Education Service Office Hours:
Monthly Housing Allowance and DoD Rate Changes, REAP Sunset, Graduate Non-Standard Terms, and SCO Training

Target Audience: SCOs and SAAs

November 2019

Agenda

- Introduction and Welcome
- Purpose and Outcomes
- Monthly Housing Allowance and DoD rate change reminders
- Graduate Non-Standard Terms Refresher
- REAP Sunset
- SCO Training Requirements (Section 305)
- Q&A with Subject Matter Experts
- Knowledge Check & Menti Feedback Survey
- Next Steps
- Closing Remarks & Info

PURPOSE

Setting you up for success by providing information about:

- Refresher on key implementation activities for Monthly Housing Allowance and DoD Rate Changes
- Actions required due to the REAP Sunset
- Graduate Non-Standard Term Refresher
- SCO Training Requirements (Section 305)
- Reminders, upcoming training and webinar opportunities

OUTCOMES
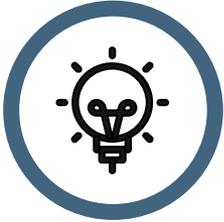
After this webinar, you will be able to:

- Understand the timeline for upcoming changes to VA systems
- Understand how the REAP sunset may impact your beneficiaries
- Understand how to certify enrollments that include Graduate Non-Standard Terms
- Understand the SCO Training requirements (Section 305)

Monthly Housing Allowance and DoD Rate Update

VA reached another milestone and successfully uploaded a second round of extension campuses on 11/04/2019

## WHAT SHOULD I DO AS AN SCO?

- **Continue to certify enrollments to available extension campuses for terms beginning on or after 12/01/2019** to the physical location where the beneficiary is attending their courses
  - The VA-ONCE system will prevent you from submitting terms with a begin date prior to 12/01/19
- **If your extension campus is not available**, work with your SAA to get this campus approved
  - Certify the enrollment to the associated main or branch campus and track these enrollments
- **If your extension campus is now available, but you have already certified the enrollment at the associated main or branch campus, DO NOT recertify this enrollment until further instruction is provided from VA**

MHA and DoD Rate Update: December 1 Go-Live
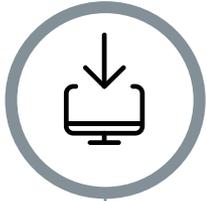
UPDATES WILL GO LIVE IN VA'S EDUCATION PROCESSING SYSTEMS ON DECEMBER 1, 2019, AND FUTURE MHA PAYMENTS WILL BE MADE IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTIONS 107 AND 501 OF THE COLMERY ACT

ALL STUDENTS WHO HAVE RECEIVED MHA PAYMENTS WILL RECEIVE A LETTER INFORMING THEM OF WHETHER THEY WERE UNDERPAID, OVERPAID OR NOT IMPACTED

VA WILL WORK WITH INSTITUTIONS ON THE RECERTIFICATION PROCESS AND DISTRIBUTE THIS GUIDANCE ONCE AVAILABLE

MHA and DoD Rate Update: What's Coming Up

VA is preparing the following materials, videos, training, and informational opportunities to prepare you for the December 1 Go-Live and beyond:

MHA SCENARIO VIGNETTES

- Short videos that provide a narrated walkthrough of the MHA rate populations and different student scenarios that may occur due to the implementation of the DoD rates

COLMERY RESOURCE OVERVIEWS

- Short, narrated videos that walkthrough different materials and tools to help you communicate these changes with beneficiaries
- Video topics include the Communications Toolkit, MHA Student Guide, and the GI Bill Comparison Tool

CAMPUS DEFINITION REFERENCE GUIDE

- One-page reference guide to help further your understanding of the different campus definition types

POST GO-LIVE "OFFICE HOURS"

- Informational webinar to provide updates on the outcomes of the December 1 Go-Live, answer stakeholder questions, and provide additional information on pertinent topics

Graduate Non-Standard Terms Refresher

Below are some key reminders about Standard Terms, TT/FT Box, Using the VBA Standard Remark, and Reporting Requirements.

STANDARD TERMS

- A "standard term" at a facility **may not** be standard based upon **VA's definition**.

- VA defines a standard quarter as 10 to 13 weeks in length and a standard semester as 15 to 19 weeks in length with courses beginning the first week and ending the last week, the last day of final examinations.

TT/FT BOX

- The minimum number of credit hours required to be considered full-time for a semester, quarter, or any individually defined time period, as published in your catalog, is referred to as the full-time modifier. This is the number that is to be reported in the TT/FT box.

USING THE VBA STANDARD REMARK

- Refer to "Certifying Credit, Chapter 33 – Graduate" section in the SCO Handbook and use the chart to determine when to add the VBA Standard Remark.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

- Reporting requirements for the Non-Chapter 33 benefits **did not** change.

- Please continue to report training time for Non-Chapter 33 benefits.

- A full time Chapter 33 student may be at a ROP less than 100%.

- **What is a non-standard term?** A non-standard length semester is shorter or longer than 15 to 19 weeks and a non-standard length quarter is shorter or longer than 10 to 13 weeks
- **How do I enter a graduate non-standard term in VA-ONCE?** SCOs must enter the minimum number of hours required for full time in the TT/FT box, as published in the catalog. See the chart below for when to include the VBA Standard Remark.

How do I Certify Different Types of Terms?**

			Minimum number of credit hours required to be full-time by academic regulations (full-time modifier)	Report in the TT/FT the minimum credit hours required for full-time for	Add VBA Standard Remark "*Graduate Non-Standard Term*"
Semester	standard-length	15-19 weeks	must be defined/published in catalog	the standard-length term	NO
Quarter	standard-length	10-13 weeks	must be defined/published in catalog	the standard-length term	NO
Semester	shorter in length	less than 15 weeks	*is not* individually defined/published	the standard-length term	NO
Quarter	shorter in length	less than 10 weeks	*is not* individually defined/published	the standard-length term	NO
Semester	shorter in length	less than 15 weeks	*is* individually defined/published in catalog	this individual term	YES
Quarter	shorter in length	less than 10 weeks	*is* individually defined/published in catalog	this individual term	YES
Semester	longer in length	greater than 19 weeks	*is not* individually defined/published	the standard-length term	YES
Quarter	longer in length	greater than 13 weeks	*is not* individually defined/published	the standard-length term	YES
Semester	longer in length	greater than 19 weeks	*is* individually defined/published in catalog	this individual term	YES
Quarter	longer in length	greater than 13 weeks	*is* individually defined/published in catalog	this individual term	YES

Source: *SCO Handbook* – Certifying Credit Section

Example 1: Individually Defined Non-Standard Term

Scenario:

A Chapter 33 Student takes 3 quarter credit hours in an 8-week non-standard term. Your school catalog defines 3 credits as full time for graduate 8-week terms.

Semester	shorter in length	less than 15 weeks	*is* individually defined/published in catalog	this individual term	YES
Quarter	shorter in length	less than 10 weeks	*is* individually defined/published in catalog	this individual term	YES

Steps to Certify:

1. Certify 3 credit hours and enter 3 in the TT/FT box.
2. Click the Modify Remarks List and select VBA Standards Remarks; then select "Graduate Non-Standard Term" from the VBA Standard Remarks.

Outcome:

VA will divide credits taken by credits considered full-time to determine the rate of pursuit (3 ÷ 3 = 1)

The student's rate of pursuit is **100%**

For more information about the Graduate Non-Standard Terms, please visit VA's website to review the latest guidance from the [VBA Education Service 2nd Quarterly Webinar](#)

Example 2: Not Individually Defined Non-Standard Term

Scenario:

A Chapter 33 Student takes a total of 9 credit hours in 3 overlapping short non-standard terms. Your school catalog defines 9 credits as fulltime for the standard semester term and does not have a published, defined fulltime modifier for any non-standard terms.

Semester	shorter in length	less than 15 weeks	*is not* individually defined/published	the standard-length term	NO
Quarter	shorter in length	less than 10 weeks	*is not* individually defined/published	the standard-length term	NO

Steps to Certify:

1. Certify 9 credit hours and enter 9 in the TT/FT box in VA-ONCE on each of the non-standard terms.

Outcome:

VA will calculate the equivalent number of credits for each non-standard term to determine the rate of pursuit.

For more information about the Graduate Non-Standard Terms, please visit VA's website to review the latest guidance from the [VBA Education Service 2nd Quarterly Webinar](#)

REAP Sunset

REAP Sunset

The National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for 2016 ended Reserve Educational Assistance Program (REAP or Chapter 1607) on November 25, 2015 and allowed individuals to use REAP through November 25, 2019 or his/her delimiting date, whichever was earlier

WHAT HAPPENS ON NOVEMBER 26?

- REAP benefits are no longer payable to claimants.
- Current active REAP claimants will be "converted" to Chapter 33 benefits based on their period(s) of service
- Beneficiaries who are not REAP claimants will not be impacted by this change

SCOS NEED TO:

- Ensure that Tuition and Fees (T&F) have been submitted for any REAP claimants that have terms that span the November 25, 2019 sunset date
- Once a claimant is converted to Chapter 33, a prorated T&F payment will be released to the school for the period of November 26, 2019 until the end of the enrollment period
- Since the student has already paid T&F for that term, schools should follow their refund policy for student reimbursement, if applicable.
- If you have additional questions, please email the Policy & Procedures mailbox (polproc.vbaco@va.gov)

For more information about the REAP sunset, please visit VA's website here

SCO Training Requirements
(Section 305)

SCO Definitions and Training Requirements

<table>
<tr>
<td colspan="3">TRAINING REQUIREMENTS FOR SCHOOL CERTIFYING OFFICIALS (SCOs)
Section 305 of the Harry W. Colmery Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2017, authorizes VA to establish training requirements for SCOs at "covered institutions". A "Covered Educational Institution" refers to an educational institution that enrolled 20 or more individuals using VA educational assistance during a calendar year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<th>TYPE OF SCO</th>
<th>DEFINITION</th>
<th>TRAINING REQUIREMENT</th>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All New SCOs
(IHL and NCD Only)</td>
<td>Individuals who begin work as a SCO on or after August 1, 2019</td>
<td>• 10 online training modules (5 hours of training)
• 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</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All New SCOs
(OJT/Apprenticeship and Vocational Flight Only)</td>
<td>Individuals who begin work as a SCO on or after August 1, 2019</td>
<td>• 1 virtual training module (approximately 1.5 hours of training)
• 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</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existing SCOs
(IIHL, NCD, and Vocational Flight)
at Covered Institutions</td>
<td>Designated SCOs who began work prior to August 1, 2019</td>
<td>• 1 year to complete the continuing education training requirement between August 1st and July 31st of each year
• 5 hours of training (2 online modules specific to facility type and choice of electives presented at school conferences)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existing SCO
(OJT/Apprenticeship Only)
at Covered Institutions</td>
<td>Designated SCOs who began work prior to August 1, 2019</td>
<td>• 1 year to complete the annual training requirement
• 1.5 hours of training consisting of 1 online training module specific to facility type</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read-only SCO</td>
<td>An individual at an institution with permission to access read-only or inquiry only information</td>
<td>• No training requirements because they are not approved to submit enrollment information to VA</td>
</tr>
</table>

Training Requirements for Existing SCOs at IHLs, NDCs & Vocational Flight

SECTION 305 – CORE TRAINING (MANDATORY)
Existing SCOs at IHLs, NCDs & Vocational Flight

SCOs are required to take a minimum of two online training modules specific to their facility type to meet their Section 305 annual training requirement. They may choose from the list of electives to complete the 5-hour annual requirement.

Institutions of Higher Learning (IHLs)

Modules	Method	Training Credit Hours
IHL Only	Online	1.5
VA-ONCE for IHLS	Online	2
TOTAL CORE TRAINING CREDIT		3.5

Institutions of Higher Learning (IHLs) with Non-College Degree Programs (NCDs)

Modules	Method	Training Credit Hours
IHL w/NCDs	Online	1.5
VA-ONCE for IHLs	Online	1
TOTAL CORE TRAINING CREDIT		2.5

Institutions of Higher Learning (IHLs) with Flight Programs

Modules	Method	Training Credit Hours
IHLs with Flight	Online	1.5
VA-ONCE for IHLs	Online	1
TOTAL CORE TRAINING CREDIT		2.5

Non-College Degree Programs (NCDs)

Modules	Method	Training Credit Hours
NCD Only	Online	1.5
VA-ONCE for NCDs	Online	1
TOTAL CORE TRAINING CREDIT		2.5

Vocational Flight

Modules	Method	Training Credit Hours
Vocational Flight	Online	1.5
TOTAL CORE TRAINING CREDIT		1.5

SECTION 305 – TRAINING ELECTIVES (MANDATORY)
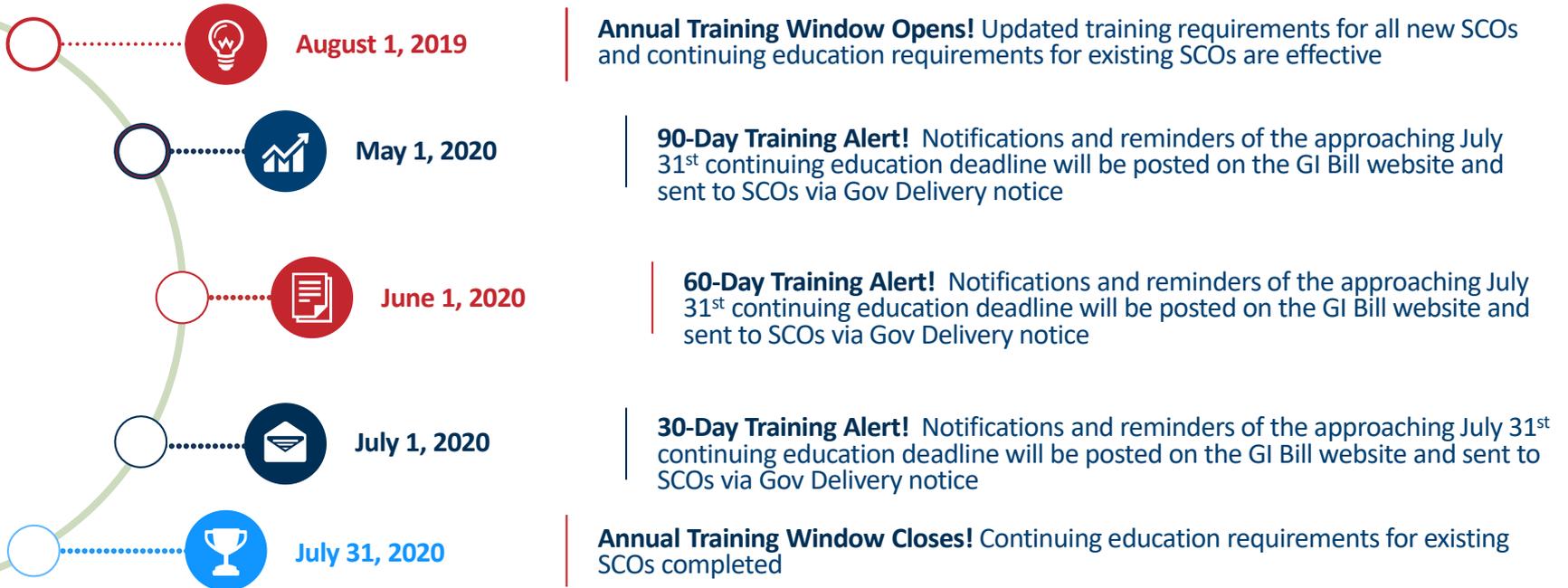### Existing SCOs at IHLs, NCDs & Vocational Flight

SCOs may select any elective from this list of VA approved modules to complete the 5-hour annual Section 305 training requirement. SCOs are also required to take a minimum of two online training modules specific to their facility type to meet their Section 305 annual training requirement. Instructor-Led modules will be held at National/State Conferences or local VA workshops. Additional online and instructor-led modules will be added throughout the training year.

Module	Method	Training Credit Hours
Compliance Surveys	Online	1
Compliance Surveys	Instructor-Led	1
New School Certifying Official Training	Instructor-Led	2
Advanced School Certifying Official Training	Instructor-Led	2
Flight School Program at IHLs	Instructor-Led	1
Certification Process for Non-College Degree (NCD) Programs	Instructor-Led	1

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

August 1, 2019 — **Annual Training Window Opens!** Updated training requirements for all new SCOs and continuing education requirements for existing SCOs are effective

May 1, 2020 — **90-Day Training Alert!** Notifications and reminders of the approaching July 31st continuing education deadline will be posted on the GI Bill website and sent to SCOs via Gov Delivery notice

June 1, 2020 — **60-Day Training Alert!** Notifications and reminders of the approaching July 31st continuing education deadline will be posted on the GI Bill website and sent to SCOs via Gov Delivery notice

July 1, 2020 — **30-Day Training Alert!** Notifications and reminders of the approaching July 31st continuing education deadline will be posted on the GI Bill website and sent to SCOs via Gov Delivery notice

July 31, 2020 — **Annual Training Window Closes!** Continuing education requirements for existing SCOs completed

Please remember if you don't complete your annual training requirements, VA has the authority to remove your access from VA-ONCE or disapprove your school's programs

Question and Answers

Knowledge Check & Feedback Survey

Next Steps

Resources

- **GI Bill Webpage – Colmery Act** - https://www.benefits.va.gov/GIBILL/forevergibill.asp

- **School Official's Handbook** - https://www.benefits.va.gov/GIBILL/docs/job_aids/SCO_Handbook.pdf

- **ELR of Jurisdiction** - https://www.benefits.va.gov/GIBILL/resources/education_resources/school_certifying_officials/elr.asp

- **School Certifying Official (SCO) Training 2019** - https://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/resources/education_resources/school_certifying_officials/online_sco_training.asp.

- **NASAA Point of Contact By State –** http://nasaa-vetseducation.com/Contacts.aspx

- **Conferences and Events –** https://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/resources/education_resources/school_certifying_officials/conferences_and_events.asp

- **Ask A Question (Known as Right Now Web)** - https://gibill.custhelp.va.gov/app/utils/login_form/redirect/ask

- **VA Facebook Page** - https://www.facebook.com/VeteransAffairs

- **Forever GI Bill Colmery Act Frequently Asked Questions** - https://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/docs/fgib/fgib_stakeholder_faqs.pdf

- **VBA Education Service 2nd Quarterly Webinar - Graduate Non-Standard Terms** - https://www.benefits.va.gov/GIBILL/docs/presentations/SCO_Webinar_03_26_2019.pdf

- **REAP Sunset** - https://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/reap.asp