

Veterans Retraining Assistance Program (VRAP)

GAVCO 2013 Spring Conference

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VETERANS BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

Agenda

- VRAP Overview
- Application Process
- Approved Programs
- Certification
- Payments
- Common Questions
- Questions

VRAP Overview

- On November 21, 2011, President Obama signed Public Law 112-56, the VOW to Hire Heroes Act of 2011, which includes the Veterans Retraining Assistance Program (VRAP) for unemployed veterans.
- The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and the Department of Labor (DoL) will collaborate to implement the program.

VRAP Overview

- **Purpose:** To offer 12 months of training assistance to unemployed veterans as of the date of application.
- **Applications:** The Department of Labor (DoL) will make the initial determination of eligibility for VRAP.
 - VA will make further eligibility determinations and issue payments.

VRAP Overview

- **Payments:** Receive up to 12 months of assistance at the full-time rate under Montgomery GI Bill Active Duty (Currently \$1,564 per mo.)
- **Participant Limitations:**
 - 45,000 participants during FY 2012
 - 54,000 participants during 10/01/12 – *03/31/14

VRAP Overview

- Be between 35-60 years old
- Be unemployed (determined by DoL)
- Have an other than dishonorable discharge
- Not be eligible for any other VA education program (e.g. Post-9/11 GI Bill) at the time of application
- Not in receipt of VA compensation due to unemployability
- Not enrolled in a federal/state job training program

VRAP Overview

- **Entitlement**

- Veterans are entitled to 12 months of VRAP.
- Individuals will be charged one day of entitlement for each day of training (because only paying Full Time)
- Entitlement will end effective the earlier of:
 - The program completion date
 - The entitlement exhaust date
 - The VRAP program end date of April 1, 2014

Application Process

- **Step 1:**
 - Veterans interested in applying for VRAP should visit www.benefits.va.gov/VOW for additional information and/or access to VONAPP.
- **Step 2:**
 - Veterans should select the VRAP application (22-1990R) from the available options.
- **Step 3:**
 - Veterans should complete the initial questions for DoL to determine their eligibility.

Application Process

- **Step 4:**
 - If the Veteran is not eligible based on DoL's initial questions, a denial letter will be generated (with an option to print) that includes appellate rights, and instructions. At this point, the application process will terminate.
- **Step 5:**
 - If the Veteran is eligible based on DoL's initial questions, the Veteran will continue completion of the VONAPP application for submission to VA.

Approved Programs

- Eligible Veterans may pursue a program of training that:
 - Is approved for VA Benefits;
 - Is pursued on a full-time basis;
 - Is offered by a community college or technical school;
 - Leads to an associate degree or certificate; and
 - Provides training for high-demand occupations as defined by DoL
 - A list of occupations can be found online at <http://www.benefits.va.gov/VOW>

Approved Programs

Terminations:

- VA will terminate VRAP payments the earlier of the training discontinuance date (including completion or graduation), or the VRAP no pay date of April 1, 2014.

Unsatisfactory Attendance, Conduct, or Progress:

- Veterans will be terminated the earlier of:
 - The date the institution terminates enrollment; or
 - The date the Veterans progress became unsatisfactory.

Reductions:

- Individuals who reduce their training below full-time will no longer be eligible to receive assistance under VRAP.
- Benefits will be terminated the date of reduction.

Note: VA will re-establish benefits if an individual increases his/her training time back to full-time.

Approved Programs

Change of program:

- Any changes in programs must be submitted by a new VA Form 22-1990R which is only available electronically.
- For VRAP, a change in program consists of:
 1. A change in educational, professional, or vocational objective; or
 2. When there is no change in the educational, professional, or vocational objective....any change that results in the loss of credit earned while pursuing training under VRAP will be treated as a change in program.

Approved Programs

Change of program:

Example...

- *A Veteran changing his/her program from an Associate of Arts in Accounting to an Associate of Arts in Finance is acceptable, provided that there is **ZERO** loss of credit.*
 1. The educational objective (Associate of Arts) is the same and they fit into the same professional/vocational category.
 2. There is a distinct difference between not completing a program because you dropped out of school, compared to a non-completion because you're now majoring in Finance.

Certification

- Enrollments and amendments must be submitted electronically through VA-ONCE.
- Institutions must electronically certify enrollments before individuals may receive payment.

Note: Due to the 45,000 participant limit being hit on August 15, 2012, all applications received after August 15, 2012 resulted in enrollments not being paid prior to 10-1-12 (54,000 participant cap, see slide 4).

Certification

- Community colleges and technical schools may be indentified by the 2nd digit of the facility code (4 through 9).
- If the 2nd digit in the facility code is 1 through 3, the community college must be verified through college navigator.
 - If the school **is** listed then it meets the definition of a community college and a Certificate of Eligibility (CoE) will be issued.
 - If the school **is not** listed then it does not meet the definition of a community college. The CoE will still be issued but it will also indicate that the school/course is not approved.

Certification

- VA will make payment to Veterans only after:
 - VA has verified that the program leads to an approved associate degree or certificate at a community college or technical school.
 - Approval displayed in WEAMS.
 - The institution certifies full-time enrollment; and
 - The individual verifies their monthly attendance through WAVE.

Payments

- VRAP participants will receive a monthly amount equal to the Montgomery GI Bill (ch30) 3 year full-time rate.
- The rate is subject to an annual COLA increase.
- Benefits are paid directly to the Veteran.
- Veterans will be responsible for all expenses including tuition, fees, and books.

Payments

- **Standard Terms:**
 - Quarter (10-13 weeks)
 - Semester (15-19 weeks)

Example (Non-Payable Standard Semester Term):

Type of Training
Undergraduate

Name of Program
ASSOCIATE SCIENCE NURSING;012;133

Credit for Prior Training
NA

Enroll Begin	Dates End	Revised End Date	Res Hrs	Dist Hrs	R/D Hrs	Clock Hrs	T&F Amt	Trng Time
01/07/13	05/07/13		9				\$1,800.00	FULL

Payments

- Credit Hour Equivalence

<u>Enrollment Term Dates</u>		
Begin Date:	1/7/2013	Total Days 121
No Pay Date:	5/8/2013	

<u>Holiday Break Dates (if applicable)</u>		
Begin Date:		Total Days 0
No Pay Date:		

Days in Term: 121

Weeks in Term: 17

<u>Semester Terms</u>		<u>Quarter Terms</u>	
Number Hours Enrolled	9	Number Hours Enrolled	
Credit Hour Equivalent =	9.53	Credit Hour Equivalent =	0.00

Semester Training Time	Three-Fourth	Quarter Training Time	
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Payments

- **Example (Payable Non-Standard Semester Term)**

Type of Training
Undergraduate

Name of Program
ASSOCIATE SCIENCE NURSING;012;133

Credit for Prior Training
NA

Enroll Begin	Dates End	Revised End Date	Res Hrs	Dist Hrs	R/D Hrs	Clock Hrs	T&F Amt	Trng Time
01/07/13	03/07/13		9				\$1,800.00	FULL

Payments

- **Credit Hour Equivalence**

<u>Enrollment Term Dates</u>				
Begin Date:	<input type="text" value="1/7/2013"/>	<table border="1"><tr><td>Total Days</td></tr><tr><td>60</td></tr></table>	Total Days	60
Total Days				
60				
No Pay Date:	<input type="text" value="3/8/2013"/>			

<u>Holiday Break Dates (if applicable)</u>				
Begin Date:	<input type="text"/>	<table border="1"><tr><td>Total Days</td></tr><tr><td>0</td></tr></table>	Total Days	0
Total Days				
0				
No Pay Date:	<input type="text"/>			

Days in Term:

Weeks in Term:

<u>Semester Terms</u>	<u>Quarter Terms</u>
Number Hours Enrolled <input type="text" value="9"/>	Number Hours Enrolled <input type="text"/>
Credit Hour Equivalent = <input type="text" value="18.00"/>	Credit Hour Equivalent = <input type="text" value="0.00"/>

Semester Training Time <input type="text" value="Full"/>	Quarter Training Time <input type="text"/>
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Common Questions

Question: Can a VRAP participant work while receiving VRAP benefits?

Answer: As of the date of application for VRAP, individuals must be unemployed. However, employment thereafter is not prohibited while pursuing an educational goal.

Question: What programs may be pursued under VRAP?

Answer: Programs of education must be approved for VA education benefits, be offered by a community college or technical school, lead to an associate degree or certificate, be pursued full-time, and lead to employment for a high demand occupation as defined by DoL.

Question: Is Tutorial Assistance available with VRAP?

Answer: No.

Common Questions

Question: If a Veteran completed a program under VRAP and has remaining entitlement, can that individual pursue another program?

Answer: No.

Question: Can a student complete more than one certificate under VRAP?

Answer: If a student completes a certificate program under VRAP and pursues a second certificate program that leads to the same educational, vocational, or professional objective (high-demand occupation) then VA may pay benefits for that second program.

Question: Can an individual attend 2 institutions provided that the credit from the secondary school are accepted by the degree granting institution and count toward program completion?

Answer: Yes.

Common Questions

Question: Can an enrollment be paid that extends beyond March 31, 2014?

Answer: No. Individuals eligible for VRAP will only be paid benefits through March 31, 2014, when the program ends.

Question: Is advance payment available under VRAP?

Answer: Yes. If the institution has completed the necessary documentation and is approved for advance payment.

Question: If a term, quarter, semester, or enrollment period begins prior to July 1, 2012, can VRAP benefits be paid for the portion of the course pursued after June 30, 2012?

Answer: No. VRAP benefits can only be paid for terms, quarters, semester, or enrollment periods that begin on or after July 1, 2012.

Questions?

