
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE BILL

No. 1111 Session of
2018

INTRODUCED BY HUGHES, BLAKE AND BREWSTER, JUNE 11, 2018

REFERRED TO EDUCATION, JUNE 11, 2018

AN ACT

1 Providing for the Pennsylvania Promise Program and the
2 Pennsylvania Promise Fund.

3 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
4 hereby enacts as follows:

5 Section 1. Short title.

6 This act shall be known and may be cited as the Pennsylvania
7 Promise Act.

8 Section 2. Definitions.

9 The following words and phrases when used in this act shall
10 have the meanings given to them in this section unless the
11 context clearly indicates otherwise:

12 "Academic year." A 12-month period commencing on or after
13 August 1 of the calendar year.

14 "Agency." The Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance
15 Agency.

16 "Community college." An institution created under Article
17 XIX-A of the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the
18 Public School Code of 1949, or the act of August 24, 1963

1 (P.L.1132, No.484), known as the Community College Act of 1963.

2 "Eligible adult learner." An individual who:

3 (1) Is a resident of this Commonwealth at the time of
4 the application.

5 (2) Has been a domiciled resident of this Commonwealth
6 as determined by the agency.

7 (3) Is 24 years of age or older at the time of the
8 application.

9 (4) Has graduated from high school or an equivalent
10 approved by the Department of Education.

11 (5) Has applied for and been accepted to an institution
12 of higher education.

13 (6) Has completed a Free Application For Federal Student
14 Aid (FAFSA).

15 (7) Has applied for all available Federal Pell grants,
16 Pennsylvania State grants and institution grants.

17 "Eligible student." An individual who:

18 (1) Is a resident of this Commonwealth at the time of
19 the application.

20 (2) Has been a domiciled resident of this Commonwealth
21 as determined by the agency.

22 (3) Is less than 24 years of age or is an active member
23 of a branch of the armed services at the time of the
24 application.

25 (4) Has graduated from high school or an equivalent
26 approved by the Department of Education within the previous
27 five years.

28 (5) Has applied for and been accepted to an institution
29 of higher education.

30 (6) Has completed a Free Application For Federal Student

1 Aid (FAFSA).

2 (7) Has applied for all available Federal Pell grants,
3 Pennsylvania State grants and institution grants.

4 "Fees." Fixed charges to recover costs of certain services,
5 materials or activities provided. Fees shall not exceed the
6 highest fixed charges set by the Pennsylvania State System of
7 Higher Education's Board of Governors.

8 "Full-time student." An individual enrolled in an
9 undergraduate degree program at an institution of higher
10 education and registered for a minimum of 12 credits per
11 semester or equivalent enrollment as set by the agency.

12 "Fund." The Pennsylvania Promise Fund established under
13 section 5.

14 "Institution of higher education." Any of the following:

15 (1) A community college.

16 (2) A State-owned institution.

17 (3) A State-related institution.

18 (4) The Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology.

19 "Part-time student." An individual enrolled in an
20 institution of higher education and registered for less than 12
21 credits per semester or equivalent enrollment as set by the
22 agency.

23 "Program." The Pennsylvania Promise Program established
24 under this act.

25 "Room and board." The standard educational expense allowance
26 for the most recent year as determined by the agency.

27 "State-owned institution." An institution which is part of
28 the State System of Higher Education under Article XX-A of the
29 Public School Code of 1949 and all branches and campuses of the
30 institution.

1 "State-related institution." The Pennsylvania State
2 University, Pennsylvania College of Technology, University of
3 Pittsburgh, Temple University, Lincoln University and associated
4 branch campuses of the universities.

5 "Tuition." An amount not to exceed the maximum undergraduate
6 in-state tuition rate established by the Board of Governors for
7 rendering educational services, as enumerated in Article XX-A of
8 the Public School Code of 1949. The agency, at its discretion,
9 may increase the maximum amount.

10 Section 3. Pennsylvania Promise Program.

11 There is established within the agency a program to be known
12 as the Pennsylvania Promise Program.

13 Section 4. Procedure.

14 (a) Agency.--The agency shall administer the program and be
15 responsible for carrying out the provisions of this act.

16 (b) Regulations.--The agency may adopt rules and regulations
17 necessary to administer the provisions of this act.

18 Section 5. Pennsylvania Promise Fund.

19 (a) Fund.--A restricted receipts account shall be
20 established in the State Treasury and shall be known as the
21 Pennsylvania Promise Fund.

22 (b) Administration of fund.--Money in the fund shall be
23 appropriated to the agency on an ongoing basis to carry out the
24 provisions of this act.

25 (c) Contributions and investment.--The following apply:

26 (1) The fund may accept gifts, donations, legacies or
27 any other revenues.

28 (2) Interest earned by the fund shall remain in the
29 fund.

30 (d) Purpose.--Money in the fund shall be used for the

1 purpose set forth in this act.

2 (e) Allocation.--The following shall apply:

3 (1) The agency shall distribute money from the fund to
4 eligible students in accordance with sections 6 and 7.

5 (2) The agency shall allocate money in the fund for
6 eligible adult learners:

7 (i) In accordance with section 8.

8 (ii) In the following amounts:

9 (A) For fiscal year 2018-2019, \$12,500,000.

10 (B) For fiscal year 2019-2020, \$25,000,000.

11 (C) For fiscal year 2020-2021, \$40,000,000.

12 (D) For fiscal year 2021-2022 and each fiscal
13 year thereafter, \$50,000,000.

14 (3) Beginning no later than the first full fiscal year
15 after the notice in section 10 is published and each fiscal
16 year thereafter, \$50,000,000 shall be transferred by the
17 agency from the fund to the Department of Labor and Industry
18 to support and enhance apprenticeship programs across this
19 Commonwealth.

20 (4) Beginning no later than the first full fiscal year
21 after the notice in section 10 is published and each fiscal
22 year thereafter, no more than \$50,000,000 shall be used by
23 the agency for matching funds through the agency's work study
24 program.

25 (5) Notwithstanding any provisions of law to the
26 contrary, uses of funds made available under this section
27 shall be determined by the agency.

28 (f) Nonlapsing.--Money in the fund shall not lapse and shall
29 be available in subsequent fiscal years to be used in accordance
30 with the provisions of this act.

1 (g) Administrative fees.--No more than 2% of the money in
2 the fund may be used to cover administrative costs. For purposes
3 of this section, administrative costs shall include marketing of
4 the program throughout this Commonwealth.

5 (h) Insufficient funds.--If during any year there are
6 insufficient funds available to provide scholarships or make the
7 transfers required under this section, the agency shall pro rate
8 the transfers and scholarships under sections 6 and 7.

9 Section 6. Scholarship for tuition and fees.

10 (a) Application.--The agency shall accept applications, in a
11 form and manner as determined by the agency, from eligible
12 students for tuition and fees.

13 (b) Scholarship at State-owned or State-related
14 institution.--An eligible student may receive a scholarship at a
15 State-owned institution or State-related institution for the
16 academic year in an amount not to exceed the outstanding tuition
17 and fees after Federal, State and institution grants have been
18 applied if the eligible student:

19 (1) has a total annual household income that does not
20 exceed \$110,000; and

21 (2) is enrolled full-time.

22 (c) Scholarship at community colleges.--An eligible student
23 may receive a scholarship at a community college for the
24 academic year in an amount not to exceed the outstanding tuition
25 and fees after Federal, State and institution grants have been
26 applied if, at a minimum, the eligible student is enrolled full-
27 time.

28 (d) Review and approval.--

29 (1) The agency shall review all applications submitted
30 under this section.

1 (2) The agency may approve an application if the
2 application meets the requirements under subsection (b) or
3 (c) and if the eligible student submitting the application
4 meets the requirements of this act.

5 (e) Distribution of scholarship.--Once an eligible student
6 has been approved for a scholarship for tuition and fees under
7 this section, the agency shall, upon receipt of an outstanding
8 balance from an institution of higher education, pay the
9 outstanding tuition and fee balance owed by the eligible student
10 directly to the institution of higher education.

11 (f) Limitation on scholarship.--Notwithstanding any
12 provision of this act to the contrary, the agency may not issue
13 any scholarship in excess of the outstanding balance for tuition
14 and fees received from an institution of higher education.

15 (g) Renewal.--

16 (1) A scholarship for tuition and fees awarded to an
17 eligible student shall not exceed one academic year.

18 (2) The agency shall create an application to allow
19 previously approved eligible students to recertify their
20 eligibility.

21 (3) An eligible student at a State-owned or State-
22 related institution who has not exceeded the limitation in
23 subsection (i) may reapply for the scholarship for tuition
24 and fees if the eligible student:

25 (i) Is enrolled full-time.

26 (ii) Is making satisfactory academic progress as
27 determined by the institution of higher education, unless
28 the eligible student is in the first year of college.

29 (iii) While attending a State-owned institution or
30 State-related institution, has a total annual household

1 income that does not exceed \$110,000.

2 (4) An eligible student at a community college who has
3 not exceeded the limitation in subsection (i) may reapply for
4 the scholarship for tuition and fees if the eligible student:

5 (i) Is enrolled full-time or part-time.

6 (ii) Is making satisfactory academic progress,
7 unless the eligible student is in the first year of
8 college.

9 (h) Continued eligibility.--An eligible student shall be
10 continuously enrolled in the institution of higher education for
11 the academic year which the eligible student received a
12 scholarship for tuition and fees. If the eligible student is not
13 continuously enrolled in the institution of higher education,
14 the agency, in its discretion, may deny renewal under subsection
15 (g).

16 (i) Limitation to scholarship.--

17 (1) An eligible student may not receive a scholarship
18 for tuition and fees if the eligible student:

19 (i) While attending a community college, the
20 eligible student has completed no more than four academic
21 years or has earned an associate's degree, except as
22 provided in paragraph (2).

23 (ii) While attending a State-owned institution or
24 State-related institution, the eligible student has
25 completed four academic years or has earned a bachelor's
26 degree.

27 (2) A student who is otherwise eligible for a
28 scholarship under this section may not be eligible for a
29 scholarship for tuition and fees if the local sponsor has not
30 made the payment required under section 1913-A(a)(2) of the

1 act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public
2 School Code of 1949.

3 (3) An eligible student may receive a scholarship for no
4 more than four academic years at an institution of higher
5 education.

6 Section 7. Scholarship for room and board.

7 (a) Application.--The agency shall accept applications, in a
8 form and manner as determined by the agency, from eligible
9 students who qualify under subsections (b) and (c).

10 (b) Scholarship at State-owned or State-related
11 institution.--An eligible student at a State-owned or State-
12 related institution may receive a need-based scholarship for
13 room and board for the academic year after Federal, State and
14 institution grants have been applied if the eligible student:

15 (1) has a total annual household income that does not
16 exceed \$48,000; and

17 (2) is enrolled full-time.

18 (c) Scholarship at community college.--An eligible student
19 at a community college may receive a need-based scholarship for
20 room and board for the academic year after Federal, State and
21 institution grants have been applied if the eligible student:

22 (1) has a total annual household income that does not
23 exceed \$48,000; and

24 (2) is enrolled full-time or part-time.

25 (d) Review and approval.--

26 (1) The agency shall review all applications submitted
27 under this section.

28 (2) The agency may approve an application if the
29 application meets the requirements under subsection (b) or

30 (c) and if the eligible student meets the requirements of

1 this act.

2 (e) Distribution of scholarship at State-owned or State-
3 related institution.--If an eligible student has been approved
4 for a scholarship for room and board under subsection (b), the
5 agency shall, upon receipt of an outstanding balance from the
6 State-owned or State-related institution of higher education,
7 pay the outstanding balance for room and board owed by the
8 eligible student directly to the institution.

9 (f) Distribution of scholarship at community colleges.--If
10 an eligible student has been approved for a scholarship for room
11 and board under subsection (c), the agency shall pay a
12 scholarship for room and board in a manner decided by the
13 agency.

14 (g) Limitation on scholarship.--

15 (1) Except as provided in paragraph (2) and
16 notwithstanding any provision of this act to the contrary,
17 the agency may not issue a scholarship for room and board in
18 excess of the outstanding balance received from a State-owned
19 institution or State-related institution.

20 (2) The agency may issue a scholarship for room and
21 board in excess of the outstanding balance received from a
22 community college.

23 (3) A student who is otherwise eligible for a
24 scholarship under this section may not be eligible for a
25 scholarship for tuition and fees if the local sponsor has not
26 made the payment required under section 1913-A(a)(2) of the
27 act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public
28 School Code of 1949.

29 (h) Renewal.--

30 (1) A scholarship for tuition and fees awarded to an

1 eligible student shall not exceed one academic year.

2 (2) The agency shall create an application to allow
3 previously approved eligible students to recertify their
4 eligibility.

5 (3) An eligible student who has not exceeded the
6 limitation in subsection (j) may reapply for the scholarship
7 for room and board if the student is enrolled full-time at a
8 State-owned or State-related institution or is enrolled full-
9 time or part-time at a community college and:

10 (i) is making satisfactory academic progress, unless
11 the eligible student is in the first year of college; and

12 (ii) has a total annual household income that does
13 not exceed \$48,000.

14 (i) Continued eligibility.--An eligible student shall be
15 continuously enrolled in the institution of higher education for
16 the academic year for which the eligible student received a
17 scholarship for room and board. If an eligible student is not
18 continuously enrolled in the institution of higher education,
19 the agency, in its discretion, may deny renewal under subsection
20 (h).

21 (j) Limitation to eligibility.--

22 (1) An eligible student may not receive a scholarship
23 for room and board if the eligible student:

24 (i) While attending a community college, has
25 completed four academic years or has earned an
26 associate's degree except as provided in paragraph (2).

27 (ii) While attending a State-owned institution or
28 State-related institution, has completed four academic
29 years or has earned a bachelor's degree.

30 (2) An eligible student may receive a scholarship for

1 two academic years at a State-owned institution or State-
2 related institution if they have exhausted their eligibility
3 under paragraph (1) (i).

4 Section 8. Eligibility for adult reeducation.

5 (a) Application.--The agency shall accept applications, in a
6 form and manner as determined by the agency, from an eligible
7 adult learner for aid to assist with education expenses.

8 (b) Eligibility.--An eligible adult learner may receive
9 assistance for aid for adult reeducation programs for the
10 academic year the eligible adult learner:

11 (1) has a total annual household income that does not
12 exceed \$110,000; and

13 (2) has applied for and has been accepted into an adult
14 reeducation program or adult reeducation certificate program,
15 or is enrolled part time or full time in an institution of
16 higher education.

17 (c) Pennsylvania Targeted Industry Program.--Notwithstanding
18 any provisions of law to the contrary, the agency may use money
19 allocated for adult reeducation for the Pennsylvania Targeted
20 Industry Program.

21 (d) Review and approval.--

22 (1) The agency shall review all applications submitted
23 under this section.

24 (2) The agency may approve an application if the
25 application meets the requirements under subsection (b) and
26 if the eligible adult learner meets the requirements of this
27 act.

28 (e) Priority.--When reviewing an application for aid under
29 this section, the agency shall prioritize aid for programs that
30 lead to an industry-recognized credential that is articulated

1 with college credit. The agency shall annually determine and
2 post on its publicly accessible Internet website industry-
3 recognized credentialed programs that qualify for aid priority
4 under this section.

5 (f) Distribution of aid.--If an eligible adult learner has
6 been approved for aid under this section, the agency shall, upon
7 receipt of an outstanding balance from an institution of higher
8 education, pay the outstanding balance owed by an adult learner
9 directly to the institution of higher education.

10 (g) Limitation on aid.--Notwithstanding any provision of
11 this act to the contrary, the agency may not issue any aid in
12 excess of the outstanding balance received from an institution
13 of higher education.

14 (h) Renewal.--

15 (1) Aid awarded to an eligible adult learner shall not
16 exceed one academic year.

17 (2) The agency shall create an application to allow
18 previously approved eligible students to recertify their
19 eligibility.

20 (3) An eligible adult learner who has not exceeded the
21 limitation in subsection (i) may reapply for aid if:

22 (i) Enrolled as a full-time student or part-time
23 student at an institution of higher education or a
24 certificate program approved by the agency.

25 (ii) Total annual household income does not exceed
26 \$110,000.

27 (i) Limitation to eligibility.--An eligible adult learner
28 may not receive aid if the eligible adult learner:

29 (1) While attending a community college, has completed
30 no more than four academic years or has earned an associate's

1 degree or an industry-recognized credential for which the
2 eligible adult learner was enrolled in order to qualify for
3 aid.

4 (2) While attending a State-owned institution or State-
5 related institution, has completed four academic years or has
6 earned a bachelor's degree or industry-recognized credential
7 for which the eligible adult learner was enrolled in order to
8 qualify for aid.

9 Section 9. Annual report.

10 Beginning one year after the first scholarship is awarded
11 under this act, the agency shall provide the Governor and the
12 chairperson and minority chairperson of the Appropriations
13 Committee and the Education Committee of the Senate and the
14 chairperson and minority chairperson of the Appropriations
15 Committee and the Education Committee of the House of
16 Representatives with a report which includes the following:

17 (1) The total number of students served by the program.

18 (2) A breakdown by race, gender, ethnicity and
19 socioeconomic demographic for all students served by the
20 program, if known.

21 (3) The total number of scholarships awarded and the
22 average amount awarded.

23 (4) A year-over-year comparison of the net total costs
24 at all institutions of higher education in this Commonwealth
25 which shall be used to evaluate the adequacy and success of
26 the program in lowering college costs.

27 (5) Recommendations, if any, for improving access and
28 affordability of higher education.

29 (6) Any other information.

30 Section 10. Notice.

1 The Secretary of the Commonwealth shall submit notice for
2 publication in the Pennsylvania Bulletin when the General
3 Assembly appropriates money necessary to effectuate this act.
4 Section 11. Effective date.

5 This act shall take effect as follows:

6 (1) The following provisions shall take effect
7 immediately:

8 (i) This section.

9 (ii) Section 10.

10 (2) The remainder of this act shall take effect upon
11 publication of the notice under section 10.