



Federal Tuition Assistance First Policy

Frequently Asked Questions

If I belong to the Ohio Air National Guard, how does this policy affect me?

Once you have the AGOH 621-1 (dated 15 SEP 17) signed and uploaded into AFRISS, all M-Day Ohio Air National Guard service members have met the new requirements. Only Ohio Air National Guard Members that are on Title 10 orders that begin before a term starts and have a definitive end date after a term ends, as well as any Ohio Air National Guard member that is on Title 32 AGR orders must now apply for Federal Tuition Assistance in addition to the Ohio National Guard Scholarship Program .

If I belong to the Ohio Army National Guard, how does this policy affect me?

Once you have the AGOH 621-1 (dated 15 SEP 17) signed and uploaded into iPERMs, all Ohio Army National Guard service members will now need to apply for Federal Tuition Assistance (FTA), unless they are considered “ineligible”. You would be considered “ineligible” if you are using your Chapter 1606 GI Bill (\$375.mo) and either attending a public institution or a private institution or going 12 credit hours or less. You would also be considered ineligible if you have a GRFD scholarship, or if your school is approved for the Ohio National Guard Scholarship Program (ONGSP), but is not approved for Federal Tuition Assistance. You can check this by comparing the Ohio National Guard Scholarship Program list of approved schools at: <http://ong.ohio.gov/information/education/ongsp-schools.html> and the Go Army Ed Schools and Programs search at: https://www.goarmyed.com/public/public_degree_plan_browse.aspx. If the school states “Active”, it is an approved school. If the main campus is “Active”, but the regional campus is listed as “Suspended” you may still attend a branch campus and that branch campus is eligible for FTA.

Where do I apply for FTA?

For Ohio **Air** National Guard participants, please go to Air Force Portal at <https://www.my.af.mil/gcss-af/USAF/ep/home.do> and select “Air Force Virtual Education Center”. This will take you to your education record. On the right, is a menu titled “Self Service Options”. Select “Apply for TA”. You will request “Reserve TA” and your servicing education center will be ARPC Denver (AFRC).

For Ohio **Army** National Guard participants, please go to GoArmyEd at <https://www.goarmyed.com/> and select “create an account” and then “student” at the top right. Enter your SSN and Date of Birth. Once you have created an account, and it is approved, you will receive an email. You will then need to log in and go through the VIA tool. After you have completed the VIA tool, you will also need to log back in and apply for FTA by “Requesting TA” each term.

What would make me ineligible for FTA?

For Ohio Air National Guard members – being in an M-Day (active drilling) status. Only Ohio Air National Guard Members that are on Title 10 orders that begin before a term starts and have a definitive end date after a term ends, as well as any Ohio Air National Guard member that is on Title 32 AGR orders is eligible to apply for FTA.

For Ohio Army National Guard members, here are some reasons you could be ineligible, but there may be others. You are ineligible for FTA if your course starts before one year has passed from the date you graduated AIT or BOLC, or were on a GRFD scholarship. You would also be considered ineligible if you were using the Chapter 1606 (Selected Reserve) or Chapter 1607 (REAP) GI Bill for the same courses that you would be requesting tuition assistance for. Another reason you would be considered ineligible is if you already had an associate's degree, your degree level was annotated in SIDPERS, and you were pursuing a second associate's degree. Also, your ETS must extend beyond the class end date. If you are currently flagged in SIDPERS, you are also ineligible for FTA. If you are currently out of the ONG, and are using the ONGSP program with your "is latta" units, you are ineligible for FTA. The best option (if you are unsure if you are eligible or not) is to register for an account at www.goarmyed.com and follow the process to request TA. If a decision is made that makes you ineligible that is okay.

How much does FTA pay?

Federal Tuition Assistance pays for up to \$250 per semester hour for up to sixteen semester hours or \$166 a quarter hour for up to twenty four quarter hours each fiscal year. A Federal fiscal year is from 1 October – 30 September.

Why can't I apply for FTA on the same day that I submit my ONGSP application?

The ONGSP and FTA application deadlines **ARE** different. You must meet the deadlines for both programs. ONGSP Deadlines are: 1 NOV (Win Qtr/Spring Sem), 1 FEB (Spring Qtr), 1 APR (Summer), 1 JUL (Fall). These are often well **before** the FTA deadlines. If you are in the Army National Guard, you must apply for Federal Tuition Assistance not sooner than **60** days and at least **5** working days **before** the first day of classes at your school. If you are in the Air National Guard, you must apply for Federal Tuition Assistance not sooner than **30** days but **before** the first day of classes at your school.

My class starts in less than 60 days, and I can't see it to "Request TA"?

If your school is a "LOI school", please reach out to the FTA contact at your school and ask them to upload their classes. This is where you register for classes. If your school is not an LOI school (most are not) you will not experience this issue. You must have your class schedule and statement of account from your school to request FTA.

When do I have to submit the Course Planner?

After you have completed nine or more semester hours of courses which you requested FTA.

I have less than a 2.0 cumulative GPA at my college, can I request FTA?

Yes. The grade requirement (that you earn an A, B, or C average and maintain a cumulative 2.0 GPA) is only for classes which you use FTA for.

I earned a D or an F for a class that I requested FTA for. What happens now?

You will be responsible for paying for that course. You must acknowledge the debt in the GoArmyEd portal and a percentage of your drill pay will be taken each month until the cost that FTA paid for the course is repaid. For example, if your course was three credit hours, you would owe \$750 and a portion of your drill checks would be taken until the \$750 was paid in full. ONGSP would still their portion for the course, but your units would also be expended. You may also use FTA again for a failed course, as long as you have elected for repayment through the portal. You may contact Jovanda Curry, Education Service Specialist at: jovanda.t.curry.civ@mail.mil directly or submit a case for an override (for LOI courses only) to retake the course. NON-LOI courses are monitored manually.

I am eligible for Chapter 1606 (Selected Reserve) Montgomery GI Bill, but I don't want to use it because I want to save my GI Bill months of eligibility for future use. How does this affect me in relation to the new FTA first policy?

You are not required to use your Chapter 1606 benefits; however, unless another condition exists that would make you ineligible for FTA, you will be required to apply for and use FTA. Chapter 1606 of the GI Bill and Federal Tuition Assistance cannot be used concurrently- you can only use one or the other, but, it is your choice as to which one you want to use.

I plan on using my Chapter 1606 (Selected Reserve) GI Bill. What do I do?

If you are using Chapter 1606 GI Bill benefit, please let your VA certifying official at your school know each semester **before** the semester begins or as soon as possible when you start that term (i.e. the first week of class). The VA Certifying Official at your school reports your usage to the ONGSP office, so this will prevent any billing errors.

I planned on “saving” my FTA eligibility for Graduate School. What happens now?

Current policy states that if you use FTA for any course as an undergraduate, you must have ten years' time-in-service to use it for a Master's degree program. You can pursue a graduate certificate before you have ten years' time-in-service. However, if you plan to pursue a Master's degree, you may wish to look for graduate assistantships and fellowships that would often pay 100% of your tuition if you were able to attend full-time. If you are attending part-time, often employers will pay for graduate studies for their employees as long as the degree program is related to their current job. If you already have ten years' time-in-service, you can immediately use FTA for a Master's degree program.

I am in the Ohio Army National Guard, using my Chapter 30 (Active Duty) GI Bill, or my Chapter 33 (Post 9/11) GI Bill, do I have to apply for Federal Tuition Assistance?

Yes, you do. Your Ohio National Guard Scholarship Program application will be reduced by \$250 per semester hour for up to 16 semester hours per year and you would owe the difference to your school. For instance, you registered for 16 semester hours for Spring Semester 2018. Your ONGSP benefit would be reduced by \$4000 for Spring Semester. You would then be responsible to pay \$4000 to your school.

I have the Chapter 33 (Post 9/11) GI Bill, and I forgot to apply for FTA, does that mean that the Chapter 33 GI Bill (Post 9/11) won't pay their portion of my tuition?

Your Ohio National Guard Scholarship Program application will be reduced by \$250 per semester hour for up to 16 semester hours per year and you would owe the school any remaining balance that your Post 9/11 GI Bill does not pick up. This means that if you have the 50% rating for the Post 9/11 GI Bill, the VA will still pay 50% of your tuition before you pay.

I forgot to apply for FTA and I was supposed to Spring Semester 2018. Classes have already started this term. What do I do?

To prevent your Ohio National Guard Scholarship Program award from being reduced by \$250 per semester hour for up to 16 semester hours per federal fiscal year, email the ONGSP office at: ng.oh.oharng.mbx.ong-scholarship@mail.mil with your FTA plan. You will be expected to apply for FTA for both summer term (if you are attending summer) and fall term 18 until you have reached your 16 hour cap for that federal fiscal year.

For Ohio Army National Guard Service Members, how does this process work?

Example: PV2 Doe graduated AIT on 5 OCT 2017. This date is found on his DD214 under block 12 b (Separation Date This Period). He is not eligible for FTA until 5 OCT 2018. After he signs the AGOH 621-1 (15 SEP 17) and applies for his ONGSP benefit each term he is not required to register for FTA through the GoArmyEd portal until Spring Semester 2019. For Spring Semester 2019, he applies for ONGSP online with his CAC card and CAC reader during the registration window (1 August – 1 NOV 2018). He then registers for his classes. He has his statement of account from his school. He is registered to take 18 semester hours Spring Semester 2019. His classes start 7 January 2018. On 15 November 2018, he registers for a Go Army Ed account at: <https://www.goarmyed.com/>. His account is approved on 16 November 2018. He then goes back into his account that day and completes the VIA tool. He has to type in the white box the correct school and major choice while completing VIA, because it did not suggest these options for him. His school and program choice are approved on 18 November 2018. He then logs back into his account and selects the “Request TA” button. The system takes him through the Common Application. Even though he has already been submitted to school, this application is required for all first time users of GoArmyEd. It takes a minimum of two hours to one business day for the system to register that he has completed the common application. Four hours later PV2 Smith logs into GoArmyEd. He then selects “Request TA” again. This time, a window pops up asking him to acknowledge the e-Version of the Statement of Understanding for Use with Army Tuition Assistance. As soon as he reads and acknowledges the Statement of Understanding, it will take him to the add tab. He needs to go to the Search tab first and find the Subject, Catalog Number and GoArmyEd Class Number for each course. He then has to add these classes one at a time. He should not select the box stating he is receiving state tuition assistance or GI Bill benefits with any course he requests TA for, or this will make the class self-pay. He will need to wait thirty minutes between each class to request TA for another class. PV2 Smith ensures that he has requested TA for all of his classes. His request for TA is approved 10 December 2018. He downloads the approval letter from the website and provides both it and his ONGSP approval letter for spring semester to his schools bursar’s office. There is nothing else that PV2 Smith needs to do to receive both his Federal Tuition Assistance and his ONGSP benefit. His total tuition (general fees and instructional fees) for spring semester is \$5808. When his school sends the ONGSP roster back to the ONGSP office, FTA will pay \$4000 first, and ONGSP will pay the remaining \$1808.

If I use all 16 semester hours of FTA in the winter/spring term, do I need to apply for FTA in the summer and fall terms?

No. The ONGSP office will see that you used your entire FTA balance in the winter/spring term.

I go to a private school that charges less than the max per semester/quarter hour cap for FTA, what should I do?

It may make most sense for you to apply for only FTA for Spring Semester 2018 first and not use any ONGSP benefit. For instance, if your school charges \$250 per semester hour for military members, and you are taking 16 semester hours that term, please only use your FTA. If you applied for the scholarship program, it would only pay your general fees for the term (because your tuition would be covered in full by FTA). This means you would have expended 12 units of ONGSP and would not get those units back if you applied for both ONGSP and FTA. Say your general fees are only \$115 for Spring Semester. FTA paid \$4000 of your tuition, and ONGSP only paid the \$115 in general fees- but you lost 12 units for \$115. Now for fall term 2018, you only need to do an ONGSP application. ONGSP will pay up to \$4808 of courses for fall term and you will not have to apply for FTA Fall term because you used all of your units Spring 2018 term and a federal fiscal year is from 1 Oct – 30 Sep each year.

I go to a private school that charges more than the max per semester/quarter hour cap for FTA, what should I do?

Apply for ONGSP for up to 12 semester hours. You can choose to even use your Chapter 1606 GI Bill for up to 12 credit hours and receive the full \$375 per month. For any courses over 12 credit hours, you can apply for FTA and rack and stack the benefits. FTA will pay for your additional courses and your ONGSP benefit will not be reduced. For example, I am taking 16 semester hours. ONGSP pays \$4808 for 12 semester hours, and I use my Chapter 1606 GI Bill for 12 semester hours of courses. I apply for FTA for my other 4 semester hour class. FTA pays \$250 per semester hour for the course (\$1000). My total tuition for 16 credit hours was \$6416. FTA paid \$1000, ONGSP paid \$4808. My balance is \$608 out of pocket.

If I plan to use FTA for summer term, do I have to use it in the winter/spring term (first term of the new fiscal year)?

No. To prevent your Ohio National Guard Scholarship Program award from being reduced by \$250 per semester hour for up to 16 semester hours per federal fiscal year, email the ONGSP office at: ng.oh.oharng.mbx.ong-scholarship@mail.mil with your FTA plan. You will be expected to apply for FTA for both summer term (if you are attending summer) and fall term 18 until you have reached your 16 hour cap for that federal fiscal year. If you have not yet applied for winter/spring term, you can also put your FTA plan in the “comments” box of your ONGSP application.

If I am not eligible for FTA, will the ONGSP still pay 100% of my instructional and general fees at a public school or the current rate for private schools at my private school?

Yes. You will not be “penalized” if you are not eligible for FTA, unless it was due to a hold on your account for failure to agree to repay recoupment for a failing grade for a course that FTA paid for.

If I am attending full time, can FTA be applied to four hours and the ONGSP be applied to only 8 hours?

Yes, only if your plan is to use your remaining 12 hours of FTA during a different term in the same federal fiscal year. To prevent your Ohio National Guard Scholarship Program award from being reduced by \$250 per semester hour for up to 16 semester hours per federal fiscal year, email the ONGSP office at: ng.oh.oharng.mbx.ong-scholarship@mail.mil with your FTA plan. If you did not provide your FTA plan to the ONGSP office, the answer is “No” and your ONGSP will be reduced by \$250 per semester hour for the 8 semester hours of courses you used your ONGSP benefit for, but not FTA for. You would then be responsible for \$2000 that FTA would have paid for the 8 semester hours to your school (your ONGSP benefit would be reduced by \$2000 for that term).

I have planned out my degree with my academic advisor, and it will take me more than eight full time semesters to graduate. What should I do?

In general, meeting with your program academic advisor at the beginning of your degree is best. Ask for an entire degree plan. Be aware that 96 units equates to 8 full time semesters of benefits. A four year degree is 120 semester hours. That means that you would need to take at least 15 semester hours each term to not “run out of units”. For an associate’s degree, your goal is to not expend more than 48 units (four full time semesters). However, before you meet with your advisor, submit your Joint Service Transcript to your school right away (available at <https://jst.doded.mil/smart/signIn.do>). Bring the list of potential CLEP tests with you for your school and ask which ones will apply towards your major. This list is found at <https://clep.collegeboard.org/school-policy-search>. Don’t be afraid to try and CLEP test out of some class requirements. DANTES pays for each CLEP exam once and this could save you considerable time towards your degree.

Know how the program works. With the new FTA first policy, the intent was not to “penalize” our service members in any way. If you’d like to take summer classes, you can consider “saving” some of your Federal Tuition Assistance for this term. Every community college in the state is under the \$250 per semester hour rate. You could take some classes at a community college and then transfer them back to your home school at the end of the term. You can find out which classes transfer at either the Ohio Transfer to Degree guarantee website: https://transfercredit.ohio.gov/pg_1 or Transferology: <https://www.transferology.com/index.htm>

Also, most colleges offer discounted tuition rates in the summer. Find out from your schools bursars office what their summer rate is. If it makes more sense for you to save a portion of your FTA benefit to use during a different term other than Winter Quarter/Spring Semester, annotate your plan in the “Comments” section of the application. Example: I am taking 16 semester hours Spring Semester. I am not using any GI Bill benefit, as I have done a TEB request to transfer my benefits to my dependents. For my spring semester ONGSP application, I annotate in the comments section “my FTA plan is: 10 semester hours in the winter 2018 term, and 6 semester hours in the summer term”. The ONGSP Coordinator will only reduce my winter 2018 payment to my school by \$2500. This allows me to apply for my remaining six semester hours of FTA in the Summer, so I do not have to use any ONGSP units in the Summer, and FTA pays more than the \$183 per semester hour that the school charges in tuition for summer, so I have \$0 cost in tuition out of pocket. If I did not know my FTA plan before I applied for ONGSP, I can always email the ONGSP office at: ng.oh.oharng.mbx.ong-scholarship@mail.mil. If you are not sure how to best plan out your degree, please contact the Ohio National Guard Guidance Counselor via email at: ng.oh.oharng.list.ngoh-j1-eiom@mail.mil for individual assistance.