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**SECOND SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 2214**

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**State of Washington**

**68th Legislature**

**2024 Regular Session**

**By** House Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Slatter, Bergquist, Chopp, Ramel, Reeves, Paul, Morgan, Gregerson, Ormsby, Alvarado, Reed, Fosse, Macri, Goodman, Pollet, Leavitt, Timmons, Davis, Riccelli, and Duerr; by request of Student Achievement Council)

READ FIRST TIME 02/05/24.

1 AN ACT Relating to permitting beneficiaries of public assistance  
2 programs to automatically qualify as income-eligible for the purpose  
3 of receiving the Washington college grant; amending RCW 28B.92.200,  
4 28B.92.225, and 28B.92.230; and creating a new section.

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

6 **Sec. 1.** RCW 28B.92.200 and 2022 c 214 s 5 are each amended to  
7 read as follows:

8 (1) The Washington college grant program is created to provide a  
9 statewide free college program for eligible participants and greater  
10 access to postsecondary education for Washington residents. The  
11 Washington college grant program is intended to increase the number  
12 of high school graduates and adults that can attain a postsecondary  
13 credential and provide them with the qualifications needed to compete  
14 for job opportunities in Washington.

15 (2) The office shall implement and administer the Washington  
16 college grant program and is authorized to establish rules necessary  
17 for implementation of the program.

18 (3) The legislature shall appropriate funding for the Washington  
19 college grant program. Allocations must be made on the basis of  
20 estimated eligible participants enrolled in eligible institutions of  
21 higher education or apprenticeship programs. All eligible students

1 are entitled to a Washington college grant beginning in academic year  
2 2020-21.

3 (4) The office shall award Washington college grants to all  
4 eligible students beginning in academic year 2020-21.

5 (5) To be eligible for the Washington college grant, students  
6 must meet the following requirements:

7 (a) (i) Demonstrate financial need under RCW 28B.92.205;

8 (ii) Receive one or more of the following types of public  
9 assistance:

10 (A) Aged, blind, or disabled assistance benefits under chapter  
11 74.62 RCW;

12 (B) Essential needs and housing support program benefits under  
13 RCW 43.185C.220; or

14 (C) Pregnant women assistance program financial grants under RCW  
15 74.62.030; or

16 (iii) Be a Washington high school student in the 10th, 11th, or  
17 12th grade whose parent or legal guardian is receiving one or more of  
18 the types of public assistance listed in (a) (ii) of this subsection  
19 and have received a certificate confirming eligibility from the  
20 office in accordance with RCW 28B.92.225; or

21 (iv) Beginning in the 2025-26 academic year, be a Washington high  
22 school student in the 10th, 11th, or 12th grade who is a member of an  
23 assistance unit receiving benefits under the Washington basic food  
24 program in chapter 74.04 RCW or the Washington food assistance  
25 program established under RCW 74.08A.120;

26 (b) (i) Be enrolled or accepted for enrollment for at least three  
27 quarter credits or the equivalent semester credits at an institution  
28 of higher education in Washington as defined in RCW 28B.92.030; or

29 (ii) Be enrolled in a registered apprenticeship program approved  
30 under chapter 49.04 RCW;

31 (c) Be a resident student as defined in RCW 28B.15.012(2) (a)  
32 through (e);

33 (d) File an annual application for financial aid as approved by  
34 the office; and

35 (e) Must not have earned a baccalaureate degree or higher from a  
36 postsecondary institution.

37 (6) Washington college grant eligibility may not extend beyond  
38 five years or one hundred twenty-five percent of the published length  
39 of the program in which the student is enrolled or the credit or  
40 clock-hour equivalent.

1 (7) Institutional aid administrators shall determine whether a  
2 student eligible for the Washington college grant in a given academic  
3 year may remain eligible for the ensuing year if the student's family  
4 income increases by no more than three percent.

5 (8) Qualifications for receipt and renewal include maintaining  
6 satisfactory academic progress toward completion of an eligible  
7 program as determined by the office and established in rule.

8 (9) Should a recipient terminate his or her enrollment for any  
9 reason during the academic year, the unused portion of the grant  
10 shall be returned to the state educational grant fund by the  
11 institution of higher education according to the institution of  
12 higher education's policy for issuing refunds, except as provided in  
13 RCW 28B.92.070.

14 (10) An eligible student enrolled on a part-time basis shall  
15 receive a prorated portion of the Washington college grant for any  
16 academic period in which he or she is enrolled on a part-time basis.

17 (11) The Washington college grant is intended to be used to meet  
18 the costs of postsecondary education for students with financial  
19 need. The student shall be awarded all need-based financial aid for  
20 which the student qualifies as determined by the institution.

21 (12) Students and participating institutions of higher education  
22 shall comply with all the rules adopted by the council for the  
23 administration of this chapter.

24 **Sec. 2.** RCW 28B.92.225 and 2022 c 214 s 6 are each amended to  
25 read as follows:

26 (1) The office shall enter into a data-sharing agreement with the  
27 department of social and health services to facilitate the sharing of  
28 individual-level data. ~~((The))~~ To the extent allowable under state  
29 and federal law, the department of social and health services shall  
30 send the office a list of all individuals receiving benefits under  
31 the public assistance programs listed under RCW 28B.92.200(5) on at  
32 least an annual basis. The office shall use the list to confirm  
33 students' eligibility for the Washington college grant program,  
34 without requiring the student to fill out a separate financial aid  
35 form. The office may also use the information to conduct outreach  
36 promoting the Washington college grant.

37 (2) For high school students ~~((in 10th, 11th, and 12th grades~~  
38 ~~whose families are receiving benefits under one of the public~~  
39 ~~assistance programs listed under RCW 28B.92.200(5)))~~ identified in

1 RCW 28B.92.200(5)(a)(iii) or (iv), the office shall issue a  
2 certificate to the student that validates the student's financial  
3 need eligibility for the Washington college grant program. The  
4 certificate is good for one year after high school graduation and may  
5 be used upon enrollment in an eligible institution of higher  
6 education, provided the student meets the other Washington college  
7 grant eligibility requirements. The office shall track and maintain  
8 records of students who were issued certificates under this section  
9 in order to confirm a student's financial need eligibility with an  
10 institution of higher education. A student does not need to produce  
11 the certificate to receive the Washington college grant.

12 (3) The office shall notify students whose eligibility for the  
13 Washington college grant is established under RCW  
14 28B.92.200(5)(a)(iv) about the importance of submitting a free  
15 application for federal student aid or a Washington application for  
16 state financial aid after their first quarter or semester, and each  
17 year thereafter.

18 (4) By December 1, 2026, and each year thereafter, the office  
19 shall submit a report to the appropriate committees of the  
20 legislature pursuant to RCW 43.01.036 detailing Washington college  
21 grant participation by students whose eligibility for the grant is  
22 established under RCW 28B.92.200(5)(a)(iv).

23 **Sec. 3.** RCW 28B.92.230 and 2022 c 214 s 7 are each amended to  
24 read as follows:

25 The office shall collaborate with the department of social and  
26 health services to ~~((facilitate))~~:

27 (1) Facilitate individual-level outreach to individuals receiving  
28 benefits under the public assistance programs listed under RCW  
29 28B.92.200(5), temporary assistance for needy families under chapter  
30 74.08 RCW, the state family assistance program provided for in rule,  
31 and the basic food program to inform these individuals of their  
32 eligibility for the Washington college grant program; and

33 (2) Notify individuals whose financial need for purposes of  
34 Washington college grant eligibility has been demonstrated under RCW  
35 28B.92.200(5)(a)(iv) that they may establish eligibility for  
36 additional state and federal aid by submitting a free application for  
37 federal student aid or a Washington application for state financial  
38 aid.

1        NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 4.**    If specific funding for the purposes of  
2 this act, referencing this act by bill or chapter number, is not  
3 provided by June 30, 2024, in the omnibus appropriations act, this  
4 act is null and void.

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