

AN ACT concerning education.

**Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,  
represented in the General Assembly:**

Section 1. Short title. This Act may be cited as the Loan Repayment Assistance for Dentists Act.

Section 5. Purpose. The purpose of this Act is to establish a program in the Department of Public Health to increase the total number of dentists and dental specialists practicing in designated shortage areas in this State by providing educational loan repayment assistance grants to dentists and dental specialists.

Section 10. Definitions. In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires:

"Dental payments" means compensation provided to dentists and dental specialists for services rendered under Article V of the Illinois Public Aid Code.

"Dental specialist" means a person who has received a license as a dentist in this State and who is trained and qualified to practice in one or more of the following specialties of dentistry: endodontics, oral and maxillofacial surgery, orthodontics, pedodontics, periodontics, and prosthodontics.

"Dentist" means a person who has received a general license pursuant to paragraph (a) of Section 11 of the Illinois Dental Practice Act, who may perform any intraoral and extraoral procedure required in the practice of dentistry, and to whom is reserved the responsibilities specified in Section 17 of the Illinois Dental Practice Act.

"Department" means the Department of Public Health.

"Designated shortage area" means a medically underserved area or health manpower shortage area as defined by the United States Department of Health and Human Services or as otherwise designated by the Department of Public Health.

"Educational loans" means higher education student loans that a person has incurred in attending a registered professional dental education program in this State.

"Program" means the educational loan repayment assistance program for dentists and dental specialists established by the Department under this Act.

Section 15. Establishment of program. The Department shall establish an educational loan repayment assistance program for dentists and dental specialists who practice in designated shortage areas in this State and who accept certain dental payments as defined under this Act. The Department shall administer the program and make all necessary and proper rules not inconsistent with this Act for the program's effective implementation. The Department may use up to 5% of the

appropriation for this program for administration and promotion of dentist and dental specialist incentive programs.

Section 20. Application. Beginning July 1, 2007, the Department shall, each year, consider 4 applications for assistance under the program. The form of application and the information required to be set forth in the application shall be determined by the Department, and the Department shall require applicants to submit with their applications such supporting documents as the Department deems necessary.

Section 25. Eligibility. To be eligible for assistance under the program, an applicant must meet all of the following qualifications:

(1) He or she must be a citizen or permanent resident of the United States.

(2) He or she must be a resident of this State.

(3) He or she must be practicing full time in this State as a dentist or dental specialist.

(4) He or she must currently be repaying educational loans.

(5) He or she must accept dental payments as defined in this Act.

(6) He or she must continue full-time practice in this State in a designated shortage area for 2 years.

Section 30. The award of grants. Under the program, for each year that a qualified applicant practices full time in this State in a designated shortage area as a dentist or dental specialist, the Department shall, subject to appropriation, award a grant to that person in an amount equal to the amount in educational loans that the person must repay that year. However, the total amount in grants that a person may be awarded under the program must not exceed \$25,000 per year for a 4-year period. The Department shall require recipients to use the grants to pay off their educational loans.

Section 35. Penalty for failure to fulfill obligation. Loan repayment recipients who fail to practice full time in a designated shortage area, as provided in this Act, shall repay the Department a sum equal to the amount received under the program, plus interest.

Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect July 1, 2007.