

Alabama GI Dependents' Scholarship Program

This nationally renowned program was created by Act 633 and approved October 1947 by the Alabama Legislature. It is administered by the Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs and is governed by the Code of Alabama 1975, Section 31-6-1. The veteran must meet the qualifications listed below to establish eligibility of his/her dependents. A dependent is defined as a child, stepchild, spouse or the un-remarried widow (er) of the veteran.

Military Service: The veteran must have honorably served at least 90 days of continuous active federal military service or been honorably discharged by reason of service-connected disability after serving less than 90 days of continuous active federal military service.

Disability Requirements: Beginning July 31, 2017 veterans must be rated 40% or more due to service-connected disabilities or have held the qualifying rating at the time of death, be a former prisoner of war (POW), declared missing in action (MIA), died as the result of a service-connected disability rating or died while on active military service in the line of duty.

*Veterans with a disability rating of 20-30% may qualify if the effective date of their disability rating is on or before July 31, 2017. This provision will expire on July 31, 2023. *Veterans whose disability rating is less than 20% prior to May 23, 2017 but who had a claim for compensation pending prior to that date which resulted in a final award by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs of at least 20% may be eligible if the dependent applies for benefits within six months of that final adjudication.

Veteran Residency Requirements: (Veterans must qualify under at least one of the following two requirements).

1. Permanent civilian resident for at least one year immediately prior to initial entry into federal active military service or any subsequent entry into federal active military service where a 12 month break in service occurred **AND one of the following:**
 - * Current resident for at least two years immediately prior to the date of this application or date of veteran's death; or
 - * Current resident who was discharged within the last 12 months; or
 - * Filed a resident Alabama income tax return for the past 10 consecutive years.
2. Bona fide permanent resident for at least five years immediately prior to the date of this application or the date of the veteran's death. Applies to 100% permanent and total ratings only.

Student Requirements: As of July 31, 2017, Students applying for benefits for the first time must meet all of the following:

- * Must be a current resident of the state of Alabama at the time of application; and
- * Must complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) for each year that they are covered under the Alabama G.I. Dependent Scholarship Program; and
- * Must comply with Standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) as defined by their education institution; and
- * Must complete a Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) release form for each educational institution that they attend to authorize the release of personally identifiable information required to determine continued eligibility and as required for necessary reporting.

Student Entitlement: Children and stepchildren of qualified veterans may receive five standard academic years (10 semesters) at any Alabama State-supported institution of higher learning or a prescribed course of study at any state-supported technical college to be used for undergraduate courses of study at the in-state tuition rate.

Spouses or un-remarried widow (er)s of a veteran rated as 100% permanently and totally disabled may also received five standard academic years (10 semesters) at any Alabama State-supported institution of higher learning or a prescribed course of study at any state-supported technical college to be used for undergraduate courses of study at the in-state tuition rate.

Spouses or un-remarried widow(er)s of a veteran rated 40-90% disabled are entitled to three standard academic years (6 semesters) at any Alabama State-supported institution of higher learning or a prescribed course of study at any state-supported technical college to be used for undergraduate courses of study at the in-state tuition rate.

Beginning with applications received at the Alabama Department Headquarters office with a postmark dated on or after July 31, 2017, tuition will be limited to the Department of Defense Tuition Assistance Cap (currently \$250 per semester hour) and required textbooks and applicable fees will be limited to a combined \$1,000 total per student for each semester. Schools may waive any overages of these charges at their discretion. All scholarships and grants must be applied to education expenses first (unless otherwise proscribed by state law) and the Alabama G.I. Dependent Scholarship Program will be applied for any applicable remaining charges pursuant to current state law.

Please note: Students who made application prior to Fall 2009 received a lower amount of awarded semesters and students who made application prior to Fall 2014 were not required to utilize benefits for undergraduate courses of study.

Age Deadline: The child or stepchild must initiate training under our program prior to his/her 26th birthday. In certain situations, a child or stepchild may be eligible for our program up to the age of 30. If the applicant is a stepchild, the veteran and the stepchild's parent must be legally married prior to the child's 19th birthday.

Application Assistance: The Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs maintains offices throughout the state which can furnish information and assist you in filing your application. To find your nearest Veterans Service Office, visit the Veterans Service Office Locator Page for contact options.