

By: Hinojosa

S.B. No. 1509

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to eligibility requirements for the repayment of certain  
mental health professional education loans.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Section 61.601, Education Code, is amended to  
read as follows:

Sec. 61.601. DEFINITION. In this subchapter, "mental  
health professional" means:

(1) a licensed physician who is:

(A) a graduate of an accredited psychiatric  
residency training program; or

(B) certified in psychiatry by:

(i) the American Board of Psychiatry and  
Neurology; or

(ii) the American Osteopathic Board of  
Neurology and Psychiatry;

(2) a psychologist, as defined by Section 501.002,  
Occupations Code;

(3) a licensed professional counselor, as defined by  
Section 503.002, Occupations Code;

(4) an advanced practice registered nurse, as defined  
by Section 301.152, Occupations Code, who holds a nationally  
recognized board certification in psychiatric or mental health  
nursing; ~~and~~

(5) a licensed clinical social worker, as defined by  
Section 505.002, Occupations Code; and

(6) a chemical dependency counselor, as defined by  
Section 504.001, Occupations Code.

SECTION 2. Section 61.603(a), Education Code, is amended to  
read as follows:

(a) To be eligible to receive repayment assistance under  
this subchapter, a mental health professional must:

(1) apply to the board;

(2) have completed ~~[one,~~ two, three, four, or five  
consecutive years of practice in a mental health professional  
shortage area designated by the Department of State Health  
Services; and

(3) provide mental health services in this state to:

(A) recipients under the medical assistance  
program authorized by Chapter 32, Human Resources Code;

(B) enrollees under the child health plan program  
authorized by Chapter 62, Health and Safety Code; or

(C) persons committed to a secure correctional  
facility operated by or under contract with the Texas Juvenile  
Justice Department or persons confined in a secure correctional  
facility operated by or under contract with any division of the  
Texas Department of Criminal Justice.

SECTION 3. Sections 61.607(a) and (b), Education Code, are  
amended to read as follows:

(a) A mental health professional may receive repayment  
assistance under this subchapter for each consecutive year the

1 mental health professional establishes eligibility for the  
2 assistance in an amount determined by applying the following  
3 applicable percentage to the maximum total amount of assistance  
4 allowed for the mental health professional under Subsection (b):

- 5 (1) [~~for the first year, 10 percent,~~  
6 [~~2~~] for the second year, 25 [~~15~~] percent;  
7 (2) [~~3~~] for the third year, 20 percent;  
8 (3) [~~4~~] for the fourth year, 25 percent; and  
9 (4) [~~5~~] for the fifth year, 30 percent.

10 (b) The total amount of repayment assistance received by a  
11 mental health professional under this subchapter may not exceed:

12 (1) \$160,000, for assistance received by a licensed  
13 physician;

14 (2) \$80,000, for assistance received by:  
15 (A) a psychologist;  
16 (B) a licensed clinical social worker, if the  
17 social worker has received a doctoral degree related to social  
18 work; or

19 (C) a licensed professional counselor, if the  
20 counselor has received a doctoral degree related to counseling;

21 (3) \$60,000, for assistance received by an advanced  
22 practice registered nurse; [~~and~~]

23 (4) \$40,000, for assistance received by a licensed  
24 clinical social worker or a licensed professional counselor who is  
25 not described by Subdivision (2); and

26 (5) \$10,000, for assistance received by a licensed  
27 chemical dependency counselor, if the chemical dependency

1 counselor has received an associate degree related to chemical  
2 dependency counseling or behavioral science.

3       SECTION 4. The changes in law made by this Act to Sections  
4 61.603(a) and 61.607(a), Education Code, apply only to a person who  
5 first establishes eligibility for loan repayment assistance under  
6 Subchapter K, Chapter 61, Education Code, as amended by this Act, on  
7 the basis of an application submitted on or after September 1, 2017.  
8 A person who first establishes eligibility on the basis of an  
9 application submitted before September 1, 2017, is governed by the  
10 law in effect at the time the application was submitted, and the  
11 former law is continued in effect for that purpose.

12       SECTION 5. This Act takes effect September 1, 2017.