§ 677. Regents physician loan forgiveness program. 1. Number and certification. Eighty regents physician loan forgiveness awards shall be awarded each year. Such awards shall be allocated as provided in article thirteen of this chapter to eligible physicians as certified to the president by the commissioner.

2. Calculation of award amounts. Each award shall consist of two consecutive annual loan forgiveness payments. Each of the annual payments shall be for an amount equal to the total of undergraduate and medical school student loan expense or ten thousand dollars whichever is less. The president shall be responsible for calculating the dollar amount of each award that eligibile candidates may receive from this program. For the purposes of this section, student loan expense shall mean the cumulative total of the annual student loans covering the cost of attendance at an undergraduate institution and/or medical school. Interest paid or due on student loans that an applicant has taken out for use in paying for such undergraduate and/or medical education shall be considered eligible for reimbursement under this program.

3. Award disbursement. a. Annual award disbursements shall be the responsibility of the president and shall occur prior to the beginning of each of the required terms of service as specified in the service contract. The board of trustees of the higher education services corporation shall adopt rules and regulations regarding criteria for determining successful completion of the service contract and any appeal process that may be required to implement this paragraph upon recommendation of the president in consultation with the commissioner.

b. The disbursement of the second annual award shall be dependent upon successful completion of the first year requirement of the service contract as defined by the president, as well as other criteria set forth in this section.