

FEDERAL TUITION ASSISTANCE

Overview

FTA is financial assistance provided for voluntary off-duty education programs in support of a Soldier's professional and personal self-development goals. (Reference: AR 621-5, Army Continuing Education System)

Eligibility:

- Be currently serving in the ARNG and have a common access card (CAC).
- Not be flagged.
- Not have a hold on your ArmyIgnitED account (once created).
- **Note:** Completion of IADT, BOLC, and/or WOBC is no longer required.

Service Requirement/Obligation:

- Have an ETS or MRD after completion of FTA-funded course(s).
- Officers and Commissioned Warrant Officers are subject to a four-year Reserve Duty Service Obligation (RDSO) OR a two-year Active Duty Service Obligation (ADSO).
- Have an ETS or MRD 14+ days after completion of FTA-funded course(s).

Additional Criteria:

- An evaluated degree plan/audit will be required after the completion of 6 credit hours using FTA.
- The college is regionally or nationally accredited AND is a participant in ArmyIgnitED.
- The funded course(s) meets a requirement listed in your personalized degree plan provided by the school (this can include prerequisite courses).
- You maintain an undergraduate GPA of 2.0 or a graduate GPA of 3.0 for FTA-funded courses.
- Courses can be requested up to 60 days, but **MUST** be requested **7 DAYS PRIOR** to the start date of that course.

For eligible Soldiers, FTA funds up to \$250 per semester hour for up to 16 semester hours each fiscal year—all towards tuition to advance your education. Here's a look at the FTA lifetime limits of the program:

- 130 undergraduate semester hours
- 39 graduate semester hours

To be eligible, your college or university must be regionally or nationally accredited—and an ArmyIgnitED participant.

CAN be used simultaneously with Chapter 1606/MGIB-SR for the same course, when attending half-time or more.

FTA will pay toward one credential at each of the following levels:

- Associate degree, bachelor's degree and master's degree
- First professional degrees are NOT eligible (e.g., doctorate degrees, juris doctorates)

Tuition assistance is for advancing your post-secondary education, so it may not be used to achieve a lower or lateral diploma or degree.

Remember, FTA is tuition assistance, which means it is for tuition only. It does not cover fees, examinations, e-learning or other expenses that are outside of an official degree plan.

Programs NOT Approved for FTA

- Courses leading to a credential that are lower or lateral to the highest credential you have already earned.
 - Example: if you have a bachelor's degree (even if you came in the ARNG with one), you cannot use FTA to pursue a second bachelor's or associate's degree.
- Any program that bundles tuition and fees together into a lump sum charge.
- Continuing Education Units (CEUs) or courses that do not meet degree requirements.

FTA requests are made through ArmyIgnitED.

Soldiers with questions can contact their assigned State Education Service Specialist directly or submit a help desk ticket to the ArmyIgnitED ServiceNow.

To start the process, follow the steps below:

- **Step 1.** Go to ArmyIgnitED and sign in with your CAC card.
- **Step 2.** Once the student account is established, select the education goal. Select education level, school and degree you want to pursue.
- **Step 3.** Once your education goal has been approved by your ESO/ESS, click on the Virtual Benefits Training link; after that is completed, click on TA Requests and issue funding.
- **Step 4.** Your assigned education counselor will review your tuition assistance request (TAR) and approve or reject it. You will receive an email stating the status of the TAR and the steps to follow, if necessary.
- **Step 5.** Register with your school.

Note: All drops/withdrawals must take place through ArmyIgnitED. Soldiers who do not successfully complete a class will be required to repay the TA. Soldiers who are unable to successfully complete a class due to military reasons must request a Withdrawal for Military Reasons (now called a recoupment waiver).

If assistance is required, you can send a message directly to your assigned counselor in the system or reach out to your Education Services Officer outside of the system.

FTA can be a huge help in driving down the cost of your education, but also be sure to ask your state education office for other benefits and programs they provide National Guard Soldiers—some include full in-state tuition.

For More Information:

- Contact the Education Support Center: 866-ARNGEDU (276-4338)
- Visit Us Online: www.nationalguard.com/education
- Contact your State Education Services Office: www.nationalguard.com/select-your-state

Notes:

- a. If you attend a state school, you should get the Tuition Waiver and NHNG Scholarship Forms off of the NHNG website and forward to your unit for approval.
- b. Most schools require you to apply for the FASFA (Free Application for Student Financial Aid).
- c. If you use Post 911/CH 33 military education benefits, you must apply for FTA or risk recoupment!