

VA Education Benefits, Scholarships, and Support

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The Forever GI Bill

Montgomery GI Bill for Active Duty

Montgomery GI Bill for Selected Reserve

Veteran Readiness and Employment

Fry Scholarships

Survivors' and Dependents' Educational Assistance

The Forever GI Bill

No expiration date.

- Previously, veterans had to use their Post-9/11 GI Bill within 15 years of their last 90-day period of active-duty service. That requirement is going away
- This portion of the law will apply to anyone who left the military after January 1, 2013
- It will also apply to spouses who are receiving education benefits through the Marine Gunnery Sergeant John David Fry Scholarship for family members of service members who have been killed in the line of duty since Sept. 10, 2001

Purple Heart recipients are eligible for more benefits.

- The updated GI Bill enables Purple Heart recipients who were awarded on or after Sept. 11, 2001 to receive 100 percent of the benefits offered under the Post-9/11 GI Bill

More people are eligible for Yellow Ribbon.

- The Yellow Ribbon Program is a voluntary agreement between schools and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to split school costs not covered by the GI Bill, reducing, or eliminating the amount students must pay themselves
- The Forever GI Bill expands eligibility to surviving spouses or children of service members as of August 2018 and active-duty service members in August 2022

STEM degrees are eligible for more money and time.

- Some college degrees in science, technology, engineering, and math fields take longer than four years to complete, which is why the new law authorizes an additional school year of GI Bill funds on a first-come, first serve basis
- Scholarships of up to \$30,000 are available for eligible GI Bill users as of August 2018 • Only veterans or surviving family members of deceased service members are eligible for this scholarship — not dependents using transferred benefits

The VA will measure eligibility for benefits differently.

- Previously, service members with at least 90 days but less than six months of active-duty service would be eligible for up to 40 percent of the full GI Bill benefits. Under new regulations starting in 2020, the same 90-days-to-six-month window is equal to 50 percent of benefits. Service members with at least six months and less than 18 months of service will be eligible for 60 percent of the benefits
- This change may tend to benefit reservists more due to the nature of their service

Reservists can count more of their service toward eligibility.

- As of August 2018, members of the National Guard and Reserve can count time spent receiving medical care or recovering from injuries received while on active duty toward their GI Bill eligibility
- This will apply to all who have been activated since 9/11
- The Forever GI Bill also allows individuals who lost their Reserve Educational Assistance Program when the program ended in 2015 to credit their previous service toward their eligibility for the Post-9/11 GI Bill

Housing stipends will decrease.

- The government will pay for the expansions represented in the Forever GI Bill through a 1 percent decrease in housing stipends over the next five years. This will bring veterans' housing stipends on par with what active-duty service members receive at the E-5 with dependents rate. (Veterans on the GI Bill currently receive a slightly higher housing allowance rate than active-duty E-5s with dependents)

Benefits can be transferred after death. • This new provision offers more flexibility with the transfer and distribution of benefits in case of death • If a dependent who received transferred benefits dies before using all of the benefits, this provision gives the service member or veteran the ability to transfer remaining benefits to another dependent

- This went into effect as of August 2018 and applies to all deaths since 2009

- This provision also gives dependents of deceased service members the ability to make changes to their deceased loved one's transferred benefits

Surviving family members will get more money, but less time.

- Surviving spouses and children of service members who are receiving benefits through the Survivors' and Dependents' Educational Assistance Program will see their monthly education stipend increase by \$200
- The downside is that the same program has previously provided 45 months of education benefits that will decrease to 36 months as of August 2018 to bring it in line with the provisions of the GI Bill

Priority Enrollment

VA will improve outreach and transparency to Veterans and Service members by providing information on whether institutions of higher learning administer a priority enrollment system that allows certain student Veterans to enroll in courses earlier than other students.

For more information, please refer to the following websites:

<https://benefits.va.gov/GIBILL/forevergibill.asp>

<https://www.congress.gov>

Montgomery GI Bill Active Duty (MGIB-AD)

All of these are true. You: If you have served at least two years on active duty, you were honorably discharged, and meet the requirements of one of the following categories, you may qualify for the MGIB-AD program. This program can pay for up to 36 months of education benefits. The amount you receive depends on length of service, the education program that you choose, among other factors.

Category I

All of these are true. You: If you have served at least two years on active duty, you were honorably discharged, and meet the requirements of one of the following categories, you may qualify for the MGIB-AD program. This program can pay for up to 36 months of education benefits. The amount you receive depends on length of service, the education program that you choose, among other factors.

- Have a high school diploma, GED, or 12 hours of college credit, **and**
- Entered active duty for the first time after June 30, 1985, **and**
- Had your military pay reduced by \$100 a month for the first 12 months of service

And at least one of these is true. You served continuously (without a break) for:

- 3 years, **or** 2 years if that was your agreement when you enlisted, **or** 4 years if you entered the Selected Reserve within a year of leaving active duty (called the 2 by 4 program)

Category II

All of these are true. You:

- Have a high school diploma, GED, or 12 hours of college credit, **and**
- Entered active duty before January 1, 1977 (or before January 2, 1978, under a delayed enlistment program contracted before January 1, 1977), **and**
- Served at least 1 day between October 19, 1984, and June 30, 1985, and stayed on active duty through June 30, 1988 (or through June 30, 1987, if you entered the Selected Reserve within 1 year of leaving active duty and served 4 years), **and**
- Had at least 1 day of entitlement left under the Vietnam Era GI Bill (Chapter 34) as of December 31, 1989

Category III

All of these are true. You:

- Have a high school diploma, GED, or 12 hours of college credit, **and**
- Don't qualify for MGIB under categories I or II, **and**
- Had your military pay reduced by \$1,200 before separation

And one of these is true. You:

- Were on active duty on September 30, 1990, and involuntarily separated (not by your choice) after February 2, 1991, **or**
- Involuntarily separated on or after November 30, 1993, **or**
- Chose to voluntarily separate under either the Voluntary Separation Incentive (VSI) program or the Special Separation Benefit (SSB) program

Category IV

Both of these are true. You:

- Have a high school diploma, GED, or 12 hours of college credit, **and**

- Had military pay reduced by \$100 a month for 12 months or made a \$1,200 lump-sum contribution (meaning you paid it all at once)

And one of these is true. You:

- Were on active duty on October 9, 1996, had money left in a VEAP account on that date, and chose MGIB before October 9, 1997, **or**
- Entered full-time National Guard duty under title 32, USC, between July 1, 1985, and November 28, 1989, and chose MGIB between October 9, 1996, and July 9, 1997

For more information on how to apply for the MGIB-AD program, visit

<https://www.va.gov/education/about-gi-bill-benefits/montgomery-active-duty/>

Montgomery GI Bill Selected Reserve (MGIB-SR)

The Montgomery GI Bill Selected Reserve Program (MGIB-SR) offers up to 36 months of education and training benefits. Members of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, or Coast Guard Reserve, Army National Guard, or Air National Guard may be eligible for this program.

You may be eligible for education benefits under this program if you meet the requirements listed below.

One of these must be true. You:

- Have a 6-year service obligation (you agreed to serve 6 years) in the Selected Reserve, **or**
- Are an officer in the Selected Reserve and you agreed to serve 6 years in addition to your initial service obligation

Note: Your obligation must have started after June 30, 1985, or for some types of training after September 30, 1990.

And all of these must also be true. You:

- Complete your initial active duty for training (IADT), **and**
- Get a high school diploma or certificate of equal value, like a High School Equivalency Diploma or GED, before finishing IADT (**Note:** You can't use 12 hours toward a college degree to meet this requirement), **and**
- Stay in good standing while serving in an active Selected Reserve unit (**Note:** You'll still be eligible if you're discharged from Selected Reserve service due to a disability that was not caused by misconduct)

For more information on how to apply for the MGIB-SR program, visit

<https://www.va.gov/education/about-gi-bill-benefits/montgomery-selected-reserve/>

Veteran Readiness and Employment

Formerly known as Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment, VR&E benefits may help you get employment support or services if you have a disability that was caused, or made worse, by your active duty service. If this disability limits or prevents you from working, you may qualify for VR&E benefits.

You may be eligible for VR&E benefits and services if you're a Veteran, and you meet all of the requirements listed below. **You:**

- Didn't receive a dishonorable discharge, **and**
- Have a service-connected disability rating of at least 10% from VA, **and**
- Apply for VR&E services

Your basic period of eligibility ends 12 years from the date you received notice of your:

- Date of separation from active military service, **or**
- First VA service-connected disability rating

Please note: The basic period of eligibility may be extended if a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (VRC) finds that you have a serious employment handicap (SEH). Having an employment handicap means your service-connected disability limits your ability to prepare for, obtain, and maintain suitable employment (a job that doesn't make your disability worse, is stable, and matches your abilities, aptitudes, and interests). If I'm still on active duty, am I eligible for Veteran Readiness and Employment?

You may be eligible for VR&E benefits and services if you're a service member and you meet at least one of the requirements listed below.

At least one of these must be true. You:

- Have a 20% or higher pre-discharge disability rating (memorandum rating) and will soon leave the military, **or**
- Are participating in the Integrated Disability Evaluation System (IDES) process or awaiting discharge due to a medical condition resulting from a serious injury or illness that occurred in the line of duty.

For more information, visit <https://www.va.gov/careers-employment/vocational-rehabilitation/eligibility/>

Fry Scholarships

The Marine Gunnery John Davis Fry Scholarship is for children and dependents of Veterans who died in the line of duty or members of the Selected Reserve that died from a service-connected disability on or after September 11, 2001.

Benefits of the Fry Scholarship include money for tuition, money for housing, and money for books and supplies for up to 36 months.

For more information on eligibility and benefits, visit

<https://www.va.gov/education/survivor-dependent-benefits/fry-scholarship/>

Survivors' and Dependents' Educational Assistance

The DEA program can offer help paying for school or job training for children and spouses of a Veteran or service member who has died, been captured, is missing, or has disabilities. To be eligible for this assistance, one of the following must be true.

The Veteran or Service Member:

- Is permanently and totally disabled due to a service-connected disability, **or**
- Died while on active duty or as a result of a service-connected disability, **or**
- Is missing in action or was captured in the line of duty by a hostile force, **or**
- Was forcibly detained (held) or interned in the line of duty by a foreign entity, **or**
- Is in the hospital or getting outpatient treatment for a service-connected permanent and total disability and is likely to be discharged for that disability (effective December 23, 2006)

For more information on eligibility and benefits, visit

<https://www.va.gov/education/survivor-dependent-benefits/dependents-education-assistance/>