
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 2272 Session of
2024

INTRODUCED BY HOWARD, HILL-EVANS, HOHENSTEIN, KINSEY, DONAHUE,
SAPPEY, FREEMAN, FLEMING, SANCHEZ, MAYES AND MALAGARI,
MAY 7, 2024

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES, MAY 7, 2024

AN ACT

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

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

7 Section 1. Short title.

8 This act shall be known and may be cited as the Social Worker
9 Educational Enrollment and Training (SWEET) Program Act.

10 Section 2. Definitions.

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

14 "Approved facility." A facility approved by the department
15 for participation in the SWEET Program.

16 "Approved Master of Social Work program." An academic
17 program at an accredited school of social work approved by the
18 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 SWEET Program
5 to a 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 SWEET Program under section 4.

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

13 "Recipient." A qualified applicant who receives a commitment
14 stipend.

15 "SWEET Program." The Social Worker Educational Enrollment
16 and Training (SWEET) Program established under section 3.
17 Section 3. SWEET Program.

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

24 (b) Qualifications.--To qualify for the SWEET 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

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

3 (c) Stipends.--A recipient shall be awarded a commitment
4 stipend of \$5,000 per semester while engaged in an internship as
5 part of an approved Master of Social Work program and
6 maintaining a 3.0 GPA or higher. The amount shall be adjusted
7 annually for inflation in accordance with the Consumer Price
8 Index for All Urban Consumers: All Items (CPI-U) for the United
9 States as published by the United States Department of Labor,
10 Bureau of Labor Statistics, for the previous 12-month period.
11 Section 4. Authorization of internships.

12 Subject to the availability of money for the SWEET Program,
13 the department shall authorize internships located within an
14 approved facility for recipients to participate in the SWEET
15 Program in accordance with the following:

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

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

25 Section 5. Award of internships.

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

29 Section 6. Funding of SWEET Program.

30 The department shall award commitment stipends to recipients

1 to the extent that money is available to fund the administration
2 of the SWEET 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. Effective date.

8 This act shall take effect in 90 days.