
SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 6300

State of Washington

68th Legislature

2024 Regular Session

By Senate Higher Education & Workforce Development (originally sponsored by Senators Randall, Nobles, Kuderer, Lovelett, Shewmake, Stanford, and Valdez; by request of Student Achievement Council)

READ FIRST TIME 01/31/24.

1 AN ACT Relating to permitting beneficiaries of public assistance
2 programs to automatically qualify as income-eligible for the purpose
3 of receiving the Washington college grant; and amending RCW
4 28B.92.200 and 28B.92.225.

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

6 **Sec. 1.** RCW 28B.92.200 and 2022 c 214 s 5 are each amended to
7 read as follows:

8 (1) The Washington college grant program is created to provide a
9 statewide free college program for eligible participants and greater
10 access to postsecondary education for Washington residents. The
11 Washington college grant program is intended to increase the number
12 of high school graduates and adults that can attain a postsecondary
13 credential and provide them with the qualifications needed to compete
14 for job opportunities in Washington.

15 (2) The office shall implement and administer the Washington
16 college grant program and is authorized to establish rules necessary
17 for implementation of the program.

18 (3) The legislature shall appropriate funding for the Washington
19 college grant program. Allocations must be made on the basis of
20 estimated eligible participants enrolled in eligible institutions of
21 higher education or apprenticeship programs. All eligible students

1 are entitled to a Washington college grant beginning in academic year
2 2020-21.

3 (4) The office shall award Washington college grants to all
4 eligible students beginning in academic year 2020-21.

5 (5) To be eligible for the Washington college grant, students
6 must meet the following requirements:

7 (a) (i) Demonstrate financial need under RCW 28B.92.205;

8 (ii) Receive one or more of the following types of public
9 assistance:

10 (A) Aged, blind, or disabled assistance benefits under chapter
11 74.62 RCW;

12 (B) Essential needs and housing support program benefits under
13 RCW 43.185C.220; ((~~or~~))

14 (C) Pregnant women assistance program financial grants under RCW
15 74.62.030;

16 (D) Beginning in the 2027-28 academic year, Washington basic food
17 program benefits under chapter 74.04 RCW;

18 (E) Beginning in the 2027-28 academic year, Washington food
19 assistance program benefits under RCW 74.08A.120; or

20 (F) Beginning in the 2025-26 academic year, apple health coverage
21 under chapter 74.09 RCW with a family income at or below 210 percent
22 of the federal poverty line; ((~~or~~))

23 (iii) Be a Washington high school student in the 10th, 11th, or
24 12th grade whose parent or legal guardian is receiving one or more of
25 the types of public assistance listed in (a) (ii) of this subsection
26 and have received a certificate confirming eligibility from the
27 office in accordance with RCW 28B.92.225; or

28 (iv) Beginning in the 2025-26 academic year, be a Washington high
29 school student in the 10th, 11th, or 12th grade who is a member of an
30 assistance unit receiving benefits under the Washington basic food
31 program in chapter 74.04 RCW or the Washington food assistance
32 program established under RCW 74.08A.120;

33 (b) (i) Be enrolled or accepted for enrollment for at least three
34 quarter credits or the equivalent semester credits at an institution
35 of higher education in Washington as defined in RCW 28B.92.030; or

36 (ii) Be enrolled in a registered apprenticeship program approved
37 under chapter 49.04 RCW;

38 (c) Be a resident student as defined in RCW 28B.15.012(2) (a)
39 through (e);

1 (d) File an annual application for financial aid as approved by
2 the office; and

3 (e) Must not have earned a baccalaureate degree or higher from a
4 postsecondary institution.

5 (6) Washington college grant eligibility may not extend beyond
6 five years or one hundred twenty-five percent of the published length
7 of the program in which the student is enrolled or the credit or
8 clock-hour equivalent.

9 (7) Institutional aid administrators shall determine whether a
10 student eligible for the Washington college grant in a given academic
11 year may remain eligible for the ensuing year if the student's family
12 income increases by no more than three percent.

13 (8) Qualifications for receipt and renewal include maintaining
14 satisfactory academic progress toward completion of an eligible
15 program as determined by the office and established in rule.

16 (9) Should a recipient terminate his or her enrollment for any
17 reason during the academic year, the unused portion of the grant
18 shall be returned to the state educational grant fund by the
19 institution of higher education according to the institution of
20 higher education's policy for issuing refunds, except as provided in
21 RCW 28B.92.070.

22 (10) An eligible student enrolled on a part-time basis shall
23 receive a prorated portion of the Washington college grant for any
24 academic period in which he or she is enrolled on a part-time basis.

25 (11) The Washington college grant is intended to be used to meet
26 the costs of postsecondary education for students with financial
27 need. The student shall be awarded all need-based financial aid for
28 which the student qualifies as determined by the institution.

29 (12) Students and participating institutions of higher education
30 shall comply with all the rules adopted by the council for the
31 administration of this chapter.

32 **Sec. 2.** RCW 28B.92.225 and 2022 c 214 s 6 are each amended to
33 read as follows:

34 (1) The office shall enter into a data-sharing agreement with the
35 department of social and health services to facilitate the sharing of
36 individual-level data. ~~((The))~~ To the extent allowable under federal
37 law, the department of social and health services and the health care
38 authority shall send the office a list of all individuals receiving
39 benefits under the public assistance programs listed under RCW

1 28B.92.200(5) on at least an annual basis. This data-sharing
2 requirement does not preempt federal laws prohibiting disclosure of
3 data for the purposes of this section. The office shall use the list
4 to confirm students' eligibility for the Washington college grant
5 program, without requiring the student to fill out a separate
6 financial aid form. The office may also use the information to
7 conduct outreach promoting the Washington college grant.

8 (2) For high school students in 10th, 11th, and 12th grades whose
9 families are receiving benefits under one or more of the public
10 assistance programs listed under RCW 28B.92.200(5), the office shall
11 issue a certificate to the student that validates the student's
12 financial need eligibility for the Washington college grant program.
13 The certificate is good for one year after high school graduation and
14 may be used upon enrollment in an eligible institution of higher
15 education, provided the student meets the other Washington college
16 grant eligibility requirements. The office shall track and maintain
17 records of students who were issued certificates under this section
18 in order to confirm a student's financial need eligibility with an
19 institution of higher education. A student does not need to produce
20 the certificate to receive the Washington college grant.

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