

An Act

ENROLLED SENATE
BILL NO. 31

By: Hicks, Stanley, and Alvord
of the Senate

and

Strom, Burns, and Miller of
the House

An Act relating to career and technology education; creating the Oklahoma National Guard CareerTech Assistance Act; providing short title; defining terms; creating the Oklahoma National Guard CareerTech Assistance Program to provide tuition assistance to certain eligible members; providing for amount of assistance subject to availability of funding; limiting assistance to certain number of years; allowing establishment of certain cap; prohibiting assistance for courses taken in excess of certain requirements; providing for eligibility; providing eligibility retention requirements; providing application process; allowing denial of continued assistance for failure to meet certain requirements; requiring exhaustion of certain federal benefits first; requiring repayment of assistance for failure to meet certain requirement; providing for calculation of repayment amount; allowing for application of hardship waiver; directing certain notification on available funding; providing for promulgation of rules and regulations; directing coordination of rules and regulations; creating the Oklahoma National Guard CareerTech Assistance Revolving Fund; specifying source of fund; providing for expenditures; providing purpose of fund; providing for codification; providing an effective date; and declaring an emergency.

SUBJECT: Career and technology education

BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

SECTION 1. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 14-140 of Title 70, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

A. This act shall be known and may be cited as the "Oklahoma National Guard CareerTech Assistance Act".

B. As used in this act:

1. "Technology center school" means a technology center school under the governance of the State Board of Career and Technology Education;

2. "Eligible Guard member" means a current member of the Oklahoma National Guard in good standing who has a high school diploma or who has completed General Educational Development (GED) requirements and who has enrolled in a technology center school; and

3. "Program" means the Oklahoma National Guard CareerTech Assistance Program established pursuant to the provisions of this section.

C. 1. There is hereby created the Oklahoma National Guard CareerTech Assistance Program to provide assistance to eligible Guard members who enroll in a technology center school. Subject to the availability of funds, the amount of assistance shall be equivalent to the amount of tuition for a career and technology program in which the eligible Guard member is enrolled leading to certification or licensure, not to exceed a maximum of three (3) years.

2. Assistance provided pursuant to this section shall be granted without any limitation other than the amount of funds available for the program and the number of eligible Guard members who apply, subject to any cap established by the Military Department of the State of Oklahoma.

3. Assistance allowed by this section shall not be allowed for courses taken in excess of the requirements for completion of a technology center school program leading to certification or licensure.

D. Assistance provided pursuant to this section shall be allocated to the technology center school from the Oklahoma National Guard CareerTech Assistance Revolving Fund created pursuant to Section 2 of this act.

E. To be eligible to apply for the program, an eligible Guard member shall:

1. Have at least one (1) year remaining on his or her enlistment contract at the beginning of any semester for which the member applies for assistance pursuant to this section;

2. Agree in writing to complete his or her current service obligation in the Oklahoma National Guard; and

3. Agree in writing to serve actively in good standing with the Oklahoma National Guard for not less than twenty-four (24) months after completion of the last semester for which the member receives assistance pursuant to this section.

F. To retain eligibility for the program, an eligible Guard member shall:

1. Maintain good academic standing and satisfactory progress according to standards of the technology center school in which the member is enrolled;

2. Maintain the requirements for retention and completion as established by the technology center school in which the member is enrolled;

3. Maintain a minimum grade point of average of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale;

4. Maintain satisfactory participation in the Oklahoma National Guard; and

5. Possess a Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) or Air Force Specialty Code (AFSC) after his or her first semester.

G. An eligible Guard member seeking assistance pursuant to the provisions of this section shall submit an application on a form prescribed by the Military Department of the State of Oklahoma to the Educational Service Office of the Military Department prior to the semester for which assistance is sought. The eligible Guard member's Commander or his or her designee shall confirm a member's standing and eligibility to the technology center school in which the student is enrolled. The Military Department may establish a cap on the number of eligible Guard members allowed to participate per semester per technology center school program.

H. The eligible Guard member's Commander may deny an application submitted by an eligible Guard member for continued program assistance if he or she fails to comply with the provisions of paragraph 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5 of subsection F of this section.

I. An eligible Guard member seeking assistance pursuant to this section who is eligible for federal education benefits for vocational training shall exhaust all such federal benefits, when available, first.

J. An eligible Guard member who has received program assistance pursuant to the provisions of this section and who fails to comply with the provisions of paragraph 4 of subsection F of this section shall be required to repay an amount to be calculated as follows:

1. Determine the total amount of assistance provided pursuant to the provisions of this section;

2. Divide the amount determined in paragraph 1 of this subsection by twenty-four (24); and

3. Multiply the amount determined in paragraph 2 of this subsection by the number of months the member did not fulfill the requirements of paragraph 4 of subsection F of this section. Repayments shall be deposited into the Oklahoma National Guard CareerTech Assistance Revolving Fund created pursuant to Section 2 of this act.

K. An eligible Guard member who has received program assistance pursuant to the provisions of this section and who fails to comply with the provisions of paragraph 4 of subsection F of this section due to hardship circumstances may request a waiver from repayment. A waiver request shall be submitted in writing to the Adjutant General.

L. By July 1 annually, the State Board of Career and Technology Education shall notify the Adjutant General of the amount of funding available in the Oklahoma National Guard CareerTech Assistance Revolving Fund created pursuant to Section 2 of this act.

M. The State Board of Career and Technology Education shall promulgate rules to implement the provisions of this act including deadlines for submission of applications required by subsection G of this section. The Military Department of the State of Oklahoma shall promulgate regulations pertaining to the application process and the determination of eligibility for the program. The Board and the Department shall coordinate the promulgation of rules and regulations, respectively. The Adjutant General may promulgate regulations to implement the provisions of this act.

SECTION 2. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 14-141 of Title 70, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

There is hereby created in the State Treasury a revolving fund for the State Board of Career and Technology Education to be designated the "Oklahoma National Guard CareerTech Assistance Revolving Fund". The fund shall be a continuing fund, not subject to fiscal year limitations, and shall consist of all monies received by the State Board of Career and Technology Education from state appropriations provided for the purpose of implementing the provisions of Section 1 of this act. All monies accruing to the credit of the fund are hereby appropriated and may be budgeted and expended by the State Board of Career and Technology Education for the purpose of providing assistance to eligible Guard members pursuant to the provisions of Section 1 of this act. Expenditures from the fund shall be made upon warrants issued by the State Treasurer against claims filed as prescribed by law with the Director of the Office of Management and Enterprise Services for approval and payment.

SECTION 3. This act shall become effective July 1, 2025.

SECTION 4. It being immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, an emergency is hereby declared to exist, by reason whereof this act shall take effect and be in full force from and after its passage and approval.

Passed the Senate the 22nd day of May, 2025.

Presiding Officer of the Senate

Passed the House of Representatives the 22nd day of May, 2025.

Presiding Officer of the House
of Representatives

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Received by the Office of the Governor this _____

day of _____, 20_____, at _____ o'clock _____ M.

By: _____

Approved by the Governor of the State of Oklahoma this _____

day of _____, 20_____, at _____ o'clock _____ M.

Governor of the State of Oklahoma

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE

Received by the Office of the Secretary of State this _____

day of _____, 20_____, at _____ o'clock _____ M.

By: _____