

Primary Care Loan Program

The Primary Care Loan Program provides long-term, low interest loans to full time, financially needy students to pursue a degree in allopathic or osteopathic medicine.

Medical students receiving a Primary Care Loan must agree to:

- **Enter and Complete Residency training in Primary Care within four years after graduation AND**
- **Practice in Primary Care for the life of the loan**
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Eligible Applicants

You are eligible to apply for this loan at a school that participates in the Primary Care Loan Program if you are:

- **A citizen, national, or a lawful permanent resident of the United States or the District of Columbia, the Commonwealths of Puerto Rico or the Marianas Islands, the Virgin Islands, Guam, the American Samoa, the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, the Republic of Palau, the Republic of the Marshall Islands and the Federated State of Micronesia.**
- **Enrolled as full time student at an accredited, participating school in a degree program leading to a doctor of medicine or doctor of osteopathy.**
- **Able to demonstrate financial need and provide financial information about your parents (independent students do not have to provide parental financial information, but must be at least 24 years of age and must provide documentation showing you have been independent for a minimum of 3 years.**
- **Not in default on any federal loan and owe no federal grant refund.**
- **In good academic standing**
- **Registered with Selective Service if required by law**

Eligible Discipline

Under this program, funds are awarded to accredited schools of

- **Allopathic medicine**
- **Osteopathic medicine**

Program Details

The Primary Care Loan (PCL) program interest rate is 5 percent and begins to accrue interest following a one year grace period after you cease to be a full time student. When compared with other federal student loans and private loans, the PCL provides significant savings. The loan also offers deferment of principal and interest not found in other loan programs. The financial aid office at participating schools where you are enrolled will determine how much you can borrow based on your eligibility, the amount of PCL funds available at your institution and other criteria. The maximum award for this is cost of attendance (including tuition, fees, educational expenses, and reasonable living expenses).

Primary Care Requirements

New recipients of the Primary Care Loan must enter into a residency training program in family medicine, internal medicine, pediatrics, combined medicine/pediatrics, preventive medicine, or osteopathic general practice; must complete the residency program within 4 years of graduation; and must practice in primary care for either 10 years (including the years spent in residency training) or through the date on which the loan is repaid in full, whichever occurs first. Recipients of loans made prior to March 23, 2010 are required to practice in primary health care until the loan is paid in full.

Primary Care: Acceptable Specialties

- **Clinical Preventive Medicine**
- **Occupational Medicine**
- **Public Health**
- **Public Policy Fellowship**
- **Senior Residencies in one of the above**
- **Geriatrics**
- **Adolescent Medicine**
- **Adolescent Pediatrics**
- **Sports Medicine**
- **Faculty administrators/policy makers certified in one of the primary health care disciplines**

Non-Primary Care: Unacceptable

- * **Cardiology**
- * **Gastroenterology**
- * **Obstetrics/Gynecology**
- * **Surgery**
- * **Dermatology**
- * **Radiology**
- * **Rehabilitation Medicine**
- * **Psychiatry**
- * **Emergency Medicine**

The primary health service obligation may be waived if you terminate studies before graduating and do not later resume studies or suspended for the period you are not enrolled because you have terminated studies before graduating; your obligation is resumed when you return to medical school to complete your studies.

Should you fail to fulfill the service obligation; the outstanding loan balance will be computed annually at an interest rate of 2 percent greater than the rate you would pay if compliant. For recipients of loans made prior to March 23, 2010 who fail to fulfill the service obligation, the outstanding loan balance will be computed annually at an interest rate of 18 percent from the date of noncompliance. If you are not firmly committed to the practice of primary health care, you should not accept a Primary Care Loan.

You may obtain additional certification in primary health care while fulfilling your service obligation, as long as you complete your primary health care residency program within four years after graduation. For example, if your primary care residency is completed in 3 years after graduation, you may obtain certification in an area of training to enhance your primary health care practice (i.e. geriatrics) at any time, and it will be considered an acceptable activity for fulfillment of your service obligation.

Repayment

Repayment begins following a 12 month grace period after you cease to be a full time student. Interest at 5 percent is computed on the unpaid principal balance and begins to accrue upon expiration of your grace period unless you are eligible to defer payment. Loans are repayable over a period of not less than 10 years nor more than 25 years, at the discretion of the institution.

Repayment of the Primary Care Loan may be deferred for:

- **Up to 4 years in a eligible primary health residency program**
- **Up to 3 years as a volunteer under the Peace Corps Act practicing in an eligible primary health care activity;**
- **Up to 3 years as a member of an uniformed service. To be eligible for deferment you must be on sustained full time active duty practicing in an eligible primary health care activity in the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Corps or the U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps.**

The Primary Care Loan is NOT eligible for consolidation because of the service obligation.

The Primary Care Loan normally falls under a Standard Ten Year Repayment Plan.

In the unfortunate event of the borrower's death or total disability, the obligation to repay the loan will be canceled upon receipt of the required documentation.