

# **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

## **VA EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

**Check with VA for official policy and procedures before you change anything!**  
**<http://www.gibill.va.gov/>**

***Q: Who can CG Reservists contact for assistance concerning VA education programs?***

**A:** Coast Guard Reserve (CGR) now has a Reserve Education Office located in PSC-rpm-3. This office manages MGIB-SR (CH-1606), REAP (CH-1607) and Post 9/11 GI Bill (CH-33). This office also approves the TEB Requests when transferring education benefits to dependents. We coordinate with DEERS, VA, and CG-PPC so we can often assist to resolve eligibility issues.

To contact this office, please send an email to [reserveVAeducation@uscg.mil](mailto:reserveVAeducation@uscg.mil) with your name and program inquiry in the subject line. Please be advised that this office has minimal staffing and your inquiry will be handled as quickly as possible

**Remember: MGIB-SR, REAP, Post 9/11 GI Bill and MGIB-AD each offers 36 months of benefits BUT 48 months of benefits is the maximum you may ever use. So, if you are eligible for several programs, choose wisely which to use.**

## **MGIB-SR**

### **(Chapter 1606)**

***Q: How do I become eligible for MGIB-SR (Chapter 1606)?***

**A:** You must incur a six year SELRES contract, sign an SOU (normally completed with the recruiter) and complete your IADT. You must have completed high school or received a GED. Your eligibility status can be found in Direct Access by going to Main Menu > Self Service > Employee > View > Personal Information. Scroll down to the bottom of the page to find RMGIB Eligibility. Contact the Reserve Education Office for any issues.

***Q: How long do I remain eligible for MGIB-SR?***

**A:** You will remain eligible as long as you're a drilling reservist in good participation standing. Participation standards are outlined in the Reserve Policy Manual COMDTINST M1001.28A and include but not limited to: completion of drills, two weeks ADT, meeting medical and dental readiness, and ASQ.

***Q: I completed 4 of my 6 years of obligated SELRES service and have been approved to go IRR. Can I still use my MGIB-SR?***

**A:** No. Benefits are suspended once you separate from SELRES. Also, you had a six year MGIB-SR commitment to the Selected Reserve which you did not complete. You have one year to return to SELRES status to restart your benefits. (Three years if authorized a break to fulfill a missionary obligation.) If you do not return within the authorized timeframe, your benefits will be terminated permanently. If you do not complete the required six years of SELRES and you received money from VA, they will begin recoupment action to get the money back from you.

***Q: I enlisted for six years SELRES and completed IADT. Will my eligibility start automatically?***

**A:** Eligibility should start upon graduation from “A” school. If it didn’t, contact the Reserve Education Office at [reserveVAeducation@uscg.mil](mailto:reserveVAeducation@uscg.mil) for assistance.

***Q: I just completed four years in the Active Component and now I’m completing my last four years as a reservist. Can I become eligible for MGIB-SR?***

**A:** Yes, you can, BUT you must extend your current enlistment to meet the six year SELRES obligation. You must also complete a Statement of Understanding (SOU) CG-5482 which must be sent to the Reserve Education Office along with an email requesting that eligibility be granted. Once the requirements have been met, an eligibility code will be entered into Direct Access which will then transfer to VA.

***Q: I applied to VA for my MGIB-SR and I was told that I was not “coded as eligible”. What does this mean?***

**A:** Every eligible reservist should have a specific eligibility code in Direct Access. This information is transmitted to VA. There can be a variety of reasons why VA may not see your eligibility code. It could be that there was a data transmission error or that the eligibility code was never entered or was entered incorrectly. In any case, contact the CG Reserve Education office and someone will assist you.

***Q: My school asked for my NOBE. What is a NOBE?***

**A:** A Notice of Basic Eligibility (NOBE - DD Form 2384-1) certifies that you are eligible for MGIB-SR. If you do not have one, you can request one from the Reserve Education Office. **Be sure to look in your personal records at home and in your SPO PDR before you make a request.** Your records and information will be reviewed by CGR to confirm your eligibility. If eligibility is confirmed, you will be sent a request for certain information to complete the form. Once your reply is received, a completed NOBE will be sent to your CG email address for your signature. If eligibility cannot be confirmed, you will be notified and asked to send any appropriate documentation that can rectify the issue(s).

***Q: How do I get my MGIB-SR benefits started?***

**A:** If you have not already done so, you will need to apply to VA. You can do so by completing the form VA-22-1990 either electronically through VONAPP at: <http://vabenefits.vba.va.gov/vonapp/main.asp> or with a paper application. Be sure to speak with your school's VA Certifying Official to ensure that they will be submitting VA-22-1999 (only available to school officials) to VA. This form verifies your school enrollment and permits VA to begin payments.

***Q: Okay, I applied to VA for benefits and I met with my school's VA Certifying Official. Do I need to do anything once payments begin?***

**A:** While receiving benefits, you must verify enrollment at the end of each month of school via VA's Web Automated Verification of Enrollment (WAVE) at <https://www.gibill.va.gov/wave/index.do> or phone 877 VA-ECERT 877-823-2378. *If you forget, you may miss a payment.*

## **REAP** **(Chapter 1607)**

***Q: What are the requirements to become eligible for REAP?***

**A:** As a Reservist, you must have served 90 consecutive (or 30 consecutive if released due to a service connected disability) in support of contingency operations (ONE, OIF, OEF) and you must return to the Ready Reserve category or greater from which you were mobilized (SELRES must return to SELRES; IRR must return to IRR or SELRES)

***Q: I served two years on Title 10 Orders. Am I eligible for MGIB-AD instead of REAP?***

**A:** Yes but you would have to make an election and pay the \$1200 within one year after RELAD. The Post 9/11 GI Bill may give you better benefits without any contribution.

***Q: I spent 2 years on Extended Active Duty (EAD) orders. Am I eligible for REAP?***

**A:** No. The only time considered qualifying time for REAP is "Title 10" Active Duty orders, or ADOS orders, in support of a named contingency operation on or after 11 Sep 2001. Your time may have made you eligible for MGIB-AD (Chapter 30) which requires a contribution of \$1200.00 within a required timeframe. If your time was on or after 11 SEP 2001, you are probably eligible for the Post 9/11 GI Bill.

***Q: I was in the Active Component for four years after 11 SEP 2001. I am now SELRES and have not yet mobilized in support of any contingency operation. Am I eligible for REAP now that I am SELRES?***

**A:** No, time served in the Active Component does not count towards the requirements for REAP. This is a Reserve Education Program only. Your time would have counted towards MGIB-AD (if you paid into it) and/or the Post 9/11 GI Bill.

## **POST 9/11 GI BILL (Chapter 33)**

***Q: I plan to use the Post 9/11 GI Bill and I was told that I if I have another VA education benefit, that I have to relinquish it in order to use Post 9/11 GI Bill. Is this correct?***

**A:** Yes, it is and because relinquishment rules are not the same for all programs, you should contact VA or your ESO for counseling prior to making any changes. Individuals transferring to the Post 9/11 GI Bill from the MGIB-AD will be limited to the amount of their remaining MGIB-AD entitlement. So if you have 35 months of MGIB-AD, you should get 35 months of Post 9/11. Likewise, if you have 5 months of MGIB-AD left, you will only get 5 months of Post 9/11. If you exhaust all MGIB-AD, you may be eligible for 12 months of Post 9/11. So, you can see how important to know the remaining balance of MGIB-AD benefits before making any *irrevocable* decisions.

***Q: I paid for MGIB-AD while in the Active Component and I used 20 months of those benefits. I'm completing my last 2 years of my original 8 yr contract in the IRR and would like to switch my benefits to the Post 9/11 GI Bill. How many months will I be eligible for?***

**A:** You should be eligible for 16 months. Confirm with VA before making any decisions.

MGIB-AD:	36 months
Used:	<u>20 months</u>
Balance:	16 months

***Q: I paid for MGIB-AD while in the Active Component and used 20 months of those benefits. I'm completing my last 2 years of my original 8 yr contract in SELRES and would like to switch my benefits to the Post 9/11 GI Bill. How many months will I be eligible for?***

A: You should have 16 months of benefits left (see above). However, if you reenlist or extend for a 6 year SELRES contract, you may be eligible for MGIB-SR. Once eligible, you may relinquish MGIB-SR for Post 9/11 which gives you 48 months of total benefits instead of the 36 in the above example. You may choose to use the balance under Post 9/11 or a mixture of Post 9/11 and up to 16 months of MGIB-AD. Again, confirm with VA or your ESO before making any final decisions.

Max Allowed for 2+ programs:	48 months
MGIB-AD Used:	<u>20 months</u>
Balance of Benefits to Use:	28 months

***Q: I was a reservist for 6 years and was eligible for MGIB-SR. I then integrated into the Active Component where I paid into MGIB-AD. I used 3 months of MGIB-SR and 33 months of MGIB-AD. When I transfer my benefits to Post 9/11 GI Bill, what will I be eligible for?***

A: Once you integrated into the Active Component, you lost eligibility for MGIB-SR. If MGIB-AD is the only program you currently have, you will have to relinquish it for Post 9/11. Here's how it should work.

MGIB-SR:	36 months	MGIB-AD:	36 months
<u>Used:</u>	<u>3 months</u>	<u>Used:</u>	<u>33 months</u>
Balance:	0 - not eligible	Balance:	3 months

**\*\*You will only be eligible for only 3 months of Post 9/11 benefits when MGIB-AD is relinquished.**

**\*\*However if you use up those three months of MGIB-AD completely before transferring to Post 9/11, then you may be eligible for up to 12 months of Post 9/11 benefits. In your case, here's how it should look:**

MGIB-SR Used:	3 months
MGIB-AD Used:	<u>36 months</u>
Total Used:	39 months
<u>Total Allowed:</u>	<u>48 months</u> allowed under two or more programs
Post 9/11:	9 months to use

**\*\*\* These are only examples and not official calculations – only VA can give you exact balances. Even a balance of 3 days could change what you are eligible for. So it is extremely important to speak with VA concerning the number of months you are eligible for before transferring to Post 9/11 GI Bill. REMEMBER, this is an irrevocable decision.**

***Q: I have applied for benefits with VA and they are asking me for a DD-214. I do not have one for each of my periods of active duty because they were shorter than 90 days. What should I do?***

**A:** When you completed your VONAPP (application for VA benefits), you should have listed all of your time as it requested. If there is a discrepancy between what you listed and what VA sees in their screen, they will contact CGR for clarification. The Reserve Education office will review your records, verify your time, and respond back to VA. VA will then make a final decision on your eligibility.

***Q: How do I transfer my benefits to my dependents?***

**A:** You must access, via your CAC card, the Transfer Education Benefits (TEB) portal at <https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/TEB/>. There is a power point presentation on the Reserve Homepage for more guidance on completing and tracking your TEB request. TEB also has a Help Page.

***Q: I will retire in 2 months. Can I transfer my benefits to a dependent after I retire?***

**A:** No. You must transfer benefits prior to separation from the SELRES or Active Component. You may also be required to obligate additional service which would conflict with the ability to transfer benefits if retiring now.

***Q: I want to transfer benefits to my son & daughter but they are not showing up in DEERS. How do I fix this?***

**A:** When your child reaches the age of 21 and is not a full time college student, they will be dropped out of DEERS as a dependent (unless they fall under incapacitation rules). If they are a full time student and you have provided your ID Card Office the required verification from their college, they should stay in DEERS until the age of 23 or graduation from college (whichever is earlier). If you believe there is an issue with your dependents not being in DEERS, you can contact the DEERS Support Center by telephone at 1-800-538-9552.

***Q: I want to transfer my Post 9/11 benefits to my dependents but I was told that I must obligate additional service. Why?***

**A:** Post 9/11 GI Bill is for recruiting and retention. Currently there is a pro-rated service obligation for those over 16 years. Everyone transferring benefits on or after 1 August 2012 will be required to obligate an additional four years of continuous service in SELRES or Active Component.

***Q: What is the start date of my obligated service?***

A: The start date is the date which you submitted your TEB request.

***Q: Who can sign my CG-3307 when obligating additional service?***

A: It must have command signature; CO/XO, OIC/XPO, Admin or Personnel Officer. Be sure to have their name typed on the form so it doesn't get returned by the TEB Approval Official.

***Q: Do I have to do anything with the CG-3307 after it's signed?***

A: YES. Unless you or your SPO returns it to [reserveVAeducation@uscg.mil](mailto:reserveVAeducation@uscg.mil), your TEB request will not be approved. It is member responsibility.

***Q: I signed my CG-3307 for an additional four years. Do I still have to complete a new enlistment contract to cover this period?***

A: Yes, you do. You must still do a Career Intention Worksheet and complete the new contract.

***Q: If I use TEB to transfer my benefits, how do I know which benefit will be relinquished?***

A: If you do not choose which benefit to relinquish by going to VONAPP first, then VA will choose for you after you use TEB. We are told that if you have more than one program that VA will relinquish the program which gives you the lesser benefit.

***Q: I think I would like to transfer my benefits to my children but they are very young. Any recommendations?***

A: If you transfer now, your required obligated service period can begin now. You should also request a Certificate of Eligibility from VA so you know what your children are currently eligible for. Remember; if you ever used any benefits, it will impact what your dependents will receive. There are many instances where the member has forgotten that they took courses years ago which VA paid for.

***Q: What's a Certificate of Eligibility and how do I get one?***

A: A Certificate of Eligibility (COE) is provided by VA to the member upon request via VONAPP. VA will conduct a review of your records and generate COE(s) reflecting each program you are currently eligible for. You take the COE to your school when ready to use benefits

***Q: I transferred my benefits to my daughter. She applied for her Certificate of Eligibility but hasn't received it yet. Classes have already started and the school said they cannot submit an enrollment certification without the COE. Any suggestions?***

**A:** Your daughter should bring a copy of the TEB approval form to the school's VA Certifying Official. Schools do not have to wait for the COE before sending the enrollment certification to VA.

***Q: Can I still get the Monthly Stipend (living allowance) if I am enrolled in distance learning?***

**A:** A new change as of 5 Jan 2011 authorized individuals pursuing a program of more than a half-time basis, but solely thru distance learning, to receive a Monthly Stipend equal to 50% of the national average prorated on the rate of pursuit. This takes effect on 1 Oct 2011.

***Q: If I contributed \$600 Buy-Up towards the MGIB-AD or REAP, can I get that money back if I transfer to the Post 9/11 GI Bill?***

**A:** No, the Buy-Up contributions are not refundable nor transferrable.

***Q: Can I get a refund of the \$1,200.00 paid for MGIB-AD if I switch to the Post 9/11 GI Bill?***

**A:** Any individual who paid the \$1,200.00 for the Montgomery GI Bill and elects to use the Post-9/11 GI Bill may be refunded a proportional amount after all entitlement under the Post-9/11 GI Bill is used. Individuals who do not use all their entitlement under the Post-9/11 GI Bill will not receive a refund of contributions paid under the Montgomery GI Bill. This is refunded in conjunction with the monthly stipend if entitled. Check with VA for possible updates to this rule.