

**ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH
NURSING EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM**
Pursuant to the Nursing Education Scholarship Law [110 ILCS 975]

**PROGRAM INFORMATION
2017 – 2018 ACADEMIC YEAR**

PURPOSE

The goal of the Nursing Education Scholarship Program (NESP) is to increase the number of nurses available for employment in Illinois by offering scholarships to overcome financial barriers to education. The program provides financial assistance to qualified individuals pursuing a certificate in practical nursing, an associate degree in nursing, a hospital-based diploma in nursing, a baccalaureate degree in nursing, or a graduate degree in nursing.

ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for a scholarship an applicant must:

1. Be an Illinois resident for at least one year prior to applying for the scholarship;
2. Be a U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident alien of the U.S.;
3. Be enrolled in or accepted for admission to a nursing program in Illinois that is approved by the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation (a list of approved schools is located at: <http://www.idfpr.com/Forms/DPR/NurseSchools.pdf>);
4. Demonstrate financial need; and
5. Agree to the nurse employment or nurse educator employment obligation.

APPLICATION

To be considered for the scholarship, you must submit:

1. A scholarship application prior to the submission deadline; and
2. A copy of your enrollment or acceptance letter to an approved nursing program; and
3. A copy of your Illinois driver's license or State-issued identification card; and
4. A copy of your **notarized** birth certificate, or documentation you are a naturalized citizen, or documentation you are a lawful permanent resident of the U.S.; and
5. Your latest official transcripts which indicate your cumulative grade point average. The transcripts must be received by the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) directly from the school or have been issued to the applicant in a sealed envelope, which shall remain sealed until its arrival at IDPH. The transcripts must include the institution's official seal, the date the transcript was issued, and the registrar's signature. Transcripts that do not conform to these requirements **will not** be accepted;

6. Your current Student Aid Report (SAR) from your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) that indicates your Estimated Financial Contribution. A current SAR is required even if you are not eligible for or have not applied for other financial assistance;
7. A copy of your current Illinois nursing license (if applicable); and
8. Your signed Confirmation and Release form (the form is attached to the e-mail you will receive from IDPH when your application is submitted).

For assistance with your SAR, visit your school's financial aid office, go to www.fafsa.ed.gov, or call 1-800-4FED-AID (1-800-433-3243).

DISTRIBUTION OF SCHOLARSHIPS

Scholarships will be distributed as follows:

1. At least 40 percent to students pursuing a baccalaureate degree in nursing;
2. At least 30 percent to students pursuing an associate degree or a hospital-based diploma in nursing;
3. At least 20 percent to students pursuing a graduate degree in nursing; and
4. At least 10 percent to students pursuing a certificate in practical nursing.

SELECTION CRITERIA

Recipients will be selected based on the following criteria:

- A. For applicants pursuing a certificate, diploma, or degree to become a licensed practical nurse, registered nurse, or advanced practice nurse:
 1. Current recipients requesting a scholarship renewal will receive preference.
 2. If the number of qualified applicants exceeds the number of scholarships to be awarded, priority will be given to applicants who:
 - a. Demonstrate financial need, as shown on a current SAR, and will pursue their education on a full-time or close to full-time basis and who already have a certificate in practical nursing, a diploma in nursing, or an associate degree in nursing and are pursuing a higher degree; and
 - b. Have a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.0 on a 4.0 scale.

In the event of a tie, applicants having the fewest number of credit hours remaining to complete the certificate, diploma, or degree will be awarded scholarships.
- B. For applicants who are pursuing a graduate degree to become a nurse educator:
 1. Current recipients requesting a scholarship renewal will receive preference.

2. If the number of qualified applicants exceeds the number of scholarships to be awarded, priority will be give to applicants who:
 - a. Demonstrate financial need, as shown on a current SAR, and will pursue their education on a full-time or close to full-time basis, and already have a baccalaureate degree in nursing and are pursuing a higher degree;
 - b. Are a registered nurse who is pursuing a graduate degree in nursing to gain employment in an approved institution that educates licensed practical nurses and registered nurses in undergraduate and graduate nursing programs; and
 - c. Have a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.00 on a 4.00 scale.

In the event of a tie, applicants having the fewest number of credit hours remaining to complete the degree will be awarded scholarships.

YEARS OF SCHOLARSHIP FUNDING

The number of years a recipient is eligible to receive scholarship funding is based on the certificate, diploma, or degree being pursued. The maximum years are:

1. Certificate in practical nursing – one academic year
2. Associate degree in nursing – two academic years
3. Hospital-based diploma in nursing – three academic years
4. Baccalaureate degree in nursing – four academic years
5. Graduate degree in nursing – five academic years
6. Graduate degree in nursing to become a nurse educator – three academic years

SCHOLARSHIP AMOUNTS

Full-time students may receive the following for an academic year:

Public college or university:

Students pursuing a baccalaureate or graduate degree in nursing:

\$11,177 for tuition and fees (**estimate per academic year**)

\$4,875 for a stipend (**estimate per academic year**)

Community college, hospital-based school of nursing, or school of practical nursing:

Students pursuing a certificate in practical nursing, an associate degree, a hospital-based diploma:

\$3,118 for tuition and fees (**estimate per academic year**)

\$4,875 for a stipend (**estimate per academic year**)

Private colleges and universities

Students attending private colleges and universities receive the same amount of assistance as students attending public institutions.

Scholarship awards for part-time students are determined by applying the ratio of part-time enrollment to full-time enrollment, to the average per-term scholarship amount for a student in the same nursing degree category. Part-time students are ineligible for the stipend.

CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT

Prior to receiving scholarship funding for any academic year, the recipient must sign a grant agreement with the State of Illinois agreeing to work at a medical facility in Illinois providing direct patient care as a licensed practical nurse, registered nurse, or advanced practice nurse. For individuals who pursue a graduate degree in nursing to become a nurse educator, the recipient must teach nursing students at an approved institution in Illinois.

REPAYMENT OF SCHOLARSHIP OBLIGATION

Repayment of the scholarship obligation to the State of Illinois is achieved by:

1. Working at a medical facility in Illinois as a licensed practical nurse, registered nurse, or advanced practice nursing providing direct patient care; or as a nurse educator (in the case of a graduate degree student) teaching at an approved institution; or
2. Monetarily repaying the obligation.

Following graduation and licensing, a scholarship recipient is required to be employed on a full-time or part-time basis.

Full-time employment: providing direct patient care or working as a nurse educator for 35 hours or more per week for weekday shifts or 24 hours per weekend shift.

Part-time employment: providing direct patient care or working as a nurse educator for a minimum of 17.5 hours and up to 34 hours per week.

Fulfillment of the nursing employment obligation must be within a time period that does not exceed twice the number of months covered by the scholarship, as illustrated in the following table.

SCHOLARSHIP	NURSING EMPLOYMENT OBLIGATION	
	FULL-TIME EMPLOYMENT	PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT
ONE ACADEMIC YEAR (semester / trimester basis)		
Per term, full-time student	6 months	12 months
Per term, part-time student	3 months	6 months
ONE ACADEMIC YEAR (quarter basis)		
Per term, full-time student	4 months	8 months
Per term, part-time student	2 months	4 months
SUMMER TERM		
Per term, full-time student	3 months	6 months
Per term, part-time student	1.5 months	3 months
NOTE: Total nursing employment obligation for any one academic year will not exceed 12 months of full-time employment.		

Fulfillment of the nurse educator employment obligation is accomplished by being employed in Illinois as a nurse educator at an approved institution for at least **two** years for each year of scholarship assistance received.

License pending status – employment in "license pending" status does not meet the employment obligation of this scholarship.

For recipients holding a current Illinois nurse license prior to graduation, the scholarship obligation is met by employment subsequent to receipt of the degree for which the scholarship was received.

Monetary repayment – A recipient who fails to meet any term of the grant agreement is in default and will be required to monetarily repay the scholarship to IDPH. Repayment is as follows:

For each year not met by the nursing employment (or nurse educator employment) obligation, recipient will repay IDPH the total amount of scholarship funds received plus seven percent interest per year on the unpaid balance. Cash repayment must begin within six months following the date of the default and must be completed within six years.

DEFERMENT OF OBLIGATION

The nurse employment or nurse educator employment obligation may be deferred by review of a written statement from the recipient to IDPH when failure to fulfill the nursing employment or nurse educator employment obligation results from:

1. Involuntarily leaving the nursing profession due to a decrease in the number of nurses employed in Illinois; or
2. Enlisting for up to four years in military service, before or after graduation, and before completion of the obligation; or
3. Receiving another NESP scholarship to pursue a higher nursing degree.

WAIVER OF OBLIGATION

The nurse employment or nurse educator employment obligation is waived if the failure to fulfill the obligation is the result of the recipient's:

1. total and permanent disability; or
2. adjudication as incompetent; or
3. death.

RECIPIENT RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Upon graduation, a recipient must provide a copy of his / her certificate, diploma, or degree (as applicable) to IDPH.
2. Recipient must pass the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX) and provide a copy of his / her Illinois nurse license to IDPH.
3. Recipient must meet the required nursing employment or nurse educator employment obligation or monetarily repay the scholarship funds.

4. Recipient should consult a tax preparer regarding the tax obligation resulting from this award.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Applications (both electronic and paper) will be accepted beginning March 1, 2017 through April 30, 2017. Paper applications that are postmarked on or before April 30, 2017, but received at a later date **will not** be considered.

The scholarship pays for coursework within the nursing curriculum for which the recipient is funded; it **does not** pay for pre-requisite coursework. The expense for coursework applied to another degree will not be paid, nor will it be considered when determining eligibility for a stipend.

Applicants who are in default on other educational loans and / or scholarships received from state or federal funds are not eligible to receive these scholarship funds.

Applicants are not required to disclose their Social Security number on the application. If selected for a scholarship, however, the Social Security number will be necessary.

It is the applicant's responsibility to notify program staff if any information on their application changes.

Submitting an application and having it deemed complete DOES NOT guarantee a scholarship.

Questions may be directed to:

Illinois Department of Public Health
Center for Rural Health
Nursing Education Scholarship Program
535 West Jefferson, Ground Floor
Springfield, IL 62761-0001
Telephone: 217-782-1624 or 1-800-821-3635
TTY (hearing impaired use only) 1-800-547-0466
e-mail: dph.nesp@illinois.gov