



# Office of the Staff Judge Advocate LEGAL SERVICES U.S. Army Japan and I Corps (Fwd)

## *Housing Allowance for School?*

The Yellow Ribbon Program is designed to assist eligible veterans to pay for post-secondary education at private and for-profit colleges with higher tuitions and at graduate and professional schools. Veterans Administration (VA) may match dollar-for-dollar institutional aid provided specifically to veterans to help fill the outstanding balance on tuition and fees, to include housing allowance.

The Post 9/11 GI Bill is designed to cover the cost of the most expensive public undergraduate tuition and fee for veterans serving 36 months active duty after September 11, 2001. The benefits, for those 100 percent eligible, are as follows:

- Monthly Housing Allowance – The monthly housing allowance is equal to the basic allowance for housing for a member of the military with dependents in pay grade E-5, using the zip code area in which all or a majority of the institution of higher education is located.
- Tuition – VA will either pay the actual amount of tuition charged or the cost of the highest, public in-state undergraduate tuition, whichever

is lower, based on the VA's state tuition and fee schedule. Search your state and institution tuition via the VA website: [http://www.gibill.va.gov/GI\\_BILL\\_Info/CH33/YRP/YRP\\_List.htm](http://www.gibill.va.gov/GI_BILL_Info/CH33/YRP/YRP_List.htm). You should contact your school directly to obtain the most updated tuition information.

- Fees – Based on the VA's state tuition and fees schedule.
- Book Allowance – Maximum of \$1,000 per year.

Full benefits are available only to veterans who have served at least 36 months. Veterans who have served for as little as 90 days qualify for a reduced benefit equal to 40 percent of the maximum benefit. Disabled veterans with at least 30 days service are eligible for the full benefit. Veterans who were dishonorably discharged are not eligible for the benefit.

Tuition and fees are paid directly to the institution of higher education; the book and housing allowances are paid directly to the veteran.

## *Expanded Tax Services*

Camp Zama's Chief of Client Services and the Tax Center Officer-in-Charge are pleased to announce additional tax services available for the upcoming filing season:

1. Email: [Taxcenter@zama.army.mil](mailto:Taxcenter@zama.army.mil)
2. Office Satellite Center: One day visit.
3. AAFES Satellite Tax Center: Taxes while you shop.

**Email:** Clients who received tax services last year will be emailed IRS Form 13614 (Client Intake Form) for completion. Return the completed form with your W2 and any other applicable tax documents (i.e. 1099 Misc). Darken out the first five numbers of SSN. Clients will be contacted for an appointment time on a first-received first-scheduled basis.

**Office Satellite Center:** Your administrator, 1SG, or Commander may contact us directly to plan a one day visit to your office to provide service to no less than ten clients. Your POC will gather tax documents in a sealed envelop, drop off envelopes at our office three days prior to the scheduled arranged visit, and a representative will visit your office for the day.

**AAFES Satellite Tax Center:** Operations are 0900 to 1600, Monday - Friday. Drop off tax documents for completion, shop for a while, and then return for signing.

For more information, please contact our office at 263-1040 or forward an inquiry via email at [Taxcenter@zama.army.mil](mailto:Taxcenter@zama.army.mil).

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## *Adoptions and DOD Reimbursable Expenses*

There are multiple types of adoptions, but the most common to Japan have been International Adoptions and Relative Adoptions.

**International Adoptions:** In an international adoption, the adoptive parents adopt a child who is a citizen of a foreign country. In addition to satisfying the adoption requirements of both the foreign country and the parents' home state in the U.S., the parents must obtain an immigrant visa for the child through the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). The USCIS has its own rules for international adoptions, such as the requirement that the adoptive parents be either married or, if single, at least 25 years old. The USCIS also requires adoptive parents to complete several forms and submit a favorable home study report. Finally, U.S. citizenship is not granted automatically; you must apply for it for the child.

**Relative Adoptions:** When a child is related to the adoptive parent by blood or marriage, the adoption is a relative adoption. The most common example of this type of adoption is a stepparent adoption, in which a parent's new spouse adopts a child from a previous partner. Grandparents also often adopt their grandchildren if the parents die while the children are minors or are otherwise unable to care for the children. These adoptions are simpler and easier than non-relative adoptions.

**Reimbursement:** Consistent with 10 U.S.C. § 1052, DoDFMR Volume 7C, Chapter 4, and DoDI 1341.9., reimbursement of \$2,000 per child, not to exceed \$5,000 per calendar year, is authorized if the adopted child is under 18 years of age.

Generally, in order to qualify for the reimbursement, the adoption must have been arranged by a qualified adoption agency or, for adoptions that occurred on or after January 6, 2006, the adoption must have been arranged by either a qualified adoption agency or other source authorized to place children for adoption under state or local law. To qualify for the reimbursement, you must be on active duty for at least 180 days, submit a claim within one year of the final adoption, and the adoption must be final.

**Qualifying Adoption Expenses:** A member will be reimbursed for reasonable and necessary expenses, which include the following: public and private agency fees, including adoption fees charged by an agency in a foreign country; placement fees, including fees charged adoptive parents for counseling; legal fees, including court costs, for services that are unavailable to a member of the military services; medical expenses, including hospital expenses of the biological mother of the child to be adopted and of a newborn infant to be adopted, for medical care given to the adoptive child/children before the adoption, and for physical examinations for the biological mother of the child to be adopted. If you have any questions concerning your claim, send an e-mail to DFAS Adoption Reimbursement at [CCL-ADOPTION-REIMBURSEMENT@dfas.mil](mailto:CCL-ADOPTION-REIMBURSEMENT@dfas.mil).

### WE'RE ON THE WEB

[HTTP://  
WWW.USARJ.ARMY.MIL/  
CMDSTAF/SJA/  
LA.ASPX](http://www.usarj.army.mil/cmdstaf/sja/la.asp)

PROUD TO  
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AMERICA'S  
FINEST MEN  
AND WOMEN

If you have any questions, comments, or suggestions, please contact the Legal Assistance Office at 263-4698.

