



## **Military Tuition Assistance (TA) and TA Refund Process**

### **Military Tuition Assistance (TA) Overview:**

As part of Red Rocks Community College's (RRCC) commitment to provide excellent service to military students, we have a team of professionals in Veteran Services and Student Accounts Receivable ready to assist you with your Military Tuition Assistance (TA) funding. TA is a government benefit offered to eligible service members of the Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force, and Coast Guard to assist with the cost of tuition. Some Department of Defense employees and military spouses may also be eligible to receive a form of TA.

Each service has its own criteria for eligibility, obligated service, application process, and restrictions. This money is usually paid directly to the institution by the individual services. TA is not a loan; the student should view TA as money earned just like base pay.

Active duty service members may also elect to use the Montgomery GI Bill "Top Up" in addition to their military service branch provided TA to cover high cost courses.

The process for requesting TA is generally the same for all branches of the military. However, each student is responsible for confirming eligibility and completing the process with the specific branch.

### **High-Level Process Overview for Requesting TA:**

1. Speak with the local Education Services Officer (ESO) to ensure eligibility for TA.
2. Follow the ESO's instructions for how to request TA. The deadlines to request TA each term vary by service and each student must confirm the specific deadline applicable to their military service branch.
3. Military service branch approves the TA request.
4. Provide RRCC's Veteran Services office with the approved TA request for processing.
5. RRCC Student Accounts Receivable office posts the TA credit to the student account.

### **Dropping or Withdrawing From Classes:**

Each student is responsible for officially dropping any class registered, even when the first class meeting was not attended. Not attending classes is not an official drop or withdrawal, and it doesn't relieve the student of a financial obligation to RRCC.

Full refunds are available only if classes are officially dropped before the census day of specific class. Because course lengths vary, census dates are specific to each individual class. After the census date applicable to the class, students using TA are subject to the tuition Refund/Return of TA calculation below.

**This calculation is applicable ONLY for service members using Military Tuition Assistance benefits.**

### **Refund or Return of TA:**

TA is awarded to a student under the assumption that the student will attend school for the entire period for which the assistance is awarded. When a service member officially or unofficially withdraws from classes and did not complete at least 60% of the term, they are no longer eligible



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for the total amount initially awarded through TA. By federal law, TA funds are earned proportionally during the term, with unearned funds returned to the military service branch based on when the student stops attending. As a result, RRCC must calculate the amount of TA earned by the service member and the amount that must be refunded to the military service branch.

In instances where a service member stops attending due to a military service obligation, RRCC will work with the affected service member to identify solutions that will not result in a debt for the returned, unearned portion of TA.

The calculation performed by RRCC Student Accounts Receivable office determines the amount of unearned TA funding through the 60 percent portion of the term. Once a student attends 60 percent of the term, all TA received for the course is fully earned. The calculation is completed for each course individually. A student who drops a course before the census date applicable to that course does not receive any TA for that specific course.

### **Refund/Return of TA Calculation:**

When a service member ceases attendance in a class during a given term, a calculation of “earned” and “unearned” TA must be completed. All remaining TA is unearned and is returned to the official military branch. For courses which meet the length above, the applicable percentages listed above will be used.

**As a result of not completing the course, the earned TA may not cover all charges due to RRCC at that time and the student may owe both a balance due to the college and possibly the service branch.**

### ***Official Withdrawal from a Course***

An official withdrawal occurs when a student completes withdrawal paperwork in RRCC Enrollment Services or online. When a student officially withdraws from a course, the date of withdrawal will be used as the last date of attendance in order to calculate the amount of TA the student is eligible to receive.

### ***Unofficial Withdrawal from a Course***

An unofficial withdrawal occurs when a student never attends, stops attending, or stops participating in a course. If a student receives a grade of “F” (failure for nonattendance or nonperformance) for a course, that is considered an “unofficial” withdrawal. For unofficial withdrawals, RRCC will determine the last date of attendance by reviewing the last date of activity within a course. For online courses, RRCC will determine the last date of attendance based on the last date a student made a contribution to the class or submitted an assignment. For on campus courses, RRCC will reach out to the professor to determine the last date of attendance.

Once the last date of attendance has been determined, RRCC will re-calculate the student’s TA eligibility based on the following formula:

$$\text{Number of days completed/Total number days of the course/term} = \text{Percent earned}$$



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### **Return of funds:**

Determining eligibility for TA is course specific. The start and end date for each course will be used to determine eligibility.

Using the calculation formula above, RRCC will return some or all of the TA awarded to service members that did not complete at least 60% of each course; possibly creating a balance on the RRCC student account or a balance due to the military service branch. In some instances, a student could owe both RRCC and the military service branch, depending on how much of the term elapsed at the time of withdrawal.