

The Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board / State Approving Agency

What is a State Approving Agency?

After World War II, Congress decided that each state should have an agency to determine which programs within their borders are appropriate for veterans to enroll in to utilize their Veterans Administration (VA) educational benefits. As a result, State Approving Agencies (SAAs) were formed. After a few years states realized that a national association was needed and in 1948 it was formed. The National Association of State Approving Agencies (NASAA) assists states in coordinating their efforts to do a better job for veterans. Also, it is a tool to resolve mutual problems.

In many ways the fundamental role of state approving agencies is the same today as it was when they were founded. State Approving Agencies:

- Promote and safeguard quality education and training programs for veterans.
- Ensure greater educational and training opportunities to meet the changing needs of veterans.
- Assist the VA in preventing fraud, waste and abuse in the administration of the GI Bill.

The programs which can be approved are found in institutions of higher learning (colleges and universities), non-degree institutions (vocational and technical schools), apprenticeship programs, on-the-job training programs, flight training schools, and high schools. Each state reviews the appropriateness of each program as to its own standards and laws in addition to VA rules and regulations along with any other applicable laws and/or regulations. States then approve or disapprove programs, and continuous supervision is required of approved programs.

Today there are 58 SAAs (some states have more than one). In Washington state, we have two SAAs.

The Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board/SAA approves:

1. Career and technical programs at public community and technical colleges
2. Associate degree and certificate programs at proprietary colleges
3. Certificate programs at private vocational schools
4. Certificate programs at public four-year public institutions

5. High school diploma programs
6. Licensing exams

The Higher Education Coordinating Board/SAA approves:

1. Bachelor degree programs at public four-year institutions and proprietary colleges
2. General academic transfer programs at community colleges
3. On-the-job training (OJT) and apprenticeship programs
4. Flight schools
5. Certification exams

SAA additional responsibilities include:

- Conducting annual on-site supervisory visits to approved educational institutions and training organizations to monitor all active schools for compliance with VA policies and procedures, and rules to ensure program quality.
- Providing technical assistance with applications for approval.
- Providing information about training and education opportunities to veterans, military base personnel, employers and labor groups through outreach activities.
- Serving as a liaison between Washington veterans and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

WTECB/State Approving Agency Contacts

Lee Williams, Program Manager
360-586-3321
lwilliams@wtb.wa.gov

Donna Ashman, Administrative Assistant
360-753-5665
dashman@wtb.wa.gov