

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2025 REGULAR SESSION

Introduced

Senate Bill 631

By Senator Deeds

[Introduced February 28, 2025; referred
to the Committee on Education; and then to the
Committee on Finance]

1 A BILL to amend and reenact §18C-9-5 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating
2 to extending the West Virginia Invests Grant Program to an associate degree or certificate
3 in a post-secondary program for emergency medical services.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

ARTICLE 9. WEST VIRGINIA INVESTS GRANT PROGRAM.

§18C-9-5. Eligibility requirements; agreements.

1 (a) To be eligible for a WV Invests Grant, an individual must satisfy the following
2 requirements:

3 (1) Be a citizen or legal resident of the United States and have been a resident of West
4 Virginia for at least one year immediately preceding the date of application for a grant;

5 (2) Have completed a secondary education program in a public, private, or home school;

6 (3) Have not been previously awarded a post-secondary degree: Provided, That
7 individuals who have been previously awarded a post-secondary degree may qualify for the grant
8 if they are seeking an associate degree or certificate in an eligible post-secondary program for
9 emergency medical services;

10 (4) Be at least 18 years of age: *Provided, That* individuals younger than 18 years of age
11 may qualify for the grant upon completion of a secondary education program in a public, private, or
12 home school;

13 (5) Meet the admission requirements of, and be admitted into, an eligible institution;

14 (6) Satisfactorily meet any additional qualifications of enrollment, academic promise, or
15 achievement as established by the council through rule;

16 (7) Have filed a completed free application for federal student aid for the academic year in
17 which the grant award is sought;

18 (8) Be enrolled in an eligible post-secondary program;

19 (9) Be enrolled in at least six credit hours per semester;

20 (10) Have completed a WV Invests Grant application as provided by the council in

21 accordance with a schedule established by the council; and

22 (11) Have, prior to the start of each academic year or prior to the initial academic period for
23 which the student is enrolled if that period for which the student is enrolled is not the beginning of
24 the academic year, taken a drug test administered by the eligible institution. If the individual tests
25 positive, he or she shall take another drug test prior to the beginning of the next academic period.
26 If the results of the second test are positive, the individual shall complete a drug rehabilitation
27 program as prescribed by the Vice Chancellor for Administration as a condition of continued
28 eligibility for a WV Invests Grant. The applicant shall be responsible for the actual cost of any drug
29 tests required by this subdivision.

30 (b) Each grant may be renewed until the course of study is completed as long as the
31 following qualifications, as determined by the vice chancellor for administration and the council,
32 are satisfied:

33 (1) Maintaining satisfactory academic standing, including a cumulative grade point
34 average of at least 2.0;

35 (2) Making adequate progress toward completion of the eligible post-secondary program;

36 (3) Satisfactory participation in a community service program authorized by the council.

37 The council shall include in the legislative rules, required by §18C-9-4 of this code, provisions for
38 the administration of community service requirements, including, but not limited to, requiring
39 completion of at least eight hours of unpaid community service during the time of study, which may
40 include, but is not limited to, participating with nonprofit, governmental, institutional, or community-
41 based organizations designed to improve the quality of life for community residents, meet the
42 needs of community residents, or foster civic responsibility;

43 (4) Continued satisfaction of eligibility requirements provided by §18C-9-5(a) of this code;

44 and

45 (5) Satisfaction of any additional eligibility criteria established by the council through
46 legislative rule.

(c) Each recipient of a WV Invests Grant shall enter into an agreement with the vice chancellor for administration, which shall require repayment of an amount of the grant or grants awarded to the recipient, in whole or in part, if a recipient chooses to reside outside the state within two years following obtainment of the degree or certificate for which the grant or grants were awarded. The council may not require a recipient to repay grants, in whole or in part, unless the prospective recipient has been informed of this requirement in writing before initial acceptance of the grant award. Each WV Invests Grant agreement shall include the following:

(1) Disclosure of the full terms and conditions under which assistance under this article is provided and under which repayment may be required; and

(2) A description of the appeals procedure required to be established under this article.

(d) WV Invests Grant recipients found to be in noncompliance with the agreement entered into under §18C-9-5(c) of this code shall be required to repay the amount of the grant awards received, plus interest, and, where applicable, reasonable collection fees, on a schedule and at a rate of interest prescribed in rules promulgated by the council. The council shall also provide for proration of the amount to be repaid by a recipient who maintains employment in the state for a period of time within the time period required under §18C-9-5(c) of this code.

(e) A recipient is not in violation of an agreement entered into pursuant to §18C-9-5(c) of this code during any period in which the recipient is meeting any of the following conditions:

(1) Pursuing a half-time course of study at an accredited institution of higher education;

(2) Serving as a member of the armed services of the United States;

(3) Failing to comply with the terms of the agreement due to death or permanent or temporary disability as established by sworn affidavit of a qualified physician; or

(4) Satisfying the provisions of any additional repayment exemptions prescribed by the council through rule.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to extend the West Virginia Invests Grant Program to an

associate degree or certificate in a post-secondary program for emergency medical services

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