



103RD GENERAL ASSEMBLY

State of Illinois

2023 and 2024

HB2838

Introduced 2/16/2023, by Rep. Lindsey LaPointe

SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

30 ILCS 105/5.990 new
20 ILCS 1705/71B new
20 ILCS 1705/71C new
20 ILCS 1705/71D new

Amends the Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities Administrative Act. Provides that, beginning with the 2023-2024 academic year, the Department of Human Services shall establish and administer the Behavioral Health Scholarship Program for the purpose of incentivizing students to pursue degrees in a behavioral health discipline. Provides that the Department shall award financial assistance in the form of a scholarship to cover the cost of tuition, university fees, and books each year for a maximum of 4 years at a participating university if the applicant meets certain conditions. Sets forth rules, regulations, and other requirements for the Program. Provides that the Department shall establish the Employment Funding Grant Program to provide grants to qualified individuals who work for a community not-for-profit behavioral health agency or a federally qualified health center. Defines who is a qualified individual. Sets forth rules, regulations, and other requirements for the Program. Amends the State Finance Act to create the Behavioral Health Education Program Fund. Makes other changes.

LRB103 04770 RJT 49779 b

1 AN ACT concerning State government.

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

4 Section 5. The State Finance Act is amended by adding
5 Section 5.990 as follows:

6 (30 ILCS 105/5.990 new)

7 Sec. 5.990. The Behavioral Health Education Program Fund.

8 Section 10. The Mental Health and Developmental
9 Disabilities Administrative Act is amended by adding Sections
10 71B, 71C, and 71D as follows:

11 (20 ILCS 1705/71B new)

12 Sec. 71B. Behavioral Health Education Program Fund.

13 (a) The Behavioral Health Education Program Fund is
14 created in the State treasury as a special fund.

15 (b) The Fund is created for the purpose of funding
16 scholarships and employment opportunities in the behavioral
17 health field as provided in Sections 71C and 71D.

18 (20 ILCS 1705/71C new)

19 Sec. 71C. Behavioral Health Scholarship Program.

20 (a) Definitions. As used in this Section:

1 "Behavioral health discipline" means:

2 (1) undergraduate behavioral health disciplines that
3 may be offered through universities or community colleges,
4 including psychology, social work, and community health;

5 (2) graduate behavioral health disciplines, including
6 clinical or counseling psychology, mental health or
7 addiction counseling, social work, marriage and family
8 therapy, and mental health or psychiatric nursing; and

9 (3) certified behavioral health disciplines, including
10 certified recovery support specialists, certified peer
11 recovery specialists, or certified community health
12 workers.

13 "Eligible applicant" means a student who is enrolled in a
14 program of study at a participating university and who meets
15 all of the qualifications and requirements under this Section.

16 "Federally qualified health center" has the meaning given
17 to that term in Section 1905(1)(2)(B) of the federal Social
18 Security Act.

19 "Participating university" means a public university in
20 this State that is a party to an intergovernmental agreement
21 entered into with the Department in order to participate in
22 the program established under this Section.

23 "Tuition, university fees, and books" includes the
24 customary charge for instruction and books or course material
25 and the additional fixed fees charged for purposes that are
26 required generally of students who are not Program applicants

1 under this Section for each academic year for which a Program
2 applicant under this Section actually enrolls. "Tuition,
3 university fees, and books" does not include room and board,
4 transportation fees, fees payable only once, breakage fees,
5 and other contingent deposits that are refundable in whole or
6 in part. The Department may adopt, by rule not inconsistent
7 with this Section, detailed provisions concerning the
8 computation of tuition, university fees, and books.

9 (b) Subject to appropriation, beginning with the 2023-2024
10 academic year, the Department shall establish and administer
11 the Behavioral Health Scholarship Program for the purpose of
12 incentivizing students to pursue degrees in a behavioral
13 health discipline. The Department shall enter
14 intergovernmental agreements with public universities in this
15 State to participate in the Program. Under the Program, the
16 Department shall provide financial assistance to an eligible
17 applicant.

18 (c) Subject to appropriation, the Department shall award
19 financial assistance in the form of a scholarship to an
20 applicant to cover the cost of tuition, university fees, and
21 books each year for a maximum of 4 years at a participating
22 university if the applicant meets all of the following
23 criteria:

24 (1) The applicant is a resident of this State or a
25 child of a noncitizen of the United States.

26 (2) The applicant has committed to work in a community

1 not-for-profit behavioral health agency or a federally
2 qualified health center for at least 6 years.

3 (3) The applicant maintains at least a grade point
4 average of no less than 3.0 on a 4.0 scale.

5 (d) Each participating university shall post on its
6 website the criteria and eligibility requirements to receive
7 financial assistance under this Section and must identify that
8 the financial assistance is for a maximum of 4 academic years,
9 with the total amount of financial assistance awarded to an
10 eligible applicant not to exceed the cost of tuition,
11 university fees, and books or a higher education student loan.
12 This information must also be reported to the Department and
13 the Board of Higher Education, and the Department and the
14 Board shall post the information on the Department's and
15 Board's respective websites.

16 (e) Prior to receiving financial assistance for any
17 academic year, an eligible applicant under this Section shall
18 be required by the participating university to sign an
19 agreement with the Department under which the eligible
20 applicant pledges that, within 6 months from the date of the
21 eligible applicant's graduation from the participating
22 university, the eligible applicant must search for, apply for,
23 and accept full-time employment at a community not-for-profit
24 behavioral health agency or a federally qualified health
25 center. The recipient of financial assistance must, for at
26 least 6 years, maintain this employment.

1 (f) If the recipient of financial assistance under this
2 Section fails to search for, apply for, and accept full-time
3 employment as required under subsection (e) within 6 months
4 following his or her graduation from a participating
5 university, the Department shall require the recipient to
6 begin to repay the total amount of any financial assistance
7 received no later than 90 calendar days after the end of the
8 6-month period or as otherwise agreed to by the Department.
9 The Department may include in the amount to be repaid (i)
10 interest at a rate of 5% per year beginning 6 months following
11 the recipient's graduation from a participating university and
12 (ii) if applicable, reasonable attorney's fees and collection
13 fees. The repayment amount shall be prorated according to the
14 fraction of the employment obligation not completed if the
15 recipient accepts full-time employment at a community
16 not-for-profit behavioral health agency or a federally
17 qualified health center. All repayments collected under this
18 Section shall be forwarded to the State Comptroller for
19 deposit into the Behavioral Health Education Program Fund.

20 (g) A student recipient of financial assistance under this
21 Section must immediately notify the participating university
22 and the Department of any changes to the recipient's
23 enrollment status or if the recipient withdraws from the
24 academic program for which the recipient was awarded financial
25 assistance in accordance with this Section. The Department
26 shall require the student recipient to begin to repay the

1 total amount of any financial assistance received no later
2 than 90 calendar days after the end of the 6 months after the
3 student's enrollment status changes or after the recipient
4 withdraws, whichever is earlier, or as otherwise agreed to by
5 the Department. The Department may include in the amount to be
6 repaid (i) interest at a rate of 5% per year beginning 6 months
7 after the student's enrollment status changes or after the
8 recipient withdraws, whichever is earlier and (ii) if
9 applicable, reasonable attorney's fees and collection fees. If
10 the student reenrolls at the participating university in the
11 same academic program and begins attending classes again, then
12 no more repayments are necessary by the student if the student
13 graduates.

14 (h) If a recipient's qualified employment is terminated
15 for any reason other than for cause prior to the completion of
16 the Program's 6-year employment requirement, the recipient
17 shall, within 90 calendar days from the recipient's
18 termination of full-time employment, search for, apply for,
19 and accept new, qualified, full-time employment as a mental
20 health or substance use clinician, counselor, therapist, case
21 manager, community health worker, social worker, mental health
22 or detox nurse, or similar position providing direct care
23 services to Medicaid patients for a contracted or
24 subcontracted provider of the Department or another State
25 agency, otherwise the recipient must repay the awarded
26 financial assistance to the Department as provided in

1 subsection (f).

2 (i) If a recipient's qualified employment is terminated
3 for cause prior to the completion of the Program's 6-year
4 employment requirement, the recipient shall repay the total
5 amount of financial assistance received under the Program no
6 later than 90 calendar days from termination or as otherwise
7 agreed to by the Department. The amount of repayment owed by
8 the recipient shall be prorated based on the amount of the
9 employment requirement that has been satisfied. The Department
10 may include in the amount to be repaid (i) interest at a rate
11 of 5% per year beginning at the date the recipient is
12 terminated and (ii) if applicable, reasonable attorney's fees
13 and collection fees.

14 (j) Repayments and interest payments made under this
15 Section shall be deposited into the Behavioral Health
16 Education Program Fund.

17 (k) The Department may use moneys from the Behavioral
18 Health Education Program Fund to fund the Program as described
19 under this Section.

20 (l) The Department shall adopt rules to implement this
21 Section and may adopt rules relating to its collection
22 activities for the repayment of any financial assistance
23 provided under this Section.

24 (20 ILCS 1705/71D new)

25 Sec. 71D. Employment Funding Grant Program.

1 (a) As used in this Section, "qualified individual" means:

2 (1) a student pursuing a degree in behavioral health
3 who works at a community not-for-profit behavioral health
4 agency or a federally qualified health center as an unpaid
5 intern or volunteer;

6 (2) a person who is hired within the 6 months prior to
7 applying for a grant under this Section as a paid employee
8 or contractor on a full-time, part-time, or hourly basis;
9 or

10 (3) a faculty member, staff member, postdoctoral
11 student or fellow, individual who has received an
12 applied-research fellowship, or graduate student at an
13 institution of higher education who engages in applied
14 work at a community not-for-profit behavioral health
15 agency or a federally qualified health center to improve
16 the quality and consistency of clinical supervision, help
17 implement research-supported or evidenced-based
18 interventions, or improve the effectiveness or cost
19 effectiveness of the behavioral health agency or the
20 federally qualified health center.

21 (b) Subject to appropriation, the Department shall
22 establish the Employment Funding Grant Program to provide
23 grants to qualified individuals who work for community
24 not-for-profit behavioral health agencies or federally
25 qualified health centers.

26 (c) Under the Program, the Department shall provide

1 financial assistance to qualified individuals.

2 (d) A person who is a qualified individual under paragraph
3 (1) of subsection (a) is eligible to receive a grant to
4 compensate the individual for work as a unpaid intern or
5 volunteer. The grant amount shall provide an equivalent amount
6 of compensation to the individual similar to the expected
7 market rate of a person performing similar duties as the
8 individual in either a community profit or not-for-profit
9 behavioral health agency or a federally qualified health
10 center.

11 (e) A person who is a qualified individual under paragraph
12 (2) of subsection (a) is eligible to receive a grant as a bonus
13 for the individual for working at a community not-for-profit
14 behavioral health agency or federally qualified health center.
15 The grant may be renewed every 6 months and renewed up to 4
16 times per qualified individual based on meeting performance
17 standards set by the Department. The grant amount shall be
18 determined by the Department.

19 (f) A person who is a qualified individual under paragraph
20 (3) of subsection (a) is eligible to receive a grant covering
21 the time that the individual does applied work at the
22 behavioral health agency or the federally qualified health
23 center. The grant amount shall provide an equivalent amount of
24 compensation to the individual similar to the expected market
25 rate of a person performing similar duties to the individual
26 in a community profit behavioral health agency, not-for-profit

1 behavioral health agency, or federally qualified health
2 center. If a qualified individual under paragraph (3) of
3 subsection (a) is a graduate student, then the graduate
4 student shall be eligible for a grant to cover tuition costs.
5 The grant may be renewed every 6 months and renewed up to 4
6 times per qualified individual.

7 (g) The Department may use moneys from the Behavioral
8 Health Education Program Fund to fund the Program as described
9 under this Section.

10 (h) The Department shall adopt rules to implement this
11 Section.