

**ACHIEVING A BETTER LIFE EXPERIENCE PROGRAM  
AND TAX CREDITS**

2015 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

**Chief Sponsor: Todd Weiler**

House Sponsor: Rebecca P. Edwards

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**LONG TITLE**

**General Description:**

This bill enacts the Achieving a Better Life Experience Program Act and provides tax credits for contributions to accounts created under the program.

**Highlighted Provisions:**

This bill:

- ▶ enacts the Achieving a Better Life Experience Program Act;
- ▶ requires the Department of Workforce Services to conduct a study related to the program;
- ▶ enacts nonrefundable tax credits for contributions to accounts created under the program; and
- ▶ provides a repeal date for the study.

**Money Appropriated in this Bill:**

None

**Other Special Clauses:**

This bill provides a special effective date.

**Utah Code Sections Affected:**

ENACTS:

**35A-12-101**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

**35A-12-102**, Utah Code Annotated 1953



- 28 [35A-12-201](#), Utah Code Annotated 1953
- 29 [35A-12-202](#), Utah Code Annotated 1953
- 30 [35A-12-301](#), Utah Code Annotated 1953
- 31 [35A-12-302](#), Utah Code Annotated 1953
- 32 [35A-12-303](#), Utah Code Annotated 1953
- 33 [35A-12-304](#), Utah Code Annotated 1953
- 34 [35A-12-305](#), Utah Code Annotated 1953
- 35 [35A-12-401](#), Utah Code Annotated 1953
- 36 [35A-12-402](#), Utah Code Annotated 1953
- 37 [59-7-618](#), Utah Code Annotated 1953
- 38 [59-10-1033](#), Utah Code Annotated 1953
- 39 [63I-2-235](#), Utah Code Annotated 1953

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41 *Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:*

42 Section 1. Section **35A-12-101** is enacted to read:

43 **CHAPTER 12. ACHIEVING A BETTER LIFE EXPERIENCE PROGRAM ACT**

44 **Part 1. General Provisions**

45 **35A-12-101. Title.**

46 This chapter is known as the "Achieving a Better Life Experience Program Act."

47 Section 2. Section **35A-12-102** is enacted to read:

48 **35A-12-102. Definitions.**

49 As used in this chapter:

50 (1) "Account" means a state Achieving a Better Life Experience Program account  
51 established under this chapter.

52 (2) "Account administrator" means a person who administers accounts in accordance  
53 with this chapter.

54 (3) "Account agreement" means an agreement between an account administrator and an  
55 account owner to establish an account.

56 (4) "Account owner" means the following who enter into an agreement with an account  
57 administrator to establish an account under this chapter:

58 (a) an eligible individual; or

59 (b) if the eligible individual is under 18 years of age or is incapacitated, a parent or  
60 legal guardian of the eligible individual.

61 (5) "Beneficiary" means an individual who is:

62 (a) an eligible individual;

63 (b) a resident of:

64 (i) this state; or

65 (ii) a contracting state; and

66 (c) designated as the beneficiary of an account under an account agreement.

67 (6) "Contracting state" means a state that:

68 (a) does not have an Achieving a Better Life Experience program that meets the  
69 requirements to be a qualified Achieving a Better Life Experience program under the federal  
70 Achieving a Better Life Experience Act; and

71 (b) has entered into a contract with this state to provide residents of the other state  
72 access to the state Achieving a Better Life Experience Program.

73 (7) "Eligible individual" means an individual who, before the individual turns 26 years  
74 of age:

75 (a) as determined by the department, has a medically determinable physical or mental  
76 impairment that:

77 (i) results in marked and severe functional limitations that can be expected to result in  
78 death; or

79 (ii) has lasted or can be expected to last for a continuous period of 12 months or more;  
80 or

81 (b) is eligible for benefits under title II or title XVI of the Social Security Act on the  
82 basis of blindness.

83 (8) "Federal Achieving a Better Life Experience Act" means the Stephen Beck, Jr.,  
84 Achieving a Better Life Experience Act of 2014, Pub. L. No. 113-295, 128 Stat. 4010.

85 (9) "Qualified disability expenses" means the same as that term is defined in the federal  
86 Achieving a Better Life Experience Act.

87 (10) "State Achieving a Better Life Experience Program" means the program created  
88 by this chapter.

89 Section 3. Section **35A-12-201** is enacted to read:

90 **Part 2. State Achieving a Better Life Experience Program**

91 **35A-12-201. Creation of program.**

92 (1) There is created the state Achieving a Better Life Experience Program.

93 (2) The department shall administer the program in compliance with:

94 (a) this chapter;

95 (b) the federal Achieving a Better Life Experience Act; and

96 (c) regulations, if any, issued by the United States Department of the Treasury.

97 (3) The program shall authorize the creation of an account for the purpose of allowing  
98 contributions on behalf of a beneficiary for the payment of qualified disability expenses.

99 (4) Subject to Subsection [35A-12-301\(3\)](#), the department shall ensure that  
100 contributions to an account:

101 (a) are held in trust for a beneficiary; and

102 (b) may not be used for a purpose other than the payment of qualified disability  
103 expenses.

104 Section 4. Section **35A-12-202** is enacted to read:

105 **35A-12-202. Application.**

106 (1) (a) If an individual seeks to become an account owner, the individual shall file an  
107 application with the department on a form provided by the department.

108 (b) The form:

109 (i) shall include documentation that the individual who will be designated as the  
110 beneficiary of the account is:

111 (A) an eligible individual; and

112 (B) a resident of this state or a contracting state; and

113 (ii) may include other information required by the department.

114 (2) (a) If the individual who will be designated as the beneficiary of the account has a  
115 medically determinable physical or mental impairment described in Subsection

116 [35A-12-102\(7\)\(a\)](#), the individual shall submit documentation required by the department on the  
117 individual's diagnosis prepared by a physician.

118 (b) If the individual who will be designated as the beneficiary of the account is eligible  
119 for benefits under title II or title XVI of the Social Security Act on the basis of blindness, the  
120 individual shall submit documentation that the individual is eligible for the benefits.

121 (3) (a) Within a 60-day period after the date an individual who seeks to become an  
122 account owner files an application under Subsection (1), the department shall make a  
123 determination as to whether the individual who will be designated as the beneficiary of the  
124 account is:

125 (i) an eligible individual; and

126 (ii) a resident of this state or a contracting state.

127 (b) If the department determines that the individual who will be designated as the  
128 beneficiary of the account meets the requirements of Subsection (3)(a), the department shall  
129 issue the individual who seeks to become an account owner a certificate to authorize the  
130 individual to enter into an account agreement.

131 (c) If the department determines that the individual who would be designated as the  
132 beneficiary of the account does not meet the requirements of Subsection (3)(a), the department  
133 shall inform the individual who seeks to become an account owner in writing that:

134 (i) the individual who would be designated as the beneficiary of the account does not  
135 meet the requirements of Subsection (3)(a); and

136 (ii) provide the individual who seeks to become an account owner with an opportunity  
137 to provide new or additional documentation to the department to establish that the individual  
138 who would be designated as the beneficiary of the account meets the requirements of  
139 Subsection (3)(a).

140 Section 5. Section **35A-12-301** is enacted to read:

141 **Part 3. Administration of Accounts**

142 **35A-12-301. Account administrator -- Fees or service charges.**

143 (1) The department shall:

144 (a) serve as the account administrator; or

145 (b) designate another person to serve as the account administrator in accordance with  
146 Title 63G, Chapter 6a, Utah Procurement Code.

147 (2) Subject to Section [35A-12-302](#), the account administrator shall:

148 (a) receive contributions to an account; and

149 (b) make distributions for the payment of qualified disability expenses on behalf of a  
150 beneficiary.

151 (3) The department may authorize the account administrator to collect a reasonable fee

152 or reasonable service charge to offset the costs of administering an account.

153 Section 6. Section **35A-12-302** is enacted to read:

154 **35A-12-302. Contributions.**

155 (1) For a calendar year, the total contributions to an account from all persons who  
156 contribute to the account may not exceed the federal gift tax exclusion provided in Section  
157 2503, Internal Revenue Code, for the calendar year.

158 (2) If a contribution to an account would result in the total contributions to the account  
159 for a calendar year exceeding the amount provided in Subsection (1), the account administrator  
160 shall return the excess contribution to the person who made the contribution within 30 days  
161 after the date of the contribution.

162 Section 7. Section **35A-12-303** is enacted to read:

163 **35A-12-303. Account agreements -- Beneficiaries.**

164 (1) Beginning on or after January 1, 2016, the department may authorize an account  
165 owner who holds a certificate issued under Section [35A-12-202](#) to enter into an account  
166 agreement with the account administrator.

167 (2) The account agreement shall designate a beneficiary.

168 (3) An individual may only be designated as a beneficiary of one account under this  
169 chapter.

170 (4) An account agreement shall state that:

171 (a) an account is not insured or guaranteed by the state; and

172 (b) the state does not guarantee the rate or payment of interest or other return on an  
173 account.

174 Section 8. Section **35A-12-304** is enacted to read:

175 **35A-12-304. Duties of account administrator.**

176 (1) The account administrator shall ensure that an account, a contribution to an  
177 account, a distribution from an account, or the return of an excess contribution is administered  
178 in compliance with:

179 (a) this chapter;

180 (b) the federal Achieving a Better Life Experience Act, including a requirement for or  
181 prohibition on:

182 (i) the manner in which a contribution may be made;

- 183 (ii) providing a separate accounting for a beneficiary;  
184 (iii) directing the investment of a contribution;  
185 (iv) pledging an amount as security for a loan; and  
186 (v) making excess contributions; and  
187 (c) regulations, if any, issued by the United States Department of the Treasury.  
188 (2) (a) The account administrator shall provide a statement to an account owner at least  
189 monthly.  
190 (b) The statement described in Subsection (2)(a) shall itemize:  
191 (i) contributions made to an account;  
192 (ii) distributions made from an account; and  
193 (iii) the return of an excess contribution.  
194 (3) (a) The account administrator shall provide a statement to a person who contributes  
195 to an account within 30 days after the person makes the contribution.  
196 (b) The statement described in Subsection (3)(a) shall itemize:  
197 (i) the amount of the contribution made to the account; and  
198 (ii) the amount of any excess contribution returned to the person who made the  
199 contribution.  
200 Section 9. Section **35A-12-305** is enacted to read:  
201 **35A-12-305. Reports.**  
202 (1) Except as provided in Subsection (2), the department shall issue statements and  
203 make reports as required by:  
204 (a) this chapter;  
205 (b) the federal Achieving a Better Life Experience Act; and  
206 (c) regulations, if any, issued by the United States Department of the Treasury.  
207 (2) The department may delegate the requirement to issue a statement or make a report  
208 under this section to the account administrator if:  
209 (a) the department is not the account administrator; and  
210 (b) the delegation is authorized or permitted by the federal Achieving a Better Life  
211 Experience Act or regulations, if any, issued by the United States Department of the Treasury.  
212 (3) The department shall file a copy of a statement issued or report made under this  
213 section to the state treasurer.

214 Section 10. Section **35A-12-401** is enacted to read:

215 **Part 4. Miscellaneous Provisions**

216 **35A-12-401. Scope of chapter -- No state guarantee.**

217 (1) This chapter may not be interpreted to:

218 (a) authorize or provide a disability-related service to an eligible individual;

219 (b) be a factor in establishing residency; or

220 (c) provide that contributions made into an account are sufficient to cover the qualified  
221 disability expenses of an eligible individual.

222 (2) An account is not insured or guaranteed by the state.

223 (3) The state does not guarantee the rate or payment of interest or other return on an  
224 account.

225 Section 11. Section **35A-12-402** is enacted to read:

226 **35A-12-402. Department study -- Report to Health and Human Services Interim**  
227 **Committee.**

228 (1) During the 2015 interim, the department shall study the implementation of the state  
229 Achieving a Better Life Experience Program.

230 (2) In conducting the study required by this section, the department shall evaluate:

231 (a) the federal Achieving a Better Life Experience Act; and

232 (b) regulations, if any, issued by the United States Department of the Treasury.

233 (3) The study shall include:

234 (a) an evaluation of the process for determining whether an individual is an eligible  
235 individual;

236 (b) an evaluation of whether the department should designate a person other than the  
237 department to be the account administrator;

238 (c) establishing a reasonable fee or reasonable service charge that the account  
239 administrator may charge to offset the costs of administering an account;

240 (d) an evaluation of similar programs in other states;

241 (e) whether the state should enter into agreements with:

242 (i) other contracting states; or

243 (ii) other states that provide a program similar to the state Achieving a Better Life  
244 Experience Program;

245 (f) an evaluation of best practices for administering accounts, including:  
246 (i) the investment of contributions made into accounts; and  
247 (ii) contracting for personnel, goods, and services; and  
248 (g) an evaluation of reporting requirements for the department.  
249 (4) The study may include other issues as determined by the department.  
250 (5) The department shall report to the Health and Human Services Interim Committee  
251 on or before the November 2015 interim meeting on the issues the department studies under  
252 this section.

253 (6) As part of the report required by Subsection (5), the department shall make  
254 recommendations on whether the state Achieving a Better Life Experience Program should be  
255 modified.

256 Section 12. Section **59-7-618** is enacted to read:

257 **59-7-618. Nonrefundable tax credit for contribution to state Achieving A Better**  
258 **Life Experience Program account.**

259 (1) As used in this section:

260 (a) "Account" means the same as that term is defined in Section [35A-12-102](#).

261 (b) "Account administrator" means the same as that term is defined in Section  
262 [35A-12-102](#).

263 (c) "Contributor" means a corporation that:

264 (i) makes a contribution to an account; and

265 (ii) receives a statement from the account administrator in accordance with Section  
266 [35A-12-304](#) itemizing the contribution.

267 (d) "State Achieving a Better Life Experience Program" means the same as that term is  
268 defined in Section [35A-12-102](#).

269 (2) A contributor to an account created under the state Achieving a Better Life  
270 Experience Program may claim a nonrefundable tax credit as provided in this section.

271 (3) Subject to the other provisions of this section, the tax credit is equal to the product  
272 of:

273 (a) 5%; and

274 (b) the total amount of contributions:

275 (i) the contributor makes for the taxable year; and

276 (ii) for which the contributor receives a statement from the account administrator in  
277 accordance with Section 35A-12-304 itemizing the contributions.

278 (4) A contributor may not claim a tax credit under this section:

279 (a) for an amount of excess contribution that is returned to the contributor in

280 accordance with Section 35A-12-302; or

281 (b) with respect to an amount the contributor deducts on a federal income tax return.

282 (5) A tax credit under this section may not be carried forward or carried back.

283 Section 13. Section **59-10-1033** is enacted to read:

284 **59-10-1033. Nonrefundable tax credit for contribution to state Achieving A Better**  
285 **Life Experience Program account.**

286 (1) As used in this section:

287 (a) "Account" means the same as that term is defined in Section 35A-12-102.

288 (b) "Account administrator" means the same as that term is defined in Section  
289 35A-12-102.

290 (c) "Contributor" means a claimant, estate, or trust that:

291 (i) makes a contribution to an account; and

292 (ii) receives a statement from the account administrator in accordance with Section  
293 35A-12-304 itemizing the contribution.

294 (d) "State Achieving a Better Life Experience Program" means the same as that term is  
295 defined in Section 35A-12-102.

296 (2) A contributor to an account created under the state Achieving a Better Life  
297 Experience Program may claim a nonrefundable tax credit as provided in this section.

298 (3) Subject to the other provisions of this section, the tax credit is equal to the product  
299 of:

300 (a) 5%; and

301 (b) the total amount of contributions:

302 (i) the contributor makes for the taxable year; and

303 (ii) for which the contributor receives a statement from the account administrator in  
304 accordance with Section 35A-12-304 itemizing the contributions.

305 (4) A contributor may not claim a tax credit under this section:

306 (a) for an amount of excess contribution that is returned to the contributor in

307 accordance with Section [35A-12-302](#); or  
308 (b) with respect to an amount the contributor deducts on a federal income tax return.  
309 (5) A tax credit under this section may not be carried forward or carried back.  
310 Section 14. Section **63I-2-235** is enacted to read:  
311 **63I-2-235. Repeal date -- Title 35A.**  
312 Section [35A-12-402](#) is repealed December 31, 2015.  
313 Section 15. **Effective dates.**  
314 (1) Except as provided in Subsection (2), this bill takes effect on May 12, 2015.  
315 (2) The actions affecting Sections [59-7-618](#) and [59-10-1033](#) take effect for a taxable  
316 year beginning on or after January 1, 2016.

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**Legislative Review Note**  
**as of 3-2-15 3:29 PM**

**Office of Legislative Research and General Counsel**