§12542. Program established

1. Program created; goals. The Job Creation Through Educational Opportunity Program, referred to in this chapter as "the program," is created to provide a student loan repayment tax credit. The program is designed to achieve the following goals:

A. Promote economic opportunity for people in this State by ensuring access to the training and higher education that higher-paying jobs require; [PL 2007, c. 469, Pt. A, §1 (NEW).]

B. Bring more and higher-paying jobs to this State by increasing the skill level of this State's workforce; [PL 2007, c. 469, Pt. A, §1 (NEW).]

C. Offer educational opportunity and retraining to individuals impacted by job loss, workplace injury, disability or other hardship; [PL 2007, c. 469, Pt. A, §1 (NEW).]

D. Keep young people in this State through incentives for educational opportunity and creation of more high-paying jobs; and [PL 2007, c. 469, Pt. A, §1 (NEW).]

E. Accomplish all of the goals in this subsection with as little bureaucracy as possible. [PL 2007, c. 469, Pt. A, §1 (NEW).]

[PL 2021, c. 635, Pt. H, §7 (AMD).]

2. Principal cap.

[PL 2009, c. 553, Pt. A, §8 (RP).]

2-A. Principal cap.

[PL 2013, c. 525, §8 (RP).]

3. Eligibility for the program.

[PL 2013, c. 525, §9 (RP).]

3-A. Educational loans.

[PL 2013, c. 525, §10 (RP).]

4. Administration.

[PL 2009, c. 553, Pt. A, §12 (RP).]

4-A. Administration. The program must be administered as described in this subsection.

A. The department, in consultation with the State Tax Assessor, shall make information about the program available on the department's publicly accessible website. The department shall refer any questions regarding the program to the relevant accredited Maine community college, college or university's financial aid office. The assessor shall provide to an accredited Maine community college, college or university information that is necessary to document a student's eligibility for the student loan repayment tax credit. [PL 2021, c. 635, Pt. H, §8 (AMD).]

B. An accredited Maine community college, college or university shall, at a minimum, provide information about the program in financial aid award materials, entrance interviews, exit interviews, materials listing financial aid resources and, as appropriate, any promotional materials provided by state agencies, to the extent such contacts with students are already part of the accredited Maine community college, college or university's procedures. [PL 2021, c. 635, Pt. H, §8 (AMD).]

C. [PL 2021, c. 635, Pt. H, §8 (RP).]

D. [PL 2013, c. 525, §12 (RP).]

[PL 2021, c. 635, Pt. H, §8 (AMD).]

5. Effective date; participation by individual already enrolled in degree program.

[PL 2021, c. 635, Pt. H, §9 (RP).]

6. Promotion by state agencies. The department, the Finance Authority of Maine, the Department of Economic and Community Development and any other agency engaging in education-related outreach shall integrate promotion of the program into existing educational opportunity outreach efforts to the extent possible in a manner consistent with the scope of the program and its centrality to the State's efforts to raise educational attainment.

A. The department shall notify superintendents about the program annually and encourage the superintendents to publicize the availability of the program among students, parents and school staff. [PL 2013, c. 417, §1 (NEW).]

B. The Department of Labor shall require that publicly funded workforce development programs, including state and local workforce boards and the Competitive Skills Scholarship Program established in Title 26, section 2033, include within their plans and programs efforts to promote and increase awareness of the program. [PL 2017, c. 110, §5 (AMD).]

[PL 2017, c. 110, §5 (AMD).]

7. Promotion by institutions. Public higher education institutions identified in section 12541, subsection 1, paragraphs A to C shall make reasonable efforts to inform students about the program. [PL 2013, c. 417, §2 (NEW).]

8. Publicity. To assist institutions of higher education to promote the program, the Finance Authority of Maine shall contract with a private nonprofit corporation in the amount of at least $20,000 annually to market the program throughout the State, targeting high schools, postsecondary educational institutions and organizations of parents, teachers and other relevant audiences. Marketing efforts must include printed materials, online information and in-person promotional efforts. [PL 2013, c. 417, §2 (NEW).]

SECTION HISTORY

PL 2007, c. 469, Pt. A, §1 (NEW). PL 2009, c. 553, Pt. A, §§8-15 (AMD). PL 2011, c. 548, §7 (AMD). PL 2011, c. 665, §§2-4 (AMD). PL 2013, c. 417, §§1, 2 (AMD). PL 2013, c. 525, §§7-13 (AMD). PL 2017, c. 110, §5 (AMD). PL 2021, c. 635, Pt. H, §§7-9 (AMD).

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