



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
Arizona AHEC
Area Health Education Centers

Federal definition of disadvantaged status

CRITERIA FOR DISADVANTAGED BACKGROUND STATUS

Disadvantaged background means an individual comes from an educationally/environmentally or economically disadvantaged background.

Educationally/environmentally disadvantaged means an individual comes from an environment that has inhibited the individual from obtaining the knowledge, skills, and abilities required to enroll in and graduate from a health professions school, or from a program providing education or training in an allied health profession.

Economically disadvantaged means an individual comes from a family with an annual income below a level based on low-income thresholds, according to family size established by the U.S. Census Bureau, adjusted annually for changes in the Consumer Price Index, and adjusted by the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), for use in all health professions programs. The Secretary updates these income levels in the Federal Register annually.

Low income family/household is defined by the Secretary for various health professions programs included in Titles III, VII and VIII of the Public Health Service Act, as having an annual income that does not exceed 200 percent of the Department's poverty guidelines. A family is a group of two or more individuals related by birth, marriage, or adoption who live together. A household may be only one person. Parental income will be used to determine a student's eligibility as economically disadvantaged in all cases except those where the student is considered independent by being at least 24 years old and has not been listed as a dependent on his or her parents' income tax for 3 or more years. In those cases, the students' family income will be used instead of parental family income.