



POST★9/11
GI BILL

It's Your Future

VBA Quarterly Education Service Webinar

December 3, 2014

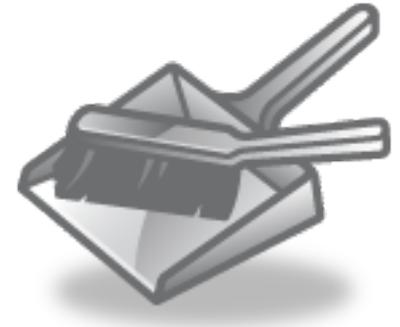
Agenda

- Section 701 (Choice Act) – Expanded Fry Scholarship
- Section 702 (Choice Act) – In-state Tuition Provision
- Flight School Programs at IHLs
- GI Bill Outcome Measures
- Comparison Tool Update
- SVA Million Records Project
- Questions & Answers



Housekeeping

- Participants may submit questions and feedback during the webinar. We want this to be beneficial for you.
- Answers to questions will be provided when a copy of the webinar is uploaded to www.benefits.va.gov/gibill
- To find the webinars, visit www.benefits.va.gov/gibill
 - Click on “For School Administrators”
 - Select “School Resources”
 - Select “Education Benefit Presentations” under the Certifications and Training header
- For any specific or situational questions you may have, please contact your ELR or call the School Certifying Official Hotline



Section 701 (Choice Act) – Expanded Fry Scholarship

Section 701 – Overview

- Public Law 113-146, Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 passed in August 2014
 - Also known as “The Choice Act”
- Section 701 of this law extends the Fry Scholarship to surviving spouses of Servicemembers who died in the line of duty while on active duty after September 10, 2001

Section 701 – Eligibility

- Spouse is eligible if Servicemember died in the line of duty while on active duty after September 10, 2001
- If eligible, spouse will...
 - Receive 36 months of benefits at 100% level of Post-9/11 GI Bill
 - Make an irrevocable election to use EITHER Fry or DEA
 - NOT be eligible for the Yellow Ribbon Program
- Benefits are available for 15 years from Servicemember's death or until date of remarriage
- VA **cannot** pay Fry benefits for terms that begin prior to January 1, 2015
- For terms beginning after 12/31/14, individuals eligible for both the Fry Scholarship and DEA must relinquish one program in order to receive a benefit payment

Section 701 – How to Apply

- VA began accepting paper applications November 3rd
- Updated application forms are available (includes irrevocable election language)
 - On the GI Bill website
 - <http://www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/VBA-22-5490-ARE.pdf>
 - By calling the GI Bill Hotline (1-888-442-4551)
 - Electronic application is not updated in VONAPP
- Applications can be submitted via:
 - Snail mail to the RPO
 - Email completed PDF through secure email system on GI Bill website
 - Applications submitted via VONAPP will be developed for election choice between DEA and the Fry Scholarship

Section 702 (Choice Act) – In-State Tuition Provision



Section 702 – In-state Tuition Provision

- Section 702 of the Choice Act requires that VA disapprove programs of education under the Post-9/11 GI Bill and Montgomery GI Bill at a public IHLs if the school charges qualifying Veterans and dependents (“covered individuals”) tuition and fees in excess of the rate for resident students
- To remain approved for Post-9/11 and MGIB benefits, schools must charge in-state tuition and fee amounts to “covered individuals” under those two programs
- Section 702 requirements apply to terms beginning after July 1, 2015



Section 702 - In-state Tuition Provision (cont.)

- A “covered individual” is defined in the Choice Act as:
 - A **Veteran** who lives in the state in which the IHL is located (regardless of formal state of residence) and enrolls in the school **within three years of discharge** from a period of active duty service of 90 days or more
 - A **spouse or child** using transferred benefits who lives in the state in which the IHL is located (regardless of his/her formal state of residence) and enrolls in the school **within three years of the transferor’s discharge** from a period of active duty service of 90 days or more
 - A **spouse or child** using benefits under the **Fry Scholarship** who lives in the state in which the IHL is located (regardless of his/her formal state of residence) and enrolls in the school **within three years of the Servicemember’s death** in the line of duty following a period of active duty service of 90 days or more
- Students maintain covered individual status as long as they remain continually enrolled at the same public IHL in one or more programs
- More information can be found on our website:
http://www.benefits.va.gov/GIBILL/docs/factsheets/Section_702_Factsheet.pdf



Section 702 - In-state Tuition Provision (cont.)

- How do the provisions of 702 impact my schools ability to utilize Yellow Ribbon? Does this mean that Yellow Ribbon is going away?
 - For a covered individual the Yellow Ribbon Program will be obsolete because they will meet the requirements for in-state tuition. However, the Yellow Ribbon Program will be an option for Veteran students attending your school if they do not meet the definition of covered individual or fail to maintain the covered individual status.
- Does the Veteran have to receive a Honorable Discharge to be eligible for 702?
 - An individual must have an honorable qualifying period of service in order to establish eligibility for the Post-9/11 GI Bill or the MGIB. However, for those with multiple periods of service, the final discharge need not be fully honorable.
- We believe that our state/school is compliant with the provisions of the law, what should we do? As an SAA, how can we be most beneficial at this time?
 - Contact your Governor's office or highest authority and help them answer the three questions contained within the Governor's letter and get that response back to VA as soon as possible to Section702.VBAVACO@va.gov.



POST★9/11
GI BILL

It's Your Future 10

Section 702 - In-state Tuition Provision (cont.)

- We will have to make changes to our law in order to become compliant and won't meet the deadline, what should we do?
 - VA has provided technical assistance to states with questions regarding required changes and/or draft legislation or policies. State decision makers may contact VA through the Section702.VBAVACO@va.gov mailbox to request assistance.
- Can our school have other requirements in-order to receive in-state tuition?
 - Yes. Section 702 allows institutions to have requirements to demonstrate an intent, by means other than satisfying a physical presence requirement, to establish residency in the State in which the institution is located, or to satisfy other requirements not relating to the establishment of residency. For example, your school requires that the student obtains a Driver's License; in your state you must live in the state for 30 days before applying to receive the Driver's License. Requiring a driver's license is acceptable, but the 30 day physical presence requirement is not.



POST★9/11
GI BILL

It's Your Future 11

Flight School Programs at IHLs



Compliance Survey Findings

- Compliance Surveys conducted at IHL flight programs in the last year have uncovered a number of common issues in the treatment and certification of VA students
- Generally those issues can be broken down into the following categories
 - Tuition and Fees and Allowable Hours
 - Standards of Progress
 - 85/15% Violations



POST★9/11
GI BILL

It's Your Future 13

Tuition and Fees and Allowable Hours

- **THE ISSUE**

- VA is being charged excessive fees related to hours being flown by VA students in excess of approved FAA syllabus
- VA is being charged excessive fees relating to purposeful use of more expensive aircraft to train VA students



POST★9/11
GI BILL

It's Your Future 14

Tuition and Fees and Allowable Hours (cont.)

- **THE RULES**

- The total cost of a course or program's tuition and fees certified to VA must be the same (no more than) as those of non-Veterans
- The flight hours certifiable to VA (and by extension the costs) are no more than the number of hours in the approved FAA syllabus



Tuition and Fees and Allowable Hours (cont.)

- **BEST PRACTICES**

- The school's general course catalog should identify the number of flight hours approved for the course
- Those hours should match the FAA- approved hours in the syllabus at the flight facility
- It is the school's responsibility to ensure that VA is not billed for flight hours in excess of the facility's approved FSDO stamped syllabus hours



POST★9/11
GI BILL

It's Your Future 16

Standards of Progress

- **THE ISSUE**

- When a student has not completed required flight hours during the reported term, we are finding schools are certifying modified term dates or requesting payment for hours flown outside of the schools initially reported term dates



POST★9/11
GI BILL

It's Your Future 17

Standards of Progress (cont.)

- **THE RULES**

- Incomplete course work for flight courses should be reported to VA in the same manner as an incomplete course is reported for other courses at your institution
- Incompletes should be reported to VA within 30 days

Standards of Progress (cont.)

- **BEST PRACTICES**

- A special shortened completion period of no more than 90 days should be considered and may be a requirement for approval by the SAA



POST★9/11
GI BILL

It's Your Future 19

85/15% Requirement (cont.)

- **THE ISSUE**

- Some schools are in violation, having more than 85% VA students in their flight programs



POST★9/11
GI BILL

It's Your Future 20

85/15% Requirement

- **THE RULES**

- In any one term, no more than 85% of students in the degree programs can be VA students
- VA (85%) portion of ratio includes VA students and any students receiving a grant, waiver, discount, scholarship, etc. directly from the school
- Non-VA/non-supported (15%) portion of ratio includes all other students officially registered in that degree program
- You must calculate the ratio **before** certifying a VA student in the program for the first time

85/15% Requirement (cont.)

- **BEST PRACTICES**

- Schools need to carefully monitor the ratio of non-VA and VA student in their programs, as the expensive tuition & fees for flight programs have the effect of precluding enrollment by non-VA students



POST★9/11
GI BILL

It's Your Future 22

GI Bill Outcome Measures



GI Bill Outcome Measures

- VA's Comparison Tool will display the following outcome measures:
 - Retention and Persistence Rate
 - Transfer Rate
 - Graduation Rate
 - Certificate Completion Rate
 - Number of Years to Complete Degree/Certificate
 - Number of Institutions attended to complete degree
- VA does not have the statutory authority to require reporting
 - Requesting voluntary participation to report the outcomes in VA-ONCE.
 - We ***strongly encourage participation*** to ensure that the most accurate and complete information is available to our Veterans
- School Certifying Officials should report program completion/graduation information data through the VA-ONCE system
 - Further information can be found in the SCO handbook, VA-Once user guide, or by contacting your Education Liaison Representative

GI Bill Outcome Measures (cont.)

- Will schools need to report grades?
 - No. Institutions are not to begin reporting grades to VA
- How far back should schools go to report graduation/completion data for Post-9/11 GI Bill?
 - Institutions should report graduation/completion data from August 1, 2009 - present for all recipients of the Post-9/11 GI Bill
- Why is VA focusing on the Post-9/11 GI Bill only and not on other benefit programs?
 - Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits represent an overwhelming majority (over 80%) of all education benefits, and should therefore effectively convey trends in student Veteran success at any institution.
- How do you report graduation if a student doesn't graduate from the institution? Example: student transfers from a 2 year to 4 year institution
 - If the student does not graduate, you should not report it



GI Bill Outcome Measures (cont.)

- What if a student exhausts benefits and doesn't use benefits in the last term? How do we report graduation if they graduate after exhaustion?
 - If the student graduates after they exhaust their benefits, don't report it
- If a school recently started using VA-ONCE and used paper certifications prior to that point, how should we update the graduations of students who were not certified in VA-ONCE?
 - Institutions should update graduation/program completion data using the same method that the student was originally certified.
 - If originally certified using VA-ONCE, then a VA-ONCE certification amendment should be entered to reflect the graduation/completion
 - If originally certified using a paper certification, then a paper certification amendment should be entered to reflect the graduation/completion

Comparison Tool Update



Comparison Tool Update

- New features include:
 - Release complaint information
 - Advanced search capability
 - Compare multiple schools
 - Calculate other GI Bill benefits
- New data elements in a “School Summary” section including:
 - School Complaints: Number of closed PoE-related complaints by campus and by all campuses
 - Accreditation:
 - Type: Regional and/or National accreditation
 - Status: Probation
 - Total Paid to Schools:
 - Total Post-9/11 GI Bill dollars paid for tuition and fees to an institution or employer by fiscal year with student total
 - Total Post-9/11 GI Bill Yellow Ribbon dollars paid to an institution by fiscal year with student total

Comparison Tool Update (cont.)

- Calculates other VA education benefit programs (not just Post-9/11 GI Bill):
 - Montgomery GI Bill – Active Duty (Ch 30)
 - Montgomery GI Bill – Selected Reserve (Ch 1606)
 - Reserve Educational Assistance Program (Ch 1607)
 - Survivors' and Dependents' Educational Assistance Program (Ch 35)
 - Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Program (Ch 31)

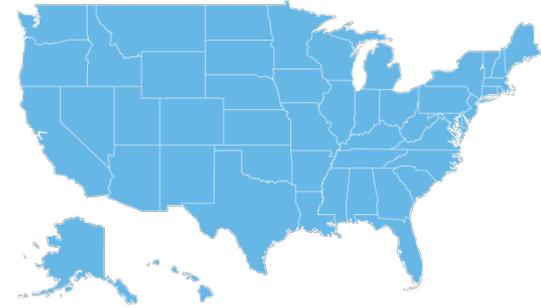


POST★9/11
GI BILL

It's Your Future 29

Comparison Tool Update (cont.)

- Advanced search allows users to find an approved program by:
 - Regional
 - State
 - Country
 - Veteran Programs
 - Student Veteran Group
 - Yellow Ribbon Scholarships
 - Principles of Excellence participation
 - 8Keys to Veteran Success participation
 - Type of School
 - Public
 - Private
 - For Profit
 - On-the-job training
 - Foreign
 - Flight
 - Correspondence



Comparison Tool Update (cont.)

- Side by Side Comparison
 - Users can compare up to three “favorite” programs side-by-side.
- Users can now easily download the entire school data file including
 - School Information (e.g., type of school)
 - VA Summary (e.g., # of GI Bill beneficiaries)
 - School Summary (e.g., complaints)
 - School Indicators (e.g., graduation rate)
- Enhanced calculator results
 - The results of the GI Bill benefits calculator are easier to read.



POST★9/11
GI BILL

It's Your Future 31

Comparison Tool Update (cont.)

Benefit Estimator x Close

Your Favorites

JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY		UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA - REGISTRAR OFFICE		VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE & STATE UNIVERSITY	
Benefit Estimator		Benefit Estimator		Benefit Estimator	
HARRISONBURG, VA		CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA		BLACKSBURG, VA	
Public School		Public School		Public School	
Tuition / Fees Benefit:	100% of instate tuition	Tuition / Fees Benefit:	100% of instate tuition	Tuition / Fees Benefit:	100% of instate tuition
Housing Allowance:	\$1,218 / month (full time)	Housing Allowance:	\$1,530 / month (full time)	Housing Allowance:	\$1,113 / month (full time)
Book Stipend:	\$1,000 / year	Book Stipend:	\$1,000 / year	Book Stipend:	\$1,000 / year
VA Summary Source		VA Summary Source		VA Summary Source	
GI Bill Beneficiaries:	645 students	GI Bill Beneficiaries:	568 students	GI Bill Beneficiaries:	806 students
Student Veterans Group:	Yes	Student Veterans Group:	Yes	Student Veterans Group:	Yes Go to site
Yellow Ribbon:	No	Yellow Ribbon:	Yes	Yellow Ribbon:	Yes
Principles of Excellence:	No	Principles of Excellence:	Yes	Principles of Excellence:	Yes
8 Keys to Veterans Success:	No	8 Keys to Veterans Success:	No	8 Keys to Veterans Success:	No



Comparison Tool Update (cont.)

- Additional features are being discussed and will be implemented in the future
- A rating system is being developed that will include the following criteria:
 - Overall school rating
 - Class quality
 - Veteran friendliness
 - Employment preparation
 - Recruiting practices





SVA Million Records Project



SVA Million Records Project (Phase 2)

- Phase 2 reviews current support services for military student populations at IHLs
 - Impact on post-secondary educational attainment
 - Success of Servicemembers and Veterans
- SVA requests schools fill out a survey about on-campus support programs for military and Veteran students
- Check out the information/participation email here:
https://syracuseuniversity.qualtrics.com/CP/File.php?F=F_6RRqV8wE32wzmex

Question & Answers



POST★9/11
GI BILL

It's Your Future 36

Questions and Answers

Q1. So, if a student is currently using DEA do they still have to make the irrevocable election?

A1: For any training beginning after January 1, 2015, a spouse eligible for both Chapter 35 and Fry must make an election prior to benefits being paid, even if the spouse merely wants to continue using Chapter 35. However, if the spouse elects to continue to use Chapter 35 benefits after January 1, 2015, he or she is irrevocably electing to waive eligibility to Fry in the future.

Q2. Can we charge out of state rates and give a waiver of the out of state charges or can we only charge in state rates?

A2: Presumably this is a school asking whether they are still in compliance with section 702 if they charge the student the out-of-state rate. Section 702 mandates disapproval of any program of education where a “covered individual” is charged a rate higher than the rate the institution charges for tuition and fees for that program for residents of the State in which the institution is located.

Q3: How is living in the state defined for residency? If a student lives in a dorm during classes but goes to home state on breaks, do they live in the state?

A3: We are still developing the regulatory language for the term “living in the state.”



POST★9/11
GI BILL

It's Your Future 35

Questions and Answers

Q4: What if child is using CH33, but service member is still serving, in different state, Veteran was never a resident of our state, and was not discharged from active duty yet.

A4: Section 702 does not apply to transfer recipients while the transferor is still on active duty.

Q5: Will the comparison tool continue to have the school's Dept of Ed stats?

A5: Yes

Q6: Who do we contact if our information is not listed correctly on the GI Bill Comparison tool (i.e., not showing undergraduate Yellow Ribbon)?

A6: Please send an email to 223D mailbox: 223D.VBAVACO@va.gov

Questions and Answers

Q7: Will the institution be allowed to specify which types of complaints are listed on the comparison tool?

A7: No

Q8: What if my ELR never answers and is not helpful when they do?

A8: If you are a SCO and unable to reach your ELR, you should e-mail your CELO for assistance.

Buffalo – Michele Mendola Michele.mendola@va.gov

Atlanta – Jerome Marshall Jerome.marshall@va.gov

Muskogee – Michael Marks Michael.marks1@va.gov

St. Louis – Marie George Marie.george@va.gov



POST★9/11
GI BILL

It's Your Future 35

Questions and Answers

Q9: We give our flight students one year to complete their flight hours, they are not issued incomplete. How do we report this?

A9: The school would not be allowed to certify those flight hours pursued after the end of the term and the student would be responsible for the cost of any such flights. The school must issue an incomplete or other grade that officially acknowledges the student's status to finish up work not completed during the official term dates. If this school issues an incomplete grade and gives a student one year to finish up their flight lessons, they must report that I to VA under the appropriate instructions regarding that type of grade. Please contact your local ELR for additional guidance specifically to your situation.

Q10: Are you going to update VA Once to allow accurate reporting of completion dates when during a term not certified? (after benefits exhausted, for example)

A10: No, only actions completed during a term the student was using benefits are reported. If the student had exhausted benefits, no further actions should be reported in VA ONCE.

Q11: How do you correct past grad info from before you were the SCO?

A11: In VA-ONCE, once a term is terminated, no changes can be made to that term. This is problematic when a School Certifying Official (SCO) finds out after the fact that there were reductions prior to the termination. Please consult your ELR for additional guidance.



POST★9/11
GI BILL

It's Your Future 35

Questions and Answers

Q12: If student chooses not to use VA Ed Benefits but completes program, do not report?

A12: Correct, only actions completed during a term where the student was using benefits should be reported.

Q13: If a student is 1606 and changes over to Chapter 33 when they return for their final year of school - it would be appropriate to report graduation?

A13: Yes, actions completed during a term where the student was using benefits should be reported, regardless of the type of education benefit.

Q14: How do we report graduation?

A14: Select the term during which the graduation occurred. On the Cert menu, select Terminate. As the "Reason for Termination", select "Graduation". The end date of the term will be populated as the effective date. If this is not correct, enter the correct date of graduation.

Detailed instructions to report a graduation of a degree program or certificate can be located within the SCO Handbook, VA-Once user guide, or by contacting your ELR. The SCO handbook can be found at the following link. http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/school_training_resources.asp (Page 79)

VA Once Users Guide can be found at the following link

http://www.benefits.va.gov/GIBILL/docs/vaonce/VAONCE_SCO_PowerPoint_v7.pdf



Questions and Answers

Q15: Since putting in a graduation terminates the cert is it possible that they can change this and give it it's own place?

A15: Not at this time, due to how VA-ONCE works in conjunction with other VA processing systems.

Q16: In regards to Comparison Tool - we have 3 facility codes with the VA and our two branch campus show as "non-accredited" on the comparison tool. This is incorrect because since our main campus is accredited, this covers our branches as well. How is this corrected?

A16: Please contact your State Approving Agency or ELR to request an update to the Web Enhanced Automated Management System (WEAMS).

Q17: If a student uses the GI Bill and then exhausts benefits, they never show up as a graduated student, does that affect our outcome measurements?

A17: Actions during a term where the student was using benefits are reported and collected in the data.

Questions and Answers

Q18: Graduation rates from VA ONCE are horrible numbers and are nowhere near accurate for our school; can we opt out of you showing our VA ONCE graduation rates on the comparison tool? I think we should have that right, or be able to refer the Veteran to another source for more reliable numbers.

A18: If your institution has elected not to report any or all instances of graduation/program completion; we won't be able to report accurate graduation/program completion rates for your institution and fulfill our obligation to our Veterans.

Q19: How do we report graduation if student finish at a different school and transfers units to parent school?

A19: Graduation is tracked by facility codes reported on the graduation certification. The parent school would get credit for the appropriate degree completion.



POST★9/11
GI BILL

It's Your Future 35

