



Wisconsin Department  
of Veterans Affairs

# A GUIDE TO VETERANS' EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS: STATE OF WISCONSIN

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# WDVA Benefits Overview

- The Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs either administers or provides certification for the following benefits:
  - Wisconsin GI Bill
  - Veterans Education (VetEd) Reimbursement Grant
  - Veteran Identifier
  - Disabled Veterans and Surviving Spouses Property Tax Credit
  - Professional/Occupational License Fee Waiver
  - Returning Service Members DNR Voucher
  - Assistance to Needy Veterans (ANV) Grant
  - Retraining Grant
  - Veteran-Owned Business
  - Veterans Employment Grant
  - Nonprofit Grant

# Wisconsin GI Bill - Tuition Fee Remission Program

- The Wisconsin GI Bill remits or waives eligible tuition and fees up to 128 credits or 8 semesters (whichever ends up being greater) at UW System schools or Wisconsin Technical College System schools for qualifying Wisconsin veterans, spouses, or dependents.
- The Wisconsin GI Bill sets no delimiting periods following military service during which the benefit must be used.

# Eligibility for Veteran Applicants

- When the veteran is applying as the student, there are two main eligibility criteria that must be verified:

- Service requirements

AND

- Residency requirements

# Veteran Applicants – Service Requirement

- There are three aspects of the service requirement that must be met:
  - Type of Service
  - AND
  - Term of Service
  - AND
  - Character of Service

# Veteran Applicants – Type of Service

- The type of service requirement would be met if:
  - ▣ The veteran served on regular active duty in the US Armed Forces.

OR

- ▣ The veteran served in the Reserves/National Guard and was mobilized to a period of active duty or active duty for training (ADT).
- The type of service requirement would not be met if:
  - ▣ The veteran's only active service was Active Duty for Special Work (ADSW) or Active Guard Reserve (AGR) (National Guard Component).

# Veteran Applicants – Term of Service

- The term of service requirement would be met if:
  - ▣ The veteran's period of active duty or active duty for training was at least 90 days (cumulative) during wartime.

OR

- ▣ The veteran's period of active duty or active duty for training was at least two consecutive years during peacetime.

OR

- ▣ The veteran received an expeditionary medal or was discharged due to a service-connected disability, hardship, or reduction of forces (exceptions under s.36.27(3p)(a)(1r).

# Veteran Applicants – Character of Service

- The character of service requirement would be met if:
  - ▣ The veteran received an honorable discharge as indicated on DD-214.

OR

- ▣ The veteran received a general (under honorable conditions) discharge as indicated on DD-214.

OR

- ▣ The veteran fulfilled their initial service obligation while serving honorably/in good standing.



# Veteran Applicants – Residency Requirement

- If the veteran is the student, they must be a current resident of Wisconsin at time of application.
- In addition, the veteran must either:
  - ▣ Have entered or re-entered active duty as a Wisconsin resident.
    - Usually determined by Home of Record on DD-214.

OR

- ▣ Have held Wisconsin residency for at least five consecutive years preceding the date of application.
  - Usually determined by WI voting records, WI income tax filings, WI driver's license, or WDVA 1805 (Veterans Residency Affidavit).

# Veteran Applicant – Scenario

- As an example:
  - ▣ A veteran served in the National Guard and was mobilized to active duty for training from June 1, 2000 to December 1, 2000. DD-214 lists an honorable discharge and a Home of Record of Minnesota. A voting records search shows that the veteran has voted in Wisconsin for the last six years and is currently residing in Wisconsin.
  - ▣ The veteran qualifies for the Wisconsin GI Bill.
    - Meets the service requirement with at least 90 days of active duty for training during wartime and an honorable discharge.
    - Meets residency requirement due to holding WI residency for five consecutive years preceding application.

# Veteran Applicant – Scenario

- Another example:
  - A veteran served in the US Army from January 1, 2000 to February 1, 2002 before receiving a ‘Bad Conduct’ discharge and did not complete initial service obligation. DD-214 lists a Home of Record of Wisconsin.
  - The veteran does not qualify for the Wisconsin GI Bill.
    - Meets residency requirement with Home of Record of WI.
    - Does not meet service requirement due to Character of Service (Bad Conduct), even though veteran meets type and term of service requirements.

# Eligibility for Dependent/Spouse Applicants

- When a dependent or spouse of a veteran is applying as a student, there are three main eligibility criteria we must verify:
  - Service requirements
  - AND
  - Residency requirements
  - AND
  - Disability requirements

# Dep./Spouse Applicant – Service Requirement

- The service requirement would be met if:
    - ▣ The veteran served on active duty or active duty for training for at least **one day** during wartime or peacetime.
- AND
- ▣ The veteran was discharged under either honorable or general (under honorable conditions).

# Dep./Spouse Applicant – Residency Requirement

- There currently is only one way the residency requirement would be met for dependent or spouse applicants:
  - ▣ The veteran must have been a resident of Wisconsin at time of entry or re-entry into active service.
    - Usually determined by Home of Record on DD-214.
  - ▣ If the veteran's Home of Record was in a different state, the dependent/spouse would not qualify even if veteran has held at least five years of WI residency.
- The student (not necessarily the veteran) also must be a current WI resident at time of application.

## Dep./Spouse Applicant – Disability Requirement

- The disability requirement would be met if the veteran holds or has held at least a 30% combined service-connected disability rating with the US Department of Veterans Affairs.
- Veteran would not necessarily need to hold 30% rating at time of application, as long as they have held 30% combined rating at any point in the past.

# Dependents – Age Limit

- WDVA can only provide certification for dependents between the ages of 17 and 26. This is also the age range the dependent has to use the benefit within.
- For spouse applicants, there is no age limit.



# Dependent Applicant - Scenario

- The veteran served in the US Marine Corps from January 1, 1980 to October 1, 1980 before being discharged under General (Under Honorable) Conditions. Home of Record at time of entry into active service was WI. Veteran also has a 60% combined disability rating with USDVA.
- The dependent of the veteran would qualify.
  - ▣ Veteran meets service requirement with one day of honorable active service, even though service was less than two years during peacetime.
  - ▣ Meets residency requirement with Home of Record of WI.
  - ▣ Meets disability requirement with at least 30% rating.

# Spouse Applicant – Scenario

- The veteran has two DD-214s:
  - First DD-214 is for active duty in US Air Force from January 1, 2000 to December 31, 2003. Discharged under Honorable conditions. Home of Record on this DD-214 is Illinois.
  - Second DD-214 is for when veteran was serving in Air National Guard and was mobilized to active duty for special work (ADSW) from January 1, 2012 to January 1, 2013. Discharged under Honorable conditions. Home of Record on this DD-214 is Wisconsin.
  - Veteran has 30% combined rating with USDVA.

# Spouse Applicant – Scenario

- The spouse of the veteran would not qualify.
  - ▣ First period of service meets service requirements for Wisconsin GI Bill, but not residency requirement.
    - Because Home of Record was Illinois.
  - ▣ Second period of service meets residency requirement, as well as term and character of service of requirements, but not type of service requirement.
    - Because this period of service was Active Duty for Special Work (ADSW) – must have been either regular active duty or active duty for training.
- Each individual period of service would have to meet both the service and residency requirements.
- Still ineligible even though veteran meets disability requirement.

# GPA Requirement

- The student, whether it be an eligible veteran, dependent, or spouse, must maintain at least a 2.0 cumulative GPA in order to remain eligible for Wisconsin GI Bill benefits.
- Should a student's cumulative GPA fall below the 2.0 threshold, the student may still enroll the following term, but would not be able to use Wisconsin GI Bill at that time.
- Must get cumulative GPA back to a 2.0 or higher to begin using Wisconsin GI Bill again.

# Post-9/11 GI Bill and Wisconsin GI Bill

- ❑ Veterans who are eligible for the Federal VA Post-9/11 GI Bill must elect to use that federal benefit in order to use the Wisconsin GI Bill.
- ❑ Veterans who are eligible for, but elect not to apply for the Post-9/11 GI Bill, will not be eligible for Wisconsin GI Bill benefits.
- ❑ If a veteran eligible for the Post-9/11 GI Bill elects to use the Montgomery GI Bill or another Federal education benefit instead of the Post-9/11, the veteran would not be concurrently eligible for the Wisconsin GI Bill.

# Wisconsin GI Bill

- The Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs **certifies** the veteran's status to the UW or WTCS school.
- The university or college **administers** the program.
  - The school approves the student, whether veteran, spouse, or dependent for the waiver of Tuition and Standard Academic Fees.

# Veterans Education (VetEd) Reimbursement Grant

- The VetEd Grant provides tuition reimbursement based on a credit-bank system that is determined by the length of active duty service.
- Only for veterans who have not yet been awarded a Bachelor's degree.
  - ▣ Not available to dependents or spouses of veterans.
- Reimbursement is issued following successful course completion at an eligible UW, technical college, or approved private institution of higher learning.

# Veterans Education (VetEd) Reimbursement Grant

- There is a broader list of schools that a veteran may attend under VetEd Grant.
  - ▣ Not strictly limited to UW or WTCS schools, like Wisconsin GI Bill.
- Veterans who are eligible for the Wisconsin GI Bill must apply for and use those benefits in order to be eligible for VetEd reimbursement.
- Cannot use VetEd Grant and Wisconsin GI Bill concurrently.



# VetEd Limitations & Restrictions

- Applications due within 60 days after semester start date.
- Minimum GPA: 2.0 GPA for course or semester.
- Income limitation:
  - The veteran's household income must be below \$50,000, plus \$1,000 for each dependent in excess of two dependents.
- Delimiting date:
  - Veterans may use VetEd up to their 10-year anniversary of leaving active duty. Once a veteran reaches the 10-year delimiting date, they can only be reimbursed up to 11 credits per academic period.
  - After delimiting date, a maximum of 60 unused credits may be used.

# VetEd – Amount of Reimbursement

- Maximum amount of credits for which eligible veteran would receive reimbursement is based on amount of time veteran spent on active duty.
  - ▣ 90-180 days = 30 credits or two semesters
  - ▣ 181-730 days = 60 credits or four semesters
  - ▣ 731 days or more = 120 credits or eight semesters

# VetEd – Eligibility Requirements

- Eligibility for the VetEd Grant is based on Chapter 45 of the Wisconsin State Statutes.
- In order to qualify, a veteran must meet both service and residency requirements:
  - ▣ The service requirement would be met if the veteran served on active duty for at least 90 days during wartime or two consecutive years during peacetime.
    - Unlike Wisconsin GI Bill, active duty for training would not qualify.
  - ▣ The residency requirement would be met if the veteran was a Wisconsin resident at time of entry into active duty or if the veteran has held at least 12 consecutive months of WI residency.
    - Must also be current Wisconsin resident.

# How to Apply for Wisconsin GI Bill or VetEd Grant

- Veterans may apply for the Wisconsin GI Bill or VetEd Grant electronically using our online application tool, myWisVets ([myWisVets.com](http://myWisVets.com)).
- Veterans may also apply by paper application.
  - Wisconsin GI Bill: Form WDVA 2030
  - VetEd Grant: Form WDVA 2200
- Dependent/spouse Wisconsin GI Bill applications must generally be submitted via paper application if dependent/spouse is not yet in WDVA database.
- For assistance in applying for these benefits, please contact the Veterans Benefits Resource Center at (800) 947-8387 or your County Veterans Service Office.

# For more information

- Wisconsin GI Bill: WI State Statutes Ch. 36.27(3n)-(3p)
- VetEd Grant: WI State Statutes Ch. 45.20
- For questions on the VetEd Grant, please contact Leslie Busby-Amegashie at (608) 266-3575.
- For any policy or other specific questions on the Wisconsin GI Bill, please contact the Veterans Assistance Section Supervisor, Brian Jones, at (608) 267-1782.



Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs

Thank you for what you do for veterans!