

VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY - 2026 SESSION

CHAPTER 135

An Act to amend and reenact §§ 23.1-624 and 23.1-1303 of the Code of Virginia and to repeal § 23.1-632 of the Code of Virginia, relating to Selective Service; Two-Year College Transfer Grant; Virginia Tuition Assistance Grant Program.

[H 414]

Approved April 6, 2026

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That §§ 23.1-624 and 23.1-1303 of the Code of Virginia are amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 23.1-624. Eligibility criteria.

A. Grants shall be made under the Program to or on behalf of Virginia students who (i) maintained a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.0 on a scale of 4.0 or its equivalent while enrolled in an associate degree program at an associate-degree-granting public institution of higher education, (ii) have received an associate degree at an associate-degree-granting public institution of higher education, (iii) have enrolled in an eligible institution by the fall or spring following the award of such associate degree, (iv) have applied for financial aid, and (v) have demonstrated financial need, defined as an Expected Family Contribution (EFC) of no more than \$12,000 as calculated by the federal government using the family's financial information reported on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form.

B. Eligibility for a grant under the Program is limited to three academic years. Grants under the Program shall be used only for undergraduate coursework in educational programs other than those providing religious training or theological education.

C. To remain eligible for a grant under the Program, a student shall continue to demonstrate financial need as defined in subsection A, maintain a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.0 on a scale of 4.0 or its equivalent, and make satisfactory academic progress toward a degree.

~~D. Individuals who have failed to meet the federal requirement to register for the Selective Service are not eligible to receive grants pursuant to this article. However, an individual who has failed to register for the Selective Service shall not be denied a right, privilege, or benefit under this section if (i) the requirement to so register has terminated or become inapplicable to the individual and (ii) the individual shows by a preponderance of the evidence that the failure to register was not a knowing and willful failure to register.~~

§ 23.1-1303. Governing boards; duties.

A. For purposes of this section, "intellectual property" means (i) a potentially patentable machine, article of manufacture, composition of matter, process, or improvement in any of those; (ii) an issued patent; (iii) a legal right that inheres in a patent; or (iv) anything that is copyrightable.

B. The governing board of each public institution of higher education shall:

1. Adopt and post conspicuously on its website bylaws for its own governance, including provisions that (i) establish the requirement of transparency, to the extent required by law, in all board actions; (ii) describe the board's obligations under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act (§ 2.2-3700 et seq.), as set forth in subdivision B 10 of § 23.1-1301, including the requirements that (a) the board record minutes of each open meeting and post the minutes on the board's website, in accordance with subsection I of § 2.2-3707 and § 2.2-3707.1, (b) discussions and actions on any topic not specifically exempted by § 2.2-3711 be held in an open meeting, (c) the board give public notice of all meetings, in accordance with subsection D of § 2.2-3707, and (d) any action taken in a closed meeting be approved in an open meeting before it can have any force or effect, in accordance with subsection B of § 2.2-3711; and (iii) require that the board invite the Attorney General's appointee or representative to all meetings of the board, executive committee, and board committees;

2. Establish and maintain on the institution's website (i) a listing of all board members, including the name of the Governor who made each appointment and the date of each appointment; (ii) a listing of all committees created by the board and the membership of each committee; (iii) a schedule of all upcoming meetings of the full board and its committees and instructions for the public to access such meetings; (iv) an archive of agendas and supporting materials for each meeting of the governing board and its committees that was held; and (v) an email address or email addresses that allow board members to receive public communications pertaining to board business;

3. Establish regulations or institution policies for the acceptance ~~and assistance~~ of students that include provisions (i) ~~that specify that individuals who have knowingly and willfully failed to meet the federal requirement to register for the selective service are not eligible to receive any state direct student assistance,~~ (ii) that specify that the accreditation status of a public high school in the Commonwealth shall not be considered in making admissions determinations for students who have earned a diploma pursuant to the requirements established by the Board of Education; and ~~(iii) (ii)~~ relating to the admission of certain

graduates of comprehensive community colleges as set forth in § 23.1-907;

4. Assist the Council in enforcing the provisions relating to eligibility for financial aid;

5. Notwithstanding any other provision of state law, establish policies and procedures requiring the notification of the parent of a dependent student when such student receives mental health treatment at the institution's student health or counseling center and such treatment becomes part of the student's educational record in accordance with the federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (42 U.S.C. § 1320d et seq.) and may be disclosed without prior consent as authorized by the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (20 U.S.C. § 1232g) and related regulations (34 C.F.R. Part 99). Such notification shall only be required if it is determined that there exists a substantial likelihood that, as a result of mental illness the student will, in the near future, (i) cause serious physical harm to himself or others as evidenced by recent behavior or any other relevant information or (ii) suffer serious harm due to his lack of capacity to protect himself from harm or to provide for his basic human needs. However, notification may be withheld if any person licensed to diagnose and treat mental, emotional, or behavioral disorders by a health regulatory board within the Department of Health Professions who is treating the student has made a part of the student's record a written statement that, in the exercise of his professional judgment, the notification would be reasonably likely to cause substantial harm to the student or another person. No public institution of higher education or employee of a public institution of higher education making a disclosure pursuant to this subsection is civilly liable for any harm resulting from such disclosure unless such disclosure constitutes gross negligence or willful misconduct by the institution or its employees;

6. Establish policies and procedures requiring the release of the educational record of a dependent student, as defined by the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (20 U.S.C. § 1232g), to a parent at his request;

7. Establish programs to seek to ensure that all graduates have the technology skills necessary to compete in the twenty-first century and that all students matriculating in teacher-training programs receive instruction in the effective use of educational technology;

8. Establish policies for the discipline of students who participate in varsity intercollegiate athletics, including a provision requiring an annual report by the administration of the institution to the governing board regarding enforcement actions taken pursuant to such policies;

9. In addition to all meetings prescribed in Chapters 14 (§ 23.1-1400 et seq.) through 29 (§ 23.1-2900 et seq.), meet with the chief executive officer of the institution at least once annually, in a closed meeting pursuant to subdivision A 1 of § 2.2-3711 and deliver an evaluation of the chief executive officer's performance. Any change to the chief executive officer's employment contract during any such meeting or any other meeting of the board shall be made only by a vote of the majority of the board's members;

10. If human research, as defined in § 32.1-162.16, is conducted at the institution, adopt regulations pursuant to the Administrative Process Act (§ 2.2-4000 et seq.) to effectuate the provisions of Chapter 5.1 (§ 32.1-162.16 et seq.) of Title 32.1 for human research. Such regulations shall require the human research committee to submit to the Governor, the General Assembly, and the chief executive officer of the institution or his designee at least annually a report on the human research projects reviewed and approved by the committee and require the committee to report any significant deviations from approved proposals;

11. Submit and make publicly available on the institution's website the annual financial statements for the fiscal year ending the preceding June 30 and the accounts and status of any ongoing capital projects to the Auditor of Public Accounts for the audit of such statements pursuant to § 30-133;

12. No later than December 1 of each year, report to the Council and make publicly available on the institution's website (i) the value of investments as reflected on the Statement of Net Position as of June 30 of the previous fiscal year, excluding any funds derived from endowment donations, endowment income, or other private philanthropy; (ii) the cash earnings on such balances in the previous fiscal year; and (iii) the use of the cash earnings on such balances. In the event that the commitment of any such investment earnings spans more than one fiscal year, the report shall reflect the commitments made in each future fiscal year. The reports of the Boards of Visitors of Virginia Commonwealth University and the University of Virginia shall exclude the value of and earnings on any investments held by the Virginia Commonwealth University Health System Authority and the University of Virginia Medical Center, respectively. As used in this subdivision, "investments" includes all short-term, long-term, liquid, and illiquid Statement of Net Position accounts, and subaccounts thereof, in which moneys have been invested in securities;

13. Submit to the General Assembly and the Governor and make publicly available on the institution's website an annual executive summary of its interim activity and work no later than the first day of each regular session of the General Assembly. The executive summary shall be submitted as provided in the procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents and reports and shall be posted on the General Assembly's website;

14. Make available to any interested party upon request a copy of the portion of the most recent report of the Uniform Crime Reporting Section of the Department of State Police entitled "Crime in Virginia" pertaining to institutions of higher education;

15. Adopt policies or institution regulations regarding the ownership, protection, assignment, and use of

intellectual property and provide a copy of such policies or institution regulations to the Governor and the Joint Commission on Technology and Science. All employees, including student employees, of public institutions of higher education are bound by the intellectual property policies or institution regulations of the institution employing them;

16. Adopt policies that are supportive of the intellectual property rights of matriculated students who are not employed by such institution; and

17. Solicit the input of representatives of the institution's faculty senate or its equivalent (i) at least twice per academic year on topics of general interest to the faculty and (ii) in advance of decisions to be made on the search for the institution's new chief executive officer.

2. That § 23.1-632 of the Code of Virginia is repealed.