FROM MILITARY TO COLLEGE: A CHECKLIST FOR ND ARMY NATIONAL GUARD MEMBERS

The following is intended to be a basic resource for ND Army National Guard Soldiers entering college. It is not designed to be comprehensive and does not cover all benefits and possibilities – just the most frequent situations. Please consult the North Dakota National Guard Education Office for additional information or a benefits consultation.

STEP 1: WHERE TO GO

- Decide what school you wish to attend.
- Take admissions test (if required).

STEP 2: COLLEGE REQUIREMENTS

- Check with the individual college for requirements.
- Have official transcripts for previous college level coursework, including military training, sent to the college you plan to attend for evaluation of transfer credit. Usually, transcripts should be sent to the admissions office.
- Visit www.mymilitaryeducation.org for information about obtaining your military transcript. Click on Military FAQ’s and enter 1002 into the “Search by Keyword” section and hit “Search.”

STEP 3: FEDERAL STUDENT AID

- Submit your application for federal student aid at www.fafsa.ed.gov. The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is available to all students attending a college and/or university and determines eligibility for federal student loans as well as federal and state grants. Since FAFSA awards are based on income from the previous year, the assessment may not provide an accurate reflection of a student’s current income. If the income reported on the FAFSA was significantly higher than what will be earned while in college, notify the Financial Aid office on campus and complete a special circumstances appeal to have your assessment based on your current income.
- FAFSA is not the same as FTA (Federal Tuition Assistance). You MUST complete the FTA step, below, in order for the ND National Guard to pay for tuition.
- This must be done each semester!
- Search for scholarships. There are many available to veterans. Check with college financial aid office for general scholarships.
- First choice for student aid is a Stafford Subsidized loan. Second is Stafford Unsubsidized. PLUS loans are the next alternative. Avoid private loans at all costs.
Step 4: Guide to Tuition Assistance Applications on https://minuteman.ngb.army.mil/benefits

1. Go to https://minuteman.ngb.army.mil/benefits

2. Log in with your CAC card. You must be at a computer that has a CAC card reader in order to apply for FTA.

3. Click on Apply for Tuition Assistance
4. Minimum System requirements page will display. After you have read this click on the **Click Here to Continue To Online Tuition Assistance Application** to continue.

5. On the next screen, you will read through the **Statement of Understanding**, select “Yes” for each statement, and click on “continue.”
6. Verify that all of your contact information is correct and enter in your daytime telephone number and click on Next Step Button.

7. Select which school you are attending. To select a school, click on the “select school” link.
8. Select the State that your school is located in then click on the letter that the school starts with and locate the school in the list and click on it.

9. Choose your education goal and enter in the course begin and end date.
   a. Enter your goal from the drop down menu.
   b. Enter your program/course of study.
   c. Enter your goal category. (most of the time it will be Post Secondary)
   d. Enter the start and end dates for your classes.

10. Click on Next Step
11. Click on the Add New Course Button.

12. Enter the course department and number (MATH 101) as well as the title of the course (College Algebra.) Then select the funding level that the class is towards, delivery mode, and the number of credits of the course. After all data is input click on “add”. Repeat steps for all courses.

   a. For the cost per hour, fill it in to the best of your knowledge or $100.  We will manually figure out the cost per hour once the application is received. If you have course fees (ie. Lab fees) note in remarks or they will not be added to application.
13. When all courses are added click on the Next Step Button

14. Make sure there are no ERRORS. Double-check your entries before you submit the application.

15. You must view the recoupment policy. Then select “AGREE to Policy” or “DECLINE to policy.” NOTE: if you decline the policy your application will not be processed.
16. At this point you may enter any additional comments. Make sure to note course fees (ie. Chem Lab Fee- $15.00) or they will not be covered on your application.

17. It is strongly recommended that you print a copy of your application and keep it for your records.

18. Click on “Submit application.” You will receive a confirmation e-mail to your AKO account and only your AKO account once your application is received.

19. Once your application is processed, you will receive an email with your DA 2171 with the words “STUDENT COPY” printed over it. Print this copy and bring to the school’s business office immediately. DA 2171’s that are not turned in to the school in a timely manner may not receive funding.

20. If you have adds/drops to your schedule, notify the Education office immediately at NGNDJ1ESOS@ng.army.mil. Adds/drops not updated on the DA 2171 will be recouped.

21. Applying for tuition assistance is NOT the same as applying for VA benefits. And conversely, applying for VA benefits does not automatically grant tuition assistance. You must do both.

22. Out-of-State & Masters Degree Students MUST turn-in grade reports at the end of each semester/quarter.

**STEP 4: Veterans Administration Educational Benefits**

- There are various forms of VA educational benefits available, and it is possible to qualify for more than one. Dollar amounts are based on program eligibility and credit loan.
- The ND National Guard only verifies eligibility. The Veterans Administration determines payment amount and makes payments.
- You MUST visit the Veterans Administration certifying official located at each college/university to apply for payments. The registrar’s office will assist you in meeting the VA representative.
- Applying for VA benefits is NOT the same as applying for tuition assistance. And conversely, applying for tuition assistance does not automatically grant VA benefits. You must do both.
- Once you begin to recieve your benefits checks, you need to verify attendance every month. Visit https://www.gibill.va.gov/wave or call 1-877-823-2378.
- Notify your campus VA Certifying Official of any changes in your status to avoid overpayments and collections.

**STEP 5: North Dakota State Tuition Reimbursement**

- Benefits are based on funding availability and can vary in amount from semester to semester. Co-op education, online and distance education courses will be paid under this tuition assistance program using the tuition rates charged by the school for each class type as basis for reimbursement. Internships will be paid under this tuition assistance program provided there are credits earned and an acceptable grade received. The National Guard tuition program will pay a maximum of 130 credit hours or through completion of the member’s baccalaureate degree, whichever is first. A member may receive funding for a second baccalaureate degree if he/she received no state funding for the first degree.
The NDNG will request each school within North Dakota to send an unofficial transcript at the end of the three normal academic terms (December, May, and July) for undergraduate students. Those students that have a “business office hold” on their transcripts (student’s school account is not fully satisfied) will be responsible for turning in an unofficial transcript to the STA office once the hold has been removed. State tuition reimbursement funds will not be released to students until applicable grades are received and evaluated. A member who completes an incomplete class will send their latest transcript to the STA office to determine if further state tuition reimbursement is authorized. Satisfactory grades for state reimbursements are: A, B, C, Pass, or Satisfactory.

School waivers are applied as credits to the semester attended which will reduce the tuition amount due the following semester. If the student is not attending the following semester, the school payment is sent to the student in accordance with the school’s reimbursement policy. For ND State Funded Schools, the tuition waiver will be equal to 25% of the tuition charged by the school for the class. For Participating ND Private Schools, any institutional academic scholarships or grants may be used toward the school’s portion of the tuition waiver/grant. These academic scholarships do not include scholarships for athletics or other non-academic type scholarships. The tuition grant will be limited to 25% of the highest undergraduate rate at a State school. Adjustments to a member’s tuition costs may be made for valid reasons only by agreement between the school’s administrator and the State Tuition Assistance Office.

State Reimbursements will be made directly to the student in the form of a check, based upon the number of credit hours/classes successfully completed with a C grade or higher, Pass, or Satisfactory.

STEP 6: Request other services

- Veterans Resource Center – information regarding benefits and resource
- Student Organizations – many campuses have veteran’s clubs
- Counseling – personal and career counseling
- Disability Services – provides accommodations for students with disabilities

ND National Guard Education Office Phone Numbers:

GI Bill/Testing: (701) 333-3064

Federal Tuition Assistance: (701) 333-3071

Federal Incentives and Student Loan Repayment Program: (701) 333-3089

ND State Benefits and Bonuses Manager: (701) 333-3008