
SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 5950

State of Washington

66th Legislature

2019 Regular Session

By Senate Higher Education & Workforce Development (originally sponsored by Senators Randall, Lovelett, O'Ban, Hasegawa, Kuderer, Nguyen, and Wilson, C.)

READ FIRST TIME 02/22/19.

1 AN ACT Relating to creating the social work professional loan
2 repayment program; reenacting and amending RCW 43.79A.040; and adding
3 a new chapter to Title 28B RCW.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** It is the intent of the legislature to
6 incentivize social workers and social service specialists to enter
7 into the profession and continue to serve the most vulnerable in the
8 state. Annual turnover is over twenty percent statewide for child
9 welfare workers and over thirty percent in some regions. Mental
10 health and substance abuse social workers are one of the most in-
11 demand occupations across all counties in Washington state. Repeated
12 turnover has direct costs and indirect costs such as low morale,
13 increased workloads, and the impact of relative inexperience on
14 outcomes of safety, permanence, and well-being. Consistent social
15 worker assistance to families and individuals with mental, emotional,
16 or substance abuse problems leads to better outcomes for everyone.
17 The cost of achieving their professional credential requirements can
18 result in a social worker and social service specialist having an
19 educational debt burden greater than their annual salary. Over eighty
20 percent of social workers have student debt and the pressure to pay
21 this debt while caring for at-risk children or adults in crisis can

1 be a major barrier to retaining social workers and social service
2 specialists. In addition, educational debt has been identified as a
3 deterrent to students entering into public service careers.

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** Unless the context clearly requires
5 otherwise, the definitions in this section apply throughout this
6 chapter.

7 (1) "Eligible expenses" means reasonable expenses associated with
8 the costs of acquiring an education such as tuition, books,
9 equipment, fees, room and board, and other expenses determined by the
10 office.

11 (2) "Forgiven," "to forgive," or "forgiveness" means to render
12 social work services as a state of Washington employee.

13 (3) "Loan repayment" means a loan that is paid in full or in part
14 if the participant renders social work services on behalf of the
15 state of Washington.

16 (4) "Office" means the office of student financial assistance.

17 (5) "Participant" means a social work professional who has
18 received a loan repayment award and commenced practice as a social
19 worker.

20 (6) "Program" means the social work professional loan repayment
21 program.

22 (7) "Required service obligation" means an obligation by the
23 participant to provide social work services on behalf of the state of
24 Washington department of children, youth, and families or an entity
25 providing social work services in the field of mental health and
26 substance abuse for a period to be established as provided for in
27 this chapter.

28 (8) "Satisfied" means paid in full.

29 (9) "Social worker" or "social service specialist" means a person
30 who is licensed under RCW 18.225.090(1)(a) or qualified under chapter
31 18.320 RCW.

32 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** The social work professional loan
33 repayment program is established for social work professionals. The
34 program shall be administered by the office. In administering this
35 program, the office shall:

36 (1) Verify social work professionals who are eligible to
37 participate in the program;

38 (2) Adopt rules and develop guidelines to administer the program;

1 (3) Coordinate with the office of financial management state
2 human resources division, professional associations, and the student
3 achievement council to publicize the program, particularly to
4 maximize participation among individuals in shortage areas and among
5 populations expected to experience the greatest growth in the
6 workforce; and

7 (4) Accept grants and donations from public and private sources
8 for the program.

9 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** (1) Social workers and social service
10 specialists employed by the department of children, youth, and
11 families or social workers employed at an entity providing social
12 work services in the field of mental health and substance abuse are
13 eligible to participate in the program two years after commencing
14 their employment as a social worker or social service specialist.

15 (2) Each participant is eligible for:

16 (a) Quarterly or more frequent payments, as determined by the
17 office, subject to the best use of the funds and continued
18 eligibility for the program; and

19 (b) A maximum lifetime award of fifty thousand dollars, for up to
20 a maximum of ten consecutive years, until the loan is repaid.

21 (3) Repayment of loans under this program shall begin no later
22 than ninety days after the individual has become a participant.
23 Payments shall be made quarterly, or more frequently if deemed
24 appropriate by the office, to the participant until:

25 (a) The loan is repaid;

26 (b) The participant becomes ineligible due to a terminated
27 required service obligation; or

28 (c) The award limits specified in subsection (2) of this section
29 are reached.

30 (4) The payments in subsection (3) of this section will be for
31 the full amount of the loans paid by the participant during the prior
32 period.

33 (5) Should the participant discontinue service in a social work
34 profession, payments against the participant's loans shall cease to
35 be effective on the date the participant discontinues service.

36 (6) The office shall not be held responsible for any outstanding
37 payments on principal or interest to any lenders once a participant's
38 eligibility expires.

1 (7) Loans from federal government sources may be repaid by the
2 program.

3 (8) Participants shall allow the office access to loan records
4 and to acquire information from lenders necessary to verify
5 eligibility and to determine payments.

6 (9) Loans may not be renegotiated with lenders to accelerate
7 repayment.

8 (10) The office shall establish an appeal process by rule.

9 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** The office may grant loan repayment to
10 eligible participants from the funds appropriated for this purpose or
11 from any private or public funds given to the office for this
12 purpose. Funds appropriated for the program, including reasonable
13 administrative costs, may be used by the office for the purposes of
14 loan repayments.

15 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** The social work professional loan
16 repayment program fund is created in custody of the state treasurer.
17 Any funds appropriated by the legislature for the social work
18 professional loan repayment program or any other public or private
19 funds intended for loan repayments under this program shall be placed
20 in the program fund created by this section. All receipts from the
21 program shall be deposited into the program fund. Only the office, or
22 its designee, may authorize expenditures from the program fund. The
23 program fund is subject to allotment procedures under chapter 43.88
24 RCW, but no appropriation is required for expenditures.

25 **Sec. 7.** RCW 43.79A.040 and 2018 c 260 s 28, 2018 c 258 s 4, and
26 2018 c 127 s 6 are each reenacted and amended to read as follows:

27 (1) Money in the treasurer's trust fund may be deposited,
28 invested, and reinvested by the state treasurer in accordance with
29 RCW 43.84.080 in the same manner and to the same extent as if the
30 money were in the state treasury, and may be commingled with moneys
31 in the state treasury for cash management and cash balance purposes.

32 (2) All income received from investment of the treasurer's trust
33 fund must be set aside in an account in the treasury trust fund to be
34 known as the investment income account.

35 (3) The investment income account may be utilized for the payment
36 of purchased banking services on behalf of treasurer's trust funds
37 including, but not limited to, depository, safekeeping, and

1 disbursement functions for the state treasurer or affected state
2 agencies. The investment income account is subject in all respects to
3 chapter 43.88 RCW, but no appropriation is required for payments to
4 financial institutions. Payments must occur prior to distribution of
5 earnings set forth in subsection (4) of this section.

6 (4)(a) Monthly, the state treasurer must distribute the earnings
7 credited to the investment income account to the state general fund
8 except under (b), (c), and (d) of this subsection.

9 (b) The following accounts and funds must receive their
10 proportionate share of earnings based upon each account's or fund's
11 average daily balance for the period: The 24/7 sobriety account, the
12 Washington promise scholarship account, the Gina Grant Bull memorial
13 legislative page scholarship account, the Washington advanced college
14 tuition payment program account, the Washington college savings
15 program account, the social work professional loan repayment program
16 fund, the accessible communities account, the Washington achieving a
17 better life experience program account, the community and technical
18 college innovation account, the agricultural local fund, the American
19 Indian scholarship endowment fund, the foster care scholarship
20 endowment fund, the foster care endowed scholarship trust fund, the
21 contract harvesting revolving account, the Washington state combined
22 fund drive account, the commemorative works account, the county
23 enhanced 911 excise tax account, the toll collection account, the
24 developmental disabilities endowment trust fund, the energy account,
25 the fair fund, the family and medical leave insurance account, the
26 fish and wildlife federal lands revolving account, the natural
27 resources federal lands revolving account, the food animal
28 veterinarian conditional scholarship account, the forest health
29 revolving account, the fruit and vegetable inspection account, the
30 future teachers conditional scholarship account, the game farm
31 alternative account, the GET ready for math and science scholarship
32 account, the Washington global health technologies and product
33 development account, the grain inspection revolving fund, the
34 Washington history day account, the industrial insurance rainy day
35 fund, the juvenile accountability incentive account, the law
36 enforcement officers' and firefighters' plan 2 expense fund, the
37 local tourism promotion account, the low-income home rehabilitation
38 revolving loan program account, the multiagency permitting team
39 account, the northeast Washington wolf-livestock management account,
40 the pilotage account, the produce railcar pool account, the regional

1 transportation investment district account, the rural rehabilitation
2 account, the Washington sexual assault kit account, the stadium and
3 exhibition center account, the youth athletic facility account, the
4 self-insurance revolving fund, the children's trust fund, the
5 Washington horse racing commission Washington bred owners' bonus fund
6 and breeder awards account, the Washington horse racing commission
7 class C purse fund account, the individual development account
8 program account, the Washington horse racing commission operating
9 account, the life sciences discovery fund, the Washington state
10 heritage center account, the reduced cigarette ignition propensity
11 account, the center for childhood deafness and hearing loss account,
12 the school for the blind account, the Millersylvania park trust fund,
13 the public employees' and retirees' insurance reserve fund, the
14 school employees' benefits board insurance reserve fund, (~~(the)~~)
15 the public employees' and retirees' insurance account, (~~(the)~~) the
16 school employees' insurance account, and the radiation perpetual
17 maintenance fund.

18 (c) The following accounts and funds must receive eighty percent
19 of their proportionate share of earnings based upon each account's or
20 fund's average daily balance for the period: The advanced right-of-
21 way revolving fund, the advanced environmental mitigation revolving
22 account, the federal narcotics asset forfeitures account, the high
23 occupancy vehicle account, the local rail service assistance account,
24 and the miscellaneous transportation programs account.

25 (d) Any state agency that has independent authority over accounts
26 or funds not statutorily required to be held in the custody of the
27 state treasurer that deposits funds into a fund or account in the
28 custody of the state treasurer pursuant to an agreement with the
29 office of the state treasurer shall receive its proportionate share
30 of earnings based upon each account's or fund's average daily balance
31 for the period.

32 (5) In conformance with Article II, section 37 of the state
33 Constitution, no trust accounts or funds shall be allocated earnings
34 without the specific affirmative directive of this section.

35 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 8.** Sections 1 through 6 of this act
36 constitute a new chapter in Title 28B RCW.

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