

Happy Birthday Abraham Lincoln

New School Certifying Official Handbook

The revised School Certifying Official Handbook, Revision 4.1, dated February 9, 2015 has been released by VA. A list of revisions and the web site can be found below:

http://www.benefits.va.gov/GIBILL/docs/job_aids/SCO_Handbook.pdf

REVISIONS

Date	Change	Pages
2/9/15	Removal of historical references to "Break Pay" or "Interval Pay"	Various
2/9/15	Addition of Chief Liaison Education Officer (CELO) Map	10
2/9/15	Addition of Fry Scholarship for Spouses	35
2/9/15	Update to Graduate Level Training Time	52
2/9/15	Modification regarding use of Tuition Assistance (TA) with chapter 1606 and 1607 Benefits	86-88

Previous Newsletters

During recent compliance surveys and questions received in this office, it is evident that School Certifying Officials and other people at schools and institutions who handle veterans education benefits are not reading our newsletters. We try very hard to provide up-to-date information and to answer critical questions in our newsletters. Please make sure you read these newsletters and forward them to any one at your school or institution who is concerned with veterans education benefits. Previous editions of our newsletters are available at

http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/veteran%27s_education/8744/new_scholarship_benefits_war_veterans/522563

Amended Enrollment Certifications

If your school submitted an enrollment certification for a Chapter 33 student and indicated zero “0” in the tuition and fee field so the VA would process the certification to begin payment of the Monthly Housing Allowance and the Book and Supply Stipend, and you now want to submit a certification for the cost of tuition and fees for the school, do an AMENDED ENROLLMENT CERTIFICATION. Do NOT do a new, initial certification.

You should amend the original enrollment certification. In VA-ONCE, select the student. Click on CERT in the tabs at the top of the student screen. You will notice that all the certifications are listed with an arrow behind the term name pointing to the right. Click on that arrow until it points down. You will find the last cert you submitted there. Highlight that cert. Go to the top of the screen and click on Cert. You will get a drop down box. Select “Amend” in the drop down box. A dialog box will appear at the bottom of the screen.

Notice that you can only change the begin and end dates and the tuition and fee fields. If the begin and end dates are correct and you are only submitting the amendment to get tuition and fees for the school, enter the “actual net cost” of tuition and fees for the number of credits or the number of clock hours in the program in the “T & F” field. Do not enter the tuition and fees for the number of credits or clock hours per week the student is taking after an increase or decrease. (This is accomplished by an adjustment in VA-ONCE.) Make sure you enter the actual net cost of tuition and fees for the credits or clock hours in the program for the number of credits that appear greyed out on the amendment.

If the student changed (increased or decreased) the number of credits after the original enrollment certification was completed, do the amendment first to get the tuition and fees and then, the next day, do an adjustment to inform VA that the student has changed their enrollment. On the adjustment, you will be able to report the number of credits the student is now taking and the actual net cost of that number of credits.

See the Quick Reference User Guide for VA-ONCE for additional information on amendments and adjustments.

Persian Gulf Veterans Bonus Program

If you have students or know a veteran who served in the Persian Gulf Conflict, make sure they visit the following web site:

http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/persian_gulf_veterans_bonus/14433

They may be eligible for a veteran’s bonus from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Note this bonus does not affect federal veteran’s education benefits. Issues concerning eligibility, compensation, how to apply and more are addressed on the web site above.

Please make sure all your students who may have served during the Persian War Conflict are aware of this benefit. The deadline for submitting applications for the Persian Gulf Conflict Veterans Benefit Program is August 31, 2015.

Share This Newsletter

This newsletter is being e-mailed to Certifying Officials at each school. Please share this newsletter with all other Certifying Officials, the Bursar's or Comptroller's Office, Financial Aid Office and other interested individuals at your school. It is extremely important that the information in this newsletter receives the widest dissemination in order that veterans receive the GI Bill and other educational benefits to which they are entitled.