

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2023 REGULAR SESSION

Introduced

House Bill 3315

By Delegates Cooper and Heckert

(By Request of the Adjutant General)

[Introduced ; Referred

to the Committee on]

1 A BILL to amend and reenact §15-1B-25 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating
2 generally to readiness enhancement and commission bonuses.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

ARTICLE 1B. NATIONAL GUARD.

§15-1B-25. Readiness Enhancement and Commissioning Bonus.

1 (a) The Adjutant General may establish within the limitations of this subdivision a program
2 to provide enlistment bonuses to eligible prospects who become members of the West Virginia
3 National Guard.

4 (1) Eligibility for the bonus is limited to a candidate who: (A) Has expertise, qualifications,
5 or potential for military service deemed by the Adjutant General as sufficiently important to the
6 readiness of the National Guard or a unit of the National Guard to warrant the payment of a bonus
7 in an amount to generally encourage the candidate's enlistment in the National Guard; (B) Joins
8 the National Guard as an enlisted member; and (C) Serves satisfactorily during the period of, and
9 completes, the person's initial entry training, if applicable. The Adjutant General may, within the
10 limitations of this section, determine additional eligibility criteria for the bonus.

11 (2) The enlistment bonus payments must be made on a schedule that is determined and
12 published in department regulations by the Adjutant General.

13 (3) If a member fails to complete a term of enlistment for which a bonus was paid, the
14 Adjutant General may seek to recoup a prorated amount of the bonus as determined by the
15 Adjutant General.

16 (b) Reenlistment or commissioning bonus program. The Adjutant General may establish a
17 program to provide a reenlistment or commissioning bonus to eligible members of the West
18 Virginia National Guard who extend their term of service in the National Guard within the
19 limitations of this subdivision. Eligibility for the bonus is limited to a member of the National Guard
20 who: (1) Is serving satisfactorily as determined by the Adjutant General; (2) Has 12 or fewer years
21 of service creditable for retirement; and (3) Has military training and expertise deemed by the

22 Adjutant General as sufficiently important to the readiness of the National Guard or a unit of the
23 National Guard to warrant the payment of a bonus in an amount to generally encourage the
24 member's reenlistment in the National Guard, or the member's acceptance of a commission as an
25 officer in the National Guard. The Adjutant General may, within the limitations of this paragraph
26 and other applicable laws, determine additional eligibility criteria for the bonus.

27 (1) The bonus payments must be made on a schedule that is determined and published in
28 department regulations by the Adjutant General.

29 (2) If a member fails to complete a term of reenlistment or an obligated term of
30 commissioned service for which a bonus was paid, the Adjutant General may seek to recoup a
31 prorated amount of the bonus as determined by the Adjutant General.

32 (c) Upon graduation from the officer candidate school conducted at the regional training
33 institute, Camp Dawson, each member of the West Virginia Army National Guard who accepts a
34 commission shall be entitled to a commissioning bonus of \$2,000.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to create a program for the enhancement of readiness through recruitment and retention bonuses.

Strike-throughs indicate language that would be stricken from a heading or the present law and underscoring indicates new language that would be added.