

SBOH Summary

Proposed Changes to 77 Ill. Adm. Code 597 Nursing Education Scholarships

This rulemaking proposes changes to standardize various aspects of the Nursing Education Scholarship program. Specifically, amendments seek to update terms and definitions, make changes to tuition and stipend determination for recipients, clarify provisions regarding scholarship renewals, update requirements for deferment and waiver for nursing education and employment obligation, and incorporate reporting and recovery provisions. The intent of these changes is to formalize current practices within the program and provide recipients with clearer delineations regarding deferment and waiver options.

A significant change sought by this rulemaking is the modification of the current scholarship renewal process. The proposed rulemaking seeks to limit a scholarship renewal to only the current nursing degree being sought – rather than allowing a recipient to hold and renew a scholarship for each advance nursing degree sought. The current practice requires the Department to reserve future scholarships, which has the effect of depriving new students from scholarships. Under the proposed amendment, should a current scholarship recipient wish to pursue a higher nursing degree, the recipient would need to apply for a scholarship to cover the advance education rather than merely retain the current scholarship. For example, a student who received a scholarship to attend an LPN program would need to reapply for a scholarship to cover an RN program rather than reserving the scholarship to cover the RN or any future advance study program.

The rulemaking also provides the Department with formal criteria for when recipients request to defer or waive their nursing education or service obligation. The applicable statute (110 ILCS 975) provides general guidelines for these requests. The proposed rulemaking would provide standards on when a deferment or waiver is applicable, criteria on how a recipient can make these requests, and descriptions of the Department's role in these processes.