

Introduced by

Legislative Management

(Workers' Compensation Review Committee)

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

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

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