



## BHMT Individual Stipend Program Q&A for Clients

Are you in school or thinking about going to school? As a BHMT-eligible employee, you are eligible to participate in programs which can help to advance your career at KP.

This FAQ provides you with an overview of the Individual Stipend Program and will help you better understand what is expected of you during this program.

### Q. What is the Individual Stipend Program (ISP)?

A. When an employee reduces his or her regular work schedule to participate in an accredited program, stipend can be used to replace some or all of their lost income (up to 16-hours per pay period in wages). This payment is paid outside of your department's budget through BHMT, so your department will not be charged for your time off work.

### Q. Can Per Diem employees receive an Individual Stipend?

A. No. You must be full- or part-time employee (working at least 20 hours or more) who has completed their probationary period.

### Q. Is my manager expected to release me to attend class and/or study?

A. Although, managers make every effort to release employees to participate in the Individual Stipend Program, this is not always possible. You may want to work with your manager to develop a potential release plan.

### Q. Why is ISP important?

A. The goal of the Individual Stipend Program is to provide employees with class and/or study time to assist them in attaining their educational and career goals as well as to assist KP in filling high-demand positions. The ISP is strongly supported by KP leadership and is aligned with the mission of KP's Regional LMP Workforce Planning and Development Program to ensure that KP's workforce is the most stable, highly-skilled, and highly-trained.

### Q. How many hours are awarded by the ISP?

A. The ISP will replace up to 16-hours per pay period for employees to use to attend school and/or study.

### Q. Do I have to use all 16-hours per pay period?

A. No. You have up to 16-hours per pay period, but you may use fewer hours. This release time schedule should be coordinated in advance with you and each of your managers.

### Q. What happens if my manager says that they can't afford to give me time off?

A. If your manager is unable to release you because of operational demands, contact your local HR consultant and labor partner to find an alternate plan.

### Q. How do I know if I have been approved for ISP?

A. You are required to have your manager's approval before you are eligible to participate in the program. Your manager will receive an email at the time you apply to the program to confirm that they have approved your participation, but this is not an automatic approval. You are still required to submit supporting documentation to BHMT before your application can be routed for final approval. Once your application has received approval, you will receive another email from BHMT confirming your status. Only after receipt of this second email are you able to reduce your work schedule and begin receiving stipend payments. Any ISP time taken before the application has received approval will not be paid by BHMT.

### Q. How can I check on the status of my ISP application?

A. You can check the status of your application application by logging into their MyHR account and locating your Individual Stipend application.

### Q. Will I be responsible for ensuring my attendance in my academic program?

A. Yes, you will be required to show proof of attendance through class schedules and grades.

### Q. How long does the Individual Stipend last?

A. Eligible participants have a lifetime maximum of 1900 hours to use toward their Individual Stipend. You may use the Individual Stipend until you exhaust your lifetime maximum of 1900 hours. You must be enrolled in an accredited program and be formally accepted into the Stipend program to make use of it. If you don't use up the



hours available for a given certificate or degree, you may NOT transfer them to another program. You must reapply for the Stipend for each new certificate or degree that you pursue.

**Q. Will I have to work with HR to adjust my status, benefits, vacation, etc. as a result of my reduced work schedule?**

**A.** Yes. When using Stipend time, it is encouraged that you confirm with your regional HR Representative that you will remain fully benefited and your participation in the ISP will not negatively affect your status or result in loss of benefits.

**Q. How do I apply for the ISP?**

**A.** To apply for ISP, you must have your manager's approval, meet with your Career Counselor, meet with your Academic Success Coach and have your learning resource plan, acceptance, and class schedule available.

**Q. How long does the application process take?**

**A.** Once you have completed your application and uploaded your documents, it takes 4-6 weeks to be reviewed by BHMT. BHMT will notify you and your manager by email whether you have been approved or denied.

**Q. How many ISP hours are available for each type of certificate or degree?**

**A. Degree/Certification = Max Stipend Hours**

AA/AS = 640	PhD = 960
BA/BS = 1280	Certification = 960
MA/MS = 640	RN-BSN = 480

**Q. Why do the maximum hours available for all degrees total more than 1900 hours?**

**A.** We allocated ample hours per degree type to accommodate those times where you may be required to pursue multiple degrees/certificates of the same type over the span of your career. But we also want to make sure the ISP is available to all our beneficiaries that need to access it – so no more than the allotted hours per degree type or 1,900 total lifetime maximum stipend hours will be awarded even if you aren't finished with your educational program. It is very important to determine how best to utilize your stipend hours so you still have hours available when you really need them. Your KP Supervisor, your BHMT Career Counselor, and your Academic Success Coach are here to help you plan how to best utilize your benefit during your entire educational journey.

**Q. Am I guaranteed the full 1900 hours?**

**A.** Yes, as long as you are in a qualifying academic program, attending school, and reducing your KP work schedule. You may not continue receiving stipend payments if you:

- Change schools or programs without a new stipend application
- Don't reduce your KP work schedule
- Fail to complete the bi-annual renewal process
- Go on a leave of absence
- Don't have the minimum KP paid hours
- No longer have your manager's support to participate
- Transfer from an eligible union position to a non-represented position
- Are in a non-qualifying union position
- No longer work for Kaiser Permanente
- Do not show continued significant progress in your academic program
- Fail to meet other requirements determined by the BHMT and regional coordinators

**Q. Do the stipend hours have to be on the same day or at the same time as the class?**

**A.** No, but the stipend hours have to replace hours that you were previously scheduled to work.

**Q. If I reduce my KP work schedule, can I pick up extra hours or shifts?**

**A.** No. The Stipend Program is intended to provide time off, so you can attend class and/or study without losing income. It is not intended to provide additional or supplemental income.

**Q. What if I run out of stipend hours before my academic program is over?**

**A.** No more than 1900 hours will be awarded even if you aren't finished with your academic program. That's why it is important to determine how you will use your stipend so you still have hours available when you really need them. **For example:** During clinicals, you should work closely with your manager to schedule your time off as well as your BHMT Academic Success Coach to determine how to receive support throughout your entire academic program.

**Q. Can I "cash in" my remaining stipend (wage replacement) hours and use them for other purposes?**

**A.** No. Stipend hours may only be used toward wage replacement while you are eligible to receive BHMT benefits and are enrolled in an educational program at an accredited institution. They can not be "cashed in" for any other purposes.