

## Veteran Benefits



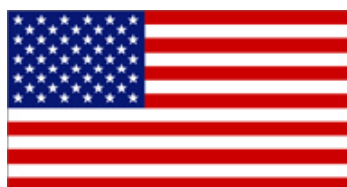
### Federal Veteran Benefits



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#### Secure the Blessings of Liberty

U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs & Federal Agencies



The Plymouth colony first cared for veterans beginning in 1636. Three hundred and seventy-three years later, the United States continues to provide the best possible care for our greatest assets. There is no greater calling than to care for those that ensured our freedom; Warrior Care is America's duty.

Veterans of the United States armed forces may be eligible for a [broad range of programs and services](#) provided by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). These benefits are legislated in Title 38 of the United States Code.

#### Federal Benefits Checklist

##### Military Service and Social Security

Earnings for active duty military service or active duty training have been covered under Social Security since 1957. Social Security has covered inactive duty service in the armed forces reserves (such as weekend drills) since 1988. If you served in the military before 1957, you did not pay Social Security taxes, but we gave you special credit for some of your service. You can get both Social Security benefits and military retirement.



<http://www.ssa.gov/pubs/10017.html>

##### Social Security and Wounded Warriors

Military service members can receive expedited processing of disability claims from Social Security. Benefits available through Social Security are different than those from the U.S. Dept. Veterans Affairs (VA) and require a separate application. The expedited process is used for military service members who become disabled while on active military service on or after October 1, 2001, regardless of where the disability occurs.

<http://www.ssa.gov/woundedwarriors/index.htm>

##### Armed Forces Retirement Home

Veterans are eligible to live in the Armed Forces Retirement Home located in Gulfport, Miss.,\* or Washington, D.C., if their active duty military service is at least 50 percent enlisted, warrant officer or limited duty officer. Eligibility determinations are based on rules prescribed by the Home's Chief Operating Officer. Veterans are not eligible if they have been convicted of a felony or are not free from alcohol, drug or psychiatric problems. For information, call 1-800-332-3527 or 1-800-422-9988.

[www.afrh.gov](http://www.afrh.gov)

##### Eye Glasses and Vision

Eye Glasses and vision examination at no charge for veterans with 10% or greater service-connected disability of any kind, including former POW's. This benefit is also available to veterans with a service-connected disability for an eye condition, 0% or greater. Veterans not eligible for eyeglasses will receive a copy of their eyeglass prescription which may be used to purchase eyeglasses from a private source at the veteran's own expense.

#### Federal Benefits

- [Veterans Benefits GI BILL](#)
- [Voc Rehab](#)
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- [VA Disability Compensation](#)
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- [Disability Benefits For Wounded Warriors](#)
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#### Records Request

- [Military Service Records](#)
- [Medical & Health Records](#)
- [Discharge Records](#)
- [Medals and Awards](#)
- [Correcting Records](#)

**Travel Reimbursement**

Reimbursement for mileage or public transportation may be paid to the following:

1. Veterans with service-connected disabilities rated at 30% or more;
2. Veterans traveling for treatment of a service-connected condition;
3. Veterans receiving a VA pension;
4. Veterans traveling for scheduled compensation or pension examinations;
5. Veterans whose income does not exceed the maximum VA pension rate;

Mileage reimbursement is paid at 41.5 cents per mile. No deductible is charged for veterans traveling for scheduled compensation or pension examinations.

[Need a Ride to a Medical Appointment? Check the DAV Van Schedule](#)

 **Clothing Allowance**

Prosthetic appliances and medications have an effect on clothing. If qualified, a veteran can receive a one time or yearly allowance for reimbursement. Any veteran who is service-connected for a disability for which he or she uses prosthetic or orthopedic appliances may receive an annual clothing allowance. This allowance also provides for any veteran whose service-connected skin condition requires prescribed medication that irreparably damages outer garments.

<http://www.vba.va.gov/bln/21/Rates/special1.htm>

 **Burial and End of Life**

Veterans with a discharge other than dishonorable, their spouses and dependent children can be buried in a national cemetery. Other burial benefits available for all eligible veterans, regardless of whether they are buried in a national cemetery or a private cemetery, include a burial flag, a Presidential Memorial Certificate, and a government headstone or marker.

[Oregon Military Funeral Honors Program](#)

A burial allowance (if receiving or entitled to receive USDVA benefits at time of death), burial flag, grave marker and, if desired, burial in a national cemetery.

[Burial Flags](#)

Veterans and family members are also eligible for Burial At Sea. For further assistance or questions about the Burial at Sea program, please contact the United States Navy Mortuary Affairs office toll-free at 1-866-787-0081. Anyone desiring burial at sea should indicate that preference in writing (in a will or other legal document).

[Burial At Sea Program](#)

 **GI Bill**

VA administers the following education benefit programs, please click on the program name for more information. Call 1-888-GI-BILL-1 (1-888-442-4551) to speak with a Veterans Benefits Counselor. Veterans may also call 1-800-827-1000 to reach the nearest VA Regional Office.

- [The Post-9/11 GI Bill](#)
- [Montgomery GI Bill - Active Duty \(MGIB-AD\)](#)
- [Montgomery GI Bill - Selected Reserve \(MGIB-SR\)](#)
- [Reserve Educational Assistance Program \(REAP\)](#)
- [Veterans Educational Assistance Program \(VEAP\)](#)
- [Educational Assistance Test Program \(Section 901\)](#)
- [Survivors' and Dependents' Educational Assistance Program \(DEA\)](#)
- [National Call to Service Program](#)
- [Colleges and Training Institutes](#)
- [Licenses/Certifications](#)
- [National Exams](#)
- [Education Programs Covered](#)

 **Military Personnel Records**

The National Archives maintains a customized order form to request information from your, or your relative's, military personnel records. DD 214s are not available online. They are sent to the requester through the mail and like all other similar requests do require a written signature before the

request is processed. Additionally, although our web site (eVetRecs) is set up to accept orders for DD 214s, it uses a secure, encrypted channel with the customer. You may use this system if you are:

- A military veteran, or
- Next of kin of a deceased, former member of the military
  - The next of kin can be any of the following: surviving spouse that has not remarried, father, mother, son, daughter, sister, or brother.

<http://www.archives.gov/veterans/evetrecs>

#### **Military Medals, Awards and Decorations**

Veterans are entitled to one replacement set of military medals. Requests for the issuance or replacement of military service medals, decorations, and awards should be directed to the specific branch of the military in which the veteran served. Generally, there is no charge for medal or award replacements. The length of time to receive a response or your medals and awards varies depending upon the branch of service sending the medals.

<http://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/replacement-medals.html>

#### **Naturalization Preference**

Honorable active-duty service in the U.S. armed forces during a designated period of hostility allows an individual to naturalize without being required to establish any periods of residence or physical presence in the United States. Additional information about filing and requirement fees and designated period of hostility are available on the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) Web site at [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov).

#### **Combat Veteran Health Care & Medical Check-Up**

Veterans who are 50 percent or more disabled from service-connected conditions, unemployable due to service-connected conditions, or receiving care for a service-connected disability receive priority in scheduling of hospital or outpatient medical appointments. Veterans who enroll with VA under the "Combat Veteran" authority will retain enrollment eligibility even after their five-year post discharge period ends. At the end of their post discharge period, VA will reassess the veteran's information (including all applicable eligibility factors) and make a new enrollment decision.

During enrollment, each veteran is assigned to a priority group. VA uses priority groups to balance demand for VA health care enrollment with resources. Changes in available resources may reduce the number of priority groups VA can enroll. If this occurs, VA will publicize the changes and notify affected enrollees.

[VA Form 10-10EZ - Application for Medical Benefits \(Enroll\)](#)

[Oregon VA Medical Facilities](#)

#### **Veterans Identification Card (VIC)**

VA issues eligible veterans a Veterans Identification Card (VIC) for use at VA Medical facilities. The VIC does not contain any sensitive, identifying information such as your social security number or date of birth on the face of the card. The VIC now displays the following special eligibility indicators: Service Connected, Purple Heart, and Former POW.

[How do I get an Identification Card?](#)

#### **Counseling and Outreach Services**

Vet Centers provide readjustment counseling and outreach services to all veterans and family members who served in any combat zone. Services are also available for their family members for military related issues. Veterans have earned these benefits through their service and all are provided at no cost to the veteran or family. There are four Vet Centers serving Oregon, [Salem](#), [Portland](#), [Grants Pass](#), and [Eugene](#).

#### **Pension for Low-Income Veterans**

Pension is a benefit paid to wartime veterans who have limited or no income, and who are age 65 or older, or, if under 65, who are permanently and totally disabled. Veterans who are more seriously disabled may qualify for Aid and Attendance or Housebound benefits. These are benefits that are paid in addition to the basic pension rate.

[Veterans Pension Program](#)

#### **Service-Connected Disability Compensation**

Military veterans with a service-related disabilities may qualify for over \$3,100

in monthly benefits. Additional amounts are paid for the veterans spouse, children, and dependent parents. These benefits are paid to veterans who have injuries or diseases that happened while on active duty, or were made worse by active military service. These disabilities are considered to be service-connected. It is also paid to certain veterans disabled from VA health care.

<http://www.vba.va.gov/bln/21/compensation/index.htm>

#### **Combat-Related Special Compensation (CRSC)**

CRSC may entitle you to additional funds which are designed to compensate you for the reduction of your military retired pay due to the receipt of Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) compensation (also known as the VA waiver's). With CRSC, you can receive either partial or full concurrent receipt of your military retirement pay and your VA disability compensation.

<http://www.dfas.mil/retiredpay/combat-relatedspecialcompensationcrsc.html>

#### **Dental Care and Treatment**

Outpatient dental benefits are provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs according to law. In some instances, VA may provide extensive dental care, while in other cases treatment may be limited. Those having a VA service-connected compensable dental disability or condition are eligible for any needed dental care.

- Former Prisoners of War (POWs) and those whose service-connected disabilities have been rated at 100 percent.
- Veterans participating in VA vocational rehabilitation program under 38 U.S.C. chapter 31.
- Veterans with service-connected compensable dental disability or condition.
- Veterans with service-connected noncompensable dental condition or disability resulting from combat wounds or service trauma are eligible for repeat care for the service-connected condition(s).
- Veterans with a dental condition clinically determined by VA to be currently aggravating a service-connected medical condition are eligible for dental care to resolve the problem.
- Veterans with nonservice-connected dental conditions or disabilities for which treatment was begun while the veteran was in an inpatient status in a VA medical center, when it is clinically determined to be necessary to complete such dental treatment on an outpatient basis.
- Veterans receiving outpatient care or scheduled for inpatient care may receive dental care if the dental condition is clinically determined to be complicating a medical condition currently under treatment.
- Veterans enrolled in a VA Homeless Program for 60 consecutive days or more may receive certain medically necessary outpatient dental services.

**Effective January 28, 2008**, recently discharged veterans with a service-connected noncompensable dental condition or disability who served on active duty 90 days or more and who apply for VA dental care **within 180 days** of separation from active duty, may receive one time treatment for dental conditions if the dental condition is shown to have existed at the time of discharge or release and the veteran's certificate of discharge does not indicate that the veteran received necessary dental care within a 90-day period prior to discharge or release. This includes veterans who reentered active military, naval, or air service within 90 days after the date of a prior discharge and; veterans whose disqualifying discharge or release has been corrected by competent authority.

<http://www.va.gov/healtheligibility/Library/pubs/Dental/Dental.pdf>

#### **Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment VR&E Program**

Education and Employment program for veterans with 20% or higher service-connected disability. Veterans generally have 12 years from the date they are notified of their entitlement to the program. Eligible veterans may be allowed up to 48 months of full-time benefits.



[Vocational Rehabilitation](#)  
1-800-827-1000  
[www.vetsuccess.gov](http://www.vetsuccess.gov)

#### **Aid and Attendance or Housebound Veterans**

A veteran who is determined by VA to be in need of the regular aid and attendance of another person, or a veteran who is permanently housebound, may be entitled to additional disability compensation or pension payments. A

veteran evaluated at 30 percent or more disabled is entitled to receive an additional payment for a spouse who is in need of the aid and attendance of another person.

#### **Transition Assistance Program (TAP) and Disabled Transition Assistance Program (DTAP)**

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has an active role in Transition Assistance Program (TAP) and Disabled Transition Assistance Program (DTAP) throughout the United States and around the world. Since the implementation of TAP/DTAP through the original legislation VA has provided benefit information to separating service members and their families. VA encourages all separating service members to contact their respective Family Service Centers/Transition Center to determine when the Transition Assistance Briefings are scheduled for a particular site and attend.

#### [Taps Slideshow](#)

[Turbo TAP](#) - The official Transition Assistance Program (TAP) Personal Finance & Transition web site operated on behalf of U.S. Department of Defense, U.S. Department of Labor, and U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

#### **Life Insurance**

Honorably discharged veterans with service-connected disabilities may qualify for insurance. The Insurance programs developed to provide benefits for veterans who may not be able to get insurance from private companies because of the extra risks of a service connected disability. Veterans with service-connected disability must sign-up within the first two years.

#### [Life Insurance Benefits for Service-Disabled Veterans](#)

#### [VA Life Insurance](#)

File a Death Claim

Department of Veterans Affairs  
Regional Office and Insurance Center  
P O Box 7208  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19101  
(888) 748-5822

#### **Home Loan Counseling**

In order to help veterans in serious financial trouble, VA Regional Loan Centers have technicians available to conduct financial counseling. This counseling is designed to help you avoid foreclosure. VA Regional Loan Centers have technicians available to conduct financial counseling. If you want this assistance, call 1-877-827-3702. When serious financial troubles arise, it is obvious that living expenses must be cut to the bone. Most of the luxuries previously enjoyed, and even some things which may have been thought of as necessary, may have to be dropped for a time.

<http://www.homeloans.va.gov/paytrbl.htm#financial>

#### **Interest Rate Reduction Refinancing Loans**

VA counselors at nine regional loan centers assist people with VA-guaranteed loans avoid foreclosure through counseling and special financing arrangements. Counselors also can assist other veterans with financial problems. Depending on a veteran's circumstances, VA can intercede with the borrower on the veteran's behalf to pursue options -- such as repayment plans, forbearance, and loan modifications -- that would allow a veteran to keep a home. To obtain help from a VA financial counselor, veterans can call VA toll-free at 1-877-827-3702.

<http://www.homeloans.va.gov/IRRRL.htm>

#### **VA Home Loan Guaranty Eligibility Center**

VA Loans can be used to obtain a loan to: Buy or build a home, Buy a residential condominium, Buy a residential cooperative housing unit, Repair, alter or improve a home, Refinance an existing home loan, Buy a manufactured home with or without a lot, Buy and improve a manufactured home lot, Install a solar heating or cooling system or other weatherization improvements, and Buy a home and install energy-efficient improvements. Call the VA Eligibility Center is 1-888-244-6711.

<http://www.homeloans.va.gov/eligibility.htm>

#### **Loans for Native American Veterans**

Eligible Native American veterans can obtain a loan from VA to purchase, construct or improve a home on Federal Trust land, or to reduce the interest rate on such a VA loan. The maximum loan amount is equal to the Freddie Mac conforming loan limit for a single-family home. This limit changes yearly. Veterans who are not Native American, but who are married to Native



American non-veterans, may be eligible for a direct loan under this program.

#### **Specially Adapted Housing Program**

Veterans or servicemembers who have specific service-connected disabilities may be entitled to a grant from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) for the purpose of constructing an adapted home or modifying an existing home to meet their adaptive needs. The goal of the Specially Adapted Housing (SAH) Grant Program is to provide a barrier-free living environment that affords the veterans or servicemembers a level of independent living he or she may not normally enjoy.

<http://www.homeloans.va.gov/sah.htm>

#### **Housing and Urban Development**

Housing and Urban Development (HUD) sponsors the Veteran Resource Center (HUDVET), which works with national veterans service organizations to serve as a general information center on all HUD sponsored housing and community development programs and services. To contact HUDVET, call 1-800-998-9999.

<http://www.hud.gov/hudvet>

#### **Loans for Farms and Homes**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) provides loans and guarantees to buy, improve or operate farms. Applications from veterans have preference. Loans and guarantees are available for housing in towns generally up to 20,000 in population. For further information, contact Farm Service Agency or Rural Development, USDA, 1400 Independence Ave., S.W., Washington, DC 20250, or apply at local Department of Agriculture offices, usually located in county seats.

<http://www1.va.gov/opa/IS1/14.asp#Loans>

#### **Small Businesses Economic Injury Disaster Loan**

A special Military Reservist Economic Injury Disaster Loan is available for self-employed Reservists whose small businesses may have been damaged through extended absences of the owner or essential employee as a result of activation of the owner or essential employee to military active duty. The SBA also conducts important research in veterans' entrepreneurship. A Veterans Business Development Officer is stationed at every SBA District Office. Contact SBA at 1-800-U-ASK-SBA (1-800-827-5722).

<http://www.sba.gov/vets/>

<http://www.sba.gov/reservists/>

#### **Veterans' Recruitment Appointment**

Allows federal agencies to appoint eligible veterans to jobs without competition. These appointments can be converted to career or career-conditional positions after two years of satisfactory work. Veterans should apply directly to the agency where they wish to work.

<http://www.usajobs.opm.gov/ei4.asp>

#### **Veterans' Employment Preference**

Since the time of the Civil War, veterans of the Armed Forces have been given some degree of preference in appointments to Federal jobs. Recognizing their sacrifice, Congress enacted laws to prevent veterans seeking Federal employment from being penalized for their time in military service. Veterans' preference recognizes the economic loss suffered by citizens who have served their country in uniform, restores veterans to a favorable competitive position for Government employment, and acknowledges the larger obligation owed to disabled veterans.



Preference applies in hiring from civil service examinations, for most excepted service jobs, and when agencies make temporary appointments or use delegated examining authorities from the U. S. Office of Personnel Management. To be entitled to preference, a veteran must meet the eligibility requirements in section 2108 of title 5, United States Code. This means that:

- An honorable or general discharge is necessary.
- Military retirees at the rank of major, lieutenant commander, or higher are not eligible for preference unless they are disabled veterans.
- Guard and Reserve active duty for training purposes does not qualify for preference.
- When applying for Federal jobs, eligible veterans should claim preference on their application or resume. Applicants claiming 10-point preference must complete form SF-15, Application for 10-Point Veteran Preference.

[Application for Veterans Preference - SF15](#)

[Veterans Preference Advisor](#)

[Office of Personnel Management](#)

**Transportation to VA Medical Appointments**

The DAV Transportation Network provides veterans with a ride to the [U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs \(VA\)](#) medical facilities. The Transportation Network is administered nationwide by DAV Hospital Service Coordinators (HSCs) at the VA's 172 medical centers, including Oregon medical facilities.

[Contact the the VA facility DAV Coordinator](#)

**Automobile Grant**

Financial assistance, in the form of a grant, is available to purchase a new or used automobile (or other conveyance) to accommodate a veteran or servicemember with certain disabilities that resulted from an injury or disease incurred or aggravated during active military service. The one time grant is paid directly to the seller of the automobile for the total price (up to \$11,000) of the automobile.

[Information about Automobile Grants](#)

**Commissary and Exchange Privileges**

Unlimited exchange and commissary store privileges in the United States are available to honorably discharged veterans with a service-connected disability rated at 100 percent, unremarried surviving spouses of members or retired members of the armed forces, recipients of the Medal of Honor, and their dependents and orphans. Certification of total disability is done by VA. Reservists and their dependents also may be eligible.

<http://www1.va.gov/opa/is1/14.asp#Commissary>

**Veterans Canteen Service (VCS)**

The VA VCS has partnered with Army and Air Force Exchange Service (AAFES) to offer more products and services for veterans. Veterans enrolled with the VA Healthcare system may enroll with VCS to shop online. To enroll, go online to [www.vacanteen.va.gov](http://www.vacanteen.va.gov) or send an email to [vcs.canteen@med.va.gov](mailto:vcs.canteen@med.va.gov) and use the subject line VAVCS Catalog.

[www.vacanteen.va.gov](http://www.vacanteen.va.gov)

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