

Department of Veterans Affairs

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credit hours required to be carried by a full-time student in the course of training being pursued by the participant.

(5) A full stipend may be paid only for the months the part-time student is attending classes.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 7614(2))

(6) The Secretary may make arrangements with the school in which the participant is enrolled for the direct payment of the amount of tuition and/or reasonable educational expenses on the participant's behalf.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 7613(c))

(7) A participant's eligibility for a stipend ends at the close of the month in which degree requirements are met.

(b) *Leave-of-absence, repeated course work.* The Secretary may suspend scholarship payments to or on behalf of a participant if the school (1) approves a leave-of-absence for the participant for health, personal, or other reasons, or (2) requires the participant to repeat course work for which the Secretary previously has made payments under the Scholarship Program. Additional costs relating to the repeated course work will not be paid under this program. Any scholarship payments suspended under this section will be resumed by the Secretary upon notification by the school that the participant has returned from the leave-of-absence or has satisfactorily completed the repeated course work and is proceeding as a full-time student in the course of study for which the scholarship was awarded.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 7633)

[48 FR 37400, Aug. 18, 1983, as amended at 55 FR 40170, Oct. 2, 1990]

§ 17.607 Obligated service.

(a) *General.* Except as provided in paragraph (d) of this section, each participant is obligated to provide service as a Department of Veterans Affairs employee in full-time clinical practice in the participant's discipline in an assignment or location determined by the Secretary.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 7616(a))

(b) *Beginning of service.* (1)(i) *Date of employment.* Except as provided in paragraph (b)(2) of this section, a participant's obligated service will begin on the date VA appoints the participant as a full-time VA employee in a clinical occupation for which the degree prepared the participant. VA will appoint the participant to such position as soon as possible, but no later than 90 days after the date that the participant receives his or her degree, or the date the participant becomes licensed in a State or becomes certified, whichever is later. VA will actively assist and monitor participants to ensure State licenses or certificates are obtained in a minimal amount of time following graduation. If a participant fails to obtain his or her degree, or fails to become licensed in a State or become certified no later than 180 days after receiving the degree, the participant is considered to be in breach of the acceptance agreement.

(ii) *Notification.* VA will notify the participant of the work assignment and its location no later than 60 days before the date on which the participant must begin work.

(iii) *VA mentor.* VA will ensure that the participant is assigned a mentor who is employed at the same facility where the participant performs his or her obligated service at the commencement of such service.

(2) Obligated service shall begin on the degree completion date for a participant who, on that date, is a full-time VA employee working in a capacity for which the degree program prepared the participant.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 7616(b), 7616(c), 7618(a))

(c) *Duration of service—(1) Full-time student.* A participant who attended school as a full-time student will agree to serve as a full-time clinical employee in the Veterans Health Administration for 1 calendar year for each school year or part thereof for which a scholarship was awarded, but for no less than 2 years.

(2) *Part-time student.* Obligated service to VA for a participant who attended school as a part-time student must be satisfied by full-time clinical employment. The period of obligated service will be reduced from that which

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a full-time student must serve under paragraph (c)(1) of this section in accordance with the proportion that the number of credit hours carried by the part-time student in any school year bears to the number of credit hours required to be carried by a full-time student who is pursuing the same degree; however, the period of obligated service will not be for less than 1 year.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 7612(c)(1)(B), 7612(c)(3)(A), 7618(c))

(d) *Location for service.* VA reserves the right to make final decisions on the location for service obligation. A participant who receives a scholarship as a full-time student must be willing to relocate to another geographic location to carry out his or her service obligation according to the participant's mobility agreement. A participant who received a scholarship as a part-time student may be allowed to serve the period of obligated service at the health care facility where the individual was assigned when the scholarship was authorized, if there is a vacant position which will satisfy the individual's mobility agreement at that facility.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 7616(a))

(e) *Creditability of advanced clinical training.* No period of advanced clinical training will be credited toward satisfying the period of obligated service incurred under the Scholarship Program.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 7616(b)(3)(A)(ii))

[47 FR 10810, Mar. 12, 1982, as amended at 48 FR 37400, Aug. 18, 1983; 54 FR 28675, July 7, 1989; 78 FR 51070, Aug. 20, 2013]

§ 17.608 Deferment of obligated service.

(a) *Request for deferment.* A participant receiving a degree from a school of medicine, osteopathy, dentistry, optometry, or podiatry, may request deferment of obligated service to complete an approved program of advanced clinical training. The Secretary may defer the beginning date of the obligated service to allow the participant to complete the advanced clinical training program. The period of this deferment will be the time designated for the specialty training.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 7616(a)(A)(i))

(b) *Deferment requirements.* Any participant whose period of obligated service is deferred shall be required to take all or part of the advanced clinical training in an accredited program in an educational institution having an Affiliation Agreement with a Department of Veterans Affairs health care facility, and such training will be undertaken in a Department of Veterans Affairs health-care facility.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 7616(b)(4))

(c) *Additional service obligation.* A participant who has requested and received deferment for approved advanced clinical training may, at the time of approval of such deferment and at the discretion of the Secretary and upon the recommendation of the Under Secretary for Health, incur an additional period of obligated service—

(1) At the rate of one-half of a calendar year for each year of approved clinical training (or a proportionate ratio thereof) if the training is in a specialty determined to be necessary to meet health care requirements of the Veterans Health Administration; Department of Veterans Affairs; or

(2) At the rate of three-quarters of a calendar year for each year of approved graduate training (or a proportionate ratio thereof) if the training is in a medical specialty determined not to be necessary to meet the health care requirements of the Veterans Health Administration. Specialties necessary to meet the health care requirements of the Veterans Health Administration will be prescribed periodically by the Secretary when, and if, this provision for an additional period of obligated service is to be used.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 7616(b)(4)(B))

(d) *Altering deferment.* Before altering the length or type of approved advanced clinical training for which the period of obligated service was deferred under paragraphs (a) or (b) of this section, the participant must request and obtain the Secretary's written approval of the alteration.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 7633)