

As Introduced

**136th General Assembly
Regular Session
2025-2026**

H. B. No. 924

Representative Williams

A BILL

To enact sections 120.09, 120.091, and 120.092 of 1
the Revised Code to create the court-appointed 2
public defender loan repayment program. 3

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

Section 1. That sections 120.09, 120.091, and 120.092 of 4
the Revised Code be enacted to read as follows: 5

Sec. 120.09. (A) The court-appointed public defender loan 6
repayment program is created, which shall be administered by the 7
state public defender. The purpose of the program is to provide 8
loan repayment on behalf of attorneys who agree to employment as 9
court-appointed counsel under division (E) of section 120.16 or 10
division (E) of section 120.26 of the Revised Code. 11

(B) Under the program, the state public defender shall 12
agree to repay up to fifty thousand dollars of a government or 13
other educational loan taken by an individual if the individual 14
has met all of the requirements under section 120.091 of the 15
Revised Code and if the expenses were incurred while the 16
individual was enrolled in a law school in the United States 17
that was, during the time enrolled, accredited by the American 18
bar association, or a law school located outside the United 19

States for which the individual received a foreign equivalency 20
evaluation. 21

(C) The state public defender, in accordance with section 22
111.15 of the Revised Code, shall adopt rules as necessary to 23
implement and administer sections 120.09 to 120.092 of the 24
Revised Code, including all of the following: 25

(1) The application described in section 120.091 of the 26
Revised Code; 27

(2) A method to verify an applicant's information; 28

(3) A method to receive and review questions regarding the 29
program from the general public. 30

(D) Notwithstanding any provision of section 121.95 of the 31
Revised Code to the contrary, a regulatory restriction contained 32
in a rule adopted under this section is not subject to sections 33
121.95 to 121.953 of the Revised Code. 34

Sec. 120.091. (A) An individual who meets all of the 35
following requirements may apply for loan repayment under the 36
court-appointed public defender loan repayment program: 37

(1) The individual is employed under division (E) of 38
section 120.16 or division (E) of section 120.26 of the Revised 39
Code for at least one thousand hours per year for a period of 40
either of the following: 41

(a) Ten consecutive years; 42

(b) Fifteen nonconsecutive years during a twenty-year 43
period. 44

(2) The individual is not enrolled in any other state or 45
federally funded student loan repayment or debt forgiveness 46

program, including the "John R. Justice Prosecutors and 47
Defenders Incentive Act of 2008," 34 U.S.C. 10671 et seq., or 48
the rural practice incentive program established under section 49
3333.131 of the Revised Code. 50

(3) The individual has made monthly payments that are 51
described by all of the following: 52

(a) Made after October 1, 2007; 53

(b) For the full amount due, as shown on the bill; 54

(c) Paid not later than fifteen days after the due date; 55

(d) Made during the individual's employment under division 56
(E) of section 120.16 or division (E) of section 120.26 of the 57
Revised Code. 58

(B) An application for loan repayment under the court- 59
appointed public defender loan repayment program shall be 60
submitted to the state public defender on a form that the state 61
public defender shall prescribe. The individual shall submit the 62
following information with an application: 63

(1) The individual's name, permanent address or address at 64
which the individual is currently residing if different from the 65
permanent address, and telephone number; 66

(2) The individual's employer under division (E) of 67
section 120.16 or division (E) of section 120.26 of the Revised 68
Code; 69

(3) A summary and verification of the educational expenses 70
for which the individual seeks reimbursement under the program; 71

(4) Verification that the individual has been admitted to 72
the practice of law in this state by the supreme court and 73

remains in good standing. 74

Sec. 120.092. The court-appointed public defender loan 75
repayment fund is created in the state treasury. The fund shall 76
consist of all money awarded to the state by donation, gift, or 77
bequest and all other money received for the implementation and 78
administration of sections 120.09 to 120.092 of the Revised 79
Code. 80

The state public defender shall use the fund for the 81
implementation and administration of sections 120.09 to 120.092 82
of the Revised Code. 83