

# Washington County Veterans' Newsletter July 2017



432 East Washington Street, Room 2006 (Courthouse)  
West Bend, WI 53095 (262)-335-4457 Monday-Friday 8:00-4:30  
[www.co.washington.wi.us](http://www.co.washington.wi.us) [www.dva.state.wi.us](http://www.dva.state.wi.us)

## Words from our CVSO officer, **Kurt Rusch**

For Marines, at the end of boot camp you undergo a final grueling challenge called the Crucible. It's a test that is supposed to resemble a combat experience through physical and mental challenges over time and distance. In other words, Marines are forced to march up and down mountains for 40+ miles over two days with limited sleep and food, while performing at a high level. When the test is completed, the command calls all of the Marine recruits together and gives them a final briefing.

I will never forget what our commander said. "Marines, you are done, you are going to graduate, if you are broken, now is the time to get fixed." You see, several Marine recruits had been pushing through the challenge with broken legs, hands, and ankles refusing to be pushed back in training or released from the Marine Corps. They were doing their best to hide their injuries and finish, afraid of what would happen if someone knew they were hurt. Veterans do this too.

So I say to you, if you are a Veteran. *You are done, if you are broken, now is the time to get fixed.* Give me a call and let's talk about how we can help.

Kurt Rusch  
Washington County  
Veterans Service Officer  
West Bend – (262)335-4457  
Toll Free – (800)616-0446  
FAX – (262)365-5001

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## Transportation

If you have an appointment at the VAMC in Milwaukee, the following services are available:

- ✓ Interfaith Caregivers 262-365-0902
- ✓ Washington County Commuter Express (WCCE) call: 1-888-675-9223  
[www.rideWCCE.com](http://www.rideWCCE.com)
- ✓ DAV Transportation 414-587-0128

## Honor Flight Program

The Stars and Stripes Honor Program is affiliated with the National Honor Flight Program.

The goal of the Honor Flight Program is to provide veterans the opportunity to see their National Memorials in Washington D.C. before they pass away.

The current emphasis is on WW II veterans, as we are losing far too many of them every day. However, special consideration will be given to Korean War and Vietnam veterans who are terminally ill.

The objective of this endeavor is to provide the trip at NO COST to the veteran. Guardians must pay their own way. Rules for guardians are contained on the application form.

Donations are being accepted, and can be mailed to:

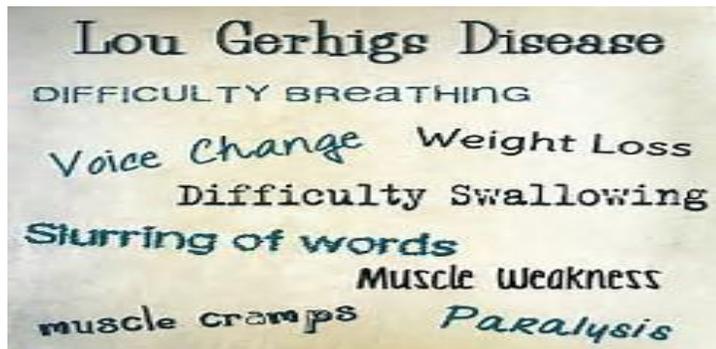
For more information visit [www.wisconsinhonorflight.org](http://www.wisconsinhonorflight.org) or [www.starsandstripeshonorflight.org](http://www.starsandstripeshonorflight.org) or call 262-238-7740

## Lou Gehrig's Disease/ALS

The Department of Veterans Affairs plans to provide full disability payments for Lou Gehrig's Disease (Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis, or ALS) tacitly acknowledging for the first time a generalized link between the fatal neurological disorder and military service.

The VA already extends full compensation to ALS-stricken veterans of the first Persian Gulf War, who, according to a study earlier this decade, are twice as likely as other service members to contract the disease.

**If you know a veteran who has ALS or a widow of a veteran who died of ALS, they should call their CVSO office to file for benefit.**



Kurt Rusch

Barb Kempf-Neuy

Deb Van Erem



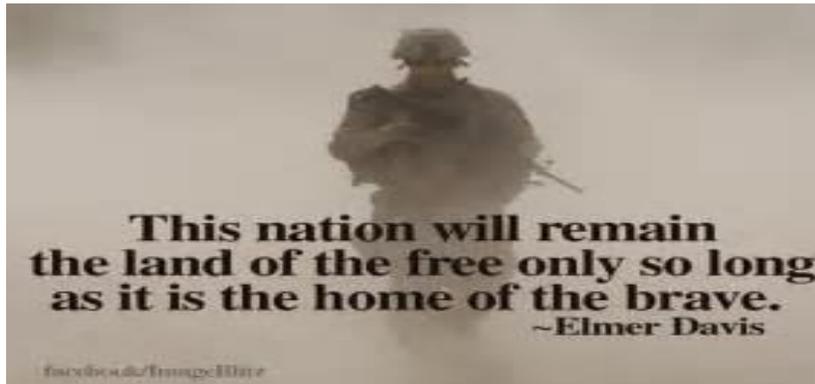
## Were you at Camp Lejeune for at least 30 days between August 1, 1953- December 31, 1987?

Veterans that were at Marine Base Camp Lejeune during the stated timeframe may be eligible for cost-free health care pertaining to certain conditions.

To see the list of conditions and to find more information, please see the following website:

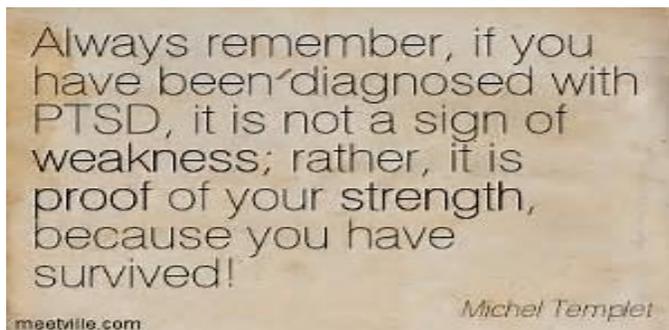
[www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/camp-lejeune/](http://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/camp-lejeune/)

**Note:** Veterans must first establish eligibility with the state of Wisconsin (WDVA) before applying for any Wisconsin Veteran's State Programs and Services. For more information on education benefits, applications and eligibility please visit [www.dva.state.us](http://www.dva.state.us) or contact the Washington County CVSO.



## VA PTSD PROGRAM QUICK FACTS

- In 2010, Secretary Shinseki reduces the evidence needed by Veterans seeking health care and disability compensation for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. The simplified process allows for faster and more accurate decisions and faster access to medical care to Veterans.
- All Veterans coming to VA for the first time are screened for the presence of symptoms of PTSD and depression.
- Treatment is driven by a recovery orientation, which includes a focus on the Veteran's needs and preferences in order to help them fulfill their personal goals and live meaningful lives.
- The PTSD Coach mobile app is available as a free download for iPhone or Android devices to help Veteran's manage PTSD symptoms. The app has been downloaded over 66,000 times in over 65 countries.
- VA has launched Make the Connection, Strong at the Broken Places, and About Face—campaigns that aim to help Veteran's feel comfortable talking about PTSD and seeking help if need be.



*“This nation has a solemn obligation to the men and women who have honorably served this country and suffer from the often devastating emotional wounds of war.” - Eric K. Shinseki, Secretary of Veteran Affairs*

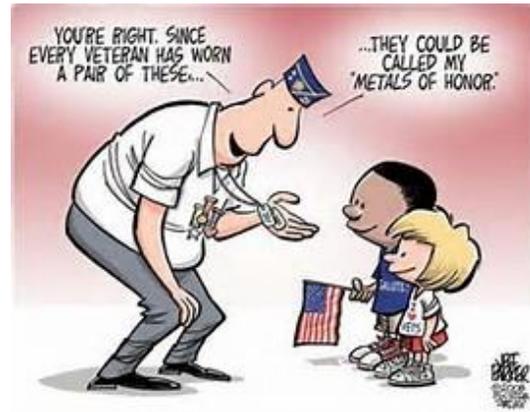
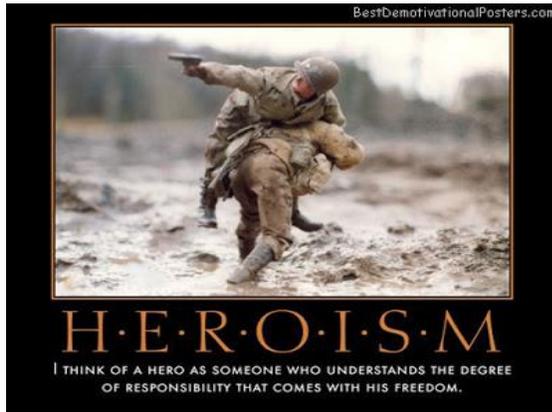
Copied from [www.va.gov/opa/issues/PT](http://www.va.gov/opa/issues/PT)

**ATTENTION VETERANS! FRAUD WARNING!** Veterans around the country are reporting that they are getting calls from a company identifying itself as the “Patient Care Group.” This company is claiming that VA prescriptions are now being dispensed through them and that if veterans want to continue to properly receive their medications, they must provide a credit card number. VA has **NOT** changed the process of receiving and dispensing prescriptions. Please contact your local VA Medical Center if you have questions about VA prescriptions or services. **DO NOT GIVE YOUR CREDIT CARD NUMBER TO ANYONE WHO CALLS YOU!**

Kurt Rusch

Barb Kempf-Neuy

Deb Van Erem



## Pre-9/11 Disability Ratings Review

October 27, 2008 – Military Health System

Service members who have been medically separated since September 11, 2001, will have the opportunity to have their disability ratings reviewed to ensure fairness and accuracy.

The new Physical Disability Board of Review (PDBR) will examine each applicant's medical separation, compare DoD and VA ratings, and make a recommendation to the respective Service Secretary (or designee). A disability rating cannot be lowered and any change to the rating is effective on the date of final decision by the Service Secretary.

To be eligible for PDBR review, a service member must have been medically separated between September 11, 2001 and December 31, 2009 with a combined disability rating of 20 percent or less, and not found eligible for retirement.

There are significant differences between this new PDBR review and a Board for Correction of Military (or Naval) Record (BCMR/BCNR) review. These differences are outlined here and will also be on the application.

While the Air Force is the lead for the PDBR process, case tracking and reporting, a joint service board will conduct the evaluation and review of each case. Applicants will not be able to appear in person, but may include any statements, briefs, medical records or other supporting documents with their application. After the document review is completed and a final decision is made, each applicant will be notified of the decision and any further information regarding a change of rating.

Pending final approval, the application form should be available on the Web site on or about December 1, 2008. Applications will be accepted immediately thereafter.

Please refer to the FAQ document for more information about the Physical Disability Board of Review. You may contact the PDBR intake unit at the following address:

SAF/MRBR  
550 C STREET WEST  
SUITE 41RANDOLPH  
AFB, TEXAS 78150-4743

Please keep in mind that the office above cannot discuss the merits of your application. You may wish to contact your local veterans' service organization for advice or guidance.

The DoD Instruction on the PDBR process is available here:

<http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/pdf/604044p.pdf>

**Kurt Rusch    Barb Kempf-Neuy    Deb Van Erem**

## **VA Pension w/Aid and Attendance**

As many more veterans and widows are taking advantage of the VA program I thought it would be appropriate to address the program. This is not a new VA program it has been around for many years. In 2000 medical cost and medical care cost began to explode. The purpose of this program is to stretch the veteran's dollars out to allow them a better quality of life and to be independent longer.

To be eligible to apply for this program you must be a veteran who served during wartime period designated by Congress; WWII, Korea, Vietnam, Persian Gulf. For those with service between these periods they are not eligible. Un-remarried widows of veterans who served during a wartime period may also apply.

First this program is a two tier program that first looks at net worth then adjusted gross income. The veteran's or widow's net worth must be at or below \$80,000.00 (not counting their home), before you can look at adjusted income. If the net worth is greater than \$80,000.00 we would stop there and advise the veteran or widow to contact our office once they have reached the \$80,000.00 limit.

Once the first criteria are met for the first tier then we can look at the adjusted income of the veteran or widow. Based on a doctor's evaluation a veteran will be categorized as being able to (1) live independently, (2) homebound due to blindness or being wheelchair bound, (3) needing the Aid and Attendance of another person to meet their daily living needs. Each of these criteria has an income cut-off.

Independent Living Veteran	\$ 12,907.00	Widow of Veteran	\$ 8,656.00	Veteran and Spouse	\$ 16,902.00
Homebound Veteran	\$ 15,773.00	Widow of Veteran	\$10,580.00	Veteran and Spouse	\$ 19,770.00
Aid and Attendance Veteran	\$ 21,531.00	Widow of Veteran	\$13,836.00	Veteran and Spouse	\$ 25,525.00

The veteran or widow's adjusted gross income must be below the amount listed based on their doctor's evaluation. To calculate adjusted gross income one would add together all income for a veteran and spouse if married; this would include but would not be limited to: Social Security; Pensions; Dividends and Interest; Wages. Once that number has been calculated you would then total up all non-reimbursed medical expenses that the couple has paid out. This would include but would not be limited to, Medicare premiums; Supplemental Health Insurance premiums; doctor co-pays; dental cost; hearing aids and eye glasses purchased; prescription medication, nursing home fees and in some cases assisted living home fees. Once this number has been calculated you would multiply it by .95 the result would then be subtracted from the gross income amount.

Here is an example. Veteran and spouse net worth is calculated at \$60,000.00. Veteran is diagnosed by his/her doctor and they need aid and attendance of another person. Income limit would be \$25,525.00. Veteran and spouse total income is \$30,000.00. Their combined medical expenses total \$12,000.  $\$12,000 \times .95 = \$11,400.00$ . Gross income \$30,000.00 minus \$11,400.00 = \$18,600.00. Aid and Attendance cut-off is \$25,525.00.  $\$25,525.00 - \$18,600.00 = \$6,925.00$  divided by 12 = \$577.00. The result \$577.00 would be the veteran's monthly benefit using this example.

The VA pension program is a little more complicated than the above example, but this is the gist of it. Our office will review the veteran's discharge to see if they qualify to apply. Then we work with the veteran or widow in submitting the application. If the veteran or widow is unable to come to our office we will meet with them at their home or treatment facility here in Washington County to get their application completed.

**Kurt Rusch      Barb Kempf-Neuy      Deb Van Erem**

## EXPANSION OF DENTAL ELIGIBILITY



The National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) of 2008 was signed by President Bush on January 28, 2008. Among the many provisions, this Act extends the period of enhanced dental eligibility provided a recently discharged veteran.

Prior to NDAA, veterans who served on active duty 90 days or more were eligible to receive one-time VA dental benefits if they made application to VA within 90 days post discharge from active duty and if his/her DD214 did not indicate necessary dental treatment had been provided within 90 days of release from active duty.

The NDAA has extended the timeframe for veterans to make application for the one-time VA dental benefit from 90 days to 180 days post-separation. There are no software implications for this change as eligibility for dental benefits is determined at site of application. Consequently, the field should implement this expanded benefit immediately. CBO is developing a directive to provide formal guidance and anticipates release to field to be expedited.

For questions contact Tony Guagliardo, Director Business Policy (202) 254-0406.

## VETERANS' BENEFITS IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2008

On October 10, 2008, the President signed s.3023, the Veterans' Benefits Improvement Act of 2008. Enhanced VA Mortgage Options are now available for Veterans of potential benefit to those in FINANCIAL DISTRESS. The Federal VA is willing to refinance up to 100% on VA loans. If you have any questions you can call 1-877-827-3702 or visit the website at [http://www.homeloans.va.gov/docs/home\\_loan\\_enhancements.pdf](http://www.homeloans.va.gov/docs/home_loan_enhancements.pdf)



*"Honor to the soldier and sailor everywhere, who bravely bears his country's cause. Honor, also, to the citizen who cares for his brother in the field and serves, as he best can, the same cause." ----Abraham Lincoln*

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## VA Headstones and Markers

**VA BURIAL BENEFIT UPDATE:** The VA has changed the regulation concerning the provision of a VA headstone or marker for a grave already marked in a private cemetery. As a result of passage of the Dr. James Allen Veteran Vision Equity Act of 2007, the VA can now provide a headstone or marker for those graves already marked in a private cemetery for those Veterans who died after

NOV 1, 1990. The claimant must pay the cost of the installation of the Government headstone or marker in a private cemetery. Details of the new regulation can be read at:

<http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2008/E8-10635.htm> .



## Presidential Memorial Certificates

Certificates can be issued in the name of honorably discharged, deceased veterans. The Presidential Memorial Certificate is a parchment certificate with a calligraphic inscription expressing the nation's recognition of the veteran's recognition of the veteran's service. The veteran's name is inscribed and the certificate bears the signature of the President.

## Wisconsin Veterans & Surviving Spouse Property Tax Credit

Eligible veterans and surviving spouses that have not remarried may receive a refundable property tax credit for their in-state residence and up to one acre of land.

Once eligibility is confirmed by the Wisconsin Department of Veteran Affairs, the credit is administered by the Wisconsin state income tax return.

For additional information or to see if you qualify, you should contact your local CVSO office or go to the following website: <http://dva.state.wi.us/Pages/benefitsClaims/Financial-Tax-Benefits.aspx#property>.

## Vet Family Legal Clinic

Family related, non-criminal issues. Available on a first-come, first-serve basis.

M-F 7:30am-8:00pm, Saturday 8:00am-8:00pm, Sunday 8:00am-2:00pm

1030 E Brady Street, Milwaukee (414)-455-8456 [www.dryhootch.org](http://www.dryhootch.org)

**\*\*\*Please note: No legal advice can be given over the phone!**

Kurt Rusch

Barb Kempf-Neuy

Deb Van Erem

# UPCOMING EVENTS:



July 1: **Discovery World** 10AM-5PM

Admission for Military/Veteran +5

July 1: **Milwaukee Public Museum**



9AM-5PM

Admission for Military/Veteran +5



The World's Largest Music Festival

July 2: **Summerfest** 12PM-3PM

Admission for Military/Veteran +1

July 2: **Mitchell Park Domes** 9PM-4PM

Admission for Military/Veteran +5



July 23: **Festa Italiana**

Admission for Military/Veteran



July 28: **German Fest**

Admission for Military/Veteran + Immediate Family

July 29-30: **German Fest**

Admission for Active Military ONLY + Immediate family



August 13: **Wisconsin State Fair** before 4PM

Admission for Military/Veteran +3

August 20: **Irish Fest**

Admission for Military/Veteran +1



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August 25: **Mexican Fiesta** 12PM-3PM

Free Admission for ALL!

August 26-27: **Mexican Fiesta** 12PM-1PM

Admission for Military/Veteran only

September 10: **Indian Summer Festival**

Admission for Military/Veteran only



## Milwaukee Brewers Tickets

**2 Free Terrace Tickets**

To redeem, present proof of service

At Windows 7-12 at the box office on Game Day.

Box Office # 414-902-4000



## Free Access to State Parks

Certain disabled veterans and former Prisoners of War (POWs) are eligible to receive waivers of vehicle admission and trail pass fees. Please see your CVSO office or visit the following website for more information/qualifications:  
[www.wisvets.com/parks](http://www.wisvets.com/parks).

## Returning Veterans

Returning veterans who have served in Afghanistan and Iraq should have their discharge recorded and reviewed by the Veteran Service Officer. Dental claims must be filled within 180 days of discharge if it wasn't completed prior to discharge. Claims for conditions or injuries should be filed within one year of discharge.

Department of Workforce Development Information:  
1-888-258-9966

For Job Postings, visit [www.JobCenterofWisconsin.com](http://www.JobCenterofWisconsin.com)

**Kurt Rusch**

**Barb Kempf-Neuy**

**Deb Van Erem**

### Requesting Medals/Ribbons

If you would like to request your medals and ribbons earned while on active duty please contact our office and we will assist you. Currently, the time between the request and receiving your medals is about one year.

### CIB or Combat Medic Badge

If you received the CIB or Combat Medic Badge during WW II period, you may apply for the Bronze Star Medal. Contact our office and we will assist you in your application.

### Korea Defense Service Medal

Korean veterans, the Korea Defense Service Medal is now being awarded to those who have served in Korea (post Korean War to present.) Veterans can receive this medal by providing proof of service in Korea. Examples would be Discharge papers, DD215, special orders or recognition documentation. If you need assistance in locating your discharge or other supporting documents, please contact our staff.

## SUPERHEROES WEAR COMBAT BOOTS AND DOGTAGS, NOT CAPES.



Kurt Rusch

Barb Kempf-Neuy

Deb Van Erem

## Post- 9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008

The federal Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act, signed into law on June 30, 2008 (PL 110-252), *effective August 1, 2009*, will provide up to 36 full-time months educational benefits for qualifying veterans for the 15 year period following discharge or release from the last period of active duty military service.

### COVERED VETERANS:

Category	If the Veteran has Aggregate Post-9/11 Active Duty Military service of at least...	...but less than	...and...	...then the rate of payment for tuition and fees, living allowance, and stipend, is:
1	36 months	N/A	includes active duty service for entry level and skill training	100%
2	30 continuous days	N/A	<i>is discharged or released due to a service-connected disability</i>	100%
3	30 months	36 months	includes active duty service for entry level and skill training	90%
4	24 months	30 months	includes active duty service for entry level and skill training	80%
5	18 months	24 months	<i>excludes</i> active duty service for entry level and skill training	70%
6	12 months	18 months	<i>excludes</i> active duty service for entry level and skill training	60%
7	6 months	12 months	<i>excludes</i> active duty service for entry level and skill training	50%
8	90 days	6 months	<i>excludes</i> active duty service for entry level and skill training	40%

### CORE BENEFITS:

- I. **Tuition and Fees Payments:** Lump sum payment made directly to the school per quarter, semester, or term, with the maximum rate of payment equal to the full established charges for the program of study (not to exceed the maximum in-state rate for full-time study at the highest-cost in-state public institution). For private schools participating in the *Yellow Ribbon G.I. Education Enhancement Program*, VA will match the remaining charges with the participating school.
- II. **Housing Stipend:** A maximum monthly rate of payment equal to the Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) rate for an E-5 with dependents, based on the school's zip code (See: <http://perdiem.hqda.pentagon.mil/perdiem/bah.html>).
- III. **Stipend for Additional Educational Costs:** Maximum rate of payment of \$1,000 each year for books, supplies, equipment, and other educational costs, paid in a lump sum prorated by quarter, semester, or term.

### ADDITIONAL BENEFITS:

- **Tutorial Assistance:** Maximum payment of \$100 per month, up to a 12-month or \$1,200 maximum.
- **Relocation Assistance:** A one-time \$500 payment for qualifying individuals.
- **Licensure or certification:** Maximum payment of \$2,000 or the actual cost of one test, whichever is less.
- **Transfer to Dependents:** An active duty service member with qualifying service with an agreement to serve additional years may transfer unused benefits to the veteran's spouse (upon 6 or more years of service) or children (transfer at 6 years of service, with use beginning at 10 or more years of service; child must be age 18 or older).
- Information about the new program and VA's other educational benefits can be obtained through [www.GIBILL.VA.gov](http://www.GIBILL.VA.gov) <<http://www.gibill.va.gov/>> or by calling 1-888-GIBILL1 (1-888-442-4551)

Kurt Rusch      Barb Kempf-Neuy      Deb Van Erem

# Wisconsin GI Bill Tuition Remission Program

[www.WisVets.com/WisGIBill](http://www.WisVets.com/WisGIBill)

*\*\*Important message regarding the Wisconsin GI Bill and the new 5-year residency requirement for eligibility purposes*

*– Starting with the 2013 fall educational semester. \*\**

## Expanded Eligibility for Veterans under the Five Year Residency Requirement

Beginning in the Fall Semester of 2013, veterans who have established and maintained status as a Wisconsin resident for at least 5 consecutive years, immediately preceding the beginning of any semester or session for which the student registers at an institution may qualify, even if they were not residents of Wisconsin at the time of entry into a qualified period of "Active Duty" under Title 10 Orders.

**NOTE: This benefit does not extend to the spouse or children.** In order to extend the benefit to the spouse or children the veteran must have entered a qualifying period of Active Duty service under Title 10 Orders as a Wisconsin Resident.

The Wisconsin GI Bill provides a full waiver ("remission") of tuition and fees for eligible veterans and their dependents for up to 8 full-time semesters or 128 credits (whichever is greater) at any University of Wisconsin System (UWS) or Wisconsin Technical College System (WCTS) institution for any degree seeking courses, or for study at the undergraduate, masters or even doctoral level at the UW System.

In accordance with 2005 Wisconsin Act 468, signed into law by Governor Jim Doyle on Memorial Day 2006 and effective with the 2007-08 academic year, the tuition remission is a full 100% of tuition and fees. The Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs verifies the veteran's eligibility for the program. The waiver ("remission") of tuition and fees for eligible veterans and their dependents is administered by the participating UW and Wisconsin Technical Colleges.

**"If you served after September 10, 2001, and are currently using the WI GI Bill or plan to use the WI GI Bill; DO NOT MAKE AN IRREVOCABLE CHOICE TO CHANGE TO POST 9/11 Chapter 33 FEDERAL BENEFITS UNTIL YOU HAVE ALL THE FACTS."**

### Wisconsin GI Bill Tuition Remission Program for Veterans

For the Wisconsin GI Bill, the veteran must have been a Wisconsin resident at the time of entry into active duty or who have established and maintained status as a Wisconsin resident for at least 5 consecutive years immediately preceding the beginning of any semester or session. Character of service and active duty service requirements apply. Veterans with "less than honorable" discharges are not eligible for the Wisconsin GI Bill unless the character of service has been upgraded (DD-215) from the veteran's respective branch of service. Upgrades for the character of service from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) are not acceptable for this *state program*. **The benefit recipient must reside in Wisconsin.**

For veterans, there is no post-service time limitation (such as the federal Montgomery GI Bill 10-year delimiting date) on the use of the benefit. The veteran may attend full-time or part-time. The benefit may be used for study at the undergraduate or graduate level.

### Wisconsin GI Bill Tuition Remission Program for Dependents

A 100% remission is provided to the qualifying dependents of an eligible veteran:

- Spouse; or
- Un-remarried Surviving Spouse; or
- Child between the ages of 17 and under 26,

Where the qualifying Wisconsin (must have been considered a Wisconsin resident at the time of entry onto active duty) veteran:

- Is currently rated by the federal VA with a combined service-connected disability rating of 30% or greater; or
- Died in the line of duty while on active, Reserve, or Guard duty; or
- Died as a direct result of a service-connected disability, as determined by the federal VA.

For qualifying children, the benefit is available from ages 17 and under 26. The child may attend full- or part-time. Both children and spouses have to be residents of Wisconsin for tuition purposes to receive the tuition remission.

For the Wisconsin GI Bill, the veteran must have been a Wisconsin resident at the time of entry onto active duty or who have established and maintained status as a Wisconsin resident for at least 5 consecutive years immediately preceding the beginning of any semester or session.

**Kurt Rusch**

**Barb Kempf-Neuy**

**Deb Van Erem**

## Eligibility Determination

Eligibility for the WI GI Bill is a two-part process. WDVA certifies that the veteran is eligible, and the post-secondary education institution determines the student (be it veteran, spouse, or child of a veteran) as eligible for the tuition remission based upon the statutory requirements for eligibility outlined in the WI GI Bill legislation. **The benefit recipient must reside in Wisconsin.**

For more information, and to apply, see the **WDVA B0105** information and application booklet, contact your local CVSO Office, or contact the schools Veterans Certifying Official.

### WI GI Bill Facts as of August 2011

Rev. 08/29/2011

Last updated 8/29/2011

Stay updated, subscribe to our [rss](#).

#### GENERAL INFORMATION

The following is a list of important facts about Wisconsin G.I. Bill tuition remission benefit program (WI GI Bill). Wisconsin GI Bill is a complex benefit. Understanding the relationship among state and federal veterans benefits, and knowing which are best for your specific circumstance will require you to be well informed. You are urged to speak directly with the following resource people:

**County Veterans Service Officer** regarding Wisconsin Veterans Benefits programs (<http://dva.state.wi.us/CVSO.asp>), **Veterans Administration** regarding federal benefits programs (<http://www.gibill.va.gov/>), and **School Veterans Certifying Officer** at your campus (contact information available at <http://uwhelp.wisconsin.edu/paying/veterans.aspx>)

**NOTICE: Changing to the Federal Post-9/11 GI Bill Benefit is an irrevocable decision. We recommend careful consultation with federal, state, and higher education veteran's benefits staff about any decision to elect the Post-9/11 GI Bill benefit.**

This document references the following federal veterans benefit programs: Chapter 30 (Montgomery GI Bill-Active Duty), Chapter 1606 (Montgomery GI Bill-Selected Reserve), Chapter 1607 (Reserve Educational Assistance Program-REAP) and Chapter 35 (Survivors' and Dependents' Educational Assistance Program-DEA).

NOTE: The WI GI Bill is complicated legislation with many possible permutations depending on an individual's status and eligibility for a wide range of federal and state benefit programs.

**1. State of Wisconsin WI GI Bill Eligibility Requirement for Veterans:** If a veteran has federal active duty service since September 10, 2001, he or she must apply for benefits provided by the Post-9/11 GI Bill before he or she can receive benefits under the WI GI Bill. Except as noted in a & b following, if a student is eligible for Post-9/11 Bill benefits and does not elect to use them, he or she will not be eligible to receive the WI GI Bill tuition remission until such time as he or she does elect to use the Post-9/11 GI Bill benefit.

#### Exceptions to #1:

- a. If a veteran has fewer than 12 months of eligibility remaining under Chapter 30 (Montgomery GI Bill – Active Duty), Chapter 1606 (Montgomery GI Bill – Selected Reserve), or Chapter 1607 (REAP) as of the first day of the academic term in which he or she seeks to enroll, he or she may be exempt from this requirement. Please see point 9 for additional information.
- b. If a veteran has no Post-9/11 GI Bill benefit eligibility based upon his or her own military service and has received transferred Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits from a parent or spouse, the veteran is not required to use the transferred benefits in order to use the WI GI Bill.

**2. WI GI Bill Eligibility Requirement for Children and Spouses:** If a child or spouse who is not a veteran, has received transferred Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits from a parent or spouse, the student (that is the child or spouse) must use the transferred benefits before he or she can receive benefits under the WI GI Bill. Two exceptions are noted below (a and b). If the child or spouse has received transferred Post-9/11 Bill benefits and does not elect to use them, he or she will not be eligible to receive the WI GI Bill tuition remission until such time as he or she does elect to use the transferred Post-9/11 GI Bill benefit first.

#### Exceptions to #2:

- a. If the child or spouse also has fewer than 12 months of eligibility remaining as of the first day of the academic term in which he or she seeks to enroll under Chapter 35 (DEA), Chapter 1606 (Montgomery GI Bill – Selected Reserve), or Chapter 1607 (REAP), he or she may be exempt from this requirement. Please see point 9 for additional information.
- b. If the student is using the WI GI Bill as a child or spouse and the student has Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits based upon his or her own military service, the student may continue to use the WI GI Bill without using his or her own **Post-9/11 GI Bill**

**3. New Applicants:** New applicants for the WI GI Bill will be asked on the WI GI Bill application form (WDVA form #2029) to declare whether they have had active duty service since September 10, 2001. Veterans who have had active duty service since that date may or may not be eligible for the WI GI Bill as described in #1 above. Children and spouses applying for WI GI Bill benefits under the eligibility of a parent or spouse may or may not be eligible for the WI GI Bill as described in #2 above. Form 2029 will be available from the School Veterans Certifying Official and as part of the packet of application materials for the WI GI Bill available from the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs.

**4. Clarification Regarding the 128 Credit Limit:** The 2009-2011 Wisconsin Biennial Budget Act clarified that the total WI GI Bill eligibility to 128 credits or 8 semesters, whichever is longer, is the combined total credits and semesters attended at all UW institutions and Wisconsin Technical Colleges. For example, if a

student uses 30 credits of WI GI Bill tuition remission at a Wisconsin Technical College and 30 credits of WI GI Bill tuition remissions at UW institutions, that student will have 68 WI GI Bill credits remaining of the 128 total credits allowed. Students will be responsible for the costs of credits beyond 128 credits or 8 semesters, whichever is longer.

**5. Relationship between Federal and State Benefits:** The Wisconsin 2009-2011 Biennial Budget Act provided that veterans must use Post-9/11 benefits before any WI GI Bill benefit. As described in #1 above, as long as a veteran elects to apply for Post 9/11 GI Bill benefits, he or she may be eligible to also receive WI GI Bill benefits. If the Federal VA determines that a student is eligible for less than 100 percent of the Post-9/11 GI Bill benefit, the WI GI Bill can be used to remit any remaining tuition amount (up to the amount that would normally be covered by the WI GI Bill). Under the Wisconsin 2011-13 Biennial Budget Act Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits used at University of Wisconsin institutions or Wisconsin Technical Colleges **will not** reduce (count against) the total 128 credits or 8 semesters, whichever is longer, that Wisconsin allows an eligible veteran, spouse, or child to receive under the WI GI Bill.

**6. WI GI Bill Supplemental Payment:** Students who elect to switch from federal Chapter 30 (Montgomery GI Bill-Active Duty), Chapter 1606 (Montgomery GI Bill-Selected Reserve), or Chapter 1607 (REAP) to the Post-9/11 GI Bill benefit in order to use WI GI Bill benefits (as required by Wisconsin State Law), may be eligible for a state Supplemental payment paid by the Wisconsin college or university.

This payment represents an approximation of the difference between the benefits a student would have received from Chapter 30, Chapter 1606, or Chapter 1607 and those the student will receive after relinquishing another federal benefit to enroll in the Post-9/11 GI Bill. Students who receive an equivalent or larger benefit package under Post-9/11 GI Bill, or who have exhausted their 36 months of Chapter 30 benefits, will not receive a Supplemental payment.

a. **Eligibility:** Veterans are eligible to receive the supplemental payment if they were entitled to Chapter 30, Chapter 1606, or Chapter 1607 and relinquished one or more benefits when they elected their Post-9/11 GI Bill benefit. Veterans who relinquished a benefit to use Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits transferred to them by a parent or spouse are not eligible for a Supplemental Payment.

b. **Financial Aid:** The Supplemental Payment paid under the WI GI Bill is considered as a student resource for financial aid purposes and may affect a student's eligibility for other state or federal financial aid. Financial Aid offices will estimate the Supplemental Payment when packaging a student's financial aid.

c. **Payment Process:** Supplemental payments will be directly deposited into students' accounts according to standard campus business practices and are subject to a student's other outstanding financial obligations.

d. **Timing for University of Wisconsin Institutions:** The Supplemental Payment will be made twice each term. The first payment will be for 50% of the estimated semester amount and applied to the student's account sometime after the institution's last day to drop courses. The second payment, for 50% of the final adjusted amount, will be made after grades for the term are posted. All Supplemental Payments will be made based on this timing, even if the student is enrolled in a session that does not coincide with the standard term begin and end dates.

e. **Timing for Wisconsin Technical Colleges:** WTCS colleges will make Supplemental Payments based on existing student account procedures. Students should check with the Wisconsin Technical College they are attending to verify the Supplemental Payment timing and process.

f. **Children and Spouses:** Children and spouses may be eligible for a Supplemental Payment if they switched from Chapter 35, Chapter 1606, or Chapter 1607 to use Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits transferred to them by a parent or spouse. Children and spouses who switched from Chapter 35, Chapter 1606, or Chapter 1607 to use Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits earned through their own military service are not eligible for a Supplemental Payment. Children and spouses are not eligible for a Supplemental Payment if they switch from Chapter 30.

g. **Taxability of the Supplemental Payment:** In compliance with federal requirements, UW and WTCS institutions provide the 1098-T to students. Neither UW nor WTCS institutions provide personal tax advice or guidance to students. Students are responsible for working with a tax professional to assess the tax implications of the Supplemental Payment.

h. **Overpayment of the Supplemental Payment:** Students will be responsible for repaying the college or university for any Supplemental Payment amount paid in excess of their eligibility. This is most likely to occur if a student adds or drops classes or withdraws during a semester.

**9. Additional Months of Post-9/11 GI Bill Benefits Eligibility:** The Federal Veterans Administration has provided that some veterans may be eligible for up to an additional twelve months of eligibility for Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits if they exhaust their Chapter 30 benefits prior to enrolling for Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits.

The WI GI Bill was written to assist students in claiming these additional months of benefits. When a student wishing to use the WI GI Bill has 12 or fewer months of remaining eligibility under a prior federal veterans benefit program and has qualifying active duty service following Sept. 10, 2001, he or she will be allowed to receive WI GI Bill benefits as described below. The twelve or fewer months of remaining eligibility will be counted from the first date of the term in which the student wants to use the WI GI Bill.

a. **Veterans Exhausting Federal Benefits:** Beginning in Spring 2010, veterans using the WI GI Bill with 12 or fewer months of remaining eligibility as of the first day of the semester in which they seek to enroll under Chapter 30, Chapter 1606, or Chapter 1607, with active duty service following September 10, 2001, will be allowed to continue to receive WI GI Bill benefits until the Chapter 30, 1606, or 1607 benefits are exhausted. At that point, they will be required to enroll for Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits before receiving any additional WI GI Bill benefits. Students will not be eligible for a Supplemental Payment while they are exhausting their Chapter 30, Chapter 1606, or Chapter 1607 benefits or while using the 12 additional months of Chapter 33 eligibility. Both the Verification of Continuing Eligibility Form and the WDVA Form #2029 allow students to indicate that they have 12 or fewer months of benefit remaining and indicate their desire to exhaust a previous benefit. Students selecting this option will be required to provide a copy of their most current VA awards letter or Web Automated Verification of Enrollment (WAVE) to document that they have twelve or fewer months remaining of the appropriate federal benefit.

b. **Children and Spouses Exhausting Federal Benefits:** Students using the WI GI Bill as children or spouses who have 12 or fewer months of Chapter 1606, Chapter 1607, or Chapter 35 benefits will be allowed to exhaust these benefits prior to signing up for Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits. Please note that according to the WI GI Bill, students using Chapter 30 as children or spouses are not included among those able to exhaust their benefits prior to signing up for the Post-9/11 GI Bill. Students are not eligible for a Supplemental Payment while they are exhausting their Chapter 35, Chapter 1606, or Chapter 1607 benefits or while using the 12 additional months of Chapter 33 eligibility. Both the Continuation of Eligibility Form and the draft WDVA Form #2029 allow students the option to indicate that they have 12 or fewer months of benefit remaining and indicate their desire to exhaust their previous benefit. Students selecting this option will be

required to provide a copy of their most current VA awards letter or Web Automated Verification of Enrollment (WAVE) to document that they have twelve or fewer months of the appropriate federal benefit.

**10. Dropping/Withdrawing:** Students should be aware that there are **significant** financial consequences when adding or dropping classes paid for by the Post-9/11 GI Bill. Adding classes, dropping classes or withdrawing may result in a student being required to repay the Federal VA for any benefits received during that term, and to repay the Supplemental Payment granted under the WI GI Bill. Students are urged to carefully consider the financial consequences of any enrollment changes.

**11. Transferred Post-9/11 benefits:** Veterans who have transferred Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits to a spouse or children must have retained or reclaimed for their own use sufficient months of Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits in order to

a. As long as a veteran has remaining Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits, whether or not they have been transferred to a spouse or child, the veteran will need to use or reclaim some of those benefits if the veteran wants to use the WI GI Bill him or herself.

b. If a veteran transfers all of their Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits to a child and/or spouse, the veteran will be ineligible for the WI GI Bill until such time as the child or spouse completely exhausts the transferred benefits, or the veteran reclaims some benefit for him or herself.

c. If a spouse or child receives transferred Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits, the spouse or child must apply the Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits first before using WI GI Bill benefits. .

**12. Combined Benefit Payments:** When a student's tuition and fees are partially covered by the Post-9/11 GI Bill, partially covered by a WI GI Bill tuition remission, and/or partially ineligible and therefore paid by the student, the payments will be made as follows:

**UWS EXAMPLE:** A veteran is attending UW Colleges. The student is eligible for the Post-9/11 GI Bill at the 60% benefit level and for the WI GI Bill. The veteran is taking six traditional credits for \$1,163.23 in tuition and fees and six credits on-line in two on-line courses for \$1,500.00. The on-line courses also have an administrative fee of \$50.00 per course for an additional charge of \$100.00. The total tuition and fees for the 12 credits cost \$2,763.23. The Post-9/11 GI Bill will pay the University 60 % of the six traditional credits (\$697.94), 60% of the online credits (\$900.00), and 60% of the administrative fee (\$60.00). Combined, the Post-9/11 GI Bill pays \$1,657.94 or 60% of the total cost. The University will then apply a tuition remission for 40% of the remaining WI GI Bill-eligible amount. The WI GI Bill tuition remission covers standard tuition, tuition in cost recovery, online and distances education programs as well as certain fees. In this example, it would not cover the administrative fee. So the WI GI Bill tuition remission would apply for 40% of the six traditional credits (\$465.29) and 40% of the tuition for the online credits (\$600). The total covered by the WI GI Bill is then \$1,065.29 or 38% of the total cost. Once the two benefits are applied, the student is responsible for the remaining \$40.00 which is the amount of the administrative fee that is not covered by the WI GI Bill. **WTCS EXAMPLE:** WTCS colleges may assess additional fees and charges beyond program and material fees that are not covered by the WI GI Bill, such as the \$10.00 online course fee. Students will be responsible to pay any fees not covered by the Wisconsin GI Bill or Post-9/11 benefits.

**13. Appeals:** All University of Wisconsin System institutions and Wisconsin Technical Colleges have appeal processes in place for students who disagree with a decision or action. For details, contact the specific institution and office involved.

For more information about Veterans' Benefits, contact your County Veterans Service Officer, the Federal Veterans Administration, or the School Veterans Certifying Official at your campus.

SAP Scholarship Program helps put veterans back to work. For more information visit:

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