

Colleagues and Fellow Veterans,

For more than a century, education, as we know it, has traditionally been in a classroom setting. Before this more modern arrangement, there was apprenticeship. Nowadays, apprentices are productive members of the workforce who have chosen to master their craft as they train on the job and in the classroom.

VA is no stranger to the apprenticeship movement. Did you know...Veterans can use their education benefits, including the Post-9/11 GI Bill, to pursue on-the-job (OJT) and apprenticeship training?

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) OJT/Apprenticeship program is a simple and effective way to attract and increase retention of well-disciplined Veterans into hard-to-fill positions and provide them with the specific skills and knowledge needed to perform their duties.

The OJT/APP program allows Veterans to learn a trade or skill through structured training and close supervision on the job rather than attending formal classroom instruction. The program is available through both, non-Federal and Federal agencies/entities.

Employers generally pay a reduced OJT/apprenticeship wage (must be at least 50% of journeyman wage). Unless the training establishment is operated by a Federal, State, or local government, periodic wage increases must be granted and by the last full month of training, the wage must be at least 85% of the wage for a fully trained employee. Veterans in an approved program can use their Post 9/11 GI Bill benefit and receive a tax-free housing stipend which is the equivalent of the Monthly Housing Allowance (MHA) of an E-5 with dependents. The stipend starts at 100% and decreases by 20% every six months as wages increase. Stipend payments for other GI Bill programs are found here:

http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/resources/benefits_resources/rate_tables.asp

Help us get the word out, as these programs provide an excellent opportunity and benefit to Veterans and employers alike.

Veterans benefit from these programs through improved skills and competencies that meet the specific needs of the employer, incremental wage increases as their skills improve, occupation-focused education, and career advancement.

Employer benefits include increased productivity, enhanced retention, and a stable and predictable pipeline for the development of qualified workers.

Federal employers can start the OJT approval process by contacting the Education Liaison Representative (ELR) who has jurisdiction over their state. A list of ELRs with contact information can be found on VA's website at www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/resources/education_resources/school_certifying_officials/elr.asp.

For information and approval requirements related to non-federal OJT/APP programs, please contact your local State Approving Agency (SAA). Requirements generally entail submitting a training request form that specifically outlines the proposed program, wages, and standard workweek information, as well as the company contact name and phone number. SAA contact information can be found on VA's website at <http://www.nasaa-vetseducation.com/Contacts.aspx>.

In addition, VA and the Department of Labor have collaborated to streamline GI Bill approval for DoL registered apprenticeships, as these training programs are deemed approved for GI Bill

benefits. For more information on the registration process, please contact your state representative. Contact information can be found at <http://www.doleta.gov/oa/contactlist.cfm>.

To find out more about OJT and Apprenticeship, download our Factsheet at www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/docs/factsheets/OJT_Factsheet.pdf. Also, you can search the GI Bill Comparison Tool at www.vets.gov/gi-bill-comparison-tool/ to determine if your current program is approved.

V/R

Curtis L. Coy
Deputy Under Secretary for Economic Opportunity
Veterans Benefits Administration
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

VA Core Values: Integrity, Commitment, Advocacy, Respect, Excellence (“I CARE”)

Please Remember:

- If you would like to review prior messages sent through this listserv, click http://benefits.va.gov/vow/economic_opportunity.htm.
- If you would like to research, find, access, and, in time, manage your VA benefits and personal information please visit and/or register at <https://www.ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits-portal/ebenefits.portal>.
- If you looking for a job or an employer committed to hiring Veterans, please register on the Veterans Employment Center™ (VEC) at: <https://www.ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits/jobs>
- If you are seeking employment in the federal government, particularly the VA, our VA for Vets high-tech tools and resources can help. Visit online at <http://vaforvets.va.gov/> or call 1-855-824-8387.

If you would like to contact us about your VA education benefits:

You can send us a secure email that will usually be answered within 48 hours. You can also search for answers to frequently asked questions and register to be notified of any updates to the information. This contact method is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and can also be utilized worldwide. Click here to enter the "Ask A Question" site or here to review our frequently asked questions.

You can call 1-888-GIBILL-1 (1-888-442-4551). This line only accepts calls from 7:00 AM - 6:00 PM central time Monday – Friday.