

Introduced by

1 A BILL for an Act to amend and reenact section 65-05.1-08 of the North Dakota Century Code,
2 relating to a workers' compensation grant program for vocational rehabilitation; and to provide a
3 continuing appropriation.

4 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:**

5 **SECTION 1. AMENDMENT.** Section 65-05.1-08 of the North Dakota Century Code is
6 amended and reenacted as follows:

7 **65-05.1-08. Workforce safety and insurance educational revolving loan fund -**
8 **Vocational rehabilitation grants - Continuing appropriation.**

- 9 1. The organization may establish a revolving loan fund to provide a low-interest loan
10 to an injured employee or to a surviving spouse or dependent child of an injured
11 employee whose death resulted from a compensable injury under section
12 65-05-16. The loan must be used to pursue an education at an accredited
13 institution of higher education or an institution of technical education. In order to be
14 eligible for a loan under this section, an individual must have obtained a high
15 school diploma or its equivalent and either must be ineligible for retraining under
16 this chapter or must have exhausted training and education benefits. The Bank of
17 North Dakota and the organization shall establish loan eligibility requirements and
18 make application determinations based on the established criteria. The loan
19 application must require an applicant to demonstrate a viable education plan that
20 will enable the individual to achieve gainful employment.
- 21 2. The total amount loaned annually under this section may not exceed two million
22 five hundred thousand dollars. The maximum amount payable on behalf of ~~an~~ a
23 loan applicant may not exceed fifty thousand dollars and must be payable within
24 five years. A loan must be repaid within a period not to exceed twenty years. A

1 loan must be repaid at an interest rate established by the organization which may
2 not exceed the rate of one percent below the Bank of North Dakota's prime interest
3 rate. The organization shall pay the Bank of North Dakota a negotiated fee for
4 administering and servicing loans under this section. At the organization's
5 discretion, moneys to establish and maintain the revolving loan fund must be
6 appropriated from the organization's workforce safety and insurance fund. The
7 revolving loan fund is a special fund and must be invested pursuant to section
8 21-10-06. Investment income and collections of interest and principal on loans
9 made from the revolving loan fund are appropriated on a continuing basis to
10 maintain the fund and provide loans in accordance with this section. ~~The~~ As
11 determined necessary, the organization,~~as determined necessary,~~ may transfer
12 uncommitted moneys of the revolving loan fund to the workforce safety and
13 insurance fund.

14 3. The organization may implement a grant program to promote and provide
15 necessary educational opportunities for injured employees within the vocational
16 rehabilitation process. The organization may award a grant to promote necessary
17 skills upgrading and to provide for the completion of remedial educational
18 requirements which allows for optimal transition into the labor force. The total
19 annual amount the organization may grant under this subsection may not exceed
20 one hundred thousand dollars. The organization shall establish grant eligibility
21 requirements and make grant determinations based on the established criteria.
22 Moneys are appropriated on a continuing basis from uncommitted moneys in the
23 educational revolving loan fund for the purpose of funding the grants under this
24 subsection.