

# **WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE**

## **2025 REGULAR SESSION**

**Introduced**

### **House Bill 2737**

By Delegates Willis, Rohrbach, Dittman, Moore,

Stephens, and J. Cannon

[Introduced February 21, 2025; referred to the

Committee on Education then Finance]

1 A BILL to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding thereto a new article,  
 2 designated §18B-22-1, §18B-22-2, §18B-22-3, §18B-22-4, §18B-22-5, and §18B-22-6,  
 3 relating to creating the Higher Education Health and Aid Grant; providing for a short title;  
 4 enacting the act and providing for a legislative purpose; providing criteria that institutions  
 5 must follow to receive such grant; giving a reporting requirement; appropriating money;  
 6 and providing for an effective date.

*Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:*

**ARTICLE 22. HIGHER EDUCATION HEALTH AND AID GRANT.**

**§18B-22-1. Short title.**

1 This article shall be known and may be cited as the "Higher Education Health and Aid  
 2 Grant."

**§18B-22-2. Enactment and purpose.**

1 The West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission shall establish a Higher Education  
 2 Health and Aid Grant Program. The purpose of the program shall be to provide grants to public  
 3 institutions of higher education that have one or more campuses. The purpose of the grant funding  
 4 shall be to:

- 5 (1) Address student food insecurity; and
- 6 (2) Address student health and hygiene inadequacies.

**§18B-22-3. Grant criteria.**

1 In order to receive the Higher Education Health and Aid Grant, the institution shall only be  
 2 allowed to spend the aforementioned funds upon the following criteria while acting in accordance  
 3 with the following rules and regulations:

- 4 (1) Grant funds may be spent on purchasing or building infrastructure apparent and  
 5 necessary to provide at least one physical food and health aids pantry on campus;
- 6 (2) Grant funds may be spent on any shelf-stable food and food products commonly  
 7 defined as foods processed or packaged to withstand prolonged storage without refrigeration;

8           (3) Grant funds may be spent on medical and health aids limited to the following: absorbent  
9 compress dressings, adhesive bandages, adhesive cloth tape, antibiotic ointment packets,  
10 antiseptic wipe packets, cold compresses, non-latex gloves, hydrocortisone ointment packets,  
11 gauze, cotton swabs, cotton balls, moleskin, sterile gauze pads, tweezers, nail files, nail clippers,  
12 toothbrushes, toothpaste, non-alcoholic mouth wash, dental floss, toothpicks, saline solution,  
13 tissues, paper towels, toilet paper, trash bags, dish soap, laundry detergent, disinfectant wipes,  
14 disinfectant spray, hand sanitizer, hand soap, body soap and wash, face soap and wash,  
15 shampoo, washcloths, towels, and female hygiene products;

16           (4) Grant funds may be spent on one-use, disposable tableware items that may be needed  
17 for the consumption of food including but not limited to paper or plastic plates, bowls, cups,  
18 spoons, forks, and napkins;

19           (5) All institutions must keep a detailed perpetual inventory based on one-calendar month  
20 periods of all materials with the purpose of tracking what items have been purchased, what items  
21 have been taken, and what items remain while including specific dates and times;

22           (6) All institutions must provide the Chancellor of the Higher Education Policy Commission  
23 with physical receipts of all expenditures concerning purchases with grant funding no later than 30  
24 days after the receipt date and provide the Chancellor of the Higher Education Policy Commission  
25 with periodic inventory reports at the end of each one-calendar month period.

26           The Chancellor of the Higher Education Policy Commission shall allocate grant funding to  
27 each public institution of higher education that has one or more campuses that agree to comply  
28 with the criteria established under this article. The Chancellor of the Higher Education Policy  
29 Commission shall determine the amount of each grant which shall be used by the institution to  
30 further address food, hygiene, and health insecurities among students enrolled in the institution.  
31 The Chancellor of the Higher Education Policy Commission must grant any and all participating  
32 compliant public institutions a minimum of a \$10,000 individual grant per calendar year. The  
33 Chancellor of the Higher Education Policy Commission must allocate no more than a \$25,000

34 individual grant per calendar year to any compliant public institution. The Chancellor of the Higher  
 35 Education Policy Commission may only allocate the maximum grant amount of \$25,000 to, at  
 36 most, any five participating compliant public institutions, all other individual grants must be less  
 37 than the \$25,000 maximum. The Chancellor of the Higher Education Policy Commission must  
 38 determine grant amounts so that the fiscal total of all individual grants does not exceed the entire  
 39 grant program's appropriated budget of \$450,000 per calendar year.

**§18B-22-4. Reporting requirement.**

1 The Chancellor of the Higher Education Policy Commission shall submit a report to the  
 2 Legislative Oversight Commission on Education Accountability no later than one year after the  
 3 establishment of the Higher Education Health and Aid Grant Program. The report shall include, but  
 4 not be limited to, the number and amounts of the grant awards, the rationale behind individual  
 5 campus funding grant amounts, the impact the grant program has had on establishing additional  
 6 food and health aid pantries on campuses at public institutions of higher education, the impact the  
 7 grant had in reducing the number of students experiencing food and basic hygiene insecurity, and  
 8 recommendations on the expansion of the grant program.

**§18B-22-5. Appropriation.**

1 There is appropriated from the General Revenue Fund the sum of \$450,000 per calendar  
 2 year for the purpose of effectuating the provisions of this article.

**§18B-22-6. Effective date.**

1 This article shall take effect July 1, 2025.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to create the "Higher Education Health and Aid Grant," which requires the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission to establish a grant program to address food, health, and hygiene insecurities among students enrolled in public institutions of higher education and appropriates \$450,000 per calendar year.

Strike-throughs indicate language that would be stricken from a heading or the present law and underscoring indicates new language that would be added.