

FY2023 ICCB PATH Program FAQ

Updated

8.30.26

1. Q: Are student financial supports like exam fees, certification fees, practicum stipends, background, and drug testing fees allowable?

A: Yes, stipends and other forms of financial assistance may be offered to students with financial barriers to participating in eligible programs. Stipends may be granted to students to cover expenses related to their participation in the program. However, participants might be required to fulfill a mandatory 5-year service commitment mandated by the Federal Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). Failure to complete this service period may result in a requirement to repay the funds. **Note:** We are still working with HFS and CMS to determine how this commitment applies to the community colleges and your students.

Any financial assistance offered through this grant should be done so by first exhausting other financial aid resources (Pell, MAP, etc.), when applicable.

2. Q: Can Rural Health funds pay for construction/renovation costs?

A: No, new construction and building expansion is not an allowable expense under the Rural Health Transformation Project. However, funds can be used for minor renovations, equipment upgrades, or retrofitting within existing buildings, provided these improvements directly link to program goals.

3. Q: Is food an allowable purchase if we have a full-day training?

A: Food and beverages provided during grant-supported trainings or meetings may be allowable when they are necessary to support the activity and permitted by the terms of the NOFO. Generally, but not exclusively, ICCB considers these costs appropriate only for trainings or meetings that are at least five hours in duration and span a customary meal period.

4. Q: Past discussion indicated that we could retroactively apply expenses to these grants. Given that the grant period began 8/1 but awards/applications occur later, what expenditures are eligible for retroactive reimbursement, and what risk does a college assume by incurring those costs before award?

A: Funding rules from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) explicitly list pre-award costs as an unallowable expense across all program elements, and all spending

must occur within an approved budget period. For this reason, we the start date of the REACH and ROOTS opportunities is now September 1, 2026.

- 5. Q: Can Student Success Coach services include students who have identified a healthcare pathway but have not been formally admitted to a selective Health Sciences program?**

A: Yes

- 6. Q: How strongly must every proposed activity tie directly to maternal care and substance-use treatment? Can a college fund broader eligible healthcare program capacity if the overall project meaningfully addresses those two priority areas?**

A: While we strongly encourage the development of maternal care and substance abuse programs, colleges maintain full flexibility to develop and support a variety of healthcare programs with these funds. Grant funds should ultimately be tied to activities that best align with each college's unique program and community needs.

- 7. Q: We would like to further develop our healthcare apprenticeships with these programs. Would it be allowable to use funds to reimburse businesses/employers that are sponsoring apprentices?**

A: Yes, colleges can use funds to reimburse employers who sponsor apprentices, provided the reimbursement complies with federal cost principles and explicitly supports work-based learning pathways mapped to the grant's goals.

- 8. Q: How should colleges distinguish activities between ROOTs and REACH when the same eligible healthcare program or institutional resource could potentially benefit both?**

A: The cleanest way to distinguish activities is to map out which healthcare programs and occupations each opportunity is supporting. If an institutional resource, such as a software program, updated lab, or specialized equipment, benefits both opportunities, you will need to split the costs across both grants based on a documented proportional ratio. Also keep in mind that funds from REACH can only be used to support the six priority programs. All other healthcare programs most likely fall under the ROOTS opportunity.

- 9. Q: For REACH, are occupational therapy programs allowed? Our Occupational Therapy faculty find that often when Physical Therapy is specified, Occupational Therapy is included but not mentioned.**

A: Occupational Therapy is not an eligible program for REACH. However, Occupational Therapist Assistant (510803) can be supported with funds from ROOTS, as it is included on the approved healthcare program list.

- 10. Q: For ROOTS, Substance Abuse/Addiction Counseling is listed as Prioritized and Weighted. We don't offer pathways that align to that CIP code because those jobs require master's degrees. Would other mental health programs that include substance abuse training but don't match that CIP code also be considered Prioritized and Weighted?**

A: No, to assist HFS in meeting the goals they proposed to Federal CMS, we are specifically prioritizing Substance Abuse/Addiction Counseling (511501). Students who graduate from this program can qualify for a variety of entry-level clinical, support, and administrative jobs. Additionally, students with an Associate Degree in Substance Abuse or Addiction counseling can work as a Certified Alcohol and Other Drug Counselor (CADC), if they pass the state exam and complete supervised hours. However, other mental health programs are most likely on the approved programs list and can still be supported with ROOTS funds.

- 11. Q: Can ROOTs fund equipment and simulation resources that enhance maternal-health or substance-use competencies within an existing nursing program, rather than requiring a separate maternal-health or substance-use program?**

A: Yes. While we do strongly encourage colleges to develop maternal health and substance abuse programs, colleges should purchase resources that best meet the needs of their individual programs and communities.