

STATE OF OKLAHOMA
OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

Veterans Job Training Program Information Letter

ARE YOU AN HONORABLY DISCHARGED VETERAN OR CURRENT MEMBER OF THE SELECTED RESERVE OR NATIONAL GUARD?

If so, this letter contains important information for you. Please read it carefully.

You are being enrolled in a job training program as a Correctional Security Officer, Probation and Parole Officer, Correctional Case Manager, Correctional Training Officer or Fugitive Apprehension Agent with the Oklahoma Department of Corrections. If approved for G.I. Bill benefits through the United States Department of Veterans Affairs, you will be eligible to receive a portion of your G.I. Bill benefits while enrolled in this job training program. The Correctional Security Officer training program at the Oklahoma Department of Corrections is approved for 24 months. During this period you will receive your regular wages plus a portion of your G.I. Bill benefits each month, as long as you are progressing satisfactorily in your training and you remain employed by the Department. The amount of your monthly job training check is determined by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs not by the Oklahoma Department of Corrections.

If you think you might be eligible, notify your work location's Human Resources Management Specialist (HRMS) as soon as possible to begin the application process.

Application. Several things must happen to complete your enrollment in the program. First, it is your responsibility to complete an application to use your benefits in this program. You should soon receive a letter from the Oklahoma State Accrediting Agency with an attached application outlining your responsibility to complete the required form. Failure to complete this application will result in denial of benefits, so please be sure you follow all instructions and complete the form as soon as possible.

Next, there is additional paperwork that must be completed by the Oklahoma Department of Corrections. This paperwork does require your signature and it will be forwarded to you when complete. If you have any questions regarding the paperwork, please contact your work location's HRMS who will be your primary source of information.

Please be advised that it takes the VA up to three months to process and mail you the first monthly educational assistance check for On-The-Job Training after all necessary paperwork, including your application, is received in the VA office in Muskogee.

What should you do during this time period? Nothing at all! Once your paperwork is processed, and you are approved by the VA, you will receive your training pay retroactively to your enrollment date in the program, with the following provisions:

1. The VA cannot pay benefits more than one year in arrears.
2. The VA cannot pay benefits prior to your eligibility date for the G.I. Bill.

Inquiries. While three months is an unfortunate delay, chances are it will not take that long. However, if you have not received your first educational assistance benefit payment within three months of receipt of this letter, you may call the VA directly at 1-888-442-4551 and inquire about the status of your application. However, job training benefits are paid out of a different system than education awards, but the VA will be able to tell you the current processing time for these out of system award payments. Please be sure to tell them that you are enrolled in an ODOC training program and provide the following information:

1. Name;
2. SSN;
3. Date started with the Department;
4. Any correspondence received from the VA; and
5. Date and amount of checks received to date from the VA.

Monthly Certification. Once you are enrolled, the VA must be notified each month of your hours worked before a payment will be issued. After approval, the VA will mail you a Monthly Certification form along with instructions on what to do with the form. You need to take that form to your location's HRMS (certifying official) to be processed.

Payments. Once the VA receives the monthly notification of hours worked, they will issue your check to either your home address or to the bank account designated by you, subject to the following provisions:

1. To receive the full award check from the VA each month you must have worked at least 120 hours, including paid time off.
2. For months you work less than 120 paid hours, your monthly check from the VA will be reduced proportionately.

Address Changes. Make sure you keep the VA apprised of your current mailing address. You can do this by calling the VA's toll free line at 1-888-442-4551. If you would like additional information regarding veterans job training programs and other G.I. Bill programs, please go to the VA's website at <https://gibill.custhelp.va.gov>.

Remember that the VA determines your eligibility for the G.I. Bill. If you have a question about your qualification for G.I. Bill benefits or how much your education assistance allowance provides, you may contact the Muskogee U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs office at 1-800-827-1000.