



HOUSE BILL 612: Expand Criminal Justice Fellows Program.

2023-2024 General Assembly

Committee:	House Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House	Date:	May 2, 2023
Introduced by:	Reps. Carson Smith, Faircloth, Greene	Prepared by:	Kara McCraw Staff Attorney
Analysis of:	PCS to First Edition H612-CSTC-27		

OVERVIEW: House Bill 612 would allow all counties in North Carolina to eligible for the North Carolina Criminal Justice Fellows Program (Program) and allow for the extension of certain Program deadlines.

The PCS for HB 612 would make technical changes to eliminate use of the term "eligible counties."

CURRENT LAW: The Program was established to increase the number of criminal justice professionals by providing forgivable loans to individuals to obtain an Applied Associate Degree in criminal justice or other approved related fields of study to enter a criminal justice profession. Eligible criminal justice professions include State and local sworn law enforcement officers, State and local correctional officers, sworn sheriffs and deputy sheriffs, and detention officers.

The Program provides forgivable loans of up to \$3,152 per year for up to 2 years and can be used for tuition, fees, and the cost of books as determined by the Criminal Justice Fellows Committee (Committee). The number of forgivable loans awarded each year cannot exceed 100 and the total number of recipients in the Program cannot exceed 200.

Applicants must be domiciled in an eligible county at the time of the application for the Program. An eligible county is defined as a county with a population of less than 200,000 according to the latest federal decennial census.

Recipients must become and remain full time students at a North Carolina community college in an Applied Associate Degree program in criminal justice or in a Committee-approved related field of study as well as meet other requirements including obtaining the degree within 2 years.

BILL ANALYSIS: House Bill 612 would eliminate any county-based restrictions on eligibility for the Program.

The bill would also allow the Committee to extend the period over which the Program can provide a forgivable loan to an individual for a period of three years if circumstances warrant such an extension and allows the person an additional 12 months to complete the degree. However, the maximum loan amount cannot be increased.

EFFECTIVE DATE: The bill would become effective when it becomes law and applies to individuals participating in the Program on or after that date and to Committee extension determinations made on or after that date.

Jeffrey Hudson
Director



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Legislative Analysis
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