Application Submission Deadline: September 28, 2017, 7:30pm ET

For questions, please call 1-800-221-9393 (TTY: 1-877-897-9910) Monday through Friday (except federal holidays) 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 pm ET.

Authority: Section 846 of the Public Health Service Act, as amended (42 U.S.C. 297n). Future changes in the governing statute, implementing regulations and Program Guidance may also be applicable to the NURSE Corps Loan Repayment Program participants.
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PRIVACY ACT NOTIFICATION STATEMENT

General
This information is provided pursuant to the Privacy Act of 1974 (Public Law 93-579), as amended, for individuals supplying information for inclusion in a system of records.

Statutory Authority
Section 846 of the Public Health Service Act, as amended (42 U.S.C. 297n).

Purposes and Uses
The purpose of the NURSE Corps Loan Repayment Program (LRP) is to provide loan repayment assistance to professional Registered Nurses (RNs), including advanced practice nurses (APRNs), in return for a commitment to working at eligible health care facilities with a critical shortage of nurses or serving as nurse faculty in eligible schools of nursing. The information applicants supply will be used to evaluate their eligibility, qualifications, and suitability for participating in the NURSE Corps LRP. In addition, information from other sources will be considered (e.g., credit bureau reports).

An individual’s contract, application, required supplemental forms, supporting documentation, related correspondence, and data are maintained in a system of records to be used within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to monitor NURSE Corps LRP-related activities. The information may also be disclosed outside the Department, as permitted by the Privacy Act and Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), to the Congress, the National Archives, the General Accountability Office, and pursuant to court order and various routine uses described here: http://www.hrsa.gov/about/privacyact/09150037.html).

The name of a NURSE Corps LRP participant, discipline, specialty, business address, business telephone number, and service obligation completion date may be provided to professional placement firms in response to requests made under FOIA.

Effects of Nondisclosure
Disclosure of the information sought is voluntary; however, if not submitted, except for the replies to questions related to race/ethnicity, an application may be considered incomplete and therefore may not be considered for funding under this announcement.

PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT PUBLIC BURDEN STATEMENT

An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a current OMB control number. The current OMB control number for information collected through this application process is 0915-0140 and the expiration date is 06/30/2020. Public reporting burden for this collection is estimated to average 0.9 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to HRSA Reports Clearance Office, 5600 Fishers Lane, Room 14N39, Rockville, Maryland 20857.

Non-Discrimination Policy Statement
In accordance with applicable Federal laws and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services policy, the Department does not discriminate on the basis of any non-merit factor, including race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability (physical or mental), age, status as a parent, or genetic information.
PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Please read the Application and Program Guidance (Guidance) in its entirety before proceeding with an application. The Guidance explains in detail the rights and obligations of individuals selected to participate in the NURSE Corps Loan Repayment Program and outlines the financial, legal, and other consequences of failing to perform the mandatory service obligation associated with any NURSE Corps Loan Repayment Program Award.

INTRODUCTION

While the supply of nurses differs across geographic regions, there continues to be a need to address the nursing workforce distribution in critical shortage facilities (CSFs) across the U.S. Many factors will continue to affect the demand for and supply of the nurse workforce. These include population growth, an aging population, overall economic conditions, aging of the nursing workforce, demand for health services broadly and within specific health care settings, and health care reimbursement. Additionally, NURSE LRP assists nurse faculty who teach and train the nurses needed addressing these issues.

The NURSE Corps LRP is administered by the Bureau of Health Workforce (BHW) in the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The NURSE Corps LRP Continuation Contract is an obligation to serve full-time for one (1) additional year at an eligible CSF or eligible school of nursing. It offers current participants who successfully complete their initial two-year service obligation, and who have applied all NURSE Corps LRP payments received under their initial two-year contract the option to reduce their approved qualifying educational loans by providing a third year of service. In exchange, HRSA will pay an additional 25 percent of the participant’s original qualifying educational loan balance. All potential NURSE Corps LRP Continuation Contracts are subject to the availability of funds and are not guaranteed.

Participants applying for a NURSE Corps LRP Continuation Contract cannot request to switch to a different service option. For example, if a participant is serving under an initial two-year contract as an RN at a CSF, the individual will not be allowed to switch and serve as nurse faculty (NF) in an eligible school of nursing.

Critical Shortage Facility (CSF) – A health care facility located in, designated as, or serving a primary medical care or mental health, Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA). The facility must be a public or private nonprofit entity.

Eligible School of Nursing – An accredited public or private nonprofit collegiate, associate degree or diploma school of nursing in a State that provides educational training to become a registered nurse (RN) or advanced practice registered nurse (APRN). The educational programs in the school of nursing must be accredited by a national nursing accrediting agency or state approval agency recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education. See section 801 of the Public Health Service Act for a full and complete definition of all applicable terms.
Eligibility Requirements
To be eligible for a NURSE Corps LRP Continuation award, an applicant must:

1. Be a current participant serving full-time at an eligible CSF or eligible school of nursing, as approved by the NURSE Corps LRP under the initial two-year contract;

2. Have a current, full, permanent, unencumbered, unrestricted license to practice as an RN or APRN in the State in which employed or authorized to practice pursuant to the Nurse Licensure Compact. All NURSE Corps LRP participants must retain an RN or APRN license during the one-year NURSE Corps LRP Continuation Contract service obligation period;

3. Have applied all the NURSE Corps LRP payments received after Federal tax withholding under the initial two-year contract to reduce the original qualifying educational loan balances;

4. Have no current Federal service obligation other than the NURSE Corps LRP. The only exception is for members of a reserve component of the Armed Forces or the National Guard;

   a. Reservists should note the following: Military training or service performed by reservists will not satisfy the NURSE Corps LRP obligation. If a participant’s combined military training and service, or other absences from the CSF or school of nursing, will exceed 7 weeks (35 workdays) per service year, the participant should request a suspension; payments will be stopped, and will resume when the reservist returns to full-time service. The service obligation end date will be extended to compensate for the break in service.

5. Continue to meet all other program eligibility requirements, be in full compliance with the existing NURSE Corps LRP service obligation, and continue to work for the duration of the NURSE Corps LRP Continuation Contract at the CSF or school of nursing as was approved by the NURSE Corps LRP under the initial two-year contract; and

6. Have not defaulted on any Federal payment obligations (e.g., Health Education Assistance Loans, Nursing Student Loans, FHA Loans, Federal income tax liabilities, etc.), or non-Federal payment obligations (e.g., court-ordered child support payments, mortgage payments, currently excluded, debarred, suspended, or disqualified by a Federal Agency from participating in covered transaction, etc.).

Please Note: If a CSF loses its HPSA designation (i.e., all applicable primary medical care and/or mental health HPSA designations are withdrawn) or changes to a for-profit status, or an eligible school of nursing loses its accreditation or changes to a for-profit status, a participant working at that site will not be eligible for a NURSE Corps LRP Continuation Contract award. If a participant decides to transfer to another eligible CSF or eligible school of nursing, the individual must request and receive approval prior to applying for a NURSE
Corps LRP Continuation Contract. If a participant decides to relocate, the individual should update their forwarding contact information. Moving expenses will not be paid under the NURSE Corps.

**Eligible Health Care Facility Types**

**NURSE Corps LRP participant serving as Nurse Faculty**

A participant who is a nurse faculty member is required to provide full-time service by teaching pre-licensure students, RNs and/or APRNs at an eligible public or private nonprofit school of nursing. The NURSE Corps LRP considers a school of nursing to be eligible if it is accredited by a national nursing accrediting agency or by a State agency recognized for this purpose by the Secretary of Education. For the list of the agencies recognized by the Secretary of Education for purposes of accrediting nurse education programs, please visit:

https://www2.ed.gov/admins/finaid/accred/accreditation_pg6.html

**NURSE Corps LRP participant serving as an RN or APRN**

A participant who is an RN or APRN (such as an NP) is required to provide full-time service at a CSF. The CSF must be a public or private nonprofit health care facility located in, designated as, or serving a primary medical care or mental health HPSA. Eligible health care facility types are:

1. **Critical Access Hospital (CAH)** A facility certified by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) under section 1820 of the Social Security Act. In general, a CAH must be located in a rural area in a State that has a Medicare Rural Hospital Flexibility Program, maintain no more than 25 inpatient beds and an average annual length of stay of 96 hours or less, furnish 24-hour emergency care services 7 days a week, and be located either more than a 35-mile drive from the nearest hospital or CAH, or more than a 15-mile drive in areas with mountainous terrain or only secondary roads. For more information, please visit:

2. **Disproportionate Share Hospital (DSH)** – A hospital that has a disproportionately large share of low-income patients and receives an augmented payment from the State under Medicaid or a payment adjustment from Medicare. Hospital-based outpatient clinics are included under this definition. For more information, please visit:
   https://www.hrsa.gov/opa/eligibilityandregistration/hospitals/disproportionatesharehospitals/

3. **Public Hospital** – Any hospital that is owned by a government (Federal, State, or local), receives government funding, and is primarily engaged in providing the following care, by or under the supervision of physicians, to inpatients: (a) diagnostic and therapeutic services for medical diagnosis, treatment, and care of injured, disabled, or sick persons; or (b) rehabilitation of injured, disabled, or sick persons. U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs hospitals and military treatment facility hospitals are also included under this definition. State psychiatric hospitals must use facility HPSAs to determine site eligibility – population and geographic HPSAs cannot be used.

4. **Private Nonprofit Hospital** – A hospital in a State that is a private nonprofit entity and is primarily engaged in providing the following care, by or under the supervision of
physicians, to inpatients: (a) diagnostic and therapeutic services for medical diagnosis, treatment, and care of injured, disabled, or sick persons, or (b) rehabilitation of injured, disabled, or sick persons.

(5) **Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC)** – FQHCs, as defined in section 1861(aa)(4) of the Social Security Act, include: (1) nonprofit entities or public agencies that receive a grant under section 330 of the Public Health Service Act or funding from such a grant under a contract with the recipient of such a grant and meets the requirements to receive such a grant; (2) entities designated as “Look-Alikes” by the U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services (Secretary of HHS) (or designee) as meeting the requirements for receiving a grant under section 330 of the Public Health Service Act; and (3) outpatient health programs or facilities operated by a tribe or tribal organization under the Indian Self-Determination Act or by an urban Indian organization receiving funds under Title V of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act. FQHCs include Community Health Centers, Migrant Health Centers, Health Care for the Homeless Health Centers, and Public Housing Primary Care Health Centers. For more information, please visit: [https://www.hrsa.gov/opoa/eligibilityandregistration/healthcenters/fqhc/index.html](https://www.hrsa.gov/opoa/eligibilityandregistration/healthcenters/fqhc/index.html).

(6) **Indian Health Service (IHS) Health Center** – A health care facility (whether operated directly by the IHS or by a tribe or tribal organization, contractor or grantee under the Indian Self-Determination Act, as described in 42 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 136, Subparts C and H, or by an urban Indian organization receiving funds under Title V of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act) that is physically separated from a hospital, and which provides clinical treatment services on an outpatient basis to persons of Indian or Alaskan Native descent as described in 42 CFR Section 136.12. For more information, please visit: [http://www.ihs.gov](http://www.ihs.gov).

(7) **Native Hawaiian Health Center** – An entity as defined in 42 U.S.C. § 11711(4)(a) which is organized under the laws of the State of Hawaii; (b) which provides or arranges for health care services through practitioners licensed by the State of Hawaii, where licensure requirements are applicable; (c) which is a public or nonprofit private entity; and, (d) in which Native Hawaiian health practitioners significantly participate in the planning, management, monitoring, and evaluation of health services. For more information, please see the Native Hawaiian Health Care Act of 1992, as amended. For more information, please visit: [https://www.hrsa.gov/opoa/eligibilityandregistration/healthcenters/nativehawaiian/index.html](https://www.hrsa.gov/opoa/eligibilityandregistration/healthcenters/nativehawaiian/index.html).

(8) **Rural Health Clinic (RHC)** – An entity that CMS has certified as a RHC under section 1861(aa)(2) of the Social Security Act. A RHC provides outpatient services to a non-urban area with an insufficient number of health care practitioners. For more information, please visit: [https://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNProducts/downloads/rhclistbyprovidername.pdf](https://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNProducts/downloads/rhclistbyprovidername.pdf)

(9) **State or Local Public Health or Human Services Department** – The State, county, parish, or district entity that is responsible for providing health care services, which include health promotion, disease prevention, and intervention services, in clinics or other health care facilities that are funded and operated by the State Public Health, Health, or Human Services Department.

(10) **Nurse Managed Health Clinic/Center** – An entity as defined in 42 U.S.C. § 254c-
1a(a)(2) which is a nurse-practice arrangement, managed by advanced practice nurses, that provides primary care or wellness services to underserved or vulnerable populations and that is associated with a school, college, university or department of nursing, FQHC, or independent nonprofit health or social services agency.

**Urgent Care Center** – An entity that provides acute episodic care on a walk-in basis to assist patients with an illness or injury that does not appear to be limb or life-threatening and is either beyond the scope or availability of the typical primary care practice.

**Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC)** – A clinic that is certified by a State in accordance with criteria published by the Secretary of HHS and with the requirements of the Protecting Access to Medicare Act of 2014. The criteria include requirements for staffing, availability and accessibility of services, care coordination, scope of services, quality and other reporting, and organizational authority. Certified Community Mental Health Centers (CMHCs) would also fall under this category. A CMHC is an entity that meets applicable licensing or certification requirements for CMHCs in the State in which it is located and provides (1) outpatient services, including specialized outpatient services for children, the elderly, individuals who are chronically mentally ill, and residents of its mental health service area who have been discharged from inpatient treatment at a mental health facility; (2) 24-hour-a-day emergency care services; (3) day treatment, or other partial hospitalization services, or psychosocial rehabilitation services; and (4) screening for patients being considered for admission to State mental health facilities to determine the appropriateness of such admission.

**Free and Charitable Clinics** – An entity that is a safety-net health care organizations that utilizes a volunteer/staff model to provide a range of medical, dental, pharmacy, vision and/or behavioral health services to economically disadvantaged individuals. Such clinics are 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organizations, or operate as a program component or affiliate of a 501(c)(3) organization. Please note: free clinic volunteer staff are not eligible for loan repayment awards.

**End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) Dialysis Centers** – An entity that provides outpatient maintenance dialysis services, or home dialysis training and support services, or both. ESRD facilities are described under section 1881 of the Social Security Act and 42 CFR 413.174 as being either hospital-based or independent facilities.

**Ambulatory Surgical Center** – An entity that operates exclusively for the purpose of furnishing surgical services to patients who do not require hospitalization and in which the expected duration of services does not exceed 24 hours following admission.

**Residential Nursing Home** – An institution that is primarily engaged in providing, on a regular basis, health related care and service to individuals who because of their mental or physical condition require care and service (above the level of room and board) that can be made available to them only through institutional facilities. This category includes a “skilled nursing facility,” which is an institution (or distinct part of an institution), certified under section 1819(a) of the Social Security Act, that is primarily engaged in providing skilled nursing care and related services to residents requiring medical, rehabilitation, or nursing care and is not primarily for the care and treatment of mental diseases; transitional facilities; assisted living; and group homes.

**Home Health Agency** – An agency or organization, certified under section 1861(o) of the Social Security Act, that is primarily engaged in providing skilled nursing care and
other therapeutic services. For more information, please visit: 
https://www.cms.gov/Center/Provider-Type/Home-Health-Agency-HHA-Center.html.

(18) **Hospice Program** – An agency or organization, certified under section 1861(dd)(2) of the Social Security Act, that provides 24-hour care and treatment services (as needed) to terminally ill individuals and bereavement counseling for their immediate family members. Care is provided in individuals’ homes, on an outpatient basis, and on a short-term inpatient basis, directly or under arrangements made by the agency or organization. For more information, please visit: 
https://www.cms.gov/Center/Provider-Type/Hospice-Center.html

**Ineligible Health Care Facility Types**

Ineligible facilities include, but are not limited to:

1. Clinics in prisons and correctional facilities; and
2. Private for-profit facilities.

**Selection Factors and Funding Preferences**

Among eligible applicants, the NURSE Corps Loan Repayment Program determines loan repayment awardees using various selection factors and funding preferences.

**Selection Factors**

Applicants who meet the eligibility criteria outlined above must also demonstrate that they:

1. Have completed the two-year service obligation under the initial NURSE Corps LRP contract:
   a. After accounting for any additional approved leave/absences in excess of the allowable 7 weeks (35 workdays) of leave per service year, an applicant will begin serving under the NURSE Corps LRP Continuation Contract.
   b. Applicants are required to review and verify their current service site’s name and address and initiate an electronic **Employment Verification Form (EVF)**. The EVF must be completed by an appropriate official (POC) at the approved CSF or eligible school of nursing. This may be the applicant’s immediate supervisor or an authorized agent in the human resources department at the service site. If the POC does not submit a completed EVF, or the EVF is not completed by the appropriate official, the application is considered incomplete and the applicant will not be able to submit the application. If your authorized POC is not listed, applicants may enter the correct POC’s email address in the “Other POC email” section of the application.

2. Have applied all loan repayment funds received under the initial Contract to repay the qualifying educational loan balances prior to the completion of service under that contract:
   a. Applicants must submit a loan account statement to show the principal and interest of the current loan balances. The account statement must include the lender’s name, applicant’s name, account number and the current loan balance with principal and interest.
   b. Applicants must submit a disbursement report that shows the approved educational loans listed on the Payment Authorization Worksheet (PAW). Each loan must have its original loan amount, the original loan date, type of loan, and the consolidation dates, if applicable. For Federal loans, the Aid Summary Report on the National Student Loan
Data System (NSLDS) website, http://www.nslds.ed.gov is considered a disbursement report.

(3) Hold a valid license to practice as a registered nurse or an advanced practice registered nurse (APRN) in a State of service or participate in the state nurse share compact.

(4) Have no adverse information reported to the National Practitioner Databank (NPDB). Applicants who have adverse information on a NPDB report may not be awarded a NURSE Corps LRP Continuation Contract until we have an opportunity to further review and reach a determination of the adverse actions contained in the report.

(5) Have a history of honoring prior legal obligations. NURSE Corps LRP Continuation applicants who have a history of not honoring prior legal obligations, as evidenced by one or more of the following factors, will not be selected:

   a. Default on any Federal payment obligations (e.g., Department of Education student loans, Health Education Assistance Loans, Nursing Student Loans, Federal Housing Administration (FHA) Loans, Federal income tax liabilities, federally-guaranteed/insured loans (e.g., student or home mortgage loans) or any non-Federal payment obligations (e.g., court-ordered child support payments or State tax liabilities)), even if the applicant is currently considered to be in good standing by that creditor.
   b. Write-off of any Federal or non-Federal debt as uncollectible or waiver of any Federal service or payment obligation.
   c. Default on a prior service obligation. Applicants who have defaulted on a prior service obligation to the Federal government, a State or local government, or other entity, even if the applicant subsequently satisfied that obligation through service, monetary payment or other means.
   d. Any judgment liens arising from Federal debt. Please be advised that a credit check will be performed as part of the application review process.

Funding Preferences
If sufficient funds are not appropriated to fully fund all continuation applications, HRSA will apply the statutory preference in the Public Health Service Act Section 846(e) for qualified applicants with the greatest financial need.

Eligible Disciplines and Specialties
(1) Registered Nurses
(2) Advanced Professional Registered Nurses
(3) Nurse Faculty

Qualifying and Non-Qualifying Educational Loans
Government and private (commercial) loans for actual costs paid for tuition and reasonable educational and living expenses incurred (1) while attending a school of nursing where the applicant obtained his/her qualifying nursing education, and (2) while taking only nursing prerequisite courses at schools other than the school(s) of nursing where the applicant obtained
the qualifying nursing education, provided that the applicant received academic credit for those courses from the school of nursing where the applicant obtained the qualifying nursing education. Participants will receive funds for repayment of qualifying educational loans that are still owed. If the applicant has consolidated qualifying educational loans with any other debt or consolidated the loans with loans of another individual, the consolidated loan is ineligible.

**Award Process**

If a participant is selected for a NURSE Corps LRP Continuation Contract, the individual’s signed Continuation Contract is then countersigned by the Secretary of HHS or designee. Once the participant has completed the service obligation under the initial two-year contract as determined by the NURSE Corps LRP, the Continuation Contract service obligation will commence, and the individual will begin to accrue service credit under the Continuation Contract.

An applicant may withdraw the application (via the Program Portal) at any time prior to the Secretary of HHS or designee counter-signing the NURSE Corps LRP Continuation Contract. Once the contract is counter-signed, the applicant is obligated to provide one year of full-time service at the CSF or eligible school of nursing identified in the application immediately following completion of the service obligation under the initial two-year contract. If an applicant fails to commence service on the effective date of the contract, the applicant will be in breach of the contract and may be placed in default and become permanently disqualified from receiving future awards under the NURSE Corps LRP and some other Federal programs.

**UNDERSTANDING THE CONTRACT AND SERVICE OBLIGATION**

**Service Obligation**

NURSE Corps Loan Repayment Program Continuation service obligation is for one additional year.

**Taxes and Financial Implications**

(1) NURSE Corps LRP payments are subject to Federal taxes. The NURSE Corps LRP will withhold Federal income tax and Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA) tax (for Social Security and Medicare) from a participant’s award. These taxes will be paid directly to the IRS in the participant’s name. All NURSE Corps LRP payments and Federal taxes withheld will be reported to the participant and the IRS on a Form W-2 after the end of the tax year. Loan repayment payments may also be subject to State and local income taxes. Loan repayments paid to the participant after Federal tax withholding can only be used to repay qualifying educational loans.

(2) Each January, participants will receive a W-2 Wage and Tax Statement for the taxable income received under the NURSE Corps LRP during the prior tax year. You may sign up to have your W-2 form posted in your Program Portal account. W-2 forms are expected to be posted no later than January 30 of each year. If your W-2 Wage and Tax Statement is not available by that date, please submit an inquiry via the Program Portal. You may also choose to have your W-2 mailed to the address you provided in the Program Portal. It is critical that your name, mailing and email addresses, and banking information are kept up to date at all times.
(3) Under the Treasury Offset Program, the Department of the Treasury is authorized to offset the NURSE Corps LRP payments for application to delinquent Federal and State debts, including past-due child support.

SERVICE REQUIREMENTS

Service Requirements
Participants are obligated to serve full-time for one (1) additional year at an eligible CSF or eligible school of nursing.

(1) General Requirements for All NURSE Corps LRP participants:

   No more than 7 weeks (35 workdays) per service year may be spent away from the CSF or school of nursing for vacation, holidays, continuing education, illness, maternity/paternity/adoption leave, or any other reason. Any periods of leave/absence in excess of 7 weeks (35 workdays) of leave away from the CSF or school of nursing will extend a participant’s service obligation end date as determined by the NURSE Corps LRP;

   a. Participants must retain a current, full, permanent, unencumbered, unrestricted license to practice as an RN or APRN in the State in which they are employed during the one-year service obligation to receive service credit under the NURSE Corps LRP Continuation Contract;

   b. Participants must continue to work under the employer’s verified scope of practice as an RN, APRN, or NF member for the duration of the one-year contract to receive service credit under the NURSE Corps LRP Continuation Contract;

   c. Once an individual applies and is awarded a Continuation Contract for a particular service option at a CSF or school of nursing, the individual cannot switch to the other type of service option during the one-year continuation service period.

(2) Requirement for Nurse Faculty:

   Nurse faculty must provide full-time service as faculty for a minimum of nine months per service year for a period of one year, beginning on the day following completion of service under the initial two-year contract at the NURSE Corps LRP-approved school of nursing identified in the individual’s NURSE Corps LRP Contract Continuation application.

Service Obligation Life Cycle
Service credit will begin to accrue after the participant has completed the service obligation under the initial two-year contract and has begun full-time service under the Continuation Contract, as determined by the NURSE Corps LRP. If an individual fails to commence full-time service on the effective date of the contract at the CSF or eligible school of nursing identified in the application, the individual may be placed in default.
Serving Half/Part Time Instead of Full-Time
Participants are not allowed to complete the additional one-year service obligation through part-time service.

Requirements for Clinical Practice
To apply for a Continuation Contract, participants must be working (and continue to work) full-time. For this purpose, “full-time” at an eligible CSF means at least 32 hours per week for a minimum of 45 weeks per service year) or, at an eligible school of nursing means full-time as defined by the employer for a minimum of 9 months per service year) as approved under the initial two-year contract.

(1) Specific Requirements for RNs and APRNs serving at a CSF:

RNs and APRNs (such as NPs) must provide full-time service for a period of one year beginning the day following completion of service under the initial two-year contract at the CSF identified in the individual’s NURSE Corps LRP Continuation Contract application.

PROGRAM COMPLIANCE

Worksite Absences
No more than 7 weeks (35 workdays) per service year under the Continuation Contract may be spent away from the CSF or eligible school of nursing. Any leave/absences totaling greater than 7 weeks (35 workdays) in a service year will extend the Continuation Contract end date. During that time, a participant will not accrue service credit.

Service Verification
The NURSE Corps LRP requires verification every six months that participants are in current compliance with the service obligation. In-Service Verification (ISV) must be completed by the authorized POC at the approved CSF or eligible school of nursing and submitted via the Program Portal. An overdue ISV for service under the initial two-year contract may affect a participant’s eligibility for a Continuation Contract. By completing and signing the ISV, the participant and the POC are certifying the participant’s compliance or noncompliance with the full-time service requirements during the identified period. The ISV records the total number of full-time workdays that a participant was absent, for any reason, from the CSF or school of nursing during the reporting period. Please be aware that an ISV is different from an EVF that is submitted with the application. However, both forms must be completed by an authorized official and submitted via the Program Portal.

Participants and their service site must complete the ISV within 30 days of notification that the service verification is due, and submit it through the Program Portal. An overdue ISV may jeopardize a participant from receiving service credit, delay or stop monthly payments, and lead to a recommendation for default. An overdue ISV for a reporting period under the initial two-year contract may also impact eligibility for a NURSE Corps LRP Continuation Contract.

PLEASE NOTE: APRNs, such as Nurse Practitioners, Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists, Certified Nurse Midwives, Certified Nurse Specialists employed by a professional group must have the ISV completed by the POC at the CSF and not by a POC from the professional group.
Leaving an Approved Service Site Prior to Completion of Service
If a participant discontinues working at the service site without prior written approval of the NURSE Corps LRP, the individual may be placed in default of the NURSE Corps LRP Continuation Contract, and all payments will be suspended until the request is approved or denied.

Transfer Request to Another Approved Service Site
NURSE Corps LRP expects that participants will fulfill their service obligation at the initial CSF or eligible school of nursing. The NURSE Corps LRP understands that circumstances may arise resulting in a participant’s need to leave the initial CSF or eligible school of nursing, and complete the service obligation at another approved site. If a participant can no longer continue working at the initial CSF or eligible school of nursing, the participant should immediately contact the NURSE Corps LRP through the Program Portal or Customer Care Center. Participants must transfer to another eligible CSF or school of nursing that falls in the same funding preference tier the participant was initially awarded or higher. Participants must continue to provide service in the same capacity as agreed upon in the initial two-year contract and cannot switch to the other service option.

To request a transfer to another site via the Program Portal, please go to the “Activities” section, then to “Change My Site Request.” The request must include the reason for the transfer and an initiation of an EVF to the prospective site to determine whether it is an eligible CSF or eligible school of nursing. If the prospective site is not a CSF or school of nursing in the same or higher funding preference tier as that in which the individual was awarded under the NURSE Corps LRP contract, or is a private for-profit entity, the transfer request will not be approved.

The participant will be notified via the Program Portal regarding the approval or denial of their request. If approved, the participant can resume full-time service at the prospective CSF or school of nursing. Please note that detailed instructions on how to complete a “Change My Site Request” are provided in the Program Portal.

Unemployment During Service Obligation
• If there is a break in service of 30 days or less between the stop work date at the initial/former service site and the start date at the approved transfer site, the NURSE Corps LRP payments will not be interrupted.
• If the participant fails to resume service after 30 days of the stop work date at the initial/former CSF or school of nursing, the NURSE Corps LRP will stop all payments. Once the participant begins full-time service at another approved CSF or eligible school of nursing, the NURSE Corps LRP service end date may be extended as determined by the NURSE Corps LRP, and the loan repayments will resume.
• If a participant ceases full-time employment at the initial/former site and does not resume service at an eligible approved CSF or school of nursing within 90 days, the participant may be considered in breach of the contract and recommended for default.

Breaching the NURSE Corps LRP Continuation Contract
Participants are encouraged to immediately contact the NURSE Corps LRP if a situation arises in which they are potentially unable to fulfill the service obligation. A participant who enters into a one-year NURSE Corps LRP Continuation Contract but fails to begin or complete the service
obligation is liable to repay all the NURSE Corps LRP payments received for the third year of service. This includes the amounts withheld for Federal taxes plus interest at the maximum legal prevailing rate, from the date of the breach of the NURSE Corps LRP Continuation Contract. Breach of the Contract may permanently disqualify an individual from receiving future awards under the NURSE Corps LRP and some other HRSA and Federal programs.

The Secretary of HHS may, under certain circumstances, suspend (put on “hold”) or waive (excuse) the NURSE Corps LRP service or payment obligation. A written request for a suspension or waiver must be submitted through the Program Portal. Additional supporting documentation demonstrating good cause will be required in order to process such a request.

Any indebtedness owed to the Federal government is due within three (3) years of the participant’s breach of the contract. The debt amount will be subject to interest at the maximum legal prevailing rate from the date of breach until paid in full. Other charges and penalties for delinquent or past due debts may be assessed.

Maternity/Paternity/Adoption Leave
No more than 7 weeks (35 workdays) per service year may be spent away from the CSF or school of nursing for vacation, holidays, continuing education, illness, maternity/paternity/adoption leave, or any other reason. Any periods of leave/absence in excess of 7 weeks (35 workdays) of leave away from the CSF or school of nursing will extend a participant’s service obligation end date as determined by the NURSE Corps LRP. For more details see Under Suspensions & Waiver Section.

Suspensions & Waivers
The Secretary of HHS or his/her designee may suspend or waive, in whole or in part, a NURSE Corps LRP Continuation service or payment obligation, if certain criteria are met.

(1) Suspension – A mechanism that provides temporary relief to a NURSE Corps LRP participant who has a short-term (not permanent) circumstance that currently makes compliance with the obligation impossible or would involve an extreme personal hardship to the participant such that enforcement of the obligation would be unreasonable. Periods of approved suspension will extend a participant’s NURSE Corps LRP service obligation end date. Listed below are some major categories of service suspensions:

a. Medical or Personal Reasons – A suspension may be granted for up to one year if the participant provides independent medical documentation of a physical or mental health disability, or personal circumstances, including a terminal or debilitating illness of an immediate family member, which results in the participant’s temporary inability to perform the NURSE Corps LRP obligation. Upon receipt of the written suspension request, the NURSE Corps LRP will notify the participant of the instructions for submitting further supporting documentation.

b. Maternity/Paternity/Adoption Leave – Maternity/paternity/adoption leave of 12 weeks or fewer will be approved by the NURSE Corps LRP upon request if adequately documented in the NURSE Corps LRP Customer Service Portal. If participants plan to be away from their approved service site for maternity/paternity/adoption leave, they are required to inform the NURSE Corps before
taking the leave. NURSE Corps LRP will allow participants to be away from their service site within the timeframes established by either the Family Medical Leave Act (up to 12 weeks) or for a longer period as permitted under State law where the participant resides, consistent with the leave policies of his/her employer. If participants plan to take leave beyond this time period, they are required to request a medical suspension (see item a. above) for consideration by the NURSE Corps LRP. Requests should be submitted through the Customer Service Portal. Remember that a participant may be away from the NURSE Corps LRP-approved service site for no more than 35 workdays per service year; therefore, a participant’s obligation end date will be extended for each day of a NURSE Corps LRP-approved absence over the allowable 35 workdays.

c. **Call to Active Duty in the Armed Forces** – A participant who is also a military reservist is and is called to active duty will be granted a suspension for up to one year, which may be extended, beginning on the activation date described in the reservist’s call to active duty order. In addition to the written request for a suspension, a copy of the order to active duty must be submitted to the NURSE Corps LRP. Upon the participant’s written request, the suspension will be extended if the Armed Forces entity continues the period of active duty. The period of active military duty service will not be credited towards the NURSE Corps LRP service obligation.

(2) **Waiver** – A mechanism that permanently relieves the participant of all or part of the NURSE Corps LRP service obligation. A waiver will be granted only if the participant demonstrates that compliance with the obligation is permanently impossible as the result of an extreme personal hardship such that enforcement of the obligation would be unreasonable. The request must be submitted in writing to the NURSE Corps LRP and must specify the reason(s) the waiver is being sought. The participant will be contacted directly by the NURSE Corps LRP regarding the medical and financial documentation necessary to process the waiver request. **Please note that waivers are not routinely granted and require a demonstration of compelling circumstances as described above.**

**Cancellation of NURSE Corps Loan Repayment Obligation**
A participant’s NURSE Corps LRP obligation will be cancelled in its entirety in the unfortunate event of the participant’s death. No liability will be transferred to the participant’s heirs.
APPLICATION INFORMATION

Please read the Application and Program Guidance (Guidance) in its entirety before proceeding with an application. The Guidance explains in detail the rights and obligations of individuals selected to participate in the NURSE Corps Loan Repayment Program. A complete understanding of the commitment to serve at a Critical Shortage Facility, and the financial, legal, and other consequences of failing to perform that commitment is critical to successful completion of the mandatory service obligation associated with any NURSE Corps Loan Repayment Program Award.

APPLICATION DEADLINE

A complete online application must be submitted by 7:30 PM ET on September 28, 2017. All supporting documentation for the application must be uploaded before an individual can submit a complete application package. Applicants must upload all documents; the NURSE Corps will not accept documentation by fax, email, or mail.

All decisions regarding applications for the FY 2018 NURSE Corps LRP Continuation Contract awards will be made no later than September 30, 2018.

COMPLETING AN APPLICATION

Application Information
The NURSE Corps Loan Repayment Program application consists of:
(1) Online Application,
(2) Required Supporting Documentation, and
(3) Additional Supporting Documentation (if applicable).

Applicants should keep a copy of the application package for their records. Applicants are responsible for submitting a complete application. It is required that the information in the online application match the submitted supplemental/supporting documents. Application packages will be initially reviewed to determine their completeness. Application packages deemed incomplete (e.g., missing, illegible, or incomplete application materials) as of the application deadline will not be considered for funding.

NURSE Corps Loan Repayment Program will not accept requests to update a submitted application or permit the submission/resubmission of incomplete, rejected, or otherwise delayed application materials after the deadline. In addition, NURSE Corps LRP staff will not fill in any missing information or contact applicants regarding missing information. No changes will be accepted to applicant’s choice of school or discipline entered on the submitted application prior to award. Awardees who wish to enter a different school and/or program should contact the NURSE Corps LRP immediately.
Online Application
Applicants are required to complete each of the sections below to be able to submit an online application.

1. Employment
2. Employment Verification
3. Loan Information
4. Self Certification
5. Sign Contract

Required Supporting Documentation
It is the applicant’s responsibility to upload required supporting documents by 7:30 pm ET on September 28, 2017. Failure to submit a complete application package by the deadline will deem the applicant ineligible, and he/she will not be considered for a NURSE Corps LRP Continuation award. Applicants must upload all supporting documents at the time of the online application submission. Each document submitted must include the applicant’s First Name, Last Name, Discipline and last 4 digits of his/her social security number.

1. Payment History – Applicants must account for all funds received under the initial two-year contract by submitting a history of payments made to the lenders or holders for all approved loans listed on the PAW. The history of payments must total the actual funds received from the NURSE Corps LRP from the service obligation start date to the date of the submission of the Continuation Contract application. The payment history must include the lender’s/holder’s name and the applicant’s name and account number, and may be obtained on-line from your loan servicer or lender. Please call your lender or loan servicer if you are having difficulty downloading the information.

2. Account Statements – Applicants must submit an account statement that shows the principal and interest of their current loan balances. The account statement must include the lender’s name, applicant’s name and account number, and the current balance with the principal and interest.

3. Employment Verification Form (EVF) – Applicants are required to review and verify the name and address of the current CSF or eligible school of nursing, and initiate an electronic EVF. The EVF must be completed by an appropriate official or authorized POC at the CSF or school of nursing. The POC should be the applicant’s immediate supervisor or an authorized agent of the human resources department at the service site. If the POC does not submit a completed EVF, or it is not completed by the appropriate official, the application will be considered incomplete and will not be further processed by the NURSE Corps LRP

Additional Supporting Documentation (if applicable)
Based on the applicant’s responses to the online application, the applicant may need to submit additional documents. Applicants are strongly encouraged to upload all supporting documents in PDF format. Check that all documents are legible, viewable and accurate prior to submission of the application. Multiple-paged documents can be consolidated by scanning and saving into one document and then uploaded. When uploading documents to the online application, please be sure that the documents do not exceed 5MB as the system restricts larger documents.
Application Review and Award Process
Applicants will receive a receipt of submission once the application has been successfully submitted online. Applicants can verify that sections of the application are complete when there is a checkmark by each on the status page. Applicants will not be able to edit submitted applications. Applicants may withdraw their applications before the deadline to submit applications. If an applicant needs to edit application after submission but before the deadline they need to contact NURSE Corps staff or call center. Please allow 5 to 10 business days for the NURSE Corps LRP to update your submitted documents.

(1) If a participant exceeds the amount of allowable leave (35 workdays) per service year during the initial two-year NURSE Corps LRP contract, the individual’s service end date will be extended as determined by the NURSE Corps LRP to account for additional days of such leave/absence. Scheduled payments may also be adjusted.

(2) Award payments will be made monthly over 12 months through an electronic funds transfer to the participant’s checking or savings account as identified on the banking information submitted by the participant. The participant will receive the first direct deposit within 60 days after the NURSE Corps LRP Continuation Contract service obligation begins. Participants must keep all banking information updated and current.

(3) Participants must use all NURSE Corps LRP payments received under the Continuation Contract to pay the lenders or holders of their qualifying educational loans. The NURSE Corps LRP may contact the participant’s lenders or holders to verify that award payments have been applied to reduce the NURSE Corps LRP-approved loans.

(4) If for any reason a participant does not receive a scheduled payment, please contact the NURSE Corps LRP through the Program Portal or Customer Care Center at 1-800-221-9393. If the NURSE Corps LRP has any questions concerning a participant’s eligibility for continued payments, the NURSE Corps LRP will delay payments pending the verification of the participant’s compliance with the service obligation. It is important to immediately notify the NURSE Corps LRP of any changes in your service site or employment status.

(5) The NPDB will be queried as part of the application review process if the employing CSF indicates on the EVF any of the following:
   - An NPDB report has never been obtained by the employing CSF for the applicant,
   - It has been more than 18 months since the NPDB was queried by the employed CSF for the applicant, or
   - An NPDB report regarding the applicant on file with the employing CSF contains adverse information.
An applicant may withdraw the application (via the Program Portal) at any time prior to the Secretary or designee counter-signing the NURSE Corps LRP Continuation Contract. Once the contract is counter-signed by the Secretary or designee, the applicant is obligated to provide one year of full-time service at the CSF or eligible school of nursing identified in the application immediately following completion of the service obligation under the initial two-year contract. If an applicant fails to commence service on the effective date of the contract, the applicant will be in breach of the contract and may be placed in default and become permanently disqualified from receiving future awards under the NURSE Corps LRP and some other Federal programs.

NOTIFICATION OF AWARD

If selected as a finalist, you will receive a Confirmation of Interest email. An applicant must respond by the deadline in the Confirmation of Interest email and electronically sign a copy of the contract and provide the NURSE Corps LRP with his/her banking information. The electronic signature has the effect of a handwritten signature, and once countersigned by the Secretary of HHS or his/her designee, obligates the participant to a NURSE Corps LRP Continuation service commitment. If the applicant does not respond to the NURSE Corps LRP by the deadline, the offer of award expires and will be offered to an alternate.

If an individual selected for an award decides not to accept the award prior to signing the contract, he/she may decline the award by selecting the “decline” option on the Confirmation of Interest document. This process is without penalty and permits the award to be offered to an alternate. Once an applicant declines the offer of award, there will not be any opportunities to reclaim the award. A decision to decline the award is final and cannot be changed under any circumstances.

If an individual selected for an award decides he/she does not want it after signing the contract, the individual should notify the NHSC immediately through the Customer Service Portal that he/she no longer wants the award.

- **If the Secretary’s designee has not yet countersigned the contract**, the individual will not incur a service obligation or any penalty for withdrawing.
- **If the Secretary’s designee has already signed the contract**, the individual can request termination of the contract only under certain conditions, as explained in “Contract Termination.”

All decisions regarding applications for the FY 2018 NURSE Corps LRP Continuation Contract awards will be made no later than September 30, 2017.
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

RESOURCES FOR APPLICANTS

Health Workforce Connector
Health Workforce Connector (formerly NHSC Jobs Center) contains a searchable database for all NCLRP approved service sites, including those with current job openings.


HPSA Find
All NCLRP Corps participants must serve in a federally-designated HPSA. The websites below provide an understanding of where HPSAs are currently located.

- [http://hpsafind.hrsa.gov](http://hpsafind.hrsa.gov)

Customer Care Center
Any individual with questions about the NCLRP may contact the Customer Care Center Monday through Friday (except federal holidays), 8:00 am to 8:00 pm ET.

- 1-800-221-9393 (TTY – 1-877-897-9910)

Customer Service Portal
Once an applicant has been selected for an award, he/she will be provided with instructions for establishing an account on the Customer Service Portal. This web-based system will allow NURSE Corps LRP participants to communicate with NURSE Corps LRP staff, to make certain requests (e.g., suspensions, transfers, waivers), and to access the 6-month In-Service Verification Form.

- [https://programportal.hrsa.gov/](https://programportal.hrsa.gov/)

NURSE Corps LRP Social Media
- NURSE Corps LRP Facebook Page: [https://www.facebook.com/HRSANURSECorps/](https://www.facebook.com/HRSANURSECorps/)
- NURSE Corps LRP LinkedIn Page: [https://www.linkedin.com/showcase/10402274/](https://www.linkedin.com/showcase/10402274/)

DEFINITIONS

**Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (APRN)** – a nurse who has a master’s, post-masters, or doctoral degree in a nursing specialty and can generally practice medicine without the supervision of a physician.

**Base Annual Salary** – The minimum annual compensation or the standard gross salary that an employee receives for doing a specific job, before taxes, health/dental insurance, retirement contributions, etc. are deducted (excludes overtime or shift differential pay).

**Basic Registered Nurse (RN) Education** – A nursing education that qualifies an individual to take the NCLEX-RN licensing examination.
**Continuation Contract** – An optional, one-year extension of an initial two-year NURSE Corps LRP Contract.

**Critical Shortage Facility (CSF)** – A public or private nonprofit health care facility located in, designated as, or serving a primary medical care or mental health Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA).

**Default of payment obligation** – More than 120 days past due on the payment of a financial obligation.

**Default of service obligation** – Failure to begin or complete a contractual service commitment.

**Disadvantaged Background** – An individual from a disadvantaged background is defined as someone who:

1. Comes from an environment that has inhibited the individual from obtaining the knowledge, skills, and abilities required to enroll in and graduate from a health professions or nursing school (Environmentally Disadvantaged).

The following are provided as examples of “Environmentally Disadvantaged” criteria, which are for guidance only and are not intended to be all-inclusive:

- The individual graduated from (or last attended) a high school with low average SAT score based on most recent data available.

- The individual graduated from (or last attended) a high school which, based on most recent data available, has a:
  - low percentage of seniors receive a high school diploma; or
  - low percentage of graduates go to college during the first year after graduation.

- The individual graduated from (or last attended) a high school with low per capita funding.

- The individual graduated from (or last attended) a high school where, based on most recent data available, many of the enrolled students are eligible for free or reduced price lunches.

- The individual comes from a family that receives public assistance (e.g., Aid to Families with Dependent Children, food stamps, Medicaid, public housing).

- First generation in family to attend college

-- OR --

2. Comes from a family with an annual income below a level based on low-income thresholds according to family size established by the U.S. Census Bureau, adjusted
annually for changes in the Consumer Price Index, and adjusted by the Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) for adaptation to this program (Economically Disadvantaged).

The Secretary defines a “low income family/household” for various health professions and nursing programs included in Titles III, VII, and VIII of the Public Health Service Act as having an annual income that does not exceed 200 percent of the Department’s poverty guidelines (see table below).

<table>
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<th>Persons in Family</th>
<th>48 Contiguous States and D.C.</th>
<th>Alaska</th>
<th>Hawaii</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>$12,060</td>
<td>$15,060</td>
<td>$13,860</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>$16,240</td>
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<td>$25,520</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>$32,960</td>
<td>$41,210</td>
<td>$37,910</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>$37,140</td>
<td>$46,440</td>
<td>$42,720</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>$41,320</td>
<td>$51,670</td>
<td>$47,530</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For each additional person, add</td>
<td>$4,180</td>
<td>$5,230</td>
<td>$4,810</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SOURCE:** Federal Register, Vol. 82, No. 19, January 26, 2017, pp. 8831-8832.

**Eligible School of Nursing** - An accredited, public or private nonprofit, collegiate, associate degree or diploma school of nursing in a State where graduates are: 1) authorized to sit for the NCLEX-RN or 2) licensed RNs who will receive a graduate or equivalent degree or training to become an advanced education nurse. The educational programs in the school of nursing must be accredited by a national nursing accrediting agency or a State agency recognized by the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education. See section 801 of the Public Health Service Act for a full and complete definition of all applicable terms.

**Existing Service Obligation** – An obligation to work as a RN or as a nurse faculty member owed under an agreement with a Federal, State, or local government, or any other entity. Examples are the National Health Service Corps Loan Repayment or Scholarship Programs, NURSE Corps Scholarship Program, State Loan Repayment Program, Bureau of Health Workforce Nurse Faculty Loan Program, Faculty Loan Repayment Program, any State-sponsored loan repayment/forgiveness program, any employer-sponsored scholarship or recruitment/retention incentive programs, or Active Duty military obligation). Nurse Faculty members are encouraged to promote health care careers in
underserved areas, accomplished through presentations to students or other community based organizations by providing information about nursing and other health care professions.

**Family and Family Member** – For the purposes of the NURSE Corps LRP, “family member” includes spouses, as well as unmarried domestic partners (both same-sex and opposite-sex), including those in civil unions or similar formal relationships recognized under state law as something other than a marriage.

**Federal Judgment Lien** – A lien that is placed against an individual’s home or property when a court ordered judgment is entered against the individual for an unpaid Federal debt (e.g., a Federal student loan or Federally insured home mortgage). An IRS tax lien that is not created pursuant to a court ordered judgment is not a Federal judgment lien.

**Fiscal Year (FY)** – The Federal fiscal year (FY) is October 1 through September 30.

**Full-Time Service** – Working as an RN or advanced practice RN at a public or private nonprofit Critical Shortage Facility for a minimum of 32 hours per week, or working full-time (as defined by the employer) as a nurse faculty member for a minimum of 9 months per service year at an accredited public or private nonprofit eligible school of nursing, for the time period specified in the participant’s contract, with no more than 35 workdays per service year spent away from the service site for vacation, holidays, continuing education, illness, maternity/paternity/adoption leave, or any other reason.

**Government Loans** – Loans made by Federal, State, county or city agencies authorized by law to make such loans.

**Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA)** – A HPSA is a geographic area, population group, public or nonprofit private medical facility or other public facility for the delivery of health services (including a Federal or State correctional institution), which has been determined by the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services to have a shortage of health professionals. HPSAs may be identified on the basis of agency or individual requests for designation. HPSAs are designated by the Division of Policy and Shortage Designation within HRSA’s Bureau of Health Workforce, pursuant to Section 332 of the PHS Act (Title 42, U.S. Code, Section 254e) and implementing regulations (Title 42, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 5).

**Initial two-year contract** – A written contract pursuant to Section 846(a) of the Public Health Service Act, as amended, under which (1) the participant agrees to engage in a period of continuous full-time service for 2 consecutive years as an RN or APRN at an eligible Critical Shortage Facility or as nurse faculty in an accredited eligible school of nursing and (2) the Secretary agrees to repay, in consideration of such service, a percentage of the amount which is outstanding on the participant's qualifying educational loans on the effective date of the initial two-year contract.

**Lender** – The private commercial or Government institution that initially made the qualifying educational loan (e.g., Department of Education). As used in this Guidance, the term “lender” also
includes “holder,” which is the private commercial or Government institution that currently holds the promissory note for the qualifying educational loan (e.g., Sallie Mae, Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency etc.).

**National Practitioner Data Bank (NPDB)** – A confidential, electronic repository of information related to the professional conduct and competence of physicians, nurses, dentists, and other health care practitioners. The NPDB collects information about malpractice payments paid on behalf of a health care provider and adverse actions taken against a health care provider’s license, clinical privileges or professional memberships.

**NURSE Corps Loan Repayment Program (NURSE Corps LRP)** – The NURSE Corps LRP is authorized by Section 846 of the Public Health Service Act, as amended. Under the NURSE Corps LRP, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services provides financial assistance to qualified applicants to repay a portion of their qualifying educational loans, in exchange for their full-time service as an RN at an eligible Critical Shortage Facility or as nurse faculty in an accredited eligible school of nursing.

**Nurse Faculty** – A licensed registered nurse (RN) or APRN who is a full-time (as defined by his or her employer) academic staff member engaged in nursing instruction or related educational activities in an eligible school of nursing.

**Nurse Licensure Compact** – The mutual recognition model of nurse licensure that allows a nurse to have a license in one State and to practice in other States subject to each State’s practice law and regulation. Under mutual recognition, an RN may practice in several States unless otherwise restricted.

**Participant Award Worksheet (PAW)** – A detailed payment disbursement report reflecting all the participant’s eligible loans that qualify for repayment under the NURSE Corps LRP award. Monthly payments received by a participant can only be applied to the loans listed on this document.

**Point of Contact (POC)** – An official at a CSF or eligible school of nursing who is the applicant’s immediate supervisor or an authorized agent of the human resources department at the service site.

**Private (Commercial) Loans** – Loans made by banks, credit unions, savings and loan associations, insurance companies, schools, and other financial or credit institutions which are subject to examination and supervision in their capacity as lenders by an agency of the United States or of the State in which the lender has its principal place of business.

**Qualified Applicant** – A person who meets all of the NURSE Corps LRP eligibility requirements.

**Qualifying Educational Loans** – Government and private (commercial) loans for actual costs paid for tuition and reasonable educational and living expenses incurred (1) while attending a school of nursing where the applicant obtained his/her qualifying nursing education, and (2) while taking only nursing prerequisite courses at schools other than the school(s) of nursing where the applicant obtained the qualifying nursing education, provided that the applicant received academic credit for those courses from the school of nursing where the applicant obtained the
qualifying nursing education. Participants will receive funds for repayment of qualifying educational loans that are still owed. If the applicant has consolidated qualifying educational loans with any other debt or consolidated the loans with loans of another individual, the consolidated loan is ineligible.

**Qualifying Nursing Education** – The completed undergraduate basic RN education and completed graduate nursing education (including post-master’s nursing certificate programs) resulting in a baccalaureate or associate degree in nursing (or an equivalent degree), a diploma in nursing or a graduate degree in nursing from an accredited school of nursing in a State.

**Registered Nurse (RN)** – A nurse who has graduated from an accredited school of nursing, passed the NCLEX-RN, and is licensed to practice as a registered nurse or an advanced practice registered nurse (APRN) in a State.

**School of Nursing (SON)** – An eligible SON is an accredited, public or private nonprofit, collegiate, associate degree or diploma school of nursing in a State where graduates are: 1) authorized to sit for the NCLEX-RN or 2) licensed RNs who will receive a graduate or equivalent degree or training to become an advanced education nurse. The educational programs in the school of nursing must be accredited by a national nursing accrediting agency or a State agency recognized by the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education. See section 801 of the Public Health Service Act for a full and complete definition of all applicable terms.

**Spouse and Marriage** - For the purposes of the NURSE Corps LRP, “spouse” includes same-sex married couples as well as opposite-sex married couples. In accordance with the Supreme Court decisions in *United States v. Windsor* and in *Obergefell v. Hodges*, the Department of Health and Human Services will treat as valid marriages of same-sex couples. The term “spouse” does not include individuals in registered domestic partnerships, civil unions or similar formal relationships recognized under state law as something other than a marriage.

**State** – Includes the 50 States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Territory of American Samoa, Territory of Guam, Republic of Palau, Republic of the Marshall Islands, and Federated States of Micronesia.

**Suspension** – A temporary status. A suspension of the service or payment obligation will be granted if compliance with the obligation by the participant (1) is temporarily impossible or (2) would involve a temporary extreme hardship such that enforcement of the obligation would be unconscionable. All requests for a suspension must be submitted in writing via the Program Portal and be supported by full medical, financial, or other relevant documentation, where applicable.

**Transfer** - Upon a written request and written approval, participants may transfer to another eligible CSF or school of nursing that falls in the same funding preference tier that the individual was initially awarded in, or higher.

**Tribal Health Program** – An Indian tribe or tribal organization that operates any health program, service, function, activity, or facility funded, in whole or part, by the Indian Health Service (IHS)
through, or provided for in, a contract or compact with the IHS under the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450 et seq.).

**Unencumbered License** – Is a license that is not revoked, suspended, or made probationary or conditional by a State licensing board or a registering authority as the result of any disciplinary action.

**Waiver** – A permanent status. A waiver of the service or payment obligation will only be granted if compliance with the obligation by the participant (1) is permanently impossible or (2) would involve a permanent extreme hardship such that enforcement of the obligation would be unconscionable. All requests for a waiver must be submitted via the Program Portal and the compelling circumstances required must be supported by full medical, financial, or other relevant documentation, where applicable.