



**American Recovery and
Reinvestment Act
Health Professions Programs**

**Public Health Traineeship
Questions and Answers**

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The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009

What is The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009?

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA or Recovery Act), was signed into law February 17, 2009.

The Recovery Act was enacted to:

- preserve and create jobs;
- promote economic recovery;
- help people most impacted by the recession;
- increase economic efficiency by investing in technological advances in science and health;
- promote long-term economic benefits by investing in transportation, environmental protection and other infrastructure; and
- preserve essential services of States and local governments.

Why is the PHT program funded under the ARRA?

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 provides \$500 million to address health professions workforce shortages.

The objective of the Health Professions Programs as supported through ARRA is to address health professions workforce shortages. Programs funded promote training in primary care, nursing and public health, help educational institutions, and increase the diversity of the health professions workforce. These programs will also help disadvantaged individuals who might otherwise have to delay their entry into, or drop out of, training programs or teaching.

Several types of activities will be funded with ARRA dollars, including direct student support, loan repayment, training program infrastructure, and equipment purchases for health professions training programs. The grant programs funded under ARRA will help increase the diversity of students entering health professions programs, support the training of disadvantaged students, provide training in primary care disciplines, and improve training programs by providing better access to equipment.

Public Health Traineeships are grants awarded by formula that provide Federal support to address the educational needs of the public health workforce who are pursuing a specific course of study such as epidemiology, environmental health, and maternal child health. In a December 2008 policy brief entitled “Confronting the Public Health Workforce Crises,” the Association of Schools of Public Health reported that the United States is approaching a public health workforce crisis. It is projected that by 2020, the nation will be facing a shortfall of more than 250,000 public health workers. Shortages of public health physicians, public health nurses, epidemiologists, health care educators, and administrators are anticipated. It is anticipated that over the next 11 years, schools of public health would have to train three times the current number of graduates to meet projected needs.

The PHT program is receiving approximately \$3 million dollars in ARRA-PHT funds in FY 2009.

Where can I learn more about the ARRA?

Additional information on the Recovery Act can be found at <http://www.recovery.gov>. Information on activities related to the Recovery Act at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) can be accessed at <http://www.hhs.gov/recovery>.

Purpose

What is the purpose of the ARRA-PHT funding opportunity?

The purpose of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (Recovery Act or ARRA) Public Health Traineeships (PHT) funding is to provide grants to accredited schools of public health, and to other public or nonprofit private institutions accredited for the provision of graduate or specialized training in public health, to augment the amount of traineeships funds available to students pursuing a graduate degree in public health. Funds will be directed at the public health fields where there is a severe shortage of health professionals. These include epidemiology, environmental health, maternal and child health, toxicology, nutrition, and biostatistics.

Summary of Funding

How do schools apply for ARRA-PHT funds?

The FY 2009 ARRA-PHT competition is complete. Grant announcement HRSA-09-201 closed on April 20, 2009 for the PHT program. Successful applicants from the competition will be given the opportunity to apply for ARRA-PHT funds.

If a school does not receive ARRA-PHT funds in 2009, will they have an opportunity to compete for ARRA-PHT funding in 2010?

No, additional ARRA-PHT funds will not be available and are one-time funding only. In FY 2010 eligible schools will only have the opportunity to apply and compete for regular appropriation funding. Eligible applicants are accredited collegiate schools of public health and/or other public or nonprofit private entities including faith-based and community-based organizations by the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH).

When will the grant be awarded?

ARRA PHT funds will be awarded in September.

Can ARRA-PHT funding be used to cover costs incurred prior to the award date?

In general, these grants are intended to support costs incurred after the ARRA- PHT project start date. ARRA- PHT funds cannot be used to support any costs incurred prior to February 17, 2009 (the date the Recovery Act was signed). Any costs incurred before receipt of the Notice Grant Award (NGA) are at the recipient's risk.

Is there any formal notification of an ARRA-PHT award from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)?

Yes. HRSA will electronically transmit a formal notification in the form of a Notice of Grant Award (NGA) that will be provided to the ARRA-PHT applicant organization/institution.

What is the timeline for grantees to use the ARRA-PHT funds?

The grantee is expected to use the ARRA-PHT funds within the 3 year project period. Grantees will have the option of expending all allocated ARR-PHT funds in one, two, or three years. We will close-out the ARRA-PHT grants for schools that expend all their funds prior to the end of the formal project period based on that earlier date.

Responsible use of funds will be further outlined on the Notice of Grant Award under Terms and Conditions.

Are schools permitted to carryover unused ARRA-PHT funds?

No. ARRA-PHT funds must be used within the specified project period.

Student Support

Are schools permitted to make regularly appropriated PHT funds and ARRA PHT funds available to the same student?

No. ARRA-PHT funds must be used to support students other than those that receive regular PHT support.

Are schools permitted to make ARRA-PHT traineeships available to students for more than one year?

Yes. Schools are able to make ARRA-PHT traineeships available to students for 1-3 years.

May a student who received ARRA-PHT funds in FY2009 receive PHT regularly appropriated funds in FY2010, or vice versa?

Yes. One single student may receive regularly appropriated PHT funds in one academic year and ARRA-PHT funding in another year, as long as the ARRA and non-ARRA funds are from different grant budget periods. However, we encourage you to award the same student ARRA-PHT funds for more than one year, to have a greater impact on the ARRA-PHT outcome measures.

Are schools permitted to make ARRA-PHT traineeships available to continuing and new PHT students?

Yes. Schools can make ARRA-PHT traineeship monies available to any new and continuing student. We encourage you to award traineeship funds to students expected to graduate within the project period, to have a greater impact on the ARRA-PHT outcome measures.

Are schools permitted to make ARRA-PHT traineeships available to part-time students?

Yes. Part-time trainees may receive tuition and fees , but are not authorized to receive stipends.

Eligible Use of Funds

Are there certain eligibility requirements for use of these funds?

ARRA-PHT funds cannot be used to support students who are already participating in the PHT and receiving support from the appropriated PHT funds.

Costs incurred prior to February 17, 2009 are unallowable costs under ARRA-PHT.

How can I track and separate ARRA-PHT versus non-ARRA-PHT funds?

To facilitate monitoring and tracking of ARRA-PHT funds from regular PHT funds, ARRA-PHT grants will be provided under a unique grant number and Payment Management System (PMS) sub-account.

How will ARRA-PHT funding be delivered to grantees?

Grantees will receive ARRA-PHT funds much in the same way schools get their current PHT funding via the PMS; a NGA will be issued under a different grant number. For information regarding the drawdown of your awarded funds, contact your account representative at 1-877-614-5533 or <http://www.dpm.psc.gov/>. Grantees should drawdown funds based on the needs of the ARRA-PHT project.

How will applications be submitted?

Applications were submitted as a result of the competitive funding opportunity HRSA-09-201. This opportunity closed on April 20, 2009. No further applications are being accepted for 2009 ARRA-PHT funding opportunities. Applicants will be asked, however, to report on the number of students these funds will support.

If I decline receiving ARRA funds will it affect my regular PHT award?

No. Declining ARRA funds will have no affect on your regular PHT award.

Reporting

What are the reporting requirements for Recovery Act funding?

Grantees must continue to comply with the usual and customary reporting requirements of the PHT Program, in addition to specific Recovery Act reporting. Recipients of Recovery Act funding will be required to provide periodic reports to ensure that funds are used for authorized purposes and instances of fraud, waste, error, and abuse are mitigated. Recovery Act funds can be used in conjunction with other funding as necessary to complete projects, but tracking and reporting must be separate to meet the reporting requirements of the Recovery Act. Additional information is available at http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/recovery_default/.

Generally, as required by the Recovery Act, recipients are required to report the following information to www.FederalReporting.gov 10 days after the end of each calendar quarter; submission dates will be July 10, October 10, January 10, and April 10.

These reports will include the following data elements, as prescribed by the Recovery Act:

1. The total amount of Recovery Act funds.
2. The amount of Recovery Act funds received that were obligated and expended to projects or activities. This reporting will also include unobligated allotment balances to facilitate reconciliations.
3. A detailed list of all projects or activities for which Recovery Act funds were obligated and expended, including
 - a. The name of the project or activity;
 - b. A description of the project or activity;
 - c. An evaluation of the completion status of the project or activity;
 - d. An estimate of the number of jobs created and the number of jobs retained by the project or activity.
4. Detailed information on any subcontracts or subgrants awarded by the recipient to include the data elements required to comply with the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 (P.L. 109-282), allowing aggregate reporting on awards below \$25,000 or to individuals, as prescribed by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

22. Where can I find out more information about the ARRA reporting requirements?

The OMB Section 1512 guidance for recipient reporting can be found at:

<http://www.recovery.gov/?q=node/579>.

In addition, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) prepared a series of webinars to train Federal Agencies and recipients of ARRA funding on how to comply with their reporting responsibilities. Links to the recorded webinars can be found at:

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/Recovery/WebinarTrainingMaterials/>.

Are schools required to submit both the PHT Performance Report and the ARRA-PHT quarterly reports?

Yes. The PHT-Performance Report is a standard annual reporting requirement for the regularly funded program. Similarly, the ARRA-PHT program has the requirement for an ARRA PHT-Performance Report in addition to the required ARRA specific reporting as described on the Recovery.gov web site. However, it is important to note that the Performance Report is an ANNUAL report while the additional ARRA reporting requirements are quarterly reporting.

What if a school has not been able to disburse traineeship funds by October 10, 2009 (first quarterly report due date)? Would it still have to submit a quarterly report?

Yes; this is a government-wide requirement. Schools are required to submit quarterly reports regardless of whether or not they have disbursed any funds. If no funds were disbursed prior to the first report, they would report zeroes.

Why is the ARRA-PHT required reporting scheduled quarterly rather than annually?

Quarterly reporting is stipulated for timely measure and transparency of the use and impact of ARRA-PHT funds.

Will the ARRA-PHT quarterly report be completed and submitted through the HRSA EHBs?

No. ARRA-PHT reports will be completed and submitted via a centralized system on www.FederalReporting.gov by no later than 10 days from the end of each quarter. This information will then be migrated for public access to the Recovery.gov website upon data quality review by the funding agency.

Are schools expected to create new jobs as a result of receiving ARRA-PHT funds?

ARRA-PHT funds are intended to enhance the regular PHT funding level to increase the number of eligible students pursuing a graduate degree in fields with severe shortage of health professionals, such as epidemiology, environmental health, toxicology, nutrition, biostatistics, and maternal and child health through the provision of tuition, fees, stipends and allowances.