

**California Military Department
GI Bill Award Program
2026-2027 AY Statement of Understanding**

Print Name (Last, First, MI):

Rank:

The Statement of Understanding highlights the California Education Code Chapter 2 of Part 42 of Division 5 of Title 3, commencing with section 69999.10 pertaining to the application and participation in the California Military Department GI Bill Award Program (CMD GI Bill), formerly the California National Guard Education Assistance Program (CNG EAAP). This Statement of Understanding is to assure that you are aware of critical information that affects your participation in the program.

To be completed by the Applicant:

(Initial in front of each statement after reading. Failure to do so will result in your form being rejected.)

I hereby acknowledge, understand, and agree that:

- I understand that modifying any portion of this Statement of Understanding may result in my being barred from participating in the program and prosecution under the Uniform Code of Military Justice.
- I am applying to enter the California Military Department GI Bill Award Program (CMD GI Bill), formerly the California National Guard Education Assistance Award Program (CNG EAAP) for the 2026-27 academic year (AY). I understand the academic year starts on July 1, 2026 and ends on June 30, 2027. The academic year that a term (semester or quarter) falls under is based on the start date of the term.
- I must complete and submit the 2026-27 AY Initial application, the 2026-27 AY Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), this Statement of Understanding (SOU), the Letter of Recommendation form, and the annual Service Commitment Acknowledgment form by the priority application deadline date of April 30, 2026, to be considered as a priority applicant. These steps and the related links can be found by going to [Calguard Education Site](#).

Applicants who do not complete all 5 steps by the April 30, 2026 deadline can apply as first-come, first serve applicants by completing the 2026-27 AY Initial Application, the 2026-27 AY Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), this Statement of Understanding (SOU), and the annual Service Commitment Acknowledgement form until April 30, 2027, when the application closes for the 2026-27 AY. Materials submitted beyond this date will not be processed.

- I must adhere to all application, program, and institutional deadlines. Failure to do so may result in withdrawal from the CMD GI Bill.
- I will remain an active member of the Cal Guard (California National Guard, California State Guard, or California Naval Militia) during the participation period of the CMD GI Bill and I understand that I must serve two (2) years in the Cal Guard upon completion of the last academic period that I use educational assistance under this Program. Failure to serve the 2 years upon completion of the Program will result in recoupment of all funds received. I understand the term "active member" to be my full conformance to the military standards for attendance, personal appearance, weight, discipline, and any other standard established by military regulations and I must meet any other requirement set forth by my component. Prior to leaving the Cal Guard, I will provide the CMD GI Bill Coordinators at least 2.5 years notice.
- My enlistment obligation takes precedence over my academic work. Military duties may require me, temporarily, to interrupt my academic program to serve annual training periods, active duty training exercises, required service school, state active duty, mobilizations, or other active military service. If I cannot maintain the minimum of 3 units per term, I will submit a Record Change Request form for a Leave of Absence for those terms as soon as I know that I will not be able to attend the term or I may be withdrawn.

- I agree to use the award to obtain a certificate, degree, or diploma not currently held and that leads to a baccalaureate, graduate, or doctoral degree. I agree to complete my course of study within 10 years of my initial acceptance into the program.
- I understand that I can utilize the Program to obtain one degree (baccalaureate or higher). If I previously participated in the Program, I did not receive a baccalaureate or higher degree I was pursuing while utilizing the Program. On the application, I will list only the degree I am currently pursuing and not subsequent degrees for the Desired Certificate/Degree/Diploma field. If I entered something else, I understand I can go back and change my application or I can request the Record Change Request form from the CMD GI Bill Coordinators at the e-mail address below to update my application.
- I am a resident of California as determined by my institution and I will remain a California resident throughout the participation period of the terms I receive an award for. To be a California resident, I must have lived in California for one year prior to the residency determination date and must intend to remain in California. If I am currently living out of state, it is only because I have been assigned temporary military orders that require me to do so as a Cal Guard member and I have already obtained California residency. Being eligible for a nonresident fee waiver for military service is not sufficient.
- I must enroll in and attend an eligible program at an eligible institution for a minimum of 3 academic units per term for continued eligibility in the CMD GI Bill. Should I miss a term or attend less than 3 units for a term, I will submit a Record Change Request form with the Leave of Absence section completed to remain active in the program or I risk being withdrawn. I can obtain the Record Change Request form by contacting the CMD GI Bill Coordinators at the e-mail address listed below. I understand that if an eligible institution has more than one school or location that the one I attend must be included in the Institutional Participation Agreement with the California Student Aid Commission and that a separate graduate school may not be eligible. I understand that I can contact the CMD GI Bill Coordinators to confirm eligibility.
- I am responsible for reporting educational benefits I receive from the federal GI Bill or any other federal educational benefits program for veterans. I must submit a Record Change Request form to report changes in the benefits that I am receiving. I can obtain the Record Change Request form by contacting the CMD GI Bill Coordinators at the e-mail address listed below. Failure to properly report money received for GI Bill benefits or other federal educational benefits for veterans may be grounds for denial to participate in the program and prosecution under the Uniform Code of Military Justice. These benefits include, but are not limited to the following:
 - GI Bill Benefits: Ch. 30 – Montgomery GI Bill – Active Duty; Ch. 1606 – Montgomery GI Bill – Selected Reserve; Ch. 33 – Post 9/11 GI Bill (including Yellow Ribbon, the STEM Scholarship, and the Fry Scholarship)
 - Other Federal Educational Benefits for Veterans: Federal Tuition Assistance (including Air Force TA); Ch. 31 – Veteran Readiness and Employment (VR&E); Ch. 32 – Veterans Educational Assistance Program; Ch. 35 – Dependents’ Educational Assistance; ROTC Scholarship.
- I understand that I start the program with the equivalent of 4 full-time academic years of eligibility (400%) based on a traditional (9-month) school year. If I previously participated in the program and am returning to the Program, my eligibility remaining is based on my previous participation. Upon receiving an award payment in the CMD GI Bill, my eligibility will decrease incrementally based on my enrollment status (i.e., quarter time, half-time, three-quarter time, or full-time). As the award is utilized, the percentage will decrease as stated in the schedule below:
 - Semester or Trimester terms: Full-time: 50%; Three-quarter: 37.5%; Half-time: 25%; Quarter-time: 12.5%
 - Quarter terms: Full-time: 33.33%; Three-quarter time: 25%; Half-time: 16.67%; Quarter-time: 8.33

I may receive benefits until my 400% of eligibility runs out or I am permanently withdrawn from the program. I understand there are allowances for eligible educational programs that require a 5th year of instruction and for an initial teaching credential that might allow for one additional year (100%) of eligibility, contingent upon funds being authorized and available. I understand I must check if my program is eligible by contacting the CMD GI Bill Coordinator(s) at the e-mail address listed below.

- My receipt of award payments for the CMD GI Bill is subject to the availability of funds authorized by the approved/adjusted annual State Budget.
- I must notify the CMD GI Bill Coordinator(s) about any institution changes or changes in my contact information (phone number, e-mail address, mailing address, or name changes) by submitting the Record Change Request form, which can be obtained by contacting the CMD GI Bill Coordinators at the e-mail address listed below.
- I must maintain at least a 2.0 cumulative grade point average (GPA) at an eligible institution. If I was previously a participant in the Program and received an award payment, I certify that my cumulative GPA was 2.0 or greater for the last term I received a payment. I understand failure to maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.0 or greater will result in permanent withdrawal from the CMD GI Bill.
- I cannot receive funds from both the CMD GI Bill and the Cal Grant program in the same academic year. I understand that receiving the CMD GI Bill may impact any financial-need based awards I am receiving and I may have to choose between the CMD GI Bill and the financial-need based awards.
- If I am accepted, I understand there is no guaranteed date of when CMD GI Bill funds will be disbursed. My institution may require payment in advance. It is my responsibility to make payment arrangements with my institution.
- I understand that, if I am accepted into the CMD GI Bill, the maximum award amount I may receive is calculated based on the institution I selected on my application. If I change from an institution with a lower maximum award amount to an institution with a higher maximum award amount, I will only receive the higher award amount if funds are available.
- I certify all funds received will be used for educationally related expenses. I understand that the actual award amount for a term is calculated by taking my Cost of Attendance for the term (as provided by my institution) and subtracting any federal educational benefits received for the term to determine the unmet Cost of Attendance for the term. I can then be awarded the lesser of the unmet Cost of Attendance for the term or the maximum award amount allowed for the term.
- If I attend the University of California or the California State University, I may be awarded up to the maximum of the Cal Grant A award as adjusted by the annual budget act. If I attend a non-public institution, I may be awarded up to the maximum of the Cal Grant A award for the University of California as adjusted by the annual budget act. If I attend a California Community College, I may be awarded up to the maximum of the Cal Grant B award as adjusted by the annual budget act. If I attend an eligible baccalaureate program, I may be eligible for additional funds. I must contact the CMD GI Bill Coordinators at the e-mail address listed below prior to starting the term at the upper level courses or when applying for the CMD GI Bill before I can be considered for the additional funds.
- To be eligible for an award for the summer term, I must submit a completed Summer Term Certification form found on the [Calguard Education Site](#) signed by my unit commander stating that my summer term enrollment will not adversely impact my attendance at mandatory military training. Whether the summer term at the institution I attend is considered to be mandatory or discretionary is determined by how the institution establishes the term in the California Student Aid Commission's WebGrants System. I can contact the CMD GI Bill Coordinators at the e-mail address listed below to find out if my summer term is considered mandatory or discretionary. The CMD GI Bill will only pay towards discretionary

summer terms if there are enough funds remaining at the end of the academic year after all mandatory terms have been paid.

- It is my responsibility to e-mail the CMD GI Bill Coordinator at the e-mail address listed below to verify that I have completed all of the application steps.
- Failure to reply to the CMD GI Bill Coordinators may result in withdrawal from the Program.
- I have read the Frequently Asked Questions at [Calguard Education Site](#) in the past 30 days.
- This form must be submitted within 30 days of the signature date of the Unit Commander.

By signing the Statement of Understanding, I declare under penalty of perjury that I understand and agree to all obligations, responsibilities, and standards set forth.

Signature must be handwritten or an e-signature, such as a CAC-signature, but cannot be a digital image

Print Name (Last, First, MI):

Last 4 SSN:

Contact E-Mail:

Contact Phone Number:

Signature:

Date:

To be completed by the Unit Commander:

By my signature, I am certifying the individual identified above is an active member in the California National Guard, State Military Reserve, or Naval Militia per the definition above.

Signature must be handwritten or an e-signature, such as a CAC-signature, but cannot be a digital image

Print Name (Last, First, MI):

Rank:

Unit:

Signature:

Date:

Scan and e-mail completed form (.pdf format only) to cmd.gi.bill@cmd.ca.gov