

VETERANS AFFAIRS

The mission of the Veteran Affairs Services Centers and primary function is to assist veterans, military personnel and their family members so they can receive their educational benefits through the Department of Veteran Affairs and/or the Texas Veteran Commission as a financial resource to reach their educational objectives. The Veteran Affairs Services Center provides a respectful atmosphere to the veterans, military personnel and family members of the community.

VA Education Benefits may be authorized for veterans and qualified dependents under specific chapters of Title 38, U.S. Code (USC). Each VA Education Program has distinct eligibility requirements. The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs determines eligibility for VA Education Benefits, Veterans Coordinator cannot determine eligibility. Recipients can only receive one VA Federal Benefit at a time even if they are eligible for more than one VA Federal Benefit. Students who wish to apply for VA Federal Benefits can go to the VA web site at <https://www.va.gov/> to apply on-line. If you have specific questions on any of the chapters or eligibility requirements, please contact the Department of Veterans Affairs 1-888-442-4551 or visit with LC's Veterans Services Center at the Lerma Pena Building Room 131.

Veteran's Requirements Checklist

1. Apply and be accepted to the college.
2. Complete the VA Application (VA Form 22-1990) by applying on <https://www.va.gov/>
3. Present discharge documents DD-214 member 4 form.
4. Complete the "Request for Veteran Certification" form at the Student Financial Aid and Veteran Affairs Services Center.
5. Complete request for JST transcripts at <http://jst.doded.mil> (<https://jst.doded.mil/jst/>)

New Students

- Enroll as a student or update information if you are a returning student at the Office of the Registrar and Admissions
- Request for Veteran Certification
- COE (Certificate of Eligibility)
- DD-214 Member 4 form
- Military transcript
- Apply for financial aid if eligible
- Valid U.S. ID

Previous Applicants

- See advisor for registration permit
- Request for Veteran Certification (every semester)
- Be Registered
- provide updated certificate of eligibility every semester

Registration

Students must be advised and present a registration permit for classes before the VA Coordinator can certify enrollment to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Student Status

It is the student's responsibility to notify your VA coordinator if you withdraw from a course, terminate your enrollment, or make any other changes that would affect your payment status. If you withdraw or drop a course, you may have to repay all or part of the benefits you received for the course(s).

Failure to notify your VA coordinator of changes in enrollment may result in an over-payment of benefits. Due to the new Isakson Roe Provision any changes in enrollment after the first-class day will cause student to incur a debt with Laredo College which the school will collect directly from the student. Any other debts due to drops will be collected by The Department of Veterans Affairs.

Repeating a Course

- VA will not cover the cost to repeat a course(s) for which you have received a passing grade (D or higher), whether the course was taken at Laredo College or at another college or university. They will cover the cost to repeat a course under the following two conditions:
 - VA will cover the cost for you to repeat a course if you received a grade of "F" and it is required for graduation.
 - You received a grade of "D" in the course and your Laredo College degree program requires at least a grade of "C". It is your responsibility to notify your VA Coordinator if you are repeating a course under the above circumstances. If proper notification is not provided, an over-payment may occur and **you** will be held liable for repayment.

A student who is receiving VA educational or Hazlewood benefits must maintain a 2.0 grade point average or better to be considered in good academic standing. Please refer to the Laredo College Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy.

Concurrent Enrollment

A student may take courses at more than one school that apply to his or her degree. The school that will grant the degree is the student's "primary" school. All other schools are considered "secondary" schools.

VA can pay benefits for courses taken at secondary schools if the student is only enrolled at the secondary school (supplemental enrollment), VA will pay for the credits taken at the secondary school if the student is enrolled at the primary school and the secondary school at the same time (concurrent enrollment), VA will pay for the combined credit, taking overlapping enrollment dates into account.

Hazlewood recipients are allowed to use their benefits if concurrently enrolled at two institutions. Each college/university granting Hazlewood Act benefits must document the Veteran's eligibility and must observe the 150-hour limit.

Both VA and Hazlewood students are responsible for notifying the VA coordinator at each institution of their enrollment and a **Parent Institution Letter** must be provided from the primary school. Only courses listed in the primary school letter will be certified.

Policy for Students Called to Active Duty

If, as a member of a National Guard unit, Reserve Component, or as a discharged veteran, you are called to active duty, contact your VA coordinator immediately. You will need to provide a copy of your orders.

The Hazlewood Act

The Hazlewood Act is a State of Texas tuition waiver that provides qualified Veterans, spouses, and dependent children with an education benefit of up to 150 hours of tuition exemption, at public institutions of higher education in Texas. This does **not** include living expenses, books, supply fees, or student activity fees.

Veteran Qualifications

A Veteran must:

- At the time of entry into active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces, designate Texas as Home of Record; have or enter the service in Texas; or was a Texas resident.
- Have received an honorable discharge or separation or a general discharge under honorable conditions as indicated on the Veteran's Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty (DD Form 214 Member 4 copy).
- Served at least 181 days of active duty service (excluding training);
- Have no federal Veteran's education benefits, or have no federal Veterans education benefits dedicated to the payment of tuition and fees only (such as Chapter 33 or 31; for term or semester enrolled that do not exceed the value of Hazlewood benefits).
- Not be in default on a student loan made or guaranteed by the State of Texas.
- Enroll in classes for which the college receives tax support (i.e., a course that does not depend solely on student tuition and fees to cover its cost), unless the college's governing board has ruled to let Veterans receive the benefit while taking non-funded courses; and
- Meet the GPA and undergraduate excessive hours requirements of Texas Education Code Sec. 54.2001 (see link at bottom of page).

Hazlewood Act Application Process

A Veteran must:

- Apply and be accepted to a Texas public college or university of his/her choice. Go to <https://www.goapplytexas.org> to apply or use your institution's application for admission.
- Provide proof (DD Form 214 Member 4 copy) from the Department of Defense regarding military service and the nature of discharge.
- Provide proof of eligibility or ineligibility for GI Bill® benefits (Chapter 31, 33/Post-9/11) by requesting a certificate of eligibility for federal education benefits from eBenefits (if Veteran has active duty service after 9/11/2001). You will need to create a username and password to request your certificate of eligibility.
- Fill out the Hazlewood Exemption application form; and
- Turn in the Hazlewood Exemption application form, a copy of your letter of eligibility/ineligibility, and a copy of your DD Form 214 Member 4 copy to VA Services Center of the institution you will be attending.

Applications and all supporting documentation must be received by the institution no later than the last day of class in order to be evaluated for the semester or term.

Child (Legacy Act)

Eligible veterans may assign unused hours of exemption eligibility to a child under certain conditions. To be eligible, the child must:

- Be a Texas resident.
- Be the biological child, stepchild, adopted child, or claimed as a dependent in the current or previous tax year.
- Be 25 years or younger on the first day of the semester or term for which the exemption is claimed (unless granted an extension due to a qualifying illness or debilitating condition); and
- Make satisfactory academic progress in a degree, certificate, or continuing education program as determined by the institution.

If a child to whom hours have been delegated fails to use all of the assigned hours, a veteran may re-assign the unused hours to another dependent child.

A veteran's spouse or a child's guardian, conservator, custodian, or other legally designated caretaker may re-assign unused hours to an eligible child (through Legacy) on behalf of the veterans if the veteran died prior to requesting the transfer of hours (documentation required).

The Montgomery GI Bill[®] program (MGIB) Active Duty (MGIB-AD)

Some service members may contribute up to an additional \$600 to the GI Bill[®] to receive increased monthly benefits. For an additional \$600 contribution, you may receive up to \$5400 in additional GI Bill[®] benefits. The additional contribution must be made while on active duty. For more information contact your personnel or payroll office.

The Montgomery GI Bill[®] - Active Duty, provides up to 36 months of education benefits to eligible Veterans for:

- College
- Technical or Vocational Courses
- Correspondence Courses
- Apprenticeship/Job Training
- Flight Training
- High-tech Training
- Licensing & Certification Tests
- Entrepreneurship Training
- Certain Entrance Examinations

The Post-9/11 GI Bill[®]

The Post-9/11 GI Bill[®] provides financial support for education and housing to individuals with at least 90 days of aggregate service on or after September 11, 2001, or individuals discharged with a service-connected disability after 30 days. This benefit provides up to 36 months of education benefits, generally benefits are payable for 15 years following your release from active duty.

The Post-9/11 GI Bill[®] includes graduate and undergraduate degrees, vocational/technical training, on-the-job training, flight training, correspondence training, licensing and national testing programs, entrepreneurship training, and tutorial assistance. All training programs must be approved for GI Bill[®] benefits.

Qualifications

- Veteran must have at least 90 days aggregate service on or after September 11, 2001, or;
- Individuals discharged with a service-connected disability after 30 days; and
- Must have received an honorable discharge.

Veteran Education Benefits

The Veteran Services Center assists student veterans with certification needs for veteran educational benefits. The office is located at the Ft. McIntosh Campus in the Lerma Pena Building # 131.

Academic Progress

All students must meet satisfactory academic progress toward a degree or certificate in accordance with the institution's policy regarding eligibility for financial aid. Veterans and/or dependents will be expected to maintain academic standards as outlined in this Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) policy for the purposes of receiving Veterans Educational Benefits. Veterans and Dependents must maintain a minimum overall GPA of 2.0 or better and successfully complete at least 67% of the coursework attempted each term to be considered in good standing.

Effective for Fall 2014, the Texas Legislature approved Senate Bill 1210 which states that recipients of Texas state exemptions and/or waivers must meet Financial Aid satisfactory academic progress (SAP) requirements of a grade point average (GPA) of 2.0 for undergraduate students at all times and recipients must not be in excess hours status.

It is the student's responsibility to inform the Student Financial Aid & Veteran Affairs Services Center of any changes in enrollment status.

Veterans with previous college or university training are required to have transcripts from other schools on file with the Student Financial Aid & Veteran Affairs Services Center before being considered for certification under the Veterans Administration. In addition, it is the responsibility of each student to request the required transcripts.

Military Credit

See Credit by Non-Traditional Means: Military Credit

Schools that have an academic progress policy allowing for a period of academic probation prior to termination for Unsatisfactory Progress (Academic Suspension) should notify VA promptly when a student receiving VA education benefits is placed on academic probation.

Unsatisfactory Progress, Conduct and Attendance

The law requires that educational assistance benefits to Veterans and other eligible persons be discontinued when the student ceases to make satisfactory progress toward completion of his or her training objective.

Both accredited and non-accredited schools are required by law to have and to enforce standards of progress and conduct in order for their programs to be approved for VA benefits. Only non-accredited schools are required by federal law to have attendance standards. These standards should be stated plainly in the school's catalog or bulletin. A school's policy and regulations for standards of progress, conduct and attendance must define:

- The school's grading system
- The minimum satisfactory grade level
- Conditions for interruption of training due to unsatisfactory grades or progress
- A description of any probationary period
- Conditions for a student's re-entrance or readmission following dismissal or suspension for unsatisfactory progress

- Conditions for dismissal due to unsatisfactory conduct
- The school's attendance policy

When a student has failed to maintain prescribed standards of progress, VA must be informed promptly so that benefit payments can be discontinued in accordance with the law. The termination date assigned by the school will be the last day of the term or other evaluation period in which the student's progress became unsatisfactory. Schools that provide a period of academic probation may not continue to certify a Veteran or eligible person (who remains in a probationary status) for an indefinite period of time. It is reasonable to expect that an institution will report a termination due to unsatisfactory progress if a student remains on academic probation beyond 2 terms, quarters, or semesters.

Fees not covered by VA or Hazlewood

Penalty fees (late registration, repeated course fees, add or drop course fees and student service fees and activity fees (Hazlewood students).

For more detailed information on all VA Benefits please visit www.gibill.va.gov (<http://www.gibill.va.gov>) and Texas Veterans Commission on all information related to Hazlewood benefits <https://www.tvc.texas.gov>.