



ARKANSAS NATIONAL GUARD TUITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. What is NGTA?

NGTA is a state funded program created by the Arkansas General Assembly in 2017, which provides a tuition free benefit to qualifying members of the Arkansas Army and Air National Guards. NGTA may be used all public institutions of higher education within the state of Arkansas.

2. Can I still get GTIP (Guard Tuition Incentive Program)?

The National Guard Tuition Assistance Program (NGTA) replaces GTIP altogether. There are a few Guardsmen, who have already been identified and notified via email, that have been “grandfathered” in and are eligible to still receive GTIP. These were ONLY the Guardsmen that attended private institutions AND had previously been awarded GTIP.

3. Who qualifies for NGTA?

The NGTA Program is open to all Guardsmen of the Arkansas Army and Air National Guard who do not already possess a Bachelor’s Degree, are residents of the State of Arkansas, are in “Good Standing”, have completed Initial Active Duty Training (Basic Training or had the Basic Training requirement waived by the Reserve Officer’s Training Corps (ROTC)), and are enrolled in a degree producing program.

4. What is meant by in “Good Standing?”

In “Good Standing” is defined as NOT under a Suspension of Favorable Actions (Flag) for serious misconduct at the time of application.

5. What law is NGTA based on? Where can I find it?

NGTA was implemented due to Act 471 of the State of Arkansas 91st General Assembly, Regular Session, 2017, Arkansas Code § 6-61-112 can be read in full here: arkleg.state.ar.us/assembly/2017/2017R/Acts/Act471.pdf

6. I’m out of the Guard now. Can I still get NGTA?

If you were discharged for non-medical reasons or medical reasons that are not service connected, you are eligible for the semester in which you were enrolled at the time of discharge. If you were medically discharged due to a service connected condition, you may remain eligible for up to 5 years from the date of discharge. Once you have received the benefit for 120 credit hours, or have completed a bachelor’s degree, you will no longer be eligible.

7. What if I qualified for NGTA, but mobilized/deployed and had to withdraw from classes?

In the event that a mobilization or deployment interrupts your enrollment and you are currently receiving NGTA, you will remain eligible for a period of time equal to the semester in which you were enrolled. It is your responsibility to notify the institution as soon as possible, via copies of the orders for mobilization or deployment. The institution will handle the mobilization in accordance with Arkansas Code § 6-61-112. If you are discharged following a mobilization which interrupted enrollment, you may be eligible to receive NGTA for a length of time equal to the deployment.

8. What if I mobilize/deploy, but do not notify the institution or withdraw from classes before I leave?

Ultimately, you are responsible for notifying the institution prior to withdrawal. Failure to do so may result in funds owed by YOU to the institution. Get them a copy of your orders as soon as possible. If you are already deployed, you can send them a copy via mail, email, or fax. The key is to communicate with them and provide the requested documentation as soon as possible.

9. What is meant by “a degree producing program?”

A degree producing program is a program of study leading to an undergraduate degree. You should discuss specific courses and programs with your institution to ensure they are eligible for NGTA.

10. I already have a bachelor’s degree and want another one. Can I still get NGTA?

No. To qualify for NGTA, you cannot have previously been awarded a Bachelor's Degree.

11. I already have an associate’s degree and I want to get my bachelor’s degree or another associate’s degree. Can I still get NGTA?

Yes. You are eligible for NGTA up to a bachelor’s degree or you have received the benefit for 120 credit hours, whichever comes first.

12. What does NGTA cover?

NGTA will cover tuition for all approved courses. You are responsible for all other costs, such as fees, room and board, textbooks, etc.

13. How do I apply for NGTA?

1. You must submit an application online, **each** semester, through the Arkansas National Guard Education web site arguard.org/Education/.
2. You must review the statement of understanding, and should keep a copy for your records.
3. You must complete your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) at fafsa.ed.gov/
4. You must complete a YOUiversal application for state financial aid at scholarships.adhe.edu/.
5. You must apply for any scholarships that your institution offers that you are eligible for.

14. Can I use NGTA for summer or intercession classes? Or just spring and fall semesters?

Yes. NGTA can be used for ALL semesters, including fall, spring, summer I and II, and all intersessions, such as winter and May intersessions.

15. When can I turn in the applications?

Applications may be submitted 30-60 days before the start of the course/semester. Applications must be submitted at least 30 days before the start of the course/semester. Applications

submitted after the deadline WILL NOT be granted NGTA for that semester without an approved Exception to Policy (ETP).

16. How do I get an appeal or Exception to Policy (ETP)?

You request an ETP in writing to your Air Wing or the Education Services Office within 60 days from the date of denial/termination/recoupment. ETP's must contain, at a minimum, your name, unit/wing of assignment, institution's name and location, semester and year in question, and the reason for the ETP.

17. Can I become ineligible for NGTA? If so, how?

You will become ineligible for NGTA for, but not limited to the following reasons:

1. You fail to maintain satisfactory academic progress as determined by the institution in which you are enrolled.
2. You are dismissed from the institution for academic or disciplinary reasons.
3. If your service in the Arkansas National Guard is terminated or becomes unsatisfactory.
4. You commit fraud or misrepresentation on the application.
5. Failure to complete the semester in which NGTA was awarded.
6. If you engage in misconduct or fail to remain a satisfactory participant in active drilling status with the Arkansas National Guard (as defined in Army Regulation 135-178 and Air Force Instructions 36-3208 and 36-3209).

18. Can the NGTA be recouped if I lose eligibility?

Yes. You may be subject to recoupment for that semester, if you are dismissed from the institution for academic or disciplinary reasons, if your service in the Arkansas National Guard is terminated or becomes unsatisfactory, you committed fraud or misrepresentation of the application, or failed to complete the semester in which NGTA was awarded.

The Adjutant General may initiate recoupment of ALL funds paid on a Guardsman's behalf using NGTA when the Guardsman engages in misconduct or fails to remain a satisfactory participant in active drilling status with the Arkansas National Guard (as defined in Chapter 12 and Chapter 13 of AR 135-178 and AFI 36-3208 and 3209 that governs misconduct.) Any funds recouped will be returned to the State of Arkansas.

19. What can I use the NGTA for?

NGTA will only be awarded for programs leading to an undergraduate degree, up to a bachelor's degree, in a state supported public two (2) or four (4) year institution within the State of Arkansas. You cannot have previously been awarded a Bachelor's Degree.

20. Which schools can I use the NGTA at?

Eligible institutions may be found at adhe.edu//locations. NGTA may be used at all public 2-year and 4-year institutions of higher education within the state of Arkansas. Private (independent) or out-of-state institutions are NOT eligible for use this program (i.e. Central Baptist College, Harding University, or University of Phoenix). You may be enrolled in more than one institution concurrently, however a separate application must be submitted for each institution.

21. Do I have to be a full time student?

There are no minimum or maximum credit hours, per semester, for this program.

22. Is there a limit to how many credit hours I can use the NGTA for?

There are no minimum or maximum credit hours, per semester, for this program. NGTA will not

pay for more than a TOTAL of 120 credit hours, or after you have received a bachelor's degree. Only credit hours covered by NGTA, to include remedial classes, count towards the 120 credit hour limit.

23. What if I drop a class?

Classes dropped after the add/drop date may not be covered by the benefit and you may be responsible for paying for those classes directly to the institution. To maintain eligibility, you must not drop more than 6 credit hours during a course of study; however, this does not include courses dropped before the add/drop date. A course of study is defined as the time during which a student is continuously enrolled in pursuit of a degree.

24. What if I add a class after I submit the NGTA application?

You should address this question to your institution's financial aid office to see how they wish to address the issue. The total number of hours covered under this benefit is not submitted until the end of the semester, so this would be between you and your institution.

25. What if I fail a class? Do I have to pay it back?

You may not have to pay it back. If at the end of the semester the institution determines that you have **not** maintained satisfactory academic progress, tuition may not be covered under this benefit. If that happens, the institution will bill you for the tuition for all of your classes for the semester. If at the end of the semester the institution determines that you have maintained satisfactory academic progress, tuition will be covered and you will not be billed.

26. Will my grades affect my eligibility for NGTA?

They can. You must maintain satisfactory academic progress as determined by the state-supported institution in which you are enrolled.

27. Is NGTA refundable to students at all?

No. It is tuition assistance that will only be paid to your institution by the State of Arkansas for the exact amount of tuition that you owe. There is nothing to refund.

28. Do I have to use my military Federal Tuition Assistance (FTA) and/or GI Bill with NGTA?

No. You may, but are not required to, use FTA, the Post 9/11 GI Bill, or the Montgomery GI Bill (all Chapters) and the Kicker. If you request GI Bill benefits and NGTA, the NGTA will be applied first. This allows you to use your GI Bill for additional costs, if you choose to do so.

29. Can NGTA be applied to courses completed in a prior semester?

No. NGTA cannot be applied to courses completed in a previous semester. It is not retroactive.

30. Can I get NGTA if I'm in the Guard, but still in high school, but taking some college classes too?

No. If you are enrolled in high school and college at the same time, you are not eligible for NGTA.

31. Who makes the final decision regarding an exception to policy?

If you are in the Arkansas Army National Guard, the Education Services Office will coordinate with the Arkansas Department of Higher Education, the institution, and the Guardsman to resolve any Exception to Policy requests.

If you are in the Arkansas Air National Guard, your Air Wing will coordinate with the Army

Education Services Office will coordinate with Arkansas Department of Higher Education, the institution, the Air Wing, and the Guardsman to resolve any Exception to Policy requests.

32. Why do I have to apply for other types of financial aid – FAFSA, state, and institution – to get NGTA?

Act 471 requires that you apply for these other types of financial aid. Any grants and scholarships that can be applied to your tuition, will be before NGTA. Grants and scholarships that are for specific things, like books and fees, but do not include tuition in their covered items, cannot be applied to tuition, and will not be. Scholarships and grants that are general in nature must be applied to tuition prior to NGTA being applied. Any remaining funds will be applied to tuition prior to NGTA. If you receive NGTA and student loans, the NGTA will be applied first.

33. What is the Reimbursement Process?

At the conclusion of each semester ADHE will add up what each school awarded through NGTA. If the total amount awarded is less than the appropriation for the program ADHE will reimburse the institutions the full amount at that time. In a situation that more than the appropriation is awarded by schools ADHE will reimburse each school on a pro-rata basis. Example: School A awarded 10% of the total amount waived. School A would then receive 10% of the appropriation.

34. How does the Arkansas National Guard ESO know who's been approved and who hasn't?

ADHE will be able to report at the end of each term what students were actually funded for that term.

35. How often will funding be pushed out to reimburse Institutions or Students, and to whom will the funding go to?

The funding will only be sent out once a year at the conclusion of the spring semester and will be sent directly to the institution.

36. What is the process for processing funds to the institution/Student?

Refer to Reimbursement Process.

37. What are all the disqualifiers for receiving this funding?

Students must meet the following requirements to be eligible for funds through NGTA:

- a. The NGTA is available to all Guardsmen currently serving in the Arkansas National Guard and considered at the time of application to meet all eligibility criteria.
- b. Guardsman must be an Arkansas Resident.
- c. Guardsman must have completed Initial Active Duty Training (basic training or credit for a basic course through the Reserve Officers' Training Corps ROTC).
- d. Guardsman must not currently hold a bachelor or higher degree.
- e. Guardsman must be accepted and enrolled in an undergraduate degree producing program at an Arkansas public institution of higher education.
- f. Guardsman must have completed the FAFSA, the Arkansas YOUiversal Financial Aid Application, and applied for grants and scholarships with the institution in which they are enrolled.
- g. Guardsman must be in "Good Standing" with their enrolled institution, as defined by that institution.