Arkansas Department of Health

Arkansas State Board of Nursing
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Frequently Asked Questions about the Faith A. Fields Nursing Scholarship Loan

What is the Faith A. Fields Nursing Scholarship Loan?
The Faith A. Fields Nursing Scholarship Loan provides forgivable loans to students pursuing a course of study leading to qualification as a registered nurse (Nursing Practice Loan), licensed practical nurse (Nursing Practice Loan), or nurse educator (Nurse Educator Loan). Funding for this loan program is provided through the Arkansas State Board of Nursing (ASBN).

Who qualifies for the scholarship loan?
Applicants for the scholarship loan must meet certain criteria in order to be considered for this scholarship, as follows:

- Bona fide Arkansas resident.
- Be accepted or enrolled in an Arkansas approved nursing education program or nationally accredited out-of-state nursing program that meets requirements of ASBN and Department of Higher Education.
- Have a valid financial need that is identified by the required filing of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) application.
- Not be related to an Arkansas State Board of Nursing Board member or staff according to the Arkansas Nepotism policies
- Hold a current unencumbered nursing license (if already licensed as a nurse).

Additional criteria for Nurse Educator Loan applicants:

- Teaching or hired to teach in an Arkansas nursing education program.
- Enrolled in Arkansas approved or nationally accredited baccalaureate or master of nursing program, or doctorate of nursing program.

How much funding may a recipient receive?
Each scholarship recipient may be awarded up to $20,000. This amount is awarded over multiple semesters, if the recipient continues to qualify for funding. Full-time students may receive up to $5,000 each semester (up to $10,000/year) and part-time students up to $2,500 each semester (up to $5,000/year).

How many credit hours are required for full-time and part-time status?
Full-time status is determined by the educational institution in which the applicant is enrolled. Part-time status is defined as a minimum of six (6) credit hours during the fall and spring terms and three (3) credit hours during the summer term.

What are considered educational costs?
The ASBN may make a scholarship loan to an applicant to pay for the applicant's tuition, maintenance, and other educational expenses while the student is enrolled in a program of nursing education. Reasonable educational costs shall be defined as tuition, books, fees, supplies, equipment and materials that are identified as mandatory by the program in which the financial aid recipient is enrolled in to obtain nursing education leading to licensure as a registered nurse (Nursing Practice Loan), licensed practical nurse (Nursing Practice Loan) or nurse educator (Nurse Educator Loan).

How do I apply?
The application can be downloaded from www.arsbn.org. The applicant is required to submit a complete application form and other required documents. The application and all other required documents should be submitted to the Arkansas State Board of Nursing. An application will not be reviewed if the application is incomplete and/or the applicant fails to submit all other required documents prior to the deadline.

When is the application deadline?
Applications are accepted January 1 - June 1 of each year.

Do I have to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) report?
Yes. The FAFSA report must be completed; a current Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) application at
http://studentaid.ed.gov/PORTALSWebApp/students/english/fafsa.jsp

Whose information do I use to complete the financial section of the application?
Complete this section with the financial information of the student. If His/her parents support the student, answer yes to the question " Do you receive financial support from your parents?" and list "parents" and the amount of expected support under the next question "Other Expected Sources of Funds." Submit tax return for applicant and/or parents.

What are the required documents /attachments that must be submitted with the application?
Applicants for the scholarship loan must submit certain required documents, as follows:

- Proof of Arkansas Residence (ie. Copy of driver's license, copy of voter's registration card, copy of state identification card,or copy of state tax return).

- Letter of acceptance to an approved nursing education program, or if already enrolled in a nursing education program, submit a current official transcript.

- Schedule of your program of study outlining courses that remain to be taken to complete your degree. List enrollment by semester and credit hour. Must be signed by your advisor.

- A copy of the first two pages of your federal income tax return for the prior year. If you filed your return "married filing separately" you must also attach a copy of your spouse's

return. If you are not required to file a return, or if you receive any support from your parents, you must also send a copy of your parent's return.

- An official transcript from your highest level of education.

- Written explanation, court records and other relevant documents if marked "yes" to Background Information question(s).

- Documentation of Permanent Resident Alien status (if applicable).

Do I need to verify enrollment?
Recipients of the nursing scholarship loan program shall verify their enrollment via submission of their program eligibility, their anticipated program completion date, and their academic standing after the completion of each semester and summer session.

When and how will I know if I am a recipient of the scholarship/loan?
ASBN will make decisions regarding who will be awarded money. A list of accepted recipients will be posted on the ASBN website at www.arsbn.org.

What role does the Arkansas State Board of Nursing perform in the loan program?
The ASBN receives applications and materials submitted by the applicant, determines the eligibility of the applicants, determine which applicants may participate, funds the loan, and disburses money.

How is the scholarship money awarded to the recipient?
The scholarship is paid directly to the educational program at the beginning of each semester. Any funds left after expenses are paid will be dispersed to the student by the financial aid officer of the respective educational institution.

Can the scholarship be used for previous educational expenses?
No. The scholarship funds are awarded only for current educational expenses.

Can I attend any nursing education program?
No. For recipients of the Nursing Practice Loan, the program must be a nationally accredited, regionally accredited and/or program approved by the ASBN which leads to qualifications as a registered nurse or licensed practical nurse.

For recipients of the Nurse Educator Loan, the program must be a BSN or higher degree program which leads to qualifications as a nurse educator. In addition, the program must be nationally accredited, regionally accredited and/or approved by the ASBN.

Can I renew my loan? How often must I apply for this program?
You must reapply annually, by June 1 of each year, to be considered for a nursing scholarship loan. If money is not available to fund all eligible applicants, completed applications submitted to the

ASBN shall be prioritized for funding based on each applicant's academics, financial need, and willingness to serve in Arkansas.

I received scholarship funds for the semester in which I am currently enrolled; can I receive scholarship funds for additional semesters?
Yes. Subject to the availability of funds and continued eligibility of the recipient, each scholarship shall be renewable annually until the degree is obtained or the maximum amount of the scholarship fund is awarded.

Do I have to repay the scholarship?
No, for recipients of the Nursing Practice Loan, as long as you work continue to engage in the practice as a registered nurse or licensed practical nurse in the state of Arkansas for one year for each year a scholarship was awarded.

No, for recipients of the Nurse Educator Loan, as long as you teach in a nursing education program in the state of Arkansas for one year for each year a scholarship was awarded.

What happens if I am required to repay the scholarship loan?
Scholarships will be repaid with interest at the maximum legal rate and become due and payable immediately if the recipient of the scholarship fund ceases to be enrolled in good standing in a recognized school of nursing before completing the education requirements (for recipients of the Nurse Educator Loan), fails to teach for the specified time in an Arkansas nursing program, or fails to fulfill terms of the agreement. Failure to repay the scholarship as specified may be considered unprofessional conduct and disciplinary action against the nursing license may be taken.

What happens if I default on the service agreement?
Participants who default of their service repayment agreement will be subject to monetary repayment of the contracted amount and interest. If termination of qualified employment of a service repayment participant results from circumstances beyond the control of the participant, deferral status may be approved for a period up to ninety (90) days to permit the participant to obtain qualified employment in Arkansas.

In the event of death of the participant, both the principal and interest on the loan will be due and payable immediately.

What interest rate will I be charged if I do not abide by the service agreement?
The principal of the loan(s) shall be due in addition to interest at the maximum rate allowed by Arkansas law, or 5% above the federal discount rate, whichever is less. Payment is due and payable in full once the ASBN determines you are not in compliance with the contractual agreements of the program. The interest shall accrue from the date each payment of funds was received by the recipient**.**

What qualifies for a deferral?
Deferral of loan payment may be approved provided the participant demonstrates her or she is currently enrolled, in good standing, in a qualified nursing program, and the initial eligibility requirements are still applicable.

The ASBN may grant a deferral if the participant is involuntarily serving on active duty in the United States armed forces. If the deferral is due to military service, interest is not accrued during the deferral period.

If the repayment of the loan has already began through a service agreement, and beyond the control of the participant, termination of qualified employment occurs. The loan may be deferred for a period up to ninety (90) days to permit the participant to obtain qualified employment in Arkansas.

The ASBN may review the deferral as often as needed, but will annually review to insure compliance.

Must I verify employment after graduation and licensure?
In order to convert your nursing loan into a scholarship grant, a work history must be submitted on the prescribed forms on an annual basis until the entire loan obligation is retired.

What happens if I do not pass my RN or LPN licensure examination?
For recipients of the Nursing Practice Loan, who do not pass their RN or LPN licensure examination will be subject to monetary repayment of the contracted amount and interest. Repayment of the principal and interest shall begin within ninety (90) days after the date the recipient ceases to be an eligible student, or immediately upon notification of failure to pass the licensure examination whichever is later.

If an individual who does not pass his/her RN examination takes and passes the LPN examination, repayment by service is still available. However, monetary repayments would apply to an individual who already has an LPN license, receives funding from this program, and does not pass his/her RN examination.

The recipient shall notify the ASBN's Nursing Loan Program within ten (10) days of the date the recipient is notified the recipient did not pass the RN or LPN licensure examination. Payment shall be completed no more than twenty-four (24) months from the date the recipient ceases to be an eligible student.

The principal of the loan(s) shall be due in addition to interest at the maximum rate allowed by Arkansas law, or 5% above the federal discount rate, whichever is less. The interest shall accrue from the date each payment of funds was received by the recipient.

Who do I contact for more information about this program?
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