Veterans Education
Frequently Asked Questions
Questions from Group 1
What is required from the Veteran for proper certification?

Required:

- Certificate of Eligibility (COE)
  - Certificate will indicate:
    - Name of beneficiary (Veteran / Spouse / Dependent)
    - Chapter (30, 32, 33, 35, 1606, 1607)
    - Eligibility tier (40%-100%)
    - Yellow Ribbon eligibility if Post 9/11 (Chapter 33)
    - Number of months student is entitled to (0-36)
    - Deliminating date
How do we certify students who are receiving financial aid, or Pell Grant money, as well as VA benefits?

As of August 1, 2011 VA is the **LAST PAYER**

- ALL State, Federal and Institutional aid must be applied to Tuition and Fees *BEFORE* it's reported to the Veterans Administration

  - Includes:
    - “Tuition / Fee” scholarships
    - Other federal programs (TA, MYCAA)
    - State tuition waivers

  - Exclusions
    - Loans
    - Title IV funding (e.g. Pell Grant)
    - Any “general” scholarship of grant not specifically intended for tuition of fees
Some scholarship students prepay for summer classes in fall or spring, so no tuition charge is placed on their summer statements. What is the best way to ensure that they still receive the appropriate reimbursement from the VA?

School Certifying Official (SCO) would certify:
- Student / Program Information
- Number of Credits
- Term Start / End Date
- Tuition ($0)
- Fees ($0)

VA will use term dates and credit load to determine rate of pursuit. Students going greater than 51% will receive prorated housing allowance and books.
When a student is receiving benefits under both the Post-9/11 GI Bill and state tuition waiver, which is recognized first?

- Current regulations require all waivers to be applied before reporting tuition and fees.
- The Categorical Tuition Waiver (aka Veterans Tuition Waiver) is currently applied before being reported to the VA so they’ll be no change.
- The National Guard Tuition and Fee Waiver is not a true waiver thus it can be reported to the VA.
- Currently the VA is first payer and Guardsmen’s FULL tuition and fees can be certified to the VA BEFORE any remaining unpaid amount is billed to the Guard.
- AFTER August 1, VA is last payer and Guardsmen’s FULL tuition and fees are billed to the Guard’s office in Milford BEFORE any remaining unpaid amount is certified to the VA.
When a student withdraws from a course, what should be adjusted on a 22-1999b?

- Student must be advised to notify the SCO
- SCO must fill out 22-1999b ASAP (30 days of date of discovery)
- Failure to complete may lead to overpayment
What is the window of time between initial certification at registration, end of add/drop, and when money pays out to the student?

- Payment is processed almost immediately if VA Once is used. The student should see the payment in her bank account in 7-10 calendar days.

- Certifications made with VA Form 22-1999 are processed for payment in the order received. Processing times vary based on the time of year (Sep, Jan, and May are peak months). Once payment is processed, payment is made in 7-10 days.
How soon after graduation should I terminate a student record? How is this done?

- Students record is automatically terminated at end date of certified

- VA is currently tracking graduation rates, completing a 22-1999b with checking “graduated” is helpful.
Will VA-ONCE be updated to reflect the new changes to the Post-9/11 GI Bill?

Yes:

- VA will update VA-ONCE to reflect the new changes in the Post-9/11 GI Bill

Update TBD
If a student is over awarded due to a last minute reduction in credits, is it the student’s or school’s responsibility to work with the VA to ensure return of funds?

It would be the school’s responsibility to return the funds:

• Certified but never attended
• Withdraws on or before first day of term
• School received payment for wrong student
• School received duplicate payment
• Amended certification sent with reduction of tuition or Yellow Ribbon contribution
• In the event of student death

• VA paid school too much
Questions from Group 2
What scholarships and funds should/shouldn’t I deduct from tuition for Chapter 33?

As of August 1, 2011 VA is the **LAST PAYER:**

- ALL State, Federal and Institutional aid must be applied to Tuition and Fees **BEFORE** it's reported to the Veterans Administration

  - **Includes:**
    - “Tuition / Fee” scholarships
    - Other federal programs (TA, MYCAA)
    - State tuition waivers

  - **Exclusions**
    - Loans
    - Title IV funding (e.g. Pell Grant)
    - Any “general” scholarship of grant not specifically intended for tuition of fees
Is the GI Bill considered Financial Aid and How do I report the Yellow Ribbon for Eligible Post 9/11 (Chapter 33) students?

Yellow Ribbon is Part of Chapter 33 (Post 9/11 GI Bill)

- The GI Bill is considered an entitlement, not financial aid.
  - To report Yellow Ribbon: (Private College with cap of $17,500)
    (1 Yellow Ribbon Slot = $5,000)
  - Fall semester students net tuition & fee bill is $20,000.00
    - Report **net** “Tuition / Fee” ($20,000)
    - Report YR Box $1,250, in doing so School agrees to waive the $1,250.
    - VA will pay $17,500 + $1,250.00 – Students bill is paid in full
  - Spring Semester Students Net Charges = $20,000
    - Report **net** “Tuition / Fee” ($20,000)
    - Report YR Box $3,750, in doing so School agrees to waive the $3,750.
    - VA will pay $3,750 - Student is responsible for remaining $12,500
What happens when tuition and fees have been verified for a semester and the student notifies us of new funds that have come in?

The nature of the funds have to be reviewed:

- If funds are a result of excluded items, nothing needs to be done.
  - Excluded items include:
    - Title IV Funds
    - Loans
    - Money from generous relatives or Powerball

- If funds are the result of state, federal or institutional scholarship, grant (OR) a program (Excluding Title IV) that pays tuition and fees:
  - 22-1999-b must be filled out to reflect / adjust NET cost
How will the changes in payment for Post-9/11 GI Bill be implemented for private colleges? Is the only option to apply the full $17,500 to the fall semester? What if students do not attend in spring?

Private colleges have to CORRECTLY certify the student’s net cost to the VA.

- The VA will pay the institution up to $17,500.00
  - Only Chapter 33 students are entitled to Tuition and Fees
  - Payment will be up to $17,500 or (% of)

- Institution has to apply 100% of payment to students current bill

- The Yellow Ribbon Program (If applicable) is intended to cover all costs in excess of the $17,500.00
How are active duty students affected? How are expected benefits calculated?

Active Duty service member benefits are based on Title 10 and certain Title 32 active duty time

- Active duty (and eligible spouse transferees) receive:
  - Tuition & Fees at veterans rate and as of August 1
  - Books as of August 1
  - Dependent transferees also receive BAH (prorated based on rate of pursuit)

- Active duty (and eligible spouse transferees) DO NOT receive:
  - BAH
  - Eligibility for Yellow Ribbon

- Certificate of eligibility will reflect benefit level:
  - Keep in mind an active duty member may want to re-apply for a COE after each deployment to reflect their current benefit level.
Can students be grandfathered in (using old rates and calculations)?

No, however, pending legislation may affect BAH in Massachusetts:

- HR 1383 (Passed by House May 23, 2011)
  - Seeks to grandfather folks who would receive more Tuition and Fee funds (more than $17,500) who are pursuing IHL degree at a private institution from August 1, 2011 to July 31, 2014
  - It also seeks to preserve the BAH at the 100% rate

- If passed the legislation would only apply to 7 states where current rate can be more than the $17,500 rate.
How is the Yellow Ribbon amount impacted for spring if a student is not receiving any VA benefits for the spring?

The institution must abide by their Yellow Ribbon agreement:

- Chapter 33 Students receive up to $17,500 per academic year.

- Yellow Ribbon is applied up to 50% of any remaining amount for the academic year (e.g. Semesters where basic remaining tuition and fee benefit is (0) or less than the NET cost of the semester).

- Remember - not all students will qualify for the Yellow Ribbon program.
Have there been changes in BAH payments for students that have a break in January or are not enrolled in the summer?

As of August 1, 2011 all break pay will no longer be paid.

- BAH for partial months will be prorated:
  (e.g. term ends Dec 16, starts January 16, Dec and January BAH will be pro-rated)
The housing allowance is prorated based on the training time, but is it also prorated based on a student’s benefit level (percent eligibility)?

Yes:

- Housing allowance (BAH) is rounded to the nearest tenth:

  12 undergrad credits = full time = full housing allowance

  A student at 7 credits = 58%, student at 100% eligibility level would receive prorated 60% BAH.

- Student less than 100% eligibility rate taking 7 undergrad credits would get their % of the prorated 60% BAH
Is the monthly housing allowance a set flat rate across the country for all Chapter 33 students enrolled solely in distance learning courses?

Yes

- BAH for 100% distance learning is set at a national average.

- Students pursuing programs via 100% distance educations will get a housing allowance pegged at 50% of the national average (or a prorated portion of).
What if a student is enrolled in both on-campus and distance learning credits? How is the student paid in regards to the monthly housing allowance?

- If the program consists of both on-campus and on-line classes the housing allowance will be based on the zip code of the school (BAH E-5 w/dependents).
What does it mean that “programs offered at accredited public and private-not-for-profit schools are deemed already approved for VA education benefits”?

- According to Public Law 111-377 - all degree programs offered at accredited non-profit colleges and universities.
- This approval does not pertain to certificate programs.
- Jurisdiction of these programs will fall under the VA.
- Institution must have prior authority to offer the degree program (Massachusetts Department of Higher Education).
- The process on advising VA of programs is still TBD.
Are there examples of how we can use the reporting fees? Must these fees be used for the same academic year?

- Reporting fees are to be used to defer the costs associated with the administration of GI Bill programs.
Who do we refer Chapter 31 veterans to? My campus has never had a Chapter 31 recipient and we have an incoming student this fall asking questions.

- Chapter 31 is vocational rehabilitation (Voc Rehab).
- Voc Rehab questions should be referred to respective veterans’ Voc Rehab counselor.
Questions