

STATE OF NEW YORK

6485

2021-2022 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

March 19, 2021

Introduced by M. of A. SOLAGES, STECK -- read once and referred to the Committee on Higher Education

AN ACT to amend the education law, in relation to providing free SUNY, CUNY and community college tuition to volunteer firefighters

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. Paragraph h of subdivision 2 of section 355 of the education law is amended by adding a new subparagraph 1-a to read as follows:

2 (1-a) The trustees shall implement a program to permit any student who
3 has been admitted to a state-operated institution of the state university
4 to attend without the payment of tuition and fees if such student
5 serves as an active volunteer firefighter as defined in subdivision one
6 of section two hundred fifteen of the general municipal law. The
7 provisions of this subparagraph shall only apply to costs of one under-
8 graduate degree and any additional costs associated with more than one
9 simultaneous undergraduate degree shall not be covered by this program.

10 (i) The trustees shall provide an application process and administer
11 the program according to the following criteria:

12 (A) Any student eligible for resident tuition rates is eligible for
13 this program.

14 (B) The student shall be required to serve as an active volunteer
15 firefighter through the completion of his or her academic program.

16 (C) Students shall be required to complete their degree program within
17 a minimum period of time to be set by the trustees which shall be no
18 fewer than three years and no more than five years.

19 (D) The student shall be required to maintain a cumulative grade point
20 average (G.P.A.) of at least 2.5 in order to remain eligible for the
21 program.

22 (ii) If a student or former student fails to fulfill any of the
23 requirements set forth in clause (i) of this subparagraph, the trustees
24 shall convert to a student loan the full amount of the tuition which
25

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets
[-] is old law to be omitted.

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1 would have been paid by such student, as determined by the New York
2 state higher education services corporation, plus interest, according to
3 a schedule to be determined by such corporation. Such repayment may also
4 be required if a recipient fails to respond to requests for information
5 necessary to determine continued eligibility or for administration of
6 the program.

7 (iii) Any student who elects to participate in the program under this
8 subparagraph shall be required to apply for tuition assistance program
9 funding. Funds awarded on the tuition assistance program shall be
10 applied towards the cost of tuition prior to an award under this subpar-
11 agraph.

12 (iv) Students shall be responsible for all other costs including hous-
13 ing, fees and other non-tuition related charges.

14 § 2. Subdivision 7 of section 6206 of the education law is amended by
15 adding a new paragraph (f) to read as follows:

16 (f) The trustees shall implement a program to permit any student who
17 has been admitted to an institution operated by the city university to
18 attend without the payment of tuition and fees if such student fulfills
19 the requirements of such program pursuant to the provisions of this
20 paragraph.

21 (i) The trustees shall provide an application process and administer
22 the program according to the following criteria:

23 (A) Any student eligible for resident tuition rates is eligible for
24 this program.

25 (B) The student shall be required to serve as an active volunteer
26 firefighter through the completion of his or her academic program.

27 (C) Students shall be required to complete their degree program within
28 a minimum period of time to be set by the trustees which shall be no
29 fewer than three years and no more than five years.

30 (D) The student shall be required to maintain a cumulative grade point
31 average (G.P.A.) of at least 2.5 in order to remain eligible for the
32 program.

33 (ii) If a student or former student fails to fulfill any of the
34 requirements set forth in subparagraph (i) of this paragraph, the trus-
35 tees shall convert to a student loan the full amount of the tuition
36 which would have been paid by such student, as determined by the New
37 York state higher education services corporation, plus interest, accord-
38 ing to a schedule to be determined by such corporation. Such repayment
39 may also be required if a recipient fails to respond to requests for
40 information necessary to determine continued eligibility or for adminis-
41 tration of the program.

42 (iii) Any student who elects to participate in the program under this
43 paragraph shall be required to apply for tuition assistance program
44 funding. Funds awarded on the tuition assistance program shall be
45 applied towards the cost of tuition prior to an award under this subpar-
46 agraph.

47 (iv) Students shall be responsible for all other costs including hous-
48 ing, fees and other non-tuition related charges.

49 § 3. Subdivision 1 of section 6304 of the education law is amended by
50 adding a new paragraph e to read as follows:

51 e. The trustees, sponsors or other governing body of a community
52 college shall implement a program to permit any student who has been
53 admitted to such community college to attend without the payment of
54 tuition and fees if such student fulfills the requirements of such
55 program pursuant to the provisions of this paragraph.

1 (i) The trustees shall provide an application process and administer
2 the program according to the following criteria:

3 (A) Any student eligible for resident tuition rates is eligible for
4 this program.

5 (B) The student shall be required to serve as an active volunteer
6 firefighter through the completion of his or her academic program.

7 (C) Students shall be required to complete their degree program within
8 a minimum period of time to be set by the trustees which shall be no
9 fewer than three years and no more than five years.

10 (D) The student shall be required to maintain a cumulative grade point
11 average (G.P.A.) of at least 2.5 in order to remain eligible for the
12 program.

13 (ii) If a student or former student fails to fulfill any of the
14 requirements set forth in subparagraph (i) of this paragraph, the trus-
15 tees shall convert to a student loan the full amount of the tuition
16 which would have been paid by such student, as determined by the New
17 York state higher education services corporation, plus interest, accord-
18 ing to a schedule to be determined by such corporation. Such repayment
19 may also be required if a recipient fails to respond to requests for
20 information necessary to determine continued eligibility or for adminis-
21 tration of the program.

22 (iii) Any student who elects to participate in the program under this
23 paragraph shall be required to apply for tuition assistance program
24 funding. Funds awarded on the tuition assistance program shall be
25 applied towards the cost of tuition prior to an award under this subpar-
26 agraph.

27 (iv) Students shall be responsible for all other costs including hous-
28 ing, fees and other non-tuition related charges.

29 § 4. This act shall take effect on the ninetieth day after it shall
30 have become a law.