

256.228 Future ready Iowa skilled workforce last-dollar scholarship program.

1. *Definitions.* As used in [this section](#), unless the context otherwise requires:

a. “*Adult learner*” means a person who, following receipt of a high school diploma or high school equivalency diploma and on or after attaining the age of twenty, enrolls on a full-time or part-time basis in an eligible program at an eligible institution and maintains continuous enrollment on a full-time or part-time basis in subsequent terms to receive additional awards. A person’s age for purposes of this paragraph shall be calculated on July 1 prior to the year of enrollment in an eligible institution.

b. “*Approved state-recognized work-based learning program*” means a structured educational and training program that includes authentic worksite training and is approved by the department according to a process established under rules adopted pursuant to [section 256.7, subsection 34](#).

c. “*Commission*” means the college student aid commission.

d. “*Credential*” means a postsecondary certificate, diploma, or degree, conferring no more than an associate degree, awarded by an eligible institution and earned in a program of study that leads to a high-demand job and is authorized for federal student aid under Tit. IV of the federal Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended.

e. “*Eligible institution*” means a community college as defined in [section 260C.2](#) or an accredited private institution as defined in [section 256.183](#), that meets all of the following criteria:

(1) Applies to and is approved by the commission to participate in the future ready Iowa skilled workforce last-dollar scholarship program.

(2) Requires eligible students to complete and file application forms required by the commission, apply for all available state and federal financial aid, apply to the eligible institution to participate in the program, attend orientation in person or virtually, register for classes with the assistance of an academic advisor, and participate in academic and career advising sessions offered under the program.

(3) Facilitates, in collaboration with the commission on volunteer service created in [section 15H.2](#), the assignment of a volunteer mentor to each eligible student, based on the eligible student’s interest. The volunteer mentor shall have successfully passed a background investigation and a check of the national sex offender registry as required under [section 15H.10, subsection 2](#), and both the eligible student and the volunteer mentor shall have entered into a written agreement as provided in [section 15H.10, subsection 3](#).

(4) Facilitates connections through campus career centers and services to internships and similar local, state, and federal programs.

(5) Markets the eligible institution’s future ready Iowa program of study and optional incentives, which may include but not be limited to credit for military experience, on the eligible institution’s internet site and to other relevant agencies and organizations as recommended by the college student aid commission, the commission on volunteer service, or the department of workforce development.

(6) Submits annually information and data regarding the eligible program operated by the eligible institution, the students and volunteer mentors participating in the eligible program, scholarship recipient eligible program completion results, and statistics on employment outcomes for eligible program participants by industry, to the commission in the manner required by the commission.

f. “*Eligible program*” means a program of study or an academic major jointly approved by the commission and the department of workforce development, in consultation with an eligible institution, that leads to a credential aligned with a high-demand job designated by the workforce development board or a community college pursuant to [section 84A.1B, subsection 14](#). If the board or a community college removes a high-demand job from a list created under [section 84A.1B, subsection 14](#), an eligible student who received a scholarship for a program based on that high-demand job shall continue to receive the scholarship until achieving a postsecondary credential, up to an associate degree, as long as the student continues to meet all other eligibility requirements.

g. “*Eligible student*” means an Iowa resident who meets all of the following requirements:

(1) Is any of the following:

(a) A graduate of an Iowa high school, or a person who completed private instruction under [chapter 299A](#), or a person who is a recipient of a high school equivalency diploma, and who prior to becoming an adult learner enrolls full-time or part-time during the academic year or summer semester in an eligible program at an eligible institution.

(b) A graduate of an Iowa high school or a person who completed private instruction under [chapter 299A](#), or a recipient of a high school equivalency diploma, and who prior to becoming an adult learner, enters into full-time or part-time employment as part of an approved state-recognized work-based learning program, and enrolls full-time or part-time in an eligible program in an eligible institution.

(c) An adult learner who is at least age twenty at the beginning of the state fiscal year, who has received a high school diploma or a high school equivalency diploma, and who enrolls in an eligible program in an eligible institution as a full-time or part-time student.

(2) Completes and submits application forms required by the commission, including the free application for federal student aid; applies for all available state and federal financial aid; attends orientation in person or virtually; registers for classes with the assistance of an academic advisor; and participates in academic and career advising sessions required under the eligible program.

(3) Is making satisfactory academic progress as defined by the eligible institution.

(4) Remains continuously enrolled unless granted a leave of absence by the eligible institution based on criteria adopted by rule by the commission.

(5) Has a student aid index of less than or equal to twenty thousand dollars at the time of initial application, as determined by the application forms submitted pursuant to subparagraph (2), including the free application for federal student aid.

h. “*Full-time*” means enrollment in at least twelve semester hours or the equivalent.

i. “*Part-time*” means enrollment in at least six but less than twelve semester hours or the equivalent.

2. *Allowable activities.* An eligible student may work with an assigned volunteer mentor to help the student meet the requirements of [this section](#) or the requirements of an eligible program, identify and participate in work-based learning opportunities with the approval of the eligible institution, and make other career-related connections.

3. *Scholarship limitations — requirements.*

a. For an eligible student who is attending an eligible institution that is a community college during the fall, spring, or summer term of enrollment, and is pursuing a postsecondary credential up to an associate degree, the annual amount of a future ready Iowa skilled workforce last-dollar scholarship, when combined with other state and federal nonrepayable student aid, shall not exceed an amount equivalent to the tuition and any mandatory institution-wide fees charged by the community college for the eligible program. For an eligible student pursuing a postsecondary credential up to an associate degree at an eligible institution that is an accredited private institution during the fall, spring, or summer term of enrollment, the annual amount of a future ready Iowa skilled workforce last-dollar scholarship, when combined with other state and federal nonrepayable student aid, shall not exceed an amount equivalent to the average tuition rate plus the average institution-wide mandatory fees charged during the same term of enrollment by the eligible institutions that are community colleges.

b. If an eligible student receives nonrepayable financial aid under any other state or federal program, the full amount of that aid shall be considered part of the student’s available financial resources before determining the amount of the student’s future ready Iowa skilled workforce last-dollar scholarship for the same period during which the student receives other state or federal financial aid. However, each eligible student enrolled full-time in an eligible program shall receive at least five hundred dollars annually, and the amount received by each eligible part-time student shall be the same amount prorated by the commission based on the number of semester hours, or the equivalent, for which the part-time student is enrolled.

c. A full-time eligible student may receive a future ready Iowa skilled workforce last-dollar scholarship for not more than five semesters, or the equivalent, or until the

eligible student earns the credential sought, up to an associate degree, under the program, whichever occurs first. A part-time eligible student may receive the scholarship for not more than eight semesters, or the equivalent, on a prorated basis, or until the eligible student earns the credential sought, up to an associate degree, under the eligible program, whichever occurs first. All classes identified by an eligible institution as required for completion of the eligible program by the eligible student shall be considered required under the eligible program for purposes of [this section](#).

d. A future ready Iowa skilled workforce last-dollar scholarship shall be awarded for a two-year period, or prior to the expiration of a two-year period if the student earns the credential or associate degree sought within such period. Scholarship payments shall be allocated equally among the semesters, or the equivalent, and paid upon certification by the eligible institution that the student meets the requirements of [subsection 1](#), paragraph “g”.

e. If a scholarship recipient discontinues attendance before the end of any semester, or the equivalent, after receiving scholarship payments, the entire amount of any refund due that recipient, up to the full amount of all of the annual scholarship payments made, shall be paid by the eligible institution to the commission. A scholarship recipient, who is not approved for a leave of absence by the eligible institution, who discontinues attendance before the end of a semester, or the equivalent, is ineligible to receive future scholarships under [this section](#).

4. *Commission’s duties and responsibilities.* Subject to an appropriation of funds by the general assembly for purposes of [this section](#), the commission shall administer the future ready Iowa skilled workforce last-dollar scholarship program and shall do all of the following:

a. Provide application forms for distribution to students by high schools and eligible institutions.

b. Adopt rules under [chapter 17A](#), in collaboration with the department of workforce development, for administration of [this section](#), including but not limited to establishing the duties and responsibilities of eligible institutions under the program; defining residence and satisfactory academic progress for purposes of the program; and establishing procedures for scholarship application, processing, and approval. The rules shall provide for determining the priority awarding of scholarships if funds available for purposes of [this section](#) are insufficient to pay all eligible students. Priority shall be given to fully awarding each eligible student approved for a scholarship rather than to prorating scholarship awards among all eligible students.

c. Approve and award future ready Iowa skilled workforce last-dollar scholarships on an annual basis.

d. Transmit to the department of workforce development the compilation of information, data, and statistics submitted in accordance with [subsection 1](#), paragraph “e”, subparagraph (6), for the annual report required under [section 84A.1B](#).

5. *Fund created.* A future ready Iowa skilled workforce last-dollar scholarship fund is created in the state treasury as a separate fund under the control of the commission. All moneys deposited or paid into the fund are appropriated and made available to the commission to be used for scholarships awarded as provided under [this section](#). Notwithstanding [section 8.33](#), any balance in the fund on June 30 of each fiscal year shall not revert to the general fund of the state, but shall be available for purposes of [this section](#) in subsequent fiscal years.

[2018 Acts, ch 1067, §12, 15; 2018 Acts, ch 1172, §24](#)

C2020, §261.131

[2020 Acts, ch 1117, §16, 17; 2022 Acts, ch 1107, §1; 2023 Acts, ch 19, §2636, 2641](#)

C2024, §256.228

[2024 Acts, ch 1162, §22 – 24](#)

Referred to in [§15H.10, 84A.1B, 84A.13, 256.7](#)

Subsection 1, paragraph g, subparagraph (2) amended

Subsection 1, paragraph g, NEW subparagraph (5)

Subsection 3, paragraph d amended