

Veteran Affairs Information

Education Call Center

The toll-free number for the Education Call Center is **1-888-442-4551**. The Call Center is in Muskogee, OK, and Education Case Managers are available 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. (CST), Monday through Friday. The system's automated functions can provide information about benefits, applications, etc., and are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Individual Veterans can access their own record to obtain date of last benefit payment, check amounts, etc.

Applications for Benefits

VA students can submit applications online at <https://www.va.gov/education/apply-for-education-benefits/application/1990/introduction>. If students don't have access to apply online, they can call **1-888-442-4551** and ask that an application be mailed to them.

All VA students must file an application when they first start school before they can receive benefits. Students who have never received VA benefits must file an original application. Please refer to the website above to submit applications.

Comparison Tool

Please use the VA Comparison Tool at <https://va.gov/gi-bill-comparison-tool/> to calculate VA education benefits. This is a great tool to show how much a VA student could receive based on the benefit chapter and percentage.

Request Transcripts

If you have previously attended other colleges, the student must request that official copies of military and college transcripts be sent to Florida Academy. If transcripts are not received within 30 days of the program start date, the student will be subject to having VA benefits terminated according to Section 1775 of Title 38 U.S. Code. The VA will not pay for any classes that have already been satisfactorily completed at a prior institution.

Financial Aid

Students using VA Educational Benefits may be eligible to receive financial aid. These additional funds help pay for tuition, books, and supplies while awaiting VA Educational Benefits. Any tuition, supplies, and fees either not covered through education benefits or financial aid are the financial responsibility of the student to pay to Florida Academy. Any payment arrangements to cover the full amount of tuition, supplies, and fees is required to be completed before the student attends classes.

Repeating Courses

VA regulations prohibit repeating a course in which a passing grade (D grade or higher) was earned. However, if a C grade or better is necessary to progress to the next level, then the repeated course can be certified.

Monthly Monetary Award and Certificate of Eligibility

All eligibility and monthly monetary awards are determined by the Department of Veterans Affairs and not by Florida Academy School Certifying Officials. It may take 4 to 12 weeks to start receiving a monthly VA payment. Monthly VA payments are paid based on the following: number of credit hours the student is enrolled; location of residential classes; class attendance; and the particular program the student is participating in.

All eligible tuition and fees will be certified through the VA by the VA School Certifying Official. Book cost is paid through a book stipend. The stipend is a lump sum payment paid directly to the student from the VA when the student's enrollment certification is processed. The stipend is prorated by the student's length of service percentage. The maximum stipend is \$1000 per academic year (08/01/YY – 07/31/YY). Any tuition, supplies, and fees either not covered through education benefits or financial aid are the financial responsibility of the student to pay to Florida Academy. Any payment arrangements to cover the full amount of tuition, supplies, and fees is required to be completed before the student attends classes.

Students using Chapter 30 – Montgomery GI Bill®, Chapter 35 – Survivors' and Dependents' Educational Assistance Program or Chapter 1606/1607 – Montgomery GI Bill® will receive a monthly Educational Assistance Allowance. This allowance can be used toward paying tuition and fees, or toward personal expenses. It is recommended that students using these benefits speak with a financial aid processor about whether additional payment methods will be needed and what their options are.

VA students must provide Florida Academy a copy of the Certificate of Eligibility (COE) no later than the first day of class, if using the Chapter 31 – Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment or Chapter 33 – Post 9/11 GI Bill®

- A "Statement of Benefits" obtained from the VA website – eBenefits, or a VA Form 28-1905 from Chapter 31 authorization purposes can substitute a COE.
- VA students are permitted to attend or participate in the course of education during the period beginning on the date on which the individual provides to Florida Academy a COE for entitlement to educational assistance and ending on the earlier of the following dates:
 - o The date on which payment from VA is made to the institution
 - o 90 days after the date the institution certified tuition and fees following the receipt of the certificate of eligibility
- No penalty, including assessment of late fees, the denial of access to classes, libraries, or other institutional facilities, or the requirement that a covered individual borrow additional funds, on any VA student because of the student's inability to meet the financial obligations to the institution due to the delayed disbursement funding from VA under Chapter 31 or Chapter 33.

Reporting Changes

To avoid a delay, suspension, or overpayment of VA benefits, students must report all changes to the VA School Certifying Official as stated below:

- Address Changes
- Name Changes
- Change in credit hours
- Withdrawal from classes or school

Student Verification of Enrollment

Students receiving Chapter 30, 1606, and 1607 must verify their enrollment monthly to the VA by using the Web Automated Verification of Enrollment (WAVE) or by the Interactive Voice Response (IVR).

The preferred verification method is WAVE, which includes features not in IVR. When students are awarded benefits, the award letter they receive describes WAVE and IVR. The earliest students can verify their enrollment is the last calendar day of each month. WAVE allows students to verify their enrollment on the Internet. WAVE is on the Education Service website at <https://www.gibill.va.gov/wave/index.do>.

Updated March 2023

Students must be currently enrolled in an approved educational program and must have a current benefit award to use WAVE. The WAVE system permits students to perform a multitude of functions.

Veterans Called to Active Duty

Florida Academy recognizes that veteran students may have unique challenges if they are still serving on an active or reserve basis. Veterans who are enrolled in the current term who get called to active duty can petition for an administrative withdrawal with 100 percent tuition refund for the current term by providing the appropriate documentation to the Director of Education.

**GI Bill® is a registered trademark of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). More information about education benefits offered by VA is available at the official U.S. government web site at <http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill>.*

Admission Policies for Students using Veteran Affairs (VA) Education Benefits

In addition to the General Admissions Policies, the following policies are required for compliance with the VA State Approving Agency of Florida.

- **The VA requires all previous transcripts be submitted for review of transferrable credit.** A written record that clearly indicates that appropriate previous education and training has been evaluated and granted, with training time shortened and tuition reduced proportionately, will be maintained. This includes Joint Service Transcripts for students that served in the military. All transcripts must be received within the first two weeks of the student's program start date.
- A copy of the servicemember's DD-214 and/or Certificate of Eligibility
- A signed Shopping Sheet
- Submission of form 22-1990, 22-5490, or 22-5495 to the VA. The correct form is dictated by benefit chapter being utilized and dependency status.
- In accordance with Title 38 US Code 3679 subsection (e), this school adopts the following additional provisions for any students using U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Post 9/11 G.I. Bill® (Ch. 33) or Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment (Ch. 31) benefits, while payment to the institution is pending from the VA. This school will not:
 - Prevent the student's enrollment;
 - Assess a late penalty fee to the student;
 - Require the student to secure alternative or additional funding; or
 - Deny the student access to any resources (access to classes, libraries, or other institutional facilities) available to other students who have satisfied their tuition and fee bills to the institution.

However, to qualify for this provision, such students may be required to:

- Produce the VA Certificate of Eligibility (COE) by the first day of program/course start;
- Provide a written request to be certified; and/or
- Provide additional information needed to properly certify the enrollment as described in other institutional policies.

Attendance

Florida Academy's policies and regulatory compliance require that accurate attendance be reported to all pertinent state and/or federal agencies and departments. Students must attend and complete all published program hours to successfully complete a program.

- Students not meeting a cumulative daily attendance record of at least 67% may be withdrawn.
- Students using VA (Veteran Affairs) Education Benefits must maintain a cumulative daily attendance record of at least 67% to maintain VA education benefit eligibility.

Educators keep daily attendance records for all classes. The daily attendance records are posted in the student's digital record maintained by the Registrar and is the official attendance record for each student. Students not in attendance for any portion of a class will accrue time absent by the quarter hour. A program's published hours must be met for successful completion of the program. Any missed time must be made up in order to complete the program. **Attended hours (including make-up hours) cannot exceed a student's scheduled hours of attendance.** Students are hereby advised to keep a personal log of attendance for verification purposes.

Students missing more than ten (10) consecutive calendar days (this includes weekends and holidays except as notated below) will be withdrawn from Florida Academy.

Students must complete their program of study in a maximum timeframe of 150% of expected completion time for the program in which they are enrolled.

For attendance purposes only, the Thanksgiving Break*, Winter Break*, and school closures (due to issues such as hurricanes) are not included in the ten (10) consecutive calendar days policy. *Please refer to the Holiday Schedule section of the catalog for exact dates.

Attendance is determined by the following guidelines:

- If a student is not present for class, the student will receive an absence for that day.
- If a student arrives late for class, the student will receive a Tardy for that day. Tardies are calculated based on fifteen-minute increments. If a student is 1-15 minutes late for class, they will be docked 15 minutes of scheduled attendance. If a student is more than 15 minutes late, the student will not be allowed to attend on that day. Any exceptions to this rule are at the discretion of the Education Director and/or designee.
- Early departures are calculated in fifteen-minute increments as well.
- Students are responsible for coordinating with the educator to make-up material/hours covered during the missed period of time.

Please be advised that students may be placed on probation or terminated due to lack of attendance.

Veteran Educational Benefits Attendance Policy

In addition to Florida Academy's general attendance policies, students using VA education benefits who are enrolled in NCD programs will have their VA education benefits terminated for unsatisfactory attendance when accumulated absences, tardiness, and class cuts exceed 33% of scheduled class clock hours. **Make-up time will not be included in calculating attendance for VA benefit purposes.** Per VA regulations, VA educational benefits will not be extended due to absence(s).

The termination will be reported to the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) within 30 days of the Veteran's last date of attendance and will reflect that last date of the students' class attendance before violating the policy.

A veteran may be recertified for VA education benefits at the beginning of the term or, where a school does not operate on a term basis, 30 days following the termination of benefits due to unsatisfactory attendance after showing that the cause of unsatisfactory attendance has been removed. This is done by the veterans meeting attendance standards, as defined, for one month after being terminated for unsatisfactory attendance.

Probation

Students may be placed on probation for various reasons that include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Academic Issues-Failure to maintain a cumulative grade average of 75% or better.
- Attendance Issues-Failure to attend scheduled program hours regularly and consistently.
- Behavioral Issues-Failure to adhere to Florida Academy and/or program specific policies of conduct.
- Misconduct

Students placed on probation will be required to adhere to an approved student advising form implemented by the Education Director and/or designee and signed by the student.

Veteran Educational Benefits Probation Policy

If a student utilizing VA Education benefits falls below the minimum required cumulative grade average (CGA), VA education benefits will be terminated until such time as the student meets the minimum CGA.

Dismissals/Terminations

Students may be dismissed/terminated for various reasons that include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Academic Issues- Failure to maintain a cumulative grade average of 75% or better.
- Attendance Issues-Failure to attend scheduled program hours regularly and consistently.
- Behavioral Issues-Failure to adhere to Florida Academy and/or program specific policies of conduct.
- Misconduct.

Leave of Absence

Florida Academy permits students to request a leave of absence (LOA) for up to 180 days in any 12-month period. Students must provide proof of extenuating circumstances that require the students to interrupt their education. The LOA may be authorized as one period or may be authorized as multiple leaves of absence.

Any planned leave of absence must be presented in writing one week prior to the onset of the request. The written request should explain the reason for the LOA; include supporting documentation (if applicable), the date of the expected leave, and the date of the expected return (if known). After the request is submitted, the committee and/or designee will grant or deny the LOA request.

In the case of an emergency, an LOA may be granted by Florida Academy without the required notice. An administrative LOA may be granted for the purpose of optimal course progression. Documentation (written or verbal) will be maintained by the school. Be advised that any leave of absence will modify the student's scheduled completion date. No additional charges will be added to the student's account as a result of the approved LOA.

Students on an approved LOA are not considered to be withdrawn and will not be subject to any increase in tuition or change in graduation requirements that may have occurred during their LOA. However, if a student does not return from an approved LOA on the date agreed upon, or exceeds the 180-day maximum, the student will be withdrawn.

Veteran Educational Benefits Leave of Absence Policy

All students may request a leave of absence from Florida Academy; however, VA education beneficiaries are not eligible to receive VA educational benefits while on a leave of absence. Per VA requirements, VA education benefits must be terminated at the point of the last date of attendance. These benefits may be reinstated upon the student's return from an approved leave of absence.