

STATE OF NEW YORK

5339

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

February 20, 2025

Introduced by Sen. FAHY -- 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 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.

LBD05960-01-5

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

(b) Loan repayment awards made to a dentist pursuant to paragraph (a) of this subdivision shall not exceed the total qualifying outstanding debt of the dentist 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.

(c) In the event that a three-year commitment pursuant to the agreement referenced in paragraph (a) of this subdivision is not fulfilled, the recipient shall be responsible for repayment in amounts which shall 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.