

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 any 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 be permanently disabled from service-connected causes with 100% disability and who at the time of entering service was an Illinois resident or was an Illinois resident within 6 months of entering such service.

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. 89-267, eff. 1-1-96.)

Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon becoming law.