



2022 - 2023 Student Veterans Handbook

City College, Mesa College,
Miramar College and
College of Continuing Education





SAN DIEGO COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

CITY COLLEGE • MESA COLLEGE • MIRAMAR COLLEGE • CONTINUING EDUCATION

Dear Student,

Welcome to San Diego City College, Mesa College, Miramar College and the San Diego College of Continuing Education.

On behalf of our colleges and Continuing Education we would like to extend a heartfelt thank you for your dedicated service to our country. We are delighted that you have selected us to pursue your academic goals; we are committed to helping you to accomplish a “new mission” in your life. This handbook is designed specifically for you, our veteran student and/or dependent, to assist you in navigating our community college system; our programs, our services as well as the educational benefits requirements.

Please note, that there are many services available on campus to ensure your academic success whether your goal is to complete an Associate Degree, Certificate, or Transfer to a four-year institution.

The Veterans Affairs Offices at our colleges and Continuing Education are committed to helping you achieve your educational goals. If you have additional questions or concerns that are not addressed by this handbook, please visit the college Veterans Affairs Offices.

Sincerely,

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Carolina Vargas
Dora Meza

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City College
A-241
619-388-3504
sdcity.edu/students/military

Mesa College
I4-102
619-388-2805
sdmesa.edu

Miramar College
K1-207
619-388-7862
sdmiramar.edu/services/veterans

San Diego College of
Continuing Education
ECC 128
619-388-4956
sdcce.edu

We look forward to meeting you!

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GETTING STARTED

Steps for College

1. Applications for admission to San Diego City, Mesa and Miramar Colleges are available online. Students access the online application at: <https://www.sdccd.edu/apply/>.
2. Verify your Residency Status by contacting the college Admissions & Records Office (VA Office at San Diego City College). The Admissions & records Office will determine whether you will be assessed non-resident tuition.
3. In order to receive Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) educational benefits, you must have a Student Education Plan on file through City, Mesa, or Miramar College that leads to an Associate Degree or transfer program approved by the State of California approving agency/DVA.
4. The Education Plan you select will determine your primary college for DVA Education Benefits.
5. Submit official transcripts from all:
 - Previously attended colleges and universities
 - Active Duty training: Joint Services Transcript (formerly SMARTS, AARTS), College of the Air Force, or Coast Guard
 - CLEP, DANTES, IB, AP
6. Submit transcripts to:

San Diego Community College District
3375 Camino del Rio South, Suite 100
San Diego, CA 92108-3883

Transcripts may also be hand-delivered to the college Admissions & Records Office; it must be in a **sealed envelope issued by the institution within the last 12 months**. For schools now partnered with Parchment and National Student Clearing house and accepting official transcripts from those provides.

Priority Registration for Active Duty Military & Veterans

If you are currently in the military or were discharged within the last fifteen years, you may be eligible for up to 4 years of priority registration. Check with the Admissions & Records Office for eligibility requirements and deadlines to submit required documentation.

Veterans with disabilities are encouraged to pursue services through the college Disability Support Programs and Services (DSPS).

It is recommended that all students apply for financial aid at www.fafsa.ed.gov .



STEPS TO OBTAINING VETERANS EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS

1. Complete the Application for DVA Education Benefits (VONAPP) at www.gibill.va.gov. DVA will mail your Certificate of Eligibility (COE) to you in 30 – 45 days. Submit a copy of the COE to the college Veterans Affairs office upon receipt.
2. Submit a copy of your DD-214 (member 2 or 4) to the college Veterans Affairs Office.
3. Submit a copy of your DD-214 (member 2 or 4) to the college Admissions & Records Office for possible eligibility for priority registration.
4. Once official transcripts have been received by the District office, contact the Counseling Office to complete a *Request for Transcript Evaluation* form.
5. After the transcripts have been evaluated, you will be notified by Evaluations via email to contact the college Counseling Office to schedule an appointment for a Student Education Plan.
6. Read and sign the Veteran's Statement of Understanding available in the college Veterans Affairs Office.
7. Students using DVA Education Benefits for the first-time must complete a **mandatory** online Veterans Orientation within the first 90-days (16-week) or 45-days (short-term) of the semester.
8. After you have registered for your classes, go to the college Veterans Affairs Office to complete a semester worksheet (**must be completed each semester**).

City College

- To get started: <https://www.sdcity.edu/students/military/index.aspx>

Mesa College

- For orientation information, contact Veteran Services at 619-388-2805, also see our webpage at sdmesa.edu/student-services/veterans-services/index.shtml

Miramar College

- For orientation information, contact the Veterans Affairs Office either by calling (619) 388-7862 or stop by K1-207

9. It is recommended that all students apply for financial aid at www.fafsa.ed.gov
10. If you have not attended college previously, determine which English, math or ELAC courses you should start with. Please see a counselor for details.
11. All veterans must have an official Student Education Plan on file (including all official transcripts from prior colleges) by the end of the first semester or there will be an interruption in VA educational benefits. No exceptions will be made.

Transcripts

1. Transcripts from all previously attended colleges and any CLEP, DANTES, IB, AP test scores must be on file with the college no later than the first semester.
2. Military Transcripts - The Joint Services Transcript (JST) is now under one umbrella. Students no longer have to go to individual websites to order Joint Service Transcripts (JST) EXCEPT Air Force transcripts. Individuals in the Air Force must order an official copy of transcripts from the Community College of the Air Force (CCAF). See below.

Joint Service Transcripts: Army, Coast Guard, Marine Corps and Navy: Active Duty, Reserve and Veterans. <https://jst.doded.mil/smart/signIn.do>

Air Force: Order official copies of transcripts from Community College of the Air Force (CCAF).

Please visit: <http://www.au.af.mil/au/barnes/ccaf/transcripts.asp> for more information.

3. DD-214 showing at least 6 months active duty and an honorable discharge.

Submit transcripts to:

San Diego Community College District

3375 Camino del Rio South, Suite 100

San Diego, CA 92108-3883

All previously attended college transcripts must be on file and have been evaluated prior to making your appointment with the Counseling Office for your Student Education Plan.

Failure to submit official transcripts will result in a delay in certifying your future enrollment for DVA Education Benefits.

STUDENT CHECKLIST

➤ Counseling Assistance

- ☐ See a counselor to develop an educational plan
- ☐ Review English and mathematic assessment results
- ☐ Explore personal, career and education options
- ☐ Establish a comprehensive Student Educational Plan

➤ College Veterans Office

- ☐ Complete semester worksheet
- ☐ Sign Veterans Statement of Understanding

➤ Financial Aid

- ☐ Apply for financial aid by completing the FAFSA at www.fafsa.ed.gov
- ☐ Submit other required documentation to the Financial Aid Office
- ☐ Apply for scholarships

➤ Other

- ☐ Disabled Student Programs and Services (DSPS)
- ☐ Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS)
- ☐ Utilize student support services such as tutoring, library and computer labs. See college catalog for a full list of resources.

➤ Assessment

Assessment is a process that is designed to assist students in determining which English or English language Acquisition (ELAC and Mathematics they should start with, specifically identifying milestones (formerly known as skill levels) in these areas. Assessment also helps students in meeting course prerequisites. Students may also meet course prerequisites based

on other factors such as English and Mathematics course completion or other standardized tests.

Assessment via College Application

Students who have graduated from a U.S. high school with the last 10 years will receive the placement levels based on high school performance information that is provided on the application for admissions. The new college application (CCCApply) will identify English and math courses that students can enroll in using prior high school history. Students will report cumulative, unweighted high school GPA, courses completed, and grades received in English and math courses.

Assessment via Placement Assistant

Students who have graduated from a U.S. high school more than 10 years ago, completed the GED, or HiSet exam are eligible for this assessment. The Placement Assistant will identify courses that students can enroll in using prior academic history. Students will report cumulative, unweighted high school GPA, courses completed, and grades received in English and math courses. Based on the information reported, students will receive an English and mathematics placement milestone. Students who graduated from a foreign high school should contact the Assessment Center for guidance.

PRINCIPLES OF EXCELLENCE

The San Diego Community College District participates in the Principles of Excellence outlined by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

- 1) Provide students with a personalized form covering the total cost of an education program. This form can be found in the annual Financial Aid Bulletin.
- 2) Provide educational plans for all military and Veteran education beneficiaries.
- 3) End fraudulent and aggressive recruiting techniques and misrepresentations.
- 4) Accommodate Service Members and Reservists absent due to service requirements.
- 5) Designate a point of contact to provide academic and financial advice.
- 6) Ensure accreditation of all new programs prior to enrolling students.
- 7) Align institutional refund policies with those under Title IV, which governs the administration of federal student financial aid programs.

VA GI Bill ® Feedback System – When Should You Submit a Complaint

You may submit a complaint if your school is failing to follow the Principles of Excellence. The VA will review the following types of complaints: recruiting/marketing practices, quality of education, accreditation, grade policy, financial issues (e.g. tuition/fee charges), release of transcripts, student loans, transfer of credits, post-graduation job opportunities, refund issues, change in degree plan/requirements, and others.

Questions about your eligibility and payments under the GI Bill should be directed to the “Ask a Question” section of the VA website: <http://www.benefits.va.gov/benefits/> You may also call the Department of Veterans Affairs directly to speak to a VA representative at (888) 442-4551.

If you are not using VA education benefits please file your complaint with the appropriate agency:

- Federal Financial Aid (e.g., Pell Grants and federal loans) – Department of Education
- Private student loans – Consumer Financial Protections Bureau

Once you submit a complaint

- 1) Complaint submitted: You submit a complaint about an issue with a school. You will receive status updates via the email address you gave us if you provided one when you submitted the complaint.
- 2) VA reviews and forwards to school: Complaints will be sent to your school or employer for their review and to provide a response to your complaint. If we determine another government agency would be better able to assist, we will forward your complaint to them and provide you with an update. Please note, complaints submitted anonymously will not be sent to your school for them to prepare a response but submitted for the record to the Federal Trade Commission’s Consumer Sentinel Network.
- 3) School Response: The school will review your complaint, communicate with you as needed and prepare a response to your complaint.
- 4) You can review response: We will provide the school’s response. We will ask you to inform us if the response you received is satisfactory for tracking purposes only.

NOTES:

VETERANS STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING

A Statement of Understanding must be completed by each Veteran or Dependent acknowledging the following requirements:

- I understand that it takes 4 to 8 weeks for the VA Regional Office to process my educational benefits. Payment is paid retroactive to the beginning of the semester.
- I understand that I must meet the college standards of progress. If I am academically disqualified from the college, I am no longer eligible to receive VA benefits.
- I understand that all official transcripts of prior college work and military schools, including copies of form DD-214 or DD-295 must be on file and evaluated by the end of the first semester of attendance at my primary college. Failure to submit official transcripts will delay further VA enrollment certifications. If I already have a bachelor's degree, I understand that my enrollment certification will not be submitted until all transcripts are **EVALUATED**.
- I understand that each semester I will be required to complete a "Semester Worksheet" in order to utilize and continue my educational benefits.
- I understand that I will be responsible for paying any outstanding fees not covered by my VA educational benefits. I will have a hold placed on my account and will not be able to register for classes in subsequent semesters until the balance is satisfied.
- I understand that a comprehensive student education plan must be on file prior to certification of the second term. Once a comprehensive student education plan is completed, prior credit will be noted.
- I understand that it is my responsibility to report any changes (Adds/Drops/Withdrawals) to the college Veterans Affairs Office **immediately**.
- I understand that all classes taken each semester must apply to my major according to my computerized education plan.
- I understand that my DD-214 (with at least six months of active duty service and an honorable discharge) will meet the health and PE requirements for the AA/AS degree and CSU Area E General Education requirements.
- I understand that failure to enroll in the proper classes may result in an overpayment and the reduction or termination of benefits. The veteran and/or dependent assume FULL responsibility for any overpayment of Veterans Benefits.
- I understand that I will get paid for the dates I actually attend class (For example, 8 and 5 week short term sessions only pay for that specific term and are not counted towards a full 16 week semester).
- I understand that I cannot count the units of SELF-PACED CLASSES or ONLINE REMEDIAL COURSES towards my education benefits.
- I understand that if I fail to report enrollment changes (dropping a class, adding a class, stop attending a class), this could result in delays, overpayments, or termination of my DVA Education Benefits.
- I understand that overpayment is my responsibility and I will owe money to the Department of Veterans Affairs. The DVA may deduct the funds from ANY Federal payments (retirement, taxes, disability, etc.).
- I understand if I am using the Post 9/11 GI Bill (CH33), I must verify my enrollment monthly in order to continue receiving my housing benefit. Failure to do so would mean I will not receive my housing benefit.

DVA EDUCATION BENEFITS INFORMATION

eBenefits

Students may research, access, and manage their benefits and personal information using the Veterans Benefit Administration's eBenefit website at: <https://www.ebenefits.va.gov> Click "Register Now" and select a free Premium account for unlimited access to:

- Download a DD-214
- View benefit status
- Check Post-9/11GI Bill ® entitlement
- Check enrollment status

DVA EDUCATION BENEFITS INFORMATION STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES & LIABILITY

Student Education Plan (Program Requirements)

- All veterans must have an official Student Education Plan on file (including official transcripts from all prior colleges) by the end of the first semester or there will be an interruption in your VA educational benefits. No exceptions will be made.
- Students are required to notify their college Veterans Affairs Office when changing their program or degree plan. A new Student Education Plan must be developed by a college counselor and must be immediately turned into the college Veterans Affairs Office to update the student's VA file.

Selecting College Courses

- For all veterans and dependents using DVA benefits and registering for classes, it is important to understand that all courses are subject to approval and must meet prerequisite or course requirements listed on the current Student Education Plan on file.
- Courses not meeting the requirements of the Education Plan will be denied by the DVA and will not be included towards the student's rate of pursuit (approved units) calculated for awarding monthly education benefits. As a result, these courses will not be reimbursed for paid out-of-pocket tuition and fees to the college.
- Failure to take the proper courses will result in an overpayment and the reduction or termination of benefits. Veteran and dependent assumes full liability for any overpayment of all DVA educational benefits.

Submitting Semester Worksheet

- Every semester, all students are required to report their enrollment by submitting a completed Semester Worksheet to the college Veterans Affairs Office. All registered courses listed on the semester worksheet are subject to approval based on the Student Education Plan on file. **Failure to submit the Semester Worksheet will delay your enrollment certification to the DVA for education benefits.**

AVOID OVER/UNDER PAYMENT

Student Overpayments, Underpayments and Repeating Courses

- All adds, drops, and withdrawals must be processed through mySDCCD at <https://myportal.sdccd.edu> and must be reported to the student's primary college Veterans Office by completing a Class Adjustment form in order to avoid any erroneous (overpayment or underpayment) monthly benefits.
- You MUST attend class and participate (both on campus and online) or it will result in an adjustment to your original enrollment certification. The adjustment will result in a student debt to the DVA, including any accruing interest until the debt has been resolved.
- You MUST inform the college Veterans Office of any changes in enrollment status (add/drop/withdrawal). Changes may result in an overpayment or underpayment of monthly benefit payment.

Failure to take classes listed on your approved Student Education Plan may result in an overpayment and the reduction or termination of benefits. Veterans and dependents assume full liability for any overpayment and will owe money to the Department of Veterans Affairs. The DVA may deduct the funds from ANY Federal payments (retirement, taxes, disability, etc.).

- Repeating Courses: The San Diego Community College District allows students to repeat courses where a D, F, or NP was earned the first take. However, for veterans receiving benefits, you must earn A, B, C, or P on the second take or the DVA will decertify you for the first enrollment and you will owe DVA for the overpayment.
- Drop classes by the drop deadline.
- Report any change to your class enrollment to the college VA Office immediately. Consequence: You may be certified for the wrong unit load.
- A Semester Worksheet must be submitted to the primary college Veterans Affairs Office in order to be certified for VA Education Benefits.
- Failure to attend class and participate (both on campus and online) will result in an adjustment to the student's original enrollment certification. The adjustment will result in a student debt to the DVA, including any accruing interest until the debt has been resolved.

All class adjustments made after the initial certification will not be processed until after the add/drop period.

Transcripts hand-delivered to the college Admissions & Records Office **must be in a sealed envelope and issued by the institution within the last 12 months or submitted electronically.**

STUDENT EDUCATION PLAN

All veterans must have an official Student Education Plan on file by the end of the first semester or there will be an interruption in VA educational benefits. No exceptions will be made.

Official transcripts from all previously attended colleges, Military transcripts, and any CLEP, DANTES, IB, and AP test scores must be submitted to the college.

Once the transcripts have been received by the college, you should complete a Request for Transcript Evaluation form. After the transcripts have been evaluated, you will be notified by Evaluations via email to contact the college Counseling Office to schedule an appointment for a Student Education Plan.

Change of Program/Major

Veterans and dependents are required to notify their primary college Veterans Office when they make a change to their program or degree plan (change of major). A new Student Education Plan must be developed by a college counselor and submitted to the college Veterans Office in order for the change to be effective.

It is not advisable to change your education plan mid-semester/session because it may result in decertification or an overpayment.

PRIMARY SCHOOL LETTERS

ATTENDING COLLEGES OTHER THAN CITY, MESA, AND MIRAMAR

For courses outside the San Diego Community College District you must provide your primary college Veterans Affairs Office with the following information:

- Course Information (Subject and Course #)
- Course Schedule (start-end dates)
- If course schedule differs from primary school enrollment dates, rate of pursuit may be affected.
- Contact information for the Secondary School Certifying Official
- Copy of the course description from the college catalog

IMPORTANT: Primary School Letters are subject to approval. Courses offered by secondary colleges must be approved by the Counseling or Evaluations Office to confirm course equivalency.

You should follow-up with the secondary college Veterans Affairs Office for certification processing times.

- Upon completion of approved course(s), students will be required to submit official transcripts no later than one (1) month after the completion of the semester/session to:

San Diego Community College District
Office 3375 Camino Del Rio South, Suite 100
San Diego, CA 92108-3883

Failure to submit transcripts from your secondary college will result in a delay of future enrollment certification for DVA Education Benefits.

EDUCATION BENEFITS PROGRAMS

Failure to take the proper courses will result in an overpayment and the reduction or termination of benefits. The veteran or dependent assume full liability for any overpayment of all DVA Education Benefits.

EDUCATIONAL AND VOCATIONAL COUNSELING SERVICES CHAPTER 36

Eligibility

- Within six months prior to discharge from active duty and within one year following active duty.
- Eligible for VA Educational Benefits.

Benefits

- Counseling to facilitate career decision making for civilian or military occupations.
- Educational and vocational counseling to choose an appropriate civilian occupation and develop a training program.
- Academic and adjustment counseling to resolve barriers that impede success in training or employment.

POST-9/11 GI BILL ® FOR ACTIVE DUTY & DEPENDENTS - CHAPTER 33

Eligibility

- Service member must have completed at least 90 days of aggregate service on or after September 11, 2001 or be discharged with a service connected disability after 30 days.
- Service member received an honorable discharge.
- Spouse and dependents must have a DEERS issued certificate of Transfer of Entitlement and have completed the application for DVA Education Benefits (VA-Form 22-1990).
- Benefits expire 15 years from the date of discharge/separation (MGIB delimiting date).
- For detailed information on eligibility requirements, please visit the DVA website at www.gibill.va.gov for those discharged before Jan 01, 2013.

Benefits

- Includes reimbursement of enrollment fees, health fee, student representation fee, a monthly housing allowance, a stipend for books and supplies, and a “kicker” college fund payment (if eligible).
- San Diego Community College District does not participate in the Yellow Ribbon Program.
- Effective August 1, 2010, the Post-9/11 GI BILL will no longer pay for non-resident tuition.
- All veterans and dependents are required to pay all tuition and fees at the time of registration. The college will reimburse students after Ch.33 funds have been received from the DVA and processed by the college.
- It is recommended that all students apply for financial aid at www.fafsa.ed.gov

POST-9/11 GI BILL ® CHAPTER 33 BASIC ALLOWANCE FOR HOUSING (BAH)

- A monthly housing allowance is paid directly to the student at the beginning of each month for the previous month's enrollment. The housing allowance is prorated by the student's length of service percentage. Active duty members utilizing Post 9/11 GI Bill benefits and spouses who have been TRANSFERRED benefits by current active service members are NOT eligible for the BAH.
- The monthly housing allowance is equal to the Department of Defense Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) for an "E-5 with dependents" and the zip code of the college. To view the current BAH rate, visit www.defensetravel.dod.mil

Getting Started

Students utilizing **Chapter 33: Post 9/11 GI Bill** must submit a current (within 1 year) Certificate of Eligibility (COE) to the college Veterans Office and sign a Statement of Understanding in order to have tuition and fees deferred. If you are using the Chapter 33: Post 9/11 GI Bill benefits, complete the following steps in order to have your tuition and fees deferred:

- 1) Register for classes
- 2) Bring your current (within a 1 year) Certificate of Eligibility (COE) to the campus Veterans Office.
- 3) Sign a Statement of Understanding, semester worksheet, and deferment contract acknowledging acceptance of the responsibilities associated with the deferred fee payment.

Rate of Pursuit

- To be eligible for the BAH rates, the student's rate of pursuit must be greater than 50% (*greater than and not equal to ½ time status*).
- Students taking less than twelve units will only receive partial housing allowance based on the rate of pursuit. Current payment rates can be viewed online at <http://www.gibill.va.gov>
- For more information contact the DVA to speak to a Veterans Benefits representative by calling 1-888-GI- BILL-1 (442-4551).
- Students will only be certified for approved courses as identified on the Student Education Plan on file.

Distance Learning and BAH

- Students enrolled exclusively in distance learning (online courses) are eligible for monthly housing allowance equal to 50% of the national BAH average and your rate of pursuit.
- If a student's enrollment is a combination of distance learning and on-campus and the rate of pursuit is greater than 50% you may be eligible to receive the local BAH rate.

Remedial and Refresher Courses

- Remedial and refresher courses may be approved based upon mathematics and English assessment results. These courses must be taken on campus, not online or self-paced, to be eligible.

MONTGOMERY GI BILL ® ACTIVE DUTY (MGIB) - CHAPTER 30

Eligibility

- Benefits expire 10 years from the date of discharge/separation (MGIB delimiting date).
- Veteran was active duty personnel.
- Veteran has received an honorable discharge.
- For detailed information on eligibility requirements, please visit the DVA website at www.gibill.va.gov

Benefits

- Provides up to 36 months of education benefits.
- Students are paid a monthly stipend (based on approved units) at the beginning of the month for the previous month's enrollment certification.
- Current payment rates can be viewed online at <http://www.gibill.va.gov>

Remedial and Refresher Courses

- Remedial and refresher courses may be approved based upon mathematics and English assessment results. These courses must be taken on campus, not online or self-paced, to be eligible.

Monthly Enrollment Certification—Last day of each month

- All veterans receiving MGIB-Active Duty (Chapter 30) must verify their enrollment with the DVA on the last day of each month in order to receive payment for that month. Your enrollment can be verified by using the Web Automated Verification of Enrollment (WAVE) at <https://www.gibill.va.gov/wave> or by calling the DVA toll-free Interactive Voice Response (IVR) at 1-877-823-2378.

VETERAN READINESS AND EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM - CHAPTER 31

Eligibility

- Served on or after September 16, 1940.
- Has service connected disabilities rated at least 10% by the DVA.
- Needs Veterans Readiness (VR) to overcome an employment handicap and it has been less than 12 years since DVA notified veteran of their qualified service connected disabilities.

Benefits

- Services include: vocational and personal counseling, education and training, financial aid, job assistance, and if needed medical and dental treatment.
- Services generally last up to 48 months, but can be extended in certain instances.
- In most cases, you must have already been awarded a monthly VA disability compensation payment.
- In some cases, you may be eligible even if you are not receiving a monthly VA disability compensation payment. For example, if you are awaiting discharge from the service because of a disability.
- Complete VA Form 28-1900, Disabled Veterans Application for Vocational Rehabilitation and mail it to the VA Regional Office that serves your area. You can also apply online

through: va.gov/careers-employment/vocational-rehabilitation/ or visit:

VA Regional Office
8810 Rio San Diego Drive
San Diego, CA 92108

Remedial and Refresher Courses

- Remedial and refresher courses may be approved based upon mathematics and English assessment results. These courses must be taken on campus, not online or self-paced, to be eligible.

Did You Know

- You may be entitled to Veterans Readiness services if you are rated 10% disabled; however, it must be determined that you have a serious employment handicap.
- Regardless of your service connected disabilities rating percentage, you may have longer than 12 years to use your VR benefit if certain conditions prevented you from participating in a VR program or it is determined that you have a serious employment handicap.

Getting Started

Students using **Chapter 31. Veteran Readiness and Employment Program** must submit a Semester Worksheet, sign a Statement of Understanding and a deferment contract in order to have tuition and fees deferred.

If you are using Chapter 31 benefits complete the following steps in order to have your tuition and fees deferred:

- 1) VA Authorization via Tungsten must be sent from your assigned case manager at the San Diego VA Regional Office to the college prior to processing your semester enrollment for VR benefits. If not on file, you will need to contact your VR case manager.
- 2) Register for classes.
- 3) Sign a Statement of Understanding, semester worksheet, and deferment contract acknowledging acceptance of the responsibilities associated with the deferred fee payment.

Book Authorization

- All paperwork must be submitted to the college Veterans Office before the book authorization will be released to the college bookstore.
- The bookstore authorization will be available in the college bookstore one week prior to the start of the semester or session.
- If submitting paperwork within one week or after the start of the semester or session, the book authorization will be available in the bookstore 72 hours after paperwork has been submitted to the college Veterans Office.
- All textbooks and supplies must be purchased by the 3rd week of the semester.
- If classes are dropped, books may have to be returned. Please contact your VR counselor for further information. Please check with college bookstore for book return deadline dates in

order to receive a refund.

Supplies for VA Veteran Readiness Students

- In general, the Department of Veterans Affairs Veteran Readiness & Employment Division (VR&E) will authorize Chapter 31 students to charge only those books and supplies that are required by all other students in the same program. Your local VA case manager will audit each invoice and disallow items not authorized for payment.
- Text Books and Supplies (as listed on syllabus)
The VA will approve payment for books and supplies that are required for the course and listed on the instructor's syllabus. The VA will not pay "Optional" or "Suggested Reading" books or supplies.

The VA Readiness and Employment Program will cover the following per public school standard term **not to exceed \$55 per term or \$100 per term if purchasing ink:**

Ream of Computer Paper
Folders
Hi-lighters
Package of Post-its
Spiral Notebooks or Note Paper
Scantron & Blue Books
Non-electric Pencil Sharpeners

Pencils
Pens (not to exceed \$3 each)
Report covers
CD-RW Disks
Black Ink
Paper clips & Index Cards

One-Time Purchase during the course of vocational training:

Dictionary and Thesaurus

Calculator – not to exceed requirements of program (usually less than \$25)

Note: A more expensive calculator will be covered if specifically required for a course and the syllabus is provided

Book bag/backpack (not to exceed \$50)

Flash Drive (not to exceed \$25)

Color ink cartridges are only reimbursable if listed as requirement on class syllabus. Do not charge tax, the VA cannot pay tax. **All other items require written pre-approval by the VA Ch.31 case manager prior to purchase.**

MONTGOMERY GI BILL ® SELECT RESERVE (MGIB-SR) CHAPTER 1606 AND RESERVE EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (REAP) CHAPTER 1607

Eligibility

- Any Select Reserve member
- 1606/07 only – member must have served on active duty on or after September 11, 2001, under Title 10, U.S.C., for contingency operation and who served at least 90 or more consecutive days.
- Must NOT be using Tuition Assistance Program.

Benefits

- Benefits may be used for college degree and/or certificate programs.
- Students are paid a monthly stipend (based on approved units) at the beginning of the month for the previous month's enrollment certification.

- Current payment rates can be viewed online at <http://www.gibill.va.gov>

Remedial and Refresher Courses

- Remedial and refresher courses may be approved based upon mathematics and English assessment results. These courses must be taken on campus, not online or self-paced, to be eligible.

Monthly Enrollment Certification—Last day of each month

- All veterans receiving MGIB-Select Reserve (Chapter 1606), or REAP (Chapter 1607) must verify their enrollment with the DVA on the last day of each month in order to receive payment for that month. Your enrollment can be verified using the Web Automated Verification of Enrollment (WAVE) at <https://www.gibill.va.gov/wave> or by calling the DVA toll-free Interactive Voice Response (IVR) at 1-877-823-2378.

DEPENDENTS EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE (DEA) PROGRAM - CHAPTER 35

Eligibility for dependents of veterans

- Service member was released from active duty due to a permanent and total disability as a result of active duty service in the Armed Forces.
- Service member who has died or has a permanent and total service connected disability.
- Is Missing in Action (MIA) or was a Prisoner of War (POW)
- Children of service member between the ages of 18 and 26, with some exceptions (marriage does not preclude you from this benefit).
- The spouse of a service member may begin to use benefits during the eligibility period provided he/she has not remarried.

Benefits

- DEA offers up to a total of 45 months of educational benefits.
- DEA benefits may be used for college degree and/or certificate programs.
- Students are paid a monthly stipend (based on approved units) at the beginning of the month for the previous month's enrollment certification.
- Current payment rates can be viewed online at <http://www.gibill.va.gov>

Remedial and Refresher Courses

- Remedial and refresher courses may be approved based upon mathematics and English assessment results. These courses must be taken on campus, not online or self-paced, to be eligible.

MARINE GUNNERY SERGEANT JOHN DAVID FRY SCHOLARSHIP

Eligibility

- Children of an active duty member of the Armed Forces who has died in the line of duty on or after September 11, 2001.
- The child may be married or over the age of 23 and still be eligible.

Benefits

- Full tuition and fees paid directly to the school for all public school in-state students.
- A monthly housing allowance and a stipend for books and supplies.
- Students are entitled to 36 months of benefits at the 100% level and may be used until their 33rd birthday.
- Students who are eligible for the Fry Scholarship may also be eligible for DEA – Chapter 35 benefits. Although the benefits cannot be used at the same time, a student may be eligible for up to 48 months of benefits between the two programs.

Application Process

- Go to <http://www.gibill.va.gov> and click on “Apply for Benefits.”
- Paper versions of the form (VA Form 22-5490) may be printed.

COLLEGE TUITION FEE WAIVERS FOR VETERANS’ DEPENDENTS (CAL–VET)

Benefits

- Waiver of mandatory system-wide tuition and fees at any California Community College, California State University and University of California.
- All students must meet California residency requirements.
- To ensure ongoing benefits, students are required to reapply each year.

Eligibility

A dependent cannot receive this benefit if they are already receiving VA Chapter 35 benefits.

PLAN A: The spouse, child, unmarried surviving spouse, or California certified registered domestic partner of a veteran who is totally service connected disabled or who has died of service related causes, may qualify.

The veteran must have served during a period of war declared by Congress, or been awarded a Campaign or Expeditionary Medal. This program does not have an income limit. A child must be under 27 years of age to receive the fee waiver benefit. The age limit is extended to 30 years of age if the child is also a veteran. There are no age limits for a spouse, surviving spouse or California certified registered domestic partner.

PLAN B: The child (no age limit) of a veteran who has a service connected disability, or had a service connected disability at the time of death, or who died of service related causes, may also qualify for a waiver of fees. The child’s income, which includes the student’s ADJUSTED GROSS INCOME, PLUS THE VALUE OF SUPPORT provided by a parent, cannot exceed the “national poverty level” as published by the U.S. Census Bureau on December 31st of last year. NOTE: This figure changes annually. To obtain the applicable national poverty level, contact your local County Veterans Service Office (CVSO).

PLAN C: Any dependent, or surviving spouse who has not remarried, or California certified registered domestic partner of a member of the California National Guard who was killed, permanently disabled or died of a disability that resulted from activation under Military and Veterans Code Section 146.

PLAN D: Benefits are available to Congressional Medal of Honor recipients and their children. These applicants are required to apply directly to the California Department of Veterans Affairs. Your CVSO can accept and refer the application for you.

Application Process

- Contact your local County Veterans Service Office or go to www.nacvso.org to obtain an application. You should apply prior to attending school. Additional information is also available at www.calvet.ca.gov
- Applicants to the program must submit proof of income, such as a tax return from the previous year, with their application.
- If applicant had no income, a statement to the effect can be obtained from either the Franchise Tax Board (800) 852-5711 or IRS (800) 829-1040.
- Certain dependency documents may be required to establish your relationship with the veteran.
- Once the application is complete, take it to your local County Veterans Service Office (CVSO) for processing.

San Diego County Veterans Services
County Veterans Service Officer
5560 Overland Ave., Suite 310
San Diego, CA 92123
Hours: Monday – Friday, 8:00 am – 4:00 pm
Phone: (858) 694-3222 - Fax: (858) 505-6961

The information on this page is only for general reference. For more detailed and up-to-date information, refer to the Cal-Vet website: www.calvet.ca.gov

VA WORK-STUDY

Eligibility

- A student must be receiving DVA Education Benefits.
- Must be attending college $\frac{3}{4}$ time or more.

Benefits

- Pay is based on the higher of the Federal minimum wage or the State/Local minimum wage.
- VA work-study pay is non-taxable.

How do Students Apply?

- Complete the Application for Work-Study Allowance (VA Form 22-8691).
- Obtain an Enrollment Certification (VA form-1999) from the college VA Office.
- Your Application and Enrollment Certification will be submitted to the VA Regional Processing Office by the college Veterans Affairs Office.
- If approved by the VA Regional Processing Office, a letter will be sent to the college Veterans Affairs Office who will notify you.
- If denied by the VA Regional Processing Office, a letter will be sent to you.

Check your local college VA Office, VA Regional Office and VA hospitals for available positions.	
Potential Employers	Contact



STEPS TO SAN DIEGO CONTINUING EDUCATION VETERANS SERVICES

1. Complete an Application for San Diego Continuing Education online at <http://sdce.edu/services/registration-enrollment>. To get started click on the “Apply online” link.
2. Sign-up for an orientation online at <http://sdce.edu/services/orientation>. Students are served on a first come, first served basis.
3. Make an appointment with San Diego Continuing Education’s Certifying Official at 619-388-4933 or in-person at the Educational Cultural Complex, R²S Center, Veterans Services, room 116.

Veterans using benefits for the first time, the following are required:

- DD 214 (Certified Copy)
- Form 1990
- Dependent Form 2168c, **transcripts of dependents if they are over 18 but in school** (This form is only used when veteran is eligible to claim dependents)
- Transcripts of previous coursework completed (All prior education and training shall be evaluated and appropriate credit granted)
- Certificate of eligibility from the VA
- **Please NOTE: Paperwork will not be submitted to the VA office until the above forms are received.**

Veterans who previously used benefits, the following are required:

- Form 1995 (Change of Program)
- Transcripts of previous coursework completed (All prior education and training shall be evaluated and appropriate credit granted)
- **Please NOTE: Paperwork will not be submitted to the VA office until all of the above forms are received**

NOTE: Please understand that once all necessary paperwork has been submitted, it takes up to 8 weeks before benefits are received. For information or for resolution of specific payment problems, the veteran should call the DVA nationwide toll free number at 1-800-827-1000.

POLICY RELATING TO STUDENT’S ATTENDANCE

ATTENDANCE

Students are expected to attend all classes regularly. Occasionally, students may need to be excused from classroom attendance; therefore the following lists suggest those circumstances which may be excusable. However, each occurrence will be reviewed separately.

- Illness (if student notifies VA Clerk and Instructor with doctor’s note)
- Jury Duty/Compulsory Military Training

- Formal Leave of Absence from training (pre-arranged with VA Clerk)

Tardiness in reporting to class after the first 15 min. will be counted, recorded, and reported to the VA. Each tardy will count as one (1) full hour of absence. After three (3) tardies, student will be placed on thirty (30) days probation by a counselor. If any tardiness occurs during this probationary period, the school will recommend termination of VA benefits.

ABSENCES - CONTINUING EDUCATION

Continuing Education Students receiving veteran's benefits **cannot** have more than three (3) absences during a calendar month.

INTERRUPTION FOR UNSATISFACTORY ATTENDANCE

- Students who exceed three (3) absences during a calendar month will have their benefits interrupted (stopped) as of their last day of class attendance. **Students are responsible for the accurate tracking of their absences and for being aware of the potentially negative effect they will have on payment of their VA Educational benefits.** The first time students exceed three (3) absences; their VA benefits will be interrupted for thirty (30) calendar days. Once the student has re-established satisfactory attendance, the certifying official can reinstate the student. The second time a student exceeds three (3) absences during a calendar month, their VA benefits will be interrupted and a termination form will be sent to the VA.

VOLUNTARY INTERRUPTION OF VA BENEFITS

- In an attempt to avoid inadvertent interruption of their VA benefits due to violation of the attendance policy, students have the option of requesting a voluntary interruption of their benefits. The request for a voluntary interruption must be made prior to violation of the attendance policy.

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS RESOURCES

Department of Veterans Affairs

Located in Muskogee, Oklahoma (Central Standard Time)

Education Benefits: 1-888-GI-BILL-1 (1-888-442-4551)

All other benefits: 1-800-827-1000

Online VA Education Benefits: www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/

Online VA Home website: www.va.gov

Online VA (Other) Benefits: www.benefits.va.gov

For all mail correspondence:

Veterans Affairs Regional Office

PO Box 8888

Muskogee, Oklahoma 74402-8888

San Diego Regional Office

8810 Rio San Diego Drive San Diego, CA 92108

Disability claims, Veteran Readiness, VA-Work Study Program, PTSD, Health & Well- Being

Phone: 1-800-827-1000

Website: www.benefits.va.gov/sandiego/

Direct Deposit

- To establish or change your direct deposit information with the DVA, please call the following numbers Monday through Friday 7:30 AM to 4:50 PM Central Standard Time at 1-877-838-2778 or 1-800-827-1000

Pay Status

- The college Veterans Office staff does not have access to payment information regarding education benefits awards.
- Please contact the DVA Muskogee Regional Office for all pay status inquiries by calling 1-888-GI-BILL1 (1-888-442-4551) Monday through Friday 7:30 AM to 4:50 PM Central Standard Time.

COLLEGE RESOURCES

City College Student Support Services

Veterans Affairs	A-241	619-388-3504
Admissions	A-241	619-388-3475
Assessment	A-201	619-388-3023
General Counseling	A-366	619-388-3540
DSPS	A-122	619-388-3513
English Center	L-209	619-388-3633
EOPS	A-354	619-388-3209
Financial Aid	A-270	619-388-3501
Math Center	L-208	619-388-3580
Mental Health Counseling	A-180	619-388-3539
Tutorial/Learning Center	L-205	619-388-3685
Veterans Service Center	M-101	619-388-3504

Mesa College Student Support Services

Veterans Affairs	I4-102	619-388-2805
Admissions	I4-102	619-388-2682
Assessment	I4-201	619-388-2718
General Counseling	I4-303	619-388-2672
DSPS	I4-405	619-388-2780
Financial Aid	I4-107	619-388-2817
EOPS	I4-309	619-388-2706
STAR	I4-308	619-388-2481
Tutoring Center	I4-203	619-388-2898

Miramar College Student Support Services

Veterans Affairs	K1-207	619-388-7862
Admissions	K1-207	619-388-7844
General Counseling	K1-203	619-388-7840
DSPS	K1-204	619-388-7312
EOPS/CARE/CalWORKs	K1-305	619-388-7869

Financial Aid	K1-312	619-388-7864
Academic Success Center (Tutorial Center)	L-101	619-388-7852

CONTINUING EDUCATION RESOURCES

Veterans Services	116	619-388-4933
Student Services	128	619-388-4956
DSPS	124	619-388-4812

TIPS FROM STUDENT VETERANS

College

- Verify your status for Veterans priority registration with the Admissions & Records Office.
- All adds, drops, and withdrawals must be reported to the college Veterans Office.
- Drive to campus early (especially during the first 2 weeks) in order to get to class on time.
- Make sure you report to class on time on the first day of class, otherwise you risk forfeiting your seat.
- Learn about the services offered by the college Health Services Office.
- There are limited mental health services on college.
- Ensure your contact information is always updated with the college Veterans Office. View and update on mySDCCD. Register for your classes on the assigned appointment time and date. Avoid delaying this as the window of opportunity for classes are reduced greatly.
- Meet with a counselor prior to the start of the semester and ensure your classes are applicable to your program/major. Don't wait for the last minute to get an education plan.
- Pay close attention to the semester deadlines for add, drop, refund, and withdrawal.
- Instructors are not required to accommodate any deployments or training missions.
- Develop a working relationship with an academic counselor.
- Speak to your instructors about classroom concerns.
- Learning Culture Success Toolkit for Veterans https://youtu.be/a64PY2Y_m1U

Veterans Affairs

- Know the minimum number of units required to receive education benefits.
- You will be paid after the completion of the month.
- Students are responsible for all issued overpayments.
- Visit the VA Hospital/Regional Office in-person rather than contacting by phone.
- Visit the VA Website for any important updates.
- Patience. Know that delays are common with the processing of your education benefits.
- You will only receive VA educational benefits while enrolled in classes (No Break-Pay).

Finances and Personal

- Look for summer/seasonal jobs.
- Apply for financial aid and scholarships.
- Prepare a résumé brush up on interviewing skills, and attend job fairs.
- Textbooks and supplies are the student's responsibility.
- Advocate for yourself.

- Network with other veterans and exchange experiences and information (phone, email, etc.) on how VA can help with your needs.
- Plan ahead and prepare for unexpected circumstances for your family.
- It is okay to call 911 in an emergency situation.
- Study/do homework between classes.
- Schedule classes with breaks in between.
- Have a planner and practice time management (school, study, home, work).
- Know your limitations and maintain a healthy lifestyle.

TRANSFER/GRADUATION CHECKLIST

☐ **Transfer**

- ☐ Meet early on with a college counselor
- ☐ Choose a college/university
- ☐ Select the appropriate general education pattern for the transfer institution
- ☐ Determine major preparation courses
- ☐ Research minimum GPA required for transfer
- ☐ Attend Transfer Admission Workshop
- ☐ See Transfer Center for dates/times of visiting colleges

Transfer College/University	Anticipated transfer Date (Semester/Year)	Application/Supplemental Deadline

➤ **Graduation**

- ☐ File a *Petition for Graduation* online at <https://www.sdccd.edu/students/evaluations/graduation/> two semesters in advance of anticipated graduation.
- ☐ Pay close attention to petition deadlines <https://www.sdccd.edu/students/evaluations/graduation/graduation-deadlines.aspx>

Verification of Enrollment

Beginning December 17, 2021 students attending Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL) will also be required to verify their enrollment. All Post-9/11 GI Bill® students who receive Monthly Housing Allowance (MHA) and/or kicker payments are required to verify their enrollment to continue receiving their payments. Read below to learn more about what enrollment verification is and how to do it.

What is Enrollment Verification?

Enrollment verification is a new requirement for Post-9/11 GI Bill students to verify that they have remained enrolled in the same courses or training every month. Students who receive MHA/kicker payments will have their payments withheld if they fail to verify or report that they are no longer enrolled in their courses or training.

This requirement is only for Post-9/11 GI Bill and does not impact other programs, including Veteran Employment Through Technology Education Courses (VET TEC), Survivors' and Dependents' Educational Assistance (DEA), Veterans' Educational Assistance Program (VEAP), or the Edith Nourse Rogers STEM Scholarship.

If you are a Montgomery GI Bill® (MGIB) student, this new requirement does not represent a change for you, as MGIB students are already required to verify enrollment.

When Does Enrollment Verification Start?

Currently, the monthly verification requirement is only being applied to Post-9/11 GI Bill students who receive MHA/kicker payments. Beginning December 17, 2021 students attending Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL) will also be required to verify their enrollment.

NCD vs. IHL: How do you know which type of facility you attend?

IHL Facilities Have:

1

Associates/
Bachelors/Masters/PhD
degree programs.

2

Traditional
2-to-4-year
schools.

All other facilities are NCD facilities.*

*This excludes on-the-job and apprenticeship training.

If you ever have questions about the monthly verification requirement or when it applies to you, contact a VA education representative at 1-888-GIBILL-1 (1-888-442-4551) domestically or 001-918-781-5678 overseas.



How do I Verify Enrollment?

You can verify enrollment using the following methods:

■ Via Text Message

- You can use text messages as a simple, quick option for verifying monthly enrollment. To opt into text message verification, please contact the Education Call Center (ECC) at 1-888-GIBILL-1 (1-888-442-4551) to ensure VA has your mobile phone number.
- After opting-in, you can verify your enrollment simply by responding to a text message from VA.
- Please be assured that enrollment verification via text message is safe and secure. VA will never ask for your personal information, such as social security number or bank account information, via text.
- VA strongly recommends this method for verifying enrollment. It will be easier and faster than calling the ECC.

■ Via Education Call Center

- Contact the ECC at 1-888-GIBILL-1 (1-888-442-4551) and ask a representative to verify enrollment on your behalf. NOTE: ECC wait times may be high due to the number of students verifying enrollment each month.
- If you opt out of text verification and later change your mind, or need to update your mobile number on file, you can opt in by calling the ECC at 1-888-GIBILL-1 (1-888-442-4551).

What Happens if I Fail to Verify my Enrollment?

If you fail to verify enrollment for two consecutive months, your MHA/kicker payments will be placed on hold. You must take steps to verify your enrollment to have the payments released.

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The San Diego Community College District includes San Diego City College, San Diego Mesa College, San Diego Miramar College, and San Diego College of Continuing Education. The SDCCD is governed by its Board of Trustees. No oral or written agreement is binding on the San Diego Community College District without the express approval of the Board of Trustees.



EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT YOUR GI BILL IN THE PALM OF YOUR HAND

The SDCCD Vet GPS Mobile WebApp provides important information on accessing and using your GI Bill education benefits at San Diego City, Mesa, and Miramar colleges, and Continuing Education.

SCAN THE QR CODE



or open up the browser
on your phone and go
to: <https://bit.ly/SDCCDVETS>