

VA contacting veteran-students about New GI Bill

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WASHINGTON – Representatives of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) will be telephoning veterans across the country to explain their education benefits under the new Post-9/11 GI Bill and ensure beneficiaries are able to receive payments due them.

"The Post-9/11 GI Bill is one of our highest priorities," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki. "Instead of making people wait to hear from us, we're reaching out to veterans, so they can get the money they need to stay in school."

The department is conducting this telephone outreach in response to the large numbers of veterans who have applied for education benefits for the fall 2009 semester. The calls are scheduled to go to Veterans who have applied for benefits under the new educational assistance program.

Those who registered for advanced payments will be called, too, in ensure they received their benefits.

To protect the personal identity of veterans, VA representatives making calls will not ask for any personal information, such as birth dates, bank account or social security numbers, but they may ask family members for information to contact Veterans who are away at school.

"Our procedures and policies to provide advanced payments remain in effect," Shinseki said. "Meanwhile, we're completing the on-time development of our automated processing system that will ensure timely delivery of checks in the future."