



DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS  
BUFFALO REGIONAL OFFICE  
P.O. BOX 4616  
BUFFALO NY 14240-4616

APRIL 7, 2021

MR. JOSIAH T. JOHNSON  
5671 RIVER PARK ROAD NE  
BEMIDJI, MN 56601

307/22  
JTJOHNS  
XXX-XX-0630

Dear Mr. Johnson:

### Certificate of Eligibility

This certifies that you are entitled to benefits for an approved program of education or training under the Post-9/11 GI Bill (38 CFR 21.9590).

**You must take this letter to your school. Your school must certify your enrollment before you can get paid (38 CFR 21.9720).**

You have 36 months and 0 days of full-time benefits remaining (38 CFR 21.9550).

Because you are on active duty, you currently have no delimiting date (38 CFR 21.9530; 38 USC 3301).

You're entitled to receive 60% of the benefits payable under the Post-9/11 GI Bill program for training offered by an institution of higher education. We determined this percentage based on your length of creditable active duty service (38 CFR 21.9640; 38 USC 3311). We based our decision on the following service information:

Begin Date	End Date	Service Length (in days)	Training Length (in days)*	Total (Service/Training)*
06/18/2020	Active Duty	294	0	294
Total:		294	0	294

*\*Note: By law we can't include dates of entry level and skill training because the total aggregate service is less than 24 months (38 CFR 21.9520; 38 USC 3301; 38 USC 3311).*

### Choosing the Right Career and Training

CareerScope® assesses your interests and aptitudes, gives career recommendations and helps you decide which courses or training programs you should focus on. To access CareerScope® please visit <http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/careerscope.asp>.

The GI Bill® Comparison tool allows you to compare estimated benefits by school. To access the tool please visit <https://www.vets.gov/gi-bill-comparison-tool>.

## What You Must Do

You should take this letter to your school's veterans certifying official as proof of your eligibility and ask him or her to submit your enrollment certification to VA. After your school submits your enrollment certification, your tuition and fees payment will be sent to the school on your behalf. All other payments will be sent directly to you.

## Debt Information

You must promptly notify your school's veterans certifying official and the VA. If there is any change in your enrollment, it may create a debt due to overpayment. Generally, VA cannot pay for:

- Courses you don't attend.
- Courses from which you withdraw.
- Courses you complete but receive a grade which will not count towards graduation.

**If you have a change of enrollment which resulted in an overpayment of tuition and fees or Yellow Ribbon, you may see that debt indicated as a tuition and fee or Yellow Ribbon debt amount to be collected. However, VA will not collect the tuition and fee or Yellow Ribbon debt from you. Rather, VA will collect this amount from your school. (Authority 38 U.S.C. 3685(b)) In turn, your school may require you to pay them any outstanding balance for tuition and fees or Yellow Ribbon. VA will not manage your tuition and fee or Yellow Ribbon debts anymore - schools will hold these debts. You will have to go through your school if you owe money for dropping a class or withdrawing from school. The school may be reaching out to you for the debt. It is important that you contact the school and work through any issues.**

**For additional information regarding debts, please visit  
[http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/resources/education\\_resources/debt\\_info.asp](http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/resources/education_resources/debt_info.asp)**

- The Internet by visiting [www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/](http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/)
- Telephone by calling toll-free at 1-888-GI-BILL-1 (1-888-442-4551).
- Postal mail by sending correspondence to the address at the top of this letter.

## Career Counseling

The receipt of this Certificate of Eligibility (COE) means that you are also eligible for VA-provided professional career counseling services at any time during your eligibility period.

**Please note:** When considering the school(s) for which you would like to receive your educational training, we recommend that you research your prospective school using the GI Bill Comparison Tool and our “Factors to Consider When Choosing a School: A guide before using the G.I. Bill”.

- GI Bill Comparison Tool: [www.vets.gov/gi-bill-comparison-tool](http://www.vets.gov/gi-bill-comparison-tool)
- ‘Factors to Choosing a School: A guide before using the GI Bill’:  
[www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/docs/factsheets/choosing\\_a\\_school.pdf](http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/docs/factsheets/choosing_a_school.pdf)

Pay particular attention to whether your prospective school(s) has articulation agreements in place, what the agreement involves, and how it applies to credit transferability should you wish to transfer

to a different school at a later date.

If you have questions, particularly about articulation agreements, or would like more information about career counseling services, you may call VA to speak directly with a customer service representative at 1-800-827-1000.

Additionally, if you are within six months of discharge, you may be eligible for VA's professional career counseling. For more information, call 1-800-827-1000.

## What You Should Do If You Disagree With Our Decision

If you do not agree with this decision, you have one year from the date of this letter to select a review option to preserve your earliest effective benefit date. The review options and their proper applications are as follows, for a(n):

- **Supplemental Claim**, complete **VA Form 20-0995**, *Decision Review Request: Supplemental Claim*
- **Higher-Level Review**, complete **VA Form 20-0996**, *Decision Review Request: Higher-Level Review*
- **Appeal to the Board**, complete **VA Form 10182**, *Decision Review Request: Board Appeal (Notice of Disagreement)*

Please see the enclosed **VA Form 20-0998**, *Your Rights to Seek Further Review of Our Decision*. It explains your options for an additional review. You may obtain any of the required applications by downloading them from [www.va.gov/vaforms/](http://www.va.gov/vaforms/) or by contacting us at 1 (888) GI BILL 1 (1-888-442-4551). You can also learn more about the disagreement process at [www.va.gov/decision-reviews](http://www.va.gov/decision-reviews). If you would like to obtain or access evidence used in making this decision, please contact us as noted below. Some evidence may be obtained by signing in at [www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov).

## If You Have Questions or Need Assistance

Website	<a href="http://www.va.gov">www.va.gov</a>
VA Forms	<a href="http://www.va.gov/vaforms">www.va.gov/vaforms</a>
Frequently Asked Questions	<a href="https://gibill.custhelp.va.gov/app/answers/list">https://gibill.custhelp.va.gov/app/answers/list</a>
Ask A Question: <i>Include your full name and VA file number</i>	<a href="https://gibill.custhelp.va.gov/app/">https://gibill.custhelp.va.gov/app/</a>
Mailing Address: <i>Include your full name and VA file number on the inside of mailed correspondence (not on envelope)</i>	See address at the top of this letter

Education Call Center	1-888-GI-BILL-1 (1-888-442-4551) (inside the U.S) 001-918-781-5678 (outside the U.S.)
TTY, Federal Relay	711
Veterans Crisis Line	1-800-273-8255 and press 1
VA Regional Office Location	<a href="http://www.va.gov/find-locations">www.va.gov/find-locations</a>
GI Bill® Comparison Tool: <i>This tool allows you to get information on a school's value and affordability; and to compare estimated benefits by school.</i>	<a href="http://www.va.gov/gi-bill-comparison-tool">www.va.gov/gi-bill-comparison-tool</a>

Sincerely,

Education Officer

Enclosures: VA Form 20-0998

## YOUR RIGHTS TO SEEK FURTHER REVIEW OF OUR DECISION

After careful and compassionate consideration of the matter(s) before VA, we have reached a decision. This document outlines your rights to seek further review of our decision on any issue with which you are dissatisfied or disagree. This document does not apply to decisions issued by the Board of Veterans' Appeals (Board), which have a separate rights notice. For **most VA benefits**, you must elect one of the review options discussed below within **one year** of the date on your decision notice letter to preserve your right to receive the maximum possible benefit. **Consult your decision notice letter for specific filing time limits.** If you are a party to a **contested claim**, you must file an appeal to the Board within **60 days** of the date on your decision notice letter in order to seek review. All parties to a contested claim will have received notice of the decision. See the section below regarding filing an appeal to the Board. You may select different review options for each issue decided by VA. The options are as follows:

Review Options	VA Benefit Claim	Parties to a Contested Claim	Insurance Claim	Fiduciary Decision
<b>Supplemental Claim</b>	✓	Not Available	✓	Not Available
<b>Higher-Level Review</b>	✓	Not Available	✓	✓
<b>Appeal to the Board</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>U.S. District Court Complaint</b>	Not Available	Not Available	✓	Not Available

*VA benefits include Compensation, Pension/Survivors Benefits, Education, Loan Guaranty, Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment, Veterans Health Administration, or National Cemetery Administration.*

You **MAY NOT** concurrently file for review of any single issue using more than one option at a time. The following is an overview of each option to help you select the most appropriate course of action. You can also find detailed information on all of the available review options and apply at [www.vets.gov](http://www.vets.gov).

### Descriptions of Review Options

Supplemental Claim	Higher-Level Review	Appeal to the Board	U. S. District Court
<p><b>Use this option when you have additional evidence that is NEW AND RELEVANT</b> to support granting the benefit(s) sought or you can identify existing relevant records that you would like VA to obtain. (<b>NEW evidence</b> means information not previously submitted to VA, and <b>RELEVANT evidence</b> means information that tends to prove or disprove a matter at issue.)</p> <p>VA will assist you in gathering new and relevant evidence to support a Supplemental Claim.</p>	<p><b>Use this option when you have NO</b> additional evidence to submit, or that you would like VA to obtain, in support of a previously decided issue.</p> <p>You <i>may not</i> request a Higher-Level Review of a Higher-Level Review decision or a Board decision.</p> <p>The designated reviewer will conduct a brand new review of the issue(s) based on the evidence that was before VA at the time of the prior decision(s). An <b>informal conference</b> is available to you and/or your representative, if you choose to exercise this option. The purpose of this telephonic contact is to point out specific errors in the case. VA will not consider any new evidence.</p>	<p><b>Use this option to appeal to the Board for consideration by a Veterans Law Judge.</b> You may appeal to the Board from a Supplemental Claim decision or a Higher-Level Review decision.</p> <p>When appealing to the Board, you may request a hearing with a Veterans Law Judge and/or the opportunity to submit additional evidence. You may also choose for the Board to review your claim without any additional evidence or a hearing, which may result in a faster decision. By selecting one of these options, the Board will place your appeal onto a list for consideration in the order it was received.</p> <p>The Board does not have a duty to assist you in obtaining additional evidence, but may review whether VA properly fulfilled its duty to assist you in the original claim process and may remand your claim on that basis.</p>	<p><b>(INSURANCE CLAIMS ONLY)</b></p> <p>You may challenge VA's decision on your insurance application or claim by filing a complaint with a United States district court in the jurisdiction in which you reside within six years from when the right of action first accrues.</p> <p>To find a district court, use the map at: <a href="http://www.uscourts.gov/court_locator.aspx">www.uscourts.gov/court_locator.aspx</a>.</p>

## How do I request review by VA of my decision?

To select a review option, you must submit the appropriate form to the appropriate office for review.

For a **Supplemental Claim**, consult your decision notice letter for the required forms and ways to submit the request.

For a **Higher-Level Review**, complete **VA Form 20-0996, Decision Review Request: Higher-Level Review** (available at [www.va.gov/vaforms/](http://www.va.gov/vaforms/)), and consult your decision notice letter for the required ways to submit the request.

To **Appeal to the Board**, complete **VA Form 10182 - Decision Review Request: Board Appeal (Notice of Disagreement)** (available at [www.va.gov/vaforms/](http://www.va.gov/vaforms/)), and send the form to:

**Board of Veterans' Appeals**  
**P.O. Box 27063**  
**Washington, DC 20038**  
**Fax: 844-678-8979**

## Can someone help me with my request for review?

Yes, VA recognizes and accredits attorneys, claims agents, and Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs) representatives to assist VA claimants with their benefits claims. VSOs and their representatives are not permitted to charge fees or accept gifts for their services. Only VA-accredited attorneys and claims agents may charge you fees for assisting in a claim for VA benefits, and only after VA has issued an initial decision on the claim and the attorney or claims agent has complied with the power-of-attorney and the fee agreement requirements. For more information on the types of representatives available, see [www.va.gov/ogc/accreditation.asp](http://www.va.gov/ogc/accreditation.asp).

If you have not already selected a representative, or if you want to change your representative, a searchable database of VA-recognized VSOs and VA-accredited attorneys, claims agents, and VSO representatives is available at [www.va.gov/ogc/apps/accreditation/index.asp](http://www.va.gov/ogc/apps/accreditation/index.asp). Contact your local VA office for assistance with appointing a representative or visit [www.ebenefits.va.gov](http://www.ebenefits.va.gov).

## What happens if I do not submit my request for review on time?

If you do not request a review option within the required time limit, you may only seek review through the following options:

- File a request for revision of the decision based on a clear and unmistakable error in the decision;
- File a Supplemental Claim along with new and relevant evidence to support your issue(s). Where a Supplemental Claim is filed after the time limit to seek review of a decision, the effective date for any resulting award of benefits generally will be tied to the date that VA receives the Supplemental Claim.

For more information on all the available review options visit: [www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov), or [www.vets.gov](http://www.vets.gov) or contact us at 1-800-827-1000.

**NOTE:** This form supersedes VA Forms 4107, 4107C, 4107VHA, 4107VRE, 4107INS for VA decisions after the publication in the Federal Register of the applicability date on which the *Veterans Appeals Improvement and Modernization Act of 2017* goes into effect.