

VA



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs

# COVID-19

## Impacts of Isakson and Roe Section 1106



**PRESENTER** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Department of Veterans Affairs**

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# COVID-19

## Impacts of Isakson and Roe Section 1106



**PRESENTER** \_\_\_\_\_

**Shawn Casey**

**National Training Team - Compliance**  
**VBA Education Service**  
**Department of Veterans Affairs**



# 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
- Today's training will review Isakson & Roe: Section 1106, which ensures that beneficiaries in an On-The-Job training (OJT) or apprenticeship program are not negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic in the event that they are unable to fulfill the 120-hour requirement for their program



# Objectives

**After completing this course, you will be able to:**

1. Understand the impact of Section 1106 on current operating procedures
2. Notify VA of changes in maximum hours offered for OJT/Apprenticeship Program beneficiaries that are less than 120 hours (Section 1106)



# Impact of Section 1106

- This section ensures that a Veteran, who is enrolled in an Apprenticeship or OJT program and is unable to fulfill VA's 120-hour requirement between the period of March 2020 and December 21, 2021 due to inability to attend the training program, is not negatively impacted
- This section recognizes the number of hours the individual was able to work, to receive payment from VA. It also allows a Veteran to roll-over hours worked in excess of 120 hours from the previous month to the subsequent month to achieve the required 120 hours for full-time benefits.
- Became effective: January 5, 2021



# Hours Offered vs. Hours Worked

- Typically, if a trainee was offered 160 hours and worked 120 or more
  - VA will pay the trainee full time for that month
- Due to COVID-19, the trainee was offered 0 hours and worked 0.
  - VA will pay the trainee a full-time payment due to the negative impact of COVID-19
- If a trainee was offered 60 hours and worked 30
  - VA will pay the trainee half time for that month





# New Upcoming Action Required

## What new actions are required from SCOs?

- ✅ Report the hours worked then complete the maximum offered hours for the month within the remarks field for any student who was offered less than the 120-hour VA requirement

**VA NCE** Cert Complete Submit Print Student

Name: FUNKE, TOBIAS  
SSN: 999-66-7777  
File/Payee: 999-66-7777/00

Program:   
Chapter: 33  
Training Type: APP/QJT

**Bio** **Certs** **VA Data** **Log** **History**

Course Name Status Facility Code Begin Date Range End Date Range Filter

Program Name	Info	Begin Date	Mo	Yr	Hrs	End Date	Trainee Hrs	Standard Hrs	Facility Code
ACT 101		06/20/2020				06/20/2021	40	40	2222222
		06/20/2020				06/20/2021	40	40	2222222
			09	2020	145				2222222
			08	2020	150				2222222
			07	2020	142				2222222

**Edit Monthly Verification (6553)**

October Cert Month 2020 Cert Year

**Hrs Worked** 90

☒ Trainee Enrolled in and Pursuing Approved Program for Month Shown

☒ Rate in Accordance with Training Agreement

Remarks  
Offered 90 hours maximum

**"Hours worked"** should accurately reflect the actual number of hours the student worked during a given month so that VA can accurately calculate the ratio of funds to be distributed

Use the remark **"Offered \_\_\_\_ hours maximum"** filling in the number of hours a student was offered for the given month



# Frequently Asked Questions

## When is a student eligible for this reduced hours protection under Section 1106?

Any month between March 2020 and December 2021 is eligible for this protection. Any reductions in hours offered that occur during this time should be reported using the new remark format

## My facility does not use VA-ONCE to report OJT/Apprenticeship hours. How should I report changes to the offered hours?

Should your facility elect not to submit changes in hours offered through VA-ONCE, submit a PDF version through the SCO “Ask a Question” portal of either:

- VA Form 22-6553d-1, or
- Description of hours offered/worked on agency letterhead





# Frequently Asked Questions, cont.

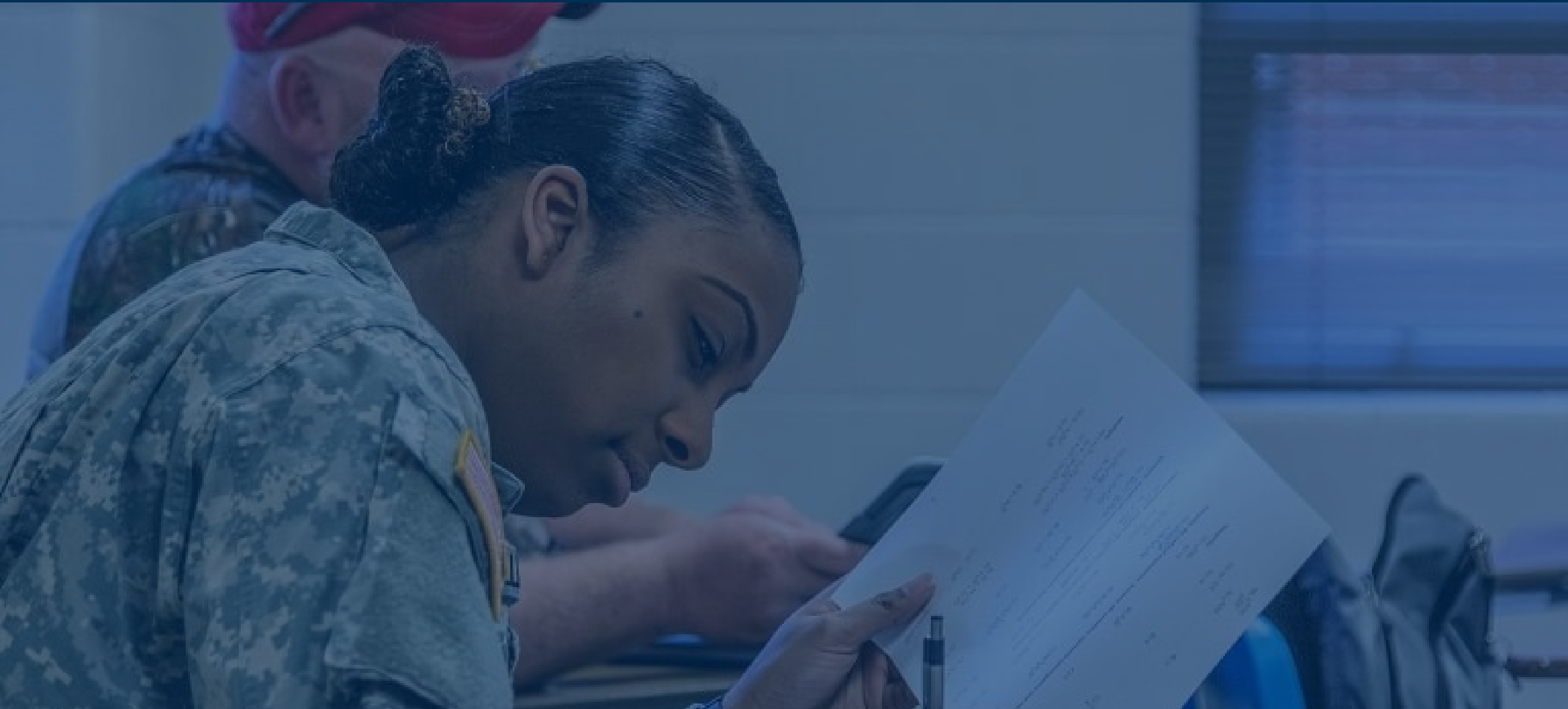
## What if a student's OJT/Apprenticeship program is cancelled or the student is furloughed during the COVID-19 emergency? Is a student still eligible to receive payments under Section 1106?

Yes, if any reduction or cancellation occurred during the COVID-19 emergency, the student is still eligible to receive their full-time Monthly Housing Allowance (MHA). Enter "Offered 0 hours maximum; furloughed/cancelled" as a remark for that month, indicating to VA that the student was not offered any hours for that month and should not have their MHA penalized.

**Report facility codes and date(s) of temporary cessation of operations to your State Approving Agency (SAA) AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.**



# KNOWLEDGE CHECK



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# Digital GI Bill®

## Modernization Efforts



### PRESENTER

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**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



# Digital GI Bill® Stakeholder Impact



## 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



**PRESENTER** \_\_\_\_\_

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*National Training Team - Compliance*  
VBA Education Service  
Department of Veterans Affairs



# 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, 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](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](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.

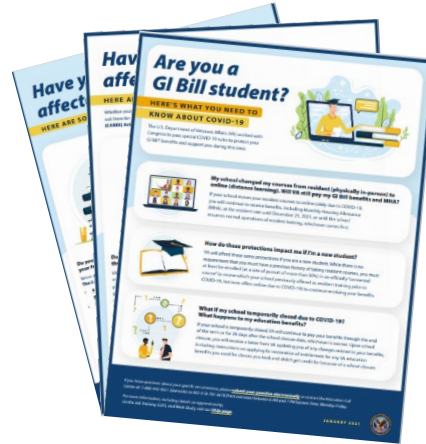




# Additional School Administrator Resources

## Communication Tools

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



## Stay up to date on GI Bill® benefits



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[NEW School Resource Page](#)



[SCO Training](#)



[COVID-19 FAQs](#)



[General FAQs](#)



[School Certifying Official's Handbook](#)

# Thank You All For Attending Today!



## 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-official-training/)

