

AN ACT concerning education.

**Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,
represented in the General Assembly:**

Section 5. The School Code is amended by changing Section 30-14.2 as follows:

(105 ILCS 5/30-14.2) (from Ch. 122, par. 30-14.2)

Sec. 30-14.2. MIA/POW scholarships.

(a) Any spouse, natural child, legally adopted child, or step-child of an eligible veteran or serviceperson who possesses all necessary entrance requirements shall, upon application and proper proof, be awarded a MIA/POW Scholarship consisting of the equivalent of 4 calendar years of full-time enrollment including summer terms, to the state supported Illinois institution of higher learning of his choice, subject to the restrictions listed below.

"Eligible veteran or serviceperson" means any veteran or serviceperson, including an Illinois National Guard member who is on active duty or is active on a training assignment, who has been declared by the U.S. Department of Defense or the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to be a prisoner of war, be missing in action, have died as the result of a service-connected disability or have become a person with a permanent disability from service-connected causes with 100%

disability and who (i) at the time of entering service was an Illinois resident, (ii) was an Illinois resident within 6 months after entering such service, or (iii) is a resident of Illinois at the time of application for the Scholarship and, at some point after leaving such service, was a resident of Illinois for at least 15 consecutive years ~~until July 1, 2014, became an Illinois resident within 6 months after leaving the service and can establish at least 30 years of continuous residency in the State of Illinois.~~

Full-time enrollment means 12 or more semester hours of courses per semester, or 12 or more quarter hours of courses per quarter, or the equivalent thereof per term. Scholarships utilized by dependents enrolled in less than full-time study shall be computed in the proportion which the number of hours so carried bears to full-time enrollment.

Scholarships awarded under this Section may be used by a spouse or child without regard to his or her age. The holder of a Scholarship awarded under this Section shall be subject to all examinations and academic standards, including the maintenance of minimum grade levels, that are applicable generally to other enrolled students at the Illinois institution of higher learning where the Scholarship is being used. If the surviving spouse remarries or if there is a divorce between the veteran or serviceperson and his or her spouse while the dependent is pursuing his or her course of study, Scholarship benefits will be terminated at the end of

the term for which he or she is presently enrolled. Such dependents shall also be entitled, upon proper proof and application, to enroll in any extension course offered by a State supported Illinois institution of higher learning without payment of tuition and approved fees.

The holder of a MIA/POW Scholarship authorized under this Section shall not be required to pay any matriculation or application fees, tuition, activities fees, graduation fees or other fees, except multipurpose building fees or similar fees for supplies and materials.

Any dependent who has been or shall be awarded a MIA/POW Scholarship shall be reimbursed by the appropriate institution of higher learning for any fees which he or she has paid and for which exemption is granted under this Section if application for reimbursement is made within 2 months following the end of the school term for which the fees were paid.

(b) In lieu of the benefit provided in subsection (a), any spouse, natural child, legally adopted child, or step-child of an eligible veteran or serviceperson, which spouse or child has a physical, mental or developmental disability, shall be entitled to receive, upon application and proper proof, a benefit to be used for the purpose of defraying the cost of the attendance or treatment of such spouse or child at one or more appropriate therapeutic, rehabilitative or educational facilities. The application and proof may be made by the parent or legal guardian of the spouse or child on his or her behalf.

The total benefit provided to any beneficiary under this subsection shall not exceed the cost equivalent of 4 calendar years of full-time enrollment, including summer terms, at the University of Illinois. Whenever practicable in the opinion of the Department of Veterans' Affairs, payment of benefits under this subsection shall be made directly to the facility, the cost of attendance or treatment at which is being defrayed, as such costs accrue.

(c) The benefits of this Section shall be administered by and paid for out of funds made available to the Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs. The amounts that become due to any state supported Illinois institution of higher learning shall be payable by the Comptroller to such institution on vouchers approved by the Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs. The amounts that become due under subsection (b) of this Section shall be payable by warrant upon vouchers issued by the Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs and approved by the Comptroller. The Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs shall determine the eligibility of the persons who make application for the benefits provided for in this Section.

(Source: P.A. 99-78, eff. 7-20-15; 99-143, eff. 7-27-15; 100-201, eff. 8-18-17.)

Section 10. The Higher Education Student Assistance Act is amended by changing Section 40 as follows:

(110 ILCS 947/40)

Sec. 40. Illinois Veteran grant program.

(a) As used in this Section:

"Qualified applicant" means a person who served in the Armed Forces of the United States, a Reserve component of the Armed Forces, or the Illinois National Guard, excluding members of the Reserve Officers' Training Corps and those whose only service has been attendance at a service academy, and who meets all of the ~~following~~ qualifications of either paragraphs (1) through (4) or paragraphs (2), (3), and (5):

(1) At the time of entering federal active duty service the person was one of the following:

(A) An Illinois resident.

(B) An Illinois resident within 6 months of entering such service.

(C) Enrolled at a State-controlled university or public community college in this State.

(2) The person meets one of the following requirements:

(A) He or she served at least one year of federal active duty.

(B) He or she served less than one year of federal active duty and received an honorable discharge for medical reasons directly connected with such service.

(C) He or she served less than one year of federal active duty and was discharged prior to August 11, 1967.

(D) He or she served less than one year of federal active duty in a foreign country during a time of hostilities in that foreign country.

(3) The person received an honorable discharge after leaving each period of federal active duty service.

(4) The person returned to this State within 6 months after leaving federal active duty service, or, if married to a person in continued military service stationed outside this State, returned to this State within 6 months after his or her spouse left service or was stationed within this State.

(5) The person does not meet the requirements of paragraph (1), but (i) is a resident of Illinois at the time of application to the Commission and (ii) at some point after leaving federal active duty service, was a resident of Illinois for at least 15 consecutive years.

"Time of hostilities" means any action by the Armed Forces of the United States that is recognized by the issuance of a Presidential proclamation or a Presidential executive order and in which the Armed Forces expeditionary medal or other campaign service medals are awarded according to Presidential executive order.

(b) A person who otherwise qualifies under subsection (a) of this Section but has not left federal active duty service and has served at least one year of federal active duty or has served for less than one year of federal active duty in a

foreign country during a time of hostilities in that foreign country and who can provide documentation demonstrating an honorable service record is eligible to receive assistance under this Section.

(c) A qualified applicant is not required to pay any tuition or mandatory fees while attending a State-controlled university or public community college in this State for a period that is equivalent to 4 years of full-time enrollment, including summer terms.

A qualified applicant who has previously received benefits under this Section for a non-mandatory fee shall continue to receive benefits covering such fees while he or she is enrolled in a continuous program of study. The qualified applicant shall no longer receive a grant covering non-mandatory fees if he or she fails to enroll during an academic term, unless he or she is serving federal active duty service.

(d) A qualified applicant who has been or is to be awarded assistance under this Section shall receive that assistance if the qualified applicant notifies his or her postsecondary institution of that fact by the end of the school term for which assistance is requested.

(e) Assistance under this Section is considered an entitlement that the State-controlled college or public community college in which the qualified applicant is enrolled shall honor without any condition other than the qualified applicant's maintenance of minimum grade levels and a

satisfactory student loan repayment record pursuant to subsection (c) of Section 20 of this Act.

(f) The Commission shall administer the grant program established by this Section and shall make all necessary and proper rules not inconsistent with this Section for its effective implementation.

(g) All applications for assistance under this Section must be made to the Commission on forms that the Commission shall provide. The Commission shall determine the form of application and the information required to be set forth in the application, and the Commission shall require qualified applicants to submit with their applications any supporting documents that the Commission deems necessary. Upon request, the Department of Veterans' Affairs shall assist the Commission in determining the eligibility of applicants for assistance under this Section.

(h) Assistance under this Section is available as long as the federal government provides educational benefits to veterans. Assistance must not be paid under this Section after 6 months following the termination of educational benefits to veterans by the federal government, except for persons who already have begun their education with assistance under this Section. If the federal government terminates educational benefits to veterans and at a later time resumes those benefits, assistance under this Section shall resume.

(Source: P.A. 94-583, eff. 8-15-05.)

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Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect July 1,
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