

EMERGE Program; Cardiac Emergency Response Plans; SB 19

SB 19 establishes the Kansas National Guard Education Master's for Enhanced Readiness and Global Excellence (EMERGE) Program to provide financial assistance to Kansas National Guard members pursuing master's degrees at Kansas educational institutions and requires school districts to adopt cardiac emergency response plans based on the statewide standards developed by the Secretary of Health and Environment.

EMERGE Program

National Guard Member Selection

The bill requires, on or before July 1 of each academic year, the Adjutant General to select up to 100 eligible National Guard members who have applied to the EMERGE Program to receive assistance. The bill caps the number of eligible National Guard members in the program at 200 members in any one school year.

Financial Assistance

The bill, subject to appropriations, provides eligible National Guard members who are enrolled at Kansas educational institutions and participating in the program to receive financial assistance for tuition and fees each semester. The bill provides each participant with financial assistance in an amount equal to the tuition and required fees for the semester, with the following requirements and adjustments:

- The number of credit hours may not exceed 15.0 credit hours in one semester;
- The aggregate number of credit hours taken by a participant may not exceed 150.0 percent of the total credit hours needed for the master's degree;
- The course is not being repeated or taken in excess of the master's degree program requirements;
- The tuition and required fees do not exceed the maximum rate that may be charged by a state educational institution for enrollment of the eligible National Guard member; and
- The amounts of federal or institutional tuition assistance received by the eligible National Guard member shall be deducted from that participant's state benefits.

Participation Requirements

The bill requires National Guard members participating in the program to agree, in writing, to complete the member's current service obligation and to serve actively and in good

standing for no less than 48 months following the completion of the program. The bill also requires participating members to submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and apply for any other federal tuition assistance available.

Each participating National Guard member will be required to remain in good standing with their Kansas educational institution, make satisfactory progress toward completion of the requirements of their degree, and maintain a grade point average of no less than 2.75 in order to continue their participation in the program.

Clawbacks

The bill requires any participating National Guard member who received benefits under the program but failed to meet the requirement of continued service to repay to the State an amount of money determined in the following manner:

- Determine the total amount of assistance paid to such member under the program;
- Divide the amount determined by 48; and
- Multiply the amount determined by the number of months such member did not serve as required by the bill.

The bill requires all repayments made in this manner to be deposited in the State Treasury and credited to the Kansas National Guard EMERGE Repayment Fund (Fund).

State Board of Regents

The bill requires the State Board of Regents to administer the program and carry out the following activities:

- Establish a mechanism to ensure distribution of funds for tuition and fee reimbursement to Kansas educational institutions;
- Enter into a cooperative relationship with the Adjutant General to ensure efficient operation of the program;
- Develop and effectuate a system of accountability for all disbursements of funds and provide written reports as required; and
- Coordinate with the Adjutant General to create a procedure to ensure initial and ongoing eligibility of participating National Guard members in the program.

The bill authorizes the State Board of Regents to adopt rules and regulations to assist in administering the program.

Definitions

The bill defines, among others, the following terms:

- “Educational program” means a master’s degree program offered or maintained by a Kansas educational institution that leads to the award of a master’s degree to an eligible guard member upon satisfactory completion of course work;
- “Eligible guard member” means any member of the Kansas National Guard who has been accepted into an eligible master’s degree program and who is not under a suspension of favorable flag action or on the unit unfavorable information file; and
- “Kansas educational institution” means a state educational institution as defined by law, Washburn University, or an accredited independent institution as defined by law.

Establishment of Fund

The bill establishes the Fund in the State Treasury. The Fund will be administered by the State Board of Regents, and all expenditures from the Fund must be for National Guard member financial assistance under the program.

Cardiac Emergency Response Plans

Statewide Standards

The bill requires the Secretary of Health and Environment (Secretary) to develop statewide standards for cardiac emergency response plans in accordance with nationally recognized guidelines.

School District Cardiac Emergency Response Plans

The bill requires the board of education of each school district to adopt a comprehensive cardiac emergency response plan based on the statewide standards developed by the Secretary. Each board of education may be permitted to use any materials, documentation, video recordings, training modules, and certifications published by organizations focused on emergency cardiovascular care.

The bill requires a cardiac emergency response plan to include at least the following:

- Establishing a cardiac emergency response team;
- Identifying and implementing the placement of automated external defibrillators (AEDs);

- Identifying roles and responsibilities of school district and emergency personnel in implementing the emergency response plan;
- Establishing procedures, such as the roles and responsibilities of school district personnel when responding to emergency cardiovascular incidents at school or at the site of any school-sponsored activity, that would include, but not be limited to:
 - Responding to individuals experiencing a suspected sudden cardiac arrest;
 - Summoning emergency medical services (EMS);
 - Assisting EMS providers; and
 - Documenting actions taken during such incident;
- Conducting routine maintenance and placement of AEDs in accordance with statewide standards;
- Rehearsing cardiac emergency response plans either prior to the beginning of each athletic season or prior to the beginning of each school year;
- Establishing communication systems with local EMS operating within the school district; and
- Developing a cardiac emergency response plan for school-sponsored events held at a location that is not on school district property.

Reviewing and Submitting Cardiac Emergency Response Plans

Each board of education is required to annually review the cardiac emergency response plan and adopt any changes to such plan as necessary. Additionally, each school district is required to submit to the Secretary a copy of the adopted cardiac emergency response plan and, if changes are made to such plan, a copy of the amended plan.