

California Rural Health Transformation (CalRHT) Program

Expand and Support Rural Workforce Capacity: Family Medicine–Obstetrics (FM-OB) Fellowship Award Program

Budget Period 1

What It Means for Tribal Health Partners

This program expands access to high-quality maternity and perinatal care in rural and Tribal communities by training more family physicians in advanced obstetrics. Through the CalRHT Tribal Set-Aside, Tribal Health Programs (THPs) can receive non-competitive funding to build the capacity needed to serve as FM-OB rural training sites.

Why this Program Matters for Tribal Communities

Many rural and Tribal communities face shortages of obstetric providers and long travel distances for maternity care. By training family physicians in advanced obstetrics where rural patients already receive care, this program works to improve maternal and infant health outcomes and build lasting obstetric workforce capacity in Tribal communities.

Program Leadership and Key Partners

- Department of Health Care Access and Information (HCAI) leads the CalRHT program and the FM-OB Fellowship Award Program, part of the Transformative Care Model initiative.
- California Rural Indian Health Board (CRIHB) is HCAI's contracted Tribal liaison, providing technical assistance to THPs before and after award.

Eligibility: Who Can Participate

- Rural THPs: which have at least one clinic located in an HRSA-designated rural area with an onsite licensed clinician practicing at that site.
- Urban-located, rural-serving THPs: which have no rural clinic sites but have at least one clinic with an onsite licensed clinician where at least 50% of patients are rural residents.

How Tribal Health Programs Participate

Your THP does not run or employ the fellowship. Instead:

1. **A sponsoring institution operates the Fellowship:** A graduate medical education (GME) sponsoring institution manages the fellowship, employs fellows, and oversees curriculum. FM-OB fellowships typically last one year.
2. **THPs serve as rural training sites:** Your THP serves as a rural training site where fellows provide patient care and receive advanced obstetrics training. Your site must serve at least 50% of patients who are rural residents, using the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Rural Health Grants Eligibility Analyzer and confirmed by HCAI.

3. **Tribal Set-Aside funds** support THP's training sites and program capacity. The funds do not support fellows' individual salaries, stipends, or benefits, which are managed separately by the sponsoring institution.

Benefits for Tribal Health Programs

- Receive non-competitive funding through the Tribal Set-Aside, no scoring or ranking of applications
- Bring family medicine with obstetrics training and physician presence into your community, where your patients already receive care
- Grow your own pipeline, fellows who train in rural and Tribal settings are more likely to stay and practice there
- Strengthen your obstetric and maternal health capacity without having to build or accredit a fellowship yourself
- Build and deepen regional relationships with GME institutions and rural care networks

How to Get Started

1. **Confirm your eligibility category.**
 - **Rural THPs** may choose FM-OB as one of three Set-Aside options; rural-serving, urban-located THPs may choose FM-OB only.
 - **Urban-Located, Rural-Serving THP** may select FM-OB only
2. **Check your Rural Status.** Use the HRSA Rural Health Grants Eligibility Analyzer to determine rural status. Link: <https://data.hrsa.gov/topics/rural-health/rural-health-eligibility>
3. **Explore a Sponsoring Partnership:** Identify an existing or aspiring FM-OB fellowship sponsoring (GME) institution that may be able to place fellows at your site. A confirmed partnership, letter of intent, or memorandum of understanding (MOU) is not required when you submit the initial Tribal Set-Aside application. **CRIHB can assist THPs in making connections** with sponsoring institutions. Partner lists will be finalized after FM-OB grant subawards.
4. **Define your Training-Site Role.** Begin discussing potential fellow activities, supervision, scheduling, and site capacity with the sponsoring institution. A letter of intent or MOU may be developed later and is not required for the initial application.
5. **Apply through the Tribal Set-Aside.** Complete the short FM-OB section of the Tribal Set-Aside application. CRIHB and HCAI can help throughout the application process.

Support and Contact Information

- **CRIHB:** email CalRHT.ta@crihb.org for technical assistance with eligibility, finding a sponsoring partner, and applying.
- **Questions?** email: info@calruralhealth.org | call: 855-225-7487
- Please review the Tribal Set-Aside Grant Guide and Request for Application (RFA) for extended details on the CalRHT Grant Funding Opportunity Website: <https://hcai.ca.gov/rural-health/calrht/funding/>

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