



VA Certifying Official Procedures for On-the-Job Training and Apprenticeship Programs

Business, Industry, and Government Employers.

MISSOURI STATE APPROVING AGENCY

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Handy Reference Guide

My State Approving Agency (SAA) Representative is:

Michael Flynn, 573-522-2061, michael.flynn@dese.mo.gov

My Facility Name as approved is:

My Facility Code is:

The VA St. Louis Regional Processing Office (RPO)

P O Box 32432

St. Louis, MO 63132-0832

Fax: 314-253-4140

Use this contact information to submit forms.

Veterans Benefits: 888-442-4515

Veterans should call this number to determine if they are eligible for educational benefits. Veterans, as well as the son, daughter or spouse of a disabled or deceased veteran, may be eligible for benefits in this training program, provided the disability or death is related to the period of active duty. Once it has been determined that they are eligible, they can find the applications online at <https://www.vets.gov/education/apply/>. This site enables veterans to apply for benefits using the Internet.

This handbook applies only to GI Bill Educational Benefits for Registered On-the-Job and Apprenticeship programs.

For assistance and information regarding approval of academic institutions, and other schools please contact 573-751-2571.

Table of Contents

Handy Reference Guide.....	2
Enroll Eligible Veteran in Your Training Program.....	4
Certify Monthly Training Hours	5
Report Changes in Training Program.....	6
Maintain a Quality Training Program	8
Maintain Proper Training Records.....	9
Participate in Compliance Surveys	9
Glossary and Abbreviations	11
Appendix	13

Once you have been approved as a GI Bill® Training Facility, you will receive a letter of approval from the director of Veterans Education and Training and one from the Veterans Administration. The letter from the Veterans Administration will include your Facility Code which will be used on virtually all forms. At that point, you can begin enrolling eligible veterans in your approved training program(s).

Upon receipt of the letter we encourage you to include “Approved for the “GI Bill ® GI Bill® is a registered trademark of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).” with any announcements regarding openings for positions that have been approved. You must use the entire statement whenever it is used. This informs veterans about their eligibility for benefits as an On the Job Training facility. “Approved for the GI Bill ®” is a registered trademark of the Veterans Administration and can only be used with positions approved for training.

This guide will help you maintain your approval as GI Bill Training Facility and carry out these tasks:

I. Enroll Eligible Veteran in Your Training Program

A. ELIGIBILITY – If the veteran isn’t sure if they are eligible for benefits or if they have used all their benefits, they should call 888-442-4551 for verification of their eligibility.

If the veteran **has not applied for benefits**, the veteran can apply online using VA’s website <https://www.vets.gov/education/apply>. Use of website online application by the veteran is strongly encouraged. If the veteran is not able to use the website they can call 888-442-4551. They can also contact the Veterans Representative at the local Workforce Development office for assistance in completing the application and other veteran issues. A list of offices can be found at <https://jobs.mo.gov/career-centers>

The Certifying Official should NOT counsel on GI Bill eligibility or selection of benefits. If the veteran desires assistance, the VA provides eligibility assistance and a benefits comparison tool at www.gibill.va.gov and phone assistance at 888-442-4551.

NOTE: Sometimes VA eligible trainees pursue benefits well after the completion of training. In cases where VA benefits are pursued retroactively, VA will honor claims up to one year from the date they receive an application or other verifiable claim, such as a training agreement bearing the veteran’s signature. Retroactive payment of benefits will include only those months of training during the past 12 months. Time prior to that must be accounted for as prior credit.

B. ENROLLMENT - The following forms must be completed for certification:

1. For On-the-Job training complete the **VE-1A**, for Apprenticeship training complete the **VE-11** (Veteran Training Agreement)

This form is completed and signed by the certifying official and the veteran. Name of Training Establishment is the facility name listed on the Application for Approval. The claim number is generally the social security number of the veteran. Trade or Craft is the name of the training program. Length of Training Period is number of months of the program (e.g. 18 months, 24 months etc.) established during the approval process. The Effective Date is the date the claimant began the training program.

2. VA Form 22-1999 side B (VA Enrollment Certification) Contact the State Approving Agency (SAA) for additional copies.

If the veteran has a copy of the Certificate of Eligibility or a VA 1990 (Application for VA Education Benefits) we encourage you to submit it with the other two forms.

Make a copy, make sure the veteran receives a copy of either the VE-1 or VE-11 and the 22-1999 side b. Send all forms to Veterans Administration Regional Office Box 32432, St. Louis, MO 63132-0832.

You may submit the required forms for several veterans at one time.

The Certifying Official needs to ensure that any forms sent to the SAA office or the VA **contain the veteran's claim number/SSN**, which is the control number used by the VA to pay benefits

Keep a copy of all training forms and correspondence in the employee file.

When the VA approves the enrollment, the veteran will receive written confirmation from VA.

II. Certify Monthly Training Hours – Complete the 22-6553d-1

To receive a full monthly payment, the veteran must work and be paid for **at least 120 hours in the month**. The veteran's monthly benefit will be reduced proportionately if the veteran works less than 120 hours a month.

- Include all hours worked during the month as one total. Overtime hours do not need to be designated or separated in anyway.
- Vacation, sick leave, compensatory time and other paid leave hours taken during a month do not count as work hours and must not be included.
- Classroom instruction hours (if any) for which the participant is paid are counted as work hours.
- Unpaid related instruction hours are not counted as work hours.

Hours should be submitted soon after the end of each month to assure the veteran receives their benefits in a timely fashion

If the trainee does not have any training hours in a month, do not submit any documents for that month.

Hours must be documented and maintained in a file for the specific veteran. These files can be reviewed in a compliance survey.

Submit to the VA via

US Mail:
Central Region Veterans Administration
P O Box 32432
St. Louis, MO 63132-0832

OR

Fax: 314-253-4140 –
More successful to fax prior to 7:00 or after 5:00.

OR

VA website. <http://benefits.va.gov/gibill/> "Submit a Question" tab
An account will need to be established, ask your SAA Representative.

OR

VA Once website -fully automated.

Discuss these options with your SAA representative so you have a clear plan on how to submit the monthly hours.

III. Report Changes in Training Program

If there are changes to the training program, notify the SAA and/or the VA Regional office as is noted below.

A. Change in Certifying Official

- **Any changes in Certifying Official(s) must be entered on VA Form 22-8794 (See Appendix) and submitted to Veterans Administration Regional Office Box 32432, St. Louis, MO 63132-0832.** Be sure and list ALL the individuals who are certifying officials on the form.

- Only an authorized Certifying Official may sign, and thus certify, GI Bill paperwork to verify a veteran's enrollment, monthly work/training hours, change in status, and any other circumstances that affect the amount or duration of GI Bill educational benefits.
- The Certifying Official must have access to the training file, including payroll records.
- The Designating Official must also be listed as a Certifying Official to sign GI Bill paperwork.

B. Change in Wage Schedule. Company name, address, phone number etc.

Submit the VE-2 (Amendment to Approval) to the SAA at MO. Dept. of Elementary & Secondary Education, Veterans Education, PO Box 480, Jefferson City, MO 65102.

C. New training position

Notify your SAA if you wish to add new training programs. The SAA will work closely with you and/or your training coordinator through the approval process.

D. Termination or early completion

Any time the trainee is terminated from the training program or completes the program earlier than anticipated, it must be reported to the VA within 30 days by completing the VE-1999b.

E. Call To Active Duty

When the training of a GI Bill enrollee is interrupted due to call to active duty, the Certifying Official ensures educational benefits are properly stopped. Notify the VA immediately by changing the status in VA Once or by completing the VE-1999b. The contract will remain active, but temporarily unassigned, during active duty. Send to **Veterans Administration Regional Office Box 32432, St. Louis, MO 63132-0832.**

F. Return From Active Duty

When active duty tour is completed and veteran returns to the same employment in an unfinished training program with you, GI Bill enrollment can resume. Notify your SAA immediately by completing a VE-1A showing their new start date.

Upon notice from your SAA that the contract or agreement is again in active status, the Certifying Official changes the status in VA Once or completes VA enrollment form **22-1999**, retains a copy, then faxes or mails to the SAA.

G. Veteran Benefits are Exhausted, Ended or Changed

The Veteran, not the Certifying Official or the SAA, is responsible for the proper selection and application for benefits. There may be times during an active training enrollment when those benefits change due to eligibility issues or the veteran's choice. Those changes may require a new enrollment or other paperwork to be submitted. In nearly all cases, **the VA instructs the veteran** which forms to submit or process. Your role, as Certifying Official, is to respond to guidance from the VA (directly or through the veteran's documents) or the SAA. You are not expected to be an expert in VA benefits, forms or procedures

H. Veteran Has Questions on Benefits or Process

Refer the veteran to the VA experts. Do not answer questions that are the purview of VA.

Benefits: 1-888-442-4551 or GI Bill comparison tool:

http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/comparison_tool.asp

Process or Forms: Ask to see any instructional written notices the veteran has received. Make a copy of that notice and place in the veterans file. If that doesn't describe the needed process or form, contact your SAA for guidance.

Veteran hasn't received a response after online application: Suggest vet logon to confirm submission. It is common for Vet to complete the online application and fail to click the "submit" button. An application that is initiated, but not submitted, will sit in unfinished status for six months.

IV. Maintain a Quality Training Program

A GI Bill Training Facility must provide the training outlined in the training agreement. This includes;

- having adequate space, equipment, instructional material, and qualified personnel to provide satisfactory training.
- adhere to the established Training Outline and Training Agreements. Remember that a veteran has chosen to use GI Bill education benefits within your training program in lieu of college or other options.
- any change to the training plan must be approved prior to implementing those changes.
- training programs for new or different jobs must be approved by the SAA prior to a veteran beginning those jobs.

V. Maintain Proper Training Records

The GI Bill Training Facility's Certifying Official must maintain records that allow VA and SAA to confirm that training provided meets GI Bill requirements and that benefits were properly paid. ALL RECORDS MUST BE MAINTAINED FOR THREE YEARS FROM THE LAST DATE OF VETERANS PARTICIPATION IN TRAINING.

Retain the following in a training file;

- Documentation of hours worked. Vacation and sick leave hours must be clearly documented. Remember, vacation and sick leave hours don't count toward the 120 hours required for the veteran to receive their full monthly stipend.
- A copy of the official wage records,
- Progress records must be maintained. Form VE-7 (See appendix) or an approved company progress document must be completed on a monthly basis. This form is to be retained in the trainee's file and does not need to be submitted to the VA. Be sure to record hours worked and have training officials initial the form.
- Work and training evaluations, including grades from related instruction.
- A copy of all GI Bill-related forms and letters, including the VA Certificate of Eligibility.
- All veteran records **must be retained for at least three years** following the veteran's completion or cancellation of the training program.

VI. Participate in Compliance Visits

SAA, as the State Approving Agency (SAA), and/or the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) will periodically visit the sponsor to monitor the records of the apprentices/trainees. This visit generally occurs annually and is designed to provide technical assistance and ensure that GI Bill benefits paid were paid properly.

Required records are subject to onsite inspection by authorized representatives of the Dept. of Veteran Affairs (VA) and the SAA. A standardized form is used to guide the compliance visit and is provided to the Training Facility.

What kinds of records will be reviewed?

Official payroll records or check stubs to reflect the actual wage paid must be available for review.

- Timecards/Payroll Records/Time & Leave Records, so that the person conducting the compliance survey can verify:
 - That the begin date certified was the actual first date of training.
 - That the hours certified to VA each month match the payroll or time/leave records of the employee's hours worked. Hours certified must not include vacation, medical leave, layoffs or other paid leave. Hours certified can include paid related instruction hours.
 - That wages paid during the training meet the contract/agreement requirements.
- The employee file contains a current training agreement for the veteran.
- Training Progress Records so that the person conducting the survey can verify:
 - Actual progress toward the training objective.
 - That a progress record is maintained and is current.
 - That the individual is being properly training as specified in the contract,
- Records to support any credit for prior training or experience awarded, and documentation is available to confirm the VA was properly notified of the credit.
- Copies of VA forms and correspondence.

GLOSSARY AND ABBREVIATIONS

Accrediting Agency

A nationally recognized agency or association which the U.S. Secretary of Education determines to be a reliable authority as to the quality of training offered by an educational institution. The Secretary publishes a list of these agencies and associations which the state approving agencies utilize for establishing that a program of instruction may be approved under the provisions of 38 USC 3675 as an accredited program.

Active Duty

Active duty is full-time duty in the Armed Forces. This also includes full-time duty performed by commissioned officers of the Public Health Service and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (not including active duty for training).

Already Qualified

A student is considered "already qualified" if he or she has previously completed a program at the same level and in the same field of study for which application is now being made. A person will be considered already qualified if he or she was previously employed in a job for which the course now being requested is designed to qualify the individual who completes it. For example, if the applicant is employed as a welder, he or she is already qualified and not eligible for enrollment in a general welding course. VA benefits are not payable for pursuit of any program for which the student is already qualified. This includes courses required for relicensing or a continuation of licensing in a professional field.

Award Letter

The official written notice from the Department of Veterans Affairs to a student of his or her monthly rate of payment, the inclusive dates of payment, and remaining entitlement at the end of the award period. **An award letter is sent to a VA student whenever VA awards or changes the student's education benefit.** The award letter is a good source of information for financial aid purposes.

Certificate of Eligibility (COE)

Letter issued to an applicant showing approval to pursue a stated program of education at a particular institution, the remaining entitlement of the student, and the ending date of the student's eligibility.

Certifying Official

The person(s) designated to sign enrollment certifications and other documents relating to VA benefits. The designation is made on VA Form 22-8794, Designation of Certifying Official(s).

Change of Program

A change of program is a change in a student's program and curriculum. This includes any change that results in pursuing a different position.

DD Form 214

The Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty that is prepared at the time an individual completes a period of active duty in one of the Armed Forces. Former members of the Public Health Service (PHS) and of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) do not receive a DD Form 214, but they do receive comparable documents that provide necessary information concerning their active duty service. Veterans should be advised to submit Member-4 copy of their DD Form 214 with a claim for VA benefits. A certified copy may also be submitted. A DD 214 can be requested from the National Archives website (<http://www.archives.gov/Veterans/military-service-records/>).

ELR (Education Liaison Representative)

The individual at a VA Regional Office or Regional Processing Office responsible for education liaison and program approval functions. Among other things, the ELR is responsible for promptly informing schools of changes in policies and procedures.

Entitlement

The number of months the student will be eligible for VA education benefits. This is usually expressed in the numbers of months and days the student will be eligible for full-time benefits, or the equivalent in part-time training, but also may be expressed in a dollar amount. Entitlement will vary depending on the education law the individual qualifies under. In no event will entitlement exceed 48 months under any combination of laws

Facility Code

The numerical code assigned by VA to an institution specifically identifying it or one of its subdivisions.

File Number

A seven, eight or nine-digit number assigned by VA to identify a claimant's records. The Social Security Number (SSN) is the VA file number for most Veterans.

Prior Credit: If the veteran has worked in the occupation prior to beginning their training, credit must be given for previous training and experience, and the length of the program reduced proportionately. The amount of time should be placed in the Credit given for experience prior to effective date of this Agreement area of the VE-1A Report the total prior credit in terms of months. Subtract prior credit given from length of training program and record the remaining time in Training Period Remaining After Effective Date area. That amount of time is also placed in Box 7 of the 22-1999 side b.

State Approving Agency (SAA)

An agency appointed by the Chief Executive of a state to approve institutional programs of education and training for payment of benefits under the various laws administered by VA.

APPENDIX

VE-1A – Training Agreement for On-the-Job training programs

VE-11 – Training Agreement for Apprenticeship programs

VE-2 – Amendment to Approval

VE-7 – Progress Record

VA 22-1995 – Request for Change of Program or Place of Training (Used when veteran makes a change in program, banking information, etc.)

VA 22-1999b- Notice of Change in Student Status (Used when a student ends program prior to completion date.)

VA 22- 1999 Side B – VA Enrollment Certification

VA 22-6553d-1-Monthly Certification of Training hours

22-8794- Designation of Certifying Officials

Submit a Question Instruction Page

VA Once Memorandum of Understanding Instruction Pages