

State of Arkansas

As Engrossed: S4/3/25

95th General Assembly

A Bill

Regular Session, 2025

HOUSE BILL 1543

By: Representative Underwood

By: Senator Irvin

For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT TO AMEND THE LAW CONCERNING PUBLIC ASSISTANCE;
TO ESTABLISH THE WORKFORCE EXPERIENCE OPPORTUNITIES
ACT OF 2025; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Subtitle

TO ESTABLISH THE WORKFORCE EXPERIENCE
OPPORTUNITIES ACT OF 2025.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Title 20, Chapter 76 is amended to add an
additional subchapter to read as follows:

Subchapter 9 - Workforce Experience Opportunities Act of 2025

20-76-901. Title.

This subchapter shall be known and may be cited as the "Workforce
Experience Opportunities Act of 2025".

20-76-902. Legislative purpose.

The purpose of this subchapter is to increase employment, income, and
self-sufficiency among families by giving recipients of Supplemental
Nutrition Assistance Program benefits more opportunities to comply with work
requirements by volunteering at any public entity that receives state
funding.

20-76-903. Definitions.



1 As used in this subchapter:

2 (1) "Accept and accommodate" means allowing an individual to
3 physically enter and remain in the portion of a physical address open to the
4 public when an employee is present for no less than four (4) hours per day
5 and providing access to a bathroom;

6 (2) "State-funded entity" means:

7 (A) An agency, a sub-agency, a political subdivision of
8 the state, or an office of the state with a physical address at which
9 individuals are employed indoors at least part-time; or

10 (B) A municipal entity or office of a municipal entity
11 that accepts any amount of state funding in a given calendar year with a
12 physical address at which individuals are employed indoors at least part-
13 time; and

14 (3) "Work requirement volunteer" means a state resident who:

15 (A) Is required to comply with the employment and training
16 program requirement required in § 20-76-803 as a condition of eligibility for
17 the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program; and

18 (B) Does not qualify for an exemption under 7 U.S.C. §
19 2015(d)(2), as it existed on January 1, 2025.

20
21 20-76-904. Requirements of state-funded entities.

22 (a) A state-funded entity shall accept and accommodate a work
23 requirement volunteer who presents documentation of his or her work
24 requirement and photographic identification.

25 (b) A state-funded entity that accepts a work requirement volunteer
26 shall:

27 (1) Provide timely documentation to the agency responsible for
28 monitoring the work requirement volunteer's compliance with a work
29 requirement that accurately certifies:

30 (A) The work requirement volunteer's physical presence;
31 and

32 (B) Any additional descriptions or information required by
33 the responsible agency; and

34 (2) Allow the work requirement volunteer to monitor the
35 operations of the state-funded entity to the extent the monitoring does not
36 interfere with;

1 (A) Essential functions: or

2 (B) The health and safety of employees or the public.

3 (c) In accepting and accommodating a work requirement volunteer, a
4 state-funded entity:

5 (1) May allow or require a work requirement volunteer to
6 participate in:

7 (A) An activity for which no experience or education is
8 required; or

9 (B) An activity for which a work requirement volunteer is
10 qualified, including without limitation an activity that occurs in a place
11 other than the state-funded entity's physical address;

12 (2) May prohibit a work requirement volunteer from engaging in
13 an activity on the premises of the state-funded entity other than providing
14 himself or herself basic human necessities of relief when the work
15 requirement volunteer is not otherwise engaged; and

16 (3) Shall not allow the acceptance and accommodation of a work
17 requirement volunteer to negatively interfere with essential operations of
18 the state-funded entity.

19 (d) A state-funded entity is exempt from this subchapter if the
20 presence of a work requirement volunteer anywhere on the premises will
21 inevitably or inherently interfere with the essential operations of the
22 state-funded entity or negatively impact the health and safety of the
23 community served by the state-funded entity.

24
25 20-76-905. Liability.

26 (a) Except in a case of reckless conduct or intentional, willful, or
27 wanton misconduct, a state-funded entity or employee of a state-funded entity
28 is not liable for an injury, including without limitation economic and
29 noneconomic damages or death:

30 (1) Arising from the conduct of a work requirement volunteer; or

31 (2) Experienced by a work requirement volunteer either at a
32 physical location or during an activity associated with the state-funded
33 entity.

34 (b) A work requirement volunteer is not eligible for workers
35 compensation benefits under § 11-9-101 et seq.

36 (c)(1) A defense under this section is in addition to any other

1 defense, immunity, or limitation of liability provided by law.

2 (2) This section does not:

3 (A) Constitute a waiver of sovereign immunity of the state
4 or governmental immunity of any political subdivision; or

5 (B) Modify the defenses or duties of a work requirement
6 volunteer for conduct associated with his or her acceptance and accommodation
7 by a state-funded entity.

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9 SECTION 2. DO NOT CODIFY. Effective date.

10 This subchapter shall be effective on and after January 1, 2026.

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12 */s/Underwood*

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15 **APPROVED: 4/16/25**
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