

Local Health Department Medical Director Michigan State Loan Repayment Program: Participant Information and Requirements for Providers & Employers

This section contains information, requirements and procedures providers and employers will use once participating in the Local Health Department Medical Director Michigan State Loan Repayment Program (MSLRP). Providers will need to understand the content of this section.

Per their MSLRP agreements, providers and employers must read, understand, and comply with all requirements and procedures in this section. Participants should read this section before contacting the MSLRP Office regarding questions about the program. If questions remain after reading this, they should contact Brittany Brookshire at BrookshireB1@michigan.gov.

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1. Change of Personal Information Reporting Requirements

Name and Home Address Instructions: Providers must notify the MSLRP Office of name and home address changes and change their profiles on SIGMA Vendor Self Service (VSS) **no less than 10 calendar days before they occur**. Your name and home address must be the same at the MSLRP Office and on SIGMA VSS to receive MSLRP payments.

MSLRP Office: Providers must contact Brittany Brookshire at BrookshireB1@michigan.gov, to change their name and/or home address at the MSLRP Office.

SIGMA VSS: Providers must also change their name and/or home address on [SIGMA VSS](#).

Phone Numbers and Email Address Instructions: Providers must contact Brittany Brookshire at BrookshireB1@michigan.gov, to report phone number and email address changes to the MSLRP Office no more than 10 calendar days after they occur.

2. Electronic Funds Transfer Registration on SIGMA Vendor Self Service (VSS)

All providers (vendors) selected for the final phase of the application process or already participating in the Michigan State Loan Repayment Program must immediately register for electronic funds transfer (EFT) on [SIGMA VSS](#). This will allow MSLRP payments to be electronically deposited into your personal checking or savings account.

3. Employer/Provider Relationship

Employer Responsibilities to Providers:

- **Employers must employ providers throughout their MSLRP service obligations.**

Employers applying to MSLRP are agreeing to employ the providers they sponsor throughout their service obligations to the program. Employers uncertain about continuing to employ providers should not sponsor them or sign their Revenue Agreements during the current application period. They should wait until issues with providers are resolved or sponsor other providers. Employers who terminate their MSLRP participant's employment during their service obligations without *good cause* are in breach of their agreements and will receive a *Non-Compliance Assessment*. This means the sponsoring agency will not be eligible to participate in the next application period by sponsoring providers applying to the program for the first time as their employees. They will, however, be able to continue sponsoring those who are reapplying to the program as their employees.

Loan repayment must not offset provider salaries.

- The salaries of MSLRP participants must be based on prevailing rates for their disciplines and experience in their respective practice areas. Loan repayment is meant to be funds participants receive in addition to their normal salaries and benefits. Federal requirements do not allow MSLRP loan repayment agreements to be used as salary or benefit offsets. Providers who believe their salaries or benefits have been reduced because of loan repayment should discuss this with their employers and then, if necessary, with Brittany Brookshire at BrookshireB1@michigan.gov.

Provider Responsibilities to Employers:

- **Providers must complete service obligations with their original employers.**

Providers applying to MSLRP are agreeing to stay with their employers during their two-year service obligations. Providers uncertain about remaining with their current

employers during their entire two-year MSLRP service obligations should not apply during the current application period. They should wait until issues with their current employers are resolved or start with other employers before applying. Once providers sign and return their Personal Service Agreements, they are committed to starting and completing their two-year service obligations with their current employers. Participant-initiated transfers to new employer practice sites with employment start dates other than the first day of their next MSLRP loan repayment agreements, if awarded, are breaches of their agreements.

Participants who initiate transfers to the practice sites of new employers with employment start dates other than the first day of their next loan repayment agreements will receive *Non-Compliance Assessments*. This means they will not be eligible to participate in the next application period during which they would normally apply for their next loan repayment agreements. Providers will not receive *Non-Compliance Assessments* when initiating transfers to new employer practice sites to complete current service obligations because their employment has been terminated by their original employers.

Participants who chose to leave their original employers or are terminated must complete their service obligation at the eligible practice sites of other employers. Participants who breach their loan repayment agreements by not completing their service obligations are subject to the repayment penalty described below under *Service Obligation and Repayment Penalty*.

4. Payment Process

It's important for participants to understand how and when they will be paid. Providers complete six months of their service obligations beginning with the October 1 start date of their MSLRP agreements and then initiate their first six-month payments. Providers initiate their six-month payment cycles each March 1 and September 1 during their participation in the program by submitting their properly dated *Work Verification Forms* (WVFs) to their employers. Providers must also submit their *Workdays Away from Practice Site* (WDA) forms to their employers with their final WVFs.

Providers receive their fully executed MSLRP agreements, WVFs, and Workdays Away Forms attached to emails announcing their fully executed MSLRP agreement packages. WVFs are dated with the year and month during which they must be submitted to employers. Again, providers must initiate the process for each of their MSLRP payments by providing their employers with the appropriate forms.

Providers must save the electronic version of their MSLRP Agreements, WVFs and Workdays Away Forms, print them, and keep the copies in a safe place because the MSLRP Office does not provide duplicates. Providers should also mark their calendars to remind themselves when their next WVF is due, because failing to submit WVFs on time will delay participants' payments until the next six-month payment cycle.

Employers have until the end of each March or September to do the following:

1. Complete, date, and sign semiannual WVFs to affirm each participating provider's completion of their preceding six-month service obligation by having been employed at the Local Health Department.
2. Complete, date, and sign Workdays Away from Practice Sites Forms for providers' final WVFs to document whether they have exceeded the 35 workdays away limit during one or more agreement years.
3. Mail each provider's WVF and Workdays Away from Practice Sites Form, when required, to the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services Cashier (not to the MSLRP Office) as described on the WVF.

Each WVF submitted by participants to their employers will include complete instructions on how to mail required forms to:

**Michigan Department of Health and Human Services
Cashier/Accounting Office
320 South Walnut, P.O. Box 30437
Lansing, MI 48913**

Once MDHHS receives the WVFs and Workdays Away Forms for final payments, it will credit participants with six months of completed service obligation and process their semiannual MSLRP payments.

Providers should receive their payments within eight weeks following the later of the:

1. End of the month during which their WVFs were due, or
2. Date their WVFs and Workdays Away from Practice Sites Forms, when required, were received by the Department.

Providers who do not receive their payments within that eight-week period should contact Brittany Brookshire, MSLRP Coordinator at BrookshireB1@michigan.gov.

Special Requirement for Final Payment: Workdays Away from Practice Sites Form

MSLRP participants are allowed to be away from their approved practice sites no more than 35 workdays per agreement year without making up days in excess of the limit at the end of their agreements. MSLRP agreement years begin each October 1 and end each September 30. The Workdays Away from Practice Sites Form is designed to ensure program compliance with this requirement.

Employer Requirements: Employers must complete, sign and date the Workdays Away from Practice Sites Forms forwarded to them by MSLRP participants along with their **final** Work Verification Forms (WVFs). Employers must:

- Count and record all workdays away during providers' first agreement year.
 - Count and record all workdays away during the second year.
 - Sign, date, and mail Workdays Away from Practice Sites Forms, along with final Work Verification Forms to the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, Cashier/Accounting Office.
- Complete mailing instructions are included on each WVF.

Participants **will not receive their final payments** until their Workdays Away from Practice Site Forms are completed and submitted. Employers must complete the Workdays Away Forms. Providers may not complete their own Workdays Away Forms.

Counting Workdays Away: When counting workdays away from approved practice sites, employers should not include normal days off during each work week. For example, if a participant works five eight-hour days, Monday through Friday, employers should not count Saturdays or Sundays as workdays away from their practice sites. Similarly, if a participant works four ten-hour days, Monday through Thursday, then Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays should not be counted. Employers must, however, count all other days that participants are away from their approved practice sites, including:

- Vacation days - For example, if a participant takes a two-week vacation during which they would have normally worked five days each week, employers would count their vacation as 10 workdays away from their practice site.
- Holidays
- Sick days
- Days taken off to care for family members
- Family leave days, including maternity leave days
- Workdays at ineligible practice sites
- Other days - This includes all reasons for workdays away from practice sites, including building closures for any reason, including severe weather.

Extended Leaves of Absence from Practice Sites: Employers must record the number of participants' workdays away from their practice sites during extended leaves of absence on their Workdays Away Forms, which are submitted with their final Work Verification Forms. Providers and employers are not required to contact the MSLRP office prior to or during extended leaves of absence for certain reasons, including:

- Sick days
- Days taken off to care for family members
- Family leave days, including maternity leave

However, providers or employers must notify the MSLRP Office of extended leaves of absence for other reasons. Once employers submit Workdays Away forms for providers with extended leaves, along with their final Work Verification Forms, the MSLRP office will review them and determine the number of days in excess of the 35-workday limit per agreement year and the date on which final payments will be approved. As

discussed below, excess days will be either:

- Added to current contracts to extend their end dates, or
- Transferred to providers' next loan repayment agreements.

Extending the End Date of Current Agreements: Excess days will be added to the original end dates of current loan repayment agreements of providers who have not been awarded new contracts. Upon review of their Workdays Away forms, providers will receive an email stating the:

- Number of excess days added to their original end dates.
- New end dates upon which their final payments will be approved.

Transferring Excess Days to Next Agreement: When excess workdays away from approved practice sites occur to participants in good standing with the program, they may be transferred into their next loan repayment agreements, if awarded. This allows providers to participate in the program for up to four consecutive years before their extended agreement end dates make them ineligible for the following application period. However, the Department reserves the right to not award new loan repayment agreements or transfer excess workdays away into new agreements if the number and nature of those excess days, or other issues, cause concern about a participants' ability to complete an additional two-year service obligation. When excess workdays are transferred into a new agreement, a provider will receive an email stating that:

- Their final payment on their current contract has been approved.
- The number of excess days transferred to their new agreement.
- The number of excess days transferred will be added to any excess days incurred during the new agreement to determine the extended end date of their new agreement.
- The delay in eligibility to reapply for their next agreement, as discussed below.

Extending End Date of Second Consecutive Agreement Will Delay Reapplication Eligibility: The extended end date of a second two-year consecutive agreement will be determined once the program receives the Workdays Away from Practice Site Form, along with the final WVF for the second two-year agreement. This will allow the program to determine the number of excess workdays incurred during the second agreement and add them to those transferred from the initial agreement to determine the end date of the second two-year agreement. Providers will be notified of their extended end dates once they have been determined.

When the end date of a participant's second two-year agreement is extended because of excess days transferred from their initial agreement, it will prevent them from reapplying for their third consecutive two-year agreement during the application period in which they would normally do so. This occurs because any days added to their second agreement will overlap with new agreements starting on October 1 following their normal September 30 agreement end date. As a result, providers will need to wait until the following application period to apply.

5. Practice Site Transfers

Provider Transfers to Practice Sites of New Employers: Providers applying to MSLRP are agreeing to stay with their employers during their two-year service obligations. **Participants**

who initiate transfers to the practice sites of new employers with employment start dates other than the first day of their next loan repayment agreements are in breach of their agreements and will receive a Non-Compliance Assessment. This means they will not be eligible to participate in the next application period during which they would normally apply for their next loan repayment agreements. Providers will not receive Non-Compliance Assessments when initiating transfers to new employer practice sites to complete current service obligations because their original employers have terminated their employment. Participants must follow the process described below when transferring to practice sites of new employers.

Transfer Process:

1. Only nonprofit practice sites can be approved as eligible practice sites at which participants can complete their service obligations.
2. Once providers determine practice sites are eligible, they must ask their new employer to complete the *Practice Site Verification Letter* and email it to Brittany Brookshire at BrookshireB1@michigan.gov **before** transferring to the new practice sites. The MSLRP Office will review the form as quickly as possible and respond to the provider and the employer.
3. Once Practice Site Verification Letter and transfers are approved, providers may move to their new practice sites.

6. Service Obligation and Repayment Penalty

Service Obligation: Providers awarded MSLRP agreements enter into service obligations that correspond to the start and end dates of their loan repayment agreements. MSLRP service obligations are legal responsibilities that should be taken seriously. Applicants should carefully read their MSLRP agreements before signing them and understand that participants who fail to start or complete their service obligations face significant repayment penalties. Once a participant signs and returns their MSLRP loan repayment agreement, their two-year service obligation goes into effect as of October 1 following the application period and must be completed.

Providers must complete their service obligations even if they are no longer working for the same employer at their originally approved practice sites. This means participants no longer working for their original employers will need to find new employers to complete the remainder of their service obligations. Applicants with concerns about their current employment situations should not apply or sign MSLRP loan repayment agreements. This is especially true for those who believe they might have to move to find another eligible practice site at which to complete their service obligations.

Repayment Penalty: Penalties will be imposed on healthcare providers who default on MSLRP agreements. Participants who chose to leave their original employers, or are terminated, must complete their service obligation at another eligible practice site. Participants who default on their loan repayment agreements by not completing their service obligations are subject to the repayment penalty described below.

Upon default of the MSLRP agreement by not completing their service obligation in addition to forfeiting the right to any future MSLRP payments, they will owe the Department an amount equal to the sum of any period of obligated service not served.

7. Non-Compliance Assessments

Employer Non-Compliance Assessments: When employers receive a Non-Compliance Assessment, their sponsoring agencies will be ineligible to participate in the next MSLRP application period by sponsoring providers applying to the program for the first time as their employees. They will, however, be able to continue sponsoring employees who are reapplying to the program as their employees.

- Reason Assessed: Terminating an MSLRP participant's employment before the end date of their loan repayment agreement, as amended, without good cause. Employers applying for MSLRP are agreeing to employ the providers they sponsor throughout their service obligations to the program. Employers uncertain about continuing to employ providers should not sponsor them or sign and return their Revenue Arguments during the current application period. They should wait until issues with providers are resolved or sponsor other providers.

Provider Non-Compliance Assessments: Providers who receive Non-Compliance Assessments are ineligible to participate in the application period during which they would normally reapply for their next loan repayment agreements.

- Reason Assessed: Initiating transfers to the practice sites of new employers with employment start dates other than the first day of their next loan repayment agreements. Providers applying for MSLRP are agreeing to stay with their employers during their two-year service obligations, as amended. Providers uncertain about remaining with their current employers should not apply for loan repayment or sign and return their Personal Service Agreements during the current application period. They should wait until issues with their current employers are resolved or start with other employers before applying. However, providers will not receive Non-Compliance Assessments when initiating transfers to new employer practice sites to complete current service obligations because their original employers have terminated their employment.