

Wisconsin Technical College System

WI G.I. BILL BENEFITS: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

The Wisconsin G.I. Bill is a program which allows veterans and their spouses and children to take classes at colleges in the Wisconsin Technical College System and the University of Wisconsin System without paying course fees. This program has eligibility requirements and not all fees and charges are waived (remitted).

ELIGIBILITY

1. Who is eligible for this program and what can I get?

VETERANS - Under the Wisconsin G.I. Bill, eligible Wisconsin veterans who entered active military duty as a Wisconsin resident receive a remission of 50% of the program fees (tuition) and material fees at a Wisconsin Technical College System college. Effective with the 2007 summer session, this remission increases to 100% of program and material fees. The Wisconsin G.I. Bill sets no income limits, ending periods following military service during which the benefit must be used, or limits on the level of study. There are, however, some limitations to the total number of credits and semesters covered.

NON-VETERANS - Qualifying spouses and children of eligible Wisconsin veterans receive a waiver of 100% of the program fees (tuition) and material fees at a Wisconsin Technical College System college. To be eligible the spouse or child of the eligible veteran must be a Wisconsin resident. Spouses are only eligible for a set time period following the death or disability of the veteran and children must be between 18 and 26 years old. There are some limitations to the total number of credits and semesters covered.

In determining if spouses and children qualify, “eligible Wisconsin veteran” means a person verified by the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs to either have died in the line of duty, died as the result of a service-connected disability, died in the line of duty while on active or inactive duty for training purposes or have a service connected disability with a combined rating by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) of 30% or greater.

All veteran eligibility determinations are made by the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs.

2. Is it possible to be currently in the military (Active Duty, Guard, or Reserves) and be considered a Wisconsin state veteran at the same time? Will the WI G.I. Bill apply to me if I take classes while on active duty?

Wisconsin veteran status does not require that one is on inactive military status. If you meet all of the eligibility requirements, the WI G.I. Bill can apply for those still on active duty.

3. Am I eligible for other veterans benefits if I use the WI G.I. Bill benefits?

You may be eligible for other benefits. The best way to know what benefits you are eligible for is to contact your County Veterans Service Office <http://dva.state.wi.us/CVSO.asp> or the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA) <http://dva.state.wi.us/> directly.

4. What documentation is necessary to prove that I am the “child” of an eligible deceased or disabled Wisconsin veteran?

The following documentation **in addition to** providing your own government issued photo I.D. (driver license, state I.D., passport, etc) would suffice to demonstrate that a student applicant is a “child” of an eligible deceased or disabled Wisconsin veteran.

- ▶ Biological Child: A copy of the student’s Birth Certificate or similar official documents that identify parentage.
- ▶ Adopted Child: A copy of the student’s Adoption Certificate.
- ▶ Stepchild: A copy of the student’s Birth Certificate and a Marriage License that demonstrates the eligible veteran has married a biological parent of the student, or a copy of the Certificate of Eligibility for Federal VA benefits that indicates recognition as a stepchild.
- ▶ Other Child Who is a Member of the Veteran’s Household: A copy of the veteran’s most recent state and federal income taxes where the student is listed as a dependent and the student’s permanent address is the same as the veteran’s household address.
- ▶ Nonmarital Child: A copy of a certificate of paternity.

5. How is “child” defined under the WI G.I. Bill provisions?

For the purposes of the WI G.I. Bill, a child is defined by statute as “any biological child, any adopted child, any stepchild, or any other child who is a member of the veteran’s household, or any nonmarital child if the veteran acknowledges paternity or paternity has been otherwise established.”

6. I am confused about the eligibility dates and ages. When do they start and end? If they begin or end within a semester can I receive remission for that semester?

Qualified spouses and unremarried surviving spouses have a ten year window to take advantage of the benefits of the WI G.I. Bill. The ten year period begins from the date of a qualified veteran’s death or initial Veterans Affairs determination of at least 30% disability. The college will be informed of this start date from Wisconsin Department of Veteran Affairs and will project ten calendar years into the future to establish a definitive eligibility end date. The qualified spouse or unremarried surviving spouse will be eligible to receive the benefits for an

academic term as long as the eligibility end date is not before the first day of instruction, as established by the college, for the term, as long as all other eligibility requirements are met.

The child of an eligible deceased or disabled Wisconsin veteran must be at least 18 years old but not yet 26 years old on the first day of instruction as established by the college, in order to take advantage of the WI G.I. Bill in a particular academic term. If your 26th birthday falls on or after the second day of the term, you are eligible for the benefit for that term.

7. What documentation is necessary to prove that I am the spouse or unremarried surviving spouse of an eligible deceased or disabled Wisconsin veteran?

- The following documentation **in addition to** providing your own government issued photo I.D. (driver license, state I.D., passport, etc).
- Spouse: A copy of the marriage license.
- Unremarried Surviving Spouse: A copy of the marriage certificate and most recent federal or state tax return.

8. Can I provide copies of the documents to verify my relationship to the eligible deceased or disabled Wisconsin veteran?

Yes. Photocopies are fine.

9. If I am eligible under the WI G. I. Bill do I still need to meet other enrollment requirements?

Yes, all other district requirements still apply. This includes (but is not limited to) academic standards such as waiting lists, prerequisites and academic probation/minimum grade point average as well as other requirements such as payment of non-remitted fees and charges.

10. Do I need to be a full-time student to benefit from the WI G.I. Bill?

Maybe. Children of eligible deceased or disabled Wisconsin veterans must be enrolled as a full-time student.

Spouses, unremarried surviving spouses, and the veterans themselves are not required to be enrolled full-time.

11. How is full-time defined?

Full-time status is defined as enrolled for at least 12 credits as of the first day of the academic term (fall and spring semesters). For summer sessions, contact the School Veterans Certifying Official at your college for the college's definition of full-time.

12. What happens if I am required to be full-time but drop to less than full-time during the semester?

Falling below this level after the first day of the semester will not result in a loss of WI G.I. Bill benefits for the semester.

13. What happens if I withdraw during the semester? Will the semester count against the eight semester limitation?

If you withdraw from the college prior to the 100% refund deadline, the semester will not be counted toward the eight semesters allowed for the WI G.I. Bill benefits. If you withdraw from the college after the 100% refund deadline, the semester will count as part of the eight semesters allowed.

14. How are the 128 credits counted? If I drop a course will those credits count towards the 128 credit limit?

All courses for which fees were remitted under the WI G.I. Bill will count toward the 128 credit limit.

15. How does the "128 academic credits or eight semesters, whichever is longer" limitation in the WI G.I. Bill apply?

The bill is not retroactive. The credit and semester limit (whichever is greater) begins the first time you are granted the WI G.I. Bill remission, but no earlier than the fall 2005 academic term. Therefore all students, regardless of their current academic credit or semester totals, would be eligible for the full 128 academic credits or eight semesters, whichever is longer, under the WI G.I. Bill, providing they maintain other eligibility status requirements.

You have eight full semesters to receive this remission, even if your credits total more than 128. Conversely, you may receive this remission for more than eight semesters, as long as your total credits remain under 128.

For example:

- a. If you have received the remission for fewer than eight semesters but have completed 128 credits, you will still be eligible for eight semesters of remission even if it will put your total credits over 128.

b. You can continue to get the remission for more than eight semesters if the number of credits you've taken is less than 128. After you have received the remission for eight or more semesters, once your credits total 128, you will not receive the remission for subsequent semesters.

16. What happens if I transfer to another college?

Your credits/semesters enrolled at multiple colleges in the Wisconsin Technical College System are not cumulative under the WI G.I. Bill. Your eligibility limitations (10 years, age, number of credits/semesters, etc.) are tracked individually by each college. However, in the University of Wisconsin System these limitations are cumulative for enrollment at any and all UW colleges. If you transfer to a Wisconsin independent college or any college not based in Wisconsin, the WI G.I. Bill does not apply.

APPLYING FOR WI G.I. BILL BENEFITS

1. Does this FAQ apply to everyone eligible for the WI G.I. Bill?

No, this FAQ is only for students attending Wisconsin Technical College System colleges. If you are a student in the University of Wisconsin System contact the appropriate School Veterans Certifying Official. They are listed in the brochure described in the next question.

2. Where do I get information about these benefits and how do I apply?

A brochure, which explains the benefits, lists School Veterans Certifying Officials at each college, and includes the forms necessary to apply, is available for downloading online at [http://dva.state.wi.us/Forms/WDVA_B0105_Wisconsin_Tuition_Programs_\(WI_GI_Bill\)_Color.pdf](http://dva.state.wi.us/Forms/WDVA_B0105_Wisconsin_Tuition_Programs_(WI_GI_Bill)_Color.pdf)

This information is also available from your County Veterans Service Office (CVSO) or the School Veterans Certifying Official at your college. Your CVSO provides information and assistance in obtaining state and federal veterans benefits. For a listing of CVSO's go to <http://dva.state.wi.us/CVSO.asp>.

3. There are two forms in the brochure - do I need to complete both?

Yes. To be considered for the WI G.I. Bill benefits you must:

- submit the form entitled "Request for Certification..." to the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA). Include the following:

- Request for certification (WDVA 2030)
- DD Form 214 (if not previously submitted)
- Eligibility Determination (WDVA 0001) (if not previously submitted)
- Death Certificate (if applicable)
- Initial Federal VA Service-Connected Disability Rating Notification Letter (if applicable)

AND

- submit the form “Application for WI G.I. Bill Benefits...” to the college you plan to attend. Include the following:
 - Application (WDVA 2029)
 - Copy of Marriage Certificate (if applicable)
 - Copy of Birth Certificate (if applicable)
 - Copy of tax form for children demonstrating dependent status (if applicable)

When Wisconsin Department of Veteran Affairs determines the eligibility of the veteran, they will notify the college of their determination. To have the certification process proceed in a timely manner, you must submit your application to the college at the same time you submit your certification request to the Wisconsin Department of Veteran Affairs.

4. Is there an application deadline to receive the fee remission?

Yes. Applications for WI G.I. Bill benefits must be submitted to Wisconsin Department of Veteran Affairs **and** to the college you plan to attend by the 14th day of the semester. For summer sessions, applications must be submitted by June 1st. Applications submitted in a timely manner will be processed as quickly as possible pending our receipt of certification from Wisconsin Department of Veteran Affairs.

If Wisconsin Department of Veteran Affairs certification is not received by the college by July 1 for summer, November 1 for fall, and April 1 for spring, you will not be eligible to receive the remission for that term. Certifications received after these dates will be processed for the subsequent term.

Once the certification and eligibility process has been successfully completed, your account will be adjusted to reflect the remission. You will be liable for any unpaid fees.

5. What does the WI G.I. Bill remission cover?

The Wisconsin G.I. bill includes two programs:

1. Eligible veterans receive 50% remission of program fees (tuition) and material fees. This increases to 100% remission effective with the 2007 summer session term.
2. The eligible spouse, surviving spouse, or child of veterans receive a 100% remission of program fees (tuition) and material fees.

Remission of program and material fees applies to courses at all levels, including continuing education. If your eligibility has not been established by the time that program fees (tuition) and material fees are due you will also be required to pay them. A refund will be issued for the amount remitted after your eligibility for a WI G.I. Bill remission has been established.

6. What fees are not covered?

The Wisconsin G.I. bill remission does not apply to any fees and charges that are assessed in addition to program fees (tuition) and material fees. The School Veterans Certifying Official at the campus you plan to attend can assist you in obtaining specific information on any costs that may not be covered for your planned course of study and the other particulars of your situation.

You will be assessed and responsible to pay for any fees or charges not covered by the WI G.I. Bill remission. You will be liable for those fees and charges (plus any late charges that accrue if they are not paid by the due date).

7. Will I need to reapply each semester?

It depends. Once you have applied, have been granted certification by Wisconsin Department of Veteran Affairs, and been determined eligible by the college, you do not need to reapply if you are continuously enrolled at that same college. However, if there is a break in your enrollment, excluding the summer session or if you transfer to another college you will need to reapply to Wisconsin Department of Veteran Affairs and to the college you plan to attend.

8. What should I do if a change to the information I provided in my application for the WI G.I. Bill remission?

If there are changes to your residency, marital status, or to other items requested as part of the WI G.I. Bill benefits application, you must inform the School Veterans Certifying Official at your college.

9. How will I find out if I am eligible?

If you have been awarded a remission it will be reflected on your account with the college.

RESIDENCY

1. There are multiple references to “resident” in the WI G.I. Bill and in the statute exempting certain veterans from non-resident tuition. What does it mean to be a “resident” under these provisions?

There are two different uses of the term “resident” in these sections. One use refers to the Wisconsin Department of Veteran Affairs definition of resident under Chapter 45 of the

Wisconsin Statutes, and the other is to the Wisconsin Technical College System definition of resident.

To be considered an “eligible veteran” the applicant must meet Wisconsin Department of Veteran Affairs’ definition of “resident”.

In contrast, the term “resident” as it is by the Wisconsin Technical College System relating to fee remissions for certain family members of eligible deceased or disabled Wisconsin veterans has a different meaning. In that section, “resident” refers to residency for tuition purposes. In other words, the family member must be determined to be a “resident for tuition purposes” to satisfy one of the criteria for eligibility for G.I. Bill benefits.

2. If I am a spouse or child of a qualified veteran and I meet all other criteria for WI G.I. Bill benefits but I do not meet the residency requirements, am I still eligible for WI G.I. Bill benefits?

No.

3. What happens if I am denied eligibility by Wisconsin Department of Veteran Affairs or denied a fee remission under the WI G.I. Bill? May I appeal the decision?

If you are denied eligibility by Wisconsin Department of Veteran Affairs, you will receive notice of the denial directly from Wisconsin Department of Veteran Affairs. You may appeal this denial to Wisconsin Department of Veteran Affairs according to Wisconsin Department of Veteran Affairs’ own appeal protocol as described in the notice of denial.

If you are denied a fee remission by the college the School Veterans Certifying Official will contact you in writing to inform you of the denial and the basis for the denial. If you wish to appeal the college’s decision, contact the School Veterans Certifying Official to request information about the college’s appeal process.