

Army Human Resources Command





<u>Purpose</u>

Provide information and step-bystep instruction on the Army CA Program, Army COOL, MilGears, and Creation of CA Goals.

<u>Agenda</u>

- > Slides 2-11: Army CA Program Information
- > Slides 12-24: Researching Army COOL,

Milgears, and credentials

- Slides 25-37: Accessing ArmylgnitED and Exploring Options
- > Slides 38-57: Creating MOS Related and Non-
- MOS Related Education Goal
- Slide 58- Need Assistance or Counseling?
 Schedule your appointment with a CA
 Counselor

The Army Credentialing Assistance Program Office (ACAPO)

1 October 2025



Overview of CA





Army Credentialing Assistance Program:

Program that supports the use of funding to obtain industry recognized credentials



Army COOL (Credentialing Opportunities On-Line):

https://www.cool.osd.mil/army/costs and funding/index.html?cr edentialingassistance:

Repository for all credentials for Soldiers are authorized to pursue (Library)



Milgears-

https://milgears.osd.mil/:

Platform where Soldiers can get customized credentialing recommendations



ArmylgnitED- https://www.armyignited.army.mil/ :

Platform for where Soldiers will submit their CA Requests



AlPortal:

Platform for Vendors ONLY

Overview of CA cont.



The CA Program directly contributes to supporting Soldiers' professional development, retaining quality Soldiers, and preparing Soldiers for meaningful employment upon transition from military service.

- CA is voluntary and conducted off-duty for all Soldiers, (Active Duty, ARNG, USAR) of all ranks (Enlisted, NCO, Officer, Warrant Officer)
- Vetting of all Vendors and the processing/payment of all CA requests is conducted by the Army Credentialing Assistance Program Office (ACAPO)
- Vendors are considered colleges, universities, credentialing agencies, other organizations that provide training in support of completing a credentialing exam or license



Army Credentialing Assistance

Overview of CA cont.

- CA may be authorized for the payment of credentialing expenses for classroom, hands-on, online/blended training, study guides, materials, textbooks, fees, exams, and/or recertification of credentials
- Soldiers can select any credential listed in Army COOL if the CA Program has a vendor that offers an exam
- Soldiers may use both TA and CA; however, the combined use cannot exceed \$4,500 fiscal year (FY) limit
- Soldiers can pursue one credential per FY and the FY funding limit for that one is \$2000
- Soldiers have a limit of 3 credentials per 10 years of service (excluding recertification). This limit will be retroactive to a Soldier's PEBD to determine the years of service. Previously funded credentialing education goals will be included in the cap. Recertifications will not count against the lifetime limits but will count against the FY funding limit. Soldiers who submitted a CA Request for recertification in prior FYs that are being counted against their lifetime or FY Education Goal limits must contact ACAPO through ArmylgnitED messaging to have their lifetime and/or FY Education Goal limit corrected.

Overview of CA cont.



- Prior to using CA the first time Soldiers, regardless of rank, must access MILGEARS explorer at milgears.osd.mil prior to using CA the first time and upload their MILGEARS results into ArmylgnitED (Soldiers will be identified of this requirement when attempting to select a goal, if Soldiers have used CA before in ArmylgnitED, there requirement will not be there)
- Pilot credentials are limited to \$1,000 per FY for all Soldiers regardless of Component
- Credentials do NOT have to align with a Soldier's MOS/AOC/ASI
- Soldiers must submit CA requests at least 45 days from the start date and no more than 90 days from the submission date
- End date on CA request must be at least 31 days from their ETS
- Course / exam will be paid prior to the start date by the CA Billing Office (CABO).

//CUI// PED LEVEL 2



U.S. Army Human Resources Command

Overview of CA cont.



- Soldiers receive messages in ArmylgnitED listing the status (and can also be found on the dashboard under "Funding Requests") of the CA request on when it is moved to finance or rejected. Status requests can be submitted in ArmylgnitED to ACAPO by the Soldier if it is 3 days prior to the start date.
- NOTE! Continuing Resolutions (CR) will result in holding of cases. ACAPO cannot move CA Requests to finance if the date is after the CR.
- NOTE!! Per CA Policy: ACAPO has up to the day of the start date to process the case and move to the CABO for payment. In certain circumstances (i.e. Continuing Resolution, delay in funding), CABO may pay after the start date.
- If the Soldier was notified that their CA Request was moved to finance for payment, and the Soldier is within 3 days of the selected start date, submit a ArmylgnitED message (using the "Credentialing Assistance (CA) FINANCE" category) requesting the status from the CABO. Once the CABO funds a request, Soldiers will receive an ArmylgnitED message letting them know they can begin.

//CUI// PED LEVEL 2

Overview of CA cont.



- Books and/or materials must be associated to an existing CA request in progress or pending payment. They must be submitted separately. (If vendor provides these items, and the Soldier does not receive these items- the Soldier must contact the vendor to receive these items).
- CA requests for exams or books and materials cannot be split
 payments. If a Soldier does not have enough funding remaining to pay for a
 requested exam, books, or materials in full, the CA request will be rejected.
- Soldiers will be subject to reimbursing the Army for CA if they fail or withdraw
 from a course of instruction or fail an exam (or fail to sit for the course/exam in
 the timeframe requested), and do not have an approved military withdrawal.
- Soldiers who pay out of pocket for anything will NOT be reimbursed.
 Soldiers who start courses prior to notification from the CABO will not be reimbursed
- CA is available to Commissioned Officers and Warrant Officers. Officers and Warrant Officers may use CA and will not incur a service obligation

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Overview of CA cont.



- Soldiers cannot bundle. Training and exam cannot be requested together within the same CA request; Training and books/materials cannot be requested together within the same CA request; Exam and books/materials cannot be requested together within the same CA request (itemization on a quote, even without cost, can be viewed as bundled)
- Soldiers can select any provider-not restricted
- If a Soldier has completed all degrees and certificates, they may still be eligible for CA
- If Soldiers know there are "Multiple Trainings" required before request the exam, there is a box that can be checked when selecting the goal. NOTE! After the training CA request is submitted, Soldiers have 365 days to request the next CA request for training. If the Soldier fails to submit within that timeframe, the Soldier will be recouped ALL CA requests for training associated with the goal after 11 Dec 24 (when policy was changed)
- Soldiers can receive CA counseling from the CA Virtual Counseling Cell- only CA, not TA

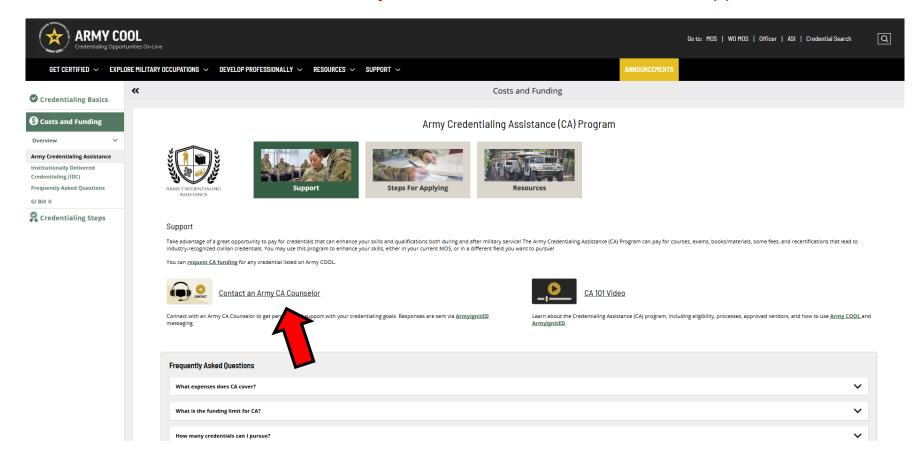
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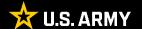


Assistance

Soldier requesting assistance should be referred to the CA Virtual Counseling Cell. Please send them to the Army CA Page within Army COOL:

https://www.cool.osd.mil/army/costs_and_funding/index.html?credentialingassistance And click the "Contact An Army CA Counselor" to schedule their appointment





CA Key Takeaways



Credentialing Assistance (CA) is only available through ArmylgnitED https://www.armyignited.army.mil/

- All CA Requests must be submitted directly through ArmylgnitED. The CA Request does not get submitted or vetted through the Education Center or Office
- Soldiers must submit CA Requests 45 days from the start date of the course or exam. NOTE!! END DATE MUST BE AT LEAST 31 DAYS FROM THE ETS DATE.
- If Soldier does not see the vendor of choice submit a message in ArmyignitED,
 Please navigate to ArmylgnitED, click Messages on the left side and select the
 drop down, click on General Inbox or My Inbox, click on "Create Message",
 select the "Credentialing Assistance (CA) Office" as the category, Then provide
 the vendor's name, vendor URL, vendor POC name, vendor email and phone
 number, then send. ACAPO will contact the vendor and request they
 participate in the CA Program.
- It may take up to a few days prior to the start date of the course to receive approval notifications from ACAPO/CABO.

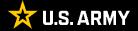


CA Key Takeaways cont.



Completion of Courses / Withdrawals

- Soldiers select start and end dates. Per policy, within 30 days of completion, a grade (certificate of completion) must be added to the CA Request. Soldiers must ensure the vendor provides a grade in the CA Request. Soldiers will not receive approval to use CA for an additional course or exam until the vendor provides the grade for a completed course or exam. If the vendor does not receive the results of the exam (i.e., Pearson Vue, CompTIA, or vendors who provide vouchers for those same exams), it is the Soldier's responsibility to upload the exam results via ArmylgnitED messaging to ACAPO using the Credentialing Assistance (CA) Office category. Failure to provide the certificate of completion within the designated timeframe may result in recoupment.
- After a CAR has been paid, and a Soldier wishes to withdrawal from a course or exam, Soldiers who withdraw from a CA-approved course or exam must contact the vendor and ACAPO to request the withdrawal. Select the "Credentialing Assistance (CA) Office" category and enter "Withdraw" as the Subject of your message. In the narrative, provide name, CA Request ID #, and request to withdraw. ACAPO will add a "W" grade to the course or exam. The Soldier will receive a message when the "W" grade has been added with further instructions on how to complete the waiver process. All requests for recoupment waivers for withdrawals must be completed in ArmylgnitED.
- If a CA Request has NOT been paid and hasn't been moved to finance, Soldiers can delete their own CA Request in their account. Soldiers should not submit a ArmylgnitED Helpdesk ticket to resolve this.



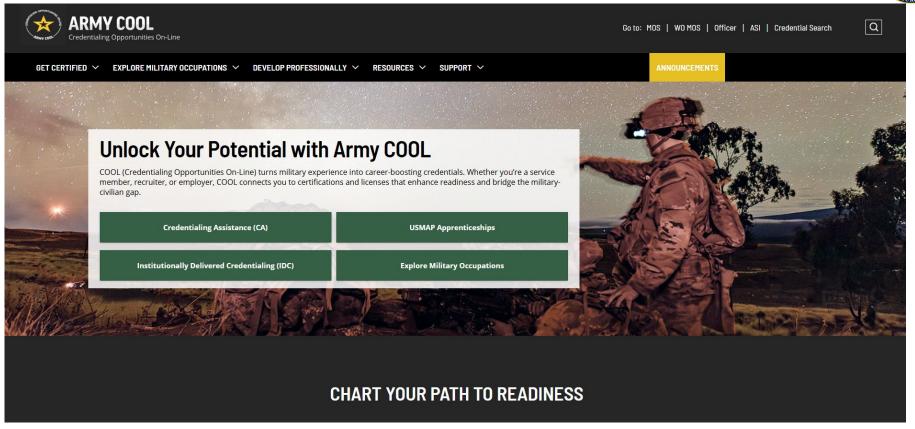


ARMY COOL AND MILGEARS



Army COOL and MilGears





Army Credentialing Opportunities On-Line (COOL) is a public page- best accessed on Microsoft Edge, Chrome or Firefox

https://www.cool.osd.mil/army/index.htm

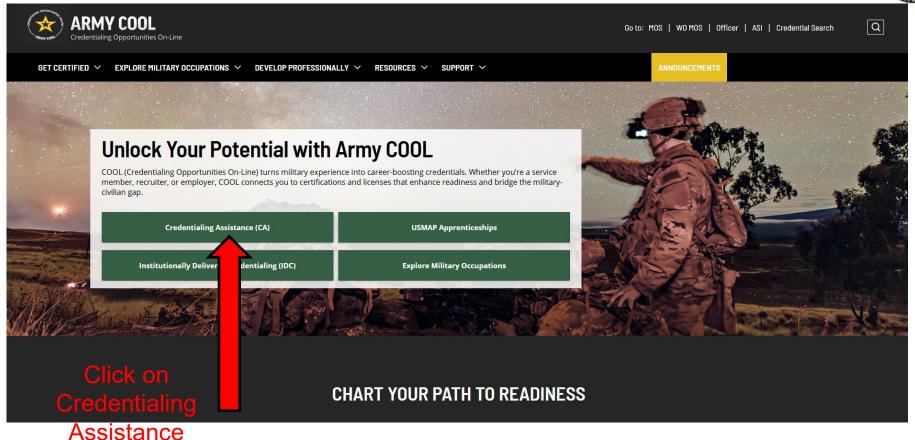
or

https://cool.osd.mil/army/index.html



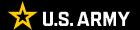
Army COOL





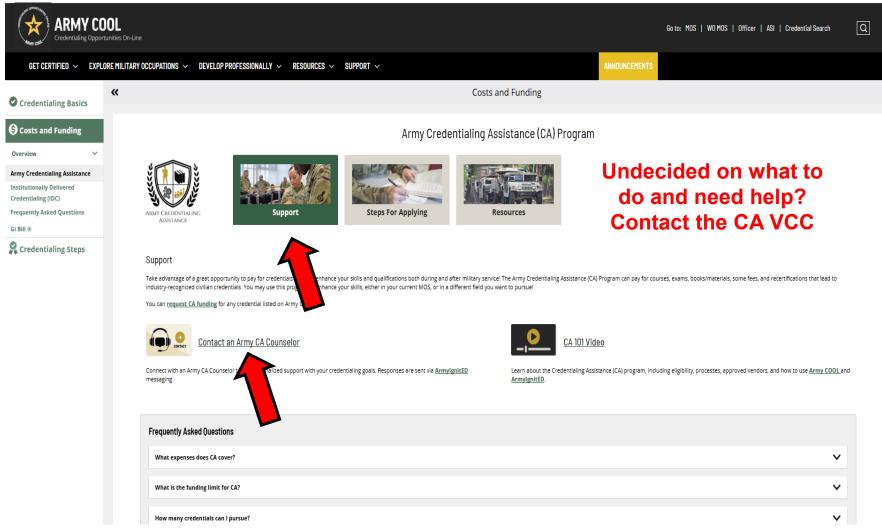
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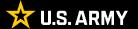
https://cool.osd.mil/army/index.html



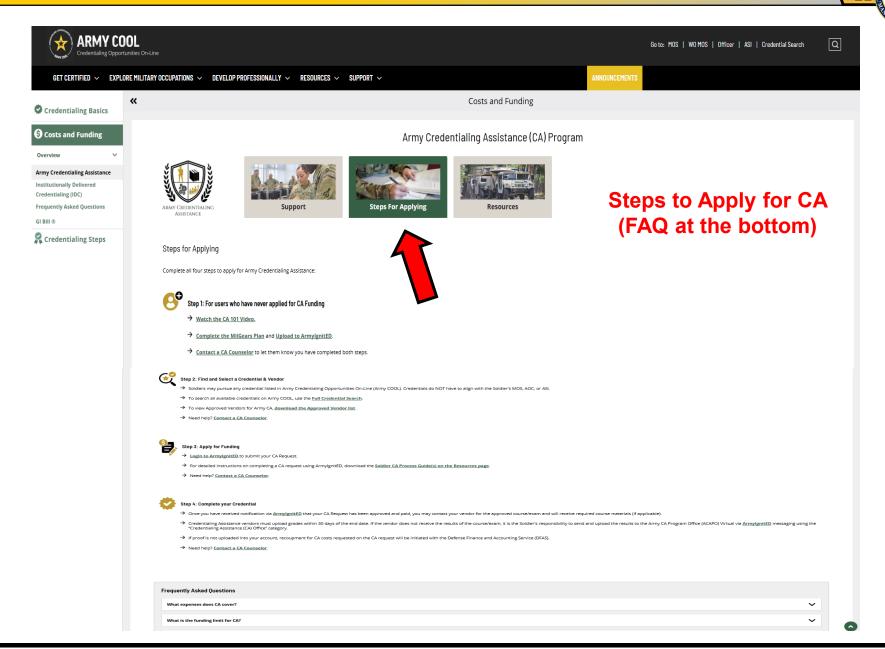
Credentialing Assistance Page







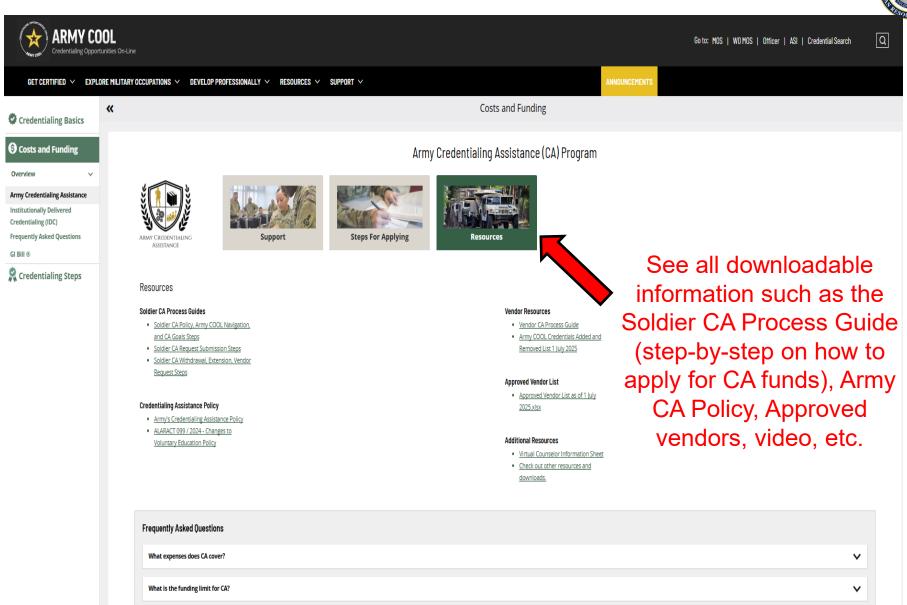
Credentialing Assistance Page cont.

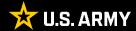




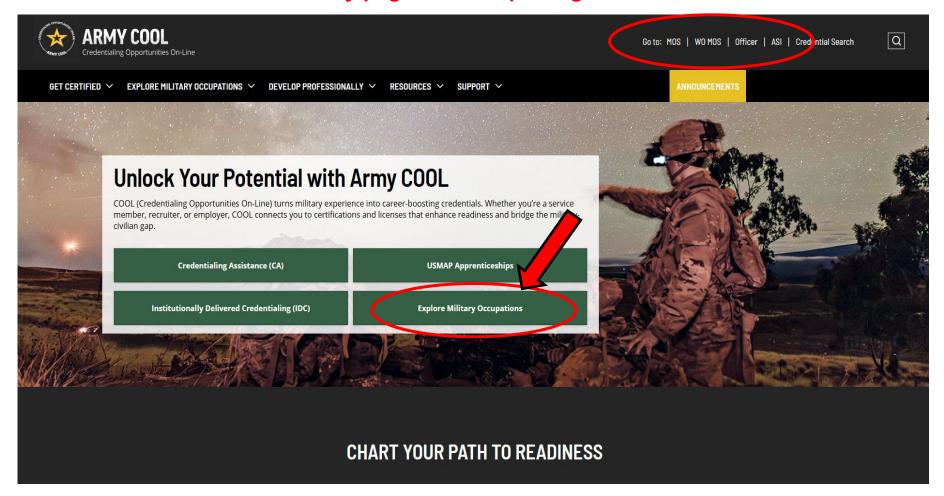
Credentialing Assistance Page cont.

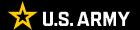






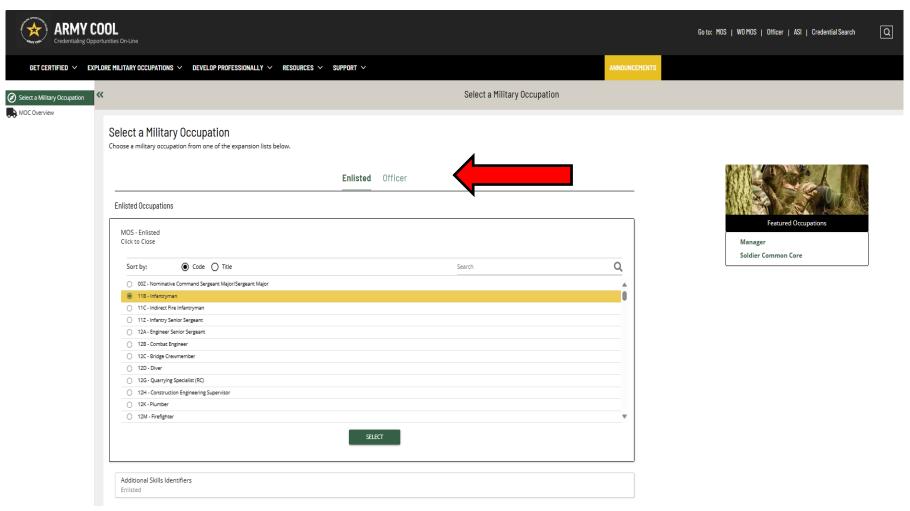
To find MOS /AOC/ASI related credentials: Soldiers can go directly to the page by clicking on "Explore Military Occupations" from the home page, or the "Go To" menu available on every page on the top navigation.



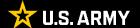


Finding MOS Aligned Credentials



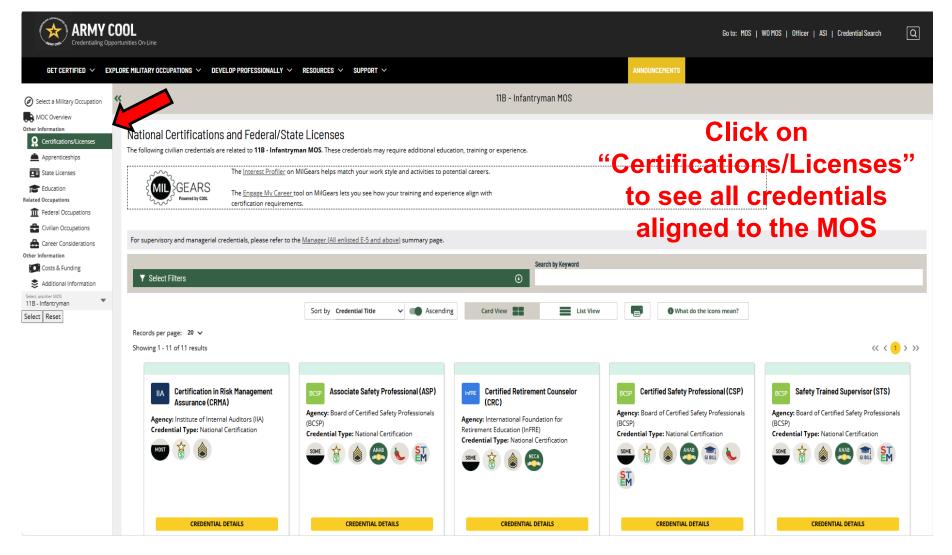


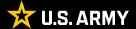
Select the MOS, WO MOS, Officer, then click "Select"



Finding MOS Aligned Credentials cont.

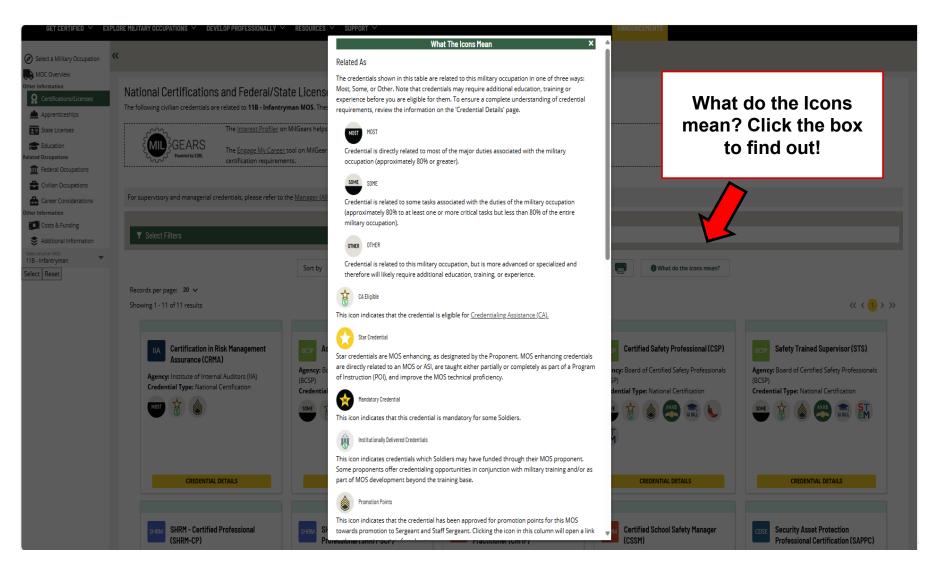






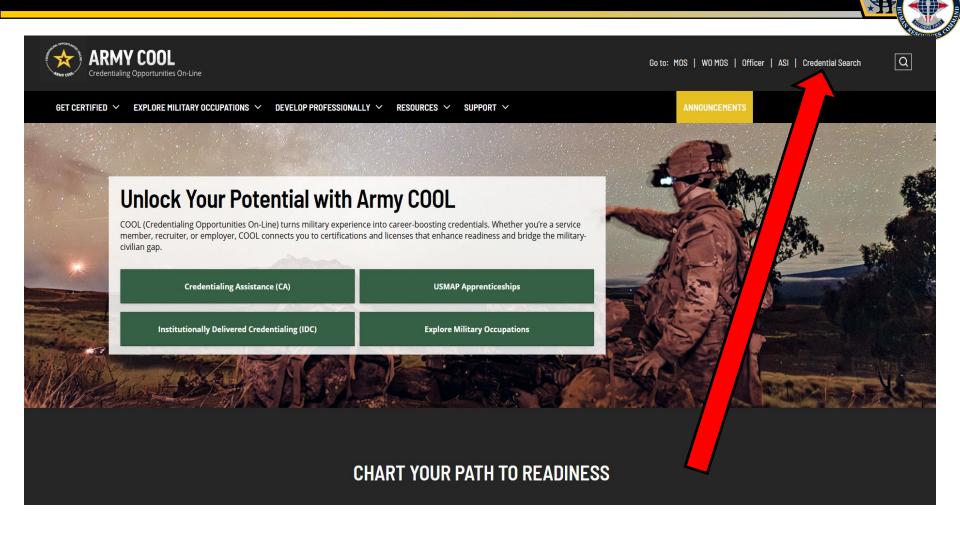
Finding MOS Aligned Credentials cont.



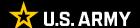




Full Credential Search

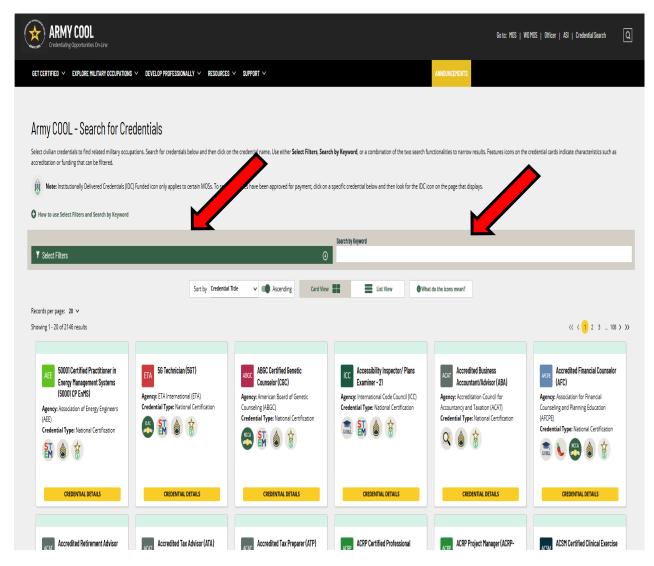


Know what credential you wish to seek? Or just want to see all credentials? Click here



Full Credential Search cont.





You can expand "Select Filters" or "Search by Keyword"

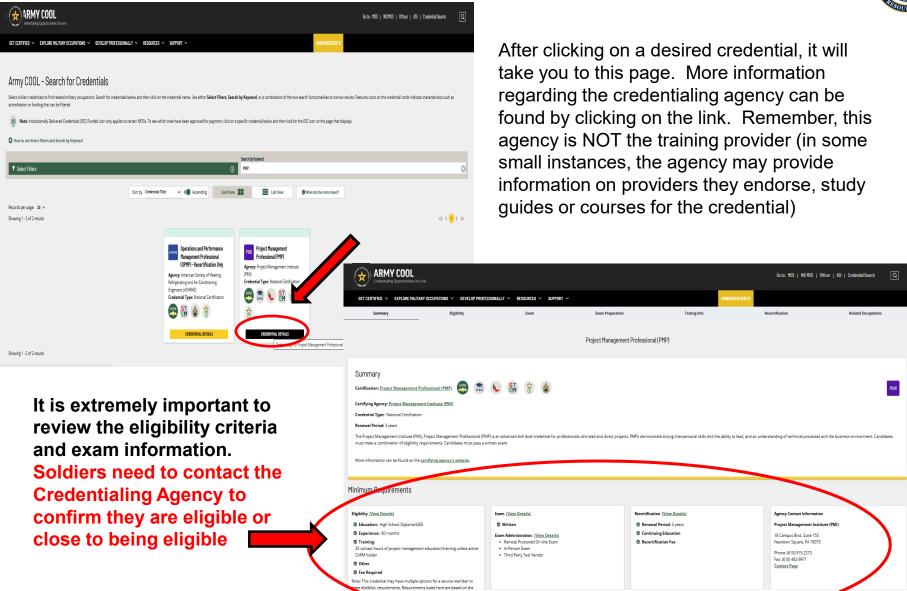
When clicking on
"Select Filters" you
have the option to find
credentials by
"Agency", "Industry", or
"Occupation Area".

There are other filters
as well to help drill
down on the credential
you may be looking for,
but "Search by
Keyword" will get you to
the credential



Full Credential Search cont.

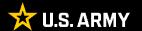






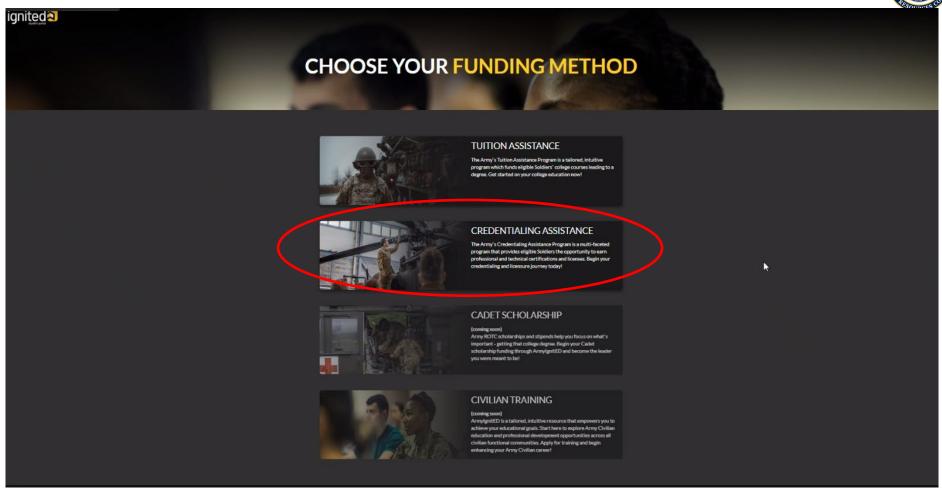


EXPLORING CREDENTIALS



Exploring Credentials



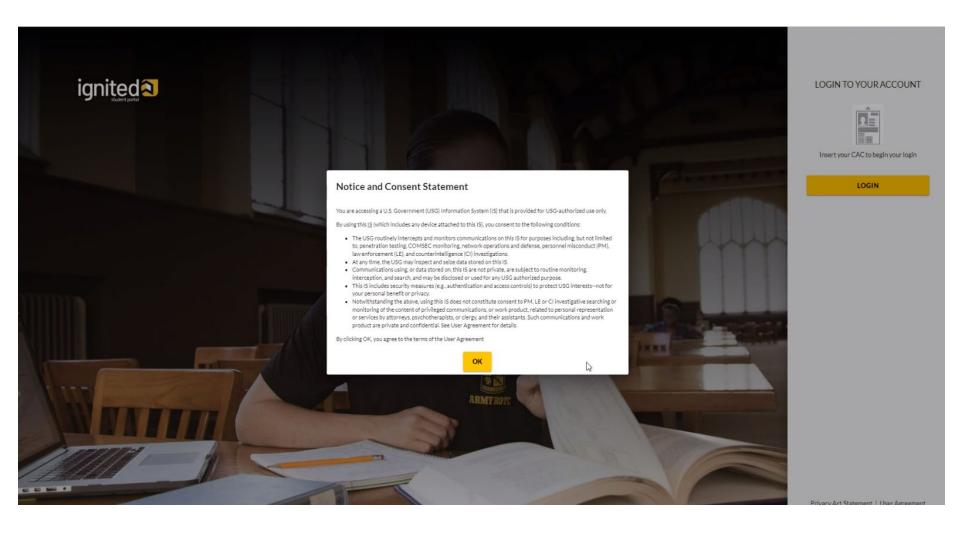


https://www.armyignited.army.mil/



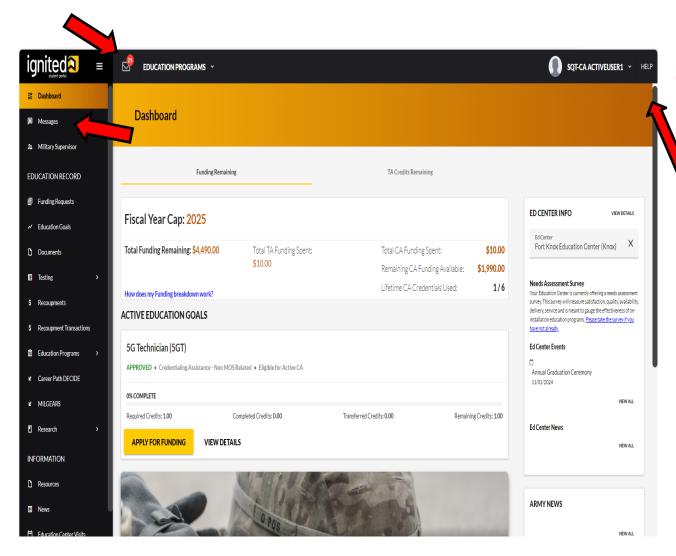


Click Ok, then Log In using your CAC card

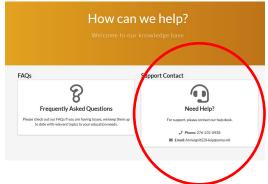








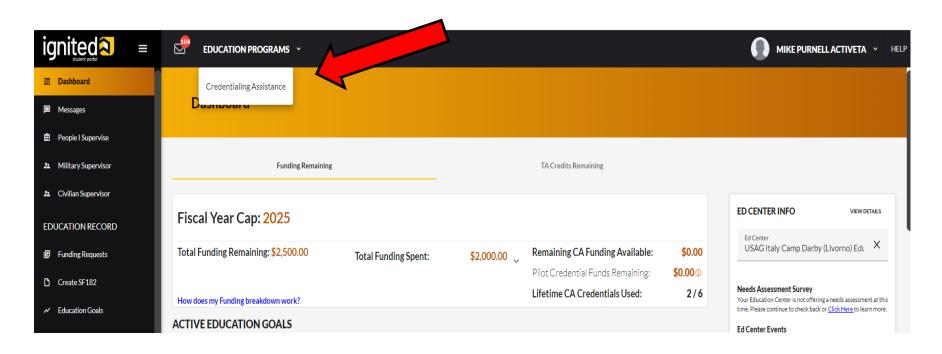
From this page, you can click on "Help" for FAQs or find the Support Contact information

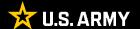






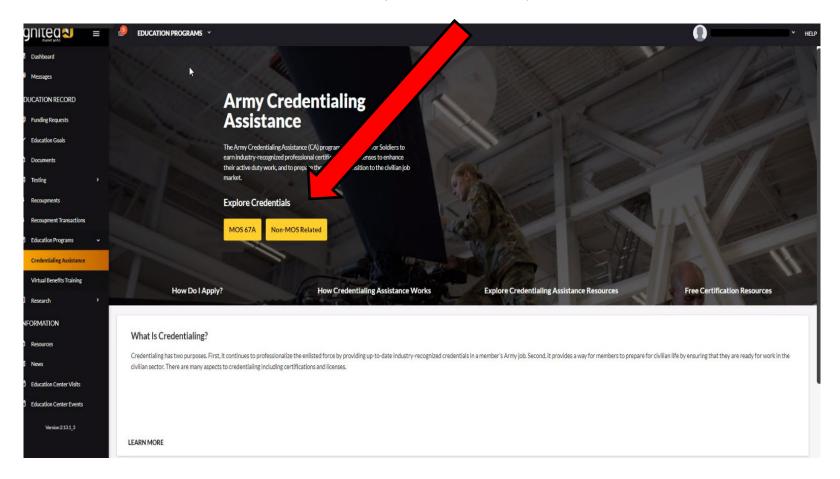
If you are looking for a specific delivery method, you can see what may be available by clicking on "Education Programs" dropdown, then select "Credentialing Assistance"

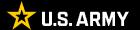




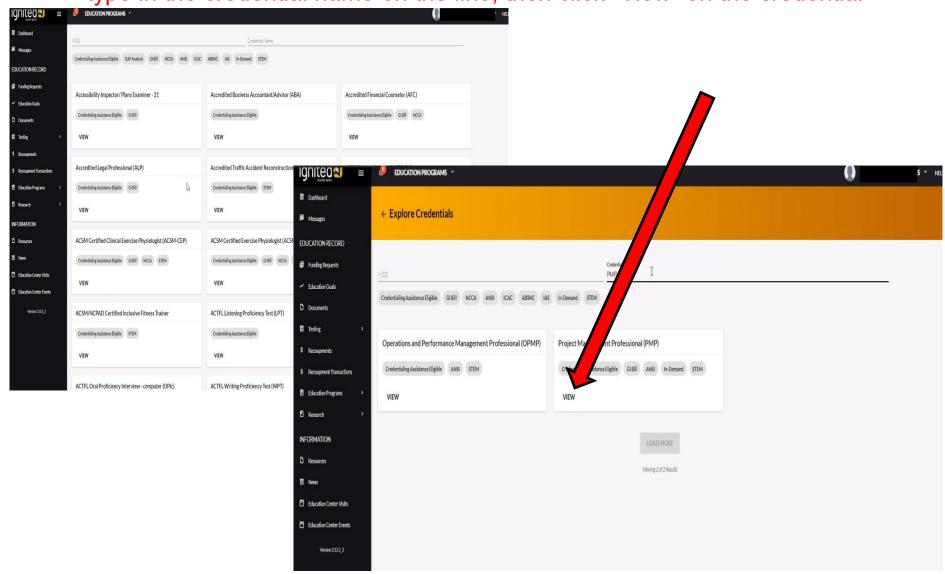


From here, select either MOS for credentials that may be aligned to your MOS or Non-MOS Related to see what is not aligned. If you don't see a credential listed in MOS related, it will be in the Non-MOS related tab (or vice-versa)





Once here, you can either look through all the credentials, or you can type in the credential name on the line, then click "View" on the credential

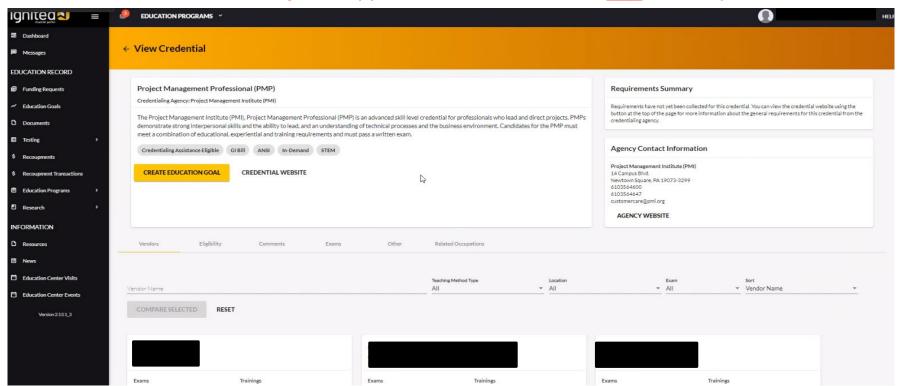


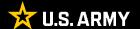


Once it is selected, if there are vendors that provide training or exam toward this credential, they will appear. If not, Soldiers will not be able to pursue that credential. If you wish to request a vendor be added to the list, submit an ArmylgnitED message to the Credentialing Assistance team using the "Credentialing Assistance (CA) Office" category.

NOTE!!!! Not all vendors that will appear on this page are Army Vendors. You MUST confirm they are approved by going to

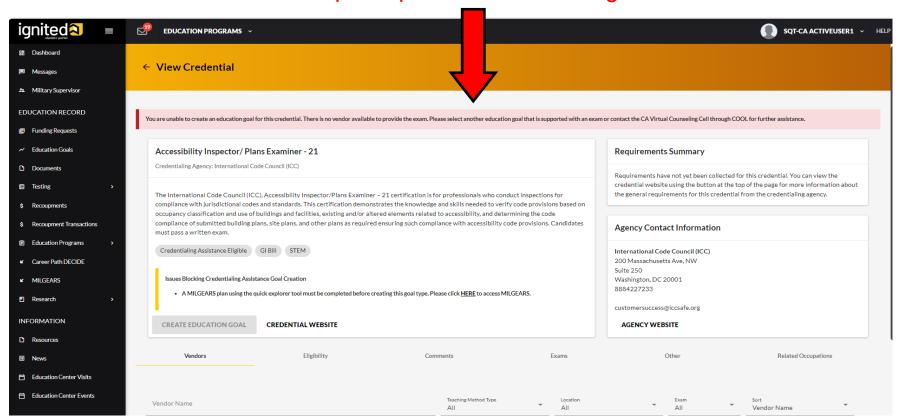
https://www.cool.osd.mil/army/costs_and_funding/index.html?credentialingassistance_and_downloading the "Approved Vendor List as of ____" to verify.





If there is no vendor that offers an exam, a red banner with, "You are unable to create an education goal for this credential. There is no vendor available to provide the exam. Please select another education goal that is supported with an exam or contact the CA Virtual Counseling Cell through COOL for further assistance."

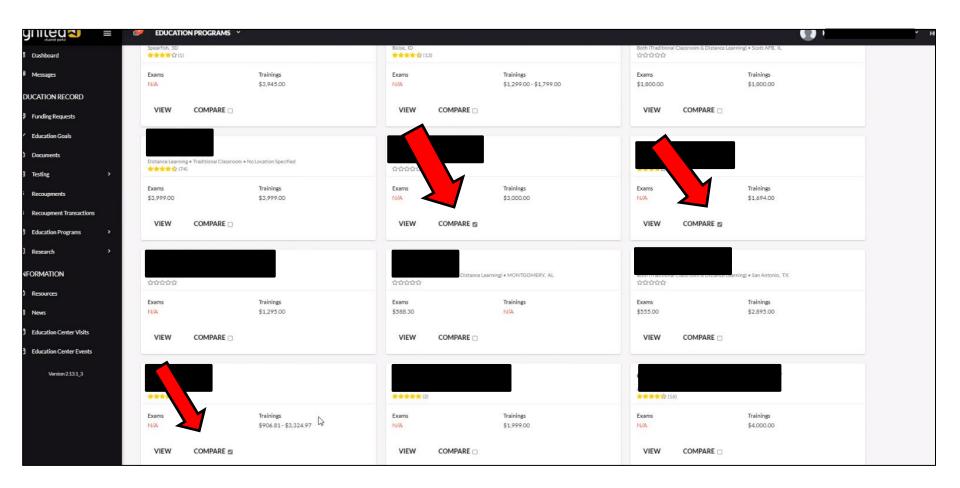
Soldiers will have to select another credential until a vendor who offers the exam participates in the CA Program

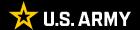






Once you find a credential that can be pursued, you can compare vendors and their offering by checking the box to compare

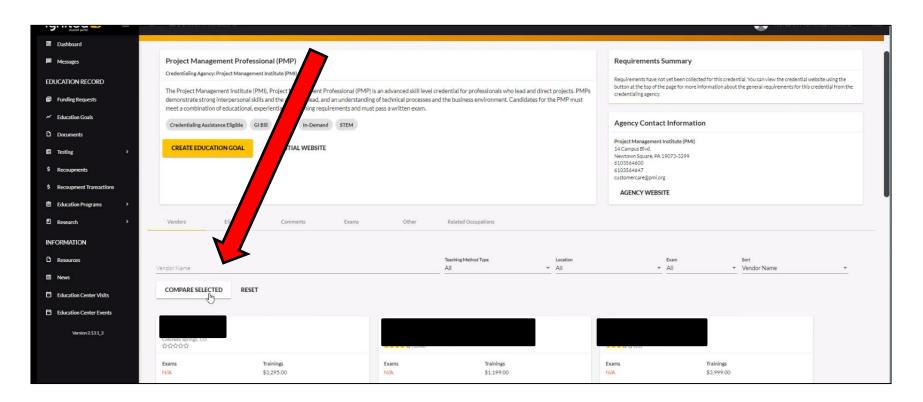


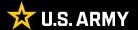




Scroll back up to the top and click on "Compare Selected"

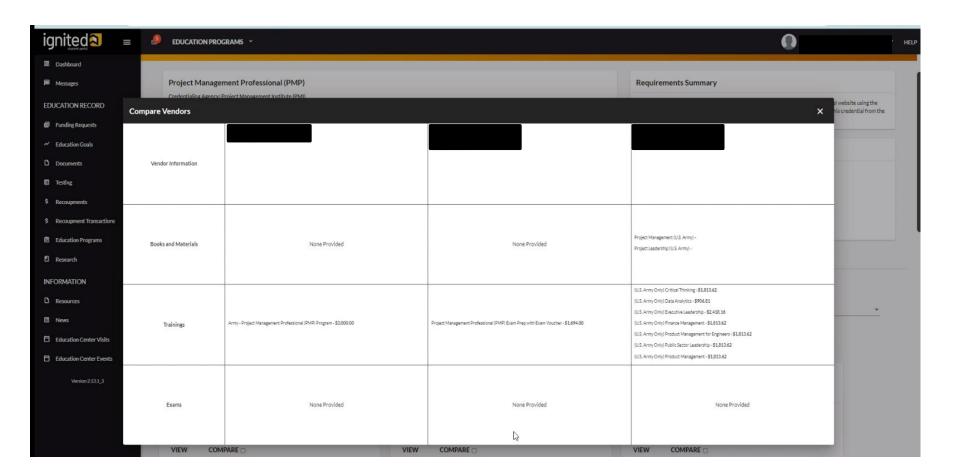
NOTE- from this page, if you wanted to get started here, you can click on "Create Educational Goal"

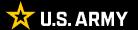






Here you can compare what is offered by each vendor and cost of courses/exams

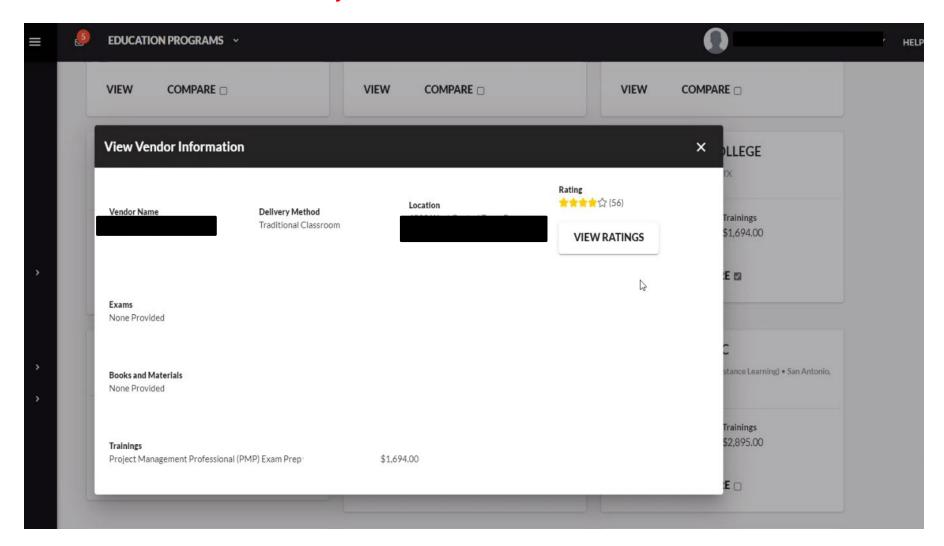


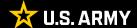


Exploring Credentials cont.



To view a specific vendor of interest, click on "View". Here you can view the delivery method, the location and what is offered

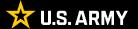






CREATING EDUCATION GOALS

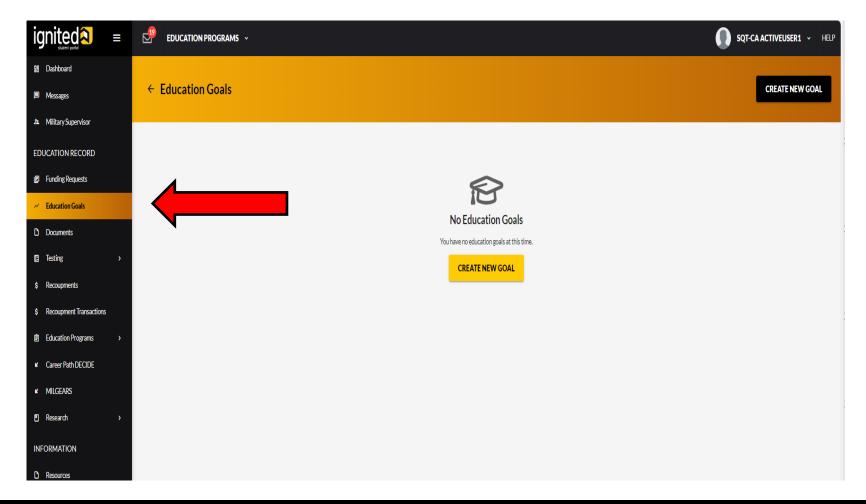
(MOS Related or Non-MOS Related)



Goals



After Soldiers have completed their research and requested a custom quote from the vendor they wish to take training or exam with, they will click on "Education Goals" then "Create New Goal" in either spots below

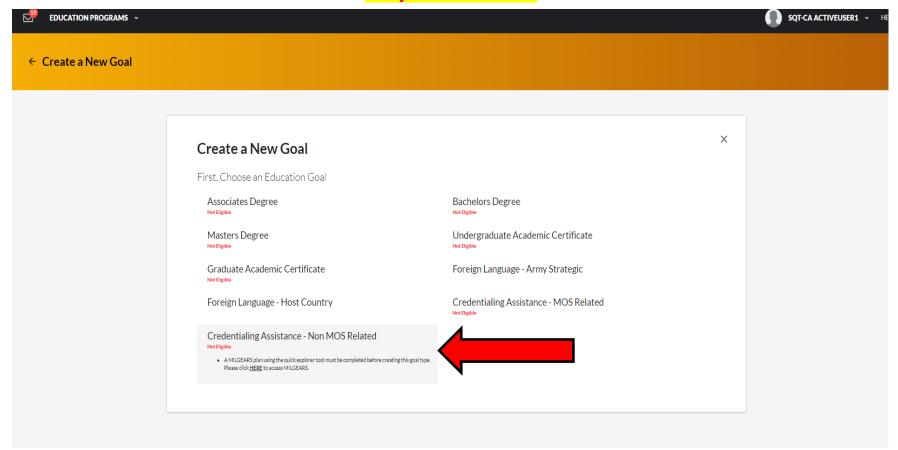




If you have never used CA before, you will be required to complete MilGears and meet with a CA Virtual Counselor before you can move forward.

Click on the "HERE" link.

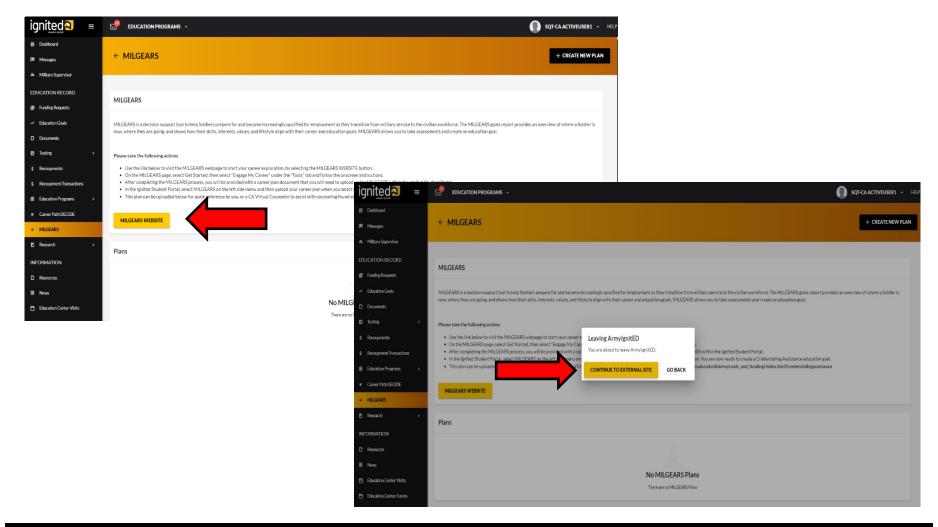
If you have already submitted CA Requests in ArmylgnitED, you can skip to slide 48







Per the instructions, you must complete your Career Exploration. Click on the "MilGears Website" button to get started, then click on "Continue to External Site"



MilGears

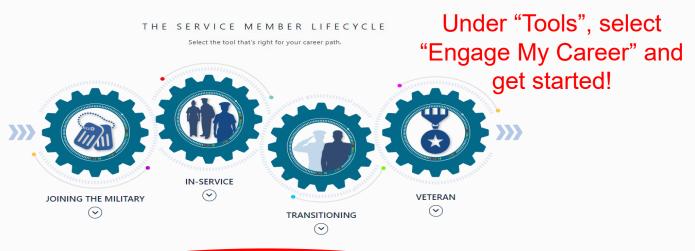




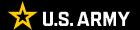
https://milgears.osd.mil/



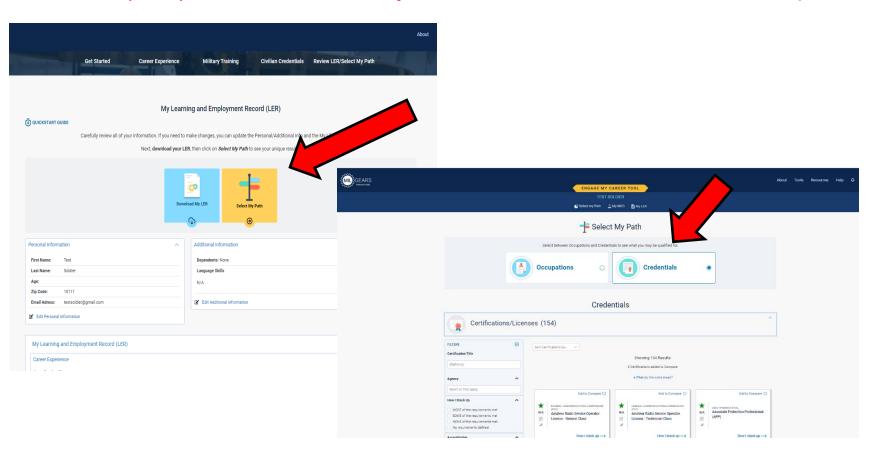
This interest inventory will go into depth with possibilities that you can save and come back to later!





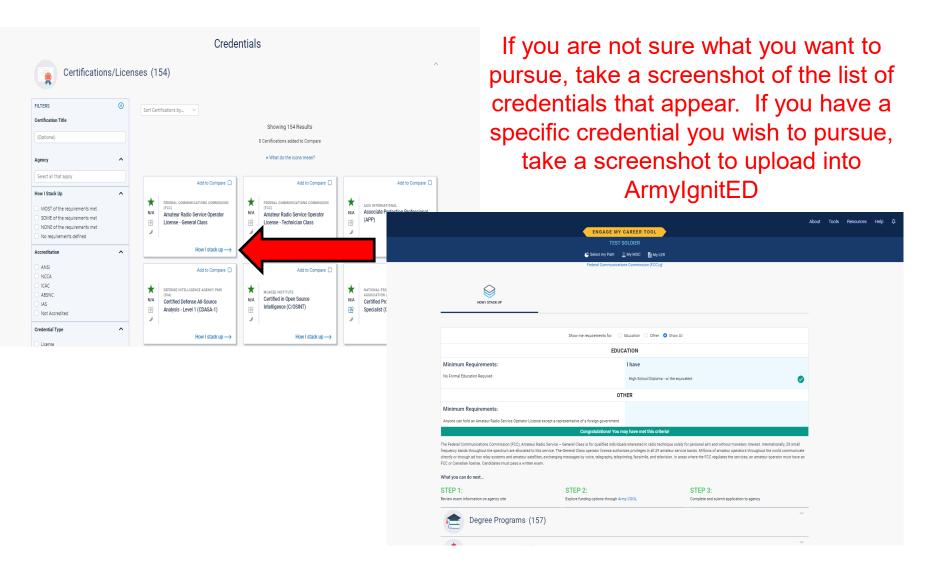


Once you click on "Engage my Career" enter the information you wish to provide and continue through the process. Once you get to "My Learning and Employment Record (LER)", click on "Select My Path" then "Credentials" to view the possibilities



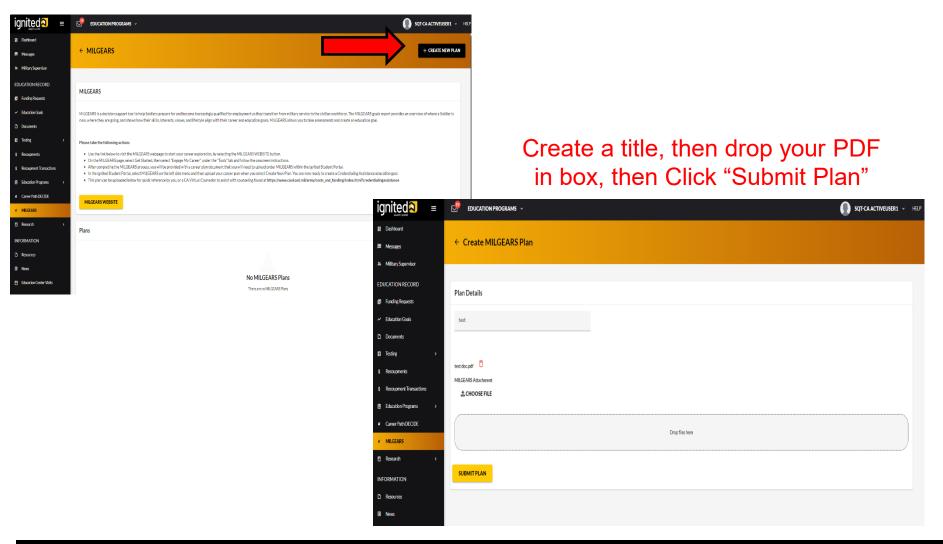


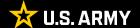
Once you review the list, click on "How I Stack Up"



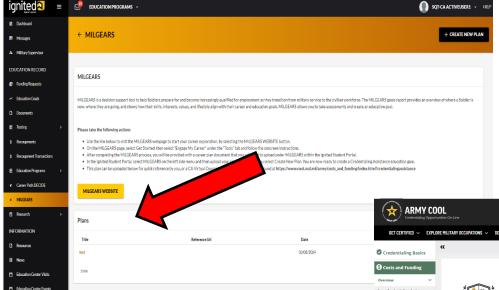


After you create a PDF of your screenshots, in ArmylgnitED click on "+Create New Plan"

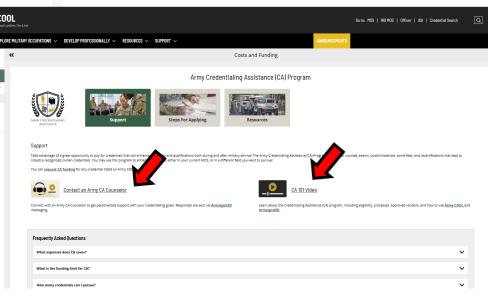




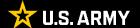
Once completed, you will see the file in Plans at the bottom. Once your plan has been submitted, complete CA 101 and reach out to the CA Virtual Counseling Cell (VCC) to schedule your counseling by clicking on the "Contact An Army CA Counselor" button



https://www.cool.osd.mil/army/costs and funding/index.html?credentialingassistance



R Credentialing Steps

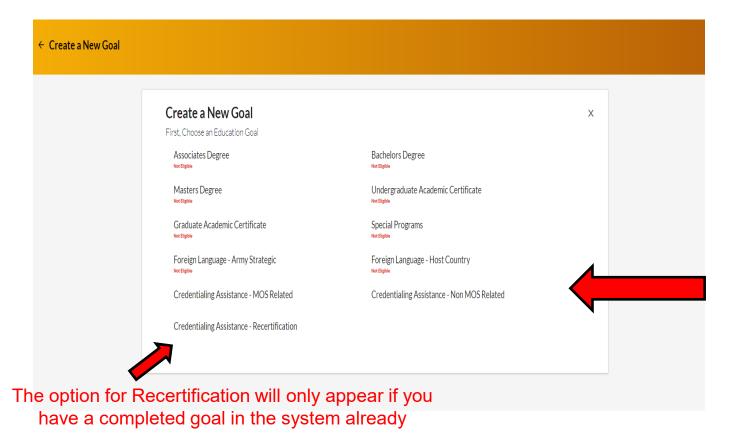


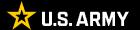
Back to ArmylgnitED



Once your counseling with the CA VCC is complete, you will now have the ability to create either a Non MOS Related or MOS Related goal!

****If this isn't the first time you are using CA, you will not have to go through MilGears or receive the counseling and can continue as before



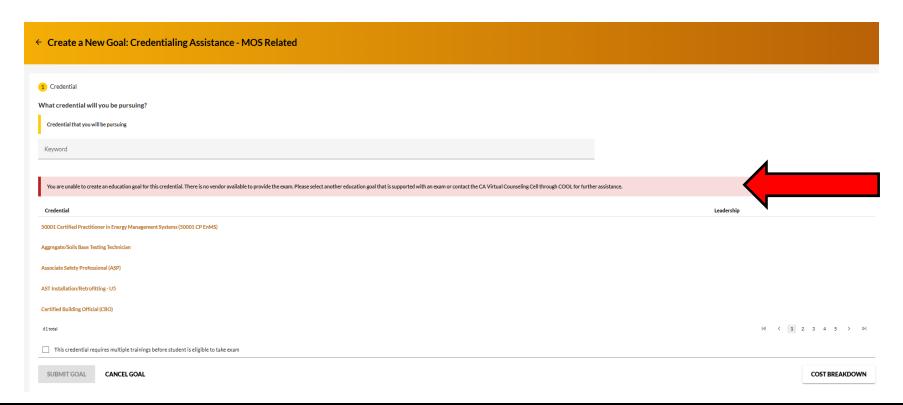


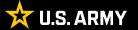
Goals



If there is no vendor that offers an exam, a red banner with, "You are unable to create an education goal for this credential. There is no vendor available to provide the exam. Please select another education goal that is supported with an exam or contact the CA Virtual Counseling Cell through COOL for further assistance."

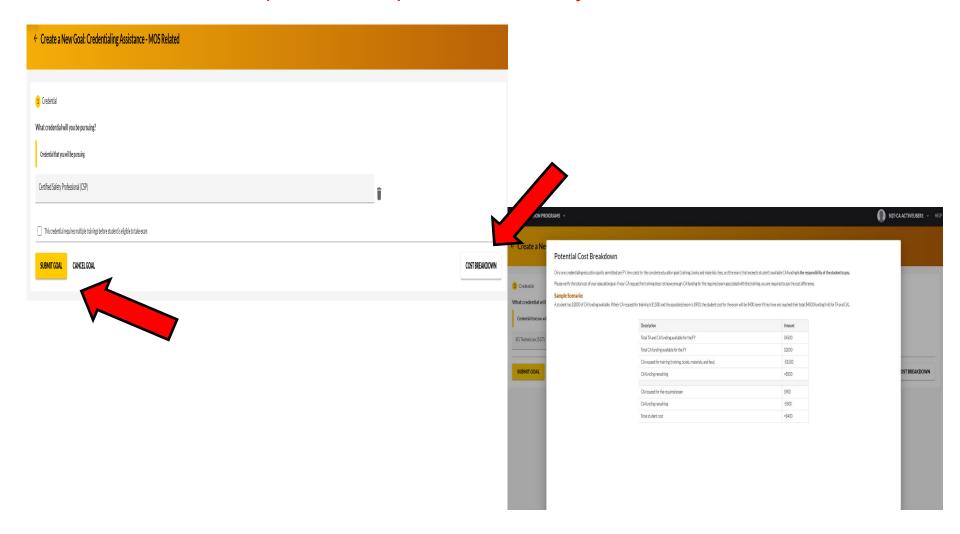
Soldiers will have to select another credential until a vendor who offers the exam participates in the CA Program

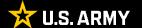




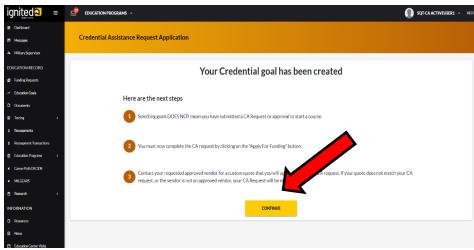


Once a credential is selected, submit the Goal. "Cost Breakdown" provides an explanation of potential costs if you wish to review

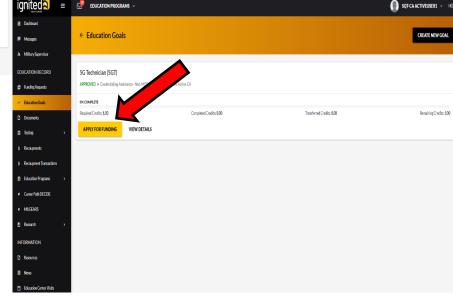


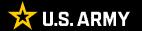


After submission, you will receive this page which indicates the Credential Goal was submitted. It DOES NOT mean a CA Request has been submitted. Click "Continue" to start the CA request process



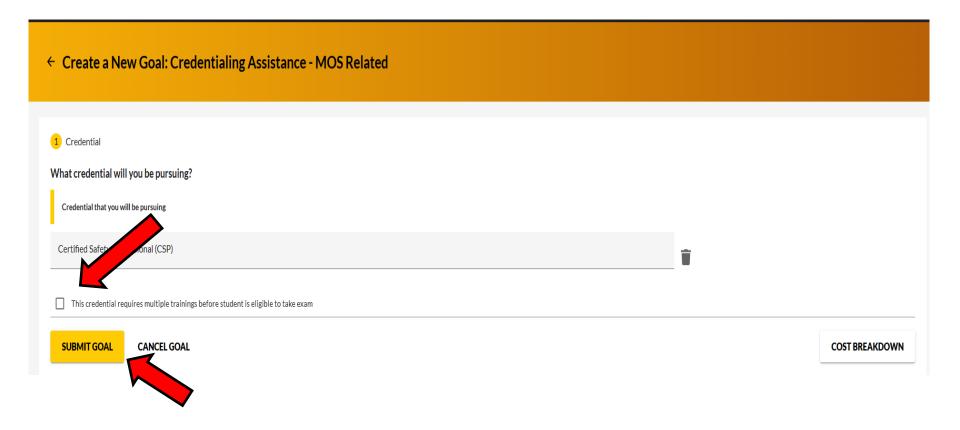
Note! Soldiers can submit multiple requests off one goal (training, books/materials/exams). Attempts to submit multiple duplicate goals will not be allowed. If Soldier exhausted all credits (exams) from the goal and did not successfully complete the exam, the Soldier must submit a request to add the same goal by submitting an ArmylgnitED message to ACAPO using the "Credentialing Assistance (CA) Office" category to request it.







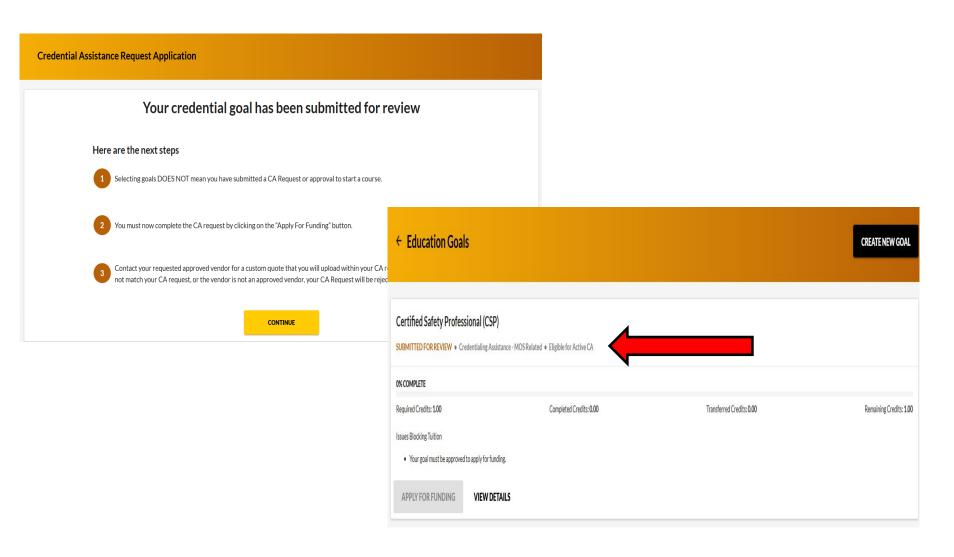
If the Soldier knows there will be multiple trainings that are needed prior to requesting an exam, the Soldier can check the box "This credential requires multiple trainings before student is eligible to take exam" then hit "Submit"





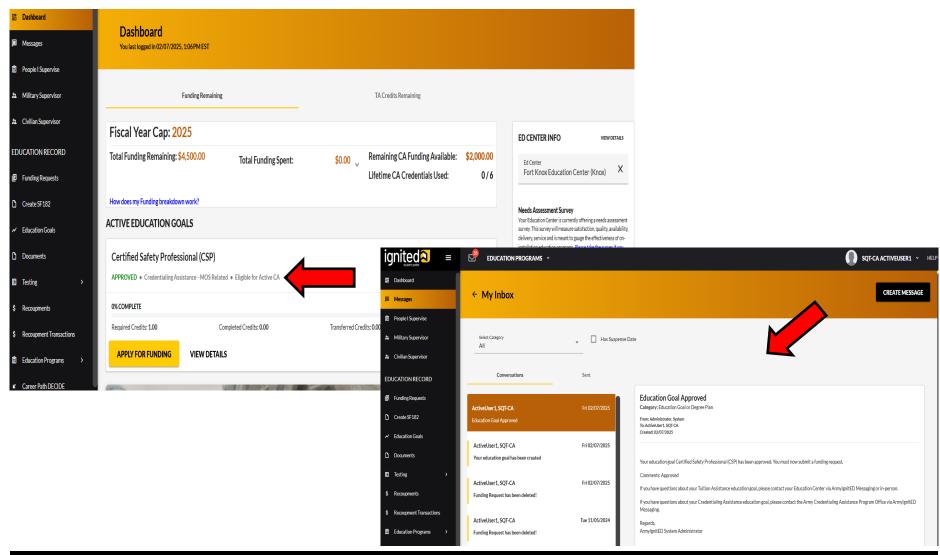


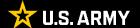
Once submitted, the Goal will be submitted for "Review" by ACAPO.





Once ACAPO approves, the Soldier will see "Approved" in green and can now click "Apply For Funding". The Soldier will also receive a message in ArmylgnitED.

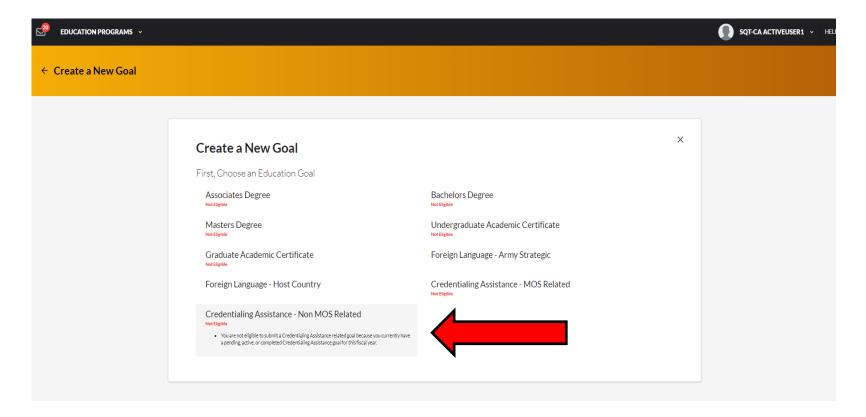


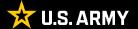


NOTE!! Once a Goal is submitted for the FY, you will no longer be able to submit Goals for the remaining of the FY. You must wait until the next FY to create a new one.

For issues submitting new goals, please submit your questions to ACAPO in ArmylgnitED using the "Credentialing Assistance (CA) Office" category, or contact the CA VCC at:

https://www.cool.osd.mil/army/costs and funding/index.html?credentialingassistance

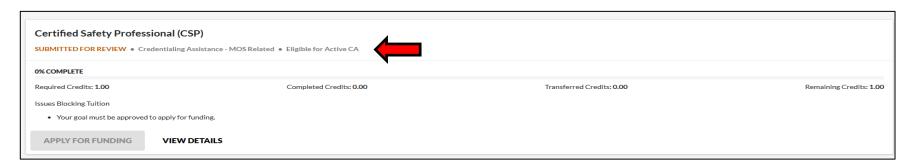




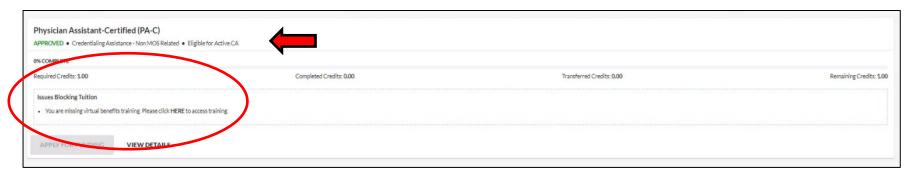


To check the status of a Goal:

GOAL was created but "Multiple trainings box was checked- by waiting on ACAPO approval:

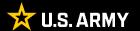


GOAL was Approved but still grey- Soldier needs to complete virtual benefits training:



GOAL was approved, now Soldier can submit CA request:

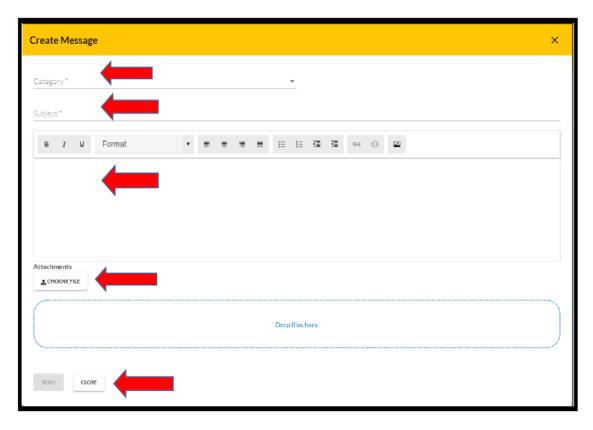




To Reach ACAPO



Soldiers must send message through an ArmylgnitED message



Category: Credentialing Assistance (CA) Office

Subject: Need clarification

Body: Provide:

Name, case number, title of

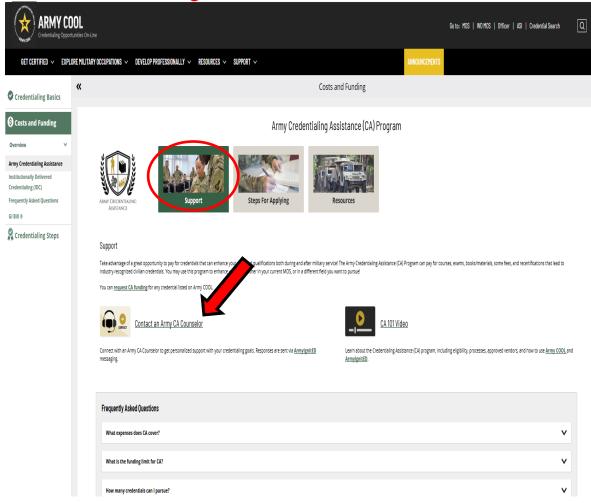
course.



Need Assistance or Counseling?

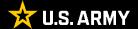


Need counseling or assistance with CA?



Click on the "Contact An Army CA Counselor" for:

- Soldiers who need counseling assistance for the use of Army CA funding can now request Counseling assistance! This cell is available to CONUS and OCONUS Soldiers.
 Counseling sessions are available on Microsoft Teams/Phone
- Soldiers who are unsure of what to pursue, or what they may be eligible for can benefit from this counseling
- Soldiers needing assistance with submitting their CA Requests can also use this counseling





Army Credentialing Assistance Program Page:

https://www.cool.osd.mil/army/costs and funding/army credential assist ance.htm



"Soldiers First"