

Education

Montana National Guard Scholarship Program

Summary. This circular provides procedures and guidance for implementing the Montana National Guard Scholarship Program.

Applicability. This circular is applicable to all eligible active members of the Montana National Guard.

Suggested Improvements. The proponent agency for this circular is the J1 Manpower and Personnel Directorate, Department of Military Affairs, State of Montana. Users are invited to send comments and suggested improvements to Department of Military Affairs, ATTN: G1 Army Personnel (ESO), PO Box 4789, Fort Harrison, MT 59636-4789.

Contents: (Listed by paragraph number)

Purpose - 1	Eligibility Review and Continuation in the Scholarship Program - 7
References - 2	Funds Management - 8
Explanations of Abbreviations and Terms – 3	Glossary
Authority – 4	Scholarship Application
Responsibilities – 5	
Scholarship Program – 6	

1. Purpose. This circular provides procedures and guidance for the implementation, administration, eligibility, and certification processes required by the Department of Military Affairs regarding the Montana National Guard Scholarship Program.

2. References.

- a. AR 135-91, Service Obligations, Methods of Fulfillment, Participation Requirements and Enforcement Procedures.
- b. AR 350-1, Army Training and Leader Development.
- c. NGR/AR 350-1, Army National Guard Training.
- d. ANGI 36-2001, Management of Training and Operational Support Within the Air National Guard.

3. Explanation of Abbreviations and Terms. Abbreviations and special terms used in this circular are explained herein or in the reference list in paragraph 2 above.

4. Authority. House Bill 2, 60th Montana Legislature Special Session.

*Supercedes DMAMT Circular 621-03-1 dated 1 October 2007

5. Responsibilities.

- a. The Adjutant General (TAG) has overall responsibility for the Montana National Guard (MT NG) Scholarship Program.
- b. The J1 Army Personnel (G1) has overall responsibility for the operations and maintenance of the MT NG Scholarship Program.
- c. Centralized Services Division (CSD) will provide overall accounting functions, prepare and issue State Warrants, and provide monthly financial reports to the Army National Guard Education Guidance Counselor (ARNG-Guidance Counselor) and the Air National Guard Retention Officer Manager (ANG-ROM).
- d. The ARNG-Guidance Counselor has overall program management responsibility for the MT NG Scholarship Program. The ARNG-Guidance Counselor will maintain a database of ARNG/ANG Scholarship Program applications for the purpose of preparing reports and statistics relative to the utilization of Scholarship Program funds. The ARNG-Guidance Counselor will coordinate information with CSD, keep the J1 Army Personnel (G1)/ANG Retention Manager informed of ongoing program activities, advertise the availability of the MT NG Scholarship Program on a regular basis, and keep unit commanders informed of all aspects of the program.
- e. The Air National Guard (ANG) Retention Office will serve as a collection point for all ANG Scholarship Program applications and ensure all necessary paperwork is forwarded to the ARNG-Guidance Counselor. The ANG Retention Office will advertise the availability of the MT NG Scholarship Program on a regular basis and keep unit commanders informed of all aspects of the program.
- f. Unit Commanders and/or Designated Unit Representative will ensure timely processing of all Scholarship Program Applications and keep Unit Members informed of the availability of the MT NG Scholarship funds and all aspects relating to it. They will counsel Unit Members concerning eligibility criteria and their responsibilities as they pertain to the Scholarship Program. Unit Commanders will safeguard against fraud and abuse.
- g. The Unit Member will maintain scholarship eligibility and notify their Unit Commander in writing of any change in status that would disqualify him/her from receiving the scholarship. The Unit Member is responsible for the timely processing of their Scholarship Program Application and for ensuring all required documents are provided as requested. Any changes to Section I of the DMAMT Form 621-R will be submitted in writing through channels, to include the student's signature (see enclosed Scholarship Application).
- h. The Scholarship Committee will review all proposed exceptions. The Scholarship Committee is comprised of the ARNG Deputy J1, ANG Military Personnel Management Officer (MPMO), ARNG-Guidance Counselor, ANG-ROM, and a CSD Representative.

6. Scholarship Program.

a. Eligibility Criteria. A Montana National Guard member may apply for the Montana National Guard Scholarship Program under this instruction if the following criteria are met at the beginning of the "term" (effective Courses Start Date):

- (1) Military members in grades E-1 through E-7, W-1 through W-3, and O-1 through O-2.
- (2) Has established eligibility for Chapter 1606 Reserve Component Montgomery GI Bill (MGIB) or be under a 6-year obligation to the MT NG during current enlistment.
- (3) Must have completed MOS/AFSC initial training and have a High School Diploma or GED.

(4) Must not exceed 16 years of military service upon entry of school term for which member is receiving the scholarship. Military service for the determination of eligibility is based upon military service for pay purposes - Pay Entry Basic Date (PEBD) or Pay Date.

(5) Certification by the Unit Commander or Authorized Representative in Section III on the Scholarship Program Application (DMAMT Form 621-R).

(6) Be an active drilling member of the Montana National Guard. Members of the Inactive National Guard (ING) are not eligible.

(7) Been accepted for admission or is enrolled at a Montana State Institution of Higher Learning in an undergraduate degree-granting program, 2-year vocational technical college, or Veterans Administration (VA) Approved MT Training Program. This benefit does not include graduate degree programs.

(8) A satisfactory participant in accordance with AR 135-91 or ANGI 36-2001.

b. General procedures: **ANG.**

(1) Guard member responsibilities.

(a) Upon acceptance or enrollment, complete Sections I and II of the Scholarship Program Application and forward it to their Unit Commander/Authorized Representative for certification along with supporting documentation (i.e. voided check and Form W-9). NOTE: Unit Members will apply for the Scholarship Program for each semester or specified training period.

(b) To ensure prompt payment, Airmen must forward a grade report, unofficial transcript, or certificate of completion/ satisfactory progress report to the ANG Retention Officer after each semester or specified training period.

(2) ANG Unit Commander or Authorized Representative responsibilities.

(a) Disseminate Montana National Guard Scholarship Program information received from the ANG Retention Office.

(b) Certify Section III, Scholarship Program Application.

(c) Forward the Scholarship Program Application to the ANG Retention Office not later than ten days after receipt of application.

(3) The ANG Retention Office responsibilities.

(a) Provide an opportunity for positive public relations within the organization through appropriate and timely presentation of State Scholarship Award to the qualified applicant.

(b) Disseminate Montana National Guard Scholarship Program information to the Unit Commanders. Suggested methods of advertisements include, but are not limited to: Big Sky Flyer, Retention Newsletters, Email, Public Announcements, etc.

(c) Upon receipt of a scholarship application, review for accuracy and eligibility. Complete Section IV and return completed applications to the respective ANG unit.

(d) If applicant is preapproved, provide necessary documents (i.e. copy of application, voided check, and W-9) to CSD.

- (e) After grades have been received by member, send payment authorization to CSD.
- (f) Ensure accurate and proper tracking of all applications and funds distribution.
- (g) Maintain documentation for accountability and audit purposes.
- (h) Ensure timely and appropriate coordination with ARNG Guidance Counselor for all information, regulatory guidance, and issues.

c. General Procedures: **ARNG.**

- (1) Guard member responsibilities.
 - (a) Upon acceptance or enrollment, complete Sections I and II of the Scholarship Program Application and forward it to their Unit Commander/Authorized Representative for certification along with supporting documentation (i.e. voided check and Form W-9). NOTE: Unit Members will apply for the Scholarship Program for each semester or specified training period.
 - (b) To ensure prompt payment, the Soldier must forward a grade report, unofficial transcript, or certificate of completion/ satisfactory progress report to the ARNG-Guidance Counselor after each semester or specified training period.
- (2) ARNG Unit Commander or Authorized Representative responsibilities.
 - (a) Disseminate Montana National Guard Scholarship Program information received from the ARNG-Guidance Counselor.
 - (b) Certify Section III, Scholarship Program Application.
 - (c) Forward the Scholarship Program Application to the ARNG-Guidance Counselor not later than ten days after receipt of application.
- (3) The ARNG-Guidance Counselor responsibilities.
 - (a) Provide an opportunity for positive public relations within the organization through appropriate and timely presentation of State Scholarship Award to the qualified applicant.
 - (b) Disseminate Montana National Guard Scholarship Program information to the Unit Commanders.
 - (c) Upon receipt of a scholarship application, review for accuracy and eligibility. Complete Section IV and return completed applications to the respective ARNG unit.
 - (d) If applicant is preapproved, provide necessary documents (i.e. copy of application, voided check, and W-9) to CSD.
 - (e) After grades have been received by member, send payment authorization to CSD.
 - (f) Ensure accurate and proper tracking of all applications and funds distribution.
 - (g) Maintain documentation for accountability and audit purposes.

(h) Ensure timely and appropriate coordination with ANG Retention Office for all information, regulatory guidance, and issues.

(4) CSD responsibilities.

(a) Ensure accounting functions are completed for the Scholarship Program state appropriated funds under the state accounting system.

(b) Prepare State Warrants for eligible unit members upon receipt of Authorization to Pay from the ARNG-Guidance Counselor/ANG-ROM in accordance with paragraph 8.

(c) Provide the ARNG-Guidance Counselor/ANG-ROM monthly financial reports from the state accounting system.

7. Eligibility Review and Continuation in the Scholarship Program. Participation in the program will be determined on a semester-by-semester basis or specified training period in accordance with the applicable eligibility criteria set forth in paragraph 6a and availability of appropriated funds.

a. Suspension/Termination of Educational Benefits. At anytime during the semester, failure to meet the eligibility criteria outlined in paragraph 6a(8) is cause for suspension from the Scholarship Program.

b. Funds Appropriation. Availability of the Montana National Guard Scholarship fund is contingent upon appropriations made by the Montana Legislature.

8. Funds Management.

a. These funds are prohibited for use in church affiliated schools.

b. Period of federal active duty and/or activation by the Governor of the State of Montana will extend the period of eligibility, as outlined in paragraph 6a(4).

c. Scholarships will be awarded on a first-come, first-serve basis until bi-annual funds are exhausted.

d. Recipients must be in good academic standing according to the definition of the Montana State Institution of Higher Learning or VA Approved MT Training Program.

e. The amount to scholarship award will be:

(1) Up to \$75 per credit up to \$900 per term*

(2) Up to \$75 per 16 clock hours*

(3) A stipend, in addition to the scholarship award, may be awarded to students attending a 2-year technical or vocational college. This stipend is prorated based upon enrollment status. 12 credits or greater (\$250), 9-11 credits (\$187.50), 6-8 credits (\$125), 1-5 credits (\$62.50).

(4) Awards for student attending compressed schedule institutions will be based solely on credits.

f. Students have 60 days from the Course(s) End Date – as stated on the DMAMT Form 621-R – to turn in their grades to their respective certifying official. Failure to comply will result in a forfeiture of the preapproved award.

g. Review of Funds Management for both entities will take place on a semi-annual basis and/or as needed.

***This amount will be adjusted as needed, determined by the semi-annual review**

Glossary

Full Time Student. A unit member enrolled in twelve or more semester credit hours in a MT State Institution of Higher Learning or fully enrolled in a VA Approved MT Training Program.

Interim Session. Is not a full semester, i.e. short-term class (1 month) of concentrated study.

Montana Institution of Higher Learning. Any college or university that is regionally accredited.

Montgomery GI Bill (MGIB). Chapter 1606, of Title 10 U.S. Code is an educational assistance program enacted by Congress to attract high quality men and women into the Reserve Branch of the Armed Forces.

Period of Eligibility. See paragraph 8a(2).

Satisfactory Participant. See AR 135-91, AR 350-1, or ANGI 36-2001.

Specified Training Period. As outlined by a VA Approved MT Training Program.

State Fiscal Year. The 1st of July through the 30th of June.

State Warrant. Method of payment by the State of Montana, will be EFT.

Tuition. The total semester hour or specified training period cost of instruction to a student as published in the catalog of the MT Institution of Higher Learning or VA Approved MT Training Program.

VA Approved. The VA must approve each program offered by a school or company. Contact must be made to the nearest VA Regional Office

APPLICATION FOR THE MONTANA NATIONAL GUARD SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

For use of this form, see DMAMT Circular 621; the proponent agency is J1 Army Personnel.

PRIVACY ACT STATEMENT

Authority: Title 10, USC, E.O. 9397.

Principal Purpose: Used by Airman/Soldier IAW DMAMT Circular 621 when requesting application for the Scholarship Program.

Routine Uses: To initiate the processing of a scholarship application as requested by the Airman/Soldier.

Disclosure: Disclosure of your SSN is voluntary; however, if not provided you will not be eligible for the Scholarship Program.

SECTION I – MEMBER’S REQUEST (ALL blocks must be completed)

Member’s Last Name, First, MI	Pay Grade	SSN	PEBD / Pay Date	Branch of Service <input type="checkbox"/> Air NG <input type="checkbox"/> Army NG
Mailing Address	City	State	Zip Code	Phone Number
Unit of Assignment	Email Address(s)			

Educational Level Applying for: Associate’s Degree Bachelor’s Degree VA-Approved Training Program

Name of Montana State Institution of Higher Learning or VA Approved MT Training Program:	<input type="checkbox"/> Fall _____ (School Year)	Course(s) Start Date:	_____ # of Credit Hours Enrolled in for this term
	<input type="checkbox"/> Spring _____ (School Year)	_____	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ (School Year)	Course(s) End Date:	_____ Other (Explain)

I understand that my payment will be made by electronic funds transfer (EFT).

I have attached a voided check, with all account information.

_____ For tax purposes, Form W-9 or Substitute Form W-9 is attached.

SECTION II – MEMBER’S CERTIFICATION

_____ I certify that I meet the initial eligibility criteria for issuance of the State Scholarship in accordance with DMAMT Circular 621, para 6a(1 thru 8).

_____ I understand that I must remain a satisfactory participant in good standing with my respective unit as prescribed in AR 135-91 or ANGI 36-2001. I further understand that I must remain in good academic standing with the Montana State Institution of Higher Learning, 2-year technical or vocational college, or VA-Approved MT Training Program in order to receive the scholarship payment at the end of each semester or specified period of training.

_____ I will submit a copy of my Grade Report thru proper channels to the ARNG-ESO or ANG-ROM at the end of each course and understand that a check will not be issued to me until the Grade Report is received in the Education Office. **Any changes to Section I above will also be included with the Grade Report submission.**

_____ I am aware that payment is subject to the availability of funds.

Member’s Signature	Date Signed
--------------------	-------------

SECTION III – UNIT COMMANDER/AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE CERTIFICATION

I certify that the member meets the initial eligibility criteria for issuance of the State Scholarship as stated in Section II. If the member becomes ineligible IAW DMAMT Circular 621, para 6a(8), this change will be reported to the ARNG-ESO or ANG-ROM upon submission of the Grade Report.

Signature	Rank	Name of Unit Commander/Designated Unit Representative (Print)	Date Signed
-----------	------	---	-------------

SECTION IV – ARNG-ESO or ANG-ROM VERIFICATION/CERTIFICATION

Preapproved \$ _____ Amount preapproved for. **Certificate Number** _____ **Date** _____

Disapproved - Reason: _____

A copy of this form certified by the ESO/ROM with the preapproved amount or disapproving reason(s) will be routed through channels to the Unit Member. If the member disagrees with the reason(s) provided, he/she can explain the disagreement by submitting a letter to the Scholarship Committee, ATTN: ARNG-ESO.

ARNG-ESO/ANG-ROM Signature	Date Signed
----------------------------	-------------

BY ORDER OF THE GOVERNOR:

OFFICIAL:
JOHN E. WALSH
BG, MT National Guard
The Adjutant General

JOEL D. CUSKER
COL, AR, MTNG
Chief of the Joint Staff

KENDALL S. SWITZER
COL, Montana National Guard
Vice Chief of the Joint Staff

DISTRIBUTION:
B4
ANG