

## TUITION ASSISTANCE GUIDELINES AND REGULATIONS for FY 2023

This assembles into one location, all Marine Corps Tuition Assistance (TA) regulations and procedures, as found in the Department of Defense Instruction (DoDI) 1322.25, all Changes; Marine Corps Order (MCO) 1560.25 and MARADMINs 147/07, 639/11, 687/14, 093/16, 255/18, 150/19, 218/19, and 765/20, as well as provides additional guidance for first-time-TA-users and time in service obligations for active-duty Marines using TA who are in the Warrant Officer and Limited Duty Officer program.

DoDI 1322.25 remains the principal policy and guidance on DoD Voluntary Education programs. These documents supply guidance to allow for responsible stewardship of government funds for Marines using TA toward their coursework, but in the event of any legal challenges, only the DoDI 1322.25 and MCO 1560.25 may stand per their connection with U.S.C.

These FY23 Guidelines and Regulations strive to meet the challenges and tasks presented from the Commandant of the Marine Corps (CMC) *2017 Institutional Task List for Deputy Commandants and Commanders* and the CMC *2021 Talent Management 2030*.

1. TA is authorized only for Marines who meet the standards and eligibility criteria contained herein, in the MCO, and/or in any applicable MARADMIN. Initial and continued usage of TA is at commanders' discretion. Commanders shall ensure Marines meet all eligibility criteria:

(a) TA is authorized only for tuition charges and tuition fees, for up to 100 percent of costs including lab, technology, and distance learning fees, not to exceed \$250 per semester hour (SH), or \$166.67 per quarter hour (QH), or \$16.67 per clock hour (CH), for undergraduate and graduate courses, and \$4,500 per individual per fiscal year (FY). (The DoDI 1322.25 establishes the following equivalents to be applied herein, or when necessary, with regard to earned academic credit: 1 SH = .67 QH = 15 CH.) Marines are responsible for costs that exceed TA authorized funding limits, as well as all non-tuition fees including, but not limited to, costs associated with room, board, equipment, supplies, books/materials, exams, insurance, parking, transportation, admissions, registration, or fines.

(b) Marines shall be eligible for promotion per MCO P1400.31C and P1400.32D.

(c) Marines will have no minimum time in service (T-I-S) requirement prior to the utilization of TA. Additionally, Marines awaiting training status are eligible to utilize TA.

(d) Prior to first-time use of TA, Marines will have:

(1) completed the Personal Readiness Seminar (PRS) accomplished within 90 days of arrival at the First Permanent Duty Station, or any PRS on any Marine Corps installation; or, the Personal Financial Management course on MarineNet; completion of PRS, or the PFM Program course is submitted to the Unit Education Officer (UEO) prior to attending the TA Orientation brief;

(2) completed the TA Orientation brief through the installation Voluntary Education (VolEd) Center; a list of topics covered in the TA Orientation Brief are found in the TA Brief Essential Elements.

(3) met at least one of the following criteria -

(a) completed at least 10 academic semester credits at the post-secondary level, with no grade lower than a C;

(b) earned a score of at least 50 on the Armed Forces Qualification Test (AFQT);

(c) earned a score of at least 100 on the General Technical portion of the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery;

(d) completed the Academic Skills Program in the classroom;

(e) completed the Online Academic Skills Program (OASC). If none of these criteria are met, the installation Education Services Officer (ESO) reserves the right to authorize TA for one course per academic term until ten semester credits (or fifteen quarter credits) have been completed. If all academic credits are completed with no grade lower than a C, the Marine may continue to use TA at the maximum allowable.

(e) The installation VOLED Center shall document completion of these requirements to the Marine's official TA account as found in the Navy College Management Information System (NCMIS), per MCO 1560.25. First-time TA applicants will receive authorized TA funding for only one course, unless documentation is provided that the Marine has completed at least 31 SH with a minimum grade point average (GPA) of 2.5, on the 4-point scale.

(f) TA applications are submitted only within 60 days of the start date of the class. TA applications may contain no more than one course per application (per NCMIS). Marines may not have more than two TA-funded classes active at any given time.

(g) TA funds for approved involuntary withdrawal waivers and failed courses will count toward individual fiscal year ceilings.

(h) TA is authorized for only one course in the next academic term, should:

(1) the undergraduate cumulative GPA fall between 2.0 and

2.5;

(2) a grade of "D" or "F" is received in any course during the previous term in which TA was utilized;

(3) a voluntary or involuntary withdrawal occurred from any course during the previous term in which TA was utilized.

(i) Marines using TA will maintain a cumulative GPA of at least 2.0 after completing 10 SH in undergraduate studies, or at least 3.0 after completing 9 SH in graduate studies. If the GPA for TA-funded courses falls below these minimum GPA limits, TA cannot be authorized.

(j) Career and technical education certificate programs who wish to receive TA will:

(1) be accredited by an accrediting body recognized by the Department of Education;

(2) be approved by the Department of Veterans Affairs;

(3) have a signed DOD Memorandum of Understanding.

(k) Marines may utilize TA toward one academic degree at the next level higher than that currently held by the Marine, following the policies and guidance contained herein, in DoDI 1322.25 and MCO 1560.25. The academic degree ranks are as follows in ascending order: Certificate, Associate's, Bachelor's, or Master's/Post Baccalaureate. The academic certificate may be at any level, provided that completion of a Master's degree is not a requirement for admission into the program.

(l) The maximum number of SH allowed for TA funding shall be capped at Undergraduate-138; Graduate-45.

(m) Degree pre-requisites or developmental courses can be funded by TA, but must be included on the Marine's education plan and will count towards the TA funding cap at the level of the degree pursued.

(n) The Marine must submit an education plan by the time ten semester credits have been successfully completed, regardless of whether or not TA funded these earned academic semester credits. The "Student Work Week" expectation maintains for academic guidance purposes, at three hours/week over a 16-week academic term, for every SH earned, to include class time, adjusted proportionately for the varied lengths of academic terms.

(o) Marines who completed an initial master's degree through the Military Studies program at Command and Staff Marine Corps University (Command & Staff) will be eligible for TA funding for courses toward a second master's degree. All current Marine Corps TA policies, regulations, rates, procedures, caps and criteria outlined herein and in MCO 1560.25, remain in effect, including all incurred T-I-S obligations. Command & Staff Marines shall present their Marine Corps University transcripts to the Installation VolEd Center prior to receiving the TA Orientation brief and subsequent submission of TA applications. This is unique to Command & Staff Marine selectees.

(p) Marines who fail to complete a course successfully must reimburse received TA funds. Successful course completion, in compliance with DoDI 1322.25, is defined for the purpose of reimbursement as a grade of "C" or higher for undergraduate courses, a "B" or higher for graduate courses, and a "pass" for "pass/fail" courses. TA funds will be recouped from Marines for "D" and "F"/fail grades, unresolved "I"/Incomplete, or courses from which the Marine voluntarily withdrew, resulting in a "W" grade. Recoupment for undergraduate grades of "D" or below and graduate grades of "C" or below cannot be waived.

(q) Recoupment for withdrawals related to duty, medical or emergency circumstances may be waived. Waiver requirements and processes are contained in MCO 1560.25. Reimbursement procedures and all related pertinent information are obtained through the Installation VolEd Ctr.

(r) Open issues in Marines' NCMIS TA accounts, including incomplete courses, reimbursement issues, and waivers, will be resolved, and posted to the Marine's NCMIS TA account prior to command approval and authorization of any future TA requests.

(s) TA cannot be authorized for fees related to certifications, license exams, or credentials.

(t) Utilization of authorized TA funds requires T-I-S beyond the end date of the academic term, regardless of the course level funded. Marines must reimburse paid TA funds for T-I-S not met, at the percentage equal to that of the unmet T-I-S. (MCO1560.25, Ch 6, Sect 1, and {1}). Marines do not reimburse TA to the Installation VolEd Ctr, but they may obtain all pertinent information regarding TA reimbursement from the Installation VolEd Ctr ESO and/or any VolEd Ctr personnel with "by direction" authority from the ESO. T-I-S requirements are as follows:

(1) Commissioned Officers must serve 24 months (per DoDI 1322.25, Change 4, Enclosure 3, Section c, and MCO 1560.25, Ch 6);

(2) Enlisted personnel must serve 60 days (per MARADMIN 687/14);

(3) Limited Duty Officers (LDOs), Chief Warrant Officers (CWOs) and Warrant Officers (WOs) who do not hold a Baccalaureate degree must serve 60 days; LDOs, CWOs, and WOs who have completed a Baccalaureate degree must serve 24 months; (per MARADMIN 765/20)

(4) Reserve Component officers on active duty orders/mobilization must serve 24 months; Officers who end their active service (EAS) and transition seamlessly to Active Reserve (AR) program may use service time in AR program toward the 24-month T-I-S requirement.

(u) TA is not authorized for non-credit courses, training programs, or programs under continuing education or workforce development.

(v) Marines assigned to Military Occupation School or residential Professional Military Education (i.e., Command and Staff College, Corporals Course, Sergeants Course, Career Course, etc.) shall not receive TA funding until they return to their regular or permanent duty.

(w) Marines attending vocational/technical certification programs with more than one class or module shall receive TA funding for a maximum of two classes or modules at a time.

2. Marines shall contact their base Voluntary Education and Career Centers to ensure full compliance with all current Marine Corps TA policies and criteria as outlined herein and in MCO 1560.25. TA authorization is contingent upon responsible stewardship of available funds by the installation's ESO and all installation VolEd and education support personnel. The ESO retains the discretion to treat each TA application solely on the merits of the individual case.

3. Marines remain encouraged to participate in all appropriate personal and professional readiness programs, including, but not limited to:

(a) United States Military Apprenticeship Program

(b) College Level Examination Program (CLEP)/Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support Subject Standardized tests (DSST) credit-by-exam as appropriate

(c) Marine Corps Credentialing Opportunities On-Line (COOL).

## APPENDIX

### TUITION ASSISTANCE ORIENTATION BRIEF

- Topics to be Covered as Applicable to the USMC Installation VolEd Center

#### “What the Marine Should Know to Use TA”

- Installation VOLED Center Phone Number and Email Address
- Installation VOLED Center and Staff - Contact Information (ESO, Specialists, Counselors, Administrators, Technicians, Advisors)
- Installation VOLED Center Services Offered
  - Academic and Technical Program Advising and Resources
  - Career Guidance
  - Financial Aid information (FAFSA, Work-Study, Scholarships, Loans, Other)
  - Military Education Benefits Programs (TA, GI Bill)
  - Transcripts - Academic and Joint Services
  - Testing (Military Classification, Cr-by-Exam, Pearson Vue, FAA, Proctoring)
  - Basic Academic Skills (MASP and/or OASC)
  - Installation MOU Schools and Representatives
  - Other P&PD Sections - I&R, Finance, Libraries, LRC
- Post-Secondary Education Terminology
  - Types of academic credit hours - Semester, Quarter, Clock (1 SH = .67 QH = 15 CH)
- Degree/Diploma Options, Common Credit Hour Requirements (in SH) Certificate (18-32); Associates (60); Baccalaureate (120); Masters (30-45)
- Course Categories (GenEd, Major/Core, Major Electives, General Electives)
- Course Levels (Lower=100/200; Upper=300/400; Graduate=500 and up)
- Accreditation (Regional, National, Programmatic)
- Tuition Assistance (TA) Policies, Regulations, and Procedures
  - Policy Documents - MCO, MARADMINs, FY Policies and Guidelines)
  - First-Time TA Users -- Orientation Brief, PFM/PRS, previous VolEd/GT/TABE
  - Marine Applies, Command Approves, VolEd Ctr Authorizes

- Course Completion -- Grades, Open Issues, Reimbursement/Waiver