

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 1707 Session of
2025

INTRODUCED BY HOWARD, SANCHEZ, GUENST, RABB, HILL-EVANS, KHAN,
SAPPEY, GIRAL, T. DAVIS, RIVERA, MAYES, D. WILLIAMS AND
NEILSON, JULY 8, 2025

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES, JULY 8, 2025

AN ACT

1 Establishing the Social Worker Educational Enrollment and
2 Training Pilot Program; and providing for authorization of
3 internships, for award of internships and for funding of the
4 Social Worker Educational Enrollment and Training Pilot
5 Program.

6 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
7 hereby enacts as follows:

8 Section 1. Short title.

9 This act shall be known and may be cited as the Social Worker
10 Educational Enrollment and Training Pilot Program Act.

11 Section 2. Definitions.

12 The following words and phrases when used in this act shall
13 have the meanings given to them in this section unless the
14 context clearly indicates otherwise:

15 "Approved facility." A facility approved by the department
16 for participation in the program.

17 "Approved Master of Social Work program." An academic
18 program at an accredited school of social work approved by the
19 department to prepare professional personnel for employment in

1 accordance with the act of July 9, 1987 (P.L.220, No.39), known
2 as the Social Workers, Marriage and Family Therapists and
3 Professional Counselors Act.

4 "Commitment stipend." Money provided under the program to a
5 recipient.

6 "Department." The Department of Human Services of the
7 Commonwealth.

8 "Internship." A field placement required as part of an
9 approved Master of Social Work program authorized by the
10 department for the program under section 4.

11 "Program." The Social Worker Educational Enrollment and
12 Training Pilot Program established under section 3.

13 "Qualified applicant." An individual who meets all of the
14 criteria under section 3(b).

15 "Recipient." A qualified applicant who receives a commitment
16 stipend.

17 Section 3. Social Worker Educational Enrollment and Training
18 Pilot Program.

19 (a) Establishment.--The Social Worker Educational Enrollment
20 and Training Pilot Program is established within the department.
21 The department shall administer the program to provide
22 commitment stipends to qualified applicants. The department may
23 consult with the Department of Health to administer the program.

24 (b) Qualifications.--To qualify for the program, an
25 individual shall meet all of the following criteria:

26 (1) The individual is a resident of this Commonwealth.

27 (2) The individual is currently enrolled in an approved
28 Master of Social Work program and maintains a 3.0 GPA or
29 higher.

30 (3) The individual submits an application to the

department on a form and in a manner specified by the department.

(c) Stipends.--A recipient shall be awarded a commitment stipend of \$5,000 per semester while engaged in an internship as part of an approved Master of Social Work program and maintaining a 3.0 GPA or higher. The amount shall be adjusted annually for inflation in accordance with the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers: All Items (CPI-U) for the United States as published by the United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, for the previous 12-month period.

Section 4. Authorization of internships.

Subject to the availability of money for the program, the department shall authorize internships located within an approved facility for recipients to participate in the program in accordance with the following:

(1) The department shall ensure that internships provide qualified applicants with clinical training, supervision and instructional experiences that prepare qualified applicants with the necessary competencies to enter into the behavioral health care workforce.

(2) The department shall ensure that internships satisfy the requirements for supervised experience necessary to earn a Master of Social Work from an approved Master of Social Work program.

Section 5. Award of internships.

The department shall establish a process for a qualified applicant to apply for and receive an internship in accordance with this act.

Section 6. Funding of program.

The department shall award commitment stipends to recipients

1 to the extent that money is available to fund the administration
2 of the program.

3 Section 7. Regulations.

4 The department shall promulgate regulations, adopt policies
5 and procedures and establish forms as necessary to implement
6 this act.

7 Section 8. Report.

8 Within one year of the program's implementation, the
9 department shall collaborate with the participating managed care
10 organizations and any other relevant stakeholders to develop a
11 report evaluating the outcomes of the program, including
12 recommendations regarding whether the program should be expanded
13 throughout this Commonwealth. The department shall submit the
14 report to all of the following:

15 (1) The Governor.

16 (2) The President pro tempore of the Senate.

17 (3) The Speaker of the House of Representatives.

18 (4) The chairperson and minority chairperson of the
19 Appropriations Committee of the Senate.

20 (5) The chairperson and minority chairperson of the
21 Appropriations Committee of the House of Representatives.

22 (6) The chairperson and minority chairperson of the
23 Health and Human Services Committee of the Senate.

24 (7) The chairperson and minority chairperson of the
25 Health Committee of the House of Representatives.

26 (8) The chairperson and minority chairperson of the
27 Human Services Committee of the House of Representatives.

28 Section 9. Expiration of authority.

29 The department's authority to implement the program shall
30 expire three years after the effective date of this section.

1 Section 10. Effective date.

2 This act shall take effect in 90 days.