§12122. Maine Veterinary Medicine Loan Program

1. Establishment. The Maine Veterinary Medicine Loan Program is established. The authority shall administer the program. Beginning January 1, 2011 and until December 31, 2022, the chief executive officer shall, as resources allow, award up to 2 loans annually up to an aggregate of 8. Beginning January 1, 2023, the chief executive officer shall, as resources allow, award up to 8 loans annually up to an aggregate of 32. At least half, and no fewer than 2, of the annual loans awarded must be awarded to applicants who have demonstrated a likelihood to practice livestock veterinary medicine in the State unless the authority does not receive enough qualified applicants to meet this requirement, in which case the chief executive officer may award the remaining loans to other eligible applicants. Loans are available to Maine residents enrolled in a school of veterinary medicine.
[PL 2021, c. 725, §3 (AMD).]

2. Application process. Application for participation in the program must be made directly to the authority.
[PL 2009, c. 488, §14 (NEW).]

3. Eligibility. To be eligible to participate in the program, a person must be a Maine resident, be enrolled in a school of veterinary medicine and meet additional eligibility criteria established in rules adopted under section 12124. In selecting recipients, priority must be given to a student who:

A. Previously received a loan pursuant to this section; [PL 2009, c. 488, §14 (NEW).]

B. Exhibits financial need; and [PL 2009, c. 488, §14 (NEW).]

C. Demonstrates an interest in practicing in an area of the State with insufficient veterinary services or in an underserved geographic region. [PL 2021, c. 725, §4 (AMD).]
[PL 2021, c. 725, §4 (AMD).]

4. Maximum amount. The maximum loan amount available under the program to each participant is $35,000 per year for a period of up to 4 years.
[PL 2021, c. 725, §5 (AMD).]

5. Loan agreement; forgiveness. A student selected as a loan recipient shall enter into a loan agreement as set out in this subsection.

A. Upon completion of professional education, the loan recipient shall repay the loan in accordance with this paragraph.

(1) A loan recipient who does not obtain loan forgiveness pursuant to subparagraph (2) shall repay the entire principal of the loan plus simple interest at a rate to be determined by rule of the authority. Interest does not begin to accrue until the loan recipient completes veterinary medical education.

(2) A loan recipient who, upon conclusion of the loan recipient's professional education, including any fellowships, elects to serve as a veterinarian in an area of the State with insufficient veterinary services or in an underserved geographic region is forgiven 25% of the original outstanding indebtedness for each year of that practice. A loan recipient who practices in an area of the State with insufficient veterinary services or in an underserved geographic region less than full time may receive prorated loan forgiveness. A loan recipient who is not practicing in an underserved geographic region and who devotes less than 50% of the recipient's practice to the care of livestock or to emergency and critical care may receive prorated loan forgiveness.

(3) A loan recipient must make a commitment to undertake specific training, including clinical experiences in livestock medicine or emergency and critical care medicine. [PL 2021, c. 725, §§6, 7 (AMD).]

B. Loans must be repaid over a term no longer than 10 years, except that the chief executive officer may extend an individual's term as necessary to ensure repayment of the loan. Repayment must commence within 6 months of when the loan recipient completes, withdraws from or otherwise fails to continue veterinary medical education. [PL 2009, c. 488, §14 (NEW).]

C. A veterinarian requesting forgiveness under this section shall report annually to the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry on the portion of the veterinarian's practice dedicated to livestock or emergency and critical care, the location of the veterinarian's practice and the geographic region served by the veterinarian's practice. [PL 2021, c. 725, §8 (AMD).]

[PL 2021, c. 725, §§6-8 (AMD).]

6. Default. A loan recipient under the program who agrees to practice in an area of the State with insufficient veterinary services or in an underserved geographic region and who fails to complete the period of service required to pay off the loan is liable to the authority for an amount equal to the sum of the total amount paid by or on behalf of the authority to or on behalf of the recipient under the agreement plus interest at a rate determined by the authority. Credit for practicing in an area with insufficient veterinary services or in an underserved geographic region is awarded for each consecutive 12-month period served. Exceptions may be made by the authority in accordance with subsection 7.
[PL 2021, c. 725, §9 (AMD).]

7. Deferments. Deferments on the repayment of a loan under the program may be granted for causes established by rule of the authority. Interest at a rate to be determined by rule of the authority must be assessed during the deferment. The loan recipient's total debt to the authority, including principal and interest, must be repaid either through return service or cash payments. The chief executive officer shall make determinations of deferment on a case-by-case basis. The decision of the chief executive officer is final.
[PL 2009, c. 488, §14 (NEW).]

SECTION HISTORY

PL 2009, c. 488, §14 (NEW). PL 2011, c. 657, Pt. W, §5 (REV). PL 2021, c. 725, §§3-9 (AMD).

The State of Maine claims a copyright in its codified statutes. If you intend to republish this material, we require that you include the following disclaimer in your publication:

All copyrights and other rights to statutory text are reserved by the State of Maine. The text included in this publication reflects changes made through the Second Regular Session of the 132nd Maine Legislature and is current through October 1, 2026. The text is subject to change without notice. It is a version that has not been officially certified by the Secretary of State. Refer to the Maine Revised Statutes Annotated and supplements for certified text.

The Office of the Revisor of Statutes also requests that you send us one copy of any statutory publication you may produce. Our goal is not to restrict publishing activity, but to keep track of who is publishing what, to identify any needless duplication and to preserve the State's copyright rights.

PLEASE NOTE: The Revisor's Office cannot perform research for or provide legal advice or interpretation of Maine law to the public. If you need legal assistance, please contact a qualified attorney.