

AN ACT concerning higher education.

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

Section 1. Short title. This Act may be cited as the Volunteer Emergency Worker Higher Education Protection Act.

Section 5. Definitions. For the purposes of this Section:

"Institution of higher education" means the University of Illinois, Southern Illinois University, Chicago State University, Eastern Illinois University, Governors State University, Illinois State University, Northeastern Illinois University, Northern Illinois University, Western Illinois University, the public community colleges of this State, and any other public universities, colleges, and community colleges now or hereafter established or authorized by law.

"Volunteer emergency worker" means a volunteer emergency worker as defined in the Volunteer Emergency Worker Job Protection Act.

Section 10. Accommodation policy. Each public institution of higher education must adopt a policy that reasonably accommodates any student who is a volunteer emergency worker in regard to absence from class caused by the performance of his or her duties as a volunteer emergency worker. This policy shall include a grievance procedure by which a student who believes that he or she has been unreasonably denied this accommodation may seek redress.

Section 15. Publication of policy. Each institution of higher education must publish the policy adopted under Section 10 of this Act in a handbook, manual, or other similar document regularly provided to faculty and students.

Section 90. The State Mandates Act is amended by adding Section 8.30 as follows:

(30 ILCS 805/8.30 new)

Sec. 8.30. Exempt mandate. Notwithstanding Sections 6 and 8 of this Act, no reimbursement by the State is required for the implementation of any mandate created by the Volunteer Emergency Worker Higher Education Protection Act.

Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect on July 1, 2006.