



OREGON DEPARTMENT
of **VETERANS' AFFAIRS**

Housing and Education Grants

House Veterans and Emergency Management (HVEM) Committee | 22 September 2022



PRESENTED BY

Kelly Fitzpatrick, Director



VETERAN EDUCATIONAL BRIDGE GRANT – PROGRAM BACKGROUND



Purpose: to support student veterans who are unable to complete an academic or training program on time because required courses or training hours are not available.

Grant Award: Up to \$5,000

Eligibility: Using Post 9/11 GI Bill® and unable to complete an academic or training program on time because required classes or training hours are not available.



VETERAN EDUCATIONAL BRIDGE GRANT – PROGRAM FUNDING

2019-21

Allocated: \$300,000 LF
+ 1 FTE funding

Total funds awarded: \$220,961
as of June 30, 2021

2021-23

Allocated: \$175,000 LF

Total funds awarded: \$49,848
as of September 8, 2022

2019 Regular Session: HB 2201 established the Veteran Educational Bridge Grant (VEBG).

2020: The initial grant launch experienced immediate impact from COVID-19 on the higher education system. School closures left some veterans with gaps in their educational funding. Significant need for this program in summer of 2020.



VETERAN EDUCATIONAL BRIDGE GRANT - AWARD HISTORY AND APPLICATION TRENDS

2021	APPLICATIONS	AWARDS	NOT AWARDED
January	1	1	N/A
February	1	0	1 withdrawn
March	1	1	N/A
April	1	1	N/A
May	1	1	N/A
June	2	0	2 ineligible
July (New Biennium)	1	1	N/A
August	1	1	N/A
September	2	2	N/A
October	0	0	N/A
November	0	0	N/A
December	0	0	N/A
2021 Totals	11	8	
2022	APPLICATIONS	AWARDS	NOT AWARDED
January	1	0	1 ineligible
February	1	1	N/A
March	2	1	1 ineligible
April	0	0	N/A
May	0	0	N/A
June	1	1	N/A
July	1	1	N/A
August	2	2	N/A
September (as of 9/8)	1	1	N/A
VEBG Totals	19	14	1 withdrawn / 4 ineligible

- Early 2020 school closures and employer shutdowns created widespread course and training unavailability. ODVA received 49 applications and awarded 43 Bridge Grants in 2020.
- As schools reopened and training hours in apprenticeship programs resumed, grant applications decreased.
- 2022 trends indicate occasional class cancellations, changes to course scheduling, and reduced apprenticeship training hours cause interruptions in academic or training progress, but on a smaller scale than during COVID.



VETERAN EDUCATIONAL BRIDGE GRANT – OUTREACH EFFORTS



Program Communication to Veterans

- Blog post featuring VEBG released to ODVA website, social media, and email list July 2022.
- Information and link to VEBG application attached to email signatures.
- Ongoing agency web, blog, social, and email communication about VEBG.
- Redesigned and updated Bridge Grant flyer.
 - Update includes active QR Code directing applicants to VEBG website.



Explore the
Veterans
Educational
Bridge Grant



VETERAN EDUCATIONAL BRIDGE GRANT – OUTREACH EFFORTS

Partnerships and Professional Networks

- ODVA Campus Veteran Coordinator Summit: Campus Veteran Coordinators at community colleges and public universities (July 2022).
- School Certifying Officials (SCO) via Oregon Association of Veteran School Certifying Officials (ORAVSCO) conference (May 17-18, 2022), website, and email messaging for distribution to their student populations.
- Partners with BOLI to send out to apprentices and apprenticeship coordinators in their registered apprentice networks.

Campus Visits and Outreach Events

- VEBG Coordinator visited 24 Oregon Institutes of Higher Learning (IHL) between May 1 – August 31, 2022.
- Outreach tables at Pride events in Portland, Bend, and Eugene.
- Outreach table at Yellow Ribbon events.



VEBG ELIGIBILITY – LEGISLATIVE CONCEPT

ODVA 2023-25 Legislative Concept (LC 397) would not change the current purpose of VEBG but would expand eligibility by:

- Eliminating the current statutory sunset of the grant (January 1, 2024) and making the VEBG program permanent.
- Eliminating the requirement that a veteran's program of training or education be approved for GI Bill® benefits.
- Allowing veterans at any licensed career school, in any registered apprenticeship, or any on-the-job training program with a public employer to be eligible.
- Eliminating the requirement that veterans have entitlement to education benefits based on service (i.e. GI Bill® benefits).
- Allowing veterans to apply for a grant of up to \$5,000 to cover a debt on a student account that is preventing them from enrolling in courses for an upcoming term.



GRANTS FOR VETERANS HOUSING STABILITY & HOUSELESSNESS

- HUD'S 2020 Homeless Assessment Report to Congress reported that Oregon has the 5th highest number of homeless veterans at 1,329.
- ODVA 2023-25 Policy Option Package would create grant funding to help address veterans' housing stability and homelessness.
- The purpose of the grant program is to provide direct and real-time services to veterans in need of housing support in order to reduce barriers and provide services and housing.
- Request includes funding for a grant to support veterans exiting incarceration, in support of successful reintegration.
 - Would be worked in partnership with ODOC, Veteran Service Officers, and local parole and probation.
- Request includes funding for a Grants Coordinator to administer the grants and work closely with ODVA partners.

QUESTIONS