

Education Service July Office Hours 2021





Isakson & Roe Updates



Adrienne Reagins

Chief National Training Team - Compliance









Section 1010 – Monthly Enrollment Verification

Verification of enrollment to receive Post-9/11 GI Bill® Benefits

As of **August 1, 2021**, Non-College Degree (NCD) students must verify their enrollment status each month to continue receiving their Monthly Housing Allowance (MHA) and/or kicker payments. This change will be implemented in phases, starting with students enrolled at a NCD facility, and extending to students at Institutes for Higher Learning (IHL) this fall

<u>Note</u>: Monthly enrollment verification is applicable to only Chapter 33 students

NCD facility students can verify their enrollment status in one of two ways:



Text Messaging – NCD students who choose VA's "Opt-In" feature will receive a text message each month prompting them to verify their enrollment status



Telephone – NCD students who Do <u>Not</u> Opt-In for text may call the Education Call Center (ECC) at <u>888-442-4551</u> to verify their enrollment status







Monthly Enrollment Verification - Cont

Verification of enrollment to receive Post-9/11 GI Bill® Benefits How MHA payments are altered from this process:

NCD students who reply '**Yes**' to the verification text or confirm their enrollment status hasn't changed by phone will have <u>MHA payments released on the first of the month as usual</u>



NCD students who reply '**No**' or report a change by phone will prompt the Veteran Claims Examiner (VCE) to review for updated enrollment information from the SCO. If no updated information is pending, the VCE will contact the SCO to request an update be submitted. <u>MHA payments will be held in the meanwhile</u>

If a student fails to verify for two consecutive months, VA will withhold future MHA payments until they call the Educational Call Center (ECC) to verify



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Section 1010 – Two Certification Requirement



Section 1010 requires that educational institutions submit an additional certification of enrollment after the last day when a student is able to withdraw from the course or program of education without penalty, know as the drop-add period

<u>Note</u>: Two certification requirement is applicable to only chapter 33 students



The second certification should be received no later than 30 days after the school's drop-add period or 60 days from the first day of the enrollment period, whichever occurs first



For schools that do not have a drop-add period, the second enrollment certification must be received within 60 days from the first day of the enrollment period



The second enrollment certification will be submitted in the same form as the first certification (either through VA-ONCE or paper form)









Dual Certifications



Many schools use a practice of submitting initial enrollment certification with \$0.00 in the tuition and fees field(s)



After the drop-add period, the tuition and fees are certified by amending the term to add the tuition and fees amount. This is called dual certification



Following this common "dual certification" process is **highly recommended** because it has several significant benefits:

- It satisfies the new two certification requirement
- It dramatically reduces the creation of school T&F debts under section 1019
- Still allows GI Bill® students to receive their book and supply stipends on time



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Enrollment Changes

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If a beneficiary makes changes to their enrollment the process of certifying the change does not change under the new two certification rule. However, the timing of when you submit the change is something you should consider



If the change is certified during the drop-add period, that change does not satisfy the "certification after drop/add" requirement. You are still required to certify again after the drop/add period

However, if you wait until after the drop/add period to certify the change within the established the time limit, it will satisfy the "certification after drop/add" requirement









Unchanged Certifications



If the school has no changes to make to the enrollment or tuition and fees for a term, they must still submit a second enrollment certification



This should be done by amending the enrollment, making no changes, and submitting the term through VA-ONCE



Comments or remarks should be avoided (unless necessary) on these "unchanged" amendments to allow the greatest likelihood of automation by VA









Retroactive Certifications



When schools are submitting enrollment certifications for terms that are already completed, the two certification requirements remain



An amended term should be submitted on the next day to maximize automation, as described for "unchanged" certifications above









Paper Certifications



If a school is unable to certify enrollments using VA-ONCE, the SCO should submit two enrollment certifications (VA Form 22-1999). The first should be sent to VA when the beneficiary enrolls



If there are no changes, schools should submit a duplicate enrollment certification after the drop-add period with remarks stating: "No Change/Verification Only" within the time limits stated in section A, 2



If there are changes to the original enrollment, a Notice of Change in Student Status (VA Form 22-1999b) should be reported after the drop-add period which will suffice for the second certification









Please remember, if a second certification comes in before the drop/add date, the school will need to submit a third certification after the drop/add date





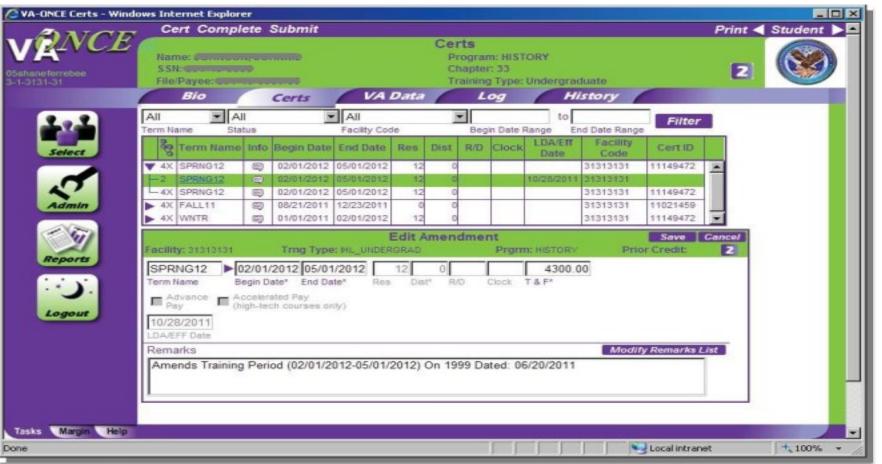






Sec 1010 - Two Certification Reminder

If there is no change in enrollment, you must submit an Amended Certification after the drop/add date in VA-ONCE









Certify

9/1

Section 1015 – Additional Approval Requirement

Additional requirement for approval of educational institutions for purposes of the educational assistance programs of the Department of Veterans Affairs



VA advises accredited educational institutions that currently do not participate in Title IV to begin the process of interpreting and implementing all provisions of <u>Public Law 116-315</u>



All waiver requests will be considered on a <u>case-by-case</u> basis and an institution should not assume a waiver will be granted



For institutions that are accredited and currently have a Program Participation Agreement with the Department of Education, it is expected Title IV eligibility and participation will continue beginning **August 1, 2021**



If eligibility is lost or participation ceases at any point after **August 1, 2021**, a waiver would need to be sought to continue GI Bill® eligibility







Section 1018 – Requirements for Educational Institutions

Requirements for educational institutions participating in the educational assistance programs of the Department of Veterans Affairs

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While the provisions take effect on **June 15, 2021**, they are not applicable to educational institutions until August 1, 2021



As with Section 1015, there is no expectation of immediate disapproval on August 1, 2021. All waiver requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis and an institution should not assume a waiver will be granted









Section 1015 & 1018 Waiver Request Process

- Dedicated email boxes have been set up for each section to receive waiver requests
- Schools that do not apply for a waiver are assumed to have claimed compliance; will be subject to routine compliance actions by SAAs and VA and adverse action if found to be out of compliance
- Once a school submits a waiver request it is placed in "Pending Waiver Decision" status
 - Adverse action under section 1015 or 1018 will not occur while decision is pending
 - VA will make a decision within 60 to 90 days of August 1, 2021
- Applications that provide inadequate information will be denied. Applicants that do not meet waiver criteria will result in:
 - Caution flag in the Comparison Tool
 - Further action by SAAs (program disapproval or suspension)









Waiver Request Continued

As with Section 1015, there is no expectation of immediate disapproval on **August 1, 2021**. All waiver requests will be considered on a <u>case-by-case</u> basis and an institution should not assume a waiver will be granted









Section 1020 – Advertising, Sales, and Enrollment Practices

Improvements to limitation on certain advertising, sales, and enrollment practices

This section defines current limitations on advertising, sales and marketing tactics a school can utilize and remain eligible for GI Bill® funds



Creates a tiered penalty system for institutions that do not comply with the law



Sets up a mechanism for institutions to work with the State Approving Agencies and the VA on coming back into compliance



It is advised that education institutions begin to review internal policies to ensure compliance with Section 1020 by **August 1, 2021**









Registration Process and Enrollment Certifications



<u>Ellen Shaheed</u> Management & Program Analyst National Training Team - Compliance









Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this presentation, you will be able to:

- Complete the registration process for VRRAP
- Complete VRRAP Enrollment Certifications
- Complete Adjustments, Amendments and Terminations for VRRAP
- Complete the Employment Certification Form









Registration Process









Registration Process Cont.

Education Institutions seeking to participate in VRRAP must:

- Submit the <u>Participation Agreement & Acknowledgement Form</u> to the VRRAP Processing Team at <u>EDUVRRAP.VBAMUSK@VA.GOV</u>
- The VRRAP Team will process the Agreement and send the institutions an approval letter and list of all approved programs
- Upon receipt of approval, the education institutions can submit enrollment certifications

Note: Education Institutions cannot submit enrollment certifications prior to receiving their approval









Enrollment Certifications









Enrollment Certifications



The use of VA-ONCE is mandatory when submitting enrollment certifications, amendments, adjustments or terminations for VRRAP









Initial Enrollment Submission

- The VA Enrollment Certification (VA Form 22-1999) can be submitted up to 14 calendar days prior to the start of the program
- The remarks section for the initial enrollment certification must contain the entire length of the program (beginning and end date) and the tuition and fees for the entire program as well

<u>NOTE</u>: VA Payments to the education institutions will be based on the information listed in the remarks section of the initial enrollment certification. Therefore, you <u>must</u> enter the **entire length of the program and the tuition and fees** in the remarks section!







Verification of Attendance

- An "Amended Enrollment Certification" (VA Form 22-AM1999) <u>must</u> be submitted to verify attendance once the Veteran has started the term. This certification allows the VRRAP Processing Team to release VRRAP funds to the school for the certified Student Veteran
- "Verification of Attendance" must be entered in the remarks section

<u>Note</u>: When submitting in advance, a correction (VA Form 22-AM1999) to the original VA Form 22-1999 must be submitted to verify attendance







Program Completion



- On or after the last day of the program, once the student has met all necessary requirements to receive a Certificate of Competition, the Certifying Official will submit a Notice of Change in Student Status (VA Form 22-1999b) reporting "End of Term or Course" effective the last day of the term
- A prorated amount will be paid for the portion of the program pursued if an eligible Veteran withdraws, and provides notice to the educational institution that he/she no longer intends to pursue the program of education









Changes to Enrollment Certifications

Amendments and Adjustments work the same as any other VA Benefit

 The School Certifying Official <u>must</u> submit a Notice of Change in Student Status (VA Form 22-1999b) to report any changes to the enrollment certification within 30 days of the change

 Reductions – The amount paid to the educational institution will <u>not</u> be prorated due to a reduction in term









Termination

Although VRRAP terminations are processed the same as any other benefit, the impact on the Veteran is **significantly different** than any other VA Benefit:

- The law states that once a student receives benefits for a program and then terminates, the student cannot re-enroll or enroll in any program under VRRAP
- If a Veteran attends one or more days of class and terminates with the intent of reenrolling later that year, the Veteran will not be able to re-enroll in VRRAP. Additionally, the Veteran will only receive MHA payment for the day or days he/she attended
- If a Veteran enrolls and terminates before the first day of term, the Veteran can reenroll in VRRAP









Termination Cont

- When submitting a termination, the SCO must enter the number of days the Veteran attended the program
- If the termination occurs within 14 days of the first day of term, the VRRAP Processing Team will contact the SCO for attendance verification
- If the termination occurs 15 days or more from the first day of term, the VRRAP Processing Team will process the termination without requesting attendance verification
- A prorated amount will be paid for the portion of the program pursued if the eligible Veteran withdraws and provides notice to the Educational Institution that he/she no longer intends to pursue the program of education









Employment for VRRAP

The Veteran Rapid Retraining Assistance Program (VRRAP) is focused on the successfully placing a Veteran into a related employment field upon the successful completion of the program of education:

What is Considered Employment for VRRAP?

- Traditional employment in a career in the program of study
- Self Employment The Veteran owns their own business and can demonstrate utilization of the skills learned from the VRRAP program
- Paid internships, apprenticeships and contract employment

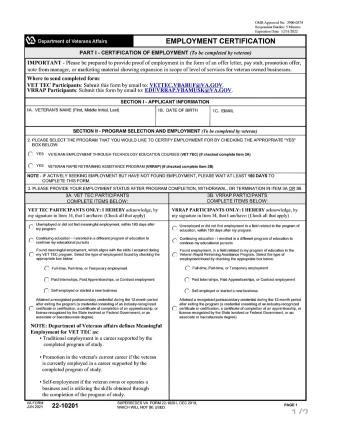








Employment Certifications



Employment Certification Form

- VA must be notified when the Student Veteran has found program related employment. This must be accomplished within the 180 days of completing the program by using the <u>Employment Certification Form</u>
- A prorated amount will be paid for the portion of the program pursued, if the eligible Veteran does not complete the program, nonetheless finds employments in a field related to the program of education during the 180-day period







How to Certify employment

- The Veteran must complete the applicable sections on Part 1 and Part II of the <u>Employment Certification Form</u> and return it to the School Certifying Official (SCO)
- The SCO must complete Part II of Section II of the form and send it via email to the VRRAP Processing Team at <u>EDUVRRAP.VBAMUSK@VA.GOV</u> once the Veteran Student finds employment

<u>Note</u>: If a Veteran Student is affirming employment via "Self Employment", additional information may be required (Federal Tax ID Number and Corporation Papers) Additionally, VA may require a written explanation as to how the skills learned in their VRRAP program will assist in growing their business. For additional questions regarding related employment, please contact the VRRAP Processing Team





VA-ONCE Updates









VA-ONCE Updates Cont.

The following changes were made in version P062.4 of VA-ONCE:

- The addition of a new chapter, VRRAP, Veteran Rapid Retraining Assistance Program
- All VRRAP submissions will be automatically routed to the Muskogee RPO for processing
- VET TEC schools are permitted to submit VRRAP claims
- If the benefit type is VRRAP:
 - STEM is not allowed
 - Associates-IHL Undergrad & NCD are the only valid training types
 - Bachelors and Graduate training is prohibited
 - Advance Pay and Accelerated Pay are disabled
 - The begin date for enrollments must be on or after 3-11-21
 - Entire length of program (begin date and end date) as well as Tuition and Fees for the entire program must be in remarks section on initial enrollment certification



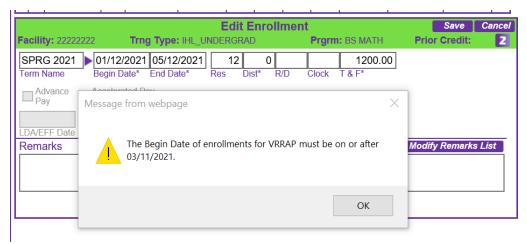






VA-ONCE Updates Screen Shots

VRRAP terms cannot begin before 3/11/21, the date legislation was enacted, and Tuition and Fees are required for the entire program.



Tuition and fees are required for the **entire program** for all VRRAP Enrollments.

	Save Cancel		
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LDA/EFF Date			
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VA-ONCE Updates Screen Shots Cont.

Enter the entire length of the program (Begin Date & End Date) as well as the Tuition and Fees for the entire program in the Remarks section

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Length of entire program: 03	/12/2021 thru 05	/12/2022		
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Note: VA payments to the education institutions will be based on the information listed in the remarks section on the initial enrollment certification. Therefore, **you must enter the entire length of the program and the tuition and fees for the entire program in the remarks section**.







TRAINING

GI Bill® Status Updates



<u>Justin Brown</u> Education Quality & Training Specialist National Training Team - Compliance



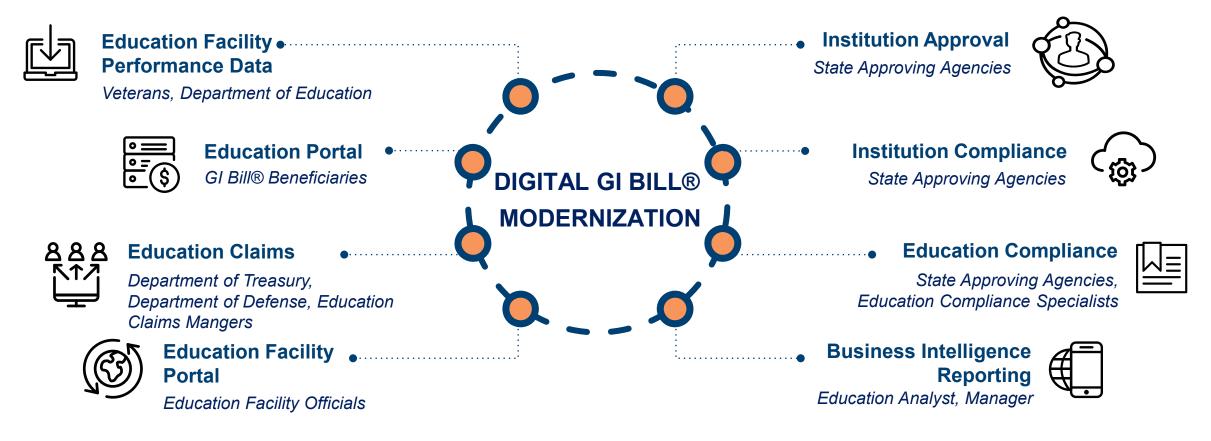






Digital GI Bill® Overview

Digital GI Bill® (DGIB) is a modernized digital platform that will transform VA technology systems, improve GI Bill® students' user experience, and optimize benefits processes for millions of beneficiaries. This platform will be a single interface across the education ecosystem

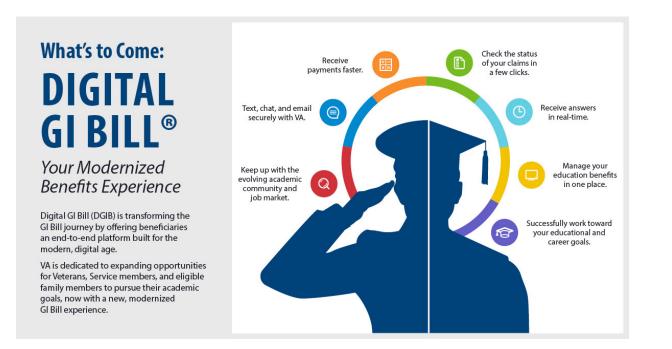






Digital GI Bill® Overview (Cont.)

DGIB will enable VA to go beyond the technical modernization of claims processing by transitioning to a holistic service that improves user experience across our entire ecosystem of partners while providing additional value to Veterans, Service members, and their families. The new digital platform and streamlined processes will provide direct, online, one-stop access to GI Bill® benefits for beneficiaries and external partners











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Human Centered Design – Focus Groups

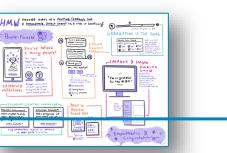
- Focus groups are underway to understand the needs of stakeholders. This month, VA has been holding sessions with:
 - GI Bill® Students
 - School Certifying Officials
 - Chief Education Liaison Officers/Supervisory Compliance and Liaison Specialists
 - Veteran Claims Examiners/Education Quality and Training Specialists
 - Education Call Center
- These sessions will be used to create Stakeholder Journey Maps to inform training and communications
- Other Human Centered Design activities include:

RESEARCH & USER FEEDBACK SESSIONS

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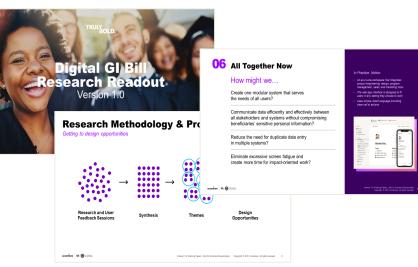
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Conduct primary research through unstructured user feedback sessions and directed storytelling to understand the needs and pain points of participants



DESIGN CONCEPTING

Design ideas to address pain points and opportunities identified from Research & User Feedback Sessions



USABILITY TESTING Test and validate prototypes with different users to measure success and feasibility

Feedback from the HCD process is used to inform and tailor configuration updates





HCD User Feedback Sessions

More than 80 HCD user feedback sessions have informed the modernization efforts so far

Modernizing the GI Bill®

Putting Veterans and their families at the center of the experience.









Digital GI Bill® Focus Groups

- The DGIB team conducted focus groups with different stakeholder groups to understand user experience and develop stakeholder journey maps
- Journey maps will be leveraged to inform training and communications efforts

MAJOR THEMES

- Personalization communications are preferred by GI Bill® beneficiaries
- Digitalized communications with email, app and text as preferred methods
- Self-sufficiency allows users to learn about a new system on their own time at their own pace

"I prefer personalized emails, so I know it's not spam. I don't care what VA is doing [if it doesn't relate to me]."

POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES

- Segmenting communications based on the stakeholder, so students receive information on topics that affect them
- Developing opportunities to push communications via text and/or an app
- Producing videos and step-by-step guides along with setup wizards allowing student to have self-learning opportunities

"I'm more interested in hearing how changes would affect my benefits."

STAKEHOLDER SESSIONS



Education Call Center (ECC)



GI Bill® Beneficiaries

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Veteran Claims Examiners (VCEs)



Chief Education Liaison Officers (CELOs) & Supervisory Compliance and Liaison Specialists (SCLS)



School Certifying Officials (SCOs) Scheduled for June 29 -July 1





Upcoming Training for LTS Update



<u>Victoria Evans</u> Chief National Training Team - Schools









U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Upcoming training for LTS Update

Rules – Calculate Awards for Non-Standard IHL Graduate Enrollments

- When an IHL enrollment period has a Training Type of Graduate, and the length of the Enrollment Period is non-standard, LTS now calculates the Rate of Pursuit as the Payable Hours divided by the Fulltime Hours for the school
- This change is effective with Enrollment Periods with a Begin Date on or after 8/1/21

Note: Training is currently being developed and will be released in August Office Hours







SCO Training Requirements



<u>Victoria Evans</u> Chief National Training Team - Schools









FY21 SCO Annual Training Reminders

New Training Cycle!

- The new training cycle runs from October 1 thru August 31st of the following year.
 Existing SCOs have 11 months to meet their annual training requirement.
- September 1 -30:
 - □ Training Window Closes for Existing SCO
 - New SCO training is continuous throughout the year

Training Compliance

Compliance will be determined by the number of modules completed

Centralized Certifications

- Only designated SCOs are required to complete the annual training
- SCOs listed as points of contact are not required to complete the training because they are not authorized to submit enrollment certifications to VA





FY21 SCO Annual Training Reminders Cont.

Training modality to complete annual training requirement:

- Asynchronous Online training located on the <u>SCO training portal</u>
 Mandatory training topics specific to facility type
 PowerPoint Presentations from virtual training events
- Synchronous SCO Approved training events (virtual or in-person instructor led) presented by or co-presented with a VA employee at:
 - Online Training Events
 - National or Regional Conferences
 - Local Workshops
 - One-On-One Training with the <u>ELR of jurisdiction</u>









FY21 SCO Annual Training Requirements

New SCOs

- Must complete the training prior to being authorized to certify enrollments to VA
- Upon training completion must submit training certificates with the VA Form 22-8794, to the ELR of jurisdiction

Facility Type	Number of Training Modules Required
Institutions of Higher Learning (IHLs)	10
Non-College Degree (NCD) Programs	10
High Schools and Residency Programs	1
OJT/Apprenticeship Programs	1
Vocational Flight	1





FY21 SCO Annual Training Requirements Cont.

Existing SCOs

Must complete one (1) mandatory self-paced online training module specific to their facility type
Must complete three (3) elective modules using the training modality of their choice

*Note: The three (3) electives are not required if only one (1) training module is needed to meet compliance

Facility Type	Number of Training Modules Required
Institutions of Higher Learning (IHLs)	4
Institutions of Higher Learning (IHLs) with Flight Courses	4
Institutions of Higher Learning (IHLs) with NCDs	4
Non-College Degree (NCD) Programs	4
Vocational Flight	4
*High Schools and Residency Programs	1
*OJT/Apprenticeship Programs	1





SCO Annual Training Requirements

Here are important training dates for School Certifying Officials (SCOs)



Please remember, if you don't complete your annual training requirements:

VA has the authority to remove your access from VA-ONCE and the SAA has the authority to disapprove your school's programs







Non-Compliance

- When covered institutions fail to complete the required training by the end of the training cycle, a notification via <u>Gov.Delivery</u> will be sent of the delinquency informing the institution of the impending loss of their ability to certify enrollments to VA
- If covered institution remains non-compliant after the end of the training cycle the ELR will remove their ability to certify to VA and refer the institution to the SAA for review and determination on suspension or withdrawal actions in accordance with Colmery Act section 305
- It will be a function of the National Training Team Schools to generate training compliance reports at the 90, 60, and 30-day milestones, and at the end of the training cycle to determine compliant and non-compliant institution







How To Self Certify!

- 1. Click on the URL Below or Copy and Paste it in your web browser https://vba-tpss.vbatraining.org/assess/trkSignIn?refid=XSCO
- 2. Enter your email address and eight (8) digit facility code and click Next

(If you do not have a <u>User Profile</u>, click <u>New User Account</u> and follow the steps to set up your profile)

- 3. Scroll down and click the Conference/Workshop/Virtual Training tab
- 4. Select the applicable training session from the list of topics that appears on the right side of the screen by clicking Begin
- 5. To enter Conference/Workshop/Virtual Training Title, click the dropdown arrow, select SCO Virtual Training Session and click Submit
- 6. Enter the start date and the end date
- 7. Enter your Facility Name, City and State (Main Campus) and click Submit
- 8. Certify your attendance by clicking Agree and then submit
- 9. Print your training certificate and keep for your records

















