

VETERANS EDUCATION AMENDMENTS

2020 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Paul Ray

Senate Sponsor: Todd Weiler

LONG TITLE

General Description:

This bill makes changes to statutes regarding servicemember and veteran educational benefits.

Highlighted Provisions:

This bill:

- ▶ revises the definition of "eligible person" to include all persons entitled to educational benefits administered by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs under Title 38, U.S.C.; and
- ▶ allows the use of grants for fees and books in addition to tuition.

Money Appropriated in this Bill:

None

Other Special Clauses:

None

Utah Code Sections Affected:

AMENDS:

53B-8-102, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2016, Chapter 57

53B-13b-104, as enacted by Laws of Utah 2014, Chapter 87

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

Section 1. Section **53B-8-102** is amended to read:

53B-8-102. Definitions -- Resident student status -- Exceptions.

(1) As used in this section:

30 (a) "Eligible person" means an individual who is entitled to post-secondary educational
31 benefits under Title 38 U.S.C. [Chapter 30, Montgomery G.I. Bill - Active Duty Educational
32 Assistance Program, or Chapter 33, Post 9/11 Educational Assistance Program], Veterans'
33 Benefits.

34 (b) "Immediate family member" means an individual's spouse or dependent child.

35 (c) "Military servicemember" means an individual who:

36 (i) is serving on active duty in the United States Armed Forces within the state of Utah;

37 (ii) is a member of a reserve component of the United States Armed Forces assigned in
38 Utah;

39 (iii) is a member of the Utah National Guard; or

40 (iv) maintains domicile in Utah, as described in Subsection (9)(a), but is assigned
41 outside of Utah pursuant to federal permanent change of station orders.

42 (d) "Military veteran" has the same meaning as veteran in Section [68-3-12.5](#).

43 (e) "Parent" means a student's biological or adoptive parent.

44 (2) The meaning of "resident student" is determined by reference to the general law on
45 the subject of domicile, except as provided in this section.

46 (3) (a) Institutions within the state system of higher education may grant resident
47 student status to any student who has come to Utah and established residency for the purpose of
48 attending an institution of higher education, and who, prior to registration as a resident student:

49 (i) has maintained continuous Utah residency status for one full year;

50 (ii) has signed a written declaration that the student has relinquished residency in any
51 other state; and

52 (iii) has submitted objective evidence that the student has taken overt steps to establish
53 permanent residency in Utah and that the student does not maintain a residence elsewhere.

54 (b) Evidence to satisfy the requirements under Subsection (3)(a)(iii) includes:

55 (i) a Utah high school transcript issued in the past year confirming attendance at a Utah
56 high school in the past 12 months;

57 (ii) a Utah voter registration dated a reasonable period prior to application;

58 (iii) a Utah driver license or identification card with an original date of issue or a
59 renewal date several months prior to application;

60 (iv) a Utah vehicle registration dated a reasonable period prior to application;

61 (v) evidence of employment in Utah for a reasonable period prior to application;

62 (vi) proof of payment of Utah resident income taxes for the previous year;

63 (vii) a rental agreement showing the student's name and Utah address for at least 12
64 months prior to application; and

65 (viii) utility bills showing the student's name and Utah address for at least 12 months
66 prior to application.

67 (c) A student who is claimed as a dependent on the tax returns of a person who is not a
68 resident of Utah is not eligible to apply for resident student status.

69 (4) Except as provided in Subsection (8), an institution within the state system of
70 higher education may establish stricter criteria for determining resident student status.

71 (5) If an institution does not have a minimum credit-hour requirement, that institution
72 shall honor the decision of another institution within the state system of higher education to
73 grant a student resident student status, unless:

74 (a) the student obtained resident student status under false pretenses; or

75 (b) the facts existing at the time of the granting of resident student status have changed.

76 (6) Within the limits established in Title 53B, Chapter 8, Tuition Waiver and
77 Scholarships, each institution within the state system of higher education may, regardless of its
78 policy on obtaining resident student status, waive nonresident tuition either in whole or in part,
79 but not other fees.

80 (7) In addition to the waivers of nonresident tuition under Subsection (6), each
81 institution may, as athletic scholarships, grant full waiver of fees and nonresident tuition, up to
82 the maximum number allowed by the appropriate athletic conference as recommended by the
83 president of each institution.

84 (8) Notwithstanding Subsection (3), an institution within the state system of higher
85 education shall grant resident student status for tuition purposes to:

- 86 (a) a military servicemember, if the military servicemember provides:
- 87 (i) the military servicemember's current United States military identification card; and
- 88 (ii) (A) a statement from the military servicemember's current commander, or
- 89 equivalent, stating that the military servicemember is assigned in Utah; or
- 90 (B) evidence that the military servicemember is domiciled in Utah, as described in
- 91 Subsection (9)(a);
- 92 (b) a military servicemember's immediate family member, if the military
- 93 servicemember's immediate family member provides:
- 94 (i) (A) the military servicemember's current United States military identification card;
- 95 or
- 96 (B) the immediate family member's current United States military identification card;
- 97 and
- 98 (ii) (A) a statement from the military servicemember's current commander, or
- 99 equivalent, stating that the military servicemember is assigned in Utah; or
- 100 (B) evidence that the military servicemember is domiciled in Utah, as described in
- 101 Subsection (9)(a);
- 102 (c) a military veteran, regardless of whether the military veteran served in Utah, if the
- 103 military veteran provides:
- 104 (i) evidence of an honorable or general discharge;
- 105 (ii) a signed written declaration that the military veteran has relinquished residency in
- 106 any other state and does not maintain a residence elsewhere;
- 107 (iii) objective evidence that the military veteran has demonstrated an intent to establish
- 108 residency in Utah, which may include any one of the following:
- 109 (A) a Utah voter registration card;
- 110 (B) a Utah driver license or identification card;
- 111 (C) a Utah vehicle registration;
- 112 (D) evidence of employment in Utah;
- 113 (E) a rental agreement showing the military veteran's name and Utah address; or

- 114 (F) utility bills showing the military veteran's name and Utah address;
- 115 (d) a military veteran's immediate family member, regardless of whether the military
- 116 veteran served in Utah, if the military veteran's immediate family member provides:
 - 117 (i) evidence of the military veteran's honorable or general discharge [~~within the last~~
 - 118 ~~five years~~];
 - 119 (ii) a signed written declaration that the military veteran's immediate family member
 - 120 has relinquished residency in any other state and does not maintain a residence elsewhere; and
 - 121 (iii) objective evidence that the military veteran's immediate family member has
 - 122 demonstrated an intent to establish residency in Utah, which may include any one of the items
 - 123 described in Subsection (8)(c)(iii); or
 - 124 (e) an eligible person who provides:
 - 125 (i) evidence of eligibility under Title 38 U.S.C. [~~Chapter 30, Montgomery G.I. Bill=~~
 - 126 ~~Active Duty Educational Assistance Program, or Chapter 33, Post 9/11 Educational Assistance~~
 - 127 ~~Program]~~, Veterans' Benefits;
 - 128 (ii) a signed written declaration that the eligible person will use the G.I. Bill benefits;
 - 129 and
 - 130 (iii) objective evidence that the eligible person has demonstrated an intent to establish
 - 131 residency in Utah, which may include any one of the items described in Subsection (8)(c)(iii).
 - 132 (9) (a) The evidence described in Subsection (8)(a)(ii)(B) or (8)(b)(ii)(B) includes:
 - 133 (i) a current Utah voter registration card;
 - 134 (ii) a valid Utah driver license or identification card;
 - 135 (iii) a current Utah vehicle registration;
 - 136 (iv) a copy of a Utah income tax return, in the military servicemember's or military
 - 137 servicemember's spouse's name, filed as a resident in accordance with Section [59-10-502](#); or
 - 138 (v) proof that the military servicemember or military servicemember's spouse owns a
 - 139 home in Utah, including a property tax notice for property owned in Utah.
 - 140 (b) Aliens who are present in the United States on visitor, student, or other visas which
 - 141 authorize only temporary presence in this country, do not have the capacity to intend to reside

142 in Utah for an indefinite period and therefore are classified as nonresidents.

143 (c) Aliens who have been granted immigrant or permanent resident status in the United
144 States are classified for purposes of resident student status according to the same criteria
145 applicable to citizens.

146 (10) Any American Indian who is enrolled on the tribal rolls of a tribe whose
147 reservation or trust lands lie partly or wholly within Utah or whose border is at any point
148 contiguous with the border of Utah, and any American Indian who is a member of a federally
149 recognized or known Utah tribe and who has graduated from a high school in Utah, is entitled
150 to resident student status.

151 (11) A Job Corps student is entitled to resident student status if the student:

152 (a) is admitted as a full-time, part-time, or summer school student in a program of
153 study leading to a degree or certificate; and

154 (b) submits verification that the student is a current Job Corps student.

155 (12) A person is entitled to resident student status and may immediately apply for
156 resident student status if the person:

157 (a) marries a Utah resident eligible to be a resident student under this section; and

158 (b) establishes his or her domicile in Utah as demonstrated by objective evidence as
159 provided in Subsection (3).

160 (13) Notwithstanding Subsection (3)(c), a dependent student who has at least one
161 parent who has been domiciled in Utah for at least 12 months prior to the student's application
162 is entitled to resident student status.

163 (14) (a) A person who has established domicile in Utah for full-time permanent
164 employment may rebut the presumption of a nonresident classification by providing substantial
165 evidence that the reason for the individual's move to Utah was, in good faith, based on an
166 employer requested transfer to Utah, recruitment by a Utah employer, or a comparable
167 work-related move for full-time permanent employment in Utah.

168 (b) All relevant evidence concerning the motivation for the move shall be considered,
169 including:

170 (i) the person's employment and educational history;
171 (ii) the dates when Utah employment was first considered, offered, and accepted;
172 (iii) when the person moved to Utah;
173 (iv) the dates when the person applied for admission, was admitted, and was enrolled
174 as a postsecondary student;

175 (v) whether the person applied for admission to an institution of higher education
176 sooner than four months from the date of moving to Utah;

177 (vi) evidence that the person is an independent person who is:

178 (A) at least 24 years of age; or

179 (B) not claimed as a dependent on someone else's tax returns; and

180 (vii) any other factors related to abandonment of a former domicile and establishment
181 of a new domicile in Utah for purposes other than to attend an institution of higher education.

182 (15) (a) A person who is in residence in Utah to participate in a United States Olympic
183 athlete training program, at a facility in Utah, approved by the governing body for the athlete's
184 Olympic sport, shall be entitled to resident status for tuition purposes.

185 (b) Upon the termination of the athlete's participation in the training program, the
186 athlete shall be subject to the same residency standards applicable to other persons under this
187 section.

188 (c) Time spent domiciled in Utah during the Olympic athlete training program in Utah
189 counts for Utah residency for tuition purposes upon termination of the athlete's participation in
190 a Utah Olympic athlete training program.

191 (16) (a) A person who has established domicile in Utah for reasons related to divorce,
192 the death of a spouse, or long-term health care responsibilities for an immediate family
193 member, including the person's spouse, parent, sibling, or child, may rebut the presumption of a
194 nonresident classification by providing substantial evidence that the reason for the individual's
195 move to Utah was, in good faith, based on the long-term health care responsibilities.

196 (b) All relevant evidence concerning the motivation for the move shall be considered,
197 including:

- 198 (i) the person's employment and educational history;
- 199 (ii) the dates when the long-term health care responsibilities in Utah were first
200 considered, offered, and accepted;
- 201 (iii) when the person moved to Utah;
- 202 (iv) the dates when the person applied for admission, was admitted, and was enrolled
203 as a postsecondary student;
- 204 (v) whether the person applied for admission to an institution of higher education
205 sooner than four months from the date of moving to Utah;
- 206 (vi) evidence that the person is an independent person who is:
 - 207 (A) at least 24 years of age; or
 - 208 (B) not claimed as a dependent on someone else's tax returns; and
- 209 (vii) any other factors related to abandonment of a former domicile and establishment
210 of a new domicile in Utah for purposes other than to attend an institution of higher education.

211 (17) The board, after consultation with the institutions, shall make rules not
212 inconsistent with this section:

- 213 (a) concerning the definition of resident and nonresident students;
- 214 (b) establishing procedures for classifying and reclassifying students;
- 215 (c) establishing criteria for determining and judging claims of residency or domicile;
- 216 (d) establishing appeals procedures; and
- 217 (e) other matters related to this section.

218 (18) A student shall be exempt from paying the nonresident portion of total tuition if
219 the student:

- 220 (a) is a foreign national legally admitted to the United States;
- 221 (b) attended high school in this state for three or more years; and
- 222 (c) graduated from a high school in this state or received the equivalent of a high
223 school diploma in this state.

224 Section 2. Section **53B-13b-104** is amended to read:

225 **53B-13b-104. Guidelines for administration of the program.**

226 (1) The board shall use the guidelines in this section to develop policies to implement
227 and administer the program.

228 (2) (a) The board shall allocate money appropriated for the program to institutions to
229 provide grants for qualifying military veterans.

230 (b) The board may not use program money for administrative costs or overhead.

231 (c) An institution may not use more than 3% of its program money for administrative
232 costs or overhead.

233 (d) Money returned to the board under Subsection (3)(b) shall be used for future
234 allocations to institutions.

235 (3) (a) An institution shall award a program grant to a qualifying military veteran on an
236 annual basis but distribute the money one quarter or semester at a time, with continuing awards
237 contingent upon the qualifying military veteran maintaining satisfactory academic progress as
238 defined by the institution in published policies or rules.

239 (b) At the conclusion of the academic year, money distributed to an institution that was
240 not awarded to a qualifying military veteran or used for allowed administrative purposes shall
241 be returned to the board.

242 (4) A qualifying military veteran may receive a program grant until the earlier of the
243 following occurs:

244 (a) the qualifying military veteran completes the requirements for a bachelor's degree;

245 or

246 (b) 12 months from the time that the qualifying military veteran receives an initial
247 program grant.

248 (5) A qualifying military veteran who receives a program grant may only use the grant
249 toward tuition, fees, and books at an institution of higher education in the state.

250 (6) The board may accept grants, gifts, bequests, and devises of real and personal
251 property from any source for the purpose of awarding grants to qualifying military veterans in
252 addition to those funded by the state.