

# Illinois Veteran Grant (IVG) -- Frequently Asked Questions

## ***What is the Illinois Veteran Grant?***

A state program since 1967, the Illinois Veteran Grant (IVG) is authorized in Illinois statute by the Higher Education Student Assistance Act (110 ILCS 947/) to cover all tuition and mandatory fees for qualified applicants attending public universities or community colleges in the state for a period that is equivalent to 4 years of full-time enrollment, including summer terms.

## ***What if the state budget doesn't provide any money for the program? Will I still get my benefits?***

Yes. IVG is an entitlement program, so benefits remain available to eligible applicants even if there is no state appropriation for the program. Illinois public universities and community colleges must provide tuition and mandatory fee benefits for qualified applicants without any condition other than the qualified applicant's maintenance of minimum grade levels and a satisfactory student loan repayment record. If the state does make an appropriation for the program, ISAC uses the funds to reimburse schools for grants provided through the program.

## ***Who is eligible for the Illinois Veteran Grant?***

To be eligible for the IVG, you must have served for at least one year of federal active duty service in the Armed Forces of the United States, a Reserve component of the Armed Forces, or the Illinois National Guard. Or, regardless of length of service, you may be eligible if you have served in a foreign country in a time of hostilities in that country; have been medically discharged for service related reasons; or have been discharged prior to August 11, 1967.

For each period of federal active duty service, you must have received an honorable discharge.

You must also meet certain Illinois residency requirements, based on residency prior to entering service and after separation from service. These, as well as other eligibility criteria, are explained in more detail on the ISAC website at: [isac.org/students/during-college/types-of-financial-aid/grants/IVG-program.html](http://isac.org/students/during-college/types-of-financial-aid/grants/IVG-program.html).

## ***What if I didn't return to Illinois after separating from service, but later moved back to Illinois and have lived there for several years?***

Effective July 1, 2019, Illinois residency requirements for IVG were expanded to allow veterans who did not separate to Illinois, but have since resided in Illinois after for at least 15 years after leaving service to be eligible for the program. To qualify under this provision, the veteran must: reside in Illinois at the time application and while enrolled, and have been a resident of Illinois for at least 15 consecutive years after leaving federal active duty. Veterans will need to provide documentation that confirms Illinois residency for the 15 consecutive years.

## ***Can I use the grant for private schools?***

The IVG is only available for qualified applicants attending Illinois public universities and public community colleges.

## ***Can I use the grant for a community college outside of my district?***

Yes. Recipients attending out-of-district community colleges receive tuition and fee benefits equivalent to those at the in-district rate, and IVG recipients are not responsible for paying the difference between in-district and out-of-district tuition.

***Can I use the grant for graduate school as well?***

Yes, IVG may be used at the graduate and undergraduate levels.

***Are there credit-hour enrollment requirements in order to use the grant, and does the grant expire?***

No. There is no minimum enrollment requirement and non-credit courses are eligible for IVG. IVG benefits do not expire. It is the student's responsibility, however, to notify the college of his or her eligibility status for IVG by the last scheduled day of classes for the term for which the student would like to utilize the benefits.

***What fees are covered by the IVG?***

IVG covers mandatory fees, defined for this grant as a fee that an institution assesses to each and every full-time student for each term. Application, graduation, laboratory, breakage, add/drop fees, and program administrative fees for out-of-state or foreign study are specifically excluded.

Please note that military benefit programs vary with respect to fees eligible for benefits. The federal Post-9/11 GI Bill, for example, covers fees such as health premiums, freshman fees, graduation fees, and lab fees, among others. Consult with your college or university's financial aid office to learn more about which fees would be covered by IVG or other programs for which you may be eligible.

***What if I qualify for IVG and GI Bill benefits? How do the two programs work together?***

Students who qualify for IVG and the Montgomery GI Bill may receive benefits from both programs during the same term for eligible educational expenses. For veterans who are eligible for Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits and who choose to use those benefits with IVG program in the same term, the Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits may be applied first (VA will be first payer), and any remaining eligible tuition and fee charges would be covered by IVG. In most cases, IVG units used will be prorated when combined with Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits; the exception to that is for those at the 100% eligibility level for Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits.

***What if I qualify for the IVG and the Illinois National Guard Grant (ING)? How do the two programs work together?***

Students can use IVG and ING together. However, students are encouraged to keep in mind that they will use the same amount of eligibility units for each program regardless of the amount of benefits paid. Students are encouraged to consult with the financial aid office at their institution for guidance.

***How do I apply?***

The online application is available at [isac.org](http://isac.org) and may be completed any time during the award year. Required documentation, including DD214s for all periods of federal active duty service, may be uploaded to ISAC electronically through the application process.

***Additional Questions?***

Contact ISAC at 800.899.4722, [isac.studentservices@illinois.gov](mailto:isac.studentservices@illinois.gov) or visit ISAC's Military Service page: <https://www.isac.org/students/during-college/military-service/index.html>.