

The GI Bill Anniversary

The 70th anniversary of the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, commonly known as the "GI Bill," was celebrated this year. This law was enacted on June 22, 1944, requiring the Veterans Administration (VA) to provide a range of benefits for veterans returning from World War II, including provisions for education and training, loan guaranty for homes, farms and businesses, and unemployment pay.

Successive iterations of the GI Bill have assisted millions of service members, veterans, survivors, and their families buy homes and obtain education and professional certifications. The Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 ("Choice Act") includes two provisions impacting education benefits for veterans and dependents in regard to the GI Bill. The Choice Act legislation requires public colleges to provide in-state tuition to veterans and eligible dependents in order for the school to remain qualified to receive GI Bill education payments. In addition, the Sergeant Fry Scholarship Program expands the Fry Scholarship to include the surviving spouses of service members who died in the line of duty after Sept. 10, 2001.

Spouses currently eligible for, or receiving benefits from the Survivors' and Dependents' Educational Assistance (DEA) program, may now qualify for the Fry Scholarship. DEA offers education and training opportunities to eligible dependents of veterans who are permanently and totally disabled due to a service-related condition, or veterans who died while on active duty, or as a result of a service-related condition. A surviving spouse of a service member who died in the line of duty after Sept. 10, 2001 will have to make a one-time irrevocable election to receive either the Fry Scholarship or DEA.

The VA expects to begin accepting Fry Scholarship applications by mail from spouses starting Monday, Nov. 3, 2014.

To learn more about this important new benefit, please review the VA Fact Sheet at http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/handouts_forms.asp. To either apply or make an election, one can complete and send an application (Form VA-Form 22-5490). You can download the form at <http://www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/VBA-22-5490-ARE.pdf> and send a copy via the GI Bill website (<http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill>) using the "Submit a Question" button. You may also mail the completed form to your nearest Regional Processing Office, or request a paper application by calling 1-888-GI BILL-1 (888-442-4551).

For additional information on education, job training, and employment opportunities for student veterans, click [here](#) or view, ["70 Years of the GI Bill...Then and Now."](#)