

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 2067 Session of
2024

INTRODUCED BY M. BROWN, GUENST, CONKLIN AND CIRESI,
FEBRUARY 27, 2024

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS, FEBRUARY 27, 2024

AN ACT

1 Amending the act of April 9, 1929 (P.L.343, No.176), entitled
 2 "An act relating to the finances of the State government;
 3 providing for cancer control, prevention and research, for
 4 ambulatory surgical center data collection, for the Joint
 5 Underwriting Association, for entertainment business
 6 financial management firms, for private dam financial
 7 assurance and for reinstatement of item vetoes; providing for
 8 the settlement, assessment, collection, and lien of taxes,
 9 bonus, and all other accounts due the Commonwealth, the
 10 collection and recovery of fees and other money or property
 11 due or belonging to the Commonwealth, or any agency thereof,
 12 including escheated property and the proceeds of its sale,
 13 the custody and disbursement or other disposition of funds
 14 and securities belonging to or in the possession of the
 15 Commonwealth, and the settlement of claims against the
 16 Commonwealth, the resettlement of accounts and appeals to the
 17 courts, refunds of moneys erroneously paid to the
 18 Commonwealth, auditing the accounts of the Commonwealth and
 19 all agencies thereof, of all public officers collecting
 20 moneys payable to the Commonwealth, or any agency thereof,
 21 and all receipts of appropriations from the Commonwealth,
 22 authorizing the Commonwealth to issue tax anticipation notes
 23 to defray current expenses, implementing the provisions of
 24 section 7(a) of Article VIII of the Constitution of
 25 Pennsylvania authorizing and restricting the incurring of
 26 certain debt and imposing penalties; affecting every
 27 department, board, commission, and officer of the State
 28 government, every political subdivision of the State, and
 29 certain officers of such subdivisions, every person,
 30 association, and corporation required to pay, assess, or
 31 collect taxes, or to make returns or reports under the laws
 32 imposing taxes for State purposes, or to pay license fees or
 33 other moneys to the Commonwealth, or any agency thereof,
 34 every State depository and every debtor or creditor of the

1 Commonwealth," establishing the Professional Nurse Grant
2 Program; providing for duties of Department of Health; and
3 making an appropriation.

4 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
5 hereby enacts as follows:

6 Section 1. The act of April 9, 1929 (P.L.343, No.176), known
7 as The Fiscal Code, is amended by adding an article to read:

8 ARTICLE I-M

9 PROFESSIONAL NURSE GRANT PROGRAM

10 Section 101-M. Scope of article.

11 This article relates to the Professional Nurse Grant Program.

12 Section 102-M. Definitions.

13 The following words and phrases when used in this article
14 shall have the meanings given to them in this section unless the
15 context clearly indicates otherwise:

16 "Applicant." A nurse who submits an application for a grant
17 award.

18 "Department." The Department of Health of the Commonwealth.

19 "Full-time nurse." A nurse who works on average more than 30
20 hours per week or more than 130 hours per month.

21 "Grant award." A grant awarded by the department under the
22 program.

23 "Nurse." An individual who is authorized by the State Board
24 of Nursing in accordance with the act of May 22, 1951 (P.L.317,
25 No.69), known as The Professional Nursing Law, to function as
26 any of the following:

27 (1) A certified registered nurse anesthetist.

28 (2) A certified registered nurse practitioner.

29 (3) A clinical nurse specialist.

30 (4) A practical nurse.

31 (5) A registered nurse.

1 (6) Any other nursing professional who is licensed,
2 permitted, certified or otherwise registered with the State
3 Board of Nursing.

4 "Part-time nurse." A nurse who works on average less than 30
5 hours per week or less than 130 hours per month.

6 "Program." The Professional Nurse Grant Program established
7 under section 103-M.

8 Section 103-M. Establishment of program.

9 The Professional Nurse Grant Program is established within
10 the department. The department shall administer the program.

11 Section 104-M. Use of grant funding.

12 The department shall award grants under the program in
13 accordance with this article from money appropriated to the
14 program by the General Assembly.

15 Section 105-M. Applications for grant awards.

16 (a) Form and manner.--The following shall apply to an
17 application for a grant award:

18 (1) The application shall be on a form and submitted in
19 a manner determined by the department.

20 (2) The application shall contain documentation as
21 required by the department.

22 (3) The application shall be available electronically on
23 the department's publicly accessible Internet website.

24 (b) Consideration.--The department shall receive and
25 consider applications for grant awards on a rolling basis until
26 funding for grant awards has been completely expended, or until
27 December 31, 2034, whichever occurs first.

28 (c) Additional conditions.--The department may impose
29 additional conditions on an applicant, including reporting
30 requirements and documentary proof from the applicant to ensure

1 compliance.

2 Section 106-M. Certification requirements.

3 An applicant shall certify in good faith all of the following
4 to the department:

5 (1) The applicant is employed as a full-time nurse or
6 part-time nurse within this Commonwealth.

7 (2) The applicant has been employed as a nurse within
8 this Commonwealth for at least 12 consecutive months prior to
9 submission of the application.

10 (3) The applicant will only use the grant award for the
11 repayment of existing loans for education directly relating
12 to the applicant meeting the educational requirements to
13 practice as a nurse within this Commonwealth.

14 (4) The applicant did not receive more than one grant
15 award during the calendar year.

16 (5) The applicant agrees to abide by the program
17 requirements established by the department.

18 (6) The applicant acknowledges that failure to abide by
19 the program requirements established by the department:

20 (i) shall result in removal from the program; and

21 (ii) may result in recoupment of grant award money
22 as authorized by the laws of this Commonwealth.

23 (7) That the information provided in the application and
24 each supporting document or form is true and accurate in all
25 material aspects. An applicant or an authorized
26 representative of the applicant who knowingly makes a false
27 statement to obtain a grant award shall be subject to 18
28 Pa.C.S. § 4904 (relating to unsworn falsification to
29 authorities).

30 Section 107-M. Review of applications.

1 (a) Determination.--The department shall approve or
2 disapprove an application for a grant award. The department
3 shall provide reasons for a disapproval or for a grant award
4 less than the amount requested in an application.

5 (b) Grant agreements.--After approval of an application
6 under subsection (a), the department shall enter into a grant
7 agreement with the nurse. A fully executed grant agreement shall
8 be required before the disbursement of a grant award. The
9 following shall apply to grant agreements:

10 (1) The grant agreement shall explain the terms and
11 conditions of the grant award, including the applicable
12 Federal and State laws, and reporting requirements that may
13 be imposed by the department.

14 (2) The grant agreement may be electronically signed by
15 all applicable parties.

16 (c) Distribution.--

17 (1) The department shall distribute a grant award to a
18 nurse in accordance with this article no later than 60 days
19 after approval of the application by the department. A full-
20 time nurse may receive a grant award of up to \$50,000 a year
21 for a period of two years, and a part-time nurse may receive
22 a grant award of up to \$25,000 a year for a period of two
23 years. A nurse shall continue to meet the requirements under
24 this article to receive a grant award each year. The
25 department may require documentation from a nurse each year
26 to ensure compliance with this article.

27 (2) The department may award grants in increments of
28 \$5,000, not to exceed the limitations specified under
29 paragraph (1).

30 (3) A nurse may not receive a total grant award that is

1 greater than the remaining loan amount specified under
2 section 106-M(3) that is owed by the nurse.

3 (4) A nurse may receive a grant award based upon the
4 nurse's full-time or part-time status for the previous 12
5 months.

6 Section 108-M. Compliance with program requirements.

7 A nurse who is a recipient of a grant award shall allow the
8 department to determine compliance with the requirements of this
9 article. If a nurse fails to comply with the requirements of
10 this article, the nurse shall reimburse the Commonwealth for the
11 amount of the grant award received, including interest accrued,
12 as determined by the department. The nurse and the department
13 shall make every effort to resolve conflicts in order to prevent
14 a breach of program requirements established by the department.

15 Section 109-M. Reports.

16 (a) Contents.--No later than December 31 of each year, the
17 department shall post a report on the department's publicly
18 accessible Internet website that contains the following
19 information:

20 (1) The name and nurse license type of each nurse
21 awarded a grant.

22 (2) The amount of each grant award.

23 (3) The total amount of the appropriation under section
24 110-M that has been distributed for grant awards each
25 calendar year.

26 (4) The number of grants awarded to full-time nurses as
27 compared to part-time nurses.

28 (5) An aggregate total of grants awarded for each county
29 where a nurse who received a grant award is employed.

30 (b) Submission.--The department shall submit the report

1 under subsection (a) to the following:

2 (1) The chair and minority chair of the Appropriations
3 Committee of the Senate.

4 (2) The chair and minority chair of the Appropriations
5 Committee of the House of Representatives.

6 (3) The chair and minority chair of the Health and Human
7 Services Committee of the Senate.

8 (4) The chair and minority chair of the Health Committee
9 of the House of Representatives.

10 (c) Final report.--Upon the disbursement of all money
11 appropriated for the program, or December 31, 2034, whichever is
12 earlier, the department shall post and submit a final report in
13 accordance with this section within six months from the period
14 specified under this subsection.

15 Section 110-M. Appropriation.

16 The sum of \$15,000,000 is appropriated on a continuing basis
17 from the General Fund to the department for the program and
18 payment of grant awards under this article. Money appropriated
19 under this section shall not lapse into the General Fund at the
20 end of a fiscal year.

21 Section 111-M. Tax applicability.

22 Grants awarded under this article may not be considered
23 taxable income to a nurse for the purposes of Article III of the
24 act of March 4, 1971 (P.L.6, No.2), known as the Tax Reform Code
25 of 1971.

26 Section 2. This act shall take effect in 60 days.