

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 65.115 as follows:

6 (110 ILCS 947/65.115)

7 Sec. 65.115. ~~School and Municipal~~ Social Worker and School
8 Counselor ~~Work~~ Shortage Loan Repayment Program.

9 (a) To encourage Illinois students to work, and to
10 continue to work, as a school social worker or school
11 counselor for a ~~in~~ public school district ~~districts~~ in this
12 State or to work as a social worker for a municipality in this
13 ~~in~~ State ~~municipalities~~, the Commission shall, each year,
14 receive and consider applications for loan repayment
15 assistance under this Section. This program shall be known as
16 the School and Municipal Social Worker and School Counselor
17 ~~Work~~ Shortage Loan Repayment Program. The Commission shall
18 administer the program and shall adopt all necessary and
19 proper rules to effectively implement the program.

20 (b) Subject ~~Beginning July 1, 2022, subject~~ to a separate
21 appropriation made for such purposes, the Commission shall
22 award a grant, up to a maximum of \$8,000 per year for a maximum
23 of 4 years ~~\$6,500~~, to each qualified applicant. A ~~The~~

1 ~~Commission may encourage the recipient of a grant awarded~~
2 under this Section shall be used ~~to use the grant award~~ for
3 repayment of the recipient's educational loan. If funds are
4 insufficient to provide all qualified applicants with a grant
5 as authorized by this Section, the Commission shall allocate
6 the available grant funds for the fiscal year to qualified
7 applicants who submit a complete application on or before a
8 date specified by the Commission, based on the following order
9 of priority:

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

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

15 (c) A person is a qualified applicant under this Section
16 if he or she meets all of the following qualifications:

17 (1) The person is a United States citizen or eligible
18 noncitizen.

19 (2) The person is a resident of this State.

20 (3) The person is a borrower with an outstanding
21 balance due on an educational loan related to obtaining a
22 degree in social work or obtaining the appropriate
23 education and training to work as a school counselor.

24 (4) The person, at the time of application, has been
25 employed for at least 12 consecutive months as a school
26 social worker or school counselor by a public elementary

1 school or secondary school in this State ~~for at least 12~~
2 ~~consecutive months~~ or as a social worker for an Illinois
3 municipality ~~who did not report directly to a police~~
4 ~~department.~~

5 (5) The person, at the time of application, is
6 currently employed as a school social worker or school
7 counselor by a public elementary school or secondary
8 school in this State or as a social worker for an Illinois
9 municipality ~~who does not report directly to a police~~
10 ~~department.~~

11 (d) An applicant shall submit an application, in a form
12 determined by the Commission, for grant assistance under this
13 Section to the Commission. An applicant is required to submit,
14 with the application, supporting documentation as the
15 Commission may deem necessary.

16 (e) (Blank).

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

18 Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect July 1,
19 2026.