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AN ACT  
RELATING TO LEGAL SERVICES; PROVIDING FOR THE COMMUNITY  
GOVERNANCE ATTORNEY COMMISSION TO ADJUST THE MAXIMUM  
ALLOWABLE SALARIES FOR ATTORNEYS PURSUANT TO THE COMMUNITY  
GOVERNANCE ATTORNEY ACT.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO:

SECTION 1. Section 21-21Q-3 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 2019,  
Chapter 43, Section 3) is amended to read:

"21-21Q-3. COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE ATTORNEY AND  
CONDITIONAL TUITION WAIVER PROGRAM  
CREATED--ADMINISTRATION--RULEMAKING SELECTION  
PROCESS--REPAYMENT.--

A. The "community governance attorney and  
conditional tuition waiver program" is created and shall be  
administered by the department. The department shall:

(1) promulgate rules for implementing the  
program and for a reasonable living stipend in consultation  
with the university; provided that the maximum living stipend  
shall be based upon the availability of funds and information  
provided by the university regarding the current cost of  
attendance at the university;

(2) publicize the program to law students  
and to prospective law students;

(3) collect and manage repayment from

1 students who do not meet their obligations under the program;  
2 and

3 (4) solicit and accept funds for the  
4 program, including grants and donations.

5 B. Participants shall enter the program in their  
6 final year of law school. The department shall select  
7 participants according to rules it promulgates and, in  
8 consultation with the commission, shall create a standard  
9 process for law students to apply to participate in the  
10 program.

11 C. The department shall award no more than two new  
12 waivers a year, in addition to renewing existing waivers for  
13 eligible participants, subject to the availability of  
14 funding.

15 D. Participation in the program shall be evidenced  
16 by a contract between the participant and the department.  
17 The contract shall provide for the payment of a participant's  
18 waiver and shall be conditioned upon the participant  
19 fulfilling the program obligations and meeting the  
20 university's standards for satisfactory academic progress.  
21 An applicant to the program shall sign the contract prior to  
22 being accepted into the program.

23 E. The contract shall include the following terms  
24 for repayment of the waiver:

25 (1) interest shall accrue upon termination

1 of the participant's course of study at the following  
2 interest rates:

3 (a) eighteen percent per year if the  
4 participant completes a course of study and no portion of the  
5 principal and interest is forgiven pursuant to Subsection F  
6 of this section; and

7 (b) seven percent per year in all other  
8 cases; and

9 (2) the maximum period for repayment shall  
10 be ten years, commencing six months from the date the  
11 participant completes or discontinues the course of study.

12 F. The contract shall provide that the department  
13 forgive fifty percent of a waiver for each year that a  
14 participant is employed full time as a community governance  
15 attorney with a maximum salary of not more than fifty  
16 thousand dollars (\$50,000) per year, subject to adjustment by  
17 the commission pursuant to Subsection G of this section.

18 G. The commission may approve subsequent increases  
19 in the maximum salary established pursuant to Subsection F of  
20 this section; provided that the maximum salary shall not  
21 exceed the salary rate for entry-level attorneys paid by  
22 legal service assistance entities in New Mexico that receive  
23 funding from the federally established legal services  
24 corporation."

25 SECTION 2. EFFECTIVE DATE.--The effective date of the

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provisions of this act is July 1, 2021. \_\_\_\_\_