

FIRST REGULAR SESSION  
SENATE COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR  
**SENATE BILL NO. 71**

103RD GENERAL ASSEMBLY

1178S.05C

KRISTINA MARTIN, Secretary

**AN ACT**

To amend chapter 173, RSMo, by adding thereto two new sections relating to college tuition for public safety personnel.

*Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Missouri, as follows:*

Section A. Chapter 173, RSMo, is amended by adding thereto  
2 two new sections, to be known as sections 173.2655 and 173.2660,  
3 to read as follows:

173.2655. 1. This section and section 173.2660 shall  
2 be known and may be cited as the "Public Safety Recruitment  
3 and Retention Act".

4 2. For purposes of this section and section 173.2660,  
5 unless the context clearly indicates otherwise, the  
6 following terms mean:

7 (1) "Advanced emergency medical technician", as such  
8 term is defined in section 190.100;

9 (2) "Department", the department of higher education  
10 and workforce development;

11 (3) "Emergency medical dispatcher", as such term is  
12 defined in section 190.100;

13 (4) "Emergency medical technician", as such term is  
14 defined in section 190.100;

15 (5) "Firefighter", any officer or employee of a fire  
16 department who is employed for the purpose of fighting  
17 fires, excluding volunteer firefighters and anyone employed

18 in a clerical or other capacity not involving fire-fighting  
19 duties;

20 (6) "Legal dependent", as such term is defined by the  
21 United States Department of Education for purposes of the  
22 Free Application for Student Financial Aid;

23 (7) "Line of duty", any action that public safety  
24 personnel is authorized or obligated by law, rule, or  
25 regulation to perform, related to or as a condition of  
26 employment or service;

27 (8) "Open seat", a vacant position in a class, course,  
28 or program that is available for enrollment, and which may  
29 become available when a student drops out or transfers, or  
30 when a class, course, or program has unused capacity,  
31 allowing new students to register or enroll;

32 (9) "Paramedic", as such term is defined in section  
33 190.100;

34 (10) "Police officer", any person who, by virtue of  
35 office or public employment, is vested by law with the power  
36 and duty to make arrests for violation of the laws of the  
37 state of Missouri or ordinances of any municipality thereof,  
38 while acting within the scope of his or her authority as an  
39 employee of a public law enforcement agency, as such term is  
40 defined in section 590.1040;

41 (11) "Public institution of higher education", a  
42 public community college, state college, or state university;

43 (12) "Public safety personnel", includes any police  
44 officer, firefighter, paramedic, emergency medical  
45 dispatcher, emergency medical technician, or advanced  
46 emergency medical technician who is trained and authorized  
47 by law or rule to render emergency medical assistance or  
48 treatment;

49           (13) "Tuition", the charges and cost of tuition as set  
50 by the governing body of a public institution of higher  
51 education, excluding the costs of room, board, books, and  
52 any other educational materials, equipment, or supplies.

53           3. Subject to appropriation, public safety personnel  
54 with at least six years of service shall be entitled to a  
55 waiver of one hundred percent of the resident tuition  
56 charges of a public institution of higher education if the  
57 individual:

58           (1) Possesses one of the following:

59           (a) A current, valid license issued by the department  
60 of health and senior services authorizing such person to  
61 serve as an emergency medical technician, advanced emergency  
62 medical technician, or paramedic;

63           (b) A current, valid license issued by the peace  
64 officer standards and training commission authorizing such  
65 person to serve as a peace officer pursuant to the  
66 provisions of chapter 590;

67           (c) A current, valid certificate issued by the  
68 division of fire safety authorizing such person to serve as  
69 a firefighter; or

70           (d) A current, valid certificate confirming successful  
71 completion of an emergency medical dispatcher course and any  
72 ongoing training requirements pursuant to section 650.340;  
73 and

74           (e) For all public safety personnel, a certificate of  
75 verification signed by the individual's supervisor or  
76 employer verifying that such individual is currently  
77 employed full-time as public safety personnel and trained  
78 and authorized by law or rule to render emergency medical  
79 assistance or treatment;

80           (2) Meets all admission requirements of the public  
81 institution of higher education;

82           (3) Has not already earned a baccalaureate degree;

83           (4) Pursues studies leading to an associate degree or  
84 baccalaureate degree in one of the following academic  
85 subject areas:

86           (a) For police officers, eligible subjects include  
87 forensic science, fisheries and wildlife, political science,  
88 psychology, history, philosophy, sociology, anthropology,  
89 global studies, Spanish, journalism, advertising, public  
90 relations, nutrition and health sciences, communication  
91 sciences and disorders, and criminal justice;

92           (b) For firefighters, paramedics, emergency medical  
93 technicians, and advanced emergency medical technicians,  
94 eligible subjects include biology, chemistry, biochemistry,  
95 microbiology, nutrition and health sciences, communication  
96 sciences and disorders, Spanish, advertising, public  
97 relations, paramedicine, fire science, fire technology, fire  
98 administration, fire management, communications, homeland  
99 security, emergency management, disaster management, and  
100 crisis management; and

101           (c) For emergency medical dispatchers, eligible  
102 subjects include any subject specified in paragraph (a) or  
103 (b) of this subdivision;

104           (5) Submits verification of the professional license  
105 or certificate and the certificate of verification required  
106 by subdivision (1) of this subsection to the department, in  
107 a form and manner as prescribed by the department;

108           (6) Files with the department documentation showing  
109 proof of employment as public safety personnel and proof of  
110 residence in Missouri each year such individual or such

individual's legal dependent applies for and receives the tuition waiver;

(7) First applies for all other forms of federal and state student financial aid before applying for a tuition waiver, including, but not limited to, the United States Department of Education Free Application for Federal Student Aid; and

(8) Submits a document to the public institution of higher education confirming that the public safety personnel has satisfied the provisions of subdivision (7) of this subsection, to be submitted in a form and manner as prescribed by the public institution of higher education.

4. Public safety personnel may receive the tuition waiver pursuant to subsection 3 of this section for up to five years if they otherwise continue to be eligible for the tuition waiver. The five years of tuition waiver eligibility starts once the individual applies for and receives the tuition waiver for the first time and is available to such individual for the next five consecutive years.

5. Subject to appropriation, a legal dependent of public safety personnel with at least ten years of service shall be entitled to a tuition waiver of one hundred percent of the resident tuition charges of any public institution of higher education for an associate or baccalaureate degree program if such public safety personnel satisfies the provisions of subdivisions (1), (5), and (6) of subsection 3 of this section and the legal dependent:

(1) Executes an agreement with such institution in accordance with the provisions of section 173.2660;

(2) Has not previously earned a baccalaureate degree;

142           (3) Meets all admission requirements of the public  
143 institution of higher education;

144           (4) First applies for all other forms of federal and  
145 state student financial aid before applying for a tuition  
146 waiver, including, but not limited to, the United States  
147 Department of Education Free Application for Federal Student  
148 Aid;

149           (5) Submits a document to the public institution of  
150 higher education confirming that the legal dependent has  
151 satisfied subdivision (4) of this subsection, to be  
152 submitted in a form and manner as prescribed by the public  
153 institution of higher education;

154           (6) Submits the verification required pursuant to  
155 subsection 8 of this section to the public institution of  
156 higher education; and

157           (7) Pursues studies leading to an associate degree or  
158 baccalaureate degree in any one of the subject areas  
159 specified in paragraphs (a) to (c) of subdivision (4) of  
160 subsection 3 of this section.

161           6. A legal dependent may receive the tuition waiver  
162 for up to five years if the public safety personnel and the  
163 legal dependent continue to be eligible for such tuition  
164 waiver. The five years of tuition waiver eligibility starts  
165 once the legal dependent applies for and receives the  
166 tuition waiver for the first time and is available to such  
167 legal dependent for the next five consecutive years.

168           7. The public institution of higher education shall  
169 waive one hundred percent of the public safety personnel's  
170 or the legal dependent's tuition remaining due after  
171 subtracting awarded federal financial aid grants and state  
172 scholarships and grants for the eligible public safety  
173 personnel or legal dependent during the time the public

174 safety personnel or legal dependent is enrolled. To remain  
175 eligible, the public safety personnel or legal dependent  
176 shall comply with all requirements of the institution for  
177 continued attendance and award of an associate degree or a  
178 baccalaureate degree.

179       8. (1) An application for a tuition waiver shall  
180 include a verification of the public safety personnel's  
181 satisfaction of the requirements of subdivisions (1), (5),  
182 and (6) of subsection 3 of this section. The public safety  
183 personnel shall include such verification when he or she or  
184 his or her legal dependent is applying to the public  
185 institution of higher education in order to obtain a tuition  
186 waiver upon initial enrollment.

187       (2) The death of public safety personnel in the line  
188 of duty which occurs after submission of an application for  
189 a tuition waiver shall not disqualify such individual's  
190 otherwise eligible legal dependent from receiving the  
191 tuition waiver. In such case, in lieu of submitting the  
192 certificate of verification provided for in subdivision (1)  
193 of this subsection, the legal dependent shall submit a  
194 statement attesting that:

195       (a) At the time of death, such public safety personnel  
196 satisfied the requirements of subdivision (1) of this  
197 subsection; and

198       (b) Such public safety personnel died in the line of  
199 duty.

200       9. A public institution of higher education shall  
201 provide a tuition waiver to public safety personnel and  
202 legal dependents who satisfy the provisions of this section  
203 and section 173.2660, if applicable, and apply for an open  
204 seat, but shall not be required to provide a tuition waiver  
205 if doing so would require the institution to create

206 additional seats exceeding class, course, or program  
207 capacity.

208 10. Within forty-five days after receipt of a  
209 completed application for a tuition waiver, the public  
210 institution of higher education shall send written notice of  
211 the applicant's eligibility or ineligibility for the tuition  
212 waiver and state whether the application has been approved  
213 or denied. If the applicant is determined not to be eligible  
214 for the tuition waiver, the notice shall include the reason  
215 or reasons for such determination. If the application is  
216 denied, the notice shall include the reason or reasons for  
217 the denial.

218 11. The department shall promulgate rules to implement  
219 the provisions of this section and section 173.2660. Any  
220 rule or portion of a rule, as that term is defined in  
221 section 536.010, that is created under the authority  
222 delegated in this section shall become effective only if it  
223 complies with and is subject to all of the provisions of  
224 chapter 536 and, if applicable, section 536.028. This  
225 section and chapter 536 are nonseverable and if any of the  
226 powers vested with the general assembly pursuant to chapter  
227 536 to review, to delay the effective date, or to disapprove  
228 and annul a rule are subsequently held unconstitutional,  
229 then the grant of rulemaking authority and any rule proposed  
230 or adopted after August 28, 2025, shall be invalid and void.

231 12. (1) There is hereby created in the state treasury  
232 the "Public Safety Recruitment and Retention Fund", which  
233 shall consist of moneys appropriated by the general assembly  
234 for the purpose of implementing the provisions of this  
235 section and section 173.2660. The state treasurer shall be  
236 custodian of the fund. In accordance with sections 30.170  
237 and 30.180, the state treasurer may approve disbursements.



The fund shall be a dedicated fund and money in the fund shall be used solely by the department of higher education and workforce development for the purpose of reimbursing public institutions of higher education for tuition waivers awarded as provided in this section and 173.2660.

(2) Notwithstanding the provisions of section 33.080 to the contrary, any moneys remaining in the fund at the end of the biennium shall not revert to the credit of the general revenue fund.

(3) The state treasurer shall invest moneys in the fund in the same manner as other funds are invested. Any interest and moneys earned on such investments shall be credited to the fund.

13. In any year in which moneys in the public safety recruitment and retention fund are insufficient to fully fund tuition waivers for all eligible applicants, tuition waivers shall be awarded in the following order of priority; provided that, in the event of a tie in eligibility, available funds shall be distributed on a pro rata basis:

(1) Priority class one shall include public safety personnel, in the following order:

(a) Public safety personnel in departments with the highest crime rate per capita; and

(b) Public safety personnel with the most years of service; and

(2) Priority class two shall include dependents of public safety personnel, in the following order:

(a) Dependents of public safety personnel in departments with the highest crime rate per capita; and

(b) Dependents of public safety personnel with the most years of service.

269        14. The tuition waivers provided for in this section  
270 and section 173.2660 are subject to appropriation. If there  
271 are no moneys in the fund established in subsection 12 of  
272 this section, no tuition waivers shall be awarded.

      173.2660. 1. Each legal dependent who is a tuition  
2 waiver recipient pursuant to the provisions of section  
3 173.2655 shall execute an agreement as provided in this  
4 section. Such agreement shall include the following terms,  
5 as appropriate:

6        (1) The tuition waiver recipient agrees to reside  
7 within the state of Missouri for a period of five years  
8 following the use of the tuition waiver;

9        (2) Each year during the five-year period following  
10 use of the tuition waiver, the tuition waiver recipient  
11 agrees to file a state income tax return and provide a copy  
12 of such tax return to the department to document that such  
13 recipient still resides in the state of Missouri;

14        (3) If the tuition waiver recipient fails to annually  
15 file a tax return to prove residency in the state of  
16 Missouri for the five-year period following the use of the  
17 tuition waiver or fails to remain a resident of Missouri for  
18 the five-year period following the use of the tuition  
19 waiver, the tuition waiver recipient agrees to repay the  
20 public institution of higher education attended by such  
21 tuition waiver recipient the amount of tuition that was  
22 waived for such individual if the public institution of  
23 higher education requests such payment on the dates and in  
24 the amounts requested. Any repayment received by a public  
25 institution of higher education pursuant to this subdivision  
26 shall be remitted by such institution to the department in  
27 full or deducted from future reimbursements to such  
28 institution from the fund established in subsection 12 of

29 section 173.2655, as determined in accordance with rules  
30 promulgated by the department; and

31 (4) Any residency, filing, or payment obligation  
32 incurred by the tuition waiver recipient under the public  
33 safety recruitment and retention act is canceled in the  
34 event of the tuition waiver recipient's total and permanent  
35 disability or death.

36 2. The five-year residency requirement begins once the  
37 legal dependent applies for and receives the tuition waiver  
38 for the first time and continues until the tuition waiver  
39 recipient's:

40 (1) Completion of the five-year tuition waiver  
41 eligibility period;

42 (2) Completion of a baccalaureate degree at a public  
43 institution of higher education;

44 (3) Completion of an associate degree at a public  
45 community college and notification to the department that  
46 such recipient does not intend to pursue a baccalaureate  
47 degree or additional associate degree using tuition waivers  
48 pursuant to the public safety recruitment and retention act;  
49 or

50 (4) Notification to the department that such recipient  
51 does not plan to use additional tuition waivers pursuant to  
52 the public safety recruitment and retention act.

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