

FIRST REGULAR SESSION

# HOUSE BILL NO. 1501

103RD GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE JAMISON.

2835H.011

JOSEPH ENGLER, Chief Clerk

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## AN ACT

To amend chapter 173, RSMo, by adding thereto one new section relating to college tuition for first responders.

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

Section A. Chapter 173, RSMo, is amended by adding thereto one new section, to be known as section 173.2665, to read as follows:

**173.2665. 1. This section shall be known and may be cited as the "First Responder Tuition Assistance Act".**

**2. As used in this section, the following terms mean:**

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

**(2) "Descendant", the natural or adopted child of a first responder;**

**(3) "Emergency medical technician", as such term is defined in section 190.100;**

**(4) "Firefighter", as such term is defined in section 87.120;**

**(5) "First responder", an individual who meets or has met the applicable requirements listed in subsection 3 of this section and serves or has served as a first responder, as such term is defined in section 67.145;**

**(6) "Line of duty", any action that a first responder is authorized or obligated by law, rule, or regulation to perform, related to or as a condition of employment or service;**

**(7) "Paramedic", as such term is defined in section 190.100;**

**(8) "Public institution of higher education", a public community college, state college, or state university in this state;**

EXPLANATION — Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets ~~thus~~ in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted from the law. Matter in **bold-face** type in the above bill is proposed language.

18           **(9) "Tuition", the charges and cost of tuition as set by the governing body of a**  
19 **public institution of higher education.**

20           **3. A first responder shall be entitled to a waiver of one hundred percent of the**  
21 **resident tuition charges of a public institution of higher education if the first responder:**

22           **(1) Possesses or has possessed one of the following:**

23           **(a) A valid license issued by the department of health and senior services**  
24 **authorizing such person to serve as an emergency medical technician, advanced**  
25 **emergency medical technician, or paramedic;**

26           **(b) A valid license issued by the peace officer standards and training commission**  
27 **authorizing such person to serve as a peace officer under the provisions of chapter 590;**

28           **(c) A valid certificate issued by the division of fire safety authorizing such person**  
29 **to serve as a firefighter;**

30           **(d) A valid license issued by the state board of nursing authorizing such person**  
31 **to engage in the practice of professional nursing under the provisions of chapter 335;**

32           **(e) A valid license issued by the board of healing arts authorizing such person to**  
33 **practice medicine under the provisions of chapter 334;**

34           **(f) Any other valid license or certification that is required for such first**  
35 **responder's employment; or**

36           **(g) For first responders who are employed in a position that does not require a**  
37 **license or certificate described in paragraphs (a) to (f) of this subdivision, the certificate**  
38 **of verification described in paragraph (h) of this subdivision; and**

39           **(h) For all first responders, a certificate of verification signed by the first**  
40 **responder's supervisor or employer verifying that such first responder is currently**  
41 **employed or was employed in the past as a first responder who is or, at the time such**  
42 **first responder was employed as a first responder, was trained and authorized by law or**  
43 **rule to render emergency medical assistance or treatment;**

44           **(2) Meets all admission requirements of the public institution of higher**  
45 **education;**

46           **(3) Pursues studies leading to a degree from an associate, baccalaureate, or**  
47 **graduate degree program;**

48           **(4) Submits verification of the professional license or certificate, if applicable,**  
49 **and certificate of verification required by subdivision (1) of this subsection to the**  
50 **department of higher education and workforce development, in a form and manner as**  
51 **prescribed by the department of higher education and workforce development; and**

52           **(5) Files with the department of higher education and workforce development**  
53 **documentation showing proof of current or past employment as a first responder.**

54           **4. A first responder may receive the tuition waiver under subsection 3 of this**  
55 **section for up to thirty-six months if such first responder otherwise continues to be**  
56 **eligible for the tuition waiver. The thirty-six months of tuition waiver eligibility starts**  
57 **once the first responder applies for and receives the tuition waiver for the first time and**  
58 **is available to such first responder for the next thirty-six months the first responder is**  
59 **enrolled in an associate, baccalaureate, or graduate degree program and attending**  
60 **classes at a public institution of higher education.**

61           **5. A first responder who does not use all or part of the number of months of a**  
62 **tuition waiver for which the first responder is eligible may transfer all or a specified**  
63 **number of months of such tuition waiver to the first responder's eligible spouse or**  
64 **descendants.**

65           **6. A spouse or a descendant of a first responder shall be entitled to a tuition**  
66 **waiver of one hundred percent of the resident tuition charges of any public institution of**  
67 **higher education for an associate, baccalaureate, or graduate degree program if the**  
68 **spouse or descendant:**

69           **(1) Has not previously earned a baccalaureate degree;**

70           **(2) Meets all admission requirements of the public institution of higher**  
71 **education;**

72           **(3) Completes and submits to the United States Department of Education a Free**  
73 **Application for Federal Student Aid;**

74           **(4) Submits a document to the public institution of higher education confirming**  
75 **that the spouse or descendant has satisfied subdivision (3) of this subsection, to be**  
76 **submitted in a form and manner as prescribed by the public institution of higher**  
77 **education; and**

78           **(5) Submits the verification required under subsection 9 of this section to the**  
79 **public institution of higher education.**

80           **7. A first responder's spouse or descendant may receive the tuition waiver for up**  
81 **to thirty-six months if the spouse or descendant continues to be eligible for such tuition**  
82 **waiver. The thirty-six months of tuition waiver eligibility starts once the spouse or**  
83 **descendant applies for and receives the tuition waiver for the first time and is available**  
84 **to such spouse or descendant for the next thirty-six months the spouse or descendant is**  
85 **enrolled in an associate, baccalaureate, or graduate degree program and attending**  
86 **classes at a public institution of higher education.**

87           **8. The public institution of higher education shall waive one hundred percent of**  
88 **the first responder's, spouse's, or descendant's tuition remaining due after subtracting**  
89 **awarded federal financial aid grants and state scholarships and grants for an eligible**  
90 **first responder, spouse, or descendant during the time the first responder, spouse, or**

91 descendant is enrolled. To remain eligible, the first responder, spouse, or descendant  
92 shall comply with all requirements of the institution for continued attendance and  
93 award of an associate degree, baccalaureate degree, or graduate degree.

94 9. (1) An application for a tuition waiver shall include a verification of the first  
95 responder's satisfaction of the requirements of subsection 3 of this section. The first  
96 responder shall include such verification when the first responder, spouse, or  
97 descendant is applying to the public institution of higher education in order to obtain  
98 a tuition waiver upon initial enrollment.

99 (2) The death of a first responder in the line of duty that occurs after submission  
100 of an application for a tuition waiver shall not disqualify such first responder's  
101 otherwise eligible spouse or descendant from receiving the tuition waiver. In such case,  
102 in lieu of submitting the certificate of verification provided for in subdivision (1) of this  
103 subsection, the spouse or descendant shall submit a statement attesting that:

104 (a) At the time of death, such first responder satisfied the requirements of  
105 subdivision (1) of this subsection; and

106 (b) Such first responder died in the line of duty.

107 10. Within forty-five days after receipt of a completed application for a tuition  
108 waiver, the public institution of higher education shall send written notice of the first  
109 responder's, spouse's, or descendant's eligibility or ineligibility for the tuition waiver. If  
110 the first responder, spouse, or descendant is determined not to be eligible for the tuition  
111 waiver, the notice shall include the reason or reasons for such determination.

112 11. The department of higher education and workforce development shall  
113 promulgate rules to implement the provisions of this section. Any rule or portion of a  
114 rule, as that term is defined in section 536.010, that is created under the authority  
115 delegated in this section shall become effective only if it complies with and is subject to  
116 all of the provisions of chapter 536 and, if applicable, section 536.028. This section and  
117 chapter 536 are nonseverable and if any of the powers vested with the general assembly  
118 pursuant to chapter 536 to review, to delay the effective date, or to disapprove and annul  
119 a rule are subsequently held unconstitutional, then the grant of rulemaking authority  
120 and any rule proposed or adopted after the effective date of this section shall be invalid  
121 and void.

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