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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Public prosecutors, defenders may qualify for student loan forgiveness program**

**FRANKFORT, Ky. (June 17, 2024)** — Public prosecutors and public defenders in Kentucky may qualify for student loan forgiveness through the John R. Justice Grant program, administered by the Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority (KHEAA).

“Everyone is guaranteed representation in court and prosecutors and public defenders often make financial sacrifices to protect this Constitutional right,” Gov. Andy Beshear said. “The John R. Justice Grant program can help these public servants who are repaying student loans they took on so they could provide vital legal services.”

The application period begins on July 15, 2024. The deadline to have applications submitted or postmarked is August 16, 2024. The estimated award is \$2,000 per year. Awards are paid directly to the lender.

Eligible attorneys include prosecutors and public defenders who are full-time employees of the Commonwealth or a local government. Attorneys who supervise, educate or train prosecutors and defenders are also eligible.

Funding is available for loan forgiveness for 48 attorneys for the 2024–2025 fiscal year. Three prosecutors and three public defenders will be chosen from each of the seven state Supreme Court districts, and three prosecutors and three public defenders with statewide responsibilities also will be chosen. Recipients are selected based on their loan-to-income ratio and total student loan debt.

KHEAA has received funds from the U.S. Department of Justice to provide the program for this fiscal year.

Applicants must sign a three-year service agreement and have an annual salary of less than \$100,000 for initial application. Prior-year recipients must reapply and will be given priority consideration.

For complete information or to apply, visit [kheaa.com](http://kheaa.com) and type John R. Justice in the search bar.

KHEAA is the state agency that administers the merit-based Kentucky Educational Excellence Scholarship (KEES) program, as well as need-based grants and other programs to help students pay their higher education expenses. Kentucky Lottery funds pay for many of those programs. For more information about Kentucky scholarships and grants, visit <https://www.kheaa.com/web/scholarships-grants.faces>; write KHEAA at PO Box 798, Frankfort, KY 40602; or call 800-928-8926.

In addition, KHEAA administers the KY Saves 529 program, which allows families to save for college. For more information, visit <https://www.kysaves.com/home.html>.

KHEAA's sister agency, the Kentucky Higher Education Student Loan Corporation (KHESLC), is the Kentucky not-for-profit agency committed to offering students/borrowers with the lowest possible cost assistance in achieving their higher education dreams by offering the Advantage Education Loan program. For more information, visit <https://www.advantageeducationloan.com/>.

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