



HOUSE REPUBLICAN STAFF ANALYSIS

Bill:	House File 2549	House Committee: PASSED HR 1/25/22 (20-0)
Committee:	Human Resources	PASSED Approps 3/1/22 (24-0)
Floor Manager:	Rep. Cecil Dolecheck	House Floor:
Date:	March 15, 2022	Senate Floor:
Staff:	Natalie Ginty (5-2063)	Governor:

Mental Health Loan Forgiveness

- This bill establishes a mental health practitioner loan repayment program for mental health practitioners that agree to practice in Iowa for at least 5 years. This program is modeled after the Rural Iowa Primary Care Loan Repayment Program, and provides preference to Iowans and those willing to serve in a mental health shortage area.
- **Fiscal Note:** This bill appropriates \$1.5 million in FY2023.

Section by Section Analysis

Section 1 – New Section (Iowa Code 261.117) – Mental Health Practitioner Loan Repayment Program – Trust Fund – Appropriation

Requires the Iowa College Student Aid Commission to establish a mental health practitioner loan repayment program for mental health practitioners that agree to practice in a mental health shortage area for at least 5 years. The bill requires the commission to give priority to Iowa residents in the selection process. This section also requires the provider to be enrolled as an actively participating Medicaid provider.

The bill outlines the following loan repayment amounts based on the profession, unless their total loan is less than the maximum amount specified:

- Psychiatrist - \$40,000 annually with a maximum of \$200,000
- Psychologist or mental health professional - \$8,000 annually with a maximum of \$40,000
- Psychiatric ARNP and PA under the supervision of a psychiatrist - \$10,000 annually with a maximum of \$50,000

“Mental health professionals” means individuals who hold a master’s degree in a mental health field, including counseling and guidance, social work, marriage and family therapy, or mental health counseling. These individuals must also have at least two year of post-degree clinical experience.

In order for the mental health shortage area to be considered for a location, the city in which it is located must provide a \$20,000 contribution for deposit in the trust fund for each loan recipient in the community who is participating in the loan repayment program.

Allows the commission to determine the number of agreements to enter into annually based on funding. This bill also allowed for a part-time practice agreement to be entered into and postponement of an agreement, as modeled after other loan repayment programs.

Loan repayment recipients who fail to meet the requirements of their agreement are subject to repayment of the moneys.

This bill creates the trust fund for this program within the state treasury, and requires the commission to submit a report to the Legislature annually with the number of individuals who received loan repayment, where they practiced, and the amount paid to each program participant.

This bill appropriates \$1,500,000 to the mental health practitioner loan repayment program trust fund.

Amendment Analysis

H-8181 by Dolecheck — Makes technical changes requested by the College Student Aid Commission and also revises the community buy-in based on the profession and loan amount.