

# **State of Alaska FY2006 Governor's Operating Budget**

## **Department of Military and Veterans Affairs Educational Benefits Component Budget Summary**

**Component: Educational Benefits**

**Contribution to Department's Mission**

Increase recruitment and retention by offering improved educational benefits to members of the Alaska National Guard and Naval Militia.

**Core Services**

After becoming a guard member, advancement and promotion within the ranks is heavily dependent on education. Officers must have 90 college semester hours completed prior to commissioning and have obtained a Bachelor's degree within 2 year after commissioning. Failure to complete a degree impacts the officer's promotion opportunities. Enlisted personnel who enlist with less than a 9th grade reading level are very likely not to be promoted to Sergeant/E-5 due to mandatory military schools that require 9th grade level reading skills. These funds assist members of the Alaska National Guard and Naval Militia by paying 100% of tuition and/or fees if they successfully complete classes to obtain post-secondary degrees or training in order to promote careers in the National Guard.

The Department of Military and Veterans Affairs lists as one of its major goals and strategies for the Alaska Army and Air National Guard as; improved recruitment, retention. The Alaska Army National Guard is critically short of junior officers and senior grade enlisted personnel while the Alaska Air National Guard is behind in personnel strength compared to other like units. States that have 100% tuition assistance are at or near full strength in the officer and enlisted ranks and experience exceptionally high retention rates.

**Major Activities to Advance Strategies**

- Payment of guard members tuition costs to University of Alaska
- Reimbursement of Tuition and Fees to Guard Members

**FY2006 Resources Allocated to Achieve Results**

<b>FY2006 Component Budget: \$353,500</b>	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td colspan="2"><b>Personnel:</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Full time</td> <td style="text-align: right;">0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Part time</td> <td style="text-align: right;">0</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Total</b></td> <td style="text-align: right; border-top: 1px solid black;"><b>0</b></td> </tr> </table>	<b>Personnel:</b>		Full time	0	Part time	0	<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Personnel:</b>									
Full time	0								
Part time	0								
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>								

**Key Component Challenges**

Tuition reimbursement funding for schools other than the University of Alaska Tuition Assistance— In FY2004, \$25,000 in student requests were unfunded for other than University of Alaska post-secondary schools in the state. Demand will continue to exceed the \$28,500 allotted for this program.

**Significant Changes in Results to be Delivered in FY2006**

The University of Alaska Tuition credit hour rate increased from \$82 in FY2002 to \$109 in the fall of FY2005. A general fund increase in the amount of \$75,000 is requested in FY2006 to restore the base level credit hours provided to guard members due to the University of Alaska tuition cost increases.

**Major Component Accomplishments in 2004**

The State Tuition Assistance Program provided \$28,500 to reimburse guard members for classes successfully completed at institutions in Alaska other than the University of Alaska system. Twenty-eight Guard and Naval Militia members received state reimbursement.

The legislature also provided \$250,000 to pay for the tuition of Guard members attending classes at the University of Alaska. These funds were fully utilized this fiscal year and made it possible for over 475 guard members to attend the University. The availability of tuition waivers also allowed more members in the rural areas to pursue higher education goals. Guard members from Anchorage, Fairbanks, Juneau, Bethel, Ninilchik, Nulato, Hooper Bay and Nome have utilized this program.

### Statutory and Regulatory Authority

AS 26.05.295-298      Educational assistance for enlisted personnel

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**Educational Benefits  
Component Financial Summary**

*All dollars shown in thousands*

	FY2004 Actuals	FY2005 Management Plan	FY2006 Governor
<b>Non-Formula Program:</b>			
<b>Component Expenditures:</b>			
71000 Personal Services	0.0	0.0	0.0
72000 Travel	0.0	0.0	0.0
73000 Services	0.0	0.0	0.0
74000 Commodities	0.0	0.0	0.0
75000 Capital Outlay	0.0	0.0	0.0
77000 Grants, Benefits	278.4	278.5	353.5
78000 Miscellaneous	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Expenditure Totals</b>	<b>278.4</b>	<b>278.5</b>	<b>353.5</b>
<b>Funding Sources:</b>			
1004 General Fund Receipts	278.4	278.5	353.5
<b>Funding Totals</b>	<b>278.4</b>	<b>278.5</b>	<b>353.5</b>

**Summary of Component Budget Changes  
From FY2005 Management Plan to FY2006 Governor**

*All dollars shown in thousands*

	<u>General Funds</u>	<u>Federal Funds</u>	<u>Other Funds</u>	<u>Total Funds</u>
<b>FY2005 Management Plan</b>	<b>278.5</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>278.5</b>
<b>Proposed budget increases:</b>				
-Increase Program Funding to Maintain Current Level of Educational Benefits to National Guardsmen	75.0	0.0	0.0	75.0
<b>FY2006 Governor</b>	<b>353.5</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>353.5</b>