



DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH

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JONATHAN E. SHERIN, M.D., Ph.D.
Director

Gregory C. Polk, M.P.A.
Chief Deputy Director

Curley L. Bonds, M.D.
Chief Medical Officer

30 DAY PUBLIC POSTING MID-YEAR ADJUSTMENT TO THE MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ACT (MHSA) ANNUAL UPDATE FISCAL YEAR 2019-20

QUALITY, OUTCOMES AND TRAINING DIVISION PLAN TO SUSPEND MHSA WET PROJECT: THE FINANCIAL INCENTIVE PROGRAMS FOR PSYCHIATRY

JULY 22, 2020

INTENDED ACTION

The Department intends to suspend the MHSA WET Mental Health Psychiatrist Student Loan Repayment Incentive Program, the Mental Health Psychiatrist Recruitment Incentive Program and the Mental Health Relocation Expense Reimbursement Programs for Fiscal Year 2020-2021. The \$3,273,608 project is funded with MHSA WET funds and is part of the Department's WET plan adopted by the Board of Supervisors in June, 2019 as part of the Department's MHSA Annual Update Fiscal Year 2019-2020.

MHSA WET STIPEND PROGRAM PURPOSE AND DESCRIPTION

The purpose of these financial incentive programs for psychiatry is to create a various financial incentives for psychiatrist recruitment and retention. Specifically:

- Mental Health Psychiatrist Student Loan Repayment Program: Funds the active, unpaid graduate or medical student loans for mental health psychiatrists and supervising psychiatrists who have completed one year of continuous service with the Department. The program funded a maximum amount of \$50,000 for a period of five years, equating to a lifetime total of \$250,000 per awardee.
- Mental Health Psychiatrist Recruitment Incentive Program: For full-time mental health psychiatrists or supervising psychiatrists that have completed one year of continuous service with the Department and have not been awarded funds through the Student Loan Repayment Program. Awards are in the form of a one-time \$50,000, with the recipient receiving \$25,000 after the first year and \$25,000 after the second year.
- Mental Health Psychiatrist relocation Expense Reimbursement Program: Available to full time newly-hired mental health psychiatrists or supervising mental

health psychiatrists. The maximum reimbursement is \$15,000. If the employee leaves the Department prior to one year from their employment start date, the employee must re-pay the Department the full amount of the award.

REASON FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020-21 SUSPENSION

The economic impact of COVID-19 is resulting in curtailments across County Departments, taking various forms depending upon the Department. Vacant positions within the Department of Mental Health are likely to be impacted, with hiring freezes being instituted. Reductions in the Department's key funding streams (Realignment and MHSA) will have an impact on recruitment efforts throughout the Department's entire system of care.

DMH will re-evaluate the Stipend Program for Fiscal Year 2021-2022 later on this fiscal year as the economic impact from COVID becomes clearer.