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ILLINOIS STUDENT ASSISTANCE COMMISSION

NOTICE OF PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

- 1) Heading of the Part: Grant Program for Exonerees
- 2) Code Citation: 23 Ill. Adm. Code 2743
- 3)

<u>Section Numbers:</u>	<u>Proposed Actions:</u>
2743.10	Amendment
2743.15	Amendment
2743.20	Amendment
2743.30	Amendment
- 4) Statutory Authority: Implementing and authorized by Section 62 of the Higher Education Student Assistance Act [110 ILCS 947/62].
- 5) A Complete Description of the Subjects and Issues Involved: This Part is being revised to update the program summary, update and add definitions of dependent and grant funds, update the applicant eligibility and program procedures sections to add allowances for dependents of exonerees to receive benefits due to P.A. 103-1046.
- 6) Published studies or reports, and sources of underlying data, used to compose this rulemaking: None
- 7) Will this proposed rulemaking replace an emergency rule currently in effect? No
- 8) Does this rulemaking contain an automatic repeal date? No
- 9) Does this proposed rulemaking contain incorporations by reference? No
- 10) Are there any other proposed rulemakings pending on this Part? No
- 11) Statement of Statewide Policy Objectives: This rulemaking does not create or expand a State mandate as defined in Section 3(b) of the State Mandates Act [30 ILCS 805/3(b)] and does not necessitate a local government to establish, expand or modify its activities in such a way as to necessitate additional expenditures from local revenues.
- 12) Time, Place, and Manner in which interested persons may comment on this proposed rulemaking: Persons who wish to comment on this proposed rulemaking may submit written comments no later than 45 days after the publication of this Notice to:

Carly Mandarino

ILLINOIS STUDENT ASSISTANCE COMMISSION

NOTICE OF PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

Agency Rules Coordinator
Illinois Student Assistance Commission
1755 Lake Cook Road
Deerfield, IL 60015

(847) 831-6753
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- 13) Initial Regulatory Flexibility Analysis:
- A) Types of small businesses, small municipalities and not for profit corporations affected: None
 - B) Reporting, bookkeeping or other procedures required for compliance: None
 - C) Types of professional skills necessary for compliance: None
- 14) Small Business Impact Analysis: None
- 15) Regulatory Agenda on which this rulemaking was summarized: January 2025

The full text of the Proposed Amendments begins on the next page:

ILLINOIS STUDENT ASSISTANCE COMMISSION

NOTICE OF PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

TITLE 23: EDUCATION AND CULTURAL RESOURCES
SUBTITLE A: EDUCATION
CHAPTER XIX: ILLINOIS STUDENT ASSISTANCE COMMISSIONPART 2743
GRANT PROGRAM FOR EXONEREES AND THEIR DEPENDENTS

Section

2743.10	Summary and Purpose
2743.15	Definitions
2743.20	Applicant Eligibility
2743.30	Program Procedures
2743.40	Institutional Procedures

AUTHORITY: Implementing and authorized by Section 62 of the Higher Education Student Assistance Act [110 ILCS 947/62].

SOURCE: Adopted at 40 Ill. Reg. 1968, effective January 7, 2016; amended at 45 Ill. Reg. 8468, effective July 1, 2021; amended at 50 Ill. Reg. _____, effective _____.

Section 2743.10 Summary and Purpose

- a) The Grant Program for Exonerees and their Dependents (Program) provides direct grant assistance to an individual who has received a pardon from the Governor of the State of Illinois stating that the pardon is issued on the grounds of innocence of the crime for which the individual was imprisoned or an individual who has received a certificate of innocence from a circuit court pursuant to Section 2-702 of the Code of Civil Procedure [735 ILCS 5]. If the individual has not yet exhausted the grant assistance, the Program can provide grant assistance with the unexpended portion to one or more designated dependents. Grants are limited based on funding levels appropriated by the Illinois General Assembly.
- b) This Part establishes rules that govern the Program. Additional rules and definitions are contained in 23 Ill. Adm. Code 2700 (General Provisions).

(Source: Amended at 50 Ill. Reg. _____, effective _____)

Section 2743.15 Definitions

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"Dependent" – Any spouse, natural child, legally adopted child, or child in the legal custody of an individual.

"Exonerated Person" – An individual who has received a pardon from the Governor of the State of Illinois stating that the pardon is issued on the grounds of innocence of the crime for which the individual was imprisoned, or an individual who has received a certificate of innocence from a circuit court.

"Grant Funds" –

Full or part-time tuition and mandatory fees at an institution that is approved for participation in the Monetary Award Program (MAP) (see Ill. Adm. Code 2735) ~~a public university or community college~~ for undergraduate or graduate study.

The costs associated with obtaining a high school equivalency certificate from an Illinois Community College Board-approved provider. These costs shall include payment of the cost of the high school equivalency test and up to one retest on each test module; and

Any administrative fees that may be required in order to obtain an Illinois high school equivalency certificate or an official transcript of test scores after successful completion of the high school equivalency test.

(Source: Amended at 50 Ill. Reg. _____, effective _____)

Section 2743.20 Applicant Eligibility

- a) A qualified applicant shall:
 - 1) be a resident of Illinois;
 - 2) have received:
 - A) a pardon issued on the grounds of innocence; or
 - B) a certificate of innocence from a circuit court;
 - C) a designation as a dependent of a qualified applicant;

ILLINOIS STUDENT ASSISTANCE COMMISSION

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- 3) be an exonerated person or their dependent who:
 - A) has not yet received a high school diploma or a high school equivalency certificate and is completing a high school equivalency preparation course through an Illinois Community Board-approved provider and/or is seeking an Illinois high school equivalency certificate; or
 - B) is enrolled at an institution that is approved for participation in the MAPISAC-approved public university or community college in an eligible degree or certificate program (see 34 CFR 668.8) for either a semester or quarter term, throughout the institution's tuition refund/withdrawal adjustment period;
- 4) maintain satisfactory academic progress as determined by the institution; and
- 5) not have to demonstrate financial need to receive this grant.

(Source: Amended at 50 Ill. Reg. _____, effective _____)

Section 2743.30 Program Procedures

- a) All applicants must complete annually an ISAC application for the Grant Program for Exonerees.
 - 1) Applications are available at ISAC's website and ISAC's Springfield and Deerfield ~~and Chicago~~ offices.
 - 2) If the application is incomplete, ISAC will notify the applicant, who will have an opportunity to furnish the missing information. The application will only be considered for processing as of the date the application is complete and received by at ISAC's ~~Deerfield~~ office.
 - 3) A qualified applicant must also submit any forms required for the receipt of the Program.

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- b) Benefits are limited to the full-time enrollment equivalent of 8 semesters or 12 quarters of payment for undergraduate or graduate study. Exonerated persons ~~Recipients~~ may accumulate up to 48 eligibility units. If the exonerated person has not exhausted their benefits, the exonerated person may designate one or more dependents to use the unexpended portion. The combined benefits used by an exonerated person and their designated dependents are limited to the total benefit for which the exonerated person is eligible.
- c) The Grant Program for Exonerees and their Dependents funds shall be applicable only to tuition and mandatory fees and only for two semesters or three quarters in a regular school year.
- d) ISAC shall select the recipients from among those who have submitted complete applications, including qualified new applicants and those who filed timely renewal applications and have supplied information required.
- e) The total number of grants awarded in a given fiscal year is contingent upon available funding. If funding is insufficient to pay all eligible applicants of the grant, awarding will be based on the date the completed application is received ~~by~~ in ISAC's Deerfield office. Preference may be given to renewal applicants, provided that the recipient continues to meet the eligibility requirements. If funding is insufficient to serve all applicants, preference may be given to applicants who have been exonerated over applicants who are designated dependents of exonerated persons.
- f) Each qualified applicant who is selected to receive a grant shall be notified by ISAC. Applicants not receiving the grant will be notified as well.
- g) The grant may be used to pay costs associated with obtaining a high school equivalency certificate and up to one retest on each test module.
- h) The grant may be used to pay costs associated with obtaining an official transcript of test scores after successful completion of the high school equivalency test.
- i) The total amount of Grant Program for Exonerees and their Dependents funds awarded pursuant to Section 2743.30(b) to a qualified recipient in a given academic year, when added to other financial aid available to the qualified recipient for that year, shall not exceed the cost of attendance.

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- j) A qualified applicant attending a private institution in Illinois may receive funds sufficient to pay the cost of tuition and mandatory fees, provided the funding does not exceed the maximum amount payable to a student enrolled in the most expensive comparable program of study at a public institution.
- k) ISAC pays grant funds directly to the institution of record in the name of the recipient; however, ISAC reserves the right to reimburse costs associated with obtaining a high school equivalency certificate or in obtaining transcripts and test scores (as described in subsection (h)) directly to the qualified applicant.

(Source: Amended at 50 Ill. Reg. _____, effective _____)

ILLINOIS STUDENT ASSISTANCE COMMISSION

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- 1) Heading of the Part: Nursing Education Scholarships
- 2) Code Citation: 23 Ill. Adm. Code 2749
- 3)

<u>Section Numbers</u> :	<u>Proposed Actions</u> :
2749.100	Amendment
2749.110	Amendment
2749.200	Amendment
2749.220	Amendment
2749.300	Repealed
2749.310	Amendment
2749.320	Amendment
2749.325	Amendment
2749.330	Repealed
2749.335	Amendment
- 4) Statutory Authority: Implementing and authorized by the Nursing Education Scholarship Law [110 ILCS 975].
- 5) A Complete Description of the Subjects and Issues Involved: This Part is being revised to align the Nursing Education Scholarship rules to the format followed by Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC) following the transfer of this program from Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) in FY23, as well as to reduce redundant language and provide clarity in several of the sections. The Eligibility section has been updated to remove redundant language and consolidate remaining language; the Application section has been updated to include additional information on the ISAC Promissory Note; the Scholarship Description section has been updated to remove redundant language and consolidate remaining language; the Selection Criteria section has been updated to remove redundant language and consolidate remaining language; the Work Agreement section has been repealed, as the language was redundant to the previous section; the Fulfillment of Nursing Education Scholarship Employment Obligation section has been updated to remove redundant language and consolidate remaining language; the Request to Defer or Extend Time to Fulfill section has been updated to remove redundant language and consolidate remaining language; the Deferment of Nursing Employment Obligation or Nurse Educator Employment Obligation section has been repealed, as the language was redundant to the previous section.

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- 6) Published studies or reports, and sources of underlying data, used to compose this rulemaking: None
- 7) Will this proposed rulemaking replace an emergency rule currently in effect? No
- 8) Does this rulemaking contain an automatic repeal date? No
- 9) Does this proposed rulemaking contain incorporations by reference? No
- 10) Are there any other proposed rulemakings pending on this Part? No
- 11) Statement of Statewide Policy Objectives: This rulemaking does not create or expand a State mandate as defined in Section 3(b) of the State Mandates Act [30 ILCS 805/3(b)] and does not necessitate a local government to establish, expand or modify its activities in such a way as to necessitate additional expenditures from local revenues.
- 12) Time, Place, and Manner in which interested persons may comment on this proposed rulemaking: Persons who wish to comment on this proposed rulemaking may submit written comments no later than 45 days after the publication of this Notice to:

Carly Mandarino
Agency Rules Coordinator
Illinois Student Assistance Commission
1755 Lake Cook Road
Deerfield, IL 60015

(847) 831-6753
carly.mandarino@illinois.gov
- 13) Initial Regulatory Flexibility Analysis:
 - A) Types of small businesses, small municipalities and not for profit corporations affected: None
 - B) Reporting, bookkeeping or other procedures required for compliance: None
 - C) Types of professional skills necessary for compliance: None
- 14) Small Business Impact Analysis: None

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15) Regulatory Agenda on which this rulemaking was summarized: January 2025

The full text of the Proposed Amendments begins on the next page:

ILLINOIS STUDENT ASSISTANCE COMMISSION

NOTICE OF PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

TITLE 23: EDUCATION AND CULTURAL RESOURCES
SUBTITLE A: EDUCATION
CHAPTER XIX: ILLINOIS STUDENT ASSISTANCE COMMISSIONPART 2749
NURSING EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIPS

SUBPART A: GENERAL PROVISIONS

Section	
2749.10	Summary and Purpose
2749.15	Definitions
2749.20	Referenced Materials
2749.30	Administrative Hearings

SUBPART B: ELIGIBILITY AND APPLICATION

Section	
2749.100	Eligibility
2749.105	Notification (Repealed)
2749.110	Application
2749.115	Scholarship Renewal (Repealed)

SUBPART C: AWARD OF SCHOLARSHIPS

Section	
2749.200	Scholarship Description
2749.210	Determination of Financial Need (Repealed)
2749.220	Selection Criteria for Award of Scholarships
2749.230	Student Enrollment and Institutions' Obligations
2749.235	Continuous Attendance Requirement
2749.240	Waiver of Continuous Attendance Requirement (Repealed)

SUBPART D: TERMS OF PERFORMANCE

Section	
2749.300	Work Agreement (<u>Repealed</u>)
2749.310	Repayment of Scholarship
2749.320	Fulfillment of Nursing <u>Education Scholarship</u> Employment Obligation or Nurse

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- 2749.325 ~~Educator Employment Obligation~~
Request to Defer or Extend Time to Fulfill the ~~Extension of Fulfilling Nursing Education Scholarship Continuous Employment Obligation or Nurse Educator Employment Obligation~~
- 2749.330 Deferment of Nursing Employment Obligation or Nurse Educator Employment Obligation (~~Repealed~~)
- 2749.335 Discharge of Nursing ~~Scholarship Employment Obligation or Nurse Educator Employment Obligation~~

AUTHORITY: Implementing and authorized by the Nursing Education Scholarship Law [110 ILCS 975].

SOURCE: Recodified from 77 Ill. Adm. Code 597 (Department of Public Health) pursuant to P.A. 102-699, at 47 Ill. Reg. 7031; amended at 48 Ill. Reg. 12574, effective August 1, 2024; amended at 50 Ill. Reg. _____, effective _____.

SUBPART B: ELIGIBILITY AND APPLICATION

Section 2749.100 Eligibility

- a) Two forms of scholarship are available under the Nursing Education Scholarship Law (the "Law"): a scholarship in nursing (Section 5 of the Law) and a scholarship as a nurse educator (Section 6.5 of the Law). They are referred to as the Nursing Education Scholarship ("NES").
- ba) To qualify for consideration for NES, an applicant shall meet the eligibility criteria for either scholarship outlined in Section 5 or 6.5 of the Law showing that the applicant:
- 1) Is a U.S. citizen or an eligible non-citizen;
 - 2) Has been a resident of this State for at least one year prior to application (Section 5(1) and Section 6.5(a)(1) of the Law);
 - 3) Is enrolled in or accepted for admission in one of the following programs at an approved institution in Illinois:
 - A) associate degree in nursing program;

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- B) associate degree in applied sciences in nursing program;
 - C) hospital-based diploma in nursing program;
 - D) baccalaureate degree in nursing program;
 - E) graduate degree in nursing program for direct practice nursing or to become a nurse educator;
 - F) certificate in a practical nursing program; or
 - G) post-licensure nursing education program approved by the Board of Higher Education or successor agency. (Section 5(2) and 6.5(a)(2) of the Law)
- 4) Agrees to meet the employment obligation to work in Illinois as a nurse, if receiving a scholarship to pursue nursing education, or as a nurse educator, if receiving a scholarship to pursue nurse educator education. (Section 5(3) and Section 6.5(a)(3) of the Law)
- 1) For Nursing Scholarships
- A) *Has been a resident of this State for at least one year prior to application, and is a citizen or a lawful permanent resident of the United States (Section 5(1) of the Law); and*
 - B) *Is enrolled in or accepted for admission to an Illinois school in an associate degree in nursing program, hospital based diploma in nursing program, baccalaureate degree in nursing program, graduate degree in nursing program or certificate in practical nursing program at an approved institution (Section 5(2) of the Law); and*
 - C) *Agrees to meet the nursing employment obligation (Section 5(3) of the Law);*
- 2) For Nurse Educator Scholarships

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- A) ~~Has been a resident of this State for at least one year prior to application and is a citizen or lawful permanent resident of the United States (Section 6.5(a)(1) of the Law); and~~
 - B) ~~Is enrolled in or accepted for admission to a graduate degree in nursing program at an approved institution (Section 6.5(a)(2) of the Law); and~~
 - C) ~~Agrees to meet the nurse educator employment obligation (Section 6.5(a)(3) of the Law).~~
- b) An individual is ineligible to receive the scholarship if the individual:
- 1) Defaulted on an educational loan;
 - 2) Previously received a scholarship under this Part and was granted a waiver of the continuous attendance requirement (see Section 2749.235 or 597.240) or a discharge of the nursing employment obligation or nurse educator employment obligation (see Section 2749.335 or 597.335); or
 - 3) Receives monies from other scholarship or loan funds requiring service commitments that would prevent the applicant from meeting the nursing employment obligation or nurse educator employment requirements of this Part.

(Source: Amended at 50 Ill. Reg. _____, effective _____)

Section 2749.110 Application

- a) An application for an NES must be submitted annually and an applicant must also complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®). An ISAC application for an NES and a FAFSA must be completed and received by April 30 immediately preceding the academic year for which the scholarship is being requested.
 - 1) An application will be available on ISAC's website (isac.org) from March 1 through April 30 of each year. An applicant must provide demographic and educational program information on the application.

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- 2) If the NES application is incomplete, ISAC will notify the applicant. The applicant will then have until May 31 to furnish the missing information; however, the application will only be considered for processing as of the date the application is complete and received by ISAC.
- b) Each person applying for a scholarship shall be provided details of the employment obligations outlined in~~Each person applying for a scholarship shall be provided with a copy of~~ Section 6 or 6.5(e) of the Law as part of the Terms and Conditions included with the application~~at the time of application.~~ ~~(Sections 6 and 6.5(e) of the Law)~~
- c) Prior to receiving scholarship funding for any academic year, the qualified applicant must sign a Work Agreement/Promissory Note and submit it to ISAC. The Work Agreement/Promissory Note shall include a pledge that any recipient will begin working in Illinois and contains details on the employment obligations for both nurses and nurse educators.

(Source: Amended at 50 Ill. Reg. _____, effective _____)

SUBPART C: AWARD OF SCHOLARSHIPS

Section 2749.200 Scholarship Description

- a) Scholarships shall be awarded to students in good standing, meaning a cumulative grade point average equivalent to at least the academic grade of a "C", recipients at approved institutions in Illinois for the following time frames based on the recipient's academic program (Section 5 and 6.5 of the Law):
- 1) A certificate in practical nursing: up to one academic year.~~A student in good standing pursuing an associate degree in nursing may receive a scholarship for up to 2 academic years. (Section 5 of the Law)~~
 - 2) An associate degree in nursing: up to two academic years.~~A student in good standing pursuing a hospital-based diploma in nursing may receive a scholarship for up to 3 academic years. (Section 5 of the Law)~~
 - 3) A hospital-based diploma in nursing: up to three academic years.~~A student in good standing pursuing a baccalaureate degree in nursing may receive a scholarship for up to 4 academic years. (Section 5 of the Law)~~

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- 4) ~~A baccalaureate degree in nursing: up to four academic years. A student in good standing pursuing a graduate degree in nursing may receive a scholarship for up to 5 academic years. (Section 5 of the Law)~~
- 5) ~~A graduate degree in nursing: up to three academic years for training to become a nurse educator and five academic years for training to become a nurse. A student in good standing pursuing a certificate in practical nursing may receive a scholarship for up to one academic year. (Section 5 of the Law)~~
- 6) ~~A student in good standing pursuing a graduate degree in nursing to become a nurse educator may receive a scholarship for up to 3 academic years. (Section 6.5(c) of the Law)~~
- b) Awards for students at approved private institutions shall not exceed the tuition and fee charges at community colleges and universities statewide and the uniform living allowance reported in the weighted MAP budget for the academic year in which the scholarship is made. (Section 7 of the Law)
- c) *Part-time awards shall be determined by applying the proportion represented by the part-time enrollment to full-time enrollment ratio to the average per term scholarship amount for a student in the same nursing degree category. (Section 7 of the Law)*
- d) Full-time awards for students pursuing an associate degree in nursing or a hospital-based diploma in nursing at an Illinois community college shall be determined by adding 75% of the weighted tuition and fees charged by community colleges in Illinois to the uniform living allowance reported in the weighted MAP budget. (Section 7 of the Law)
- e) *Scholarship amounts for students pursuing associate, baccalaureate or graduate degrees in nursing at a college or university shall include 75% of the weighted tuition and fees charged by public universities in Illinois plus the uniform living allowance reported in the weighted MAP budget. (Section 7 of the Law)*
- f) *Scholarship amounts for students in practical nursing programs shall include 75% of the average tuition and fee charges at all practical nursing programs plus the uniform living allowance reported in the weighted MAP budget. (Section 7 of*

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the Law)

- g) Scholarship funds shall not be used for expenses incurred when the recipient must complete a prerequisite course or courses (as determined by the approved institution).
- h) Scholarship funds shall not be used for expenses incurred when the recipient must repeat an academic course or courses, if the repetition is necessary because the recipient has an academic performance below an acceptable level (as determined by the approved institution).
- i) Under the provisions of the State Comptroller Act [15 ILCS 405/10.05], recipients may have their scholarship funds offset to fulfill a delinquent State debt. The offset of funds shall not reduce, waive, defer or suspend a recipient's continuous attendance requirement, nursing employment obligation, or nurse educator employment obligation under this Part.

(Source: Amended at 50 Ill. Reg. _____, effective _____)

Section 2749.220 Selection Criteria for Award of Scholarships

- a) Nursing education scholarship recipients will be selected based on the following criteria outlined in Sections 5(3) and 6.5(b) of the Law:
 - 1) Recipients continuing with their nursing education (for the same nursing degree sought) from the previous academic year will receive preference over other applicants;
 - 2) *If in any year the number of qualified applicants exceeds the number of scholarships to be awarded, ISAC shall, in consultation with the Illinois Nursing Workforce Center Advisory Board, consider the following factors in granting priority in awarding scholarships:*
 - A) ~~The financial~~*Financial* need, as determined by information submitted by the applicant on the FAFSA and ~~provided to ISAC by the U. S. Department of Education, of students who are seeking higher degree attainment; will pursue their education on a full-time or close to full-time basis and who already have a certificate in practical nursing, a diploma in nursing, or an associate degree in~~

ILLINOIS STUDENT ASSISTANCE COMMISSION

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~~nursing and are pursuing a higher degree.~~ (Section 5(3)(A) of the Law)

- i) For students seeking to become nurses, those who will pursue their education on a full-time or close to full-time basis and who already have a certificate in practical nursing, a diploma in nursing, or an associate degree in nursing and are pursuing a higher degree (Section 5(3)(A) of the Law); or
 - ii) For students seeking to become nurse educators, those who will pursue their education on a full-time or close to full-time basis and who already have a baccalaureate degree in nursing and are pursuing a higher degree to become a nurse educator, or registered nurses who are pursuing a graduate degree in nursing to obtain employment in an approved institution that educates licensed practical nurses and that educates registered nurses in undergraduate and graduate nursing programs (Sections 6.5(b)(1) and 6.5(b)(2) of the Law);
- B) *A student's merit, as shown through* the following (Section 5(3)(c) and Section 6.5(b)(3) of the Law);~~the student's grade point average, class rank, and other academic and extracurricular activities (Section 5(3)(C) of the Law), including, but not limited to:~~
- i) a student's~~A~~ cumulative grade point average~~GPA~~ of at least 3.0 on a 4.0 scale; or
 - ii) class~~Class~~ rank in the 50th percentile or higher, and other academic and extracurricular activities; and
- 3) For students seeking to become nurse educators, experience as a nurse, including supervisory experience, experience as a nurse in the United States military, and other academic and extracurricular activities.
- C) ~~The number of credit hours remaining for the applicant to complete the certificate, diploma or degree, beginning with those with the~~

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~~fewest remaining.~~

- D) ~~The date the completed application was received, beginning with the earliest date and then in date received order.~~
- b) ~~Nurse educator scholarship recipients will be selected based on the following:~~
- 1) ~~Recipients continuing with their nursing education (for the same nursing degree sought) from the previous academic year will receive preference over other applicants;~~
 - 2) ~~If in any year the number of qualified applicants exceeds the number of scholarships to be awarded, ISAC shall, in consultation with the Illinois Nursing Workforce Center Advisory Board, consider the following factors in granting priority in awarding scholarships:~~
 - A) ~~Financial need, as determined by information submitted by the applicant on the FAFSA and provided to ISAC by the U.S. Department of Education of students who will pursue their education on a full-time or close to full-time basis and who already have a baccalaureate degree in nursing and are pursuing a higher degree. (Section 6.5(b)(1) of the Law)~~
 - B) ~~A student's status as a registered nurse who is pursuing a graduate degree in nursing to pursue employment in an approved institution that educates licensed practical nurses and that educates registered nurses in undergraduate and graduate nursing programs. (Section 6.5(b)(2) of the Law)~~
 - C) ~~A student's merit, as shown through the student's grade point average, class rank, experience as a nurse, including supervisory experience, experience as a nurse in the United States military, and other academic and extracurricular activities (Section 6.5(b)(3) of the Law), including, but not limited to:~~
 - i) ~~A cumulative GPA of at least 3.0 on a 4.0 scale; or~~
 - ii) ~~Class rank in the 50th percentile or higher.~~

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- D) ~~The number of credit hours remaining for the applicant to complete the degree, beginning with those with the fewest remaining.~~
- E) ~~The date the completed application was received, beginning with the earliest date and then in date received order.~~
- c) Scholarship awards shall be distributed as follows:
- 1) *At least 40% of the scholarships awarded shall be for recipients who are pursuing baccalaureate degrees in nursing;*
 - 2) *At least 30% of the scholarships awarded shall be for recipients who are pursuing associate degrees in nursing or a hospital-based diploma in nursing;*
 - 3) *At least 20% of the scholarships awarded shall be for recipients who are pursuing a graduate degree in nursing to become a nurse or nurse educator; and*
 - 4) *At least 10% of the scholarships awarded shall be for recipients who are pursuing a certificate in practical nursing. (Section 5 of the Law)*

(Source: Amended at 50 Ill. Reg. _____, effective _____)

SUBPART D: TERMS OF PERFORMANCE

Section 2749.300 Work Agreement (Repealed)

~~Prior to receiving scholarship funding for any academic year, the qualified applicant must sign a Work Agreement/Promissory Note and submit it to ISAC. The Work Agreement/Promissory Note shall include the following stipulations:~~

- a) ~~for fulfillment of the nursing employment obligation, the recipient pledges to begin working as a registered professional nurse, licensed practical nurse or advanced practice registered nurse providing direct patient care at a health care facility in Illinois within one year following completion of the postsecondary degree or license program for which the award funds were provided and continue working on a full or part-time basis for at least one year for each year of scholarship assistance received. (See Section 2749.320.)~~

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- b) ~~for fulfillment of the nurse educator employment obligation, the recipient pledges to begin working as a nurse educator at an approved institution in Illinois to educate nursing students within one year following completion of the graduate degree for which the award funds were provided and continue working on a full- or part-time basis for at least two years for each year of scholarship assistance received. (See Section 2749.320.)~~

(Source: Repealed at 50 Ill. Reg. _____, effective _____)

Section 2749.310 Repayment of Scholarship

- a) *Any recipient who fails to fulfill the terms of the Work Agreement shall pay to ISAC an amount equal to the amount of scholarship funds received per year for each unfulfilled year of the nursing employment obligation or nurse educator employment obligation, together with interest at 7% per year on the unpaid balance. (Sections 6 and 6.5(d) of the Law)*
- b) Failure to fulfill the work obligation shall include, but not be limited to:
- 1) Misstatements in reporting information to ISAC;
 - 2) Misrepresentation to ISAC for the purpose of obtaining a scholarship;
 - 3) Failure to maintain the continuous attendance requirement;
 - 4) Failure to complete nursing school, voluntary withdrawal from school or dismissal from school due to academic failure (as defined by the school);
 - 5) Failure to become a licensed nurse in Illinois; and
 - 6) Failure to fulfill the nursing ~~scholarship employment obligation or nurse educator employment obligation.~~
- c) *Repayment must begin within 6 months following the date of the default action initiating the repayment. (Sections 6 and 6.5(d) of the Law)*
- d) Recipients who fail to fulfill their obligation shall enter repayment status on the earliest of the following dates:

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- 1) the first day of the calendar month after the recipient has ceased to pursue a course of study leading to an associate degree in nursing program, hospital-based diploma in nursing program, baccalaureate degree in nursing program, graduate degree in nursing program or certificate in practical nursing program, but not before six months have elapsed after the cessation of at least part-time enrollment in such a course of study;
 - 2) the date the recipient informs ISAC that the recipient does not plan to fulfill the work obligation; or
 - 3) the day after the latest date upon which the recipient is required to begin working after completing the postsecondary education for which the scholarship was awarded.
- e) If a recipient fails to pay monies owed to ISAC, ISAC *may require a recipient to reimburse the State for expenses, legal fees and costs, incurred by ISAC or other agent of the State for a successful legal action against the recipient for a breach of any provision of the Work Agreement* and refer the recipient to the Illinois Attorney General or to a collection agency. The total 6-year interest shall be due if the recipient fails to fulfill the repayment requirements and the case is settled through authorized agencies outside ISAC. (Section 4 of the Law)
- f) *All cash repayments must be completed within 6 years from the date of the first annual cash payment.* (Sections 6 and 6.5(d) of the Law)
- g) *ISAC may allow a nurse educator employment obligation fulfillment alternative if the nurse educator scholarship recipient is unsuccessful in finding work as a nurse educator. The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) shall maintain a database of all available nurse educator positions in this State.* (Section 6.5(d) of the Law)

(Source: Amended at 50 Ill. Reg. _____, effective _____)

Section 2749.320 Fulfillment of Nursing Education Scholarship Employment Obligation-~~or Nurse Educator Employment Obligation~~

- a) Recipients of an NES in nursing must begin employment in Illinois as a licensed practical or registered professional nurse, or an advanced practice registered

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nurse, or as a nurse educator for recipients of an NES as a nurse educator, following graduation and remain so employed for a period equivalent to the educational time supported by the scholarship. A recipient must graduate from the nursing program funded and provide a copy of the certificate, diploma or degree that indicates the graduation date promptly upon request.

- b) Within 12 months of graduation from the nursing program, except as provided in Sections 2479.325, 2749.330 and 2749.335 of this Part: A recipient must be licensed as a registered professional nurse, an advanced practice registered nurse, or a licensed practical nurse in the State of Illinois and must provide a copy of the license promptly upon request.
- 1) Recipients of an NES in nursing must provide evidence of employment as a nurse at a medical facility in Illinois providing direct patient care as a registered professional nurse, licensed practical nurse, or advanced practice registered nurse in direct patient care for at least one year for each year an award was received. (Section 6 and Section 3(14) of the Law)
 - 2) Recipients of an NES as a nurse educator must provide evidence of employment as a nurse educator teaching nursing students at an approved institution in Illinois for at least two years for each year an award was received. (Section 6.5(d) and Section 3(14) of the Law)
 - 3) Forms to document employment shall be sent to the recipient following graduation and licensure which must be complete and returned to ISAC. Documentation forms will be forwarded periodically until the employment obligation is completed, at which time the recipient will be notified and the scholarship record closed.
 - 4) Recipients must furnish upon request a copy of the certificate, diploma or degree that indicates the graduation date and/or a copy of their licensure as a registered professional nurse, an advanced practice registered nurse, or a licensed practical nurse.
- c) Any student who terminates their studies or fails to become employed will be required to repay the full scholarship amount, plus 7% interest per year. Except as provided in Sections 2749.325, 2749.330 and 2749.335, within 12 months after graduation from an associate degree in nursing program, hospital based diploma in nursing program, baccalaureate degree in nursing program, graduate degree

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in nursing program, or certificate in practical nursing program, any recipient who accepted a scholarship shall begin meeting the required nursing employment obligation. (Section 6 of the Law)

- 1) To complete the nursing employment obligation, the recipient must work full time or part time (as applicable) at a medical facility in Illinois providing direct patient care.
- 2) Fulfillment of the nursing employment obligation may be achieved as follows:
 - A) For each full-time semester completed, the obligation is six months of full-time employment or 12 months of part-time employment;
 - B) For each part-time semester completed, the obligation is three months of full-time employment or six months of part-time employment;
 - C) For each full-time quarter or trimester completed, the obligation is four months of full-time employment or eight months of part-time employment;
 - D) For each part-time quarter or trimester completed, the obligation is two months of full-time employment or four months of part-time employment;
 - E) For each full-time summer term completed, the obligation is three months of full-time employment or six months of part-time employment;
 - F) For each part-time summer term completed, the obligation is one and one-half months of full-time employment or three months of part-time employment.
- d) Except as provided in Sections 2749.325, 2749.330 and 2749.335, *within 12 months after graduation from a graduate degree in nursing program for nurse educators, any recipient who accepted a scholarship shall begin meeting the required nurse educator employment obligation by teaching nursing students at an approved institution in Illinois. (Section 6.5(d) of the Law)*

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- 1) ~~A recipient must graduate from the nursing program funded and provide a copy of the degree that indicates the graduation date promptly upon request.~~
- 2) ~~To complete the nurse educator employment obligation, the recipient shall be employed full time or part time (as applicable) at an approved institution in Illinois to educate nursing students. The nurse educator employment obligation is 2 years for each year of scholarship assistance received. (Section 3(24) of the Law)~~
- 3) ~~Fulfillment of the nurse educator employment obligation may be achieved as follows:~~
 - A) ~~For each full-time semester completed, the obligation is 12 months of employment;~~
 - B) ~~For each part-time semester completed, the obligation is six months of employment;~~
 - C) ~~For each full-time quarter or trimester completed, the obligation is eight months of employment;~~
 - D) ~~For each part-time quarter or trimester completed, the obligation is four months of employment;~~
 - E) ~~For each full-time summer term completed, the obligation is six months of employment;~~
 - F) ~~For each part-time summer term completed, the obligation is three months of employment.~~
- e) ~~Forms to document nursing employment or nurse educator employment shall be sent to the recipient following graduation and licensure. Documentation forms will be forwarded periodically until the nursing employment obligation or nurse educator employment obligation is completed, at which time the recipient will be notified and the scholarship record closed.~~

(Source: Amended at 50 Ill. Reg. _____, effective _____)

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Section 2749.325 Request to Defer or Extend Time to Fulfill the Extension of Fulfilling Nursing Education Scholarship Continuous Employment Obligation or Nurse Educator Employment Obligation

A request to defer the start of the employment obligation or to extend the period of time within which the recipient's nursing employment obligation or nurse educator obligation must be fulfilled shall be submitted in writing to ISAC. The request shall be accompanied and supported by documentation as requested by ISAC.

- a) Reasons for deferring the start of the employment obligation or extending the period of time within which the recipient's nursing employment obligation must be fulfilled include:
- 1) serving as a member of the United States Armed Forces, including as a military reservist, for not more than four years;
 - 2) being called to active duty (for recipients who are military reservists) by the armed forces of the United States for the period of active duty; temporary, total disability, as established by the sworn affidavit of a licensed qualified physician, for not more than three years;
 - 3) enrolled in an academic program leading to a higher degree or a graduate degree in nursing until no longer enrolled or graduation;
 - 4) temporary, total disability, as established by the sworn affidavit of a licensed qualified physician, for not more than three years; maternity, paternity or adoption leave, for not more than 12 weeks. If the recipient's leave will exceed 12 weeks, an extension may be granted based on documented medical need; and
 - 5) involuntarily leaving the profession due to a decreased ~~decreased~~ in the number of nurses employed in the State. ~~When requesting an extension, the recipient shall provide documentation to ISAC demonstrating that nursing positions do not exist in the recipient's area. If an extension is granted, it will be re-evaluated every 6 months.~~
- b) A recipient who received a deferment must begin meeting the required employment obligations no later than six months after the end of the

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~~deferments. Reasons for extending the period of time within which the recipient's nurse educator employment obligation must be fulfilled may include:~~

- c) A recipient who requested an extension to fulfill their employment obligation will have this request reevaluated every six months.
- 1) ~~servicing as a member of the United States Armed Forces, including as a military reservist, for not more than four years;~~
 - 2) ~~temporary, total disability, as established by the sworn affidavit of a licensed qualified physician, for not more than three years;~~
 - 3) ~~enrolled in an academic program leading to a graduate degree in nursing;~~
 - 4) ~~maternity, paternity or adoption leave, for not more than 12 weeks. If the recipient's leave will exceed 12 weeks, an extension may be granted based on documented medical need; and~~
 - 5) ~~involuntarily leaving the profession due to a decrease in the number of nurses employed in the State. When requesting this extension, the recipient shall provide documentation to ISAC that nurse educator positions do not exist in the recipient's area. If an extension is granted, it will be re-evaluated every 6 months.~~

(Source: Amended at 50 Ill. Reg. _____, effective _____)

Section 2749.330 Deferment of Nursing Employment Obligation or Nurse Educator Employment Obligation (Repealed)

~~A request to defer the recipient's nursing employment obligation or nurse educator employment obligation shall be submitted in writing to ISAC. The request shall detail the reasons for the deferment and shall be accompanied and supported by documentation as requested by ISAC.~~

- a) ~~Deferment of the nursing employment obligation may include the recipient:~~
- 1) ~~Spending up to four years in military service before or after graduation. The recipient shall notify ISAC within 30 days after enlisting in military service. (Section 6 of the Law)~~

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- 2) ~~Being called to active duty (for recipients who are military reservists) by the armed forces of the United States. The recipient shall submit a copy of the order to active duty with the written request for deferment. The duration of the deferment shall equal the recipient's period of active military duty.~~
 - 3) ~~Enrolling in an academic program leading to a higher degree or a graduate degree in nursing. If the recipient receives funding through the Nursing Education Scholarship Program for a higher degree, the nursing employment obligation shall be deferred until the recipient is no longer enrolled or has graduated. The recipient shall notify ISAC within 30 days if the recipient is enrolled in an academic program leading to a graduate degree in nursing. (Section 6 of the Law)~~
 - 4) ~~Failing to fulfill the nursing employment obligation by involuntarily leaving the profession due to a decrease in the number of nurses employed in the State. When requesting a deferral, the recipient shall provide documentation to ISAC demonstrating that nursing positions do not exist in the recipient's area. If a deferment is granted, it will be re-evaluated every 6 months. (Section 6 of the Law)~~
 - 5) ~~Providing documentation of a physical or mental health disability that results in the recipient's temporary inability to fulfill the obligation. Documentation shall include an explanation from a licensed health care professional attesting to the recipient's temporary inability to fulfill the obligation. This deferment may be granted for up to three years.~~
 - 6) ~~Requesting up to 12 weeks leave for maternity, paternity or adoption leave. If the recipient's leave will exceed 12 weeks, a deferment may be granted based on documented medical need.~~
 - 7) ~~The recipient must begin meeting the required nursing employment obligations no later than 6 months after the end of the deferments. (Section 6 of the Law)~~
- b) Deferment of the nurse educator employment obligation may include the recipient:

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- 1) ~~Spending up to four years in military service before or after graduation. The recipient shall notify ISAC within 30 days after enlisting. (Section 6.5(d) of the Law)~~
- 2) ~~Being called to active duty (for recipients who are military reservists) by the armed forces of the United States. The recipient shall submit a copy of the order to active duty with the written request for deferment. The duration of the deferment shall equal the recipient's period of active military duty.~~
- 3) ~~Enrolling in an academic program leading to a graduate degree in nursing. The recipient shall notify ISAC within 30 days after enrolling in an academic program leading to a graduate degree in nursing. (Section 6.5(d) of the Law)~~
- 4) ~~Providing documentation of a physical or mental health disability that results in the recipient's temporary inability to fulfill the recipient nurse educator employment obligation. Documentation shall include an explanation from a licensed health care professional attesting to the recipient's temporary inability to fulfill the nurse educator employment obligation. This deferment may be granted for up to three years.~~
- 5) ~~Requesting up to 12 weeks for maternity, paternity or adoption leave. If the recipient's leave will exceed 12 weeks, a deferment may be granted based on documented medical need.~~
- 6) ~~The nurse educator employment obligation may be deferred and re-evaluated every 6 months when the failure to fulfill the nurse educator employment obligation results from involuntarily leaving the profession due to a decrease in the number of nurses employed in this State. (Section 6.5(d) of the Law) When requesting this deferral, the recipient shall provide documentation to ISAC that no nurse educator position exists in the recipients' area.~~
- 7) ~~ISAC may allow a nurse educator employment obligation fulfillment alternative if the nurse educator scholarship recipient is unsuccessful in finding work as a nurse educator. (Section 6.5(d) of the Law) Prior to ISAC approving an alternative to the nurse educator employment obligation, the recipient shall provide documentation that no nurse~~

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~~educator position exists in the recipient area. If the recipient demonstrates that no nurse educator position exists, ISAC will allow the recipient to fulfill the service obligation by working as a nurse in a medical facility in Illinois providing direct patient care.~~

- 8) ~~The recipient must begin meeting the required nurse educator employment obligation no later than 6 months after the end of the deferment or deferments. (Section 6.5(d) of the Law)~~

(Source: Repealed at 50 Ill. Reg. _____, effective _____)

Section 2749.335 Discharge of Nursing Scholarship Employment Obligation ~~or Nurse Educator Employment Obligation~~

A discharge request of a recipient's ~~nursing employment obligation or nurse educator employment obligation~~ shall be submitted in writing to ISAC. The request shall detail the reasons for the discharge and be accompanied and supported by documentation as described in this Section.

- a) Reasons for a discharge request may include the recipient's:
- 1) Total and permanent disability;
 - 2) Incompetency; or
 - 3) Death.
- b) If the discharge is due to total and permanent disability, a formal request from a physician, advanced practice registered nurse, or physician's assistant (who is licensed to practice in the United States) is required. Accompanying this formal request, *proof of disability shall be:*
- 1) *A declaration from the Social Security Administration;*
 - 2) *From the Illinois Workers' Compensation Commission;*
 - 3) *From the U.S. Department of Defense; or*

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- 4) From *an insurer authorized to transact business in Illinois who is providing disability insurance coverage to a contractor*. (Section 3(21) of the Law)
- c) If a discharge is requested because the recipient is incompetent, the request shall be supported by a certified copy of the adjudication from a State or federal court of law. *No claim for repayment may be filed against the estate of an individual deemed incompetent*. (Sections 6 and 6.5(d) of the Law)
- d) If the discharge is requested because of the recipient's death, the request shall be supported by a certified copy of the recipient's death certificate. *No claim for repayment may be filed against the estate of a decedent*. (Sections 6 and 6.5(d) of the Law)

(Source: Amended at 50 Ill. Reg. _____, effective _____)

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- 1) Heading of the Part: Illinois Graduate and Retain our Workforce (iGROW) Tech Scholarship Program
- 2) Code Citation: 23 Ill. Adm. Code 2750
- 3)

<u>Section Numbers:</u>	<u>Proposed Actions:</u>
2750.20	Amendment
2750.30	Amendment
2750.40	Amendment
- 4) Statutory Authority: Implementing and authorized by Section 65.120 of the Higher Education Student Assistance Act [110 ILCS 947/65.120].
- 5) A Complete Description of the Subjects and Issues Involved: This Part is being revised to update the applicant eligibility criteria pertaining to academic performance, to clarify the definition of room and board, and to clarify the work obligation for recipients of the scholarship.
- 6) Published studies or reports, and sources of underlying data, used to compose this rulemaking: None
- 7) Will this proposed rulemaking replace an emergency rule currently in effect? No
- 8) Does this rulemaking contain an automatic repeal date? No
- 9) Does this proposed rulemaking contain incorporations by reference? No
- 10) Are there any other proposed rulemakings pending on this Part? No
- 11) Statement of Statewide Policy Objectives: This rulemaking does not create or expand a State mandate as defined in Section 3(b) of the State Mandates Act [30 ILCS 805/3(b)] and does not necessitate a local government to establish, expand or modify its activities in such a way as to necessitate additional expenditures from local revenues.
- 12) Time, Place, and Manner in which interested persons may comment on this proposed rulemaking: Persons who wish to comment on this proposed rulemaking may submit written comments no later than 45 days after the publication of this Notice to:

Carly Mandarino

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Agency Rules Coordinator
Illinois Student Assistance Commission
1755 Lake Cook Road
Deerfield, IL 60015

(847) 831-6753
carly.mandarino@illinois.gov

- 13) Initial Regulatory Flexibility Analysis:
- A) Types of small businesses, small municipalities and not for profit corporations affected: None
 - B) Reporting, bookkeeping or other procedures required for compliance: None
 - C) Types of professional skills necessary for compliance: None
- 14) Small Business Impact Analysis: None
- 15) Regulatory Agenda on which this rulemaking was summarized: January 2025

The full text of the Proposed Amendments begins on the next page:

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TITLE 23: EDUCATION AND CULTURAL RESOURCES
SUBTITLE A: EDUCATION
CHAPTER XIX: ILLINOIS STUDENT ASSISTANCE COMMISSIONPART 2750
ILLINOIS GRADUATE AND RETAIN OUR WORKFORCE (iGROW) TECH
SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Section

2750.10	Summary and Purpose
2750.15	Definitions
2750.20	Applicant Eligibility
2750.30	Program Procedures
2750.40	Institutional Procedures

AUTHORITY: Implementing and authorized by Section 65.120 of the Higher Education Student Assistance Act [110 ILCS 947/65.120].

SOURCE: Adopted at 48 Ill. Reg. 4456, effective March 8, 2024; amended at 48 Ill. Reg. 12611, effective August 1, 2024; amended at 50 Ill. Reg. _____, effective _____.

Section 2750.20 Applicant Eligibility

A qualified applicant shall:

- a) be a resident of Illinois;
- b) ~~be a U.S. citizen or an eligible non-citizen; have graduated from high school or have received a State of Illinois High School Diploma and have maintained a cumulative grade point average of no less than 2.5 on a 4.0 scale;~~
- c) be a high school graduate or have received a State of Illinois High School Diploma or General Education Development (GED) certificate or equivalent from another state;
- d) have earned a minimum grade point average of 2.5 on a 4.0 scale as a high school graduate with no earned college credits or have maintained a cumulative grade point average of 2.5 on a 4.0 scale as a college student with earned college credits.

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Applicants with a GED/state diploma that do not have a GPA are still eligible to apply;

- ee) *pursue or intend to pursue a qualifying degree;*
- fd) *be enrolled at an ISAC-approved institution of higher learning, on at least a half-time basis, in a course of study necessary to secure a qualifying degree; and [110 ILCS 947.65/120]*
- ge) *maintain satisfactory academic progress as determined by the institution.*

(Source: Amended at 50 Ill. Reg. _____, effective _____)

Section 2750.30 Program Procedures

- a) An application for an iGROW award must be submitted annually, and an applicant must also complete the FAFSA® or the Alternative Application for Illinois Financial Aid. In order to receive priority consideration for an award, an ISAC application and the ~~federal~~ FAFSA or Alternative Application must be completed and received by a date established each year by the Commission and posted on the ISAC website, preceding the academic year for which the scholarship is being requested. No applications will be considered for processing if received after the published date unless funds remain available for disbursement.
 - 1) Applications are available on ISAC's website (~~isac.org~~).
 - 2) If the application is incomplete, ISAC will notify the applicant, who will have an opportunity to furnish the missing information. The application will only be considered for processing as of the date the application is complete and received by ISAC ~~at ISAC's Deerfield office~~.
- b) Scholarship assistance is limited to the full-time enrollment equivalent of 8 semesters or 12 quarters of payment for undergraduate study.
- c) ISAC will annually determine a maximum award amount. Award funds may not exceed the full costs of tuition and fees, and room and board, also referred to as "housing and food", respectively, which is~~n~~ the amount of the standard housing and food allowance used for all undergraduate students, at a public institution.

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[110 ILCS 947.65/120] For recipients at private institutions, the award may not exceed the maximum amount payable to a student enrolled in the most expensive comparable program of study at a public institution.

- d) Awards are payable only for two semesters or three quarters in an academic year.
- e) ISAC shall select the recipients from among those who have submitted complete applications and have supplied required information, including qualified and timely new and renewal applicants.
- f) Awarding priority shall be given to renewal applicants who continue to meet the eligibility requirements; then those applicants who demonstrate academic excellence, demonstrate financial need or minority applicants. Once renewal applicants have been awarded, the awarding methodology shall consider academic excellence, financial need and minority status as evenly-weighted separate values that will be summed to determine an overall priority score.
- g) The total number of awards in a given fiscal year is contingent upon available funding. If funding is insufficient to pay all eligible applicants, awarding will be based on the date the completed application is received by ISAC~~in ISAC's Deerfield office~~.
- h) Each qualified applicant who is selected to receive a scholarship shall be notified by ISAC. Applicants not receiving the scholarship will be notified as well.
- i) *The total amount of funds awarded to a qualified recipient in a given academic year, when added to other financial aid available to the qualified recipient for that year, shall not exceed the cost of attendance. If the amount of financial aid to be awarded to a qualified student exceeds the institution's cost of attendance, the iGROW Tech Scholarship shall be reduced by the amount by which the cost of attendance is exceeded.* [110 ILCS 947.65/120]
- j) If the recipient receives other assistance targeted specifically for tuition, fees, and room and board expenses, the combined assistance shall not exceed the total tuition, fees, and room and board expenses incurred by the recipient, and if it does, the institution shall reduce one of the awards accordingly.
- k) If the recipient is eligible for assistance under MAP, the recipient may not be eligible for a full iGROW award because MAP must be factored into the financial

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aid package prior to receiving iGROW assistance. The institution, however, may request an iGROW award to finance tuition and fees expenses not paid by MAP.

- l) ISAC pays scholarship funds directly to the institution of record in the name of the recipient.
- m) Prior to receiving scholarship assistance under this Part, the qualified applicant must sign an Agreement/Promissory Note that is submitted to ISAC. The Agreement/Promissory Note shall include the following stipulations:
 - 1) *for each year of scholarship assistance received, the recipient pledges to work in Illinois in a qualifying job for a period of ~~not less than~~ one year, with a minimum required service commitment of two years for all recipients but in no event for a period of less than two years.* [110 ILCS 947.65/120]
 - 2) the recipient shall begin working within one year after completion of the program for which the recipient received assistance under this Part, and shall work on a continuous basis for the required period of time.
 - 3) if the work requirement is not fulfilled, the scholarship converts to a loan and the recipient must repay the entire amount of the scholarship prorated according to the fraction of the employment obligation not completed, plus interest at a rate equal to 5%, and if applicable, reasonable collection fees.
 - 4) The recipient agrees to provide ISAC with evidence of compliance with program requirements (e.g., responses to annual follow-up questionnaires, etc.)
- n) *A recipient of a scholarship awarded under this Part will not be in violation of the agreement entered into pursuant to subsection (m) during the periods in which the recipient:*
 - 1) *enrolls at a qualified institution on a full-time basis as a graduate student in a course of study related to the technology degree for which the recipient qualified for the scholarship;*

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- 2) *serves, for not more than three years, as a member of the United States Armed Forces;*
 - 3) *is temporarily totally disabled, for not more than three years, as established by a sworn affidavit of a licensed physician;*
 - 4) *is actively seeking but unable to find full-time employment with a State employer that satisfies the criteria set forth in subsection (m)(1) and is able to provide evidence of that fact; or*
 - 5) *becomes totally and permanently disabled as established by sworn affidavit of a qualified physician. [110 ILCS 947.65/120]*
- o) *Scholarship recipients who withdraw from a program of computer science or other related major area of study (see Qualifying Degree), but remain enrolled in a qualified institution to continue their postsecondary studies in another academic discipline, shall not be required to commence repayment so long as they remain enrolled on a full-time basis or if special circumstances that warrant extension of repayment can be documented, including, but not limited to, service in the United States Armed Forces and temporary total disability. [110 ILCS 947.65/120]*

(Source: Amended at 50 Ill. Reg. _____, effective _____)

Section 2750.40 Institutional Procedures

- a) Institutions shall submit payment requests to ISAC, and shall request payment for tuition and fees only up to the amount of actual tuition and fee expenses incurred and any room and board (also known as "housing and food") expenses.
- b) Upon receipt of scholarship funds, the institution shall verify the recipient's enrollment status for the term for which the award was intended.
- c) *Upon receipt of the scholarship funds, if the recipient has withdrawn from enrollment for the terms for which the award was intended, the recipient may receive payment for tuition and fees incurred up to the term award. The room and board ("housing and food") allowance shall be prorated based on the institution's return of funds policy. The institution shall return the appropriate amount of the payment to ISAC. [110 ILCS 947.65/120]*

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- d) To provide sufficient time for processing and vouchering through the State Comptroller's Office, all payment requests must be received by ISAC no later than July 1.

(Source: Amended at 50 Ill. Reg. _____, effective _____)

ILLINOIS STUDENT ASSISTANCE COMMISSION

NOTICE OF PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

- 1) Heading of the Part: Human Services Professional Loan Repayment Program
- 2) Code Citation: 23 Ill. Adm. Code 2752
- 3)

<u>Section Numbers:</u>	<u>Proposed Actions:</u>
2752.15	Amendment
2752.20	Amendment
- 4) Statutory Authority: Implementing the Human Services Professional Loan Repayment Program Act [110 ILCS 997] and authorized by Section 20(f) of the Higher Education Student Assistance Act [110 ILCS 947/20(f)].
- 5) A Complete Description of the Subjects and Issues Involved: This Part is being revised to add a definition of a human services agency and to clarify the employment eligibility criteria at the time of application and awarding.
- 6) Published studies or reports, and sources of underlying data, used to compose this rulemaking: None
- 7) Will this proposed rulemaking replace an emergency rule currently in effect? No
- 8) Does this rulemaking contain an automatic repeal date? No
- 9) Does this proposed rulemaking contain incorporations by reference? No
- 10) Are there any other proposed rulemakings pending on this Part? No
- 11) Statement of Statewide Policy Objectives: This rulemaking does not create or expand a State mandate as defined in Section 3(b) of the State Mandates Act [30 ILCS 805/3(b)] and does not necessitate a local government to establish, expand or modify its activities in such a way as to necessitate additional expenditures from local revenues.
- 12) Time, Place, and Manner in which interested persons may comment on this proposed rulemaking: Persons who wish to comment on this proposed rulemaking may submit written comments no later than 45 days after the publication of this notice to:

Carly Mandarino
Agency Rules Coordinator
Illinois Student Assistance Commission

ILLINOIS STUDENT ASSISTANCE COMMISSION

NOTICE OF PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

1755 Lake Cook Road
Deerfield, IL 60015

847-831-6753
carly.mandarino@illinois.gov

- 13) Initial Regulatory Flexibility Analysis:
- A) Types of small businesses, small municipalities and not for profit corporations affected: None
 - B) Reporting, bookkeeping or other procedures required for compliance: None
 - C) Types of professional skills necessary for compliance: None
- 14) Small Business Impact Analysis: None
- 15) Regulatory Agenda on which this rulemaking was summarized: January 2025

The full text of the Proposed Amendments begins on the next page:

ILLINOIS STUDENT ASSISTANCE COMMISSION

NOTICE OF PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

TITLE 23: EDUCATION AND CULTURAL RESOURCES
SUBTITLE A: EDUCATION
CHAPTER XIX: ILLINOIS STUDENT ASSISTANCE COMMISSION

PART 2752
HUMAN SERVICES PROFESSIONAL
LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM

Section	
2752.10	Summary and Purpose
2752.15	Definitions
2752.20	Applicant Eligibility
2752.30	Program Procedures

AUTHORITY: Implementing the Human Services Professional Loan Repayment Program Act [110 ILCS 997] and authorized by Section 20(f) of the Higher Education Student Assistance Act [110 ILCS 947/20(f)].

SOURCE: Adopted at 47 Ill. Reg. 2461, effective February 6, 2023; amended at 48 Ill. Reg. 4463, effective March 8, 2024; amended at 50 Ill. Reg. _____, effective _____.

Section 2752.15 Definitions

"Professional" means an individual employed by a human services agency that contracts with, receives funding from or is grant-funded by a State agency for the purposes of providing direct or indirect services that ensure that individuals have the essential elements to build and maintain physical, emotional, and economic well-being at every phase of life.

"Human Services Agency" means:

a community-based human services organization employing human services professionals that contracts with, receives funding from or is grant-funded by a State agency for the purposes of providing direct or indirect services; and;

one that ensures that individuals have the essential elements to build and maintain physical, emotional, and economic well-being at every phase of life;

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Physical well-being includes services focused on physiological, shelter and safety needs, such as access to nutritious food (food assistance programs), safe and affordable housing (housing and homeless services, shelters), medical care for uninsured or underinsured (community health clinics), public health preventative care (vaccinations), disability and independent living services, services for vulnerable populations (reentry services, immigration and asylum services) and ensuring a safe environment (domestic violence intervention services)

Emotional well-being includes services focused on helping individuals develop the skills and strategies to effectively build resilience, healthy development and wellness, such as access to mental health resources (counseling services), substance use services (drug and alcohol treatment), and supportive child, family, and senior services (case management, programs, trainings)

Economic well-being includes services focused on helping individuals develop their ability to meet financial needs, achieve fiscal stability, and access opportunities for economic advancement, such as access to stable employment (job training programs), financial assistance (housing/food subsidies), and resources for financial literacy (budgeting and credit counseling); and;

one that provides services to varied populations pursuant to its mission; and;

an organization that provides a wide-range of direct cash assistance, in kind benefits, and other direct and indirect services in various places and settings as required by individual and community needs.

"Qualified program" means a program that offers an associate, bachelor's, or master's degree from an accredited college or university.

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"State agency" means the Department of Human Services, the Department of Children and Family Services, the Department of Juvenile Justice, the Department on Aging, and the Department of Public Health. [110 ILCS 997/10]

(Source: Amended at 50 Ill. Reg. _____, effective _____)

Section 2752.20 Applicant Eligibility

A qualified applicant shall be:

- a) a resident of Illinois;
- b) a borrower with an outstanding balance due on an eligible educational loan;
- c) an individual who is not in default on a federally guaranteed educational loan and does not owe a refund on a grant or scholarship program administered by ISAC;
- d) an individual who, *has been a full-time employee for at least 24 consecutive months prior to applying for the grant and including through the time of application, is employed full-time as a human services professional for ~~a~~ and the community-based human services agency that currently has or did have a contract with, receives funding from or is grant-funded by a State agency for the purpose of providing human services during the applicant's 24 consecutive month tenure; and*
- e) an individual who *remains a full-time employee as a human services professional in the same community-based human services agency for at least 12 months after receiving this grant. [110 ILCS 997/30]*

(Source: Amended at 50 Ill. Reg. _____, effective _____)

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- 1) Heading of the Part: Community Behavioral Health Care Professional Loan Repayment Program
- 2) Code Citation: 23 Ill. Adm. Code 2753
- 3)

<u>Section Numbers:</u>	<u>Proposed Actions:</u>
2753.15	Amendment
2753.20	Amendment
- 4) Statutory Authority: Implementing the Community Behavioral Health Care Professional Loan Repayment Program Act [110 ILCS 996] and authorized by Section 20(f) of the Higher Education Student Assistance Act [110 ILCS 947].
- 5) A Complete Description of the Subjects and Issues Involved: This Part is being revised to add a definition of behavioral health professional and to update application eligibility criteria by adding additional educational credentials and clarifying employment eligibility criteria at the time of application and awarding.
- 6) Published studies or reports, and sources of underlying data, used to compose this rulemaking: None
- 7) Will this proposed rulemaking replace an emergency rule currently in effect? No
- 8) Does this rulemaking contain an automatic repeal date? No
- 9) Does this proposed rulemaking contain incorporations by reference? No
- 10) Are there any other proposed rulemakings pending on this Part? No
- 11) Statement of Statewide Policy Objectives: This rulemaking does not create or expand a State mandate as defined in Section 3(b) of the State Mandates Act [30 ILCS 805/3(b)] and does not necessitate a local government to establish, expand or modify its activities in such a way as to necessitate additional expenditures from local revenues.
- 12) Time, Place, and Manner in which interested persons may comment on this proposed rulemaking: Persons who wish to comment on this proposed rulemaking may submit written comments no later than 45 days after the publication of this notice to:

Carly Mandarino

ILLINOIS STUDENT ASSISTANCE COMMISSION

NOTICE OF PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

Agency Rules Coordinator
Illinois Student Assistance Commission
1755 Lake Cook Road
Deerfield, IL 60015

(847) 831-6753
carly.mandarino@illinois.gov

- 13) Initial Regulatory Flexibility Analysis:
- A) Types of small businesses, small municipalities and not for profit corporations affected: None
 - B) Reporting, bookkeeping or other procedures required for compliance: None
 - C) Types of professional skills necessary for compliance: None
- 14) Small Business Impact Analysis: None
- 15) Regulatory Agenda on which this rulemaking was summarized: January 2025

The full text of the Proposed Amendments begins on the next page:

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NOTICE OF PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

TITLE 23: EDUCATION AND CULTURAL RESOURCES
SUBTITLE A: EDUCATION
CHAPTER XIX: ILLINOIS STUDENT ASSISTANCE COMMISSION

PART 2753
COMMUNITY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONAL
LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM

Section	
2753.10	Summary and Purpose
2753.15	Definitions
2753.20	Applicant Eligibility
2753.30	Program Procedures

AUTHORITY: Implementing the Community Behavioral Health Care Professional Loan Repayment Program Act [110 ILCS 996] and authorized by Section 20(f) of the Higher Education Student Assistance Act [110 ILCS 947].

SOURCE: Adopted at 43 Ill. Reg. 7289, effective July 1, 2019; amended at 46 Ill. Reg. 12083, effective July 1, 2022; amended at 48 Ill. Reg. 12618, effective August 1, 2024; amended at 50 Ill. Reg. _____, effective _____.

Section 2753.15 Definitions

"Physician" means a person licensed by this State to practice medicine in all its branches and includes any person holding a temporary license, as provided in the Medical Practice Act of 1987 [225 ILCS 60].

"Psychiatrist" or "Licensed Psychiatrist" means a physician who has successfully completed a residency program in psychiatry accredited by either the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education or the American Osteopathic Association. [110 ILCS 996/10]

"Behavioral Health Professional" means a professional engaged in the delivery of behavioral health, mental health or substance use disorder treatment or services.

"Health Professional Shortage Area" or "HPSA" means the geographical area in the State of Illinois that the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has designated as an area that has a shortage of mental health professionals.

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"HPSA Database" means a searchable database provided by the U.S. Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA) that allows the user to find data regarding designated HPSAs and their relative shortage areas.

(Source: Amended at 50 Ill. Reg. _____, effective _____)

Section 2753.20 Applicant Eligibility

A qualified applicant shall be:

- a) a resident of Illinois;
- b) a United States citizen or eligible noncitizen;
- c) a borrower with an outstanding balance due on an eligible educational loan;
- d) an individual who is not in default on a federally guaranteed educational loan and does not owe a refund on a grant or scholarship program administered by ISAC;
- e) a qualifying behavioral health professional who meets licensing requirements of the Department of Financial and Professional Regulation or certification as a Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselor or a Certified Recovery Support Specialist from the Illinois Alcoholism and Other Drug Abuse Professional Certification Association, or has attained the required educational credentials of a master's degree in counseling, psychology, social work, or marriage and family therapy or a bachelor's degree in counseling, psychology, or social work;
- f) *an individual who, for at least 12 consecutive months prior to applying for the grant, and including through the time of program application, is employed~~has worked~~ as a behavioral health professional in a community mental health center, behavioral health clinic, substance use treatment center, or State-operated psychiatric hospital licensed or certified by the Department of Human Services or the Department of Healthcare and Family Services in an underserved or rural HPSA mental health discipline; and*
- g) an individual who, for each year during which a grant is received, fulfills a *separate 12 month period* as a behavioral health professional in a community

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mental health center in an underserved or rural HPSA mental health discipline.
[110 ILCS 996/30]

(Source: Amended at 50 Ill. Reg. _____, effective _____)

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NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULES

- 1) Heading of the Part: Journalism Student Scholarship Program
- 2) Code Citation: 23 Ill. Adm. Code 2755
- 3)

<u>Section Numbers:</u>	<u>Proposed Actions:</u>
2755.10	New Section
2755.15	New Section
2755.20	New Section
2755.30	New Section
2755.40	New Section
- 4) Statutory Authority: Implementing Section 65.125 and authorized by Section 20(f) of the Higher Education Student Assistance Act [110 ILCS 947/65.125 and 20(f)].
- 5) A Complete Description of the Subjects and Issues Involved: Rules are being established for this new program created by P.A. 103-1021.
- 6) Published studies or reports, and sources of underlying data, used to compose this rulemaking: None
- 7) Will this proposed rulemaking replace an emergency rule currently in effect? No
- 8) Does this rulemaking contain an automatic repeal date? No
- 9) Does this proposed rulemaking contain incorporations by reference? No
- 10) Are there any other proposed rulemakings pending on this Part? No
- 11) Statement of Statewide Policy Objectives: This rulemaking does not create or expand a State mandate as defined in Section 3(b) of the State Mandates Act [30 ILCS 805/3(b)] and does not necessitate a local government to establish, expand or modify its activities in such a way as to necessitate additional expenditures from local revenues.
- 12) Time, Place, and Manner in which interested persons may comment on this proposed rulemaking: Persons who wish to comment on this proposed rulemaking may submit written comments no later than 45 days after the publication of this Notice to:

Carly Mandarino
Agency Rules Coordinator

ILLINOIS STUDENT ASSISTANCE COMMISSION

NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULES

Illinois Student Assistance Commission
1755 Lake Cook Road
Deerfield, IL 60015

(847) 831-6753
carly.mandarino@illinois.gov

- 13) Initial Regulatory Flexibility Analysis:
 - A) Types of small businesses, small municipalities and not for profit corporations affected: None
 - B) Reporting, bookkeeping or other procedures required for compliance: None
 - C) Types of professional skills necessary for compliance: None
- 14) Small Business Impact Analysis: None
- 15) Regulatory Agenda on which this rulemaking was summarized: January 2025

The full text of the Proposed Rules begins on the next page:

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NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULES

TITLE 23: EDUCATION AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

SUBTITLE A: EDUCATION

CHAPTER XIX: ILLINOIS STUDENT ASSISTANCE COMMISSION

PART 2755

JOURNALISM STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Section

- 2755.10 Summary and Purpose
- 2755.15 Definitions
- 2755.20 Applicant Eligibility
- 2755.30 Program Procedures
- 2755.40 Institutional Procedures

AUTHORITY: Implementing Section 65.125 and authorized by Section 20(f) of the Higher Education Student Assistance Act [110 ILCS 947/65.125 and 20(f)].

SOURCE: Adopted at 50 Ill. Reg. _____, effective _____.

Section 2755.10 Summary and Purpose

- a) The Journalism Student Scholarship Program was created to *encourage academically talented Illinois students to pursue careers in journalism, especially in underserved areas of the State, and to provide those students with financial assistance to increase the likelihood that they will complete their full academic commitment and elect to remain in Illinois to pursue a career in journalism.* [110 ILCS 947/65.125]
- b) This Part establishes the rules which govern the Journalism Student Scholarship Program. Additional rules and definitions are contained in General Provisions, 23 Ill. Adm. Code 2700.

Section 2755.15 Definitions

"Local News Organization" is defined in 815 ILCS 412/10 of the Strengthening Community Media Act and will be used to define a local news organization for this scholarship program.

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"Underserved Area" has the meaning given to that term in Section 5-5 of the Economic Development for a Growing Economy Tax Credit Act, defined as an area that meets one of the following four qualifications:

poverty rate of at least 20% according to the latest American Community Survey;

35% or more of the families with children in the area are living below 130% of the poverty line according to the latest American Community Survey;

at least 20% of the households in the area receive assistance under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP); and/or

the area's average unemployment rate that is more than 120% of the national unemployment average for a period of at least 2 consecutive calendar years preceding the date of the application. [35 ILCS 10/5-5]

Section 2755.20 Applicant Eligibility

A qualified applicant shall:

- a) be a resident of Illinois;
- b) be a U.S. citizen or an eligible non-citizen;
- c) be a high school graduate or have received a State of Illinois High School Diploma or General Education Development (GED) certificate or the equivalent from another state;
- d) be enrolled or accepted for enrollment, on at least a half-time basis at an institution of higher learning;
- e) be pursuing a postsecondary course of study in journalism or a related field leading to a career in journalism; and
- f) maintain satisfactory academic progress as determined by the institution.

Section 2755.30 Program Procedures

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- a) The Journalism Student Scholarship Program application must be submitted annually and is available on ISAC's website. In order to receive priority consideration for an award, the application, including all required documentation, must be completed and received by a priority date established each year by the Commission that will precede the academic year for which the scholarship is being requested.
 - 1) The Journalism Student Scholarship Program application is available on ISAC's website.
 - 2) If the scholarship application is incomplete, ISAC will notify the applicant. The applicant will then have an opportunity to furnish the missing information; however, the application will only be considered for processing as of the date when the application is complete and received by ISAC.
- b) Award funds shall be applicable only toward tuition and fees for an award year after other financial aid received, up to a maximum of \$5,000.
- c) Within the constraints of annual appropriation levels, two semester or three quarter term payments are made directly to the institution.
- d) ISAC shall select recipients from among those who have submitted complete applications and have supplied required information, including qualified timely renewal and new applicants.
- e) Awarding priority shall be given to renewal applicants, meaning those who were paid a Journalism Student Scholarship benefit in the previous award year, who continue to meet the eligibility requirements.
- f) The total number of awards in a given fiscal year is contingent on available funding. If funding is insufficient to pay all eligible applicants, awarding will be based on the date the completed application is received by ISAC.
- g) Each qualified applicant who is selected to receive an award shall be notified by ISAC. Applicants not receiving the award will also be notified.

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- h) The total amount of funds awarded to a qualified recipient in any given academic year, when added to other financial aid available to the qualified recipient for that year, shall not exceed tuition and fees. If the amount of financial aid to be awarded to a qualified student exceeds the institution's cost of attendance, the scholarship shall be reduced by the amount by which the cost of attendance is exceeded.
- i) ISAC pays award funds directly to the institution of record in the name of the recipient.
- j) *These scholarships shall be awarded to individuals who make application to the Commission and agree to sign an agreement under which the recipient pledges that within the 2-year period following the termination of the academic program for which the recipient was awarded a scholarship, the recipient shall:*
 - 1) *begin working in journalism in this State for a period of not less than 2 years;*
 - 2) *fulfill this obligation at local news organization; and*
 - 3) *upon request of the Commission, provide the Commission with evidence that the recipient is fulfilling or has fulfilled the terms of the teaching agreement provided for in this subsection. [110 ILCS 947/65.125]*

Section 2755.40 Institutional Procedures

- a) The institution shall submit eligibility information for qualified applicants in sufficient time for ISAC to make award announcements.
- b) Scholarship awards are paid directly to the approved institution of record that certifies to ISAC that the applicant is an eligible recipient.
 - 1) ISAC will annually establish priority claim dates for the submission of payment requests and inform schools of the required priority dates.
 - 2) Late payment requests will result in delayed processing of payments. Payment requests are processed in the sequence of receipt by ISAC and as funds are available.

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- 3) Institutions may submit their payment requests beginning 10 days prior to the start of classes for the term for which payment is being requested.
- c) ISAC shall disburse scholarship funds in two or three installments, depending on the number of terms financed by the scholarship. Multiple disbursements shall not be required in cases where the applicant's eligibility is not determined until the final term of the academic year for which the scholarship is being awarded or when a student is attending only one term and the maximum award does not exceed the student's cost of attendance.
- d) Funds shall be remitted by ISAC to institutions on behalf of the recipients.
- e) Upon receipt of scholarship funds, the institution shall verify the recipient's enrollment status for the term for which the award was intended. If enrolled, the institution may credit the scholarship funds to the recipient's account for expenses due and payable. The balance of the disbursement shall be released to the recipient.
- f) Upon receipt of the scholarship funds, if the recipient has withdrawn from enrollment for the terms for which the award was intended, the institution shall return the amount of the scholarship payment to ISAC.
- g) The scholarship is applicable only toward tuition and mandatory fees. The total amount of scholarship assistance awarded to a qualified applicant in an award year, when added to other financial aid available to the qualified applicant for that year, cannot exceed the cost of attendance.
- h) To provide sufficient time for processing and vouchering through the State Comptroller's Office in Springfield, all payment requests must be received by ISAC no later than July 1.

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NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULES

- 1) Heading of the Part: Workforce Development Through Charitable Loan Repayment Program
- 2) Code Citation: 23 Ill. Adm. Code 2776
- 3)

<u>Section Numbers</u> :	<u>Proposed Actions</u> :
2776.10	New Section
2776.15	New Section
2776.20	New Section
2776.30	New Section
2776.40	New Section
- 4) Statutory Authority: Implementing the Workforce Development Through Charitable Loan Repayment Program Act [110 ILCS 998] and authorized by Section 20(f) of the Higher Education Student Assistance Act [110 ILCS 947].
- 5) A Complete Description of the Subjects and Issues Involved: Rules are being established for this new program created by P.A. 103-0592.
- 6) Published studies or reports, and sources of underlying data, used to compose this rulemaking: None
- 7) Will this proposed rulemaking replace an emergency rule currently in effect? No
- 8) Does this rulemaking contain an automatic repeal date? No
- 9) Does this proposed rulemaking contain incorporations by reference? No
- 10) Are there any other proposed rulemakings pending on this Part? No
- 11) Statement of Statewide Policy Objectives: This rulemaking does not create or expand a State mandate as defined in Section 3(b) of the State Mandates Act [30 ILCS 805/3(b)] and does not necessitate a local government to establish, expand or modify its activities in such a way as to necessitate additional expenditures from local revenues.
- 12) Time, Place, and Manner in which interested persons may comment on this proposed rulemaking: Persons who wish to comment on this proposed rulemaking may submit written comments no later than 45 days after the publication of this notice to:

ILLINOIS STUDENT ASSISTANCE COMMISSION

NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULES

Carly Mandarino
Agency Rules Coordinator
Illinois Student Assistance Commission
1755 Lake Cook Road
Deerfield, IL 60015

(847) 831-6753
carly.mandarino@illinois.gov

- 13) Initial Regulatory Flexibility Analysis:
- A) Types of small businesses, small municipalities and not for profit corporations affected: None
 - B) Reporting, bookkeeping or other procedures required for compliance: None
 - C) Types of professional skills necessary for compliance: None
- 14) Small Business Impact Analysis: None
- 15) Regulatory Agenda on which this rulemaking was summarized: January 2025

The full text of the Proposed Rules begins on the next page:

ILLINOIS STUDENT ASSISTANCE COMMISSION

NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULES

TITLE 23: EDUCATION AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

SUBTITLE A: EDUCATION

CHAPTER XIX: ILLINOIS STUDENT ASSISTANCE COMMISSION

PART 2776

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT THROUGH CHARITABLE LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM

Section

- 2776.10 Summary and Purpose
- 2776.15 Definitions
- 2776.20 Applicant Eligibility
- 2776.30 Program Procedures
- 2776.40 Institutional Procedures

AUTHORITY: Implementing the Workforce Development Through Charitable Loan Repayment Program Act [110 ILCS 998] and authorized by Section 20(f) of the Higher Education Student Assistance Act [110 ILCS 947].

SOURCE: Adopted at 50 Ill. Reg. _____, effective _____.

Section 2776.10 Summary and Purpose

- a) The Workforce Development through Charitable Loan Repayment Program was created for the purpose of facilitating student loan repayment assistance for qualified workers in the private sector. It serves as an incentive for qualified workers to work and live in eligible areas while also reducing the student debt burden of those workers.
- b) The Program shall be administered by qualified community foundations with the assistance of the Commission.
- c) This Part establishes rules that govern the Workforce Development through Charitable Loan Repayment Program. Additional rules and definitions are contained in General Provisions, 23 Ill. Adm. Code 2700 and Limitation, Suspension and Termination (L,S&T) Proceedings, 23 Ill. Adm. Code 2790.

Section 2751.15 Definitions

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"Commission" means the Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC). [110 ILCS 998/10-10]

"Full-time employee" means an individual who is employed for consideration for at least 35 hours each week. [110 ILCS 998/10-10]

"Program" means the Workforce Development through Charitable Loan Repayment Program established under the Workforce Development through Charitable Loan Repayment Act. [110 ILCS 998/10-10]

"Qualified community foundation" means a community foundation or similar publicly supported organization described in Section 170(b)(1)(A)(vi) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 that (i) is organized or operating in this State, (ii) substantially complies, as determined by the Commission, with the national standards for United States community foundations established by the Community Foundations National Standards or a successor entity, and (iii) is approved by the Commission for participation in the Program. [110 ILCS 998/10-10]

"Qualified worker" means an individual who meets all of the following:

the individual is a full-time employee of a business that meets one or more of the following criteria:

a qualified new business venture registered with the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity under Section 220 of the Illinois Income Tax Act;

the business is primarily engaged in a targeted growth industry;

the business is a minority-owned business, a women-owned business, or a business owned by a person with a disability as defined in the Business Enterprise for Minorities, Women, and Persons with Disabilities Act;

and/or the business is a not-for-profit corporation, as defined in the General Not For Profit Corporation Act of 1986;

the individual is employed by the business at a job site that is located in an Enterprise Zone, an Opportunity Zone, an underserved area, or an area

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that has a bachelor's degree attainment rate for the population that is below the State or national average for the population; and

the individual has received an associate degree or higher and has an outstanding balance due on a qualified education loan and/or has accrued educational debt while pursuing skilled trades and related schooling. [110 ILCS 998/10-10]

"Student loan repayment assistance" means grants or post-graduation scholarships made by a community foundation directly to a student loan servicer on behalf of a qualified worker. [110 ILCS 998/10-10]

"Targeted growth industry" is one or more of the following: advanced manufacturing; agribusiness and food processing; transportation distribution and logistics; life sciences and biotechnology; businesses and professional services; or energy. [110 ILCS 998/10-10]

"Underserved area" has the meaning given to that term in Section 5-5 of the Economic Development for a Growing Economy Tax Credit Act, defined as an area that meets one of the following four qualifications:

poverty rate of at least 20% according to the latest American Community Survey;

35% or more of the families with children in the area are living below 130% of the poverty line according to the latest American Community Survey;

at least 20% of the households in the area receive assistance under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP); and/or

the area's average unemployment rate that is more than 120% of the national unemployment average for a period of at least 2 consecutive calendar years preceding the date of the application. [110 ILCS 998/10-10]; [35 ILCS 10/5-5]

Section 2776.20 Applicant Eligibility

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- a) A qualified community foundation shall apply to the Commission for eligibility to participate in the Program.
- 1) The qualified community foundation shall submit a complete Community Foundation Program Application to the Commission. A complete application includes, but is not limited to, the following items, sufficient to the satisfaction of ISAC:
- A) A summary of each of the following:
- i) an outline of the community foundation's planned loan repayment program requirements, including established work requirements;
 - ii) application questions to be completed by the qualified worker applicants seeking an award under the loan repayment program and the format of the application; and
 - iii) the community foundation's application, certification and awarding processes for qualified workers to receive student loan repayment assistance;
- B) Documentary evidence that the qualified community foundation meets the qualifications under Section 170(b)(1)(A)(vi) of the Internal Revenue Code and substantially complies with the standards established by Community Foundations National Standards;
- C) A list of the names and addresses of all members of the governing board of the qualified community foundation and;
- D) A copy of the most recent financial audit of the qualified community foundation's accounts and records conducted by an independent certified public accountant in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States, government auditing standards, and rules adopted by the Commission.

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- E) Providing documentation for items B-D of this sub-section is optional for any qualified community foundation that can instead provide documentation that it has been determined eligible to participate in tax incentive programs administered by other State agencies.
- b) Upon approval of the Commission, the qualified community foundation will enter into a Community Foundation Partner Participation Agreement with ISAC.
- 1) A qualified community foundation's Community Foundation Partner Participation Agreement may automatically be renewed annually for a period of five years upon the annual submission of the following items to ISAC, by no later than July 31 of each calendar year, unless good cause is shown for the items to be submitted at a later date.
 - A) Documentary evidence that the qualified community foundation meets the qualifications under Section 170(b)(1)(A)(vi) of the Internal Revenue Code and substantially complies with the standards established by Community Foundations National Standards;
 - B) A list of the names and addresses of all members of the governing board of the qualified community foundation;
 - C) A copy of the most recent financial audit of the qualified community foundation's accounts and records conducted by an independent certified public accountant in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States, government auditing standards, and rules adopted by the Commission; and
 - D) An annual report summarizing its loan repayment activity, as further defined in 2776.40(b).
- c) A qualified community foundation that no longer meets the criteria for a qualified community foundation, or does not timely submit the annual items for automatic renewal of the Community Foundation Partner Participation Agreement, will need to re-complete the application and Community Foundation Partner Participation Agreement processes.

ILLINOIS STUDENT ASSISTANCE COMMISSION

NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULES

Section 2776.30 Program Procedures

- a) ISAC will advertise the program on its website.
- b) ISAC will develop and post on its website an application for qualified community foundations to participate in the program, provide information on the application contents, and any necessary supplementary materials.
- c) ISAC will notify applicants when their application is submitted and when it is complete. If the application is incomplete, ISAC will notify the applicant, who will have an opportunity to furnish the missing information. If a qualified community foundation does not submit a complete application, the applicant cannot be considered for participation in the program.
- d) ISAC will review all application information and supplementary materials and make a determination on whether the qualified community foundation meets the requirements to participate in the program.
- e) Approved qualified community foundations will receive written notice of their approval and will begin the Community Foundation Participation Agreement process with ISAC. Any applicant that is not approved for participation will be given written notice of this determination with reasons for ineligibility included.

Section 2776.40 Institutional Procedures

- a) In addition to complying with the application procedures in Section 2776.20, qualified community foundations will be responsible for administering and making awards to qualified workers in compliance with the following requirements:
 - 1) Establish an application process for qualified workers;
 - 2) Establish a process to give priority to applicants with a higher student debt-to-income ratio if necessary due to limited funds;
 - 3) Establish work requirements in accordance with the Workforce Development through Charitable Loan Repayment Act;