

ASSEMBLY, No. 2425

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 221st LEGISLATURE

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2024 SESSION

Sponsored by:

Assemblywoman ANNETTE QUIJANO

District 20 (Union)

Assemblyman REGINALD W. ATKINS

District 20 (Union)

Co-Sponsored by:

Assemblywomen Bagolie and Reynolds-Jackson

SYNOPSIS

Provides that State pay high school equivalency exam fees for low-income individuals.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As reported by the Assembly Education Committee with technical review.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 6/20/2024)

A2425 QUIJANO, ATKINS

2

1 AN ACT concerning high school equivalency exam fees,
2 supplementing chapter 50A of Title 18A of the New Jersey
3 Statutes, and amending P.L.1992, c.43.
4

5 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State
6 of New Jersey:

7
8 1. (New section) a. No later than six months following the
9 effective date of P.L. , c. (C.) (pending before the Legislature
10 as this bill), the State Board of Education shall establish a program
11 to pay the fee of a high school equivalency exam on behalf of a
12 low-income individual. The State board shall specify the manner in
13 which an individual may apply for the payment, including the
14 documentation that shall be used to verify the individual's income.
15 The program established by the State board shall not provide
16 payment for more than one exam for an individual.

17 b. As used in this section:

18 "High school equivalency exam" means any adult education
19 assessment approved by the State board as a basis for qualifying for
20 a State-issued high school diploma;

21 "Low-income individual" means an individual who resides in a
22 household in which the household income is less than or equal to
23 185 percent of the most recent federal poverty guidelines available.
24

25 2. Section 9 of P.L.1992, c.43 (C.34:15D-9) is amended to read
26 as follows:

27 9. a. A restricted, nonlapsing, revolving Workforce
28 Development Partnership Fund, to be managed and invested by the
29 State Treasurer, is hereby established to: provide employment and
30 training services to qualified displaced, disadvantaged and
31 employed workers by means of training grants or customized
32 training services; provide for the other costs indicated in subsection
33 a. of section 4 of P.L.1992, c.43 (C.34:15D-4); provide for the New
34 Jersey Innovation and Research Fellowship Program as provided for
35 in section 3 of P.L.2015, c.235 (C.34:15D-26); provide for the
36 Talent Network Program as provided for in section 2 of P.L.2019,
37 c.125 (C.34:15D-29); and facilitate the provision of education and
38 training to youth by means of grants provided by the Youth
39 Transitions to Work Partnership pursuant to the provisions of
40 P.L.1993, c.268 (C.34:15E-1 et al.). All appropriations to the fund,
41 all interest accumulated on balances in the fund and all cash
42 received for the fund from any other source shall be used solely for
43 the purposes specifically delineated by this act.

44 b. During any fiscal year beginning after June 30, 2001, of the
45 total revenues dedicated to the program during any one fiscal year:

EXPLANATION – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

1 (1) 25% shall be deposited in an account of the Workforce
2 Development Partnership Fund reserved to provide employment and
3 training services for qualified displaced workers, and through fiscal
4 year 2023, not less than 10% of the revenues deposited in that
5 account shall be reserved to provide employment and training
6 services to qualified displaced workers in the pursuit of industry-
7 valued credentials under the pilot program established pursuant to
8 P.L.2019, c.252 (C.34:15D-30 et al.); and during any fiscal year
9 beginning after June 30, 2019, 0.5% shall be deposited in an
10 account of the Workforce Development Partnership Fund reserved
11 for an appropriated to the Department of Labor and Workforce
12 Development for the Apprenticeship Start-Up Grant Program
13 created pursuant to section 3 of P.L.2019, c.417 (C.34:15D-6.1);

14 (2) 6% shall be deposited in an account of the Workforce
15 Development Partnership Fund reserved to provide employment and
16 training services for qualified disadvantaged workers, and through
17 fiscal year 2023, not less than 10% of the revenues deposited in that
18 account shall be reserved to provide employment and training
19 services to qualified disadvantaged workers in the pursuit of
20 industry-valued credentials under the pilot program established
21 pursuant to P.L.2019, c.252 (C.34:15D-30 et al.);

22 (3) 37% prior to July 1, 2022, and 35% after June 30, 2022 shall
23 be deposited in an account of the Workforce Development
24 Partnership Fund reserved for and appropriated to the Office of
25 Customized Training;

26 (4) 5% prior to July 1, 2022, and 7% after June 30, 2022 shall be
27 deposited in an account of the Workforce Development Partnership
28 Fund reserved for the Youth Transitions to Work Partnership
29 created pursuant to P.L.1993, c.268 (C.34:15E-1 et seq.);

30 (5) 3% shall be deposited in an account of the Workforce
31 Development Partnership Fund reserved for occupational safety and
32 health training;

33 (6) 5% shall be deposited in an account of the Workforce
34 Development Partnership Fund reserved for and appropriated to the
35 Talent Network Program established pursuant to section 2 of
36 P.L.2019, c.125 (C.34:15D-29);

37 (7) 3% shall be deposited in an account of the Workforce
38 Development Partnership Fund reserved for the New Jersey
39 Innovation and Research Fellowship Program established pursuant
40 to section 3 of P.L.2015, c.235 (C.34:15D-26);

41 (8) 10% shall be deposited in an account of the Workforce
42 Development Partnership Fund reserved for administrative costs as
43 defined in section 3 of P.L.1992, c.43 (C.34:15D-3);

44 (9) 0.5% shall be deposited in an account of the Workforce
45 Development Partnership Fund reserved for the State Employment
46 and Training Commission to design criteria and conduct an annual
47 evaluation of the program; and

A2425 QUIJANO, ATKINS

1 (10) 5% shall be deposited in an account of the Workforce
2 Development Partnership Fund to be used , pursuant to the
3 provisions of P.L., c. (C.) (pending before the Legislature as
4 this bill), to pay the fee for an adult education assessment exam,
5 and, at the discretion of the commissioner, for any of the purposes
6 indicated in subsection a. of section 4 of P.L.1992, c.43 (C.34:15D-
7 4).

8 c. Beginning January 1, 1995, through June 30, 2002, the
9 balance in the fund as of the previous December 31, as determined
10 in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles, shall
11 not exceed 1.5 times the amount of contributions deposited for the
12 calendar year then ended. If the balance exceeds this amount, the
13 excess shall be deposited into the unemployment compensation
14 fund within seven business days of the date that the determination is
15 made.

16 d. Beginning July 1, 2002, and for any subsequent fiscal year,
17 if the unexpended cash balance in any of the accounts indicated in
18 subsection b. of this section, except for the account reserved for the
19 Talent Network Program, less any amount awarded in grants but not
20 yet disbursed from the account, is determined to exceed 20% of the
21 amount of contributions collected for deposit in the account
22 pursuant to this subsection during the fiscal year then ended, the
23 excess shall be regarded as an unemployment compensation
24 contribution and deposited into the unemployment compensation
25 fund within seven business days of the date that the determination is
26 made. If the unexpended cash balance in the account reserved for
27 the Talent Network Program, less any amount awarded in grants but
28 not yet disbursed from the account, is determined to exceed 20% of
29 the amount of contributions collected for deposit in the account
30 pursuant to this subsection during the fiscal year then ended, the
31 excess shall be deposited into the Workforce Development
32 Partnership Fund account reserved for the Office of Customized
33 Training.

34 e. \$250,000 shall be allocated to the Apprentice Assistance and
35 Support Services Pilot Program established pursuant to section 1 of
36 P.L.2019, c.419 (C.34:15D-6.2) from the \$29,690,000 which was
37 appropriated pursuant to the annual appropriations act for State
38 fiscal year 2019 from the Workforce Development Partnership Fund
39 for the purpose of funding Work First New Jersey Work Activities
40 and Work First New Jersey-Training Related Expenses, and,
41 \$1,100,000 shall be allocated to the pilot program in each of fiscal
42 years 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, and 2024 from the amounts
43 appropriated pursuant to the annual appropriations act in those
44 fiscal years from the Workforce Development Partnership Fund for
45 the purpose of funding Work First New Jersey Work Activities and
46 Work First New Jersey-Training Related Expenses. Of the funds
47 allocated to the pilot program pursuant to this subsection, 90% shall

1 be dedicated to the Child Care Stipend program and 10% to
2 transportation reimbursement.
3 f. Upon the effective date of P.L.2022, c.89 (C.34:15E-6 et al.)
4 and notwithstanding the provisions of any law or regulation to the
5 contrary, in addition to the amount deposited in an account of the
6 Workforce Development Partnership Fund reserved for the Youth
7 Transitions to Work Partnership pursuant to subsection b. of this
8 section, \$1,000,000 shall be allocated to the Youth Transitions to
9 Work Partnership from the \$22,500,000 which was appropriated
10 pursuant to the annual appropriations act for State fiscal year 2022
11 from the Workforce Development Partnership Fund for the purpose
12 of funding the NJ Apprenticeship Network, the Career Accelerator
13 Internship Program, the Workforce Development Policy and
14 Evaluation Lab, the NJ Career Network, and such other priority
15 workforce initiatives recommended by the Commissioner of Labor
16 and Workforce Development.
17 (cf: P.L.2022, c.89, s.2)
18
19 3. This act shall take effect immediately.