



FOREVER GI BILL SECTIONS

The Harry W. Colmery Veterans Educational Assistance Act, also known as the “Forever GI Bill,” was signed into law on August 16, 2017, and brings significant changes to Veterans’ education benefits. Many of the changes enhance or expand education benefits for Veterans, servicemembers, families and survivors.

Changes:

Assistance for Students Affected by School Closures and Certain Program Disapprovals

Students may be able to receive back entitlement charged against them if their school closed while they were attending.

Elimination of 15-year Time Limit to Use the Post-9/11 GI Bill

The law removes the 15-year time limit for the use of Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits for those whose last discharge or release from active duty is on or after January 1, 2013, children of deceased servicemembers who became entitled to Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits on or after January 1, 2013.

Independent Study at Technical Schools and Non-Institutions of Higher Learning (IHLs) Study (e.g., online learning) at non-IHLs. The non-IHLs must be area career and technical education schools that provide postsecondary level education or postsecondary vocational institutions.

Note: This change does not apply to Dependents’ Educational Assistance (DEA) program, Chapter 35 beneficiaries.

Priority Enrollment

VA will improve outreach and transparency to Veterans and servicemembers by providing information on whether institutions of higher learning administer a priority enrollment system that allows certain student Veterans to enroll in courses earlier than other students.

REAP Eligibility Credited Toward Post-9/11 GI Bill Program

Reservists who established eligibility to educational assistance under the Reserve Educational Assistance Program (REAP) before November 25, 2015 and lost it due to the program’s sunset may elect to have that service credited towards the Post-9/11 GI Bill.

Work-Study Expansion

The law removes the expiration date for qualifying work-study activities.

GI Bill® Monthly Housing Allowance becomes effective on December 1, 2019

Those who first use Post-9/11 GI Bill on or after January 1, 2018, will receive a monthly housing allowance based on the Department of Defense BAH for monthly housing rates.

Changes to Licensing and Certification Charges

Entitlement charges for licensing and certification exams and national tests under the Post-9/11 GI Bill will be prorated based on the actual amount of the fee charged for the test. This lowers the entitlement charge to benefits.

Changes to Transfer of Benefits (TEB)

Veterans who transferred entitlement to a dependent can now designate a new dependent if the original dependent dies. If the Veteran dies, a dependent who received transferred entitlement can now designate a new eligible dependent of the Veteran to transfer any of the dependent’s remaining entitlement.

Informing Schools About Beneficiary Entitlement

VA must make available to educational institutions information about the amount of educational assistance to which a beneficiary is entitled. A beneficiary may elect not to provide the information to an educational institution.

Monthly Housing Allowance During Active Duty Service (Including Reserve Components performing Active Duty Service)

VA will prorate the monthly housing allowance under the Post-9/11 GI Bill. Currently, those who leave active duty can't receive their housing allowance until the beginning of the next full month after being released from active duty. With this change, the student will receive housing payments effective the day of discharge.

Monthly Housing Based on Campus Where Student Attends Most Classes effective on December 1, 2019

The law requires the monthly housing allowance under the Post-9/11 GI Bill program to be calculated based on the zip code of the campus where the student physically attends the majority of classes, rather than the location of the school where the student is enrolled.

VET TEC Pilot Program

VA will develop a pilot program to provide eligible Veterans with the opportunity to enroll in high technology education programs that VA determines provides training and skills sought by employers in a relevant field or industry.

Purple Heart Recipients

Servicemembers and honorably discharged Veterans who were awarded a Purple Heart on or after September 11, 2001, will be entitled to Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits at the 100-percent benefit level for up to 36 months.

Reserve Component Benefits

The law authorizes service by Guard and Reserve members under 10 U.S.C 12304a and 12304b to receive Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits.

Reserve Duty That Counts Toward Post-9/11 Eligibility

The time that a Reservist was ordered to active duty to receive authorized medical care, to be medically evaluated for disability, or to complete a Department of Defense health care study on or after September 11, 2001, now counts as active duty toward eligibility for the Post-9/11 GI Bill.

Yellow Ribbon Extension to Fry and Purple Heart Recipients

Recipients of the Fry Scholarship and Purple Heart may use the Yellow Ribbon Program.

Survivors' & Dependents' Educational Assistance (DEA) Program, Chapter 35

Decreases the amount of entitlement under the Survivors' and Dependents Educational Assistance (DEA) program from 45 months to 36 months. Applies to individuals who first use DEA after August 1, 2018. Individuals who first use DEA prior to August 1, 2018, qualify for a maximum of 45 months of entitlement.

Consolidation of Benefit Levels becomes effective August 1, 2020

Eliminates the 40-percent benefit level and expands the 60-percent benefit level under the Post-9/11 GI Bill.

More Benefits for Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) Programs

VA will provide up to nine months of additional Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits to eligible individuals who are enrolled in a STEM field program of education.

Yellow Ribbon Extension to Active Duty Servicemembers becomes effective August 1, 2022

Active duty servicemembers may use the Yellow Ribbon Program.

Our Education Call Center is available at 1-888-442-4551 (Monday-Friday, 7 a.m. -6 p.m. CST) for any questions about GI Bill benefits.

Join the conversation on Facebook at www.facebook.com/gibillEducation and follow us on Twitter @VAVetBenefits.

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More information about education benefits offered by VA is available at <https://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill>