



Florida State Approving Agency for Veterans' Education and Training

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October 4, 2023

Important Information for The Art Institute Students and Other Interested Parties

The Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs received notice that The Art Institute schools, to include the Miami International University of Art & Design, and The Art Institute of Tampa, closed their doors on September 30, 2023, and will no longer offer education and training after that date. Approximately 30 Florida GI Bill® benefit recipient students and hundreds of non-veteran students were enrolled in programs at these facilities which were approved to administer VA Education Benefits.

The following information is intended to provide resources and identify services and assistance available to Florida students affected by The Art Institute closures. Please know that you are not alone during these trying times. As you will see on the following pages, the school is providing guidance and is offering information as to where you may acquire your transcripts as well as other pertinent information. Other resources included in this document include information and/or links to web pages of the U.S. Department of Education, the Florida Department of Education, the school's accrediting agency, The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges, the U.S. Department of Veterans' Affairs, and the Florida State Approving Agency for Veterans' Education and Training.

Hopefully, the information provided below will help you find the resources that you need to proceed with your education plan. Topics addressed are transcript acquisition, federal student loan forgiveness, transfer of credit, prospective schools to transfer into, and general guidance and information pertinent to GI Bill benefit students. If you require assistance where a resource/contact is not provided to you below, please contact the Florida State Approving Agency for Veterans' Education and Training (SAA) and we will do our best to locate the individuals who can best address your issues. You may contact the Florida State Approving Agency for Veterans' Education and Training by calling Paul Smith at (727) 319-7406 or by emailing him at Paul.Smith@fdva.fl.gov Paul will make every effort to determine who can best assist you.

For information posted by **The Art Institute**, please go to <https://www.artinstitutes.edu/closed-school-information-page-1>

For information posted by the **U.S. Department of Education**, please go to <https://studentaid.gov/sites/default/files/ai.pdf>

For **Frequently Asked Questions About School Closures** posted on the **U.S. Department of Education's website**, please go to <https://studentaid.gov/announcements-events/closed-school#frequently-asked-questions-about-school-closures>

Please look for upcoming information posted by the **Florida Department of Education** at <https://www.fldoe.org/> and also by the school's accreditor, **The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC)** at <https://sacscoc.org/>

Please peruse the webpages on this site, www.floridavets.org for the link to **facilities approved to participate in GI Bill® Education Benefits by searching, VA's Public WEAMS System** at <https://inquiry.vba.va.gov/weamspub/buildSearchInstitutionCriteria.do> To find contacts and more information about the **Florida State Approving Agency**, see the State Approving Agency link on this website under the Benefits & Services tab <https://www.floridavets.org/benefits-services/state-approving-agency/>

Below, please see **an important message to you, from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs**. If you have additional questions for VA, please call the VA Education Call Center at 1-888-442-4551.

Having trouble viewing this email? [View it as a web page.](#)

VA



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs



EDUCATION SERVICE GI BILL PROGRAMS

Dear GI Bill® Student,

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) was made aware that the following Art Institute campuses closed effective September 30, 2023:

- Miami International University of Art & Design
- The Art Institute of Atlanta
- The Art Institute of Austin, a branch of The Art Institute of Houston
- The Art Institute of Dallas, a branch of Miami International University of Art & Design
- The Art Institute of Houston
- The Art Institute of San Antonio, a branch of The Art Institute of Houston
- The Art Institute of Tampa, a branch of Miami International University of Art & Design
- The Art Institute of Virginia Beach, a branch of The Art Institute of Atlanta

We understand the extremely difficult situation a school closure may cause Veterans and their families, and we wish to assist you as much as possible in continuing your educational goals. If you are considering a transfer to another school to prevent or minimize interruptions in your education benefits, please know that some schools may offer to waive certain admissions fees, and accept credits earned at Art Institutes. VA has resources to support students to choose another school at: <https://www.va.gov/education/choosing-a-school/> or <https://www.va.gov/education/gi-bill-comparison-tool/>.

In certain circumstances, when a closure or withdrawal action is made, students may be eligible for restoration of entitlement of their GI Bill benefits. VA will make determinations on a student-by-student basis based on specific eligibility factors outlined in the law ([38 U.S.C. § 3699](#)). You can learn more about restoration of entitlement at <https://www.benefits.va.gov/GIBILL/Restoration.asp>.

Where can I find help?

Please see some additional resources that may assist you:

- Student Veterans of America (<http://studentveterans.org/>) has a network of over 1,400 student chapters at colleges and universities and their staff can provide answers to your questions.
- Reach out to Veterans of Foreign Wars (<https://www.vfw.org>). They offer emergency assistance grants to students affected by school closures.
- Free lawyers and advice are available for students from Veterans Education Success. Visit their website at <http://veteranseducationuccess.org/> or email directly, help@VeteransEducationSuccess.org.
- If a school closes, the Department of Education's Federal Student Aid has a dedicated page. Visit [Has Your School Closed? Here's What to Do. | Federal Student Aid](#) for more information. Please see Federal Student Aid's update for Art Institutes students - <https://studentaid.gov/sites/default/files/ai.pdf>
- The American Legion (<https://www.legion.org/serviceofficers>) has service officers in every state that can provide answers to questions about education benefits, Federal student loans and credit transferability.
- The State Approving Agencies (<https://nasaa-vetseducation.com/nasaa-contacts/>) are working with schools to identify those that will accept transfers.

VA remains focused on the Veterans who have honorably served, as well as their eligible dependents. VA is contacting all affected Art Institutes students via email to inform them of this action and the options available to them. We are committed to working closely with all students to ensure that you are properly protected and have minimal disruptions to your future educational plans.

If you have any questions, or are experiencing difficulties, please contact VA's Education Call Center at 1-888-442-4551 between 7 a.m. and 6 p.m. Central Time, Monday through Friday. Alternatively, you may submit questions through the Ask VA (AVA) system. If you don't already have a VA login account, you will need to set one up to use AVA: <https://ask.va.gov/>.

Respectfully,
Education Service



US Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Benefits Administration
1-888-442-4551, TDD: 711



Do you have a question or concern about your benefits?
Contact us safely and securely with [AskVA!](#)

**If you know a Veteran who is in crisis,
call the [Veterans Crisis Line](#) at 988 press 1.**

Other pertinent advice:

Retain all syllabi from coursework taken at The Art Institute schools

Retain your financial aid records

Retain your enrollment documents from the Art Institute schools

Retain student account ledgers from The Art Institutes to document your tuition charges, student loan disbursements, veteran education disbursements/refunds and credit balance refunds on your student account

NOTE: A student who transfers credits to complete their program is generally not eligible for a closed school loan discharge (see the U.S. Department of Education's website).

"GI Bill® is a registered trademark of the U.S. Department of Veterans' Affairs (VA). More information about education benefits offered by VA is available at the official U.S. government website at www.benefits.va.gov/gibill."

The above resources are based on current information available in Florida and are subject to change.