

Start using your benefits

Thank you for your service! We've got you covered with a step-by-step guide to accessing funds from the VA's GI Bill®

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GI Bill® step-by-step guide

Using your GI Bill® to finance your education? Here's a step-by-step guide to help you get started.

Note: Not all steps have to be completed in this order. You can apply to UT Southern and the VA in any order, and you can send the Certificate of Eligibility at any point in the process, this is just to help guide you.

Step 1: Apply to UT Southern

It is easy! Just use this online application <https://apply.utsouthern.edu/>

Step 2: Apply for VA Education Benefits

If you know which chapter of the GI Bill® you plan on using, [apply on the VA website](#).

If you are unsure of the chapter, scroll down to the section “Chapters of the GI Bill®,” then come back here. To speak to a VA educational representative for more information, call the VA hotline at 1-888-442-4551, press 1, then press 0.

Step 3: Send the Certificate of Eligibility to us

After you've applied for VA benefits, you'll receive a letter called a Certificate of Eligibility (COE). You can use the Statement of Benefits page in your VA account. Please send your COE [via email](#). We can accept any form of your COE:

- a photo or scanned copy of your physical letter,
- a screenshot of your online statement of benefits,
- a PDF, etc.

The most important thing is that you send it in!

Step 4: Register for classes

Step 5: Request Certification

The VA requires that you must complete and submit a [Request to Certify](#) form to the School Certifying Official ([SCO](#)).

Chapters of the GI Bill® at a glance

The VA website has a helpful guide to the [different benefits offered by the GI Bill®](#). For a brief overview of the chapters and links to chapter-specific resources, read on.

Chapter 30: The Montgomery GI Bill® - Active Duty (MGIB)

This chapter is for veterans who served active-duty from 1984 to 2008, and who also electively signed up to participate in the MGIB. Chapter 30 benefits may be used up to 10 years from the date of last discharge or release from active duty. Learn more from the [VA about Chapter 30](#).

Chapter 31: VR&E, Veteran Readiness and Employment (Formerly called Voc Rehab)

This chapter serves eligible active-duty servicemembers and veterans with service-connected disabilities. If you're a veteran with a SCD (service-connected disability), it's worth finding out if you're eligible for Chapter 31. Learn more from the [VA about Chapter 31 \(VR&E\)](#).

Chapter 33: Post 9/11 GI Bill®:

If you've served on active duty after September 10, 2001, you may qualify for CH 33. Percentage of entitlement is based on qualifying active-duty (AD) time. Qualifying AD service of 36 months or more equals 100 percent entitlement. Learn more from the [VA about Chapter 33 \(Post-9/11\)](#).

Chapter 33 (Transfer of Entitlement):

Veterans eligible for CH 33 may choose to transfer their benefits to an eligible dependent—typically a spouse or child. Learn more from the [VA about Chapter 33D \(Post-9/11 TOE\)](#).

Chapter 35: Survivors and Dependents Educational Assistance Program (DEA)

If you are a dependent of a veteran who is permanently and totally disabled due to a service-related condition, or who died while on active-duty or as a result of a service-related condition, you may be eligible for CH 35. Learn more from the [VA about Chapter 35 \(Survivors & Dependents\)](#).

Chapter 1606:

This chapter is available to members of the Selected Reserves, including all military branch Reserve components, as well as the Army National Guard and Air National Guard members. Learn more from the [VA about Chapter 1606 \(Montgomery GI\)](#).

You may also be eligible for federal or state tuition assistance through the National Guard. For more information about TA, contact your command.

A Note on Delayed VA Payments

The University of Tennessee Southern will not deny a student access to classrooms, libraries or other institutional facilities, make the student borrow money to cover the cost while waiting for payment from the VA or charge a student a late fee or penalty while we are awaiting payment from the VA for tuition and fees. If the balance due is not related to tuition and fees, UT Southern may implement the same holds or penalties that apply to students not using Chapter 33, Chapter 31, or Chapter 35 benefits.

The University of Tennessee Southern requires that students wanting to use their Chapter 33, Chapter 31, or Chapter 35 benefits submit:

- a request for certification online at [this link](#), and
- a Certificate of Eligibility, a Form 1905 (Chapter 31 authorization), or a Statement of Benefits from the VA no later than the first day of classes.

This policy is written to comply with Section 103 of Public Law 115-407 and ends on the earlier of the following dates:

- the date the VA makes payment, or
- 90 days after the date the school certifies or invoices for tuition and fees provided the student submitted the required request for certification and required documentation outlining benefit eligibility.

GI Bill® is a registered trademark of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). [Visit the official VA website](#) for more information about education benefits offered by VA.