

FIRST REGULAR SESSION

SENATE COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR

SENATE BILL NO. 71

103RD GENERAL ASSEMBLY

1178S.05C

KRISTINA MARTIN, Secretary

AN ACT

To amend chapter 173, RSMo, by adding thereto two new sections relating to college tuition for public safety personnel.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Missouri, as follows:

Section A. Chapter 173, RSMo, is amended by adding thereto
2 two new sections, to be known as sections 173.2655 and 173.2660,
3 to read as follows:

**173.2655. 1. This section and section 173.2660 shall
2 be known and may be cited as the "Public Safety Recruitment
3 and Retention Act".**

**4 2. For purposes of this section and section 173.2660,
5 unless the context clearly indicates otherwise, the
6 following terms mean:**

**7 (1) "Advanced emergency medical technician", as such
8 term is defined in section 190.100;**

**9 (2) "Department", the department of higher education
10 and workforce development;**

**11 (3) "Emergency medical dispatcher", as such term is
12 defined in section 190.100;**

**13 (4) "Emergency medical technician", as such term is
14 defined in section 190.100;**

**15 (5) "Firefighter", any officer or employee of a fire
16 department who is employed for the purpose of fighting
17 fires, excluding volunteer firefighters and anyone employed**

18 in a clerical or other capacity not involving fire-fighting
19 duties;

20 (6) "Legal dependent", as such term is defined by the
21 United States Department of Education for purposes of the
22 Free Application for Student Financial Aid;

23 (7) "Line of duty", any action that public safety
24 personnel is authorized or obligated by law, rule, or
25 regulation to perform, related to or as a condition of
26 employment or service;

27 (8) "Open seat", a vacant position in a class, course,
28 or program that is available for enrollment, and which may
29 become available when a student drops out or transfers, or
30 when a class, course, or program has unused capacity,
31 allowing new students to register or enroll;

32 (9) "Paramedic", as such term is defined in section
33 190.100;

34 (10) "Police officer", any person who, by virtue of
35 office or public employment, is vested by law with the power
36 and duty to make arrests for violation of the laws of the
37 state of Missouri or ordinances of any municipality thereof,
38 while acting within the scope of his or her authority as an
39 employee of a public law enforcement agency, as such term is
40 defined in section 590.1040;

41 (11) "Public institution of higher education", a
42 public community college, state college, or state university;

43 (12) "Public safety personnel", includes any police
44 officer, firefighter, paramedic, emergency medical
45 dispatcher, emergency medical technician, or advanced
46 emergency medical technician who is trained and authorized
47 by law or rule to render emergency medical assistance or
48 treatment;

49 (13) "Tuition", the charges and cost of tuition as set
50 by the governing body of a public institution of higher
51 education, excluding the costs of room, board, books, and
52 any other educational materials, equipment, or supplies.

53 3. Subject to appropriation, public safety personnel
54 with at least six years of service shall be entitled to a
55 waiver of one hundred percent of the resident tuition
56 charges of a public institution of higher education if the
57 individual:

58 (1) Possesses one of the following:

59 (a) A current, valid license issued by the department
60 of health and senior services authorizing such person to
61 serve as an emergency medical technician, advanced emergency
62 medical technician, or paramedic;

63 (b) A current, valid license issued by the peace
64 officer standards and training commission authorizing such
65 person to serve as a peace officer pursuant to the
66 provisions of chapter 590;

67 (c) A current, valid certificate issued by the
68 division of fire safety authorizing such person to serve as
69 a firefighter; or

70 (d) A current, valid certificate confirming successful
71 completion of an emergency medical dispatcher course and any
72 ongoing training requirements pursuant to section 650.340;
73 and

74 (e) For all public safety personnel, a certificate of
75 verification signed by the individual's supervisor or
76 employer verifying that such individual is currently
77 employed full-time as public safety personnel and trained
78 and authorized by law or rule to render emergency medical
79 assistance or treatment;

80 (2) Meets all admission requirements of the public
81 institution of higher education;

82 (3) Has not already earned a baccalaureate degree;

83 (4) Pursues studies leading to an associate degree or
84 baccalaureate degree in one of the following academic
85 subject areas:

86 (a) For police officers, eligible subjects include
87 forensic science, fisheries and wildlife, political science,
88 psychology, history, philosophy, sociology, anthropology,
89 global studies, Spanish, journalism, advertising, public
90 relations, nutrition and health sciences, communication
91 sciences and disorders, and criminal justice;

92 (b) For firefighters, paramedics, emergency medical
93 technicians, and advanced emergency medical technicians,
94 eligible subjects include biology, chemistry, biochemistry,
95 microbiology, nutrition and health sciences, communication
96 sciences and disorders, Spanish, advertising, public
97 relations, paramedicine, fire science, fire technology, fire
98 administration, fire management, communications, homeland
99 security, emergency management, disaster management, and
100 crisis management; and

101 (c) For emergency medical dispatchers, eligible
102 subjects include any subject specified in paragraph (a) or
103 (b) of this subdivision;

104 (5) Submits verification of the professional license
105 or certificate and the certificate of verification required
106 by subdivision (1) of this subsection to the department, in
107 a form and manner as prescribed by the department;

108 (6) Files with the department documentation showing
109 proof of employment as public safety personnel and proof of
110 residence in Missouri each year such individual or such

111 individual's legal dependent applies for and receives the
112 tuition waiver;

113 (7) First applies for all other forms of federal and
114 state student financial aid before applying for a tuition
115 waiver, including, but not limited to, the United States
116 Department of Education Free Application for Federal Student
117 Aid; and

118 (8) Submits a document to the public institution of
119 higher education confirming that the public safety personnel
120 has satisfied the provisions of subdivision (7) of this
121 subsection, to be submitted in a form and manner as
122 prescribed by the public institution of higher education.

123 4. Public safety personnel may receive the tuition
124 waiver pursuant to subsection 3 of this section for up to
125 five years if they otherwise continue to be eligible for the
126 tuition waiver. The five years of tuition waiver
127 eligibility starts once the individual applies for and
128 receives the tuition waiver for the first time and is
129 available to such individual for the next five consecutive
130 years.

131 5. Subject to appropriation, a legal dependent of
132 public safety personnel with at least ten years of service
133 shall be entitled to a tuition waiver of one hundred percent
134 of the resident tuition charges of any public institution of
135 higher education for an associate or baccalaureate degree
136 program if such public safety personnel satisfies the
137 provisions of subdivisions (1), (5), and (6) of subsection 3
138 of this section and the legal dependent:

139 (1) Executes an agreement with such institution in
140 accordance with the provisions of section 173.2660;

141 (2) Has not previously earned a baccalaureate degree;

142 (3) Meets all admission requirements of the public
143 institution of higher education;

144 (4) First applies for all other forms of federal and
145 state student financial aid before applying for a tuition
146 waiver, including, but not limited to, the United States
147 Department of Education Free Application for Federal Student
148 Aid;

149 (5) Submits a document to the public institution of
150 higher education confirming that the legal dependent has
151 satisfied subdivision (4) of this subsection, to be
152 submitted in a form and manner as prescribed by the public
153 institution of higher education;

154 (6) Submits the verification required pursuant to
155 subsection 8 of this section to the public institution of
156 higher education; and

157 (7) Pursues studies leading to an associate degree or
158 baccalaureate degree in any one of the subject areas
159 specified in paragraphs (a) to (c) of subdivision (4) of
160 subsection 3 of this section.

161 6. A legal dependent may receive the tuition waiver
162 for up to five years if the public safety personnel and the
163 legal dependent continue to be eligible for such tuition
164 waiver. The five years of tuition waiver eligibility starts
165 once the legal dependent applies for and receives the
166 tuition waiver for the first time and is available to such
167 legal dependent for the next five consecutive years.

168 7. The public institution of higher education shall
169 waive one hundred percent of the public safety personnel's
170 or the legal dependent's tuition remaining due after
171 subtracting awarded federal financial aid grants and state
172 scholarships and grants for the eligible public safety
173 personnel or legal dependent during the time the public

174 safety personnel or legal dependent is enrolled. To remain
175 eligible, the public safety personnel or legal dependent
176 shall comply with all requirements of the institution for
177 continued attendance and award of an associate degree or a
178 baccalaureate degree.

179 8. (1) An application for a tuition waiver shall
180 include a verification of the public safety personnel's
181 satisfaction of the requirements of subdivisions (1), (5),
182 and (6) of subsection 3 of this section. The public safety
183 personnel shall include such verification when he or she or
184 his or her legal dependent is applying to the public
185 institution of higher education in order to obtain a tuition
186 waiver upon initial enrollment.

187 (2) The death of public safety personnel in the line
188 of duty which occurs after submission of an application for
189 a tuition waiver shall not disqualify such individual's
190 otherwise eligible legal dependent from receiving the
191 tuition waiver. In such case, in lieu of submitting the
192 certificate of verification provided for in subdivision (1)
193 of this subsection, the legal dependent shall submit a
194 statement attesting that:

195 (a) At the time of death, such public safety personnel
196 satisfied the requirements of subdivision (1) of this
197 subsection; and

198 (b) Such public safety personnel died in the line of
199 duty.

200 9. A public institution of higher education shall
201 provide a tuition waiver to public safety personnel and
202 legal dependents who satisfy the provisions of this section
203 and section 173.2660, if applicable, and apply for an open
204 seat, but shall not be required to provide a tuition waiver
205 if doing so would require the institution to create

206 additional seats exceeding class, course, or program
207 capacity.

208 10. Within forty-five days after receipt of a
209 completed application for a tuition waiver, the public
210 institution of higher education shall send written notice of
211 the applicant's eligibility or ineligibility for the tuition
212 waiver and state whether the application has been approved
213 or denied. If the applicant is determined not to be eligible
214 for the tuition waiver, the notice shall include the reason
215 or reasons for such determination. If the application is
216 denied, the notice shall include the reason or reasons for
217 the denial.

218 11. The department shall promulgate rules to implement
219 the provisions of this section and section 173.2660. Any
220 rule or portion of a rule, as that term is defined in
221 section 536.010, that is created under the authority
222 delegated in this section shall become effective only if it
223 complies with and is subject to all of the provisions of
224 chapter 536 and, if applicable, section 536.028. This
225 section and chapter 536 are nonseverable and if any of the
226 powers vested with the general assembly pursuant to chapter
227 536 to review, to delay the effective date, or to disapprove
228 and annul a rule are subsequently held unconstitutional,
229 then the grant of rulemaking authority and any rule proposed
230 or adopted after August 28, 2025, shall be invalid and void.

231 12. (1) There is hereby created in the state treasury
232 the "Public Safety Recruitment and Retention Fund", which
233 shall consist of moneys appropriated by the general assembly
234 for the purpose of implementing the provisions of this
235 section and section 173.2660. The state treasurer shall be
236 custodian of the fund. In accordance with sections 30.170
237 and 30.180, the state treasurer may approve disbursements.

238 The fund shall be a dedicated fund and money in the fund
239 shall be used solely by the department of higher education
240 and workforce development for the purpose of reimbursing
241 public institutions of higher education for tuition waivers
242 awarded as provided in this section and 173.2660.

243 (2) Notwithstanding the provisions of section 33.080
244 to the contrary, any moneys remaining in the fund at the end
245 of the biennium shall not revert to the credit of the
246 general revenue fund.

247 (3) The state treasurer shall invest moneys in the
248 fund in the same manner as other funds are invested. Any
249 interest and moneys earned on such investments shall be
250 credited to the fund.

251 13. In any year in which moneys in the public safety
252 recruitment and retention fund are insufficient to fully
253 fund tuition waivers for all eligible applicants, tuition
254 waivers shall be awarded in the following order of priority;
255 provided that, in the event of a tie in eligibility,
256 available funds shall be distributed on a pro rata basis:

257 (1) Priority class one shall include public safety
258 personnel, in the following order:

259 (a) Public safety personnel in departments with the
260 highest crime rate per capita; and

261 (b) Public safety personnel with the most years of
262 service; and

263 (2) Priority class two shall include dependents of
264 public safety personnel, in the following order:

265 (a) Dependents of public safety personnel in
266 departments with the highest crime rate per capita; and

267 (b) Dependents of public safety personnel with the
268 most years of service.

269 14. The tuition waivers provided for in this section
270 and section 173.2660 are subject to appropriation. If there
271 are no moneys in the fund established in subsection 12 of
272 this section, no tuition waivers shall be awarded.

 173.2660. 1. Each legal dependent who is a tuition
2 waiver recipient pursuant to the provisions of section
3 173.2655 shall execute an agreement as provided in this
4 section. Such agreement shall include the following terms,
5 as appropriate:

6 (1) The tuition waiver recipient agrees to reside
7 within the state of Missouri for a period of five years
8 following the use of the tuition waiver;

9 (2) Each year during the five-year period following
10 use of the tuition waiver, the tuition waiver recipient
11 agrees to file a state income tax return and provide a copy
12 of such tax return to the department to document that such
13 recipient still resides in the state of Missouri;

14 (3) If the tuition waiver recipient fails to annually
15 file a tax return to prove residency in the state of
16 Missouri for the five-year period following the use of the
17 tuition waiver or fails to remain a resident of Missouri for
18 the five-year period following the use of the tuition
19 waiver, the tuition waiver recipient agrees to repay the
20 public institution of higher education attended by such
21 tuition waiver recipient the amount of tuition that was
22 waived for such individual if the public institution of
23 higher education requests such payment on the dates and in
24 the amounts requested. Any repayment received by a public
25 institution of higher education pursuant to this subdivision
26 shall be remitted by such institution to the department in
27 full or deducted from future reimbursements to such
28 institution from the fund established in subsection 12 of

29 section 173.2655, as determined in accordance with rules
30 promulgated by the department; and

31 (4) Any residency, filing, or payment obligation
32 incurred by the tuition waiver recipient under the public
33 safety recruitment and retention act is canceled in the
34 event of the tuition waiver recipient's total and permanent
35 disability or death.

36 2. The five-year residency requirement begins once the
37 legal dependent applies for and receives the tuition waiver
38 for the first time and continues until the tuition waiver
39 recipient's:

40 (1) Completion of the five-year tuition waiver
41 eligibility period;

42 (2) Completion of a baccalaureate degree at a public
43 institution of higher education;

44 (3) Completion of an associate degree at a public
45 community college and notification to the department that
46 such recipient does not intend to pursue a baccalaureate
47 degree or additional associate degree using tuition waivers
48 pursuant to the public safety recruitment and retention act;
49 or

50 (4) Notification to the department that such recipient
51 does not plan to use additional tuition waivers pursuant to
52 the public safety recruitment and retention act.

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