



Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs

G.I. Dependent Scholarship Program



Alabama G.I. Dependent Scholarship Program

- ✚ The Alabama G.I. Dependent Scholarship program was created in 1947 and has provided educational opportunities to thousands of dependents of disabled veterans



Alabama G.I. Dependent Scholarship Program

- ✚ Who does this program help?
 - ✚ Dependents of Eligible disabled veterans
 - ✚ Dependents are defined as children, step-child and spouses of the eligible veteran.
 - ✚ In order for a step-child to qualify, the veteran and the child's parent must have married prior to the child's 19th birthday.
 - ✚ Divorce will terminate benefits for the stepchild and the spouse.
 - ✚ Re-marriage of a widow/widower will also terminate benefits.
 - ✚ Students are only eligible to use the Alabama G.I. Dependent Scholarship Program once in a lifetime



Has anything changed?

- ✚ As of May 14, 2021, the Alabama G.I. Dependent Scholarship Program can cover Comprehensive Transition Post Secondary Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities for eligible students at any public 4 year institution in Alabama.
- ✚ All other qualifications and rules under Act 2017-349 apply to these students.



Has anything changed?

- ✚ On June 1, 2022 qualifying private schools were added to the program.
 - ✚ The qualifying private colleges have to receive a direct appropriation from the state legislature or have resident students who received appropriations through the Alabama Student Grant Program.
 - ✚ All new schools added to the program fall under the guidelines of Act 2017-349



Has anything changed?

- ✦ The new schools are:
 - ✦ Amridge University
 - ✦ Birmingham Southern College
 - ✦ Faulkner University
 - ✦ Huntingdon College
 - ✦ Miles College
 - ✦ Oakwood College
 - ✦ Samford University
 - ✦ South University
 - ✦ Spring Hill College
 - ✦ Stillman College
 - ✦ Talladega College
 - ✦ Tuskegee University
 - ✦ U.S. Sports Academy
 - ✦ University of Mobile



Benefit Changes Through The Years

- ✚ **Legacy** (applied prior to Fall 2014) can use the benefits for undergraduate, graduate etc.
 - ✚ We can be billed for these students for full tuition, textbooks/access codes and instructional fees.
- ✚ **Act 2014-177** (Applied Fall 2014 through July 30, 2017) Must use benefits for undergraduate courses of study at the in-state tuition rate.
 - ✚ We can be billed for full tuition, textbooks/Access Codes and instructional fees.
 - ✚ Students cannot be billed for the difference between in state and out of state tuition.



Benefit Changes Through The Years

- ✚ **ACT 2017-349** (applied July 31, 2017 forward, eligible private colleges and students attending Comprehensive Transition Post Secondary Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities)
 - ✚ We are the payer of last resort. ANY grants or scholarships (Not loans!) that are paid to the school **MUST** be used first toward required education expenses.
 - ✚ Required education expenses are anything that your school requires of the student.
 - ✚ After grants and scholarships have been utilized or accounted for, we can be billed **up to** \$250 per credit hour for tuition and **up to** \$1,000 for the combination of textbooks/Access Codes and instructional fees.



Benefit Changes Through The Years

Act 2017-349 continued

- ✚ Student's must complete a FASFA for each year that they are using the Alabama G.I. Dependent Scholarship Program.
 - ✚ The school is required to verify this prior to any billing.
- ✚ Students must meet Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) as defined by your school.
 - ✚ We must be notified in proper spreadsheet format of any student who does not meet SAP.



Benefit Changes Through The Years

Act 2017-349 continued

- ✚ Student's must complete a FERPA release for every educational institution they attend.
 - ✚ You must ensure that you have one on file prior to invoicing.
 - ✚ You may use our FERPA release or one created by your school as long as it does not exclude us from obtaining needed information.



Which Act?

- ✚ The certificate of eligibility will tell you what is covered.
- ✚ When you request the student entitlement report for your school, the last column on the right shows the program type.



How Semesters Are Reduced

✚ For all students under the Alabama G.I. Dependent Scholarship Program, the following formula is used to deduct their semesters:

1-5 hours = $\frac{1}{4}$ of a semester

6-8 hours = $\frac{1}{2}$ of a semester

9-11 hours = $\frac{3}{4}$ of a semester

12 hours or more = 1 semester

As the number of hours is how their semesters are deducted, it is extremely important that the hours are correct on invoices and the ADVA 5s forms.



Invoicing

- ✚ All invoices must be in alphabetical order
- ✚ Student from all Act's should be included on the same invoice
- ✚ All invoices must contain your school's name and address as they are listed in your schools STAARS account
- ✚ All invoices must include the required invoice statement
- ✚ All invoices must be signed and notarized and mailed to us to our P.O. Box address



Invoicing

- ✚ A copy of the invoice should be emailed directly to me in excel spreadsheet format (password protected)
- ✚ The password should be emailed in a separate email
- ✚ Invoices are paid after the semester ends
- ✚ Please wait to submit the invoice until drop/add has ended and your school's deadline for purchasing textbooks has passed.
 - ✚ This helps reduce the number of supplemental invoices that must be submitted.



Invoicing

✚ If an invoice is received after our fiscal year has ended, they will become State Board of Adjustment Claims.

- ✚ This must try to be avoided.
- ✚ When invoices become board of adjustment claims, it means that we must pay prior year invoices with current year funds.
- ✚ This can cause use to deplete our current year funds before we have paid all current year invoices.
- ✚ It is also additional work for you and us
- ✚ It will generally take several months before the State Board of Adjustment approves or denies the claim.
- ✚ The State Board of Adjustment will deny any claim if it is received more than 12 months after the end of the semester.



Good Information

✚ Month end letters are mailed to students at the most recent address we have on file.

✚ These letter are computer generated and are issued when a student is getting low on benefits, have exhausted their benefits or getting close to their expiration date.

✚ These letters are based on the invoicing. If we have not received the invoice, those hours have not been calculated.



Good Information

✚ Applications and benefits

- ✚ If a student is interested in applying for the scholarship, they should visit their local county veteran service office for assistance.
- ✚ The effective date for new applications is the date that we receive an approvable application into our HQ office. We can pay from that date forward.



New System coming Jan/Feb 2023!

✚ We are current working with a vendor that is building a new online database

✚ Students will apply online for the scholarship.

✚ They will be able to view their eligibility through their account.

✚ This means certificates, remaining eligibility, effective dates, expiration dates, transfer forms and much more!

✚ What does this mean for **you**?

✚ **YOU** will be able to get certificates through email, be able to check remaining eligibility, print out a listing of current students, invoice, complete transfer requests etc.

✚ More information to come!



Contact Information

Kayla Kyle

Program Manager

P.O. Box 1509

Montgomery, AL 36102

(334)242-5077

kayla.kyle@va.alabama.gov

www.va.alabama.gov



The End

Questions?

