

## MONTANA BOARD OF REGENTS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

SUBJECT: FINANCIAL AFFAIRS

Policy 940.24 – Contract Requirements for the University of Washington Cooperative Medical Education Program (WWAMI) and the Idaho College of Osteopathic Medicine Cooperative Medical Education Program (ICOM)

**Effective: November 17, 2017; Revised: March 10, 2022**

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### I. Board Policy

A. WWAMI and ICOM Contract Requirements. This policy implements the provisions of §§ 20-25-810 through 811, MCA, to establish contracts for individuals participating in the cooperative medical education programs through the University of Washington School of Medicine, the Washington, Wyoming, Alaska, Montana, and Idaho (WWAMI) medical education program beginning with the 2018-2019 academic year (AY) entering class or later; and the Idaho College of Osteopathic Medicine (ICOM) medical education program beginning with the 2022-2023 academic year entering class or later. The contract requirements are administered by the board of regents through the office of the commissioner of higher education in accordance with §§ 20-25-810, through 811, MCA, and this policy.

### II. Procedures

A. Contract Requirements. All Montana students entering the WWAMI and ICOM medical education programs shall sign a contract stating whether they will commit to enter active full-time medical practice in Montana for a minimum period of 3 years within 1 year of the completion of their professional medical training. The contracts must be entered into prior to accepting a position and confirming enrollment in the WWAMI or ICOM medical education program.

1. A commitment to return contract conveys an obligation to pay the annual fee established under §20-26-1502, MCA, during the 4 years of medical school (not to exceed 4 years) and includes an obligation to return to Montana and commence full-time professional medical practice within 1 year of completing professional medical training for a minimum of 3 years.
2. Failure to honor a contract to return to Montana and enter full-time professional medical practice for the required 3-year period within 1 year of completing professional medical training, converts the state support amount paid on a participant's behalf into a loan to be repaid to the state with interest.
  - a. Repayment of the state support loan will commence 1 year from the participant's completion of professional medical training and must be repaid within 10 years.
  - b. Interest accrual on the loan begins at the time the state support converts to a loan and will be calculated using a fixed interest rate at the time of commencement conversion based on the annual federal Stafford loan rate at that time, not to exceed 8%. The Federal Stafford loan rate is updated by the federal government annually.
3. A contract not to commit to return to Montana conveys an obligation to pay the annual Montana Rural Physician Incentive Program (MRPIP) fee established in § 20-26-1502, MCA, at 2.5 times the established fee throughout the student's participation in the WWAMI or ICOM medical education program; payment of the MRPIP fee may not exceed 4 years.

B. Delegation of authority to commissioner. The board of regents hereby delegates to the commissioner of higher education specific authority to administer the WWAMI and ICOM contract requirements, including the authority to track WWAMI and ICOM program participants, establish and enforce participant contracts, confirm practice obligations, and to collect and enforce repayment of the state support fee loans. The commissioner also has the authority to determine the circumstances under which the contract may be modified, including but not limited to when the medicine support fee may be suspended or waived and the time at which participants obtain professional status.

History:

ITEM 177-102-R1117, to establish WWAMI contract requirements, approved by the Board of Regents November 17, 2017.

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C. Interpretation. The commissioner of higher education shall administer the programs in accordance with §§ 20-25-810, through 811, MCA, and may use discretion in resolving issues and making reasonable interpretations relating to the programs.

D. Appeals. An individual adversely affected by a decision under this policy may appeal the decision to the commissioner of higher education and the board of regents pursuant to board of regents' policy 203.5.2.

History:

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