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extended to the date on which he or she submitted the evidence supporting the existence of mitigating circumstances.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 3034(a), 3323(a), 3680(a))

(b) *No educational assistance for some incarcerated individuals.* VA will not pay educational assistance to an eligible individual who is incarcerated in a Federal, State, local, or other penal institution or correctional facility due to a felony conviction and has incurred no expenses for books, supplies, or equipment if—

(1) The individual is enrolled in a course for which there is no tuition and fees;

(2) The individual is enrolled in a course and the tuition and fees for the course are being paid in full by a Federal (other than one administered by VA), State, or local program.

(c) *Reduced educational assistance for some incarcerated individuals.* (1) VA will reduce the amount of educational assistance paid to an eligible individual who is incarcerated in a Federal, State, local, or other penal institution or correctional facility due to a felony conviction if—

(i) The individual is enrolled in a course for which the tuition and fees are paid entirely by a Federal (other than one administered by VA), State, or local program, but the individual is required to purchase books, supplies, or equipment for the course; or

(ii) The individual is enrolled in a course for which the tuition and fees are paid partially by a Federal (other than one administered by VA), State, or local program, whether or not the individual is required to purchase books, supplies, or equipment for the course.

(2) The amount of educational assistance payable for pursuit of an approved program of education by an eligible individual, as described in this paragraph, will be the lesser of the following—

(i) The amount equal to any portion of tuition and fees charged for the course that are not paid by a Federal (other than one administered by VA), State, or local program plus an amount equal to any charges to the eligible individual for the cost of necessary books, supplies, and equipment; or

(ii) The amount of tuition and fees otherwise payable to the individual based on the individual's length of creditable service as determined in § 21.9640(a) and the individual's rate of pursuit, plus an amount equal to any charges to the eligible individual for the cost of necessary books, supplies, and equipment.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 3034(a), 3323(a), 3482(g))

(d) *No educational assistance for certain enrollments.* VA will not pay educational assistance for—

(1) An enrollment in an audited course (See § 21.4252(i));

(2) A new enrollment in a course during a period when the approval has been suspended by a State approving agency or VA;

(3) An enrollment in a course by a nonmatriculated student except as provided in § 21.4252(l);

(4) An enrollment in a course certified to VA by the individual taking the course;

(5) A new enrollment in a course which does not meet the veteran-non-veteran ratio requirement as computed under § 21.4201; and

(6) An enrollment in a course offered under contract for which VA approval is prohibited by § 21.4252(m).

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 501(a), 3034(a), 3323(a))

**§ 21.9680 Certifications and release of payments.**

(a) *Payee.* (1) VA will make payment of the appropriate amount of established charges (including top-up payments), as determined under § 21.9640, directly to the institution of higher learning as a lump sum payment for the entire quarter, semester, or term, as applicable.

(2) VA will make all other payments to the eligible individual or a duly appointed fiduciary. VA will make direct payment to the eligible individual even if he or she is a minor.

(3) The assignment of educational assistance is prohibited. In administering this provision, VA will apply the provisions of § 21.4146 to 38 U.S.C. chapter 33.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 3034(a), 3313(g), 3323(a), 3680, 5301)

(b) *Payments.* (1) VA will pay educational assistance for an eligible individual's enrollment in an approved program (other than one seeking tuition assistance top-up, one seeking reimbursement for taking an approved licensing or certification test, or one who qualifies for an advance payment of the monthly housing allowance) only after the educational institution has certified the individual's enrollment as provided in § 21.9720.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 3034(a), 3323(a), 3680(g), 3689)

(The Office of Management and Budget has approved the information collection provisions in this section under control number 2900-0073)

(2) *Advance payments.* VA will apply the provisions of this section in making advance payments of the monthly housing allowance to eligible individuals.

(i) VA will make payments of the monthly housing allowance in advance when:

(A) The eligible individual has specifically requested such a payment;

(B) The individual is enrolled at a rate of pursuit greater than half-time;

(C) The institution of higher learning at which the eligible individual is accepted or enrolled has agreed to and can satisfactorily carry out the provisions of 38 U.S.C. 3680(d)(4)(B), (d)(4)(C), and (d)(5) pertaining to receipt, delivery, and return of checks, and certifications of delivery and enrollment;

(D) The Director of the VA Regional Processing Office of jurisdiction has not acted under paragraph (b)(2)(iv) of this section to prevent advance payments being made to the eligible individual's institution of higher learning;

(E) There is no evidence in the eligible individual's claim file showing that he or she is not eligible for an advance payment;

(F) The period for which the eligible individual has requested a payment either—

(1) Is preceded by an interval of non-payment of 30 days or more; or

(2) Is the beginning of a school year that is preceded by a period of non-payment of 30 days or more; and

(G) The institution of higher learning or the eligible individual has submitted the certification required by § 21.9715.

(ii) The amount of the advance payment to an eligible individual is the amount payable for the monthly housing allowance for the month or fraction thereof in which the term or course will begin plus the amount of the monthly housing allowance for the following month.

(iii) VA will mail advance payments to the institution of higher learning for delivery to the eligible individual. The institution of higher learning will not deliver the advance payment check more than 30 days in advance of the first date of the enrollment period for which VA makes the advance payment.

(iv) The Director of the VA Regional Processing Office of jurisdiction may direct that advance payments not be made to individuals attending an institution of higher learning if:

(A) The institution of higher learning demonstrates an inability to comply with the requirements of paragraph (b)(2)(iii) of this section;

(B) The institution of higher learning fails to provide adequately for the safekeeping of the advance payment checks before delivery to the eligible individual or return to VA; or

(C) The Director determines, based on compelling evidence, that the institution of higher learning has demonstrated its inability to discharge its responsibilities under the advance payment program.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 3034, 3323, 3680)

(3) *Lump sum payments.* VA will make a lump sum payment for the entire quarter, semester, or term:

(i) To an institution of higher learning, on behalf of an eligible individual, for the appropriate amount of established charges;

(ii) To an eligible individual for the appropriate amount for books, supplies, equipment, and other educational costs; and

(iii) To an eligible individual entitled to the \$500 rural relocation benefit.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 3034(a), 3313, 3318, 3323(a), 3680(f))

(4) VA will pay educational assistance for tuition assistance top-up only

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after the individual has submitted to VA a copy of the form(s) that the military service with jurisdiction requires for tuition assistance and that had been presented to the educational institution, covering the course or courses for which the eligible individual wants tuition assistance top-up. If the form(s) submitted do not contain the amount of tuition assistance charged to the individual, VA may delay payment until VA obtains that information from the educational institution. Examples of these forms include:

- (i) DA Form 2171, Request for Tuition Assistance—Army Continuing Education System;
- (ii) AF Form 1227, Authority for Tuition Assistance—Education Services Program;
- (iii) NAVMC 10883, Application for Tuition Assistance, and either NAVEDTRA 1560/5, Tuition Assistance Authorization, or NAVMC (page 2), Tuition Assistance Authorization;
- (iv) Department of Homeland Security, USCG CG-4147, Application for Off-Duty Assistance; and
- (v) Request for Top-Up: eArmyU Program.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 5101(a))

(The Office of Management and Budget has approved the information collection provisions in this section under control number 2900-0698)

(5) VA will pay educational assistance to an eligible individual as reimbursement for taking an approved licensing or certification test only after the eligible individual has submitted to VA a copy of his or her official test results and, if not included in the results, a copy of another official form (such as a receipt or registration form) that together must include:

- (i) The name of the test;
- (ii) The name and address of the organization or entity issuing the license or certificate;
- (iii) The date the eligible individual took the test; and

- (iv) The cost of the test.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 3034(a), 3323(a), 3689)

(The Office of Management and Budget has approved the information collection provisions in this section under control number 2900-0695)

(6) *Payment for intervals and temporary school closings.* VA may authorize payment of the monthly housing allowance (as increased under §§ 21.9650(a) and 21.9655(a), if applicable) for an interval or for a temporary school closing that occurs within a certified enrollment period. If a school closing that is or may be temporary occurs during an interval, VA will apply any applicable provisions in paragraphs (b)(5)(i) through (b)(5)(v) of this section concerning intervals and in paragraph (5)(vi) of this section concerning temporary school closings. For the purposes of this paragraph, interval means a period without instruction between consecutive school terms, quarters, or semesters or a period without instruction between a summer term and a term, quarter, or semester. (See definitions of divisions of the school year in § 21.4200(b).)

(i) *Payment for intervals.* In determining whether a student will be paid for an interval, VA will first review the provisions of paragraph (b)(5)(ii) of this section. If none of the provisions apply, VA will review the provisions of paragraphs (b)(5)(iii), (iv), and (v) of this section to determine if payments may be made for the interval. In determining the length of a summer term, VA will disregard a fraction of a week consisting of 3 days or less, and will consider 4 days or more to be a full week.

(ii) *Restrictions on payment for intervals.* VA will make no payment for an interval if—

(A) The individual's rate of pursuit is one-half time or less on the last day of the certified enrollment period preceding the interval;

(B) The individual is on active duty;

(C) The individual requests, prior to authorization of an award or prior to negotiating a check or receiving a direct deposit for educational assistance, that no benefits be paid for the interval period;

(D) The individual's entitlement applicable to such payment will be exhausted by receipt of such payment, and it is to the advantage of the individual not to receive payment;

(E) The interval occurs between school years at a school that is not organized on a term, quarter, or semester basis; or

(F) The individual withdraws from all courses in the term, quarter, semester, or summer session preceding the interval, or discontinues training before the scheduled start of an interval in an institution of higher learning not organized on a term, quarter, or semester basis.

(iii) *Payment for intervals between periods of enrollment at different schools.* If the individual transfers from one approved school for the purpose of enrolling in and pursuing a similar program of education at the second school, VA may make payments for an interval that does not exceed 30 days. If the student does not enroll in a similar program of education at the second school, VA may not make payments for the interval.

(iv) *Payment for intervals that occur at the same school.* (A) If the individual remains enrolled at the same school, VA may make payment for an interval which does not exceed 8 weeks and which occurs between:

- (1) Semesters or quarters,
- (2) A semester or quarter and a term that is at least as long as the interval,
- (3) A semester or quarter and a summer term that is at least as long as the interval,
- (4) Consecutive terms (other than semesters or quarters) provided that both terms are at least as long as the interval, or
- (5) A term and summer term provided that both the term and the summer term are at least as long as the interval.

(B) If the individual remains enrolled at the same school, VA may make payment for an interval that does not exceed 30 days and that occurs between summer sessions within a summer term.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 3034(a), 3323(a), 3680)

(v) *Payment for intervals that occur between overlapping enrollments.* (A) If a

student is enrolled in overlapping enrollment periods whether before or after an interval (either at the same or different schools), VA will determine whether the student is entitled to payment for the interval between the overlapping enrollment periods, and which dates the interval and enrollment periods will be considered to begin and end, as follows:

(1) By treating the ending date of each enrollment period as though it were the individual's last date of training before the interval,

(2) By treating the beginning date of each enrollment period as though it were the individual's first date of training after the interval,

(3) By examining the interval payment that would be made to the individual on the basis of the various combinations of beginning and ending dates, and

(4) By choosing the ending date and beginning date that result in the highest payment rate as the start and finish of the interval for VA measurement purposes.

(B) VA will not reduce the interval rate of payment as a result of training the individual may take during the interval, but VA will increase the interval rate of payment if warranted by such training.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 3034(a), 3323(a), 3680(a))

(vi) *Payment for temporary school closings.* VA may authorize payment for temporary school closings that are due to emergencies (including strikes) or established policy based upon an Executive Order of the President. If a school closing that is or may be temporary occurs in whole or in part during an interval, VA will first review the provisions of paragraph (b)(5)(ii) through (v) of this section to determine if payment may be continued during the interval.

(A) If payment would not be inconsistent with the provisions of paragraph (b)(5)(ii) through (v) of this section, a determination to authorize payment for a period of a temporary school closing, or to not authorize payment if it appears that either the school closing will not be temporary or payment would not otherwise be in accord with this section, or both, will be made by:

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(1) The Director of the VA Regional Processing Office of jurisdiction if:

(i) The reason for the school closing does not result in the closing of a school or schools in the jurisdiction of the Director of another VA Regional Processing Office, and

(ii) If the reason for the closing is a strike, and the strike lasts, or is anticipated to last, 30 days or less.

(2) The Director of Education Service if:

(i) The reason for the school closing results in the closing of schools in the jurisdiction of more than one Director of a VA Regional Processing Office, or

(ii) The reason for the closing is a strike, and the strike lasts, or is anticipated to last, more than 30 days.

(B) A school that disagrees with a decision made under paragraph (b)(5)(vi) of this section may request an administrative review. The review request must be submitted in writing and received by the Director of the VA Regional Processing Office of jurisdiction within one year of the date of VA's letter notifying the school of the decision. A review of the decision will include the evidence of record and any other pertinent evidence the school may wish to submit. The affirmation or reversal of the initial decision based on an administrative review is final. The review will be conducted by the—

(1) Director, Education Service, if the Director of the VA Regional Processing Office of jurisdiction made the initial decision to continue or discontinue payments; or

(2) Under Secretary for Benefits, if the Director, Education Service, made the initial decision to continue or discontinue payments.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 512, 3034(a), 3323(a), 3680(a))

(c) *Rural relocation benefit.* VA will make the \$500 rural relocation benefit payment after—

(1) The educational institution has certified the individual's enrollment as provided in § 21.9680;

(2) The individual has provided—

(i) *Request for benefit.* An individual must submit a request for the rural relocation benefit in writing;

(ii) *Proof of residence.* (A) An individual must provide proof of his or her

place of residence by submitting any of the following documents bearing his or her name and current address:

(1) DD Form 214, Certification of Release or Discharge from Active Duty; or

(2) The most recent Federal income tax return; or

(3) The most recent State income tax return; or

(4) Rental/lease agreement; or

(5) Mortgage document; or

(6) Current real property assessment; or

(7) Voter registration card.

(B) An individual using entitlement granted under § 21.9570 who, because he or she resides with the transferor or, in the case of a child, a parent, cannot provide any of the documents in paragraph (c)(2)(ii) of this section, may submit any document in paragraphs (c)(2)(ii)(A)(2) through (7) of this section bearing the name and current address of the transferor or, in the case of a child, a parent as proof of residence; and

(iii) *Proof of relocation.* An individual traveling by air must provide an airline receipt for travel with a departure and destination airport within reasonable distance from the home of residence and the institution of higher learning, respectively; and

(3) VA has determined that the individual resided in a county (or similar entity utilized by the Bureau of the Census) with less than seven persons per square mile based on the most recent decennial census prior to relocation, and either:

(i) If traveling by land, physically relocated at least 500 miles, confirmed by means of a commonly available internet search engine for mapping upon entering the individual's resident address provided in paragraph (c)(2) as the beginning point and the address of the institution of higher learning as the ending point; or

(ii) If traveling by air, was unable to travel to the institution of higher learning by land due to the absence of road or other infrastructure.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 3318)

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(d) *Apportionments prohibited.* VA will not apportion educational assistance.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 3034(a), 3323(a), 3680)

(e) *Accrued benefits.* Educational assistance remaining due and unpaid on the date of the individual's death is payable under the provisions of § 3.1000 of this chapter.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 5121)

### § 21.9685 Tutorial Assistance.

(a) An individual who is eligible to receive benefits under 38 U.S.C. chapter 33 may receive additional monetary assistance for tutorial services. VA will pay the individual this assistance if the tutorial assistance is necessary for the eligible individual to complete his or her program of education successfully, and the individual—

(1) Is enrolled in and pursuing a post-secondary program of education at a rate of pursuit of at least 50 percent at an institution of higher learning; and

(2) The professor or other person teaching, leading, or giving the course certifies that—

(i) Tutorial assistance is essential to correct a deficiency of the individual in such course; and

(ii) The course is required as part of, or is prerequisite or indispensable to the satisfactory pursuit of, an approved program of education.

(b) *Limits on tutorial assistance.* (1) VA will authorize the cost of tutorial assistance in an amount not to exceed \$100 per month.

(2) The total amount of all tutorial assistance provided under this section will not exceed \$1,200.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 3034(a), 3314, 3323(a), 3492)

(The Office of Management and Budget has approved the information collection provisions in this section under control number 2900-0171)

### § 21.9690 Nonduplication of educational assistance.

(a) Except for receipt of a Montgomery GI Bill-Active Duty kicker provided under 38 U.S.C. 3015(d) or a Montgomery GI Bill-Selected Reserve kicker provided under 10 U.S.C. 16131(i), an eligible individual is barred from receiving educational assistance under 38

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U.S.C. chapter 33 concurrently with educational assistance provided under—

(1) 10 U.S.C. 1606 (Montgomery GI Bill—Selected Reserve);

(2) 10 U.S.C. 1607 (Reserve Educational Assistance Program);

(3) 10 U.S.C. 106a (Section 901, Educational Assistance Test Program);

(4) 38 U.S.C. 30 (Montgomery GI Bill—Active Duty);

(5) 38 U.S.C. 31 (Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Program);

(6) 38 U.S.C. 32 (Post-Vietnam Era Veterans' Educational Assistance);

(7) 38 U.S.C. 35 (Survivors' and Dependents' Educational Assistance); or

(8) Hostage Relief Act of 1980.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 3034(a), 3322, 3323(a), 3681; section 901, Pub. L. 96-342)

(b) An individual who is eligible for educational assistance under more than one program listed in paragraph (a) of this section must specify in writing which benefit he or she wishes to receive. The eligible individual may choose to receive payment under another educational assistance program at any time, but may not change which benefit he or she will receive more than once during a term, quarter, or semester.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 3034(a), 3322, 3323(a), 3681)

(c) *Nonduplication—Federal program.* Payment of educational assistance is prohibited to an otherwise eligible reservist—

(1) For a unit course or courses that are being paid for entirely or partly by the Armed Forces during any period in which he or she is on active duty service; or

(2) For a unit course or courses that are being paid for entirely or partly by the United States under the Government Employees' Training Act.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 3034(a), 3323(a), 3681)

### § 21.9695 Overpayments.

(a) *Prevention of overpayments.* In administering educational assistance payable under 38 U.S.C. chapter 33, VA will apply the provisions of §§ 21.4008 and 21.4009 to eligible individuals and,