

1 A bill to be entitled  
2 An act relating to the Florida State Guard; amending  
3 s. 115.07, F.S.; providing that members of the Florida  
4 State Guard are entitled to specified leaves of  
5 absences; amending s. 258.0145, F.S.; providing a  
6 specified discount on annual state park entrance  
7 passes to current members of the Florida State Guard;  
8 amending s. 379.354, F.S.; creating the annual Florida  
9 State Guard gold sportsman's license for state  
10 residents who are current members of the Florida State  
11 Guard; providing the cost of the license and uses of  
12 the license; creating s. 1009.8959, F.S.; establishing  
13 the Florida State Guard Scholarship Program within the  
14 Department of Education for specified purposes;  
15 providing eligibility criteria for the program;  
16 providing requirements for awards through the program;  
17 providing for funding for the program; providing for  
18 rules and regulations to administer the program;  
19 providing an effective date.  
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21 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:  
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23 **Section 1. Subsections (1) and (4) of section 115.07,**  
24 **Florida Statutes, are amended to read:**

25 115.07 Officers and employees' leaves of absence for

26 | reserve or guard training.-

27 |       (1) All officers or employees of the state, of the several  
 28 | counties of the state, and of the municipalities or political  
 29 | subdivisions of the state who are commissioned reserve officers  
 30 | or reserve enlisted personnel in the United States military or  
 31 | naval service or members of the National Guard or Florida State  
 32 | Guard are entitled to leaves of absence from their respective  
 33 | duties, without loss of vacation leave, pay, time, or efficiency  
 34 | rating, on all days during which they are engaged in training  
 35 | ordered under the provisions of the United States military or  
 36 | naval training regulations for such personnel when assigned to  
 37 | active or inactive duty.

38 |       (4) It is the intent of the Legislature that the state,  
 39 | its several counties, and its municipalities and political  
 40 | subdivisions shall grant leaves of absence for active or  
 41 | inactive training to all employees who are members of the United  
 42 | States Reserve Forces, ~~or~~ the National Guard, or the Florida  
 43 | State Guard, to ensure the state and national security at all  
 44 | times through a strong armed force of qualified and  
 45 | mobilization-ready personnel.

46 |       **Section 2. Subsections (2) through (4) of section**  
 47 | **258.0145, Florida Statutes, are renumbered as subsections (3)**  
 48 | **through (5), respectively, and a new subsection (2) is added to**  
 49 | **that section, to read:**

50 |       258.0145 Military, Florida State Guard, law enforcement,

51 and firefighter state park fee discounts.—The Division of  
52 Recreation and Parks shall provide the following discounts on  
53 park fees to persons who present written documentation  
54 satisfactory to the division which evidences their eligibility  
55 for the discounts:

56 (2) Current members of the Florida State Guard shall  
57 receive a 15-percent discount on annual entrance passes.

58 **Section 3. Paragraph (k) of subsection (4) of section**  
59 **379.354, Florida Statutes, is redesignated as paragraph (l), and**  
60 **a new paragraph (k) is added to that subsection, to read:**

61 379.354 Recreational licenses, permits, and authorization  
62 numbers; fees established.—

63 (4) RESIDENT HUNTING AND FISHING LICENSES.—The licenses  
64 and fees for residents participating in hunting and fishing  
65 activities in this state are as follows:

66 (k) Annual Florida State Guard gold sportsman's license,  
67 \$34.48. A resident who is a current member of the Florida State  
68 Guard may purchase the Florida State Guard gold sportsman's  
69 license upon submission of a current Florida State Guard  
70 identification card. The annual Florida State Guard gold  
71 sportsman's license authorizes the same activities as the annual  
72 gold sportsman's license.

73 **Section 4. Section 1009.8959, Florida Statutes, is created**  
74 **to read:**

75 1009.8959 The Florida State Guard Scholarship Program.—The

76 Florida State Guard Scholarship Program is created to provide  
77 scholarships to any member of the Florida State Guard who meets  
78 the eligibility criteria established in subsection (1). The  
79 Department of Education shall administer the program.

80 (1) INITIAL ELIGIBILITY.—To be eligible to receive a  
81 scholarship through the program, an individual must:

82 (a) Have completed at least 4 years of active service with  
83 the Florida State Guard.

84 (b) Have graduated with a standard high school diploma or  
85 the equivalent.

86 (c) Currently be a member in good standing or have left  
87 service with the Florida State Guard in good standing as  
88 determined by rules adopted by the director of the Florida State  
89 Guard.

90 (d) Have not earned a baccalaureate degree or higher.

91 (e) Enroll in a certificate program or an associate or  
92 baccalaureate degree program at a Florida College System  
93 institution, state university, or an independent college or  
94 university that is eligible to participate in the William L.  
95 Boyd, IV, Effective Access to Student Education Grant program  
96 pursuant to s. 1009.89.

97 (2) RENEWAL ELIGIBILITY.—To be eligible for continued  
98 funding through the program, an individual must:

99 (a) Enroll in a minimum of 6 credit hours per semester.

100 (b) Earn at least 24 credit hours in the last academic

101 year in which the student earned the scholarship if the student  
102 was enrolled full-time or a prorated number of credit hours as  
103 determined by the department if the student was enrolled less  
104 than full-time for any part of the academic year.

105 (3) PROGRAM AWARDS.—

106 (a) A student enrolled in a Florida College System  
107 institution or state university shall be eligible for an award  
108 equal to 100 percent of his or her tuition and fees.

109 (b) A student enrolled in an eligible independent college  
110 or university shall receive a fixed award calculated by using  
111 the average tuition and fee calculation as prescribed by the  
112 department for full-time enrollment at a public postsecondary  
113 educational institution at the comparable level.

114 (c) A student may be awarded a stipend for textbooks as  
115 specifically funded in the General Appropriations Act.

116 (d) A student may receive an award for a maximum of 100  
117 percent of the number of credit hours required to complete up to  
118 a baccalaureate degree program.

119 (4) PROGRAM FUNDING.—The department shall issue awards for  
120 the program annually. The funding for the program is subject to  
121 legislative appropriation. If the funds appropriated are not  
122 adequate to provide the maximum allowable award to each eligible  
123 applicant, awards in all components of the program must be  
124 prorated using the same percentage reduction for each award.

125 (5) RULES AND REGULATIONS.—The State Board of Education

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126 | and the Board of Governors shall adopt rules and regulations,  
127 | respectively, to administer this section.

128 |       **Section 5.** This act shall take effect July 1, 2025.