

§ 16161. Purpose

The purpose of this chapter is to provide educational assistance to members of the reserve components called or ordered to active service in response to a war or national emergency declared by the President or the Congress, in recognition of the sacrifices that those members make in answering the call to duty.

(Added Pub. L. 108-375, div. A, title V, § 527(a), Oct. 28, 2004, 118 Stat. 1890.)

§ 16162. Educational assistance program

(a) PROGRAM ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary of each military department, under regulations prescribed by the Secretary of Defense, and the Secretary of Homeland Security with respect to the Coast Guard when it is not operating as a service in the Navy, shall establish and maintain a program as prescribed in this chapter to provide educational assistance to members of the Ready Reserve of the armed forces under the jurisdiction of the Secretary concerned.

(b) AUTHORIZED EDUCATION PROGRAMS.—Educational assistance may be provided under this chapter for pursuit of any program of education that is an approved program of education for purposes of chapter 30 of title 38.

(c) BENEFIT AMOUNT.—(1) The educational assistance program established under subsection (a) shall provide for payment by the Secretary concerned, through the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, an educational assistance allowance to each member entitled to educational assistance under this chapter who is pursuing a program of education authorized under subsection (b).

(2) The educational assistance allowance provided under this chapter shall be based on the applicable percent under paragraph (4) to the applicable rate provided under section 3015 of title 38 for a member whose entitlement is based on completion of an obligated period of active duty of three years.

(3) The educational assistance allowance provided under this section for a person who is undertaking a program for which a reduced rate is specified in chapter 30 of title 38, that rate shall be further adjusted by the applicable percent specified in paragraph (4).

(4) The adjusted educational assistance allowance under paragraph (2) or (3), as applicable, shall be—

(A) 40 percent in the case of a member of a reserve component who performed active service for 90 consecutive days but less than one continuous year;

(B) 60 percent in the case of a member of a reserve component who performed active service for one continuous year but less than two continuous years; or

(C) 80 percent in the case of a member of a reserve component who performed active service for—

(i) two continuous years or more; or

(ii) an aggregate of three years or more.

(d) MAXIMUM MONTHS OF ASSISTANCE.—(1) Subject to section 3695 of title 38, the maximum number of months of educational assistance that may be provided to any member under this chapter is 36 (or the equivalent thereof in part-time educational assistance).

(2)(A) Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter or chapter 36 of title 38, any payment of an educational assistance allowance described in subparagraph (B) shall not—

(i) be charged against the entitlement of any individual under this chapter; or

(ii) be counted toward the aggregate period for which section 3695 of title 38 limits an individual's receipt of assistance.

(B) The payment of the educational assistance allowance referred to in subparagraph (A) is the payment of such an allowance to the individual for pursuit of a course or courses under this chapter if the Secretary of Veterans Affairs finds that the individual—

(i) had to discontinue such course pursuit as a result of being ordered to serve on active duty under section 12301(a), 12301(d), 12301(g), 12302, or 12304 of this title; and

(ii) failed to receive credit or training time toward completion of the individual's approved educational, professional, or vocational objective as a result of having to discontinue, as described in clause (i), the individual's course pursuit.

(C) The period for which, by reason of this subsection, an educational assistance allowance is not charged against entitlement or counted toward the applicable aggregate period under section 3695 of title 38 shall not exceed the portion of the period of enrollment in the course or courses for which the individual failed to receive credit or with respect to which the individual lost training time, as determined under subparagraph (B)(ii).

(e) AVAILABILITY OF ASSISTANCE FOR LICENSING AND CERTIFICATION TESTS.—The provisions of section 16131(j) of this title shall apply to the provision of educational assistance under this chapter, except that, in applying such section under this chapter, the reference to subsection (b) in paragraph (2) of such section is deemed to be a reference to subsection (c) of this section.

(f) CONTRIBUTIONS FOR INCREASED AMOUNT OF EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE.—(1)(A) Any individual eligible for educational assistance under this section may contribute amounts for purposes of receiving an increased amount of educational assistance as provided for in paragraph (2).

(B) An individual covered by subparagraph (A) may make the contributions authorized by that subparagraph at any time while a member of a reserve component, but not more frequently than monthly.

(C) The total amount of the contributions made by an individual under subparagraph (A) may not exceed \$600. Such contributions shall be made in multiples of \$20.

(D) Contributions under this subsection shall be made to the Secretary concerned. Such Secretary shall deposit any amounts received as contributions under this subsection into the Treasury as miscellaneous receipts.

(2) Effective as of the first day of the enrollment period following the enrollment period in which an individual makes contributions under paragraph (1), the monthly amount of educational assistance allowance applicable to such individual under this section shall be the monthly rate otherwise provided for under subsection (c) increased by—