

Stricken language would be deleted from and underlined language would be added to present law.

State of Arkansas
94th General Assembly
Regular Session, 2023

As Engrossed: H4/3/23
A Bill

HOUSE BILL 1772

By: Representative L. Johnson
By: Senator B. Davis

For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT TO CREATE THE PSYCHOLOGICAL AND
NEUROPSYCHOLOGICAL TESTING WORKFORCE SCHOLARSHIP,
STIPEND, AND INCENTIVE PROGRAM; AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES.

Subtitle

TO CREATE THE PSYCHOLOGICAL AND
NEUROPSYCHOLOGICAL TESTING WORKFORCE
SCHOLARSHIP, STIPEND, AND INCENTIVE
PROGRAM.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Title 6, Chapter 81, is amended to add an additional subchapter to read as follows:

Subchapter 19 – Psychological and Neuropsychological Testing Workforce
Scholarship, Stipend, and Incentive Program

6-81-1901. Creation.

There is created the Psychological and Neuropsychological Testing Workforce Scholarship, Stipend, and Incentive Program to be administered by the Arkansas Psychology Board in accordance with the provisions of this subchapter.

6-81-1902. Legislative findings and intent.

(a) The General Assembly finds that:



(1) Neuropsychological testing services are necessary services for the citizens of the State of Arkansas in order to provide access to and inform a broad range of clinical services, psychoeducational services, and legal and quasi-legal decision-making skills, including without limitation child custody evaluations, forensic evaluations, and occupationally mandated psychological and neuropsychological evaluations; and

(2) There is a workforce shortage and a need for education and training to promote the workforce pipeline for these clinical services.

(b) It is the intent of this subchapter that the Arkansas Psychology Board shall approve scholarships, stipends, and incentives, such as loan repayment assistance, based on standards established by the General Assembly and the board for individuals pursuing career paths that address the workforce shortage for these clinical services.

6-81-1903. Psychological and Neuropsychological Testing Workforce Scholarship, Stipend, and Incentive Program – Funding.

(a) Cash funds for the Psychological and Neuropsychological Testing Workforce Scholarship, Stipend, and Incentive Program shall consist of:

(1) Funds appropriated for the program;

(2) Federal funds;

(3) Gifts;

(4) Grants;

(5) Bequests;

(6) Devises;

(7) Donations;

(8) Interest and other income accruing to or earned by the funds; and

(9) All moneys provided by law.

(b) The Arkansas Psychology Board:

(1) May invest the principal, interest, and income of the funds; and

(2) Shall use the funds for program scholarships, stipends, and incentives.

6-81-1904. Arkansas Psychology Board – Powers and duties.

(a) The Arkansas Psychology Board shall:

(1) Prescribe forms to be used for the Psychological and Neuropsychological Testing Workforce Scholarship, Stipend, and Incentive Program;

(2) Monitor the submission of applications for scholarships, stipends, or incentives;

(3) Determine eligibility of applicants;

(4) Allow or reject applications for scholarships, stipends, or incentives;

(5) Contract for, increase, decrease, terminate, and otherwise monitor all scholarships, stipends, and incentives made under this subchapter; and

(6) Manage, operate, and control all funds and property appropriated or otherwise contributed for purposes of funding this program.

(b) The board may:

(1) Accept gifts, grants, bequests, devises, donations, and any federal funds available for the program, to be used together with funds appropriated for the program for making scholarships, stipends, and incentives under this subchapter; and

(2) Hire a qualified person or entity to administer the program.

6-81-1905. Eligibility and requirements for scholarships.

The Arkansas Psychology Board may award a scholarship, stipend, or incentive under the Psychological and Neuropsychological Testing Workforce Scholarship, Stipend, and Incentive Program available to an applicant who:

(1) Is a bona fide resident of Arkansas; and

(2) Is:

(A) Enrolled in good standing or has been accepted for admission to a program as a:

(i) Psychology student or trainee who is pursuing a bachelor's degree to obtain status as a technician according to the requirements of § 17-97-401 et seq. and the board; or

(ii) Master level or doctoral psychology student or trainee who has been placed in an approved training site that is focused on psychological or neuropsychological testing under the supervision of a licensed psychologist; or

(B) A licensed psychological examiner or licensed

psychologist who provides psychological or neuropsychological testing services.

6-81-1906. Scholarship, stipend, and incentive – Amount.

(a) The Arkansas Psychology Board may award a scholarship to cover tuition and the required coursework to an applicant who has been accepted for admission or is enrolled in good standing in a program as a psychology student or trainee who is pursuing a bachelor's degree to obtain status as a technician according to the requirements of § 17-97-401 et seq. and the board.

(b) The board may award a stipend to support required training experience to an applicant who has been accepted for admission or is enrolled in good standing in a program as a *master level or doctoral psychology* student or trainee who has been placed in an approved training site that is focused on psychological or neuropsychological testing under the supervision of a licensed psychologist.

(c) The board may provide loan forgiveness assistance to an applicant who is a *licensed psychological examiner or licensed psychologist* who provides psychological or neuropsychological testing services.

(d) The board may provide a financial incentive to an applicant who agrees to work full time for at least two (2) years in Arkansas providing psychological or neuropsychological testing services following his or her educational training.

6-81-1907. Renewal.

(a) Subject to the availability of funds, each scholarship, stipend, or incentive awarded to an applicant under this subchapter shall be renewable annually for the number of years required to complete a qualifying program under this subchapter.

(b) Each scholarship, stipend, or incentive awarded to an applicant under this subchapter subsequent to his or her initial receipt of a scholarship, stipend, or incentive shall be made only upon application of the recipient and upon a finding by the Arkansas Psychology Board that the applicant meets all qualifications under this subchapter and board rules.

6-81-1908. Rules.

The Arkansas Psychology Board may adopt rules consistent with this subchapter to effectively and efficiently carry out the purposes of this subchapter.

/s/L. Johnson