RNTAP FAQs

A. Program Overview and Features

What is the purpose of RNTAP?
Duke University Health System (DUHS) and the Duke University School of Nursing (DUSON) believe a highly educated nursing workforce strengthens the quality of care, clinical outcomes, and translation of nursing research into clinical practice within DUHS. RNTAP is designed to support the continued education and learning of DUHS registered nurses.

What types of degrees are included?
The RNTAP award can be used to attend DUSON to obtain the following: MSN, Post-Master’s Certificate and DNP.

Can I use RNTAP to attend another nursing school other than Duke University School of Nursing?
No. RNTAP can only be used at Duke University School of Nursing.

What is the difference between RNTAP and the Duke University Tuition Assistance Program (DUTAP)?
RNTAP is a tuition assistance program dedicated to supporting RNs in the Duke University Health System. DUTAP is a Duke University tuition benefit that is available to all Duke University employees. DUHS nurses can and should access both benefits. RNTAP is administered by DUHS Nursing through the Nurse Recruitment office and DUTAP is administered by Duke University through its Human Resource office: http://www.hr.duke.edu/benefits/education/tuition_assistance.html

Do I have to apply each semester for RNTAP funding?
No, once you are admitted to the RNTAP program you do not need to reapply each semester. However, the DUTAP program does require an application for each semester.

What are the deadlines for applying for RNTAP?
Because nurses can enter DUSON at any semester, there are three deadline dates:
- Spring semester: December 1st
- Summer semester: April 1st
- Fall Semester: July 1st

B. Eligibility

How long do I have to work at DUHS before I am eligible for RNTAP?
You are eligible for RNTAP after one year of continuous service at DUHS in a benefits eligible position. For most nurses, your benefits eligible date will be the same as your service date (some nurses, however, begin work at DUHS in non-benefits positions, so their date will be different.)

Do I have to be a full-time employee to be eligible for RNTAP?
You must work as a 30 hr/week, benefits eligible employee.

How does RNTAP define a DUHS employee?
You must receive DUHS benefits to be eligible for RNTAP. The easiest way to determine the difference is to ask the question: “Do I receive PTO, or do I receive vacation and sick time?” DUHS employees receive PTO; non-DUHS employees receive vacation and sick time. Non-DUHS entities would include: University-based employees, School of Nursing, School of Medicine, and PDC clinics.
Is there a certain grade requirement for each course to maintain my RNTAP award?
Yes. If your grade is below a “C” or “Pass” or you do not complete the course, you will be required to re-pay DUHS the RNTAP funds awarded for that class. You must turn in a copy of your grades to the RNTAP office within two weeks of the end of the semester.

What if I just want to take classes at DUSON without pursuing a degree?
You must be a degree seeking candidate or post-masters certificate candidate to be eligible for RNTAP funds. RNTAP does not fund non-degree candidates.

Can I participate in RNTAP and other Loan Forgiveness programs concurrently?
No, you cannot participate in RNTAP and any other Loan Forgiveness program at the same time.

C. Work Commitment
Is there a work commitment required and when does it begin?
The 3-year work commitment clock begins on the last day of the semester, after you have taken 5 hours in a degree program at DUSON. The clock continues to run while you are in school and working at DUHS as a 30 hr/week, benefits eligible employee.

What happens if I leave Duke, or transfer out of a DUHS eligible position before my three year work commitment ends?
Total RNTAP = amount owed
\[ \frac{2}{2} \]
This formula is not prorated. Length of employment is not taken into account. Any employment less than the 3 year time commitment is subject to the pay back penalty.

How do I pay back the RNTAP funds?
The payment will be to Duke University Health System and will be for the gross amount (interest free). The payback period cannot exceed one year and the total amount can be divided into four payments.

Do I have to stay in the same position throughout the RNTAP program?
No, but you must stay in a DUHS 30-hr/week benefits-eligible position which requires a RN.

After I receive my degree I will be a Nurse Practitioner, will that role qualify to work off the 3-year work commitment?
Yes, a nurse working in the role of NP qualifies as a “RN working in the health system.”

My degree requires a residency at the end of my program. What will happen to my RNTAP benefit if my residency is in another city?
You must maintain your 30 hr/week, benefits eligible employee status to continue receiving RNTAP benefits. If you use PTO time while you are away, then you will maintain your RNTAP benefit. However, if you do not maintain your employment status, you will not receive the benefit.

D. Payment
Is the RNTAP benefit on a calendar or school year (semester) basis?
RNTAP funds can be awarded each semester you are in school. However, the Duke University Tuition Assistance Program is per calendar year.
Can I use Duke University Tuition Assistance Program (DUTAP) and RNTAP funding at the same time?
Yes, if you are a nurse with at least 2 years of continuous service.

Can I choose when to use RNTAP and when to use DUTAP?
No, you must access the DUTAP funds when they become available to you. For most nurses, this means that you will access DUTAP in the spring of every year, since DUTAP becomes available January 1st of each year. Of course, if you enter DUSON in the summer of fall semesters, then you will access DUTAP at that time. Your RNTAP funding will be calculated based on the available DUTAP benefit.

Is there a cap on how many hours RNTAP will cover?
RNTAP will provide funds up to 5 credit hours per semester. RNTAP only covers required classes and up to the number of hours needed to complete your degree. RNTAP does not cover additional courses required if/when a student changes her/his major program.

Is RNTAP taxable?
The IRS views the RNTAP benefit as taxable income.

How much of my tuition will I be responsible for if I am awarded RNTAP?
Since the RNTAP benefit is subject to tax (approximately 40%), the gross RNTAP award will not be posted to your student bursars account. This means you will owe the “missing tax” portion to the bursar. Your true expense will include the initial student portion of 10% and the amount deducted for taxes.

For example, if your RNTAP award is for $5,000, then the amount posted to your bursars account would be approximately $3,000 (the missing $2,000 is tax that was withheld).

How do I find out how much it cost per credit hour to attend DUSON?
For the current credit hour price, contact the DUSON Office of Admissions and Student Services at 684-4248 or visit http://nursing.duke.edu/

E. Miscellaneous