

Chapter 28B.121 RCW
FOOD ANIMAL VETERINARIAN CONDITIONAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

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RCW 28B.121.005 Findings—Intent. The legislature finds that there is a critical shortage of food animal veterinarians particularly in rural areas of the state. The legislature finds that among the factors contributing to this shortage is the need to repay student loans that are taken out to pay for an extensive and high-cost education. To pay these student loans, licensed graduates currently find it necessary to take higher paying positions that provide service to companion and small animals.

The legislature finds that the livestock industry provides a critical component of the food supply. Providing adequate animal health and disease diagnostic services is of high importance not only to protect animal health, but also for the protection of our food supply, the protection of public health from potential effects of contagious diseases, and to provide an essential disease detection and response capability.

The legislature intends to increase the supply of food animal veterinarians by providing incentives to graduates of Washington State University college of veterinary medicine to focus on food animal health services to address this critical shortage. [2008 c 208 s 1.]

RCW 28B.121.010 Definitions. The definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(1) "College" means the Washington State University college of veterinary medicine.

(2) "Conditional scholarship" means a loan that is forgiven in whole or in part if the recipient renders service as a food animal veterinarian in this state.

(3) "Eligible student" means a student who is registered for at least six credit hours or the equivalent, is making satisfactory academic progress as defined by the college, has declared veterinary medicine for his or her major, and has a declared intention to practice veterinary medicine with an emphasis in food animal medicine in the state of Washington.

(4) "Food animal" means any species commonly recognized as livestock including, but not limited to, poultry, cattle, swine, and sheep.

(5) "Food animal veterinarian" means a veterinarian licensed and registered under chapter 18.92 RCW and engaged in general and food

animal practice as a primary specialty, who has at least fifty percent of his or her practice time devoted to large production animal veterinary practice.

(6) "Forgiven" or "to forgive" or "forgiveness" means to practice veterinary medicine with an emphasis in food animal medicine in the state of Washington in lieu of monetary repayment.

(7) "Participant" means an eligible student who has received a conditional scholarship under this chapter.

(8) "Satisfied" means paid-in-full.

(9) "University" means Washington State University. [2008 c 208 s 2.]

RCW 28B.121.020 Program established. The food animal veterinarian conditional scholarship program is established. The program shall be administered by the university. In administering the program, the university has the following powers and duties:

(1) To select, in consultation with the college, up to two students each year to receive conditional scholarships;

(2) To adopt necessary rules and guidelines;

(3) To publicize the program;

(4) To collect and manage repayments from students who do not meet their obligations under this chapter; and

(5) To solicit and accept grants and donations from public and private sources for the program. [2008 c 208 s 3.]

RCW 28B.121.030 Selection of participants—Selection committee—Selection criteria. (1) The university shall select participants based on an application process conducted by the university.

(2) The university shall establish a selection committee for screening and selecting recipients of the conditional scholarships. The selection committee shall include at least two representatives from the college, at least one of whom is a faculty member teaching in food animal veterinary medicine, and at least one representative from the beef, dairy, or sheep industry.

(3) The selection criteria shall emphasize factors demonstrating a sustained interest in food animals and serving the needs of Washington's agricultural communities. The criteria shall also take into account the need for food animal veterinarians in diverse areas of the state and allocate funds in a manner designed to represent a cross section of geographic locations. [2008 c 208 s 4.]

RCW 28B.121.040 Eligibility. To remain an eligible student and receive continuing disbursements under the program, a participant must be considered by the college to be making satisfactory academic progress. [2008 c 208 s 5.]

RCW 28B.121.050 Award of scholarships—Amount—Duration. The university may award conditional scholarships to eligible students from the funds appropriated to the university for this purpose, or from any private donations, or any other funds given to the university for this program. The amount of the conditional scholarship awarded an individual may not exceed the amount of resident tuition and fees at

the college, as well as the cost of room, board, laboratory fees and supplies, and books, incurred by an eligible student and approved by a financial aid administrator at the university. Participants are eligible to receive conditional scholarships for a maximum of five years. [2008 c 208 s 6.]

RCW 28B.121.060 Repayment obligation—Rules. (1) A participant in the conditional scholarship program incurs an obligation to repay the conditional scholarship, with interest, unless he or she is employed as a food animal veterinarian in Washington state for each year of scholarship received, under rules adopted by the university.

(2) The interest rate shall be determined annually by the university.

(3) The minimum payment shall be set by the university. The maximum period for repayment is ten years, with payments of principal and interest accruing quarterly commencing six months from the date the participant completes or discontinues the course of study, including any internship or residency in food animal medicine and surgery. Provisions for deferral of payment shall be determined by the university.

(4) The entire principal and interest of each payment shall be forgiven for each payment period in which the participant is employed as a food animal veterinarian in this state until the entire repayment obligation is satisfied. Should the participant cease to be employed as a food animal veterinarian in this state before the participant's repayment obligation is completed, payments on the unsatisfied portion of the principal and interest shall begin the next payment period and continue until the remainder of the participant's repayment obligation is satisfied.

(5) The university is responsible for collection of repayments made under this section and shall exercise due diligence in such collection, maintaining all necessary records to ensure that maximum repayments are made. Collection and servicing of repayments under this section shall be pursued using the full extent of the law, including wage garnishment if necessary. The university is responsible to forgive all or parts of such repayments under the criteria established in this section and shall maintain all necessary records of forgiven payments.

(6) Receipts from the payment of principal or interest or any other subsidies to which the university as administrator is entitled, that are paid by or on behalf of participants under this section, shall be deposited in the food animal veterinarian conditional scholarship account and shall be used to cover the costs of granting the conditional scholarships, maintaining necessary records, and making collections under subsection (5) of this section. The university shall maintain accurate records of these costs, and all receipts beyond those necessary to pay such costs shall be used to grant conditional scholarships to eligible students.

(7) The university shall adopt rules to define the terms of repayment, including applicable interest rates, fees, and deferments. [2008 c 208 s 7.]

RCW 28B.121.070 Food animal veterinarian conditional scholarship account. (1) The food animal veterinarian conditional scholarship

account is created in the custody of the state treasurer. No appropriation is required for expenditures of funds from the account. The account is not subject to allotment procedures under chapter 43.88 RCW except for moneys used for program administration.

(2) The university shall deposit into the account all moneys received for the program. The account shall be self-sustaining and consist of funds appropriated by the legislature for the food animal veterinarian conditional scholarship program, private contributions to the program, and receipts from participant repayments.

(3) Expenditures from the account may be used solely for conditional scholarships to participants in the program established by this chapter and costs associated with program administration by the university.

(4) Disbursements from the account may be made only on the authorization of the university. [2008 c 208 s 8.]