

## News Release

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Contact: Anne Atkins  
(804) 371-0441

### ***Change results in increased GI Bill benefits for veterans attending Eastern Virginia Medical School***

Veterans attending Eastern Virginia Medical School will pay significantly lower tuition as a result of a change in classification approved recently by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. The Virginia Department of Veterans Services (DVS) estimates the change could aid as many as 25 veterans currently enrolled at EVMS in medical and other health care programs.

The change resulted from a review of the school's status as a public educational institution. Historically, the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) had classified EVMS as a private institution of higher education. G.I. Bill benefits cover full tuition for in-state students attending a public institution; however, federal regulations cap benefits for private schools. This meant that until the change was made, G.I. Bill benefits for veterans attending EVMS in medical programs were capped at \$17,500. The remainder of the annual \$29,000 tuition came out of veterans' pockets.

Following a request from DVS, SCHEV declared EVMS a public educational institution for the purpose of G.I. Bill benefits. "While EVMS' relationship to the state is different from that of other Virginia institutions of higher education, its services to Virginia residents are supported with state tax dollars," wrote SCHEV Director Peter Blake. "Therefore, in educating and providing financial aid to Virginia residents, EVMS is acting in a public capacity."

“This change will save veterans attending EVMS thousands of dollars in tuition costs,” commented Paul Galanti, Commissioner of the Virginia Department of Veterans Services. Galanti added, “These veterans, some of whom have served their country for many years and gone on multiple deployments, earned these G.I. Bill benefits. It’s only fair that they receive all they are entitled to.”

The G.I. Bill, originally named the Serviceman’s Readjustment Act, was created in 1944 and provided multiple benefits for G.I.s returning from WWII. One of those benefits was cash payments to cover tuition and living expenses for college, high school, or vocational education. Nearly half of the nation’s WWII veterans used G.I. Bill education benefits, contributing to the nation’s extraordinary post WWII economic growth.

The Post 9-11 G.I. Bill and Post 9/11 GI Bill Improvement Act, enacted in 2009 and 2011, respectively, cover full tuition and fees for all in-state students attending a post-secondary public school but provide reduced benefits for private and foreign schools. Veterans also receive a monthly housing allowance and an annual stipend for books and supplies. Benefits cover 36 months and are available for up to 15 years following release from active duty.

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