

HB 1781-FN - AS INTRODUCED

2026 SESSION

26-3075

09/08

HOUSE BILL ***1781-FN***

AN ACT relative to child support obligations during postsecondary education.

SPONSORS: Rep. Burton, Straf. 10

COMMITTEE: Education Funding

ANALYSIS

This bill extends parental child support obligations to potentially include payment for post-high school education, including college tuition.

Explanation: Matter added to current law appears in ***bold italics***.
Matter removed from current law appears ~~[in brackets and struckthrough.]~~
Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty-Six

AN ACT relative to child support obligations during postsecondary education.

Be it Enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court convened:

1 1 Parental Rights and Responsibilities; Support. Amend RSA 461-A:14, IV to read as follows:

2 IV. The amount of a child support obligation shall remain as stated in the order until the
3 dependent child for whom support is ordered marries, or becomes a member of the armed services, or
4 is emancipated pursuant to an order of emancipation under RSA 461-B, or reaches the age of 18
5 years, unless the child is still a full-time student at a secondary or elementary school, charter school,
6 ~~[or]~~ a home education program in conformity with RSA 193-A at the age of 18, **or college or other**
7 **post-secondary education, subject to paragraph V**, then child support shall continue until the
8 child graduates or until ~~[2 months after]~~ the child reaches the age of ~~[19]~~ **22**, whichever is first, at
9 which time the child support obligation, including all educational support obligations, shall
10 terminate without further legal action. If the parties have a child with disabilities, the court may
11 initiate or continue the child support obligation after the child reaches the age of 18. No child
12 support order for a child with disabilities which becomes effective after July 9, 2013 may continue
13 after the child reaches age 21 or no longer qualifies as a child with a disability, as defined in RSA
14 186-C:2, I, who is receiving special education or special education and related services as identified
15 by the child's school district.

16 2 Parental Rights and Responsibilities; Support. Amend RSA 461-A:14, V to read as follows:

17 V. No child support order shall require a parent to contribute to an adult child's ~~[college~~
18 ~~expenses or other]~~ educational expenses beyond the completion of ~~[high school]~~ **college**, except as
19 provided in RSA 461-A:21.

20 3 Parental Rights and Responsibilities; Agreement on Post-College Expenses. Amend RSA 461-
21 A:21 to read as follows:

22 461-A:21 Agreement on **Post**-College Expenses. Parents may agree to contribute to their child's
23 **post-college educational** expenses or other educational expenses beyond the completion of ~~[high~~
24 ~~school]~~ **college** as part of a stipulated decree, signed by both parents and approved by the court. The
25 agreed-on contribution may be made by one or both parents. The agreement may provide for
26 contributions to an account to save for ~~[college]~~ **educational expenses**, for the use of an asset, or for
27 payment of educational expenses as incurred. Any such agreement shall specify the amount of the
28 contribution, a percentage, or a formula to determine the amount of the contribution.

29 4 Effective Date. This act shall take effect January 1, 2027.

HB 1781-FN- FISCAL NOTE
AS INTRODUCED

AN ACT relative to child support obligations during postsecondary education.

FISCAL IMPACT: This bill does not provide funding, nor does it authorize new positions.

Estimated State Impact				
	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029
Revenue	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<i>Revenue Fund(s)</i>	None			
Expenditures*	\$0	\$7,000 - \$17,000 general funds; \$13,000 - \$33,000 federal funds	\$0	\$0
<i>Funding Source(s)</i>	General funds, federal funds			
Appropriations*	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<i>Funding Source(s)</i>	None			

*Expenditure = Cost of bill

*Appropriation = Authorized funding to cover cost of bill

METHODOLOGY:

This bill amends RSA 461-A by making the following changes to child support laws. The bill:

- Removes the portion of the statute that caps child support at two months after a child's 19th birthday, replacing it with a cap at 22 years old;
- Provides that support may continue through college or other post-secondary education, subject to RSA 461-A:14, V;
- States that no child support order shall require a parent to contribute to an adult child's college expenses or other educational expense beyond the completion of college, except as provided in RSA 461-A:21; and
- Provide guidance on how parents can agree to cover post-college educational expense.

The Department of Health and Human Services anticipates additional costs associated with changing agency systems. To fulfill its statutory duty to enforce child support orders, the Department relies on various procedures and automated systems to set up and track orders for enforcement. Any changes to the Department's procedure in enforcement remedies may require changes to the New England Child Support Enforcement System (NECSSES). The Department estimates the one-time cost for system changes to be \$20,000-\$50,000. These costs will be funded with 66 percent federal funds and 34 percent state general funds.

AGENCIES CONTACTED:

Department of Health and Human Services