



# HEALTH OFFICERS COUNCIL OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Email: [hoc.secretariat@phabc.org](mailto:hoc.secretariat@phabc.org)

## Public Health Bursaries Frequently Asked Questions

### 1. Who is eligible to apply?

The bursaries are open to students engaged in (or accepted into) **post-graduate studies** in a field of public health, community health, or population health practice (e.g., public health nursing, nutrition, environmental health).

Undergraduate students, including those currently completing a BSN or MD, are **not eligible** unless they have been accepted into a post-graduate program as described above.

Preference is given to residents of BC engaged in full-time studies.

### 2. What documents are required in the application package?

The application package should include the following documents, combined into 1 PDF document for submission:

- Completed application form
- Curriculum Vitae (Resume) -max. 3 pages
- Proof of enrollment or acceptance into a post-graduate program
- Minimum one, preferred two reference letters
- Personal letter (max. 250 words) describing future goals, leadership, and views on public health challenges

### 3. How should I submit my application?

All application materials must be combined into a single electronic submission (PDF preferred) and emailed to [hoc.secretariat@phabc.org](mailto:hoc.secretariat@phabc.org) by the deadline. Multiple or incomplete submissions may not be reviewed.

### 4. How should reference letters be submitted, and who can write them?

Applicants are responsible for collecting their reference letters and including them as part of their complete application package; letters should not be sent directly to the Secretariat. A maximum of two reference letters may be submitted. At least one letter must be from a more senior person in your current place of employment. Other referees may include senior colleagues, supervisors, or academic mentors who can speak to your qualifications and potential in public health.



**5. What should reference letters include?**

Reviewers look for letters that highlight:

- Excellence in performance and leadership ability
- Commitment to public/community health, especially in BC or rural contexts
- Specific examples from professional or academic work
- Suitability for graduate-level study and potential for future contributions

**6. Is there a length requirement for reference letters?**

There is no strict format or page limit. A well-developed letter of 1–2 pages is generally most effective.

**7. Do I need to be currently enrolled, and what can be used as proof of enrollment?**

No. Applicants do not need to be currently enrolled at the time of application. You may apply with either proof of current enrollment (e.g., registration confirmation) or an offer/acceptance letter from a qualifying post-graduate program if your studies have not yet begun.

**8. Can late applications be accepted?**

Applications must normally be submitted by the posted deadline (August 31). Exceptions are rare and only considered under special circumstances, with prior approval.

**9. How are applications evaluated?**

Applications are assessed based on a combination of factors, including:

- Demonstrated excellence and leadership
- Commitment to public/community health practice
- Relevance of current or intended work to public health in BC
- Strength of reference letters
- Clarity of future goals and potential to contribute to public health capacity

**10. When will successful applicants be notified?**

Applicants will be notified by October 31, and funds are disbursed by December 31.

**11. How are bursary funds distributed?**

Funds are typically disbursed to the recipient's educational institution.

**12. What if my institution is not a registered Canadian charity?**

You must identify a registered Canadian charitable organization to receive the funds on your behalf.

**13. Are there any obligations if I receive the bursary?**

Recipients are expected to acknowledge acceptance of the award and are encouraged to continue contributing to public health practice in BC.