The Health Professions Education Foundation is pleased to announce that the 2015/2016 Mental Health Loan Assumption Program (MHLAP) Cycle is now open. For Fiscal Year 2015/16, the program cycle will be open from August 3, 2015 to September 30, 2015. Applications submitted after September 30, 2015 mid-night will not be accepted. Please encourage all potential applicants to go to https://calreach.oshpd.ca.gov to complete their application, as applications will only be accepted online. If applicants have applied in the past, they are eligible to apply again, however, a new application must be submitted each time. Prior year application will not be accepted for the current cycle. For resources on how to apply, please visit www.healthprofessions.ca.gov/.

Eligibility Requirements:

- Applicants may work or volunteer with an organization which is administered, in whole or part, by the County Mental Health Department including County Mental Health funded contractors, subcontractors and Juvenile Halls.
- Applicants must be working or volunteering in a hard-to-fill or retain position in any capacity that meets your County Mental Health workforce needs. The County Mental Health Director may determine what professions or positions fit their criteria for their County.

Eligible Professions (hard-to-fill and/or retain) for MHLAP include:

- Licensed Marriage & Family Therapists
- Marriage & Family Therapist Interns
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- Juvenile Hall Facility Mental Health Staff

MHLAP has included two attachments that can help answer questions and assist in the application process. They include: 1) MHLAP FAQs 2) Sample MHLAP Application Questions and materials needed. The application website listed above also has additional information.

MHLAP is administered by the Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development (OSHPD) and their website contains the most up-to-date information. If you have specific Sacramento County questions, please contact Debrah DeLoney-Deans, Workforce, Education and Training Coordinator at deloneyde@saccounty.net or (916) 876-5128.

Thank you in advance for your assistance in distributing this important information to interested parties.

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MHLAP Program Overview

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Eligible Professions: Counties determine which professions are eligible for their County's hard-to-fill/retain positions. Some of the eligible professions include, but are not limited to the following:

- Registered/Licensed Psychologists
- Registered/Licensed Psychiatrists
- Registered/Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists
- Registered/Licensed Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioners
- Support, managerial and/or fiscal staff may be eligible
- Postdoctoral Psychological Assistants
- Postdoctoral Psychological Trainees
- Registered/Licensed Clinical Social Workers
- Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor Interns
- Licensed Professional Clinical Counselors

Application FAQs

1. How do I apply?

Visit our CalREACH website: https://calreach.oshpd.ca.gov.

2. If I have previously applied to MHLAP and want to re-apply, do I need to submit a new application?

Yes, you must submit a new application each time you apply.

3. When is the deadline to apply for MHLAP?

The application must be submitted via the online application system, CalREACH, by September 30, 2015. Applications submitted after September 30, 2015 12 mid-night will not be accepted.

4. Can I submit my application prior to the deadline?

You are encouraged to submit your application prior to the deadline; however, the application will not be available until August 3, 2015.

5. How do you select the award recipients for MHLAP?

Recipients are selected based on the following criteria:

- Cultural and linguistic competence
- Experience with working in underserved areas
- Career goals
- Other community service and involvement
- Proof of employment or volunteer work in the County Public Mental Health System*
- *Only individuals who are verified by their County Mental Health Director/Designee as working in the County Public Mental Health System in a hard-to-fill/retain position are eligible.

6. Do certain professions receive preference and/or larger award amount?

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7. What is a "service obligation?"

A "service obligation" means the contractual obligation agreed to by the recipient of a loan assumption or stipend. It is the time you spend working or volunteering for your employer for the duration that is outlined in the contract. <u>MHLAP has a 12-month service obligation</u>.

8. Do I have to be a permanent California resident and U.S. citizen to apply for the MHLAP?

Applicants must have a valid legal presence and ability to work and provide care in the State of California. If you are already working in California, you have a valid legal presence.

- 9. Can I apply for other Health Professions Education Foundation (HPEF) programs while applying for MHLAP?
 Yes. You may apply to all HPEF programs for which you are eligible. However, if selected for more than one program, you may only accept one award, since you may not have overlapping service obligations.
- 10. Can I apply for MHLAP, even if I currently owe a service obligation to HPEF or another entity?
 Yes. You may apply if you have an existing service obligation to HPEF or another organization, only if your service obligation ends before June 30, 2016. You must complete your existing obligation before starting your (new) obligation with HPEF/MHLAP. This includes, but is not limited to, CalSWEC, County, or other MHSA stipend programs.
- 11. How do I know if my mental health profession will qualify for the MHLAP?
 Counties determine which positions fit their hard-to-fill/retain criteria and are eligible. Eligibility requirements may, therefore, vary by County and year. MHLAP staff will direct you to your appropriate employment County contact.
- 12. How do I know if my facility will qualify for MHLAP?
 To qualify for MHLAP, you must work in the County Public Mental Health System, which means publicly-funded mental health programs/services that are administered, in whole or in part, by the County Department of Mental Health. This may include County Juvenile Hall facilities and County contractors or sub-contractors. However, publicly-funded programs and/or services administered, in whole or in part, by adult correctional entities or services provided in adult correctional facilities do not qualify.
- Yes. Your direct supervisor or administrative officer will be required to sign the Employment or Volunteer Verification Form (EVF), included in the application. You will need to print this form from the online application and upload it onto the online application system. MHLAP staff will forward your EVF to your County Mental Health Director/Designee for verification, once your application is received.
- 14. What employment county do I indicate on my MHLAP application?
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 - A mental health clinic's headquarters or facility is in Yolo County but does not serve any Yolo County residents
 (the clients come from other counties). In this case, the Yolo County Mental Health Director would not be able to
 verify this applicant as eligible.
 - An applicant's headquarters could be in Sacramento, but s/he provides care through a county contract in Placer.
 In this case, the Placer County Mental Health Director, not the Sacramento Mental Health Director, would be required to verify the applicant as hard-to-fill/retain.
 - If switching employment counties during the 12-month service obligation, you will automatically be ineligible for MHLAP.
- 15. Do all applicants of MHLAP receive a loan repayment award?

No. Awards for MHLAP are made on a competitive basis. Additionally, applicants may not always receive the maximum loan repayment award of \$10,000.

16. What if my loans are consolidated?

If your educational loans are consolidated, you may list only the consolidated loan information on the Educational Debt Reporting Form. Also, include the corresponding lender statement. Loans may not be consolidated with other types of debt or with another person.

17. What if my loans are in forbearance or deferment?

You are considered eligible for a loan repayment award if your loans are in forbearance or deferment so long as those remain with a commercial or government educational lender. You are, however, not qualified if your loan is in default.

Other FAQs

1. How is MHLAP funded?

MHLAP is funded by the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA), also known as Proposition 63 approved by California voters in November 2004. (See MHLAP Program Overview above)

2. How many applicants are awarded through MHLAP?

The number of applicants awarded will depend on the number of eligible applications and the availability of funding.

3. How will I be notified of an award?

The Foundation will notify all applicants of their MHLAP results when all applications have been reviewed and scored. Award notifications will be sent before service obligations begin on or before June 30, 2016. Award notifications and other correspondence will be sent via email.

4. If I am selected for an MHLAP award, does the money come directly to me or will it be sent to my lender?

A single payment shall be made on the award recipient's behalf directly to his/her lender after the 12-month service obligation has been completed and all necessary paperwork has been received and processed. Awardees should expect it to take from 4 to 8 weeks for the payment to be processed after they have completed their obligation and submitted all necessary paperwork.

5. If I am selected for an MHLAP award, do I still have to make payments to my lender/s?

Yes. You are responsible for making continued loan payments to your lender/s throughout your participation in MHLAP. The Foundation is not responsible for any late fees, penalties, or accrued interest.

6. If I am selected for an MHLAP award, will I still get paid my salary?

Yes. Participation in MHLAP does not affect your salary.

7. If I have been working in a qualified facility for several years already, can I backdate my contract to include time that I Have already served?

No. You cannot use prior employment in order to complete the terms of your service obligation for MHLAP. The start date of your 12-month service obligation will begin after you are awarded and have signed your contract. MHLAP service obligation will begin on or before June 30, 2016.

8. What happens if I am unable to fulfill the terms of my contractual obligation and complete my service obligation?

If you are unable to complete your 12-month service obligation in the County Public Mental Health System, no payment will be made toward your loan/s. The award is not pro-rated based on the number of months served.

MHLAP CalREACH Application Questions and Materials Needed

Materials needed to be uploaded: Lender statement, proof of professional license/registration (if applicable), proof of honorable military discharge (if applicable) and employment verification form

Cultural and Linguistic Competency:

Instructions: Please elaborate on how have your personal, educational and professional experiences contributed to your cultural or linguistic competence? Tell us if and how the statements below apply to you and/or the mental health consumers you serve.

Questions:

- Briefly explain how you have utilized the strengths and forms of healing unique to an
 individual's racial/ethnic, cultural, geographic, socio-economic, or linguistic population
 when providing services or support. This may also pertain to military veterans.
- Describe your work, unpaid and paid, serving military veterans or a particular racial/ethnic, cultural, geographic, faith based, socio-economic, LGBTQ, and/or linguistic population.
- Give an example of how you participated in treatment interventions and outreach services to military veterans, those with lived experience or individuals of diverse racial/ethnic, LGBTQ, cultural or linguistic populations.
- Give an example of how your experiences, education, work or volunteer service has contributed to your competence in creating rapport with individuals with few literacy skills, are not literate, or have disabilities that impair communication.
- Elaborate on whether you consider yourself part of an underserved or un-served population/community and why.

Professional Goals:

- Elaborate on your professional career goals for the next 5 years as they relate to the mental health profession.
- Where do you plan on working in the next 5 years?

Community Service: List any community service or volunteer organizations that you have been involved in the past five years. Internships do not apply. If none, please leave blank.

Personal Statement: Elaborate on how your personal background, education, training or lived experience as a consumer or family member in the mental health system has:

- · Contributed to your commitment to working in the public mental health system
- · Enabled you to better serve the mental health consumers you work with
- · Contributed to your cultural competency working in the public mental health system

Selection Criteria: Selection of awards is based solely on the information and documents contained in the application packet which includes proof of your working or volunteering in the County Public Mental Health System, cultural and linguistic competence, career goals, other community service and involvement, and your experience with or background in an underserved or un-served population or community. Only individuals who are verified by their County Mental Health Director/designee as working the County Public Mental Health System in a hard—to-fill/retain position are eligible.

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13. Will my employer need to fill out any forms for MHLAP?

Yes. Your direct supervisor or administrative officer will be required to sign the Employment or Volunteer Verification Form (EVF), included in the application. You will need to print this form from the online application and upload it onto the online application system. MHLAP staff will forward your EVF to your County Mental Health Director/Designee for verification, once your application is received.

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- Elaborate on whether you consider yourself part of an underserved or un-served population/community and why.

Professional Goals:

- Elaborate on your professional career goals for the next 5 years as they relate to the mental health profession.
- Where do you plan on working in the next 5 years?

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Personal Statement: Elaborate on how your personal background, education, training or lived experience as a consumer or family member in the mental health system has:

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- Enabled you to better serve the mental health consumers you work with
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