

**DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY**  
**BOARD FOR CORRECTION OF MILITARY RECORDS**

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**Application for Correction of  
The Coast Guard Record of:**

**BCMR Docket No. 2025-069**

████████████████████  
**MSTC/E-7 (Retired)**

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**FINAL DECISION**

This proceeding was conducted according to the provisions of 10 U.S.C. §1552 and 14 U.S.C. §2507. The Chair docketed the case after receiving the completed application on March 12, 2025 and assigned the case to a staff attorney to prepare the decision in accordance with 33 C.F.R. § 52.61(c).

This final decision, dated October 23, 2025, is approved and signed by the three (3) duly appointed members who were designated to serve as the Board in this case.

**APPLICANT’S REQUEST AND ALLEGATIONS**

Applicant requests a correction of benefits, reflecting that he transferred his Post 9/11 G.I. Bill educational benefits to his dependent children (██████, DOB XX/XX/2006 and ██████ DOB XX/XX/2009).

After the birth of his second child in 2009, Applicant transferred his Post-9/11 G.I. Bill (Chapter 33) educational benefits to his dependents on September 18, 2009. As a result of the transfer, he incurred an additional 48-month obligation, the service of which he completed in 2013. When he retired in 2019, his yeoman verbally confirmed that his children and then-wife were entitled to use the education benefits. After his retirement, the VA management system accurately reflected his two children and then-wife as eligible.

However, in October 2023, Applicant and his wife divorced. Applicant updated his paperwork with CG PSC to reflect the change in marital status, which would thereby affect any benefits which would have flowed to his former spouse. Subsequently, in May 2024, Applicant’s older child applied to use the educational benefits to begin college in Fall 2024, but was denied. As a result of the denial, Applicant discovered that his children had been removed from eligibility

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to use the Post-9/11 G.I. Bill when PSC made the marital update. Until that point, Applicant was not aware that the children had been removed, as he did not request any change to the children's status. Applicant seeks to correct their removal.

Applicant submitted the following materials in support of his application:

1. DD-149;
2. Email confirmation of the transfer of educational benefits, dated September 18, 2009;
3. Email correspondence with the office of Senator Bob Casey;
4. Correspondence with the Department of Veterans Affairs concerning denial of educational benefits and Applicant's inquiry into reason for denial;
5. Correspondence with USCG concerning designations;
6. Correspondence with the office of Congressman Brendan F. Boyle.

### **SUMMARY OF THE RECORD**

In 2009, Applicant transferred his Post-9/11 G.I. Bill educational benefits to his dependents: two children and a spouse. The USCG emailed him confirmation of the transfer, noting specifically that his *dependents* could start using the benefits. Because of the transfer, Applicant was obligated to serve an additional 48 months, which he completed in 2013.

In 2019, Applicant retired from the USCG. At that time, his children appeared in DMDC as dependents for education benefits.

In 2023, Applicant divorced. At that point, he contacted PSC to inform of the change in marital status only. Thereafter, in May 2024, when his older child was making financial arrangements to begin college in the fall and was denied use of the Bill, Applicant discovered that his children had also been removed when his former spouse was removed. Applicant inquired with the VA and USCG PSC to find out what had caused the removal of both children, and to correct the mistake. PSC explained that according to its transaction logs, only Applicant's spouse was listed as a beneficiary and that his children had not been listed.

### **VIEWS OF THE COAST GUARD**

On May 9, 2025, a Judge Advocate (JA) of the Coast Guard submitted an advisory opinion recommending that Applicant's request be denied. The JA explains that the system tracking educational benefits (DMDC) includes transaction logs for every time a member "completes transactions related to their educational benefits." According to the logs, the JA asserts that Applicant transferred 36 months of educational benefits to his spouse in 2009. The allocation was not changed until 2024, when the former spouse's allocation was reduced to seven (7) months. Based on the transaction logs, the JA asserted that the children were not designated beneficiaries, and, therefore, are not entitled to Applicant's accrued educational benefits.

## **APPLICANT'S RESPONSE TO THE VIEWS OF THE COAST GUARD**

After the Chair sent Applicant the Coast Guard's Advisory Opinion and invited him to respond within thirty days, the Applicant responded on August 1, 2025. Applicant objected to the Advisory Opinion, attaching correspondence that in 2019, when he retired, his servicing USCG yeoman verbally confirmed that Applicant's then-spouse *and children* were eligible to receive educational benefits.

## **APPLICABLE REGULATIONS**

The Post-9/11 G.I. Bill, 38 U.S.C. § 3301, *et seq.*, was enacted in Chapter 33 of Public Law 110-252 (2008). Administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Bill entitles dependents of qualifying individuals (e.g., active duty servicemembers or veterans having separated) to receive educational benefits. Qualifying individuals must complete a term of service in order to receive the educational benefits, and are authorized to transfer unused education benefits to family members. 38 U.S.C. § 3319.

## **FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS**

The Board makes the following findings and conclusions based on the Applicant's military record and submissions, the Coast Guard's submissions and applicable law:

1. The Board has jurisdiction concerning this matter pursuant to 10 U.S.C. § 1552.
2. An application to the Board must be filed within three years after the applicant discovers the alleged error or injustice.<sup>1</sup> The error or injustice in this case was discovered in May 2024, when education benefits were denied to one of Applicant's dependents. Applicant's submitted application for Board consideration was received on December 10, 2024. The instant application is timely.
3. A review of the merits of this case reveals that Applicant's request warrants relief.
4. Applicant accrued education benefits pursuant to 33 U.S.C. § 3301, *et seq.*, requirements. In 2009, after the birth of his second child, Applicant requested to transfer his Post-9/11 G.I. Bill education benefits to his dependents. The USCG emailed correspondence to Applicant confirming that Applicant's request was approved, and further confirmed that his *dependents* could "now follow the necessary steps to apply for benefits." Email from YN3 Jenna Seyjagat, USCG, dated 9/18/2009. Applicant was obligated to complete an additional 48 months of service as a result of transferring these benefits. He completed his obligation in 2013.

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<sup>1</sup> 10 U.S.C. § 1552(b) and 33 C.F.R. § 52.22.

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5. In 2019, Applicant retired from service in the USCG. Following his divorce in 2023, the applicant contacted PSC to inform the Coast Guard of a change in his marital status (divorced) to be reflected for his benefits accordingly. In May 2024, one of Applicant's dependents (older minor child) applied to use the authorized education benefits to begin college and was denied. As a result of the denial, Applicant discovered his children had been removed from eligibility. Applicant states that he did not request removal of his children from Post-9/11 G.I. Bill eligibility.

6. DMDC transaction logs reflect that changes were made to Applicant's account in 2010, 2015, 2019 and 2024. The logs further reflect that transaction log updates in 2010, 2015, and 2019, were made by an unknown user. There is no evidence that the applicant personally made or was aware of any changes to his account that removed his dependents from eligibility for Post-9/11 G.I. Bill benefits.

7. The reliance on transaction logs, in this instance, is misplaced, as the logs do not reflect that a servicemember made specific designations or changes to his or her account. USCG personnel processed Applicant's transfer of education benefits and retirement paperwork. Applicant trusted that the USCG personnel tasked with processing 1) his transfer of benefits, and 2) his retirement, were indeed competent to understand the information they were entering and were accurately representing to him the information they observed in the system. Consequently, to conclude that both personnel erred in reporting that his *dependents* were eligible, when only one *dependent* was eligible, is unreasonable. This would require that both USCG personnel tasked with processing Applicant's paperwork—first in 2009 and then in 2019—were equally incompetent in reporting to him that his children were included as eligible dependents for benefits.

8. Nevertheless, it defies logic that an active duty servicemember would obligate himself to 48 additional months of service for the sole purpose of transferring specifically applied-for education benefits to a spouse and exclude his children. Whether transferring to one or all dependents, the 48-month active duty service obligation requirement is the same. At the time of transfer, Applicant's family consisted of a wife, a 3-year-old and a newborn. This servicemember was diligent in transferring his G.I. Bill education benefits to his family just after the birth of his second child. Such diligence does not also invite an inference of dereliction in providing for one's children when presented the specific opportunity and given the obligation he actually incurred.

9. Accordingly, it is the Decision of the Board that Applicant's request be granted.

**[ORDER AND SIGNATURE ON NEXT PAGE]**

**ORDER**

The application of MSTC [REDACTED] USCG Retired, to correct the error of removing his children from eligibility to use educational benefits per Applicant's Post-9/11 GI Bill, is GRANTED. Applicant's dependent children ([REDACTED] DOB XX/XX/2006 and [REDACTED] DOB XX/XX/2009) are hereby reinstated as eligible dependents for purposes of Applicant's Post-9/11 G.I. Bill benefits, effective upon the original date of transfer in 2009.

October 23, 2025

