VA | U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Fact Sheet

Office of Public Affairs
Media Relations

Washington, DC 20420
(202) 461-7600
www.va.gov

NDAA of 2016 Ends the Reserve Educational Assistance Program

The National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) of 2016 ended the Reserve Educational Assistance Program (REAP) on Nov. 25, 2015, for new school enrollments. Due to Congressional mandate, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) can only grant REAP eligibility to those enrolled in school on November 24, 2015, or during their school's last term, quarter, or semester ending prior to that date.

This change affects beneficiaries differently:

- **Current REAP beneficiaries** -- Veterans who were attending an educational institution on Nov. 24, 2015, or during the last semester, quarter, or term ending prior to that date, are eligible to continue to receive REAP benefits until Nov. 25, 2019.

- **REAP beneficiaries not attending school** -- Veterans who applied for REAP but were not attending an educational institution on Nov. 24, 2015, or during the last semester, quarter, or term ending prior to that date are no longer eligible to receive REAP benefits.
    - Many of these Veterans may be eligible to receive benefits under the Post-9/11 GI Bill.

- **New REAP applicants** – Veterans who have not enrolled in school and applied for REAP benefits prior to Nov. 25, 2015, are no longer eligible for REAP benefits. However, in most cases, those Veterans will be eligible for the Post-9/11 GI Bill.

VA is actively working to identify affected Veterans who have previously applied for VA benefits to notify them of this change and their potential eligibility for other VA educational assistance programs.

If a Veteran is no longer eligible for REAP:

- **He or she may still be eligible for Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits,** depending on the individual's dates of service.

- VA will evaluate all applications for REAP received on or after Nov. 25, 2015, to determine eligibility for another program, including the Post-9/11 GI Bill, and will award benefits under a different program if found eligible.

Nearly 14,000 Veterans received REAP benefits in fiscal year 2014. The program was originally created by Congress to provide benefits to members of the National Guard and Reserve components who were called or ordered to active service in support of a contingency operation or in response to a national emergency as declared by the President or Congress. The Reserve components consist of the Army Reserve, Navy Reserve, Air Force Reserve, Marine Corps Reserve, Coast Guard Reserve, Army National Guard, and the Air National Guard.

The Post-9/11 GI Bill in many ways has replaced REAP because it provides eligibility for Reserve and National Guard members called to active duty.