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U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

COVID-19

Impacts of Isakson and Roe
Sections 1102, 1103, 1104, and 1105 and 1018



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Department of Veterans Affairs

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SCO Approved Training

Impacts of Isakson and Roe
Sections 1102, 1103, 1104, 1105 and 1018



Today's Training

- On January 5, 2021, the Johnny Isakson and David P. Roe, M.D. Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act of 2020 (P.L.116-315) was signed into law. This new law provides for the improvement and/or expansion of various GI Bill® programs, including various COVID-19 provisions.
- As VA continues to work through implementation of this new provision and its complexities, we are committed to providing you with regular updates through briefings, direct email campaigns and social media, along with equipping you with the necessary training/information to properly administer VA education benefits.



Legislative Overview

Today's Training will review:

1. Section 1102 - Continuation of Department of Veterans Affairs educational assistance benefits during COVID-19 emergency.
2. Section 1103 - Effects of closure of educational institution and modification of courses by reason of COVID-19 emergency.
3. Section 1104 - Payment of educational assistance in cases of withdrawal.
4. Section 1105 - Modification of time limitations on use of entitlement.
5. Section 1018 – Requirements for Educational Institutions participating in VA Educational Assistance Programs.



Training Objectives

After completing this course, you will be able to:

1. Determine if a school must certify based on the negative impact of COVID-19 (Section 1102)
2. Report to the VA that entitlement should not be charged due to the negative impact of COVID-19 (Section 1103)
3. Report to the VA that a student's withdrawal is a mitigating circumstances due to COVID-19 (Section 1104)
4. Understand the extension of time limits to use certain educational and VR&E benefits due to COVID-19 (Section 1105)
5. Understand the requirements mandatory for approval of a course of education and the Principles of Excellence (Section 1018)



Isakson and Roe COVID-19 Provisions

How does this impact the student experience?



Monthly Housing Extension

Students may be eligible to **receive their MHA at their original rate before a change in enrollment for up to a total of four weeks**, if either the student or the school they attend was negatively impacted by COVID-19 between March 1, 2020 and December 21, 2021



Full Time Enrollment

Students who were enrolled full-time as of March 1, 2020 may be eligible to **receive their MHA at the full-time rate for any enrollment** between March 1, 2020 and December 21, 2021



Extension of GI Bill® Benefits

The expiration date of student GI Bill® benefits (Montgomery Bill, Post-9/11, or VR&E) will **automatically be extended 661 days if the school they attend either temporarily or permanently closed due to COVID-19.** (March 1st, 2020 – December 21st, 2021)

NOTE: These provisions do NOT affect the current payment structure for a student's tuition and fees, or books and supplies, regardless of how they may have been impacted due to COVID-19.



Isakson and Roe COVID-19 Provisions

What upcoming actions are required from SCOs?

- ✓ Verify completion of the VA-ONCE 1102/1103 Update coursework found in the SCO Training Portal
- ✓ Identify school closures and shifting term dates resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic using the new negative impact remarks once available within VA-ONCE
- ✓ Facilities without access to VA-ONCE will follow the remarks procedures using VA-Forms 22-1999 and 22-1999b
- ✓ Report adjusted credit hours or terminations within VA-ONCE utilizing the existing COVID-19 mitigating circumstance if a student drops or withdraws from a course due to the COVID-19 pandemic. All other VA reporting rules still apply.

Report facility codes and date(s) of temporary cessation of operations to your State Approving Agency (SAA) **AS SOON AS POSSIBLE** so that a claimant's monthly stipend can be correctly adjusted



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Commonly Asked Questions

What negative impacts potentially trigger these new benefits?

Additional benefits may be triggered for students if the COVID-19 emergency caused any of the following:

- School closure (temporarily or permanently)
- Reduction of credit of hours
- Shortened semesters/quarters
- Delayed the start of terms
- School relocated either to a new physical location or converted to online training
- A program was canceled or disapproved
- A modification made a program unavailable after March 1, 2020

Will these new benefits require any calculations from me?

No. Provided the changes are correctly reported within VA-ONCE, the LTS rules engine will automatically manage changes to a student's entitlements and record usage of their additional benefits, which requires no additional action from you



Commonly Asked Questions, cont.

Are there any retroactive actions required for students who may have been impacted by the COVID-19 emergency but were not flagged using these new provisions?

If your school experienced or a student reports a potential negative impact due to the COVID-19 emergency between March 1, 2020 and December 1, 2021, you may be required to go back and flag these students with one of the upcoming new negative impact remarks. There is no additional action required from you at this time, but impacted SCOs will receive more information regarding next steps later this summer.

If a student withdraws due to COVID-19 emergency, are there any additional actions required?

Currently, there are no additional actions required for SCOs to identify students who withdrew due to the COVID-19 pandemic.



Knowledge Check



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Requirements for Educational Institutions participating in VA Educational Assistance Programs: Impacts of Isakson and Roe Sections 1018



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Isakson & Roe: Requirements Educational Institutions

Public Law 116-315 - Section 1018: Requirements for educational institutions participating in the educational assistance programs of the Department of Veterans Affairs

Section 1018 is effective June 15, 2021; and will apply to Institutions of Higher Learning and Non-College Degree (NCD) institutions beginning August 1, 2021

The provision mandates adherence to the requirements of the Principles of Excellence, currently in [Executive Order 13607](#), among other requisites to maintain approval for GI Bill® participation and obligates schools that receive federal funding through programs such as the GI Bill® to follow certain guidelines



Section 1018 Requirements

Section 1018 codifies in statute the following requirements:

- Provide students with a timely personalized Financial Aid Shopping Sheet covering the total cost of an education program
- Inform students who are eligible to receive Veterans education benefits of the availability and potential eligibility of Federal financial aid before packaging or arranging private student loans or alternative financing programs
- Avoid fraudulent and unduly aggressive recruiting or automatic renewal techniques (covered individuals must approve their enrollment in individual courses)
- Avoid misrepresentations or payment of incentive compensation
- Must fully disclose conditions or additional requirements, including training, experience, or examinations, required to obtain the license, certification, or approval for which the course of education is designed to provide preparation



Section 1018 Requirements

Section 1018 codifies in statute the following requirements:

- Provide to a covered individual enrolled in a course of education at the educational institution with information regarding the requirements to graduate from such course, including information regarding when required classes will be offered and a timeline to graduate.
- Obtain the approval of the institution's accrediting agency for new courses or program offerings prior to enrolling students.
- Maintain a policy to accommodate Service members and reservists to be readmitted to a program if they are temporarily unable to attend class or suspend their studies due to service requirements.
- Designate a point of contact to provide academic and financial advising.



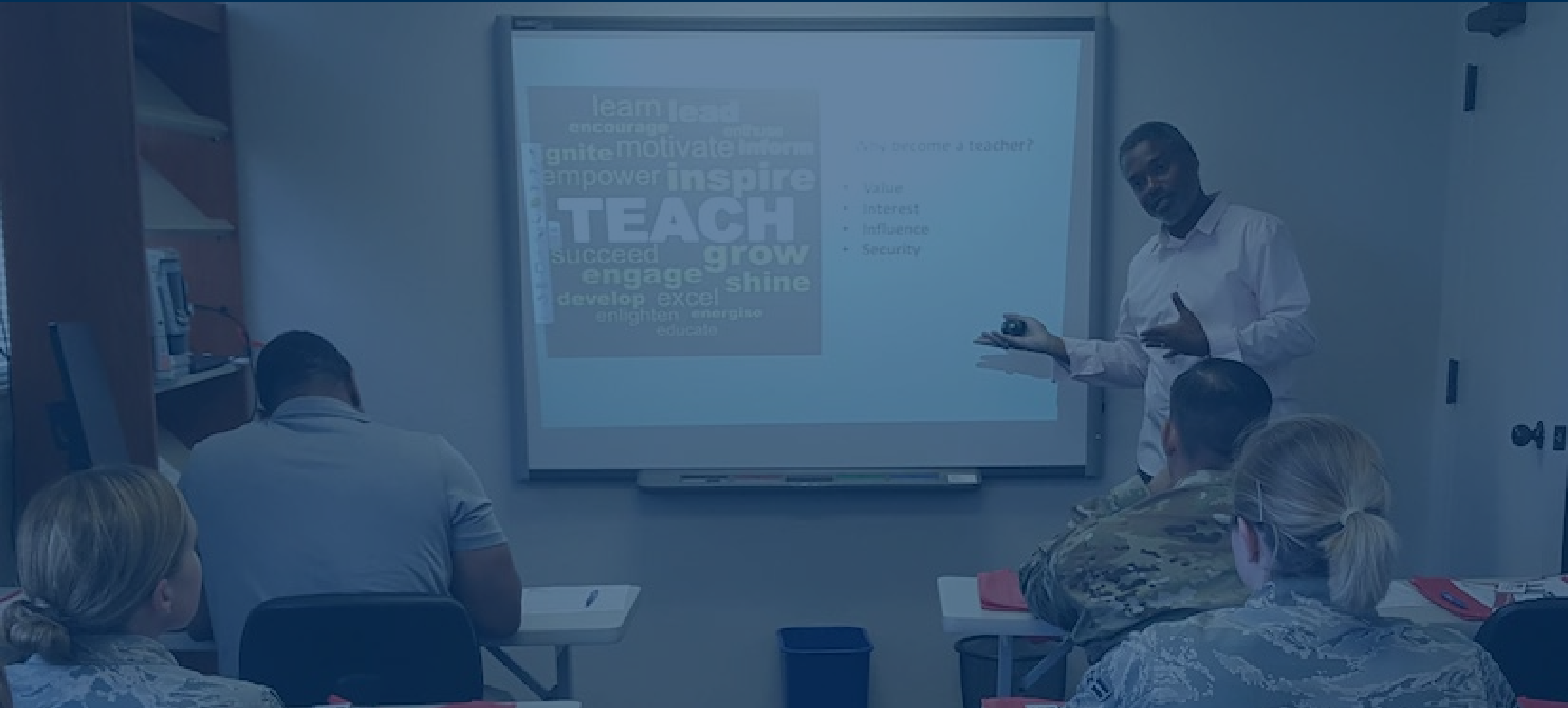
Section 1018 – Next Steps

No Later Than June 15th

- As VA continues to review, interpret, and implement all provisions of Public Law 116-315, we are committed to provide additional updates as they become available
- Educational institutions should review internal policies to ensure compliance with Section 1018



Knowledge Check



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Digital GI Bill® Modernization Efforts

PRESENTER



John (Havener) Havnewitz

DGIB Training Lead
Data Engineering Manager
Accenture Federal Services

Digital GI Bill®

Digital GI Bill (DGI) 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.

DGI will:



Improve customer and financial services, allowing for timely and accurate delivery of payments and making it possible to see real-time eligibility and benefit information



Process eligibility claims rapidly and allow beneficiaries to review their remaining benefits



Provide the ability for beneficiaries to interact with VA electronically for service and response to questions in near real-time



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Digital GI Bill® Stakeholder Impact

DGI will:



School Certifying Officials

- Provide an improved, streamlined system that enhances capabilities to assist students without needing to go to VA
- Allow rapid notification of new legislation or policy changes and the impacts on students



GI Bill® Students

- Process claims faster and allow for near real-time answers to questions as well as self-service options like the financial services they access elsewhere.
- Allow omni-channel engagement for interaction in the most convenient manner



VA Staff

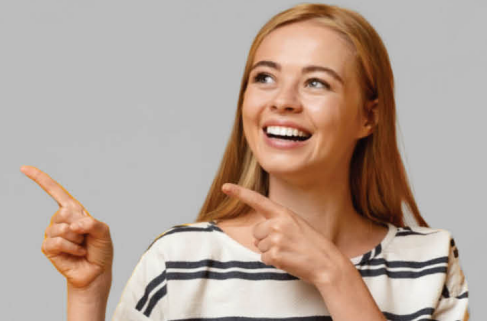
- Decrease the amount of time it takes to process claims, reduce many of VA manual processes, and improve error handling.
- Create more time to focus on more value-added activities



Help Moderate Digital GI Bill® Benefits

VA is modernizing GI Bill benefits delivery.
You can help design it.

PROVIDE FEEDBACK



How can you help?

Building a successful platform and ecosystem that meets the needs of GI Bill® students and stakeholders requires input from the very stakeholders it will serve through interviews, focus groups, and usability testing, among others.

To express interest in participating in this process, please sign up at
<https://forms.office.com/r/kTScVq8vQp>.



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SCO Reminders & Additional Resources



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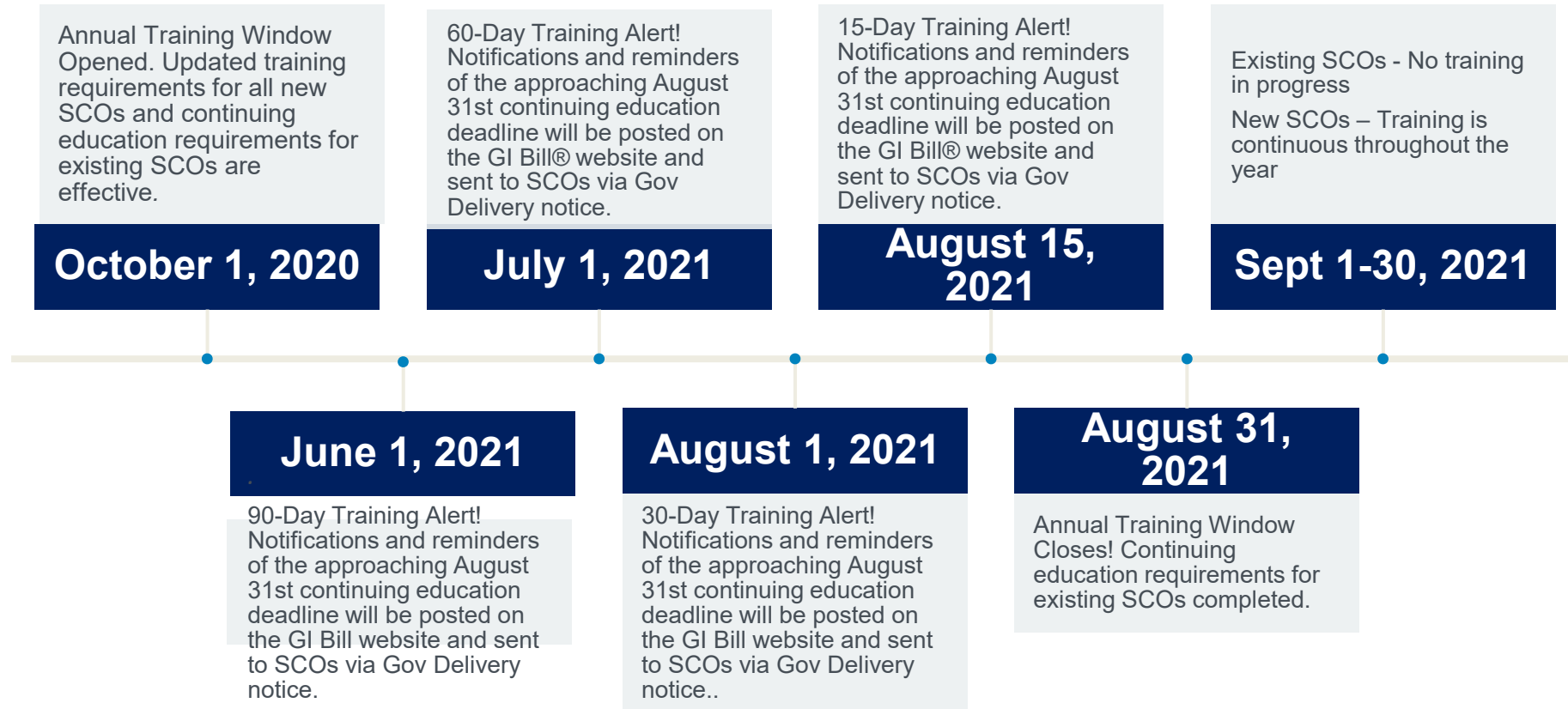
How To Certify This Training

1. Click on the URL 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 user profile, click New User Account 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 and 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



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



SCO Training FAQ's

Q: What is considered approved or qualifying conference training?

A: Approved or qualifying conference training is standardized training content approved by the NTT-C and presented by a VACO employee (CELOs, ELR, ECSS, etc.). If either element is missing from the training session, it cannot be counted toward your annual training requirements.

Q: Can SCOs register on the SCO training portal now?

A: Yes, SCOs can register by following the "Online Training" link on the SCO Training page on the GI-Bill website.
https://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/resources/education_resources/school_certifying_officials/online_sco_training.asp

Q: How will SCOs track their annual training requirement?

A: SCOs will be able to view the number of training modules complete from their online training profile. When you click on the Welcome tab in the training portal, your training profile will be displayed in the bottom right corner. It will be update to show the number of training modules completed both, online and at conferences. Additionally, you will be able to print your certificate of completion.

Q: Will existing SCOs be required to send anything to their ELR to verify completion of their annual training requirements?

A: No, the online training have a built in tracking system to record your training accomplishment. Soon, we will be able to link conference training to your online profile. However, we strongly recommend keeping a copy of your certification of completion for your records.

Q: Will conference training fulfill the rest of the training requirements once the online training is complete?

A: Yes, if you complete your mandatory online training modules you will be able to fulfill your annual training requirements by attending qualifying sessions at local or regional conferences (Virtual or In-Person).

Q: What is the process to add someone as a new SCO?

A: New SCOs must complete the SCO Online Training for New SCOs prior to being authorized to submit enrollment certifications to VA. Upon completion of the training and post course review, they must print a copy of their certificate of completion and send it to their ELR along with the VA Form 22-8794. Instructions on how to register and the online training can be accessed by clicking the following link:
https://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/resources/education_resources/school_certifying_officials/online_sco_training.asp

Q: For existing SCOs, are we required to take training once a year from the date of our last training?

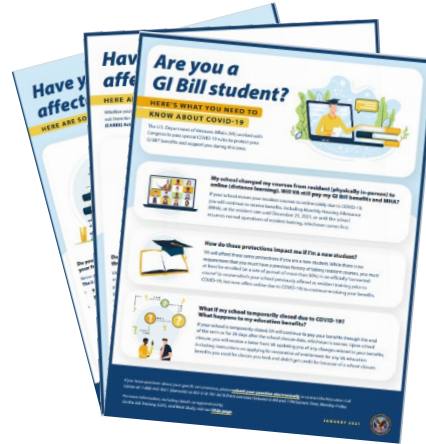
A: SCOs will be required to take training on an annual basis to remain compliant with this law. The training resets on October 1 of each year. You will have from October 1, through August 31 of the follow year to complete your annual training requirement.



Additional School Administrator Resources

Communication Tools

Our [COVID-19 Factsheet](#) provides pre-drafted language to help you communicate special COVID-19 rules with your GI Bill® students



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[COVID-19 FAQs](#)



[General FAQs](#)



[School Certifying Official's Handbook](#)

THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING!



DON'T FORGET TO:

1. Complete the anonymous survey and submit your questions
2. Certify your training attendance
3. Stay tuned for updates & FAQs on the [School Certifying Official \(SCO\) Training - Education and Training \(va.gov\)](https://www.va.gov/school-certifying-officials-training-education-and-training/)

