



# Senate

General Assembly

**File No. 352**

February Session, 2024

Senate Bill No. 407

*Senate, April 9, 2024*

The Committee on Labor and Public Employees reported through SEN. KUSHNER of the 24th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the bill ought to pass.

## **AN ACT GRANTING VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STUDENTS ACCESS TO WORKERS' COMPENSATION.**

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Subparagraph (A) of subdivision (9) of section 31-275 of the  
2 2024 supplement to the general statutes is repealed and the following is  
3 substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2024*):

4 (9) (A) "Employee" means any person who:

5 (i) Has entered into or works under any contract of service or  
6 apprenticeship with an employer, whether the contract contemplated  
7 the performance of duties within or without the state;

8 (ii) Is a sole proprietor or business partner who accepts the provisions  
9 of this chapter in accordance with subdivision (10) of this section;

10 (iii) Is elected to serve as a member of the General Assembly of this  
11 state;

12 (iv) Is a salaried officer or paid member of any police department or  
13 fire department;

14 (v) Is a volunteer police officer, whether the officer is designated as  
15 special or auxiliary, upon vote of the legislative body of the town, city  
16 or borough in which the officer serves;

17 (vi) Is an elected or appointed official or agent of any town, city or  
18 borough in the state, upon vote of the proper authority of the town, city  
19 or borough, including the elected or appointed official or agent,  
20 irrespective of the manner in which he or she is appointed or employed.  
21 Nothing in this subdivision shall be construed as affecting any existing  
22 rights as to pensions which such persons or their dependents had on  
23 July 1, 1927, or as preventing any existing custom of paying the full  
24 salary of any such person during disability due to injury arising out of  
25 and in the course of his or her employment;

26 (vii) Is a member of the armed forces of the state while in the  
27 performance of military duty, whether paid or unpaid for such military  
28 duty, in accordance with the provisions of section 27-17, 27-18 or 27-61;  
29 [or]

30 (viii) Is elected to serve as a probate judge for a probate district  
31 established in section 45a-2; or

32 (vix) Is a student of a regional agricultural science and technology  
33 education center who is enrolled in (I) a public work-study program as  
34 defined and approved by the Commissioner of Education and the Labor  
35 Commissioner or a program established pursuant to section 10-20a, or  
36 (II) an internship, as defined in section 31-23.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	October 1, 2024	31-275(9)(A)

**LAB** Joint Favorable

*The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.*

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**OFA Fiscal Note****State Impact:** None**Municipal Impact:** None**Explanation**

The bill explicitly makes students of a regional agricultural science and technology education center “employees” covered by the state workers’ compensation law, resulting in no fiscal impact to the state or municipalities.

**The Out Years****State Impact:** None**Municipal Impact:** None

**OLR Bill Analysis****SB 407*****AN ACT GRANTING VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STUDENTS ACCESS TO WORKERS' COMPENSATION.*****SUMMARY**

This bill explicitly makes students of a regional agricultural science and technology education center (i.e., regional vo-ag program) “employees” covered by the state workers’ compensation law if they are enrolled in a work-study program, the Connecticut Career Certification Program, or an internship. It appears that students in a work-study program, the career certification program, or paid internship are already covered by workers’ compensation (see BACKGROUND).

Under the workers’ compensation law, an “employee” includes any person who has entered into or works under any contract of service or apprenticeship with an employer (CGS § 31-275(9)(A)).

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2024

**BACKGROUND*****Connecticut Career Certification Program***

The career certification program law specifically says all state and federal laws relating to employment and apprenticeships, except unemployment compensation law, apply to the work experiences and that they must be paid employment, with limited exceptions (e.g., community-service type activities) (CGS § 10-20b).

***Internship***

By law an “internship” is supervised practical training of a high school student or recent high school graduate that is comprised of curriculum and workplace standards approved by the departments of Education and Labor (CGS § 31-23(c)).

**Regional Vo-Ag Programs**

Regional vo-ag programs are hosted at high schools and students are enrolled in the regular comprehensive high school curriculum while also taking agricultural science courses and participating in supervised agricultural experiences.

**Work-Study Program**

By law a “cooperative work-study program” is a program of vocational education, approved by the education and labor commissioners, in an arrangement between the school and employers, where students receive instruction, including required academic courses and related vocational instruction by alternating between study in school with a job in the occupational field. The two experiences must be planned and supervised by the school and employers so that each contributes to the student’s education and employability (CGS § 31-23(c)). A student with a job in this scenario would be covered by workers’ compensation.

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Labor and Public Employees Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 12    Nay 0    (03/21/2024)