This document is to inform the Approval, Compliance and Liaison (AC&L) staff about the updates to Section 305 of the Colmery Act, which mandates training for School Certifying Officials.

This document shall be used to answer questions about the updates to section 305, school certifying official training.

1. **What is the link to enroll in the SCO Online Training?**

[School Certifying Official (SCO) Training](https://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/resources/education_resources/school_certifying_officials/online_sco_training.asp)

The direct link to the School Certifying Official Training is: <https://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/resources/education_resources/school_certifying_officials/online_sco_training.asp>

1. **If I’ve already completed the existing TPSS online training, will I need to take the new training for existing SCOs online mandated under the Colmery Act?**

Yes – As an existing SCO, if you have completed the TPSS online training, you are still required to take the Existing SCO Online Training mandated under the Colmery Act. The Colmery Act mandate for existing SCOs is effective August 1, 2019 and is an annual requirement. Therefore, any training taken prior to this date cannot be used to meet this training requirement.

1. **How does one designate a person as "Read-Only"?**

Educational institutions must use VA Form 22-8794, “Designation of Certifying Official(s)” to assign an individual as a Designated Certifying Official or a Read-Only Certifying Official. The VA Form 22-8794 has been updated to include Item B for designating a "Read-Only" Certifying Official.

1. **How are Read Only SCOs identified in WEAMS?**

Designated and Read-only SCOs will appear:

* Under both “Certifying Official/POC and “L&C POC” tabs (left side column)
* After “Main & Branch Campus Facility Codes” under the VCE Program View and
* After “Facility Codes” on the VA Form 22-1998 tab.

1. **We understand that SCO training is not required if the institution has less than 20 students receiving VA benefit. However, is it recommended?**

Yes - SCO training will be available online and presented at National and State conferences. Training will available on August 1, 2019, to anyone who would like to take it.

1. **Will a "read only" SCO be able to call an RPO and have questions answered?**

Yes, a read-only SCO is an individual at an educational institution with permission to access read-only or inquiry only information. He/she is authorized to call VA with questions and/or student inquiries; however, “Read-Only” SCOs **are not** authorized to provide enrollment information to VA and are exempt from the training requirement.

1. **Does a SCO have to be marked as “Read-Only" in VA-Once to be considered Read-Only?**

ELRs will not input Read-Only certifying officials in VA-ONCE. SCOs at the facility can set up user accounts for those individuals that need access to VA-ONCE information.

1. **How will SCOs be notified about the new required training requirements?**

The SCOs will be notified of the training requirements by VA through e-mail notification and through the School Administrator’s page on the GI Bill website before August 1, 2019.

1. **Is there time limit for the SCOs to get certified and complete the training?**

* Effective August 1, 2019, **all new** SCOs at educational institutions that have enrolled one or more individual(s) using educational assistance under title 38, United States Code must complete the training prior to being authorized to certify enrollments to VA. To meet this prerequisite, the designated individual(s) must submit a copy of their certificate of completion along with the VA Form 22-8794 to the ELR of jurisdiction.
* Effective August 1, 2019, **existing** SCOs at covered educational institutions, and facilities, where the educational institution have enrolled 20 or more individuals using educational assistance under title 38, United States Code will have one year to complete required training (from August 1, 2019 thru July 31, 2020).

1. **Are all certifying officials listed on the VA 22-8794 required to take the training if only one person is designated to certify students’ enrollment?**

The VA Form 22-8794 has been updated to include Item B for identifying "Read-Only" Certifying Officials. Individual listed as Read-Only Certifying Officials are not required to take the training. Conversely, all individuals listed as a Designated Certifying Official and working at a covered educational institution or facility will be required to take the training.

All new individuals listed as a Designated Certifying Official who and started in the position on or after August 1, 2019, will be required to take the training prior to submitting their VA Form 22-8794 to their ELR of Jurisdiction. The ELR will verify the completion of the online training prior to entering the SCO’s contact information into WEAMS and granting access to VA-ONCE.

1. **Is there a process for when a SCO changes their name?**

You will be able to update your profile after logging into the training. If you need further assistance, contact your Education Liaison Representative (ELR) of Jurisdiction for updates to your name. A new 22-8794 will be required.

1. **How many hours of training must be completed each year?**

* IHL and NCD Facilities – New SCOs must complete approximately 5 hours.
* OJT/Apprenticeship and Vocational Flight – New SCOs must complete 1.5 hours
* Existing IHL and NCD SCOs at covered institutions– Are required to complete 5 hours of annual training.
* Existing OJT/Apprenticeship SCOs are required to complete 1.5 hours of annual training.

1. **Where can we find the list of covered institutions?**

The [current list](http://10.205.5.114/gibill/resources/education_resources/school_certifying_officials/covered_institutions.asp) can be found on the GI Bill Website under School Training Resources . Remember, a covered institution is one with 20 or more individuals enrolled during the previous calendar year. This includes institutions with 20 or more and/or institutions and facilities with multiple branch locations and extension campuses. The list of covered institutions will be generated annually and may change depending on the number of students enrolled and receiving VA educational benefits.

1. **Does the category "SCO" also fall under Work-study or Temp Employees who certify students?**

An SCO is an individual who is employed by the educational institution and is designated to provide enrollment information to the VA. Work-study students may assist with the certification process; however, since they are not employees of the educational institution, they should not actually certify information to VA. As such, they will not be required to complete the training, however, it will be available for them to complete. If a temporary employee is designated as an SCO to certify enrollment information, he/she will be subject to the training requirements.

1. **Is the WEAMS "List of Officials" the appropriate place to review SCOs for the training requirement?**

Yes, individuals listed in WEAMS as **Designated** Certifying Officials and works for a covered educational institution are subject to the SCO training requirement effective August 1, 2019.

1. **What proof is required to show that we have met those annual training requirements?**

New SCOs are required to submit a copy of their certificate of completion along with the VA Form 22-8794 to their ELR of Jurisdiction.

**REMINDER: The submission of the VA Form 22-8794 must include all active assigned designated school certifying officials and “read only” SCOs.**

Existing SCOs - The online training has a built-in feature that tracks the SCOs progress. It will be monitored by VA and reported to congress as requested. National and State conferences training will be tracked through self-certification. VA will provide the SCOs with a QR code which will direct the SCOs to a self-certification form. The SCOs must complete the self-certification form and print their certification of completion to receive credit for the training session.

1. **Will training be specific to the type of school in which you certify? IHL vs NCD schools?**

Yes, there will be general training for an SCO and specialized training based on the type of facility.

1. **What happens if SCO does not meet the training requirements?**

The law states SAAs may disapprove any course of education if the requirements are not met. Essentially, we may be unable to award benefits. We are working with SAAs to detail the process for addressing non-compliance to ensure we do not take this course of action unless it is warranted.

1. **Will this new training take the place of the original online VA-ONCE training?**

Yes - The new training will replace the existing online SCO Training Performance Support System (TPSS), which contains VA Once components. The training will consist of micro-learning training modules which can be taken individually and will include specific modules on VA Once.

1. **Will taking the training for new SCOs fulfill the training requirement for the entire year?**

Yes- Completion of the new SCO training will fulfill the training requirement until July 31, 2020. SCOs at covered institutions (20 or more enrolled Veterans) are required to take the existing SCO training between August 1st – July 31st annually.