

Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act

The Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 (Public Law 113-146) changed the amount of tuition and fee charges that can be reported to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Effective July 1, 2015, public institutions of higher education must charge qualifying veterans, dependents, and eligible individuals tuition and fees at the rate for in-state residents. Any institution not meeting this requirement will be disapproved by VA for the Post-9/11 and Montgomery GI Bill®.

Individuals qualifying for in-state tuition under Public Law 113-146 are:

- A veteran receiving benefits under the Montgomery GI Bill® (Chapter 30) or the Post-9/11 GI Bill® (Chapter 33) who lives in the state in which the institution is located (regardless of his/her legal state of residence) and enrolls in the institution within 3 years of discharge from a period of active duty service of 90 days or more
- A spouse, child, or individual using transferred benefits under the Post-9/11 GI Bill® (Chapter 33) who lives in the state in which the institution is located (regardless of his/her legal state of residence) and enrolls in the institution within 3 years of the transferor's discharge from a period of active duty service of 90 days or more
- A spouse, child, or individual using benefits under the Marine Gunnery Sergeant John David Fry Scholarship who lives in the state in which the institution is located (regardless of his/her legal state of residence) and enrolls in the institution within 3 years of the service member's death in the line of duty following a period of active duty service of 90 days or more

If the veteran, dependent, or eligible individual enrolls within 3 years after the veteran's discharge, the requirement to charge no more than the in-state tuition rate would apply for the duration the individual remains continuously enrolled at the institution.

Federal law permits public institutions of higher education to require eligible veterans, dependents, or individuals to demonstrate intent to establish residency in the state by means other than satisfying a physical presence requirement. For example, institutions can request documentation such as a driver's license, car registration or voter registration, or a signed lease or rent receipt to help establish an applicant's intent to establish residency in Massachusetts. Please note that the federal law does not include a durational residency requirement, nor does it include a requirement that the eligible veterans, dependent, or individual demonstrate intent to remain in Massachusetts indefinitely.

Finally, please note that the federal law does not bar institutions from requiring the eligible veteran, dependent, or individual to meet other requirements, unrelated to residency, in order to be eligible for the in-state tuition rate.