

## The Contemporary G.I. Bill

The Harry W. Colmery Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2017 passed both the House and the Senate unanimously, and was signed into law on August 16, 2017.

Commonly known as the “Forever G.I. Bill,” the act picked up its nickname due to its main provision, which eliminates the 15-year “use-it-or-lose-it” provision in its predecessor program, the Post 9/11 G.I. Bill. This was an important improvement on past iterations of the G.I. bill, and was just one of many.

### **Who qualifies for the G.I. Bill?**

- Anyone who served on active duty for 90 or more days after Sept. 10, 2001 and was honorably discharged.
- Anyone who served at least 30 days of continuous active duty after Sept. 10, 2001 and was discharged due to a service-connected disability.

### **How much does it pay?**

- Full resident tuition at a public school for 36 months. If the recipient attends a private or foreign school it pays up to \$23,671.94 per academic year.
- A monthly housing allowance at the rate of an E-5 with dependents in the zip code where the recipient physically participates in a majority of classes. In California that allowance can range from \$4,368 in San Francisco to \$1,512 in Bakersfield – in Sacramento the allowance is \$2,100.
- Up to \$1,000 per year for books and supplies.

### **How may it be used?**

- Attendance at Institutes of Higher Learning such as Four Year Universities, Community Colleges, and Advanced Degree Programs.
- Vocational and technical training such as trade schools, vocational schools, and specialized training schools. Examples include: HVAC repair, truck driving, emergency medical training, barber/beautician school, and auto repair.
- On-the-job or apprenticeship programs.
- Reimbursement for licensing and certification tests that have been specifically approved for the G.I. Bill.
- Reimbursement for nationally approved tests such as the SAT, LSAT, GRE, MCAT, etc.
- Flight Training.
- Correspondence training.
- Work Study. If the recipient is a full-time or 3/4-time student in a college degree program or a vocational or professional program, they can "earn while they learn" with a V.A. work-study allowance.
- Tuition assistance Top-Up, a program that allows G.I. Bill recipients to use their benefit to supplement the tuition and fees not covered by tuition assistance.
- Tutorial assistance.