

144.1503 HOME AND COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICES EMPLOYEE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM.

Subdivision 1. **Creation.** The home and community-based services employee scholarship grant program is established for the purpose of assisting qualified provider applicants to fund employee scholarships for education in nursing and other health care fields.

Subd. 2. **Provision of grants.** The commissioner shall make grants available to qualified providers of older adult services. Grants must be used by home and community-based service providers to recruit and train staff through the establishment of an employee scholarship fund.

Subd. 3. **Eligibility.** (a) Eligible providers must primarily provide services to individuals who are 65 years of age and older in home and community-based settings, including housing with services establishments as defined in section 144D.01, subdivision 4; adult day care as defined in section 245A.02, subdivision 2a; and home care services as defined in section 144A.43, subdivision 3.

(b) Qualifying providers must establish a home and community-based services employee scholarship program, as specified in subdivision 4. Providers that receive funding under this section must use the funds to award scholarships to employees who work an average of at least 16 hours per week for the provider.

Subd. 4. **Home and community-based services employee scholarship program.** Each qualifying provider under this section must propose a home and community-based services employee scholarship program. Providers must establish criteria by which funds are to be distributed among employees. At a minimum, the scholarship program must cover employee costs related to a course of study that is expected to lead to career advancement with the provider or in the field of long-term care, including home care, care of persons with disabilities, or nursing.

Subd. 5. **Participating providers.** The commissioner shall publish a request for proposals in the State Register, specifying provider eligibility requirements, criteria for a qualifying employee scholarship program, provider selection criteria, documentation required for program participation, maximum award amount, and methods of evaluation. The commissioner must publish additional requests for proposals each year in which funding is available for this purpose.

Subd. 6. **Application requirements.** Eligible providers seeking a grant shall submit an application to the commissioner. Applications must contain a complete description of the employee scholarship program being proposed by the applicant, including the need for the organization to enhance the education of its workforce, the process for determining which employees will be eligible for scholarships, any other sources of funding for scholarships, the expected degrees or credentials eligible for scholarships, the amount of funding sought for the scholarship program, a proposed budget detailing how funds will be spent, and plans for retaining eligible employees after completion of their scholarship.

Subd. 7. **Selection process.** The commissioner shall determine a maximum award for grants and make grant selections based on the information provided in the grant application, including the demonstrated need for an applicant provider to enhance the education of its workforce, the proposed employee scholarship selection process, the applicant's proposed budget, and other criteria as determined by the commissioner. Notwithstanding any law or rule to the contrary, funds awarded to grantees in a grant agreement do not lapse until the grant agreement expires.

Subd. 8. **Reporting requirements.** Participating providers shall submit an invoice for reimbursement and a report to the commissioner on a schedule determined by the commissioner and on a form supplied by the commissioner. The report shall include the amount spent on scholarships; the number of employees who received scholarships; and, for each scholarship recipient, the name of the recipient, the current position of

the recipient, the amount awarded, the educational institution attended, the nature of the educational program, and the expected or actual program completion date. During the grant period, the commissioner may require and collect from grant recipients other information necessary to evaluate the program.

History: *2015 c 71 art 6 s 1*