



# Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor

**Higher Education Coordinating Commission**

Office of the Executive Director

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Salem, Oregon 97302

[www.oregon.gov/HigherEd](http://www.oregon.gov/HigherEd)

February 6, 2025

Co-Chair, Senator Janeen Sollman  
Co-Chair, Representative Ricki Ruiz  
Joint Committee on Ways and Means, Subcommittee on Education

Dear Co-Chairs Sollman and Ruiz,

During today's presentation on education for adults-in-custody, Sen. Sollman asked about the ability of such students to utilize federal veterans' education benefits.

The US Department of Veteran's Affairs (VA) states:

Beneficiaries incarcerated for other than a felony can receive full monthly [education] benefits, if otherwise entitled. Convicted felons residing in halfway houses (also known as "residential re-entry centers"), or participating in work-release programs also can receive full monthly benefits.

Claimants incarcerated for a felony conviction can be paid only the costs of tuition, fees, and necessary books, equipment, and supplies. VA cannot make payments for tuition, fees, books, equipment, or supplies if another Federal State or local program pays these costs in full.

If another government program pays only a part of the cost of tuition, fees, books, equipment, or supplies, VA can authorize the incarcerated claimant payment for the remaining part of the costs.

More information can be found at: <https://www.benefits.va.gov/persona/veteran-incarcerated.asp>

If you have further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Kyle Thomas  
Director, Legislative and Policy Affairs