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# The Montgomery GI Bill



***Change in High  
School  
Requirement***

If you weren't eligible for the  
Montgomery GI Bill (MGIB)  
before, because you didn't have a  
high school diploma, you now  
have another chance  
to become eligible.

VA Pamphlet  
22-03-2  
September 2003

Veterans Benefits Administration  
Washington, DC 20420

## WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS?

To be eligible for MGIB benefits, you must have your high school diploma, equivalency (GED) certificate, or the equivalent of 12 semester hours leading to a college degree.

## WHAT HAS CHANGED?

### The old requirement:

In the past, you had to obtain your high school diploma or the equivalent **before** you completed

- your first period of active duty, **or**
- your initial period of active duty for training, if you're in the Selected Reserve.

### The new requirement:

You may now be eligible for MGIB (Active Duty or Selected Reserve) benefits if you meet the high school requirement **any time before you apply for benefits.**



## WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?

If you haven't already done so, get your high school diploma or the equivalent, and apply (or reapply) for MGIB benefits for further education or training. Contact one of the following individuals, who can help you get started.

- An official in the academic or Admissions Office of a high school or community college in your area, **or**
- An Education Services Officer (ESO) or Education Counselor, if you're on active duty.

When you've obtained your diploma or the equivalent, apply for MGIB benefits. If you applied for MGIB before, but were turned down, you can reapply!

Even if you're not ready to begin using your benefits, you can apply to find out if you're eligible. If you meet all eligibility requirements, VA will send you a Certificate of Eligibility showing the ending date of your eligibility period and the number of months of benefits you can receive.

## HOW LONG ARE YOU ELIGIBLE?

If you weren't eligible for MGIB – Active Duty before but, because of this change, you now become eligible, you must use your benefits before

- November 2, 2010, **or**
- 10 years from the date of your last discharge from active duty, whichever is later.

If you're a reservist and you weren't eligible for MGIB-Selected Reserve but, because of this change, you now become eligible, you must use your benefits before whichever comes first:

- 14 years from the date you received your high school diploma or equivalent, **or**
- the date you leave the Selected Reserve.



## HOW CAN YOU APPLY?

If you applied for MGIB before, send VA

- a copy of your high school diploma or GED certificate, **or**
- a transcript showing you completed 12 semester hours in a degree program.

If you never applied for MGIB, you must send the evidence described above **and** a completed VA Form 22-1990, Application for VA Education Benefits.

You can complete this application on-line. Just go to [www.gibill.va.gov](http://www.gibill.va.gov) and click on *Electronic Application Form*.

**Remember:** To get an official VA determination of your eligibility for MGIB benefits, **you must send VA a formal application.**

**Good luck in all your future endeavors!**

**IMPORTANT:** If VA previously denied your claim, you should be aware that there may be other reasons why you weren't eligible.