

**VA's Implementation of Section 555 of the
National Defense Authorization Act of 2016
Education Call Center
Q&A Script**

Issue: Callers have been informed that the program known as the Reserve Educational Assistance Program (REAP) or chapter 1607 is no longer available.

Background: The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016 sunset chapter 1607 of Title 10 U.S.C., known as the Reserve Educational Assistance Program (REAP) effective November 25, 2015. The law sunsets the current title 10 program known as REAP or chapter 1607 and ends the program on November 25, 2019.

Q: What does “sunset” mean?

A: It means the authority DoD had to provide or award educational assistance under this chapter (1607) will be terminated.

- The VA can no longer grant eligibility to new applicants received on or after November 25, 2015.
- REAP beneficiaries who were attending an educational institution during the semester, quarter, or term immediately preceding November 25, 2015, may receive REAP benefits until November 25, 2019.

VA understands this change may have an impact on students who expect to return to school for the spring 2016 semester. In most cases, students will be eligible for Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits.

Q: I am a REAP student, currently using my benefits, how does this law impact me?

A: Current REAP beneficiaries—those students who were enrolled at an educational institution or eligible for a payment during the semester, quarter, or term that immediately preceded or spans November 25, 2015—may continue to receive the benefit.

Q: I used my REAP benefits in the past, but haven't used it recently, how does this law impact me?

A: Beneficiaries who previously applied for and were granted REAP benefits but were not enrolled in an institution during the semester, quarter, or term that immediately preceded November 25, 2015, are not able to receive REAP benefits. However, depending on the dates of your periods of service, you may still be eligible for Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits. We will identify Veterans who have previously applied for VA benefits and are affected by this change to notify them their potential eligibility for other VA educational assistance programs like the Post-9/11 GI Bill.

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Q: I just applied for REAP benefits, how does this law impact me?

A: Beneficiaries whose application for REAP benefits was not received prior to November 25, 2015, are no longer eligible for REAP benefits. However, if VA receives an application for REAP on or after November 25, 2015, VA will evaluate your eligibility for all programs (for example, Post-9/11 GI Bill) and may award benefits under a different program for which you may be eligible or request any additional information needed to make an award determination.

Q: How can I complete my program or continue my education if I was using REAP and it no longer exists?

A: If the VA determines you are not eligible for REAP, a separate determination will be made for other benefits. VA will evaluate your eligibility for all programs (for example, Post-9/11 GI Bill) and may award benefits under a different program.

Q: What if I have entitlement remaining under REAP/Chapter 1607?

A: If you have remaining entitlement for REAP, VA will determine if you can remain in the program. To remain eligible you must have been attending a term, quarter, or semester "immediately preceding" November 25, 2015.

Q: What does VA mean by remaining period of qualifying service?

A: If the period of service used to qualify for REAP started before August 1, 2011, that same period of service may be used to qualify for the Post-9/11 GI Bill. However, if the period of service used to qualify for REAP started on or after August 1, 2011, and the individual used that service to establish eligibility for REAP, then that same period of service may not now be used to qualify for Post-9/11 GI Bill.

Q: I am a GI Bill (MGIB, MGIB-SR, or Post 9/11) student, currently using my benefits, how will/does this impact me?

A: There is no impact for any beneficiary receiving Chapter 30 (MGIB), Chapter 1606 (MGIB-SR), or Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits. You may continue using your benefits. The law only impacts REAP beneficiaries.

Q: I just applied for Post-9/11 benefits using the "in lieu of" REAP, how will this new law impact my benefits?

A: VA will continue to process Post-9/11 applications. If you attempted to relinquish REAP for Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits, VA is evaluating your claim further. If any changes are required, we will contact you.

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SCO Hotline Question: I am a School Certifying Official (SCO), should I stop sending Chapter 1607 enrollment certifications?

A: SCOs should continue processing enrollment certifications, VA-Form 22-1999s, to the Department of Veterans Affairs for REAP students. VA will determine if the claimant is eligible to continue using REAP. In the event a beneficiary is not eligible for REAP, VA will determine eligibility for another education benefit and notify the student directly.