

SUNY Empire Expands Military Grant to Include Veteran Spouses, Leads SUNY System in Military Support

Empire State University continues pioneering efforts to serve military families with enhanced grant coverage beginning Fall 2025

Empire State University announced a significant expansion of its military grant program, extending comprehensive educational benefits to spouses of veterans for the first time. Beginning fall 2025, undergraduate military spouses of active-duty personnel, National Guard and Reserve members, and veterans are eligible for a military grant that aligns tuition with the in-state rate of \$295 per credit hour and provides the same covered fees previously available only to service members.

Expanding Access for Military Families

The expansion represents an evolution of SUNY Empire's military support initiatives. Although the university first introduced grants for military spouses in 2020, the program covered only spouses of active duty, Guard, and Reserve personnel. The expansion includes veteran spouses and adds coverage for the Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) fee—providing more complete financial support for military families pursuing higher education. "This expansion for veteran spouses reflects SUNY Empire's commitment to serving military families—removing financial barriers and empowering active duty, Guard, Reserve, and veteran members, along with their spouses, to achieve their educational goals," says Desiree Drindak, SUNY Empire's Veteran and Military Resource Center director. The grant program requires verification of military affiliation.

Leading the SUNY System

SUNY Empire has been providing comprehensive support to military-affiliated students for years and serves more military-affiliated students than any other campus in the 64-institution SUNY system. SUNY Empire grants nearly 20% of all SUNY degrees to military-affiliated students.

More Than Financial Support

Beyond financial coverage, SUNY Empire has built comprehensive support systems specifically designed for military families. The university's online format accommodates the unique challenges military families face, from irregular schedules and deployment separations to frequent moves between duty stations.

According to the U.S. Department of Labor, military spouses face a 21% unemployment rate nationally—six times the civilian rate—and often struggle to maintain career continuity due, in part, to relocations and lack of childcare. SUNY Empire's online programs allow spouses to continue their education regardless of where military assignments take their families.

Comprehensive Military Benefits Portfolio

With the Fall 2025 expansion, SUNY Empire's military grant program funded with institutional support, now offers:

- In-state tuition rate of \$295 per credit hour for undergraduate military spouses
- Tuition for undergraduate active-duty personnel, National Guard members, Reserve personnel, and veterans aligned with the Department of Defense Tuition Assistance limit of \$250 per credit hour
- Covered fees including the fee for credit for prior learning
- Eligibility extended to active-duty personnel, National Guard members, Reserve personnel, veterans, and all their spouses

The program builds on SUNY Empire's broader commitment to accessible, flexible, high-quality education.

"The expansion represents enhanced benefits and recognition of military spouses as essential partners in military service," said Drindak. "They deserve educational opportunities that support their aspirations."

About Empire State University

Founded in 1971 as the innovative campus of the State University of New York, Empire State University is New York's only online public university and empowers learners from diverse backgrounds to achieve their educational goals. We have decades of experience providing access to high-quality, affordable education through online teaching and learning, individualized instruction, mentoring, and credit for prior learning. We build on our students' experiences to promote their growth and drive upward mobility and economic development in New York state and beyond. SUNY Empire's 100,000 alumni are teachers, nurses, entrepreneurs, and leaders in their communities and their fields. For many of the 2.1 million New Yorkers who have some college credit, but no degree, we are New York's leading completion institution. Visit

[../www.sunyempire.edu]www.sunyempire.edu and follow us on social media @SUNYEmpire.

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