

Checklist for New Student Veterans

Please read everything through once, and then again very thoroughly. These instructions will get you paid, paid on time, and keep it that way.

Before Discharge/On Terminal:

1. Obtain copies of:

- High School Diploma
- Medical and Dental Records
- DD-214
- Awards and Letters of recommendation
- College Education Transcripts (Joint Service Transcripts)
- Certificate of Eligibility – (you can do this online through the VA eBenefits account)

2. Certificate of Eligibility.

- Create MyPay, gibill.va.gov, and eBenefits accounts (don't forget/lose your user names or passwords).
- Submit initial application for a COE on eBenefits. They can walk you through the application form if you have any questions (1-800-983-0937). Try to allow at least three months before school starts for the VA to process this.
- Be sure that you have select the Post 9/11 GI-Bill (Chapter 33), as you're applying. You may use the Montgomery GI-Bill (Chapter 30), but it will not pay Fordham's tuition in full and will not afford you the same monthly housing stipend as with the Post 9/11 GI-Bill.
 - To do this, create an account with E-Benefits and fill out a 22-1990 form. This will allow you to elect which program you wish to use, and it will also "activate" your GI-Bill.

3. The VA will respond by sending you a Certificate of Eligibility in the mail. Allow four to five weeks for delivery. When you receive your letter:

- E-mail a scanned copy of the COE and your DD-214 (member copy 4) to Ms. Seton Heslin-Scott (heslinscott@fordham.edu), if Rose Hill/Westchester, or Ms. Mara Saumell (msaumell@fordham.edu), if Lincoln Center, so they can create your student/VA profile and get your credits certified. **You must do this to start your VA benefits on time.**

4. Once you pass your EAS, immediately call the VA Education, Benefits, and Training Department at (1-888-442-4551) and ask:

- Are you registered as a veteran in their system? (**You need to be registered as a vet in their system to receive BAH**). Do not assume this happens automatically. You may

need to send them paperwork to confirm this (DD2-14, make an account on gibill.va.gov, etc. Prepare accordingly.)

- Make sure your mailing address is updated with the VA as they periodically send important mail.
- Make sure they have your direct deposit information in their system (bank routing number and account info). If they do not, they will mail you a check.
- If you received a Fordham e-mail saying your credits were certified and sent to the VA, confirm with the VA that they received the certification. (Be advised, this may take up to a week or more for them to receive the certification.)

NOTE A. If your semester starts *before* you EAS, (i.e. you're doing college during terminal leave), there may be some financial planning issues to work out. Reach out to the certifying officials (Ms. Heslin-Scott/ Ms. Saumell).

NOTE B. Do note, it takes about a month – so you'll receive your housing allowance for September/January on October/February 1st. Plan your financials accordingly.

Finished with Everything Above & Accepted to Fordham:

Be prepared to buy books, pay apartment first deposits or housing, and living expenses out of pocket until the first month BAH hits. It may take time for Fordham and the VA to process these requests. Feel free to contact your Veteran Certifying Officer to ensure all documentation is in order.

Mara Saumell, **Lincoln Center Campus Certifying Official**
msaumell@fordham.edu

Cell: 212-636-7717
 Fax: 212-636-6009

Seton Heslin-Scott, **Rose Hill/Westchester Campus Certifying Official**
heslinscott@fordham.edu

Cell: 718-817-5905
 Fax: 718-817-2685

Shots and Medical/Health Insurance

Bring your shot records to health services. Vaccination records are required to comply with federal and state law. Without them you can be automatically disenrolled which means you will not get paid.

1. Take a copy of your military medical records to health services to verify your immunizations. This is required by state law; failure to comply will result in your disenrollment from Fordham. Otherwise, scan the required information into a PDF and email health@fordham.edu. They will confirm receipt of information, and your updated compliance status in a timely manner. If not, follow up with them. **Do not wait.**

2. If you need vaccinations, don't pay for them. Student Veterans have resources available. Call the Vet Center to inquire if confronted with a requirement to pay.
3. Enroll in the VA health network. If you haven't done this already, VITAL works with student vets to get them free VA healthcare for the Manhattan VA. Reach out to Yvette.Branson@va.gov or give Dr. Branson a call at 646-772-6087.

The Manhattan VA's address is 423 E 23rd St, New York, NY 10010.
The Bronx VA's address is 130 W Kingsbridge Rd, Bronx, NY 10468.

Moving To New York City:

1. Set aside a week or more to look for apartments.
2. Look online: Trulia, Zillow, Streeteasy, Renthop, Craigslist, etc. Contact realtor (be prepared to pay a brokerage fee)
3. For proof of income:
 - DD-214
 - W-2
 - LES
 - Acceptance Letter
 - Print out of GI Bill Comparison Tool Quote

NOTE: VA Housing allowance is a lawful proof of income, regardless of any claim to the contrary. The last page of this check-in sheet should be kept on your person while looking at apartments, as a matter of good form.

4. If you're moving into the area early or showing up right at the start of the semester – you will not get BAH until a month or more from the beginning of the semester. *Plan for out-of-pocket rent costs and housing deposits accordingly.*
5. If you have questions about living farther away geographically, from NYC, etc, feel free to contact the vet center with questions about commuting or anything not covered here.

Fordham Veterans Center

45 Columbus Avenue, New York, NY
(corner of W 61st St.)
Martino Hall, Room 212
Vet Center: 212-636-6433
Email: veterans@fordham.edu



Commission on Human Rights

Carmelyn P. Malalis,
Chair/Commissioner

Department of Veterans' Services

Loree Sutton, MD,
Commissioner

USEFUL INFORMATION ABOUT G.I. BILL HOUSING ALLOWANCES

Qualifying student veterans pursuing higher education in New York City may utilize G.I. Bill housing allowances to subsidize the cost of renting an apartment. The New York City Department of Veterans' Services and the New York City Commission on Human Rights aim to provide landlords and student veterans with helpful information about legal protections under New York law for tenants seeking to finance their rent with G.I. Bill housing allowances.

Here are some things that you should know:

Many student veterans receive housing allowances under the G.I. Bill.

Under the Montgomery G.I. Bill and the Post 9/11 G.I. Bill, many student veterans receive monthly housing payments *guaranteed by the federal government*. Student veterans are eligible for such payments when they are enrolled in Department of Veterans Affairs-approved institutes of higher education, on-the-job training, or apprenticeship programs. Housing allowances under the G.I. Bill offer recipients a stable source of income to pay their rent. The current housing allowances set by the Department of Defense may be found at <http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/bahCalc.cfm>.

G.I. Bill housing allowances are considered a form of "lawful source of income," and NYC law prohibits landlords from discriminating against veterans who seek to finance their housing with such payments.

The G.I. Bill housing allowance is comparable to any other form of income that a landlord might accept from a civilian tenant and is protected as a "lawful source of income" under the New York City Human Rights Law enforced by the NYC Commission on Human Rights or through a state court action. That means it is unlawful to deny a rental unit to or otherwise discriminate against a student veteran using G.I. Bill housing allowances as payment for a rental unit. While student veterans and landlords are free to negotiate rental agreements which are mutually beneficial and lawful, a landlord may not, based on a veteran's reliance on a G.I. Bill housing allowance, deny a rental application, make misrepresentations about the availability of an apartment, or refuse to make or unreasonably delay making repairs to a residence because of the renter's use of the G.I. Bill housing allowance.

Uniformed service members are protected from discrimination by landlords and brokers based on their current or prior service.

In addition to protections based on lawful source of income, New York State and New York City law protects veterans and other past or current members of the uniformed services from discrimination based on their service. These protections were codified in the New York City Human Rights Law with Local Law 119-2017.

You can find more information about how New York City is making a difference for all New Yorkers through the following resources:

New York City Department of Veterans' Services

Commissioner Loree Sutton, MD
1 Centre Street, Suite 2208
New York, NY 10007
212-416-5250 or 311
nyc.gov/veterans

New York City Commission on Human Rights

Commissioner/Chair Carmelyn P. Malalis
22 Reade Street
New York NY, 10007
(718) 722-3131
nyc.gov/humanrights

For more information about the G.I. Bill, visit <http://benefits.va.gov/gibill> or call the G.I. Bill Hotline at 1-888-442-4551.