

STATE OF NEW YORK

7937

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

April 16, 2025

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

AN ACT to amend the parks, recreation and historic preservation law, in relation to enacting the "Lifeguard incentive and debt assistance (LIDA) act"

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

1 Section 1. Short title. This act shall be known and may be cited as
2 the "Lifeguard incentive and debt assistance (LIDA) act".

3 § 2. The parks, recreation and historic preservation law is amended by
4 adding a new section 3.30 to read as follows:

5 § 3.30 Lifeguard incentive and debt assistance program. 1. For the
6 purposes of this section, the following terms shall have the following
7 meanings:

8 (a) "Debt relief check" shall mean a financial benefit equivalent to
9 the average monthly student loan payment in the state of New York,
10 issued for six months.

11 (b) "Eligible student" shall mean a student enrolled in an accredited
12 public or private college or university within the state of New York,
13 who:

14 (i) works as a certified lifeguard at a public pool or beach for a
15 minimum of five months, full-time or part-time, within one calendar
16 year;

17 (ii) maintains such lifeguard certification for four years after grad-
18 uation; and

19 (iii) demonstrates satisfactory performance in lifeguard duties with-
20 out termination for cause or resignation without valid justification.

21 (c) "Financial aid" shall mean:

22 (i) twenty-five percent of the state's monthly average student loan
23 payment for up to five months annually for eligible students who main-
24 tain certification for pool lifeguard duty; and

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

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1 (ii) fifty percent of the state's monthly average student loan payment
2 for up to five months annually for eligible students who maintain
3 certification for beach lifeguard duty.

4 (d) "Lifeguard certification" shall mean a valid certification from a
5 New York state-approved lifeguard training program.

6 (e) "Public pool or beach" shall mean any swimming facility or water-
7 front area managed by a municipal, city, or state entity in the state of
8 New York.

9 2. The office and the New York state higher education services corpo-
10 ration shall establish a joint program, hereafter referred to as the
11 "program", to provide financial aid to eligible students working as
12 lifeguards during such student's time at a college or university at a
13 public pool or beach. Eligible students who maintain active lifeguard
14 certification for four years post-graduation shall receive a one-time
15 debt relief check. Each eligible student shall submit annual proof of
16 service and lifeguard certification renewal to the office and New York
17 state higher education services corporation to remain eligible for post-
18 graduation benefits.

19 3. The joint program shall be funded from the appropriations provided
20 annually to the department of education.

21 4. Any student who fails to maintain such student's lifeguard certif-
22 ication for four years post-graduation without valid justification shall
23 forfeit the debt relief check benefit.

24 5. Each facility that employs an eligible student shall perform annual
25 performance reviews to determine if such eligible student is meeting the
26 requirements of the program.

27 6. The department and New York state higher education services corpo-
28 ration shall establish a jointly managed database that contains the
29 following information on eligible students to include:

30 (a) the eligible students' enrollment status with an accredited
31 college or university;

32 (b) the eligible students' lifeguard certification; and

33 (c) the eligible students' employment status.

34 7. The department and New York state higher education services corpo-
35 ration shall establish a joint review board to handle disputes, appeals,
36 and exemption requests for eligible students who fail to meet eligibil-
37 ity requirements due to extenuating circumstances.

38 8. The department and New York state higher education services corpo-
39 ration are authorized to promulgate such rules and regulations as neces-
40 sary to effectuate and enforce the provisions of this section.

41 § 3. This act shall take effect on the one hundred eightieth day after
42 it shall have become a law and shall apply to any eligible applicant
43 beginning with the 2026-2027 academic year.