



WISCONSIN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ACT MEMO

2015 Wisconsin Act 282
[2015 Assembly Bill 741]

**Grants for Student Emergency
Needs**

2015 Wisconsin Act 282 (the Act) creates a program to award grants to address emergency financial needs of certain college students.

Under the Act, a student is eligible for a grant if the following criteria are met:

- The student is enrolled in the Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS) or a two-year University of Wisconsin (UW) college campus.
- The student's expected family contribution, as determined by the federal Free Application for Federal Student Aid, is less than \$5,000.

A financial emergency is "an unplanned event causing an unanticipated expense that would cause a student to not complete that term if a grant were not available to cover the expense." A college may award a grant to an eligible student to pay the student's expense resulting from a financial emergency. Expenses such as those for medical treatment or vehicle repair are eligible. Expenses for textbooks, student fees, or groceries are not eligible.

A student must submit an application that includes written proof identifying the nature and amount of the expense and the third party to whom the amount is owed. In evaluating a grant application, the college must, in its discretion and based on its best judgment, determine whether the student has incurred a legitimate financial emergency.

A student may receive up to two grants per academic year, with a total limit of \$500 per student per academic year.

The Act appropriates \$130,000 general purpose revenue (GPR) for grants to UW college students, and \$320,000 GPR for grants to WTCS students, for the 2016-17 fiscal year.

Grant funding is distributed by the WTCS Board to the WTCS colleges, and by the UW System Board of Regents to the two-year UW colleges, based on the anticipated need and

This memo provides a brief description of the Act. For more detailed information, consult the text of the law and related legislative documents at the Legislature's Web site at: <http://www.legis.wisconsin.gov>.

demand for grants at each technical college or UW college. Each technical college and UW college must collect certain information relating to the grant program and, at the end of each academic year, report this information to, respectively, the WTCS Board and UW Board of Regents. The WTCS Board and Board of Regents must then report this information to the Legislature.

Effective date: March 30, 2016

Prepared by: Mary Matthias, Principal Attorney

March 30, 2016

MM:mcm;jal