

Targeted Academic Support Program Guidelines 2019/20

1. Program Description

The Targeted Academic Support Program (TASP) provides financial support of up to \$50,000 to health and social services professionals employed in indeterminate health and social services professions within the Northwest Territories Health and Social Services System (HSS System). It is intended for employees seeking to expand their scope of practice by attaining academic or technical training offered through accredited post-secondary academic institutions to address an existing or future gap within the HSS System.

The HSS System includes the Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority (NTHSSA), the Hay River Health and Social Services Authority (HRHSSA), the Tłı̄ch̄q Community Services Agency (TCSA – Health), and the Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS).

TASP is administered by the Talent and Organizational Development Division within the NTHSSA.

2. Objective

The objective of the program is to provide indeterminate health and social services professionals with the opportunity to:

- Expand their scope of practice;
- Build capacity in priority occupations to maintain a sustainable HSS System workforce; and
- Where applicable, promote mobility between positions through professional development.

Each year, HSS System senior management will advise on which occupation(s) are priority areas of need to be supported through TASP. Based on analysis regarding health and social services hard to recruit positions and/or occupational needs, prioritized occupations may vary from year to year.

For the 2019/20 fiscal year, priority consideration will be given to applicants pursuing accredited certificate, diploma, undergraduate or graduate degrees in the following occupations:

- Child and Youth Mental Health Counsellor
- Clinical Nurse Educators
- Community Social Services Worker
- Diagnostic Medical Sonographer / Ultrasound Technician
- Nurse Practitioner



- Personal Support Worker / Long-Term Care Worker
- All specialized nursing positions

Applicants seeking financial support for academic and technical training for health and social services occupations not identified as a priority occupation may be considered for TASP funding, if:

- It will help address an existing or future gap in the HSS System; and
- TASP funding is still available after applications for all priority occupations have been considered.

3. Funding Availability

Employees may apply for up to \$50,000 in funding. Funding may be provided over more than one fiscal year, depending on the length of the academic or technical training. Where an employee is approved for TASP funding and there are changes to the approved projected budget amount an employee will receive, the employee will notify TASP Coordinator immediately.

TASP funding cannot exceed a lifetime maximum of \$50,000 per applicant. All costs over and above the maximum amount are at the responsibility of the employee.

The number of applicants supported through the program will vary from year to year, based on prior year's budget commitments.

4. Applicant Eligibility

To be eligible for TASP, employees:

- Must be a current, indeterminate employee of the HSS System;
- Must be applying for financial support for academic or technical training related to HSS System priority occupations;
- Must be obtaining/starting their academic or technical training through an accredited post-secondary academic institute in the same academic year of their TASP application; and
- Must sign a return of service agreement, if approved for funding through the program.

Mandatory work courses and/or training are not eligible for funding through TASP.

Please ensure you have received approval for leave from your supervisor prior to submitting your application, if required.



5. How to Apply

Interested applicants who meet the eligibility criteria are required to submit the following documentation to TASP Coordinator at hssprograms@gov.nt.ca by the application deadline:

- The completed and signed application form, including support from the applicant's deputy head (COO/CEO/DM)
- A current resume
- A letter of intent, which:
 - Outlines the education / technical training being proposed in the application.
 - Outlines the applicant's medium and long-term learning and career objectives.
 - Identifies how the proposed education / technical training will help expand the applicant's scope of practice.
 - Identifies how the proposed education / technical training will help support the applicant's organization and/or the GNWT.

The deadline for 2019/20 application submissions is June 28, 2019. If TASP funding has not been exhausted from the applications received by the intake deadline, applications submitted after the deadline may be considered.

Employees are responsible for submitting a complete TASP application. Applications that are incomplete will not be considered.

Applicants are responsible for working directly with the academic institution to apply for acceptance into the proposed program.

6. Selection Process

All applications are reviewed and assessed using the following criteria when making funding decisions:

- The employee meets all eligibility criteria;
- The employee has submitted all the required documentation;
- The employee has applied by the application deadline; and
- The employee is pursuing academic or technical training in a HSS System priority occupation.

Final TASP funding allocation decisions will be determined by a selection committee comprised of HSS System senior management.

The TASP Coordinator will notify applicants and their direct supervisors of the selection process results through email.

7. Applicants Approved for Funding

If an applicant is approved for TASP funding:

- The employee and their direct supervisor will be contacted by email, notifying them of conditional funding approval, pending official acceptance and enrolment into the academic institution.
- The employee is responsible for providing the TASP Coordinator with confirmation of enrolment into the academic institute specified in their application.
- The employee will be required to sign a funding support agreement and return of service agreement that outlines the terms and conditions of the funding.
- The employee must provide a copy of their transcript to the TASP Coordinator at the end of each academic semester. Continued funding support is contingent on obtaining passing grades, as determined by the academic institution. If an applicant does not successfully complete the academic program or technical training, including all required assignments and practicums (if applicable), they will be required to repay some or all of the monies which have been provided as financial assistance through TASP.

TASP recipients are responsible for ensuring their contact and personal information is up-to-date. Any updates can be sent to the TASP Coordinator at hssprograms@gov.nt.ca. Failure to do so may result in delays in financial reimbursement to the TASP recipient.

8. Program Funding Details

Costs eligible for TASP funding include tuition, books and/or resources, travel, and residency costs associated with mandatory practicums.

Costs not eligible for TASP funding include application fees, student fees, salary/wages, operational coverage (back-fill costs), housing, per diems, child care expenses, parking fees, gas, car rental fees, and/or any costs that are incurred before the applicant has received final approval for funding support.

Additionally, only those expenses which have been pre-approved and which are eligible under the guidelines will be eligible for reimbursement.

Employees are encouraged to access online training when feasible.

Employees should ask for government rates when making travel arrangements and must use the most reasonable or economical means of travel possible.

Upon receipt of paid invoices/receipts for any eligible costs under TASP, the applicant will be reimbursed by cheque through the program within 30 days. Alternatively the employee's department/authority will be reimbursed, if the department/authority pre-pays costs on behalf of the employee.

All receipts must be received by the TASP Coordinator no later than March 15th of the fiscal year in question. No retroactive payments will be made. Applicants approved for funding for the next fiscal year may submit receipts after March 15th, although funding will come from the next year's funding.

9. Completion of Academic/ Technical Training

The employee is expected to provide proof of graduation at the end of their academic studies or technical training. Failure to do so may result in the applicant being required to repay any monies provided as financial assistance through TASP.

10. For More Information

For information on TASP, please contact the TASP Coordinator at hssprograms@gov.nt.ca.