



Using the WI GI Bill in the Wisconsin Technical College System

Updated as of January 2023

Under the WI GI Bill, eligible veterans and their qualifying spouses and children may have their tuition and fees waived when taking eligible courses at a Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS) college [38.24 \(7\)](#). The WI GI Bill can also be used at University of Wisconsin (UW) institutions [36.27 \(3n\)](#) and private non-profit institutions in Wisconsin (39.49). Visit <https://www.wisconsin.edu/veterans/> for additional information on using the WI GI Bill at UW institutions.

This document is intended as a reference tool to help WTCS students and administrators understand:

- **who is eligible** for the WI GI Bill
- **how to apply** for the WI GI Bill
- **what benefits the program provides** to eligible students
- **using the WI GI Bill if you are eligible for the federal Post-9/11 GI Bill**
- **transferring WI GI Bill benefits**
- **supplemental payments**

Your individual circumstances may affect the WI GI Bill benefits for which you qualify. Understanding the relationship among state and federal veteran benefits and determining which are best for your specific circumstance requires that you are well informed.

The WTCS urges you to speak directly with the following resource people to learn more about using state and federal veterans benefits:

- County Veterans Service Officer regarding Wisconsin Veterans Benefits programs (<http://dva.state.wi.us/CVSO.asp>)
- Federal Veterans Administration regarding federal benefits programs (<http://www.gibill.va.gov/>),
- Wisconsin State Approving Agency for program and policy approvals (<https://dva.wi.gov/pages/educationemployment/stateapprovingagency.aspx>), and
- School Veteran Certifying Officials at the WTCS or UWS institution where you intend to enroll. For a list of WTCS school veterans certifying officials, visit <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Tx-g-emViXUkynDyBbxFefNtPQx5E8QrmI9IYHQgNJ4/edit?usp=sharing>

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Eligibility for the WI GI Bill

Veterans

Veterans qualify to use up to 128 credits or 8 semesters (whichever takes the longest) from the WI GI Bill if they entered active military duty as a Wisconsin resident or they have resided in Wisconsin for at least five consecutive years immediately preceding the beginning of any semester or session in which they enroll. Beginning in January 2010, veterans who have federal active-duty service after September 10, 2001 must apply for education related benefits provided under the federal Post-9/11 GI Bill program and provide the college either a federal Veterans Administration (VA) Certificate of Eligibility or a rejection notice for Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits before they can receive WI GI Bill benefits.

All available federal Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits at 100% award level must be used before a veteran becomes eligible for WI GI Bill benefits. This includes benefits that may have been transferred to an eligible spouse or dependent. A spouse or dependent must use the federal Post-9/11 benefits before using the WI GI Bill.

Transferred Post-9/11 benefits must be used in full by either the veteran, spouse or dependent before any WI GI Bill benefits can be used by an eligible veteran, spouse or dependent. For example, a veteran who transfers benefits to their dependent is not eligible for WI GI Bill until the transferred benefits are used in full.

Who determines if I am eligible for the WI GI Bill?

Determining your eligibility for the WI GI Bill is a two-step process and involves two forms that you should submit at the same time. First, the WDVA determines the Veteran's eligibility to use the WI GI Bill based on your Request for Certification form (WDVA 2030). They notify the college(s) you list on the Request for Certification about your eligibility. They also verify your residency using WDVA 1805, if you are seeking to qualify for the WI GI Bill based on living in the state for the previous five years immediately before enrolling.

Second, the college you attend determines the actual fee remission for which you are eligible, based on the WDVA 2029 that you submit to the college you want to attend. The school verifies your enrollment information and ensures you meet other eligibility requirements such as a cumulative 2.0 GPA. The college also verifies your residency based on the notarized residency affidavit you must submit if you are seeking to qualify for the WI GI Bill based on living in the state for the previous five years immediately before enrolling. The residency affidavit is available from the college you are seeking to attend.

What happens if WDVA denies my eligibility for the WI GI Bill? May I appeal?

You will be notified by WDVA if they deny your eligibility. You may appeal WDVA's decision using the appeal protocol described in the notice of denial.

Do I need to meet college enrollment requirements if I am eligible for the WI GI Bill?

Yes, you must comply with all other college enrollment requirements and procedures. Contact the college in which you want to enroll for more information about specific college enrollment and program admission requirements.

Does my grade point average (GPA) affect my eligibility for the WI GI Bill?

Yes. In accordance with Wisconsin Statutes 38.24(7)(b) and 38.24(8)(b), a student must maintain a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of at least 2.0 at the institution you are enrolled in to use the WI GI Bill. This means that if your cumulative GPA is not at least 2.0, you will not qualify for tuition and fee remissions until the start of the next semester after your cumulative GPA reaches at least 2.0.

The 2.0 cumulative GPA requirement can cover grades earned at any point in your post-secondary academic career based on how the institution you attend calculates your GPA. The state law that created the cumulative 2.0 GPA requirement did not include any provisions that allow institutions to modify or ignore grades earned in the past.

If I am currently on active duty, can I use the WI GI Bill?

Yes, if you are currently in the military (either active duty, Guard or Reserves) and have qualifying service, you may qualify for WI GI Bill benefits if you meet all of the eligibility requirements, including enrolling in the federal Post-9/11 GI Bill as of January 2010.

Am I eligible for other veteran's benefits if I use the WI GI Bill?

You may be eligible for other state or federal veteran's benefits. Your best source of information about other WI veteran benefits is your County Veterans Service Officer (<http://dva.state.wi.us/CVSO.asp>) or the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA, <http://dva.state.wi.us/>.)

For information on federal benefits, contact the US Department of Veterans Administration regarding federal benefit programs (<http://www.gibill.va.gov/>)

Am I eligible for other educational benefits if I use the WI GI Bill?

You may qualify for additional benefits, such as state or federal student financial aid, while attending college and using the WI GI Bill. You must file the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) to apply for other state and federal student financial aid.

You may file the FAFSA as early as October 1 for the academic year that begins the following year. For example, if you want to attend school start in Fall 2024, you can file the FAFSA as of October 1, 2023. You can find the FAFSA at <https://studentaid.gov> .

You also may qualify for private scholarships. One good source of information about private scholarships is the Foundation Office of the college that you want to attend. Private scholarships may require additional application materials.

Spouses and Children of Veterans

Spouses and children of veterans may qualify for WI GI Bill remission if they are Wisconsin residents and they are the surviving spouse or child of an eligible Wisconsin veteran who:

- died in the line of duty;
- died as the result of a service-connected disability;
- died in the line of duty while on active or inactive duty for training purposes; or
- has a service-connected disability with a combined rating by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) of 30% or greater.

Spouses and unremarried surviving spouses of an eligible deceased or disabled Wisconsin veteran generally can use the WI GI Bill for up to 128 credits or 8 semesters, whichever is greater.

Children of eligible deceased or disabled Wisconsin veterans must be at least 17 years old but not yet 26 years old on the first day of the academic term as established by the college to receive WI GI Bill remission for that academic term. This means that, if you turn 17 after the academic term begins, you must wait until the next term to use the WI GI Bill. If you turn 26 during an academic term, your WI GI Bill eligibility continues until the end of that term as long as all other eligibility requirements are met.

The WI GI Bill defines an eligible child as “any biological child, any adopted child, any stepchild, or any other child who is a member of the veteran’s household, or any nonmarital child if the veteran acknowledges paternity or paternity has been otherwise established.”

How do I prove that I qualify for the WI GI Bill as the eligible spouse or eligible unremarried surviving spouse?

You must provide documentation, including a government issued photo I.D. (driver’s license, state identification, passport, etc.). If you are an eligible spouse you also must provide a copy of your marriage certificate. If you are an unremarried surviving spouse, you must provide a copy of your marriage certificate and your most recent federal or state income tax return.

How do I prove that I qualify for the WI GI Bill as an “eligible child”?

As required by the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs, you must provide appropriate documents (photocopies are acceptable) to show that you are the child of an eligible deceased or disabled Wisconsin veteran, including your government issued photo I.D. (driver license, state I.D., passport, etc.). Additional required documents depend on your relationship to the eligible Wisconsin veteran and include:

- Biological Child: A copy of the student’s Birth Certificate
- Adopted Child: A copy of the student’s Adoption Certificate.
- Stepchild: A copy of the student’s Birth Certificate and a Marriage Certificate that demonstrates the eligible veteran has married a biological parent of the student, or a copy of the Certificate of Eligibility for Federal VA benefits that indicates recognition as a stepchild.
- Other Child Who is a Member of the Veteran’s Household: A copy of the veteran’s most recent state and federal income taxes where the student is listed as a dependent and the student’s permanent address is the same as the veteran’s household address. For Example, a copy of last

5 years of Federal income taxes that lists students permanent address as the same as eligible veteran's permanent household address. Copy of most recent Federal income taxes that lists the student as a dependent of the veteran. Photocopy of Certificate of Paternity. Photocopy of DOD issued valid Military ID identifying child as a dependent of the eligible veteran. Documentation showing child is a member of the veterans household getting TANF benefits. (Badgercare, Foodshare or Childcare assistance). WIGI Bill Residency Affidavit- for Children of "5 year" Veteran.

- Nonmarital Child: A copy of a certificate of paternity.

Alternative documentation may be accepted on a case-by-case basis.

Residency Requirements

Veterans seeking to qualify for the WI GI Bill based on 5-year residency requirements must submit documentation when they apply to the WDVA for certification of their eligibility. For more information on documents needed for this process contact the WDVA.

Appropriate documentation of residency includes at least two of the following:

- State of Wisconsin driver's or photo I.D. that cover the full 5 years or current I.D. plus the previously issued card;
- Copy of signed and submitted Wisconsin income tax forms for the most recent 5 consecutive years;
- DD Form 2058 (State of Legal Residence Certificate);
- State of Wisconsin resident hunting or fishing license for the last 5 years; or
- State of Wisconsin voting record for the last 5 years.

How does Wisconsin residency affect the ability of spouses or children to use the WI GI Bill?

Legislative changes enacted in September 2017 allow spouses and children who are Wisconsin residents to qualify to use the WI GI Bill based on length of Wisconsin residency. Under these new provisions:

- Deceased veterans who were not Wisconsin residents when they entered service must have lived in Wisconsin for at least 5 consecutive years at some point after age 18 for the surviving spouses and children to qualify for the WI GI Bill.
- Disabled veterans who did not live in Wisconsin when they entered service must have lived in Wisconsin for five consecutive years immediately preceding the semester in which their spouse or children seeks to enroll in college using WI GI Bill benefits.
Spouses and children must have lived in Wisconsin for at least 5 consecutive years immediately preceding the semester in which they seek to use the WI GI Bill benefits.

Once a student has established residency and have received the WIGI Bill, may the student continue to receive tuition remission if they move to another state in a subsequent term?

The statutes are very clear that students are required to be residents to receive full remission of fees. Here are the two statutes:

- Fee remissions for spouse, surviving spouse and children of certain Veterans

- [Wis Stats. 38.24\(7\)\(a\)1p.](#) - The district board shall grant full remission of fees under sub. [\(1m\) \(a\)](#) to [\(c\)](#) to any resident student who is enrolled in a program leading to an associate of arts degree, a collegiate transfer program or a vocational diploma program and who is any of the following:
 - Fee Remission for Veterans
 - [Wis Stats. 38.24\(8\)\(a\)1g.](#) - “Fees” has the meaning given in sub. [\(7\) \(a\) 1p.](#)

The statute for veterans is referring back to the same language for spouses and dependents.

Applying for the WI GI Bill

What is the application process for the WI GI Bill?

There are two forms that you must complete and submit to use your WI GI Bill benefits. You should submit these forms at the same time. Eligible dependents or spouses seeking to use WI GI Bill benefits also must complete these two forms.

You must submit form WDVA 2030 to the WDVA and form [WDVA 2029](#) to the WTCS college that you want to attend. Each form includes instructions on how to complete and where to send the completed forms, along with appropriate documentation, such as a DD214. The 2030 form is available at: [MyWisVets](#).

Students with active-duty service after September 10, 2001 must apply for and use any available federal Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits before they can use the WI GI Bill. There are, however, some specific situations in which you are not required to apply for the federal Post- 9/11 GI Bill. Please see below for information specific to the federal Post-9/11 GI Bill.

You must submit the completed WDVA 2029 to the School Veterans Certifying Official of the WTCS college in which you are enrolling along with, if applicable, copies of your marriage certificate, birth certificate or income tax form for children needing to demonstrate their dependent status.

As part of their application, veterans also will need to submit the following documents which can be found within the [WDVA Toolkit](#):

- A copy of their DD214 (member 4 or 6);
- WDVA 1805, Wisconsin Veteran’s Residency Affidavit;
- WDVA 2029, School Application of Wisconsin GI Bill; and
- WDVA 2030, Request for Certification for Wisconsin GI Bill.

Is there an application deadline to qualify for the WI GI Bill?

It is recommended to have paperwork in within 60 days of the start of the term.

Do I need to reapply for the WI GI Bill each semester?

You only need to reapply if there is a break in your enrollment (other than during a summer session) once WDVA determines you are eligible and the college you are attending approves remission under the WI GI Bill.

What if the information I included in my WI GI Bill application changes?

You are responsible for notifying the WDVA and the School Certifying Official at your college if there are changes to your residency, marital status, or other items reported on your application for WI GI Bill benefits.

WI GI Bill Benefits

What costs are covered by the WI GI Bill remissions?

If you are eligible for the WI GI Bill, you qualify for 100% remission of program fees/tuition and material (course-related) fees for courses leading to an associate degree, liberal arts transfer degree or vocational diploma. Books are not included.

Courses that are not part of programs leading to these credentials are not eligible for remission under the WI GI Bill as of June 2011 based on changes enacted by the State Legislature. You are responsible for any costs or fees that the college you attend determines are not covered by the WI GI Bill.

Are there costs that are not covered by the WI GI Bill? Do I have to pay these?

There are costs at each college that you will need to pay because they are not covered by the WI GI Bill. For example, WTCS colleges charge all students some fees, such as student activity fees for things like parking or technology fees.

For more information, contact the School Certifying Official at the campus you plan to attend for specific information about costs that you will need to pay even if you are eligible for the WI GI Bill.

How many credits can I take using my WI GI Bill eligibility?

Under the WI GI Bill, eligible veterans, spouses and dependents qualify for up to 128 credits or 8 semesters of tuition remissions, whichever is longer. The 128 credits include combined covered credits taken at any WTCS college or University of Wisconsin institution for which you did not pay program fees/tuition because they were remitted under the WI GI Bill.

You may qualify for less than 100% of costs under the federal Post-9/11 program, based on your qualifying length of service. If you qualify for less than 100% under Post-9/11, the WI GI Bill will

cover the remaining cost of eligible courses if you are eligible for WI GI Bill. For example, if you qualify for 60% of college costs under the federal Post-9/11 program, and apply for and are eligible for the WI GI Bill, the WI GI Bill will cover the remaining 40% of base tuition for eligible courses, with the portion covered counting toward your 128-credit maximum.

What is the difference between 128 credits and 8 semesters?

The law that created the WI GI Bill grants eligibility for up to 128 credits or 8 semesters, whichever is longer. This means that you can attend for more than 8 semesters if you have not yet taken 128 credits. If you take 128 credits in less than 8 semesters, you can continue to use the WI GI Bill through the end of your eighth qualifying semester.

If I drop a course, does it count against the 128 credit maximum?

If you drop a course before the 80% refund date it will not count against your 128 credits. If you receive a grade for the course that appears on your transcript, it will count toward the 128-credit maximum, including course grades of A-F, pass/fail, audit, or withdraw.

What happens to my veteran education benefits if my enrollment changes during the semester?

You should be aware that there are **significant** financial consequences when dropping or adding classes under the federal Post-9/11 GI Bill. Adding classes, dropping classes or withdrawing may result in you being required to repay any federal VA benefits you received during that term and in some cases repay the supplemental payment you may have received under the WI GI Bill. You should carefully consider the financial consequences of enrollment changes.

If I withdraw from college during the semester, will it count against the WI GI Bill limits?

If you withdraw after the official date of record for a semester, the credits will count against your 128 credit total.

Using the WI GI Bill if you are eligible for the federal Post-9/11 GI Bill (Chapter 33)

This section only applies to veterans who have active duty military service since September 10, 2001 or to spouses or dependents who had federal Post-9/11 benefits transferred to them.

What is the relationship between the WI GI Bill and the federal Post-9/11 GI Bill?

The federal Post-9/11 GI Bill applies to veterans with active duty service since September 10, 2001. As of January 2010, any veteran who has active duty (Title 10) service since September 10, 2001 must apply for the federal Post-9/11 GI Bill and present either their federal Post-9/11 GI Bill

Certificate of Eligibility (COE) or their denial letter to their school certifying official before they can use the WI GI Bill.

Veterans who are eligible for the federal Post-9/11 GI Bill must elect to use their Post-9/11 benefits before they are eligible to use the WI GI Bill. Veterans who are eligible for the federal Post-9/11 GI Bill but who do not elect to use this federal benefit are not eligible for the WI GI Bill.

Credits taken that are paid by the federal Post-9/11 GI Bill do not count toward the 128 credit maximum allowed under the WI GI Bill.

What if I do not want to use federal Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits?

If you are eligible for federal Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits but choose not to use them, you are not eligible to receive WI GI Bill tuition remission until you use your federal Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits.

What exceptions exist to the requirement that I apply for the federal Post-9/11 GI Bill before I can use the WI GI Bill?

Veterans who have fewer than 12 months of eligibility remaining under the Montgomery GI Bill (Chapter 30), Selected Reserve (Montgomery GI Bill Chapter 1606) as of the first day of the academic term in which they want to use the WI GI Bill are not required to switch to the federal Post-9/11 GI Bill.

Veterans who do not have active duty service since September 10, 2001 but who have received transferred Post-9/11 benefits from a parent or spouse are not required to use the transferred Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits in order to use the WI GI Bill.

Spouses and dependents who are eligible for the WI GI Bill based on their relationship to a veteran and who also are eligible for the Post-9/11 GI Bill based on their own active duty military service are not required to switch to the federal Post-9/11 GI Bill and can continue using the WI GI Bill.

I am eligible for less than 100% of tuition and fees under the federal Post-9/11 GI Bill. Can I use the WI GI Bill for the remaining amount of tuition and fees?

The federal VA determines your eligibility for the Post-9/11 GI Bill. You must use your Post-9/11 benefits before you can use the WI GI Bill if you have active duty service after September 10, 2001. If the federal VA determines that you are eligible for less than 100% of tuition and fees (based on your length of active duty service), you can use the WI GI Bill to pay the remaining portion of eligible tuition and fees while using Post-9/11 GI Bill, if you apply for and are determined to be eligible for the WI GI Bill.

For example, the federal VA determines you are eligible for the federal Post-9/11 GI Bill at 70%. You can use the WI GI Bill for the remaining 30% portion of qualifying program fees/tuition and material fees. Only the credits that are paid by WI GI Bill count toward the maximum WI GI Bill benefit of 128 credits. You may have to pay out of pocket for some portion of fees that are not remittable under the WIGI Bill.

What if switching to the federal Post-9/11 GI Bill reduces my overall federal VA education benefits?

Students who give up other federal VA education programs (Chapter 30 Montgomery GI Bill, Chapter 1606 Selected Reserve) to use Post-9/11 GI Bill may be eligible for an additional WI GI Bill benefit known as a supplemental payment. The supplemental payment is paid to you by the WTCS or UWS institution you attend. More information on supplemental payments can be found on page 12.

Transferring Benefits

Can I transfer my Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits to others and then use my WI GI Bill benefit immediately when I transfer the benefits?

No. Any transferred federal benefits must be reclaimed and used by the veteran or used by an eligible spouse or dependent before an eligible veteran can use the WI GI Bill.

Can a spouse or child who has been given transferred federal VA education benefits use the WI GI Bill?

Yes, but an eligible spouse or child must use any transferred federal VA education benefits before they are eligible to use the WI GI Bill.

What happens if I transfer to another college?

Your enrollment (both number of semesters and credits) at any WTCS or University of Wisconsin System (UWS) is combined to determine your maximum WI GI Bill eligibility of 128 credits or 8 semesters, whichever is longer. This means the credits and semesters of WI GI Bill eligibility that you have used move with you if you transfer to another WTCS or UW institution. The accumulative GPA is specific to each college you attend. When determining WI GI Bill eligibility, prior college progress does not pertain.

If you transfer to a Wisconsin independent college or any college not based in Wisconsin, the WI GI Bill does not apply. Private colleges offer a separate benefit called the WI Veteran Grant.

What happens if I enroll in more than one Wisconsin Technical College or a UW institution at the same time?

If you are enrolled at more than one college/institution, you can use your WI GI Bill benefits at each college, but you must apply for the WI GI Bill at each Wisconsin Technical College and UW institution you attend. You should notify each college where you are receiving WI GI Bill benefits of any other college in which you are also enrolled. You have a maximum of 128 credits or 8 semesters regardless of the number of institutions that you attend at the same time.

Supplemental Payments

What is a supplemental payment?

The supplemental payment approximates the difference between the benefits (other than tuition) you would have received from Your relinquished benefit federal benefit and those you will receive under the post 9/11 benefit.

Only veterans are eligible for the supplemental payment, not spouses or dependents.

Who is eligible for a supplemental payment?

Only students using the federal Post-9/11 GI Bill may qualify for a supplemental payment. In addition, students who receive the same or more benefits under the federal Post-9/11 GI Bill, exhausted, or are no longer eligible for their relinquished benefit, will not qualify for a supplemental payment. Finally, students using Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits transferred from a parent or spouse are not eligible for a supplemental payment.

How do I apply to receive a supplemental payment?

To get a supplemental payment, you will first need to apply for the WI GI bill and be approved. Then, you need to provide several documents to your school certifying official so that they can determine if you are eligible for a supplemental payment and calculate the supplemental payment amount. The documents you need to provide are:

- Federal VA Certificate of Eligibility (COE) or your current federal VA award letter for the Post-9/11 GI Bill
- Your most recent DD-214 (certificate of release or discharge from active duty)
- Papers that show any “kickers” for which you are eligible
- Papers or receipts that show any “buy-up” contracts.

- Verification of payment into MGIB or relinquished Ch 30 benefit

If I am attending more than one college at a time, how do I get the supplemental payment?

You can only receive a supplemental payment from one college at a time. You are responsible for notifying the school certifying officials at each institution in which you are enrolled about any other colleges (UWS or WTCS) that you are attending in the same semester. The college awarding your credential or degree will process your supplemental payment.

If you do not notify each WTCS or UWS institution you are attending that you also are attending other schools, your supplemental payment may be too small or you may receive too large a payment. Receiving too large a payment could create a debt that you will need to repay.

When will I get my supplemental payment?

The school certifying official at the WTCS institution you are attending can tell you when you will receive your supplemental payment.

How will I get my supplemental payment?

The supplemental payment will be deposited into your student account according to standard campus business practices and is subject to any other outstanding financial obligations you may have to the WTCS institution issuing the supplemental payment.

Is the supplemental payment subject to taxes?

In compliance with federal requirements, WTCS and UWS institutions provide students the 1098-T form. Neither WTCS nor UWS institutions provide personal tax advice or guidance to students. Students are responsible for working with a tax professional to assess the tax implications of the supplemental payment.

Does the supplemental payment impact other financial aid?

This payment can impact other financial aid awards and may be counted in a student's Estimated Financial Assistance.