

1 (b) Interim Vermont National Guard Tuition Benefit Program.

2 (1) The Interim Vermont National Guard Tuition Benefit Program
3 (Interim Program) is created solely for new enlistees who have not completed
4 basic training due solely to the reduced number of available basic training slots
5 as a result of safety measures implemented to address the COVID-19
6 pandemic. The structure, administration, and terms and conditions of this
7 Interim Program shall be otherwise identical to the Vermont National Guard
8 Tuition Benefit Program under 16 V.S.A. § 2857, except that the Interim
9 Program shall not require that a member has successfully completed basic
10 training. Eligible members under the Interim Program shall be entitled to this
11 tuition benefit for courses offered by participating postsecondary educational
12 institutions only during the fall 2020 semester.

13 (2) The sum of \$[TBD] is appropriated in fiscal year 2021 from the
14 Coronavirus Relief Fund to the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation
15 (VSAC) to fund the tuition benefits under the Interim Program.

16 (c) Vermont National Guard Tuition Benefit Program waiver. For new
17 enlistees who want to use the tuition benefit under the Vermont National
18 Guard Tuition Benefit Program established under 16 V.S.A. § 2857 for the
19 spring 2021 semester and thereafter, but have not completed basic training due
20 solely to the reduced number of available basic training slots as a result of
21 safety measures implemented to address the COVID-19 pandemic, the

1 requirement to have successfully completed basic training (16 V.S.A.
2 § 2857(c)(2)) is waived.

3 (d) Verification of future basic training. Before funds are allocated to a
4 member under subsection (b) or (c) of this section, the Adjutant General shall
5 provide verification to VSAC that the member has a reservation for a future
6 basic training class.

7 (e) Service commitment. Academic attendance under the Interim Program
8 shall count toward the member's service commitment under the Vermont
9 National Guard Tuition Benefit Program, 16 V.S.A. § 2857(d).

10 (f) Repeal. This section is repealed on the date that the Adjutant General
11 certifies to the House Committee on General, Housing, and Military Affairs
12 and the Senate Committee on Government Operations that all members who
13 had not completed basic training due solely to the reduced number of available
14 basic training slots as a result of safety measures implemented to address the
15 COVID-19 pandemic have successfully completed, or are currently attending,
16 basic training. A copy of this certification shall be sent at the same time to the
17 Office of Legislative Counsel.

18 (g) Effective date. Notwithstanding 1 V.S.A. § 214, this section shall take
19 effect on passage and shall apply retroactively to August 17, 2020.