Appendix AS:

SAMPLE SCHOOL NOTIFICATION LETTER

Re: VA Payment of Tuition and Fees for Chapter 31 Veterans who Receive Financial Aid from Other Sources

Dear (Insert Name of School Official):

This letter is intended to clarify the Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) policy and procedures for the payment of tuition and fees for Veterans attending your school under the VA Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) program (Chapter 31) who may receive financial assistance from another source, such as from a Federal or non-Federal agency.

The VA has a firm commitment to ensure that each service-disabled Veteran receives the services and assistance necessary to achieve the goals of his or her Chapter 31 vocational rehabilitation program. There­fore, the VA will maintain primary responsibility for ensuring that tuition and fees are paid so that the Veteran may begin training. The VA should not be billed until the school’s Drop/Add Period has concluded. This policy ensures that the Veteran will be able to begin or continue his or her rehabilitation program without delay or distraction.

VA policy regarding tuition and fees is controlled by VA Acquisition Regulation (VAAR) 48 CFR 831.7001-1. A copy of the applicable provisions of this regulation is attached for your review and future reference. The following guidelines are derived from VA policy and regulations:

1. In accordance with the instructions on page 2 of VA Form 28-1905, VA pays in arrears directly to the institution all vouchers for the Veteran’s tuition, fees, books and supplies. Therefore, VA should not be billed for a particular term or semester until after any Drop/Add period for that term closes. The Veteran under Chapter 31 or child under Chapter 18 should not have their registration cancelled for non-payment of these expenses, since VA has obligated payment for that term. A copy of VA Form 28-1905 is attached.

1. VA should be billed only for the actual net cost for tuition and fees assessed by the institution for the program of education after the application of:
* any waiver of, or reduction in, tuition and fees; and
* any scholarship, or other Federal, State, institutional, or employer-based aid or assistance that is provided directly to the institution and specifically designated for the sole purpose of defraying tuition and fees, with the following exception: Loans and any funds provided under section 401(b) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070a), such as Pell grants, should not be used to reduce the amount billed to VA.

3. If the Veteran receives assistance that is not specifically designated for tuition and fees (funds that may be disbursed directly to the Veteran) from a Federal, State or private contribution, the VA will not deny or reduce a Chapter 31 payment on behalf of the Veteran unless the Veteran actually applies such funds to tuition and fee charges. If the Veteran chooses to apply such assistance to tuition and fees, the school should then reduce its bill to the VA by an equal amount.

4. Reimbursement of duplicate funding or errors in accounting: All errors in accounting or disbursing funds should be corrected by the school and any funds that are unused by, or recouped from, the Veteran or another source should be returned to the appropriate funding source, including VA. It is the responsibility of the school to contact the agency that created the duplication and arrange the return of any unused funds.

Please contact (Insert Name of Case Manager) at (Insert Telephone Number and/or email) if you have questions about this letter or need additional information.

Your collaboration in ensuring the success of Veterans participating in vocational rehabilitation programs is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

(Insert Name of VR&EO)

Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Officer