WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

**FISCAL NOTE**

2025 REGULAR SESSION

Introduced

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Senate Bill 35

By Senators Oliverio, Woelfel, Takubo, and Hamilton

[Introduced February 12, 2025; referred
to the Committee on Pensions; and then to the Committee on Finance]

A BILL to amend and reenact §18B-4-5 and §18B-7-5 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating to permitting current campus police officers in this state to participate in the Deputy Sheriffs Retirement System; and mandating newly hired campus police officers to participate in the Deputy Sheriffs Retirement System beginning on January 1, 2026.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

ARTICLE 4. GENERAL ADMINISTRATION.

§18B-4-5. Campus police officers; appointment; qualifications; authority; compensation and removal; law enforcement grants; pension plan.

(a) The governing boards may appoint qualified individuals to serve as campus police officers upon any premises owned or leased by the State of West Virginia and under the jurisdiction of the governing boards, subject to the conditions and restrictions established in this section.

(1) A person who previously was qualified for employment as a law-enforcement officer for an agency or political subdivision of any state is considered qualified for appointment as a campus police officer.

(2) Before performing duties as a campus police officer in any county, a person shall qualify as is required of county police officers by:

(A) Taking and filing an oath of office as required by §6-1-1 *et seq*. of this code; and

(B) Posting an official bond as required by §6-2-1 *et seq*. of this code.

(b) A campus police officer may carry a gun and any other dangerous weapon while on duty if the officer fulfills the certification requirement for law-enforcement officers under §30-29-5 of this code or meets the requirements of subsection (a) of this section.

(c) ~~It is the duty of a~~ A campus police officer ~~to~~ shall preserve law and order on:

(1) ~~On the~~ The premises under the jurisdiction of the governing board; and

(2) ~~On any~~ Any street, road, or thoroughfare, except controlled access and open country highways, immediately adjacent to or passing through premises, to which the officer is assigned by the president of the institution.

(A) For the purpose of this subdivision, the campus police officer is a law-enforcement officer pursuant to the provisions of §30-29-1 *et seq*. of this code;

(B) The officer has and may exercise all the powers and authority of a law-enforcement officer as to offenses committed within the area assigned;

(C) The officer is subject to all the requirements and responsibilities of a law-enforcement officer;

(D) Authority assigned pursuant to this subdivision does not supersede in any way the authority or duty of other law-enforcement officers to preserve law and order on ~~such~~ these premises;

(E) Campus police officers may assist a local law-enforcement agency on public highways. The assistance may be provided to control traffic in and around premises owned by the state when:

(i) Traffic is generated as a result of athletic or other activities conducted or sponsored by the institution; and

(ii) The assistance has been requested by the local law-enforcement agency; and

(F) Campus police officers may assist a local law-enforcement agency in any location under the agency’s jurisdiction at the request of the agency.

(d) The salary of a campus police officer is paid by the employing governing board. A state institution may furnish each campus police officer with a firearm and an official uniform to be worn while on duty. The institution shall furnish and require each officer while on duty to wear a shield with an appropriate inscription and to carry credentials certifying the person’s identity and authority as a campus police officer.

(e) A governing board may at its pleasure revoke the authority of any campus police officer and such officers serve at the will and pleasure of the governing board. The president of the state institution shall report the termination of employment of a campus police officer by filing a notice to that effect in the office of the clerk of each county in which the campus police officer's oath of office was filed.

(f) Notwithstanding any other provisions of this code to the contrary, and for purposes of enhancing the ability of campus police officers to perform their duties, a governing board may apply for and receive any public or private grant or other financial award that is available to other law-enforcement agencies in the state.

(g) Current campus police officers may choose to participate in the Deputy Sheriffs Retirement System, to be administered by the Consolidated Public Retirement Board. Should the current campus police officer choose to participate in the Deputy Sheriffs Retirement System, no service credit or dollars accrued may be moved to that system.

(h) Effective January 1, 2026, all newly hired campus police officers shall participate in the Deputy Sheriffs Retirement System.

ARTICLE 7. PERSONNEL GENERALLY.

§18B-7-5. Supplemental and additional retirement plans for employees; payroll deductions; authority to match employee contributions; retroactive curative and technical corrective action.

(a) Any reference in this code to the additional retirement plan relating to state higher education employees, means the higher education retirement plan provided in this section. Any state higher education employee participating in a retirement plan upon the effective date of this section continues to participate in that plan and may not elect to participate in any other state retirement plan. Any retirement plan continues to be governed by the provisions of law applicable on the effective date of this section.

(b) The commission, on behalf of the council, governing boards and itself, shall contract for a retirement plan for their employees, to be known as the Higher Education Retirement Plan. The commission, council and governing boards shall make periodic deductions from the salary payments due employees in the amount they are required to contribute to the Higher Education Retirement Plan, which deductions shall be six percent.

(c) The commission, council and governing boards may contract for supplemental retirement plans for any or all of their employees to supplement the benefits employees otherwise receive. The commission, council and governing boards may make additional periodic deductions from the salary payments due the employees in the amount they are required to contribute for the supplemental retirement plan.

(d) An organization, by way of additional compensation to their employees, shall pay an amount, which, at a minimum, equals the contributions of the employees into the higher education retirement plan from funds appropriated to the commission, council or governing board for personal services.

(e) As part of an overall compensation plan, the commission, council or a governing board, each at its sole discretion, may increase its contributions to any employee retirement plan to an amount that exceeds the contributions of employees.

(f) Each participating employee has a full and immediate vested interest in the retirement and death benefits accrued from all the moneys paid into the Higher Education Retirement Plan or a supplemental retirement plan for his or her benefit. Upon proper requisition of a governing board, the commission or council, the Auditor periodically shall issue a warrant, payable as specified in the requisition, for the total contributions so withheld from the salaries of all participating employees and for the matching funds of the commission, council or governing board.

(g) Any person whose employment commences on or after July 1, 1991, and who is eligible to participate in the Higher Education Retirement Plan, shall participate in that plan and is not eligible to participate in any other state retirement system: *Provided,* That the foregoing provision does not apply to a person designated as a 21st Century Learner Fellow pursuant to §18A-3-11 of this code: *Provided, however*, That the foregoing provision does not apply to campus police officers in this state pursuant to §18B-4-5. The additional retirement plan contracted for by the governing boards prior to July 1, 1991, remains in effect unless changed by the commission. Nothing in this section considers employees of the council or governing boards as employees of the commission, nor is the commission responsible or liable for retirement benefits contracted by, or on behalf of, the council or governing boards.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to permit current campus police officers in this state to participate in the Deputy Sheriffs Retirement System (DSRS). The bill also mandates newly hired campus police officers to participate in the DSRS beginning on January 1, 2026.

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