

1 AN ACT concerning education.

2 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,**  
3 **represented in the General Assembly:**

4 Section 5. The Higher Education Student Assistance Act is  
5 amended by changing Section 65.110 as follows:

6 (110 ILCS 947/65.110)

7 Sec. 65.110. Post-Master of Social Work School Social Work  
8 Professional Educator License scholarship.

9 (a) Subject to appropriation, ~~beginning with awards for~~  
10 ~~the 2022-2023 academic year,~~ the Commission shall award  
11 annually up to 250 Post-Master of Social Work School Social  
12 Work Professional Educator License scholarships, which may  
13 also be known as School Social Work scholarships. A qualified  
14 applicant ~~to a person who:~~

15 (1) holds a valid Illinois-licensed clinical social  
16 work license or social work license or is pursuing a  
17 clinical social work license or social work license;

18 (2) has obtained a master's degree in social work from  
19 an approved program or will obtain a master's degree in  
20 social work from an approved program before enrolling in  
21 the academic program that this scholarship would support;

22 (3) is a United States citizen or eligible noncitizen;  
23 and

1           (4) submits an application to the Commission for such  
2       scholarship and agrees to take courses to obtain an  
3       Illinois Professional Educator License with an endorsement  
4       in School Social Work.

5       (b) If an appropriation for this Section for a given  
6       fiscal year is insufficient to provide scholarships to all  
7       qualified applicants, the Commission shall allocate the  
8       appropriation as follows:

9           (1) first, to students who received a scholarship  
10      under this Section in the prior academic year and who  
11      remain eligible for a scholarship under this Section;

12          (2) (blank); and

13          (3) then, to new, qualified applicants in accordance  
14      with this Section.

15       (c) Scholarships awarded under this Section shall be  
16      issued pursuant to rules adopted by the Commission.

17       (d) Each scholarship shall be applied to the payment of  
18      tuition and mandatory fees at a State public university or at a  
19      private, not-for-profit institution of higher learning in this  
20      State that prepares students to obtain an Illinois  
21      Professional Educator License with an endorsement in School  
22      Social Work ~~the University of Illinois, Southern Illinois~~  
23      ~~University, Chicago State University, Eastern Illinois~~  
24      ~~University, Governors State University, Illinois State~~  
25      ~~University, Northeastern Illinois University, Northern~~  
26      ~~Illinois University, and Western Illinois University.~~ Each

1 scholarship may be applied to pay tuition and mandatory fees  
2 required to obtain an Illinois Professional Educator License  
3 with an endorsement in School Social Work. A scholarship for a  
4 recipient attending a private, not-for-profit institution of  
5 higher learning shall not exceed the maximum grant payable to  
6 a student enrolled in the most expensive comparable program of  
7 study at a public university in this State.

8 (e) The Commission shall make tuition and fee payments  
9 directly to the qualified institution of higher learning that  
10 the applicant attends.

11 (f) Any person who has accepted a scholarship under this  
12 Section must, within one year after graduation or termination  
13 of enrollment in a Post-Master of Social Work Professional  
14 Education License with an endorsement in School Social Work  
15 program, begin working as a school social worker at a public or  
16 nonpublic not-for-profit preschool, elementary school, or  
17 secondary school located in this State for at least 2 of the 5  
18 years immediately following that graduation or termination,  
19 excluding, however, from the computation of that 5-year  
20 period: (i) any time up to 3 years spent in the military  
21 service, whether such service occurs before or after the  
22 person graduates; (ii) the time that person is a person with a  
23 temporary total disability for a period of time not to exceed 3  
24 years, as established by the sworn affidavit of a qualified  
25 physician; and (iii) the time that person is seeking and  
26 unable to find full-time employment as a school social worker

1 at a State public or nonpublic not-for-profit preschool,  
2 elementary school, or secondary school.

3 (g) If a recipient of a scholarship under this Section  
4 fails to fulfill the work obligation set forth in subsection  
5 (f), the Commission shall require the recipient to repay the  
6 amount of the scholarships received, prorated according to the  
7 fraction of the obligation not completed, at a rate of  
8 interest equal to 5%, and, if applicable, reasonable  
9 collection fees. The Commission is authorized to establish  
10 rules relating to its collection activities for repayment of  
11 scholarships under this Section. All repayments collected  
12 under this Section shall be forwarded to the State Comptroller  
13 for deposit into this State's General Revenue Fund.

14 A recipient of a scholarship under this Section is not  
15 considered to be in violation of the failure to fulfill the  
16 work obligation under subsection (f) if the recipient (i)  
17 enrolls on a full-time basis as a graduate student in a course  
18 of study related to the field of social work at a qualified  
19 Illinois institution of higher learning; (ii) is serving, not  
20 in excess of 3 years, as a member of the armed services of the  
21 United States; (iii) is a person with a temporary total  
22 disability for a period of time not to exceed 3 years, as  
23 established by the sworn affidavit of a qualified physician;  
24 (iv) is seeking and unable to find full-time employment as a  
25 school social worker at an Illinois public or nonpublic  
26 not-for-profit preschool, elementary school, or secondary

1 school that satisfies the criteria set forth in subsection (f)  
2 and is able to provide evidence of that fact; or (v) becomes a  
3 person with a permanent total disability, as established by  
4 the sworn affidavit of a qualified physician.

5 (Source: P.A. 104-437, eff. 11-21-25.)

6 Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect July 1,  
7 2026.