

# VA MISSION Act of 2018

*Your Care is Our Mission*

## Educational Initiatives for Veterans

### Overview

If you are a Veteran applying to medical school, the Veterans Affairs (VA) MISSION Act of 2018 created several programs to help you with the high cost of medical school. The programs are the Veterans Healing Veterans Medical Access and Scholarship Program (VHVMASP), the Health Professions Scholarship Program (HPSP), and the Specialty Education Loan Repayment Program (SELRP). The VHVMASP is for Veterans only, and the HPSP and SELRP allows VA to give preference to Veteran applicants. All three programs give financial support in exchange for service at a VA facility after finishing residency.

### Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

#### **Q1. How does the VHVMASP help me become a physician?**

**A1.** This program requires nine schools to select the two highest ranking Veteran applicants for the entering class of 2020. The medical schools in this program are Texas A&M College of Medicine, the University of South Carolina College of Medicine, the Boonshoft School of Medicine at Wright State University, the Edwards School of Medicine at Marshall University, the Quillen College of Medicine at East Tennessee State University, Howard University School of Medicine, Meharry Medical College, Drew University of Medicine and Science, and Morehouse School of Medicine. The program provides financial support for tuition, books and equipment, fees, two away rotations at a VA facility during the senior year, and a monthly stipend.

#### **Q2. How can I qualify for VHVMASP?**

**A2.** To apply for the program, you must meet these conditions:

- You must apply for, and be admitted to, the entering class of 2020 at one or more of the nine named schools.
- The duration between your application to medical school (AMCAS application) and your date of separation cannot be more than ten years.

Rehabilitation funding at the same time you receive scholarship funding.

- You must indicate on your school application that you wish to participate in the program.
- You must agree to the obligations of the program.

#### **Q3. What are my obligations for this program?**

**A3.** To meet the requirements of the scholarship you have to:

- Stay enrolled at the medical school.
- Maintain acceptable academic standing and progress leading to graduation.
- Complete residency training in a specialty that is applicable to VA (for example, pediatrics alone would not be acceptable) and become board-eligible in your specialty.
- Be licensed in any state.
- Become a full-time clinical provider at a VA facility for at least four years (12 months per year of support).

#### **Q4. What is the HPSP and how can it help me?**

**A4.** The VA Health Professions Scholarship Program (HPSP) gives financial help for health professions students. The MISSION Act required that the HPSP give at least 50 scholarships annually for medical or dental students. The program covers the cost of tuition, books and equipment, fees, and provides a monthly stipend. VA may give preference to Veteran applicants for these scholarships. You may receive from two to four years of medical school financial support through this program.

#### **Q5. What are my obligations for this program?**

**A5.** The obligations for the HPSP are similar to those of the VHVMASP. The HPSP requires 18 months of service at a VA facility for each year of support.

- You can't receive GI Bill or Vocational

**Q6. What is the SELRP and how can it help me?**

**A6.** The Specialty Education Loan Repayment Program (SELRP) is a loan repayment program targeted towards physician residents. Its purpose is to provide VA with needed medical specialists in geographic areas and VA facilities where VA needs those specialists. Applicants can apply right after the residency match or up to two years before completion of the residency. The program can repay up to \$160,000 of education loans total; each year of service at a VA facility qualifies for \$40,000 in loan repayment, with a minimum of two years of service required. VA may give preference to Veteran program applicants.

**Q7. What are the requirements for SELRP?**

**A7.** The SELRP requires that the recipient successfully complete residency leading up to board eligibility in a specialty applicable to VA (e.g. not pediatrics), obtain a license to practice in any state, and agree to serve in VA for the required number of years and at the location specified by VA.

**Q8. What if I want to do a fellowship? Can I delay my service requirement?**

**A8.** VA may postpone the service requirement until the completion of the fellowship in specialties applicable to VA. Requests will be reviewed on an individual basis and granted based on the needs of VA.

**Q9. For these programs where will I be assigned for clinical service?**

**A9.** While VA will take a recipient's preference into consideration for clinical service, assignments will be determined primarily based on the healthcare needs of Veterans at specific locations.

**Q10. Where else can I find information about VA financial aid programs?**

**A10.** You can find more information about these programs from the VHA's Office of Workforce Management and Consulting. The link is <https://www.vacareers.va.gov/Benefits/EducationSupport/#scholarships>

**NOTE:** Scholarship programs will be executed based on Congressional appropriations and VA budget availability.

