



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
Health Resources and Services Administration  
Bureau of Clinician Recruitment and Service

**NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE CORPS SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM  
ACADEMIC YEAR 2009-2010**

**FOR STUDENTS IN TRAINING TO BE ALLOPATHIC AND OSTEOPATHIC  
PHYSICIANS, DENTISTS, CERTIFIED NURSE-MIDWIVES, CERTIFIED FAMILY  
NURSE PRACTITIONERS, OR PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS**

Health Resources and Services Administration  
Bureau of Clinician Recruitment and Service  
Division of Applications and Awards  
5600 Fishers Lane, Room 8-37  
Rockville, Maryland 20857

**Contact National Health Service Corps Scholarship Program**

c/o Discovery Logic  
Telephone: 1-800-638-0824  
E-mail: [nhscsp@discoverylogic.com](mailto:nhscsp@discoverylogic.com)  
Monday through Friday 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. ET

**On-line application and BCRSIS Banking Information must be submitted by 5:00 PM ET on  
April 6, 2009 and all Supporting Documents must be postmarked by April 6, 2009.**

**Complete on-line application, BCRSIS Banking Information, and download forms at  
<http://nhsc.hrsa.gov/applications/scholarship/default.htm>**

**Mail completed forms to:**

NHSC Scholarship Program  
c/o Discovery Logic  
1375 Piccard Drive, Suite 360  
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Authority: Public Health Service Act as amended, Title III, Sections 338A and 338C-H

## ***IMPORTANT NOTICE***

On February 17, President Obama signed into law the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (“Recovery Act”) of 2009. The Recovery Act provides additional funding for the National Health Service Corps Scholarship Program.

Due to the availability of Recovery Act funding, the Bureau of Clinician Recruitment and Service expects to be able to award scholarships to more students who wish to pursue training in those health care disciplines and specialties most needed to deliver quality primary health care services in health professional shortage areas of greatest need throughout the United States and its territories, as designated by the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

The scholarship consists of payment for tuition, required fees, other reasonable educational costs, and a monthly support stipend. In return, students agree to provide one year of service in a National Health Service Corps approved site in the Health Professional Shortage area to which they are assigned for each school year or partial school year of scholarship support received, with a minimum two-year service commitment and a maximum four-year commitment.

For the 2009-2010 academic year, scholarships will be available for students pursuing primary health care training leading to a degree in allopathic medicine, osteopathic medicine, or dentistry, and education leading to national certification as a family nurse practitioner, nurse-midwife or physician assistant.

Applicants selected to participate in the National Health Service Corps Scholarship Program enter into a contract to receive scholarship support during the 2009-2010 school year, and may enter into optional contracts (for up to 3 subsequent school years). As there is no guarantee of the availability of scholarship funding in future fiscal years, applicants are strongly encouraged to sign the 2009-2010 contract and optional contracts for additional school years (up to three years), through their date of graduation.

## ***DISCRIMINATION PROHIBITED***

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, and its Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) implementing regulation, 45 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 80, provide that no person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination, under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and its HHS implementing regulation, 45 CFR Part 86, provide that no person in the United States shall, based on his/her sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under, any educational program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and its HHS implementing regulations, 45 CFR Parts 84 and 85, provide that no otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States shall, solely by reason of his/her disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance or any program or activity conducted by HHS.

Title III of the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended, and its HHS implementing regulation, 45 CFR Parts 90 and 91, provide the general rule that no person in the United States shall, on the basis of age, be excluded from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under, any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.

**NOTICE  
PLEASE PRINT AND KEEP THIS BULLETIN**

Applicants selected to participate in the National Health Service Corps Scholarship Program should retain a copy of this Applicant Information Bulletin as a reference guide to the scholarship award.

The *Applicant Information Bulletin* describes the National Health Service Corps Scholarship Program authorized by Sections 338A and 338C through 338H of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S. Code 254l and 254m-q), as amended; its implementing Federal Regulations (Title 42 Code of Federal Regulations, Part 62, Subpart A); and the administrative guidelines for Fiscal Year 2009. Future changes in the governing statute, the implementing regulations, and Program guidelines may also be applicable to your participation in this Program. The National Health Service Corps Scholarship Program is listed as number 93.288 in the *Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance*.

## **PRIVACY ACT NOTIFICATION STATEMENT**

### **General**

This information is provided pursuant to the Privacy Act of 1974 (Public Law 93-579), as amended, for individuals supplying information for inclusion in a system of records.

### **Authority**

Public Health Service Act as amended, Title III, Sections 338A and 338C-H.

### **Purposes and Uses**

The National Health Service Corps (NHSC) Scholarship Program provides scholarships to health professions students, in return for a commitment to provide primary health services in Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSA) within the United States. The information applicants supply will be used to evaluate their eligibility, qualifications and suitability for participating in the NHSC Scholarship Program.

Applicant and participant documentation (e.g. contract, application and related data, documentation and correspondence) are maintained in a system of records to be used within the Department of Health and Human Services to monitor NHSC Scholarship Program-related activities. The information may also be disclosed outside the Department, as permitted by the Privacy Act and Freedom of Information Act, to the Congress, the National Archives, the General Accounting Office, and pursuant to court order and various routine uses (see <http://www.hrsa.gov/privacyact/sorn/09150037.htm>).

The name of an NHSC Scholarship Program participant, specialty, address and telephone number, and service obligation completion date may be provided to professional placement firms in response to requests made under the Freedom of Information Act.

### **Effects of Nondisclosure**

Disclosure of the information sought is voluntary; however, if not submitted, except for the reply to Section E, Item 1 (Race/Ethnicity) on the Application for NHSC Scholarship Program, an application will be considered incomplete and will not be considered for funding under this announcement.

### **Paperwork Reduction Act Public Burden Statement**

An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a current OMB control number. The current OMB control number for information collected through this application process is 0915-0146. Public reporting burden for this collection is estimated to average 180 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to HRSA Reports Clearance Office, 5600 Fishers Lane, Room 10-33, Rockville, Maryland 20857.

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>SECTION I. APPLICANT INFORMATION BULLETIN .....</b>	<b>6</b>
INTRODUCTION.....	6
APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY .....	7
SUBMITTING THE APPLICATION.....	10
SELECTION CRITERIA AND FUNDING PRIORITIES .....	12
SCHOLARSHIP BENEFITS .....	14
DEFERMENTS FOR POST-DEGREE ADVANCED TRAINING.....	19
FULFILLING THE SERVICE COMMITMENT .....	21
DEFAULTING ON THE SCHOLARSHIP COMMITMENT - BREACH OF CONTRACT .....	25
WAIVER, SUSPENSION, OR CANCELLATION OF THE COMMITMENT .....	26
<b>SECTION II. GLOSSARY OF TERMS.....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>SECTION III. SUMMARY OF IMPORTANT DEADLINES.....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>SECTION IV. SAMPLE SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS .....</b>	<b>29</b>
NHSC CHECKLIST FOR COMPLETING THE APPLICATION .....	30
NHSC SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM CONTRACT .....	31
ACADEMIC OFFICIAL’S EVALUATION LETTER - INSTRUCTIONS.....	33
ESSAY QUESTIONS .....	34
AUTHORIZATION TO RELEASE INFORMATION.....	35
VERIFICATION OF ACCEPTANCE REPORT/VERIFICATION OF GOOD STANDING.....	36

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The National Health Service Corps (NHSC) Scholarship Program Application Information Bulletin (AIB) provides a summary of the rights and liabilities of applicants who are selected to become participants in the NHSC Scholarship Program. This AIB also contains instructions for preparing and completing the 2009-2010 application and all required forms. The information outlined below includes important information for successfully applying for a NHSC scholarship.

### 1. Electronic Submission of the Application and Banking Information

Individuals applying for this funding opportunity are required to submit the application and banking information for direct deposit of stipend payments electronically no later than **5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on April 6, 2009**.

**Please note that all required supporting documentation described in this Applicant Information Bulletin must be submitted by April 6, 2009 (postmark date) to:**

NHSC Scholarship Program  
c/o Discovery Logic  
1375 Piccard Drive, Suite 360  
Rockville, MD 20850

Only the Health Resources and Services Administration's HRSA staff can enter any relevant changes to the electronic banking information once it has been submitted through BCRSIS and a "BCRSIS Receipt of Submission" has been printed. However, if changes are required, applicants must complete the Banking Update Form which may be found at <https://www.fms.treas.gov/eft/1199a.pdf> and mail the completed form to the Division of Applications and Awards, NHSC Scholarship Branch, 5600 Fishers Lane, Room 8-37, Rockville, MD 20857.

### 2. Submission of Supporting Documentation to Complete Application Package

In addition to submitting the electronic and signed hard copy of the application and banking information through BCRSIS, there is required supporting documentation, including a copy of the BCRSIS "Receipt of Submission", described in the Bulletin, which must be postmarked by the April 6, 2009, due date.

If you are unable to print a copy of the "BCRSIS Receipt of Submission", please complete the following 2 steps:

- Contact the HRSA Call Center to log a help-ticket toll-free at 1-800-221-9393 (TTY: 1-877-897-9910), Monday-Friday (except Federal Holidays), 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. ET.
- Complete the Banking Update Form (by 5:00 p.m. ET on April 6, 2009) which may be found at <https://www.fms.treas.gov/eft/1199a.pdf>. The completed form must be received or postmarked by April 6, 2009. Please mail the completed form to: Division of Applications and Awards, 5600 Fishers Lane, Room 8-37, Rockville, MD 20857.

Any applicant that fails to complete and submit all required documents by the deadline will be considered ineligible and will not be considered for an award.

Applications will undergo an initial review to determine the completeness of the application package submitted in response to the April 6, 2009 deadline. Application packages deemed incomplete (i.e., missing, inconsistent, or incomplete supporting documents) will not be considered for funding. The NHSC will not accept submission or re-submission of incomplete, rejected, or otherwise delayed applications after the deadline. It is the applicant's responsibility to submit a complete application package.

The information submitted in the electronic application must be consistent with what is reported by the school on the Verification of Enrollment/Verification of Good Standing Report.

### 3. NHSC Scholarship Program and Taxes

Stipend payments made to scholars under the NHSC scholarship are taxable.

#### **4. Telephone Conferences for Applicants**

The NHSC will conduct two (2) telephone conferences for applicants who may have questions during the Fiscal Year 2009 application cycle. The telephone conferences will be held on **March 11, 2009 at 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. ET and on March 18, 2009 at 2:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. ET** and will be limited to no more than 100 applicants.

If you are interested in participating in a telephone conference, please call **1-800-369-1867** and use the following participant passcode: NHSC SCHOLAR.

## SECTION I. APPLICANT INFORMATION BULLETIN

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### INTRODUCTION

The NHSC Scholarship Program is mandated by Congress to supply the NHSC with health care professionals trained in those disciplines and specialties most needed to deliver quality primary health care services in health professional shortage areas (HPSAs) throughout the United States and its territories as designated by the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

The NHSC Scholarship Program is not a general financial assistance program for students of health-related disciplines; rather, it provides the NHSC with the committed health professionals it needs to carry out its mission of providing primary health care to populations in areas of greatest need in health professional shortage areas (HPSAs).

#### NHSC Scholarship Program Profile

**The NHSC Scholarship Program is a competitive Federal program that awards scholarships to students pursuing primary care health professions training in return for a service commitment.**

The scholarship consists of payment for tuition, required fees, other reasonable educational costs, and a monthly support stipend. In return, students agree to provide one (1) year of service in a NHSC approved site in the HPSA of greatest need to which they are assigned for each school year or partial school year of scholarship support received, with a minimum 2-year service commitment and a maximum 4-year commitment.

For the 2009-2010 academic year, scholarships will be available for students pursuing primary health care training leading to a degree in allopathic medicine, osteopathic medicine, or dentistry, and education leading to a degree as a family nurse practitioner, nurse-midwife or physician assistant.

The scholarship recipient's NHSC service commitment will be fulfilled as a non-Federal employee, as a commissioned officer of the Regular or Reserve Corps of the U.S. Public Health Service (PHS), or as a civilian employee of the U.S. Government. It should be noted that approximately 92% of scholars fulfill their commitments as non-Federal employees of public or private entities such as community and migrant health centers, State or local health departments, and other non-Federal entities. The remaining 8% of scholars serve as Federal employees at HPSA sites served by the Indian Health Service, the Department of Justice's Federal Bureau of Prisons, or the Department of Homeland Security's Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

NHSC scholarship recipients are required to fulfill their NHSC service commitment at sites located in a HPSA approved by the Bureau of Clinician Recruitment and Service (BCRS). The HPSA locations may be anywhere in the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Territory of Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas, the U.S. Virgin Islands, the Territory of American Samoa, the Republic of Palau, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, or the Federated States of Micronesia.

Students uncertain of a commitment to primary health care practice in HPSAs throughout the United States or who are unable to relocate based on the needs of the NHSC are advised not to participate in this program. Students unsure about their future specialty interests are advised not to apply for the NHSC scholarship.

#### Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs)

A HPSA is a geographic area, a facility, or a population group, which has been determined by the Secretary of Health and Human Services to have a shortage of health professionals. HPSAs are identified on the basis of agency or individual requests for designation. Information considered when designating a primary care HPSA includes health practitioner-to-population ratios, rates of poverty, and access to available primary health services. **Service commitments to the NHSC may be satisfied only in those NHSC approved sites in HPSAs with the greatest need at the time of service assignment, as determined by the BCRS.**



## **Program Administration**

The BCRS, Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), administers the NHSC Scholarship Program. The Division of Applications and Awards (DAA) awards the scholarships. The Division of Scholar and Clinician Support (DSCS) monitors scholars while in school and in deferment for approved advanced training, assists scholars in securing employment at eligible service sites upon the completion of their training, reviews and approves requests for service transfers, and monitors scholars' service until they have completed their service commitment. In addition, the Division of Site and Clinician Recruitment (DSCR) identifies appropriate service sites. The Legal and Compliance Office (LCO) reviews scholar and clinician compliance referrals, handles default determinations, and reviews requests for suspensions and waivers.

## **APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY**

Applicants must meet the following requirements in order to be eligible for scholarship awards.

### **U.S. Citizenship**

Applicants for the NHSC Scholarship Program must be citizens of the United States (either U.S. born or naturalized) or U.S. nationals. Nationals are individuals who owe permanent allegiance to the U.S. and were born in certain outlying possessions of the U.S. (e.g., American Samoa and Swains Island) on or after the date of formal acquisition of such possession by the U.S. All applicants must submit documentation to verify U.S. citizenship or status as a U.S. national (e.g., a copy of a birth certificate, a certificate of citizenship, passport or naturalization certificate) with the application material. Permanent residents of the U.S. are not eligible to apply.

### **Full-time Enrollment in Fully Accredited Schools and Programs**

To be considered for a scholarship award for the 2009-2010 academic year, applicants must be enrolled or accepted for enrollment as full-time students, and begin classes on or before September 30, 2009. Individuals planning to be on a leave of absence from school such that they will not begin class attendance on or before September 30, 2009, should not submit an application this year, but may apply next year. **Please be advised that any non-required or unrelated courses will not count toward the schools' required hours in determining full-time status.**

The NHSC Scholarship Program considers the schools and programs to be fully accredited if students/graduates are eligible to take the national certification/licensure examinations (as set forth below in this section and in the "[Licensure/Certification Requirements](#)" section of this *Bulletin* which lead to licensure in the profession for which the applicant is applying for scholarship support. The following is a listing of acceptable schools/programs:

- (1) A school of *allopathic medicine or osteopathic medicine*, pursuing the M.D. or D.O. degree, accredited by the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (sponsored by the American Medical Association and the Association of American Medical Colleges) or the American Osteopathic Association, Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation.
- (2) A school of *dentistry*, pursuing the D.D.S. or D.M.D. degree, accredited by the American Dental Association, Commission on Dental Accreditation.
- (3) A school or program of *family nurse practitioner (FNP) education* pursuing a master's degree, or post-master's certificate, accredited by the National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission or the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education, and leading to national certification as a family nurse practitioner by either the American Nurses Credentialing Center or the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners.
- (4) A school or program of *nurse-midwifery (NM) education* pursuing a master's degree, or post-master's certificate, accredited by the American College of Nurse-Midwives, Division of Accreditation and leading to national certification by the American Midwifery Certification Board.

***NURSING STUDENTS PLEASE NOTE: The NHSC Scholarship Program will not provide scholarship support for students who are enrolled in a nursing Bridge Program (e.g. RN-MSN, BSN-MSN, Direct Entry,***

**Graduate Entry Pre-specialty or Entry to Practice Programs) or who are pursuing a doctoral degree in nursing.**

- (5) A school or program of primary care *physician assistant (PA) education* pursuing an associate, bachelor's or master's degree from a physician assistant education program accredited by the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant and the affiliated school must be accredited by a U.S. Department of Education nationally recognized regional or State institutional accrediting agency. The PA training program must lead to national certification by the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants.

***PLEASE NOTE: Students in the "pre-professional" phase (e.g., taking undergraduate course work as a prerequisite for admission to the PA training program) or in PA programs specializing in areas other than primary care (e.g., PA programs with a surgical or emergency room focus) ARE NOT eligible for NHSC scholarship funding.***

***ALL STUDENTS – PLEASE NOTE: The NHSC Scholarship Program WILL NOT provide scholarship support for any joint programs that provide dual degrees in the above-listed disciplines (e.g., a joint program leading to a dual FNP/CNM degree, etc).***

***Scholarship recipients are required to serve areas of greatest need throughout the country. Each applicant is responsible for ensuring that his or her professional program and type of degree will lead to broad eligibility for licensure in multiple States.***

### **Schools and Programs Must be Located in the U.S.**

The schools and educational programs for which scholarship support is requested must be in a State (includes the 50 States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas, the U.S. Virgin Islands, the Territory of Guam, the Territory of American Samoa, the Republic of Palau, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Federated States of Micronesia). *Students attending schools outside of these geographic areas are not eligible for NHSC scholarships, even though they may be citizens of the United States.*

### **Eligibility for Federal Employment**

Most NHSC Scholarship Program recipients should expect to serve their commitments as salaried non-Federal employees of public or private entities approved by the BCRS. However, there may be vacancies which require Federal employment including a security clearance. In view of the potential for Federal employment, an applicant must be eligible to hold an appointment as a commissioned officer of the Public Health Service (PHS) or be eligible for a Federal civil service appointment.

### **Submission of Authorization to Release Information Form**

To be eligible for an NHSC scholarship award, the applicant must complete, sign and return to the BCRS the [Authorization to Release Information Form](#). A completed and signed Authorization to Release Information Form is necessary for the Department of Health and Human Services to receive enrollment information from the applicant's/participant's school and, if applicable, post-degree advanced training program; to confirm that an applicant/participant is not excluded (suspended or debarred) or disqualified by any Federal agency from participating in [covered transactions](#); and after school completion, to receive information from a participant's service site to confirm compliance with the NHSC service obligation.

### **Submission of Signed Contract**

To be eligible for an NHSC scholarship, the statute requires that an applicant sign and submit a contract. The [contract](#) is located at end of this Bulletin.

The contract is for the 2009-2010 school year with contract extensions for up to 3 subsequent school years, not to exceed a total of 4 school years of NHSC scholarship support. The 2009-2010 contract, if countersigned by the Secretary or his/her designee, obligates the applicant to the minimum 2-year service commitment. Therefore, applicants are strongly encouraged to sign the 2009-2010 contract and an optional contract for the 2010-2011 school year, if the applicant will need additional support for all or part of the subsequent school year (2010-2011). The

contract(s) must be signed through the student's date of graduation in order for the student to receive support through the date of graduation. **Before an applicant decides not to request scholarship support through his/her graduation date, the applicant should read the "[Continuing Support after the 2009-2010 School Year](#)" section of this *Bulletin*.**

### **Exclusion or Disqualification from Covered Transactions**

The receipt of funding under the NHSC Scholarship Program is a "covered transaction" pursuant to Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 180, as adopted by HHS pursuant to 2 CFR Part 376. Before entering into a scholarship contract, the applicant is required, under Subpart C of Part 180, to report certain information, which is described in the "Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Disqualification and Related Matters" located in the online application. The applicant should sign the Certification that is applicable to his/her situation.

Individuals who are currently excluded (suspended or debarred) or disqualified by any Federal agency from participating in covered transactions are ineligible to receive an award under the NHSC Scholarship Program. Individuals with reportable problems other than exclusion or disqualification may, or may not, be selected to participate in the NHSC Scholarship Program, based on the Program's consideration and evaluation of the applicant's circumstances.

As a condition of participating in the NHSC Scholarship Program, a participant must agree to comply with the requirements of Subpart C of Part 180, which include providing immediate written notice to BCRS if the applicant/participant learns that he/she failed to make a required disclosure or that a disclosure is now required due to changed circumstances.

### **No Judgment Lien for a Federal Debt**

An applicant must be free of any judgment lien against his/her property arising from a debt owed to the United States. Debtors with judgment liens for Federal debts are ineligible to receive Federal financial assistance.

### **No Conflicting Service Commitments**

Applicants, except military reservists, who are already obligated to a Federal, State or other entity for professional practice or service after academic training are not eligible for NHSC scholarship awards. An exception may be made if the obligating entity provides documentation that there is no potential conflict in fulfilling the service commitment to the NHSC Scholarship Program and that the NHSC Scholarship Program service commitment will be performed first.

**A scholarship recipient who meets the above exception should not expect to serve in a State, community, or medical facility to which the recipient already owes a commitment for service.** The NHSC cannot make any such advance placement commitments to NHSC Scholarship Program recipients.

Scholarship recipients, except military reservists, who subsequently enter other service commitments and, are not immediately available after completion of their degrees to fulfill their NHSC scholarship service commitments, will be subject to the [breach-of-contract provisions](#) described later in this *Bulletin*.

### **Members of a Reserve Component of the Armed Forces**

Individuals in the Reserve component of the Armed Forces or National Guard are eligible to participate in the NHSC Scholarship Program. However, reservists should understand the following:

**First**, the placement opportunities for reservists may be more limited, in order to minimize the negative impact that a deployment would have on continuity of patient care for the vulnerable populations served by the NHSC. For example, placement of a reservist as the sole provider at a clinic, that would be forced to close if the reservist were deployed, would not be approved.

**Second**, military training or service performed by reservists will not satisfy the NHSC service commitment. If a participant's military training and/or service, in combination with the participant's other absences from the NHSC service site, exceeds 7 weeks (49 calendar days) per service year, the participant should request a suspension. See "[Waiver, Suspension or Cancellation of The Commitment](#)" for more information. The NHSC service commitment end date will be extended to compensate for the break in service. See discussion of Full-Time Clinical Practice located under the "[Fulfilling the Service Commitment](#)" section of this *Bulletin*.

*Third*, if the site where the reservist was serving at the time of his/her deployment is unable to re-employ that reservist, the participant will be reassigned to another service site to complete his/her remaining NHSC service commitment. In some cases, a participant may be asked to sign an employment contract that extends beyond the completion date of his/her NHSC service commitment.

## SUBMITTING THE APPLICATION

In order to be eligible for an NHSC scholarship award, the following documentation must be submitted **on or before April 6, 2009** as set forth below:

- **BCRSIS Banking Information.** Banking information must be submitted electronically through the **BCRSIS by 5:00 p.m. ET on April 6, 2009**. In addition, a copy of the “BCRSIS Receipt of Submission” must be printed, and submitted with the Supplemental Forms and Supporting Documentation.

To submit your banking information through BCRSIS and print the “BCRSIS Receipt of Submission”, go to the following address: [HTTPS://NIS.HRSA.GOV/BANKLOGIN.ASPX](https://NIS.HRSA.GOV/BANKLOGIN.ASPX). If you are unable to print a copy of the “BCRSIS Receipt of Submission”, please complete the following 2 steps:

- Contact the HRSA Call Center to log a help-ticket toll-free at 1-800-221-9393 (TTY: 1-877-897-9910), Monday-Friday (except Federal Holidays), 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. ET.
- Complete the Banking Update Form (by 5:00 p.m. ET on April 6, 2009) which may be found at <https://www.fms.treas.gov/eft/1199a.pdf>. The completed form must be received or postmarked by April 6, 2009. Please mail the completed form to: Division of Applications and Awards, 5600 Fishers Lane, Room 8-37, Rockville, MD 20857.

Only HRSA Staff can enter any relevant changes to the electronic banking information once it has been submitted and a “BCRSIS Receipt of Submission” has been printed. However, if changes are required, you must complete the Banking Update Form which may be found at <https://www.fms.trea.gov/eft/1199a.pdf> and mail the completed Banking Update Form to the Division of Applications and Awards, NHSC Scholarship Branch, 5600 Fishers Lane, Room 8-37, Rockville, MD 20857.

- **Supporting Documentation.** All supporting documents ([NHSC Checklist for Completing the Application](#)) must be submitted via hard copy and POSTMARKED by the April 6, 2009 deadline. Supporting documentation includes, but is not limited to, the following items:
  - A Signed and Dated Contract
  - [Authorization to Release Information Form](#)
  - [Academic Official's Evaluation Letter](#)
  - [Essay Questions](#)
  - [Transcript](#)
  - [Verification of Acceptance Report/Verification of Good Standing Report](#)
  - [W-4 Form](#)
  - Resume outlining work/volunteer experience (no more than 5 pages)
  - Copy of 2009-2010 tuition/fee schedule or latest schedule

**Any applicant who fails to submit a *complete* application by the deadline will be considered ineligible and will not be considered for a NHSC Scholarship Program award.**

*The Associate Administrator, BCRS, or his/her designee, may authorize an extension of published deadlines when justified by circumstances such as acts of nature (e.g., floods or hurricanes), widespread disruptions of mail service, or other disruptions, such as a prolonged blackout. The authorizing official will determine the affected geographical area(s) and the length of the extension granted.*

### Verification of Acceptance/Verification of Good Standing

No applicant will receive an award until he or she is enrolled or accepted for full-time enrollment in a fully

accredited program during the 2009-2010 school year (applicant must begin classes by September 30, 2009). Within the established deadline set forth above, each applicant is required to submit a report from the program verifying his or her acceptance or good standing. Applicants are required to use the [Verification of Acceptance Report /Verification of Good Standing Report](#). The verification report **must bear the training institution's raised seal or stamp. FAXES OR PHOTOCOPIES ARE NOT ACCEPTABLE.** The school identified in the Verification of Acceptance Report/Verification of Good Standing Report submitted by the deadline will be the applicant's "initial school of record."

**ONCE THE APPLICATION DEADLINE HAS PASSED, NO CHANGES WILL BE ACCEPTED IN THE APPLICANT'S CHOICE OF SCHOOL OR DISCIPLINE PRIOR TO AWARD.** Applicants who elect to enter a different school and/or program after the application deadline should contact the NHSC Scholarship Program immediately and withdraw their application. These individuals would be free to reapply for scholarship support in a subsequent fiscal year.

If the Verification of Acceptance Report/Verification of Good Standing Report states that there are conditions (not yet fulfilled) for acceptance into the school and/or program, other than standard contingencies that apply to all admitted applicants, applicants will not be eligible for consideration for an award for the 2009-2010 school year, unless all contingencies or conditions for acceptance are removed and documented in writing by the school and received or postmarked by April 6, 2009.

### **Essay Questions**

Applicants are required to respond to the following five essay questions:

1. Why do you want to be an NHSC Scholar?
2. When did you realize you wanted to serve underserved populations and how did you arrive at this decision?
3. What experiences have you had or activities have you participated in that have prepared you for working with underserved populations?
4. If selected, how do you envision your service as a provider/employee at a health clinic in a medically underserved community?
5. What are your long-term professional plans after fulfilling your scholarship service obligations?

Each response should be limited to 2,500 characters or less (approximately one-half typed page). We recommend that you use a standard word processing tool (e.g., Word, Word Perfect, etc.) to create the response to the questions. Most word processing tools provide you with the character count in addition to providing spelling and grammar checking. (Essay Questions are included in the Supporting Documentation which is downloadable from the on-line application at <http://nhsc.hrsa.gov/applications/scholarship/default.htm>).

### **Transcript**

Each applicant must include an official transcript from his/her current educational institution or, if not currently attending an educational institution, a transcript from the last educational institution he/she attended.

### **Academic Official's Evaluation Letter**

Applicants are required to submit one Evaluation Letter from an academic official. If the applicant is currently enrolled in the health professions training program, then the letter should be from the Dean, faculty advisor, or a faculty member of that academic program who is familiar with the student. If the applicant has not begun the training associated with the scholarship, the letter should be from the Dean, faculty advisor or a faculty member of the applicant's most recent academic program. The academic official's evaluation must be based on his/her observation or knowledge of the applicant.

The letter should indicate the academic official's relationship to the applicant (e.g., dean, faculty advisor, etc.) and the length of time that this official has known the applicant. It must be dated within three (3) months of the application deadline and address the following points:

1. the applicant's education/work achievement,
2. the applicant's relationships with other people, and
3. the official's assessment of whether the applicant has characteristics that increase the probability that the applicant will continue to serve in a HPSA after the scholarship service obligation is completed.

The letter should be on the institution's letterhead, included with the other supporting documents and must be submitted in a sealed envelope with the evaluator's signature across the seal.

### **Students Must Use the Current Application Packet**

Students who have submitted applications to the NHSC Scholarship Program in past years, and who did not receive or accept an award, must complete a new application and compete with all other applicants. Prior year applications will not be considered.

## **SELECTION CRITERIA AND FUNDING PRIORITIES**

**The NHSC Scholarship Program for the 2009-2010 school year is very competitive; the Program anticipates more applicants for scholarship awards than available funds. Due to the competitiveness of the NHSC Scholarship Program, students are advised to apply for other funding sources.**

This section describes the factors that will be considered in approving applications for participation in the NHSC Scholarship Program.

### **Selection Criteria**

The NHSC Scholarship Program will consider well-prepared applicants who demonstrate a commitment to serve, geographic flexibility, a strong interest in providing primary health care to the underserved populations nationally, and a history of honoring prior obligations (e.g., is not delinquent on any Federal debts).

Please remember that all applicants who demonstrate a high potential for providing quality primary health care may not receive a scholarship award due to limited funding.

*Applicants who do not demonstrate a high potential for providing primary health care in designated shortage areas will not be selected for a scholarship award.*

### **Funding Priorities for the 2009-2010 Academic Year**

Applications that demonstrate the individuals' high potential for providing primary health care services in federally designated health professional shortage areas will be competitively evaluated. The following statutory priorities for funding will be applied:

#### **FIRST PRIORITY**

**A. Former NHSC Scholarship Program Recipients**

Former NHSC Scholarship Program recipients who are seeking support for the 2009-2010 academic year, or through their date of graduation;

**B. Recipients of Federal Scholarship Program for Students of Exceptional Financial Need (EFN) (Medical and Dental Students Only)**

Applicants who have received a Scholarship for Students of Exceptional Financial Need under former section 758 of the Public Health Service Act (formerly 42 U.S.C. 294z) qualify for a funding priority.

Applicants claiming EFN status must submit by **April 6, 2009 (postmarked date)** written documentation from their school's financial aid official affirming former participation in the EFN Program.

#### **SECOND PRIORITY**

Applicants who are from "disadvantaged backgrounds" and who have characteristics that increase the probability that they will continue to serve in health professional shortage areas after their period of obligated service has been completed.

Applicants who wish to claim "disadvantaged backgrounds" should submit with their applications a written statement from the student financial aid administrator certifying their participation in, or eligibility for, participation in a qualifying Federal program. For example:

- (a) *For Medical and Dental Students:* Applicants' schools must certify that the applicants participated in, or would have been eligible for participation in, Federal programs such as "Scholarships for Disadvantaged Students," or "Loans to Disadvantaged Students."
- (b) *For Family Nurse Practitioners, Nurse Midwifery, and Physician Assistant Students:* Their schools must certify that the applicants participated in, or would have been eligible for participation in, Federal programs such as "Scholarships for Disadvantaged Students" or the benefits of the "Nursing Workforce Diversity Grant Program."

For information about programs for disadvantaged students, visit the website <http://www.bhpr.hrsa.gov/dsa/weblinks>.

The documentation of "disadvantaged background" must be POSTMARKED by the April 6, 2009 deadline.

### **THIRD PRIORITY**

All other applicants who demonstrate that they have characteristics that increase the probability that they will continue to serve in a health professions shortage areas after their period of obligated service has been completed.

#### **Notification of Selection/Acceptance of Award**

Individuals selected for awards will be notified by email/letter, no later than September 30, 2009. To accept the award, the selectees must respond by the deadline in the notice of award email/letter. If the selectee does not respond to the NHSC Scholarship Program by that deadline, the offer of award expires and the award will be offered to an alternate.

***Individuals selected for an award must attend full-time classes during the 2009-2010 school year and class attendance must begin on or before September 30, 2009. Individuals whose class attendance during the 2009-2010 school year will begin after September 30, 2009, MUST decline the award, but may reapply next year. Please note that the ranking of selectees will not be disclosed.***

#### **Notification of Alternate Status**

Individuals selected as alternates will be notified by email, no later than September 30, 2009. Alternates will be notified of selection for an award as selectees decline their awards. **Please note that the ranking of alternates will not be disclosed.**

#### **Notification of Non-Selection/Ineligibility**

Eligible individuals whose application did not fall within the competitive range to be considered as an NHSC scholarship selectee or alternate will be notified no later than October 31, 2009. Ineligible individuals will also be notified no later than October 31, 2009.

#### **New Scholars' Conference**

Individuals awarded an NHSC scholarship will be expected to attend the mandatory New Scholar Conference for Fall 2009 sponsored by the BCRS (specific date and location to be determined).

#### **Declining Scholarship Support**

Selectees who will not begin classes on or before September 30, 2009, including selectees who will be on a leave of absence from school through September 30, 2009, *must* decline the award. All other selectees *may* decline awards. The declination of an award is without penalty, and permits the promotion of alternates to selectee status. An award can be declined by mailing or faxing a signed letter declining the award offer, with the reason for declination, to the NHSC Scholarship Program by the deadline date specified in the notice of award letter. Telephone declinations will not be accepted.

Once a selectee declines the offer of award, the award will be offered to an alternate. **There will be no opportunity to reclaim the award. A decision to decline the scholarship award is final and cannot be changed under any circumstances.**

## SCHOLARSHIP BENEFITS

New NHSC Scholarship Program contract awards, including new contracts for previous NHSC scholars, depend on the availability of appropriated funds.

### **Awards Limited to Four (4) School Years**

Scholarship awards will be granted for no more than four (4) school years, which includes any partial school year of funding received during the school year. All awards to students (including students in Family Nurse Practitioner, Nurse Midwifery, and Physician Assistant Programs) are based on a 1-year, or 12-month period. The school year is defined as July 1 through the following June 30 during which an applicant is enrolled in a school as a full-time student. Students may not receive full funding for each school year of their program, to the extent their course work does not coincide with the NHSC Scholarship Program's definition of school year. (For more information, see section "[Graduating Off-Cycle](#).")

### **Commencement and End of Scholarship Support**

Participation in the NHSC Scholarship Program becomes effective when the initial contract(s) (submitted with the application) has/have been signed by both the applicant and the Secretary of Health and Human Services or his/her designee.

***New applicants must be able to financially support themselves until the first week of November. The first scholarship stipend payments should be made by the 7<sup>th</sup> of November.***

**The end of the scholarship support will be the date that the scholar completes the required classes for graduation or June 30 (the last day of the school year for which the scholar has an executed contract), whichever comes first.** The NHSC Scholarship Program cannot make payments to scholars when they are not enrolled or attending classes on a full-time basis or if they do not have a current contract.

### **Distance Learning Programs**

Individuals who are participating in distance learning programs are advised that they may not receive full funding for each year of their program, to the extent that their course work does not coincide with the NHSC Scholarship Program's definition of school year (running from July 1 through June 30). Also, the NHSC Scholarship Program will not pay for any penalty or additional distance learning fees that are incurred for not completing the course load in the required time frame.

### **Payment of Tuition and Required Fees**

**The NHSC Scholarship Program will pay tuition and required fees directly to the school. All Federal payments must be processed through Electronic Funds Transfer/Direct Deposit. Therefore, all educational institutions must have an electronic funds transfer account with our Division of Financial Operations (DFO) in order for tuition and fee payments to be made in a timely manner.**

Scholarship awards are based on the cost of full-time attendance at the initial school of record. A full-time student is defined as a student enrolled for a sufficient number of credit hours in any academic term to complete the course of study within the number of academic terms normally required at the school. **The NHSC Scholarship Program will only pay tuition and required fees for pre-approved summer school sessions when summer school is an academic term normally required by the school for all students in the same program.**

**Payment for any increases in tuition or required fees that are reported by the school after the Data Collection Worksheet for Academic Year 2009-2010 has been received by the BCRS is not guaranteed and will be subject to the availability of funds. The program will not pay tuition and fees for any portion of a school term prior to July 1, 2009.**

**Should a participant be taking classes at more than one school,** please be advised that the NHSC Scholarship Program cannot make payments to more than one school.

**Changes in schools are strongly discouraged once the applicant has been accepted into the NHSC Scholarship Program. Changes in schools must be approved by BCRS, in advance, to ensure continued**



**eligibility for funding.** Funding will be based on the initial school of record for all school year contracts executed during Fiscal Year 2009. For example, if the 2009-2010 tuition of the initial school of record is \$10,000, and the tuition of the proposed transfer school is \$15,000, then the BCRS may not have the additional funding of \$5,000 to pay for the scholar's tuition at the proposed transfer school. Therefore, students should carefully consider the financial implications of school transfers. Changes in disciplines/degree programs (e.g., from a physician assistant to a medical doctor) are not permitted.

The NHSC Scholarship Program will not pay for tuition costs unrelated to the degree program, penalty fees for over extension of a distance learning program, or for membership dues for student societies, associations, loan processing fees, and similar expenses.

**The NHSC Scholarship Program will pay ONLY for courses that are required for graduation. Elective courses not required for graduation are not eligible for payment.**

Upon receipt of an invoice from the educational institution for the tuition and fees required of all students pursuing a similar curriculum, payment will be made to the educational institution. NOTE: Any fees on the invoice that were included in Other Reasonable Cost will not be approved for payment to the educational institution, as those funds are provided separately and paid directly to the scholar.

If an applicant is unsure of what is covered by the NHSC scholarship, please contact the NHSC Scholarship Program in writing or email for further clarification at: NHSC Scholarship Program, c/o Discovery Logic, 1375 Piccard Drive, Suite 360, Rockville, Maryland 20850 or [nhscsp@discoverylogic.com](mailto:nhscsp@discoverylogic.com).

### **Other Reasonable Costs (ORC)**

The NHSC Scholarship Program will make ORC payments to cover expenses for required books, clinical supplies, laboratory expenses, instruments, two sets of uniforms, graduation fees (if applicable), computer/PDA rental or purchase (only if required of all students) and travel expenses for one clinical rotation during school. For new awardees, the ORC will be paid with the first stipend payment (received by the first week of November). The ORC payment covers the school year and the student must budget funds received accordingly.

**The ORC payment made to the scholarship recipient may or may not meet the total expenses required by the school.**

Individual vouchers or receipts for expenses will not be honored.

### **Stipend Amount**

During the 2009-2010 academic year, the NHSC Scholarship Program will pay stipends based on a monthly stipend amount of **\$1,269 (before Federal taxes)** directly to each recipient. The first payment for new awardees will include stipend payments retroactive to July 1 and payment for Other Reasonable Costs.

Receipt of the monthly stipend payment does not mean that the student is employed by the Federal Government or participates in any of the benefits available to Federal employees.

### **Submission of Applicant Banking Information**

All stipend and ORC payments are paid directly to the student's financial institution through direct deposit. Individuals applying for this funding opportunity are required to submit the banking information through BCRSIS electronically by 5:00 PM ET on April 6, 2009, and mail a **copy of the "BCRSIS Receipt of Submission" (postmarked no later than April 6, 2009) to:**

National Health Service Corps Scholarship Program  
c/o Discovery Logic  
1375 Piccard Drive, Suite 360  
Rockville, MD 20850

If you are unable to print a copy of the "BCRSIS Receipt of Submission" please complete the following 2 steps:

- Contact the HRSA Call Center to log a help-ticket toll-free at 1-800-221-9393 (TTY: 1-877-897-9910), Monday-Friday (except Federal Holidays), 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. ET.

- Complete the Banking Update Form (by 5:00 p.m. ET on April 6, 2009) which may be found at <https://www.fms.treas.gov/eft/1199a.pdf>. The completed form must be received or postmarked by April 6, 2009. Please mail the completed form to: Division of Applications and Awards, 5600 Fishers Lane, Room 8-37, Rockville, MD 20857.

Only the Health Resources and Services Administration's HRSA staff can enter any relevant changes to the electronic banking information once it has been submitted through BCRSIS and a "BCRSIS Receipt of Submission" has been printed. However, if changes are required, applicants must complete the Banking Update Form which may be found at <https://www.fms.treas.gov/eft/1199a.pdf> and mail the completed form to the Division of Applications and Awards, NHSC Scholarship Branch, 5600 Fishers Lane, Room 8-37, Rockville, MD 20857.

### **Taxation of the NHSC Scholarship**

ONLY THE STIPEND PAYMENTS made to scholars under the NHSC scholarship are taxable. The Internal Revenue Service ([IRS](#)) [Form W-4](#) is available at [www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/fw4.pdf](http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/fw4.pdf), and must be completed and submitted with the applicant's supporting documentation (postmarked no later than April 6, 2009). The information provided on the W-4 form will be used to determine withholding of Federal taxes on the stipend portion of the scholarship. Students who want additional funds deducted from the stipend amount should indicate the additional amount to be deducted on the appropriate line on the W-4 form. We advise students to consult their local tax authority regarding State or local taxes for which they may be liable, as State and local income taxes will not be withheld. **It is the responsibility of the scholarship recipient to arrange for the payment of any additional Federal, State, and/or local taxes that may be owed.**

### **Treasury Offset Program**

Under the Treasury Offset Program, the Treasury Department is authorized to offset a student's NHSC scholarship payments if the student becomes delinquent on a Federal debt after entering the NHSC Scholarship Program. In addition, the Treasury Department is authorized to offset NHSC scholarship payments for application to the student's State debts, including delinquent child support payments. In keeping with the President's Executive Orders concerning compliance with child support orders, the NHSC Scholarship Program stresses the importance of honoring any child support obligations the applicant may have.

### **Discontinuation of Benefits**

The NHSC Scholarship Program will discontinue the payment of all benefits under the following circumstances:

- (1) While the recipient is on a leave of absence (for personal or medical reasons) which has been approved by the school;
- (2) While the recipient is repeating course work which delays the recipient's graduation date. The NHSC Scholarship Program will pay tuition only for courses taken the first time. (This does not include courses taken prior to the receipt of the NHSC Scholarship Program award.) If a student repeats a course which is taken in addition to a standard full-time course load and the repeat course work does not delay the graduation date, payment of the monthly stipend will continue, but the NHSC Scholarship Program will not pay for the course work being repeated;
- (3) While the recipient is enrolled in school as a less than full-time student; and
- (4) If the recipient withdraws or is dismissed from school. Moreover, the recipients' withdrawal or dismissal from school is a breach of the scholarship contract, and the recipient will be liable to repay the amount described in the "[A Failure to Complete Academic Training](#)" section of this *Bulletin*.

A recipient is required to notify the Scholarship Support Branch of the Division of Scholar and Clinician Support (DSCS) immediately, in writing, whenever any of the following events are anticipated or expected:

- 1) an approved leave of absence;
- 2) repeat course work;
- 3) a decrease in credit hours in any academic term; or
- 4) withdrawal or dismissal from school.

The Scholarship Support Branch needs to know, in advance, that the above events may occur, so that timely action

can be taken to discontinue payments and avoid overpayments. The recipient must also submit a letter to the Scholarship Support Branch from the school verifying that one of these events has occurred. **Please be advised that if the NHSC Scholarship Program has any questions concerning a participant's eligibility for continued support, the NHSC Scholarship Program may delay the payment of all benefits to that participant pending clarification of the participant's eligibility status.**

### **Termination of Contract**

The Secretary of Health and Human Services or his/her designee may terminate a NHSC Scholarship Program Contract for a school year if the recipient, on or before June 1 of the school year:

- 1) submits a written request to terminate his or her contract for that school year to the Scholarship Support Branch, DSCS, **and**
- 2) repays all amounts paid to, or on behalf of that recipient for that school year. If a scholarship recipient does not meet these requirements, he or she will incur a service commitment for the full or partial year of support received, as set forth in the "[Fulfilling the Service Commitment](#)" section of this *Bulletin*.

A scholar who begins receiving support under a school year contract and subsequently has that support discontinued for the remainder of the same school year (due to a leave of absence, repeat course work or less than full-time enrollment) may wish to submit a request to terminate that school year contract. The potential benefit of such a request is two-fold. First, the student would not incur a service obligation for that school year. Second, that school year would not count against the student's maximum of 4 school years of support.

For example, a medical student signs contracts for 4 school years of scholarship support, through her date of graduation. During the third school year, she goes on a leave of absence from October 1 through June 30. If, by June 1 of the third school year, the student submits a written request to terminate her third year contract **and** repays all amounts paid to her, or on her behalf, under the third-year contract the Secretary will terminate her third year contract (eliminating any service obligation for the third school year of support and making her eligible to receive scholarship support for 2 more school years (subject to the availability of funds)). If she elects to retain the scholarship support received from July 1 through October 1, she would owe a year of service for the partial third year of support received and would be eligible to receive only one additional school year of scholarship support.

### **Resumption of Benefits for Contracts That Have Not Been Terminated**

To resume benefits under existing scholarship contracts (contracts that have not been terminated), the recipient must submit documentation from a school official confirming that he/she is:

- 1) enrolled as a full-time student in courses leading to the degree for which the scholarship was awarded, and
- 2) not repeating course work.

Requests for the resumption of scholarship benefits will be considered on a case-by-case basis by BCRS, to determine the recipient's eligibility to receive continuing funds. For recipients who have not repaid overpayments received, the resumption of scholarship benefits will be subject to the administrative offset described in the below "[Collection of Benefit Overpayments](#)" section of this *Bulletin*. For recipients whose benefits were discontinued due to their withdrawal or dismissal from school, benefits will not be resumed. See "[Failure to Complete Academic Training](#)."

### **Collection of Benefit Overpayments**

Scholarship Program payment(s) received by a recipient, including payment(s) made to a school on the recipient's behalf, during periods while the recipient is on an approved leave of absence, is repeating course work, or is enrolled as a part-time student, are overpayments. Overpayments may also occur due to administrative error. A participant receiving an overpayment should immediately telephone the Scholarship Support Branch, DSCS, and follow-up in writing to make arrangements to promptly return all overpayment(s) to avoid interest accrual and debt collection procedures.

For recipients who receive subsequent funding under the NHSC Scholarship Program, the overpayments may be collected through administrative offset. The NHSC Scholarship Program may withhold scholarship funds payable to, or on behalf of, the recipient (including stipends, ORC, and, if necessary, tuition payments) until the overpayment owed is paid in full.

Debt collection procedures include sending delinquent overpayments to a debt collection agency, reporting the

overpayments to credit reporting agencies, offsetting Federal and/or State payments due to the delinquent scholar (e.g., an IRS income tax refund) to collect the overpayments, and referral of the overpayments to the Department of Justice for enforced collection.

Administrative offset is not a repayment option for scholars who wish to terminate a contract.

### **Effect on Participation in Other Programs**

**Receipt of an NHSC scholarship award does not automatically preclude a participant from receiving funds from other programs, as long as no service commitment is involved.** However, many student assistance programs are based on the student's financial need, or may be limited to the payment of expenses already paid by the NHSC Scholarship Program. The list of NHSC Scholarship Program recipients supplied to the schools will enable the school officials to reevaluate the financial need or eligibility of these individuals for funds under other aid programs. When continuation of financial assistance is not warranted, the school is required to reduce or terminate payments. Applicants should contact their financial aid officers to determine how the receipt of a NHSC scholarship may affect him/her. Tuition and fees already paid by another program should not be submitted to the NHSC Scholarship Program for payment unless reimbursement will be made to the funding source.

Educational benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs (G.I. Bill) continue along with NHSC funds, since these benefits were earned as a result of prior active duty in a uniformed service.

### **Graduating Off-Cycle**

All NHSC scholarship contracts are for a specific school year. Under the NHSC Scholarship Program, all school years run from July 1 through June 30. If, for example, a student is in a 24-month program that begins on August 3, 2009 and he/she signs contracts for 2 school years, the student will receive stipend, ORC and tuition payments through June 30, 2011. Funding for the extra months of the program beyond June 30, 2011 would require a request for a third year of scholarship funding and, if granted, obligates the recipient to 3 full years of service commitment. If a student is in a 24-month program that begins on May 3, 2009 and he/she signs contracts for 2 school years, the student will receive stipend, ORC and tuition payments from July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2011 or the month that the recipient completes the required classes for graduation, whichever comes first.

### **Continuing Support after the 2009-2010 School Year**

The NHSC Scholarship Program award and contract will be for the 2009-2010 school year and any additional school years (Optional Contracts) requested by the applicant and agreed to by the Secretary or his/her designee as indicated on the signed contracts. Support will be paid for the school years agreed to in the contracts (not to exceed 4 years), based on the costs of the initial school of record; provided, the student is enrolled full-time in eligible academic courses leading to the degree for which he/she was funded, is not repeating course work, and is in good standing. *Please be advised that since all recipients incur a minimum 2-year service commitment, it may be in the best interest of the student to sign contracts for 2 years of support, if the student will need scholarship support for all or part of the 2010-2011 school year.*

If a student signs a contract for only 1 year of support (2009-2010 school year), his/her scholarship support will be terminated as of June 30, 2010. Should this student subsequently decide that he/she would like additional scholarship support for the next school year (2010-2011), and any subsequent school years through graduation, the student must submit a report verifying his/her good standing and a signed contract for that school year (and, if desired, Optional Contracts for subsequent school years through graduation -- up to the maximum of 4 school years of support). This submission must be sent to BCRS and be received by the date outlined in the correspondence received by the scholars.

The granting of continuation awards depends upon the:

- 1) availability of funds for the NHSC Scholarship Program,
- 2) current or former participant's continued eligibility to participate in the NHSC Scholarship Program (i.e., the student must be enrolled full-time in academic courses leading to the degree for which he/she was funded and must not be repeating course work),
- 3) student being in academic good standing, and
- 4) current or former participant being in compliance with policies and procedures established by the NHSC Scholarship Program for requesting continued support.

If a continuation award is granted, the first payment may not be received until the 7<sup>th</sup> of November, but will include stipends retroactive to July 1, and the annual ORC payment.

## **DEFERMENTS FOR POST-DEGREE ADVANCED TRAINING**

For physicians (M.D. and D.O.), the service commitment will begin upon completion of a BCRS-approved specialty in an accredited primary care medical residency. For dentists (D.D.S. and D.M.D.), the service commitment will begin upon the completion of the degree program supported by the NHSC Scholarship Program or, if applicable, upon the completion of post-degree residency or advanced training approved by the BCRS. For nurse midwives, family nurse practitioners and physician assistants, the service commitment will begin upon the completion of the degree program supported by the NHSC Scholarship Program. Upon a written request from the scholar, the BCRS will grant a deferment of service to scholarship recipients to complete post-degree advanced training (including an internship or residency) **if the BCRS determines that the training is consistent with the needs of the NHSC to deliver primary health care services in HPSAs.**

### **Deferring Service for Postgraduate Medical or Dental Education (Residency)**

During the final year of allopathic or osteopathic medical school or dental school, scholarship recipients will be sent a *Deferment Information Bulletin (DIB)* describing the policies and procedures for approving deferments and a *Deferment Request Form (DRF)* to enable them to request approval from the BCRS for their residency plans. The Division of Scholar and Clinician Support will review the DRF and return a copy to the scholarship recipient if the DRF has been approved. After graduation, the scholarship recipients with approved deferments will be expected to start their residency training on or about July 1. To the extent that the *DIB* subsequently received by the scholarship recipient may be inconsistent with this *Bulletin*, the *DIB* will take precedence.

**For allopathic and osteopathic medical students entering the NHSC Scholarship Program in the 2009-2010 school year, the approved specialties for which training deferments will be granted are:**

- *family practice (3 years),*
- *general internal medicine (3 years),*
- *general pediatrics (3 years),*
- *general psychiatry (4 years),*
- *internal medicine/family practice (4 years),*
- *internal medicine/pediatrics (4 years),*
- *obstetrics-gynecology (4 years), and*
- *rotating internship with a request to complete one of the above specialties (D.O. only)*

**Allopathic and osteopathic medical students MUST complete one of the BCRS-approved specialties set forth above prior to commencing service or be subject to the damages provision described later in this *Bulletin*.** Physicians are required to use their best efforts to enter an approvable residency program by July 1, of their graduation year, either through the residency match process or outside the match process.

Allopathic and osteopathic medical students who are unsure about their future specialty interests or who are unable to commit themselves to complete specialty training in any of the approvable specialties specified above are advised not to apply for participation in the NHSC Scholarship Program.

**The BCRS may approve, on a case-by-case basis, consistent with the needs of the NHSC, requests submitted by clinicians in their last year of residency training for a single year of additional training in three specific fellowships:**

1. A 1-year Child Psychiatry Fellowship which follows the completion of residency training in Psychiatry;
2. A 1-year Obstetrics/Gynecology Fellowship which follows the completion of residency training in Family Practice; and
3. A 1 or 2-year Geriatrics Fellowship which follows the completion of residency training in Family Practice or General Internal Medicine.

**For dental students entering the NHSC Scholarship Program in the 2009-2010 school year, the approved specialties for which training deferments may be granted are:**

- *Advanced Education in General Dentistry (1 year)*
- *General Dentistry Residency (up to 2 years)*
- *Pediatric Dentistry (2 years)*
- *Public Health Dentistry (2 years)*

Dental students are encouraged, but not required, to complete one of the postgraduate clinical training programs approved by the NHSC for the Scholarship Program set forth above prior to commencing service. **Dental students who wish to pursue specialty training other than the programs listed above are advised not to participate in the NHSC Scholarship Program.**

**NOTE:** When selecting a residency program, it is the responsibility of the scholarship recipient to research the residency programs to assure that the program selected will provide adequate training to enable the scholarship recipient to sit for the appropriate boards.

### **Training for Which Deferments Are Not Granted**

Deferments **will not be approved** by the BCRS for non-primary health care programs (e.g., emergency medicine, surgery, radiology, neurology, anesthesiology, ophthalmology, pathology, oral surgery, endodontics, etc.) or programs which the BCRS determines are not consistent with the needs of the NHSC to provide primary health services in HPSAs.

- Deferments **will not be approved** by the BCRS for postgraduate health professions education conducted by a branch of the Armed Forces of the United States. Participants in such programs incur military service obligations which conflict with the service commitment required under the NHSC Scholarship Program.
- Deferments **will not be approved** by the BCRS for part-time residency training.
- Deferments **will not be approved** by the BCRS for transitional residency training.

*Please write to the Division of Scholar and Clinician Support or call 1-800-221-9393 (TTY: 1-877-897-9910), if you have any questions about the service deferments the NHSC Scholarship Program will grant for postgraduate medical education.*

### **No Scholarship Payments, Service Obligation or Service Credit**

During residency and other advanced training, recipients **do not receive** NHSC Scholarship Program financial support nor do they incur additional NHSC Scholarship Program service commitments.

Periods of advanced training (including residencies) are not creditable toward satisfying the scholarship service commitment, even though the training may occur in a facility located in a HPSA.

### **Conditions of Deferment**

The terms and conditions of deferment require participants:

- (1) To pursue training which is approved for deferment by the BCRS, and which does not incur a conflicting service commitment;
- (2) To complete and return the annual Deferment Request Form, or provide equivalent evidence of approvable training, by the deadline stated in the *Deferment Information Bulletin*;
- (3) To make no change in the type or period of training without prior written approval of the BCRS; and
- (4) To notify the BCRS in writing, within 30 days, of his/her new mailing address and/or any changes that affect his/her training status.

Scholarship recipients, who, after graduation, enter training that is not approved for deferment by the NHSC Scholarship Program, or who otherwise fail to comply with the published terms and conditions of deferment, will be subject to the [damages provision](#) described later in this *Bulletin*.

## FULFILLING THE SERVICE COMMITMENT

NHSC Scholarship Program recipients incur **1 year of obligated service for each full or partial school year of support**. The minimum service commitment is 2 years; the maximum is 4 years.

**Recipients are obligated to provide full-time clinical primary health care services in high need, high-priority HPSAs selected by the BCRS.**

### Beginning Date of Service Commitment

Participants are required to begin service as soon as possible upon graduation from school or, if applicable, upon expiration of the approved deferment period.

**Physicians** must complete a primary care residency and are expected to begin service within 3 months of the completion of that residency (generally within 3 months of June 30).

**Dentists** who elect to pursue a residency approved by BCRS are expected to begin service within 3 months of the completion of their approved residency (generally within 3 months of June 30). Dentists who do not receive a deferment to complete post-degree advanced training must secure necessary licensure and a job offer within 6 months of graduation and start work within 3 months of receipt of the job offer.

**Nurse midwives, family nurse practitioners and physician assistants** must secure necessary licensure, certification and a job offer within 6 months of graduation and start work within 3 months of receipt of the job offer.

All scholarship recipients must comply with the applicable examination, certification and licensure requirements set forth in the "[Licensure/Certification Requirements](#)" section of this *Bulletin*.

Credit for service toward the NHSC scholarship commitment does not begin until:

- 1) the scholar passes required licensing or national certification exams;
- 2) the scholar obtains a permanent unencumbered license to practice in the State where the NHSC service site is located (unless he or she has a license in another State and will work for a Federal entity);
- 3) the scholar begins to provide full-time clinical services at the NHSC service site; and
- 4) if applicable, the appropriate agreement has been completed and signed by the scholar and the Secretary of Health and Human Services or his/her designee.

### Delaying Start of Service

Recipients, with documented extreme circumstances which jeopardize the start of service, may make a request to the Division of Scholar and Clinician Support to suspend their service commitments for up to **1-year**. Such requests must be in writing and include a detailed written explanation and supporting documentation. See the "[Waiver, Suspension or Cancellation of the Commitment](#)" section in this *Bulletin*.

### Ending Date of Obligated Service

The last day of the service commitment is determined in whole years from the start date. For example, the last day of service for a recipient with a 3-year service commitment who began service on July 15, 2009, would be July 14, 2012. Adjustments in the ending date will be made by the BCRS if the scholar takes more than the allowable 35 work days away from the site in a service year (see "[Full-Time Clinical Practice](#)" section).

***NOTE: Please be advised that NHSC scholarship recipients are eligible for NHSC Loan Repayment Program after they have completed their scholarship service commitment. While they are not given preference based on their scholar status, the NHSC Loan Repayment Program does give preference to clinicians working at the highest need HPSA NHSC approved sites.***

## Service Assignment Process

*NHSC Scholarship Program recipients must fulfill their service commitments at approved sites in federally-designated HPSAs with the greatest need at the time of assignment, as determined by the Secretary (or his/her designee).* These may include assignments to the Indian Health Service (IHS), the medical facilities of the Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP), or the medical facilities of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

*NHSC scholarship recipients **cannot** fulfill their NHSC Scholarship Program service commitments by serving in one of the Armed Forces of the United States or the Veterans Administration.*

**Physicians and dentists** will receive information about the NHSC placement process approximately 6 months prior to the scheduled start of service. **Family nurse practitioners, certified nurse midwives and physician assistants** will be sent information about the placement process approximately 4 months prior to the scheduled start of service. The packet will include the Approved Practice List containing job vacancies for which scholars in each discipline and specialty can compete.

**The BCRS reserves the right to make final decisions on all placements, in order to comply with statutory requirements for the placement of scholarship recipients.** There is no guarantee that HPSAs or sites which are currently approved for NHSC scholar placements will still be approved at the time applicants are available to serve.

Recipients who fail to obtain a placement in one of the approved practices by the deadlines announced by the BCRS will be assigned to a service site identified by the BCRS.

**Recipients who, for any reason, fail to begin or complete service at their assigned service location are in breach of the NHSC Scholarship Program contract and incur the damages described in section “[Failure to Begin or Complete the Service Commitment or Meet the Terms and Conditions of Deferment](#)” of this *Bulletin*.**

## Types of Placements

The following types of NHSC scholar placements may appear on the Approved Practice List:

### Non-Federal Placements:

#### — Private Practice Assignment (PPA)

A PPA is an assignment to a public or private entity that operates a community-based system of care where a scholar may serve his/her commitment. These entities may be supported by local communities or may be supported in part by Federal grant funds. Under the PPA, scholars are considered non-Federal members of the NHSC and are paid by and work under the personnel system of the entity to which they are assigned. The income paid by the entity must be at least equal to the income that the scholar would have received as a Federal civil service employee. Malpractice insurance should be agreed upon by the employer and the scholar and detailed in their written employment contract. The BCRS requires that each entity make provisions for malpractice insurance, including tail coverage, for scholars under the PPA. Employment contract negotiations are solely the responsibility of the scholar.

#### — Private Practice Option (PPO)

A PPO is a release (from having to serve as a member of the NHSC) to serve in a private practice (including a salaried position at a public, private non-profit, or for-profit site). There is no minimum provider salary and benefit package requirement for a PPO. By statute, scholars wishing to exercise the PPO must submit a written application to the BCRS. If a PPO placement is approved by the BCRS, the scholar must sign an agreement to, among other things, comply with the section “[Charges for Services](#)” requirements set forth in this *Bulletin*. The scholar must also prepare and submit a Uniform Data System report to the BCRS on the conduct of his/her practice. NOTE: PPO providers must make arrangements to obtain their own malpractice and medical insurance. Scholars are not eligible for solo private practice options.

### Federal Placements:

#### —Indian Health Service (IHS)

This agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services offers a variety of placement opportunities at hospitals and other health care facilities serving Native American/Alaskan Native populations



(usually on Indian reservations). An IHS placement may require a security clearance.

—*Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP)*

This agency of the U.S. Department of Justice employs health professionals in Federal prison facilities ranging from infirmary-size units to 500-bed tertiary care hospitals throughout the United States. A BOP placement requires a security clearance.

—*U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)*

This agency of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security provides primary health care for the detainees remanded to the custody of the ICE. Within each Service Processing Center throughout the country, there is a fully accredited outpatient clinic. An ICE placement requires a security clearance.

Work schedules at Federal facilities may be significantly different than community-based systems of care. Scholars who are interested in practice positions at Federal facilities need to discuss the details with these facilities directly.

### **Charges for Services**

Federal and PPA entities, as well as PPO providers, must not discriminate in the provision of services to an individual because that individual is unable to pay or because payment would be made under Medicare, Medicaid or the State Children's Health Insurance Program. A schedule of discounts (including, in appropriate cases, waiver) must be utilized for patients unable to pay. Finally, Federal and PPA entities and PPO providers must accept assignment under Medicare and enter into appropriate agreements with State agencies to participate in the Medicaid and State Children's Health Insurance Programs.

### **Licensure/Certification Requirements**

Scholarship recipients *must be permanently licensed in their scholarship-supported profession prior to commencing service*. Credit towards fulfillment of the scholarship commitment will not be given in the absence of a current, unencumbered permanent license.

Scholarship recipients serving under a PPO or PPA Agreement are required to have a license in the State where the service site is located. Scholarship recipients serving as Federal employees are required to be licensed in a State (i.e., any State). Responsibility for obtaining the required State license prior to the service start date rests with the scholarship recipient. Given that scholars will be required to serve in the areas of greatest need throughout the country, each scholar is responsible for ensuring that his or her professional program will provide broad eligibility to obtain a license in multiple States. In addition, each scholar is responsible for meeting the applicable board and licensure requirements outlined below.

#### **Physicians**

All physicians must have successfully completed Steps 1, 2 (clinical skills and clinical knowledge components) and 3 of the United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE) or Levels 1, 2 (cognitive evaluation and performance evaluation components), and 3 of the Comprehensive Osteopathic Medical Licensing Examination (COMLEX) by the time they complete their primary care residency training program. To assure that physician scholars are able to fulfill their commitment wherever the need is greatest upon completion of their primary care residency, the BCRS expects all MD/DO scholars to take and pass:

- Step 1 of the USMLE or Level 1 of the COMLEX by the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of their MD/DO program.
- Step 2 (both components) of the USMLE or Level 2 of the COMLEX (both components) by the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> year of their MD/DO program.
- Step 3 of the USMLE or Level 3 of the COMLEX by the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> year of their post-graduate (residency) training program.

MD/DO scholars unable to pass all parts of the licensing examination and obtain a license to practice medicine by the time the service is scheduled to begin will not be routinely eligible for request to suspend of their service obligation and may be placed in default.

## **Dentists**

All dentists must have successfully completed the National Board Dental Examination Parts 1 and 2 prior to beginning their NHSC Scholarship Program service obligation. To assure that dentists will have licensure in States with the greatest dental needs, the BCRS reserves the right to determine which Regional or State clinical exam the dental scholar should take and pass. Dental scholars are expected to take the appropriate exams at the earliest possible date. If the recipient is unsuccessful in passing the exams and obtaining a license, the recipient should immediately contact the Division of Scholar and Clinician Support (DSCS), in writing, to request a suspension. Please see the "[Waiver, Suspension or Cancellation of the Commitment](#)" section in this *Bulletin*.

## **Nurse Midwives, Family Nurse Practitioners and Physician Assistants**

All nurse midwives, family nurse practitioners and physician assistants must have successfully passed discipline-specific national certification exams prior to beginning their service commitments and are expected to take the appropriate certification exam at the earliest possible date. ***No service credit will be given for practice at an NHSC scholar site prior to the scholar's passage of the national certification exams.*** If the recipient is unsuccessful in passing the national certification exam, the recipient should immediately contact the DSCS, in writing, to request a suspension. Please see the "[Waiver, Suspension or Cancellation of the Commitment](#)" section in this *Bulletin*.

## **Full-Time Clinical Practice**

Every participant is required to engage in the full-time outpatient clinical practice of the profession for which he or she was awarded an NHSC Scholarship contract.

Full-time practice is defined as a minimum of 40 hours per week. The 40 hours per week may be compressed into no less than 4 days per week, with no more than 12 hours of work to be performed in any 24-hour period. Time spent in "on-call" status will not count toward the 40-hour week. Hours worked over the required 40 hours per week will not be applied to any other workweek.

No more than 7 weeks (35 workdays) per service year can be spent away from the practice for vacation, holidays, continuing professional education, illness, or any other reason. For absences of greater than 7 weeks in a service year, the participant must request a suspension. A break in service will extend the service commitment end date.

A full-time **clinical** practice is defined as follows:

**For all health professionals, except obstetrician/gynecologist (OB/GYN) physicians, family medicine physicians who practice obstetrics on a regular basis, certified nurse midwives, and psychiatrists,** at least 32 of the minimum 40 hours per week must be spent providing direct outpatient care. These services must be conducted during normally scheduled clinic hours in an ambulatory care setting in the office(s) specified in the PPA or PPO Agreement. The remaining hours must be spent providing inpatient care to patients of that clinic (as appropriate to meet the needs of the patients and to assure continuity of care) and/or in practice-related administrative activities.

**For OB/GYN physicians, family medicine physicians who practice obstetrics on a regular basis, and certified nurse midwives,** at least 21 of the minimum 40 hours per week must be spent providing direct outpatient care. These services must be conducted during normally scheduled clinic hours in an ambulatory outpatient care setting in the office(s) specified in the PPA or PPO Agreement. Eleven of the remaining hours may be spent providing inpatient care to patients of that clinic or other settings including hospitals. The remaining 8 hours per week must be spent providing additional patient care and/or performing practice-related administrative activities.

**For psychiatrists,** at least 21 of the minimum 40 hours per week must be spent providing direct outpatient care. These services must be conducted during normally scheduled clinic hours in an ambulatory outpatient care setting in the office(s) specified in the PPA or PPO Agreement. Eleven of the remaining hours must be spent providing direct clinical services to patients of the assigned site either at the site, an inpatient facility or in an alternative setting. The remaining 8 hours per week must be spent providing additional patient care and/or performing practice-related administrative activities.

Practice-related administrative activities, which may not exceed 8 hours per week, include teaching, attending staff meetings, supervision of other clinicians, court appearances, and other non-treatment related activities

pertaining to the clinician's approved NHSC practice. Supervision of other clinicians is defined as an administrative activity if the clinician being supervised is treating the patient and billing for such treatment in his or her name. If the supervising clinician is treating the patient and billing for such treatment under his or her name, this activity would be counted as direct clinical services for the supervising clinician.

## **DEFAULTING ON THE SCHOLARSHIP COMMITMENT - BREACH OF CONTRACT**

### **Failure to Complete Academic Training**

Scholarship recipients who are dismissed from school for academic or disciplinary reasons, or who voluntarily terminate academic training before graduation from the educational program for which the scholarship was awarded, will be declared in breach of their scholarship commitment and held liable to the United States for repayment of *all NHSC Scholarship Program funds paid* to them and to the school on their behalf. The amount owed must be paid in full within **3 years of the date of default**. No interest will be charged on any part of this debt to the United States during the 3-year repayment period. However, if payment in full is not made within the 3-year period, interest will be assessed thereafter.

### **Failure to Begin or Complete the Service Commitment or Failure to Meet the Terms and Conditions of Deferment**

Scholarship recipients who, for any reason, fail to comply with the terms and conditions of deferment (including physicians who fail to complete an approved residency in a BCRS-approved specialty) or who, for any reason, fail to begin or complete their service commitments after completion of training, will be in breach of their scholarship commitments. When recipients default on their contracts for these reasons, the United States shall be entitled to recover damages equal to *three times the scholarship award plus interest*, in accordance with the formula:

$$A = 3\emptyset \frac{(t-s)}{t}$$

In which:

- “A” = is the amount the United States is entitled to recover,
- “ $\emptyset$ ” = is the sum of the amounts paid to, or on behalf of, the participant and the interest on such amounts which would be payable if, at the time the amounts were paid, they were loans bearing interest at the maximum legal prevailing rate, as determined by the Treasurer of the United States,
- “t” = is the total number of months in the participant's period of obligated service, and
- “s” = is the number of months of the period of obligated service served by the participant.

The damages which the United States is entitled to recover shall be paid within **1 year of the date of default**.

### **Delinquent Debt**

If the default debt is not repaid within 1 year or 3 years (as applicable), and subsequent collection efforts are unsuccessful, the case may be referred to the U.S. Department of Justice for enforced collection. The recipient will be liable for the debt incurred plus administrative costs and court costs associated with collection of the debt. All delinquent debts will be reported to a commercial credit reporting agency and to the Treasury Department for the Treasury Offset Program. Also, recovery through Administrative Wage Garnishment may be enforced to repay a delinquent default debt.

### **IRS Tax Refund Offsets and Medicare/Medicaid Exclusion**

Through the Treasury Offset Program, the government may offset Federal and/or State payments due to the participant (e.g., an IRS income tax refund) and apply those payments to repay delinquent NHSC Scholarship Program debts. In addition, a delinquent defaulter who is unwilling to enter into, or stay in compliance with, an agreement to repay his/her default debt can be excluded from participation in Medicare, Medicaid, and other Federal health care programs. See section 1128 of the Social Security Act.

## **Licensure Sanctions**

In several States, a health professional license can be suspended or revoked for non-payment of an NHSC scholarship debt.

## **WAIVER, SUSPENSION, OR CANCELLATION OF THE COMMITMENT**

The Secretary of Health and Human Services may suspend or waive, in whole or in part, a service or payment obligation. Requests for suspensions and waivers are processed and reviewed by the Legal and Compliance Office (LCO).

Scholarship recipients seeking a waiver or suspension of the service or payment obligation must submit a written request stating the underlying circumstances to the Bureau of Clinician Recruitment and Service, Division of Scholar and Clinician Support, 5600 Fishers Lane, Room 8-15, Rockville, Maryland 20857. Upon receipt of the request, the LCO will mail the recipient instructions for additional documentation necessary to process the request.

A waiver may be granted if the recipient documents a permanent situation that makes compliance with the service or financial obligation impossible or an extreme hardship, such that enforcement would be against equity and good conscience. A suspension is granted if the recipient documents a temporary situation that makes compliance with the service or financial obligation impossible or an extreme hardship, such that enforcement would be against equity and good conscience.

Compliance would be considered “impossible” if the Secretary’s designee determines that the participant suffers from a physical or mental disability resulting in his/her inability to perform the obligation incurred.

To determine whether performance of the obligation would impose an “extreme hardship” and be “against equity and good conscience,” the Secretary’s designee, will consider:

- 1) the recipient’s present financial resources and obligations;
- 2) the recipient’s estimated future financial resources and obligations; and
- 3) the extent to which the recipient has problems of a personal nature, such as physical or mental disability, or terminal illness in the immediate family, which so intrude on the recipient’s present and future ability to perform as to raise a presumption that the individual would be unable to perform the obligation incurred.

Maternity leave is limited to 12 weeks. A suspension for maternity leave exceeding 12 weeks will only be granted upon a showing of medical complications requiring additional time away from the service site. A request for medically necessary additional time for maternity leave is submitted as a suspension request as described above.

In the unfortunate event of a scholarship recipient’s death, any commitment to the NHSC Scholarship Program is **canceled**.

## SECTION II. GLOSSARY OF TERMS

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### DIVISION OF APPLICATION AND AWARDS NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE CORPS SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

#### GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**DEFERMENT** - is a delay in the start of a National Health Service Corps service commitment granted upon a scholar's request by the BCRS, for a specified period of time to enter and complete an approved post-degree advanced training program. For multi-year programs, requests for deferment are reviewed annually, and are granted in 1-year increments.

**FULL-TIME ENROLLMENT** - to be eligible to receive scholarship benefits, participants must be enrolled as full-time students. **Please be advised that any non-required or unrelated courses will not count toward the school's required hours in determining full-time status.**

**LEAVE-OF-ABSENCE** - is a period of approved absence from a course of study granted to a student by his or her training institution for medical, personal, or other reasons. The leave-of-absence is usually granted for a period of 1 year or less. When a leave-of-absence is expected, a scholar is required to notify the NHSC Scholarship Program immediately, in writing, and submit a letter from the school approving the leave-of-absence and indicating the start and end dates for the period of the absence. Payment of all benefits are discontinued when a scholar is on an approved leave-of-absence, and may be resumed when the student returns full-time to the course of study for which the scholarship was awarded.

**SUSPENSION** - is a **temporary** status. The basis for a suspension would be a medical condition or a personal situation that: 1) would make it temporarily impossible to continue the service commitment or pay the monetary debt, or 2) would temporarily involve an extreme hardship to the individual and enforcement of the service or payment commitment would be against equity and good conscience. All requests for a suspension must be submitted in writing and include full medical and financial documentation.

**WAIVER** - is a **permanent** status. The basis for a waiver would be a permanent medical condition or personal situation that: 1) would make it impossible for the individual to serve the commitment or pay the debt, or 2) would involve an extreme hardship to the individual and enforcement of the service or payment commitment would be against equity and good conscience. All requests for a waiver must be submitted in writing and include full medical and financial documentation.

**SECTION III. SUMMARY OF IMPORTANT DEADLINES**

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**DIVISION OF APPLICATION AND AWARDS  
NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE CORPS SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM**

**SUMMARY OF IMPORTANT DEADLINES**

<b>ISSUES</b>	<b>IMPORTANT DEADLINES</b>
Submit an NHSC Scholarship Application and BCRSIS Banking Information electronically and print "BCRSIS Receipt of Submission"	April 6, 2009 5:00 p.m. ET
Submit All Supporting Documents (see Checklist)	Must be Postmarked on or before April 6, 2009
Notify applicant of award	September 30, 2009
Notify applicant of selection as alternate	September 30, 2009
Notify applicant of non-selection for a scholarship award	October 31, 2009

## SECTION IV. SAMPLE SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

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In addition to submitting electronic and a signed hard copy of the application and the electronic banking information through BCRSIS, with a copy of the "Receipt of Submission", there are other required supporting documents which must be postmarked by the April 6, 2009, due date.

Any applicant who fails to complete and submit all required documents by the deadline will be considered ineligible and will not be considered for an award. This section provides a copy of the application checklist, which outlines all the supporting documentation that is required. This section also contains sample copies of numerous BCRS forms/documents referenced in the checklist. All of the required documents must be mailed to:

National Health Service Corps Scholarship Program  
c/o Discovery Logic  
1375 Picard Drive, Suite 360  
Rockville, MD 20850

The application and banking information must be submitted electronically and the "BCRSIS Receipt of Submission" must be printed by 5:00 p.m. ET on April 6, 2009 and all supporting documents including a copy of the BCRSIS "Receipt of Submission" forms must be received or postmarked by the application deadline, April 6, 2009.

If you are unable to print a copy of the "BCRSIS Receipt of Submission", please complete the following 2 steps:

- Contact the HRSA Call Center to log a help-ticket toll-free at 1-800-221-9393 (TTY: 1-877-897-9910), Monday-Friday (except Federal Holidays), 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. ET.
- Complete the Banking Update Form (by 5:00 p.m. ET on April 6, 2009) which may be found at <https://www.fms.treas.gov/eft/1199a.pdf>. The completed form must be received or postmarked by April 6, 2009. Please mail the completed form to: Division of Applications and Awards, 5600 Fishers Lane, Room 8-37, Rockville, MD 20857.

All questions should be directed to the Discovery Logic at: [nhscsp@discoverylogic.com](mailto:nhscsp@discoverylogic.com) or 1-800-638-0824, Monday through Friday 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. ET.

## NHSC CHECKLIST FOR COMPLETING THE APPLICATION

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The following items must be received or postmarked by the April 6, 2009, deadline.

- 1. Application (**submitted by 5:00 p.m. ET**). Be sure to print two copies of the on-line application (one for your records and the other copy to mail with your supporting documentation). In ink, sign and date the application that will be submitted with the supporting documentation.
- 2. Banking Information (**submitted by 5:00 p.m. ET**). Submitted banking information electronically through BCRSIS.
- 3. "BCRSIS Receipt of Submission". Be sure to print a copy of the completed "BCRSIS Receipt of Submission" by 5:00 p.m. ET and submit with supporting documents. If you are unable to print a copy of the "BCRSIS Receipt of Submission", please complete the following 2 steps: (1) Contact the HRSA Call Center to log a help-ticket toll-free at 1-800-221-9393 (TTY: 1-877-897-9910), Monday-Friday (except Federal Holidays), 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. ET; and (2) Complete the Banking Update Form (by 5:00 p.m. ET on April 6, 2009) which may be found at <https://www.fms.treas.gov/eft/1199a.pdf>. The completed form must be received or postmarked by April 6, 2009. Please mail the completed form to: Division of Applications and Awards, 5600 Fishers Lane, Room 8-37, Rockville, MD 20857.
- 4. Scholarship contract, **signed in ink**, and dated. **Sign on each line for each school year you are requesting support.**
- 5\*. Authorization to Release Information Form. Be sure to complete and sign the authorization.
- 6.\* Verification of "Disadvantaged Background" status, if claimed. Obtain from financial aid official of your school.
- 7.\* Verification by school of your previous participation in the "Scholarship Program for Students of Exceptional Financial Need" (EFN), if this priority status is claimed (Medical and Dental students only).
- 8.\* Verification of Acceptance Report/Verification of Good Standing Report.
- 9. W-4 Form. Must be completed and signed.
- 10.\* Essay Questions. Each applicant must respond to five essay questions. Each response should be limited to 2,500 characters or less (approximately one-half typed pages).
- 11.\* Transcript. Each applicant must include a transcript from his/her current educational institution or, if not currently in school, a transcript from the last educational institution attended.
- 12.\* Resume including detailed descriptions of volunteer and work experience. This should be no more than 5 pages.
- 13.\* Tuition and fees schedule for the 2009-2010 school year or, if not yet available, the most recent tuition and fees schedule published by the school.
- 14.\* Academic Official's Evaluation Letter. Each applicant is required to submit one letter. The letter must be dated within three (3) months of the application due date. (See [Academic Official's Evaluation Letter – Instructions](#).)
- 15.\* Proof of Citizenship. Each applicant is required to submit evidence of your U.S. citizenship or status as a U.S. National (e.g., a copy of a birth certificate, a certificate of citizenship, passport or naturalization certificate).
- 16\* Power-of-Attorney. This document must be submitted if you are submitting an application on behalf of another person.
- 17.\* Documentation that there is no conflicting service commitment, applicable to individuals with an existing service obligation. See section "No Conflicting Service Commitment".
- 18.\* Documentation that all contingencies regarding the student's acceptance have been or will be met by the start of the Fall 2009-2010 term.

\* Identify each document with your full name and the last four digits of your Social Security Number (See "Privacy Act Notification Statement"). If your current legal name is different from the name found on any of the documents, identify each with your current name.



**NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE CORPS  
SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM CONTRACT  
SCHOOL YEAR 2009-2010**

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE  
HEALTH RESOURCES AND SERVICES ADMINISTRATION  
BUREAU OF CLINICIAN RECRUITMENT AND SERVICE

Section 338A, C-H of the Public Health Service Act ("Act") (42 U.S.C. 2541, m-q), as amended, authorizes the Secretary of Health and Human Services ("Secretary") to provide applicants selected to be participants in the National Health Service Corps Scholarship Program ("Scholarship Program") with scholarship awards. In return for the awards, applicants must agree to provide primary health services in a manner determined by the Secretary for a period of obligated service equal to one year for each school year of scholarship support received, or two years, whichever is greater.

Section 338A of the Act requires applicants to submit with their application a signed contract stating the terms and conditions of participation in the Scholarship Program. The Secretary shall sign only those contracts submitted by applicants who are selected for participation.

The terms and conditions of participating in the Scholarship Program for the 2009 - 2010 school year are set forth below.

**Section A - Obligations of the Secretary**

Subject to the availability of funds appropriated by the Congress of the United States for the Scholarship Program and the National Health Service Corps (NHSC), the Secretary agrees to:

1. Provide the undersigned applicant ("applicant") with a scholarship award for the school year 2009 - 2010 during which the applicant:
  - a. is enrolled, or is accepted for enrollment, as a full-time student in a fully accredited (as determined by the Secretary) educational institution in one of the States, the District of Columbia, or the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and
  - b. is pursuing a course of study leading to a degree in medicine, osteopathy, dentistry, or other health profession which has been approved by the Secretary for participation in the Scholarship Program.

The scholarship award may consist of payments, in whole or in part, for tuition, an amount for all other reasonable educational expenses incurred by the student, and stipend support for the 12-month period beginning with the first month of each school year in which the applicant is a participant in the Scholarship Program. The disbursement of these scholarship payments may be delayed by the Secretary pending receipt of verification, satisfactory to the Secretary, of the applicant's continued eligibility for scholarship support. Scholarship support is limited to a maximum of 4 school years.

2. Utilize the applicant to provide primary health services in accordance with Section B(6) of this contract.
3. Defer performance of an applicant's period of obligated service if the applicant requests a period of deferment to complete a residency or other advanced training which the Secretary determines is consistent with the needs of the Corps for primary health services.
4. Release the applicant from all or part of his or her Corps service obligation to enter into the full-time private clinical practice as a provider of primary health services where the provisions of Section 338D of the Act, 42 U.S.C. 254n, and applicable Corps policies are met.

**Section B - Obligations of the Applicant**

The applicant agrees to:

1. Accept the scholarship award provided by the Secretary under Section A(1) of this contract for the school year 2009 - 2010.
2. Maintain enrollment as a full-time student until completion of the course of study for which the scholarship award is provided. If the course of study (approved by the Secretary) exceeds 4 years, the individual will be considered a full-time student for only the last 4 years of the course of study.
3. Notify the Scholarship Program promptly in writing as soon as one of the following events is anticipated: repeat course work; delay in the

applicant's graduation date (e.g., due to a leave of absence approved by the school, a decrease in credit hours in an academic term, etc.); and a withdrawal or dismissal from school.

4. Maintain an acceptable level of academic standing while enrolled in the course of study for which the scholarship award is provided.
5. Complete a residency in a specialty that has been determined by the Secretary to be consistent with the needs of the Corps, if he or she received a degree from a school of medicine or osteopathy.
6. Serve his or her period of obligated service by providing primary health services, as determined by the Secretary:
  - a. In the full-time clinical practice of his/her profession in a health professional shortage area ("HPSA") designated under Section 332 of the Act to which he or she is assigned by the Secretary as a member of the Corps, either as commissioned officer in the Regular or Reserve Corps of the Public Health Service, a civilian employee of the United States, or an individual who is not an employee of the United States;
  - b. In the full-time private clinical practice of his or her health profession under a Private Practice Option Agreement (Section 338D of the Act) in a HPSA selected by the Secretary.
  - c. In a unit of the Department of Health and Human Services determined by the Secretary as a full-time health professional, if the Secretary determines there is no need in a HPSA for a Corps member of the profession in which the applicant is obligated to provide health services under the contract and if such individual is a commissioned officer of the Public Health Service or a civilian employee of the United States.
7. Serve one year of obligated service for each school year the scholarship award is provided, with a minimum obligation of 2 years.
8. Undertake service in accord with placement policies and procedures in effect at the time of his or her placement.
9. Comply with provisions of Title 42, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 62, Subpart A.
10. Comply with Title 2, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 180, Subpart C (2006), as supplemented by Subpart C of Title 2, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 376 (2007).
11. Permit the Department of Health and Human Services to collect any debt owed by the applicant, as a result of an overpayment of scholarship award payments, through the administrative offset of subsequent scholarship award payments to the applicant under this Contract, or an Extension Contract, until the debt is paid in full. An overpayment of scholarship award payments occurs when scholarship award payments are made:
  - a. for repeat coursework,
  - b. during any period when the applicant is on an approved leave of absence from the school, is repeating course work that will delay the applicant's graduation date, or is enrolled as a less than a full-time student (see Section B(2) of this Contract), or
  - c. due to administrative error.

**Section C - Breach of Scholarship Contract**

1. If the applicant:
  - a. fails to maintain an acceptable level of academic standing in the course of study for which the scholarship award is provided,
  - b. voluntarily terminates academic training before the completion of such training, or
  - c. is dismissed from the educational institution for disciplinary reasons, then the applicant shall, instead of performing the service obligation, repay to the United States all funds paid to the applicant and to the educational institution under this contract. Payment of this amount must be made within 3 years of the date the applicant becomes liable to make payment under this paragraph.

- If the applicant, fails to begin or complete the period of obligated service incurred under this contract for any reason other than those in paragraph 1 of this section, or fails to complete a required residency as set forth in Section B(5) of this contract, the United States shall be entitled to recover an amount equal to three times the scholarship funds awarded, plus interest, as determined by the formula:

$$A=3 \text{ } \emptyset \frac{(t-s)}{t}$$

In which:

- 'A' is the amount the United States is entitled to recover,
- '∅' is the sum of amounts paid to or on behalf of the applicant and the interest on such amounts which would be payable if at the time the amounts were paid they were loans bearing interest at the maximum legal prevailing rate, as determined by the Treasurer of the United States,
- 't' is the total number of months in the applicant's period of obligated service, and
- 's' is the number of months of such period served by the applicant in accordance with Section 338C of the Act or with a written agreement under Section 338D of the Act.

The damages the United States is entitled to recover shall be paid within one year of the date the Secretary determines that the applicant has failed to begin or complete the period of obligated service.

**Section D - Creditability of Graduate Training Toward the Period of Obligated Service**

- No period of residency or other advanced training will be counted toward satisfying the period of obligated service incurred under this contract.

**Section E - Cancellation, Suspension, and Waiver of Obligation**

- Any service or payment obligation incurred by the applicant under this contract will be canceled upon the applicant's death.
- The Secretary may waive or suspend the applicant's service or payment obligation incurred under this contract if:
  - compliance by the applicant with the obligation is impossible or
  - compliance would involve extreme hardship and enforcement of such obligation would be unconscionable.

**Section F - Contract Extension**

- The applicant may request an annual extension of this contract, if the request is submitted in accordance with procedures established by the Secretary.
- Subject to the availability of funds appropriated by the Congress of the United States for the Scholarship Program and the Corps, the Secretary may approve a request for contract extension if:
  - the request does not extend the total period of scholarship award beyond 4 school years; and
  - the applicant is otherwise eligible for continued participation in the Scholarship Program.

**Section G - Contract Termination**

- The Secretary may terminate this contract with the applicant if, not later than 30 days before the end of the school year to which the contract pertains (i.e., by June 1 of that school year), the applicant:
  - submits a written request for such termination and
  - repays all amounts paid to, or on behalf of, the applicant under the contract for that school year.

**The Secretary or his/her authorized representative must sign this contract before it becomes effective.**

Applicant Name (Please Print)	Applicant Signature	Date
Secretary of Health and Human Services		Date

**OPTIONAL CONTRACTS**

This National Health Service Corps Scholarship Program Contract for the 2009-2010 school year ("2009-2010 Contract") is hereby amended by the Secretary of Health and Human Services and the applicant to provide the applicant with additional scholarship support for the 2010-2011 school year, under the same terms and conditions set forth in the 2009-2010 Contract except to the extent that the terms set forth in the 2009-2010 Contract may be subsequently amended by statute or regulation. Disbursements for the 2010-2011 school year will begin at the start of that school year.

<b>2010-2011 SCHOOL YEAR</b>	Applicant Signature	Secretary Signature
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This National Health Service Corps Scholarship Program Contract for the 2009-2010 school year ("2009-2010 Contract") is hereby amended by the Secretary of Health and Human Services and the applicant to provide the applicant with additional scholarship support for the 2011-2012 school year, under the same terms and conditions set forth in the 2009-2010 Contract except to the extent that the terms set forth in the 2009-2010 Contract may be subsequently amended by statute or regulation. Disbursements for the 2011-2012 school year will begin at the start of that school year.

<b>2011-2012 SCHOOL YEAR</b>	Applicant Signature	Secretary Signature
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This National Health Service Corps Scholarship Program Contract for the 2009-2010 school year ("2009-2010 Contract") is hereby amended by the Secretary of Health and Human Services and the applicant to provide the applicant with additional scholarship support for the 2012-2013 school year, under the same terms and conditions set forth in the 2009-2010 Contract except to the extent that the terms set forth in the 2009-2010 Contract may be subsequently amended by statute or regulation. Disbursements for the 2012-2013 school year will begin at the start of that school year.

<b>2012-2013 SCHOOL YEAR</b>	Applicant Signature	Secretary Signature
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**NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE CORPS SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM'S  
ACADEMIC OFFICIAL'S EVALUATION LETTER - INSTRUCTIONS**

If the applicant is currently enrolled in the health professions training program, the letter should be from the applicant's Dean, Faculty advisor or a faculty member of that academic program who is familiar with the student. If the applicant has not begun the training associated with the scholarship, the letter should be from the Dean, Faculty advisor, or a faculty member of the applicant's most recent academic program who is familiar with the applicant.

The letter must be dated within three (3) months of the application deadline and be based on the academic official's observations or knowledge of the applicant.

The letter should include the following:

Student's name;

Last 4 Digits of Social Security Number;

Student's discipline;

A description of the Academic official's relationship to the applicant and the length of time the official has known the applicant;

A discussion of the following points:

1. The applicant's education/work achievement,
2. The applicant's relationships with other people, and
3. The official's assessment of whether the applicant has characteristics that increase the probability that the applicant will continue to serve in a Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA) after the scholarship service obligation is completed. A HPSA is a geographic area, population group, public or nonprofit private medical facility or other facility determined by the Secretary of Department of Health and Human Services to have a shortage of primary health care professionals.

This letter should be on the institution's letterhead and must be submitted in a sealed envelope with the evaluator's signature across the seal.

This letter must be received or postmarked by April 6, 2009. It should be mailed to the following address:

NHSC Scholarship Program  
c/o Discovery Logic  
1375 Piccard Drive, Suite 360  
Rockville, Maryland 20850



**AUTHORIZATION TO RELEASE INFORMATION - SAMPLE**

If I become a participant in the National Health Service Corps (NHSC) Scholarship Program, I, \_\_\_\_\_, hereby authorize:

(Print Name - First, Middle Initial, Last)

- 1) The school where I am/was enrolled while participating in the NHSC Scholarship Program to disclose information pertaining to my school enrollment to the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), and/or its contractors. Information pertaining to my school enrollment includes, but is not limited to, my transcripts and grades, my academic standing, my enrollment and degree status, my curriculum and examination requirements for graduation, my tuition and fees, and my leave-of-absence, withdrawal, or dismissal from school. This information will be used by DHHS to determine my eligibility to continue to receive scholarship benefits and the amount of those benefits.
  
- 2) If applicable, I hereby authorize any post-degree advanced training program(s), for which I receive a deferment (i.e., approval) from DHHS to complete, to disclose to DHHS, and/or its contractors, information pertaining to my participation in the post-degree advanced training program(s) including, but not limited to, my curriculum and examination requirements, my status in the program, my completion date, and my leave-of-absence, withdrawal or dismissal from the program.
  
- 3) The entity/entities where I am/was approved to provide service in satisfaction of my NHSC Scholarship Program obligation to disclose to DHHS, and/or its contractors, information pertaining to my compliance with the NHSC scholarship service requirements. Such information includes, but is not limited to, my practice location(s), my practice responsibilities, my work schedule or other documentation indicating the hours that I worked and the hours I was away from the site, records relating to my work performance and (if applicable) the circumstances relating to the termination of my employment at the service location.

The above authorizations take effect on the date that I become a participant in the NHSC Scholarship Program.

In addition, I hereby authorize the DHHS, and/or its contractors, to release my name, address(es) and social security number to see if I appear on the Excluded Parties List System. This authorization takes effect on the date I sign this release form. If I do not become a participant, this authorization shall remain in effect until September 30, 2010.

If I become a participant, all the above authorizations shall remain in effect until the date my NHSC scholarship commitment has been fulfilled or this authorization has been revoked by me in writing.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of Individual)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Last 4 Digits of  
Social Security Number)

**Return to:**

NHSC Scholarship Program  
c/o Discovery Logic  
1375 Piccard Drive, Suite 360  
Rockville, Maryland 20850

