

Arkansas Division of Higher Education
Rules Governing Out-of-State Veterinary Medical Education
Loan Repayment Program
(Effective Date: May 2, 2022)

Organization and Structure

- I. The Arkansas Division of Higher Education (ADHE) shall administer the Out-of-State Veterinary Medical Education Loan Repayment program within the policies set by the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board. All formal communications shall be addressed to or signed by the Director of the Arkansas Division of Higher Education or his/her designee.
- II. When functioning under Act 881 of 2011, and any subsequent legislation, ADHE shall follow provisions of the Administrative Procedure Act.

Eligibility Criteria

- I. Eligibility Criteria
 - A. Applicants must be bona fide Arkansas residents, as defined by the Arkansas Division of Higher Education, for at least twelve (12) months prior to the application deadline.
 - B. Applicants must be a citizen of the United States or a lawful permanent resident.
 - C. Applicants must have graduated from a veterinary medicine program from the Mississippi State University College of Veterinary Medicine program after April 2022.
 - D. Applicants must have outstanding federal student loans.
 - E. Applicants must hold a valid Arkansas veterinary's license.
 - F. Applicants must practice food supply veterinary medicine;
 - G. Applicants must begin practicing food supply veterinary medicine in Arkansas within ninety (90) days after the completion of:
 - 1. The professional degree program for which the loan was made;
 - 2. An internship program; or
 - 3. The professional degree program for which the loan was made and an internship program

- H. Applicants must have graduated from an Arkansas public, private, or home school or, GED program.

II. Continued Eligibility

Recipients shall notify ADHE annually with documentation that proves his/her continuation to meet the eligibility criteria set forth above. A recipient may receive an annual award for a maximum of five (5) consecutive years. However, if a recipient fails to practice the minimum amount of food supply veterinary medicine for even one (1) year out of the five (5) consecutive year period, he/she will not receive loan repayment.

Selection Process

I. Application

Students must submit an application for the Out-of-State Veterinary Medical Education Loan Program to the Arkansas Division of Higher Education. The application is available online at the scholarship website.

II. Submission of Application and Application Deadline

The application deadline shall be July 1 of the calendar year in which a student graduates and begins practicing food supply veterinary medicine in Arkansas. At its discretion, the ADHE may extend the deadline, provided sufficient notice is provided to the public. The student is responsible for submitting the application and all supporting documentation in a timely manner.

III. Upon receipt by ADHE, applications are reviewed to ensure that all pertinent data is included. Each applicant will receive confirmation of the receipt and completeness of the application. For those whose application is either incomplete or ineligible, a notification will be made identifying the reason for incompleteness or ineligibility. The applicant will then have the opportunity to provide the missing information or correct any inaccurate information. Before an applicant can be considered for an award, the corrected/missing information must be received by the ADHE by the deadline indicated in the Incomplete/Ineligible Notice.

IV. Selection and Notification of Recipients

A. The ADHE shall review applicants and select recipients based on the eligibility criteria for the Out-of-State Veterinary Medical Education Loan Repayment program.

B. Selected recipients will receive award notices stating their eligibility for the program and the conditions of their award.

- C. Awards will be provided based on available funding.
 - D. Awards will be made on a first-come, first-serve basis.
- V. Disbursement of Award

The award will be disbursed in one (1) disbursement to the federal student loan holder indicated by the applicant. If the award amount is larger than the outstanding loan balance, the award amount will be reduced to the amount of the loan balance.

Limitations of Loan Repayment

- I. The Out-of-State Veterinary Medical Education Loan Repayment program shall be used to provide:
 - A. A loan repayment for federal student loans in the amount not to exceed the amount of tuition assistance provided under the Southern Regional Education Compact program per year for each year a licensed veterinarian, who graduated from Mississippi State University College of Veterinary Medicine program after April 2022, practices food supply veterinary medicine in Arkansas. Total term of federal student loan repayment shall not exceed five consecutive years.
 - B. If a recipient fails to satisfy the obligation to engage in the practice of food supply veterinary medicine for one (1) year in a five (5) consecutive year period, then he/she shall not receive the loan repayment amount.

Recipient's Responsibility

- I. Recipient's Responsibility

It is the recipient's responsibility to notify the Arkansas Division of Higher Education of any change in status within 21 days. This will include:

Change in name;

Change in residence;

Failure to notify the Arkansas Division of Higher Education of a change in status will affect future eligibility or collection status.

Deferment of Practice

- A. The obligation to engage in the practice of food supply veterinary medicine for a five (5) consecutive year period shall be postponed during

any:

1. Period of temporary medical disability if the recipient is unable to practice veterinary medicine;
 2. Period of military service under A.C.A. § 6-61-112; or
 3. Other period of postponement agreed to by the ADHE.
- B. To qualify for a deferment, a recipient must notify ADHE of their claim for the deferment and provide supporting documentation on a Request for Deferment form that will be supplied by ADHE upon request. The Request for Deferment form must be completed and returned to ADHE by the recipient. The recipient will be notified within ten (10) days of approval or disapproval of any application for a deferment.

Program Definitions

The following definitions are used in the Out-of-State Veterinary Medical Education Loan Repayment Program:

Arkansas Resident

To be considered an Arkansas resident by ADHE, an applicant must be an Arkansas resident for twelve (12) months prior to the application deadline for the financial aid program. Further, the recipient may be asked to provide evidence of a permanent connection with the State of Arkansas. ADHE will look to one or more of the following to determine residency in those cases:

- (A) Valid Arkansas Driver's License;
- (B) Proof of payment for Arkansas personal and/or real taxes for previous year;
- (C) Proof of Arkansas vehicle registration;
- (D) Proof of Arkansas voter registration; and
- (E) Other forms of proof of Arkansas residency.

Award Year

The award year begins on July 1 of one calendar year, and extends to June 30 of the next calendar year.

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| Food Animal | A bovine, porcine, ovine, camelid, cervid, poultry, and any other species determined by the Arkansas State Veterinarian. |
| Food Supply Veterinary Medicine | All aspects of veterinary medicine's involvement in food supply systems, from traditional agricultural production to consumption. |
| Lawful Permanent Resident | An individual who can provide documentation from the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) that he or she is in the U.S. for other than a temporary purpose with the intention of becoming a citizen or permanent resident. Valid documentation is an I-551, I-151, I-181, I-94, or passport stamped with the notation "Processed for I-551, Temporary Evidence of Lawful Admission for Permanent Residence". A completed Form G-641 can also be used to document permanent resident status. |
| Loan Repayment | A payment made to a federal loan holder on a recipient's behalf after the completion of the yearly requirements by recipient. |
| Participating Institution | Mississippi State University College of Veterinary Medicine |
| Practice of Food Supply Veterinary Medicine | A corporate or private veterinary practice with a minimum of thirty percent (30%) of the practice devoted to food animal medicine or mixed animal medicine located in rural areas. |
| U.S. Citizen | The term "U.S. citizen" includes persons born or who have become naturalized citizens of the 50 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, and Trust Territory- Palau. The term "national" includes citizens of American Samoa or Swain's Island. |