

# **BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND RECOVERY SERVICES**

## **Workforce Education and Training Scholarship Program**

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

#### **1. How does the scholarship program get funded?**

The scholarship program is funded by California's Mental Health Services Act also known as Proposition 63.

#### **2. What is the goal of the scholarship program?**

The goal of the scholarship program is to promote and integrate the invaluable knowledge that diverse consumers and their caretakers possess in the county's behavioral healthcare service system by providing financial support to qualifying residents to receive vocational education and training to become certified mental health peer specialists, substance use and domestic violence counselors.

#### **3. Will I have to pay the scholarship award back?**

No. The scholarship award program is intended to provide financial and mentor support for qualifying applicants to enter the behavioral healthcare field by reducing financial and other barriers that may exist for interested applicants.

#### **4. Will the scholarship program enroll me into a school or training program of my choice?**

No. The scholarship program only administers scholarship awards to awarded applicants and manages its mentoring services. It is the responsibility of the applicant to determine what certified education and training program she/he would like to enroll in. However, if the applicant is unsure of what program to enroll in, the program manager and program mentors are available to provide a list of training programs that are offered in the county.

#### **5. What types of expenses can the scholarship pay for?**

If awarded, scholarships can pay for tuition/enrollment fees, school supplies, transportation (bridge toll, mileage reimbursement or bus tickets), or childcare.

#### **6. If I am in the early stages of my recovery, can I still apply for the scholarship?**

Yes. Behavioral Health and Recovery Services recognizes that education and training that lead to meaningful volunteer or internship placement, and/or gainful

employment is an important part of an individual's recovery process. If accepted into the scholarship program, applicants can work closely with an assigned mentor to ensure that any risks of failing are reduced and the chances of achieving one's educational and training goals are increased.

**7. How are applicants selected to receive a scholarship award?**

Decisions to offer scholarship awards to applicants come in two different ways, the application and the interview process. Applications and applicant interviews provide the program an opportunity to determine the interest, readiness and commitment of the applicant to enter into an education and training program in the behavioral healthcare field.

**8. I am interested in becoming a counselor but I am not ready to enroll in school. Can I still work with a mentor in the scholarship program to help me prepare to enroll in an education and training program in the future?**

Yes. The program has a team of talented and diverse mentors with lived experiences who can help to prepare you to become ready to enroll in an education and training program of your choice in the future.

**9. Once I complete and obtain a certificate from my chosen education and training program, can the program help me find a volunteer or internship?**

Yes. The scholarship program mentors will be available to support you to find volunteer or internship opportunities. Most certified peer and domestic violence education and training counseling programs in the county offer volunteer and/or internship opportunities for their students upon successful completion of her/his classroom coursework. If you are a student who graduate from a substance use education and training program, a credentialed field placement coordinator will be available in the scholarship program to assist you in finding an appropriate internship placement in order to obtain the necessary clinical hours you will need to become a state certified substance use counselor.

**10. Can the scholarship program help me find a job when I complete or obtain my certificate from my education and training program?**

No. While many of the program's past scholarship awardees and graduates have successfully found employment immediately after she/he completed her/his chosen education and training program, the scholarship program is not designed to provide employment-related services. However, the scholarship program can refer awardees and graduates to the county's Marin Employment Connection for

employment-related help such as resume writing, interviewing skills and access to job opportunities in the county's behavioral healthcare field.

**11. If I get awarded a financial scholarship and I don't complete my education and training program, will I have to pay the scholarship program back?**

No. Financial scholarships given to the applicant do not need to be paid back in the event that the applicant does not successfully complete her/his program. However, most, if not all, education and training programs will work with students to develop an educational completion plan in the event that the student is at risk of failing or dropping out of the education and training program that she/he is enrolled in. It is important to work closely with program mentors to develop and implement an intervention plan to reduce the risk of dropping out, especially in the event that the applicant experiences personal challenges that would prevent her/him from achieving her/his education and training goals.

**10. Can I get the full amount of my financial scholarship request if I get awarded?**

It depends. The amount of financial scholarship award given are based on a few factors:

- The number of applications submitted and their requested amount.
- The awardee's ability to partially pay her/his total expenses.

In spirit of fairness, the scholarship program is committed to ensure that all scholarship awardees are given financial support in an equitable manner.

**11. I'm already enrolled in, and currently taking courses an education and training program that will enable me to become a peer specialist, substance use and/or domestic violence counselor, and I have already paid my tuition fee in full. Can I apply for the scholarship to get reimbursed for my tuition fee?**

No. If you have paid your tuition in full prior to applying for the scholarship award, the scholarship program cannot reimburse you for the tuition that you already paid. However, if you have an outstanding tuition balance that you have yet to pay in full, the scholarship program may be able to pay the remaining or a part of the balance if you are accepted in the scholarship program.

**12. If I get a financial scholarship award, will I directly receive the scholarship amount that I have been awarded?**

Tuition/Enrollment fees are typically paid directly to the education and training program where you are enrolled. Any other financial scholarships that you have been awarded for, which pay for incidental costs associated with your education and

training such as supplies, books, transportation or childcare are reimbursed to you once you pay out-of-pocket and submit a simple form and receipts.

**13. I was awarded a financial scholarship last year. Can I re-apply again?**

Yes. However, priority will be given to applicants who have not received financial scholarships in the past. If funds are still available after scholarships have been awarded to qualifying applicants, returning applicants' financial scholarship requests will be considered for additional financial support if the requests are consistent to the purpose and goals of the scholarship award program.

**14. I am not a legal resident and/or not legally authorized to receive government benefits. Can I still apply for a scholarship?**

No. State law prohibits residents who are not legal residents and/or who are not authorized to receive government benefits to receive state funds.