

**[Mont. Code Ann. § 20-26-1503.]**

§ 20-26-1503. Use of incentive for physicians practicing in rural areas or medically underserved areas or for underserved populations state special revenue account: Health Care Provider Incentive Programs

- (1) The state special revenue account established in 20-26-1501 is statutorily appropriated, as provided in 17-7-502, to the board of regents to be used to pay:
- (a) the educational debts of physicians who practice in rural areas or medically underserved areas or for medically underserved populations of the state that demonstrate a need for assistance in physician recruitment; and
  - (b) the expenses of administering the incentive program. The expenses of administering the program may not exceed 10% of the annual fees assessed pursuant to 20-26-1502.
- (2) The board of regents shall establish procedures for determining rural areas and medically underserved areas or populations of the state that qualify for assistance in physician recruitment. An eligible area or eligible population must demonstrate that a physician shortage exists or that the area or population has been unsuccessful in recruiting physicians in other ways.
- (3) A physician from an area or serving a population determined to be eligible under subsection (2) may apply to the board of regents for payment of an educational debt directly related to a professional school, as provided in subsection (4). Physicians who have paid the fee authorized in 20-25-810 or 20-26-1502 must be given a preference over other applicants. To receive the educational debt payments, the physician shall sign an annual contract with the board of regents. The contract must provide that the physician is liable for the payments if the physician ceases to practice in the eligible area or serve the eligible population during the contract period.
- (4) The maximum amount of educational debt payment that a physician practicing in a rural area or medically underserved area or for a medically underserved population may receive is \$150,000 over a 5-year period or a proportionally reduced amount for a shorter period.
- (5) The amount contractually committed in a year may not exceed the annual amount deposited in the state special revenue account established in 20-26-1501.