

*****Michigan SLRP 2020 Application Period Update*****

10/22/2019

- 1. 2020 Application Period: February 3 through February 7, 2020 Postmarks Only**
- 2. HPSA-Find Address and County Documentation Required for All Practice Sites**
- 3. Rural Health Clinics Not Approved as NHSC Practice Sites Must Submit NHSC-Compliant Sliding Fee Schedule and Policy**
- 4. Top Priority Applicants for 2020 Application Period**
 - a. Inpatient Pediatric Psychiatrists**
 - b. Genesee County Applicants**

Please Note: Genesee county applicants remain a top priority, but employers will now be required to make contributions equal to 20 percent of their providers' loan repayment agreements.
 - c. Northern Obstetric Service Providers:**

Please Note: For providers other than OB/GYN physicians and certified nurse midwives (CNMs) to be considered a top priority, employers must include a signed letter with their Practice Site Applications (See below.)
- 5. Important Reminders:**
 - a. Non-priority Practice Sites with HPSA Scores of 8 or Higher Treated as Priority**
 - b. Updated MSLRP Review Process**
 - c. *Workdays Away Form* Must be Submitted with Final *Work Verification Form***
 - d. Participants Must Complete Service Obligations with Original Employers**
 - e. Employers Must Employ Participants Throughout Service Obligations**

Program Purpose:

The Michigan State Loan Repayment Program (MSLRP) assists employers in the recruitment and retention of medical, dental, and mental health primary care providers who continue to demonstrate their commitment to building long-term primary care practices in underserved communities designated as Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs). MSLRP will assist those selected by providing up to \$200,000 in tax-free funds to repay their educational debt over a period of up to eight years of participation. New applicants and current participants compete for consecutive two-year MSLRP agreements requiring them to remain employed for a minimum of 40 hours per week for no less than 45 weeks per year at eligible nonprofit practice sites providing primary healthcare services to ambulatory populations. Providers must remain with the employers who sponsor them during their two-year agreements, and employers must continue to employ the providers they sponsor during their two-year service obligations. Employers must not use MSLRP payments to offset participants' salaries or other components of their compensation packages. MSLRP payments must be in addition to participants' salaries, which must be based on prevailing rates in their practice areas. Due to significant program changes starting with this application period, providers and employers are urged to carefully read this update, as well as the entire updated MSLRP website and instructions for all application forms.

1. 2019 Application Period: February 3 - 7, 2020 Postmarks Only:

The 2020 application period will begin on **February 3** and continue through **February 7, 2020**. Applications will be batched according to their postmarks and applications in each postmark batch will have preference over those in each subsequent batch. First, applications in the February 3 postmark batch will be ranked according to their applicant priority status and randomly generated lottery numbers assigned during intake and then screened and reviewed. This process will continue with each following postmark batch until enough applications have been approved to obligate program funds. The best strategy for being awarded in 2020 is to start working on applications early, make sure they are 100% complete, and drop them into the mailbox on the morning of February 3, 2020. The postmark is what matters, not how soon it arrives at the MSLRP Office, so sending an application through an express mail service will not improve the chances of being awarded.

Applications with postmarks earlier than February 3, 2020 be will treated as if they have February 7 postmarks. You will find more information about applicant priority status, lottery numbers and rank ordering, as well as the screening and review process on the MSLRP website.

New application forms will be posted on the MSLRP website under *Application Periods, Forms, and Process* as soon as possible. The new forms must be used to apply. Briefly, providers must complete the *Provider Application Part A* and *Part B* forms, and employers must complete the *Practice Site Application and Declaration of Intent form* and include all required attachments. Providers should start with their *Part B* forms, because they take the longest to complete. **All application forms must be mailed together in a single envelope to the MSLRP Office. Only one provider application package may be included in each envelope.**

Loan repayment agreements for successful applicants will begin October 1, 2020 and continue through September 30, 2022. The contribution requirement for nonprofit employers will remain at 20 percent of their providers' agreement amounts. For-profit employers placing providers in nonprofit practice sites, such as state prisons, will continue to contribute 50 percent. Participation in MSLRP is contingent upon the availability of program funds at the time of contracting. Although the program expects to receive funding for loan repayment agreements resulting from this application period, applicants should be aware that state and federal budgeting processes may affect their participation. **Applicants are asked not to call the MSLRP Office to inquire about funding status. Applicants will be notified as soon as information is available.**

Applications must be mailed to:

Brittany Brookshire, MSLRP Coordinator,
Office of Planning
Michigan Department of Health and Human Services
South Grand Building
P.O. Box 30195
Lansing, MI 48909

2. HPSA-Find Address and County Documentation Required for All Practice Sites

Employers must submit HPSA-Find documentation for each practice site listed on their Practice Site Applications. **Many applicants were screened out during 2019 because employers did not meet this requirement.** Providers should check to make sure their employers have included the required documentation. Employers must include the documents found by searching the HPSA-Find website at <https://data.hrsa.gov/tools/shortage-area> by **both**

- **Practice site address**, and by the
- **County** in which their practice sites or Community Health Center administrative offices are located.

HPSA-Find Practice Site Address Documentation Printouts: Employers must:

- **Search** the website by practice site address.
- **Print** a HPSA address document for each of their practice sites, even if the printout indicates the practice site is not in a geographical HPSA.
- **Label** practice sites **PS#1 – PS#5 on the printouts**, as they appear on their Practice Site Applications.

- **Include** the printouts in their application packages.

HPSA-Find County Documentation Printouts: Employers must:

- **Search** the website **by each county in which their practice sites are located**
- **Print** a HPSA county document for each of their practice sites, even if the practice site is not listed on the printout.
 - **County data must be printed in the PDF format** offered on the website.
 - All documents must show the dates they were printed.
 - Only submit one HPSA county document for multiple practice sites in the same county.
 - Community Health Centers must submit the HPSA county document for the county in which their administrative offices reside, not for each of their practice sites.
- **Highlight** their practice sites on their HPSA county printouts.
- **Label** practice sites **PS#1 – PS#5 on the printout**, as they appear on their Practice Site Applications.
- **Make sure** practice site names that appear on their Practice Site Applications are exactly the same as those on their HPSA county printouts.
- **Write the names** used on their Practice Site applications on their HPSA county printouts when site names are different and draw an arrow to the correct practice site.
- **Include** the printouts in their application packages.

3. Rural Health Clinics Not Approved as NHSC Practice Sites Must Submit NHSC-Compliant Sliding Fee Schedule and Policy

Many Rural Health Clinics have recently lost their HPSA facility designations because they are no longer National Health Service Corps (NHSC) approved practice sites and are no longer listed on their HPSA-Find county report. Employers must check whether their Rural Health Clinics are still listed on their HPSA-Find county reports at <https://data.hrsa.gov/tools/shortage-area>.

- Employers must submit HPSA county documentation printouts for practice sites listed on their Practice Site Applications whether or not their sites are listed on the HPSA-Find county document.
- Employers must also submit HPSA-Find document printouts by practice site address for each of their practice sites listed on their Practice site Applications whether or not the report shows a HPSA designation.
- Rural Health Clinics not approved as NHSC practice sites must have a HPSA score of eight (8) or higher for providers working there to be considered single-priority applicants.

Employers with Rural Health Clinics **not** listed on their county reports must submit Sliding Fee Schedule (SFS) charts and policies that meet NHSC guidelines.

- Applications submitted without NHSC compliant SFS charts and policies will not be accepted. There will be no opportunity to resubmit or change SFS charts and policies during the application period.
- NHSC SFS and Policy Guidelines can be found at <https://nhsc.hrsa.gov/downloads/discountfeeschedule.pdf>. General requirements can be found on page 3, with sliding fee schedule and policy examples following on subsequent pages. MSLRP will be screening SFS charts and policies for the following requirements.
 - SFS charts and policies must be based on the 2020 or 2019 Federal Poverty Level guidelines.
 - Patients at or below the 100% FPL level must receive a 100% discount or be charged no more than a nominal flat fee not to exceed \$25. Employers may not require payment of a percentage of charges, such as 10%, because it may exceed the \$25 limit.
 - There should be adjusted fees (partial sliding fee discount) based on family size and income for individuals and families with incomes above 100% and at or below 200% of the FPL.

- Employers must highlight the portions of their SFS charts and policies that explain patient discounts.
- Patient discounts shown on SFS charts must be clearly labeled as discounts.
- If employers collect patient financial information, it cannot be used as part of an asset test to determine eligibility for services under their SFS policies.

4. Top Priority Applicants for 2020 Application Period

a. Inpatient Pediatric Psychiatrists:

Psychiatrists specializing in pediatrics at inpatient psychiatric units will be a priority during the 2020 application period. To be eligible for priority status, psychiatrists must be involved in the assessment, admission, and treatment of pediatric inpatients. Employers of those awarded will be required to make 20 percent employer contributions. Applicants must meet all program eligibility and application requirements except they may be:

- Inpatient hospital-based, instead of clinic-based.
- Treating an inpatient hospital, instead of an outpatient, ambulatory population.
- Working at a practice site(s) that does **not** have a mental health HPSA facility designation and is not located within a mental health geographical HPSA.

b. Genesee County Applicants:

Providers working at practice sites in Genesee County will continue to be a priority during the 2020 application period. Employers are required to make contributions equal to 20 percent of providers' loan repayment agreements. Providers must meet all MSLRP requirements except:

- Provider practice sites are not required to be located within a Health Professional Shortage Area.

c. Northern Obstetric Service Providers:

This includes all obstetric service providers working at practice sites in, or north of, Mason, Lake, Osceola, Clare, Gladwin, Arenac, Bay and Huron Counties. This includes OB/GYN physicians and certified nurse midwives (CNMs), as well as family medicine physicians, nurse practitioners (NPs), and physician assistants (PAs) who provide obstetric services on a regular basis at hospital or non-hospital-based clinics. Clinicians who provide prenatal care, but do not perform deliveries, may also receive priority status. For more information see the *Selection Criteria, Review Process, and Final Phase Procedure* chapter on the MSLRP website.

Please Note: For providers other than OB/GYN physicians and certified nurse midwives (CNMs) to be considered a top priority, employers must include a signed letter with their Practice Site Applications which includes the: 1) Number of hours per week the applicant spends providing obstetric services (which must be a least 10); and, 2) Provider types and number of hours per week other practitioners provide obstetric services at the applicant's practice site(s).

5. Important Reminders:

a. Non-priority Practice Sites with HPSA Scores of 8 or Higher Treated as Priority

Non-priority practice sites with Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA) scores of at least eight, will be treated as priority sites. To be considered a priority applicant all the non-priority practice sites at which a provider may complete their MSLRP service obligation must have HPSA scores of at least eight. Non-priority applicants working at sites with less than a score of eight will be included in the final 2/7/20 batch of applications, regardless of postmark.

b. Updated MSLRP Review Process

The review process has been streamlined to accommodate increasing application volume. In the past, those submitting incomplete applications were provided an opportunity to complete their applications by submitting supplemental documentation. Now, those submitting incomplete application packages will be notified they have been screened out of the current application process and encouraged to reapply the following year. Emails notifying applicants they have been screened out will outline deficiencies in their current applications to assist them in submitting complete future applications.

Providers and employers are strongly encouraged to read more about the review process in

the **Selection Criteria, Review Process and Final Phase Procedure** section of the MSLRP website.

c. Workdays Away Form Must be Submitted with Final Work Verification Form

Employers are required to complete, sign and mail each participant's *Workdays Away from Practice Sites (WDA)* form with their final *Work Verification Form (WVF)*. Employers will find instructions for calculating workdays away in the *Participant Information and Requirements* section of the MSLRP website. Complete mailing instructions are included on each WVF. **Participants will only receive their final payments if their WDA forms are submitted.**

d. Participants Must Complete Service Obligations with Original Employers

Providers applying for MSLRP are agreeing to stay with their employers during their two-year service obligations. Providers uncertain about remaining with their current employers during their entire two-year MSLRP service obligations should not apply for loan repayment during the current application period. They should wait until issues with their current employers are resolved or start with other employers before applying. Provider-initiated transfers to new employer practice sites with start dates other than the first day of their next MSLRP loan repayment agreement, if awarded, are a breach of that agreement for which they will receive a *Non-Compliance Assessment*. This means they will not be eligible to participate in the next application period during which they would normally reapply.

e. Employers Must Employ Participants Throughout Service Obligations

Employers applying for MSLRP are agreeing to employ the providers they sponsor throughout their service obligations to the program. Employers uncertain about continuing to employ providers should not sponsor them during the current application period. They should wait until issues with those providers are resolved or sponsor other providers. Employers who terminate their MSLRP participant's employment during their service obligations without 'good cause' are in breach of their agreements and will receive a *Non-Compliance Assessment*. This means the sponsoring agency will not be able to participate in the next application period by sponsoring providers applying to the program for the first time as their employees. They will, however, be able to continue sponsoring employees who are reapplying to the program.

Additional MSLRP Information:

You will find additional information regarding MSLRP eligibility requirements and application forms on the MSLRP Website at: www.michigan.gov/mslrp. If you have further questions **after reading the MSLRP website**, please contact Ken Miller at millerk3@michigan.gov or (517) 241-9946 or Brittany Brookshire at BrookshireB1@michigan.gov or (517) 284-4986.