

# **WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE**

## **2024 REGULAR SESSION**

### **Committee Substitute**

**for**

### **House Bill 5445**

By Delegates Hott, Kelly, Kimble, and Ward

[Originating in the Committee on the Judiciary;

Reported on February 23, 2024]



1 A BILL to amend and reenact §15-2-7 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, revising  
2 the statute to reduce the minimum age for a cadet for the West Virginia State Police from  
3 the age of 21 to the age of 18; and eliminating the upper age restriction.

*Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:*

**ARTICLE 2. WEST VIRGINIA STATE POLICE.**

**§15-2-7. Cadet selection board; qualifications for and appointment to membership in State Police; civilian employees; forensic laboratory employees; salaries.**

1 (a) The superintendent shall establish within the West Virginia State Police a cadet  
2 selection board which shall be representative of commissioned and noncommissioned officers  
3 within the State Police.

4 (b) The superintendent shall appoint a member to the position of trooper from among the  
5 top three names on the current list of eligible applicants established by the cadet selection board.

6 (c) Preference in making appointments shall be given whenever possible to honorably  
7 discharged members of the armed forces of the United States and to residents of West Virginia.  
8 Each applicant for appointment shall be a person not less than 21 18 years of age ~~not more than~~  
9 ~~39 years of age~~, of sound constitution and good moral character, and is required to pass any  
10 mental and physical examination and meet other requirements as provided in rules promulgated  
11 by the cadet selection board: *Provided*, That a former member may, at the discretion of the  
12 superintendent, be reenlisted.

13 (d) No person may be barred from becoming a member of the State Police because of his  
14 or her religious or political convictions.

15 (e) The superintendent shall adhere to the principles of equal employment opportunity set  
16 forth in §5-11-1 *et seq.* of this code and shall take positive steps to encourage applications for  
17 State Police membership from females and minority groups within the state. An annual report shall  
18 be filed with the Legislature on or before January 1 of each year by the superintendent which

19 includes a summary of the efforts and the effectiveness of those efforts intended to recruit females,  
20 African-Americans, and other minorities into the ranks of the State Police.

21 (f) Except for the superintendent, no person may be appointed or enlisted to membership  
22 in the State Police at a grade or rank above the grade of trooper.

23 (g) The superintendent shall appoint civilian employees as are necessary and all  
24 employees may be included in the classified service of the civil service system except those in  
25 positions exempt under the provisions of §29-6-1 *et seq.* of this code.

26 (h) Effective June 30, 2014, West Virginia State Police civilian employees with a minimum  
27 of one year service shall receive an annual longevity salary increase equal to \$500. The increases  
28 in salary provided by this subsection are in addition to any other increases to which the civilian  
29 employees might otherwise be entitled.

30 (i) Effective July 1, 2014, all current West Virginia State Police Forensic Laboratory  
31 analysts, directors, and evidence technicians shall receive a one-time, across-the-board salary  
32 increase equal to 20 percent of their current salary.

33 (j) On or before January 1, 2018, the Director of the West Virginia State Police Forensic  
34 Laboratory shall submit a report to the Joint Committee on Government and Finance detailing the  
35 West Virginia State Police Forensic Laboratory's ability to retain employees.

36 (k) Effective July 1, 2021, the salaries of West Virginia State Police Forensic Laboratory  
37 Evidence Custodians, Forensic Technicians, Forensic Scientists, and Forensic Scientist  
38 Supervisors shall be as set forth in the provisions of §15-2-5(d) of this code.