

FROM MILITARY TO COLLEGE: A CHECKLIST FOR ND ARMY NATIONAL GUARD MEMBERS

The following is intended to be a basic resource for ND Army National Guard Soldiers entering college. It is not designed to be comprehensive and does not cover all benefits and possibilities – just the most frequent situations. Please consult the North Dakota National Guard Education Office for additional information or a benefits consultation.

STEP 1: WHERE TO GO

- Decide what school you wish to attend.
- Take admissions test (if required).

STEP 2: COLLEGE REQUIREMENTS

- Check with the individual college for requirements.
- Have official transcripts for previous college level coursework, including military training, sent to the college you plan to attend for evaluation of transfer credit. Usually, transcripts should be sent to the admissions office.
- Visit www.aarts.army.mil for information about obtaining your army military transcript. Other branches have a similar site.

STEP 3: FEDERAL STUDENT AID

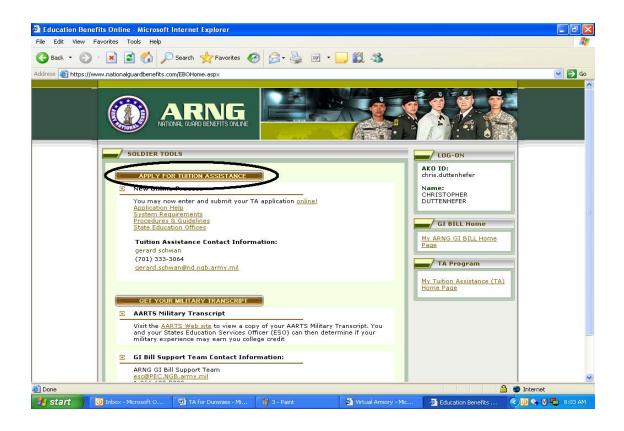
- Submit your application for federal student aid at www.fafsa.ed.gov. The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is available to all students attending a college and/or university and determines eligibility for federal student loans as well as federal and state grants. Since FAFSA awards are based on income from the previous year, the assessment may not provide an accurate reflection of a student's current income. If the income reported on the FAFSA was significantly higher than what will be earned while in college, notify the Financial Aid office on campus and complete a special circumstances appeal to have your assessment based onf of your current income.
- FAFSA is not the same as FTA (Federal Tuition Assistance). You MUST complete the FTA step, below, in order for the ND National Guard to pay for tuition.
- This must be done each semester!
- Search for scholarships. There are many available to veterans. Check with college financial aid office for general scholarships.
- First choice for student aid is a Stafford Subsidized loan. Second is Stafford Unsubsidized. PLUS loans are the next alternative. Avoid private loans at all costs.

Step 4: Guide to Tuition Assistance Applications on https://minuteman.ngb.army.mil/benefits

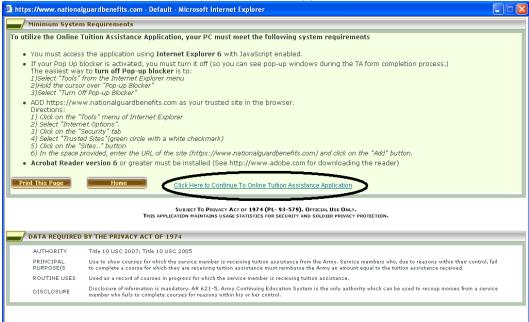
1. Go to https://minuteman.ngb.army.mil/benefits



- 2. Log in with your CAC card. You must be at a computer that has a CAC card reader in order to apply for FTA.
- 3. Click on Apply for Tuition Assistance



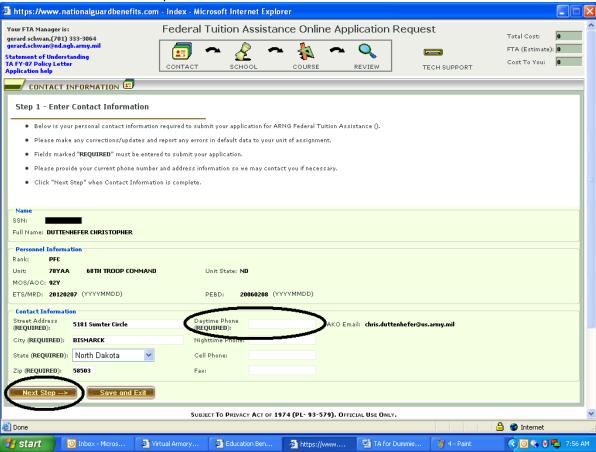
Minimum System requirement page will display. After you have read this click on the Click Here
to Continue To Online Tuition Assistance Application to continue.



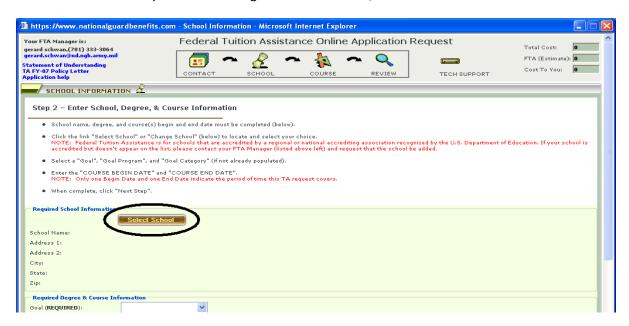
5. On the next screen, you will read through the Statement of Understanding, select "Yes" for each statement, and click on "continue."



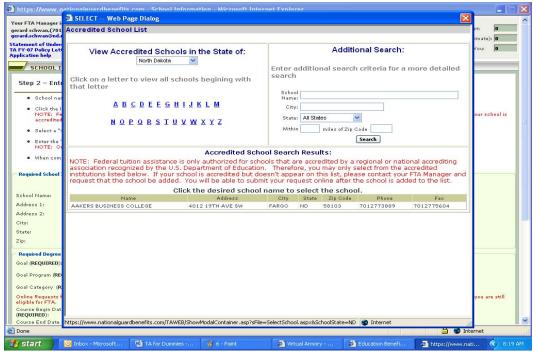
6. Verify that all of your contact information is correct and enter in your daytime telephone number and click on Next Step Button.



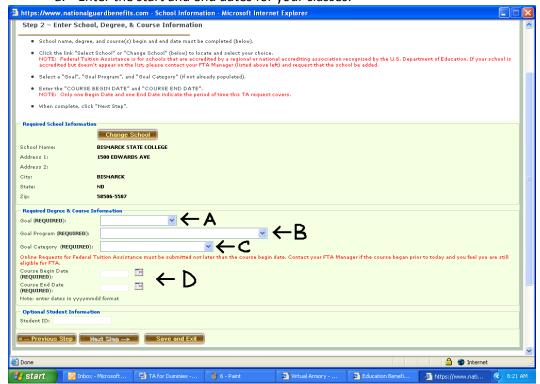
7. Select which school you are attending. To select a school, click on the "select school" link.



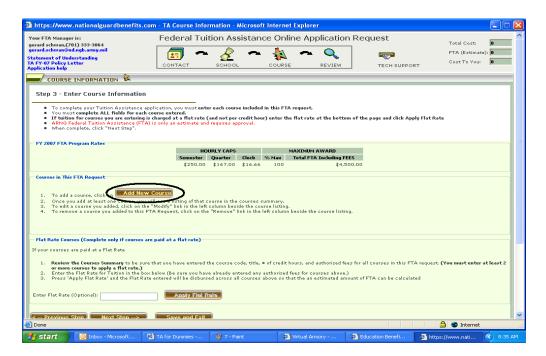
8. Select the State that your school is located in then click on the letter that the school starts with and locate the school in the list and click on it.



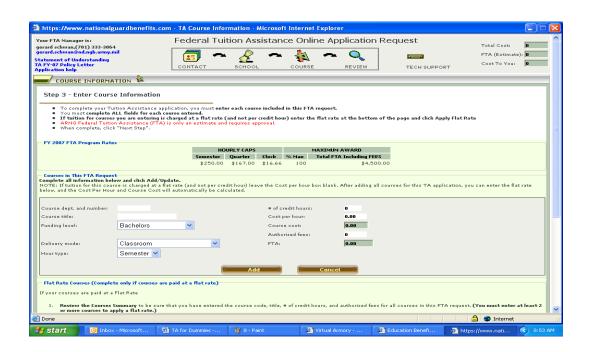
- 9. Choose your education goal and enter in the course begin and end date.
 - a. Enter your goal from the drop down menu.
 - b. Enter your program/course of study.
 - c. Enter your goal category. (most of the time it will be **Post Secondary**)
 - d. Enter the start and end dates for your classes.



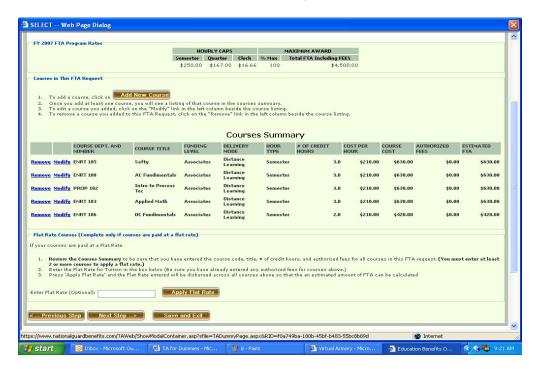
11. Click on the Add New Course Button.



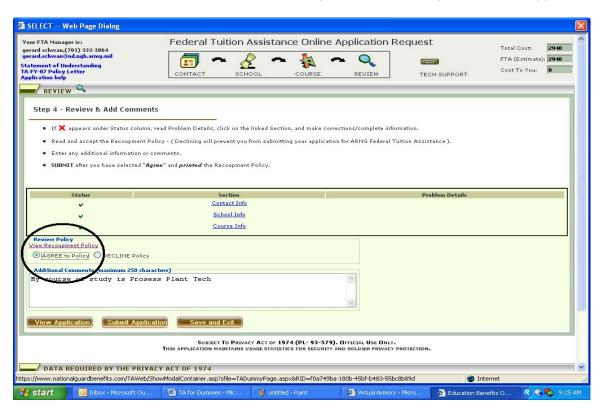
- 12. Enter the course department and number (MATH 101) as well as the title of the course (College Algebra.) Then select the funding level that the class is towards, delivery mode, and the number of credits of the course. After all data is input click on "add". Repeat steps for all courses.
 - a. Enter the tuition amount for the cost per hour. This field cannot be left blank.
 - b. Note course fees (i.e. Lab fees) in remarks or they will not be paid.



13. When all courses are added click on the Next Step Button



14. Make sure there are no ERRORS. Double-check your entries before you submit the application.



15. You must view the recoupment policy. Then select "AGREE to Policy" or "DECLINE to policy." NOTE: if you decline the policy your application will not be processed.

- 16. At this point you may enter any additional comments. Make sure to note course fees (ie. Chem Lab Fee- \$15.00) or they will not be paid. Make a notation in this section with the type of GI Bill program you will be receiving.
- 17. It is strongly recommended that you print a copy of your application and keep it for your records.
- 18. Click on "Submit application." You will receive a **confirmation e-mail to your AKO account and only your AKO account** once your application is received.
- 19. Once your application is processed, you will receive an email with your DA 2171 with the words "STUDENT COPY" printed over it. Print this copy and bring to the school's business office immediately. DA 2171's that are not turned in to the school in a timely manner may not receive funding.
- 20. If you have adds/drops to your schedule, notify the Education office immediately at NGNDJ1ESOS@ng.army.mil. Adds/drops not updated on the DA 2171 will be recouped.
- 21. Applying for tuition assistance is NOT the same as applying for VA benefits. And conversely, applying for VA benefits does not automatically grant tuition assistance. You must do both.
- 22. Out-of-State & Masters Degree Students MUST turn-in grade reports at the end of each semester/quarter.

STEP 4: Veterans Administration Educational Benefits

- There are various forms of VA educational benefits available, and it is possible to qualify for more than one. Dollar amounts are based on program eligibility and credit loan.
- When applying for Federal Tuition Assistance (above), note in the comments section which type of GI Bill Program you will be receiving.
- The ND National Guard only verifies eligibility. The Veterans Administration determines payment amount and makes payments.
- You MUST visit the Veterans Administration certifying official located at each college/university to apply for payments. The registrar's office will assist you in meeting the VA representative.
- Applying for VA benefits is NOT the same as applying for tuition assistance. And conversely, applying for tuition assistance does not automatically grant VA benefits. You must do both.
- Once you begin to recieve your benefits checks, you need to verify attendance every month. Visit https://www.gibill.va.gov/wave or call 1-877-823-2378.
- Notify your campus VA Certifying Official of any changes in your status to avoid overpayments and collections.

STEP 5: North Dakota State Tuition Reimbursement

- Benefits are based on funding availability and can vary in amount from semester to semester.
- All class types are eligible.
- The program is available ONLY for in-state participating schools.

- Reimbursement is based upon the tuition rates charged by the school for each class type, up to the undergraduate rates at UND .
- The National Guard State tuition program will pay a maximum of 144 credit hours, and can be used towards all certificate programs and degrees except doctorates.
- The STA office will request participating schools to send an unofficial transcript at the end of the three normal academic terms (December, May, and July). Those students that have a "business office hold" on their transcripts will be responsible for turning in an unofficial transcript to the STA office once the hold has been removed. State tuition reimbursement funds will not be released to students until grades are received. A member who completes an incomplete class may send their latest transcript to the STA office to determine if further state tuition assistance is authorized. Satisfactory grades for state tuition assistance are a C grade or higher, Pass, or Satisfactory.
- School waivers are applied as credits to the semester attended which will reduce the tuition amount due the following semester. If the student is not attending the following semester, the school payment is sent to the student in accordance with the school's reimbursement policy. The tuition waiver will be equal to 25% of the tuition charged by the school for the class, up to 25% of tuition at UND. Any institutional academic scholarships or grants may be used toward the school's portion of the tuition waiver/grant. These academic scholarships do not include scholarships for athletics or other non-academic type scholarships.
- State Reimbursements will be made directly to the student in the form of a check, based upon the number of credit hours/classes successfully completed with a C grade or higher, Pass, or Satisfactory.

STEP 6: Request other services

- Veterans Resource Center information regarding benefits and resource
- Student Organizations many campuses have veteran's clubs
- Counseling personal and career counseling
- Disability Services provides accommodations for students with disabilities

ND National Guard Education Office Phone Numbers:

Testing: (701) 333-3064

Federal Tuition Assistance: (701) 333-3071

GI Bill: (701) 333-3089

Federal Incentives and Student Loan Repayment Program: (701) 333-3087

State of ND Benefits and Bonuses Manager: (701) 333-3008

Email address: ngndj1esos@ng.army.mil



Post-9/11 GI Bill:

General Information

Who is eligible for benefits under the Post-9/11 GI Bill?

Individuals who serve at least 90 days of aggregate service after September 10, 2001 are eligible.

- To be eligible for 100% of the benefit, an individual must have served an aggregate of 36 months of
 active duty service, or have been discharged for a service-connected disability after 30 days of
 continuous service. NOTE: Active-duty service time required by graduates of a Service Academy or
 ROTC does not count toward the three years necessary to qualify for full benefits.
- For those who served fewer than 36 months, the percentage of benefit ranges from 40% to 90%:
 - 90% 30 total months (including service on active duty in entry level and skill training)
 - 80% 24 total months (including service on active duty in entry level and skill training)
 - 70% 18 total months (excluding service on active duty in entry level and skill training)
 - 60% 12 total months (excluding service on active duty in entry level and skill training)
 - 50% 6 total months (excluding service on active duty in entry level and skill training)
 - 40% 90 or more days (excluding service on active duty in entry level and skill training).
 For example, an individual with five months of qualifying service could receive 40% of the tuition benefit, 40% of the monthly housing allowance, and a maximum of \$400 books and supplies stipend.
- Veterans must have an honorable discharge or other qualifying discharge (e.g. hardship, condition interfering with duty, etc.) to be eliqible.

What benefits do students receive under the Post-9/11 GI Bill?

Depending on each individual's situation, benefits could include payment of tuition and fees, a monthly housing allowance, a stipend for books and supplies, college fund ("kicker") payments, a rural benefit payment, and a Yellow Ribbon benefit. Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits differ from other education assistance programs in that each type of payment is issued separately, with some payments made directly to the school and others issued to the individual.

- Tuition and Fees: These payments are issued to the school on behalf of the individual at the time the
 certificate of enrollment is processed
 - Not on active duty: For individuals not on active duty, the amount is prorated according to length of service. The amount paid is limited to the highest amount of tuition and fees charged for full-time, undergraduate training at a public institution of higher learning in the state where the student is enrolled. (A chart of maximum in-state tuition and fees for 2008-2009 is on the VA GI Bill website at http://www.gibill.va.gov/GI_Bill_Info/CH33/Tuition_and_fees.htm.)
 - On active duty: Individuals on active duty may receive the total amount of tuition and fees. The
 amount is not limited to the state maximum.
- Monthly housing allowance: This payment is issued directly to the student at the beginning of each
 month for education and training pursued the previous month. The amount is prorated based on length
 of service. NOTE: Active duty personnel are not eligible for the Post-9/11 GI Bill monthly housing
 allowance. Students enrolled exclusively in online training are not eligible for the housing allowance.
- Books and supplies stipend: This payment issued directly to the student when the school certifies
 and VA processes the enrollment. This benefit is prorated based on length of service. NOTE: Active
 duty personnel are not eliqible for the Post-9/11 GI Bill books and supplies stipend.

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- Yellow Ribbon payments: The Yellow Ribbon Program allows degree-granting institutions to enter into a voluntary agreement with VA to fund tuition expenses that exceed the highest public in-state undergraduate tuition rate for individuals eligible for the 100% payment tier. The institution can contribute up to 50% of those expenses and VA will match the same amount as the institution. This payment is issued to the school when the school certifies and VA processes the student's enrollment. (For details on this program see Yellow Ribbon Program on the web page http://www.gibill.va.gov/GI_Bill_Info/CH33/Yellow_ribbon.htm.)
- College fund or "kicker": These payments are issued directly to the student based on "rate of pursuit"
 (full- or part-time study) and the education benefits program under which the kicker is payable. Post9/11 GI Bill kickers will be issued monthly with the housing allowance; all other kickers will be issued in a
 lump sum when the student's enrollment certification is processed.
- Rural benefit payments: This one-time, lump-sum payment of \$500 is issued directly to a student who
 resides in a county with six persons or fewer per square mile (as determined by the most recent
 decennial census), and who either:
 - physically relocates at least 500 miles to attend an educational institution, or
 - relocates by air (any distance) to physically attend an educational institution, if no other land-based transportation exists.

What kind of education and training does the Post-9/11 GI Bill cover?

Approved training under the Post-9/11 GI Bill includes graduate and undergraduate degrees. All training programs must be offered by a degree-granting institution of higher learning (IHL) and approved for GI Bill benefits. Additionally, tutorial assistance and reimbursement for one licensing or certification test reimbursement are available under the Post- 9/11 GI Bill.

NOTE: If an individual is eligible for the Post 9/11 GI Bill as well as other GI Bill benefits, s/he will be required to make an irrevocable choice of which benefit to receive. Individuals who were previously eligible for the Montgomery GI Bill-Active Duty (MGIB-AD, Chapter 30), Montgomery GI Bill-Selected Reserve (MGIB-SR, Chapter 1606), or the Reserve Educational Assistance Program (REAP, Chapter 1607) may continue to receive benefits for approved programs not offered by degree-granting institutions. These programs include flight, correspondence, apprenticeship/on-the-job training, preparatory courses, and national tests. Individuals in these programs will be paid as if they are still receiving benefits under Chapters 30, 1606, and 1607.

When will benefits be paid?

The Post-9/11 GI Bill is effective for training on or after August 1, 2009.

What is the eligibility period?

The period of eligibility for the Post 9/11 GI Bill ends 15 years from the date of the last discharge or release from active duty of at least:

- 90 consecutive days
- 30 days but less than 90 days if released for a service-connected disability

Or. 15 years from the date of discharge for the last period of service used to meet the minimum service requirements of 90 aggregate days of service.

For more information, visit the VA GI Bill Website at http://www.gibill.va.gov, or call toll-free 1-888-GIBILL-1 (1-888-442-4551).

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8 Most Common Mistakes

- 1. You must inform the Education office of course changes. You will be responsible for dropped courses after the schools drop deadline and not informing the Education Office.
- 2. You must submit a degree plan to the Education Office. Funding will not be received without a degree plan.
- 3. You must apply for both federal tuition assistance and GI Bill. These are separate processes and not interchangeable.
- 4. Tuition Assistance is not a guaranteed benefit. It is First Come First Served. Get your application in early (up to 90-days in advance. Late applications may not be considered.
- 5. The Tuition Assistance application requires department and course number. Do not use the class number.
- 6. In order to get extra fees paid for a course (lab, program, etc.), you must enter amounts in comment section.
- 7. Ensure the Tuition Assistance application is accepted. Not completing all fields will not allow application to be accepted. Ensure to get a pop-up that tells you the application was successfully submitted.
- 8. You must indicate in the comments section of the Tuition Assistance application if you are using the Post 9/11 (Chapter 33) GI Bill. Failure to indicated this may cause overpayment and subsequent recoupment.