

MILITARY SERVICES

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Office of Military Services

The mission of the Office of Military Services at Mason is to assist veterans, active duty service members, guardsmen, reservists, and dependents in making a successful transition into the Mason community. Our goal is to help these students in a number of capacities including counseling and advising on benefits, academic and admissions advising, and career transition. Few schools have a dedicated staff to help transition from a military environment to college life and we are proud to be able to assist our students in any way.

Located within the Office of Admissions, the Office of Military Services understands personally that the transition to student life can be challenging, yet rewarding. Along with the entire university community, we are grateful to you and your family members for your service to our country. We are dedicated to providing the services you need to successfully navigate this transition.

To schedule a time to meet with a Transition Coordinator, email military@gmu.edu or call 703-993-1316.

The Virginia State Approving Agency (SAA), is the approving authority of education and training programs for Virginia. Our office investigates complaints of GI Bill beneficiaries. While most complaints should initially follow the school grievance policy, if the situation cannot be resolved at the school, the beneficiary should contact our office via email saa@dvs.virginia.gov.

Veteran Student Resident Tuition Rates

George Mason University complies with veteran student regulations regarding tuition rates. The following individuals shall be charged the in-state rate, or otherwise considered a resident, for tuition purposes:

- A Veteran using educational assistance under either chapter 30 (Montgomery G.I. Bill – Active Duty Program) or chapter 33 (Post-9/11 G.I. Bill), or chapter 35 (DEA), of title 38, United States Code, who lives in the Commonwealth of Virginia while attending a school located in the Commonwealth of Virginia (regardless of his/her formal State of residence).
- Anyone using transferred Post-9/11 GI Bill® benefits (38 U.S.C. § 3319) who lives in the Commonwealth of Virginia while attending a school located in the Commonwealth of Virginia (regardless of his/her formal State of residence).
- A spouse or child using benefits under the Marine Gunnery Sergeant John David Fry Scholarship (38 U.S.C. § 3311(b)(9)) who lives in the Commonwealth of Virginia while attending a school located in the Commonwealth of Virginia (regardless of his/her formal State of residence).
- An individual using educational assistance under chapter 31, Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) who lives in the Commonwealth of Virginia while attending a school located in the Commonwealth of Virginia (regardless of his/her formal State of residence) effective for courses, semesters, or terms beginning after **March 1, 2020**.
- Anyone described above while he or she remains continuously enrolled (other than during regularly scheduled breaks between courses, semesters, or terms) at the same institution. The person so described must be using educational benefits under either chapter 30, chapter 33, chapter 31, or chapter 35 of title 38, United States Code.

Veterans Benefits and Transition Act of 2018

Pursuant to the Veterans Benefits and Transition Act of 2018, section 3679 of title 38, United States Code, effective August 1, 2019 George Mason University will not impose any penalty, including the assessment of late fees, the denial of access to classes, libraries, or other institutional facilities, or the requirement that a covered individual borrow additional funds, on any covered individual because of the individual's inability to meet his or her financial obligations to the institution, when the delay is due to the delayed disbursement funding from VA under chapter 31 or 33. Mason will permit any covered individual to attend or participate in their course of education during the period beginning on the date on which the individual provides to the educational institution a certificate of eligibility for entitlement to educational assistance under chapter 31 or 33 (a "certificate of eligibility" can also include a "Statement of Benefits" obtained from the Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) website – eBenefits (<https://www.ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits/homepage>) (<https://www.ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits/homepage/>)), or a VAF 28-1905 form for chapter 31 authorization purposes) and ending on the earlier of the following dates:

1. The date on which payment from VA is made to the institution.
2. 90 days after the date Mason certifies tuition and fees following the receipt of the certificate of eligibility.

Mason requires covered individuals to take the following additional actions:

1. Submit a certificate of eligibility for entitlement to educational assistance no later than the first day of a course of education.
2. Submit a written request to use such entitlement.
3. Provide additional information necessary to the proper certification of enrollment by the educational institution.

Students are responsible for additional payment(s) or the payment of fees for the difference between the amount of the financial obligation and the amount of the VA education benefit disbursement in the following cases:

1. The covered individual will receive less than 100% tuition reimbursement based on the Certificate of Eligibility or written request of entitlement provided by the covered individual, or

A hold or late fee may be assessed if timely payment is not made in the following cases:

1. A covered individual fails to make timely payments for balances incurred for housing, meal plans, or other fees or charges that are not eligible for payment by the Veterans Administration

Military Activation Policy

In accordance with the "Virginia Tuition Relief, Refund, and Reinstatement Guidelines," Mason students in the uniformed services under call or order to active duty, after the beginning of a semester or summer session have two options they may consider with the dean's office of their school of enrollment and Office of the University Registrar in determining their enrollment status with the University:

1. Students may withdraw from courses in which they are enrolled as of the effective date of the call or order to report to active duty. When this option is selected, a credit of tuition and fees, and any pre-paid tuition, room, or board deposits, will be made to the student's account. Students will receive a pro-rated credit of dining service and housing contract charges. Financial aid awards that were credited to the student's account will be recovered by the University in the amount of tuition and fees, dining, or housing credit. Loans used to cover the remaining charges will be subject to normal repayment procedures. For students receiving Title IV funds, financial aid recovery will be subject to requirements for return of Title IV funds to the federal government.
2. Students may take a grade of incomplete in all courses. Students may request an incomplete grade for military deployment, mobilization, or duty changes occurring in the final three (3) weeks of the course if they have satisfactorily completed more than 50% of the course requirements. The conditions for completing course work and receiving a regular grade should be agreed to between the student, course instructors, and the appropriate dean's office of the school in which the student is enrolled. A copy of the military orders must be provided to the Office of the University Registrar as documentation. The deadline for removing an incomplete given on the basis of military service is the last day of the subsequent term, which includes the summer session. This option requires joint agreement of the student and faculty member(s). Faculty and departments are encouraged to take additional steps to accommodate short absences due to military obligations. If a joint agreement can't be reached, students may withdraw from the course and are eligible to receive a 100% reduction of tuition charges after withdrawal is approved for classes that have been discontinued.

Please coordinate requests under the Military Activation Policy with the Office of Military Services. The Office of Military Services will assist with the processes in accordance with current policies. Students will need to discuss their situation with the appropriate representative from their dean's office in consultation with Student Accounts and the Office of the University Registrar. A copy of the active duty orders are required.

Regardless of the option selected above, the following provisions govern reinstatement to the University upon release or return from service in the uniformed services. Students that have a leave of absence under the military activation policy are entitled to reinstatement, to their program of study (if available), without having to reapply for admission if (1) they return to the University after a cumulative absence of not more than five years, and (2) they provide notice of intent to return to the University not later than three years after the completion of the period of service. (Exceptions to these time periods may be found in the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) of 2008.) Throughout the entire process, former students/students will have access to counseling to determine the impact of absence from the program, to evaluate the ability to resume

study, and to assess options when a program is no longer available or suitable.

Applicants to the University who have accepted an offer of admission but who have not yet registered in a degree program may defer admission for up to two consecutive semesters by making a request in writing to the Office of Military Services. To request a deferment for longer than two consecutive semesters, a copy of the military orders must be provided with the written request.

For further information, students should contact the Office of Military Services at (703) 993-1316.

Virginia Military Survivors and Dependents Education Program

The Virginia Military Survivors and Dependents Education Program provides education benefits to qualified children between the ages of 16 and 29, and spouses of military service members killed, missing in action, taken prisoner as a result of military service in an armed conflict, or veterans discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable who served in the Armed Forces of the United States, Reserves of the Armed Forces of the United States, or Virginia National Guard, and due to such service, became at least 90 percent disabled.

The military service member must have established domicile, or had a physical presence, in Virginia for at least five years immediately prior to the date on which the admission application was submitted by or on behalf of the applicant to a Virginia public college or university; or

In the case of a deceased military service member:

The military service member must have established domicile, or had a physical presence, in Virginia on the date of death and for at least five years immediately prior to date of death; or

The surviving spouse or surviving parent must have established domicile, or had a physical presence, in Virginia for five years immediately prior to the date on which the admission application was submitted by or on behalf of the applicant to a Virginia public college or university.

Education benefits include tuition and fee waivers, and a stipend for room and board charges, books and supplies, and other expenses. Program and application information may be found on the Virginia Department of Veterans Services website.

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