

Targeted Academic Support Program Guidelines 2020/21

1. Program Description

The Targeted Academic Support Program (TASP) provides financial support of up to \$50,000 to health and social services practitioners 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 Tłı̄ch̄o 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 practitioners 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.

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.

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.

All submissions for TASP for the 2020/2021 fiscal year must be for online and/or distance education study. Special approvals are required if you are seeking to travel as part of your training, if for any reason you are attending a program that requires travel, please ensure you have received approval for leave from your supervisor prior to submitting your application.

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 2020/21 application submissions is September 18, 2020. 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.

The TASP application and other forms can be found at [OurNTHSSA](#) and at [PracticeNWT](#).

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 based on:

- the training addressing an existing or future gap within the HSS System;
- the training expands the scope of practice;
- the training promotes mobility between positions.

Determinations will be made by a selection committee comprised of HSS System senior management.

7. Applicants Approved for Funding

If an applicant is approved for TASP funding:

- The applicant and their direct supervisor will be contacted by email by the TASP Coordinator, notifying them of conditional funding approval.
- The employee must provide proof of official acceptance and confirmation of enrolment into the academic institution to the TASP Coordinator.
- The employee must discuss leave options with their supervisor and be approved for leave if leave is required.
- The employee must sign a funding support agreement and return of service (ROS) agreement that outlines the terms and conditions of the funding. One month of return service is required for each \$1,000 committed.
- A Final Letter of Approval is issued.
- 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.

Where an employee's projected budget is anticipated to change, the employee will

notify TASP Coordinator immediately to discuss options.

TASP recipients are responsible for ensuring their contact and personal information is up-to-date in SAM and the TASP files. 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
- Resources(texts, ebooks, printing)
- Travel and residency costs may be funded where special approval has been granted.
 - Travel (for exams, training or practicum,
 - Residency costs (maximum of \$200 per night) associated with mandatory practicums.

Costs not eligible for TASP funding include application fees, student fees, salary/wages, operational coverage (back-fill costs), travel home for school breaks, housing, per diems, child care expenses, parking fees, gas, car rental fees, and/or any costs that are incurred prior to the application submission.

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

Special approval may be granted for employees to attend practicums and placements. TASP is not considered duty travel. A Travel Authorization is not required. Employees should ask for government rates when making travel arrangements and must use the most reasonable or economical means of travel possible.

NTHSSA Employees:

Within 10 working days of completing the approved PDI activity or resource purchase, the applicant will submit a completed SAM generated expense claim form with supporting receipts through SAM using the following account coding string:

GL Unit: NTH01 Org: 12026 Account: 52111 Fund: 01 Area: 1A Program: 10026

The expense claim process can be found at [OurNTHSSA](#) or [PracticeNWT](#).

DHSS, HRHSSA & TCSA Employees:

Complete the expense report form and submit to the TASP Coordinator.

Reimbursement is expected by cheque or direct deposit within 30 days of submission of the expenses.

Alternatively the employee's department/authority will be reimbursed, if the department/authority pre-pays costs on behalf of the employee.

All receipts are to be submitted in SAM or to the TASP Coordinator no later than April 05. New Year funds after April 05 cannot be used to reimburse training costs from the prior fiscal year.

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.