



**Virginia Department of Veterans Services**

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**Veterans Education Transition and Employment  
State Approving Agency**

**Technical Assistance Handbook  
July 2022**

***“Serving the Deserving”***

**101 N. 14<sup>th</sup> Street, 17<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Richmond, Virginia 23219  
804-225-2298**

## Table of Contents

Veterans Education Benefits: Where to Go for Help	3
Glossary and Abbreviations	5
The Difference Between the SAA and the DVA	14
Approval Revisions	15
Dual Objectives	16
New Catalog Approval	17
Approval of New Branch/Extension	18
Miscellaneous Approval Issues	19
Change of Ownership	21
Types of School Visits	22
The Role of the Certifying Official	23
Compliance Survey	25
Useful Web Sites	29
VA Forms	32
Virginia Military Survivors and Dependents Education Program (VMSDEP)	35

# VETERANS EDUCATION BENEFITS: WHERE TO GO FOR HELP

## INFORMATION AND QUESTIONS

Virginia Department of Veterans Services  
Veterans Education, Transition and Employment (VETE)  
State Approving Agency for Veterans Education and Training (SAA)  
101 N. 14<sup>th</sup> Street, 17<sup>th</sup> Floor  
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## QUESTIONS CONCERNING VA REGULATIONS AND REPORTING PROCEDURES

### Education Liaison Officer (ELR)

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Department of Veterans Affairs  
Roanoke RPO  
210 Franklin Rd., SW  
Roanoke, VA 24011  
Office (540) 597-1689  
Fax (540) 597-1794  
[VA-ELR.VBAATG@va.gov](mailto:VA-ELR.VBAATG@va.gov)

## **PROCESSING OF CLAIMS AND CERTIFICATIONS**

**Degree, Non-Degree (Certificates), Flight, OJT/Apprenticeship, Correspondence**  
Buffalo Regional Processing Office (RPO)  
P.O. Box 4616  
Buffalo, NY 14240-4616  
Fax (716) 857-3192

### **EDUCATION BENEFIT QUESTIONS (for school officials, students and the general public)**

Internet: [www.gibill.va.gov](http://www.gibill.va.gov) (Link: "Ask a Question") (For All)  
Toll-Free Call: 1-888-GIBILL1 (1-888-442-4551)  
Forms may also be found at: [http://www.va.gov/vaforms/search\\_action.asp](http://www.va.gov/vaforms/search_action.asp)  
Monthly Phone Certification Toll Free – (1-877- 823-2378)

**School Officials Only** – (Create an Account) in subject area show "School Official"

**School Officials Inquiries: For the Toll-Free number call the SAA at 804-225-2298**

## **GLOSSARY AND ABBREVIATIONS**

### **Accrediting Agency**

A nationally recognized agency or association that the U.S. Secretary of Education determines to be a reliable authority as to the quality of training offered by an educational institution. The Secretary publishes a list of these agencies and associations which the State Approving Agencies utilize for establishing that a program of instruction may be approved under the provisions of 38 USC 3675 as an accredited program.

### **Accelerated Payment**

An accelerated payment is a 60% lump sum payment of tuition and fees for high cost, high technology programs. The payment is in lieu of regular chapter 30, 1606 and 1607 (REAP) benefits and is payable only if tuition and fees exceed 200% of what would normally be payable under chapter 30 for a given enrollment period

### **Active Duty**

Full-time duty in the Armed Forces. This also includes full-time duty performed by commissioned officers of the Public Health Service and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (not including active duty for training).

### **Active Duty for Training (ACDUTRA)**

Active duty for training in the Reserves or National Guard. This includes reservists on full-time duty for training purposes in the Armed Forces; members of the National Guard or Air National Guard of any state, performing full-time training duty under title 32, U.S. Code, sections 316, 502, 503, 504, or 505.

### **Advance Payment**

The monetary allowance which may be payable to students for the first (fractional or full) and second full month of enrollment. Advance payment must be requested by students and is mailed to schools before the beginning of classes for release to students who have completed registration

### **Already Qualified**

A student is considered “already qualified” if he or she has previously completed a program at the same level and in the same field of study for which application is now being made. This will not preclude the pursuit of a program leading to a degree at the same level with a different major or in an entirely different field. It also does not preclude the pursuit of subjects that may be necessary to qualify for admission into a program leading to a higher degree or to qualify for a vocational or professional objective. A person will be considered already qualified if he or she was previously employed in a job for which the course now being requested is designed to qualify the individual who completes it. For example, if the applicant is employed in sales, he or she is already qualified and not eligible for enrollment in a general sales course. VA benefits are not payable for pursuit of any program for which the student is already qualified. This includes courses required for re-licensing or a continuation of licensing in a professional field.

### **Armed Forces**

This includes the United States Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force and Coast Guard, including the reserve components thereof.

### **Assignment of Benefits**

Any arrangement by a school that denies the student the opportunity to control the proceeds of a check is prohibited. Section 5301(a) of title 38, U.S. Code, provides that payments of benefits due under the laws administered by VA shall not be assigned except as specifically authorized by law. There are no laws that authorize assignment of VA educational checks, either directly or indirectly.

### **Audited Course**

The term means any credit course that a student attends as a listener only, with a prior understanding between school officials and the student that such attendance will not result in credit being granted toward graduation. VA education benefits are not payable for pursuit of such courses.

### **Award Letter**

The official written notice from the Department of Veterans Affairs to a student of his or her monthly rate of payment, the inclusive dates of payment and remaining entitlement at the end of the award period. **An award letter is sent to a VA student whenever VA awards or changes the student's education benefit.** The award letter is a good source of information for financial aid purposes.

### **BDN**

The Benefits Delivery Network (BDN) is composed of various components. It is VA's main processing system for all award and related actions. This system generates the payment information that is sent to the Treasury for producing the benefits checks. BDN also contains the master record files for veterans and beneficiaries. It was formerly known as the Target Delivery System.

### **Break in Service**

The term "break in service" means a period of more than 90 days between the date when an individual is released from active duty or otherwise receives a complete separation from active duty service and the date he or she reenters on active duty.

### **Break Pay**

Educational assistance benefits may be paid during the intervals between terms at a school or between terms when transferring from one school to another while remaining in the same program. Exceptions apply, as well as certain other restrictions in certain situations. Persons on active duty or training at less than half-time are not entitled to interval payments.

### **Certificate of Eligibility (COE or C/E)**

A Form 22-1993a which is issued to an applicant showing approval to pursue a stated program of education at a particular institution, the remaining entitlement of the student, and the ending date of the student's eligibility.

### **Certifying Official**

The person(s) designated to sign enrollment certifications and other documents relating to VA benefits. The designation is made on VAF 22-8794, *Designation of Certifying Official(s)*.

### **Certification of Delivery (COD)**

A Certification of Delivery (VA Form 22-1999v) is mailed to the school in a separate envelope from the advance payment check. When the advance payment check is given to the student by the school, the COD, which contains preprinted enrollment information, must be completed by the certifying official and immediately returned. Failure to do so will result in the student's VA education benefits being suspended.

### **Change of Program**

A change of program consists of a change in the educational, professional, or vocational objective for which the veteran or eligible person entered training and a like change in the type of courses required to attain a new objective. This includes any change in an eligible person's program or objective which will result in a material loss of credit or which will materially lengthen the training time necessary to complete an objective. A material loss of credit is generally considered to be the loss of more than 12 credit hours for programs measured in quarter or semester hours, or the loss of more than 10 per cent of the training completed for other types of courses. A change of program is **NOT** charged if a claimant **completes** one program, then begins a totally different objective.

## **Change of School**

There is no limit or restriction on change of schools for continued pursuit of the same course or program provided the veteran or eligible person is making satisfactory progress and there is no material loss of credit.

## **Character of Discharge**

All VA benefits (with the exceptions of some insurance programs and certain medical benefits) payable to veterans or their dependents require the period of service upon which entitlement is based be terminated under conditions other than dishonorable. However, under the Montgomery GI Bill® veterans must have an **“Honorable”** discharge to receive benefits. Discharges “under honorable conditions” or “general” do not qualify veterans for benefits. Service personnel who complete six months or less of active military service are issued “uncharacterized” discharges. If an “uncharacterized” discharge is used for reasons of service-connected disability or hardship, they are considered to be “Honorable” for Montgomery GI Bill® purposes.

## **Circular**

A publication issued by VA for distribution to regional offices and sometimes to schools as an expeditious way to provide directives on new procedures. A circular may also be used to disseminate information regarding issues that will be pertinent for only a limited period of time.

## **Claimant**

An individual in the process of claiming VA benefits who is potentially eligible for benefits but who has not completed all the necessary steps that will permit VA to determine individual eligibility and entitlement.

## **Concurrent Enrollment**

A student pursuing a degree at a school may take a course at another school because it's at a more convenient time, it's less expensive, etc. The school that will grant the degree is the student's primary school. All other schools are secondary schools. If the primary school will accept the secondary school's course as a transfer credit that applies towards completion of the student's degree, then both the primary school and the secondary school can certify the student to VA. The student may pursue courses at a secondary school at the same time, concurrent, or at a different time, supplemental.

## **Confirmed Enrollment**

An enrollment certification that is dated, signed, and mailed by the school's certifying official on or after the first day of a certified enrollment period.

## **Course**

As used in this Handbook, “course” means a specific class or subject of instruction (e.g., English 110).

## **DD Form 214**

The Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty that is prepared at the time an individual completes a period of active duty in one of the Armed Forces. Former members of the Public Health Service (PHS) and of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) do not receive a DD Form 214, but they do receive comparable documents that provide necessary information concerning their active duty service. Veterans should be advised to submit copy number 4 of their DD Form 214 with a claim for VA benefits. A certified copy may also be submitted.

## **Delayed Enlistment Program (DEP)**

A Delayed Enlistment or Delayed Entry Program allows individuals to contract to go on active duty in the Armed Forces at a later date. The periods of time of the delayed entry onto active duty vary according to the specific

program involved. For example, under DEP, the delay of entry onto active duty varies up to 270 days. In other programs, such as ROTC, the delay may be several years.

### **Delimiting Date**

The first day after a claimant's period of eligibility expires. Benefits are not payable on or after the delimiting date. Generally, the delimiting date is ten years and one day from the veteran's last release from active duty date (RAD). The expiration date for those under Chapters 33, 35 and 1606 is computed differently.

### **Dependents' Educational Assistance (DEA)**

Education benefits payable to eligible dependents or survivors of veterans. Commonly referred to as DEA or Chapter 35.

### **DOD Record**

The Department of Veterans Affairs accesses the Department of Defense's manpower database through a computer interface between the Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC) in Monterey, California and the BDN System. This record contains information from the serviceperson's/veterans military records which VA may use to determine eligibility for Chapters 30 and 1606.

### **Drop Period**

The brief period at the beginning of a term officially designated for dropping courses without **academic** penalty. The school's last day to drop a course will be the end of the drop period, providing it does not exceed 30 days from the first day of the term.

### **Dual Eligibility**

Entitlement to education benefits under two or more programs administered by VA. If an individual qualifies for educational assistance under two or more such programs, the total assistance available may not exceed 48 months, or the equivalent in part-time benefits. A person having dual eligibility may not receive such benefits concurrently.

### **ECAP (Electronic Certification Automated Program)**

ECAP is a computer program that processes VA-ONCE submissions. ECAP can set up claim, propose education awards, and process education awards. ECAP will go as far as possible on this continuum. ECAP copies all documents into TIMS (imagining system).

### **Education Services Officer (ESO)**

This includes civilian education services officers, military career counselors, and other employees of the military education offices who are assigned responsibility for advising servicepersons of the educational opportunities available to active duty personnel.

### **Educational Assistance**

This term is generally used interchangeably with the term "education benefits." However, under the Montgomery GI Bill® - Active Duty, the term "educational assistance" means basic educational assistance, supplemental educational assistance, and all additional amounts payable, commonly called "kickers."

### **Eligible Person**

A child, spouse, or surviving spouse of a veteran who served on active duty and who died on active duty, or who died of a service-connected disability, or who has a total disability permanent in nature resulting from a service-connected disability, or who died from any cause while a total and permanent service-connected disability was in existence. Also includes a child or a spouse of a person who is on active duty as a member of the Armed Forces and who now is, and, for a period of more than 90 days, has been, listed by the Secretary concerned as missing in



action, captured in line of duty by a hostile force, or forcibly detained or interned in line of duty by a foreign government or power. Also includes dependents to whom a veteran has transferred chapter 33 benefits.

### **ELR (Education Liaison Representative)**

The person at the VA Regional Office or Regional Processing Office responsible for education liaison and program approval functions. Among other things, the ELR is responsible for promptly informing schools of changes in policies and procedures.

### **Enrollment Period**

This term means an interval of time during which a veteran or eligible person is enrolled in an educational institution and is pursuing his or her program of education. This term applies to each unit course or subject in the veteran's or eligible person's program of education; i.e., quarter, semester, or full school year.

### **Entitlement**

The number of months the student will be eligible for VA education benefits. This is usually expressed in the numbers of months and days the student will be eligible for full-time benefits, or the equivalent in part-time training, but also may be expressed in a dollar amount. Entitlement will vary depending on the education law the individual qualifies under. In no event will entitlement exceed 48 months under any combination of laws.

### **Facility Code**

The numerical code assigned by VA to an institution specifically identifying it or one of its subdivisions. Can be found on the WEAMS report.

### **File Number**

A seven, eight or nine-digit number assigned by VA to identify a claimant's records. The Social Security Number (SSN) is the VA file number for most veterans. If a veteran was assigned an old seven or eight-digit file number, the veteran's SSN will cross reference the seven or eight-digit file number. VA assigns a suffix *to the veteran's file number* ("10" or "W", spouse or surviving spouse, "41" or "A", first child to apply, "42" or "B", second child to apply, "43" or "C" third child . . .) to identify the records of an individual eligible for chapter 35 benefits. A dependent's SSN **will not** cross-reference a veteran's record. To access a dependent's record, the **file number of the veteran** must be provided.

### **GED**

General Educational Development (GED) certificate issued by a state-level department of education. The credentials issued by state-level departments of education are official documents that are acceptable as the equivalent of high school graduation diplomas. In addition, Department of Defense certificates of GED equivalency are acceptable evidence of completion of high school educational requirements.

### **Guest Student**

A guest student is a student who is matriculated at one institution, but is taking one or more courses at another institution that apply to the student's program at his/her original institution. The student must have a parent school letter from his/her original institution on file at the new institution, and must be certified as a guest student at the new institution.

### **Independent Study**

A course or subject offered without any regularly scheduled, conventional classroom or laboratory sessions. For VA purposes, such courses or subjects must be accredited and lead to a standard college degree and consist of a prescribed program of study with provision for interaction either by mail, telephone, computer/Internet, or personally between the student and the regularly employed faculty of the university or college. A specific approval of these courses by the State Approving Agency is required in order for VA benefits to be authorized.

**Institution of Higher Learning (IHL)**

A college, university, technical or business school offering instruction at the postsecondary level that leads to an associates or higher degree. The institution must be empowered by the appropriate state education authority (under state law) or accredited by a recognized accrediting agency to grant such degrees. This designation also includes hospitals offering medical-dental internships or residencies without regard to whether the hospital grants a postsecondary degree.

**Interval Payment (See Break Pay)****Kicker**

Additional money added to an individual's education fund by the Department of Defense to encourage enlistment or retention in the Armed Forces. The kicker is added to the individual's normal education benefit. Kickers are used for chapters 30 and 1606.

**Matriculated Student**

A student who satisfied formal admission requirements and is recognized by the college or university as a degree-seeking student. This does not mean that an undergraduate student must have formally been accepted into a specific major curricular field of study before he or she may be classified as "matriculated".

**MGIB**

Refers to either the Montgomery GI Bill® - Active Duty (Chapter 30 of title 38, U.S. Code) or the Montgomery GI Bill® - Selected Reserve (Chapter 1606 of title 10, U.S. Code).

**Mitigating Circumstances**

Unanticipated and unavoidable events beyond a student's control which are responsible for the student's inability to complete a course or courses or which result in the student's receipt of a non-punitive grade for a course the student completed. Generally, a student will be required to submit corroborative evidence to substantiate his or her reasons for being unable to complete a course with a creditable grade.

**NOBE**

Members of the Selected Reserve are given a Notice of Basic Eligibility (DD Form 2384, commonly referred to as a NOBE, pronounced *no-be*) by their National Guard or Reserve unit stating they are eligible for the Montgomery GI Bill®—Selected Reserve (Chapter 1606). The primary source VA uses to establish chapter 1606 eligibility is a Department of Defense (DOD) computer link, the chapter 1606 DOD Data Record. The NOBE is an alternative or supplemental document for establishing eligibility that's primarily used to verify eligibility for 120 days after the date it's issued. If you receive a NOBE from the student filing an original application for chapter 1606, send VA a copy of the NOBE when you certify the student.

**Non-College Degree (NCD)**

The designation "NCD" is used to refer to a course or program of education or any other institutional vocational/educational training which does not lead to a standard college degree.

**Non-Punitive Grade**

A non-punitive grade is a grade that (1) doesn't count as earned credit and that (2) doesn't affect progress standards for graduation. If a student completes the term and receives non-punitive grades, the non-punitive grades must be reported to VA if they change training time. An example of a non-punitive grade is a "X" (no basis for grade), a "NP" (no pass), or a "U" (unsatisfactory) that doesn't count as earned credit and that isn't calculated into the student's grade point average.

Grades such as P (Pass) or S (Satisfactory) aren't calculated into a student's grade point average, **but** they are counted as earned credit for graduation requirements. Since they count as earned credit towards completion of the student's program, they aren't non-punitive.

### **Nonstandard Term**

A term that is shorter or longer than a standard quarter or semester. The number of instructor-student contact hours is increased or decreased proportionately each week to compensate for the difference in length. VA will compute equivalent undergraduate credits to measure courses pursued during nonstandard terms. Terms of shorter than standard length are referred to as **accelerated terms**.

### **Objective**

The final educational, professional or vocational goal of a veteran, serviceperson or eligible person (e.g., degree, diploma, certificate, occupation). An educational objective is one that leads to the awarding of a diploma, degree or postdoctoral certificate that reflects educational attainment. Graduate certificate programs generally do not lead to an educational objective. A professional or vocational objective is one that leads to an occupation. It may include educational courses essential to prepare for the chosen occupation.

### **Primary School (Parent School)**

The primary school is the school that will grant the degree a student is pursuing. Generally, the student will be enrolled at the primary school for the majority of the program.

### **Program of Education**

A combination of subjects, unit courses or training activities pursued at a school or training establishment that is generally accepted as necessary to meet requirements for a predetermined educational, professional or vocational objective (e.g., diploma, degree, certificate, occupation). An "approved program" is a course of study or program of training that the appropriate State Approving Agency has determined meets the legal requirements for payment of VA educational assistance benefits to veterans and other eligible persons.

### **Punitive Grade**

A punitive grade is a grade that doesn't count as earned credit, but is used in determining a student's progress toward graduation requirements

### **Pursuit**

The term "pursuit" means to work, while enrolled, toward the objective of a program of education. This work must be in accordance with approved institutional policy and regulations, and applicable criteria of title 38, United States Code; must be necessary to reach the program's objective; and must be accomplished through resident courses (including teacher training courses and similar courses which VA considers to be resident training), independent study courses, a graduate program of research in absentia or medical/dental internships and residencies, nursing courses and other medical/dental specialty courses. VA considers a person who qualifies for payment during an interval between terms or school closing, or who qualifies for payment during a holiday vacation to be in pursuit of a program of education during the interval, school closing, or holiday vacation.

### **Quarter**

A division of the academic year at institutions that operate on a quarter system. Credits are earned and measured in quarter hours. A "standard quarter" is a period of instruction usually 10 to 13 weeks long.

### **Refresher Training**

Refresher training is a course at the elementary or secondary level to review or update material previously covered in a course that has been satisfactorily completed. Under some education programs, the term also means training in a program of education in which the veteran is already qualified, provided that the program pursued is training

to permit the veteran to update knowledge and skills and to be instructed in the technological advances which have occurred in the veteran's field of employment during the veteran's period of service. It may be used to update skills learned either during or prior to service but not for skills first acquired after discharge from service. Veterans pursuing "refresher training" are not limited to "refresher courses" at the elementary or secondary level.

### **Remedial/Deficiency Courses**

These terms refer to noncredit training at the secondary level that is required for entrance to or preparatory to the successful pursuit of a postsecondary educational program. If secondary level training is needed for the student to reach a certain mastery level necessary for pursuit of a postsecondary program of education, the courses must be listed separately on the Enrollment Certification. Upon entrance, each student's academic background should be evaluated and, as warranted, a required noncredit program established. These secondary level courses may include, for example, basic English skills, fundamental math, reading or other special academic assistance necessary for the student to qualify for admission. These courses may also include noncredit secondary level training to overcome a handicap, such as in speech, and may be offered at a high school, college or other educational institution. It is the institution's responsibility to determine if remedial/deficiency courses are necessary.

### **Reporting Fee**

VA pays an annual reporting fee to schools. This fee is intended to help defray the cost of processing VA certifications. The annual reporting fee is based on the number of VA students, including chapter 31 (Vocational Rehabilitation), certified by the school during the calendar year. The fee may fluctuate based on legislation. The reporting fee is paid as soon as possible after the end of the calendar year.

### **REPS**

Restored Entitlement Program for Survivors. Certain survivors of deceased veterans who died on active duty, or of service-connected causes incurred or aggravated prior to August 13, 1981, are eligible for benefits. The benefits are similar to the benefits for students and surviving spouses with children between ages 16 and 18 that were eliminated from the Social Security Act. The benefits are payable in addition to any other benefits to which the family may also be entitled. The amount of benefits is based on information from the Social Security Administration.

### **Research in Absentia**

A certifying official of a school may certify a program of research pursued by a veteran or eligible person in absentia, when the research activity is necessary for the preparation of the student's master's thesis, doctoral dissertation or a similar treatise which is a prerequisite to the degree being pursued. The research activity must be defined and organized so as to enable the certifying official to evaluate the time required for its successful pursuit, and the time certified for the research activity is independent of the time devoted to any employment situation in which the veteran or eligible person might be engaged.

**SAA** (See State Approving Agency)

### **Selected Reserve**

The term means, with respect to the Armed Forces, the Army Reserve, the Naval Reserve, the Marine Corps Reserve, the Air Force Reserve, the Coast Guard Reserve, the Army National Guard of the United States and the Air National Guard of the United States. The Public Health Service and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration do not have Selected Reserve units.

### **Semester**

A division of the academic year at institutions that operate on a semester system calendar. Credits are earned and measured in semester hours. A "standard semester" is a period of instruction usually 15 to 19 weeks long.

**Serviceperson**

An individual who is currently serving on active duty. Same as “service member.”

**Standard College Degree**

The term means an associate or higher degree awarded by an institution of higher learning that is accredited as a collegiate institution by a recognized regional or national accrediting agency or an institution of higher learning that is a “candidate” for accreditation, or an institution which is accredited by an agency recognized to accredit specialized degree-level programs.

**State Approving Agency (SAA)**

An agency appointed by the Chief Executive of a state to approve institutional programs of education and training for payment of benefits under the various laws administered by VA.

**Summer Session**

A division of the summer term specifically designated in a school catalog as a distinct period of instruction. These sessions vary in length, and are often only 3-8 weeks long.

**Summer Term**

The total instruction offered by a school between the end of the spring term and the beginning of the fall term. A summer term may consist of several summer sessions.

**Target (See BDN)****TIMS**

The Image Management System (TIMS) is the scanning system used by Muskogee. All education paper work is scanned into TIMS. Paper is scanned manually. Electronic paperwork like VA-ONCE Certifications are electronically copied into TIMS.

**Tuition and Fees**

The term “tuition and fees” means the total cost for tuition and fees for a course a school charges all students whose circumstances are similar to veterans enrolled in the same course. “Tuition and fees” does **not** include the cost of supplies or books that the student is required to purchase at his or her own expense.

**VA-ONCE**

Internet based application used to submit enrollment certifications and notices of change in student status. Information about VA-ONCE is available at [www.gibill.va.gov/School%5FInfo/once](http://www.gibill.va.gov/School%5FInfo/once).

**WEAMS (Web Enabled Approval Management System)**

DVA computer program that lists information and programs for approved schools and facilities nationwide. This will allow veterans to access approved schools and their programs on DVA website. To access the web site, go to <http://www.gibill.va.gov>; highlight **Education Benefits**, the select **Search for Approved Education Programs**.

## THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE SAA AND THE VA

The **Virginia Department of Veterans Services** is the **state** agency charged with the responsibility for administering **state** programs for veterans, including the **State Approving Agency (SAA) for Veterans Education and Training**.

The **U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA)** is charged with the responsibility of administering **federal** programs for veterans nationwide. The Roanoke Education Services Office, under the administrative supervision of the Atlanta Regional Processing Office, is the **federal** office with the responsibility for approving **federal** programs in Virginia.

### WHAT TYPES OF PROGRAMS OR SCHOOLS MUST BE APPROVED?

Any educational institution which enrolls, or is likely to enroll, veterans in training programs (except for **Federal** programs, programs offered **in other countries** and **Correspondence Courses** – DVA approves those programs) must be approved or reviewed by the **Virginia State Approving Agency**.

Examples are:

- colleges and universities
- private occupational schools
- trade and technical schools
- training and residency programs
- high school diploma, GED or post-diploma certificate programs
- apprenticeship and other on-the-job training programs
- flight programs
- preparatory programs

*New accredited public and non-profit degree granting institutions are deemed approved under 38 U.S.C. 3762 and CFR 21.4253 and therefore must have a review completed and all non-degree programs must be approved by the SAA prior to receiving a Facility Code from the Department of Veterans Affairs.*

### WHAT NEEDS TO BE APPROVED?

**Advertising-**

**Publications-** catalogs, student handbooks and class schedules.

**Programs** leading to an educational or immediate vocational goal such as a degree, certificate, postgraduate residency or non-collegiate technical or trade program. (Programs offered at branch campuses or facilities other than main campuses are approved separately).

**Policies** on attendance, academic progress, evaluation of credit for prior education and training, student conduct and specific types of instruction such as television courses, independent study, practicum or internships, English as a Second Language or other developmental programs.

**Changes** to any of these publications, programs or policies to include tuition and fees are to be reported to the State Approving Agency. Failure to do so could result in immediate suspension of approval and the interruption of benefits to veterans.

**Tuition and Fees** changes must be reported to the SAA for approval prior to implementation.

## APPROVAL REVISIONS

### **New Programs**

- School must complete the Application for Revised Approval

*If the new program is a minor, specialization or concentration under an existing approved degree (major) no action is required unless portions of the program are being taught by a partnership or contract with another institution (if under contract or partnership follow procedures for new program) . The school certifying official should certify the new program under the degree major.*

### **Revised Programs**

The school should only request an approval revision of an existing program when the following occurs:

#### **Certificates and Diplomas (all schools to include deemed approved)**

- The program hours have changed (increased or decreased)
- The name of the program has changed
- No longer being offered
- Is placed in teach-out
- Change in accreditation (*if applicable*)
  - ✓ Achieved, lost, suspended or probation status
- Offered in part or whole by third party contract

#### **Degrees offered at deemed approved and other facilities**

- The name of the program has changed
- No longer being offered
- Is placed in teach-out
- Change in accreditation
  - ✓ Achieved, lost, suspended or probation status
- Offered in part or whole by third party contact

**Note:** For all actions on this page you must complete the **Application for Revised Program Approval**. You may contact the SAA via email at [saa@dvs.virginia.gov](mailto:saa@dvs.virginia.gov) for an application.

## DUAL OBJECTIVES

### **Dual Objectives (*all schools to include deemed approved*)**

- Dual Objective only needs to be approved if the objective includes a non-college-degree program (*it must be reasonably related to a single career field*)
- No longer being offered
- Is placed in teach-out
- Either program had a name change or change in hours
- Change in accreditation (*if applicable*)
  - ✓ Achieved, lost, suspended or probation status

**Note:** Schools must complete the ***Request for Approval of Dual Objective*** contact the SAA via email at [saa@dvs.virginia.gov](mailto:saa@dvs.virginia.gov) for an application.



## New Catalog Approval

All schools (*to include deemed approved*) are required to complete and submit the application for new catalog approval and their catalogs (pdf format) to the SAA for approval for each academic year the catalog is published.

The catalogs are to be certified with the following statement and include your signature and date:

“I Certify This Catalog to be True and Correct in Content and Policy”

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

The following information should be included with the catalog:

- A complete list of all programs the school is requesting approval for (on the application)
- Tuition and fees
- Academic calendar
- Term dates (to include all accelerated periods of enrollments)
- All school policies and procedures
- Any catalog supplements or addendums and student handbooks
- Branch locations associated with your facility code
- All combined programs taught in conjunction with another school or training establishment. (please provide other institution’s name and address and a copy of the contract)

**Note:** *You must complete the application for catalog approval. Please contact the SAA via email at [saa@dvs.virginia.gov](mailto:saa@dvs.virginia.gov) for the appropriate application that pertains to your facility type.*

*If you have questions, you should contact the SAA via email at [saa@dvs.virginia.gov](mailto:saa@dvs.virginia.gov).*

## APPROVAL OF NEW BRANCH/EXTENSION

### **Branch**

*Branch campus* means a location of an educational institution that—

- Is geographically apart from and operationally independent of the main campus of the educational institution;
- Has its own faculty, administration and supervisory organization; and
- Offers courses in education programs leading to a degree, certificate, or other recognized education credential.

### **Extensions:**

- An extension is a location of an educational institution that is geographically apart from and is operationally dependent on the main campus or a branch campus of the educational institution.
- Programs taught at an extension will need to be approved under the campus (main or branch) from which the extension receives its operational support.
- An extension location must be approved by completing and submitting an *Application for Branch/Extension* to the SAA and must be listed on the *Institution Catalog Approval Request*.

### **New Branch with Separate Facility Code**

Approvals for a branch location with separate facility code are treated as a new facility. To request approval of these location contact the SAA at 804-225-2298 or go to <http://www.dvs.virginia.gov/education-employment/state-approving-agency/> and click on *Application Request Form*, complete and follow instruction for submission of application.

***Please have the following information available when requesting an application by telephone:***

- Institution name, address and phone number
- Accredited or non-accredited, if accredited name of accrediting agency
- Point of contact with phone number and email address

### **New Extension with Combined Approval**

The SAA will review the approval request and determine if it meets the requirements to be approved as a branch with separate approval or a combined approval under the institution's current facility code. The school should contact the SAA via email at [saa@dvs.virginia.gov](mailto:saa@dvs.virginia.gov) before applying for approval.

If the SAA determines the new location is a branch, the school should follow the instruction under “*New Branch with Separate Facility Code*” above.

## MISCELLANEOUS APPROVAL ISSUES

### **Change of Address**

Submit a letter on school letterhead requesting approval of the new address. The letter should include the following information:

- Effective date of change of address
- New phone number, email address and points of contact
- New Designation of Certifying Official Form (VAF 22-8794)
- Approval from your accrediting agency, SCHEV and/or any other state agency that provides oversight of your school and its programs

### **Change of Ownership**

See page 20.

### **Change of Certifying Official**

Complete a new designation of certifying official form (VAF 22-8794) and submit to:

**Education Liaison Officer (ELR)**  
James Quesenberry and Rita Harris ELRs (314/22)  
Department of Veterans Affairs  
Roanoke RPO  
210 Franklin Rd., SW  
Roanoke, VA 24011  
Fax: (540) 597-1794  
[VA-ELR.VBAATG@va.gov](mailto:VA-ELR.VBAATG@va.gov)

### **Change in Name of Facility**

School officials will need to submit a letter on the school's letterhead requesting the name change and include the following information:

- The effective date of the name change
- Include the old name and new name
- Approval from your accrediting agency, SCHEV and/or any other state agency that provides oversight of your school and its programs
- A new Designation of Certifying Official form (VAF 22-8794).

### **Other Issues**

The following information must be submitted to the State Approving Agency for approval if any changes occur during the academic year after your catalog has been approved:

- Tuition and fees
- Academic policies and procedures
- Academic calendar (to include all accelerated enrollments)
- Accreditation

***Note:** Please contact the SAA via email at [saa@dvs.virginia.gov](mailto:saa@dvs.virginia.gov) to request an application.*

## CHANGE OF OWNERSHIP

**Change of ownership**- A change of ownership of a proprietary educational institution occurs when—

- A person acquires operational management and/or control of the proprietary educational institution and its educational activities; or
- A person ceases to have operational management and/or control of the proprietary educational institution and its educational activities.

Transactions that may cause a change of ownership include, but are not limited to the following:

- The sale of the educational institution;
- The transfer of the controlling interest of stock of the educational institution or its parent corporation;
- The merger of two or more educational institutions; and
- The division of one educational institution into two or more educational institutions.

VA considers that a change in ownership of an educational institution does not include a transfer of ownership or control of the institution, upon the retirement or death of the owner, to:

- The owner's parent, sibling, spouse, child, spouse's parent or sibling, or sibling's or child's spouse; or
- An individual with an ownership interest in the institution who has been involved in management of the institution for at least 2 years preceding the transfer.

***Note:*** Please contact the SAA via email at [saa@dvs.virginia.gov](mailto:saa@dvs.virginia.gov) to request an application for change of ownership.

## TYPES OF SCHOOL VISITS

### Compliance Surveys

The two primary purposes of compliance survey visits are:

- To assist school or training establishment officials and veterans or eligible persons in understanding the provisions and requirements of the law; and
- To verify and assure the propriety of VA educational benefit payments to veterans and other eligible persons

Unlike inspection visits, which occur at the time of initial approval, compliance surveys may be conducted annually by the **State Approving Agency or DVA staff** to review an institution's compliance with veterans' approval and reporting requirements. To see a list of items that will be reviewed see *page 24*.

### Technical Assistance Visits

A technical assistance visit is an interaction designed to assist a group or individual at a facility with any aspect of the approval function. This type of visit helps to develop an extensive network of relationships with school officials throughout the state and provide integral knowledge and information to assist school officials in providing service to their veterans.

The SAA can provide training or information for your school, including, but not limited to the following:

- Department of Veteran Affairs (DVA) veterans benefit programs
- Enrollment certification to include VA-ONCE (online certification)
- Approval issues
- Commonwealth of Virginia veteran's programs and benefits

**To schedule a visit to your facility contact** the SAA via email at [saa@dvs.virginia.gov](mailto:saa@dvs.virginia.gov)

### Inspection Visits

- Inspection visits are conducted at a new school or branch location during or after its initial approval. Usually, the visit is conducted within 30 days upon the school's receipt of its facility code
- The inspection visit includes an inspection of the facility and technical assistance to provide training to the school's certifying official

### Other Visits

Other visits occur when:

- DVA request the SAA to visit because of non-compliance with approval standards
- To investigate a complaint

## THE ROLE OF THE CERTIFYING OFFICIAL

The Certifying Official, named by a school or college, acts as that institution's liaison with the **State Approving Agency** and **DVA**. This person informs the SAA of any changes requiring approval and sends certified copies of the school's publications to the SAA. This person also certifies veteran enrollment to **DVA**. During site and compliance survey visits, the Certifying Official meets with **State Approving Agency or DVA staff** to provide necessary files and information.

### WHAT ARE THE CONDITIONS FOR MAINTAINING APPROVAL?

To maintain approval, both accredited and non-accredited schools and colleges must meet the following conditions among other criteria:

#### **The catalog or bulletin must include an institution's:**

- Standards of progress (must contain a definite statement that defines the grading system, minimum grades considered satisfactory, conditions for interruption for unsatisfactory grades or progress, description of probationary periods and conditions for dismissal and re-admittance)
- Attendance policy
- Conduct policy
- Progress records furnished to students and retained by the institution

#### **The school must maintain:**

- A written record of a veteran's previous education and training, clearly indicating that appropriate credit for prior training has been given and training shortened proportionately
- Cumulative individual records containing the results of each enrollment period, including all courses and grades
- Adequate records showing the progress of each veteran, including notices of course withdrawals and last dates of attendance
- Attendance records of veterans enrolled in courses not leading to standard college degrees.
- Evidence that tuition and fees charged to and received from veterans are the same as those for other students
- Complete records and copies of all advertising, sales and enrollment materials used by or on behalf of the school for the preceding 12 months

#### **The school agrees to:**

- Enforce all policies
- Notify the **U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs** when veterans do not achieve satisfactory academic progress
- Notify the **U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs** within 30 days of all changes in hours of credit or attendance, including interruption or termination
- Notify the **State Approving Agency** of any changes affecting approved programs, including changes to location, course offerings, degree requirements and academic regulations
- Make available during regular business hours all required records outlined above to representatives of the **State Approving Agency** and **DVA** during periodic on-site visits

In addition to the preceding, the following conditions regarding refunds and evaluations apply to all **non-accredited** schools:

***Refunds:***

A pro rata refund policy must be in place which assures that the amount charged for tuition, fees and other charges for a portion of a course does not exceed the approximate pro rata portion of the total charges for tuition, fees and other charges that the length of the completed portion of the course bears to the total length; and

- Registration fees cannot exceed \$10 or they become subject to the pro rata refund policy
- Breakage fees cover only the exact amount of the breakage, with the remainder to be refunded
- Only the exact amount of charges for consumable supplies may be retained, with the remainder refunded
- Refunds for books, supplies and equipment furnished by the school will be made in full for the amount charged for unissued books, supplies and equipment. Issued items may be disposed of at a veteran's discretion
- Refund policies more favorable to veterans than pro rata refunds are acceptable; otherwise, schools may charge a sum not greater than 10% from the exact pro rata portion of such tuition, fees and other charges that the length of the completed portion of the course bears to its total length; the exact pro ration will be determined on the ratio of the number of instructional days in the course

***Evaluations (This requirement applies to all school programs):***

Evaluations of the following must occur:

- The quality, content and length of programs
- Personnel qualifications
- Facility's adequacy of resources and financial soundness
- School calendars and fee schedules

**IT IS IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER THAT:**

Adjudication receives updated approval information regarding your school at about the same time you receive your copy of your **WEAMS Report - Form 22-1998 (Web Enabled Approval Management System)**. Until that time, they do not have any information regarding your new or revised program. Therefore, it is very important that you not certify any VA beneficiaries for pursuit of that new or revised program or calendar until you receive the copy of your school's WEAMS Report – VA Form 22-1998 that contains the new or revised information.

Because your WEAMS Report – VA Form 22-1998 contains all of the information that each Adjudicator has regarding your school's approval, it is also very important that you review that form to insure that it accurately reflects the approval you requested from the SAA. If a change is needed, please contact the SAA via email at [saa@dvs.virginia.gov](mailto:saa@dvs.virginia.gov) and they will assist you in the correct course of action to take.

If the WEAMS form does not have enough room to accommodate all approved programs (as at some NCD schools) or all calendar dates (as at many IHL's), the remarks section of the form is annotated to refer to Education Services any question regarding programs or dates not listed.

**It is also important, when certifying VA beneficiaries, to use the exact course or program title as shown on your WEAMS Report-VA Form 22-1998.** This is especially true for NCD programs. If a slightly different title is used, benefits may not be paid until it is clear that the program is indeed approved.



# COMPLIANCE SURVEY

## WHAT IS A COMPLIANCE SURVEY?

It is the review of all Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) documents and the facility's documents that pertain to the application and payment of DVA benefits to beneficiaries. A review is undertaken for quality and accuracy of documents, certifications and progress of students and an overall assessment of your training program and facility.

## RECORD DISCLOSURE

Can a representative from the SAA and DVA review student records and transcripts at your facility?

- ✓ Yes, the law provides VA an avenue along the same lines as Financial Aid. It was determined that VA benefits fall into the Financial Aid category and therefore are exempted from the Buckley Amendment Public Law 93-380.

## HOW OFTEN AM I REVIEWED?

- Generally, every one to three years is the annual review for each school if active with VA students.
- A review that has a high percentage of discrepancies will prompt another visit. If there are serious or systemic problems, a follow up can be scheduled within 6 months.
- New facilities will be scheduled as soon as possible, schedule permitting.

## NOTIFICATION PROCEDURE

- You will receive a fax, letter or email notifying you of an impending compliance survey.
- This notification will provide you with detailed information as to which student(s) will be reviewed and which documents and information need to be provided for the compliance survey.
- We ask you to look at your schedule and to accommodate the compliance survey as best as possible. It might be our only chance to visit with your facility.

## MAJOR AREAS OF REVIEW

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| • VA certifications and documents            | • Overall quality of the records  |
| • Change of programs                         | • Transfer credits  |
| • Transcripts                                | • Tuition and fees  |
| • Attendance records for clock hour programs | • Statistical comparison of VA beneficiaries to non-VA students                           |
| • Advertising material                       | • Equal opportunity review only if selected (new proprietary facilities are the priority) |
| • Enrollment agreements                      |   |
| • Refund policies                            |   |
| • Standards of progress                      |   |

## TIPS FOR PREPARING FOR A COMPLIANCE SURVEY

- Review the compliance notification that was faxed or sent to you first
- Organize your files (suggestion: VA documentation on side in date order and all other material on the other side)
- Review your files at least 3 years back! The survey will cover at least 3 years or when the student enrolled in your institution
- Self-audit (review the transcript against the certifications that have been sent to DVA)
- Certify only approved term dates and programs

## **MORE TIPS FOR PREPARING FOR A COMPLIANCE SURVEY**

- Review your records often, especially if there are changes with students. Report the adjustments even if they are late. (This looks better for the SAA/VA on the survey than not reporting.)
- Identify T/A courses from VA courses if you have mixture of assistance being used by the student
- Accelerated courses: Note the exact charges and fees to the student and must be the same as certified. Certify only what has been approved
- Review for below-par performers and apply your standards for progress see if additional action is necessary. (Another case where it looks better for the SAA/VA on the survey than doing nothing.)

## **HOW AM I INFORMED OF THE RESULTS?**

- You will receive a letter providing you with the official results from the survey visit
- The inspector should discuss the discrepancies with you prior to leaving your facility. Any correctable actions should be resolved at that time
- If noted discrepancies require referral action to the State Approving Agency (SAA), the inspector should advise you of referring action to the SAA before his/her departure from your facility.

## **SAMPLE COMPLIANCE SURVEY OUTLINE**

I am requesting the following be prepared for each student listed on the last page:

- Admissions files/records
  - Application for admission
  - Acceptance letter
- Student Account/Bursar File/Records (**for Ch. 33 and Ch. 33 Yellow Ribbon students only**)
  - Schedule of tuition and fees
  - Tuition and fees payment ledger (we request a copy of ledgers for our records)
- VA Files/Records
  - VA-ONCE: printed copies of all 22-1999's and 22-1999b's for every enrollment period
  - All other veteran's education forms used by the school to process educational benefits
- Financial Aid Files/Records
  - Financial aid award letters or listing of Title IV federal financial aid awarded
  - Listing of all other types of financial aid (scholarships, grants, etc.) and information about any non-federal financial aid, specifically, what that aid can be used for
  - Cost of Attendance figure that indicates room and board, books and supplies
- Academic Files/Records
  - Registration information
  - Program outline/curriculum
  - Drop/add slips
  - Prior credit evaluations
  - Remedial training information (specifically, test scores achieved and an explanation of what the test scores indicate)
  - Attendance records (if applicable)
  - Schedule of courses/class schedules
  - Copy of academic student transcripts/grade reports (we request a copy of transcripts for our records)

In addition, I am requesting the following be prepared:

- Total number of all students currently enrolled at your facility\_\_\_\_\_.
- The number of VA beneficiary students (student who receive VA education benefits) by education chapter.

Ch 30		CH 32		Ch 1606		Ch 33	
Ch 31		CH 35		Ch 1607		Ch 33YR	

- A copy of the academic and/or school calendars dating back to **THREE** years of Compliance Survey date. Please include all summer and mini semester dates, if applicable.
- Copies of the school's refund policy and each academic catalog dating **THREE** years back from the present academic year (we will not need to take copies of the old catalogs).
- **Two** copies of the current catalogs/handbooks. Make sure that the following statement is on the catalogs provided: *"This catalog is true and correct in content and policy."* Please ensure that you sign and date the catalogs.

- Student Accounts: An assessment of tuition and fee charges for a student who is using VA benefits and a student who is not using VA benefits in the same program of study.
- Sample of all advertising used, i.e., copies of ads in newspapers or magazines or other advertisements or enrollment information given out during the last 12 months.
- If you have VA work-study students, please have the position description, schedule, and time sheets available for review.

The following is provided for your information so you are aware of the authority given to the State Approving Agency (SAA) representative to review the requested information.

### **38 U.S.C. 3690 and CFR 21.4209**

*The Buckley Amendment (Public Law 93-80) requires that institutions receiving Federal funds administered by the Department of Education must obtain the student's consent to release information from school records. One exception to the law, however, is that information sought in connection with a student's application for receipt of financial aid is exempt. It has been determined that school records relating to VA benefits fall into the "financial aid" category and are therefore exempt from the provisions of the Buckley amendment. Therefore, the VA and SAA shall have access to the records of VA beneficiaries as well as non-VA students without the written consent of the students in order to monitor the school's compliance.*

**Note: The School certifying official is the primary contact person and has the responsibility to ensure that all items requested above are available for the compliance survey. If the school certifying official is unable to provide the requested items listed in this agenda, it will reflect in the findings and be reported to the VA as appropriate.**

***A LIST OF VETERAN BENEFICIARIES' RECORDS TO BE REVIEWED WILL BE ENCLOSED WITH THE LETTER.***

## USEFUL WEB SITES

State Agency Web Sites	
<b>State Approving Agencies</b> - Listing of State Approving Agencies including mailing addresses and telephone numbers.	<a href="http://nasaa-vetseducation.com/">http://nasaa-vetseducation.com/</a>
<b>Virginia Department of Veterans Services:</b> The Virginia Department of Veterans Services operates 26 benefit services offices where representatives assist veterans and their family members in filing claims for VA benefits. The agency operates four cemeteries for veterans and administers the <b>Virginia Military Survivors and Dependents Education Program</b>	<a href="http://www.dvs.virginia.gov/">http://www.dvs.virginia.gov/</a>
<b>Virginia Department of Education:</b>	<a href="http://www.doe.virginia.gov/">http://www.doe.virginia.gov/</a>
<b>State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV):</b> The State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) makes higher education public policy recommendations to the Governor and General Assembly in such areas as capital and operating budget planning, enrollment projections, institutional technology needs, and student financial aid.	<a href="http://www.schev.edu/">http://www.schev.edu/</a>
Federal Government Web Sites	
<b>U. S. Department of Education</b> - Homepage for the Dept. Of Education.	<a href="http://www.ed.gov/index.jhtml">http://www.ed.gov/index.jhtml</a>
<b>Military Spouse Resource Center</b> - Find resources on employment and education for military spouses, community information and more.	<a href="http://www.milspouse.org/">http://www.milspouse.org/</a>
<b>Department of Labor</b> - Veterans Employment and Training Services. A site designed to make it easier for veterans to obtain civilian job credentials based on military training and experience.	<a href="http://www.dol.gov/vets/">http://www.dol.gov/vets/</a>
Military Web Sites	
<b>Department of Defense</b> - Defense Link	<a href="http://www.defenselink.mil/">http://www.defenselink.mil/</a>
<b>DOD Voluntary Education Program</b> - This program provides off-duty civilian high school, vocational-technical, undergraduate and graduate educational opportunities to U.S. military personnel worldwide. These services are provided through the respective Services and their local education centers.	<a href="http://www.dantes.doded.mil/index.html">http://www.dantes.doded.mil/index.html</a>
<b>GI Bill Website</b>	<a href="http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/">http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/</a>

<b>Troops to Teachers Program</b> - This program is managed by the Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Support (DANTES)	<a href="http://www.dantes.doded.mil/service-members/become-a-teacher/troops-to-teachers.html#sthash.IotHa3RG.dpbs">http://www.dantes.doded.mil/service-members/become-a-teacher/troops-to-teachers.html#sthash.IotHa3RG.dpbs</a>
<b>U.S. Army</b> - Department of the Army website.	<a href="http://www.army.mil/">http://www.army.mil/</a>
<b>U.S. Air Force</b> - Department of the Air Force website.	<a href="http://www.af.mil/">http://www.af.mil/</a>
<b>U.S. Navy</b> - Department of the Navy website.	<a href="http://www.navy.mil/swf/index.asp">http://www.navy.mil/swf/index.asp</a>
<b>U. S. Marine Corps</b> - Marine LINK	<a href="http://www.usmc.mil">http://www.usmc.mil</a>
<b>U. S. Coast Guard</b> - US Coast Guard website.	<a href="http://www.uscg.mil/default.asp">http://www.uscg.mil/default.asp</a>
<b>Army/American Council on Education Registry Transcript System (AARTS)</b> . - Get a transcript translating your formal military education and job experience into civilian language, also includes college equivalent credit recommendations.	<a href="http://aarts.army.mil">http://aarts.army.mil</a>
<b>Joint Services Transcript</b> - Get a transcript translating your formal military education and job experience into civilian language, also includes college equivalent credit recommendations.	<a href="https://jst.doded.mil/jst/">https://jst.doded.mil/jst/</a>
<b>Community College of the Air Force</b> - CCAF: The foremost occupational education institution -- preparing the world's best expeditionary-minded air, space and cyberspace enlisted leaders.	<a href="http://www.au.af.mil/au/ccaf/">http://www.au.af.mil/au/ccaf/</a>
<b>Miscellaneous</b>	
<b>American Council on Education</b> - ACE evaluation teams provide clear guidelines to interpret and recommend credit for formal service-school courses, demonstrated proficiency in military occupations, and college-level tests.	<a href="http://www.acenet.edu">http://www.acenet.edu</a>
<b>Graduate Record Examinations</b> - This site is the Graduate Record Exam Online. Topics include Financial Aid, Sample Test Questions, Practice And Reference Materials, and other related information.	<a href="http://www.ets.org/">http://www.ets.org/</a>
<b>Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA)</b> -The <i>CHEA Database of Institutions and Programs Accredited by Recognized United States Accrediting Organizations</i> provides the largest and most comprehensive Web-based listing of accredited institutions and programs in the U.S.	<a href="http://www.chea.org/default.asp">http://www.chea.org/default.asp</a>
<b>Learning Exchange</b> - An Online Resource for Education and Training.	<a href="http://www.alx.org/">http://www.alx.org/</a>

<b>Military Discharge Upgrade Information</b>	
<b>U. S. Army</b> Army Review Boards Agency (ARBA) ATTN: Client Information and Quality Assurance Arlington, VA 22202-4508 Phone: 703-607-1600	<a href="http://arba.army.pentagon.mil">http://arba.army.pentagon.mil</a>
<b>U.S. Navy</b> Board for the Correction of Naval Records Arlington Annex, Room 2432 Washington, DC 20370 Phone: 703-614-1765	<a href="http://www.hq.navy.mil/bcnc/bcnc.htm">http://www.hq.navy.mil/bcnc/bcnc.htm</a>
<b>U.S. Air Force</b> Board for the Correction of Military Records Building 1535, AAFB Washington, DC 20330-1430 Phone: 301-981-5380	<a href="https://www.my.af.mil">https://www.my.af.mil</a> (log in, then go to Virtual Military Personnel Flight, then AFBCMR)
<b>U.S. Marine Corps</b> Board for the Correction of Military Records HQ, U.S. Marine Corps Washington, DC 20380 <i>Phone: 703-614-1102</i>	<a href="http://www.hq.navy.mil/bcnc/bcnc.htm">http://www.hq.navy.mil/bcnc/bcnc.htm</a>
<b>U. S. Coast Guard</b> Board for the Correction of Military Records 245 Murray Lane Room 5126, Mail Stop #0900 Washington, DC 20528 <i>Phone: (202) 447-0497</i>	<a href="http://www.uscg.mil/legal/BCMR/BCMR.htm">http://www.uscg.mil/legal/BCMR/BCMR.htm</a>

## VA FORMS

A supply of forms should be kept in the office that certifies VA students. Additional forms can be ordered by using VA Form 23-8800. You can fax your order to: (716) 551-3396. This “Request for VA Forms and Publications” must be used to order VA Forms 22-1999 and 22-1999b. You can download most other forms from the VA web site by going to:

<http://www.va.gov/forms/benefits.htm>

**VAF 22-1990:** Application for Education Benefits is completed by the student the first time an application is made (Ch. 30, 32, 33, 1606, & 1607). Please mail in the certification of enrollment (VA Form 22-1999) along with the application and a Notice of Basic Eligibility (NOBE) from the unit’s Education Officer if the student is in a select-reserve obligation in a Reserve or Guard unit. **Do not delay sending in the 22-1999 if the student doesn’t have the NOBE.**

*The 22-1990 can also be completed online at: <https://www.va.gov/>*

**VAF 22-1990e:** Application for Transfer of Entitlement (TOE). Upon approval, family members may apply to use transferred benefits with VA by completing VA Form 22-1990e in VONAPP. VA Form 22-1990e should only be completed and submitted to VA by the family member after DoD has approved the request for TEB. Do not use VA Form 22-1990e to apply for TEB.

*The 22-1990e can also be completed online at: <https://www.va.gov/>*

**VAF 22-1995:** Request for Change of Program or Place of Training, is used for students (under Chapters 30, 32, 33, 1606 and 1607) who have previously received VA education benefits for training at another institution. The 22-1995 does not to be mailed to the VA. This form will be maintained on file by the school. The school official should annotate in the remarks section of the 22-1999 that the VAF 22-1995 is on file at the school.

It is also used by students who are changing their educational program - declaring a major, changing the major, or adding a second major. (Chapter 31- Vocational Rehabilitation students need to obtain a new VA Form 28-1905 from their case manager to approve the new program or place of training).

*The 22-1995 can also be completed online at: <https://www.va.gov/>*

**VAF 22-5490:** Application for Survivor’s and Dependent’s Educational Assistance is used by first time Chapter 35 students to apply for benefits. Dependents of veterans have a different VA file number than their Social Security number. It is the VA claim number of the veteran who died while in service or of a service connected disability, or is 100% permanently disabled due to a service connected disability. The “C” number is followed by a payee number or letter ( a “W” or “10” for a spouse or widow(er) and A, B, C, etc. or 41, 42, 43, etc. for children. Please mail in the certification of enrollment (VA Form 22-1999) along with the application

*The 22-5490 can also be completed online at: <https://www.va.gov/>*



**VAF 22-5495:** VA Form 22-5495, Request for Change of Program or Place of Training (Survivor's and Dependents Educational Assistance) is used by dependents that are changing their program or school. Chapter 35 students have the veteran's VA claim number and their own payee number (or letter) - instead of their Social Security number.

The 54-1995 does not need to be mailed to the VA. This form will be maintained on file by the school. The school official should annotate in the remarks section of the 22-1999 that the VAF 54-1995 is on file at the school.

*The 22-5495 can also be completed online at: <https://www.va.gov/>*

**VAF 22-1999:** VA Form 22-1999, Certification of Enrollment, is used by the certifying official to tell the VA about the student's enrollment. It includes the dates of enrollment, credit or clock hours, prior credit, type of training, and name of program. This can also be accomplished for IHL's and NCD's by using VA-ONCE (except for Chapter 31 students).

*VAF 22-1999 is not available for download from the internet. Effective August 2013, all schools are required to use VA-ONCE for certification of enrollments except for On-the-Job Training (OJT) and Apprenticeship. Contact the SAA via email at [saa@dvs.virginia.gov](mailto:saa@dvs.virginia.gov) for an electronic version.*

**VAF 22-1999b:** VA Form 22-1999b, Notice of change in Student Status, is used to notify VA of any change in a student's enrollment - adding or dropping courses that change the student's status. This can be used for all students. These changes can also be reported by using VA-ONCE (except for Chapter 31 students). All changes should be reported within 30 days of change.

*VAF22-1999b is not available for download from the internet. Effective August 2013, all schools are required to use VA-ONCE for changes in student status except for On-the-Job Training (OJT) and Apprenticeship. Contact the SAA via email at [saa@dvs.virginia.gov](mailto:saa@dvs.virginia.gov) for an electronic version.*

**The following DVA forms may be obtained at: <http://www.va.gov/forms/benefits.htm>**

**VAF 21-674:** VA form 21-674, Request for Approval of School Attendance, should be used and completed by the person receiving benefits for a veteran's child who is at least 18 but under 23 and attending school. This form is usually required for veterans claiming benefits under chapter 30/34.

**VAF 21-686c:** VA form 21-686c, Declaration of Status of Dependents, is usually required for veterans claiming benefits under chapter 30/34 and should be completed by the veteran. If the veteran has a child who is at least 18 but under 23 and attending school listed on this form should also complete VAF 21-674.

**VAF 21-4138:** VA form 21-4138, Statement in Support of Claim, may be use for veterans to submit mitigating circumstances or any other general information required by DVA.

**VAF 20-8800:** VA form 20-8800, Request for VA forms and Publications, is generally used to request a variety of forms and publications or forms in large quantity.

**VAF 24-0296:** VA form 24-0286, Direct Deposit Enrollment, is use by veterans who previously were not enrolled in direct deposit and now wish to enroll.

**VAF 22-8794:** VA form 22-8794, Designation of Certifying Official, is used to add or change the facility's certifying official(s). The submission of a new designation of certifying official will supersede previously listed school officials. To obtain this form, contact your regional Manager or ELR.

## **Military Forms**

**DD-214:** The DD-214 is the veteran's discharge or separation papers. Request the DD 214 at:  
<http://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/>

**NOBE:** The NOBE is a Notice of Basic Eligibility. DD Form 2384-1. This is a temporary eligibility certificate which is issued to individuals in the active Selective Reserves or National Guard who have established eligibility for Chapter 1606, but whose computer record has not yet been updated to show the eligibility.

## **VIRGINIA MILITARY SURVIVORS AND DEPENDENTS EDUCATION PROGRAM (VMSDEP)**

The Virginia Military Survivors and Dependents Education Program (VMSDEP) provides education benefits to spouses and dependents of military service members killed, missing in action, taken prisoner or who became at least 90 percent disabled as a result of military service in an armed conflict and have been discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable. Military service includes service in the United States Armed Forces, United States Armed Forces Reserves, the Virginia National Guard and the Virginia National Guard Reserves. Armed conflict includes service during military operations against terrorism, on a peacekeeping mission, as a result of a terrorist act or in any armed conflict subsequent to December 6, 1941.

The VMSDEP program waives tuition and at participating public institutions of higher education and public accredited postsecondary institutions.

### **Eligibility Requirements**

To be eligible, dependents and spouses of qualifying military service members must meet the following criteria:

- The dependent must be between the ages of 16 and 29; there is no age restriction for spouses
- The qualifying military service member is and must have been a bona fide domiciliary or maintained a physical presence in the Commonwealth of Virginia for five (5) consecutive years immediately prior to the date an application for admission was submitted by the dependent or spouse to a participating public institution of higher education and/or public accredited postsecondary institution
- In the case of a deceased military service member, the Veteran's surviving spouse can meet the residency requirement if he or she was or is a bona fide domiciliary or maintained a physical presence in the Commonwealth of Virginia for five (5) consecutive years prior to marrying the Veteran or for five (5) consecutive years immediately prior to the date any application for admission was submitted

### **Required Documentation**

In most cases, eligibility will be determined using documentation from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. However, the Veteran or surviving spouse may be asked to provide documentation verifying residency or the applicant's age or relationship. The acceptable forms documentation are listed on the DVS webpage at [www.dvs.virginia.gov](http://www.dvs.virginia.gov) under the Education & Employment tab.

In most instances, students will not be required to apply each academic year and will receive eight (8) semesters of education benefits. If a student is not granted the full 8 semesters of entitlement, the student will be notified of the requirement to reapply. The Department of Veterans Services (DVS) approximates 36 months to equate to eight (8) semesters of school attendance, not to include summer sessions.

**For More Information and to learn more about the VMSDEP benefit, please call (804) 225-2083 or contact the VMSDEP staff via email at [vmsdep@dvs.virginia.gov](mailto:vmsdep@dvs.virginia.gov)**

Hours: Monday through Friday, 8:00 am to 4:30 pm

To apply online go to:  
<https://myvmsdep.dvs.virginia.gov/>