

Sign Up, Pay Down!
Recruiting Dentists to the Safety Net

Note: Applications are due by March 21, 2025.
[Click here](#) for an overview of this initiative and application.

Frequently Asked Questions

- **Q: What is a Dental Professional Shortage Area (DPSA) and how do I know if the practice for which we are recruiting a dentist is in one?**

A: A DPSA is a federally designated geographic area that has fewer dentists per capita than the federal standard. The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) and State Primary Care Offices work together using public, private, and state-provided data to determine when such a shortage qualifies for designation as a DPSA. Click [here](#) to see if your locality has a DPSA designation.

- **Q: Who is the applicant for this package? My organization, or the person we hire?**

A: Your organization is the applicant.

- **Q: If my organization is awarded *Sign Up, Pay Down!* funds, how and when will the payments be issued?**

VHCF will issue a check to your organization for the signing bonus so you can distribute it as negotiated in your contract with the new dentist. We recommend several payments stretched over the commitment period.

The funds for loan repayment will be provided by the Delta Dental of Virginia Foundation. Payments will be issued to the newly hired dentist at the end of each service year (*\$10,000 at the end of year one and \$10,000 at the end of year two*).

- **Q: What will be required of the dentist?**

A: The dentist receiving these funds will be required to provide dental services for at least two years at your dental safety net organization. Some SUPD recipient organizations have been able to negotiate a three-year service commitment.

- **Q: Are part-time dentists eligible for this initiative?**

A: No. This initiative is designed to help recruit full-time dentists to Virginia's dental safety net.

- **Q: Can we use the package to recruit dental hygienists or dental assistants, as well?**

A: No. While we understand there is a shortage of both, this initiative is targeted to dentists only. Delta Dental of Virginia Foundation offers student loan repayment for dental hygienists.

- **Q: If awarded funds, how long do we have to fill the dentist position?**

A: A contract with the new dentist should be fully executed within 4 months of award notification. If that does not occur, VHCF reserves the right to reallocate the SUPD funds from the initial awarded organization to another organization, which is recruiting a dentist.

- **Q: What will be the reporting requirements?**

A: Report requirements will be simple. At year-end, you will be asked to provide: when the dentist was hired, the number of patients and visits s/he treated, the payments made to the dentist in that year, and a brief description of the status of the dental practice operations (*any current wait list, staffing levels, etc.*).

**Other Questions? Great! We'd Love to Hear from You.
Send them to Tessa Ashoff @ tessa@vhcf.org.**