

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
1997 SESSION

SESSION LAW 1997-505  
HOUSE BILL 1142

AN ACT TO WAIVE TUITION FOR CHILDREN OR SPOUSES OF CERTAIN  
EMERGENCY WORKERS KILLED OR DISABLED IN THE LINE OF DUTY.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

Section 1. The title of Chapter 115B reads as rewritten:  
"Tuition ~~Waiver for Senior Citizens.~~ Waivers."

Section 2. G.S. 115B-1 reads as rewritten:

**"§ 115B-1. ~~Definition.~~ Definitions.**

~~As used in this Chapter, "tuition" shall mean the~~ The following definitions apply in this Chapter:

- (1) Employer. - The State of North Carolina and its departments, agencies, and institutions; or a county, city, town, or other political subdivision of the State.
- (2) Firefighter or volunteer firefighter. - The same as provided in G.S. 58-86-25 for 'eligible firemen'.
- (3) Law enforcement officer. - An employee or volunteer of an employer who possesses the power of arrest, who has taken the law enforcement oath administered under the authority of the State as prescribed by G.S. 11-11, and who is certified as a law enforcement officer under the provisions of Chapter 17C of the General Statutes or certified as a deputy sheriff under the provisions of Chapter 17E of the General Statutes. 'Law enforcement officer' also means the sheriff of the county.
- (4) Permanently and totally disabled as a direct result of a traumatic injury sustained in the line of duty. -- A person: (i) who as a law enforcement officer, firefighter, volunteer firefighter, or rescue squad worker suffered a disabling injury while in active service or training for active service, (ii) who at the time of active service or training was a North Carolina resident, and (iii) who has been determined to be permanently and totally disabled for compensation purposes by the North Carolina Industrial Commission.
- (5) Rescue squad worker. - The same as provided in G.S. 58-86-30 for 'eligible rescue squad worker'.

- (6) Survivor. - Any person whose parent or spouse: (i) was a law enforcement officer, a firefighter, a volunteer firefighter, or a rescue squad worker, (ii) was killed while in active service or training for active service or died as a result of a service-connected disability, and (iii) at the time of active service or training was a North Carolina resident. The term does not include the widow or widower of a law enforcement officer, firefighter, volunteer firefighter, or a rescue squad worker if the widow or widower has remarried.
- (7) Tuition. - The amount charged for registering for a credit hour of instruction and shall not be construed to mean any other fees or charges or costs of textbooks."

Section 3. G.S. 115B-2 reads as rewritten:

**"§ 115B-2. Tuition waiver authorized.**

State-supported institutions of higher education, community colleges, industrial education centers and technical institutes, shall permit ~~legal residents of North Carolina who have attained the age of 65~~ the following persons to attend classes for credit or noncredit purposes without the required payment of tuition; provided, however, that such persons meet admission and other standards deemed appropriate by the educational institution, and provided further that such persons shall be accepted by the constituent institutions of the University of North Carolina only on a spaces-available ~~basis.~~ basis:

- (1) Legal residents of North Carolina who have attained the age of 65.
- (2) Any person who is the survivor of a law enforcement officer, firefighter, volunteer firefighter, or rescue squad worker killed as a direct result of a traumatic injury sustained in the line of duty.
- (3) The spouse of a law enforcement officer, firefighter, volunteer firefighter, or rescue squad worker who is permanently and totally disabled as a direct result of a traumatic injury sustained in the line of duty.
- (4) Any child, if the child is at least 17 years old but not yet 23 years old, whose parent is a law enforcement officer, firefighter, volunteer firefighter, or rescue squad worker who is permanently and totally disabled as a direct result of a traumatic injury sustained in the line of duty. However, a child's eligibility for a waiver of tuition under this Chapter shall not exceed: (i) 48 months, if the child is seeking a baccalaureate degree, or (ii) if the child is not seeking a baccalaureate degree, the number of months required to complete the educational program to which the child is applying."

Section 4. G.S. 115B-5 reads as rewritten:

**"§ 115B-5. Proof of eligibility.**

(a) The officials of such institutions charged with administration of this Chapter may require such proof as they deem necessary to insure that ~~the a~~ a person applying to the institution as a senior citizen is eligible for the benefits provided by this Chapter.

(b) The officials of the institutions charged with administration of this Chapter shall require the following proof to insure that a person applying to the institution and who requests a tuition waiver under G.S. 115B-2(2), (3), or (4) is eligible for the benefits provided by this Chapter.

- (1) The parent-child relationship shall be verified by a birth certificate, legal adoption papers, or other documentary evidence deemed appropriate by the institution.
- (2) The marital relationship shall be verified by a marriage certificate or other documentary evidence deemed appropriate by the institution.
- (3) The cause of death of the law enforcement officer, firefighter, volunteer firefighter, or rescue squad worker shall be verified by certification from the records of the Department of State Treasurer, the appropriate city or county law enforcement agency that employed the deceased, the administrative agency for the fire department or fire protection district recognized for funding under the Department of State Auditor, or the administrative agency having jurisdiction over any paid firefighters of all counties and cities.
- (4) The permanent and total disability shall be verified by documentation deemed necessary by the institution from the North Carolina Industrial Commission."

Section 5. Chapter 115B is amended by adding a new section to read:

**"§ 115B-5A. Student to be credited for scholarship value.**

If a person obtains a tuition waiver under G.S. 115B-2(2), (3), or (4) and the person also receives a cash scholarship paid or payable to the institution, from whatever source, the amount of the scholarship shall be applied to the credit of the person in the payment of incidental expenses of the person's attendance at the institution, and any balance, if the terms of the scholarship permit, shall be returned to the student."

Section 6. This act becomes effective October 1, 1997, and applies to deaths or disabilities occurring on or after that date.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 28th day of August, 1997.

s/ Marc Basnight  
President Pro Tempore of the Senate

s/ Harold J. Brubaker  
Speaker of the House of Representatives

s/ James B. Hunt, Jr.  
Governor

Approved 9:35 a.m. this 16th day of September, 1997