

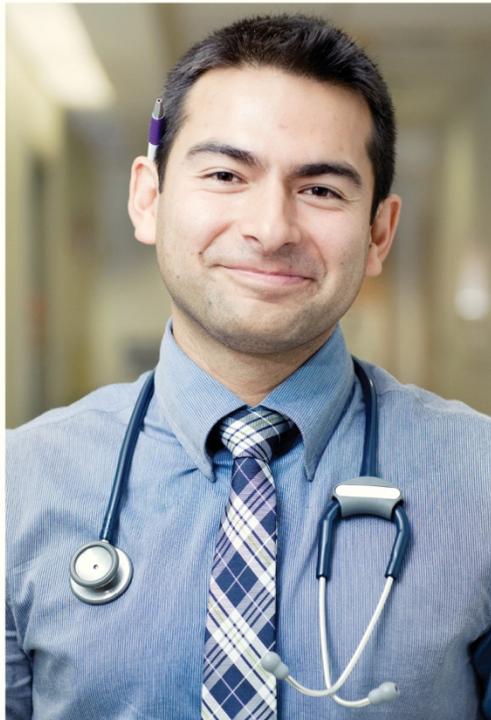
NATIONAL HEALTH
SERVICE
CORPS 

*Connecting dedicated primary care providers
with the communities that need them*

**NHSC SCHOLAR
ORIENTATION AND PLACEMENT
REFERENCE**

GUIDE

July 19–21, 2012 • Grapevine, Texas • Gaylord Texan Hotel and Convention Center



NHSC.hrsa.gov

Table of Contents

Welcome	2
Placement Process Overview	3
Important Dates and Milestones.....	3
Preparing for Service	5
Clinical Rotations at NHSC-Approved Sites	5
Identifying Potential Service Sites	5
Site Search Resources	7
Site Visit Logistics	8
Allowable Expenses	9
Family Travel.....	9
Site Visits to Alaska, Hawaii, and U.S. Territories	9
Reimbursement.....	10
Interviewing	10
Matching to a Site	11
Completing the Placement Process	12
Relocation	13
Special Situations.....	15
Communicating with NHSC.....	16
NHSC Customer Service Portal	20
Appendix A: Important Links	21
Appendix B: Sample Letters.....	22
Appendix C: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)	24

Welcome!



Congratulations on your arrival to this exciting juncture that links the completion of your formal training with the beginning of your professional career. We, at the National Health Service Corps (NHSC), hope that your training experiences to date have been fulfilling and have further strengthened your passion to provide primary health care to the underserved.

The impact you will make as you transition to practice is vast. One in five people in the United States lives in a primary care shortage area, which means they go without essential health services or have to travel long distances to see their primary care practitioner. Too many Americans—particularly in underserved rural and urban areas—go without checkups, preventive screenings, vaccines, routine dental work, and other care, simply because there is no one to provide care and treatment. At its heart, the NHSC is about bringing primary care to communities in need and you will help us to fulfill that mission.

As an NHSC scholar, you will have the opportunity to choose from positions located at NHSC-approved sites in high-need areas. You, and the NHSC-approved site, will be looking for a match that is right for you both. As you transition into practice, we encourage you to maintain consistent communication with the NHSC. Reach out to our dedicated staff with any questions you may have. We are here to provide support as you explore the many job opportunities that can be found within our diverse array of NHSC-approved sites.

Our hope is that you not only find a site that meets your professional needs, but is in a community that you will be proud to call home for years to come!

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rebecca H. Spitzgo". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rebecca H. Spitzgo
Director, National Health Service Corps

Placement Process Overview

You are entering the phase of your NHSC scholarship commitment where you transition from training to service.

During this time, you will:

- Identify geographic locations of interest
- Research NHSC-approved sites and inquire about current, or anticipated, vacancies
- Apply for competitive positions and visit sites that not only meet program requirements, but are of interest to you
- Accept a job and (possibly) relocate to begin your career



“My advice to the 2013 placements: Get started early on trying to find a job!”
—Toby Imler, D.D.S.

This NHSC Scholar Placement Guide is intended to serve as a resource to you throughout the placement process. It includes information on key dates, site search resources, site visit and relocation logistics, and much more.

While the responsibility for finding a position is yours, the NHSC is here to support you throughout the placement process!

Important Dates and Milestones

Be aware of the key dates listed below. It is the responsibility of each scholar to meet these deadlines. Please review the dates closely as there is variation by discipline.

2013 Match Timelines

Discipline	Test & Licensure Deadlines	Secure a job offer by	Begin Service by
Physicians completing residency	By the time service is scheduled to begin	June 30, 2013 (or last day of residency)	September 30, 2013 (or within 3 months of end of residency)
Dentists completing residency	By the time service is scheduled to begin	June 30, 2013 (or last day of residency)	September 30, 2013 (or within 3 months of end of residency)
Dentists who do not elect residency, or post-degree, training	Within 6 months of graduation	Within 6 months of graduation	Within 3 months of date of job offer or graduation, whichever date is later
Nurse-Midwives, Nurse Practitioners, and Physician Assistants	Within 6 months of graduation	Within 6 months of graduation	Within 3 months of date of job offer or graduation, whichever date is later

Placement Cycle Milestones

Dentists (not doing a residency), Family Nurse Practitioners, Nurse-Midwives, and Physician Assistants should adapt this schedule to their applicable placement match deadlines.

When	What	How-Why
July 2012	Annual NHSC Scholar Placement Guide made available to all scholars in the 2013 Placement Cycle. (Scholars not attending the conference can download the Reference Guide from the conference website.)	The Placement Guide will help you understand and prepare for the Placement Cycle.
July–August 2012 (After the conference)	You will be contacted by your Regional Placement Advisor. Check in regularly by phone or email with your Placement Advisor.	Check in regularly with your Regional Placement Advisor to ask questions or request assistance with your site search and placement needs.
August 2012	Monthly calls to your Placement Advisor.	Contact your Placement Advisor to let us know how your interviewing and site search is going.
February 1, 2013	Deferment deadline to accept a chief residency or fellowship position.	Deferments are granted in 1-year increments. Submit requests through the NHSC Customer Service Portal to apply for a chief residency or fellowship.
April 1, 2013	Ninety days until the end of the Placement Cycle for physicians.	Ninety days remain in the Placement Cycle for physicians to find employment and submit all required documentation to the NHSC (the deadline for dentists, nurse-midwives, physician assistants, and nurse practitioners is 6 months after graduation date).
April 15, 2013	Deferment deadline to continue postgraduate residency training for physicians or dentists.	Deferments are granted in 1-year increments. Submit requests through the NHSC Customer Service Portal while you complete your residency.
May 1, 2013	Sixty days until the end of the Placement Cycle for physicians.	Sixty days remain in the Placement Cycle for physicians to find employment and submit all required documentation to the NHSC (the deadline for dentists, nurse-midwives, physician assistants, and nurse practitioners is 6 months after graduation date).
May 2013–June 2013	Routine check-in calls to your Placement Advisor.	Contact your Placement Advisor to inform them of how your interviewing and site selection is going.
June 1, 2013	Thirty days until the end of the Placement Cycle for physicians.	Thirty days remain in the Placement Cycle for physicians to find employment and submit all required documentation to the NHSC (the deadline for dentists, nurse-midwives, physician assistants, and nurse practitioners is 6 months after graduation date).
June 30, 2013	End of Placement Cycle for physicians	All physicians must have a job offer, and the NHSC must receive all required documents.

Preparing for Service

Clinical Rotations at NHSC-Approved Sites

If you have elective clinical rotations remaining in your academic training, you should consider a rotation at an NHSC-approved site with a HPSA score of 16 or higher. Arranging a rotation in an area where you would like to practice offers a great opportunity to get acquainted with the community, practice site, and site leadership. You should contact NHSC sites directly to inquire about rotation opportunities.

The NHSC will pay for a scholar's round-trip travel and 3 days/2 nights per diem to a clinical rotation just as it does for a pre-employment site visit (see site visit information on page 8). You and the site should discuss and coordinate any additional costs (including possible stipend) while in rotation.

We strongly advise that you and the site where you will conduct a rotation create a written agreement detailing all specifics including: room and board; anticipated clinical experience; dates of rotation; and any other items germane to the rotation.



“Ask to shadow a clinician for a few hours to get a sense of how the center and their patient flow works.”
—Leigh Montejo, NP

Identifying Potential Service Sites

Framing Your Job Search

You are not simply looking for a job in the NHSC placement process, but a place that will be home throughout your service commitment, and hopefully long after. Think about your ideal living and working environments. Although you may need to make compromises along the way, it is good to start by recognizing the things that you need and the items where you are flexible. Take a moment to consider the following questions:

- Are there cities and states where you would like to live?
- Are you primarily interested in rural or urban locations?
- Do you need to make considerations for your spouse or children?
- What types of social, or recreational, opportunities would you like nearby?

Once you have outlined your priorities, share them with your Regional Placement Advisor; the more they understand your preferences, the more they can help you search for a good match!



“I came from a small rural area and that’s what I wanted to find. My site offers a lot to me in terms of outdoor lifestyle—there’s hunting and fishing in this area.”
—Denver Brown, PA

Service Site Requirements

To successfully fulfill your commitment to the NHSC, you must start by finding a job at an NHSC-approved site. This includes gaining employment by your match deadline (see section titled *Important Dates and Milestones*) and being employed at an NHSC-approved site that carries a **Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA) score of 16 or higher** in your professional field of primary care, mental health, or dental. Scholars may work at more than one NHSC-approved site. However, each of the sites must be NHSC-approved and meet the HPSA requirement.

NHSC-Approved Sites

NHSC-approved sites are facilities that provide primary care medical, dental, and/or mental and behavioral health services to all patients regardless of their ability to pay. All sites must be approved through the NHSC and have a formal NHSC Site Agreement in place. NHSC-approved site types include:

NHSC-Approved Site Types
Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC)
Federally Qualified Health Center Look-Alike
Rural Health Clinic
Hospital-Affiliated Primary Care Outpatient Clinic
Indian Health Service: Tribal Clinic and Urban Indian Health Clinic
State or Federal Correctional Facility
U.S. Department of Immigration Customs and Enforcement (ICE) Facility
Critical Access Hospital
School-Based Health Program
Mobile Health Unit
Community Mental and Behavioral Health Clinic
Free Clinic

For more information on NHSC-approved sites, please visit the Sites section of the NHSC website and review the [NHSC Site Reference Guide](#). To view current NHSC-approved sites, visit the NHSC Jobs Center.

HPSA Scores

Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA) scores are a multi-variable calculation that defines the degree of health services needed in a given area, facility, or population. HPSA scores range from 1 to 25 for primary care and mental health and 1 to 26 for dental. A higher HPSA score equates to a greater need for health professionals.

The required HPSA score for scholar placement varies from year to year and is published on an annual basis in the *Federal Register Notice*.

For the 2013 Scholar Placement Cycle, the required score is 16 for all disciplines (primary care, mental health, and dental). NHSC-approved sites carry HPSA scores for different professional fields (primary care, dental, or mental health). As a scholar in the 2013 Scholar Placement Cycle you must work at a site that holds a 16 or higher HPSA score for your field. For example, a site may have a HPSA of 18 in dental, but only a 6 in primary care. In this example, only an NHSC scholar who is a dentist may take a job at the site. The site does not meet the required HPSA threshold for a primary care provider.

While it is the strong preference of the NHSC that you start and complete your service obligation at the same site, we recognize situations will arise for some scholars that require transferring to a new site. If such a circumstance arises, you will be required to transfer to an NHSC-approved site that has the required 16 or higher HPSA score.

The HPSA data listed in the [NHSC Jobs Center](#) are considered the official data for use with NHSC programs. Visit the [NHSC Jobs Center](#) to view HPSA scores for all NHSC active and approved sites.

Site Search Resources

Regional Placement Advisor

Each scholar will be paired with a Regional Placement Advisor. Your Advisor will provide resources during your job search and monitor the collection of the required documents needed for you to match with a site. Check in regularly with your Advisor to let them know how your search is going and if you need any additional assistance during the process.



“My placement advisor helped me find resources outside of the [NHSC Jobs Center]. One of the agencies contacted me out of the blue and told me about the job that I now have!”
—Alyson Bacon, M.D.

NHSC Jobs Center

Start your search by visiting the NHSC Jobs Center at nhscjobs.hrsa.gov. The Jobs Center includes information on all NHSC-approved sites and allows you to sort sites by city, state, discipline, open vacancies, and HPSA score. Although the HPSA scores posted on this site are considered official, however, scholars are encouraged to contact their Regional Advisor to confirm HPSA scores.

Although all NHSC-approved sites have the option to post their vacancies in the Jobs Center, not all sites utilize this resource. Scholars should contact not only sites with posted vacancies, but also those sites listed in the Jobs Center that are in your geographic areas of interest and that meet the HPSA score requirements. As with any other job search, it is up to you to contact potential employers.

A quick Internet search can uncover valuable information about the site, its vacancies, and the surrounding area. Before you contact an NHSC-approved site, research the site as you would in any other job search. Most organizations have a website.

State Contacts

NHSC scholars can find their placement sites through state workforce partners who are dedicated to supporting primary care in underserved areas. These contacts can assist you with identifying NHSC sites that have, or will soon have, open positions.

Although it varies, most states have the offices and associations listed below. Please talk with your Placement Advisor about engaging with representatives from one or all of these organizations.

- **Primary Care Associations (PCAs)** represent the community health centers in a state. Some PCAs have their own job websites or recruitment resources. You might also consider asking a PCA to send an email to their member health centers (with the requisite HPSA score) and request that they solicit interest from the health centers in hiring NHSC scholars.

Be sure to start your job search early. It is recommended that you begin contacting NHSC-approved sites of interest at least 6 months prior to completing your training or residency.

- **Primary Care Organizations (PCOs)** are state-level organizations that work on health care workforce issues in a state, including working closely with the NHSC. PCOs work on NHSC site approval, HPSA designation, and often have good information about sites and communities in their state.
State Offices of Rural Health (SORHs) work on rural and underserved health issues in a given state. Some offices are co-located with the PCO while others are independent organizations.
- **National Rural Recruitment and Retention Network (3RNet)** is a job search resource that you may also find useful. Its members are not-for-profit organizations dedicated to helping health professionals find jobs in rural and underserved areas throughout the country. If you use this resource, you will need to confirm that any site you identify is an NHSC-approved site.

Site Visit Logistics

NHSC scholars in the 2013 Placement Cycle are eligible to receive travel support for site visits to attend pre-employment interviews at approved NHSC sites that have a HPSA score of 16 or higher.

Travel Authorization

In order to receive reimbursement for travel costs, associated with an interview at a site, you must obtain advance approval by [submitting a request](#). Please submit the request at least 14 days in advance of the planned interview (if possible). After submitting your request, the NHSC will verify the HPSA score for the site and approve/disapprove the request. Upon approval, you will be contacted by a Site Visit and Relocation (SVRE) specialist to initiate your travel arrangements. Once travel arrangements have been finalized, you may proceed with your site visit.

Scholars will be notified of the status of their request via email. The SVRE specialist can answer any questions regarding travel arrangements, allowable travel expenses, and reimbursement of travel expenses.

The NHSC will pay a total of up to \$1,200 (in accordance with Federal Travel Regulations and NHSC travel policies) to cover allowable site visit travel costs (this is a total for all visits, not a per-visit allowance). All site visit requests must be approved by the NHSC prior to travel. To maximize your allotment, you are encouraged to plan ahead and initiate the travel plan at least 2 weeks prior to the travel date. Last-minute travel is expensive and may limit you to fewer trips. Travel may include one or a combination of the following: 1) commercial transportation (usually air or train; coach-class accommodations only); 2) privately owned vehicle; 3) rental car for interviews in remote areas or multiple site visits in remote areas (prior NHSC authorization and approval is required); or 4) a combination of the methods listed above.

Travel Notes:

Additional visits to the same site will not be funded by the NHSC.

NHSC will not reimburse scholars for any travel costs associated with personal travel.

Prior approval is not necessary for site visits you plan to make on your own expense.

Allowable Expenses

Lodging

The NHSC will authorize 3 days and 2 nights for an approved site visit. If travel is extended beyond this, you will be responsible for any additional costs. Lodging costs must not exceed the prevailing lodging per diem rate for a particular location, per the [General Services Administration](#). Original receipts are required.

Ground Transportation

NHSC will reimburse for 1) using your privately owned vehicle (POV) for a round-trip site visit (if approved in advance), 2) driving your POV to and from the closest airport, 3) rental car charges (if approved in advance).

Per Diem

Per diem is intended to cover expenses for meals and incidentals. Per diem begins when travel commences to an authorized destination and ends upon return to the point of origin or at the NHSC-authorized termination point. Federal [per diem rates](#) are determined by geographic location.

Family Travel

NHSC permits reimbursement of up to \$1,200 for one family member to accompany you on one site visit. A family member is considered to be someone who will be relocating with the scholar, and living in the household with the scholar, while the scholar is serving his/her NHSC service commitment. You and your family member must travel together, depart/return from the same airport, and travel on the same flight. Hotel double-occupancy government rates apply. NHSC will fund air or rail transportation expenses, as well as meals and incidentals, for the family member. Family members may not extend their stay beyond the allowable 3 days and 2 nights for a site visit. Once an airline ticket is arranged by the Site Visit and Relocation (SVRE) specialist, reviewed, and approved for ticketing, any additional costs related to ticket changes, or cancellation fees, will be your responsibility.

Site Visits to Alaska, Hawaii, and U.S. Territories

For scholars interested in conducting a site visit to Alaska, Hawaii, or one of the U.S. territories, you must also:

- Conduct a phone interview with a representative from the NHSC-approved site.
- Have a detailed discussion with the site regarding the resource limitations, cultural differences, and their expectations.
- Contact a regional overseas consultant:
 - **Hawaii and the Pacific Trust Islands**, contact Gary Hlady in the San Francisco Regional Office (GHlady@hrsa.gov or 415-437-8014)
 - **Alaska**, contact Susan Dunn in the Seattle Regional Office (SDunn@hrsa.gov or 206-615-2492)
 - **Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands**, contact Patrick McHugh in the New York Regional Office (PMchugh@hrsa.gov or 212-254-2806).
- Submit a letter to the NHSC regional overseas consultant explaining why you have decided to serve your commitment in an overseas location.

Be aware that the travel and relocation allotment remains at \$1,200.00. Exceptions may be made in special circumstances. Please discuss this with your NHSC regional overseas consultant.

Reimbursement

For site visits you have a \$1,200 maximum allotment. As you make site visits, the Site Visit and Relocation (SVRE) specialist will advise you on how much money is left in your allotment. If you do not spend your full allotment, you will not be able to keep any remaining travel funds. If you go over your \$1,200 allotment, you will be expected to pay for any additional expenses. Scholars should check with the site and inquire if it is willing to pay for any part of your travel.

When arranging your travel, you should be aware of expenses paid upfront by NHSC and expenses for which you may be reimbursed. Your airline ticket (round trip), hotel, and rental car (if approved) expenses will be paid by NHSC directly to the vendor. Other allowable expenses, including per diem, will be reimbursed to you after you submit an approved travel voucher, including receipts.

Keep track of all receipts for expenses incurred during your trip. Since you are traveling under Federal per diem rates at a fixed amount, receipts for meals are not necessary. Extra costs incurred while on travel status may be reimbursable. Personal expenses (excluding per diem) will not be reimbursed.

When returning from a site visit, submit your travel voucher immediately to your SVRE specialist through the [SVRE website](#). This will enable your specialist to track how much money is left in your allotment and if you need to be reimbursed for travel costs. Reimbursement for any money owed will be sent within 30–60 days.

Interviewing

You are competing with other clinicians in securing a position at an NHSC-approved site. As sites have no requirement to hire an NHSC scholar over other applicants, be well prepared for interviews and other interactions with sites, and conduct yourself with the utmost professionalism.

Interview Tips:

- Research the site and community in advance. Know how you will be an asset to the site.
- Be as professional and formal in phone interviews as you would be in person. Always address your interviewer as Dr./Mr./Ms. unless they tell you otherwise.
- Prepare answers for potential interview questions beforehand.
- Show interest. Inquire as much about the practice as the practice is inquiring about you, and prepare questions about the site, practice, community, and patients served.
- Demonstrate your passion for the field and the position.
- Be prepared to discuss your training and experience.
- Practice a mock interview, preferably with someone in your profession. Record and listen to yourself before the official interview.



“If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is... They waved a nice contract and benefits package at me so I didn’t think to look too hard at the business model or think about looking at other sites. I should have asked more questions about the business up front.”

—Leigh Montejo, NP

- Do not discuss salary during your first interview. If asked, your response should be, “I will consider your strongest offer.”
- Bring copies of your CV, relevant licensure and contact information for your references, and take pen and paper for notes.
- Business dress (a suit) is still the standard interviewing attire.
- Close the deal. If you like what you see, don’t leave the interview without letting the interviewer know you are really interested in the position.
- Send a thank-you note after your interview.

Matching to a Site

Before accepting a position, always speak with your Regional Placement Advisor and get written confirmation that the site: a) has the requisite HPSA of 16 or higher; and b) that the site is currently NHSC-approved and in good standing.

The more flexible you are the easier placement will occur. Have a backup plan, or two, after your first preference. The scholar who is completely and exclusively dedicated to only one site takes on greater risk of disappointment.

Job Offer and Employment Contract

If you and the site feel you are a good match, you will negotiate your employment contract directly with the site. Employment start dates are also negotiated between you and an authorized representative of the practice site. Scholars are expected to begin their service commitment within 3 months of their job offer. Physicians and dentists completing their residency within the usual timeframe will likely have a match deadline of June 30, 2013, and are expected to begin their service commitment by September 30, 2013. Physicians and dentists finishing their residency on an alternate timeline are expected to begin service within 3 months after their residency completion date; dentists who do not complete a residency, nurse-midwives, nurse practitioners, and physician assistants are expected to secure an approved job offer within 6 months after their graduation date, and begin their service commitment within 3 months of their job offer.

Site Assignment

Scholars who have not matched to an NHSC-approved site by their respective deadline will transition to “Site Assignment.” Please note that the Site Assignment process does not find you a job, rather it will find you a viable vacancy for which you must compete. The NHSC will identify a job opening at an NHSC-approved site anywhere in the United States, and based on the needs of our Nation’s underserved communities. NHSC will take the scholar’s preferences into consideration, but there is no guarantee that all the preferences will be met. Scholars in the site assignment phase will be notified of their assignment and instructions in writing. Scholars are to arrange an interview and do their best to obtain employment at the site to which they have been assigned. NHSC scholars breach their scholarship contract when turning down an employment offer during the Site Assignment process.

Failure to Begin or Complete Service Commitment

If you breach an NHSC scholarship contract by not fulfilling your NHSC service commitment, you become financially liable to the United States Government for damages equal to three times the amount of the NHSC scholarship award, plus interest and penalties. You will be encouraged to request a “debt estimate” from the Office of Legal and Compliance and be recommended for default.

Completing the Placement Process

There are a number of documents you will need to submit to the NHSC to complete the placement process. These documents should be submitted through your [Customer Service Portal](#) account as you receive them (see instructions below). Use this checklist to keep track of the documents that you will need to submit to the NHSC.

Important Documents Checklist	
✓	CV/Resume
✓	Results of Board/Certification Exams
Dentists:	Submit a copy of your National Dental Board Exam Part II
Nurse-Midwives:	Submit a copy of a discipline-specific, and if applicable, a specialty-specific National Certification Exam
Nurse Practitioners:	Submit a copy of a discipline-specific, and if applicable, a specialty-specific National Certification Exam
Physicians:	Submit a copy of your USMLE or COMLEX Part III scores
Physician Assistants:	Submit a copy of a discipline-specific, and if applicable, a specialty-specific National Certification Exam
✓	Regional-State License Exams (for all dentists)
✓	Unrestricted-State License
	This license should be for the state where you will be practicing. However, if you are working at a site that is considered a Federal facility (a Federal prison, Indian Health Service site, or Immigration and Customs Enforcement site), you may submit a license from any state.
✓	Offer Letter
	Provide a copy of your job Offer Letter (on company letterhead and signed by the site or personnel representative). The letter should contain the name and address of each site you will work at (and the percentage of time at each site if you will be working at multiple sites), an anticipated start date, and the status of your benefits and malpractice/tail coverage.
✓	Acceptance Letter
	Provide a copy of your formal, written job acceptance letter sent to your future employer. This should mirror the offer letter.

Upon starting your NHSC service commitment, you will receive a Private Practice Assignment Agreement (PPA), Private Practice Option Agreement (PPO), or a Federal Assignment Agreement (FA), outlining the contractual obligation during your service period. For more information on these practice types, please see the [Scholarship Program Application & Program Guidance](#).

Uploading Documents in the NHSC Customer Service Portal

You will be expected to upload the documents listed in the checklist above through the NHSC Customer Service Portal. These documents should be uploaded as you receive them by following the instructions below. Please do not wait until you have all documents to submit them through the Portal.

Shortly after the NHSC Scholar Placement Conference you will receive an email from the NHSC Customer Service Portal indicating that you have a message waiting for you. You can either click on the link within the email message, or at any time, you may access the [Customer Service Portal](#) from nhsc.hrsa.gov.

Once you enter your login information, follow these steps to upload your documents:

- Log in to the NHSC Customer Service Portal via the email message or from nhsc.hrsa.gov.
- Click on the “My Messages” tab.
- Click on the plus sign (+) next to “Communication History” to view your messages.

The messages will remind you which documents are required to complete your placement. The messages will also provide naming conventions for each document. In order to ensure the NHSC is clear which documents you are submitting, we ask that you use the naming conventions provided in the Portal message, along with the date the document is uploaded. (For example, all Board Exam score documents should be saved as “Board-Exam Scores MM-DD-YYYY.”)

To upload your documents click “Contact Us.” Once you do that, you can submit a message indicating what document you are submitting and upload your files. To upload your documents, choose the “Browse” button to search for the document to be uploaded; select “Upload Document” button; and then click “Send.”

The message you receive in your Portal account will remain open and accessible to you until all of your documents are submitted. As noted above, please upload your documents as you receive them. We realize you may not have some of the required documents, such as your professional license or board certification, until late in the process.

If you have any questions about this new process, or have technical issues with the Customer Service Portal, please contact the Customer Care Center at 1-800-221-9393 between 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. ET.

Relocation

Request for Relocation Support

Once you have accepted a job, signed a contract (or agreed to the terms of employment), and are ready to actively plan a move to your new location, you will begin to arrange your [relocation](#). (Note that this is the same website used to arrange site visits.) Receipt of your request will alert NHSC staff to verify that all required documents (see the *Important Document Checklist* section) have been uploaded to your file through the Customer Service Portal. Once your documents have been verified, funding will be approved and you will begin working with a SVRE specialist who will coordinate your move.

Scholars are advised not to travel, relocate, or make any commitments related to relocation without first receiving confirmation from NHSC that relocation and funding have been approved.

Allowable Costs

For many scholars, reporting to a new job will entail relocating. The NHSC will allow up to \$10,000 for approved relocation expenses (overseas travel and relocation expenses are limited at up to \$25,000). The scholar and family members’ relocation allowances include:

- Commercial transportation (coach-class accommodations).
- Travel by one privately owned vehicle—mileage at the prevailing government rate for the most direct route, one night’s lodging for every 300 miles, and per diem based on the local per diem rate.

NHSC will ship one automobile to Alaska, Hawaii, and U.S. territories. NHSC does not ship automobiles within the contiguous United States. NHSC will not ship automobiles back from an overseas assignment; any cost for return to the continental United States is at the scholar’s expense.

NHSC will allow advanced storage of household goods for up to 90 days. This option is restricted to compelling situations and must be approved in advance by NHSC. All household goods will remain in the scholar's current resident state until the compelling situation has concluded. Please note that scholars do not have access to the storage units once the shipment has been sealed by the moving company. Storage costs will be deducted from the \$10,000 allowance.

You and your family members are eligible for reimbursement for travel and shipment of household goods to the initial employment location and in accordance with the Federal Travel Regulations and NHSC travel policies. Any subsequent relocations during or at the end of the service obligation period are at your expense.

Travel for family members and the shipment of your household goods to the new location must occur within 1 year from the start date of the scholar's employment contract. For transportation of household goods, the NHSC-contracted carriers will pack, transport, and unpack household goods. All household goods must be packed and shipped from one location and delivered to only one location.

Relocation Options

Government-Managed Option: This option is for scholars who have been matched to a site, are officially employed, and are fully licensed in the assigned jurisdiction. NHSC will arrange for packing and shipment of household goods. All household goods must be shipped from one location, and must not exceed 18,000 pounds. Reimbursement will be based on allowable expenses and submission of required original receipts, not to exceed a total of \$10,000 for all relocation expenses.

Self-Financed Relocation Option: This option is for scholars who have been matched to a site and who are officially employed, but do not yet have a license in the assigned jurisdiction. Scholars will arrange to have household goods packed and shipped. Once fully licensed, the scholar will submit original receipts to the SVRE Specialist for reimbursement of allowable expenses. Reimbursement will be based on allowable expenses and submission of required original receipts, not to exceed \$10,000 for all relocation expenses.



“The Government-Managed Move Option was great. The movers came, packed up all our belongings, moved us, and delivered. All we had to do was stand there. It was a very nice feeling!”
—Toby Imler, D.D.S.

If you live within 50 miles of your new job location, you are NOT eligible for relocation services.

Reimbursement

Reimbursement [forms](#) can be downloaded. Scholars must provide original receipts.

Serving at Your Site

Once you begin working at an NHSC-approved site, the NHSC continues to offer support in a number of ways. Support activities include networking opportunities, educational resources (including access to free Continuing Education Units), and access to community assets. Please explore the [NHSC Support Network](#) for opportunities and resources that exist within the NHSC community.

Special Situations

Deferment Requests

Deferments are granted in one year increments or less. To receive a deferment of service obligation for approved postgraduate residency training, a physician or dentist submits a written request through the Customer Service Portal, for each year of residency, by April 15 (Note: deferment deadline for chief residency or fellowship is February 1). The request should include: specialty and year of postgrad training (e.g., second year of Family Practice residency). The scholar must also upload into the Portal a letter from the residency director, on letterhead, with the start and completion dates of the training. Additional information can be found in the [Deferment Information Bulletin](#). The NHSC Scholarship Branch will provide written approval of all deferment requests.

Fellowships and Chief Residency

Other limited, and specific opportunities may arise for which some scholars choose to further defer the start of their service commitment, such as serving as chief resident or specific fellowships. Again, the annual Deferment Information Bulletin will provide guidance; however, below are the specific activities for which a deferment may be approved. These are the only activities for which an extension of your training time may be granted. While the NHSC Scholarship Branch processes deferment requests submitted through the Customer Service Portal, you may always ask your Placement Advisor for guidance if the Deferment Information Bulletin does not answer all your questions.

The NHSC will, on a case-by-case and year-to-year basis, approve requests submitted by physicians in their last year of residency training for additional training under the following circumstances only:

- A 1-year Chief Residency position, which may follow the completion of residency training.
- A 2-year Child Psychiatry fellowship, which may follow the completion of residency training in General Psychiatry
- A 1-year Obstetrics/Gynecology fellowship, which may follow the completion of residency training in Family Practice
- A 1-year Geriatrics fellowship, which may follow the completion of residency training in Family Practice or General Internal Medicine

There are four eligible dental deferments:

- General Practice Dentistry—1 Year
- Advanced Education in General Dentistry Program—1 Year
- General Pediatrics Dentistry—2 Years
- Public Health Dentistry—2 Years

Placement Cycle Impact

If you are approved for a deferment that will extend your residency, or education, beyond what was previously anticipated by you and the NHSC, you may be placed in a later Placement Cycle. As each Placement Cycle has a unique HPSA requirement, a deferment may affect the minimum HPSA score for the NHSC sites at which you will need to work.

Review the [Deferment Information Bulletin](#) for detailed information about deferments. [Deferment forms](#) are also available online.

Suspension Requests

A suspension is a break in service that typically occurs for either medical, or academic, reasons and is requested through the Customer Service Portal.

Academic Suspension

If you do not pass all discipline-specific required exams (e.g., USMLE Steps 1–3; COMLEX Parts 1–3; Dental Exams Part I and II; National Certification Exam for NM, FNP, or PA), or do not complete residency, you will need to submit a suspension request to the NHSC Scholarship Branch. The request will be approved, or disapproved, by the NHSC's Office of Legal and Compliance (OLC). Once you have passed the required exam(s), or completed residency, the OLC will refer you back to the Scholarship Branch for Placement Cycle and Placement Advisor assignment. Note that a change in Placement Cycle may result in a change of HPSA threshold requirements.

Medical Suspension

The basis for a medical suspension is a medical condition that (1) would make it temporarily impossible to continue the service commitment or (2) would temporarily involve an extreme hardship to the individual and the enforcement of the service commitment would be against equity and good conscience. Requests for a suspension must be submitted, in writing, through the Customer Service Portal. It must include full medical documentation. Your Placement Advisor and Scholarship Branch contacts are available to assist you in facilitating your suspension request submission.

Waivers

A waiver permanently relieves you of all or part of your NHSC obligation. Approvals of waivers are exceedingly rare, and have only been granted in extreme hardship situations where a participant is medically determined to never again be capable of work in the discipline in which he/she was trained, and for which he/she received a scholarship. Requests for waivers can be entered into the Customer Service Portal and are processed by the Scholarship Branch.

Sites Requesting Additional Scholars

NHSC allows one scholar of each discipline to work at a site. However, sites may request a second scholar from each discipline, if they can justify need. While it is the responsibility of a site to request an additional scholar, we mention it in this guide so that you may inform sites of this possibility. If a site expresses interest in hiring you, they must obtain and complete an additional [scholar request form](#) which can be downloaded from the NHSC website's [Current Members](#) page by clicking on *Recruit Providers* and then selecting *Additional Scholar Request Form* in the *Recruit NHSC Scholars* section.

Communicating with NHSC

NHSC has a host of divisions, offices, and contractors that specialize in different phases of your NHSC experience. This section will list contact information for these staff members.

In-School & Training: NHSC Scholarship Branch

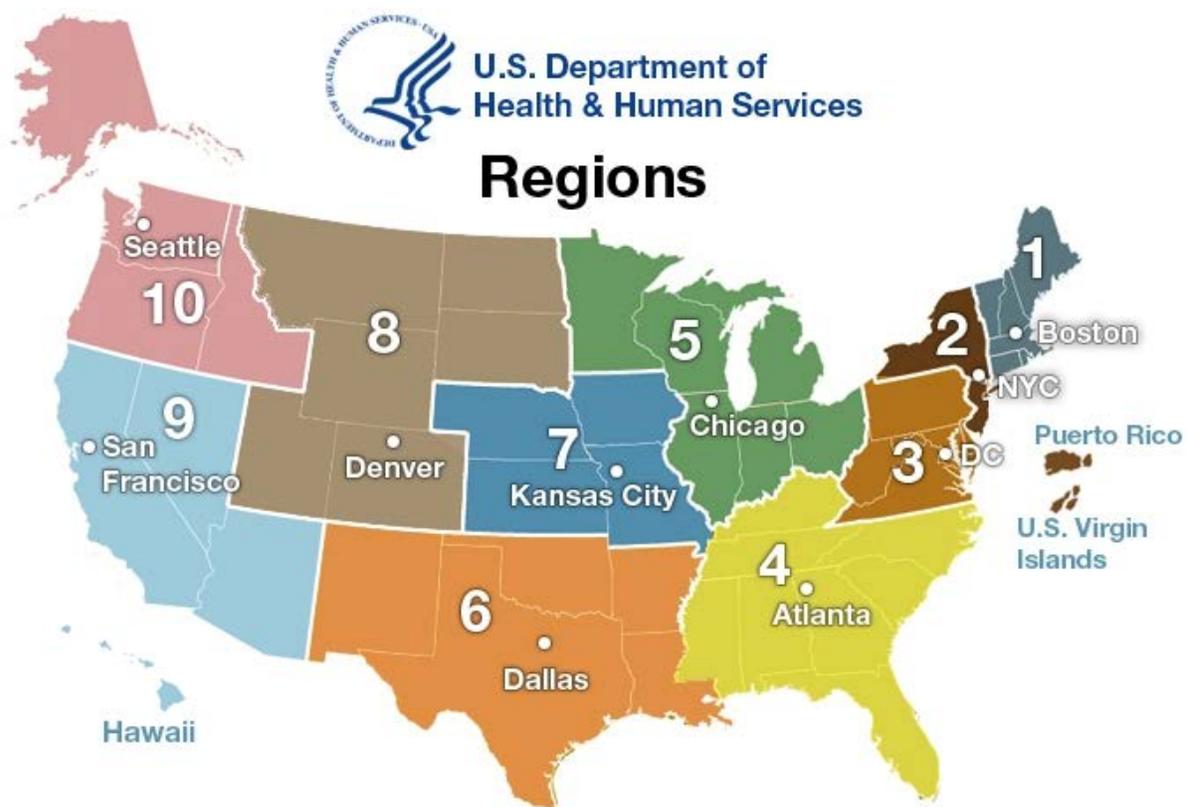
The Scholarship Branch (SB) works with scholars from award of the scholarship through the end of your training program. The SB is in charge of the application and awards, and conducts support and monitoring activities throughout scholars' health professions training. For issues related to funding, deferment, suspension, waiver, graduation dates, residency end-date, and placement cycle you will find these staff particularly knowledgeable. Depending on where you went to school for your clinical degree, please contact:

Name	States	Phone	Email
Abigail Liu	AL, AR, UT, NM, HI, MS, NV, DE	301-443-2943	aliu@hrsa.gov
Ashley Carothers	NJ, SC, IL, LA, MA, ME, MT	301-443-7229	acarothers@hrsa.gov
Cheryl Little	OR, VA, IA, MO, MI	301-594-0337	clittle@hrsa.gov

Greg Brooks	ID, CO, MN	301-443-5346	gbrooks@hrsa.gov
Jestover Jones	FL, CO, VT, TN, KY, SD, RI, PR	301-594-4985	jjones3@hrsa.gov
Pochahontas Wilkinson	WV, AZ, CT, IN, OH, WA, TX	301-594-0225	pwilkinson@hrsa.gov
Purnima Kissoon	GA, KS, PA, NY	301-443-9155	pkissoon@hrsa.gov
Vanessa Hill	NE, OK, MD, DC, NH, WI, NC	301-443-8987	vhill@hrsa.gov

Scholar Placement: NHSC Regional Placement Advisor

The NHSC has 10 regional offices outlined on the map below. Your Placement Advisor will routinely contact you throughout the months of your search to provide you with resources to make your site search experience as easy as possible. We believe the more in touch you are with your Placement Advisor, the more efficient and streamlined your job search will be. If you have not heard from your Placement Advisor, within one month of the Scholar Orientation and Placement Conference, please contact the regional supervisor for the region in which you are interested in working. A complete listing of Placement Advisors and supervisors, including state assignments, is located below.



Points of Contacts for the Division of Regional Operations

Name	Title and Region	Email	Phone
Anita Johnson	Supervisor – Region 1	AJohnson2@hrsa.gov	617.565.4824
Patrick McHugh	Supervisor – Region 2	PMcHugh@hrsa.gov	212.264.2806
Dennis Day	Supervisor – Region 3	DDey@hrsa.gov	215.861.4361
Wanza Bacon	Supervisor – Region 4	WBacon@hrsa.gov	404.562.7040
Anna Gonzales	Supervisor – Region 5	AGonzales@hrsa.gov	313.886.3867
Cindy Adams	Supervisor – Region 6	CAdams@hrsa.gov	214.767.3201
Clark Conover	Supervisor – Region 7	CConover@hrsa.gov	816.426.2919
Beth Dillon	Supervisor – Region 8	BDillon@hrsa.gov	303.844.7878
Gary Hlady	Supervisor – Region 9	GHlady@hrsa.gov	415.437.8014
Susan Dunn	Supervisor – Region 10	SDunn@hrsa.gov	206.615.2492

DRO Regional Placement Advisors

Division of Regional Operations (DRO) State Lead Assignments

Region 1 - Boston		Office Phone	
Anita Johnson	AJohnson2@hrsa.gov	617.565.4824	Supervisor, CT
Timothy Pappalardo	TPappalardo@hrsa.gov	617.565.1456	ME, RI
Colleen Geib	CGeib@hrsa.gov	617.565.1465	MA, NH, VT
Region 2 - New York			
Patrick McHugh	PMcHugh@hrsa.gov	212.264.2806	Supervisor
Apeksha Deshpande	ADeshpande@hrsa.gov	212.264.2544	NY (excluding NYC)
Jennifer Sermas	JSermas@hrsa.gov	212.264.2543	NJ
Steven Auerbach	SAuerbach@hrsa.gov	212.264.2550	New York City (NYC)
Parmjeet Saini	PSaini@hrsa.gov	212.264.3937	PR, VI
Region 3 - Philadelphia			
Dennis Dey	DDey@hrsa.gov	215.861.4361	Supervisor
Camille Soondar	CSoondar@hrsa.gov	215.861.4338	DE, DC, MD
Carolyn Ballard	Cballard@hrsa.gov	215.861.4712	PA
Dina Stahl	DStahl@hrsa.gov	215.861.4380	VA , WV
Region 4 - Atlanta			
Wanza Bacon	WBacon@hrsa.gov	404.562.7040	Supervisor
Janice Cook	JCook1@hrsa.gov	404.562.4177	FL
Michele Smith - Farris	MFarris@hrsa.gov	404.562.5037	AL
Kimberly Price - Evans	Kprice-Evans@hrsa.gov	404.562.3001	NC, SC
Lisa Gilmore	LGilmore@hrsa.gov	404.562.3004	TN
Debra Powell	DPowell@hrsa.gov	404.562.4130	KY
Carolyn Keshinro	CKeshinro@hrsa.gov	404.562.4118	GA
Monica Harrington	MHarrington@hrsa.gov	404.562.3003	MS
Region 5 - Chicago			
Anna Gonzales	AGonzales@hrsa.gov	312.886.3867	Supervisor, MI
Celida Egues	CEgues@hrsa.gov	312.353.4204	IL
Rick Selvik	RSelvik@hrsa.gov	312.353.2996	MN, WI
Haydee Encarnacion - Garcia	Hencarnacion-Garcia@hrsa.gov	312.353.4210	IN, OH
Region 6 - Dallas			
Cindy Adams	CAdams@hrsa.gov	214.767.3201	Supervisor
Richard Brantley	Rbrantley@hrsa.gov	214.767.4533	TX
James (Eugene) Thomas	ETHomas@hrsa.gov	214.767.8111	OK, LA
Delbert Thomas	DThomas2@hrsa.gov	214.767.3920	NM, AR

Region 7 - Kansas			
Clark Conover	Cconover@hrsa.gov	816.426.2919	Supervisor
Tina Arthur	TArthur@hrsa.gov	816.426.5208	MO
Bonnie Grant	BGrant@hrsa.gov	816.426.2918	IA, KS
Terrie Fair - Childress	TFair@hrsa.gov	816.426.5228	NE
Region 8 - Denver			
Beth Dillon (DRO Director)	BDillon@hrsa.gov	303.844.7878	Supervisor
Bruce Dawson	BDawson@hrsa.gov	303.844.7864	(DRO Assistance)
Erica Grover	EGrover@hrsa.gov	303.844.7876	CO, ND
Brenda Neubaum	BNeubaum@hrsa.gov	303.844.7877	MT, WY
Christine Poe	CPoe@hrsa.gov	303.844.7152	SD, UT
Region 9 - San Francisco			
Walter (Gary) Hlady	GHlady@hrsa.gov	415.437.8014	Supervisor
Lisa Ronquillo	LRonquillo@hrsa.gov	415.437.8538	HI, NV
Carol Sherman	CSherman1@hrsa.gov	415.437.8610	AZ, Pacific Territories
Diahann Williams	Dwilliams5@hrsa.gov	415.437.8126	AZ, Pacific Territories
Peter Martineau	PMartineau@hrsa.gov	415.437.8117	CA
Delia Garcia	Dgarcia@hrsa.gov	415.437.8465	CA
Region 10 - Seattle			
Susan Dunn	SDunn@hrsa.gov	206.615.2492	Supervisor, AK
Matthew Feist	MFeist@hrsa.gov	206.615.2488	ID
Maria Garcia	MGarcia@hrsa.gov	206.615.2636	OR, WA
DRO Assistance			
Beth Dillon - DRO Director	BDillon@hrsa.gov	303.844.7878	Director (Denver)
Jeffrey Jordan - Deputy DRO Director	JJordan1@hrsa.gov	214.767.3903	Deputy Director (Dallas)
Bruce Dawson - DRO Assistance	BDawson@hrsa.gov	303.844.7864	(Denver)
Carrie Hartley - DRO Assistance	Chartley@hrsa.gov	301.443.2022	(Rockville)

Site Visit and Relocation: Site Visit and Relocation Specialists

For all placement-related travel and logistics, you will work with the [Site Visit and Relocation](#) (SVRE) specialists. They will assist you with making travel arrangements and receiving reimbursement for site visits and relocation expenses.

In-Service: NHSC Division of Program Operations

Once you begin working at your site, you will be in contact with the NHSC Division of Program Operations (DPO), with whom you will work through the completion of your NHSC service. One of the primary interactions with DPO will be to verify your employment (i.e., meeting program requirements) every six months throughout your service. These verifications will be processed through the Customer Service Portal. Once you begin your service, you will be assigned a DPO analyst.

Please feel free to contact DPO by:

- Sending an inquiry through your account in the [Customer Service Portal](#)
- Calling the Customer Care Center at 800-221-9396 (for TTY hearing impaired 877-897-9910)
- E-mailing GetHelp@hrsa.gov

NHSC Customer Service Portal

All scholars must establish an NHSC Customer Service Portal account which can be accessed through the NHSC website. You will use this account to formally communicate with the NHSC until you complete your service commitment. During the placement cycle, you may communicate with your Placement Advisor through the Portal, email, or by phone. Once you begin working at your site, you will use the Portal to submit questions, complete your six month service verifications and update your personal information. Always ensure that your contact information, including email, phone, and address, is kept current, especially when transitioning from school to work.

To create your account:

1. Visit the NHSC website and click on the [Customer Service Portal](#) button found at the bottom of each NHSC web page.
2. Select the “Create an Account” button located on the bottom left-hand section of the page.
3. Fill in the series of required fields. Once you select “Register,” the system will send an email to the address used to create the account. The email will be from noreply@hrsa.gov with a subject of “Activate Your BCRS Program Portal Account.”
4. Open the link, included in the email, to log in and activate your account.
5. The first time you log in, you must enter your last name, date of birth, and the last six digits of your Social Security number.
6. Once you have entered your information successfully, your account will be activated and you will be ready to use the portal.

If you have any questions or problems creating your account, please contact the NHSC via the Customer Care Center at 1-800-221-9393 or GetHelp@hrsa.gov.

Appendix A: Important Links

Resource	Website
NHSC Jobs Center	www.nhsc.hrsa.gov
Site Visit and Relocation (SVRE) Request	www.nhscsupportservices.com
Central Regional Dental Testing Service (CRDTS)	www.crdts.org
Northeast Regional Board of Dental Examiners (NERB)	www.nerb.org
Southern Regional Board of Dental Examiners (SRTA)	www.srta.org
Western Regional Examining Board (WREB)	www.wreb.org
Federation of State Medical Boards	www.fsmb.org
State Dental Licensing Boards	www.dentalwatch.org
Physician Assistant State and Territorial Regulatory Authorities	www.aapa.org
National Council of State Boards of Nursing	www.ncsbn.org

Appendix B: Sample Letters

Sample Offer Letter

(Site Letterhead)

(Date)

(Clinician's Name)
(Clinician's Street Address)
(City, State ZIP Code)

Dear (Clinician's Name):

We are pleased to offer you full-time employment as a (Discipline/Specialty). You will work at (Site Name), (Street Address), in (City, State ZIP Code).

(NOTE: If the clinician will work at multiple sites, include each site name, physical address and percentage of time at each site. The site information needs to match the NHSC records.)

Your anticipated start date will be (Anticipated Start Date). This allows ample time for us to receive your unrestricted state licensure and regulation. We intend to provide full company benefits, including malpractice and tail coverage insurance for the duration of your employment (OR We intend to provide full company benefits, including malpractice insurance under the Federal Tort Claims Act (FTCA) for the duration of your employment. OR The scholar would not be covered by malpractice and tail coverage insurance.)

Thank you for your interest in our site. Please let us know if there is anything we can do in advance of your start date to facilitate the paperwork requirements, or if there is any literature that you would like to review in order to better understand our organization and community.

We look forward to you joining our team and working with you at (Site Name).

Sincerely,

(Site Representative Name)
(Site Representative Title)

Sample Acceptance Letter

(Clinician's Name)
(Clinician's Street Address #1)
(City, State ZIP)

(Date)

(Site Representative Name)
(Site Representative Title)
(Site Name)
(Site Address #1)
(City, State ZIP)

Dear (Site Representative Name),

I, (Clinician's Name), am pleased to accept your full-time employment offer as a (Discipline/Specialty) at the (Site Name), (Site Address), in (City, State ZIP).
(NOTE: If the clinician will work at multiple sites, include each *site name, physical address and percentage of time* at each site. The site information needs to match the NHSC records.)

As discussed, my anticipated start date is (Anticipated State Date) allowing ample time for receipt of my state licensure and regulation.

NOTE: *If you are serving under the Private Practice Assignment, please include the following statement: I anticipate full company benefits, including malpractice and tail coverage insurance for the duration of my employment. (OR I anticipate full company benefits, including malpractice under the Federal Tort Claims Act (FTCA), for the duration of my employment).

NOTE: * If you will work under the Private Practice Option, please include the following statement: I understand I will be responsible for obtaining malpractice and tail coverage insurance for the duration of my employment.

Thank you again, for extending this exciting opportunity to me. Please let me know if there is anything I can do in advance of my start date to facilitate the paperwork requirements, or if there is any literature that you would like for me to review in order to better understand your organization and community.

I look forward to joining the (Site Name) team.

Sincerely,

(Clinician's Name, Discipline/Specialty)

Appendix C: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q. What is the Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA) score requirement for my discipline?

A: The HPSA requirement for all clinicians in the 2013 placement cycle is 16 for all disciplines.

Q. Can I visit multiple sites on one site visit?

A: Yes, but you must submit a separate travel request for each site visit.

Q. Will the NHSC allow me to use my travel stipend to visit a site more than once?

A: The NHSC pays for only one visit per site.

Q. Can I work at multiple sites?

A: Yes. You may split your time at multiple NHSC-approved sites as long as they all meet the HPSA requirement.

Q. What documents do I need to have on file to begin the relocation process to my site?

A: In order to begin the NHSC Government-managed relocation process, NHSC must have on file a copy of your CV/resume, board/certification examination results, signed Offer Letter, signed Acceptance Letter, a permanent unrestricted license for the state where you will practice, a copy of your regional-state license exam results for all dentists, and a signed Start Date Letter (if applicable).

Q. When does my NHSC service commitment begin?

A: If you have been issued a permanent unrestricted license for the state where you will practice, credit toward your NHSC service commitment will be calculated from the first full day of employment at your match site.

OR

If you begin work prior to receipt of your permanent unrestricted license, your service commitment will begin on the issue date of your permanent unrestricted license.

Q. Can I work as a half-time provider to fulfill my service commitment?

A: Yes. NHSC scholarship recipients can fulfill their service obligation by practicing part time, provided required service hours are completed. More information can be found in the Application and Program Guidance (PDF - 646 KB) under Service Requirements.

Q. Will I be able to transfer to another site after beginning my service commitment?

A: The NHSC would prefer that a scholar completes his/her service commitment at the original match site; therefore, it is important that you thoroughly research your selection. For extenuating circumstances, the NHSC will review and consider a request for a transfer.

Q. If I am interested in working for the Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP), Indian Health Service (IHS), or U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), do I need to possess a license in that state?

A: If you are planning to work at a Federal site, a permanent unrestricted license from any state will be acceptable.

Q. Do I have to use a specific moving company if I choose the Self-Financed Relocation option?

A: You have the option to use a moving company of your choice if you are using the Self-Financed Relocation option. However, if you are planning to use the Government-Managed option, the NHSC contracts with Paul Arpin Van Lines.

Q. Will the NHSC pay to relocate me back once I have completed my service commitment?

A. The NHSC does not pay for return relocations. This includes scholars that wish to return to the contiguous states after completing their service commitment in the U.S territories.

Q. May two NHSC scholars be placed at one site?

A. The NHSC will consider site requests for up to two scholar placements per site for all disciplines on an exceptional/case-by-case basis. Sites wishing to request an additional scholar placement must provide a justification on how NHSC placement of two scholars during the same placement cycle will benefit the community by meeting longstanding unmet needs and increasing the possibility for clinician retention after service obligations are complete.

Q. What should I do if my name, address or other contact information has changed since I started school?

A. Please notify the NHSC any time your name or contact information changes. These changes can be made through the NHSC Customer Service Portal.

Q: Can I continue receiving NHSC scholarship financial assistance while I am serving a residency?

A: The NHSC does not provide financial assistance to scholarship recipients during residency and postgraduate training.

Q: Can I go from an NHSC scholarship-supported PA/NP training program to medical school before serving my NHSC commitment?

A: Your NHSC scholarship contract requires you to fulfill your service commitment upon completion of the health professions degree and/or training for which you received the scholarship.

Q: Can NHSC scholars who have completed their first residency serve a second primary care residency before beginning to fulfill their service commitments?

A: NHSC scholarship recipients must fulfill their service commitments after completing their required residency. Scholarship recipients may be approved for a second primary care residency on a case-by-case basis consistent with the needs of the NHSC. Requests must be submitted by scholarship recipients in their last year of residency training.

Q: I want to specialize in internal medicine, but would also like to sub-specialize. If I am selected to receive the NHSC scholarship, will I be able to do this before serving my obligation to provide clinical primary care services at an NHSC-approved site?

A: NHSC scholars must complete the NHSC service commitment as soon as they have completed required training and education.

Q: What if I change my mind about going into primary care after I have accepted the scholarship or while in residency?

A: Accepting an NHSC scholarship is a serious commitment. If, after graduation, you enter training that is not approved by the NHSC scholarship Program, or you otherwise fail to comply with your contract, you will be liable for financial damages equal to three times the amount of your scholarship plus interest.

Q: What makes a site eligible for fulfillment of the NHSC service commitment?

A: Sites must apply to, and be approved by, the National Health Service Corps to be considered an NHSC-approved site. To become an NHSC-approved site, the site must meet several eligibility requirements.