



# Federal Update

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Presentation for: AVECO Federal Update

**July 2022**



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# Overview

- Digital GI Bill
- GI Bill Comparison Tool Video
- GI Bill Engagement Update
- REMOTE Act Updates
- Isakson – Roe Act Updates
- VRRAP Updates
- VET TEC Updates
- GI Bill Summit
- Rollback of COVID-19 Provisions
- Questions



# Digital GI Bill

## Digital GI Bill | Project Milestones



This timeline presents the key milestones the DGIB Team has met in implementing and migrating capabilities to the Managed Service. On May 14, we deployed Release DGI-3.0.4.2 which **improved claims processing and enhanced automation capabilities for Veterans Claims Examiners and others. In the near future, we are releasing updates that provide for a streamlined and simplified Post-9/11 GI Bill (Chapter 33) application process** for Veterans and Service members and further improve claims processing.

Key Experience Stakeholders

- GI Bill Students
- Schools
- VA Employees
- Other



### Modernization Journey Start

03/11/21: Contract awarded and modernization journey mobilization kicks off.

Mar '21



### Legacy Legislative Release

07/31/21: Legislative updates including ability for Non-College Degree (NCD) students to verify monthly enrollment via text



Jul '21



### Post-9/11 GI Bill Managed Service Go-Live

09/29/21: Post-9/11 GI Bill claims (Chapter 33) functionality live in Managed Service



Sept '21



### Legislative Release

1/15/2022: Ability for Institute of Higher Learning (IHL) students to verify enrollment via text; email verification made available to NCD and IHL students



Jan '22



### VET TEC Managed Service Go-Live

04/16/2022: VET TEC Pilot Program claims processed in Managed Service. Provides for calculation of VET TEC awards, with and without amendments and generation of letters.



Apr '22



### System Improvements Release

05/14/2022: Improved experience for VCEs and ECC staff, improved letters verbiage, Post-9/11 GI Bill system bug fixes.



May '22



### Enhanced Original Claim (Application) Processing

Integration with service history (VADIR) to improve claims processing for Post-9/11 GI Bill applications, pre-filling data and reducing processing time, where possible



Future '22



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# Digital GI Bill

## Digital GI Bill | Project Updates



The Digital GI Bill (DGIB) team is continuing enhancements which contribute to direct, online, one-stop access to education benefit resources. On May 14<sup>th</sup> we deployed Release DGI-3.0.4.2, making back-end system improvements to improve claims processing and reduce redundancies.

### Release DGI-3.0.4.2

The Release improved claims processing and enhanced automation capabilities through updates which provide for:

- Consistent calculations of Monthly Housing Allowance debts
- Entitlement transfer improvements
- Updated language of Awards
- Ability for Education Call Center (ECC) staff and Veterans' Claims Examiners (VCEs) to update the verification screen.

### Program Increment (PI) 7 Planning

DGIB team's **PI 7 Planning** was held 6/1-6/3 to determine priorities for the next 9 weeks.

**For this Program Increment, the team is focused on:**

- Enhancing Transfer of Entitlement (TOE) application for transferred Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits
- Testing original claims application for Post-9/11 GI Bill self-entitlements
- Improving claims processing capabilities within the Managed Service

These changes contribute to the continued evolution of a Managed Service that increases efficiencies and reduces downtime, allowing VA to focus more on serving Veterans and their families.



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# Digital GI Bill

## Digital GI Bill | Change Management



As the DGIB Team prepares for new functionality and product launches in future releases, we are developing comprehensive change management plans to inform and prepare all key stakeholders and users of the coming changes.

### Education Benefits Application Enhancements

- Provides updated user interfaces and functionalities for Veterans to support a faster and easier application process for GI Bill benefits. Features include
- Pre-filled Service History
- Near Real-Time Eligibility of Benefits
- Comparison of Benefits & more!

### Enrollment Manager Enhancements

Improves the School Certifying Official's user experience and reduces manual data entry with:

- A streamlined user experience
- Pre-populated data

### Training and Communications Collaboration

Training



Communications

The DGIB teams are working together during planning, development and implementation of work products to provide for consistent messaging to key stakeholders and provide for the smooth implementation and knowledge sharing on impacts to Veterans, service members and their families.

#### Planned Communications Activities

- MEB and EM Product Launch Videos
- Comprehensive and Targeted Outreach Campaign including: Email, Social Media, Newsletters, Stakeholder Toolkits

#### Planned Training Activities

- Tailored training curriculum for SCOs and VA Staff including: Self-Study Modules, Job Aids, Instructor-Lead Webinars, Office Hours support, Videos, Tip of the Week Campaign, User Guides

Product Reviews

Content Accuracy

Quality Control

Knowledge Sharing

Best Practices

Content Development



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# Digital GI Bill

## Digital GI Bill | Enrollment Verification



The DGIB Team launched an innovative, exhaustive and data-driven campaign to drive the successful implementation of monthly enrollment verification. Both text and email verification are available to students, providing the option to verify via a channel that works best for them. The team has maintained consistent outreach to inform students of the requirement and encourage opt-in to text message and email, leading to a **current opt-in rate of 98%**.



### Enrollment Verification Rollout

#### NCD Rollout (8/1/2021)

Implemented Isakson and Roe legislation to enhance student benefits, including Monthly Enrollment Verification for students attending Non-College Degree (NCD) facilities.

#### IHL Rollout (1/15/2022)

Implemented Enrollment Verification for students at Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL), while adding in the ability to verify via email.



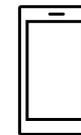
Email Outreach to Impacted Students

1.4M



Number of Students Impacted

307K



Total Enrollment Opt-In Count  
302K

Number of Schools with Perfect Verification Rates for April 2022



5,232



Number of Schools with 100% Opt-In Rates

7,590



Total Views of Enrollment Verification Video

26K



### Feedback from GI Bill Students



Remembering to verify enrollment is easy because VA sends you a text message.



[!] haven't had any issues with the text messages. It has all been pretty seamless.



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# Digital GI Bill

## Usability Testing Feedback Session Highlights



On April 14, 2022, over **618 School Certifying Officials** participated in a usability testing session for the Enrollment Manager prototype and feedback was overwhelmingly positive.

### Feature: Student Profile

**Students** > Riley Armstrong

### Riley Armstrong

Student ID 0013478 | VA ID 1234567 | ACTIVE

**Enrollments** | Programs | Benefit | Payments | Notes

Filter ▾ Showing 1 of 1 **Add enrollment**

**Winter Term 2022 at University of Arkansas** **Amend**

School code 12345678 | January 11, 2022 - June 04, 2022

PROCESSED Total credit hours 24 | Total clock hours 0

**BENEFIT Post-9/11 GI Bill**

Benefits remaining **11 months and 2 days**

Benefit level 100%

**Contact information**

Email address [ramstrong@uar.edu](mailto:ramstrong@uar.edu)

Home phone 123-456-7890  
Mobile phone 098-7665-4321

Mailing address  
221B Baker Street, Apartment 1,  
Washington, District of Columbia,  
USA 20005

**Edit**

*“Being able to see the benefits remaining is HUGE for SCOs! THANK YOU!”*

*“I love all of the different options that are now populated. It is easy to use, access, and update.”*

### Feature: SCO Dashboard

University of Arkansas Statistics

**Enrollments** | Students

*“This is priceless.”*

Since 2006, University of Arkansas has processed **2,560** enrollments for **1,800** GI Bill students.

In 2021, University of Arkansas has processed **234** enrollments.

**Current Enrollments**

Showing current enrollments 1 - 5 of 100

Name	Enrollment status	Last edited on	Last edited by
<a href="#">Jana Margaret Doe</a>	PENDING SCO REVIEW	Sept 07, 2021	Pete Davis
<a href="#">Hector Oliver Stanley Jr.</a>	PENDING SCO REVIEW	Sept 07, 2021	Marsha Olander
<a href="#">Sally Jacobs</a>	IN PROGRESS	Sept 03, 2021	You
<a href="#">Sekai Curran</a>	UNDER VA REVIEW	Aug 29, 2021	You
<a href="#">Maya Hurdle-Ziener</a>	PROCESSED	Aug 29, 2021	You

**Export**

*“Love that you can update multiple students at once and it is so much easier to read.”*



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# GI Bill Comparison Tool



## Progress Report: Shared Services Spotlight

### Communications Team: GI Bill Comparison Tool Video

#### Overview

- The team posted the short-form GI Bill Comparison Tool [video](#) on the Post-9/11 GI Bill Facebook page.
- The video shares the story of how one Veteran utilized the tool to pivot into a new career and emphasizes the improved Veteran experience with the side-by-side comparison and map features.

#### Impact

- By highlighting an individual's story, this video shows how VA is actively improving the lives of our Veterans and transitioning Service members through modernization efforts, which may help **increase awareness, engagement, and use of the GI Bill Comparison Tool, and may lead to an increase in GI Bill utilization.**



## Engagement Update



### Stakeholder Engagement

#### COVID-19 Provisions sunset



June 1, 2022, final notification  
on May 26 went to **2.4K** GI Bill beneficiaries  
and **453** schools



#### Section 1010 Short Code

Notified GI Bill beneficiaries on five-digit  
44354 short code allows



#### GI Bill Summit – April 14

10% increase in traffic to VA.gov web pages

#### Newsletters

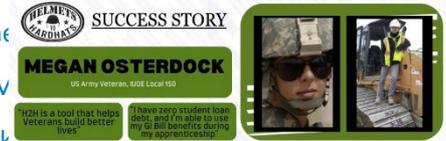
GI Bill Student Newsletter – May Issue  
VET TEC Newsletter

### Digital Engagement

- ✓ Section 1010 Social Media
- ✓ Instagram Posts (IBM + POE)
- ✓ TOE Tuesday Campaign
- ✓ VAntage Point VRRAP Blog

#### May Commemorations

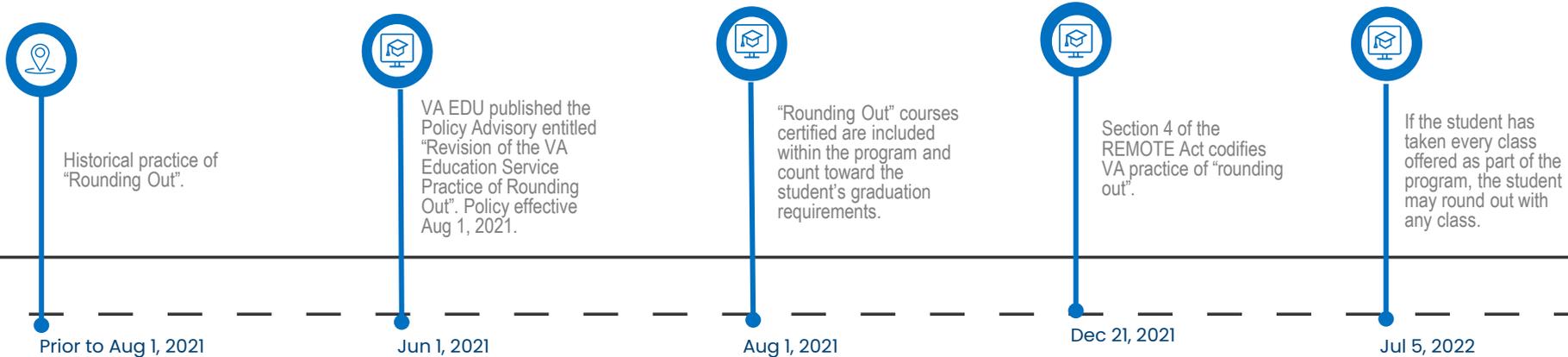
- ❖ National Mental Health Awareness
- ❖ National Military Appreciation Month
- ❖ Public Service Recognition Week
- ❖ National Teacher Appreciation Day
- ❖ National Skilled Trades Day
- ❖ Military Spouse Appreciation Day
- ❖ National Nurses Day
- ❖ Children of the Fallen Patriots Day



# REMOTE Act Updates (1)

EDU's policy is that a student may round out with any additional class(es) that are included within the program even though not required for the specific beneficiary to graduate and could have counted. Such classes must be specified by name in the approved program curriculum, and not have been already completed.

Additionally, if the student has taken (or is enrolled in) every class offered as part of the program, the student may round out with classes that are not offered as part of the program of education (i.e., any class offered by the educational institution).



## Rounding Out

# REMOTE Act Updates (2)

## Second Certification Waiver for Flat Rate Tuition Schools

### Flat Rate Categories (general):

- IHLs that charge students one price for taking a block of courses within min and max credits (e.g., 12 to 18 credit hours)
- NCDs that charge a flat rate for a program
- Programs that charge an all-inclusive flat fee for each enrollment period

VA finds that none of these categories

**“make the use of a second verification under this subsection unnecessary”**

as all allow changes that could result in one or more kinds of overpayment



# Isakson-Roe Act Updates

## The College Financing Plan (a.k.a. Financial Aid Shopping Sheet)



Schools that provide the

### College Financing Plan (CFP)

satisfy the requirement

**No additional action needed**

Schools that do not provide the  
CFP can submit a one-year



**Waiver**

University of the United States (UUS) <span style="float: right;">MM / DD / YYYY</span>			
Undergraduate College Financing Plan			
Student Name, Identifier			
Total Cost of Attendance 2022-2023			
	On Campus Residence		Off Campus Residence
Tuition and fees		\$X,XXXX	
Housing and meals	\$X,XXXX		\$X,XXXX
Books and supplies		\$X,XXXX	
Transportation		\$X,XXXX	
Other education costs		\$X,XXXX	
<b>Estimated Cost of Attendance</b>		<b>\$X,XXXX / yr</b>	<b>\$X,XXXX / yr</b>
Expected Family Contribution			
<b>Based on FAFSA</b>	As calculated by the institution using information reported on the FAFSA or to your institution.		X,XXXX / yr
<b>Based on Institutional Methodology</b>	Used by most private institutions in addition to FAFSA.		X,XXXX / yr
Scholarship and Grant Options			
Scholarships and Grants are considered "Gift" aid - no repayment is needed.			
Scholarships		Grants	
Merit-Based Scholarships		Need-Based Grant Aid	
Scholarships from your school	\$X,XXXX	Federal Pell Grants	\$X,XXXX
Scholarships from your state	\$X,XXXX	Institutional Grants	\$X,XXXX
Other scholarships	\$X,XXXX	State Grants	\$X,XXXX
Employer Paid Tuition Benefits	\$X,XXXX	Other forms of grant aid	\$X,XXXX
<b>Total Scholarships</b>	<b>\$X,XXXX / yr</b>	<b>Total Grants</b>	<b>\$X,XXXX / yr</b>
VA Education Benefits			
VA Education Benefits			\$X,XXXX / yr
College Costs You Will Be Required to Pay			
Net Price To You			\$X,XXXX / yr



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# Veterans Rapid Retraining Program

## Veteran Rapid Retraining Assistance Program (VRRAP) (PL 117-2)

- **Implementation of THRIVE Act (PL 117-16) Provisions**

- Department of Labor contact information regarding employment services has been added to claimant communications;
- Hiring Our Heroes' intake site sent an additional 256 referrals from VRRAP program participants, bringing HOH's total to 1,453 Veteran referrals since standup;

- **Program Statistics**

- As of June 27, VA has allocated \$182.9M of the \$386M funding limit and reports 14,776 Certificates of Eligibility issued with 6,425 program participants against the *17,250-participant* limit;
- As of June 27, 2022, there are 1,077 training providers approved for VRRAP;
- There have been 333 reports of employment.

- **Resources for VRRAP**

- VA.gov has a [VRRAP](#) webpage, for Veterans interested in VRRAP benefits;
- VBA has an [Educational Institution](#) specific website for VRRAP.



# VET TEC

VET TEC Statistics (Through June 1, 2022)	
VET TEC Eligibility (Participant Data)	Numbers
Total Applications Received	68,520
Certificates of Eligibility	46,339
VET TEC Enrollments & Employment	Numbers
Total Participants (FY19 to Present)	7,550
Total Graduated	5,020
Graduation Rate*	82%
Withdrawal After the Start of Term	832
Presently Attending	1,391
Meaningful Employment Not Obtained	1,015
Meaningful Employment Obtained	2,325
Employment Rate**	70%
Within Employment Window	1,680
Average Salary	\$60,780.00
Average Days to Hire	76

- \$60.3 million in funding has been allocated through April 2022
- On March 15, 2022, P.L. 117-103 (*Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2022*) increased VET TEC's FY2022 budget cap to \$125 million.

# VET TEC



- ✓ Bridging the Gap between VET TEC program completion and employment
- ✓ More than 20 employer partners
- ✓ Through targeted communications, the momentum for participation has increased

## Featured Partners

**HIRING OUR  
HEROES**

U.S. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE  
FOUNDATION

**LinkedIn**



**Pocket Prep**

**RUTGERS**

Graduate School of Education

**IBM SkillsBuild**

**maximus**



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# GI Bill Summit

## 2022 GI Bill® Summit | Executive Summary

On April 14, 2022, the Veterans Benefits Administration Education (EDU) Service hosted the first ever **GI Bill Summit**. The event leveraged intentional engagement opportunities with Veterans, Service members, and their families to answer GI Bill questions. VA promoted the Summit with extensive, omni-channel marketing efforts and featured VA EDU leadership directly answering GI Bill beneficiaries' questions about benefits, transferability, Monthly Housing Allowance, and modernization efforts during a Facebook Live stream.

### RallyPoint Partnership



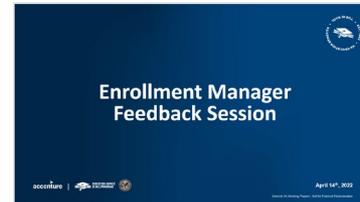
Hosting a RallyPoint Q&A in advance of the Summit increased visibility across the Veteran community, **garnering more than 44K views, 256 questions, and 6.6K RSVPs**, and gave VA insight into the topics, questions and concerns top of mind for Veterans.

### Facebook Live Event



Hosting the Summit as a Facebook Live event allowed VA to showcase a video recording and connected VBA leadership directly with members of the GI Bill community by answering their questions live in the comments.

### Enrollment Manager Feedback Session



Holding a feedback session for School Certifying Officials (SCO) helped EDU gather input on possible new functionalities within the new Enrollment Manager. **70% of the 618 attendees felt satisfied or strongly satisfied with the new user interfaces.** The team received more than 200 comments and 171 feedback responses following the session.

### Key Stats

#### Pre-Recorded 23-Minute Video



#### Facebook Live

6.1K Views  
5.7K Reach  
213 Impressions  
1.1K Comments

#### RallyPoint

43.7K Views (since Mar 14, 2022)  
433 Likes  
259 Questions



**10% increased traffic** to VA.gov web pages!



**7.7% increase in Form 1990 submission!**



**82% increase in web traffic from Facebook** on the day of the event!



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## Top Questions from the 2022 GI Bill Summit

Quantified by number of up-votes and percentage of questions asked on RallyPoint



### #1 Monthly Housing Allowance - 21%

*“Why do online students only get 50% BAH when we are doing school all the same as those attending brick and mortar schools. What is the reasoning for this and are there plans to give full BAH to online students?”*  
(BAH=Basic Allowance for Housing)



### Facebook Live Event Comments:

one of my classes is only offered online. I still have 3 classes in fully in person. Would this affect my MHA?

Do I get full on campus MHA rate if I take 2 on campus classes and 2 online classes?

I have 21 months remaining on my GI Bill and I about to retire for the final time later 2023. Is there a way to extend my educational benefit?

I have a question about the Post 9/11 GI Bill. Why are veterans that were discharged prior to 2013 still bound by the 15-year time limit? Will that eventually change?

Please give us the opportunity to transfer our bill to our kids prior to your present dates. I retired in 2007

Why, if you can transfer your GI Bill benefit to you spouse regardless of age, why can't you transfer to you children who are over a certain age? Not all kids mature at the same rate and the benefit should be available to them regardless of when they decide they are ready begin their studies.



### #2 Expiration and Extension of Benefits - 18%

*“When I retired, I opted into the Post-9/11 program. I've since timed out of using the remaining months and no other of my beneficiaries are interested in further education. Is there a chance that the time limits are removed so that the retiree, me, could use the remaining education benefits? I'd love to go back to school and use my remaining Post 911 months.”*



### #3 Transfer of Entitlement - 16%

*“Why can't Veterans transfer Post-9/11 GI benefits to dependents that were not given any during active duty?”*



**Takeaway:** RallyPoint questions provided great insight into topics that matter most to GI Bill students. The top RallyPoint topics were also the top topics discussed in the Facebook Live chat. The team will incorporate topics, popular questions and comments into future social media strategies and content mix, to continue to provide relevant answers and clarity on GI Bill benefits.



# Responsibility for Recertification



**Regarding Rollback of COVID- Will VA review certifications previously submitted and identify which ones need to be recertified or is this solely the responsibility of the SCOs?**

**Answer:** SCOs should not rely on VA to notify them of their affected certifications. It is the school's responsibility to be aware of certifications that included converted courses. Additionally, if the COVID remark was inadvertently left off the initial certification the SCO is still required to submit the adjusted certification.



# Rollback of COVID-19 Provisions (1)



**The requirement to make corrections to the Summer certifications if the term spans 01-June date, is this just for schools who are NOT approved for online classes? Or for all schools?**

**Answer:** This is a requirement for any school that has certified a student in a converted course during a term or enrollment period that spans June 1, 2022. Please see the updated FAQs on the GI Bill® website for instructions on how to adjust the certifications for each type of school and program.

**We no longer do asynchronous online courses. We do live Zoom and record the class period for later viewing if missed. Is Live Zoom considered Distant or Resident? We have military grad students in different states zooming in live**

**Answer:** If your students are attending the course from anywhere other than in a classroom on campus with other students (with attendance taken) the course must be certified to VA as distance training for terms beginning after June 1, 2022.



# Rollback of COVID-19 Provisions (2)



**What is the plan for certifications already submitted that cover the June 1 end date if the certifications were submitted with the COVID process?**

**Answer:** You must adjust or terminate (as applicable) any certification that included converted courses where the term or enrollment period certified spans June 1, 2022. What you will submit (adjustment or termination) varies depending on if your school or program is approved for online training by the State Approving Agency. Please see the updated FAQs on the GI Bill® website for specific instructions for your school and program type.

**What is the deadline for submitting all the adjustments for the terms spanning the covid-19 expiration date?**

**Answer:** While there is no deadline, other than the normal 30-day requirement to report changes, timely corrected COVID-19 certifications will assist with payment processing accuracy and reduce overpayments. To avoid debts, SCOs should strive to have COVID-19 related adjustments submitted before the end of June so June payments for MHA are correct.



# Rollback of COVID-19 Provisions (3)



So , for our summer certs that go through the 6/1 date, do we have to recertify if our school is already back to normal offerings and have been?

**Answer:** If the student was only attending resident (in-person) courses and no converted courses were certified you do not need to adjust the certification as there is no change to report.

**Rollback of COVID Certifications- Does it apply to VRRAP students as well?**

**Answer:** Yes, the COVID-19 provisions and the sunseting of those provisions applies to VRRAP students.



# COVID-19 Provisions FAQs & Resources



- [School Certifying Officials COVID-19 FAQs](#)
- [VBA Education Office Hours - Education and Training](#)



# Questions

