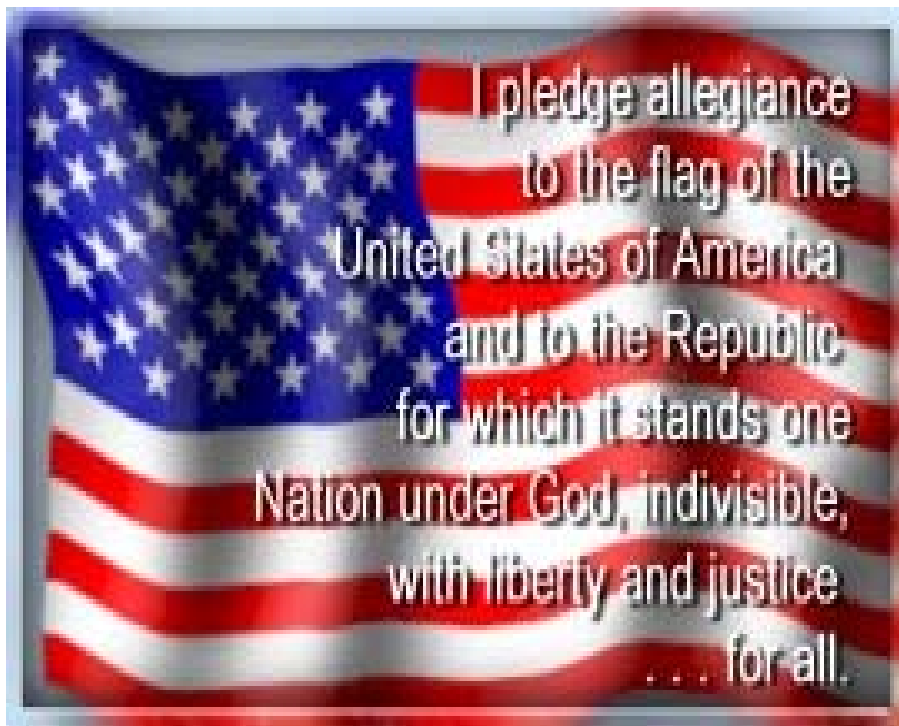


2003

HANDBOOK FOR SCHOOL CERTIFYING OFFICIALS



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
ATLANTA REGIONAL PROCESSING OFFICE
DECATUR, GEORGIA

SOUTHERN REGION EDITION

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HANDBOOK FOR SCHOOL CERTIFYING OFFICIALS

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Because this handbook is designed for use throughout the Southern Region, all references to specific state policies and procedures have been omitted. These include procedures that vary from state to state such as State Approving Agency procedures, teacher certification, policies regarding the Associate in Arts degree, etc. Please see your state's Education Liaison Representative for the handbook supplement that contains policies applicable to schools in your state.

Sections of this handbook which have been changed from the previous addition have been shaded.

The Definition of a Veteran

A VETERAN is not an outsider to our business....he's our reason for existence.

A VETERAN is not an interruption of our work....he's the purpose for it. We are not doing him a favor - he's doing us a favor by letting us serve him.

A VETERAN is not a cold statistic....he's a flesh-and-blood human being with feelings and emotions like our own.

A VETERAN is not someone to argue or match wits with....he deserves courteous, attentive and sympathetic treatment.

A VETERAN is not dependent on us....we are dependent on him.

A VETERAN is there to be served, not just tolerated....it is our job to handle him properly - both for his sake and for our own.

A VETERAN makes it possible that our salaries get paid....whether we are a Clerk, Financial Aid Officer, Certifying Official, Veterans Benefits Counselor, Education Compliance Survey Specialist, Registrar, Education Liaison Representative, School Officer, or County Veterans Services Officer.

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SOUTHERN REGION STATE APPROVING AGENCIES

ALABAMA

**STATE OF ALABAMA DEPT. OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION
STATE APPROVING AGENCY
PO BOX 302130
MONTGOMERY, AL 36130-2130**

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GEORGE WALKER - SAA Field Supervisor

DR. RANDALL L. GULL - SAA Field Supervisor

SUZANNE DRASUTIS - SAA Field Supervisor

FLORIDA

For all Schools (except Flight and Correspondence Schools & Job Tng. Programs)

**FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
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FRANK MYERS - Coordinator**

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DEBORAH GARDNER - Educational Specialist
ROBERT PURVIS - Educational Specialist**

QUICK REFERENCE TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NATIONWIDE <u>EDUCATION</u> TOLL-FREE NUMBER.....	1-888-442-4551
NATIONWIDE TOLL-FREE NUMBER (other benefits).....	1-800-827-1000
TELEPHONE VERIFICATION OF PURSUIT (Chpt 30).....	1-877-823-2378
ATLANTA RPO E-MAIL INQUIRY ADDRESS (for veterans).....	atlrpo@vba.va.gov
ATLANTA RPO E-MAIL INQUIRY ADDRESS (for <u>SCHOOLS ONLY - To be used in emergencies, hardship, or very old cases</u>).....	atlrposco@vba.va.gov
VACERT HELP E-MAIL ADDRESS.....	atlvacert@vba.va.gov

<u>SOUTHERN REGION EDUCATION SERVICES OFFICES</u>		
<u>AND</u>		
<u>STATE APPROVING AGENCIES</u>		
ALABAMA	ELR (334) 396-1986 xt 27	SAA (334) 834-2555
FLORIDA	ELR (727) 319-5973	SAA (850) 487-2836
GEORGIA	ELR (404) 929-3002	SAA (404) 656-2322
MISSISSIPPI	ELR (404) 929-3002 (GA)	SAA (601) 354-6210
NORTH CAROLINA	ELR (336) 631-5484	SAA (919) 733-7535
PUERTO RICO	ELR (787) 772-7354	SAA (787) 754-0884
SOUTH CAROLINA	ELR (803) 255-4250	SAA (803) 737-2244
TENNESSEE	ELR (615) 695-6243	SAA (615) 741-7569

VETERANS and **SCHOOL OFFICIALS** making routine inquiries should call our education toll-free number:

1-888-442-4551

Alternately, **VETERANS** may make inquiries on the Atlanta E-mail address:

atlrpo@vba.va.gov

SCHOOL OFFICIALS make inquiries in **emergency** cases at this E-mail address:

atlrposco@vba.va.gov

SCHOOL OFFICIALS who wish to make a **payment inquiry** regarding their most **difficult, unresolved** cases should call the toll free education number and enter option two to get to the head of the queue.

SCHOOL OFFICIALS who have questions regarding VA education **policies or procedures** should call the Education Services Office in your state at the number listed on page 6.

SCHOOL OFFICIALS who have questions regarding their **approval** to train VA students should call their State Approving Agency at the number listed on pg. 6.

PUERTO RICO FLIGHT SCHOOL OFFICIALS and FLORIDA FLIGHT & CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOL OFFICIALS & APPRENTICESHIP & OTHER ON-THE-JOB TRAINING OFFICIALS who have questions regarding their **approval** to train VA students should call our St. Petersburg, Florida, Education Services Office at:

(727) 319-5973

TENNESSEE CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOL OFFICIALS who have questions regarding their **approval** to train VA students should call our Nashville, Tennessee, Education Services Office at:

(615) 736-7288

**WHERE TO OBTAIN TRANSCRIPTS FOR INSERVICE
EDUCATION & TRAINING**

Programs completed through USAFE prior to July 1, 1974:

E.T.S. DANTE, PO Box 6605, Princeton, NJ 08541....1-800-257-9484

GED programs completed after July 1, 1974:

**OVERSEAS: GED Testing Service, 1 Dupont Circle,
Washington, DC 20036**

**IN THE U.S.: Write the State Department of Education in
the state in which the test was given.**

**Tests other than the GED taken through the military after
July 1, 1974 (CLEP, etc.):**

E.T.S. DANTE, PO Box 6604, Princeton, NJ 08541..1-800-257-9484

DANTES (For Troops to Teachers information & applications):

1-800-452-6616

**To Request Transcripts from the
Community College of the Air Force (CCAF)**

**Write to: CCAF/RRR
130 West Maxwell Blvd.
Maxwell AFB, AL 36112-6613**

**Call: (334) 954-2794
E-mail: registrar.ccaf@maxwell.af.mil**

VA EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS SUMMARY

There are so many VA education programs currently in existence that it is sometimes difficult to tell for which program a student may be eligible. In all, there are 10 different education/job training programs for which VA students are presently drawing benefits.

The following charts briefly describe each program with eligibility requirements, pay rates or reference, application form numbers, and other information to further define each program. These charts may be helpful to veterans affairs personnel in counseling students and may help to identify students as eligible for VA educational programs. The information they contain has been updated to include all the most recent changes made to some of these programs. These charts should **NOT** be used as a final authority to tell any student that he or she is or is not eligible for any particular program. They are guides as to the eligibility requirements for each program. **If a student feels that he or she may be eligible for a particular program you should encourage that student to apply to VA.** We will make a determination of eligibility based on official service records, evidence submitted by the student, and applicable veterans' laws. **Generally VA cannot make retroactive payments going back more than one year prior to the date we receive the student's claim (student's application or school's enrollment certification, whichever is EARLIER).**

If any claimant has any questions regarding their eligibility to receive benefits under any particular VA program, he or she should dial 1-888-442-4551 and ask one of our Atlanta counselors.

EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS SUMMARY

CHAPTER PUBLIC LAW	CHAPTER 30 PI. 98-525	CHAPTER 31	CHAPTER 32 PI. 94-502
COMMON NAME	MONTGOMERY GI BILL-- ALL VOLUNTEER FORCE EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM MGIB	VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION VR	VETERANS EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM VEAP
ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS	FIRST ENTERED ACTIVE DUTY 7-1-85 OR LATER AND COMPLETES INITIAL OBLIGATED PERIOD OF ACTIVE DUTY OF 2 YRS OR MORE OR WHO COMPLETES 2 YRS OF ACTIVE DUTY AND ENTERS THE SELECTED RESERVES FOR 4 OR MORE YEARS. CERTAIN CHAPTER 34 ELIGIBLES ARE ENTITLED AFTER 12-31-89. THERE ARE SEVERAL OTHER CATEGORIES OF ELIGIBLE PERSONS BASED ON VOLUNTARY AND INVOLUNTARY SEPARATIONS. EFF 11-1-00 ANOTHER VEAP OPEN WINDOW THRU 11-1-01	MUST HAVE A SERVICE CONNECTED DISABILITY RATED AT 10 PERCENT OR MORE WHICH CAUSES A DEMONSTRABLE EMPLOYMENT HANDICAP	SERVED ON ACTIVE DUTY FOR AT LEAST 181 CONTINUOUS DAYS AND ENLISTED FOR THE FIRST TIME BETWEEN 1-1-77 AND 6-30-85 INCLUSIVE AND SIGNED UP PRIOR TO 4-1-87 TO MAKE CONTRIBUTIONS WHILE ON ACTIVE DUTY CAN DISENROLL AND LATER RE-ENROLL IF STILL ON ACTIVE DUTY.
DELIMITING DATE	LATER OF 10 YEARS FROM DATE OF LAST SEPARATION FROM ACTIVE DUTY OR 10 YEARS FROM THE DATE FIRST BECAME ELIGIBLE (chpt 34/30 converters)	LATER OF 12 YEARS FROM LAST SEPARATION FROM ACTIVE DUTY OR FROM THE DATE SERVICE CONNECTION IS ESTABLISHED	10 YEARS FROM DATE OF LAST SEPARATION FROM ACTIVE DUTY.
PROGRAMS ALLOWED	POST-SECONDARY PROGRAMS OFFERED AT AN IHL OR NCD; CORRESPONDENCE, OJT, APPRENTICESHIP, CO-OPERATIVE TNG; & FLT TNG EFF 9-30-90. TEST PREP COURSES EFF 10-1-99. LICENSING & CERT TEST FEES UP TO \$2,000 EFF. 11-1-00; ACCELERATED PAY FOR HIGH TECH COURSES EFF 10-1-02	ANY PROGRAM DEEMED SUITABLE BY THE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AND COUNSELING DIVISION	HIGH SCHOOL (VETERANS AND IN SERVICE ENLISTED), IHL, NCD, APP/OJT CORRESPONDENCE, CO-OPERATIVE TNG, FLT EFF 4-1-94, & LICENSING/CERT TEST FEES EFF/ 3-1-01
TUTORIAL ASSISTANCE	YES	YES	YES
WORK STUDY	YES	YES	YES
EDUCATION LOAN	NO	YES	NO
RATES AND ENTITLEMENT	EFFECTIVE 1-1-02 BASIC RATES OR FULL-TIME TRAINING: 2 YRS SVC: \$650/MONTH FOR 36 MONTHS 3 YRS SVC OR 2 YRS ACT DTY AND 4 YRS SEL RES: \$800/MONTH FOR 36 MONTHS EFF. 5-1-01 VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS CAN BE MADE UP TO \$600 (MO RATE INCREASED BY \$1 FOR EACH \$4 PAID)	EFFECTIVE 10-1-01: INSTITUTIONAL TNG FULL TIME: \$448.24/MT; 3/4 TIME: \$336.80/MT; 1/2 TIME: \$225.36/MT SUBSISTENCE ALLOWANCE IS IN ADDITION TO PAYMENT OF TUITION, FEES, BOOKS, SUPPLIES, ETC. <u>ADDITIONAL AMOUNTS ADDED FOR DEPENDENTS.</u> ENTITLEMENT GENERALLY CAN NOT EXCEED 48 MONTHS	AMOUNT OF CONTRIBUTION X 3 PLUS ANY "KICKER" ADDED BY DOD, DIVIDED BY THE NUMBER OF MONTHS IN WHICH CONTRIBUTIONS WERE MADE. LUMP-SUM CONTRIBUTIONS ARE TREATED AS MONTHLY CONTRIBUTIONS OF \$100 (VETERAN CAN ELECT A LESSER MONTHLY CALCULATION). ENTITLEMENT EQUALS NUMBER OF MONTHS IN WHICH CONTRIBUTIONS WERE MADE. PAYMENT FOR PERSONS ON ACTIVE DUTY IS THE SAME AS FOR VETERANS
MISCELLANEOUS	MUST POSSESS A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA OR EQUIVALENT; VETERANS MUST HAVE AN HONORABLE DISCHARGE. SERVICE MEMBER'S PAY IS REDUCED BY \$100/MT FOR THE FIRST 12 MONTHS OF ENLISTMENT (EXCEPT FOR CH34/30 CONVERTERS). THESE PAY REDUCTIONS ARE NOT REFUNDABLE UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES. OFFICERS WHO RECEIVED COMMISSIONS THROUGH THE SERVICE ACADEMIES OR FULL ROTC SCHOLARSHIP AFTER 12-31-76 ARE INELIGIBLE. (EXCEPTIONS ARE MADE FOR CERTAIN SPECIFIC VOLUNTARY AND INVOLUNTARY SEPARATIONS). ACTIVE DUTY PERSONNEL MUST HAVE SERVED A MINIMUM OF 2 YRS. LIMITED ENTITLEMENT TRANSFER 6-30-02		MOST VETERANS MUST COMPLETE THE SHORTER OF 24 MONTHS CONTINUOUS ACTIVE DUTY OR THE FULL PERIOD CALLED TO ACTIVE DUTY (EXCEPTIONS: MEDICAL, HARDSHIP, AND CONVENIENCE OF THE GOVERNMENT DISCHARGES) SERVICE PERSONS MUST COMPLETE THE LESSER OF 6 YRS OR THE FIRST OBLIGATED PERIOD AND HAVE AT LEAST 3 CONTRIBUTIONS AVAILABLE

APPLICAT- ION FORMS	VAF 22-1990	VAF 28-1900	VAF 22-1990
REFERENCE	CFR 21.7000 SERIES	CFR 21.1 --21.430	CFR 21.5000 SERIES

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EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS SUMMARY

CHAPTER PUBLIC LAW	CHAPTER 34 PL. 89-358	CHAPTER 35 PL. 84-634	SECTION 1606 PL. 98-525
COMMON NAME	VIETNAM ERA GI BILL	DEPENDENTS AND SURVIVORS EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM DEA	EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE FOR THE SELECTED RESERVE MGIB-SR
ELIGIBILITY REQUIRE- MENTS	SERVED ON ACTIVE DUTY FOR AT LEAST 181 CONTINUOUS DAYS, ANY PART OF WHICH OCCURRED BETWEEN 2-1-55 AND 12-31-76 INCLUSIVE. INCLUDES DELAYED ENLISTMENT CONTRACTS SIGNED IN 1976 FOR ACTIVE DUTY IN 1977	<u>SPOUSE AND/OR CHILD OR SURVIVING SPOUSE AND/OR CHILD OF</u> A VETERAN WITH A PERMANENT & TOTAL SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABILITY; OR WHOSE DEATH WAS SERVICE CONNECTED OR WHO DIED OF ANY CAUSE WHILE RATED AS HAVING A P&T SERVICE- CONNECTED DISABILITY	OFFICER: ADDED 6 YRS TO THEIR CURRENT OBLIGATION AFTER 6-30-85 ENLISTED: ENLISTED, REENLISTED, OR EXTENDED THEIR ENLISTMENT FOR A 6-YR PERIOD AFTER 6-30-85
DELIMITING DATE	PROGRAM WENT OUT OF EXISTENCE ON 1-1-90 by act of Congress	SPOUSE: LATER OF 10 YRS FROM P&T RATING OF S/C DISABILITY OR DEATH: CHILD: LATER OF 26TH BIRTHDAY OR 8 YRS FROM DATE ELIGIBILITY ESTABLISHED ,NOT TO EXCEED 31ST BIRTHDAY.	EARLIER OF THE DATE AFTER SEPARATION FROM THE SELECTED RESERVE OR 10 YEARS FROM THE DATE FIRST ELIGIBLE EFF FOR THOSE WHO BECAME ELIG ON OR AFTER 10/1/92 IT IS 14
PROGRAMS ALLOWED		SPOUSE ONLY: CORRESPONDENCE SPOUSE AND CHILD: HIGH SCHOOL, IHL, NCD, OJT/APP, CO-OP, FARM CO-OP, & (EFF. 3-1-00) LICENSE & CERT TEST FEES NM \$2,000. EFF 11-1-00 COLLEGE TEST PREP COURSE	POST-SECOND. PGM. AT AN IHL: EFF. 10-1-90: COOP TNG, APPT, OJT, VOC/TECH TRNG. PROGRAMS AT AN NCD, CORRESP. TNG., EFF 9-30-90 FLIGHT TRAINING, EFF 11-30-93 GRADUATE TRAINING, EFF 3-1-01 LICENSING/CERT TEST FEES.
TUTORIAL ASSISTANCE		YES	YES EFFECTIVE 10-29-92
WORK STUDY		YES EFFECTIVE 5-01-90	YES EFFECTIVE 5-01-90 (INCLUDES WORK AT A MILITARY FACILITY)
EDUCATION LOAN		YES SPOUSE/SURVIVING SPOUSE ONLY	NO
RATES AND ENTITLE- MENT		INSTITUTIONAL TRNG (EFF 1-1-02) FULL TIME - \$670/MT 3/4 TIME - \$503/MT 1/2 TIME - \$335/MT LESS THAN 1/2 TIME - TUITION AND FEES NOT TO EXCEED \$335/MT ENTITLEMENT IS 45 MONTHS OF FULL TIME TRAINING OR THE EQUIVALENT IN PART TIME TRAINING	EFFECTIVE 10-1-01 FULL TIME: \$272 PER MONTH 3/4 TIME \$204 PER MONTH 1/2 TIME \$135 PER MONTH 1/4 TIME \$68 PER MONTH ENTITLEMENT IS 36 MONTHS
MISCELLAN EOUS	INDIVIDUALS WITH ELIGIBILITY FOR CHAPTER 34 WHO WERE ON ACTIVE DUTY ON 10-19-84, AND WHO REMAINED ON ACTIVE DUTY THROUGH 6-30-88 MAY BE ELIGIBLE FOR BENEFITS UNDER CHAPTER 30	CHILD IS NOT ELIGIBLE PRIOR TO 18TH BIRTHDAY UNLESS THEY HAVE PASSED THE AGE OF COMPULSORY EDUCATION. CHILD MAY BE PAID FOR PURSUIT OF AN APPROVED REGULAR HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM.	MUST EARN A HIGH SCHOOL DIPL OR EQUIV BEFORE COMPLETING INITIAL ACTIVE DUTY FOR TRAINING OR BEFORE COMPLETING A RE-ENLISTMENT OR EXTENDED ENLISTMENT. EFF 11-1-00 MUST COMPLETE HS REQ BEFORE FIRST USING BENEFITS. UNTIL 10-1-90 A BACCALAUREATE DEGREE IS A BAR. MUST ENLIST, RE-ENLIST, OR EXTEND ENLISTMENT FOR A 6-YR PERIOD AFTER 10-01-90 EXCEPT FOR A GRADUATE PROGRAM.

APPLICAT- ION FORMS		VAF 22-5490	VAF 22-1990
REFERENCE		CFR 21.4000 SERIES	CFR 21.7500 SERIES

EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS SUMMARY

CHAPTER PUBLIC LAW	SECTION 901 PL 96-342	SECTION 903 PL 96-342	OMNIBUS DIPLOMATIC ANTI- TERRORISM ACT OF 1986 PL 99-200
COMMON NAME	EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE TEST PROGRAM	EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PILOT PGM (NON-CONTRIBUTORY VEAP)	HOSTAGE RELIEF ACT
ELIGIBILITY REQUIRE- MENTS	ENLISTED OR RE-ENLISTED IN THE ARMY, NAVY, AIR FORCE, OR MARINES BETWEEN 11-01-80 AND 9-31-81 INCLUSIVE, OR ENTERED A DELAYED ENLISTMENT CONTRACT DURING THAT PERIOD AND ENTERED ACTIVE DUTY PRIOR TO 10-01-82	SAME AS FOR SECTION 901 PLUS MUST NOT BE ELIGIBLE FOR CHAPTER 34	INDIVIDUALS IN THE CIVIL SERVICE OF THE U.S. AND INDIVIDUALS WHO RENDERED PERSONAL SVC TO THE U.S. SIMILAR TO CIVIL SVC PERSONS WHO HAVE BEEN PLACED IN CAPTIVE STATUS BECAUSE OF HOSTILE ACTION RESULTING FROM THE INDIVIDUAL'S RELATIONSHIP WITH THE US
DELIMITING DATE	<u>VETERANS</u> : 10 YEARS FROM DATE OF LAST SEPARATION FROM ACTIVE DUTY <u>DEPENDENTS</u> : 10 YEARS FROM DATE OF VETS DEATH; OTHERWISE SAME AS VETERAN'S	10 YEARS FROM DATE OF LAST SEPARATION FROM ACTIVE DUTY	<u>FORMER CAPTIVE</u> : 10 YRS FROM DATE OF RELEASE FROM CAPTIVITY <u>SPOUSE</u> : THE EARLIER OF ABOVE OR 10 YRS FROM DATE OF RELEASE
PROGRAMS ALLOWED	IN-RESIDENT TRAINING OFFERED IN THE U.S. AND IT'S POSSESSIONS BY ACCREDITED POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS EXCEPT REMEDIAL AND DEFICIENCY COURSES	IHL, NCD, OJT/APP, CO-OPERATIVE, FARM CO-OPERATIVE, CORRESPONDENCE AND FLIGHT EFFECTIVE 4-1-91 TO 9-30-94	SAME AS CHAPTER 35
TUTORIAL ASSISTANCE	NO	NO	NO
WORK STUDY	NO	YES	NO
EDUCATION LOAN	NO	NO	NO
RATES AND ENTITLE- MENT	EDUCATIONAL SUBSISTENCE ALLOWANCE: EFFECTIVE 10-01-94 FULL TIME \$649 PER MONTH LESS THAN FULL TIME \$324.50 PER MONTH EDUCATION ASSISTANCE ALLOWANCE: EFFECTIVE 10-01-94 COST OF TUITION, FEES, BOOKS, AND SUPPLIES UP TO \$2605 PER ACADEMIC YEAR (9 MONTHS)	SAME AS FOR CHAPTER 32 EXCEPT THAT PAYMENTS ARE BASED ON THE AMOUNT OF CONTRIBUTIONS MADE BY DOD ON THE PARTICIPANT'S BEHALF	PAYMENT RATES: SAME AS CHAPTER 35 ENTITLEMENT: 45 MONTHS EFFECTIVE DATES OF PAYMENTS <u>FORMER CAPTIVE</u> : NO EARLIER THAN THE DATE OF RELEASE FROM CAPTIVITY <u>DEPENDENTS</u> : NO EARLIER THAN 90 DAYS AFTER THE DATE THE INDIVIDUAL BECAME A CAPTIVE
MISCELLAN EOUS	MUST POSSESS HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA OR EQUIVALENT MUST SERVE 24 MONTHS OF ACTIVE DUTY OR FULL PERIOD OF ENLISTMENT (DOD MAY ADD OTHER REQUIREMENTS) <u>PARTICIPANTS MAY TRANSFER ENTITLEMENT TO SPOUSE OR CHILDREN</u> <u>CLAIMS ARE PROCESSED BY WACO, TX</u> <u>USE PAYEE "01" TO FIND PAYMENTS ON ON THE TINQ SCREEN</u>	<u>TRANSFER OF ENTITLEMENT TO DEPENDENTS IS ALLOWED</u> <u>CLAIMS ARE PROCESSED BY THE STUDENT'S VARO</u> <u>USE PAYEE "03" TO FIND PAYMENTS ON THE TINQ SCREEN</u>	VARO BALTIMORE HANDLES ALL CLAIMS PROCESSING <u>APPLICATION IS BY LETTER TO: DIR GEN OF THE FOREIGN SVC DEPT OF STATE WASHINGTON DC 20520</u> <u>NOTE:</u> DELIMITING DATE FOR DEP CHILD IS SAME AS FOR SPOUSE EXCEPT MAY NOT EXCEED CHILD'S 21ST BIRTHDAY

APPLICAT- ION FORMS	22-8889	22-1990	SEE "MISCELLANEOUS ABOVE"
REFERENCE	CFR 21.5700 SERIES	CFR 21.5290 SERIES	DVB CIR 20-89-17

EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS SUMMARY

CHAPTER PUBLIC LAW	SECTION 156 PL 97-377		
COMMON NAME	RESTORED ENTITLEMENT PROGRAM FOR SURVIVORS (REPS)		
ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS	SURVIVING SPOUSES OR CHILDREN OF ARMED FORCES MEMBERS WHO DIED WHILE ON ACTIVE DUTY PRIOR TO 8-13-81 OR OF VETERANS WHO DIED OF SERVICE CONNECTED CAUSES INCURRED OR AGGRAVATED PRIOR TO 8-13-82		
DELIMITING DATE	<u>CHILD</u> : ELIGIBLE FROM AGE 18 TO 22 <u>SPOUSE</u> : ONLY WHEN HAS CHILD UNDER THEIR CARE BETWEEN AGE 16 TO 18		
PROGRAMS ALLOWED	FULL TIME TRAINING IN A POST-SECONDARY SCHOOL		
TUTORIAL ASSISTANCE	NO		
WORK STUDY	NO		
EDUCATION LOAN	NO		
RATES AND ENTITLEMENT	BASED ON SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION RATE TABLES CLAIMANT'S EARNED INCOME MAY BE A FACTOR		
MISCELLANEOUS	PROGRAM TEMPORARILY RESTORES SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS ELIMINATED BY PL 97-35 (OMNIBUS BUDGET RECONCILIATION ACT OF 1981). REGIONAL OFFICE HAVING JURISDICTION OF THE VETERAN'S RECORDS MAKES INITIAL ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION ST LOUIS REGIONAL OFFICE PROCESSES PAYMENTS CLAIMANTS WITH PROBLEMS MAY CALL THE REPS UNIT DIRECTLY AT 314-589-9703		
APPLICATION FORMS	21-8924 & 8938		
REFERENCE	DVB CIR 20-83-16		

EXTENSIONS OF ENTITLEMENT & DELIMITING DATE

CHAPTER 30

ENTITLEMENT can be extended to end of term or up to 12 weeks in non-term courses.

DELIMITING DATE *CANNOT* be extended except as allowed by law (physical/mental disability, etc.)

CHAPTER 32

ENTITLEMENT *CANNOT* be extended.

DELIMITING DATE *CANNOT* be extended except as provided by law.

CHAPTER 35

ENTITLEMENT *CANNOT* be extended.

DELIMITING DATE can be extended to end of term or up to 12 weeks in non-term courses. Other extensions may apply (death of veteran, military duty, etc.), but for *CHILDREN* may NOT be extended beyond age 31 (except for end of term or 12 week extension, and certain other rare exceptions).

CHAPTER 1606

ENTITLEMENT *CANNOT* be extended.

DELIMITING DATE may be extended to end of term or 12 weeks for non-term courses. Also as provided by law, etc.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION FOR VETERANS WITH SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABILITIES CHAPTER 31, TITLE 38, U.S.C.

A veteran may be eligible for Chapter 31 benefits if he or she:

- received, or will receive, a discharge under other than dishonorable conditions;
- incurred or aggravated a service-connected disability on or after September 16, 1940, which entitles him or her to VA disability compensation; and
- is in need of vocational rehabilitation because his or her disability creates an employment handicap.

Entitlement for these services is determined on an individual basis following an evaluation of the veteran's unique interests, aptitudes, education, work experience, and vocational abilities.

Vocational rehabilitation may be provided for up to 48 months. An eligible veteran generally has 12 years from the date he or she is notified of entitlement to VA compensation in which to use these benefits. VA may approve an extension of time and/or length of training in certain cases. If a veteran is interested in chapter 31 services s/he should contact Voc-Rehab directly at (727) 319-7900 or toll free at 1-800-827-1000 ext. 7900.

Terms Unique to Vocational Rehabilitation - Chapter 31

Consumable Supplies

Supplies necessary for the veteran's training which are usually exhausted during the course of training.

Contract Case Manager

Private rehabilitation professionals who provide case management services to veterans under an authorized VA contract. These professionals are responsible for assisting veterans and monitoring their progress throughout their programs under the supervision of a VA Rehabilitation Counselor (RC) or a VA Counseling Psychologist (CP).

Independent Instructor

An individual who provides a course of training to a veteran on an individualized basis.

Induction Into A Program

The date a Counseling Psychologist or a Rehabilitation Counselor and a veteran sign an individualized written rehabilitation plan detailing the veteran's Chapter 31 program.

Leave

A period of absence from training which has been authorized by VA.

Non-consumable Supplies

Durable items, such as tools and equipment, which are useful both during and after training.

Rehabilitated

The designation given to the veteran's status when he or she has overcome the employment handicap to the maximum extent feasible. Depending on the individual veteran's circumstances and program goals, this designation may be given due to successful employment, pursuit of higher education through resources other than VA vocational rehabilitation, or increased independence in daily life.

Special Equipment

Items which the veteran requires to pursue a course of training, but which would not ordinarily be required by trainees who do not have a disability.

Subsistence Allowance

The monetary payment made to the veteran each month while pursuing a course of vocational rehabilitation training. The amount paid is dependent upon the rate of pursuit of training.

Employment Adjustment Allowance

Two months of subsistence allowance payable in monthly increments after the veteran has become suitably employed or demonstrates a good faith effort to find employment within the field for which training was provided.

Supplies (Allowable)

Books, supplies, tools and equipment which are required of all students to satisfactorily complete the rehabilitation program the trainee is enrolled in.

Unauthorized Absence

Absence from training without VA approval.

Rehabilitation Counselor (RC) and Counseling Psychologist (CP)

Staff members of the Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) Division of the VA regional office who have the responsibility for assisting the veteran and supervising the training program.

Application for Chapter 31 Vocational Rehabilitation Benefits

Veterans use VA Form **28-1900** to apply for vocational rehabilitation benefits under Chapter 31. Information and instructions for the veteran are included on the reverse of the application form. Following receipt of this application in the regional office, VA will make a determination of basic eligibility. If the veteran is eligible, VA will schedule an appointment with a Counseling Psychologist (CP) or Rehabilitation Counselor (RC) for an initial evaluation to establish the veteran's entitlement to vocational rehabilitation. Contractors may be utilized to assist in working with the veteran to gather information needed for the CP or RC to make an entitlement determination.

The **veteran** must:

- ◆ Complete each item on the application form, unless a particular item contains an instruction to the contrary, or indicate N/A if not applicable. Leave item 4 blank, if the veteran does not know his or her VA claim number.
- ◆ Date the application form in item 18 and sign in item 19. VA will return unsigned forms to the veteran for signature before processing the claim.
- ◆ Submit evidence of his or her active duty service, unless this evidence has been previously submitted. VA will return the service documents to the claimant upon request.
- ◆ Provide documents, if required, to establish dependency for payment of additional subsistence allowance.

◆ **The veteran should submit the completed application directly through the regional office with jurisdiction over the veteran's residence. If the veteran files Form 28-1900 with a school, the certifying official should forward the application to the regional office with any evidence of service or dependency which the veteran may have filed with his or her application.**

Purpose

Vocational Rehabilitation (Chapter 31) is intended to help the service-disabled veteran become independent in daily living and, to the extent possible, to select, prepare for, and secure entry level employment which is compatible with his or her interests, abilities, and physical capabilities.

Under Chapter 31, VA pays the cost of tuition, fees, books, equipment, and supplies. The veteran also receives a monthly subsistence allowance. Since VA makes separate payment to assist the veteran in meeting the costs of school attendance and the veteran is receiving (or is entitled to receive) monthly disability compensation payments, the monthly subsistence rates under Chapter 31 are somewhat lower than the monthly payments made to veterans under other VA educational assistance programs. For example, the monthly subsistence payment to a Chapter 31 veteran without dependents is currently \$454.96 for full-time training. The full-time monthly rate for a veteran with one dependent is \$564.34; with 2 dependents the rate is \$665.03. For each additional dependent, the veteran is entitled to \$48.48 per month additional while training at a full-time rate. Monthly subsistence rates are proportionately lower when training is at a half-time or a three-quarter time rate. No benefits are payable for less than half-time training.

Each veteran under Chapter 31 is assisted by a VA Counseling Psychologist (CP) or Rehabilitation Counselor (VRC) in developing an individualized written rehabilitation plan and, when appropriate, in selecting a suitable training facility. The veteran continues to receive assistance from a CP or RC throughout the training program. In many cases, the veteran may also receive assistance from a contract counselor or case manager, under the supervision of a CP or RC.

Other services and benefits include:

- ◆ Tutoring, reading service, other special help in training, if needed;
- ◆ Interest-free advances called “Revolving Fund Advances”, which are repaid through deductions from the veteran's monthly compensation or subsistence payments;
- ◆ Medical and dental treatment, prosthetic aids, special equipment, and special restorative services that are necessary to assist veterans to enter and stay in the rehabilitation program; and
- ◆ Job development, placement, and post placement services after the training phase of the program has been completed.

Form 28-1905, Authorization and Certification of Entrance or Reentrance Into Rehabilitation and Certification of Status

Sections A and B of this form will be completed by the case manager responsible for a veteran's vocational rehabilitation program or for an eligible dependent's special restorative or specialized vocational training. This form authorizes the facility to enter the veteran or eligible child into the program established in Section B, and must be signed by a CP or RC. The form also authorizes the facility to voucher VA for payment of the veteran's expenses for tuition, fees, books, equipment and other supplies needed to complete the rehabilitation program.

Certifying the Veteran's Enrollment

VA makes the decisions regarding an entitled veteran's major, program, courses, etc., under the vocational rehabilitation program for individual veterans.

The veteran's entrance into rehabilitation is authorized with Form 28-1905. This form is valid for the period designated by the CP or RC. The school will receive the Form 28-1905 after the veteran has completed rehabilitation counseling at the VA regional office and been approved to begin a program. The trainee's case manager may contact the certifying official prior to the beginning of the term, to obtain early registration data, if available. This is done to avoid lapses in subsistence payments to the veteran.

On or after the beginning date of the enrollment period, the certifying official should complete Section C of Form 28-1905 as verification of the veteran's entrance into training. It is the certifying official's responsibility to only certify dates of enrollment within the dates authorized on the VA Form 28-1905 and only the courses which pertain to the authorized program. The school copy of Form 28-1905 should be removed and kept as part of the school records and the veteran's copy should be removed and given to the student. Unless other arrangements have been made with the veteran's case manager, the VA copy of Form 28-1905 should be mailed to the address in item 10 of the form. The VA copy of Form 28-1905 must be received in the VA regional office no later than 15 days after the beginning of the term.

Reports of changes in the enrollment status of a Chapter 31 program participant, including courses not required in the program, unsatisfactory attendance/progress, students dropping a course, etc., are required in the same

Since no special form has been issued by VA for reporting changes in enrollment for a Chapter 31 trainee, the certifying official should use **VA Form 22-1999b, Notice of Change in Student Status**, with the annotation, "**Chapter 31 Trainee**" added in the top margin of the form. VA Form 22-1999b must be received in the VA regional office within 30 days of the date the change took effect. The 1999b should reflect actual last date of attendance for each course that the veteran withdrew from in addition to the date on which the veteran officially withdrew from the course.

A CP or RC has been assigned by the VA regional office to be responsible for supervising the training of Chapter 31 students at each institution. In addition, a contract case manager may be assigned. If a contract case manager is assigned, he or she will be conducting all necessary interactions with the certifying official as directed by the CP or RC. The contract case manager, CP or RC will contact the certifying official periodically to discuss the needs of Chapter 31 students at the institution and are available to assist the school with questions about Chapter 31.

Supplies and Equipment

VA provides a Chapter 31 student with the supplies needed for training, specifically, the same supplies which are needed by other students pursuing the same course. Institutions are requested to furnish the supplies whenever practicable in order to facilitate service to the veteran. A handling fee of up to 10 percent is payable to the institution under certain conditions. Supplies should be issued periodically, as necessary, to enable the student to maintain satisfactory progress, rather than all being issued at the beginning of the program or term.

The cost of items susceptible to personal use, such as musical instruments, cameras, and tennis rackets, and the cost of items used for individual projects, research, etc., may be reimbursed only if the CP or RC has given prior written authorization for their purchase. On the other hand, protective articles, such as laboratory aprons, rubber gloves, facility required uniforms, and goggles, which are necessary to protect the student from harm, may be furnished when these items are required to be worn by all students taking the course.

A supplier vouchers the VA regional office for supplies issued to the Chapter 31 student. The voucher (which should include a copy of the purchase order and an itemized receipt of supplies) is audited before payment is released to the supplier. If the CP or RC determines that unauthorized items have been furnished to a student, the cost of the unauthorized items will be deducted from the invoice before payment is made. The amount deducted then becomes an obligation of the veteran to the supplier.

**MONTGOMERY GI BILL (MGIB)
ALL-VOLUNTEER FORCE EDUCATION
ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
CHAPTER 30, TITLE 38 U.S. CODE**

I. ELIGIBILITY

Members of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard, and commissioned officers of the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration and Public Health Service who:

Enlisted or entered active duty **FOR THE FIRST TIME on or after July 1, 1985**. Active duty for the purpose of this program includes full-time National Guard duty first performed after November 29, 1989.

In order to use benefits under MGIB, service persons must generally serve on active duty for at least two years. They must also earn a high school diploma or its equivalent either prior to or during the qualifying period of enlistment. See **PL 106-409** for a change to this.

To be eligible for education payments under MGIB, veterans must possess an **HONORABLE DISCHARGE**. **This would exclude those veterans with a General Discharge Under Honorable Conditions or any other discharge other than Honorable**. Also excluded are officers who obtained their commission after 12/31/76, through a military academy (Annapolis, West Point, Air Force Academy, or Coast Guard Academy), or through an ROTC scholarship program (**payments exceeding \$3,400/yr.**)

PUBLIC LAW 101-510 (Effective February 5, 1991): Certain individuals **involuntarily** separated from active duty with an **honorable** discharge may participate in MGIB before separating from active duty.

Before applying for benefits the individual must have completed the requirements for a secondary school diploma (or equivalency certificate) or satisfactorily completed 12 semester hours in an IHL program leading to a standard college degree. Also, they must withdraw their original election not to receive MGIB before separating from active duty. The basic pay of such individuals will be reduced by \$1,200.00.

An individual who contributed or who could have contributed to VEAP, before being involuntarily separated, may make an irrevocable election to receive MGIB benefits. Such a person's basic pay must be reduced by \$1,200.00. After disenrolling, the unused VEAP contributions will be returned to the individual and/or the Department of Defense, respectively. Unused kickers will be retained in the account to be used to pay additional benefits to such an individual.

A service person who may have been eligible under another VA education program, who is involuntarily separated from active duty, may be eligible to elect MGIB benefits prior to separation. The basic pay of such an individual will be reduced by \$1,200.00.

It should also be noted that this is one of a VERY few programs under which persons who graduated from one of the military academies or through an ROTC scholarship program may also become eligible for MGIB.

PUBLIC LAW 102-484 - VOLUNTARY SEPARATIONS:

Effective **October 23, 1992**, a veteran voluntarily separated under Section 1174a or 1175, Title 10 U.S. Code, can be eligible for MGIB benefits if he or she:

- ◆ Completed secondary school requirements, and
- ◆ Withdrew an election not to receive MGIB (if he or she did make such an election), or elected MGIB in lieu of VEAP before separating (if he or she contributed to VEAP).

All voluntary separations under the **VSI (Voluntary Separation Incentive)** and the **SSB (Special Separation Benefit)** Programs are covered under sections 1174a and 1175, Title 10 USC.

VA is responsible for obtaining an election of MGIB and \$1,200 from each individual voluntarily separated during the period **December 5, 1991, through October 22, 1992**. DD Form 214, Separation or Release from Active Duty, indicating that an individual was voluntarily separated is acceptable evidence of separation reason. The Service Departments will notify these individuals by letter. The appropriate **Service Department** will obtain an election of MGIB and \$1,200 from each individual voluntarily separated **after October 22, 1992**. Once again, this is one of the VERY few exceptions which will allow service academy graduates and ROTC scholarship graduates to participate in the MGIB.

PUBLIC LAW 104-275 CONVERSION FROM VEAP TO MGIB-AD

Under this provision, any person who was **on active duty** and had money in their VEAP (Ch 32) account as of **October 9, 1996**, could have converted from Ch 32 to Ch 30 during the period **October 9, 1996 through October 8, 1997**. This conversion could **only** have been accomplished while the participant was still **on active duty**. Any Ch 32 contributions still in the member's account was applied to the \$1,200 pay reduction required. If Ch 32 contributions were less than \$1,200, the participant had to pay the difference. If Ch 32 contributions exceeded \$1,200, the difference was refunded to the member. Elections under this program were irrevocable.

PUBLIC LAW 106-419 VARIOUS PROVISIONS (Effective November 1, 2000)

- ◆ Eligibility for the MGIB-AD is based upon the person completing their initial period of active duty. This change includes subsequent periods of active duty after an interruption as part of the initial obligated period of active duty as long as all other requirements are met.
- ◆ Previously, members had to complete the requirement for a high school diploma before completing their initial obligated period of active duty. Now they must complete this requirement **before they use the MGIB for the first time**.
- ◆ Certain persons who have been eligible for VEAP can convert to the MGIB:
 - By October 1, 2001, they must make an irrevocable election to receive the MGIB
 - They were a VEAP participant on or before **October 9, 1996**
 - Served continuously on active duty from **October 9, 1996 through April 1, 2000**
 - Veterans must make a **nonrefundable** payment of **\$2,700**
- ◆ **Tuition Assistance Top-Up** allows VA to pay the difference between what the military covers of an active duty member's school tuition and the actual cost of tuition. The member's MGIB entitlement to benefits is reduced in dollar amount by the amount paid by VA under this program.

- ◆ **\$600 Addition Contribution:** This program allows certain MGIB eligible persons to increase their monthly GI Bill benefit with a voluntary contribution of up to \$600. Their monthly benefit is increased by \$1 for each \$4 contributed; thus, a person who contributes the full \$600 would have his/her monthly benefit increased by \$150, which over a full 36 months of entitlement would figure to a total return of \$5,400 on an investment of \$600. Persons who were discharged from service between November 1, 2000 and April 30, 2001, have until **July 31, 2001** to make this contribution to their Regional Processing Office. Active duty members should go to the Finance Office at their installation. They can only make contributions **while they are still on active duty**. All contributions, either by veterans or active duty members, must be made in increments of no less than \$20. All participants are encouraged to make lump sum payments of \$600.

II. COST

Each person entering active duty during the qualifying period will automatically have his/her pay reduced by \$100.00 per month for the first twelve months of enlistment only. No further reductions are ever made. A person may elect not to have these reductions made, but then have no entitlement under MGIB. **ONCE REDUCTIONS ARE MADE, AN INDIVIDUAL CANNOT, UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES, GET A REFUND.** All moneys reduced are returned to the Department of the Treasury. No individual accounts of reductions are kept because this is not a matching funds program such as VEAP. There is a provision for death benefits to designated survivors of MGIB participants whose death on active duty or death within one year of release from active duty was service-connected.

Chapter 34 veterans and service members who qualify for MGIB on January 1, 1990, will not have their pay reduced under this program.

III. ENTITLEMENT

◆ Basic Entitlement

✓ **\$900** per month for 36 months based on completion of at least a **three year active duty enlistment or obligation, or two years active duty plus four years in the selected reserve.**

✓ **\$732** per month for 36 months based on completion of **less than a three year obligated period of active duty.**

✓ **Servicepersons** using MGIB are reimbursed for the actual charges for tuition and fees. **Servicepersons** may use MGIB only after **completion of the first two years of active duty.**

✓ For persons with at least one day of entitlement at the start of an enrollment period, **entitlement** may be extended to the end of the term of enrollment or 12 weeks (for non-term courses).

◆ Supplemental Benefit

At the discretion of the Department of Defense (DOD), up to \$300.00 per month may be added to the basic entitlement. In order to qualify, a servicemember must enlist for five years of active duty beyond the initial three year enlistment (total of eight years). This

could give a qualified veteran a total education allowance of up to \$700.00 per month for 36 months.

◆ **Kicker**

The DOD may add, at its discretion, additional monthly benefits (kickers) for those possessing a skill or specialty in which there is a critical shortage. This DOD-funded kicker can be up to \$700.00 per month (and sometimes more) in addition to the basic entitlement and/or up to \$300.00 per month in addition to the supplemental benefit. Therefore, it is possible for an eight year enlistee in a critical skill or specialty to receive up to \$1,700.00 per month for 36 months while attending school under this program.

◆ **Accelerated Payments for Education in High Technology**

Makes eligible those persons charged tuition & fees such that, when divided by the number of months in the enrollment period, the monthly amount exceeds an amount equal to 200% of the monthly rate otherwise payable. The total amount of payments will be the lesser of 60% of program cost or the total amount of education assistance to which the person has entitlement at the time of payment. This is effective October 1, 2002.

IV. DELIMITING DATE

Each eligible person must use his/her MGIB benefits within ten years from:

- ◆ The date last discharged from active duty, or
- ◆ Date of upgraded discharge, or
- ◆ the last day a person became entitled to this program (those converting from chapter 34 to 30), whichever is later.

V. LEAVES OF ABSENCE

Up to a two year leave of absence may be granted by DOD for a serviceperson to pursue a program of education under this program. However, for each month of leave granted under this provision, a serviceperson must agree to extend his/her enlistment by two months.

VI. CHAPTER 34 ELIGIBILITY

The final delimiting date for all persons with eligibility under Chapter 34 (Vietnam Era GI Bill) was December 31, 1989. This date cannot be extended. Those persons with Chapter 34 entitlement remaining on December 31, 1989, became eligible for MGIB benefits on January 1, 1990, if eligible as described below. They must:

- ◆ Serve on active duty at any time during the period **October 19, 1984 - July 1, 1985** and,
- ◆ serve three continuous years on active duty **after June 30, 1985** (through June 30, 1988), or serve two continuous years on active duty followed by four years in the selected reserve after June 30, 1985. Exceptions can be made for some persons who were released from active duty after June 30, 1985, for a compensable service connected disability (rated by VA), or a hardship discharge, or a discharge for the convenience of the government.

NOTE: The individual must serve on active duty after July 1, 1985 without any break in service.

◆ Meet the requirements of a high school diploma or equivalency certificate prior to January 1, 1990. In lieu thereof, they may successfully complete the equivalent of 12 semester hours in a program leading to a standard college degree.

Each individual's 10-year delimiting date will be reduced by the amount of time the individual was not on active duty during the period January 1, 1977, through October 18, 1985. He/she must also have remaining entitlement under Chapter 34. Those persons may use their Chapter 34 benefits through December 31, 1989, and may use MGIB no earlier

than January 1, 1990. They will have 36 months of entitlement or whatever entitlement they have remaining from Chapter 34, whichever is less. It should be remembered that each person's total entitlement is restricted by law to no more than 48 months for a combination of entitlement under two or more GI Bill programs.

◆ Their basic monthly full-time benefit payment is **\$900** plus one half of the applicable Chapter 34 rate in effect at that time for the amount of Chapter 34 entitlement they have remaining. After that, their full-time monthly payment is reduced to **\$900**.

VII. TRANSFER OF ENTITLEMENT TO DEPENDENTS

Public Law 107-107 included a provision to allow active duty persons to transfer up to a total of 18 months of their entitlement to one or more of their dependents. Participants must have served at least 6 years in the armed forces, be in a critical skill or military specialty (as designated by the appropriate service Secretary), and agree to serve four additional years of active duty. Each military component will select those individuals that they wish to have participate in this program. There is no voluntary application for this program.

VIII. PROGRAMS

Payments under MGIB may be made for pursuit of:

- ◆ A degree program.
- ◆ A vocational certificate.
- ◆ Apprenticeship or other on-the-job training (**effective October 28, 1986**). The payable rate for pursuit of apprenticeship and OJT will be 75% of the monthly assistance allowance payable for the first six months, 55% for the second six months, and 35% thereafter. The allowance for individuals who fail to work at least 120 hours in any month will be reduced proportionately.
- ◆ Correspondence training, payable at 55% of the established charges (**effective October 28, 1986**).
- ◆ Work-study program (**effective October 28, 1986**).
- ◆ Tutorial assistance program (**effective November 18, 1988**).
- ◆ Cooperative training (**effective January 1, 1989**).
- ◆ Refresher, remedial, and deficiency courses (**effective August 15, 1989**).
- ◆ Flight training (**effective September 30, 1990**).
- ◆ Test preparation courses (for SAT, ACT, GRE, LSAT, etc.) (**effective October 1, 1999**).
- ◆ Licensing & certification tests, up to \$2,000 per exam (**effective March 1, 2000**).

Payments cannot be made for pursuit of:

Farm Cooperative programs or an allowance for the education loan program.

MGIB-SR
MONTGOMERY GI BILL - SELECTED RESERVE
CHAPTER 1606, TITLE 10 U.S.C.

Public Law 98-525 was enacted October 19, 1984, and revised the existing Chapter 106 effective July 1, 1985. This revision basically transferred the program administration responsibility to the Veterans Administration. Department of Defense, however, still (1) provides written notice of basic eligibility to each reservist when he or she meets basic eligibility via DD Form 2384 (Notice of Basic Eligibility), (2) notifies the VA when a reservist becomes ineligible for the program, and (3) funds educational assistance payments under the program.

I. ELIGIBILITY:

Person who:

- ◆ Enlists, re-enlists or extends an enlistment in the Selected Reserve for a period of not less than six years **on or after July 1, 1985**. (If an officer, the six-year period is in addition to any other obligated period of service).
- ◆ Has received a secondary school diploma or equivalent before completing Initial Active Duty Training (IADT), or before completing a reenlistment or extended enlistment.
- ◆ Has completed IADT.
- ◆ Is satisfactorily participating in required training in the Selected Reserve.

Eligibility is precluded if the person is:

- ◆ Eligible for MGIB based on a combination of active duty and reserve service.
- ◆ Is on a full ROTC scholarship, or

An eligible reservist shall be entitled to a maximum of 36 months of training at the full-time rate or the equivalent in part-time training. The maximum combined entitlement under MGIB-SR and any other program is 48 months. Benefits may not be paid concurrently for MGIB-SR and another GI Bill. **There is NO extension of entitlement available under this program.**

II. Delimiting Period:

Date of separation from the Selected Reserve **or** ten years from the date **original** eligibility began. Note: This is unique to this program and it should be noted that the ten-year period is from the date eligibility began and not from the date of separation.

Separation from the Selected Reserve ends eligibility for MGIB-SR effective that day. An extension of delimiting date may be made if an individual is separated from the reserve due to a disability.

In accordance with Public Law 107-314 those who became eligible for chapter 1606 on or after October 1, 1992, the ten year delimiting date is changed to 14 years.

III. Programs of Education:

Until October 1, 1990, educational assistance is payable only for pursuit of undergraduate college degree and NCD program **pursued at IHL's.**

Effective October 1, 1990, educational assistance may be paid for pursuit of the additional programs shown below.

In order to be eligible to pursue these programs a reservist must enlist, re-enlist, or extend an enlistment in the Selected Reserve for a period of not less than six years on or after October 1, 1990. **Officers** must add six years to any current obligation.

- ◆ NCD programs at other than IHL's
- ◆ Second (or more) bachelors degree
- ◆ Cooperative training
- ◆ Correspondence training
- ◆ Independent study (without concurrent pursuit of in-resident training)
- ◆ Apprenticeship and OJT programs
- ◆ Remedial, deficiency, and refresher courses
- ◆ Flight training (**effective September 30, 1990**)

Effective October 1, 1992, eligible reservists may receive reimbursement for individual tutorial assistance. A new contract or extension of current obligation does **not** have to be executed to be eligible for this program.

Effective November 30, 1993, eligible reservists may be paid benefits for the pursuit of a graduate program of education. A new contract or extension of a current obligation does **not** have to be executed to be eligible for this program.

VETERANS' EDUCATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (VEAP) CHAPTER 32, TITLE 38 U.S.C.

Veterans who served and servicepersons currently serving are eligible if they:

- ◆ Entered active duty **after December 31, 1976, and before July 1, 1985**, (they cannot be eligible for Chapter 34 under delayed enlistment), **and**
- ◆ Were released under conditions other than dishonorable or continue on active duty. A veteran must have served 181 days or more, or have been discharged for a service-connected disability. Those who enter active duty after October 16, 1981 (or enlisted after September 7, 1980) must have 24 months service, or have completed the full period for which they were called to duty, whichever comes first, unless the claimant received a hardship discharge for disability or has a compensable service-connected disability. A serviceperson must have completed his first obligated period of service (or six years of active duty, whichever comes first), **and**
- ◆ Have satisfactorily contributed to the program. Satisfactory contributions consist of the monthly deduction of \$25 to \$100 from military pay, up to a maximum of \$2,700. **The initial contribution must have been made before April 1, 1987.**

Participants, **while on active duty**, may make a lump sum contribution to the fund.

BENEFIT

The contributory plan permits the serviceperson to voluntarily participate in a plan for future education or training in which the participant's savings are administered and augmented by the Government.

At the time the eligible participant elects to use the benefits to pursue an approved course of education or training, the United States will match the contribution at the rate of \$2 for every \$1 made by the participant. (The Government may also make additional contributions into the fund.) Participants receive monthly payments for the number of months they contributed, or for 36 months, whichever is less. The amount of the payments is determined by dividing the number of months benefits will be paid into the participant's training fund total.

A participant may leave the program at the end of any 12-consecutive-month period of participation and those who do so may have their contributions refunded. Participants have 10 years from the date of last discharge or release from active duty within which to use these benefits. Secondary education is available to servicepersons eligible under these benefits, and may be pursued during the last six months of the participant's first enlistment or at any time thereafter.

NOTE: NO INDIVIDUAL ON ACTIVE DUTY MAY INITIALLY ENROLL IN VEAP AFTER MARCH 31, 1987; HOWEVER, ANY INDIVIDUAL WHO HAS PARTICIPATED BY THAT DATE, EVEN IF HE/SHE RECEIVES A REFUND OF ALL CONTRIBUTIONS, MAY AGAIN CONTRIBUTE AT ANY TIME HE/SHE IS ON ACTIVE DUTY.

DEPENDENTS EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE (DEA) CHAPTER 35, TITLE 38 U.S.C. (CHILDREN)

ELIGIBILITY

The parent must have a PERMANENT & TOTAL SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABILITY, DIED AS THE RESULT OF A SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABILITY, DIED WHILE TOTALLY & PERMANENTLY SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABLED, or DIED IN THE LINE OF DUTY WHILE A SERVICE MEMBER.

A dependent child cannot receive DEA benefits before his 18th birthday unless he has completed secondary school or the equivalent, or is beyond the age of compulsory school attendance. No DEA entitlement exists for a child who reaches his 26th birthday before the veteran's disability or death occurred. No child is eligible beyond his 31st birthday.

NOTE: The only exception to the above is establishment of entitlement to special restorative or vocational training. This program is only available if recommended by Counseling, a child has reached his 14th birthday and has a physical or mental handicap.

DELIMITING DATE

Basic eligibility date is the 18th birthday, or completion of secondary schooling if prior to age 18, or the child is beyond the age of compulsory school attendance. If the disability or death of the veteran occurs between the 18th and 26th birthdays, the **eligibility date is the effective date of the rating or notification, or the date of the veteran's death, whichever the claimant chooses.** The ending date is the 26th birthday, or 8 years from a basic eligibility date which occurred after the 18th birthday, but **in only rare cases** after the 31st birthday.

An **extension** of the **delimiting date** is possible to the end of the IHL semester, or 12 weeks for NCD if at least one half of the course has been completed, as long as there is sufficient entitlement. The same extension applies if a veteran is no longer rated permanently and totally disabled. No DEA benefits can be paid during any period the child is on duty with the Armed Forces.

Extension of delimiting date can also be granted if the child was prevented from pursuing training during the basic period of entitlement because of reasons beyond his control or active duty in the Armed Forces.

ENTITLEMENT

Entitlement: Is limited to 45 months. **There is NO extension of entitlement available under Chapter 35.**

VA Form 22-5490 is still used to apply for children's DEA. VA Form 22-5495 is used to apply for a change of program or place of training. The veteran's claim number with a suffix A, B, C, etc. is assigned to each child in order of entrance into the DEA program. Payee numbers 41, 42, 43, etc. are assigned in accordance with the suffix used.

Approved courses: Are the same as for MGIB, except a **child is not entitled to payment for correspondence, flight training, or licensing exams.**

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DEPENDENTS EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE CHAPTER 35, TITLE 38 U.S.C. (SPOUSES & SURVIVING SPOUSES)

ELIGIBILITY

SPOUSES: The veteran must have permanent and total service-connected disability.

The basic period of eligibility is 10 years from the effective date of the permanent and total rating or the date of notification, at the choice of the claimant.

SURVIVING SPOUSES: The death of the veteran must be service-connected or veteran was permanently and totally service-connected disabled at time of death.

The basic period of eligibility is, again, 10 years. If the eligibility is based on service-connected death, and he was rated permanently and totally disabled at the time of his death, eligibility begins the date of his death. Otherwise, it is the date on which the VA determines that he died of a service-connected disability. If he dies while in service, the eligibility date is, also, date of death.

NOTE: The period of eligibility of a **surviving** spouse will be another 10 years from the veteran's death.

ENTITLEMENT & DELIMITING DATE

The maximum **entitlement** is 45 months and **cannot be extended.**

The **delimiting** date can be extended if she is enrolled and eligibility ceases because the veteran is no longer permanently and totally disabled, or she is divorced without fault on her part. The ending date will be extended to the end of the semester for IHL, or to the end of the course or 12 weeks for NCD, regardless of whether she has reached the midpoint of the course.

The delimiting date can also be extended due to physical or mental disability. A Form 22-5490 is used as an application and 22-5495 is used to apply for a change of program or place of training.

The veteran's claim number with a suffix W is assigned to a spouse or surviving spouse with payee number 10.

Approved courses: Are the same as for MGIB except they are **not entitled to flight training or licensing exams.** No additional allowance is payable for dependents.

Chapter 30 Basic Monthly Rates, Chapter 1606 Monthly Rates

Type of Training		Chapter 30 - Less than 3 years active duty	Chapter 30 - all others	Chapter 1606
Institutional				
Full Time	EFF 10-01-2002	\$732.00	\$900.00	\$276.00
	EFF 01-01-2002	\$650.00	\$800.00	\$272.00
3/4 Time	EFF 10-01-2002	\$549.00	\$675.00	\$207.00
	EFF 01-01-2002	\$487.50	\$600.00	\$204.00
1/2 Time	EFF 10-01-2002	\$366.00	\$450.00	\$137.00
	EFF 01-01-2002	\$325.00	\$400.00	\$135.00
Less than 1/2, more than 1/4	EFF 10-01-2002	(*) \$366.00	(*) \$450.00	Not
	EFF 01-01-2002	(*) \$325.00	(*) \$400.00	Applicable
1/4 Time	EFF 10-01-2002	(*) \$183.00	(*) \$225.00	\$69.00
	EFF 01-01-2002	(*) \$162.50	(*) \$200.00	\$68.00
OJT/Apprenticeship				
1st Six Months	EFF 10-01-2002	\$549.00	\$675.00	\$207.00
	EFF 01-01-2002	\$487.50	\$600.00	\$204.00
2nd Six Months	EFF 10-01-2002	\$402.60	\$495.00	\$151.80
	EFF 01-01-2002	\$357.50	\$440.00	\$149.60
Remainder of Training	EFF 10-01-2002	\$256.20	\$315.00	\$96.60
	EFF 01-01-2002	\$227.50	\$280.00	\$95.20
Cooperative				
	EFF 10-01-2002	\$732.00	\$900.00	\$276.00
	EFF 01-01-2002	\$650.00	\$800.00	\$272.00

(*) Tuition and Fees not to exceed the shown rate

Note: The rate for active duty personnel is the actual cost of tuition and fees not to exceed the rate otherwise payable for their training time. Entitlement is charged in accordance with the training time of pursuit, NOT by the amount of benefits paid.

Correspondence Training: Chapter 32 - Reimbursed at 100 percent of the cost of lessons completed. Chapter 35 (Spouses/Widow(er)s only), Chapter 30, Chapter 1606- Reimbursed at 55 percent of the cost of lessons completed. One month of entitlement is charged each time the equivalent of the full-time rate is paid.

Flight Training: Flight training is available under Chapter 30, Chapter 32, and Chapter 1606. Lessons are reimbursed at 60 percent of the cost of the lessons. One month of entitlement is charged each time the equivalent of the full-time rate is paid.

Correspondence and Flight Training - Entitlement Extension: Chapter 30 - VA may extend entitlement to the end of the course or the total additional instruction that the equivalent of 12 weeks at the full-time rate provides (eff. 01-10-2002 \$2,049.60 for less than 3 years or \$2,520.00 for all others), whichever is less. No extension of entitlement for flight or correspondence training is provided under Chapter 32, Chapter 35, or Chapter 1606.

Tutorial Assistance: Chapters 30, 32, 35, and 1606 - up to \$100 per month not to exceed \$1200 total. Entitlement charged after the first \$600 paid at the rate of one month each time the equivalent of the full-time rate is paid.

CHAPTER 30 INSTITUTIONAL RATES FOR PERSONS WITH REMAINING ENTITLEMENT UNDER CHAPTER 34 OF TITLE 38, U.S.C. (34/30)

TRAINING TIME	NO DEPS (ACT DUTY*)	ONE DEP	TWO DEPS	THREE DEPS	EACH ADD DEP
FULL					
EFF 10-01-2002	\$1088.00	\$1124.00	\$1155.00	\$1171.00	\$16.00
EFF 01-01-2002	\$988.00	\$1024.00	\$1055.00	\$1071.00	\$16.00
3/4					
EFF 10-01-2002	\$816.50	\$843.00	\$866.50	\$878.50	\$12.00
EFF 01-01-2002	\$741.50	\$768.00	\$791.50	\$883.50	\$12.00
1/2					
EFF 10-01-2002	\$544.00	\$562.00	\$577.50	\$586.00	\$8.50
EFF 01-01-2002	\$494.00	\$512.00	\$527.50	\$536.00	\$8.50
LESS THAN ONE-HALF BUT MORE THAN ONE-QUARTER	Tuition and Fees, Not to Exceed the Rate of \$544.00 (EFF 10-01-2002) \$494.00 (EFF 01-01-2002)				
ONE QUARTER TIME	Tuition and Fees, Not to Exceed the Rate of \$272.00 (EFF 10-01-2002) \$247.00 (EFF 01-01-2002)				
CO -OP	SAME	AS	FULL	TIME	TNG

***ACTIVE DUTY:** TUITION AND FEES NOT TO EXCEED THE RATE PAYABLE FOR THE TRAINING TIME, AT THE SINGLE (I.E. NO DEPENDENTS) RATE

CHAPTER 30 JOB TRAINING RATES FOR PERSONS WITH REMAINING CHAPTER 34 ENTITLEMENT

TIME		NO DEP	ONE DEP	TWO DEP	EACH ADD DEP
1ST 6 MTS	EFF 10-01-2002	777.75	\$790.13	\$801.00	\$5.25
	EFF 01-01-2002	\$702.25	\$715.13	\$726.00	\$5.25
2ND 6 MTS	EFF 10-01-2002	\$551.38	\$560.73	\$568.43	\$3.85
	EFF 01-01-2002	\$496.98	\$505.73	\$513.43	\$3.85
3RD 6 MTS	EFF 10-01-2002	\$338.80	\$344.93	\$349.65	\$2.45
	EFF 01-01-2002	\$303.80	\$309.93	\$314.65	\$2.45
REMAINDER	EFF 10-01-2002	\$326.90	\$332.68	\$337.93	\$2.45
	EFF 01-01-2002	\$291.90	\$297.68	\$302.93	\$2.45

OJT/APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING - PROPORTIONAL PAYMENTS

HRS WORKED DURING MONTH	PORTION MONTHLY RATE ISSUED	HRS WORKED DURING MONTH	PORTION MONTHLY RATE ISSUED	HRS WORKED DURING MONTH	PORTION MONTHLY RATE ISSUED
116 OR MORE	FULL CHECK	68 - 75	9/15	20 - 27	3/15
108 - 115	14/15	60 - 67	8/15	12 - 19	2/15
100 - 107	13/15	52 - 59	7/15	4 - 11	1/15
92 - 99	12/15	44 - 51	6/15	0 - 3	NONE
84 - 91	11/15	36 - 43	5/15		
76 - 83	10/15	28 - 35	4/15		

CHAPTER 31 SUBSISTENCE ALLOWANCE RATES

DEPENDENCY STATUS:	None	One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Six	EACH ADD DEP
INSTITUTIONAL TRAINING (a)								
FULL TIME (TT4):								
EFFECTIVE 10-1-02	454.96	564.34	665.03	713.51	761.99	810.47	858.95	48.48
EFFECTIVE 10-1-01	448.24	556.00	655.20	702.96	750.72	798.48	846.24	47.76
EFFECTIVE 10-1-00	433.06	537.19	633.04	679.18	725.32	771.46	817.60	46.14
THREE QUARTER TIME (
EFFECTIVE 10-1-02	341.85	423.87	497.21	534.49	571.77	609.05	646.33	37.28
EFFECTIVE 10-1-01	336.80	417.61	489.86	526.59	563.32	600.05	636.78	36.73
EFFECTIVE 10-1-00	325.41	403.49	473.29	508.77	544.25	579.73	615.21	35.48
ONE HALF TIME (TT2):								
EFFECTIVE 10-1-02	228.74	283.41	333.13	358.00	382.87	407.74	432.61	24.87
EFFECTIVE 10-1-01	225.36	279.22	328.21	352.71	377.21	401.71	426.21	24.50
EFFECTIVE 10-1-00	217.73	269.77	317.11	340.78	364.45	388.12	411.79	23.67
FARM COOPERATIVE/APPRENTICESHIP/OJT(b)								
EFFECTIVE 10-1-02	397.79	481.05	554.39	590.45	626.51	662.57	698.63	36.06
EFFECTIVE 10-1-01	391.91	473.94	546.20	581.73	617.26	652.79	688.32	35.53
EFFECTIVE 10-1-00	378.65	457.91	527.72	562.04	596.36	630.68	665.00	34.32
EXTENDED EVALUATION/INDEPENDENT LIVING								
FULL TIME								
EFFECTIVE 10-1-02	454.96	564.34	665.03	713.51	761.99	810.47	858.95	48.48
EFFECTIVE 10-1-01	448.24	556.00	655.20	702.96	750.72	798.48	846.24	47.76
EFFECTIVE 10-1-00	433.06	537.19	633.04	679.18	725.32	771.46	817.60	46.14
THREE QUARTER TIME								
EFFECTIVE 10-1-02	341.85	423.87	497.21	534.49	571.77	609.05	646.33	37.28
EFFECTIVE 10-1-01	336.80	417.61	489.86	526.59	563.32	600.05	636.78	36.73
EFFECTIVE 10-1-00	325.41	403.49	473.29	508.77	544.25	579.73	615.21	35.48
ONE HALF TIME								
EFFECTIVE 10-1-02	228.74	283.41	333.13	358.00	382.87	407.74	432.61	24.87
EFFECTIVE 10-1-01	225.36	279.22	328.21	352.71	377.21	401.71	426.21	24.50
EFFECTIVE 10-1-00	217.73	269.77	317.11	340.78	364.45	388.12	411.79	23.67
ONE QUARTER TIME: (c)								
EFFECTIVE 10-1-02	114.35	141.70	166.57	178.98	191.39	203.80	216.21	12.41
EFFECTIVE 10-1-01	112.66	139.61	164.11	176.34	188.57	200.80	213.03	12.23
EFFECTIVE 10-1-00	108.85	134.89	158.55	170.37	182.19	194.01	205.83	11.82

(a) INSTITUTIONAL TRAINING ALSO INCLUDES NO - OR NOMINAL - PAY OJT OR WORK EXPERIENCE IN A FEDERAL AGENCY

(b) OJT OR WORK EXPERIENCE FOR NO - OR NOMINAL - PAY IN A STATE OR LOCAL GOVERNMENT AGENCY IS PAID AT THE APPRENTICESHIP OR OTHER OJT RATE; I. E. FULL-TIME RATE ONLY

(c) THE QUARTER - TIME RATE MAY ONLY BE PAID DURING EXTEND EVALUATION AND INDEPENDENT LIVING

CHAPTER 35 - MONTHLY RATES

INSTITUTIONAL TRAINING:	
FULL TIME (TT4)	EFF 10-01-2002: \$680.00 EFF 01-01-2002: \$670.00
3/4 TIME (TT3):	EFF 10-01-2002: \$511.00 EFF 01-01-2002: \$503.00
1/2 TIME (TT2):	EFF 10-01-2002: \$340.00 EFF 01-01-2002: \$335.00
LESS THAN 1/2 TIME:	EFF 10-01-2002: TUITION COSTS NOT TO EXCEED \$340.00 FOR LESS THAN 1/2 TIME BUT MORE THAN 1/4 TIME \$170.00 FOR 1/4 TIME
APPRENTICESHIP/OJT:	
FIRST 6 MONTHS:	EFF 10-01-2002: \$495.00 EFF 01-01-2002: \$448.00
SECOND 6 MONTHS:	EFF 10-01-2002: \$370.00 EFF 01-01-2002: \$365.00
THIRD 6 MONTHS:	EFF 10-01-2002: \$246.00 EFF 01-01-2002: \$242.00
REMAINDER OF PROGRAM:	EFF 10-01-2002: \$124.00 EFF 01-01-2002: \$122.00
FARM COOPERATIVE:	
FULL TIME (TT4):	EFF 10-01-2002: \$549.00 EFF 01-01-2002: \$541.00
3/4 TIME (TT3):	EFF 10-01-2002: \$412.00 EFF 01-01-2002: \$403.00
1/2 TIME (TT2):	EFF 10-01-2002: \$275.00 EFF 01-01-2002: \$271.00
COOPERATIVE:	
FULL TIME ONLY	EFF 10-01-2002: \$680.00 EFF 01-01-2002: \$670.00
CHAPTER 35 SPECIAL RESTORATIVE TRAINING	
BASIC ALLOWANCE	EFF 10-01-2002: \$680.00 EFF 01-01-2002: \$670.00
ACCELERATED CHARGE	
COST OF TUITION AND FEES IN EXCESS OF	EFF 10-01-2002: \$213.00 EFF 01-01-2002: \$210.00 PER MONTH
ENTITLEMENT REDUCED 1 DAY FOR EACH	EFF 10-01-2002: \$22.67 EFF 01-01-2002: \$22.33

Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

Accrediting Agency

A nationally recognized agency or association which 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.

Active Duty

Full-time duty in the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard. 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 a student for the first fractional (or full) month and the following full month of enrollment. These payments are mailed to schools prior to the beginning of classes for release to students who have completed registration.

Advertising

VA will not approve an enrollment in any course offered by an institution which uses advertising, sales, or enrollment practices which are erroneous, deceptive, or misleading by actual statement, omission, or intimation. Any institution approved for the enrollment of veterans and other eligible persons must maintain a complete record of all advertising, sales, or enrollment materials used during the preceding 12-month period.

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 which 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 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 which 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 which 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. GI Bill benefits are not payable **under any circumstances** for pursuit of such courses: ***Exception - Where students change to a grade of audit during a semester, such grade will be treated like any other non-punitive grade.***

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.

Basic Educational Assistance

As used under the Montgomery GI Bill - Active Duty, "basic educational assistance" means a monetary benefit payable to all individuals who meet basic requirements for eligibility under Chapter 30, title 38, U.S. Code, for pursuit of a program of education.

BDN

The Benefits Delivery Network 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

BIRLS

Beneficiary Identification and Records Locator Subsystem. This is a computerized record system directly accessed by regional offices by means of computer terminals. It contains basic identifying information on a VA claimant including the current location of the claimant's folder and service information.

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 (See Interval Pay)

Certificate of Eligibility (COE)

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 at an institution who has been delegated authority to sign enrollment certifications, other certification documents and reports relating to VA benefits.

Certification of Delivery of Advance Payment and Enrollment

Often referred to as the "COD," the 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 changes to 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 that the particular period of service upon which entitlement is based be terminated under conditions other than dishonorable. However, **a veteran's qualifying service must have been honorable** in order to receive educational benefits under the Montgomery GI Bill, not "under honorable conditions" or "general," which will disqualify the individual for those 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 of providing directives on new procedures. A circular may also be used to disseminate information regarding issues which 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 which will permit VA to determine individual eligibility and entitlement.

Concurrent Enrollment

When a student cannot successfully schedule his or her complete program at one school, or cannot complete his or her program within the period in which he or she plans to complete an objective, a student may pursue courses at a second institution. A student is enrolled in more than one school at the same time (the dates of course pursuit at each school may overlap) and the primary institution certifies that supplemental school pursuit will be accepted at full credit toward the student's course objective.

Confirmed Enrollment

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

Cost of Course

The term "cost of course" means the total cost for tuition and fees for a course which an educational institution charges to non-veterans whose circumstances are similar to veterans enrolled in the same course. "Cost of course" does **not** include the cost of supplies or books which the student is required to purchase at his or her own expense.

Course

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

Cycle, Cooperative Program

Most cooperative programs have terms devoted exclusively to institutional study at both the beginning and the end of the program. Between these terms are a series of cycles in which the student alternates between classroom instruction and on-the-job training. A cycle may begin with either the institutional phase or with the work phase, but the cycle continues until both phases are completed. Alternating periods may be a part-day in school and a part-day on the job or may be such periods which alternate on a daily, weekly, monthly, or term basis. The alternate in-school periods of the course must be at least as long as the alternate periods in the business or industrial establishment.

DD Form 214 / DD-215

The Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty which 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 expiration date for education benefits. It is 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 35 and 1606 is computed differently. See appropriate sections for further explanation.

Dependents' Educational Assistance (DEA)

See Survivors' and Dependents' Educational Assistance.

DOD Record

The Department of Veterans Affairs accesses the Department of Defense's manpower data base 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/veteran's military records which VA may use to determine eligibility for Chapters 30 and 1606.

Drop Period

A reasonably brief period of time at the beginning of a term officially designated by a school for dropping courses without **academic** penalty. For VA education benefits purposes, the drop period is the date specified in the school's approved calendar or 30 days after the start of the term, **whichever is earlier**.

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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.

Dual Enrollment (See Concurrent Enrollment)

Education Liaison Representative (ELR)

The person at the VA regional office responsible for the education liaison and program approval functions. The ELR is education expert at the Regional Office and is responsible for promptly informing state approving agencies, schools, and training establishments of changes in policies and procedures.

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. This can also refer to the person in the Regional Processing Office who supervises the ELR's in that region.

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.

Enrollment Period

This term means an period 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. Entitlement will vary depending on the individual's specific GI Bill. **Except as otherwise provided, entitlement may not 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.

File Number

A seven-, eight- or nine-digit number assigned by VA to identify a claimant's records. Most veterans have their Social Security numbers assigned as their VA file number. Dependents or survivors of veterans eligible for chapter 35 benefits are assigned a letter suffix (e.g., "A," "B," "W") *to the veteran's file number*.

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G.E.D.

An official General Educational Development 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 G.E.D. equivalency are acceptable evidence of completion of high school educational requirements.

Holiday Vacation

The term "holiday vacation" means a customary, reasonable vacation period connected with a federal or state legal holiday which is identified as a holiday vacation in the educational institution's approved literature. Generally, VA interprets a reasonable period as not more than one calendar week at Christmas and one calendar week at New Year's and shorter periods of time in connection with other legal holidays.

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. **Effective 10/27/01 includes certificate programs offered by IHL's which reflect educational attainment.**

Institution of Higher Learning (IHL)

A college, university, technical or business school, offering instruction at the postsecondary level which leads to an associate 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

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 persons who are training at less than half-time are not entitled to interval payments.**

Matriculated Student

A college or university student who has satisfied all prerequisites for formal admission and recognition by the institution 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."

M.G.I.B.

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 nonpunitive grade for a course that the student did complete. Generally, a student will be required to submit corroborative evidence to substantiate his or her reasons for being unable to complete the course(s) with a creditable grade(s).

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NOBE

This is a DD Form 2384, Selected Reserve Educational Assistance Program Notice of Basic Eligibility, which the Selected Reserve member obtains from his or her National Guard or Reserve component unit stating his or her eligibility for the Montgomery GI Bill - Selected Reserve. If available, this form should accompany the reservist's application for benefits.

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.

Nonpunitive Grade

The term means any grade assigned for pursuit of a course, whether upon completion of the course or at the time of withdrawal from the course, which has the effect of excluding the course from any consideration in determining progress toward fulfillment of requirements for graduation, i.e., "W" or "NC" grades. No credit toward the school's requirements for graduation is granted for such a grade, nor does the grade affect any other criteria for graduation by the policies of the school, such as a grade point average. Therefore, it has the same effect as an audited course. A student will be charged with an overpayment of the benefits received for those courses in which a nonpunitive grade is received unless he or she presents evidence of acceptable mitigating circumstances to explain the grade assigned.

Nonstandard Term

A term which is of a shorter or longer length (i.e., weeks and days) than a standard quarter or semester. The number of instructor-student contact hours is increased proportionately each week to compensate for a shorter term length. VA will compute equivalent undergraduate credits to measure courses pursued during nonstandard terms. Terms of shorter than normal length are often referred to as **accelerated terms**.

Normal Commuting Distance

Two locations that are within 55 miles of each other are within normal commuting distance. Furthermore, a branch, extension or additional facility of a school located more than 55 miles from the school's main campus or parent facility may be considered within normal commuting distance only if school records show that, prior to the establishment of the additional teaching site, at least 20 students or 5 per cent of the enrollment, whichever is less, on the main campus or parent facility were regularly commuting from the area where the additional teaching site is located; or other comparable evidence clearly shows that students commute regularly between the two locations.

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 which 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.

Ordinary School Year

This is generally a period of 2 semesters or 3 quarters which is not less than 30 nor more than 39 weeks in total length.

Preregistered Enrollment

An Enrollment Certification (Form 22-1999) that is submitted for a student who is already enrolled in school and has preregistered for the next term with less than a calendar month break between terms.

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Primary Institution

The institution which will confer or grant the current degree sought, or certify that the student has completed the program qualifying him or her for the current objective sought, will be the principal or primary institution. Generally, the student will be enrolled at the principal or primary institution 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 which 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 which the appropriate state approving agency has determined meets the legal requirements for payment of VA educational assistance benefits to veterans and other eligible persons. This definition now includes test preparation courses for standard tests such as the ACT, SAT, GRE, LSAT, etc.

Punitive Grade

The term means a grade assigned for pursuit of a course which is used in determining the student's overall progress toward completion of the school's requirements for graduation, e.g., a failing grade. Unlike the nonpunitive grade, the punitive grade does affect the criteria to be met by the student for graduation, i.e., it is a factor in computing the student's grade average or grade point average, for example. For this reason it is not the same as an audited course, since it does have an effect upon the student's ability to meet the school's criteria for graduation. Grades such as P (Pass) or S (Satisfactory) are considered to be punitive, even if they do not count toward a student's GPA, as long as they count as credit earned toward a student's 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 which operate on a quarter system calendar. 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 annually to each educational institution furnishing training under the various VA education programs a reporting fee for required reports or certifications. This fee is intended to help defray the costs of processing various reports and certifications required to be submitted to VA and is in lieu of any other compensation or reimbursement. Effective with calendar year 1999 the annual fee is computed based on the total number of VA beneficiaries enrolled at the institution during the school year. 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 which 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.

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 which 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 period 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. It begins with the first Summer session and ends with the last Summer session.

Survivors' and Dependents' Educational Assistance

The benefits payable to eligible dependents or survivors of veterans. It is often abbreviated simply as DEA (Chapter 35).

Target

See **BDN**.

VEAP

Refers to the Veterans' Educational Assistance Program, Chapter 32 of title 38, U.S. Code. This is the contributory education benefits program for post-Vietnam era veterans.

Veteran

In accordance with Title 38, United States Code, Section 101(2), a veteran "...means a person who served in the active military, naval, or air service, and who was discharged or released therefrom under conditions other than dishonorable." This definition should not be confused with the eligibility requirements for the Montgomery GI Bill which specify that the veteran must have an *honorable discharge*.

Veterans Assistance Inquiry (VAI)

An inquiry regarding questioned amounts of VA monetary benefits, or the nonreceipt of such benefits after the anticipated claims processing time has elapsed.

STUDENTS' APPLICATION PROCEDURES

Application Forms

Application forms are available at all VA offices, most active duty stations, and American Embassies in other countries. In Florida, each County Veterans Service Office should have those forms. Certifying officials should keep a supply on hand at all times. All forms are obtainable from VA regional offices.

Depending on the status of the student, i.e., the particular VA program for which he or she may qualify, and whether the claim for educational assistance allowance benefits is an original claim or a supplemental one, the proper application form must be completed by the student.

Certifying officials should inform veterans, reservists, servicepersons, and other applicants that an application for VA benefits does not constitute an application for admission to the educational institution. A formal application for admission to the institution should be completed before an application for VA benefits is submitted. Students who have not been accepted for enrollment by the institution should be referred to the Admissions Office.

Applications for VA benefits are designed to obtain the data necessary to determine eligibility for educational assistance benefits for particular educational, professional, or vocational objectives. Since the students' application forms do not include enrollment certification data, claimants should be encouraged to take their completed applications and supporting documents to the school certifying official so that the documents can be submitted as a package enrollment with Form 22-1999, Enrollment Certification.

Retroactive applications and payments

Students have **one year** from the beginning date of their training in which to file an application and to receive benefits from the beginning date. VA will only pay educational assistance allowance retroactively for school enrollment periods up to **one year prior to the date the claim OR certification of enrollment are received by VA. Receipt of either the student's application by itself or the school's enrollment certification by itself DOES constitute a claim under VA regulations.** See appropriate section on Chapter 35 for new exceptions to this rule.

After receipt of an original application in the VA Regional Processing Office of jurisdiction, the claimant is often sent an Acknowledgment of Receipt of Claim. This acknowledgment will display the official VA claim number which the student and the school should use in all future correspondence with VA.

The forms described below should be used to apply for the education and training benefits indicated.

Form 22-1990 - Application For Education Benefits

(Chapters 30 and 32, title 38, U.S.C., Section 903, Public Law 96-342, Chapter 1606, title 10, U.S.C.)

This is an original application to be used by servicepersons, veterans, and reservists to apply for the following VA education benefits; VEAP (Chapter 32), Non-Contributory VEAP (Section 903), Montgomery G.I. Bill - Active Duty Educational Assistance Program (Chapter 30), and Montgomery G.I. Bill - Selected Reserve Educational Assistance Program (Chapter 1606). If an applicant is on active duty, Part II must also be completed by the serviceperson's Education Services Officer and his or her Commanding Officer.

Form 28-1900 - Disabled Veterans Application For Vocational Rehabilitation

(Chapter 31, title 38, U.S.C.)

This application is used by veterans to apply for Vocational Rehabilitation benefits. If the veteran is found eligible, VA will schedule an appointment with a counseling psychologist for an initial evaluation to establish the veteran's entitlement to Vocational Rehabilitation.

Form 22-5490 - Application For Survivors' And Dependents' educational Assistance

(Chapter 35)

This application is to be used by eligible spouses, surviving spouses, and children of veterans who died while on active duty or as a result of a service-connected condition and dependents of veterans who are permanently and totally disabled due to a service-connected condition, to apply for education benefits.

Form 22-8889 - Application For Educational Assistance Test Program Benefits

(Section 901)

This application will be used by veterans, servicepersons, and eligible dependents to apply for benefits under the Section 901 program.

Form 22-1995 - Request For Change Of Program Or Place Of Training

This application will be used by veterans, servicepersons, and reservists to apply for a change of program or place of training, or to apply for reentry into training following a report of unsatisfactory progress or conduct. This form may also be used by veterans who have reentered service to apply for education benefits as servicepersons or by those who received benefits while on active duty and are now applying for educational assistance as a veteran after release from active duty. This form should also be used by those persons who have interrupted their training for 12 or more months and are now returning to the same school in the same program.

Form 22-5495 - Request For Change Of Program Or Place Of Training: Survivors' And Dependents' Educational Assistance

This application will be used by eligible spouses, surviving spouses, and children to apply for a change of program or place of training, or to apply for reentry into training following a report of unsatisfactory progress or conduct.

Form 5281 - Application For Refund Of Educational Contributions

This form is used by participants in the Chapter 32 (VEAP) program to request a refund of money that they have contributed. This form does not apply to the Section 903 program, because participants in that program do not make contributions.

Form 21-8924 - Application For Benefits Under The Provisions Of Section 156, Public Law 97-377

This form is used by certain spouses and school children to apply for benefits under the Restored Entitlement Program for Survivors (REPS). This program restores certain Social Security benefits that were reduced or terminated by Public Law 97-35. Claimants under this program should submit their applications to the nearest VA regional office.

Supporting Evidence

Veterans

A veteran's eligibility for educational assistance benefits cannot be determined until VA receives satisfactory evidence of his or her active duty service. Veterans of the Armed Forces receive DD Form 214, Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty, when they are separated from service. Individuals who serve in the Public Health Service and in the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration receive comparable documents.

Veterans who use Form 22-1990 to submit their claims should attach **copy number 4** of DD Form 214 as supporting documentation. In addition to receiving the original copy of the DD Form 214, the individual is usually given copy 4 also. Veterans of the Armed Forces who have been released from active duty since October 1979 should be advised to submit a certified copy number 4 of DD Form 214 with their claim for VA benefits, if available. The original of this form (July 1979 edition and later) omits certain information regarding the individual's period of service that is essential to VA's determination of eligibility for benefits. A veteran who has recorded his or her original service document with a state or local government office may submit a copy of that document which is certified by the public custodian of records instead of the original document. School certifying officials may not certify copies of an applicant's DD Form 214.

If one of the types of evidence described is not available, VA must verify active duty service by alternate methods.

If a veteran previously claimed VA benefits, his or her file probably already contains service verification. Service may also be verified by the VA regional office through the VADS record (Veterans Assistance Discharge System). This record is a computerized system into which service information is entered for most veterans shortly after they are separated from active duty. VADS records do not exist for all veterans, however, which means sometimes service must be verified with the appropriate military service or department. Similarly, for M.G.I.B. claimants, VA is able to access basic eligibility criteria through a computer interface with the Department of Defense's Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC). This record is now the primary document VA uses for determining eligibility for Chapters 30 and 1606.

Certifying officials should encourage veterans who do not have copies of the documents issued to them at the time of separation from service to submit any other type of information available to them that describes their periods of active duty. This includes, for example, a photocopy of the DD Form 214. Often a photocopy of a service document can be used in conjunction with information obtained from a VADS or DMDC record to provide necessary service verification. A photocopy of the DD Form 214 can also expedite an inquiry to the service department.

IN NO CASE SHOULD A SCHOOL OFFICIAL DELAY THE SUBMISSION OF A VETERAN'S CLAIM BECAUSE HE/SHE DOESN'T HAVE A COPY OF HIS/HER DD-214.

Reservists

DD Form 2384, Selected Reserve Educational Assistance Program (GI Bill) Notice of Basic Eligibility (NOBE), is provided to eligible reservists by his or her National Guard or Reserve component. This is a supplementary document the reservist should submit, if available, in support of his or her claim to establish the date of eligibility or to reestablish eligibility. If VA has an eligible DOD record, the NOBE is not required, in order to establish eligibility. However, the reservist should submit one, if available,

but it is not mandatory. A photocopy of the NOBE is also acceptable. NOBE's are only valid for the processing of claims for 120 days after the date of eligibility.

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Dependents

Under certain VA programs (Chapters 30 (chapter 34 conversion) and 31, as well as certain recipients eligible for VA compensation, pension, or Dependents' Indemnity Compensation, or death pension), persons may have the monthly amount of their VA benefit payment increased based on the number of his or her established dependents. Under the educational assistance programs (Chapters 30 and 31), additional allowance for dependents is not available when the veteran is training at a less than half-time rate, is not available to servicepersons, for those training under any other VA-administered education program, or to persons while they are incarcerated for conviction of a felony offense. Documentary proof to establish the relationship of the individuals claimed as dependents is required.

To claim dependents, **VA Form 21-686c**, Declaration of Status of Dependents, should be submitted. In addition, if an individual is out of school for more than six months, he or she must submit another **VA Form 21-686c**, in order to continue to receive additional allowance for dependents.

Only the following individuals may qualify as dependents for VA purposes:

- ◆ The veteran's spouse;
- ◆ The veteran's child. The term "child" includes a natural child, adopted child or stepchild. The child must be unmarried, and (a) under 18 years of age, or (b) between the ages of 18 and 23 and attending school, or (c) over the age of 18 and must have been determined to be permanently incapable of self-support due to a physical or mental handicap before reaching the age of 18.
- ◆ The veteran's mother or father, if dependent upon the veteran for support.

Certification of Documents

Although NOT required, the preferred documentary evidence is a certified copy of the public or church record of marriage or birth. A certified copy means a copy obtained from the official custodian of the recorded document. The copy should include certification by the custodian as to its authenticity. The certifying official of the school may certify a copy of the original document. If a student is unable to obtain a certified copy of marriage or birth certificate, he or she should contact the VA Regional Office for information on other types of evidence which may be accepted by VA to establish the relationship of the claimed dependent.

The individuals authorized to certify documents to VA include:

- ◆ Any accredited representative of a veteran service organization,
- ◆ Military personnel appointed to this task by orders of the commander of a military installation,
- ◆ Any official of an approved educational facility who is authorized to certify enrollments. Such official must be listed on Form 22-8794, Designation of Certifying Officials.

NOTE: A **notarized** copy is **not** acceptable evidence for VA benefits purposes. Notary Publics are **not** authorized to certify documents.

When a document is authenticated, the certification must contain the following language or an equivalent:

"I certify that this is a true and exact copy of the original document (or a certified copy issued by a public custodian of records) that I have personally examined."

The certification must be legible, it must have the signature of the individual who is certifying the document, the legibly printed name of the certifying official and the title and the name of the

organization. Facsimile signatures for certifying officials of approved educational facilities and institutions are acceptable, if shown on Form 22-8794.

Certifying officials may certify copies of **birth certificates, marriage certificates, and all other dependency evidence for veterans training at their facility under Chapters 30 & 31**. The certifying official should view the original document to be copied and be satisfied as to the document's genuineness and freedom from alteration. Each document copied must be annotated as noted above. **Certifying officials may not certify discharge documents (DD Form 214) or other forms verifying service.**

Form 21-674, Request For Approval Of School Attendance

This form must be completed by the veteran to provide evidence of a child's school attendance after the child's 18th birthday. Qualifying school attendance requires that the child be attending a minimum of three regular class sessions per week. The instruction or training must be offered by an institution recognized as standard and accredited for such course.

Additional amounts of educational assistance may be payable for unmarried children between the ages of 18 and 23 who attend school. If Form 21-674 is submitted before the child's expected beginning date of education or training, the veteran will be requested to complete **Form 21-674b**, School Attendance Report, after the child's school attendance actually begins.

On original applications, marital status and dependency information should be entered in Block 19 of the Form 22-1990. Any change in the number of a veteran's dependents should be reported promptly to VA by the veteran. **Form 21-686c** may be used to report the change. If the change is a claim for an allowance for an additional dependent(s), the required documentary evidence should be attached to the Form 21-686c.

When a veteran loses entitlement to an allowance for a dependent (e.g., through divorce, death, marriage of a child, departure from the veteran's household of a stepchild), the amount being paid on account of that dependent must be discontinued no later than the end of the month in which the loss occurs. Therefore, in order for such veterans to avoid an overpayment of their educational assistance, prompt reporting of dependency changes to VA is essential.

Where to Send Applications (Students Attending Schools in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, and Tennessee)

Except as noted below, applications, enrollment certifications, correspondence, and inquiries or questions regarding an eligible student should be sent to the **Atlanta Regional Processing Office** (see address on page one). As always, telephone inquiries should be made to this regional office.

Section 901, Educational Assistance Test Program.

Completed applications and Enrollment Certifications should be sent to the following VA regional office.

**Department of Veterans Affairs Regional Office
1400 North Valley Mills Drive
Waco, TX 76799**

For Section 901 students, the school must sign and date the Enrollment Certification after the beginning of the term, quarter, or semester and mail it to the address above. The school may certify only one term, quarter, or semester on each Enrollment Certification. A student under Section 901 may not receive an advance payment of benefits. All changes in a student's enrollment under Section 901 and any changes of address should be promptly reported to the VA regional office in Waco at the address shown above.

Certificate of Eligibility

When VA receives a completed application form without an Enrollment Certification, a Certificate of Eligibility (C/E), Form 22-1993a, may be issued to the student, if eligibility exists and the selected program is approved. Two copies of the C/E, with instructions, are mailed to the veteran, serviceperson, reservist, or eligible person.

The C/E is valid only at the institution named and only for the objective indicated. The student should present a copy of the certificate to the certifying official. The student's presentation of a C/E to the certifying official assures the school that the student's eligibility and entitlement to VA benefits have been established.

It should be noted, however, that a student does not have to have a Certificate of Eligibility. The issuance of a C/E merely indicates that VA has already examined the student's records and has established eligibility for the program of education shown thereon with any applicable limitations. The absence of a C/E on behalf of a student generally implies only that the student has not applied to VA for a particular program of education at a school and that a determination of eligibility or entitlement to the program being sought simply has not as yet been made.

Award Letter

When payment of education benefits is authorized, VA will, **without exception**, mail an award letter to the student. Only one copy of this letter will be issued. The letter provides the student with:

- ◆ Notification that his or her enrollment has been processed for a specific period. The inclusive dates for which payment will be issued will be shown.
- ◆ The monthly rate of payment the student can expect to receive.
- ◆ The student's original net entitlement.
- ◆ Delimiting date.
- ◆ The amount of entitlement remaining at the end of the term, quarter, semester, or academic year, if the student continues to attend at the certified rate for the entire period. (For a serviceperson, the entitlement used is shown.)
- ◆ Information regarding appeal procedures.

Generally, the award letter is computer-generated through VA's Target System. Where applicable, a copy is also provided to the claimant's accredited service representative.

Availability of Educational/ Vocational Counseling (Chpts 30, 31, 32, 35, 1606, & Sect 903)

In addition to informing veterans, servicepersons, reservists, and eligible persons of the institution's academic and advisory counseling, it is recommended that the certifying official remind them at the time they submit an application for VA benefits of the free professional counseling services offered by the VA. Although the counseling itself is free, associated costs of travel, meals, and lodging must usually be borne by the student.

BASIC INFORMATION FOR CERTIFYING OFFICIALS

Approvals Required

It is generally the responsibility of **VA** to determine the eligibility of veterans, servicepersons, and other eligible persons and to approve the payment of benefits.

The **STATE APPROVING AGENCY (SAA)** approves or disapproves programs and courses of instruction so that educational assistance benefits may be paid to veterans and other eligible persons under the several programs administered by VA. The SAA must specifically approve each program of education into which the institution wishes to enroll veterans and other eligible persons. In addition, if an institution operates branch or extension facilities away from the main campus, then the SAA must also approve the offering of instruction at those sites. All approval actions by the SAA are subject to acceptance by VA.

Two copies of the school's latest catalog must be forwarded to the appropriate state approving agency. Each catalog must be certified as being correct in content and policy, and this certification must be signed by the appropriate school official. The certifying official at the institution must be certain that catalogs, school calendars, and other publications containing descriptions of programs and/or courses of study are submitted to the SAA as soon as they are published. Additional requests for approval of new programs and/or courses not contained in the current catalog may be submitted to the SAA by letter as soon as they are established by the institution.

A course offered by a school other than a job training establishment will be appropriate for the enrollment of a veteran or eligible person only if it has been in operation for 2 years or more immediately prior to the date of enrollment, except that this provision does not apply to: (1) any course to be pursued in a public or other tax-supported educational institution, and (2) any course which is offered by a school or college which is recognized for credit toward a standard college degree.

Various schools could have many names for programs and/or courses that VA considers to be practical training, cooperative, and/or independent study. For example, a school may call a course a cooperative course, but it may meet VA's definition of practical training and may not meet VA's definition of coop. Also, programs which the schools frequently call externships, internships, etc., could be coop, practical training, or independent study according to VA's definitions. How the course is structured determines which of VA's categories it falls into. As such, for these types of training, there may be a conflict between the school's definitions and those of VA. In these instances, it is best to check with either the state approving agency or your local VA regional office for guidance in getting these courses approved.

VA Publications and Forms

It is essential that certifying officials have copies of VA directives which pertain to the responsibilities of the officials of the institution as related to VA educational assistance. Copies of forms may be procured by writing to your VA Regional Office, ATTN: Publications Department. Your request should be typed on the institution's stationery and specify what is needed, the name and number of the form or publication required, and the quantity needed.

Reporting Fees to Institutions

In December of each year, a listing of students who were receiving assistance during that calendar year is printed by VA for each institution. Based on the number of students enrolled and in receipt of benefits, institutions are compensated at the rate of \$7 for each student. If any advance payment or an education loan check is delivered by the institution, compensation is increased to the rate of \$11 for that student. Prior to the delivery of any reporting fee payment by VA, an official at the institution must certify that the institution exercises reasonable diligence in meeting all applicable requirements of 38 U.S.C. Institutions must also certify that any failure to meet applicable requirements of 38 U.S.C. will be reported promptly to VA. This certification statement is included in the "Certifications" section of Form 22-1999, Enrollment Certification.

Availability of Information

You or the student can obtain additional information concerning VA benefits by writing or calling the Regional Processing Office (RPO). Active duty personnel should first seek resolution of any problem with VA benefits by contacting the Education Services Officer (ESO) in the Education Office on their military installation. Veterans and other eligible persons must use the nationwide toll-free number as listed on page six. Your own calls to the regional office will usually be to the Education Liaison Representative at the appropriate number listed on page six or to the RPO at the number listed on page seven. You should recommend to each student that he or she set up a folder in which copies of all correspondence and documents pertaining to his/her educational assistance be retained. You should also recommend that the student enter the name, address, and telephone number of the certifying official in this folder along with the address and telephone number of the regional office. In addition, you should inform the student of his or her responsibility to report promptly to you and to VA any changes in his/her enrollment.

Compliance Surveys

The law requires that VA employees conduct periodic surveys at educational institutions. The two main purposes of these surveys are to (1) ensure that VA payments going to students enrolled in the school are based upon proper and correct enrollment information as furnished by the school to VA; and, (2) assist school and training officials and students in understanding the requirements of the law in order to prevent deficiencies or violations which could develop because of misunderstandings or misinterpretations of the law.

REVIEW OF SCHOOL RECORDS BY VA AND SAA

Schools which have sought and obtained approval to provide training under 38 U.S.C. are required by law (38 U.S.C. 3690(c) and 38 C.F.R. 21.4209) to maintain certain records and to make these records available for examination by authorized representatives of the government. All records and accounts of schools pertaining to veterans and eligible persons, as well as the records of other students which are necessary to determine compliance with the law, must be available for examination. **The law (38 U.S.C. 3690(c)) provides that records and accounts must be made available for review by authorized representatives of the government "NOTWITHSTANDING ANY OTHER PROVISION OF LAW."** The effect of this provision is to allow VA to examine necessary records which may be restricted under laws regarding privacy of student records such as PL 93-380 (Buckley Amendment) or other provisions of the law. Failure to make records available may result in discontinuance of educational assistance benefits.

Records of an institution or establishment **must be retained for a period of at least THREE YEARS** following the termination of the enrollment of an eligible individual, or longer if requested by VA or GAO (General Accounting Office). Any institution offering courses approved for the enrollment of eligible individuals must maintain a complete record and copies of all advertising, sales, or enrollment materials utilized by or on behalf of the institution during the preceding 12-month period.

A school's records, such as applications, transcripts, grade reports, and school enrollment records, will be reviewed during a compliance visit to ensure:

- ◆ Credit granted for prior education and training, if any, reported. The school must maintain a written record of the student's previous education and training, grant appropriate credit and shorten the course proportionately. The amount of credit granted should have been reported by the school on the student's Enrollment Certification.
- ◆ Specific curriculum in which a student is enrolled was correctly reported;
- ◆ Changes in credit hours correctly and promptly reported;
- ◆ Last date of attendance correctly and promptly reported;
- ◆ Unsatisfactory progress (based upon grades or grade point average required or other approved progress criteria, and approved length of course) correctly and promptly reported.
- ◆ Certifications of 85 percent enrollment restriction verified;
- ◆ Certifications of two-year period of operation for branch locations verified.

A school's finance records will be reviewed to determine:

- ◆ Tuition and fees paid by VA students are not more than those paid by non-VA students. The charges to VA students for tuition and fees may not be more than the charges to non-VA students in the same program. Any discount or payment plan which is available to non-VA students but not available to VA students, and which reduces the tuition and fees for non-VA students is, in effect, an overcharge to VA students.
- ◆ Refunds in accordance with school policy were given students who discontinued courses.
- ◆ Tuition paid by non-VA students is the same as tuition paid by VA students.
- ◆ School procedures for care and delivery of advance payment checks meet requirements of the law.
- ◆ Procedures for delivery of other education assistance checks, mailed to a school address do not violate power-of-attorney restrictions.

In addition, work-study records may be examined to ensure student services are an activity of VA and the hours worked have been properly reported; tutorial assistance records to ensure recipients of tutorial assistance have academic deficiencies, tutors are known by the school to be qualified, and charges for tutoring are reasonable and customary.

If a compliance survey team discovers serious discrepancies in reporting or record keeping requirements, payments of educational assistance allowance benefits to students may be discontinued. (38 U.S.C. 3690(b) and 38 C.F.R. 21.4133 and 21.4134)

Reporting to the VA Regional Processing Office

In most cases, the certifying official will either personally deliver, mail, or electronically send (VACERT) completed certification documents directly to the RPO. Notifications of reductions in students' enrollments or withdrawals from the institution may also be reported initially to the RPO by telephone.

Telephonic notifications of these enrollment changes, particularly when the changes are discovered during the last half of a month, will assist VA in preventing overpayments of benefits. It is recommended that any telephone notice of reduction in training time or withdrawal from the institution be confirmed in writing by submitting a Form 22-1999b to VA.

Debt Prevention

It is especially important that those who are participating in the educational assistance programs administered by VA, to include those responsible for the certification of students under veterans' laws, know that VA fully intends to be aggressive in its efforts to collect justified debts and is serious about ensuring that GI Bill benefits are not abused. VA has responsibilities to administer these programs in the best interests of the veteran and to assist in efforts to use the benefits productively. However, there are also responsibilities to ensure that Federal funds are not misused or expended fraudulently. Determined efforts need to be made at all junctures to prevent the establishment of debts in the first place. Debt prevention initiatives must be made a continuing priority in the administration of educational assistance programs. Between August 1 and August 15 of each year schools will be sent a letter reminding them of the importance of continued debt prevention efforts.

VA studies show the causes of education overpayments are varied, with some resulting from processing problems within VA and some resulting from delayed reporting by schools. Approximately 60 percent of overpayments are the result of students' not providing acceptable mitigating circumstances for changes in enrollments.

When students enroll in school is an excellent time for certifying officials to advise those receiving VA educational benefits of the actions that can result in overpayments of these benefits. Each student should be made aware of the importance of promptly notifying both the school and VA of any change in enrollment. Students should be encouraged to provide statements regarding mitigating circumstances for reductions and terminations for inclusion with the notification. VA requirements emphasize that notifications of reductions and terminations be processed as expeditiously as possible. In cases in which award actions cannot prevent the next payments, VA sends telegrams to local postmasters asking for the return of the checks so that payments can be issued in the proper amounts.

In cases in which overpayments are established, VA is interested in recovering the money owed as soon as possible. Collection efforts are not limited to written requests for payment and withholding future benefit payments. Debts may be referred to collection agencies or the Justice Department. Approval of VA home loan guarantees may be delayed pending satisfactory repayment arrangements. Federal income tax refunds may be withheld and applied to VA debts. While these collection efforts are often viewed negatively by the benefit recipients, they are an integral part of the effort to reduce outstanding debt.

Students may discontinue their educational endeavors due to benefits being withheld for prior overpayments. Some benefit recipients cannot afford to attend school without their VA benefits. Therefore, it is important that certifying officials keep students informed of the responsibilities involved in reporting changes in their status.

Student awareness of VA policies and how school policies may affect payment of VA benefits is critical to debt prevention. VA provides information to benefit recipients, but the certifying official can help improve the understanding at the school by providing students with additional information pertaining to the receipt of their benefits. The communication could take the form of a letter, a handout at registration, an article in the school newspaper, or posters displayed around the campus. It is important that students understand that a reduction in their course load may result in a retroactive reduction in benefits and a debt to VA. Academic advisors should be aware of this information, since they may be involved in course scheduling and decisions to drop courses.

During compliance surveys, schools' debt prevention efforts will be documented, to include copies of information provided to students and/or annotations of debt prevention measures the school has implemented. Such measures are not mandatory, but reducing the number of overpayments requires cooperation among VA, the schools, and the beneficiaries.

Advertising, Sales, or Enrollment Practices

No enrollment will be approved at institutions utilizing advertising, sales, or enrollment practices of any type which are erroneous, deceptive, or misleading either by actual statement, omission, or intimation. All approved institutions must maintain for a period of 12 months complete records and copies of all advertising, sales, and enrollment materials used by or on behalf of the institution. These materials must be available for inspection by the SAA during supervisory visits and by VA during compliance surveys. These include, but are not limited to:

- ◆ Any direct mail pieces
- ◆ Brochures
- ◆ Printed literature used by sales people
- ◆ Films, videocassettes and audio tapes disseminated through broadcast media
- ◆ Material disseminated through print media
- ◆ Leaflets
- ◆ Handbills
- ◆ Fliers
- ◆ Any sales or recruitment manuals used to instruct sales personnel, agents, or representatives of the educational institution.
- ◆ Web sites

An institution which utilizes advertising, sales, or enrollment practices of any type which are erroneous, deceptive, or misleading will be barred from further enrollments of VA beneficiaries and no certificates of eligibility will be issued for any courses at the institution. The phrase "advertising, sales, or enrollment practices" includes but is not limited to any method used or action taken by or on behalf of an institution for the purpose of soliciting or encouraging enrollment in its course(s) of study and may include the use of direct mail pieces, brochures, sales training materials, printed literature used by salespersons, films, videotapes and audio tapes.

Advertising must not leave a false, misleading, or exaggerated impression concerning the school, its personnel, courses, etc. Advertising that might be construed as literally true must be literally true. Deceptive practices may occur when a school indicates that the objective of its course is one thing when, in fact, those graduates of the school who get jobs may get jobs that are less prestigious with lower salary and with less chance for ultimate advancement than the job for which they thought they were training. Catalogs and other brochures published by the school should clearly disclose, in advance of enrollment, usual and traditional limitations and restrictions, if any, on admissions and employment opportunities,

such as medical requirements, licensing, internship, apprenticeship, union, age, education, examination and experience requirements.

Misrepresentation of the availability of placement services and employment opportunities may be another area of concern. The school may, for example, guarantee employment placement service after graduation, but in reality simply provides the student with a list of employers to contact. A school's advertising may imply extensive employment connections with nationwide firms when such connections do not exist.

Advertisements, sales, or enrollment practices can be erroneous, deceptive, or misleading by omission as well as by actual statement or intimation. Such omissions might well include the failure to disclose to the veteran any material facts concerning the school or its instruction which may reasonably affect the student's decision to enroll. For example, a salesperson may state that there are "thousands of jobs open" in a particular field. What is not mentioned, however, is that the jobs are located in a part of the country where many people do not want to relocate, or that the school's graduates do not qualify for such jobs.

Certain sales and enrollment practices are held to be deceptive and/or misleading per se. These include obtaining any form or document signed in blank by the student and any statement or action which tends to defeat the purpose of the affirmation period for correspondence courses.

PAYMENT PROCEDURES

NONDUPLICATION OF FEDERAL BENEFITS

There is a prohibition against concurrent payment of educational benefits when a person has eligibility under more than one law administered by VA and against concurrent payment of educational benefits and certain other Federal education programs. One exception is an eligible person under Chapter 35 may receive concurrent payment of benefits under the Restored Entitlement Program for Survivors (REPS).

Concurrent Payment

An individual who is eligible for education or training under more than one law (i.e., Chapters 30, 31, 32, 35, 1606, and sections 901 and 903) must elect which benefit he or she will receive. A reelection may be made at any time.

Reservists Training Under Chapter 1606

A reservist may not receive benefits concurrently under Chapter 1606 and any other education program administered by VA. A reservist, however, may have dual eligibility under Chapter 1606 and Chapter 30, if the Chapter 30 eligibility is based solely upon active duty service; however, **the law prohibits the concurrent receipt of benefits under Chapter 30 and Chapter 1606**. If dual eligibility exists, the reservist must elect in writing which benefit he or she wishes to receive. The reservist may make a new election at any time, but may not elect more than once in any calendar month.

Senior Reserve Officers' Training Corps Scholarship Program

Educational assistance may not be provided to a **reservist** receiving financial assistance under 10 U.S.C. 2107 as a member of the Senior Reserve Officers' Training Corps **scholarship** program.

Chapter 35

Payment of educational assistance allowance and special training allowance are prohibited to otherwise eligible persons for a program of education pursued while on active duty or for a specific course or courses which are paid for entirely or partly by the United States under the Government Employees' Training Act during any period that full salary is being paid him or her as an employee of the United States.

Veterans/Reservists

Payment of educational assistance allowance is prohibited to otherwise eligible veterans and reservists for a specific course or courses which are being paid for in whole or in part by the **Department of Health and Human Services** during any period that he or she is **on active duty with the Public Health Service**; or for any course(s) which is being paid for entirely or partly by the United States under the **Government Employees' Training Act (GETA)**.

Effective for all courses starting on or after October 30, 2000, VA education benefits can be paid to active duty individuals who are also receiving tuition assistance from the military. This is called the Tuition Assistance Top Up program. An individual sends his/her application for VA education benefits along with the authorization for Tuition Assistance to the RPO.

The RPO then authorizes a payment which covers the portion of tuition not covered by Tuition Assistance. Schools need take no action with regard to this benefit.

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Limitations on Entitlement

A student may be entitled to VA educational assistance benefits under certain combinations of the various education programs. As noted above, however, a claimant cannot receive benefits under more than one chapter at any given time. Students with eligibility under more than one chapter should consult a VA counselor to determine which program will be most beneficial.

Generally the maximum entitlement allowed under any combination of chapters is 48 months.

An applicant who is receiving, or is entitled to receive, any other VA benefit based on his or her own or on another veteran's service should identify the benefit in his or her application. A student may not earn entitlement under Chapters 32 and 1606 or Chapters 30 and 1606 based upon the same period of active duty. The student must elect whether the period of active duty is to be credited to Chapter 30, 32 or 1606.

Advance Payment

Advance Payment of educational assistance allowance is intended to help students meet school-related and other expenses which are concentrated at the beginning of a term. When a veteran, serviceperson, reservist, or other eligible person, enrolled at a half-time rate or more, initially enters training, or reenters training after an interval of 30 days or more, **and** the student is not eligible for an interval payment, he or she may elect in writing to be paid in advance for the first initial month or fraction thereof in which the term will begin plus the amount payable for the following month. **Students should be aware that if they receive advance payments, for example, for September and October at the beginning of a fall term commencing in September, they will not receive their November benefit check until December.** (*Note:* Advance Payment may **not** be made for veterans training under Section 901.)

If the student has an existing overpayment in his or her VA account, part or all of the Advance Payment may be applied to liquidate that debt.

Eligibility Requirements

An Advance Payment **may** be made only if **all** of the following criteria are met:

- ◆ The student signs the Advance Payment Request in Block 16 of the Enrollment Certification. A separate document or sheet of paper requesting Advance Payment, signed and dated by the student and attached to the Enrollment Certification, is also acceptable.
- ◆ The institution has certified to VA that it agrees to receive and to process the Advance Payment.
- ◆ The Enrollment Certification must be for an enrollment period which begins at least 30 days after the end of the student's prior period of enrollment, **and** the student is not eligible for payment of benefits for that interval.
- ◆ The student must be enrolled for at least half-time training.
- ◆ The Enrollment Certification must be **received in VA at least 30 days and not more than 120 days before the beginning of the term.**

When these criteria are met, an Advance Payment will be sent to the educational institution for the student. VA will send an award letter directly to the student that advises him or her that an Advance Payment will be sent to the school. The school certifying official should advise students requesting Advance Payment of any special procedures which may have been established by the school for the

distribution of Advance Payment checks. Generally, the check should be given to the student when he or she registers (or not more than 30 days before the beginning of school if registration is earlier).

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Servicepersons

A serviceperson is eligible and may be certified for Advance Payment if he or she is attending half-time or more. The payment will be equal to the amount charged the student for tuition and fees for the course or courses or the established maximum for full-time, three-quarter time, or half-time training, *whichever is less*.

Certification of Delivery of Advance Payment and Enrollment

When an Advance Payment check is given to the student, Form 22-1999V must be completed by the school official and immediately returned to the VA regional office. This form (formerly a card - now a pre-printed letter) is mailed to the school in a separate envelope from the check and contains preprinted enrollment information. In the event that the school has not yet received the COD form, the certifying official may use instead a Form 22-1999B, Notice of Change in Student Status - Institutional Courses Only. The Remarks section of this alternate form should be annotated: "In lieu of certification of delivery - no change in enrollment and A/P check delivered" or "In lieu of certification of delivery - A/P check delivered." No further payments will be issued to those students pursuing non-college degree programs or to those under Chapter 30 until this certification is received in VA. Those students under Chapters 32 and 35 will continue to receive checks, and the VA regional office is required to follow-up in writing or by telephone to confirm enrollment.

If a student originally scheduled his or her enrollment to be at a half-time rate or greater and was certified for Advance Payment but has registered only for courses that will constitute less than half-time when he or she reports to pick up the Advance Payment check, the student should be informed that he or she is not entitled to the Advance Payment, and the check should be returned to the Treasury. A report of the student's change in enrollment should then be submitted to the VA regional office on Form 22-1999B, with a comment entered in the Remarks section of the form noting that the Advance Payment check was returned (because the student did not begin attendance for the term, enrolled for less than half-time, etc.). Any changes in enrollment from what is shown on the preprinted Form 22-1999V should be clearly annotated. Since this form provides no file copy for the institution or the student, the certifying official may wish to make copies of the form before submitting it to the VA regional office. It is recommended that one copy of the form, signed by the student to attest to the receipt of the Advance Payment check, be retained in school files. A copy may also be given to the student, if desired.

Note: If an advance payment request was submitted, and the check is not received at the educational institution within the first ten class days, then more than likely for some reason payment will be made on the regular pay cycle basis instead. Inquiry should be made to the local VA office, however, to ensure there are no other problems needing resolution on the student's case. Any Advance Payment check that has not been claimed by the student 30 days after the beginning of the term must be returned to the Treasury. Likewise, all Forms 22-1999V should be submitted to VA within 30 days after the beginning of the term or other enrollment period.

Envelopes containing the 22-1999V letters should be clearly marked in bold letters, "Forms 22-1999V," and addressed to the regional processing office in the same manner as the other certifications submitted. The forms which show enrollment changes will be used by VA to make necessary adjustments to the student's benefit payments. No further notification (e.g., Form 22-1999b) is required unless another enrollment change occurs after the COD form is returned to VA.

Method of Payment to Students

Students not participating in Advance Payment will receive their monthly benefits (including the first payment for each enrollment or reenrollment) on or after the first of the month following the month for which payment is due. This system of payment is called "post-payment."

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Enrollment Certifications for students not participating in the Advance Payment or who are not Chapter 30 students must be confirmed. An Enrollment Certification is considered "**confirmed**" if it is signed and dated by the certifying official on or after the beginning date of the enrollment period being certified.

Confirmation of any initial enrollment and of any reenrollment will be required unless there will be less than a full calendar month break between terms or other subsequent enrollment periods. Preregistered or continuing student enrollments may be certified to VA for those students enrolled in the current term and preregistered for the next term, with no calendar month between terms. These continuing students may be certified for the subsequent term as soon as they are registered or preregistered for the subsequent term. However, this may not be done for servicepersons or for those students enrolled at less than half-time. Depending upon which VA education benefit program a student is under, as well as the type of program of education being pursued, the method of payment may vary.

Chapters 32, 35, Sections 901 and 903

Payments for those pursuing a program of education leading to a standard college degree at half-time or greater training time are released the first of the month following the month for which payment is due. For example, the monthly benefit due for October is released the first of November. Those pursuing non-college degree programs, whether at a vocational technical school or at an institution of higher learning, are sent a certification of attendance form at the end of the month for which payment is due. This form must be signed by the student and returned to VA before payments are released.

Chapters 30 & 1606

Students pursuing a program of education leading to a standard college degree or higher or a non-degree program must verify their enrollment on a monthly basis in order to receive their benefits check for that month. Formerly, they had to return a verification letter to the Atlanta RPO. Now they must call a toll free number to accomplish the same task. Starting with the last day of a month, they may verify their enrollment for that month by calling the following toll-free number and following the instructions:

1-877-823-2378. Alternately, they can verify at our Web site: www.gibill.va.gov and follow the link to WAVE (Web Automated Verification of Enrollment).

Lump-Sum Payments

Except for eligible reservists under Chapter 1606, a veteran or other eligible person enrolled for less than half-time will receive a lump sum payment after certification that training has begun. Payment for an individual enrolled for less than half-time will be computed on established charges for tuition and fees which the institution requires similarly circumstanced nonveterans to pay. These charges do not include the cost of books and supplies, which the student is required to purchase at his or her own expense.

Maximum rates of payment are established for training at less than half-time but more than quarter-time, and for quarter-time or less. The student receives reimbursement of the actual charges for tuition and fees or the established maximum, whichever is less. (**Note:** Chapter 32 and Section 903 students have separate training time rates established based on their contribution records and are paid at those rates rather than reimbursement of tuition and fees. Chapter 32 trainees pursuing high school courses do receive lump-sum payments.)

If a lump-sum payment cannot be made at the beginning of the term, as when the enrollment period exceeds five months, the student will receive a monthly payment which is arrived at by prorating established charges over each enrollment period, or the maximum monthly rate, whichever is less.

Veterans and servicepersons training under Chapter 30 are issued lump-sum payments for less than one-half time training (unless the tuition & fees exceed the monthly rate payable - then monthly checks are issued at the monthly rate based upon training time). Persons training one-half time or more receive monthly checks based upon the prorated monthly rate of payment and training time pursued.

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Additional Allowance for Dependents (Chapter 30 and 31)

The monthly amount of a veteran's educational assistance payment is based in part on the number of his or her established dependents, when he or she is training at a half-time rate or more. Certain veterans training under Chapter 30 are paid one-half of the Chapter 34 monthly rate applicable to their training time and number of dependents over and above their Chapter 30 monthly rate. A veteran may claim allowances for his or her spouse, natural children, adopted children, stepchildren, and dependent parents. If a husband and wife are both eligible veterans, each may claim the other as a dependent in addition to each claiming their children as dependents. Form 21-686c, Declaration of Status of Dependents, is used to claim dependents. Veterans must submit documentary proof to establish the relationship of the individuals they claim as their dependents, **and in the case of dependent parents, Form 509.**

If a child is permanently handicapped because of accident or injury and as a result is incapable of self-support prior to reaching the age of 18, a veteran may receive benefits for that child beyond the child's 18th birthday. The veteran must submit medical evidence to the VA regional office of his or her child's condition, in order to establish the child as a dependent after age 18. Questions concerning this benefit should be referred to the VA regional office. If a veteran contributes to the support of his or her parent(s) because the parent(s) has insufficient resources to meet living expenses, the veteran may be entitled to an additional dependency allowance. He or she should contact the VA regional office for forms and information.

Under certain conditions veterans will be requested to confirm their dependency status. A veteran who has received increased educational assistance benefits for his or her dependents will be required to confirm his or her current dependency status before increased benefits are authorized for a new period of enrollment if there has been more than one year since the veteran's reentrance into training and VA has not received a statement of the veteran's dependency status during a one-year period preceding receipt of the claim for resumption of benefit payments. A veteran's statement certifying his or her current marital status and providing the first names of his or her dependents is sufficient evidence to confirm the continuing dependency of those persons previously established as the veteran's dependents and supported by acceptable documentary proof of relationship. Form 22-1995, Request for Change of Program or Place of Training, (Chapter 34), requests this information from veterans who are changing programs or places of training at the time they apply for benefit payments. Form 21-686c, Declaration of Status of Dependents, may also be used.

Overpayment of Educational Assistance

Benefit payments will be authorized to a student based on the information provided by certifying officials in the initial Enrollment Certification for a scheduled period of attendance. Changes in the student's enrollment that occur after the Enrollment Certification is submitted may increase or decrease his or her entitlement to monetary benefits.

If a student makes certain enrollment changes such as failing to commence attendance after receiving an Advance Payment, withdrawing from one or more courses, completing a course and receiving a grade that is not considered when determining progress toward fulfillment of graduation requirements (i.e., a nonpunitive grade), etc., he or she may receive one or more benefit checks in amounts that exceed his or her actual entitlement. When this occurs, the VA will make a retroactive adjustment to the student's award and the student will be charged with a debt to the U.S. Government. Legitimate debts that are the result of benefit overpayment should be paid in full by the student within 30 days after the VA sends notification of the debt to the student. If the debt is not repaid promptly, the debtor will be charged interest and administrative collection costs on the outstanding indebtedness.

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If the cause of an overpayment was an improperly completed Enrollment Certification or a late report of a change in a student's enrollment, the institution may be charged by VA with liability for the occurrence of the overpayment.

Certifying officials should be aware of debt prevention measures and their responsibilities for informing students about the consequences of not keeping both the school and VA informed of changes in their status. (See Section 4.09 on Debt Prevention)

Whenever an overpayment results in a student's account, VA may take the following actions:

- ◆ Add interest charges and collection fees to the debt
- ◆ Withhold future benefits and apply them to the debt
- ◆ Turn the debt over to a private collection agency
- ◆ File suit in federal court to collect the debt
- ◆ Withhold approval of the veteran's VA home loan guarantee
- ◆ Collect the debt from the student's federal income tax refund

Some student actions that may result in an overpayment of VA benefits:

- ◆ Withdrawing from a course. The student will have to establish that he or she withdrew for a reason that was unexpected and beyond his or her control. Otherwise, a retroactive overpayment may result.
- ◆ Receiving a grade which does not count toward the graduation requirements. The student will have to establish that he or she received the grade due to unexpected circumstances beyond his or her control. Otherwise, a retroactive overpayment may result.
- ◆ Failure to have an Incomplete grade changed to a grade which counts toward graduation requirements.

COMPLETION OF THE ENROLLMENT CERTIFICATION

The certifying official will generally be certifying the student's entry into training by completing an **Enrollment Certification, VA Form 22-1999**. Certifying officials should note all of the certifications listed on the reverse side of the form. Entitlement to benefits administered by VA cannot be established nor award action taken until the Enrollment Certification is properly completed by the school's or training facility's certifying official and received by VA. In limited instances involving VAI (Veterans Assistance Inquiries) or special hardship cases, a verbal certification by the certifying official may be accepted. Written confirmation, however, should follow. If an Advance Payment is delivered to the student, a Form 22-1999v, Certification of Delivery of Advance Payment and Enrollment, must also be submitted within 30 days after the student begins training. It is recommended that the certifying official make a copy of any Form 22-1999v completed as evidence of having submitted that certification.

All enrollment certifications must be sent to VA within 30 days of the start of the term or end of the drop/add period. Exceptions may be given for specific programs or circumstances, but such permission must be received in writing from your ELR.

Supplies of Form 22-1999 are distributed to all institutional certifying officials by the VA regional office. Before the beginning of the fall and spring enrollment periods, institutions of higher learning are sent computer-generated enrollment forms, Form 22-1999-1, for each VA student under Chapter 35 who was enrolled for the previous period, has not completed his or her program, has not exhausted his or her entitlement, and is still within his or her period of eligibility for educational assistance benefits. It may be that no form will be produced for a student who withdraws before the end of the previously certified period of enrollment, and no form will be produced for the spring enrollment period if that period was certified together with the fall enrollment.

Forms 22-1999-1 are produced as a carbon set the same as Forms 22-1999. They should be used when the student under Chapter 35 reenrolls for the term, quarter, or semester specified on the form. Any change in the student's address may be shown on the form. To the extent possible, these certifications should be accumulated and submitted at the same time. This will help to save administrative costs for the institution and will facilitate the preparation of awards at the VA regional office. If for some reason the Form 22-1999-1 is not received for a Chapter 35 student, or cannot be used, Form 22-1999 should be used instead to certify reenrollment. Instructions for completion of the forms are included with the distribution of the forms.

The certifying official should not submit both Form 22-1999 and Form 22-1999-1 for the same student for the same enrollment period. Changes to data previously certified on Form 22-1999-1 should be submitted on Form 22-1999b or on Form 22-1999v for advance payment cases.

This is a new, Web-based electronic certification program which is replacing VACERT, our previous electronic certification system. Unlike VACERT, eCert does not require you to download a program into your PC. Through the Web you can directly access our eCert data base to certify the enrollment and changes in enrollment of your VA students. All it requires is that you have Web access, execute a Memorandum of Understanding, and log on with your unique, assigned password. More details will be available soon after publication of this Handbook.

Item 3. File Numbers

With few exceptions (such as for those eligible for Vocational Rehabilitation - Chapter 31 and Chapter 35 dependents), a student's Social Security number is assigned as the VA file number. When an eligible student is enrolling for the first time at an educational institution, every effort should be made to obtain the proper VA file number. The number may be copied from a VA document, if the student has one in his or her possession. ***Do not assume the VA file number is the Social Security number.*** The file number is listed on the individual's benefit check, the 22-1999v letter, award letters, and may also be found by checking the computer-generated pay listing supplied to IHL's. ***If the student's file number is not known, do not place the Social Security number in the block on the form reserved for the file number.***

VA receives many documents with incorrect file numbers each year. This causes delays in processing claims. It is better to provide as much identifying information as possible on the veteran, such as date of birth, active duty dates, branch of service, service serial number, and Social Security number than to show an incorrect file number when reports or forms are sent to the VA regional office.

VA assigns a prefix of "C" or "CSS" to a veteran's, serviceperson's, or reservist's VA file number. After a veteran is deceased, the prefix is changed to "XC" or "XSS." A dependent of a veteran (under Chapter 35) is assigned the veteran's file number with a suffix added. The spouse or surviving spouse of the veteran will have a suffix of "W" added to the veteran's file number (e.g., CSS 123-45-6789-W). A child of the veteran, however, will have an alpha suffix added beginning with "A" for the veteran's first child to apply for Chapter 35, "B" for the second, etc. (e.g., CSS 123-45-6789-A). If the file number is not known for a dependent, identifying information for the ***veteran*** should be included with the documents submitted to the VA regional office (e.g., the veteran's name, Social Security number, dates of service, branch of service, etc.). This additional information will assist VA in processing the dependent's claim.

Item 4. Addresses

It is vital that the student's proper address be shown on an Enrollment Certification. The address shown on this certification will be considered as the student's most current address, and checks will be mailed to this address. If the student is using an institution's address to receive checks, the institution's name and address should be shown in Block 4A of the Form 22-1999.

The law ***prohibits assignment of educational assistance checks.*** VA will not mail checks to an institution's address unless the institution has certified that it has no Power of Attorney to negotiate VA checks or otherwise has no direct or indirect access to the proceeds of such checks except by direct payment from the eligible person.

When a student wishes to have his or her checks mailed to an institution, the student's home address should be entered in Block 22, "Remarks" of the Form 22-1999. This is necessary in the event VA needs to contact the student directly. If other than an Enrollment Certification is submitted to VA and there is

a change in the student's home address, a separate Form 572 should be attached for the change of address.

Item 8. Name of Program

The complete name of the program for which a student is currently enrolled must be shown on all Enrollment Certifications - **avoid using acronyms or abbreviations**. Benefits will not be authorized without this information. Not all programs of education are payable under the various programs administered by VA. Therefore, it is essential that the certifying official be aware of the VA program under which the student may qualify.

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If the student is pursuing either a graduate or undergraduate program, the name of the degree or certificate program must be shown. If the student has selected a major field of study, that field must also be shown, e.g., bachelor's degree in engineering. (Generally, a student will select a major field of study by the time half of the program is completed.) If either the school or the student indicates that the major field has not been selected, the name of the general degree program will normally be sufficient for the first two school years. However, in subsequent school years, the major field should be shown.

Institutions may encounter difficulty in certifying "special students" before they are reclassified as "regular students." The certifying official should enter the specific degree program for which a nonmatriculated student is in the process of completing formal admission requirements. For newly enrolled undergraduate students, entry of "Associate's Degree" or "Bachelor's Degree" is acceptable. The Enrollment Certification, however, should not exceed two full-time terms, quarters, or semesters. The certifying official should check one block under the "Type of Training" (item 7) item on any Enrollment Certification submitted.

If the student changes his or her program, the certifying official must notify VA promptly of the change. This may be done by submitting an Enrollment Certification that specifies the student's new program and shows the credit which has been allowed by the institution toward the student's new objective for prior training, not only for credit for training at the present institution but also elsewhere. Based on the certifying official's report of credit allowed for prior training and on other information contained in the student's VA records, the VA regional office will make a determination regarding whether a material loss of credit or extension of training time has occurred requiring that the student be charged by VA with a change of program.

Note: A student must file Form 22-1995 or Form 22-5495 (Chapter 35) to apply for a change of program.

Item 9. Credit Allowed for Previous Training or Experience

An Enrollment Certification submitted for a veteran, reservist, serviceperson, or eligible person initially enrolling in a school or training facility, or initiating pursuit of a program of education or training different from that previously pursued, must reflect the amount of credit allowed for previous education, training, or experience, including military training and experience. "Credit for prior training" is that which applies to the program of education currently being pursued and which shortens the program accordingly.

The amount of credit allowed, if any, should be shown in terms of the basic components of the current course or curriculum. For example, if the course is approved for operation on a semester-hour basis, credit for prior training should be shown in terms of semester hours; if operation is on other than a credit-hour basis, credit allowed should be certified in clock hours, lessons, or other appropriate divisions reflecting the amount by which course length is reduced.

If an official evaluation of transcripts has not been completed at the time the first enrollment certification is submitted for an undergraduate student, the notation "Pending" should be shown in item 9, Credit for Previous Civilian or Military Training and Experience, on the Enrollment Certification. In such cases, the enrollment period certified in item 10, Enrollment Effective Dates, should not exceed two terms, quarters, or semesters. The Enrollment Certification for any subsequent term(s) must include a report of credit allowed for previous training and experience. Although enrollment certifications may be sent and VA education benefits paid without prior credit information after two terms, there may be some cases where benefits payments may be suspended. Such cases include those where we have evidence that the claimant has an extensive amount of prior education and training and there is a very real danger of paying VA education benefits for courses that have previously been satisfactorily completed.

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Enrollment certifications for students enrolled in "open-ended" and "transfer" programs must indicate that fact and provide the specific title of the SAA-approved program. Certifying officials at institutions offering these programs should inform veterans and other eligible persons of the certification which must be obtained from the institution which will award the students' degrees before VA benefits can be authorized for the student's enrollment. If possible, the required certification from the degree-granting institution should be obtained before submission of an Enrollment Certification so that it can be attached to Form 22-1999 when it is submitted to VA. This procedure will greatly expedite a determination regarding the student's eligibility for monetary benefits.

Item 10. Enrollment Periods to Be Certified

A school operating on a standard semester- or quarter-hour basis may certify semesters or quarters including a summer term, not to exceed one academic/school year on any one Enrollment Certification form, with some exceptions such as for servicepersons and for those training at less than half-time. If a school offers training on a nonstandard term basis, or if there are nonstandard formats or terms within standard terms, the beginning and ending dates of each term must be shown separately from the standard semester or quarter. For programs which may be operated on a year-round basis, as opposed to a term, quarter, or semester basis, the school may certify the student for the entire length of the program.

Some other exceptions to the above are Enrollment Certifications for other than an Advance Payment which should not include any future term that is preceded by a full calendar month break. A Fall term preceded by less than a full calendar month break may not be included on any Enrollment Certification unless the student is registered or preregistered for fall and the student's summer term has actually begun. The school must include the beginning and ending dates, credit hours, and total charges for each separate term. Separate certification of each term is necessary for VA to properly compute the training time for each term. **Since servicepersons and veterans training less than half-time are not entitled to interval payment, only confirmed enrollments for these students may be accepted and they may be certified for only one term at a time on each enrollment certification.** An exception is made for requests for Advance Payment from servicepersons which may be submitted before the beginning of the term.

The exact beginning and ending dates (month, day, year) of the enrollment period(s) certified must be shown for each relevant category of instruction, e.g., "Residence Instruction."

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If a student is pursuing an IHL or NCD course (other than flight or correspondence), the school should report the date classes begin or, (if not more than 14 days prior to the beginning of classes) the date all students were required to report in advance of the start of classes as well as the ending date of the period.

With all NCD programs which do not operate on a term basis, the school should enter the exact date on which the student first attends and the exact date on which he or she will last attend; i.e., the first day of actual classroom attendance and the last day of actual classroom attendance are to be reported. The certification should also show the dates of any interval which is officially designated as a break between school years, since payment for such intervals is generally precluded.

If the student is pursuing a cooperative program, the school should indicate the various cycles of training as "classroom" or "on-the-job."

Fall Enrollment

For non-chapter 30 students, fall enrollments **must be confirmed** if there is a break between summer and fall terms for which payment cannot be made (see section on interval pay rules), **unless** an advance payment is requested. If a student has less than a full calendar month break between the summer and fall terms, the certifying official may certify the student's fall enrollment after the beginning of the student's summer term, but only after the student is actually registered or preregistered for the fall term. This same procedure should be followed for the "first" term whenever a school's academic year does not begin in the fall. If a student has a full calendar month break between summer sessions, the fall enrollment certification may be submitted no earlier than the beginning of the summer session which follows the full calendar break.

Item 11. Credit Hour Courses

If remedial course hours are certified, the school must list each such course(s) by course name and catalog number in the remarks section of the certification document. If supplemental courses are designated as deficiency, a statement to that effect in the remarks section will suffice.

A distinct entry should be made for each separate period/cycle certified. If a student is certified for two semesters during which time he or she will earn nine credits per term, the school should enter "9" and not the total credits for both terms. Future changes to credit-hour loads, if known, must also be shown.

Students may choose to be paid for fewer hours than actually enrolled, in order to conserve entitlement. **In such instances, the student must specify which individual unit subjects he/she wishes to have certified for VA education benefits.** Only changes in those specified credit hours need to be reported to VA.

Item 12. Clock Hour Courses

For programs not leading to a standard college degree which VA does not measure on a credit hour basis, the specific days of required attendance each week and the clock hours of enrollment **per week** must be shown on the Form 22-1999.

Item 13. Charges for Period of Instruction

For study under most programs administered by VA, the tuition and fees must be entered separately for each term for all servicepersons, and all other persons attending school on less than a half-time basis. (For Chapters 32 & 1606, tuition and fees are not necessary.) In reporting tuition and fees, the cost of books, supplies, and other incidentals are not to be included.

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Item 14. Training Time for Graduate or Advanced Professional Courses

An entry is required in Item 14 of the Enrollment Certification **only for veterans or eligible persons pursuing a graduate degree or postdoctoral certificate program**. For such students attending accredited institutions, the rate of educational assistance will be based on the certifying official's statement of training time according to established policies of the institution. The institution must be able to verify that the graduate or professional student is in continuous pursuit of his or her objective during the period for which he or she has been certified. The training time for an individual in a graduate program and concurrently enrolled in an undergraduate course will be based upon the total number of credit hours or the training time certified by the IHL, whichever is greater. This provision does not apply to individuals in graduate programs who are only enrolled in undergraduate courses. Institutions, such as nonaccredited law schools, must report both the clock hours and credit hours pursued. **Under no circumstances should schools enter training time for undergraduate or vocational certificate students.** VA determines training time in all such cases.

Item 15. Additional Information for NCD and Farm Cooperative

If the veteran or eligible person is pursuing a high school course and the school measures training in Carnegie units, i.e., not less than 120 60-minute hours or their equivalent of study in any high school subject in 1 academic year, the number of units must be entered in Block 15 A.

If the student is pursuing a farm cooperative program, a check should be placed in the appropriate block to indicate that the student is pursuing this program concurrently with agricultural employment. The school must also certify that the student is engaged in substantially full-time agricultural employment averaging 40 hours per week.

Item 16. Advance Payment Request

If an Advance Payment is requested, the student must have signed and dated the "Advance Payment Request." The certifying official may also accept a separate request signed and dated by the student and attached to the Enrollment Certification. Where a school is using **VACERT**, you can place the following statement in Remarks: "**Student requests advance pay. Signature on file.**" You can then place the student's signed request in his/her school VA file to be available for review during compliance surveys.

Supplemental Enrollment

Supplemental enrollment exists whenever a student's approved program of education involves training at more than one school. In such cases, the institution which will confer or grant the current degree sought will be the principal or primary institution. The other institution will be the supplemental institution.

Generally, the student will be enrolled at the principal or primary institution for the majority of the program. Supplemental enrollments are categorized in one of the following three ways:

(1) Concurrent Enrollment:

A student is enrolled in more than one school at the same time (the dates of course pursuit at each school may overlap) and the primary institution certifies that supplemental school pursuit will be accepted at full credit toward the student's course objective.

(2) Contracted Out In Whole Or In Part:

Instruction for a portion of the current course authorized is contracted to another school or entity for performance. The actual training need not be performed at the supplemental school site to fall within this category. It is sufficient that the supplemental school personnel actually do the instructing, even if performed at the primary school. NOTE: The contract school must also be approved by the appropriate state approving agency.

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(3) Combination Residence - Independent Study:

The primary school is providing residence instruction and the supplemental school, independent study, or vice versa.

If supplemental enrollment is involved, the primary school must furnish the following additional information in "Remarks": (1) The name and address of the supplemental school or entity; (2) training site location (if different from the supplemental school address); and (3) a listing of all supplemental courses identified by course title and course number. Certification responsibility depends on the form of supplemental enrollment.

When *contracted* training is involved, the primary school is the certifying school. As such, it is responsible for certifying not only the required information in "Enrollment Data" for the instruction it provides, but also certification for the supplemental instruction furnished at the school which is under contract.

Whenever a supplemental enrollment is to be certified, Item 17 of the Enrollment Certification is to be completed. This block should show the name and address of the supplemental or contract school. This block is also used whenever a course is taken at a branch location of a school's main campus. It is not used, however, to identify courses taken at an "additional facility" of a school which is in the same general locality and is being utilized because of space limitations on the main campus. These types of additional facilities are not considered to be subsidiary branches or extensions for VA purposes.

In other supplemental enrollment situations (i.e., noncontracted out), the primary school and the supplemental school must submit separate Enrollment Certifications. The primary school must also certify that it will give full credit for the specific subjects taken at the supplemental school and that the subjects taken apply to the student's degree. This certification may be included in the remarks section of the primary school's certification document or may be submitted as a separate document with the supplemental school's certification form. The primary school should certify the enrollment data applicable to supplemental school instruction in cases of study in a foreign country when the U.S. school assumes certification responsibility, e.g., "Junior Year Abroad" program.

If the supplemental school is preparing the enrollment document and is aware of its supplemental status, it should note its status in "Remarks." It would be helpful if the supplemental enrollment were forwarded to the primary school to be included as an "enrollment package" submitted to VA along with the primary school's enrollment certification. However, if this is not feasible, the certifying official at the supplemental school should forward the supplemental enrollment certification directly to VA.

Item 18. Certification of Enrollment Data by Certifying Official

The date the school or training establishment completes and signs the Enrollment Certification must be shown. This date, when compared to the effective date of the enrollment period, helps VA determine how the Enrollment Certification will be processed.

Advance Payment Request

If an Advance Payment is being requested by the student, the Certifying Official may sign the Enrollment Certification at least 30 days, but not more than 120 days prior to the beginning date of the term.

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Confirmed Enrollments (IHL Only)

An enrollment certification is considered "confirmed" if it is signed and dated by the certifying official on or after the beginning of the enrollment period. A confirmed enrollment is not required if **all** of the following conditions are met:

- ◆ There is less than a full calendar month break between terms of standard length or there is a break no greater than 30 days between terms of nonstandard length;
- ◆ The Enrollment Certification is not for the student's initial term;
- ◆ The training time is one-half time or greater, and;
- ◆ The student is pre-registered for that term (see below).

If an Enrollment Certification is submitted that is not "confirmed," VA will have to contact the school to verify the information. **For Chapter 30 cases, if an enrollment certification is signed and dated within 120 days of the beginning date of the term, the student's pursuit is at least one-half time or greater, and the student is not on active duty, confirmation of enrollment is *not* required.**

Preregistered Enrollments

Although the term "preregistered" generally means that the student has already registered for all classes in a particular term, it can also mean that the student has given a written indication of intent to register.

Signature and Title of Certifying Official

The designated official must sign the form and enter his or her title. Facsimile signatures may be accepted only when the school furnishes the VA with a **completed VA Form 22-8794, Designation of Certifying Official(s)**, certifying that such signatures are genuine, that they are supplied on reports with the full knowledge and consent of such official, and that VA is authorized to accept all reports as authentic which bear the signature(s) so certified. The signature(s) so authorized must be illustrated in the certification.

Name and Address of School or Training Establishment

The complete name and mailing address of the school should be entered, to include specifically the name of the state and the school's Zip Code. In addition, it would be helpful if the school were to indicate in the school's address block the VA Facility Code assigned to it and the telephone number of the school's certifying official. Schools with multiple branches must specify the branch location.

Certifications

When the certifying official signs and dates Form 22-1999, Enrollment Certification, items **(1)** through **(15)** on the reverse of the form are also being certified as having been met. Generally, the certifying

official certifies that the school meets all applicable requirements of the law, and that any failure by the school to meet any of these will be promptly reported to VA. In addition, the certifying official indicates by his or her signature that the courses being certified to VA for the student are approved by the state approving agency and are acceptable toward meeting the graduation requirements in the program of study being pursued. The certifying official's signature also confirms that the course certified is not a repetition of any course previously satisfactorily completed by the student except as permitted by VA regulations.

The certifying official also is indicating that the school does not hold a power of attorney agreement authorizing the school to negotiate VA educational assistance checks. The signed Enrollment Certification also shows the educational institution's agreement to report promptly to VA any enrollment changes which will affect the educational assistance allowance, including any change due to unsatisfactory progress and/or conduct.

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By signing the Enrollment Certification in Advance Payment cases, the school is agreeing that it will accept the initial check for this enrollment period when mailed to the school for delivery to the student upon registration but no earlier than 30 days before the commencement of training. The school also acknowledges that it must normally complete a certificate of delivery upon delivery of the advance payment.

Whenever noncredit deficiency, remedial, or refresher courses are certified, the signature of the certifying official verifies that the course(s) is needed by the student in order to pursue a program of education at the school.

For programs of vocational education, the signed Enrollment Certification verifies that the instruction provided will prepare a graduate for entry level employment in the designated occupational category.

For enrollments under Chapters 30, 32, and 1606, the certifying official is also certifying that all of the 85:15% ratio requirements have been satisfied.

For privately owned profit schools, the student certified may not be an owner or officer of the school nor may he or she be an official authorized to sign certificates of enrollment or monthly certificates of attendance.

85:15% Percent Ratio

The law (38 U.S.C. 1673(d)) provides that no new enrollment or reenrollment in any program may be approved for an otherwise eligible veteran, not already enrolled, during any period when more than 85 percent of the persons enrolled in the program are having all or part of their tuition, fees or other charges paid to or for them by the educational institution or the VA. Grants from other Federal agencies (e.g., Pell Grants, SEOG) are not counted when computing the 85:15 percent ratio.

The percentage of VA and institutionally supported students must be computed for each program leading to a separately approved educational or vocational objective. Farm cooperative programs are excluded from this computation. The results of the computation must be submitted to the VA regional office no later than 30 days after the beginning of each regular term (excluding summer sessions) or 30 days after the end of each calendar quarter for programs not operated on a term basis.

When a computation establishes that the 85:15 percent ratio has not been satisfied, no benefits will be paid to a veteran or serviceperson whose enrollment begins on or after the date of the computation. Once a veteran or serviceperson is properly enrolled in a program, benefits will not be terminated solely

because the 85:15 percent requirement is not met, provided that he or she remains continuously enrolled. Continuity of enrollment is not broken by failure to attend summer sessions.

If an institution can certify that 35 percent or less of its total student population receives VA educational assistance, the 85:15 percent computation may be waived by the VA Regional Office Director.

Conflicting Interests

The law prohibits employees of the VA and the state approving agency from owning any interest in an educational institution operated for profit. In addition, the law prohibits these employees from receiving any wages, salary, dividends, gifts or services from private profit schools. These provisions may be waived if the VA determines that no detriment will result to the government or to veterans, servicepersons, reservists, and eligible persons enrolled.

The law prohibits the approval of the enrollment of any veteran, serviceperson, reservist, or eligible person in any proprietary (private) school of which the veteran, serviceperson, reservist, or eligible person is an official authorized to sign certificates of enrollment or monthly certificates of attendance or is an owner or officer.

CHANGES IN ENROLLMENT STATUS

Timely Reporting of Changes in Enrollment

After a student's enrollment has been properly certified to the VA regional office of jurisdiction, the certifying official has the responsibility for timely submission of additional reports when the student modifies his or her enrollment by changing the credit (or clock) hours of enrollment, changes to another program objective, terminates training prior to the end of the certified period, etc. These changes made by the student, or actions by the institution to terminate the student's enrollment (e.g., academic suspension or dismissal), should be reported promptly by the certifying official to the VA regional office on **VA Form 22-1999b**. **Changes in enrollment which do not result in a change in training time do not have to be reported to VA. For example, a student reduces from 15 to 12 semester hours and remains full time and this change does not need to be reported to VA.**

VA CONSIDERS A NOTICE OF CHANGE IN STUDENT STATUS TIMELY FILED IF IT IS RECEIVED BY THE REGIONAL OFFICE NO LATER THAN 30 DAYS AFTER THE CHANGE OCCURS. THERE ARE NO EXCEPTIONS TO THIS TIMELINESS REQUIREMENT.

Certifying officials should keep in mind that they may telephone notices of reductions and terminations to the VA regional office. The time saved, particularly during the last half of the month, improves the likelihood that award actions can be taken in time to prevent or minimize overpayments. Implementing procedures to telephone notices of reductions and terminations permits VA to take award actions sooner than if the notifications are mailed. If notices of change in student status are telephoned to VA, the completed Form 22-1999b should still be mailed or electronically transmitted to VA as verification.

Terminations and Reductions of Training Time

The certifying official is responsible for reporting changes in the hours of enrollment and the interruption of enrollment by any student certified to VA. If a student certified as half-time or more for consecutive terms fails to enroll for a succeeding term within the period previously certified, the termination date for benefits will be the last day of class attendance in the previous term.

If a student has been certified for half-time or greater training and reduces his or her training to less than half-time, the certifying official must show on Form 22-1999b the amount paid for tuition and fees for the student's remaining course(s) during the term in which the adjustment occurs. The beginning and ending dates of the term must be reported. In such cases, a new award will be authorized by VA and a new award letter will be issued to show the amount of the monthly payment, the period of enrollment, the corrected amount of remaining entitlement and the amount of overpayment, if any. The student's benefits will be interrupted at the end of the term in which the adjustment to less than half-time occurs.

Note: For students pursuing **non-college degree** programs, the certifying official should also report the last date through which credit was accrued **as well as tuition and fees where the student's training is less than half time.**

Date of Last Attendance

VA will accept as satisfactory the last date of pursuit reported by an accredited institution which has filed a statement of the institution's policy on determination of academic progress toward graduation, and a

statement that the institution has informed students they are required to report to the institution immediately upon withdrawal or dropping from courses. These steps enable institutions to establish the official withdrawal or drop date required to be reported to VA and provide a good faith basis for establishing a definite date of last attendance. This will not relieve an institution of its responsibility to report the changes promptly, if a student fails to withdraw officially and continues to receive benefits following termination of pursuit.

The certifying official may determine the last date of pursuit in a number of ways. For institutions that do not take attendance or for programs of education leading to a standard college degree, the certifying official may use any of the following methods of determining the last date of pursuit:

- ◆ The last activity date reflected in the instructor's record;
- ◆ The last date papers were submitted;
- ◆ The last date an examination was completed;
- ◆ The date shown on the student's "drop form"; or
- ◆ The student's reasonable statement of last date of attendance.

VA personnel will be checking whatever institution records are available to determine last date of pursuit at the time a VA compliance survey is conducted.

Institutional Liability

The reporting of changes in enrollment is a twofold responsibility involving the student and the institution. At the time the certifying official certifies a student's enrollment to VA, the student should be informed how to report any changes in his or her enrollment. Although the student is responsible for reporting changes in his or her enrollment to the certifying official and to VA, the institution's certifying official is responsible for making timely reports of changes in enrollment even if the student fails to inform the certifying official of a change.

The certifying official is responsible for submitting information regarding (1) changes in hours of credit or enrollment, (2) unsatisfactory progress or conduct, and/or (3) interruption and termination of attendance of each veteran, serviceperson, reservist, or eligible person. These events must be reported (and received by VA) no later than 30 days after the occurrence.

If the institution specifies a *limited* drop period (see definition in Glossary) at the beginning of a term, the 30-day reporting period may be figured from the last day of the drop period. If an institution uses different dates for dropping courses, the later date is used to begin the 30-day reporting period. However, if an institution provides a drop period longer than 30 days, the allowable reporting period may not exceed a maximum of 60 days after the beginning of the term for changes that occur during the first 30 days of the term.

Institutions may not be held liable for an overpayment of VA benefits to a student except in the case of willful or negligent failure to report changes, or false certification of enrollment or date of withdrawal. VA acknowledges that occasional clerical errors do not constitute a false certification. In any event, the amount of overpayments which might be collected from an institution after finding of school liability is reimbursed to the institution if the overpayments are later collected from other sources.

Such reimbursement will be made annually when recalculation of an institution's liability reveals that the combined collections from the institution and from students exceed the total amount of the institution's liability.

Institutional liability will not be assessed in instances of overpayments due to issuance of an Advance Payment at the beginning of an enrollment period when a valid Enrollment Certification was submitted and the student had been properly enrolled.

Repeat Courses

The payment of VA educational assistance allowance may not be made for any course that is not computed in the graduation requirements of the school, unless there are mitigating circumstances. Whenever a punitive grade is either removed from a student's transcript or is no longer computed in his or her grade point average, that grade is considered a nonpunitive grade. At some schools, failing or other punitive grades are either removed from the student's transcript completely or the initial punitive grade is no longer considered in the student's grade point average, if the course is repeated successfully at a later date. In such cases, the punitive grade is no longer considered in computing the student's graduation requirements and has been converted to a nonpunitive grade.

In those instances where it is the established published policy of an educational institution to replace a prior punitive grade with a creditable passing grade following successful repetition of a course, if otherwise in order, that fact alone shall constitute acceptable mitigating circumstances, and no overpayment shall be created based upon the assignment of the nonpunitive grade. This applies only to courses required for graduation which a student failed and to required courses which a student may have passed but did not achieve a minimum acceptable grade (e.g., in some programs students must earn a grade of "C" or better in all courses in their major.)

Payment of educational assistance may be authorized, if repetition of the course is specifically required by the institution for attainment of the student's approved program objective, and if overall satisfactory progress standards are met. There is no limit on the number of times an eligible person may repeat a course for which a failing grade (or a grade which does not meet the minimum requirements for graduation) was received as long as the grade assigned to the repeated course at the end of the term is punitive. However, the school must report the student's unsatisfactory progress at such time as he or she no longer meets the school's standards of progress. There is no distinction between the criteria of repeating courses for noncollege degree (NCD) and degree (IHL) courses.

Electives are considered to be courses which are required for graduation as long as they do not exceed the minimum number of credit hours required for graduation. Electives for which a failing grade (or a grade unacceptable for graduation) has been assigned may be repeated until a passing or acceptable grade is received, as long as each grade is punitive when it is originally assigned. For example, a student may fail an elective course during his or her freshman year and elect to repeat that course at a later date. If at the time the student repeats the elective course the student has not met the required elective requirement for his or her degree program, VA benefits may be paid for the repeat of the course.

If the student does not need additional electives to meet his or her degree requirements, but elects to repeat an elective, no benefits may be authorized unless the repetition takes place during his or her final term and is merely taken to round out the program to full-time.

Schools need not report grade replacements for repeated courses to VA. However, in accordance with 38 C.F.R. 21.4209(f), a record of eligible students' pursuit of all courses **must be maintained by the institution for at least 3 years, even if the grade assigned for an unsuccessful pursuit of a course has been deleted from the official transcript.** Schools with this type of replacement policy should maintain such additional records.

In those instances where a student repeats a course required for graduation and a failing or unacceptable grade is assigned which does not affect the student's grade point average, then this repeat should be reported to VA as nonpunitive in the same manner as any other course for which a nonpunitive grade is assigned. Overpayments are created in such situations, unless acceptable mitigating circumstances are submitted.

Repeating courses for which an unacceptable grade has been assigned should not be confused with taking additional courses to remove a deficiency in the grade point average which is preventing the student from graduating. When additional subjects beyond those generally required for a degree are needed in order to overcome a grade point deficiency, the additional subjects may be approved, but a statement is required from the school certifying official that: (a) the courses are being taken for the purpose of removing the grade point deficiency, and (b) no course previously taken for which credit has been granted is being repeated, unless repetition of that particular course is required for continuation in the approved program, and (c) the student's progress is satisfactory under the school's standards.

Nonpunitive Grades/Mitigating Circumstances

A "nonpunitive grade" is defined for VA purposes as any grade assigned for a course which has the effect of excluding the course from any consideration in determining progress toward fulfillment of requirements for graduation. Characteristically, nonpunitive grades have no quality point value and, accordingly, they neither yield credit toward graduation nor affect the student's cumulative grade point average.

The law prohibits payment of VA benefits for a course from which the student withdraws, or for a course that the student completes, but receives a grade for the course which will not be used in computing requirements for graduation. Payments may be allowed, however, if the student submits evidence of acceptable mitigating circumstances to explain why the course could not be completed and/or a creditable grade assigned. This means that if a student drops a course, unless he or she can show VA that there are mitigating circumstances, he or she must return all the money paid to him or her for pursuit of that course from the start of the term, not merely from the date he or she dropped the course.

For withdrawals on or after June 1, 1989, mitigating circumstances will be considered to exist without explanation by the student in the **first** instance of **withdrawal** from a course or courses totaling not more than 6 semester hours or the equivalent. This does not mean, however, that the school does not have to report the withdrawal. It means that in the first instance of withdrawal, mitigating circumstances automatically are presumed to exist, up to a total of 6 semester hours.

The certifying official must report the assignment of nonpunitive grades to VA within 30 days from the date the grades are assigned. However, the allowable reporting period may not exceed 60 days from the end of the enrollment period, if grades are not assigned by the end of 30 days after the end of the period.

Mitigating circumstances are **unanticipated AND unavoidable** events or situations beyond a student's control that prevent him or her from completing a course with a creditable grade. Generally, the student will be required to submit corroborative evidence to substantiate his or her claim of mitigating circumstances. For example, if the student claims that a personal illness or injury seriously interfered with his or her enrollment, a physician's statement would be appropriate evidence; if the student was required to withdraw from a course because of an unanticipated and unavoidable change in his or her hours of employment, then the employer's verification of the required change of work schedule should be submitted. A student may use Form 21-4138, Statement in Support of Claim, to submit his or her statement(s).

Examples of acceptable mitigating circumstances include, but are not limited to:

- ◆ A serious injury or illness afflicting the student during the enrollment period;
- ◆ A serious illness or death in the student's immediate family;
- ◆ Unforeseen family or financial obligations requiring a change in the terms, hours, or place of the student's employment, and precluding further pursuit or successful completion of a course;
- ◆ Discontinuance of the course by the school;
- ◆ Unanticipated active duty military service, including active duty for training;
- ◆ An unavoidable geographical transfer resulting from the student's employment; and
- ◆ An unavoidable change in the student's conditions of employment.
- ◆ Unanticipated difficulties with the child care arrangements the student has made for the period during which he or she is attending classes.

These examples are not all inclusive and are included merely as guidelines.

Examples of unacceptable mitigating circumstances include, but are not limited to, withdrawal to avoid a failing grade, dislike of instructor, too many courses attempted, or a call to active duty which was anticipated before the term began, **such as the initial active duty for training.**

The certifying official should submit reports of withdrawal or receipt of nonpunitive grades to VA on Form 22-1999b, Notice of Change In Student Status. Whenever a student claims mitigating circumstances, and presents evidence of those circumstances, it would be most helpful to the student and VA if the certifying official would attach the student's evidence to the report submitted to VA. Where the school utilizes **VACERT**, the certifying official can **fully** explain the circumstances in Item 7 "Mitigating Circumstances" along with the annotation "Evidence on file." The specific nature of the evidence should also be detailed.

Certifying officials should urge VA students to furnish a statement of mitigating circumstances along with their notifications of reductions and terminations. If VA students do not have the necessary supporting documentation, however, the certifying official should not delay submission of the notifications to VA. Telephone procedures should be followed for such reports whenever possible, with the written notice mailed later as confirmation.

Incomplete Grades

Some institutions allow the assignment of an "I" (incomplete) grade on a provisional basis only. These institutions require a student to remove the "I" grade within a specified time (e.g., by the end of the term following the term for which the "I" grade was assigned). If the student does not replace the "I" grade within the prescribed time period, a punitive failing grade will be assigned and recorded in the student's academic record. Institutions which have and enforce such a policy, and prescribe a maximum time period for grade replacement of less than one year, are not required to report the assignment of an "I" grade as a nonpunitive grade.

Many institutions have a grading policy that permits an "I" grade to be replaced with a nonpunitive grade, or which allows a nonpunitive "I" grade to remain in a student's record indefinitely. In such cases the school must set up a control to track the grade. If it is resolved into a punitive grade within one year of the date it was originally assigned, the school need take no further action. If it is resolved into a non-punitive grade during the one-year period, it must be reported as such, with the effective date being the date the original "I" grade was assigned. In "Remarks" state that "I grade resolved to non-punitive grade."

If after one year the "I" grade has not yet been resolved one way or the other, it must then be reported as a non-punitive grade effective the date the "I" grade was assigned. If at a later date it is resolved to be a punitive grade, another report can be made to show the increase in credit hours with the notation that a non-punitive "I" grade has been resolved to be a punitive grade.

Unsatisfactory Attendance, Conduct or Progress

The law requires that educational assistance benefits to veterans and other eligible persons be discontinued when the student ceases to make satisfactory progress toward completion of his or her training objective. Benefits can be resumed if the student reenrolls in the same educational institution and in the same program. In other cases, benefits cannot be resumed unless VA finds that the cause of the unsatisfactory attendance, conduct or progress has been removed and the program of education or training to be pursued by the student is suitable to his or her aptitudes, interests, and abilities.

Both accredited and nonaccredited schools are required by law to have and to enforce standards of progress and conduct in order for their programs to be approved for VA benefits. Only nonaccredited schools are required by federal law to have attendance standards (the SAA enforces a state requirement for attendance standards at accredited NCD schools). These standards should be stated plainly in the school's catalog or bulletin. A school's policy and regulations for standards of progress, conduct and attendance must define:

- ◆ the school's grading system;
- ◆ the minimum satisfactory grade level;
- ◆ conditions for interruption of training due to unsatisfactory grades or progress;
- ◆ a description of any probationary period;
- ◆ conditions for a student's reentrance/ readmission following dismissal/suspension for unsatisfactory progress;
- ◆ conditions for dismissal due to unsatisfactory conduct; and
- ◆ the school's attendance policy.

All schools are required to maintain an academic record for each student which includes, for a veteran or eligible person, the credit allowed toward the student's current program due to previous training and experience. The record must also show the results of each enrollment period, to include the unit courses or subjects undertaken and the final result (e.g., grade, passed, failed, withdrawn, test results). The record must be cumulative and document the progress being made toward completion of the program. For those institutions that use a narrative grading system and/or unspecified academic terms, as opposed to the traditional grading system and specified terms, the academic record must contain sufficient information to permit the recipient of a transcript to make an informed evaluation of the student's educational experience. For those institutions not operating on a term basis, the record must show the student's proficiency at the various stages in the training program.

School officials are responsible for enforcing their established standards of progress. This will require that the school specify intervals between enrollment and graduation (i.e., completion) when each student's progress will be evaluated. Each such evaluation must compare the student's progress with clearly defined progress standards such as:

- ◆ For programs offered on a term basis, a minimum grade average or credit level which should bear a reasonable relationship to final attainment of graduation requirements. It is frequently appropriate that separate evaluations be made for overall grade point average and the grade point average attained in courses from the student's major field of study.
- ◆ For programs not offered on a term basis, a minimum proficiency level expected of a student if he or she is to successfully complete the program within the number of hours of training that has been approved by the SAA. Measurement of a student's proficiency should be based on instruction appraisals, graded course work, periodic testing, or other techniques that will permit an evaluation of student's progress toward satisfactory completion of the program.

When a student has failed to maintain prescribed standards of progress, VA must be informed promptly so that benefit payments can be discontinued in accordance with the law. The termination date assigned by the school will be the last day of the term or other evaluation period in which the student's progress became unsatisfactory. Institutions should use Form 22-1999b to report the student's termination. Schools that provide a period of academic probation may not continue to certify a veteran or eligible person (who remains in a probationary status) for an indefinite period of time. It is reasonable to expect that an institution will report a termination due to unsatisfactory progress if a student remains on academic probation beyond 2 terms, quarters, or semesters without an improvement in his or her academic standing.

Recertification of VA Claimant

A school's standards of progress must include specific conditions a veteran or eligible person is required to satisfy to permit recertification for VA benefits after being terminated (for benefit purposes) because of unsatisfactory progress or conduct. When a school recertifies a student's enrollment to VA after a termination due to unsatisfactory progress or conduct, it is presumed the school has established that there is a reasonable likelihood that the student will be able to maintain satisfactory progress and conduct in the future.

The school's certifying official should submit a statement with the first recertification of enrollment that describes the conditions for the student's continued certification to VA. These conditions should prescribe the minimum performance standards to be achieved by the student during the next enrollment/evaluation period.

Students should be advised of any counseling services available to them at the school in order to resolve academic or other problems and to establish a meaningful plan for successful completion of their education or training. Schools and training establishments that are unable to provide counseling services are asked to remind students of the counseling services available through VA.

A specific request for resumption of VA benefits following an interruption due to unsatisfactory progress or conduct must be submitted by the student to initiate action by VA to determine whether further payments of VA educational assistance allowance should be authorized. Requests may be submitted on Form 22-1995 or Form 22-5495.

If the same school will again certify enrollment to VA, and indicate on the Enrollment Certification that the problems relating to the unsatisfactory progress or conduct have been discussed with the student, VA will accept the school's recertification of the student's enrollment as prima facie evidence that the cause of the unsatisfactory progress has been removed. The school should monitor the claimant's progress and ensure that, if there is a recurrence of unsatisfactory progress, it will again be promptly reported to VA.

When counseling has not been requested and no or insufficient evidence is on record for VA to determine eligibility for resumption of benefits, a Form 22-8873, Supplemental Information for Change of Program or Reenrollment After Unsatisfactory Progress or Conduct, will be sent to the student. This form requests information relative to the cause for unsatisfactory progress or conduct, its removal, and the suitability of the program to be pursued.

Completing Form 22-1999b, Notice of Change in Student Status

Whenever there is any change in a student's enrollment status from what had previously been reported to VA, it is the school's responsibility to report such change promptly using Form 22-1999b. The student's benefits will be adjusted by VA in accordance with how this form is completed. Therefore, it is very important that all items as appropriate be completed accurately by the certifying official to reflect the actual enrollment changes a student may make. The data included on this form are generally in accordance with the same procedures used for completion of the Enrollment Certification, Form 22-1999.

Note: Form 22-1999b, Notice of Change in Student Status, is used to notify VA of changes to previously certified periods of enrollment. **It is not to be used as an Enrollment Certification for subsequent periods of enrollment.**

Item 4. Terminations

If a student withdraws from **ALL** courses at the institution thereby terminating his or her enrollment, Item 4 of Form 22-1999b must be completed. In Item 4A, the actual last date of attendance at the educational institution must be reported. For college level courses any of the following methods may be used to determine the last date of attendance: **(1)** attendance records; **(2)** grading reports; **(3)** last date on which examination or other papers filed; **(4)** last date of activity in the instructor's records; or **(5)** a statement from the student as to the last day of his or her attendance.

For all terminations of enrollment, one of the blocks in Item 4B must be checked as appropriate. Those blocks are:

Withdrawal or Interruption (noncollege)

This block should be checked if a student terminates or temporarily interrupts a noncollege degree (NCD) program. This block should not be used, however, if the NCD instruction operates on a term, block, or unit basis and the student will be required to repeat the entire term, block, or unit due to the withdrawal. In other words, due to the withdrawal from the NCD course(s), no credit is accrued for work completed. In these instances, another of the blocks in Item 4B should be checked, as appropriate, and an explanation given in Item 8, Remarks, along with the first date for which no credit is accrued toward graduation.

Withdrawal During Drop Period

Regardless of the reason(s) for termination of training, if the withdrawal from all classes is during the officially designated drop period of the school, this block should be checked (**the drop period is the period during which a student may officially drop a unit subject without academic penalty**). However, for VA purposes, the drop period cannot be more than **30 days** from the beginning date of classes in a term, quarter, or semester. This block should not be used if the student's withdrawal is after the school's officially designated drop period or more than 30 days after the start of the term, whichever is earlier.

Withdrawal After Drop Period - Nonpunitive Grades Assigned

As used by VA and as defined in the Glossary to this manual, a nonpunitive grade is any grade which has the effect of excluding the course from any consideration in determining progress toward fulfillment of requirements for graduation. A nonpunitive grade is equivalent to an audited course for purposes of advancement toward graduation. Typical examples are "W" (withdrawal) and "NC" (no credit). If a student terminates his or her training after the school's officially designated drop period or more than 30 days after the start of the term, whichever is earlier, and nonpunitive grades are assigned, this block should be checked, and Item 6, Mitigating Circumstances, should also be completed.

Withdrawal After Drop Period - Punitive Grades Assigned

As used by VA and as defined in the Glossary to this manual, a punitive grade is one which is assigned a value when computing the requirements for graduation. A common example is an "F" grade which has a quality point value of "zero." If a student terminates his or her training after the school's officially designated drop period or more than 30 days after the start of the term, whichever is earlier, and a punitive grade or grades are assigned, this block should be checked.

End of Term or Course

Check this block only if the student terminates his or her training at the end of the term or course without regard as to whether punitive or nonpunitive grades are assigned.

Unsatisfactory Progress or Conduct

If the student's progress or conduct has not been met by the student, this block should be checked. In Item 4A, Last Date of Attendance, the last date that progress or conduct was satisfactory should be shown.

Other

If none of the above reasons are appropriate for the student's termination of training, this block should be checked with an explanation given in Item 8, Remarks. The certifying official should also indicate if the grade(s) assigned are punitive or nonpunitive.

Item 5. Adjustment Of Credit or Clock Hours

This section should be completed if the student increases or reduces his or her credit or clock hour load **without actually terminating or withdrawing from all training**. Item 5A should show the effective date of the adjustment, and in Item 5B, the type of adjustment must be indicated:

Increase

This block should be checked if the student has increased the number of credit hours, clock hours, or high school units being pursued.

Reduction (noncollege)

If there is a reduction in the noncollege degree courses being pursued, this block should be checked. However, this block should not be used if the NCD instruction operates on a term, block, or unit basis and the student will be required to repeat the entire term, block, or unit because of the withdrawal from that course. In other words, no credit is being given for work completed up to the date of the reduction in training. If this is the situation, another of the blocks should be checked, as appropriate, and an explanation given in Item 8, Remarks, along with the first date from which no credit accrued toward graduation.

Reduction During Drop Period

If the reduction is during the officially designated drop period of the school but not more than 30 days from the start of the term, this block may be checked.

Reduction After Drop Period - Nonpunitive Grades Assigned

Same as for Item 4B above regarding assignment of nonpunitive grades. Whenever this block is checked, Item 6 must also be completed for Mitigating Circumstances.

Reduction After Drop Period - Punitive Grades Assigned

Same as for Item 4B above regarding assignment of punitive grades.

Student Completed Term but Nonpunitive Grades Assigned For One or More Courses

If a student completes a term but received nonpunitive grades for one or more courses, this block should be checked. For example, a student may have completed 12 credits but for 6 of those credits he or she received a nonpunitive "NC" grade. The last date of the term should be shown in Item 5A; 12 would be entered in Item 5C, Credit Hours Before Adjustment; and 6 entered in Item 5D, Credit Hours After Adjustment.

Other

If this block is used, Item 8, Remarks, should also be completed explaining the reasons. This box is used for any adjustment type not covered by the other boxes in this section. For example, Incomplete grades "I" are not converted to credit grade(s) within one calendar year, or Incomplete "I" grades converted to credit grade(s) or to punitive, failing grade(s). The certifying official should indicate whether the grade(s) assigned are punitive or nonpunitive.

Credit Hours

These items should be completed just as on an Enrollment Certification, Form 22-1999, with any breakdown as necessary, i.e., credit hours, deficiency hours, independent study, laboratory hours, workshop, etc. For noncollege or nondegree programs measured on a clock-hour basis, Items 5F, 5G, and 5H should be completed just as on an Enrollment Certification. Item 5I is to be completed if there is a change to the previously reported ending date of enrollment.

Charges For Period of Enrollment

This item should be completed for all inservice students and for students whose training load either before or after adjustment is less than half-time. The certifying official should list the customary charges of the adjusted load by school year, term, or other period as appropriate. For example, a student starts a term at full-time but reduces to less than half-time in the third week of the semester. The certifying official should report the dates for the *complete* term in Item 5A and report the customary charges (tuition and fees) for the *adjusted* load only in Item 5B.

Exception: This item does *not* apply to students receiving benefits under Chapter 32, Chapter 1606, or Section 903.

Item 7 - Mitigating Circumstances

This item should be completed only if required by one of the reasons in Items 4 or 5. Generally, however, these are circumstances which directly hinder the student's pursuit of a course and which are judged to be both unexpected and out of the student's control. Students will be expected to document their claimed mitigating circumstances with evidence that substantiates the seriousness and/or the unavoidable nature of the situations which interfered with their enrollments. Adequate corroborative evidence will be documentation received from an individual, organization, or agency in a position to verify the mitigating occurrence claimed by the student. If available, this evidence should be submitted along with the Form 22-1999b at the time it is sent to VA. A student may use Form 21-4138, Statement in Support of Claim, to submit his or her statement. Schools using VACERT can **detail** the student's mitigating circumstances (if available), keeping the documentation in their folder at the school and annotating "remarks" with "documentation on file." A complete description of the documentation should also be given.

Item 8 - Remarks

This space should be used to provide any needed clarification of any item on this form. It is most important for the certifying official to make clear the student's status for any term subsequent to the one in which the change occurred. For example, a student has been certified for both the fall and spring terms and now the certifying official is reporting a reduction during the fall term. Item 8, Remarks, should be completed to show that the student is still enrolled for the spring term, if this is the case. However, if a termination is being reported for the fall term, the certifying official will have to submit a new Form 22-1999, Enrollment Certification, at the beginning of the spring term, in order for benefits to be resumed at that time.

THE STATE APPROVING AGENCY, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS, AND THE SCHOOL APPROVAL PROCESS

In 1944, with the Second World War winding down and facing the prospect of millions of veterans returning home and looking for jobs, Congress considered what measures they could take to make the transition of all these soldiers from military to civilian life a smooth one. After much debate, the result was the “**Servicemen’s Readjustment Act of 1944**,” signed into law by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt on June 22, 1944. Known to us today as the GI Bill of Rights, it’s major provisions included money for college or vocational education, home loan guarantees, and rights to job retention. Because it was the first ever federal school financial aid program, it’s birth was not an easy one. Many doubts had to be overcome regarding the education provisions. One primary obstacle was who would control this major flow of funding to veterans throughout the fifty states: the federal government or each state? The GI Bill’s passage was insured when a compromise was reached: The **federal government**, i.e., the Veterans Administration, would determine which veterans were eligible, how much money they would receive, and when they would receive it. Each **state** would determine which schools the veterans could attend and still receive their GI Bill payments. Thus, out of this compromise was born the idea of **State Approving Agencies (SAA)**.

Since that time a close working relationship has developed between the **SAA’s** and the (now) **U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)**. Under the laws currently in place, each state governor designates the agency or agencies which will approve programs for VA students. Those agencies then enter into agreements (contracts) with **VA** to perform those duties. Each contract, negotiated out of the VA Central Office in Washington, DC, and administered by the Education Liaison Representative (ELR) in that state, provides for the reimbursement to each state for all the costs of salaries, fringe benefits, and travel associated with the approval of schools. An additional allowance is paid to defray all administrative expenses such as lease of office space, equipment purchases, consumable supplies, etc. In other words, this is one of those programs where the federal government asks the states to perform a task and then reimburses them for all the associated costs.

Although **VA** is paying the costs, each state is not under any control by **VA** to impose any policies or procedures except as required under the contract. The provision for having **SAA’s** allows each state to impose its own local licensing requirements, fire codes, safety rules, standards of quality, etc., on schools desiring to train VA students. That is why schools often find that they have few or no problems becoming approved for VA training in one state, but may find that the same programs cannot be approved in another state. This all comes under the heading of “States’ Rights” and is one of the foundations of our republic.

There are instances where states decide that they do not want to bother approving certain categories of schools. In such cases, **VA** assumes the approval function, then normally directly handled by the ELR situated in that state. The following categories of schools are currently approved by the ELR’s listed:

**STATE
JURISDICTION**

CATEGORY OF SCHOOL

ELR WITH

Florida	Correspondence Schools Apprenticeship and Other OJT Vocational Flight Schools	Ron Scoggins - St. Petersburg, FL Ron Scoggins - St. Petersburg, FL Ron Scoggins - St. Petersburg, FL *
Louisiana	Apprenticeship	Ellis Yeager - New Orleans, LA
Puerto Rico	Vocational Flight Schools	Ron Scoggins - St. Petersburg, FL *
Tennessee	Correspondence Schools	E. Victoria Burton - Nashville, TN

In all other cases each state has an **SAA** which approves programs for veterans. Some agencies function under the state department of education, under a state licensing board, under a state department of veterans affairs, etc. The list of **SAA's** in the southern region can be found on pages 3 - 5 of this handbook.

Because each SAA sets up its own procedures and criteria for approval, you should refer to the Handbook Supplement for your state.

Once an SAA approves a school and/or courses, the ELR in that state reviews the approval notice and converts that approval information into a computer format (on MS Word - Windows 95) that our authorizers in Atlanta can read and interpret in order to award education benefits. This format is our **On Line Approval File**, or **OLAF**, and the form is called an **OLAF Report - Form 1998**. The following pages contain samples of this form for a two year and a four year IHL, an NCD, a job training establishment (Apprenticeship or other On the Job Training establishment), a flight school, and a correspondence school. When you receive the copy of this form for your school from your ELR, please be sure to review it for accuracy. Remember, what you see on this form is EVERYTHING that our education authorizers know about your school. If you have any questions regarding the information on that form, please call your ELR.

EDUCATION BENEFITS PAYMENTS

DEFINITION OF TERMS

NON-STANDARD TERM - A term which is shorter or longer in length than a standard quarter or semester. It is also known as an **ACCELERATED TERM**. A standard semester is 15 -19 weeks in length and a standard quarter is 10-13 weeks in length. A **DECELERATED TERM** is one which is longer than a standard length semester or quarter.

EQUIVALENT CREDIT HOURS - Because credits earned during a short, non-standard term are more concentrated or accelerated in order to accomplish a semester's worth of study during a shorter period of time, **VA** will pay a greater training time for fewer credits. The formulas for converting accelerated term credits to "equivalent" credit hours are shown below:

SEMESTER HOURS PURSUED X 18 DIVIDED BY LENGTH OF TERM IN WHOLE WEEKS *

QUARTER HOURS PURSUED X 12 DIVIDED BY LENGTH OF TERM IN WHOLE WEEKS *

Pay for **undergraduate** standard length and non-standard (accelerated) terms alike is based on the following chart (pay for **graduate** study is based on the training time certified by the school):

12 or more hours.....	full time
9 to 11 hours.....	3/4 time
6 to 8 hours.....	1/2 time
4 and 5 hours.....	less than half, more than 1/4 time
1 to 3 hours.....	1/4 time

VA will pay education benefits according to this chart using the equivalent credit hours pursued (see equivalent semester and quarter hour charts following this section).

*** To determine the length of the term, divide the number of days from the beginning to the end of the term by seven. Any remainder of four days or more adds one week. Any remainder of three days or less is disregarded. From the total length of the term, subtract any vacation periods or holidays of seven days or more that occur during the term. All calculations of term length include weekends.**

Payments will be made for all breaks in enrollment except as prohibited below.

Payment will NOT be made for:

- ◆ Breaks between terms at the same school which **exceed** eight weeks or the term preceding or following the break is shorter than the break. *
- ◆ Breaks between terms which **exceed** eight weeks or the term preceding or following the break is shorter than the break if the student transfers from one school to another, but is **not** charged with a change of program. *
- ◆ Breaks of **any** length when the student transfers from one school to another and **is** charged with a change of program. (If a change of program occurs and the student remains in the same school, normal break pay rules apply as set forth herein).
- ◆ **Any** break of **any** length between terms if the student is:
 - ✓ On active duty or,
 - ✓ the student is training at the less than half-time rate on the last day **preceding** the break
- ◆ **Any** interval which is a break between the end of one school year and the beginning of another at a school which does **not** operate on a term basis. **This includes public vocational-technical schools in many states.**
- ◆ Any breaks for which the student requests that pay not be made as long as the request is made before the award is authorized.
- ◆ Breaks where it is to the student's advantage not to receive benefits, e.g., where entitlement would otherwise be exhausted during the break, but before the beginning of the following enrollment period.
- ◆ **Any** break of **any** length where a student withdraws from all courses in the term preceding the break.

BREAK PAY - SUMMER TERMS OR SESSIONS (breaks between individual summer sessions and between summer sessions and the winter/spring or fall terms)

- ◆ The rules for paying breaks which occur before, during, or after summer terms or sessions are the same as for Fall, Winter, and Spring terms with the following exception: If a student is enrolled for a combination of summer terms/sessions, then the length of that period is measured from the start of the first summer session to the end of the last summer session for purposes of the **Eight Week Rule** for break pay for breaks which immediately precede or follow the summer period. This provision does not apply if a student fails to enroll during a summer session which intervenes between the first and last summer sessions. **Additionally, a break between summer sessions cannot be paid if it exceeds 30 days and the term preceding or following the break is less than eight weeks in length.**

* The **Eight Week Rule** went into effect for any break which began after October 31, 2000.

◆ Payment for overlapping periods is based on the equivalent semester/quarter hours for each term **for the overlapping periods only**.

◆ Break pay when overlapping terms are involved:

✓ Compare break pay using all the possible combinations of beginning and ending dates for the break.

✓ Pay whatever rate is the **highest**.

Schools will always certify the **actual** credit hour load for each term. **VA** will make all conversions to equivalent semester and quarter hours as necessary.

MISCELLANY

◆ **EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 9, 1996**, open-circuit TV is treated the same as any other in-resident course and **may be certified without concurrent pursuit of in-resident course work**. Prior to that date a student had to be concurrently enrolled in at least one hour of in-resident study in order to receive payment for any open-circuit TV course.

◆ **Closed-circuit TV** is treated the same as any other in-resident course.

◆ For all in-service trainees, the rate of pay is tuition and fees not to exceed the rate payable for the training time. **EXCEPTION: Chapter 32 (VEAP) and Chapter 1606 (Montgomery G.I. Bill for the Selected Reserve)** is payable at the full, three quarter, half, and one quarter time rate as appropriate.

◆ For **all** trainees incarcerated for a **felony**, the rate of pay is the actual direct cost to the student for tuition, fees, books, & supplies.

◆ **Distance Learning**, when approved as part of a college degree at an institution of higher learning, is approved by the SAA as independent study and is certified the same as other courses. Distance learning approved at non-degree schools is approved as correspondence training. In any case, all courses must lead to a valid educational or vocational goal. Distance learning classes designed for career enhancement or continuing education cannot be approved for veterans' training.

USING THE QUARTER AND SEMESTER HOUR EQUIVALENT CHARTS

These charts are designed to allow you to determine quarter or semester hour equivalents without having to use the formulas as detailed on page 96. They are for your information to help answer student questions regarding training time for their enrollment. When certifying the enrollment of VA students, it is important to remember that when certifying each student's enrollment to VA, **ALWAYS** show the exact credit hours being pursued for each term, **NOT** the equivalent hours as calculated by using these charts. Adjudication will make any necessary calculations and adjustments to determine training time for undergraduate students.

TO USE THE CHARTS

You must know two things: the number of quarter or semester hours being pursued and the length of the term or session during which the student is pursuing those credits. If you know the total number of days in a particular term, you can use the table on the next page to convert those days into whole weeks.

- 1. Determine whether the student is receiving credit in either quarter or semester hours and find the appropriate chart.**
- 2. Go ACROSS the top of the chart until you find the length of the term or session in which the student is enrolled.**
- 3. Go DOWN that column until you reach the line for the number of credit hours being pursued.**
- 4. The number in that block represents the equivalent semester or quarter hours as appropriate for that term length and course load.**
- 5. For overlapping terms, combine equivalent hours, then use the training time chart. Do not round off the equivalent hours until after you have combined them for the overlapping periods. Then when you do round off, always round down.**

CONVERSION TABLE
DAYS TO WEEKS

X Number Days = X number weeks

1 = 0	31 = 4	61 = 9	91 = 13	121 = 17
2 = 0	32 = 5	62 = 9	92 = 13	122 = 17
3 = 0	33 = 5	63 = 9	93 = 13	123 = 18
4 = 1	34 = 5	64 = 9	94 = 13	124 = 18
5 = 1	35 = 5	65 = 9	95 = 14	125 = 18
6 = 1	36 = 5	66 = 9	96 = 14	126 = 18
7 = 1	37 = 5	67 = 10	97 = 14	127 = 18
8 = 1	38 = 5	68 = 10	98 = 14	128 = 18
9 = 1	39 = 6	69 = 10	99 = 14	129 = 18
10 = 1	40 = 6	70 = 10	100 = 14	130 = 19
11 = 2	41 = 6	71 = 10	101 = 14	131 = 19
12 = 2	42 = 6	72 = 10	102 = 15	132 = 19
13 = 2	43 = 6	73 = 10	103 = 15	133 = 19
14 = 2	44 = 6	74 = 11	104 = 15	134 = 19
15 = 2	45 = 6	75 = 11	105 = 15	135 = 19
16 = 2	46 = 7	76 = 11	106 = 15	136 = 19
17 = 2	47 = 7	77 = 11	107 = 15	137 = 20
18 = 3	48 = 7	78 = 11	108 = 15	138 = 20
19 = 3	49 = 7	79 = 11	109 = 16	139 = 20
20 = 3	50 = 7	80 = 11	110 = 16	140 = 20
21 = 3	51 = 7	81 = 12	111 = 16	141 = 20
22 = 3	52 = 7	82 = 12	112 = 16	142 = 20
23 = 3	53 = 8	83 = 12	113 = 16	143 = 20
24 = 3	54 = 8	84 = 12	114 = 16	144 = 21
25 = 4	55 = 8	85 = 12	115 = 16	145 = 21
26 = 4	56 = 8	86 = 12	116 = 17	146 = 21
27 = 4	57 = 8	87 = 12	117 = 17	147 = 21
28 = 4	58 = 8	88 = 13	118 = 17	148 = 21
29 = 4	59 = 8	89 = 13	119 = 17	149 = 21
30 = 4	60 = 9	90 = 13	120 = 17	150 = 21

Figures arrived at by taking total number of days (including the first day of the term) divided by seven. Any remainder of less than half a week is dropped, any remainder of more than half a week adds a week (there is no such thing as exactly half a week).

Examples: 59 days divided by 7 = 8.43 or 8 weeks.
60 days divided by 7 = 8.57 or 9 weeks.

CONCURRENT ENROLLMENT & NON-MATRICULATED STUDENTS

Most students who are not matriculated when they enter a school are placed in the special student or nonmatriculated status, either because transcripts have not been received or the student does not meet all program entrance requirements (usually pre-requisite unit subjects). In many cases, students must take subjects at a school other than the degree-granting institution or at two schools simultaneously for a concurrent enrollment.

Specific procedures to be used, some of which may be familiar but bear repetition, are outlined below:

In all cases, a VA student must be pursuing an approved program of education. Payment is prohibited for pursuit of subjects that are designed for "career enhancement" or that are being taken because a school counselor "recommended" them. Courses pursued must be "required" for or otherwise apply to the student's degree program.

1. Special or Nonmatriculated Student - (transcripts from prior schools not received).

- ◆ The term "Pending" should be placed in Item 9 (prior credit) of VA Form (Enrollment Certification).
- ◆ **The enrollment should be for, but is not restricted to no more than two terms.**
- ◆ Once transcripts are received you must complete another VA Form 22-1999 to continue the student's enrollment and show in Item 9 only those transfer credits which specifically apply to the graduation requirements of the student's current degree program.

2. Special or Nonmatriculated Student - (has completed associate degree and is pursuing courses at the community college to become a degree seeking student at the junior year level of an upper division or four-year school, or is taking courses from any other school to transfer back to their degree granting institution).

- ◆ The student must apply for admission to the senior institution and they will evaluate his/her transcript.
- ◆ The senior institution will then issue a typed letter on school letterhead, signed by the registrar, academic dean, or certifying official that specifies:
 - ✓ The specific student for whom the certification is being made.
 - ✓ Lists the specific unit subjects required, by course code, number, and title, and at what school the courses may be taken.
 - ✓ That full credit will be granted for those courses upon transfer.
 - ✓ The courses will be accepted in partial fulfillment of graduation requirements for the bachelor degree.

When the community college certifies the student in those courses, they will place the following note in "Remarks": **"Courses required at (name of upper division school). Documentation on File."** The two-term guideline does **NOT** apply to students in this category.

3. Special or Nonmatriculated Student - (needs pre-requisite graduate or undergraduate subjects to become degree seeking, usually because of a change of program, e.g., earned a bachelor degree in English and seeks a Masters degree in Business Administration).

The degree-granting school will prepare documentation to be placed in the student's file which specifies:

- ◆ The name of the specific student.
- ◆ The specific unit subjects required, by course code, number and title, as pre-requisite to entry into the degree program (graduate and undergraduate level courses).

The school will then certify the student as if he/she were degree seeking. We will check for proper course certification during compliance surveys. The two-term guideline does **NOT** apply to students in this category.

4. Concurrent Enrollment - This is a case where the student is degree seeking at one school and is taking courses at a second (supplemental) school to transfer back to his/her degree granting school. The reason for doing so is not relevant.

The degree granting school will prepare the documentation to be given to the student to give to the supplemental school or send it to the supplemental school official directly. The form shown on the following page should be used and fully completed in such cases. It contains all the information necessary.

The supplemental school can then use that documentation to certify the student only for the specific courses authorized by the parent, degree granting institution.

Following these procedures does not guarantee that VA will pay any education benefits while a student is in a nonmatriculated status. In some cases, because a significant amount of prior credit is indicated (along with the possibility of course duplication), VA may withhold all payment of education benefits until the school has evaluated and reported all prior credit.

The form on the following page is a suggested format which schools may wish to use when providing information to supplemental schools for their own non-matriculated students. Neither this form nor letters from the upper division school need be attached to Enrollment Certifications (as detailed above). That documentation must then be maintained in the student's school VA file for possible review during VA compliance surveys or SAA inspection visits.

CERTIFICATION OF NONMATRICULATED STUDENT

1. Name of Student: _____

VA File Number of Student: _____

2. Name of Degree-Granting School: _____

School Address: _____

3. Student's current or intended program: _____

4. **CERTIFICATION**

I certify that the above-named student:

- a. Has applied for admission to this school or is currently a degree-seeking student at this school;
- b. This student has permission to take the unit courses listed below at the school listed below;
- c. These unit subjects will transfer to our school and apply in-full to the requirements for this student's degree at our school or apply to pre-requisite requirements for subjects needed in this student's degree at our school.

Name and address of school: _____
where subjects are to be
taken (supplemental
school): _____

Subject courses to be taken:

Course Title	Course Code	Course Title	Course Code
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Signature of School Certifying Official

Title

Date

TUTORIAL ASSISTANCE - CFR 21.4236

Many students, upon entering their college program or other post-high school education, find that they need additional help in order to obtain passing grades in their course work. One method is through individual tutoring by a knowledgeable student or faculty member.

For Chapter 30 & Chapter 32 veterans and servicepersons, Chapter 1606 reservists (effective October 1, 1992), and Chapter 35 spouses, surviving spouses and children, VA will help defray the cost of such individualized tutoring as found necessary. This benefit will reimburse eligible VA students for the actual cost of the tutorial sessions up to **\$100.00** per month. The maximum amount of tutorial assistance to which any VA student will be eligible is **\$1,200.00**. A total of **\$600** in tutorial assistance may be paid to a student without charge to the student's entitlement. All moneys paid after that limit is reached will be charged against that student's entitlement.

PROCEDURE TO QUALIFY FOR TUTORIAL ASSISTANCE

◆ To qualify for tutorial assistance, a VA student must:

- ✓ Be enrolled in a post-secondary program of education (requires a high school diploma/equivalent or at least 12th grade level skills for admission).
- ✓ Be enrolled on at least a half-time or greater basis.

◆ Appropriate school certifying officials (designated on Item C of VA Form 22-8794, Designation of Certifying Officials) must make the following determinations:

- ✓ That the individual tutorial assistance is essential to correct a deficiency in a specified unit subject or subjects required as a part of, or which is pre-requisite to, or which is indispensable to the satisfactory pursuit of the student's approved program of education;
- ✓ That the tutor selected is qualified;
- ✓ That the charges for such tutorial sessions do not exceed the customary charges for such tutorial assistance.

Acceptable evidence of the need for tutorial assistance includes failure of first class test or assignment, poor SAT, ACT or other standard test scores for the particular subject matter, retaking a unit subject which was previously failed, and instructor's evaluation after the first class meeting of the unit subject. A VA student's statement that, "I feel I need it", will **not** suffice. **The school, not the student, must make the final determination for need.** It should also be noted that the student must be registered for and pursuing that unit subject at the time he/she is being tutored for it. A student cannot receive VA assistance for tutorial sessions conducted before the class commences or after it ends.

Qualified tutors include upper class students majoring in the subject matter for which they are giving tutorial sessions, students who received a grade of A in that subject, and faculty members teaching in that subject matter. It is permissible, if not the usual case, for a VA student to receive tutorial sessions from the faculty member who is teaching the student's class for which tutoring is needed.

PAYMENT FOR TUTORING GIVEN BY A CLOSE RELATIVE OF THE CLAIMANT IS PROHIBITED BY LAW. A CLOSE RELATIVE IS DEFINED AS A PARENT, CHILD, SIBLING, OR SPOUSE OF THE CLAIMANT. CLOSE RELATIVES ALSO INCLUDE IN-LAWS (whether or not they are close in fact is not relevant).

In the southern region customary charges for tutorial sessions range as shown below:

Freshman and Sophomore courses.....	\$8.00 to \$14.00 per hour.
Junior and Senior courses.....	\$10.00 to \$20.00 per hour.
Graduate courses.....	\$15.00 to \$30.00 per hour.

Where higher rates than these are deemed by school officials to be appropriate, additional justification for the higher rates must be given. Although tutorial assistance is payable for graduate subjects, this should occur only rarely and additional justification for the tutorial sessions must be given.

All tutorial sessions must be individual, one-on-one, sessions and **not** group tutorial or self-help sessions or study groups. Additionally, where a school offers free tutorial services, we expect VA students to use those services the same as any other student. At such schools, VA tutorial assistance may be paid only if a specialized tutor is needed who is not normally available through the school's free program. Justification should be placed in the student's file.

VA FORM 22-1990t
APPLICATION AND ENROLLMENT FOR INDIVIDUAL TUTORIAL ASSISTANCE

A sample, completed form is included for reference (page 99). In particular, please note the following item numbers:

Item 11 - The individual course **code** and **title** of the subject for which tutorial sessions have been given must be shown.

Item 13c - The number of hours of tutorial sessions for the current month must be shown in hours and minutes (or fractions of hours).

Where individual tutorial assistance is given, the school must maintain records to verify:

- ◆ The need for tutorial assistance.
- ◆ Qualifications of the tutor.
- ◆ The unit subjects (for which tutorial assistance was given) are required in the student's program.

Following is a sample, suggested form which can be used to document these requirements (page 100). You may reproduce this form, alter it to your needs, or use any other form or records system that meets the requirements above. These records are subject to review on VA Compliance Survey visits.

VETERAN TUTORIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
INFORMATION
(Suggested Format)

1. Student's Name: _____

2. VA Claim No: _____

3. Course (Unit Subject): _____
Course Prefix/Number/Title

4. This student has an academic deficiency in this credit course as evidenced
by: _____

(Grades, test results, class performance, etc.)

Signature of Instructor Date

5. This credit course is required for the completion of the student's program.

Signature of Authorized College Official Date

6. Tutor's Name: _____

Tutor's Qualifications: _____

Above information verified by: _____
(Instructor, Advisor, Academic Dept., etc.)

Date Title

APPROVAL OF DUAL DEGREES, DUAL MAJORS AND MINORS

Title 38, United States Code, Section 3452(b) defines a program of education as "...any curriculum or any combination of unit courses or subjects pursued at an education institution which is generally accepted as necessary to fulfill requirements for the attainment of a predetermined and identified educational, professional, or vocational objective. **Such term also means any curriculum of unit courses or subjects pursued at an educational institution which fulfill requirements for the attainment of more than one predetermined and identified educational, professional, or vocational objective if all the objectives pursued are generally recognized as being reasonably related to a single career field.**"

This is the provision of law which allows for students to receive GI Bill payments for dual degrees and majors. You SAA has final authority to approve or disapprove dual objectives under criteria that they prescribe. Many school catalogs contain procedures for students to follow if they wish to pursue double majors, minors, and dual degrees. Some SAA's approved these on an individual basis and others approve them as listed in the school's approved catalog.

For the procedures applicable to your institution for dual objectives of any kind, please see the Handbook Supplement for your state.

TEACHER'S CERTIFICATION

VA students often go to institutions of higher learning to take unit courses necessary to either renew or apply for a certificate to teach in a particular school or school system. Although the requirements for obtaining teacher certificates vary from state to state, certain procedures remain the same region wide. We can pay VA education benefits for this necessary course work under certain circumstances. These circumstances and procedures are outlined below.

Circumstances under which VA education benefits can be paid for a teacher's certificate:

- ◆ Student has **never** had a certificate and needs one now.
- ◆ Student has had a teacher's certificate in one subject or discipline and now needs a certificate in a **different subject, discipline or grade level**. Examples include going from high school math to high school social studies, from elementary education to secondary science, etc.

VA educational assistance **cannot** be paid to a student who has received a teacher's certificate at any time in the past and now needs to get that certificate **renewed** (renewal is required by most States every five years). In that case, the student is considered to be already qualified. It is irrelevant whether or not the student used VA education benefits to earn his/her certificate the first time. Once the student has qualified for a license or certificate, benefit payments for renewal of that license or certificate are prohibited.

For the procedures applicable to your institution for teacher certification, please refer to the Handbook Supplement for your state.

FILLING OUT A FULL-TIME SCHEDULE IN A VA STUDENT'S LAST TERM AT AN IHL

RULES IN BRIEF

1. A VA student can fill-in a schedule with non-required courses to bring his/her course load up to a full-time schedule in his/her last term only. An exception explained below in number 4.
2. This procedure can be done only **once** per program.
3. In filling out a full-time schedule, VA students may use any credit hour unit subject, **including** a subject which they have previously successfully completed (received a passing grade).
4. If any other circumstances arise where the school official feels that this round out rule should be applied for more than one term for a veteran, please call or E-mail your ELR to discuss it.

VA expects veterans and other eligible persons to schedule their programs carefully so that they can complete their degree within the approved hours. However, we do recognize that this is not always possible. It is only when a VA student needs less than a full-time load of required courses to complete his/her program that this procedure will apply.

The student must pursue all courses needed to graduate. Whether the student needs 3, 6, or 9 hours to graduate, we will pay full-time benefits under this rule only when the last required course(s) is pursued along with other, non-required courses bringing the schedule up to full-time. For example, a student could need nine hours to graduate and take three hours of those required courses in each of three terms. This fill-in rule would apply only in the last semester when the last required three hour course was pursued. If the student took all nine hours of remaining required course-work during a semester, the rule would be applicable to that semester only.

A VA student can fill-in a full-time schedule with any credit hour courses he/she desires. This includes courses not related to the student's degree program or any other credit hour course that school or another supplemental school offers during that same semester or quarter. This also includes courses which the student has previously satisfactorily completed (passed). This is the only time that the VA will pay VA students for pursuing occupational credit hour courses that would not apply to the graduation requirements of an AA degree or for any course which the student had previously satisfactorily completed. We hope, of course, that students will pursue courses that bear some relation to their ultimate educational goals.

A VA student can use this procedure only once in any given educational program. For example, a student may need only three hours to graduate and pursues that course plus nine hours of non-related fill-in course work for which VA pays full-time education benefits. If that student fails the required course and must re-take it in order to graduate, VA will then pay education benefits to re-take the required course, but will not pay for filling-in a full-time schedule again for that degree program. Full-time benefits would be paid for what should have been his/her last semester, but afterwards, payment will then be made only for the required course if it must be retaken.

If a student had failed a required course sometime prior to the scheduled final semester, the student can fill-in a full-time schedule upon re-taking that course in his/her final term, even if it is the only required course needed.

Once the student completes that degree program, this fill-in rule can then be applied again at the end of the student's next program. This is true even if no change of program is incurred, such as when a student progresses from an AA degree to a Baccalaureate and, thence, to a Masters.

Another situation arises when the VA student fills-in a full-time schedule, then withdraws from any or all of the courses required for graduation. VA will continue to pay education benefits for all remaining courses being pursued during that term (required or not), but will not again pay that VA student to fill-in a full-time schedule in that program. Payment will then be made only for the remaining course(s) required for that program which are pursued during a subsequent term.

NCD's: This procedure may be used **ONLY** for credit hour NCD programs which generally also apply to the requirements of a college degree. In such rare instances, the procedures outlined above will apply. **These procedures will NOT apply to any NCD program offered on a clock hour basis.**

VA WORK STUDY PROGRAM

This is one of the most popular programs that VA sponsors, especially at schools with large VA enrollments. For many years it has been a significant factor in schools' ability to administer the VA educational program. It allows a VA student to earn the Federal or state minimum wage (whichever is higher) for up to 1,300 hours per year (25 hours per week). This tax-free benefit allows each VA student to "earn while he learns" while he/she is pursuing an approved post-secondary program of education on at least a three-quarter time basis.

Once again, however, it must be emphasized that VA work study students may be utilized only **for "VA related work"** as specified in section 21.4142 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR). That section further specifies that VA students in this program may be utilized in connection with the "preparation and processing of necessary papers and other documents at educational institutions ..." Some non-VA work may be performed only if it is unavoidably necessary in preparing or processing VA work. **VA work study students may perform any work at any VA facility.**

Examples of work which may be performed by a veteran under a VA work study contract include, but are not limited to:

- ◆ Preparing and processing VA enrollment certifications and other VA forms.
- ◆ Checking the programs of VA students for course drops and courses out of program (non-VA transcripts and files may be processed only to the extent necessary to separate them from VA student records).
- ◆ Checking VA student attendance records and processing certification of absence forms (non-VA records may be handled only to the extent necessary to separate them from VA student records).
- ◆ Any other work which directly produces a product (paperwork) to be submitted to VA. Once again, non-VA work may be performed only to the extent necessary to accomplish VA work.

Examples of work which a VA work study may not perform include, but are not limited to:

- ◆ General maintenance or housekeeping.
- ◆ Registration activities of non-VA students.
- ◆ General typing related to non-VA students.
- ◆ Orientation activities for any students or relatives of students.
- ◆ Security activities.
- ◆ General errands for school staff.
- ◆ Tutoring (VA work study students may tutor, if qualified, during non-duty hours).
- ◆ Homework or personal business during VA work study duty hours.

Properly utilized, VA work study students can greatly enhance a school's ability to administer their VA educational programs and meet VA requirements for submission of certifications.

Chapter 1606 work-study students may perform work **on Department of Defense facilities, e.g., military bases, reserve centers, and National Guard facilities**, that relates to the Chapter 1606 program.

Although prohibited in the past, the General Counsel has ruled that VA work study students may receive an additional stipend or payment from another source under certain circumstances for work performed under their VA work study contract. Some schools have asked to be allowed to pay a supplement to their VA work study students to bring their total work study pay up to the same hourly amount as their college work study students (who are often paid an hourly wage higher than the federal or state minimum). This practice has been approved.

Effective with all contracts entered into on or after January 1, 1999, at the student's option an advance payment equal to the first 50 hours of work may be paid. Prior to that date, the advance payment was mandatory and not optional.

CREDIT FOR PRIOR TRAINING

One of the criteria for approval of any school for veterans' training is that it review prior credit and grant credit as appropriate to a VA student's current program. This is found in Title 38, Code of Federal Regulations, Sections 21.4253(d)(3) and 21.4254(C)(4). In essence, this requires every approved school to have and enforce a policy with regard to transfer courses, credits, and previous experience.

VA DOES NOT REQUIRE ANY SCHOOL TO ACCEPT ALL PRIOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING, BUT MERELY TO REVIEW ALL PRIOR TRAINING OF EACH VA STUDENT AND GRANT CREDIT TOWARDS THE STUDENT'S CURRENT PROGRAM AS APPROPRIATE UNDER THAT SCHOOL'S RULES AND ESTABLISHED POLICIES. A STUDENT'S DESIRE NOT TO HAVE SOME OR ALL PRIOR CREDIT TRANSFERRED IS IRRELEVANT.

All of these rules and policies must be contained in the school's catalog or an addendum thereto which then must be approved by the State Approving Agency (SAA).

When certifying the initial enrollment of any VA student, schools must always complete item 9 of VA Form 22-1999. The information on prior training put in this block will depend on how rapidly the school is able to get and evaluate transcripts of prior education and training. Where this information is already available, it must be put in item 9 with the initial enrollment certification. If no credit is being granted, the word "**NONE**" should be put there.

Where prior credit information is **NOT** immediately available, the word "**PENDING**" should be put in that block. You should also give an estimate as to how long it will take to provide that information. Generally it should take no longer than two terms (semesters or quarters) or 24 weeks in an NCD program not operating on a term basis. If it is not possible for you to give us prior credit within those time frames for any particular student, please tell us so as soon as possible, giving us the reasons for delay and your estimated date of availability of that information. However, please note that we may not always pay VA education benefits before receiving prior credit information if our records indicate that a student may have a large amount of credit to transfer. In such cases there is the very real danger that a student may pursue unit subjects for which he/she will be granted credit by the school once transcripts arrive from other institutions.

When giving us prior credit information, please tell us only about those credits which apply directly to the specific program which the VA student is pursuing at your school. For example, a student may transfer 75 hours from Decatur Community College to Georgia Tech (GT), but only 60 hours will apply to his program at GT. In block 9, GT will report 60 hours of credit for prior training

If a VA student changes programs at the same school, prior credit must again be calculated and put in item 9 when certifying the student's enrollment in the new program. If a VA student is absent from your school for a year or more, then returns to your school in the same program, prior credit must again be certified in item 9. It is sometimes helpful, but not required, for you to put updated prior credit information on each enrollment certification, especially for those students certified on a term by term basis.

**APPROVED COURSE LENGTH AND TRAINING TIME
FOR NON-COLLEGE DEGREE (NCD) PROGRAM (Title 38, CFR 21.4270(a))**

DEFINITIONS

- ◆ **Clock Hour** - a full 60-minute period of classroom, laboratory, or shop instruction. This excludes any scheduled break period.
- ◆ **Classroom/Theory Instruction Predominates** - a technical program in which classroom or theoretical instruction constitutes more than 50% of the required hours per week. This includes lab time which consists of physically working with actual or mock up devices, machines, etc., to learn the theory behind how those devices actually work, e.g., examining electronic circuits to learn how they operate, working on an internal combustion engine or mock up to see how it works, etc.
- ◆ **Shop Practice Predominates** - a trade or technical course in which hands-on, shop training is an integral part of the program. Shop practice consists of physically working with devices, machines, etc., to learn how to actually perform certain tasks, e.g., learning how to tune-up an automobile motor, how to build a masonry wall, etc.
- ◆ **Break Between Classes** - a short break necessary to change classes. This includes breaks where students move from one classroom to another or the students remain in the same room and the instructors go to different rooms or the students and instructors remain in the same room, but the class subject is changed. In all such cases as noted above, the class subject must change, e.g., from Math to English or from Electronic Circuitry to Technical Math.

APPROVED PROGRAM LENGTH

Most NCD programs are approved by the State Approving Agency (SAA) and measured for VA payment purposes in clock hours as defined above (The following rules do NOT apply to those NCD programs approved on a credit hour basis). In measuring the total length of a program or measuring it for payment of VA education benefits (clock hours per week), some break periods can be included in the net hours of instruction. The length and type of breaks that can be included are dependent upon whether the program is classroom/lab or shop practice predominating (as defined in 2 and 3 above). **The breaks that can be included in the clock hours of instruction are listed below:**

- ◆ **Classroom/Lab Predominating:** Customary intervals not to exceed 10 minutes between classes (see above) may be included in net clock hours of instruction. All shop practice and rest periods are excluded and cannot be included in either the approved program length or clock hours per week that are certified for VA pay purposes.
- ◆ **Shop Predominating:** Rest periods, generally up to 2-1/2 hours per week or 30 minutes per day, depending on the number of hours of instruction per week (see measurement below for details), can be included in the net hours of instruction for pay purposes and approved program length. **Rest periods may not be combined to include a lunch period in the net hours of instruction.**

All requests to the SAA for approval of NCD programs must exclude from the total program length any break time that is not authorized above. For classroom programs this means that any break that does not occur between classes must be excluded from the total program length. For shop programs this

means that any break time which exceeds the maximum allowed (based on the scheduled hours of attendance per week) must be excluded from the total approved program length.

NCD MEASUREMENT FOR PAY PURPOSES

For the purpose of paying VA education benefits, VA will determine what constitutes full, three-quarter, half, and less than half-time training. We will make this determination based on one factor only: Total hours of attendance scheduled per week. School requirements for full and part-time pursuit will have no bearing on the training time determined by VA; **however, VA students must pursue whatever schedule is approved by the SAA and required of all other students just the same as non-VA students.** For example, if VA only requires 22 hours per week to receive full-time pay but the school requires all students to attend the same 30-hour per week schedule, then VA students must attend 30 hours per week. If, however, the same school will allow their students to attend a shorter than 30-hour per week schedule, we will pay full time VA education benefits for a 22-hour per week schedule even though the school would not consider them full time with less than a 30-hour per week schedule. These varied individual schedules may or may not require SAA approval (see your SAA for details).

VA NCD training time requirements are outlined below (all values are clock hours per week, net instruction):

	Classroom Predominating (Clock Hours)	Shop Predominating (Clock Hours)
FULL TIME:	18	22 (including not more than 2 1/2 hour rest periods per week)
3/4 TIME:	13 THRU 17	16 THRU 21 (including not more than 2 hours rest periods per week)
HALF TIME:	9 THRU 12	11 THRU 15 (including not more than 3/4 hours rest periods per week)
LESS THAN HALF, MORE THAN 1/4 TIME:	5 THRU 8	6 THRU 10 (including not more than 3/4 hours rest periods per week)
QUARTER TIME	1 THRU 4	1 THRU 5 (no allowance for rest periods)

COOPERATIVE TRAINING - IHL AND NCD
38 CFR, 21.4233 AND 21.4257

Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL) and Non-College Degree schools (NCD) increasingly are offering work experience or work internship programs. The term cooperative training is also used in many instances and is the terminology used by VA to denote school-sponsored programs consisting of phases of school instruction alternating with training in a business or industrial establishment. In IHL's cooperative training generally involves schools of Engineering and Business. In NCD's, cooperative training generally involves small business in a wide variety of vocational specialties.

RULES FOR COOPERATIVE TRAINING

Cooperative always consists of alternating phases of **FULL TIME** school and on-the-job training (OJT). This can be done in either one of two ways: **alternating co-op** or **parallel co-op**.

- ◆ **ALTERNATING CO-OP:** This is where a student alternates **full-time** school attendance with **full time** work on-the-job on a weekly, monthly or term basis. In all cases, for school and OJT phases, all training **must be full-time**. For example, a student may alternate one month of full-time school attendance (22 hours per week) with one month of full-time OJT (40 hours per week).
- ◆ **PARALLEL CO-OP:** In this situation, a student attends school half-time (usually in the morning) and works half-time (in the afternoon) each day. An example as above where 22 hours per week was full-time school attendance, a student would attend school 2 1/2 hours per day, 5 mornings each week and would work 4 hours per day each afternoon for the same 5 days. In this case, the **combination** of school instruction and OJT **must equal full-time training**.

In either alternating or parallel co-op, the **school phase** of training must be **at least** as long as the OJT phase of training.

- ✓ **Alternating Co-op** - If the student is paid for a 3 month phase of OJT, then he/she must also be certified for a school/classroom phase of at least 3 months duration (The OJT phase together with the in-school phase constitutes one cycle of co-op). An in-school phase of co-op can be longer than the OJT phase, **BUT THE OJT PHASE CAN NEVER BE LONGER THAN THE IN-SCHOOL PHASE.**
- ✓ **Parallel Co-op** - The same rule applies here. The student must be going at least half-time to school each day he/she is going OJT, but the student can't work more than 4 hours per day. A student could be attending school three quarter time each day and working half-time or less, but not the other way around.

A VA student must elect co-op **in writing**. The best method of written election is for the student to write a statement of election in the "Remarks" block of the Enrollment Certification. **For those schools using VACERT, you can place the student's election statement in his/her school VA file. Then, in remarks you can type the statement, "Student elects cooperative training. Signature on file."** Once a student elects co-op, he/she must complete at least one full cycle of co-op. For instance, if a student elects co-op, finishes either the OJT or school phase, then drops out of the program part-way through the other phase, an overpayment would be created for all benefits paid for the OJT phase.

The OJT phase of training must be an integral part of the schools' approved course, the training on-the-job **must be supervised by school instructors**, and the job must be found by the school and the VA student **placed in that job by the school**.

In most IHL's, students go full-time OJT during a summer term. In such a case, the school would certify the VA student as full-time co-op (in school) for either the preceding or following term and full-time co-op (OJT) for the summer. Once again, as at NCD's, the OJT phase and in-school phase must each be full-time (generally 40 hours per week OJT and 12 credits per term in school).

It should also be noted that although VA rules require that certain procedures be followed and specific minimum ratios of school and on-job time be met, **local and state requirements always take precedence and veterans are expected to follow the same rules and internal procedures as all other students**. Sometimes this means that a particular co-op program cannot be approved for veterans' training because county or school rules conflict with VA regulations. **That is unfortunate, but sometimes unavoidable**. In such cases we suggest that the VA students involved be given the option of completing their program entirely in a classroom setting with VA education benefits or completing it by co-op on-the-job without VA education benefits.

STANDARDS OF PROGRESS

One of the criteria that each school must meet in order to obtain and retain approval to train VA students is that it must have and enforce standards of progress. The requirement for standards of progress (SOP) is contained in 38 CFR, Section 21.4253(d)(4) for accredited schools and Section 21.4254(B)(6) for non-accredited schools.

When approving school standards of progress, State Approving Agencies (SAA) and VA will consider four primary aspects of those standards:

- ◆ **Does the SOP define the school's grading system and specify the minimum grades or scores required for graduation?**
- ◆ **Does the SOP reasonably relate to the requirements for graduation?**
- ◆ **Is the SOP specific enough to determine the point in time when VA education benefits must be discontinued for unsatisfactory progress?**
- ◆ **Does it contain the conditions for re-entrance after unsatisfactory progress?**

In making a determination as to whether or not a particular school's SOP meets these criteria, both SAA's and VA use the following guidelines depending on whether a school operates on a term basis with lock-step instruction or the school does not operate on a term basis with competency-based instruction.

Schools operating on a term basis

Typically this category includes all institutions of higher learning (IHL) and some non-college degree (NCD) schools which operate courses on a lock-step basis (all students in same class cover the same material at the same time and progress at the same pace). For such courses, SOP's are generally based on a cumulative grade point average (CGPA) with some provision for a probationary period. Neither the SAA nor VA accept SOP's which allow VA students to remain in a probationary status indefinitely. Often, SAA's restrict probationary periods to no more than two consecutive terms. An acceptable SOP must also reasonably relate to the final obtainment of the CGPA required for graduation. For example, where a 2.0 CGPA (on a 4.0 scale) is required for graduation in a four-year degree, a SOP might require the following minimum CGPA: 1.5 at the end of the first year; 1.75 at the end of the second year; 2.0 at the end of the third year and thereafter. At the same school, a SOP which only requires a student to maintain a 1.5 or 1.75 CGPA throughout the course to be considered satisfactory for progress, would not be sufficient because it does not relate to the school's graduation requirement of a 2.0 CGPA.

In any case, the SOP must specify when a VA student's education benefits will be stopped. Examples include "a student's VA education benefits **will** be terminated if his CGPA remains less than 2.0 for more than two consecutive semesters" or "if a student does not achieve the CGPA required by the SOP at the end of any particular term, his/her VA education benefits **will** be terminated."

Schools not operating on a term basis

Typically this category includes many public NCD schools which operate their courses on the principle of competency-based instruction, open entry-open exit (each student learns course material at his/her own pace and receives a certificate of completion when all competencies have been learned. Students just starting the course and others ready to complete that same course will be in the same classroom/shop at the same time with the same instructor). For such courses, a SOP may require specific grades/scores at the end of each grading period with probationary periods of one or two grading periods.

In any case, the school's SOP must **also** be able to identify the point in time when it has become apparent that the student will not be able to complete the course (all course competencies) **within the approved course length (in clock hours)**. It is normally the course instructor who makes this determination based on his/her observations, knowledge of the student, and tests/projects completed. Such determinations should be made well before the VA student has attended for the approved course length (in hours).

Schools which have institutional SOP's which do not meet these minimum standards may create a separate SOP which only affects a student's VA education benefits payments. In such a case it may well be possible for a student's VA education benefits payments to be terminated while he/she is still technically in good standing with the school and allowed to continue in attendance. This would not be a "double standard" in the traditional sense, but would merely be two separate standards, one of which governs the student's eligibility to attend school and the other of which governs the student's eligibility to receive VA education benefits payments (much the same way that scholarship students must maintain certain academic achievement levels in order to continue receiving their scholarships).

Conditions for re-entrance after unsatisfactory progress will vary from school to school, but most usually require re-application for admission and review by an academic dean or committee or counseling. Many require the student to remain out of school for one or more terms. In all cases, schools are required to notify VA when a VA student does not meet the minimum requirements of their approved SOP. This is true even where the school may feel that mitigating or extenuating circumstances exist. Based primarily on the school's recommendation, VA will determine whether or not to resume the payment of VA education benefits to that particular student. In most cases, if the school feels that the student will now succeed, VA will pay education benefits.

VOCATIONAL FLIGHT TRAINING

Background: Effective October 1, 1990, vocational flight training benefits were authorized for a four-year period for persons entitled to CH30 or CH1606 benefits. On April 1, 1991, CH32 eligible persons were added with the same program ending date as Chapters 30 and 1606. Flight training benefits reimburse the trainee for **60%** of the charges paid by the trainee for training completed in an approved course. This includes charges for **Dual Flights, Ground School & Pre/Post** training generally **for the hours in the FSDO approved Training Course Outline (TCO), up to 120% of the FAR Part 141 or 63 minimums, whichever is less.** Effective October 1, 1992, VA education benefits could be paid for **Solo Flights** in an approved program, but only up to the **minimum** required by FAR Part 141. Effective October 1, 1994, under Public Law 103-446, flight training was made a permanent part of these GI Bill programs.

CONDITIONS FOR ENTRY

◆ APPROVED PROGRAM

VA approved programs, aircraft and charges are identified on the **OLAF Report - Form 1998**. This form is issued when the school is approved and as changes occur and is important because it is used by the VA to authorize and pay for training. School certifying officials should refer to this form when completing enrollment certifications. **Under no circumstances can VA education benefits be paid for pursuit of a vocational Private Pilots License. College credit courses which apply to a standard college degree and which simultaneously apply to acquiring a private pilot's license may be certified for VA education benefits. In such a case, VA will pay a monthly benefit commensurate with the training time justified by the credit hours being pursued.**

◆ LICENSE AND MEDICAL REQUIREMENTS

Generally these follow FAR 141/63 requirements. The first program for which VA benefits can be paid to a student is Commercial or Commercial and Instrument (must be pursued concurrently if the student possesses a private license restricted to VFR). No benefits are payable for pursuit of a Private Pilot's License. **All VA Students must have a medical certificate valid for second class privileges at the beginning of each program/rating (except in pursuit of an airline transport pilot - ATP - rating for which the student must have a medical certificate valid for first class privileges).** Additionally, those persons wishing to enter an **ATP** course must have already accumulated the **1500** hours of flight required for that rating.

◆ 85/15% RATIO REQUIREMENTS & WAIVER

Flight schools which have demonstrated that their VA student enrollment is 35% or less of their overall student enrollment are granted a waiver from having to maintain and utilize a daily flight log whenever a new VA student enrolls. As long as the VA student enrollment remains 35% or less, veteran students can be entered into approved training programs without exception. However, once the 35% VA student enrollment has been exceeded, veteran students must be enrolled in accordance with the following 85/15% ratio requirements:

A new student cannot begin training if more than 85% of the total hours flown for the preceding 30 days were completed by VA student(s). A daily flight log is maintained to compute this percentage. The log identifies, on a daily basis, the dual flight hours flown by VA and non-VA students training under FAR Part 141. The day the VA student is to begin training, the total VA hours for the thirty days preceding the entry date is divided by the total of non-VA and VA hours for the same period. The student can

begin training if the percentage of VA to non-VA flight hours is 85% or less. If the ratio is greater than 85%, the log will have to be checked the next day and the computation done again to determine whether the ratio is in balance. Until the computations show the ratio as 85% or less VA flight hours, the VA student cannot be certified. This is important because VA cannot reimburse a student for any training that takes place before the 85/15% ratio is in balance. Alternately, the charges for Part 141 dual and ground school training may be used in lieu of actual hours.

FORMS

✎ APPLICATION:

A student who has never used VA education benefits before will complete **VA Form 22-1990, Application for Education Benefits**. Otherwise the **VA Form 22-1995, Request for Change of Program or Place of Training**, is used.

✎ ENROLLMENT CERTIFICATION, **VA Form 22-1999**:

- ◆ **BLOCKS 1-8 and 18A, B & C** on the front of the form are completed.
- ◆ **BLOCK 7** Check "Flight Training".
- ◆ **BLOCK 8** Name of the program as it has been approved by VA. Only one program can be certified at a time.
- ◆ **BLOCK 18A** This item is dated on/or after the first day of training.
- ◆ **BLOCK 18B** Signature & title of the school official authorized to sign VA forms. The **VA Form 22-8794, Designation of Certifying Official**, with this signature must be on file with VA.
- ◆ **BLOCK 18C** Name & address of school as it has been approved by VA. Please put your eight digit facility code in this block. This number has been assigned to your school by VA. Your number is in the upper right-hand corner of the **VA Form 22-1998c, Approval Information Courses in Flight School**.
- ◆ **BLOCK 19A** Show the highest current rating held by the trainee which is a prerequisite for the course listed in Block 8. If the trainee does not need all the approved hours for the ground school or dual portions of the course listed in Block 8, please identify these hours as credit granted for prior training. Put "NONE" when no credit has been granted.
- ◆ **BLOCK 19B** This is the date the trainee first has ground school or a flight lesson.

- ◆ **BLOCK 19C** This is the number of hours of the approved course, less any dual, solo, or ground school hours for which credit has been granted. The approved course hours are identified on the OLAF Report - Form 1998.
- ◆ **BLOCK 19D** The total charges are the sum of the products of the hours in each category times the maximum hourly rate for that category. If a trainee has no credit for prior training, the total charges will be the cost of the course as approved and identified on the OLAF Report - Form 1998.

Keep the "**SCHOOL COPY**" of the Enrollment Certification for your records. The "**VA COPY**" is mailed along with the student's application to:

ATLANTA REGIONAL PROCESSING OFFICE
PO BOX 100022
DECATUR, GA 30031-7022

☛ **MONTHLY CERTIFICATION OF FLIGHT TRAINING:**

Payments of VA education benefits for flight training are based on the submission of **VA Form 22-6553c, Monthly Certification of Flight Training**. This form is also used to notify the VA of a change in enrollment status within 30 days of the effective date of the change. These changes include: voluntary termination; termination for unsatisfactory progress or conduct; termination for failure to meet quarterly minimums; course completion.

This form requires the signature of the student and certifying official and must be complete and accurate. The instructions for completing this form are on the reverse of that form. VA will pay 60% of the cost of relevant state and local sales taxes **if required**. Check with your SAA regarding the charging of sales tax on the cost of renting/leasing aircraft for use in flight training.

Monthly certifications are based on cash tickets signed by the instructor and student. It will not be necessary to submit copies of the cash tickets with the form; however, the cash tickets must be maintained in the student's file. **We recommend that the cash tickets be stapled to a photocopy of the VAF 22-6553c and kept as part of the student's records.**

Information reported on the form must agree with charges, rates and hours that have been approved by the SAA or VA. We want to stress the importance of arithmetic accuracy and continuity from one monthly certification to the next.

The completed VAF 6553c should be submitted promptly after each month of training. **No more than one month at a time may be certified on this form.** Send the certifications to:

CH30: ATLANTA REGIONAL PROCESSING OFFICE	CH32 & 1606:	VA REGIONAL OFFICE
PO BOX 100022		400 SOUTH 18TH STREET
DECATUR, GA 30031-7022		ST. LOUIS, MO 63103

The following page contains a check sheet that may be used to help insure that you have all documentation on hand that is needed for VA flight training in each VA student's file. Sample completed VAF's 22-1999 and 6553c (both hard copy and VACERT versions) are found following the FAA/VA minimum/maximum requirements chart.

VA FLIGHT STUDENT CHECK LIST

IMPORTANT - A COPY OF EACH ITEM LISTED BELOW MUST BE MAINTAINED IN EACH STUDENT'S VA FILE - DO NOT CERTIFY TO VA FOR PAYMENT UNTIL ALL ITEMS ARE OF RECORD.

- VA REQUIRES A MEDICAL CERTIFICATE VALID FOR SECOND CLASS PRIVILEGES (FIRST CLASS PRIVILEGES FOR ATP) BEFORE STUDENT ENROLLS.**

- PRIVATE PILOT (OR HIGHER) LICENSE, AS REQUIRED FOR RATING TO BE PURSUED**

- COPY OF CERTIFICATE TO FAA FOR COMMENCEMENT OF PART 141 TRAINING**

- EVALUATION OF PRIOR CREDIT (CHIEF FLIGHT INSTRUCTOR TO PROVIDE)**

- 85-15% LISTING FOR THE 30 DAY PERIOD PRIOR TO VETERANS START DATE**

- COPY OF STUDENT'S SIGNED STATEMENT OF RECEIPT OF SCHOOL CATALOG**

- COPY OF VETERANS APPLICATION FOR VA BENEFITS & DD214**

- AFTER ALL INFORMATION ABOVE IS SECURED - THEN COMPLETE VA FORM 22-1999 (ENROLLMENT CERTIFICATION)**

- FROM THIS POINT ON KEEP A COPY OF EVERY MONTHLY CERTIFICATE WITH A COPY OF CASH TICKETS, ACCOUNTING DOCUMENTATION, ETC.**

VETERAN'S NAME

SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER

SCHOOL OFFICIAL IDENTIFICATION: _____

**FAA MINIMUM HOURLY REQUIREMENTS
FAR PART 141 (1997 REVISION)
AND MAXIMUM HOURS THAT CAN BE APPROVED FOR VA**

Instrument Rating Course (Appendix C)

<u>Initial Instrument Rating</u>	<u>Minimum</u>	<u>Maximum (*)</u>
Ground School	33 hours	FSDO approved hours
Dual Flight	35 hours	42 hours

<u>Additional Instrument Rating</u>	<u>Minimum</u>	<u>Maximum (*)</u>
Ground School	20 hours	FSDO approved hours
Dual Flight	15 hours	18 hours

Commercial Pilot ASEL or AMEL (Appendix D)

Ground School	35 hours	FSDO approved hours
Flight	120 hours	
(must include at least the following)		
Dual	55 hours	66 hours
Solo (PIC)	65 hours	65 hours

Commercial Pilot Rotorcraft (Appendix D)

Ground School	30 hours	FSDO approved hours
Flight	115 hours	
(must include at least the following)		
Dual	30 hours	36 hours
Solo (PIC)	85 hours	85 hours

Flight Instructor Certification (Appendix F)

Ground School	40 hours	FSDO approved hours
Dual Flight	25 hours	30 hours

Additional Flight Instructor Certification (Appendix F)

Ground School	20 hours	FSDO approved hours
Dual Flight	25 hours	30 hours

Instrument Flight Instructor (Appendix G)

Ground School	15 hours	FSDO approved hours
Dual Flight	15 hours	18 hours

Airline Transport Pilot (Appendix E)

Ground School	40 hours	FSDO approved hours
Dual Flight	25 hours	30 hours

Additional Aircraft Category or Class Rating (Appendix I)

No Minimums - Whatever the FSDO approves, VA approves

Additional Aircraft Type Rating for Other Than ATP (Appendix J)

Ground School	10 hours	FSDO approved hours
Dual Flight	10 hours	12 hours

(*) The VA approval will be for the hours approved by the FSDO, not to exceed 120% of the FAA minimums.

A certified flight school does not have to meet any of these minimums if its courses are approved under the provisions of FAR 141.55 (d) & (e). In such cases, the hours approved for VA purposes will be whatever hours the FAA FSDO approves.

VA EDUCATION LOANS

This is a program, very limited in scope, which is designed to help students continue their education once they have passed their delimiting date. Such loans may be granted in amounts equal to the amount by which school-related expenses exceed available resources, but not to exceed a rate of \$1,250 for one semester, \$1,660 for two quarters, or \$270 per month for courses not operating on a term basis.

Basic Eligibility: Education loans may be granted for a maximum of two years after a claimant's delimiting date. **Claimants are limited to spouses and surviving spouses whose delimiting date has passed, but who had remaining entitlement under Chapter 35.** Some, but not all of the eligibility criteria are listed below:

- ◆ The student has remaining entitlement after the end of his/her delimiting date.
- ◆ The student is enrolled full time in the same program of education that he/she was pursuing at the time the delimiting date expired.
- ◆ The student has no outstanding indebtedness to VA because of prior overpayment of benefits.
- ◆ The student must have school-related expenses which exceed his/her available financial resources.

In determining the student's available financial resources, income from all sources is counted, including, but not limited to, non-VA financial assistance, family contributions, cash assets, net available income, etc.

School-related expenses include tuition and fees, books and supplies (as required for non-VA students), commuting expenses, and noninstitutional room and board (but not to exceed the room and board charges of the school).

If spouses or surviving spouses feel that they may be eligible for this program, they should complete **VA Form 22-8725, Application for Education Loan**. If approved, VA will provide the student a **VA Form 22-8726, Promissory Note**, which provides for repayment of principal and interest. Repayment of both principal and interest is deferred any time the student is enrolled in training and attending on at least a half-time basis. Repayment of the loan begins nine months after the student ceases to be enrolled on at least a half-time basis.

OVERPAYMENTS, DEBT COLLECTION, AND LOST CHECKS

LOST CHECKS

If a student does not receive a VA education check that he/she believes was issued, the VA should be called immediately on our toll-free number at **(1-800-827-1000)**. Our counselors can check the date and amount of any VA education check issued to a student and whether or not it has been returned. If a check was issued, but not received within **ten days**, then we can initiate tracer action with the U.S. Treasury Department (VA education checks are issued by the U.S. Treasury Disbursement Office in Austin, Texas). Once Treasury has completed its review, the following action will be taken, as appropriate:

- ◆ If the check is outstanding (not cashed), a courtesy disbursement check will be issued to the student.
- ◆ If Treasury finds the check to have been negotiated (cashied), they will send a photocopy (front and back) of the check and a claim form to complete. The student will be asked to complete the form and return it to the address provided (in Hyattsville, Maryland). If the student claims non-receipt of a benefit check, is issued a courtesy disbursement check, and the original check is received, only one of the checks should be cashed. The other check should be marked "**VOID**" and returned to the U.S. Treasury in Austin, Texas, immediately. If both checks are cashed, Treasury will notify VA of the double payment and charge our federal account for the excess payment. VA will then be responsible for collecting this dual payment from the student.

OVERPAYMENTS AND DEBT COLLECTION

◆ When an overpayment is created, a first demand letter is sent notifying the student of the overpayment. When the letter is received, the student should immediately contact VA regarding the debt. The response should be sent (in writing) directly to the office sending the letter, unless otherwise stated. Responding immediately and reaching a valid repayment agreement in a timely manner could **prevent future benefits from being withheld**. Due process (rights to appeal or waiver) as well as time limits for each step in the process is given in the first demand letter.

Time limits - A request for waiver must be received no later than **180 days (6 months) from the date of the initial notification of the overpayment**. If a waiver request is received within 30 days of the first demand (notification) letter, no benefits will be withheld until the decision is made. If benefits were withheld and the waiver request was found to be timely, a refund will be issued. If a waiver is granted, any funds that have been applied will be refunded.

Compromise offers can be made any time. The offer must be a lump sum offer, in writing, and accompanied by a current Financial Status Report (form available through our toll-free telephone number).

◆ If a waiver is denied, the student will be notified by letter which will also indicate when future benefits will start being withheld. An appeal to a waiver denial must be made within one year from the date of the denial letter. Withholding of benefits will continue while this issue is pending.

◆ Second and third demand letters and one warning letter are sent before referrals are made to nationwide credit bureaus.

◆ Second and third demand letters and two warning letters are sent before referral to the Internal Revenue Service to offset the debt from federal income tax refunds.

COMMITTEE ON WAIVERS AND COMPROMISES

The Committee on Waivers and Compromises (COWC) has the authority to consider waiver of all benefit overpayments. The COWC at our Regional Office in St. Petersburg, has been consolidated into one unit whose primary duty is to render COWC decisions and conduct COWC hearings. The establishment of this unit enables our Committee to render quality decisions in a timely manner.

Should a veteran/claimant have an overpayment and desire waiver consideration, **a request must be received at VA no later than six (6) months from the date of initial notification of the overpayment.** When an overpayment is established, written notification is sent to the veteran/claimant detailing the information needed to be considered for waiver. Briefly, the request must be in writing, specifically stating the reasons for the waiver request, accompanied with a financial status report listing all income, living expenses, installment contracts, assets, etc. The request should be sent to the Regional Office having jurisdiction for collection; the address can be found on the indebtedness notification letter.

DEBT INFORMATION CENTERS

Education Loans:	VA Debt Management Center ATTN: Education Loans Bishop Henry Whipple Fed. Bldg. Ft. Snelling St. Paul, MN 55111	1-800-827-0648
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REPS:	VA Regional Office Finance Division (243) 400 South 18 th Street St. Louis, MO 63103	1-800-827-1000 (To be taken as a benefits payment inquiry by the regional office in the state where the veteran lives)
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All Other Debts (*):	VA Debt Management Center P.O. Box 11930 St. Paul, MN 55111-0930	1-800-827-0648
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(*) Debts which exist as a result of Chapter 31 (Vocational Rehabilitation) activity are handled by the VA Regional Office which has jurisdiction for that case as long as that Chapter 31 award is active.

TUITION ASSISTANCE TOP UP (TATU)

This program, enacted as part of Public Law 106-398, is applicable only to those persons eligible for benefits under Chapter 30. **Effective for courses with start dates of October 30, 2000 or later**, this program pays the difference between what the military component reimburses an active duty member for their course and the actual cost of the course.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

- ◆ The person must be eligible for chapter 30 benefits
- ◆ The person must receive Tuition Assistance from his/her military component for the course or courses for which s/he is claiming TATU

APPROVAL REQUIREMENTS

Any course for which Tuition Assistance is approved by a military department is approved for TATU payments. Even though TATU is a chapter 30 benefit, it is not necessary that courses or the schools be approved for other VA education benefit programs.

APPLICATION PROCEDURES

Original Claims:

- ◆ The service member completes a VAF 22-1990, Application for VA Education Assistance. Write at the top of the form, "Top-Up."
- ◆ Attach a copy of the approved Tuition Assistance form supplied by the military component.

Supplemental Claims: The service member simply sends the approved Tuition Assistance form supplied by the military component with a cover letter specifically requesting Top-Up.

All claims in the Southern Region should be sent to the Atlanta Regional Processing Office in Decatur, Georgia (see address in front of Handbook).

The RPO will then pay the service member the difference between the actual cost of tuition and what the military paid him/her.

HOW ARE TATU PAYMENTS CHARGED AGAINST A PERSON'S CHAPTER 30 BENEFITS?

An account is maintained to show the total amount of TATU payments made to an individual. The total dollar amount paid under TATU is divided by the amount that would normally be paid to a veteran for full time school attendance. The result is the number of months of entitlement that will be charged to that individual for the use of TATU. For example, an individual uses \$1,300 under TATU and the full time school benefit for that person would be \$650 per month. That person would then have used two (2) months of his/her Montgomery GI Bill entitlement.

Active duty service members are counseled regarding these ramifications so that they can decide whether or not TATU is for them.

PAYMENTS FOR LICENSING AND CERTIFICATION TESTS

Another provision of Public Law 106-419, this benefit is available to veterans who eligible under Chapters 30, 32, and 35 and Section 903. It pays for the cost of tests required for specific licenses required by state agencies to practice an occupation or certifications which are generally recognized as necessary for the pursuit of a specific career. Payment is limited to **\$2,000** per test and is effective only for **tests taken on or after March 1, 2001**. It should be further noted that this benefit pays **only for the cost of the test**. It does **not** pay for the cost of the license or certification itself or any other related costs or any courses a student may take to prepare for the test.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Individuals must be eligible to receive education payments under Chapter 30, 32, or 35, or Section 903

APPROVAL REQUIREMENTS

Licensing and certification tests must be specifically approved by SAA's for this benefit. Once approval has been granted, that information is entered into the **Licensing And Certification Approval System (LACAS)**. Only SAA's and Education Liaison Representatives (ELR's) have the authority to enter courses into LACAS; however, the general public can view it to see which licensing and certification tests are approved nationwide. It is available on the Internet at **www.gibill.va.gov/lac**.

APPLICATION PROCEDURES

- ◆ If s/he has not already done so, s/he must file an original application for education benefits using the application form appropriate for his/her benefit, e.g., VA Form 22-1990, 5490, etc.
- ◆ There is no form to specifically apply for this benefit. The best way to apply is for the individual to send the Atlanta RPO a copy of his/her test results with a note or VA Form 21-4138 (Statement in Support of Claim) stating that they are requesting reimbursement for the cost of their licensing or certification exam. The statement must include at least the following:
 - ◇ Name of the test they took
 - ◇ Name and address of the organization issuing the license or certificate (not necessarily the organization that administered the test.
 - ◇ Date they took the test
 - ◇ Cost of the test
 - ◇ The following statement: "I authorize release of my test information to VA"

HOW DO PAYMENTS UNDER THIS BENEFIT AFFECT A PERSON'S ENTITLEMENT?

We will take the total amount of payments made under this benefit, then divide it by the monthly full time rate paid for school attendance for that person. For example, a typical chapter 30 veteran is eligible for 36 months of full time benefits at the rate of \$800 per month. That person is paid a total of \$1,300 under this provision. \$1,300 divided by \$800 results in a computation of two (2) months of entitlement used.

VA REGIONAL OFFICE ADDRESSES

VA Regional Office
345 Perry Hill Road
Montgomery, AL 36109-3798

VA Regional Office
2925 DeBarr Road
Anchorage, AK 99508-2989

VA Regional Office
3225 North Central Ave.
Phoenix, AZ 85012

VA Regional Office
Building 65, Ft. Roots
PO Box 1280
North Little Rock, AR 72115

VA Regional Office
Federal Building
11000 Wilshire Blvd
Los Angeles, CA 90024

VA Regional Office
Oakland Federal Building
1301 Clay St.
Suite 1300 North
Oakland, CA 94612-5209

VA Regional Office
2022 Camino Del Rio North
San Diego, CA 92108

VA Regional Office
44 Union Blvd.
PO Box 25126
Denver, CO 80225

VA Regional Office
Abraham Ribicoff Federal Bldg.
450 Main St.
Hartford, CT 06103

VA Regional Office
1601 Kirkwood Highway
Wilmington, DE 19805

VA Regional Office
1120 Vermont Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20421

VA Regional Office
9500 Bay Pines Boulevard
PO Box 1437
St. Petersburg, FL 33731

Atlanta VA Regional Office
1700 Clairmont Road
Decatur, GA 30033-4032

VA Regional Office
PJJK Federal Building
300 Ala Moana Blvd.
PO Box 50188
Honolulu, HI 96850

VA Regional Office
Federal Bldg. & U.S. Courthouse
550 W. Fort St.
Boise, ID 83702

VA Regional Office
536 S. Clark St.
PO Box 8136
Chicago, IL 60680

VA Regional Office
575 N. Pennsylvania St.
Indianapolis, IN 46202

VA Regional Office
210 Walnut St.
Des Moines, IA 50309

VA Medical & Regional
Office Center
5500 E. Kellogg
Wichita, KS 67211

VA Regional Office
545 S. Third St.
Louisville, KY 40202

VA Regional Office
701 Loyola Avenue
New Orleans, LA 70113

VA Medical & Regional
Office Center
Togus, ME 04330

VA Regional Office
Federal Building
31 Hopkins Plaza
Baltimore, MD 21201

VA Regional Office
JFK Federal Building
Government Center
Boston, MA 02203

VA Regional Office
Patrick V. McNamara Federal
Building
477 Michigan Avenue
Detroit, MI 48226

VA Regional Office & Insurance
Center
Federal Building
Fort Snelling
St. Paul, MN 55111

VA Regional Office
100 West Capitol St.
Jackson, MS 39216

VA Regional Office
400 S. 18th St.
St. Louis, MO 63103

VA Medical & Regional Office
Ft. Harrison, MT 59636

VA Regional Office
5631 S. 48th St.
Lincoln, NE 68516

VA Regional Office
1201 Terminal Way
Reno, NV 89520

VA Regional Office
Norris Cotton Federal Building
275 Chestnut St.
Manchester, NH 03101

VA Regional Office
20 Washington Place
Newark, NJ 07102

VA Regional Office
Dennis Chavez Federal Building
500 Gold Avenue, S.W.
Albuquerque, NM 87102

VA Regional Office
Federal Building
111 West Huron St.
Buffalo, NY 14202

VA Regional Office
252 Seventh Avenue at 21st St.
New York, NY 10001

VA Regional Office
Federal Building
251 N. Main St.
Winston-Salem, NC 27155

VA Regional Office
2101 Elm St.
Fargo, ND 58102

VA Regional Office
Anthony J. Celebrezze Fed. Bldg.
1240 East Ninth St.
Cleveland, OH 44199

VA Regional Office
Federal Building
125 S. Main St.
Muskogee, OK 74401

VA Regional Office
Federal Building
1220 Southwest Third Ave.
Portland, OR 97204

VA Regional Office & Insurance Center
5000 Wissahickon Avenue
PO Box 8079
Philadelphia, PA 19101

VA Regional Office
1000 Liberty Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

VA Regional Office (Manila, PI)
1131 Roxas Blvd.
APO AP 96440

VA Regional Office
U.S. Courthouse & Federal
Building
Carlos E. Chardon St.
Hato Rey
GPO Box 364867
San Juan, PR 00936

VA Regional Office
380 Westminster Mall
Providence, RI 09203

VA Regional Office
1801 Assembly St.
Columbia, SC 29201

VA Medical & Regional Office
2510 W. 22nd St.
PO Box 5046
Sioux Falls, SD 57117

VA Regional Office
110 Ninth Avenue, South
Nashville, TN 37203

VA Regional Office
8900 Lakes at 610 Dr.
Houston, TX 77054

VA Regional Office
1400 N. Valley Mills Drive
Waco, TX 76799

VA Regional Office
Federal Building
125 South State St.
PO Box 11500
Salt Lake City, UT 84147

VA Medical & Regional Office Center
N. Hartland Rd.
White River Junction, VT 05009

VA Regional Office
210 Franklin Road, S.W.
Roanoke, VA 24011

VA Regional Office
Federal Building
915 Second Avenue
Seattle, WA 98174

VA Regional Office
640 Fourth Avenue
Huntington, WV 2570

VA Regional Office
5000 W. National Avenue
Building 6
PO Box 6
Milwaukee, WI 53295

VA Medical & Regional Office Center
2360 E. Pershing Blvd.
Cheyenne, WY 82001

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CONSOLIDATION OF EDUCATION CLAIMS PROCESSING

(For all GI Bill programs, except chpt 31, as of July 2003)

ATLANTA, Georgia

Alabama

Florida

Georgia

Mississippi

North Carolina

Puerto Rico

South Carolina

Tennessee

BUFFALO, New York

Connecticut

Delaware

District of Columbia

Maine

Maryland

Massachusetts

New Hampshire

New Jersey

New York

Ohio

Pennsylvania

Rhode Island

Vermont

Virginia

ST. LOUIS, Missouri

Colorado

Illinois

Indiana

Iowa

Kansas

Kentucky

Michigan

Minnesota

Missouri

Montana

Nebraska

North Dakota

South Dakota

Wisconsin

Wyoming

West Virginia

MUSKOGEE, Oklahoma

Alaska

Arkansas

Arizona

California

Hawaii

Idaho

Louisiana

Nevada

New Mexico

Oklahoma

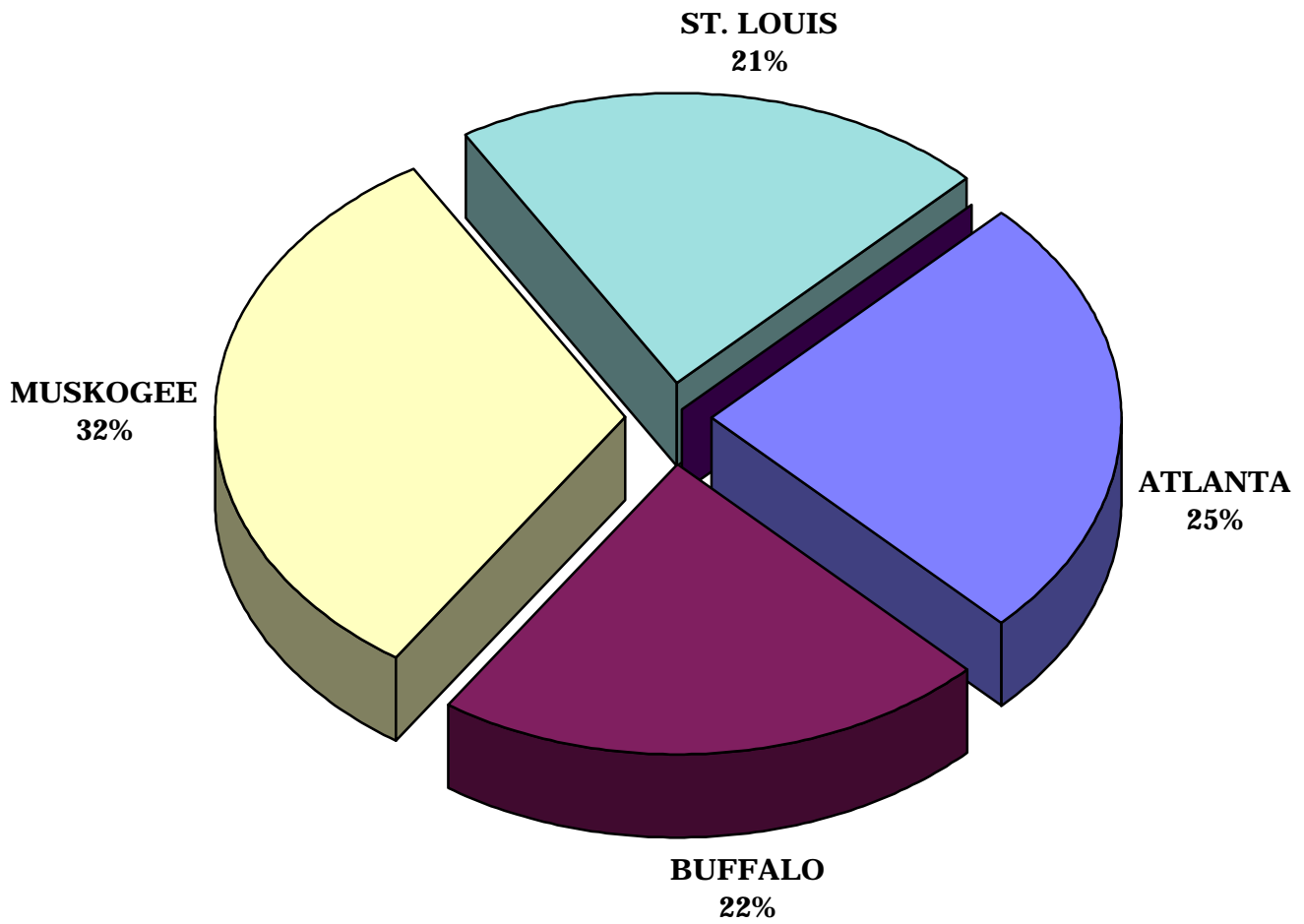
Oregon

Texas

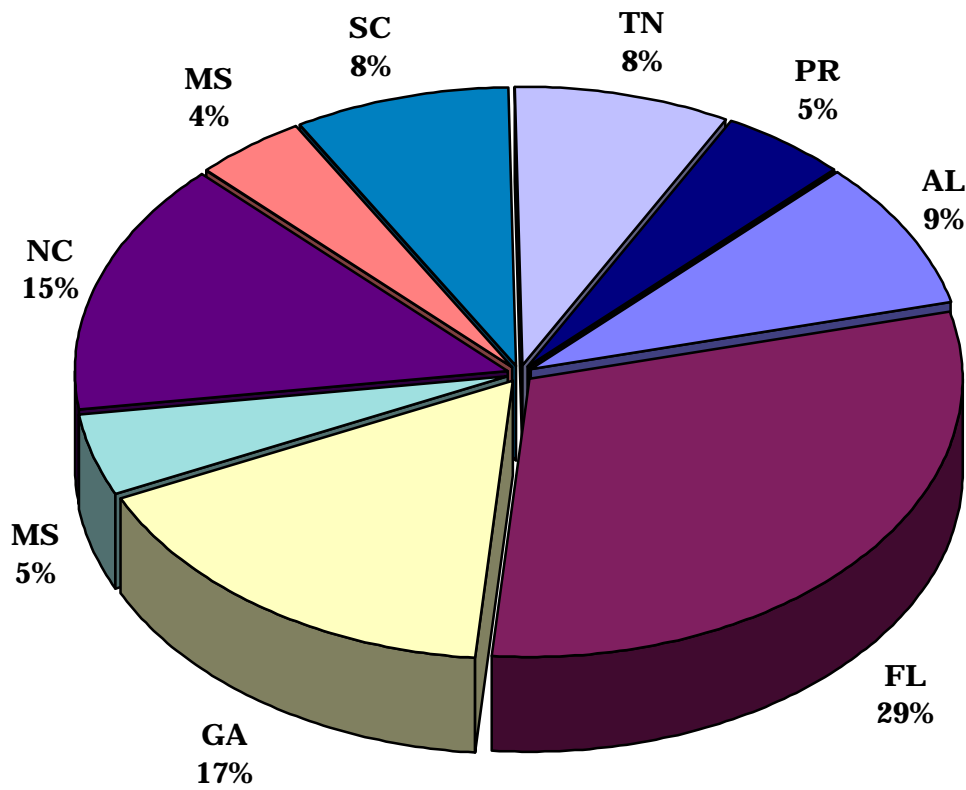
Utah

Washington

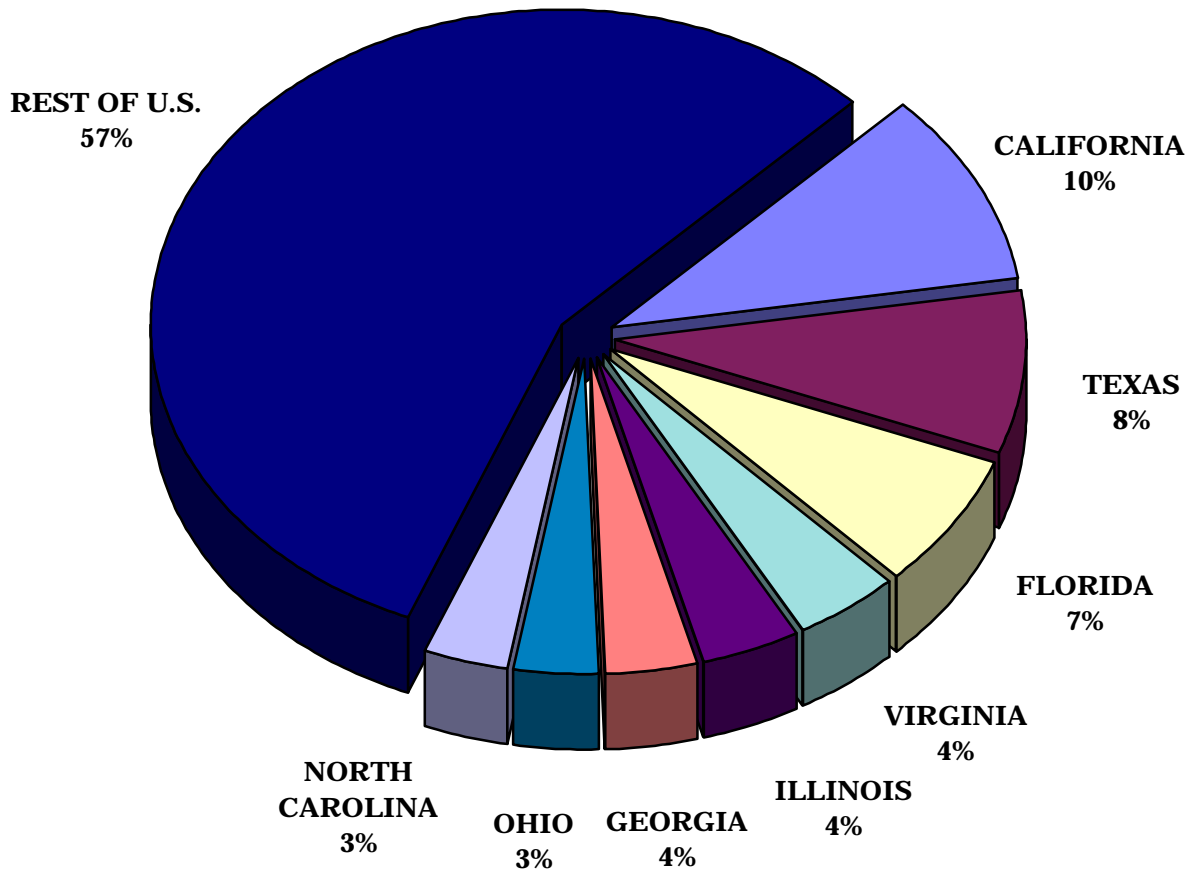
PER CENT TRAINEES FISCAL YEAR 2001 BY REGION



**TOTAL TRAINEES FISCAL YEAR 2002
SOUTHERN REGION (ATLANTA RPO)
BY PERCENTAGE**



TOTAL GI BILL TRAINEES BY PERCENTAGE - NATIONWIDE FISCAL YEAR 2002



ERRATA

Page 21 - Public Law 106-419: Bullet regarding VEAP conversions to the Montgomery GI Bill, first line should read "**No later than October 1, 2001** they must make an irrevocable election to receive the MGIB."

Page 45 - Box titled "Retroactive applications and payments":

Fourth line, delete first "**the**" in sentence beginning "Receipt of..."

Fifth line, delete first "**does**"

Page 117 - Paragraph titled APPROVED PROGRAM LENGTH: Third line delete "**or**" between "credit hour" and "basis".

Page 142 - Licensing and Certification Tests: Last paragraph, the full time rate and divisor should be **\$800**, not **\$650** as currently on that page.

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IN FLANDERS FIELDS

**In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.**

**We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders fields.**

**Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.**

John McCrae (1872-1918)

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VICKIE FRITCHLEY, & CHUCK PETERMAN**

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