

## **DEPENDENT EDUCATION ASSISTANCE (CHAPTER 35) HIGH SCHOOL BENEFIT**

There is a little-known benefit available to children of 100% permanent and total disabled veterans. Dependent children who turn 18 years of age during their senior year of High School can start receiving Chapter 35 benefits while attending High School.

History, 100% permanent and total disabled spouses and dependent children are eligible to receive Dependent Education Assistance (DEA). Spouses are eligible for the benefit for 7 years from the date the veteran is rated 100% permanent and total disabled. Dependent children are eligible from age 18 through age 26.

Both spouses and dependent children receive 36 months of DEA benefits that can be used for College, On-The-Job (OJT) Training and/or Apprenticeship programs. Dependent children who turn 18 during their senior year of High School can receive DEA benefits while attending High School full time and it **does not** take away from their 36 months of DEA benefits for College, OJT and/or Apprenticeships. Most veterans are unaware of this benefit, and it is not advertised on the VA website.

What DEA pays for the 18-year-old senior in High School? The child will receive approximately \$1,400.00 per month from their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday until High School Graduation. They can then enroll in college and still have 36 months of benefits to help pay for college tuition should the child decide to attend College after High School Graduation.

What is the process to get the student paid?

Step one, the child must apply for DEA on the VA Website at [benefits.va.gov](https://benefits.va.gov). This step activates the benefit and establishes eligibility for DEA.

Second step, the Georgia State Approving Agency (SAA) must approve the High School as a school eligible to certify students to the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) for payment. Once the High School is approved, the SAA will assist the school with the certification of the student to get the payments started.

How does this effect the veteran's disability payments? As part of disability compensation veterans receive a certain amount of their disability payments based on the number of dependents they claim. Children are no longer eligible to be on the award once they turn 18. In most circumstances VA will allow the child to remain on the award until High School Graduation. However, the DEA benefit in most cases exceeds what the veteran would normally receive with the dependent as part of their disability award.

How do I get started? Contact the Georgia SAA at [saaga@vs.state.ga.gov](mailto:saaga@vs.state.ga.gov) or (404) 656-2306 or 2322 and we will be happy to work with you through the entire process and answer any questions you may have.