



Media Contact:
Amanda Miles | (m) 214-796-9770
amandam@ldwwgroup.com

Texas Mental Health Professionals Encouraged to Apply for Loan Repayment Assistance

Last day to submit an application is June 30, loan repayment could pay up to two years of current school loans.

Dallas, TX – The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) Loan Repayment Program for Mental Health Professionals is currently accepting applications for student loan repayment assistance. The funds are available for certain eligible mental health professionals providing care to Texans in underserved areas. The deadline for [applications](#) has been extended to June 30.

Created in 2015 by the Texas Legislature, the loan repayment program aims to address the state's critical mental health provider shortage and improve access to mental health services in Texas. Senator Charles Schwertner, MD (R-Georgetown) and Representative John Zerwas, MD (R-Simonton) championed the initiative, which provides more than \$2 million each biennium. Funds are available to qualified psychiatrists, psychologists, licensed professional counselors, psychiatric mental health advanced practice nurses, and clinical social workers who agree to provide direct care in Mental Health Professional Shortage Areas (MHPSAs).

“An overwhelming majority of Texans - one in four - live in the 199 counties with workforce shortages, defined as more than 30,000 Texans per clinician,” said Dr. Andy Keller, president and CEO of the Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute. “The Loan Repayment Program for Mental Health Professionals is an important incentive to help build our mental health workforce in underserved communities and ensure all communities in Texas are served with proper care and professional treatment options.”

There are 185 Texas counties that do not have a psychiatrist. Additionally, 241 counties are fully or partially designated geographic or population-based MHPSAs, or have at least one facility-based MHPSA. Over 80 percent of these counties are rural counties.

THECB is now accepting online applications for the Loan Repayment Program for Mental Health Professionals on their website. All applications must be received by the June 30 deadline. For more information on the program, please call THECB at [1-800-242-3062](tel:1-800-242-3062) or visit: <http://www.hhloans.com/index.cfm?objectid=EC6C1C10-8982-11E5-A0840050560100A9>

About the Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute

The Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute provides data-driven, nonpartisan policy research and technical assistance to improve behavioral health services in Texas. For more information, please visit texasstateofmind.org.

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