

REIMBURSEMENTS FOR PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICERS

2017 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Karen Mayne

House Sponsor: Lee B. Perry

LONG TITLE

General Description:

This bill creates the Peace Officer Career Advancement Reimbursement program under the State Board of Regents.

Highlighted Provisions:

This bill:

- ▶ creates the Peace Officer Career Advancement Reimbursement program to provide up to \$5,000 annually for qualified applicants;
- ▶ appropriates funds for the Peace Officer Career Advancement Reimbursement program;
- ▶ dedicates a portion of the reimbursement funds for officers currently employed in smaller counties;
- ▶ requires that an individual who receives a reimbursement through the Peace Officer Career Advancement Reimbursement Program continue to be employed with the individual's current law enforcement agency for an additional year for each year that the individual applies for and receives reimbursement funds; and
- ▶ requires the board to annually report on the reimbursement program to the Higher Education Appropriations Subcommittee.

Money Appropriated in this Bill:

This bill appropriates in fiscal year 2018:

- ▶ to the State Board of Regents – Student Assistance, as an ongoing appropriation:
 - from the Education Fund, \$200,000.

Other Special Clauses:

None

Utah Code Sections Affected:

ENACTS:

53B-8-112, Utah Code Annotated 1953

53B-8-113, Utah Code Annotated 1953

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:

Section 1. Section **53B-8-112** is enacted to read:

53B-8-112. Public Safety Officer Career Advancement Scholarship.

(1) The Public Safety Officer Career Advancement Reimbursement Program is created.

(2) Subject to legislative appropriations and Subsection (7) the board shall reimburse an applicant who:

(a) is a certified peace officer, currently employed by a law enforcement agency within the state;

(b) has been employed as a certified peace officer for three or more consecutive years;

(c) is seeking a post-secondary degree in the area of criminal justice from a credit-granting higher education institution within the state system of higher education, described in Section **53B-1-102**; and

(d) is employed as a peace officer for one year following completion of the academic year for which the individual is seeking reimbursement.

(3) Individuals who qualify for reimbursement from the Public Safety Officer Career Advancement Reimbursement program may apply for reimbursement by July 1 one year after each academic year for which they are requesting reimbursement.

(4) Subject to Legislative appropriations, of the funds appropriated for the Peace Officer Career Advancement Reimbursement Program:

(a) 25% of the annual appropriation shall be designated for applicants who are

56 currently employed by a law enforcement agency with jurisdiction in a county of the third or
57 fourth class; and

58 (b) 12% of the annual appropriation shall be designated for applicants who are
59 currently employed by a law enforcement agency with jurisdiction in a county of the fifth or
60 sixth class.

61 (5) (a) A qualified applicant may be reimbursed up to half of the cost of tuition and
62 fees.

63 (b) A reimbursement under Subsection (5)(a) is limited to:

64 (i) a maximum of \$5,000 each academic year; and

65 (ii) a maximum of eight academic years.

66 (6) (a) The board shall make rules in accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah
67 Administrative Rulemaking Act, to:

68 (i) set deadlines for receiving reimbursement applications and supporting
69 documentation; and

70 (ii) establish the application process and an appeal process for a reimbursement from
71 the Peace Officer Career Advancement Reimbursement Program, including procedures to
72 allow for online application submittals.

73 (b) The board shall include a disclosure on all applications and related materials that
74 the amount of the awarded reimbursements may be subject to funding or be reduced, in
75 accordance with Subsection (7).

76 (7) (a) Subject to future budget constraints, the Legislature shall make an annual
77 appropriation from the Education Fund to the board for the costs associated with the Peace
78 Officer Career Advancement Reimbursement Program authorized under this section.

79 (b) Notwithstanding the provisions of this section, if the appropriation under this
80 section is insufficient to cover the costs associated with the Peace Officer Career Advancement
81 Reimbursement Program, the board may reduce the amount of a reimbursement.

82 (c) Any individual who is denied reimbursement because of insufficient funds

appropriated may re-apply for reimbursement up to two years after the first year of eligibility.

Section 2. Section **53B-8-113** is enacted to read:

53B-8-113. Reporting.

No later than December 1, the board shall report annually on the Public Safety Officer Career Advancement Reimbursement program to the Higher Education Appropriations Subcommittee regarding the following information for the previous calendar year:

(1) the number of certified peace officer applicants for reimbursement;

(2) the number of reimbursements awarded from the Peace Officer Career Advancement Reimbursement Program; and

(3) the total amount in reimbursements awarded.

Section 3. **Appropriation.**

The following sums of money are appropriated for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2017, and ending June 30, 2018. These are additions to amounts previously appropriated for fiscal year 2018. Under the terms and conditions of Title 63J, Chapter 1, Budgetary Procedures Act, the Legislature appropriates the following sums of money from the funds or accounts indicated for the use and support of the government of the state of Utah.

To State Board of Regents -- Student Assistance

From Education Fund

\$200,000

Schedule of Programs:

Public Safety Officer Career Advancement

Reimbursement

\$200,000