

Good afternoon, my name is Cheri Carter. In 2007, I decided to use my GI Bill to pursue a career in medical billing and coding because I had worked in the medical field as a corpsman while I was in the Navy. I enrolled in an accelerated online associate's degree program for medical billing and coding at Colorado Technical University. I wanted the convenience of an online school because I was a single mother of a child with special needs.

After enrolling, I remember thinking that something seemed off about the school. The teachers never gave us any exams or tests, not one quiz. Instead, we just had to post two written assignments each week and comment on other students' online posts. Almost all of us got As. When we had to do group work, some students never showed up but they received As. There was very little covered in the 8 week classes. If a textbook had twenty chapters, we only read about three of them.

It was near the end of my time at Colorado Tech that I realized we had been given what I call the "Dollar Store" version of a medical billing and coding program. It did not have the accreditation that would make us eligible for the jobs we thought we could get. As part of our classes, we had learned about different medical billing and coding certifications. Two weeks before we were set to graduate, one of my classmates sent a message in the group chat, saying that our degree would only lead to a lower certification and would not open many job opportunities. The next day, our teacher confirmed that our classmate was correct. We would not be able to get the certifications that doctors and hospitals required for billing and coding. I couldn't believe it. I had spent fourteen months in an expensive program and it turned out to be total junk. I am unable to get my GI Bill Benefits restored, and I will never never get back the time I spent.

Because the school was approved, I thought it was legitimate. I think if a school offers a program that is supposed to lead to a career, the school's accreditor should make sure the program has what is needed to prepare you for that career. Otherwise, veterans will waste their precious time and hard-earned GI Bill benefits, just like I did.

Thank you for your time.