



## St. Tammany Health System Scholarship Program Guidelines

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### 1.0 POLICY

St. Tammany Parish Hospital Service District No. 1 d/b/a St. Tammany Health System ("STHS" or "System") Board of Commissioners ("Board") has established a scholarship program to create a stable, sustainable, dedicated workforce by increasing educational opportunities available to the Allied Health Profession and Nursing students and for existing STHS employees who seek to further their education, all who agree to fulfill an Employment Commitment with STHS. Engaging individuals when they are students provides an early opportunity to cultivate loyalty which leads to loyalty when employed. The Board hereby establishes guidelines for the application process, eligibility criteria and administration of the scholarship Program.

### 2.0 DEFINITIONS

**Allied Health Profession** means any generally recognized medical profession or vocation including, but not limited to occupational, respiratory, vocational, physical, and other therapies; medical, radiologic, and other technologists; pharmacists, social workers, athletic trainers, and other similar professions and vocations.

**Board** means the Board of Commissioners of St. Tammany Parish Hospital Service District No. 1 d/b/a St. Tammany Health System.

**Eligible Applicants** shall mean any individual who is admitted to or is engaged in the study of Nursing or Allied Health at an accredited school of Nursing or Allied Health located in the United States, and who intends to fulfill the Employment Commitment with STHS.

**Employment Commitment** means the amount of time a Scholarship Recipient shall be obligated to be a full-time employee of STHS.

**Nursing** means nursing as practiced by an individual who has graduated from an accredited school of nursing, passed the licensing examination and has been issued a license to practice as a registered nurse in this state by the Louisiana State Board of Nursing or a license to practice as a practical nurse in this state by the Louisiana State Board of Practical Nurse Examiners.

**Recipient** shall mean any Eligible Applicant who satisfies all criteria established by the Board and who has been selected to receive a Scholarship.

**Scholarship** shall mean the funds remitted on behalf of a Recipient which defray costs of Nursing or Allied Health education or training as consideration for the Employment Commitment.

**Scholarship Agreement** shall mean the written document which establishes the terms and conditions upon which the Scholarship shall be granted, the parameters of the Eligible Applicant's obligation to practice as a full-time Nurse or Allied Health employee with STHS and payment obligations.

**Scholarship Commitment** shall mean the funds committed by STHS for the Scholarship.

**Scholarship Eligibility Criteria** shall mean the eligibility criteria established by the Board and as stated herein.

**Scholarship Review Committee** shall mean the committee comprised of the Senior Vice-President/ Chief Nursing Officer, the Senior Vice-President/ Chief Human Resources Officer, and the Director of Nursing Workforce.

**Program** shall mean the St. Tammany Health System Scholarship Program.

**Program Cycle** shall mean an academic semester which STHS offers and awards any scholarship pursuant to the guidelines stated herein.

### **3.0 PROCEDURE**

The Scholarship Review Committee shall review each application and verify completeness, identify Eligible Recipients, conduct interviews, and make recommendations. Guidelines for the application and selection process will be widely published to ensure a transparent and open process. Each Eligible Applicant, who is accepted into the Program, and the Dean or office of financial assistance where the Applicant (s) are registered, will be notified by the Board of any scholarship award.

#### **Minimum Criteria to be Eligible for Selection as a Recipient:**

##### **3.1 Nursing Students:**

3.1.1 Be enrolled as a full-time (9 hours for 16-week semesters, 7 hours for 10- to 12-week semesters, or 5 hours for 8-week semesters) undergraduate Nursing student in good standing at the Program.

3.1.2 Have completed at least the first semester of nursing clinical coursework toward an associate or bachelor's degree that qualifies the graduate to take the NCLEX-PN or NCLEX-RN.

3.1.3 Maintain a 2.75 minimum cumulative grade point average (grades in nursing-specific courses will also be reviewed).

- 3.1.4 Be willing to fulfill the Employment Commitment to STHS following graduation.
- 3.1.5 Participate in one or more interviews with representatives from the Program, STHS Nursing Leadership and/or STHS Human Resources.
- 3.1.6 Each selected Recipient shall sign a written Scholarship Agreement with STHS which establishes the terms and conditions upon which the Scholarship shall be granted to the applicant, the Employment Commitment, and repayment obligations for any breach.

### 3.2 Allied Health Students

- 3.2.1 Be enrolled as a full-time or part-time Allied Health Student in good standing.
- 3.2.2 Maintain a 2.5 minimum cumulative grade point average.
- 3.2.3 Be willing to fulfill the Employment Commitment to STHS following graduation.
- 3.2.4 Participate in one or more interviews with representatives from the Program, STHS Leadership and/ or STHS Human Resources.
- 3.2.5 Each selected Recipient shall sign a written Scholarship Agreement with STHS which establishes the terms and conditions upon which the Scholarship shall be granted to the applicant, the Employment Commitment, and repayment obligations for any breach.

## **4.0 GUIDELINES**

- 4.1 The number of scholarships to be awarded and the amount of funds to be used for Scholarship awards will be identified by the Board through its budgeting process. Scholarships will be awarded on a semester-by-semester basis referred to as the Program Cycle. The Scholarship Review Committee shall monitor the continual eligibility of Recipients.
- 4.2 Recipient shall enter a Scholarship Agreement which establishes the terms and conditions upon which the Scholarship shall be granted, the parameters of the Recipient's obligations to practice as a full-time Nurse or Allied Health employee with STHS, continued eligibility requirements and re-payment obligations.
- 4.3 Upon receipt of a request for payment from the Recipient's school for Scholarship funds, such funds shall be forwarded to the dean or chief fiscal administrator of the school.
- 4.4 The Scholarship Agreement will provide the Employment Commitment length of time which shall be commensurate with the value of the scholarship awarded to the Recipient.

4.5 Within one hundred and twenty days (120) prior to the date the Recipient is to begin practice pursuant to Recipient's employment with STHS, the Recipient will be notified of the designated position of employment with STHS and the designated area to be served by Recipient.

4.6 If the Recipient fails to comply with any condition as provided in the Scholarship Agreement, the Recipient shall owe and remit to STHS the ratio, to the aggregate of the amount of the Scholarship awarded, as the number of months that the Recipient failed to comply bears to the number of months he was obligated to comply. Said amount shall be computed together with interest at the legal rate, such interest to be computed from the date on which the Recipient completed education or professional training, and active military service, if any. Such repayment shall be completed within four (4) years from the date at which the Scholarship began to draw interest.

4.7 In the event of failure to maintain eligibility criteria, permanent withdrawal, or dismissal by the Recipient from school, internship, training or residency, the Recipient shall forfeit immediately the right to retain the Scholarship. The Scholarship shall begin to bear interest upon the occurrence of any such event, and repayment shall be completed within four (4) years.

4.8 If the Recipient fails to begin the Employment Commitment upon completion of school, internship, training or residency, the Recipient shall begin repayment of the Scholarship with interest, within six (6) months after completion of education or training. Payments shall be made within four (4) years.

4.9 Upon the death or permanent disability of the Recipient, the Scholarship Contract shall be cancelled. In the event of the death, a certified copy of the death certificate shall be required.

4.10 The Board, in its discretion, may waive or suspend any financial obligation contained herein where compliance would involve extreme or unusual hardship. A written request containing sufficient detail shall be submitted to the Board.

4.11 Should full time positions not be available or STHS is unable to offer the Recipient full time employment within twelve (12) months of completion of training, the Scholarship shall be considered paid in full. The Recipient is not required to make any payment (principal nor interest) while enrolled in school.

4.12 Upon default of payment, the Board shall proceed with collection of amounts due and owing.

4.13 Eligible Applicants who participate in the St. Tammany Health System Scholarship Program are also eligible to participate in the Medical Staff Scholarship for Nursing and STH Guild Scholarship for Nursing and Allied Health programs.

4.14 Electronic signatures on any document in connection with the Program are the same as handwritten signatures for the purposes of validity, enforceability, and admissibility.

4.15 STHS will not discriminate based on race, color, creed, sex, age, religion, national origin, or physical capability in administering the Program.

## **5.0 REFERENCES**

LA R.S. 46:1131 *et seq.*

LA Attorney General Opinions Nos. 77-284, 77-1488, 81-1197, 88-322, 90-259, 00-02, 00-02A, and 05-0306.

## **6.0 ATTACHMENTS**

- 6.1 Scholarship Application
- 6.2 Scholarship Agreement
- 6.3 Scholarship Request for Continuance
- 6.4 Board Resolution Adopting Scholarship Program

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