

H.517

An act relating to the Vermont National Guard Tuition Benefit Program

It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

Sec. 1. 16 V.S.A. § 2857(c) is amended to read:

(c) Eligibility.

(1) To be eligible for the Program, an individual, whether a resident or nonresident, shall satisfy all of the following requirements:

~~(1)~~(A) be an active member of the Vermont National Guard;

~~(2)~~(B) have successfully completed basic training;

~~(3)~~(C) be enrolled at UVM, a Vermont State College, or any other college or university located in Vermont in a program that leads to an undergraduate certificate or degree or at an eligible training institution in a program that leads to a certificate or other credential recognized by VSAC;

~~(4)~~(D) have not previously earned an undergraduate bachelor's degree;

~~(5)~~(E) continually demonstrate satisfactory academic progress as determined by criteria established by the Vermont National Guard and VSAC, in consultation with the educational institution at which the individual is enrolled under the Program;

~~(6)~~(F) have used available post-September 11, 2001 tuition benefits and other federally funded military tuition assistance; provided, however, that this subdivision shall not apply to:

~~(A)~~(i) tuition benefits and other federally funded military tuition assistance for which the individual has not yet earned the full amount of the benefit or tuition;

~~(B)~~(ii) Montgomery GI Bill benefits;

~~(C)~~(iii) post-September 11, 2001 educational program housing allowances;

~~(D)~~(iv) federal educational entitlements;

~~(E)~~(v) National Guard scholarship grants;

~~(F)~~(vi) loans under section 2856 of this title; and

~~(G)~~(vii) other nontuition benefits; and

~~(7)~~(G) have submitted a statement of good standing to VSAC signed by the individual's commanding officer within 30 days prior to the beginning of each semester.

(2) An individual may receive more than one undergraduate certificate or other credential recognized by VSAC under the Program, provided that the cost of all certificates and credentials received by the individual under the Program does not exceed the full-time in-state tuition rate charged by NVU for completion of an undergraduate baccalaureate degree.

Sec. 2. VERMONT NATIONAL GUARD TUITION BENEFIT

PROGRAM EXTENSION; MASTER'S DEGREE OR A SECOND
BACCALAUREATE DEGREE; PILOT

- (a) The provisions of this section shall apply notwithstanding 16 V.S.A. § 2857.
- (b) A National Guard member shall be eligible to pursue a second undergraduate baccalaureate degree under the Vermont National Guard Tuition Benefit Program, whether a resident or nonresident, if the individual received a first undergraduate baccalaureate degree that was not funded under the Program or any other State funding source designed exclusively for members of the Vermont National Guard.
- (c)(1) A National Guard member shall be eligible to pursue a graduate degree under the Program, whether a resident or nonresident, if the individual agrees in the promissory note under 16 V.S.A. § 2857(b) to, upon receipt of the graduate degree and until the individual's service commitment under 16 V.S.A. § 2857(d) is satisfied, be employed full time in Vermont or, if unemployed, be actively seeking full-time employment in Vermont.
- (2) An individual may pursue a graduate degree under the Program even if the individual has received an undergraduate baccalaureate degree under the Program.

(3) The Office of the Vermont Adjutant and Inspector General may terminate the tuition benefit provided to an individual who has earned a graduate degree under the Program for failure to satisfy the work requirement under subdivision (1) this subsection.

Sec. 3. REPEAL

Sec. 2 of this act is repealed on July 1, 2025.

Sec. 4. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on July 1, 2022.