



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Question: What is the policy if I want to move to half-time service with the National Health Service Corps?

Answer: The Affordable Care Act (P.L. 111-148) provided the NHSC the flexibility to allow Corps members to fulfill their service obligation through half-time clinical practice. This option is available to participants in the Scholarship Program and the Loan Repayment Program. HHS' Health Resources Service Administration's (HRSA) Bureau of Clinician Recruitment and Service (BCRS) administers the NHSC and has established the process by which Corps members can convert from full-time to half-time status. To be eligible to convert from a full-time service obligation to half-time you must complete the Full- to Half-Time Conversion Request form located on the NHSC web site at <http://nhsc.hrsa.gov/loanrepayment/halftime/halftimeconversionform.pdf>. Participants should be aware of the following:

- During a contract period, participants are only able to convert from full- to half-time service.
 - Once converted to half-time, Corps members MUST FULFILL their remaining obligation through half-time service. The NHSC does not have the authority to allow for a conversion from half-time to full-time service during the middle of a contract period.
 - This means that even if the employment contract changes back to full-time, clinicians will only receive half-time credit (i.e. 20 hours per week).
 - A participant wishing to convert from half-time to full-time must complete a contract (either an initial contract or a continuation contract) and may apply for a continuation contract under full-time service.
- Clinicians must wait 90 days from the NHSC contract start date before submitting a conversion request.
- In order to qualify for a conversion, a clinician must:
 - Have received approval from their site for a conversion (if a site does not approve, the conversion request will not be considered);
 - Be in good standing with his or her NHSC service requirements, i.e. up to date with service verification forms;
 - Be working at an NHSC-approved service site; and
 - Be a Federal employee or a Private Practice Assignee (Private Practice Option clinicians are not eligible).
- A conversion request must be made at least 60 days in advance of the requested conversion start date.
- Clinicians cannot switch to half-time service status until their conversion request is approved by the NHSC.
 - Participants are required to continue serving in full-time status until the conversion takes effect, or his or her service obligation will be extended to account for the full-time service not completed.
 - Switching to half-time without NHSC approval may be grounds for denying a conversion request.
- Once a conversion is approved and finalized, the participant MUST FULFILL the remaining obligation in half-time service.
 - If a Corps member is seeking a temporary conversion to half-time service, a "suspension" may be more appropriate.

FAQs provide current information on specific topics. An FAQ does not create or confer any rights for or on any person and does not operate to bind BCRS or the public. Applicable statutes and guidance's must be satisfied. The use of the word "must" means that something is required under the Public Health Service Act. For further information on this topic please contact the Division of Program Operations at (301) 594-4200 or gethelp@hrsa.gov. January 2011