Human Resources Services Branch
(NGGA-PES-SVC)

Army Federal Tuition Assistance (FTA) and Army Credentialing Assistance (CA)

SUMMARY of CHANGE

SOP
Army Federal Tuition Assistance

o Change: Army Ignited 101 Training required for new Army Ignited users para (2-3a).

o Pending Change: The CA portion of this SOP may require significant change once Fort Knox provides updated requirements and amounts which are projected to be announced in 2nd and 3rd Quarter 2025 (para 2-3e).

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Chapter 1
Overview

1-1. Applicability

Eligible Army National Guard Soldiers attending an accredited post-secondary institution who wish to request Army FTA funds to pay for one or more courses.

1-2. References

See appendix A.

1-3. Point of contact

Army FTA Manager, <ng.ga.gaarng.list.ngga-g1-pei-fta@army.mil>, (678) 569-5067.

Chapter 2
Army Federal Tuition Assistance (FTA) (ArmyIgnitED)

2-1. Guidelines and Limitations

    a. Soldiers are eligible for Army FTA when they are currently serving in the Army National Guard and possess a CAC card. Officers incur a 2-year (AGR) or 4-year (M-DAY) service obligation.

    b. Soldiers are eligible to use sixteen credit hours per fiscal year with a cap of $250.00 per semester hour, not to exceed $4000.00 per fiscal year (1 October - 30 September).

    c. Army FTA will stop under either of the following conditions:

       (1) The Soldier has completed the degree currently being pursued.

       (2) The Soldier has completed 130 hours of Bachelor's-level courses, or 39 hours of Master's-level courses, using Army FTA through ArmyIgnitED.

       (3) If the Soldier has a Suspension of Favorable Personnel Action (SFPA).

    d. Army FTA cannot be used for a lower degree than the highest level already attained by the Soldier, nor for a lateral degree (degree of the same level as the highest level already attained by the Soldier), nor can it be used for any degree above a master's degree, such as doctorate degrees (e.g., PhD).

    e. ArmyIgnitED (AIED) grade point average (GPA) is independent of the GPA at a Soldier's home school. In general, the courses counted toward the AIED GPA have been paid for, totally or partially, by AIED. If a course is "self-funded," an FTA request must still be submitted through AIED, with supporting documentation, to have the grade for that course input to AIED, so the AIED GPA will match the GPA at Soldier's home school.

    f. Bachelor's degree students must maintain a 2.0 or above GPA on a four-point scale to continue using Army FTA. In addition, students that receive a grade of "D" or "F" for a course will be recouped for the amount of tuition assistance received for that course.

    g. Master's degree students must maintain a 3.0 or above GPA on a four-point scale to continue using Army FTA. In addition, students that receive a grade of "C", "D", or "F" for a course will be recouped for the amount of tuition assistance received for that course.

    h. Army FTA only pays for tuition; no fees (e.g., technology fees, parking fees) or books or room & board will be paid.

    i. Military Service Obligation (MSO)

       (1) Enlisted Soldiers must have sufficient time in service remaining to complete all courses for which the Soldier is requesting FTA.

       (2) Reserves or National Guard Officers (CW2, 2LT and above) are subject to a four-year MSO after the last day of the course (M-Day Soldiers).

       (3) Active Duty Officers (AGR Soldiers) (CW2, 2LT and above) are subject to a two-year MSO after the last day of the course.

2-2. Duplication of Benefits
    a. Eligible service members may be able to combine Army FTA with other funding sources to fund their educational expenses (e.g., GI Bill, ARNG Kicker, loan programs, state-funded programs).

(1) Army FTA can be used concurrently with MGIB-SR (Chapter 1606) for the same course.

(2) The ARNG's student loan repayment program (SLRP), health professional loan repayment program (HPLRP), and chaplain loan repayment program (CLRP) are incentives that have no impact on receiving funds from the Army FTA program.

(3) Eligible service members not on active duty that are eligible for MGIB-AD (Chapter 30) can use Army FTA, MGIB-AD, and ARNG Kicker concurrently.

(4) Guaranteed Reserve Forces Duty (GRFD), ROTC scholarship, ARNG Kicker, and the MGIB-AD (Chapter 30) can be combined.

(5) If eligible for both Army FTA and a Pell Grant, apply Army FTA first to allow maximum use of Pell Grant funds.

(6) Eligible service members can combine the Dedicated ARNG ROTC Scholarship and MGIB-AD (if they previously obtained this benefit while in the Active Component).

(7) Applicants who selected the tuition option of ROTC scholarship funding under Guaranteed Reserve Forces Duty (GRFD), Dedicated ARNG ROTC Scholarship or ROTC scholarship are not entitled to Army FTA. Those electing the room & board option are entitled to use Army FTA.

(8) State-funded programs (such as Georgia's HERO Scholarship) have no impact on Army FTA programs and should not be a factor in determining Army FTA, subject to any state laws or directives. Army FTA can be used concurrently with state tuition assistance (e.g., the Georgia National Guard Service-Cancelable Loan program) but, when combined, cannot exceed 100% of tuition costs.

b. Chapter 33 (Post 9-11) Recipients. Eligible service members may qualify to receive Chapter 33 benefits for the same courses for which they receive Army FTA. Depending on their mobilization time, National Guard and Reserve service members may have varying percentages of Chapter 33 benefits ranging from 50% to 100%. Schools must deduct Army FTA benefits from the net tuition and fees submitted to The Department of Veteran Affairs (VA), and then Chapter 33 can be used to pay toward the remaining out-of-pocket costs.

c. Chapter 30 Recipients.

(1) Active Component service members and AGRs cannot receive standard (full) Chapter 30 benefits for the same courses for which they receive Army FTA. If a service member takes several courses, that service member cannot receive Chapter 30 benefits for the courses for which Army FTA is paid, but the service member can receive Chapter 30 benefits up to the cost of tuition for courses for which Army FTA has not paid.

(2) Former Active Component service members who earned Chapter 30 benefits while on active duty and are currently M-Day/TPU service members of the National Guard or Reserve may be eligible to receive standard (full) Chapter 30 benefits for the same courses for which they receive Army FTA from the military.

(3) Chapter 30 and "Top-up." Service members who are eligible for Chapter 30 and approved for Army FTA may be eligible for Top-up. Top-up allows VA to pay the difference between what Army FTA pays and the cost of the course. The law prohibits Active Component or AGR service members from receiving standard (full) Chapter 30 benefits and Army FTA for the same course.

2-3. Using ArmyIgnitED (AIED)

a. To apply for Army FTA, Soldiers must create an account in ArmyIgnitED 2.0 at

https://www.armyignited.army.mil. Per the FY25 VolEd Policy (PPOM 24-026, dated 3 Sep 2024), all Soldiers who have not previously used ArmyIgnitED to request FTA must complete ArmyIgnitED 101 training before their education goal can be approved. Soldiers must follow the instructions at the end of the 15-minute presentation and create a "message" in Army Ignited to notate AIED 101 training completion.

     b. ArmyIgnitED will not send any information to old AKO email addresses (@us.army.mil or mil@mail.mil). Soldiers must now use Office 365 Army Enterprise (@army.mil) and commercial email addresses (e.g., @gmail.com, @yahoo.com). Soldiers must also add a phone number.

     c. Soldiers will add an education goal based on the school and program they have been accepted to. Soldiers are not required to upload a .pdf degree plan at education goal creation, however they will not be able to request funding for a 3rd class until the degree plan has been added by the ESS or ESO to their account. Soldiers should send the .pdf degree plan provided by their school guidance counselor to the ESO distro: ng.ga.gaarng.list.ngga-g1-eso@army.mil.

     d. Soldiers will submit a funding request for each class each term within the education goal up to the TA limits. FTA funding can be requested as early as 60 days but must be submitted NLT 8 days prior to the course.

     e. Upon completion of the class, the school must enter the official grade in AIED.

Chapter 3
Army Credentialing Assistance (CA) (ArmyIgnitED)

3-1. Guidelines and Limitations

    a. Credentialing Assistance is an Army education program that provides financial assistance to help pay for a credential or licensure listed on the Army COOL website: https://www.cool.osd.mil/army/.

    b. Soldiers are eligible for Army CA after successfully completing initial entry training (IET, composed of either basic combat training and advanced individual training (BCT + AIT), or one station unit training (OSUT), or warrant officer basic course (WOBC), or basic officer leader course (BOLC). Officers NO longer incur service obligation for using CA.

    c. Credentialing Assistance will provide up to $4000 per fiscal year (1 October - 30 September) toward an approved credential given by an approved training provider. Note that this $4000 per fiscal year cap is shared between Federal Tuition Assistance and Credentialing Assistance; FTA and CA usage combined can't exceed $4000 per fiscal year. It should be noted that FTA and CA are dependent on federal funding and issues on a first come-first serve basis. Access AU (For Knox) has indicated that changes to the CA program are likely coming in 2ND quarter 2025.

    d. Credentialing Assistance will pay expenses for classroom, hands-on, online/blended training and associated materials to include: manuals, study guides, textbooks, processing fees, test fees, related fees for continuing education requirements, and recertification of credentials.

    e. Credentials must be listed on the Army COOL web site at: https://www.cool.osd.mil/army but do not have to be related to the Soldier's MOS.

    f.   Credentials cannot be associated with doctoral degrees.

3-2. Using ArmyIgnitED (AIED) for Credentialing Assistance (CA)

    a.   To apply for Army CA, Soldiers have or create an account in ArmyIgnitED: https://www.armyignited.army.mil

    b.   Decide the type of credential they need/want (Credential, Apprenticeship, License, Badge, and Certification).

    c.   Find the credential on the Army COOL website; https://www.cool.osd.mil/army and select the training provider. Request an invoice from the vendor.

    d.   Fill-out the pertinent course information in ArmyIgnitED. Start by creating an educational goal for CA. Submit the CA funding request NLT 45 business days prior to credential start date and no earlier than 90 days prior to the course start date.

    e.   ACCESS AU will notify the Soldier via email and in the account message inbox if approved/disapproved.

    f.   Once complete with the required course work, the Soldier or vendor will upload the certificate of completion no later than 10 business days after training end date.

    g.   If testing is required, there are two major companies that offer certification and licensure exams. You can find local test centers on their websites.

        1)   Pearson VUE: https://home.pearsonvue.com

        2)   Prometric: https://www.prometric.com/en-us/Pages/home.aspx

3-3. Military Service Obligation (MSO)

 a. All Soldiers must have sufficient time in service remaining to complete all courses for which the Soldier is requesting CA. The certificate must be completed and uploaded to ArmyignitED prior to discharge.

 b. Aviation certificates are capped at $1000 per FY for all active-duty Soldiers.

3-4. Recoupment

 a. Soldiers will be subject to recoupment if they fail or withdraw (non-military) from a course of instruction.

 b. Soldiers who fail an exam/course or fail to the exam in the timeframe required to earn the credential, and do not have an approved military withdrawal.

Appendix A
References

Section I
Publications

Title 10 United States Code, Subtitle A, § 2107
Financial Assistance Program for Specially Selected Members

Title 10 United States Code, Subtitle A, § 2107a
Financial Assistance Program for Specially Selected Members: Army Reserve and Army National Guard

Title 10 United States Code, Subtitle E, Chapter 1609, § 16301
Education Loan Repayment Program: Members of Selected Reserve

DoDI 1322.25
Voluntary Education Programs, dated 15 March 2011, Change 4, effective 2 April 2020

DoDI 1322.17
Montgomery GI Bill-Selected Reserve (MGIB-SR), dated 15 January 2015

AR 621-5
Army Continuing Education System (ACES), dated 28 October 2019

AR 621-202
Army Educational Incentives and Entitlements, dated 26 September 2017

FY25 VolED Policy- PPOM 24-026 dated 3 SEP 2024
Army National Guard (ARNG) Voluntary Education Policy https://ga.ng.mil/Portals/49/G1/education.html

Credentialing Assistance (CA) Funding Reduction for Select Aviation Credentials for Active Duty (AD) Soldiers
https://cool.osd.mil/army/docs/CA_Aviation_Funding_Reduction_Policy_for_AD_Soldiers.pdf

Updates to Army Credentialing Assistance Policy
https://www.cool.osd.mil/army/docs/army-ca-policy-revision-20220511.pdf

Section II
Forms (Not Used)

Glossary

Section I
Abbreviations

AMHRR
Army Military Human Resource Record

SOP
Standard Operating Procedure

Section II
Terms

Course Planner
Lists all the future courses that the Soldier needs in order to earn their degree.

Degree Plan
Lists all the courses that the Soldier has taken, is taking, and will take in order to earn their degree.

G1
Deputy Chief of Staff, Personnel (DCSPER); the senior military personnel officer (MILPO) at division and above.

G-1
The office and staff of the G1.

HR Automated Systems
Computer programs and websites utilized by HR professionals to manage or update personnel records. These include, but are not limited to: IPPS-A, iPERMS, and GIMS.

Unit
The lowest level of military organization authorized a unit identification code (UIC), such as a company, troop, battery, flight, or detachment.