



EDUCATION SERVICE

# Harry W. Colmery Veteran Educational Assistance Act of 2017

GI Bill Housing Payment Rate Updates  
PL 115-48 Sections 107 and 501

Academic Year 2018-2019





# Overview

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Since the passing of the Harry W. Colmery Educational Assistance Act of 2017, otherwise known as the Forever GI Bill, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has taken action to successfully implement each of its 34 provisions. Actions taken vary from provision to provision. This briefing is intended to provide updates on the most current actions and IT changes.

VA



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs



## Topics of Interest

The Forever GI Bill focuses on enhancing the Post-9/11 GI Bill for servicemembers, Veterans, and dependents. Section 501 and 107 are undergoing technical fixes to ensure payments are accurately made to students.

Topics include:

- ✓ Key Changes
- ✓ Cost of Living Adjustment for 2018-2019 Academic year
- ✓ Section 501-Removes Exemption from DoD Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH Reduction
- ✓ Section 107- Calculate Housing Based on Location of the Campus where the Majority of Classes are taken





Topics of Interest

Key Changes





# Key Changes

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced key changes on November 28, 2018, in the processing of GI Bill benefits payments under the Harry W. Colmery Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2017 (Forever GI Bill).

Changes required by this legislation impacts the rate of housing students should receive and the location where the rate will be based upon.

VA has been working diligently to implement the changes required by this law and had anticipated completion by August 1, 2018; however, this did not occur. Therefore VA is delaying implementation of Sections 107 and 501 until Spring 2020.





Topics of Interest

## Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for Academic Year 2018-2019





# What does this mean for you?

- The housing payment received for your term that began on or after August 1, 2018 were paid at the 2017-2018 academic year rates
- VA installed the 2018-2019 academic year VA housing rates in December 2018 (COLA is retroactive to August 2018)
- Many students' housing rate will be equal to or higher than their current payment
- Students who were underpaid will be corrected retroactively

Note: COLA adjustments are conducted annually. DoD adjust rates in January, and VA adjust rates in August.



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Topics of Interest

## Section 501- Removes Exemption from DoD Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH Reduction







## Section 501: Basic Housing Allowance (BAH) Rates

Creates two categories of individuals with **separate** rate tables:

Individuals that begin using Post -9/11 GI Bill before January 1, 2018 (VA Rate – uncapped)

- Individuals that begin using Post-9/11 GI Bill on or after January 1, 2018 (DoD Rate – capped)

Basic Housing Allowance		
Zip Code	VA Rate	* DOD Rate
62794	1086	1017

\* DOD Rate applies to the Post 9/11 GI Bill students who had not previously used their benefits before 1/1/2018.

WEAMS Public Site: <https://inquiry.vba.va.gov/weamspub/searchInst.do>





Topics of Interest

Section 107- Calculate  
Housing Based on Location of  
the Campus where the  
Majority of Classes are taken





# Section 107

- Requires VA to calculate the Monthly Housing Allowance (MHA) under the Post-9/11 GI Bill based on the location of the campus where the individual physically **attends** majority of their classes
- This change in law applies to all new terms beginning on or after August 1, 2018
- MHA is currently based on the “main campus” location of the school where the individual is enrolled.
  - VA will continue to pay this way until Spring of 2020
  - VA will also correct retroactively any underpayments
- VA will be communicating any changes and updates to student Veterans, Servicemembers, dependents, and schools



VA



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# Questions

If you have any questions or need additional assistance please contact the Education Call Center at 888-442-4551 between 7 a.m. - 6 p.m. Central Time, Monday-Friday.





# 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)

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