



CALIFORNIA EDUCATIONAL MFT STIPEND PROGRAM

Guide for Completion of 2011-12 Stipend Application

GENERAL INSTRUCTION

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

- The *Information on the 2011-12 MFT Stipend Program*
- The *2011-12 Application Form* for the appropriate regional MFT Consortium
- This *Guide for Completion of 2011-12 Stipend Application*
- The sample of the *Payback Agreement*
- The *Federal W-9 Tax Form* (rev. January 2011) www.irs.gov

Each regional consortium has an application form that includes the county or counties represented by that region (part II, number 5). Applicants should use the application form for the region they intend to fulfill their post-degree employment or volunteer placement obligation. Applicants may not apply to more than one region and may only submit one application form for the Stipend Program. The applicant's school must be a member of a consortium. For a list of qualifying schools and campuses of each regional MFT Consortium, see Phillip's website. The completed application must have applicant and school advisor's original signatures. Copied, faxed or emailed applications will not be accepted. Do not include other material such as a cover letter, résumé, or letters of recommendation.

SUBMISSION INSTRUCTION

- ❑ Meet with your school administrator/faculty advisor to discuss your interest and eligibility in the State Stipend Program. Your advisor's name and signature needs to be included in Part I of the application form.
- ❑ Complete the three parts of this application form. Make sure you fully and legibly complete the applicant identifying information and that you sign and date where indicated.
- ❑ Complete the *W-9 Federal Tax Form*. Make sure you include your address and social security number, and that you have signed the form. Only submit the first page of the W-9 form.
- ❑ Mail together the completed application (Parts I & II), the typed essays (Part III), and page one of the W-9 form to:

**California Educational MFT Stipend Program
Phillips Graduate Institute
19900 Plummer Street
Chatsworth, CA 91311**

Application Deadline: November 4, 2011. Applications postmarked after November 4, 2011 will not be accepted. Applicants will be notified after the application deadline of the receipt and eligibility of their application. Communication with applicants will be through the primary email address provided on Part I of the application form. As this is a publicly funded program no exceptions can be made on the deadline.

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Guide for Completion of Application – Part I

PART I: APPLICANT IDENTIFYING INFORMATION

Applicant's Name. The applicant's full name needs to be provided; no abbreviations. The name must match the name provided on the Federal W-9 tax form.

Applicant's Address. The first address is the applicant's current address and often is the address used when in school. The permanent address needs to be the address provided in the Federal W-9 tax form and will be the address where the stipend checks will be mailed. Of course, the current and permanent addresses may be the same.

Applicant's Emails. Communication with the applicant 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. Applicants awarded a stipend will be in communication with the stipend program coordinator and administrator two years beyond their graduation. Emails must be legible; ensure that underscores are clearly distinguishable from underlines and that numbers are distinguishable from letters. Applicants need to regularly check their primary email address for communiqués from the stipend coordinator or program administrator that may be time sensitive.

Applicant's 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. School and campus site are both necessary, especially for schools that have multiple campus sites. The applicant's graduate school needs to be listed on the Phillips' website under "Qualifying Schools for 2011-12 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 applicant to register as an MFT Intern. The degree conferral date refers to the date posted by the school's Registrar and will appear on the applicant's transcript. Note: The date of "graduation" is often confused with the ceremonial date, which may not be the date the degree is posted.

School Administrator/Faculty Advising Applicant. The name and signature of the applicant's stipend advisor is provided here. The advisor's signature on the application form implies the following:

- The applicant is in good academic standing, if currently enrolled
- The applicant is eligible to receive a stipend because she/he will graduate with a degree conferral date between July 1, 2011 and June 30, 2012
- The applicant has received advisement on eligibility and qualifications for the State Stipend Program

Applicant Signature. Applicant needs to sign and date the application form. As stated on the form, the applicant's signature affirms the applicant has read the *Information on the 2011-12 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 and essays.

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Guide for Completion of Application– Part II

PART II: APPLICANT QUALIFYING INFORMATION

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

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

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

2. County Operated or County Contracted Employment/Volunteer Experience. Applicants who had experience as an employee or volunteer at an agency that was operated or contracted by a county mental health department may check this box. The employment or volunteer experience needs to be in a capacity that exposed the applicant to the population and delivery of public mental health services but providing direct services is not necessary. The applicant needs to include all of the information requested. Providing this information authorizes the agency to verify the employment or volunteer experience received by the applicant. The employment/volunteer experience cannot be the same as the practicum training listed in boxes 1 and 4.

3. Language Capacity. Only applicants who have the proficiency to provide mental health services in a language other than English should check this box. The second language *must* be one of the needed languages listed on the application form. Applicant's proficiency in the second language will not be tested by the State Stipend Program. If an applicant is awarded a stipend and is not able to demonstrate proficiency in this language 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. Applicants 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 may check this box. These training agencies, not part of a county mental health delivery system, provide valuable educational, clinical and peer-based services. The specialized training provided by these agencies usually serve households coping with multiple stressors, second-language families, persons exposed to trauma/violence, or persons dealing with addictions in oppressed or disfranchised communities. The applicant needs to include all of the information requested. Providing this information authorizes the agency to verify the practicum training received.

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

5. Employment in Underserved Areas. Applicants 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 should 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. County Employment in a MHSA Program. Applicants who are willing to be employed and provide services in programs funded through the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) should check this box. These programs usually require providing services in the field, such as clients' 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 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 APA guidelines (6th Edition). For anonymity in scoring, your name and school must not be included in the essay responses.

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 applicants who reflect the communities served by local mental health agencies, especially those communities that have been underserved by the public mental health system. Explain how you understand communities with respect to 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 applicants 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 the mental health system, either as a consumer or as a family member of a consumer of public mental health care, and describe how it will be a strength in your community service
- ◆ Disclose your cultural background, second language proficiency, and 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 having prepared 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 with 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 of resiliency, recovery, wellness, empowerment, self-directed care and the value of peer support groups

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Guide for Completion of Application– Part III

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

The ultimate goal of 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 a professional career in public practice.

In responding to essay #4, consider the following:

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

GENERAL GUIDELINES

Below are common errors made by past applicants that resulted in their application not being eligible for the State Stipend Program. Also included are suggestions made by past recipients and scorers to strengthen the application.

Common Errors in Applications that Resulted in Non-Eligibility:

- ◆ 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
- ◆ In Part I, the application was not signed by the applicant
- ◆ The application was mailed after the deadline
- ◆ The application was sent by fax, email or a mailed copy was sent in lieu of original
- ◆ All four parts of the application were not included
- ◆ W-9 completion errors such as missing signature and missing SSN

Suggestions to Help Strengthen an Application:

- ◆ Begin the advisement process with faculty administrator early
- ◆ Read all application materials and follow directions carefully
- ◆ Double check that all information required in Part I and II is included, without errors
- ◆ 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