

Chapter 396

(House Bill 1464)

AN ACT concerning

Maryland Loan Assistance Repayment Program for Physicians and Physician Assistants – Alterations

FOR the purpose of clarifying that part–time physicians and physician assistants are eligible for participation in the Maryland Loan Assistance Repayment Program for Physicians and Physician Assistants; authorizing the Maryland Department of Health to establish prorated loan repayment assistance for part–time physicians and physician assistants; establishing the Maryland Loan Assistance Repayment Program Advisory Council *for Physicians and Physician Assistants* to assist the Department in the administration of the Program; and generally relating to the Maryland Loan Assistance Repayment Program for Physicians and Physician Assistants.

BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
Article – Health – General
Section 24–1703
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2019 Replacement Volume and 2021 Supplement)

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
Article – Health – General
Section 24–1704
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2019 Replacement Volume and 2021 Supplement)

BY adding to
Article – Health – General
Section 24–1708
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2019 Replacement Volume and 2021 Supplement)

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Article – Health – General

24–1703.

There is a Maryland Loan Assistance Repayment Program for Physicians and Physician Assistants in the State.

24-1704.

(a) (1) In this section[, “eligible] **THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS INDICATED.**

(2) (I) “ELIGIBLE field of employment” means employment by an organization, institution, association, society, or corporation that is exempt from taxation under § 501(c)(3) or (4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

[(2)] (II) “Eligible field of employment” includes employment by the State or any local government in the State.

(3) “PHYSICIAN” INCLUDES A PART-TIME PHYSICIAN.

(4) “PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT” INCLUDES A PART-TIME PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT.

(b) (1) The Department shall assist in the repayment with the funds transferred to the Department by the Comptroller under § 14-207(d) of the Health Occupations Article of the amount of education loans owed by a physician or physician assistant who:

[(1)] (i) 1. Practices primary care in an eligible field of employment in a geographic area of the State that has been federally designated; or

[(ii)] 2. Is a medical resident specializing in primary care who agrees to practice for at least 2 years as a primary care physician in an eligible field of employment in a geographic area of the State that has been federally designated; and

[(2)] (II) Meets any other requirements established by the Department.

(2) THE DEPARTMENT MAY ESTABLISH PRORATED LOAN REPAYMENT ASSISTANCE FOR A PART-TIME PHYSICIAN OR PART-TIME PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PARTICIPATING IN THE PROGRAM.

(c) Any unspent portions of the money that is transferred to the Department for use under this subtitle from the Board of Physicians Fund may not be transferred to or revert to the General Fund of the State, but shall remain in the Fund maintained by the Department to administer the Program.

24-1708.

(A) IN THIS SECTION, “COUNCIL” MEANS THE MARYLAND LOAN ASSISTANCE REPAYMENT PROGRAM ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR PHYSICIANS AND PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS.

(B) THERE IS A MARYLAND LOAN ASSISTANCE REPAYMENT PROGRAM ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR PHYSICIANS AND PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS.

(C) THE COUNCIL CONSISTS OF THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS:

(1) THE CHAIR OF THE HEALTH SERVICES COST REVIEW COMMISSION, OR THE CHAIR'S DESIGNEE;

(2) THE CHAIR OF THE MARYLAND HEALTH CARE COMMISSION, OR THE CHAIR'S DESIGNEE;

(3) THE PRESIDENT OF THE MARYLAND HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION, OR THE PRESIDENT'S DESIGNEE;

(4) THE DEAN OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND SCHOOL OF MEDICINE, OR THE DEAN'S DESIGNEE;

(5) THE DEAN OF THE JOHNS HOPKINS SCHOOL OF MEDICINE, OR THE DEAN'S DESIGNEE;

(6) THE PRESIDENT OF MEDCHI, OR THE PRESIDENT'S DESIGNEE;

(7) ONE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PRIMARY CARE OFFICE IN THE OFFICE OF POPULATION HEALTH IMPROVEMENT;

(8) ONE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE STATE BOARD OF PHYSICIANS;

(9) ONE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE MARYLAND ACADEMY OF PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS; AND

(10) ANY OTHER MEMBERS AS DETERMINED NECESSARY BY THE SECRETARY.

(D) (1) THE MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL SHALL SELECT THE CHAIR OF THE COUNCIL.

(2) A MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL:

(I) MAY NOT RECEIVE COMPENSATION AS A MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL; BUT

(II) IS ENTITLED TO REIMBURSEMENT FOR EXPENSES UNDER THE STANDARD STATE TRAVEL REGULATIONS, AS PROVIDED IN THE STATE BUDGET.

(3) THE COUNCIL SHALL MEET AT LEAST THREE TIMES A YEAR.

(E) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL PROVIDE STAFF FOR THE COUNCIL.

(F) THE COUNCIL SHALL:

(1) SEEK PERMANENT AND DIVERSE REVENUE SOURCES TO AID IN THE STABILITY AND FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROGRAM;

(2) HELP ENSURE MAXIMUM USE OF FEDERAL FUNDS;

(3) USE AVAILABLE DATA AND INFORMATION TO HELP DIRECT FUNDING TO PRIORITY AREAS;

(4) MONITOR SIMILAR LOAN PROGRAMS IN OTHER STATES AND ENSURE THAT THE PROGRAM REMAINS COMPETITIVE;

(5) ASSIST THE DEPARTMENT IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE PROGRAM;

(6) HELP MARKET AND RAISE AWARENESS OF THE PROGRAM THROUGH EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND OTHER APPROPRIATE ENTITIES AS AN INCENTIVE TO HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS TO PRACTICE IN UNDERSERVED AREAS; AND

(7) MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE GOVERNOR AND THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON ANY NECESSARY CHANGES TO THE PROGRAM.

(G) ON OR BEFORE OCTOBER 1 EACH YEAR, THE COUNCIL SHALL REPORT TO THE GOVERNOR AND, IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 2-1257 OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT ARTICLE, THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON THE ACTIVITIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COUNCIL.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July 1, 2022.

Approved by the Governor, May 16, 2022.