



HIGHER EDUCATION VETERANS PROGRAMS

FROM MILITARY TO COLLEGE: A CHECKLIST FOR VETERANS

The following is intended to be a basic resource for veterans entering college. It is not designed to be comprehensive and does not cover all benefits and possibilities – just the most frequent situations. Please consult a Higher Education Veterans Programs Regional Coordinator for additional information or a benefits consultation.

- Decide what school you wish to attend. Minnesota has four main systems:**
 - Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU), www.mnscu.edu
 - Online education at www.minnesotaonline.org
 - University of Minnesota system, www.umn.edu
 - Private colleges and universities, www.mnprivatecolleges.org

- Take admissions test (if required)**
 - Most Minnesota 4-year colleges and universities require the ACT to be considered for admission. However, this requirement might be waived for transfer students or those who graduated high school three or more years ago. Check with the college you are interested in attending.
 - View www.actstudent.org for more information about the ACT as well as testing times and locations.

- Apply for admission**
 - Check with the individual college for requirements.

- Send official transcripts**
 - Have official transcripts for previous college-level coursework, including military training, sent to the college you plan to attend for evaluation of transfer credit. Usually, transcripts should be sent to the admissions office.
 - Visit www.mymilitaryeducation.org for information about obtaining your military transcript. Click on Military FAQs, enter 1002 into the “Search by Keyword” section and hit “Search.”

- Apply for financial aid**
 - Complete the Free Application for Student Aid (FAFSA), found online at www.fafsa.ed.gov.
 - FAFSA determines your eligibility for low/no interest student loans as well as state/federal grants.
 - Make sure to report any veteran/military benefits you will be receiving.
 - Financial aid is initially based on your previous year’s earnings. If this doesn’t accurately reflect your income at the time you will be taking classes, make sure to complete a financial aid appeal at your college to have your award reassessed.

- Search for scholarships**
 - There are many scholarships available to veterans.
 - Visit www.mymilitaryeducation.org or contact the Veterans Resource Center on your campus for a listing of military-related scholarships.
 - Check with the college financial aid office for general scholarships.

- Take placement tests (if required)**
 - MnSCU programs may require assessment testing for course placement.
 - Check with your college for details.

- **Attend orientation**
 - You will be required to attend an orientation session, where you will get details on the registration process, campus services, and other information. Check with your campus regarding the availability of a veterans' specific orientation session.

- **Register for classes**
 - After you attend orientation, you will be able to register for courses. This should be done in consultation with an advisor, and is usually done at the orientation session.

- **Apply for benefits**
 - Depending on your time and type of service, residency, and other factors, you may be eligible for all or some of the following. Check with the Higher Education Veterans Programs Regional Coordinator for a one-on-one benefit consultation.
 - ***VA Educational Benefits***
 - Apply online at www.gibill.va.gov or contact the MDVA Regional Coordinator on your campus. If you apply online, make sure to check with your Certifying Official regarding any other paperwork that may be needed for your campus.
 - Notify your campus Certifying Official of any changes in your status.
 - The GI Bill "Top-Up" program allows the USDVA to pay you the difference between the total course cost and the cost covered by the military, up to the maximum rate payable to a Veteran.
 - ***Minnesota GI Bill***
 - Minnesota residents who served active duty after 9/11/2001 or those who have not served on active duty, but have served at least 5 years in the National Guard/Reserves and some spouses and dependents may be eligible for this benefit.
 - Student must attend participating Minnesota public or private institution.
 - Applicants must first submit a FAFSA.
 - Visit www.getreadyforecollege.org/military for more information or to apply.
 - ***Federal Tuition Assistance***
 - Available to active duty members and some members of the National Guard and Reserve.
 - Go to www.GoArmyEd.com to apply.
 - Apply early, money for this program can run out!
 - ***Minnesota National Guard – State Tuition Reimbursement***
 - Available to members of the Minnesota Army and Air National Guard, as well as spouses under certain circumstances.
 - If you are actively drilling, complete required paperwork with your unit education specialist.
 - If you have deployed and are now out of the military, you may qualify for the Extended State Tuition Reimbursement Program. Contact a Regional Coordinator for further details.

- **Other campus services**
 - Veterans Resource Center – information regarding benefits and resources
 - Student Organizations – many campuses have veterans' clubs
 - Counseling – personal and career counseling
 - Disability Services – provides accommodations for students with disabilities

For more information, visit <http://www.mymilitaryeducation.org>.