

# AN ACT

To amend section 4743.05 and to enact sections 4741.50, 4741.51, 4741.52, 4741.53, 4741.54, 4741.55, 4741.56, and 4741.57 of the Revised Code to create the Veterinarian Student Debt Assistance Program.

*Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Ohio:*

SECTION 1. That section 4743.05 be amended and sections 4741.50, 4741.51, 4741.52, 4741.53, 4741.54, 4741.55, 4741.56, and 4741.57 of the Revised Code be enacted to read as follows:

Sec. 4741.50. (A) As used in sections 4741.50 to 4741.56 of the Revised Code:

(1) "Educational expenses" means all of the following expenses that were incurred while a veterinarian was enrolled, for a maximum of four years, in a veterinary college that, during the time of enrollment, was approved by the state veterinary medical licensing board or accredited by the American veterinary medical association:

(a) Tuition;

(b) Other educational expenses, such as fees, books, and laboratory expenses, for specific purposes and in amounts determined to be reasonable by the board;

(c) Room and board, in an amount determined to be reasonable by the board.

(2) "Educational loan" includes the principal and interest of a government or other educational loan used to pay educational expenses.

(B) There is hereby created the veterinarian student debt assistance program. Under the program, the state veterinary medical licensing board, by means of a contract entered into under section 4741.54 of the Revised Code, may agree to repay all or part of any educational loans taken out by a veterinarian for educational expenses. The board shall operate the program in accordance with sections 4741.50 to 4741.57 of the Revised Code.

Sec. 4741.51. (A) The state veterinary medical licensing board, in accordance with Chapter 119. of the Revised Code, shall adopt rules necessary to implement and administer the veterinarian student debt assistance program.

(B) Rules adopted under division (A) of this section shall do all of the following:

(1) Establish procedures for the selection of veterinarian student debt assistance recipients, including the development of a lottery system for selecting who, from the list of eligible veterinarians, will receive assistance. The rules shall require that the selection of recipients occur in each odd-numbered calendar year.

(2) Provide for a method to determine the amount that each recipient of veterinarian student debt assistance receives if selected through the lottery system. The rules shall require that all recipients receive the same amount of assistance in each year in which assistance is awarded. The rules also shall require that the amount awarded to each recipient is not less than five thousand

dollars and not more than ten thousand dollars.

(3) Establish the types of charitable veterinarian services that qualify for application to and participation in the program, including, but not limited to, spay and neutering services. The rules shall require an applicant to complete charitable veterinarian services in service to a nonprofit organization, a humane society established under Chapter 1717. of the Revised Code, a law enforcement agency, or a state, local, or federal government entity. The rules also shall require each recipient of veterinarian student debt assistance to submit information to the board that details the charitable veterinarian services completed by the veterinarian.

(4) Establish the minimum amount of time that a veterinarian must have performed charitable veterinarian services to be eligible to apply to the program. The number of hours shall be not less than twelve.

(5) Establish the minimum period of time, not to exceed two years, that a veterinarian must agree to reside in this state under a contract entered into under section 4741.54 of the Revised Code;

(6) Provide for the inclusion of information regarding the program on application forms for both an initial veterinary license and a renewal of a veterinary license;

(7) Establish any other procedures and requirements that the board determines is necessary to administer and implement the program.

Sec. 4741.52. (A) A veterinarian who meets all of the following requirements is eligible to apply for participation in the veterinarian student debt assistance program:

(1) The veterinarian is a citizen of the United States, a national of the United States, or a permanent resident of the United States.

(2) The veterinarian is licensed under this chapter and has been engaged in the practice or instruction of veterinary medicine in this state for more than six months prior to submitting an application for veterinarian student debt assistance.

(3) The veterinarian has taken out an educational loan.

(4) The educational loan was used for educational expenses that were incurred while the veterinarian was enrolled in a veterinary college.

(5) The veterinarian has performed charitable veterinarian services in accordance with rules adopted under section 4741.51 of the Revised Code.

(6) The veterinarian is not a member of the state veterinary medical licensing board at the time the application is submitted under division (B) of this section.

(7) The veterinarian is not under contract with the board under section 4741.54 of the Revised Code and has not been under contract with the board under that section within one year prior to submitting an application.

(B) A veterinarian shall submit an application for participation in the veterinarian student debt assistance program to the state veterinary medical licensing board on a form that the board prescribes. The veterinarian shall submit the following information with an application:

(1) The veterinarian's name, permanent address or address at which the veterinarian is currently residing if different from the permanent address, and telephone number;

(2) The veterinary college the veterinarian attended and the dates of attendance;

(3) A summary and verification of the educational expenses for which the veterinarian seeks reimbursement under the program;

(4) Verification of the veterinarian's authorization under this chapter to practice veterinary medicine;

(5) Verification that the veterinarian is a citizen of the United States, a national of the United States, or a permanent resident of the United States;

(6) A statement attesting that the veterinarian performed charitable veterinarian services in accordance with rules adopted under section 4741.51 of the Revised Code;

(7) Any other information the board determines is necessary and appropriate.

Sec. 4741.53. (A) If the veterinarian student debt assistance fund created in section 4741.56 of the Revised Code contains sufficient money and the general assembly has appropriated funds for the veterinarian student debt assistance program, the state veterinary medical licensing board may approve a veterinarian for participation in the program if the board finds that the veterinarian is eligible for participation in the program. By the first day of June of each odd-numbered calendar year, the board shall compile a list of all veterinarians who applied in accordance with section 4741.52 of the Revised Code.

(B) The state veterinary medical licensing board shall select eligible veterinarians to receive veterinarian student debt assistance in accordance with the lottery system established in rules adopted under section 4741.51 of the Revised Code.

(C) Upon selection of a veterinarian, the board shall notify and enter into discussions with the veterinarian. The object of the discussions is to determine if the veterinarian agrees to do both of the following:

(1) Perform charitable veterinarian services in this state in an amount and for a duration of time established in rules adopted under section 4741.51 of the Revised Code;

(2) Reside in this state for a minimum duration of time established in rules adopted under section 4741.51 of the Revised Code after the receipt of veterinarian student debt assistance.

If, after discussions, the veterinarian so agrees, the veterinarian shall prepare, sign, and deliver to the board a letter of intent stipulating the agreed to terms.

(D) If the veterinarian does not prepare, sign, and deliver the letter of intent to the board within thirty days of receiving notice under division (C) of this section, the veterinarian forfeits their acceptance into the program and the board shall select another veterinarian for participation in the program.

Sec. 4741.54. (A) After signing a letter of intent under section 4741.53 of the Revised Code, a veterinarian and the state veterinary medical licensing board may enter into a contract, for not more than two years, for the veterinarian's participation in the veterinary student debt assistance program. A lending institution also may be a party to the contract.

(B) The contract shall include all of the following obligations:

(1) The veterinarian agrees to perform charitable veterinarian services in this state in a manner and for a time and duration specified in the contract.

(2) The veterinarian agrees to continue to reside in this state for a duration of time specified in the contract.

(3) The board agrees to repay, so long as the veterinarian performs the obligations agreed to under divisions (B)(1) and (2) of this section, all or part of an educational loan taken by the veterinarian in an amount and under terms specified in the contract.

(4) The veterinarian agrees to pay the board damages in an amount specified in the contract, up to the amount the board awarded the veterinarian, if the veterinarian fails to complete the obligations agreed to under divisions (B)(1) and (2) of this section.

(5) An assignment to the board of the veterinarian's duty to pay the principal and interest of a government or other educational loan taken by the veterinarian for expenses described in section 4741.50 of the Revised Code;

(6) The terms of the assignment under division (B)(5) of this section, which shall set forth the total amount of principal and interest to be paid, an amortization schedule, and the amount of each payment to be made under the schedule.

(C) The contract may include any other terms agreed to by the parties.

(D) Not later than the thirty-first day of January each year, the board shall cause to be mailed to each veterinarian to whom or on whose behalf veterinary student debt assistance is provided a statement showing the amount of principal and interest repaid by the board in the preceding year pursuant to the contract. The board shall send the statement by ordinary mail with address correction and forwarding requested in the manner prescribed by the United States postal service.

(E) The board shall deposit money collected from damages under division (B)(4) of this section into the veterinary student debt assistance fund created in section 4741.56 of the Revised Code.

Sec. 4741.55. The state veterinary medical licensing board shall submit a report to the governor and the general assembly describing the operations of the veterinarian student debt assistance program during the previous biennium. The board shall submit the report by the first day of September of each odd-numbered calendar year and shall include all of the following information in the report:

(A) The total number of veterinarians who applied to participate in the program within the prior twenty-four months;

(B) The total amount of money awarded to program participants within the prior twenty-four months;

(C) The names of the participants who entered into a contract with the board in accordance with section 4741.54 of the Revised Code within the prior twenty-four months;

(D) Any other information the board determines to be pertinent.

Sec. 4741.56. (A) There is hereby created the veterinary student debt assistance fund in the state treasury to be used by the state veterinary medical licensing board for the implementation and administration of sections 4741.50 to 4741.57 of the Revised Code.

(B) The fund shall consist of all of the following:

(1) Money transferred into the fund from the occupational licensing and regulatory fund in accordance with section 4743.05 of the Revised Code;

(2) Money received from gifts, donations, and bequests;

(3) Damages collected from program participants who fail to fulfill their service obligations;

(4) Any other money contributed to the fund.

Sec. 4741.57. On August 1, 2021, and every two years thereafter, the state veterinary medical licensing board shall certify to the director of budget and management the amount resulting from the following formula:

0.9 X {(the board's total revenue credited to the occupational licensing and regulatory fund during the previous biennium) - [(the board's amount of actual expenditures during the first fiscal year of the previous biennium) + (the amount appropriated to the board during the second fiscal year of the previous biennium)]}.

Sec. 4743.05. (A) Except as otherwise provided in sections 4701.20, 4723.062, 4723.082, 4729.65, 4781.121, and 4781.28 of the Revised Code, all money collected under Chapters 3773., 4701., 4703., 4709., 4713., 4715., 4717., 4723., 4725., 4729., 4732., 4733., 4734., 4736., 4741., 4744., 4747., 4753., 4755., 4757., 4758., 4771., 4775., 4779., and 4781. of the Revised Code shall be paid into the state treasury to the credit of the occupational licensing and regulatory fund, which is hereby created for use in administering such chapters.

(B) At the end of each quarter, the director of budget and management shall transfer from the occupational licensing and regulatory fund to the nurse education assistance fund created in section 3333.28 of the Revised Code the amount certified to the director under division (B) of section 4723.08 of the Revised Code.

(C) At the end of each quarter, the director shall transfer from the occupational licensing and regulatory fund to the certified public accountant education assistance fund created in section 4701.26 of the Revised Code the amount certified to the director under division (H)(2) of section 4701.10 of the Revised Code.

(D) On August 30, 2021, and every two years thereafter, the director shall transfer from the occupational licensing and regulatory fund to the veterinary student debt assistance fund created in section 4741.56 of the Revised Code the amount certified to the director under section 4741.57 of the Revised Code.

SECTION 2. That existing section 4743.05 of the Revised Code is hereby repealed.

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*Speaker* \_\_\_\_\_ *of the House of Representatives.*

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*President* \_\_\_\_\_ *of the Senate.*

Passed \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_

Approved \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_

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*Governor.*

The section numbering of law of a general and permanent nature is complete and in conformity with the Revised Code.

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*Director, Legislative Service Commission.*

Filed in the office of the Secretary of State at Columbus, Ohio, on the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, A. D. 20 \_\_\_\_.

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*Secretary of State.*

File No. \_\_\_\_\_ Effective Date \_\_\_\_\_