



DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
Veterans Benefits Administration
Washington DC 20420

Dear Colleagues:

Our Nation has immense human capital potential in the form of Servicemembers who are transitioning into the civilian labor market. Accelerated Learning Programs (ALP) have emerged as a potential strategy to assist in this endeavor. VA is keenly interested in the viability of innovative learning models such as ALPs for both short- and long-term economic achievement of our Veterans and we need your help. We have been strategically studying and learning more about the programs you are developing that provide our Veterans with the opportunity to build highly valued skills and their economic potential.

VA would like to better understand the positive impact of innovative information technology programs in particular, and facilitate valuable discussion about how to build a pipeline from economic opportunities to the Veteran and military family talent pool using accelerated learning models. In the coming months, we will be engaging Federal agencies, employers, and training organizations to implement a series of ALP demonstration projects in key Veteran communities. Our goal is to propel Veterans, transitioning Servicemembers, and their families into meaningful employment opportunities.

The men and women who have served in our military have earned rich benefits. These benefits are designed to support their personal goals and accelerate their economic mobility. In many cases, these benefits are the single most important educational investment in their future. Enclosed is information about the GI Bill® and Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment approvals for training and education programs. VA would like to make criteria available to you as you consider how your programs may engage Veterans, transitioning Servicemembers, and their families.

There are millions of jobs across the Nation that require cutting-edge technical skills, which employers are struggling to fill with competitive candidates. The work you are doing is already inspiring a path ahead for Veterans and their families to take advantage of these economic opportunities.

Thank you for continued support of our mission.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Allison A. Hickey".

Allison A. Hickey
Under Secretary for Benefits
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Enclosure

Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)
Fact Sheet for GI Bill®, GI Bill® Exception, and Vocational Rehabilitation and
Employment (VR&E) for Current Contractors

GI Bill® Approval

For many of you doing this training and education work with Veterans, you may not be aware the GI Bill® has the following criteria:

- Accredited degree programs at public and private not-for-profit schools are “deemed” approved subject to the requirements of 38 United States Code (U.S.C.) §3672(b)(2).
- Private educational institutions (whether for-profit or not-for-profit) must be in operation for at least 2 years in order for GI Bill® benefits to be paid for enrollment in non-degree programs.
- Accredited programs (including non-degree accredited programs) offered by proprietary for-profit educational institutions must meet the requirements of 38 U.S.C. §3675 and 38 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 21.4253.
- Non-accredited programs must meet the requirements of 38 U.S.C. §3676 and 38 CFR 21.4254.
- Both accredited and non-accredited institutions must submit an application for approval; a catalog that includes graduation, attendance, progress, and other policies as well as tuition, fees, and program requirements; and written records of review and appropriate credit for prior training to meet the majority of approval requirements.
- For non-accredited programs, the financial soundness of the institution and its capability to fulfill its stated training mission and institution enrollment limitations will be reviewed.
- On-the-job training programs must meet several criteria found in 38 U.S.C. §3677 and 38 CFR 21.4262(c) including, but not limited to:
 - Provision of skills and related training the trainee needs to be fully qualified for the job.
 - Reasonable certainty that the job for which the person is being trained will be available after the trainee completes the program.
 - Full-time training customarily requires between 6 months and 2 years.
 - The length of training is no longer than customarily required in the community.
 - Progression depends on skills learned through training and not just on such factors as length of service and normal turnover.
- Registered apprenticeship programs are approved subject to the requirements of 38 U.S.C. §3672(b)(2).
- Non-registered apprenticeship programs may be approved for Veterans’ training if they meet the requirements and approval criteria found in 38 U.S.C. §3687 and 38 CFR 21.4261(c) including, but not limited to:

- Must meet the standards of apprenticeship published by the Secretary of Labor under 29 U.S.C. §50a and 29 CFR 29.4, 29.5 and 29.6.
- A signed copy of the training agreement for each Veteran or eligible person, making reference to the approved training program and wage schedule, is provided to the Veteran or eligible person and the Department of Veterans Affairs by the employer.
- VA typically cannot approve a program in which more than 85 percent of the students enrolled have all or part of their charges paid by the school or the GI Bill®.

Additional information about VA education benefits may be found at the GI Bill® Web site: <http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/>.

GI Bill® Exception

Programs offered by educational institutions currently under contract with the Federal Government and providing training on a military installation may be eligible for GI Bill®. If your program is offered by an institution under contract with the Department of Defense or the Department of Homeland Security and is given on or immediately adjacent to a military base, Coast Guard station, National Guard facility, or facility of the Selected Reserve, the programs offered are exempt from the 2-year operational requirement and may exceed the 85 percent Veteran (VA student) enrollment limitation.

If you have further questions, State Approving Agencies (SAA) are available to help you learn more about the approval of education and training programs in your respective states. SAAs are the pathway into VA for a program's recognition and identification as being eligible for the payment of VA education benefits. SAAs contact information may be found at: <http://nasaa-vetseducation.com/contacts/>.

Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment (VR&E) Eligibility

Many Veterans are also eligible for VR&E (Chapter 31 benefits), which is a VA service to help individual Veterans identify a career goal and choose an educational program to reach that goal. For VR&E-only schools, the 2-year rule requirement does not apply for approval. The 85 percent requirement for GI Bill® also does not apply. For your program to be eligible for VR&E, a counselor will determine whether your program meets requirements and can be granted a VR&E facility code by performing the following:

- Review existing school catalogs, brochures, statements of charges, course outlines and other agency approvals (i.e., state vocational rehabilitation agencies, SAAs or nationally recognized accrediting associations) to determine the general suitability of courses and whether the catalog or other published

documents meet the requirements of Veterans Affairs Acquisition Regulation 871.201-2.

- Visit the facility and conduct a site survey to determine if the site meets the requirements of 38 CFR 21.290 through 21.299 for course/program approval, including, but not limited to, the following:
 - Adequacy of equipment, tools, educational resource materials and Americans with Disabilities Act compliance.
 - Whether the program/course appears to be generally suitable, if additional information is needed, and whether the facility has or has not been previously used by VR&E.
 - Whether the program/course or facility will meet the goal or objective of the Veteran.
 - Adequacy of recordkeeping and progress reporting.
 - Whether the facility can provide accurate and timely information on attendance, courses and progress.