



Applies to: Faculty, staff, students, and volunteers

Responsible Office **Academic Affairs - Enrollment Management/The Gateway**

POLICY STATEMENT

Central Ohio Technical College (COTC) strives to ensure the academic success of COTC’s student service members and veterans by assisting them as they pursue associate degrees and/or certificates.

Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to identify the support and assistance that Central Ohio Technical College provides to student service members and veterans, and to ensure compliance with Ohio Revised Code Section 3345.421(B).

Definitions

Term	Definition
Dependent	Some dependents are eligible for educational benefits; eligibility is determined by the Veterans Administration.
Service member	A person who is serving in the armed forces of the United States.
Veteran	Any person who has completed service in the armed forces, including the national guard of any state or a reserve component of the armed forces, and who has been discharged under honorable conditions from the armed forces or who has been transferred to the reserve with evidence of satisfactory service.
Veterans Affairs Coordinator	A college advisor is designated as the college’s Veterans Affairs Coordinator and is the authorized college official with primary responsibility for coordinating the college’s provision of services to veterans.

Policy Details

- I. Organization and Administration
 - A. Central Ohio Technical College employs a multi-pronged approach to serve all military and veterans services, issues, and concerns. Student Financial Services manages certification and educational benefits, Gateway provides admission assistance and academic advising, Student Life offers counseling and career services, and the Veterans Affairs Coordinator connects student service members and veterans to resources on and off campus.
 - B. The Veterans Affairs Coordinator refers student service members, veterans, and their dependents to proper local, state, and/or federal agencies whenever an individual and/or dependent(s) is eligible for services.
 - C. Staff who certify VA and other government-issued military/veteran benefits for student service members and veterans are trained and remain current in the proper certification methods and latest state and federal guidance.
 - D. The college is committed to outreach and communication with eligible student service members and veterans about educational and training benefits, encouraging the use of GI Bill benefits, and services and assistance offered by the college.

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- E. The college offers training resources to appropriate faculty and staff to increase awareness of the mindset and unique needs of student service members and veterans returning from combat zones and/or tours of duty overseas.

II. Programming for Student Service Members and Veterans

- A. The college creates “safe zones” for service members and veterans by supporting student organizations for service members and veterans, identifying trained faculty/staff, and hosting visiting benefits/service agencies on campus.
- B. The college provides a specialized student orientation prior to each semester for student service members, veterans, and their dependents, focusing on issues specific to student service members and veterans on campus and resources available to them on campus and in surrounding communities.
- C. The college provides specialized programs (e.g., priority registration and interim financial aid arrangements) for student service members and veterans to promote educational achievement.
- D. The college recognizes the achievement and service of student service members and veterans at commencement and provides programming to honor and engage student service members and veterans throughout the academic year.
- E. The college integrates existing career services to link student service members and veterans with prospective employers.
- F. COTC encourages the Manager of Career Development to seek and promote opportunities for internships and employment of student service members and veterans with state, local, national, and international employers. The Office of Academic Affairs promotes internships of student service members and veterans with state, local, national, and international employers.
- G. The college surveys student service members and veterans to identify their needs and challenges and makes the survey available to faculty and staff at COTC. The college conducts follow-up surveys every three years to gauge the institution's progress toward meeting identified needs and challenges.

III. Ongoing Institutional Efforts

- A. As part of its commitment to eliminate barriers to student service member and veteran success, the college regularly evaluates institutional policies and procedures.

Central Ohio Technical College is committed to continuing to work with the legislature, workforce, and higher education community to identify and develop statewide policies to ensure the transition to higher education is seamless for student service members, veterans, and eligible dependents.

PROCEDURE

I. Training

- A. Training resources are offered for faculty, staff, and students. Contact the Veterans Affairs Coordinator to request and schedule in-person training (See Resource Section)

II. Registering for services with campus offices

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- A. Student service members, veterans, and eligible dependents opting to use VA or other government-issued military/veteran benefits as part of their enrollment at Central Ohio Technical College must register during their orientation with the Student Financial Services prior to any benefits being extended.
- B. Student service members and veterans and their dependents are encouraged to visit the Veterans Affairs Coordinator to develop a relationship with the office so the college may better support our student service member and veteran community.

III. Referrals

- A. Student service members and veterans seeking referrals to local, state, and federal agencies should contact the Veterans Affairs Coordinator to schedule an appointment.
- B. Faculty and staff may contact the Veterans Affairs Coordinator for referrals or consultation related to student service members or veterans.
- C. Referrals are made on a case-by-case basis and are tailored to the student service member and veteran, whether or not the student service member or veteran is using her or his educational benefit.

IV. Benefits Certification

- A. Student service members and veterans using VA benefits while attending COTC must verify their enrollment and eligibility for benefits by registering with the School Certifying Official in Student Financial Services. Registration is required before VA payments will be made to the college or to the student receiving benefits.
- B. Student service members and veterans must notify the Gateway and the School Certifying Official every time there is a change in schedule or student status.
- C. Student service members and veterans must renew their *Veterans Enrollment Report* form, either in person or electronically, with the School Certifying Official every semester or term that they seek to draw benefits.

V. Other College Offices with Policies and Procedures Impacting Student Service Members and Veterans

- A. Offices with policies, procedures, or practices that may impact student service members or veterans must notify and coordinate with the Veterans Affairs Coordinator for help and consultation about such policies, procedures, and practices.

Responsibilities

Position or Office	Responsibilities
Veterans Affairs Coordinator	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Administer this policy. 2. Serve as the college's single point of contact for all military and veterans services, issues, and concerns. 3. Refer student service members, veterans, and their dependents to proper local, state, and/or federal agencies whenever an individual and/or dependent(s) is eligible for services. 4. Coordinate with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and all local, state, and federal veterans organizations. 5. Support and advocate for student service members, veterans, and eligible dependents. 6. Support and coordinate all student service member and veteran issues and programs. 7. Offer training free of charge for faculty, staff, and students. 8. Provide consultation related to student service members, veterans, or eligible dependents to faculty and staff. 9. Make referrals on a case-by-case basis that are tailored to the student service member, veteran, or eligible dependent.

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Position or Office	Responsibilities
	10. Regularly evaluate institutional policies and procedures that create barriers to service member, veteran, or eligible dependent success.
School Certifying Official	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Manage the certification process. 2. Remain current with educational benefits training and federal aid requirements. 3. Serve as educational benefits point of contact.
Gateway	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop a clear outreach strategy to communicate with eligible persons about potential educational and training benefits. 2. Provide a portion of student orientation for service members, veterans, and eligible dependents. 3. In collaboration with the Veterans Affairs Coordinator, recognize the service of service members and veterans at various events such as commencement.
Faculty, staff, students	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Request in-person training by contacting the Veterans Affairs Coordinator. 2. Access online training at http://www.cotc.edu/Admissions/Documents/COTC%20Veterans%20Faculty%20Resource.pdf 3. Contact the Veterans Affairs Coordinator for referrals and consultation related to student service members of veterans.
Student service members and veterans and their dependents	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If using educational benefits, register with the School Certifying Official as part of orientation. 2. Contact the Veterans Affairs Coordinator for help with referrals to local, state, or federal agencies. 3. Verify enrollment and eligibility for benefits by registering with the School Certifying Official. 4. Notify the Gateway and the School Certifying Official with every change in schedule or student status. 5. Renew the Veterans Enrollment Report form, either in person or electronically, with the School Certifying Official every semester or term they seek to draw benefits.
Offices	Notify and coordinate with the Veterans Affairs Coordinator regarding policies, procedures, or practices that may impact student service members or veterans.

Resources

- Ohio Revised Code §3345.42, codes.ohio.gov/orc/3345.42
- Ohio Revised Code §3345.421, codes.ohio.gov/orc/3345.421
- Ohio Revised Code §3345.422, codes.ohio.gov/orc/3345.422
- Ohio Revised Code §3345.424, codes.ohio.gov/orc/3345.424

Student Enrollment Certification form:

<http://www.cotc.edu/Admissions/Pages/Veteran-Educational-Benefits.aspx>

Federal Student Aid Handbook

https://ifap.ed.gov/ilibrary/document-types/federal-student-aid-handbook?award_year=2019-2020&

COTC's Veterans and Military Students webpage

<http://www.cotc.edu/Admissions/Pages/Veterans-and-Military-Students.aspx#>

Dependent information

<https://www.va.gov/education/survivor-dependent-benefits/dependents-education-assistance/>



Valuing Our Veterans: Support & Assistance, 5.1.40

College Policy

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Academic Affairs Policies and Procedures Handbook

<http://www.cotc.edu/Academics/Documents/Policy%20Procedures%20Manual%202020-2021.pdf>

Contacts

Subject	Office	Telephone	E-mail/URL
Policy questions; support and assistance	Veterans Affairs Coordinator	740-755-7667	Charlene Ross ross.850@mail.cotc.edu
Certification, education benefits	Student Financial Services	740-366-9459	Misty Amacher amacher.1@mail.cotc.edu
Enrollment; transfer credit	Gateway Admissions	740-755-7667	ross.850@mail.cotc.edu
Plan of study; re-enrollment	Gateway Academic Advising	740-755-7667	ross.850@mail.cotc.edu

History

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