

CHAPTER 132

AN ACT creating the "Statewide Tuition Waiver Program" for certain students under the care or custody of the State and supplementing P.L.1951, c.138 (C.30:4C-1 et seq.).

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

C.30:4C-101 "Tuition" defined.

1. As used in this act:

"Tuition" means the charges imposed by a New Jersey public institution of higher education or county vocational school providing post-secondary vocational education, for enrollment at the institution or school.

C.30:4C-102 "State Tuition Waiver Program."

2. There is created in the Department of Human Services the "Statewide Tuition Waiver Program." The purpose of the program is to provide State-paid tuition to children who have been under the care and custody of the Division of Youth and Family Services pursuant to section 11 of P.L.1951, c.138 (C.30:4C-11), and who are interested in pursuing a college or post-secondary vocational education at a public institution of higher education or county vocational school in this State.

C.30:4C-103 Eligibility requirements for program.

3. a. A child shall be eligible to qualify for the program if the child meets the following requirements at the time of the initial application to the Commissioner of Human Services for a tuition waiver pursuant to subsection b. of this section:

(1) the child is 16 to 23 years of age;

(2) the child:

(a) has been in the care and custody of the Division of Youth and Family Services in the Department of Human Services for a period of nine months or more following the child's sixteenth birthday;

(b) is or has been residing in an independent living arrangement, or a transitional living program established pursuant to P.L.1999, c.224 (C.9:12A-2 et seq.), operated or approved for payment by the division; or

(c) is or has been residing in a transitional living program located in the State of New Jersey and approved for payment by the federal government pursuant to the federal "Runaway and Homeless Youth Act," Title III of Pub.L.93-415 (42 U.S.C.A. s.5701 et seq.);

(3) the child has received a high school diploma or a certificate of high school equivalency; and

(4) the child has been granted admission to a New Jersey public institution of higher education or county vocational school.

b. A child who meets the eligibility requirements listed in this section may apply to the Commissioner of Human Services for a tuition waiver in a form and manner prescribed by the commissioner.

c. Upon receipt of an application, the Commissioner of Human Services shall review the application and if the child meets the program eligibility requirements, the commissioner shall approve the application and notify the appropriate New Jersey public institution of higher education or county vocational school that the child qualifies for a tuition waiver.

d. Eligibility for the program shall be limited to five years from the date the child applied to the Commissioner of Human Services for a tuition waiver pursuant to subsection b. of this section.

e. Each child approved for the program shall be required to enroll in a full-time degree, diploma or certificate program or course of undergraduate study and retain satisfactory academic progress during the time the child qualifies for a tuition waiver.

C.30:4C-104 Application procedure, maximum benefit.

4. The applicant shall complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid to determine the level of need and eligibility for State and federal financial aid programs. If the sum of the tuition waiver plus other federal, State and institutional student financial assistance, except loans, exceeds the total cost of the child's tuition, the tuition waiver shall be reduced by the amount

exceeding that cost.

C.30:4C-105 Rules, regulations.

5. Subject to the "Administrative Procedure Act," P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.), the Commissioner of Human Services, in consultation with the Higher Education Student Assistance Authority shall adopt rules and regulations to effectuate the purposes of this act.

6. This act shall take effect immediately.

Approved July 17, 2003.