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Veterans Dependents Educational Benefits

Maine Bureau of Veterans' Services

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The Veterans Dependents Educational Benefits Program is administered by the Bureau of Maine Veterans' Services under the provisions of MRSA 37-B, Chapter 7, Section 505(2). Benefits under this program include waiver of tuition and related fees for qualified dependents of certain disabled or deceased veterans. Schools covered under this program include the University of Maine System, Maine Community Colleges and Maine Maritime Academy.

SPOUSES BENEFITS

Spouses of veterans who are attending state-supported postsecondary vocational schools or institutions of collegiate grade must be admitted free of tuition including mandatory fees and lab fees for a **certificate program or an associate's, bachelor's or master's degree program**. Room and board may not be waived. **Spouses are entitled to receive up to 120 credit hours of educational benefits and have 10 years from the date of first entrance to complete the program.**

CHILDREN BENEFITS

Children of veterans who are attending state-supported postsecondary vocational schools or institutions of collegiate grade must be admitted free of tuition including mandatory fees and lab fees for associate's and bachelor's programs. The tuition waiver provided under this paragraph may be reduced by an amount necessary to ensure that the value of this waiver, combined with all other grants and benefits received by the student, does not exceed the total cost of education. Room and

board may not be waived. A child of a veteran has 6 academic years from the date of first entrance to complete 8 semesters. The director may waive the limit of 6 consecutive academic years when the recipient's education has been interrupted by severe medical disability or illness making continued attendance impossible.

NOTE: Students must maintain at least a 2.0 or "C" grade point average to continue receiving educational benefits. If a student's grade point average falls below 2.0 or a "C", then the student has one semester to bring the grade point average up to at least a 2.0 or a "C". If after that semester the student's grade point average is below 2.0 or a "C", the student loses educational benefits under this paragraph until the student achieves a grade point average of at least 2.0 or a "C".

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

1. "Child" means a natural child whose mother or father is or was a veteran or a child who was adopted prior to turning 18 years of age and whose adoptive mother or father is or was a veteran and who:

- a. Is at least 16 years of age;
- b. Has graduated from high school; and
- c. Enrolled in a degree program and was awarded benefits under this subsection prior to the child's 22nd birthday.

NOTE: If the child is unable to enroll in a degree program prior to turning 22 years of age due to service in the United States Armed Forces, then the child may apply to begin this benefit until reaching 26 years of age.

- "Child" also means a stepchild who is a member of a veteran's household either at the time of application or, in the event of the veteran's death, at the time of death, and who continues to be a member of the household after the death of the veteran.

NOTE: At least 5 years must have elapsed since the veteran married the parent of the stepchild before the stepchild is eligible for educational benefits, and the biological parent of the stepchild must reside in the veteran's household while the stepchild receives educational benefits.

- "Child" also means a legally adopted child whose natural parent is or was a veteran.

2. "Spouse" means the person currently legally married to a living veteran or the unremarried widow or widower of a deceased veteran, not previously divorced from that veteran. (Awards under the educational benefits program are authorized to provide benefits to only one spouse per veteran).

3. "Veteran" means any person who served in the military or naval forces of the United States and entered the service from this State or has been a resident of this State for 5 years immediately preceding application for aid and, if living, continues to reside in this State throughout the duration of benefits administered under the educational benefits program and who:

- a. Has a total permanent disability resulting from service-connected disability as a result of service;

- b. Was killed in Action;
- c. Died from a service-connected disability as a result of service;
- d. At the time of death was totally and permanently disabled due to a service-connected disability, but whose death was not related to the service-connected disability; or
- e. Is a member of the Armed Forces on active duty who has been listed for more than 90 days as missing in action, captured or forcibly detained or interned in the line of duty by a foreign government or power.

The continuous residency requirement of this program does not apply to a person who is receiving educational benefits under this chapter on or before January 1, 2006.

NOTE: If a veteran was a resident of Maine prior to his/her death for less than five years, and application is received subsequently after the five year period from the date he/she last established residency, the applicant will be considered eligible and the deceased veteran will have been considered to have met eligibility requirements for purposes of this benefit.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

The following documentation must be submitted with application:

Children, Step-Children, Adopted Children

- 1. Birth certificate with both parent's names printed on it.
- 2. Proof of veteran's disability.
- 3. **If the veteran did not enter the service from Maine**, proof of residency needs to be

submitted showing the veteran has been a resident of Maine for at least five years.

- 4. A step-child of the veteran must also provide a copy of marriage certificate showing their natural parent is married to the veteran.
- 5. An adopted child of the veteran must also provide a copy of adoption certificate showing that they were adopted by the veteran prior to turning age 18.
- 6. An adopted child whose natural parent is the disabled veteran must also provide proof of veteran's paternity such as, adoption papers, original birth certificate, or any legal document with such verification.

Spouse

- 1. Copy of marriage certificate.
- 2. Proof of veteran's disability.
- 3. **If the veteran did not enter the service from Maine**, proof of residency needs to be submitted showing the veteran has been a resident of Maine for at least five years.

OTHER INFORMATION

Only the University of Maine System, Maine Community Colleges and Maine Maritime Academy provide waiver benefits under this program. **Private colleges, out-of-state universities, prep schools, adult education and correspondence courses are not covered under this program.**

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State of Maine



Veterans Dependents Educational Benefits

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