

Enrolled Senate Bill 81

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CHAPTER

AN ACT

Relating to waiver of tuition for community college courses; and declaring an emergency.

Be It Enacted by the People of the State of Oregon:

SECTION 1. Section 2 of this 2015 Act is added to and made a part of ORS chapter 341.

SECTION 2. (1) The Office of Student Access and Completion shall administer the Oregon Promise program as provided by this section.

(2) Subject to subsections (5) and (6) of this section, the office shall provide a waiver of tuition for community college courses to a person who meets the criteria described in subsections (3) and (4) of this section. The waiver shall be a grant and limited as provided by subsections (5) and (6) of this section.

(3) A grant shall be awarded under this section to a person who meets the following criteria:

(a) Is enrolled in courses that are:

(A) Offered at a community college in this state; and

(B) Determined by the office, in accordance with rules adopted by the Higher Education Coordinating Commission, to be required for completion of:

(i) A one-year curriculum for students who plan to transfer to another post-secondary institution of education;

(ii) An associate degree; or

(iii) A program in career and technical education;

(b) Has been a resident of this state for at least 12 months prior to enrolling in the courses described in paragraph (a) of this subsection;

(c) Attained the person's highest level of education in this state prior to:

(A) Receiving a diploma under ORS 329.451;

(B) Receiving a General Educational Development (GED) certificate as provided by ORS 351.768; or

(C) Completing grade 12 in compliance with the requirements of ORS 339.035;

(d) Attained the person's highest level of education as described in paragraph (c) of this subsection within six months from the date that the person first enrolls in courses described in paragraph (a) of this subsection for the purpose of receiving a grant under this section;

(e) Earned a cumulative grade point average of 2.5 or better in high school or otherwise demonstrated an equivalent academic ability, as determined by the office according to rules adopted by the commission;

(f) Completed and submitted the Free Application for Federal Student Aid for each academic year and accepted all state and federal aid grants available to the person, if eligible to file the application; and

(g) Has not completed either of the following:

(A) More than a total of 90 credit hours, or the equivalent, at a post-secondary institution of education; or

(B) A curriculum, degree or program, as described in paragraph (a)(B) of this subsection.

(4)(a) A person continues to remain eligible to receive a grant under this section if the person, in addition to satisfying the criteria specified in subsection (3) of this section, meets the following criteria:

(A) Maintains a cumulative grade point average of 2.5 or better during each term for which the person has received a grant under this section;

(B) Makes satisfactory progress toward a curriculum, degree or program, as described in subsection (3)(a)(B) of this section, as determined by the office according to rules adopted by the commission; and

(C) Enrolls in courses described in subsection (3)(a) of this section for a sufficient number of credit hours to be considered at least a half-time student each term for at least three terms in each consecutive academic year.

(b) A person who fails to maintain the cumulative grade point average specified in paragraph (a)(A) of this subsection becomes ineligible to receive a grant under this section for the term after which the person fails to maintain the cumulative grade point average, unless the eligibility requirement of paragraph (a)(A) of this subsection is waived by the office according to rules adopted by the commission.

(5)(a) The total amount of a grant awarded under this section shall be based on each term that a person is enrolled in courses described in subsection (3)(a) of this section. After the amount of tuition for the person for the term is reduced by \$50, to be paid by the person, and reduced by any amounts received by the person in state and federal aid grants, the person shall be eligible for a grant under this section in an amount that equals:

(A) Except as provided by paragraph (b) of this subsection, not less than the greater of:

(i) \$1,000; and

(ii) The person's actual cost for tuition.

(B) Not more than the lesser of:

(i) The average cost of tuition at a community college in this state, as determined by the office; and

(ii) The person's actual cost for tuition.

(b) The minimum amount of a grant, as calculated under paragraph (a) of this subsection, may be prorated for a person who is enrolled in courses described in subsection (3)(a) of this section for a sufficient number of credit hours to be considered at least a half-time student but not a full-time student.

(c) The commission may prescribe by rule whether to include fees, and any limitations related to the inclusion of fees, when determining the actual cost of tuition or the average cost of tuition under this subsection.

(6) The total amount in grants awarded under this section by the office may not exceed \$10 million per fiscal year, or any lesser amount available to the office for the purpose of this section. The commission may adopt by rule the priority by which grants are awarded, which may allow for preference to be given to persons enrolled in school districts or high schools that meet specified criteria.

(7) The commission shall adopt any rules necessary for the administration of this section, including any requirements related to:

(a) Specifying the form and timelines for submitting an application for a grant under this section;

(b) Determining whether a person is eligible for a grant under this section, including whether the person shall be given priority as allowed under subsection (6) of this section;

(c) Implementing programs or policies that improve the academic success or completion rates for persons who receive a grant under this section;

(d) Prescribing eligibility requirements and grant calculations for persons dually enrolled in a community college and a public university; and

(e) Evaluating the impact of the program established under this section, including any requirements for reporting data needed for evaluations.

(8) No later than December 31 of each even-numbered year, the commission shall submit to an interim legislative committee related to education a report that summarizes the commission's findings on the impact of the program established under this section. The report shall include:

(a) Student completion rates of curricula, degrees and programs described in subsection (3)(a)(B) of this section;

(b) The amount of federal aid grants received by persons who received a grant under this section;

(c) The financial impact of the program on school districts that had students receive a grant under this section;

(d) The financial impact and the enrollment impact of the program on community colleges and public universities in this state; and

(e) The overall success rate of the program and financial impact of the program.

SECTION 3. (1) Section 2 of this 2015 Act becomes operative on July 1, 2016.

(2) Section 2 of this 2015 Act first applies to courses enrolled in for the 2016-2017 academic year.

(3) The Higher Education Coordinating Commission, the Office of Student Access and Completion or a community college district may take any action before the operative date specified in subsection (1) of this section that is necessary for the commission, office or district to exercise, on or after the operative date specified in subsection (1) of this section, all of the duties, functions and powers conferred on the commission, office or district by section 2 of this 2015 Act.

SECTION 4. In addition to and not in lieu of any other appropriation, there is appropriated to the Higher Education Coordinating Commission, for the biennium beginning July 1, 2015, out of the General Fund, the amount of \$10 million, which may be expended for the creation and implementation of the program established under section 2 of this 2015 Act, including the provision of grants under the program.

SECTION 5. This 2015 Act being necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health and safety, an emergency is declared to exist, and this 2015 Act takes effect on its passage.

Passed by Senate July 2, 2015

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Lori L. Brocker, Secretary of Senate

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Peter Courtney, President of Senate

Passed by House July 3, 2015

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Tina Kotek, Speaker of House

Received by Governor:

.....M,....., 2015

Approved:

.....M,....., 2015

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Kate Brown, Governor

Filed in Office of Secretary of State:

.....M,....., 2015

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Jeanne P. Atkins, Secretary of State