



**Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Executive Office of Public Safety and Security  
Office of Grants and Research  
John R. Justice Student Loan Repayment Program**

## **Availability of Grant Funds - Frequently Asked Questions**

### **1. This Grant Program appears to be only for CPCS counsel that defend clients in criminal or delinquency cases.**

The John R. Justice Student Loan Repayment Program defines eligible applicants as:

- Prosecutor: an eligible attorney employed by a State or unit of local government who prosecutes criminal or juvenile delinquency cases at the State or local level; including supervision, education or training of other persons providing such representation. This includes prosecutors who are employed by one of the Commonwealth's District Attorneys' Offices or the Attorney General's Office.; OR
- Public Defender: an eligible attorney who:
  - a. is an employee of a State or unit of local government who provides legal representation to indigent persons in criminal or juvenile delinquency cases; including supervision, education or training of other persons providing such representation (includes public defenders employed by the Committee for Public Counsel Services or the Federal Public Defenders Office); or
  - b. is an employee of a nonprofit organization operating under a contract with Massachusetts or a local government, who provides legal representation to indigent persons in criminal or juvenile delinquency cases; including supervision, education or training of other persons providing such representation; or
  - c. is employed as a Federal defender attorney in a defender organization established pursuant to subsection (g) of section 3006A of title 18, United States Code that provides legal representation to indigent persons in criminal or juvenile delinquency cases.

### **2. I'm interested in applying for the student loan repayment program, but I'm not sure whether I'm eligible. Am I eligible as a public defender who represents indigent parties in care and protection cases in juvenile court, for Family Justice Advocates, which is a branch of Committee for Public Counsel Services (CPCS)?**

The current language within the grant posting defines eligible public defenders as an attorney who:

- a. is an employee of a State or unit of local government who provides legal representation to indigent persons in criminal or juvenile delinquency cases; including supervision, education or training of other persons providing such representation (includes public defenders employed by the Committee for Public Counsel Services or the Federal Public Defenders Office); or
- b. is an employee of a nonprofit organization operating under a contract with Massachusetts or a local government, who provides legal representation to indigent persons in criminal or juvenile delinquency cases; including supervision, education or training of other persons providing such representation; or

- c. is employed as a Federal defender attorney in a defender organization established pursuant to subsection (g) of section 3006A of title 18, United States Code that provides legal representation to indigent persons in criminal or juvenile delinquency cases.

**3. When completing the Attachment A, what would an applicant write for "Name of Institution?" Would this be the student loan servicer or the academic institution the loans came from?**

For Attachment A, applicants should list the name of the Loan Servicer along with the Loan Servicer's contact information (i.e. address/city/state).

**4. I am eligible to apply for this grant if I have only worked for an eligible government agency for 5 months?**

The current program defines an "eligible attorney", in part, as a full-time employee that has been employed full-time for at least 12 months (cumulatively) immediately preceding the date of application. We encourage the submission of an application so it may be properly reviewed by our office.

**5. If applying with two sets of eligible loans (i.e. one from law school and one from degrees received prior to law school), can a recipient designate that the grant award amount goes towards one of the loans and not the other? The reason behind this would be related to the progress made towards accruing eligible payments towards the PSLF program on the initial set of loans while just starting out on the law school set of loans. There is a greater chance that the initial set will be successfully be forgiven under PSLF.**

If the loans qualify under the outlined eligibility, recipients may designate that the award go towards a loan of their choosing.

Applicants should follow the instructions provided on Attachment A to provide additional details on all eligible student loans for which you seek assistance, in this section applicants may indicate their **top priority loan**.

**6. I have been a prosecutor for 15 years and I applied for loan forgiveness, but it is unclear with the recent legal battles if the loan balance will be forgiven. Would I still be eligible to apply for this program?**

Yes - if your status as an attorney currently meets the eligibility criteria you are eligible to apply for the program.