Live page: <https://www.va.gov/education/eligibility/>

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Meta description: Find out if you may be able to get help paying for tuition and fees, books, housing, and other education costs, depending on which education benefits you’re eligible for.

**[H1]** **GI Bill and other education benefit eligibility**

**[Intro]** If you’re an active-duty service member or Veteran, a member of the National Guard or Reserves, or a qualified survivor or dependent, you may be eligible for the GI Bill or other educational assistance. Find out if you may be able to get help paying for tuition and fees, books, housing, and other education costs, depending on which education benefits you’re eligible for.

## **[Alert] You may qualify for additional entitlement under the Rudisill decision**

If you have 2 or more qualifying periods of active duty, you may now qualify for up to 48 months of entitlement. You must be eligible for the Post-9/11 GI Bill (PGIB) and the Montgomery GI Bill Active Duty (MGIB-AD).

**Note:** Even if you gave up your right to use MGIB-AD benefits in the past (we call this “relinquishing” your benefits), you may now qualify to use some of that entitlement.

[Learn more about how the Rudisill decision affects you](https://benefits.va.gov/GIBILL/rudisill.asp) (in English)

## **[H2] Post-9/11 GI Bill eligibility information**

If any of these are true, you may be eligible for benefits through the Post-9/11 GI Bill (Chapter 33):

* You served on active duty for at least 90 days after September 10, 2001, whether continuous (all at once) or interrupted (for shorter periods over time), **or**
* You served for at least 30 continuous days after September 10, 2001 and were discharged because of a service-connected disability, **or**
* You received a Purple Heart after September 10, 2001

[Learn more about the Post-9/11 GI Bill](https://www.va.gov/education/about-gi-bill-benefits/post-9-11) (in English)

**Note:** If you have only 1 period of service that begins on or after August 1, 2011, and you qualify for other VA education benefits, you can use only 1 education benefit. You’ll have to choose which education benefit you’d like to use.

For example, if you choose to use the Post-9/11 GI Bill instead of the Montgomery GI Bill Active Duty (MGIB-AD, or Chapter 30), you can’t switch at some later date to use MGIB-AD. If you decide to use the Post-9/11 GI Bill, we’ll refund you part or all of the payments you made into MGIB-AD.

[Learn more about Montgomery GI Bill refunds](https://www.va.gov/resources/montgomery-gi-bill-refunds) (in English)

## **[H2] Montgomery GI Bill eligibility information**

### **[H3] Montgomery GI Bill Active Duty (MGIB-AD)**

Generally, if you served at least 2 years on active duty and you meet the requirements listed here, you may be eligible for benefits through MGIB-AD.

**All of these must be true:**

* You were honorably discharged, **and**
* You have a high school diploma, GED, or 12 hours of college credit, **and**
* You didn’t decline enrollment in MGIB-AD when you started active duty, **and**
* You meet other requirements   
  [Check all the requirements for MGIB-AD](https://www.va.gov/education/about-gi-bill-benefits/montgomery-active-duty) (in English)

**Note:** If you have only 1 period of service that begins on or after August 1, 2011, and you qualify for other VA education benefits, you can use only 1 education benefit. You’ll have to choose which education benefit you’d like to use.

For example, if you choose to use MGIB-AD instead of the Post-9/11 GI Bill, you can’t switch at some later date to use the Post-9/11 GI Bill.

You can get help deciding which education benefits to use by calling us at 888-442-4551 ([TTY: 711](tel:711)). We’re here Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. ET.

### **[H3] Montgomery GI Bill Selected Reserve (MGIB-SR)**

If you’re a member of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps or Coast Guard Reserves, Army National Guard, or Air National Guard, and you meet the requirements listed here, you may be able to get benefits through MGIB-SR.

**One of these must be true:**

* You have a 6-year service obligation (you agreed to serve 6 years) in the Selected Reserve, **or**
* You’re an officer in the Selected Reserve who agreed to serve 6 years in addition to your initial service obligation

**And all of these must be true:**

* You complete your initial active duty for training (IADT), **and**
* You get a high school diploma or certificate of equal value, like a High School Equivalency Diploma or GED, before finishing IADT, **and**
* You stay in good standing while serving in an active Selected Reserve unit

[Check all the requirements for MGIB-SR](https://www.va.gov/education/about-gi-bill-benefits/montgomery-selected-reserve) (in English)

## **[H2]** **Other eligibility questions you may have**

**[accordion] How many total months of VA education benefits can I get?**

Generally, if you’re eligible for more than 1 education benefit, you may be able to get up to a maximum of 48 months (or 4 years) of VA education benefits. This doesn’t include Veteran Readiness and Employment (VR&E) benefits (Chapter 31). But many applicants are eligible for up to 36 months (or 3 years) only.

**[accordion] Am I eligible for other educational assistance programs or scholarships?**

You may be eligible for added benefits through the Edith Nourse Rogers STEM Scholarship or the Yellow Ribbon Program.

[Find out if you’re eligible for the STEM Scholarship](https://www.va.gov/education/other-va-education-benefits/stem-scholarship) (in English)

[Find out if you’re eligible for the Yellow Ribbon Program](https://www.va.gov/education/about-gi-bill-benefits/post-9-11/yellow-ribbon-program) (in English)

**[accordion] How can I use my GI Bill benefits?**

You can use your benefits in many ways. For example, you can earn a degree, diploma, or certificate, or you can use your benefits for on-the-job training and apprenticeships. You can also get reimbursed for the cost of tests to become a licensed or certified professional.

[Learn about all the ways you can use your GI Bill benefits](https://www.va.gov/education/about-gi-bill-benefits/how-to-use-benefits) (in English)

**[accordion] Can I get educational and career counseling through VA?**

You may be able to get free educational and career counseling through the Personalized Career Planning and Guidance program (Chapter 36) if you meet one of these requirements.

**One of these must be true:**

* You’re leaving active service soon, **or**
* You have been discharged within the past year, **or**
* You’re a Veteran or dependent who is eligible for VA education benefits

[Learn more about educational and career counseling](https://www.va.gov/careers-employment/education-and-career-counseling)

**[accordion] Are there any related benefits I may also be eligible for?**

If you have a service-connected disability that limits your ability to work or prevents you from working, you may be eligible for Veteran Readiness and Employment (VR&E) benefits and services (Chapter 31)—like help exploring employment options and getting more training if required.

[Find out if you qualify for VR&E (Chapter 31)](https://www.va.gov/careers-employment/vocational-rehabilitation/eligibility)

**[accordion] What should I do if I received an other than honorable, bad conduct, or dishonorable discharge?**

If you’ve received one of these discharge statuses, you may not be eligible for VA benefits.

[Find out how to apply for a discharge upgrade](https://www.va.gov/discharge-upgrade-instructions/)

**Note:** If you served honorably in one period of service, you can apply for VA benefits using that honorable characterization. You earned your benefits during the period in which you served honorably.

**[accordion] Can my spouse or child get VA education benefits?**

In some cases, the spouse, surviving spouse, and children of service members and Veterans can get educational assistance through the GI Bill.

[Learn more about Survivors’ and Dependents’ Assistance](https://www.va.gov/family-and-caregiver-benefits/education-and-careers/dependents-education-assistance)

Also, if you’re in the Armed Forces and you haven’t used all of your Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits, you may be able to transfer up to 36 months (or 3 years) of benefits to your spouse or dependent children.

[Learn more about transferring benefits](https://www.va.gov/education/transfer-post-9-11-gi-bill-benefits)

If you have a service-connected disability, your dependent family members may be eligible for educational and career counseling benefits through the Personalized Career Planning and Guidance program (Chapter 36).

[Learn more about employment benefits for dependent family members](https://www.va.gov/careers-employment/dependent-benefits)

## **[H2] How do I apply?**

You can apply online right now. Just answer a few questions, and we'll help you get started with the education benefits form that's right for you.

**Apply for education benefits**

**Apply for education benefits**

Are you applying for a benefit or updating your program or place of training?

-Applying for a new benefit

-Updating my program of study or place of training

-Applying for the Edith Nourse Rogers STEM Scholarship after using Post-9/11 GI Bill or Fry Scholarship benefits

[Learn more about how to apply for education benefits](https://www.va.gov/education/how-to-apply)

**Note:** To apply for Veteran Readiness and Employment (VR&E) benefits (Chapter 31) or educational and career counseling through Personalized Career Planning and Guidance (Chapter 36), you’ll need to use a different application.

[Find out how to apply for VR&E (Chapter 31)](https://www.va.gov/careers-employment/vocational-rehabilitation/how-to-apply)

[Find out how to apply for educational and career counseling (Chapter 36)](https://www.va.gov/careers-employment/education-and-career-counseling)