



# Before we begin...

- The webinar will start at **2 pm** Eastern Time(ET)
- Please make sure to:
  - Mute your phone
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- **Audio can ONLY be accessed by calling 1-800-767-1750**
  - **Conference code: 37639#**
- There may be silence on the line prior to 2 pm ET
- A 2 hour timeframe has been allotted for this webinar
- Slides will be available in 1-2 weeks on our website under the **School Training Resources** page



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## VBA Education Service Quarterly Webinar

June 12, 2018

**Veterans Benefits Administration**

**VA**



**U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs**



# Agenda

- Harry W. Colmery Educational Assistance Act of 2017 (Forever GI Bill) Update
- School Certifying Official (SCO) Training Requirements
- Dual Certification
- Debt Management Center (DMC)
- Outcome Measures
- Question & Answer





# Housekeeping

- To reduce background noise, all microphones are muted.
- Due to the large number of attendees:
  - The hand raise icon has been disabled
  - Audio quality may fluctuate during the webinar (Personal Internet connection is also a factor)
- Submit questions during the webinar in the QA box to the right of the presentation.
- Chat box is for issued with the webinar audio/visual or general information, not for questions.
- We cannot accept questions or comments regarding a specific Veteran, benefit, or claim issue.





# Housekeeping

- Answers to questions will be provided when a copy of the webinar is uploaded to [www.benefits.va.gov/gibill](http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill)
  - Click on “Education and Training Home”
    - “For School Administrators”
      - Select “School Training Resources”
        - » Select “Education Benefit Presentations” under the Certifications and Training header
- For any specific or situational questions you may have, please contact your ELR or call the School Certifying Official Hotline
- This session is being recorded.





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# Deputy Director Charmain Bogue



*Welcome*



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EDUCATION SERVICE

# Harry W. Colmery Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2017, “Forever GI Bill”

June 12, 2018







# GI Bill Monthly Housing Allowance

**GI Bill Monthly Housing Allowance:** Housing will be paid based on the “campus” where the student attends the majority of classes. Campus includes:

- ▶ The individual campus of a school where the student is taking classes (i.e. the school’s science center, humanities building, or athletic center)
- ▶ The physical location where a student is learning in a study abroad program
- ▶ Any internship, externship, practicum or student teaching site



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# GI Bill Monthly Housing Allowance

**GI Bill Monthly Housing Allowance:** Housing will be paid based on the “campus” where the student attends the majority of classes.

- ▶ VA sent notification to SCOs in early April
  - ▶ **IF YOUR STUDENT** physically attends **all** courses at the actual campus location of the facility code shown on the Enrollment Certification being submitted:
    - ▶ **THEN:** You may submit that student’s certification.
  - ▶ **IF YOUR STUDENT** begins a term on or after August 1, 2018, and physically attends any course (including internships, externships, training, practicums) or other aspects of their education located in any location, other than the one represented by the facility code being certified:
    - ▶ **THEN:** Please **HOLD** and **DO NOT** submit that student’s enrollment certifications until further notice.





# Changes to Licensing and Certification Charges

- ▶ **Changes to Licensing and Certification Charges:**  
Entitlement charges for licensing and certification exams and national tests under the Post-9/11 GI Bill will be based on the actual amount of the fee charged for the test.
- ▶ Notice published in Federal Register



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EDUCATION SERVICE

# School Certifying Official (SCO) Training Requirements

June 12, 2018







# Legislation Summary and Definitions

Section 305 of the Harry W. Colmery Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2017, authorizes VA to establish training requirements for SCOs at “covered institutions”.

- Training requirements will be developed in consultation with the State approving agencies (SAAs).
- VA may disapprove any course of education offered by the institution if training requirements are not met.
- This section will be effective on August 1, 2018.





# Legislation Summary and Definitions

- A "covered educational institution" would refer to an educational institution that has enrolled 20 or more individuals using VA educational assistance
- Includes institutions offering any type of training (i.e. IHLs, NCDs, flight schools, apprenticeship/OJT facilities)
- Institutions with more than one campus/branch location will be considered a covered institution if either their individual enrollment or the combined total of all locations is 20 or more



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# Legislation Summary and Definitions

- An “SCO” is defined as an employee of an educational institution with primary responsibility for certifying Veteran enrollment at the educational institution
- VA Form 22-8794, Designation of School Certifying Official, is required to designate individuals authorized to certify enrollment information to VA
- All SCOs at covered institutions will be subject to training requirements





# Legislation Summary and Definitions

- Proposed revisions to VA Form 22-8794 under review to allow for designation of individuals with “ready only” access to VA information
- Individuals designated for “read only” and/or Work-study students:
  - May access online training
  - Are not subject to training requirements
  - May not submit information to certify, amend or adjust a student’s enrollment







# Implementation Plans

## VA and SAA Collaboration

- Recurring meetings with VA, SAA and SCO representatives to discuss and define specific training requirements
- SCO focus groups support to review and provide feedback on training content
- Updates provided at regional SCO conferences



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# Implementation Plans

## Employee Development and Training (ED&T) Support

- Partnership to develop value added learning opportunities to include online training modules, diagnostic testing and training effectiveness metrics
- Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) to validate content based on most current procedures, policies and regulations
- Learning Performance Consultants (LPCs) engaged to design and develop tailored training programs



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# Implementation Plans

- Training requirements must be met on an annual basis
- Training will be deployed in phases, with specific requirements for new SCOs.
- First phase will be for new SCOs designated on or after August 1, 2018.
- New SCO training will be completed online and will include a basic overview of VA education benefits and SCO responsibilities.



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# Implementation Plans

Training requirements for all SCOs may be met by completing online micro-learning training modules, verified registration and attendance at SCO conferences, or a combination of both







# Implementation Plans

- Phase 2 will include training requirements for experienced SCOs (those designated prior to August 1, 2018)
- Experienced SCOs will be subject to training requirements beginning August 1, 2019
- Phase 2 will contain detailed training modules, including modules for specific types of facilities
- Subsequent phases will include:
  - Diagnostic testing for experienced SCOs, the results of which may be used to satisfy annual training requirements
  - Requirements for receiving training credit for conference attendance



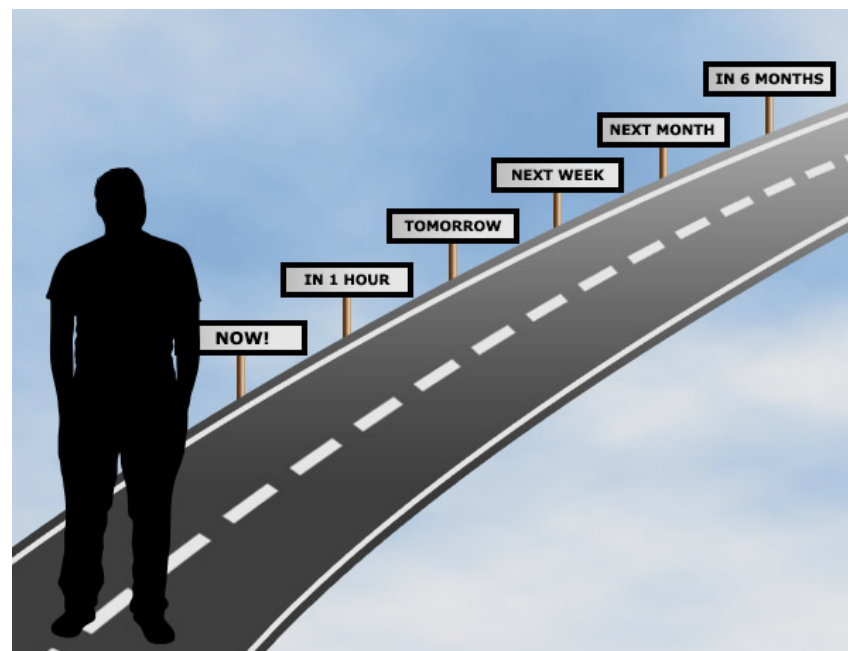


# Next Steps

Collaboration

Migration

Communication





# Next Steps

- Continue collaboration between VA and SAA to fully deploy implementation plan.
- Upon delivery of Phase 1 training content by ED&T, conduct focus groups to validate content
- Finalize Phase 2 training topics





# Next Steps

- Continue migration of existing online training content to new training platform
  - Update content with provisions of recent legislation
  - Identify new training content and topics of interest
- Develop infrastructure for reporting requirements and oversight



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# Next Steps

VA has developed a multi-faceted communication strategy to keep SCO community abreast of implementation updates

- Quarterly webinars
- National and regional SCO conferences



Revisions to SCO page on GI Bill website

- List of covered institutions by July 1, 2018
- Link to online training content by August 1, 2018





# Specialized Webinars

- VA will hold multiple webinars during the months of August and September 2018 to provide updates to:
  - School Certifying Official Training
  - GI Bill ® Monthly Housing Allowance changes





# Where Can I Find More Info on Forever GI Bill?



For more information go to

[www.benefits.va.gov/GIBILL/ForeverGIBill.asp](http://www.benefits.va.gov/GIBILL/ForeverGIBill.asp)

Our Education Call Center is available at 1-888-442-4551 (Monday – Friday, 7 a.m. – 6 p.m. CST)

Join the conversation on Facebook at

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EDUCATION SERVICE

## Dual Certification



June 12, 2018







# Dual Certification

- Schools are obligated to submit student's enrollment "without delay"
  - In the SCO handbook (page 44) this is expressed as, "Schools are requested to submit certifications as early as possible in order to ensure that students receive their benefit payments in a timely manner, but must be submitted 30 days of the beginning of the term."
- An effective way to minimize student debts and adjustments is for schools to submit an enrollment certification with \$0.00, and then amend the tuition and fees after the end of the drop-add period. This practice is often called "Dual Certification."
- Dual Certification is the process by which a school may certify an enrollment and fill out the term dates, credit hours, and other pertinent information (claimant's SSN, address, school facility code etc.).



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# Dual Certification

- **This process is highly encouraged** but is not mandatory
- The benefits of dual certifications are two-fold:
  - It allows the school to certify an enrollment in a timely manner while ensuring that the student receives housing allowance, books and supplies stipend, and;
  - It allows for a more precise report from the schools when they certify tuition and fees and ***prevents overpayments.***
- In addition, schools also get an accurate picture of how many credits a student pursued during a term, quarter, or semester and have the ability to track what an individual student owes.



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# VA Debt Management Center (DMC)

June 12, 2018





# Overview

- About DMC
- Reasons for school debts
- Collection Process
- Payments to DMC
- Referrals to Treasury Offset Program (TOP)
- FAQ





# DMC Mission Statement

The Debt Management Center provides Veterans and Beneficiaries with compassionate counseling on their VA benefit debts. We also provide distinctive, high quality accounts receivable services through a value-added approach, empowering our stakeholders to focus on core missions.



Bishop Henry  
Whipple Federal  
Building



Warren E. Burger  
Federal Building



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# Seven Reasons a School Debt (75B) is established

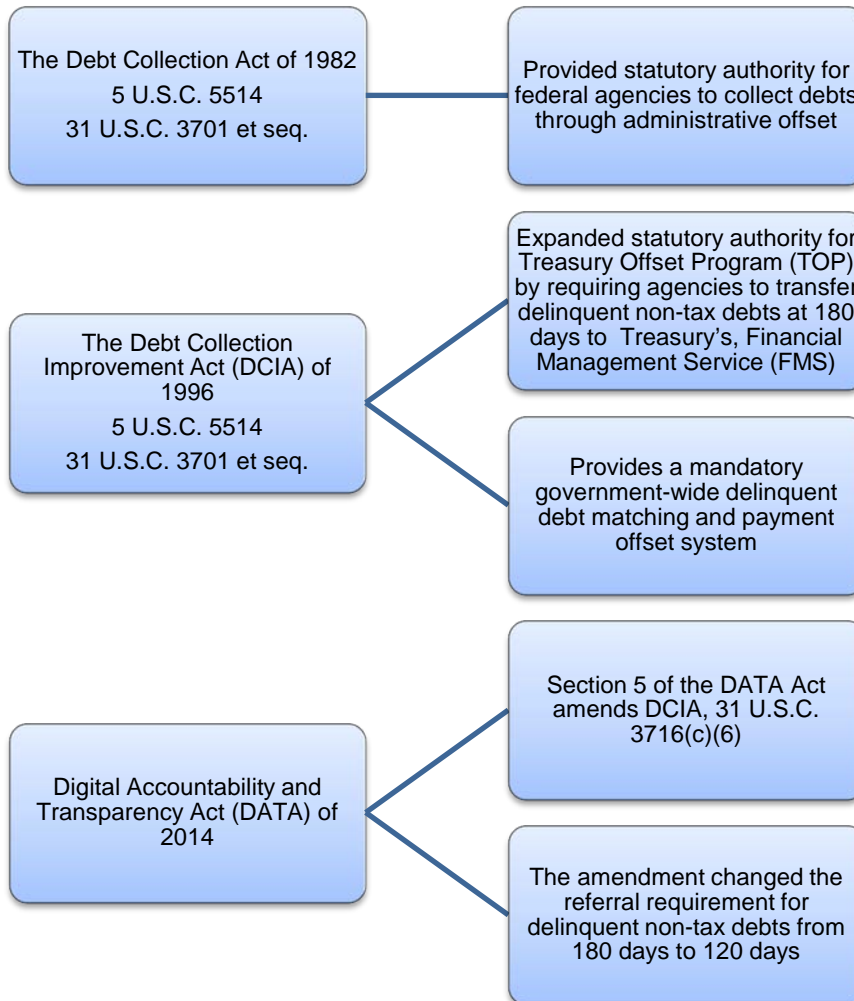
- Student never attended classes
- Student completely withdrew on or before the first day
- Student passed away during or before the term started
- School received a payment for the wrong student
- School received a duplicate payment
- School submitted an amended certification to report reduced tuition and fee charges and/or Yellow Ribbon
- VA issued payment above the amount certified







# Federal Debt Collection Laws



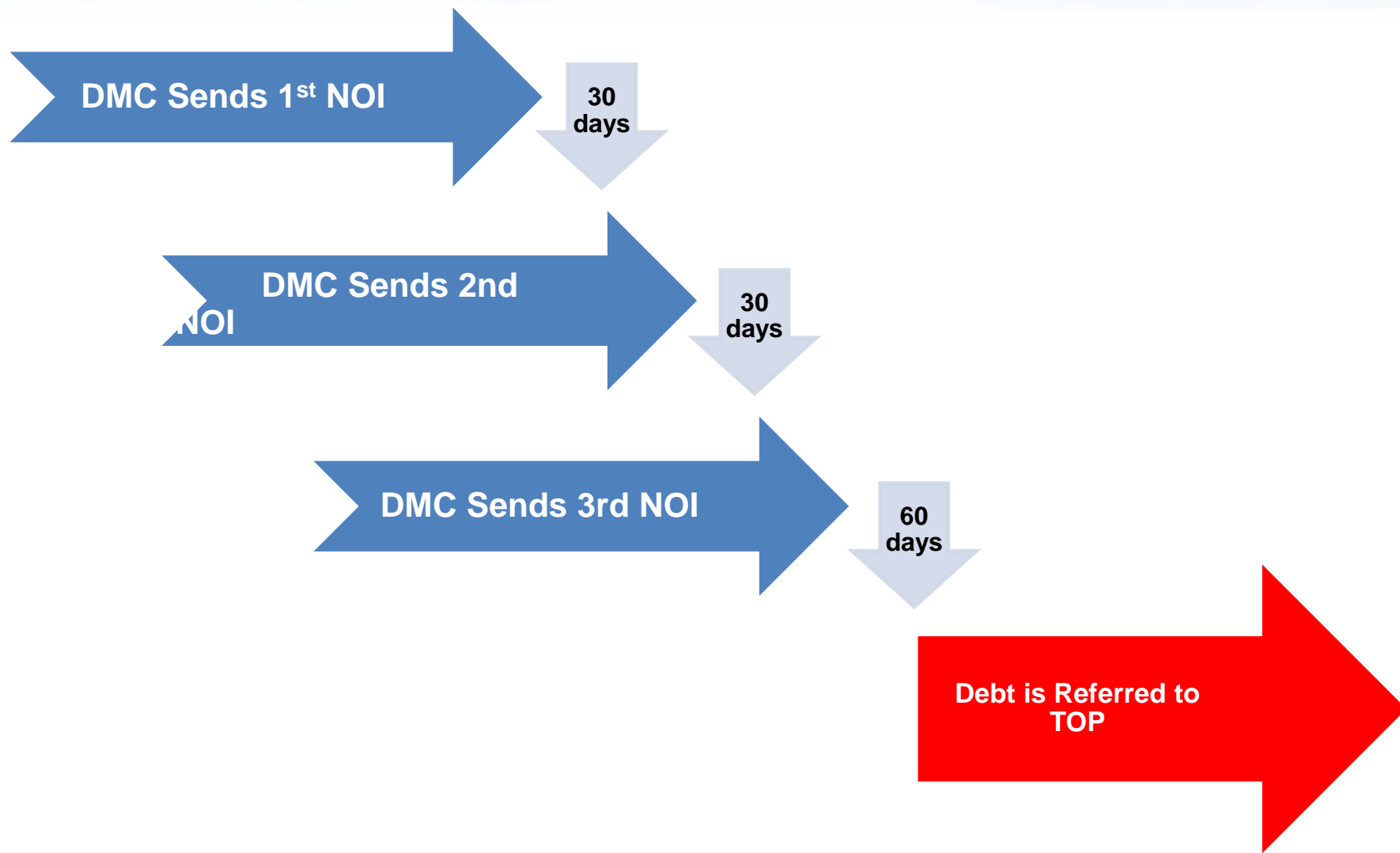
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# Collection Process



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# Payments to DMC

- Pay by check: mail the check, payment coupon(s) and/or letter to:  
VA Debt Management Center  
Bishop Henry Whipple Federal Building  
P.O. Box 11930  
St. Paul, MN 55111-0930
- Return electronic payment  

Payments received through EFT can be returned through your bank/financial institution using return code R31
- Pay online: [www.pay.va.gov](http://www.pay.va.gov)
- Return **un-cashed** hard copy check(s) to:  
U.S. Department of the Treasury  
Financial Management Service  
P.O. Box 51318  
Philadelphia, PA 19115-6316



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# Referral to TOP

- A centralized offset program managed and operated by the Department of Treasury's Financial Management Services (FMS)
- Federal agencies are required by law to submit delinquent debts to TOP
- TOP offsets payments based on a payee's taxpayer identification number (TIN) and name
  - Pursuant to regulations governing TOP, all subdivisions or organizations sharing a single TIN are responsible for all debts associated with that TIN
- Before submitting a debt to TOP, a creditor agency must certify that the agency complied with all the due process pre-requisites prior to offset
- ◀ • TOP call center: 1-800-304-3107





# FAQ

- How do I submit an inquiry/dispute on a debt?
  - dmcedu.vbaspl@va.gov
- What if I have funds to return but no debt letter?
  - Review 7 reasons
  - Update certifications
  - RNW through RPO
  - Follow refund policy
- How can I help students with their debt?
  - [www.va.gov/debtman](http://www.va.gov/debtman)
  - 1-800-827-0648



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EDUCATION SERVICE

# Academic Progress and Outcome Measures

June 12, 2018





# Public Law 114-315 Section 404: Academic Progress and Outcome Measures

**VA Academic Progress:** In accordance with 38 CFR 668.34, Service Members, Veterans, and/or eligible dependents meeting the eligibility criteria and receiving Department of Veteran Affairs Education Benefits are required to maintain satisfactory *academic progress*. Academic progress is based on the quantitative and qualitative requirements of degree, certificate, and learning programs of the *educational institutions* of which Service Members, Veterans, and/or eligible dependents are enrolled within at that *educational institution* in an Academic Calendar year.

## Academic Progress includes:

1. Unit courses or subjects undertaken and the final result (e.g., grade, passed, failed, withdrawn, test results)
2. Cumulative and document progress being made toward completion of the program
3. For those institutions that use a narrative grading system and/or unspecified academic terms, as opposed to the traditional grading system and specified terms, the academic record must contain sufficient information to permit the recipient of a transcript to make an informed evaluation of the student's educational experience
4. For those institutions not operating on a term basis, the record must show the student's proficiency at the various stages in the training
5. Outcome Measures; VA has worked in collaboration with Department of Education (ED) and Department of Defense (DoD) to develop and publish outcome measures that provided information on available educational programs.





# Public Law 114-315 Section 404: Academic Progress and Outcome Measures: Update

## What does this mean?

- Effective January 1, 2018, educational institutions are required to report academic progress data to VA, which includes graduation and completion data.
- If educational institutions fail to report student academic progress they risk losing VA approval for training and, VA will work with SAA's to enforce this.
- Leveraging this data provides VA the ability to assist Veterans, Servicemembers and eligible dependents in making more informed educational decisions

## Updated Actions On Academic Progress and Outcome Measures:

- Educational Institutions are required to report academic progress data of individuals at an educational institution receiving educational assistance under chapter 36.
- VA, Department of Education, and Department of Defense have collaborated for several years to develop and publish outcome measures.
- VA's release of academic measures will be the first of a series of measures to assess academic progress of individuals to aid benefit recipients in making more informed educational decisions.
- No additional reporting burden will be placed on schools besides reporting graduation and completion data.





# Questions?







# Resources

- School Certifying Official Handbook
  - [https://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/docs/job\\_aids/sco\\_handbook.pdf](https://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/docs/job_aids/sco_handbook.pdf)
- School Certifying Official Hotline
  - Direct line of communication with VA for inquiries on student issues
  - Education Case Managers who have the expertise to answer and resolve most SCO questions work between 7:00am to 5:00pm (CST) Monday through Friday
  - **Contact your ELR for the number**
- School Training Resources on GI Bill Website
  - Includes VA ONCE training, online training, handbook, links to webinars, etc.
  - [http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/school\\_training\\_resources.asp](http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/school_training_resources.asp)



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