

HB1086



103RD GENERAL ASSEMBLY

State of Illinois

2023 and 2024

HB1086

Introduced 1/12/2023, by Rep. Mary E. Flowers

SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

110 ILCS 947/65.120 new

Amends the Higher Education Student Assistance Act. Provides for the issuance of grants to essential workers and the dependents of essential workers, subject to appropriation. Defines "essential worker" as an individual whose employment duties provide a service that is typically deemed vital to public health and safety and economic and national security and essential to continue critical infrastructure operations. Sets forth provisions concerning application and qualifications for a grant, the amount of a grant and its use, and rulemaking. Effective July 1, 2023.

LRB103 04843 RJT 49853 b

A BILL FOR

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 adding Section 65.120 as follows:

6 (110 ILCS 947/65.120 new)

7 Sec. 65.120. Grants for essential workers.

8 (a) In this Section:

9 "Dependent" means a spouse, natural child, legally adopted
10 child, or child in the legal custody of an essential worker.

11 "Essential worker" means an individual whose employment
12 duties provide a service that is typically deemed vital to
13 public health and safety and economic and national security
14 and essential to continue critical infrastructure operations.

15 "Essential worker" includes, but is not limited to, a medical
16 or healthcare worker; child care or school personnel; an
17 in-home support provider; a telecommunications, information
18 technology systems, defense, food or agriculture,
19 transportation or logistics, energy, or water or wastewater
20 worker, or law enforcement personnel.

21 "Satisfactory academic progress" means the qualified
22 applicant's maintenance of minimum standards of academic
23 performance, consistent with requirements for maintaining

1 federal financial aid eligibility, as determined by the
2 institution of higher learning.

3 (b) Subject to a separate appropriation for this purpose,
4 the Commission shall, each year, receive and consider
5 applications for grant assistance under this Section. Both an
6 essential worker and all dependents of the essential worker
7 qualify to receive a grant issued by the Commission in
8 accordance with this Section. Provided that the recipient is
9 maintaining satisfactory academic progress, the funds from the
10 grant may be used to pay up to 8 semesters or 12 quarters of
11 full payment of tuition and mandatory fees at any public
12 university or public community college located in this State
13 for either full or part-time study. This benefit may be used
14 for undergraduate or graduate study.

15 In addition, a qualified applicant who has not yet
16 received a high school diploma or a high school equivalency
17 certificate and completes a high school equivalency
18 preparation course through an Illinois Community College
19 Board-approved provider may use grant funds to pay costs
20 associated with obtaining a high school equivalency
21 certificate, including payment of the cost of the high school
22 equivalency test and up to one retest on each test module, and
23 any additional fees that may be required in order to obtain an
24 Illinois High School Equivalency Certificate or an official
25 transcript of test scores after successful completion of the
26 high school equivalency test.

1 (c) An applicant for a grant under this Section need not
2 demonstrate financial need to qualify for the benefits.

3 (d) The Commission may adopt any rules necessary to
4 implement and administer this Section.

5 Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect July 1,
6 2023.