



Veterans Benefits Administration

Education Service

Southeastern Council on Military Education

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Veterans Benefits Administration
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VA



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Forever GI Bill

The Forever GI Bill expands, enhances and enriches:



Expands the number of Veterans and eligible family members who can use benefits.



Enhances programs, including the introduction of VET TEC and STEM.

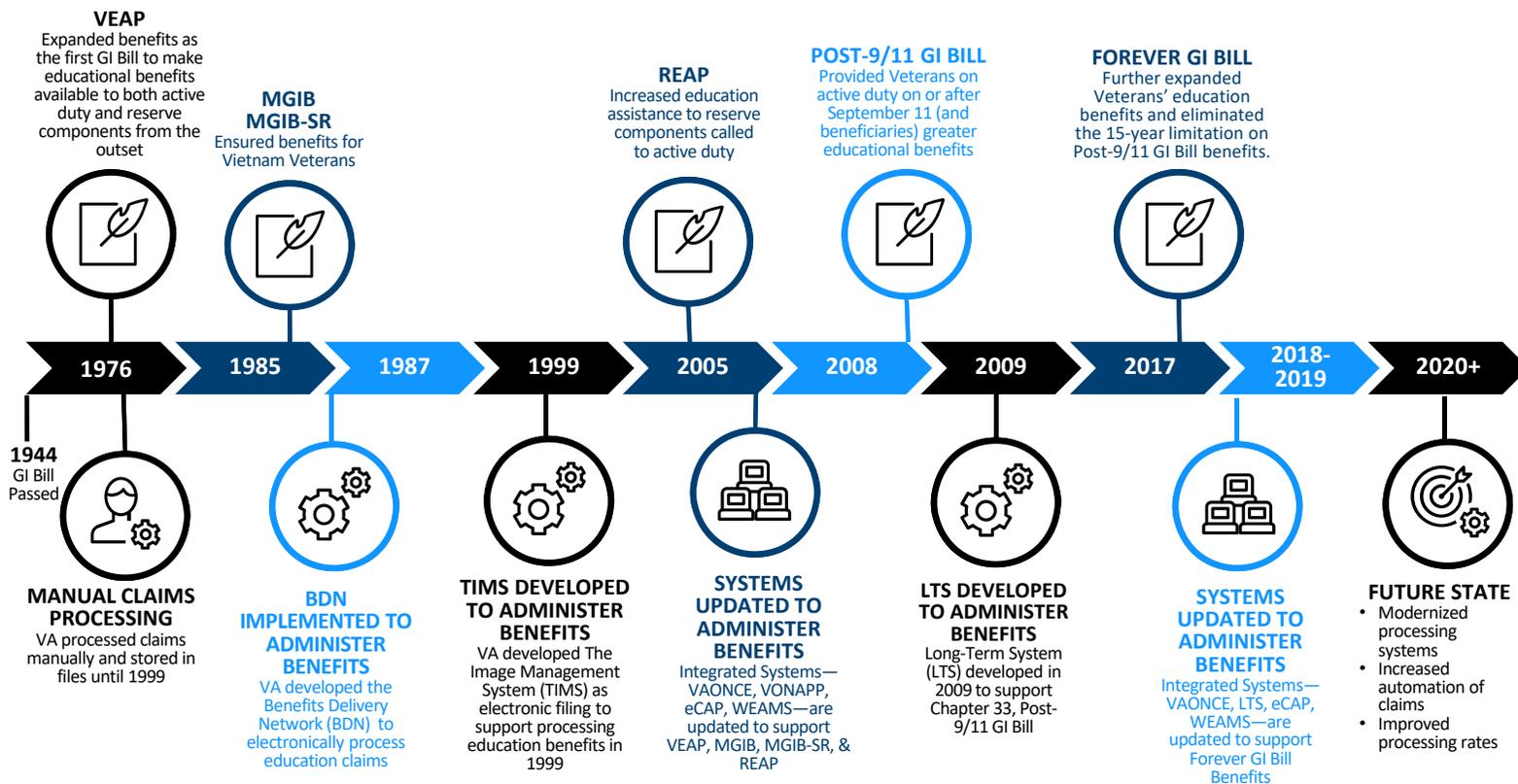


Enriches lives by giving GI Bill beneficiaries tools they need to further their education.

Historical IT System Overview

VBA EDUCATION CLAIMS PROCESSING | HISTORICAL IT SYSTEM OVERVIEW

To adhere to legislative changes and provide increased benefits to Veterans and their beneficiaries, VBA continuously integrates and updates multiple IT systems.



Education Service Highlights

Fast Facts



- Administers **6 educational benefits** programs
- Processes approximately **4 million claims** each year
- Distributes **\$12B/year** to **1 million beneficiaries**
- Benefits support students at approved IHL, NCD, Apprenticeship, On Job Training, Correspondent, and Flight institutions and training facilities



Over **43,000 Campuses** approved (Main, Branch, Extension)

Since inception (Aug 2009), **\$101.B** to over **2.1 million** trainees

Post- 9/11 GI Bill by far the **largest** education benefit



Payment accuracy > **98%**



Average Days to Complete Education Claims



28 days Original applications



14 days Enrollments (each academic term)



Over **400,000** Individual Approved Programs

Forever GI Bill

The Harry W. Colmery Veterans Educational Assistance Act, also known as the “Forever GI Bill,” brings significant changes to VA education benefits. Most changes enhance or expand education benefits for Veterans, service members, families and survivors.



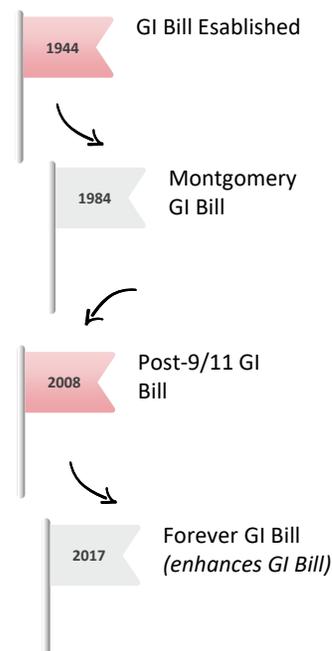
EXPANDED EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE

- Signed August 16, 2017 – the most comprehensive changes to GI Bill benefits since enactment of the Post 9/11 GI Bill.
- 13 provisions were effective upon enactment; 18 were effective by August 1, 2018; 3 provisions are effective by 2022.
- Implemented 30 out of 34 education related provisions



ENHANCED BENEFITS

- **Eliminated Time Limit for Using Benefits.** The 15-year time limit is gone for those who left active duty on or after January 1, 2013. Veterans will now be able to access their benefit when the time is right for them and their families.
- **Purple Heart Recipients are Assured Full Benefits.** Servicemembers and honorably discharged Veterans awarded a Purple Heart on or after September 11, 2001, are entitled to Post-9/11 benefits at the 100 percent benefit level for up to 36 months.
- **On August 1, 2020, Benefit Levels Will Expand.** The 40 percent benefit level will be eliminated, and the 60 percent level expanded under the Post-9/11 GI Bill.



Colmery Act Highlights

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Forever GI Bill By the Numbers



VET TEC (Veteran Employment Through Technology Education Courses):

Since April, 2019, 2,996 Veterans have become eligible to take advantage of VET TEC, a new coding bootcamp program that provides tuition assistance.



Independent Study Program

181% increase in Postsecondary Tech Schools and Vocational Institutions offering independent study.



Exams

More than 3,500 GI Bill beneficiaries have had their licensing and certification exam fees prorated.



Restoration of Entitlement

Over 1,236 years of equivalent GI Bill entitlement restored because of the Forever GI Bill.



Priority Enrollment

More than 690 schools offer priority enrollment which allows Veterans to enroll in courses earlier than other students.



Purple Heart

Over 2,000 Purple Heart recipients had their Post 9/11 GI Bill benefits increased to the 100% level through the Forever GI Bill.



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VET TEC

VET TEC IS A 5-year pilot program for eligible Veterans to help them secure meaningful employment in the talent-hungry tech sector



WHAT IS VET TEC?

VET TEC pairs eligible Veterans with market-leading Training Providers offering the high-tech training and skills development sought by employers. Veterans can take classes to earn a certificate in one of five areas (information science, computer programming, data processing, media applications, and computer software).



WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

If you have at least one day of unexpired GI Bill entitlement, then you may be eligible for VET TEC.



WHAT DOES IT COST?

It's free! Participation in the VET TEC program will not count against your GI Bill entitlement. While you are in VET TEC you will earn a housing stipend.



WHERE CAN I APPLY?

Visit benefits.va.gov for the application (22-0994)

Or go to www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/fgib/VetTec.asp and click 'Apply Now' under 'How do I sign up for VET TEC'



HIGHLIGHTS

13 Approved Training Providers; 7 with Preference; 28 Locations

60 Students Enrolled, 10 Students Graduated, 1 Student Employed

STEM SCHOLARSHIP

VA has launched the Edith Nourse Rogers STEM Scholarship program for students training in high demand STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) fields.



WHAT IS THE STEM SCHOLARSHIP?

The STEM Scholarship offers up to nine extra months of benefits (may not exceed \$30,000) for GI Bill Science/Technology/Engineering/Math programs



WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

Veterans who are currently enrolled in a STEM program requiring at least 120 semester (or 180 quarter) hours and who have completed 60 standard semester (or 90 quarter) hours.



WHICH APPLICATIONS GET PRIORITY?

Priority given to those entitled to 100% of Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits and to those who require the most program credit hours



WHERE CAN I APPLY?

Visit benefits.va.gov for the application (22-1995)

Or go to <https://benefits.va.gov/gibill/fgib/stem.asp> and click 'Apply Now' under 'How do I Apply?'



HIGHLIGHTS

Over 6,000 Applications received

First Scholarships will be awarded in November 2019

Section 107: What to Know

Section 107: Effective August 1, 2018, a student's Monthly Housing Allowance is calculated **based on the main, branch or extension campus location where they physically attend the majority of their classes.**



BRANCH CAMPUS

A location of an educational institution that is geographically apart from and operationally independent of the main campus of the educational institution; has its own administration; and offers courses leading to a degree or other recognized education credential.



MAIN CAMPUS

A location where the primary teaching facilities of an educational institution are located.



EXTENSION CAMPUS

VA currently defines "extension campus" as a location of an educational institution that is geographically apart from and is operationally dependent on the main campus or a branch campus of the educational institution.



Some students were actually attending the majority of their classes at an extension campus, and therefore received incorrect housing payments.



All previously submitted claims impacted by 107 from August 1, 2018 to December 1, 2019 will need to be re-adjudicated.

Section 107: Zip Codes & Facility Codes

VA is no longer using zip codes. Instead, we will be using facility codes and sub-facility codes for campuses.



VA compiled information on campus locations, based on approved extension campuses submitted by SAAs to VA



The information became available in VA-ONCE, WEAMS, ECAP systems in **August.**



Schools should submit all **enrollments beginning on or after December 1** to the campus where the student is attending classes

Section 501: What to Know

Section 501: Effective January 1, 2018, for those using the Post-9/11 GI Bill for the first time after that date, student's rates set to the slightly lower Department of Defense's E-5 With Dependents Basic Allowance Housing (BAH) rate.



Students who started using their Post-9/11 GI Bill before January 1, 2018, **will continue receiving MHA payments** based on the slightly higher VA rate eliminated by this change.



Until the IT solution is in place **VA will pay students at the slightly higher VA rate for the academic year**



For terms on or after December 1, payments to students will be made **in accordance to rates mandated by the Colmery Act.**

Before December 1: Extension Campus Data Upload

In August, submitted extension campuses were made available in the ECAP, WEAMS, and VA-ONCE applications.



SPRING 2020 ENROLLMENTS

- SCOs will be able to, and will be instructed to, submit enrollments starting on or after December 1 using Extension Facility Codes



ENROLLMENTS BEFORE SPRING 2020

- For any enrollments prior to December 1, SCOs will be instructed to continue the current process to submit enrollments using the main or branch campus facility code
- Do not recertify enrollments from August 1, 2018 – December 1, 2019 until instruction from VA



AVAILABLE EXTENSION CAMPUSES

- All Extension Campuses that were approved by SAAs and previously submitted to VA are available in VA-ONCE



ADDING ADDITIONAL EXTENSION CAMPUSES

- Each school must have **ALL** extension campuses in VA-ONCE
- All additional extension campuses will be submitted by schools to SAAs through current processes and procedures



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December 1: Sec.107 & 501 Implementation

Sections 107 and 501 will be implemented so that all future enrollments will be processed according to the Colmery Act.



MONTHLY HOUSING ALLOWANCE CHANGES

- On December 1, updates will go live in VA's education processing systems, and future MHA payments will be made in accordance with Sections 107 and 501 of the Colmery Act.



IMPACT TO STUDENTS

- **501:** VA will identify students whose MHA should have been the same rate as the Department of Defense's E-5 with dependents basic allowance for housing (BAH) rate, but instead received MHA payments based on the slightly higher VA rate.
 - All students will receive a letter informing them of whether they were underpaid, overpaid or not impacted.
- **107:** Once the IT system has been updated, VA will need additional information from schools in order to identify students who were not paid the housing rate of the campus where they physically attended the majority of classes.



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After December 1: Replacement Enrollments

Schools will need to replace enrollments for students who took classes outside of a main campus location between August 1, 2018 to December 1, 2019.



IMPACT TO STUDENTS

- Schools will be required to re-submit enrollments of students who took courses outside the main or branch campus location between August 1, 2018 to December 1, 2019. VA will work with institutions on this process. After VA has necessary information, it will be able to identify impacted students.
- All students will receive a letter informing them of whether they were overpaid, underpaid, or not impacted.



REPLACEMENT OF ENROLLMENTS

- SCOs will be asked to remove and replace enrollments of impacted students within the VA-ONCE application
- **Do NOT terminate or replace enrollments until further instruction by VA.**



PAYMENTS TO BENEFICIARIES

- Impacted students will receive a notification of their account being reviewed.
- Any underpaid students will receive a check, while any overpaid students will have their debt reviewed and waived by VA if it is solely due to Sections 107 and 501.

New Legislation

Veterans Benefits and Transition Act of 2018

Section 103

- Upon receiving a Certificate of Eligibility (CoE) from a GI Bill beneficiary, a school must allow the student to attend class for up to 90 days while awaiting VA payments
- Schools may not:
 - charge penalties
 - pursue late fees or,
 - deny access to school facilities while awaiting VA payments;
- Schools that don't meet these criteria will be disapproved for all GI Bill benefits
- Additionally, VA shall take steps necessary to ensure payments are NLT 60 days from the date the school certifies tuition and fees, and must report on any claim over 60 days old

Tools for Students

- **GI Bill® Comparison Tool**
 - Find a school and determine GI Bill benefits while attending
 - Website: <https://www.va.gov/gi-bill-comparison-tool>
- **GI Bill® Feedback System**
 - Provides avenue for student complaints concerning non-compliant POE schools
 - Website: <https://www.benefits.va.gov/GIBILL/Feedback.asp>
- **Website:** www.benefits.va.gov/gibill
 - Information on how to apply for education benefits
- **Facebook:** www.facebook.com/gibillEducation
 - Provides a forum for EDU information updates to over 105K followers
- **Education Call Center** – 1-888-GIBILL-1 (1-888-442-4551)

VA School Tour

VA Leadership



Charmain Bogue
Executive Director,
Education Service
Department of Veterans Affairs

Goal of School Tour:

- Inform Students and School Officials about changes associated with the Forever GI Bill
- Provide claims assistance and answer benefit questions in-person
- Collect feedback experiences from beneficiaries and faculty



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Questions

Contact Us



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TWITTER: @VAVetBenefits

FACEBOOK: www.facebook.com/gibillEducation

TELEPHONE: 1-888-GIBILL-1 (1-888-442-4551)

