

## INTERNET INQUIRIES

**Ask VA** (AVA) is an online tool that allows the user to submit questions and certain documents directly to VA. When a question or document is submitted through **AVA**, it is routed directly to the appropriate benefit office to ensure an accurate and timely answer or action.

**NOTE:** Do not submit any documents or forms through AVA that are required to be submitted through the Education File Upload Portal.

- AVA allows questions and documents to be submitted by Designated School Certifying Officials (SCOs), Read Only SCOs and VA beneficiaries. AVA will guide the user through the correct process.
- This **guide** can be used to assist with setting up and using AVA.
- If you or your trainees have issues setting up an AVA account, call MyVA411 at 800-698-2411.

### **Verifying Your Identity**

To make AVA secure and to protect personal information, users need a **VA.gov** account, which requires that you **verify your identity**.

- You can verify your identity by using your account for certain secure VA systems, like **MyHealthVet**, DS Logon, or by **creating an ID.me account**.
  - o Creating an ID.me account may require personal identification documents.
  - o If you need assistance setting up an ID.me account, you can access live chat or submit a ticket at **Verifying for Veterans Affairs – ID.me Help Site**
  - o For technical issues with ID.me email **va.support@id.me**
- When you're signed in with one of the verified accounts, you'll have access to all the features in AVA.

### **Submitting an Inquiry or Documents**

Once registered, sign in and you will land on the **My AVA Dashboard**. Click the **Create a new Inquiry** button and you will be asked to provide the following to submit a question or documents:

- **Which Category best describes your question?** - Click the magnifying glass icon at the right of the field. The Lookup records window for Category appears.
  - o Select the checkbox for Education (Ch.30, 33, 35, 1606, etc. & Work Study) **GI Bill®**, then click the Select button.
- **Which Topic best describes your question?** - Click the magnifying glass icon. The Lookup records window for Topics appears.

- o The options in this lookup window depend on which category you selected in the first step.
- o If you change or delete the category, the list of topics will change.
- o Select the checkbox for topic of your inquiry, then click the Select button.

**NOTE:** Depending on the Category/Topic combination selected above, additional fields may appear. If, *and only if*, a selected topic has subtopics, a “Which subtopic best describes your question?” field appears.

- **Which Subtopic best describes your question?** – If this field appears click the magnifying glass icon. The Lookup records window for Subtopics appears.

- o Select your subtopic.
- o The selection of some subtopics will result in additional required fields appearing.

- **Tell us the Reason you’re contacting us?** – Use the drop-down arrow to choose.

- o Select your reason.

- **Are you currently an employee of the VA?** – check yes or no as applicable.

- **I am a:** – Use the drop-down arrow to choose **School Certifying Official**.

- **School Facility** – Click the magnifying glass icon. The Lookup records window for schools and OJT/APP facilities appears.

- o To search, type in all or part of your VA Facility Code to bring up a list of facilities.

**NOTE:** You cannot search based on school name.

- **State of School** - Use the drop-down arrow to choose.

- **How should we get in touch with you?** - Use the drop-down arrow to choose.

- **Subject** – Type your subject in this free text field.

- o Enter a brief description of the nature of your question.

- **What is your Question?** – Type in your question.

- o This is a free text field. Include as much detail as possible to describe your question.

**Click Next** – The Tell us about yourself page will appear.

- o This page should already contain information because you signed-in to create the inquiry.
- o Please review and make sure the information is correct and all required fields are completed. If the information is not correct select the **Update My Profile** button.

**Click Next** - The system indicates that it is processing, then the Review your information page appears.

**Click Submit** - The system will submit your inquiry.

- o You will receive a message that your inquiry has been submitted.
  - o **Keep the inquiry reference number provided.**
  - o Your inquiry reference number will let you track submissions or check the status later.
  - o You can also add more information to a question you already submitted or ask a follow-up question.
- You should receive a reply to your submission in 3 to 5 business days.
  - **Important:** Responses to inquiries are not emailed to you. You will be notified by email that a response has been provided by VA. You must go to the website and log into AVA to view the response.