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## AMENDMENTS

2017—Pub. L. 115-48, title I, §111(b), Aug. 16, 2017, 131 Stat. 983, added item 3320.

2016—Pub. L. 114-315, title IV, §§404(b), 405(b), Dec. 16, 2016, 130 Stat. 1554, 1558, added items 3326 and 3327.

2012—Pub. L. 112-154, title IV, §402(a)(2), Aug. 6, 2012, 126 Stat. 1189, added item 3325.

2011—Pub. L. 111-377, title I, §108(a)(2), Jan. 4, 2011, 124 Stat. 4119, added item 3315A.

## SUBCHAPTER I—DEFINITIONS

## § 3301. Definitions

In this chapter:

(1) The term “active duty” has the meanings as follows (subject to the limitations specified in sections 3002(6) and 3311(b)):

(A) In the case of members of the regular components of the Armed Forces, the meaning given such term in section 101(21)(A).

(B) In the case of members of the reserve components of the Armed Forces, service on active duty under a call or order to active duty under section 688, 12301(a), 12301(d), 12301(g), 12301(h), 12302, 12304, 12304a, or 12304b of title 10 or section 712 of title 14.

(C) In the case of a member of the Army National Guard of the United States or Air National Guard of the United States, in addition to service described in subparagraph (B), full-time service—

(i) in the National Guard of a State for the purpose of organizing, administering, recruiting, instructing, or training the National Guard; or

(ii) in the National Guard under section 502(f) of title 32 when authorized by the President or the Secretary of Defense for the purpose of responding to a national emergency declared by the President and supported by Federal funds.

(2) The term “entry level and skill training” means the following:

(A) In the case of members of the Army, Basic Combat Training and Advanced Individual Training or One Station Unit Training.

(B) In the case of members of the Navy, Recruit Training (or Boot Camp) and Skill Training (or so-called “A” School).

(C) In the case of members of the Air Force, Basic Military Training and Technical Training.

(D) In the case of members of the Marine Corps, Recruit Training and Marine Corps Training (or School of Infantry Training).

(E) In the case of members of the Coast Guard, Basic Training and Skill Training (or so-called “A” School).

(3) The term “program of education” has the meaning given such term in section 3002, except to the extent otherwise provided in section 3313.

(4) The term “Secretary of Defense” means the Secretary of Defense, except that the term means the Secretary of Homeland Security with respect to the Coast Guard when it is not operating as a service in the Navy.

(Added Pub. L. 110-252, title V, §5003(a)(1), June 30, 2008, 122 Stat. 2359; amended Pub. L. 111-377, title I, §101(a), Jan. 4, 2011, 124 Stat. 4107; Pub. L. 112-239, div. A, title VI, §681(c), Jan. 2, 2013, 126 Stat. 1795; Pub. L. 115-48, title I, §101(a), title IV, §401(a), Aug. 16, 2017, 131 Stat. 974, 995.)

## AMENDMENTS

2017—Par. (1)(B). Pub. L. 115-48, §401(a), substituted “12304, 12304a, or 12304b” for “or 12304”.

Pub. L. 115-48, §101(a), inserted “12301(h),” after “12301(g).”

2013—Par. (1)(B). Pub. L. 112-239 inserted “or section 712 of title 14” after “title 10”.

2011—Par. (1)(C). Pub. L. 111-377, §101(a)(1), added subparagraph (C).

Par. (2)(A). Pub. L. 111-377, §101(a)(2), inserted “or One Station Unit Training” before period at end.

Par. (2)(E). Pub. L. 111-377, §101(a)(3), inserted “and Skill Training (or so-called ‘A’ School)” before period at end.

## EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2017 AMENDMENT

Pub. L. 115-48, title I, §101(b), Aug. 16, 2017, 131 Stat. 974, provided that: “The amendment made by subsection (a) [amending this section] shall apply with respect to service in the Armed Forces occurring on or after September 11, 2001.”

Pub. L. 115-48, title I, §101(c), Aug. 16, 2017, 131 Stat. 974, provided that: “An individual who is entitled to educational assistance by reason of the amendment made by subsection (a) [amending this section] may use such entitlement to pursue a course of education beginning on or after August 1, 2018.”

Pub. L. 115-48, title IV, §401(b), Aug. 16, 2017, 131 Stat. 995, provided that: “The amendment made by subsection (a) [amending this section] shall apply with respect to service in the Armed Forces occurring on or after the date of the enactment of the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008 (Public Law 110-252) [June 30, 2008].”

Pub. L. 115-48, title IV, §401(c), Aug. 16, 2017, 131 Stat. 995, provided that: “An individual who is entitled to educational assistance by reason of the amendment made by subsection (a) [amending this section] may use such entitlement to pursue a course of education beginning on or after August 1, 2018.”

## EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2013 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 112-239 applicable to call or order to active duty authorized under section 712 of Title 14, Coast Guard, after Dec. 31, 2011, and deemed to have been enacted on Dec. 31, 2011, for purposes of applying the amendment to section 5538 of Title 5, Government Organization and Employees, and sections 701 and 12731 of Title 10, Armed Forces, see section 681(d) of Pub. L. 112-239, set out as a note under section 101 of Title 10.

## EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2011 AMENDMENT

Pub. L. 111-377, title I, §101(d)(1)-(3), Jan. 4, 2011, 124 Stat. 4108, provided that:

“(1) SERVICE IN NATIONAL GUARD AS ACTIVE DUTY.—The amendment made by subsection (a)(1) [amending this section] shall take effect on August 1, 2009, as if included in the enactment of chapter 33 of title 38, United States Code, pursuant to the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008 (title V of Public Law 110-252) [see Short Title of 2008 Amendment note set out under section 101 of this title]. However, no benefits otherwise payable by reason of such amendment for the period beginning on August 1, 2009, and ending on September 30, 2011, may be paid before October 1, 2011.

“(2) ONE STATION UNIT TRAINING.—The amendment made by subsection (a)(2) [amending this section] shall take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act [Jan. 4, 2011].

“(3) ENTRY LEVEL AND SKILL TRAINING FOR THE COAST GUARD.—The amendment made by subsection (a)(3) [amending this section] shall take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act, and shall apply with respect to individuals entering service on or after that date.”

## EFFECTIVE DATE

Section effective Aug. 1, 2009, see section 5003(d) of Pub. L. 110-252, set out as an Effective Date of 2008 Amendment note under section 16163 of Title 10, Armed Forces.

## CONSTRUCTION OF ACTIVE DUTY

Pub. L. 115-48, title I, §106(b), Aug. 16, 2017, 131 Stat. 977, provided that: “Section 3301(1) of title 38, United States Code, shall be construed to include, in the case of a member of a reserve component of the Armed Forces who, before November 25, 2015, established eligibility for educational assistance under chapter 1607 of title 10, United States Code, pursuant to section 16163(a)(1) of such title, but lost eligibility for such educational assistance pursuant to section 16167(b) of such title, service on active duty (as defined in section 101 of such title) that satisfies the requirements of section 16163(a)(1) of such title.”

## IMPROVEMENT OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY OF THE VETERANS BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Pub. L. 115-48, title I, §115, Aug. 16, 2017, 131 Stat. 986, provided that:

“(a) PROCESSING OF CERTAIN EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE CLAIMS.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall, to the maximum extent possible, make such changes and improvements to the information technology system of the Veterans Benefits Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs to ensure that—

“(1) to the maximum extent possible, all original and supplemental claims for educational assistance under chapter 33 of title 38, United States Code, are adjudicated electronically; and

“(2) rules-based processing is used to make decisions with respect to such claims with little human intervention.

“(b) IMPLEMENTATION PLAN.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act [Aug. 16, 2017], the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to Congress a plan to implement the changes and improvements described in subsection (a).

“(c) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to Congress a report on the implementation of the changes and improvements described in subsection (a).

“(d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs \$30,000,000 to carry out this section during fiscal years 2018 and 2019.”

## FINDINGS

Pub. L. 110-252, title V, §5002, June 30, 2008, 122 Stat. 2357, provided that: “Congress makes the following findings:

“(1) On September 11, 2001, terrorists attacked the United States, and the brave members of the Armed Forces of the United States were called to the defense of the Nation.

“(2) Service on active duty in the Armed Forces has been especially arduous for the members of the Armed Forces since September 11, 2001.

“(3) The United States has a proud history of offering educational assistance to millions of veterans, as demonstrated by the many ‘G.I. Bills’ enacted since World War II. Educational assistance for veterans helps reduce the costs of war, assist veterans in readjusting to civilian life after wartime service, and boost the United States economy, and has a positive effect on recruitment for the Armed Forces.

“(4) The current educational assistance program for veterans is outmoded and designed for peacetime service in the Armed Forces.

“(5) The people of the United States greatly value military service and recognize the difficult challenges involved in readjusting to civilian life after wartime service in the Armed Forces.

“(6) It is in the national interest for the United States to provide veterans who serve on active duty in the Armed Forces after September 11, 2001, with enhanced educational assistance benefits that are worthy of such service and are commensurate with the educational assistance benefits provided by a grateful Nation to veterans of World War II.”

## APPLICABILITY TO INDIVIDUALS UNDER MONTGOMERY GI BILL PROGRAM

Pub. L. 110-252, title V, §5003(c), June 30, 2008, 122 Stat. 2375, which related to applicability of Post-9/11 Educational Assistance program to individuals entitled to education assistance under chapter 33 of this title, was repealed by Pub. L. 114-315, title IV, §405(c), Dec. 16, 2016, 130 Stat. 1558. See section 3327 of this title.

## EX. ORD. NO. 13607. ESTABLISHING PRINCIPLES OF EXCELLENCE FOR EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS SERVING SERVICE MEMBERS, VETERANS, SPOUSES, AND OTHER FAMILY MEMBERS

Ex. Ord. No. 13607, Apr. 27, 2012, 77 F.R. 25861, provided:

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, and in order to ensure that Federal military and veterans educational benefits programs are providing service members, veterans, spouses, and other family members with the information, support, and protections they deserve, it is hereby ordered as follows:

SECTION 1. *Policy.* The original GI Bill, approved just weeks after D-Day, educated nearly 8 million Americans and helped transform this Nation. We owe the same obligations to this generation of service men and women as was afforded that previous one. This is the promise of the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008 (title V, Public Law 110-252) (Post-9/11 GI Bill) and the continued provision of educational benefits in the Department of Defense’s Tuition Assistance Program (10 U.S.C. 2007): to provide our service members, veterans, spouses, and other family members the opportunity to pursue a high-quality education and gain the skills and training they need to fill the jobs of tomorrow.

Since the Post-9/11 GI Bill became law, there have been reports of aggressive and deceptive targeting of service members, veterans, and their families by some educational institutions. For example, some institutions have recruited veterans with serious brain injuries and emotional vulnerabilities without providing academic support and counseling; encouraged service members and veterans to take out costly institutional loans rather than encouraging them to apply for Federal student loans first; engaged in misleading recruiting practices on military installations; and failed to disclose meaningful information that allows potential students to determine whether the institution has a good record of graduating service members, veterans, and their families and positioning them for success in the workforce.

To ensure our service members, veterans, spouses, and other family members have the information they need to make informed decisions concerning their well-earned Federal military and veterans educational benefits, I am directing my Administration to develop Principles of Excellence to strengthen oversight, enforcement, and accountability within these benefits programs.

**SEC. 2. Principles of Excellence for Educational Institutions Serving Service Members, Veterans, Spouses, and Other Family Members.** The Departments of Defense, Veterans Affairs, and Education shall establish Principles of Excellence (Principles) to apply to educational institutions receiving funding from Federal military and veterans educational benefits programs, including benefits programs provided by the Post-9/11 GI Bill and the Tuition Assistance Program. The Principles should ensure that these educational institutions provide meaningful information to service members, veterans, spouses, and other family members about the financial cost and quality of educational institutions to assist those prospective students in making choices about how to use their Federal educational benefits; prevent abusive and deceptive recruiting practices that target the recipients of Federal military and veterans educational benefits; and ensure that educational institutions provide high-quality academic and student support services to active-duty service members, reservists, members of the National Guard, veterans, and military families.

To the extent permitted by law, the Principles, implemented pursuant to section 3 of this order, should require educational institutions receiving funding pursuant to Federal military and veterans educational benefits to:

(a) prior to enrollment, provide prospective students who are eligible to receive Federal military and veterans educational benefits with a personalized and standardized form, as developed in a manner set forth by the Secretary of Education, working with the Secretaries of Defense and Veterans Affairs, to help those prospective students understand the total cost of the educational program, including tuition and fees; the amount of that cost that will be covered by Federal educational benefits; the type and amount of financial aid they may qualify for; their estimated student loan debt upon graduation; information about student outcomes; and other information to facilitate comparison of aid packages offered by different educational institutions;

(b) inform students who are eligible to receive Federal military and veterans educational benefits of the availability of Federal financial aid and have in place policies to alert those students of their potential eligibility for that aid before packaging or arranging private student loans or alternative financing programs;

(c) end fraudulent and unduly aggressive recruiting techniques on and off military installations, as well as misrepresentation, payment of incentive compensation, and failure to meet State authorization requirements, consistent with the regulations issued by the Department of Education (34 C.F.R. 668.71-668.75, 668.14, and 600.9);

(d) obtain the approval of the institution's accrediting agency for new course or program offerings before

enrolling students in such courses or programs, provided that such approval is appropriate under the substantive change requirements of the accrediting agency;

(e) allow service members and reservists to be readmitted to a program if they are temporarily unable to attend class or have to suspend their studies due to service requirements, and take additional steps to accommodate short absences due to service obligations, provided that satisfactory academic progress is being made by the service members and reservists prior to suspending their studies;

(f) agree to an institutional refund policy that is aligned with the refund of unearned student aid rules applicable to Federal student aid provided through the Department of Education under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as required under section 484B of that Act when students withdraw prior to course completion;

(g) provide educational plans for all individuals using Federal military and veterans educational benefits that detail how they will fulfill all the requirements necessary to graduate and the expected timeline of completion; and

(h) designate a point of contact for academic and financial advising (including access to disability counseling) to assist service member and veteran students and their families with the successful completion of their studies and with their job searches.

**SEC. 3. Implementation of the Principles of Excellence.**

(a) The Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs shall reflect the Principles described in section 2 of this order in new agreements with educational institutions, to the extent practicable and permitted by law, concerning participation in the Yellow Ribbon Program for veterans under the Post-9/11 GI Bill or the Tuition Assistance Program for active duty service members. The Department of Veterans Affairs shall also notify all institutions participating in the Post-9/11 GI Bill program that they are strongly encouraged to comply with the Principles and shall post on the Department's website those that do.

(b) The Secretaries of Defense, Veterans Affairs, and Education, in consultation with the Director of the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection (CFPB) and the Attorney General, shall take immediate action to implement this order, and, within 90 days from the date of this order, report to the President their progress on implementation, including promptly revising regulations, Department of Defense Instructions, guidance documents, Memoranda of Understanding, and other policies governing programs authorized or funded by the Post-9/11 GI Bill and the Tuition Assistance Program to implement the Principles, to the extent permitted by law.

(c) The Secretaries of Defense, Veterans Affairs, and Education shall develop a comprehensive strategy for developing service member and veteran student outcome measures that are comparable, to the maximum extent practicable, across Federal military and veterans educational benefit programs, including, but not limited to, the Post-9/11 GI Bill and the Tuition Assistance Program. To the extent practicable, the student outcome measures should rely on existing administrative data to minimize the reporting burden on institutions participating in these benefit programs. The student outcome measures should permit comparisons across Federal educational programs and across institutions and types of institutions. The Secretary of Education, in consultation with the Secretaries of Defense and Veterans Affairs, shall also collect from educational institutions, as part of the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System and other data collection systems, information on the amount of funding received pursuant to the Post-9/11 GI Bill and the Tuition Assistance Program. The Secretary of Education shall make this information publicly available on the College Navigator Website.

(d) The Secretary of Veterans Affairs, in consultation with the Secretaries of Defense and Education, shall

provide to prospective military and veteran students, prior to using their benefits, streamlined tools to compare educational institutions using key measures of affordability and value through the Department of Veterans Affairs' eBenefits portal. The eBenefits portal shall be updated to facilitate access to school performance information, consumer protection information, and key Federal financial aid documents. The Secretaries of Defense and Veterans Affairs shall also ensure that service members and veterans have access to that information through educational counseling offered by those Departments.

**SEC. 4. *Strengthening Enforcement and Compliance Mechanisms.*** Service members, veterans, spouses, and other family members should have access to a strong enforcement system through which to file complaints when institutions fail to follow the Principles. Within 90 days of the date of this order, the Secretaries of Defense and Veterans Affairs, in consultation with the Secretary of Education and the Director of the CFPB, as well as with the Attorney General, as appropriate, shall submit to the President a plan to strengthen enforcement and compliance mechanisms. The plan shall include proposals to:

(a) create a centralized complaint system for students receiving Federal military and veterans educational benefits to register complaints that can be tracked and responded to by the Departments of Defense, Veterans Affairs, Justice, and Education, the CFPB, and other relevant agencies;

(b) institute uniform procedures for receiving and processing complaints across the State Approving Agencies (SAAs) that work with the Department of Veterans Affairs to review participating institutions, provide a coordinated mechanism across SAAs to alert the Department of Veterans Affairs to any complaints that have been registered at the State level, and create procedures for sharing information about complaints with the appropriate State officials, accrediting agency representatives, and the Secretary of Education;

(c) institute uniform procedures for referring potential matters for civil or criminal enforcement to the Department of Justice and other relevant agencies;

(d) establish procedures for targeted risk-based program reviews of institutions to ensure compliance with the Principles;

(e) establish new uniform rules and strengthen existing procedures for access to military installations by educational institutions. These new rules should ensure, at a minimum, that only those institutions that enter into a memorandum of agreement pursuant to section 3(a) of this order are permitted entry onto a Federal military installation for the purposes of recruitment. The Department of Defense shall include specific steps for instructing installation commanders on commercial solicitation rules and the requirement of the Principles outlined in section 2(c) of this order; and

(f) take all appropriate steps to ensure that websites and programs are not deceptively and fraudulently marketing educational services and benefits to program beneficiaries, including initiating a process to protect the term "GI Bill" and other military or veterans-related terms as trademarks, as appropriate.

**SEC. 5. *General Provisions.*** (a) This order shall be implemented consistent with applicable law and subject to the availability of appropriations.

(b) Nothing in this order shall be construed to impair or otherwise affect:

(i) the authority granted by law to an executive department, agency, or the head thereof; or

(ii) the functions of the Director of the Office of Management and Budget relating to budgetary, administrative, or legislative proposals.

(c) This order is not intended to, and does not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by any party against the United States, its departments, agencies, or entities, its officers, employees, or agents, or any other person.

BARACK OBAMA.

## SUBCHAPTER II—EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE

### § 3311. Educational assistance for service in the Armed Forces commencing on or after September 11, 2001: entitlement

(a) **ENTITLEMENT.**—Subject to subsections (d) and (e), each individual described in subsection (b) is entitled to educational assistance under this chapter.

(b) **COVERED INDIVIDUALS.**—An individual described in this subsection is any individual as follows:

(1) An individual who—

(A) commencing on or after September 11, 2001, serves an aggregate of at least 36 months on active duty in the Armed Forces (including service on active duty in entry level and skill training); and

(B) after completion of service described in subparagraph (A)—

(i) continues on active duty; or

(ii) is discharged or released from active duty as described in subsection (c).

(2) An individual who—

(A) commencing on or after September 11, 2001, serves at least 30 continuous days on active duty in the Armed Forces; and

(B) after completion of service described in subparagraph (A), is discharged or released from active duty in the Armed Forces for a service-connected disability.

(3) An individual who—

(A) commencing on or after September 11, 2001, serves an aggregate of at least 30 months, but less than 36 months, on active duty in the Armed Forces (including service on active duty in entry level and skill training); and

(B) after completion of service described in subparagraph (A)—

(i) continues on active duty for an aggregate of less than 36 months; or

(ii) before completion of service on active duty of an aggregate of 36 months, is discharged or released from active duty as described in subsection (c).

(4) An individual who—

(A) commencing on or after September 11, 2001, serves an aggregate of at least 24 months, but less than 30 months, on active duty in the Armed Forces (including service on active duty in entry level and skill training); and

(B) after completion of service described in subparagraph (A)—

(i) continues on active duty for an aggregate of less than 30 months; or

(ii) before completion of service on active duty of an aggregate of 30 months, is discharged or released from active duty as described in subsection (c).

(5) An individual who—

(A) commencing on or after September 11, 2001, serves an aggregate of at least 18 months, but less than 24 months, on active duty in the Armed Forces (excluding service on active duty in entry level and skill training); and