



**March 9<sup>th</sup> VA suspension of new GI Bill students at five schools: University of Phoenix, Colorado Technical University, American InterContinental University, Bellevue University, and Temple University.**

**Who can I talk to?**

If you have questions or concerns about VA's announcement, you can call VA's Education Call Center at 888-442-4551 between 8 a.m. and 7 p.m. ET, Monday-Friday to speak with a VA representative.

You can also contact the Student Veterans of America National Headquarters at [policy@studentveterans.org](mailto:policy@studentveterans.org).

**What is going on?**

[Official VA Press Release](#)

On March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2020, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced the suspension of new GI Bill beneficiary enrollments for five schools:

- The University of Phoenix
- Colorado Technical University
- American InterContinental University
- Bellevue University
- Temple University

Late last year, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and two State Attorneys General (AG) took negative action against these schools for "false or misleading advertising or enrollment practices." Seeing this, VA responded by conducting their own investigation of the allegations against these schools. This announcement is the result of VA's investigation.

If VA takes the proposed suspension action on May 9, 2020, all new GI Bill beneficiary enrollments at these schools will stop. The schools will be afforded the opportunity to have a hearing, and VA regulations provide for an appeal process as well.

**What authority does VA have to do this?**

Sections 3690(b) and 3696(a) of title 38, United States Code; and sections 21.4210(d)(4)(iii) and 21.4211(a)(6) of title 38, Code of Federal Regulations.

**What happens now?**

The March 9<sup>th</sup> announcement begins a 60-day notice period, during which time the schools may take corrective action to avoid the suspension. Beginning on May 9<sup>th</sup>, each of the relevant Regional Processing Offices (RPOs) will hold a hearing to reach a formal determination and, possibly, long-term adverse action against the school. The schools may attend these hearings and submit contrary evidence that refutes the decision by VA. Following these hearings, the Committees will each make a recommendation to the Directors of the RPOs who will then make a final decision on whether to lift the suspension or enact further sanctions.

Additionally, State Approving Agencies (SAAs), the groups that say whether a school may receive any funding from VA, now have the option of reviewing the approval status of individual school programs. It is possible that they *could* conduct a review, find a school lacking in their approval criteria, and revoke their approval for all VA education benefits. Importantly, this would impact *all* students at a program, not just new enrollments.

## **What if I'm a student at one of these schools?**

If you are *currently* a student at one of these schools, the suspension will not affect you if you *maintain continuous enrollment*. However, the school may be prohibited from submitting enrollment certifications for students returning from a break in attendance during the suspension. (A 'break in attendance' means no more than a 6-month break in training for enrollment.)

## **What do I do? Can I transfer? What are my options?**

As a current student of one of these schools, you have a few options:

- You may continue your current course of study so long as you maintain continuous enrollment.
- You may transfer to another school. Please consider that, depending on many factors, your earned credits may not transfer to another school. This may extend your time to graduate and increase your likelihood of exhausting your benefits prior to graduation. If you would like more information, please refer to your current institution's transfer of credit policy and accreditation type as well as your desired new school's transfer of credit policy.

We have partnered with other VSOs to provide an aggregated list of schools that we are working with to help potential student transfers. You should have also received an email notice from VA regarding your options moving forward. You can also call VA's Education Call Center at 888-442-4551 between 8 a.m. and 7 p.m. ET, Monday-Friday to speak with a VA representative.

## **What if I'm looking to attend one of these schools in the future?**

These schools may enroll new GI Bill students up until the May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2020 deadline. After that, and assuming the suspension is not lifted during an appeals process, no new GI Bill user may receive benefits at these schools.

## **What else do I need to know?**

*Department of Defense.* The Department of Defense's (DoD) Tuition Assistance program may be impacted. DoD typically acts on programs that VA disapproves, but the decision lies with DoD.

*Additional schools.* VA has sent a notification to all schools with approved GI Bill programs on VA's actions, effects on students, and how these schools can assist impacted students.