



DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
Veterans Benefits Administration
Washington, D.C. 20420

October 1, 2013

Dear School Official:

This is written to notify you of an important policy change for non-college degree programs in accredited public and not for profit proprietary institutions of higher learning (IHLs).

Public Law 111-377, section 203, provided that "an accredited standard college degree program offered at a public or not-for-profit proprietary institution that is accredited by an agency or association recognized for that purpose by the Secretary of Education shall be "deemed approved", subject to sections 3675 (b)(1) and (2), 3680A, 3684 and 3696". This law did not address accredited public and not-for-profit non-college degree programs at these institutions, therefore after consultation with VA's General Counsel we sent guidance on August 16, 2011 that indicated non-college degree programs would also be considered "deemed approved", providing applicable statutes were met. Accredited public and not-for-profit proprietary institutions were asked to submit a VA Modification form to their VA Education Liaison Representative to indicate new or modified programs. Based on continued examination of this policy and the intent of the law we recently requested another opinion from VA's General Counsel.

VA's General Counsel has determined that non-college degree programs do not meet the criteria outlined in section 203 and indicate that these programs should be reviewed and approved for the purposes of payment of VA education benefits. Effective October 1, 2013, VA will return approval authority for non-college degree programs to the State Approving Agencies. The VA modification form sent to you on August 16, 2011, should not be utilized after this date. You must request approval for any new or modified non-college degree programs from the SAA of jurisdiction. To streamline processes, you will now also request approval or modification of any standard college degree program offered under contract from your SAA of jurisdiction. You will notify the SAA regarding any accreditation changes, name changes, address changes, policy changes, etc.

Accredited public and not-for-profit IHLs with only standard college degrees (no non-college degree programs) will also notify the SAA regarding any accreditation changes, name changes, address changes, etc.

Please note: SAAs will consider accredited public and not-for-profit proprietary non-college degree programs that were submitted, accepted and entered into the VA approval system prior to October 1, 2013, to be approved, as long as the program continues to meet statutory requirements for approval.

Accredited public and not-for-profit IHLs will continue to send the VAF 22-8794, school certifying official designation form to the Education Liaison Representative (ELR) of jurisdiction, with a copy to the SAA. The current ELR listing can be found at <http://www.gibill.va.gov/school-certifying-officials/elr.html>.

Please contact your SAA to obtain their current approval application or for additional questions regarding non-college degree approval criteria. SAA contact information can be found at <http://www.nasaa-vetseducation.com/contacts/default.aspx>.

Please contact your SAA should you have further questions. Thank you for your continued service to our nations Veterans, service members, guard members, reservists and dependents.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert M. Worley II", followed by a stylized flourish or symbol.

Robert M. Worley II
Director, Education Service