**Policy Advisory**: *Distance Learning* vs. *Resident Training* and Monthly Housing Allowance (MHA) Payments under the Post-9/11 GI Bill.

August 13, 2019

**What Changed**: Education Service has provided clarification of MHA payments for *hybrid* courses, along with the rescission of **March 26, 2010** Policy Advisory titled “Independent Study/Distance Learning vs. Resident Training.”

The Post 9/11 GI Bill provides students training *solely through distance learning* (no on-site classroom instruction) receive a housing allowance that is set at half the national average of the Basic Allowance for Housing, or BAH, rates for an E-5 with dependents.

In the March 26, 2010 Policy Advisory, hybrid courses (training that combines both residential training and distance learning) are being paid as solely distance learning courses (i.e., only half of the national average BAH rate).

Since hybrid courses contain at least some element of resident training, they are not “solely through distance learning”; therefore, they do not satisfy the requirements of 38 U.S.C. § 3313 (c)(1)(B)(iii) or 38 U.S.C. § 3313 (g)(3)(A)(ii)(I)(bb) so should not be paid 50 percent of the national average.

Consequently, the **March 26, 2010** Policy Advisory titled “Independent Study/Distance Learning vs. Resident Training” which states that hybrid course shall sometimes be paid the “solely through distance learning” monthly housing allowance rate is inaccurate and will be rescinded.

**RPO Impact:** Veterans Claims Examiners (VCEs) must mindfully process any claims which combine residence courses with distance courses as eligible for regular MHA, if all other conditions apply.

**What RPO Action is Needed:**  For all terms beginning on or after **August 15, 2019** School Certifying Officials (SCOs) will certify all courses which combine classroom instruction and distance learning (commonly known as hybrid courses) as in-residence training. These procedures are **NOT** retroactive and terms beginning on or before August 14, 2019 will not be amended to account for these changes.

**Additional Questions**: If you have any additional questions, please direct them to the Procedures Team at POLPROC.VBACO@va.gov

V/R

Procedures Team

Education Service