

STATE OF MAINE

—
IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD
TWO THOUSAND AND EIGHTEEN

—
S.P. 635 - L.D. 1736

**An Act To Broaden Educational Opportunities to Members of the Maine
National Guard and Provide Financial Assistance to Veterans**

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

Sec. 1. 37-B MRSA §352, sub-§4, as amended by PL 2015, c. 465, Pt. D, §4, is further amended to read:

4. State postsecondary education institution. "State postsecondary education institution" means the University of Maine System, the Maine Maritime Academy, the Maine Community College System or any other college or university system established as a public instrumentality of this State, the Maine Criminal Justice Academy, or a private nonprofit postsecondary education institution in this State registered with the Military Bureau as a participating institution in accordance with this subchapter.

Sec. 2. 37-B MRSA §352-A is enacted to read:

§352-A. Participating institution registration

A member is entitled to a tuition benefit described in this subchapter at a private nonprofit postsecondary education institution in the State if that private nonprofit postsecondary education institution is registered with the Military Bureau as a participating institution in the manner prescribed by the bureau. The bureau may adopt rules to implement the registration requirement described in this section. Rules adopted in accordance with this section are routine technical rules as described under Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2.

Sec. 3. 37-B MRSA §353-B, as enacted by PL 2015, c. 465, Pt. D, §6, is amended to read:

§353-B. Tuition benefit for member

A member who meets the prerequisites of section 354 is entitled to a 100% tuition benefit at a state postsecondary education institution, except that the tuition benefit at a state postsecondary education institution that is a private nonprofit postsecondary

education institution may not exceed the in-state tuition at the University of Maine at Orono for the previous academic year. The benefit applies to tuition for a member enrolled or accepted for admission to a state postsecondary education institution on a full-time or part-time basis. To be eligible for the benefit, a member must be enrolled full-time or part-time at a state postsecondary education institution. The benefit may be used to earn one credential at the following levels: baccalaureate, associate or certificate and licensure. The benefit must be reduced by any other tuition assistance received by a member not related to housing costs or non-tuition expenses.

Sec. 4. 37-B MRSA §357, as repealed and replaced by PL 2015, c. 465, Pt. D, §12, is amended to read:

§357. In-state tuition rates

A Unless otherwise provided under this subchapter, a member who is approved to receive tuition benefits under this subchapter qualifies for in-state tuition rates.

Sec. 5. 37-B MRSA §505, sub-§1-A, as amended by PL 2009, c. 415, Pt. A, §§24 and 25, is repealed.

Sec. 6. 37-B MRSA §505, sub-§§1-B and 1-C are enacted to read:

1-B. Veterans Temporary Assistance Fund. The Veterans Temporary Assistance Fund, referred to in this section as "the fund," is established as a dedicated, nonlapsing Other Special Revenue Funds account in the bureau. The fund is administered and used by the director for the purposes of offering financial assistance to veterans as prescribed by subsection 1-C.

1-C. Financial assistance. The following provisions apply to grants of temporary financial assistance to veterans.

A. The bureau may provide a grant of temporary assistance not to exceed \$2,000 to a veteran currently a resident of this State who has filed a valid claim for a veteran's pension, pending notification of the award of such a pension. For purposes of this paragraph, "claim for a veteran's pension" means a claim filed with the United States Department of Veterans Affairs pursuant to 38 United States Code, Chapter 15.

B. The bureau may provide a grant of temporary assistance not to exceed \$2,000 to a veteran currently a resident of this State who demonstrates to the bureau's satisfaction a financial need and suffers an emergency, including but not limited to:

- (1) Damage to that veteran's home due to fire, flood or hurricane that is not fully compensable by insurance;
- (2) Illness or the illness of an immediate family member; or
- (3) Hardship that would result in the veteran becoming homeless.

C. A veteran who requests temporary assistance under this subsection and is denied such assistance by the bureau may request a reconsideration and review of this decision. Requests for reconsideration of a claim must be reviewed by the director

and the commissioner or the commissioner's designee, and the decision after the reconsideration is final and may not be appealed to a court.

D. The bureau may contract with an organization incorporated in the State as a nonprofit corporation in accordance with Title 13-B or an organization with tax-exempt status under 26 United States Code, Section 501(c) for the purpose of providing temporary financial assistance to veterans as described in this subsection. A contract authorized under this subsection may provide only for the distribution of direct temporary financial assistance to veterans and may not provide for compensation for personnel costs of the organization, funding of positions of employment within the organization or administrative costs of the organization except those directly related to the distribution of temporary financial assistance grants to veterans.

E. The department may adopt rules to implement this subsection. Rules adopted pursuant to this paragraph are routine technical rules as defined in Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

For the purposes of this subsection, "veteran" has the same meaning as "eligible veteran" in section 504, subsection 4, paragraph A-1. The director may also determine eligibility for temporary financial assistance on a case-by-case basis.

Sec. 7. Appropriations and allocations. The following appropriations and allocations are made.

DEFENSE, VETERANS AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT, DEPARTMENT OF

Maine National Guard Postsecondary Fund Z190

Initiative: Provides funding for tuition assistance to veterans attending state postsecondary education institutions and private postsecondary education institutions.

GENERAL FUND	2017-18	2018-19
All Other	\$0	\$150,000
GENERAL FUND TOTAL	\$0	\$150,000

Veterans Temporary Assistance Fund N284

Initiative: Establishes the Veterans Temporary Assistance Fund and provides funding for financial assistance to veterans.

GENERAL FUND	2017-18	2018-19
All Other	\$0	\$250,000
GENERAL FUND TOTAL	\$0	\$250,000

**DEFENSE, VETERANS AND EMERGENCY
MANAGEMENT, DEPARTMENT OF
DEPARTMENT TOTALS**

	2017-18	2018-19
GENERAL FUND	\$0	\$400,000
DEPARTMENT TOTAL - ALL FUNDS	\$0	\$400,000