

VETERANS RESOURCE CENTER COVID-19 RESPONSE - UPDATES

UT's transition to online classes may have caused you stress and disorientation. We are working daily to provide you resources, support, and answers during these challenging times. We are committed to working with you to make sure you finish the semester strong, and your success is paramount to us. For tips to help you with your online journey, visit the Online Academic Success Guide at: <https://studentsuccess.utk.edu/online-academic-success-guide/>.

The Veterans Resource Center is committed to helping our students through this transition, and we are here to serve you.

- We remain operational; however, Hodges Library is currently closed.
- Connect with us by phone (865-974-5420), email (utkva@utk.edu), or Zoom.
- Watch for new updates regarding course instruction and graduation plans.

COMPUTER & INTERNET

If you do not have a laptop or internet, click on this link for information about obtaining these items from UT: forms.utk.edu/tech-request.

865-974-HELP

It's okay not to be okay. We are in uncharted territory. If you need counseling or are experiencing anxiety, especially if you have trouble adjusting to online learning, contact our office or 865-974-HELP if you're distressed. The Counseling Center has virtual services listed on their website at: <https://counselingcenter.utk.edu/>.

GUARD/RESERVE UNITS

If you are being called up for active orders, let us know how we can help. There are several organizations we partner with that can help you or your family.

FOOD

The VRC will still have food. If you or your family needs food or other items, contact us. There are several veteran organizations we partner with locally that are willing to help.

TUTORING

Tutoring will continue online via Zoom. If you still want a tutor for the semester, contact our office. You may also find resources through the Student Success Center's website: <https://studentsuccess.utk.edu/>.

VETERANS EDUCATION BAH STIPEND

Email from VA

Over the past two weeks, VA has worked with Congress to preserve GI Bill benefits for impacted students during this difficult time. The Senate and House passed S.3503 and the bill will be headed to POTUS to sign, which will give the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) the authority to continue GI Bill payments uninterrupted in the event of national emergencies. The new law allows for VA to continue to pay benefits regardless of the fact that the program has changed from resident training to online training. Also, students will continue to receive the same monthly housing allowance payments that they received for resident training until January 1, 2021, or until the school resumes normal operations of resident training. VA is working to immediately implement the new changes to address current and future school terms to ensure students continue to receive their education benefits.

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WHAT SHOULD GI BILL STUDENTS KNOW?

There is no action required from a GI Bill student. VA has scheduled several training sessions with all VA-approved schools and training facilities over the next couple of days to provide further guidance. We will work closely with schools to ensure enrollments are accurately certified and processed timely.

We are committed to providing regular updates to you through direct email campaigns and social media about VA's effort to implement these new changes.

If you have questions about your specific circumstance, contact the Education Call Center at: 1-888-442-4551 between 8:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday-Friday.

VA OFFICES CLOSED FOR WALK-IN TRAFFIC

The Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) Regional Offices are closed to the public starting March 19. Regional offices will remain open, but will no longer accept walk-ins for claims assistance, scheduled appointments, counseling, and other in-person services.

Veterans can continue to get information about benefits or file a claim for benefits by visiting the VA website at www.va.gov.

Veterans with claims specific or other questions may request information via Inquiry Routing & Information System (IRIS) or telephone at 1-800-827-1000.

VBA benefits and services provided to Veterans, families, and survivors will continue to be delivered throughout the duration of COVID-19 impacts.

Continue to check www.va.gov for updates. You also may follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

REMEMBER - VOLS HELP VOLS

You are not alone, and we are here to support you and offer you the resources you need.

HOW CAN WE HELP?

Veterans Resource Center
865-974-5420
utkva@utk.edu
<https://veterans.utk.edu/>

