

Steps to Follow When Applying For VA Educational Benefits

- 1. APPLY TO THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF VETERAN'S AFFAIRS FOR A FORMAL DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FOR GI BILL BENEFITS.** This is required of all Veterans and eligible family members and must be done if you believe you are eligible for GI Bill benefits. You may submit your application on line at the GI Bill website (www.gibill.va.gov) or fill out and submit a hard copy application through our office (the on-line application system, (VONAPP), is quicker and may be accessed by selecting the "apply on-line" feature on the GI Bill website). **Please note: It can take anywhere from eight to twelve weeks for the VA to receive and process an initial request for a determination of eligibility and issue your certificate of eligibility. The VA will make no benefit payments until this process is complete.**
- 2. APPLY FOR ADMISSION TO CHEMEKETA.** There is no application fee and no obligation to register for classes. You must be an admitted student (have been issued a student ID/K #) before we can process your benefit request. You can apply for admission at any time – you do not have to wait until class registration begins for the next term.
- 3. VISIT THE VETERANS' SERVICE'S OFFICE STAFF ON THE SALEM CAMPUS (BUILDING 2, ROOM 200, WINDOWS 5 OR 6)** to pick up the forms necessary for our staff to submit your benefit request electronically to the VA. Even though you have received a Certificate of Eligibility from the VA, no benefits will be paid unless this certification is submitted by a school employee each term you attend school and wish to receive GI Bill benefits. You may submit a benefit request before the VA has completed your eligibility determination.
- 4. APPLY FOR FINANCIAL AID THROUGH THE CHEMEKETA FINANCIAL AID OFFICE.** While timelines vary, it could take six months or longer to receive financial aid funding.
- 5. ORDER OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPTS FROM ALL PREVIOUS COLLEGES YOU HAVE ATTENDED.** This is a VA requirement. Students may be certified for benefits one term at a time (**three terms maximum**) while awaiting completed of their prior credit evaluation. Evaluation of all prior college credit (**including Community College of the Air Force**) is mandatory; you should also have any Army (AARTS), Navy/Marine Corps (SMART) and Coast Guard training evaluated. Students failing to meet this requirement will have their benefits suspended and benefits cannot be reinstated until the prior credit evaluation is complete.
- 6. TAKE THE STUDENT PLACEMENT TEST** and provide a copy of your test results to Veterans' Services when you return your GI Bill paperwork. We must have test scores on file to certify any academic pre-requisites.
- 7. REGISTER FOR CLASS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AFTER REGISTRATION BEGINS.** Chapter 33 students must be registered for class each term **BEFORE** a benefit certification can be submitted to the VA.
- 8. AFTER YOU REGISTER FOR YOUR CLASSES,** contact the Veterans' Services office in person or by e-mail at veterans@chemeketa.edu to confirm that all of your classes meet the requirements of your program or degree and that you have registered for the number of credit hours that you requested benefits for. **THIS MUST BE DONE EACH TERM YOU ATTEND CHEMEKETA OR YOUR BENEFITS MAY BE DELAYED.** Due to restrictions placed on college staff by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), we cannot respond to phone calls concerning a student's schedule and can only use your student e-mail account when corresponding about student specific issues, such as class schedules, benefit requests, benefit status, and grades. Generic questions regarding benefit eligibility, benefit amounts, credit requirements, and VA guidelines can be answered over the phone or by reply to e-mail accounts other than Chemeketa student accounts.
- 9. IMMEDIATELY REPORT ALL CHANGES YOU MAKE TO YOUR CLASS SCHEDULE** to the Chemeketa Veterans' Services office. Failure to do so may result in an overpayment of veteran's education benefits and an obligation on your part to repay some or all of your benefits to the VA.
- 10. PERIODICALLY CHECK YOUR CHEMEKETA STUDENT E-MAIL ACCOUNT.** Chemeketa Veterans' Services Office uses this account to communicate with you regarding issues that may affect your VA educational benefits. This includes, but is not limited to reminders regarding class registration, verification of enrollment (Chapter 30, 1606 and 1607 only) and failure to meet some or all of the obligations outlined in the college's Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy.