

Benefits and Transition Act signed into law



Authorizes provisions to improve veterans' quality of life

Several new minor provisions—including changes to veterans educational benefits, Department of Veterans Affairs debt notification and Memorial Affairs—were signed into law at the end of the 115th Congress, under the Veterans Benefits and Transition Act of 2018.

One popular provision included in the law stops schools from charging students late fees and taking other punitive actions when school bills go unpaid due to processing delays at the VA. If schools don't agree to the new rules, they won't be allowed to keep enrolling students using the Post-9/11 GI Bill. The law also mandates the VA provide electronic proof of income to veterans who will be receiving housing payments under the GI Bill so the veteran can provide appropriate documentation when looking for a home.

“The transition from military to civilian life is often a very stressful time for veterans and their families, many of whom rely on their earned GI Bill benefits to prepare them for the next chapter in their lives,” said National Commander Dennis

R. Nixon. “This provision should help ease some of the burden on individual veterans when they’re dependent on the VA to ensure payments flow smoothly.”

The law also makes changes to the VA’s departmental administration that will require them to provide standardized debt notices to veterans, while also offering an option for individuals to choose to receive debt notifications by electronic means versus standard mail. Another electronic advancement includes changing the VA’s information technology systems so claimants can review and revise information about dependents electronically.

Also as part of this bill, deceased spouses and dependents of honorably serving active-duty troops can now be buried and receive headstones in VA national cemeteries through Sept. 30, 2024. Eligible dependents buried in tribal veterans cemeteries will also receive VA recognition, including adding headstones to unmarked graves.

“There are a number of provisions in this legislation that will improve the lives of veterans and their families,” said National Legislative Director Joy Ilem. “We’ll be sure to stay on top of it to make sure each requirement in the law is implemented as Congress intended.”

Learn More

Read a summary about the list of provisions in this bill affecting veterans and their families at dav.la/so. Follow along with updates on veteran legislation on [DAV CAN](https://www.davcan.org) (Commander’s Action Network) at [DAVCAN.org](https://www.davcan.org)