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## Alabama

Find Alabama State and local veteran's benefits including education, employment, healthcare, tax breaks/exemptions, recreation and much more below. The Bay State provides benefits for nearly 350,000 veterans who reside in the State of Alabama.

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### **Alabama Veteran Education Benefits**

#### **Alabama G.I. Dependents' Scholarship**

Alabama residency, the nature of the veteran's discharge, and other requirements will apply.

The qualifications and the actual amount of the scholarships will vary depending on the veteran's VA-rated disability percentage and as of July 31, 2017, "tuition will be limited to the Department of Defense Tuition Assistance Cap" with reimbursement for textbooks and fees capped at a total of \$10000 per student per semester.

A condition of this program is that it must be applied only after any other scholarships or grants have been put toward the student's education expenses first; any remaining charges will be handled by the Alabama G.I. Dependents' Scholarship.

#### **State Of Alabama College Credit for Military Experience**

Alabama state law permits colleges to offer credit to veterans and currently serving military members for military training, continuing education, and other experiences related to service in the Armed Forces. Students must discuss the colleges' requirements with the school admissions office where they will be attending to learn what that institution's documentation requirements are to receive the credit.

#### **Alabama State College Tuition Waivers for Purple Heart Recipients**

Those who were awarded the Purple Heart may be eligible for a waiver of tuition and fees for undergraduate study. The State of Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs instructs those interested in this Purple Heart tuition waiver to contact Alabama colleges directly to learn how to apply.

#### **Operation Recognition: High School Diplomas for Qualifying Veterans**

Alabama residents who entered the military and had their high school education interrupted and could not graduate may be eligible for a high school diploma. This program is offered to those who meet the qualifying conditions (including an Honorable discharge) and served during the following dates:

- December 7, 1941 – January 1, 1946
- June 27, 1950 – January 31, 1955
- November 15, 1961 – March 28, 1973

Veterans or their family members may contact the high school principal's office of the institution the veteran attended to make arrangements for the diploma.

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## **Alabama Veteran Employment Benefits**

### **State of Alabama Unemployment Compensation for Veterans**

Honorably discharged veterans who are unemployed in Alabama may be able to claim **unemployment compensation** as long as they do not receive a military pension or VA disability payments.

Military spouses may also be entitled to unemployment compensation if they voluntarily left their jobs to facilitate a military **Permanent Change of Station** (PCS) move with the veteran, or if the veteran was activated/deployed. Qualifying veterans and spouses should contact the Alabama State Unemployment Compensation Claims office to learn how to apply for this benefit.

### **Alabama Small Business Veteran Hiring Tax Incentive**

The State of Alabama offers businesses that employ 50 or fewer employees to take advantage of a \$1,000 tax credit in exchange for employing recently deployed, discharged, "and now unemployed" veteran as a new hire.

### **Alabama Veteran-Owned Small Business Tax Credit**

Alabama extends a \$2,000 tax credit to recently deployed, discharged, and now unemployed veterans who begin their own small businesses.

### **Alabama Reemployment Protection for Veterans**

Alabama residents who are currently serving military members called into service and those who enter the military, designated as employees "who are not in the classified service" are given the same consideration for reemployment in state jobs as those who were hired into the classified service.

The Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs official site adds that "State, county, and municipal officials who enter the military or naval service at a time when a state of national emergency has been declared to exist by the President of the United States have preservation of job status and reemployment rights."

## **Retirement Benefits Protection for Veterans Who Are State Employees or Teachers**

Military members who work for the State or Alabama or as teachers within the state are permitted to claim credit for military service for up to four years if they do not stop retirement plan contributions during that time. The veteran must return to said employment within a year of receiving an Honorable discharge.

The military service credit toward retirement is offered, "Provided the employee pays an amount equal to four percent of the average compensation paid to a state employee during each claimed year of full-time military service, plus and together there with eight percent interest compounded from the last date of such claimed military service." Additional requirements may apply.

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## **Alabama Veteran Housing Benefits**

### **State of Alabama Veterans Homes**

Alabama runs four veterans homes:

- Bill Nichols State Veterans Home, Alexander City
- Floyd E. "Tut" Fann State Veterans Home, Huntsville
- William F. Green State Veterans Home, Bay Minette
- Colonel Robert L. Howard State Veterans Home, Pell City

Depending on the location, a variety of services are available to eligible veterans including 24-hour nursing care, on-site occupational therapy and physical therapy, and pharmacy services. Acute care and one-on-one care is not available.

Applicants must be Alabama residents for the 12 months leading up to the application, have an honorable discharge and a minimum service requirement of 90 days active duty with at least one of those days served during a "wartime period".

There is a stipulation in the application package for these veterans' homes which states that veterans who do not meet the wartime service requirement may be admitted on a space-available basis depending on circumstances, but wartime vets have top priority.

A medical exam within 90 days of application time is required and applicants must not have mental health conditions which, according to the application package, "outweighs their medical condition".

An **application for admission** is available from the Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs.

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## **Alabama Veteran Financial Benefits**

### **Tax Breaks for Veterans**

The State of Alabama offers tax breaks and related incentives for veterans including the following:

- Ad Valorem Tax Exemption – up to 160 acres of land and the home situated upon it may be exempt from Ad Valorem tax if the owner is permanently 100% disabled, 65 or older, and meets income requirements.
- Tax Exemption For Veteran/Surviving Spouse Homes Purchased Under The Specially Adapted Housing Grant – a home purchase under the Specially Adapted Housing Grant law (Public Law 702) “shall be exempt, as long as the same is owned and occupied as a home by the veteran or his/her un-remarried widow/er”.
- Disabled Combat Veterans’ Vehicle Tax Exemptions – this exemption applies to disabled veterans of World War II or “any hostilities in which the United States was, is or shall be engaged against any foreign state” who owns a vehicle paid in part or in full by funds provided by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs. Such vehicles are eligible for tax exemptions for all fees, ad valorem taxes, or other state charges as long as the vehicle is for the veteran’s own personal use. Business vehicles are not exempt from state taxation under this rule.
- Combat Pay Tax Exemption – this tax exemption applies specifically to “money paid by the United States to a person as compensation for active service as a member of the Armed Forces of the United States in a combat zone.”
- Military Retirement Pay – all military retirement pay is tax exempt under Alabama state law as of January 1, 1989.

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## **Additional State Of Alabama Veteran Benefits**

### **Alabama Guard/Reserve Vehicle Tax Exemptions**

Guard/Reserve members (active or retired) “shall be exempt from the payment of the privilege or license tax and registration fee now and hereinafter to be levied on one automobile or motor vehicle by the State of Alabama”.

### **Alabama Military-Themed License Plates**

A variety of free military-designated license plates are available to qualifying veterans. Some of these plates are free, others may require the payment of Ad Valorem taxes. These include (but are not limited to) the following:

- Medal of Honor
- Purple Heart Medal
- Prisoner of War

- [Legion of Valor](#)

Other military-themed license plates are available but may require full payment of taxes and applicable fees. Applicants must furnish proof of service and the awards/decorations signified by the plates.

Veterans with qualifying VA-rated disabilities may be eligible for tax-free plates with the Disabled Veteran designation. Depending on the disability rating, some plates are limited to first-use tax exemptions, while others may be available indefinitely.

### **Burial Benefits for Veterans**

There are three veteran cemeteries in the state of Alabama, but only one is operated by the state itself. The Alabama State Veterans Memorial Cemetery, located at Spanish Fort is open to veterans and spouses to reserve or pre-register no-cost burial services in advance.

Pre-registration requires the veteran's discharge paperwork ([DD Form 214](#) or the Guard/Reserve equivalent) and a copy of the marriage certificate where applicable. Two national veterans' cemeteries, Fort Mitchell and Alabama National Cemetery, are also non-state run burial options.

### **Hunting/Fishing/Recreation Licenses for Qualifying Veterans**

There are a variety of deeply discounted hunting, fishing, and firearms discounts available to veterans, especially those with VA-rated service-connected disabilities. Many are open to veterans with VA ratings starting at 20%; discounts vary depending on the license, the disability rating, and the department issuing the license.

The Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs official site encourages veterans seeking these discounts to contact the agency Outdoor Alabama at **1-888-848-6887** to learn how to apply for veteran discounts for hunting, fishing, and firearms licenses.

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### **[Link to Alabama Veterans Services](#)**

- [Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs](#)

## Alaska

Find state and local veterans' benefits including education, employment, healthcare, tax breaks/exemptions, recreation and much more below. The Last Frontier is home to more than 68,000 veterans. Learn more about veterans benefits in the state of Alaska.

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### **Veteran Education Benefits**

#### **Tuition Waivers for Veterans, Spouses, and Dependents**

Veterans, their spouses, and dependents may qualify for financial benefits while attending school in the University of Alaska system. Benefits can include resident tuition or **tuition waivers**.

In order to qualify for the resident tuition benefit, applicants must meet one of the following criteria:

- Active duty military service member, spouse, or dependent
- National Guard service member, spouse, or dependent
- Veterans eligible for VA education benefits, spouses, or dependents

Surviving spouses and dependents may qualify for waivers on undergraduate tuition and fees while attending school in the University of Alaska system.

In order to be eligible for the tuition waiver benefit, the deceased veteran must have been an Alaska resident, and must also meet one of the following criteria:

- Died in the line of duty
- Listed by the DOD as a POW
- Killed in action

National Guard members may be eligible for up to 100% tuition assistance while attending school in the University of Alaska system.

Students who qualify for these benefits must move to and live in Alaska for their course of study.

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### **Veteran Employment Benefits**

#### **Hiring Preference**

Veterans and eligible spouses may qualify for priority services through the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development. Priority services include the following:



- Job search workshops
- Priority job referral
- Special programs
- Career assessment and counseling
- Employment assessment and testing
- Resume assistance
- Education assessment and referral
- Labor market information
- Job development

In order to qualify for this benefit, applicants must have been service members for a minimum of one day, and must have been discharged or released under any discharge other than dishonorable.

In order for spouses to be eligible for this benefit, applicants must meet one of the following criteria:

- Surviving spouse of veteran who died due to military service
- Surviving spouse of veteran who is totally disabled due to military service, per the VA
- Surviving spouse of veteran who died of a disability that was due to military service
- Spouse of service member who has been listed under one of the following categories for more than 90 days:
  - MIA
  - Captured in line of duty
  - Detained or interned in line of duty

Job centers in Anchorage, Fairbanks, and Wasilla are staffed by veteran representatives who work directly with applicants. All Alaska job centers work with qualified veterans and eligible spouses to provide priority services.

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## **Veteran Housing Benefits**

### **Veterans Assisted Care Homes and Nursing Homes**

The Alaska Veterans and Pioneers Home is located in downtown Palmer, Alaska. The home has 79 beds, 59 of which are exclusively for veterans, while the remaining 20 are available to non-veterans.

Life in the home is structured to be comfortable and resident-centered. There are resident neighborhoods, which contain dining rooms, sitting areas, and activity areas.

The home may provide the following services, depending on health status and need:

- Private or semi-private rooms
- Opportunities for recreation

- Meals & housekeeping services
- Emergency assistance
- Physical activities
- Assistance with activities of daily living (ADLs)
- Nursing assessment and intermittent health services depending upon level of care
- Payment assistance for those who qualify
- Pharmacy services

Qualifying Veterans are eligible for a per diem from the VA to offset costs of their care.

### **Alaska Housing Finance Corporation, (AHFC)**

The AHFC administers two programs to assist qualified veterans in the purchase of a home: the Veterans Mortgage Program and the Veterans Interest Rate Preference Program.

The Veterans Mortgage Program offers financing to qualified veterans who seek to purchase a home. This benefit offers loans at lower interest rates, provides quick processing time, and require little to no down payment from the purchaser.

Active duty service members may also qualify for this program. This includes members of all branches of military service, US Air Force, Military, Naval Academy, and Coast Guard cadets, Public Health Service, and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration employees (NOAA).

The Veterans Interest Rate Preference program offers a lower interest rate to qualified “State Vets” who purchase new homes. A 1% lower interest rate is applied to the first \$50,000 of a bank loan, and qualified veterans may combine this program with many other single family home loan programs. A blended interest rate is applied to loans in excess of \$50,000, (rounded up to the next 0.125%). Also, “State Vet” income guidelines apply.

In order to qualify for State Vet status, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Honorably discharged service member
- Service of at least 90 days active duty after April 6, 1917 in one of the following:
  - Armed Forces
  - Armed Forces Reserve
  - Alaska Army

OR

- Honorably discharged service member
- Service in one of the following:
  - Alaska Army
  - Alaska Air National Guard

- Reservist who has served at least five years
- Members who served in both the Guard and Reserves

OR

- Surviving spouse of a qualified veteran

OR

- Public Health Service employees

The AHFC also owns low-cost housing, and offers a preference for the rent or sale of these units.

There are certain exceptions for this benefit. Active duty service members are not eligible, and unmarried applicants applying jointly must both be qualified veterans.

### **Land Discount/Purchase Preference**

The Alaska Department of Natural Resources administers the Veterans Land Discount program to assist veterans with purchasing a home. This program grants qualified veterans a one-time 25% discount off purchase of unoccupied, state-owned residential or recreational land. Land offered under this benefit must be settlement land classified, zoned for residential use, and five acres or less, (agricultural, commercial, or industrial land purchases are excluded from this benefit). Veterans may purchase land for fair market value at a restricted sale.

In order to be eligible for this benefit, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- 18 years of age or older at sale date
- Resident of the State of Alaska for at least one year immediately preceding sale date
- Service member of one of the following:
  - Alaska Territorial Guard for a minimum of 90 days, (unless discharged due to disability resulting from military service)
  - Honorable discharge or general discharge under honorable terms

OR

- Active duty military a minimum of 90 days ( unless discharged due to either disability resulting from military service, or early separation after a overseas tour of duty)
- Honorable discharge or general discharge under honorable terms

Survey costs and other expenses reimbursable to the state are excluded from this benefit. Also, this benefit may not be combined with Veterans Land Sale Preference benefit.

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## **Veteran Financial Benefits**

### **State Retirement Credit**

Veterans may qualify for up to five years credit in the Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS) for active military service.

In order to be eligible for this benefit, applicants must be eligible for **retirement benefits** and must have been honorably discharged from service. Applicants may also be eligible for this credit if they fall into one of the following categories:

- PERS retirees
- Vested service members who have deferred benefits
- Retired National Guard service members
- Retired Reservists
- Retired from service in U.S. Merchant Marines from December 1941, through September 30, 1945
- Surviving spouses
- Service with the U.S. Department of State in Vietnam, Cambodia or Laos from August 4, 1964, through November 7, 1975 in one of the following capacities:
  - Foreign service officer
  - Foreign service reserve officer
  - Limited foreign service reserve officer

This benefit does not apply to service members first hired under PERS after June 30, 1986 who retired from regular service and are eligible for service-related federal benefits. Also, while this benefit is used to calculate monthly benefits, it does not count towards retirement eligibility.

### **Property Tax Exemptions**

Disabled veterans may be eligible for **exemption from property tax** on the first \$150,000 assessed valuation of a primary residence. In order to qualify for this benefit, applicants must be rated as 50% disabled or more as a result of military service, as verified by either the military service or VA. This benefit may transfer to a surviving spouse who is 60 years of age or more.

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## **Additional Veteran Benefits**

### **Veteran License Plates**

Veterans may be eligible for license plates with specialized designations of service. Special designations include the following:

- Veteran of branch of service, (Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard)
- Purple Heart Medal Recipient
- POW
- Pearl Harbor Survivor
- Gold Star Family

Upon receipt and validation of proof of service, the Alaska DMV issues these plates free of charge and exempt from annual registration renewal fees.

### **Disabled Veteran Plates**

Disabled veterans may be eligible for license plates with a “Disabled Veteran” designation. In order to qualify for this benefit, applicants must submit proof of at least 50% disability due to military service. These plates do not grant special parking privileges.

Upon receipt and validation of disability, the Alaska DMV will issue only one set of these plates free of charge and exempt from annual registration renewal fees. Payment of all fees will be required for subsequent sets of plates. Also, only applicants who live in remote areas of the state and do not have access to a DMV office are allowed to request these plates by mail.

### **Disabled Veterans Plates with Parking Privileges**

Disabled veterans may be eligible for license plates with a “Disabled Veteran with Parking Privileges” designation. In order to qualify for this benefit, applicants must submit the following as proof of disability due to military service that affects mobility:

- Fully-completed Application for Disabled Parking Identification, (applicant and Alaska-licensed physician)
- Certification of disability from the VA or agency of the federal government

Upon receipt and validation of disability, the Alaska DMV will issue these plates free of charge and exempt from annual registration renewal fees.

### **Disabled Veterans Annual Camping Pass**

Disabled veterans may be eligible to receive one Alaska State Park Camping Pass free of charge. This pass is valid in all developed Alaska State Park campgrounds, and is good for two years. Day use passes and boat launch passes are excluded from this program.

In order to be eligible for this benefit, applicants must be Alaska residents with disability or disabilities due to military service. Proof of disability must include the following:

- The Veterans Universal Access Identification card with the words “SERVICE CONNECTED” printed below the photo ID
- Current certification letter from the VA that certifies disability due to military service, (percentage of disability does not affect qualification)

## Arizona

Find Arizona State and local veteran's benefits including education, tax deductions, veteran's homes, financial assistance, and more below. The Grand Canyon State has over 500,000 veterans with access to these great veterans' benefits.

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### **Arizona Veteran Education Benefits**

#### **Tuition and Fees-Deferred Payment**

Veterans and eligible dependents applying for **educational benefits under the G.I. Bill** may have payment of tuition, fees, and books deferred for 120 days with a no interest charge; extensions may be granted if money has not been received the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs for payment during the 120-day time frame.

#### **In-State Tuition**

Allows eligible veterans and dependents to be granted immediate residency, indicating eligibility to pay in-state tuition rates. To qualify, veterans and dependents must either reside in the state or provide other proof of Arizona residency such as:

- Arizona voter or vehicle registration
- Arizona driver's license
- in-state employment history or transfer of banking services
- change of permanent address
- In order to be eligible, individuals must have been discharged or be a spouse or dependent of a veteran who was discharged within the last 36 months from a period of active duty 90 days or longer and using VA Chapter 30 or 33 benefits.

#### **Arizona Tuition Waiver Scholarship aka Arizona Purple Heart Tuition Waiver**

*This scholarship is available to:*

- Post 9/11 veterans established as Arizona residents during their time of service who have least a 50 percent VA disability and received a **Purple Heart** medal
- Dependent children up to 30 years of age and dependent spouses of an Arizona military member killed in the line of duty on or after September 11, 2001
- Post 9/11 Arizona guard members who were medically discharged or received a Purple Heart.

#### **Veteran Supportive Campuses (VSCs)**

Arizona VSCs are post-secondary institutions that are in compliance with the State Approving Agency and Department of Veterans Affairs; these are campuses that are eligible to receive **GI Bill** Education Benefits and also meet certain standards to meet the needs of veteran students and their families.

*Some of the requirements these schools meet to maintain VSC certification are:*

- Maintaining surveys and metrics on veteran students
- Have committees to provide guidance on developing programs for veterans
- Conduct sensitivity and awareness training on military and veteran culture
- Provide the following specific to military and veteran students:
  - orientation programs
  - peer mentoring and support programs
  - outreach
  - resources

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## **Arizona Veteran Employment Benefits**

### **Civil Service**

Veterans and spouses of veterans deceased of a service-connected disability passing examination by state, county or city for civil service may have extra points added to their certification score.

### **Arizona Veteran Employment Roadmap**

The Arizona Veteran Employment Roadmap is a statewide effort developed in partnership by the Arizona Department of Veterans' Services and the Arizona Coalition for Military Families to connect veterans and their families to employment, training, and resources. The roadmap includes resources for job-seekers, employers, employment service providers, and the community. Some of the services that can be found at the site are:

- Military Skills Translator
- Online Resume Builder
- Online document storage
- Personalized Job Portal

### **Veterans Toolkit Program**

This program was launched in July 2017 to help veterans get the supplies they need to begin working. A veteran can qualify by proving they live in Arizona, being enrolled in the Arizona Department of Economic Security Employment program, and identifying the job that supplies are needed for. The



program provides up to \$750 of supplies per veteran and can cover anything from tools to work clothes to transportation.

### **Economic Veterans Programs**

The purpose of this program is to develop and support initiatives to create more opportunities for employment and job training for Arizona veterans. Veterans can receive priority service for referrals and training. Also, veterans with unemployment insurance claims can get priority referrals to job openings along with training workshops and job screenings.

### **Department of Economic Security Vet Programs**

- *Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP)*
  - Provides specialized services such as assessments, employment plans, career guidance, referrals to support services, and job opening connections to disabled veterans and other eligible persons.
- *Local Veteran Employment Representative (LVER)*
  - LVER staff work with employers and hiring executives to increase job opportunities for veterans and advocate for the hiring of veterans.

### **Arizona State Retirement Benefits**

If a period of military service is not on account with any other retirement system, military service may be counted towards a state retirement plan. Length of military service will be included in computing length of service for retirement for Police and Fire Department Employees.

### **Professional and Occupational Licenses**

All funeral directors, embalmers, or apprentice embalmers serving in the armed forces during a time of war for the duration of the war and six months thereafter or six months following discharge is exempt from paying license renewal fees.

### **Employment resources**

The Arizona Department of Veterans' Services does not have its own employment website but does offer links to a variety of services that can be useful to veterans seeking employment.

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### **Arizona Veteran Housing Benefits**

#### **State Veteran Homes**

Arizona has two state veteran homes, one in Phoenix and one in Tucson. Honorably discharged veterans and their spouses may apply for admission. Both offer skilled certified nursing care as well as a host of services and activities.

### **Arizona Veterans Stand-down Alliance (AVSA)**

The AVSA is a program of the Arizona Housing Coalition. AVSA holds events and fairs to provide resources and assistance for veterans and their families who are experiencing homelessness or housing instability.

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## **Arizona Veteran Financial Benefits**

### **State Income Tax Exemptions**

Federal payments (civil service or military retirement) up to \$2,500.00 per year are exempt from state income tax.

### **Vehicle License Tax and Registration Fees**

Exemptions on vehicle license taxes apply for personally owned vehicles of Arizona resident veterans if the veteran is 100% service-connected disabled and drawing disability and/or if the vehicle owned by the veteran was acquired through financial aid from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

- This exemption also applies to surviving unmarried spouses of deceased 100% disabled veterans.

### **Property Tax**

Property tax on real estate, mobile homes, or automobiles may be exempted under specific guidelines for widows, widowers, or disabled persons.

### **Arizona Military Family Relief Fund**

The Arizona Military Family Relief Fund provides financial assistance to families of deployed Service Members and post-9/11 military as well as honorably discharged veteran Arizona residents who experienced hardship caused by the veteran's deployment to a combat zone post 9/11. Applications for financial assistance must be submitted to a committee who reviews and determines eligibility.

### **Native American Settlement Fund (NASF)**

The NASF was established in 2016 to refund all state income taxes withheld from active duty military pay of Native Americans domiciled on their reservation from 1977 to 2005. Native American veterans and their spouses and if the veteran is deceased may submit claims for a refund.

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## **Additional Arizona Veteran Benefits**

### **Benefits Counseling**

Veterans Benefits Counselors (VBCs) provide free information, counseling, and assistance to veterans; they are located at Veterans Benefits Offices (VBOs) around the state and they also travel to fifteen state counties.

### **Hunting and Fishing Licenses**

Disabled veterans receiving compensation for permanent service-connected disabilities rated at 100% and who have more than one year of residency in Arizona can receive complimentary hunting and fishing licenses. For more information, contact the nearest Department of Game & Fish Office.

### **Arizona State Parks**

100% disabled veterans can receive a “Disabled Veterans Annual Day Use pass” which will provide day-use access to all 27 state parks.

### **Veterans Drivers Licenses and License Plates**

- All Arizona veterans have the option to have the **VETERAN designation** on their Arizona issued driver’s license, commercial driver license, and Identifications card or learner permit.
- Veterans applying for an Arizona CDL can request a waiver of the skills test if they meet specific requirements.
- Several military/veteran license plates are available for purchase from the ADOT’s Motor Vehicle Division; each gives \$17 of proceeds to the Veterans’ Donation Fund. Military and veteran license plates cost \$25 and require proof of veteran status.

### **Cemeteries and Burials**

There are four veterans’ cemeteries in Arizona located in Sierra Vista, Marana, Bellemont, and Phoenix. Veterans and their spouses are eligible for burial.

### **Veterans Court**

Arizona supports Veterans' Courts in several counties. These courts are incarceration diversion programs for Veterans who have entered the criminal justice system through violations of the law; they focus on treatment and rehabilitation geared specifically towards Veterans.

### **Arizona Gold Star Military Medal**

The Arizona **Gold Star** Military Medal was created to honor all Arizona military members killed in action since February 14, 1912. Families of qualifying individuals may apply for this Medal.

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### **Arizona State Links to Veterans Services**

- [Arizona Coalition for Military Families](#)
- [Arizona Department of Veterans Services](#)
- [Arizona Department of Veterans Services Offices](#)
- [Arizona Veterans Standdown Alliance](#)

## Arkansas

Find Arkansas State and local veteran's benefits which include education, employment, healthcare, tax breaks/exemptions, recreation, and much more below. The Natural State has over 250,000 veterans according to the Department of Veterans Affairs.

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### **Arkansas State Veteran Education Benefits**

#### **Arkansas State Tuition Benefits for Qualifying Military Dependents**

The Arkansas Department of Higher Education offers qualifying military spouses and dependent children free tuition and fees for coursework at any state supported college, university, technical school, or vocational school.

Qualifying spouses or children are those of "any Arkansan who has been declared to be Prisoner of War or placed in a missing-in-action status since January 1, 1960" and spouses/children of any state resident killed in action since 1960.

#### **Arkansas In-State Tuition Benefits**

Arkansas state-supported colleges, trade schools, or vocational schools "shall classify a student as in-state, in-county, in-district, or resident for the purpose of tuition and fees" as long as the student qualifies as one of the following:

- A veteran discharged or released from a period of not less than ninety (90) days of active duty in the military, naval, or air service within three years before enrolling
- A qualifying military dependent of a veteran
- A currently serving military member
- A dependent spouse

#### **Arkansas Diplomas for Veterans Program**

Those who left high school to serve in World War Two, Korea, or Vietnam may qualify for a high school diploma under this Arkansas Department of Education program. Qualifying veterans or their families should contact the veteran's high school superintendent for the district or contact the Arkansas Department of Education.

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### **Arkansas Veteran Employment Benefits**

#### **Arkansas State Hiring Preference Points for Qualifying Veterans and Spouses**

Arkansas State law requires hiring preference for veterans and spouses of veterans applying for state jobs.

There is a five-point preference for all qualifying veterans and military spouses. A 10-point preference is offered to “Disabled veterans, veterans over the age of 55 who are disabled and entitled to a pension or compensation under law.” The spouse of a veteran who has a disability qualifies for the 10-point preference.

Such hiring preference does not apply in cases where the job is an elected office, to political appointees, or “to any person holding a strictly confidential administrative or secretarial position in relation to the appointing officer.”

### **Arkansas Workforce Services for Veterans**

The [Arkansas Department of Workforce Services](#) offers job counseling and referral services for qualifying veterans. These services include an “ongoing program of job development” intended to create jobs for veterans via two programs: Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVER’s) and the Disabled Veterans Outreach program (see below).

#### **Local Veterans Employment Representatives**

Local Veterans Employment Representatives work with local employers and hiring executives to promote [employment](#) opportunities for veterans. This includes seminars for employers and career workshops for veterans. Learn more or sign-up for programs at the closest [Arkansas Workforce Center](#).

#### **Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP)**

The State of Arkansas offers “intensive services to meet the employment needs of disabled veterans and other eligible veterans.” They have an emphasis on “serving those who are economically or educationally disadvantaged” including homeless veterans.

DVOP activities include networking in areas/activities where transitioning service members congregate including “outplacement in Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Program offices.” They maintain contact with Veterans Service Organizations, Native American Trust Territories, Military installations and “other areas of known concentrations of veterans or transitioning service members.” Learn more about DVOP services and activities by calling 1-855-225-4440.

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### **Arkansas State Veteran Housing Benefits**

## **Arkansas State Veterans Homes**

The State of Arkansas operates two veterans' homes. One is located in Fayetteville, the other is located in North Little Rock. Admission criteria for both homes includes the following:

- Honorable discharge
- Have a medical need for nursing home placement
- Arkansas residents have first priority
- Military spouses and Gold Star parents are allowed to apply

Services at the Fayetteville facility include:

- Hospice care
- Medical Director on site
- RN, Licensed Practical Nurse, and Certified Nursing Assistant skilled care around the clock
- Physical Therapist, Occupational Therapist, and Speech Therapist
- Daily activities coordinated by a Certified Activities Director
- Licensed Clinical Social Worker
- Transportation available
- Cable TV provided at no charge

The North Little Rock facility is described as a "small home" design featuring eight homes each serving a dozen residents. This concept "seeks to deinstitutionalize care and provide a warm, home-like environment" and according to the Arkansas Department of Veterans Affairs. It is run quite differently than other veterans' homes.

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## **Arkansas Veteran Financial Benefits**

### **Arkansas State Tax Exemption for Military Retirement Pay**

Beginning in 2018, Arkansas military retirement pay is fully **exempt from state taxes**, thanks to the passage of Act 141 of Arkansas' 91<sup>st</sup> General Assembly.

### **Arkansas State Homestead Tax Exemption for Qualifying Veterans**

The State of Arkansas offers a homestead tax exemption for qualifying disabled veterans "who have been awarded special monthly compensation by the Department of Veterans Affairs" for the following conditions:

- Loss of, or the loss of use of, one (1) or more limbs
- Total blindness in one (1) or both eyes

- Service-connected one hundred percent (100%) total and permanent disability

Veterans who qualify based on one or more of the conditions listed above are declared exempt “from payment of all state taxes on the homestead and personal property owned by the disabled veteran.”

This exemption also applies to qualifying not remarried surviving spouses and to dependent children “during their minority.” This homestead tax exemption also applies in cases where the veteran died as a result of military service or is declared MIA.

The State of Arkansas requires “annual re-certification of continued entitlement” by the VA.

### **Arkansas State Gross Receipt of Tax Exemption**

Arkansas offers a tax break on gross receipts or proceeds “derived from the sale of a new automobile to a veteran who is blind as a result of a service-connected injury.” Documentation required for this tax benefit includes an entitlement letter from the VA. The tax exemption is restricted to one new vehicle every two years.

This Arkansas tax break may also apply to qualifying gross receipts or proceeds, “from the sale of motor vehicles and adaptive equipment to disabled veterans who have purchased the motor vehicles or adaptive equipment with the financial assistance of the Department of Veterans Affairs.”

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### **Additional Arkansas State Veteran Benefits**

#### **Recreational Benefits for Veterans**

The State of Arkansas offers a variety of recreation benefits for borrowers including:

- State Park Discounts: Arkansas resident veterans, who have a “permanent service connected 100% disability rate” are allowed to camp for half price in Arkansas State Parks.
- Hunting and Fishing License Discounts: The Arkansas Game and Fish Commission offers 100% disabled veterans over the age of 60 discounted hunting and fishing licenses.
- Resident Disabled Military Veteran Lifetime Fishing License: 100% permanently disabled veterans are offered discounted Resident Fisheries Conservation Licenses.
- Discounted Lifetime Hunting and Fishing Licenses for Military Retirees and Disabled Veterans: These benefits are available to qualifying retirees and disabled veterans with lifetime licenses for both hunting and fishing (and combination licenses to cover both at once); supporting documentation including discharge paperwork and VA award letters where applicable are required.

#### **Arkansas Burial Benefits for Veterans**



The State of Arkansas operates two veterans' cemeteries, located in North Little Rock, and Birdeye. Veterans, spouses, and dependent children may qualify for internment as long as the veteran's discharge is characterized as "other than dishonorable." Pre-need eligibility determination and arrangements are available. State cemetery benefits include the following:

- No cost for veteran interment (\$300 for spouse or qualified dependent)
- Gravesite
- Opening and closing of grave
- Perpetual care
- Upright federal government supplied headstone or niche cover
- A burial flag (provided by funeral home)
- Military honors (arranged by funeral home)

Required documentation includes:

1. Military discharge paperwork
2. Signed cemetery pre-eligibility application
3. Marriage License (if married)
4. Check for \$300 (spouse and dependent only) payable at the time of burial.

## California

Find California State and local veteran's benefits including education, employment, healthcare, home loans, tax exemptions, recreation and much more below. California is home to nearly two million vets according to data from the Department of Veterans Affairs, and that population enjoys access to **state assistance** to many veteran's benefits.

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### California Veteran Education Benefits

#### College/University Veteran Tuition Waivers

Eligible California veterans and qualifying military dependents may be eligible for a waiver of statewide tuition and fees for California State University, University of California, and any State of California community college.

This veteran benefit program will not cover expenses related to books, housing, or meals. There is also a non-resident college fee waiver for qualifying veterans good at the institutions mentioned above. Ask your admissions advisor how to apply for and use these California-specific education benefits.

#### California National Guard Education Assistance Award Program

This program is specifically for those who have served a qualifying amount of time in either the California National Guard (CNG) or the State Military Reserve (MSR). It offers up to 100% coverage of fees at the Universities of California, California State Universities, and California Community Colleges.

This benefit may also be used at qualifying California "proprietary and public institutions". There are specific qualifying circumstance which must be met in order to be approved for this veteran education benefit including a minimum of two years of service in either the CNG or MSR, plus an agreement to continue serving through the use of the benefit. The applicant must be pursuing a degree "not currently held" and must not receive a Cal Grant award during the same academic year the Education Assistance Award funds are used.

#### Troops to College

While the California State Troops to College program doesn't offer any specific financial benefit, it does address the unique needs of military members and dependents who want to attend classes at California state colleges and universities. Some participating institutions offer transition assistance classes, on-campus military liaisons, and there are credit transfer evaluation programs for those who want to turn their military experiences and training into college credit.

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## California Veteran Employment Benefits

### Veteran Employment Programs

CalVets Jobs is an employment resource offered by the State of California and has options for veterans in association with the California Department of Veterans Affairs official site.

The California Employment Development Department helps veterans and eligible military spouses “maximize their employment and training opportunities”. That includes “a veteran 24-hour priority hold on all job listings” plus the ability to make appointments to get personal help from a veterans’ representative “for personalized services and assistance to achieve professional goals”.

California, like many other states, offers veteran hiring preferences for selected state jobs. Proof of service, **discharge paperwork**, and other identification may be required at application time and/or when taking a Civil Service exam for certain jobs. You’ll need to consult the requirements of the job portal you’re applying to (including [caljobs.ca.gov](http://caljobs.ca.gov)) for specific paperwork submission rules.

### Employment Development Department (EDD)

This California State resource for veterans includes CalJobs, which allows military members to search for jobs based on the member’s Military Occupational Specialty code or other such identifiers (include Air Force Specialty Codes, Navy Enlisted Classification Codes, etc.)

EDD offers qualifying veterans and family members priority services. To qualify, the service member must have a discharge characterized as other than Dishonorable. Surviving spouses of those who have died on active duty, POW/MIAs, and spouses of military members rated at 100% disability by the Department of Veterans Affairs are also eligible for priority services.

### Department Of Industrial Relations Apprenticeship Finder for Veterans

Veterans interested in finding vet-friendly apprenticeship programs should explore the resource offered by the California Department of Industrial Relations Division of Apprenticeship Standards (DAS). These programs combine classroom experience with job training, but there is a large number of apprenticeships within the State of California-one reason why DAS makes consultants available to veterans to help navigate the system and learn how to find and properly apply to the right program.

### Troops to Trucks program

The California Troops to Trucks program offers qualifying service members a commercial driving license test waiver for non-passenger driving. This program is for military members who have been employed with year leading up to the application, “in a military position requiring the operation of a military motor vehicle equivalent to a commercial motor vehicle on public roads and highways” according to the California DMV.

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## **California Veteran Housing Benefits**

### **Farm and Home Loans**

CalVets offers eligible veterans home loans and farm loans as direct, “manually underwritten” mortgages. These loans are offered from the State of California, and do not have a California residency requirement-you do not have to be a resident of the state, or list California as your home of record in your military paperwork.

These loans feature little to no down payment requirement depending on financial qualifications, and have low interest rates. Borrowers do not have to be first-time home buyers, and may be able to use this California veteran benefit a second time if they meet certain requirements.

### **Veteran Property Tax Exemption**

This California veteran tax benefits offers eligible residents a property tax exemption up to \$4000 at the time of this writing for qualifying properties. Those currently serving, those honorably discharged, the unmarried surviving spouse of a qualifying service member, or the parent of a deceased qualifying veteran may be able to take advantage of this tax benefit.

Additional qualifications including property valuation rules may apply. When taking advantage of tax breaks related to military service, it’s best to get the assistance of an experienced tax professional who can help guide you through the process.

There is also a property tax exemption for qualifying disabled veterans and/or qualifying spouses. This benefit include a “basic” \$100,000 exemption, plus a “low-income” version. To qualify, veterans must suffer from conditions that include but may not be limited to blindness in both eyes, loss of two or more limbs, or a VA-rated total disability condition. These conditions must be as a result of military service.

### **Veteran Affordable Housing Programs**

The CalVet Residential Enriched Neighborhood program is designed to help low-income veterans find permanent housing. Requirements for this program include qualifying for a CalVet home loan and

complete a “sweat equity” program that may include participating in the construction of the home and completing self-sufficiency training at no cost to the veteran.

Another CalVet program, the Veterans Housing and Homelessness Prevention Program, funds California agencies for the specific purpose of creating veteran-oriented multi-family rental housing. This program does not provide funds directly to veterans, but provides financial incentives for companies to focus on veteran housing needs.

### **Veterans Homes of California**

California has 8 veterans homes located in the following cities:

- Barstow
- Chula Vista
- Fresno
- Lancaster
- Redding
- Ventura
- West Los Angeles
- Yountville

Visit the [National Association of State Veteran Homes](#) for a California state home directory with contact information, eligibility requirements and much for more.

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### **California Veteran Financial Benefits**

There are a variety of private financial relief funds available in California including the VFW Unmet Needs program which provides financial help for military members and their families who run into financial difficulty. On the state level, the California Military Family Relief Funds offers grants to California National Guard members and families who are negatively affected by deployments and mobilizations.

Qualifying criteria for this program include being a California resident, a member of the CNG in good standing deployed for at least 60 consecutive days in Title 10 USC status, and having a financial difficulty that results in a reduction of household income by a minimum of 10%.

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### **Additional California Veteran Benefits**

#### **Department Of Motor Vehicles Benefits for Veterans**

Qualifying service members can receive veteran designation (including disabled veteran designation for those who provide proof of disability) on license plates, and are eligible to legally operate motor vehicles registered in other states without transferring to the State of California as long as the military member's orders are not temporary. There is also a renewal penalty waiver offered for those who are California residents but have been deployed outside of California. (Certain restrictions apply.)

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### California Links to Veterans Services

- [CALVET](#)
- [CA AMERICAN LEGION](#)
- [CA DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS](#)
- [CA VETERAN OF FOREIGN WARS](#)
- [CA Council of Vietnam Veterans of America](#)
- [Team AMVETS – Department of California](#)

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### County Veterans Affairs Offices

Each county within California provides additional unique benefits specific to each county. Locate the county you reside in below to find additional veterans benefits. Also, check with your local city or veterans service organizations for even more veteran's benefits.

Established in 1946, this CVAO offers veterans assistance and advocacy via county offices that can help veterans, surviving spouses, qualifying dependent children, and Gold Star families with VA claims, veteran education benefits, home loan assistance, and outreach for "hard-to-reach veterans" and referral services.

### California County Veterans Affairs Offices

Alameda	Amador	Butte	Calaveras
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Colusa	Contra Costa	Del Norte	El Dorado
Fresno	Glenn	Humboldt	Imperial
Inyo/Mono	Kern	Kings	Lake
Lassen	Los Angeles	Madera	Marin
Mariposa	Mendocino	Merced	Modoc
Monterey	Napa	Nevada	Orange
Placer	Plumas/Sierra	Riverside	Sacramento
San Benito	San Bernardino	San Diego	San Francisco

San Joaquin	San Luis Obispo	San Mateo	Santa Barbara
Santa Clara	Santa Cruz	Shasta	Siskiyou
Solano	Sonoma	Stanislaus	Tehama
Trinity	Tulare	Tuolumne	Ventura
Yolo	Yuba-Sutter		



## Colorado

Find Colorado State and local veteran's benefits including education, tax deductions, veteran's homes, financial assistance, and more below. The Centennial State has over 400,000 veterans that can access Colorado's veteran's benefits.

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### **Colorado Veteran Education Benefits**

#### **State Tuition Assistance**

Members of the Colorado National Guard may be eligible for up to 100% state tuition assistance at selected schools.

#### **Operation Recognition**

This program awards high school diplomas to Veterans who served in World War II, and during the Korea and **Vietnam** eras; veterans who left school to serve in one of the aforementioned conflicts can receive a diploma through a number of participating schools.

Veterans applying for this program must be at least 60 years of age, must not already have a high school diploma, and must reside in the school district of the school of application or have resided in the school district of the school of application when first leaving to serve in the Armed Forces.

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### **Colorado Veteran Employment Benefits**

#### **Department of Regulatory Agencies (DORA)**

DORA works to assist active duty, National Guard, veterans, and spouses to transition from military duty to civilian professions. DORA helps to transfer military credentials to civilian Colorado credentials and also has programs to help active and veterans obtain licensing needed to bridge the gap between military experience and civilian professions.

#### **Colorado Department of Labor and Employment (CDLE) resources for Veterans**

- CDLE in partnership with American Job Centers offers a program where veterans can register and have access to a wide variety of job finding assistance and networking opportunities including:
  - Resume and cover letter help
  - Job search guidance
  - Licensure, certification, and apprenticeship information

- Veterans rights and priorities information
- Referrals for job openings
- Custom job development
- Job fairs
- Referrals for additional assistance from other agencies
- AJC resource room access, for use of computers, fax machines, telephones, and copiers

### **Vocational Rehabilitation**

Provides training and job assistance through counseling, testing, and monitoring for veterans with a disability. This typically covers the cost of employment services, school, and a monthly subsistence allowance.

Basic eligibility includes veterans rated with 20% or greater employment handicap or 10% or greater serious employment handicap.

### **Veterans' Preference**

Provides training and job assistance through counseling, testing, and monitoring for veterans with a disability. This typically covers the cost of employment services, school, and a monthly subsistence allowance.

Basic eligibility includes veterans rated with 20% or greater employment handicap or 10% or greater serious employment handicap

### **Career Assistance for Veterans**

Offers career assistance to eligible individuals at workforce center locations across the state. These locations are staffed with a local veteran's employment representative qualified to assist with employment, training, and placement services.

### **VA Vocational Assistance**

The program is designed to assist veterans with personal job searches. It includes:

- Job Club: A place to network with hiring employers and other veterans and learn about available employment services through local workforce centers.
- Computer Lab: Provides basic computer/internet skills and assists with resume writing and online job searches.
- One-on-One Assistance: Offers direct assistance with resumes, interviews, job searches and job referrals.

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## **Colorado Veteran Housing Benefits**

### **State Veteran Homes**

Colorado has five Veterans Community Living Centers in Fitzsimmons, Florence, Homelake, Rifle, and Walsenburg. These centers are open to applications from honorably discharged veterans, their spouses, and “gold-star” parents, or parents with children who died serving the Armed Forces.

Services at these community centers include long-term care, short-term rehabilitation, domiciliary cottages similar to assisted living, memory care services, short-term “respite” care, and end-of-life/hospice services.

### **Property Tax Deferral Program for seniors and Active Military Personnel**

The Property Tax Deferral Program helps military personnel and seniors afford to live in their home by deferring property tax payments; the State Treasurer’s office makes tax payments directly to the county on behalf of the participant through a loan logged as a lien against the participant’s property.

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## **Colorado Veteran Financial Benefits**

### **Income Tax on Active Duty Pay**

Active duty military who are stationed outside of Colorado are exempt from state income tax.

### **Income Tax on Retired Military Pay**

A portion of military retiree pay can be excluded from income tax based on these qualifications:

- 55-64 exclude up to \$20,000 in retired military pay
- 65 and over exclude up to \$24,000 in retired military pay

### **State Income Tax Exemptions**

**Disabled Veterans rated at 100%** as permanent and totally disabled and owning and occupying a home from the 1st of the year of application may apply for a 50% property tax exemption on the first \$200,000 home value.

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## **Additional Colorado Veteran Benefits**

### **State-Sponsored Life Insurance (SSLI)**

Current active members of Colorado National Guard are automatically covered with \$1,000 of SSLI at no charge. Additional coverage available at cost.

### **Free Legal Self Help Clinic – Virtual Pro Clinic**

Free legal clinic conducted via computer link for individuals without attorneys. Volunteer attorneys can answer questions, help with forms, explain the process and procedural family law, civil litigation, property law, probate law, collections, appeals, landlord-tenant, veterans' benefits, and civil protection orders.

### **Hunting and Fishing Licenses**

The Division of Parks and Wildlife in Colorado offers the following for veterans:

- Free lifetime small-game hunting and fishing license combination for resident veterans with a permanent service-connected disability of 60% or more.
- Free fishing license for armed forces members who are patients at a military hospital or convalescent station, any resident patient at a State USDVA hospital, or any permanently and totally disabled veterans.
- Free admission to all state parks/recreation areas for veterans with a Disabled Veterans License Plate.

### **Resident Fishing on Temporary Leave**

Active duty Colorado residents that are stationed outside of the state may fish without a license while on temporary leave in Colorado; this benefit is only valid for 30 days and with proof of leave.

### **Resident Rates for Fishing and Hunting Licenses**

Military personnel stationed in Colorado and family members may qualify to purchase hunting and fishing licenses at Colorado resident rates.

### **Preference Points**

An active duty member of the Armed Forces stationed in Colorado and deployed outside the U.S. during a hunting/fishing license application deadline period is eligible to apply for a preference point on a future hunt.

Active duty military members are exempt from the \$25 preference point fee; in order to receive this benefit, members must first pay the fee and then submit a refund request.

### **License Refund and Point Return if Deployed after Application**

Active duty military members deployed overseas after applying for a hunting/fishing license who are then unable to use the license, are eligible for a license purchase refund and any preference point.

### **Wounded Warrior Program**

The Colorado Parks and Wildlife Commission is authorized to issue free licenses to qualified members of the Wounded Warrior or Safe Harbor programs; Requirements to qualify are:

- Member must be a Colorado resident/stationed in Colorado and an active member of the U.S. Armed Forces.
- Member must be returning from post-9/11 overseas contingency operation.
- Member must be currently assigned to a military medical treatment facility.
- Member must be a qualifying member of the Armed Services Wounded Warrior or Safe Harbor Program.

### **Veteran's Lifetime Combination Small Game Hunting/Fishing License**

Colorado residents that are disabled veterans can obtain a free Lifetime VA Combo license. Eligibility requirements are:

- Proof of 60% or more VA rated service-connected disability.
- Any person born on or after 1/1/1949 must have completed a hunter's safety course to apply for a license.
- Veterans who can prove receipt of **Purple Heart** are also eligible for the free lifetime Combo License.

### **Parks and Recreation**

- *Parks and Recreation Pass*
  - Service members and Veterans can obtain a free admission pass for the month of August to any Colorado State park or recreations area. This pass is offered annually and only covers admissions; campgrounds, yurts, or other amenities/services are not included. This pass must be obtained in-person at any CPW office or park.
- *Free State Park admission for Resident Disabled Veterans*
  - Colorado residents with current Colorado Disabled Veteran license plates may enter Colorado State Parks free of charge and without a windshield pass; the vehicle must have plates and the Veteran must be present.

- *Columbine Annual Pass*
  - The Columbine Annual Pass allows qualifying disabled persons, including qualifying disabled Veterans, entrance for one vehicle into most Colorado State Parks (additional fees may apply for some parks) for one year for only \$14.00.
- *Discounted Camping*
  - Disabled Veterans over 64 are eligible for discounted camping in State parks Sunday-Thursday excluding holidays.
- *YMCA Military Getaway Package*
  - The YMCA at Snow Mountain Ranch in Granby, Colorado offers a Military Getaway Package to active duty and Reserves members.

## **Licenses and ID Cards**

- *License or ID military identifier*
  - Military members and veterans may request a military identifier on their regular or commercial driver's license or ID card.
- *License Extensions for Military Personnel*
  - Colorado residents on active-duty military status may extend for three years without charge on their current driver's license if stationed out of state. A letter from the service member's commanding officer is required to request the extension.
- *Colorado Driver License Exemption*
  - Out of state residents who are active-duty and stationed in Colorado and their spouses are exempted from having to obtain a Colorado driver's license if they have a valid out-of-state driver's license; Out of state residents who are active-duty military may register their vehicle(s) in Colorado.

## **Veteran License Plates**

- *Disabled Veteran License Plates*
  - Disabled veterans who meet requirements may apply for one free Disabled Veteran License Plate through the Division of Motor Vehicles.
- *Branch and Award Specific License Plates*
  - Veteran's may purchase a license plate displaying their service and/or award upon providing proof of service and/or proof of award or military medal to the local DMV office.

## **Free RTD Bus and Rail Use**

Regional Transportation District (RTD) offers free rides on all RTD services for active duty military members; members must be in uniform or present driver with a valid military ID.

## **Furniture and Delivery Vouchers**

Providers Resource Clearing House offers a service of delivering free donated furniture to veterans in need and their families. Requirements to apply for this service are an honorable discharge, DD214, and a valid ID.

## **The Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado**

The Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado was opened in 2002 to provide a dignified place for Colorado veterans to be buried. Eligibility for burial in the cemetery requires Colorado residency as well as the requirements for Veteran Cemetery burial outlined by the Department of Veterans Affairs national cemeteries. All veteran burials are furnished, upon request, with a headstone free of charge.

Other Cemeteries that offer Veteran burials are Fort Logan National Cemetery in Denver and Fort Lyon National Cemetery in Las Anamas.

## **National Guard Records**

Department of Military and Veterans Affairs Archives hold the military personnel records for:

- Colorado Army National Guard retired and discharged members
- Colorado Air National Guard retired and discharged members

## **Documents Storage**

Veterans who listed Colorado for DD-214 storage can obtain a copy by calling 303-284-6077 and can also get free recording and certified copies of public records for veteran-related purposes such as birth, marriage, death, and divorce decrees through the local County Recorder's Office.

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## **Important Links for Colorado Veterans' Benefits**

- [Colorado Division of Veterans Affairs](#)
- [Department of Regulatory Agencies \(DORA\)](#)
- [Connecting Colorado job Search](#)
- [List of Colorado County Veterans Service Offices](#)
- [Snow Mountain Ranch YMCA Military Getaway](#)

## Connecticut

Find Connecticut State and local veteran's benefits including education, employment, healthcare, tax breaks/exemptions, recreation, and much more below. The "Nutmeg State" has more than 200,000 veterans residing there.

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### **Veteran Education Benefits**

#### **Connecticut In-State Tuition for Veterans and Spouses**

Active military personnel who are stationed in Connecticut are eligible for in-state tuition and fees at the University of Connecticut along with 17 other Connecticut state colleges & universities. This policy also applies to military spouses and dependents. Proof of service, current military orders, and other documentation may be required.

Contact the admissions office of the school you wish to apply to for more information on how to apply for the in-state tuition benefit.

#### **Connecticut State Combat Veterans Tuition Waiver**

Qualifying wartime veterans and military dependents may be eligible for tuition waivers at Connecticut public colleges supported by the state.

Veterans qualify if they have served 90 days of active duty during wartime and are state residents at the time of acceptance into the school. A discharge not characterized as Dishonorable or Bad Conduct is required. This waiver is for undergraduate and graduate programs only.

Military dependents of those declared missing in action after 1 January, 1960 are also eligible to apply for this tuition waiver.

#### **Connecticut State High School Diploma Program for Veterans**

The State of Connecticut permits local school boards to award high school diplomas to World War Two veterans who had their high school education interrupted by military service.

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### **Veteran Employment Benefits**

#### **Connecticut State Job Protection for Veterans**



Connecticut state law makes a provision for those who leave certain types of jobs to enter military service. The Connecticut State Department of Veterans Affairs official site quotes state public law which states, “An employee who leaves any public authority or public agency to enter the armed forces can be reinstated in their former position.”

The caveat is that returning veterans who wish to reclaim such job must do so within 90 days of “receipt of a certificate from the armed forces confirming satisfactory service.”

### **Connecticut State Hiring Preferences for Wartime Veterans**

Connecticut state policy for competitive state exams includes a provision for wartime veterans to earn extra points on those exams. The number of points awarded depends greatly on circumstances.

- Wartime veteran’s eligible for or receiving VA compensation are awarded an additional ten exam points.
- Wartime veterans **not** eligible for VA compensation or pension are awarded five additional exam points.
- **Spouses of qualified veterans** may also be considered eligible for additional points, but a passing grade is required on the exam.
- Honorably discharged wartime veterans awarded a campaign badge or expeditionary medal qualify for five additional points if a passing grade is received on the examination.
- For competitive municipal job exams, wartime veterans who are eligible for VA compensation or a pension are awarded ten additional points to a passing score.
- A wartime veteran not eligible for compensation or a pension is eligible for five additional exam points on a passing score.

### **Retirement Benefit for Qualifying Veterans in the Municipal Employees’ Retirement System**

Qualifying veterans who are members of the Municipal Employees’ Retirement System may be eligible to get retirement credit for time served in the military.

According to state law, those who left a municipal job for military service during wartime and then returned to be “re-employed by the municipality within six (6) months of discharge” may apply for credit “with the period of service as though they had been continuously employed.”

The six-month limitation listed above may be extended for veterans with service-connected medical issues.

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### **Veteran Housing Benefits**

#### **Connecticut State Veterans Home in Rocky Hill**

The State of Connecticut administers a veterans' home in Rocky Hill featuring a 400-bed residential program, a substance abuse recovery program, and skilled care. According to the official site, "Professional services are provided by staff physicians, Advanced Practice Registered Nurses, OT, PT, RT, dietitians and social workers are augmented by community specialists, as well as, networking to local VA and major area hospitals when appropriate."

Veterans who are able to pay in whole or in part for programs or services will receive a monthly bill for such services rendered. Eligibility requirements include, but may not be limited to:

- Proof of military discharge (any other than Dishonorable)
- Connecticut residency

There is also an option to be admitted to the Sgt. John Levitow Healthcare Center in Rocky Hill for those with qualifying needs/conditions. A waiting list for these services may apply.

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## **Veteran Financial Benefits**

### **Connecticut State Tax Breaks for Veterans**

Qualifying veterans with wartime military service, including Merchant Marines, may be eligible for property tax exemptions. The State of Connecticut Department of Veterans Affairs official site states that those who served in World War Two may qualify for a \$1,500 exemption for either real property or automobiles. Additionally, "certain veterans, who do not own real property or a motor vehicle, may be eligible for a tax refund if they are leasing a motor vehicle."

There is also help for veterans who demonstrate financial need and for qualifying disabled veterans in the form of property tax exemptions as high as \$10,000 for those with qualifying disabilities.

Surviving spouses may also qualify. It is necessary to discuss these exemptions with a municipal tax assessor's office for current application and qualification procedures.

### **Connecticut State Tax Exemption for Military Retirement Pay**

The State of Connecticut does **not tax military retirement pay**.

### **The Connecticut Soldiers', Sailors' and Marines' Fund (SSMF)**

The SSMF is a Connecticut state fund which is "administered by the American Legion for the purpose of providing temporary financial assistance" for qualifying military veterans with ninety or more days of wartime service.

This fund is intended for qualifying veterans with disabilities, illness, and/or unemployment issues. State residency is required at application time.

Funds may be used for emergency food, medical care including surgery, plus “general care and relief.”

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### **Additional Veteran Benefits**

#### **Connecticut State Veteran Drivers’ License**

All Connecticut veterans with qualifying service may request a “veteran flag identifier” on **state drivers’ licenses** or ID cards.

This service is offered to those with 90 days or more of active duty service (not including training), proof of a non-punitive military discharge (Honorable or Under Honorable Conditions), plus documentation such as a DD Form 214 or a VA Certificate of Service. Applications must be received no later than 30 days before the license expiration date.

#### **Connecticut State Military Vehicle Registration and License Plate Benefits for Qualifying Veterans**

Former prisoners of war and Medal of Honor awardees are eligible for free motor vehicle registration. Former prisoners of war and recipients of the Medal of Honor can also receive special plates.

Veterans who were residents of Connecticut at the time they entered military service are exempt from paying operators licenses and exam fees for one year or licensing period if they apply within two years of an Honorable discharge.

State law waives fees for qualifying service members who seek the following services:

- Special License plates for disabled veterans
- Special fee license plates for certain disabilities (loss of use or loss of limb, or blind) handicapped and overtime parking
- When applying for an auto grant from the VA or as a Medal of Honor recipient, state law exempts qualifying applicants from having to pay registration fees.

#### **Recreational Benefits for Veterans**

The State of Connecticut provides hunting, fishing, and trapping licenses for active full-time military members at the in-state rate regardless of the military member’s status as a resident or non-resident. Disabled veterans with the loss of (or loss of use) of a limb and accompanying documentation can be issued a free hunting, fishing, or trapping license.

## **Connecticut State Burial Benefits for Veterans**

Veterans with military discharges characterized as Honorable or Under Honorable Conditions are eligible to be buried in the Connecticut State Veterans' Cemetery in Middletown.

There are no fees associated with the burial plot, opening and closing the grave, or perpetual care. To qualify, veterans must meet the following standards:

- Must have a military discharge characterization of Honorable or General Under Honorable Conditions
- Must have a record of active duty service other than for training purposes OR a minimum of 20 years of qualifying service in the National Guard or Reserve
- Must be a Connecticut resident at time of death, or have Connecticut listed as the home of record on entering military service.

Certain qualifying dependents may also be eligible for burial at the Connecticut State Veterans' Cemetery in Middletown. Contact the cemetery to discuss pre-need verification of eligibility.

## Delaware

Find Delaware state and local veterans benefits including education, employment, healthcare, tax breaks/exemptions, recreation and much more below. According to the Department of Veterans Affairs, The First State (also known as the Diamond State, the Blue Hen State, and Small Wonder) is home to more than 70,000 veterans. Read on to learn more about Delaware veterans benefits.

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### **Veteran Education Benefits**

#### **Educational Benefits for Dependents of Deceased or POW Veterans**

Dependents of deceased or POW veterans may qualify for **education benefits** through the Delaware Postsecondary Education Commission. These benefits may apply to dependents of veterans who meet one of the following criteria:

- Died while on active duty
- Former or current POWs
- Officially declared MIA
- Died as a result of wounds, injuries, disease, or disabilities due to military service

Benefits may cover tuition, fees, room, and board. The amount may not exceed either amount of tuition per year, or \$525 per year, whichever is greater. Also, payment of benefits is limited to four years of training or education.

In order to be eligible for this benefit, applicants must be between the ages of 16 and 24 years of age, residents of Delaware for a minimum of three years prior to date of application; and either already attending or admitted to an undergraduate or vocational program that is four years in length.

#### **Education Benefits for Active Delaware National Guard Members**

Active members of the Delaware National Guard may qualify for education benefits. These benefits may cover post-secondary tuition and fees.

In order to be eligible for this benefit, applicants must meet the requirements for satisfactory membership. These requirements are outlined by the Adjutant General of the Delaware National Guard.

#### **High School Diplomas for WWII Veterans**

WWII veterans may be eligible to receive high school diplomas through the Delaware Department of Veterans Affairs.

In order to receive this benefit, applicants must have performed wartime service between December 7, 1941 and December 31, 1946, and must have not graduated from high school due to military service.

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## **Veteran Employment Benefits**

### **State Employment**

Veterans may be eligible for ratings preference when applying for state jobs. This may include a five-point **preference for veterans**, and a ten-point preference for disabled veterans. These preference points do not apply to either promotion or retention during workforce reduction. Preference points may also be applied to spouses of qualified veterans in the following circumstances:

- Unremarried surviving spouse
- Spouse of POW
- Spouse of MIA service member
- Spouse of totally disabled veteran

In order to be eligible for this benefit, veterans must pass pre-employment examinations.

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## **Veteran Housing Benefits**

### **Delaware Veterans Home**

Located in Milford, the Delaware Veterans Home is a 150-bed long term care facility. The home offers skilled nursing services for residents, as well as a memory care unit.

Care teams in the home may provide residents with assistance for daily living activities, such as personal grooming and hygiene, as well as support with dietary and exercise needs. The home also provides speech therapy, physical therapy, and occupational therapy to residents, as needed.

All meals are served in the main dining room, and dietary staff work to ensure meals meet nutritional standards and residents' preferences. There is also a Canteen, where residents may enjoy snacks.

The home provides numerous daily activities for residents, including games, entertainment, arts and crafts, and day trips. The home also provides special veterans programs for Flag Day, Memorial Day, Veterans Day, and Independence Day.

Residents receive housekeeping services, and are provided with laundry services at minimal cost.

The home does not have restrictive visiting hours so as to allow family members 24-hour access to loved ones in residence. The library is also equipped with internet/Skype access so family members and friends who cannot easily travel to the home can stay in touch.

In order to be eligible for this benefit, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Resident of Delaware at least three years prior to application
- Meets state and federal guidelines for skilled nursing home level of care
- Honorably discharged from active service that occurred either in peacetime or wartime; or
- National Guard service member who is either:
  - Eligible for retirement pay at age 60; or
  - Served on active duty at least 180 consecutive or non-consecutive days; or
- Reservist who is either;
  - Eligible for retirement pay at age 60; or
  - Served on active duty at least 180 consecutive or non-consecutive days.

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## **Veteran Financial Benefits**

### **Pension Benefits for Paraplegic Veterans**

Paraplegic veterans may be eligible for a pension in the amount of \$3,000 per year from the State of Delaware. Pensions are paid throughout the year in equal monthly installments.

In order to be eligible for this benefit, applicants must provide certification from the VA of being paraplegic and totally disabled due to military service either during wartime or an UN-supported period of conflict with another nation. Documentation must be provided to the Delaware Pension Office.

### **Military Retirement Pay Tax Exemptions**

Veterans may be eligible for **tax exemptions on military retirement pay**. Veterans who are under 60 years of age may exclude up to \$2,000 of military retirement pay from state taxes. Veterans who are 60 years of age or older may exclude up to \$12,500 from state taxes.

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## **Additional Veteran Benefits**

### **Registration and Inspection of Motor Vehicles of Disabled Veterans**

Disabled veterans may be eligible for exemption from registration fees.

In order to be eligible for this benefit, the vehicle must be owned by a disabled veteran who is eligible for 'adaptive equipment' benefits, which may include the following:

- Power brakes
- Power steering
- Power seats
- Power window lifts
- Special equipment to assist an eligible individual into and out of the vehicle

This benefit is limited to one vehicle per eligible veteran.

## **Recreational Benefits for Veterans**

### **State Park Admission**

Veterans and Delaware National Guard members may be eligible for a 50% discount on annual fees for vehicle entrance into state parks and recreation areas.

In order to be eligible for this benefit, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Honorably discharged; or
- Honorably serving
- Residing in Delaware
- Owns a vehicle registered in Delaware

Hunting, Trapping and Fishing License: Disabled veterans may be eligible for no-fee hunting, trapping, and fishing licenses. In order to be eligible for this benefit, applicants must provide documentation of 60% or more disability rating by the VA.

## **Document Assistance for Veterans**

Veterans may be eligible to receive copies of service-related documents through the Delaware Commission of Veterans Affairs (DCVA). The DCVA may be able to assist with documents such as:

- Certified copy of Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty (DD 214)
- Duplicate military awards
- Copies of service records
- Copies of service treatment records
- Submission of discharge document upgrades
- Request updates to DD-214's
  - Campaign medal received after discharge



Veterans who have listed Delaware as home of record, or have visited a Delaware Veteran Service Officer, may have a DD 214 on file with the DCVA. If a copy is not on file, a DCVA Veterans Service Officers may assist with requests for a certified copy from the National Archives.

### **Notary Service for Veterans**

The DCVA provides notary service for veterans, dependents and family members free of charge.

### **Delaware Veterans Memorial Cemetery**

Veterans, spouses, or dependents may be eligible for interment at either one of two Delaware Veterans Memorial Cemeteries. The cemeteries are located in Bear and Millsboro.

In order to be eligible for this benefit, the deceased veteran must have been honorably discharged, and must have been a legal Delaware resident under one of the following circumstances:

- At time of entry into active service; or
- At time of death; or
- For minimum period of three years.

In order to be eligible for this benefit, deceased National Guard or Reservist veterans must have either been eligible for retirement pay, or would have been eligible at age 60. Any active duty term of service under Executive Orders, excluding training, would also qualify.

In order to be eligible for this benefit, deceased active duty service members must have served continuously for at least 24 months. However, there are exceptions. For enlisted service members, any active duty term of service on or before September 7, 1980 qualifies. For commissioned officers, any active duty term of service on or before October 16, 1981 qualifies. Finally, any term of service qualifies in the following cases:

- Death while on active duty; or
- Early separation due to hardship; or
- Early separation as a result of disability due to military service.

### **Indigent Veteran Burial**

Indigent veterans may qualify to have the cost of interment covered by the Adjutant General of the Delaware National Guard.

In order to be eligible for this benefit, the deceased veteran must meet the following criteria:

- Honorably discharged
- Served during any wartime
- Resident of Delaware
- Left insufficient means to cover burial costs

**Copy of Death Certificate**

The State Registrar will provide a certified copy of a veteran's death certificate free of charge to next of kin for the purpose of settling the deceased veteran's estate.

## Florida

Find Florida State and local veteran's benefits including education, employment, healthcare, tax breaks/exemptions, recreation and much more below. As one of the states with the most veterans (1.6 million) in the United States, Florida has a wide of array of veteran's benefits.

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### Florida Veteran Education Benefits

Florida state colleges/universities provide college credits to veterans to earn academic college credit "for college-level training and education acquired in the military". Florida state colleges also offer priority registration to any student attending classes using the GI Bill benefit.

#### *Tuition Waivers*

The State of Florida offers a tuition waiver program for veterans attending a Florida state university, Florida College System institution, or career center. This program waives out-of-state fees for qualifying veterans who are Florida residents while enrolled. There is also an out-of-state tuition waiver for those attending Florida colleges but who are not physically residing in the state, but this waiver is for Active Duty military only.

Tuition is waived for qualifying veterans doing undergraduate courses at Florida state universities, community colleges, and career and technical training facilities. **Purple Heart awardees** and those who have received other combat awards are eligible, including but not limited to the following:

- **Medal of Honor**
- Navy Cross/Air Force Cross/Distinguished Service Cross
- Distinguished Service Medal with Combat V
- Silver Star Legion of Merit with Combat V
- Distinguished Flying Cross
- Bronze Star with Combat V

#### *Scholarships for Military Dependents and Spouses*

The State of Florida also provides educational assistance to qualifying dependents and spouses of veterans through the Scholarships for Children and Spouses of Deceased or Disabled Veterans program. Certain qualifying dependents of those listed as **prisoners of war or as missing in action** may also have benefits through this program.

These scholarships are designed to provide financial help with tuition and fees at any eligible public or private school.

### *Florida High School Diploma Program for Veterans*

One non-college education benefit offered by the State of Florida allows qualifying veterans to be awarded a high school diploma regardless of which state high school was attended in, as long as the military member is a current resident of Florida and was honorably discharged.

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### **Florida Veteran Employment Benefits**

Like many other states, Florida offers **hiring preference to veterans**, with special emphasis on those who served during wartime, those who have VA-rated **service connected disabilities**, and qualifying surviving spouses of deceased veterans.

### *Florida Occupational License Fee Waivers for Veterans*

Disabled veterans with wartime service, and who are permanent Florida residents who cannot perform manual labor will be exempt from Occupational license fees up to a specified amount. Surviving spouses of deceased disabled veterans may also qualify for this exemption under certain circumstances.

### *Florida County and Municipal Fee Exemptions for Disabled Veterans*

Veterans who are VA-rated with a 100% disability are exempt from building license and permit fees designed to make a residence “habitable and safe”. Certain restrictions may apply.

### *Florida Business Fee Waivers for Veterans*

Florida waives the initial business licensing fee, application fee, and initial unlicensed business activity fee for qualifying veterans and spouses who submit applications within the first 60 months after an honorable discharge. There is also a fee waiver program for veterans and spouses who seek qualifying health care licensing, agriculture, and consumer service licensure.

### *Certification for Florida Veteran-Owned Businesses*

The Florida Department of Management Services’ Office of Supplier Diversity is responsible for certification of “Florida-based veteran-, woman- and minority-owned small businesses” according to the Florida Department of Veterans Affairs. This office provides services to veteran-owned businesses including information on state contract opportunities, and technical assistance.

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### **Florida Veteran Housing Benefits**

### *Veteran's Assisted Care Homes and Nursing Homes*

Veterans who have lived in Florida for at least one year are eligible to apply for space in the Robert Jenkins, Jr. Veterans Domiciliary Home. This is a 150-bed assisted living home located in Lake City, Florida intended for honorably discharged veterans who are physically capable of feeding and dressing themselves, but who need assisted care.

The state of Florida also has six nursing homes for honorably discharged veterans who have been certified by a doctor as requiring nursing home care:

- Emory L. Bennett State Veterans' Nursing Home in Daytona Beach.
- Baldomero Lopez State Veterans' Nursing Home in Land O' Lakes.
- Alexander "Sandy" Nininger Veterans' Nursing Home in Pembroke Pines.
- Clifford C. Sims State Veterans' Nursing Home in Panama City.
- Douglas T. Jacobson State Veterans' Nursing Home in Port Charlotte.
- Clyde E. Lassen State Veterans' Nursing Home in St. Augustine.
- Ardie R. Copas State Veterans' Nursing Home in Port St. Lucie.

Care offered will vary depending on the facility, but all facilities have fixed number of beds available for Alzheimer's and Dementia patients.

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### **Florida Veteran Financial Benefits**

#### *Tax Breaks for Veterans*

Veterans with VA service-connected disability ratings of 10% or higher are eligible for a basic Florida state property tax exemption of \$5,000. This exemption is not automatic-the veteran is required to file paperwork in their county showing proof of disability and the VA rating that goes with it. This tax exemption may also apply to qualifying surviving spouses who were married to the veteran for five years prior to the service member's death.

#### *Florida Homestead Tax Exemptions for Veterans*

Honorably discharged veterans are also entitled to a State Of Florida "homestead exemption" which offers property tax breaks depending on the nature of service and other factors. At the time of this writing, current and former military members may be eligible to receive an exemption if deployed outside the United States during the previous year "in support of a designated operation" determined by the State of Florida.

The exact amount of the exemption “corresponds to the percent of time during the previous year when the service member was deployed on a designated operation” according to the Florida Department of Revenue.

#### *100% Florida Property Tax Exemption for Totally Disabled Veterans*

Service members who have a VA-rated “total disability” considered permanent may be eligible for a 100% exemption from property taxes on homesteads. Qualifying surviving spouses are also eligible for this exemption.

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### **Additional Florida Veteran Benefits**

#### *Florida Driver License, ID Cards, and License Plates for Veterans*

The State of Florida allows special **veteran designation on driver licenses** and state ID cards. Discharge paperwork such as the **DD Form 214** or its’ Guard/Reserve equivalent is required at application time.

100% Disabled veterans are eligible for no-fee licenses/ID cards. No-fee Florida driver licenses are available to 100% disabled veterans who are “qualified to obtain a driver license” according to the Florida Department of Veterans Affairs.

#### *Florida Military License Plates*

The State of Florida offers military members and veterans “military” designated license plates for a nominal fee. These plates may reflect the driver’s Purple Heart status or other honors. Proof of military service/honorable discharge is required at application time.

#### *Veteran License Plates and Parking Benefits*

Qualifying disabled veterans are eligible for one free “DV” designated license plates for disabled veterans. The applicant must furnish proof of “a service-connected 100-percent disability rating or that the vehicle was acquired through VA financial assistance” according to the Florida VA. Additionally, the State of Florida also provides a free license plates with a wheelchair emblem are “for those veterans permanently confined to a wheelchair and who otherwise qualify for a DV plate”.

Any driver with a “DV” plate who has mobility issues can park in any designated handicapped parking zone, and state law prohibits publicly-run airports from charging parking fees to those with applicable DV license plates.

### *Florida Toll Road Fee Waivers for Disabled Veteran Drivers in Specially Equipped Vehicles*

State law requires toll-road fee waivers for any driver of a specially equipped motor vehicle for the handicapped if the driver's disabilities prevent or complicate the paying of tolls with coins in the toll baskets.

### *Florida Recreational Benefits for Veterans*

Reduced fees, discounts, and fee waivers for veterans in the State of Florida include:

- A 25% discount on annual passes to Florida State Parks.
- Full or partial discount on entrance fees at municipal parks and recreation facilities.
- A "Military Gold Sportsman's License" is offered at a reduced fee to current and retired military members.
- No-fee Florida state hunting and fishing licenses and permits for Florida residents who are VA certified as 100% totally and permanently disabled and for those who carry a disabled veteran ID card.
- No-fee use of state land and state-run agricultural land as part of the Operation Outdoor Freedom project.

### *Florida Legal Benefits for Veterans*

Florida has established a unique "veterans court" that addresses mental health and substance abuse issues for qualifying veterans. Approximately 24 veteran's courts have been established to handle such cases. According to the Florida Department of Veterans Affairs, "Successful completion of Veterans Court has helped decrease the recidivism rates of its participants through the proper diagnosis and treatment of mental health issues".

### *Florida Burial Benefits for Veterans*

The State of Florida itself does not extend additional benefits to veterans for burial, but the presence of a large number of VA cemeteries in Florida makes it easier for veterans and their families to manage pre-need planning for funeral arrangements. According to the Department of Veterans Affairs, Florida does not operate any national cemeteries for veterans, but the following is a list of VA cemeteries in the state:

- Barrancas National Cemetery
- Bay Pines National Cemetery
- Cape Canaveral National Cemetery
- Florida National Cemetery
- Jacksonville National Cemetery
- Sarasota National Cemetery
- South Florida National Cemetery

- [Tallahassee National Cemetery](#)

St. Augustine National Cemetery is included in the Florida list, but is marked as closed.

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### Links to Veterans Services in Florida

- [Florida Department of Veterans Affairs](#)
- [Florida Department Highway Safety & Motor Vehicles](#)
- [Florida County Veterans Service Officer Association](#)

## Georgia

Find Georgia State and local active duty and veterans' benefits including education, employment, healthcare, tax breaks/exemptions, recreation and much more below. The state of Georgia has one of the largest population of veterans with over 700,000 veterans. These benefits are in addition to the benefits provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

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### Veteran Education Benefits

#### *High School Diplomas for Certain War Veterans*

Qualifying veterans who did not get a high school diploma due to military service in World War Two, Korea, or Vietnam are eligible to obtain a high school diploma. The veteran must apply at the high school attended prior to military service.

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### Georgia State Veteran Employment Benefits

#### *Georgia State Veterans Hiring Preference*

Qualifying war veterans are given five-point hiring preference credit when seeking employment with the State of Georgia. Veterans who are VA rated with a service-connected disability rating of 10 percent or more qualify for ten points.

#### *State of Georgia Veterans Business Certificate of Exemption*

Qualifying Georgia state veterans are eligible for an exemption "from any occupation tax, administrative fee, or regulatory fee imposed by local governments for peddling, conducting a business, or practicing a profession or semi-profession".



This exemption requires the veteran to meet all of the following:

- Discharged under honorable conditions
- Service-connected disability rating of 10 percent (wartime veterans) or 25 percent (peacetime veterans)
- Income is not liable for state income taxes

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## **Veteran Housing Benefits**

### *Georgia Veterans Assisted Care Homes and Nursing Homes*

The Georgia Department of Veterans Service (GDVS) runs two skilled nursing care homes for eligible war veterans in Augusta and Milledgeville. Qualifying criteria for care in these homes includes one the following:

- Military discharged not characterized as Dishonorable
- Resided in Georgia two years immediately preceding the date of application
- Resided in Georgia five or more of the past 15 years
- The veteran must have served on active duty in the U.S. armed forces during wartime/times of conflict
- Must be approved as eligible for skilled nursing care by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Qualifying veterans must also be free of “contagious infectious disease” or behavioral/psychiatric problems. The veteran must not need line-operated mechanical life support.

According to the GDVS official site, a nominal daily fee is charged and VA Aid & Attendance benefits can be used to help offset the daily fee. Veterans with qualifying service-connected disability ratings of 70 percent or higher, or veterans whose admission is due to a service-connected condition will have their daily fees paid by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

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## **Veteran Financial Benefits**

### *Extension of Georgia State Tax Filing Deadlines for Combat Deployment*

Combat deployed military personnel receive an extension for filing state taxes-the military member has an additional 180 days after the end of a combat deployment.

### *Disabled Veteran Homestead Tax Exemption*

This exemption is for the greater of \$32,500 or the maximum amount allowable under 38 U.S.C. 2101. The maximum amount is \$60,000 plus an index factor. Open to honorably discharged Georgia veterans “who are considered disabled according to any of several criteria” according to the Georgia Department of Veterans Service official site.

Qualifying for this benefit requires home ownership and occupancy of the home as the disabled veteran’s primary residence. The homestead tax exemption also applies to “surviving unremarried spouses and minor children as long as they remain in the homestead or a subsequent homestead in the same county”.

Honorably discharged Georgia veterans considered disabled under the following criteria are eligible to apply for the exemption:

- VA-rated 100 percent totally disabled
- VA-rated less than 100 percent disabled but paid at the 100 percent rate due to unemployability
- Entitled to receive a statutory award from VA for:
  - Loss or permanent loss of use of one or both feet
  - Loss or permanent loss of use of one or both hands
  - Loss of sight in one or both eyes
  - Permanent impairment of both eyes
- Surviving, unremarried spouses of qualified deceased veterans
- Surviving minor children of qualified deceased veterans

#### *Abatement of Income Taxes for Combat Deaths*

Georgia state veterans benefits include this provision for military members who die as a result of military service in a combat zone. These circumstances exempt the veteran’s estate from “all Georgia income taxes for the taxable year of death”. These taxes also won’t apply “for any prior taxable year ending on or after the first day served in the combat zone”.

#### *“Ad Valorem” Tax on Motor Vehicles*

This Georgia state veterans’ exemption is for any veteran VA-certified as 100% permanently service-connected disabled. It’s also open to Purple Heart recipients, Medal of Honor awardees, and also to veterans who are receiving or who are entitled to receive statutory awards from VA for the following:

- Loss or permanent loss of use of one or both feet;
- Loss or permanent loss of use of one or both hands;
- Loss of sight in one or both eyes;
- Permanent impairment of vision in both eyes to a prescribed degree.

This Georgia military state vehicle tax exemption applies to one vehicle the veteran owns with a disabled veteran license plate attached to the vehicle. It can be used for either the annual property tax or the title tax where applicable.

#### *Georgia State Sales Tax Exemption for Vehicle Purchase or Modification*

Qualifying disabled veterans with VA grants for buying and modifying a vehicle to be more accessible are exempt from paying state sales tax on the vehicle.

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### **Additional Veteran Benefits**

#### *Free Georgia Veteran Drivers' Licenses*

Georgia State drivers' licenses are available free to honorably discharged veterans with Georgia residency and service "during a recognized period of war or conflict". Georgia veterans qualify for these free licenses if they entered service from Georgia as evidenced on DD Form 214 military discharge paperwork, and are a current resident of Georgia.

Free veterans' licenses are also available to vets who have been legal residents of the state for the last two consecutive years. Current and former members of the Reserve or National Guard are also eligible depending on the length of service and state residency.

#### *Free Georgia Drivers Licenses for Qualifying Military Spouses*

Spouses of disabled veterans with qualifying disabilities (that prevent the veteran from operating a vehicle) may be eligible for a free "honorary driver's license". Residence and qualifying service terms are identical to those for the free veteran's driver's license mentioned above.

Unremarried surviving spouses of qualifying veterans may also be eligible for a free honorary driver's license. Qualifying spouses must bring supporting documentation to a Georgia Department of Veterans Services (GDVS) field office to obtain a Certificate of Eligibility (DS-516), which is presented at the Georgia Department of Driver Services.

#### *Free Georgia State Veteran ID Cards*

Qualifying veterans who meet eligibility and residency requirements for a veteran's driver's license are also eligible for a Georgia State veterans' ID card. Proof of qualifying service and residency must be taken to a GDVS Veterans Field Service Office to obtain a Certificate of Eligibility (DS-516) which must be presented at the Georgia Department of Driver Services at application time.

### *Honorary Military Spouse Georgia State ID card*

Qualifying spouses and surviving unremarried spouses of disabled veterans (who meet the eligibility and residency requirements for an honorary veteran's driver's license) are also eligible for a free ID Georgia State identification card.

### *Free Georgia State Veteran License Plates*

There are several options for free Georgia State veteran license plates. They include a "generic" veteran designation, a retired veteran option, plus plates for disabled vets, women veterans, military medal award plates and many more.

These are, in general, offered to veterans with honorable discharges and surviving unremarried spouses of qualifying deceased service members. Most of these plates feature no registration fee, annual fee, or other payments for these veteran plates, and vets are able to apply for a second plate for a nominal fee.

### *Georgia State Veteran Burial Benefits*

Georgia Veterans Memorial Cemeteries (Glennville and Milledgeville) are available for qualified veterans and in some cases, their dependents. Those who are eligible include:

- Veterans with any military discharge other than dishonorable.
- Members of the Reserves or National Guard eligible to draw retirement pay at the time of death.
- Military members killed in the line of duty while on active duty or active duty for training.
- Those who "otherwise died on active duty."

Spouses, unmarried dependents under the age of 21, and eligible life-long dependents of any qualifying service member meeting the criteria above are also eligible. The veteran's DD Form 214 or other proof of service is required, and a marriage certificate is required for a spouse to be buried with the veteran.

### *Georgia State Park Entrance Fee Reduction for Qualifying Vets*

Georgia veterans with honorable discharges and who have VA rated service-connected disabilities are offered a 25 percent reduction of the entrance fee to state parks, historical sites, and recreational areas.

This benefit must be applied for at a Georgia Department of Veterans Services field office using military discharge paperwork.

### *Free Georgia State Full Privilege Sportsman Licenses for Returning Veterans*

Qualifying returning veterans who have been discharged from active duty, Georgia reservists, and Georgia National Guard members ordered to federal duty for a period of 90 days or longer are eligible for a “free one-year honorary full privilege sportsman’s license” which includes all state paid recreational hunting and fishing privileges.

#### *Free Georgia State Hunting And Fishing Licenses For Permanently and Totally Disabled Vets*

Free Georgia State hunting and fishing license are available for vets with VA-rated total/permanent disabilities that prevent gainful employment.

#### *Free Georgia State Lifetime Fishing Licenses for Qualifying Blind Veterans*

Veterans who are Georgia residents and totally blind are eligible for a free lifetime fishing license from the state.

#### *Free Georgia State Hunting/Fishing Licenses for Vets 65 or Older*

Qualifying Georgia residents who are eligible for free lifetime senior hunting and fishing licenses.

#### *Georgia Motor Fuel Service for Disabled Veterans*

Georgia gas stations offering both self-serve and full-service options will (by request), provide full-service options at the self-service price to a disabled veteran. This is available when:

-A disabled veteran is driving a vehicle displaying Disabled Veteran license plates.

#### And

-The disabled veteran is not accompanied by another person (16 years old or older and not also disabled) who is capable of pumping gas.

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#### **Links to Georgia Veterans Services**

- [Georgia Department of Veterans Service \(GDVS\)](#)
- [GDVS Veterans Field Service Offices](#)

## Hawaii

Find Hawaii state and local veterans benefits including education, employment, healthcare, tax breaks/exemptions, recreation and much more below. According to the Department of Veterans Affairs, approximately 112,300 veterans are living in the Aloha State. Find Hawaii state and local veterans benefits including education, employment, healthcare, tax breaks/exemptions, recreation and much more below.

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### **Hawaii Veteran Education Benefits**

#### **Hawaii Residency for Tuition Purposes**

The State of Hawaii offers residency to military service members stationed in Hawaii, non-resident veterans, and stationed military dependents; this allows them to qualify to attend colleges in Hawaii at resident tuition rates.

Service members may qualify for resident tuition if they meet one of the following requirements:

- S. troops stationed in Hawaii on active duty;
- Hawaii National Guard and Hawaii-based Reserve members.

Nonresident veterans may qualify for resident tuition if they meet one of the following requirements:

- **Post 9/11 GI Bill** recipients who live in Hawaii and have enrolled within three years of discharge from a period of active duty service of 90 days or more;
- **Montgomery GI Bill** Active Duty educational benefit recipients who live in Hawaii and have enrolled at the University within three years of discharge from a period of active duty service of 90 days or more.

Nonresident students may qualify for resident tuition if they are authorized dependents stationed in Hawaii during the service member's active duty assignment. Students may also qualify if utilizing either transferred Montgomery GI Bill Active Duty educational benefits, or transferred Post 9/11 GI Bill educational benefits. Additionally, they must meet the following requirements:

- The transferor of the GI Bill Active Duty educational benefits is serving on active duty;
- GI Bill educational benefits transferees enrolled within three years of the transferor's discharge from a period of active duty service of 90 days or more;
- Post 9/11 GI Bill educational benefits transferees enrolled at the University within three years of the transferor's discharge from a period of active duty service of 90 days or more.

Post 9/11 GI Bill educational benefits under the Marine Gunnery Sergeant John David Fry Scholarship transferees who live in Hawaii also qualify for this program.

## **Hawaii National Guard State Tuition Assistance Program, (STAP)**

The Hawaii Army National Guard STAP offers tuition waivers for eligible service members who have completed both Basic Combat Training, and Advanced Individual Training. The waiver covers 100% of community college tuition, and 50% of **four-year university** tuition.

In order to be eligible for STAP, the following requirements apply;

- Enrollment in an undergraduate degree program;
- Enrollment in courses specific to the degree program;
- A “satisfactory performer” in a Hawaii National Guard unit

STAP may be used in conjunction with G.I. Bill and Federal Tuition Assistance benefits.

## **Hawaii Kupono Diploma Program for Wartime Veterans**

The Hawaii State Department of Education Kupono Diploma Program grants honorary high school diplomas to qualifying veterans of World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War.

Veterans applying for this program must meet the following criteria;

- Enrollment in a State of Hawaii public high school prior to enlistment
- Proof of honorable discharge
- Military service during a qualifying period (World War II, the Korean War, or Vietnam)
- Qualifying veterans who have successfully completed a General Education Diploma (GED) program may qualify for an honorary high school diploma
- Diplomas be awarded posthumously, or to family members on the veteran’s behalf

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## **Hawaii Veteran Employment Benefits**

### **Hawaii State Veterans Preference for Public Employment**

The State of Hawaii Department of Human Resources Development manages the **Veterans Preference Program** for public employment. Preference points are added to examination scores of applications for open competitive recruitments only.

A five-point veteran’s preference may be awarded to honorably separated veterans who served on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces during the following periods:

- December 7, 1941 to July 1, 1955

- For more than 180 consecutive days from Jan. 31, 1955 through Oct. 14, 1976 (Initial active duty for training under Reserve or National Guard programs are exempt)
- During a campaign or expedition for which a campaign badge or service medal was authorized

To qualify for preference, copy of the DD-214 showing dates of honorable service must be submitted with the state employment application.

A 10-point veteran's preference may be awarded to:

- Honorably discharged veterans with service-connected disabilities
- Purple Heart recipients
- Spouses of honorably separated veterans with service-related disabilities that disqualifies the veteran from State positions in their usual occupation
- An unremarried, surviving spouse of a service member who died on active duty
- An unremarried surviving spouse of an honorably separated veteran who served during the qualifying periods cited above

To receive a 10-point veterans preference, an official statement from the Veterans Administration or the service member's branch of service within the past 12 months confirming eligibility (based on the above) to receive the preference must be submitted with the state employment application.

Spouses or surviving spouses must also submit evidence of marriage to the eligible veteran, as well as certification of the veteran's death where applicable.

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### **Hawaii Veteran Housing Benefits**

#### **Yukio Okutsu State Veterans Home**

Yukio Okutsu State Veterans Home in Hilo is named for Yukio Okutsu, recipient of the Congressional Medal of Honor for service in World War Two. The home is Hawaii's only post-acute care and rehabilitation service provider specifically for veterans. The home offers dedicated short-term rehabilitation services, residential long-term placement, and an active Adult Day Health Care Program.

Applicants must meet the following criteria:

- 55 years or older
- Honorably discharged
- Rated as eligible by the Department of Veteran Affairs
- Requires skilled or long-term nursing home care, as certified by a physician in compliance with VA, MedQuest, or Medicare standards
- Hawaii residency either prior to military service, or for one year prior to application
- Ability to pay the resident's portion of cost of care



Applicants must also meet all other clinical criteria for admission and must submit to a background check. No applicant on the Sex Offender Registry or in a fugitive felon status will be considered for admission.

### **Hawaii Special Housing Assistance for Disabled Veterans**

Qualified 100% disabled veterans may receive up to \$5,000 from the State of Hawaii for the purpose of purchasing or remodeling a home to improve handicapped accessibility. Award of payments are based on the availability of state funds and approval from Veteran Affairs. Local Office of Veteran Services can provide specific information regarding this program.

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### **Hawaii Veteran Financial Benefits**

#### **Hawaii State Vehicle Tax Exemption**

The State of Hawaii exempts resident disabled veterans from payment of annual vehicle registration fees for one vehicle per year. This exemption applies to registrations issued or renewed after January 1, 2016, and to vehicles subsidized by the Department of Veterans Affairs. This exemption does not apply to vehicles used for commercial purposes.

#### **Property Tax Exemption for Totally Disabled Veterans**

An exemption applies to real property owned and occupied as a home by a totally disabled veteran or their surviving spouse, when the following criteria are met:

- Ownership of the property is recorded at the Bureau of Conveyances on or before June 30 for the first half payment or December 31 for the second half payment.
- All leases must be for a term of 10 years or more and recorded at the Bureau of Conveyances in order for the lessee to qualify for the disability exemption.
- In the case of a lease of Hawaiian homestead land, either lessee and/or spouse shall be entitled to the disability exemption. Proof of marriage must be submitted for the non-Hawaiian spouse claiming the disability.
- The disability shall be certified by a physician.

The applicant must file a claim for the disability exemption before June 30 for the first half payment or December 31 for the second half payment. Once approved, this exemption is valid as long as the recipient veteran remains totally disabled or the surviving spouse remains unmarried. Additionally, recipients do not have to re-apply for the exemption as long as all previously-mentioned requirements continue to be met.

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## **Additional Hawaii Veteran Benefits**

### **Veteran Designation for Hawaii Driver's Licenses, State IDs, and Instruction Permits**

Veterans that have also received a discharge other than dishonorable are eligible for a veteran designation on a Hawaii driver's license, state ID, or instruction permit.

Applicants must provide proof of qualification for the designation. Acceptable documents include the following:

- Discharge Certificate reflecting characterization of discharge
- Verification letter issued by the Veterans Administration
- Verification letter issued by the Office of Veteran Services
- DD Form 214
- NGB Form 22

Any applicant whose driver's license, permit, or state ID is not within the renewal period may add the veteran designation. In this case, the applicant must apply for a duplicate and also present supporting documents as listed above. Regular duplicate fees will apply.

### **Veteran License Plates**

The state of Hawaii issues special license plates for military personnel and veterans:

- Combat veterans
- Former prisoners of war
- Purple Heart recipients
- Persian Gulf veterans
- Service veterans
- Vietnam veterans
- World War II veterans

Supporting documentation, such as discharge paperwork and/or VA award letters, may be required. Additionally, military plate availability, fees, and application processes will vary from county to county.

### **Hawaii Hunting Licenses for Non-resident Service Members and Dependents**

When obtaining hunting licenses, active duty military personnel and their dependents are considered to be residents of Hawaii. Non-resident licenses cost \$95.00, whereas resident hunting licenses cost \$10.00. A hunting license may be obtained at:

- <http://www.ehawaii.gov/DLNR/hunting/>

- Any Division of Forestry and Wildlife Office (DOFAW)
- Any registered hunting license vendor

### **Hawaii State Veterans Cemeteries**

Hawaii State Veterans Cemeteries (HSVC) are located on Oahu, Hawaii, Kauai, Maui, Molokai, and Lanai. The cemeteries are reserved for the interment of veterans, their spouses, and minor children. Unmarried adult children with physical or mental disabilities who require assistance and support for living and pass before reaching the age of 21 years also are eligible for burial.

Eligibility for burial in one of the Hawaii State Veterans Cemeteries requires a copy of the veteran's official military discharge document with the character of discharge, i.e., DD Form 214, VA Statement of Service, etc.

Family of the deceased are responsible for mortuary services and other costs. There is a standard plot or interment allowance fee of \$700 payable to State of Hawaii, Department of Defense. While the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) will pay the plot or interment allowance fee for wartime and peacetime veterans, families are responsible to pay the plot allowance fee for active duty service members and dependents.

In cases where both spouses are veterans, two grave sites and two headstones may be provided at the request of the family. The Hawaii National Guard may provide funeral honors on request.

## Idaho

Find Idaho State and local veteran's benefits including education, employment, healthcare, tax breaks/exemptions, recreation and much more below. "The Gem State" population includes more than 115,000 veterans, according to the Housing Assistance Council.

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### Idaho State Veteran Employment Benefits

#### **Idaho State Hiring Preference for Veterans**

Idaho state law gives qualifying veterans state hiring preference points for veterans who have served on active duty (other than for training purposes) and are either still serving or have received an Honorable discharge. Qualifying vets include those with "a present service connected disability of 10% or more" and those who have been awarded the Purple Heart.

Idaho state hiring preference points are used for initial job appointments only; preference points do not factor into promotions. Five preference points are offered to veterans and surviving spouses of preference-eligible vets. Disabled veterans with a **VA disability rating** of 10% or higher are awarded 10 points.

Surviving spouses of preference-eligible disabled veterans are also offered 10 points. Furthermore, "Spouses of disabled Veterans may claim preference if the Veteran is unable to qualify for any public employment because of a service-connected disability" according to the Idaho Division of Veterans Services.

#### **Occupational License Fee Waivers for Veterans**

Any member of the military holding an Idaho state occupational or professional license, "shall be exempt from the payment of any professional or occupational license or renewal fee required by any law of this state for the period during which such persons shall be engaged in the military services of the United States" according to the Idaho Division of Veterans Services.

There is an additional benefit; for six months after leaving military service, professional licenses do not need to be renewed, cannot be cancelled, or be revoked. There may be expedited services available to qualifying military spouses for license applications depending on demand and other factors.

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### Idaho Veteran Housing Benefits

#### **Veterans Assisted Care Homes and Nursing Homes**

The State of Idaho operates three skilled care veterans' homes in Boise, Pocatello, and Lewiston. All three of these facilities are Medicare and Medicaid certified. Honorably discharged Veterans and their spouses with a need for skilled care are eligible for admission to the nursing homes, but spouses are not eligible for residential care at the Boise location. Wartime vets have priority placement status, all applicants must be Idaho state residents, and must be eligible for a VA pension and **Aid and Attendance benefits** from the VA.

Spouses must furnish proof of legal marriage. Furthermore, according to the official site, at the time of this writing all applicants must apply for Medicaid benefits, "or must pay the established maximum monthly nursing care charge" if not eligible.

Admission to these skilled care facilities is permitted for veterans with any military discharge except those characterized as Dishonorable.

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### Idaho Veteran Financial Benefits

#### **Idaho State Financial Assistance for Wartime Veterans**

The State of Idaho offers a grant up to one thousand dollars at the time of this writing for wartime veterans who have an "extreme emergency". To qualify, veterans must have entered military service in Idaho or live in the state for five years or more. The request for this grant must be received within 90 days of the emergency. Learn more by calling the Idaho Office of Veterans Advocacy at 208-780-1380.

#### **Idaho State Tax Breaks for Veterans**

Idaho offers a variety of tax breaks for qualifying veterans. Some of these are simply associated with military service, others are tied to a veteran's disability status, or may be income-based.

All retirement income, according to the Idaho Division of Veteran Services, is taxable until age 65 with the exception of disability income. Contact a local tax assessor's office to learn more about specific property tax breaks for veterans in the current tax year.

#### **Idaho Veteran Circuit Breaker Property Tax Reduction**

Veterans with a 10% VA-rated service connected disability or higher, and those getting VA pension benefits may qualify for the "Circuit Breaker" property tax benefit. Residency and income requirements apply. To qualify the property owner must have:

- Owned and lived in a home or mobile home as the primary residence. Those residing in nursing homes may still qualify depending on circumstances;

- Earned income of \$30,450 or less;
- Fall into one of several categories including but not limited to being 65 or older, being a surviving spouse, former prisoner of war, having a 10% or more service-connected disability, or receiving a pension from Veterans Affairs.

### **Idaho State Disabled Veterans Property Tax Reduction**

Veterans with a **VA-rated 100% service-connected disability** may apply to reduce their property taxes by more than one thousand dollars at the time of this writing. To qualify for Veterans Property Tax Reduction in 2019, the veteran must:

- Be VA-rated with a 100% service-connected disability;
- Live in an Idaho residence full time;
- The property must have a current homeowner's exemption;
- Motor homes are included for this veteran tax benefit;
- Those who currently reside in a nursing home may still qualify.

### **State Income Tax Exemption for Active Duty Military Stationed Out Of State**

When currently serving military members who are Idaho residents are stationed outside the state, they are declared exempt from Idaho state income tax. Federal tax laws will still apply.

### **State Income Tax Retired Military Pay Tax Deduction**

Veterans and unremarried surviving spouses aged 65 or older (or disabled and age 62 or older) who receive **military retirement benefits** are permitted to deduct those benefits at state tax time. The deductible must be reduced "by retirement benefits paid under the Federal Social Security Act or the Tier 1 Federal Railroad Retirement Act" according to the State of Idaho.

### **Idaho State Grocery Tax Credit for Veterans**

Qualifying veterans who are 65 or older, and vets who are disabled at least 62 years old may claim a "grocery tax credit" allowing a certain dollar amount per exemption claimed. This is permitted regardless of whether the veteran is required to file an income tax return.

Certain restrictions may apply for this benefit under Idaho state tax law. State tax code is subject to change from year to year; it's best to inquire at a local tax office get advice from an Idaho state tax professional about claiming such benefits each year.

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### **Additional Idaho State Veteran Benefits**

## **Gold Star License Plates**

The Idaho Transportation Department offers a free Gold Star license plate to spouses, parents and other immediate family of military members killed in combat while on active military service. Proof of Gold Star status is required-applicants may submit a DD Form 214 or other documentation such as a VA letter acknowledging Gold Star status.

## **Veteran Status on Idaho State ID and Driver's Licenses**

Honorably discharged veterans who provide supporting documentation (discharge paperwork, VA award letters, etc.) can have a free "veteran" designation added to their driver's license or state ID.

This fee-free service is only available at renewal time or when a brand new ID or license is issued. To replace an existing card that is not up for renewal, a \$15 fee applies. The "veteran" designation is permanent and will be automatically added on subsequent renewal.

## **Recreational Benefits for Veterans**

The State of Idaho offers veterans who are Idaho residents with VA-rated 100% service related disabilities free campsites and day passes to state parks. Supporting documentation is required at application time including discharge paperwork, VA award letters, etc.

Other benefits for disabled resident veterans include reduced hunting fees and other related perks; many of the discounts require a minimum VA disability rating of 40% or higher. Non-resident disabled veterans may also apply for certain hunting discounts. All applicable discounts require VA award letters sent prior to the hunting application date.

## **Idaho Burial Benefits for Veterans**

The State of Idaho operates the Idaho State Veterans Cemetery located in Boise. Eligibility for burial at this facility includes any military discharge other than Dishonorable, plus qualifying spouses, dependent-age children, and parents of an eligible service member. Pre-need authorization is available and encouraged.

The following options are made available to those seeking interment service, according to the official site:

- A columbarium niche, cremation inurnment (includes an inscribed granite cover);
- An in-ground, garden niche, cremation inurnment that includes an inscribed granite marker;
- Full casket, in-ground interment (includes an inscribed granite marker);
- Military Funeral Honors including Taps, folding of the flag, and presentation;

- An Honor Guard detail.



## Illinois

Find Illinois State and local veteran's benefits including education, employment, healthcare, tax breaks/exemptions, recreation and much more below. These benefits are in addition to the benefits provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs. Illinois State has 650,000 veterans.

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### Illinois State Veteran Education Benefits

#### *Illinois Veterans' Grant*

The Illinois Veterans' Grant (IVG) program pays (up to 120 academic "units) for qualified veterans' tuition and mandatory fees at all Illinois state colleges, universities and community colleges. Requirements to qualify include, but may not be limited to, the following:

- Honorable discharge.
- Illinois resident six months prior to entering military service.
- One full year of active duty service or active overseas duty in a time of hostilities in that country regardless of length of service;
- Return to Illinois within six months of an Honorable discharge.

#### *Illinois National Guard Grant*

Available to any qualifying enlisted National Guard member having served at least one year of service. Early-career officers (Lieutenants and Captains) may also qualify. This grant provides the student with eight semesters or 12 quarters of full-time/part-time undergrad coursework at any state-supported college.

#### *Children of Veterans Tuition Waiver*

The State of Illinois offers one honorary scholarship per Illinois County per year, to be used at the University of Illinois. This Illinois state veteran education benefit is for children of Veterans of WWI, WWII, Korea and Vietnam War periods, the Gulf War and the "War on Terror". This grant also features a preference to the dependent children of deceased or disabled vets.

#### *Illinois State Bright Start Fallen Heroes Scholarship*

The State Of Illinois offers \$2,500 to be deposited in a Bright Start account, intended for the children of service members killed while serving in Operation Iraqi Freedom or Enduring Freedom. This scholarship is available on request by the next-of-kin of the service member.

#### *Illinois State Educational Aid for Children 10-18 Years Old*

This Illinois state assistance is offered via the Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs to dependent children between the ages of 10 and 18 of veterans who died or became **VA-rated 100% disabled** as a result of military service.

#### *Illinois MIA/POW Scholarship*

Another education program offered by the Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs. This scholarship is intended for **military spouses** and dependent children of eligible veterans or currently serving military members. This scholarship pays for four years of full-time college enrollment at any state-supported campus.

#### *Illinois State Troops to Teachers*

The Illinois Troops to Teachers program is for honorably discharged veterans with a minimum of six years of service, intended to help a career change from military service to public school teaching. The program includes the following resources:

- Academic advising
- Career advising
- Information resources for earning state teacher certification
- Career assistance
- Financial aid up to \$5,000 to eligible veterans enrolled in a certification program, \$10,000 bonuses for teachers agreeing to a three-year commitment in any high-needs Illinois school

#### *Illinois State Veteran High School Diploma Program*

Illinois, like many other states, offers high school diplomas for qualifying veterans of WWII, Korea, and Vietnam. These Illinois vets are eligible for a high school diploma they had their education interrupted to serve in the Armed Forces.

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### **Illinois State Veteran Employment Benefits**

#### *Illinois State Employment Preference for Veterans*

The State of Illinois features a hiring preference offered to honorably discharged Veterans applying for state work with Central Management Services. This preference is also available to Guard/Reserve members who have served four years even if they were never called to active duty. This hiring preference does not have a specific Illinois residency requirement, but vets who are Illinois residents will be given first consideration before out-of-state veterans.

### *Illinois State Jobs for Vets Program*

The Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) offers training and job placement assistance for Illinois vets. IDES and partner agencies provide career assistance and transition help for vets trying to re-enter the private sector.

### *Illinois State Reemployment Rights for National Guard Service Members*

Illinois National Guard members called to active duty have employment protections under state law. These rights may be dependent on the veteran's actions before, during, and after active duty; the veteran must give proper notice to the employer, report to work in a timely manner once the active service has ended, and other important details. The [book of rules for these rights](#) and many veteran-specific rights is published by the Illinois Attorney General, is more than 150 pages long!

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## **Illinois State Veteran Medical Benefits**

### *Illinois State Veterans Care Program*

Veterans Care offers comprehensive health care coverage for uninsured Illinois Veterans including help in a variety of areas. These include clinic visits, hospital inpatient and outpatient care, lab tests, x-rays, prescription drugs, vision care, limited dental, physical, and occupational and speech therapy, mental health and substance abuse services and emergency medical transportation according to the Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs official site.

This is a need-based program and applicants must meet an income threshold to be approved. Qualified applicants are responsible for a monthly premium of under \$100 for this program.

### *Illinois Warrior Assistance Program*

The State of Illinois has a 24-hour, toll-free helpline (1-866-554-IWAP or 4927) operated by healthcare professionals. The Illinois Warrior Assistance Program is for veterans who are dealing with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) or Traumatic Brain Injury symptoms. Through this program all veterans have the option to go through TBI/PTSD screening.

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## **Illinois State Veteran Housing Benefits**

### *Illinois GI Home Credit Program*

Qualifying Illinois veterans and currently serving military who are also first time home buyers may be eligible for an Illinois State Mortgage Credit Certificate or MCC. This credit reduces the amount of the borrower's federal income tax. Information on this credit is available via your local Illinois County Assessor's office.

#### *Illinois State Veterans Specially Adapted Housing Tax Exemption*

This is a State of Illinois tax exemption on the "assessed value of real property for which federal funds have been used for the purchase or construction of specially adapted housing for as long as the Veteran, or the spouse, or unmarried surviving spouse resides on the property".

#### *Illinois State Veterans Tax Exemption for Mobile Homes*

This state benefit offers exemption from the Mobile Home Local Services Tax Act. The benefit applies to Illinois veterans, spouses and surviving unmarried spouses and is intended for primary residences only. Your nearest County Tax Assessor office has more information on how to apply.

#### *Illinois Veterans' Homes*

Qualifying Illinois vets who have "one day or more of service during any wartime period recognized by the US Department of Veterans Affairs" may apply. Use of an Illinois Veterans' home requires that the vet must have entered military service from the State of Illinois, or have been a resident for at least a year before applying. Background checks are required. Available beds, type of care, and the availability of care for Alzheimer's and dementia sufferers may vary depending on the facility.

There are five active locations:

- The Veterans' Home at Quincy
- The Veterans' Home at LaSalle
- The Veterans' Home at Anna
- The Veterans' Home at Manteno
- The Prince Homeless/Disabled Veterans' Home

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### **Illinois State Veteran Financial Benefits**

#### *Illinois State Veterans Tax Credit*

The State of Illinois offers businesses that hire veterans a \$1,200 tax credit.

#### *Illinois State Returning Veterans' Homestead Exemption*

Qualifying vets may apply to receive a one-time \$5,000 reduction to their home's Equalized Assessed Value. This is another benefit available via the local County Assessor's office.

#### *Illinois State Disabled Veterans' Homestead Exemption*

Veterans with a qualifying, VA-rated service-connected disability of at least 50 percent, but less than 75 percent, may qualify for a \$2,500 homestead tax exemption. For qualifying veterans at least 75 percent VA-rated service connected disabled may qualify for a \$5,000 exemption. This benefit is available via County Assessor's Office.

#### *State Of Illinois Military Service Bonuses*

The State of Illinois offers a one-time bonus for qualifying veterans who served during wartime. Qualifying criteria includes being a recipient of certain medals or awards, and the benefit must be applied for by veterans or surviving family members at the nearest "service office" of the Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs.

#### *Bonus Application & Armed Forces Certificate*

to apply for any of the bonuses listed here must submit paperwork including:

- [Bonus Application](#) (PDF, 43 KB)
- [Armed Forces Certificate](#) (PDF, 16 KB)

*World War II Bonus Payment:* \$10 per month for domestic service, \$15 per month for foreign service for residents of Illinois who were honorably discharged, and served at least 60 days on active duty between September 16, 1940 and September 3, 1945. Survivors are entitled to a benefit of \$1,000, "if the veteran's death was service-connected and as a result of hostile action with enemy forces" according to the Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs.

*Korean War Bonus Payment:* \$100 bonus for Illinois residents who have honorable discharges, a Korean Service Medal, and served in Korea between June 27, 1950 – July 27, 1953. The residency requirement includes living in-state for 12 months immediately prior to entering service.

*Vietnam War Bonus Payment:* \$100 bonus for honorably discharged veterans who were residents of Illinois for 12 months immediately prior to entering service, were awarded the Vietnam Service Medal or Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal for Vietnam, and received an Honorable Discharge for service during one of the following periods:

- Vietnam: January 1, 1961 – March 28, 1973
- Vietnam Frequent Wind: April 29, 30, 1975

Survivors may be entitled to a benefit of \$1,000, if the veteran's death was "classified as service-connected by the US Department of Veterans' Affairs".

*Persian Gulf War Bonus Payment:* \$100 bonus for honorably discharged Illinois veterans who served between August 2, 1990 – November 30, 1995. Recipients of this bonus must have been Illinois residents for 12 months immediately prior to entering service, received the Southwest Asia Service Medal, and received an Honorable Discharge. Service members currently on active duty who served in the Persian Gulf may apply prior to discharge.

*Global War on Terrorism Bonus Payment:* \$100 bonus for honorably discharged or still-serving service members with military service on or after September 11, 2001. Applicants must have been legal residents of Illinois for 12 months immediately prior to entering service.

This bonus requires 30 consecutive or 60 nonconsecutive days of foreign or sea service and the applicant must have one of the following:

- Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal
- Global War on Terrorism Service Medal
- Iraq Campaign Medal
- Afghanistan Campaign Medal

Those on active duty who served in the Global War on Terrorism may apply prior to discharge.

*POW Compensation:* A \$50 bonus for each month held captive. This is intended for applicants on active duty (or employed by the United States Government) on, or after, January 1, 1961, "who were residents of Illinois 12 months prior to entry, and who were taken and held prisoner by hostile forces in Southeast Asia".

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## **Additional Illinois State Veteran Benefits**

### *Chicago Transit Authority Military Service Pass*

A free Chicago Transit Authority pass for active duty, members of the Reserves and National Guard, and qualifying veterans who are 10 percent or more VA-rated service-connected disabled. These passes work only on the CTA and are not available for Metra rail service. Applications are accepted in person the first Tuesday of every month at 100 W. Randolph, Suite 5-507 and on the fourth Tuesday of every month via the Jesse Brown VA Medical Center.

### *Illinois State Veterans' Grave Registration*

The Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs Roll of Honor is a database of "all known Veterans buried in the State of Illinois" according to the Illinois State Department of Veterans Affairs. This can be helpful not only for locating the gravesite of a deceased veteran, but also for genealogical research, family histories, etc.

#### *Illinois State Indigent Veterans Burial Benefit*

A Veterans Assistance Commission or an "individual county of Illinois" may provide burial assistance for qualifying, honorably discharged indigent veteran. This benefit, the maximum of which is \$900, is also offered to the mother, father, spouse, or surviving children (minors) who demonstrate a financial need.

#### *Illinois State Headstone Fees Benefit for Veterans*

When the federal government has furnished a headstone or marker for a deceased veteran, the Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs can pay "up to the allowable reimbursement amount for the setting of such marker within Illinois". At the time of this writing that maximum is \$100.

#### *Illinois State Camping Fee Benefits*

Eligible Illinois veterans, former Prisoners of War, and immediate family (as long as they are accompanied by the veteran) pay no camping and admission fees at parks under the control of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. Fishing and Hunting Fee Waivers for Disabled Veterans

Fishing and hunting licenses are not required for disabled veterans with a VA-rated 10 percent or greater service-connected disability, and for those who receive total disability pension benefits. These licenses are offered via the Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs and supporting documentation such as VA disability award letters are required.

#### *Waived Illinois State Museum Fees for Ex-POWs*

Ex-POWs attending any museum that receives state funds pay no admission costs.

#### *Illinois State Disabled Veterans License Plates and Parking*

Veterans with a VA-rated 100 percent service-connected disability and who have been "declared eligible for funds for the purchase of a motor vehicle" according to the Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs may qualify for a fee-free special license.

Any vehicles that displays these special registration plates for disabled veterans are "exempt from any statute or ordinance imposing time limitations on parking in business districts or other facilities".

Supporting documentation such as a VA award letter, report of military discharge ([DD Form 214](#)) and other paperwork may be required.

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#### **Links to Veterans Services**

- [Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs](#)



## Indiana

Find Indiana state and local veteran benefits including education, employment, healthcare, tax breaks/exemptions, recreation and much more below. The State of Indiana's 455,000 veterans make up nearly 10 percent of its adult population. The Hoosier state provides a wide array of benefits to veterans – especially those with service connected disabilities as nearly 35 percent of Indiana veterans served during the Vietnam-era. Find Indiana State and local veteran's benefits including education, tax deductions, employment, and more below.

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### Indiana Veteran Education Benefits

#### High School Diploma Program for WWI, WWII, Korea, and Vietnam Veterans

Veterans who did not graduate high school because of service during World War I, World War II, Korean War, or Vietnam are eligible to receive a high school diploma by the Indiana Department of Veterans Affairs (IDVA). To be eligible, veterans must be a student in good standing, have attended public or nonpublic high school in Indiana prior to military service, and have been honorably discharged from the U.S. Armed Forces.

#### Free Tuition for Children of Disabled Veterans and Purple Heart Recipients

The State of Indiana offers free tuition and fee exemption for the children of disabled veterans and Purple Heart recipients at state-supported colleges and universities. The veteran must have been on active duty during a period of wartime (WWII, Korean War, Vietnam, or August 2, 1990 – present) or received a Purple Heart Medal with an honorable discharge.

This program covers the costs for 124 semester credit hours, and includes textbooks, supplies, equipment, and any other required material.

*Eligible state-supported schools:*

- Ball State
- Indiana State University
- Indiana University Bloomington
- Indiana University East
- Indiana University Kokomo
- Indiana University South Bend
- Indiana University Southeast
- Purdue University West Lafayette
- Purdue University North Central
- Purdue University Calumet
- Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis

- Indiana University Purdue University Columbus
- Indiana University Purdue University Fort Wayne
- Ivy Tech Community College (all Campuses)
- University of Southern Indiana
- Vincennes University
- Western Governor's University (WGU) Indiana

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## **Indiana Veteran Employment Benefits**

### **Employment Assistance**

The Indiana Department of Workforce Development offers employment assistance for veterans to aid in the transition to civilian life. The Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program specializes in job placement and training for veterans with service-connected disabilities. Through the Local Veterans' Employment Representative Program, veterans are offered services such as counseling, testing, and employment opportunities. Contact your local Workforce Development office to get connected with your nearest veterans' representative.

### **Peddlers, Vendors, or Hawkers License**

Any wartime veteran who was honorably discharged is entitled to these licenses by all cities and counties free of charge. Contact your county auditor for more information.

### **Military CDL Skills Waiver Program**

The Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV) may waive the required skills test to obtain a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) for select veterans or active duty military who were truck drivers during their military service if the applicant applies within one year of discharge and meets all requirements. V

### **Indiana Veteran Owned Small Business Program**

The Indiana Department of Administration uses this program to increase contracting opportunities by setting a goal to procure three percent of state contracts with Hoosier veteran-owned businesses.

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## **Indiana Veteran Housing Benefits**

### **The Veterans Home**

The Indiana Veterans' Home in West Lafayette is the only veteran's home in the Hoosier state. It provides nursing care, short-term rehabilitation services, and domiciliary care for honorably discharged veterans and their spouses. There is no wartime service requirement, but eligible veterans must have resided in Indiana for at least one year prior to admission.

## **Property Tax Deductions**

Indiana offers the following property tax deductions to disabled veterans:

- 1) For a deduction of \$24,960 from the assessed value of their property, the veteran must have served during wartime (WWII, Korean War, Vietnam, or August 2, 1990 – present), received an honorable discharge and a service connected disability rating of at least 10 percent.
  - 2) For a deduction of \$12,480 from the assessed value of their property, the veteran must have served in the military for at least 90 days, received an honorable discharge, and have either a total service connected disability, or be at least 62 years old AND have a service connected disability rating of at least 10 percent.
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## **Indiana Veteran Financial Benefits**

### **Military Service Deduction**

Active duty and reserve military, military retirees (60 years or older), or surviving spouses are eligible to exempt \$5,000 from their gross taxable income. This deduction is equal to the actual amount of military income received (military pay, retirement pay, and/or survivor's benefits) or \$5,000, whichever is less.

### **Military Family Relief Fund**

The Military Family Relief Fund is available to all veterans that served on active duty during wartime for at least 12 months. The temporary emergency grant may be used for food, housing, utilities, transportation, and medical expenses. Eligible families may receive a one-time grant of up to \$2,500.

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## **Additional Indiana Veteran Benefits**

### **Motor Vehicle License Plates**

The Hoosier state allows veteran designation on license plates for \$15. It also offers privileged license plates for disabled veterans, ex- POWs, Purple Heart recipients, and Gold Star families. Proof of military service must accompany application.

### **Resident Veteran Hunting and Fishing License**

Any Indiana veteran with a service connected disability is eligible to purchase a state hunting and fishing license at a discount. To receive this benefit, veterans must submit the Application for Reduced Fee Hunting and Fishing License for Disabled Veterans available from County Veteran Service Officers, the Department of Natural Resources, or the Indiana Department of Veterans Affairs.

### **Golden Hoosier Passport**

Veterans who are at least 65 years old and current Indiana residents may enjoy unlimited access at a discounted price to all Indiana state-owned parks, recreation areas, reservoirs, and forests. The pass is good for one calendar year, and is not valid for historical sites, museums, memorials, or other Department of Natural Resources facilities. Former POWs who apply for a POW-designated license plate will receive their Golden Hoosier Passport in the mail after their plates are issued.

### **Indiana Veterans Memorial Cemetery**

Located in Madison, Ind., any Hoosier veteran eligible to be buried in a national cemetery is eligible for burial at the Indiana Veterans Memorial Cemetery at no cost. Spouses are also eligible to be buried at the cemetery, but must pay opening and closing fees. [Learn more here.](#)

### **Veteran and Family Support Services**

The family members of military are sometimes overlooked in the many resources provided to veterans. In an effort to help Hoosier veterans and military maintain strong family bonds, the Indiana Department of Veterans Affairs offers services to military families in need of counseling (including parenting, family, pre-marital, marital, and personal), vocational training opportunities for veterans and their spouses, employment assistance, couple and family retreats, and tutoring.

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### **Indiana Links to Veterans Services**

- [Indiana Department of Veterans Affairs](#)
- [Bureau of Motor Vehicles](#) – Military and Veterans services

## Iowa

Discover Iowa state and local veteran's benefits including education, employment, healthcare, tax breaks/exemptions, recreation, and much more below. There are more than 225,000 veterans living in the Hawkeye state according to the VA.

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### **Iowa State Veteran Education Benefits**

#### **Iowa State Resident Tuition Benefit for Military Members, Spouses, and Dependent Children**

The State of Iowa automatically applies in-state tuition rates to currently serving active duty military members, spouses, and dependent children. Specific documentation requirements apply including the following items:

- Current military members must provide a copy of PCS orders and/or **military ID card**
- Dependents should furnish a military ID card or the military parent's current orders, along with the military parent's tax return naming the student as a dependent
- Spouses should provide a military spouse ID card or current PCS orders and marriage certificate

Domestic partners are also eligible. They must supply the same documentation as spouses and a certification of domestic partnership.

Members of the Guard and Reserve may also qualify for this in-state tuition benefit as long as the following conditions are met:

- Must be assigned to an Iowa unit
- Must have either completed basic training or who have served at least one year of their commitment
- Non-resident students will remain classified as non-resident while being assessed in-state tuition and fees

In this case, only the military member is eligible for in-state tuition. Required documentation for Iowa Guard or Reserve members includes:

- Paperwork showing completion of basic training or 12 months of service and attachment to an Iowa unit to the Office of the Registrar
- Enlistment/Reenlistment Document
- Current military orders

Full-time members of the Iowa Guard or Reserve plus their dependents and spouses are also eligible for in-state tuition benefits. Documentation requirements are similar to those listed above for active duty, Guard/Reserve, etc.

### **Branstad/Reynolds Scholarship Fund**

Qualifying children of military members who died on active duty after September 11, 2001 may be eligible for the Branstad-Reynolds Scholarship fund. The cause of death does not have to be combat-related. The scholarship is intended to subsidize “tuition, books, fees, housing, special tools and equipment required” for school.

This program is administered by the Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs. The application deadline is December 31 of each year. Applicants are expected to supply estimated education costs that will be offset by the scholarship.

### **Iowa War Orphan Tuition Assistance:**

Qualifying dependent children up to the age of 26 of Iowa veterans killed in action after September 11, 2001 may be eligible for Iowa War Orphan Tuition Assistance for coursework at an Iowa college. This assistance is available up to \$600 each year and the benefit is capped at \$3,000. Proof of residency is required. The dependents of Guard and Reserve members may also qualify.

There are certain stipulations to receive this benefit, which include the following requirements:

- The qualifying dependent student must have a high school diploma or equivalent.
- The applicant must have lived in the State of Iowa for at least two years “immediately preceding the filing of an application.”
- The applicant must plan to attend an approved school within the State of Iowa.

### **Iowa National Guard Tuition Assistance**

Iowa National Guard members who are currently serving may be eligible for up to \$2,700 per semester for full-time coursework. There is a smaller tuition assistance amount for part-time students. Those who are mobilized during the school year may be eligible for a tuition refund under this program.

### **Operation Recognition High School**

Veterans of World War One, World War Two, Korea, and Vietnam may qualify for high school diplomas if they were unable to complete their studies due to joining the military. This program is for honorably discharged veterans. The diplomas may be awarded posthumously. The Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs is responsible for determining eligibility for this program.

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### **Iowa State Veteran Employment Benefits**

## **Iowa State Hiring Preference for Veterans**

Hiring preference for state jobs can include a hiring preference for veterans including Guard and Reserve members with 20 years of service after January 28, 1973. Purple Heart recipients, disabled veterans, and those receiving pension payments via the VA are also eligible. Proof of service must be submitted via documentation such as discharge paperwork, VA award letters, etc.

It is important to note that hiring preference for veterans under Iowa state law is not equal to the federal requirements for similar hiring practices. Check with the Iowa Department of Administrative services if you have questions on these differences.

## **Home Base Iowa Program for Veterans**

Home Base Iowa is a public/private program intended to match veterans and those transitioning from military careers to Iowa based job resources and partner agencies.

It is intended to bring together “Iowa businesses with qualified veterans looking for career opportunities.” [The Home Base Iowa official site](#) allows veterans to post resumes, apply to have a small business recognized as a Home Base Iowa business, and offers employers a service to recommend veterans for employment. Posting a resume requires creating an account and login for the Home Base Iowa site.

## **Iowa State Commercial Driver’s License Waiver for Qualifying Veterans**

Qualifying service members and veterans with “recent experience” driving large trucks in the military may be eligible to obtain an Iowa state commercial driver’s license without being required to participate in the driving skills test.

To qualify for the test exemption, the service member must have “legally operated the same type of commercial motor vehicle” they plan to operate with the CDL for a minimum of two years prior to applying for the Iowa State commercial driver’s license.

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## **Iowa State Veteran Housing Benefits**

### **Iowa State Veterans Home in Marshalltown, Iowa**

The Iowa Veterans Home was built in 1887 and offers long-term care to qualifying military members with honorable discharges. Dependents and surviving spouses may also qualify for care if they meet admission requirements.

All applicants must be eligible for admission to a VA Medical Center and be Iowa residents. Spouses and surviving spouses of qualified veterans “are eligible for admission if they have been married to the veteran for one year before the date of application and meet the residency requirements of Iowa,” according to the official site. The County Commissioners of Veterans Affairs (with an office in each Iowa County) is the admissions referral agency.

This facility features an infirmary, nursing home-style care with nearly 700 beds and “domiciliary care.” Services may include:

- Medical
- Optometry
- Podiatry
- Dermatology
- Respiratory therapy
- Laboratory/x-ray
- Pharmacy
- Dental
- Nursing
- Psychology
- Physical and occupational therapy
- Audiology

Admitted residents and patients will pay a need-based fee determined by income and assets.

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### **Iowa Veteran Financial Benefits**

#### **Iowa Veterans Trust Fund**

The State of Iowa maintains a multi-million trust dollar to help qualifying veterans and their families. These funds have been used to offset the financial challenges of veteran unemployment or underemployment. They help vets and qualifying family members receive vision care, hearing, dental services, durable medical equipment, and prescription drugs.

Approved expenses that may be covered under this trust fund benefit are vehicle repairs, housing repair, transitional housing in an emergency, and counseling and substance abuse services. These payments are need-based. The veteran’s cash-on-hand assets cannot exceed \$15,000.

The Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs lists certain benefits with their cash payment amounts including:

- Unemployment Assistance – the recipient must have a service connected issue causing their unemployment. \$3,000.00 in a twelve month period, with a lifetime maximum of \$6,000.00.



- Job Training or Education Assistance – Lifetime maximum of \$3,000.00.
- Individual or Family Counseling – Up to \$5,000.00 in a twelve month period.
- Dental – Up to \$2,500.00 in a twelve month period.
- Audiology – Up to \$1,500.00 per year in a twelve month period.
- Emergency Housing Repairs – Up to \$3,000.00 in a twelve month period.
- Emergency Vehicle Repairs – Up to \$2,500.00 in a twelve month period.
- Emergency Room – Lifetime maximum of \$5,000.00.
- Durable Medical Equipment – Lifetime maximum of \$2,500.00.

### **Iowa Finance Authority Military Homeowner Grant**

A \$5,000 grant is available to qualifying service members with active duty service on or after September 11, 2001 (and certain surviving spouses) who purchased a home after March 10, 2005. This benefit is also open to service members who served 90 days of active duty between August 2, 1990 and April 6, 1991. Requirements include the following:

- The home buyer must intend to occupy the property.
- The buyer receives prior approval before closing on a qualified home.
- The borrower may purchase in cash or use an Iowa Finance Authority (IFA) Participating or Facilitating Lender and IFA first mortgage.
- The borrower uses an IFA participating lender to receive a non-IFA first mortgage if IFA deems it economically feasible and financially advantageous. “At this time, IFA will approve a grant with non-IFA financing if the lender demonstrates that such financing is a fixed rate, permanent, fully amortizing mortgage loan that is at least 25 basis points lower APR\* than the most comparable IFA mortgage product available at the time the applicable Good Faith Estimate is issued” according to the IFA official site.

These grants are available by working with a participating lender. Military discharge paperwork and four months of Leave and Earnings Statements are required as part of the application package.

### **Iowa State Injured Veterans Grant**

The State of Iowa offers currently serving military members and qualifying discharged veterans who have received “serious or very serious combat-related injuries in a combat theater of operations after 9-11-2001” a grant of up to \$10,000. This is so family members can accompany the veteran during the recovery process after being injured in a combat zone or when the service member was drawing hazardous duty pay.

The grants are paid to qualifying military members as follows:

- \$2,500 when veteran is medically evacuated from the combat zone after a combat-related injury.
- \$2,500 30 days after evacuation if the military member is still hospitalized, receiving medical treatment or rehabilitation services by the military or Veterans Administration; (This stipend is not for follow-up appointments.)

- \$2,500 60 days after evacuation date if still hospitalized, receiving medical treatment, etc.
- \$2,500 90 days after evacuation date if still hospitalized, receiving treatment, etc.

There is an additional requirement that the treatment/services are not administered in the service member's home of record.

## **Iowa State Tax Breaks for Veterans**

The State of Iowa offers several tax incentives and **tax breaks** for veterans.

### **Military Retirement Pay Tax Exemption**

Iowa state legislation passed in 2014 exempts military retirement pay and survivor benefits from Iowa state income tax.

### **Property Tax Exemption for Qualifying Military Service**

Home owners with qualifying military service (wartime service or a minimum of 18 months with an honorable discharge OR fewer than 18 months with a qualifying service-related medical condition) may be eligible for a property tax exemption (generally just under \$2,000 in most cases). The tax exemption may also apply to surviving spouses, dependent children, etc. if they meet the criteria for the benefit.

### **Iowa State Disabled Veteran Homestead Tax Credit**

The State of Iowa offers a Homestead Tax Credit to qualifying disabled veterans with permanent and total disability ratings based on individual unemployability paid at the 100% disability rate. This is a 100% exemption for property taxes for qualifying residences used by veterans as their home.

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## **Additional Iowa Veteran Benefits**

### **Recreational Benefits for Veterans**

The State of Iowa offers veterans who are VA-rated with a disability of any rating the ability to apply for a lifetime hunting and fishing license for a seven dollar fee. The service member must be an Iowa resident who has a VA-rated disability as the result of active duty military service.

### **Iowa Burial Benefits for Veterans**

The State of Iowa runs the Iowa State Veterans Cemetery, located west of Des Moines in Adel. Military members, qualifying spouses and dependent children have **burial privileges** with no fee for veterans. All others require an interment fee.

Eligibility for burial is determined by military service including:

- - The service member must have a discharge not characterized as Dishonorable.
  - Service member died on active duty or served at least 20 years in the National Guard or Reserves and qualified or would have qualified for military retirement pay.
  - Reserve component personnel qualify if they otherwise served in a presidential call-up during Reserve Component military service.
  - Active duty for training of Reserve Component personnel does not qualify as active service.

Pre-need eligibility determination is available. Applicants should download the **pre-need application** and submit to the address mentioned on the form.

## Kansas

Kansas has over 200,000 veterans residing in “The Sunflower State” according to the VA. Find Kansas State and local veteran’s benefits including education, employment, healthcare, tax breaks/exemptions, recreation and much more below.

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### **Kansas State Veteran Education Benefits**

#### **The Kansas Military Service Scholarship**

Qualifying military members who are Kansas residents may be eligible for the Kansas Military Service Scholarship. This award is good at all state-supported schools. This need-based program covers tuition and fees.

Applicants must have served “in international waters or on foreign soil in support of military operations for which the person received hostile fire pay for at least 90 days after September 11, 2001, or served less than such 90 days because of injuries during such military service.”

The applicant must have a non-punitive discharge or still be in military service. They must provide documentation to show the required military service. Financial need is a requirement for this scholarship and completion of FAFSA documents is part of the application process. This scholarship is for undergraduate programs only. Fill out the [online form](#) or receive [more information](#).

#### **Kansas National Guard Educational Assistance**

This program offers to pay a percentage of tuition and fees for qualifying enlisted Kansas National Guard members attending state-supported colleges. The full amount paid depends on the maximum rate charged by a particular state institution for enrollment.

This program is good for those working on a diploma, certificate, or degree program. It is only available for those who have not earned a bachelor’s degree. Fill out the [online form](#) or get more [information](#).

#### **In-State Tuition Benefits for Veterans**

The State of Kansas offers qualifying military members, military spouses, and dependent children in-state tuition. Applicants must live in Kansas at the time of enrollment. The list of qualifying individuals includes:

- Currently serving military
- Spouses and dependent children

- Veterans, veteran spouses and dependent children permanently stationed in Kansas during military service
- Any of the above who established residency in Kansas prior to military service
- Veterans eligible for [VA educational benefits](#)
- Spouses and dependent children with entitlement to a VA educational benefit.

The Kansas Commission on Veterans Affairs official site reminds applicants that there is no requirement to use VA benefits to qualify for the in-state tuition rate. Applicants who qualify based on their eligibility for VA education benefits do not need to use them at enrollment time.

### **Kansas Board of Regents College Credit for Military Service Program**

The Kansas Board of Regents has initiatives to award college credit for approved military service for those attending participating Kansas State Colleges. This is done via a program called Credit for Military Alignment. It allows service members to search a list of military career fields to see if their specialty is approved for college credit transfer.

Not all military career fields are supported at this time, but the program is dedicated to expanding the list. More information is at the [Kansas Board of Regents](#) official site.

### **Tuition and Fees Waiver for Former Prisoners of War**

The State of Kansas offers qualifying former Prisoners of War admission to state-supported colleges without requiring the veteran to pay tuition or fees. Qualifying veterans are responsible for other charges including room and board.

Eligibility requirements for this program includes:

- Must be a Kansas resident at the time of entry into military service
- Was declared a prisoner of war, as established by the United States Secretary of Defense after January 1, 1960.
- Can furnish proof of eligibility such as written documentation from the VA, DoD, or the veteran's branch of service verifying POW status.

Funding for this program may vary from year to year depending on legislation and other issues. Contact the admissions office of the Kansas state-supported college of your choice to learn how to apply for this benefit with that school or institution.

### **Waiver of Tuition and Fees for Dependents and Spouses of Deceased Military Personnel**

This program is similar to the tuition/fees waiver for former prisoners of war. Qualifying applicants will meet the following conditions:

- The military parent or spouse was a Kansas resident
- The military parent or spouse served on active duty, active state or federal service in the Kansas army or air national guard, at the time of death
- The military spouse or parent person died on or after September 11, 2001, while, and as a result of serving in military service.
- The applicant can provide documentation such as a DD Form 13000 Report of Casualty, Form AR 600-8-1 or other written documentation.

Contact the admissions office of the Kansas state-supported college of your choice to learn how to apply for this benefit with that school or institution.

### **Operation Recognition**

The State of Kansas offers qualifying veterans the opportunity to be awarded a college diploma if their schooling was interrupted by wartime military service. Diplomas may be awarded posthumously.

Qualifying criteria includes:

- An Honorable discharge
- Military service during World War Two between September 16, 1940 and December 31, 1946 OR
- Korean War service between June 27, 1950 and January 31, 1955

This program is also open to veterans who earned a diploma, but could not participate in graduation due to military service during the qualifying dates.

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### **Kansas State Veteran Employment Benefits**

#### **Kansas State Government Hiring Preference for Veterans**

The State of Kansas offers hiring preference for veterans who have not received punitive discharges. There may also be hiring preference extended to spouses of qualifying veterans.

According to the State of Kansas Employment Center official site, state law is designed to, “prevent veterans seeking State employment from being penalized because of time spent in military service. Veterans’ preference recognizes the economic loss suffered by citizens who have served their country in uniform.”

Qualified Kansas veterans and spouses who qualify are, “guaranteed an interview and to receive consideration for the position for which they apply.”

Veteran preference is offered to military members and spouses qualified for the vacant position applied for under the following conditions:

- The vacancy is a “regular classified position” with “Veterans Preference” Eligible (VPE) listed in the job description
- There are no applicants eligible under the Kansas Employee Preference Program who have applied for the specific job listed
- The veteran was not dismissed from state service
- The qualifying active duty service is “not for the Reserves or National Guard training”
- The veteran is not currently on active duty at application time.

Learn more about this hiring preference, qualifying service periods, and how to identify Veteran’s Preference Eligible vacancies at the [State of Kansas Employment Center](#) official site.

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## **Veteran Housing Benefits**

### **Kansas State Veterans Homes**

The State of Kansas operates two veterans homes located in Fort Dodge and Winfield. Priority care is given to veterans who have a demonstrated need or “no adequate means of support.” Veterans must have active duty service to qualify for admission and the veteran must have a discharge not characterized as Dishonorable.

There are other admissions criteria including:

- Disabled veterans with service-connected disabilities
- Former prisoners of war
- Veterans who receive or are eligible to receive disability compensation
- Veterans who agree to pay the applicable copayment “if they seek VA hospital nursing home or outpatient care.”

Spouses and surviving spouses may be eligible for care in these homes on a space-available basis.

At the time of this writing, the Kansas Commission on Veterans Affairs official site states that applicants for state-run veterans’ homes, “need not have been actual residents of the State of Kansas. However, Kansas residents will receive priority for acceptance in the Home.”

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## **Kansas State Veteran Financial Benefits**

### **Military Retirement Pay Tax Breaks**

Military retirement pay is not subject to state tax in Kansas.

## **Kansas State Homestead Tax Break for Qualifying Veterans**

Qualifying Kansas veterans who were residents of the state for the full tax year may be eligible for a refund of homestead taxes up to \$700. This applies specifically to those with a household income that meets need-based thresholds. This may change from year to year as the threshold for household income in 2015 was \$34,000 or less.

Those who qualify for this tax refund include:

- Disabled veterans VA-rated at 50% disabled or higher
- Unremarried surviving spouses of disabled Kansas veterans
- Unremarried surviving spouses of active duty military personnel who died in the line of duty.

These refunds are for homes owned and occupied by the veteran and/or spouse as the primary residence. Contact the Kansas Department of Revenue to learn how to claim this tax break and what may be required in the current tax year.

## **Kansas State Motor Vehicle Tax Exemption for Qualifying Veterans**

Kansas state law provides a privately-owned vehicle tax exemption for “not more than two motor vehicles.” This applies when the military member is “mobilized and deployed on the date of the application for registration of the vehicle(s).

“A separate exemption may be granted by the Kansas Board of Tax Appeals for RV-titled vehicles.” The vehicles cannot be used as part of a business and the following qualifying circumstances apply including, but not limited to:

- The veteran’s name is listed on the vehicle title as the legal owner
- Kansas is listed as the home of record
- The applicant is active duty, National Guard or Reserve (mobilized or deployed).

Contact the Kansas Department of Revenue to learn how to claim this motor vehicle tax exemption. Tax laws change frequently. The requirements of previous years or the amounts of the tax break may not be consistent from year to year.

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## **Additional Kansas State Veteran Benefits**

### **Recreational Benefits for Veterans**



Kansas offers free and discounted fishing and hunting licenses, reduced or free state park admission, and other outdoor recreation perks to National Guard members and disabled veterans. There are a variety of these benefits which all require documentation and applications. Application forms for licenses and permits can be downloaded from the KDWP website at [www.kdwp.state.ks.us](http://www.kdwp.state.ks.us).

Free hunting and fishing licenses are available for qualifying Guard members and veterans VA-rated at 30% disabled or greater. Discounted park entry is also an option. Active duty military stationed in Kansas are allowed to buy annual state licenses, permits, etc. at the Kansas resident rate.

### **Burial Benefits for Veterans**

The State of Kansas operates four veterans' cemeteries located in:

- Fort Dodge
- Fort Riley
- Wakeeney
- Winfield

Requirements for interment are basically identical to the Department of Veterans Affairs requirements for **burial in a veteran's cemetery** operated under VA jurisdiction. Those requirements include:

- Any military discharge not characterized as Dishonorable
- Veterans who died on active duty
- National Guard or Reservists members with 20 years of qualifying service entitled to retirement pay and at least 60 years old.

Spouses, surviving spouses, and certain dependent children may also qualify under the following conditions:

- The spouse or surviving spouse of an eligible veteran eligible for interment in a State Veterans' Cemetery. The veteran does not have to be buried there, but qualified for the benefit.
- Any natural or adoptive child of an eligible veteran who is under the age of 21 and unmarried.
- Under 23 years of age and pursuing a full-time course of instruction at an approved education institution.
- Unmarried adult children of eligible veterans in cases where the child became permanently physically or mentally disabled and incapable of self-support prior to the 21st birthday (or before reaching 23 years age if pursuing a full-time course of instruction at an approved educational institution).

Basic burial services for veterans, spouses, and dependents are fee-free and pre-need eligibility determination is encouraged. Applying for pre-need determination does not guarantee a space in the cemetery, but does establish that the veteran and/or spouse's ability to be interred at the facility.

Learn more at the [Kansas Commission on Veterans Affairs](#) official site.

## Kentucky

Find Kentucky State and local veteran's benefits including education, employment, healthcare, tax breaks/exemptions, recreation and much more below. Kentucky is officially a commonwealth, so we use "State of Kentucky" and "Commonwealth of Kentucky" interchangeably here. The Bluegrass State provides benefits for over 300,000 veterans who reside in the State of Kentucky.

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### **Veteran Education Benefits**

#### ***Commonwealth of Kentucky College Tuition Waiver***

The Commonwealth of Kentucky provides a tuition waiver for qualifying military dependents including children, stepchildren, adopted children, spouses, and un-remarried widows & widowers of veterans who meet the tuition program requirements.

This tuition waiver program applies to "any two-year, four-year or vocational-technical schools that are operated and funded by the Kentucky Department of Education" according to the Kentucky Department of Veterans Affairs official site.

To qualify for this Kentucky state tuition waiver program the veteran must meet one or more of the following requirements:

- The veteran died on active duty.
- The veteran died "as a direct result of a service-connected disability" as determined by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.
- The veteran was 100% service connected disabled.
- The veteran is rated as totally disabled (non-service connected) with wartime service.
- The veteran is deceased and lived in KY at time of death and served during wartime.

In addition to these requirements, Kentucky residency is mandatory for both the veteran (at the time of death) and the dependent applying for the Kentucky tuition waiver program.

#### ***Kentucky In-State Tuition Benefits for Non-Residents Attending On the Post 9/11 GI Bill***

Public universities in Kentucky are authorized to charge in-state tuition rates to veterans (including Guard and Reserve members) who are not state residents provided the veteran qualifies for benefits under the [Post-9/11 GI Bill](#).

#### ***Kentucky College "Active Duty Forgiveness" Program***

Students who are called to federal military active duty “shall not be discriminated against for absence, be credited with academic work accomplished, and given reasonable time to make up work” according to the Kentucky Commission on Veterans Affairs.

### ***Kentucky High School Diploma Program***

Started in 2002, the Kentucky High School Diploma Program offers a high school diploma to veterans who left high school to serve in World War Two, Korea, or Vietnam.

Eligibility requirements include but may not be limited to being an honorably discharged veteran who was enrolled but did not complete high school due to military service.

Qualifying service periods include:

- World War II: 7 December 1941 – 31 December 1946.
- Korean Conflict: 25 June 1950 – 27 July 1953.
- Vietnam War 5 August 1964 – 7 May 1975.
- If the veteran served in Vietnam before 5 August 1964, the eligibility period begins 28 February 1961.

Veterans or family members must complete an application (and submit a copy of the veteran’s discharge paperwork) **online** or **by mail** to:

*KDVA High School Diploma Program*  
1111B Louisville Road  
Frankfort, KY 40601

### ***Kentucky Educational Excellence Scholarship Awards***

This program allows students who list Kentucky as the home of record and are also attending an out-of-state high school to qualify for KY educational excellence scholarship awards while their parents serve in uniform.

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## **Veteran Employment Benefits**

### ***Kentucky Professional Licenses and Certification for Veterans***

The State of Kentucky provides a variety of options for those seeking professional certifications, licensure, or other qualifications. They include, but are not limited to, the following perks and programs, created or directed by Kentucky public law:

### ***Certification for Firefighters***

Kentucky has specific procedures for “accepting military training and service toward firefighter certification” to allow veterans to use their military experience toward civilian firefighting jobs.

### ***Kentucky Reciprocity Program for Emergency Medical Technician Certification***

The Kentucky Board of Emergency Medical Services will allow “direct reciprocity” for military training and or experience for initial certification in the state as an emergency medical technician.

### ***Commercial Driver’s License Skills Test Waiver***

The Commonwealth of Kentucky grants a waiver on the skills test portion of the commercial driver’s test for military service members with “recent experience operating commercial-sized motor vehicles”.

### ***Automatic Extension of Professional Certifications***

Kentucky offers qualifying active duty military members “any professional license or certificate renewal without payment of fees or obtaining continuing education”.

### ***Military Spouse Temporary Professional Licensure and Certification***

Qualifying military spouses who possess current professional licenses or certifications may transfer them to Kentucky and be issued a six-month temporary license.

### ***Kentucky Continuing Education Requirements Exemption for Licensed Engineers in the Military***

The state offers a waiver for continuing education requirements for qualifying military members who are licensed engineers and are on a military deployment.

### ***Kentucky Alternative Teacher Certification***

State of Kentucky public law allows veterans to obtain “alternative teaching certification” to teach elementary, secondary, and secondary vocational school.

### ***Kentucky License Requirements for HVAC Professionals***

Kentucky permits qualifying veterans or currently serving military members to include their military experience when applying for heating, ventilation and air conditioning licenses. There is also a provision

for a 60-day period after the expiration of the current license to continue working while applying for a renewal.

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## **Veteran Housing Benefits**

### ***Commonwealth of Kentucky Housing Grants For National Guard and Reserve Members***

The State of Kentucky offers grants to qualifying Guard and Reserve members, intended to reduce principal and interest payments on a mortgage (or rental). Requirements include listing Kentucky as the Home Of Record and serving on a deployment outside the United States.

Under this program, the Kentucky Department of Military Affairs also provides qualifying military spouses “with website tools such as educational, technical, and ombudsman services to maintain a mortgage during federal active duty”

### ***Veterans Assisted Care Homes and Nursing Homes***

The Commonwealth of Kentucky operates four veteran centers and/or nursing homes:

- Carl M Brashear Veterans Center, Radcliff
- Eastern Kentucky Veterans Center, Hazard
- Thompson-Hood Veterans Center, Wilmore
- Western Kentucky Veterans Center, Hanson

Admission requirements include residency, any military discharged other than Dishonorable, and the veteran must demonstrate a need for care. Services include, but may not be limited to:

- 24-hour nursing care
- Physician services
- Physical therapy Pharmaceutical services
- Laboratory services
- Occupational and speech therapy
- Dementia/Alzheimer’s care
- Arts and crafts Activities 7 days per week
- Wireless Internet
- Library

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## **Veteran Financial Benefits**

### ***Kentucky State Income Tax Exemption for Resident Military Members***

The Commonwealth of Kentucky offers a military pay exemption from state income tax received by active duty or reserve components of the Armed Forces plus National Guard members.

#### ***Kentucky State Income Tax Exemption for Death on Line of Military Duty***

The State of Kentucky “excludes all income from all sources for active duty and reserve members killed in the line of duty”, for the year of the service member’s death and the year prior. This Kentucky tax rule exempts “all federal and state death benefits payable to the estate or any beneficiaries” from state income tax.

#### ***Kentucky Probate Fee Exemption***

Kentucky makes estate probate fees exempt for any “regular member of the Armed Forces”.

#### ***Kentucky State Income Tax Return Extension for Service in a Combat Zone***

Kentucky allows service members to extend their state income tax filing while serving in a combat zone.

#### ***Military Retirement Pay Partial Exemption from Kentucky State Income tax***

Eligible military retirees may deduct up to \$41,110 of “total distributions from pensions, annuities, profit sharing, retirement, or employee savings plans”. **Tax laws** change frequently so you may need to check with the Kentucky Commission on Veterans Affairs or the local tax office to learn what the current exemptions and benefit may be.

#### ***Kentucky Property Tax Exemption for 100% Disabled Veterans***

Kentucky offers a homestead tax exemption for veterans with **100% service-connected disabilities** as rated by the Department of Veterans Affairs

#### ***Kentucky State Tax Credit for National Guard Members***

Kentucky residents are eligible for a \$20 tax credit if the taxpayer is a National Guard member at the end of the calendar year.

#### ***Kentucky State Military Family Assistance Trust Fund***

Since 2006, the State of Kentucky offers trust fund assistance for qualifying military personnel and dependents for expenses that may be applicable at the end of a deployment. This program is managed by the Kentucky Department of Veterans Affairs.

### ***Kentucky Military Spouse Unemployment Benefits***

Qualifying military spouses in Kentucky have the right to receive Kentucky unemployment benefits for leaving work to accompany the military member when she or he is reassigned to a new location.

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### **Additional Veteran Benefits**

#### ***Kentucky Veteran License Plate Benefits***

The State of Kentucky offers a variety of perks and benefits for qualifying military members and veterans who need to renew or obtain license plates and meet DMV requirements. They include, but are not limited to, the following:

#### ***No Annual Proof Required For Renewal of Veterans and Retired Military License Plates***

Kentucky has eliminated a requirement that discharged and retired applicants for military license plates show proof of eligibility at renewal time.

#### ***Driver's License Exceptions for 17-Year-Old Military Enlistees***

Kentucky state law exempts 17-year old enlistees from the requirement to obtain an intermediate driver's license.

#### ***Kentucky Driver's License Renewal for Expired Licenses***

Kentucky allows currently serving military members to renew a driver's license by mail, and "exempts military from an expired license" within 90 days of return to the Commonwealth when serving out-of-state duty according to the Kentucky Commission on Military Affairs official site.

#### ***Vehicle License Renewal Extension for Deployed Military Members***

Kentucky state law exempts deployed service members from citations for "driving a vehicle with expired registration" within 30 days of return (proof of deployment required). Qualifying military members are also exempted from late renewal penalties and property taxes. Renewal in such cases is prorated.



### ***Automatic Extension of Licenses, Permits, and Certifications***

Kentucky law provides an automatic extension of licenses, permits, or certifications which may expire while deployed overseas, plus free renewal for same within 90 days after coming home.

### ***Recreational Benefits for Veterans***

The State of Kentucky offers qualified disabled veterans a discount on hunting and fishing combo licenses via the Senior or Disabled Sportsman License program, open to a variety of qualifying ages and conditions that include residents of Kentucky who are VA-rated at 50% disabled or greater.

The license discount is substantial compared to similar licenses at the regular fee. In order to apply for the discount, the veteran must first apply for a “disability authorization card” from the [Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources](#).

There is also a Kentucky State Park Overnight Accommodations Rate Exemption for overnight accommodations at any Kentucky State Park for resident veterans who are 100% disabled.

### ***Burial Benefits for Veterans***

The Commonwealth of Kentucky operates five veterans’ cemeteries in the state:

- Kentucky Veterans Cemetery North
- Kentucky Veterans Cemetery Central
- Kentucky Veterans Cemetery West
- Kentucky Veterans Cemetery South East
- Kentucky Veterans Cemetery North East

Kentucky state law requires citizenship to be buried at one of these veterans’ cemeteries; the veteran may have been born in Kentucky, served in Kentucky, or has the home of record listed as Kentucky for eligibility purposes. The veteran can have any military discharge not characterized as Dishonorable.

Services at these state-run Kentucky veterans’ cemeteries include:

- Furnishing grave or columbarium space
- Opening and closing the grave
- Perpetual care for the gravesite
- Supplying the grave marker and/or headstone
- Providing a grave liner for casket burials

## Louisiana

Find Louisiana State and local veteran's benefits which include education, employment, healthcare, tax breaks/exemptions, recreation and much more below. There are over 275,000 veterans residing in the Bayou state according to the VA.

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### **Louisiana State Veteran Education Benefits**

**Louisiana In-State Tuition Program:** In-State tuition is available for veterans and active-duty military attending state-supported colleges or universities. Learn more or apply at the nearest [Veterans Parish Service Office](#).

**Louisiana National Guard State Tuition Exemption:** This exemption provides free tuition for Guard members who meet the following requirements:

- Drilling member of the Louisiana National Guard in good standing
- A resident of Louisiana
- Working toward an Associate's, Bachelor's, or Master's degree
- Must remain in good academic standing
- Must pay all fees applied to bill as exemption covers tuition only

Learn how to apply or get more information at the nearest Veterans Parish Service Office.

**State Dependent Tuition Exemption (Title 29)** is an [education](#) and training assistance program for qualifying dependents of veterans with VA-rated disabilities at 90% or higher as a result of military service. It is also open to qualifying dependents of veterans who died on duty or as a result of service-related issues during a wartime period.

Under Title 29, qualifying students are exempt from paying tuition and school fees. Apply via a local Veterans Parish Service Office. Those approved for Title 29 receive a Fee Exemption Certificate from the Louisiana Department of Veteran Affairs.

**Louisiana Professional Certifications and Licenses for Veterans:** *Act 276:* The Louisiana Department of Veterans Affairs official site states that Act 276 allows those with military training and experience to be offered "civilian professional licensure and/or certification when the Service member has been awarded a military occupational specialty and performance in that specialty that is at a level equal to or exceeding the requirements for said license and/or certification."

Act 276 also allows colleges to, "award educational credits to a student who is also a veteran for courses that are part of the student's military training or service and that meet the standards of the American Council on Education" for offering college credit to qualifying veterans.

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## **Louisiana State Veteran Employment Benefits**

**Louisiana State and Federal Civil Service Hiring Preference for Veterans:** Louisiana state and city civil service departments have a **veteran hiring preference program** including up to ten points of hiring preference “in original appointment” to honorably discharged veterans who serve “under certain circumstances”.

This is in addition to federal laws requiring five to ten point hiring preference points for federal positions. Certain qualifying disabled veterans may be hired directly under state law.

**Louisiana State Tax Break for Employers Hiring Disabled Veterans:** This tax incentive allows those who hire qualifying disabled employees, including veterans who are mentioned specifically in the legislation, to claim a **tax break** equivalent to half the gross wages paid to the employee for the first four continuous months of employment plus 30% of wages for each subsequent month.

According to Louisiana law, “A taxpayer shall be eligible to claim the deduction provided for in this Section after employing a qualified individual with a disability for four continuous months for no less than an average of twenty hours a week” at rates comparable to other employees of the taxpayer performing similar work.

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## **Louisiana State Veteran Housing Benefits**

The Louisiana Department of Veterans Affairs runs five veterans’ homes in the state:

- Jackson
- Bossier City
- Monroe
- Reserve
- Jennings

Long-term and short-term care are available at these homes. They are open to those who have served 90 days or more of active duty and have a discharge under honorable conditions.

State residency is required, except for those who have a referral from an in-state VA medical center or by a Louisiana Department of Veterans’ Affairs Veterans’ Assistance Counselor.

A medical examination is required prior to admission to screen for communicable diseases and certain mental health issues. Care at the five facilities may include:

- Rehabilitative therapies
- Alzheimer’s and intermediate care

- Skilled nursing
- Mental health services
- Centralized pharmacy services

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### **Louisiana State Veteran Financial Benefits**

#### **Louisiana Military Family Assistance Fund (MFA)**

Created in 2005, the MFA fund is intended for veterans, Louisiana National Guard members, and Louisiana Military Reserves and their families to offset financial hardships associated with being placed on active duty status.

Money from this fund may be used to pay for housing, utilities, medical services, and “other essential expenses that may have created an undue financial hardship” up to \$10,000 in a 12-month period.

Qualifications for this program include:

- Louisiana state resident
- Current member of the Louisiana National Guard or Reserves OR
- Veteran of the Armed Forces of the United States (Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard, Louisiana National Guard or Reserves) with a discharge of “Honorable” or “Under Honorable Conditions”
- Veterans must have completed 24 months of continuous active-duty, other than active duty for training; Completed at least 90 days of active duty and has been discharged under the specific authority of 10 U.S.C. 1171 or 1173, or has been determined to have a service connected disability;
- Received a discharge with less than 90 days of service for a service connected disability

This is a “payer of last resort” program, meaning that the applicant must exhaust other avenues of aid or assistance before applying.

#### **Louisiana Homestead Tax Exemption**

The Louisiana Homestead Tax exemption equals \$7,500 of a homestead’s assessed value (\$75,000 of market value) and can be claimed for up to 160 acres as long as the home is an owner-occupied property.

According to the Louisiana Department of Veterans Affairs, “in parishes in which the voters have elected to adopt the policy, the amount of the homestead exemption is doubled to \$15,000 of a home’s assessed value (\$150,000 of market value) for property owned by a military veteran having a service-related disability rating of 100% as determined by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.”

This exemption is also available for property owned and occupied by the surviving spouse of a qualifying service member.

### *Louisiana State Tax Exemptions for Veterans*

Military retirement income is exempt from Louisiana state taxes. Any military pay exempt from federal tax including combat pay or hazardous duty pay is also exempt from Louisiana state income taxes.

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## **Louisiana State Additional Veteran Benefits**

### **Louisiana Veteran Cemeteries**

The State of Louisiana operates four veterans' cemeteries in:

- Keithville
- Leesville
- Rayville
- Slidell

These facilities are open to qualifying veterans, military spouses, and dependent children. Veterans may be interred without cost, and there is a nominal fee for dependents and spouses. Services include:

- Grave sites for caskets
- Grave sites for cremated remains
- Headstone/grave marker
- Opening and closing of the grave
- Perpetual care

Pre-register by downloading and submitting a [printable application](#).

### **Recreational Benefits for Veterans: Reduced Hunting and Fishing Licenses**

The State of Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries offers greatly reduced license fees for qualifying veterans and currently serving military members whether in-state or out-of-state. This program also includes special fee-free licenses, excluding Federal Duck Stamps, for qualifying disabled veterans with VA-rated disabilities of 50% or greater.

## Maine

If you live in “The Pine Tree State,” you may be among the 116,000 plus veteran population who reside in this region according to the VA. Find State of Maine and local veteran’s benefits including education, employment, healthcare, tax breaks/exemptions, recreation, and much more below.

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### **Maine Veteran Education Benefits**

#### **State of Maine Veterans and Dependents Educational Benefits**

Maine offers qualified state resident veterans and spouses a 100% waiver good for college tuition and fees. Qualifying criteria for the veteran include being VA-rated at 100% total, permanent disability, or a veteran who meets one of the following requirements:

- Was killed in action
- Died from a service-connected disability as a result of military service
- At the time of death was totally and permanently disabled due to a service-connected disability, even if the cause of death is not related to the service-connected disability; or
- Is a member of the Armed Forces on active duty who has been listed for more than 90 days as missing in action, captured or forcibly detained or interned in the line of duty?

Military spouses should know the criteria applies to the service member. If the veteran’s condition qualifies, the spouse can apply for this benefit.

#### **State of Maine National Guard Tuition Assistance**

LD 1612, the Maine state law passed in 2016 titled “An Act to Improve the Delivery of Services and Benefits to Maine’s Veterans and Provide Tuition Assistance to Members of the Maine National Guard.”

This law includes a 100% tuition waiver for Maine’s National Guard members applicable in all University of Maine, Maine Community College Systems, and the Maine Maritime Academy.

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### **Maine Veteran Employment Benefits**

The Maine Department of Professional and Financial Regulation has a program designed to “accelerate the licensing process” for veterans who are state residents. Expedited licensing is available for veterans with military training or experience in the following skill areas:

- Boiler
- Electrical systems

- Fuel
- Plumbing

The state of Maine offers flexibility in evaluating and crediting military experience in these areas when the veteran needs to obtain a license or meet continuing education requirements. Depending on demand and other factors, certain skill areas may have state-sponsored licensing workshops for the purpose of training and providing same-day licensing options.

The Maine Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, (VR) is a Department of Labor program offering job placement and career management services to those with disabilities. This program is not limited to veterans, but any veteran who needs these services is eligible to apply. Qualifying criteria for this assistance basically includes:

- Having a disability that prevents obtaining or keeping a job.
- Needing VR services to find or keep a job.

The State of Maine accepts applications via the state Department of Labor official site.

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### **Maine Veteran Housing Benefits**

#### **Veterans Assisted Care Homes and Nursing Homes**

The State of Maine operates veterans' homes in the following locations:

- Augusta
- Bangor
- Caribou
- Machias
- Scarborough
- South Paris

Eligibility requirements for admission into these homes includes an honorable discharge and residency. Veterans who were residents of Maine at the time of their entry into military service and those who are residents of Maine at the time of their application are eligible.

The official site for these nursing homes adds, "We also serve the spouses, widows or widowers and Gold Star parents of eligible veterans."

Qualifying military service basically involves having served one or more days on active duty. There is no combat requirement for admission.

The types of care and level of care may vary depending on the location. But in general, Maine Veterans Homes offer skilled care, respite care, assisted living, dementia and memory care services.

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## **Maine Veteran Financial Benefits**

### **Maine Military Retirement Tax Exemption**

As of 2016, all military pension benefits including survivor benefits are exempt from State of Maine income tax collection. Past restrictions on military retirement pay **tax breaks** in the state such as the “\$35,000 Rule” and other regulations are no longer in effect. It was replaced by this 100% tax break on retirement pay for military service.

The State of Maine also offers veterans with civilian employee retirement plans the option to take advantage of a \$10,000 pension exemption for qualifying retirement plans for federal civilian retirees who are also retired veterans.

The state defines “military retirement” or pension payments as those made by the federal Defense Finance and Accounting Service. Military pension benefits rolled over into any civilian retirement plans will be eligible for “only the \$10,000 exemption” according to the State of Maine.

### **State of Maine Property Tax Exemption for Qualifying Veterans**

Qualifying veterans aged 62 or older who apply in writing may be exempt from property taxes for up to \$6,000 of the property’s value on primary residences used by the veteran as the home address.

Certain qualifying disabled veterans may also be eligible for more tax breaks on their homes. Paraplegic veterans may be eligible for an exemption from municipal property tax for up to \$50,000 for “a specially adapted housing unit in the municipality where the veteran is a legal resident.” To qualify for this tax break the veteran must be VA-rated and have received a **Specially Adapted Housing** grant from the VA to modify a home to be more accessible.

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## **Additional Maine Veteran Benefits**

### **Driver License, ID Cards, and License Plates for Veterans**

The State of Maine offers a Veteran designator on its state-issued ID **cards and drivers’ licenses**. Proof of active military service or honorable discharge is required at application time. Any change to a Maine



driver's license or ID card requested outside of ID renewal time will incur a small fee. In addition to proof of military service, proof of residency in Maine is also required.

### **Maine Gold Star Family License Plates**

Families of those qualifying service members who died on duty are eligible to apply for Gold Star license plates issued by the State of Maine.

The rules for this program changed in 2015 to offer these license plates not just to the families of those who died in combat. It was extended to any family member "who dies while honorably serving as an active member of the United States Armed Forces who did not fit the gold star lapel button guidelines established in 10 United States Code, Section 1126."

Gold Star family registration plates are also available for families who are described by the State of Maine as being "newly eligible."

### **Maine Recreational Benefits for Veterans**

The State of Maine offers a variety of recreational benefits for veterans. Disabled veterans with VA-disability ratings at 50% or higher are offered free licenses for a variety of hunting and trapping activities including archery, muzzle-load hunting, night hunting for certain breeds, and more. These licenses are offered to veterans who are residents of Maine, Vermont, and New Hampshire and are good for a lifetime as long as the veteran maintains residency.

All Maine vets with any discharge except dishonorable are offered free admission to Maine historic sites and state parks. Active duty Maine residents are offered discounts on hunting and fishing licenses and any military member or family stationed in Maine are offered discounted licenses regardless of residency status.

For all such benefits, supporting documentation such as discharge paperwork, current military orders, VA award letters, and other paperwork as required will need to be presented at application time or at the time of admission depending on the facility.

### **Burial Benefits for Veterans**

There are four state-run veteran cemeteries in the state of Maine. Two are located in Augusta, one in Caribou, and another located in Springvale. These facilities are open to veterans, spouses, and dependents. There is no charge for burial regardless of whether the loved one is a veteran or family member.

Pre-need determination is encouraged. All supporting documentation including military discharge paperwork, marriage certificates, and similar documents will be required at application time.

The Maine veterans' cemeteries do not provide vaults, but will provide "double-depth in-ground concrete liners" free of charge.

## Maryland

Discover Maryland state and local veteran's benefits including education, employment, healthcare, tax breaks/exemptions, recreation and much more below. The Old Line State has over 400,000 veterans that can access this Mid-Atlantic's state's veteran's benefits.

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### Maryland Veteran Education Benefits

This Maryland scholarship program is military members who served in Afghanistan or Iraq, and is also open to qualifying dependents and military spouses attending an approved college or higher learning institution.

This scholarship covers up to 50% of the applicant's tuition, fees, plus room and board.

Qualifying criteria: a minimum of 60 days of service in Iraq or Afghanistan, plus additional requirements including (but not limited to) the following:

- Maintain Maryland residency.
- Submit a **FAFSA** by March 1st each year.
- Accepted for admission or enrolled in a regular undergraduate program at an eligible Maryland institution, or is accepted for admission or is enrolled in a 2-year terminal certificate program considered to be acceptable for transfer credit for an accredited baccalaureate program at an eligible Maryland institution.
- Enrolled as either a full-time (12 or more credits per semesters) or part-time (6-11 credits per semester) undergraduate student,

Active Duty, National Guard, Reservists, qualifying dependents, and spouses who meet the qualifying criteria, are eligible to apply before March 1 each year.

#### *In-State College Tuition at Maryland State-Supported Schools*

Veterans, National Guard members and Active Duty service members "residing or domiciled in Maryland" qualify for in-state college tuition rates at Maryland's public institutions.

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### Veteran Employment Benefits

#### *Maryland State Employment Hiring Preferences for Veterans*

The State Of Maryland offers veteran hiring preferences to qualifying service members. Ten hiring points are available to eligible veterans with or without a VA-rated service-connected disability, **former POWs**,

spouses of eligible veterans with VA-rated disabilities, and surviving spouses of eligible military members.

An additional two points are offered to those who meet criteria including but not limited to veterans with a service-connected disability and former prisoners of war.

#### *The Maryland Veterans Full Employment Act of 2013*

This Maryland state program is designed to help qualifying veterans and spouses get or transfer professional credentials, college credits, licensing, and related assistance when relocating to Maryland and transferring career credentials there.

The benefit of this program includes expedited service, as long as the transferring credentials meet Maryland State requirements.

Veterans with any discharge except Dishonorable are eligible can apply including Guard/Reserve members. Military spouses who are relocating to Maryland for a new military assignment, spouses of recently discharged military members, and surviving spouses are also encouraged to apply.

Veterans must apply no later than one year after military discharge. Military members and spouses who are relocating to the state on military orders are permitted to apply once they have taken up residence in the state.

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### **Veteran Housing Benefits**

#### *Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs Charlotte Hall Veterans Home*

The Maryland VA operates Charlotte Hall for honorably discharged Maryland State veterans and “legal non-veteran” spouses. Applicants must be 62 or older and “deemed disabled by the Social Security Administration or the Veterans Administration.”

The Department of Veterans Affairs offers a daily per diem for those residing at the home, which offers both assisted living care and nursing home services. 24-hour care is available through the home as well as a range of diagnostic and medical options.

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### **Veteran Financial Benefits**

#### *Military Personnel and Veteran Owned Small Business No Interest Loan Program*

The State of Maryland offers veteran-owned small businesses a no-interest loan up to \$50,000 for those who meet the following criteria:

- A small business owned by a National Guard or Reserve member called to active duty
- A small business that employs a reservist or Guard member called to active duty
- A veteran small business owner or a veteran seeking to start a small business
- A small business that employs a VA-rated disabled veterans

According to the State of Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs, these no-interest loans mature in one to eight years, with the expected loan repayment period not to exceed “the useful life expectancy of the equipment to be purchased”.

#### *State Of Maryland Tax Breaks for Veterans*

- *Military Retirement Pay Income Tax Deduction:* qualifying military members and/or military spouses at least 65 years old (by the last day of the tax year) may subtract up to \$5,000, with an increase to the first \$10,000 of military retirement income “from federal adjusted gross income before determining your Maryland tax.”
- *Maryland State Property Tax Exemption for Disabled Veterans and Certain Surviving Spouses:* veterans with 100% VA-rated service-connected disabilities may be eligible for a “complete exemption from real property taxes on the dwelling house and surrounding yard”. Qualifying veterans or surviving spouses may apply at any time and are not held to the stated filing deadlines.
- *Maryland State Vehicle Tax Exemption:* those new to Maryland are required to title a motor vehicle within 60 days of moving to the state. Those who supply military ID or other proof of military service may be eligible to claim a Maryland vehicle excise tax credit.
- *Active Duty Pay Income Tax Exemption:* Up to \$15,000 of military pay can be excluded if earned while serving overseas.

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#### **Additional Veteran Benefits**

##### *State Of Maryland Military Service Record Archive*

This Maryland veterans’ benefit is unique-the state of Maryland maintains an archive of DD Form 214s (the active duty military discharge paperwork) for Maryland veterans who requested a transfer of DD 214 paperwork to the home of record in Maryland.

You can call to verify your DD-214 is on file at (410)-230-4444 ext.6450. This is a service offered by the Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs and is not related to the National Archives or that agency’s collection of **military service records**.

##### *Free Entry for Veterans at Maryland State Parks*

The State of Maryland waives entrance fees at state parks and other facilities are waived for those with current **military ID cards**. “Day use” fees may be waived, and for those who are Maryland residents and on leave (with orders in hand) may be eligible for exemptions from certain hunting and fishing permits. The Maryland Department of Natural Resources official site offers the following:

- Maryland residents stationed in Maryland must purchase a Resident Hunting License before hunting unless they are on official leave and possess a copy of their official leave orders.
- Maryland residents while hunting during official military leave in Maryland are not required to pay for a hunting license, deer stamps, or a Maryland Managed Hunt Permit.
- Free lifetime hunting licenses are available to Maryland residents who are former prisoners of war or 100% service connected disabled as rated by the VA. The lifetime license is available only at the department’s Licensing and Registration Service Centers.
- It is important to note that the Maryland Migratory Game Bird Stamp is not part of the complimentary hunting license. (The Migratory Game Bird Stamp, Federal Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp, and the Big Game Harvest Record are required every year.

#### *Burial Benefits for Veterans*

The State of Maryland operates five veterans’ cemeteries:

- Cheltenham
- Crownsville
- Flintstone
- Hurlock
- Owings Mills

Burial plots are offered at no cost to eligible, honorably discharged Maryland resident veterans and eligible dependents. These free plots are available first come, first served. There is no charge for the plot, headstone, or liner. Interment services are also free for veterans. Funeral services for dependents may include an opening/closing charge and other fees.

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#### **Important Links for Maryland Veterans’ Benefits**

- **[Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs](#)**

## Massachusetts

Find Massachusetts State and local veteran benefits including education, employment, healthcare, tax breaks and tax exemptions, recreation and much more below. The Cotton State provides benefits for nearly 400,000 veterans who reside in the State of Alabama.

Technically, the State of Massachusetts is referred to as the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in state legal documents, but we use “the State of Massachusetts” interchangeably with “commonwealth” here.

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### **Massachusetts State Veteran Education Benefits**

#### **Commonwealth of Massachusetts College Tuition Waivers**

Massachusetts veterans may be eligible for undergraduate tuition waivers at state-supported colleges in the state. To qualify, a veteran must be a legal resident of Massachusetts. Applicants must not be in default on any federal student loan. This program is open on a space-available basis, “for a waiver of full or partial tuition based on proper documentation of the eligibility of the veteran”.

The amount of space available for qualifying veterans is determined by each college or university. These tuition waivers must, in general, lead to a degree or certificate where applicable. Non-credit courses may be excluded from the tuition waiver, and some night school or certificate programs may not qualify for the waivers depending on the institution.

Prospective students interested in this tuition waiver for Massachusetts veterans should contact the state-sponsored institution of their choice to learn how to apply.

#### **Massachusetts National Guard Tuition and Fees Waiver**

Qualifying members of the Massachusetts National Guard are eligible for a waiver of tuition and fees for all state-supported colleges and universities. Potential applicants must contact the college or university veterans’ representative for details and instructions on how to apply.

#### **The Massachusetts Soldiers Legacy Fund (MSLF)**

The Soldiers Legacy Fund is a charitable trust for eligible **surviving dependents** of Massachusetts service members killed while deployed on Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom.

This trust provides education grants for post-secondary school, higher education, trade or professional school. It also offers “Pre post-secondary” education grants for special needs programs, tutoring, college

counseling, summer camps and related programs. Information about applying for these grants is available at [info@mslfund.org](mailto:info@mslfund.org).

### **Massachusetts Public Service Scholarship Programs**

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts offers scholarships for undergraduate studies “at an institution of higher education in the Commonwealth” to qualifying children of Massachusetts veterans who meet the following criteria:

- Children of prisoners of war or military or service members declared missing in action in Southeast Asia with service between February 1, 1955, and the termination of the Vietnam campaign;
- Children of Massachusetts veterans killed in action or otherwise died as a result of military service.

More information about this program is available from the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education.

### **The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Welcome Home High School Diploma Program for Veterans**

In November of 2005, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts passed the Welcome Home Bill, which allows Massachusetts high schools to award diplomas to World War II, Korean, and Vietnam veterans.

Eligible veterans are those who left high school for military service and did not return. These diplomas are available by working with a Veterans’ Service Officer to apply.

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### **Massachusetts State Veteran Employment Benefits**

#### **Veteran Preference in State and Civil Service Employment**

There are a variety of perks and protections for eligible veterans apply for or hoping to maintain employment with the state of Massachusetts.

They include a protection for state jobs that are not civil service related; those in such positions for more than three years “cannot be involuntarily separated for lack of work or money when similar offices or positions exist, unless such positions are held by veterans” according to the Massachusetts Veterans Laws And Benefits guidebook.

Veterans are also offered preference for civil service jobs in the following order:



1. Disabled veterans
2. Veterans
3. Spouses or single parents of veterans who were killed in action or who died from a service-connected disability incurred during wartime service provided that the spouse or parent has not remarried.

Veterans applying for no-exam civil service positions get preference over “equally qualified non-veterans”.

Civil service jobs in Massachusetts include a “system of absolute veteran’s preference”; where qualifying veterans scoring “70 points or above” on an open competitive civil service exam are promoted to the top of the eligibility list for those positions including police and firefighter jobs.

This preference does not equal automatic hiring for the veteran but allows the veteran to be considered first where applicable.

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### **Massachusetts State Veteran Housing Benefits**

#### **Massachusetts Soldiers’ Homes**

The state operates two Soldiers’ Homes in Massachusetts, offering acute hospital care, domiciliary care, long-term care, physical and occupational therapy, laboratory and radiology services, and outpatient care.

There are two state Soldiers’ Homes:

- Chelsea Soldiers’ Home  
91 Crest Avenue Chelsea, MA 02150  
617-884-5660
- Holyoke Soldiers’ Home  
110 Cherry Street, Holyoke, MA 01041  
413-552-4764

Admission to these facilities is based on veteran status, need, and space available. The official site states that treatment options and caregiving include extended care for veterans “with elopement / wandering tendencies, units for Veterans at various stages of cognitive impairment and functional abilities and a unit for Veterans requiring hospice and/or palliative care”.

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### **Massachusetts State Veteran Financial Benefits**

## **Massachusetts Veterans' Bonuses and Annuities**

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts offers bonuses and other payments to qualifying Massachusetts veterans who served in designated wartime campaigns or other operations. If the veteran has died, spouses, dependents, parents or siblings may be eligible to receive the bonuses instead.

These bonuses include annuities for 100% disabled veterans, but also bonus payments for military service in one of the following campaigns:

- World War Two
- Korea
- Vietnam
- Persian Gulf
- Operation Enduring Freedom
- Operation Iraqi Freedom
- Operation Noble Eagle
- Operation Inherent Resolve
- Operation Freedom's Sentinel

Other operations where veterans were discharged under honorable conditions are also eligible for consideration.

## **Massachusetts State Property Tax Exemptions for Veterans, Spouses, and Parents**

There are a variety of state property tax exemptions in Massachusetts ranging from \$400 to total exemption for qualifying veterans and family members. There are many exemptions including those for **Purple Heart recipients**, **Gold Star** families, surviving spouses, disabled veterans, and many other variations.

To be eligible for these exemptions, the veterans and other family members are required to be legal residents of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, occupy the property as the home address on or before July 1st in the year the tax exemptions are applied for, and:

- Have lived in Massachusetts for at least six months prior to entering the service (spouses exempted) or;
- Have lived in Massachusetts for five consecutive years immediately prior to filing for a property tax
- Surviving spouses may qualify for property tax exemptions if those exemptions were received before the death of the veteran. Surviving spouses lose their tax exemptions upon remarriage where applicable.

To apply for these tax exemptions, contact your local assessor's office.

## **Massachusetts Military Retirement Pay Tax Exemption**

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts does not apply state income taxes to military retirement income.

## **Massachusetts Motor Vehicle Excise Tax Exemption for Disabled Veterans, Ex-Prisoners of War**

Qualifying veterans who are Massachusetts residents suffering the “loss, or permanent loss of the use of one or both feet or one of both arms or has permanent visual impairments as determined by the VA or has been determined by the medical advisory board within the Registry of Motor Vehicles to be permanently disabled” may be eligible for motor vehicle excise exemption.

This Massachusetts tax break is good for one non-commercial motor vehicle owned for personal use. Surviving spouses may also be eligible depending on circumstances.

## **Massachusetts Motor Vehicle Sales Tax Exemption for Qualifying Disabled Veterans**

Massachusetts veterans with VA-rated, service-connected disabilities including the loss or permanent loss of the use of, both legs or both arms or one leg and one arm may be eligible for a motor vehicle sales tax exemption. This exemption is for one motor vehicle registered for personal use.

## **Massachusetts Financial Public Assistance for Indigent Veterans**

The Commonwealth offers financial and medical help for qualifying indigent veterans and their dependents. This is a need-based program that offers help with food, shelter, medical care and other needs using a formula “which takes into account the number of dependents and income from all sources”.

The financial public assistance program is open to qualifying dependents of veterans who have died, providing the same help as though the veteran were still alive. Applications must be submitted via a Veterans’ Service Officer; you can locate a VSO by calling the Massachusetts Department of Veterans’ Services at 617-210-5480.

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## **Additional Massachusetts State Veteran Benefits**

### **Massachusetts Driver License and ID Cards for Veterans**

The procedures for Massachusetts state identification cards, drivers’ licenses, learner’s permits, and liquor ID cards allow the addition of a **Veteran designation** on these documents. There is no added fee

for this service, but regular fees for all cards applies and the designation cannot be added via an online application, it must be done in person.

### **Massachusetts Military License Plates**

Qualifying service members are eligible for free license plates designating the award of military honors for (but not limited to) the following:

- Bronze Star
- **Medal of Honor**
- Distinguished Flying Cross
- Legion of Valor
- Pearl Harbor Survivors
- Silver Star
- Purple Heart
- Ex-POW
- Disabled Veterans

Supporting documentation is required for each of these plates, and to obtain a disabled veteran placard or set of plates, qualifying medical criteria is also required.

### **Massachusetts State Burial Benefits for Veterans**

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts runs two state veterans' cemeteries, one in Agawam and the other located in Winchendon. Eligible veterans may be buried without a fee; there is a nominal cost for the burial of eligible spouses and dependent children.

Requirements include residency, a military discharge under honorable conditions, and accompanying paperwork or documentation.

### **Massachusetts Recreational Licenses for Veterans**

Recreational licenses may be offered to veterans or currently serving military members displaying ID or other required documentation for in-state rates for recreational licenses such as for hunting or fishing. Certain day-use costs such as parking fees at Massachusetts state parks may be waived for veterans with a Disabled Veteran designation license plate.

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### **[Link to Massachusetts Veterans Services](#)**

- **[Massachusetts Department of Veterans Services](#)**



## Michigan

Find Michigan State and local veteran's benefits including education, tax deductions, veteran's homes, financial assistance, and more below. The Great Lake State is home to over 600,000 veterans who can access these veterans' benefits.

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### **Michigan Veteran Education Benefits**

#### **Children of Veterans Tuition Grant**

Michigan offers tuition assistance for natural or adopted children of certain deceased or disabled veterans. Grant recipients must be Michigan residents between 16-26 years old to be eligible. The grants are distributed based on the student's enrollment status, and full-time students are eligible to receive up to \$2,800 per academic year.

#### **Michigan National Guard State Tuition Assistance**

Active duty Michigan National Guard, including the traditional service of one weekend per month, two weeks per year – are eligible to receive tuition assistance to attend any public or private college, university, vocational school, technical school, or trade school in Michigan. Tuition assistance covers up to \$600 per credit hour and up to \$6,000 per year including tuition and fees.

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### **Michigan Employment Benefits**

#### **Licensing Fees**

MVAA helps veterans get established in various professions by waiving licensing fees for certain occupations and certain levels of experience.

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### **Michigan Veteran Housing Benefits**

#### **Veterans Homes**

Michigan hosts two Veterans Homes in Marquette and Grand Rapids. Both homes provide medical and nursing care, domiciliary care, in-house pharmacy, rehabilitation therapy, and recreational activities among other services. Veterans eligible for VA health care or financial assistance for long-term care may be admitted. Additionally, eligible veterans must have served at least 90 days active duty and been honorably discharged. Veterans who enlisted after Sept.

7, 1980 or who entered active duty after Oct. 16, 1981, must have served 24 continuous months or the full period for which they were called to active duty to be eligible. Spouses, surviving spouses, and parents of eligible veterans are also eligible for admission, space permitting.

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### **Michigan Veteran Financial Benefits**

#### **Income Tax**

Active duty and retired pay is not taxed.

#### **Property Tax Waiver**

Veterans who are 100 percent permanently and totally disabled or entitled to veterans benefits at the 100 percent disability rate, as determined by the VA, may request a property tax waiver from the Michigan Department of Treasury. In order to apply, the veteran must be a Michigan resident and have been honorably discharged. Un-re-married surviving spouses of eligible veterans may also apply.

#### **Income Tax Credit**

Disabled veterans or surviving spouses receive a property tax credit. This benefit varies depending on disability rating and the family's income.

#### **Michigan Veterans Trust Fund**

The Michigan Veterans Trust Fund (MVTF) provides emergency assistance to Michigan veterans and dependents in the event of a short-term financial crisis. To be eligible, the veteran must be a Michigan resident and honorably discharged with either 180 days of service during a period of war, 180 days of active duty with the award of an Armed Forces Expeditionary medal or Marine Corps and Navy expeditionary medal, or have a service-incurred disability if served less than 180 days. Apply for an MVTF grant through your local MVTF County Committee.

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### **Additional Michigan Veteran Benefits**

#### **Disabled Veteran Vehicle Registration**

Veterans who have a service-connected total or permanent disability rating from the VA or ex-POWs, regardless of disability rating, are eligible to register one vehicle with a disabled veteran license plate at no charge. There is a one-time \$5 administrative fee when the plate is first issued.

## **Veteran License Plates**

The Michigan Department of State allows veteran and military designation on license plates starting at \$5. Proof of military service must accompany the application. To obtain a special designation license plate, apply with your local Secretary of State office.

## **Veteran Driver's License Designation**

Veterans with an honorable or under honorable conditions (general) discharge are eligible to have a **veteran designation** printed on their state driver's license or ID card. The designation is available when applying for an original or renewal Michigan license or ID at no additional charge.

## **Hunting and Fishing License**

Michigan veterans with a 100 percent disability and active duty military are eligible to receive a state hunting and fishing license at no charge.

## **Free State Park Access**

**Medal of Honor** recipients, 100 percent disabled veterans, and ex-POWs may enjoy free entry to Michigan state-owned parks, trails, and recreation areas. Eligible veterans must have the specialty license plate designation in order to gain free access.

## **Veteran Treatment Courts**

Some veterans involved with the legal system have access to Veteran Treatment Courts – a hybrid court that incorporates elements of drug and mental health specialty courts to help veterans resolve underlying issues that may have contributed to their arrest. There are currently 25 Veteran Treatment Courts in Michigan.

## **Michigan Veterans Cemeteries**

Any Michigan veteran eligible to be buried in a national cemetery is eligible for burial at one of the two national cemeteries in Michigan at no cost. Burial benefits include a gravesite, opening and closing of the grave, a government headstone or marker, burial flag, and Presidential Memorial Certificate. Spouses are also eligible to be buried in Michigan's national cemeteries. The two national cemeteries in Michigan are Great Lakes National Cemetery in Holly and Fort Custer National Cemetery in Augusta.

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## Michigan Link to Veterans Services

- [Michigan Department of Veterans Affairs](#)
- [Michigan Veterans Benefits & Services Guide](#)

## Minnesota

Find Minnesota State and local veteran's benefits including education, employment, healthcare, tax breaks/exemptions, recreation and much more below. The Gopher State or land of 10,000 thousand lakes provides benefits for nearly 350,000 veterans who reside in the State of Minnesota.

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### **Veteran Education Benefits**

#### ***The Minnesota GI Bill***

The State of Minnesota offers its' own version of the GI Bill to qualifying Minnesota Veterans, plus "currently serving military, National Guard, and Reserve members who served after September 11, 2001".

Eligible military spouses and children may also qualify for this Minnesota state military education benefit.

The Minnesota GI Bill offers education funds up to \$10,000 for qualified applicants up to age 62. Minnesota GI Bill funds can be used for higher Education, on-the-job training, licenses and certifications, and apprenticeships. Requirements include, but may not be limited to, the following:

- Applicants must be Minnesota residents
- Veterans must have "served honorably"
- Those who have served honorably "for a total of five credible years or more cumulatively as a member of the Minnesota National Guard or any other active or reserve component of the United States armed forces, and any part of that service occurred on or after September 11, 2001" according to the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs
- Surviving spouses or children "of a person who has served in the military at any time", and who has died or has a VA-rated 100% permanent and total disability as a direct result military service.
- Dependent children must be eligible to receive education benefits under the Chapter 33 Fry Scholarship, or Chapter 35.

Minnesota GI Bill applicants are eligible for up to \$3,000 per academic year, which equals \$1,000 per semester for full-time, and up to \$500 per semester for part-time attendance as determined by the GI Bill program and/or by the institution.

Veterans are required to reapply each year to receive benefits under the Minnesota GI Bill.

### ***Surviving Spouse & Dependent Education Benefit***

The Surviving Spouse & Dependent Education Benefit is a program for eligible surviving spouses and dependent children (including adopted children) of military members who have died on active duty or as the result of a service-related medical condition.

The veteran must have been a Minnesota resident upon entering military service, but those who have been Minnesota state residents for six months before time of death may also meet the residency requirement. The surviving spouse and/or dependent children must also be Minnesota residents.

This program allows qualifying dependents and surviving spouses to attend Minnesota state-supported and privately run higher education institutions “free of tuition until he/she obtains a bachelor’s degree”. This program also provides \$750 per fiscal year for fees, books and supplies, and room/board.

### ***Minnesota State Veteran Education Assistance***

Minnesota offers additional financial aid to veterans with a one-time \$750 grant for tuition. This Minnesota state veteran’s education benefit is offered to vets who have used up all **GI Bill benefits**. This grant is open to those trying to complete a Bachelor’s degree and is paid directly to the school.

One caveat for this program is that to qualify, the veteran must have used up all available GI Bill benefits; allowing them to expire does not qualify a veteran for this grant.

There is also a reimbursement option for veterans who have paid their tuition before the grant money is sent. This benefit, like other state veteran education benefits, may be applied for via the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs official site.

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### **Veteran Employment Benefits**

The State of Minnesota offers a variety of hiring preferences for veterans, including (but not limited to) the following:

- Nondisabled Veteran’s Credit; 10 Veterans Preference points for local government positions.
- Disabled Veteran’s Credit; 15 Veterans Preference points for local government positions.
- Direct Appointment to State Jobs; this benefit is for 30% service-connected disabled veterans applying for state jobs.
- Veterans Preference in State Jobs; VA-rated disabled veterans are considered ahead of veterans without such ratings, who are in turn considered ahead of non-veterans as long as the applicant meets minimum requirements for the posted jobs.

- Recruitment of Veterans in State Employment; special attention is given to the recruitment of vets and “protected group members”.
- Veterans Preference in MN Private Sector Employment; private companies are allowed by Minnesota state law to grant hiring and promotion preference to vets.

### ***State of Minnesota WorkForce Centers Veteran Preference***

The State of Minnesota offers eligible veterans priority services in Minnesota WorkForce Centers. Those who use this resource may be helped by “specially trained veteran’s employment representatives” according to the official site. Services offered may include:

- Assistance with resumes and cover letters
- General job search guidance
- Information on Minnesota licensure, certification and apprenticeships
- Explaining hiring references for veterans
- Job referrals
- Referrals to other veteran-specific services in the state

There may also be transition assistance help available, and the State of Minnesota also offers advice and referral services for disabled veterans via the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development.

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### **Veteran Housing Benefits**

Minnesota State Veterans Assisted Care Homes and Nursing Homes

The State of Minnesota operates five Veterans Homes and one Adult Day Care Center. The state veteran’s homes are located in the following areas:

- Fergus Falls
- Hastings
- Luverne
- Minneapolis
- Silver Bay

Services may vary depending on the facility but they can include:

- Skilled Nursing Care
- Dementia Care
- Domiciliary Care (Hastings and Minneapolis)
- 24-hour Nursing Care
- Work Therapy

- Social Services
- Rehabilitation Services
- Mental Health Services
- Pharmaceutical Services

The adult day care for qualifying veterans is located in the Minneapolis veterans' home campus. Admissions requirements include Minnesota residency, an honorable discharge, demonstration of a medical need, and a minimum time in service.

Military spouses may also be eligible if they meet the residency requirements and are at least 55 years old.

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## **Veteran Financial Benefits**

### ***Minnesota Tax Breaks and Tax Benefits for Veterans***

The Minnesota Department of Revenue offers a variety of state tax breaks and state tax benefits for qualifying service members and veterans where applicable. They include the following:

- *Military retirement pay deductions*; **military retirement pay** (including pensions) are deducted from Minnesota state taxable income.
- *Minnesota state tax credit for military service in a combat zone*; military members qualify for this credit if they served in a combat zone or received hazardous duty area on or after January 1, 2014.
- *Minnesota state tax credit for past military service*; active duty veterans, plus National Guard and Reserve members may be eligible for a state tax credit up to \$750 for past military service.
- *Minnesota state active duty military pay deductions*; qualifying active duty service members may be able to subtract federally taxable active-duty military pay from their state taxable income.
- *State tax filing extensions for currently serving military*; service members could qualify for a state tax filing extension if they are serving in the U.S. military and cannot file tax paperwork or pay their Minnesota income tax by the due date.
- *Minnesota state tax "market value exclusion" on homesteads of disabled veterans*; honorably discharged vets with VA-rated service-connected disabilities of 70% or higher may qualify for a property tax exclusion on homes they use as the principal residence.

### ***Minnesota State Short-Term Financial Assistance for Veterans***

The State of Minnesota provides "subsistence" financial aid for eligible veterans and their dependents who need temporary help with rent, mortgage, utility bills and even health insurance premiums.

This need-based financial aid is available for up to six months "for those who are unable to work his/her normal occupation due to a temporary disability, or who are permanently disabled and are waiting to

receive a permanent disability benefit from VA Compensation, VA Pension, Social Security or other long-term benefit” according to the official site.

Documentation is required-the veteran must provide written evidence via a medical report and is required to have been employed within a year of the medical report.

This program is also open to qualifying surviving spouses who do not have a temporary disability if an application is filed within the first 12 months of the death of the veteran. Minnesota County Veteran Service Officers can help with these applications.

### ***Minnesota State Unemployment Benefits for Veterans***

The State of Minnesota offers qualifying veterans unemployment benefits. Requirements to draw unemployment as a veteran include, but may not be limited to, the following:

- Must be a Minnesota resident
- Must have completed the first full term of military service
- Must be separated under honorable conditions
- The veteran must physically reside in Minnesota when the benefits are claimed
- Unemployment benefits cannot be applied for until after the veteran’s official date of separation

Once the veteran has passed the date of separation and meets the other requirements, it is permitted to apply for unemployment benefits even if the applicant does not have a **DD Form 214** Report of Discharge.

However, the veteran’s discharge paperwork is required as soon as available in order to calculate the proper amount of unemployment benefits available based on the last applicable rate of pay while serving in uniform.

This program requires the applicant to request unemployment benefits every week while unemployed, even if the wage information has not yet been supplied via DD Form 214. One important aspect of this program is that the payments will not be issued for any veteran who refuses a job offer including one from a previous employer.

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### **Additional Veteran Benefits**

#### ***Minnesota Military License Plates***

The State of Minnesota provides no-fee license plates that identify **Gold Star** families and ex-POWs. All other military-themed license plates have a \$10 filing fee and a \$10 plate fee.

### ***Recreational Benefits for Current Military Members***

There are a variety of recreation benefits for currently serving troops. Those who have not retired or separated are eligible for free Minnesota state park permits, and military personnel who are Minnesota residents get priority for certain hunting permits. Some permit-required activity such as small game hunting is free and permit-free for qualifying military members.

### ***Minnesota Recreational Benefits for Retired, Separated, and Disabled Veterans***

Those who are retired or separated from military service are eligible to hunt small game and fish without a license and receive certain veteran preference for deer lotteries and related events.

Veterans with VA-rated disabilities at 100% are eligible to receive the same benefits listed above but also may apply for a “permanent angling license”.

For many (but not all) recreational benefits, Minnesota residency requirements may apply.

### ***Firearms and Hunting Safety Training Requirements for Military Members***

Active duty military members are eligible for a hunting license in Minnesota even if they have not completed the required firearms safety training. This exemption from safety training only applies as long as the military member serves on active duty.

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources official site adds that once the veteran is discharged a firearm safety training course is required if the veteran was born after December 31, 1979, but the field training portion of the firearms safety course is waived by providing proof of military service such as a DD Form 214 to the firearms instructor.

### ***Burial Benefits for Veterans***

Minnesota operates state cemeteries in Preston and another in Little Falls. VA burial benefits are available to eligible service members and their spouses at these two cemeteries. Veterans are buried at no cost, and certain fees will apply to spouses.

Benefits include providing a gravesite, grave liner, headstone and “perpetual care” of the gravesite. Cremation options are also available. It is possible to pre-apply for these veteran burial benefits, but applicants must visit the cemetery or a county Veterans Service Office.

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**[Link to Minnesota Veterans Services](#)**

- Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs

## Mississippi

Find Mississippi State and local veteran's benefits including education, employment, healthcare, tax breaks/exemptions, recreation, and much more below. A little under 200,000 veterans reside in "The Magnolia State" according to the VA.

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### **Mississippi State Veteran Education Benefits**

#### **In-State Tuition Benefits for Veterans**

Any military veteran or those entitled to education benefits under Title 38 (including survivors and dependents) may qualify for in-state tuition even if they are not a state resident.

#### **Education Benefits for Children of POWs and MIAs**

Children of those reported as missing in action or prisoners of war may qualify for eight semesters of education benefits from the State of Mississippi. Tuition is free in such cases for qualifying applicants attending state supported schools, but the following expenses are not covered by the scholarship:

- Books
- Food
- School supplies
- Dues or fees for extracurricular activities

#### **Mississippi National Guard Scholarships**

"Certain members of the active Mississippi National Guard" may qualify for free tuition at accredited colleges, vocational schools, junior colleges, etc. Mississippi residency is required. Applicants should contact their unit orderly room or command support staff to learn what application procedures are required at the unit level.

#### **State of Mississippi High School Diploma Program for Qualifying Wartime Veterans**

Mississippi law allows local school boards to offer honorary high school diplomas to veterans of World War II, the Korean Conflict, and Vietnam if those veterans could not complete high school due to enlisting in the United States military. Specifically, this program is for:

- Mississippi residents
- Those who should have graduated between 1941 and 1955 OR
- Scheduled to graduate between 1963 and 1973 and awarded the Vietnam Service Ribbon.



Family members may apply to have a diploma awarded posthumously.

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## **Mississippi State Veteran Employment Benefits**

### **State Retirement Credit for Qualifying Wartime Veterans**

Anyone contributing to the Mississippi State Public Employees Retirement System with wartime service during World War Two (including Maritime Service) may be entitled to four years of credit. This is as long as they entered state service after finishing their military obligation.

There is also the option to have this credit extended beyond four years in cases where the employee was retained by the military for circumstances beyond the service member's control.

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## **Mississippi State Veteran Housing Benefits**

### **State of Mississippi Veterans Home Purchase Board**

Qualifying veterans may be eligible for low interest mortgages up to \$250,000, which is good for existing construction homes or for having a house built to suit.

This loan option from the State of Mississippi is available for those who were residents of the state prior to enlisting. Additionally for those who have been a Mississippi resident for two consecutive years before filling out loan application paperwork.

This loan option is available to anyone who qualifies for the **VA home loan program** and can provide a VA Certificate of Eligibility for a VA mortgage. An Honorable discharge is also required.

### **Mississippi Veterans Homes**

The State of Mississippi operates four veterans' homes located in Collins, Jackson, Kosciusko, and Oxford. They feature skilled care and 150 beds in each facility. Nursing care, pharmacy services, rehabilitation, and social services are available in these facilities. Admission requirements to these homes includes:

- Qualifying military service with a discharge other than Dishonorable
- Mississippi residency
- No communicable diseases or conditions that may affect safety of other residents
- Out-of-state veterans may be admitted on a space-available basis

- Out-of-state veterans must demonstrate a medical need for skilled care.

Spouses may also qualify for care in these homes, as long as the military member meets the above requirements. Admissions paperwork for families may include the following requirements:

- Application Cover Sheet
- Letter from the Administrator
- Family Cover Sheet
- Social History
- 1010-EZ
- Form 21-22

The entire application process takes approximately two weeks, but expedited processing may be possible in cases of an emergency.

Mississippi state law declares, “There shall be no State Veterans Nursing Home resident daily charge for those residents in need of nursing home care for a VA adjudicated service-connected disability.”

This fee exemption is also extended to veterans who have a singular or combined service-connected rating of seventy percent or higher OR a disability rating of one hundred percent “based on individual unemployability.”

Special assistance may be available for qualifying homeless veterans who need these services.

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## **Mississippi State Veteran Financial Benefits**

### **Military Retirement Pay Tax Exemption**

**Military retirement pay** is not subject to State of Mississippi income tax.

### **Ad Valorem Homestead Tax Breaks for Veterans**

The State of Mississippi offers a homestead tax exemption to “any Veteran having a service-connected, total disability” with an honorable discharge. This exemption is good for “all Ad Valorem taxes on the assessed value of homestead property.” Unremarried surviving spouses of veterans who qualify may also apply for this exemption.

### **State Business Privilege Tax Exemption for Qualifying Disabled Veterans**

While not aimed specifically at veterans, the State of Mississippi offers a business tax exemption from the “privilege tax for specified businesses” to “persons who are 65 or older, blind, deaf, dumb, or with loss (or loss of use) of hand or foot.” Documentation of the disability is required for this tax break. Income requirements may also apply.

### **Fee-Free Documents and Document Services for Qualifying Veterans**

Birth and death certificates are available at no cost from the Mississippi Department of Health, Bureau of Vital Statistics. This applies when the records are intended by state residents to make claims for:

- Dependency
- Disability
- Survivor benefits

The Mississippi State Bureau of Vital Statistics is required to provide a similar service for certified copies of birth certificates for anyone joining the military. Chancery and Circuit Clerks are required to provide fee-free records for veterans and family members including:

- Marriage licenses
- Divorce decrees
- Adoption decrees
- “All other records”

This fee-free service is offered when the documents requested are needed for the following purposes:

- Claims for dependency
- Claims for disability
- Claims for survivor benefits

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### **Mississippi State Additional Veteran Benefits**

#### **Concealed Carry Permits Training Exemption for Qualifying Veterans**

The state exempts honorably discharged military members and those currently serving from concealed carry firearms training. The service member must have completed law enforcement or combat training with any handgun. An affidavit may be required from the service member stating the required training took place.

#### **Concealed Weapon Permit Fee Exemptions**

All active duty service members are exempt from concealed carry permit fees and renewal fees in the State of Mississippi. Furthermore, any veteran having a service connected disability is exempt from concealed carry permit and renewal fees if the veteran is a state resident for 12 months or more at application time.

There is an exception for residency made in cases where the applicant has a valid concealed carry permit from another state, is an active duty military member stationed in the state, or is a law enforcement officer establishing state residency.

### **Hunting and Fishing Recreational Benefits for Qualifying Disabled Veterans**

Veterans with VA rated service-connected disabilities at 100% are not required to buy hunting or fishing licenses in the state. They must have proof of both state residency and disability status while hunting or fishing.

### **Burial Benefits for Veterans**

There are two state-run veteran cemeteries in the State of Mississippi. The Mississippi Veterans Memorial Cemetery is in Newton and North Mississippi Veterans Memorial Cemetery in Kilmichael.

Interment is open to those with Honorable discharges, plus spouses and dependent children. These cemeteries are also open to Reservists who die while on active duty, or while performing training duty, or “who have 20 years of service in reserve components of the Armed Forces creditable toward retirement pay.”

Services include:

- Opening and closing of the gravesite
- Furnished grave or columbarium space
- Grave Liner
- Use of Committal Shelter for services
- Supply and installation of suitable headstones or markers
- Perpetual care

**Burial benefits** are free for veterans, but services for dependents and spouses may require a fee.

## Missouri

Find Missouri State and local veteran's benefits including education, employment, healthcare, tax breaks/exemptions, recreation and much more below. The Show-Me State is home to over 450,000 veterans that can access these great veterans' benefits.

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### **Veteran Education Benefits**

#### **Returning Heroes Act Tuition Reduction**

Combat veterans and certain decorated service members who are Missouri residents may be eligible for reduced tuition at Missouri state-funded colleges. The Missouri Returning Heroes Act limits the tuition rate charged to qualifying veterans to \$50 per credit hour.

According to the State of Missouri, this reduction in tuition is applied "before federal and state student aid has been applied to the tuition amount". Requirements for this program include the following:

- Veteran entered the military as a Missouri resident. This must be documented as the veteran's home of record on **DD Form 214**. The requirement does not include being a Missouri resident at the time the applicant gets the benefit.
- Veteran must be discharged under any condition EXCEPT punitive discharges such as Bad Conduct, Less Than Honorable, Dishonorable, etc.
- Veteran must be degree-seeking at a Missouri public institution.

#### **Missouri Wartime Survivor's Grant**

This educational grant is open to a limited number (25 total per year) of qualifying children and spouses of veterans who died as a result of combat, or who became "80 percent disabled as a result of injuries or accidents sustained in combat action" since Sept. 11, 2001. To be eligible, the veteran must have been a Missouri resident when first entering the military service or at the time of death or injury.

Per semester, this grant covers the lesser of the actual tuition charged or the amount of tuition charged a Missouri resident enrolled in the same number of hours at the University of Missouri Columbia. There is also \$2,000 per semester allowance for housing and a book stipend.

Applicants must be under 25, and according to the State of Missouri, "You may continue to be eligible through the end of the semester in which you turn 25 OR the receipt of your first bachelor's degree, whichever occurs first."

#### **Missouri State Exemptions from Proof of Residency**

In situations where the family of a student living in Missouri, “moves to live with other family members or live in a military family support community because one or both of the child’s parents are stationed or deployed out of state or deployed within Missouri under Title 32 or Title 10 active duty orders”, the State of Missouri considers such students to have furnished adequate proof of residency and “may attend the school district in which the family member’s residence or family support community is located.”

In cases where the parents’ active duty orders expire during the academic year, the student is permitted finish the remainder of the academic year in that district.

### **Exemptions from the Missouri A+ Schools Program for Qualifying Students**

The State of Missouri permits active duty military dependent students to be listed as exempt from a three-year attendance requirement for the Missouri A+ Schools Program. Also exempt: dependent children of retired veterans who relocate to Missouri within one year of the date of the parent’s retirement from active duty.

### **Operation Recognition Honorary High School Diplomas for Qualifying Missouri State Veterans**

The Missouri State Operation Recognition program offers honorary high school diplomas for veterans (and qualifying civilians) who experienced an interruption in high school education due to military service. All honorably discharged veterans, “who are residents or former residents of the state of Missouri who served in the United States military” did not complete their high school education are eligible to apply for the honorary diploma which is also available posthumously.

### **In-State Tuition Eligibility for Service Members Retiring/Separating**

Veterans who leave the service with either an Honorable or General discharge, and who establish residency in the State of Missouri are considered a resident of Missouri when applying to attend approved public four-year and two-year institutions. In cases where the veteran is attending a community college, “presence within the taxing district of the community college must also be declared” according to the State of Missouri.

### **In-State Tuition Eligibility for Military Dependents**

Dependents of military members living residing in Missouri (and whose parent is assigned to permanent duty in the state) may be eligible for in-state tuition. This is applicable if the student is enrolled in an undergraduate or graduate degree program at approved Missouri higher education institution. Transfers may also be affected by this benefit.

### **Additional Missouri State Veterans Education Benefits**

Depending on the institution and the veteran's status as active duty, retired/separated, etc. other state education benefits may be available including academic credit for military training and professional military education courses.

There are also protections for certain scholarship awardees when called to active duty before a program can be completed. The State of Missouri Veterans Commission official site urges vets and currently serving military members seeking education benefits to utilize a **Veterans service organization (VSO)** to help navigate the state military benefits system.

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### **Veteran Employment Benefits**

#### **Missouri Show Me Heroes Employment Program**

Show-Me Heroes is a veteran's employment incentive program featuring "a 50% wage reimbursement to employers in qualifying training for up to six months" for more than one thousand hours of training.

Some veterans may qualify for both the Missouri State Show-Me Heroes program AND VA on-the-job training and apprenticeship help. Requirements for veterans includes an honorable discharge and you must apply within a year of your discharge date. Certain **military spouses** may also be eligible.

#### **State Contract and Business Preference for Disabled Veterans**

Veterans with VA-rated disabilities may be eligible for preference when bidding or applying for jobs/services with the state. According to the Missouri Veterans Commission, the preference applies to "disabled Veteran businesses doing business as Missouri firms, corporations, or individuals, or which maintain Missouri offices or places of business, when the quality of performance promised is equal or better and the price quoted is the same or less".

#### **Military Service Waivers for Dissolved Corporations**

The Missouri Secretary of State offers to waive reinstatement fees and procedures under qualifying circumstances including when a corporation must be dissolved "for failure to file an annual registration report when the failure was due to the business owner's active military service." Fees and other costs may be waived in such case under qualifying circumstances.

#### **Business Fees Waiver for Active Duty/Guard Members**

Missouri resident veterans who are organizers, members, officers, partners, or majority shareholders who are part of a “company, corporation, health services corporation, nonprofit corporation, cooperative company, or partnership” may be eligible for waivers of “certain specified business fees.”

### **Military Experience Counted For Missouri Professional Licenses**

The State of Missouri directs professional licensing boards and commissions in the state to accept military education, training, or service “toward the qualifications to receive the license or certification upon presentation of satisfactory evidence by an applicant for certification”. Additionally, military members who have jobs that require licensing or certification by the state are not required to attend required continuing education classes when called to active duty as members of the Guard or Reserve.

Once the military member has come home from active service, the employee will not be required to do make-up tests or retake training missed due to military service.

Healthcare professionals called to active duty also have some license protection; according to the State of Missouri, a veteran’s healthcare licenses/certificates will remain valid for the duration of active duty military service. When it comes time for these military members to renew the licenses/certificates, it will be “without the payment of dues.”

The service member’s existing license/certificate may remain valid as long as military service continues on active duty and “for a period of at least six months after being released from active duty.”

### **Missouri State Unemployment Compensation for Qualifying Veterans and Spouses**

The State of Missouri has unemployment compensation for certain Veterans and spouses. Veterans of “the war on terror” may be eligible for weekly unemployment benefits for up to 26 weeks. Compensation is based on the veteran’s highest pay grade, with a maximum benefit at approximately \$1,150.

There are also unemployment compensation opportunities for military spouses who may lose jobs in order to relocate with a military spouse for a **permanent change of station** (PCS) move. According to the Missouri State Veterans Commission, qualifying spouses who relocate a new a residence “from which it is impractical to commute to the workplace and remains employed as long as reasonable prior to the move” may be eligible for unemployment benefits if the other state unemployment criteria are met.

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### **Veteran Housing Benefits**

#### **Missouri Veterans Homes and Housing Assistance**



The State of Missouri operates seven veterans' homes in the following locations:

- Cameron
- Cape Girardeau
- Mexico
- Mt. Vernon
- St. James
- St. Louis
- Warrensburg

Veteran eligibility rules include Missouri residency and a need for skilled nursing care. Patients may be eligible for housing assistance in these homes and apply with the following required paperwork:

- Application for Admission (MO 812-0100),
- Admission Medical Information form (MO 812-1099)
- Financial Information Income and Assets Worksheet (MO 812-0704)
- Health Care Information sheet
- Notice of Privacy Practices

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### **Veteran Financial Benefits**

#### **Tax Breaks for Veterans**

Tax breaks for Missouri veterans include a full property tax exemption for the primary residences of VA-rated 100% disabled vets who are listed as former prisoners of war. Other tax breaks for vets in the State of Missouri include:

- Income tax exemptions for active duty military members
- Income tax exemptions for military retirement pay
- Property tax receipt waivers for out-of-state military
- Personal property tax credits for qualifying military

Tax laws and requirements change frequently; in order to determine your eligibility for tax credits mentioned above or to see the latest tax break/waivers offered by the State of Missouri, contact a tax professional or the Missouri Veterans Commission.

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### **Additional Veteran Benefits**

#### **Driver License, ID Cards, and License Plates for Veterans**

The State of Missouri offers veteran-designated ID cards, driver's licenses, license plates, and more. These services require the payment of fees (include plate fees and service fees where applicable) and proof of service at the Missouri DMV.

### **Legal Benefits for Veterans**

The State of Missouri offers special consideration for deploying service members where child custody issues are concerned. According to the Missouri Veterans Commission, in cases where a deploying military parent is to be separated from their dependents, "a court shall not enter a final order modifying the terms of custody or visitation until 90 days after the deployment ends unless there is a written agreement by both parties."

Deployments, including any future deployment "shall not be the sole factor to support a permanent modification of the custody or visitation terms established in an existing order" according to the State of Missouri.

Child custody and visitation orders are permitted to be modified in order to give reasonable accommodation to the deploying service member and "shall automatically end no later than 30 days after the return of the deploying parent and the original order at the time of deployment is automatically reinstated."

There is also an important consideration for deploying veterans where child support arrangements are concerned. A military member who has been called to active duty for a period of more than 30 days may request a review and modification of a child support agreement, "due to an income change."

There will be a review of the child support court order regardless of the age of the order "and complete a modification where warranted. Those who wish to have a child support agreement reviewed must furnish a copy of the most recent Leave & Earnings statement plus a copy of the relevant military orders assigning the veteran to active duty status.

### **Burial Benefits for Veterans**

The Missouri Veterans Commission operates a group of five Veterans' cemeteries across the state:

- Springfield
- Higginsville
- Bloomfield
- Jacksonville
- Fort Leonard Wood

A sixth Veterans cemetery is located at the St. James Veterans Home, but is not available for new interments. These facilities are operated free-of-charge for qualifying families, with available services

including “opening and closing of the grave, provision of a concrete grave liner, upright granite headstones, and full military honors for the Veteran, and perpetual care.”

There is no Missouri residency required for these services. Veterans are eligible for interment with any military discharge other than Dishonorable. Spouses and dependent children may also qualify for interment; the official side advises families to “make these VA and State burial benefits arrangements through their funeral provider as neither the VA nor the State of Missouri make funeral arrangements or perform cremations.”

### **Missouri State Recreational Benefits for Veterans**

According to the State of Missouri, Any honorably discharged military Veteran having a service-related disability of sixty percent (60%) or greater, or who was a prisoner of war during military service may be eligible for free hunting and fishing licenses. This privilege basically excuses the veteran from having to apply for a license at all (hunting or fishing “without a permit”) as long as the Veteran carries a “certified statement of eligibility” from the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Those who meet the criteria above but are not residents of the State of Missouri may be eligible for state resident permit privileges. Missouri resident permit privileges are also available to those who have resided in Missouri due to a military permanent change of station.

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### **Missouri State Link to Veterans Services**

- [Missouri Veterans Commission](#)
- [Missouri Secretary of State’s Business Services Corporations Division](#)

## Montana

Find Montana State and local veteran's benefits including education, employment, healthcare, tax breaks and exemptions, recreation and much more below. The Treasure State is home to more than 90,000 veterans. Learn more about all that Big Sky Country has to offer.

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### Veteran Education Benefits

#### Tuition Waivers

Montana offers a variety of education benefits for veterans and their dependents.

**The Montana State Scholarship Program:** National Guard service members who attend college may receive scholarships through this program.

In order to be eligible for this benefit, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Grade E1 through E7, WO1 through CW3, and O1 through O2
- Serving a 6 year contract
- Completed Individual Advanced Training; or
- Basic Officer Leaders Course, with less than 16 years of service
- Attending a state school
- Working towards a Bachelor's degree

**Honorably Discharged Veteran Tuition Waiver:** Veterans who attend college may be eligible for registration fee and tuition waivers.

In order to be eligible for this benefit, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- "Honorable" discharge ("General Under Honorable Conditions" is excluded)
- Resident of Montana
- Eligible for VA education benefits that have been exhausted or have expired, (excludes veterans who withdrew a portion of their **VEAP** contribution before benefits expired)

Applicants must also meet one of the following criteria:

- Undergraduate and graduate student who served during one of the following periods:
  - December 7, 1941 to December 31, 1946
  - June 22, 1950 to January 31, 1955
  - January 1, 1964 to May 7, 1975
- Undergraduate student seeking an initial degree who has received an Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal for service after May 7, 1975

- Undergraduate student seeking an initial degree who has received the Southwest Asia Service Medal for service in the Persian Gulf between August 2, 1990 and April 11, 1991
- Veteran undergraduate student seeking an initial degree who has received the Kosovo Campaign Medal
- Veteran undergraduate student seeking an initial degree who served in a combat theatre in Afghanistan or Iraq after September 11, 2001 and received one of the following honors:
  - Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal
  - Afghanistan Campaign Medal
  - Iraq Campaign Medal

Upon approval, this tuition waiver may cover a total of 12 semesters. Recipients must maintain adequate progress toward their degree.

### **Free Tuition for Dependents**

**Surviving Dependents of Montana National Guard Member Waiver:** Montana offers tuition waivers to surviving spouses or children of Montana National Guard service members killed through injury, disease, or disability due to state active duty.

**War Orphans Waiver:** Children under 25 years of age whose parent or parents have died due to injury, disease, or disability due to military service may be eligible for tuition waivers.

In order to be eligible for this benefit, deceased veteran parents must meet the following criteria:

- Montana resident upon entry into military service
- On active duty during World War II, the Korean War, Vietnam, the Iraq or Afghanistan conflicts
- Killed in action
- Died through injury, disease, or disability due to military service

This waiver is subject to approval by the Commissioner of Higher Education.

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### **Veteran Employment Benefits**

#### **Veteran Hiring Preference**

Veterans who apply for public employment in Montana receive **preference over non-veteran applicants:**

- Veterans receive a 5 percentage point preference
- Disabled veterans and eligible dependents receive a 10 percentage point preference

In order to be eligible for this benefit, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- US citizen
- Must meet the minimum qualifications required for the position

This benefit may include a guaranteed job interview for qualified veterans who request preference.

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## **Veteran Housing Benefits**

### **Veterans Assisted Care Homes and Nursing Homes**

Montana has two nursing homes for veterans; the Eastern Montana Veterans Home, located in Glendive, and the Montana Veterans Home, located in Columbia Falls. Both homes are managed through the Montana Department of Health and Human Services, and both are certified through the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services, and the VA.

The Eastern Montana Veteran's Home houses 80 intermediate/skilled-care beds and 16 beds in its Special Care Unit.

In order to be eligible for this benefit, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Honorably discharged veteran
- Spouse or surviving spouse of honorably discharged veteran

The Columbia Falls Montana Veterans Home is certified through Medicare/Medicaid and the VA. It houses 12 residential self-care beds and 105 intermediate/skilled-care beds, as well as a memory care unit with 15 beds.

In order to be eligible for this benefit, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Honorably discharged veteran
- Qualifies for skilled/intermediate nursing care
- Qualifies for residential self-care living

Spouses may also be admitted if space is available. A veteran and their spouse may be admitted together if both qualify for either residential self-care or intermediate/skilled care.

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## **Veteran Financial Benefits**

### **Property Tax Exemption for Totally Disabled Veterans**

The Montana Department of Revenue runs the Disabled Veterans, (MDV), and Assistance Program. This program helps veterans who are 100% disabled due to military service, or unremarried surviving spouses, through **property tax reductions**.

In order to qualify for this benefit, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Verification of 100% disability due to military service through the VA
- Own a home, either through mortgage or contract
- Maintain this home as primary residence for a minimum of seven months per year

Unremarried surviving spouses must supply verification from the VA showing either that:

- The deceased veteran spouse died during active duty as a result of military service
- The deceased veteran spouse died from a disability as a result of military service, with a disability rating of 100% at time of death

Income and marital status also affect eligibility for this benefit, (this excludes capital income or loss). All income must be reported, including veteran's benefits, Social Security, or any other non-taxable form of income. Veterans who own homes on either agricultural or forest land, the benefit will include the home and an area of one acre around it.

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### **Additional Veteran Benefits**

#### **Vehicle Registration for Veterans**

Veterans and their unremarried surviving spouses may be eligible for exemption from registration fees for up to two non-commercial vehicles. In order to be eligible for this benefit, veterans and/or their unremarried surviving spouses must meet one of the following criteria:

- POW or their unremarried surviving spouse.
- Veteran who is currently rated 100% disabled due to military service or their unremarried surviving spouse.
- Veteran who receives payment at the 100% disabled rate by the VA for disabilities due to military service; or their unremarried surviving spouse.
- Veteran who has been awarded the Purple Heart, and who have been determined by the VA to be 50% or more disabled due to military service; or their unremarried surviving spouse.
- The unremarried surviving spouse of a service member killed on active duty.
- The unremarried surviving spouse of a service member or veteran who died from injury or disability due to military service.

All situations must be verified in official documentation from the VA.

## License Plates and Parking Benefits

Montana offers several license plates for qualifying veterans. Each plate imparts specific additional benefits to veterans:

The Disabled Veteran license plate includes the following benefits:

- A one-time \$10 fee for plate production
- No cemetery or annual renewal fee (motorcycle plates are exempt and require a \$10 veterans cemetery fee)
- The "DV" designation entitles disabled veterans to access disabled parking

This benefit is not transferable to a surviving spouse.

In order to qualify for this benefit, applicants must meet one of the following criteria:

- Purple Heart recipient with a disability rating of 50% or more due to military service
- Veteran with a disability rating of 100% due to military service
- Veteran who is paid at the 100% disabled rate due to military service

The Gold Star Family license plate includes the following benefits:

- A one-time \$10 fee for plate production
- No veterans cemetery fees or renewal fees (motorcycle plates are exempt and require a \$10 veterans cemetery fee)

Family members eligible for a Gold Star Lapel Button may be eligible for these plates, but are still responsible for all motor vehicle, trailer, semitrailer, or pole trailer registration fees and special license plate fees.

The Army Veteran license plate includes the following benefits:

- A one-time \$10 fee for plate production
- A \$10 cemetery fee and renewal fee (motorcycle plates require a \$10 veterans cemetery fee)

The Purple Heart Disabled Veteran license plate includes the following benefits:

- A one-time \$10 fee for plate production
- A \$10 cemetery fee and renewal fee (motorcycle plates require a \$10 veterans cemetery fee)

The Purple Heart license plate includes the following benefits:



- A one-time \$10 fee for plate production
- A \$10 cemetery fee and renewal fee (motorcycle plates require a \$10 veterans cemetery fee)

In order to be eligible for this benefit, applicants must provide the following:

- VA verification of 50% or more disability rating and
- Form DD-214 verifying receipt of Purple Heart

## **Burial Benefits**

**Montana Cemetery Fee Exemption:** Veterans and their unremarried surviving spouses may be eligible for exemption from veteran's cemetery fees.

In order to be eligible for this benefit, veterans and/or their unremarried surviving spouses must meet one of the following criteria:

- POW or their unremarried surviving spouse
- Veteran who is currently rated 100% disabled due to military service or their unremarried surviving spouse
- Veteran who receives payment at the 100% disabled rate by the VA for disabilities due to military service; or their unremarried surviving spouse
- The unremarried surviving spouse of a service member killed on active duty
- The unremarried surviving spouse of a service member or veteran who died from injury or disability due to military service

## **Veterans Cemeteries**

There are three veterans' cemeteries in Montana: Fort Harrison in Helena, Eastern Montana State Veterans Cemetery in Miles City, and Western Montana State Veterans Cemetery in Missoula.

In order for a deceased veteran to be interred at any of these cemeteries, the following documents must be submitted:

- A copy of death certificate
- Discharge papers that indicate "Honorable" or "Under Honorable Conditions"
- Burial transit permit for full body burial (provided by the mortuary) OR
- Cremation certificate (provided by the mortuary)
- Headstone application (completed by the funeral home or the cemetery sexton)

Veterans are entitled to a headstone provided at government expense, whether they are interred in the state veterans cemetery or private cemetery.

The following information will be inscribed on the headstone or marker at government expense:

- Name of the deceased
- Years of birth and death
- Branch of service

The following information may also be included at government expense upon request:

- Military service component
- Rank
- Period of war service
- Religious emblem
- Valor awards
- Purple Heart

A fee of \$115.00 will be charged to set the headstone. The deceased veteran's county of residence will pay \$70.00, and the family will pay the remaining \$45.00. Non-residents must pay the full \$115.00.

In order for either the spouse of a veteran, or their child under the age of 21, to be interred at any of these cemeteries, the following documents must be submitted:

- A copy of death certificate
- The veteran's discharge papers that indicate "Honorable" or "Under Honorable Conditions"
- Burial transit permit for full body burial (provided by the mortuary) OR
- Cremation certificate (provided by the mortuary)
- Headstone application (completed by the funeral home or the cemetery sexton)

There is a \$500.00 fee for opening and closing of the grave for a spouse's interment, and a headstone is provided at government expense. However, headstones are not provided at government expense if the spouse is interred in a private cemetery.

## Nebraska

Find Nebraska State and local veteran's benefits including education, employment, healthcare, tax breaks/exemptions, recreation, and much more below. The "Cornhusker State" has over 130,000 veterans living there according to the VA.

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### **Nebraska State Veteran Education Benefits**

#### **Nebraska Waiver of Tuition Program**

The State of Nebraska administers a Waiver of Tuition program for dependents of eligible veterans. This program offers a 100% waiver of a qualifying student's tuition and "tuition-related fees" to participating University of Nebraska campuses, Nebraska state colleges, and Nebraska community colleges.

This program is offered for "ONE degree, diploma, or certificate from a community college and ONE baccalaureate degree from the university or a state college. If the student wishes to take full advantage of the Waiver program, the degree, diploma, or certificate must be earned before the baccalaureate degree" according to the Nebraska Department of Veterans Affairs.

Once a baccalaureate degree has been earned, the student is no longer eligible to receive Waiver. There are no extensions or exceptions to this rule.

The program does not pay for housing, college parking fees, food, books, or materials. Qualifying criteria for applicants includes the following requirements for the veteran parent, who must:

- Be rated permanently and totally disabled as a result of military service; or
- Have died of a service connected disability; or
- Have died subsequent to discharge as a result of injury or illness sustained while a member of the armed forces; or
- Have been classified as missing in action or a prisoner of war during armed hostilities while a member of the armed forces;
- The VA disability rating decision date, date of death, or classification "must be prior to the start of the term being applied for to be eligible for that term" according to the Nebraska VA.

There is also eligibility criteria for the student applicant, including the following:

- The student must be a Nebraska resident and be eligible to pay in-state tuition.
- The dependent must be a spouse or surviving spouse, a biological or adopted child, or stepchild.

This program must be applied for prior to the start of the school term. The applications are submitted to the Nebraska Department of Veterans Affairs initially, not the school.

## **Nebraska Reservist Tuition Credit Program**

Residents of Nebraska who are also enlisted Active Selected Reserve members may be eligible for a 50% tuition credit at approved colleges (see below). The program is limited to the first 200 applicants in a given school year with two years remaining on their current enlistment at the start of each school term. There are additional requirements:

- Service member must agree to serve a minimum of three years as a Reservist;
- Should not have completed 10 years of total service in the armed forces;
- Must be working toward a degree or certificate;
- Must meet Nebraska in-state tuition requirements for residency.

Approved schools for this program include:

- University of Nebraska (Kearney, Lincoln, Omaha, UNMC, NCTA-Curtis)
- Chadron State College
- Peru State College
- Wayne State College
- Central Community College (Columbus, Grand Island, Hastings, Holdrege)
- Metropolitan Community College
- MidPlains Community College (McCook, North Platte)
- Northeast Community College
- Southeast Community College (Beatrice, Lincoln, Milford)
- Western Nebraska Community College (Alliance, Scottsbluff, Sidney)

## **Operation Recognition: High School Diploma Program for Veterans**

The State of Nebraska offers high school diplomas to qualifying wartime veterans who could not complete high school or attend graduation as a result of military service. Qualifying dates of service include World War Two from 9/16/1940 through 12/31/1946 and the Korean War from 6/25/1950 through 1/31/1955.

Unlike some states' high school diploma programs similar to this one, the Nebraska application procedure requires the veteran or family members to submit an application and the veteran's discharge paperwork to the Nebraska Department of Veterans Affairs. This establishes eligibility for the program rather than approaching the school district.

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## **Nebraska State Veteran Employment Benefits**

### **Nebraska State Job Preference for Qualifying Veterans and Spouses**

State job hiring preference is extended to qualifying veterans and their spouses. This preference is open to retired/separated service members, spouses of 100% disabled vets, and spouses of those still serving or who have left the service in the past 180 days leading up to the application/testing for a state job.

Applicants must submit military discharge paperwork such as the DD Form 214, plus VA documentation of any service-connected disability. Proof of legal marriage must be submitted with spouse applications. Spouses of a veteran currently on active duty may claim preference “during the time of active duty and up to 180 days after their separation from service” according to the Nebraska VA.

Hiring preference begins at five extra percentage points added to passing scores on all parts of a job exam, with an additional five percent added for qualifying disabled veterans.

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### **Nebraska State Veteran Housing Benefits**

#### **Nebraska State Veterans’ Homes**

The State of Nebraska operates four veterans’ homes in Bellevue, Norfolk, Grand Island, and Scottsbluff. Depending on location, services may include domiciliary care, intermediate and skilled nursing care. These homes are for those who have served on Active Duty, plus surviving spouses, and **Gold Star** parents.

Applications for admission are reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the Nebraska Veterans’ Homes Board. You may submit an application to each home directly or apply via a Veterans Service Organization including any one of the following:

- American Legion
- AMVETS
- Disabled American Veterans
- Marine Corps League
- Military Order of the Purple Heart
- Paralyzed Veterans of America
- Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States
- Vietnam Veterans of America

Waiting lists may apply, it’s best to explore options as early as possible.

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### **Nebraska State Veteran Financial Benefits**

#### **Nebraska Veterans’ Aid Fund**

Nebraska administers a “temporary emergency aid fund” to help veterans, spouses, and dependents in times of emergency. This fund helps “their normal method of living and when other resources are not immediately available” according to the Nebraska VA official site.

This assistance can be used for food, shelter, clothing, medical needs, and funeral expenses. Applications for this assistance must be accomplished via the County Service Officer or Post Service Officer “of any recognized veterans’ organization in the county nearest the applicant’s place of residence and submitted to the Department of Veterans’ Affairs.”

### **Military Retirement Pay State Tax Breaks for Qualifying Veterans**

Under a Nebraska state program which began in 2015, qualifying military members who retire after July 18, 2014 may make a one-time choice (within two years after the date of their retirement) to exclude a portion of their retirement income from state taxation. The two choices are as follows:

- Exclude 40% of all military retirement income for seven consecutive state tax years beginning with the year in which the election is made. All retirement income after the 40% election is treated as fully taxable income.
- Exclude 15% of all military retirement income for all taxable years beginning with the year in which they turn 67. All retirement income before the 15% election is treated as fully taxable income.

Once the choice is made, it cannot be changed. This process is in no way automatic. If a choice is not made within the two years after retirement time frame, the benefit is lost.

Those who retire from military service before July 1, 2012 or who fails to make the election within two years of his/her retirement date are NOT eligible for the exclusion. Guard and Reserve members may also be eligible but even if retirement benefits do not begin within two years of the retirement date, a choice must still be made within that deadline (see above). See the Nebraska Department of Veterans Affairs official site for more information.

### **State of Nebraska Homestead Exemption**

Totally disabled veterans (with any discharge other than Dishonorable) and unremarried surviving spouses may be eligible for a Homestead Exemption for property taxes in the state of Nebraska. These exemptions generally apply to primary residences the veteran and/or spouse use as their home address.

The amount and qualifications for this exemption may be modified depending on the tax year. Tax laws are subject to change and there are income limits on a sliding scale which may also change depending on current year’s tax laws. Contact a county tax assessor’s office to determine what may be applicable within the current tax year.

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## **Additional Nebraska State Veteran Benefits**

### **Recreational Benefits for Veterans**

Veterans who are Nebraska residents with VA-rated disabilities at 50% or greater may qualify for a fee-free lifetime hunting or fishing permit. This benefit is also open to those who get a pension from the Veterans Administration “as a result of a total permanent disability not incurred in the line of duty in the Military Service.”

Nebraska residents deployed out of the state with a branch of the United States military within the last 12 months may be eligible for a greatly reduced one-time Annual Small Game Hunt/Fish/Fur Harvest Permit including all state stamps. A copy of deployment orders is required at application time.

There is also an option for a reduced veteran’s Hunting/Fishing Permit (for a fee of \$5) if the applicant is a veteran 64 years of age or older who served on active duty beyond basic training.

### **Burial Benefits for Veterans**

The State of Nebraska operates a **veterans’ cemetery** in Alliance, NE. Admission requirements for veterans and qualifying spouses are the same as the requirements for interment in a VA National Cemetery, and pre-need eligibility determination is highly encouraged.

Caskets and cremation options are available. Plus pre-interment planning, headstones, perpetual care of the site, and reinternment services are also an option where applicable. Call (308) 763-2958 to learn more about pre-need eligibility.

## Nevada

Find Nevada State and local veteran's benefits including education, employment, healthcare, tax breaks/exemptions, recreation and much more below. There are over 220,000 veterans residing in The Silver State.

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### **Nevada State Veteran Education Benefits**

#### **Nevada Non-Resident Tuition Exemption for Active Duty Members, Spouses and Dependents**

Active duty military stationed in Nevada, plus spouses and dependent children, may qualify for in-state tuition rates. In cases where there is a permanent change of duty station outside the State of Nevada, spouses and dependent children remain classified as Nevada residents for tuition purposes. This is status remains as "long as they remain continuously enrolled at an NSHE institution" according to the Nevada Department of Veterans Services (NDVS).

#### **Nevada Non-Resident Tuition Exemption for Veterans Serving on Active Duty in Nevada when Discharged**

Honorably discharged veterans and on active duty stationed in Nevada at the time of discharge (including the Marine Corps Mountain Warfare Training Center at Pickle Meadows, California according to NVDS) are charged tuition as in-state residents.

#### **Nevada Non-Resident Tuition Exemption for Out-of-State Veterans**

The 2013 Nevada Legislature passed a law exempting honorably discharged veterans within "the two years immediately preceding the date of matriculation" from non-resident tuition.

#### **Nevada Grant-In-Aid for the Family of a Member Killed in the Line of Duty**

This grant is for "financially dependent" children and/or spouses of an active duty member of the U.S. Armed Forces who died in the line of duty after PCSing to the State of Nevada. This grant-in-aid is defined by the State of Nevada as a financial award with no expectation of repayment.

#### **Nevada National Guard Fee Waiver**

Active members of the Nevada National Guard, dependent children, and qualifying military spouses are eligible for a registration fee waiver for higher education. This program excludes programs at certain higher learning institutions including:



- William S. Boyd School of Law
- University of Nevada School of Medicine
- UNLV School of Dental Medicine

These three programs are not eligible for this Nevada National Guard Fee waiver program.

### **POW/MIA Benefits for Children and Spouse**

Children and spouses of a military member permanently stationed in Nevada who has been declared a Prisoner of War (POW) or Missing in Action (MIA) may be eligible to register for similar registration fee waivers mentioned above.

Dependent children are permitted to apply for this waiver until age 28, or ten years after the date of enrollment if the dependent is under the age of 18 at application time. Spouses have up to ten years from the date on which the member was identified as a prisoner of war or missing in action to use this fee waiver program.

The same restrictions apply to programs associated with the William S. Boyd School of Law, the University Of Nevada School Of Medicine, and the UNLV School of Dental Medicine.

### **The Nevada State Millennium Scholarship**

In general, Governor Guinn Millennium Scholarship recipients have up to six academic years after their high school graduation date to take advantage of their scholarship award. An extension is available for qualifying military dependent children “equal to time served, but not to exceed six years.”

This extension must be applied for and is not automatically granted. Learn more by downloading the [Application for Extension of Scholarship Expiration Date](#), available at the Nevada State Treasurer’s Office official site.

### **Operation Recognition: The Nevada State High School Diploma Program for Veterans**

Operation Recognition was passed in 2003, allowing Nevada School Districts to issue a standard high school diploma to veterans who served during World War Two through Vietnam (between September 16, 1940 and May 7, 1975).

The veteran, next-of-kin, or guardians of disabled veteran can fill out an application on the veteran’s behalf. High school diplomas can be awarded posthumously under Operation Recognition.

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### **Nevada State Veteran Employment Benefits**

## **Nevada State Hiring Preference for Veterans**

State hiring preference is available to active duty military, members of the Nevada Guard, plus surviving spouses. Nevada state law requires applicants to declare intent to use veterans' preference points at the time of the job application. Proof of eligibility as a veteran must be submitted at the application time.

State hiring preferences are offered to active duty veterans and qualifying members of the Nevada National Guard. Standard hiring preference equals five points; disabled applicants may be eligible for 10 preference points.

According to Nevada State law, anyone who qualifies for preference points "is entitled to have the points applied to any open competitive examination in the classified service, but only to one promotional examination."

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## **Nevada State Veteran Housing Benefits**

### **Nevada State Veterans' Home**

Since 2003, the Nevada State Veterans' Home in Boulder City has provided services to eligible veterans, Gold Star families, and spouses. This facility houses 180 residents in three living units and provides 24-hour skilled nursing care with a clinical team.

Admission requirements include a military discharge characterized as anything but Dishonorable. There should be medical need-based care such as a demonstrated need for 24-hour nursing services. Certain types of conditions are not treatable at this facility including intravenous delivery of narcotic pain medication, ventilators, dialysis, etc.

This facility provides fee-based care and the ability to pay must be verified as a condition of admission to the Veterans' Home.

An additional Nevada State Veterans' Home is scheduled to be completed at the end of 2018.

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## **Nevada State Veteran Financial Benefits**

### **Nevada Property Tax Exemptions for Qualifying Veterans and Surviving Spouses**

There are a number of Nevada State property **tax exemptions** for qualifying veterans and surviving spouses. The exemption amount should be applied to the next year's tax bill on real property the veteran or spouse owns.

This exemption is also valid for "any personal property (which includes business personal property, aircraft or manufactured housing) at any time during the year, prior to payment of taxes" according to the official site of the Clark County, Nevada Tax Assessor's Office.

Tax exemptions include:

- The Nevada State Property Tax Exemption for Veterans is open to qualifying active duty, Guard or Reserve members who served a minimum of 90 continuous days of active duty of which at least one day was between:
  1. April 6, 1917 to November 11, 1918
  2. December 7, 1941 to December 31, 1946
  3. June 25, 1950 to May 7, 1975
  4. September 26, 1982 to December 1, 1987
  5. December 20, 1989 to January 31, 1990
  6. August 2, 1990 to April 11, 1991
  7. December 5, 1992 to March 31, 1994
  8. November 20, 1995 to December 20, 1996

Veterans are also eligible if they served on active duty in connection with a campaign or expedition for service in which a medal was authorized by the government of the United States. Apply for this tax break with a valid Nevada driver's license or ID card, DD214 or other discharge paperwork, plus documentation showing Nevada as the home of record.

- The State of Nevada Surviving Spouse Property Tax Exemption is for those with a valid Nevada Driver's License or Nevada Identification Card. The military member's death certificate is required at application time.
- The State of Nevada Disabled Veterans' Exemption is available for qualifying veterans with a VA-rated disability of 60% or higher; the amount of exemption is "dependent upon the degree of disability incurred."

Apply for this Nevada veterans' tax exemption with a valid Nevada driver's license or Nevada ID Card plus discharge paperwork and documentation of the disability such as a VA award letter. This tax break for veterans is also open to surviving spouses of veterans who were eligible for the exemption at the time of death.

### **Nevada State Government Services Tax Breaks for Veterans Purchasing Vehicles**

The State of Nevada offers Government Service tax breaks for qualifying veterans. Tax exemptions are possible depending on the dates of service and the County Assessor's office is responsible for

determining the amount of the tax exemption permitted depending on the nature of military service. The Assessor will determine the amount of the exemption and veterans will be given a receipt for the exemption which is submitted at vehicle registration time. These Nevada State Tax exemptions CANNOT applied after the vehicle registration or renewal is complete.

For these Nevada veteran tax breaks, VA-rated disabled veterans are eligible for exemptions based on the percentage of disability.

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### **Additional Nevada State Veteran Benefits**

#### **Nevada State Military License Plates**

Nevada provides discounted license plates to disabled veterans, Purple Heart awardees, Gold Star families, etc. These discounts apply to those who meet the specific criteria for each individual plate (Purple Heart, Gold Star family, ex-POW, etc.). Visit the Nevada DMV or contact a County Assessor's office that offers vehicle registration services at that location.

#### **Nevada State Recreational Benefits for Veterans**

Currently serving military members (in-state or from out-of-state) may be eligible for discounted Nevada Department of Wildlife hunting and fishing licenses good for one year from the date of issue. Signed verification of residency and duty station may be required in some cases depending on the nature of military service and the amount of the discount.

Disabled Nevada veterans with VA rated disabilities of 10% may qualify for a permit offering unlimited entrance to all Nevada state parks with use of camping and boat launch facilities in the parks for one year. There is an annual fee associated with this permit. Apply by downloading the [application](#) and mail it to the address on the form.

#### **Nevada Legal Benefits for Veterans**

The Nevada Attorney General's Office of Military Legal Assistance (OMLA) offers free / pro bono legal help and representation to qualifying active duty, Reserve, and National Guard service members.

This free service includes the creation of legal wills and powers of attorney. This is a statewide program "combining the joint efforts of legal aid organizations, private sponsors and the State Bar of Nevada" to help veterans get affordable legal representation.

#### **Burial Benefits for Veterans**

The State of Nevada operates two veterans' cemeteries which are the Northern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery and Southern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery. These facilities are open to all qualifying veterans at no charge and there is a fee for burial of spouses.

There is no advance plot assignment service available, but pre-need registration is possible. This can be done with a copy of your discharge documents, pre-registration form, and any supporting documentation required such as a marriage certificate for spouses where applicable. Call 775-575-4441 for more information on fee-free pre-need registration.

## New Hampshire

Find state and local veteran's benefits including education, employment, healthcare, tax breaks/exemptions, recreation and much more below. The Granite State is home to 110,000 veterans who can access the many benefits offered.

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### **Veteran Education Benefits**

#### **Tuition Waivers**

New Hampshire National Guard service members may apply for tuition waivers while attending a state college. In order to qualify for tuition assistance, New Hampshire National Guard service members must meet the following criteria:

- Enrollment in any vocational or technical school which falls under the authority of the commissioner of regional community-technical colleges.
- Enrollment in a state-supported public college or university.
- Be an active service member in the New Hampshire National Guard, who has completed advanced individual training or who has been commissioned.
- In-state or out-of-state New Hampshire resident.

Waivers are granted on a space-available basis. Additionally, tuition waivers are granted after other federal educational entitlements have been applied, (this excludes **Montgomery GI** benefits and National Guard scholarship grants).

#### **Free Tuition for Dependents**

Under certain circumstances, qualifying children of service members may receive free tuition for college or vocational-technical school. Qualifying circumstances include:

- Children of reported missing service members serving after February 28, 1961 and stationed in the state of New Hampshire
- Children of service members killed during wartime may qualify for free tuition at New Hampshire state colleges
- Children of veterans who die from a disability that is service-related

Children in need of **financial aid** may also receive scholarships of (up to \$2500 per year at the time of this writing) to cover the costs of rent, room, board, books and supplies. These scholarships are granted for up to four years.

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### **Veteran Employment Benefits**

## **Employment Services Priority**

New Hampshire Employment Services, (NHES), gives priority to veterans and their spouses for training, employment, and placement services in all Department of Labor-funded state workforce programs. In order to qualify for priority status, veterans must meet the following criteria:

- Military service for a minimum of 90 days
- Released or discharged under conditions other than dishonorable

In order to qualify for priority status, spouses must meet one of the following criteria:

- Surviving spouse of a service member who died as a result of a service-connected disability
- Spouse of any service member who has been declared MIA, has been captured by hostile forces, or has been forcibly detained and/or interned by a foreign government or power
- Spouse of a veteran who is totally, permanently disabled as a result of military service

Additionally, NHES gives priority to qualifying veterans in obtaining state or federal funding for training.

## **Employment Preference**

The following state agencies give preference to veterans during hiring:

- The Director of the State Office of Veterans Services
- Employees of the State Liquor Commission
- Both the Commandant and employees of the New Hampshire Veterans Home
- Members of the State Office of Veterans Services
- State and local public departments and/or public works, including unremarried surviving spouses and spouses of disabled veterans

Additionally, when applying within 90 days of discharge from service, veterans may receive **re-employment preference** by towns and other political subdivisions.

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## **Veteran Housing Benefits**

### **Housing Assistance**

If an honorably-discharged wartime veteran is unable to support his or her family, the state of New Hampshire provides housing assistance. This assistance comes through either public welfare offices or the county commissioners' office.

### **Veterans Assisted Care Homes and Nursing Homes**

The New Hampshire State Veterans' Home in Tilton is a 250-bed facility, with 100 beds designated for residents in need of memory care. It is an intermediate to long-term care facility, and is staffed by nearly 400 health care professionals.

The Veterans' Home coordinates with local hospitals and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs in order to provide both outpatient care and inpatient hospitalization. In order to be eligible for the facility, veterans must meet the following criteria:

- Honorably discharged from any branch of service, reserves or the New Hampshire Army/Air National Guard, (service during combat or disability as a result of service is not required).
- Either residency in New Hampshire for at least one year prior to the date of application or New Hampshire listed as the "home of record" on military discharge papers.
- The Home must have the resources and ability to treat any conditions or disabilities the veteran may have, and the veteran cannot exhibit be a potential danger to him or herself or other residents.
- Financial assets must not exceed a cap (\$275,000 at the time of this writing).
- Assets are reviewed for a period of one year prior to the date of application. In cases where the applicant is married and owns a home, that home remains the property of the spouse.

There is no minimum age requirement for eligibility of admission.

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### **Veteran Financial Benefits**

#### **License Fee Waivers**

Veterans with disabilities that are a result of military service, or the unremarried surviving spouse of a disabled veteran, may be exempt fees required for a Peddler's License.

#### **Tax Credits for Veterans**

New Hampshire provides a standard tax credit of \$50 for veterans who served during a "qualifying war or armed conflict." To qualify for either tax credit, veterans must have served during at least one of the following periods:

- "World War One for the period between April 6, 1917 and November 11, 1918. This period is extended to April 1, 1920 for service in Russia. The period on or after November 12, 1918 and before July 2, 1921, with prior service between April 6, 1917 and November 11, 1918, are included in World War I service period.
- World War Two for the period between December 7, 1941 and December 31, 1946.
- Korean Conflict for the period between June 25, 1950 and January 31, 1955.



- Vietnam Conflict for the period between December 22, 1961 and May 7, 1975, or the period between July 1, 1958 and December 22, 1961, if a Vietnam service medal or the armed forces expeditionary medal was awarded.
- Persian Gulf War for the period between August 2, 1990 and after, as ordered by either Presidential proclamation or law.
- Hostilities occurring after May 8, 1975, and in which an armed forces expeditionary medal or theater of operations service medal was awarded.

Additionally, recipients must meet the following criteria:

- Active service during at least one of the periods of “qualifying war or armed conflict” for at least 90 days with an honorable discharge, or his or her spouse or surviving spouse, (Title 10 training for active duty by a member of the national guard or reserve also qualifies).
- Veterans separated from service due to disability as a result of service, or his or her surviving spouse.
- The surviving spouse of any service member whose death resulted from military service.

New Hampshire also provides an optional veterans’ tax credit of between \$51 and up to \$750 at the time of this writing. Either credit is subtracted each year from the veterans’ residential property tax burden. The surviving spouse of a veteran who died as a result of service may also receive the credit.

Other tax credits provided by New Hampshire include the following:

- The surviving spouse of a veteran killed while on active duty may be eligible for a tax credit of between \$700 and \$2000 at the time of this writing.
- A veteran who is permanently and totally disabled as a result of service may qualify for a tax credit. This includes veterans who are double amputees or paraplegics as a result of service, or an unremarried surviving spouse. This credit may be increased to up to \$2000 through city or town vote.

### **Property Tax Exemption for Totally Disabled Veterans**

Veterans who are permanently and totally disabled, (blind, double amputee, or paraplegic), may qualify for an exemption from **property tax**. Veterans who wish to receive this exemption must also meet one of the following requirements:

- Ownership of a specially adapted home purchased through an assistance program of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.
- Ownership of a home purchased with proceeds from the sale of a previous home purchased through an assistance program of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Surviving spouses may also qualify for this exemption.

### **Compensation**

There are several compensation programs for veterans living in New Hampshire.

The New Hampshire Vietnam War Bonus pays \$100 to eligible veterans. To qualify, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Served for 90 days or more
- Served in Vietnam between August 5, 1964, and August 15, 1973, or between July 1, 1958, and August 5, 1964
- Earned the Vietnam Service Medal or the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal
- Be a resident of New Hampshire at the time of enlistment
- Received an honorable discharge

Claims filed after August 22, 1977 require approval by the Adjutant General, the Governor, and Executive Council.

The New Hampshire Persian Gulf War Service Bonus pays \$100 to eligible veterans. To qualify, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Service between August 2, 1990, and November 30, 1995
- Awarded the Southwest Asia Service Medal
- Honorably discharged
- Be a resident of New Hampshire at the time of service

Veterans who have received Persian Gulf War Bonus payments from another state may not receive this bonus. Additionally, while the program expired on August 31, 2002, provisions allow for submission and acceptance of applications after this date.

The New Hampshire Global War on Terrorism Operations Service Bonus pays \$100 to eligible veterans. To qualify, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Service on or after September 11, 2001 and on or before a date to be determined by the Secretary of Defense
- Awarded the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal
- Honorably discharged
- Be a resident of New Hampshire at the time of such service

Service members who are MIA or who killed in action also qualify posthumously for this program. Additionally, while the program expired on June 11, 2009, provisions allow for submission and acceptance of applications after this date.

National Guard service members may receive Workers' Compensation benefits under certain circumstances:

- The Compensation for New Hampshire National Guard Service Members who Sustain Injury or Illness while on State Active Duty program awards Workers' Compensation benefits to eligible veteran applicants who have been injured or become ill while serving in the National Guard on state active duty.
- The Compensation for New Hampshire National Guard Service Members Killed while on State Active Duty posthumously awards Workers' Compensation benefits to deceased service members who are killed while on, or as a result of, state active duty.

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### **Additional Veteran Benefits**

#### **Driver License and ID Cards for Veterans**

Veterans may receive a "Veteran" indicator on their New Hampshire driver licenses, commercial driver license, or non-driver ID cards. In order to be eligible for this indicator, applicants must present proof of honorable discharge to any Department of Motor Vehicle location.

There is no additional cost if this indicator is applied for during the regular time for license or ID renewal. There is, however, a \$3.00 fee if the application is submitted outside the regular time for license or ID renewal.

Disabled veterans may be exempted from paying driver license fees. In order to be eligible for this fees exemption, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Be an amputee or paraplegic
- Must have received a motor vehicle from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, OR
- Per the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, be classified as a permanently and totally disabled veteran as a result of military service

#### **Vehicle Registration for Veterans**

Vehicle registration fee exemptions are available to eligible veterans under certain circumstances:

- **Registration Fee Exemption for Blind Veterans:** Registration fees for one vehicle may be waived for veterans who have been classified by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs as being totally blind as a result of military service.
- **Registration Fee Exemption for Vehicle provided by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs:** Registration fees are waived for vehicles provided by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to amputee, paraplegic or blind veterans classified as being permanently and totally disabled due to military service.
- **Registration Fee Exemption for Amputee or Paraplegic Veterans:** Registration fees are waived for vehicles provided by the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs to amputee or paraplegic veterans,

or for veterans who have lost the use of a limb as a result of military service, and who have been certified as being totally and permanently disabled as a result of military service.

### **License Plates and Parking Benefits**

Special license plates may be issued to eligible veterans at little to no cost. To qualify for these plates, applicants must meet one of the following criteria:

- Motor vehicles owned by individuals with walking disabilities. A fee of \$5.00 is charged to cover the cost of printing and mailing.
- Amputee or paraplegic veterans classified by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs as being permanently and totally disabled due to military service, for a vehicle received from or replaced by the Department of Veterans Affairs. There is no charge for these plates.
- Blind veterans who have been determined by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to be totally blind as a result of military service. There is no charge for these plates.
- Veterans who are former Prisoners of War (POWs). There is no charge for these plates.

Veterans who own vehicles with special disabled veteran license plates that bear the international accessibility symbol may parking for free in any city or town in New Hampshire.

### **Recreational Benefits for Veterans**

Hunting and fishing licenses may be issued to eligible veterans at little to no cost. To qualify for these licenses, applicants must meet at least one of the following:

- Veterans who have been determined to be permanently and totally disabled as a result of military service, who have been honorably discharged, and who are residents of New Hampshire may be issued a free perpetual Fish and Game License. There is a one-time administrative fee of \$10.00 for this permit.
- Paraplegic veterans may be issued a permit to hunt from motor vehicles or boats without motors. There is a one-time administrative fee of \$10.00 for this permit.
- Veterans who are either resident patients at the V.A. Medical Center in Manchester, NH, or residents of the NH Veterans' Home, may be issued fishing permits. There is not charge for this permit.

Disabled veterans and New Hampshire National Guard service members may receive admission to New Hampshire state parks free of charge. To qualify, applicants must meet one of the following criteria:

- The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs has determined the disability is due to military service, and either the veteran has New Hampshire Disabled Veteran license plates, or a "State Park" letter issued by the VA that verifies disability as a result of military service.
- National Guard service members who are New Hampshire residents, and are either serving or retired in pay grades E-1 through E-6.

This does not include the use of facilities such as ski lifts, campgrounds, or food service.

### **Burial Benefits for Veterans**

The New Hampshire State Veterans Cemetery is located in Boscaawen, NH. The cemetery provides burial services for veterans, whether or not they are residents of New Hampshire, as well as qualifying spouses and dependents, under certain circumstances. To qualify, applicants must meet one of the following criteria:

- Honorable discharge, with service prior to September 7, 1980
- Services of at least 24 months service after September 7, 1980
- Under certain circumstances, Reserve Components and Reserve Officers' Training Corps are eligible for interment

Veterans should pre-apply to determine eligibility. Pre-need eligibility determination is not considered an advance reservation or a guarantee that space will be available at the time of need. Upon approval, eligible veterans will receive an eligibility certificate. This certificate may include eligible dependents. An indigent veteran who has died in a municipality of New Hampshire may be buried at the expense of the municipality.

## New Jersey

Find New Jersey state and local veteran's benefits including education, tax deductions, veteran's homes, and more below. The nearly 400,000 veterans residing in the Garden State have access to a wide array of veteran's benefits.

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### **New Jersey Veteran Education Benefits**

#### **War Orphans Tuition Assistance**

The children of veterans who died while in the military or due to service-connected disabilities, or who are officially listed as missing in action, may claim \$500 annually for four years of college or equivalent training. To be eligible, the student must be a New Jersey resident for at least one year and be between the ages of 16 and 21. The veteran must have been a New Jersey resident.

#### **POW/MIA Tuition Benefit Program**

The state of New Jersey offers free undergraduate college tuition to any child born or adopted before or during the period of time his or her parent was declared a prisoner of war (POW) or Missing in Action (MIA) after Jan. 1, 1960. The **POW/MIA** must have been a New Jersey resident at the time he or she entered military service. Eligible students must attend either a public or private school in New Jersey and submit a copy of the DD-1300 with the application.

#### **Veterans Tuition Credit Program**

Under this program, veterans attending an approved educational institution may receive partial reimbursement to offset the cost of tuition. Maximum yearly allowances are \$400 for full-time students and \$200 for part-time students. To be eligible, the veteran must have been on active duty between Dec. 31, 1960, and May 7, 1975, and been a New Jersey resident at the time of entering military service or two years immediately prior to application. Reimbursement is paid directly to the institution.

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### **New Jersey Veteran Employment Benefits**

#### **Civil Service Preference**

Veterans receive an absolute Veterans Preference when applying for New Jersey state jobs. Veterans who receive a passing score on applications are given top priority on open competitive employment lists ahead of non-veterans, regardless of their scores. Disabled Veterans are given the highest preference.

## **Veterans Status for Pensions**

Individuals with Veterans Status who are enrolled in the following state-operated pension funds qualify for Veterans Retirement: New Jersey Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS), Police and Firemen's Retirement System (PFRS), and New Jersey Teachers' Pension and Annuity Fund (TPAF). Veterans Retirement has special benefits such as the ability to retire at age 55 (with 25 years of service) and a more generous calculation of Maximum Annual Allowance during retirement. To qualify, the veteran must have served on active duty during a qualifying war era and been honorably discharged.

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## **New Jersey Veteran Housing Benefits**

### **Veterans Memorial Homes**

New Jersey hosts three **Veterans Homes** in Paramus, Menlo Park, and Vineland. All three homes are inspected and licensed annually by the New Jersey Department of Health and the U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs. Each offers 24-hour medical and nursing care, rehabilitative services, supportive programs, beauty and barber shops, and recreational activities. Veterans of all wars who served on active duty and were honorably discharged are eligible for the Veterans Memorial Homes as well as spouses and **Gold Star parents**. Preference is given to New Jersey residents, and payment is based on income.

### **Transitional Housing for Homeless Veterans**

Homeless veterans in New Jersey may find respite at the Veteran's Haven, a transitional housing program located in Glen Garner or Winslow. The program is divided into three phases: treatment, self-reclamation, and community reintegration. Each phase lasts from three to six months and is tailored to the veteran's needs. To be admitted, the veteran must be drug and alcohol-free; eligible for VA healthcare benefits; underemployed, but employable, with an income less than \$1,800 per month; and be able to complete the interview process.

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## **New Jersey Veteran Financial Benefits**

### **Property Tax Exemption for Disabled Veterans**

Combat veterans and those who served in certain peacekeeping missions are exempt from real estate taxes on their principal residence in the state of New Jersey. The exemption also applies to surviving spouses/civil unions or domestic partners of disabled combat veterans or service members who were killed in action. To qualify, the veteran must have served during wartime and been honorably discharged, have a service-connected total disability or be 100 percent permanently disabled as certified

by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, be the full or partial owner of the home, and be a New Jersey resident.

### **Property Tax Deduction for Veterans**

Combat veterans and those who served in certain peacekeeping missions may be eligible for a \$250 yearly deduction from taxes due on real or personal property. A surviving spouse/civil union or domestic partner may also be eligible as long as he or she is not remarried, is a New Jersey resident, and is the owner and occupant of the home.

### **Income Tax Exemption for Veterans**

Honorably discharged military veterans qualify for an exemption of \$3,000 on their New Jersey Income Tax. Recently discharged veterans are eligible in the tax year they were released.

### **Retired Military Pay Income Tax Exemption**

Military pensions and survivor's benefit payments – regardless of age or disability status – **are not taxable in the state of New Jersey**. However, civil service pensions are taxable, even if based on credit for military service.

### **Catastrophic Entitlement**

Combat veterans who are New Jersey residents and permanently or totally disabled may qualify for a payment of \$62.50 a month from the state. In addition to being permanently or totally disabled, the veteran must have one of the following disabilities: multiple sclerosis, hemiplegia, blindness, paraplegia, double amputee, quadriplegia, or osteochondritis. To qualify, the veteran must have served during a period of war and been a New Jersey resident at the time of entry into military service and when applying for the entitlement. Surviving spouses are also eligible.

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### **Additional New Jersey Veteran Benefits**

#### **Disabled Veteran and Purple Heart Recipient Placards**

Disabled Veterans and **Purple Heart** recipients are exempt from paying municipal parking meter fees for up to 24 hours with a special designated placard. To qualify, the applicant for the placard must be the owner and driver or passenger of the vehicle.

#### **Transportation Program**



Veterans in New Jersey have access to free transportation to VA medical facilities, pharmacies, private physicians, regional veteran's service offices, job service offices, and other community services in most counties.

### **Hunting and Fishing Licenses**

Honorably discharged veterans with a service-connected disability, who are New Jersey residents, are eligible to receive free New Jersey hunting and fishing licenses, permits, and stamps. The eligible veteran must first be certified by the Division of Fish and Wildlife.

New Jersey National Guardsmen are also eligible to receive free hunting and freshwater fishing licenses. To qualify, the National Guardsman must have completed Initial Active Duty for Training, participated in unit training assemblies within the last 90 days, and be up-to-date on any court-mandated child support payments.

Active duty military are entitled to receive hunting and fishing licenses at the resident rate.

### **New Jersey Veterans Memorial Cemetery**

New Jersey veterans whose service ended under other than dishonorable or undesirable conditions and were legal New Jersey residents before death, or were legal residents of the state for at least 50 percent of their lifetime, are eligible to be buried at the Brigadier General William C. Doyle Veterans Memorial Cemetery at no cost.

The cemetery is located in Arnetown, N.J. Dependents are also eligible to be buried at the cemetery including the veteran's spouse, unmarried children under the age of 21 (or 23, if in college), and unmarried adult children who became incapable of self-support before reaching the age of 21. The next of kin is responsible for all costs associated with preparation and transportation of the casketed or cremated remains to the cemetery except in cases when the death occurred while the veteran was on active duty.

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### **New Jersey State Link to Veterans Services**

- [New Jersey Department of Veterans Affairs](#)
- [New Jersey Veteran Service Offices \(VSO\) – County-Operated](#)

## New Mexico

Find New Mexico State and local veterans' benefits including education, employment, healthcare, tax breaks/exemptions, recreation, and much more below. The "Land of Enchantment" has over 160,000 veterans residing in New Mexico according to the VA.

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### **Veteran Education Benefits**

#### **State of New Mexico Vietnam Veteran Scholarship**

A scholarship for Vietnam-era military service is available to qualifying veterans. They should be residents of New Mexico for at least ten years, served in the Vietnam conflict, and were awarded a Vietnam Service Medal or Vietnam Campaign Medal. This scholarship pays for books and tuition at any state-supported college in New Mexico.

#### **State of New Mexico Combat Veterans' Scholarship Award**

The State of New Mexico offers this scholarship (good for tuition and book fees) to qualifying wartime veterans who have received service medals or other qualifying awards including, but not limited to:

- Southwest Asia Service Medal
- Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal
- Iraq Campaign Medal
- Afghanistan Campaign Medal
- Any other medal issued for service in support of any US Military campaign or armed conflict as defined by congress or presidential executive order for service after August 1, 1990.

These scholarships are open to those who meet the above requirement, have been New Mexico residents for at least 10 years, and *who have used up all GI Bill benefits*. The scholarship may be used at any state funded school for undergraduate or master's degree work.

#### **In-State Tuition Policies at New Mexico State Supported Colleges**

Qualifying vets, spouses, and dependents are no longer required by New Mexico state law to wait to establish in-state residency for college tuition purposes. According to the New Mexico Department of Veterans' Services, "Those who wish to use their G.I. **Education Benefit** Bill can now immediately take advantage of less-expensive 'resident' in-state tuition rates."

#### **Children of Deceased Veterans Scholarship**

The State of New Mexico offers free tuition to dependent children of qualifying veterans who were killed in action or died as a result of wounds sustained in battle. Qualifying ages for this scholarship include dependents between the ages of 16-26. Residency is a requirement and supporting documentation. A VA death certificate or other official paperwork must be submitted along with the application for this scholarship.

### **New Mexico High School Diploma Program for Qualifying Wartime Veterans**

A high school diploma is offered to any New Mexico resident who was honorably discharged from military service and left high school to serve in World War Two or Korea. The diploma may be awarded posthumously to those with military service within the following qualifying dates:

- World War Two: December 7, 1941 to December 31, 1946
- Korean War: June 27, 1950 to January 31, 1955

The veteran must have been scheduled to graduate after 1940 and before 1955 in order to qualify for the high school diploma.

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### **Veteran Employment Benefits**

#### **New Mexico State Job Hiring Preference Points**

New Mexico state job hiring procedures include offering hiring preference points to qualifying veterans. To qualify, one or more of the following will apply:

- The veteran has an honorable or general discharge OR
- An honorable discharge with a service-connected disability from the United States Armed Forces OR
- Is currently serving in the National Guard.

According to the New Mexico State Personnel office, veterans and National Guard members get five preference points added to the final passing numerical scores of state hiring exams. Disabled veterans are awarded an additional five points.

Documentation such as a DD Form 214 or the National Guard equivalent will be required at application time.

#### **State of New Mexico Business Tax Credit for Hiring Recently Returned Veterans**

A one thousand dollar business tax credit is available from the State of New Mexico “for each hire of a recently-retained veteran.” The requirements and application process details are available from the New Mexico Taxation and Revenue Department at (505) 827-0700.

Tax laws are subject to change year-to-year. It’s best to contact a local tax professional or consult the NM Taxation and Revenue Department for information about the current tax year’s options in this area.

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## **Veteran Housing Benefits**

### **New Mexico State Veterans Home**

The State of New Mexico operates one veterans’ home, located in Truth or Consequences, NM. Admission requirements include having an Honorable discharge with at least 90 days of military service.

Preference is given to state residents, but there is a waiting list for all eligible veterans even if they are not New Mexico residents. Spouses, Gold Star parents and “certain members of a reserve component of the US Armed Forces who meet the legal residence requirements” may also qualify for care. Fees are required and there may be an ability to pay assessment administered at application time.

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## **Veteran Financial Benefits**

### **New Mexico Property Tax Exemption for Totally Disabled Veterans**

Any veteran who is a legal resident of New Mexico with a **VA disability rating** at 100 percent “Permanent & Total” may qualify for “a complete property tax waiver” on an owner-occupied primary residence.

This benefit is available to those who meet the above requirements and have 90 or more days of continuous active service with an Honorable discharge. There are exceptions to the 90-day requirement for those who were discharged for service-connected disabilities.

Those serving in the Guard or Reserves may apply for this benefit if they have six years of continuous service.

### **New Mexico Excise Tax Exemptions for Qualifying Disabled Veterans**

New Mexico state Excise taxes for the purchase of a new vehicle are waived for qualifying veterans who have suffered loss or loss of use of one or more limbs in connection with military service.

## **New Mexico Property Tax Break for Qualifying Veterans and Surviving Spouses**

Veterans who are legal New Mexico residents and who have served a minimum of 90 continuous days of active duty other than for training purposes may qualify for a property tax break. It is a \$4,000 reduction in the taxable value of “real property” or property that is legally classifiable as real estate for county tax purposes.

This tax break may alternately be used to get a 1/3 discount when registering a vehicle in New Mexico. It is also open to qualifying unremarried surviving spouses of veterans who would have met the requirements listed above for this tax break.

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## **Additional New Mexico State Veteran Benefits**

### **New Mexico Military License Plates**

The State of New Mexico offers veterans the option of a fee-based Armed Forces Plate and a fee-based Woman Veteran license plate. There are “special recognition” New Mexico license plates that are offered to veterans for free who show proof of having received a Purple Heart or Medal of Honor, are a 50% or greater VA-rated disabled veteran, a survivor of Pearl Harbor, or an ex-prisoner of war.

VA paperwork or the appropriate substitute is required to apply. Only passenger vehicles and light trucks under 26,000 pounds are authorized to display these military service plates. The vehicle must have current New Mexico title and registration.

The vehicle must be currently titled and registered in New Mexico in the applicant’s name, or be registered, OR have that title and registration transferred at the application time for the military license plate.

### **Burial Benefits for Veterans**

There are two **national veterans’ cemeteries** in New Mexico. Until plans were approved in 2015 to build as many as four state-run veterans’ cemeteries, there were no state-operated facilities. At the time of this writing, a state-run veterans’ cemetery at Fort Stanton is open to honorably discharged veterans and qualifying spouses.

Pre-need determination of eligibility is possible but reservation of a burial site is not.

### **New Mexico Recreational Benefits for Qualifying Veterans**

There are a variety of recreational perks and discounts for qualifying veterans including the following:

- Veterans' Day Recreation and Museum Privileges – Each Veterans' Day holiday, honorably discharged state residents and their families are offered free use of any New Mexico State Park, campsites, the Museum of New Mexico, the New Mexico Museum of Natural History, and the New Mexico Museum of Space History.
- Day-Pass and Three Free Camping Nights for Disabled Veterans – Veterans what are VA-rated at 50% disabled due to military service are offered an annual free day-use pass and three free nights of camping. A VA award letter is required to sign up for this benefit.
- Free State Monuments and Museums Passes for Qualifying Disabled Veterans – Vets who are VA-rated at 50% or greater service-connected disabilities are eligible for free State Monument and Museum passes.
- Free And Reduced Lifetime Hunting And Fishing Licenses for Qualifying Disabled Veterans – Veterans rated by the VA as 100% service-connected disabled are eligible for a free lifetime New Mexico small-game hunting and fishing license, and those with VA-rated disabilities below the 100% level may qualify for discounted renewable hunting/fishing licenses.

### **New Mexico Liberal Veteran Recognition Standards**

The definition of “veterans” by the State of New Mexico, for the purpose of assigning benefits and other perks for military service, includes Guard and Reserve members who have been honorably discharged after six years of consecutive service.

The definition goes farther as it also includes “commissioned officers from the Public Health Service or the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration who served on active duty in defense of the United States” according to the New Mexico Department of Veterans' Services.

## New York

Find New York State and local veteran's benefits including education, employment, healthcare, tax breaks/exemptions, recreation and much more below. There are about 900,000 veterans in New York according to data from the U.S. Bureau and that population enjoys access to **state assistance** to many veteran's benefits.

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### New York Veteran Education Benefits

#### Veterans Tuition Awards

Available for full and part-time study for eligible veterans in approved undergraduate, graduate, and vocational training programs in New York State. Eligibility depends on dates and location of service during wartime:

- Vietnam Veterans who served in Indochina between February 28, 1961 and May 7, 1975.
- Persian Gulf Veterans who served in the Persian Gulf on or after August 2, 1990.
- Afghanistan Veterans who served in Afghanistan during hostilities on or after September 11, 2001.
- Veterans who "served in hostilities that occurred after February 28, 1961 as evidenced by receipt of an Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, Navy Expeditionary Medal or a Marine Corps Expeditionary Medal".

#### Military Service Recognition Scholarships

Provides financial aid to children, spouses, and dependents of veterans who "on or after August 2, 1990, while a New York State resident, died or becomes severely and permanently disabled while engaged in hostilities or training for hostilities".

#### Regents Awards for Children of Deceased and Disabled Veterans

Awards up to \$450 per year to dependents of veterans who served in wartime or national emergency and either died as a result of service or have a 40 percent or higher VA disability rating. The veteran must be a current New York State resident or was a resident at the time of death.

#### Operation Recognition

Helps qualifying veterans earn high school diplomas in New York State. This benefit is available for veterans of conflicts from World War II to Vietnam, and diplomas may be awarded posthumously.

***The “Experience Counts” Program*** includes waived Commercial Drivers’ License testing and credit towards certain healthcare certification programs for vets with qualifying experience or training. The program covers (but is not limited) to the following certifications/career paths:

- Advanced Emergency Medical
- Armed Security Guard
- Bus Driver
- Certified First Responder
- Crane Operator
- Emergency Medical
- Home Health Aide
- Home Nurse Aide
- Licensed Radiological Technologist
- Personal Care
- Security Guard
- Tractor Trailer Operator
- Truck Driver

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## **New York Veteran Employment Benefits**

### **New York/Civil Service Hiring Preference Points**

Available for New York Veterans who may qualify for Civil Service hiring points for exams and appointments. Additional consideration for disabled vets and disabled vets who served during wartime.

### **Veterans with Disabilities Employment Program (55-c)**

For those who have been awarded a **Purple Heart** or who have VA disability ratings of at least 20 percent or greater. Those who meet the criteria may apply for state jobs where they meet “minimum qualifications for the position” but they are not required to take an exam. This program does not guarantee state employment and does not act as a hiring list.

### **New York Department of Labor veteran’s priority service**

Offered for all training and job programs administered by the state.

### **Military Service Claim for Unemployment Benefits**

Recently discharged veterans may qualify for unemployment compensation from the State of New York. Not all veterans will qualify for these benefits, but the basic requirements include completing the first full term of enlistment, except where discharge or early release was for



- Hardship
- Government convenience/early release
- Medical disqualification, pregnancy, parenthood, or any service-incurred injury/disability
- Personality disorder or “inaptitude” (but only with a year of continuous service)

Members of the Guard/Reserve may qualify if there was a minimum of 180 days of continuous active duty, and an honorable discharge.

### **New York State Peddler’s License**

A program offering no-fee lifetime Veterans Peddlers’ Licenses to those who served overseas in peace or wartime and has any discharge other than Dishonorable. The license confers the right to “peddle, vend, and sell goods, wares or merchandise, or solicit trade on the highways within a specific jurisdiction” but does not override applicable local ordinances.

### **Veterans Temporary Hiring Program**

Honorably discharged veterans will be used for temporary appointments in state agencies rather than utilizing temporary employment service companies.

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### **New York Veteran Housing Benefits**

#### **Homes for Veterans Program**

Through the New York State Department of Veterans’ Affairs and SONYMA veterans and active duty U.S. military personnel receive assistance with down payments, lower interest rates, no points or origination fees and minimum borrower cash contribution.

#### **Property Tax Exemptions for Veterans**

There are three basic property tax breaks for veterans in New York State. Veterans who qualify may apply for one of the three, which are:

##### *Alternative Veterans’ Exemption*

A property tax break for residential property owned by those who served during a “designated time of war” or received an expeditionary medal. The exemption is not available in 100% of the state. Some municipalities may or may not offer this exemption.

### *Cold War Veterans' Exemption*

A New York State property tax break applicable for the residences of veterans who served during the Cold War. Like the Alternative Veterans' Exemption, certain municipalities within the state may or may not offer the tax break.

### *Eligible Funds Exemption*

Considered a "partial exemption" for property a veteran or a "certain other designated person" purchases. "Such owners must purchase the property with pension, bonus, or insurance monies" according to the New York State Division of Veterans Affairs.

In all three cases, veterans with qualifying service-connected disabilities may be able to apply for additional consideration and/or tax breaks. These exemptions are not automatic and must be applied for.

### **Real Property Tax Deadline Extension**

Localities are permitted, at their discretion, to extend the payment period for any tax owed on real property for a person who has been ordered to active military duty, other than for training, for a period beginning with a declaration of war by Congress or during any periods of combat designated by presidential executive order or during hazardous ("imminent danger") duty.

### **New York State Veterans Nursing Homes**

The State of New York Department of Health and State University of New York operate skilled nursing facilities located across the state:

- New York State Veterans' Home at St. Albans
- New York State Veterans' Home at Batavia
- New York State Veterans' Home at Oxford
- New York State Veterans' Home at Montrose
- Long Island State Veterans' Home State University of New York at Stony Brook

These facilities are for those requiring skilled nursing care who entered active duty from the State of New York, as well as eligible honorably discharged veterans who were a New York State resident for one year prior to application for admission. Vets with VA-rated service connected disabilities at 70% or higher are eligible to have their nursing home care in these facilities paid for by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

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## **New York Veteran Financial Benefits**

### **New York State Income Tax Exemption for Military Pay**

Tax exemption rules for New York State depend on whether the income is earned in a combat zone or a non-combat zone.

Military pay received “for active service as a member of the United States Armed Services in an area designated as a combat zone” is considered exempt from New York State, New York City, and Yonkers income taxes, according to the New York State Division of Veterans Affairs.

“Service members are entitled to a New York subtraction modification in computing New York adjusted gross income for the amount of combat pay included in federal adjusted gross income” according to the site.

For non-combat zone pay, those who are New York State residents and lived in New York when military service began, residency is assumed, and thereby “military pay is subject to New York State income tax to the same extent it is subject to federal income tax”. However, exceptions apply for those who meet state criteria for “nonresident status”.

There may be other New York State income tax breaks depending on residency status at the time of enlistment and whether the veteran served time in-state or out of state. Tax laws are subject to frequent change and revision.

### **New York State Income Tax Exemptions for Military Retirement Pay**

Military pensions, including pension payments to surviving spouses or other beneficiaries, are “**totally exempt**” from New York State income taxes.

### **New York State Income Tax Exemptions for Military Spouses**

Military spouses who meet the criteria listed in the Service members Civil Relief Act (SCRA) may be entitled to an **income tax exemption** from New York State. This benefit is claimed by filing Form IT-2104-E, *Certificate of Exemption from Withholding*, with the military spouse’s employer. Tax relief for a military spouse may be approved when the spouse resides in New York “solely to be with a service member who is in that state so he or she can comply with military orders” according to the NY Division of Veterans Affairs.

### **Retirement Credits for Military Service**

The New York State and Local Retirement System offers veterans the opportunity to get additional credit toward retirement for “qualifying military service”. There are several ways to get credit for qualifying service, and any such credit will be awarded on a case-by-case basis depending on which credit is “the most advantageous to the veteran”. Some types of credit may increase the applicant’s pension, others may not, according to the New York State Division of Veterans Affairs.

### **Gold Star Parent Annuity Program**

This New York State program pays qualified applicants an “an annuity payment of up to \$500 per Gold Star parent of a deceased Veteran”. Applicants approved for the Gold Star Annuity Payment must re-verify every year to continue receiving the annuity.

### **Blind Annuity**

Qualifying veterans may be eligible for an annuity payment from the State of New York. The annuity is available for New York residents who are considered legally blind (described as “20/200 vision in the better eye with best correction” or a “20- degree limitation of field of vision”), and who served on active duty during specific wartime periods or received an expeditionary medal for certain conflicts.

Time-in-service requirements are 90 days or more active duty for other than training. Those with fewer than 90 days may still be eligible if discharged for a service-related medical issue.

### **Supplemental Burial Allowance**

A burial allowance (up to \$6,000) is offered to qualified surviving family members of veterans who were New York residents at the time of death or who served in the New York Army National Guard/New York Air National Guard upon entering active duty status, and died during that time. This benefit is available under the following circumstances. The veteran:

- Passed away in a combat zone;
- Passed away while receiving hazardous duty pay, pursuant to Title 37, Section 310 (a)(4) of the United States Code; or
- Passed away from wounds sustained in a combat zone or while receiving hazardous duty pay.

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## **Additional New York Veteran Benefits**

### **New York State Motor Vehicle Registration Fee Exemption**

New York State Department of Motor Vehicles allows veterans to apply for an exemption to registration and license plate fees. This is permitted if the veteran has qualifying disabilities, or qualifies for custom

plates for the Congressional Medal of Honor. Those who qualify for Former Prisoner of War custom plates are also eligible.

### **New York State Recreation Benefits for Veterans**

There are a variety of discounts and perks for veterans from the State of New York including free or discounted hunting and fishing licenses. Disabled veterans with qualifying VA-rated medical issues may be eligible for free or reduced licenses.

### **The Lifetime Liberty Pass**

Allows disabled war veterans a variety of perks including free use of state parks, boat launch sites, preserves, and free golf at 28 State Park golf courses. Veterans must be New York State residents and provide VA documentation showing a 40% or greater service connected disability as certified by the VA.

### **E-Z Pass for Disabled Veterans**

Free, unlimited travel anywhere on the Thruway to certain, qualifying disabled Veterans who also have fee-exempt vehicle registration from Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV).

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### **New York Links to Veterans Services**

- [Department of Motor Vehicles Military & Veterans](#)
- [Homes For Veterans Program](#)
- [New York State Division of Veterans' Affairs](#)
- [Thruway Authority E-ZPass for Disabled Veterans](#)

## North Carolina

Find North Carolina state and local veterans' benefits including education, employment, healthcare, tax breaks/exemptions, recreation and much more below. There are over 700,000 veterans residing in North Carolina according to the Department of Veterans Affairs.

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### Veteran Education Benefits

#### *North Carolina Scholarship for Children of Wartime Veterans*

This scholarship program offers financial assistance good for eight academic semesters with an eight-year time limit to use the scholarship. Applicants must be North Carolina residents 25 or under, a "qualifying natural or adopted child", and the dependent of "certain class categories of deceased, disabled, combat, or **POW/MIA** veterans". The veteran's qualifying service "must have occurred during a period of war" and the veteran must have been a North Carolina resident at the time active service began.

This scholarship is good only for North Carolina schools, but approved private institutions may qualify. Private school attendance will be compensated with a cash award to the applicant. Additional restrictions or requirements may apply depending on circumstances.

#### *North Carolina Tuition Benefits for Out-Of-State GI Bill Users*

Qualifying spouses and children of active duty service members may be eligible for the North Carolina in-state tuition rate without having to meet the 12 month residency requirement. This is allowed if the student is attending a state college using the GI Bill. A partial reading of a law passed in 2017 reveals, "Recipients using transferred **Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits**...while the transferor is on active duty in the Armed Forces...are eligible for the in-State tuition rate, provided the recipient's abode is in North Carolina and the recipient provides the institution of higher education a letter of intent to establish residency in North Carolina."

Veterans who themselves do not qualify for the in-state tuition rate because of the residency requirement are also exempt and will pay or be compensated for in-state tuition rather than at the higher non-resident tuition rate.

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### Veteran Employment Benefits

#### *North Carolina Government Hiring Preference for Veterans*

North Carolina government (state, city, and local) is, according to the North Carolina Veterans Services and Affairs official site, among the largest employers of veterans and their families in the entire state. With that in mind, the official site posts this quote from North Carolina state law:

“It shall be the policy of the State of North Carolina that, in appreciation for their service to this State and this country during a period of war, and in recognition of the time and advantage lost toward the pursuit of a civilian career, veterans shall be granted preference in employment with every State department, agency, and institution.” ~NCGS 126-80, Article 13

The level of hiring preference may vary depending on the nature of the job, Civil Service exam requirements, and other factors. Consult the Human Resources department or hiring division of the North Carolina government agency you want to apply for to learn levels of hiring preference, required examinations, etc.

#### *North Carolina “Fast Track” Professional Licensing For Veterans*

Qualifying veterans and military spouses are offered credit for military experience towards state licensing for career fields ranging from molecular science to commercial truck driving. License Boards “representing several NC license occupations have been required to provide a process to recognize military training in pursuing a licensed occupation” in the state of North Carolina. The list of occupations and available licensure is quite extensive.

#### *North Carolina Disabled Veteran Outreach*

The North Carolina Department of Commerce offers veteran’s employment resources, career counseling, resume prep and much more via state Workforce Centers and also via assistance from Disabled Veteran Outreach specialists who work with disabled vets to provide the same services.

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### **Veteran Housing Benefits**

#### *The N.C. Home Advantage Mortgage Program*

This home buying program, while not specifically targeted at veterans, is available to any qualifying first time home buyer who needs down payment assistance. The Home Advantage Program is the work of the North Carolina Housing Finance Agency and is offered statewide via approximately 85 financial institutions.

It features “down payment assistance in the form of a zero-interest, second mortgage for up to 5 percent of the loan amount” and offers loan forgiveness for that down payment assistance available as early as 11 years into the loan.

Some may wonder why veterans should take advantage of this program rather than a VA home loan, but among the incentives for the Home Advantage program is that it may be combined “with a tax-saving Mortgage Credit Certificate (MCC)” that can help lower a veteran’s federal income taxes.

This benefit is income-based, but qualifying applicants can claim as much as 50% of the mortgage interest for a tax credit of up to \$2000 per year.

#### *North Carolina Veterans’ Assisted Care Homes and Nursing Homes*

The State of North Carolina operates full-service assisted care/nursing homes for veterans who are honorably discharged, have a reference from a physician and a qualifying need, and have been a North Carolina resident for 24 months prior to application time.

There are four locations:

- Fayetteville
- Salisbury
- Black Mountain
- Kinston

You can take a virtual tour of any of these facilities at the [NC4Vets.com official site](https://www.nc4vets.com).

#### *Housing Resources for Homeless Veterans in North Carolina*

The State of North Carolina advertises resources to help veterans avoid homelessness. The state official site urges veterans in danger of or currently experiencing homelessness to contact National Call Center for Homeless Veterans (1-877-4AID-VET) but the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs also provides a list of resources for “immediate service for homeless veterans” in North Carolina from a variety of providers.

These resources are often private or charitable organizations and include substance abuse programs, resources for women veterans, and programs for those with medical issues.

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## **Veteran Financial Benefits**

#### *Retirement Income Tax Breaks for Veterans*

Qualifying service members with at least five years of “creditable service” as of August 12, 1989 may be exempt from [state income tax on military retirement pay](#). This is not automatic, and must be claimed as part of a typical tax filing or amended return.



According to the North Carolina Department of Revenue, “A retiree entitled to exclude retirement benefits in arriving at North Carolina taxable income should claim a deduction on Form D-400 Schedule S, Part B – Deductions from Federal Adjusted Gross Income, Line 10, for the amount of excludable retirement benefits included in federal adjusted gross income.”

#### *North Carolina Disabled Veteran Property Tax Exclusion*

North Carolina residents who are honorably discharged veterans with qualifying VA-rated disabilities or service-connected medical issues may be eligible for a property tax break for primary residences. Unmarried surviving spouses of honorably discharged veterans may also apply.

Applicants must submit proof of service, VA disability award letters, and evidence of benefits received in order to apply for an assessment reduction of \$45,000 under the program. There are no income or age restrictions to apply.

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### **Additional Veteran Benefits**

#### *Legal Assistance for Veteran Claims*

The North Carolina Central University School of Law provides legal advice for vets through its’ Veterans Law Clinic. This is a “supervised service” operated by law students designed to help veterans file VA claims and appeals all the way up to the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans’ Claims.

The program is offered statewide via a variety of UNC Campuses throughout the state. Claims assistance is available for many stages of the legal process including judicial review. Not all cases are eligible for this assistance, but a determination process can be started by calling 919-530-6605.

#### *North Carolina State Veteran Cemeteries*

There are six state-run Veteran Cemeteries in the state of North Carolina. They are:

- Black Mountain
- Jacksonville
- Spring Lake
- Goldsboro
- Salisbury National Veterans Cemetery

These cemeteries offer burial benefits to qualifying veterans, spouses, and (in some cases) military dependents. Residency, discharge, and other requirements may vary depending on the facility. Salisbury

is the only National Cemetery in North Carolina, and may have different regulations than the others in the list.

#### *Driver License, ID Cards, and License Plates for Veterans*

The State of North Carolina offers free or reduced-cost license plates for qualifying veterans. Plates for disabled veterans are at no cost. **Military discharge paperwork** is required to apply; for disabled veterans your most recent VA award letter is also required.

Military members who are North Carolina Residents but are out of state because of military service commitments may renew their North Carolina drivers' licenses by mail. Early renewal and "veteran" designation are also possible; all military-related drivers' license exceptions, discounts, exemptions, etc. are handled on a case-by-case basis by the DMV and will require supporting documentation (DD Form 214, VA award letters, etc.).

#### *North Carolina Recreational Licenses for Veterans*

North Carolina does not require military members who are NC residents but serving out-of-state to purchase hunting or fishing licenses when they are home on leave for 30 days or less. This requires the service member to carry a **military ID card** while fishing or hunting AND "the official document issued by their service unit confirming that they are on authorized leave from their duty station outside of North Carolina".

Non-resident military members stationed in North Carolina are eligible for a discounted rate for such licenses. There are also lifetime hunting and fishing licenses offered at a discount for disabled veterans who are 50% or more disabled as determined by the VA; proof of service and VA award letters may be required to apply.

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#### **North Carolina Links to Veterans Services**

- **Department of Commerce (veteran job seekers)**
- **Department of Military & Veterans Affairs**
- **DMVA/NC4VETS**

## North Dakota

Find North Dakota state and local veterans benefits including education, employment, healthcare, tax breaks/exemptions, recreation and much more below. The Peace Garden State is home to approximately 50,000 veterans who can utilize the many state benefits that are available.

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### **North Dakota State Veteran Education Benefits**

#### **Certification Exam and State Licensing Reimbursement**

Veterans may be eligible to receive reimbursement for the cost of a certification exam or state licensing. In order to be eligible for this benefit, applicants must qualify for VA benefits under one of the following programs:

- **Reserve Educational Assistance Program**
- **Post-Vietnam Era Veterans Educational Assistance Program**
- **Montgomery GI Bill** – Active Duty Educational Assistance Program
- **Montgomery GI Bill** – Selected Reserve Program
- **Survivors' and Dependents' Educational Assistance Program**
- **Post-9/11 GI Bill**

The VA will reimburse eligible applicants up to \$2,000 for tests and exams.

#### **Free Tuition to Qualified Dependents of Deceased Resident Veterans**

Qualified dependents of deceased resident veterans may receive free tuition in any North Dakota state-supported college, technical school, or vocational tech.

In order to be considered a resident, the deceased veteran must meet one of the following criteria:

- Was born in and lived in North Dakota until time of enlistment or commission.
- Was born in North Dakota, but temporarily lived in another state, and did not give up North Dakota residency before enlistment or commission.
- Was a resident of this state for the ten years prior to the request for tuition waiver.

In cases where the deceased veteran was born in another state then moved to North Dakota for at least six months before enlistment or commission, he or she should have completed at least one of the following activities in that six-month period:

- Voted in North Dakota
- Was a minor who lived with a parent or guardian who was a resident of North Dakota
- Not registered to vote in another state

In order for dependents to qualify for this benefit, the deceased resident veteran must meet one of the following criteria:

- Killed in action
- Died from wounds as a result of military service
- Died as a result of military service
- Totally disabled as a result of military service
- Died from disabilities that occurred as a result of military service
- Was a POW
- Declared MIA

Once a qualified dependent is accepted to either a state-supported college, technical school, or vocational tech, he or she may attend tuition-free for 45 months, 10 semesters, or the equivalent of these to complete a bachelor's degree or certificate program. Qualified dependents will not be disqualified in the following circumstances:

- Return of the POW
- Return of the MIA individual
- The resident veteran 100% disabled due to military service at time of death

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## **North Dakota State Veteran Employment Benefits**

### **State Hiring Preference for Veterans**

North Dakota gives preference to veterans for recruitment and hiring by state government agencies. In order to qualify for this benefit, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Be a US citizen at the time of application
- Have either been active military duty for 180 days, or served for the full period of active military duty (training periods are excluded)
- Discharged under other than dishonorable conditions, (service members discharged under "expiration of term of service," "completion of required service," etc., qualifies the individual as a veteran)

In order to qualify for this benefit as a wartime veteran, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Military service during a period of armed conflict
- Awarded either an Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal or a campaign service medal during "emergency conditions"
- Discharged under other than dishonorable conditions
- May also be individuals who died in the line of duty

Periods of service for wartime veterans include:

- WWII: December 7, 1941, to December 31, 1946
- Korean War: June 27, 1950, to January 31, 1955
- Vietnam War: August 5, 1964, to May 7, 1975
- Gulf War: August 2, 1990, to January 2, 1992
- Operation Iraqi Freedom/Operation Enduring Freedom: September 11, 2001, to ending date prescribed by presidential proclamation or by Congress as the last day of either conflict, whichever occurs later?

Veterans with disabilities who qualify for preference may not be disqualified from holding any position with an agency, unless he or she is unable to perform the duties of the position with or without reasonable accommodation.

Unremarried surviving spouses may receive preference for recruitment and hiring by state government agencies. In order to qualify for this benefit, the deceased veteran must meet one of the following criteria:

- Died while on active duty due to military service
- Died later due to military service

Spouses of disabled veterans may receive **preference for recruitment and hiring** by state government agencies.

In order to qualify for this benefit, the veteran must meet one of the following criteria:

- A determination by the VA of 100% disability due to military service; or
- A determination by the VA of an “extra-schedular” rating, (to include individual unemployability), bringing the total disability rating to 100%;
- The disabled veteran is unable to exercise the right to employment preference due to disability, but is otherwise qualified to the employment preference.

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## **North Dakota State Veteran Housing Benefits**

### **Veterans Assisted Care Homes and Nursing Homes**

The North Dakota Veterans Home is located in Lisbon, North Dakota. The facility houses 111 basic care beds and 38 skilled nursing beds.

Eligibility for admission requires that veterans meet one of the following criteria:

- Service in a North Dakota regiment
- Entry into service as a North Dakota resident
- Resident of North Dakota for 30 days

- Spouse or surviving spouse of a veteran who meets one of these criteria

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## **North Dakota State Veteran Financial Benefits**

### **Renter Property Tax Refund for Disabled Veterans**

Permanently and totally disabled veterans may be eligible for a Renter's Property Tax Refund of up to \$400.00 under certain circumstances. To qualify for this refund, applicants must meet one of the following criteria:

- Any person, regardless of age, who is permanently and totally disabled OR
- Any person 65 years of age or older
- Annual income from all sources, to include any dependent income, may not exceed \$42,000 per year

Applicants must provide a physician's certificate or written determination of disability from the Social Security Administration with the completed application. Applications must be filed with the Office of State Tax Commissioner before June 1 following the year the refund is to be claimed.

### **Property Tax Exemption for Totally Disabled Veterans**

Veterans may qualify for **property tax exemptions** for their homes under certain circumstances. To qualify for this exemption, applicants must meet one of the following criteria:

- A paraplegic disabled veteran
- Any veteran who has been awarded specially adapted housing by the Department of Veterans' Affairs
- An unremarried surviving spouse, for the first \$120,000

Veterans may be eligible for a property tax credit applied toward the initial \$6,750 of taxable valuation, or \$150,000. To qualify for this credit, applicants must meet one of the following criteria:

- A veteran with a VA disability rating of 50% or greater as a result of military service
- A veteran who has an extra-schedular rating, to include individual unemployability, that brings the veteran's total disability rating to 100%
- An unremarried surviving spouse

Applicants must also have either been discharged under honorable conditions, or retired from military service. Also, unremarried surviving spouses who receive Department of Veterans' Affairs Dependency and Indemnity Compensation are 100% exempt.

To apply for this property tax credit, veterans should provide the following information:

- A copy of the DD Form 214 showing veteran's honorable discharge;
- Certification from the Department of Veterans Affairs to the percentage of disability as a result of military service; OR
- There is a change in the percentage of certified rated disability as a result of military service.

### **Relief and Assistance Programs**

The North Dakota National Guard Foundation is a non-profit organization. It is entirely volunteer-staffed, has no paid employees and hires no professional fundraisers. It runs two programs aimed at National Guard service members:

- North Dakota National Guard Emergency Relief Fund (ERF) provides financial support to more than 4,300 North Dakota National Guard members and their dependents during emergencies, such as fire, illness, natural disasters, accident, or theft.
- North Dakota Tragedy Assistance Program (TAPS) provides support and services to surviving families. Funds are used to cover transportation costs so these families may travel to Washington, D.C. each year to participate in the annual national TAPS event.

### **Adjusted Compensation**

Honorably-discharged veterans and their dependents may be entitled to adjusted compensation for foreign or domestic military service. Adjusted compensation is exempt from taxation by either North Dakota or the federal government.

In order to be eligible for this benefit, applicants must meet one of the following criteria:

- National Guard or Reserve veterans who are mobilized stateside may receive \$50.00 per each month, (or for more than one half a month), of domestic service.
- National Guard, Reserve, or "active component resident veteran of foreign service recipients" of expeditionary medals or campaign badges may receive \$100.00 per each month, (or for more than one half a month).
- Rather than receive monthly adjusted compensation for mobilization, veterans who are Purple Heart for Foreign Service recipients may be entitled to a payment of \$2,500.00.
- Beneficiaries of deceased veterans may receive any payments the veteran was entitled to.
- Rather than receive other compensation, beneficiaries of veterans who died as a result of military service may receive a payment of \$5,000.00.

Applications should be sent to the adjutant general of the state of North Dakota using appropriate forms. Applications must include either certified copies of honorable discharge, or evidence of faithful and honorable service. Applications must be subscribed and sworn to by applicants in a manner approved of by the adjutant general.

### **Family Assistance Centers**

Family Assistance Centers (FACs) operate regionally throughout the state. FACs provide information about military, local state, and federal resources to service members and their families. Services include the following:

- Legal information and referrals
- ID cards and DEERS enrollment
- **TRICARE** medical and dental assistance
- Emergency financial assistance and referrals
- Financial information and referrals
- Crisis information and referrals
- Community resources information and referrals

FACs are located in Bismarck, Fargo, Minot, Devils Lake, and Grand Forks.

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### **Additional North Dakota State Veteran Benefits**

#### **Veteran License Plates and Parking Benefits**

North Dakota offers veterans a variety of license plates with service designations. These plates also afford specific additional benefits to veterans who display them on vehicles.

#### **Disabled American Veteran**

Veterans may be eligible for license plates with a Disabled American Veteran designation. Plates may be displayed on up to two excise tax-exempt vehicles licensed at a time. Vehicles with a gross weight of 26,000 lbs. or more are excluded from displaying these plates.

In order to qualify for these plates, applicants must:

- Complete an Application for Certificate of Title
- Receive a signed certification letter from the US Department of Veteran Affairs office stating the applicant is either 100% disabled due to military service, or is declared eligibility under Public Law 663 of the 79th Congress

Upon approval, annual license fees are waived. The unremarried surviving spouse of a disabled veteran who receives Department of Veterans' Affairs **Dependency and Indemnity Compensation** may also qualify to keep one DAV plate.

Veterans may also be eligible for license plates with a Disabled American Veteran Mobility Impaired designation. In order to qualify for these plates, applicants must be eligible under both Mobility Impaired and DAV qualifications.



Vehicles with DAV licensed may park in marked handicap spots throughout the state.

### Prisoner of War

Veterans who are former Prisoners of War may be eligible for license plates with a POW designation. Plates may be displayed on two excise tax-exempt vehicles at a time. Vehicles with a gross weight of 20,000 pounds or more are excluded from displaying these plates.

In order to be eligible for these plates, applicants must complete an Application for Certificate of Title, and receive certification from the Veterans Affairs Office of Prisoner of War status.

Upon the death of the eligible POW, the unremarried surviving spouse may have plates transferred for use on one vehicle. Upon the death of the surviving spouse, or if there was no surviving spouse, the number plate is retired. Surviving family members may request a commemorative plaque of the number plate.

### Purple Heart

Purple Heart recipients may be issued a license plate with a Purple Heart designation. In order to qualify for Purple Heart plates, applicants must submit a completed Application for ND Veterans Plate Number and a signed letter from the State or County Veterans' Service Officer that verifies the applicant's receipt of a Purple Heart.

The plates may be displayed on one vehicle. Vehicles that exceed 26,000 pounds are excluded from displaying these plates.

These plates are issued at no cost and carry no annual fees. Vehicles displaying these plates are exempted from vehicle registration fees.

### National Guard

Veterans of the National Guard with 20 years or more service, and current National Guard members may be eligible for license plates with a National Guard designation. Plates are issued through the Adjutant General's office and cost a one-time fee of \$5.00. In order to be eligible for these plates, applicants must submit an Application for Certificate of Title, a National Guard license plate number form, and the one-time \$5.00 fee.

### Veteran

Veterans may be eligible for license plates with a North Dakota Veterans designation. In order to be eligible for these plates, applicants must submit an Application for ND Veterans Number Plate. A fee of \$15.00 will be charged initially, \$5.00 of which goes to the Veterans Cemetery maintenance fund. The annual fee for these plates is \$10.00, \$5.00 of which goes to the Veterans Cemetery trust fund and \$5.00 goes to the Veterans Cemetery maintenance fund.

### **Recreational Benefits for Veterans**

Veterans may be eligible for combined general game, habitat stamp, small game, and furbearer licenses for \$3.00, (plus a \$1.00 fee for resident certificate). In order to be eligible for reduced cost game licenses, applicants must be North Dakota residents and veterans who are 100% disabled due to military service.

Veterans may be eligible to obtain a fishing license for \$5.00 (plus a \$1.00 fee for certificate). In order to be eligible for reduced cost fishing licenses, applicants must be North Dakota residents and veterans who are 50% disabled due to military service.

Veterans may be eligible to receive free annual permits to North Dakota state parks. In order to be eligible for free permits, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Be a resident of North Dakota
- Disability of 50% or greater that is due to military service OR
- Former POW

Veterans who are disabled due to military service at a rating of less than 50% may receive an annual permit for \$20.00. In order to be eligible for this reduced cost, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Be a North Dakota residents
- Possess a Report of Benefit letter from the VA OR
- Have a North Dakota DAV/POW license plate

### **Travel for VA Appointments**

County Veteran Service Offices in North Dakota have a small fleet of DAV/VA vans available for round-trip transport of veterans, (and required caregivers, as necessary), to VA medical facilities in Fargo and Ft. Meade, SD.

The offices coordinate van trips and provide volunteer drivers. Veterans ride free of charge. The vans follow established routes and only make scheduled stops. Vans are also not wheelchair-accessible.

### **Service Dogs**

Service Dogs for America, in partnership with the 63rd North Dakota Legislative Assembly and private donors, provides **service dogs** to veterans diagnosed with **Post Traumatic Stress Disorder** (PTSD) through grant funding. In order to be eligible for a PTSD service dog grant, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- North Dakota resident
- Medical diagnosis of PTSD
- Participation in therapy or counseling
- Doctor's recommendation for a PTSD service dog

### **Food and Nutrition Assistance**

North Dakota offers food and nutrition assistance to veterans who qualify. These benefits are delivered through a variety of public and private organizations:

- Veterans can apply for the **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program**, (SNAP), at any county social services office. Eligibility can be based on household size, income, shelter costs, medical costs, and disability.
- The Great Plains Food Bank distributes food to programs across North Dakota. It has made serving the veteran population of North Dakota a top priority.
- North Dakota food pantries are comprised of a network of public and private organizations. The food pantries are sponsored by government agencies, churches, faith-based organizations, non-profit agencies, community groups, service organizations, and senior citizen centers. These food pantries distribute both food and non-food items to eligible applicants, including veterans.

### **Military Outreach Specialists**

Military Outreach Specialists work through the Outreach Program to provide information regarding resources, benefits, and services to veterans, service members, and their families throughout North Dakota. This program works with all branches of service, eras, and conflicts. Its goal is to connect both current and former military service members and their families with resources they are entitled to.

These resources include state and federal veteran benefits, military records, mental health and PTSD resources, financial services, employment services, retirement information, and shelter services. North Dakota has two Military Outreach Specialists in state. These Specialists may be contacted directly, or through a Veterans Service Officer.

### **ND CARES**

The North Dakota Cares, (ND Cares) Coalition consist of a network of military and civilian professionals throughout the state. The mission of this coalition is to connect veterans, service members and their families, and surviving spouses and dependents with behavioral health services they need.

## **Burial Benefits for Veterans**

The North Dakota Veterans Cemetery is located at Fort Lincoln State Park. In order to be eligible for interment, applicants must meet one of the following descriptions:

- Retired from military service
- Service member on active duty
- Eligible veteran of any war
- Veteran who has served at least one term of enlistment and not dishonorably discharged
- Reservist or former reservist

The North Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs offers family members of deceased North Dakota veteran's commemorative memorial coins. These coins are presented to family members immediately following presentation of the flag, and there is no cost for the coin. If family members wish to purchase additional coins, the cost is \$10.00 each.

Indigent veterans who have died will be buried at the expense of the county in which they died. The county social service board will pay for funeral expenses, and will also provide either a military urn or casket for burial.

## Ohio

Find Ohio State and local veteran benefits including education, employment, healthcare, tax breaks/exemptions, recreation and much more below. There are over 800,000 veterans living in Ohio according to the VA.

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### Ohio Veteran Education Benefits

#### *Ohio National Guard Scholarship Program (ONGSP)*

This program allows Ohio National Guard members with qualifying time-in-service to apply for scholarships to Ohio schools on the ONGSP approved list. Those who choose to attend a public institution on that list receive 100% paid tuition. Those who choose other institutions on the list will receive 100% of the “average tuition charges of all Ohio public universities”. This program is for undergraduate work only; those who already have a Bachelor’s degree are not eligible.

#### *The Ohio GI Promise*

For qualifying veterans, the State of Ohio waives its’ normal 12-month residency requirement to qualify for in-state tuition rates. The GI Promise also includes a provision that qualified vets are not required to enroll themselves in a state college program in order to gain residency for their dependents. According to the Ohio Department of Veterans Services, qualifying criteria includes (but is not limited to) the following:

1. Honorable discharge or medical separation from the military with at least one year of time in service. Veteran dependents also are eligible if the veteran was killed in action, declared missing in action, or declared a prisoner of war.
2. Eligibility is documented via DD Form 214.
3. The veteran and dependents (where applicable) must reside in Ohio “as of the first day of enrollment”. In cases where the veteran was KIA, MIA or POW, only the dependents are required to live in Ohio.
4. Documentation of dependent eligibility is required. The necessary documents may include the following:

- Proof of marriage/marriage certificate.
- Proof of dependent status as provided by the veteran parent’s federal tax paperwork submitted for the previous year.
- Documentation of the military member’s status as a POW, MIA, or KIA

#### *Ohio Safety Officers College Memorial Fund*

The dependents of Ohio residents killed in the line of duty who were safety officers, peace officers, firefighters and military members may qualify for the Ohio Safety Officers College Memorial Fund, which pays up to 100% tuition at public universities, and up to an approximate \$7 thousand in tuition at private institutions. Dependent children are only eligible for this program if not eligible for the Ohio War Orphans Scholarship (see below).

#### *Ohio War Orphans Scholarship*

This Ohio military benefits program “awards tuition assistance to the children of deceased or severely disabled (60% or greater) Ohio veterans who served in the armed forces during a period of declared war or conflict”. Students may apply for this scholarship if they are full-time Ohio-based undergrad students under the age of 25.

The Ohio War Orphans Scholarship are designed to cover “a portion of instructional and general fee charges at two and four-year public institutions and a portion of these charges at eligible private colleges and universities”. Funding for this program is subject to change from year to year, check with a college admissions counselor or the Ohio Department of Veterans Services for current scholarship dollar amounts.

#### *Ohio Values Veterans College Credit for Military Experience Program*

An executive order signed in 2013 requires Ohio colleges to consider military training and experience and award “appropriate credit and credentialing”. Ohio values veterans, streamlines occupational licensing for qualified veterans, and helps veterans get “relevant military education, skills training and experience” considered as an equivalency for certain licenses and certificates.

Under the program, there is an ongoing review of educational policies and practices with the goal of simplifying the process of awarding college credit for military experience. The changes and improvements under this program may not always be known at the time a veteran applies to attend classes-it’s always best to consult your campus Veteran Services rep to see what may be applicable before you commit to attending.

#### *Ohio High School Diploma Program for War Veterans*

Ohio state law authorizes school districts to grant a high school diploma “to any Veteran of WWII, the Korean War, or Vietnam War, or to women who left school to support the war effort”. Eligibility for this program includes the following conditions:

- Veteran left school prior to graduation to serve in the U.S. Armed Forces or left school prior to graduation due to family circumstances and subsequently entered the Armed Forces.
- Veteran has not been granted a diploma.

- Veteran received an honorable discharge.
- A woman left school prior to graduation in order to “join or subsequently join the workforce to support her family or to join the work effort”.

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## **Veteran Employment Benefits**

### *Educator License Fee Waivers*

The Ohio Department of Education waives the licensing fees for “any initial Ohio educator license, permit or certificate – or for a renewal – will be waived for candidates who are veterans with honorable discharges or current service members”.

Spouses of active duty service members can also apply for an educator a license free of charge, and there are extension programs that allow military members with existing licenses to extend them for a time “commensurate with the length of active duty service”.

### *Fast Track to Professional Licenses for Veterans*

Veterans with discharges characterized as Honorable and their spouses “can use a prioritized process that applies military training and experience to expedite obtaining a professional state license or certification”. This program also permits the use of **GI Bill benefits** to pay for certain licensure and renewal fees. Applicants must use a military career field matching tool that matches a veteran’s skills with civilian equivalents that require state licenses.

### *Apprenticeship/OJT Living Expenses Compensation for Veterans*

Veterans participating in GI Bill-approved on-the-job training, apprenticeship programs or other career development may be eligible to receive tax-free stipends for living expenses. “Ohio has more than 1,100 registered apprenticeship programs” in careers ranging from construction to healthcare. Applicants must search a list of state apprenticeships and choose from the list provided by the **Ohio State Apprenticeship Council**.

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## **Veteran Housing Benefits**

### *Ohio Assisted Care Homes and Nursing Homes for Veterans*

The State of Ohio operates veteran’s homes in Sandusky and in Georgetown. Skilled nursing care for intermediate-level needs as well as Alzheimer’s care are available to qualified applicants. Admission requirements include:

- Ohio residency for at least one year.
- Honorably discharged or separated under honorable conditions.
- Must have served on active duty (other than for training) during a period of war or declared armed conflict OR have been a recipient of the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal or the Vietnam Service Medal.
- Must have a disability due to disease, wounds or otherwise and are, by reason of such disability, incapable of earning a living.

**Applications for admission** must be directed to Ohio Veterans Homes, not the Ohio Division of Veterans Affairs.

### *Ohio Heroes Home Loan Program*

Active duty, veterans, Guard/Reserve members, and surviving spouses who are Ohio residents may be eligible for the Ohio Housing Finance Agency (OHFA) Ohio Heroes home loan program which offers mortgage loan interest rate discounts.

These loans are for single-family primary residences and have income and price limits, which may vary by county. This program operates via a list of participating lenders, and you may have to shop around to find a lender offering Ohio Heroes incentives. FICO score and credit history requirements will apply.

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## **Veteran Financial Benefits**

### *Ohio Military Injury Relief Fund (MIRF)*

The Military Injury Relief Fund provides a one-time \$500 payment to qualifying service members “injured in active service as a member of the Armed Forces of the United States serving after October 7, 2001, and to individuals diagnosed with post-traumatic stress while serving after October 7, 2001”.

This payment is tax-free, requires Ohio citizenship, proof of service, and proof of injury.

### *Ohio Veterans Bonus Program*

Qualifying military members who are Ohio residents may be eligible compensation for up to \$1,000 per month based on the number of months served for qualifying military duty. According to the Ohio Department of Veterans Services, individual eligibility for the program and the amounts to be paid depend on when and where active duty service occurred:

- \$100 per month, not to exceed \$1,000, for service in Afghanistan during the compensable periods.



- \$50 per month, not to exceed \$500, for service anywhere else in the world during the compensable periods.
- Service for a fraction of a month shall be paid at the rate of 1/30 of the appropriate monthly amount for each day of service. Compensation may not exceed \$1,500 for combined service.

Those who served or are currently serving 90 days or more on active duty “during at least one of the compensable time periods and meets requirements” may be eligible for the Ohio Veterans Bonus:

1. Served or currently serving in Afghanistan from Oct 7, 2001 through a date to be determined.
2. Veteran separated from the United States armed forces under honorable conditions, is still serving in active duty or after serving on active duty remains in any reserve component of the United States armed forces or in the Ohio National Guard.
3. The person was an Ohio resident at the start of active duty service.
4. The person is currently an Ohio resident.
5. The person has not received a bonus or compensation of a similar nature from another state.

There have been similar compensation options for those serving during other conflicts, but the application deadlines for them have passed and those options have since expired.

#### *Ohio Military Retirement Income Tax Breaks for Veterans*

The State of Ohio does not tax military retirement income. Surviving spouse benefit plans are also exempt from Ohio income tax.

#### *Ohio Mobilized Military Member Tax Exemption*

The deduction of military pay from federal adjusted gross income “received for active duty while stationed outside of the State of Ohio for greater than 30 days is allowed” since 2007 according to Ohio Revised Code 5747.01 A(24).

#### *Ohio Homestead Property Tax Exemption for Disabled Veterans*

Honorably discharged veterans with a 100% disability rating certified by the Department of Veterans Affairs may be eligible for expanded Homestead tax relief up to \$50 thousand “of the assessed value of their primary residential home” from property taxes. Qualifying veterans are also exempt from a \$30,000 limit on annual income applied to non-veteran Homestead exemption applicants.

#### *Veteran Disability Pensions*

Qualifying discharged low-income veterans who have permanent and total disabilities or who are age 65 or older may be eligible for financial support designed to bring the applicant’s income up to a minimum level as determined by law. Eligibility includes a requirement of 90 days or more of active service with at

least one of those days served “during a wartime period”. Help applying or qualifying for this benefit is available from your nearest Ohio County Veterans Service Office.

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## **Additional Veteran Benefits**

### *Driver License, ID Cards, and License Plates for Veterans*

The State of Ohio has around 40 different types of license plate options for veterans, currently serving, Guard/Reserve and other categories. Driver’s license applicants who are VA-rated as 100% disabled veterans are eligible for a free driver’s license from the state, and Ohio veterans can also submit a copy of their DD Form 214 to get a free **“Armed Forces” stamp** on a renewed license.

### *Free Ohio Drivers’ License Plates*

The State of Ohio makes free license plates available to veterans are rated by the VA as 100% disabled, plus Medal of Honor and Purple Heart recipients, and former prisoners of war.

### *Ohio Recreational Benefits for Qualifying Service Members*

A wide range of discounts are available for qualifying service members with VA-rated disabilities, Purple Heart recipients, Medal of Honor awardees, former Prisoners of War, and others. Free or discounted use of state parks, free boating, hunting and fishing licenses, “fur taker permits” and more are available via the Ohio Division of State Parks and Watercraft.

### *Ohio Military Burial Benefits*

Limited burial stipends may be available to the families of qualifying veterans via local County Veteran Service Offices. The amount of the burial benefit may vary depending on county, and family members will need to provide a copy of the veteran’s discharge paperwork (DD Form 214 or the Guard/Reserve equivalent) to apply.

### *The Patriot Program: Legal Assistance from the Ohio State Attorney General*

The Ohio Attorney General offers certain pro bono services for eligible Ohio military members. Those services include volunteer lawyers drawing up or modifying wills, powers of attorney, living wills and “durable powers of attorney” intended for health care. Civil rights help and consumer protection assistance are also available. The range of services available may depend on whether or not the client is currently serving or retired/separated.

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## Ohio Links to Veterans Services

- [County Veterans Service Offices](#)
- [Department of Veterans Services](#)
- [Ohio Apprenticeship Council](#)
- [Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles \(BMV\) Armed Forces Services](#)
- [Ohio Veterans Benefits Resource Guide](#)

## Oklahoma

Find Oklahoma State and local veteran's benefits including education, employment, healthcare, tax breaks/exemptions, recreation and much more below. The Sooner State provides benefits for over 300,000 veterans who reside in the State of Oklahoma.

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### **Veteran Education Benefits**

#### **Oklahoma Heroes Promise Scholarship**

The State of Oklahoma created a program in 2011 called Heroes Promise, a scholarship program for children of Oklahoma military members killed in action on or after January 1, 2000. Eligibility requirements for this program include the following:

1. The military member must have filed an individual or joint Oklahoma income tax return for the tax year "prior to the year during which the person was killed or died".
2. The student must be an Oklahoma resident.
3. The student must enroll within the Oklahoma State System of Higher Education before their 21st birthday.

The award amount may vary depending on the scholarship, but in general, the Heroes Promise program will "help pay the student's tuition" state-supported college or university. Funds may also be available for private colleges or universities "that are approved for credit toward an Associate in Applied Science degree at a public college".

Students may take advantage of Heroes Promise for five years or until the completion of a Bachelor's degree (whichever happens first). The amount of the scholarship is dependent on the college program, the number of hours attended, and other factors.

#### **Oklahoma State National Guard Tuition Waiver**

The Oklahoma State National Guard Tuition Waiver offers qualifying service members a 100% waiver on in-state tuition costs for those who do not currently hold a Baccalaureate degree and are members of the Oklahoma National Guard at the time of application or the application deadline. Other requirements include:

1. Must be certified as a National Guard member "in good standing" by the Adjunct General.
2. Must be an Oklahoma resident.
3. Does not currently hold a baccalaureate or graduate degree.
4. Meets admission requirements of the school.

The course of study must lead to a degree, the student must be enrolled for a minimum of three semester hours, and the benefit must be applied for each semester. Up to 18 hours of tuition may be waived each semester.

These tuition waivers cannot be used for continuing education, certificate courses, or other programs that do not count toward a degree.

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## **Veteran Employment Benefits**

### **Oklahoma State Hiring Preference Policies for Veterans**

Honorably discharged veterans and qualifying surviving spouses of veterans have state hiring preference points available to them. Those points are awarded depending on the nature of military service, VA-rated disabilities, and more.

Five preference points are added to the final score of a state exam for:

- Honorably discharged veterans;
- Unremarried surviving spouses of veterans who have died;
- Spouses of veterans who are deemed by the VA or Department of Defense to be unemployable due to a service-connected disability within six months of the date of application.

Ten preference points are available to:

War veterans (as defined in Oklahoma Statutes) who pass the state exam and submit proof of a service-connected disability within six months of the date of application.

“Absolute Preference” Veterans are eligible for additional consideration if they meet criteria including being an eligible war veteran and are VA rated as 30% disabled or more.

These veterans “shall be placed at the top of the register, ranked in order of their examination scores. Absolute Preference Veterans shall not be denied employment and passed over for others without showing cause” according to the Oklahoma Department of Veterans Affairs Official Site.

### **Oklahoma State Veterans’ Priority**

The Oklahoma Employment Security Commission official site advises veterans that the state receives U.S. Department of Labor grants to provide employment and training for eligible Oklahoma residents including veterans.

“As a condition to receiving those funds, priority of service will be given to qualified veterans when referring individuals to job openings, DOL-funded training programs or related services” according to the official site.

Veterans’ Priority preference opportunities may vary depending on the job or program; vets are encouraged to contact an [Oklahoma Workforce office](#).

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## **Veteran Housing Benefits**

### **Oklahoma State Veterans Homes**

The State of Oklahoma operates Oklahoma Veterans Centers, which are long-term nursing / skilled nursing facilities. The nature and availability of individual care options may depend on the facility, space available, and other factors.

Oklahoma Veterans Centers are open in the following locations:

- Lawton / Fort Sill Veterans Center (580) 351-6511
- The Ardmore Veterans Center (580) 223-2266
- The Claremore Veterans Center (918) 342-5432
- The Clinton Veterans Center (580) 331-2200
- Oklahoma Veterans Center (405) 360-5600
- Sulphur Veterans Center (580) 622-2144
- Oklahoma Veterans Center (918) 567-2251

Admission requirements for these Oklahoma Veterans Centers include being an Oklahoma resident who qualifies for VA per diem payments for this type of care.

The applicant must have served at least 90 days with one or more of those days on active duty or a veteran who received a discharge related to a service-connected disability (with any discharge characterized as other than dishonorable discharge.)

The applicant must be “disabled by age, disease or other reason” as defined by the Veterans Center. Spouses and surviving spouses may also be admitted on a space available basis after veterans have received priority.

## Oregon

Oregon's 317,000 veterans make up over 8 percent of the state's population and have access to a wide array of benefits. Find Oregon veteran's benefits including education, employment, tax relief, home loans, and more below.

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### **Oregon Veteran Education Benefits**

#### **College Credit for Military Training**

Military experience and training may translate into college credit for some Oregon veterans. All universities and community colleges in Oregon accept guidance from the American Council on Education regarding how to award academic credit for military training. To claim college credit, request a transcript from your military service branch and submit to your higher learning institution.

#### **In-State Tuition for Non-residents**

Veterans who are pursuing an undergraduate degree at a public institution in Oregon qualify for in-state tuition – even if they are not yet a permanent resident of the state. The benefit also extends to veterans' dependents using transferred benefits and orphans of veterans who died while serving on active duty. This benefit does not apply to graduate students or active duty military and their dependents.

For graduate degrees, qualified student-veterans may be able to have their out-of-state tuition reduced after all other VA benefits, grants, and fee remissions have been deducted.

#### **Voyager Tuition Assistance Program**

Available to members of the National Guard or Reserves who served on active duty in a combat zone on or after September 11, 2001, the Voyager Tuition Assistance Program is a "last dollar award" meant to ensure that these service members do not pay tuition costs if other federal military education benefits fall short. This benefit is available to those earning a bachelor's degree and the typical length of the award is four years (five in certain situations). It does not cover **e-campus** or distance courses and is non-transferable.

#### **Statewide Apprenticeships**

The Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries partners with Oregon businesses to offer career opportunities through paid training and education for veterans seeking **apprenticeships** in the construction, industrial, and manufacturing trades.

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## **Oregon Veteran Employment Benefits**

### **Direct Professional Licensing for Military Experience**

Designed to help veterans get back to work quickly after serving in the military, an Oregon state law (House Bill 4063) requires that certain professional licensing agencies and boards in Oregon accept military training or experience as a substitution for traditional civilian education or experience when required for licensure, certification, or registration.

### **Veteran's Preference**

Veterans and disabled veterans receive preference in appointments to state government jobs in Oregon – whether as a new hire or promotion from within. To qualify, the veteran must clear an initial application screening, satisfy any applicable exam or civil service test, and meet the minimum and any special qualifications for the job. Preference is five points for veterans and 10 points for disabled veterans.

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## **Oregon Veteran Housing**

### **Veterans' Homes**

Oregon hosts two veterans' homes in The Dalles and Lebanon. In order to be admitted, the applicant must be in need of 24-hour nursing care as recommended by their primary care physician, and the Dept. of Veterans Affairs must agree with the assessment. Care at an Oregon Veterans' Home is available to honorably discharged veterans, their spouses, and parents of service members who had a child die while serving in the U.S. Armed Forces.

### **ODVA Home Loan Program**

Separate from the VA Home Loan, Oregon is one of five states that offers its own veteran home loan program. Eligible veterans can receive fixed-rate financing for an owner-occupied, single-family residence; up to the Fannie Mae limit; purchase only (no refinancing), and up to four home loan maximum life benefit.

### **Property Tax Exemption**

Disabled veterans may be entitled to exempt some of their property's assessed value from their property taxes. To be eligible, the veteran must be certified by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs,



or any branch of the U.S. Armed Forces, as having at least a 40 percent disability or be certified each year by a licensed physician as being 40 percent or more disabled.

Active duty military and National Guard and Reserves members may also qualify for a residential property tax exemption.

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## **Oregon Veteran Financial Benefits**

### **Oregon Veterans' Emergency Financial Assistance**

Veterans and their immediate family (spouse, un-remarried surviving spouse, child, or stepchild) who are in need of emergency financial assistance are eligible to apply for this one-time grant from the state of Oregon. Emergency financial assistance includes but is not limited to: emergency or temporary housing and related housing expenses, such as funds for utilities, insurance, and house repairs; mortgage or rent assistance; emergency medical or dental expenses; and emergency transportation expenses. The amount granted is assessed on a case-by-case basis.

### **Retired Pay Income Tax**

Military retirees may qualify for a "federal pension subtraction". Those considered "special-case" Oregon residents will have their military retirement pay taxed as regular income.

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## **Additional Oregon Veteran Benefits**

### **Motor Vehicle License Plates**

The Oregon Department of Motor Vehicles offers privileged license plates for veterans, active duty military, and disabled veterans. There is a one-time fee for the disabled veteran plate. All other plate styles can be obtained at no additional cost, but the regular fee is required.

### **Free Fishing/Hunting License**

The Beaver state encourages disabled veterans to enjoy the great outdoors by offering free hunting and fishing licenses. Eligible veterans must have at least a 25 percent disability rating and have been an Oregon resident for at least six months.

Non-resident active duty service members may purchase a hunting and fishing license at the resident rate.

## **Free Special Access Pass for Veterans**

Veterans with a verified service-connected disability are eligible for free, year-round camping and day-use privileges at RV and tent sites at 26 Oregon State Parks. The pass is valid for four years.

Active duty military on official leave are also eligible for this benefit but must pay up front and file for reimbursement within 30 days of visiting the park.

## **Willamette National Cemetery**

Any Oregon veteran eligible to be buried in a national cemetery is eligible for burial at the Willamette National Cemetery in Portland. Additionally, a veteran's spouse, widow or widower, minor dependent children, and unmarried adult children with disabilities may also be eligible for burial. Families of eligible deceased veterans may receive a burial allowance from the Dept. of Veterans Affairs to help cover the burial and funeral expenses.

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## **Link to Oregon Veterans Services**

- [Oregon Department of Veterans Affairs](#)

## Pennsylvania

Find Pennsylvania state and local veterans benefits including education, employment, healthcare, tax breaks/exemptions, recreation and much more below. Pennsylvania is home to nearly 900,000 vets according to data from the Department of Veterans Affairs, and that population enjoys access to [state assistance](#) to many veteran's benefits.

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### Pennsylvania Veteran Education Benefits

#### Educational Gratuity for Dependent Children of Veterans

Up to \$500 per term or semester (with an eight semester limit) is available for the dependent children of honorably discharged veterans who have qualifying disabilities (rated at 100% permanent and total disability by the VA) and who served in times of armed conflict. This benefit is also available to the surviving dependents of veterans who died while serving during a period war or armed conflict. Dependents must qualify with the following criteria:

- Must be 16 – 23 years old
- Must demonstrate financial need
- Must be a resident of Pennsylvania five years prior to application
- must attend an approved school within the state

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### Pennsylvania Veteran Employment Benefits

#### Veteran Benefits for Employment

Free career resources for veterans are available via the [Pennsylvania CareerLink](#) official site.

Like many other states, Pennsylvania offers veteran preference points for state Civil Service jobs, and these points can be transferred to a spouse for qualifying disabled veterans. Veteran preference points can be used for initial hires, but not for promotions according to the Pennsylvania State Civil Service Commission official site.

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### Pennsylvania Veteran Housing Benefits

#### Disabled Veteran Real Estate Tax Exemption

Pennsylvania residents who are honorably discharged veterans with qualifying disabilities may be exempt from paying real estate taxes "on any building" that serves as the veteran's principal residence

with a five-acre land limit where the building stands. Qualifying disabilities include but may not be limited to the following:

- Blind or paraplegic or;
- has sustained the loss of two or more limbs or;
- has a service-connected disability declared by the U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs to be a total or 100% permanent disability

This tax exemption is need-based, so qualifying veterans will need to file a claim with the Pennsylvania State Veterans Commission.

### **Pennsylvania State Veterans' Homes**

Honorably discharged veterans who were residents of the state at the time they entered military service may be eligible for care at one of six Pennsylvania state veterans' homes:

- Hollidaysburg Veterans' Home
- Pennsylvania Soldiers' and Sailors' Home (Erie)
- Southeastern Veterans' Center (Spring City)
- Gino J. Merli Veterans' Center (Scranton)
- Southwestern Veterans' Center (Pittsburgh)
- Delaware Valley Veterans' Home (Philadelphia)

Visit the [National Association of State Veteran Homes](#) for a California state home directory with contact information, eligibility requirements and much for more.

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### **Pennsylvania Veteran Financial Benefits**

#### **Veteran Retirement Pay Tax Benefits**

The State of Pennsylvania (also referred to as the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania) does not tax military retirement benefits as long as those benefits are paid because the military member met age or time-in-service requirements.

Not all federal retirement programs are eligible for Pennsylvania tax-exempt status and you may be required to furnish proof of the terms of your retirement plan and/or "manually indicate" on the state tax returns which portion of your retirement qualifies for tax-exempt status.

#### **Veteran Tax Breaks for Out-Of-State Active Duty Service**

According to the Pennsylvania Department of Revenue, “Compensation earned by residents of PA in the armed forces serving on active duty outside PA is not taxable as compensation in PA.” Those who are Pennsylvania residents and serve within the state are required to pay taxes on military pay, and “Non-active status military pay is also subject to tax, regardless of where served”.

### **Veterans Temporary Assistance Program**

Honorably discharged veterans who have completed a period of active duty other than for training may be eligible for temporary financial assistance from the state. This need-based program is for VA-certified disabled veterans who meet certain qualifying circumstances including need-based circumstances including a loss of income or an increase in expenses.

This program offers financial aid for basic necessities and must not exceed \$1,600 in a 12-month period. Surviving spouses may also qualify for this assistance.

### **The Pennsylvania Military Family Relief Assistance Program (MFRAP)**

The state of Pennsylvania offers need-based financial grants to Pennsylvania service members and family members up to \$3,500. This grant is available to both currently serving military (see below) and qualifying veterans.

Qualifying criteria for currently serving military members:

- Serve 30 or more consecutive days of active duty with the U.S. Armed Forces or reserve components
- Serve 30 or more consecutive days of active duty or state active duty in the PA Army or Air National Guard
- Are a member in good standing of any reserve component of the U.S. Armed Forces, including the PA National Guard, for a period of three years after release from a tour of active duty, authorized under Title 10 or Title 32, U.S. Code (other than for training), of 30 or more consecutive days duration, when the need for assistance is directly related to the member’s performance of active duty
- Are a member in good standing of the PA National Guard for a period of three years after release from a tour of state active duty of 30 or more consecutive days duration, when the need for assistance is directly related to the member’s performance of state active duty

Qualifying criteria for veterans includes (but is not limited to) active duty, National Guard, or Reserve service, “for a period of four years after a medical discharge for a medical disability incurred in Line of Duty and the reasons arising to the discharge did not exist prior to the member’s military service”.

### **Pensions for Amputee, Blind, and Paralyzed Veterans**

There are state pension programs for qualifying disabled veterans who were Pennsylvania residents when entering military service and “served honorably”. These programs pay \$150 a month each for qualifying service-connected injuries, disabilities, or illnesses including:

- Qualifying loss of vision that includes (but may not be limited to) Visual acuity with the best correcting lens equaling 3/60, or 10/200 or equivalent, or less normal vision in the better eye. Also includes cases where the “widest diameter of the visual field of the better eye has contracted to an angular distance of not greater than 20 degrees.”
- A service-connected injury/disease that results in the loss (or loss of use) of two or more extremities
- Qualifying disability (at least 40% disability compensation rating or higher in each limb) as rated by the Department of Veterans Affairs

These pension benefits are not automatic and must be applied for; you will be required to give supporting documentation and other evidence as needed.

### **Persian Gulf Conflict Veterans Bonus**

This program awards financial compensation for qualified currently service members, veterans, and certain surviving relatives of veterans who served in Operation Desert Shield and Operation Desert Storm. Compensation is available for qualifying Pennsylvania residents totally \$75 per month served in the Persian Gulf with a maximum benefit of \$525.

There is an additional benefit of \$5,000 for those who were declared a prisoner of war at any time during active service in the Persian Gulf Theater during the period of August 2, 1990 to August 31, 1991

This program was originally due to expire in 2015, but further legislation allowed a final application deadline for this benefit of August 31, 2018. Applicants must have been Pennsylvania residents at the time of the qualifying active service.

### **Veteran Benefits for State Retirement Pay**

Veterans employed by the State of Pennsylvania may be eligible to purchase retirement service time to increase retirement pay.

According to the Pennsylvania State Employees Retirement System official site, “You can only purchase service while you are an active, contributing SERS member; you cannot purchase service after you leave state employment or while you are on a leave without pay.”

Terms and conditions vary depending on the nature of your military service and whether or not you receive active duty retirement pay.

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## **Pennsylvania Additional Veteran Benefits**

### **Veteran Driver's License/ID Card Designations**

Veterans may apply for a service-related designation on their state drivers' license ID card, however application fees and/or renewal fees may apply.

### **Veteran Benefits for Recreation**

There are a variety of discounts and perks for veterans from the State of Pennsylvania including hunting, fishing, and trapping licenses. Disabled veterans with qualifying VA-rated medical issues may be eligible for free or reduced licenses via the County Treasurer's office.

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## **Pennsylvania Links to Veterans Services**

- [Department of Military & Veterans Affairs](#)
- [Department of Motor Vehicles](#) – Military Personnel/Veterans

## Puerto Rico

Find Puerto Rico state and local veterans' benefits including education, employment, healthcare, tax breaks/exemptions, recreation and much more below. The Island of Enchantment is home to more than 85,000 Veterans, according to the Department of Veterans Affairs.

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### **Veteran Education Benefits**

#### **Tuition Assistance**

##### Puerto Rico National Guard (FIGNA) Tuition Assistance Program

Active FIGNA service members may be eligible for tuition assistance. This benefit includes the following:

- Undergraduate or vocational programs:
  - Up to 18 credits per academic year
  - Up to \$50.00 per credit
  - Maximum of \$900.00 per year
  - Medical specialties are allowed up to \$1,000.00 annually for two years
- Graduate programs:
  - Up to 18 credits per academic year
  - Maximum of \$75.00 per credit
  - Maximum of \$1,350.00 per year

Recipients are required to pay a \$5.00 monthly fee while using this benefit. Spouses or dependents under 23 years of age may also use this benefit, but certain conditions apply:

- Dependents may use the benefit for undergraduate programs
- Spouses may use the benefit for graduate programs

#### **Tuition Waivers**

##### Free Tuition at University of Puerto Rico and Regional Colleges for Puerto Rican Veterans

Veterans may be eligible to receive free tuition through this program. In order to be eligible for this benefit, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Veteran did not have the GI Bill, or
- **GI Bill** benefits ran out.

Reduced Tuition at University of Puerto Rico and Regional Colleges for Dependents of Puerto Rican Veterans.



Dependents of veterans may be eligible for a 50% reduction in tuition at the University of Puerto Rico and its regional colleges. Check with the University of Puerto Rico for more information regarding this benefit.

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## **Veteran Financial Benefits**

### **Income Tax Exemptions for Veterans**

Veterans may be eligible for additional income tax exemptions. Veterans may take an additional \$500.00 deduction from gross income. This benefit is available to veterans for life.

### **Property Tax Exemption for Veterans**

Veterans may be eligible for **property tax exemptions** available in Puerto Rico. These benefits vary both in eligibility criteria and level of exemption, and include the following programs:

#### **Territory of Puerto Rico Standard Veteran Ten Year Property Tax Exemption**

- Veteran or veteran family residence is exempted from property taxes for ten years and up to \$5,000 appraised taxable value.
- If there are multiple residences in the building where veteran residence is located, the Secretary of the Treasury will determine the appraised taxable value allowed for the exemption.

#### **Territory of Puerto Rico Injured Veterans Property Tax Exemption**

- Injured veterans or immediate family residence are exempt from property tax if:
  - Lot does not exceed 500 square meters in urban zone; or
  - Lot does not exceed one cuerda, (3,930 square meters) in rural zone.

#### **Territory of Puerto Rico Disabled Veteran Property Tax Exemption**

- Veterans who receive disability compensation of 50% or more from the VA are exempt from property tax on the first \$50,000 of appraised taxable value.
  - Must provide proof of disability through written certification from the VA as of January 1st each year.
  - Veteran or veteran family has resided at dwelling from January 1st of year immediately preceding year of requested exemption.
  - Lot does not exceed 500 square meters in urban zone; or
  - Lot does not exceed one cuerda, (3,930 square meters), in rural zone.
- Surviving spouses, younger children, and older children with disabilities are also eligible for this benefit.

### **Puerto Rico National Guard Retiree Annuity**

Puerto Rico National Guard retirees may be eligible to receive an annuity of \$175 per month.

In order to be eligible for this benefit, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Retired National Guard members
- 20 or more years of honorable and meritorious service upon retirement
- Between 55 and 59 years of age

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### **Additional Veteran Benefits**

#### **Discounted Auto Registration Fees**

Puerto Rico National Guard members may qualify for a \$35 discounted auto registration fee. At the time of this writing, no further information was available, but check with your National Guard Orderly Room for more information.

#### **Funeral Insurance for National Guard Service Members and Retirees**

National Guard service members and retirees may be eligible for \$3,000 of funeral insurance to defray costs of burial.

In order to be eligible for this benefit, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Under 60 years of age
- Provide proof of incurred funeral costs for a National Guard Service member or retiree

## Rhode Island

Find state and local veteran's benefits including education, employment, healthcare, tax breaks/exemptions, recreation and much more below. Rhode Island sometimes breaks down state veteran benefits by era of service (World War Two, Vietnam, War on Terror, etc.) and certain benefits may vary depending on service era. The Ocean State is home to over 65,000 Veterans, according to the Department of Veterans Affairs. Learn more about Veterans benefits in Rhode Island.

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### **Veteran Education Benefits**

#### **In-State Tuition**

Veterans may be eligible to receive in-state tuition rates at the University of Rhode Island, Community College of Rhode Island, or Rhode Island College. This applies to undergraduate and graduate students.

In order to be eligible for this benefit, applicant must be determined to be a "qualified veteran." A "qualified veteran" is defined as follows:

- Established home in Rhode Island by January 1st of the year prior to enrollment
  - Must have physical mailing address
  - P.O. boxes may not be used
- Certificate of Eligibility for the **GI Bill**
- U.S. citizen or permanent residency identification
- Meets academic and eligibility requirements for the state college he or she will attend
- Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) has been filed on or before March 1 for year of admission
- Served at least 24 months on active duty
- Injured due to military service which resulted in less than 24 months active duty

Spouse and/or dependents may also qualify for this benefit if the veteran meets the following criteria:

- Minimum of ten years active duty
- Rhode Island resident at time of transferring benefit

#### **Tuition Waivers**

##### **Tuition Waivers for Disabled Veterans**

Veterans with disabilities may be eligible to receive free tuition at Rhode Island public colleges and universities. Applicants must be rated between 10% and 100% disabled due to military service, and permanent residents of Rhode Island. They must also apply for and use financial aid first.

## Rhode Island National Guard State Tuition Assistance Program (STAP)

National Guard members may be eligible for tuition waivers at state colleges and universities. Waivers may cover up to five classes per Fall or Spring semester, and may be used along with the GI Bill. This benefit does not cover fees or books.

In order to be eligible for this benefit, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Army and Air National Guard enlisted service members or officer
  - One year commitment for every 12 credits
  - ETS must be after end of class date
- In an Associate, Bachelor, or Master's program at a state college or university
- In good standing

## State Tuition Exemption Program

National Guard service members may be eligible for tuition exemptions at state colleges or universities. Exemptions can be used with the GI Bill.

In order to qualify for this benefit, applicants must be an Army and Air National Guard enlisted service member or officer who is enrolled in an Associate, Bachelor, Masters, or certificate program at a state college or university.

Service members may receive up to four tuition exemptions per enlistment, and an additional four exemptions for each year of enlistment extension. However, exemptions have certain restrictions:

- Covers one tuition free course per Summer semester
- May not to exceed two courses a year
- Based on seat availability

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## Veteran Employment Benefits

### Veterans Hiring Preference

Veterans may be eligible for hiring preference when applying for state jobs. In order to be eligible for this benefit, veteran applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Other than dishonorable discharge
- 30 or more days of active duty service, (excludes training), or;
- Discharged because of disability due to military service, or;
- National Guard or Reserve retiree with 20 or more years' service.

Veterans may also receive a five-point credit on civil service entrance exams. Points are applied after applicant has passed the exam.

In order to be eligible for this benefit, disabled veteran applicants must meet the following criteria:

- War veteran
  - Campaign ribbon or expeditionary medal
- Honorable or General discharge
- Physical disability
  - Due to military service
  - VA rating

Disabled veterans may also receive a ten- point credit on civil service entrance exams. Points are applied after applicant has passed the exam.

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### **Veteran Housing Benefits**

#### **Veterans Assisted Care Homes and Nursing Homes**

Rhode Island war veterans may be eligible for residence in the Rhode Island Veterans Home. Located on a 110-acre area at Mount Hope Bay in Bristol, the home has 208 beds. The cost for living in the home is adjusted to 80% of net income, and residents are provided with a wide range of care options, including:

- Assisted living
- Nursing care
- Memory care in secure units
- Palliative care
- Health services
  - X-ray
  - Dental
  - Pharmacy
  - Physical therapy
  - Occupational therapy
  - Psychiatric services
- Transportation to Portland VA center for appointments

In order to be eligible for this benefit, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Honorable discharge
- 90 or more days active wartime service
- Resident of Rhode Island two consecutive years prior to application; or
- Joined the service in Rhode Island

Veterans may be denied admission if diagnosed with any of the following:

- Active psychosis
- Substance addiction
- Contagious disease
- Infectious disease

## **Public Housing**

Veterans may be eligible for preferential placement in public housing for the elderly.

In order to be eligible for this benefit, applicants must have a disability that is due to wartime military service, and must have been discharged under other than dishonorable conditions. Individual housing projects have additional criteria applicants must meet in order to be allowed admission.

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## **Veteran Financial Benefits**

### **Property Tax Exemption for Totally Disabled Veterans**

Veterans, surviving spouses, and Gold Star parents may be eligible for property tax exemptions. Exemptions vary from town to town, and the state Department of Revenue maintains a list of eligible properties.

In order to be eligible for this benefit, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Other than dishonorable discharge
  - Wartime service during WWII, Korea, Vietnam; or
  - Service in recognized post-Vietnam conflict
- 

## **Additional Veteran Benefits**

### **Driver License, ID Cards, and License Plates for Veterans**

Veterans may be eligible for driver licenses and IDs with a “Veteran” designation. The designation is available to honorably-discharged veterans, and is free of charge.

### **Veteran License Plates**

Veterans may be eligible for license plates with service-specific designations. Initially-issued plates are free of charge, and remade plates carry a charge of \$31.50.

Special designations include the following:

- Disabled Veteran
- Veteran
- Veteran Gold Star
- Prisoner of War
- Purple Heart

### **Bus Passes**

Disabled veterans may be eligible to receive bus passes at reduced prices through the Rhode Island Public Transit Authority. In order to qualify for this benefit, applicants must have certification of 70% or higher disability rating from VA.

Bus Pass ID cards cost \$25 and remain valid for five years, and applicants have two options for passes: No Fare or Reduced Fare.

No Fare ID cards allow holders to ride free of charge on all fixed service routes. In order to qualify for a No Fare ID card, veterans must meet income guidelines.

Reduced Fare ID cards allow holders to pay half fare during non-peak hours on all fixed service routes, (full fare must be paid during peak hours). Applicants who do not meet income guidelines for No Fare ID cards may be eligible for Reduced Fare ID cards.

If a Bus Pass holder requires a personal care assistant when traveling, the assistant rides free of charge.

### **Legal Benefits for Veterans**

#### **Veterans Treatment Court**

Veterans diagnosed with trauma-related disorders may be eligible for treatment through the Kent County District Veterans Treatment Court. Utilizing the Rhode Island Alternatives to Sentencing and Trauma Recovery Program with Priority to Veterans, or ASTR, the goal of the court is successful rehabilitation and reintegration of veterans currently involved in the judicial system. Treatment options may include the following:

- Jail diversion
- Reduction of charges

- Alternatives to sentencing
- Court-supervised compliance with treatment options and recommendations
- Referral to the Trauma, Addiction, Mental Health, and Recovery (TAMAR) Program
- Peer support through the Veterans Mentor Program
- Additional services through the VA and supporting organizations

In order to be eligible for this benefit, applicants must be diagnosed with a trauma-related disorder that is due to military service. Also, criminal history and charges may affect eligibility.

## **Burial Benefits for Veterans**

### Rhode Island Veterans Memorial Cemetery

Eligible veterans, spouses, and dependents may be eligible for burial in the Veterans Memorial Cemetery. Located in Exeter, the grounds of the 280-acre cemetery are maintained by the Rhode Island Office of Veterans Affairs. This includes well-maintained landscapes and markers, as well as 31 monuments dedicated to veterans.

The cemetery offers a variety of burial options, including in-ground cremation or casket, and columbarium cremation. Burials for veterans are provided at no cost, but certain fees are not covered for burial of spouses or dependents. All committal services include military honors.

In order to be eligible for this benefit, veterans must have had honorable service, and must also meet one of the following criteria:

- Resident of Rhode Island two consecutive years prior to death
- Joined the service from Rhode Island
- Active duty service with receipt of campaign or expeditionary medal
- Two or more consecutive years peacetime active duty
- 20 or more years of National Guard or Reserve service



## South Carolina

Find South Carolina state and local veteran's benefits including education, tax deductions, veteran's homes, financial assistance, and more below. The PALMETTO State has over 420,000 veterans that can access these great benefits.

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### **Veteran Education Benefits**

#### **Tuition Assistance for Children of War Veterans**

In addition to Federal GI Bill benefits, South Carolina offers tuition assistance for children of certain war veterans. Children of veterans are eligible for free tuition if they are 26 or younger and enrolled in an undergraduate program at a state-supported school. The veteran must have been honorably discharged after serving during a war-time period **and** meet the following criteria for the child to receive free tuition:

- Deemed totally and permanently disabled by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA);
- Died during military service;
- Died from a service-connected disability;
- Was a prisoner of war (POW) or is missing in action (MIA);
- Congressional Medal of Honor or Purple Heart recipient

Certain residency requirements apply. For questions or to apply contact 803.647.2434 or download the [Application for Tuition Assistance for Certain War Veterans Children](#).

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### **Veteran Employment**

#### **SC Works Centers**

To assist veterans transitioning into the civilian workforce, local veteran outreach specialists are trained to provide career coaching, job referrals, resume preparation and priority placement services.

#### **Operation Palmetto Employment**

Operation Palmetto Employment is a statewide initiative supported by the South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce to help military members, veterans and their families find meaningful careers after military service. This includes access to education, training, job fairs and more.

#### **Veterans Preference**

Veterans who have received an honorable discharge from military service will receive hiring preference for state positions, provided they meet the knowledge and skill requirements for the position. In addition, veterans who retire from state employment may use up to six years towards an increase in state retirement benefits.

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### **Veteran Housing Benefits**

#### **South Carolina Veteran Nursing Home**

Veterans meeting residency requirements who were discharged under general or honorable conditions and require skilled nursing care are eligible for admission to one of three veteran nursing homes in South Carolina.

#### **Specially Adapted Housing**

State, county, and municipal taxes are exempt on the residence of veterans who have lost the use of their lower extremities or who have paralysis of one lateral half of the body resulting from injury to the motor centers of the brain.

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### **Veteran Financial Benefits**

#### **Military Retirement Pay Taxes**

South Carolina veterans receiving military retirement pay are permitted to deduct certain amounts from their total taxable income. Retirees under 65 may deduct \$11,700, while those 65 and older can deduct \$24,000.

#### **Veteran Property Taxes**

Veterans with a 100 percent service-connected disability are eligible for a total exemption of property tax on their homes as well as a homestead tax deduction of up to \$50,000.

Vehicle property taxes are also exempt for disabled veterans and will be extended to their surviving spouse in the event of the veteran's death.

#### **Admissions Tax Exemption**

Admissions taxes to athletic contests are tax exempt where junior American Legion athletic teams are participants unless the proceeds are given to individual players in the form of salary or otherwise.

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### **Additional Benefits**

#### **Recreational Benefits**

Veterans with a service-connected disability are eligible to receive a free state hunting and fishing license. Veterans deemed permanently and totally disabled will receive free access to South Carolina state parks upon proof of disability.

#### **Lawyers 4 Vets**

Volunteer attorneys in South Carolina assists veterans with basic legal services, such as child support issues, powers of attorney, wills and other legal matters. These services are reserved for low-income veterans. For more information, call 877-289-6000.

#### **Burial Benefits**

Veterans who resided in South Carolina at the time of death, at the time of entry into service or for any period of 5 years or more are eligible to be buried in a South Carolina State Cemetery. Additionally, there is one veteran's cemetery located in Anderson, called the M.J. Cooper veterans cemetery. There is no charge for veteran's buried at this cemetery and only a small fee for their spouse. Some dependent children may be eligible for burial as well.

#### **Special License Plates**

Special motor vehicle license plates are issued to certain veterans.

#### **Parking Fee Exemption**

Municipal parking meter fees are free when a veteran's vehicle bears a disabled veteran ("V" tag), Purple Heart or Medal of Honor license plate.

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### **Link to South Carolina Veterans Services**

- [South Carolina Division of Veterans' Affairs](#)
- [Operation Palmetto Employment](#)



## South Dakota

Find South Dakota state and local veterans' benefits including education, employment, healthcare, tax breaks/exemptions, recreation and much more below. The Mount Rushmore State is home to over 66,000 veterans. Learn more about veteran's benefits available in South Dakota.

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### **South Dakota State Veteran Education Benefits**

#### **Tuition Waivers for Veterans and Dependents**

**Veteran Tuition Waivers:** Veterans may be eligible for tuition waivers at state colleges. In order to be eligible for this benefit, applicants must meet the following conditions:

- Not eligible for federal education programs such as the GI Bill
- Taking undergraduate classes at a state college
- Honorably discharged
- Resident of South Dakota
- Qualify for in-state tuition

Veterans must also meet one of the following criteria:

- Service member between August 2, 1990 and end date of "qualifying service," defined as, "The amount of time served on active duty between the beginning and ending dates of the particular period of conflict or hostilities during which the veteran earned eligibility for this program"
- Received one of the following:
  - Armed Forces Expeditionary medal
  - United States campaign or service medal
  - Disability rated 10%, or more due to military service

Tuition waivers are awarded for each month of "qualifying service." Veterans may receive waivers for a minimum of one academic year, and up to a maximum of four academic years.

**Surviving Dependent Waivers:** Surviving dependents of a service member who was a resident of South Dakota for 6 months or more prior to entry into military service may be eligible for tuition waivers while attending state colleges. In order to be eligible for this benefit, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- 25 years of age or younger
- Resident of South Dakota
- Parent service member killed while on active duty

Surviving dependents of a service member listed as POW or MIA may also be eligible for tuition waivers while attending state colleges. In order to be eligible for this benefit, applicants must not be eligible for federal benefits of equal or greater value.

### **High School Diploma Program for Veterans**

Veterans may be eligible to receive honorary high school diplomas. Diplomas are awarded by the school district of the veteran's choosing. In order to qualify for this benefit, applicants must have served during one of the following periods:

- December 7, 1941 to September 2, 1945
- June 25, 1950 to July 31, 1953, or
- February 28, 1961 to May 7, 1975

### **Tuition Benefits for National Guard Service Members**

**Tuition Reduction for Guard Members:** Guard members who attend state college may qualify for a 50% tuition reduction. This includes one of the following:

- Up to 128 credits in **undergraduate programs**
- Up to 32 credits in graduate programs up to 32 credits
- State vocational school approved by the Board of Education

In order to qualify for this benefit, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Resident of South Dakota
- Member of the South Dakota Army or Air Guard each semester or vocational program the benefits are applied to
- Completed required training
- Attended 90% or more drills/training periods
- Maintaining a satisfactory academic progress
- Give timely notice to the college or vocational program the benefits will be used for

Federal educational benefits do not disqualify applicants from this benefit.

**Tuition Waivers for Dependents, Surviving Spouses, and Surviving Dependents:** Dependents of National Guard members disabled due to military service, and surviving dependents, may qualify for tuition waivers at state colleges.

In order to qualify for this benefit, dependent applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Resident of South Dakota

- 25 years of age or younger
- Guard member parent who died due to military service, or
- Guard member parent who became totally and permanently disabled due to military service

Spouses of National Guard members disabled due to military service, and surviving spouses, may also qualify for this benefit.

In order to qualify for this benefit, spouse applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Resident of South Dakota
- Spouse who died due to military service, or
- Spouse who became totally and permanently disabled due to military service

This benefit includes tuition waivers at any state college managed by the Board of Regents, as well as any course or courses of study chosen by the spouse or dependent.

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## **South Dakota State Veteran Employment Benefits**

### **Veterans Hiring Preference**

Veterans may be eligible for **hiring preference**. This preference applies to appointments, employment, and promotions throughout all levels of government, including state, counties, municipalities, and school districts. Veterans who possess at least minimum qualifications will be granted an interview. Also, veterans who are disabled due to military service are given preference over veteran who are not disabled.

In order to be eligible for this benefit, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Honorably discharged
- US citizen
- Served under “qualifying conditions”

Qualifying conditions include:

- Served full obligation for active duty, reserve, or National Guard, or
- Received early discharge for one of the following:
  - Medical condition
  - Hardship
  - Reduction in force
  - At the convenience of the military

Applicants must meet qualifications necessary for the job they are applying for, and must not be disqualified due to age, loss of a limb, or other physical impairment.

The unremarried surviving spouse of an eligible veteran who died due to military service may receive preference comparable with the eligible veteran preference. The spouse must meet minimum qualifications of the position.

The spouse of a disabled eligible veteran who cannot exercise the right to employment preference may receive preference comparable with the eligible veteran preference. The spouse must meet minimum qualifications.

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### **South Dakota State Veteran Housing Benefits**

#### **Veterans Assisted Care Homes and Nursing Homes**

The Michael J. Fitzmaurice Veterans Home is located in Hot Springs, South Dakota. The facility contains 24 living beds and 76 skilled nursing beds. The home is open to eligible veterans, their spouses, and surviving spouses. In order for a veteran, spouse, or surviving spouse to be eligible for admission, the veteran must meet the following criteria:

- Honorably discharged
- Period of service qualifies for veteran benefits
- Resident of South Dakota at least five years prior to application
- Incapacitated due to work
- Completed physical examination 60 days or less prior to application

Applicants must also meet the following additional criteria:

- Ambulatory – must be able to take care of self and living quarters
- No addiction issues
- No mental illness

In order for a spouse to be admitted to the home, the spouse must be admitted with the veteran.

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### **South Dakota State Veteran Financial Benefits**

#### **Property Tax Exemption for Disabled Veterans**



Veterans who are paraplegic may qualify for exemption from property tax on their dwellings, (“dwelling” is defined as a structure or structures on real estate of up to one acre).

In order to qualify for this benefit, dwellings must meet the following criteria:

- Specifically designed to be wheelchair accessible for use by paraplegic
- Owned and occupied for one full calendar year by veteran with
  - Loss of both lower extremities, or
  - Loss of use, of both lower extremities
- Owned and occupied one full calendar year by unremarried surviving spouse

### **South Dakota State Property Tax Exemption for Totally Disabled Veterans**

Veterans who are disabled may qualify for **exemption from property tax** for up to \$100,000 of the full and true value for their dwelling.

In order to qualify for this benefit, dwellings must meet the following criteria:

- Owned and occupied for one full calendar year
- The veteran must be rated totally and permanently disabled due to military service
- Owned and occupied one full calendar year by unremarried surviving spouse of veteran rated totally and permanently disabled due to military service

### **Bonuses for Veterans**

Veterans may receive paid bonuses for military service during specific periods of conflict. Active duty training does not qualify for this benefit.

In order to qualify for this benefit, applicants must be residents of South Dakota six months or more prior to service. Applicants must have also served during one of the following periods:

- August 2, 1990 to March 3, 1991 (all active service qualifies)
- March 4, 1991 to December 31, 1992 (both service in hostile area and eligibility for Southwest Asia Service Medal qualifies)
- January 1, 1993 to September 10, 2001 (both service in hostile area and eligibility for any United States campaign or combat service medal qualifies)
- September 11, 2001 to date TBD (all active service qualifies)

Veterans may also qualify for \$500 bonuses for service during the following periods:

- Desert Storm: August 2, 1990, to December 31, 1992
- Service beginning on or after January 1, 1993

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## **Additional South Dakota State Veteran Benefits**

### **Veteran License Plates**

Veterans may qualify for plates with specific designations. A \$10.00 fee is charged annually for each of these plates, along with a \$5.00 mailing fee. However, no annual registration fees are charged.

**Disabled Veteran Plates:** In order to qualify for this benefit, applicants must meet be a resident of South Dakota with an Injury or disability due to military service during wartime or due to a military mission involving armed conflict.

Applicants must also already receive one of the following benefits:

- K award, verified by letter from the VA
- Benefits for total disability due to military service
- Vehicle through Public Law 187
- Benefits for loss of one or more extremities
- Benefits for loss of use of one or more extremities

**Pearl Harbor Survivor:** In order to qualify for this benefit, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Resident of South Dakota
- Survivor of attack on Pearl Harbor, Hawaii on December 7, 1941
- Honorable discharge

Upon the death of the applicant, these plates must be surrendered to the county treasurer's office. However, no additional fees will be charged for the registration year.

**POW Plates:** In order to qualify for this benefit, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Resident of South Dakota
- POW during military service

Upon the death of the applicant, these plates must be surrendered to the county treasurer's office.

### **Fee-Free Veterans Records**

When certified copies of legal documents are required for claims against any state or federal agency, counties may not charge fees for these documents. Documents include:

- Birth certificates
- Death certificates
- Marriage certificates
- Adoption records
- Divorce decrees
- Guardianship records
- Conservatorship paperwork

In order to qualify for this benefit, claims must be made by, or on behalf of:

- Service members;
- Veterans;
- Spouses;
- Surviving spouses;
- Dependents;
- Surviving dependents.

### **Recreational Benefits for Veterans**

**Disabled Veterans and POW Reduced Fee Hunting and Fishing License:** Veterans may qualify for hunting and fishing licenses at a reduced fee rate. This license replaces resident small game license and resident fishing licenses, and is valid for four years.

In order to qualify for this benefit, applicants must be residents of South Dakota. Applicants must also meet one of the following criteria:

- Receipt of K award, verified by letter from the VA
- 40% or greater disability due to military service, verified by letter from the VA
- Receipt of Social Security benefits for disability due to military service, verified by letter from the Social Security Administration
- POW status, verified by discharge paperwork

The application and verification papers must be submitted with a \$10.00 processing fee. Once approved, applicants receive a Reduced Fee Hunting & Fishing License.

**Disabled Vet and POW Lifetime State Park Entrance License:** Veterans may be eligible for lifetime state park entrance licenses. These licenses provide the following benefits:

- 50% discount on any camping fee
- 50% discount on associated electrical service fee for site or cabin
- Exemption from \$2.00 reservation call center fee

In order to qualify for this benefit, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Resident of South Dakota
- Receipt of K award, verified by letter from the VA
- 100% disability due to military service, verified by letter from the VA
- POW status, verified by discharge paperwork

State park lodges are excluded from this benefit.

## **Burial Benefits for Veterans**

**Burial Allowance for Veterans, Spouses, or Surviving Spouses:** Veterans, their spouses, or their surviving spouses, who lack the ability to pay for funeral and burial services, may qualify for a burial allowance of up to \$100 to help defray these expenses.

In order for applicants to qualify for this benefit, the veteran must meet one of the following criteria:

- Honorably discharged
- US citizen
- Resident of South Dakota one year prior to military service, or
- Resident of South Dakota one year prior to death

Proof of financial hardship must be submitted through an affidavit to the Veterans Service Officer, and application must be made to the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs in Pierre within one year of burial date.

**Headstone Setting Fee Payment:** Veterans may qualify for a payment of \$100 towards the cost of setting a government marker or headstone.

In order to qualify for this benefit, applicants must meet one of the following criteria:

- Resident of South Dakota one year prior to military service, or
- Resident of South Dakota one year prior to death

Application must be made to the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs in Pierre within one year from the date of setting of the marker or headstone.

## Tennessee

Find Tennessee State and local Veteran's benefits including education, employment, healthcare, tax breaks/exemptions, recreation and much more below. The Volunteer State is home to over 475,000 veterans that can access these great veterans' benefits.

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### **Tennessee State Veteran Education Benefits**

#### **Out-Of-State Tuition Waivers**

In 2014, the State of Tennessee changed its' out-of-state tuition policies for publicly-funded colleges; all eligible Veterans classified as out-of-state students pay in-state tuition and fees instead of the out-of-state rates.

#### **The Tennessee Helping Heroes Grant**

This Tennessee veteran education grant offers eligible veterans \$1,000 per semester for twelve (12) or more semester hours with no failing final grades. Also available; \$500 per semester for successfully completing six to 11 semester hours with no failing final grades.

These grants are awarded on a first-come, first-served basis to qualifying honorably discharged veterans (including Reserve or Tennessee Guard units called into active service) who meet the following criteria:

- Tennessee resident for one year before applying;
- Awarded any of following on or after September 11, 2001: Iraq Campaign Medal, Afghanistan Campaign Medal, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal;
- Enrolled or will enroll at an eligible 2-year or 4-year postsecondary institution ;
- Have not earned a baccalaureate degree;
- Not be in default on a federal Title IV educational loan or Tennessee educational loan;
- Not owe a refund on a federal Title IV student financial aid program or a Tennessee student financial aid program;
- Be in compliance with federal drug-free rules and laws for receiving financial assistance; not incarcerated.

Award of a Helping Heroes Grant shall be made after the completion of a semester, so long as the student successfully completes the course with a non-failing grade as the final grade for the course.

#### **Tennessee State Scholarships for Surviving Military Dependents and Surviving Spouses**

Qualifying surviving dependents under 23 years of age and surviving spouses residing in Tennessee may be entitled to receive free tuition and fees to any state-supported college. The service member must

have died “as a direct result of injuries received or officially reported as being either a prisoner-of-war or missing-in-action while serving as a member of the Armed Forces during a qualifying period of armed conflict” according to the Tennessee Department Of Veterans Services official site.

To claim these Tennessee state veteran education benefits, the surviving spouse or dependent must “present a certificate from the United States Government, and he/she cannot be receiving benefits under Public Law 634” or similar benefits.

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### **Tennessee State Veteran Employment Benefits**

#### **Veteran Preference for Tennessee State Jobs**

Qualifying veterans applying for state jobs may be offered priority placement for interviews for “preferred positions”. According to the State of Tennessee, “Veterans who meet the minimum qualifications for open state preferred positions are guaranteed an interview. Preferred Service employees hold a position in an agency in the state service, in which the employee has successfully completed the requisite probationary period”.

Veterans (and other employees in the preferred service program) are offered a “streamlined appeals process for appreciation of a law, rule or policy by an agency which results in dismissal, demotion or certain suspensions”.

Spouses and surviving spouses may be eligible to receive preference for interviews in the same manner if the spouse is registered to vote in Tennessee and/or has been a Tennessee resident for more than two years before applying, and;

- The veteran was permanently and totally disabled or was 100% disabled due to service-connected disabilities, or
- The veteran died while on active duty.

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### **Tennessee State Veteran Housing Benefits**

#### **Veterans Assisted Care Homes and Nursing Homes**

The State of Tennessee operates four Veterans’ homes:

- Brigadier General Wendell H. Gilbert Tennessee State Veterans Home, Clarksville
- W.D. “Bill” Manning Tennessee State Veterans Home, Humboldt
- Ben Atchley Tennessee State Veterans’ Home, Knoxville

- Tennessee State Veterans Home-Murfreesboro

Veterans who are entitled to medical treatment or other benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs are eligible to apply-depending on the facility applicants must also meet at least one of the following requirements:

- A resident of Tennessee at time of admission to the facility.
- Born in Tennessee.
- Entered the U.S. Armed Forces in Tennessee.
- Tennessee address is official Home of Record.
- Has an immediate family member (Parent, Spouse, Sibling, or Child) or Legal Guardian who would serve as a primary caregiver, who is a resident of Tennessee.

Spouses, Widows, Widowers or **Gold Star Parents** may also be eligible for admission on a space-available basis. Supporting documentation will be required including VA award letters, **DD Form 214**, death certificates, etc.

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### **Tennessee State Veteran Financial Benefits**

#### **Tennessee State Property Tax Relief for Qualified Disabled Veterans**

Disabled veterans with qualifying VA-rated conditions and certain surviving spouses may be eligible for a property tax break up to \$100,000 for primary residences only. The qualifying conditions for this property tax exemption include, but may not be limited to, one or more of the following:

A service-connected disability that resulted in:

- Paraplegia
- Permanent paralysis of both legs and lower part of the body resulting from traumatic injury or disease to the spinal cord or brain; OR
- Loss, or loss of use of, two (2) or more limbs; OR
- Legal blindness
- **A VA-rated service-connected permanent and total disability or disabilities,**
- A 100% total and permanent disability rating from the VA as a result of being a Prisoner of War.

Surviving spouses who are eligible for this property tax break are those who, at the time of the disabled veteran's death, were eligible for disabled veterans' property tax relief. The surviving spouse may apply for this veteran tax relief as long as the spouse:

- Does not remarry;
- Solely or jointly owns the property for which tax relief is claimed; and
- Uses the property for which tax relief is claimed exclusively as a home.

Over the years, changes to this tax relief program have included the addition of an income cap in 2015. Applicants should discuss the current rules of this tax relief program with a tax professional or state tax official to learn what current requirements and options may be.

### **Motor Vehicle Sales Tax Exemptions for Combat Veterans**

Tennessee law exempts from eligible combat veterans from paying sales tax on motor vehicles sold in Tennessee to members of the Tennessee National Guard or to members of the Reserve called into active military service, “who are stationed outside the United States during hostilities in which such person is actually engaged in combat”.

### **Tennessee State Motor Vehicle Privilege Tax Waiver For 100% Disabled Veterans and Ex-POWs**

Any veteran with a VA-rated 100% permanent and total disability from a service-connected cause, or any former prisoner-of-war, is exempt from Tennessee’s Motor Vehicle Privilege Tax. Supporting documentation including VA paperwork is required.

### **Tennessee Highways for Heroes Program**

Thanks to legislation passed by the Tennessee General Assembly in 2013, the state’s road skills test may be waived for qualified military personnel holding a military vehicle operator’s permit or approved equivalent and want to apply for a Tennessee Commercial Driver License (CDL).

Regardless of military service, all applicants must pass the applicable CDL knowledge test. This skills test waiver may have a time limit for those who have been recently discharged; it’s best to explore this option as early as possible once leaving military service.

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## **Additional Tennessee State Veteran Benefits**

### **Driver License, ID Cards, and License Plates for Veterans**

Veterans may apply for **Veteran-designated ID cards**, driver’s licenses, and license plates from the State of Tennessee, but there are no reduced fees or free options at the time of this writing. Disabled veterans are eligible for a free disabled driver placard/decal which can be added to an existing plate, specialty or otherwise.

### **Tennessee State Recreational Benefits for Veterans**



There are several perks for veterans who wish to use Tennessee state public parks, campgrounds, and waterways. They include a Free Day (for all veterans) designated by the Department of Environment and Conservation as a day for vets to “access to and use of all state parks, including, but not limited to, campgrounds and golf courses...free of charge for all veterans”.

Each veteran shall be required to show proof of veteran status, prior to being granted free admission to any state park. Veterans’ Day is usually the designated free day, proof of service is required.

Special pricing for recreational licensing is another state perk for veterans. The State of Tennessee allows discounted sport-fishing and hunting licenses for veterans who are 100% permanently disabled, and combat veterans VA-rated at 30% disability or more. VA award letters and/or other proof of service may be required at application time.

In the off-season, generally November through the end of March, there are discounted camping fees for all veterans who are residents of Tennessee. Specific rates may vary from place to place and are determined by the Tennessee State Parks Department.

### **Tennessee State Burial Benefits for Veterans**

Eligible veterans may be interred at one of Tennessee’s state-run veteran cemeteries. The state operates four veteran cemeteries; two in Knoxville, one in Nashville, and one in Middle Tennessee. Who is eligible to be interred at one of these state-run facilities? According to the Tennessee Department of Veterans Services:

- Any active duty Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force and Coast Guard member discharged or released therefrom before September 7, 1980, under conditions other than dishonorable.
- Any military member who died while on active duty.
- Any person who served on active duty in the Armed Forces of the United States who entered active duty as an enlisted person after September 7, 1980, and officers commissioned who entered active duty after October 17, 1981, and whose discharge or separation from active military service was under “other than dishonorable” conditions.
- A veteran who saw their first tour of duty on or after the dates listed above may be eligible “if he or she completed a continuous period of active duty of at least 24 months or the full period for which called or ordered to active duty, whichever is shorter or was released because of a hardship discharge, or has a compensable service-connected disability or was released because of a service-connected disability”.

Additional requirements may apply.

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### **Tennessee State Link to Veterans Services**

- Tennessee Department of Veterans Services

## Texas

Find Texas State and local veteran's benefits including education, employment, healthcare, home loans, tax exemptions, recreation and much more below. Texas is definitely a veteran-friendly state, with a large number of military bases and access to plenty of VA facilities. But the State of Texas offers additional programs for veterans and their families above and beyond what is available from the Department of Defense and the VA.

### Help From the Texas Veterans Commission

This state agency offers many services for veterans. Their **employment help** for vets includes "one-on-one job coaching, interview skills, and resume development" according to the official site. The site includes news and application information for the Hazelwood Act, (see below) which offers 150 hours of tuition waivers for public colleges and universities in Texas.

There are indirect benefits, too. The **Texas Veterans Commission** offers general assistance grants to agencies dedicated to helping veterans. Similar grants are available to approved agencies for mental health, "treatment court" grants, and the "Housing for Texas Heroes" program.

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### Texas Veteran Education Benefits

#### The Hazelwood Act

The Hazelwood Act and the Hazelwood Legacy Act are two important programs available to qualifying veterans and their dependents. According to the VA official site for the state of Texas, the Hazelwood Act is "a State of Texas benefit that is run by the Texas Veterans Commission. It provides qualified Veterans, spouses, and **dependent children** with up to 150 hours of tuition exemption, including most fee charges, at public institutions of higher education in Texas. This does NOT include living expenses, books, or supply fees."

The Hazelwood Legacy Act is available to qualifying dependent children. The veteran assigns his or her unused or remaining tuition-exempt Hazelwood Act hours to a dependent. Since 2011, there is a requirement that the veteran reside in the state of Texas during the time the dependent uses the benefit. Only one dependent at a time can use these hours.

Certain Hazelwood provisions also apply for "spouses and dependent children of eligible Active Duty, Reserve, and Texas National Guard who died in the line of duty or as a result of injury or illness directly related to military service, are missing in action, or who became totally disabled for purposes of employability" according to the VA official site for Texas.

#### Tuition Assistance for National Guard Members

The State of Texas Tuition Assistance Program, also known as the State Tuition Reimbursement Program or STRP, is “an education benefit that provides money for college to eligible members of the Texas Military Department pursuing their educational and career goals” according to Texas.gov.

This program is intended for “active drilling members of the Texas Army National Guard (TXARNG), Texas Air National Guard (TXANG) and Texas State Guard (TXSG)”. Requirements include completion of Basic Training “or its’ equivalent” according to the State of Texas. This tuition assistance is good for “first degrees” at any nationally or regionally accredited Texas college or university. Applicants cannot pursue second degrees with STRP funds.

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## **Texas Veteran Employment Benefits**

### **Career Assistance from the Texas Veterans Commission**

The Texas Veterans Commission is a state agency offering many services for veterans. Their employment help for vets includes “one-on-one job coaching, interview skills, and resume development” according to the official site. The site includes news and application information for the Hazelwood Act, (see the education section above) which offers 150 hours of tuition waivers for public colleges and universities in Texas.

There are indirect benefits, too. The Texas Veterans Commission offers general assistance grants to agencies dedicated to helping veterans. Similar grants are available to approved agencies for mental health, “treatment court” grants, and the “Housing for Texas Heroes” program.

### **Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation**

Veterans with relevant training experience may qualify for credit towards licensing and other required credentialing to work for or run businesses in the state including electricians, air conditioning and refrigeration, barbering, well drilling, and others. The list of requirements for time-in-service, OJT, and other relevant military experience varies greatly depending on the type of job or license required.

Those who meet the minimum requirements may be exempt from application fees, exams, and more. Supporting documentation is required in all cases.

### **Unemployment Benefits for Veterans and Military Spouses**

Veterans and military spouses in Texas receive consideration for unemployment benefits. According to the Texas Workforce Commission official site, those with Texas-based military service may be eligible when the applicant is physically living in Texas when filing the unemployment claim, the applicant was discharged under honorable conditions and completed one full term of service.

Those who did not serve one full term, but “separated early for a reason specified by Congress” may be eligible for an exception to the full-term requirement.

Guard/Reserve members may be eligible if they served at least 180 days of continuous active duty service on or after November 25, 2015, “and received a Form DD-214 when separated, OR served at least 90 days of continuous active service, beginning on or before November 24, 2015, as a reservist or member of the National Guard, and received a Form DD-214 when separated”.

Military spouses who relocate due to PCS orders or other factors may also be eligible, but the following caveat applies; “You may be eligible for benefits but you will be disqualified for 6 to 25 weeks, depending on the situation. Your maximum benefit amount is also reduced by the number of disqualified weeks” according to the Texas Workforce Commission.

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## **Texas Veteran Housing Benefits**

### **Veterans Land Board**

The Veterans Land Board (VLB) offers qualifying veterans to borrow money directly from the State of Texas. Up to \$150,000 is available per transaction “to purchase land at competitive interest rates” according to the VLB official site.

### **Housing Assistance**

Land purchases aren’t the only option available via VLB. There is also a Veterans Housing Assistance Program (VHAP) which allows veterans to apply for fixed-rate home loans with little or no down payment required. According to the official site, “Veterans, military members and their spouses may receive up to \$424,100 on a fixed-rate loan for 15, 20, 25 or 30 year terms...Veterans with a VA service-connected disability rating of 30% or greater qualify for a discounted interest rate.”

### **Veteran Homes in Texas**

Texas has 8 veterans homes located in the following cities:

- Amarillo
- Big Spring
- Bonham
- El Paso
- Floresville
- McAllen
- Temple

- Tyler

These homes open for those who need, “long-term nursing care for Texas Veterans, their spouses and Gold Star parents” according to the official site, which adds that the Department of Veterans Affairs, “subsidizes much of a veteran’s cost to stay at a VLB Texas State Veterans Home” resulting in lower daily rates.

Visit the [National Association of State Veteran Homes](#) for a Texas state home directory with contact information, eligibility requirements and much for more.

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## **Texas Veteran Financial Benefits**

### **The “Texas Income Tax Break”**

Since the State of Texas features no personal **income tax**, military members living there will enjoy more savings at tax time than they might in states where personal income tax is collected. There is also no Texas military retirement income tax.

### **Tax Breaks for Disabled Veterans and Surviving Dependents**

Qualifying disabled veterans and surviving spouses may be eligible for property tax breaks from the State of Texas. One such tax break is a “graduated” form of property tax relief for those with VA disability ratings starting at 10%. Tax exemption laws and requirements may change from year to year, it’s best to consult a local tax professional to see what exemptions or regulations of those exemptions apply in a given tax year.

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## **Additional Texas Veteran Benefits**

### **Veteran Driver Benefits**

The State of Texas allows veterans to apply for driver’s licenses and ID cards with a “veteran” designation, as well as specialty license plates for both disabled and non-disabled vets. The “veteran” designation on a driver’s license is free except in cases where the applicant requests a duplicate license that is updated to show veteran status. Qualifying disabled veterans with a 60% or higher disability rating may be eligible for free driver’s licenses. Disabled veterans may also apply for parking placards and other designations.

### **Parks and Recreation Benefits**

There are a variety of military perks for veterans including the Texas Parklands Passport- free admission to Texas state parks for veterans with disability ratings of 60% or higher, or “loss of lower extremity”. A disabled veteran license plate, VA award letter, or tax exemption letter for Texas vets is required to claim this benefit.

### **Free Texas Hunting Licenses**

There are several options for Texas veterans including the free “Texas Resident Active Duty Military Super Combo” which requires proof of residency or military documentation showing Texas as the service member’s home of record. “Super Combo” licenses include hunting and fishing, with the exception of duck hunting, which is licensed separately. There is also a version of this free combo license for qualifying disabled veterans.

### **Free or Reduced-Price Texas Handgun Licenses**

According to the Texas Department of Public Safety official site, “Individuals currently serving in the military OR who were honorably discharged within the last 365 days” are eligible for a free gun license. Honorably discharged veterans who apply beyond the “free zone” 365 days after leaving military service are eligible for a reduced rate handgun license.

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### **Texas Links to Veterans Services**

- [Texas Department of Motor Vehicles](#)
- [Texas State Parks](#)
- [Texas Veterans Commission](#)
- [Texas Veterans Land Board](#)
- [Texas Veterans Portal](#)
- [TexVet.com](#) – Texas A & M and University of Texas comprehensive benefits information
- [Veterans County Service Officer Association of Texas \(VCSOAT\)](#)

## Utah

Find Utah State and local veteran's benefits including education, employment, healthcare, tax breaks/exemptions, recreation and much more below. The "Beehive State" has more than 140,000 veteran residents according to the VA website.

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### **Utah State Veteran Education Benefits**

#### **In-State Tuition for Qualifying Service Members**

Active duty military and veterans who have finished active duty service within 12 months of being admitted to a state school may qualify for college tuition at in-state rates. Applications for this benefit are handled by the school and is not automatic.

#### **Utah State Veterans Tuition Gap Program**

The Veterans Tuition Gap Program allows qualifying veterans to receive tuition assistance "for the last school year at State institutions of higher education" according to the Utah Department of Veterans and Military Affairs. The payments do not cover housing, books, or other non-tuition expenses.

#### **Scott Lundell Military Survivors Tuition Waiver**

Surviving dependents of service members killed in action on or after September 11, 2001 may qualify for a tuition waiver at state schools. The veteran must have been a Utah resident and residency requirements for dependents claiming this benefit may also apply. This tuition waiver is for undergraduate studies only.

#### **Utah State Tuition Waiver for Purple Heart Recipients**

Purple Heart recipients are eligible for free tuition at "all public institution of higher learning in Utah" for undergraduate studies or master's degree programs. Supporting documentation is required to apply for this benefit. It is not automatic.

#### **Utah High School Diploma Program for Qualifying Wartime Veterans**

Like many other states, Utah state law permits local school districts to offer high school diplomas to qualifying veterans who could not graduate because they left school to serve in uniform. Qualifying eras for this Utah high school diploma program include World War Two, Korea, and Vietnam. Contact the applicable Utah school district for application procedures in that district.



## Utah State Veterans Upward Bound Program

Veterans Upward Bound is a program funded by the Department of Education and sponsored by Weber State University. It is designed to offer help to veterans seeking post-secondary education in certain fields including math, English, and “basic computer applications.” This program may not be available statewide. At the time of this writing, it is provided in the following counties:

- - Salt Lake County
  - Davis County
  - Weber County

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## Utah State Veteran Employment Benefits

The State of Utah offers qualifying veterans multiple ways to claim hiring preference points for state jobs. One of those options is via the “traditional” **veteran’s preference point system** (five additional points awarded for qualifying veterans on state job tests, 10 points awarded for those with qualifying disabilities).

For state jobs open to the public, the State of Utah’s veterans’ preference is open to those who meet the following requirements:

- On active duty in the armed forces for more than 180 consecutive days, **except** active duty for training, basic or advanced individual training (AIT), or active duty to attend a military course
- Retired or separated under honorable conditions
- Reservists who served in a campaign or expedition for which a campaign medal has been authorized and who was separated from active service under honorable conditions
- Disabled veterans regardless of the percentage of disability
- Spouses and unmarried surviving spouses of qualifying veterans
- Purple Heart recipients
- Retirees

Another option for veteran hiring preference in the state of Utah is the Veteran Employment Opportunity Program (VEOP) which permits qualifying veterans to be hired “into designated career-service positions with a six-month on-the-job examination period in lieu of a competitive hiring process.”

This program is not automatic and must be claimed when applying for state jobs via the Utah’s official Job Seeker website. According to the Utah Department of Veterans and Military Affairs website, those conducting state hiring procedures may decide to interview and/or hire a qualified veteran under this program, “separately from other candidates.”

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## **Utah State Veteran Housing Benefits**

### **Utah State Veterans Assisted Care Homes and Nursing Homes**

The State of Utah operates four veterans' homes open to Utah veterans:

- Salt Lake City
- Ogden
- Payson
- Ivins

While wartime service is not a requirement for admission to these homes, "wartime veterans with one day or more of wartime service, as recognized by state and federal laws, have top priority." This is according to the Utah Department of Veterans and Military Affairs official site.

Spouses and surviving spouses may also be eligible for care in these homes as long as the marriage to the veteran is dated at least one year prior to applying for care. Services provided may depend on the location, staffing, demand, and other variables. Facilities may offer some or all of the following:

- Short-term rehabilitation
- Physical therapy
- Speech therapy
- Wound care
- Orthopedic care
- Memory Care
- Long-term care
- Respite care
- Post-stroke rehabilitation
- Medication management
- Diabetes management
- Complex medical care
- IV services
- COPD care

Qualifying for care in these homes may depend on the veteran's eligibility for the VA healthcare system in general. Those admitted must require long-term care and have medical documentation or establish documentation showing this need.

### **Utah State First-Time Home Buyer Grants for Qualifying Veterans**

Currently serving military and veterans who apply within five years of leaving military service may qualify for a \$2,500 first-time home buyer grant for qualifying home purchases within the state of Utah. Applicants must be purchasing a first home and be able to provide a valid VA Certificate of Eligibility for

a VA mortgage loan. House hunters are NOT required to use a VA loan to purchase the house. The borrower's purchase of a property as a primary residence must occur no later than five years from retirement or separation. The \$2,500 grant is delivered to the buyer at closing time.

The type of homes eligible under this program are single family homes, condos, mobile/manufactured homes, homes with up to four units, etc. This is essentially the same kind of property a government-secured mortgage loan such as an FHA loan or **VA home loan** would be eligible under.

**\*\*Important Note:** This program is currently funded until June 2019, but may be extended by state legislation past then. Contact the Utah Department of Veterans and Military Affairs official site for updates and more information.

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### **Utah State Veteran Financial Benefits**

#### **Armed Forces Property Tax Breaks for Qualifying Service Members**

Utah offers a state property tax exemption for members of active or reserve components of the United States Armed Forces "who perform qualifying active duty military service" of at least 200 active days per year (consecutively or not).

According to the State of Utah, "200 consecutive days of active service...may cross into a second calendar year" as long as that service has not been used "toward the count for the previous year's taxes."

The amount of the **tax exemption** is equal to the total taxable value of the property and may be claimed "up to a year following the year the service was completed." This exemption is not for spouses or for property "owned exclusively by the military person's spouse."

#### **Utah State Property Tax Abatement for Qualifying Disabled Veterans**

Those with a minimum 10% VA-rated disability may qualify for a tax abatement benefit for permanent place-of-residence property tax abatement. This tax break may also apply for unmarried surviving spouses and surviving dependent children. The higher the disability rating for the qualifying service member, the higher the tax abatement all the way up to a 100% disability rating.

The maximum property tax abatement, rated at 100% military service-connected disability, is \$244,064 at the time of this writing.

Regardless of the actual amount of the maximum permitted abatement, multiply the percentage of VA-rated disability by the maximum dollar amount of the abatement (in this case, the amount stated above at \$244,064).

The amount of that calculation is subtracted from the taxable property value and property taxes are assessed on that dollar amount given from the calculation. The home owner pays taxes based on the smaller amount.

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### **Additional Utah State Veteran Benefits**

#### **Reduced Utah Transit Authority Fees for Qualifying Veterans**

Certain veterans may qualify up to 65% reduced fares on Utah Transit Authority (UTA) busses and TRAX light rail. Qualifying criteria includes:

- A VA-rated 40% disability status or higher (service-connected)
- Those receiving a VA non-service connected pension
- Veterans and others with “transportation disabilities that cause either difficulty boarding or getting off a bus / light rail system” and related issues
- Those receiving Social Security Disability benefits, SSI, or Medicare (veteran status or not)
- Those 65 and older

Visit a UTA location or the UTA official site for more information on how to apply. Proof of service and/or disability may be required at application time.

#### **Free Utah Vehicle License and Registration for Purple Heart Recipients**

Those awarded the Purple Heart are exempt from paying Utah state fees for licensing and registering a privately-owned vehicle in the state. The exemption of these fees does not extend to any related property taxes or “age-based fees” that may apply.

#### **State of Utah Discounted Fishing Licenses for Qualifying Disabled Veterans**

Veterans with a VA-rated 40% service connected disability may be eligible for discounted fishing licenses via the Utah Division of Wildlife. A VA award letter and/or other proof of disability documentation may be required.

#### **Utah Burial Benefits for Veterans**

The Utah Veterans Memorial Cemetery and Memorial Park is a state-run veterans' cemetery open since 1990. No fees are required for the **burial of qualifying veterans**, but dependent children and spouses of veterans may require a fee for interment. Requirements for burial include any military discharge except Dishonorable.

Family members are urged to look into pre-need eligibility; this requires the family to submit the veteran's DD Form 214 discharge paperwork or the equivalent. Reservists and National

Guard Members who at the time of death were entitled to retired pay, or would have been entitled had they reached the age of 60, may also be eligible for burial at this facility.

## Vermont

Find Vermont State and local veterans' benefits including education, employment, healthcare, tax breaks and exemptions, recreation and much more below. The Green Mountain State is home to over 45,000 Veterans, according to the Department of Veterans Affairs. Learn more about veterans benefits in the state of Vermont.

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### **Veteran Education Benefits**

#### **Tuition Waivers**

National Guard service members may be eligible for loan forgiveness through the Vermont National Guard Educational Assistance Program.

In order to receive this benefit, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Active member of Vermont Army or Air National Guard in good standing who has successfully completed commission or basic training
- Attendance at approved state technical center or college
- Enrolled in a degree or diploma program OR
- Attending continuing education

#### **High School Diploma Program for Veterans**

Veterans may be eligible to receive a high school diploma from any Vermont public school.

In order to be eligible for this benefit, applicants must have served during one of the following periods:

- World War II (December 7, 1941 to December 31, 1946)
- Korean War Era (June 27, 1950 to January 31, 1955)
- Vietnam War Era:
  - Veterans who served outside Vietnam (August 5, 1964 to May 7, 1975)
  - Veterans who served inside Vietnam (February 28, 1961 to May 7, 1975)

The Vermont Office of Veterans Affairs, (VOVA) takes applications over the phone. Once eligibility is determined, the specified high school will arrange the presentation with the eligible veteran.

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### **Veteran Employment Benefits**

#### **Employment Assistance**

The Vermont State Department of Labor has programs to assist veterans and disabled veterans to find **job training or employment**: Career Resource Center professionals who specialize in working with veterans and disabled veterans, and the Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP). Center professionals who specialize in working with veterans and disabled veterans can assist with the following areas;

- Assisting veterans to find work
- Identifying job training needs
- Identifying funds for training

DVOP representatives travel to all Vermont Regional Career Centers, as well as White River Junction VA, to assist disabled veterans who are looking for work.

### **Veterans Hiring Preference**

Veterans may be eligible to claim **preference points when seeking state employment** in Vermont. Veterans may also be eligible to apply for jobs for positions normally only open to current state employees.

In order to be eligible for the addition of preference points, applicants must meet one of the following criteria:

- Minimum service of 90 days
- Honorable discharge or other acceptable conditions of discharge
- Disability due to military service

Spouses of veterans who are totally disabled due to military service and unremarried surviving spouses may also be eligible for this benefit.

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### **Veteran Housing Benefits**

#### **Veterans Assisted Care Homes and Nursing Homes**

The State of Vermont operates the Vermont Veterans Home, which is located in Bennington. The home has 177 beds, and is a licensed healthcare facility with a wide range of medical services for residents, including:

- Skilled nursing home care
- Short-and long-term care
- Post-operative wound care
- Physical therapy

- Speech therapy
- Rehabilitation therapy
- Occupational therapy
- Namaste program
  - Relaxation techniques for comfort and pain management
- Certified Alzheimer's & dementia unit
  - Music and Memory program for memory care and relaxation

Eligible Vermont veterans have priority for admission. The Home defines eligible veterans as service members who served at least ninety days and were discharged under honorable conditions. Gold Star parents and spouses of eligible veterans also are eligible for admission, and veterans from other states are welcome to apply.

The Vermont Veterans' Home accepts the following options for payment:

- Private payment
  - Reduced costs may be available
- Medicare
- Vermont Medicaid
- New York Medicaid
- Other insurance through special arrangements

The Home is not affiliated with the VA, and receives no payments for care at the Home. Also, if an applicant does not have Medicare, Medicaid, or private insurance, he or she will have to pay for care. However, the Home will assist veterans with accessing any available insurance program he or she is eligible for.

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### **Veteran Financial Benefits**

#### **Vermont Veterans Assistance Fund**

Veterans may be eligible to receive financial assistance from VOVA Vermont Veterans Assistance Fund. Veterans, or families of veterans, may receive a one-time payment of up to \$500. The VOVA application takes roughly ten minutes to complete, and is done via telephone.

In order to qualify for this benefit, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Vermont resident
- Experiencing a financial crisis that prohibits paying for housing, utilities, or similar "critical need"
- The ability to provide detailed information regarding income and expenses

#### **Tax Breaks for Veterans**



Veterans may be eligible for tax breaks on military disability retirement pay awarded for disability due to military service.

In order to qualify for this benefit, applicants must meet one of the following criteria:

- Awarded disability payment prior to September 25, 1975
- Active or reserves service member on September 24, 1975
- Under binding written commitment on September 24, 1975

Applicants must also either receive disability payments for injury or illness due to military service, or be entitled to receive disability from the VA. Disability due to military service must result from one of the following situations:

- Armed conflict
- Extra-hazardous service
- Training exercises, or
- Vehicles, devices, or vessels of war

### **Property Tax Exemption for Totally Disabled Veterans**

Disabled veterans may be eligible for **exemption from property tax** through the VOVA. This exemption applies to the first \$10,000 of appraisal value, but may also apply up to the first \$40,000, depending upon the place of residence. Surviving spouses or surviving dependents may also be eligible for this exemption if it was granted prior to death.

In order to qualify for this benefit, applicants must provide proof of receipt for one of following types of compensation:

- Military medical retirement pension
- Rated at 50% or more disability compensation
- Non-Service Connected or Improved Pension

This exemption also only applies to the primary residence owned by a veteran or surviving spouse, (rentals are excluded). Also, recipients must reapply annually to the VOVA before May 1st. However, veterans who are totally and permanently disabled are only required to submit application the first year, and are only required to reapply if they relocate.

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### **Additional Veteran Benefits**

#### **Driver Licenses and Identification Cards**

Veterans may be eligible to receive a “Veteran” designation on driver licenses or identification cards. Applicants must submit a new Driver’s License/Identification Card along with completed Vermont Certificate of Veteran Status either to any local Vermont DMV office or the VOVA. Fee information is not currently available online. Inquiries regarding fees should be made to the VOVA or the Vermont DMV.

### **Driver License Fee Exemption**

Veterans may be eligible for exemption from driver license fees if they have been approved for financial assistance through the VA.

In order to qualify for this benefit, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Honorably discharged
- Resident of Vermont
- Motor vehicle acquired with VA financial assistance
- Eligible to be granted a license
- Application includes an approved VA Form 21-4502

### **Commercial Driver License Test Waiver**

Veterans may be eligible for a test waiver when applying for a Vermont CDL.

In order to be eligible for this benefit, applicants must submit verification that, within the last two years, they have not had:

- More than one license in addition to military license
- Suspended, revoked, or canceled license
- Convictions for disqualifying offenses
- More than one conviction for serious traffic violations
- Any conviction for a violation of military, state, or local law relating to motor vehicle traffic laws due to crash
- Record of fault for a crash

This waiver is only available to veterans who, while in the military:

- Were exempted from the commercial driver license requirements to drive military vehicles on state roads or highways, *and*
- Were employed in a military position that required them to operate a vehicle equivalent to a commercial vehicle two years prior to leaving the military.

### **Veteran License Plates**

Veterans may be eligible to receive and display license plates with service-specific designations. All applications must include Vermont Certificate of Veteran Status as verified by the Vermont Office of Veterans Affairs. Special designations include:

- Pearl Harbor Survivor
- POW
- **Purple Heart**
- US Veteran

Veterans who completed tours of duty overseas in theater may be eligible for plates with specific “in-theater” designations. In addition to verification by the VOVA, applicants must have actual “boots on the ground” service. Special designations include:

- Afghanistan
- Gulf War
- Iraq War
- Korean War
- Vietnam War
- World War II

In addition to verification by the VOVA, some plates available to veterans require additional affiliations, forms, and verifications. These include:

- Vietnam Veterans
  - Available to members in good standing with Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA)
  - Completed Safety/Service Organization Plate Application
  - Signed authorization or valid VT Membership card
  - One-time additional fee for plate
- Veterans of Foreign Wars
  - Available to VFW members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars
  - Completed Safety/Service Organization Plate Application
  - Valid membership card or authorization signed by VFW Quartermaster
  - One-time additional fee for plate
- Disabled Veteran
  - Universal Medical Evaluation/Progress Report, unless a medical evaluation has been filed in previous four years
- Gold Star
  - Gold Star Family Plate Application
  - Report of Casualty
  - Submit to VOVA for certification as Gold Star Family member
  - Plates are not subject to special plate fees

## **Recreational Benefits for Veterans**

**Vermont Resident Veterans Hunting and Fishing Permanent Disability License:** Veterans may be eligible for free permanent hunting, fishing, or combination licenses through the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department.

In order to qualify for this benefit, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Vermont resident
- Rated at 60% disabled or greater due to military service
  - Disability certified through letter from the VA

**Vermont Non-Resident Veterans Reciprocal Hunting and Fishing Privileges:** Veterans may be eligible for free non-resident one-year hunting, fishing, or combination licenses through the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department.

In order to qualify for this benefit, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Reside in states that allow reciprocal privileges for Vermont residents
  - New Hampshire and Maine
- Qualify for a free license under disabled veteran provision
  - Disability certified through the VA

**Vermont Green Mountain Passport Lifetime Pass for Resident Veterans:** Veterans may be eligible to receive lifetime day passes for \$2.00 through local town clerk's office. In order to qualify for this benefit, applicants must meet one of the following criteria:

- 62 years of age or older, OR
- Honorably discharged from active duty

## **Medals**

Veterans may qualify for service-specific medals awarded by the state of Vermont through the VOVA. Medals may be received via mail, or delivered by the Governor during an annual medal presentation ceremony at the Vermont State House.

Vermont awards three medals to veterans. Each medal requires certain qualifying criteria:

- The Vermont Veterans Medal
  - Honorable discharge
- The Vermont Distinguished Service Medal
  - Honorable discharge
  - Service in combat theater
- The Patriots Medal
  - Vermont service members killed in action

- Awarded to surviving spouses or family members

In order to receive these medals, veterans must apply for them, or a designated representative must apply on behalf of a qualifying veteran. The VOVA can take applications via telephone.

### **Burial Benefits for Veterans**

Vermont provides several burial benefits and honors to deceased veterans. In order to qualify for this benefit, applicants must meet one of the following criteria:

- Veteran
- Deceased spouse
- Unmarried minor children
- National Guard members
  - 20 years of service with retirement letter
- Reserve Service members
  - 20 years of service with retirement letter

The Vermont Veterans Memorial Cemetery (VVMC) is located in Randolph Center. The VVMC provides several free of charge benefits to veterans interred at the cemetery, including:

- Perpetual care of burial plot
- Plot marker
  - Custom-made plot markers must be paid for by the veteran or family
- Funeral honors
  - Vermont National Guard may perform the following
- Appropriate gun salute
- Flag folding ceremony
- Presentation of flag to next of kin
- Playing of Taps

The VVMC also provides several benefits to spouses interred at the cemetery, including:

- Perpetual care of burial plot
- Plot marker for nominal fee

Families of veterans who have either been buried at sea or whose ashes have been scattered elsewhere may have a memorial stone placed in the VVMC memorial garden.

### **Burial of Vermont's Destitute Veterans**

Vermont provides guaranteed burial services for veterans who "die destitute." Arrangements may be made through any local Economic Services Division Office.



## Virgin Islands

Find Virgin Islands state and local veterans benefits including education, employment, healthcare, tax breaks/exemptions, recreation and much more below. Twin City, Love City, and Rock City are home to over 10,000 veterans. Learn more about Veterans benefits in the Virgin Islands.

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### **Veteran Education Benefits**

#### **Tuition Waivers**

Virgin Islands veterans may be eligible to attend the University of the Virgin Islands Community Engagement & Lifelong Learning (UVICELL) program free of charge.

The UVICELL program offers both **in-class and online instruction**. In-class courses include subjects such as real estate, computer training, and bookkeeping. Online courses include subjects such as business, healthcare, green energy, and education. Applicants are encouraged to explore options on the university website to determine which program to pursue.

Eligibility to attend UVICELL free of charge is determined through the Virgin Islands Office of Veterans Affairs.

#### **US Territory Tuition**

Veterans may be eligible for in-territory tuition rates while attending the University of the Virgin Islands (UVI). There are several ways to access this benefit.

In order to be eligible for this benefit, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Using **Montgomery G.I. Bill** – Active Duty Program; or
- Using **Post-9/11 G.I. Bill**
- Resides in the U.S. Virgin Islands while attending UVI
- Enrolled at the university either
  - Within three years of discharge; or
  - Release from 90 days or more active duty.

In order to be eligible for this benefit, individuals using either transferred Post-9/11 GI Bill must meet the following criteria:

- Resides in the U.S. Virgin Islands while attending UVI
- Enrolled at the university either:
  - Within three years of the transferor's discharge; or
  - Release from 90 days or more active duty

In order to be eligible for this benefit, individuals using benefits under the Marine Gunnery Sergeant John **David Fry Scholarship** must meet the following criteria:

- Resides in the U.S. Virgin Islands while attending UVI
- Enrolled at the university:
  - Within three years of service member's death in the line of duty
  - 90 days or more active duty

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## **Veteran Employment Benefits**

### **Retirement System Service Credits**

Veterans may be eligible to receive service credit with the Government Employee Retirement System of the Virgin Islands for active military service.

Credits are distributed in tiers. Tier I is divided into two groups: those hired before Oct 1st, 2005 who have worked for a period of ten years prior to September 25th, 2001, and those hired before Oct 1st, 2005 who worked for a period of time after September 25th, 2001.

Those who fall into the first group will receive a maximum service credit of ten years. Vets who fall into the second group will receive a maximum service credit of three years. Tier II refers to those hired on or after Oct 1st, 2005. These individuals will receive a maximum service credit of three years.

### **USVI Government Employment Veteran Hiring Preference**

Veterans may be eligible to receive additional points on Local Civil Service Examinations. Veterans may receive ten points, and disabled veterans may receive 15 points.

In order to be eligible for this benefit, applicants must meet one of the following criteria:

- Veteran discharged or released under other than dishonorable conditions
- Spouse of a qualifying veteran
- Surviving spouse of a qualifying veteran

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## **Veteran Housing Benefits**

### **US Virgin Islands Veterans Home/Land Loans and Home Improvement Loans**

Veterans may be eligible to receive home mortgage, land mortgage, or home improvement loan assistance through the Virgin Islands Housing Finance Authority (VIHFA).



The Home/Land Mortgage Program for Virgin Islands Veterans provides several benefits to qualifying applicants, including:

- Zero down payment required
- Application fee discount of 25%
- Land sold by the VIHFA discounted and additional 10% additional discount on the established price
- Fixed interest rate 3% below Federal Prime rate
- Up to \$220,000 for homes
- Up to \$50,000 for land

VIHFA home improvement loans are designed to assist veterans in improving, changing or repairing a primary residence. Loan provide the following benefits:

- \$40,000 maximum loan amount
- Ten years maximum loan term
- Interest rate 3% below the Federal Prime rate

Per the VIHFA website, “the combined loan-to-value ratio must not exceed 100% of the appraised value.”

In order to qualify for this benefit, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Veteran discharged or released under other than dishonorable conditions
- First-time home buyer
- Meets income guidelines
- Resident of the Virgin Islands for the last three years
- Ability to make an earnest money deposit of at least \$500
  - Earnest money deposit is waived for qualified veterans
- Pre-qualified for a mortgage loan
  - Based on underwriting standards of Federal Housing Administration/ U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs /Conventional Mortgages
- Attendance and completion of VIHFA’s Homebuyer Education Program
  - Must earn Certificate of Completion
- Property must be primary residence

### **Refinancing to Prevent Foreclosure**

Veterans at risk of foreclosure on primary residence may qualify for refinancing through the VIHFA. Once eligibility has been determined, veterans may receive a maximum loan amount of \$220,000 with a fixed rate 3% below the Federal Prime rate.

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### **Veteran Financial Benefits**

## **Tax Breaks for Veterans**

Disabled veterans, surviving spouses, and families may be eligible for exemption from taxes on retirement income. The Virgin Islands do not collect taxes on the following types of income:

- Military Disability Retired Pay
- Disability Dependency and Indemnity Compensation
- Military Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP)
- Reserve Component Survivor Benefit Plan (RCSBP)
- Retired Serviceman's Family Protection Plan (RSFPP)

## **Property Tax Credit for Veterans**

Veterans may be eligible for property tax credit. The maximum tax credit is \$650. In order to be eligible for this benefit, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Property owners of record as of January 1 of the taxable year
- Honorably discharged
  - Must provide copy of DD-214 with filing
  - Valid USVI driver's license, or
  - Voter registration card

The deadline for tax credit application is prior to January 1st for the year in which the application will be processed.

## **Taxi Medallions**

Veterans may be eligible to acquire New US Virgin Islands taxi medallions (taxi medallions serve as permits which allow drivers to operate taxis). Taxi medallions are sold at annual auction every December, and only veterans are permitted to buy medallions through the auction.

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## **Additional Veteran Benefits**

### **Funeral Benefits**

#### **Funeral Leave for Veterans**

Veterans may be excused to perform duties in funeral ceremonies for deceased service members. Excusal may be up to 4 hours with pay, and duties may include pallbearer, member of a firing squad, or honor guard.

#### **Reimbursement for Burial Expenses**

Veterans who entered military service while residing in the Virgin Islands may be eligible for reimbursement of funeral expenses. The maximum amount is \$3,500.

#### Free Burial in Local Cemeteries

Veterans may be eligible for free burials in local cemeteries. This benefit is available to veterans who are residents of the Virgin Islands and who entered military service while residing in the Virgin Islands.

#### **Miscellaneous Benefits**

Veterans residing in the Virgin Island may be eligible to receive the following benefits:

- Free license plates
- Free emergency ambulance service
- 100% reimbursement for off-island travel assistance to VA medical appointments

For specific eligibility requirements or assistance regarding these benefits, please contact the Virgin Islands Office of Veteran Affairs.

## Virginia

Find Virginia State and local veteran's benefits including education, employment, healthcare, home loans, tax exemptions, recreation and much more below. Virginia is home to a large number of **military bases** including Coast Guard, Navy, Army and Air Force installations. As such, there are many perks and **benefits for military members** and their families to be had from the Commonwealth of Virginia.

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### Virginia Veteran Employment & Education Benefits

#### Veterans Education Transition & Employment (VETE)

VETE ensures that every Veteran or eligible person has a full and fair opportunity to reach his or her fullest potential through access to the G.I. Bill approved post-secondary educational, training/licensure/certification, entrepreneurial institutions, V3 certified employers and Virginia Colleges and Universities. Currently, more than 1,000 institutions with various programs are approved in Virginia.

#### Transition Assistance Program (VTAP)

This official program from the State of Virginia offers help to transition into civilian life including assistance with education, employment, and training. One program known as the Veterans Career Transition Program offers free training to Post 9/11 active duty members, veterans and spouses.

The program is paid for by a private company and features professional skills training, **technical training**, and an independent study track.

#### Virginia Military Survivors and Dependents Education Program (VMSDEP)

The Virginia Military Survivors and Dependents Education Program (MSDEP), offers "educational assistance for the spouses and children of military service members killed, missing in action, taken prisoner, or who became at least 90% disabled as a result of military service in an armed conflict".

This program pays for tuition and fees at "any" state-supported college or university and waives tuition and fees in Virginia for up to four years. Dependents have an age requirement (between the ages of 16 and 29) but there is no age limit for spouses.

#### Vets on Campus

Veterans on Campus is designed to help in a variety of ways including accommodations for vets with PTSD, traumatic brain injuries, and other service-connected medical issues with the potential for interfering with academic progress. These services are available by request and the DVS program is

designed to work with individual colleges in the state to determine the level and availability of such accommodations.

The Virginia National Guard State Tuition Assistance Program is available to Virginia National Guard members and funds 100% of tuition expenses after all Federal Tuition Assistance benefits have been used.

Good at any Virginia state school, this benefit can be used concurrently with the **GI Bill**, and when receiving this tuition assistance Guard members are charged at the in-state tuition rate. There is also a textbook stipend.

### **State Employment**

The State of Virginia offers typical hiring preference to veterans with an increased preference for those with VA-rated disabilities. Those hired by the State of Virginia receive extra vacation time, and full-time state employees who are members of the Guard or Reserve get to “bank” unused leave time instead of being subjected to a “use-or-lose” arrangement.

The Virginia Employment Commission features job referral and placement services for qualifying veterans and qualifying spouses, and offers them preference where such services are offered to non-veterans.

The Virginia Board of Workforce Development offers job transition services including resume building, career transition skills assessment by military occupation specialty, and job services/career placement help.

### **Military Medics and Corpsmen (MMAC) Program**

The Virginia Military Medics and Corpsmen (MMAC) Program offers job placement services for qualifying veterans working in certain healthcare fields. This program does not provide licensure or certification, but is intended to help qualifying veterans while they work towards those certifications that allow them to continue using their healthcare skills in the civilian healthcare sector. Veterans must apply for this program through the Virginia Department of Veterans Services.

### **Virginia Values Veterans (V3)**

V3 educates and trains employers throughout Virginia to help employers connect with these personnel assets to maximize the productivity of their workforce. V3 is committed to assisting employers recruit, hire, train, and retain Veterans.

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## **Virginia Veteran Housing Benefits**

### **Income Tax Deduction**

Military personnel stationed inside or outside Virginia or National Guard service members may be eligible to subtract up to \$15,000 of military basic pay received during the taxable year.

### **Real Estate Tax Exemption**

Veterans are exempt from paying real estate taxes if they have been awarded a 100% disability rating by the Department of Veterans Affairs and/or who are deemed unemployable as a result of the disability. This veteran tax benefit is only good for primary residences, and qualifying surviving spouses are also eligible for this benefit if the veteran died on or after September 11, 2011.

### **Veterans Care Centers**

The Virginia Department of Veterans Services (DVS) State Veterans Homes has two long term veteran care centers with two more care centers to be opened by 2019. The care centers are available based on the following criteria:

- Honorable discharge from the U.S. Armed Forces
- Virginia residency at the time of admission or entry into active duty from Virginia
- Meets medical requirements for nursing home care

#### **Virginia Veteran Care Centers:**

- Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center (Richmond)
- Virginia Veterans Care Center (Roanoke)
- Jones & Cabacoy Veterans Care Center, Virginia Beach (Opening Late 2019)
- Puller Veterans Care Center, Vint Hill, Fauquier County (Opening Late 2019)

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## **Virginia Veteran Financial Benefits**

### **Veteran Tax Benefits**

- Military members on active duty for 90 days or more a tax break for basic pay for those earning less than \$30,000.
- Medal of Honor recipients are allowed to subtract their retirement pay from their federal gross income.

- Those serving on combat zones are given the same tax extension benefits for state filing as are permitted for federal income tax returns.

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## **Additional Virginia Veteran Benefits**

### **Virginia Veteran and Family Support (VVFS)**

VVFS provides peer and family support and care coordination services to veterans, the Virginia National Guard and Armed Forces Reserves including their families. Support includes behavioral health, rehabilitative, and supportive services.

### **Veteran Cemetery Benefits**

Qualifying service members have the option of burial with military honors in state veteran cemeteries including Virginia Veterans Cemetery at Amelia, Albert G. Horton Jr. Memorial Veterans Cemetery, Suffolk and Southwest Virginia Veterans Cemetery, Dublin. The state of Virginia provides the gravesite, orders and places the grave marker, and provides caretaker services for the gravesite at no cost. This benefit cannot be reserved, it is offered on a first-come, first served basis.

### **Hunting and Fishing Licenses for Disabled Veterans**

The Commonwealth of Virginia offers a variety of veteran benefits to those with VA disability ratings including free lifetime hunting and freshwater fishing licenses, and discounted saltwater fishing licenses.

### **Veteran Driver Benefits**

The Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles offers a special **Veteran ID** card available for a fee that can be used by qualifying vets to claim veteran discounts in a variety of Virginia-based establishments.

Special license plates for a variety of service-related associations (wartime service, **POW/MIA**, disabled veteran plates, etc.).

### **Disabled Veteran Public Transportation Benefits**

Disabled veterans may qualify for discounted public transit fares on Virginia's MetroBus and MetroRail systems. Veterans with a 60% or greater disability rating are exempt from some application requirements to receive these transportation discounts.

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## Links to Veterans Services in Virginia

- [Veterans Services Foundation](#)
- [Virginia Department of Veterans Services](#)
- [Virginia Tax](#)
- [Virginia Values Veterans \(V3\)](#)



## Washington

Find Washington State and local veterans' benefits including education, employment, healthcare, tax breaks/exemptions, recreation and much more below. According to the Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs, the Evergreen state is home to over half a million veterans who have access to a wide array of benefits.

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### **Washington Veteran Education Benefits**

#### **Veterans Tuition Waiver**

The state of Washington has authorized state community colleges, colleges, and universities to waive all or a portion of tuition and fees for eligible veterans or National Guard members. To be eligible, the veteran or National Guard member must have served during a war or conflict, served in another country/in international waters, or served in any location if serving in support of others serving in another country and received an honorable discharge. Contact the financial aid office at the college you are planning to attend for information on applying for the veteran tuition waiver.

#### **Free Tuition for Dependents of Disabled Veterans**

Washington State waives undergraduate tuition and fees – up to 200 quarter credits or equivalent semester credits – for eligible dependents of 100 percent disabled veterans at state community colleges, colleges, and universities. Eligibility is determined by the [tuition waiver law](#).

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### **Washington Veteran Employment Benefits**

#### **State Employment Preference**

Veterans and their spouses receive preference in appointments to state government jobs in Washington. To qualify, the veteran must have been honorably discharged, discharged for medical reasons with an honorable record, or have a [DD-214](#), NGB-22, or their equivalent. Eligibility includes veterans who served during any U.S. war or military campaign for which a campaign ribbon was awarded, and surviving spouses or registered domestic partners of eligible veterans or honorably discharged veterans with a service-connected, permanent, and total disability qualify for preference. Preference is a percentage – ranging from five to 10 percent – added to examination scores.

#### **Veteran Conservation Corps**

Training and paid internships are available for veterans while working to restore and protect the Evergreen state's natural resources.

### **Military CDL Skills Waiver Program**

Service members who currently hold a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) and who are or were employed within the last 90 days in a military position requiring the operation of a military motor vehicle equivalent to a Commercial Motor Vehicle are eligible to apply for a CDL without skills testing. However, CDL written tests cannot be waived.

### **Military Service Credit**

The Washington State Department of Retirement Systems (DRS) offers non-interruptive military service credit to veterans who served in the U.S. military before becoming Public Employees' Retirement System Plan 1 members. To be eligible, the veteran must have served on active duty either between World War I and World War II, during a period of wartime, or received the Armed Forces Expeditionary medal or Marine Corps and Navy expeditionary medal for opposed action on foreign soil while serving in any branch of the Armed Forces or the Women's Air Force Service Pilots.

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### **Washington Veteran Housing Benefits**

#### **Veterans Homes**

Washington State hosts four Veterans Homes in Orting, Retsil, Spokane, and Walla Walla. All four homes are Medicare- and Medicaid-certified facilities and provide 24-hour nursing care, medical care, pharmacy services, and supportive programs. Eligible veterans must have served in any branch of the U.S. Armed Forces, received an honorable discharge, and be a Washington state resident or the spouse of a resident. Widows of eligible veterans or **Gold Star** parents are also eligible.

#### **Homeless Veterans Transitional Housing**

In an effort to increase residential stability, greater self-determination, and increase income potential for homeless veterans, Washington offers the Building 9 for Veterans Transitional Housing Program. The facility is located at the Washington Veterans Home in Retsil. To be eligible, the veteran must have served in any branch of the U.S. Armed Forces, received an honorable or general under honorable discharge, been homeless for at least one night, be sober for at least 30 days with the desire to lead a clean lifestyle, and be willing to undergo a criminal background check. Generally, veterans are referred by the Federal VA Medical Center.

#### **Property Tax Relief**

Veterans who reside in Washington and retired because of a disability, veterans with a 100 percent service-connected disability, and widows of 100 percent disabled veterans may qualify for income-based property tax exemptions and deferrals. To find out if you qualify, contact your County Assessor.

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## **Washington Veteran Financial Benefits**

### **Estate Management**

The Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA) Veterans Estate Management Program is available to veterans and family members who are incapable of managing their own financial affairs by offering protective payee services. By assuming custody of finances, the WDVA ensures that basic needs such as housing, food, clothing, and medical care are provided.

### **Veterans Innovations Program**

The Veterans Innovations Program provides assistance to veterans and their families who are experiencing financial hardships due to deployments in support of Operation Enduring Freedom/Operation Iraqi Freedom.

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## **Additional Washington Veteran Benefits**

### **PTSD Counseling**

Washington's Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) Program offers free community-based avenues to counseling that are less formal than traditional counseling. Services offered include individual, couples, family, and veteran group counseling. Veterans do not need to be formally diagnosed with PTSD but should be showing significant post-war adjustment issues. Some contractors offer group services to women veterans and spouses. Learn more [here](#).

### **Motor Vehicle License Plates**

The Washington State Department of Licensing offers free disabled veteran license plates to veterans who have received a 100 percent VA disability rating for at least one year. The state also offers privileged license plates for veterans, active duty military, family members, and Gold Star Families (free for widows/widowers).

### **Reduced Fishing/Hunting License**

The Evergreen state encourages disabled veterans to enjoy the great outdoors by offering a discount on fishing and hunting licenses. Eligible veterans must have received an honorable discharge with at least a 30 percent disability rating or be at least 65 years of age with a service-connected disability as verified by the VA.

### **Free Disabled Veteran Lifetime State Park Passes**

Disabled veterans with a verified service-connected disability of at least 30 percent may enjoy unlimited access to Washington's state parks. The Disabled Veterans Pass provides free camping/moorage, campsite reservations through Washington State Parks central reservations system, watercraft launching, and the trailer dump.

### **Washington State Veterans Cemetery**

Located in Medical Lake, Washington, any Washington veteran eligible to be buried in a national cemetery is eligible for burial at the Washington State Veterans Cemetery. The Federal VA provides the burial plot or columbarium niche, concrete liner for casket burials, opening and closing of the grave, perpetual care of the gravesite, an inscribed gravestone, and a 30-minute committal service. Spouses and dependent children are also eligible to be buried at the cemetery for \$300.

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### **Washington Link to Veterans Services**

- [Washington State Department of Military Affairs](#)

## West Virginia

Find West Virginia State and local veterans' benefits including education, employment, healthcare, tax breaks/exemptions, recreation, and much more below. "The Mountain State" has over 160,000 veterans residing within its borders.

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### **West Virginia State Veteran Education Benefits**

#### **West Virginia Purple Heart and Medal of Honor Tuition Waivers for Qualifying Service Members**

The West Virginia Department of Veterans Assistance (DVA) official site announces public institutions of higher education will waive tuition and mandatory fee charges for West Virginia veterans awarded the **Purple Heart** or **Medal of Honor**.

The requirements for this waiver may vary depending on the college or school. Check with your chosen state-supported college's admissions department for more information. You may need to provide documentation including VA award letters, service records showing awards and decorations, or copies of the written citation associated with the medal itself depending on the school.

#### **West Virginia War Orphan Education Program**

The War Orphan Education Program provides qualifying dependents of military members who were West Virginia residents at the time of enlistment and died as the result of wartime military service. There is an age requirement for this program. Enrollees may be between the ages of 16 and 25.

The award amounts will vary depending on the number of applications received each semester, but in general the funds available are capped at \$1,000 per student per semester and \$2,000 per student per year. Proof of enrollment and the parent's military service, VA award letters, etc. are required.

#### **West Virginia High School Diploma Program for Veterans**

West Virginia residents who left high school to serve in WWII, Korea or Vietnam without graduating may be eligible for a high school diploma. The diploma may be granted by the veteran's current county of residence or by the county where the high school was located.

The rules of this program indicate that it is for "surviving veterans" of the qualifying service eras and does not indicate whether a diploma may be awarded posthumously.

#### **West Virginia In-state Tuition Rates for Nonresident Veterans**

Non-resident GI Bill recipients attending West Virginia state-supported schools will be permitted to enroll at the in-state tuition rate. There is one caveat. This program is meant for users of the **GI Bill** “who enroll within three years of their discharge (beginning July, 2015)” according to the West Virginia Department of Veterans Assistance. When enrolling at the state-supported institution of your choice, be sure to ask about the in-state tuition program. Request information about the school’s application requirements may be such as deadlines, documentation, etc.

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## **West Virginia State Veteran Employment Benefits**

### **State of West Virginia Veteran Re-Education Assistance**

This state program offers \$500 per semester to qualified veterans enrolled in “a certified post-secondary class.” These funds are also available for vocational and non-traditional education (on a case-by-case basis according to the application forms).

Qualifying criteria includes an Honorable discharge and the veteran must have used up all GI Bill funds prior to applying for this assistance. A new application is required for each semester.

### **State of West Virginia Combat Veteran Hiring Preference**

Qualifying service members who serve during times of “hostile conflict” may be awarded additional points to competitive Civil Service job exam scores. Five points are awarded, with an additional five points for those who have been awarded the Purple Heart or who have a VA-rated service connected disability.

Claiming these preference points may require proof of service, disability, etc. Applicants should be prepared to provide copies (not originals) of DD Form 214, VA award letters, and other documentation as required.

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## **West Virginia State Veteran Housing Benefits**

### **West Virginia Veterans Assisted Care Homes and Nursing Homes**

The State of West Virginia operates two facilities. They are a veterans’ assisted care home in Barboursville and a nursing home in Clarksburg. Admissions requirements include a non-punitive discharge. Applicants must be eligible for care at a federal Department of Veterans Affairs facility.

Pre-admission screenings are required as certain conditions and certain types of patients cannot be admitted. The official site requires applicants to be “ambulatory and independent in all activities of daily living.” Certain types of skilled care requirements may be beyond the scope of these West Virginia facilities for veterans. Applications are available from any West Virginia DVA field office.

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### **West Virginia State Veteran Financial Benefits**

#### **West Virginia Cash Bonuses for Qualifying Combat Veterans**

In the past, the state of West Virginia has offered cash bonuses to combat veterans with service in both World Wars, Vietnam, Korea, Iraq, and elsewhere. Many of these bonuses have expired, but those who have served in Afghanistan and apply within one year after leaving military service.

The bonus includes “a one-time payment of \$600 for service in the combat zone or a one-time payment of \$400 for service outside the combat zone” according to the State of West Virginia. Visit the West Virginia Department of Veterans Assistance for more information on how to apply.

#### **Property Tax Breaks for Qualifying Disabled Veterans**

Those rated as 100% service-connected disabled by the VA may be eligible for property tax waivers. Tax laws change frequently and the qualifying criteria for these tax breaks may require the applicant to supply VA award letters, military discharge paperwork, and other documentation to qualify.

Those who receive these property tax exemptions agree to notify the State of West Virginia (via a tax assessor’s office) if their disability status changes and they no longer qualify as per current state tax law.

Claiming these tax breaks means filing the paperwork before the first day of December deadline each year. Otherwise the tax break is waived for the following tax year. Those over 65 may be permitted to file once only with no re-application for the benefit needed unless for use on a different homestead.

#### **Military Retirement Pay Tax Waiver**

Beginning in tax year 2018 the State of West Virginia does not require state income tax on military retirement pay.

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### **Additional West Virginia State Veteran Benefits**

#### **Fee-Free West Virginia License Plates for Qualifying Veterans**

Special West Virginia license plates and disabled veteran placards/tags are provided free for veterans who qualify. The individual is eligible under VA vehicle grant benefits and/or qualifying veterans with a VA-rated 100% permanent and total service connected disability. Former POWs, Purple Heart recipients, and Pearl Harbor survivors are also eligible for free West Virginia special license plates. Documentation of veteran status, VA award letters, and other documentation may be required at application time.

### **Recreational Benefits for Veterans**

- The State of West Virginia offers a variety of perks for qualifying veterans and currently serving military members. These benefits include the West Virginia State Parks “Veterans’ Salute” which is an all-year 10% discount of “all standard lodge rooms, cabins and campsites operated by West Virginia State Parks.” Other seasonal discounts may be available.
- Certain qualifying disabled veterans who are West Virginia residents, have an honorable discharge, and are qualified for “a veteran’s pension based on total permanent service connected disability as certified by the veteran’s administration” is allowed to hunt, trap or fish without obtaining a license from the State of West Virginia.
- West Virginia residents who serve on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces may hunt, fish, or trap without a license while on leave. Proof of military leave status is required at all times while engaged in hunting, trapping, or fishing under these rules.

### **Burial Benefits for Veterans**

The State of West Virginia Jack Bennett Fund is provided for families of veterans who have died and who demonstrate a financial need to offset burial costs associated with the installation of a grave marker for the veteran.

The Jack Bennett Fund provides applicants up to \$380 (at the time of this writing) to offset these costs. Criteria for financial eligibility is based on the “means test threshold” as published by the Department of Veterans Affairs. Contact the West Virginia Department of Veterans Assistance for more information.

### **Donel C. Kinnard Memorial State Veterans Cemetery**

This West Virginia state veteran’s cemetery is approximately 350 acres and is open to veterans, spouses, and dependents. **Burial benefits** at the cemetery are intended for any member of the Armed Forces of the United States who dies on active duty, plus:

- Veterans who have served a minimum of 24 months and were discharged under conditions other than dishonorable
- The spouse or surviving spouse of an eligible veteran
- Dependent children (minors) of eligible veterans. For these purposes a minor may be either a dependent under the age of 21 or a dependent under 23 enrolled full-time at an approved school.



Death order does not affect the eligibility of dependents or spouses. A military member may survive dependents and spouses and still qualify to have those dependents/spouses interred at Kinnard. The following services are included at no cost for the veteran:

- Grave site or niche
- Opening and closing of the grave
- Concrete crypt, Headstone / Niche Cover
- Perpetual Care
- Presidential Memorial Certificate.

Surviving spouses who married a non-veteran after the veteran's death may still qualify for burial. This applies in cases where the death of the surviving spouse happens on or after January 1, 2000.

## Wisconsin

The state of Wisconsin provides state and local veteran's benefits including education, employment, healthcare, tax breaks/exemptions, recreation and much more below. With nearly 400,000 veterans the FORWARD state provides many benefits for its veterans.

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### Wisconsin Veteran Education Benefits

#### *The State Of Wisconsin GI Bill*

The Wisconsin GI Bill offers forgiveness or remittance of the greater of eight semesters or 128 credit hours' worth of "full tuition and segregated fees" for eligible veterans and dependents. Qualifying is a two-step process dependent in part on the standards of each institution of higher learning that participates in the program.

This program is available for attendance at any University of Wisconsin System or Wisconsin Technical College System school. This program is not associated with the **VA GI Bill** program in spite of the name.

#### *The VetEd Program*

Qualifying veterans who have not yet earned a Bachelor's degree may qualify for VetEd reimbursement of tuition and fees at qualifying state colleges, private schools, and technical colleges. This program is based on the applicant's length of qualifying military service and is permitted to be applied concurrently with VA GI Bill benefits.

However, the State of Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs official site says, "VetEd reimbursement will be reduced to the extent that tuition and fees have already been paid by other grants, scholarships, and remissions provided for the payment of tuition and fees, including federal VA Chapter 33 Post 9/11 GI Bill tuition benefits." Those who are eligible for the Wisconsin GI Bill must use that benefit prior to applying for VetEd.

#### *State Of Wisconsin High School Diploma Program for Veterans*

Wisconsin Statutes section 120.13 (37) permits local school boards to offer high school diplomas to qualifying veterans who had their high school education interrupted by military service during wartime.

The veteran or a veteran's family must apply directly to the local Wisconsin school district. Requirements include an honorable discharge, and the applicant must 65 years old or 55 or older with a qualifying service-connected disability.

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## **Veteran Employment Benefits**

### *State Of Wisconsin Veteran Hiring Preference (Civil Service)*

The State of Wisconsin offers “competitive preference” for disabled veterans and combat veterans who served during qualifying era. This preference is available for competitive hiring processes that require a Civil Service exam.

Ten additional points are awarded to qualifying veterans on the exam and those with VA approved service-connected disabilities “are entitled to points added to their passing score, depending upon their level of disability.” Qualifying military spouses of disabled or deceased eligible veterans may also be eligible for hiring preference points.

Qualifying disabled veterans who have VA-rated service-connected disabilities (at least 30% disabled) may be hired to any non-competitive State of Wisconsin job with no exam required.

The hiring preferences listed here do not necessarily apply for Limited-Term Employment (LTE) positions; veterans interested in these positions will need to inquire if any hiring preference mechanism is available for the specific LTE job they want to apply for.

### *Wisconsin Unemployment Compensation for Ex-Service members (UCX)*

Honorably discharged veterans who cannot find employment may be eligible for UCX, Unemployment Compensation for Ex-Service members. These applications must be made by phone; callers should have ready their DD Form 214, Social Security Number, and a Wisconsin drivers’ license where applicable. To file a new claim, qualifying veterans should call one of three numbers:

**Madison: (608) 232-0678**

**Milwaukee: (414) 438-7700**

**Toll-free: 800-822-5246**

### *State of Wisconsin Unemployment / Underemployment Benefits for Veterans*

Qualifying veterans considered underemployed or who have become “recently unemployed” may qualify for \$3,000 per year (with a two-year maximum) by demonstrating a financial need while “being retrained for employment”.

The actual amount of this grant is determined by financial need. The applicant must declare any other retraining funds made available to them at application time, and the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs makes the final decision as to the grant amount.

#### *Wisconsin One-Time Fee Waiver for Professional/Occupational Licenses*

The state offers a single-use fee waiver for a variety of occupational licenses, many of which are related to hunting, trapping, farming, sanitary licenses, and much more. Qualification requirements may vary depending on the type of license the veteran needs; basic qualifications include being an individual (rather than a company or corporation trying to apply for the same fee waiver) and being a qualifying veteran who is a Wisconsin resident.

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### **Veteran Housing Benefits**

#### *Wisconsin Veterans Assisted Care Homes and Nursing Homes*

The Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs operates three veteran's care homes in the state:

- Chippewa Falls
- King
- Union Grove

Each facility is a 24-hour care operation that accepts federal assistance for individual residents where applicable, plus private-pay and Medicare paid options. These facilities are open to honorably discharged veterans, but also offers space-available care prioritized in descending order for:

1. Spouses of veterans who are still alive
2. Spouses of deceased veterans
3. Parents of veterans killed on active duty

For admission purposes, "veteran" is defined with the following criteria as found on the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs official site:

- Those on active duty during peacetime for two or more years or the full period of their initial obligation. OR;
- Those who served on active duty for at least 90 days, one day of which must have been during a wartime period. AND:
- Those who served and were discharged from the armed forces under honorable conditions.
- Spouses of veterans and parents of veterans killed on active duty.

#### *Wisconsin Veterans and Surviving Spouse Property Tax Credit*

The State of Wisconsin offers a property tax credit to qualifying veterans and un-remarried surviving military spouses for primary residences and up to an acre of land. Qualifying veterans must be a Wisconsin resident for five consecutive years after entering military service (Active Duty) or who was a Wisconsin resident upon entering military service.

To qualify for the tax credit, these veterans must have a 100% service-connected disabled (SCD) rating or be considered 100% disabled for the purpose of determining employability. Unremarried surviving spouses may claim this tax credit if they receive the VA benefit known as **Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC)** from the Department of Veterans Affairs.

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## **Veteran Financial Benefits**

### *Wisconsin Income Tax Breaks for Veterans*

Wisconsin offers a variety of state income tax breaks for veterans including the following:

- Wisconsin Income Tax Combat Pay Exemption
- Wisconsin Income Tax Filing Extension Deadlines For Active Duty Military
- Wisconsin Income Tax Military Retirement Benefits Exemptions
- Wisconsin Income Tax Military Pay Tax Exemption For Mobilized Guard/Reserve Members

Tax code changes from time to time, and it's best to consult a tax professional to see how and which benefits may apply to your current year's Wisconsin State Income Tax filing.

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## **Additional Veteran Benefits**

### *State of Wisconsin MOVE-IT Program*

Wisconsin's Making Opportunities for Veteran Employment in Transportation program allows vets to transfer commercial driving skills from their military careers to civilian employment in the state.

This program includes a military skills waiver for those who operated military vehicles and want a skills test waiver for a Wisconsin Commercial Drivers Licenses (CDL). Applicants must have operated military versions of commercial vehicles for a minimum of two years, are either on duty or within a year of discharge, and are willing to take the "knowledge portion" of the Wisconsin CDL test.

### *Driver License, ID Cards, and License Plates for Veterans*

The State of Wisconsin offers the usual options for **Veteran and military designations** on state ID cards and drivers' licenses. Applicants must furnish proof of military service. The licenses are not advertised as free for veterans, but a military designation is an option.

#### *Wisconsin Drivers' License Renewal Options for Qualifying Military Members*

Military members stationed outside of Wisconsin during times of military conflict are considered to be active duty personnel when it's time to renew or duplicate drivers' licenses. This also applies to vehicle registration and insurance procedures, reinstatement of revoked licenses, applications for special plates and related issues.

Any active duty perks applicable for active duty military under such conditions will apply to all Wisconsin military members serving outside the state.

#### *Wisconsin State Veteran Cemeteries*

There are three Veteran Cemeteries in the State of Wisconsin:

- Union Grove
- Spooner
- King

There are no fees for qualifying veterans to be interred at one of these facilities. Veterans with discharges not characterized as Dishonorable are eligible for burial benefits in these cemeteries as long as they meet residency, time-in-service, and discharge requirements.

Certain requirements do not apply to veterans who died in one of the state's three Veterans' Homes. Eligible spouses and dependents may also be buried in these cemeteries for a fee. No-fee pre-registration services are available to veterans.

#### *Wisconsin Recreation License Discounts for Veterans*

There are a great many discounts, fee-exemptions, and other perks for veterans using Wisconsin State Parks and other facilities; so many that they cannot all be listed here. They include discounted and free hunting and fishing licenses for active duty, retirees, disabled, and **Purple Heart awardees**.

Contact the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (1-888-936-7463) to learn what discounts may apply to you and what documentation is required to take advantage of the discounts, reduced fees, and free/reduced licenses.

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## Wisconsin Links to Veterans Services

- [Department of Veterans Affairs](#)
- [Health & Insurance Benefits for Veterans](#)

## Washington, D.C.

Find state and local veterans' benefits including education, employment, healthcare, tax breaks/exemptions, recreation and much more below. The Nation's Capital is home to nearly 30,000 Veterans. Learn more about the benefits available to Veterans in The District of Columbia.

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### **Veteran Education Benefits**

#### **DC National Guard Scholarship**

Members of the District of Columbia Army National Guard may be eligible to receive the DC National Guard Scholarship. Depending on availability of funds, this scholarship will reimburse up to \$6,000 of tuition and fees for any school year.

In order to be eligible for this benefit, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- DC Army National Guard member in good standing
- Attendance at an approved college or university

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### **Veteran Employment Benefits**

#### **Veterans Employment Initiative**

Veterans may qualify for assistance through the District Department of Employment Services, (DOES). The DOES offers a wide variety of training and job search services, and there are special veterans representatives at most District American Job Centers to assist veterans with accessing these services.

In order to be eligible for this benefit, applicants must provide the following:

- Proof of service
- Proof of discharge under other than dishonorable conditions
- Disabled veterans must provide proof of disability:
  - VA award letter

The benefits offered by the DOES include the following:

- Registration at an American Job Center
- Priority status for all employment services
- Assessments to assist with job search:
  - Individual interest



- Skills and abilities
- Career counseling
- Follow-up services
- Assistance with accessing counseling and/or medical services

## **Veterans Hiring Preference**

Veterans may be eligible to receive 5-point or 10-point **veteran preference** for initial appointments with the District of Columbia government, or new appointments following a break in service.

In order to be eligible for a 5-point preference, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Service for more than 180 consecutive days:
  - On or before October 14, 1976 OR
  - In wartime, on or after October 15, 1976
- Honorable or general discharge

In order to be eligible for a 10 point preference, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Disability due to military service OR
- Receiving compensation:
  - Disability retirement benefits
  - Pension
- Honorable or general discharge.

Spouses and surviving spouses may also be eligible for **hiring preference**.

In order for a spouse to be eligible for this benefit, the veteran must meet the following criteria:

- Disabled veteran, *or*
- Disabled Vietnam veteran, *or*
- 30% disabled veteran, AND
- Disqualified for employment by the District government because of disability due to military service.

In order for a surviving spouse to be eligible for this benefit, he or she must meet the following criteria:

- Was married to a veteran
- Has not remarried (unless remarriage was annulled)
- Veteran's service included one of the following:
  - During a war
  - Campaign or expedition with authorized campaign badge
  - Any period of time from April 28, 1952 through July 1, 1955
- Veteran separated from service:

- Honorable or general discharge; or
- Died while on active duty under conditions that would not have resulted in an other than an honorable or general discharge.

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## **Veteran Housing Benefits**

### **Armed Forces Retirement Home, (AFRH)**

While there are no veteran's homes run by the District of Columbia, there are two AFRH homes run by the federal government in the DC area. Located in Gulfport and Washington, AFRH homes are retirement communities that offer a wide range of programs and amenities alongside accredited healthcare. This includes both assisted living and long-term nursing care.

Admission criteria varies depending upon the circumstances of applicants:

- In order to be eligible for admission to one of the homes, applicants must meet the following criteria:
  - Minimum of twenty years and at least one-half of service as enlisted, (other than as a warrant officer or limited-duty officer)
  - Honorable discharge
  - At least 60 years old
- In order for a disabled veteran to be eligible for admission to one of the homes, he or she must have been honorably discharged. One of the following criteria must also be met:
  - Unable to maintain employment because of disability due to military service
  - Unable to maintain employment due to disability, disease, or injuries
  - Served in a war theater
  - Were eligible for hostile fire pay
  - Determined unable to maintain employment due to disability, disease, or injuries
- Those who served in either the Women's Auxiliary Army Corp or the WAVES prior to June 12, 1948 may be eligible for admission to one of the homes in cases of "compelling personal circumstances."
- Married couples who are both eligible for admission may also live together in one of the homes.

All applicants must be free from drug, alcohol, and psychiatric problems. Convicted felons are ineligible for admission. Applicants must also be able to live independently upon admission. However, assisted living and long term care are available if more intensive health care is needed.

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## **Veteran Financial Benefits**

### **Tax Exemptions for Veterans**

Veterans may be eligible for an exemption from income tax on up to \$3,000 of **retirement income**.

In order to be eligible for this benefit, veterans must meet the following criteria:

- 62 years of age or older;
- Receive military retirement income.

Surviving spouses who are 62 years of age or older and who receive survivor benefits from either the federal government or the District of Columbia are fully excluded from District Individual Income Tax.

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### **Additional Veteran Benefits**

#### **Driver Licenses and ID Cards for Veterans**

Veterans may qualify for a DC driver license or ID with a “Veteran” designation. There are no additional fees for adding this designation to a license or ID card.

In order to be eligible for this benefit, applicants must have been honorably discharged from service. Applicants who do not currently have an updated driver license or ID card with a DC REAL ID credential must also provide additional documentation to qualify for the “Veteran” designation.

#### **Veteran License Plates and Parking Benefits**

**Disabled American Veterans License Plate:** Disabled veterans may be eligible for license plates with a “Disabled American Veterans” designation.

In order to qualify for this benefit, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Member of the DC Disabled American Veterans
- Proof of service
- Proof of disability due to military service, as determined by the VA

Or

- Proof of permanent and total disability due to military service, as determined by the VA

Veterans who are totally and permanently disabled due to military service will receive one set of plates for a non-commercial vehicle. These plates are exempt from annual registration fees. Normal registration fees apply to DAV plates issued to all other applicants.

**DC Veterans License Plates:** Veterans, disabled veterans, and spouses may be eligible for plates with a “DC Veteran” designation. These plates are offered through the DC DMV on behalf of the DC Office of Veteran Affairs.

In order for veterans to qualify for this benefit, the following must be provided:

- Military service
- Honorably discharged
- DC driver license
- DC vehicle registration of the vehicle’s registered owner
- Completed application from the Office of Veterans Affairs that verifies eligibility

In order for disabled veterans to qualify for this benefit, the following must be provided:

- Total and permanent disability due to military service, as determined by the VA
- Military service
- Honorably discharged
- DC driver license
- DC vehicle registration of the vehicle’s registered owner
- Completed application from the Office of Veterans Affairs that verifies eligibility

In order for spouses to qualify for this benefit, the following must be provided:

- Proof of the veterans honorable discharge
- Marriage certificate
- Military ID
- DC driver license
- DC vehicle registration
- Completed application from the Office of Veterans Affairs that verifies eligibility

These plates may only be displayed on non-commercial vehicles. Also, while there are no annual registration fees for these plates, there are application and display fees. However, these fees are collected and deposited into the Office of Veterans Affairs Fund in order to provide other services for DC veterans.

**DC Woman Veteran Tag:** Women veterans may qualify for plates with a “DC Woman Veteran” designation.

In order to qualify for this benefit, applicants must provide the following:

- Proof of military service
- Discharge types accepted:
  - Honorable
  - General
  - Other Than Honorable

- DC Driver License
- DC vehicle registration of the vehicle's registered owner
- Completed application from the Office of Veterans Affairs that verifies eligibility

These plates may only be displayed on non-commercial vehicles. Also, while there are no annual registration fees for these plates, there are application and display fees. However, these fees are collected and deposited into the Office of Veterans Affairs Fund in order to provide other services for DC veterans.

### **Reduced Fare Program for Veterans with Disabilities (Reduced Fare/SmarTrip® Photo ID Card)**

Veterans with disabilities may qualify for a Reduced Fare SmarTrip® photo ID card. These ID cards are issued through Metrobus and Metrorail, and allow card holders to:

- Ride at discounted rates
- Pay Metrobus and Metrorail fare with preloaded card
- Buy 7-Day regional passes
- Pay half peak fare on Metrorail
- Pay \$0.85 cash for fare

In order to be eligible for this benefit, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- 60% or more disability rating, as determined by the VA
- Valid photo ID
- Original letter of disability notification issued by the VA
- Must appear in person at the Metro Transit Accessibility Center

Veterans who are rated at 100% disability may use a valid DD Form 2765 Department of Defense Uniformed Services ID card to verify eligibility.

### **VetsRide**

Veterans, family members, and caregivers may be eligible for transportation to vital services such as medical appointments, continuing education, and employment. This program is run through the Mayor's Office on Veterans Affairs in conjunction with the Department of For-Hire Vehicles.

In order to be eligible for this benefit, applicants must be veteran residents of Washington DC whose annual income is less than \$30,000. Proof of DC residency may be provided using DD-214s or VA cards. Proof of income may be provided through a statement of annual income.

### **Burial Assistance Program**

Eligible veterans may qualify for assistance towards the costs of cremation or burial.

In order to qualify for this benefit, the following criteria must be met:

- Available funds may not exceed \$1000.00 on date of death, including:
  - Banking and checking accounts
  - Social Security checks
  - Final paycheck
- If married, spousal income and assets will be considered
- Resident of the District of Columbia
- Burial or cremation services have been arranged through funeral home under contract with the District
- Deceased's body has not been released to non-contract funeral home at time of application

When applying for this benefit, certain documents are acceptable for the following verifications:

- Identity of deceased:
  - Social Security Number
- Income and assets of deceased:
  - Bank statements
  - Pay stubs
- DC residency of deceased:
  - Leases
  - Utility bills
- Relationship to deceased:
  - Birth certificate
  - Marriage certificate

The Burial Assistance Program may provide the following amounts for burial or cremation

- Up to \$1,000.00 towards burial
- \$650.00 towards cremation
- Total cost of burial or cremation is no more than \$2,000.00
- Cost of burial that requires an oversized casket cannot exceed \$3,000.00

If the deceased veteran is found to be eligible, the Burial Assistance Program will make payments directly to the contract funeral home.

## Wyoming

Find state and local veteran's benefits including education, employment, healthcare, tax breaks/exemptions, recreation and much more below. More than 45,000 veterans reside in the Equality State according to the Department of Veterans Affairs. Learn more about veterans benefits in the state of Wyoming.

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### **Veteran Education Benefits**

#### **Tuition Waivers for Veterans, Surviving Spouses, and Dependents**

Veterans, surviving spouses, and dependents may be eligible for ten semesters of free tuition and fees while attending the University of Wyoming or Wyoming **community colleges**.

In order to be eligible for this benefit, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Service in Vietnam between August 5, 1964 and May 7, 1975; or
- Overseas combat veteran
  - Expeditionary Medal or equivalent
- Discharge other than dishonorable
- Resident of Wyoming minimum of one year prior to application

In order for surviving spouses or dependents to be eligible for this benefit, the eligible veteran must have died during active service. Also, dependents must be 22 years of age or less at time of application.

#### **Wyoming National Guard 100% State Educational Assistance Plan**

Wyoming National Guard members may be eligible for a 100% tuition and mandatory fees waiver while attending Wyoming community colleges or the University of Wyoming. The plan also covers some tuition and fees for Guard members who attend VA-approved private schools in Wyoming.

Guard members may use this waiver to complete one **degree or certificate program**, to include Certificates, Associates degree, Bachelor's degree, Master's degree, or PhD program, (combined attendance of Certificate, Associate, and Bachelors are considered pursuit of one degree). This benefit may be used along with the **GI Bill**.

Spouses or dependents of Guard members may qualify for waivers of matriculation fees and tuition while attending the University of Wyoming, Wyoming community colleges, or vocational training program.

In order to qualify for the benefit, the Guard member must have died or sustained total and permanent disability as a result of state active duty or authorized training duty.

### **High School Diploma Program for Veterans**

Veterans of WWII, Korea, or Vietnam who were able to complete high school education prior to entering military service may be eligible to receive diplomas through Operation Recognition. Diplomas may be awarded posthumously.

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## **Veteran Employment Benefits**

### **State Employment**

Veterans may be eligible to receive **preference when applying for state positions**. Veterans may receive five-point preference, and veterans rated at 10% or more disability as a result of military service may receive a ten-point preference.

In order to be eligible for this benefit, applicants must be residents of Wyoming both at the time of entry into military service and at the time of application.

### **Wyoming Department of Workforce Services Veterans Services**

Veterans may be eligible to receive employment and training services through Veterans Services. These services provide support to veterans, including disabled veterans and veterans who have employment issues.

### **Employment Assistance for Wyoming National Guard Members**

Guard members may be eligible for **employment assistance** through the Wyoming Military Department. This program may help Guard members and their families find community employment opportunities.

The Wyoming National Guard Jobs Coordinator may also assist Guard members with job seeker skills, such as interview preparation and resume writing.

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## **Veteran Housing Benefits**

### **Veterans Assisted Care Homes and Nursing Homes**



The Veterans Home of Wyoming is located at the grounds of former Fort McKinney, three miles west of Buffalo on U.S. Highway 16. The home has 117 beds, including private rooms for single residents and two-room suites for married couples.

The home utilizes domiciliary care, which is similar to assisted living care, and offers a wide variety of services and supports, including;

- Primary care provider
  - Available to residents during the week
  - Will refer to outside specialists or VA providers, as needed
- Nursing care
  - Around the clock care
  - Supervision for medication administration and treatments
  - Coordinates medical appointments with Sheridan VA Medical Center and other outside providers
- Licensed clinical social worker
  - Provides scheduled individual counseling sessions
- Social and recreational services
  - Opportunities for entertainment, socialization, recreation, and creativity
    - Library
    - Computer lab
    - Fishing pond
    - Walking paths
    - Woodshop
    - Paint room
    - Greenhouse
- Dietary services
  - Dietary department is supervised by a registered dietitian
    - Monitors resident diets and menus
  - Dietary manager
    - Supervision of meal preparation
    - Individual dietary counseling with residents
- Laundry Services
  - Washers and dryers provided for residents
  - Staff launders bed linens and towels
- Physical fitness and wellness
  - Johnson County YMCA three times per week
  - Walking program monitored by nursing staff
  - Exercise equipment
    - Stationary bikes
    - Treadmill
    - Elliptical machine
    - Weights
- Financial Counseling
  - Resident trust accounts
    - Earns monthly interest

- Social Security and VA monthly benefits are deposited into individual resident accounts
  - Staff assists residents with money management
- Veterans Benefits Coordinator
  - The Veterans' Home of Wyoming also employs a veterans benefits coordinator who helps Johnson and Sheridan county veterans and families of veterans learn about benefits
- Support Services
  - Housekeeping Department
    - Cleaning
    - Personal laundry services
  - Maintenance Department
    - Buildings and grounds
- Chaplain Services
  - Spiritual support
  - Two Sunday services per month
  - Bible study

In order to be eligible for this benefit, applicants must meet one of the following criteria:

- Unable to earn a living
  - Injuries
  - Disease
  - Old age
  - Other infirmities
- No adequate means of support
- Already resident of Wyoming
  - Resident at time of application; or
  - Intent to permanently reside in Wyoming state residency is less than one year
    - Transit; temporary or seasonal residency not permitted
  - Dependent of qualified veteran
    - Preference given to veterans first and accompanying dependents second

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## **Veteran Financial Benefits**

### **Veterans Property Tax Exemption**

Veterans may be eligible for **property tax exemptions**. This exemption reduces assessed value of a primary residence by \$3,000 in order to lower property tax burden.

In order to qualify for this benefit, applicants must be residents of Wyoming for a minimum of three years prior to claiming exemption, and must produce proof of service and discharge. One of the following criteria must also be met:

- Service during one of the following periods:

- World War II: December 7, 1941 through December 31, 1946
  - Korean War: June 27, 1950 through January 31, 1955
  - Vietnam War: February 28, 1961 through May 7, 1975
- Service overseas during armed conflict
  - Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal or equivalent
- Veteran disabled due to military service
  - Certified by VA or DOD
- Unremarried surviving spouse of qualifying veteran who resides in Wyoming

If it is not used on property, this benefit may be applied to licensing fees for a vehicle.

### **Family Support Grant Program**

Wyoming Guard members, Reserve members, and active personnel in need of financial assistance may qualify for last resort funds grants. This trust fund program is administered by the Wyoming Adjutant General.

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### **Additional Veteran Benefits**

#### **Veteran License Plates**

Veterans may be eligible for license plates with either “POW” or “Disabled Veteran” designations. The first sets of POW plates are free, and additional plates may be purchased. Disabled veterans may only receive one free set of plates.

In order to qualify for this benefit, applicants must be Wyoming residents, and either own or lease the vehicle that will display plates. The vehicle must be titled to applicant or jointly owned with an immediate family member. Applicants must also provide proof of POW status or VA disability rating of at least 50% due to military service.

The County treasurer must receive applications at least 30 days before registration expires. These plates will be reissued once within an eight-year period, and must be renewed annually.

#### **Recreational Benefits for Veterans**

Wyoming offers several recreational benefits to veterans.

In order to qualify for these benefits, applicants must be residents of Wyoming for a minimum of one year. Each benefit also has additional specific criteria:

- Free Fishing License for Disabled Veterans
  - Must submit VA letter to certify minimum 50% disability due to military service
- Free State Parks Pass Annual Day Use and Camping Lifetime Permit
  - Must submit VA letter to certify minimum 50% disability due to military service
- Free Bird, Small Game, and Fishing Licenses for Disabled Veterans
  - Must submit VA letter to certify 100% disability due to military service
- Free Hunting and Fishing License for Purple Heart Recipients
  - Free lifetime game bird, small game and fish licenses
  - Specifically for Purple Heart medal recipients

Wyoming also offers service-specific recreational benefits:

- Active Duty Hunting and Fishing Licenses
  - Free resident general elk, resident general deer, resident game bird/small game and resident daily fishing license
    - Wyoming resident
    - Deployed to a combat zone on active duty
    - Home on leave
  - Free Pioneer Veteran Bird, Small Game, and Fishing License
    - 65 or older
    - Wyoming resident for 30 or more continuous years
  - Special Limited Fishing Permit for Hospitalized Veterans
    - Institution must supervise veteran during fishing

### **Free and Confidential Recording of Honorable Discharges**

Veterans who receive an honorable discharge may qualify to have discharge papers recorded in the office of the county clerk free of charge. This only applies to documents not previously recorded in another county of Wyoming. Records are kept confidential by the County Clerk.

### **Burial Benefits for Veterans**

Established in 1983, the Oregon Trail State Veterans Cemetery is located in Evansville. All veterans who receive other than dishonorable discharge are eligible for burial. Spouses, minor children, and children with disabilities of eligible veterans may also qualify for burial. Family members will be buried together in the same burial plot.

Burial plots are assigned on a first come, first served basis at no charge. Grave vaults for casket burials are also provided at no charge. All other expenses must be paid for by survivors.

Burial services are only scheduled for weekdays, and are only held in the chapel and patio area. Services are not held at grave sites. Also, flat granite grave markers provided by the U. S. government are the only markers authorized for individual graves.

## **Payment for Burial Details**

All pre-registered burial details are eligible for payment of \$50 for burial detail services.

## **Funeral Expenses**

Deceased veterans may be eligible to have funeral expenses covered by the Board of County Commissioners.

In order to be eligible for this benefit, the deceased veteran must have been other than dishonorably discharged, and must not have left sufficient funds for funeral expenses.

The Board of County Commissioners will cover costs for preparation of, transmittal to, and burial in the cemetery. The amount for services is capped at \$500.

## **Military Funeral Honors**

Deceased veterans who were honorably discharged may receive military honors at one funeral service. A minimum of two uniformed military members will perform honors free of charge to surviving family members.

## **Burial of Indigent Veterans**

Deceased indigent veterans may be eligible for burial by state counties.

In order to be eligible for this benefit, the deceased veteran must meet the following criteria:

- Discharged under other than dishonorable conditions
- Service during wartime
  - WW I
  - WW II
  - Korean war
  - Vietnam war
- Died in the county paying funeral
- Proof of insufficient funds for burial

Counties will provide up to \$500 for burial services.