
SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 6261

State of Washington

65th Legislature

2018 Regular Session

By Senate Higher Education & Workforce Development (originally sponsored by Senators Ranker, Wellman, Keiser, McCoy, Kuderer, Hasegawa, Hunt, and Conway)

READ FIRST TIME 01/31/18.

1 AN ACT Relating to expanding eligibility for the state need
2 grant; amending RCW 28B.92.060; and creating a new section.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that the state need
5 grant is essential to helping the state's lowest-income undergraduate
6 students pursue degrees or retrain for new careers. Yet, paying for
7 college remains difficult for middle and lower income families. It is
8 the intent of the legislature to expand the number of students
9 eligible for the state need grant program so that more families may
10 access higher education opportunities in Washington state.

11 **Sec. 2.** RCW 28B.92.060 and 2012 c 229 s 558 are each amended to
12 read as follows:

13 In awarding need grants, the office shall proceed substantially
14 as follows: PROVIDED, That nothing contained herein shall be
15 construed to prevent the office, in the exercise of its sound
16 discretion, from following another procedure when the best interest
17 of the program so dictates:

18 (1) The office shall annually select the financial aid award
19 recipients from among Washington residents applying for student
20 financial aid who have been ranked according to:

1 (a) Financial need as determined by the amount of the family
2 contribution. Families that earn up to one hundred percent of the
3 state's median family income are eligible; and

4 (b) Other considerations, such as whether the student is a former
5 foster youth, or is a placebound student who has completed an
6 associate of arts or associate of science degree or its equivalent.

7 (2) The financial need of the highest ranked students shall be
8 met by grants depending upon the evaluation of financial need until
9 the total allocation has been disbursed. Funds from grants which are
10 declined, forfeited or otherwise unused shall be reawarded until
11 disbursed, except that eligible former foster youth shall be assured
12 receipt of a grant. The office, in consultation with four-year
13 institutions of higher education, the council, and the state board
14 for community and technical colleges, shall develop award criteria
15 and methods of disbursement based on level of need, and not solely
16 rely on a first-come, first-served basis.

17 (3) A student shall be eligible to receive a state need grant for
18 up to five years, or the credit or clock hour equivalent of five
19 years, or up to one hundred twenty-five percent of the published
20 length of time of the student's program. A student may not start a
21 new associate degree program as a state need grant recipient until at
22 least five years have elapsed since earning an associate degree as a
23 need grant recipient, except that a student may earn two associate
24 degrees concurrently. Qualifications for renewal will include
25 maintaining satisfactory academic progress toward completion of an
26 eligible program as determined by the office. Should the recipient
27 terminate his or her enrollment for any reason during the academic
28 year, the unused portion of the grant shall be returned to the state
29 educational grant fund by the institution according to the
30 institution's own policy for issuing refunds, except as provided in
31 RCW 28B.92.070.

32 (4) In computing financial need, the office shall determine a
33 maximum student expense budget allowance, not to exceed an amount
34 equal to the total maximum student expense budget at the public
35 institutions plus the current average state appropriation per student
36 for operating expense in the public institutions. Any child support
37 payments received by students who are parents attending less than
38 half-time shall not be used in computing financial need.

39 (5)(a) A student who is enrolled in three to six credit-bearing
40 quarter credits, or the equivalent semester credits, may receive a

1 grant for up to one academic year before beginning a program that
2 leads to a degree or certificate.

3 (b) An eligible student enrolled on a less-than-full-time basis
4 shall receive a prorated portion of his or her state need grant for
5 any academic period in which he or she is enrolled on a less-than-
6 full-time basis, as long as funds are available.

7 (c) An institution of higher education may award a state need
8 grant to an eligible student enrolled in three to six credit-bearing
9 quarter credits, or the semester equivalent, on a provisional basis
10 if:

11 (i) The student has not previously received a state need grant
12 from that institution;

13 (ii) The student completes the required free application for
14 federal student aid;

15 (iii) The institution has reviewed the student's financial
16 condition, and the financial condition of the student's family if the
17 student is a dependent student, and has determined that the student
18 is likely eligible for a state need grant; and

19 (iv) The student has signed a document attesting to the fact that
20 the financial information provided on the free application for
21 federal student aid and any additional financial information provided
22 directly to the institution is accurate and complete, and that the
23 student agrees to repay the institution for the grant amount if the
24 student submitted false or incomplete information.

25 (6) As used in this section, "former foster youth" means a person
26 who is at least eighteen years of age, but not more than twenty-four
27 years of age, who was a dependent of the department of social and
28 health services at the time he or she attained the age of eighteen.

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