

TUITION ASSISTANCE GUIDELINES AND REGULATIONS for FY2025

References

- (a) DoDI 1322.25, All Changes (Change 4–April 2020)
- (b) MCO P1560.25C – Lifelong Learning (Chapter 6 – TA regulations)
- (c) MARADMIN 639/11 – TA Eligibility, Funding Provisions and Restrictions (re-states TA caps and ceiling, complies with ref a)
- (d) MARADMIN 687/14 – FY15 TA Guidelines Update (established no more than two TA courses active at a time; 60 days T-I-S for Enlisted)
- (e) MARADMIN 218/19 – TA Guidelines Update (removed T-I-S prior to 1st-time TA use, compiled TA use regulations from 687/14 and 255/18)
- (f) MARADMIN 765/20 – Permits 2nd Master's for Command & Staff; 60 days T-I-S for Warrant Officers pursuing Baccalaureate, ESO discretion.

1. **Purpose.** These Guidelines state policy and establish regulations for use of Marine Corps Tuition Assistance (TA), per references (a) through (f).

2. **Background.** Marine Corps TA encourages and supports active-duty and Active Reserve (AR) personnel to access Post-Secondary Voluntary Education (VolEd) opportunities during off-duty time, delivered by appropriately accredited institutions of higher learning (IHLs) on campus, at campus resident centers, on military installations and through distance learning using technology, regardless of duty station, independent duty or deployment (per ref b).

3. **Execution.**

a. The Deputy Commandant, Manpower and Reserve Affairs (DC M&RA) centrally manages TA funding for the Marine Corps with administrative support from the Naval Education and Training Professional Development Center (NETPDC) (per ref b).

b. NETPDC manages the Navy College Management Information System (NCMIS), and the Oracle Business Intelligence Education Enterprise (OBIEE). NCMIS is an automated TA management system accessed online for the purpose of authorizing TA funding for all eligible active-duty and AR Marine personnel. NETPDC also processes TA invoices, records grades and initiates TA reimbursement when required (per ref b).

c. Marine Corps installation VolEd personnel who have completed all security clearance requirements for employment in the installation VolEd center, and for access to NCMIS, are eligible to provide authorization of

TA funding in full compliance with all DoD and Marine Corps policy and regulations for use of the TA benefit (per ref b).

(1). The Education Services Officer (ESO) is responsible for the installation VolEd office, establishing and building relationships with all Unit Education Officers (UEO), as well as overseeing and coordinating all installation VolEd activities (per ref b).

(2) The installation ESO is responsible for determining TA authorization authority among all installation VolEd personnel with the proper clearance and NCMIS access (per ref b and ref f).

d. Marine Corps installation VolEd personnel must not process TA for United States Navy or Coast Guard personnel (per ref b, Ch 6).

4. Eligibility.

a. TA is authorized for Active Duty Marine Corps personnel to include AR, who meet eligibility criteria stated in this NAVMC (per ref b, Ch 6).

b. Initial and continued usage of TA is at Commanders' discretion. Commanders, Sergeants Major, UEOs, and Command Approval Officers (CAOs) shall ensure Marines meet all eligibility criteria (per ref b) and have completed all Professional Military Education (PME) requirements appropriate to their rank, per MCO P1400.32D, CH-2, Volume 2 and MCO P1400.31C, CH-1, Volume 1. Marines must submit documentation of PME completion to the UEO prior to submission of the first TA request, (per ref e) as well as the first TA request following any subsequent promotion, per MCO P1400.32D, CH-2, Volume 2 and MCO P1400.31C, CH-1, Volume 1.

5. Funding Provisions and Restrictions.

a. TA is authorized only for tuition charges and tuition fees, up to one hundred percent of costs including lab, technology, and distance learning fees at, but not exceeding semester hour (SH), quarter hour (QH), or clock hour (CH) caps for undergraduate and graduate courses, and fiscal year (FY) ceilings, per reference (b). Currently, this stands at \$250/SH, \$166.67/QH, \$16.67/CH for the per credit caps, and \$4500/FY for the ceiling, (per ref c) the maximum Military Tuition Rate (MTR) allowed (per ref a). The DoD Interservice Voluntary Education Board (IVEB) will review annually all TA caps and ceilings (per ref a); the Marine Corps will comply with any DoD proposed changes to the MTR (per ref a).

(1) The following equivalents are applied regarding earned academic credit: 1 SH = 1.5 QH = 15 CH (per ref a).

(2) Marines are responsible for costs exceeding authorized TA funding caps and ceilings, as well as all non-tuition fees including, but

not limited to costs associated with room, board, equipment, supplies, books/materials, exams, insurance, parking, transportation, admissions, registration, or fines, (per ref b). (Marines with at least two years active duty, are encouraged to consider MGIB "Top Up" for these costs). All Marines with costs exceeding TA caps are strongly encouraged to contact their base VolEd center for assistance (per ref b, Ch 6).

b. Marines must be eligible for promotion, or, if the Marine is in the last tour of duty, must qualify for an Honorable Discharge. This is determined by command leadership as represented by the UEO (per ref b, the Order and Ch 6).

c. Marines have no minimum time in service (T-I-S) requirement prior to the utilization of TA (per ref b and e). Additionally, Marines awaiting training status are eligible to utilize TA (per ref b, Ch 6).

d. Prior to command approval, first-time TA applicants must demonstrate their readiness for the post-secondary education classroom and subsequent use of TA funds, by meeting the following requirements:

(1) Completion of the Personal Financial Management (PFM) training (per ref e) through the Personal Readiness Seminar (PRS) at the first permanent duty station, or on any Marine Corps installation, or through completion of the PRS Survival Skills Training J3OP-US1395 on Joint Knowledge Online; completion of the PFM training is submitted to the installation VolEd office prior to attending the TA Orientation Brief;

(2) Completion of the TA Orientation Brief (per ref b, Ch 6). Topics addressed during the TA Orientation Brief are attached at the end of these guidelines;

(3) Completion of the skills and interests surveys on Career Path Decide (CPD)

(4) Meeting at least one of the following criteria:

(a) A minimum Armed Forces Qualification Test (AFQT) score of 50; or,

(b) A minimum General Technical (GT) score of 100 from the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) (per ref b, Ch 6); or,

(c) Successful completion of at least ten (10) SH of post-secondary coursework at the Freshman level, or higher, with each course earning a minimum of a C (2.0) grade (per ref a and ref b, Ch 6, and ref e; or,

(d) Successful completion of the Academic Skills Program (ASP) in the classroom, or, the Online Academic Skills Course (OASC); direction to ASP or OASC is accomplished through the installation VolEd personnel (per ref b, Ch 6;

(e) Completion of the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE), (per ref b, Ch 6) with a minimum score of 11.

(5) If none of these criteria are met, but the PFM training, TA brief and CPD surveys are complete, the ESO retains the discretion to authorize TA funding for one course per term until 10 SH have been completed successfully (per ref e). Successful completion is indicated by no grade earned less than a C, (per ref a).

e. Installation VolEd personnel document completion of these requirements to the Marine's official TA account in NCMIS (per ref b, Ch 6).

f. First-time TA applicants receive authorized TA funding for only one course, unless documentation is provided that the Marine has completed at least 31 SH within a traditional face-to-face classroom academic setting, with a minimum grade point average (GPA) of 2.5, on the 4-point scale (per ref b, Ch 6;

g. TA applications must be submitted no more than 60 days prior to the start date of the class (per ref d and e).

h. Marines may submit more than one TA application per academic term, but TA applications must contain no more than one course per application

i. Marines must not have more than two TA-funded classes active at any given time (per ref d and e).

j. TA must be authorized only for one course in the next academic term, if: the undergraduate cumulative GPA falls between 2.0 and 2.5, or the graduate cumulative GPA falls below 3.0, for all courses passed; a grade of "D" or "F" is received in any course during the previous term in which TA was utilized (grade of "C" for graduate courses) (per ref a; ref b, Ch 6; ref d, and ref e); or, a voluntary or involuntary withdrawal occurs from any course during the previous term in which TA was utilized (per ref b, Ch 6; ref d and ref e). Exceptions may be submitted to the installation ESO for consideration (per ref b, Ch 6).

k. TA funds for approved involuntary withdrawal waivers count toward individual FY ceilings (per ref e).

l. Career and technical education certificate programs eligible for TA funding must:

(1) be accredited by an accrediting body recognized by the Department of Education (per ref b, Ch 6);

(2) be approved by the Department of Veterans Affairs (per ref b, Ch 6);

(3) have a signed DOD Memorandum of Understanding (per ref a).

m. Marines may utilize TA toward one academic degree at the next level higher than that currently held by the Marine, (per ref a and ref b, Ch 6).

(1) The academic degree ranks are as follows in ascending order: Certificate, Associate's, Bachelor's, Master's/Post Baccalaureate (per ref a).

(2) The academic certificate may be at any level (per ref b, Ch 6), if completion of a Master's degree is not a requirement for admission into the program

(3) Marines who previously have not earned an Associate's, Bachelor's, or Master's, may use TA toward more than one academic certificate. This is encouraged for the pursuit of 'stackable certificate' opportunities. This option is relinquished immediately upon completion of any undergraduate degree.

n. The maximum number of SH allowed for TA funding is capped at Undergraduate-138; Graduate-45 (per ref a,

o. Degree pre-requisites or developmental courses can be funded by TA, but must be included on the Marine's education plan and count towards the TA funding cap at the level of the degree pursued (per ref b,

p. Marines are strongly encouraged to submit an education plan prior to authorization of TA funds. The ESO retains the discretion to authorize TA funding for up to four courses - no more than one per academic term - before the education plan must be posted to the Marine's web TA record (per ref b, Ch 6; ref e and ref f).

q. TA is not authorized for non-credit courses, training programs, or programs under continuing education or workforce development (per ref b, Ch 6).

r. TA may be used for foreign language courses outside of a degree plan. This is limited to those languages identified by the Under Secretary of Defense (USD) as strategic stronghold or immediate investment languages, published annually in a memorandum from the USD. Languages

Dominant-in-the-Force, and those in which the DoD has sufficient strategic capability will not receive authorization for TA funding unless they are part of a degree plan. Authority to declare Dominant-in-the-Force languages rests solely with USD (Personnel & Readiness), who assesses the DoD-wide foreign language capacity annually and publishes a corresponding list (per ref b, Ch 6).

s. Marines who have completed an initial Master's degree granted by a resident Service Professional Military Education institution, or by National Defense University, or The Eisenhower School, are eligible for TA funding toward a second master's degree. The Marine loses this eligibility if more than one Master's is held. Marines must present transcripts from the conferring institution, to installation VolEd personnel prior to receiving TA Orientation (per ref f),

t. Marines who fail to complete a course successfully must reimburse received TA funds (per ref a and ref b, Ch 6). Received TA funds for unsuccessful course completion will not count toward the FY ceiling once reimbursement is posted to the Marine's TA account. Successful course completion is defined for the purpose of reimbursement as a grade of "C" or higher for undergraduate courses, a "B" or higher for graduate courses, and a "pass" for "pass/fail" courses (per ref a and ref e). TA funds are reimbursed by Marines for "D" and "F"/fail grades, unresolved "I"/Incomplete, or courses from which the Marine voluntarily withdrew, resulting in a "W" grade (per ref a and ref b, Ch 6).

u. Reimbursement for course withdrawals indicated by a grade of "W" and related to duty, medical or personal or family emergency circumstances, may be waived (per ref a and ref b, Ch 6). TA funds for approved involuntary withdrawal waivers count toward individual FY ceilings. All reimbursement procedures and related pertinent information are obtained from installation VolEd personnel.

(1) Waiver memo must be signed by the commanding officer (CO), or the UEO, and submitted to the installation ESO for review. Waiver requests are not submitted directly to NETPDC (per ref b, Ch 6).

(2) The waiver request should contain supporting documentation including, where appropriate, Temporary Assignment of Duty (TAD) or Permanent Change of Station (PCS) Orders, and a descriptive narrative explaining the change beyond individual control and unknown at the time of the TA request (per ref b, Ch 6).

(3) The ESO determines if justification for a waiver is warranted, and if so, forwards the waiver onto NETPDC with additional support statements (per ref b, Ch 6 -)

v. Open issues in Marines' NCMIS TA accounts, including unresolved Incompletes (indicated by a grade of "I" on the academic transcript), reimbursement issues, and waivers, are resolved, and posted to the Marine's NCMIS TA account prior to authorization of future TA requests (per ref d and ref e).

w. TA cannot be authorized for fees related to certifications, license exams, or credentials (per ref b, Ch 6).

x. Utilization of authorized TA funds requires T-I-S beyond the end date of the academic term, regardless of the course level funded (per ref a; ref b, Ch 6; ref d; and ref e). Marines must reimburse paid TA funds for T-I-S not met, at the percentage equal to that of the unmet T-I-S (per ref b, Ch 6). Marines do not reimburse TA to the installation VolEd Center, but may obtain all pertinent information regarding TA reimbursement from the installation VolEd Center ESO, or any VolEd Center personnel (per ref b, Ch 6). T-I-S requirements are as follows: Commissioned Officers must serve 24 months (per ref a; ref b, Ch 6; ref d; and ref e); Enlisted personnel must serve 60 days (per ref d and ref e); Limited Duty Officers (LDOs), Chief Warrant Officers (CWOs) and Warrant Officers (WOs) who do not hold a Baccalaureate degree must serve 60 days (per ref f); LDOs, CWOs, and WOs who have completed a Baccalaureate degree must serve 24 months (per ref a; ref b, Ch 6; ref e; and ref f); Reserve Component Officers on active-duty orders/mobilization must serve 24 months (per ref a; ref b, Ch 6; and ref f). Officers who end their active service (EAS) and transition seamlessly (no break in service of any kind) to AR programs may use service time in AR program toward the 24-month T-I-S requirement.

y. Marines assigned to Military Occupation School or residential PME (including, but not limited to: Corporals Course, Sergeants Course, Career Course, Advanced Course, or any other special professional education or training program, such as Skill Bridge, must not receive TA funding until they return to their regular or permanent duty (per ref b, Ch 6).

z. Marines in a Marine Corps Enlisted Commissioning Education Program (MECEP) or a Staff Non-Commissioned Officer Degree Completion Program (SNCO DCP) may use TA toward their degrees during Summer terms if required to serve Active Duty fulltime instead of taking courses in their MECEP or SNCO DCP (per ref b, Ch 6).

aa. Marines selected for attendance to the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy (USASMA) as taught through the U.S. Army NCO Leadership Center of Excellence (NCO LCE), under the umbrella of the Combined Arms Center and Army University, may use TA toward in-class or online post-Baccalaureate courses at the IHLs on post, with Articulation Agreements through the USASMA. The NCO LCE provides the list of partner IHLs and the specific

Master's degree programs toward which TA can be used, as well as the number of credits earned toward the degree to be awarded through participation in the USASMA. Marines may not use TA toward any degree or certificate at any level outside of these partner programs or IHLs while in attendance at the USASMA, but may submit TA requests upon their return to duty stations within full compliance of USMC TA policies and regulations as stated within this chapter.

ab. Marines attending vocational/technical certification programs with more than one class or module shall receive TA funding for a maximum of two classes or modules at a time (per ref d and ref e).

6. Fiscal Instructions

a. Funds to administer TA are appropriated annually and shall be available to fund-approving authorities through NETPDC, the centrally managed TA authority (per ref b, Ch 6).

b. DC M&RA must provide NETPDC with a funding ceiling with limits to obligation authority. Individual TA limits are defined by DC M&RA and not subject to waivers (per ref b, Ch 6).

c. The start date of the academic term of a TA-funded course shall determine the chargeable Fiscal Year (FY) appropriation (per ref b, Ch 6).

d. TA requests received in one FY for courses starting in the next FY must wait until the next FY to receive authorization of TA funds (per ref b, Ch 6).

e. NETPDC must fund all courses, regardless of length, immediately upon receiving the invoice prepared by the institution through the Wide Area Work Flow (WAWF) system (per ref b, Ch 6).

f. TA funding requests cannot be authorized retroactively. Requests for TA funding must be submitted and have received command approval through a unit CAO appointed by the UEO, no later than 24 hours prior to the course start date (per ref e).

g. TA funding authorizations must not occur between 15-30 September, to allow NETPDC to close out all records for the current FY. Requests for TA funding for courses with a start date between 15-30 September, must have command approval via a unit CAO by 12 September, to receive TA funding authorization by 14 September (per ref b, Ch 6; and ref e).

h. TA requests are complete and accurate. The application must contain the school code, the course start and end dates, and course number and title, as stated in the school's academic catalog. The installation ESO retains the discretion to require the use of a Cost Verification

Statement to ensure complete and accurate information on the TA request (per ref b, Ch 6; and ref e).

i. Changes to the TA voucher to ensure total accuracy of the document, must be made by installation VolEd personnel prior to the end of the school's Drop/Add period (per ref b, Ch 6). The Marine must contact installation VolEd personnel immediately, to execute such changes, or, as necessary to cancel the voucher document (per ref b, Ch 6).

j. If both the academic term start and end date must be changed on an existing TA voucher document, the document must be cancelled, and the Marine must submit a new TA request. Also, the academic term start date cannot be changed once the term has begun (per ref b, Ch 6).

k. Grades are submitted to NETPDC within 30 days after the course end date (per ref b, Ch 6).

(1) If grades are not received, a communication of TA indebtedness resolution (via email and/or postal mail written letter) is issued to the student Marine (per ref b, Ch 6)

(2) A pay checkage, DD Form 139, is initiated if no response to the indebtedness communication is received within 30 days of its issuance (per ref b, Ch 6)

(3) Grade reporting is the responsibility of the DoD MOU institution, however, the ultimate responsibility of ensuring the timely application of grades to the Marine's TA record rests with the Marine (per ref b, Ch 6).

1. Individual student Marines who receive a grade of "I" - Incomplete - for a TA-funded course have up to six months from the term end date, to successfully covert the grade to that which is successful (per ref a). The school's deadline for completion of an "Incomplete" takes precedence if said deadline is shorter than 6 months. The "I" grade must be resolved prior to the submission of any further TA requests (per ref b, Ch 6; ref d; and ref e).

7. Administration.

a. Marines must contact installation VolEd personnel to ensure full compliance with all current Marine Corps TA policies and criteria (per ref b, Ch 6).

b. TA authorization is contingent upon responsible stewardship of available funds by the installation's ESO and all VolEd personnel (per ref b, Ch 6; ref e; and ref f).

c. The ESO retains the discretion to treat each TA application solely on the merits of the individual case (per ref f).

d. Installation ESOs coordinate with Public Affairs Offices, Career Retention Specialists, and local commands via the MCCS Director to ensure that all eligible Marines are aware of available VolEd Program opportunities. Personnel should ensure that information and advisement are devoid of bias and prejudice (per ref b, Ch 6).

e. TA funding is discretionary. Command approval for a Marine's TA request is contingent upon the unit's anticipated mission requirements and the UEO's concurrence that the Marine can meaningfully fully participate, meet all course requirements, and complete all academic and term demands as determined by the institution and the course instructor (per ref b, Ch 6). The UEO is given this additional collateral duty, by the commanding officer who confers all "By Direction Authority" on the UEO for the unit's VolEd matters (per ref b).

f. The course instructor, nor the institution must not alter the course requirements, or academic term demands for the Marine, either in favor of, or counter to those requirements and demands put forth to other non-military students in the course. Attention to command schedule commitments that may preclude successful course completion, remains vital to the success of the Marine Corps TA program (per ref b and ref e).

g. Commands should coordinate whenever possible with the installation ESO in advance of scheduled deployments, to assist deploying Marines wishing to pursue VolEd opportunities (per ref b, Ch 6).

(1) Marines deployed to other Marine Corps installations are eligible for TA through the installation's VolEd office at either the installation from which they deploy, or to which they deploy (per pef b, Ch 6).

(2) TA for east-coast deployments and for Marines assigned to duty at non-Marine Corps installations or other remote locations east of the Mississippi River, is processed by the VolEd office on either MCB Camp Lejeune, or MCAS Cherry Point (per pef b, Ch 6).

(3) TA for west-coast deployments and for Marines assigned to duty at non-Marine Corps installations or other remote locations west of the Mississippi River, is processed by the VolEd office on either MCB Camp Pendleton, or MCAS Miramar (per pef b, Ch 6).

(4) TA for deployments to Okinawa is processed through MCB Camp Butler (per pef b, Ch 6).

(5) TA for Marines on Recruiting Duty is processed at two locations: Recruiters west of the Mississippi should contact the MCRD San Diego CA VolEd Center. Recruiters east of the Mississippi should contact the MCRD Parris Island SC VolEd Center (per pef b, Ch 6).

(6) TA for Marines on Inspector-Instructor Duty is processed at Marine Forces Reserve. Contact information for any Marine Corps installation VolEd office is obtained from any VolEd office (per pef b, Ch 6).

h. The "Student Work Week" expectation maintains for academic guidance purposes, at three hours/week over a 16-week academic term, for every SH earned, to include class time, adjusted proportionately for the varied lengths of academic terms (per ref a).

i. Installation ESOs ensure VolEd staff prepare and participate in the Marine Corps Certification Program (MCFP) site reviews as required and demonstrate compliance with all standards in the program resource guides located on the HQMC SharePoint site: https://usmc-sharepoint-mil.us/sites/dcmra_family_mfn/Pages/MFCertification.aspx, per DoDI 1342.22 and NAVMC 1700.4.

8. Marines remain encouraged to participate in all DoD programs under the management of P&PR, (per ref b, Ch 6), including, but not limited to:

a. United States Military Apprenticeship Program;

b. College Level Examination Program (CLEP)/Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support Subject Standardized tests (DSST);

c. Marine Corps Credentialing Opportunities On-Line (per ref e).

Tuition Assistance Orientation Brief--Topics to Be Covered

Introduction, Contact Information of Installation VOLED Center Staff

- ESO
- Specialists/Counselors
- Technicians, Administrators (if applicable), and P&PD Advisors
- VOLED Center Phone Number and Email Address (if applicable)
- Other P&PD Sections - I&R, PFM, Transition, Libraries and LRCs

VOLED Center Services

- Academic, Career and Technical Program Advising
- Military Education Benefits Programs (including TA)
- Financial Aid Information, Advising and Guidance
- Available Testing Services - Military Classification, Admissions, and Credit-by-Exam (CLEP/DSST)
- Academic Skills Program
- Connection to Schools

Post-Secondary Education Programs Options, Terminology, Environment

- Academic credit - Semester, Quarter, Clock
- Diploma/Degree Options - Certificate, Associates, Bachelor's, Master's/Graduate
- Course Category Breakdowns - GenEd, Major/Core, Lower and Upper-Level Electives, Graduate and Cognate (as applicable)

Academic and Career Counseling

- Current MOS
- Ideal Position upon completion of active-duty service
- Chosen field of study and passion for knowledge
- Finding the right life-career balance - pros and cons: the more education, the higher the salary and the consequences
- Critical thinking and problem solving skills

Tuition Assistance (TA) Policies and Procedures for Initial and Continued Use

- Policy Documents - VoLED MCO, MARADMINs, FY TA Guidelines
- First-Time TA Users - TA Orientation per policy, regulations and guidelines, submission of degree plan
- Personal Readiness Seminar - Personal Financial Management Course
- TA Request procedures - application, approval, authorization, grade reporting, reimbursing or waiver of reimbursement
- WEB TA documentation