STATE OF NEW YORK

3320

2021-2022 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

January 28, 2021

Introduced by Sen. KAMINSKY -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Health

AN ACT to amend the public health law, in relation to establishing the New York state COVID-19 heroes loan forgiveness program

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

Section 1. The public health law is amended by adding a new section 903-a to read as follows:

§ 903-a. New York state COVID-19 heroes loan forgiveness program. 1. Purpose. The commissioner, in collaboration with the commissioner of education, and the president of the higher education services corporation, is authorized and directed to establish a New York state COVID-19 heroes loan forgiveness program.

2. Eligibility. To be eligible for an award pursuant to this section, applicants shall:

(a) be a physician or a professional or practical nurse, nurse practitioner, or clinical nurse specialist, physician assistant or specialist assistant in New York state in accordance with sections sixty-five hundred twenty-four, sixty-nine hundred five, sixty-nine hundred six, sixty-nine hundred ten and sixty-nine hundred eleven, and sixty-five hundred forty-one and sixty-five hundred forty-eight of the education law; or

(b) be a certified first responder, emergency medical technician, or advanced emergency medical technician, as defined pursuant to section three thousand one of this chapter; or

(c) be an active volunteer firefighter or volunteer ambulance worker in New York state, as defined pursuant to sections two hundred fifteen and two hundred nineteen-c of the general municipal law; and

(d) be a resident of New York state and have served in such capacity in New York state in direct response to the COVID-19 public health emer-

EXPLANATION--Matter in *italics* (underscored) is new; matter in brackets [-] is old law to be omitted.

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gency, pursuant to Executive Order 202, issued by the governor on March seventh, two thousand twenty.

3. Awards. The commissioner shall grant awards pursuant to the amount appropriated for such purpose and based on availability of funds in an amount up to one hundred thousand dollars to individuals who meet the eligibility requirements of subdivision two of this section, provided that loan repayment awards shall not exceed the total qualifying outstanding debt from student loans to cover tuition and other related educational expenses, made by or guaranteed by the federal or state government, or made by a lending or educational institution approved under title IV of the federal higher education act. Loan repayment awards shall be used solely to repay such outstanding debt.

4. Rules and regulations. The commissioner is authorized to promulgate rules and regulations and may promulgate emergency regulations necessary for the implementation of the provisions of this section.

§ 2. This act shall take effect on the ninetieth day after it shall have become a law.