

Licensed Mental Health Services Provider Education Program (LMH)
Frequently Asked Questions
2016

1. Do I have to be a permanent California resident and U.S. citizen to apply for the LMH program?

You do not need to be a U.S. Citizen, but you must have a valid legal presence and ability to work in the state of California.

2. What is a “service obligation?”

“Service obligation” means the contractual obligation agreed to by the recipient of a loan repayment where the recipient agrees to practice their profession for a specified period of time in or through a designated facility. LMH has a 24-month obligation.

3. Can I still apply for the LMH program if I currently owe an existing service obligation?

If you owe an existing service obligation to another entity, you cannot apply to LMH until you have completed your existing obligation.

4. Do all applicants of the LMH program receive a loan repayment award?

Awards for the LMH program are made on a competitive basis. All applicants are not guaranteed a loan repayment award.

5. How is the LMH program funded?

A ten-dollar surcharge is collected by the Board of Behavioral Sciences and the Board of Psychology at the time of provider’s initial licensure and renewal to support LMH.

6. What is the maximum award amount for the LMH program?

The maximum award amount for the LMH program is \$15,000. Award recipients may not receive the full amount.

7. How many applicants are awarded each cycle for the LMH program?

The number of applicants depends on the number of complete LMH applications received as well as the availability of funding. Each cycle is unique and Health Professions Education Foundation (HPEF) staff cannot predict the number of awards.

8. How do I know if my mental health profession will qualify for the LMH program?

Qualified professions include: licensed psychologist, registered psychologist, postdoctoral psychological fellow/trainee, licensed marriage and family therapist, marriage and family therapist intern, licensed clinical social worker and associate clinical social worker.

9. Do I have to be licensed in order to apply for the LMH program?

You do need to be a licensed/registered mental health professional with either the Board of Behavioral Sciences or the Board of Psychology.

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10. Can I submit my application prior to the deadlines?

You are encouraged to submit your LMH program application prior to the deadline, but not before the cycle officially opens. Applications submitted after the deadline date will not be accepted by the CalREACH system. Dates may be found on HPEF website or on CalREACH.

11. When will I be notified whether or not I have been selected to receive a loan repayment award?

You will be notified after the applications have been reviewed and scored. The process takes several months from start to finish. Notifications will be sent out before your service obligation starts.

12. Do I have to be bilingual in order to apply for the LMH program?

No, you do not have to be bilingual in order to apply for the LMH program.

13. What do I do if my loans are consolidated? In forbearance?

If your educational loans are consolidated, you may list only the consolidated loan information on the Educational Debt Reporting Form and also include the corresponding lender statement. Loans may not be consolidated with other types of debt or with another person.

If your loans are in forbearance, you are still required to fill out the Educational Debt Reporting Form and include a recent copy of corresponding lender statements.

14. If I am selected to be a loan repayment recipient of the LMH program, what are the terms of my contractual obligation?

All LMH program award recipients are required to complete a 24-month service obligation in a qualified facility providing a minimum of 32 hours a week of direct patient care. If I have been working in a qualified facility for several years already, can I backdate my contract to include time that I have already served?

No. You cannot use prior employment in order to complete the terms of your service obligation for the LMH program. The start date of your two-year service obligation will begin after you are awarded and will be identified in the contract.

15. What happens if I need to change jobs during my service obligation?

You have the option to change jobs during the term of your service obligation. However, in order to comply with the terms of your contract, you must remain employed with a qualified facility and the facility must be verified by HPEF. It is best to call HPEF and discuss with a Program Officer before you change jobs to be sure the new job qualifies.

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16. What happens if I am unable to fulfill the terms of my contractual obligation and complete my service obligation?

If an award recipient is unable to fulfill their contractual obligation, you will be assessed a penalty, which could include payments received plus interest.

17. What criteria are used to select award recipients for the LMH program?

Selection of awards is based solely on the information and documents contained in the LMH program packet. Selection for awards is based on the following criteria: work experience, cultural and linguistic competence, career goals, community service, community background, and fluency in a language other than English. Priority will be given to individuals whose community background and commitment indicates the likelihood of long-term employment in a qualified facility even after the service obligation has ended.

18. If I am selected to be a recipient for the LMH program, does the money come directly to me or will it be sent to my lender?

LMH program loan repayments are issued in a total of eight payments throughout the term of the 24-month service obligation. Checks will be sent directly to the recipient of the award after quarterly reports are received by HPEF.

19. If I am selected to be a recipient for the LMH program, do I still have to make payments to my lender?

Yes. Award recipients are responsible for making continued loan payments to their lender throughout their participation in the LMH program. HPEF is not responsible for late payments or penalties.

20. If I am selected to be a loan repayment recipient for the LMH program, how many times can I reapply?

LMH loan repayment recipients may only receive a total of two awards from HPEF. However, there is no limit as to the number of times someone can apply.