Using VA Benefits for Your Aviation Degree

American Winds proudly supports the men and women who have served and are currently serving our country. We are a VA-approved flight school and have several staff members who are former service personnel. Our VA Certifying Official is well versed in assisting veterans with the application process, appropriate documents and VA benefit requirements.

We encourage you to contact our Admissions Coordinator at 330-733-2500 or admissions@teachmetofly.com to schedule a visit. This is your opportunity to learn more about our Associate Degree programs, tour the school, check out our training fleet and talk with one of our flight instructors. You may also use this opportunity to take a Discovery Flight. We offer a variety of affordable options … let us know if you're interested when you schedule your admissions appointment.

The information contained here should serve as a general guideline regarding using your VA benefits for our Associate Degree programs. We encourage you to contact our VA Certifying Official at 330-733-2500 or officemanager@teachmetofly.com to schedule a meeting or if you need assistance at any point during application process.

How do I get started?

For veterans using education benefits for the first time, verify that your VA benefits are available by contacting your local VA office at 1-800-827-1000 or apply for your benefits on the VA website: www.gibill.va.gov.

For veterans who have previously used VA education benefits: You must submit a "Change of Place of Training" VA Form DD 22-1995, which is also available on the VA website. Submit your form through the "Submit a Question" link and ask the VA to add it to your file. They will send an e-mail confirmation upon receipt and when it is added to your file. You may also choose to come to American Winds and work with our VA Certifying Official to complete your form.

After you have verified your eligibility for benefits:

1. If active duty military: an Application for Benefits DD 1990, signed by your commander
2. If you are separated or retired military: a copy of your DD 214
3. If you are a reservist, you must provide a DD 2384

American Winds will complete the VA Enrollment Form. We send everything to the VA for their final approval of benefits. They will send an approval letter stating that your application and enrollment have been approved. This process can take anywhere from three to six weeks.

Can I use my VA benefits to get a Private Pilot's License?
No. The VA does not cover your private pilot course. A private pilot cannot be compensated and, because of this, the VA requires that you finish the private pilot course on your own. As such, your benefits cannot be used until you begin the Instrument/Commercial training portion of your flight training. Your benefits may apply to all subsequent airmen ratings.

When you enroll in an American Winds Associate Degree program in which a Private Pilot's License is part of the curriculum, then your VA benefits may apply.

What are the minimum requirements to receive my benefits for flight training?
American Winds requires either First, Second or Third Class Medical Certificate from an FAA-approved physician for students, depending on which Associate Degree program they have enrolled. **Please confirm with American Winds which class medical you need before making your appointment with the physician**. **Failure to obtain the correct medical certificate may severely impact the cost, other training opportunities and your future employment options.** These physicians may be located on the FAA website: www.faa.gov. The medical must have been performed within six months of application.

If you have or are currently utilizing your benefits at another school, you must complete a VA Form 22-1995 to transfer your benefits to American Winds.

You must provide a copy of your DD-214 and VA benefit approval letter to American Winds prior to the start of training.

You must fly a minimum of eighteen (18) hours every three months to stay within VA guidelines.

For enrollment/admissions requirements for American Winds Associate Degree programs, please visit americanwinds.edu or call us at 330-733-2500 to request an academic catalog.

What are the differences between the Montgomery GI Bill® and the Post-9/11 benefits?
Montgomery GI Bill

- You pay up-front for the cost of your approved flight training course.

- At the end of each month, a verification of your training expenses will be submitted to the VA. The VA will then reimburse you up to 60% of the cost of that month's training expenses.

- You are fully responsible for paying all training expenses not reimbursed by the VA.

Post 9-11

- You may qualify for up to $22,805.34 per academic year (August 1, 2017–July 31, 2018). The benefit begins again starting August 1st; amounts may change. Vocational flight training certificate programs are covered at a maximum $13,031.61 (August 1, 2017 – July 31, 2018).

- An accrual account is set up with American Winds so you do not have to pay the full up-front cost for your training.

- You must sign an invoice after each flight or ground session. This is submitted to the VA by American Winds each month for certification.

- At the end of each month, a verification of the veteran's training expenses will be submitted to the VA. The VA will then reimburse American Winds for up to $22,805.24* of the veteran's training expenses per academic year. Vocation flight training certificate programs are covered at a maximum $13,031.61.* *August 1, 2017-July 31, 2018

- Once your full benefit has been used, you are financially responsible for any additional training necessary to complete your current training.

- If you have used your benefit at another facility during the academic year, that will affect the reimbursable amount that can be used at American Winds.

- The veteran is financially responsible for all training expenses (including books, checkrides, ground training, flight training, etc.) not reimbursed to American Winds by the VA. For FAA testing fees, you may complete Form 22-0803 (available from American Winds) and mail it for possible reimbursement.

- All American Winds students are required to pay an aviation lab fee and annual registration fee prior to the beginning of training.

If you qualify for both the Montgomery and Post 9-11 benefits and decide to use the Post-9/11 benefit, you cannot go back to the Montgomery GI Bill benefit.

How do I convert my military flight time to civilian flight time?
You will need to schedule a meeting with our Chief Flight Instructor to review your log book and accomplishments. In determining the conversion amount, American Winds will apply appropriate regulations to meet your experience.

Can I use my VA benefits to buy necessary supplies?
No. The VA benefit only covers flight/ground training for any certificate program.

Yes. The VA may cover the cost of books, supplies, etc. when you are enrolled in one of our Associate Degree programs. Amount covers up to $1,000 for book stipend.

Can I use my benefits toward housing?
No. The VA benefit only covers flight/ground training for any certificate program. Yes. The VA may cover the cost of accommodations when you are enrolled in our Associate Degree programs. BAH may apply.

How long do I have to use my VA benefits?
Once our VA Certifying Official establishes your benefit eligibility with the Regional Office, you will be given your benefit amount in exact detail. For example: John Smith has 2 years, 3 months and 7 days in order to use his remaining benefit.

All information presented is based on percentage of eligibility. Please see Office Manager for parental assignment of benefits.

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