

Chapter 28B.92 RCW
STATE STUDENT FINANCIAL AID PROGRAMS

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RCW 28B.92.005 Financial aid application due dates and information—Notification. Community and technical colleges shall provide financial aid application due dates and information on whether or not financial aid will be awarded on a rolling basis to their admitted students at the time of acceptance. State universities, regional universities, and The Evergreen State College shall provide financial aid application due dates and distribution policies on their websites, including whether financial aid is awarded on a rolling basis, for prospective and admitted students. [2015 c 212 s 1; 2014 c 53 s 2.]

Intent—2014 c 53: "The legislature recognizes that in recent years not all students eligible for the state need grant program have received an award due to limited funds and unfamiliarity with disbursement policies. Therefore, it is the intent of the legislature to ensure that institutions of higher education clearly disseminate

their financial aid policies to admitted and prospective students."
[2014 c 53 s 1.]

RCW 28B.92.030 Definitions. The definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(1) "Council" means the student achievement council.

(2) "Financial aid" means either loans, grants, or both, to students who demonstrate financial need enrolled or accepted for enrollment as a student at institutions of higher education.

(3) "Financial need" means a demonstrated financial inability to bear the total cost of education as directed in rule by the office.

(4) "Institution" or "institutions of higher education" means:

(a) Any public university, college, community college, or technical college operated by the state of Washington or any political subdivision thereof; or

(b) Any other university, college, school, or institute in the state of Washington offering instruction beyond the high school level that is a member institution of an accrediting association recognized by rule of the council for the purposes of this section and that agrees to and complies with program rules adopted pursuant to RCW 28B.92.150. However, any institution, branch, extension or facility operating within the state of Washington that is affiliated with an institution operating in another state must be:

(i) A separately accredited member institution of any such accrediting association;

(ii) A branch of a member institution of an accrediting association recognized by rule of the council for purposes of this section, that is eligible for federal student financial aid assistance and has operated as a nonprofit college or university delivering on-site classroom instruction for a minimum of 20 consecutive years within the state of Washington, and has an annual enrollment of at least 700 full-time equivalent students;

(iii) A nonprofit institution recognized by the state of Washington as provided in RCW 28B.77.240; or

(iv) An approved apprenticeship program under chapter 49.04 RCW.

(5) "Maximum Washington college grant":

(a) For students attending two or four-year institutions of higher education as defined in RCW 28B.10.016, is tuition and estimated fees for 15 quarter credit hours or the equivalent, as determined by the office, including operating fees, building fees, and services and activities fees.

(b) For students attending private four-year not-for-profit institutions of higher education in Washington:

(i) In the 2019-20 academic year, is \$9,739 and may increase each year afterwards by no more than the tuition growth factor through the end of the 2025-26 academic year; and

(ii) Beginning in the 2026-27 academic year, is 50 percent of the average of awards for the same academic year granted to students at the public research institutions in Washington.

(c) For students attending two-year private not-for-profit institutions of higher education in Washington, in the 2019-20 academic year, is \$3,694 and may increase each year afterwards by no more than the tuition growth factor.

(d) For students attending four-year private for-profit institutions of higher education in Washington, in the 2019-20

academic year, is eight thousand five hundred seventeen dollars and may increase each year afterwards by no more than the tuition growth factor, until the end of the 2025-26 academic year.

(e) For students attending two-year private for-profit institutions of higher education in Washington, in the 2019-20 academic year, is two thousand eight hundred twenty-three dollars and may increase each year afterwards by no more than the tuition growth factor, until the end of the 2025-26 academic year.

(f) For students attending Western Governors University-Washington, as established in RCW 28B.77.240:

(i) In the 2019-20 academic year, is \$5,619 and may increase each year afterwards by no more than the tuition growth factor through the 2025-26 academic year; and

(ii) Beginning in the 2026-27 academic year, is \$4,150 and may increase each year afterwards by no more than the tuition growth factor.

(e) [(g)] For students attending approved apprenticeship programs:

(i) In the 2022-23 academic year, is the same amount as the maximum Washington college grant for students attending two-year institutions of higher education as defined in (a) of this subsection to be used for tuition and fees, program supplies and equipment, and other costs that facilitate educational endeavors through the 2025-26 academic year; and

(ii) Beginning in the 2026-27 academic year, is 50 percent of the maximum Washington college grant award for students attending two-year institutions of higher education as defined in (a) of this subsection to be used for tuition and fees, program supplies and equipment, and other costs that facilitate educational endeavors.

(6) "Office" means the office of student financial assistance.

(7) "Tuition growth factor" means an increase of no more than the average annual percentage growth rate of the median hourly wage for Washington for the previous 14 years as the wage is determined by the federal bureau of labor statistics. [2025 c 395 s 2; 2022 c 166 s 1; 2019 c 406 s 21; 2013 c 248 s 2; 2012 c 229 s 557; 2011 1st sp.s. c 11 s 159. Prior: 2009 c 238 s 7; 2009 c 215 s 5; 2004 c 275 s 35; 2002 c 187 s 1; 1989 c 254 s 2; 1985 c 370 s 56; 1979 ex.s. c 235 s 1; 1975 1st ex.s. c 132 s 16; 1969 ex.s. c 222 s 8. Formerly RCW 28B.10.802, 28.76.440.]

Finding—Intent—2025 c 395: "The legislature finds that postsecondary education is critical for the economic mobility of Washingtonians. The Washington college grant established an entitlement program to provide financial aid for low-income students. It is the intent of the legislature to continue assessing state financial aid offered to students attending institutions of higher education across all sectors in Washington in order to serve students pursuing postsecondary education. Further, it is the intent to continue assessing the college bound program available to students attending institutions of higher education across all sectors in Washington." [2025 c 395 s 1.]

Effective date—2025 c 395: "This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect July 1, 2025." [2025 c 395 s 5.]

Findings—Intent—2019 c 406: See note following RCW 43.79.195.

Findings—Short title—2019 c 406: See notes following RCW 28B.92.200.

Findings—2019 c 406: See note following RCW 28B.94.020.

Findings—Intent—2019 c 406: See note following RCW 28C.30.050.

Findings—Intent—2019 c 406: See note following RCW 43.216.135.

Findings—Intent—2013 c 248: "The legislature finds that Western Governors University-Washington, recognized by the state of Washington under RCW 28B.77.240, serves a student population that is nontraditional and geographically diverse. Enrollment in Western Governors University-Washington has grown steadily since 2011 reaching over four thousand three hundred students. These students represent an average age of thirty-seven, sixty-nine percent of whom are classified as underserved, including low-income, ethnic minority, rural, and first-generation students.

The legislature also finds that tuition at Western Governors University-Washington has remained static since 2008 at five thousand seven hundred eighty dollars per year.

Further, the legislature finds that the population served by Western Governors University-Washington deserves to have access to affordable postsecondary education, including baccalaureate degree-granting institutions. Therefore, the legislature intends to provide access to the state need grant program for eligible students attending Western Governors University-Washington.

The legislature also intends that Western Governors University-Washington comply with all reporting requirements established by the student achievement council for state need grant participation, including financial information about students, enrollment, graduation and placement rates, and the institution's standing with its accrediting agency, the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities, and the United States department of education." [2013 c 248 s 1.]

Effective date—2013 c 248: "This act takes effect August 1, 2013." [2013 c 248 s 6.]

Effective date—2012 c 229 ss 101, 117, 401, 402, 501 through 594, 601 through 609, 701 through 708, 801 through 821, 902, and 904: See note following RCW 28B.77.005.

Effective date—2011 1st sp.s. c 11 ss 101-103, 106-202, 204-244, and 301: See note following RCW 28B.76.020.

Intent—2011 1st sp.s. c 11: See note following RCW 28B.76.020.

Findings—Intent—2009 c 238: See note following RCW 28C.18.160.

Findings—Intent—2009 c 215: "The legislature finds that a myriad of financial aid programs exist for students at the federal, state, local, community, and institutional levels. These programs enable thousands of students across Washington to access all sectors of

higher education, from apprenticeship programs to public and private four and two-year institutions of higher education. The legislature further finds that Washington state is a national leader in the distribution of financial aid to increase college access and affordability, ranking fourth in the nation in 2007 in terms of state student grant aid funding per capita.

It is the intent of the legislature to promote and expand access to state financial aid programs by determining which programs provide the greatest value to the largest number of students, and by fully supporting those programs. Furthermore, it is the intent of the legislature to designate all existing financial aid an opportunity pathway, with the effect of providing students with a clear understanding of available resources to pay for postsecondary education, thereby increasing access to postsecondary education and meeting the needs of local business and industry.

It is the intent of the legislature that the *higher education coordinating board, the state board for community and technical colleges, the office of the superintendent of public instruction, the workforce training and education coordinating board, and institutions of higher education coordinate the development of outreach tools, such as a web-based portal for information on all opportunity pathway aid programs. The information should be communicated in a format and manner that provides an ease of understanding for students and their families and include other pertinent information on institutions of higher education, costs, and academic programs. It is also the intent of the legislature for institutions of higher education to incorporate this information in promotional materials to prospective and current students and their families." [2009 c 215 s 1.]

***Reviser's note:** The higher education coordinating board ("board") was abolished by 2011 1st sp.s. c 11 s 301, effective July 1, 2012.

Effective date—2009 c 215: "This act takes effect August 1, 2009." [2009 c 215 s 17.]

Part headings not law—2004 c 275: See note following RCW 28B.76.090.

Intent—1989 c 254: "It is the intent of the legislature that nothing in this act shall prevent or discourage an individual from making an effort to repay any state financial aid awarded during his or her collegiate career." [1989 c 254 s 1.]

Effective date—Severability—1975 1st ex.s. c 132: See notes following RCW 28B.77.060.

Loan programs for mathematics and science teachers: RCW 28B.15.760 through 28B.15.766.

RCW 28B.92.040 Guidelines in performance of office duties. The office shall be cognizant of the following guidelines in the performance of its duties:

(1) The office shall be research oriented, not only at its inception but continually through its existence.

(2) The office shall coordinate all existing programs of financial aid except those specifically dedicated to a particular institution by the donor.

(3) The office shall take the initiative and responsibility for coordinating all federal student financial aid programs to ensure that the state recognizes the maximum potential effect of these programs, and shall design state programs that complement existing federal, state, and institutional programs.

(4) Counseling is a paramount function of the Washington college grant program and other state student financial aid programs, and in most cases could only be properly implemented at the institutional levels; therefore, state student financial aid programs shall be concerned with the attainment of those goals which, in the judgment of the office, are the reasons for the existence of a student financial aid program, and not solely with administration of the program on an individual basis.

(5) The "package" approach of combining loans, grants and employment for student financial aid shall be the conceptual element of the state's involvement.

(6) The office shall ensure that allocations of state appropriations for financial aid are made to individuals and institutions in a timely manner and shall closely monitor expenditures to avoid under or overexpenditure of appropriated funds. [2019 c 406 s 27; 2011 1st sp.s. c 11 s 160; 2004 c 275 s 36; 1999 c 345 s 3; 1995 c 269 s 801; 1969 ex.s. c 222 s 10. Formerly RCW 28B.10.804, 28.76.450.]

Findings—Intent—2019 c 406: See note following RCW 43.79.195.

Findings—Short title—2019 c 406: See notes following RCW 28B.92.200.

Findings—2019 c 406: See note following RCW 28B.94.020.

Findings—Intent—2019 c 406: See note following RCW 28C.30.050.

Findings—Intent—2019 c 406: See note following RCW 43.216.135.

Effective date—2011 1st sp.s. c 11 ss 101-103, 106-202, 204-244, and 301: See note following RCW 28B.76.020.

Intent—2011 1st sp.s. c 11: See note following RCW 28B.76.020.

Part headings not law—2004 c 275: See note following RCW 28B.76.090.

Effective date—Part headings not law—Severability—1995 c 269: See notes following RCW 18.16.050.

RCW 28B.92.060 State need grant awards. In awarding need grants, the office shall proceed substantially as follows: PROVIDED, That nothing contained herein shall be construed to prevent the office, in the exercise of its sound discretion, from following another procedure when the best interest of the program so dictates:

(1) The office shall annually select the financial aid award recipients from among Washington residents applying for student financial aid who have been ranked according to:

(a) College bound scholarship eligibility. Eligible students as defined in RCW 28B.118.010 who meet the requirements in *RCW 28B.118.010(4)(b)(i) for the college bound scholarship may not be denied state need grant funding due to institutional policies or delayed awarding of college bound scholarship students. College bound scholarship eligible students whose family income exceeds sixty-five percent of the state median family income, but who are eligible for the state need grant, shall be prioritized and awarded the maximum state need grant for which the student is eligible;

(b) Financial need as determined by the amount of the family contribution; and

(c) Other considerations, such as whether the student is a former foster youth, or is a placebound student who has completed an associate of arts or associate of science degree or its equivalent.

(2) The financial need of the highest ranked students shall be met by grants depending upon the evaluation of financial need until the total allocation has been disbursed. Funds from grants which are declined, forfeited or otherwise unused shall be reawarded until disbursed, except that eligible former foster youth shall be assured receipt of a grant. The office, in consultation with four-year institutions of higher education, the council, and the state board for community and technical colleges, shall develop award criteria and methods of disbursement based on level of need, and not solely rely on a first-come, first-served basis.

(3) A student shall be eligible to receive a state need grant for up to five years, or the credit or clock hour equivalent of five years, or up to one hundred twenty-five percent of the published length of time of the student's program. A student may not start a new associate degree program as a state need grant recipient until at least five years have elapsed since earning an associate degree as a need grant recipient, except that a student may earn two associate degrees concurrently. Qualifications for renewal will include maintaining satisfactory academic progress toward completion of an eligible program as determined by the office. Should the recipient terminate his or her enrollment for any reason during the academic year, the unused portion of the grant shall be returned to the state educational grant fund by the institution according to the institution's own policy for issuing refunds, except as provided in RCW 28B.92.070.

(4) In computing financial need, the office shall determine a maximum student expense budget allowance, not to exceed an amount equal to the total maximum student expense budget at the public institutions plus the current average state appropriation per student for operating expense in the public institutions. Any child support payments received by students who are parents attending less than half-time shall not be used in computing financial need.

(5)(a) A student who is enrolled in three to six credit-bearing quarter credits, or the equivalent semester credits, may receive a grant for up to one academic year before beginning a program that leads to a degree or certificate.

(b) An eligible student enrolled on a less-than-full-time basis shall receive a prorated portion of his or her state need grant for any academic period in which he or she is enrolled on a less-than-full-time basis, as long as funds are available.

(c) An institution of higher education may award a state need grant to an eligible student enrolled in three to six credit-bearing quarter credits, or the semester equivalent, on a provisional basis if:

(i) The student has not previously received a state need grant from that institution;

(ii) The student completes the required free application for federal student aid;

(iii) The institution has reviewed the student's financial condition, and the financial condition of the student's family if the student is a dependent student, and has determined that the student is likely eligible for a state need grant; and

(iv) The student has signed a document attesting to the fact that the financial information provided on the free application for federal student aid and any additional financial information provided directly to the institution is accurate and complete, and that the student agrees to repay the institution for the grant amount if the student submitted false or incomplete information.

(6) As used in this section, "former foster youth" means a person who is at least eighteen years of age, but not more than twenty-four years of age, who was a dependent of the department of social and health services at the time he or she attained the age of eighteen. [2019 c 298 s 4; 2012 c 229 s 558. Prior: 2011 1st sp.s. c 11 s 162; 2011 1st sp.s. c 10 s 9; 2009 c 215 s 4; 2007 c 404 s 2; 2005 c 93 s 3; 2004 c 275 s 37; 1999 c 345 s 5; 1991 c 164 s 4; 1989 c 254 s 4; 1969 ex.s. c 222 s 12. Formerly RCW 28B.10.808, 28.76.470.]

Reviser's note: *(1) RCW 28B.118.010 was amended by 2021 c 283 s 2, significantly changing subsection (4)(b)(i). RCW 28B.118.010 was subsequently amended by 2025 c 395 s 4 and 2025 c 288 s 1, deleting subsection (4)(b).

(2) RCW 28B.92.060 was amended by 2019 c 298 s 4 without cognizance of its repeal by 2019 c 406 s 79. For rule of construction concerning sections amended and repealed in the same legislative session, see RCW 1.12.025.

Effective date—2012 c 229 ss 101, 117, 401, 402, 501 through 594, 601 through 609, 701 through 708, 801 through 821, 902, and 904: See note following RCW 28B.77.005.

Effective date—2011 1st sp.s. c 11 ss 101-103, 106-202, 204-244, and 301: See note following RCW 28B.76.020.

Intent—2011 1st sp.s. c 11: See note following RCW 28B.76.020.

Findings—Intent—Short title—2011 1st sp.s. c 10: See notes following RCW 28B.15.031.

Findings—Intent—Effective date—2009 c 215: See notes following RCW 28B.92.030.

Findings—Intent—2005 c 93: See note following RCW 74.13.570.

Part headings not law—2004 c 275: See note following RCW 28B.76.090.

Intent—1989 c 254: See note following RCW 28B.92.030.

RCW 28B.92.060 State need grant awards. [2012 c 229 s 558. Prior: 2011 1st sp.s. c 11 s 162; 2011 1st sp.s. c 10 s 9; 2009 c 215 s 4; 2007 c 404 s 2; 2005 c 93 s 3; 2004 c 275 s 37; 1999 c 345 s 5; 1991 c 164 s 4; 1989 c 254 s 4; 1969 ex.s. c 222 s 12. Formerly RCW 28B.10.808, 28.76.470.]

Reviser's note: RCW 28B.92.060 was amended by 2019 c 298 s 4 without cognizance of its repeal by 2019 c 406 s 79. For rule of construction concerning sections amended and repealed in the same legislative session, see RCW 1.12.025.

RCW 28B.92.065 Washington college grant program appropriations reduction. Beginning with the 2015-2017 omnibus appropriations act and each biennium thereafter, reductions in tuition levels resulting from section 3, chapter 36, Laws of 2015 3rd sp. sess. will allow the legislature to reduce Washington college grant program appropriations by an equal amount from the 2013-2015 fiscal biennium amounts. The legislature does not intend to reduce award levels for private colleges and universities below the 2014-15 academic year levels. [2019 c 406 s 28; 2015 3rd sp.s. c 36 s 4.]

Findings—Intent—2019 c 406: See note following RCW 43.79.195.

Findings—Short title—2019 c 406: See notes following RCW 28B.92.200.

Findings—2019 c 406: See note following RCW 28B.94.020.

Findings—Intent—2019 c 406: See note following RCW 28C.30.050.

Findings—Intent—2019 c 406: See note following RCW 43.216.135.

Short title—2015 3rd sp.s. c 36: See note following RCW 28B.15.031.

RCW 28B.92.070 Persian Gulf veterans—Limited application of RCW 28B.92.060. Under rules adopted by the council, the provisions of *RCW 28B.92.060(3) shall not apply to eligible students, as defined in RCW 28B.10.017, and eligible students shall not be required to repay the unused portions of grants received under the state student financial aid program. [2012 c 229 s 559; 2004 c 275 s 38; 1991 c 164 s 3. Formerly RCW 28B.10.8081.]

***Reviser's note:** RCW 28B.92.060 was repealed by 2019 c 406 s 79 without cognizance of its amendment by 2019 c 298 s 4. For rule of construction concerning sections amended and repealed in the same legislative session, see RCW 1.12.025.

Effective date—2012 c 229 ss 101, 117, 401, 402, 501 through 594, 601 through 609, 701 through 708, 801 through 821, 902, and 904: See note following RCW 28B.77.005.

Part headings not law—2004 c 275: See note following RCW 28B.76.090.

RCW 28B.92.085 Part-time students—Review of financial aid policies and procedures. Institutions of higher education are encouraged to review their policies and procedures regarding financial aid for students taking a less-than-half-time course load, and to implement policies and procedures providing students taking a less-than-half-time course load with the same access to institutional aid, including tuition waivers, as provided to students enrolled half time or more. [2007 c 404 s 3.]

RCW 28B.92.086 Dual credit programs—Review of financial aid policies and programs. Institutions of higher education are encouraged to review their policies and procedures regarding financial aid for students enrolled in dual credit programs as defined in RCW 28B.15.821. Institutions of higher education are further encouraged to implement policies and procedures providing students enrolled in dual credit programs with the same access to institutional aid, including all educational expenses, as provided to resident undergraduate students. [2009 c 215 s 10.]

Findings—Intent—Effective date—2009 c 215: See notes following RCW 28B.92.030.

RCW 28B.92.090 Aid granted without regard to applicant's race, creed, color, religion, sex, or ancestry. All student financial aid shall be granted by the commission without regard to the applicant's race, creed, color, religion, sex, or ancestry. [1969 ex.s. c 222 s 14. Formerly RCW 28B.10.812, 28.76.480.]

RCW 28B.92.100 Theology student denied aid. No aid shall be awarded to any student who is pursuing a degree in theology. [1969 ex.s. c 222 s 15. Formerly RCW 28B.10.814, 28.76.490.]

RCW 28B.92.110 Application of award. A state financial aid recipient under this chapter shall apply the award toward the cost of tuition, room, board, books, and fees at the institution of higher education attended. An opportunity internship graduate who enters an apprenticeship program may use the award for the costs of related and supplemental instruction provided through an institution of higher education, tools, and other costs associated with the apprenticeship program. [2009 c 238 s 10; 2004 c 275 s 40; 1969 ex.s. c 222 s 16. Formerly RCW 28B.10.816, 28.76.500.]

Findings—Intent—2009 c 238: See note following RCW 28C.18.160.

Part headings not law—2004 c 275: See note following RCW 28B.76.090.

RCW 28B.92.120 Office to determine how funds disbursed. Funds appropriated for student financial assistance to be granted pursuant to this chapter shall be disbursed as determined by the office. [2011 1st sp.s. c 11 s 164; 2004 c 275 s 41; 1969 ex.s. c 222 s 17. Formerly RCW 28B.10.818, 28.76.510.]

Effective date—2011 1st sp.s. c 11 ss 101-103, 106-202, 204-244, and 301: See note following RCW 28B.76.020.

Intent—2011 1st sp.s. c 11: See note following RCW 28B.76.020.

Part headings not law—2004 c 275: See note following RCW 28B.76.090.

RCW 28B.92.130 Grants, gifts, bequests, and devises of property. The office shall be authorized to accept grants, gifts, bequests, and devises of real and personal property from any source for the purpose of granting financial aid in addition to that funded by the state. [2011 1st sp.s. c 11 s 165; 2004 c 275 s 42; 1969 ex.s. c 222 s 18. Formerly RCW 28B.10.820, 28.76.520.]

Effective date—2011 1st sp.s. c 11 ss 101-103, 106-202, 204-244, and 301: See note following RCW 28B.76.020.

Intent—2011 1st sp.s. c 11: See note following RCW 28B.76.020.

Part headings not law—2004 c 275: See note following RCW 28B.76.090.

RCW 28B.92.140 State educational trust fund—Deposits—Expenditures. The state educational trust fund is hereby established in the state treasury. The primary purpose of the trust is to pledge statewide available college student assistance to needy or disadvantaged students, especially middle and high school youth, considered at-risk of dropping out of secondary education who participate in approved early awareness and outreach programs and who enter any accredited Washington institution of postsecondary education within two years of high school graduation.

The office shall deposit refunds and recoveries of student financial aid funds expended in prior fiscal periods in such account. The office may also deposit moneys that have been contributed from other state, federal, or private sources.

Expenditures from the fund shall be for financial aid to needy or disadvantaged students. The office may annually expend such sums from the fund as may be necessary to fulfill the purposes of this section, including not more than three percent for the costs to administer aid programs supported by the fund. All earnings of investments of balances in the state educational trust fund shall be credited to the trust fund. Expenditures from the fund shall not be subject to appropriation but are subject to allotment procedures under chapter 43.88 RCW. [2011 1st sp.s. c 11 s 166; 1997 c 269 s 1; 1996 c 107 s 1; 1991 sp.s. c 13 s 12; 1985 c 57 s 10; 1981 c 55 s 1. Formerly RCW 28B.10.821.]

Effective date—2011 1st sp.s. c 11 ss 101-103, 106-202, 204-244, and 301: See note following RCW 28B.76.020.

Intent—2011 1st sp.s. c 11: See note following RCW 28B.76.020.

Effective dates—Severability—1991 sp.s. c 13: See notes following RCW 18.08.240.

Effective date—1985 c 57: See note following RCW 18.04.105.

RCW 28B.92.150 Rules. The office shall adopt rules as may be necessary or appropriate for effecting the provisions of this chapter, in accordance with the provisions of chapter 34.05 RCW, the administrative procedure act. [2011 1st sp.s. c 11 s 167; 2004 c 275 s 43; 1999 c 345 s 7; 1973 c 62 s 4; 1969 ex.s. c 222 s 19. Formerly RCW 28B.10.822, 28.76.530.]

Effective date—2011 1st sp.s. c 11 ss 101-103, 106-202, 204-244, and 301: See note following RCW 28B.76.020.

Intent—2011 1st sp.s. c 11: See note following RCW 28B.76.020.

Part headings not law—2004 c 275: See note following RCW 28B.76.090.

Savings—Severability—1973 c 62: See notes following RCW 28B.10.510.

RCW 28B.92.200 Washington college grant program. (1) The Washington college grant program is created to provide a statewide free college program for eligible participants and greater access to postsecondary education for Washington residents. The Washington college grant program is intended to increase the number of high school graduates and adults that can attain a postsecondary credential and provide them with the qualifications needed to compete for job opportunities in Washington.

(2) The office shall implement and administer the Washington college grant program and is authorized to establish rules necessary for implementation of the program.

(3) The legislature shall appropriate funding for the Washington college grant program. Allocations must be made on the basis of estimated eligible participants enrolled in eligible institutions of higher education or apprenticeship programs. All eligible students are entitled to a Washington college grant beginning in academic year 2020-21.

(4) The office shall award Washington college grants to all eligible students beginning in academic year 2020-21.

(5) To be eligible for the Washington college grant, students must meet the following requirements:

(a)(i) Demonstrate financial need under RCW 28B.92.205;

(ii) Receive one or more of the following types of public assistance:

(A) Aged, blind, or disabled assistance benefits under chapter 74.62 RCW;

(B) Essential needs and housing support program benefits under RCW 43.185C.220; or

(C) Pregnant women assistance program financial grants under RCW 74.62.030; or

(iii) Be a Washington high school student in the 10th, 11th, or 12th grade whose parent or legal guardian is receiving one or more of the types of public assistance listed in (a)(ii) of this subsection and have received a certificate confirming eligibility from the office in accordance with RCW 28B.92.225; or

(iv) Beginning in the 2025-26 academic year, be a Washington high school student in the 10th, 11th, or 12th grade who is a member of an assistance unit receiving benefits under the Washington basic food program in chapter 74.04 RCW or the Washington food assistance program established under RCW 74.08A.120;

(b)(i) Be enrolled or accepted for enrollment for at least three quarter credits or the equivalent semester credits at an institution of higher education in Washington as defined in RCW 28B.92.030; or

(ii) Be enrolled in a registered apprenticeship program approved under chapter 49.04 RCW;

(c) Be a resident student as defined in RCW 28B.15.012(2) (a) through (e);

(d) File an annual application for financial aid as approved by the office; and

(e) Must not have earned a baccalaureate degree or higher from a postsecondary institution.

(6) Washington college grant eligibility may not extend beyond six years or 150 percent of the published length of the program in which the student is enrolled or the credit or clock-hour equivalent.

(7) Institutional aid administrators shall determine whether a student eligible for the Washington college grant in a given academic year may remain eligible for the ensuing year if the student's family income increases by no more than three percent.

(8) Qualifications for receipt and renewal include maintaining satisfactory academic progress toward completion of an eligible program as determined by the office and established in rule.

(9) Should a recipient terminate his or her enrollment for any reason during the academic year, the unused portion of the grant shall be returned to the state educational grant fund by the institution of higher education according to the institution of higher education's policy for issuing refunds, except as provided in RCW 28B.92.070.

(10) An eligible student enrolled on a part-time basis shall receive a prorated portion of the Washington college grant for any academic period in which he or she is enrolled on a part-time basis.

(11) The Washington college grant is intended to be used to meet the costs of postsecondary education for students with financial need. The student shall be awarded all need-based financial aid for which the student qualifies as determined by the institution.

(12) Students and participating institutions of higher education shall comply with all the rules adopted by the council for the administration of this chapter. [2024 c 323 s 1; 2024 c 116 s 1; 2022 c 214 s 5; 2019 c 406 s 19.]

Reviser's note: This section was amended by 2024 c 116 s 1 and by 2024 c 323 s 1, each without reference to the other. Both amendments are incorporated in the publication of this section under RCW 1.12.025(2). For rule of construction, see RCW 1.12.025(1).

Intent—2022 c 214: See note following RCW 28B.77.300.

Findings—2019 c 406: "(1) The legislature finds that individuals with a postsecondary credential have a greater chance of earning a wage that can support themselves and their families than if they do not obtain a postsecondary credential. At the same time, Washington employers are in need of many more individuals who possess postsecondary qualifications. Access to postsecondary opportunities are vital to ensure that more Washington high school graduates and working adults can enter and complete a postsecondary program and compete for the job opportunities available in the state.

(2) The legislature further finds that a statewide free college program, for students who demonstrate financial need as defined in section 20 of this act, is necessary to significantly reduce the financial costs of obtaining a postsecondary credential. The Washington college grant program is intended to increase access to postsecondary opportunities for Washington residents." [2019 c 406 s 18.]

Short title—2019 c 406: "This act may be known and cited as the workforce education investment act." [2019 c 406 s 80.]

Findings—Intent—2019 c 406: See note following RCW 43.79.195.

Findings—2019 c 406: See note following RCW 28B.94.020.

Findings—Intent—2019 c 406: See note following RCW 28C.30.050.

Findings—Intent—2019 c 406: See note following RCW 43.216.135.

RCW 28B.92.205 Washington college grant program—Financial need.

In addition to other eligibility requirements outlined in this chapter, students who demonstrate financial need are eligible to receive the Washington college grant. Beginning with the 2025-26 academic year, students with family incomes between zero and 60 percent of the state median family income, adjusted for family size, shall receive the maximum Washington college grant as defined in RCW 28B.92.030. Grants for students with incomes between 61 and 100 percent of the state median family income, adjusted for family size, shall be prorated at the following percentages of the maximum Washington college grant amount:

(1) 60 percent for students with family incomes between 61 and 65 percent of the state median family income;

(2) 50 percent for students with family incomes between 66 and 70 percent of the state median family income;

(3) 24.5 percent for students with family incomes between 71 and 75 percent of the state median family income; and

(4) 10 percent for students with family incomes between 76 and 100 percent of the state median family income. [2025 c 395 s 3; 2023 c 475 s 923; 2022 c 297 s 949; 2019 c 406 s 20.]

Finding—Intent—Effective date—2025 c 395: See notes following RCW 28B.92.030.

Effective date—2023 c 475: See note following RCW 16.76.030.

Effective date—2022 c 297: See note following RCW 43.79.565.

Findings—Intent—2019 c 406: See note following RCW 43.79.195.

Findings—Short title—2019 c 406: See notes following RCW 28B.92.200.

Findings—2019 c 406: See note following RCW 28B.94.020.

Findings—Intent—2019 c 406: See note following RCW 28C.30.050.

Findings—Intent—2019 c 406: See note following RCW 43.216.135.

RCW 28B.92.210 Washington college grant program—Caseload forecast. The caseload forecast council shall estimate the anticipated caseload of the Washington college grant program and submit the caseload forecast as specified in RCW 43.88C.020. [2019 c 406 s 23.]

Findings—Intent—2019 c 406: See note following RCW 43.79.195.

Findings—Short title—2019 c 406: See notes following RCW 28B.92.200.

Findings—2019 c 406: See note following RCW 28B.94.020.

Findings—Intent—2019 c 406: See note following RCW 28C.30.050.

Findings—Intent—2019 c 406: See note following RCW 43.216.135.

RCW 28B.92.220 Postsecondary institution student-level data—Education data center. (1) In order to be eligible for state student financial aid programs, postsecondary institutions shall submit student-level data to the education data center established in RCW 43.41.400 in accordance with RCW 28B.77.090 for the purposes of legislatively authorized research and evaluation of state postsecondary student aid programs.

(2) The education data center shall determine the appropriate student-level data each postsecondary institution shall report in order to meet the state goals for research and evaluation under subsection (1) of this section.

(3) The education data center shall enter data-sharing agreements to facilitate the transfer of required data.

(4) Religious postsecondary institutions that maintain a religious exemption under RCW 28B.85.040 may request an exemption from the council from submitting student-level data to the education data center.

(5) Postsecondary institutions, except for those exempt under subsection (4) of this section, that do not submit student-level data to the education data center may be found ineligible for the state's federally required eligible training provider list and may lose eligibility to participate in the Washington college grant program, established in this chapter. The council's office of student financial

assistance shall determine penalties for postsecondary institutions in accordance with chapter 34.05 RCW.

(6) Nothing in this section allows the sharing of confidential information that is prohibited by state or federal law.

(7) For the purposes of this section, "postsecondary institution" means an institution of higher education as defined in RCW 28B.10.016, a degree-granting institution as defined in RCW 28B.85.010, a private vocational school as defined in RCW 28C.10.020, and a school as defined in RCW 18.16.020. [2019 c 406 s 22.]

Findings—Intent—2019 c 406: See note following RCW 43.79.195.

Findings—Short title—2019 c 406: See notes following RCW 28B.92.200.

Findings—2019 c 406: See note following RCW 28B.94.020.

Findings—Intent—2019 c 406: See note following RCW 28C.30.050.

Findings—Intent—2019 c 406: See note following RCW 43.216.135.

RCW 28B.92.225 Individual-level data—Public assistance certificates—Annual report—Washington college grant program. (1) The office shall enter into a data-sharing agreement with the department of social and health services to facilitate the sharing of individual-level data. To the extent allowable under state and federal law, the department of social and health services shall send the office a list of all individuals receiving benefits under the public assistance programs listed under RCW 28B.92.200(5) on at least an annual basis. The office shall use the list to confirm students' eligibility for the Washington college grant program, without requiring the student to fill out a separate financial aid form. The office may also use the information to conduct outreach promoting the Washington college grant.

(2) For high school students identified in RCW 28B.92.200(5)(a)(iii) or (iv), the office shall issue a certificate to the student that validates the student's financial need eligibility for the Washington college grant program. The certificate is good for one year after high school graduation and may be used upon enrollment in an eligible institution of higher education, provided the student meets the other Washington college grant eligibility requirements. The office shall track and maintain records of students who were issued certificates under this section in order to confirm a student's financial need eligibility with an institution of higher education. A student does not need to produce the certificate to receive the Washington college grant.

(3) The office shall notify students whose eligibility for the Washington college grant is established under RCW 28B.92.200(5)(a)(iv) about the importance of submitting a free application for federal student aid or a Washington application for state financial aid after their first quarter or semester, and each year thereafter.

(4) By December 1, 2026, and each year thereafter, the office shall submit a report to the appropriate committees of the legislature pursuant to RCW 43.01.036 detailing Washington college grant participation by students whose eligibility for the grant is

established under RCW 28B.92.200(5)(a)(iv). [2024 c 116 s 2; 2022 c 214 s 6.]

Intent—2022 c 214: See note following RCW 28B.77.300.

RCW 28B.92.230 Individual-level outreach—Additional aid—Washington college grant program. The office shall collaborate with the department of social and health services to:

(1) Facilitate individual-level outreach to individuals receiving benefits under the public assistance programs listed under RCW 28B.92.200(5), temporary assistance for needy families under chapter 74.08 RCW, the state family assistance program provided for in rule, and the basic food program to inform these individuals of their eligibility for the Washington college grant program; and

(2) Notify individuals whose financial need for purposes of Washington college grant eligibility has been demonstrated under RCW 28B.92.200(5)(a)(iv) that they may establish eligibility for additional state and federal aid by submitting a free application for federal student aid or a Washington application for state financial aid. [2024 c 116 s 3; 2022 c 214 s 7.]

Intent—2022 c 214: See note following RCW 28B.77.300.