

# **REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS**

## **Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program**

Fiscal Years 2021 and 2022 Request for Applications

FUNDING YEAR: Fiscal Years 2021 and 2022

APPLICATION DEADLINE: Fiscal Year 2021: April 16, 2021  
Fiscal Year 2022: April 15, 2022

LETTER OF INTENT DEADLINE: Not Required

AWARD AMOUNT: FY 2021: Approximately \$7.6 million  
FY 2022: Approximately \$7.6 million

CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE NUMBER: 10.313

**INITIAL ANNOUNCEMENT**  
National Institute of Food and Agriculture  
United States Department of Agriculture

**Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance.** The Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program (VMLRP) is listed in the Assistance Listings under the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance number 10.313.

**Table 1:** Key Dates and Deadlines

Task Description	Deadline
Application:	Fiscal Year 2021: 5:00 P.M. Eastern Time, April 16, 2021 [ <i>Ref to <a href="#">Part I § C of this RFA</a></i> ] Fiscal Year 2022: 5:00 P.M. Eastern Time, April 15, 2022 [ <i>Ref to <a href="#">Part I § C of this RFA</a></i> ]
Letter of Intent:	Not Required
Applicants Comments:	Within six months from the issuance of this notice ( <i>NIFA may not consider comments received after the sixth month</i> )

**Stakeholder Input.** The National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) seeks comments on all requests for applications (RFAs) so it can deliver programs efficiently, effectively, with integrity, and with a focus on customer service. NIFA considers comments to the extent possible when developing RFAs, and uses comments to help meet the requirements of [Section 103\(c\)\(2\) of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 \(7 U.S.C. 7613\(c\)\(2\)\)](#). Applicants may submit written comments to [Policy@usda.gov](mailto:Policy@usda.gov) (email is for comments only). Please use the following subject line: Response to the VMLRP RFA.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The National Institute of Food and Agriculture requests applications for the Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program (VMLRP) for FY 2021 and FY 2022 to repay qualified educational loans for eligible veterinarians in exchange for veterinary services in designated shortage situations in the United States and U.S. Insular Areas. The anticipated amount available for support of this program in FY 2021 is approximately \$7.6 million. Applicants considering applying the second year should review the [VMLRP News and Timeline](#) for updated deadlines and announcements. The anticipated amount available for support of this program in FY 2022 is approximately \$7.6 million.

This notice identifies the objectives for VMLRP projects, deadlines, funding information, eligibility criteria for projects and applicants, and application forms and associated instructions.

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## **PART I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION**

### **A. Legislative Authority**

In December 2003, the National Veterinary Medical Service Act (NVMSA) passed into law adding section 1415A to the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1997 (NARETPA). This law established a new Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program ([7 U.S.C. 3151a](#)) authorizing the Secretary of Agriculture to carry out a competitive program of entering into agreements with veterinarians under which they agree to provide veterinary services in veterinarian shortage situations.

Section 7105 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 amended section 1415A to revise the determination of veterinarian shortage situations to consider (1) geographical areas that the Secretary determines have a shortage of veterinarians; and (2) areas of veterinary practice that the Secretary determines have a shortage of veterinarians, such as food animal medicine, public health, epidemiology, and food safety. This section also added that priority be given to agreements with veterinarians for the practice of food animal medicine in veterinarian shortage situations.

The regulations at [7 CFR 3431](#) outline the process and procedures for designating veterinarian shortage situations as well as the administrative provisions for VMLRP.

### **B. Purpose and Priorities**

The goal of the Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program (VMLRP) is to encourage veterinarians, through competitively awarded financial incentives, to fill the most serious veterinary shortage situations in the United States. A further objective of the program is to determine the best possible match between specific shortage situations and the knowledge, skills, abilities, and experiences of program applicants to enhance the chances that awardees will achieve sufficient professional success and satisfaction during their term of service that they will continue in their service to the area.

Each year, State Animal Health Officials (SAHOs) identify approximately 200 priority shortage situations across the United States and Insular Areas and more than 150 veterinarians compete to receive one of the approximately 60 to 70 loan repayment awards the program can fund annually. While a few states nominate fewer shortage designations than they are permitted, most states continue to nominate the maximum number of shortage situations their state is allowed. This indicates that demand for the program remains strong throughout the country, particularly in animal agriculture-intensive states where shortages are most acute and widespread.

Handling of baseline data and data collection will be addressed in the Data Management Plan in accordance with the Part IV(B) of this RFA.

The VMLRP is aligned with the following strategy of the [USDA Strategic Plan \(FY 2018-2022\)](#):  
Goal 2: Maximize the Ability of American Agricultural Producers to Prosper by Feeding and Clothing the World

The VMLRP is aligned with the following themes of the [USDA Science Blueprint](#);

1. Theme 1 - Sustainable Ag Intensification.
2. Theme 3 – Food and Nutrition Translation.

The VMLRP actively supports research projects that promote the [USDA Agriculture Innovation Agenda](#) commitments of creating a comprehensive U.S. agriculture innovation strategy to align public and private research efforts and integrating the latest innovative conservation technologies and practices into USDA programs that aim to increase U.S. agricultural production and to reduce food loss and waste.

**Table 2: VMLRP Key Information**

Title	Description
Program Code:	VMLRP
CFDA Number	10.313
Project Type:	Loan Repayment
Application Deadline	FY 2021: April 16, 2021 FY 2022: April 15, 2022
Award Duration:	New Applicant: 3 Years Renewal Applicant*: 1 Year: \$15,000-\$25,000 2 Years: \$25,001-\$50,000 3 Years: \$50,001+
Anticipated # of Awards:	Approximately 60-70 per FY
Maximum Award Amount:	Maximum Loan Award: \$75,000 Maximum Tax Liability: \$29,250
	Maximum Total Award (Loan + Tax Liability): \$104,250

\*Terms of the fully executed contract with a renewal varies based on the applicant’s eligible Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM) debt. The minimum eligible DVM debt is \$15,000.

Additional requirements on expected performance goals, indicators and targets may be required as a condition of award.

**C. Program Area Description**

This loan repayment program contains two general categories of participation:

1. Mitigation of private practice shortage situations emphasis on food supply veterinary medicine sector; and
2. Mitigation of public veterinary practice and specialty veterinary discipline shortage situations.

The VMLRP facilitates professional workforce development in critical agricultural sectors related to animal health and well-being. Specifically, this program incentivizes veterinarians to consider practicing, or serving in other professional capacities, in geographic or specialty veterinary discipline shortage areas important to the security of local, state, and federal food safety infrastructures, and more broadly to the protection of animal and public health. The mitigation of shortage situations in food animal veterinary practice is emphasized in areas of veterinary specialization such as, but not limited to, epidemiology, food safety, and public health.

In this respect, the VMLRP achieves important outreach objectives because the veterinarian is among the most highly trained and respected agricultural professionals, especially in rural areas and communities where a significant proportion of food animal production occurs. By virtue of their broad education in the biomedical and animal sciences, their intimate connection to the local farming communities they serve, and their skills in clinical, diagnostic, surgical, therapeutic and population medicine, veterinarians represent an essential component of NIFA's extension and outreach capacity, and of the nation's agrosecurity, food security, and public health infrastructures. Furthermore, veterinarians serving in specialized settings such as state veterinarians, epidemiologists, food safety inspectors, animal disease laboratory directors and university faculty, that are also experiencing workforce shortages, provide an important communication link among state and federal government agencies, animal owners/producers, and the general public.

## **PART II. AWARD INFORMATION**

### **A. Available Funding**

The anticipated amount available for the Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program (VMLRP) in FY 2021 is approximately \$7.6 million. The anticipated amount available for the VMLRP in FY 2022 is approximately \$7.6 million. USDA is not committed to fund any particular application or to make a specific number of awards.

NIFA anticipates that approximately 90 percent of available funds will be awarded to veterinarians for [Type I and Type II](#) private practice of food animal medicine in geographic areas determined to have shortage(s) of veterinarians. Approximately 10 percent of the available funds will be awarded to veterinarians serving in [Type III](#) public practice, specialty practices, or discipline areas determined to have a shortage of veterinarians such as, but not limited to, food animal medicine, public health, epidemiology, and food safety.

### **B. Application Restrictions**

NIFA will evaluate applications using the criteria described in [Part V](#) of this RFA. Applications for FY 2021 and FY 2022 are limited to the following application types:

1. *New application*: New applications will be evaluated competitively using the selection process and evaluation criteria described in [Part V](#) of this RFA and are subject to the due dates herein. A new applicant is an individual who was not previously awarded and who will provide veterinary services in a shortage situation (see [Appendix III](#) for definition).
2. *Renewal application*: Renewal applications will be evaluated competitively, among all applications, using the selection process and evaluation criteria described in [Part V](#) of this RFA, subject to the due dates herein. A renewing applicant is an individual who has provided veterinary services in a shortage situation and who completed a signed VMLRP contract. Applicants submitting a renewal application must enter the NIFA assigned shortage situation identification code of the previously original awarded application on page 1 from NIFA Form 01-10. An applicant who has previously received an award and is interested in providing veterinary services in a shortage situation area that is different than their current or previous contract will need to submit a new application. In this case, the applicant will qualify for participation, however the applicant will be competitively evaluated with other new applicants. To verify if you qualify for a renewal or need assistance verifying your shortage situation identification code, please contact [vmlrp.applications@usda.gov](mailto:vmlrp.applications@usda.gov) for assistance (see [Appendix III](#) for definition).

### **C. Types of Designated Veterinary Shortages**

There are three types of veterinary shortage situations, all based on a 40-hour work week:

1. Type I – at least 80 percent time (32 hours per week) commitment in private practice food supply veterinary medicine;
2. Type II – at least 30 percent (12 hours per week) time commitment in private practice food supply veterinary medicine in a rural area;
3. Type III – at least 49 percent (19.6 hours per week) commitment in public practice.

Further descriptions of each shortage situation type can be found on the [VMLRP shortage situation nomination form](#) resource page under “Type of Shortage.”

## PART III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

### A. Eligibility Requirements

Applicants for the Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program (VMLRP) must meet all the requirements discussed in this RFA. Failure to meet the eligibility criteria by the application deadline will result in exclusion from consideration or preclude NIFA from making an award.

Applicants are eligible for the VMLRP if they meet all of the following requirements:

1. Meet all of the requirements outlined in [7 CFR 3431.10](#);
2. Have a degree of Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM), or the equivalent, by July 1, 2021, from a college of veterinary medicine accredited by the [American Veterinary Medical Association Council on Education](#);
  - a. For the FY 2022 RFA, the DVM or equivalent must be received by July 1, 2022.
3. Have a minimum qualifying educational loan ([see 7 CFR part 3431.3](#)) debt of \$15,000 from a lender capable of accepting incoming Automated Clearing House (ACH) payments. If you are unable to verify this with your lender, please contact [vmlrp@usda.gov](mailto:vmlrp@usda.gov) (Subject: lender payment acceptance assistance) for assistance.
4. Secure an offer of employment or establish and/or maintain a practice in a NIFA-designated veterinary shortage situation within the time period specified in the VMLRP contract offer;
5. Provide certifications and verifications as defined in [7 CFR part 3431.16](#), Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program;
6. Not owe an obligation for veterinary service to the Federal government, State, or other entity under an agreement with such Federal, State, or other entity unless such obligation will be completely satisfied prior to beginning service under the VMLRP. Please contact the VMLRP staff for further clarification of a specific situation via email at [vmlrp@usda.gov](mailto:vmlrp@usda.gov);
7. Not have a Federal judgement lien against their property arising from Federal debt.

Renewal applicants must meet the following below:

8. Further, to be eligible to submit a renewal application, participants must meet items (1) through (7) above.
9. A renewal application is an application from a veterinarian who previously accepted and completed a VMLRP Contract. Current award recipients may apply for a renewal award at the conclusion of their current award.
  - a. For the FY2021 RFA, renewal applicants must have a VMLRP contract start date of January 1, 2018 (FY 2017) or January 1, 2019 (FY 2018).
  - b. For the FY 2022 RFA, renewal applicants must have a VMLRP Contract start date of January 1, 2019 (FY 2018) or January 1, 2020 (FY 2019). If a renewal applicant is uncertain if their VMLRP Contract start date is applicable that is prior to what is indicated above, the applicant should contact the VMLRP program staff to obtain this information via email at [vmlrp.applications@usda.gov](mailto:vmlrp.applications@usda.gov).
  - c. The renewal applicant will use their original shortage nomination identification code. If a renewal applicant is uncertain as to the correct five-digit Shortage Identification Code, the applicant should contact the VMLRP program staff to obtain this information via email at [vmlrp.applications@usda.gov](mailto:vmlrp.applications@usda.gov).

- d. There is no limit to the number of times you can extend your VMLRP award. If you continue to meet the eligibility criteria and have eligible remaining DVM repayable debt, you may apply for a renewal award.

***Veterinary Services Shortage Situations*** – To determine the designated veterinary shortage situations which are eligible for application, go to the [Veterinary Services Shortage Situations map](#) and, in the middle of the page under the dropdown menu for “Fiscal Year”, select the applicable fiscal year and it will automatically populate those shortage situations. Shortages for FY 2021 will be posted at, or prior to, the release of this RFA in February 2021. Shortages for FY 2022 will be posted at, or prior to, February 2022.

***Federal Employees*** – There are no prohibitions against the participation of federal employees if they meet all eligibility requirements for participation in the VMLRP. Full-time federal government employees (i.e., USDA/APHIS or FSIS, etc.) who wish to apply for a Veterinary Shortage Situation outside of their current federal employment must meet the following:

1. Items (1) through (7) as detailed in the eligibility requirements section above.
2. Certain employees may be required to report outside employment, as well as the VMLRP award, and get clearance from the USDA Office of Ethics (see <https://www.ethics.usda.gov/science/outside-activities/2003-outside-activities.htm>).

***Duplicate or Multiple Submissions*** – duplicate or multiple submissions are not allowed. NIFA will disqualify both applications if an applicant submits duplicate or multiple submissions.

## **B. Cost Sharing or Matching**

***No Match Required*** - The VMLRP has ***NO*** matching requirement. NIFA will not factor matching resources into the review process as an evaluation criterion.

## PART IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION

### A. Method of Application

There are two options for submitting applications. First, applications may be submitted via email to [vmlrp.applications@usda.gov](mailto:vmlrp.applications@usda.gov). Second, applications may be faxed to NIFA at 1-833-208-8205. No other method or response will be accepted. For details on the two submission options please refer to Section D. Submission requirements, #2 Delivery Method of Application; we urge you to submit early to the Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program (VMLRP). VMLRP applications are complex and require completion of multiple forms, if you wait until the last days before the due date to submit your application you risk missing the deadline. We encourage inexperienced applicants to submit their applications at least one week or more before the deadline.

Application materials can be accessed two ways:

- 1) Application materials can be downloaded from the NIFA website ([VMLRP application forms](#)); the list of VMLRP forms is available by scrolling down the webpage.
- 2) If you do not have access to the web page or have trouble downloading the materials, you may contact the VMLRP program staff via email at [vmlrp.applications@usda.gov](mailto:vmlrp.applications@usda.gov). When emailing the VMLRP program staff, please include your name, mailing address, e-mail address, and phone number in the body of the email. State that you want a copy of the RFA and the associated application forms for the VMLRP. You must download and install a version of Adobe Reader that is compatible to access and complete application materials. **Table 3** provides instructions on how to obtain an electronic application.

**Table 3:** Steps to Obtain Application Materials

Steps	Action
Step One: Download Adobe Software	Download and Install <a href="#">Adobe Reader</a> (see <a href="#">Adobe Software Compatibility</a> for basic system requirements)
Step Two: Locate and Download Application Materials	To download NIFA VMLRP application forms go to <a href="#">VMLRP Application forms</a> .

### B. Content and Form of the Application

Applications must conform to the application preparation and submission instructions. All attachments to an application must comply with NIFA font, spacing and margin requirements and MUST be in .pdf (portable document format) (see [Table 4](#) for further instructions). The application must not be received in any format other than PDF, such as in word processing (MS Word, etc.) format. Applications will not be accepted for review if they do not follow the specific guidelines.

The VMLRP application must be typed. Electronic and wet (ink) signatures are acceptable. Handwritten responses on any part of your application or recommendations will not be accepted

and your application will not qualify for further consideration. Lastly, applications submitted by mail will not be accepted and your application will not qualify for further consideration.

Proper preparation of application materials will assist reviewers in evaluating the merits of each application in a systematic, consistent fashion. Financial documents should be unmarked in their original format and notes included in your financial documents will not be reviewed. Identified below are the elements of a new application followed by the elements of a renewal application.

The [VMLRP Application Guide](#) is part of the corresponding application package for this RFA. The RFA overrides the VMLRP Application Guide if there is a discrepancy between the two documents. NIFA will accept subsequent submissions, that are identified as revisions, to an application until the application deadline. The final submission prior to an application deadline will be the submitted application for review. However, applicants that do not meet the application requirements, to include partial applications, risk being excluded from NIFA’s review. Table 4 outlines other VMLRP instructions for applicants.

**Table 4:** VMLRP Application Instructions

Instruction	References
Review Eligibility of Veterinary Services Shortage Nomination Form from the State Animal Health Official (SAHO) and Select the Shortage Area to apply to.	<a href="#">VMLRP Veterinary Services Shortage Situations Map</a>
Attachments must be in a portable document format (PDF) format.	<a href="#">Creating PDFs with Adobe Guide</a>
Attachments must be merged into two separate PDF documents. Instructions are indicated below on which forms must be combined for the two PDF documents. Applications will be rejected if the application materials do not follow this format.	<a href="#">Merging PDFs with Adobe Guide</a>
Attachments must be an electronic copy of the PDF.	<a href="#">Print PDF to Electronic Copy with Adobe Guide</a>
Reduce the file size of the application before submission.	<a href="#">Optimizing PDF to Reduce File Size with Adobe Guide</a>
Sign the PDF documents.	<a href="#">Sign PDFs with Adobe Guide</a>
Follow the submission instructions.	N/A
Conduct an administrative review of the application before submission. Check for completion using the <a href="#">application checklist</a> , missing information, grammatical or spelling errors.	N/A
Contact the <a href="#">VMLRP program</a> staff for technical support, and keep a record of the correspondence.	N/A

Contact the <a href="#">VMLRP program</a> staff if applicant does not receive correspondence from NIFA regarding an application being received within <b>15</b> days of submission.	N/A
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***New Applications*** – New applications must contain the following elements. The application must be assembled in the following order into one email containing two PDF documents as follows:

Program Document:

1. (NIFA-01-10) Application Information Form
  - a. Resumé
  - b. Unofficial Transcript(s)
2. (NIFA-02-10) Personal Statement
  - a. Types I & II must include a map of the selected shortage situation area
3. (NIFA-03-10) List of Recommenders
4. (NIFA-08-10) Three Recommendation Forms (if submitted as part of application)

Loan Document:

1. (NIFA-04-10) Loan Information Form
  - a. Additionally, you must provide:
    - i. Master Promissory note(s)/Consolidated Promissory Note/Disclosure Statement for each lending institution
    - ii. Account Statement for each lending institution
    - iii. A Student Aid Loan Summary and Student Aid Individual Loan Detail Report from [Federal Student Aid](#) (FSA) website.
2. (NIFA-06-10) Certifications for Application
3. (NIFA-07-10) Intent of Employment

***Renewal Applications*** – Renewal applications must contain the following elements. It must be assembled in the following order into one email containing two PDF documents as followed:

Program Document:

1. (NIFA-01-10) Application Information Form
  - a. Resumé
  - b. Unofficial transcript(s)
2. (NIFA-02-10) Personal Statement
  - a. Types I & II must include a map of the selected shortage situation area
3. (NIFA-03-10) List of Recommenders
4. (NIFA-08-10) Three Recommendation Forms (if submitted as part of application)

Loan Document:

1. (NIFA-04-10) Loan Information Form (Optional, See [Part IV, B, 22](#) for further information)
2. Additionally, you must provide:
  - a. Updated Account Statement
3. (NIFA-06-10) Certifications for Application

4. (NIFA-07-10) Intent of Employment (Optional, See [Part IV, B, 25](#) for further information)

Content and form of the application guidelines must be followed. An application that does not meet the guidelines indicated will be disqualified without review. Except for recommendations and transcripts, multiple submissions with separate attachments will not be considered without prior arrangements. For questions regarding the submission of applications, please email: [vmlrp.applications@usda.gov](mailto:vmlrp.applications@usda.gov).

Contained within the “Applicants” section of the VMLRP web site is an [Application Checklist](#) and a [VMLRP Application Guide](#) to assist in preparing and submitting a new or renewal application to the VMLRP. General instructions of the forms that must be included in the application are provided below.

### **General Instructions for Application Forms**

1. [Veterinary Services Shortage Situations Map](#)

The map of designated Veterinarian Shortage Situations contains all shortage situation designations for a given fiscal year (FY) application cycle. The location of service, species to be served for Types I or II, discipline designations for Type III, and activities that are to be served are identified on this shortage situation designation. VMLRP applicants will use this information to select shortage situations they are willing and qualified to fill, and to guide the preparation of their applications. NIFA will use this information to assess contractual compliance of awardees. Therefore, it is important for the applicant to read carefully the requirements stated on the shortage situation form.

All states shaded in blue have at least one designated shortage area. Shortage situations appear in the table below the map. Additional details for a shortage situation can be found by clicking on the PDF or the ID code of the area of interest. Previous years' designations can be found by selecting the year of interest in the fiscal year filter (data is not currently available for all program years). Please note that using the Microsoft Edge browser is not supported and may not allow you to view PDFs in full.

2. [Applicant Information Form \(NIFA-01-10\)](#)

*Applicants may only apply to fill one of the designated shortage situations for each RFA period (one in either FY 2021 or FY 2022).* Applicants must indicate the shortage situation they propose to fill by entering the five-digit Shortage Identification Code in Section 1 of this form. To determine the designated veterinary shortage situations which are open for application and the applicable five-digit Shortage Identification Code, go to the [VMLRP Veterinary Services Shortage Situations map](#) and, in the middle of the page under the dropdown menu for “FY” select the applicable FY 2021 or FY 2022. Shortages for FY 2021 will be posted at, or prior to, the release of this RFA in February 2021. Shortages for FY 2022 will be posted at, or prior to, February 2022.

If your Veterinary License and/or USDA APHIS Accreditation have not been posted or received, mark “Pending” onto the license information on page 4. If awarded, you will be required to demonstrate proof of licensing prior to the contract start date on January 1.

A renewal applicant should enter the five-digit Shortage Identification Code of the shortage situation they are currently serving through a VMLRP award. If a renewal applicant is uncertain as to the correct five-digit Shortage Identification Code, the applicant should contact the VMLRP program staff to obtain this information via email at [vmrlp.applications@usda.gov](mailto:vmrlp.applications@usda.gov).

3. [Resumé](#)

This document should describe in summary the applicant’s education, work history, credentials, trainings/seminars, certifications, and other accomplishments and skills. The information provided should demonstrate the applicant’s abilities to serve in the designated shortage area. The body of the resumé is limited to two pages. An additional page (optional) may be included to list publications, patents, etc.

Renewal applicants must provide an updated resumé to add any academic degrees, work experience, professional awards and honors, or other special achievements that took place since their last VMLRP application.

DO NOT include demographic information, financial information, or a Social Security Number.

4. [Unofficial Transcript\(s\)](#)

Unofficial transcript(s) from the applicant’s professional veterinary degree program are required. If the applicant attended more than one school during their DVM studies, unofficial transcripts from all schools must be provided. If your degree has not posted to your transcripts prior to the application deadline, provide an unofficial transcript to date. If you are selected for a VMLRP award, you will be required to provide official transcripts from all schools attended during your DVM studies in order to receive the official award package.

Renewal applicants must submit unofficial transcript(s), including coursework taken since the original VMLRP award. If you are selected for a renewal VMLRP award, you must provide official transcripts if you have taken new coursework since the original award in order to receive the official award package.

5. [Personal Statement \(NIFA-02-10\)](#)

New and renewal applicants are required to create a document with their personal statement that must conform to the following guidelines: Page size must be letter (i.e., 8.5 inches × 11 inches); have one-inch margins, have 12-point font; and be double spaced. Use an easily readable font (e.g., Geneva, Helvetica, or Times New Roman). Double check the personal statement for grammar and spelling errors. This document must not exceed five double-spaced, typed pages. Include your name, the date, and

the page number in the header on each page. This limit has been established to ensure fair and equitable competition.

The personal statement must include a description of existing ties to the community or a plan to become involved in the community; a description of the applicant's short-term and long-term career objectives in veterinary medicine; a plan to achieve these objectives, relevant knowledge, skills, abilities and experience and how the VMLRP funding will directly support these objectives; and practice plans and logistics to address the specific shortage situation to which the applicant is applying.

In addition to the above, renewal applicants must include how the applicant is effectively addressing the specific shortage situation and an explanation of the applicant's ability to continue mitigating this shortage situation with long-term objectives.

DO NOT include your demographic information, financial information, or a Social Security Number in the personal statement.

a. Shortage Situation Map for Types I & II

- i. Additionally, for those applying to a Type I or Type II shortage situation, a map (limited to 1 page) must be provided to identify the location of the proposed shortage situation in relation to the location of the veterinary practice from which the applicant will be working. For mobile practices, identify beginning and end locations for a typical workday. Any spatial features may be added to the map (e.g., circles, arrows, or points) to highlight these areas. Any spatial features added to the map is the only portion of the application that may be handwritten. Please make sure the map is clear and legible to read.

6. List of Recommenders (NIFA-03-10)

The List of Recommenders form identifies three individuals who will support your capability to fulfill the program obligations. You must include the name, email address, and phone number of each individual. VMLRP does not have requirements for who a recommender may be; it is the applicant's decision to choose who they think will be the best recommenders for their application. We do encourage applicants to choose their recommenders based on the case they made in their personal statement and represent their ability to serve the specific requirements that are listed in the shortage nomination form. The recommenders should be able to speak to your ability to serve that shortage area. We encourage applicants to reach out as early as possible to their recommenders, to ensure that recommendation letters get submitted by the deadline. Three separate recommendations are required for each application.

7. Loan Information Form (NIFA-04-10)

This form requests information on qualified loans you want considered for the VMLRP. Only outstanding educational loans from a legally enforceable institutional,

State, or Government entity made for the purpose of meeting the costs of attending an accredited college or university of veterinary medicine will be considered. Applicants must complete sections one through three of the NIFA-04-10 form. DO NOT complete section four as part of the application. If an applicant is recommended for an award, NIFA will ask a representative at the applicable lending institution to complete section four.

A loan information form is to be completed for each loan servicer or provider. For example, there are 10 different loans from Nelnet. One NIFA-04-10 form is filled out with the estimated total loan amount, estimated payoff balance, initial date of first loan disbursement, date payoff is valid through, and average of the current interest rate of all the loan(s). An additional NIFA-04-10 form would be filled out if there was a different service provider, such as Great Lakes, etc.

Individuals who consolidated their veterinary school loans with other educational loans (e.g., undergraduate) will be allowed to apply for the VMLRP; however, only the eligible portion of the consolidation (veterinary school loans) of the consolidation will be repaid by the VMLRP. Furthermore, applicants with consolidated loans must provide a complete history of their student loans from the [Federal Student Aid](#) website. Individuals who consolidated their DVM loans with non-educational loans or loans belonging to an individual other than the applicant, such as a spouse or child, are ineligible for VMLRP consideration. Please visit [VMLRP Loan Consolidation](#) webpage for more information.

In addition, for new applicants a promissory note, account statement, and student aid summary reports must be included with the NIFA-04-10 form.

For renewal applicants, a NIFA-04-10 form must be submitted if there is an alternative method of payment to a lending institution. If there are no changes in the method of payment from the previous VMLRP contract, then NIFA-04-10 is not required. An updated account statement must be provided with all renewal applications.

- a. Promissory Note/Disclosure Statement/Disbursement Report
  - i. The promissory note must include the name of the borrower, loan type (Stafford, Perkins, etc.), date of note, original loan amount, signature and date. Please do not include the terms and conditions of the promissory note. It can take several weeks to obtain a promissory note from your lender, so you are strongly urged to contact your lender as soon as possible. If you are unable to obtain the promissory note by the application deadline, please contact the VMLRP office via email at [vmlrp.applications@usda.gov](mailto:vmlrp.applications@usda.gov).
- b. Account Statement
  - i. All applicants must submit an account statement that is dated within 90 days of the application deadline. A statement printed from the lender's website will be accepted. This document typically provides

the current loan balance, interest rate, and other information, including the account number and payment address.

c. Student Aid Loan Summary and Student Aid Loan Detail Report

- i. A Student Aid Loan Summary (loan breakdown) is a printout that shows a list of all educational loans that have been disbursed or paid off.
- ii. A Student Aid Loan Detail Summary is a printout of each individual educational loan within the Student Aid Loan Summary. The Student Aid Loan Detail Summary must include the loan type, amount disbursed, and the date of the loan disbursed. This information is retrieved from the [Federal Student Aid](#) website.

8. VMLRP Contract (NIFA-05-10)

DO NOT submit this form with your application. It is important for applicants to read the sample contract thoroughly so that you fully understand the terms and conditions that are required in the VMLRP. If you are selected for an award, you will receive an official copy of the contract to sign and return.

The VMLRP Contract is a legal agreement that binds the selected applicant and the Secretary of USDA and/or NIFA Director to the terms and conditions for participation in the VMLRP, including obligations of both parties. The contract must be signed by the applicant and the Secretary before the agreement can become effective and is fully executed.

9. Certifications for Application (NIFA-06-10)

Your signature on the Certifications for Application form validates the accuracy of information you provided in the application, and request for confidential recommendations. This form is required for both new and renewal applications.

10. Intent of Employment (NIFA-07-10)

This form designates where you intend to work upon receipt of a VMLRP award in order to fill the designated shortage situation. You may apply for only one shortage situation. If you are unable to secure employment by the application deadline, check the box indicating “I work or intend to work in a public position, or a private practice owned by someone else.” Then in the contact information of the prospective employer indicate “Pending”. Successful applicants will be given until January 1<sup>st</sup> of the year their contract starts to secure employment or establish a practice in the designated veterinary shortage situation. Failure to secure employment or establish a practice of veterinary medicine in accordance with the award offer may result in the offer being null and void.

Renewal applicants, if the employer/hiring official changes at the start of the new VMLRP contract, then a new Intent of Employment form must be submitted. If the employer/hiring official does not change from the previous VMLRP contract, then do not submit an Intent of Employment form.

11. [Recommendation Form \(NIFA-08-10\)](#)

Each individual identified on the Recommenders List Form (NIFA-03-10) must complete a Recommendation Form (NIFA-08-10). The form includes ratings and short answers designed to allow reviewers to assess your capabilities to provide veterinary services in the specific shortage situation. Recommenders are encouraged to review and consider the information describing the relevant shortage situation on the [VMLRP Service Shortage Situations](#) map located on the website.

Three separate individual recommendations are required. If fewer than three recommendations are received by the application deadline, your application will not be accepted and will not be considered for further consideration.

The short answers should be prepared on only one side of a standard size (8½” x 11”) white paper with one-inch margins, typed or word-processed using type no smaller than 12-point font, and double spaced. Use an easily readable font face (e.g., Geneva, Helvetica, or Times New Roman). All sections of this form must be typed. Handwritten responses on any part of this form will not be accepted and your application will not be considered for further consideration.

It is always the applicant’s responsibility to contact and follow up with recommenders to ensure all required recommendations are completed and submitted in accordance with the applicable instructions. Recommenders will be receiving an email verification of receipt of the recommendation from NIFA.

**C. Funding Restrictions**

VMLRP loan repayment awards are capped at \$25,000 for each year of service rendered (tax payments are additional). Loan repayments will be made directly to the participant’s lending institution on behalf of the participating individual. Lending institutions must be capable of accepting incoming Automated Clearing House (ACH) payments. If you are unable to verify this with your lender, please contact [vmllrp@usda.gov](mailto:vmllrp@usda.gov) (Subject: lender payment acceptance question) for assistance.

The repayments will be applied to the principal, interest, and related expenses on government and commercial educational loans received by the participating individual for attendance at an American Veterinary Medical Association Council on Education accredited college of veterinary medicine resulting in a degree of Doctor of Veterinary Medicine or the equivalent. If an institution received full accreditation status during the participating individual’s attendance, only the portion of veterinary school loans disbursed subsequent to the accreditation are eligible for repayment under the VMLRP. This includes any scenario involving an individual transferring from a non-accredited institution to an accredited institution. Applicants with a degree from an institution that was not accredited at the time the degree was earned are ineligible for an award.

NIFA will allow individuals who consolidated their eligible veterinary school debt with other educational loans (e.g., undergraduate) to apply for the VMLRP; however, only the eligible portion of the consolidation will be repaid by the VMLRP. Furthermore, applicants with consolidated loans must provide a complete history of their student loans from the Federal Student Aid (FSA) which is a central database for student aid operated by the U.S. Department

of Education. The FSA website can be found at <https://studentaid.gov/> to download your Student Aid Summary. Individuals who consolidated their DVM loans with non-educational loans or loans belonging to an individual other than the applicant, such as a spouse or child, are ineligible for participation in the VMLRP.

Tax payments equal to 39 percent of the loan repayment amount will be paid directly to the participant. The participant is required to pay this amount to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). These tax payments are not tax-exempt and will be reported to the IRS along with loan payments. The participant will receive a Form 1099-G (Certain Government Payments) no later than January 31 of each calendar year.

In accordance with 31 CFR part 208, all federal payments are required to be made through electronic funds transfers (EFTs). Each award recipient will be provided guidance regarding the appropriate form(s) which must be submitted in order to process the EFT payment(s). Please visit the [VMLRP Taxes and 1099G documents](#) webpage for further information.

## **D. Submission Requirements**

### **1. Application Submission Dates and Times**

For the FY 2021 RFA, applications and recommendations must be received by 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on Friday, April 16, 2021. Applications received after this deadline will not be considered for funding.

For the FY 2022 RFA, applications and recommendations must be received by 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on Friday, April 15, 2022. Applications received after this deadline will not be considered for funding.

### **2. Delivery Method of Application Materials**

See below for specific instructions for each delivery method. Applications received by mail will not be accepted and your application will not qualify for further consideration. Do not submit an additional copy of the VMLRP application by mail. Regular mail may only be used for official transcript(s). For questions regarding the submission of applications, please email: [vmlrp.applications@usda.gov](mailto:vmlrp.applications@usda.gov).

- a. Application Materials (see [Section B. Content and Form of Application](#) for form requirements of submission)
  - i. Email submission of application materials: Applications must be emailed, as two single PDF documents, with the forms in the order listed in [Part IV \(Application and Submission\)](#), [Section B \(Content and Form of the Application\)](#) of this RFA to: [vmlrp.applications@usda.gov](mailto:vmlrp.applications@usda.gov). Subject of the email should read “VMLRP Application, Last Name, First Name-Shortage Identification Code”. Except for the recommendations, multiple emails with separate attachments will not be considered without prior arrangements.

- ii. Fax submission of application materials: Application materials may be faxed as two separate fax submissions, one with Program forms and one with Loan forms submitted in the order listed in [Part IV \(Application and Submission\), Section B \(Content and Form of the Application\)](#) under New Application or Renewal Application of this RFA to: 1-833-208-8205. Subject of the fax should read “VMLRP Application, Last Name, First Name-Shortage Identification Code”.
  - iii. Correspondence of Receipt of Application Materials
    - 1. If the applicant has not received correspondence from NIFA regarding receipt of a submitted application within 15 days of submission, the applicant must contact the VMLRP program staff by email at [vmlrp.applications@usda.gov](mailto:vmlrp.applications@usda.gov) to request confirmation of receipt of their application. Failure to alert NIFA that confirmation of receipt has not been received could result in the application not being reviewed by the peer review panel.
- b. Official Transcript(s)
- i. Email submission of official transcript(s): Official transcripts will be accepted electronically separate from the application materials. Electronic copies are encouraged for tracking purposes to [vmlrp.applications@usda.gov](mailto:vmlrp.applications@usda.gov). Official electronic transcript(s) must be received directly from the school. Official electronic transcript(s) cannot be received directly from the applicant.
  - ii. Mail submission of official transcript(s): Official transcripts will be accepted by mail separate from the application materials, or by U.S. mail directly from the school, as there are several schools that do not send official electronic transcripts. Official transcript(s) must be received directly from the school or from the applicant in an original unopened envelope. Official transcript(s) that are mailed must be received by the published deadline. Official transcript(s) that are mailed that are received after the published deadline will not be considered, even if the postmark is prior to the deadline.

Please use the following mailing address for official transcript(s) ONLY:

VMLRP Applications  
Division of Animal Systems (Attn: Marline Azevedo)  
National Institute of Food and Agriculture  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
2312 East Bannister Road  
Mail Stop 10,000 (ten thousand)  
Kansas City, MO 64131

c. Recommendations

- i. Email or Fax submission of Recommendation Letters: Recommendations must be emailed (preferred) to [vmlrp.applications@usda.gov](mailto:vmlrp.applications@usda.gov) or faxed to 1-833-208-8205. Subject of the email should read “VMLRP Recommendation, Applicant Last Name, First Name”. Do not submit recommendations by mail. Recommendations received by mail will not be accepted and your application will not qualify for further consideration.
- ii. It is always the applicant’s responsibility to contact and follow up with recommenders to ensure all required recommendations are completed and submitted in accordance with the applicable instructions. Recommenders will be receiving an email verification of receipt of the recommendation from NIFA.

## **PART V. APPLICATION REVIEW REQUIREMENTS**

### **A. NIFA's Evaluation Process**

NIFA evaluates each application in a two-part process. First, NIFA screens each application to ensure that it meets the administrative requirements set forth in this RFA. **If applications do not meet the administrative requirements, they will not move forward to the second evaluation process.** Second, a technical peer-review process is used to evaluate each application that meets the administrative requirements using a review panel (see [VMLRP Application Review Process](#)).

NIFA selects reviewers based upon their training and experience in relevant public and private veterinary practice-related fields, considering the following factors:

1. Level of relevant training and experience in public and private veterinary practice, as well as the extent to which an individual is engaged in relevant public and private veterinary practice-related activities;
2. Need to include experts from various areas of specialization within relevant public and private veterinary practice-related fields;
3. Need to include other experts (e.g., producers, grower managers/operators, and consumers) who can assess relevance of the applications to targeted audiences and program needs;
4. Need to include experts from a variety of geographic locations and organizational types (e.g., colleges, universities, industry, state and federal agencies, and private for-profit and non-profit organizations); and
5. Need to maintain a balanced panel composition with regard to gender, age, professional seniority, and minority representation.

After each peer review panel has completed its deliberations, VMLRP program staff will recommend approval of meritorious applications for support from available funds. Applications will be declined due to insufficient funds or unfavorable review.

***Conflicts of Interest and Confidentiality.*** NIFA takes extreme care to prevent any actual or perceived conflicts of interest that may influence the review or evaluation of an application.

Names of submitting individuals, as well as application content and peer evaluations, are kept confidential except to those involved in the review process, to the extent permitted by law. In addition, the identities of peer reviewers will remain confidential throughout the entire review process, to the extent permitted by law. Therefore, the names of the reviewers will not be released to applicants.

## **B. Evaluation Criteria**

The primary evaluation criteria are listed below in ascending order of consideration. The evaluation criteria are used by the panel reviewers to evaluate each application submitted that passes the administrative review in response to this RFA. The panel reviewers use the following evaluation criteria for this RFA:

1. Expertise and Experience
  - a. This criterion relates to the demonstration of the applicant's knowledge, skills, abilities, and experience of the key elements as indicated within the shortage situation as it relates to the application by:
    - i. Formal pre-professional educational training (e.g., undergraduate or graduate degree programs and credentials);
    - ii. Formal training during pursuit of the DVM (or equivalent) degree (e.g., electives, curricular emphases);
    - iii. Formal, post-DVM (or equivalent) training and specialization (e.g., graduate degree programs, internships, residency programs, and board certifications);
    - iv. Professional employment experience in private or public veterinary practice, or other relevant work experiences before, during, or after earning the DVM (or equivalent) degree;
    - v. Specialty short-course certifications, accreditations or licensures (e.g., APHIS accreditation, agrosecurity training series, food animal production management courses, certified proficiency-training in foreign animal disease diagnostics);
    - vi. Awards, honors, or special achievements;
    - vii. Community Involvement Activities;
    - viii. Recommendations; and
    - ix. Clarity and quality of content in personal statement.
2. Achievability
  - a. This criterion relates to the sustainability of the success of the shortage situation to the quality of the match between the shortage situation with the applicant's professional training and experience as indicated through their application. The applicant must address the proposed shortage situation circumstances and needs by indicating the mitigation of the shortage situation, goals or business plans during period of VMLRP agreement, long-term range goals beyond the VMLRP agreement, and opportunities for establishing roots within the community. The application must indicate the most effective mitigation plan of the specific veterinary shortage situation for opportunities of success. The applicant must address how receiving the VMLRP award would provide professional success through the duration of the agreement.
3. Shortage Situation
  - a. This criterion relates to the prioritization of the overall priority severity of the shortage situation among the applications that is determined by the State Animal Health Official on the shortage nomination form. This criterion is used in the final selection process.

The criteria listed above will help NIFA determine the likelihood that the applicant will meet the terms and conditions of the VMLRP agreement and continue to serve in a veterinary shortage situation, or pursue a career in some other facet of food supply veterinary medicine, agricultural animal health, or public health, in private or public veterinary sectors. Additionally, the criteria will help NIFA determine the relative severity of the veterinary shortage situation; and the practicality and logistical feasibility of applicant's plan to address the specific shortage(s).

**C. Organizational Management Information**

Applicants must submit specific management information relating to an applicant prior to an award and update the information as needed. Applicants may only have to update their information if they had previously provided the information under this or another NIFA program. NIFA provides the requisite forms during the pre-award process. Although an applicant may be eligible for award under this program, there are factors that may exclude an applicant from receiving federal financial and nonfinancial assistance and benefits under this program (e.g., debarment or suspension of an individual, or a determination that an applicant is not responsible). All submitted applications shall be reviewed to ensure administrative compliance and completeness prior to an evaluation by the VMLRP application review panel. A complete review of each applicant's loan documents by NIFA will also take place prior to the announcement of awards.

**D. Application Disposition**

Applicants may withdraw at any time before NIFA makes a final funding decision. NIFA will retain all applications, including withdrawn applications and unfunded applications. An electronic copy of each application not selected for funding, including those that are withdrawn, will be retained by VMLRP for three years.

## PART VI. AWARD ADMINISTRATION

### A. General

Within the limit of Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program (VMLRP) funds available, the NIFA awarding official shall make an award and contract offers to responsible and eligible applicants whose applications are judged most meritorious under the procedures set forth in this RFA. The date specified by the NIFA awarding official as the effective date of the award shall be no later than September 30 of the Federal fiscal year in which the application is approved for support and funds are appropriated for such purpose, unless otherwise permitted by law. It should be noted that the contract need not be initiated on the award effective date, but as soon thereafter as practical so that contract goals may be attained within the service period. See [VMLRP Contract](#), NIFA-05-10, for an example of the VMLRP Contract. All funds awarded by NIFA under this RFA shall be expended solely for the purpose for which the funds are granted in accordance with the approved application, the VMLRP authorizing statute at 7 U.S.C. § 3151(a), the VMLRP regulations at 7 CFR part 3431, and the terms and conditions of the award.

*Award Notice.* The award document will provide pertinent instructions and information as described in [2 CFR 200.211](#) (see [NIFA's Terms and Conditions](#)).

All VMLRP applicants will be informed by email of final funding decisions related to the FY2021 RFA by Thursday, September 30, 2021.

All VMLRP applicants will be informed by email of the final funding decisions related to the FY2022 RFA by Friday, September 30, 2022.

The award package will provide pertinent instructions and information including, at a minimum:

1. Legal name and address of applicant to whom the NIFA Director has issued an award under the terms of this request for applications;
2. Designated veterinary shortage situation code, including the state;
3. Service period, specifying the amount of time the Department intends to support the service agreement without requiring re-competition for funds;
4. Total amount of Departmental financial assistance approved by the NIFA Director during the service period;
5. Legal authority, or authorities, under which the award is issued;
6. Applicable award terms and conditions for the VMLRP;
7. Other information or provisions deemed necessary by NIFA to carry out its respective awarding activities or to accomplish the purpose of a particular award.

The Secretary through the NIFA Director may terminate this Contract no later than 30 days after the execution of this contract if the individual:

1. Submits a written request for such termination to [vmlrp@usda.gov](mailto:vmlrp@usda.gov); and
2. Repays all amounts paid on behalf of the individual under Paragraphs 1 and 2 of Section A – Obligations of the Secretary or NIFA Director of this contract.

## **B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements**

Several federal statutes and regulations apply to grant applications and the projects outlined in this RFA (some are listed here: [Federal Regulations](#)). Unless specifically noted by statute or award-specific requirements, [NIFA Policy Guide](#) applies to all NIFA awards.

## **C. Expected Program Outputs and Reporting Requirements**

### **Program Outputs:**

The principal program output for FY2021 and FY2022 will be verifiable mitigation of well-defined, high priority veterinary shortage situations in an estimated 40 to 50 locations across the country, for a period of three years.

### **Reporting Requirements:**

1. Quarterly Reporting:
  - a. Service Verification
    - i. VMLRP recipients will be required to verify that the terms of the VMLRP contract are being met on a quarterly (every three months) basis. Subsequent quarterly loan repayments will not be disbursed until this verification is provided. This Service Verification report (NIFA Form 09-10) will be due 15 business days after the end of each quarter during the VMLRP contract.
  - b. Service Log
    - i. VMLRP recipients will be required to document the services provided on a service log. The following information will be required within the service log:
      1. A listing of states, counties, zip code and/or insular areas served;
      2. A description of veterinary services and activities provided in the shortage situation; and
      3. Amount of time (based on a 40-hour week basis) spent providing service to mitigate the veterinary shortage situation identified in the agreement.
2. Shortage Situation Service Changes:
  - a. Program participants are responsible for notifying NIFA of any changes in the service(s) being provided in the specified shortage situation during the three-year period. It is strongly recommended that program participants advise NIFA of proposed changes at least two months in advance to allow sufficient review and approval time. Failure to receive pre-approval for changes impacting the veterinary services provided may result in termination of the VMLRP contract, and the program participant may be subject to penalties as outlined in Section C, Paragraph 1 (b) of the contract.
3. Termination Report:
  - a. At the end of the term of the contract, the recipient and their supervisor will each submit a Termination Report NIFA. The report will address the following:
    - i. services provided,
    - ii. impact on the veterinary shortage situation,
    - iii. future plans,
    - iv. an assessment of the current state of veterinary services in the recipient's service area, adjacent service areas, or specialty area, and
    - v. any other information participants wish to share.

**SPECIAL NOTE:** A Termination Report is required from all awardees. This report is subject to review for completeness and must be approved by the VMLRP program staff prior to disbursement of the final payment.

## **PART VII. OTHER INFORMATION**

### **A. Use of Funds and Changes in Budget**

**Delegation of fiscal responsibility.** Unless the terms and conditions of the award state otherwise, awardees may not in whole or in part delegate or transfer to another person, institution, or organization the responsibility for use or expenditure of award funds.

### **Changes in the VMLRP Contract**

1. The permissible changes by the awardee in the approved contract shall be limited to minor changes that do not substantially impact or alter the spirit and intent of the agreement to mitigate a specific veterinary service shortage in a specific geographic and/or occupational situation. To ensure that all applications are reviewed in an equitable and consistent manner, a change in the shortage area the applicant proposes to serve will not be considered once an application has been reviewed by the peer review panel. If the awardee is uncertain as to whether a change complies with this provision, the question must be referred to the VMLRP program staff for a final determination.
2. Changes in Loan Repayment Schedule: Unless stated otherwise in the terms and conditions of award, changes in an approved loan repayment schedule must be requested by the awardee and approved in writing by the VMLRP program staff prior to instituting such changes.

### **B. Access to Review Information**

Copies of reviews, not including the identity of reviewers, and a summary of the panel comments will be sent to the applicant upon request 60-90 days after the review process has been completed.

### **C. Confidential Aspects of Applications and Awards**

When an application results in an award, it becomes a part of NIFA transaction records, which are available to the public. Information that the Secretary of Agriculture determines to be confidential, privileged, or proprietary in nature will be held in confidence to the extent permitted by law. Therefore, applicants should clearly mark any information within the application they wish to have considered as confidential, privileged, or proprietary. NIFA will retain a copy of an application that does not result in an award for three years. Such an application will be released only with the consent of the applicant or to the extent required by law. An applicant may withdraw at any time prior to the final action thereon.

### **D. Regulatory Information**

This program is not subject to the provisions of [Executive Order 12372](#), which requires intergovernmental consultation with state and local officials. Under the provisions of the [Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 \(44 U.S.C. Chapter 35\)](#), the collection of information requirements contained in this notice have been approved under [OMB Document No. 0524-0039](#).

### **E. Definitions**

Please refer to [7 CFR Part 3431, Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program](#), for applicable definitions for this program.

**F. Materials Available on the Internet**

Numerous tools and reference materials are available via the [VMLRP](#) web. The following listing represents a few selections available under the “[Applicant](#).”

1. Detailed Instructions Before You Start Your Application
2. Preparing and Submitting Your Application
3. Application Guide
4. Application Checklist
5. Choosing Your Veterinary Shortage Situation

**APPENDIX I: AGENCY CONTACTS**

**Programmatic Contact**

Name	Title	Email	Telephone	Fax
Robert Smith	National Program Leader	<a href="mailto:vmlrp.applications@usda.gov">vmlrp.applications@usda.gov</a>	1-202-445-3468	1-833-208-8205
Kathe Bjork	National Program Leader	<a href="mailto:vmlrp.applications@usda.gov">vmlrp.applications@usda.gov</a>	Not Available	1-833-208-8205
Marline Azevedo	VMLRP Program Coordinator	<a href="mailto:vmlrp.applications@usda.gov">vmlrp.applications@usda.gov</a>	1-816-401-7790	1-833-208-8205
Danielle Farley	Program Specialist	<a href="mailto:vmlrp.applications@usda.gov">vmlrp.applications@usda.gov</a>	Not Available	1-833-208-8205

**Loan & Administrative Contact**

Name	Title	Email	Telephone	Fax
Joseph Perez	Lead Policy Analyst	<a href="mailto:vmlrp@usda.gov">vmlrp@usda.gov</a>	1-202-445-5402	1-844-332-8008

**U.S. Postal Mailing Address:**

National Institute of Food and Agriculture  
 U.S. Department of Agriculture  
 P.O. Box 419205, MS 10000  
 Kansas City, MO 64141-6205

**Courier/Package Delivery Address:**

National Institute of Food and Agriculture  
 United States Department of Agriculture  
 2312 East Bannister Road, MS 10000  
 Kansas City, MO 64141-3061

## APPENDIX II: GLOSSARY OF TERMS

<b>Name</b>	<b>Acronyms</b>
Authorized Representative	AR
Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education reform Act of 1998	AREERA
Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance	CFDA
National Institute of Food and Agriculture	NIFA
Request for Application	RFA
Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program	VMLRP
United States Department of Agriculture	USDA

### APPENDIX III: DEFINITIONS

Refer to 7 CFR 3430 [Competitive and Noncompetitive Non-formula Federal Assistance Programs – General Award Administrative Provisions](#) for additional definitions.

Terms	Definitions
Contract/Service Agreement	Contract/Service agreement means the agreement, which is signed by an applicant and the Secretary for the VMLRP wherein the applicant agrees to accept repayment of qualifying educational loans and to serve in accordance with the provisions of NVMSA for a prescribed period of obligated service.
Fully Executed contract	The Secretary/Director or his/her authorized representative and the applicant sign the service agreement/contract
Lending Institution	A lending institution is an establishment that focuses on dealing with financial transactions. Organizations such as a bank, credit union, or finance company that makes loans.
New Application	This is an applicant, who was not previously awarded, that will provide veterinary service in a shortage situation
Renewal Application	This is an applicant that has provided veterinary service in a shortage situation and that completed a signed VMLRP contract.