Dear student:

As a student receiving VA education benefits, you may have received information from the VA or have read information from other sources regarding the impact to your housing allowance as colleges and universities are transitioning to on-line courses or making other arrangements in response to the COVID-19 virus. The staff of the UW Veterans Education Benefits Office (VEBO) want to make sure you continue to have the best information possible by providing regular updates, hopefully alleviating some anxiety over benefit payments.

**Update as of 3/20/20:**
- As we now know, classes and instruction will be offered remotely throughout spring quarter. Spring quarter will begin as scheduled on March 30, with remote instruction that will continue through the end of the quarter. The quarter will end as scheduled, after final exams conclude on June 12, 2020.

- Federal legislation was introduced last week to address concerns regarding the transition to all-online instruction, as under current VA rules, the monthly housing allowance (MHA) will be affected. If passed it would allow the VA to continue pay education benefits as normal without any changes due to the transition to distance learning by reason of emergencies and health-related situations. The bill has been approved by Congress and is expected to be signed into law by the President in the next few days. We are following this and will provide updates on our webpage once we know more.

- If you wish to use your benefits during spring quarter, please remember to submit your Enrollment Certification Request. Our forms can be completed remotely via DocuSign. All of our forms are available via our website. If you need to use a PDF version you can find PDF versions listed under the DocuSign version.

**Frequently Asked Questions:**

*Will my March monthly housing allowance be affected?*
No, enrollment for winter quarter will remain as it was certified.

*Will the VA still pay my tuition with the change to on-line instruction?*
Yes, tuition payments under Post 9/11 benefits will be paid as in previous quarters.

*Will my book stipend still be paid?*
Yes, the book stipend under Post 9/11 benefits will be paid as usual if you have not reached the $1,000 yearly cap already. Most students enrolled full time, reach the $1,000 yearly payment during winter quarter.

*How will the monthly housing allowance be affected by the switch to online instruction?*
We are closely following VA direction as legislation has been introduced to deal with MHA issues coming up as a result of changes from the COVID-19 outbreak. If passed it would allow the VA to continue pay education benefits as normal without any changes due to the transition to distance learning by reason of emergencies and health-related situations. The bill has been approved by Congress and is expected to be signed into law by the President in the next few days. Please monitor our webpage for updates.
Will my monthly housing allowance be delayed?

Due to delaying spring certifications (as instructed by the VA), there may be some students who receive their April housing allowance (typically paid May 1) later than what would normally be expected. VEBO staff will make effort to get your spring quarter certification processed in a timely manner once we are able to resume certifications. If you are experiencing any hardship due to these delays please let us know.

Other questions? The VEBO team is here for you! Due to COVID-19 concern we are working remotely. We are available via email at veteran@uw.edu, and we can set up online meetings if needed. We ask for your understanding that responses may be delayed during this challenging time. Please reach out to us if you have any concerns or are experiencing any impacts to your VA education benefits.

Our colleagues in Student Veteran Life will also be providing updates to spring quarter programming and events, as well as ways for you to stay connected to the UW. Watch for an email soon.

For more information about COVID-19 and UW updates, see the University’s COVID-19 website: https://www.washington.edu/coronavirus/

We hope you have a good spring break, and that you stay healthy.

Sincerely,

VEBO Staff