



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
THE ARMY UNIVERSITY  
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FORT LEAVENWORTH, KS 66027-2301

ATZL-AU

11 May 2022

MEMORANDUM FOR

Army Continuing Education System, G-1, U.S. Army Installation Management  
Command (IMHR-E/Ms. Moorash), 2405 Gun Shed Road, Fort Sam Houston, TX  
78234-1223

Army National Guard Education Oversight Branch, National Guard Bureau (ARNG-  
HRH-C/Dr. Hardy), 111 South George Mason Drive, Arlington, VA 22204-1382  
Services and Support Division, G-1, U.S. Army Reserve Command (AFRC-  
PRS/Ms.Giraldo), 4710 Knox Street, Fort Bragg, NC 28310-5000

SUBJECT: Updates to Army Credentialing Assistance Policy

1. References:

- a. Department of Defense Instruction 1322.33, DoD Credentialing Programs, 13 October 2021.
- b. Department of Defense Instruction 1322.25, Voluntary Education Programs, 14 March 2011, Incorporating Change 3, Effective 7 July 2014.
- c. Army Regulation (AR) 621-5, Army Continuing Education System, 28 October 2019.
- d. AR 600-8-2, Suspension of Favorable Personnel Actions (Flag), 5 April 2021
- e. AR 621-1, Advanced Education Programs and Requirements for Military Personnel, 11 December 2019.
- f. Updated Credentialing Assistance (CA) Policy, dated 10 September 2020.

2. Purpose: This policy implements Department of Defense Instruction (DoDI) 1322.33 (reference 1a). This policy supersedes the Credentialing Assistance Policy dated 10 Sep 2020 (reference 1f).

3. Applicability: This policy applies to the Regular Army, the Army National Guard/Army National Guard of the United States, and the U.S. Army Reserve.

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4. CA Eligibility: The following CA eligibility criteria are in addition to the baseline CA eligibility requirements found in reference 1c:

a. Soldiers must complete specified professional military education, and the required military education level must be reflected in ArmyIgnitED before CA can be approved.

b. Soldiers may use CA upon achieving their Military Occupational Specialty Qualification (MOSQ) as follows:

(1) Enlisted Soldiers who have graduated Advanced Individual Training.

(2) Warrant Officers who have graduated Warrant Officer Basic Course.

(3) Officers who have graduated Basic Officer Leaders Course.

5. Exclusions: The following Soldiers are ineligible for CA:

a. Contracted Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) scholarship cadets, including those receiving room and board benefits in lieu of tuition and fees. This restriction includes any period(s) of temporary suspension of scholarship benefits, leave of absence, and while school is out of session.

b. ROTC cadets contracted under the Green to Gold ROTC Program.

c. Soldiers flagged under provisions of AR 600-8-2.

d. Soldiers approved for voluntary separation, or who have received notice of involuntary separation, and do not have enough time remaining in service to complete the credentialing course or exam before separating from the Army.

e. Soldiers without sufficient time-in-service to complete the CA course or exam.

f. Soldiers assigned to the Individual Ready Reserve or the Inactive National Guard.

6. CA Authorizations:

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a. Soldiers can pursue any credential found in Army Credentialing Opportunities On-Line (COOL) and may work on multiple credentials simultaneously or sequentially; While multiple credentials can be requested, failure to submit completion certificates will create a hold on Soldier accounts preventing further requests from being submitted.

b. CA can authorize the payment of classroom, hands-on, online or blended training and courses, materials, manuals, study guides, textbooks, processing fees, test fees, and other expenses related to the attainment or recertification of credentials.

c. CA is subject to the same funding ceiling as Tuition Assistance (TA). A Soldier may use both TA and CA; however, the combined usage by any Soldier shall not exceed the fiscal year TA limit. The Army reserves the right to limit the amount of CA funding that Soldiers can use for certain credentials.

d. Before receiving CA, the Soldier must sign an electronic Statement of Understanding (SOU) acknowledging compliance with Army CA policies and procedures.

e. CA may be used in combination with other Federal benefits such as the GI Bill, tuition assistance, local or command funded programs, Service-funded programs (e.g., education-related incentive or bonus or advanced civil schooling) and military training programs that incorporate certification and licensing funding to cover any gaps between the benefits and the costs charged by the credentialing vendor. However, the combination of CA and the Federal benefits cannot generate an overpayment beyond the costs charged by the vendor.

#### 7. CA Exclusions and Limitations:

a. Soldiers must obtain an ArmyIgnitED account and request CA for credentialing courses and exams through ArmyIgnitED.

b. Soldiers may not use CA to repeat successfully completed preparatory portions of a credential, other than for those areas required for renewal of the credential.

c. Soldiers with dual civilian and military status cannot use CA and Army Civilian Training, Education, and Development Systems (ACTEDS) funds concurrently for the same course.

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d. Soldiers may use CA to pursue credentials associated with doctoral level degrees but cannot use CA to fund doctoral classes.

e. CA is not authorized for:

(1) Preparatory classes for college or graduate admissions testing such as the Scholastic Assessment Test, Graduate Record Examination, or Law School Aptitude Test.

(2) Career Skills Programs.

(3) Required credentials for an MOS, as the funds for these credentials come from Army training institutions and career management field proponents.

(4) Professional credentials, to include renewals, which are a prerequisite for appointment in the Armed Forces.

(5) Apprenticeships, Internships, or Externships.

#### 8. Credentialing Assistance Request Procedures and Timelines:

a. Prior to being approved for CA, Soldiers are encouraged to meet with an Army Education Counselor, either virtually or in person, for information regarding CA program policies and procedures.

b. Soldiers must contact the vendor prior to submitting their CA request to register (if applicable) and obtain a quote for the course/exam. The quote must match what is listed in the ArmyIgnitED CA request. Exceptions for custom quotes which may not match the ArmyIgnitED CA request from the vendor are: CompTIA, Pearson Vue, and International Board of Specialty Certification. In such cases, a screenshot of cart with cost must be submitted. Additional exceptions for custom quotes from vendors may be granted on a case by case basis that will be reviewed and approved by ACCESS ArmyU.

c. Soldiers must submit separate CA requests for each credentialing course or exam to ArmyIgnitED at least 30 business days (minus weekends and holidays) prior to the start date of the course or exam but not more than 90 days from the submission date. The end date of the requested course or exam must be within one calendar year of the start date.

(1) CA requests submitted less than 30 business days prior to the course or exam start date will be rejected.

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(2) CA requests submitted less than 30 business days prior to the course or exam start date will not be considered for exception-to-policy CA funding for any reason.

(3) Soldiers must request books and material in conjunction with a request for a credentialing course or exam. Requests for only books or material will be rejected unless there is a current credentialing course or exam in progress or pending payment.

(4) Soldiers are not authorized to prepay for a course or exam using personal funds while a CA request is pending approval. Reimbursement for Soldiers' out-of-pocket expenses is not authorized.

(5) Soldiers may not attend a course or sit for an exam prior to receiving verification from the Finance Division, Army Credentialing and Continuing Education Services for Soldiers, Army University (ACCESS, ArmyU), that the course or exam has been CA funded. If this occurs, Soldiers will be liable for the cost of the course or exam.

(6) Soldiers may request to change the start date of an existing CA request (whether funded or pending funding) up to 30 days prior to the original start date. Soldiers must ensure the vendor can accommodate the change of start date. Soldiers may request to change the end date of an existing CA requests as long as the requested end date does not exceed one calendar year from the start date of the course. Requests for changes to the start date or extensions of the end date must be submitted via an ArmyIgnitED ServiceNow (SNOW) ticket.

(7) Soldiers will not be allowed to submit a new CA request if there is a hold on their account for an overdue certificate of completion on any CA request. Vendors must upload the certificate of completion within 10 business days of the end date. If the vendor does not receive the results of the exam (i.e., Pearson Vue, CompTIA, or vendors who provide vouchers for those same exams), it is the Soldier's responsibility to upload the exam results within the ArmyIgnitED CA request.

(8) Soldiers who withdraw from a CA-approved course or exam must do so in ArmyIgnitED. Soldiers must download and digitally complete the CA Withdrawal form found in their CA request. Under no circumstances will the Soldier coordinate a withdrawal directly with the vendor. If this occurs, the Soldier will be liable for any debt incurred.

d. If the vendor cancels a CA funded course or exam, the Soldier must submit a SNOW ticket informing ACCESS, ArmyU of the cancellation not later than five business

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days from the date the Soldier was notified by the vendor of the cancellation. The Soldier will attach a cancellation notice from the vendor.

e. Soldiers should resolve any ArmyIgnitED-imposed account holds prior to requesting CA. Holds imposed due to incorrect information reported to ArmyIgnitED by third-party systems (e.g., an educational institution or Army personnel system) must be corrected in those systems. Should the placement of an erroneous hold on any ArmyIgnitED account occur, the Soldier should submit a SNOW ticket. The Soldier must attach documentation (e.g., orders, Department of the Army Form 1059, or Joint Services Transcript) that verifies the correct personnel information to have the hold deferred. Personally identifiable information must be redacted from all documentation. ACCESS, ArmyU cannot defer or remove a Suspension of Favorable Personnel Actions (Flag) Hold for any reason.

#### 9. Credentialing Assistance Recoupment:

a. Soldiers must successfully complete an approved, CA funded credentialing course or exam to avoid the recoupment of CA funds. Failing a course or an exam, withdrawing from a course or an exam with Army cost, or failing to attend a course or sit for an exam in the timeframe requested will result in CA recoupment.

b. If a Soldier is required to repay the Army for CA received, the Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) will deduct the funds from the Soldier's pay in accordance with current DFAS policies. The Soldier makes his/her recoupment acknowledgement in the ArmyIgnitED system by selecting a payment plan. When DFAS processes the recoupment, DFAS informs the Soldier of the DEBT on the LES.

c. A Soldier may use CA funding to repeat an unsuccessful course or exam, or use CA for a different course or exam, once the Soldier selects the repayment plan within their ArmyIgnitED account.

d. Recoupment Waiver.

(1) ACCESS, ArmyU may grant a recoupment waiver when a Soldier withdraws from or cannot complete a course or exam for reasons clearly beyond the Soldier's control.

(2) Soldiers can request a CA recoupment waiver by submitting a digitally completed "CA Recoupment Waiver – Withdrawal for (WM) Military Reasons" form located in the ArmyIgnitED CA request. The first commander in the Soldier's chain of command exercising the Uniform Code of Military Justice authority must endorse

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recoupment waiver requests. Soldiers must attach documentation (e.g., orders or proof of hospitalization) substantiating the reason for a waiver request to the form. Redact all Personally Identifiable Information (PII) from all documentation. The CA representative from ACCESS, ArmyU will approve or reject the waiver and, if rejected, note the reasons in the Soldier's CA Request and notes section in the Soldier's account.

e. Soldiers may not under any circumstances reimburse a vendor for CA funding to circumvent recoupment action for a dropped or failed course or exam.

10. Military Service Obligation:

a. The service obligation for the CA program has been removed per reference 1a, dated 13 October 2021. This applies to all CA requests submitted and/or completed on or after 13 October 2021. CA request end date in ArmyIgnitED must reflect a date of 13 October 2021 or after.

b. CA requests completed prior to 13 October 2021 must still complete the applicable service obligation incurred at that time; Regular Army, AGR, and mobilized commissioned officers (under Title 10 or Title 32 authority) incur an Additional Duty Service Obligation (ADSO) of two years and Reserve Component officers (USAR and ARNG) incur a Reserve Duty Service Obligation (RDSO) of four years. The CA military service obligation commences on the ending date of each course for which CA was approved.

11. Point of Contact for this policy is Sophia Sweeney, Army Credentialing Assistance Program Manager, ACCESS, ArmyU at [sophia.a.sweeney.civ@army.mil](mailto:sophia.a.sweeney.civ@army.mil).

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