

TROOPS TO TEACHERS

June 2011

MISSOURI/IOWA

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Frequently Asked Questions About Troops to Teachers

This information was provided by Mountain Pacific Troops to Teachers. Visit www.mpttt.org for more information.

Q1: How do I know if I am eligible for the stipend or the bonus?

Answer: Stipend and bonus eligibility varies. To determine your eligibility, please visit the Self-Determination Eligibility Guide at proudtoserveagain.com. After registering for Troops to Teachers, you will also receive a letter from the national office outlining what services and funds you are eligible to receive through the program.

Q2: I have heard that a person has to be certified to teach. What does that mean?

Answer: Each state requires that public school teachers meet certain educational standards. The teacher certification agency in each state's department of education is the best source for specific information. Direct links to the states' certification offices may be found at www.dantes.doded.mil/dantes_web/certification/index.htm.

Q3: Is Troops to Teachers a training program?

Answer: No. In most states, Troops to Teachers does not train or certify teachers but rather helps you to find and enter the programs that do. State TTT representatives will assist you in identifying the best training program to meet your needs.

Q4: Why should I register for the Troops to Teachers program?

Answer: There are five major areas in which Troops to Teachers assists future teachers:

1. Financial aid in the form of \$5,000 stipends or \$10,000 bonus money to qualified participants.
2. A nationwide referral system – our participant database is available to school districts to recruit new teachers.
3. Regional or state assistance offices to provide local representation for participants.
4. The ability for school districts to post their vacancies directly on the nationwide website.
5. A way for TTT participants to post a mini résumé along with their database record to personalize their national record.

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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 (Continued)

Q5: What is the Troops to Teachers Program?

Answer: Reflecting the focus of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, TTT's primary objective is to help qualify teachers for K-12 schools that serve low-income families throughout America. TTT helps relieve teacher shortages in subjects such as math, science and special education and assists military personnel in making successful transitions to second careers in teaching. TTT was established in 1994 as a Department of Defense program. In 2001, Troops to Teachers was reauthorized under the No Child Left Behind Act, placing Troops to Teachers under the U.S. Department of Education. TTT is managed by the Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support (DANTES), Pensacola, Fla.

Assistance Provided by Troops to Teachers

- **INDIVIDUAL COUNSELING:** Staff will develop a customized plan for individuals to help them reach their teaching goals. This includes providing information on how to become a teacher in a designated state.
- **FINANCIAL SUPPORT:** For those participants who qualify, up to \$10,000 is available in financial assistance. Two different financial-assistance programs exist: the stipend program and the bonus program. The two programs may be combined, but no more than a total of \$10,000 will be paid to an individual participant.
- **PLACEMENT ASSISTANCE:** Participants will receive help with:
 - * Job listings: Assistance is provided in how to best utilize job search tools and techniques.
 - * Network building: Staff members visit school districts to build a network of administrators.
 - * Interview preparation: Staff members assist participants through counseling, video and written study guides.



Missouri/Iowa

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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.

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

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

Teacher Certification Contact Information

Iowa

Geri McMahon

Phone: 515-281-8323

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Missouri

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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.

VETERANS EDUCATION & TRAINING SECTION

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Special Points of Interest

- NAVPA has a list of helpful hints for veterans considering college.
- There are income tax exemption for certain military retirement benefits.

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

Tips for Veterans Who Are Considering College

The following tips are courtesy of the National Association of Veterans' Programs Administrators (NAVPA). These are the organization's 10 best suggestions for returning veterans thinking about going to college (as reported to U.S. News & World Report).

1. **Start by applying:** Whether you are a first time college student or a transfer student, you must fill out an application. Go to the school's website to find the requirements and deadlines. Provide transcripts and test scores as needed and your DD-214 for credits you might have earned while in the service. Take a tour of the campus – either on the web or in person. If you don't know where you want to go, try the school finder at www.military.com or the *Education* tab on gijobs.com to get started.
2. **Meet the school certifying official:** Find the veterans office on campus and introduce yourself. You will be asked to provide various documents and complete different forms so your enrollment can be certified to the VA.
3. **Get your GI Bill benefits:** There are many different programs and a wide variety of education benefits offered by the VA: the Post-9/11 GI Bill (including transfer of benefits), the Montgomery GI Bill, the Yellow Ribbon Program, and Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment to name a few. Additionally, individual states offer varying opportunities to those in the National Guard (some of the benefits come with different levels of eligibility). Whether you are a reservist, in the National Guard or on active duty, you should check the VA website or discuss your benefits with the school's certifying official. You can find a wealth of information – as well as the application for benefits – at the GI Bill website (www.gibill.va.gov).
4. **Apply for financial aid:** All students can apply for financial aid by filling out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) by going to www.fafsa.gov. This aid can be for grants, loans and/or work-study programs.
5. **Apply for scholarships:** There are many types of scholarships available based on merit, academics or athletics, as well as private and general scholarships by area of interest. Some schools offer scholarships specifically for veterans. You just have to look. Check the school's website and always remember: Do not pay for any scholarship application.
6. **Find a place to live:** The key to being placed in housing is making sure you indicate you are a veteran on all forms. By doing so, you may be able to select a roommate from the beginning. Otherwise you might be assigned to a room with traditional students (just out of high school), which can be awkward with your recent military

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Tips for Veterans Considering College *(Continued)*

experience. Many colleges have housing set aside for veterans; make use of it.

7. **Get an adviser.** Every student is assigned to an adviser. Some schools have advisers specifically for veterans; smaller schools may not, but curriculum is standard for majors at each school. Interaction with the advisor will assist you in developing a suitable educational plan, making your course selections and determining your major. This person will get to know you and empower you in decision-making skills in education, career and life choices.
8. **Take the CLEP:** The College Level Examination Program is a series of exams you can take to test your college-level knowledge on what you have learned through on-the-job training, professional development, etc. There is a wide range of exams, both general and subjective, worth up to six credits each. The cost of a CLEP exam is fractional compared to the cost of tuition and fees. It could assist in skipping introductory courses and general-education classes, or it could even demonstrate your ability in a foreign language.
9. **Connect with other veterans on campus:** Veterans centers are popping up on many campuses. They are the place to meet other veterans, to do peer-to-peer networking, to connect student veterans with resources, and to help you to get involved – or simply hang out. If there is no center on campus, start one. Student Veterans of America can assist you in forming a chapter at your school.
10. **Get career training and develop skills:** Career services and job placement are available for you while getting your education. Résumé writing and mock interviews are offered. You can be placed in an internship or co-op program related to your career goal and can earn college credits (as well as a stipend or small paycheck).

Services Offered by the Department of Veterans Affairs

Veterans of the United States armed forces may be eligible for a broad range of programs and services provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). Eligibility for most VA benefits is based upon discharge from active military service under other than dishonorable conditions, and certain benefits require service during wartime. If you are new to the VA, the Federal Benefits for Veterans, Dependents and Survivors booklet (available at www1.va.gov/opa/publications/benefits_book.asp) will get you started.

Health care

VA's health care offers a variety of services, information and benefits. As the nation's largest integrated health-care system, VA operates more than 1,400 sites of care including hospitals, community clinics, community living centers, readjustment counseling centers and various other facilities.

Benefits and services

VA administers a variety of benefits and services that provide financial and other forms of assistance to veterans, their dependents and survivors. Major benefits include veterans compensation, veterans pension, survivors benefits, rehabilitation and employment assistance, education assistance, home-loan guaranties, and life-insurance coverage.

Burial and memorials

Burial and memorial benefits are available for eligible service members, veterans, reservists, National Guard members and eligible family members. Services include interment, headstones and markers, and presidential memorial certificates. The VA operates 128 national cemeteries in the United States and Puerto Rico, together with oversight and management of 33 soldiers' lots, confederate cemeteries and monument sites.

For more information, visit the VA's website at va.gov.

Income Tax Exemption for Certain Military Retirement Benefits

As of Jan. 1, 2010, 15 percent of military pension income is exempt from state taxes. This tax deduction will increase by 15 percent annually until Jan. 1, 2016, when all military pension income will be tax-free.

**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.**