

# STATE OF NEW YORK

2339

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

## IN ASSEMBLY

January 16, 2025

Introduced by M. of A. WOERNER -- read once and referred to the Committee on Health

AN ACT to amend the public health law, in relation to providing for dentist loan repayment and practice support

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

1 Section 1. Subdivision 5-a of section 2807-m of the public health law  
2 is amended by adding two new paragraphs (c-1) and (d-1) to read as  
3 follows:

4 (c-1) Dentist loan repayment program. Up to one million two hundred  
5 thousand dollars each state fiscal year for the period April first, two  
6 thousand twenty-five through March thirty-first, two thousand twenty-  
7 eight, shall be set aside and reserved by the commissioner from the  
8 regional pools established pursuant to subdivision two of this section  
9 and shall be available for purposes of dentist loan repayment in accord-  
10 ance with subdivision ten-a of this section. Notwithstanding any  
11 contrary provision of this section, sections one hundred twelve and one  
12 hundred sixty-three of the state finance law, or any other contrary  
13 provision of law, such funding shall be allocated regionally with one-  
14 third of available funds going to New York city and two-thirds of avail-  
15 able funds going to the rest of the state and shall be distributed in a  
16 manner to be determined by the commissioner without a competitive bid or  
17 request for proposal process as follows:

18 (i) Funding shall first be awarded to repay loans of up to eight  
19 dentists who train in general or pediatric dentistry in teaching general  
20 hospitals, including in community clinic settings owned by or affiliated  
21 with such hospitals, and who enter and remain in general or pediatric  
22 dentistry practices in underserved communities, as determined by the  
23 commissioner.

24 (ii) After distributions in accordance with subparagraph (i) of this  
25 paragraph, all remaining funds shall be awarded to repay loans of

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

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1 dentists who enter and remain in general or pediatric dentistry prac-  
2 tices in underserved communities, as determined by the commissioner,  
3 including but not limited to dentists working in general hospitals,  
4 other health care facilities or qualified private practices.

5 (iii) In no case shall less than fifty percent of the funds available  
6 pursuant to this paragraph be distributed in accordance with subpara-  
7 graphs (i) and (ii) of this paragraph to dentists identified by general  
8 hospitals.

9 (d-1) Dentist practice support. Up to three million dollars for each  
10 fiscal year for the period April first, two thousand twenty-five through  
11 March thirty-first, two thousand twenty-eight, shall be set aside and  
12 reserved by the commissioner from the regional pools established pursu-  
13 ant to subdivision two of this section and shall be available for  
14 purposes of dentist practice support. Notwithstanding any contrary  
15 provision of this section, sections one hundred twelve and one hundred  
16 sixty-three of the state finance law, or any other contrary provision of  
17 law, such funding shall be allocated regionally with one-third of avail-  
18 able funds going to New York city and two-thirds of available funds  
19 going to the rest of the state and shall be distributed in a manner to  
20 be determined by the commissioner without a competitive bid or request  
21 for proposal process as follows:

22 (i) Preference in funding eight awards, to support costs incurred by  
23 dentists trained in general or pediatric dentistry in teaching general  
24 hospitals, including in community clinic settings owned by or affiliated  
25 with such hospitals, who thereafter establish or join practices in  
26 underserved communities, as determined by the commissioner.

27 (ii) After distributions in accordance with subparagraph (i) of this  
28 paragraph, all remaining funds shall be awarded to dentists to support  
29 the cost of establishing or joining practices in underserved communi-  
30 ties, as determined by the commissioner, and to hospitals and other  
31 health care providers to recruit new dentists to provide services in  
32 underserved communities, as determined by the commissioner.

33 (iii) In no case shall less than fifty percent of the funds available  
34 pursuant to this paragraph be distributed to general hospitals in  
35 accordance with subparagraphs (i) and (ii) of this paragraph.

36 § 2. Section 2807-m of the public health law is amended by adding two  
37 new subdivisions 10-a and 13 to read as follows:

38 10-a. Dentist loan repayment program. (a) Beginning April first, two  
39 thousand twenty-five, the commissioner is authorized, within amounts  
40 available pursuant to subdivision five-a of this section, to make loan  
41 repayment awards to general or pediatric dentists or other dentistry  
42 specialties determined by the commissioner to be in short supply,  
43 licensed to practice dentistry in New York state, who agree to practice  
44 for at least three years in an underserved area, as determined by the  
45 commissioner.

46 (b) Loan repayment awards made to a dentist pursuant to paragraph (a)  
47 of this subdivision shall not exceed the total qualifying outstanding  
48 debt of the dentist from student loans to cover tuition and other  
49 related educational expenses, made by or guaranteed by the federal or  
50 state government, or made by a lending or educational institution  
51 approved under title IV of the federal higher education act. Loan  
52 repayment awards shall be used solely to repay such outstanding debt.

53 (c) In the event that a three-year commitment pursuant to the agree-  
54 ment referenced in paragraph (a) of this subdivision is not fulfilled,  
55 the recipient shall be responsible for repayment in amounts which shall  
56 be calculated in accordance with the formula set forth in subdivision

1 (b) of section two hundred fifty-four-o of title forty-two of the United  
2 States Code, as amended.

3 (d) The commissioner is authorized to apply any funds available for  
4 purposes of paragraph (a) of this subdivision for use as matching funds  
5 for federal grants for the purpose of assisting states in operating loan  
6 repayment programs pursuant to section three hundred thirty-eight I of  
7 the public health service act.

8 (e) The commissioner may postpone, change or waive the service obli-  
9 gation and repayment amounts set forth in paragraphs (a) and (c),  
10 respectively of this subdivision in individual circumstances where there  
11 is compelling need or hardship.

12 (f) (i) When a dentist is not actually practicing in an underserved  
13 area, such dentist shall be deemed to be practicing in an underserved  
14 area if such dentist practices in a facility or dentist's office that  
15 primarily serves an underserved population as determined by the commis-  
16 sioner, without regard to whether the population or the facility or  
17 dentist's office is located in an underserved area.

18 (ii) In making criteria and determinations as to whether an area is an  
19 underserved area or whether a facility or dentist's office primarily  
20 serves an underserved population, the commissioner may make separate  
21 criteria and determinations for different specialties.

22 13. Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, applications  
23 submitted for the dentist loan repayment program pursuant to paragraph  
24 (c-1) of subdivision five-a of this section and subdivision ten-a of  
25 this section or the dentist practice support program pursuant to para-  
26 graph (d-1) of subdivision five-a of this section, shall be subject to  
27 the following:

28 (a) Awards shall be made from the total funding available for new  
29 awards under the dentist loan repayment program and the dentist practice  
30 support program, with neither program limited to a specific funding  
31 amount within such total funding available;

32 (b) An applicant may apply for an award for either dentist loan repay-  
33 ment or dentist practice support, but not both;

34 (c) An applicant shall either: (i) agree to practice for three years  
35 in an underserved area and each award shall provide up to fifty thousand  
36 dollars for each of the three years; or (ii) agree to practice as a  
37 dentist engaged in private practice in an underserved area and each  
38 award shall provide up to seventy thousand dollars for each of the three  
39 years; and

40 (d) To the extent practicable, awards shall be timed to be of use for  
41 job offers made to applicants.

42 § 3. This act shall take effect immediately and shall be deemed to  
43 have been in full force and effect on and after April 1, 2025.