



General Assembly

Substitute Bill No. 6074

January Session, 2025



AN ACT CONCERNING THE STUDENT LOAN REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 10a-19m of the general statutes is repealed and the
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2025*):

3 (a) On or before January 1, 2025, the Commissioner of Higher
4 Education shall establish, within available appropriations, a program to
5 reimburse certain persons for student loan payments. The Office of
6 Higher Education may approve the participation of any person in the
7 student loan reimbursement program who (1) (A) attended a public or
8 independent institution of higher education in the state and graduated
9 with an associate or a bachelor's degree, (B) holds an occupational or
10 professional license or certification issued pursuant to title 20, [or] (C) is
11 granted a hardship waiver by the commissioner, pursuant to a waiver
12 application submitted by such person in the form and manner
13 prescribed by the commissioner, or (D) was enrolled in the practical
14 nurse education program at Stone Academy during the period
15 commencing November 1, 2021, and ending February 28, 2023, whether
16 or not such person completed such program; (2) is a resident of the state,
17 as defined in section 12-701, and has been a resident of the state for not
18 less than five years, as determined by the commissioner; (3) has (A) a
19 Connecticut adjusted gross income of not more than one hundred

20 twenty-five thousand dollars and files a return under the federal income
21 tax as an unmarried individual or a married individual filing separately,
22 or (B) a Connecticut adjusted gross income of not more than one
23 hundred seventy-five thousand dollars and files a return under the
24 federal income tax as a head of household, a married individual filing
25 jointly or a surviving spouse, as defined in Section 2(a) of the Internal
26 Revenue Code of 1986, or any subsequent corresponding internal
27 revenue code of the United States, as amended from time to time; and
28 (4) has a student loan.

29 (b) Persons who qualify under subsection (a) of this section may
30 apply to the Office of Higher Education to participate in the student loan
31 reimbursement program at such time and in such manner as the
32 commissioner of said office prescribes. [Not later than January 1, 2025,
33 the] The commissioner shall post on said office's Internet web site the
34 (1) qualifications for a hardship waiver described in subparagraph (C)
35 of subdivision (1) of said subsection, and (2) forms required to apply for
36 the student loan reimbursement program and a hardship waiver. The
37 application for the student loan reimbursement program shall include,
38 but not be limited to, an option for a person to disclose such person's
39 demographic information.

40 (c) (1) The Commissioner of Higher Education shall award grants to
41 persons approved to participate in the student loan reimbursement
42 program on a first-come, first-served basis, provided such person meets
43 the requirements of this subsection.

44 (2) (A) Each participant in the program shall volunteer for (i) a
45 nonprofit organization that is [registered with the Department of
46 Consumer Protection or] exempt from taxation pursuant to Section
47 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, or any subsequent
48 corresponding internal revenue code of the United States, as amended
49 from time to time, (ii) a municipal government in the state, or (iii) the
50 armed forces of the United States for not less than fifty unpaid hours for
51 each year of participation in the student loan reimbursement program.
52 For purposes of this section, "volunteer hours" shall include, but need

53 not be limited to, (I) service on the board of directors [for] of a nonprofit
54 organization, [and] (II) military service, (III) volunteering for a religious
55 organization or as a firefighter or emergency medical services
56 personnel, as defined in section 19a-175, or (IV) hours of unpaid work
57 completed as a student for any certificate or degree program that
58 requires the completion of such hours as a part of such program,
59 provided such unpaid student work hours shall be applicable for two
60 years after completing such hours or for the first two years of
61 participation in the program, whichever is later. A participant may
62 combine the volunteer hours for one or more organizations to fulfill the
63 requirement of this subdivision.

64 (B) Not later than January 1, 2026, the Office of Higher Education
65 shall establish and post on its Internet web site qualifications for a
66 hardship waiver to exempt participants from the volunteer hours
67 requirement of subparagraph (A) of this subdivision and the forms
68 required to apply for such hardship waiver. The Commissioner of
69 Higher Education shall grant a hardship waiver for volunteer hours (i)
70 for each qualified participant, as determined by the commissioner, who
71 applies for such hardship waiver, and (ii) automatically for each
72 participant who was approved for the program pursuant to
73 subparagraph (D) of subdivision (1) of subsection (a) of this section.

74 (3) Each participant in the program shall annually submit to the
75 Office of Higher Education, in the manner prescribed by the
76 commissioner, [a] (A) a statement from a student loan servicer that
77 includes the amounts for the outstanding loan balance for such student
78 loan and the total of the year-to-date payments made on such student
79 loan, [and] (B) a form documenting the number of volunteer hours
80 completed by such participant that is (i) signed by such participant's
81 supervisor or other employee of the nonprofit organization or
82 municipal government for which such participant volunteered, [or, for
83 military service, such participant's commanding officer,] and (ii)
84 notarized, provided a participant may submit other documentation, as
85 prescribed by the office, to show completion of military service or
86 unpaid student work hours, and (C) for volunteer hours at a nonprofit

87 organization, evidence of current certification from the Internal
 88 Revenue Service that such nonprofit organization is exempt from
 89 taxation pursuant to Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of
 90 1986, or any subsequent corresponding internal revenue code of the
 91 United States, as amended from time to time.

92 (4) The Office of Higher Education shall reimburse each program
 93 participant who meets the requirements of this section for student loan
 94 payments in an amount of not more than five thousand dollars,
 95 annually, provided no person shall participate in the student loan
 96 reimbursement program for more than four years or receive more than
 97 twenty thousand dollars in aggregate reimbursement for student loan
 98 payments.

99 (d) The Office of Higher Education may use up to two and one-half
 100 per cent of the funds appropriated for purposes of this section, annually,
 101 for program administration, promotion and recruitment activities.

102 (e) Not later than July 1, 2026, and each January and July thereafter,
 103 the Commissioner of Higher Education shall report, in accordance with
 104 the provisions of section 11-4a, to the joint standing committees of the
 105 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to higher
 106 education and employment advancement and appropriations and the
 107 budgets of state agencies on the operation and effectiveness of the
 108 program and any recommendations to expand the program.

109 Sec. 2. (*Effective from passage*) The amount appropriated to the Office
 110 of Higher Education for the student loan reimbursement program,
 111 established pursuant to section 10a-19m of the general statutes, as
 112 amended by this act, shall not lapse on June 30, 2025, and such funds
 113 shall be carried forward and made available during the fiscal year
 114 ending June 30, 2026, for the same purpose.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
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Section 1	July 1, 2025	10a-19m
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Sec. 2	<i>from passage</i>	New section
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APP *Joint Favorable Subst.*