



VETERANS VOICE

Winnebago County Department of Veterans Services Newsletter

July 2022

G.I. Bill Anniversary

The G.I. Bill was established on June 22, 1944, to provide benefits in support of returning World War II service members. Since then, it has continued to evolve to serve the needs of Veterans and their families.

Over the last 78 years, 25 million Veterans, service members and their families have used various G.I. Bill programs to pursue education and training, find meaningful employment and change the trajectory of their economic mobility.

Within the G.I. Bill's first seven years, eight million Veterans attended school or received [on-the-job training](#). Today, the G.I. Bill meets Veteran training needs through innovative programs like the [Veteran Employment Through Technology Education Courses \(VET TEC\) program](#), which opens the door for those who want a career in the high technology field. VET TEC enables individuals to train quickly for their next career without using their existing G.I. Bill entitlement.

The [Edith Nourse Rogers STEM Scholarship \(STEM Scholarship\)](#) supports Veterans studying in STEM fields - science, technology, engineering, and math. With an expected growth of 8% for STEM occupations compared to just 3.7% for all other occupations, the Rogers STEM Scholarship provides up to nine months or \$30,000 in benefits after Post-9/11 G.I. Bill or [Fry Scholarship](#) benefits have run out, empowering

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“The more I live, the more I learn. The more I learn, the more I realize, the less I know.”

- Michel Legrand

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Veterans to complete the education needed for a career in one of these growing fields.

Annually, hundreds of thousands of individuals continue to benefit from the G.I. Bill. As education programs have morphed and expanded to recognize the changing goals and needs of beneficiaries, so too has the G.I. Bill.

Over the last 18 months, the VA has implemented impactful changes to improve access and delivery of the G.I. Bill for beneficiaries.

Service members can now transfer their education benefits to their qualifying ward or foster child through the [Transfer of Entitlement program](#). As of Aug. 1, the [Colonel John M. McHugh Tuition Fairness for Survivors Act of 2021](#) required schools to provide in-state tuition rates for students using [Survivors' and Dependents' Educational Assistance \(DEA\)](#) benefits, reducing the out-of-pocket costs of education for surviving spouses and children.

With the [Veteran Rapid Retraining Assistance Program \(VRRAP\)](#), Veterans who are unemployed due to the COVID-19 pandemic and need additional training or education to find a job on the Department of Labor's high demand occupation list, can do so. Eligible Veterans participating in VRRAP can receive up to 12 months of tuition and fees along with a monthly housing allowance based on Post-9/11 G.I. Bill rates.

The G.I. Bill has come a long way since 1944. VA continues to seek ways to meet the needs of Veterans and improve their G.I. Bill experience. Once complete, the [Digital G.I. Bill](#) - VA's G.I. Bill modernization effort - will transform how beneficiaries interact with their G.I. Bill benefits and improve their experience.



UV Safety Awareness Month

Summer has arrived and while the sun is shining bright it's a golden time to highlight July as UV Safety Awareness Month!

We all love to take in those warm summer rays, but everyone must remember to protect their skin and eyes from the damaging effects of the sun. The sun emits radiation known as UV-A and UV-B rays. Both types can damage your eyes and skin.

- UV-B rays have short wavelengths that reach the outer layer of your skin
- UV-A rays have longer wavelengths that can penetrate the middle layer of your skin

By learning the risks associated with too much sun exposure and taking the right precautions to protect you and your family from UV rays, everyone can enjoy the sun and outdoors safely.

Here are the harmful things unprotected sun exposure can do:

- Cause vision problems and damage to your eyes
- Suppression of the immune system
- Premature aging of the skin
- Skin cancer

Fortunately, there are things you can do to minimize the risk that comes with sun exposure.

- Cover Up
- Stay in the shade
- Choose the right sunscreen
- Use the right amount of sunscreen

Free Credit or Financial Counseling With VBBP 2.0

In February 2022, VA expanded the [Veterans Benefits Banking Program](#) (VBBP) to provide more services to Veterans. The program now includes credit counseling, financial education, and financial counseling opportunities. This expansion, called VBBP 2.0, addresses the unique monetary challenges Veterans face and offers them a path toward financial wellness.

Financial or credit counseling

The [National Foundation for Credit Counseling](#) (NFCC) and the [Association for Financial Counseling and Planning Education](#) (AFCPE) offer VBBP participants one free consultation with a [credit or financial counselor](#). An NFCC-certified credit counselor may be the best fit for those who want to get out of debt, avoid foreclosure or qualify for a first-time home purchase. An AFCPE-accredited financial counselor can help you create a personalized budget, spending plan or savings plan.

VBBP also includes [VetCents](#), which is a financial education program created for Veterans and their family members to learn more about money management, emergency savings, and understanding credit. For more information and to get started with VetCents today, visit [vetcents.org](#).

If you receive VA benefit payments through a pre-paid debit card or paper check, there's also an easier, safer and more reliable way to receive them. With [VBBP](#) 2.0, your benefits can be deposited directly into an account you open with a participating financial institution. [Direct deposit](#) allows the benefits you have earned to automatically arrive in your bank account - on time, every time.

Perks of banking with VBBP

VA and [AMBA](#) teamed up to develop VBBP, which offers a long list of banks and credit unions to choose from, giving Veterans access to financial advice and educational programs offered by institutions that understand their unique needs.

Partnering institutions

Participating banks include large and small national and state-chartered locations, which all are insured by the [Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation](#).

Credit union membership criteria varies by institution, which Veterans must meet before becoming members. Some institutions may also charge a small membership fee to join as well. All participating credit unions are insured by the [National Credit Union Administration](#).

Find the [bank](#) or [credit union](#) that is right for you!

For more information

If you already have a bank account and would like to have your federal benefits electronically deposited, you can call VA at 1-800-827-1000 and provide your account information or visit [va.gov/change-direct-deposit/](#)

To learn more about VBBP and how to start banking visit [benefits.va.gov/benefits/banking.asp](#).

Upcoming Event



MILITARY VETERANS



The Winnebago County Veterans Services Office will be back at the Omro Area Community Center on July 12th from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

This time they are bringing along some friends!

Joining the Veterans Services Office will be representatives from the agencies listed below. They will be along to provide information and answer questions about the programs and services they have available to veterans and surviving spouses.



CaptionCall - The CaptionCall captioned telephone is designed to let you hear and read what the other person is saying, so you can better understand the conversation. The phone and service are exclusively for people with hearing loss who need captions to use the phone. CaptionCall is part of a federally funded program to benefit people with hearing loss. This fund pays the total cost of service for qualified users.

DWD - Veteran Employment Services - The Department of Workforce Development (DWD), is committed to advancing employment opportunities for Wisconsin veterans through targeted business engagement and service and commitment to the veteran community.

ADRC - The mission of the Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) of Winnebago County is to empower and support seniors, people with disabilities and their families, by providing useful information and finding the help people seek so they may live with dignity and security, and achieve maximum independence and quality of life.

VHA - The Veterans Health Administration provides primary care, specialized care, and related medical and social support services to American veterans.

CONTACT US

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Stay informed about benefits; join our e-mail list.
Send a request to:

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Visit us on the web at:

www.co.winnebago.wi.us/veterans



www.facebook.com/WinnebagoCVSO

For a list of more events,
check out our [calendar](#) !