

AN ACT

1 Amending Title 51 (Military Affairs) of the Pennsylvania
2 Consolidated Statutes, in educational gratuity program,
3 establishing the Medal of Honor and Purple Heart Recipient
4 Tuition Waiver Program; and making editorial changes.

5 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
6 hereby enacts as follows:

7 Section 1. The heading of Chapter 87 of Title 51 of the
8 Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes is amended to read:

9 CHAPTER 87

10 EDUCATIONAL [GRATUITY PROGRAM] AWARDS

11 Subchapter

12 A. Preliminary Provisions

13 B. Educational Gratuity

14 C. Medal Of Honor And Purple Heart Recipient Tuition Waiver

15 Program

16 Section 2. Chapter 87 is amended by adding a subchapter
17 heading to read:

18 SUBCHAPTER A

1 a result of service during a period of war or armed conflict
2 or as a result of hostile fire or terrorist attack (as
3 determined by the Department of Military Affairs) during
4 peacetime; or

5 (4) was honorably discharged from the military or naval
6 forces of the United States and died as a result of a
7 service-connected disability (as certified by the United
8 States Veterans' Administration) incurred during a period of
9 war or armed conflict or as a result of peacetime hostile
10 fire or terrorist attack (as determined by the Department of
11 Military Affairs).

12 "Qualified child." Any child meeting the requirements of
13 section [8703] 8712 (relating to eligibility and qualification
14 requirements).

15 Section 4. Chapter 87 is amended by adding a subchapter
16 heading to read:

17 SUBCHAPTER B

18 EDUCATIONAL GRATUITY

19 Sec.

20 8711. Educational gratuity payments.

21 8712. Eligibility and qualification requirements.

22 Section 5. Sections 8702 and 8703 of Title 51 are renumbered
23 to read:

24 § [8702] 8711. Educational gratuity payments.

25 (a) General rule.--The commission shall make educational
26 gratuity payments not exceeding \$500 per term or semester per
27 qualified child to each approved educational institution upon
28 submission by that approved educational institution of proof
29 that bills have been incurred or contracted covering
30 matriculation fees and other necessary fees, tuition, board,

1 room rent, books and supplies for a qualified child in a
2 definite amount for the school year.

3 (b) Records.--The commission shall attach the proof
4 submitted under subsection (a) to the requisition prepared for
5 payment out of appropriations made by the General Assembly for
6 purposes of the educational gratuity payments.

7 (c) Duration of payments.--Whenever a qualified child is
8 completing an educational or training course and becomes 23
9 years of age before completing the course, the educational
10 gratuity payment may be paid until the course is completed. No
11 educational gratuity payments may be made for any qualified
12 child for a period longer than four scholastic years, provided,
13 however, that the department may adjust the payments per term or
14 semester per child so that the total payments do not exceed the
15 amount of the appropriation.

16 § [8703] 8712. Eligibility and qualification requirements.

17 (a) Eligibility standards.--The following requirements shall
18 be used to determine the eligibility of applicants for
19 educational gratuity payments. The applicant shall be:

20 (1) Not less than 16 years of age nor more than 23 years
21 of age.

22 (2) The child of an eligible disabled or deceased
23 veteran.

24 (3) A resident of this Commonwealth for a period of five
25 years immediately preceding the date the application was
26 filed.

27 (b) Qualification determination.--The commission shall
28 determine qualified applicants based on the following
29 requirements:

30 (1) The applicant meets the requirements of subsection

1 (a).

2 (2) The applicant is attending an approved educational
3 institution.

4 (3) The applicant demonstrates a financial need for the
5 educational gratuity.

6 (c) Appeal.--Any aggrieved applicant may appeal the decision
7 of the commission to the Adjutant General under the provisions
8 of Title 2 (relating to administrative law and procedure).

9 Section 6. Chapter 87 is amended by adding a subchapter to
10 read:

11 SUBCHAPTER C

12 MEDAL OF HONOR AND PURPLE HEART

13 RECIPIENT TUITION WAIVER PROGRAM

14 Sec.

15 8721. Definitions.

16 8722. Establishment.

17 8723. Requirements.

18 8724. Regulations.

19 § 8721. Definitions.

20 The following words and phrases when used in this subchapter
21 shall have the meanings given to them in this section unless the
22 context clearly indicates otherwise:

23 "Agency." The Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance
24 Agency.

25 "Medal of Honor recipient." A qualified resident who is a
26 veteran and who has been awarded the Medal of Honor as a result
27 of the individual's service in the United States Armed Forces.

28 "Public institution of higher education." One of the
29 following:

30 (1) A community college as defined under section 1901-

1 A(4) of the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as
2 the Public School Code of 1949.

3 (2) A State-related institution.

4 (3) The Pennsylvania State University, the University of
5 Pittsburgh, Temple University and Lincoln University, and a
6 branch campus of one of these universities.

7 (4) A member institution of the State System of Higher
8 Education.

9 "Purple Heart recipient." A qualified resident who is a
10 veteran and who has earned or has been awarded the Purple Heart
11 as a result of the individual's service in the United States
12 Armed Forces.

13 "Qualified resident." An individual who has been a bona fide
14 resident of this Commonwealth prior to the time an application
15 for a tuition waiver is made.

16 "Tuition." The rate charged to a resident of this
17 Commonwealth by a public institution of higher education.

18 "Veteran." An individual who has served in the United States
19 Armed Forces including a reserve component or National Guard and
20 who has been discharged or released from the service under
21 conditions other than dishonorable.

22 § 8722. Establishment.

23 There is established the Medal of Honor and Purple Heart
24 Recipient Tuition Waiver Program.

25 § 8723. Requirements.

26 (a) Waiver.--Beginning in the 2016-2017 academic year, a
27 public institution of higher education shall waive the tuition
28 for each qualified resident who is a recipient of the Medal of
29 Honor or Purple Heart who:

30 (1) Is admitted as a full-time or part-time student in a

1 program of study leading to a degree or certificate.

2 (2) Submits verification as provided under paragraph (3)
3 that the veteran is a Medal of Honor or Purple Heart
4 recipient.

5 (3) Provides documentation as required by the department
6 that provides verification that the applicant meets the
7 requirements under this subchapter.

8 (b) Determination.--The agency shall make the final decision
9 as to whether an applicant is a qualified resident.

10 § 8724. Regulations.

11 The Adjutant General and the agency may promulgate
12 regulations to carry out the provisions of this chapter.

13 Section 7. This act shall take effect in 60 days.