



DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
BUFFALO REGIONAL OFFICE
P.O. BOX 4616
BUFFALO NY 14240-4616

January 23, 2025

ROSEMARIE BOURNE
7014 STEELE VIEW CT
WAXHAW NC 28173

In Reply Refer To: 307/22/JJG
J W MERRI
XXX-XX-3455W

Dear Ms. Bourne:

We have received your application for education benefits under Dependents' Educational Assistance Program (DEA/Chapter 35) and determined that you are eligible.

Certificate of Eligibility

This certifies that you are entitled to benefits for an approved program of education or training under the Dependents' Educational Assistance (DEA) program.

You must take this letter to your school. Your school must certify your enrollment before you can get paid.

Please note: The Harry W. Colmery Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2017 (Colmery Act), which was passed on August 16, 2017, amended the duration for use of Chapter 35.

You have 36 months and 0 days of full-time benefits (38 CFR § 21.3041, 38 CFR § 21.3046, & 38 CFR § 21.3511).

The spouse of a veteran who has been found to be permanently and totally disabled can choose the date to begin benefits. You can choose:

- **November 13, 2015**, the date the veteran became totally disabled for VA purposes, **OR**
- **August 18, 2021**, the date of our letter informing the veteran of VA's decision that the veteran is permanently and totally disabled due to service-connected disabilities, **OR**
- Any date between those two dates.

Although you can choose your beginning date as indicated above, we cannot pay you benefits prior to January 13, 2024. VA regulations prevent our paying for training you took more than one year before we received your claim for your current program. We received your claim on **January 13, 2025**. **Since benefits cannot be paid before January 13, 2024, it appears that it would be to your advantage to choose August 18, 2021, as your beginning date.**

You cannot change your beginning date once you have chosen it.

CSS XXX-XX-3455W
MERRI, J W

The ending date for using your benefits is ten years after the date you choose. Generally, you can't use any remaining benefits for training on or after your ending date.

You must notify us immediately if there is a change in your marital status.

What You Should Do

You should do the following with this letter:

- 1) Take one copy of this letter to your school or training facility's veterans certifying official and ask them to send us an Enrollment Certification, VA Form 22-1999. Please be sure that the VA file number indicated above is shown on all correspondence submitted in regard to your education benefits.
- 2) On a second copy of this letter, you will need to elect a date you would like your Chapter 35 benefits to start. Please elect a date, sign the statement below and send it to the office shown at the top of this letter. You may submit your response electronically through the GI Bill website at <https://www.gibill.gov>. You can then send VA a message with the necessary election information by clicking the "Create Account/Sign in to start your message" button and either creating an account or signing in if you already have one.

"I choose 08/18/2021 as the beginning date for my DEA benefits."


Signature

Rosemarie Bourne

XXX-XX-3455W

Date

1/27/2024

To Receive Advance Payment

You may receive an advance payment for the first month (or part of a month) and second month of enrollment if all of the following conditions are met:

- You're enrolled for at least 1/2-time training, **and**
- Your school has agreed to receive and process advance payments, **and**
- You request advance payment by signing the request block on the enrollment certification your school sends to us, **and**
- VA receives your enrollment certification at least 30 days before classes start.

Note: If we don't pay an advance payment, we'll pay you after each month you attend school.

Career Counseling

The receipt of this Certificate of Eligibility (COE) means that you are eligible for VA-professional career counseling services at any time during your eligibility period. When considering school(s), we recommend using the GI Bill Comparison Tool, and the "*Factors to Consider When Choosing a School*." A guide before using the GI Bill®. See links to access these resources:

- GI Bill Comparison Tool: www.vets.gov/gi-bill-comparison-tool
- Factors to Consider When Choosing a School. A guide before using the GI Bill®: www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/docs/factsheets/choosing_a_school.pdf

Verify that your prospective school(s) has articulation agreements; what the agreement involves, and how it applies to credit transferability for future transfer options to other schools.

For questions, additional information about career counseling services, or if you are six months from discharge, call 1-800-827-1000 and speak with a VA customer service representative.

Students receiving VA benefits at the three-quarter-time or full-time rate may participate in the VA work-study program. If you are interested, see your school's veterans coordinator.

Your Right to Seek Additional Review

If you disagree with our decision, you have one year from the date of this letter to request an additional review. For more information, please see the enclosed VA Form 20-0998, Your Rights to Seek Further Review of Our Decision. It explains your options for an additional review. You may also learn more about the appeal process at <https://www.va.gov/decision-reviews>.

Sincerely yours,

Education Officer

Enclosures: VA Form 20-0998
We Are Here to Help