

Executive Order 12988

The Department of the Interior has conducted the reviews required by section 3 of Executive Order 12988 (Civil Justice Reform) and has determined that, to the extent allowed by law, this rule meets the applicable standards of subsections (a) and (b) of that section. However, these standards are not applicable to the actual language of State regulatory programs and program amendments since each such program is drafted and promulgated by a specific State, not by OSM. Under sections 503 and 505 of SMCRA (30 U.S.C. 1253 and 1255) and 30 CFR 730.11, 732.15 and 732.17(h)(10), decisions on proposed State regulatory programs and program amendments submitted by the States must be based solely on a determination of whether the submittal is consistent with SMCRA and its implementing Federal regulations and whether the other requirements of 30 CFR Parts 730, 731, and 732 have been met.

National Environmental Policy Act

No environmental impact statement is required for this rule since section 702(d) of SMCRA [30 U.S.C. 1292(d)] provides that agency decisions on proposed State regulatory program provisions do not constitute major

Federal actions within the meaning of section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. 4332(2)(C)).

Paperwork Reduction Act

This rule does not contain information collection requirements that require approval by OMB under the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. 3507 *et seq.*).

Regulatory Flexibility Act

The Department of the Interior has determined that this rule will not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities under the Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C. 601 *et seq.*). The State submittal which is the subject of this rule is based upon counterpart Federal regulations for which an economic analysis was prepared and certification made that such regulations would not have a significant economic effect upon a substantial number of small entities. Accordingly, this rule will ensure that existing requirements previously promulgated by OSM will be implemented by the State. In making the determination as to whether this rule would have a significant economic impact, the Department relied upon the data and assumptions for the counterpart Federal regulations.

Unfunded Mandates

This rule will not impose a cost of \$100 million or more in any given year on any governmental entity or the private sector.

List of Subjects in 30 CFR Part 946

Intergovernmental relations, Surface mining, Underground mining.

Dated: January 13, 2000.

Tim L. Dieringer,

Acting Regional Director, Appalachian Regional Coordinating Center.

For the reasons set out in the preamble, Title 30, Chapter VII, Subchapter T of the Code of Federal Regulations is amended as set forth below:

PART 946—VIRGINIA

1. The authority citation for Part 946 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 30 U.S.C. 1201 *et seq.*

2. Section 946.15 is amended in the table by adding a new entry in chronological order by "Date of Final Publication" to read as follows:

§ 946.15 Approval of Virginia regulatory program amendments.

* * * * *

| Original amendment submission date | Date of final publication | Citation/description |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| * * * * * November 24, 1998 | * * * * * February 7, 2000 | * * * * * Policy clarification for implementing 4 VAC 25-130-816/817.76. |

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Coast Guard

33 CFR Part 117

[GGD08-99-068]

Drawbridge Operating Regulation; Inner Harbor Navigation Canal, LA

AGENCY: Coast Guard, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of temporary deviation from regulations.

SUMMARY: The Commander, Eighth Coast Guard District, has issued a temporary deviation from the regulation governing the operation of the Norfolk Southern Railroad bascule span drawbridge across the Inner Harbor Navigation Canal, mile 4.5, at New Orleans, Orleans Parish, Louisiana. This

deviation allows the Port of New Orleans to close the bridge to navigation daily from 7 a.m. until noon and from 1 p.m. until 6 p.m. from Monday, March 6, 2000 through Wednesday, April 19, 2000. This temporary deviation was issued to allow for the repair of the damaged fender system. The draw will open at any time for a vessel in distress. Presently, the draw opens on signal at all times.

DATES: This deviation is effective from 7 a.m. on Monday, March 6, 2000 through 6 p.m. on Wednesday, April 19, 2000.

ADDRESSES: Unless otherwise indicated, documents referred to in this notice are available for inspection or copying at the office of the Eighth Coast Guard District, Bridge Administration Branch, Commander (ob), Eighth Coast Guard District, 501 Magazine Street, New Orleans, Louisiana, 70130-3396. The Bridge Administration Branch of the Eighth Coast Guard District maintains

the public docket for this temporary deviation.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Phil Johnson, Bridge Administration Branch, telephone (504) 589-2965.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Norfolk Southern Railroad bascule span drawbridge across the Inner Harbor Navigation Canal in New Orleans, Louisiana, has a vertical clearance of one foot above mean high water in the closed-to-navigation position and unlimited clearance in the open-to-navigation position. Navigation on the waterway consists of tugs with tows, fishing vessels, sailing vessels, and other recreational craft. The Port of New Orleans requested a temporary deviation from the normal operation of the drawbridge in order to accommodate the maintenance work, involving removal and replacement of the portions of the fender system.

This deviation allows the draw of the Norfolk Southern Railroad bascule span drawbridge across the Inner Harbor

Navigation Canal, mile 4.5, at New Orleans, Orleans Parish, Louisiana to remain closed to navigation daily from 7 a.m. until noon and from 1 p.m. until 6 p.m. from Monday, March 6, 2000 through Wednesday, April 19, 2000. The draw shall open on signal at any time for a vessel in distress.

Dated: January 12, 2000.

Paul J. Pluta,

*Rear Admiral, U.S. Coast Guard Commander,
Eighth Coast Guard District.*

[FR Doc. 00-2678 Filed 2-4-00; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-15-M

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Coast Guard

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

38 CFR PART 21

RIN 2900-A163

Eligibility Criteria for the Montgomery GI Bill—Active Duty and Other Miscellaneous Issues

AGENCIES: Department of Defense, Department of Transportation (Coast Guard), and Department of Veterans Affairs.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: This document amends the educational assistance and educational benefit regulations of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). The amendments reflect statutory changes which set forth new eligibility criteria that will allow additional individuals to establish eligibility for educational assistance under the Montgomery GI Bill—Active Duty (MGIB); and also reflect statutory provisions concerning the approval of courses leading to alternative teacher certification. This document also makes changes for the purpose of clarification.

DATES: *Effective date:* February 7, 2000.

Dates of application:

October 1, 1996: 38 CFR

21.7020(b)(1); new § 21.7042(f)(3); and newly redesignated § 21.7042(f)(4).

October 9, 1996: §§ 21.4135(b); 21.5021(d)(3); 21.5058(b); 21.5130(d); 21.7020(b)(29); all changes to § 21.7042 except new § 21.7042(f)(3) and newly redesignated § 21.7042(f)(4); § 21.7045; 21.7050; 21.7131; 21.7520(b); and 21.7635.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

William G. Susling, Jr., Education Advisor, Education Service, Veterans

Benefits Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs, 202-273-7187.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: In the **Federal Register** of November 12, 1998 (63 FR 63253), the Department of Defense (DOD), the Department of Transportation (Coast Guard), and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) proposed amending subparts D, G, K, and L of 38 CFR part 21, as set forth in the SUMMARY portion of this document.

DOD, the Department of Transportation (Coast Guard), and VA gave interested persons 60 days to submit comments. VA received one letter from a service organization. The organization noted that the amendments would be beneficial for veterans and concurred in them.

Based on the rationale stated in this document and the proposed rule, we are adopting the provisions of the proposed rule as a final rule without change except to the authority citations for subparts D, G, and L.

DOD is issuing this final rule jointly with VA insofar as it relates to VEAP. DOD funds this program and VA administers it. DOD, the Department of Transportation (Coast Guard), and VA are jointly issuing this final rule insofar as it relates to the Montgomery GI Bill—Selected Reserve. DOD and the Coast Guard fund this program, and VA administers it. The remainder of this final rule is issued solely by VA.

Administrative Procedure Act

Under 5 U.S.C. 553, there is a basis for dispensing with a 30-day delay of the effective date since the changes made by this final rule are restatements of statute, interpretive rules, and nonsubstantive changes for the purpose of clarity.

Paperwork Reduction Act

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has approved the information collection and recordkeeping requirements associated with this final rule concerning 38 CFR 21.7131(l) and (m) under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. 3501-3520). The proposed rule provided an opportunity to comment to OMB and VA on those requirements, but no comments were received on them. OMB has assigned OMB control number 2900-0607 to those information collection and recordkeeping requirements. Under the collection of information provisions in § 21.7131(l) and (m), a veteran may be required to submit evidence to show that the veteran's election to receive educational assistance under the MGIB was a valid one, and the date of VA's receipt of the

evidence may have an effect on the effective date of an award of educational assistance.

OMB assigns a control number to each collection of information it approves. VA may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. We are displaying the OMB control number assigned to the collection of information in this final rule at the end of § 21.7131.

Executive Order 12866

This final rule has been reviewed by the Office of Management and Budget under Executive Order 12866.

Regulatory Flexibility Act

The Secretary of Defense, Commandant of the Coast Guard, and the Secretary of Veterans Affairs hereby certify that this final rule will not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities as they are defined in the Regulatory Flexibility Act, 5 U.S.C. 601-612. This final rule will not cause educational institutions to make changes in their activities and has minuscule monetary effects, if any. Pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 605(b), this final rule, therefore, is exempt from the initial and final regulatory flexibility analyses requirements of sections 603 and 604.

The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance numbers for programs that this final rule affects are 64.117, 64.120, and 64.124. This final rule also affects the Montgomery GI Bill—Selected Reserve program, which has no Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance number.

List of Subjects in 38 CFR Part 21

Administrative practice and procedure, Armed forces, Civil rights, Claims, Colleges and universities, Conflict of interests, Defense Department, Education, Employment, Grant programs-education, Grant programs-veterans, Loan programs-education, Loan programs-veterans, Manpower training programs, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements, Schools, Travel and transportation expenses, Veterans, Vocational education, Vocational rehabilitation.