

TROOPS TO TEACHERS

April 2011

MISSOURI/IOWA

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Troops to Teachers and JROTC Policy Change

On March 2, the policy regarding JROTC and Troops to Teachers bonuses was changed. In previous years, TTT financial benefits were reserved for participants teaching in academic areas only, not JROTC. The policy change specifies that TTT participants who begin teaching JROTC at high-need campuses are now eligible for the TTT incentive bonus.

To qualify, an individual must be registered with TTT and must be hired to teach JROTC at a high-need campus (a school where 50 percent of students are eligible for free or reduced-price lunches or 13.5 percent of students receive special education services under IDEA). The bonus is not retroactive for prior employment.

This change applies exclusively to:

- Current JROTC instructors who were registered with TTT on the implementation date of the new policy.
- New JROTC instructors who have registered with TTT and are in their first year of employment.
- Future JROTC hires who register with TTT.

Participants requesting the bonus will be paid only for employment going forward, not for years already completed. For example, a current JROTC teacher who was registered with TTT on the date of policy implementation and who teaches at a high-need campus would be eligible for the \$10,000 bonus. The bonus would be paid over the next three years of continued JROTC employment on a high-needs campus, or it could be requested as a lump sum. Individuals in this category should have received notification about the policy change from the national TTT office. If you are in this category and have not been contacted, please call the TTT finance office at 800-231-6242.

TTT Represented at NAAC Annual Conference

The National Association for Alternative Certification held its annual conference March 9-12 in Chicago. Troops to Teachers is represented in this organization because alternative certification is the pathway to the classroom for many TTT participants. Because No Child Left Behind requires all teachers in the nation's classrooms to be highly qualified, alternative certification has been challenged to provide evidence that teachers certified through alternative programs meet this standard. State education departments determine what standards meet NCLB requirements. In Missouri, alternative certification candidates must pass the Praxis II tests for their content areas; by doing so, the candidates are considered highly qualified. The U.S. Department of Education has proposed guidelines for improving the effectiveness of all teacher-preparation programs. If approved, the new guidelines would go into effect during federal FY12.

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TO FIND OUT IF YOU ARE ELIGIBLE FOR GI BILL EDUCATION AND TRAINING BENEFITS, CALL 888-442-4551.

TROOPS TO TEACHERS FAQ

1. How does disability affect my TTT enrollment?

You can enroll in the TTT program if you are separated with a service-determined physical disability and you register within four years from the date of separation.

2. What is the maximum stipend or bonus I can receive?

If you teach in a targeted school, you could receive a stipend up to \$5,000 to help obtain certification. Then, you might be eligible to receive up to \$5,000 divided over three years as a bonus for teaching in a targeted school. If you choose not to use any stipend money toward obtaining certification, you might be eligible for up to \$10,000 divided over three years (provided that you teach for three years). A total of \$10,000 is the most financial assistance you can receive from Troops to Teachers.

3. Should I register if I have less than six years of service?

Yes, go ahead and register even if you have less than six years of service. You will not qualify for financial assistance, but you will be eligible for counseling and referral services. Also, laws could be revised to change the eligibility criteria for financial assistance.

VA Medical Centers in Missouri

COLUMBIA

800 Hospital Drive
573-814-6000

KANSAS CITY

4801 Linwood Blvd.
816-861-4700 or
800-525-1483

POPLAR BLUFF

1500 N. Westwood Blvd.
573-686-4151

ST. LOUIS

Jefferson Barracks
Jefferson Barracks Drive
314-652-4100 or
800-228-5459

ST. LOUIS

John Cochran Division
915 N. Grand Blvd.
314-652-4100 or
800-228-5459



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Veterans Education and Training Section

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The national **Troops to Teachers** website is located at proudtoserveagain.com.

Teacher Certification Contact Information

Iowa

Geri McMahan

Phone: 515-281-8323

E-mail: geri.mcmahan@iowa.gov

Missouri

Debbie Butcher

Phone: 877-530-2765

E-mail: debbie.butcher@dese.mo.gov

In order to qualify for the Troops to Teachers program, a veteran must have at least six years of military service. Most have much more than that.

Often, a TTT veteran is a retiree with at least 20 years of service. This gives the school administrator a dependable teacher for today's challenging school environment.

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities. Inquiries related to Department programs and to the location of services, activities, and facilities that are accessible by persons with disabilities may be directed to the Jefferson State Office Building, Civil Rights Compliance (Title VI/Title IX/504/ADA/Age Act), 205 Jefferson Street, Jefferson City, MO 65102-0480; telephone number 573-526-4757 or Relay Missouri 800-735-2966.

VETERANS EDUCATION & TRAINING SECTION

April 2011

MISSOURI STATE
APPROVING AGENCY

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Special Points of Interest

- Operation Recognition provides honorary high school diplomas to qualifying vets.
- Contact the DOR military liaison with questions on veterans issues.

The **Missouri State Approving Agency Directory** features all schools and colleges approved for the GI Bill. Request a copy by calling **877-530-2765**.

Operation Recognition: Honoring Missouri's Veterans

The Missouri legislature created Operation Recognition in order to provide honorary high school diplomas to veterans who left high school before graduation to serve in the military and to civilian prisoners of war (POWs).

Eligibility

Those eligible for an honorary diploma include:

- All civilian POWs who are residents or former residents of the state of Missouri.
- All honorably discharged veterans who are residents or former residents of the state of Missouri, who served in the U.S. military, and who did not return to school to complete their education after their terms of service.



Application

Candidates must submit an application form to the Missouri Veterans Commission. The form is available online at mvc.dps.mo.gov/docs/services/honoraryhdsdiploma.pdf and at local schools and veterans organizations. Applicants must submit copies of their military discharge papers (or DD Form 214) along with the application. Family members may apply for an honorary diploma on behalf of a deceased veteran.

Missouri Department of Revenue's Military Liaison

The Department of Revenue has designated a liaison to help military personnel with questions about the state income tax, driver licenses, motor vehicle registration and more. Call 573-751-3622 and ask for the department's military liaison or send an e-mail to military@dor.mo.gov. Information about taxes is also available by contacting:

- Taxation Division
P.O. Box 2200
Jefferson City, MO 65105-2200
Phone: 573-751-3505

To download the department's military reference guide, go to dor.mo.gov/pdf/milrefguide.pdf or click on the cover image shown on the right.

Missouri Veterans Support Convention Held in Richland

By Tony Laszacs,
Chairman, Missouri C3

A veterans support convention was held March 26 at VFW Post 3168 in Richland; the event was organized by the Cornerstone Conservative Coalition (C3) of Missouri. Veterans, leaders and members of the public from around the state were invited to come together to

be educated about current events and issues involving veterans. Representatives from federal and state veterans organizations presented on what services they provide and how their services can best be utilized. Attendees learned how to receive disability assistance, employment assistance, educational opportunities, and needed fellowship and counsel to adjust from combat experiences.

By attending the convention, veterans received information directly from organizations tasked with the responsibility of protecting and providing for them and their families. Many had the opportunity to interact with and address concerns to the organizations' directors. State Reps. David Day and Paul Curtman also addressed the group and answered questions relating to current affairs and legislation that directly affects veterans and their families.

Briefing topics included: state and federal legislation, veterans service officers, employment opportunities and assistance, disability services, support available from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, combat-related issues, statewide community programs, veterans cemeteries, veterans homes, and many more.



State Rep. Paul Curtman speaks at a recent veterans support convention held in Richland. Attendees gained valuable information about services available to veterans and their families.

Licensure and Certification Test Benefits

Department of Veterans Affairs benefits are paid for approved licensing and certification tests. Veterans and eligible individuals can call 888-442-4551 to determine their entitlement.

Returning Warrior Workshop Held in St. Louis

The U.S. Marine Corps Reserve held a "Returning Warrior Weekend" Yellow Ribbon event March 19-20 at the Sheraton hotel in downtown St. Louis.

VETS staff members Steve Nelle and John Hose attended the event and distributed information on GI Bill benefits and the Troops to Teachers program. About 100 Marines, Navy personnel and family members attended.

Yellow Ribbon post-deployment events provide information and seminar sessions designed to aid service members in returning to civilian life and reconnecting with their families and communities.

TO FIND OUT IF YOU ARE ELIGIBLE FOR VETERANS EDUCATION AND TRAINING BENEFITS, OR TO SEE HOW MUCH YOUR ENTITLEMENT IS, CALL 888-442-4551.