



CALIFORNIA EDUCATIONAL MFT STIPEND PROGRAM

Guide for Completion of the Stipend Application

GENERAL INSTRUCTION

Students need the following documents, which can be downloaded from Phillips Graduate Institute's website, www.pgi.edu, under MFT Consortium / California State Stipend Program:

- The *Information on the 2012-13 MFT Stipend Program*
- The *2012-13 Application Form* for the appropriate regional MFT Consortium
- This *Guide for Completion of the Stipend Application*
- The sample of the *Payback Agreement*
- The *IRS W-9 Form* www.irs.gov

Each regional MFT Consortium has an application form that includes the county or counties represented by that region. Students need use the application form for the region they intend to fulfill their post-degree employment or volunteer placement obligation. Students can not apply to more than one region and can only submit one application form. The student's school must be a member of a regional MFT Consortium. (See Phillip's website for a list of qualifying schools and campuses for each regional MFT Consortium.)

SUBMISSION INSTRUCTION

- Students must meet with the school administrator/faculty advisor to discuss their interest and eligibility in the State Stipend Program. The advisor's name and signature needs to be included in Part I of the application form.
- The three parts of the application form needs to be submitted. The student's identifying information must be legible, completed in full, and signed where indicated.
- The first page of the *IRS W-9 Form* needs to be submitted with address, social security number and signature included.
- The completed application (Parts I & II), the typed essays (Part III), and page one of the *IRS W-9 Form* needs to be mailed together. Copied, faxed or emailed applications will not be accepted. Other material, such as cover letters or résumés, should not be included or submitted.

Application deadline is October 15, 2012.

Mail the complete application to:

**California Educational MFT Stipend Program
Phillips Graduate Institute
1990 Plummer Street
Chatsworth, CA 91311**

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Guide for Completion of the Stipend Application – Part I

PART I: APPLICANT IDENTIFYING INFORMATION

Full Name: The student's full name needs to be provided; no abbreviations. The name must match the name provided on the *IRS W-9 Form*.

Address: The first address is the student's current address and often is the address used when in school. The permanent address needs to be the address provided in the *IRS W-9 Form* and will be the address used to mail stipend checks. The current and permanent addresses may be the same.

Emails: Communication with the student will be through the primary email address on the application form. Do not include a school email address as the primary email address if it will not be available after graduation. Students awarded a stipend will be in communication with Phillips' Stipend Program personnel two years beyond their graduation. Emails provided must be legible; ensure that underscores are clearly distinguishable from underlines and that numbers are distinguishable from letters. Students need to regularly check their primary email address for communiqués from the Stipend Program office that may be time sensitive or require a response.

Phone Numbers: Both cell and home phone numbers are required. If the phone numbers are the same, indicate that on the application.

School Name and Campus Site: Name of school and campus site are both necessary, especially for schools that have multiple campuses. The student's school and campus needs to be listed on the Phillips' website under "Qualifying Schools for 2012-13 Educational Stipends". Schools on this list are active members and participants of the MFT Consortium in their region.

Enrollment Date and Degree Conferral Date: These dates do not have to be verified with official documents. It is sufficient that the school's administrator or faculty advisor verifies these dates with his/her signature. The degree needs to be a terminal degree and one that qualifies the student to register as an MFT Intern upon graduation. The degree conferral date refers to the date posted by the school's Registrar and will appear on the student's transcripts. Note that the ceremonial or graduation date is often not the date the degree is posted.

School Administrator/Faculty Advising Student: The name and signature of the student's stipend advisor is provided here. This is also required for students who have graduated, no earlier than July 1, 2012. The advisor's signature on the application form implies the following:

- The student is in good academic standing, if currently enrolled.
- The student is eligible to apply because she/he will graduate with a degree conferral date between July 1, 2012 and June 30, 2013.
- The student has received advisement on eligibility and qualifications for the Stipend Program.

Signature: The student needs to sign and date the application form. As stated on the form, the student's signature affirms that the student has read the *Information on the 2012-13 MFT Stipend Program*, understands that employment payback is required of all stipend recipients, is eligible to be employed in California, and has truthfully completed the entire application form.

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Guide for Completion of the Stipend Application - Part II

PART II: APPLICANT QUALIFYING INFORMATION

For anonymity scoring, do not include your name or your school on Part II of the application form.

1. County Operated or County Contracted Field Placement Training. Students who received field practicum training at an agency that was operated or contracted by a county mental health department can check this box. The student needs to include all of the information requested. Providing this information authorizes the agency to verify the practicum training received.

Note: The student may only check box 1 and box 4 if the student was in two practicum sites.

2. County Operated or County Contracted Employment/Volunteer Experience. Students who had experience as an employee or volunteer at an agency that was operated or contracted by a county mental health department can check this box. The employment or volunteer experience needs to be in a capacity that exposed the student to the population and to the public mental health delivery system but not necessarily to providing direct clinical services. The student needs to include all of the information requested. Providing this information authorizes the agency to verify the employment or volunteer experience received by the student.

Note: Employment/volunteer experience cannot be the same as the practicum training listed in boxes 1 and 4.

3. Language Capacity. Only students who have the proficiency to provide mental health services in a language other than English can check this box. Student's proficiency in the second language will not be evaluated in the application process. If a student, who checks this box, is awarded a stipend yet is not able to demonstrate proficiency in the language given to mental health agencies, the student will be required to return the stipend amount awarded.

4. Non-County Operated or Non-County Contracted Field Placement Training. Students who received field practicum training at a community agency that provided specialized training to promote their capacity to serve those in the public mental health system can check this box. These training agencies, though not part of a county mental health delivery system, provide valuable educational, clinical, and community-based services. However, students need to indicate how the training received prepared them for public mental health practice. If the type of specialized training received in this training agency is not included, this section will not be scored. Students need to include all of the information requested. Providing this information authorizes the agency to verify the practicum training received.

Note: The student may only check box 1 and box 4 if the student was in two practicum sites.

5. Employment in Underserved Areas. Students who are willing to be employed in an agency providing services in counties or geographic areas designated as high need for services by the regional MFT Consortium can check this box. These areas are usually communities that have difficulty recruiting professionals because of their rural isolation, considerable poverty or high cultural marginalization.

6. Employment in MHSA Programs. Students who are willing to be employed and provide services in programs funded through the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) can check this box. These programs usually require providing services in the field, such as in schools and homes. Programs funded through MHSA include Full Service Partnerships (FSP), Field Capable Clinical Services (FCCS), Multiple Assessment Team (MAT), among others.

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Guide for Completion of the Stipend Application – Part III

PART III: APPLICANT QUALIFYING INFORMATION - ESSAYS

Include an attachment of your typed essay responses. Each essay cannot be longer than 150 words and must adhere to the following APA guidelines: double spaced, use of 12 point Times New Roman font. For anonymity in scoring, student's name and school must not be included in the essays.

1. Explain how your personal experiences meet the objectives of the State MFT Stipend Program in serving disadvantaged communities.

One of the objectives of the State Stipend Program is to recruit potential students who know and understand the communities served by local mental health agencies, especially those communities that have been underserved by the public mental health system. These communities have residents with multiple needs due to low social economic status, social oppression and cultural marginalization. In responding to essay #1, consider the following:

- ◆ Disclose your own economic situation and how you are paying for your education.
- ◆ Describe your personal experiences growing up and living in disenfranchised communities.
- ◆ Describe any employment or volunteer experience serving individuals/families living in depressed economic conditions.

2. Explain how your personal background and individual strengths meet the objectives of the State MFT Stipend Program in serving diverse client populations.

One of the objectives of the State Stipend Program is to recruit students with the capacity to serve the culturally diverse needs of persons in mental health care.

In responding to essay #2, consider the following:

- ◆ Disclose your personal experiences in mental health service, either as a consumer or as a family member of a consumer of public mental health care, and explain how this will be a strength in your community service as a marriage and family therapist.
- ◆ Disclose your cultural background, second language proficiency, and/or acculturation status, and describe how these personal dimensions will be a strength in your community service.
- ◆ Disclose your personal/professional experience living in specific ethnic or racial communities and describe how that exposure will be a strength in your community service.

3. Explain how your educational preparation and practicum training meet the objectives of the State MFT Stipend Program in recruiting qualified clinicians to work in the public mental health system.

One of the objectives of the State Stipend Program is to promote the educational and clinical preparation of MFT students in public mental health practice. This essay provides you with the opportunity to describe how your educational preparation and practicum training has prepared you to understand the work that is needed when serving those in the public mental health system.

In responding to essay #3, consider the following:

- ◆ Describe your professional experience in addressing mental illness and mental health stigma.
- ◆ Describe the extent to which your graduate education and training prepared you to serve children, adolescents or adults living with serious mental illness.
- ◆ Describe how your graduate education and training specifically exposed you to the concepts espoused by the MHSA, such as resiliency, recovery, and wellness.

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Guide for Completion of Application– Part III

4. Explain how your professional career plans meet the goals of the State MFT Stipend Program.

One of the objectives of the State Stipend Program is to promote public mental health practice as a long term career option for MFT graduates. This essay provides you the opportunity to convey your level of commitment to receive further training in public mental health care and to pursue a professional career in public practice.

In responding to essay #4, consider the following:

- ◆ Provide a statement of your professional training and career objectives.
- ◆ Explain how your post-degree employment and training will promote your professional career objectives.
- ◆ Explain why working in public mental health is consistent with your post-degree goals and professional career objectives.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

Aside from applications submitted late, careless mistakes or omissions often disqualifies an application. Below are miscues made by past students that resulted in the ineligibility of their application for the State Stipend Program. Also included are suggestions made by past recipients and application scorers to strengthen an application.

Reasons that in the past disqualified an application:

- ◆ In Part I, the date given for the degree conferral date was not within the eligible timeframe.
- ◆ In Part I, the application was not signed by a school advisor or by the student.
- ◆ The application was submitted late, postmarked after the application deadline.
- ◆ The application was sent by fax, email or a mailed copy with no original signatures.
- ◆ All parts of the application were not included.
- ◆ The *IRS W-9 Form* was not submitted or submitted without signature and SSN.

Suggestions to strengthen an application:

- ◆ Begin the advisement process with the school stipend advisor early.
- ◆ Read all of the application material and follow directions carefully.
- ◆ Double check that all information required in Part I and II is included. Missing information in Part II will result in the item not being scored.
- ◆ Keep each essay response within the 150 words requirement; text beyond the 150 word requirement will not be read nor considered for scoring.
- ◆ Keep essay responses specific to information suggested in Part III of the Guide.
- ◆ Review essay responses for grammatical and spelling errors. Have the school advisor or someone else read your essays prior to submitting them.

Application Deadline: October 15, 2012. Applications postmarked after October 15, 2012 will not be accepted. As this is a publicly funded program no exceptions can be made on the deadline. Students will be notified of the receipt and eligibility of their application by the November 16, 2012. Communication with students will be through the primary email address provided on Part I of the application form.