



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for Dentists

The FAQs are intended to answer commonly asked questions and provide information about important deadlines. For more information, please read the Application Instructions and consider attending a webinar or watch a previously recorded webinar to receive additional information about the program – more information on upcoming webinars is available at CalHealthCares.org.

General

What is the CalHealthCares loan repayment program?

Proposition 56 provides \$340 million for a loan repayment program to increase access to care for Medi-Cal beneficiaries. The Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) contracted with Physicians for a Healthy California (PHC) to administer the loan repayment program, CalHealthCares. The CalHealthCares program offers physicians and dentists the opportunity to repay their educational loan debt up to \$300,000 in exchange for a 5-service obligation in which their direct patient care caseload is a minimum of 30% Medi-Cal beneficiaries.

How much funding do you have?

CalHealthCares has a total of \$340 million for recently graduated physicians and dentists. Please see the table below for allocation of funds per year.

Table: Approximate Funding and Awarding Available for Dentists

Years	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Totals
Total Funds	\$10.7 million	\$10.7 million	\$9.7 million	\$8.2 million	\$8.2 million	\$47.5 million
Physicians Awarded	36	36	32	27	27	158

Note: These numbers are approximate assuming all awards are \$300,000 per awardee.

Do all applicants receive a loan repayment award?

No, each application cycle is unique, and the number of applicants awarded depends on the number of applications received as well as the availability of funding.

How many dentists were awarded in the first cycle?

The inaugural cycle, in April 2019, awarded 38 dentists in 19 counties. Over \$10.1 million was awarded to these dentists during this cycle.

Can applicants also apply for a Practice Support Grant?

Qualifying dentists may apply for either loan repayment (see answer above) or a Practice Support Grant. The Practice Support Grant provides up to \$300,000 to relocate, expand or establish a new practice in one of the geographic target regions in exchange for a 10-year service commitment. Eligible dentists may apply for either loan repayment or the Practice Support Grant. Applicants may not apply for both. More information please see the Practice Support Grant section within this document.

Eligibility

Who qualifies for the Loan Repayment Program?

This program is intended to support existing physicians and dentists providing care to Medi-Cal beneficiaries as well as incentivize new physicians and dentists to increase their participation in the Medi-Cal program. To be considered for an award, the applicant must be a current licensed healthcare provider (physician or dentist) **or** current dental student, physician/dental resident, and/or fellow.

Applicants must:

- Have an unrestricted license and be in good standing with their licensing board
- Be an active enrolled Medi-Cal provider without existing suspensions, disbarments or revocations **or** have submitted your application to DHCS to become a Medi-Cal provider
- Have graduated from dental school and/or a dental residency program within the last five years (on or after January 1, 2015) **or** will be graduating by June 30, 2020
- Practice in California
- For those applying for the loan repayment program, have existing educational loan debt incurred while pursuing a dental degree and not currently participating in another loan repayment program or Practice Support Grant
- For those applying for the Practice Support Grant, have an existing dental practice and willing to expand, establish or relocate to a targeted county
- Applicants must be employed, self-employed or have a validated offer of employment by June 30, 2020. If awarded, the awardee must be employed or self-employed in California during the term of the Awardee Agreement.

What specialties are eligible to apply?

All specialties with a degree of DDS or DMD are eligible to apply. Eligible professions include dentists specializing in any specialty or sub-specialty care.

Do applicants need to be currently employed?

Applicants must be currently employed and/or have a validated offer of employment by June 30, 2020. If awarded, the awardee must be employed or self-employed in California during the term of the Awardee Agreement.

Do applicants need to be employed full-time?

Full-time and part-time applicants are eligible for the CalHealthCares program if they adhere to the service standard of at least a 30% Medi-Cal caseload and within 10% of their Medi-Cal caseload proposed in their application. Part time applicants are not eligible for the full \$300,000 award amount and will have their award amount prorated based on the hours providing direct patient care put on their application and verified within their employment verification form (EVF). For example, a provider working 20 hours per week is eligible for up to 50% of the full amount or \$150,000, while a provider working 40 hours per week, is eligible for the full amount of \$300,000.

For example, Dr. Smith works 40 hours per week. 20 hours are administrative, and 20 hours are providing direct patient care. CalHealthCares staff would prorate her award based on their hours of direct patient care using the formula below:

Hours of direct patient care /40 = %
% x amount requested= total award amount

In Dr. Smith's case:

20 hours/40 = 50%

50% x \$300,000 requested = \$150,000

So, this provider would be eligible for \$150,000 or 50% of the full amount.

Can I work at multiple practices?

Yes, applicants with multiple practice sites must provide an Employment Verification Form for all practice sites.

What if I want to change practice sites?

CalHealthCares does not restrict where you practice. However, please note you will be required to meet your proposed Medi-Cal patient caseload and all other program requirements as stated in your contract.

Do applicants need to be licensed to apply for CalHealthCares?

Yes, applicants must have a current, full, permanent, unencumbered, unrestricted health professional license, by their respective board at time of application. Graduating dentists must have an unrestricted license by June 30, 2020.

If my current patient caseload of Medi-Cal patients is below 30%, am I still eligible?

Yes, applicants who are currently below 30% of their Medi-Cal patient caseload are eligible, if they agree to increase their participation to at least 30% for the entire Awardee Agreement.

How many Medi-Cal patients do I need to see?

The goal of this program is to support existing physicians and dentists who currently have 30% or more Medi-Cal beneficiaries as part of their caseload, as well as, support existing physicians and dentists to increase their participation in the Medi-Cal program. If awarded, you must commit to a patient caseload of at least 30% Medi-Cal patients. Caseload may be defined as annual office visits, panel of patients, payor mix, or time spent on each patient.

Do applicants need to be in good standing with Medi-Cal programs?

Yes, applicants must be in good standing with the Medi-Cal programs. Applicants with current Medi-Cal suspensions, disbarments, or revocations will not be eligible.

Does my practice site need a Dental Health Professional Shortage Area (DHPSA) score?

No, your practice site does not need to have a DHPSA score. However, your practice site's DHPSA score will be a factor – of many – to determine awardees. HPSA is defined by the Federal Health Resources Services Administration (HRSA) and can depend on your automatic facility **or** geographic area HPSA score. PHC staff will input applicant's DHPSA score into their application. Please make

sure to completely spell out the name of each facility and the input the address correctly within the application.

Do applicants need to be in good standing with their educational loans?

Applicant's educational loans must be in good standing. Good standing for the purposes of educational loan debt is defined as not being in default. Applicants may have educational loans in deferment and/or forbearance. Awardees must continue to make payments during their terms of their contract. As part of this application, applicants will be required to submit current educational loan statements showing total payoff balance.

What types of loans are eligible for the CalHealthCares program?

Qualifying educational loans are any outstanding U.S. government (federal, state, or local) and U.S. commercial (i.e. private) educational loan for undergraduate or graduate education obtained by the applicant for school tuition, other reasonable educational expenses, and reasonable living expenses in pursuit of their dental degree. Educational loans must be obtained prior to the submission of the application to the loan repayment program.

What types of loans are ineligible for the CalHealthCares program?

Educational loans in pursuit of other non-medical/dental degrees such as an MBA or PhD are **not** eligible for the loan repayment. Loans related to obtaining a medical degree from an undergraduate education like a bachelor's degree are eligible. In addition, the following loans do not qualify for the CalHealthCares program:

- Parents PLUS Loans
- Personal lines of credit
- Loans subject to cancellation
- Credit card debt
- Promissory notes

Can I be a faculty member and still be eligible for the CalHealthCares program?

Yes, you can be a faculty member and still be eligible for the program if you are also providing individual direct patient care. Direct patient care may include assessment, treatment, counseling, procedures, self-care, patient education and documentation relating to patient encounter. Direct patient care does not include supervision of trainees providing any of the above treatments.

If I have completed another loan repayment program am I eligible?

Yes, applicants may apply once they have successfully completed the terms of agreement of their loan repayment program. Participating and successfully completing a loan repayment program will not impact an applicant's eligibility.

Can applicants participate in another loan repayment program at the same time as participating in this program?

No, applicants can only be under one service obligation (loan repayment program) at a time. Applicants must attest that they are not receiving any type of assistance from another loan repayment program while under the service agreement. Applicants currently participating in

another loan repayment program and will not complete their service obligation by June 30, 2020 are not eligible to apply. This may include employer-sponsored, local, regional, state and/or national loan repayment programs. For example, physicians currently participating in the Steven M. Thompson Loan Repayment Program and/or the National Health Services Corp (California's State Loan Repayment Program) are not eligible to apply.

If I am currently participating in the National Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program am I eligible?

Yes, applicants that are currently pursuing loan forgiveness through the national Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program are eligible to apply.

If I am currently participating in an income-based repayment plan am I eligible?

Yes, applicants currently participating in an income-based repayment plan are eligible to apply.

Where do services have to be provided?

Services may be in any geographic region in California.

Do applicants have to be a U.S. citizen to apply?

Applicants do not need to be a U.S. citizen to apply, however they must be eligible to work in the United States for the terms of the contract.

Do I have to commit to five years of service?

Yes, both physicians and dentists for the educational loan repayment must commit to five years of service.

Application

If awarded, do I have to re-apply each year?

No, however, awardees must provide documentation that they are meeting the contractual obligations of the CalHealthCares program on a semi-annual basis.

I am a co-owner of a practice. Can I submit an application on behalf of my business partners for the Practice Support Grant?

No, applications are specific to the individual making the submission. Complete separate applications for each business partner in the practice.

I work in a private practice. Does this negatively affect my application?

No, if you meet the eligibility requirements we encourage you to apply! The inaugural cycle awarded 7 dentists in private practice.

I don't have an NPI number. What is that and where do I get one?

An NPI number is a National Provider Index Number obtained through the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) National Plan and Provider Enumeration System (NPPES). It is a unique 10-

digit number to identify healthcare applicants. All applicants must have an NPI to be eligible for the CalHealthCares program.

What do I need to apply for the CalHealthCares program?

To see a full list of the information and documents needed, please see our CalHealthCares program checklist at [CalHealthCares.org](https://calhealthcares.org).

My current individual direct patient caseload is more than 30% Medi-Cal. If awarded will I get “credit” for the time spent at my site before my contract effective date?

No, your obligation beginning and end dates will be clearly listed on the contract. You will not receive “credit” for time served outside of those dates.

Lender statement

Do I need to submit account statements for all my educational loans?

Recognizing applicants may have multiple loans administered through a single loan servicer, applicants should include all loans from a single loan servicer as one lender and provide the total payoff balance amount. Applicants with multiple loans through a single loan servicer should submit their most recent account statement which should include their current total payoff balance.

Can I submit my monthly lender statement?

You must submit a payoff balance statement or documents from your lender showing your total payoff amount. A monthly lender statement will likely not provide the necessary information.

What do I need for the lender payoff balance statement?

Lender statements must:

- Be dated on or after November 13, 2019
- Include the applicant's name, payoff amount, account number, and lenders' name and address
- Match the information that is included in the application. If information is missing, the application will be considered incomplete

Is there a website where I can gather information on all my federal loans?

To help students with lender information and verification, the National Educational Loan Data System (NSLDS), allows students to generate a summary report that contains originating loan information such as: outstanding balance, interest, and loan status for all their federal loans. Applicants can visit their website [here](https://nslds.ed.gov/) for more information.

Award

How are awards decided?

The Advisory Council will consider the following criteria:

- Current and proposed caseload of Medi-Cal beneficiaries
- Hours providing direct patient care per week

- Dental HPSA score
- Medi-Cal threshold language/s spoken at work
- Personal statement

DHCS will make the final decisions.

Is the award amount based on my original loan balance or my current loan balance?

The award is based on the verified loan total payoff balance at the time of application submission, or a maximum of \$300,000. Discrepancies in lender statement information may result in reduction in award amount, reduction in scores and applicant being found not eligible.

How will I know if I have been awarded?

All applicants who have been awarded will be contacted via email by May 1, 2020, with an official award letter and Awardee Agreement for review, completion and signature.

If I am awarded, will this be public information?

Yes, a list of all awardee names will be posted on the CalHealthCares website on May 1, 2020.

If awarded, do I have to stay with my current employer for the duration of my contract?

No, awardees must notify CalHealthCares of changes in employment but if they can continue to meet the terms of their contract, change of employment will not affect their award.

If chosen for an award, will funds be paid directly to my loan provider?

No, funds will be disbursed directly to awardees.

If funds are paid to me directly, will I be liable for taxes?

Payments made under the National Health Service Corps or any state loan repayment or loan forgiveness program that is intended to provide for the increased availability of health care services in underserved or health professional shortage areas are excluded from gross income, effective for amounts received by an individual in tax years beginning after December 31, 2008. This response is **not** intended to provide tax or legal advice! Applicants with questions regarding the taxable and/or reportable nature of this loan repayment should consult a tax advisor.

What are the program requirements for dentist applying the Loan Repayment Program?

Dentists applying for the loan repayment program must:

- Have an unrestricted license in and be in good standing with the Dental Board of California
- Be an active enrolled Medi-Cal provider without existing suspensions, disbarments, or revocations **or** have submitted an application to DHCS to become an active enrolled Medi-Cal provider
- Have graduated from a dental program or dental residency program
- Have existing educational loan debt incurred while pursuing their dental degree

- Not currently be participating in another loan repayment program
- Practice in California
- Maintain a patient caseload of 30% or more Medi-Cal and within 10% of the proposed Medi-Cal patient caseloads as noted in their application, if awarded
- Be employed, self-employed or have a validated offer of employment

What are the program requirements for dentist applying for the Practice Support Grant?

Dentists applying for Practice Support Grant must:

- Have an unrestricted license and be in good standing with the Dental Board of California
- Be an active enrolled Medi-Cal provider without existing suspensions, disbarments or revocations or have **or** have submitted an application to become an active enrolled Medi-Cal provider
- Have graduated from dental school or a residency program within the last fifteen years (on or after January 1, 2005)
- Not currently be participating in another loan repayment program or practice support grant
- Practice in California
- Maintain a patient caseload of 30% or more Medi-Cal beneficiaries and within 10% of the proposed Medi-Cal patient caseload inputted into their application
- Expand and open new practices, relocate current practice or establish a new practice in one of the targeted counties
- Business plan with total amount of all eligible expenses (please see below for a list of eligible expenses)
- County information the applicant is proposing to relocate, expand or establish a new practice in (a list of target counties is listed below).

What happens if an awardee is unable to fulfill the terms of their contractual obligation and complete their service obligation?

Awardees may be considered in breach of their contract if they are unable to comply with the terms of their service agreement and will not be eligible for the annual loan repayment. For example, if an awardee moves out of state or no longer has an individual direct patient caseload of 30% Medi-Cal, the awardee is considered in breach of the contract and the annual payment may no longer be provided. All efforts should be made by the awardee to meet these contractual obligations.

If awarded, when will I receive my loan repayment?

Payments will be made in arrears, after every one-year of service. Each annual payment will be 20% of the total award. As such, an awardee that receives a loan repayment of \$300,000 would receive a \$60,000 payment after each one-year of service, assuming that the awardee also meets the other requirements (i.e. active and unrestricted license, in good standing with the Medi-Cal program, minimum 30% Medi-Cal caseload, etc.) Please see below for our disbursement schedule:

Loan Repayments: Funding Disbursement (assuming \$300,000 award)		
When money will be awarded	Percentage of total awarded	Amount
After first year	20%	\$60,000

After second year	20%	\$60,000
After third year	20%	\$60,000
After fourth year	20%	\$60,000
After fifth year	20%	\$60,000

If I am not awarded in this application cycle, may I apply for the next open application cycle?

Yes, we encourage all eligible applicants to reapply if they were not awarded in the previous year.

Practice Support Grant

What is the Practice Support Grant?

Eligible dentists may apply for a Practice Support Grant up to \$300,000 to relocate, expand, or establish a new practice to an area of highest patient need and commit to serving Medi-Cal beneficiaries for at least 10 years. Dentists may apply for either a loan repayment or a Practice Support Grant. Eligible dentists may not apply for both – the electronic application will ask eligible dentists to choose an option. Dentists applying for the Practice Support Grant are not required to have educational loan debt.

Who qualifies for the Practice Support Grant?

Eligible applicants must have graduated from a dental school within the last fifteen years, have an unrestricted license and be in good standing with the Dental Board of California, currently employed or have a private practice within California, and be willing to relocate, expand, or establish a new practice in an area of highest need and commit to serving Medi-Cal beneficiaries for at least 10 years.

Does an office expansion meet the requirements for the Practice Support Grant?

No, even if an applicant is currently practicing in a priority county you are still expected to open an additional office within a priority county.

What are the eligible expenses?

Applicants will submit a business plan providing an overview of costs associated with relocating and/or establishing the new practice describing how they will meet the minimum 30 percent Medi-Cal caseload. Business plans may include costs to establish and sustain a practice using any, but not limited to, the following eligible expenses:

- Renovation or construction for a practice
- Equipment or furniture for a practice
- Staff salaries for a practice
- Qualified educational loan repayment
- Income guarantee or direct compensation
- Recruitment or productivity bonus
- Relocation cost
- Continuing education fees

For more information on what should be included in a business plan, please see our business plan guidelines at CalHealthCares.org

When will I receive my Practice Support Grant?

The table below is an example of the funding disbursement for a dentist who has been awarded the full amount of \$300,000.

Dental Practice Support: Funding Disbursement (assuming \$300,000 grant)		
When money will be awarded	Percentage of total awarded	Amount
After initial contract signing	10%	\$30,000
After first year	23%	\$69,000
After second year	16.75%	\$50,250
After third year	16.75%	\$50,250
After fourth year	16.75%	\$50,250
After fifth year	16.75%	\$50,250

Do I need to have a specific patient caseload?

Eligible dentists must commit to a patient caseload of at least 30 percent Medi-Cal patients. For purposes of this program, a patient caseload may be defined as annual office visits, panel of patients, payor mix, practice and/or time.

What are the targeted counties?

Below is a list of the targeted counties for the Practice Support Grant.

Priority Counties for Dental Practice Support Grant			
Alpine	Amador	Calaveras	Colusa
Del Norte	Glenn	Humboldt	Inyo
Kings	Lassen	Mariposa	Modoc
Mono	Monterey	Sierra	Trinity
Yuba			

Who should I contact if I have questions?

For additional information, please contact PHC at
CalHealthCares@phcdocs.org.

phcdocs.org | @phcdocs |     