

**BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION  
SUPPORT FOR BEHAVIORAL HEALTH FIELD PLACEMENTS PROGRAM**

**PURPOSE**

The Support for Behavioral Health Field Placements Program is funded subject to the availability of funds and appropriation from the Massachusetts Legislature. The behavioral health workforce is identified as a priority workforce area. Supporting individuals in the behavioral health pipeline throughout their educational attainment and career development is essential to increasing the pool of available behavioral health professionals working to serve the needs of the Commonwealth. The Behavioral Health Field Placements program will provide grants to Massachusetts public and private institutions of higher education (IHEs) to cover the cost of required internship credit hours and provide cost of attendance supports to Bachelors and Masters-degree level students participating in internships, apprenticeships and practicums that provide hands-on experience in high-need behavioral health settings.

**DEFINITIONS**

***ELIGIBLE INSTITUTION:***

Accredited public and private higher education institutions located in the Commonwealth and authorized to grant degrees that offer eligible programs, listed below:

AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE
ANNA MARIA COLLEGE
ASSUMPTION UNIVERSITY
BAY PATH UNIVERSITY
BOSTON COLLEGE
BOSTON GRADUATE SCHOOL OF PSYCHOANALYSIS INC
BOSTON UNIVERSITY
BRIDGEWATER STATE UNIVERSITY
CAMBRIDGE COLLEGE
FITCHBURG STATE UNIVERSITY
FRAMINGHAM STATE UNIVERSITY
GORDON-CONWELL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
HARVARD UNIVERSITY
LESLEY UNIVERSITY
MCPHS UNIVERSITY
MERRIMACK COLLEGE
MGH INSTITUTE OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS
NORTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY
REGIS COLLEGE
SALEM STATE UNIVERSITY

SIMMONS UNIVERSITY
SMITH COLLEGE
SPRINGFIELD COLLEGE
SUFFOLK UNIVERSITY
TUFTS UNIVERSITY
UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS-AMHERST
UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS-BOSTON
UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS-DARTMOUTH
WESTERN NEW ENGLAND UNIVERSITY
WESTFIELD STATE UNIVERSITY
WILLIAM JAMES COLLEGE
WORCESTER STATE UNIVERSITY

***ELIGIBLE PROGRAM:***

Behavioral health or related degree or certificate programs, inclusive of mental health and substance use disorder (SUD)/opioid use disorder (OUD) treatment programs, that require work-place based internships, apprenticeships, or practicum credit hours as a condition for program completion, including but not limited to the following:

- Bachelor’s level
  - Social Work
  - Clinical/Counseling Psychology
  - Applied Behavioral Analysis
  - Occupational Therapy
  - Substance Use/Addiction Counseling
  - Art/Music Therapy
- Master’s level
  - Master’s level Social Work
  - Mental Health Counseling
  - Substance Abuse Counseling
  - Addictions Counseling
  - Marriage and Family Therapy/Counseling
  - Rehabilitation Counseling
  - Psychoanalysis
  - Master’s level Psychiatric/Mental Health Nursing programs

Or any other programs that directly name behavioral health, mental health or substance use treatment as its specific area of inquiry and require one or more field placements as a degree requirement.

<b>Program</b>	<b>CIP Code</b>
College Student Counseling and Personnel Services	13.1102
Student Counseling and Personnel Services, Other	13.1199
Pastoral Studies/Counseling	39.0701
Clinical Psychology	42.2801
Counseling Psychology	42.2803
School Psychology	42.2805
Educational Psychology	42.2806
Health/Medical Psychology	42.2810
Forensic Psychology	42.2812
Applied Behavior Analysis	42.2814
Clinical, Counseling and Applied Psychology, Other	42.2899
Social Work	44.0701
Youth Services/Administration	44.0702
Substance Abuse/Addiction Counseling	51.1501
Community Health Services/Liaison/Counseling	51.1504
Marriage and Family Therapy/Counseling	51.1505
Psychoanalysis and Psychotherapy	51.1507
Mental Health Counseling/Counselor	51.1508
Mental and Social Health Services and Allied Professions, Other	51.1599
Community Health and Preventive Medicine.	51.2208
Maternal and Child Health	51.2209
Behavioral Aspects of Health	51.2212
Art Therapy/Therapist	51.2301
Music Therapy/Therapist	51.2305
Occupational Therapy/Therapist	51.2306
Therapeutic Recreation/Recreational Therapy	51.2309
Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling/Counselor	51.2310
Rehabilitation and Therapeutic Professions, Other	51.2399
Psychiatric/Mental Health Nurse/Nursing	51.3810
Geriatric Nurse/Nursing	51.3821

## **ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

To be eligible for the Behavioral Health Field Placements program, the student must:

- a) be enrolled in an eligible institution, as defined;
- b) physically reside in Massachusetts for at least one year, as of the start of the enrolled term, with an intent to remain in Massachusetts consistent with Board of Higher Education (BHE) policy;

- c) be a U.S. Citizen, lawful permanent resident, or non-citizen eligible under Title IV regulations; or have an approved eligibility status designated by the BHE pursuant to the Massachusetts Tuition Equity Law<sup>1</sup> or otherwise;
- d) complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or the Massachusetts Application for State Financial Aid (MASFA) as applicable for eligible students under the Massachusetts Tuition Equity Law<sup>2</sup> annually;
- e) comply with financial aid verification requirements;
- f) not be in default on any federal or state student loans for attendance at any institution, or owe a refund for any previous state financial aid program;
- g) enroll, as a matriculated student, on a full-time or part-time basis (minimum of 6 credits, or the equivalent) in an eligible behavioral health program of study leading to a baccalaureate or graduate level degree; and
- h) meet Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) according to institution's requirements and federal standards.

## **PROGRAM CONDITIONS**

- Disbursement of funds: Support for Behavioral Health Field Placements Program funding is to be allocated to participating institutions through a formula or process approved by the Commissioner of Higher Education;
- Support for Behavioral Health Field Placements Program funds allocated during an academic year must be committed to students by institutions and expended at the conclusion of the academic year;
- The institution is required to report recipient, programmatic, and other data to the Department of Higher Education (DHE) upon request, and no less than on a quarterly basis;
- Institutions shall facilitate access to on-campus support services to students who receive assistance under the Support for Behavioral Health Field Placements Program, to promote persistence in and completion of their program of study;
- The institution is responsible for verifying student eligibility;

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<sup>1</sup> M.G.L. c. 15A, Section 9, as amended by Section 11 of Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2023, and further amended by Section 22 of Chapter 140 of the Act of 2024 For information on the Massachusetts Tuition Equity Law see here: <https://www.mass.edu/tuitionequity>

<sup>2</sup> For information on the Massachusetts Tuition Equity Law see here: <https://www.mass.edu/tuitionequity>

- Support for Behavioral Health Field Placements Program funds may be awarded to support summer enrollment that occurs prior to the end of the corresponding academic year, if funds are available; and
- Institutions are required, upon request, to submit data to the Department of Higher Education to demonstrate maintenance of fiscal effort in their commitment to institutional aid to students, while participating in the Support for Behavioral Health Field Placements Program.

## **AWARD VALUE**

Pursuant to an interagency service agreement between the Executive Office of Health and Human Services and the Department of Higher Education, the Board of Higher Education is authorized to award up to \$5,000 for each semester in which a student enrolls in and completes a degree-required workplace-based internship, apprenticeship, or practicum credit hours, subject to a maximum of \$10,000 per academic year, and \$20,000 per recipient across two academic years.

## **AWARD DISBURSEMENT**

Participating institutions must verify that each recipient is eligible in accordance with guidelines established for the Behavioral Health Field Placements program, and that the student is enrolled in an approved behavioral health program and completing an eligible behavioral health placement.

Institutions are required to refund to the Department any funds that are deemed to have been improperly awarded and disbursed to recipients who are later determined to be ineligible for the program. Behavioral Health Field Placement stipends may be awarded to support trailing summer enrollment that occur prior to the end of the corresponding fiscal year, if funds are available.

## **AWARD PRIORITY**

In the event that the fiscal year appropriation is not sufficient to permit a full award to each eligible student, the institution shall prioritize assistance to students meeting all of the award priority criteria noted as follows:

- Students who are culturally/linguistically diverse
- Students living within or completing field placements within [Advancing Health Equity in Massachusetts Priority Geographies](#) municipalities
- Students enrolled in programs requiring 2 or more semesters of practicum (i.e. \$10k/year)

Subject to available funding, eligible students that meet some of the criteria may also be eligible for a partial award at the discretion of the institution.

## **ANNUAL REVIEW**

The Department of Higher Education is responsible for evaluating the effectiveness of the Support for Behavioral Health Field Placements program. Institutions that have signed an agreement to participate in the Massachusetts State financial aid programs are required to share data for all students with the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education (DHE) or its designee, and the Office of Student Financial Assistance for this purpose. The program may be evaluated annually to determine any immediate impact or to determine if adjustments are required for various processes, such as disbursement of funds.

### **PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT**

All institutions receiving funds under the Behavioral Health Field Placements Program must have an active Massachusetts State Financial Aid Participation Agreement on file with the Massachusetts Office of Student Financial Assistance (OSFA).

### **AUDIT REQUIREMENT**

- a) It shall be the responsibility of each college to maintain documentation of a recipient student's eligibility for the Behavioral Health Field Placements program.
- b) The Commissioner shall require each institution to furnish annually to the BHE a report detailing specific information regarding recipients of the Behavioral Health Field Placements program. OSFA will establish the timeline, specifications, and procedures for this report, which shall include the list of eligible institutions receiving allocations, the amount of funds allocated to each institution, the number and type of behavioral health degree programs supported at each institution by CIP code and credential level, the number of students supported by each program at each institution, aggregate demographic information about students participating in the program, enrollment status and graduation rates of students supported by each program, information about field placements including program, type, healthcare setting, and location, and student-level information including but not limited to employment status, role, and location.
- c) All financial books, records and documents pertaining to this Program shall, at all times, be open to inspection, review and audit by the Commissioner, the State Auditor or their authorized representatives who shall have access to the premises wherever such books, records, and documents are for seven years. An institution may retain such records for a period of five years, if approval is received from the Records Conservation Board in accordance with General Laws, Chapter 30, Section 42.