

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2025

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HOUSE PRINCIPAL CLERK

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HOUSE BILL DRH10452-NDa-109

Short Title: Create Police Leadership Fellows Program. (Public)

Sponsors: Representative Longest.

Referred to:

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
2 AN ACT TO CREATE THE POLICE LEADERSHIP FELLOWS PROGRAM.

3 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

4 **SECTION 1.** Chapter 17C of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new article  
5 to read:

6 "Article 3.

7 "North Carolina Police Leadership Fellows Program.

8 **"§ 17C-30. Definitions.**

9 As used in this Article, the following definitions apply:

- 10 (1) Commission. – The North Carolina Criminal Justice Education and Training  
11 Standards Commission.  
12 (2) Committee. – The North Carolina Police Leadership Fellows Committee.  
13 (3) Division. – The Criminal Justice Standards Division of the North Carolina  
14 Department of Justice.  
15 (4) Eligible criminal justice professions. – State and local sworn law enforcement  
16 officers, State correctional officers, other correctional officers maintained by  
17 local governments and juvenile justice agencies, sworn sheriffs and deputy  
18 sheriffs, detention officers, and telecommunicators under the direct  
19 supervision of a law enforcement agency.  
20 (5) Program. – The North Carolina Police Leadership Fellows Program.  
21 (6) Recipient. – An individual selected by the Committee to receive a forgivable  
22 loan under the Program.

23 **"§ 17C-31. North Carolina Police Leadership Fellows Committee established; membership.**

24 (a) Committee Established. – There is established the North Carolina Police Leadership  
25 Fellows Committee. The Committee shall be a Special Committee of the North Carolina Criminal  
26 Justice Education and Training Standards Commission, as defined in the Commission's bylaws.  
27 The Committee shall determine program and forgivable loan recipient selection criteria, selection  
28 procedures, and shall select the recipients to receive forgivable loans under the North Carolina  
29 Police Leadership Fellows Program in accordance with the requirements of this Article.

30 (b) Membership. – The Committee shall consist of 10 members who shall be appointed  
31 as follows:

- 32 (1) The chair of the Commission shall appoint eight members of the Commission  
33 to the Committee as follows:  
34 a. Three at-large members.  
35 b. Two sworn law enforcement officers.  
36 c. Two correctional officers.



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1           d. The ex officio member representing the President of The University of  
2           North Carolina System.

3           (2) The chair of the North Carolina Sheriffs' Education and Training Standards  
4           Commission shall appoint two members of the North Carolina Sheriffs'  
5           Education and Training Standards Commission to the Committee.

6           (c) Terms of Office. – Appointments to the Committee shall be for two-year terms,  
7           commencing July 1, 2025.

8           (d) Chair; Meetings. – The chair of the Commission shall call the first meeting of the  
9           Committee. The Committee members shall elect a chair and a vice-chair from the membership  
10           of the Committee pursuant to the Commission's bylaws to serve one-year terms. The Committee  
11           shall meet regularly at times and places deemed necessary by the chair or, in the absence of the  
12           chair, by the vice-chair.

13           (e) Expenses. – Committee members shall receive per diem, subsistence, and travel  
14           allowances in accordance with G.S. 138-5 or G.S. 138-6, as appropriate.

15           (f) Vacancies. – Except as otherwise provided, if a vacancy occurs in the membership of  
16           the Committee, the appointing authority shall appoint another person meeting the same  
17           qualifications to serve for the balance of the unexpired term.

18           "§ 17C-32. North Carolina Police Leadership Fellows Program established;  
19           administration.

20           (a) Program. – There is established the North Carolina Police Leadership Fellows  
21           Program to be administered by the Committee with the assistance of the Division. The purpose  
22           of the Program is to increase the number of criminal justice professionals by providing forgivable  
23           loans to exceptional individuals to obtain Bachelor's Degrees from a constituent institution of the  
24           University of North Carolina System in criminal justice, government, the social sciences, or a  
25           related field as determined by the Committee.

26           (b) Program Administrator. – The Director of the Division shall select a member of the  
27           Division staff, with the consent of the Committee, to serve as the Program administrator. The  
28           Program administrator will be responsible for all administrative duties and oversight of the  
29           Program as established by the Committee. The Program administrator will conduct recruitment  
30           efforts to include the following:

31           (1) Target high school graduates who, due to economic circumstances, are  
32           displaced, unemployed, or underemployed.

33           (2) Target high school seniors who demonstrate an interest in being employed in  
34           an eligible criminal justice profession.

35           (3) Engage with employees of eligible criminal justice professions and local  
36           leaders for input in the Program.

37           (4) Attend high school career days, job fairs, and other activities to recruit  
38           qualified individuals into the Program.

39           (c) Awards of Forgivable Loans. – The Program shall provide forgivable loans of up to  
40           three thousand dollars (\$3,000.00) per year, totaling a maximum of six thousand dollars  
41           (\$6,000.00) over two years for the freshman and sophomore years, to selected individuals. The  
42           Program shall provide forgivable loans of up to seven thousand dollars (\$7,000.00) per year,  
43           totaling a maximum of six thousand dollars (\$14,000.00) over two years for the junior and senior  
44           years, to selected individuals. The maximum forgivable loans to any recipient under the Program  
45           shall be twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000.00). The funds from the forgivable loans may be used  
46           for tuition, fees, and the cost of books. The Committee may determine the maximum amount of  
47           loan proceeds that may be applied to university fees and course textbooks. The number of  
48           recipients in the Program each year shall be at least 50 if there are sufficient Program applicants  
49           to meet this minimum amount, and shall not exceed 100. The Committee shall select recipients  
50           no later than June 1 of each year.

1        (d) Eligibility Criteria. – An applicant must be domiciled in this State at the time of  
2 application, a resident for tuition purposes as defined in G.S. 116-143.1(a)(2), a high school  
3 graduate or a high school senior who will graduate from high school by the end of the current  
4 academic year, and demonstrate the intent upon completion of the Program to be employed in an  
5 eligible criminal justice profession. An applicant who has been convicted of any of the following  
6 is ineligible to receive a forgivable loan:

7            (1) A felony.

8            (2) A crime for which the punishment could have been imprisonment for more  
9 than two years.

10          (3) A crime or unlawful act defined as a Class B misdemeanor within the five-year  
11 period prior to the date of application.

12          (4) Four or more crimes or unlawful acts defined as Class A misdemeanors,  
13 except the trainee may be enrolled if the last conviction date occurred more  
14 than two years prior to the date of application.

15          (5) A combination of four or more Class A misdemeanors or Class B  
16 misdemeanors regardless of the date of conviction.

17        (e) Application Process. – The Committee may specify required application materials,  
18 including a certified State and local background check for applicants who are at least 18 years of  
19 age. Application materials and Committee deliberations are confidential and are not a public  
20 record as defined in G.S. 132-1. The Committee shall publish application, award, and notification  
21 deadlines and provide written notification to applicants regarding the outcome of the Committee's  
22 deliberations.

23        (f) Award of Forgivable Loan. – The Committee shall adopt standards for awarding  
24 forgivable loans based on measures the Committee deems appropriate, including the following,  
25 and the selection of recipients by the Committee shall be final:

26            (1) Scholastic Profile as determined by SAT or ACT scores, grade point average,  
27 and class rank when available.

28            (2) Potential for excellence in an eligible criminal justice profession.

29            (3) School and community service.

30            (4) At least two references.

31            (5) Demonstrated writing ability.

32        (g) Administration of Forgivable Loan Awards. – Upon the naming of recipients by the  
33 Committee, the Division shall perform all administrative functions necessary to implement this  
34 Article, which functions shall include dissemination of information, disbursement, receipt,  
35 liaison with participating universities, determination of the acceptability of service repayment  
36 agreements, and all other functions necessary for the execution, payment, and enforcement of  
37 promissory notes required under this Article.

38        (h) Recipient Obligations. – A recipient must become and remain a student at a  
39 constituent institution of the University of North Carolina System in a Bachelor's Degree in  
40 criminal justice, government, the social sciences, or a related field as determined by the  
41 Committee, at all times during each of the recipient's four academic years of university study and  
42 pursue continuously studies that will qualify the recipient to be employed in an eligible criminal  
43 justice profession upon graduation. The recipient must maintain a minimum cumulative 2.0 GPA  
44 throughout the course of study and also maintain appropriate credit hours for each semester to  
45 obtain a Bachelor's Degree in criminal justice, government, the social sciences, or a related field  
46 as determined by the Committee. If the Committee, in its sole discretion, determines that  
47 circumstances warrant an extension of the period within which the recipient must obtain a  
48 Bachelor's Degree in criminal justice, government, the social sciences, or a related field as  
49 determined by the Committee, the Committee may extend that period by up to 12 additional  
50 months. The recipient must also accept employment in an eligible criminal justice profession for

1 at least eight years following graduation. The Committee may adopt additional recipient  
2 obligations it deems appropriate.

3 (i) Annual Report. – The Program administrator, in coordination with the Committee,  
4 shall report no later than January 1, 2027, and annually thereafter, to the Joint Legislative  
5 Oversight Committee on Justice and Public Safety regarding the following:

6 (1) The number of forgivable loans awarded for each academic year  
7 disaggregated to include geographic and other demographic information.

8 (2) Aggregated student performance, retention, and graduation rates.

9 (3) Employment subsequent to completion of the Program broken down by  
10 county and eligible criminal justice profession.

11 (4) Forgiveness, termination, default, and repayment rates.

12 (5) Retention rates of recipients within criminal justice professions disaggregated  
13 by county.

14 **"§ 17C-33. Terms of forgivable loans; receipt and disbursement of funds; default.**

15 (a) Forgivable Loans. – All forgivable loans shall be evidenced by notes made payable  
16 to the Program that bear interest at a rate not to exceed ten percent (10%) per year as set by the  
17 Committee and beginning on the first day of September after the completion of the Program or  
18 60 days after termination of the forgivable loan, whichever is earlier. The forgivable loan may  
19 be terminated upon the recipient's withdrawal from school, by the recipient's failure to meet the  
20 standards set by the Committee, or by the recipient's default based on conditions set by the  
21 Committee. The Committee may only disburse funds to the university where the recipient is  
22 enrolled and may not disburse funds directly to a recipient.

23 (b) Forgiveness. – The Committee shall forgive the loan and any interest accrued on the  
24 loan if, within eight years after obtaining a Bachelor's Degree in criminal justice, government,  
25 the social sciences, or a related field as determined by the Committee, the recipient is employed  
26 on a full-time basis for a period of at least eight years in an eligible criminal justice profession.  
27 The recipient shall provide the Committee within 60 days of completion of the Program  
28 verification of the recipient's intent to seek employment in an eligible criminal justice profession.  
29 The recipient shall provide verification of employment to the Committee each year until the  
30 obligation is satisfied. The Committee shall also forgive the loan if it finds that it is impossible  
31 for the recipient to meet the terms of the loan, after or before graduation, due to death or  
32 permanent disability of the recipient.

33 (c) Extension. – The Committee may extend repayment of the loan for up to two years  
34 on a year-to-year basis for each year if (i) the recipient is on active duty with the Armed Forces  
35 of the United States or (ii) the Committee, in its sole discretion, determines that circumstances  
36 warrant an extension.

37 (d) Repayment. – If the recipient notifies the Committee that the recipient intends to  
38 forego forgiveness of the loan after completion of the Program, the Committee shall provide the  
39 recipient with the conditions of repayment and the recipient will have 60 days to begin repayment  
40 of all funds distributed, including interest. The recipient will have up to 60 months to repay all  
41 funds distributed, including interest.

42 (e) Default. – The Committee shall determine the events that constitute a default during  
43 the Program, including, but not limited to, failure by the recipient to comply with the obligations  
44 set out in G.S. 17C-32(h). In the event of default during the Program, the Committee may declare  
45 the entire unpaid amount of indebtedness evidenced by the note, including interest, immediately  
46 due and payable. A default shall preclude further participation by the recipient in the Program.  
47 Upon default, the Committee shall notify the recipient, in writing, by certified mail, return receipt  
48 requested, addressed to the recipient at the last address on file with the Committee. Refusal or  
49 nondelivery at that address will be deemed delivered after seven days. The Committee may allow  
50 a recipient who is in default to repay all funds distributed, including interest. If the Committee  
51 approves repayment, the recipient will receive the conditions of repayment and will have 60 days

1 to begin repayment of all funds distributed, including interest. The recipient will have up to 60  
2 months to repay all funds distributed, including interest."

3 **SECTION 2.** This act becomes effective July 1, 2025.