







### **U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs**



### **Agenda**

MHEC

10:00 a.m.	<b>Welcome</b> Trish Gordon McCown, Associate Director, Maryland State Approving Agency/MHEC Selica Cherry-Alexander, Maryland Education Liaison Representative, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Olayta Rigsby, Veterans Affairs Analyst, Maryland State Approving Agency/MHEC			
10:05 a.m.	Opening Remarks SCO Role & Responsibilities GI Bill® Updates Trish Gordon McCown, Associate Director, Maryland State Approving Agency/MHEC			
10:15 a.m.	Overview of the Harry W. Colmery Veterans Education Assistance Act—Forever G.I. Bill Selica Cherry-Alexander, Maryland Education Liaison Representative, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs			
10:50 a.m.	Maryland National Guard - Tuition Waiver Olayta Rigsby, Veterans Affairs Analyst, Maryland State Approving Agency/MHEC			
11:00 a.m.	Compliance Survey Training Olayta Rigsby, Veterans Affairs Analyst, Maryland State Approving Agency/MHEC			
11:15 a.m.	SAA APPROVAL – Overview & Best Practices Trish Gordon McCown, Associate Director, Maryland State Approving Agency/MHEC			
11:30 a.m.	VA-ONCE OVERVIEW Selica Cherry-Alexander, Maryland Education Liaison Representative, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs			

**Q&A** and Closing Remarks

## School Certifying Officials (SCO)

YOUR ROLE



APPROVED INSTITUTIONS'
RESPONSIBILITIES

## Basic Responsibilities

- > Keep VA informed of the enrollment status of veterans and other eligible persons.
  - \* KNOW YOUR INTERNAL PARTNERS!!!
- ➤ Keep SAA & VAinformed of new programs, changes in programs, institutional changes, etc.
- > Submit Annual Renewal Requirements ALL INSTITUTIONS!!
- Apprise supervisors of any internal problems which may affect service to VA students.

### \* PARTICIPATE IN SCO TRAINING ACTIVITIES

- Regularly view GI Bill® Website for updates http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/
- ➤ GI Bill® ComparisonTool
- > Assist VA students in applying for education benefits.
- > Maintain records of VA students and for inspection.

# Chapter 33 Post 9/11 GI Bill®Updates



### GI BILL® UPDATES

- ➤ Tuition-and-Fees payable for 100%-eligible Chapter 33 beneficiaries attending private institutions will be capped at \$23,671.94 (a/o 8/1/2018) for the VA Academic year (8/1 7/31)
- Flight Annual Cap is \$13,526.81
- The actual net costs not to exceed the annual cap per academic year. The cap applies to all classes and/or enrollments that begin during that academic year, regardless of the academic year in which the classes or enrollments are completed.
- > Stipends for books and supplies are capped at \$1000 per academic year. No Change.
  - Payments are made directly to the student's personal bank account via direct deposit.

# Harry W. Colmery Veterans Education Assistance Act – Forever GI Bill

### **SCO Colmery Webinars**

When: 2:00 PM (EST)

Tuesday, July 17, 2018

Tuesday, July 31, 2018

Thursday, August 02, 2018

Tuesday, August 14, 2018

Thursday, August 16, 2018

Tuesday, August 28, 2018

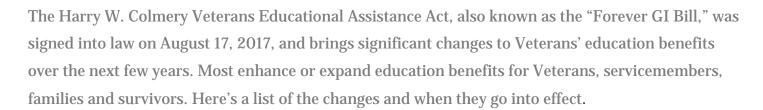
Thursday, August 30, 2018

Wednesday, September 12, 2018

Thursday, September 27, 2018







Change: Effective Date

### Assistance for Students Affected by School Closures and Certain Program Disapprovals

**Immediately** 

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

### Immediately

### 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 benefit 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 benefit on or after January 1, 2013, and all spouses using Fry Scholarship.

### Independent Study at Technical Schools and Non-Institutions of Higher Learning (IHLs)

**Immediately** 

Beneficiaries will now be able to use their educational assistance to pursue accredited independent 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 program beneficiaries.

Immediately

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.

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

**Immediately** 

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 Immediately

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

Disabilities determined by VA to be related to your military service can lead to monthly non-taxable compensation, enrollment in the VA health care system, a 10-point hiring preference for federal employment and other important benefits. Ask your VA representative or Veterans Service Organization representative about Disability Compensation, Pension, Health Care, Caregiver Program, Career Services, Educational Assistance, Home Loan Guaranty, Insurance and/or Dependents and Survivors' Benefits.





**Priority Enrollment** 

GI Bill <sup>®</sup> Monthly Housing Allowance	January 1,2018
Those who use Post-9/11 GI Bill on or after January 1, 2018, will receive a monthly housing allowance based on the Department of Defense basic housing allowance (BAH) for monthly housing rates.	
Changes to Licensing and Certification Charges	August 1, 2018
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 Survivors' and Dependents' Educational Assistance	August 1, 2018
The new law decreases the amount of entitlement that new eligible individuals will receive under the Survivors' and Dependents' Educational Assistance (DEA) program from 45 months to 36 months.	
Changes to Transfer of Benefit (TEB)	August 1, 2018
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	August 1, 2018
VA must make available to educational institutions information about the amount of educational assistance to which a beneficiaryy 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)	August 1, 2018
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	August 1, 2018
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.	
Pilot Programs for Technology Courses	August 1, 2018
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	August 1, 2018
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**

August 1, 2018

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

August 1, 2018

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

August 1, 2018

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

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

August 1, 2019

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.

#### **Consolidation of Benefit Levels**

August 1, 2020

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

#### **Yellow Ribbon Extension to Active Duty Servicemembers**

August 1, 2022

Active duty service members may use the Yellow Ribbon Program.

To learn more and apply, go to www.benefits.va.gov/GIBILL/ForeverGIBill.asp. 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.



### GI Bill® Monthly Housing Allowance

Housing will be paid based on the "campus" where the student attends the majority of classes. Campus includes:

- The individual campus of a school where the student is taking classes (i.e. the school's science center, humanities building, or athletic center)
- The physical location where a student is learning in a study abroad program
- Any internship, externship, practicum or student teaching site

### GI BILL® MONTHLY HOUSING ALLOWANCE

Schools will need to provide their SAA of jurisdiction and VA an updated copy of their catalog (or a catalog addendum) which specifically lists each campus of the school and provides the zip code for that campus.

- VA will be actively engaging with SAAs and schools to see how schools can identify and provide the zip code information for each of the schools' internship, externship, practicum and student teaching sites.
- The expected deadline for all schools to provide updated catalogs or catalog addendums to their SAA is August 2019

## Maryland National Guard

**Contact Information:** 

CPT Elise R. Dent, MS, MDARNG Education Services Officer <u>elise.r.dent.mil@mail.mil</u>

Work: 410-576-6093 Fax: 410-576-6082

SGT Joseph Chatterton Incentive Office-GI Bill Manager Guidance Counselor

joseph.e.chatterton.mil@mail.mil

Work: 410-576-1499

## Maryland National Guard

Members of the Maryland National Guard may be eligible for tuition discounts at participating institutions





# Compliance Surveys

Routine reviews of selected students' records to verify that payments of GI Bill® benefits were properly made to your VA students in order to:

Assist School Certifying Officials in better understanding their responsibilities and the procedural requirements of VA

Ensure schools and training establishments--along with their approved courses and programs--are in compliance

Monitor and assure continued acceptability of approval at previously approved facilities

## Survey Records Required

Institutional Records Needed for Student Records
Unofficial transcript

Copy of Enrollment Agreement Survey Records Required Advertising Materials 85/15 Compliance information

Copy of Student Account Ledger - Detailed Records of Tuition and Fees; for Chapter 33 students – Include all payments/credits from the VA, institutional, private, federal and other third parties. Must be detailed enough to determine the source of all debits and credits, including how charges were determined and payments were credited.

The term in which any charges/payments/credits occur should be clearly identified and linked to the appropriate dollar amount.

VA payments and refunds should be clearly labeled as such
Copy of Student enrollment/training schedules
Identifying start date, end date
Verification of prior credit evaluations
Academic Progress / Attendance standards
Obtaining LDA or last activity to confirm withdraw of subjects for student records

## GI BILL®

### Third-party use of the trademark is restricted and subject to the following:

- ✓ The GI Bill trademark is not to be incorporated or included in company or product names, trademarks, logos or internet domain names.
- ✓ The term "GI Bill®" is to be used solely to promote official VA benefit programs and services and must include the proper trademark symbol.
- ✓ Use of the trademark attribution notice, indicating that the mark and all associated services belong to VA, is required and shall be taken as evidence that use of the mark is in good faith.
- ✓ No entity shall use the GI Bill trademark in any manner that directly or indirectly implies a relationship, affiliation, or association with VA that does not exist.
- ✓ Disparagement or misrepresentations of VA services through use of the mark, or by the use of confusingly similar wording, are strictly prohibited.

\*\*\*\*\*

The following trademark attribution notice must be prominently visible:

"GI Bill® is a registered trademark of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). More information about education benefits offered by VA is available at the official U.S. government Web site at https://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill."

https://www.benefits.va.gov/GIBILL/Trademark\_Terms\_of\_Use.asp

Web Enabled Approval Management System (WEAMS) Public http://inquiry.vba.va.gov/weamspub/buildSearchInstitutionCriteria.do

Institutional program inventory
with Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC)
The SAA will only approve programs
as designated by the Secretary of Higher Education or exempted law and meets the criteria of the Code of Federal Regulations (38 U.S. Code § 3680A)

## ApprovalProcess

### **APPROVAL PROCESS**

SAA Reviews
& Determines
Eligibility
(30-45 days)

- ☐ Has the program been approved in its entirety by MHEC?
- ☐ Request application from SAA (via email or call)
- ☐ Submit completed application and supporting documents to SAA (must have Certifying Official's signature)
  - > SAA approves requests
  - > Requires additional information & approves; or
  - > Denies the request based on applicable CFR or COMAR



SAA to ELR

- ☐ SAA forwards approval packet to ELR for final review
- □ ELR processes approval & Updates WEAMS
- □ Notifies School (*Please review & verify information is correct*)

### ☐ READY TO CERTIFY STUDENT

## CATALOG SUBMISSIONS

Certified catalog submission with Standard Certification "True and correct as to content and policy" with Certifying Official'ssignature

\* \* One copy to SAA and One copy to ELR (must be hard copy) \* Submit IHL/NCD Catalog Review Form CD or DVD

versions are strongly encouraged to SAA only!

## No links; pdf version required

Additional publications as needed (i.e. Student Handbook)

# Program Schedules (Start & End Dates) Required for all NCD Programs!!!

New or updated program schedules (start & end dates) must be submitted to the Maryland SAA

**Training Academies** – Must submit each training schedule including total number of hours for classroom & field training.

> Copy of third party agreement (if applicable)

Flight Schools – Submit Flight Training Overview

> Copy of third party agreement (if applicable)

Submit via email – <u>vaeducationbenefits.mhec@maryland.gov</u>



## THE CERTIFICATION PROCESS

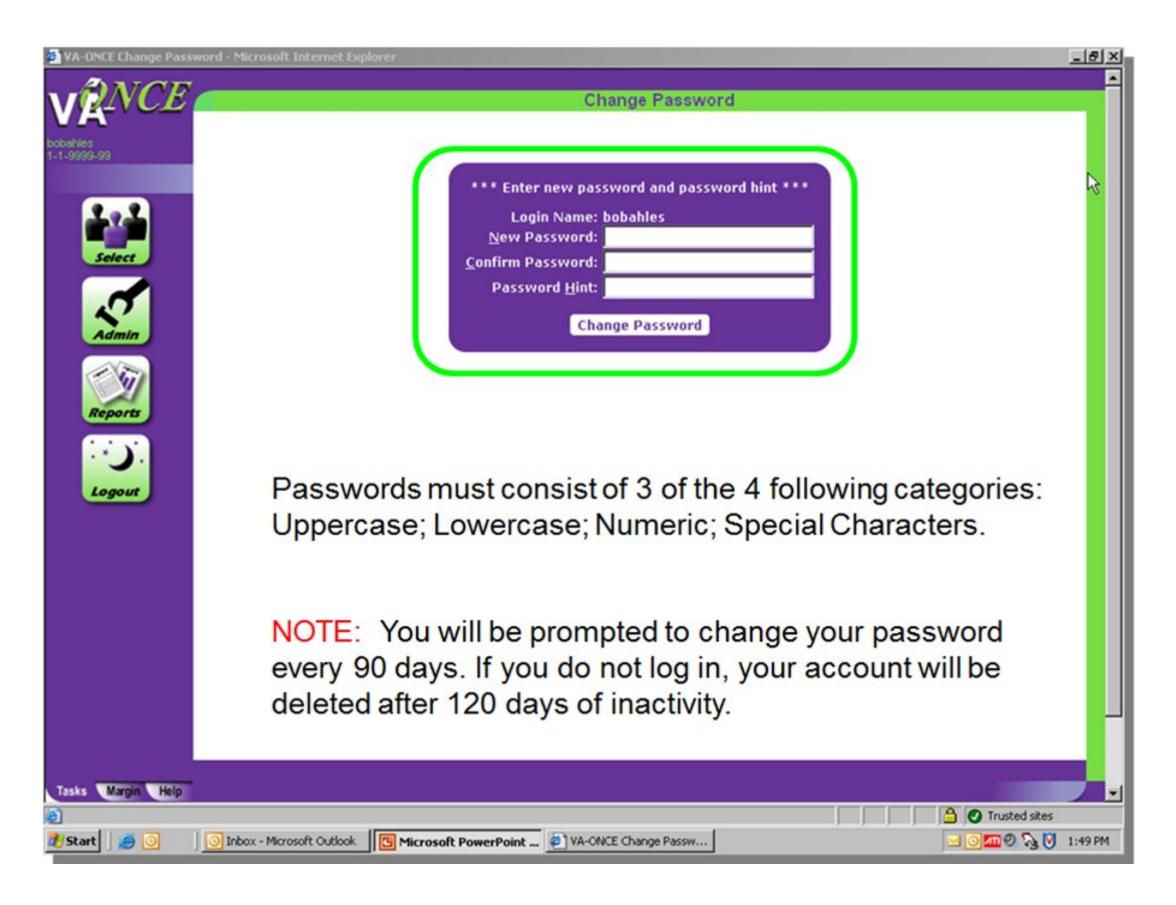
Initial Setup – Log On

Log in using your VA provided user ID and temporary Password. NOTE: Your browser must allow "Pop-

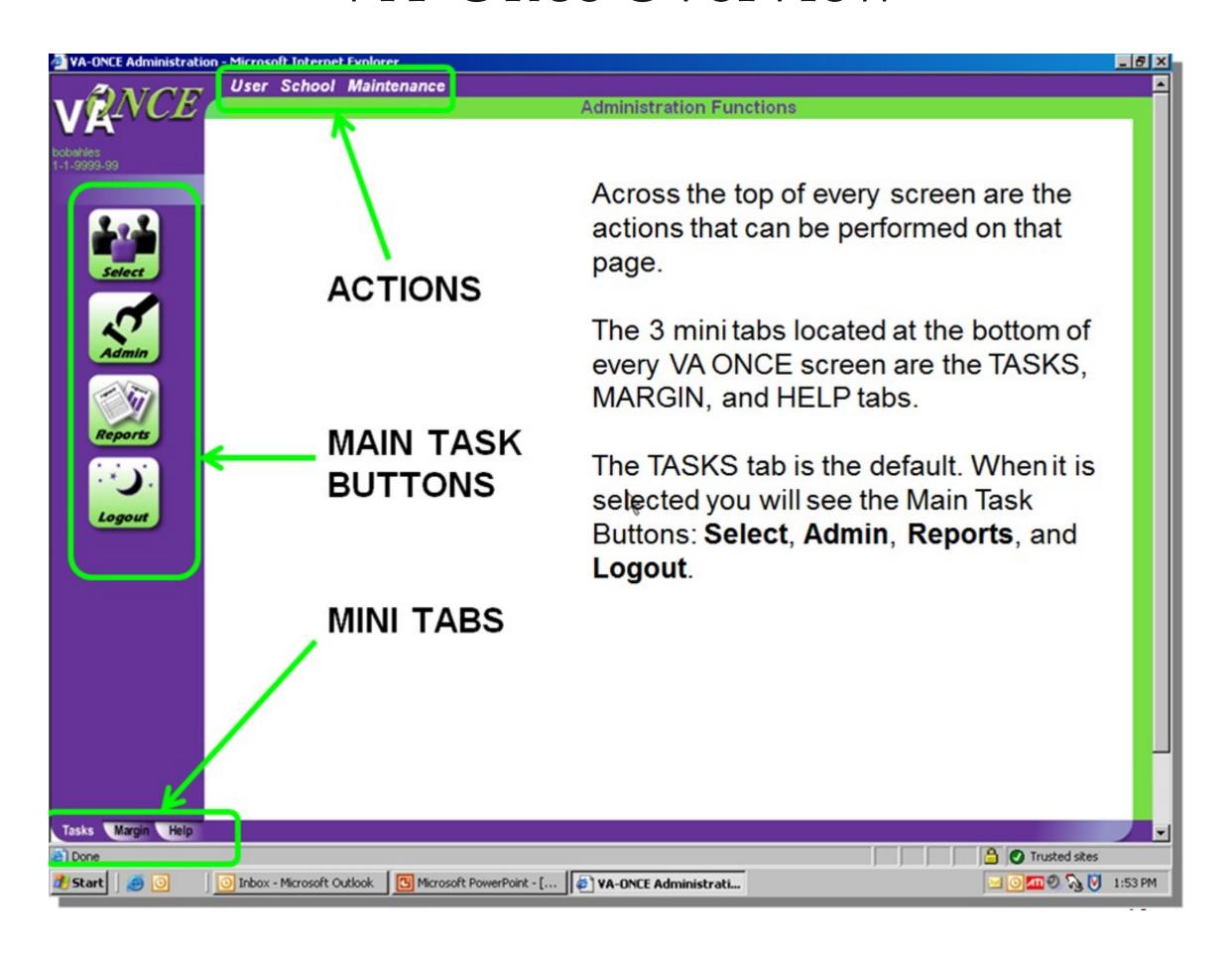
Ups" to view this page.



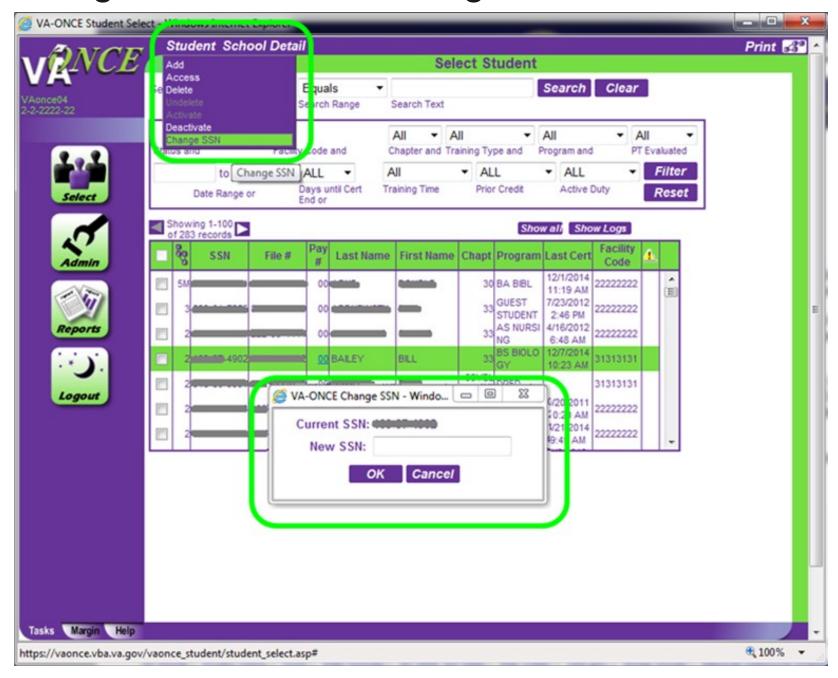
## Initial Setup - Changing your password Completed "New Password", "Confirm Password", and "Password Hint". Click "Change Password".



## VA-Once Overview



- Correcting a Social Security Number Refer to VAONCE Quick Reference User Guide, Page #120 Highlight the student whose SSN needs to be changed.
- On the Student menu select "Change SSN".
- A pop-up will appear with the Current SSN and a field for the new SSN. Enter the correct SSN in the New SSN field.
- Click "OK". The SSN will be changed. Be sure to change the file number, if appropriate.



## Helpful definitions for modifying enrollments:

Adjust - Allows you to report a decrease or increase in hours only for the term.

Amend - Allows you to edit the beginning date, ending date, or tuition and fees. This feature should be used if you are correcting something, other than hours, on the original enrollment certification.

Terminate – Allows you to report when a student is no longer attending the term (dropped to zero credits).

Correcting an erroneous enrollment certification

## Graduation/Completion or Termination

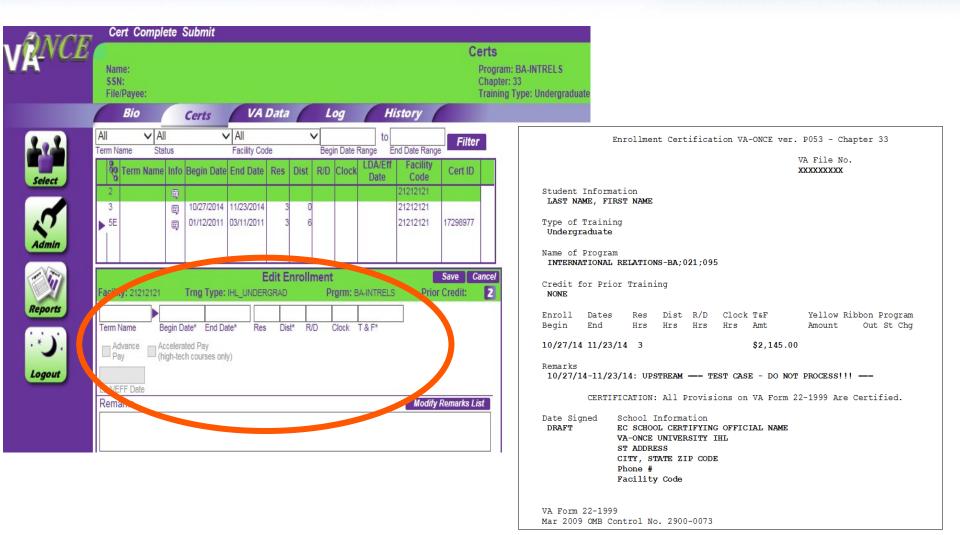
All students actively using VA Educations benefits should be terminated in VA-ONCE upon completion, graduation or termination from their program; select appropriate reason for termination.

If the student is completing a Non-College Degree program, "End of Term or Course" should be selected as the termination reason. The last date of the term selected will be pre-populated as the date of termination. If subsequent terms were previously certified, VA-ONCE will prompt you to terminate those enrollments, or to leave them as previously certified.

Termination "Unsatisfactory Attendance, Conduct, or Progress" - VA-ONCE will insert the end date of the term as the default "LDA/EFF Date". You can change the default end of termdate if it isn't the correct date.



### **Current View in VA ONCE**

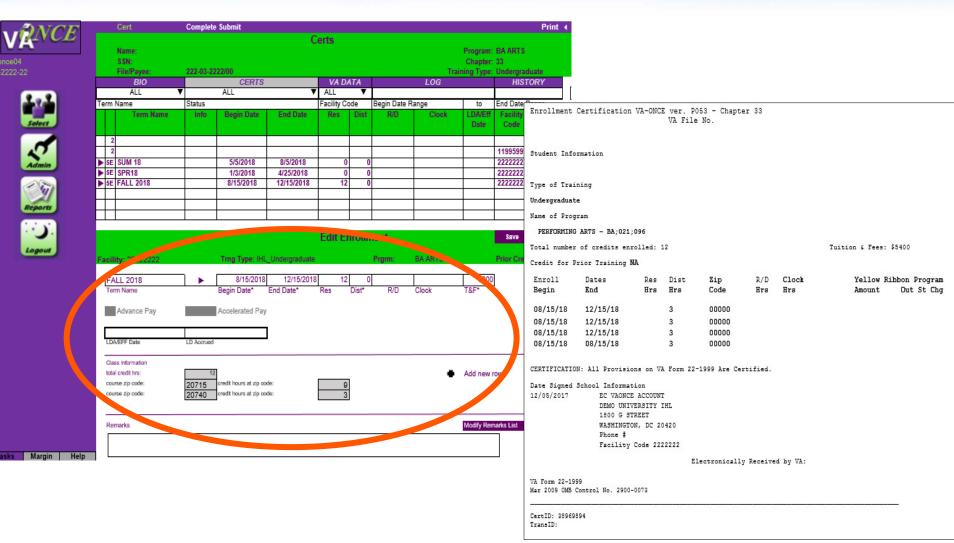








### **Proposed View in VA ONCE**







### Additional Resources

- Annual Reporting Fees
- Work Study Program
- Study Abroad

### Section 304

### Annual Reporting Fees Increased- August 1, 2018

- Increases the annual fee to \$15; based on student count from Jan 1 to Dec 31
- Prohibits an educational institution with 100 or more enrollees from merging with the amounts in the general fund
- O Compliance Procedures:
  - ✓ The surveyor will interview the primary School Certifying Official (SCO) and confirm how the school utilizes the Reporting Fee
  - ✓ Schools should document how they use the Reporting Fee (a formal ledger, receipts to/from a SCO training conference, invoices for equipment for the school's Veteran Center, formal documentation the school uses the Reporting Fees as part the SCOs salary, etc.).
- Finalizing Communications Plan to inform about increased fee and limitation



### **VA Work-Study**

### **Eligible Students:**

To apply, complete VA Form 22-8691 (Application for Work-Study Allowance). E-mail application to <a href="workstudy.vba.buf@va.gov">workstudy.vba.buf@va.gov</a>

### VA Work-Study Provides

- Provides up to 1300 hours of part time work per year
- Doesn't impact Financial Aid status
- Tax-free wages at the higher of federal or state minimum wage
- Gain valuable work experience while in school

GI Bill Website - Work Study



### INFORMATION ABOUT STUDY ABROAD PROGRAMS

- Students must be enrolled in courses that will apply to their program.
- The programs at the "host" school in the foreign country must be approved.
- VA cannot pay any fees specific to studying abroad unless the student is required to study abroad as part of their program.

## HOME SCHOOL CHARGES STUDENT TUITION AND FEES, PLUS ADDITIONAL FEES, OR A COMPREHENSIVE FEE FOR STUDYING ABROAD. HOME SCHOOL HAS AS AN ARRANGEMENT WITH THE HOST SCHOOL OR PAYS THE HOST SCHOOL.

- VA could pay the home school's tuition, up to the resident maximum allowed.
- VA could provide a monthly housing allowance to the student, if the student is enrolled more than ½-time
- VA could provide books and supplies stipend
- VA would pay no charges directly to the host school
- VA could not pay for any fees specifically due to participation in the study abroad program unless study abroad was mandatory for the specific degree. For schools that charge a comprehensive fee that includes the home school's tuition, they would have to itemize the fee and report the charged tuition
- VA cannot pay airfare
- VA cannot pay amenities fees or host school fees

## HOME SCHOOL CHARGES A FEE OR FEES FOR PARTICIPATION IN STUDY ABROAD PROGRAM, OR FACULTY LED FEES. STUDENT IS REQUIRED TO PAY THE HOST SCHOOL THE TUITION AND COURSE FEES CHARGED BY HOST SCHOOL.

 VA could pay the tuition and fees, up to the national resident maximum tuition and fee charges (Room and board charges cannot be included in tuition costs). Fees we can pay are fees students that regularly attend the institution must pay—not fees specific to study abroad students.









- VA could provide a monthly housing allowance to the student, if the student is enrolled more than  $\frac{1}{2}$ -time
- VA could provide books and supplies stipend
- VA would pay tuition directly to host school
- VA could not pay for any fees the home school charges for study abroad fees
- VA cannot pay airfare

### STUDENT ENROLLS DIRECTLY IN HOST SCHOOL.

- VA could pay the tuition and fees, up to the resident maximum tuition and fee charges. Fees we
  can pay are fees students that regularly attend the institution must pay—not fees specific to
  study abroad students.
- VA could provide a monthly housing allowance to the student, if the student is enrolled more than ½-time
- VA could provide books and supplies stipend
- VA would pay tuition directly to host school
- VA could not pay for any fees the home school charges for study abroad fees
- VA cannot pay airfare

### THIRD PARTY CHARGES A FEE TO STUDENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A STUDY ABROAD PROGRAM

VA cannot pay a third party

### STUDENT ENROLLS IN A DIFFERENT US SCHOOL, THAN THEIR HOME SCHOOL, TO PARTICIPATE IN STUDY ABROAD PROGRAM.

The school the student enrolls in for the study abroad program would be treated as the "home school" and we would pay as above, depending on whom the student was paying the tuition and fees for the courses offered at the host school

Note: Any amounts payable are reduced if the student is not eligible at the 100% payment tier. *Example: If the student's benefit payment tier is 40%, VA would pay 40% of the housing allowance, 40% of charged tuition and 40% of the books stipend.* 

For More Information, Call Toll-Free 1-888-GIBILL-1 or Visit Our Web Site at <a href="http://benefits.va.gov/gibill">http://benefits.va.gov/gibill</a>



In the event that an institution determines that they owe funds to the VA, payments should NOT be sent to the VA until the institution receives a debt letter from VA's Debt Management Center

Treasury Offset Program (TOP) – if the institution fails to respond to multiples debt management letters, the TOP will capture funds payable to the school by other government agencies (i.e., public institutions receiving Title IV Funds) Debt management number is 1-800-827-0648 International callers 1-612-713-6415

Debt Management Refer to SCO Handbook, pages 93 - 110

## VA Toll-Free Numbers

SCO Only Hotline: 1-855-225-1159

(Only for SCOs & must have your facility code)

Student Resources:

Education Center: 1-888-442-4551

General VA Info: 1-800-827-1000

eBenefits – <u>www.ebenefits.va.gov</u>

VA Debt Management: 1-800-827-0648

# GI Bill® Information <a href="http://www.gibill.va.gov">http://www.gibill.va.gov</a>

## SCO Training Resources

School Training & Information Resources (Online Training portal, VA-ONCE Quick Reference Guide, SCO Handbook, FAQs & more....):

https://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/school\_training\_resources.asp

Submit a Question to the DVA:

https://gibill.custhelp.va.gov/

**DVA Handouts & Forms:** 

https://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/handouts\_forms.asp

Forever GI Bill® - Harry W. Colmery Veterans Educational Assistance Act Updates:

https://www.benefits.va.gov/GIBILL/ForeverGIBill.asp

# Hours of Operation: Monday through Friday 8:30 am to 4:30 pm FOR CATALOG SUBMISSION & GENERAL INQUIRIES:

### VAEDUCATIONBENEFITS.MHEC@MARYLAND.GOV

MHEC Switchboard Operator: Phone 410-767-3301 or 800-974-0203 Fax 410-332-0270

MARYLAND STATE APPROVING AGENCY						
	JOB TITLE	PHONE	EMAIL			
Trish Gordon McCown	Associate Director, Veterans Affairs	410-767-3098	trish.mccown@maryland.gov			
Olayta Rigsby	Veterans Affairs Analyst	410-767-3067	olayta.rigsby@maryland.gov			

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS							
	JOB TITLE	PHONE	EMAIL				
Selica Cherry-Alexander	Maryland Education Liaison Representative	410-230-4545	Selica.cherry-alexander2@va.gov				
	Vocational Rehabilitation Office	410-230-4500					

## REGIONAL/NATIONWIDE TRAINING EVENTS

### **DVA ONLINE RESOURCES – TRAINING MATERIALS:**

https://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/school training resources.asp

### **DVA PRESENTATIONS/EDUCATION WEBINARS:**

https://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/resources/education\_resources/school\_certifying\_officials/presentations.asp

### DVA/SAA SCO EAST REGION TRAINING – NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND !!!!!

Tentatively scheduled for March 18, 2019 – March 21, 2019

Details are coming soon!

## NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF VETERANS' PROGRAM ADMINISTRATORS (NAVPA) ORLANDO, FL

http://www.navpa.org/ourevents/2018-annual-conference/

Monday, October 15, 2018 – Thursday, October 18, 2018









## QUESTIONS & COMMENTS

For best results, please email your questions to vaeducationbenefits .mhec@maryland.gov