



MHEC
MARYLAND HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION

Maryland State Approving Agency

Veterans Education Benefits

2013 – 2014 Updates

Trish Gordon McCown

State Approving Agency Director/ VA Coordinator

Brian Gibbons

State Approving Agency Senior Analyst

Shawn Grove

State Approving Agency Analyst





Staff Directory

Hours of Operation: Monday through Friday 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM

FOR GENERAL INQUIRIES: VAEDUCATIONBENEFITS@MHEC.STATE.MD.US

VA Contact – General Inquiries 1-888-GIBILL-1 (888-442-4551) Monday – Friday 7am – 7pm

| Name | Position Title | Phone | Email |
|----------------------------------|--|--------------|--|
| Trish Gordon McCown | State Approving Agency Director | 410-767-3098 | tmccown@mhec.state.md.us |
| Brian Gibbons | Senior Veterans Affairs Analyst – IHL Specialist | 410-767-3067 | bgibbons@mhec.state.md.us |
| Shawn Grove | Veterans Affairs Analyst – NCD Specialist | 410-767-3091 | sgrove@mhec.state.md.us |
| MHEC Switchboard Operator | | 410-767-3301 | |



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Post 9/11 (Ch-33) GI Bill Updates:

- Private Institutions will have a per VA Academic Year (August 1st – July 31st) **\$19,198.31** (prev. \$18,077.50) maximum for Tuition & Fees for 100% eligible GI Bill users.
- Stipends, paid to the student, may be available for books & supplies up to **\$1000**. No Change.



Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH)

- BAH will be pro-rated based on rate of pursuit
- Students taking all on-line will be paid distance BAH pro-rated based on rate of pursuit (effective 10/1/11)
- Full Time Distance BAH
 - **2012 – 2013 -- \$684.00**
 - **2013 – 2014 -- \$714.50**
- Attending classes at ½ time or less --- not payable
- Active Duty Trainee (or spouse of service member) – not payable



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BREAK/INTERVAL PAY

When term or semester ends, payments **stop**.

Examples:

- Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) will stop after last day of the term (prorated)
- Ch-30, 1606, 1607, 35 payments to students will stop after the end of the term (prorated).



Academic Probation

- Applicable to schools that have a satisfactory progress policy that includes academic and/or attendance probation prior to termination for Unsatisfactory Progress
- **Notify VA promptly** when a student receiving VA education benefits is placed on academic or attendance probation
- Notifications should be sent using VA's Internet Inquiry System
- Include the student's name and Claim Number along with the statement "Student placed on academic (or attendance) probation"



Benefit Payments

 Tuition and Fees Charged

 Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH)

 Stipend for Books and Supplies

 College Fund and Kickers

 Licensing and Certifications Tests

 Work Study

 Tutorial Assistance



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Prior Credit

- Requires every approved school to have and enforce a policy with regard to transfer courses, credits, and previous experience.
- Schools must evaluate and grant prior credit as appropriate
- Notify the student of the evaluation
- Shorten the program certified accordingly
- Documentation of the evaluation process and official transcripts



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Military Education and Training Resources

Military education and training should be evaluated for prior credit. Information needed to evaluate military education and training is available online.

The ACE Military Guide

The ACE (American Council on Education) Military Guide (Guide to Evaluation of Educational Experiences in the Armed Services) is on the web at:

<http://militaryguides.acenet.edu/>

Military Transcripts

Information about military transcripts and how to request the transcripts is available from the Army and Navy as shown below:

- Army (AARTS transcript): <http://aarts.army.mil>
- Navy & Marine Corps (SMART Transcript):
<https://smart.navy.mil/smart/welcome.do>



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COMPLIANCE SURVEY GUIDANCE



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PURPOSE OF THE COMPLIANCE SURVEY

- 1) Assist the school and beneficiaries in understanding laws as they apply to VA beneficiaries.
- 2) Verify and assure the correctness of VA educational benefit payments.



REQUIRED PARTICIPANTS

- ALL SCHOOL CERTIFYING OFFICIAL(S)
& VA COORDINATORS
- REGISTRAR
- FINANCIAL AID REPRESENTATIVE
- BURSAR/STUDENT ACCOUNTS REPRESENTATIVE



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Items to be reviewed in each file:

- **SCHOOL APPLICATION**
- **PRIOR CREDIT & SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**
(Military/Prior School Transcripts & proof of the evaluation process)
- **All VA FORMS** - (Applications for education benefits, VA-ONCE Enrollment Certifications, Changes in student status, etc.)
- **CURRENT SCHOOL TRANSCRIPT**
- **ATTENDANCE RECORDS**
- **TUITION PAYMENT LEDGER** (Showing all transactions & clearly identifying VA payments and refunds)
- **YELLOW RIBBON PROGRAM**
- **CLASS SCHEDULES**
- **Any other documents relating to each student's enrollment** (school enrollment contract, records of any disciplinary action taken, drop slips, etc.)



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Requirements to Maintain SAA/VA Approval



CATALOG SUBMISSIONS

- Certified catalog submission with Standard Certification:

**“True and correct as to content and policy”
with Certifying Official’s signature**

**** 1 copy to SAA & 1 copy to ELR ****

- Submit IHL Catalog Review form (located on the MHEC Website) -- provide any new credit based programs/updates since the last publication submission.

<http://www.mhec.state.md.us/higherEd/acadAff/VeteransBenefits/MDInstitutionalApprovalforVB2013.asp>

- Additional publications – Student Handbook



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PROGRAM INVENTORY

- **Verify your program inventory listed on WEAMS Public**

<http://inquiry.vba.va.gov/weamspub/buildSearchInstitutionCriteria.do>

- **Verify program inventory with Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC)**

http://www.mhec.state.md.us/higherEd/colleges_universities/index.asp

Proposals for new programs should be submitted electronically to acadprop@mhec.state.md.us



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CLASS SCHEDULES

START & END DATES

- **Degree programs** – No submission required
- **Non Credit Degree (NCD) – Continuing Education --**
New/yearly schedules *must* be submitted to the Maryland SAA
- Preferred delivery is via letter



| APPROVAL ACTION | Prior to 10/1/2013 | Effective 10/1/2013 |
|---|---|---|
| <u>New Institution Requests for Approvals</u> | State Approving Agency | State Approving Agency |
| <u>New Program(s) Requests for Approval</u> & <u>Program Modifications</u> | Degree – ELR/VA NCD – ELR/VA | Degree – ELR/VA (copy to SAA) NCD – State Approving Agency |

**** ALL APPROVAL ACTIONS ARE SUBJECT TO FINAL APPROVAL BY THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS ****



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UPCOMING EVENTS

**National Association of Veteran's Program
Administrators (NAVPA)**

Annual Training

Park City, Utah

October 14 -19, 2013

For more details: <http://www.navpa.org/pages/conferences.html>



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SAVE UNDER YOUR FAVORITES

G I Bill Information:

<http://www.gibill.va.gov>

**Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) –
MD State Approving Agency for Veterans Educational Benefits:**

<http://www.mhec.state.md.us/higherEd/acadAff/VeteransBenefits/index.asp>

Training Resources:

<http://www.gibill.va.gov/school-certifying-officials/>

SCO Handbook (updated June 6, 2013):

<http://www.gibill.va.gov/school-certifying-officials/sco-training-resources/handbook.html>



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Baltimore Education Liaison Representative (ELR)

Selica Cherry-Alexander
VA Regional Office (313/22)
Federal Building
31 Hopkins Plaza
Baltimore, MD 21201
410-230-4545 office
410-230-4558 fax

IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

SCO VA CONTACT LINE – (855) 225-1159 (Hours 7am – 5pm)

**** Must have your facility code ****

CALL CENTER (GENERAL INQUIRIES)

(888) 442-4551 (Hours 7am – 7pm)

SUBMIT A QUESTION -

https://gibill.custhelp.com/app/utils/login_form/redirect/ask/session/L3RpbWUvMTM0NzQ2MzI4OC9zaWQvbjc2dkYzNmw=

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

<https://gibill.custhelp.com/app/answers/list>