



Greater Bay Area Regional Partnership Workforce Education and Training

Contra Costa Behavioral Health Services
Loan Repayment Program and Application
Guide
(Updated November 2022)

Cycle 2 Application Opens: Saturday, October 1st, 2022

Closes: Thursday, December 15th, 2022

Click Here to Apply

Executive Summary

Contra Costa Behavioral Health Services (CCBHS) as a member of the Greater Bay Area Regional Partnership, and through the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Workforce Education and Training (WET) component has developed a Loan Repayment Program (LRP) opportunity. CCBHS, in collaboration with other counties in the Bay Area region, have partnered with the California Mental Health Services Authority (CalMHSA) and the California Department of Health Care Access and Information (HCAI) formerly known as Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development (OSHPD) to make this funding available to the public behavioral health system workforce. In Contra Costa County, this may include staff which work in specific classifications in CCBHS, including staff under Mental Health and Alcohol and Other Drug Services (AODS); as well as CCBHS contracted Community Based Organizations (CBOs) under Mental Health and Alcohol and Other Drug Services working in specific roles, classifications, or positions.

This program will award up to \$10,000 ¹ in eligible educational loan repayment to qualified providers working within the Contra Costa public behavioral health system, which commit to a minimum 12-month service obligation in a recognized hard-to-fill or hard-to-retain position.

CCBHS anticipates that there may be a large volume of questions and interested individuals; therefore, all interested individuals should read this document in its entirety to understand application and eligibility criteria. CCBHS will also be holding Question and Answer (Q&A) Sessions. Q&A Sessions will provide individuals the opportunity to ask questions. Although Q&A Sessions are not mandatory, it is highly encouraged to attend a Q&A Session for any questions you may have.

The CCBHS Loan Repayment Program seeks to prioritize workforce needs for language and cultural responsiveness and seeks to support diversity, equity and inclusion of qualified behavioral health staff which make up the public behavioral health workforce and serve the most vulnerable populations within Contra Costa County in hard- to-fill/retain positions.

¹ Only applicable towards qualifiable educations loans. See D. Qualifying and Non-Qualifying Educational Loans (page 5).

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Section I: Application Guide

Any person which meets minimum qualifications may apply. However, priority is given to individuals which can fill workforce needs for language, culture and/or work in hard-to-retain or hard-to-fill positions.

A. Eligible Professions

Eligible provider professions/roles/classifications/positions for the program are:

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Licensed or License Eligible
Psychologist
Licensed or License Eligible Clinical
Social Worker
Licensed or License Eligible Marriage
and Family Therapist
Licensed or License Eligible
Professional Clinical Counselor
Certified Substance Abuse
Counselor
Substance Abuse Counselor Trainee
Registered Nurse
Mental Health Specialist

Peer Provider: someone providing behavioral health peer support either under Contra Costa Behavioral Health Services (CCBHS) Menta Health or AODS county system OR through a contracted CCBHS Community Based Organization (CBO) under Mental Health or AODS AND having personal lived experience. Personal lived experience is described as personal experience or being a close family member of someone which at any point in their life has had mental health and/or substance use challenges, or systems involvement experience to include experience in the public mental health/ substance use treatment system, foster care system, or personal experience with homelessness. In CCBHS, this includes positions such as Community Support Workers or Family Partners. In a CCBHS contracted CBO under Mental Health or AODS, the position titles will likely vary.

The applicant must be employed in an eligible profession/role/classification/position as identified in the Eligible Professions section above. Change of profession/role/classification/position during or after the application or award period may be cause for disqualification. It is recommended that any applicant or awardee contact the County Site Point of Contact or identified individual prior to any changes in profession/ role/ classification/ position; as well as any changes in scheduling, employer, or site. Changes may affect your ability to meet service agreements and eligibility. In certain circumstances, changes in position/scheduling/employer/or site may not affect eligibility. Regardless, this information must be communicated to CCBHS. It is highly recommended to communicate with the CCBHS County Site Point of Contact prior to making changes to understand how potential changes affect eligibility in the CCBHS Loan Repayment Program.

B. Eligible Sites

The applicant must be employed in an eligible site to include CCBHS County System providing outpatient services or services within the community, as well as CCBHS contracted Community Based Organizations (CBOs) under Mental Health or Alcohol and Other Drug Services providing services within the community. Any person whether employed within the CCBHS County System or in a CCBHS contracted CBO which is providing services to clients in a locked facility is NOT eligible to apply. This includes locked facilities such as jails, prisons, detention centers, juvenile hall, or any locked mental health facility. Changes in site during the application or award period may be cause for disqualification. In certain circumstances, changes in site may not affect eligibility. Regardless, this information must be communicated to CCBHS. It is highly recommended to communicate with the CCBHS County Site Point of Contact prior to making changes to understand how potential changes affect eligibility or if you are unclear if your site is an eligible site in the CCBHS Loan Repayment Program.

C. Eligibility Requirements

Eligibility Requirement 1: Applicants must meet at least one of the criteria identified below in Eligibility Requirement 1 AND must meet at least one of the criteria identified in Eligibility Requirement 2 (page 6) to be eligible to apply.

Eligibility Requirement 1 – Direct Service Staff or Clinical Supervision Staff

Work Hours & Location - You must meet at least one of the below criteria.

• Working within CCBHS County System: if working within the CCBHS County System at an eligible site, an individual must work 40 hours per week in an eligible profession/role/classification/position AND be providing at minimum 20 hours per week of direct service to clients/consumers/peers. This includes staff under both CCBHS Mental Health AND Alcohol and Other Drug Services (AODS).

OR

 If working within the CCBHS County System, an individual must work 40 hours per week in an eligible profession/role/classification/position AND be providing clinical supervision to other staff within the CCBHS County System which provide direct services to clients/consumers/peers. This includes managers and supervisors in both Mental Health AND Alcohol and Other Drug Services (AODS).

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Working within a CCBHS Contracted CBO: If working within a CCBHS contracted community based organization (CBO) contracted either under Mental Health or Alcohol and Other Drug Services (AODS) in an eligible profession/role/classification/position at an eligible site, an individual must be providing at minimum 20 hours per week of direct service to clients/consumers/peers located within Contra Costa County.

OR

 If working within a CCBHS contracted CBO under Mental Health or AODS, an individual must work at least 32 hours per week in an eligible profession/role/classification/position AND be providing clinical supervision to other staff within the CCBHS contracted CBO which provide direct services to clients/consumers/peers located within Contra Costa County.

Total Weekly Hours of Direct Service

Any applicant not in a clinical supervisory position as previously described must provide at minimum 20 hours per week of direct service ² to clients/consumers/peers in an outpatient or community setting.

Reminder: Any staff within the CCBHS County System or CCBHS contracted CBO providing services to clients in locked facilities are NOT eligible to apply. This includes locked facilities such as jails, prisons, detention centers, juvenile hall, or any locked mental health facility. If you are unsure about your site, please ask.

Eligibility Requirement 2: Apart from meeting criteria identified in Eligibility Requirement 1, all applicants must also meet at least one of the criteria identified in Eligibility Requirement 2 (page 6), to be eligible to apply.

Direct Service is defined as any of the following: services that generate units of service, opening or closing cases, crisis intervention, assessments, individual/family/group therapy, rehabilitation services, medication evaluation/consultation, integrated behavioral, evidence based practice interventions, substance use treatment services, peer services, and community defined practices identified as what a community may consider cultural, linguistic or traditional practices.

Eligibility Requirement 2 – AND at Least One of the Following Criteria

Priority for staff who are fluent in English and at least one of the identified languages and/or who identify with cultural and linguistic background of communities served.

 Must be fluent in English and one of the following languages: Spanish, Mandarin, Cantonese, Vietnamese, Punjabi, Farsi, Portuguese, Dari, Arabic or Tagalog.
 AND/OR

Have lived experience as a client/consumer/peer (personal or family member experience). Personal lived experience is described as personal experience or being a close family member of someone which at any point in their life has had mental health and/or substance use challenges, or systems involvement experience to include experience in the public mental health/ substance use treatment system, foster care system, or personal experience with homelessness. In CCBHS, this includes positions such as Community Support Workers or Family Partners. In a CCBHS contracted CBO under Mental Health or AODS, the position titles will likely vary.

OR

Targeting staff in hard-to-fill/hard-to-retain positions, or those who possess experience or expertise in hard-to-fill/hard-to-retain positions.³

- Staff who work in programs delivering behavioral health services to:
 - 1. Children and Transition Age Youth (Ages 0 25)
 - 2.LGBTQIA2S+ clients/consumers/peers
 - 3. Working with clients in forensic behavioral health; who may have a history of justice-involvement. Clients may not be in a locked facility and should be receiving services through outpatient or community based setting.
 - 4. Staff who have proven experience serving Latina/Latino/LatinX/Hispanic, Asian, Pacific Islander, African American/Black and indigenous communities.
- Providers with integrated care experience/expertise (i.e. integrated primary care/behavioral health care experience/expertise).
- Staff working in crisis response settings.

D. Application to Program

The first step to applying is to submit an initial application for the program through the California Department of Health Care Access and Information (HCAI), formerly known as the Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development (OSHPD). This section of the Application and Program Guide will outline how and where a user can access application information and what information applicants will need before and during the application process.

There are four distinct parts to the application:

- 1. General Eligibility Criteria
- 2. Applicant Personal Statements
- 3. Applicant Information
- 4. Applicant Employment Verification (this document is issued outside of the standard application)

As part of the requirements of the program, awarded applicants may not serve multiple service obligations concurrently and must be in service of the program during the agreed upon 12-month service obligation within. In summary, applicants must ensure they are not participating in any other educational loan repayment program

To receive credit, your will be asked clearly to identify your qualifying program, job functions direct service hours (if applicable), and employer information on a later issued "Employment Verification," form in the Loan Repayment Program process.

or waiver from any federal, state, local or other agency during the same period as this loan repayment program.

Application Dates

The open application period for the program run from Saturday October 1st, 2022 and closes Thursday, December 15th, 2022. Upon completion and initial review of the application by HCAI, the California Mental Health Services Authority (CalMHSA) will receive the applicant data from HCAI. Once received, CalMHSA will process for the secondary steps of the application, which may include requesting applicants to submit a supplemental application/questionnaire that assesses additional county-level eligibility criteria.

Application Software

All Loan Repayment Program applicants will utilize HCAI's Central Application portal to submit their applications. The application portal is web-hosted and will be utilized to collect all applicant information except applicable county-level eligibility criteria, loan and lender information, and employment verification. The portal is located here: HCAI WET Central Application.

CalMHSA will be utilizing DocuSign to facilitate the process of acquiring an Employment Verification Form from all applicants. DocuSign is a secure and simple online tool that allows electronic transmission of documents that require review and electronic signature from recipients while maintaining the security of the information transmitted.

General Eligibility Criteria

The first section of the application will establish that applicants meet the basic necessary eligibility standards set by the Regional Partnership and or specific to your County for this program.

Applicant Information

CalMHSA will be collecting all information provided by HCAI. Based on this data, CalMHSA will work with your county to facilitate any further information gathering needed to support your application.

Employment Verification

Once CalMHSA has received the applications from HCAI, applicants which meet eligibility criteria will be required to complete an Employment Verification Form and lender/loan information form.

This employment verification will require completion and signature by the applicant, then review and signature by the applicant's immediate and direct supervisor via DocuSign. The employment verification form will be sent to the applicant's email submitted in the Applicant Information segment of the online application. DocuSign will be utilized to ensure secure transmission of information.

Additionally, CCBHS may require a verification letter from the applicant's employer, if further needed to determine eligibility.

E. Qualifying and Non-Qualifying Educational Loans

Government and commercial educational loans obtained for behavioral health care professional degrees or closely related fields, which are in current good standing, qualify for the CCBHS Loan Repayment Program. Qualifying commercial lending institutions are those subject to examination and supervision by an agency of the United States, or by the state in which the institutions have their place of business.

The following types of debt are **not** eligible for loan repayment under the program:

- Loans in default
- Loans repaid in full
- · Credit card debt
- Primary Care Loans
- Personal lines of credit
- Residency loans

The applicant must have obtained the eligible education loans in their own name. Eligible educationalloans consolidated with loans owed by any other person, such as a spouse, are ineligible for repayment. For loans to remain eligible, applicant/awardees must keep their eligible educational loans separate from other debts.

F. Post Application

Initial Completeness Review

Once the application period has closed, CalMHSA will be conducting a completeness review of all the applicant and application materials submitted. This will serve as a cursory review to ensure that all requirements were met. All materials including the Employment Verification Forms will need to be submitted no later than two calendar weeks after receipt to be considered eligible and reviewed.

If CalMHSA identifies issues with any applications, it will be at the discretion of the administrator and participating county to decide whether applicants will be given the opportunity to correct or modify their submissions. If CalMHSA and the participating County extends this opportunity, they will attempt to communicate with applicants through their supplied contact information.

Evaluator Selection Process

The independent review panel is comprised of individuals with varied backgrounds, to include professional expertise, lived experience, and personal knowledge. Panelists' information will not be disclosed as a matter of confidentiality. CalMHSA is committed to ensuring the Evaluation Panel is representative of California's racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity.

Details regarding the specific process of selecting evaluators as well as the results of the evaluation process will not be shared as a matter of confidentiality.

Application Review and Employment Verification

Once all applications have been checked for completeness and reviewer personal statement scores have been submitted, representatives of the participating counties will perform their verification of employment. During this process, the County representative may contact applicants and/or their designated supervising body to identify discrepancies encountered during the verification process. It is at the discretion of the County to determine their process for resolving discrepancies.

Establish Individual Contracts and Begin Service Obligation

Once the final review is complete and the selected applicants are identified, CalMHSA will communicate with all applicants and inform them of the decision made and any next steps.

Chosen applicants (awardees) will have until two weeks to respond to next steps. If an applicant does not confirm acceptance of their award and submit the completed contract, CalMHSA may take this as a forfeit of

their interest in this program.

G. Service Obligation

General Service Obligation Information and Requirements

The service obligation is an agreement whereby applicants maintain their position and responsibilities servicing the communities they have identified in their application. Aside from performing bi-annual service check-ins with CalMHSA, an applicant will only need to maintain their employment, hours outlined and position at their specified job site throughout the length of the service obligation period and remain in good standing on the loan.

Refer to the section on *Worksite Absences and Employment Interruption* (page 9) for information on disruptions in employment.

Bi-Annual Service Verification

In addition to agreeing to the length of the service obligation, applicants must agree to bi-annual employment verifications throughout the length of their service obligation.

Every awardee must submit employment verification documentation during the length of their service obligation, which include the initial Employment Verification, the Bi-Annual Employment Verification, and the Final Employment Verification. These employment verifications serve as check-ins and are intended to ensure program eligibility requirements are being maintained and that circumstances requiring loan repayment do not change, such as loans falling into default.

The Employment Verification form will be communicated during the establishment of the contract with the awardee and must be completed and electronically signed by the awardee. Once completed by the awardee, it will be forwarded to CalMHSA who will confirm with the applicant's practice site. By completing and electronically signing the Employment Verification form, the awardee and the practice site are certifying the awardee's compliance or noncompliance with the clinical practice requirements. The Bi-Annual and Final Employment Verification will additionally record the time spent away from the service site during the preceding six - month period to identify personal time off, medical and/or parental leave, or other disruptions in employment.

While CalMHSA will take steps to alert both the awardee and the site to the due date for an Employment Verification submission, it is the awardee's responsibility to ensure that their approved service site completes the verification in a timely manner and that it is accurate.

Awardees who fail to ensure that their Employment Verification forms are completed and submitted on time risk not receiving service credit and being recommended for default. Awardees who do not submit Employment Verifications or who are consistently late in submitting them may become ineligible for future programs.

If an awardee works more than the minimum number of hours per week, then the awardee only needs to report absences (or time spent away from the site) that will impede them from meeting the minimum weekly service requirement. This time should be deducted from the awardee's bank of allowable absences, which is 35 workdays per service year.

Worksite Absences and Employment Interruption

It will be the general policy of the program to defer to the allowable job site policies in relation to interruption in service and duties at the job site. Changes in job site, changes in hours worked or hours of direct service to clients/consumers/peers per week, or classification may be cause for disqualification, as it may void the minimum service requirements. An awardee must connect with the County identified point of contact any time there is a change in the site, hours worked, hours of direct service to clients, or change in population served. This should be done in advance whenever possibly, or as soon as known as this may disqualify applicant.

A detailed allowance for job site interruptions will be articulated in an awardee's service contract upon intent to award.

Maternity/Paternity/Adoption Leave

If an applicant needs to request maternity, paternity, or adoption leave, they must contact CalMHSA. CalMHSA will defer to the preferences of the participating County to determine whether an extension will be allowed to accommodate for approved leave within the boundaries of current job site policies.

Breach Policy

CalMHSA reserves the right to recover monies for the awardee's failure to perform the obligations set forth in the program agreement.

Section II: Program Guide H. Program Information

Program Timeline

Event – Cycle 2	Key Dates
Open Applications	Saturday, October 1 st , 2022
Close Applications	Thursday, December 15 th , 2022
Awardees Selected & Applicants Contacted	Spring 2023
Applicant Contracts Generated, Lender Information Requested	Spring 2023
Service Obligation Period Begins	Spring 2023
 Service Period Check-In 1(Initial) 	Fall 2023
Service Period Check-In 2 (Final)	Spring 2024
Service Obligation Period Ends	Spring 2024
Funds Dispersed	Summer 2024

Program Background

The program was developed through the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Workforce Education and Training (WET) component and in collaboration with the California Mental Health Services Authority (CalMHSA).

The purpose of the program is to provide financial incentive to retain current qualified, eligible employees in hard-to-fill/ hard-to-retain positions in the public behavioral system. A limited number of awards will be available of up to \$10,000 towards repayment of educational loans in exchange for a 12-month service obligation. Eligible applicants must work in an outpatient setting or in contracted, community-based organization in a hard-to-fill/ hard-to-retain position, as defined by the county's public behavioral health system.

The Loan Repayment Program is a financial incentive strategy that is included in the Statewide Mental Health Services Act Workforce Education and Training Five Year Plan. It is designed to retain public behavioral healthcare professionals to address cultural and linguistic needs of the population's served as well as address workforce needs. Through this program the County's public behavioral health system seeks to support qualified employees who meet eligibility requirements and commit to a 12-month service obligation.

Issuing Body

The California Mental Health Services Authority (CalMHSA) is a Joint Powers Authority, an independent government agency created by California counties and cities, focused on the efficient delivery of California mental health projects for its members. CalMHSA collaborates with the Member Counties/Cities to implement mental health services, project, and educational programs across the state, regionally, and locally.

CalMHSA will perform contract oversight and maintenance for this program. In this role, CalMHSA will serve as point-of-contact between awardees and County Behavioral Health agencies in issues regarding the Program. CalMHSA will also maintain contact with all recipients of awards and their educational loan providers.

Available Funding and Amounts

Individual awards will not exceed \$10,000 for each applicant per 12-month service obligation. CalMHSA and participating Counties may award full, partial, or no funding to an applicant based on a combination of application eligibility criteria, strength of personal statement submission, and available funding.

I. Communication Requirements

Awardees must email CalMHSA and the County site point of contact within these specified timeframes for the following reasons:

- a. Prior to or immediately:
 - If you are no longer employed by the approved job site or will become employed elsewhere during the
 period of the award. This will assist CalMHSA and Counties to identify if an awardee may still be eligible
 at the new place of employment.
 - Will be changing your position within your organization
 - Anytime there is a change that would affect the minimum eligibility requirements (hours worked, hours providing direct service, site change, etc.)
- b. Prior to, immediately or within 30 calendar days if you:
 - Have a change to your name, mailing address, phone number, e-mail address or lendinginstitution
 - Begin a leave of absence for any reason
 - Begin maternity/paternity/adoption leave
 - Are requesting to switch from full-time to half-time status

Leaving an Approved Job Site/Provider Role Prior to Completion of Service

CalMHSA and counties expect that awardees will fulfill their obligation at the approved job site in their specified role identified in their initial application. If an awardee feels they can no longer continue working at the approved job site or in their hard-to-fill/ hard-to-retain role, the awardee must discuss the situation and/or concerns with the County site point of contact and CalMHSA contact immediately via phone or email.

If the awardee leaves their approved job site without prior communication with and approval from the County site point of contact and CalMHSA, they may be placed in default as of the date they stopped providing client care at the approved job site and become liable for any monetary damages specified in the awardee's CalMHSA contract. Awardees who are terminated for-cause by their job site will be placed in default and will no longer be in approval of the obligations of their service period requirements.

Transfer Request to another Approved Job Site/Position

Because the Program is a retention tool, transfers from one job site or provider role into another job site or provider role may not allowed and could break the requirements of the 12-month service obligation. If an awardee requests a job site transfer due to extenuating circumstances, the awardee must contact both their County site point of contact and CalMHSA. This communication is not a guarantee of approval of the job transfer. Each potential transfer will be considered individually, and the approval of one transfer does not guarantee the approval of any additional transfer.

Unemployment During Service Obligation

Awardees who voluntarily resign from their sites without prior communications and approval with CalMHSA, are terminated for cause, or are deemed ineligible for site assistance will be in violation of the 12-month requirement of their service obligation and will no longer be eligible for participation in the program. This cancel of service obligation may have a future effect on the applicant's eligibility for future funding opportunities.

Cancellation of Loan Repayment Obligation

The program obligation will be cancelled in its entirety in the event of an awardee death. No liability will be transferred to the awardee's heirs.

Section III: Additional/Supplemental Information

J. Contact Information

Should you have any initial questions about application for this program, please contact your County Site Point of Contact below. Wherever stated throughout this document, the County Site Point of Contact and CalMHSA Point of Contact should be contacted.

If unsure who to contact, please reach out to the County Site Point of Contact first.

County Site Point of Contact - Contra Costa Behavioral Health Services (CCBHS) Genoveva Zesati, Training/ Ethnic Services Coordinator genoveva.zesati@cchealth.org

CalMHSA Point of Contact - California Mental Health Services Authority (CalMHSA) Aileen Dizon, Training Manager aileen.dizon@calmhsa.org

K. Resource Links

CCBHS MHSA WET Page: https://cchealth.org/mentalhealth/mhsa/workforce-education.php

HCAI Central Application Link: https://oshpd.sjc1.gualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV 8Jt1BS52a39kCdn