



# THE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

## Pathways to Health Careers Act

*Section by Section Summary*

### Section 1. Short title.

Designates the short title as the Pathways to Health Careers Act.

### Section 2. Pathways to Health Careers Act.

#### Subsection (a).

Appropriates \$15 million to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services (HHS Secretary) to provide technical assistance and cover administrative costs associated with the national Health Profession Opportunity Grant (HPOG) Program as authorized and funded by this legislation.

#### Subsection (b).

Authorizes new HPOG demonstration grants and by providing for HPOG competitive grants in states, the District of Columbia, U.S. territories, and tribal communities. The competitive grants include the following:

#### Application requirements.

Requires grant applications to include:

- Descriptions of how the applicant will implement or provide: a career pathway training approach, adult basic skills activities, case management and career coaching services, and staff recruitment and retention efforts.
- Demonstration that the applicant has experience working with low-income populations or has a partner with such experience, a plan for post-employment services, and a plan for providing supportive services during the training program.
- Certification that the project development included consultation with the local workforce development board, consideration of apprenticeship models, consideration of existing career pathway programs, review of the state workforce development
- Provide local labor market information that provides evidence of health care workforce shortages or in-demand jobs, and the applicant must certify that they will directly provide or contract for the training services described in the application.
- Commitment to provide all data requested by the HHS Secretary, hire a staff person to direct the project, and accept HHS technical assistance if awarded a grant.

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For the new demonstration projects for training individuals with arrest or conviction records, complete applications must additionally include confirmation that the applicant will operate in a jurisdiction where state/local laws allow for health care credentials to be awarded in the health care professions for which the applicant will be training, description of understanding of local policies or appeals processes that offer opportunity to demonstrate rehabilitation to obtain health care credentials. The application must also include discussion of project staff with experience working with people who have arrest or conviction records, or working with employers with experience working with people with arrest or conviction records, proof of concept, and a plan for participant recruitment and job placement.

For the new demonstration projects for training individuals seeking to enter a health care career in Pregnancy, Birth, and post-partum, complete applications must additionally include demonstration of partnerships and a program design that will support a career pathway and that the demonstration be conducted in a jurisdiction where state/local laws permit doulas and midwives to practice in the State.

### **Preferences in Considering Applications.**

Gives priority for grants to: prior HPOG grantees, applicants with cross-sector partnerships across social services and education and employers, applicants that provide coaching and mentoring, applicants that serve rural areas, and applicants that provide a cash stipend for living expenses or have a reserve fund to help participants with emergencies that might force them to drop out of training.

### **Grants.**

Allows the HHS Secretary to award HPOG funds to eligible entities that have submitted qualified applications and requires HHS to award at least 2 grants in each state and the District of Columbia, at least 10 tribal grants, and at least 2 grants in the U.S. territories.

The grant cycle period shall be not less than 5 years, which may include a planning period of no more than the first 12 months of the grant cycle.

Establishes new demonstration grants using the HPOG model to train in the following types of projects: (I) Individuals with Arrest or Conviction Records, and (II) Pregnancy and Childbirth Career Pathway. Each demonstration project shall be conducted for not less than 5 years, and of the 6% funding set-aside for the new demonstrations, each demonstration project is required to receive not less than 25% of the total set-aside.

### **Use of Grant.**

Requires grantees to: conduct an assessment of basic skills and provide basic skills education, if necessary; guarantee access to child care, either via referral, partial subsidy, or direct support; provide case management plans that include career coaching; and ensure access to transportation, such as public transit or gas for a personal vehicle. For the new demonstration for individuals with records, grantees are required to provide access to legal assistance for the purpose of addressing arrest or conviction records and associated workforce barriers.



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Other allowable but not required uses of grant funding include: a stipend for living expenses, a reserve fund to provide financial assistance to participants in emergency situations, training materials such as uniforms and personal protective equipment, in-kind resource donations such as interview clothing and conference attendance fees, costs related to basic education or a high school equivalency certification, legal assistance or other support necessary to address arrest or conviction record barriers to work.

Grantees are required to provide at least the number of hours of training required for enrolled participants to qualify for certification of a postsecondary or industry-recognized credential in the state in which the project is conducted. And at least 10 percent of enrolled participants must be Temporary Assistance for Needy Families recipients.

Grantees may not use funds to provide direct support to a person who is not an eligible individual. Grantees additionally may not use funds for the purposes of entertainment, with the exception of career-based milestones such as hosting a graduation.

### **Technical Assistance.**

Requires HHS to provide tailored technical assistance to prospective applicants and to grantees to assist with all stages of project administration, including the specific needs of the new demonstration projects, and the specific needs of tribal and territory applicants and grantees. HHS shall also provide technical assistance for the purpose of facilitating information exchange among eligible entities regarding best practices including but not limited to peer technical assistance conferences.

### **Evaluation of Demonstration Projects.**

Requires HHS to conduct rigorous and well-designed evaluations of the new demonstration projects. In the case of the demonstration project for individuals with arrest or conviction records, the evaluation must include identification of successful activities for developing and sustaining job training programs for people with records who seek a career in the health care industry. In the case of the demonstration project for the pregnancy and childbirth career pathway, the evaluation must include identification of successful activities for developing and sustaining a career pathway for people seeking a career in birth, pregnancy, and post-partum fields. The evaluations may include a randomized control trial, but are not required to use that methodology.

### **Reports.**

Grantees are required to report to the HHS Secretary data on participant outcomes related to earnings, employment in health professions, graduate rate, graduation timeliness, credential attainment, participant demographics, and other data specified by the Secretary to HHS.

The HHS Secretary is required to submit a once-per-Congress report to the House Committee on Ways & Means and the Senate Finance. The report must include information on the number of rural applicants and rural awards, and, if the agency was not able to award the minimum required number of grants to states, territories, and tribal communities, the explanations for such.



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### **Definitions.**

Provides definitions for terms used in the legislation.

### **Funding.**

Directly appropriates \$425 million for each of FY2022 through FY2026, of which 75 percent is for general competitive grants, 4 percent is reserved for tribal grants, 5 percent is reserved for territory grants, 6 percent is reserved for the new demonstration projects, 6 percent is reserved for technical assistance, and 4 percent is reserved for studying the effects of all HPOG grants including the short-term and long-term effects of the new demonstration grants including.

### **Non-applicability of Preceding Section of this Subtitle.**

Specifies an exception for certain limitations on uses of Title XX funds which conflict with the evidence-based HPOG model.

### **Income Disregard.**

Specifies that any cash stipends or emergency assistance that grantees may provide directly to enrolled participants are not considered income.