



HIGHER EDUCATION VETERANS PROGRAMS

MINNESOTA VETERANS EDUCATION BENEFITS GUIDE

This guide is designed to provide an introduction to the basic education benefits and financial resources available to Minnesota veterans and military members. There are many benefits available to veterans; however, not all veterans qualify for each benefit. To find out which benefits you qualify for, consult the Veterans Resource Center on your campus or the Higher Education Veterans Programs Regional Coordinator located in your area.

For more information or to contact a Campus Regional Coordinator, visit www.MyMilitaryEducation.org.

Free Application for Student Aid

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is available to all students attending a college and/or university and determines eligibility for federal student loans as well as federal and state grants. Since FAFSA awards are based on income from the previous year, the assessment may not provide an accurate reflection of a student's current income. If the income reported on the FAFSA was significantly higher than what will be earned while in college, notify the Financial Aid office on campus and complete a special circumstances appeal to have your assessment based on of your current income.

To complete a FAFSA application, log-on to <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov>.

VA Educational Benefits

There are various forms of VA educational benefits available, and it is possible to qualify for more than one benefit. Benefit amounts are based on program eligibility and credit load. Eligibility is determined by the Department of Defense. For those qualifying for more than one benefit, length of eligibility can be increased to 48 months total (no more than 36 months in any one program).

Active Duty – Chapter 30: Most people who have served on active duty with any branch of the armed forces are eligible to receive Chapter 30, assuming they signed up for and paid into the program. Chapter 30 recipients have 10 years after their date of discharge to use 36 months of payment.

NEW Post-9/11 GI Bill – Chapter 33: Eligibility for Chapter 33 is based on qualifying periods of active duty performed after 9/10/01. Percentage of the benefit you are entitled to is determined by number of qualifying months of service. This benefit consists of three components: tuition & fees made directly to the institution, a housing stipend and a book & supply stipend also paid to the student. Veterans using this benefit have 15 years from their date of eligibility to use a total of 36 months of payment. There is no pay-in requirement for Chapter 33. With additional qualifying service requirements, this program includes an option to transfer some or all of the Chapter 33 benefit to a spouse and/or dependents. Your decision to elect Chapter 33 benefit is irrevocable. We strongly recommend contacting a Regional Coordinator prior to completing an application for Chapter 33.

Selected Reserve – Chapter 1606: Most Reserve and National Guard members are eligible for Chapter 1606 upon completion of initial training. Recipients of Chapter 1606 retain eligibility for the duration of their active drilling status. Benefit extension available for those with mobilized service.

Reserve Educational Assistance Program (REAP) - Chapter 1607: Reserve and National Guard members who have served on qualifying active federal service for at least 90 days may have eligibility for Chapter 1607. This benefit is based on a percentage of the active duty GI bill rate. Benefit extension available for those who complete an 8 year service contract in the Reserve or National Guard.

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.

To apply for VA educational benefits, contact the Campus Regional Coordinator or visit www.gibill.va.gov.

Federal Tuition Assistance (FTA)

Federal Tuition Assistance (FTA) is available to active duty service-members and drilling members of the National Guard and Reserve components. This program will pay \$250 per credit up to \$4,500 per fiscal year toward tuition expenses including some student fees. In some cases, this benefit can be used in conjunction with other veteran education benefits. This program has a limited budget and is paid on a first come first serve basis, so it is important to apply early.

This benefit is paid directly to the college. You must maintain a GPA of 2.0 or better. Failure to complete classes satisfactorily will require repayment of FTA funds by the soldier.

Army National Guard Enlisted Soldiers must apply for Federal Tuition Assistance (FTA) in order to be eligible to apply for State Tuition Reimbursement. .

The online application for FTA is at www.goarmyed.com. Contact the Campus Regional Coordinator for assistance.

Minnesota State Tuition Reimbursement (STR)

This benefit is only available to current members of the **Minnesota Army and Air National Guard** and may be used in conjunction with the GI Bill and Federal Tuition Assistance. The lifetime maximum State Tuition Reimbursement benefit is 208 quarter or 144 Semester credits. The reimbursement rate is 100% of the undergraduate rate of the University of Minnesota -- Twin Cities with a maximum yearly benefit of **\$10,000.00** per fiscal year (01 JUL through 30 JUN). To apply for State Tuition Reimbursement you **MUST** contact your unit full-time representative to obligate funds as soon as you know you will be going to school. STR requires a "C" or better to qualify for reimbursement.

Army National Guard Enlisted Soldiers must apply for Federal Tuition Assistance (FTA) in order to be eligible to apply for State Tuition Reimbursement. To apply, please contact your Unit Administrator.

Minnesota State Tuition Reimbursement (STR) Extended

State Tuition Reimbursement has been extended to service members who have satisfactorily completed their service-contract in the Minnesota National Guard and who served honorably in federal active service or federally funded state active service since September 11, 2001. Eligibility is extended for a period of two years, plus the amount of time equal to the duration of that person's active service.

State Tuition Reimbursement has also been extended to service members who have been separated or discharged from that organization due to a service-connected injury, disease, or disability. Eligibility period is extended for eight years beyond the date of separation. To apply contact the Minnesota State Tuition Reimbursement Manager or a Campus Regional Coordinator.

Minnesota State Tuition Reimbursement Option for Spouses

State Tuition Reimbursement is now available to spouses of ARNG E-6, E-7, W-2, O-2, O-3 and O-4 AND spouses of ANG E-6, E-7, O-2 and O-3 if the service member has served at least 8 years of service in the National Guard. For more information or to apply, contact the Guard Member's Unit Education Officer/Full Time Staff or contact a Campus Regional Coordinator for assistance.

Minnesota GI Bill

The Minnesota GI Bill provides up to \$1,000/semester for full time students (\$10,000 lifetime benefit). Veterans benefits and federal/state aid may impact the actual amount received. Applications can be found at www.getreadyforcollege.org/military, and should be submitted to the financial aid office on campus. Students wishing to use the Minnesota GI Bill must first complete a FAFSA.

For one-on-one assistance with a Higher Education Veterans Programs Regional Coordinator, visit www.MyMilitaryEducation.org to locate a coordinator near you.