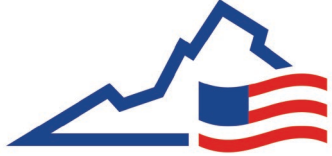


Virginia Military Survivors and Dependents Education Program

Montwrace Cunningham
Program Manager

September 26, 2024



Virginia Department of Veterans Services

Veterans Education Transition and Employment
**Virginia Military Survivors and
Dependents Education Program**

Virginia Department of Veterans Services



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Area of Focus

Virginia Department of Veterans Services' (DVS) process for:

- Determining and monitoring program eligibility; and
- Enrolling individuals in the program, addressing all aspects of the eligibility determination and enrollment process for which DVS is responsible.

Available data related to:

- The eligible population of the VMSDEP, including the current number of enrolled individuals; and
- The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs or other sources related to how many Veterans/families are eligible.

Eligibility Requirements and Responsibilities

Eligibility requirements and benefits are outlined in the Code of Virginia [§2.2-2004](#), [§23.1-608](#), and [§23.1-608.1](#).

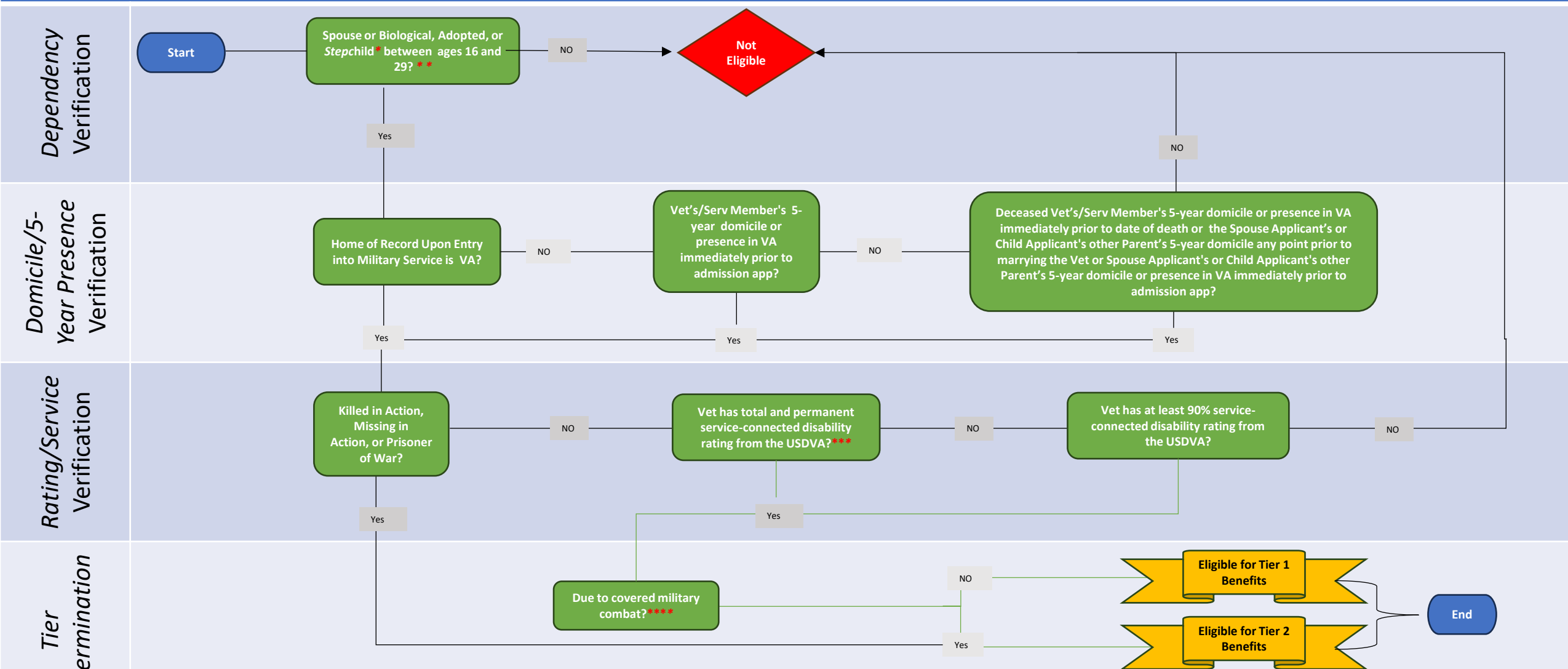
Per the Code:

- DVS determines eligibility.
- Virginia Public Colleges and Universities (VPCU) confirm enrollment/benefits usage and apply tuition/fee waiver.
- State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) controls the stipend funding and makes allocations to VPCU.

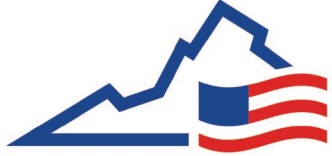
Two tiers of VMSDEP benefits:

- Tier 1 = not combat related. Tuition/fee waiver, but no stipend
- Tier 2 = combat related. Tuition/fee waiver and stipend

VMSDEP Eligibility Flow Chart



*Stepchild of deceased Tier 2 qualifying military Service Member. ** The Code authorizes the DVS Commissioner to approve children 30 and older under extenuating circumstances. *** USDVA = U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. **** Combat – is considered a military operation against terrorism, a peacekeeping mission, a terrorist act, or an armed conflict.



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Dependency Verification

Question: Is the applicant the Spouse or the Biological/Adopted/Stepchild (ages 16-29)* of a qualifying Veteran or Military Service Member?

- Yes: Proceed to Domicile/Five-Year Presence Verification.
- No: Not eligible.

* NOTE: the Code grants the DVS Commissioner the authority to “*certify dependents above the age of 29 in those cases in which extenuating circumstances prevented the dependent child from using his benefits before the age of 30.*”

Information Reviewed:

- Spouse: Marriage License/Certificate
- Biological or Adopted Child: Birth Certificate or Adoption Decree/Court Order
- Stepchild: Birth Certificate, Marriage License/Certificate of the biological parent to the deceased qualifying military service member, and evidence showing the service member claimed the stepchild as a dependent on his or her tax return or on his or her Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) while serving on active duty.

NOTE: Not available to the stepchild of a Tier 1 qualifying veteran.

Domicile/Five-Year Presence Verification

Question: Is the qualifying veteran's or service member's Home of Record Upon Entry into military service listed as "Virginia"?

- Yes: Proceed to Rating/Service Verification.
- No: Not eligible unless:
 - The qualifying veteran or service member was domiciled or had physical presence in Virginia for at least five years immediately preceding the of application for admission; or,
 - The qualifying veteran or service member is deceased and established domiciled or had physical presence in Virginia for at least five years immediately preceding the date of death or the Spouse Applicant or Child Applicant's other parent was domiciled in Virginia for at least five years at any point prior to marrying the deceased veteran or service member or the Spouse Applicant or Child Applicant's other parent was domiciled or had physical presence in Virginia for at least five years immediately preceding the date of application for admission.

Domicile/Five-Year Presence Verification *continued*



Information Reviewed, but not limited to:

- DD Form 214, DD Form 256, DD Form 1300, or NGB Form 22
- State Income Tax Records
- Real Estate Tax Records
- Personal Property Tax Records
- Voter Registration Records
- Mortgage Monthly Statement or Residential Rental/Lease Agreement
- Payroll or Check Stubs Issued with Virginia Address
- Leave and Earning Statement Form
- Annual Social Security Statement
- Utility Bills
- Letter from commanding officer on official letterhead with an original signature stating that the Veteran currently lives in Virginia and specifying the length of time resided in Virginia.

Rating/Service Verification

Question: Does the qualifying Veteran have a total and permanent or at least 90 percent permanent service-connected disability rating from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA)?

- Yes: Applicant is eligible for Tier 1 benefits.
- No: Not eligible.

Information Reviewed:

- USDVA Benefits Summary Narrative only if the qualifying Veteran considered as totally and permanently disabled; or,
- USDVA Rating Decision Narrative (Complete Copy) if the qualifying Veteran is not considered as totally and permanently disabled. IMPORTANT NOTE: The USDVA Rating Decision Narrative must include all service-connected conditions and percentage of such conditions for the combined USDVA rating equating to at least 90 percent.



Rating/Service Verification *continued*

Question: Due to a military operation against terrorism, a peacekeeping mission, a terrorist act, or an armed conflict, was the qualifying service member killed, missing in action, a prisoner of war, or rated by the USDVA at totally and permanently disabled or at least 90 percent permanently disabled?

- Yes: Applicant is eligible for Tier 2 benefits.
- No: Not eligible.

Information Reviewed:

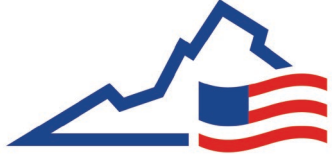
- Combat-Related Special Compensation (CRSC) Eligibility Information that includes the qualifying military service member's Combat-Related Percentage (Determined by the DoD)
- USDVA Rating Decision Narrative IMPORTANT NOTE: The USDVA Rating Decision Narrative must include all service-connected conditions and percentage of such conditions for the combined USDVA rating equating to at least 90 percent.
- Relevant Service Medical Records (Military records accessible from the National Personnel Records Center (NPRC))
- Relevant Military Personnel File Extracts (Military records accessible from the NPRC)
- Prior Military Disability Board Decisions (Military records accessible from the NPRC)
- Line of Duty Determinations (Military records accessible from the NPRC)

The VMSDEP Portal

The DVS partnered with the SCHEV and VPCUs to create a portal to carry out the listed responsibilities:

- Determining eligibility and benefits balance (number of semesters used/remaining) (DVS);
- Confirming enrollment/benefits usage (VPCU); and
- Confirming funds for the stipend (SCHEV).

The referenced Portal also enables the student to apply and update enrollment information.



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Responsibilities

Process within the VMSDEP Portal:

Step 1: Student applies;

Step 2: DVS determines eligibility and benefits balance (i.e. number of semesters used/remaining);

Step 3: If approved, the Student updates enrollment information each semester;

Step 4: School receives authorization and confirms enrollment/benefit usage;

Step 5: For Tier 2 only, School requests the VMSDEP stipend;

Step 6: SCHEV confirms the stipend;

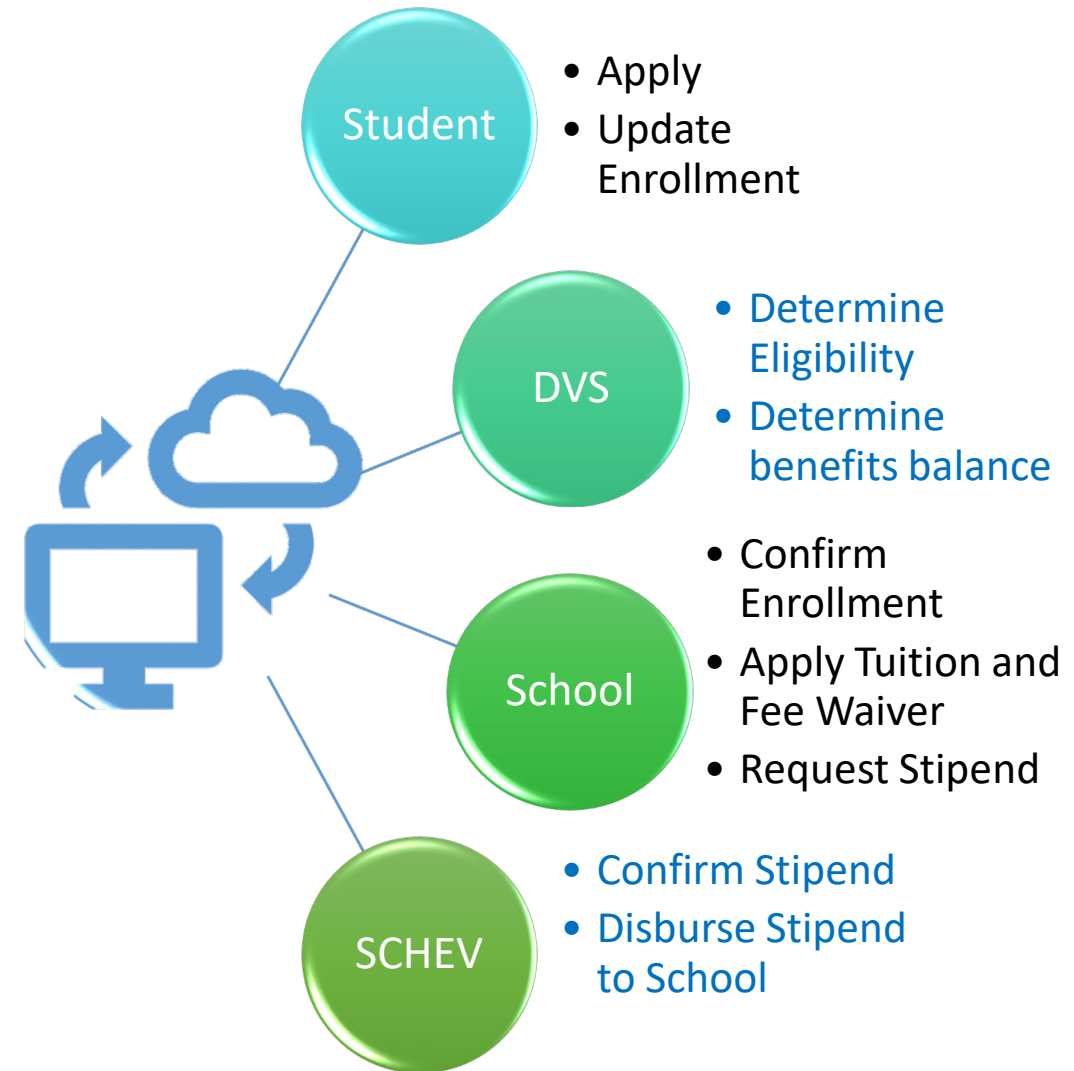
Step 7: The Portal tracks the benefit balance;

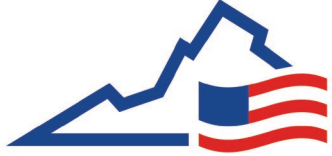
Process outside the VMSDEP Portal:

Step 8: School applies tuition/fee waiver;

Step 9: SCHEV releases the VMSDEP stipend to the School; then,

Step 10: School disburses the VMSDEP stipend to the Student.





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Population Data

VMSDEP Participants		
Academic Year	Registered/ Approved in VMSDEP Portal*	Active Participants**
2023-24	10,537	8,091

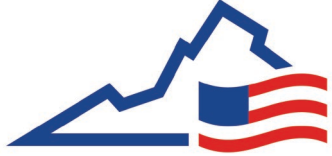
* As of August 14, 2023.

** Active Participants = used benefits during 2023-24 academic year.

Veterans Living in Virginia; Veterans with at least 90% USDVA SCD Rating			
Year	Total Veterans	Number of Veterans at least 90% SCD	Number of Veterans at least 90% SCD due to combat
FFY 23	684,043	100,541	66,689

Numbers as of September 30, 2023

- USDVA = U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
- SCD = Service-Connected Disabled, as determined by the USDVA. Ratings are in 10% increments from 0% to 100% SCD
- FFY = Federal Fiscal Year (Oct 1, 2022 – Sep 30, 2023)



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Questions?

