

## **Post 9/11 GI Bill and the Ohio GI Promise Frequently Asked Questions**

*The Ohio GI Promise was created by an Executive Order issued by Governor Ted Strickland. The Executive Order granted authority to the Chancellor of the Ohio Board of Regents to deem qualified veterans as Ohio residents for the purpose of qualifying for in-state tuition rates.*

*A ‘qualified veteran’ is defined as one who has taken the steps to meet the three major requirements to qualify for in-state tuition rates. These three major requirements include eligibility for federal GI Bill educational benefits, moving and remaining domiciled in Ohio and participating in an approved community service or co-op/internship program.*

*The Residency Officer at each public institution has sole authority to request any documentation in order to make the final determination as to the qualifying residency status of any qualified veteran under the provisions of the Ohio GI Promise.*

1 ► As a qualified veteran, what qualifications must I meet in order to be deemed a resident of Ohio for the purpose of qualifying for in-state tuition rates?

- You must be (or have been) eligible for federal GI Bill educational benefits. You must move to and remain domiciled in the state of Ohio during your course of study. You must participate in an approved community service or co-op/internship program during your course of study.

2 ► What documentation do I need in order to qualify for in-state tuition rates?

- It will remain the veteran’s burden to provide the necessary documentation to his/her residency officer at the institution of attendance. A Certificate of Eligibility issued by the Federal Department of Veteran’s Affairs may be an appropriate confirmation of federal GI Bill educational benefits. A sworn statement should be able to be secured from a supervisor in a community service or co-op/internship program to confirm your participation. The residency officers have the right to request additional documentation and have the authority to make the final determination whether a qualified veteran ultimately meets the residency requirement and qualifies for in-state tuition rates.

*\*For the period prior to the effective date of benefits under the Post 9/11 GI Bill (August 1, 2009), a qualified veteran may provide documentation that he/she is eligible for federal benefits when those benefits become available. Such qualified veterans would then be eligible for benefits under the Ohio GI Promise assuming he/she meets the other requirements.*

3 ► I read an article that said all veterans would be eligible for free tuition at an Ohio public college/university.

- Unfortunately, a few media outlets have misinterpreted the details of the Ohio GI Promise. As unveiled by Governor Strickland, the Ohio GI Promise extends in-state tuition rates to qualified veterans. Certainly, these qualified veterans will benefit immensely from the tuition discount. However, the amount of GI Bill educational benefits for which a qualified veteran is eligible still must be determined by the Federal VA. Until the federal VA determines the percentage of tuition assistance for which a qualified veteran is eligible, it is impossible to determine how much of the discounted, in-state tuition rate will be covered.

4 ► Since I (or my family and I) may qualify as Ohio residents under the Ohio GI Promise, will this make me eligible for state financial aid programs such as the Ohio College Opportunity Grant (OCOG)?

- Yes, you will be considered a qualified resident for other state financial aid programs. You will still have to meet any additional eligibility requirements of any specific program in order to ultimately receive benefits.

5► Are all veterans (and their families) eligible for the Ohio GI Promise?

- Most, but not all. Only those veterans who were eligible or currently are eligible for educational benefits under versions of any federal GI Bill qualify for additional benefits under the Ohio GI Promise. For instance, veterans who did not serve a minimum number of days (30 with a disability or 90 without) or who were discharged dishonorably may not be eligible for federal GI Bill benefits. Therefore, in these instances, these same veterans, and their family, would be ineligible for benefits under the Ohio GI Promise.

6► When do benefits begin for the Ohio GI Promise?

- Even though benefits from the Post-9/11 GI Bill do not begin until August 1, 2009, the in-state tuition rate benefit to qualified veterans and their spouse and dependents begins immediately upon the issuance of Governor Strickland's Executive Order (July 8, 2008). Therefore, qualified veterans and their spouse and dependents may qualify for in-state tuition rates for any term of enrollment ***begun after July 8, 2008***. Veterans are still required to supply documentation such as Certificate of Eligibility for GI Bill educational benefits and confirmation of community service or co-op/internship program.

7► Does the community service or co-op/internship requirement apply only to qualified veterans or to spouses and dependents as well?

- Only the qualified veteran is required to participate in the community service or internship/co-op.

8► I am a veteran and am eligible for educational benefits under the federal GI Bill. I do not plan to move to Ohio myself, but my son/daughter would like to attend an Ohio school. Will he/she be eligible for the in-state tuition rate under the Ohio GI Promise?

- No.

9► I am a veteran and am eligible for educational benefits under the federal GI Bill. I plan to move to Ohio, but I do not plan to enroll in a college/university. However, my son/daughter would like to attend an Ohio school. Will he/she be eligible for the in-state tuition rate under the Ohio GI Promise?

- No. In order for a dependent to be deemed a resident for the purpose of qualifying for in-state tuition rates, the qualified veteran must be deemed a resident first. For this to happen, the veteran must be GI Bill eligible, reside in Ohio and enroll in an Ohio institution of higher education and participate in a community service or internship/co-op program during his/her course of study. Keep in mind there are other avenues to residency for veterans moving to Ohio. Such avenues should be pursued and discussed with the appropriate Residency Officer at a public institution.

10► If my dependent qualifies for in-state tuition rates, does he/she also qualify for benefits under my federal GI Bill eligibility?

- These are two separate issues covered by two separate programs. If it has been determined that you are eligible for federal GI Bill benefits, your dependent will qualify for in-state tuition rates under the Ohio GI Promise. Whether your dependent will qualify for educational benefits under your federal GI Bill eligibility is a question that must be answered by the Federal VA.

11► Is there a limit to the number of family members who can take advantage of the in-state tuition rates at any given time?

- No. If you are a qualified veteran, you, your spouse and any qualifying dependents may take advantage of the in-state tuition rates simultaneously.

12► How much can I receive in benefits under the Post 9/11 GI Bill?

- That question must be posed to the federal VA. Only the federal VA can determine if a veteran qualifies for federal GI Bill educational benefits, and if so, how much.

13► What is the definition of a dependent for the purposes of the Ohio GI Promise?

- A dependent is defined in the Ohio Administrative Code (<http://codes.ohio.gov/oac/3333-1-10>) as, “a student who was claimed by at least one parent or guardian as a dependent on that person’s internal revenue service tax filing for the previous tax year.”

14► If I was discharged from the military in any manner other than honorably, i.e. dishonorable, other than honorable (OTH), bad conduct, or general, can I still qualify for benefits under the Ohio GI Promise?

- This answer depends on whether the federal VA has determined if you are eligible for federal GI Bill educational benefits. Regardless of the type of discharge, if the federal VA has determined you are eligible for federal GI Bill educational benefits, you are also eligible for the benefits under the Ohio GI Promise. On the other hand, if the federal VA has determined you are ineligible for federal GI Bill educational benefits, you are also ineligible for the benefits under the Ohio GI Promise.

15► I am a veteran eligible for federal GI Bill educational benefits. I am not currently a resident of Ohio but am domiciled in Ohio and attending an Ohio public institution. Will I be able to take advantage of the in-state tuition rates under the Ohio GI Promise?

- Yes, as long as you fulfill the community service or co-op/internship requirement as created in the Ohio GI Promise, you would qualify for the reduced, in-state tuition amounts at the beginning of the next term of attendance after July 8, 2008.

16► If I am eligible for post 9/11 GI Bill benefits, but those benefits do not cover the full amount of tuition, does Ohio make any other benefits available to cover the remainder of my tuition costs?

- Those who qualify for the in-state tuition rates would also qualify as a resident for the purposes of pursuing other forms of state financial aid. Also, individual colleges and universities may be able to offer additional financial aid assistance. For additional financial aid opportunities, feel free to visit [www.ohiocap.org](http://www.ohiocap.org).