



**Rural Clinician Credit Bank
Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)**

Part 1. Full Text of the Announcement

A. Program Description and Goals

The Rural Clinician Credit Bank supports recruitment and retention of talent by providing matching funds to help rural healthcare employers provide payments to eligible clinicians. Eligible staff receiving payments must sign a 5-year service commitment to support the development of a sustainable rural health care workforce. Rural healthcare providers shall request participation in this program through an open enrollment process. If selected, rural healthcare providers will execute a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement with LDH as a subrecipient of federal funding. Through this agreement, providers shall invoice the program for reimbursement of payments at an agreed upon rate after disbursement to eligible rural staff.

The Rural Clinician Credit Bank program seeks to:

- Strengthen workforce capacity in rural health care facilities.
- Improve retention of health care professionals in underserved rural areas.
- Offset financial burdens associated with recruitment and retention efforts by rural providers.
- Encourage sustainable, long-term workforce strategies for rural healthcare.

B. Financial Management and System of Internal Controls:

Funding for this opportunity is made available through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) Cooperative Agreement. All terms and conditions of the Cooperative Agreement for Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP) Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services that apply to the Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) also apply to subrecipients and subrecipient agreements awarded under this NOFO.

If selected for funding, the subrecipient must:

1. Establish and maintain effective internal control over the Federal award that provides reasonable assurance that the non-Federal entity is managing the Federal award in compliance with Federal statutes, regulations, and the terms and conditions of the Federal award.
2. Comply with applicable Federal statutes, regulations, and the terms and conditions of the Federal award.
3. Comply with applicable State statutes and regulations.
4. Take prompt action when instances of noncompliance are identified including noncompliance identified in audit findings.

C. Eligibility Information

1. *Eligible Use of Funds*

Matching financial support is available to assist with the recruitment and retention of healthcare staff in rural areas.

Types of financial support may include:

- **Sign-on bonuses** for newly hired rural clinicians
- **Retention bonuses** for clinicians in hard-to-fill or high-turnover positions
- **Relocation assistance**, stipends, or transition costs tied to recruitment
- **Training, certification, or skill development stipends** that directly support long-term retention or scope-of-practice expansion

This is a reimbursement-based program. Funds will be provided to subrecipients after payment is made to the staff and the required documentation is reviewed and approved by LDH.

To reduce risk, contracts executed to establish financial support should meet the following criteria:

- Be prospective and not retroactive
- Require a defined service term
- Include repayment provisions for early departure of the clinician
- Be formally adopted and agreed upon in writing with clear, objective criteria
- Demonstrate a direct public benefit (recruitment of medical staff to rural under-developed and under-represented areas)

2. Eligible Organizations

The following health care facilities/providers are eligible to apply for participation in this program:

- Rural health clinics (RHCs)
- Rural Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs)
- Critical access hospitals (CAHs)
- Small rural hospitals
- Rural Emergency Hospital
- Other facilities or providers in rural areas
 - Behavioral health or substance use treatment providers
 - Independent physicians/groups/practices
 - Dental offices
 - Pharmacies
 - Emergency Medical Services
 - Program for All Inclusive Care of the Elderly

Providers must qualify as rural under the Louisiana Rural Health Transformation Program definition and methodology. To confirm your agency is rural, visit [Louisiana Rural Health Transformation Funding Opportunities](#)

3. Eligible Staff Types

The following health care staff are eligible for participation in the Rural Clinician Credit Bank at the established maximum reimbursement amount based on staff type. Recommended financial support up to 25% of annual base salary.

Staff Type	Maximum Total Reimbursement Amount
Physicians (MD/DO)	\$75,000
Nurse Practitioners	\$50,000
Physician Assistants	\$50,000
Registered Nurses (RN)	\$30,000
Licensed Practical Nurses (LPN)	\$20,000
Certified Nursing Assistants / Nurse Aides	\$10,000
Mental & Behavioral Health Professionals	\$45,000
Dentists	\$60,000
Dental Hygienists	\$25,000
Allied Health Professionals	\$25,000
Paramedics / EMTs	\$20,000

4. Match Requirements

A cash match must be provided by the employer from resources other than Federal Funds. To promote sustainability, matching financial support will be reduced over the grant period in the following manner:

- RHTP Budget Years 1 and 2: Employer provides 25% of payment; RHTP provides 75%, up to the maximum reimbursement amount for clinician type
- RHTP Budget Years 3 and 4: Employer provides 50% of payment; RHTP provides 50%, up to the maximum reimbursement amount for clinician type
- RHTP Budget Year 5: Employer provides 75% of payment; RHTP provides 25%, up to the maximum reimbursement amount for clinician type

Providers may receive Rural Clinician Credit Bank support proportional to the clinician's rural Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) allocation. For clinicians practicing in both rural and non-rural settings, eligible reimbursement shall be calculated based on the percentage of total compensated hours worked in qualifying rural locations using the following formula: $\text{Rural FTE} = (\text{Hours Worked in Eligible Rural Setting} \div \text{Total Compensated Clinical Hours})$; for example, a clinician working 0.5 FTE in a rural setting and 0.5 FTE in an urban setting would be eligible for 50% of the applicable reimbursement amount.

D. Other Requirements

1. Participation Requirements

Employers participating in this program are required to comply with the following:

- Submit an initial application for participation in the program, including completion of a Statement of Work. See Appendix B. Statement of Work Requirements: Rural Clinician Credit Bank
- Participate in workforce reporting by sharing recruitment and hiring metrics, including time-to-hire from job posting to start date before and after implementation of the program, to evaluate impact on workforce access.
- Provide aggregate demographic and workforce profile data for hired staff, including education, training background, licensure, and relevant professional experience, with resumes/CVs available upon request or through approved review processes.
- Provide the organization's recruitment and retention plan.
- Execute a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement with the LDH that outlines conditions for participation, including remaining in the program throughout the 5-year grant period.
- Ensure clinician attestation to a 5-year service commitment and monitoring of compliance with the agreement.

- If staff does not meet the 5-year service commitment, collect the appropriate portion of the bonus and return the matching funds to the state.
 - Staff leaving service less than 2 years of signing must return 80% of the bonus
 - Staff leaving service between 2 – 3 years from signing must return 70% of bonus
 - Staff leaving service between 3 – 4 years from signing must return 60% of bonus
 - Staff leaving service between 4 – 5 years from signing must return 50% of bonus
- If staff transfers to another facility but continues working in a rural Louisiana location, the transferring facility must notify LDH of the transfer, and the incoming facility will be notified of the 5-year service commitment. The incoming facility will be responsible for reporting to LDH if the staff does not meet the commitment.
- May not subject participating clinicians to non-compete contractual limitations.
- Agree to comply with mandated state and federal audit requirements including Site reviews and random verification by LDH and monitoring entities, as required.
- Submit quarterly and annual reports to LDH that shall include a retention status report on all staff funded through the clinician credit program and reporting on the following Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), baseline year comparisons, and methodology used.

2. *Reimbursement Requirements*

Upon approval of the application, employers will receive a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement outlining the terms and conditions of the award.

Employers will be required to incur expenses before requesting matching funds. **After expenses are incurred**, reimbursement requests will be submitted to LDH via invoice.

Invoices must include the following:

- Proof of clinician hire or retention including signed 5-year service commitment agreement between clinician and employer
- Clinician demographics and proof of license/certification
- Proof of financial payment

LDH reserves the right to ask for additional clarification to confirm payment before reimbursement.

3. *Supplanting/Non-Supplanting*

Federal funds must be used to supplement (add to), enhance, or expand existing services for program activities and not replace those funds that have been appropriated

for the same purpose. A subrecipient may not use Federal grant funds to defray any costs that the recipient is already obligated to pay. The possibility of supplanting will be the subject of careful application review, possible pre-award review, post-award monitoring, and audit of any finding.

Subrecipients must disclose any existing or proposed federal, state, local, or private funding sources that support the same workforce recruitment or retention purpose as this program. LDH reserves the right to coordinate, reduce, or deny duplicate payments to prevent overlapping use of funds for the same position or incentive purpose.

E. Application and Submission Information

This opportunity operates on an open enrollment basis, meaning applications to participate in the program are accepted at any time. **To be considered for Year 1 Funds (August 1, 2026-September 30, 2027), applications must be received no later than June 25, 2026.**

May 15, 2026	Notice of Funding Opportunity Issued
May 22, 2026	Deadline to Submit Written Questions
May 29, 2026	Answers to Written Questions Posted
June 25, 2026	Application Submission Deadline for Year 1 Funds
June 25-July 15, 2026	Application Evaluation Period for Year 1 Funds
Early to Mid-July	Notice of Intent to Contract Announcements

Note: There will be opportunities for applicants awarded Year 1 funds to apply for continuation/additional incentive funds in future RHTP budget years. Year 1 funds awarded must be expended by September 30, 2027. Future year funds will be obligated annually.

Please apply for this NOFO at [Rural Clinician Credit Bank Application](#)

Employers will be required to provide the following information **AND** attach a Statement of Work (compliant with Appendix B. Statement of Work Requirements) and Projected Financial Support Schedule (See sample in Appendix C).

Information required for application:

- Organization Name
- Organization Type
- Program Contact Name
- Program Contact Phone Number
- Program Contact Email Address
- Physical Address, City, State, Zip Code

- Tax Identification Number
- Justification for Rural designation in alignment with the RHTP definition and methodology
- Program Name
- Brief Program Description
- Parishes Served

F. Required Registrations for Applicants

If chosen for award, all agencies will be required to provide the following documents:

- a. Federal Tax Identification Number
- b. IRS Form W-9 (Taxpayer Identification and Certification)
- c. Louisiana Vendor Profile Data Form. State of Louisiana Self-service Request for Vender <https://www.doa.la.gov/Pages/osrap/VendorPayments.aspx>
- d. Board Resolution designating signature authority (if applicable)
- e. Disclosure of Ownership from the Louisiana Secretary of State (if applicable)
- f. Applicable Louisiana Department of Health License (current and in good standing)
- g. SAM (System for Award Management) Number and current expiration date

G. Application Review Information and Notice of Award

Applications will be reviewed on a rolling, basis as funding remains available. Submission of an application does not guarantee funding, and awards will be based on program eligibility, completeness of application materials, availability of funds, demonstrated workforce need, rural impact, and alignment with program priorities.

Louisiana Department of Health may request additional information, clarifications, or supporting documentation during the application review process. Eligible applicants will receive a formal Notice of Intent to Contract outlining the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement process and requirements. LDH reserves the right to approve, partially fund, defer, or deny any application based on available resources and program considerations.

Appendix A.

Overview Information

Participating Organization: Louisiana Department of Health,
Office of Rural Health Transformation and Sustainability (LDH)
www.ldh.la.gov/page/rural-health-transformation-program

Funding Opportunity Title: Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP) Rural Clinician Credit Bank, Budget Year 1

Announcement Type: RHTP – New Grants

Federal Award Identification (CFDA) Number: RHTCMS332085

Federal Award Amount: RHTP Budget Year 1: \$208,374,447.57

Federal Period of Performance: 12/29/2025 through 10/30/2030
Project Periods are determined on a case-by-case basis

Funding Opportunity Purpose: The primary purpose of the Rural Clinician Credit Bank is to support recruitment and retention of talent in rural healthcare settings. This program is authorized by Section 71401 of Public Law 119-21

Application Types Accepted: New Applications

Due Dates: Open Enrollment,
Note: To be considered for Year 1 Funds (August 1, 2026-September 30, 2027), applications must be received no later than June 18, 2026.

Funds Available: RHTP Budget Year 1: \$5,630,000.00

Appendix B. Statement of Work Requirements

Formatting requirements:

- Font: Use Times New Roman or Arial, size 11 or 12-point font; 10-point font is considered acceptable for tables
- Margins: Maintain one-inch margins on all sides
- Line spacing: Use single-spaced or 1.5-spaced text
- Page numbers: Number all pages consecutively in the bottom right corner

Section I. Applicant Information: Include information on the applicant’s organization, physical location, number of rural residents served annually, services offered, and other relevant information.

Section II. Program Description: The program description should include:

- The employer’s current recruitment and retention strategy and how participation in the Rural Clinician Credit Bank will be integrated into this strategy.
- Recruitment and retention data should be provided as a baseline for Performance Metrics, including:
 - Current vacancies by clinician type
 - Current 1, 3 and 5 year retention rates
 - Current quarterly and annual turnover rates
 - Current benefits offered to staff
- A project plan detailing how financial support will be used strategically including projected staff hires, budget, retention strategies, and timelines.
- Description should include sustainability measures the employer will take to ensure outcomes can continue when grant funding is no longer available.

Section III. Performance Metrics & Outcomes: Proposals must clearly define performance metrics and the measurable outcomes expected to assess program success. Grantees will be required to report quarterly on progress to meet the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) as part of their reporting obligations:

- Retention Rate (Number of supported clinicians still employed at milestone date ÷ Total clinicians who received financial support in that cohort) × 100 Measure at 1, 3, and 5 years.
- Annual Recruitment Growth (Current year clinicians hired – Prior year clinicians hired) ÷ Prior year clinicians hired × 100

- Vacancy Rate $(\text{Number of vacant approved positions} \div \text{Total approved positions}) \times 100$
- Turnover Rate $(\text{Number of clinician separations during year} \div \text{Average filled clinician positions during year}) \times 100$
- Time-to-Hire Average number of days from job posting date to accepted offer/start date. Compare pre- and post-financial support.
- Patient Access Improvement Average days to next available appointment (new and established patients). Measure reduction over time.
- Continuity of Care $(\text{Number of patients seen by same clinician for follow-up visits} \div \text{Total eligible follow-up patients}) \times 100$
- ROI per Hire Total financial support dollars paid \div Number of clinicians recruited
- ROI per Retained Clinician Total financial support dollars paid \div Number of clinicians retained at 3 or 5 years

