

Procedural Advisory: Section 308 of the Harry W. Colmery Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2017

July 25, 2018

Purpose: This advisory provides an overview of the procedures that will be put in place to process a claimant's request to "opt-out" of the information displayed to schools on or after August 1, 2018.

Background: Beginning August 1, 2018, VA is required to make available to educational institutions, information about the amount of educational assistance to which a Veteran or other individual is entitled. Section 308 of the Harry W. Colmery Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2017 mandates that this information is provided for ---

- Montgomery GI Bill – Active Duty (chapter 30);
- Post Viet-Nam Era Educational Assistance (chapter 32);
- Post-9/11 GI Bill (chapter 33);
- Dependents Educational Assistance (chapter 35);
- Montgomery GI Bill-Selected Reserve (chapter 1606); and
- Reserve Educational Assistance Program (chapter 1607)

*Note: As of the publication of this advisory only chapters 30, 1606, and 1607 information is viewable in VA-ONCE. Chapters 32, 33 and 35 will be available at a future date.

Veterans or other individuals may "opt-out" of having their information made available to educational institutions

Process: Claimants may opt-out by completing VA Form 22-0993, "*Request to Opt-Out Of Information Sharing With Educational Institutions*". This form can be downloaded at <https://www.benefits.va.gov/GIBILL/docs/VAForm22-0993> or can be completed online at Vets.gov beginning August 1, 2018.

GI Bill recipients will also have the option to "opt-out" when completing an application for benefits on VA Form 22-1990 or 22-5490 or when making a change to program or benefit on VA Form 22-1995 or 22-5495 (Forms are in the process of being updated with the "opt-out" field).

The completed VA Form 22-0993 **should be** submitted through Vets.gov or the "Right-Now Web" portal.

The viewing of claimant entitlement information will be available to schools in VA-ONCE; also in VA-ONCE, there will be a check box for each claimant that, when checked, will prevent schools from seeing entitlement information for those who have chosen to "opt-out".

When correspondence is received from an individual electing to “opt-out” of VA’s requirement to provide schools with their entitlement information, follow the below procedures:

1. Right Now Web (RNW) correspondence is received electing to “opt-out”
 - a. Capture RNW inquiry and Opt Out form into the appropriate TIMS folder creating a claim token (CT) if none is active with “OPTOUT” as document type.
 - b. Route CT to “OPT OUT” queue in TIMS
2. Vets.gov correspondence received electing to “opt out”
 - a. Muskogee RPO will (initially) receive all Vets.gov Opt Out forms
 - i. Muskogee upstream will index/route the Opt Out form based on the following:
 1. TIMS Folder Located
 - a. Locate jurisdiction of the TIMS folder,
 - b. Index form to the TIMS folder with “OPTOUT” as document type
 - c. CT will route to the “OPT OUT” queue
 2. No TIMS Folder Located
 - a. Create TIMS Folder in Muskogee RPO with “OPTOUT” as document type
 - b. Route CT to “OPT OUT” queue
3. Hard Copy correspondence received (VA Form 22-0993 or any other signed document from the beneficiary) via US Mail electing to “opt-out”
 - a. If hard copy correspondence is received, RPO’s upstream will do the following:
 - i. If a TIMS folder is located - Add document into the beneficiaries TIMS file with “OPTOUT” as document type and route the CT to the “OPT OUT” queue
 - ii. If no TIMS folder can be located– RPO upstream will follow current “Unidentifiable Mail” procedures
4. RPO “Super User” (designated by each RPO) will process the VA-ONCE actions as follows:
 - a. Pull next in group from the “OPT OUT” queue
 - b. Search for beneficiary in VA-ONCE system
 - i. If found – select “Opt out” option (VA-ONCE Guide will be provided)
 - ii. If not found – create an entry in VA-ONCE and select the “Opt out” option

- c. After the “Opt out” action is completed in VA-ONCE:
 - i. No other active documents in CT; close the CT:
 - ii. If additional active documents on file to process; route CT to appropriate team processing queue for award action

Required RPO Actions:

- RPOs should submit two “Super User” designees within three business days from this advisory release date. Designee should be at the Senior VCE level or above. Please submit to the Workload Management Team mailbox at VAVBAWAS/CO/222
- TIMS actions needed:
 - Create queue titled “OPT OUT”
 - Create document type of “OPTOUT”

Note: RPO designees will be contacted separately regarding VA-ONCE access and the additional training for VA-ONCE actions; further follow up will take place between VACO and RPO TIMS administrators for appropriate TIMS set-up described above.

Questions: If you have any questions about this advisory, contact the Workload Management Team at VAVBAWAS/CO/222.

V/R

Workload Management Team
Education Service