



COLORADO
Department of
Higher Education

Temporary Educator Loan Forgiveness Program



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What is the Temporary Loan Forgiveness Program?



During the 2022 legislative session, the General Assembly passed Senate Bill 22-1220 to address Colorado’s educator shortages by helping remove barriers to educator preparation. In April 2023 HB23-1001 expanded the legislation.

The law authorizes the Colorado Department of Higher Education to offer loan repayment assistance on qualified loans for licensed K-12 Colorado educators, principals, and special service providers, mainly for those who serve in rural and hard-to-fill positions in Colorado. In approving applications Colorado Licensed teachers and length of time employed under the license – beginning with those who have been employed the shortest amount of time if more applications are received than can be awarded.

Those who qualify can receive up to \$5,000 in loan forgiveness for a given year. The program is funded for two years. Individuals who continue to qualify may apply every year of the program for up to \$5,000 in loan forgiveness annually.

CURRENT PROGRAM

The application is Closed.

With limited funds, not every applicant will receive loan forgiveness.

Apply and link your loans through the tuition.io portal.

TIMELINE

Application is Closed.

Information will be updated on the [program website](#) as it becomes available.



WHO CAN APPLY?

PROGRAM QUALIFICATIONS:

- Must be an educator defined as teacher, principal, or special service provider in a qualified position.
- Qualified position is defined as a) hard-to-staff educator position in a [rural district or rural School](#), or in a [facility school](#) that is in a rural school district, identified by the department of education. b) A hard-to-staff educator position in a [content shortage area](#) in a Colorado public school, a school operated by a board of cooperative services, or a facility school (c) an educator position in a Colorado Public School, a school operated by a [school operated by a board of cooperative services](#), or a [facility school](#).
- Must have federal student loans in your name (some private loans may qualify upon review).



Educator Loan Forgiveness FAQ

GENERAL QUESTIONS

- What types of educators qualify for this program?
- What is the minimum number of years applicants must have taught in CO to qualify?
- How do I apply?
- What is the deadline to apply for this program?
- When will I be notified if I have received the award or not? If awarded, when will I receive it?
- How will the funds be distributed?
- Who gets priority for this program?
- Who is tuition.io?



LOANS

- What types of loans qualify for this program? Do the loans have to be from certain years?
- My total qualifying loans are about \$6,000, just a little above the \$5,000 award. My colleague owes \$4,000 total. Do we both qualify?
- What if my loan(s) are currently in default and/or garnishment? Am I still eligible for this program? I refinanced my loans under a private lender, do they still count as eligible loans?
- How much money can I get through the Temporary Educator Loan Forgiveness Program?
- Can I be awarded money from this program and another Loan Forgiveness program through the state in the same year?
- Is this Loan Forgiveness money considered taxable income?

WHAT IF?

- What if I didn't complete my studies in Colorado, would I still qualify if I currently work in Colorado?
- What if I graduated from a Colorado educator preparation program, but am contracted now to teach in a different state, am I eligible for this program?
- What if I receive the loan forgiveness award this year, am I eligible to keep receiving it in future years? Do I have to re-apply next year?
- What if I don't receive loan forgiveness this year, can I apply for next year?
- What if I am studying to be an K-12 Educator now? Am I eligible to receive this Ed Loan Forgiveness award?
- What if I only work part-time? Do I qualify for this program?
- What if I received previous loan forgiveness under another Colorado or federal program? Am I eligible to receive an award under this program?
- What if I am participating in a Federal Loan Forgiveness Program that requires monthly qualifying payments? Can I still participate in this program?

FAQ

GENERAL QUESTIONS

- **What types of educators qualify for this program?**
A teacher, principal or special service provider in a qualified position.
- **What is the minimum number of years applicants must have taught in CO to qualify?**
If more applications are received then can be approved licensed educators early in their career will be the priority.
- **How do I apply?**
Applications can be submitted at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/EdLoanForgive>



- **What is the deadline to apply for this program?**
The application is closed.
- **When will I be notified if I have received the award or not? If awarded, when will I receive it?**
Applications will be reviewed in November 2023.
- **How will the funds be distributed?**
If you are selected for this award, your award will be issued in 12 monthly disbursements.

This is ideal for people also participating in federally funded loan forgiveness programs, which require a specific number of qualifying monthly payments.

There will be a mid-year evaluation to be sure awardees still meet qualifications.

- **Who gets priority for this program?**
If more new participants apply than can be approved, then CDHE will use the following priority list:
All applicants with a [Federal Student Loan](#) (or approved private loan) will be qualified using the following priority list:
 1. First, CDHE will approve applicants who have contracted for a qualified position in a [rural district or rural School](#).
 2. Second, CDHE will approve applicants who have contracted for a qualified position in a [content shortage area](#).
 3. Third, CDHE will approve applicants who have contract for a qualified position in a Colorado Public School, A [school operated by a board of cooperative services](#) or a [facility school](#).
 4. In approving applications for each pool of candidates listed above CDHE will first consider Colorado Licensed teachers and length of time employed under the license – beginning with those who have been employed the shortest amount of time.



GENERAL QUESTIONS CONT..

- **Who is tuition.io?**
tuition.io is a vendor contracted with DHE that will administer student loan contributions on behalf of the Colorado Department of Higher Education. By logging on to the tuition.io website, you can link your student loans so awarded funds can be paid directly to the lender(s).

LOANS

- **What types of loans qualify for this program?**
Educational loans eligible for repayment:
 - Federal and/or private commercial loans that were taken out for education and expenses directly related to the discipline in which you're currently practicing.**Educational loans NOT eligible for loan repayment:**
 - Loans that were consolidated with any other type of debt or another person's debt.
 - Parent PLUS Loans.
 - Loans from a friend or family member.
- **Do the loans have to be from certain years?**
Qualifying loans are educational loans incurred while completing an educator preparation program, or a bachelor's or master's degree. They can be incurred from any particular year(s).
- **My total qualifying loans are about \$6,000, just a little above the \$5,000 award. My colleague owes \$4,000 total. Do we both qualify?**
Yes. The loan forgiveness program can pay up to \$5,000 towards a loan where more or less than \$5,000 is owed.
- **What if my loan(s) are currently in default and/or garnishment? Am I still eligible for this program?**
Yes.
- **I refinanced my loans under a private lender, do they still count as eligible loans?**
Some private loans are accepted upon review.

LOANS CONT..

- **How much money can I get through the Temporary Educator Loan Forgiveness Program?**
Qualified educators may receive up to \$5,000/year. The program is funded for two years. For example, you may be eligible for loan forgiveness of up to \$10,000 over the next two years.
- **Can I be awarded money from this program and another loan forgiveness program through the state in the same year?** Yes, however you may not be awarded money from two different Colorado-run loan forgiveness programs in the same month.
- **Is this Loan Forgiveness money considered taxable income?**
The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 temporarily modified the tax treatment of forgiven or discharged student loan debt for 2021 through 2025. In many cases, loan forgiveness is not considered taxable income during this time period. However, forgiven or discharged debt could be taxable in some states. Consult a tax professional with any questions.

WHAT IF?

- **What if I didn't complete my studies in Colorado, would I still qualify if I currently work in Colorado?**
Yes. You do not have to have completed your studies in the state of Colorado to qualify for this program.
- **What if I graduated from a Colorado educator preparation program, but am contracted now to teach in a different state, am I eligible for this program?**
No. Only applicants living and working in Colorado are eligible to receive a loan forgiveness award under this program.
- **What if I receive the \$5,000 loan forgiveness award this year, am I eligible to keep receiving it in future years? Do I have to reapply next year?**
Yes, you are eligible to receive up to two years of loan forgiveness awards of \$5,000/yr through this program, but you must submit a new application for consideration each academic year. Having received an award from this program in one year does not guarantee you will receive the award again in the subsequent years you apply.
- **What if I don't receive loan forgiveness this cycle, can I apply for a future cycle?**
Yes. If you are not selected as an awardee this cycle, you are encouraged to apply for the next cycle of funding.
- **What if I am doing an alternative educator preparation program now? Am I eligible to receive this Loan Forgiveness award?**
Applicants must be an educator: defined as teacher, principal, or special service provider in a qualified position and have a qualified [Federal Student Loan](#) or approved private loan. Qualified position is defined as a) hard-to-staff educator position in a rural district or rural school, or in facility school that is in a rural school district, identified by the department of education. b) A hard-to-staff educator position in a content shortage area in a Colorado public school, a school operated by a board of cooperative services, or a facility school (c) an educator position in a Colorado Public School, a school operated by a school operated by a cooperative service, or a facility school.
- **What if I only work part-time? Do I qualify for this program?**
Yes.
- **What if I received previous loan forgiveness under another Colorado or federal program? Am I eligible to receive an award under this program?**
Yes. If you have received other Colorado-sponsored or federal loan forgiveness awards in previous years, you are still eligible to apply for this program.
- **What if I am actively a part of another loan forgiveness program that requires paying monthly qualifying payments? Will this award pay out monthly if I need it to?**
Yes, you may participate in this program if you are already participating in a federal loan forgiveness program that requires qualifying monthly payments. Awards from this program will be distributed monthly. If the monthly award does not cover the minimum monthly payment to your lender, the awardee is responsible for the difference.



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CONTACT US

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<https://cdhe.colorado.gov/colorado-educator-loan-forgiveness>

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