

Public Interest Law Loan Forgiveness Fund

RULES

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Section 1. Statement of Purpose

The purpose of the *Public Interest Law Loan Forgiveness Fund (PILLFF)* of the USC School of Law shall be to provide financial assistance to graduates of the School of Law who obtain employment in the field of public interest law and who need assistance in repaying loans for legal education

Section 2. PILLFF Financial Assistance

a) A Person is eligible to be considered for PILLFF assistance if the person:

1. has graduated from the USC School of Law
2. files a written application for the grant with the PILLFF Committee
3. agrees to be continuously employed in the field of public interest law for two years after the effective date of an initial grant and for one year after the effective date of any subsequent grant; and
4. will be responsible for the full or partial repayment of qualified debt during the grant year.

b) A person employed in the field of public interest law within the meaning of the PILLFF if the person is employed to do legal work by an organization described in subsection 501 (c) 3 or 501 (c) 4 of the Internal Revenue Code or is employed by the State of South Carolina or one of its political subdivisions, and if the employment requires a Juris Doctor degree; provided, however, that the employment is not a judicial clerkship

c) Debt is “qualified debt” if it is debt incurred to pay the expenses of legal education and owed to an institution or governmental lender. Private debt owed to a family member or friend outside the framework of a regular lender is not a qualified debt.

d) No PILLFF assistance shall be used for any purpose other than to repay qualified debt.

e) An award of financial assistance shall be paid only to a person who has become a member of the SC Bar and who agrees to remain continuously employed in the public interest law field for a second year. The award will be paid directly to the lender upon receipt of a completed *Applicant’s Lender and Employment Verification and Certification Form*. This form will be sent by the Law School at the time of notification of an award.

f) in deciding whether to award PILLFF assistance and the amount of the assistance, the PILLFF Committee may consider any factors that the PILLFF Committee considers relevant, including but not limited to:

1. the amount of the applicant's qualified debt
2. the amount of the applicant's other debt
3. the amount of debt owed within the applicant's household
4. the amount of the applicant's income
5. the amount of income received in the applicant's household
6. the applicant's assets
7. household assets
8. household dependents
9. the nature of the applicant's employment
10. the connection between the applicant's long-term goals and the field of public interest law
11. the applicant's prior commitment to public interest law
12. the applicant's academic performance
13. the applicant's potential for future compensation, including the likelihood that the applicant will move quickly to much higher compensated employment
14. other available sources of qualified debt repayment assistance

g) Preference shall be given to recent graduates of the USC School of Law

h) Preference shall be given to those practicing public interest law in South Carolina

Section 3. Changed Circumstances and New Information

a) An applicant for PILLFF assistance shall file and amended application with the PILLFF Committee whenever necessary to ensure that the application is accurate. An application that was accurate when it was filed nevertheless is inaccurate if it fails to reflect material changed circumstances or material new information.

The deadline for receipt of an application shall be June 30th of each year. Applications received after June 30th shall be held until the following grant cycle. Updated information will be required

b) A recipient of PILLFF assistance shall notify the PILLFF Committee of change circumstances and new information that a reasonable person would take into account in deciding whether to alter or revoke PILLFF assistance.

Section 4. Repayment

a) If a recipient of PILLFF assistance fails to remain employed in the field of public interest law continuously for two years after the effective date of the award, the recipient shall repay all assistance received from PILLFF, except in the case of long term disability of the recipient or one of the recipient's dependents,

b) A recipient of PILLFF assistance shall repay any funds received because of the recipient's failure to comply with Section 3 of these Rules

c) A recipient of PILLFF assistance shall repay any assistance funds used for a purpose other than to repay qualified debt

d) A recipient of PILLFF assistance shall repay any assistance funds that must be repaid under any rules promulgated by the PILLFF Committee or under the terms of the particular grant

Section 5. Leave

a) A PILLFF recipient may take temporary leave from employment in the field of public interest law without violating the eligibility requirement of continuous employment in the field of public interest law.

b) A PILLFF recipient who takes a temporary leave from employment in the field of public interest law shall notify the PILLFF Committee in advance, shall not be eligible for grant payments for the period of the leave and shall repay any grant amounts received for the period of the leave.

Section 6. PILLFF Committee

a) The PILLFF shall be administered by the PILLFF Committee. The PILLFF Committee shall be appointed by the Dean of the Law School and shall consist of a representative of the major donors, a faculty member of the School of Law, a law student, and an attorney working in the field of public interest law.

b) The PILLFF Committee shall have absolute discretion to determine:

1. whether to award PILLFF assistance in a particular year
2. how many PILLFF assistance awards to give in a particular year
3. whether to award PILLFF assistance to an applicant
4. the amount of any PILLFF assistance
5. the method or methods of payment of any PILLFF assistance
6. whether to alter or terminate PILLFF assistance

c) The PILLFF Committee shall have the authority to make decisions by consensus, but may make decisions by majority vote.

d) The PILLFF Committee have the authority by majority vote to amend these Rules

Section 7 Disclaimer

PILLFF assistance creates no property interest in its recipient or in any other person. The PILLFF Committee may alter or terminate PILLFF assistance at any time. Nothing in these Rules, no other rule or action of the PILLFF Committee, the USC School of Law, or any person shall obligate the PILLFF Committee to make, pay on, continue, or renew any PILLFF assistance. Moreover, nothing in these rules, nor rule or action of the PILLFF Committee or the USC School of Law, and no oral or written statement by person shall provide any basis for a claim or any kind against the PILLFF Committee, the USC School of Law, or any person for breach of contract, promissory estoppel, violation of property or procedural rights, or otherwise.