

164.936 Healthcare Worker Loan Relief Program -- Purpose -- Duties -- Trust fund.

- (1) The General Assembly hereby establishes the statewide Healthcare Worker Loan Relief Program designed to be in alignment with the federally funded state loan repayment program authorized under KRS 211.165 in providing student loan repayment for eligible healthcare workers within the Commonwealth. The Healthcare Worker Loan Relief Program shall be administered by the University of Kentucky through the Center of Excellence in Rural Health, and all costs associated with the program, including the reimbursement of any expenses incurred by the center in its administration of the program, shall be funded by state appropriations and other funds held in the healthcare worker loan relief fund, which shall be excluded from the comprehensive funding model established in KRS 164.092.
- (2) The board of trustees of the University of Kentucky, on behalf of the Center of Excellence in Rural Health, shall adopt policies for the administration of the program that are in alignment with the policies implemented in the administration of KRS 211.165 and the federally funded state loan repayment program it authorizes, and shall include:
 - (a) The professional, certification, education, employment, and worksite eligibility requirements, except that the professional requirements shall also grant eligibility to ophthalmologists, optometrists, and audiologists;
 - (b) Student loan eligibility requirements;
 - (c) A process to consider applications from eligible healthcare workers, except the policy shall include an application cycle that is open at least biannually;
 - (d) Program admission guidelines;
 - (e) The conditions under which admitted healthcare workers shall receive awards;
 - (f) To the extent that funding is available, the process for determining award amounts, which shall include the tiering of award amounts based on provider type, student loan amounts, and other factors, except that the policy shall not require a dollar-for-dollar match component from admitted healthcare workers' employers; and
 - (g) Procedures to provide repayment to loan servicers.
- (3)
 - (a) The healthcare worker loan relief fund is hereby created as a trust fund in the State Treasury to be administered by the University of Kentucky on behalf of the Center of Excellence in Rural Health for the purpose of providing loan repayment as described in this section.
 - (b) The trust fund shall consist of state general fund appropriations, gifts and grants from public and private sources, and federal funds. All moneys included in the fund shall be appropriated for the purposes set forth in this section.
 - (c) Any unallotted or unencumbered balances in the trust fund shall be invested as provided in KRS 42.500(9). Income earned from the investments shall be credited to the trust fund.

- (d) Notwithstanding KRS 45.229, any fund balance at the close of the fiscal year shall not lapse but shall be carried forward to the next fiscal year and continuously appropriated only for the purposes specified in this section.

Effective: April 20, 2022

History: Created 2022 Ky. Acts ch. 226, sec. 1, effective April 20, 2022.