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# AHEC SCHOLARS HANDBOOK

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**AHEC**  
SCHOLARS

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2023 – 2024

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***This handbook is provided for informational purposes only and should not be construed as the basis of a contract between a student and the University of Alaska Anchorage. Although every effort is made to ensure its correctness, regulations of the university and this program's requirements change from time to time during the period any student is attending the University of Alaska Anchorage; to the extent there is a conflict between this handbook and university policies, regulations, rules, or procedures, the university policies, regulations, rules, or procedures will control.***

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## What is AHEC and AHEC Scholars?

### What is AHEC?

The Area Health Education Centers (AHEC) are federally-funded programs dedicated to improving access to healthcare services via workforce development in their respective states. Almost every state and most territories have at least one AHEC Program Office. Alaska's AHEC Program Office is located in Anchorage at the University of Alaska Anchorage within the Alaska Center for Rural Health & Health Workforce. There are six regional AHEC centers located in Anchorage, Bethel, Fairbanks, Juneau and Nome. The Alaska AHEC addresses its mission by working in the following areas:

- Engaging Alaskans into health careers to grow our own health workforce
- Training health professions students by supporting experiential learning that occurs in rural communities or with underserved populations
- Retaining Alaska's health workforce by increasing access to and providing continuing education/continuing medical education (CE/CME) opportunities statewide

Alaska's AHEC runs healthcare exploration camps for middle and high school students, assists practicing providers with continuing education, provides exposure to rural communities via the AHEC Scholars Program, and cooperates with government, schools, non-profits and professional organizations to address issues related to healthcare training, recruitment and turnover.

### What is AHEC Scholars?

AHEC Scholars is a two-year program designed to supplement and broaden a student's healthcare training. An abbreviated form of the program, requiring half as many hours, is available to students enrolled in a degree or certificate program of less than 12 months duration. The Alaska AHEC Scholars program covers eight core topic areas related to the practice of healthcare (interprofessional education, behavioral health integration with primary care, social determinants of health, cultural competency, practice transformation, telehealth, community health workers and current and emerging health issues). Each year, students are required to complete 40 hours of classroom or online training (didactic) and another 40 hours of community-based experiential learning (CBEL) out in the field. Many students will complete their CBEL in a rural community, but there is also an option for working with underserved populations in urban centers. Students may be able to count some academic coursework towards meeting AHEC Scholars requirements.

## Who can participate?

Students must be living in Alaska and currently enrolled in a health career program. This includes certificate, associate, bachelor, and graduate programs. We may make exceptions on a case-by-case basis for students that are located in Alaska but enrolled in online health degree programs or located out of Alaska but enrolled in an online Alaska program. Pre-majors are not eligible.

## Application Process

1. Fill out the [application](#) form online. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis.
2. The Alaska AHEC Program Office will evaluate applications for eligibility, notify applicants of eligibility status as soon as possible, and send official acceptance letters in August.
3. If you are accepted into the program, you will be added to the Blackboard shell, where you can upload your registration forms. There are three tasks to complete:

- Scholars Agreement
- Media release
- Vaccinations
- Facial Photograph & Bio

Vaccination requirements will depend upon placement location. You may be requested to have any of the following:

- MMR
  - Varicella
  - TB test (job sites will require it to be within 12 months of training plus you traveling) Hepatitis B
  - TdaP
  - Recent influenza strains (within 12 months program activities)
  - COVID-19
4. Alaska AHEC staff will contact you for an on-boarding interview. This interview is to answer any of your questions, review the requirements, and discuss your goals, interests, and expertise.
  5. You will complete a CBEL plans survey. The information in the survey will be used to secure your placement.

6. Once your paperwork is complete, the Program Office will work with the AHEC Center in the region you are interested in. That office will contact you to work out arrangements for accommodations and site requirements.
7. As we get closer to the start of your CBEL, we will be in contact with you to work out details of travel and logistics.

## What is the timeline for completion?

Every student will have a different schedule, based on their academic requirements and the availability of host facilities. The schedule below is a generic outline, but will give you some idea of what to expect.

### Year 1:

1. Review the Getting Started tab on Blackboard and complete any required assignments
2. Complete 40 hours of community-based experiential learning by August 14 11:59PM
3. Complete 40 hours of didactic to complete your 40 hours by August 14 11:59PM
4. Receive stipend or reimbursement for travel and housing

### Year 2 (and students in 1 year programs):

1. Complete any new materials in the Registration and Orientation module including any new agreements
2. Complete the required didactic trainings by August 14 11:59PM
3. Complete 40 hours of community-based experiential learning by August 14 11:59PM
4. Finish the remaining didactic to reach your total of 40 hours by August 14 11:59PM
5. Receive stipend or reimbursement for travel and housing

## Costs

There is no tuition for the Alaska AHEC Scholars Program, but there are some costs associated with participating. For students who are completing their CBEL in a rural area, Alaska's AHEC will reimburse costs for the following:

- Transportation to and from your rural city/village (if applicable)
- One week of housing at your rural site (if applicable)

Alaska's AHEC will not cover the following:

- Food
- Activities or materials
- Ground transportation in the local area
- Background check expenses (if needed)
- Vaccinations (if needed)

## Benefits

- Unique, highly valuable experiences
  - CBEL can provide a once in a lifetime experience to improve understanding of the healthcare system in Alaska. In addition, there are cultural experiences, learning directly from community members who live the “Alaskan bush” lifestyle and Elders who are native to the land. There are also opportunities to engage in recreational activities just as the “locals” do.
- Sets you apart from other students
  - Not many students can say they have had this sort of an immersion experience in rural Alaska, especially when applying for graduate school programs or employment in rural/underserved communities, this experience provides you with a “leg up” and will help you bring something unique to professional and academic interview.
- Receive training on relevant and emerging issues outside of your academic program
  - The curriculum process takes time and in many cases, it’s difficult for academia to keep up with the rapidly changing healthcare system, especially in the current political environment we live in. The AHEC Scholars didactic requirements are designed to better prepare for the healthcare landscape you will be practicing in upon licensure by supplementing your curriculum with meaningful learning opportunities.
- Resume building
  - The Alaska AHEC Scholars program is nationally recognized and shows prospective employers that you have had a longstanding commitment to rural and underserved practice. In addition, the program provides opportunities for certifications and continuing education like Mental Health First Aid that will bolster your resume.
- Scholarship or travel support
  - Travel is expensive, and even more when it comes to village travel in Alaska! Without the travel support we provide, many students would never be able to afford this type of opportunity. We value your participation and want to do whatever we can to award you for the extra commitment you put in to be an AHEC Scholar. Every day we are forging community partnerships so we often have placement or housing options available exclusively to AHEC Scholars.

- National Recognition
  - As an AHEC Scholar, you are part of a national network! Being part of this community connects you with like-minded individuals from across the nation.
- Professional contacts with future employers
  - As you complete your CBEL, you are able to meet healthcare professionals and community members from your placement sites. These relationships will stick with you long after your tenure as a Scholar... it's the Alaskan way!
- Strong connections to other National and State programs like Strengthening Health Access Recruitment Program (SHARP) Loan Repayment
  - College is expensive, but there are loan repayment opportunities for health professions program graduates who choose to practice in rural or underserved communities. Being an AHEC Scholar makes you an attractive candidate for these programs!

## The Didactic

### Requirements

AHEC Scholars are required to complete a minimum of 40 hours per year of didactic learning. The didactic options are aligned with core topic areas which provide additional knowledge and skills designed to better prepare AHEC Scholars for rural and underserved practice:

- € **Interprofessional education:** (also known as interdisciplinary training) supports a coordinated, patient-centered model of health care that involves an understanding of the contributions of multiple health care professionals
- € **Behavioral health integration with primary care:** promotes the development of integrated primary and behavioral health services to better address the needs of individuals with mental health and substances use conditions by recognizing the importance of holistic healthcare
- € **Social determinants of health:** includes five key areas (determinants) of economic stability, education, social and community context, health and health care, and neighborhood and built environment, and their impact on health
- € **Cultural competency:** seeks to improve individual health and build health communities by training health care providers to recognize and address the unique culture, language and health literacy of diverse consumers and communities



- € **Practice transformation:** aims to fully support quality improvement and patient-centered care through goal-setting, leadership, practice facilitation, workflow changes, measuring outcomes, and adapting organizational tools and processes to support new team-based models of care delivery. Educational and training activities under practice transformation must target the specific skills and competencies needed to prepare students and practicing health professionals to effectively practice in a transforming health care system
- € **Telehealth:** which is the delivery and facilitation of health and health-related services including medical care, provider and patient education, health information services, and self care via telecommunications and digital communication.
- € **Community Health Worker:** which are frontline public health workers who have a close understanding of the community they serve. They serve as a liaison between healthcare services and their community. They often help link people to needed health information and services.
- € **Current and emerging health issues:**
  - Geriatrics
  - Chronic Disease
  - Trauma Informed Care
  - Oral Health
  - Substance Use Disorders
  - Suicide

Each of the topic areas has its own required training on Blackboard (except current and emerging health issues). There is a separate section for interprofessional education because we track those numbers separately. Under additional didactic there is a link to the didactic spreadsheet where you will find a wide variety of coursework that can be taken to meet the Alaska AHEC Scholars didactic requirements. You do not have to do all of the trainings on the spreadsheet. Rather, you can pick and choose which assignments interest you most. Different students will have different self-built curriculum. All assignments that are not required will be submitted here.

Each assignment has a point value which tells you the length of time the assignment requires; a 90-point assignment will take you 90 minutes to complete. One minute of instructional time is always equal to one point. Scholars need 2400 didactic points each year.

Assignments are available in a number of formats:

- Self-paced courses are available anytime and can be completed at your leisure
- Online courses are scheduled through an institution and must be completed at a specified time

- Correspondence courses are handled through the mail and involve either printed materials or CDs/DVDs
- In-Person trainings, which are listed under the “In-Person Training Opportunity” tab are conducted face-to-face.
- Multi-format courses are available in more than one medium
- By request are courses you must request with the training agency

AHEC Scholars is set up so all students complete the same 5 required modules/coursework and then students can complete different coursework to satisfy the remaining didactic requirements. Students can assemble any collection of modules they choose so long as they align with the core topic areas including conference sessions, elective coursework, train-the-trainers, etc. Most of the didactic offerings are available online but some may require face-to-face interaction. Not all courses will be accessible in all places. See the [AHEC Scholars Eligible Course List](#) to see possible electives at local institutions that may have eligible didactic hours.

It is important to note coursework and training required to complete the core curriculum of your academic program are not eligible to be counted toward your didactic requirements.

*\* if your program is less than two years, you will only complete 40 hours of didactic (including the required didactic) and 40 hours of CBEL during your one-year of eligibility*

## Didactic Checklist

At least 80 hours of online or classroom modules, including all of the following:

- € Getting Started and Orientation modules
- € 2400 points/minutes (40 hours) Year 1 September to August including the following required didactic:
  - Mental Health First Aid – Behavioral Health Integration with Primary Care
  - Culture is Medicine with Dr. Gary Ferguson – Cultural Competency
  - Attend a Grand Rounds event – Interprofessional Education
  - Introduction to Practice Transformation – Practice Transformation
  - Evidence Based Public Health Training Module 1: Overview – Social Determinants of Health
  - Northwest Regional Telehealth Resource Center (NRTRC) Telehealth 101
  - Alaska Primary Care Association: Community Health Worker Primer

- € 2400 points/minutes (40 hours) Year 2 September to August including any required didactic listed above that was not completed in Year 1.

## Community Based Experiential Learning

### Basic Requirements for Community Based Experiential Learning

“Community based experiential learning” (CBEL) is essentially field experience. Students will spend a total of 40 hours per year with a clinic, hospital, community organization, government agency, combination of, etc., learning how healthcare is provided in our rural and underserved communities. Alaska AHEC Scholars provides two tracks for community-based learning.

The **rural track** sends students outside of Anchorage, Fairbanks and Mat-Su to small towns and villages throughout Alaska. Small communities may only have one or two healthcare providers, so the scope of the job is very wide. Alaska AHEC will reimburse the costs for students’ transportation to and/from and housing for one week if needed.

The **urban underserved track** addresses city populations which suffer from lack of access to affordable or effective care. The CBEL takes place in Anchorage, Fairbanks, Palmer or Wasilla. Alaska AHEC pays a stipend but students will need to manage their own housing and food.

Unlike the didactic requirements, the core curriculum of your academic program are eligible to be counted toward your CBEL requirements.

Your hours need to be tracked on a log and uploaded under the CBEL section on Blackboard. If you submit other documentation to your academic program that may be sufficient.

### Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs)

HPSAs are designations that indicate health care provider shortages in primary care, dental health; or mental health. All of our eligible placement sites must be HPSAs. The best tool to use to check site eligibility is the [HPSA Address Look Up](#). As of September 1, 2020, Anchorage is a HPSA for Primary Care, Dental Health, and Mental Health. The Matanuska-Susitna Valley is a HPSA for Primary Care and Fairbanks is a HPSA for Primary Care and Mental Health.

## Community Partners

We are able to place students from Dutch Harbor all the way to Utqiaġvik. However, due to the flux of providers and lack of housing in the communities, facility participation at any given time varies. If you have a particular community or facility in mind, please request it on your CBEL Plans survey so we can work on organizing logistics early on. We are always looking to expand our network of community partners.

## Things to Know About Rural Alaska

### Phone Service

Your phone will most likely work just fine in any sites on the road system. The vast majority of rural Alaska is served only by GCI. All rural sites have landline phone service and you can borrow a phone in emergencies.

### Wi-Fi

Many rural communities do have Wi-Fi but it is often limited and unreliable for the entire community.

### Rural Healthcare

In many ways healthcare in Alaska is similar to healthcare in the rest of the U.S. The same drugs are available, the same basic treatments are practiced, and the health conditions you encounter are generally similar. Still, the state has some unique features:

- **Vast Geography:** Most parts of the state are not served by roads, so severely injured patients must be moved by air. Treatments are often delayed by distance and weather. The worst injuries (requiring treatment beyond the capabilities of a Level II trauma center) must be flown to Seattle.
- **High Risk Activities:** Alaskans are famously outdoor people, and lots of injuries go along with being in the wilderness. Expect to see broken limbs, head injuries, gunshot wounds, fishhooks, drownings, animal attacks, heatstroke, frostbite, etc.
- **High rates of diabetes:** Diabetes is a problem across the country but it's particularly acute here. Alaska Natives are descended from generations of people who had to make the most of every available calorie. With the recent arrival of massive quantities of sugar, Native communities suffer from high rates of obesity and related health problems. Obesity is a problem for many Alaskans, regardless of their genetic background, in part due to the sedentary lifestyle through our long, cold winters.

- **High rates of alcoholism:** Alcohol abuse is a problem across the state, and many Native communities ban it for that reason. Alaska has high rates of domestic violence, much of it fueled by drinking.
- **Mental health complications:** Alaska is among the states with the highest suicide rates in the United States. There are ongoing debates about why, but contributing factors include long, dark winters; historical trauma experienced in Native communities; widespread poverty and easy access to weapons.

## Packing

This list is hardly exhaustive, but here are a few of the things we suggest you bring.

### Essentials

- € Identification (check to see if your state driver's license meets the requirements of the Real ID Act)
- € Some cash—at least \$100
- € Groceries: depending on placement side, it might be cost effective to bring your own groceries, especially if you have dietary restrictions
- € Fresh fruit: access to fresh fruit in rural Alaska can be limited, it is a rule of thumb for Alaska AHEC to bring some fresh goodies as gifts for partners on the ground.

### Clothing

- € At least one summer outfit (dependent on season of travel and community)
- € Some winter clothing (heavy jacket, warm socks, etc.)
- € A wool hat is good to have. You can carry it in a pocket if you don't need it.
- € A hat that shades your face is also wise.
- € A variety of outfits for spring/fall weather
- € Job site appropriate clothes—check with site when placement is confirmed
- € Hiking shoes or boots

€ Rain gear & boots

#### Toiletries

€ Usual items for personal hygiene

€ Prescription and OTC medications

#### Other Items

€ Bug spray

€ Sunscreen

€ Portable entertainment (books, cards, games—some rural sites have limited entertainment)

## Dress Codes

In general, Alaskan workplaces are more relaxed about clothing than job sites in the Lower 48. Check with your preceptor to see if you should wear your profession's norm, urban business casual, rural business casual or something else.

## Housing

Housing depends on the community. We will almost always opt for the most cost effective option. It can be staff housing, a host family, a church, in the clinic, an AirBnB, etc. Most of the rural sites have electricity and running water. Laundromats are available. Please check directly with the AHEC Center of your destination to determine if there will be a need to bring bedding, and/or towels along with you.

## Alcohol

The drinking age throughout the state is 21, but aside from that alcohol regulations differ radically in different communities. Some villages ban alcohol altogether, some allow it under severe restrictions, and some permit it freely. Our advice to you is: don't. Don't bring it with you, don't buy it while you're there, and most definitely don't offer it to anyone. Alcoholism is a huge problem in Alaska and the penalties for breaking the local laws can be severe. Ignorance is no excuse.

## Tobacco

Tobacco is legal for anyone over 21 but is not allowed on the UAA campus.

## Marijuana

Alaska legalized marijuana in 2016 but it remains illegal at the federal level. Regardless, marijuana is not allowed on the UAA campus, cannot be carried aboard aircrafts and may be banned in some communities.

## Host Families

If you have a host family, call your host family before you arrive. It's polite to introduce yourself and thank them for hosting you. If you're flying out to a small village, consider bringing some fresh fruit as a gift; produce of all kinds is extremely expensive in the bush and fruit is a delicacy.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Academic Scheduling & AHEC Scholars

#### AHEC Scholars is a two year program. What does that mean?

For AHEC Scholars purposes, you need to be enrolled in the program for two continuous AHEC years. (An AHEC year begins on Sept. 1 and ends the following Aug. 31.) For example, if you join AHEC Scholars in spring of 2022, you would be considered a scholar for the period of Sept. 1, 2021 through Aug. 31, 2023. You would be able to transfer in coursework and community-based experience as far back as Sept. 1, 2021, and you would need to finish all AHEC Scholars requirements before Aug. 31, 2023.

You need to be enrolled in an academic program of study for the entire time you are also enrolled in AHEC Scholars, with some exceptions. See the questions below for details.

## If I'm enrolled in a healthcare program that lasts two years or less, can I still be an AHEC Scholar?

Yes. Students whose healthcare program lasts less than 12 months can complete their AHEC Scholars requirements in one year by doing just 40 hours of CBEL and 40 hours of didactic, including the required didactic trainings.

## I'm a part-time student doing a two year degree on a four-year schedule. Can I divide my AHEC Scholars requirements into smaller chunks so I don't have to do as much each year?

Unfortunately, no. AHEC Scholars requires a minimum of 40 hours of didactic coursework and 40 hours of CBEL each year. You would only be eligible during your last two years.

## Can I complete the entire AHEC Scholars program on an accelerated schedule?

No. AHEC will only count 40 hours of community based experiential learning and 40 hours of didactic coursework each year. You can do more if you wish, but it will not carry over to the next year. You must complete 40 hours within the timeframe of each year.

## I'm graduating soon. Can I finish my AHEC Scholars requirements after graduation?

You need to be enrolled in an academic program for at least part of each of the two AHEC years you are participating in.

If you are wanting to join Scholars now and will be graduating in a few months, you would not be eligible to enroll because you would not reach the second year of the Scholars program. Unless you are in a one year program.

If you are already in your second year and will be graduating before the end of August that is acceptable. For example, if you graduate in May, you can still finish up your AHEC Scholars requirements for the year by August.



## When do I receive my stipend/travel reimbursement?

Stipends and reimbursements are issued after the 40 hours of didactic and 40 hours of CBEL are completed each year. Please make sure your financial information is updated in UAOnline to ensure you receive your stipend.

## Community Based Experiential Learning

### What if I want to work in an urban area?

You can, as long as your experience involves working with an underserved population. We have placed Scholars at qualified facilities and organizations in Anchorage, Wasilla, Palmer and Fairbanks before.

### What if I already live in a rural area?

If you live in a rural area, your clinicals and placements in your town will count towards your CBEL and you won't need to travel. You may have the opportunity to travel to another rural community or an urban center to complete your CBEL if you wish. For both of these options we would pay for the travel to/from the cities and one week of housing.

### Can I request a specific placement site?

Yes. You can note in your CBEL plans survey that you're interested in a particular healthcare facility or contact us directly to let us know. We do our best to accommodate students' interests, but we can't always match people with exactly where they want, so we can't absolutely promise you'll get to travel there.

### What if I have a conflict with my placement site or host?

First, try to be diplomatic and understanding. Many students encounter culture shock when arriving in their placement sites for the first time. It may be something you can talk through.

If you can't resolve the conflict through dialogue, contact your local regional AHEC Center and see if they can mitigate the issue which may include a different placement site or housing within the same community. (This is rarely possible, but has been done in the past.)

Finally, if nothing else works, call the Alaska AHEC Program Office and we will happily assist with getting you back home.

## I work in a qualified healthcare facility. Can I count my work hours as community based experiential learning?

Yes! You can count your work hours as long as they occur during the same academic years that you are enrolled in AHEC Scholars and they serve a rural and/or underserved populations. AHEC defines an academic year as the period between September 1 and August 31.

## What if the facility offers to hire me?

Congratulations! Alaska's AHEC has no rules about employment with one of our partners. Be advised, though, that you must be enrolled in an academic program in order to be an AHEC Scholar. If you drop out of school, you will have to drop out of AHEC Scholars.

## Didactic

## The curriculum says we cover “current and emerging health issues.” What does that mean?

The topics covered under Current and Emerging Health Issues were specifically chosen for Alaska and include:

- Substance Use Disorders, particularly opioids
- Chronic Diseases, such as diabetes and other obesity-related conditions
- Geriatrics
- Suicide
- Oral Health
- Trauma Informed Care and other considerations that go along with it, such as Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), resilience, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD), etc.
- COVID-19

## Some of the coursework requires registration and/or fees. Do I have to pay to take these classes?

It is possible to meet all the AHEC Scholars requirements using only free resources, but the website also links to some courses which charge fees. AHEC sets aside some money to help

students pay for course fees; the limit is generally \$100 per student per year. But sometimes additional funds are available on a case by case basis. Contact the AHEC Program Office for more information.

Many of the online courses require you to create your own username and password. In most cases, it is a free sign-up process for which you only need an email address.

## Eligibility

### When is it too late to be accepted into the current cohort?

The general rule is that applications are accepted on a rolling basis through UAA spring break of each academic year. Everyone who applies prior to spring break (usually 2<sup>nd</sup> week of March) will have their start date retroactive to September 1 and be in the current cohort (this is a slightly accelerated schedule). Everyone who applies after spring break will have their year 1 begin in September 1 later in the year. There are always exceptions to the rule so contact us if you have questions.

### If I am located in Alaska but in an outside of Alaska online health program, am I eligible?

Yes, but it has to be understood that we will not organize clinical placements or rotations for your academic program. We will only be arranging CBEL experiences of up to 40 hours with no guarantees that it will satisfy competencies for academic program requirements.

### If I am not located in Alaska and not enrolled at an Alaska institution but want a rotation in Alaska, am I eligible?

Currently the Alaska AHEC is only able to schedule one week long rotations for Alaska AHEC Scholars exclusively. If you are interested in seeing Alaska healthcare first hand you may be interested in [Rural Immersion of the North \(RIIN\)](#)! If you are interested you can [complete this form](#).

### If I am not yet admitted to the full major (still pre-major) am I eligible for AHEC Scholars?

Unfortunately, we are not able to accept students who are currently pre-majors however we might have some suggestions for alternative opportunities for you. Please reach out to Alaska's AHEC if you have any questions.

## Stipends, Contact Hours and Other Benefits

### What happens if I start AHEC Scholars but can't finish?

We hope that everyone who begins the program will be able to complete it successfully, but we recognize that life doesn't always work out that way. If you know you will not be able to complete a particular set of requirements, please get in touch with Alaska's AHEC as soon as you can. We have some flexibility in scheduling and curriculum content, so we may be able to work around the problem. If you drop out of the program, you will forfeit any stipends or travel reimbursement. If you have already received a stipend and fail to meet your obligations you may owe the stipend back to the Alaska's AHEC.

### How do scholarships and travel reimbursements work?

Students who complete an urban underserved CBEL will receive a \$500 scholarship after they complete all of the AHEC Scholar requirements for the year. Students who complete a rural CBEL will be reimbursed for their travel to and from the site and housing (for up to 40 hours of placement). If the travel reimbursement is less than the \$500, the difference will be paid out in a stipend. Additionally, if students would like AHEC to pay for their travel up front, you must complete all 40 hours of the didactic requirement before traveling. Scholarships and reimbursements will only be paid after the 40 hours of didactic and 40 hours of CBEL is completed for the year. You will not receive a scholarship or reimbursement if AHEC funds your trip.

### Does the travel reimbursement provide food or travel once I'm in the rural area?

The costs eligible for reimbursement include transportation to and from the rural location and one week of lodging. Alaska's AHEC will not cover lodging beyond one week, food, incidental costs like activities or materials or transportation within the local area around the site.

## Can I count my CBEL as contact hours towards my academic program?

That's between you and your academic program. AHEC does not provide any certification that you may have spent a given number of hours in a workplace setting or completed a specific set of tasks. You may be able to have staff at the facility sign off on your requirements, but it is up to you to arrange that.

Talk to your academic advisor or program faculty before trying to set up any kind of credentialing, and recognize that staff at the healthcare facilities are under no obligation through Alaska's AHEC to fill out any paperwork for the student. The best way to coordinate experiences that count toward your program requirements is working directly with program faculty.

## Does Alaska's AHEC Scholars offer any benefits when it comes to applying for scholarships/internships/loan repayment program, etc.?

We can write you a letter of recommendation or serve as a reference. Alaska's AHEC does offer information on scholarships and other financial aid related to healthcare. See our Health Careers in Alaska website for a good place to start.

In addition, the [Alaska SHARP loan repayment program](#) has partnered with the Alaska AHEC to assure our Scholars are recognized for their works as an AHEC Scholar when they apply for the SHARP Program.

## Our Expectations for Scholars

### What are the rules for completing your requirements at the placement site?

Most of the rules that apply to students are set by healthcare facilities, not by our office. You will need to follow [HIPAA Laws](#) and any rules established by the placement site.

All students are expected to behave professionally in the workplace. There may be a dress code (see the chapter about packing). Additionally, be respectful and appreciative of your host family and remember they are accommodating you at no cost. In the same light, if you are

receiving donated housing or if Alaska's AHEC is helping pay for lodging expenses, be aware of and follow all policies. Students are responsible for any damages that occur during their stay.

## What about the online/in-person coursework?

In general, we follow the student code of conduct established by the [University of Alaska Anchorage](#). Most of this is common sense – don't plagiarize, harass people, commit crimes or abuse drugs. If you are working or housed at UAA, the code is strictly enforced. If you are doing coursework provided by another school or agency, they likely have their own rules governing student conduct.

## What are my Title IX rights and resources?

The University of Alaska is an affirmative action/equal opportunity employer and educational institution and prohibits illegal discrimination against any individual. The University of Alaska and the Affiliate subscribe to the policy of equal opportunity and will not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, citizenship, age, sex, physical or mental disability, status as a protected veteran, marital status, changes in marital status, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, parenthood, sexual orientation, gender identity, political affiliation or belief, genetic information, or other legally protected status. The University of Alaska's commitment to nondiscrimination, including against sex discrimination, applies to students, employees, and applicants for admission and employment. Both institutions shall abide by these principles in the administration of this agreement and neither institution shall impose criteria which would violate the principles of non-discrimination. Both parties agree to comply with Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and related regulations, and further shall comply with all applicable federal and state laws, rules, regulations, and Executive Orders. The University is required to follow Board of Regents' Policy and University Regulation regarding harassment and discrimination reporting and investigation, regardless of where the alleged conduct occurs; Affiliate agrees to cooperate with any related processes, including interim measures and investigation. Contact information, applicable laws, and complaint procedures are included in the University of Alaska's statement of nondiscrimination available at <https://www.alaska.edu/nondiscrimination>. See the University Sponsored Off-Campus Programs and Research Activities web page at <https://www.alaska.edu/equity/title-ix/student-placement-guidelines/> for further information.

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