

Veterans' Educational Benefits Information

Richland Community College | One College Park | Decatur, Illinois 62521
Financial Aid & Veterans' Affairs Office | 217.875.7211, Ext. 205



How do I apply for Veterans' Educational Benefits?

1. Complete the Veterans Online Application (VONAPP) at vabenefits.vba.va.gov or see Financial Aid & Veterans' Affairs for a paper application. You will need your DD214, Member 4 (if applicable) to complete the application. It is important to note that the VONAPP will be processed by the VA much faster than a paper application.
2. The VA will process your application and send you a Certificate of Eligibility, if you are eligible for benefits.
3. If you need to contact the VA regarding your application or Certificate of Eligibility you may call them at 888-442-4551.
4. Enroll in classes that are required for your certificate or degree.
5. Bring the following to the Financial Aid & Veterans' Affairs Office:
 - VA Certificate of Eligibility.
 - A copy of your DD214, Member 4, showing your honorable discharge or your Notice of Basic Eligibility (NOBE) if you do not have a DD214.
 - Students using Chapter 35 Survivor/Dependents benefits will not have a DD214, but must provide the veteran's name and social security number to receive benefits.
 - Student Records will need transcripts from high school or GED scores and official transcripts from any previous colleges you have attended. Military transcripts are optional, but you can have them sent to Student Records to be evaluated for transfer credit.
6. Submit a copy of your class schedule to the Financial Aid & Veterans' Affairs Office each semester and each time your schedule changes.
7. Sign a Veterans' Educational Benefits Procedure form once a year in the Financial Aid Office.

Things to Remember:

1. The VA will only allow students to attempt one certificate or degree at a time.
2. The VA will only cover classes that are required for the certificate or degree you have listed with the Student Services Center. Please make sure the degree/major listed on your class schedule is correct.
3. P ED 110 cannot be covered by VA benefits if you have had 6 months or more of active duty service. If you have had 6 months or more of active duty service, you can submit your DD214 to Student Records to receive Prior Credit for P ED.
4. Students using the Chapter 33 Post 9/11 GI Bill need to be enrolled in at least 7 credit hours for the entire Fall and Spring semesters or at least 6 credit hours for the entire Summer semester to receive the housing allowance. To receive the maximum housing allowance, students must be enrolled in 12 or more credit hours and take at least one class that meets on campus. Students that enroll in online-only classes will receive 50% BAH.
5. Students are responsible for turning their schedule in to the Financial Aid & Veterans' Affairs Office each semester they want to use VA benefits and each time they make a schedule change (add or drop a class or change sections).
6. Students need to notify the Financial Aid & Veterans Affairs' Office if they change their major.
7. Benefits are only paid for the amount of time students are in class. For example, late start classes do not have benefits paid for the full semester; instead, the VA will pay benefits only for the amount of time you are enrolled in the class.
8. Students on Financial Aid Suspension are not eligible to receive VA benefits. Please review the Standards of Academic Progress information in the College Catalog.

SEE REVERSE SIDE FOR MORE INFORMATION

Do I need to do a monthly self-certification with the VA? How do I certify?

- If you receive Chapter 30 GI Bill Active Duty, Chapter 1606 GI Bill Reservists/National Guard, or Chapter 1607 REAP benefits, you need to certify your enrollment on the last day of each month.
- Your Certificate of Eligibility from the VA will tell you if you need to certify and how to certify. You can certify online at gibill.va.gov/wave or by calling 877-823-2378.

Can I receive other forms of financial aid along with my Veterans' Educational Benefits?

Yes! There are several other sources of aid that veterans can apply for:

- Federal Grants/Direct Loans – Veterans can also apply for the Federal Pell grant and/or Direct Loans by completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid online at www.fafsa.gov. Pell grants are income based.
- IVG – Veterans can apply for the Illinois Veterans' Grant. For assistance or to apply, go to www.collegeillinois.org and click on "Students & Parents", "During College - Paying", "Military Service", "ISAC Programs", "Illinois Veterans Grant Program".
- ING – Members of the Illinois National Guard may apply for the Illinois National Guard Program. For assistance or to apply, go to www.collegeillinois.org and click on "Students & Parents", "During College - Paying", "Military Service", "ISAC Programs", "Illinois National Guard Grant". ING applications must be completed once per year. Please see the "Application Deadline Dates" on that site for more information.
- MIA/POW – Dependents of a person who was an Illinois resident at the time they entered active duty and has been declared to be a prisoner of war, missing in action, dead as a result of a service-connected disability, or disabled with a 100 percent disability as the result of a service-connected cause as recognized by the U.S. Department of Veterans' Affairs or the U.S. Department of Defense, may be eligible to receive the MIA/POW Scholarship. Please go to www2.illinois.gov/veterans and click on "State Benefits", "Education", to apply and for more information.
- Scholarships – Veterans can apply for scholarships through the Richland Community College Foundation Office. Applications for Fall and Spring scholarships and a complete list of scholarships are available online at richland.edu/foundation/scholarships.