

## HB24 INTRODUCED



1 HB24  
2 4YCW3R3-1  
3 By Representative Oliver  
4 RFD: Ways and Means Education  
5 First Read: 04-Feb-25  
6 PFD: 19-Aug-24



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SYNOPSIS:

The Volunteer Rescue Squad Tuition Reimbursement Program pays tuition on behalf of students who are studying to qualify for emergency medical services personnel licensure from the Alabama Department of Public Health. In exchange for tuition, the students contract with the program to work for at least two years for an ambulance service, a volunteer rescue squad, or a volunteer fire department.

Current law authorizes the member schools of the Alabama Community College System, the Alabama Fire College, and the University of South Alabama to provide the necessary educational program to students and receive tuition reimbursement. This bill would add the Alabama Department of Public Health through its regional agencies of the Office of Emergency Medical Services to the group of participating educational institutions.

This bill would also make nonsubstantive, technical revisions to update the existing code language to current style.

A BILL



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29 TO BE ENTITLED

30 AN ACT

31  
32 Relating to emergency medical services personnel  
33 education; to amend Sections 22-18-60, 22-18-61, 22-18-62, and  
34 22-18-64, Code of Alabama 1975, to further provide for the  
35 Volunteer Rescue Squad Tuition Reimbursement Program by  
36 authorizing the Alabama Department of Public Health, through  
37 its designated regional agencies of the Office of Emergency  
38 Medical Services, to provide education and receive tuition  
39 reimbursement under the program; and to make nonsubstantive,  
40 technical revisions to update the existing code language to  
41 current style.

42 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

43 Section 1. Sections 22-18-60, 22-18-61, 22-18-62, and  
44 22-18-64, Code of Alabama 1975, are amended to read as  
45 follows:

46 "§22-18-60

47 For the purposes of this article, the following terms  
48 ~~shall~~ have the following meanings:

49 (1) ACCS. The Alabama Community College System.

50 (2) AMBULANCE SERVICE. An ambulance service located in  
51 this state which is a member of the Alabama Association of  
52 Ambulance Services.

53 (3) ASSOCIATIONS. The Alabama Association of Rescue  
54 Squads, the Alabama Association of Volunteer Fire Departments,  
55 or the Alabama Association of Ambulance Services.

56 (4) DESIGNATED EMS REGIONAL AGENCY. A regional agency



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57 of the Office of Emergency Medical Services of the Alabama  
58 Department of Public Health which is designated by the  
59 department to offer educational courses to students.

60 (5) ELIGIBLE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION. A member school  
61 of the ACCS, the fire college, the University of South  
62 Alabama, or a designated regional EMS agency.

63 ~~(4)~~ (6) EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE PERSONNEL (EMSP). All  
64 recognized levels of personnel licensed by the Alabama  
65 Department of Public Health, who have met all primary or  
66 renewal educational requirements, or both, set by the Alabama  
67 Department of Public Health, and who are allowed to provide  
68 medical care within the level of their scope of practice  
69 granted by the Office of Emergency Medical Services within the  
70 Alabama Department of Public Health.

71 ~~(5)~~ (7) FIRE COLLEGE. The Alabama Fire College.

72 ~~(6)~~ (8) STUDENT. A student enrolled in an emergency  
73 medical services certification program at a member institution  
74 of the ACCS, the fire college, or the University of South  
75 Alabama, or an active volunteer in an ambulance service,  
76 volunteer rescue squad, or volunteer fire department who is  
77 studying towards EMSP certification by completing courses  
78 offered by a designated EMS regional agency.

79 ~~(7)~~ (9) TUITION COSTS. Includes the actual cost of  
80 tuition and fees required to complete an approved  
81 ~~course~~ program of instruction for EMSP certification, as  
82 determined by each eligible educational institution.

83 ~~(8)~~ (11) VOLUNTEER RESCUE SQUAD. A volunteer rescue  
84 squad located in this state ~~and~~ that is a member of the Alabama



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85 Association of Rescue Squads.

86 ~~(9)~~ (10) VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT. A volunteer fire  
87 department located in this state."

88 "§22-18-61

89 (a) ~~The ACCS, the fire college, and the University of~~  
90 ~~South Alabama~~ Eligible educational institutions, in

91 consultation with the associations, shall jointly develop and  
92 administer a student tuition reimbursement program for  
93 students who contract to provide two years of emergency  
94 medical services for volunteer rescue squads, volunteer fire  
95 departments, or ambulance services after becoming a licensed  
96 EMSP.

97 (b) (1) Tuition reimbursement under this article shall  
98 cover tuition costs paid by the student or the volunteer  
99 rescue squad, volunteer fire department, ambulance service, or  
100 association on behalf of the student of which the student is a  
101 member. Tuition paid by the volunteer rescue squad, volunteer  
102 fire department, ambulance service, or association shall be  
103 reimbursed directly to the volunteer rescue squad, volunteer  
104 fire department, ambulance service, or association.

105 (2) Tuition reimbursement under this article shall not  
106 include any tuition costs covered by grants or other monetary  
107 awards provided to a student including, but not limited to,  
108 federal education grants and scholarships, as determined by  
109 the ACCS.

110 (3) Tuition costs shall not be reimbursed until the  
111 student provides ACCS and the associations with documentation  
112 that he or she has successfully completed the approved



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113 ~~course~~program of instruction, proof of passing the  
114 certification exam, production of a valid EMSP license from  
115 the Alabama Department of Public Health, and a contractual  
116 agreement to comply with the service requirements.

117 (c) In the event that a tuition reimbursement  
118 recipient fails to meet the service requirements for any  
119 reason other than extreme hardship as defined within the joint  
120 agreement required in Section 22-18-64(b), the individual  
121 shall be deemed to have breached the underlying contract and  
122 shall be liable in the form of monetary damages to the state  
123 for the immediate repayment of the total tuition costs  
124 reimbursed, plus interest at the rate of eight percent. The  
125 associations shall notify ACCS of recipients who fail to meet  
126 the service requirements.

127 (d) Beginning with the 2023-2024 fiscal year, the  
128 amount of tuition reimbursement available to students shall be  
129 divided among volunteer fire departments, rescue squads, and  
130 ambulance services based on available appropriations. The ACCS  
131 shall create operational procedures to ensure that funds and  
132 volunteer service commitments are split equitably among  
133 volunteer fire departments, rescue squads, and ambulance  
134 services. Notwithstanding the foregoing, priority shall be  
135 given to volunteer fire departments, rescue squads, and  
136 nonprofit ambulance services."

137 "§22-18-62

138 ~~Beginning October 1, 2018, the member~~Member  
139 institutions of the ACCS, the ~~Fire College~~fire college, and  
140 the University of South Alabama, and designated EMS regional



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141 agencies may enter into contracts with new students seeking to  
142 obtain certification as an EMSP."

143 "§22-18-64

144 (a) The ACCS shall annually report on the condition and  
145 accomplishments of the tuition reimbursement program to the  
146 Governor, Speaker of the House of Representatives, President  
147 Pro Tempore of the Senate, the Chair of the House Ways and  
148 Means Education Committee, the Chair of the Senate Finance and  
149 Taxation Education Committee, and the Deputy Director of the  
150 Legislative Services Agency, Fiscal Division. The report shall  
151 include the number of students participating in the program  
152 and the amount of tuition reimbursed for the reporting year.

153 ~~The member~~Eligible educational institutions ~~of the ACCS, the~~  
154 ~~fire college, and the University of South Alabama~~ shall  
155 provide this information to ACCS for inclusion in the annual  
156 report. The report shall be submitted by the fifth legislative  
157 day of each regular session of the Legislature.

158 (b) The ACCS, ~~the fire college, and the University of~~  
159 ~~South Alabama~~ shall enter into a joint agreement with the  
160 other eligible educational institutions to implement and  
161 administer the tuition reimbursement program, which shall  
162 include provisions for ensuring that operational expenses for  
163 the program in a fiscal year do not exceed 10 percent of the  
164 funding for the program in that fiscal year. The joint  
165 agreement shall provide for limiting the acceptance of  
166 applications for the program or limiting tuition  
167 reimbursements when necessary, or both.

168 (c) Any monies received for the operations of the



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169 tuition reimbursement program, including repayments, interest,  
170 and penalties paid because of failure to honor service  
171 requirements, shall be used to fund tuition reimbursements."

172 Section 2. This act shall become effective on October  
173 1, 2025.