

SENATE, No. 1867

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 24, 2020

Sponsored by:
Senator JOSEPH A. LAGANA
District 38 (Bergen and Passaic)

SYNOPSIS

Provides tuition reimbursement to certain psychiatrists who contract with DCF.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



1 AN ACT concerning tuition reimbursement for certain psychiatrists
2 and amending P.L.2017, c.126.

3

4 BE IT ENACTED by the Senate and General Assembly of the State
5 of New Jersey:

6

7 1. Section 1 of P.L.2017, c.126 (C.18A:71C-59) is amended to
8 read as follows:

9 1. As used in **[this act]** P.L.2017, c.126 (C.18A:71C-
10 59 et seq.):

11 "Authority" means the Higher Education Student Assistance
12 Authority.

13 "Contracting psychiatrist" means a psychiatrist who has entered
14 into a contract with the Department of Children and Families to
15 provide mental health care services to a child or adolescent in
16 connection with Department of Children and Families
17 programming.

18 "Eligible tuition expenses" means tuition expenses that were
19 incurred by a program participant in attending an accredited
20 medical school and which were not covered by any grants or
21 scholarships.

22 "Program" means the tuition reimbursement program for
23 psychiatrists established pursuant to **[this act]** P.L.2017, c.126
24 (C.18A:71C-59 et seq.).

25 "Program participant" means a psychiatrist who contracts with
26 the authority to provide mental health care services in a State
27 underserved area **[or]** , in a State psychiatric hospital , or as a
28 contracting psychiatrist in return for tuition reimbursement
29 provided under the program.

30 "State psychiatric hospital" means a State psychiatric hospital
31 operated by the Department of Human Services and listed in
32 R.S.30:1-7.

33 "State underserved area" means a geographic area in this State
34 which the Commissioner of Health, in consultation with the
35 Commissioner of Human Services, determines on the basis of health
36 status and economic indicators as having a physician shortage in the
37 specialty of psychiatry.

38 (cf: P.L.2017, c.126, s.1)

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40 2. Section 2 of P.L.2017, c.126 (C.18A:71C-60) is amended to
41 read as follows:

42 2. a. There is established in the Higher Education Student
43 Assistance Authority a tuition reimbursement program for
44 psychiatrists who provide mental health care services in a State
45 underserved area **[or]** , in a State psychiatric hospital , or as a
46 contracting psychiatrist. The program shall provide reimbursement

EXPLANATION – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets **[thus]** in the above bill is
not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

1 to program participants for a portion of the eligible tuition expenses
2 incurred by the participant in attending medical school.

3 b. A program participant shall enter into a contract with the
4 authority for a specified number of one-year periods of service, up
5 to four years, in which the participant agrees to engage in the full-
6 time practice of psychiatry in a State underserved area **【or】** , in a
7 State psychiatric hospital , or as a contracting psychiatrist. The
8 agreement shall specify the program participant's dates of required
9 service and the total amount of reimbursement of eligible tuition
10 expenses to be received by the participant in return for service.

11 c. The tuition reimbursement for a participant under the
12 program shall equal 25 percent of the participant's eligible tuition
13 expenses for the one academic year of medical school attendance in
14 which tuition was the lowest, in return for each full year of service
15 satisfactorily completed by the participant under the program. The
16 total tuition reimbursement amount for a program participant, for
17 four full years of service, shall not exceed 100 percent of the
18 participant's eligible tuition expenses for the one academic year of
19 medical school attendance in which tuition was the lowest.

20 (cf: P.L.2017, c.126, s.2)

21

22 3. Section 3 of P.L.2017, c.126 (C.18A:71C-61) is amended to
23 read as follows:

24 3. To be eligible to participate in the program, an applicant
25 shall:

26 a. be a resident of New Jersey;

27 b. be a State-licensed physician who has successfully
28 completed all educational and residency training requirements for
29 the practice of psychiatry;

30 c. apply for the program within one year of completing an
31 accredited residency training program in psychiatry, or within one
32 year of completing an accredited fellowship in child and adolescent
33 psychiatry; and

34 d. agree to practice full-time as a psychiatrist in a State
35 underserved area **【or】** , in a State psychiatric hospital , or as a
36 contracting psychiatrist for a period of one to four years in return
37 for the tuition reimbursement provided under the program.

38 (cf: P.L.2017, c.126, s.3)

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40 4. Section 4 of P.L.2017, c.126 (C.18A:71C-62) is amended to
41 read as follows:

42 4. a. The Commissioner of Health, in consultation with the
43 Commissioner of Human Services, shall designate State
44 underserved areas which have a shortage of psychiatrists. In
45 designating State underserved areas, the commissioner shall
46 consider health status criteria and economic indicators including,
47 but not limited to, the financial resources of the population who

1 resides in the area under consideration, and the population's access
2 to mental health care services.

3 b. The Commissioner of Health shall transmit to the authority a
4 list of the State underserved areas and the projected number of
5 psychiatrists needed in each area.

6 c. The Commissioner of Human Services shall transmit to the
7 authority a list of the State psychiatric hospitals and the projected
8 number of psychiatrists needed in each hospital.

9 d. The Commissioner of Children and Families shall transmit
10 to the authority a list of the projected number of psychiatrists
11 needed by the Department of Children and Families.

12 (cf: P.L.2017, c.126, s.4)

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14 5. Section 6 of P.L.2017, c.126 (C.18A:71C-64) is amended to
15 read as follows:

16 6. A program participant, as a condition of participation, shall
17 be required to adhere to performance standards established by the
18 authority. The standards shall include, but not be limited to,
19 requirements that a program participant:

20 a. maintain residency in the State;

21 b. maintain a license to practice medicine in the State;

22 c. remain current with payments on any student loans;

23 d. maintain satisfactory performance of services rendered in a
24 State underserved area **【or】** , in a State psychiatric hospital , or as a
25 contracting psychiatrist; and

26 e. report to the authority, on a form and in a manner prescribed
27 by the authority, on the program participant's performance of
28 services rendered prior to reimbursement of tuition under the
29 program.

30 (cf: P.L.2017, c.126, s.6)

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32 6. This act shall take effect immediately.

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35 STATEMENT

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37 Under current law, tuition reimbursement is available to a
38 psychiatrist who agrees to provide mental health care services in a
39 State underserved area or in a State psychiatric hospital. In return
40 for one full year of service, the tuition reimbursement for
41 participating psychiatrists under the program equals 25 percent of
42 the total cost of eligible tuition expenses for the one academic year
43 of medical school attendance in which tuition was the lowest. A
44 psychiatrist is eligible to participate in this tuition reimbursement
45 program for up to four years. Total reimbursement provided under
46 the program is not permitted to exceed 100 percent of the
47 participant's eligible tuition expenses for the one academic year of
48 medical school in which tuition was the lowest.

1 This bill would allow a psychiatrist who contracts with the
2 Department of Children and Families to provide mental health care
3 services in connection with department programming to participate
4 in the existing tuition reimbursement program.

5 This bill would require the Commissioner of Children and
6 Families to transmit a list of the projected number of psychiatrists
7 needed by the department to the Higher Education Student
8 Assistance Authority, which is responsible for the administration of
9 the tuition reimbursement program.