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Elias A. Zerhouni,

Director, NIH.

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## DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

### National Institutes of Health

#### National Institutes of Health Pediatric Research Loan Repayment Program

**AGENCY:** National Institutes of Health, HHS.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** The National Institutes of Health (NIH) announces the availability of educational loan repayment under the NIH Pediatric Research Loan Repayment Program (PR-LRP). The Pediatric Research Loan Repayment Program, which is authorized by Section 487F<sup>1</sup> of the Public Health Service (PHS) Act (42 U.S.C. 288-6), as added by the Children's Health Act of 2000 (Pub. L. 106-310), provides for the repayment of educational loan debt of qualified health professionals who agree to conduct pediatric research. The Pediatric Research Loan Repayment Program provides for the repayment of up to \$35,000 of the principal and interest of the extant educational loans of such health professionals for each year of obligated service. Payments equal to 39 percent of total loan repayments are issued to the Internal Revenue Service on behalf of program participants to offset Federal tax liabilities incurred. The purpose of the Pediatric Research Loan Repayment Program is the recruitment and retention of highly qualified health professionals as pediatric investigators. Through this notice, the NIH invites qualified health professionals who contractually agree to engage in pediatric research for at least two years, and who agree to engage in such research for at least 50 percent of their time, *i.e.*, not less than 20 hours per week, to apply for participation in the NIH Pediatric Research Loan Repayment Program.

**DATES:** Interested persons may request information about the Pediatric Research Loan Repayment Program on March 31, 2003.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Jerry Moore, NIH Regulations Officer, Office of Management Assessment, NIH, 6011 Executive Blvd., Room 601, MSC 7669, Rockville, MD 20892, by email ([jm40z@nih.gov](mailto:jm40z@nih.gov)), by fax 301-402-0169, or by telephone 301-496-4607 (not a toll-free number). For program information contact Marc S. Horowitz, e-mail [lrp@nih.gov](mailto:lrp@nih.gov), or telephone 301-402-5666 (not a toll free number). Information regarding the requirements, application deadline dates, and an on-line application for the Pediatric Research Loan Repayment Program may be obtained at the NIH Loan Repayment Program Web site, <http://www.lrp.nih.gov>.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Children's Health Act of 2000 (Pub. L. 106-310) was enacted on October 17, 2000, adding section 487F of the PHS Act (42 U.S.C. 288-6). Section 487F authorizes the Secretary, acting through the Director of the NIH, to carry out a program of entering into contracts with appropriately qualified health professionals. Under such contracts, qualified health professionals agree to conduct pediatric research for at least two years in consideration of the Federal Government agreeing to repay, for each year of research service, not more than \$35,000 of the principal and interest of the qualified educational loans of such health professionals. Payments equal to 39 percent of total loan repayments are issued to the Internal Revenue Service on behalf of program participants to offset Federal tax liabilities incurred. This program is known as the NIH Pediatric Research Loan Repayment Program (PR-LRP).

#### Eligibility Criteria

Specific eligibility criteria with regard to participation in the Pediatric Research Loan Repayment Program include the following:

1. Applicants must be U.S. citizens, U.S. nationals, or permanent residents of the United States;

2. Applicants must have a Ph.D., M.D., D.O., D.D.S., D.M.D., D.P.M., Pharm.D., D.V.M., D.C., N.D., or equivalent doctoral degree from an accredited institution;

3. Applicants must have total qualifying educational loan debt equal to or in excess of 20 percent of their institutional base salary on the date of program eligibility (the effective date that a loan repayment contract has been executed by the Secretary of Health and Human Services or designee), expected to be between June 1 and August 1, 2003. Institutional base salary is the annual amount that the organization

pays for the participant's appointment, whether the time is spent in research, teaching, patient care, or other activities. Institutional base salary excludes any income that a participant may earn outside the duties of the organization. Institutional base salary may not include or comprise any income (salary or wages) earned as a Federal employee;

4. Applicants must conduct qualifying research supported by a non-profit foundation, non-profit professional association, or other non-profit institution, or a U.S. or other government agency (Federal, State, or local). A foundation, professional association, or institution is considered to be non-profit if exempt from Federal tax under the provisions of Section 501 of the Internal Revenue Code (26 U.S.C. 501);

5. Applicants must engage in qualified pediatric research. Pediatric research is defined as research that is directly related to diseases, disorders, and other conditions in children;

6. Applicants must engage in qualified pediatric research for at least 50 percent of their time, *i.e.*, not less than 20 hours per week;

7. Full-time employees of Federal Government agencies are ineligible to apply for LRP benefits. Part-time Federal employees who engage in qualifying research as part of their non-Federal duties for at least 20 hours per week, and whose funding is from a non-profit institution as defined in number 4 of this section, are eligible to apply for loan repayment if they meet all other eligibility requirements;

8. Applicants must agree to conduct research for which funding is not prohibited by Federal law, regulation, or HHS/NIH policy. Recipients who receive LRP awards must conduct their research in accordance with applicable Federal, State and local laws (*e.g.*, applicable human subject protection regulations);

9. Applicants will not be excluded from consideration under the Pediatric Research Loan Repayment Program on the basis of age, race, culture, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or other non-merit factors; and

10. No individual may submit more than one LRP application to the NIH in any fiscal year. Individuals who have applied previously for the PR-LRP but did not receive an award are eligible to submit a new application if they meet all of the above eligibility criteria.

The following individuals are ineligible for participation in the Pediatric Research Loan Repayment Program:

<sup>1</sup> So in law. There are two sections 487F. Section 1002(b) of Public Law 106-310 (114 Stat. 1129), inserted section 487F above. Subsequently, section 205 of Public Law 106-505 (114 Stat. 2329), which relates to a Loan Repayment Program for Clinical Researchers, inserted a section 487F after section 487E.