2014 Certifying Official Workshops

Certifying Official Workshops are held annually and are open to Certifying Officials at educational and training facilities. This year the workshops will be held in April and May at various locations around the state. Don’t miss this opportunity to have questions answered, review procedures and meet other certifying officials. Workshop dates and locations are as follows:

- Wednesday, April 2, 2014 – Harrisburg Area
- Thursday, April 10, 2014 – Pittsburgh - East
- Wednesday, May 7, 2014 – Philadelphia Area

Note: Workshops are open to all people at your facility who are involved in working with veterans’ education benefits.

Please register for the Certifying Official Workshops by e-mail to RA-VetEd@pa.gov You will receive a confirmation e-mail, directions and an agenda.

Note: Morning refreshments will include coffee, juice and water. Lunch is provided.

New GI Bill Website

GI Bill information can now be found on the VA’s new GI Bill website:

http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/

Veterans can apply online for benefits using e-benefits research the various chapters and benefit options and/or send questions to the VA.
Training Agreements

When a facility applies for approval for VA Education Benefits for Apprenticeship or On-the-Job Training programs, a Training Agreement is drawn up. The Pennsylvania State Approving Agency (Veterans/Military Education) uses a VA-approved form for this purpose. When information becomes outdated on this form such as wage changes and change of Training Coordinator, it is updated several different ways. For a non-registered apprenticeship or On-the-Job Training Program, updates are sent to Veterans/Military Education and the VA is notified by letter of these changes. The original training agreement is not changed or updated unless there is a change in the name of the facility, length of the training period or the work processes change significantly (description and hours assigned to tasks). The original training agreement can be used when enrolling veterans for benefits along with the 22-1999 even though it may be many years old.

An Apprenticeship program registered with the Office of Apprenticeship (OA) of the Employment Training Administration of the Department of Labor or a State apprenticeship agency recognized by the Office of Apprenticeship is to notify the VA directly using the Modification of Program form. The original training agreement that was drawn up with the Pennsylvania State Approving Agency is still valid and can be used. If there is a change in the name of the facility, length of the training period or the work processes change significantly (description and hours assigned to tasks) the VA uses Form 22-8764 as a training agreement. Your Education Liaison Representative (ELR) will be able to help you with this form.

All Federal facilities, whether On-the-Job or Registered/Non-Registered Apprenticeship programs are handled directly by the VA. The original training agreement that was drawn up with the Pennsylvania State Approving Agency is still valid and can be used. Any changes will be handled by the VA. Please contact your ELR with any questions you may have.

If you are unclear what category you fall under, call Veterans/Military Education at either 717-787-2414 or 412-565-5364.

22-8794 Designation of Certifying Official Form

It is important to update your Designation of Certifying Official Form as soon as there is a change regarding who is handling the veteran certification packets. It better to have more than one person listed so that there is a back-up person available that can sign the required forms. Send all new 22-8794 Designation of Certifying Official Forms to:

Veterans/Military Education
301 Fifth Avenue – Suite 204
Pittsburgh, PA 15222
VETERAN’S APPLICATION FOR BENEFITS

The procedure for certifying veterans for their education benefits is a pretty simple process. The veteran applies for his benefits, the employer certifies that the veteran is training at the facility and the training agreement is reviewed and signed by both parties. It is then sent to Veterans/Military Education in Pittsburgh for review. If everything is completed correctly, then it is sent on to the VA for processing. A letter is sent from Veterans/Military Education indicating the date the packet was submitted to the VA.

The Certifying Official must keep a copy of the 22-1990 Application for Benefits, 22-1999 VA Enrollment Certification, Training Agreement, DD-214, and subsequent 6553d-1 Monthly Certification of Hours forms for three years after the veteran completes the training program. A Certificate of Eligibility (a letter from the VA indicating that the veteran is eligible for benefits) can be substituted for the 22-1990 Application for Benefits. It is advisable for the Certifying Official to require either the Certificate of Eligibility or a copy of the veteran’s Application for Benefits form prior to certifying employment.

The 22-1990 – Veterans Application for Benefits - is reviewed by the Pittsburgh office only to ensure that it is signed. If there is information that is incomplete or missing from the paper form that is submitted, the VA will contact the veteran for more information. In over a dozen cases this past year, the veteran did not respond to the VA for requested information and the VA denied benefits to these veterans as a result of their non-response.

The veteran can apply for his education benefits at [http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/](http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/). The online form will show when information is missing, thus ensuring a more complete application. The online form can be printed out and given to the Certifying Official for the file. By completing the online form, it is more likely omissions will be addressed.

Reminder when reporting hours:

- When certifying hours on the 22-6553d-1 Monthly Certification of Hours form, record both the Month and Year.

- Do not certify hours before the end of the month. The VA will not accept hours certified in advance.