



Department of  
Veterans Affairs

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## News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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### **Secretary Shinseki Orders Emergency Checks to Students Awaiting Education Benefits**

#### ***Thousands of Checks to Alleviate Student Financial Burden***

WASHINGTON – Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki announced the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has authorized checks for up to \$3,000 to be given to students who have applied for educational benefits and who have not yet received their government payment. The checks will be distributed to eligible students at VA regional benefits offices across the country starting Oct. 2, 2009.

“Students should be focusing on their studies, not worrying about financial difficulties,” Secretary Shinseki said. “Education creates life-expanding opportunities for our Veterans.”

Starting Friday, Oct. 2, 2009, students can go to one of VA’s 57 regional benefit offices with a **government issued photo ID and a course schedule** to request advance payment of their education benefits. Because not all these offices are located near students, VA expects to send representatives to schools with large Veteran-student bodies and work with Veteran Service Organizations to help students with transportation needs.

Although VA does not know how many students will request emergency funds, it has approximately 25,000 claims pending that may result in payments to students.

The funds VA will give to students now are advance payments of the earned benefits for education. This money will be deducted from future education payments.

VA officials said students should know that after this special payment, they can expect to receive education payments on the normal schedule -- the beginning of the month following the period for which they are reimbursed.

“This is an extraordinary action we’re taking,” said Shinseki. “But it’s necessary because we recognize the hardships some of our Veterans face.”

More than 27,500 students have already received benefits for housing or books under the new Post-9/11 GI Bill, or their schools received their tuition payments.

## Information for the Release of Emergency VA Educational Checks to Eligible Veterans.

***The VA Regional Office, Boston, MA will distribute emergency VA educational checks to eligible veterans beginning Friday, October 02<sup>nd</sup> from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM. The VA Regional Office will also open from 8:00 AM to 12:00 Noon on Saturday, October 3, 2009 for the distribution of these emergency educational VA checks. Veterans are to report to the 14th Floor of the John F. Kennedy Building for additional information on the above dates. VA representatives will be stationed in the lobby of the John F. Kennedy Federal Building to provide assistance to the arriving veterans.***

The VA Regional Office is located at the corner of Cambridge Street and New Sudbury Street, Boston, MA on the City Hall Plaza. It is easily accessible from the MBTA subway system from the "Government Center Station" on the Green Line and the "Haymarket Station" on the Orange line. It is within walking distance of the TD Garden (the old Boston Garden) near the North Station train station. It is located off Route 93 near the Bus Station of the Haymarket Station of the MBTA. Take the New Sudbury Street exit from Route 93 going south.

Veteran must bring a government issued photo ID card (Driver's License, Military ID, etc.) and proof you are enrolled in a school (class schedule, admission letter, enrollment verification letter, etc) to apply for this special emergency VA education benefit check.

This is a onetime payment which will be recouped from future education payments. Only one payment is authorized per veteran, up to \$3,000.00

This program is currently restricted to Chapter 30, Chapter 32, Chapter 33, Chapter 1606, and Chapter 1607 attending schools. This special emergency check is not being released to veteran enrolled in VA approved "On the Job" or "Apprenticeship" training programs.

This emergency educational payment is not authorized for dependents enrolled in the Dependent Educational Assistance program (Chapter 35) program.

For Massachusetts Veterans Residing In Central and Western Massachusetts

Central and Western Massachusetts veterans can visit the VA Regional Office in Connecticut to apply for this emergency educational check.

The Hartford VA Regional Office is located at 555 Willard Avenue in Newington, CT 06111 at the Customer Service Center located on the 4th floor in Building 2E. It is projected to be open for advanced payment requests on Friday, October 2, 2009, from no later than 8:30AM to 4:00 M and on Saturday, October 3, 2009, from 8AM to noon.

For Massachusetts Veterans Residing In Southeastern Massachusetts

Southeastern Massachusetts can visit the VA Regional Office in Providence, RI to apply for this emergency educational check.

The Providence VA Regional Office is located at 380 Westminster Street, Providence, RI 02903. The Customer Service Center is located on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor. The VA Regional Office is open on Friday, October 2, 2009 from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM. On October 3, 2009, the Regional Office will also be open from 8:00 AM to 12:00 Noon so eligible veterans can apply for the special emergency educational checks.

***In order to ensure that all of you are able to get your advance payment check the VA has developed an online process to request checks.***

For Massachusetts veterans who cannot travel to the above Regional Offices to apply for the emergency educational checks, they can apply online at [www.gibill.va.gov](http://www.gibill.va.gov) for this "special" advanced payment (of VA educational assistance for a pending claim for benefits for this term)

**You are eligible if:**

You are a Veteran who has applied for one of VA's education programs and have not yet received your monthly benefit payment for the Fall 2009 term, you can request advance payment through VA's website, [www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov).

**How long will it take to get your check:**

Advance payments will be issued by the U. S. Treasury within 3 workdays (Monday through Friday) following submission of this request. Payments will be in the form of a check sent through the U.S. mail. You should therefore anticipate an additional 3 days (excluding Sundays) for the U.S. Postal Service to deliver your check.