## Bursary & Financial Policy

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<tr>
<th>Version Number</th>
<th>Date Approved by Frontline Board</th>
<th>Whom this Policy / Procedure applies to</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>TBC</td>
<td>Applicants onto the Frontline Programme</td>
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<td>Participants of the Frontline Programme during the qualifying year</td>
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Definitions

Throughout all Frontline Organisation Policies and Procedures the following terms are understood as follows:

The Frontline Organisation – this is the registered name of the organisation known as ‘Frontline’. The Frontline Organisation is registered in England and Wales as a company limited by guarantee (Registered Offices: 65 Kingsway, London, WC2B 6TD; Company Registration No: 09605966). The Frontline Organisation is also registered in England and Wales as a charity (Registered Offices: 65 Kingsway, London, WC2B 6TD; Charity Registration No: 1163194).

Applicant – this refers to any person who has applied to the Frontline Programme, from the moment that person’s application is lodged until the moment they formally enrol on the Programme.

Participant – this refers to any person enrolled on the Frontline Programme. A person is considered to be a Participant of the Programme from the moment they enrol on it, until the moment they successfully complete the second year in their designated Local Authority (irrespective of whether or not they completed the Master’s route in that second year).

The Frontline Programme or Programme - The Frontline Programme spans 26 months, running from the Summer Institute (July of joining year) to Programme graduation (September of year of graduation). During these 26 months, Participants in ‘Year 1’ of placement (September – August), also known as the 'qualifying year', undergo a Post-Graduate Diploma (PGDip) qualification worth 120 credits. In ‘Year 2’ (September – August) they have the option to undertake a further 60-credits to achieve a Master’s qualification. Leadership development elements are also built into the Programme throughout the 26 months.

Staff Member – this refers to any person employed by The Frontline Organisation, whether they be full time, part time, permanent or temporary employees, contractors, or casual agency staff.

Frontline Fellow – this refers to any person who has successfully completed the Frontline Programme.

* Please note that although this document refers to the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC), the procedures herein will also apply to any authorities that may replace or supplement these. In the same way, reference to particular HCPC documents should be interpreted as also referring to any later published documents that replace those mentioned in this document.

** Please note that the term ‘qualifying Participant’ in this document refers to a Participant in Year 1 of the Programme, during which they are training to become a qualified social worker.
1. **Introduction**

1.1 The Frontline Programme is committed to assisting Participants throughout their studies including financially. The Department of Education provides a bursary to qualifying Participants. Payment of the funds is subject to the Department of Education continuing its funding of the Frontline Programme.

1.2 The bursary is not a salary and does include benefits. Participants are student trainees for the duration of the first year of the Programme and at no time during the first Programme Year should a Participant hold himself or herself out as being an officer, employee or worker of the local authority or of Frontline.

1.3 Participants receive a bursary to cover all living costs and costs associated with completing the first year of the Frontline Programme. This includes travel to and from Recall Days and other requirements that are part of completion of the Frontline Programme.

1.4 Frontline cover all costs associated with tuition fees, and food and accommodation for the Summer Institute.

2. **Terms of Payment**

2.1 **To receive the bursary in instalments Participants must:**

- Remain enrolled and actively participating in the Frontline Programme
- Must ensure their attendance meets the requirement of the course.
- Must submit all assignments, attend all Recall Days and engage in the academic teaching.
- Must abide by the procedures and regulations of Frontline and of the local authority as applicable.
- Must provide Frontline with any evidence relating to their health and criminal convictions as reasonably requested by Frontline. Frontline will support the Participant in making the necessary arrangements to transfer to another local authority.

2.2 **Bursary Amount**

2.2.1 The Frontline bursary is £16,428 for 2017-18.

2.2.2 Frontline uses London Councils website to guide decisions about Inner and Outer London.

- Participants based in London will receive an Inner and Outer London weighting which will affect the bursary as below:
  - Participants based in the Inner London local authorities will be paid £19,207
  - Participants based in the Outer London local authorities will be paid £18,181.

2.2.3 If for any reason a Participant moves local authorities, their bursary may change to fit with the amount for that bracket.

2.2.4 Neighbouring boroughs to London such as Windsor & Maidenhead or Essex receive an outer London weighting.
2.3    Mode of Payment

2.3.1 Frontline disburses the bursary in quarterly installments according to the number of Participants in the local authority.

2.3.2 The local authorities pay Participants directly into their bank accounts. It is the responsibility of the local authority to ensure the bursary is disbursed in a timely fashion.

2.3.3 The bursary is paid in four equal instalments, quarterly in advance over the course of the first year.

2.4    Tax

The Bursary is not considered earnings by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC). Therefore the Bursary is not subject to income tax or national insurance contributions. However, Applicants should be aware this is open to review by HMRC and could change. Frontline will aim to keep Participants updated and clearly communicate any implications of changes.

Participants must take responsibility for their own tax affairs.

2.5    Time off during the Practice Learning Experience

Participants have 25 days during the first year of the Programme when they are not required to attend their practice learning experience (specific days have to be requested and agreed in advance by the Consultant Social Worker). These days are intended for personal relaxation / holiday etc.

These 25 days are not paid annual leave and are not a benefit of the bursary.

2.6    Student Loan

The bursary will not count as income that is subject to student loan repayments. However, Participants that have a student loan are responsible for contacting the Student Loan Company if required to complete a form evidencing current means of support.

2.7    Additional Financial Support while on the Programme

2.7.1 The bursary is intended to cover all living costs for the first year of the Frontline Programme.

2.7.2 Frontline recognises that additional financial assistance may be required to support individuals to complete the Summer Institute and the Frontline Loan Scheme is intended to support Participants cover expenses over that period.

2.7.3 Anoshe Waheed should be contacted in case access to the loan scheme is required. Anoshe.waheed@thefrontline.org.uk

3    Bursary Repayment

3.1    Withdrawal from a Frontline Programme:

3.1.2 The bursary is paid quarterly in advance. Should a Participant leave the Programme they would be required to return any bursary relating to the time period they were no longer on the Programme.

3.1.3 If the Participant leaves the Frontline Programme of his or her own volition during the first Programme Year, the Participant shall return to the local authority any advanced instalments
paid by the local authority that were intended to support him or her for the time period after the Participant’s subsequent withdrawal, such amount to be calculated on a pro-rata basis.

3.1.4 The Participant shall not be required to return any earlier Instalments that were intended to support him or her for time periods prior to the Participant’s withdrawal. For example, the first Instalment made in September 2017 will be deemed to cover the period 1 September 2017 to 30 November 2017. If the Participant leaves the Frontline Programme on 15 October 2017, the Participant will be required to return 50% of the amount received in September 2017.

3.1.5 The Relationship and Development Manager will issue a bursary repayment letter and a repayment plan will be agreed with the Participant. This would normally require the bursary to be repaid the following month but a longer repayment plan may be considered in cases of extenuating circumstances.

3.2 Extension of the Practice Learning Experience

3.2.1 Participants should be aware that if they fail to achieve the Postgraduate Diploma award following 12 months in the practice learning setting, and an extension of the practice learning experience is required (for example due absence of up to 30 days as per the Attendance, Transfer, Absence & Withdrawal Policy), Participants will not receive further bursary funding to cover the period of extension.

3.2.2 It is the responsibility of the Participant to ensure they are able to meet their financial commitments during this period.

3.3 Interruptions and Deferrals to the Following Year of the Frontline Programme

3.3.1 Participants who end or interrupt their practice learning experience due to illness or other personal circumstances will no longer be eligible to receive a bursary from the point at which a decision is taken to end or interrupt their practice learning experience.

3.3.2 If a decision is taken for the Participant to interrupt their practice learning experience but they still have academic assignments to complete, they will not be eligible to receive a bursary whilst they complete these.

3.3.3 Participants who are suspended pending a practice review meeting will no longer be eligible to receive a bursary from their last day in their practice learning experience agreement. If subsequently the decision of the panel is that they should be allowed to rejoin their unit or defer, they will receive a pro-rata additional bursary payment to cover the period of suspension in their next instalment.

3.3.4 In the event that the Participant has already received an advance disbursement for future months, the Relationship and Development Manager will issue a bursary repayment letter and a repayment plan will be agreed with the Participant. This would normally require the bursary to be repaid the following month but a longer repayment plan may be considered in cases of extenuating circumstances.

3.3.5 When a Participant rejoins the Programme the following year, they will be considered as any other Participant on the Programme and will receive pro-rata bursary payments under the same terms as any other Year 1 Participant in the same local authority.
4  Fees

Participants are not required to pay fees to complete the Postgraduate Diploma or Master's in the course of the Frontline Programme

5  Fee Repayment Following Early Exit

5.1 Participants agree upon accepting Frontline’s offer that they commit to completing the two year Programme.

5.2 Frontline reserves the right to recoup all or any fees, grants and costs excluding the bursary paid by Frontline on behalf of Participants or in relation to their participation on the Frontline Programme should they, having accepted this offer, leave the Frontline Programme before the two years are completed. The costs incurred could be up to £10,000 where a Participant withdrawing having obtained their Postgraduate Diploma and where there are no extenuating circumstances (for example ill health, a change in caring responsibilities or when a Participant has not been the subject of a concerning practice procedure).

6  Related Documents

This Policy should be read and applied in combination with the Participant Learning Experience Agreement.