



DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
Veterans Benefits Administration
Washington DC 20420

April 24, 2009

In Reply Refer To: 22

Dear School Certifying Official:

This letter is to inform you that VA will begin accepting applications for the Post-9/11 GI Bill (chapter 33) on May 1, 2009. As you know, the Post-9/11 GI Bill is a new education benefit for veterans, military members, reservists, and National Guard members with active duty service after September 10, 2001. Payments under this new benefit will begin August 1, 2009 for training pursued on or after that date.

VA expects to begin processing enrollment certifications for the Post-9/11 GI Bill on July 6, 2009. As with existing benefit programs, certifications may be sent electronically using VA-ONCE, or by mail using VA form 22-1999). Updates are currently being made to VA-ONCE to incorporate fields that will support Post-9/11 GI Bill certifications. Additional School Certifying Official training for this benefit program is forthcoming.

The enclosed attachment also provides general information about the implementation of the Post-9/11 GI Bill. Please provide this attachment to any interested stakeholders. For additional information about the Post-9/11 GI Bill, please visit www.GIBILL.VA.gov or contact your Education Liaison Representative.

Thank you for your continued support of VA education benefit programs.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Keith M. Wilson".

Keith M. Wilson
Director, Education Service

What You Should Know About the Post-9/11 GI Bill Implementation

When will VA begin accepting applications?

VA plans to begin accepting applications on May 1, 2009. A revised application will be available at www.gibill.va.gov. Applications will be able to be submitted electronically on the website at Veterans On-Line Application (VONAPP). The new application includes a Post-9/11 GI Bill option.

NOTE: VA is not currently accepting applications for Transfer of Entitlement (TOE). Visit our website for more information about TOE.

What should you consider before electing the Post-9/11 GI Bill?

There are several things you should consider before electing benefits under the Post-9/11 GI Bill. These include:

- Type of training you plan to pursue
- Cost of tuition and fees at your school
- Highest in-state undergraduate tuition and fees at a public institution in the state where your school is located
- Amount of the monthly housing allowance in the zip code where your school is located
- The number of courses you plan to pursue
- Other VA education benefits you are eligible to receive
- Other financial aid you may be entitled to receive

For more information on comparisons between the Post-9/11 GI Bill and other VA education benefit programs, visit our website at www.gibill.va.gov.

How do you apply for the Post-9/11 GI Bill?

If you have never applied for VA education benefits, you must submit a VA Form 22-1990, Application for Education Benefits. All applicants are encouraged to submit an application on the revised form. If you are also eligible for another benefit or benefits, you must indicate that you are electing to receive the Post-9/11 GI Bill, specify the benefit you wish to relinquish to receive the Post-9/11 GI Bill, and the effective date of your election under the Post-9/11 GI Bill. You should also submit any available supporting documentation including copies of DD-214(s), activation orders and enlistment contracts.

What should you expect when you submit an application?

VA will be reviewing applications under the Post-9/11 GI Bill and issuing Certificates of Eligibility (COEs) to qualified individuals. The COE will contain basic eligibility information including months of entitlement, period of eligibility and benefit level. Individuals eligible at the 100% rate will also be advised of eligibility for the Yellow Ribbon Program. If you have chosen

a specific school and program, the COE will also indicate if Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits are payable for that school and program. Upon receipt of your COE, you should retain a copy for your records and submit a copy to the VA Certifying Official at the school you plan to attend.

When should your school certify your enrollment?

Generally, schools may certify enrollments up to 120 days before the beginning of a term. However, benefits under the Post-9/11 GI Bill are not payable until August 1, 2009, therefore, VA is not yet accepting enrollment certifications. Schools will be notified when VA begins accepting enrollment certifications for the Post-9/11 GI Bill.

What benefits will you receive under the Post-9/11 GI Bill?

Benefits under the Post-9/11 GI Bill differ from other benefit programs in that each type of payment is issued separately. Some payments will be issued to your school while others will be issued directly to you. The following details each type of payment and how it will be issued:

- Tuition and fee payments will be issued to your school on your behalf at the time your enrollment certification is processed. The amount will be prorated based on your benefit level as determined by your length of service.
- Monthly housing allowance payments will be issued directly to you at the beginning of each month for training pursued during the previous month. Amount will be prorated based on your benefit level as determined by your length of service.
- Books and supplies stipend will be issued directly to you at the time your enrollment certification is processed. Payments cannot exceed \$1,000 per academic year.
- Yellow Ribbon payments will be issued to your school on your behalf at the time your enrollment certification is processed. The amount will be determined based on the total of unmet tuition and fees and the amount stated in the agreement between VA and your school.
- College fund "kicker" benefits will be issued directly to you based your rate of pursuit and the education benefit program under which the "kicker" is payable. Post-9/11 GI Bill "kickers" will be issued monthly with your housing allowance; kickers for all other benefit programs will be issued directly to you in a lump sum at the time your enrollment certification is processed.
- Rural benefit payments will be issued directly to you in a lump sum at the time your enrollment certification is processed.

NOTE: Payments will be released to the Department of Treasury on August 1, 2009.

For an application and more information, visit our website at www.gibill.va.gov.