



Nursing Education Loan Repayment Program

Fiscal Year 2012 Continuation Contract Application and Program Guidance

March 2012

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Health Resources and Services Administration
Bureau of Clinician Recruitment and Service
Division of Nursing and Public Health
5600 Fishers Lane, Room 8-72
Rockville, Maryland 20857

For Questions, please call 1-800-221-9393 (TTY: 1-877-897-9910), Monday through Friday (except Federal holidays) 8:00am to 8:00 pm EST, or email GetHelp@hrsa.gov.

Authority: Section 846(a) of the Public Health Service Act (42 United States Code 297(n)(a)), as amended by Sec. 5310(a) of Public Law 111-148. Future changes in the governing statute, implementing regulations and Program Guidances may also be applicable to your participation in the Nursing Education Loan Repayment Program.

Table of Contents

PRIVACY ACT NOTIFICATION STATEMENT 3

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Introduction 4

- What is the Nursing Education Loan Repayment Program (NELRP)?
- What is a NELRP Continuation Contract?

Eligibility Requirements and Application Process 4

- What are the eligibility requirements for a NELRP Continuation Contract?
- Does my site qualify for NELRP?
- What should I expect if I am selected to receive a continuation contract?

Service Requirements 7

- What are the service requirements?
- Will I earn a salary during my service obligation?
- May I be absent from my site and receive service credit?
- Service Verification

Changing Jobs 9

- What steps do I need to take if I want to transfer to a different Critical Shortage Facility or school of nursing prior to completing my service?
- How do I request a transfer to another facility or school of nursing?

Breaching the contract 10

- What if I breach my NELRP contract?

Suspension and Waiver 10

- What should I do if I feel I cannot continue my service or payment obligation?
- When would my service obligation be cancelled?

APPLY NOW

Tips & Important Dates 12

- What should I do before I apply?
- When is the application deadline?
- What materials will I need when I apply?

FY12 NELRP Forms 13

Privacy Act Notification Statement

General

This information is provided pursuant to the Privacy Act of 1974 (Public Law 93-579), as amended, for individuals supplying information for inclusion in a system of records.

Statutory Authority

Section 846(a) of the Public Health Service Act (42 United States Code 297(n)(a)), as amended by Sec. 5310(a) of Public Law 111-148.

Purposes and Uses

The purpose of the Nursing Education Loan Repayment Program (NELRP) is to assist in the recruitment and retention of professional Registered Nurses (RNs) dedicated to working in health care facilities with a critical shortage of nurses or working as nurse faculty in eligible schools of nursing, by decreasing the economic barriers associated with pursuing careers at such critical shortage facilities or in academic nursing. The information applicants provide will be used to evaluate their eligibility for participating in NELRP. In addition, information from other sources will be considered (e.g., credit bureau reports).

A participant's contract, application, required supplemental forms, supporting documentation, correspondences and related data are maintained in a system of records to be used within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to monitor NELRP-related activities. The information may also be disclosed outside the Department, as permitted by the Privacy Act and Freedom of Information Act, to the Congress, the National Archives, the Government Accountability Office, and pursuant to court order and various routine uses (see <http://www.hrsa.gov/about/privacyact/09150037.html>).

Effects of Nondisclosure

Disclosure of the information sought is voluntary; however, if not submitted, except for the replies to questions related to Race/Ethnicity (Part II of the online application for NELRP), an application will be considered incomplete and therefore will not be considered for an award under this announcement.

Paperwork Reduction Act Public Burden Statement

An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a current OMB control number. The current OMB control number for information collected through this application process is 0915-0140 and expires on 04/30/2014. Public reporting burden for this collection is estimated to average 6 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to HRSA Reports Clearance Office, 5600 Fishers Lane, Room 10-33, Rockville, Maryland 20857.

Discrimination Prohibited

In accordance with applicable Federal laws, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services is prohibited from discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability.

Program Overview

INTRODUCTION

What is the Nursing Education Loan Repayment Program (NELRP)?

The United States continues to experience a nursing shortage that is expected to increase given the aging demographic of the U.S. population and a growing need for health care. Further compounding this problem, U.S. schools of nursing cannot adequately expand enrollment levels due to a shortage of nurse faculty. NELRP assists in addressing these issues.

NELRP is administered by the Bureau of Clinician Recruitment and Service (BCRS) in the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The purpose of NELRP is to assist in the recruitment and retention of professional registered nurses (RNs), including advanced practice registered nurses (i.e., nurse practitioners, certified registered nurse anesthetist, certified nurse midwives, clinical nurse specialists), dedicated to working in health care facilities with a critical shortage of nurses or working as nurse faculty at an eligible school of nursing, by decreasing the financial barriers associated with pursuing a nursing profession. The program offers these RNs substantial financial assistance to repay a portion of their qualifying educational loans in exchange for full-time service at either a health care facility with a critical shortage of nurses or at an eligible school of nursing in the case of nurse faculty.

What is a NELRP Continuation Contract?

The NELRP Continuation Contract offers NELRP participants who have completed their initial two-year contract an opportunity for a third optional year of service in exchange for an additional 25 percent of their original qualifying educational loan balance.

Participants who completed their initial two-year contract as an RN serving at a Critical Shortage Facility cannot seek a continuation contract to work as a Nurse Faculty at an eligible school of nursing and will only be given a continuation contract for a third year of service at a Critical Shortage Facility.

Participants who completed their initial two-year contract as a Nurse Faculty at an eligible school of nursing cannot seek a continuation contract to work as an RN serving at a Critical Shortage Facility and will only be given a continuation contract for a third year of service at a school of nursing.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS and APPLICATION PROCESS

What are the eligibility requirements for a NELRP Continuation Contract?

To be eligible for a continuation contract, the following conditions must be met:

- (1) A participant must notify NELRP through the Program Portal, at least 6 months (180 days) prior to the end of the second service year, that the participant wishes to continue the NELRP contract for a third year;
- (2) A participant must continue to serve at the eligible, approved Critical Shortage Facility (CSF) or at the eligible school of nursing, as set forth in his or her initial 2-year contract;

If the participant's site is no longer a nonprofit Critical Shortage Facility or school of nursing, a continuation contract will not be awarded. If such a participant wants to continue in NELRP, he or she must request and receive prior approval to transfer to another eligible facility or school of nursing prior to submitting his/her continuation contract request. Note that moving expenses will not be paid.

- (3) A participant must have a current full, permanent, unencumbered, unrestricted license as an RN and retain it during the one-year service obligation;
- (4) The NELRP payments received after federal tax withholding under the NELRP two-year contract must have been applied to reduce the original qualifying educational loan balances, as indicated on the Payment Authorization Worksheet (PAW) that participants received with their award notice. A participant's loan balances will be verified and a payment history from his or her lender(s)/holder(s) will be required. Failure to apply all NELRP payments to reduce the original qualifying nursing education loans balance will result in the denial of a request for a continuation contract;
- (5) A participant must not have an existing service obligation other than NELRP, including any obligations for state-sponsored loan repayment programs (there is an exception for members of a reserve component of the Armed Forces, including the National Guard); and
- (6) A participant must continue to meet all other program eligibility criteria, must be in full compliance with his or her existing NELRP service obligation, and must be planning to work for the duration of the continuation contract at the same approved CSF or school of nursing.

The continuation contract will not be effective until the participant has completed the initial two-year contract. The continuation contract service period must begin immediately following the completion of the initial service commitment.

Does my site qualify for the NELRP?

An FY 2012 NELRP continuation contract participant is required to work at a Critical Shortage Facility or an eligible school of nursing in the case of nurse faculty participants. The facility or school of nursing must be a public or private nonprofit entity.

Critical Shortage Facilities in the First Funding Preference as defined in the year participants were initially awarded (FY 2010) include:

- (1) **Critical Access Hospital (CAH).** A nonprofit facility that is (a) located in a State that has established with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) a Medicare rural hospital flexibility program; (b) designated by the State as a CAH; (c) certified by the CMS as a CAH; and (d) in compliance with all applicable CAH conditions of participation. For more information, please visit: http://www.cms.hhs.gov/Certificationandcompliance/04_CAHs.asp.
- (2) **Disproportionate Share Hospital (DSH).** A nonprofit hospital that has a disproportionately large share of low-income patients and receives an augmented payment from the State under Medicaid or a payment adjustment from Medicare. Hospital-based outpatient services are included under this definition. For more information, please visit: http://www.cms.hhs.gov/AcuteInpatientPPS/05_dsh.asp#TopOfPage.
- (3) **Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC).** FQHCs include: (1) nonprofit entities that receive a grant, or funding from a grant, under section 330 of the Public Health Service Act to provide

primary health services and other related services to a population that is medically underserved; (2) FQHC “Look-Alikes” which are nonprofit entities that are certified by the Secretary of HHS as meeting the requirements for receiving a grant under section 330 of the Public Health Service Act but are not grantees; and (3) outpatient health programs or facilities operated by a tribe or tribal organization under the Indian Self-Determination Act or by an urban Indian organization receiving funds under Title V of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act. FQHCs include Community Health Centers, Migrant Health Centers, Health Care for the Homeless Health Centers, and Public Housing Primary Care Health Centers. For more information, please visit: <http://findahealthcenter.hrsa.gov>.

- (4) **Indian Health Service Health Center.** A nonprofit health care facility (whether operated directly by the Indian Health Service or by a tribe or tribal organization, contractor or grantee under the Indian Self-Determination Act, as described in 42 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 136, Subparts C and H, or by an urban Indian organization receiving funds under Title V of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act) that is physically separated from a hospital, and which provides clinical treatment services on an outpatient basis to person of Indian or Alaskan Native descent as described in 42 CFR Section 136.12. For more information, please visit: <http://www.ihs.gov>.
- (5) **Native Hawaiian Health Center.** An entity: (a) which is organized under the laws of the State of Hawaii; (b) which provides or arranges for health care services through practitioners licensed by the State of Hawaii, where licensure requirements are applicable; (c) which is a public or nonprofit private entity; and (d) in which Native Hawaiian health practitioners significantly participate in the planning, management, monitoring, and evaluation of health services. For more information, please see the Native Hawaiian Health Care Act of 1988 (Public Law 100-579), as amended by Public Law 102-396, and <http://healthfinder.gov/orgs/HR3600.htm>.
- (6) **Nursing Home.** A public or private nonprofit institution (or a distinct part of an institution), certified under section 1919(a) of the Social Security Act, that is primarily engaged in providing, on a regular basis, health related care and service to individuals who because of their mental or physical condition require care and service (above the level of room and board) that can be made available to them only through institutional facilities, and is not primarily for the care and treatment of mental diseases. For more information, please visit: <http://www.medicare.gov/Nursing/Overview.asp>.
- (7) **Rural Health Clinic.** A public or private nonprofit entity that the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services has certified as a rural health clinic under section 1861(aa)(2) of the Social Security Act. A rural health clinic provides outpatient services to a non-urban area with an insufficient number of health care practitioners. For more information, please visit: <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/center/rural.asp>.
- (8) **State or Local Public Health or Human Services Department.** The State, county, parish, or district entity in a State that is responsible for providing population-focused health services which include health promotion, disease prevention, and intervention services provided in clinics or other health care facilities that are operated by the Department.

Ineligible facilities include, but are not limited to:

- (1) free-standing clinics that do not qualify as a facility above;
- (2) renal dialysis centers;
- (3) private practice offices;
- (4) assisted living facilities;

- (5) clinics in prisons and correctional facilities; and
- (6) private for-profit facilities.

What should I expect if I am selected to receive a continuation contract?

If your continuation contract application is approved, the NELRP will notify you through the Program Portal. The NELRP frequently corresponds with applicants by email and Program Portal. Please check your email during the continuation contract process for correspondence from NELRP and make certain to disable SPAM blockers (or check your SPAM folder). Please make sure your contact information is current in the Program Portal.

If a participant is selected for a NELRP continuation contract, the individual's contract is signed by the Secretary of Health and Human Services or his/her designee. Note that a contract is not effective until you have completed the initial two-year service commitment under your initial NELRP contract, including any additional time required due to excessive absences. If your absences exceed the amount allowable (see "May I be absent from my site and receive service credit?"), your service end date under your initial contract will be extended.

Award payments are made monthly over 12 months through an electronic funds transfer to the participant's checking or savings account identified on the banking information submitted by the participant. Be sure to check and update your banking information in the Program Portal. The first direct deposit is made approximately 30 days after the effective date of the contract.

Important Notes:

- (1) Participants must use the NELRP payments to pay the lenders or holders of their qualifying educational loans, as indicated on a Payment Authorization Worksheet that will be provided to participants with their award notice. Periodically, NELRP will contact a participant's lenders or holders to verify that award payments have been applied to NELRP approved loans.
- (2) Participants must immediately notify NELRP, via the Program Portal, of any changes in mailing address, email address, name, or financial institution (bank) information to ensure an uninterrupted flow of loan repayment funds. Participants must also notify NELRP of changes in service site and employment status. In the case of a name change, please provide legal documentation, such as a copy of a marriage certificate.
- (3) If for any reason a participant does not receive a scheduled payment, the participant should contact the NELRP as soon as possible through the Program Portal, at 1-800-221-9393, or email GetHelp@hrsa.gov. Please be advised that if the NELRP has any questions concerning a participant's eligibility for continuing payments, NELRP will delay payments pending clarification of the participant's eligibility status.

SERVICE REQUIREMENTS

What are the service requirements?

- (1) For Nurse Faculty serving at an eligible school of nursing: Nurse Faculty under NELRP must provide full-time service as a nurse faculty member at the school of nursing for a period of one year beginning on the effective date of the contract. Full-time service is working full-time (as defined by the employer) as a nurse faculty member for a minimum of 9 months per service year. No more than 35 work days of the participant's scheduled work period (9 to 12 months) per

service year may be spent away from the school of nursing for vacation, holidays, continuing education, illness, maternity/paternity/adoption, or any other reason.

Nurse Faculty are encouraged to promote health care careers in underserved areas. This can be done via presentations to students, student organizations or other community based organizations to provide information about nursing and/or other health care professions.

- (2) For RNs, including advanced practice registered nurses such as NPs, who serve at a CSF: RNs under NELRP must provide full-time service, defined as working as an RN for at least 32 hours per week per service year at the CSF, for one year beginning on the effective date of the contract. No more than 35 work days per service year may be spent away from the CSF for vacation, holidays, continuing education, illness, maternity/paternity/adoption, or any other reason.

For all NELRP participants, the following rules apply:

- (1) Participants must retain a current full, permanent, unencumbered, unrestricted license as an RN during the one-year service obligation to continue to be eligible for the NELRP award;
- (2) If an applicant fails to commence full-time service on the effective date of the contract at the Critical Shortage Facility or school of nursing identified in the application, he/she may be placed in default.

Will I earn a salary during my service obligation?

NELRP participants will receive salary and benefits from the employing Critical Shortage Facility, professional group, or school of nursing. Employment compensation packages may be negotiated between the nurse and the employer. The facility, professional group, or school of nursing cannot guarantee a NELRP contract. Therefore, the NELRP loan repayments should not be a part of any salary negotiations between the nurse and the employer.

May I be absent from my site and receive service credit?

No more than 35 work days per service year may be spent away from the facility or school of nursing for vacation, holidays, continuing education, illness, maternity/paternity/adoption, or any other reason. NELRP-approved absences totaling greater than 35 work days in a service year require an extension of the contract end date.

Service Verification

Every NELRP participant who is providing nursing services at a CSF or school of nursing must verify their service every six (6) months through the Program Portal. In this process, an appropriate official at the CSF or school of nursing must certify the participant's compliance or noncompliance with the full-time service requirement during each 6-month period. The service verification process will also record the time spent away from the CSF or school of nursing.

Participants who fail to complete and submit their 6-month service verification through the Program Portal on time may jeopardize receiving service credit and may also be recommended for default. Participants must download and submit the form via the Program Portal. Any participant who cannot complete the form through the Program Portal should contact the NELRP immediately through the Program Portal, phone (1-800-221-9393), or email (GetHelp@hrsa.gov).

Please note: Advanced practice registered nurses (NPs, CRNAs, CNMs, CNSs) employed by a professional group should have the service verification form filled out by the administrator of the critical shortage facility, not by the professional group.

CHANGING JOBS

What steps do I need to take if I want to transfer to a different Critical Shortage Facility or school of nursing prior to completing my service?

NELRP expects that a participant will fulfill his or her obligation at the initial CSF or school of nursing; however, NELRP does understand that circumstances may arise that require a participant to leave the initial facility or school of nursing and complete service at another approved site. If a participant feels he or she can no longer continue working at the facility or school of nursing, the participant should contact the NELRP immediately through the Program Portal, phone (1-800-221-9393), or email (GetHelp@hrsa.gov). If the participant leaves his/her service site without prior written approval of the NELRP, he/she may be placed in default.

How do I request a transfer to another facility or school of nursing?

If a participant needs a transfer to another site, the participant must notify the NELRP through the Program Portal before leaving the facility or school of nursing. The request should include: (a) the reason for the transfer; (b) a letter/certification from the facility or school of nursing where the participant is requesting to transfer to (i.e., the new site) verifying the facility type and indicating if the facility or school is a private nonprofit, private for-profit, or public/government-owned. Please note that if the facility or school of nursing is private for-profit, the transfer request will not be approved, as NELRP participants must fulfill their service commitment at a public or private nonprofit critical shortage facility or eligible school of nursing.

Participants will receive an official decision from the NELRP regarding the approval or denial of a transfer request. Leaving the approved service site without prior NELRP approval will result in immediate suspension of payments until the NELRP: (a) receives all required forms and supporting documentation verifying the transfer site's status and the participant's full-time employment, and (b) approves the participant's transfer request.

The following are additional requirements applicable to transfer requests:

- (1) Participants who signed a contract to serve at a Critical Shortage Facility must transfer to another Critical Shortage Facility included in the First Funding Preference (See list on page 5);
- (2) Participants who sign a contract to serve as nurse faculty at a school of nursing must transfer to another eligible school of nursing.
- (3) If there is a less than 30-day break in service between the initial site and the approved transfer site, the NELRP payments will not be interrupted. However, if the participant fails to resume service within 30 days of the stop-work date at the initial facility or school of nursing, the NELRP will stop all loan repayments. Once the participant begins full-time service at another approved CSF or school of nursing, the service end date will be extended accordingly and loan repayments will resume;

- (4) If a participant ceases full-time employment at the initial site and does not resume service at an eligible approved facility within 60 days, the participant will be recommended for default.

BREACHING THE CONTRACT

What if I breach my NELRP contract?

The NELRP encourages participants to immediately contact the NELRP if a situation arises in which a participant is potentially unable to fulfill his/her service obligation. The NELRP will work with participants to assist them to the extent possible to avoid a breach and fulfill the service obligation. A participant who enters into a one-year continuation contract but fails to begin or complete his/her obligation is liable to repay all the NELRP payments received for the third year of service (including amounts withheld for Federal taxes), plus interest at the maximum legal prevailing rate from the date of the participant's breach. Breach of contract will permanently disqualify the individual from receiving future awards under the NELRP and some other Federal programs.

Any indebtedness owed to the Federal government is due within three years of the participant's service breach date. The debt amount will be subject to interest at the maximum legal prevailing rate from the date of the breach until paid in full. Other charges and penalties for delinquent or past due payments may be assessed.

SUSPENSION & WAIVER

What should I do if I feel I cannot continue my service or payment obligation?

The Secretary of Health and Human Services may, under certain circumstances, suspend (put "on hold") or waive (excuse) the NELRP service or payment obligation. A request for a suspension or waiver must be submitted through the Program Portal. Additional supporting documentation will be required following submission of the request.

- (1) Suspension. This mechanism provides temporary relief to a NELRP participant if he/she has short-term (not permanent) circumstances that currently make compliance with the obligation impossible or would involve an extreme hardship such that enforcement of the obligation would be unconscionable. Periods of approved suspension will extend a participant's NELRP service obligation end date.

All periods of time away from the approved facility or school of nursing should be documented by the participant's service site on the six-month service verification form. If the total time away from the site, including the period of suspension, exceeds 35 work days per service year (see Service Requirements on page 7), the service obligation end date will be extended accordingly.

The major categories of service suspensions are set forth below.

- a. **Medical or Personal Hardship** – A suspension may be granted for up to one year, if the participant provides independent medical documentation of a physical or mental health disability, or personal hardship, including a terminal illness of an immediate family member, which results in the participant's temporary inability to perform the NELRP

- obligation. Upon receipt of the suspension request, the NELRP will notify the participant of instructions for submitting supporting documentation.
- b. **Parental (Maternity/Paternity/Adoption) Leave** –Participants must notify the NELRP of pending parental leave and provide appropriate documentation. Parental leave of 12 weeks or less will be automatically approved, if properly documented. If the participant’s parental leave will exceed 12 weeks during that service year, a suspension may be granted by the NELRP based on documented medical need or if additional parental leave time is permitted under State law.
 - c. **Call to Active Duty in the Armed Forces** – Participants who are also military reservists and are called to active duty will be granted a suspension, for up to one year, beginning on the activation date described in the reservist’s call to active duty order. In addition to the written request for a suspension, a copy of the order to active duty must be submitted to NELRP. The suspension will be extended if the applicable Armed Forces entity continues the period of active duty. The period of active military duty will not be credited toward the NELRP service obligation.
- (2) Waiver. A waiver permanently relieves the participant of all or part of the NELRP obligation. A waiver will be granted only if the participant demonstrates that compliance with his/her obligation (a) is permanently impossible or (b) would involve an extreme hardship such that enforcement of the obligation would be unconscionable. A request must be submitted in writing to the NELRP and must specify the reason(s) the waiver is being sought. The participant will be contacted directly by the NELRP regarding the medical and financial documentation necessary to process the waiver request. Please note that waivers are not routinely granted, and require a demonstration of compelling circumstances.

When would my service obligation be cancelled?

A participant’s obligation will be cancelled only in the unfortunate event of death. No liability will be transferred to the participant’s heirs.

Apply Now

TIPS & IMPORTANT DATES

What should I do before I apply?

Please read the *Application and Program Guidance* in its entirety before proceeding with an application. It explains the contractual obligations of the Secretary of Health and Human Services and NELRP participants. Be sure you understand the obligation to serve full-time for 1 year at a Critical Shortage Facility or school of nursing and the financial consequences of failing to perform that obligation. Applicants are strongly encouraged to print and retain a copy of the *Application and Program Guidance* for future reference.

When is the application deadline?

The application will open on March 27, 2012. All required supporting documentation must be scanned and uploaded to the Program Portal at <https://programportal.hrsa.gov> by June 26, 2012.

What materials will I need when I apply?

To apply for a NELRP continuation contract, you must submit a complete application package consisting of:

- (1) **NELRP FY 2012 Continuation Contract.** This contract isn't effective until the initial NELRP service obligation is fulfilled.
- (2) **Authorization to Release Information Form.** This form authorizes the Department of Health and Human Services and/or its contractors to release required information, as needed, to verify eligibility to participate in NELRP and that previous NELRP payments have been used to pay qualifying nursing educational loans. This form is available on page 14 and must be uploaded to the Program Portal.
- (3) **Payment History for Qualifying Nursing Educational Loans.** All continuation contract applicants must submit a payment history, which indicates that all payments received under your initial NELRP contract have been applied to reduce your qualifying nursing educational loans debt. This payment history can be obtained from your lender(s) and should reflect payments from your service start date through March 2012. The payment history must be uploaded to the Program Portal.

NOTE: When uploading documents to your online application, please ensure that the documents do not exceed 5MB. Multi-page documents should be scanned and saved into one document, instead of one document per page. Also, when inputting numbers and dates, please do not use any special characters such as commas (,), dollar signs (\$), spaces (), or dashes (-) as this will cause an error in the system.

You will be notified of the decision regarding your continuation contract application no later than September 2012. Please note that if you receive a continuation contract, it will not be effective until you have completed the 2-year service commitment under your initial NELRP contract.

Nursing Education Loan Repayment Program

Fiscal Year 2012 Forms

To apply to the Nursing Education Loan Repayment Program, you must submit your online application, forms, and supporting documents to <https://programportal.hrsa.gov>. Faxes will not be accepted.

For Questions, please call 1-800-221-9393 (TTY: 1-877-897-9910), Monday through Friday (except Federal holidays) 8:00am to 8:00 pm EST, or email GetHelp@hrsa.gov.

OMB No. 0915-0140 Expiration 04/30/2014

Public Burden Statement

An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a current OMB control number. The information is being collected and will be used to evaluate an applicant's eligibility, qualifications, and suitability for participating in the NELRP. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 6 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Disclosure of information sought is voluntary; however, if not submitted, except for questions related to Race/Ethnicity on the online application, an application will be considered incomplete and therefore will not be considered for an award. The information applicants supply will be maintained in a system of records and subject to disclosure under the Privacy Act Notification Statement in the NELRP Application and Program Guidance. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to HRSA Reports Clearance Office, 5600 Fishers Lane, Room 11A-33, Rockville, Maryland 20857.

**NURSING EDUCATION LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM (NELRP)
AUTHORIZATION to RELEASE INFORMATION**

As a Nursing Education Loan Repayment (NELRP) applicant, I _____, hereby authorize:

(print full name)

- i. The HHS, and/or its contractors, to release the following information to the lenders/holders of my educational loans in order to determine my eligibility/qualifications to participate in the NELRP, and to determine the eligibility of my educational loans for repayment under the NELRP: my name, address(es), social security number, account number(s), account status, and other information necessary to identify me.
- ii. Any program or entity to which I owe a service obligation, or defaulted on a service obligation, to release information relating to that obligation to HHS and/or its contractors.

This authorization will take effect on the date that I sign this release form. If I become a participant in the NELRP, this authorization shall remain in effect until the date my NELRP obligation, including any extension of the obligation pursuant to a continuation contract has been fulfilled or this authorization is revoked by me in writing. If I do not become a participant in the NELRP, this authorization shall remain in effect until September 30, 2012.

Signature of Applicant

Date

Authorization to Release Information Form

This form authorizes HHS, and/or its contractors, to release information that identifies the applicant for purposes of obtaining the applicant's educational loan information. It also authorizes any program to which the applicant owes a health professions service obligation to release information to HHS and/or its contractors.