Nursing Education Scholarship Program (NESP)

April 2023
Nursing Education Scholarship Program (NESP)

• As a result of recent legislation, administration of NESP was transitioned from the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) to the Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC) during the 2022-23 award year.

• To minimize disruptions to students and institutions, it was decided that IDPH would manage the application and awarding process for the 2022-23 award year, and transition to ISAC for the disbursement process.

• IDPH and ISAC have worked in partnership to build the needed systems to transfer required documentation and integrate program administration into ISAC processing.
  o Additional guidance and resources will be provided as these activities progress.
NESP - Overview

- The 2023 fiscal year, July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023, appropriation is $400,000,000

- The goal of the NESP Scholarship Program is to increase the number of nurses available for employment in Illinois

- Students pursuing a certificate in practical nursing, an associates degree in nursing, a hospital-based diploma in nursing or a bachelor’s or graduate degree in nursing are encouraged to apply

- Students who demonstrate the greatest financial need among qualified applicants, may be qualified to receive the Nursing Education Scholarship

- This scholarship provides financial aid anywhere from one to five years, based on the certificate, diploma, or degree being pursued

- Full-time students may receive a stipend
  - Part-time students are not eligible for a stipend
NESP - Overview

- If awarded, recipient must begin full- or part-time employment as a licensed practical or registered nurse in Illinois within six months of graduating and remain employed for a period equivalent to the educational time supported by the scholarship.

- The scholarship pays for coursework within the nursing curriculum.

- It does not pay for pre-requisite coursework.

- If a student terminates studies, or fails to become employed, they will be required to repay the full scholarship amount, plus seven-percent interest per year.

- Applicants who have other scholarships or loan funds that require a service commitment that prevents them from meeting the obligation requirements of the program are ineligible to receive scholarship funds.
NESP - Overview

• Stipend amount the student is eligible for will be sent directly to the student for each term
  o The Comptroller’s Office will check their Offset System to determine if the recipient has any outstanding debts to the state or a municipal/county unit of government
  o If so, the amount of this debt will be subtracted from the funds available to the student
  o For this reason, the stipend voucher is sent first so that the tuition payment is not adversely affected by this possible offset
  o Vouchers for tuition payments are forwarded to the Comptroller 7-10 days after stipend vouchers are sent

• Scholarship funds will be sent directly to the school
  o The check from the Comptroller’s office is made co-payable to the school and the student
NESP - Overview

- Colleges will utilize the GAP Access portal to administer 2023-24 NESP awards
- The 2023-24 application for this program was available on March 1, 2023
- For more program information: isac.org/isac-gift-assistance-programs/NESP/

Nursing Education Scholarship Program (NESP)

Below is information about the Nursing Education Scholarship Program (NESP), the administration of which is currently being transitioned from the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) to ISAC.

NOTE: This program is different from the Nurse Educator Scholarship Program, which is no longer funded and for which no new awarding will take place.

Program News
(last updated March 27, 2023)

- 2023-24 Application – 2023-24 applications due April 30
- 2022-23 Disbursement
- 2022-23 Application
- 2022-23 Program Funding

2023-24

Application

Students may access the NESP application via the Program Applications & Status Checks area of the ISAC Student Portal.

The NESP application period each year starts on March 1 and continues through April 30. To be considered for funds during the 2023-24 academic year, the NESP Application/Promissory Note/Grant Agreement must be submitted to ISAC on or before Sunday, April 30, 2023.
**Nursing Education Scholarship Program (NESP)**

The administration of NESP is being transitioned from the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) to ISAC during the 2022-23 academic year. Refer to the "Processing Updates" section below for information about the current status.

You may either scroll through this page, or click on any of the following links to go directly to a specific topic:

- **Program Description**
- **Eligibility**
- **Participating Schools**
- **How to Apply – Submit 2023-24 application by April 30**
- **Changes to Application Data**
- **How Funds Are Disbursed**
- **Processing Updates**

If you are pursuing a certificate in practical nursing, an associate degree in nursing, a hospital-based diploma in nursing or a bachelor's or graduate degree in nursing and demonstrate the greatest financial need among qualified students, you may be qualified to receive the Nursing Education Scholarship. If awarded, you must begin full- or part-time employment as a licensed practical or registered nurse in Illinois within six months of graduating, and remain employed for a period equivalent to the educational time supported by the scholarship. If you terminate studies, or fail to become employed, you will be required to repay the full scholarship amount, plus seven-percent interest per year.

The number of years for which you may receive funding from this program is based on the certificate, diploma, or degree being pursued.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Certificate, Diploma, or Degree Pursued</th>
<th>Maximum Years of Scholarship Assistance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Certificate in Practical Nursing</td>
<td>One Academic Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate Degree In Nursing</td>
<td>Two Academic Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospital-Based Diploma in Nursing</td>
<td>Three Academic Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baccalaureate Degree In Nursing</td>
<td>Four Academic Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Degree in Nursing</td>
<td>Five Academic Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Degree in Nursing to become a Nurse Educator</td>
<td>Three Academic Years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Processing Updates**

Note that ISAC routinely updates this section as new information becomes available. Check back periodically for the current processing status.

For the **2023-24 Academic Year**

(last updated March 1, 2023)

The 2023-24 NESP application is available online via the Paying For College area of the ISAC Student Portal.

To be considered for funds during the 2023-24 academic year, a Note/Grant Agreement must be submitted to ISAC on or before April 30.

ISAC will send immediate confirmation to your e-mail address received.

For the **2022-23 Academic Year**

(last updated March 1, 2023)

The administration of the NESP is being transitioned from the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) to ISAC. Ongoing work to build systems and fully implement the scholarship through the academic year.

- Disbursement of spring term awards is expected to be disbursed directly to the college. Recipients are encouraged to keep up with questions about how the award will be applied to their tuition and financial aid award.
- Disbursement of fall term awards is underway. For applicants with an outstanding Grant Agreement/Promissory Notes, ISAC has begun processing and disbursing funds being released. Scholarship funds are disbursed directly to the college.
- NESP recipients received e-mail messages on December 5th advising them of the signing and submitting the required Grant Agreements. NESP funds cannot be disbursed until a recipient's signed agreement is on file and checks are placed in the Program Applications & Status Checks area of the ISAC Student Portal.
isac.org/e-library/partner-e-messages-and-newsletters/faa-e-messages/index.html

**FAA e-Messages**

Messages are organized according to the subscription group(s) to which they were sent, with the most recent message appearing at the top of each section.

**Pick Section**

- Financial Aid Director

**Financial Aid Directors**

- Success Network Webinars & Conference Materials 03/28/2023
- Calling All First Generation Scholars! 03/27/2023
- 2022-23 MAP Payment Update 03/21/2023
- ISAC Sessions During 2023 ILASFAA Conference 03/07/2023
- There’s Still Time to Submit CCE Conference Proposals 02/23/2023
- Reminder: Submit 2022-23 Claims and Benefit Usage Data 02/17/2023
- Don’t Forget – Submit Your CCE Conference Proposal 02/09/2023
- Upcoming Important Dates from ISAC 01/30/2023

**NESP Schools**

- Calling All First Generation Scholars! 03/27/2023
- ISAC Sessions During 2023 ILASFAA Conference 03/07/2023
- 2023-24 Nursing Education Scholarship Program Application Available 03/01/2023
- There’s Still Time to Submit CCE Conference Proposals 02/23/2023
- Don’t Forget – Submit Your CCE Conference Proposal 02/09/2023
- 2023 CCE Conference: Save the Date & Call for Proposals 01/20/2023
- ISAC Monthly Webinars for FAAs 01/17/2023
- Reminder, FAA Webinar on December 21 12/16/2022
- NESP Transition Updates – December 13 Webinar 12/08/2022
Partner Training

Find training calendars within this section, as well as the PowerPoint presentations from recent training sessions.

2023 ILASFAA Annual Conference

Following are presentation materials for the 2023 ILASFAA Conference. ISAC's sessions offered on March 13 – March 15, 2023, along with the Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs (IDVA) and ILASFAA Legislative sessions.

- ISAC Update
- Overview of New ISAC Programs
- Cybersecurity by ISAC
- The New PSLF Regulations: What They Mean For You!
- An Overview of GAP Access
- Preparing for Federal Loan Repayments to Resume: What You and Your Students Need to Know
- Illinois First Generation Scholars Network
- ILASFAA Legislative Toolkit
- Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs (IDVA) Update

Webinar: ISAC Operational Update and Program News

Wednesday, February 22, 2023 – 2 p.m.

Download the Presentation

To participate:

- Click on this link: https://illinois.webex.com/join/stephanie.claudio
- When prompted, enter the meeting number: 2452 422 8596
- For the audio portion, click on the Audio tab and select one of the available options:
  - For the "Use computer audio" option you will need to have a microphone to be able to interact with the webinar. Without a microphone, you will be in listen-only mode.
  - For toll-free participation by phone, select the "Call me" option, enter your phone number, and the webinar will call you.
  - The "Call in" option is not a toll-free number, however, if you are not able to participate through the webinar link and "Call me" option, but would like to participate by phone, you can use one of these toll numbers: +1-312-535-8110 (US Toll-Chicago) or +1-415-855-0002 (US Toll), Access code: 2452 422 8596.
The Nursing Education Scholarship Program (NESP) is now being administered by the Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC). Inquiries about the program can be directed to ISAC at isac.studentservices@illinois.gov or 800.899.4722. Program information is available on ISAC’s website.

**Purpose**

The goal of the Nursing Education Scholarship Program is to increase the number of nurses available for employment in Illinois by offering scholarships to overcome financial barriers to education. The program provides financial assistance to qualified individuals pursuing a certificate in practical nursing, an associate degree in nursing, a hospital-based diploma in nursing, a baccalaureate degree in nursing, or a graduate degree in nursing.

**General Program Information**

The application submission period is March 1, 2021 through April 30, 2021. Applications will not be accepted after the submission deadline.

The scholarship pays for coursework within the nursing curriculum for which the recipient is funded; it does not pay for pre-requisite coursework. The expense for coursework applied to another degree will not be paid, nor will it be considered when determining eligibility for a stipend.

Applicants who have other scholarship or loan funds that require a service commitment that prevent the applicant from meeting the nurse employment or nurse educator employment obligation of this program for a year will not be considered.

**Number of Years of Scholarship Funding**

The number of years a recipient is eligible to receive funding is based on the certificate, diploma, or degree being pursued. The maximum years are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years of Scholarship Funding</th>
<th>Certificate in Practical Nursing</th>
<th>Associate Degree in Nursing</th>
<th>Hospital-based Diploma in Nursing</th>
<th>Baccalaureate Degree in Nursing</th>
<th>Graduate Degree in Nursing</th>
<th>Graduate Degree in Nursing (to become a Nurse Educator)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Certificate</td>
<td>One Academic Year</td>
<td>Two Academic Years</td>
<td>Three Academic Years</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Scholarship Amounts**

Full-time students may receive the following for an academic year:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Tuition and Fees (Estimate)</th>
<th>Stipend (Estimate)</th>
<th>Total (Estimate)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public Colleges or Universities</td>
<td>$12,249.75</td>
<td>$4,875.00</td>
<td>$17,124.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community College, Hospital-based School of Nursing, or School of Practical Nursing</td>
<td>$3,449.25</td>
<td>$4,875.00</td>
<td>$8,324.25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** Actual awards may be less depending on other forms of financial aid students receive.

Students attending private colleges and universities receive the same amount of assistance as public institutions.

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*dph.illinois.gov/topics-services/life-stages-populations/rural-underserved-populations/nursing-education-scholarship-program.html*
Resources

Nursing Education Scholarship Program Online Application
Illinois Approved Nursing Education Programs

Laws & Rules

Administrative Code
Nursing Education Scholarships

Publications

Nursing Education Scholarship Program FAQs

Joint Committee on Administrative Rules

ADMINISTRATIVE CODE

TITLE 77; PUBLIC HEALTH
CHAPTER 1: DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH
SUBCHAPTER 9: GRANTS TO DENTAL AND MEDICAL STUDENTS
PART 897 NURSING EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIPS

The General Assembly's Illinois Administrative Code database includes codes that have been permanently adopted. This menu will point out the Section rule (valid for a maximum of 150 days, usually until replaced by a permanent rule). The emergency rulemaking is linked through the notation that follows the menu.

SUBPART A: GENERAL PROVISIONS

- Section 597.10 Definitions
- Section 597.20 Referenced Materials
- Section 597.30 Administrative Hearings

SUBPART B: ELIGIBILITY AND APPLICATION

- Section 597.100 Eligibility
- Section 597.105 Notification
- Section 597.110 Application
- Section 597.115 Scholarship Renewal (Repealed)

SUBPART C: AWARD OF SCHOLARSHIPS

- Section 597.200 Scholarship Description
- Section 597.210 Determination of Financial Need
- Section 597.220 Selection Criteria for Award of Scholarships
- Section 597.230 Student Enrollment and Institutions' Obligations
- Section 597.240 Payment of Continuous Attendance Requirement
- Section 597.241 Withdrawal of Continuous Attendance Requirement

SUBPART D: TERMS OF PERFORMANCE

- Section 597.300 Grant Agreement
- Section 597.310 Repayment of Scholarship

HIGHER EDUCATION
(110 ILCS 975/1) Nursing Education Scholarship Law.

(110 ILCS 975/1) (from Ch. 144, par. 2751)
Sec. 1. Short title.
This Article shall be known and may be cited as the Nursing Education Scholarship Law.
(Source: P.A. 86-1447.)

(110 ILCS 975/2) (from Ch. 144, par. 2752)
Sec. 2. Legislative finding and declaration of policy.
(a) The General Assembly finds and hereby declares that the provision of a higher education leading to an associate degree in nursing, an associate degree in applied sciences in nursing, a hospital-based diploma in nursing, a baccalaureate degree in nursing, a graduate degree in nursing, or a certificate in practical nursing for persons of this State who desire such an education is important to the health, welfare, and security of this State and Nation, and consequently is an important public purpose. Many qualified and potential nurses are deterred by financial considerations from pursuing their nursing education, with consequent irreparable loss to the State and Nation of talents vital to health, welfare, and security. A system of scholarships, repayment of which may be excused if the individual is employed as a registered professional nurse or a licensed practical nurse after obtaining an associate degree in nursing, associate degree in applied sciences in nursing, hospital-based diploma in nursing, baccalaureate degree in nursing, graduate degree in nursing, or certificate in practical nursing, will enable such individuals who attend approved institutions of their choice in the State, public or private.

(b) The General Assembly finds that there is a critical shortage of nursing instructors in this State, and such a shortage will only worsen the shortage of available nurses in this State and jeopardize the quality of healthcare of the citizens of this State. Therefore, the General Assembly declares that there is a need for an increase in skilled nurse educators in this State.
(Source: P.A. 86-1447, eff. 1-1-86.)

(110 ILCS 975/3) (from Ch. 144, par. 2753)
Sec. 3. Definitions. The following terms, whenever used or referred to, have the following meanings except where the
NESP – Administrative Rules

• For 2022-23, the program is being administered using the IDPH Administrative Rules
• For 2023-24, the IDPH Administrative Rules will be transferred ‘as is’ to ISAC

Please note:
This is NOT the Nurse Education Scholarship Program (NESP) that recently transitioned from IDPH to ISAC to administer.
2022-23 NESP

- Applicants received notification of their eligibility status from IDPH earlier in the 2022 year
  - Eligible recipients may refer to the awarding statement received from IDPH for award details, including the award amount

- Disbursements of fall term benefits were processed for those recipients who had signed their Grant Agreement/Promissory Note

- Stipends were sent directly to the students

- Spring and summer term processing will utilize GAP Access, where schools will certify eligibility for each term

- For 2023-24, the entire process will be administered by ISAC
NESP – Eligibility

• **Requirements**
  
  o An applicant must:
    
    ▪ be a U.S. citizen or an eligible non-citizen or meet the "undocumented student" criteria of the RISE Act
    
    ▪ be an Illinois resident for at least one year prior to the date of application
    
    ▪ be enrolled or accepted for enrollment to a nursing program in Illinois that is approved by the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation or the Illinois Board of Higher Education
    
    ▪ demonstrate financial need
    
    ▪ maintain satisfactory academic progress, as determined by the college
    
    ▪ establish satisfactory repayment arrangements if they are in default on any federal student loan
    
    ▪ sign an Application/Grant Agreement/Promissory Note promising to fulfill the employment commitment or repay funds received, plus interest

• **Student information page:**
  
  o [isac.org/students/during-college/types-of-financial-aid/scholarships/nursing-education-scholarship-program.html](isac.org/students/during-college/types-of-financial-aid/scholarships/nursing-education-scholarship-program.html)
NESP – GAP Access

• ISAC has implemented the certification process necessary to proceed with second term disbursements for the 2022-23 academic year

• Certification must be completed so that second term disbursements can take place
  • For the 2022-23 academic year, certification of second term eligibility is the only function that will take place in GAP Access

• GAP Access portal is open for institution registration and eligibility certification
  o Gift Assistance Programs (GAP) Access portal - the online resource through which ISAC administered program data exchanges take place

• Institution registration by an authorized institution staff member(s) is needed to perform program functions within GAP Access, including certification of a recipient’s continuing eligibility before second term disbursement can take place

• Financial aid staff with active GAP Access accounts must update the NESP program privileges under the Administration tab
Financial aid staff **without** active GAP Access accounts need to complete the institution registration process in the GAP Access portal, the GAP Access Login through this link: [https://isacportal.isac.org/](https://isacportal.isac.org/)
  - Click on *Click here to register* and then select *Administrator* as the account type
  - Select *Postsecondary Institution* as the Partner type and complete the remainder of the required information, including establishing a User ID and password
  - When registration is complete, a confirmation page will allow to make changes if necessary and confirm registration
  - Do not attempt to access the account until ISAC has set up the account

Accounts for staff who will be editing or updating data must be set to “Update” and those for staff who will not be involved in submitting data to ISAC, but need to view eligibility information will need to be set to “View”

Once a student is certified and saved it is final submission, any changes would need to be made by contacting ISAC School Services Department by email [isac.schoolservices@illinois.gov](mailto:isac.schoolservices@illinois.gov) or by phone 866-247-2172
NESP – Certification Process

• After logging into GAP Access, select NESP under the Programs tab.

• Access the NESP Certification List: View to view names of recipients attending your institution.
NESP – Certification Process

- The Certification List: View screen can be used to select records for certification in the order of your choosing
  - For example, records can be filtered by term or by status

- You can either click on a student’s name or Social Security number to open the Certification Data screen
NESP – Certification Process

- **Certification Data** screen will show fields to be completed that will be highlighted in red, based on whether the Eligible field is completed as ‘Yes’ or ‘No’

  If Eligible, these fields must be completed:
  
  - Number of credit hours enrolled
  - Number of credit hours for full-time status
  - Student’s GPA
  - Amount of tuition/fees not covered by other funding
  - Program of study (drop-down menu)
  - Anticipated graduation date

- **Tuition Amount** – is the amount certified by colleges, based on tuition/fees not covered by other financial aid assistance for each term

- **Stipend Amount** – amount is determined each award year, based on appropriation, applications, and program applicant is enrolled in, and is determined by the administering agency
NESP – Certification Process

• If **Ineligible**, only the ineligible reason must be selected from the drop-down menu

If Ineligible, select:

  o No longer enrolled in a nursing program of study
  o GPA not at least 2.0 on a 4.0 scale
  o Withdrawal prior to end of term
  o Not enrolled at least one-third of full-time hours
NESP – Certification Process

- Once all required recipient information has been entered, the Save/Submit button is clicked to complete the process for the student record.

- If information is not saved and submitted, but the screen is closed, the information will NOT be saved, and will need to be re-entered at a later time.
NESP – Disbursements

• Disbursement of **second term** will occur the same way as first term, with scholarship checks being sent to schools by the State Comptroller Office
  - Checks will be made co-payable to the school and the student

• Stipend payments will be sent to the student

• Disbursement is anticipated for later this spring - details will be provided when finalized

• ISAC encourages schools to complete eligibility as soon as possible
Notes on Quarter schools

• Quarter schools need to include the tuition cost information for that student for the quarters that “fall” into the semester format
  o For example: include tuition cost information for the student’s fall and winter quarters during the Fall verification period so that we would have the information for January

• If the school does not operate on a semester basis, adjust the student’s tuition and fees information to fit into these time frames:
  ▪ Fall 22 Term: 9/1/2022 - 12/31/2022
  ▪ Spring 23 Term: 1/1/2023 - 5/31/2023
  ▪ Summer 23 Term: 6/1/23 – 8/31/23

• IDPH always paid on a semester basis
2023-24 NESP - Application

- 2023-24 application became available March 1 in the ISAC Student Portal

- Students may access the NESP Application/Grant Agreement/Promissory Note via the Program Applications & Status Checks area of the ISAC Student Portal

- The NESP application period each year starts on March 1 and continues through April 30

- To be considered for funds during the 2023-24 academic year, the NESP Application/Grant Agreement/ Promissory Note must be submitted to ISAC on or before **Sunday, April 30, 2023**
2023-24 NESP - Application

• After an application is submitted, the process is as follows:
  
  o The applicant will immediately receive an e-mail confirming that their application was received at ISAC

  o Application processing time may be up to 4 weeks

  o If the application is incomplete, the applicant will receive a letter from ISAC explaining the reason(s) and advising how to resolve the issue

  o If an applicant needs to change their response(s) to any item(s) and/or update any information after the application has been submitted, they will need to contact ISAC School Services Department as outlined in the “Changes to Application Data” section of the Students & Parents NESP page
Questions
Please Contact ISAC for NESP Inquiries

School Services
866-247-2172
isac.schoolservices@illinois.gov

ISAC Call Center-Student Services
800-899-4722
isac.studentservices@illinois.gov
Partner & Training Services Contact Information

Sherry Schonauer
217-785-1937
Sherry.Schonauer@illinois.gov

Stephanie Claudio
217-782-8742
Stephanie.Claudio@illinois.gov

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Kimberly.Eck@illinois.gov