



National Veterans'
Technical Assistance Center

Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program (HVRP): Understanding and Establishing Relationships with Post-Secondary Institutions

Community of Practice

March 27, 2025

Reminder



HVRP best practices will be shared during this session. The National Veterans' Technical Assistance Center (NVTAC) encourages all grant recipients to utilize best practices that may improve their service delivery. Before implementing a practice discussed during this session, please review your award statement of work and contact your Grant Officer's Technical Representative (GOTR) to discuss if it is an allowable cost or activity or if it requires an amendment to your approved plan.

What is a Post-Secondary Institution?

Post-Secondary Institutions

A post-secondary institution is an educational organization that provides learning opportunities beyond high school, offering a variety of academic, technical, and career-focused programs that lead to degrees, certifications, or other professional qualifications.

Examples of Post-Secondary Institutions

Examples of Post-Secondary Institutions (1 of 2)

➤ Colleges and Universities

- Offer a broad range of academic and professional programs leading to degrees such as associates, bachelor's, master's, and doctorates, while also fostering critical thinking, research, and personal development.

➤ Community Colleges

- Generally, a more affordable education through associates degrees, certificate programs, and transfer pathways to four-year universities, often serving the educational and workforce needs of the local community.

Examples of Post-Secondary Institutions (2 of 2)

➤ Trade schools

- Specialized educational institutions that provide hands-on training and practical instruction in specific skill trades or technical fields, preparing students for direct entry into the workforce.

➤ Vocational programs

- Career-focused educational pathways that provide students with practical skills and training in specific trades or occupations, preparing them for immediate employment in specialized fields.

Why Post-Secondary Institutions?

Why Post-Secondary Institutions? (1 of 3)

- As providers, it is important that we reach veterans wherever they go for services, and post-military education or skills training is a common next step for people.
- Veterans receive education benefits from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), such as the Post 9/11 GI Bill or tuition assistance (either federal or state), or can receive funding for education through a vocational rehabilitation program through the VA called Veteran Readiness and Employment (VR&E). These benefits provide money for tuition, books, and most fees, as well as a monthly housing allowance (MHA).
- The MHA is sometimes not enough to cover the cost of everyday living expenses, resulting in financial hardship for some student veterans.

Why Post-Secondary Institutions?

(2 of 3)

- Veterans going to school have additional stress, in addition to paying for school, grades, and home life.
 - Veterans may seek connectivity on campus to engage with like-minded individuals with similar backgrounds, such as veteran resource centers, student organizations, or Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) units if available.
 - College campuses can feel very foreign to individuals who have served. Often, when veterans return to school, they feel isolated from other students due to lived experience, different world views, and motivation to attend college.

Why Post-Secondary Institutions? (3 of 3)

- Attending any kind of post-secondary institution as an adult learner can be stressful. Like other adults, veterans struggle with balancing home, grades, exams, study time, and, in a lot of cases, employment.
- To offset lost time on the job, veterans may utilize their federal financial aid (FA) for additional money, resulting in increased debt levels without necessarily meeting the financial needs of the household.
- Sharing information with resources that directly engage with military-connected students can result in increased awareness of your services and can assist in reducing the stress these veterans and their families are facing.

Who to Engage With

Who? (1 of 2)

- Before engaging with post-secondary institutions, it is important to understand that privacy laws prevent sharing direct information to outside agencies, primarily to protect students at those institutions. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that protects educational information from unnecessary access.
- Individual students may provide FERPA waivers to their schools for individuals or agencies to access their student information; however, in the case of HVRP, there is not a valid need for this level of access. Just keep in mind that some information is protected by law, so schools are not being "difficult" by denying information.

Who? (2 of 2)

- Post-secondary institutions have several resources on campus that can be useful in assisting us in reaching military-connected students.
 - Student Veterans' Resource Centers
 - Student-led organizations and public engagement opportunities
 - School certifying official
 - Registrar
 - Bursar's office
 - ROTC unit leadership
 - Office of student/campus life
 - Career Services

Student Veterans' Resource Centers

- Military-connected students may often seek assistance through their school's student veterans' service office. These can have a variety of names; however, it is usually easy to find out if a school has a military or veteran resource office or department with a simple search of the internet.
- Services offered at veteran resource centers may include:
 - Tutoring
 - Computer labs
 - Veteran service officers (VSO)
 - Veteran benefit information presentations
 - Much more!

Student-Led Organizations and Public Engagement Opportunities

- Military-connected students may often seek connectivity through student organizations, and some schools may have veteran-specific student organizations. Reaching out to on-campus resources, such as Student Veterans of America (SVA) or the Peer Advisors for Veteran Education (PAVE) program can assist you in reaching those veterans who seek connection with other military veterans.
- Reach out to other campus resources as appropriate. Not all student veterans will seek assistance or connectivity through their campus veterans' resource center, so seek engagement opportunities at main activity hubs, such as the Student Union, sporting events, and other campus activities.

School Certifying Official

- Each post-secondary institution that accepts VA education benefits must have a School Certifying Official (SCO). The SCO is the person that verifies attendance for all military education benefit users, to include the Post 9/11 GI Bill, VR&E, Dependents Education Assistance (DEA), Federal Tuition Assistance (FTA), and state education benefits, and subsequently certifies that attendance and performance to the entity that pays for each benefit.
- SCOs have record of everyone who uses military education benefits and could potentially assist in relaying information about your agency through targeted emails to those users.
- Benefit users could be veterans, spouses, current active-duty military service members, dependent children, and current national guard or reserve component members.

Registrar's Office

- The Registrar is the person or team that is responsible for academic records, registrations, course schedules and class lists, and other academic details.
- Some smaller institutions combine responsibilities of the Registrar and SCO. This is especially true in skilled trade programs, such as Truck Driving Schools, niche skill programs, heavy equipment training programs, and so on.
- Registrars could potentially also provide direct emailing services to military-connected students at their institutions.

Bursar's Office

- The Bursar's office on a school campus manages the billing for student accounts. These responsibilities may also include management of student loans, grants, and scholarships.
- The Bursar's office is also responsible for maintaining accurate financial records and preparing student account statements, often with records of which students have outstanding balances, possibly indicating financial stress.
- Connecting with this office to share information about your program as a resource may result in that office sharing your information to military-connected students who are struggling with tuition payments.

ROTC Unit Leadership

- Some student veterans may gravitate to on-campus military resources, such as the school's ROTC. Providing information to ROTC leadership, who are active-duty service members, can result in increased awareness of your program.
- Educate ROTC leadership about your services and ask them to share details about what HVRP can provide to any military-connected students they encounter who may seek them out for assistance or connectivity.

Office of Student/Campus Life

- Not all veterans are going to seek connectivity through their on-campus veteran/military resources. Think of a person who served for three years in the active military, joined the work force, and has decided later in life to utilize their Post 9/11 GI Bill. You have a person who is older, who has a wealth of life experiences, and only three years of their life is taken up by military service. Where else may they seek connections for the other years of their lives?
- Seek out the office of student/campus life at each school to find out how to engage with other student-led groups or affiliations that do not have any relationship to the military. You may find military-connected students that are not aware of the benefits for which they are eligible!

Career Services Office

- Post-secondary institutions are only successful if their graduates can find employment. Career services offices are responsible for building relationships with employers and resources to improve the opportunities for students that have completed programming at their institutions.
- Engaging with career services offices can help you, an employment program, initiate impactful conversations with personnel that have vested interest in assisting ALL their students obtain employment, and can result in their staff sharing information about your program and resources with eligible student veterans.

Process Flow

Process Flow - Research

- Researching secondary educational institutions that are in your area or remote.
 - GI Bill Comparison Tool
 - Search by location
 - Check Accreditation & Program Relevance
 - Review Veteran Services & Support
 - Established MOU example?
 - Alternate resources if there are no veteran-specific programs

GI Bill Comparison Tool

- **Website:** [VA GI Bill Comparison Tool](#)
 - **Search Options:**
 - By location (city, state, or zip code)
 - By school name or program type
 - Filters for tuition assistance, vocational training, and certification programs
- **Key Points:**
 - Number of GI Bill users at the school
 - Available benefits and tuition coverage
 - Veteran-specific support programs

Veteran Services & Support

- **Key Contacts in Educational Institutions**
 - **Veteran Services Coordinator / VA Certifying Official** – Assists with GI Bill benefits and enrollment
 - **Career Services / Workforce Development Office** – Helps veterans with career planning, internships, and job placement
 - **Financial Aid Office** – Provides guidance on additional funding sources beyond the GI Bill
 - **Student Support Services** – Offers disability accommodations, counseling, and academic support
 - **Local Veterans' Organizations** – Some schools partner with American Legion or Student Veterans of America (SVA)

Establishing an MOU with a School

- **What is an MOU (Memorandum of Understanding)?**
 - A formal agreement outlining collaboration between an HVRP grantee and a post-secondary institution.
- **Purpose:**
 - Define roles and responsibilities for both parties.
 - Ensure veterans have priority access to training and career resources.
 - Establish reporting and data-sharing protocols (if applicable).

Alternative Resources for Schools Without Veteran-Specific Programs

- **When a School Lacks a Dedicated Veterans Program, Consider:**
 - **Community College Workforce Training Centers** – Many offer short-term certifications that qualify for funding
 - **State Workforce Development Agencies** – May provide free or subsidized training for veterans
 - **Online Veteran-Focused Programs** – Schools like AMU (American Military University), Purdue Global, and Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU) have strong online veteran support
 - **Employer-Sponsored Training** – Some companies fund veterans to complete specialized training (Amazon, Microsoft, etc.)
 - **Trade & Apprenticeship Programs** – Programs like Helmets to Hardhats or SkillBridge can serve as alternatives

Resources

- [VA College Toolkit: Learn About Student Veterans](#)
- [GI Bill Comparison Tool | Veterans Affairs](#)
- [Veteran Readiness and Employment \(VR&E\) Home](#)
- [Home | Council of College and Military Educators](#)
- [2024 Colleges – Military Times: Best for Vets](#)
- [Veteran-Friendly Schools](#)
- [Post-9/11 GI Bill \(Chapter 33\) | Veterans Affairs](#)
- [Military Tuition Assistance Program: Background and Issues | Congress.gov | Library of Congress](#)



Questions?

Thank you!

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