Overview

This is the first newsletter specifically designed to address issues that Certifying Officials at the workplace face in certifying enrollment for veterans who are eligible for GI Bill education benefits.

Although GI Bill education benefits can be used at both schools and training facilities, the process to enroll a veteran and help him/her get the earned benefit is different. A school can only certify electronically and the student verifies his/her attendance electronically or by phone. At a training facility, the process is still done on paper and mailed or faxed to the VA.

With the advent of the Post 9/11 GI Bill (also known as Chapter 33) there have been additional changes. Some veterans can now choose between two benefits, or chapters. Reporting of hours worked is handled differently between chapter 33 and the other chapters. This has caused some confusion among employers and veteran employees. This newsletter is intended to address issues specific to Certifying Officials in the workplace.

New Employers Guide

A new Employers Guide to Recordkeeping is available. We have attempted to present the process of enrolling veterans, recordkeeping, reporting of hours, extension of programs, and completion of programs in a logical and concise manner. For a copy of the new Employer’s Guide to recordkeeping, send your request to:

Veterans/Military Education
333 Market Street, 12th Floor
Harrisburg, PA  17126
(717) 787-2414

or e-mail
RA-VetEd@pa.gov

State Approving Agency
Veterans/Military Education
Department of Education

The State Approving Agency acts on behalf of the VA to review evaluate and approve educational and training programs for Veterans and other eligible persons using the GI Bill. The State Approving Agency can advise you on which educational programs, on-the-job training/apprenticeship, and flight programs are approved or can be approved for GI Bill Benefits. Contact numbers are as follows:

Harrisburg  717-787-2414
Philadelphia  215-560-2509
Pittsburgh  412-565-5364
Changes in Program or Wage Rate

If the program that is currently approved at your facility has changed, then those changes need to be reported to your Advisor at the State Approving Agency. Among the changes that need to be reported are change in work processes, change in length of program and change in wage rate. Your advisor will review the information with you and decide whether or not a new training agreement should be drawn up or if you need to submit changes directly to the VA.

Effective August 1, 2011, 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 through the Education Liaison Representative regarding changes to their apprenticeship program utilizing forms designed for that purpose. Your Advisor can provide you with the form and contact information for the ELR in your region.

Application for Benefits

The first step in certifying enrollment of a veteran employee is for the veteran to apply for his GI Bill Education Benefits. This can be done either online at www.gibill.va.gov or by using a paper form 22-1990 Application for Benefits. It is recommended that your new veteran employee submit his application online and print 2 copies, one for his records and one for yours. In the case where the veteran is unable to submit the application online, the paper copy is fine. When he gives you the application, take a quick look to make sure it is signed and that Part II is completed. If 9A is checked, then 9F must be completed also. If the veteran does not fill this part out correctly, it will delay the determination of the employees benefit.

Reporting Hours to the VA

VA Form 22-6553d-1 Monthly Certification of Hours is the most commonly used method to report hours to the VA. The monthly certification form has typically been mailed to the veteran at the end of each month. The veteran records his hours and takes it to the certifying official who verifies the hours and the veteran and certifying official sign the form. A copy is made for the certifying officials file and it is then mailed to the appropriate address. PLEASE NOTE that the monthly certification of hours form is not mailed to the veteran who is collecting benefits under the Post 9/11 GI Bill (Chapter 33). If the veteran is approved for the Post 9/11 GI Bill, a VA 22-6553d-1 is enclosed with the award letter. The veteran is directed to make copies of the form (or go online to print additional forms) to give to the certifying official at the training establishment. This is being overlooked by some veteran employees. If you have a veteran employee who is complaining about not receiving their benefit or has not submitted a monthly certification of hours, have them check their award letter.

Certifying Official Workshops 2013

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 at various locations around the state. If you have not received a notice of dates and locations, contact your Veterans Education Advisor.

This is YOUR Newsletter

Have a suggestion for what you would like to see covered in future newsletters? Send your request to RA-VetEd@pa.gov.