



Department of  
Veterans Affairs

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## News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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### **Over 25,000 Post-9/11 GI Bill Applications Received in First Two Weeks *Veterans and Servicemembers Encouraged to Apply Early***

WASHINGTON – Today, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced that VA has received more than 25,000 claims for education benefits during the first two weeks that Veterans and servicemembers could apply online for the new Post-9/11 GI Bill.

“We are very pleased with the tremendous interest in the Post-9/11 GI Bill,” Patrick W. Dunne, VA’s under secretary for benefits, said. “The number of applications submitted in the first two weeks clearly shows the value and importance of this new benefit for Veterans.”

The Post-9/11 GI Bill, passed by Congress last year, is the most extensive educational assistance program authorized since the original GI Bill was signed into law in 1944. It provides eligible individuals with tuition payments to assist them in getting a college education.

Many participants will also receive a housing allowance while they’re studying and a stipend for books and supplies. Under the new GI Bill, certain members of the armed forces may transfer benefits to a spouse or dependent children.

With the large numbers of Veterans and servicemembers expected to apply for the new program, VA projects a 20 percent to 25 percent increase in the total number of participants in VA’s education programs.

Qualified people will receive a “Certificate of Eligibility” and information about their benefits under the Post-9/11 GI Bill. Applicants may expect to receive their certificate within 24 days of submission. Under federal law VA cannot pay benefits until Aug. 1, 2009. The new education benefit is for Veterans, servicemembers, reservists, and National Guard members who have served on active duty since September 11, 2001.

**-More-**

## **Post-9/11 GI Bill Applications 2/2/2**

Veterans can also apply online through the GI Bill Web site at [www.GIBILL.VA.gov](http://www.GIBILL.VA.gov). Additionally, paper applications are accepted at VA regional processing offices located in Muskogee, Okla.; Atlanta; St. Louis; and Buffalo, N.Y. Veterans who apply online and provide a specific e-mail address will receive an e-mail acknowledging receipt of their claims.

The number of education benefits' applications submitted in the first two weeks is more than three times the rate of benefit applications usually received through the Veterans Online Application system (VONAPP). VONAPP is used for all education benefit programs, as well as for submission of applications for VA disability compensation and pension benefits.

As a result of this unprecedented volume, some applicants experienced slow response times or error messages on Friday, May 1. VA immediately increased system capacity, and by Saturday morning, May 2, system performance was fully restored.

“Because of the large number of applications expected to be received, we encourage Veterans interested in attending school this fall to apply early online,” Dunne added.

Additional information about the new program and VA's other educational benefit programs can be obtained by visiting VA's Web site or by calling 1-888-GIBILL-1 (or 1-888-442-4551).

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