

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 565

Introduced by Assembly Member Salas

February 20, 2013

An act to amend Section 128553 of the Health and Safety Code, relating to physicians and surgeons.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 565, as introduced, Salas. California Physician Corps Program.

Existing law establishes the Steven M. Thompson Physician Corps Loan Repayment Program in the California Physician Corps Program within the Health Professions Education Foundation, which provides financial incentives, as specified, to a physician and surgeon for practicing in a medically underserved community. Existing law authorizes the Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development to adopt guidelines by regulation and requires the foundation to use guidelines for selection and placement of program applicants. These guidelines provide priority consideration to applicants who meet specified criteria, including that the applicant has 3 years of experience working in medically underserved areas or with medically underserved populations. The guidelines also must seek to place the most qualified applicants in the areas with the greatest need.

This bill would require the guidelines for the selection and placement of program applicants to include criteria that would give priority consideration to program applicants who have 3 years of experience providing health care services to medically underserved populations in a federally designated health professional shortage area or medically underserved area, and who agree to practice in those areas and serve a medically underserved population.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 128553 of the Health and Safety Code
2 is amended to read:
3 128553. (a) Program applicants shall possess a current valid
4 license to practice medicine in this state issued pursuant to Section
5 2050 of the Business and Professions Code or pursuant to the
6 Osteopathic Act.
7 (b) The foundation, in consultation with those identified in
8 subdivision (b) of Section 123551, shall use guidelines developed
9 by the Medical Board of California for selection and placement
10 of applicants until the office adopts other guidelines by regulation.
11 The foundation shall interpret the guidelines to apply to both
12 osteopathic and allopathic physicians and surgeons.
13 (c) The guidelines shall meet all of the following criteria:
14 (1) Provide priority consideration to applicants that are best
15 suited to meet the cultural and linguistic needs and demands of
16 patients from medically underserved populations and who meet
17 one or more of the following criteria:
18 (A) Speak a Medi-Cal threshold language.
19 (B) Come from an economically disadvantaged background.
20 (C) Have received significant training in cultural and
21 linguistically appropriate service delivery.
22 (D) Have three years of experience ~~working in medically~~
23 ~~underserved areas or with medically underserved populations~~
24 *providing health care services to medically underserved*
25 *populations in a federally designated health professional shortage*
26 *area or medically underserved area.*
27 (E) Have recently obtained a license to practice medicine.
28 (2) Include a process for determining the needs for physician
29 services identified by the practice setting and for ensuring that the
30 practice setting meets the definition specified in subdivision (h)
31 of Section 128552.
32 (3) Give preference to applicants who have completed a
33 three-year residency in a primary specialty.
34 ~~(4) Seek to place the most qualified applicants under this section~~
35 ~~in the areas with the greatest need.~~

1 (4) Give preference to applicants who agree to practice in a
2 federally designated health professional shortage area or medically
3 underserved area, and who agree to serve a medically underserved
4 population.

5 (5) Include a factor ensuring geographic distribution of
6 placements.

7 (6) Provide priority consideration to applicants who agree to
8 practice in a geriatric care setting and are trained in geriatrics, and
9 who can meet the cultural and linguistic needs and demands of a
10 diverse population of older Californians. On and after January 1,
11 2009, up to 15 percent of the funds collected pursuant to Section
12 2436.5 of the Business and Professions Code shall be dedicated
13 to loan assistance for physicians and surgeons who agree to practice
14 in geriatric care settings or settings that primarily serve adults over
15 the age of 65 years or adults with disabilities.

16 (d) (1) The foundation may appoint a selection committee that
17 provides policy direction and guidance over the program and that
18 complies with the requirements of subdivision (l) of Section
19 128552.

20 (2) The selection committee may fill up to 20 percent of the
21 available positions with program applicants from specialties outside
22 of the primary care specialties.

23 (e) Program participants shall meet all of the following
24 requirements:

25 (1) Shall be working in or have a signed agreement with an
26 eligible practice setting.

27 (2) Shall have full-time status at the practice setting. Full-time
28 status shall be defined by the board and the selection committee
29 may establish exemptions from this requirement on a case-by-case
30 basis.

31 (3) Shall commit to a minimum of three years of service in a
32 medically underserved area. Leaves of absence shall be permitted
33 for serious illness, pregnancy, or other natural causes. The selection
34 committee shall develop the process for determining the maximum
35 permissible length of an absence and the process for reinstatement.
36 Loan repayment shall be deferred until the physician is back to
37 full-time status.

38 (f) The office shall adopt a process that applies if a physician
39 is unable to complete his or her three-year obligation.

1 (g) The foundation, in consultation with those identified in
2 subdivision (b) of Section 128551, shall develop a process for
3 outreach to potentially eligible applicants.

4 (h) The foundation may recommend to the office any other
5 standards of eligibility, placement, and termination appropriate to
6 achieve the aim of providing competent health care services in
7 approved practice settings.

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