

Evaluation and Selection Process

In approving applications for the assignment of Corps members, the Secretary shall give priority to any such application that is made regarding the provision of primary health services to a health professional shortage area with the greatest such shortage. For the program year July 1, 2003–June 30, 2004, HPSAs of greatest shortage for determination of priority for assignment of Corps personnel will be defined as follows: (1) Primary care HPSAs with a score of 14 and above are authorized for the assignment of Corps members who are family nurse practitioners or primary care physicians participating in the Scholarship Program; (2) mental health HPSAs with a score of 18 and above are authorized for the assignment of Corps members who are physician psychiatrists participating in the Scholarship Program; (3) dental HPSAs with a score of 18 and above are authorized for the assignment of Corps members who are dentists participating in the Scholarship Program; (4) all primary care HPSAs are authorized for the assignment of Corps members who are physician assistants (PAs) or CNMs participating in the Scholarship Program; and (5) HPSAs (appropriate to each discipline) with scores of 14 and above will receive authorization for the assignment of Corps members who are participating in the Loan Repayment Program. HPSAs with scores below 14 will be eligible to receive assignment of Corps personnel participating in the Loan Repayment Program only after assignments are made of those Corps members matching to those HPSAs receiving the priority for placement of Corps members through the Loan Repayment Program. Placements made through the Loan Repayment Program in HPSAs with scores 13 or below will be made by decreasing HPSA score, only to the extent funding remains available. All sites on the list are eligible sites for individuals wishing to serve in an underserved area but who are not contractually obligated under the Scholarship or Loan Repayment Program. A listing of HPSAs and their scores is posted at <http://belize.hrsa.gov/newhpsa/newhpsa.cfm>.

Sites qualifying for an automatic HPSA designation are currently unscored. A methodology to score these automatic HPSAs is currently being developed. Sites on the list with an unscored HPSA designation are authorized for the assignment of Corps personnel who are PAs or CNMs participating in the Scholarship Program. Unscored HPSAs are eligible to receive assignment of Corps

personnel participating in the Loan Repayment Program only after assignments are made of those Corps members matching to scored HPSAs. When automatic HPSAs receive scores, these sites will then be authorized to receive assignment of Corps members if they meet the criteria outlined above and their newly assigned scores are above the stated cutoffs.

The number of new NHSC placements through the Scholarship and Loan Repayment programs allowed at any one site are limited to the following:

(1) Primary Health Care

(a) *Loan Repayment Program*—no more than 2 physicians (MD or DO); and no more than a combined total of 2 nurse practitioners (NPs), PAs, or CNMs.

(b) *Scholarship Program*—no more than 2 physicians (MD or DO); and no more than a combined total of 5 NPs, PAs or CNMs.

(2) Dental

(a) *Loan Repayment Program*—no more than 2 dentists and 2 dental hygienists.

(b) *Scholarship Program*—no more than 1 dentist.

(3) Mental Health

(a) *Loan Repayment Program*—no more than 2 psychiatrists (MD or DO); and no more than a combined total of 2 clinical or counseling psychologists; licensed clinical social workers, licensed professional counselors, marriage and family therapists, or psychiatric nurse specialists.

(b) *Scholarship Program*—no more than 2 psychiatrists.

Application Requests, Dates and Address

The list of HPSAs and entities that are eligible to receive priority for the placement of Corps personnel may be updated periodically. Entities that no longer meet eligibility criteria, including HPSA score, will be removed from the priority listing. Entities interested in being added to the high priority list must submit an NHSC Recruitment and Retention Assistance Application to: National Health Service Corps, 5600 Fishers Lane, Room 8A-55, Rockville, MD 20857, fax 301-594-2721. These applications must be submitted on or before the deadline date of March 26, 2004. Applications submitted after this deadline date will be considered for placement on the priority placement list in the following program year. Any changes to this deadline will be posted on the NHSC Web site at <http://nhsc.bhpr.hrsa.gov>.

Additional Information

Entities interested in receiving application materials may do so by calling the NHSC call center at 1-800-221-9393. They may also get information and download application materials from: <http://nhsc.bhpr.hrsa.gov/applications/rraa.cfm>.

Entities wishing to provide additional data and information in support of their inclusion on the high priority placement list, must do so in writing no later than January 14, 2004. This information should be submitted to the National Health Service Corps, 5600 Fishers Lane, Room 8A-55, Rockville, MD 20857. This information will be considered in preparing the final list of HPSAs and entities eligible to receive priority for the assignment of Corps personnel.

Paperwork Reduction Act: The Recruitment & Retention Assistance Application has been approved by the Office of Management and Budget under the Paperwork Reduction Act. The OMB clearance number is 0915-0230.

The program is not subject to the provision of Executive Order 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs (as implemented through 45 CFR part 100).

Dated: December 9, 2003.

Elizabeth M. Duke,
Administrator.

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DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Coast Guard

[USCG-2003-16675]

Random Drug-Testing Rate for Covered Crewmembers; Calendar Year 2004

AGENCY: Coast Guard, DHS.

ACTION: Notice of minimum random drug-testing rate.

SUMMARY: The Coast Guard has set the calendar year 2004 minimum random chemical drug-testing rate at 50 percent of covered crewmembers. An evaluation of the 2002 Management Information System (MIS) data collection forms submitted by marine employers showed that random drug testing on covered crewmembers for the calendar year 2002 resulted in positive test results 1.63 percent of the time. Therefore, we will maintain the minimum random drug-testing rate at 50 percent of covered