

From: **Office of the Deputy Under Secretary for Economic Opportunity** <DUS.VBAVACO@va.gov>

Date: Thu, Jul 20, 2017 at 1:07 PM

Subject: Critical Information for Students Attending Ashford University on the GI Bill

To:

Dear Student Attending Ashford on the GI Bill,

I am sending you this email because our records indicate you are a current or recent student attending Ashford University and receiving Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) GI Bill education benefits. This contains important information concerning your use of GI Bill benefits at Ashford University.

As you know from our previous [emails](#) sent over the past year, Ashford University has been involved in an ongoing court case regarding its GI Bill approval with the Iowa State Approving Agency. A recent ruling from the Iowa District Court dismissed Ashford's petition and affirmed the withdrawal of Ashford University's online programs from GI Bill approval by the Iowa State Approving Agency. This means that classes offered by Ashford University can no longer be qualified for VA education benefits. This ruling will become final at the expiration of a 30-day appeal period which ends on August 16, 2017, unless Ashford University appeals the decision and the court delays implementation.

What does this mean for your GI Bill benefits?

If you are enrolled in classes at Ashford you will continue to receive benefits through the end of any class beginning on or before August 16, 2017. After that you will no longer receive GI Bill benefits, including the monthly housing allowance, for any classes at Ashford University unless Ashford University appeals and a court delays implementation of the current decision. Even if your enrollment for a class starting after August 16th was already submitted to VA, VA will not be able to pay for it. This includes payments under any GI Bill benefit program including the Post-9/11 GI Bill and the Survivors' and Dependents' Educational Assistance Program.

VA does not have the legal authority to restore any GI Bill benefits you have used to attend Ashford University, even if you are not finished with your program. However, you are free to pursue your education goals at another approved school or training facility.

What resources are available to you today?

Our [GI Bill Comparison Tool](#) can help you review and compare alternatives to Ashford University if you wish to continue your education goals at another institution. If you do, remember that you must transfer to a school approved for the GI Bill to continue receiving VA education benefits, including the monthly housing allowance under the Post-9/11 GI Bill.

Here are a few more resources:

- You may qualify for an emergency grant through the [Veterans of Foreign Wars](#) Unmet Needs program to assist with interim living expenses. VFW professional staff can also help answer education benefit questions through 1StudentVeteran@vfw.org.

- The [American Legion](#) has service officers in every state that can provide answers to questions about education benefits, federal student loans and credit transferability.
- [Student Veterans of America](#) has a network of over 1,400 student chapters at colleges and universities and their staff can provide answers to your questions.
- VA's [GI Bill Comparison Tool](#) can help you review and compare alternative schools.
- In addition to the GI Bill Comparison Tool, you can also research schools on the U.S. Department of Education's [College Scorecard](#)
- For free legal advice and college choice counseling, visit Veterans Education Success [website](#) or email them directly, help@VeteransEducationSuccess.org.

What can I do if I have additional questions?

Our Education Call Center is available at [1-888-442-4551](tel:1-888-442-4551) (Monday – Friday, 7 a.m. – 6 p.m. CST) for any questions about your GI Bill benefits and remaining entitlement. You can also join the conversation on our [Facebook page](#) or follow us on [Twitter](#) @VAVetBenefits. You can also write an email to [Right Now Web](#)

We understand that this is a difficult situation and have tried to keep you informed throughout this entire process. Please pass this email on to any Ashford student you may know in case we missed someone. As always, thank you for your service.

Curtis L. Coy

Deputy Under Secretary for Economic Opportunity

Veterans Benefits Administration

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

VA Core Values: Integrity, Commitment, Advocacy, Respect, Excellence (“I CARE”)

For appointments or scheduling, please contact my office @ OEO.VBACO@va.gov or [202 443-6080](tel:202-443-6080)

CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE: This e-mail is intended only for the person or entity to which it is addressed, and may contain information that is privileged, confidential, or otherwise protected from disclosure. Dissemination, distribution, or copying of this e-mail or the information herein by anyone other than the intended recipient or for official internal VA business is prohibited. If you have received this e-mail in error, please notify the sender by reply e-mail, and destroy the original message and all copies.