



**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA NATIONAL GUARD  
JOINT FORCE HEADQUARTERS  
OFFICE OF THE COMMANDING GENERAL  
2001 EAST CAPITOL STREET, SE  
WASHINGTON, DC 20003-1719**

NGDC-CG

30 October 2025

**MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD**

**SUBJECT: Major General David F. Wherley, Jr. District of Columbia National Guard Retention and College Access Program (Policy Memo #24) – FY2026**

- 1. REFERENCES:**
  - a. DC Code Section 49-807 (National Guard Tuition Assistance Benefits)
  - b. AR 621-5 (Army Continuing Education System), 23 January 2024.
  - c. DAFI 36-2670 (Total Force Development), 18 July 2025.
- 2. PURPOSE.** Establish policy governing the use of The Major General David F. Wherley, Jr. District of Columbia National Guard (DCNG) Retention and College Access Program, herein referred to as DCTA.
- 3. APPLICABILITY.** This policy applies to all Soldiers and Airmen of the DCNG.
- 4. POLICY.**
  - a. The following outlines the process for funding:
    - (1) DC Tuition Assistance (DCTA) is funded through the DC Budget and Financial Plan for residents, and through the DC Appropriations Bill for non-residents. Funding is disbursed based on availability.
  - b. The following outlines the process for eligibility:
    - (1) Servicemembers, with at least two (2) years of service remaining on their service obligation from the last day of the course paid for by DCTA funds.
    - (2) Servicemembers shall be satisfactory participants. Servicemember shall not be subject to a suspension of favorable personnel action (SFPA) or unfavorable information file (UIF) and have no current or pending adverse actions.
    - (3) Servicemembers may utilize DCTA immediately upon enlistment, prior to completing and initial entry training (BCT/AIT or BMT/TECH), provided they have a valid enlistment contract, a Military Common Access Card (CAC), and courses do not interfere with scheduled training.

(4) Army Soldiers requesting DCTA shall first access ArmyIgnitED at <https://www.armyignited.army.mil/student/public/welcome> to obtain proof of eligibility or ineligibility of Federal TA (FTA).

(5) AGR/ADOS Airmen requesting DCTA shall first access Air Force Virtual Education Center (AFVEC) at <https://afvec.us.af.mil/afvec/account/login>, to obtain proof of eligibility or ineligibility of FTA.

(6) Servicemembers who are ineligible to receive FTA may receive DCTA.

(7) Servicemembers whose cost per credit hour exceeds the amount covered by FTA may be eligible for DCTA with an approved Exception to Policy (ETP).

c. The following outlines the application process:

(1) Required documents:

- (i) DCTA Application.
- (ii) Statement of Understanding.
- (iii) Memorandum of Good Standing.
- (iv) Degree Plan.
- (v) Cost Verification/School Invoice.
- (vi) FTA Eligibility or Ineligibility.

d. Exception to Policy (ETP). In extenuating circumstances, an ETP Memorandum may be submitted no later than seven (7) business days prior to the course start date. Submission does not guarantee approval. ETPs shall include a justification memorandum endorsed by the unit commander and routed through the Education Support Office to the G1/MILPO (Army) or for approval.

e. Payment Documentation Deadline. All documentation required for invoice processing and payment, including grade reports, cost verification/school invoice data, shall be submitted no later than 15 August of each calendar year, unless otherwise directed by the District of Columbia Tuition Assistance Board (DCTAB).

(1) Failure to meet this deadline may result in non-payment of DCTA funds due to Fiscal Year (FY) closeout timelines and contracting restrictions. The

Servicemember shall ensure their academic institution is aware of this requirement and submits necessary documents in a timely manner.

f. Requests for information concerning DCTA shall be routed to:

- (1) Army: [ng.dc.dcarng.list.per-edu@army.mil](mailto:ng.dc.dcarng.list.per-edu@army.mil)
- (2) Air: [113wg.dcanpta.org@us.af.mil](mailto:113wg.dcanpta.org@us.af.mil)

g. The following outlines the authorized uses of DCTA:

(1) Servicemembers may request DCTA for any degree level where DCTA was not utilized previously for that level of degree to include that degree's prerequisites. No more than one degree shall be funded from each of the following degree levels: associate degree, bachelor's degree, master's degree, and doctorate.

(2) Servicemembers may request DCTA in pursuit of academic certificates. Academic certificates are those granted by accredited educational institutions. A certification program is a set of courses in a particular field that lead to certificate status or a license to practice and not part of a degree program.

(3) Servicemembers may request DCTA for licensure. A licensure program which grants a license to engage in professional practice that supports professional development or career advancement are authorized.

(4) Servicemembers shall first apply for federally funded Credentialing Assistance (CA) through ArmyIgnitED (Army) or the AFVEC (Airforce), before requesting CA through DCTA. Once federal CA is fully utilized, Servicemembers may request CA through DCTA for no more than one (1) credential per FY, not to exceed \$2,000. The amount of CA used through DCTA shall be deducted from the Servicemember's annual DCTA authorization.

(i) Example: If the maximum DCTA benefit is \$20,500 per FY and a Servicemember uses the full \$2,000 of CA through DCTA, only \$18,500 of DCTA remains available for tuition, fees, or other approved pursuits.

h. The following outlines unauthorized uses:

- (1) Lateral or lower degrees that were previously funded through DCTA.
- (2) Courses determined by the ESO to be recreational or personal interest courses that do not support professional development or career advancement.

i. The following outlines accreditation and institutional requirements:

(1) Educational institutions shall be accredited by a regional or national accrediting agency and recognized by the Department of Education (DOE).

(2) Educational institutions shall be registered in the DC Government Vendor Services Portal to receive DCTA payments.

(3) Educational institutions should have current DoD Voluntary Education Partnership Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and be listed on [www.dodmou.com](http://www.dodmou.com). This ensures alignment with DoD tuition assistance standards and accountability.

(i) Institutions that are otherwise accredited and registered in the DC Government Vendor Services Portal but do not have a current MOU shall still be considered eligible for DCTA. However, they are only eligible for a reduced benefit, equivalent to the total DCTA cap (\$20,500) minus the standard Federal Tuition Assistance cap (\$4,500 in FY25), resulting in a maximum award of up to \$16,000 per FY.

j. The following outlines the authorized rates:

(1) The total amount of DCTA each Servicemember may receive shall not exceed \$20,500 per FY, which includes up to \$20,000 for tuition and \$500 for authorized fees. Authorized fees may include, but are not limited to books, laboratory fees, technology fees and program-specific fees. Any expenses exceeding these annual limits are the sole responsibility of the Servicemember.

(2) The annual maximum benefit of \$20,500 per FY is subject to the total funds allocated through the District's annual budget and Congressional appropriations. Tuition Assistance is available on a first-come, first-served basis until funds are fully obligated.

(3) Should the rate of execution indicate risk of fund exhaustion, DCTAB may implement progressive mitigation measures to ensure sufficient funding remains available for current FY obligations. These measures shall be communicated via official channels and may be lifted or adjusted at the discretion of the DCTAB in coordination with the DCNG Commanding General. These measures may include, but are not limited to, the following in sequential order:

(i) Suspension of tuition assistance for Commissioned Officers.

(ii) Limitation to academic certificates, licenses, and undergraduate degrees only.

- (iii) Reduction of the maximum DCTA benefit per Servicemember.
- (iv) Temporary pause on new applications until further funding guidance.

k. The following outlines the utilization of benefits:

- (1) Servicemembers may use FTA and DCTA concurrently. Servicemembers eligible for FTA shall apply for Federal funds prior to DCTA and provide documentation of FTA award with the DCTA application. Combined Federal and DCTA funds may not exceed 100% of the cost of tuition and fees.
- (2) In cases where Servicemembers are eligible for Pell Grants or loans, DCTA funds may be used concurrently.
- (3) The Montgomery GI Bill Chapter 1606 or the Reserve Education Assistance Program (REAP) Chapter 1607 may be used concurrently with DCTA funds.
- (4) The Montgomery GI Bill Chapter 30 and Post 9-11 (Chapter 33) GI Bill may be used concurrently with DCTA funds.
- (5) The Student Loan Repayment Program (SLRP) is an incentive with no applicability to DCTA funds.
- (6) When utilizing multiple benefit programs, the Servicemember shall provide documentation attesting to the amount of funds utilized.
- (7) DCTA is not a reimbursement program, nor does it make payments directly to Servicemembers.

I. The following outlines the suspension and recoupment of benefits:

- (1) Utilizing funds for a course that was previously failed or dropped without recoupment.
- (2) Doctoring or forging signatures on any Tuition Assistance applications or other related forms.
- (3) Failing to notify the Education Office of changes to your enrollment status within five (5) business days.
- (4) Failing to submit final grades to the DCTA program Manager within 30 days of the course completion.

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m. The following outlines governance of the DCTA program:

(1) The District of Columbia Tuition Assistance Board (DCTAB) shall convene quarterly, to ensure effective and equitable disbursement and execution throughout the FY. DCTAB shall provide program oversight and may revise this policy, or its implementation procedures as needed through recommendations to DCNG Commanding General.

(2) DCTAB is comprised of the following: DCNG ESO, DC Government Program Analyst, DC Government Operations Program Manager, ANG Personnel Superintendent, ARNG G1 SGM, DCTA Program Manager.

(3) DCTAB shall meet as needed to discuss current and future funding, policy, and submission procedures.

5. EFFECTIVE DATE. This policy is effective immediately and supersedes all previous DCNG Tuition Assistance policies and memoranda and shall remain in effect until rescinded or superseded.

6. The point of contact for this memorandum is Education Support Office at:

a. Army: [ng.dc.dcarng.list.per-edu@army.mil](mailto:ng.dc.dcarng.list.per-edu@army.mil)

b. Air: [113.wg.dcarng.ta.org@us.af.mil](mailto:113.wg.dcarng.ta.org@us.af.mil)

Enc

- 1. Statement of Understanding
- 2. Memorandum of Good Standing
- 3. FAQ

LELAND D. BLANCHARD II

Brigadier General, USA  
Commanding (Interim)