Fiscal Year 2020 Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Employee Scholarship Grant Program

Frequently Asked Questions (updated 9/9/19)

1. Can grant funds be used to support a staff member getting her LPN degree?
   Answer: Yes, grant funds may be used to support a scholarship for an eligible recipient pursuing an LPN degree (within the other parameters of the grant, i.e., as long as the scholarship recipient and expenses meet the other eligibility criteria and the scholarship funds are utilized during the grant period). For examples of eligible programs and trainings, please refer to:
   https://www.health.state.mn.us/facilities/ruralhealth/funding/grants/docs/2019hcbsresource.pdf

2. Is my organization eligible to apply if the client population is primarily 55 years and up, but fewer than 50 percent of individuals served are 65 years of age and older?
   Answer: No, as stipulated in the authorizing statute: “Eligible providers must primarily provide services to individuals who are 65 years of age and older.” The entire statute can found here:
   https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/144.1503.

3. Can grant funds be used to pay off existing student loans?
   Answer: No, the funds must be used for education or training that occurs during the grant period, and no grant-funded activities can begin until a fully executed grant agreement is in place (see page 6 of RFP).

4. How much funding should my organization request?
   Answer: The minimum amount to request (for the two-year grant period) is $15,000; $100,000 is the maximum request amount allowed. Don’t ask for more than what you need, and keep in mind that “reasonableness of the budget” accounts for 20 percent of your proposal’s score (see page 10 of RFP).

5. If my organization is awarded a grant, how will it be paid out?
   Answer: As indicated on page 7 of RFP, reimbursement is the method for making grant payments. Reimbursement is made to the grantee organization (not to employees, schools or training programs). A progress report is required with each reimbursement request, and proof of payment must be provided for each expense to be reimbursed.

6. What happens if my organization is awarded a grant, but it’s not for the entire amount requested?
   Answer: Partial funding results in the negotiation of a revised budget that reflects any recommendations made by the review committee.
7. Are managers eligible to receive scholarships or training funded by the grant?
   **Answer:** As stated on page 5 of the RFP: *To be eligible, a scholarship recipient must be employed in a caregiving role and must work an average of at least 16 hours per week for the grantee organization while receiving a scholarship funded by the HCBS Employee Scholarship Grant Program.* Therefore, a manager who spends at least 16 hours a week providing direct patient care may pursue an eligible course of study (as outlined on page 5 of RFP) with grant funds. Classes or trainings in management, human resources, accounting, coding or healthcare administration are not eligible. For examples of eligible programs and trainings, please refer to: [https://www.health.state.mn.us/facilities/ruralhealth/funding/grants/docs/2019hcbsresource.pdf](https://www.health.state.mn.us/facilities/ruralhealth/funding/grants/docs/2019hcbsresource.pdf).

8. Are culinary staff eligible to receive scholarships or training funded by the grant?
   **Answer:** Yes, culinary staff are considered to be employed as caregivers and are eligible when they meet the other eligibility criteria. Proposed scholarships and trainings must be related to client-care, lead to career advancement, and provide education over and beyond what is required to maintain an individual’s certification or an organization’s licensure.

9. Can general education classes required by a nursing program be covered by a grant-funded scholarship?
   **Answer:** Yes, coursework required for an eligible course of study is allowable. Documentation of program requirements may be requested to justify reimbursement for such coursework.

10. What needs to be included in the narrative description of the application?
    **Answer:** Please refer to Form 5 within the set of required forms: [https://www.health.state.mn.us/facilities/ruralhealth/funding/grants/docs/2020hcbsforms.pdf](https://www.health.state.mn.us/facilities/ruralhealth/funding/grants/docs/2020hcbsforms.pdf). Follow the formatting instructions and provide responses to the information requested, which will be scored according to the criteria and weighting described on page 10 of RFP.

11. If my organization currently has a HCBS Employee Scholarship Grant, can we apply before the current grant ends?
    **Answer:** Yes, current grantees may apply for new funding. As indicated on page 11 of the RFP: *It is the policy of the State of Minnesota to consider a grant applicant's past performance before awarding subsequent grants to them.* Note that the guidance for the narrative (Form 5) requests specific information from organizations that have received previous funding from the HCBS Employee Scholarship Program. Current grantees are encouraged to contact Sonya.Borgeson-Bethke@state.mn.us to discuss their plans to apply for additional funding.

12. My facility operates under an assumed name. Do I use the legal name or the assumed name on the application?
    **Answer:** On Form 3, there are separate fields for legal name and assumed name. On the other forms, if space permits, please list legal name followed by dba; otherwise, use just the legal name on the application forms. For the narrative, please introduce your organization with legal and assumed names and then refer to the organization as you do in typical conversation.
13. The RFP indicates that questions need to be submitted by September 23, 2019. What if I have questions after that date?

*Answer:* You may submit questions up to the application deadline of September 27, however, they will be answered in the order in which they are received and a response is not guaranteed before the application deadline for questions submitted after September 23, 2019.

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