



Behavioral Health Loan Repayment Program
Provider Application and Program Reference Guide

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PURPOSE

This guidance provides the requirements for participating in the Behavioral Health Loan Repayment Program (BHLRP) including a detailed technical assistance document for the application submission process and requirements. As an applicant, it is your responsibility to understand the program's eligibility requirements and to make sure that your application and supporting documentation are complete, accurate, and compliant. As a potential participant, you are responsible for understanding your obligation to serve at an approved service site and the legal and financial ramifications for failing to complete your service commitment with BHLRP.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Arizona BHLRP seeks to improve access to direct patient care in behavioral health facilities, including the Arizona State Hospital, behavioral health residential facilities and secure behavioral health residential facilities in Arizona. BHLRP is administered by the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS), Bureau of Women's and Children's Health, Office of Primary Care, within the Division of Public Health Prevention Services. BHLRP is legislatively authorized under Arizona Revised Statutes A.R.S. 36-2175 to promote the recruitment and retention of behavioral health care providers. In exchange for their service, ADHS repays their qualifying educational loans for an initial two-year commitment.

Per A.R.S. 36-2175, the BHLRP qualifies a behavioral health provider with current employment providing direct patient care with a public or non-profit entity located at the Arizona State Hospital, a behavioral health hospital, a behavioral health residential facility licensed under 9.A.A.C. 10 Article 7, or a secure behavioral health residential facility licensed under 9 A.A.C. 10 Article 13 in Arizona.

DEFINITIONS

Behavioral Health Provider, per [A.R.S. 36-2171](#), means a physician who is a board-certified or board-eligible psychiatrist, a psychologist, a physician assistant or a registered nurse practitioner who is certified to practice as a behavioral health specialist, or a person who is licensed pursuant to [Title 32](#) as a clinical social worker, professional counselor, or marriage and family therapist.

- [Licensed Clinical Social Worker, Qualifications](#)
- [Licensed Professional Counselor, Qualifications](#)
- [Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, Qualifications](#)
- [Licensed Clinical Psychologist, Qualifications](#)
- Behavioral health technician, as defined in [A.A.C. R9-10-101](#)
- Registered Nurse
- Practical Nurse
- Physician who has completed a professional residency or certification program in behavioral health

Behavioral Health Service Site is a behavioral health care facility that is:

- The Arizona State Hospital,
- A public or nonprofit behavioral health hospital located in a mental health HPSA,
- A public or nonprofit behavioral health residential facility licensed under [9 A.A.C. 10, Article 7](#), located in a mental health HPSA, or
- A public or nonprofit secure behavioral health residential facility licensed under 9 A.A.C. 10, [Article 7](#) or [13](#), located in a mental health HPSA.

Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA) is an area, population, or a facility that has been identified as experiencing a shortage of primary, dental, or mental health care providers. Federal and state programs use shortage area designations to help distribute providers to where they are most needed. To learn more about HPSAs or to find out if a service site is located in a HPSA, please visit our [website](#).

Health Service Experience with a Medically Underserved Population - means having at least 500 clock hours of medical or behavioral health services provided by an individual, including clock hours completed during the individual's residency, or graduate education:

- a. Under the direction of a governmental agency, an accredited educational institution, or a non-profit organization; and
- b. At a service site located in:
 - i. A medically underserved area designated by a federal or state agency the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services according to 42 CFR § 51c.102, or
 - ii. A medically underserved population,
 - iii. An AzMUA, or
 - iv. A HPSA designated by a federal agency.

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PROVIDER ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Provider applicants and their service sites must meet the following eligibility requirements:

- Be a U. S. Citizen (U.S. Born or Naturalized) or U.S. National
- Meet the requirements in [A.R.S. 41-1080](#)
- Provide behavioral health services through direct patient care as one of the following:
 - Physician who is a board-certified or board-eligible psychiatrist,
 - Psychologist,
 - Physician assistant who is certified to practice as a behavioral health specialist,
 - Registered nurse practitioner who is certified to practice as a behavioral health specialist,
 - Clinical social worker who is licensed pursuant to Title 32,
 - Professional counselor who is licensed pursuant to Title 32,
 - Marriage and family therapist who is licensed pursuant to Title 32,
 - Behavioral health technician,
 - Registered nurse,
 - Practical nurse, or a
 - Physician who has completed a professional residency or certification program in behavioral health
- Have completed the final year of a course of study or program approved by an accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education or the Council for Higher Education Accreditation for higher Education in a health profession licensed under A.R.S. Title 32 or holds a current Arizona license or certificate in a health profession licensed under A.R.S. Title 32.
- Demonstrate current employment providing direct patient care with a service site that is a public or nonprofit entity located at the Arizona State Hospital, a behavioral health hospital, a behavioral health residential facility licensed under 9 A.A.C. 10, Article 7, or a secure behavioral health residential facility licensed under 9 A.A.C. 10, Article 10 in Arizona.
- Demonstrate that the current employer is contracted with the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System to provide services.
- Is not participating in another loan repayment program established under 9 A.A.C. 15, Article 3
- Provide evidence of current employment with an eligible employer or service site.
- Agree to contract with ADHS to provide direct patient care services full time for at least an average of 36 hours per week for at least 45 weeks per year at the approved service site(s) for a minimum of two years.
- Have qualifying student loans that are still owed for loan repayment.
- Have completely satisfied any other service obligation owed under an agreement with a federal (e.g., an active military obligation or a National Health Service Corps Program obligation), a State (e.g. Scholarship Program obligation) or local government, or other entity, prior to beginning a period of service under this program.

APPLICANTS WHO ARE NOT ELIGIBLE TO PARTICIPATE:

- Individuals who have an existing health professional service obligation owed under a contract with a federal, state, local government or other entity, unless that service obligation will be completely satisfied before the BHLRP contract has been signed.
- Individuals who are subject to any judgment liens for a debt to a federal agency.
- Individuals who have defaulted on:
 - Any federally-guaranteed or insured student loan or home mortgage loan,
 - A Federal Health Education Assistance Loan,
 - A Federal Nursing Student Loan,
 - A Federal Housing Authority Loan.
- Individuals who are delinquent on payment of State taxes, court-ordered child support or Federal income tax liabilities

EMPLOYER & SERVICE SITE ELIGIBILITY

For a behavioral health provider to participate in BHLRP, his/her current employer or service site (if the employer is the same as the service site) must:

- Be a public or non-profit entity located and providing services in one of the following site types:
 - Behavioral health hospital including the Arizona State Hospital,
 - Behavioral health residential facility licensed under 9 A.A.C. 10 Article 7, or
 - Secure behavioral health residential facility licensed under 9 A.A.C. 10, Article 7 or 13 in Arizona
- Except for the Arizona State Hospital, must be located in a Mental Health Health Professional Shortage Area
- Accept assignment for payment under Medicare if providing behavioral health care services to adults, AHCCCS, and a qualifying health plan;
- Contract with the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System to provide services
- Agree to notify the Department when the employment status of the behavioral health provider changes

SERVICE REQUIREMENTS

Applicants can apply as full-time behavioral health providers. Full time means working at least an average of 36 hours per week, for at least 45 weeks per service year. Telemedicine services are eligible services for BHLRP.

QUALIFYING EDUCATIONAL LOANS

Qualifying student loans are limited to the recipient's government and commercial loans that cover educational and reasonable living expenses for undergraduate and graduate education pursued prior to obtaining the health professions degree including principal and interest. The Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) will only consider those loans towards the recipient's total indebtedness.

If a BHLRP participant obtains or is in the process of obtaining additional educational loans toward another health professions degree that will result in a change in discipline (e.g., a Licensed Professional Counselor obtains a doctorate in clinical psychology), he/she will need to apply to the BHLRP as a new participant in a future application cycle.

If a BHLRP participant obtains or is in the process of obtaining additional educational loans toward another health professions degree that will NOT result in a change in discipline (e.g. a Master's Level Nurse Practitioner obtains a Doctorate in Nursing Degree), the newly accrued loans will not qualify for BHLRP.

Consolidated/Refinanced Loans

The consolidated/refinanced loan must be from a government (Federal, State, or local) or commercial lender and must be for the applicant's qualifying educational loans only.

If an eligible educational loan has been consolidated/refinanced with debt other than the educational loan of the applicant, no portion of the consolidated/refinanced loan will be eligible for loan repayment.

For loans to remain eligible for the BHLRP's, applicants must keep their eligible educational loans segregated from all other debts. Eligible educational loans should not be consolidated with loans owed by any other person, such as a spouse or a child.

Obligations or debts incurred under the following are ineligible for loan repayment funds:

- A loan for which a behavioral health provider incurred a health professional service obligation which will not be fulfilled before the deadline for submission of a BHLRP initial application;
- A loan for which the associated documentation does not identify that the loan was solely applicable to the undergraduate or graduate education of a behavioral health provider;
- A Primary Care Loan;
- A loan subject to cancellation; or
- A residency loan.

PRIORITIZATION CRITERIA

Applicants are ranked based on the total health service priority score obtained from the prioritization criteria below. Applicants are awarded based on descending order of score until all program funds are exhausted.

- The applicant is a resident of Arizona for the past 12 months per A.R.S. 15-1802
- The applicant's service site is:
 - The Arizona State Hospital or behavioral health residential facility licensed under 9 A.A.C. 10 Article 13;
 - A behavioral health hospital in a rural county;
 - A behavioral health hospital in an urban county, other than as specified above
 - A behavioral health residential facility in a rural county;
 - A behavioral health residential facility in an urban county
- The applicant is providing direct patient care in a site that has a mental health HPSA score as defined by the US Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration, or at the Arizona State Hospital
- The applicant's years of service at the current service site
- The length of time the applicant has held the applicable license in Arizona
- The applicant is a graduate of an accredited Arizona health professional school or program
- The applicant has health service experience with a medically underserved population

AWARD AMOUNTS

As authorized in A.R.S. 36-2175, eligible applicants may receive a maximum of \$50,000 for an initial two years of service, and for subsequent years, a maximum of \$25,000 per year.

The award amounts for the Behavioral Health Loan Repayment are based on the highest health service priority score, the contract year of service with BHLRP, and the availability of funds.

Applicants with student loan indebtedness that is less than the award amount they are eligible to receive will be offered a loan repayment amount up to their student loan indebtedness amount subject to availability of funding.

Awards will be offered to applicants in descending order of the applicant's health service priority score. In the event that a recipient declines an award, the award will be offered to the next highest ranked applicant.

TAXABLE INCOME

Program participants in the BHLRP should note that these awards are taxable income. Program participants are responsible for any taxes owed as a result of the program participation and awards.

Participants will receive a W-2 from the Arizona General Accounting Office at the beginning of each year following receipt of BHLRP payment(s).

AWARD PROCESS

ADHS will notify all applicants of its decision regarding the BHLRP application via email generated from the PCO Portal.

Behavioral health providers whose applications have been approved must log into the PCO Portal to “Accept” or “Decline” their BHLRP award. Acceptance will trigger a notification to the program to proceed with contract development. The provider should expect their BHLRP contract via email from the ADHS Procurement Office within the 2 to 3 weeks prior to the proposed start date of their BHLRP contract. The contract will provide in detail the full terms and conditions for participating in BHLRP.

The behavioral health provider is not officially obligated to BHLRP until he/she signs and returns the contract and once countersigned by the ADHS Chief Procurement Officer. The behavioral health provider will receive a copy of the fully executed contract.

NOTE: ADHS will consider a non-response to the award notice as a “Denial” of the BHLRP award in which case, the funds will be re-allocated to the next awardee.

Applicants who were not approved for loan repayment will receive a notice from ADHS that will include the reason for denial and if applicable, the next application cycle within which to re-apply.

LOAN REPAYMENT PROCESS

Once a behavioral health provider has accepted the award and the BHLRP contract has been fully executed, the behavioral health provider is considered an “obligated” provider. The first loan repayment disbursement to the behavioral health provider’s lender(s) occurs after the first calendar quarter of service from the effective date of the loan repayment contract, and quarterly thereafter throughout the duration of the loan repayment contract. Since there will be a three-month period of time before the first payment is made to the lender(s), the behavioral health provider must coordinate with the lender(s) to make necessary adjustments to the payment schedule (if appropriate) for each loan so that quarterly payments will not result in late payments or delinquencies.

NOTE: BHLRP is intended to help reduce the behavioral health provider’s student loan debt. Therefore, behavioral health providers should not expect the quarterly BHLRP disbursements as the sole payor of their student loan debt unless their lender(s) could accommodate quarterly payments without resulting in late payments or delinquencies. Otherwise, behavioral health providers should plan on paying their monthly student loan statements.

In order to initiate loan repayments, the behavioral health provider is required to submit the Service Verification and Encounter Form within 10 business days after the end of each calendar quarter. The forms must reflect services rendered for the quarterly reporting dates as follows:

- January 1 - March 31
- April 1 - June 30
- July 1 – September 30
- October 1 – December 31

A behavioral health provider who is unable to submit the forms during the required timeframe must notify ADHS. Any delay in the behavioral health provider's submission of the forms may result in delay of loan repayment. Failure to submit the required forms will result in no loan repayment to the lender.

LOAN REPAYMENT AND GAPS IN SERVICE

A behavioral health provider who anticipates a gap in service must notify ADHS. Behavioral health providers must continue to submit the quarterly required Service Verification Form and annotate on the form the start and end dates of absences.

If the gap in service results in a cumulative absence from BHLRP service of greater than 35 working days per year, the contract must be extended for the period of time that exceeds the allowable 35 working days per year. Through a contract amendment, the new end date is established and the behavioral health provider's quarterly scheduled payment will be prorated accordingly.

If a behavioral health provider or a member of his/her immediate family has a medical condition that will result in an extended period of absence beyond 35 working days per year, the behavioral health provider must request a suspension of the BHLRP contract in writing to ADHS. If a suspension is requested and approved, the behavioral health provider's service commitment end date will be extended accordingly. During the suspension period, all loan repayments will cease.

REQUEST FOR CHANGE

Any Request for Change must be filed with ADHS electronically through the [PCO Portal](#). All requests must accompany the required supporting documents.

Change in Personal Information

1. Log in to the PCO Portal, initiate a Request for Change Application and make the necessary updates to the Personal/Discipline screen.
2. Upload supporting documentation to validate the new information (for example, proof of new address, valid state ID to document a legal name change, etc.)
3. Complete a new Substitute W-9 form and upload it to the Supporting Documents section.
4. Update the information in the Arizona Procurement Portal.

Change in Lender or Qualifying Loan Information

A BHLRP participant who wishes to change his/her lender or qualifying loan information (i.e. loan was sold to another lender, adjustment to the priority assigned to multiple lender payments, etc.) must submit a Request for Change within 10 business days. The Request for Change must accompany a copy of the recipient's billing statement from the new lender or qualifying loan. Upon receipt of the documents, program staff will review and ensure that the request for change in the lender or qualifying loan information is sufficient and compliant with program requirements.

NOTE: A Request for Change due to a Refinanced or Consolidated Loan(s) must accompany the consolidation documents filed with the new lender including the loan detail summary. ADHS will verify that the new refinanced or consolidated loans are the same loans initially approved for BHLRP.

Change in Employer or Service Site

The ADHS expects that the vast majority of the Arizona BHLRP participants will complete their service obligations at their originally selected sites. However, it is anticipated that this will not always be the case.

Behavioral health providers and service sites must make their best effort to seek a resolution of the issues in order for the behavioral health provider to remain at the original site for the duration of his/her service obligation. If a resolution is not possible, timely communication between ADHS and behavioral health providers will facilitate identification of the appropriate action by ADHS.

A BHLRP participant who wishes to transfer to another eligible employer or service site where the behavioral health provider does not anticipate a gap in service due to the transfer must immediately notify ADHS by email that they cannot fulfill their service obligation at the ADHS-approved service site.

- File a Request for Change of Employer or Service Site/Service Hours at least 30 days prior to the transfer.
- Submit the required supporting documents with the Request for Change for ADHS' review and approval.
 - Required Supporting Documents for an Employer or Service Site Change:
 - Employment Contract or Amendment that lists the new employer or service site including address, a provision for full-time employment of at least an average of 36 hours per week, employment start date, the name and address of the employer or service site
 - In lieu of an employment contract, an employment letter on appropriate letterhead that includes the name, address and telephone number of the employer and/or service site, full-time employment for at least an average of 36 hours per week, employment start date, for providers working at multiple sites, the estimated number of hours worked at each site
- Obtain approval from ADHS about the Request for Change to transfer to the new service site of the employer.

- NOTE: If the provider's new service site has a lower HPSA score than the original approved service site, the award amount will be reduced to the prescribed amount based on the lower HPSA score.

CONTRACT CANCELLATION

A behavioral health provider who has been awarded a BHLRP contract may cancel his/her contract without penalty within sixty (60) calendar days from the contract effective date if the following conditions are met:

- The behavioral health provider submits a written request to ADHS requesting cancellation of a loan repayment contract and the reason for the request;
- No loan repayment has been disbursed to the provider's lender; and
- The provider is unable or does not intend to complete the terms of the BHLRP contract.

While ADHS may not impose a penalty for a behavioral health provider who canceled a contract with the BHLRP, ADHS may consider the behavioral health provider ineligible to participate in the BHLRP in the future.

CONTRACT SUSPENSION

A contract suspension may be requested by BHLRP participants when the terms of the contract cannot be fulfilled due to:

1. Inability to complete service at the approved service site due to an employment resignation or termination, and the transfer to another service site has not yet been finalized.
2. A health condition or a health condition within the immediate family that restricts the behavioral health provider's ability to fulfill/complete the terms of the BHLRP contract.

The behavioral health provider must:

- Notify ADHS immediately in writing and include the last date of service with the approved employer/service site. With this notice, file a Request for a Contract Suspension for an initial suspension period of up to 6 months. ADHS will review the request and notify the behavioral health provider of ADHS' decision. If the contract suspension request is approved, *all loan repayments will cease and the behavioral health provider must assume responsibility for the loan.*
- During the suspension period, the behavioral health provider must report to ADHS once a month on an anticipated timeline for returning to BHLRP service. A behavioral health provider who is unable to resume service by the end of the initial suspension period may file a request for an additional 6-month suspension for a total maximum allowable contract suspension of 12 months.

- For providers on suspension due to a change in employer/service site, once an eligible site is found, notify ADHS and file a Request for Change in Employer or Service Site through the [PCO Portal](#), including the required supporting documentation.
- Notify ADHS when a return to work date is established. A contract amendment will be executed for the change in site (if applicable) and the new end date for the contract accounting for the gap in service while the contract was suspended.
- The behavioral health provider can resume BHLRP service at the new site once the contract amendment has been fully executed.

A behavioral health provider who does not resume employment by the end of the suspension period is deemed in default and will be required to pay the liquidated damages as provided in the BHLRP contract, unless the behavioral health provider is able to obtain a waiver of liquidated damages.

DEFAULT

Loan repayment recipients who do not complete the service obligation will be in default of their BHLRP contract. In determining defaults, ADHS determines that:

- The provider terminates employment at the approved service site and makes an independent decision to not complete service under the terms of the loan repayment contract.
- The provider failed to resume service at an eligible service site during or by the end of the contract suspension period.

Default providers will incur a debt to the State in an amount equal to the amount that has been paid to the lender(s) on behalf of the contractor at the time of the contract breach/default prorated based on the time not served on the contract.

The calculation for liquidated damages resulting from a breach of the BHLRP contract follows the example below:

A provider received a BHLRP award of \$50,000.00 for a 2-year commitment (8 quarterly payments of \$6,250) and defaulted after 6 months (two quarters) of service. The liquidated damages are calculated as follows:

- (1) *The prorated portion of service not completed, calculated by the number of months not served: 24 months of obligation minus 6 months served divided by total service obligation (24 months) $18 / 24 = 0.75$*
- (2) *The amount paid to the lender on behalf of the contractor for the number of quarters served. Six (6) months which is two (2) quarters served: 2 quarters served x \$6,250 per quarter = **\$12,500***
- (3) *\$12,500 (amount paid on behalf of participant) x .75 (prorated portion of service not completed) = **\$9,375 is the amount owed back to the program.***

The behavioral health provider shall pay the liquidated damages to the Department within one year after the termination date of the behavioral health provider's loan repayment contract or within one year after the end of loan repayment contract suspension approved according to R-9-15-107, whichever is later.

Avoiding Default

The loan repayment recipient must notify ADHS within 30 business days of his/her failure to complete the full term of the BHLRP contract. Based on the behavioral health provider's notification, the ADHS program manager may recommend that the behavioral health provider transfer to another eligible service site where he/she can fulfill the remaining terms of the BHLRP contract. A contract suspension may also be recommended to allow time for the provider to seek employment at an eligible service site. ADHS can provide technical assistance to assist providers in successfully transferring to a new site.

It is ultimately the responsibility of the behavioral health provider to find and match with an eligible site during the suspension period. Once the behavioral health provider finds a new eligible site to transfer to, he/she must file a request for a change in service site. After ADHS verifies that the new site meets program requirements, the loan repayment contract will then be reinstated and amended to reflect the new service site and end date. The behavioral health provider can only transfer to the new service site once a fully executed contract amendment has been established.

WAIVER OF PENALTIES FOR DEFAULT

A waiver permanently relieves the participant of all or part of the BHLRP obligation. ADHS will waive the liquidated damages due to the behavioral health provider's death.

ADHS may waive the liquidated damages if the behavioral health provider demonstrates one of the following:

- The provider suffers from a physical or behavioral health condition resulting in a temporary or permanent inability to perform services required by the BHLRP contract; or
- The behavioral health provider's immediate family has a chronic or terminal illness that prohibits the behavioral health provider from completing the terms of his/her BHLRP contract.

To request a waiver of liquidated damages, the behavioral health provider must submit a written request for a waiver of liquidated damages to ADHS. As prescribed in the program's administrative code, the written request must provide information about the behavioral health provider and the service site and must include but not limited to the following:

- A statement describing the behavioral health provider's physical or behavioral health condition or the chronic or terminal illness of the behavioral health provider's immediate family member;

- A statement describing why the behavioral health provider cannot complete the contact;
- A statement that the information included in the request for waiver is true and accurate;
- The behavioral health provider's signature and date of signature; and
- Documentation of the behavioral health provider's physical or behavioral health condition or the chronic or terminal illness of the behavioral health provider's immediate family member

After ADHS receives the information, ADHS may contact the behavioral health provider to request for additional information or the point of contact at the behavioral health provider's service site to verify the information in the request for waiver and to obtain any additional information regarding the request for waiver.

ADHS, with guidance from the Office of Administrative Counsel and Rules, will either approve the waiver request if it determines that the behavioral health provider meets the eligibility requirements to receive a waiver of liquidated damages based on submitted documentation. Otherwise, the waiver request is rejected and the behavioral health provider will be responsible to pay the liquidated damages. Regardless of the outcome, ADHS will issue a decision notice to the behavioral health provider.

APPLICATION CYCLES

Initial Application

Behavioral health providers who have NOT previously participated in the Arizona BHLRP may apply online during an open application cycle starting in late January and ending on March 1st of each year. A complete online application and required supporting documentation must be submitted through the [PCO Portal](#).

Renewal Application (3rd Year)

An applicant who is expected to complete the initial two years of participation in the 12 months after January 15 of each year, and whose service site is the Arizona State Hospital or has a HPSA score of 14 or more, may request to continue participation by submitting a renewal application by January 15 of the same year. The Renewal Application cycle announcement will be posted on the BHLRP website prior to its opening.

Supplemental Application

By July 1st of each year, the Department will determine if sufficient funds are available to open a Supplemental Application cycle. A behavioral health provider may apply to the Supplemental Application cycle if the applicant meets one of the criteria listed below:

1. Submitted an initial application that was denied during the same calendar year,
2. Provides services at the Arizona State Hospital and will have completed at least the first 2 years of participation in BHLRP before December 31st of the same calendar year,

3. Will have completed at least the initial 2 years of participation in BHLRP before December 31st of the same calendar year and was previously denied participation because loan repayment funds were not available,
4. Will have completed at least the initial two years of participation in BHLRP before December 31st of the same calendar year at a service site with a HPSA score of less than 14, or
5. Will complete 3 or more years of participation in the BHLRP before December 31 of the same calendar year.

The Department will announce the Supplemental Application cycle on the program's website prior to the opening of the cycle.

PREPARE FOR APPLICATION

To prepare for the application, applicants should have all the required documents ready for upload. Applicants are responsible for submitting a complete and accurate online application. Applicants should upload only clear and legible documents containing all of the specified information.

The system is designed to screen the applicant's eligibility for the BHLRP. Therefore, the applicant's responses to the application questionnaire may trigger a pop-up message informing the applicant of his/her ineligibility to the program or to apply during an open application cycle. Please refer to the Step-by-Step Application Instructions on the [Application Resources](#) page for more details on navigating the PCO Portal.

COMPLETING AN APPLICATION

Applicants must complete each of the sections below to be able to submit an online application.

1. **Personal/Discipline.** Complete all required fields and ensure that the information entered matches the supporting documentation uploaded with your application.
2. **Education/License.** Complete all sections for degrees you have earned. Applicants must complete the graduate education section if a graduate degree is required by their employer for their position. Copies of diplomas and a license to practice in Arizona will be required in the Supporting Documents section.
3. **Present/Past Commitments:** If you have an existing service obligation when applying, you must submit verification of service completion from the entity to which the obligation is owed prior to the proposed BHLRP contract start.
4. **Service to Underserved:** If you have health service experience to a medically underserved population, please provide the details in this section. Information entered in this section is used to score applicants, but is not a required component of the application. Any service entered in

this section must be accompanied by a certification letter from the employer. An example of a certification letter and instructions on identifying the HPSA or MUA number can be found [here](#).

5. **Qualifying Loans:** Answers in this section pertain to each qualifying educational loan for which an applicant is seeking repayment. All loans submitted will be verified to determine whether they are eligible for repayment under BHLRP. Please ensure that information entered in this section is supported by the *most current* billing statement that is uploaded in the Supporting Documents section.

For help in completing this section, visit the [Application Resources](#) webpage and click on the link for “How to Complete the Qualifying Loans Section.”

6. **Employer/Service Site Section.** In this section, applicants must select their Employer from the drop-down menu then select the Site Administrator. Then the sites registered in the BHLRP portal under the selected Site Admin will appear in the drop-down menu.

NOTE: If your employer is not in the drop-down menu, please contact workforce@azdhs.gov.

After selecting the site(s), an email will be generated to the Site Admin to complete the employment verification. Once the site admin completes the verification process, the applicant will receive an email notifying them that they may complete and submit their application.

NOTE: While you can navigate through all sections of the portal and upload all the required documents in the Supporting Documents section, you will not be able to access the “Checklist Verification” tab nor submit your application unless the employment verification process has been completed.

7. **Certification and Authorization:** Please carefully read the requirements provided in this section. Check the boxes to confirm and certify that you meet program requirements. Enter your initials in each box. Click “Save & Continue...”
8. **Supporting Documents.** Review each section and the description for all required supporting documents. At least one document must be uploaded per section. All templates, links and additional instructions may be found on the [Application Resources](#) webpage.
9. **Procurements**
 - a. The Substitute W-9 Form may be downloaded from the [Application Resources](#) page. Complete all required fields, save, and upload to the Procurements section.
 - b. Complete the supplier registration at the Arizona Procurement Portal (APP)
 - c. Access the Step-by-Step Guide for instructions. If you need technical support, contact the APP Help Desk by calling 602-542-7600.

- d. Obtain proof of Active Supplier status on APP by capturing a screenshot or PDF of the confirmation email from APP. Upload to the Procurements section.

10. Personal Information – the following documents are required:

- a. Copy of Birth Certificate, U.S. Passport (current or expired), certificate of naturalization, or documentation as a U.S. National
- b. Copy of Social Security Card
- c. Copy of current Arizona driver's license

11. License and Educational Certifications – upload the following documents:

- a. If applicable, a copy of current license to practice in Arizona
- b. Copy of undergraduate and if applicable, graduate and post-graduate studies diploma
- c. For physicians, a copy of board certification or acceptance letter from examining authority
- d. If applicable, a copy of state and/or national certification (for advanced practice providers, behavioral health providers, and pharmacists).

NOTE: Psychiatry Certification. If an applicant selects psychiatry as a specialty, he/she will be required to upload a copy of the certificate of completion or diploma from the psychiatry training program where the applicant matriculated.

12. Employment Verification Documents

- a. Copy of a fully executed employment contract **MUST** include the following:
 - i. Description of full-time employment (i.e. average number of hours per week)
 - ii. Employment start date
 - iii. Name and address of the service site(s) where the full-time direct patient care will be rendered
- b. In lieu of an employment contract, an employment letter on appropriate letterhead **MUST** include the following:
 - i. Name, address, and phone number of the employer if different from the service sites(s)

- ii. Name and phone number of the employer's contact person or the contact person for the service site
- iii. Description of full-time employment (i.e. average number of hours per week)
- iv. Employment start date
- v. For providers working at multiple sites, employer letter indicating the provider's estimated number of hours at each site

13. Loan Documents

- a. Upload a copy of the most recent billing statement(s) for each qualifying educational loan. This document is used to provide current information on the applicant's qualifying educational loans. Often, borrowers receive monthly statements indicating the status of his/her loan balance. This document should:
 - i. be on official letterhead or other clear verification that it comes from the lender/holder
 - ii. include the payment address of the lender;
 - iii. include the name of the borrower;
 - iv. contain the borrower's account number;
 - v. include the date of the statement (statement must be the most current statement)
 - vi. include the current outstanding balance (principal and interest) or the current payoff balance; and
 - vii. include the current interest rate
- b. Documentation from the lender(s) that the loans were used solely for education and reasonable living expenses.
 - i. NOTE: For all Federal loans, the National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS) Aid Summary Report may be used to verify the originating loan information, which can be accessed at NSLDS Student Access National Student Loan Data System. Visit the [Application Resources](#) webpage for Step-by-Step instructions to access the aid summary.
 - ii. For all other qualifying loans, the disbursement report can be satisfied through various types of documents including a promissory note, a

disclosure statement, and letters directly from the lender containing the required information (as indicated above). The applicant may be able to obtain this disbursement information on his/her lender's website; however, all documentation must be on official letterhead from the lender.

- c. For consolidated loans, a disbursement report from the new lender or servicer must be able to provide an itemized breakdown of the consolidated loans and to certify that only the applicant's student loans were consolidated. Alternatively, the loan detail summary obtained from the NSLDS website should provide documentation of the consolidated loans obtained while attending school. For private loans, a lender's statement certifying that the loans were for educational purposes only. If the loans from the private lender were originally federal loans, the applicant must be able to show the history of the loans before those loans were acquired by the private lender.

14. Additional Documents

- a. Evidence of residency in Arizona per A.R.S. 15-1802 (required if claiming AZ residency for at least 12 consecutive months preceding the application submission due date for which extra points are given).
- b. Certification Letter(s) as evidence of Service to Medically Underserved Population (required if qualifying for extra points for at least 500 hours of services reported in Section "Service to Underserved" of the application). See Appendix, page 35 for the letter template.

15. **Checklist Verification:** The applicant must complete the checklist to verify that all required and applicable supporting documents have been uploaded to the application.

NOTE: The applicant is responsible for submitting the entire application once all sections of the application are completed for the PCO to review.

PCO CONTACT INFORMATION

- For correspondence, please contact our centralized email: workforce@azdhs.gov
- For more information, please visit the [BHLRP website](#)

