
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 450 Session of
2017

INTRODUCED BY MURT, READSHAW, DRISCOLL, DAVIS, MILLARD, McNEILL,
J. HARRIS, KINSEY, BOBACK, V. BROWN, KORTZ, SAYLOR, D. COSTA,
SAINATO, NEILSON, DeLUCA, DEASY AND FARRY, FEBRUARY 13, 2017

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON VETERANS AFFAIRS AND EMERGENCY
PREPAREDNESS, FEBRUARY 13, 2017

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 Section 2. Chapter 87 of Title 51 is amended by adding a
12 subchapter heading to read:

13 SUBCHAPTER A

14 PRELIMINARY PROVISIONS

15 Section 3. Section 8701 of Title 51 is amended to read:

16 § 8701. Definitions.

17 The following words and phrases when used in this chapter
18 shall have the meanings given to them in this section unless the

1 context clearly indicates otherwise:

2 "Commission." The State Veterans' Commission established
3 under section 1702 (relating to State Veterans' Commission).

4 "Educational institution." Any college or university of the
5 State System of Higher Education, a State-aided educational or
6 training institution of a secondary or college grade or other
7 institution of higher education, a business school, a trade
8 school, a hospital school providing training for nurses, an
9 institution providing courses in beauty culture, art, radio or
10 undertaking or embalming, or such other educational training
11 within this Commonwealth approved by the commission.

12 "Eligible disabled or deceased veteran." A person who served
13 in the military or naval forces of the United States, or a
14 women's organization officially connected therewith, who:

15 (1) was killed in action or died as a result of wounds
16 incurred during a period of war or armed conflict or as a
17 result of hostile fire or terrorist attack during peacetime
18 (as determined by the Department of Military Affairs);

19 (2) died in service during a period of war or armed
20 conflict;

21 (3) was honorably discharged from the military or naval
22 forces of the United States and certified by the United
23 States Veterans' Administration as a 100% disabled veteran as
24 a result of service during a period of war or armed conflict
25 or as a result of hostile fire or terrorist attack (as
26 determined by the Department of Military Affairs) during
27 peacetime; or

28 (4) was honorably discharged from the military or naval
29 forces of the United States and died as a result of a
30 service-connected disability (as certified by the United

1 States Veterans' Administration) incurred during a period of
2 war or armed conflict or as a result of peacetime hostile
3 fire or terrorist attack (as determined by the Department of
4 Military Affairs).

5 "Qualified child." Any child meeting the requirements of
6 section [8703] 8712 (relating to eligibility and qualification
7 requirements).

8 Section 4. Chapter 87 of Title 51 is amended by adding a
9 subchapter heading to read:

10 SUBCHAPTER B

11 EDUCATIONAL GRATUITY

12 Section 5. Sections 8702 and 8703 of Title 51 are renumbered
13 to read:

14 § [8702] 8711. Educational gratuity payments.

15 (a) General rule.--The commission shall make educational
16 gratuity payments not exceeding \$500 per term or semester per
17 qualified child to each approved educational institution upon
18 submission by that approved educational institution of proof
19 that bills have been incurred or contracted covering
20 matriculation fees and other necessary fees, tuition, board,
21 room rent, books and supplies for a qualified child in a
22 definite amount for the school year.

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

27 (c) Duration of payments.--Whenever a qualified child is
28 completing an educational or training course and becomes 23
29 years of age before completing the course, the educational
30 gratuity payment may be paid until the course is completed. No

1 educational gratuity payments may be made for any qualified
2 child for a period longer than four scholastic years, provided,
3 however, that the department may adjust the payments per term or
4 semester per child so that the total payments do not exceed the
5 amount of the appropriation.

6 § [8703] 8712. Eligibility and qualification requirements.

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

10 (1) Not less than 16 years of age nor more than 23 years
11 of age.

12 (2) The child of an eligible disabled or deceased
13 veteran.

14 (3) A resident of this Commonwealth for a period of five
15 years immediately preceding the date the application was
16 filed.

17 (b) Qualification determination.--The commission shall
18 determine qualified applicants based on the following
19 requirements:

20 (1) The applicant meets the requirements of subsection
21 (a).

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

24 (3) The applicant demonstrates a financial need for the
25 educational gratuity.

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

29 Section 6. Chapter 87 of Title 51 is amended by adding a
30 subchapter to read:

1 SUBCHAPTER C

2 MEDAL OF HONOR AND PURPLE HEART

3 RECIPIENT TUITION WAIVER PROGRAM

4 Sec.

5 8721. Definitions.

6 8722. Establishment.

7 8723. Requirements.

8 8724. Regulations.

9 § 8721. Definitions.

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

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

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

18 "Public institution of higher education." One of the
19 following:

20 (1) A community college as defined under section 1901-
21 A(4) of the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as
22 the Public School Code of 1949.

23 (2) A State-related institution.

24 (3) The Pennsylvania State University, the University of
25 Pittsburgh, Temple University and Lincoln University or a
26 branch campus of one of these universities.

27 (4) A member institution of the State System of Higher
28 Education.

29 "Purple Heart recipient." A qualified resident who is a
30 veteran and who has been awarded the Purple Heart as a result of

1 the individual's service in the United States Armed Forces.

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

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

7 "Veteran." An individual who has served in the United States
8 Armed Forces, including a reserve component or National Guard,
9 and who has been discharged or released from the service under
10 conditions other than dishonorable.

11 § 8722. Establishment.

12 There is established the Medal of Honor and Purple Heart
13 Recipient Tuition Waiver Program.

14 § 8723. Requirements.

15 (a) Waiver.--Beginning in the 2017-2018 academic year, a
16 public institution of higher education shall waive the tuition
17 for each Medal of Honor recipient or Purple Heart recipient who:

18 (1) Is admitted as a full-time or part-time student in a
19 program of study leading to a degree or certificate.

20 (2) Provides documentation as required by the department
21 that provides verification that the applicant meets the
22 requirements under this subchapter.

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

25 § 8724. Regulations.

26 The Adjutant General and the agency may promulgate
27 regulations to carry out the provisions of this subchapter.

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