



**U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs**  
Veterans Benefits Administration

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## **Post-9/11 GI Bill: Transferability**

### **WHAT IS TRANSFERABILITY?**

The Post-9/11 GI Bill allows Service members to transfer unused education benefits to immediate family members. This applies to officer or enlisted, active duty and Selected Reserve. Qualifying immediate family members are spouses and children. The Service member must have at least six years of service and commit to an additional four years in order to transfer benefits. This policy is set by the Department of Defense because this benefit impacts recruiting and retention.

For more information:

- Visit <http://www.defense.gov>. Search “Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits.”

### **Eligible Individuals**

You must first be eligible for the Post-9/11 GI Bill. You must also be a member of the Armed Forces (active duty or Selected Reserve, officer or enlisted) on or after Aug. 1, 2009, and:

- Have at least six years of service in the Armed Forces on the date of approval, AND
  - Agree to serve four more years from the date of election
- Have at least 10 years of service in the Armed Forces on the date of approval, AND
  - If unable to commit to four more years because of standard policy (service branch or DoD) or statute, agree to serve the maximum amount of time allowed
- Be on active duty
  - Transfer requests can only be submitted and approved while on active duty.
- Effective 7/20/19, eligibility to transfer benefits will be limited to service members with less than 16 years of active duty or selected reserve service.

## **Eligible Family Members**

If you are approved to transfer your educational assistance benefit, you may transfer to:

- Your spouse
- One or more of your children
- Any combination of your spouse and children
- A family member must be eligible for benefits and enrolled in the Defense Eligibility Enrollment Reporting System (DEERS).
- A child's marriage after receiving the benefit will not affect his or her eligibility. However, once you designate a child as a transferee, they retain the right to revoke or modify the transfer at any time.
- A divorce after receiving the benefit will not affect the transferee's eligibility. However, once you designate a spouse as a transferee, they retain the right to revoke or modify the transfer at any time.

The Harry W. Colmery Veterans Educational Assistance Act, also known as the "Forever GI Bill," was signed into law on Aug. 17, 2017, and brings significant changes to Veterans' education benefits.

This new law states, as of Aug. 1, 2018, Veterans who transferred entitlement to a dependent can now designate a new dependent if the original dependent dies. If the Veteran dies, a dependent who received transferred entitlement can now designate a new eligible dependent of the Veteran to transfer any of the dependent's remaining entitlement.

## **Nature of Transfer**

Eligible Service members may transfer up to the total months of unused Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits, or 36 months if you have not used any. See the following rules and regulations for each transferee:

- Spouse:
  - May use the benefit immediately
  - May use the benefit while the member stays in the Armed Forces or after separation from active duty
  - Is not eligible for the monthly stipend or books and supplies stipend while the member is serving on active duty
  - Can use the benefit for up to 15 years after the Service member separates from active duty
- **Child:**
  - May only use the benefit after the transferring Service member has served at least 10 years in the Armed Forces
  - May use the benefit while the eligible member remains in the Armed Forces or after separation from active duty
  - May not use the benefit until he or she has attained a secondary school diploma or equivalency certificate, or turned 18
  - Can receive the monthly stipend and books and supplies even while the eligible Service member is on active duty
  - May not use the benefit after turning 26

Our Education Call Center is available at 1-888-442-4551 (Monday-Friday, 7 a.m. -6 p.m. CST) for any questions about GI Bill benefits.

Join the conversation on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/gibillEducation](http://www.facebook.com/gibillEducation) and follow us on Twitter @VAVetBenefits.

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More information about education benefits offered by VA is available at <https://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill>