VIRGINIA HEALTH WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Virginia Nursing Workforce Center

Nurse Midwife Scholarship

for Nurse Midwife Students

PROGRAM GUIDELINES

VHWDA is dedicated to ensuring that Virginia has an optimal healthcare workforce through research, education, and collaboration.

Administered by

Virginia Nursing Workforce Center (VNWC)

A center established by the Virginia Health Workforce Development Authority (VHWDA).

Authority website: www.vhwda.org

Program applications: www.vanwc.org

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Table of Contents

1. About the Program 3
2. Definitions 3
3. Eligibility Requirements 3
4. Award & Disbursement 3
5. Service Obligation 4
6. Application Cycle 4
7. How to Apply 4
8. Required Documentation 5
9. Payment Schedule 5
10. Tax Responsibility 5
11. Data and Workforce Collection 6
12. Default, Audit, and Recoupment 6
13. Contact 6

1. About the Program

Virginia's rural and underserved communities need more nurse midwives who can deliver safe, high-quality maternal and women's health care where it is needed most. The Nurse Midwife Scholarship helps offset education costs for Virginia residents accepted into or enrolled in an accredited nurse midwife program approved by the Virginia Board of Nursing.

The Program supports full-time and part-time students pursuing graduate nurse midwife education. Award amounts are based on enrollment status: up to $3,500 for part-time enrollment and up to $7,000 for full-time enrollment per award year.

In exchange for the award, recipients commit to full-time practice as nurse midwives in a Virginia Medically Underserved Area or Health Professional Shortage Area. Through maternal and women's health care, community service, mentorship, and education, recipients help address disparities and strengthen Virginia's nursing workforce.

Awards are limited to available funding. Submitting an application does not guarantee an award.

2. Definitions

Nurse Midwife As defined by§ 54.1-2957 of the Code of Virginia, advanced practice registered nurse means a certified nurse midwife, certified registered nurse anesthetist, clinical nurse specialist, or nurse practitioner who is jointly licensed by the Boards of Medicine and Nursing, has completed an advanced graduate-level education program in a specialty category of nursing, and has passed a national certifying examination for that specialty.

Registered Nurse (RN) As defined in § 54.1-3000 of the Code of Virginia, which uses the term professional nurse, a registered nurse is a person who has completed an approved professional nursing education program and holds a current license in good standing to practice professional nursing issued by the Virginia Board of Nursing.

Approved Program As established under 18VAC90-30-10 of the Code of Virginia, approved program means an advanced practice registered nurse education program that is accredited by the Council on Accreditation of Nurse Anesthesia Educational Programs/Schools, American College of Nurse Midwives, Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education, or the National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission or is offered by a school of nursing or jointly offered by a school of medicine and a school of nursing that grant a graduate degree in nursing and that hold a national accreditation acceptable to the boards

Unencumbered License As defined in § 54.1-3040.2 in the Code of Virginia, a license that is active and free of any disciplinary restrictions, suspensions, probation, or other limitations on the ability to practice. Encumbrance means a revocation or suspension of, or any limitation on, the full and unrestricted practice of nursing imposed by a licensing board

Qualifying Service Area and Facility A practice site located in a Virginia Medically Underserved Area or Health Professional Shortage Area that accepts Medicare, Medicaid, or other healthcare reimbursement programs.

Service Obligation The recipient's commitment to complete one year of full-time practice as a nurse practitioner in a qualifying Virginia service area for each award year, together with the certification, authorization, employment, and verification requirements described in these guidelines and the incentive contract.

3. Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible, an applicant must:

- Have been a resident of Virginia for at least one year
- Hold a current, unencumbered Virginia registered nurse license
- Be accepted into or enrolled, full-time or part-time, in an accredited nurse midwife program approved by the Virginia Board of Nursing
- Maintain a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.0 on a 4.00 scale
- Have a valid Social Security Number (required for payment and tax reporting)
- Applicant agrees to the service obligation: one year of full-time practice as a nurse midwife in a Virginia Medically Underserved Area or Health Professional Shortage Area for each award year (described in Section 5)

Verification of enrollment status, a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0, and an active, unencumbered Virginia RN license are required prior to disbursement of funds

4. Award & Disbursement

The Nurse Midwife Scholarship provides up to $3,500 for part-time enrollment and up to $7,000 for full-time enrollment per award year, paid directly to the recipient.

Funds are disbursed after the recipient has signed the incentive contract and submitted proof of payment for nurse midwife coursework, or a current bill for that coursework. Enrollment status, academic eligibility, and the required Virginia RN license are verified prior to disbursement. Awards are paid subject to the availability of program funds and are not guaranteed.

5. Service Obligation

For each award year, the recipient agrees to complete one year of full-time practice as a nurse midwife in a Virginia Medically Underserved Area or Health Professional Shortage Area. By accepting the award, the recipient agrees to:

- Successfully complete the nurse midwife education program.
- Obtain and maintain national certification and authorization to practice as a nurse midwife in good standing with the Virginia Board of Nursing.
- Begin full-time qualifying practice and submit proof of employment to the Virginia Nursing Workforce Center (VNWC) within 30 days of passing the national nurse midwife certification examination.
- Practice at a facility that accepts Medicare, Medicaid, or other healthcare reimbursement programs.

The recipient must submit verification of employment to VNWC every six months until the service obligation is complete and notify VNWC within 30 days of changes to name, address, or employment. Failure to obtain certification or authorization, begin or maintain qualifying practice, or provide required verification may result in default and repayment obligations under the incentive contract.

6. Application Cycle

Each year, applications are not accepted and funds are not disbursed from June 1 through June 30. The application period reopens on July 1. For the Program's first year of operation under the Virginia Nursing Workforce Center, the application period opens August 1. In each following year, it reopens July 1 as described above.

Applicants are encouraged to apply early in the application period to allow time for review and processing.

7. How to Apply

Applications are submitted online at www.vanwc.org. The application is completed in a single online session and cannot be saved and resumed later, so applicants should gather all required documents before beginning. Applications that are incomplete or missing required documentation cannot be processed.

1. Confirm you meet the eligibility requirements in Section 3.
2. Gather your required documents (see Section 8): a valid Virginia ID, proof of enrollment, an unofficial transcript, applicable financial aid documentation, a 1,000-word essay, three letters of recommendation, and proof of payment or a current bill.
3. Complete the online application and upload all required documents.
4. Submit your application. If approved, you will sign an incentive contract and submit proof of payment or a current bill.
5. Your enrollment status, academic eligibility, and Virginia RN license are verified before funds are disbursed.

8. Required Documentation

The following documents are required. Unless noted, files must be PDF with a maximum size of 10 MB.

- **Proof of Virginia residency and identity.** A valid Virginia driver's license or state-issued ID.
- **Proof of enrollment.** Acceptance or current enrollment in an accredited nurse midwife program approved by the Virginia Board of Nursing. Acceptable documents include an acceptance or enrollment letter, class schedule or registration confirmation, enrollment verification from the registrar, or a tuition or course invoice showing the applicant's name and program.
- **Unofficial transcript.** An unofficial transcript showing a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0 on a 4.00 scale.
- **Financial aid documentation.** If the applicant receives financial aid, a FAFSA Submission Summary showing the Student Aid Index (SAI), or a financial aid award letter from the school's financial aid office. This documentation is required for submission when applicable.
- **Essay.** A typed essay of at least 1,000 words, in a standard 12-point font, double-spaced. The essay must address the applicant's goals as a nurse midwife, maternal health disparities, access to maternal and women's health care, and experiences that shaped their commitment to women's health.
- **Three letters of recommendation.** Each letter must be on official letterhead, signed, and include the recommender's name, title, organization, address, and contact information. One letter must come from the program chair, dean, or director; one from a faculty member; and one from a current or former employer or supervisor. Personal letters are not accepted.
- **Proof of payment.** Proof of payment for nurse midwife coursework, or a current bill for that coursework.

An application cannot be submitted or processed unless the required documents are included and are the correct documentation.

9. Payment Schedule

Payment is issued after a complete application has been received, processed, and approved, and after the recipient has signed the scholarship contract, submitted proof of payment or a current bill, and had enrollment status, academic eligibility, and the Virginia RN license verified. Once these steps are complete, recipients should allow up to 30 days for payment to be issued.

Payment cannot be issued until all required documentation is complete and accurate. Delays in providing required items, including a completed W-9 or other tax documentation or current contact information, will

delay the processing and payment of an award. Awards are paid subject to the availability of program funds and are not guaranteed. No funds are disbursed during the closed period described in Section 6.

A valid Social Security Number is required for payment and tax reporting. Approved recipients will be asked to provide a completed W-9 through a secure process to set up payment. The Social Security Number is not collected on the application.

10. Tax Responsibility

Scholarship funds may be considered taxable income under federal and state law. It is the recipient's responsibility to understand and comply with any applicable tax reporting requirements associated with receiving scholarship funds.

The Virginia Nursing Workforce Center, a center established by the Virginia Health Workforce Development Authority (VHWDA), does not withhold taxes from scholarship payments and will issue any required tax documentation in accordance with applicable laws. Recipients are encouraged to consult a tax professional if they have questions about how scholarship funds may affect their personal tax liabilities under both state and federal law.

11. Data and Workforce Collection

The Virginia Nursing Workforce Center collects information through this Program to understand and strengthen Virginia's nursing workforce. Certain questions are optional, including demographic background, first-generation student status, prior receipt of a Virginia nursing scholarship or incentive, and current employment. Responses to optional questions do not affect eligibility or the award and are used only for reporting and workforce planning. All information is handled in accordance with applicable privacy laws, and results are generally reported in aggregate.

12. Default, Audit, and Recoupment

Applications are subject to audit. Recipients should retain documentation supporting their application and service obligation and provide it upon request. Any award paid based on inaccurate or misrepresented information may be subject to repayment (recoupment). Inaccurate or incomplete applications will be denied.

A recipient who does not begin or maintain qualifying practice, does not obtain or maintain national certification and authorization to practice, or does not provide required verification within the stated timeframes will be in default and may be required to repay the award, as set out in the incentive contract.

13. Contact

For questions about the Nurse Midwife Scholarship, contact the Virginia Nursing Workforce Center, a center established by the Virginia Health Workforce Development Authority. Learn more at www.vhwda.org and apply at www.vanwc.org.