



UNIVERSITY
of HAWAII®

HILO

Veterans Benefits and Information

Welcome to the University of Hawaii at Hilo Military Veterans `ohana. We are excited to have you as a member of our family and look forward to working with you. There is a vibrant, multicultural and richly diverse student population here at UH Hilo that blends customs, traditions, cultures and ages together into a unique learning experience. Your own personal background, as well as your military experiences will be an added value to our `ohana.

There are many benefits to choosing UH Hilo as your institution of higher learning. Small class sizes and low faculty-to-student ratios, as well as opportunities for research and hands-on learning experiences, is what makes UH Hilo such a great place to learn. As a student here, you have a unique classroom that cannot be found anywhere else in the world. Many programs utilize the Island of Hawaii as a natural learning laboratory to give you practical experience in real world environments and settings. The Big Island offers 10 of the 13 climate zones found throughout the world, as well as an active volcano, a premier spot for Astronomy, tropical rainforests, deserts, vast agricultural land, and crystal clear waters to study the many aspects of marine biology.

The school was established in 1947 as Hilo College, an extension division of The University of Hawaii at Manoa. In 1970, it was renamed The University of Hawaii at Hilo, and designated a four year university. UH Hilo is composed of six colleges, offering 39 Undergraduate, 7 Master's, and 4 Doctorate degree programs, as well as numerous program certificates. The school is comprised of a 115 acre Main Campus, 487 acre Science and Technology Park, 110 acre Agriculture Farm, 33 acre University Village student housing project, and a 10 acre Pacific Aquaculture and Coastal Resource Center.

The Office of the Registrar Veterans Benefit staff at The University of Hawaii at Hilo is committed to ensuring your transition from the military to college student is as smooth as possible. Our role in veteran certification is to assist you in pursuing your educational and professional goals. We are available to answer any questions about veteran educational benefits, certify class enrollment with the Department of Veterans Affairs, and assist you in navigating the class certification process. The VA is the final authority in all decisions regarding education benefits and disbursement of funds. The VA staff in the Office of the Registrar are not employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs, we work to ensure that the regulations set by the VA are satisfied and we do not have any authority to make judgments or decisions regarding benefit status.

We hope you enjoy your time while studying here at The University of Hawaii at Hilo, as well as the unique experience of living on The Big Island of Hawaii.

Sincerely,

The Office of the Registrar VA Staff

Contact Information

The University of Hawaii at Hilo

Office of the Registrar
200 West Kawili Street
Hilo, Hawaii
96720-4091

Phone Number: 808-932-7447 / 808-932-7634

Fax Number: 808-932-7448

Web Page: <http://hilo.hawaii.edu/registrar/>

Email: uhhro@hawaii.edu

Student Services Center (Ground Floor)

Monday-Friday

7:45am – 4:30pm

Veterans Affairs Regional Office

P.O. Box 8888

Muskogee, Oklahoma

74402-8888

Fax Number: 918-781-7863

GI Bill Hotline:

1-888-GI-Bill-1

(1-888-442-4551)

Direct Deposit: 1-877-838-2778

Monthly Verification of Enrollment: 1-877-823-2378 or <https://www.gibill.va.gov/wave/index.do>

VA Website: <http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/>

Hilo Veteran Readiness and Employment (VR&E) Office

Point of Contact: Kathryn Yamamoto

Phone: 808-433-0314

Email: Kathryn.yamamoto@va.gov

Veterans Affairs Regional Office

Veteran Readiness and Employment (VR&E) Office

459 Patterson Road (28) VR&E

Division, E-Wing 1st Floor

Honolulu, Hawaii 96819

Process for obtaining Veterans' and/or Dependents' Educational Benefits:

Responsibility of the Student:

- Submit application for educational benefits to the VA at <https://www.ebenefits.va.gov/>
- Provide the Office of the Registrar a copy of your Certificate of Eligibility (CoE) or print-out of eBenefits
- Discuss with your academic advisor what classes you should take for the upcoming semester
- Run a degree audit through STAR to ensure the classes you plan to register for count towards your degree plan
- Register for classes
- Complete a Veterans Enrollment Certification Request form and return to the Registrar's Office (***This must be done every semester that you wish to use VA benefits for***)
- Provide any additional documents that the VA certifying official may request
- If using Chapters 30 or 1606 must verify attendance to the VA on the last day of the month to continue receiving education benefits
- Must report any change in academic status to the VA certifying official (i.e. add/drop of classes, complete withdraw of classes, change of program/major, academic dismissal, concurrent enrollment at another institution, etc.)
- Keep UH Hilo Registrar's Office informed of any changes to your name, phone number, mailing address, email address, or any other important personal information
- Stay apprised of your academic progress and class standing

Responsibility of the Office of the Registrar VA Benefits Staff:

- Certify to the Department of Veterans Affairs:
 - The approved degree program you are pursuing as shown by university records
 - The number of credit hours you are pursuing for the current semester
 - Enrollment status or the number of hours considered to be full time for graduate and professional students
 - Tuition and mandatory fees
- Certify changes to your registration (i.e. dropped classes, classes no longer counting towards your degree, etc.)
- Report academic progress (i.e. academic probation, academic dismissal, graduation, etc.)
- Assist veterans with any questions or concerns they may have about education benefits
- Keep accurate records of students progress toward degree completion
- Certify concurrent enrollment

I. General Information:

Monthly Housing Allowance (MAH) (Chapter 33):

If you receive Post 9/11 GI Bill (Chapter 33) benefits, you may be eligible to receive a Monthly Housing Allowance (MHA), provided your rate of pursuit is greater than 50%.

- MHA is based on active duty E-5 with dependents rate for the zip code of the university. (The University of Hawaii at Hilo zip code is 96720)
- Paid based on your eligibility rate as stated on your Certificate of Eligibility
- Paid based on the enrollment period as reported to the VA by the university
- Paid based on your rate of pursuit. (i.e. number of credits you are taking)
- MHA is paid in the arrears, meaning after the month is complete (i.e. MHA for September is paid on October 1st).
- Prorated for any month that is not a full month of training. (i.e. August, December, January, and May)
- Not paid during summer or winter break, unless you take summer school classes
- Students who take solely distance education courses (web-based classes, correspondence, etc) will only receive MHA that is 1/2 the national average BAH rate for active duty E-5 with dependents
- Any change in your rate of pursuit could affect your MHA rate, this could cause the VA to assess an overpayment against you, in which you would have to repay
- NOT paid if rate of pursuit is 50% or less
- NOT paid if you are still on active duty, terminal leave, or your spouse is active duty and they transferred their education benefits to you

Rate of Pursuit (Chapter 33):

This is what the VA uses to determine how much, if any, MHA and other benefits you are eligible to receive. The amount you are eligible for is also based on your overall eligibility rate as determined by the VA. Rate of Pursuit is rounded to the nearest whole percent.

- How to calculate rate of pursuit for standard term. (Fall/Spring)
 - *Rate of pursuit = [# hours certified with the VA ÷ # hours determined to be full time] x 100.*
 - Example 1: 12 credit hours is considered full time, you are taking 6 credit hours.
 - $[6 \div 12] \times 100 = 50\%$ - No MHA payable
 - Example 2: 12 credit hours is considered full time, you are taking 10 credit hours
 - $[10 \div 12] \times 100 = 83\%$, this will be rounded to 80%.
 - Example 3: 12 credit hours is considered full time, you are taking 7 credit hours
 - $[7 \div 12] \times 100 = 58\%$, this would be rounded to 60%.
- How to calculate rate of pursuit for non-standard term (Summer)
 - *Rate of pursuit = [(# credit hours certified to VA) (18)] ÷ [(# of weeks in term)] = Training Time for Term*
 - *[(Training time for term) ÷ 12] x 100 = Percent of housing benefit*
 - Example 1: Term: 5/19 - 6/20 = 5 weeks
 - Credits taking: 4 Credit Hours
 - Rate of pursuit = $[(4)(18)] \div 5 = 14.4$ training time for term
 - $14.4 \div 12 \times 100 = 120\%$, rounded to 100% MHA

Certificate of Eligibility (COE):

This is provided by the VA after they have approved you for education benefits. It states what program you qualify for, months of benefit, and percentage of benefit. You must provide a copy of this letter to the Registrar's Office before the start of your second semester. The Registrar's Office will not certify any classes after certifying your first semester without this letter on file.

eBenefits Print-out:

Veterans and dependents can log into eBenefits to view a summary of their approved education benefits. You can provide the Registrar's Office with a print-out of your eBenefits summary of benefits screen which states which program you qualify for, months of benefit, and percentage of benefit. The eBenefits print-out can be accepted in lieu of a COE.

Veteran Enrollment Certification Request Form:

Commonly referred to as the "Veterans Pink Sheet" is required by the Registrar's Office for every semester you wish to receive veteran's benefits. Not turning in your "pink sheet" will delay your benefits. This form can be picked up at our office or printed from <https://hilo.hawaii.edu/registrar/forms.php#vetforms>.

Class Attendance:

Students who are receiving Chapter 30 and 1606 benefits are required to verify class attendance/enrollment on the last day of each month through the WAVE website. If you do not certify your class attendance for the prior month, you will not receive education benefits for the following month.

Retroactive Benefits:

Classes can be certified up to one year after the class has been taken. In order to receive education benefits for these classes, you must submit a Veteran Enrollment Certification Request form for each semester you are requesting benefits. The Registrar's Office will certify the classes, however, the VA will determine if you are eligible to receive benefits for the requested classes. Again, only those classes that count towards your degree program will be certified.

Unsatisfactory Progress:

Any person who is receiving VA education benefits must maintain satisfactory progress towards their education goals (i.e. graduation, certification, etc.). UH Hilo must report any unsatisfactory progress (i.e. academic probation, academic dismissal, etc.) to the VA. If you are a returning student, following academic dismissal, you must complete VA form 22-1995 or 22-5495 to request your benefits to be reinstated by the VA <https://www.ebenefits.va.gov/>

Tuition:

The tuition benefit is paid based on the in-state tuition charged for the number of hours reported to the VA. UH Hilo does not charge any additional fees or tuition for any hours over 12 credit hours in Fall and Spring. Depending on your education program, determines whether the VA pays the school directly or not.

Book and Supply Stipend:

If you receive VA education benefits, you may be eligible for a yearly book and supply stipend of \$1,000 paid proportionally based on your enrollment status paid directly by the VA.

II. Program Information:

Program of Study:

You must be enrolled in an approved program of study that leads to an undergraduate or graduate degree, minor, or subject certificate. The Registrar's Office will only certify classes that count towards your degree as stated by your individual catalog. If you have not declared a major, only classes that count towards the General Education Requirements can be certified. The best way to ensure that the classes you are registering for count towards your degree plan is to conduct a STAR audit.

Change of Program: (Degree, Major, and/or Subject Certificate)

If you decide to change your major, do so prior to submitting your Veterans Enrollment Certification Request form to the Registrar's Office for certification. The office will only certify classes based on the program that is currently in STAR for you at the time of the certification process. Although you may change your major at any time prior to class certification, by doing so during the current term could affect your current class certification and cause a change in your benefits.

Simultaneous Degrees:

The Registrar's Office is able to certify simultaneous degrees to include dual majors, minors, or subject certificates.

III. Registration:

Change in registration/student status:

If you make any changes to your class schedule after the Registrar's Office has certified your classes, you **MUST** report those changes immediately. Failure to do so could result in overpayment of benefits and you could have to repay the VA the amount you were overpaid. If you are eligible for MHA, these changes could also affect the amount you will receive. If you are thinking of making changes to your schedule, and are unsure how they may affect your VA benefits contact the Registrar's Office for assistance.

Concurrent Enrollment

You may receive benefits while attending more than one institution of higher learning during a semester. The classes that you take at the secondary school must count towards your current degree plan, and those classes must transfer back to UH Hilo. If the courses are taken at a school other than a University of Hawaii system school, you must provide UH Hilo Admissions Office with transcripts of the course(s) taken once it is completed. If you plan to enroll in courses at a secondary school you must identify those courses on your Veterans Enrollment Certification Request form for the semester you are taking those courses.

Remedial and Deficiency Course:

Courses that are designed to correct a deficiency in basic mathematics, English, and reading may be certified for VA benefits, as long as there is a verifiable need for these courses.

Repeated Coursework:

Courses that are successfully completed may not be certified for VA benefits if they are repeated. If your specific program requires a higher grade than achieved, that course may be repeated and certified for VA benefits.

Prerequisite Courses:

If a course is required to be taken before taking a course required for your degree plan the VA will pay for both courses.

Electives:

An elective is any course that does not directly fit within your degree plan. If you are taking an elective course, it may or may not be eligible for certification for VA benefits. Various degree plans allow for a different number of elective course credits. If you are planning on taking an elective and are unsure about whether it can be certified, please see the VA staff in the Registrar's Office.

Retroactive drop or Withdrawal:

If you drop a class or completely withdraw from a previous semester, UH Hilo must report that activity to the VA. If it results in a change of status, the VA may create an overpayment, which you must repay.

IV. Other Information/Definitions:**Rounding out (Graduation):**

You may use any class, including courses that do not count towards your degree, to bring your course load up to full time schedule in your last term only (i.e. graduation term). This allows you to receive benefits at the full time rate during your last semester. This can only be done once per program.

In- Resident Courses:

Courses that consist of regularly scheduled standard class sessions in a classroom are considered in-resident courses.

Distance Learning Courses:

Courses that use communication technology, such as audio or video conferencing and on-line internet courses, are considered distance learning. Distance refers to how a student interacts with the instructor.

Yellow Ribbon Program:

UH Hilo is participating in the Yellow Ribbon program; it provides three undergraduate students up to \$6,644 annually to cover tuition and fees that are not covered by the VA Chapter 33 benefits. Once a student has been awarded the yellow ribbon benefit by the Registrar's Office, they remain in the program until they are no longer eligible. When an opening becomes available, current non-resident students are notified by email of the opening and provided a program application. The position is filled on a "first come, first served" basis. The Yellow Ribbon Program does not cover any summer school tuition or fees.

***** NOTE:** Currently UH Hilo has 3 Yellow Ribbon program recipients***

Veteran and Recipients of Transferred Benefits Exemption to Non-Resident Tuition:

All campuses within the UH System, including UH Hilo, participate in the Choice Act. It allows those who are eligible to be assessed in-state tuition.

UH Board of Regents Eligibility Policy (RP 6.208): Veterans and recipients of transferred benefits eligible to use Post 9/11 GI Bill (Chapter 33) or Montgomery GI Bill Active Duty (Chapter 30) educational benefits, who live in Hawai'i, and enroll at the University within three years of discharge from a period of active duty service of 90 days or more. Veterans using educational assistance under the Veteran Readiness and Employment Program

(VR&E; also formerly called Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment) (Chapter 31) program and who lives in Hawai'i.

Entitlement:

This refers to the number of months, amount of benefit, and percentage you are entitled to receive from the VA for education. Contact the VA directly concerning your entitlements

V. Other Services:

Certification and Licensing test:

If you are entitled to receive VA education benefits, you may be eligible to receive reimbursement for the cost of licensing or certification tests approved by the VA. The VA will pay for the cost of the test, up to \$2,000 per test. There is no limit to the number of tests you may take, or the number of times you may take the same test. Fees associated with licensing or certifications are not reimbursable by the VA. For further information, see http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/licensing_certification.asp

National Testing Program:

If you are entitled to receive VA education benefits, you may be eligible for reimbursement for the fee charged for taking national tests for admission to institutions of higher learning or for tests that provide the opportunity for course credit. Some tests that are approved by the VA for reimbursement include:

- SAT (Scholastic Assessment Test)
- ACT (American College Testing Program)
- LSAT (Law School Admission Test)
- GRE (Graduate Admission Test)
- GMAT (Graduate Management Admission Test)
- MCAT (Medical College Admission Test)
- PCAT (Pharmacy College Admission Test)
- CLEP (College-level Examination Program)

For further information, see http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/licensing_certification.asp

VA Work Study:

If you are a full time or 3/4 time student and receiving VA education benefits, you may be eligible for a VA work study position. Under this program you perform VA related work and are paid an hourly wage, either state or federal minimum wage whichever is greater (Hawaii is \$10.10 per hour as of January 1, 2018) and is nontaxable.

Mitigating Circumstances:

If you reduce your course load or withdraw due to circumstances beyond your control, the VA may take mitigating circumstances into consideration when determining whether to apply an overpayment or not.

Mitigating circumstances include, but are not limited to:

- An illness or death in your immediate family
- An illness or injury afflicting you during the enrollment period
- An unavoidable change in the students conditions of employment

For more information, see <http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/>

Education Counseling:

If you receive VA education benefits, you may be eligible for free educational or vocational counseling. This counseling is designed to help with academic and adjustment problems to help resolve learning barriers that

may impede your success in school. For more information, see

<http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/careerscope.asp>

Tutorial Assistance:

If you are receiving VA education benefits, you may be eligible for tutorial assistance. This is supplemental to your regular education benefits and is available if you are at the half-time or greater rate and have a deficiency in a subject. This benefit pays up to \$100 per month, with a maximum of \$1,200. For more information, see <http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/careerscope.asp>

Tuition Assistance:

Tuition Assistance (TA) is a Department of Defense (DOD) education program and not administered by the VA. TA rules vary by branch of service and can even vary between individual units. If you are using Chapter 33 Post 9/11 GI Bill, the school reduces the total amount of tuition and fees that is reported to the VA by the amount that you receive for TA. Refer to your units Education Officer concerning any questions regarding TA. Please contact the Office of the Registrar for questions pertaining to tuition and fees.

Tuition Assistance Top-up:

This is a MGIB-AD benefit that is administered by the VA and is paid in tandem with tuition assistance. TA Top-up pays the difference between what tuition assistance pays and the cost of the class, not to exceed the total cost of the course. For more information, see <http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/careerscope.asp>

VI: Reference/ Resources for Veterans:

	Name of Organization:	Contact Information:	Services Provided:
1.	Hilo VA Outpatient Clinic	1285 Waiuanue Ave Suite 211 Hilo, Hawaii 96720 808-935-3781 Hours of Operation: Monday-Friday 0730-1600	Primary health care Mental health care Marriage counseling Drug/Alcohol Counseling Referral to special care NO EMERGENCY SERVICE
2.	State of Hawaii Office of Veterans Services	1304 Kekuanana St. #L-102 Hilo, Hawaii 96720 808-933-0315 808-433-0420 (Oahu) www.dod.hawaii.gov/ovs/ HOVS@ovs.hawaii.gov Hours of Operation: Monday-Friday 0745-1200 / 1300-1630	Assistance with VA claims Assistance with VA appeals Assistance with employment Act as liaison between veterans and the Governor Veteran representation at VA hearings
3.	Hilo Vet Center	70 Lanihuli Street Suite 102 Hilo, Hawaii 96720 808-969-3833 Hours Of Operation: Monday-Friday 0800-1630 On Campus Student Service Center Room E-231 808-932-7774 Hours of Operation: Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday 0900-1400	Readjustment Counseling Sexual trauma counseling Marital/family/individual/group counseling Employment resources Federal work-study Education benefits
5.	VFW Post 3830	15-775 Maluhia Street Pahoa, Hawaii 96778 www.vfw3830.com	Social Organization

- This list is not meant to be all inclusive, just a short list of the primary veteran resources in the Hilo area.
- The services listed on this list are not all inclusive, contact the individual agency to learn more about the services they provide.

Scholarships for Veterans and Dependents:

This list is not intended to be all inclusive, just a short informal listing of some scholarships available to you. To determine if you qualify for a particular scholarship you must contact the organization directly.

1. Air Force Sergeants Association
2. American Legion
3. AMVETS
4. Armed Services YMCA
5. Army Emergency Relief
6. ASMBA Star Foundation
7. Blinded Veterans Association
8. Children of Fallen Patriots Foundation
9. Dolphin Scholarship Foundation
10. Fisher House Foundation
11. Fleet reserve Association
12. Marine Corp league
13. Military Child Education Coalition
14. Naval Special Warfare Foundation
15. Patriot Foundation
16. Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States

Useful Contact Information:

Office:	Phone Number:	Email:	Location:
Admissions	808-932-7446	uhhadm@hawaii.edu	354
Advising Center	808-932-7776	uhhadvis@hawaii.edu	354
Bookstore	808-932-7394	hilobooks@hawaii.edu	336
Cashiers Office	808-932-7025	uhhcash@hawaii.edu	354
Campus Center	808-932-7365	campusct@hawaii.edu	336
Counseling Services	808-932-7465	armeniox@hawaii.edu	354
Career Development Center	808-932-7777	career@hawaii.edu	354
Campus Housing Office	808-932-7403	uhhouse@hawaii.edu	PB-11
Campus Parking Office	808-932-7001	uhhpark@hawaii.edu	300
Campus Security	808-932-7013	uhhsafe@hawaii.edu	300
Campus Disability Office	808-932-7623	uds@hawaii.edu	354
Campus Dining Services	808-932-7352	uhhdine@hawaii.edu	336
Financial Aid	808-932-7449	uhhfao@hawaii.edu	354
Kilohana- The Academic Success Center	808-932-7287	karlah@hawaii.edu	334
Library	808-932-7286	circ@hawaii.edu	334
Registrar	808-932-7447	uhhro@hawaii.edu	354
Student Life Center	808-932-7607	N/A	352
Student Medical Services	808-932-7369	uhhsms@hawaii.edu	354
Women's Center	808-932-7381	uhhwomen@hawaii.edu	354