Medical Expense Assistance Program to assist first responders and frontline healthcare workers to open Dec. 9

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The North Dakota Medical Expense Assistance Program (MEAP) applications are scheduled to open Wednesday, Dec. 9 at 10:00 AM CST and will close at 5:00 pm on Sunday, Dec. 20, 2020 CST.

The MEAP is a new program designed for first responders and frontline healthcare workers and provides financial assistance for COVID-19 related expenses. Eligible applicants may qualify to receive funding up to $5,000.

“Healthcare workers and first responders are on the front lines of our fight against the coronavirus, and this program provides another measure of relief for those who become COVID-positive,” Gov. Doug Burgum said. “We’re deeply grateful for their tireless service and critical roles in saving lives and caring for our citizens during this pandemic.”

The North Dakota Legislative Budget Section reallocated federal CARES Act dollars on December 3, 2020, to the Department of Commerce for MEAP to provide medical expense assistance to support first responders and healthcare workers during the COVID-19 pandemic. The state of North Dakota is required by federal regulations to spend the dollars by the end of 2020.

To be eligible for MEAP, an applicant must:

- be a first responder or frontline healthcare worker infected with COVID-19 (employee or volunteer) per Executive Orders 2020-12 and 2020-12.2, and
- have received a positive COVID-19 medical diagnosis, and

- have been denied a claim, or have not applied, for workers' compensation benefits from WSI for COVID-19.

Applicants may be eligible for $1,000 award if they meet the above eligibility requirements. They may be eligible for an additional $4,000 if they did not have private health insurance coverage at the time they received treatment for COVID-19.

"Healthcare workers and first responders are on the front line of COVID-19 and Commerce understands the importance of supporting these workers," Interim Commerce Commissioner, Shawn Kessel said. "We appreciate the North Dakota Emergency Commission and the Budget Section of the legislature for approving the funds necessary to create this program."

Applications will be considered on a first-come, first-served basis. Funding will be approved if the application meets all criteria and funding is available. Contact MEAP Hotline at meap@nd.gov or 701-328-6004 with questions.

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