

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2026 REGULAR SESSION

Introduced

House Bill 4081

By Delegates Willis, Stephens, Hanshaw, Ellington,
and Rohrbach

[Introduced January 14, 2026; referred to the
Committee on Education then Finance]

1 A BILL to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding a new article,
2 designated §18B-23-1, §18B-23-2, §18B-23-3, §18B-23-4, and §18B-23-5, relating to
3 creating the Higher Education Health and Aid Grant; providing for a short title; enacting the
4 act and providing for a legislative purpose; providing criteria that institutions shall follow to
5 receive such grant; establishing a reporting requirement; and providing for an effective
6 date.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

ARTICLE 23. HIGHER EDUCATION HEALTH AND AID GRANT.

§18B-23-1. Short title.

1 This article shall be known and may be cited as the "Higher Education Health and Aid
2 Grant."

§18B-23-2. Enactment and purpose.

1 The West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission shall establish a Higher Education
2 Health and Aid Grant Program. The purpose of the program shall be to provide grants to state
3 institutions of higher education that have one or more campuses. The purpose of the grant funding
4 shall be to:

- 5 (1) Address student food insecurity; and
6 (2) Address student health and hygiene inadequacies.

§18B-23-3. Grant criteria.

1 In order to receive the Higher Education Health and Aid Grant, the institution shall only be
2 allowed to spend the aforementioned funds upon the following criteria while acting in accordance
3 with the following rules and regulations:

- 4 (1) Grant funds may be spent on purchasing or building infrastructure apparent and
5 necessary to provide at least one physical food and health aids pantry on campus;
6 (2) Grant funds may be spent on any shelf-stable food and food products commonly
7 defined as foods processed or packaged to withstand prolonged storage without refrigeration;

(3) Grant funds may be spent on medical, health and hygiene aids limited to the following: absorbent compress dressings, adhesive bandages, adhesive cloth tape, antibiotic ointment packets, antiseptic wipe packets, cold compresses, non-latex gloves, hydrocortisone ointment packets, gauze, cotton swabs, cotton balls, moleskin, sterile gauze pads, tweezers, nail files, nail clippers, toothbrushes, toothpaste, non-alcoholic mouth wash, dental floss, toothpicks, saline solution, tissues, paper towels, toilet paper, trash bags, dish soap, can opener, laundry detergent, disinfectant wipes, disinfectant spray, hand sanitizer, hand soap, body soap and wash, face soap and wash, shampoo, hair conditioner, washcloths, towels, and female hygiene products;

(4) Grant funds may be spent on one-use, disposable tableware items that may be needed for the consumption of food including but not limited to paper or plastic plates, bowls, cups, spoons, knives, forks, and napkins;

(5) All institutions shall keep a detailed perpetual inventory based on one-calendar month periods of all materials with the purpose of tracking what items have been purchased, what items have been taken, and what items remain while including specific dates and times;

(6) All institutions shall provide the Chancellor or designee of the Higher Education Policy Commission with physical receipts of all expenditures concerning purchases with grant funding no later than 30 days after the receipt date and provide the Chancellor or designee of the Higher Education Policy Commission with periodic inventory reports at the end of each one-calendar month period.

The Chancellor or designee of the Higher Education Policy Commission shall allocate grant funding to each state institution of higher education that has one or more campuses that agree to comply with the criteria established under this article. The Chancellor or designee of the Higher Education Policy Commission shall determine the amount of each grant which shall be used by the institution to further address food, hygiene, and health insecurities among students enrolled in the institution.

§18B-23-4.

Reporting

requirement.

The Chancellor or designee of the Higher Education Policy Commission shall submit a report to the Legislative Oversight Commission on Education Accountability no later than one year after the establishment of the Higher Education Health and Aid Grant Program. The report shall include, but not be limited to, the number and amounts of the grant awards, the rationale behind individual campus funding grant amounts, the impact the grant program has had on establishing additional food and health aid pantries on campuses at state institutions of higher education, the impact the grant had in reducing the number of students experiencing food and basic hygiene insecurity, and recommendations on the expansion of the grant program.

§18B-23-5. Effective date.

This article shall take effect July 1, 2026.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to create the "Higher Education Health and Aid Grant," which requires the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission to establish a grant program to address food, health, and hygiene insecurities among students enrolled in state institutions of higher education

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