

# STATE OF COLORADO

Department of Military & Veterans Affairs



## Colorado National Guard State Tuition Assistance Manual and Standard Operating Procedures

**Version Number:** 2

**Date of Issue:** 15 June 2024

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2024

**Proponent:** Colorado National Guard State Tuition Assistance Policy. Regulation 350-8

**Point of Contact:** Tuition Assistance Manager [tuition@dmva.state.co.us](mailto:tuition@dmva.state.co.us)

**Approval:**

# STATE OF COLORADO

Department of Military & Veterans Affairs



## Colorado National Guard State Tuition Assistance Manual and Standard Operating Procedures

### Table of Contents

SECTION 1: TERMINOLOGIES .....	3
SECTION 2: APPLICATION & PROCESSING FLOW.....	7
SECTION 3: APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY .....	8
SECTION 4: SCHOOL CERTIFICATIONS, INVOICING & PAYMENTS .....	21
SECTION 5: PAYMENTS .....	24
SECTION 6: COLLECTION PROCEDURES .....	25
SECTION 7: SCHOOL NOTIFICATIONS.....	26
SECTION 8: MANAGING STATE TA WEBSITE .....	26
SECTION 9: APPEALS.....	27
SECTION 10: ELECTRONIC FILE STORAGE .....	27
SECTION 11: REVISIONS TO MANUAL.....	29

# STATE OF COLORADO

Department of Military & Veterans Affairs



## SECTION 1: TERMINOLOGIES

1. CONG - Colorado National Guard (Air and Army branches only)
2. MOS/AFSC Number or ARMY PRN# - Job numbers issued to CO National Guard members based on their branch and position. Used as a method for determining eligibility when funds are limited per State Statute.
3. ETS - Expected Term (time) of Service. Enlisted CO National Guard Members will have an actual date of completed service. This is usually located on Enlistment paperwork, the 169C form, re-enlistment paperwork and LES.
4. INDEFINITE - CO National Guard member does not have a specified ETS. Usually, high ranking members will be coded this way.
5. MRD - Mandatory Retirement Date. The date officers are required to retire by. Officers may not extend beyond this date established by the Guard.
6. DOE - Date of Entry. This is the date the guard member entered the CO National Guard. Used to determine a member's eligibility in the program.
7. CGPA - Cumulative Grade Point Average. GPA calculated on a Cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) refers to the overall points attained after dividing the number of quality points earned by the total credit hours in various courses attempted. After compilation grades within the range of A to F are awarded. CGPA is an eligibility requirement.
8. RAAF - Request for Authorization Adjustment Form. Working documents used when an applicant has Pell Grant, a change in credit hours, additional funding sources being applied towards tuition and/or a change in tuition costs. Schools should submit this form anytime the authorization letter does not match the amount the school wants to invoice for. Especially important if the invoice amount is more than the authorization.
9. PV - Payment Voucher. Sequence of numbers used in vendor billing (prior to CORE accounting implementation June 30th, 2014) to identify State TA funds paid. Generally, starts with TUIT then the last two digits of the year and then the voucher number. Example: TUIT1400057
10. GAX# - General Accounting Expense. Sequence of letters and numbers used

# STATE OF COLORADO

## Department of Military & Veterans Affairs



in vendor billing (post CORE accounting implementation July 1st, 2014) to identify State TA funds paid. Generally, starts with GAX OAAA, the four-digit year and then a unique payment number. Example: GAX OAAA 2015000000059989

11. Stamped Approval - Approval of invoices by the State TA Manager and provided to accounting department to make payment with State TA funds.
12. COF - Colorado Opportunity Fund. This is a stipend issued by the State of CO. Its purpose is to reduce the cost of tuition for in-state residents attending COF eligible institutions. COF rates are posted on their website.
13. LES - Leave and Earnings Statement, a military paycheck record.
14. GOARMYED - Federal Tuition Assistance for Army National Guard members only.
15. AGR - Active Guard and Reserve status. Soldiers volunteer to go on active duty providing full-time support to the National Guard, Reserve and Active Component organizations for the purpose of organizing, administering, recruiting, instructing, or training the Reserve Component. The Reserve Component (RC) has two primary programs, Title 10, and Title 32. Title 10 positions are generally federal level jobs, while Title 32 jobs are at the state level. AGR soldiers serve full-time and enjoy the same benefits and entitlements as Active Component soldier, including full educational benefits. Members in the AGR status are eligible to apply for State Tuition Assistance.
16. TITLE 10: ACTIVE DUTY - Full-time duty in the active military service of the U.S. Title 10. It allows the President to "federalize" the National Guard forces by ordering them to active duty in their reserve component status or by calling them into Federal service in their militia status in accordance with United States Code. Members in this USC status does not qualify for State Tuition Assistance. \*Title 10 Active Duty is not Title 10 AGR.
17. TITLE 32: FULL TIME NATIONAL GUARD DUTY - Training or other duty, other than inactive duty, performed by a member of the National Guard. Title 32 allows the Governor, with the approval of the President or the Secretary of Defense, to order a member to duty for operational Homeland Defense

# STATE OF COLORADO

## Department of Military & Veterans Affairs



activities. Members in this status are eligible to apply for State Tuition Assistance.

18. ADOS-RC - Active Duty for Operational Support, Reserve Component. Short tour opportunities for soldiers to contribute to their state and country security while enhancing their own military training and readiness. ADOS-RC tours usually support study groups, training sites and exercises, short-term projects, or administrative or support functions for the reserve component. ADOS-RC is also used in situations where the Active Army has a mission requirement for which no Active Army soldiers with the requisite skills and experience are reasonably available. CO-ADOS is used when the active army (support) mission requirement is the result of a wartime contingency situation. Members in this status are considered neither Title 10 nor Title 32. Members on these orders are eligible for State Tuition Assistance.
19. ACTIVE SERVICE - Service on active duty or full-time National Guard duty.
20. GI BILL (SELECTIVE RESERVE)-CHPT 1606 - This program provides education and training benefits to eligible members of the Selected Reserve, including the Army National Guard and the Air National Guard. Members can receive up to 36 months of benefits. Can be used in conjunction with State TA, as a last party payer for remaining college expenses.
21. REAP - Reserve Educational Assistance Program. An educational assistance program enacted by Congress to provide benefits to members of the reserve components who are called or ordered to "Active service" in response to a war or national emergency as declared by the President or Congress. The "reserve components" include the Army National Guard and the Air National Guard.
22. BAH - Basic allowance and housing. This is a living stipend. issued to eligible members via the Chapter 30 and 33 GI Bills.
23. TIV - Title IV Federal Student Aid money. Common examples include Federal Pell Grant, Subsidized and Unsubsidized Stafford Loans. Obtained by completing the FAFSA.
24. FAFSA - Free Application for Student Aid. Federal Application for students

# STATE OF COLORADO

## Department of Military & Veterans Affairs



wishing to obtain TIV funds to pay for their college education.

25. Pell Grant - TIV funding that is considered in the State TA calculation for determining eligibility. First in payment hierarchy, consider before State TA.
26. Authorization Letter/FERPA Release form - A letter created by the State TA office that is issued every semester to students that have been qualified for State TA. Outlines standard requirements of the program to students and gives the student's institution permission to release student information to the State TA office. Students must review, sign, and submit this form to their institution before the institution may release information to the State TA office.
27. DD FORM 4/1 and/or DA FORM 4836 Oath of Extension - Enlistment document for ARMY CO National Guard Members only. Used to verify a member's Date of Entry into CO National Guard, Current ETS or MRD.
28. DD FORM 4/1 and/or AF FORM 418 - Enlistment document for AIR CO National Guard Members only. Used to verify a member's Date of Entry into CO National Guard, Current ETS or MRD.
29. ROTC - Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) is a group of college and university-based officer training programs for training commissioned officers of the United States Armed Forces.

# STATE OF COLORADO

Department of Military & Veterans Affairs



## SECTION 2: APPLICATION & PROCESSING FLOW

### STEP 1:

Applicant requests command to complete the Command Authorization Form for approval to apply for State Tuition Assistance.

### STEP 2:

Applicant Initiates Online Application

<https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/dmva/tuition-assistance>

### STEP 3:

Applicant completes online qualifying questions.

### STEP 4:

Applicant Uploads Core Documents to Online Application

Enlistment (Re-Enlistment) Paperwork, Course Schedule, & Tuition Cost Breakdown

All applications are stored in Hyland's OnBase.

### STEP 5:

Online Application & Documents Reviewed by State TA Manager

### STEP 6:

Approvals/Denials email sent to applicants through Hyland's OnBase auto notification system.

# STATE OF COLORADO

Department of Military & Veterans Affairs



## SECTION 3: APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

### Application Submission Confirmation

1. Applications must be submitted by the deadline posted on the State Tuition Assistance website. The creation of new applications for State Tuition Assistance will not be accepted after the posted deadline. Applications requiring modification or inclusion of additional documentation will be accepted for resubmission until 45 days after the close date providing the original application was submitted by the deadline posted on the State Tuition Assistance webpage. The State Tuition Assistance Manager will verify any information provided by the applicant or the Unit.
  - a. Members will supply the required documentation as mentioned in section (5.c.1.) to verify current satisfactory guard performance, enlistment information, unit information, and attendance requested by the State Tuition Assistance office. If an applicant falsifies any part of this attestation, the member may be permanently disqualified from participation in the program.
    - i. Required documentation is listed in the Tuition Assistance Policy revisions effective 01 July 2024. (Regulation 350-8)
  - b. No State Tuition Assistance shall be granted without a complete online application packet submitted, in addition to any/all other necessary documents outlined in the application process by the State Tuition Assistance office. All forms for each semester/quarter must be submitted by the deadlines established by the State Tuition Assistance office. Deadlines are posted on the State Tuition Assistance webpage.
2. Once paperwork is received from the applicant and it correlates with a submitted online application, the applicant is now ready to be reviewed for State TA eligibility.
3. Carefully review the course schedule, cost breakdown, and any other paperwork submitted by the applicant that was required at the time of application. (The list



# STATE OF COLORADO

## Department of Military & Veterans Affairs



of required documentation is listed in the Colorado National Guard State Tuition Assistance, Regulation 350-8).

4. Confirm the applicant's DOE, ETS and MOS/AFSC information.
  - a. Additional documentation and corrected documents may also be collected providing the original application was submitted by the deadline posted on the State TA webpage. The State TA Manager will verify any information provided by the applicant or the Unit.
  - b. Any member of the Colorado Army & Air National Guard (CONG), including transfers from other states or service components, is eligible to use State Tuition Assistance. There is no waiting period for members transferring from other states or service components, providing they have completed Basic Training.
  - c. For transfers from other states or service components, if there is a break in service and additional requirements to attend basic training, this must be completed to qualify for tuition assistance.
    - i. Proper documentation must be provided at the time of applying to verify completion.
  - d. New members to the Colorado National Guard must complete Basic Training *before* applying for tuition assistance. Proof of Basic Training completion must be provided to the Tuition Assistance Manager at the time of applying for tuition assistance.
    - i. Proof of completion includes any of the following:
      - DD FORM 214
      - DD FORM 220
      - DD FORM 4
      - Certificate of Completion
      - For Army National Guard Officers:
        - i. Oath of Completion NGB Form 33 AND Officer Record Brief (ORB). (You may redact all other information *except* your name, MRD, and Civilian Education).

# STATE OF COLORADO

## Department of Military & Veterans Affairs



- For Air National Guard Officers:
  - i. Oath of Office NGB Form 337 or AF Form 133 AND Career Data Brief (CDB). (You may redact all other information *except* your name, MSD, and Civilian Education).
- e. Students who received State Tuition Assistance during Spring 2024 semester and do not meet the revised requirements effective 01 July 2024, will be grandfathered in, and permitted to continue to use State Tuition Assistance funds. This is only provided the member remains in good standing with the Colorado Air or Army National Guard.
  - i. New applicants must meet the revised qualifications as 01 July 2024.
- f. It is required that all applicants get approval from their Commanding Officer, or Commander's delegate, to apply for Colorado State Tuition Assistance.
  - i. Approval will be based on the command's determination, providing the applicant has completed basic training and is in good standing with the Colorado Air or Army National Guard.
  - ii. The Commanding Officer or Commander's delegate must approve the Guard member to apply for State Tuition Assistance by completing and signing the Tuition Assistance Authorization Form located on the CONG Tuition Assistance website.
  - iii. By approving, the Commanding Officer, or Commander's delegate, attests that the Guard member is currently in satisfactory standings with guard performance.
  - iv. Once complete, the Tuition Assistance applicant must upload the completed authorization form with their application to be considered for State Tuition Assistance funds.
  - v. Applications will not be approved without this completed authorization form.

# STATE OF COLORADO

## Department of Military & Veterans Affairs



- g. Members must also be enrolled at a designated State Tuition Assistance participating institution of higher education and be in good standing as an active member of the CONG, meeting all the continuing requirements of the school and this regulation.
- h. Only active CONG members under the following statuses are eligible to apply for State Tuition Assistance:
  - i. Title 32: AGR or Federal Technician, M-Day/Traditional Member, One-Time-Occasional-Tour (OTOT), or CONG Temporary Title 10 orders.
- i. Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) scholarship applicants who have made the “tuition and fees” election are **not** eligible for State Tuition Assistance. If they elect the “room and board” option of the scholarship, they may still apply for State Tuition Assistance.
  - i. ROTC applicants are required to upload the following documents to determine eligibility:
    - DA FORM 597, 597-1, 597-3, or 597-4
  - j. ROTC applicants who elect the “room and board” option of their scholarship and apply for Colorado State Tuition Assistance must get approval from their Commanding Officer, or Commander’s delegate, to receive Colorado State Tuition Assistance.
    - i. Approval will be based on the determination of the command providing current satisfactory performance and the ROTC member is not currently using scholarship funds for tuition and fees.
    - ii. The Commanding Officer, or Commander’s delegate, must approve for the ROTC member to apply for State Tuition Assistance by completing and signing the Tuition Assistance Authorization Form located on the CONG Tuition Assistance website.
    - iii. By approving, the Commanding Officer, or Commander’s delegate, attests that the ROTC member is currently in satisfactory standings with their ROTC performance and the

# STATE OF COLORADO

## Department of Military & Veterans Affairs



ROTC member is not currently using scholarship funds for tuition and fees.

- iv. Once complete, the TA applicant must upload the completed authorization form with their application to be considered for State Tuition Assistance funds.
- v. Applications will not be approved without this completed authorization form.
- k. ROTC members must actively attend weekend drills with the Colorado Air or Army National Guard.
- l. Applicants may not be drawing tuition from any other tuition assistance program funded by a private employer that, when combined with the assistance in this section, would exceed one hundred percent of the tuition costs.
- m. Applicants may not be a recipient of a full scholarship for tuition and fees to any designated institution of higher education; and
- n. Must serve in the Colorado National Guard during the period that the member receives tuition and fee assistance.
- o. State Tuition Assistance will be provided to applicants who meet all eligibility requirements, subject to the availability of funds.
- p. Additional documentation and corrected documents may also be collected providing the original application was submitted by the deadline posted on the State Tuition Assistance webpage. The State Tuition Assistance Manager will verify any information provided by the applicant or the Unit.
- q. Members will supply the required documentation as mentioned in section (5.c.1.) to verify current satisfactory guard performance, enlistment information, unit information, and attendance requested by the State Tuition Assistance office. If an applicant falsifies any part of this attestation, the member may be permanently disqualified from participation in the program.
- r. Required documentation includes the following:

# STATE OF COLORADO

## Department of Military & Veterans Affairs



- i. Detailed Course Schedule
- ii. Tuition Cost Breakdown
- iii. Reenlistment Documents (if applicable)
- s. ARMY National Guard Submit:
  - i. DA FORM 4836 Oath of Extension Document for CO National Guard. Provide a completed re-enlistment packet with both you and your Unit Commander's signatures.
- t. AIR National Guard Submit:
  - i. AF Form 418 for CO National Guard. Provide a completed re-enlistment packet with both you and your Unit Commander's signatures.
- u. No State Tuition Assistance shall be granted without a complete online application packet submitted, in addition to any/all other necessary documents outlined in the application process by the State Tuition Assistance office. All forms for each semester/quarter must be submitted by the deadlines established by the State Tuition Assistance office. Deadlines are posted on the State Tuition Assistance webpage.

## ETS

1. If the member has an ETS date that falls in the middle of the semester the applicant is applying for:
  - a. Request re-enlistment paperwork to confirm applicant is re-enlisting (payment may be delayed on the applicant's account until such paperwork is provided).
  - b. If they aren't re-enlisting, they do not qualify.
  - c. Typically, re-enlistment paperwork is collected from applicants anywhere from 1-3 months out from their ETS due to military processing requirements.
  - d. Should a recipient's ETS conclude during the sponsored semester, proof of enlistment extension or re-enlistment is required, as established by the

# STATE OF COLORADO

## Department of Military & Veterans Affairs



State Tuition Assistance office. The institution determines dates of semester/quarter length. In cases where a recipient leaves the CONG before the sponsored semester is over and no reenlistment documentation is provided, the recipient must reimburse the State Tuition Assistance program the amount of tuition paid for the semester/quarter.

### REVIEWING COURSE SCHEDULES

1. Review the applicant's submitted course schedule for details regarding their enrollment at their institution.
2. The following components must be included in the course schedule:
  - a. Student Name or Student ID# (Both of these components are not always available due to school system restrictions/varying information platforms. However, at least one should be present to make it easier to identify who the schedule belongs to).
  - b. Name of School (Not always available due to school system restrictions/varying information platforms).
  - c. Number of registered credit hours

### BEST PRACTICE FOR CONSISTENCY (EFFECTIVE October 2016):

*Schedules should have name or student ID and # of credit hours, so the schedule owner can be easily verified and # of credit hours can be closely estimated\**

1. Prior to Oct. 2016, if the above data components were not available, the schedule would still be accepted if the # of credit hours were outlined in the application and/or on the schedule and if the email address it was submitted from can be verified on the online application.
2. Remember: Even if an applicant were to submit an incorrect course schedule or it changes, State TA will not be paid until the school submits a RAAF and then an invoice.
3. Waitlisted courses will not be authorized until the student becomes 'enrolled' in

# STATE OF COLORADO

## Department of Military & Veterans Affairs



the actual course(s).

### EXCEPTIONS TO THE COURSE SCHEDULE

1. Due to timing requirements for the State TA deadline, school scheduling deadlines may not always coincide. Often students will be unable to secure a course schedule before the deadline closes. This typically occurs when applicants have not been permitted by their school to complete orientation as a new student yet.
  - a. In these cases, one or more of the following documents can be accepted in lieu of a course schedule and by an established deadline determined by the State TA Manager if outside of the normal application deadline:
    - i. A letter from the institution verifying the applicant has been enrolled and the number of estimated hours they anticipate the student will register, if available.
    - ii. An acceptance letter from the institution (The State TA Manager will establish an acceptable deadline for such applicants that submit this form of documentation to verify # of credit hours before an authorization will be issued to the applicant).
    - iii. Any other documentation is at the discretion of the State TA Manager to support proof of enrollment at or after the time of application.
    - iv. If applicants do not provide the requested documentation by the established deadline(s) outlined by the State TA Manager, they may be disqualified.

### REVIEWING COST BREAKDOWNS

1. Review the applicant's submitted cost breakdown for details regarding their tuition costs at their institution.
2. Look for the cost per credit hour, the total tuition amount and if a COF stipend has been applied towards the tuition, this is verified by the school.

# STATE OF COLORADO

## Department of Military & Veterans Affairs



3. Authorizations are awarded from the cost breakdown, but it is treated as an estimate as actual costs are verified by the schools.
4. Look for any additional aid that might impact the State TA eligibility of an applicant. Examples may include Pell Grant, CSG (Colorado State Grant), Scholarships, Employer reimbursement/waivers. See RAAF for typical funding assessed, this is verified by the school.

### EXCEPTIONS TO THE COST BREAKDOWN

1. Due to timing requirements for the State TA deadline, school's billing processes may not always coincide. Often students will be unable to secure a cost breakdown before the deadline closes, this generally occurs when applicants have not been permitted by their school to complete orientation as a new student or the school simply does not do billing until several weeks into the class.
  - a. If the applicant cannot secure a cost breakdown by the State TA deadline, one of the following documents can be accepted in lieu of the cost breakdown:
    - i. The most recent and available tuition/fees table from the school's website or cost breakdown from the student's account.
      - Please note that all state schools have a board of directors that establish their tuition rates every year, around mid- July.
      - Students are permitted to turn in a prior semester tuition/fees table from the school's website if the new table is not available due to the board of directors' late establishment of new tuition/fees tables. The State TA Manager will make this determination on a case-by-case basis for each institution.

### LATE APPLICATION EXCEPTIONS



# STATE OF COLORADO

## Department of Military & Veterans Affairs



1. In extremely limited circumstances a late application for State TA may be accepted at the State Tuition Assistance Manager 's discretion. The following circumstances, while not all encompassing, may be considered for a late application exception:
  - a. Service-related trainings where the applicant was gone during the entire application period and as a result had no access to the internet and a functioning computer.
    - i. In this scenario, the applicant must provide the following documentation in addition to their required core application paperwork by a deadline established by the State TA Manager:
      - A copy of the applicant's military orders **-AND-**
      - A memorandum from the applicant's Unit Commander confirming order dates, member's inability to apply for State TA during their period of absence.

## AUTHORIZATION OF FUNDS

1. As of Oct. 2017, authorizations for State TA funds are generated from the Fluid Review System and an Authorization Letter/FERPA Release form is emailed directly to the applicant based on the following standards:
  - a. Total # of credit hours for the semester.
  - b. Award Amount – As of March 01, 2020, due to continual increases in cost per credit hour at institutions, students will be awarded up to the cap of \$5,000 per State Fiscal Year (01 July to 30 June). Subject to change at State Tuition Assistance Manager 's discretion and based on funding availability.
    - i. \$5,000 semester/quarter/trimester
  - c. Continuance in the State Tuition Assistance program is contingent upon the member maintaining satisfactory academic progress, and satisfactory CONG performance, including attendance, and compliance with all related rules and regulations of both the CONG and this program.
  - d. Any recipient of State Tuition Assistance funding must remain in good

# STATE OF COLORADO

## Department of Military & Veterans Affairs



standing as a CONG member through the duration of the sponsored quarter/semester and maintain a minimum 2.50 cumulative grade point average (CGPA) while participating in the State Tuition Assistance program. If the minimum GPA is not met, funding will be denied.

- e. If a recipient drops their course(s) and receives a refund of State Tuition funds, the recipient and the institution must notify the State Tuition Assistance office and such a refund shall be returned to the State Tuition Assistance office for proper credit procedures. Recipients are not eligible for refunds with any State Tuition Assistance funding.
- f. If a recipient withdraws from their course(s), they become fully responsible for the tuition owed to the institution for the semester/quarter. The recipient and institution must notify the State Tuition Assistance office, and any State Tuition Assistance funds awarded at the time of withdrawal shall be returned to the State Tuition Assistance office for proper credit procedures.
- g. For each member of the Colorado National Guard who is a continuing student and who is receiving tuition assistance, the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs shall obtain certification from the designated institution before the payment to the institution attesting to the member's current satisfactory academic standing for each semester or quarter for which tuition assistance is requested. No tuition assistance shall be granted without such certification.
- h. If a recipient is separated from the CONG due to no fault of their own prior to completing his/her membership obligation, such recipients will be permitted to complete the classes they are currently enrolled in, however, will no longer qualify to receive future funding from State Tuition Assistance.
- i. Any member who leaves the Colorado National Guard in violation of the member's agreement during an academic term for which the member is receiving tuition assistance shall be required to repay to the Department

# STATE OF COLORADO

## Department of Military & Veterans Affairs



of Military and Veterans Affairs the amount of Tuition Assistance granted for that academic term and all collection fees incurred by the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs.

- j. Applicants found intentionally falsifying or misrepresenting data or information to obtain State Tuition Assistance funds may be disqualified from receiving future funds, reported to their Unit Commander, and required to repay to the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs the amount of Tuition Assistance granted for that academic term and all collection fees incurred by the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs.
- k. Officers who use State Tuition Assistance incur a service obligation of two years, calculated from the completion date of the last course for which State Tuition Assistance was paid. The command the officer is assigned to is responsible for tracking the service obligation for each officer using State Tuition Assistance.
- l. Any information concerning State Tuition Assistance application information is considered confidential and will only be released to and discussed with members and their academic institution. If a member wishes to have information regarding their State Tuition Assistance application disclosed to a third-party, the applicant must be on official orders and the third-party inquiring must have a current and valid active Power of Attorney on the applicant's behalf.
- m. Pursuant to C.R.S. 23-7.4-302 (a), members shall be permitted to pursue studies leading towards an associate degree, a bachelor's degree, a Postgraduate Degree, or a certificate of completion.
- n. To better serve members of the Colorado National Guard, the previous regulation prohibiting the application of State Tuition Assistance funds towards additional degrees of same level (e.g., Bachelor, Master, and Doctorate) has been repealed. The State Tuition Assistance office will now begin considering applications for additional degrees at the same academic level. Application

# STATE OF COLORADO

## Department of Military & Veterans Affairs



acceptance and funding will heavily prioritize students seeking their first degree at a level that they have not previously obtained.

### **PROGRAM CAPS (WHICHEVER IS REACHED FIRST):**

1. Total # of semester hours used.
2. Not to exceed 132 semester/credit hours/198 quarter credit hours -OR-
3. # of years used, not to exceed 8 years
  - i. Years are calculated based on applicant attendance by calendar year.
  - ii. EXAMPLES:
    1. Students only attend Spring 15 semester in 2015 calendar year. That equals 1 year of attendance.
    2. Students attend Spring 15, Summer 15 and Fall 15 semester in 2015 calendar year. That also equals 1 year of attendance.

### **AUTHORIZATION LETTER/FERPA RELEASE**

1. The applicant is advised in notification of award email that their issued Authorization Letter/FERPA Release form is attached and that they should print it, review it, sign/date and submit to their school's billing office or designated official by their established deadlines.
2. Each institution has a specific deadline for applicants to turn in their Authorization Letter/FERPA Release form and it is their responsibility to do so. The Authorization Letter/FERPA Release forms are provided to the applicants with ample time so they can meet their institution's third- party deadline. Once members submit this letter to their institution, they can log into their student account and view their amount of State TA authorized.
3. Applicants that fail to submit their Authorization Letter/FERPA Release form by their institution's specified deadline may risk being dropped from their classes and may be required to pay out of pocket for any charges incurred. It is at the institutions' discretion to accept a late Authorization Letter/FERPA Release form from the applicant, after the specified billing deadline has passed or the semester

# STATE OF COLORADO

## Department of Military & Veterans Affairs



has closed. If the semester has already closed, consideration may be made by the State TA Manager to accept late invoices for said applicants in this situation, after all other payments have been issued to applicants that provided their signed Authorization Letter/FERPA Release form on time to their institution.

## **SECTION 4: SCHOOL CERTIFICATIONS, INVOICING & PAYMENTS**

### **DETAILED PROCESS**

1. After the add/drop period has completed, the institution can invoice the State TA Office.
2. Designated officials at each school (generally the Registrar, VA Certifying Official(s) and/or Billing Office staff), review the submitted Authorization/FERPA Release form and report important data about the applicant's progress at the institution.
  - a. This is done in the school certification section of the Authorization/FERPA Release form.
  - b. If data components from the Authorization/FERPA Release form issued by the State TA office do not match school records or the applicant received other forms of payment towards their tuition, the school typically submits a RAAF for approval to adjust the eligible invoice amount.
  - c. Other forms of payment towards tuition only are listed on the RAAF.
  - d. Students using State TA funds cannot receive more than 100% of tuition cost. If the student's tuition owed differs from the amount awarded in their Authorization/FERPA Release letter, for any reason, their school must submit a RAAF to the State TA office to ensure overpayment does not occur. Items to be included on the RAAF include changes to the students registered credit hours (if applicable) and any funding sources that impact on their tuition total. Additionally, Pell grants must be listed on the student's RAAF. Funding sources that do not require inclusion on the

# STATE OF COLORADO

## Department of Military & Veterans Affairs



RAAF are funds that are not/cannot be applied towards the student's tuition. These include but are not limited to, money that is granted directly to the student and is not applied to their bill or other funding that is applied to their bill, that is less than or equal to their expenses/fees.

If the institution identifies the applicant has a CGPA of less than a 2.5 (due to prior attendance) and is not a continuing student in the TA program, they should immediately notify the State TA Office and initiate a payment plan with the member. Members in this status no longer qualify for State TA as of 03/01/2020.

3. The following documentation is the recommended paperwork institutions should provide in order to receive payment from the State TA Office:
  - a. An Authorization Letter with School Certification sections completed.
  - b. An invoice reflecting tuition cost (COF if applicable).
  - c. The RAAF (Request for Authorization Adjustment Form) (If applicable).
    - i. The RAAF should have already been approved by the State TA Office.
    - ii. These are typically sent by institutions for approval, and do not need to be attached with the rest of the invoice documents. The TA Manager keeps copies of the approved RAAF's on file.

# STATE OF COLORADO

Department of Military & Veterans Affairs



## START

Student applies for TA every semester at <https://dmva.colorado.gov/tuition-assistance>.

## Eligibility Review

Conducted by State TA Office.  
Usually takes 3-6 weeks from time of application.

## Authorization Notice

Emailed to eligible students  
Students must sign/date this form and submit to third party billing at their school.

**No later than Add/Drop Period**  
**School gets a list of approved students through state TA Office.**

## Student Account Changes

If credit hours, tuition amounts increased/decreased or has additional funds sources RAAF req. before invoicing.

School Official must complete Request for Authorization Adjustment Form (RAAF) (in Ecel Format) and sent to state TA Office for Approval.

## Before the Add/Drop Period (Con't)

Billing and certifying officials at the school: Review student transcripts and current CGPA.

If student currently has a CGPA of less than 2.5 email the State TA Office at [Tuition@dmva.state.co.us](mailto:Tuition@dmva.state.co.us)

## Before the Add/Drop Period

Billing and certifying officials at the school confirm they have received all signed authorization notices from the list.

## RAAF Approval/Denial

RAAF will be returned to school official with State TA Approval/Denial at the bottom of the form. School Official may now invoice State TA Office accordingly. Skip this step if student has no changes or additional funds on their account.

## Finish

### School Invoices State TA Office

#### Include all the following when invoicing:

1. Student Auth. Notice with School Certification Section Complete at bottom.
2. An invoice with all required components; Student Name, ID, # credit hours, invoice amt.

Email as packet to: [tuition@dmva.state.co.us](mailto:tuition@dmva.state.co.us)

# STATE OF COLORADO

Department of Military & Veterans Affairs



## INVOICE DEADLINES

1. Currently, the State TA Manager establishes a recommended yearly invoicing schedule that is provided every calendar year to all designated school officials to comply as closely as possible with State Budget Reporting requirements. The current schedule is outlined below.
2. Please Note: This is a recommended schedule. Schools are advised to contact the State TA Manager to work out an alternative date/time, within reason, to submit their invoice if their billing schedule does not coincide. Exceptions should be granted for schools at their request.
3. A school's failure to invoice by the billing deadline and without a submitted request for an alternative date and time may result in non-payment from the State TA Office and exceptions will be granted at the discretion of the State TA Manager. Below is the current list of institutions on billing exceptions:

## SCHOOLS ON CURRENT BILLING EXCEPTIONS

CSU at Ft. Collins Arapahoe Community College CSU Global

## FISCAL YEAR CROSSOVERS

1. Since the State TA summer semester can span across two of the state's fiscal years, invoices received from schools also span both fiscal years at a time. Therefore, an accrual should be recorded for outstanding authorizations that still need to be processed.

## SECTION 5: PAYMENTS

Once all required paperwork has been submitted and the school certification information has been verified by the State TA Manager, payment of State TA funds can begin.



# STATE OF COLORADO

Department of Military & Veterans Affairs



## ACCRUALS

1. Invoices for the summer semesters are recorded in the fiscal year in which the invoice is received and paid. Invoices not paid in the Fiscal Year issued are entered as accruals by Accounting.
2. The accounting department sends a Tuition Assistance expense report to the Tuition Assistance Manager who pivots data and payments are reconciled with the invoices submitted.

## REPORTING & FILING PAPERWORK

1. Invoices are submitted each semester to the State Tuition Assistance office via email to: [tuition@dmva.state.co.us](mailto:tuition@dmva.state.co.us).
2. All invoices are verified for accuracy to ensure credit hours and authorization/or RAAF amounts match each invoice.
3. Per DMVA Accounting policy:
  - a. Invoices must have an invoice number. If the invoice is approved, an approval stamp is applied on the invoice.
  - b. A routing form is required to be completed for each invoice and submitted to accounting for payment.
  - c. Invoices and routing forms must be emailed to accounting for payment.
  - d. An expense report is generated weekly and verified with invoices submitted to reflect payment to the appropriate school.

## SECTION 6: COLLECTION PROCEDURES

In the event an applicant leaves during the semester they received State Tuition Assistance, the State Tuition Assistance Manager will determine what steps are required to recover funds from the applicant or school. In almost all cases, TA funding should be recovered directly from the school as credit balances issued to students with TA funding are a violation of TA policy and considered an overpayment.

# STATE OF COLORADO

## Department of Military & Veterans Affairs



Generally, individuals that do not qualify are identified up front when applying each semester through the online application. Once applicants in question are confirmed, the State TA Manager contacts the school to verify the funds are still in the applicant's account. Schools have been advised and trained not to issue State TA refund checks back to students so the funds should always still be on the account. The school contact is then notified via email that the applicant no longer qualifies for State Tuition Assistance for the stated semester and a request for the funds to be returned to the State Tuition Assistance Office takes place. The applicant is advised to make payment arrangements with the school for their remaining balance.

Once funds have been requested back from the school and a check has been received, a copy of the check with information regarding the original GAX# and Check no. is placed in the Refunded Checks Folder electronically (K drive>Tuition Assistance>Refunded Checks>School>Semester) and the original is provided to the accounting office for processing. As of Oct. 2017, for any Spring 18 funds, it will also be recorded in the Fluid Review system records.

## **SECTION 7: SCHOOL NOTIFICATIONS**

All schools are officially notified by the State TA office via email and on an as-needed basis. Typically, deadlines for student applications and invoicing are provided, as well as any new guidance established from changing policies/procedures.

## **SECTION 8: MANAGING STATE TA WEBSITE**

The security of the State TA website is managed with encryptions. The DMVA Webmaster/Assistant State TA Manager updates the information displayed on the State TA webpage as needed or at the request of the State TA Manager. The site is managed every semester and changes made as needed.

# STATE OF COLORADO

Department of Military & Veterans Affairs



## SECTION 9: APPEALS

Refer to Regulation 350-8 213-01 ANG. Appeals must be submitted in writing via certified letter and sent to:

Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

Attn: State Tuition Assistance

6848 S. Revere Parkway

Centennial, CO 80112

All appeals must be received by the State Tuition Assistance Advisory Board within 30 calendar days of:

1. Notification of State Tuition Assistance denial.
2. Learning of procedural error
  - a. If funding for the term in question has already been expended, appeals may not be favorably considered.
  - b. The State Tuition Assistance Advisory Board will meet as soon as possible, after receipt of the appeal and notify applicant in writing of any decisions.
  - c. The State Tuition Assistance Advisory Board typically consists of the Purchasing and Contracts Director, Legislative Liaison and Deputy Director.

## SECTION 10: ELECTRONIC FILE STORAGE

*As of January 1, 2018: the majority of applicant PII information is encrypted and stored in the Fluid Review cloud. This drive has limited access requirements that are specific to the State TA Manager.*

1. Invoices are sometimes received both electronically and via paper mail from institutions. Attached to the invoices are generally the completed school certification (as part of the Authorization Letter) and any other pertinent

# STATE OF COLORADO

## Department of Military & Veterans Affairs



information used to verify payment to an institution. Invoice and payment related documents are scanned in by the State TA Manager and stored in the following location: **TA Drive > Tuition Assistance > Interim records > INVOICES > Year > Semester > School.**

2. Invoices are reviewed and the documents are used to approve payments by the State TA Office Manager. If approved, the invoices are Stamped with Approved with the date and Manger's name, then these are records that are sent to accounting for payment processing and are located at: **TA Drive > Tuition Assistance > Interim records > Invoices > Year > Semester > School.**
  - a. Invoices are stamped if approved, with the date and time, when reviewed by the State TA Manager.
  - b. If not approved, the schools are contacted to determine if additional information and corrections are needed, or if invoices need to be revised.
  - c. Forms are then electronically sent to the designated group email for the Accounting Department to be processed for payment.
3. GAX Records Received from Accounting (Copies of issued checks to schools) are located at: **TA Drive > Tuition Assistance > Interim records > GAX RECORDS > Year > Semester > School > GAX #**
4. Copies of Refunded Checks from institutions should always be stored and notated with the GAX #, Check No# and issue date. The original is always provided to the Accounting Office so the refund may be processed. Refund information is also recorded in Fluid Review. Copies of refunded checks are located at: **TA Drive > Tuition Assistance > Interim records > Year > Refunded Checks > School > Semester.**

# STATE OF COLORADO

Department of Military & Veterans Affairs



## SECTION 11: REVISIONS TO MANUAL

### July 1, 2024, POLICY REVISIONS:

- Qualifying criteria and application eligibility
- Application process
- Implementation of Command Authorization Form
- Extended service for Officers
- Eliminated 6 month waiting period.
- ROTC and Minuteman Scholarship recipient qualifications
- Determined documents required to upload in application process.

### TUITION ASSISTANCE SOFTWARE

- Revised qualifying questions online.
- Implemented new Tuition Assistance software to meet HB21-1110 accessibility requirements.

### SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

- Revised Tuition Assistance Flyer
- Revised Tuition Assistance FAQ Sheet
- Revised Tuition Assistance Submission Checklist

### Tuition Assistance Website

- Revised Tuition Assistance website to reflect new policy revisions and uploaded supporting documentation.

### January 21, 2021, TERMINOLOGIES

- Updated Student Expectations/FERPA Release Letter. Changed to: Authorization Letter/FERPA Release form.

# STATE OF COLORADO

Department of Military & Veterans Affairs



## APPLICATION & PROCESSING FLOW

- Section 4- Fresh Start Program Removed – Per TAG's Strategic Plan Guidance
- Updated SECTION 5 SCHOOL CERTIFICATIONS, INVOICING & PAYMENTS

## ELECTRONIC FILE STORAGE

- Updated file storage points

## REPORTING & FILING PAPERWORK

- Updated billing exceptions list of current schools
- Updated Invoice Deadlines: \*DUE TO COVID-19 – Additional delays and waivers are in effect for Spring 2020 Billing Periods.

Sarah Edwards

Chief Operating Officer