

CALIFORNIA

# Veterans Resource Book



CALIFORNIA

# Veterans Resource Book

7TH EDITION

## QUICK REFERENCE

---

Veterans Suicide  
Prevention Hotline  
**(800) 273-8255 (Toll free)**  
Veterans press 1

California Department of  
Veterans Affairs (CalVet)  
**(800) 952-5626 (Toll free)**  
[www.calvet.ca.gov](http://www.calvet.ca.gov)

U.S. Department of  
Veterans Affairs (USDVA)  
**(800) 827-1000 (Toll free)**  
[www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov)



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

January 2018

## *California Veterans*

Nearly two million veterans call our Golden State home. On behalf of the state of California, I express my sincere appreciation to all of those who have served in the Armed Forces. Your sacrifices and contributions have protected our nation's most precious asset: freedom. We owe you our deepest gratitude and unwavering support.

Many benefits and services available to you have been expanded and improved over the past decade. The California Veterans resource Book provides a comprehensive Guide for accessing your earned benefits.

I encourage veterans and veteran families of every era to use this resource and take full advantage of the benefits and services you so richly deserve.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jerry Brown".

EDMUND G. BROWN JR.





STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS  
1227 O STREET, SUITE 300 | SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95814

**THE SECRETARY**

Dear California Veterans and Families,

I am pleased to present the 7th edition of CalVet's California Veterans Resource Book. This book assists you in learning about and accessing the wide variety of services and benefits available to California veterans and family members.

Our goal is to provide information about all of the programs offered, plus how to find out if you qualify, who to contact, and how to apply. Whether you're interested in getting a veteran designation on your driver license or getting a discounted State Parks pass, or if you need assistance with the big concerns such as education, health care, disability benefits, employment, housing, or emergency assistance, you will find somewhere to start in this book.

I want to thank our partners: the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs, County Veterans Service Offices, and Veterans Service Organizations as well as many agencies, organizations, and nonprofits supporting our state's nearly two million Veterans. We've included contact information for them in this book.

The California Veterans Resource Book is also available online at [www.calvet.ca.gov](http://www.calvet.ca.gov) where we update it regularly. I encourage you to take advantage of these benefits and services – if you served, you earned.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vito Imbasciani MD".

Vito Imbasciani MD  
Secretary

---

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## 8 VETERANS BENEFITS TIMETABLE

CH/01

### California State Benefits

---

13	REGIONAL OUTREACH
14	CALIFORNIA TRANSITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
16	CALVET VETERANS SERVICES DISTRICT OFFICES
17	VETERANS LICENSE PLATE PROGRAM
18	GOLD STAR LICENSE PLATES
19	DISABLED VETERANS
20	FISHING AND HUNTING LICENSES
21	STATE PARKS AND RECREATION PASS
22	NATIONAL PARKS ACCESS PASS
24	VETERAN DESIGNATION ON CALIFORNIA DRIVER LICENSE AND ID CARD
24	BUSINESS LICENSE, TAX, AND FEE EXEMPTION
25	PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTIONS
27	DISABLED VETERAN BUSINESS ENTERPRISE PROGRAM
29	COLLEGE TUITION FEE WAIVER FOR VETERANS' DEPENDENTS

CH/02

### USDVA Claims and Benefits

---

31	VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION
31	VETERANS BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION
32	DISABILITY COMPENSATION
40	BENEFITS FOR USDVA SERVICE- CONNECTED VETERANS
42	VETERANS IDENTIFICATION CARD
43	SPECIALLY ADAPTED HOUSING GRANTS
47	PENSION
50	CEMETERY AND BURIAL BENEFITS
60	DEPENDENCY AND INDEMNITY COMPENSATION

CH/03

## Health Care

---

67	USDVA HEALTH CARE
77	HOME IMPROVEMENTS AND STRUCTURAL ALTERATIONS
79	EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE IN U.S. NON-USDVA FACILITIES
79	ONLINE ACCESS TO USDVA HEALTH INFORMATION AND SERVICES
80	VETERANS HEALTH IDENTIFICATION CARD
81	CAREGIVER PROGRAMS AND SERVICES
83	DEPENDENTS AND SURVIVORS HEALTH CARE
86	PRESUMPTIVE HEALTH CONDITIONS
90	DEPLETED URANIUM
91	HEARING LOSS AND TINNITUS
94	MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES
99	SUICIDE PREVENTION
102	POSTTRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER
104	TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY
105	MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA
106	SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS
108	USDVA MEDICAL FACILITIES
117	COVERED CALIFORNIA

CH/04

## Education

---

119	EDUCATION BENEFITS FOR CALIFORNIA VETERANS
125	USDVA EDUCATION BENEFITS
143	OTHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS FOR VETERANS

CH/05

## Housing

---

147	CALVET HOME LOANS
151	USDVA HOME LOAN GUARANTY
153	VETERANS HOMES OF CALIFORNIA
157	PROGRAMS FOR VETERANS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS
165	COMMUNITY BASED VETERANS SERVICE PROVIDERS

CH/06

## **Employment**

---

- 175 STATE EMPLOYMENT
- 181 FEDERAL EMPLOYMENT

CH/07

## **Advocacy and Assistance**

---

- 185 CALIFORNIA COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE OFFICES
- 187 DIRECTORY OF COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE OFFICES
- 192 DIRECTORY OF VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS
- 194 VETERANS CONNECT @ THE LIBRARY
- 200 MINORITY VETERANS
- 202 WOMEN VETERANS
- 204 CALIFORNIA VETERANS BOARD
- 205 DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS
- 206 JOINING COMMUNITY FORCES

CH/08

## **Other Benefits and Services**

---

- 209 MILITARY RECORDS
- 211 RE-ENTRY VETERANS BENEFITS
- 213 VOLUNTEER SERVICES
- 216 CALIFORNIA VETERANS MEMORIAL REGISTRY
- 218 CALIFORNIA NATIONAL GUARD
- 221 CALIFORNIA STATE MILITARY RESERVE
  
- 224 ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

# CalTAP

CALIFORNIA TRANSITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM



A state-wide network of premier veteran service providers ensuring California veterans and their families achieve a successful transition from the military to civilian life.

More for information contact:  
CalVet Veterans Service Division  
(916) 503-8048  
[CalTAP@calvet.ca.gov](mailto:CalTAP@calvet.ca.gov)

[WWW.CALVET.CA.GOV](http://WWW.CALVET.CA.GOV) | (800) 952-5626

# VETERANS BENEFITS TIMETABLE

Information for Veterans Recently Separated from Active Military Service

BENEFITS AND SERVICES	TIME LIMIT	HOW TO APPLY
<p><b>DISABILITY COMPENSATION</b>            USDVA pays monthly compensation to veterans for disabilities incurred or aggravated during military service. This benefit is not subject to federal or state income tax. Entitlement is established from the date of separation if the claim is filed within one year from separation. Generally, military retirement pay is reduced by any USDVA compensation received. Income from Special Separation Benefits and Voluntary Separation Incentives affects the amount of USDVA compensation paid.</p>	None	Visit any USDVA office, call (800) 827 1000 or file at <a href="http://www.va.gov">www.va.gov</a> . You may also apply at your local CVSO.
<p><b>DISABILITY PENSION</b>            This income based benefit is paid to veterans with honorable war time service who are permanently and totally disabled due to nonservice connected disabilities or who are 65 or older.</p>	None	
<p><b>MEDICAL</b>            USDVA provides a wide range of health care services to veterans including treatment for military sexual trauma, and for conditions possibly related to exposure to Agent Orange, ionizing radiation, and other environmental hazards in the Persian Gulf. Generally, veterans must be enrolled in USDVA's Health Care System to receive care.</p>	None	Visit any USDVA medical facility, call (877) 222 8387 or file at <a href="http://www.va.gov">www.va.gov</a> . You may also apply at your local CVSO.
<p><b>COMBAT VETERANS</b>            USDVA provides free health care for veterans who served in a theater of combat operations after November 11, 1998, for any illness possibly related to their service in that theater.</p> <p>» If discharged from active duty on or after January 28, 2003</p>	Five years from date of discharge from active duty	
<p><b>DENTAL</b>            Veterans may receive one time dental treatment if they were not provided treatment within 90 days before separation from active duty. The time limit does not apply to veterans with dental conditions resulting from service connected wounds or injuries.</p>	180 days from separation	

BENEFITS AND SERVICES	TIME LIMIT	HOW TO APPLY
<p><b>EDUCATION AND TRAINING</b> Up to 36 months of benefits.</p>		
<p>» Montgomery GI Bill - Active Duty (Chapter 30) or</p>	<p>10 years from release from last period of active duty. Limited extension available.</p>	<p>Visit any USDVA office, call (888) 442-4551 or file at <a href="http://www.gibill.va.gov">www.gibill.va.gov</a>. You may also apply at your local CVSO.</p>
<p>» Post 9/11 GI Bill (Chapter 33) or</p>	<p>15 years from last discharge or separation. Limited extensions available.</p>	
<p>» Montgomery GI Bill - Selected Reserve (Chapter 1606) or</p>	<p>10 years from the date of eligibility for the program, or until released from the Selected Reserve or National Guard, whichever occurs first. Some extensions available if activated.</p>	
<p>» Change in REAP Eligibility Reserve Educational Assistance Program (REAP/Chapter 1607)</p>	<p>Current REAP Beneficiaries Veterans who were attending an educational institution on November 24, 2015, or during the last semester, quarter, or term ending prior to that date, are eligible to continue to receive REAP benefits until November 25, 2019.</p>	
	<p>REAP Beneficiaries Not Attending School Veterans who applied for REAP but were not attending an educational institution on November 24, 2015, or during the last semester, quarter, or term ending prior to that date, are no longer eligible to receive REAP benefits. You may be eligible to receive benefits under the Post-9/11 GI Bill.</p>	
	<p>New REAP Applicants Veterans who have not enrolled in school and applied for REAP benefits prior to November 25, 2015, are no longer eligible for REAP benefits. However, in most cases, you will be eligible for the Post 9/11 GI Bill.</p>	

BENEFITS AND SERVICES	TIME LIMIT	HOW TO APPLY
<p><b>VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AND EMPLOYMENT, CHAPTER 31</b></p> <p>USDVA helps veterans with service connected disabilities prepare for, find, and keep suitable employment. For veterans with serious service connected disabilities, USDVA also offers services to improve their ability to live as independently as possible. Some of the services offered are: job search, vocational evaluation, career exploration, vocational training, education training, and rehabilitation service.</p>	<p>Generally, 12 years from USDVA notice to veteran of at least a 10 percent disability rating.</p>	<p>Visit any USDVA office, call (800) 827 1000 or file at <a href="http://www.benefits.va.gov/vocrehab">www.benefits.va.gov/vocrehab</a>. You may also apply at your local CVSO .</p>
<p><b>HOME LOAN</b></p> <p>Veterans with qualifying service are eligible for USDVA home loan services, including guaranteed loans for the purchase of a home, manufactured home, manufactured home and lot, certain types of condominiums, or to build, repair, and improve homes. Certain disabled veterans can receive grants to have their homes specially adapted to their needs. Native Americans living on Trust Land may qualify for a direct home loan.</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>Visit any USDVA office or call (800) 827 1000. <a href="http://www.benefits.va.gov/homeloans">www.benefits.va.gov/homeloans</a>.</p>
<p><b>LIFE INSURANCE</b> <a href="http://www.benefits.va.gov/insurance">www.benefits.va.gov/insurance</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Service members' Group Life Insurance (SGLI) is low cost life insurance for service members and reservists. It is available in \$50,000 increments up to a maximum of \$400,000. SGLI coverage begins when the service member enters service or changes duty status.</li> <li>» Traumatic Injury Protection under Service members' Group Life Insurance (TSGLI) is a traumatic injury protection rider under Service members' Group Life Insurance (SGLI) that provides for payment to any member of the uniformed services covered by SGLI who sustains a traumatic injury that results in certain severe losses. TSGLI is retroactive for members who sustain a qualifying loss as a direct result of injuries incurred on or after October 7, 2001, through November 30, 2005, in Operation Enduring Freedom or Operation Iraqi Freedom, regardless of whether they had SGLI coverage. TSGLI pays a benefit of between \$25,000 and \$100,000 depending on the loss directly resulting from the traumatic injury. In order for a veteran to qualify for a TSGLI payment, they must have incurred a qualifying loss as a result of a traumatic event that occurred while they were in the service.</li> </ul>	<p>Coverage continues for 120 days from date of separation or up to one year if totally disabled at the time of separation from service.</p> <p>Coverage continues through midnight of the date of discharge, but member/ veteran generally has up to two years from the date of the loss to apply for payment.</p>	<p>Visit any USDVA Insurance Center or call (800) 419 1473.</p>

BENEFITS AND SERVICES	TIME LIMIT	HOW TO APPLY
<p><b>LIFE INSURANCE (CONTINUED)</b>  <a href="http://www.benefits.va.gov/insurance">www.benefits.va.gov/insurance</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Veterans' Group Life Insurance (VGLI) is lifetime renewable term life insurance for veterans. It is available in increments of \$10,000 up to \$400,000 but cannot exceed the amount of SGLI coverage in force at the time of the service member's separation from service. Premiums are age based.</li> </ul>	<p>Must apply within 120 days of separation or 1 year and 120 days if proof of good health is provided. Those on the 2 year disability extension are automatically converted to VGLI at the end of the 2 year period.</p>	<p>Visit any USDVA Insurance Center or call (800) 419 1473.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Family Group Life Insurance (FGLI) is life insurance that provides automatic coverage to the spouse and children of service members insured under SGLI. Spousal coverage is available up to a maximum of \$100,000, but may not exceed the service member's coverage amount. Premiums for spousal coverage are age based. Dependent children are automatically covered for \$10,000 for which there is no cost.</li> </ul>	<p>Coverage terminates 120 days after service member is released from service. Spouse may convert to a commercial policy.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Service-Disabled Veterans' Insurance (SDVI), also called "RH" insurance, is life insurance for service disabled veterans. The basic coverage is \$10,000. A \$20,000 supplemental policy is available if premium payments for the basic policy are waived due to total disability.</li> </ul>	<p>For basic, must apply within two years from date of notification of service connected disability. For supplemental, must apply within one year of approval of waiver of premiums.</p>	<p>Any USDVA Insurance Center or call (800) 669 8477.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Veterans' Mortgage Life Insurance (VMLI) is mortgage protection insurance issued to those severely disabled veterans who have received grants for Specially Adapted Housing from USDVA. Maximum coverage of \$90,000.</li> </ul>	<p>Must apply before age 70</p>	
<p><b>REEMPLOYMENT</b>  The Department of Labor's website <a href="http://www.dol.gov">www.dol.gov</a> contains information on employment and reemployment rights of members of the uniformed services. State Job Banks: <a href="http://www.careeronestop.org">www.careeronestop.org</a>.</p>	<p>For military service over 180 days, must apply for reemployment with employer within 90 days from separation. Shorter periods to apply if service is less than 180 days.</p>	<p>Contact your former employer.</p>
<p><b>UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION</b>  The unemployment compensation for ex service members program is administered by the states as agents of the federal government. The Department of Labor's website <a href="http://www.dol.gov">www.dol.gov</a> contains links for each state's benefits.</p>	<p>Limited time</p>	<p>Any State of California Employment Office, <a href="http://www.edd.ca.gov">www.edd.ca.gov</a>. (bring your DD Form 214).</p>

CH/01

---

# California State Benefits



---

## REGIONAL OUTREACH

California Department of Veterans Affairs (CalVet) works closely with local communities in a joint effort to serve our state's veterans. To ensure veterans receive the assistance, benefits, and services they need, CalVet divides California into eight regions and staffs each region with a Local Interagency Network Coordinator (LINC). Our LINC's play a dynamic role within local communities, serving as both informational conduits to the community and feedback resources for CalVet.

LINC's bridge the gap between CalVet and the federal, state, county, and non-government agencies that provide services to our state's 1.7 million veterans. Our LINC's are advocates for veterans, military service members, and their families within their regions. In addition, they supplement and support the County Veterans Services Offices (CVSO) and regional partners in the development of improved and expanded services and support for their local veteran populations and assist veterans with employment and educational opportunities.

### CALVET'S EIGHT LINC REGIONS ARE:

- » **Sacramento Valley and North State:** Yolo, Sutter, Yuba, Nevada, Placer, Sacramento, El Dorado, Amador, Calaveras, Tuolumne, Alpine, Siskiyou, Modoc, Trinity, Shasta, Lassen, Tehama, Plumas, Sierra, and Butte.
- » **Bay Area:** Sonoma, Napa, Marin, Contra Costa, Alameda, San Francisco, San Mateo, San Joaquin, Santa Clara, and Solano.
- » **Inland Empire:** San Bernardino, Riverside, Inyo, and Mono.
- » **Central Valley:** Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Mariposa, Merced, Stanislaus, and Tulare.
- » **Central Coast:** Monterey, San Benito, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Santa Cruz.
- » **Los Angeles:** Los Angeles and Ventura.
- » **Orange:** Orange and Southwest Los Angeles.
- » **San Diego:** San Diego and Imperial.

---

# CALIFORNIA TRANSITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

## WHAT IS CALTAP?

The California Transition Assistance Program (CalTAP) offers a full array of transition assistance to all veterans in the state (not only those who have recently exited the military). It is essential that veterans are connected to the state system of care as they progress in their lives and the needs of the veteran and family change.

The goals of CalTAP are to:

- » Inform and connect veterans of all eras to their earned federal and state benefits.
- » Coordinate the delivery of the program with all stakeholders to ensure the unmet, emerging, or expanding needs of veterans and their families are met.
- » Provide continued support and assistance to veterans and their families as their needs change over time.

CalTAP works in collaboration with federal, state, and community-based organizations. The CalTAP curriculum was developed based on current best practices and the analysis of veteran demographic and benefits usage data regionally. Curriculum will continuously be evaluated with recommendations derived from up-to-date veteran data and research analysis, producing recommendations for targeting outreach and information to meet the veteran need. To inform and connect veterans of all eras successfully, a core curriculum leads veterans into three pathways—education, employment, and entrepreneurship—with a total of 22 modules. CalTAP is comprised of a variety of learning formats, to include both online and in-person options, to ensure that the curriculum is accessible to all.

## **ONLINE CURRICULUM**

The online curriculum includes the entire CalTAP core curriculum and is available to veterans 24 hours a day. Formats include computer-based training modules, recorded webinars, and printable handouts, with subject matter experts for each module. Experts from CalVet, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA), and other organizations that administer programs and benefits for veterans will participate in the web-based curriculum. CalVet website curriculum developers continuously improve the online curriculum based on best practices and current data research available for veterans of all eras. The curriculum is continuously adapted and modified to include additional modules, as well as reflect any changes to federal and state statute and regulations governing veteran benefits.

## **IN-PERSON CURRICULUM**

There are in-person CalTAP courses offered throughout California, making the courses accessible for all veterans. The CalTAP training coordinators facilitate training opportunities throughout the state by collaborating with service providers in each region as subject matter experts and presenters for the CalTAP courses. The curriculum trainings are facilitated through a collaborative effort of existing CalVet LINC program staff.

The LINC program staff serve as information conduits in various local communities throughout California. The CalTAP training coordinators coordinate four tracts of training to include the core curriculum, as well as education, employment, and entrepreneurship pathways.

Experts from organizations that administer programs and benefits for veterans deliver the curriculum, and veterans hear directly from CalVet, USDVA, and numerous non-profit community-based organizations about specific benefits and services available nationally, state-wide, and in the community where they live.

## **QUESTIONS/COMMENTS**

Email [CalTAP@calvet.ca.gov](mailto:CalTAP@calvet.ca.gov)

---

# CALVET VETERANS SERVICES DISTRICT OFFICES

CalVet operates three Veterans Services District Offices. They are located at each of the three USDVA Regional Offices in Oakland, Los Angeles, and San Diego. CalVet's District Office staff provide veteran's disability claim representation and, in cases with unfavorable decisions, assist in the appeals process. Veterans and family members interested in filing a new, reopened, or appealed claim for disability benefits with USDVA should first contact their local CVSO for assistance (page 187). Walk-ins are welcome at District Offices. However, appointments are encouraged due to the volume of cases each office handles.

## **Oakland District Office**

1301 Clay Street, Room 1130N

Oakland, CA 94612

(510) 286-0627

*Mon - Thu: 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.*

## **Los Angeles District Office**

11000 Wilshire Boulevard, Room 5203

Los Angeles, CA 90024

(213) 620-2755

*Mon - Thu: 8 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.*

*Fri: 8 a.m. - 12 p.m.*

## **San Diego District Office**

8898 Rio San Diego Drive, Annex B

San Diego, CA 92108

(619) 400-0070

(619) 400-1832 Alternate

*Mon - Thu: 8 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.*

*Fri: 8 a.m. - 12 p.m.*

---

# VETERANS LICENSE PLATE PROGRAM

## CALIFORNIA “HONORING VETERANS” LICENSE PLATE

Available to all California motorists, a special California license plate may be ordered with the branch of service, unit, or a veteran’s service organization logo/emblem of choice. More than 70 insignias are available, and the logo will be prominently displayed to the left of a six number/letter combination. Original sequential plates are \$50 (this may be a tax-deductible contribution and is in addition to normal DMV license fees). “Personalized” license plates (choice of up to 6 characters) are available for \$78. The annual renewal fees for sequential and personalized are the same – \$40 for auto, truck or motorcycle. All proceeds from the sale of veterans plates are used to expand veteran services statewide.

### HOW TO APPLY

Those interested in an “Honoring Veterans” license plate should apply online at [www.dmv.ca.gov/portal/dmv/detail/portal/ipp2/welcome](http://www.dmv.ca.gov/portal/dmv/detail/portal/ipp2/welcome). More information on how to obtain veterans plates is available on the CalVet website, [www.calvet.ca.gov/vetservices/pages/license-plates.aspx](http://www.calvet.ca.gov/vetservices/pages/license-plates.aspx) or from a local CVSO (page 187).

## SPECIAL LICENSE PLATES FOR CALIFORNIA VETERANS

California also offers special license plates to honor the service of the following veterans:

- » **Medal of Honor**

Medal of Honor recipients are eligible for one set of free commemorative license plates.

- » **Legion of Valor**

Veterans who are recipients of the Medal of Honor, Army Distinguished Service Cross, Navy Cross, or Air Force Cross are eligible for special Legion of Valor license plates.

- » **Former Prisoners of War**

Former American Prisoners of War are eligible for one set of free commemorative license plates.

» **Pearl Harbor Veterans**

An honorably discharged veteran who was stationed at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, is eligible for special Pearl Harbor Survivor license plates.

» **Purple Heart**

Any veteran who is a Purple Heart recipient is eligible for special Purple Heart license plates.

## HOW TO APPLY

Complete a DMV Form REG 17A and provide proof of aforementioned medal award or evidence of being stationed at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. Former POWs must complete DMV Form REG 17.

Mail completed application and necessary documentation to:

**Department of Motor Vehicles**

P.O. Box 932345

Sacramento, CA 94232

For more information, call the DMV at (800) 777-0133 or visit [www.dmv.ca.gov](http://www.dmv.ca.gov).

*Note: Veterans with a Medal of Honor, Legion of Valor, Former Prisoner of War, Pearl Harbor, or Purple Heart license plate may park a motor vehicle, weighing not more than 6,000 pounds gross weight, without charge, in a metered parking space. This does not exempt a vehicle with the aforementioned license plates from complying with any other state law or ordinance.*

---

## GOLD STAR LICENSE PLATES

Gold Star Family license plates are available free of charge to families who want to honor loved ones lost during service to their country.

*Note: The plates must be assigned to a California-registered vehicle owned by the qualified family member. Gold Star Family License Plates are only available as sequential plates through DMV headquarters.*

## HOW TO APPLY

Each qualified family member who applies for a Gold Star Family License Plate is required to submit original copies of the following completed and signed forms:

- » Project Gold Star License Plate Application;
- » Special License Plate Application (REG 17A); and
- » Report of Casualty (DD Form 1300) from the U.S Department of Defense (DoD).

The Project Gold Star License Plate application must be certified by a CVSO (page 187). Mail applications and necessary documentation to:

### Department of Motor Vehicles

Special Processing Unit  
P.O. Box 932345 MS D238  
Sacramento, CA 94232

---

## DISABLED VETERANS

Service-connected Disabled Veterans (DV) with any of the conditions listed below may receive, free of charge, a set of special “DV” plates which permit free parking at all parking meters in the state with no time limit and allows for parking in handicapped zones. USDVA proof of service connection is required, and the service-connected disability must, according to California Vehicle Code Section 295.7, be identified as one of the following:

- » Rated at 100 percent disabled due to a diagnosed disease or disorder which substantially impairs or interferes with mobility; or
- » Limits movement without the aid of an assistive device; or
- » Due to loss of, or lost use of, one or more limbs; or
- » Due to permanent blindness as defined in Section 19153 of the Welfare and Institutions Code.

## HOW TO APPLY

In order to qualify for exempt registration benefits for one vehicle and disabled veteran license plates, a veteran must present all of the following to the DMV:

1. Completed and signed Miscellaneous Certifications (DMV Form REG256A).
2. A letter obtained by the veteran specifically for the Disabled Veterans License Plate program (PCGL LTR 112) from a USDVA Regional Office that states the veteran's service-connected disabilities. The veteran may obtain this letter by visiting a CVSO or a CalVet District Office and request the letter to be mailed to them. Locate your closest CVSO or CalVet District Office at [www.calvet.ca.gov](http://www.calvet.ca.gov). (CVSOs: Send the completed 21-4138 to the CalVet District Offices to submit to the USDVA Public Contact unit.)
3. Medical Certification (Included with DMV Form REG256A) completed by one of the medical professionals indicated.
4. Submit all required documentation to a local DMV field office, or by mail to DMV at:  
**Department of Motor Vehicles**  
Special Processing Unit, MS D238  
P.O. Box 932345  
Sacramento, CA 94232-0001

---

## FISHING AND HUNTING LICENSES

This benefit reduces annual fees for fishing and hunting licenses for disabled veterans.

### WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

Any honorably discharged veteran with a 50 percent or greater service-connected disability from USDVA is eligible for this program. There is no residency requirement to obtain a reduced annual fishing or hunting license fee.

## HOW TO APPLY

To apply, download and complete a reduced-fee fishing or hunting license application from the Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) website at [wildlife.ca.gov/licensing/online-sales](http://wildlife.ca.gov/licensing/online-sales) or call (916) 928-5805 to request an application be mailed.

First-time applicants must submit proof of their service-connected disability from USDVA. For subsequent annual licenses, a copy of a previous year's California reduced fee sport fishing or hunting license is required.

After a veteran purchases the first sport fishing license from a DFW license sales office, subsequent licenses may be purchased from any licensed agent. However, hunting licenses are only available at DFW license sales offices.

Mail the application with USDVA proof of service-connected disability (if required) to:

### **The California Department of Fish and Wildlife**

License and Revenue Branch  
1740 N. Market Boulevard  
Sacramento, CA 95834

or any DFW office.

For more information, please visit [www.calvet.ca.gov/vetservices/pages/fishing-and-hunting-licenses.aspx](http://www.calvet.ca.gov/vetservices/pages/fishing-and-hunting-licenses.aspx).

---

## STATE PARKS AND RECREATION PASS

The Distinguished Veteran Pass entitles the holder to the use of all basic State Park System-operated facilities, including camping and day use, at no further charge. The pass is not valid at units operated by local governments, private agencies, or concessionaires and it is not valid for special events, group campsites, commercial use or for supplemental fees. The pass cannot be used in conjunction with any other pass and/or discount.

### WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

Any honorably discharged war veteran who is a resident of California with a 50 percent or more service-connected disability from USDVA, who was held as

a Prisoner of War by forces hostile to the United States, or is a recipient of the Congressional Medal of Honor.

## HOW TO APPLY

Download and complete a Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) application found at [www.parks.ca.gov/pages/737/files/dpr619.pdf](http://www.parks.ca.gov/pages/737/files/dpr619.pdf). Submit proof of USDVA service-connected disability rated at 50 percent or greater or provide documentation showing status as a former Prisoner of War or Medal of Honor recipient along with a copy of the veteran's California Driver License and a completed DPR Form DPR 619.

### Park Pass Sales Office

1416 9th Street, Room 114  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Veterans may also apply by mail. Send completed applications and required documentation to:

### California State Parks

Attn: Distinguished Veteran Pass Program  
P.O. Box 942896  
Sacramento, CA 94296-0001

Please allow 4-6 weeks for processing. Once the pass is received, veterans may use it for reservations and applicable benefits. The pass holder is required to present the Distinguished Veteran Pass and a valid California Driver License or other suitable photo identification, along with any campsite reservation or tour ticket, and to pay any supplemental fees at the park.

For more information please visit [www.calvet.ca.gov/VetServices/Pages/State-Parks-and-Recreation-Pass.aspx](http://www.calvet.ca.gov/VetServices/Pages/State-Parks-and-Recreation-Pass.aspx).

---

## NATIONAL PARKS ACCESS PASS

The access pass is a free, lifetime pass, available to U.S. citizens or permanent residents of the United States medically determined to have a permanent disability. It provides access to more than 2,000 recreation sites managed by five federal agencies. The U.S. Forest Service, the National Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management, and Bureau of Reclamation

honor the access pass at sites where entrance or standard amenity fees are charged.

At many sites, the access pass provides the pass owner a discount on expanded amenity fees (such as camping, swimming, boat launching, or guided tours).

## WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

The access pass may be issued to U.S. citizens or permanent residents of any age who have been medically determined to have a permanent disability that severely limits one or more major life activities. This includes disabled veterans.

A permanent disability is a permanent physical, mental, or sensory impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, such as caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working.

## HOW TO APPLY

Apply in person, with proper documentation, at a participating federal recreation site or office. To see site locations that issue the access pass, visit <https://store.usgs.gov/pass/passissuancelist.pdf>.

Access passes may also be obtained via mail order from the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). Mail-order applicants for the access pass must submit a completed application to USGS [http://store.usgs.gov/pass/access\\_pass\\_application.pdf](http://store.usgs.gov/pass/access_pass_application.pdf), proof of residency and documentation of permanent disability, and pay the document processing fee of \$10 to obtain a pass through the mail. Once the application package is received, the documentation will be verified and a pass, with the pass owner's name pre-printed on it, will be issued by USGS to the applicant. Documentation of permanent disability will also be returned to the applicant.

Access pass applications are processed and shipped within 3-5 business days from the day they arrive at USGS. Transit time varies, and is dependent upon the service selected:

**USPS** - typically 5-10 business days

**FedEx Ground** - typically 3-5 business days

**FedEx 2nd Day** - typically 2 business days

**FedEx Overnight** - typically 1 business day

If you need your pass within 15 days or less, it is recommended that you either obtain your pass at the first site you visit, or request expedited shipping services for your order.

For more information, please visit [www.calvet.ca.gov/vetservices/pages/access-pass-national-parks.aspx](http://www.calvet.ca.gov/vetservices/pages/access-pass-national-parks.aspx).

---

## **VETERAN DESIGNATION ON CALIFORNIA DRIVER LICENSE AND ID CARD**

Eligible veterans have the opportunity to add the word “VETERAN” to the front of their driver license or ID card to indicate that they have served in the U.S. Military. It can also play a critical role in enabling access to certain privileges, and benefits associated with being a veteran without having to carry and produce a Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty. Interested veterans need to present a valid DD Form 214 to a local CVSO to receive a Veteran Status Verification form. Then, the veteran takes the CVSO verification form to a DMV field office for processing. DMV charges an additional \$5, plus the standard cost of a new, renewal, or duplicate license fee for this enhancement.

To obtain a copy of your DD Form 214, please see Military Records (page 207).

For faster service, schedule an appointment with a CVSO. To locate the CVSO nearest you (page 187), call (844) 737-8838. Enter your zip code when prompted and your call will be transferred.

For faster DMV service, schedule an appointment with the DMV by visiting [www.dmv.ca.gov/portal/dmv/detail/portal/foa/welcome?localeName=en](http://www.dmv.ca.gov/portal/dmv/detail/portal/foa/welcome?localeName=en) or by calling (800) 777-0133.

---

## **BUSINESS LICENSE, TAX, AND FEE EXEMPTION**

The Business License, Tax, and Fee exemption benefit exempts eligible veterans from municipal, county, and state business license fees, taxes, and

other fees. The exemption applies to veterans who hawk, peddle, or vend any goods, wares, or merchandise owned by the veteran, except spirituous, malt, vinous, or other intoxicating liquor, including sales from a fixed location.

### **WHO IS ELIGIBLE?**

Honorably discharged veterans who engage in sales (not services) activities may be eligible. Eligibility criteria will differ based upon local jurisdiction.

### **HOW TO APPLY**

Bring proof of honorable discharge to the local appropriate county/city licensing authority.

---

## **PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTIONS**

California offers two separate property tax exemptions: one for veterans and one for disabled veterans.

### **VETERANS EXEMPTION**

The California Constitution provides a \$4,000 real property (e.g., a home) or personal property (e.g., a boat) exemption for honorably discharged veterans or the spouse or pensioned-parent of a deceased, honorably discharged veteran. Most persons, however, are disqualified from this exemption due to restrictions on the value of property a claimant may own. A person who owns property valued at \$5,000 or more (\$10,000 or more for a married couple or for the unmarried surviving spouse of a qualified veteran) is not eligible for this exemption. Thus, a veteran who owns a home would most likely not qualify for the veterans exemption.

### **DISABLED VETERANS EXEMPTION**

The California Constitution and Revenue and Taxation Code Section 205.5 provides a property tax exemption for the home of a disabled veteran or an unmarried spouse of a deceased disabled veteran.

There is a basic \$100,000 exemption or a low-income (less than \$58,754) \$150,000 exemption available to a disabled veteran who, because of an injury incurred in military service:

- » is blind in both eyes; or
- » has lost the use of two or more limbs; or
- » is totally disabled as determined by USDVA or by the military service from which the veteran was discharged.

An unmarried surviving spouse may also be eligible if the service member died as the result of a service-connected injury or a disease incurred while on active duty or as the result of active duty. In other words, a veteran may not have been eligible during his or her lifetime, but the surviving spouse may become eligible for the exemption upon the veteran's death.

Unlike the veteran exemption, the disabled veterans exemption has no personal wealth restriction. The exemption is only available on a veteran's principal place of residence. The home may only receive one property exemption. Thus, if a homeowner's exemption has been granted on a property and the owner subsequently qualifies for the disabled veteran exemption, the homeowner's exemption should be cancelled to allow for the disabled veterans exemption as it provides the greater benefit.

*The issues regarding these exemptions are complex, and the eligibility requirements are specific. Consult your County Assessor's Office for detailed requirements regarding these exemptions.*

*Note: Both exemption amounts are annually adjusted for cost of living index; as of January 1, 2017, the basic exemption amount is \$130,841 and the low-income exemption amount is \$196,262.*

## **HOW TO APPLY**

Eligible veterans or surviving spouses may apply for an exemption at their local County Assessor's Office. Find your County Assessor's Office at [www.boe.ca.gov/proptaxes/assessors.htm](http://www.boe.ca.gov/proptaxes/assessors.htm). Veterans may also request more information from their local CVSO (page 187).

---

# DISABLED VETERAN BUSINESS ENTERPRISE PROGRAM

The State of California established the Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise (DVBE) Program to assist DVBEs in competing more effectively for a portion of the state's contract dollars. The DVBE program also promotes self-reliance for California's disabled veterans by offering the opportunity to gain experience in business while sharing their expertise with the citizens of California. The program provides a goal that, at a minimum, 3 percent of all state contract dollars for each state agency shall be spent with certified DVBEs.

## WHAT ARE THE DVBE ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS?

To be eligible for DVBE certification, a business must meet the following criteria:

- » Be at least 51 percent owned by one or more disabled veterans.\*
- » Limited Liability Companies must be wholly owned by one or more disabled veterans.
- » Daily business operations must be managed and controlled by one or more disabled veterans. The disabled veteran(s) who manages and controls the business is not required to be the disabled veteran business owner(s).
- » Home office must be located in the United States and cannot be a branch or subsidiary of a foreign corporation, foreign firm, or other foreign based business.

*\*For DVBE certification purposes, a "disabled veteran" is a veteran of the U.S. military, naval, or air service; and has a service-connected disability of at least 10 percent or more as declared by the USDVA or the DoD and must be domiciled in California.*

## DOES THE STATE ALSO HAVE A SMALL BUSINESS PROGRAM?

Yes, California government requires state agencies to award at least 25 percent of their annual contract dollars to certified Small Businesses (SB). Most DVBEs can also be certified as a SB. CalVet encourages DVBEs to apply for both certifications to receive the maximum assistance.

## WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF DVBE AND SB CERTIFICATION?

- » There is no charge for certification as a SB and/or DVBE.
- » The state may give a 5 percent bid preference to certified SBs and may offer up to a 5 percent incentive to DVBEs in the formal bid process.
- » California certified SBs and DVBEs have their business information added to the Department of General Services (DGS) database, which state agencies use to find SBs and DVBEs.
- » All California state agencies may use a streamlined procurement process known as SB Option or DVBE Option to contract directly with California-certified SBs or DVBEs for goods, services, and information technology goods and services valued from \$5,000.01 to \$249,999.99 (up to \$291,000 for public works contracts) after obtaining price quotes from at least two SBs or two DVBEs.
- » SBs and DVBEs are eligible, under the Prompt Payment Act, for interest penalties for late, undisputed invoice payments.

## HOW TO APPLY FOR DVBE AND/OR SB CERTIFICATION

The certification process is the responsibility of DGS, Procurement Division, and Office of Small Business and DVBE Services (OSDS). The OSDS is available to assist in completing the application and to answer questions about required documents.

To obtain DVBE certification, a firm must:

- » Complete the online application at <https://caleprocure.ca.gov/pages/index.aspx>;
- » Provide a copy of an Award of Entitlement (AOE) letter from the USDVA or the DoD, dated within six months of the date the application is submitted to OSDS. To obtain a copy of the AOE letter, contact the USDVA at (800) 827-1000 or go to [www.ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits/homepage/](http://www.ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits/homepage/);
- » Other required supporting documents will be determined when completing the online application. OSDS will provide assistance regarding the required supporting documentation.

For more information or help in certifying a SB and/or DVBE, contact:

**Office of Small Business and DVBE Services**

Room 1-400, MS 210

P.O. Box 989052

West Sacramento, CA 95798-9052

(916) 375-4940

OSDSHelp@dgs.ca.gov

---

## **COLLEGE TUITION FEE WAIVER FOR VETERANS' DEPENDENTS**

The College Tuition Fee Waiver for Veterans' Dependents waives mandatory system-wide tuition and fees at all three of California's public post-secondary education systems. This includes any State of California Community College (CCC), California State University (CSU), or University of California (UC) campus. If eligibility criteria are met, use of the Fee Waiver may be applied to state-supported programs in the CCC, CSU, and UC systems. Some academic programs at these institutions that are considered self-supported, commonly referred to as extension courses or extended education, are not covered under the Fee Waiver because these courses, degrees, and certificates are neither funded by the state, nor are they system-wide programs. This program does not cover the expense of books, parking, or room and board. For eligibility requirements and more information, see page 120.

---



**CALIFORNIA OFFERS**

*Education*

**AND TRAINING PROGRAMS TO ASSIST OUR  
VETERANS IN PLANNING THEIR FUTURE.**

---

**WWW.CALVET.CA.GOV | (800) 952-5626**



CH/02

---

# USDVA Claims and Benefits



The mission of the USDVA is to provide benefits and services to veterans and their families in a responsive, timely, and compassionate manner in recognition of their service to our nation. Because of the wide variety of services USDVA provides to veterans and their families, USDVA is structured into three separate administrative divisions.

---

## **VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION**

The Veterans Health Administration (VHA) is responsible for the administration and operation of over 1,700 sites of care which include hospitals, community clinics, community living centers, domiciliaries, and veteran centers.

### **VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION LOCATIONS**

For a listing of sites of care near you, see page 108 or visit [www.va.gov/directory/guide/division\\_flsh.asp?dnum=1](http://www.va.gov/directory/guide/division_flsh.asp?dnum=1).

---

## **VETERANS BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION**

The Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) administers all of the non-medical benefit programs for veterans, dependents, and survivors. VBA operates three regional offices and one satellite office in California.

### **VBA REGIONAL OFFICE LOCATIONS**

#### **Los Angeles Regional office**

Federal Building  
11000 Wilshire Boulevard  
Los Angeles, CA 90024  
(800) 827-1000

#### **San Diego Regional office**

8810 Rio San Diego Drive  
San Diego, CA 92108  
(800) 827-1000

### **Oakland Regional office**

1301 Clay Street, North Tower  
Oakland, CA 94612  
(800) 827-1000

### **Oakland Regional Benefit Satellite Office - Sacramento**

10365 Old Placerville Road  
Sacramento, CA 95827  
(916) 364-6500  
Open Tuesday and Thursday only

## **NATIONAL CEMETERY ADMINISTRATION**

The National Cemetery Administration (NCA) operates 131 national cemeteries throughout the United States and its territories, including nine in California. NCA is responsible for honoring the military service of our nation's veterans by providing a dignified burial and lasting memorial for our veterans and eligible family members. NCA maintains national cemeteries as national shrines, sacred to the honor and memory of our veterans interred or memorialized there. To locate a USDVA national cemetery near you, visit to [www.cem.va.gov/cems/listcem.asp](http://www.cem.va.gov/cems/listcem.asp).

---

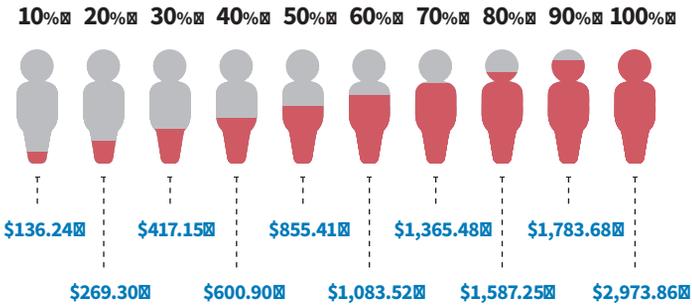
## **DISABILITY COMPENSATION**

Disability compensation is a monthly benefit paid by USDVA to veterans for any injury, condition, or illness that started during or was exacerbated by active service in the military. This benefit is tax free and also can be paid to veterans disabled from treatment in a USDVA health care facility.

Veterans may be eligible for disability compensation if they have a service-connected disability, often referred to as "S/C," and were discharged under other-than-dishonorable conditions. A service-connected disability does not have to be a combat injury; any injury or illness suffered or aggravated while in uniform can be considered.

# USDVA DISABILITY COMPENSATION RATES FOR VETERANS (Effective 12/01/17)

The dollar amount of benefits paid varies depending on the rating percentage of disability.



Veterans with disability ratings of at least 30 percent are eligible for additional allowances for dependents, including spouses, minor children, children between the ages of 18 and 23 who are attending school, children who are permanently incapable of self-support because of a disability arising before age 18, and dependent parents. The additional amount depends on the disability rating and the number of dependents.

## HOW DO I FILE A CLAIM?

### STEP 1: FILE A CLAIM

USDVA's disability claim process begins when a claim is filed, either informally or formally. It is highly recommended that the veteran complete any USDVA disability claim form with the assistance of a Veteran Service Organization (VSO), Veterans Service Representative (VSR), or a CVSO (page 187).

**Informal Claim:** An informal claim, filed on a USDVA Form 21-0966 (Intent to File a Claim for Compensation and/or Pension, or Survivor Pension and/or Dependency Indemnity Compensation), will preserve the effective date of a claim for up to one year, allowing the claimant to submit the formal claim within one year of the date the USDVA Form 21-0966 was received by USDVA.

**Formal Claim:** A formal claim for disability compensation or pension is completed on USDVA Form 21-526EZ (Application for Compensation) or

USDVA Form 21-527EZ (Application for Pension). Both claims for benefits may be filed using USDVA's Fully Developed Claim (FDC) program. Veterans may also electronically file a claim directly with USDVA using the eBenefits portal located at [www.ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits/homepage](http://www.ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits/homepage).

When a claim is filed with a VSO, VSR, or CVSO, the claimant must sign a Power of Attorney (POA) form authorizing the VSO, VSR, or CVSO to act on their behalf when preparing, presenting, and prosecuting the claim for any and all benefits with USDVA. The claimant may, at any time through the claims process, revoke the POA. Be aware that when a claimant signs a POA with a VSO, VSR, or CVSO, then they are the only individuals authorized to assist. For example, if a claimant signs a POA with the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), then the American Legion cannot legally research the status of the claim or act on behalf of the claimant.

The filing assistance provided by a VSO, VSR, or CVSO for veteran's benefits is a free service. Veterans should never have to pay a person or an organization to assist in filling out forms or advocating on behalf of the veteran. If a veteran is asked by a person or an organization for money in return for their services, please report them to the USDVA Office of the Inspector General hotline by phone at (800) 488-8244 (between 6 a.m. and 1 p.m. PST, Monday through Friday, excluding federal holidays) or by e-mail at [vaoighotline@va.gov](mailto:vaoighotline@va.gov). Claimants may also write:

**USDVA Office of the Inspector General (53E)**

810 Vermont Avenue, NW

Washington, DC 20420

**STEP 2: OBTAIN EVIDENCE**

Evidence must be submitted to support a disability claim. Evidence submitted at the time of filing will help expedite the claim. The disability evaluation will be based on the evidence provided so it is essential that the information submitted is accurate and complete. A VSO, VSR, or CVSO can assist by verifying service dates (based on the information furnished) and requesting the claimant's medical records.

USDVA may request more information from the claimant. This may include letters detailing specific experiences in service, medical records, or information on dependents, employment history, or income. Claimants can help speed the process by providing complete addresses for the medical care facilities that treated a claimant, being as exact as possible in reporting dates

of treatment, and sending requested information as soon as possible. Private medical records should be obtained by a claimant directly from the claimant's private medical provider.

*Note: In order to ensure USDVA processes a claim as quickly as possible, all evidence and information should be provided to USDVA at the same time that the formal claim is submitted to USDVA.*

### **STEP 3: USDVA REQUESTS A PHYSICAL EXAM**

Often, USDVA requests medical exams of the veteran while waiting for other evidence to arrive. Sometimes, USDVA reviews evidence to be certain it is requesting the proper exams for each disability claimed. The exams USDVA requests will depend on the claim and treatment history. The claimant's nearest USDVA Medical Center will schedule the requested exams and contact the claimant by mail and/or phone to let them know the exam reasons, dates, and locations. After each exam, an examination report will be prepared and sent to by USDVA's examiner for review by USDVA's Regional office. Claimants can expedite this process by completing exam appointments. If a claimant is unable to attend an appointment, the VSO, VSR, or CVSO should reschedule the appointment. Failure to report for an exam means the regional office will not have information to complete a claim.

### **STEP 4: USDVA RATES CLAIM**

A veteran's claim is ready to be rated when USDVA has received all necessary evidence. USDVA evaluates all the medical evidence and other documents to support the medical condition and identifies how these conditions correspond to USDVA's rating schedule. This schedule designates which disabilities can be compensated and at what percentage. USDVA pays the maximum benefit allowed by law based on the evidence submitted. Before USDVA decides the claim, if there is a change in disability, or if the claimant wants USDVA to evaluate additional disabilities, the claimant should contact the VSO, VSR, or CVSO assisting with the claim.

### **STEP 5: USDVA MAKES A DECISION**

After USDVA rates the claim, then USDVA notifies the claimant of the decision. USDVA's decision provides the reasons for all decisions to grant or deny benefits. If the claimant disagrees with USDVA's decision, then the claimant should contact their VSO, VSR, or CVSO to discuss an appeal. If a claimant has

questions about their claim process, decision, or appeal, they should contact their VSO, VSR, or CVSO before calling USDVA.

## **WHAT CAN VETERANS DO TO ACCELERATE USDVA'S CLAIM PROCESSING?**

It is highly recommended that each veteran complete any USDVA disability claim with the assistance of an advocate such as a VSO, VSR, or a CVSO (page 187). Each of the items below should be completed in collaboration with an advocate:

- » Elect to use the FDC program;
- » Submit ALL claim supporting documentation at the time the FDC is submitted to USDVA;
- » Obtain private medical records and forward to USDVA using the FDC process;
- » Be thorough when completing the claim application and do not leave any question unanswered;
- » Never assume USDVA has the necessary information on file;
- » Always sign the application form;
- » Include the claimant's USDVA claim number on every page of correspondence or documentation submitted to USDVA;
- » Respond quickly and completely to USDVA requests for additional information;
- » Complete all medical exam appointments scheduled by USDVA;
- » Notify USDVA if the claimant is unable to complete a medical exam and reschedule as soon as possible;
- » Include the veteran's complete mailing address (with apartment number, if applicable) and, if possible, a daytime phone number (with area code) with any application or correspondence submitted;
- » Notify USDVA immediately if a mailing address or phone number changes.

If in doubt about what to do at any time, contact your VSO, VSR, or CVSO before attempting to contact USDVA. Have the claimant's USDVA claim

number available to give to the person who offers assistance. If unable to locate the claimant's USDVA claim number, have the veteran's Social Security number available. Surviving family members of a veteran should have the veteran's Social Security number available.

## **WHAT IF A CLAIM IS DENIED OR THE CLAIMANT DISAGREES WITH USDVA'S DECISION?**

If a claimant disagrees with any part of a USDVA regional office disability claim decision, then the claimant may appeal any part of the decision. For example, the claimant may appeal a denial of service connection, a low percentage rating, or the effective date. The claimant should contact their VSO, VSR, or CVSO to determine the best course of action.

An appeal of a regional office decision involves many steps (some optional and some required) and strict time limits. In sequence, the steps are:

1. The claimant starts the appeal process by filing a Notice of Disagreement;
2. USDVA issues a response, called a Statement of the Case;
3. If the claimant still disagrees with USDVA's statement, then the claimant files a Formal Appeal (USDVA Form 9 or equivalent);
4. The claimant may request, and then USDVA may schedule, a review by a decision review officer at the regional office;
5. If the claimant still disagrees with the regional review officers decision, then the claimant may appeal to the Board of Veterans' Appeals (BVA) in Washington, D.C.;
6. If the claimant still disagrees with the BVA decision, then the claimant may appeal to the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans' Claims (CAVC) in Washington, D.C.

A claim appeal at the BVA or CAVC may have three possible outcomes: the granting of all or part of a claim, a remand, or a denial. When a claim is granted on appeal, it is returned to the regional office for processing. When an appeal is remanded, that means additional information is often needed to finish processing the claim. When an appeal is denied by the BVA, the next appeal level is the CAVC. When the CAVC denies an appeal, consult your VSO, VSR, or CVSO for guidance.

## 1. NOTICE OF DISAGREEMENT

A Notice of Disagreement (NOD) is a written statement that a claimant disagrees with all or part of decision made by USDVA. When submitting a NOD work with your advocate:

- » Claimants must be specific about their disagreement. If decisions were made on multiple medical conditions, claimants must be clear about which medical condition where the claimant disagrees;
- » A NOD can be accepted by USDVA only after a final decision was made by USDVA. Before benefits can be reduced or denied, USDVA must send a “pre-determination notice.” If a claimant did not receive paperwork describing the appeals process (USDVA Form 4107), check the letter to see if it is, in fact, a pre-determination notice;
- » Check USDVA’s filing deadlines. A NOD must be filed within one year of the date of USDVA’s decision letter. If a claimant missed the filing deadline, they may file another claim for the same condition or request that the previous claim be re-opened.

## 2. STATEMENT OF THE CASE

A Statement of the Case (SOC) is USDVA’s summary of the evidence considered, actions taken, decisions made, and the laws governing the decision. A SOC must be sent by USDVA to a claimant when an NOD is filed or when new evidence is received. Once the first SOC is completed on an appeal, subsequent SOCs are called a Supplemental Statement of the Case (SSOC). In many cases, a complicated appeal with many medical conditions may have several SSOCs.

## 3. FORMAL APPEAL (USDVA FORM 9 OR EQUIVALENT)

An appeal must be formal before it can continue to higher levels. The standard form for formalizing (sometimes called perfecting) an appeal is USDVA’s Form 9, Appeal to Board of Veterans’ Appeals. This form must be received no later than one of these two dates:

- » one year from the date of USDVA’s letter notifying the claimant of the decision; or
- » 60 days after the date of the last SOC.

#### **4. HEARINGS (OPTIONAL)**

Hearings provide an opportunity for claimants to present evidence in person; they are optional. Hearings are held at a USDVA regional office by a Decision Review Officer (DRO). The DRO will review the evidence and testimony and make a decision on the case. If the issue is not resolved in the claimant's favor, the appeal will continue.

#### **5. BOARD OF VETERANS' APPEALS**

The Board of Veterans Appeals (BVA), located in Washington D.C., is the highest appellate body within USDVA. Although most decisions are made in Washington, BVA does have travel boards that come to local offices. Because travel boards have been limited in recent years, the pending workload at BVA has dramatically increased. It is usual for an appeal to take two years or more from the initial NOD to the final BVA decision. If there is a grant or a remand, processing by the regional office may take an additional year or two.

BVA looks at all of the evidence regarding the issue under appeal. If BVA decides that more information is needed to make a decision, it will issue a remand to the local office. BVA will not reconsider the case until its instructions in the remand are done. If the evidence is sufficient, BVA will issue a decision. This is the final USDVA decision and the end of the appeal process within USDVA. However, a BVA decision can be appealed by a claimant to the CAVC. A claimant has 120 days from the date of the BVA decision to appeal to CAVC.

#### **6. UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS FOR VETERANS CLAIMS**

The United States Court of Appeals for Veterans' Claims (CAVC), located in Washington D.C., reviews matters of law regarding USDVA benefits and decisions. CAVC is not part of USDVA; it is an appellate court in the U.S. judicial system. CAVC will only consider decisions made by the Board of Veterans Appeals after 1988. As in most courts, a claimant must have either an attorney or personal knowledge of legal proceedings to file the correct legal paperwork for the appeal. CAVC decisions usually concern the procedural and legal issues involved in the "letter of the law." A claimant has 120 days from the date of the BVA decision to appeal to CAVC.

---

# BENEFITS FOR USDVA SERVICE-CONNECTED VETERANS

*Note: The benefits listed below have eligibility requirements; some are very complex. The following provides a general idea of potential benefits for each disability rating.*

## 0 PERCENT RATING

- » USDVA medical treatment for any S/C condition;
- » USDVA Fee Basis card for treatment of S/C conditions at non-USDVA facilities (must be applied to and approved by the nearest USDVA medical facility);
- » Service-Disabled Veterans USDVA Life Insurance (must have been released from active service on or after April 25, 1951 and applied within two years of the date the USDVA granted a new S/C condition);
- » Federal civil service, state and county employment preference;
- » Annual clothing allowance (S/C disorders requiring the need of prosthetic/wheelchair or certain skin conditions);
- » Temporary total disability (100 percent) evaluation for USDVA approved hospitalization in excess of 21 days for S/C condition and/or for medically documented periods of convalescence for S/C condition from one to three months;
- » California College Fee Waiver Program for veteran dependents.

## 10 PERCENT TO 20 PERCENT IN ADDITION TO THE ABOVE

- » USDVA medical treatment for any S/C condition;
- » Eligibility for eye glasses and hearing aids (veteran must be enrolled in and receiving USDVA health care);
- » Vocational rehabilitation (must be 20 percent S/C or 10 percent S/C with serious employment handicap and apply within 12 years of date USDVA first notified veteran of at least 10 percent S/C disability);
- » USDVA home loan funding fee exemption;

- » Combat Related Special Compensation for military retirees (CRSC);
- » National Park & Federal Recreational Lands Access Pass;
- » State DVBE Program;
- » USDVA home improvement and structural alteration (HISA) grant (referral from your VHA physician to apply through prosthetics).

### **30 PERCENT TO 40 PERCENT IN ADDITION TO THE ABOVE**

- » Dependent allowances for spouse, children and dependent parents;
- » Aid and Attendance allowance for disabled spouse.

### **50 PERCENT IN ADDITION TO THE ABOVE**

- » USDVA medical treatment for any S/C or NSC condition;
- » USDVA Fee Basis card for treatment for S/C & NSC conditions (except dental) at non-USDVA facilities;
- » No USDVA medical co-payments;
- » Reduced fee state sport fishing license and Wildlife Area Pass;
- » State Parks Permit (wartime service required);
- » Regional Transit Connection Discount Card (BART, County Connection, etc.);
- » Reduced fee for state hunting license, stamps and tags;
- » Concurrent retired disability pay for military retirees (20 plus years) (CRDP).

### **60 PERCENT IN ADDITION TO THE ABOVE**

- » Entitlement to total disability (100 percent payable) based upon individual unemployability due to one S/C disability rated at 60 percent.

### **70 PERCENT TO 90 PERCENT IN ADDITION TO THE ABOVE**

- » Entitlement to total disability (100 percent payable) based upon individual unemployability with at least one S/C disability rated at 40 percent;
- » USDVA skilled nursing facility care.

## **100 PERCENT SCHEDULAR RATING OR TOTAL DISABILITY BASED UPON UNEMPLOYABILITY IN ADDITION TO THE ABOVE**

- » Civilian Health and Medical Program (CHAMPVA) for dependents (unless in receipt of TRICARE);
- » USDVA dental care;
- » Additional eligibility for VA Dental Insurance Program (VADIP) for dependents, if enrolled in CHAMPVA;
- » USDVA sponsored education for dependents, Chapter 35, (must be permanent and total, no future exams or veteran passed away from a S/C death);
- » USDVA life insurance waiver of premiums (must be unable to work due to any disability or disabilities for a minimum six months prior to age 65);
- » Military commissary privileges and ID cards;
- » DMV vehicle fee exemption requires S/C disability, which substantially impairs mobility;
- » Property tax exemption.

## **SPECIAL BENEFITS BASED UPON A SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABILITY THAT RESULTS IN LOSS OF OR LOSS OF USE OF AN, ORGAN OR EXTREMITY OR SUBSTANTIALLY IMPAIRED MOBILITY**

- » Special monthly compensation (additional monetary);
- » Specially Adapted Automobile grant (one time) and adaptive equipment (multiple times);
- » USDVA specially adapted housing and home adaptation grants.

---

## **VETERANS IDENTIFICATION CARD**

The Veterans Identification Card can be applied for online and is free for honorably discharged veterans. To receive the card, veterans must log in to [www.vets.gov/veteran-id-card](http://www.vets.gov/veteran-id-card) using either the ID.me verification system or a DS log-in. Users will then be able to apply for the hard-copy card by verifying

their personal details through the website and by submitting a copy of a valid government issued-ID, as well as a shoulders-up photo, to the site. Once the application is complete, users can expect to receive their new ID card within 60 days. The ID cards are meant to offer a way for veterans to prove their service without carrying a copy of their DD Form 214, which contains sensitive personal information such as veterans' Social Security numbers. The new IDs will not, however, qualify as official government-issued identification for air travel or other uses.

---

## **SPECIALLY ADAPTED HOUSING GRANTS**

The USDVA provides grants to service members and veterans with certain permanent and total service-connected disabilities to help purchase or construct an adapted home, or modify an existing home to accommodate a disability. Two grant programs exist: the Specially Adapted Housing (SAH) grant and the Special Housing Adaptation (SHA) grant.

### **SPECIALLY ADAPTED HOUSING GRANT**

SAH grants help veterans with certain service-connected disabilities live independently in a barrier-free environment. SAH grants can be used in one of the following ways:

- » Construct a specially adapted home on land to be acquired;
- » Build a home on land already owned if it is suitable for specially adapted housing;
- » Remodel an existing home if it can be made suitable for specially adapted housing; or
- » Apply the grant against the unpaid principal mortgage balance of an adapted home already acquired without the assistance of a USDVA grant.

### **SPECIAL HOUSING ADAPTATION GRANT**

SHA grants help veterans with certain service-connected disabilities adapt or purchase a home to accommodate the disability. You can use SHA grants in one of the following ways:

- » Adapt an existing home the veteran or a family member already owns, in which the veteran lives;
- » Adapt a home the veteran or family member intends to purchase in which the veteran will live;
- » Help a veteran purchase a home already adapted, in which the veteran will live.

## **TEMPORARY RESIDENCE ADAPTATION**

Eligible veterans and service members who are temporarily residing in a home owned by a family member may also receive a Temporary Residence Adaptation grant to help the veteran or service member adapt the family member's home to meet their special needs. The maximum amount available is \$35,593 for the SAH grant and \$6,355 for the SHA grant. Grant amounts will also be adjusted annually based on a cost-of-construction index.

## **HOME IMPROVEMENTS AND STRUCTURAL ALTERATIONS**

USDVA may provide assistance for any home improvement medically necessary for the continuation of treatment or for disability access to the primary residence and essential lavatory and sanitary facilities. The HISA grant may be received in conjunction with either a SAH or SHA grant. HISA grants are available to veterans with both service-connected and non-service connected disabilities. The lifetime home improvement benefits of up to \$6,800 may be provided to service-connected disabled veterans and up to \$2,000 may be provided to veterans with non-service connected disabilities rated 50 percent or more. To apply, the veteran must first have a prescription from a USDVA or fee-basis physician which includes the specific items required and the diagnosis with medical justification. To apply, complete USDVA Form 10-0103 (Veterans Application for Assistance in Acquiring Home Improvements and Structural Alterations) and submit to the prosthetic representative at the nearest USDVA Medical Facility.

## **AUTOMOBILE ALLOWANCE**

Veterans and service members may be eligible for a one-time payment of not more than \$20,577.18 toward the purchase of an automobile or other conveyance if they have certain USDVA service-connected disabilities. These service members may also be eligible for adaptive equipment, and for repair,

replacement, or reinstallation required because of disability or for the safe operation of a vehicle purchased with USDVA assistance. To apply, contact your VSO, VSR, or CVSO. You may also attempt to contact USDVA directly at (800) 827-1000.

## **CLOTHING ALLOWANCE**

Veterans who have unique clothing needs as a result of a USDVA service-related disability or injury may receive a supplement to their disability compensation. The clothing allowance reimburses veterans if their clothing gets permanently damaged by a prosthetic or orthopedic appliance they wear, or by a prescribed medication used on the skin. If eligible, a veteran can receive a one-time or yearly allowance for reimbursement. To apply, please contact the prosthetic representative at the nearest USDVA medical facility (page 108).

## **GUIDE AND SERVICE DOGS**

### **WHAT ARE GUIDE DOGS?**

Guide dogs are trained to lead the blind or vision-impaired. The dog acts as a pilot to direct its owner in a straight line unless directed to turn, while avoiding obstacles in all directions.

### **HOW DO I GET A GUIDE DOG?**

Blind veterans are assessed and trained for orientation and mobility. If a guide dog is preferred, information on how to contact guide dog schools is provided. Partnership with the guide dog is provided through non-USDVA guide dog schools.

### **WHAT IS A SERVICE DOG?**

A service dog is a dog trained to do specific tasks for a person that he or she cannot do because of a disability. Service dogs can pick things up, guide a person with vision problems, or help someone who falls or loses balance easily. For example, a service dog can help a blind person walk down the street or get dangerous things out of the way when someone is having a seizure.

Protecting someone, giving emotional support, or being a companion do not qualify a dog to be a service animal. To be a service dog, a dog must go through training. Usually the dog is trained to:

- » Do things that are different from natural dog behavior;
- » Do things that the handler (dog owner) cannot do because of a disability; and
- » Learn to work with the new handler in ways that help manage the owner's disability.

Because the handler depends on the service dog's help, service dogs are allowed to go to most public places the handler goes. This is the case even if it is somewhere pet dogs usually cannot go, like restaurants or on airplanes, but there are a few exceptions. For example, individuals with service dogs can be asked to leave the dog is not behaving well.

### **HOW DO I GET A SERVICE DOG?**

Each veteran's case is reviewed and evaluated by a prescribing clinician for the following:

- » Ability and means, including family or caregiver, to care for the dog currently and in the future;
- » Goals that are to be accomplished through the use of the dog; and
- » Goals that are to be accomplished through other assistive technology or therapy.

The veteran will be informed of an approval or disapproval of their service dog request.

For more information about guide dogs and service dogs please visit [www.prosthetics.va.gov/serviceandguidedogs.asp](http://www.prosthetics.va.gov/serviceandguidedogs.asp).

### **WHAT IS AN EMOTIONAL SUPPORT DOG?**

An emotional support animal is a pet that helps an owner with a mental health condition. Emotional support dogs help owners feel better by giving friendship and companionship. These dogs are also called comfort dogs or support dogs.

An emotional support dog does not need special training. Generally, a regular pet can be an emotional support dog if a mental health provider writes a letter saying that the owner has a mental health condition or disability and needs the dog's help for his or her health or treatment.

In most states, emotional support dogs do not have special permission to go to all public places like service dogs do, but, emotional support dogs are sometimes allowed special consideration. For example, the owner may be able to get permission to have an emotional support pet in a house or apartment that does not normally allow dogs. Or, the owner may be able to get permission to fly on a plane with the dog.

To get special permission, the dog owner needs to show a provider's letter to the landlord or airline. Sometimes, the landlord or airline will also want to see information about the provider, such as a copy of their professional license.

For more information about emotional support dogs please visit [www.ptsd.va.gov/public/treatment/cope/dogs\\_and\\_ptsd.asp](http://www.ptsd.va.gov/public/treatment/cope/dogs_and_ptsd.asp).

For more information or to apply, contact your local CVSO (page 187).

---

## PENSION

USDVA helps veterans and their families cope with financial challenges by providing supplemental income through the Veterans Pension benefit. Veterans Pension is a tax-free monetary benefit payable to low-income wartime veterans.

### QUALIFYING WARTIME SERVICE

Generally, a veteran must have served at least 90 days of active duty service, with at least one day of service during a wartime period, to qualify for a USDVA pension. If you entered active duty after September 7, 1980, generally you must have served at least 24 months or the full period for which you were called or ordered to active duty (with some exceptions), with at least one day of service during a wartime period.

To view a complete listing of beginning and ending dates of each war period starting with World War II, see the 'Health Care' section (page 69).

In addition to meeting minimum service requirements, the veteran must be:

- » Age 65 or older; or
- » Totally and permanently disabled; or
- » A patient in a nursing home receiving skilled nursing care; or

- » Receiving Social Security Disability Insurance; or
- » Receiving Supplemental Security Income.

### **WHAT IS CONSIDERED TOTALLY AND PERMANENTLY DISABLED?**

- » A patient in a nursing home for long-term care because of a disability; or
- » Disabled, as determined by the Commissioner of Social Security for purposes of any benefits administered by the Commissioner; or
- » Unemployable as a result of disability reasonably certain to continue throughout the life of the person; or
- » Suffering from:
  - » Any disability which is sufficient to render it impossible for the average person to follow a substantially gainful occupation, but only if it is reasonably certain that such disability will continue throughout the life of the person; or
  - » Any disease or disorder determined by USDVA to be of such a nature or extent as to justify a determination that persons suffering from that disease or disorder are permanently and totally disabled.

### **WHAT IS COUNTABLE INCOME FOR VETERANS PENSION ELIGIBILITY PURPOSES?**

Most income received by the veteran and his or her dependents affects pension eligibility, including earnings, Social Security, disability and retirement payments, interest and dividends, and net income from farming or business. The income limits are adjusted periodically.

There is no set limit on how much net worth a veteran and his dependents can have, but net worth cannot be excessive. The decision as to whether a claimant's net worth is excessive depends on the facts of each individual case. All net worth should be reported. USDVA will determine if a claimant's assets are sufficiently large that the claimant could live off these assets for a reasonable period of time. USDVA's needs-based programs are not intended to protect substantial assets or build up an estate for the benefit of heirs.

### **HOW DOES USDVA CALCULATE PENSION?**

Annual pension is calculated by first totaling all of the veteran's countable income and then subtracting any deductions from that total. The remaining

countable income is deducted from the appropriate USDVA pension rate, which is determined by the number of the veteran's dependents, if any, and whether or not the veteran is entitled to Housebound or Aid & Attendance benefits. This amount, divided by 12 and rounded to the nearest dollar establishes the veteran's monthly payment.

## **AID & ATTENDANCE AND HOUSEBOUND**

Veterans and survivors who are eligible for a USDVA pension and require the aid and attendance of another person, or are housebound, may be eligible for additional monetary payment. These benefits are paid in addition to monthly pension, but they are not paid without eligibility for pension.

Since Aid & Attendance (A&A) and Housebound benefit allowances increase the pension amount, those who are not eligible for a basic pension because they exceed allowable income limits may be eligible for pension at A&A or Housebound rates. A veteran or surviving spouse may not receive A&A and Housebound benefits concurrently.

### **AID & ATTENDANCE**

The A&A monthly pension amount may be added to a veteran's monthly pension amount if they meet one of the following conditions:

- » The veteran requires the aid of another person in order to perform personal functions required in everyday living, such as bathing, feeding, dressing, attending to the wants of nature, adjusting prosthetic devices, or protecting themselves from the hazards of their daily environment;
- » The veteran is bedridden, in that the disability or disabilities requires the veteran to remain in bed apart from any prescribed course of convalescence or treatment;
- » The veteran is a patient in a nursing home due to mental or physical incapacity;
- » The veteran's eyesight is limited to a corrected 5/200 visual acuity or less in both eyes, or concentric contraction of the visual field is five degrees or less.

## HOUSEBOUND

The Housebound monthly pension amount may be added to a veteran's monthly pension amount if the veteran is substantially confined to their immediate premises because of permanent disability.

### HOW TO APPLY

The veteran may apply for A&A or Housebound benefits by visiting their local CVSO (page 187). The veteran should include copies of any evidence, preferably a report from an attending physician, validating the need for A&A or Housebound type care.

The report should be in sufficient detail to determine whether there is disease or injury producing physical or mental impairment, loss of coordination, or conditions affecting the ability to dress and undress, to feed oneself, to attend to sanitary needs, and to keep oneself ordinarily clean and presentable.

Whether the claim is for A&A or Housebound benefits, the report should indicate how well the applicant gets around, where the applicant goes, and what he or she is able to do during a typical day. In addition, it is necessary to establish whether the claimant is confined to the home or immediate premises.

---

## CEMETERY AND BURIAL BENEFITS

Veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces residing in California are eligible to receive certain end of life benefits. For information about entitlements, contact your local CVSO (page 187) or call CalVet's Veterans Services Division at (877) 741-8532.

### STATE CEMETERIES

#### NORTHERN CALIFORNIA VETERANS CEMETERY

The Northern California Veterans Cemetery (NCVC) is the first California veterans cemetery constructed with the cooperation of USDVA, and is operated by CalVet. State veterans cemeteries are intended to serve areas that are not adequately served by a national cemetery. The NCVC is located in Igo, near Redding, California, primarily serving the veteran population in the

eighteen northern-most California counties. The currently developed area of the cemetery provides sufficient burial space for more than 30 years. Beyond that, the cemetery has the capacity for expansion of space for well beyond 100 years. Any eligible veteran, along with their spouse and eligible dependents, may be interred at the NCVV in Igo.

## **CALIFORNIA CENTRAL COAST VETERANS CEMETERY**

The California Central Coast Veterans Cemetery (CCCVC) is the second California veterans cemetery developed and constructed in cooperation with the USDVA, Veterans Cemetery Grants Program. The facility is located in Monterey County in the City of Seaside. The CCCVC opened on October 13, 2016 and can accommodate cremated remains only in the columbaria structures. Future burial options such as casket and in-ground cremains burials are in the planning phases at this time. Any eligible veteran, along with their spouse and eligible dependents, may be interred at the CCCVC in Seaside.

Eligibility applications for columbarium interment are available on the CalVet website and at the Monterey County Military and Veterans Affairs Office.

## **ELIGIBILITY FOR BURIAL**

USDVA has adopted regulations that establish the eligibility requirements for interment in a state veterans cemetery. The regulations make the state eligibility requirements equivalent to the requirements for burial in a USDVA National Cemetery and provide for CalVet collection of information needed to determine eligibility. For eligibility requirements, visit [www.cem.va.gov](http://www.cem.va.gov).

There is no cost for eligible veterans to be interred at a state veterans cemetery. There is a fee for eligible spouses and dependent children. Associated funeral expenses are incurred by the veteran and/or family.

## **ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION FORM**

The Eligibility Determination/Pre-need Form is designed to assist in determining eligibility for burial at a state veterans cemetery on a pre-need basis. Pre-need determination allows a veteran to establish, in advance, his/her eligibility for interment at the cemetery. There is no cost for pre-need determination, and it does not obligate the veteran to be interred at the cemetery.

Pre-need determination is intended to simplify and assist the veteran's next-of-kin at the time of death, and does not reserve a plot or niche at the cemetery.

The Eligibility Determination Forms and instructions for submission to each cemetery can be downloaded at [www.calvet.ca.gov/vetservices/pages/state-veterans-cemeteries.aspx](http://www.calvet.ca.gov/vetservices/pages/state-veterans-cemeteries.aspx).

## **NATIONAL CEMETERIES**

USDVA's National Cemetery Administration maintains 131 national cemeteries in 39 states (and Puerto Rico) as well as 33 soldier's lots and monument sites. There are nine national cemeteries in California, of which five (Riverside National Cemetery, Sacramento Valley National Cemetery, San Joaquin Valley National Cemetery, Miramar National Cemetery and Bakersfield National Cemetery) are presently accepting new burials and interments. The other national cemeteries in California are only accepting burials of family members of persons already interred. Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery (near San Diego) still offers interment of only cremated remains in a columbarium.

### **ELIGIBILITY FOR BURIAL**

Persons eligible for burial in a national cemetery include:

- » Veterans;
- » Service members who die on active duty;
- » Certain Reservists and National Guard members;
- » World War II Merchant Mariners;
- » U.S. citizens who served honorably in the Armed Forces of an Allied government during a war; and
- » Such other persons or classes of persons as may be designated by either the Secretary of Veterans Affairs or the Secretary of the Air Force.

Additionally, the spouse and the children (as defined) of eligible persons are also eligible for burial in a national cemetery. In some cases, parents of active duty military killed in action may also be eligible.

## USDVA NATIONAL CEMETERY LOCATIONS

### Bakersfield National Cemetery

Arvin, CA

Open to new casketed and cremation interments.

(866) 632-1845

### Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery

San Diego, CA

Open to columbarium interment of cremated remains only.

(619) 553-2084

### Golden Gate National Cemetery

San Bruno, CA

Closed to new burials.

(650) 589-7737

### Los Angeles National Cemetery

Los Angeles, CA

Closed to new burials.

(310) 268-4675

(310) 268-4494

### Miramar National Cemetery

San Diego, CA

Open to new casketed and cremation interments.

(619) 553-6593

### Riverside National Cemetery

Riverside, CA

Open to new casketed and cremation interments.

(951) 653-8417

### Sacramento Valley National Cemetery

Dixon, CA

Open to new casketed and cremation interments.

(707) 693-2460

### San Francisco National Cemetery

San Francisco, CA

Closed to new burials.

(650) 589-7737

(650) 589-1646

### San Joaquin Valley National Cemetery

Santa Nella, CA

Open to new casketed and cremation interments.

(209) 854-1040

## BURIAL BENEFITS

Burial benefits may include the following: gravesites for casket or cremation remains, headstones or markers, opening and closing of the graves, and continued perpetual care. Burial of eligible veterans and dependents is at no cost when interred at a national cemetery. Associated funeral expenses are the responsibility of the veteran and/or family.

For assistance in completing applications for cemetery and burial benefits, please contact the local CVSO (page 187).

## MILITARY FUNERAL HONORS PROGRAM

Military funeral honors are available within the State of California for honorably discharged veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces.

### WHAT TYPES OF MILITARY FUNERAL HONORS ARE AVAILABLE?

At minimum, two service representatives will render honors, sound Taps, fold the flag and present it to the next of kin. Additionally, a detail to fire volleys, a chaplain, and/or a detail to serve as pall-bearers may be provided depending on the desires of the surviving family and resources available. Frequently, funeral honors are rendered in concert with a local VSO.

*The VSOs that may perform one or more of the above functions might include the Veterans of Foreign Wars, American Legion, Marine Corps League, etc.*

### WHO SHOULD I CONTACT?

Family members of the deceased veteran should first notify their funeral director of their desire to have military funeral honors rendered at the service. The family should provide the funeral director with as much of the following as possible:

- » Name of deceased;
- » Date of birth;
- » Social Security Number;
- » DD Form 214 (Discharge Papers); and
- » Other proof of veteran status or eligibility for burial honors.

### WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

Veterans are eligible for military funeral honors if they meet one of the following requirements:

- » Discharged from active duty under conditions other than dishonorable;
- » Completed at least one term of obligated service in the Selected Reserve under conditions other than dishonorable;
- » Enlisted on active duty at the time of death or in the Selected Reserve (drilling with a unit);
- » Discharged from the Selected Reserve due to disability incurred or

aggravated in the line of duty. The funeral director should contact one of the following Casualty Area Commands depending on the veteran's branch of service:

**Army**

(North of Fresno)  
Fort Lewis, WA  
(888) 634-7496

(Fresno & South of Fresno)  
Fort Huachuca, AZ  
(800) 248-0759

**Marine Corps**

(866) 826-3628

**Navy**

(800) 326-9631

**Air Force**

Travis AFB Mortuary Affairs  
Military Honors  
(800) 586-8402

Casualty Assistance/Benefits  
(866) 819-7250

**Coast Guard**

(510) 437-5922

In the event the funeral director cannot make contact with one of the centers listed above, please contact:

**Office of the Adjutant General**

ATTN: Military Funeral  
Honors Program  
P.O. Box 269101  
Sacramento, CA 95826-9101  
(916) 854-3821

## **BURIAL AND PLOT-INTERMENT ALLOWANCES**

USDVA burial allowances are partial reimbursements of an eligible veteran's burial and funeral costs. When the cause of death is non-service related, the reimbursements are generally described as two payments: 1) a burial and funeral expense allowance, and 2) a plot or interment allowance.

### **WHO IS ELIGIBLE?**

A veteran may be eligible for a USDVA burial allowance if:

- » The veteran paid for a veteran's burial or funeral; and

- » The veteran has not been reimbursed by another government agency or some other source, such as the deceased veteran's employer; and
- » The veteran was discharged under conditions other than dishonorable.

In addition, at least one of the following conditions must be met:

- » The veteran died because of a service-related disability; or
- » The veteran was receiving USDVA pension or compensation at the time of death; or
- » The veteran was entitled to receive USDVA pension or compensation, but decided not to reduce his/her military retirement or disability pay; or
- » The veteran died while hospitalized by USDVA, or while receiving care under USDVA contract at a non-USDVA facility; or
- » The veteran died while traveling under proper authorization and at USDVA expense to or from a specified place for the purpose of examination, treatment, or care; or
- » The veteran had an original or reopened claim pending at the time of death and has been found entitled to compensation or pension from a date prior to the date of death; or
- » The veteran died on or after October 9, 1996, while a patient at a USDVA-approved state nursing home.

## HOW MUCH DOES USDVA PAY?

### Service-Connected Death

If the veteran died on or after September 11, 2001, the maximum USDVA service-connected burial allowance is \$2,000. If the veteran died before September 11, 2001, the maximum service-connected burial allowance is \$1,500. If the veteran is buried in a USDVA national cemetery, USDVA may reimburse some or all of the cost of transporting the deceased veteran's remains.

### Non-Service-Connected Death

- » If the veteran died on or after October 1, 2017, USDVA will pay a \$300 burial allowance and \$762 for a plot;

- » If the veteran died on or after October 1, 2016, but before October 1, 2017, USDVA will pay a \$300 burial allowance and \$749 for a plot;
- » If the veteran died on or after October 1, 2015, but before October 1, 2016, USDVA will pay a \$300 burial allowance and \$747 for a plot;

Effective October 1, 2011, there are higher non-service-connected death rates payable if the veteran was hospitalized by USDVA when he or she died.

- » If the veteran died on or after October 1, 2017, USDVA will pay a \$762 burial allowance and \$762 for a plot;
- » If the veteran died on or after October 1, 2016, but before October 1, 2017, USDVA will pay a \$749 burial allowance and \$749 for a plot;
- » If the veteran died on or after October 1, 2015, but before October 1, 2016, USDVA will pay a \$747 burial allowance and \$747 for a plot;

If the death occurred while a veteran was properly hospitalized by USDVA, or under USDVA contracted nursing home care, some or all of the costs for transporting the veteran's remains may be reimbursed.

*Note: If a veteran dies while traveling at USDVA expense for the purpose of examination, treatment or care, then USDVA will pay burial, funeral, plot or interment allowances, and transportation expenses.*

## HOW TO APPLY

To apply for burial benefits, complete USDVA Form 21-530, Application for Burial Benefits. Attach a copy of the veteran's military discharge document (DD Form 214 or equivalent), death certificate, and funeral and burial bills. The bills should indicate they have been paid in full. The form can be downloaded at [www.va.gov/vaforms](http://www.va.gov/vaforms) or obtained from a CVSO (page 187).

## PRESIDENTIAL MEMORIAL CERTIFICATES

A Presidential Memorial Certificate (PMC) is an embossed paper certificate, signed by the current President, to honor the memory of an honorably discharged and deceased veteran.

USDVA administers the PMC program by preparing the certificates, which bear the current President's signature expressing the country's grateful recognition of the veteran's service in the U.S. Armed Forces. Eligible recipients include

the next of kin and loved ones of an honorably discharged and deceased veteran. More than one certificate may be provided.

Eligible recipients, or someone acting on their behalf, may apply for a PMC in person at any USDVA regional office or by U.S. mail. Requests cannot be sent via email. Enclose a copy of the veteran's discharge and death certificate to verify eligibility, as requests cannot be processed without proof of honorable military service. Submit copies only, as original documents will not be returned. To apply for a Presidential Memorial Certificate, or if a request was submitted more than eight (8) weeks ago was not fulfilled, complete the application and submit again. Family members may also visit a local CVSO (page 187) for assistance.

Download USDVA Form 40-0247, Presidential Memorial Certificate Request Form, at [www.va.gov/vaforms](http://www.va.gov/vaforms). Instructions can be found at [www.cem.va.gov/pmc.asp](http://www.cem.va.gov/pmc.asp).

Mail or fax applications to:

**Presidential Memorial Certificates (41A1C)**

5109 Russell Road  
Quantico, VA 22134-3903  
(800) 455-7143 (Fax)

*Note: Presidential Memorial Certificates are automatically ordered for the families of veterans buried at national or state veterans cemeteries.*

## **HEADSTONES AND MARKERS**

USDVA furnishes upon request, at no charge to the applicant, a government headstone or marker for the unmarked grave of any deceased eligible veteran in any cemetery around the world, regardless of their date of death.

For eligible veterans that died on or after November 1, 1990, USDVA may also provide a headstone or marker for graves that are already marked with a private headstone or marker. When the grave is already marked, applicants will have the option to apply for either a traditional headstone or marker, or the new medallion. Eligible veterans are entitled to either a government-furnished headstone or marker, or the new medallion, but not both.

Flat markers in granite, marble, and bronze and upright headstones in granite and marble are available. The style chosen must be consistent with existing

monuments at the place of burial. Niche markers are also available to mark columbaria used for inurnment of cremated remains.

When burial or memorialization is in a national cemetery, state veterans cemetery, or military post/base cemetery, a headstone or marker will be ordered by cemetery officials based on inscription information provided by the next of kin or authorized representative.

Spouses and dependents are not eligible for a government-furnished headstone or marker unless they are buried in a national cemetery, state veterans cemetery, or military post/base cemetery.

Placement of headstones in a private cemetery may be ordered by completing USDVA Form 40-1330, Application for Standard Government Headstone or Marker. The application must be submitted by the next of kin or a representative, such as funeral director, cemetery official or veterans counselor, along with copies of veterans military discharge documents. Do not send original documents, as they will not be returned.

Types of headstones and markers available:

- » Upright marble or upright granite;
- » Flat granite or flat marble;
- » Bronze;
- » Niche bronze;
- » Veterans medallion (each service has own medallion).

Applications can be mailed to:

**Memorial Programs Services (41A1)**

Department of Veterans Affairs  
5109 Russell Road  
Quantico, VA 22134-3903

Applications can also be sent by fax to (800) 455-7143.

When using the toll free fax number, do not send a paper copy of the application through the mail.

*Note: There is no charge for the headstone or marker itself; however, arrangements for placing it in a private cemetery are the applicant's responsibility and all setting fees are at private expense.*

---

## **DEPENDENCY AND INDEMNITY COMPENSATION**

Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) is a tax-free monthly monetary benefit payable to the surviving dependents of a deceased veteran. Although it is usually benefited for a veteran already service-connected by USDVA, DIC may also be authorized for certain non-service-connected deaths. There is no minimum active duty service requirement for DIC claims; however, there may be a 90-day length-of-service requirement if the cause of death was a chronic disease.

### **BENEFITS FOR SURVIVING SPOUSE AND CHILDREN**

As with disability compensation for a veteran, DIC benefits for a surviving spouse and/or surviving children is not income-based. It is the benefit payable if the veteran died while on active duty, in line of duty and not due to willful misconduct; or, when death was after service, if a service-connected disability either directly caused, or contributed substantially to and materially hastened, the veteran's death.

It is not required that a service connection was established prior to the veteran's death for the condition which caused or contributed to death. The rules and procedures for establishing service connection for a veteran's death are essentially similar to the rules for establishing a service-connected disability for a living veteran, with due consideration of the finality of the evidence in a death claim.

Since 1978, DIC has been payable as if the death were service-connected when a veteran who had been rated totally disabled from service-connected causes (whether 100 percent or by reason of individual un-employability) for 10 continuous years or longer at the time of death dies from any cause other than willful misconduct. If the veteran was out of service less than 10 years, DIC is payable if a total disability rating was in effect for a period of at least five continuous years, from the date the veteran left service to the date of death. Since November 30, 1999, DIC is payable to the surviving spouse and/or children of a former prisoner of war who was rated totally disabled from

service-connected causes for at least one year at the time of death, and who died from any cause (other than willful misconduct) after September 30, 1999.

DIC is also payable as if the death was service-connected if the veteran dies as a result of USDVA examination, hospital care, medical or surgical treatment, or vocational rehabilitation; or if a disability arising from such circumstances either directly causes, or contributes substantially to and materially hastens, the veteran's death.

DIC rates payable for a surviving spouse and/or children are dependent on a number of factors, including when the veteran died and the number and status of any dependent children.

### PAYMENTS FOR DEATHS ON OR AFTER JANUARY 1, 1993

Surviving spouses of veterans who died on or after January 1, 1993, receive a basic rate, plus additional payments for dependent children, for the aid and attendance of another person who is a patient in a nursing home, requires the regular assistance of another person, or is permanently housebound. If the veteran was totally disabled for eight continuous years prior to death, the surviving spouse may receive an additional \$301.

### DIC PAYMENT RATES FOR SURVIVING SPOUSES

(Veterans who died on or after January 1, 1993)

ALLOWANCES	MONTHLY RATE
Basic Payment Rate	\$1,283.11
<b>ADDITIONAL ALLOWANCES</b>	
If veteran was in receipt of or entitled to service-connected compensation rated totally disabled at the time of death for a period of eight continuous years preceding the death and the surviving spouse was married to the veteran for those 8 years.	\$272.46
Each Dependent Child	\$317.87
Aid & Attendance	\$317.87
Housebound	\$148.91

## PAYMENTS FOR DEATHS PRIOR TO JANUARY 1, 1993

Surviving spouses of veterans who died prior to January 1, 1993, receive an amount based on the deceased's military pay grade.

### DIC PAYMENT RATES FOR SURVIVING SPOUSES

(Veterans who died before January 1, 1993)

ENLISTED	RATE	WARRANT OFFICER	RATE	OFFICER	RATE
E-1	\$1,283.11	W-1	\$1,354.93	0-1	\$1,354.93
E-2	\$1,283.11	W-2	\$1,408.78	0-2	\$1,401.40
E-3	\$1,283.11	W-3	\$1,449.97	0-3	\$1,497.49
E-4	\$1,283.11	W-4	\$1,534.46	0-4	\$1,587.25
E-5	\$1,283.11			0-5	\$1,746.72
E-6	\$1,283.11			0-6	\$1,969.56
E-7	\$1,327.47			0-7	\$2,125.84
E-8	\$1,401.40			0-8	\$2,334.95
E-9	\$1,577.76			0-9	\$2,497.58
				0-10	\$2,739.41

The phrase “entitled to receive compensation” also applies if a total disability rating had been denied during the veteran’s lifetime, the denial was either due to clear and unmistakable error, or new and material evidence in the form of additional relevant service records was submitted (either before or after the veteran’s death) which would allow retroactive assignment of a total disability rating for the requisite period of time. The enhanced rate would not be payable if the spouse was not married to the veteran for the entire eight-year period or if the veteran had not applied for benefits (or if the veteran was out of service less than eight years at the time of death).

Additional amounts are also payable to or for a disabled surviving spouse who is housebound or who is in need of regular aid and attendance, as set out in 38 CFR § 3.351. Beginning January 1, 2005, a surviving spouse with one or more children under age 18 will be paid an additional \$317.87 per month for a transitional period of 24 months from the date entitlement to DIC begins or until the last child reaches age 18, whichever occurs first. This amount is in addition to any other DIC rates payable to the surviving spouse.

If there is an eligible surviving spouse, the veteran's minor children are considered to be additional dependents on the spouse's award. If the children are in the spouse's custody, they are included on the spouse's basic award. A child not in the spouse's custody will be paid his or her share of DIC on a separate award.

If there is no eligible surviving spouse, there are specified rates for the veteran's children, in equal shares, up to the time of each child's 18th birthday. Upon reaching age 18, each child attains independent entitlement to DIC without regard to whether there is an eligible surviving spouse. DIC may only be paid to or for a child after age 18 if the child is attending an approved educational institution or is determined to be permanently incapable of self-support (helpless). DIC for school attendance may not be paid concurrently with Dependents' and Survivors' Education Assistance under USDVA Chapter 35; however, if the child has been found to be "helpless," there is no restriction against concurrent payment, since in this case the DIC is not paid because of school attendance.

## HOW TO APPLY

To apply, complete and submit the application for DIC for a surviving spouse and/or children using USDVA Form 21-534EZ, Application for Dependency and Indemnity Compensation, Death Pension and/or Accrued Benefits. For assistance, contact the local CVSO (page 187).

## PARENTS' DIC

DIC may be payable to a veteran's surviving parent(s) if the veteran's death is service-connected or is compensable by USDVA. Parents' DIC is income-based; however, the income limits are adjusted periodically. All of the parents' family income from all sources is counted unless specifically excluded. Medical and certain other expenses, paid by the parent and/or family and not reimbursed from any source, may be deducted from otherwise-countable income to reduce the levels used for determining pension rates payable. The adjusted Parents' DIC limits are posted on USDVA's website and can be found at [http://benefits.va.gov/pension/current\\_rates\\_parents\\_dic\\_pen.asp](http://benefits.va.gov/pension/current_rates_parents_dic_pen.asp).

A parent's marital status is not a factor in eligibility but does affect the applicable income limit(s): different income limits apply according to whether one or both parents survive and, if both, whether they are married to each other or have or have not remarried. Net worth is not a factor for parents' DIC.

Additional amounts are payable if one or both parents are in need of Aid & Attendance. If the amount of the total annual benefit payable is less than 4 percent of the maximum rate, payments will be made semi-annually unless monthly payments are specifically requested. When DIC has been (or will be) awarded, if either parent is awarded any amount from a judicial proceeding, settlement, or compromise by reason of the veteran's death, DIC payments to or for that parent must be withheld until the full amount of such award has been recovered.

The application for parents' DIC is USDVA Form 21-535, Application for Dependency and Indemnity Compensation by Parent(s). Please contact your local CVSO (page 187) for assistance. DIC claims from surviving dependent parents of veterans who die while on active duty are under the initial jurisdiction of the USDVA regional office and Insurance Center Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; all others are processed by the USDVA's regional office with jurisdiction based on the veteran's address at time of death, or the regional office having jurisdiction for the address of the surviving spouse and/or children (if any). If you are not sure which regional office has jurisdiction over your claim, submit your request to nearest USDVA Regional office.

## **ESTABLISHING DEPENDENCY**

It is not required that a dependent must have been recognized prior to the veteran's death. Note that in certain cases there are time limits for recognition of a surviving spouse for benefits purposes. In general, when the marriage occurred after service, the surviving spouse must have been married to the veteran for at least one year prior to the veteran's death or for any length of time if a child was born of the marriage or was born to them before the marriage.

Alternatively, for service-connected deaths only, the marriage may have been for any length of time if it took place within fifteen years after the end of the period of service during which the condition which caused or contributed to the veteran's death was incurred or aggravated. For example, for a Vietnam-era veteran, the marriage would have to have been before May 7, 1990, fifteen years after the end of the Vietnam Era. There are no marriage length requirements if the marriage occurred while the veteran was in service, or before service, or if a married service member dies while on active duty.

Even if the marriage between the surviving spouse and the veteran cannot be recognized for USDVA purposes because of some legal impediment, it may still be “deemed valid” for USDVA benefits purposes providing several requirements are all met:

1. The purported marriage occurred one year or more before the veteran died or existed for any length of time if a child was born of the purported marriage or was born to them before such marriage;
2. The claimant entered into the marriage without knowledge of the impediment;
3. The claimant continuously cohabited with the veteran from the date of the marriage to the date of the veteran’s death; and
4. No claim has been filed by a legal surviving spouse who has been found entitled to gratuitous death benefits (other than accrued monthly benefits covering a period prior to the veteran’s death).

If the veteran and the surviving spouse had lived in a common-law relationship, then even if such relationship was not legally recognized in their state of residence, it also may still be “deemed valid” for USDVA benefits purposes if all of the above requirements are satisfied.

Remarriage of a surviving spouse generally terminates eligibility for DIC. Eligibility may be reestablished if the remarriage is terminated by death, divorce, or annulment. Beginning January 1, 2004, a surviving spouse age 57 or older who is eligible for DIC and related benefits and who remarries will not lose any eligibility because of such remarriage.

## California ***Veteran Driver License and ID Available***



**Have you ever served in the U.S. military?**  
You may qualify to proudly display veteran on your California driver license or identification card.

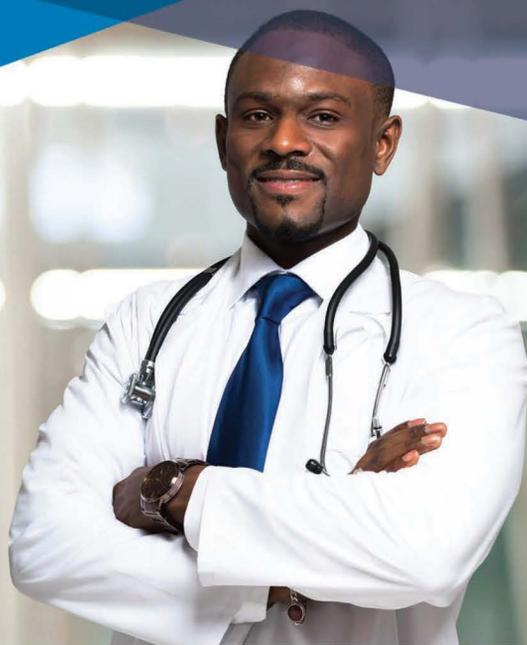
Schedule an appointment by finding your local CVSO at [www.calvet.ca.gov](http://www.calvet.ca.gov) or by calling (844) 737-8838.



CH/03

---

# Healthcare



---

## USDVA HEALTH CARE

USDVA operates the nation's largest integrated health care system with more than 1,400 care sites including hospitals, community clinics, nursing homes, domiciliary, readjustment counseling centers, and various other facilities. There are more than 100 USDVA facilities in California.

### BASIC ELIGIBILITY

If you served in the active military service and were separated under any condition other than dishonorable, you may qualify for USDVA health care benefits. Current and former members of the Reserves or National Guard who were called to active duty by a federal order and completed the full period for which they were called or ordered to active duty may be eligible for USDVA health benefits as well.

Reserves or National Guard members with active duty for training purposes only do not meet the basic eligibility requirement.

### MINIMUM DUTY REQUIREMENTS

Most veterans who enlisted after September 7, 1980, or entered active duty after October 16, 1981, must have served 24 continuous months or the full period for which they were called to active duty in order to be eligible. This minimum duty requirement may not apply to veterans who were discharged for a disability incurred or aggravated in the line of duty, for a hardship or "early out," or those who served prior to September 7, 1980. Since there are a number of other exceptions to the minimum duty requirements, USDVA encourages all veterans to apply so that we may determine their enrollment eligibility.

### ENHANCED ELIGIBILITY

Certain veterans may be afforded enhanced eligibility status when applying and enrolling in the USDVA health care system. Veterans who:

- » Are a Former Prisoner of War (POW);
- » Received a Purple Heart Medal;
- » Received the Medal of Honor;

- » Have a compensable USDVA-awarded service-connected disability of 10 percent or more;
- » Are receiving a USDVA pension;
- » Were discharged from the military because of a disability (not preexisting), early out, or hardship;
- » Served in a Theater of Operations for five years post discharge;
- » Served in the Republic of Vietnam from January 9, 1962 to May 7, 1975. U.S. Navy and Coast Guard ships associated with military service in Vietnam;
- » Served in the Persian Gulf from August 2, 1990 to November 11, 1998;
- » Were stationed or resided at Camp Lejeune for 30 days or more between August 1, 1953 and December 31, 1987;
- » Are found by USDVA to be catastrophically disabled; or
- » Had previous years' household income below USDVA's national income or geographical-adjusted thresholds.

## ENROLLMENT

USDVA operates an annual enrollment system that helps to manage the provision of health care. USDVA applies a variety of factors during the application verification process when determining a veterans' eligibility for enrollment, but once a veteran is enrolled, that veteran remains enrolled in the USDVA health care system and maintains access to certain USDVA health benefits.

Once your application is successfully processed, you will be assigned an enrollment priority group. Certain veterans may be eligible for more than one enrollment priority group. In that case, the USDVA will always place you in the highest priority group for which you are eligible. Under the USDVA Health Benefits Package, the same services are generally available to all enrolled veterans. Once enrolled, you will receive a personalized Veterans Handbook, which will detail your USDVA health benefits and provide important information concerning your access to USDVA health care.

## **USDVA HEALTH CARE APPLICATIONS IN A PENDING STATUS**

The USDVA's goal is to process all applications for enrollment in USDVA health care within five business days. If the health care application is complete and contains all necessary information, the application is processed and an enrollment decision is sent to the applicant by mail. A newly enrolled veteran will receive a Handbook in the mail welcoming him/her to the USDVA health care system. The handbook is personalized and contains detailed information about the specific health benefits the veteran is eligible to receive, as well as information on copay responsibility, if any, and other services available.

Sometimes applications for enrollment in USDVA health care are missing information needed to fully process the application to a final enrollment decision, such as military information or income information. These applications are given a "pending" status while the USDVA attempts to locate necessary information in its electronic databases or receive the needed military information from the DoD or from the veteran. If unable to obtain the missing information via its databases or from DoD, the USDVA will contact the veteran via letter to request the missing information.

The USDVA is making every effort to ensure that all applications are processed fully and in a timely manner, and will continue its outreach efforts to help reduce the number of applications in a pending status.

For immediate assistance or to inquire about the status of an application, veterans may call toll free (877) 222-VETS (8387).

## **CANCEL ENROLLMENT**

You may request to disenroll from USDVA health care, commonly referred to as cancel/decline, at any time. To request to be disenrolled, you must submit a signed and dated document requesting to be disenrolled from USDVA health care to a USDVA Medical Center or you may mail the request to:

### **USDVA Health Eligibility Center (HEC)**

2957 Clairmont Road  
Atlanta, GA 30329

You may reapply for enrollment at any time by completing a new USDVA Form 10-10EZ, Application for Health Benefits online at [www.vets.gov](http://www.vets.gov), by calling (877) 222-VETS (8387) or by visiting your local USDVA health care facility. Please note that you will be considered a new applicant and eligibility for enrollment will be based upon eligibility requirements in place at that time.

## **PRIORITY GROUPS**

Today's veterans have a comprehensive medical benefits package, which the USDVA administers through an annual patient enrollment system. The enrollment system is based on priority groups to ensure health care benefits are readily available to all enrolled veterans.

### **PRIORITY GROUP 1**

- » Veterans with USDVA-rated service-connected disabilities 50 percent or more; and
- » Veterans determined by the USDVA to be unemployable due to service-connected conditions.

### **PRIORITY GROUP 2**

- » Veterans with USDVA-rated service-connected disabilities of 30 percent or 40 percent.

### **PRIORITY GROUP 3**

- » Veterans who are Former Prisoners of War (POWs);
- » Veterans awarded a Purple Heart medal;
- » Veterans whose discharge was for a disability that was incurred or aggravated in the line of duty;
- » Veterans with USDVA-rated service-connected disabilities 10 percent or 20 percent disabling;
- » Veterans awarded special eligibility classification under Title 38, U.S.C., § 1151, "benefits for individuals disabled by treatment or vocational rehabilitation;" and
- » Veterans awarded the Medal Of Honor (MOH).

#### **PRIORITY GROUP 4**

- » Veterans who are receiving Aid & Attendance or Housebound benefits from the USDVA; and
- » Veterans who have been determined by USDVA to be catastrophically disabled.

#### **PRIORITY GROUP 5**

- » Non-service-connected veterans and noncompensable service-connected veterans rated 0 percent disabled by the USDVA with annual income below the USDVA's and geographically (based on your resident zip code) adjusted income limits;
- » Veterans receiving USDVA pension benefits; and
- » Veterans eligible for Medicaid programs.

#### **PRIORITY GROUP 6**

- » Compensable 0 percent service-connected veterans;
- » Veterans exposed to ionizing radiation during atmospheric testing or during the occupation of Hiroshima and Nagasaki;
- » Project 112/SHAD participants;
- » Veterans who served in the Republic of Vietnam between January 9, 1962 and May 7, 1975;
- » Veterans of the Persian Gulf War who served between August 2, 1990 and November 11, 1998;
- » Veterans who served on active duty at Camp Lejeune for at least 30 days between August 1, 1953 and December 31, 1987; and
- » Currently enrolled veterans and new enrollees who served in a theater of combat operations after November 11, 1998 and those who were discharged from active duty on or after January 28, 2003, are eligible for the enhanced benefits for five years post discharge.

## PRIORITY GROUP 7

- » Veterans with gross household income below the geographically-adjusted income limits (GMT) for their resident location and who agree to pay copays.

## PRIORITY GROUP 8

- » Veterans with gross household income above the USDVA and the geographically-adjusted income limits for their resident location and who agree to pay copays.

## VETERANS ELIGIBLE FOR ENROLLMENT

Non-compensable 0 percent service-connected:

- » **Subpriority A:** Enrolled as of January 16, 2003, and who have remained enrolled since that date and/or placed in this subpriority due to changed eligibility status.
- » **Subpriority B:** Enrolled on or after June 15, 2009 whose income exceeds the current USDVA or geographic income limits by 10 percent or less.

Non-service-connected and:

- » **Subpriority C:** Enrolled as of January 16, 2003, and who have remained enrolled since that date and/or placed in this subpriority due to changed eligibility status.
- » **Subpriority D:** Enrolled on or after June 15, 2009, whose income exceeds the current USDVA or geographic income limits by 10 percent or less.

## VETERANS NOT ELIGIBLE FOR ENROLLMENT

Veterans not meeting the criteria above:

- » **Subpriority E:** Non-compensable 0 percent service-connected (eligible for care of their S/C condition only).
- » **Subpriority G:** Non-service-connected.

## FINANCIAL ASSESSMENT

A financial assessment is a means of collecting the veteran's household income information, which is used to determine whether a veteran is eligible for enrollment and whether or not the veteran would be required to pay copays for care or prescription medication. The USDVA is required by law to collect this information.

There is no change in the USDVA's long-standing policy to provide no-cost care to veterans who cannot afford to pay for their care, veterans with catastrophic medical conditions, veterans with a disability rating of 50 percent or higher, or for conditions that are officially rated as service-connected.

### VETERANS REQUIRED TO PROVIDE A FINANCIAL ASSESSMENT

Not all veterans are required to provide their income information to USDVA when applying for enrollment. Only certain veterans who do not have a USDVA-rated service-connected disability, who do not receive a USDVA pension payment or have a special eligibility (such as a recently discharged combat veteran or a Purple Heart recipient) must provide their gross household income (which includes spouse/partner and dependent children, if applicable) for the previous year when applying for enrollment for USDVA health care. This part of the application process is called an income assessment or financial assessment (also formerly called a means test) and is used to determine if these veterans are eligible for enrollment and whether or not they have to pay copays for their health care or prescription medication.

### FINANCIAL ASSESSMENTS ARE NOT REQUIRED TO BE UPDATED YEARLY

Enrolled veterans are no longer required to provide their financial assessment on an annual basis if they had a current financial assessment on file as of March 24, 2014. This means veterans can enjoy their USDVA health care benefits without worrying about having to submit updated income information to USDVA every year.

If the enrolled veteran does not have a financial assessment on file as of March 24, 2014, the veteran will be required to provide updated income information. Veterans may update their financial assessment when they visit their USDVA facility at their next appointment. Veterans may also update their information by submitting USDVA Form 1010EZR, at their local USDVA medical center or by contacting (877) 222-VETS (8387), to have the form mailed. This form is available online at [www.1010ez.med.va.gov](http://www.1010ez.med.va.gov).

## **INCOME UPDATES FROM INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE AND SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION**

USDVA securely receives income information from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and the Social Security Administration (SSA) to confirm veterans' continued enrollment eligibility. The USDVA will contact the veteran (and spouse/partner and dependents, if applicable) only if the income information received from the IRS and SSA indicates a change in the veteran's eligibility or copay requirements. Veterans will still have access to care during the period of review should they disagree with the information USDVA receives from the IRS and SSA.

### **EXCEPTIONS**

- » Veterans applying for enrollment must provide income information by using USDVA Form 1010EZ. This form is available online at [www.1010ez.med.va.gov](http://www.1010ez.med.va.gov) and can also be obtained at any USDVA medical center, Veteran Service Office, or by contacting (877) 222-VETS (8387), to have the form mailed.
- » Enrolled veterans who are eligible because their household income is below the USDVA income limit (e.g., NSC and 0 percent S/C veterans without any special eligibility) will:
  - » Not be required to update their income on a yearly basis.
  - » Be required to complete a financial assessment at their next health care visit if they do not have a current financial assessment on file as of March 24, 2014.

### **VETERANS REQUIRED TO PROVIDE YEARLY INCOME UPDATES**

Veterans who complete a financial assessment to determine their eligibility for cost-free medications or for beneficiary travel only are required to submit their income yearly.

### **RECENT COMBAT VETERANS**

Combat veterans who served in combat after the Gulf War or in combat against a hostile force after November 11, 1998, are eligible for free care for five years for any illness that may be related to their military service beginning on the date of the veteran's discharge. These veterans are now eligible for an additional year of eligibility based on the Clay Hunt Act. For more information,

please visit the Clay Hunt webpage at [www.va.gov/healthbenefits/news/clay\\_hunt\\_suicide\\_prevention\\_for\\_america\\_veterans.asp](http://www.va.gov/healthbenefits/news/clay_hunt_suicide_prevention_for_america_veterans.asp).

These combat veterans are not required to provide their income for care related to their service in the theater of operations; however, they may complete the financial assessment to determine their eligibility for a higher priority status in the USDVA health care system, eligibility for beneficiary travel benefits, or for cost-free care for treatment not related to their military service.

## **VETERANS EXPOSED TO AGENT ORANGE, IONIZING RADIATION OR ENVIRONMENTAL CONTAMINANTS**

Veterans who were exposed to Agent Orange in Vietnam, ionizing radiation, or environmental contaminants in the Persian Gulf receive free care for treatment related to their exposure. These veterans are not required to provide their income; however, they may complete the financial assessment to determine if they are required to pay copays for care not related to their exposure.

## **VETERANS WHO DECLINE TO PROVIDE INCOME INFORMATION**

Veterans who decline to provide their income information and agree to pay copays for their care are not required to provide their income information; however, unless otherwise eligible (e.g. compensable service-connected, former POW, combat veterans, served in the Republic of Vietnam, service during certain periods in Southwest Asia) the veteran's enrollment may be denied based on the enrollment restriction.

## **INFORMATION FROM THE IRS AND SSA**

If the information received from the IRS and SSA may result in a change in the veteran's eligibility or copay requirement, the USDVA will notify them and give the veteran an opportunity to provide input. For more information about the income verification process, see the "Income Verification" section below.

## **CHANGES TO INCOME AND PERSONAL INFORMATION**

The USDVA encourages veterans to continue to report changes in their income information, as well as their personal information, such as address, phone numbers, dependents, next of kin and health insurance, using USDVA Form 1010EZR available online or at their local medical center. These changes can be submitted at any time.

## **INCOME VERIFICATION**

The USDVA is required by law to verify veterans' self-reported household income (including spouse/partner and dependents, if any) with the IRS and SSA.

The income verification (IV) process is used to confirm the accuracy of veterans eligibility for USDVA health care, copay status and enrollment priority group assignment. Because of the timeframe for taxpayers to report income to the IRS, the IV process typically begins in July of the following year of reported income. For example, income for the year 2017 is available from the IRS/SSA in July 2018.

### **VETERANS INCLUDED IN THE INCOME VERIFICATION PROCESS**

The USDVA does not verify all enrolled veterans' income. Only veterans who receive free medical care and/or medications based on their self-reported household income are included in the income verification process.

### **INCOME VERIFICATION PROCESS**

If a veteran's income is below the USDVA's income limits (see income limits table), but the income information received from the IRS/SSA indicates the veteran's household income is above USDVA's income limits, the veteran and spouse/partner, if applicable, will be notified by letter and given an opportunity to verify or dispute this information.

If no response is received after 45 days, a reminder letter is mailed, offering the opportunity for the veteran to verify or dispute the income reported by the IRS/SSA and to submit additional deductible expenses, if any.

If no response is received within 75 days, it is assumed the IRS/SSA information is correct and a letter will be sent informing the veteran his/her copay status will be changed and of their copay responsibility. This may also impact the veteran's eligibility for enrollment. The veteran will also receive information on how to appeal the decision.

When the USDVA receives a response, an IV case manager will be assigned to work with the veteran and/or the veteran's representative. The IV case manager will provide assistance and guidance to the veteran through the income verification process, and will assist the veteran in identifying any authorized deductions that may reduce the veteran's total gross household income below the USDVA's income limits. The USDVA works closely with

veterans to attempt to resolve and close the income verification case within 75 days.

If after the review process the information does not reduce the veteran's income below the USDVA's income limits, a final letter is mailed to the veteran explaining that the veteran will be required to pay copays for care received during the income year under review. The letter also contains information on how to appeal the decision.

## FINANCIAL HARDSHIP

The USDVA has programs that may help if a veteran is unable to pay copay charges. For more information, visit [www.va.gov/healthbenefits/cost/financialhardship.asp](http://www.va.gov/healthbenefits/cost/financialhardship.asp).

For more information about the income verification program or financial assessments, contact the Income Verification Office at (800) 929-VETS (8387).

---

## HOME IMPROVEMENTS AND STRUCTURAL ALTERATIONS

Home Improvements and Structural Alterations (HISA) grant provides medically necessary improvements and structural alterations to a veteran's or service member's primary residence for the following purposes:

- » Allowing entrance to or exit from their homes;
- » Use of essential lavatory and sanitary facilities (e.g. roll in showers);
- » Allowing accessibility to kitchen or bathroom sinks or counters (e.g. lowering counters/sinks);
- » Improving entrance paths or driveways in immediate area of the home to facilitate access to the home through construction of permanent ramping; and
- » Improving plumbing or electrical systems made necessary due to installation of home medical equipment.

HISA will not pay for:

- » Walkways to exterior buildings;

- » Widening of driveways (in excess of a 7'x 6' area);
- » Spa, hot tub, or Jacuzzi; or
- » Exterior decking (in excess of 8'x 8').

## **HISA GRANT AMOUNTS**

Lifetime HISA benefit up to \$6,800 may be provided for:

- » Veterans and service members who have a service-connected condition;
- » Veterans who have a non-service-connected condition rated 50 percent or more; and
- » Lifetime benefit up to \$2,000 may be provided for veterans who have a non-service-connected condition.

## **WHAT DOES HISA EXCLUDE?**

Some excluded HISA structural alterations are: exterior decking; purchase or installation of spa/hot tubs/Jacuzzi tubs; home security systems; removable equipment or appliances such as portable ramps; porch lifts, and stair glides; and routine repairs.

## **APPLYING FOR A HISA GRANT**

When applying for the HISA benefit, a completed HISA application package must include the following:

1. A prescription written or approved by a USDVA physician, which includes the beneficiary's name, address and telephone number; a description of the improvement or structural alteration needed; the diagnosis and medical justification for the improvement or structural alteration.
2. A completed and signed USDVA Form 10-0103, veterans application for assistance in acquiring home improvement and structural alterations; if applying for an advanced payment, request on application.
3. For renters: A signed and notarized statement from the owner authorizing the improvement or structural alteration.

4. A written itemized estimate of costs for labor, materials, permits, and inspections for the home improvement and structural alteration.
5. A color photograph of the unimproved area.

*Note: An inspection of the site by the USDVA may be warranted.*

---

## **EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE IN U.S. NON-USDVA FACILITIES**

### **WHERE SHOULD I GO FOR CARE IN AN EMERGENCY?**

Call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room. You don't have to contact USDVA in advance.

*Note: An emergency is a condition that a reasonable person believes will put your health or life at risk if you don't get treatment right away.*

If you're far from a USDVA medical center, we may pay for emergency care in a non-USDVA setting. Be sure to contact your nearest USDVA medical center as soon as possible—and ask to talk to the patient transfer or patient administration representative. Payment for emergency care in a non-USDVA setting ends when a USDVA provider concludes that you are stable enough to be transferred to a USDVA medical center. For additional information, contact the nearest USDVA medical facility (page 108).

---

## **ONLINE ACCESS TO USDVA HEALTH INFORMATION AND SERVICES**

My HealtheVet offers veterans, active duty service members and their dependents, and caregivers anywhere, anytime access to USDVA health care information and services via the internet. My HealtheVet is a free, online personal health record that allows veterans to become more informed by accessing trusted and secure health and benefits information at their convenience.

With My HealthVet, veterans can access:

- » USDVA prescription refill services
- » USDVA benefits services
- » Local USDVA events and activities
- » Personal health journals
- » Vitals tracking graphs
- » Military health history
- » Activity/food journals
- » Healthy living centers
- » USDVA news feature stories
- » Disease condition centers
- » Trusted health information

To register, visit [www.myhealth.va.gov](http://www.myhealth.va.gov), and begin making more informed decisions in collaboration with health care providers.

---

## VETERANS HEALTH IDENTIFICATION CARD

The Veteran Health Identification Card (VHIC) provides:

- » **Increased security for your personal information** – no personally identifiable information is contained on the magnetic stripe or barcode.
- » **Unique member identifier** – DoD assigns an Electronic Data Interchange Personal Identifier (EDIPI) that allows the USDVA to retrieve the veteran’s health record.
- » **A salute to your military service** – the emblem of your latest branch of service is displayed on your card, as well as certain awards.
- » **Accessibility** – raised Braille lettering helps this card to be easily distinguishable for visually impaired veterans.
- » **Anti-counterfeiting** – microtext helps prevent reproductions.

The VHIC is issued only to veterans who are enrolled in the USDVA health care system.

### PURPOSE OF THE VHIC

The VHIC is for identification and check-in at USDVA appointments. It cannot

be used as a credit card or an insurance card, and it does not authorize or pay for care at non-USDVA facilities.

## HOW TO RECEIVE A VHIC

Veterans must be enrolled in the USDVA health care system to receive a VHIC. Veterans who served in a theater of combat operations after November 11, 1998, can complete applications for enrollment in USDVA health care by telephone without the need for a signed paper application. You may apply for enrollment online at [www.va.gov/healthbenefits/enroll](http://www.va.gov/healthbenefits/enroll), call (877) 222-VETS (8387) Monday – Friday from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. EST., or in person at your local USDVA medical facility. Once your enrollment is verified, you may have your picture taken at your local USDVA medical center, so that a VHIC can be mailed to you.

The USDVA offers an enhancement to their enrollment experience through “Welcome to VA” (W2VA). W2VA enhances communication by reaching out to newly enrolled veterans through personal phone calls upon enrollment, providing assistance with health care inquiries and assisting with their initial appointment at their preferred USDVA health care facility. In addition, USDVA sends each new enrollee an introductory letter and personalized Veterans Health Benefits Handbook in the mail.

For information on USDVA health care, visit [www.va.gov/health](http://www.va.gov/health). To locate a USDVA Medical Center, outpatient clinic, or veteran center, see page 108.

---

## CAREGIVER PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Caregivers are vital partners in providing care worthy of the sacrifices by America’s veterans and service members. Each USDVA Medical Center offers a designated caregiver support point of contact to coordinate caregiver activities and serve as a resource expert for veterans, their families, and USDVA providers. Several programs are available for all veteran caregivers including:

- » **In-home and community based care:** This includes skilled home health care, homemaker home health aide services, community adult day health care and home based primary care.

- » **Respite care:** Designed to relieve the family caregiver from the constant challenge of caring for a chronically ill or disabled veteran at home, respite services can include in-home care, a short stay in one of USDVA's community living centers or an environment designed for adult day health care.
- » **Caregiver education and training programs:** USDVA currently provides multiple training opportunities which include pre-discharge care instruction and specialized caregiver programs in multiple severe traumas such as Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), Spinal Cord Injury/ Disorders, and Blind Rehabilitation. The USDVA has a family caregiver assistance healthy living center on My HealthVet, as well as caregiver information on the USDVA's main website. Both websites include information on USDVA and community resources and caregiver health and wellness.
- » **Caregiver support groups and other services:** Family caregiver support groups, offered in a face-to-face setting or on the telephone, provide emotional and peer support, and information. Family caregiver services include family counseling, spiritual and pastoral care, family leisure and recreational activities, and temporary lodging in Fisher Houses.
- » **Other services:** The USDVA provides durable medical equipment and prosthetic and sensory aides to improve function, financial assistance with home modification to improve access and mobility, and transportation assistance for some veterans to and from medical appointments.

Title I of the Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act of 2010 allows the USDVA to provide unprecedented benefits to eligible caregivers who support veterans. The law distinguishes between veterans who incurred or aggravated a serious injury or illness in the line of duty on or after September 11, 2001 (post-9/11 veterans), and veterans whose injuries or illnesses were incurred prior to September 11, 2001 (pre-9/11 veterans). Pre- and post-9/11 veteran caregivers are eligible for the following benefits:

- » General caregivers for both pre- and post-9/11 veterans may be eligible to receive training in how to provide caregiver services, counseling and other services, and information about supportive services available from other public, private and nonprofit agencies in person and online.

- » Family caregivers may be eligible for all general caregiver benefits and for ongoing technical support, counseling, lodging, subsistence, and travel benefits.
- » Primary caregivers may be eligible to receive these same benefits, as well as a stipend, mental health services, and access to healthcare coverage, if they are not already entitled to care or services under a health plan contract, including Medicare, Medicaid or worker's compensation. Primary caregivers must be a family member or a person who resides with the veteran.
- » Respite services of not less than 30 days per year are made available to primary and family caregivers while attending appointments or undergoing caregiver training for post-9/11 veterans.
- » All caregivers of both pre- and post-9/11 veterans are eligible to receive respite care under USDVA's existing program, which provides up to 30 days per year.

For more information on caregiver services, contact the Caregiver Support line at (855) 260-3274 or visit [www.caregiver.va.gov](http://www.caregiver.va.gov). For answers to questions on caregiver eligibility or to apply for benefits, contact the USDVA Health Administration Center at (877) 733-7927 or [www.va.gov/hac](http://www.va.gov/hac) or contact the CVSO near you (page 187).

---

## DEPENDENTS AND SURVIVORS HEALTH CARE

### HEALTH CARE BENEFITS

Under certain circumstances, family members of veterans are eligible for health benefits. Some of the programs offered include the Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs (CHAMPVA), Spina Bifida, Children of Women Vietnam Veterans (CWVV), Foreign Medical Program, Camp Lejeune Family Member Program (CLFMP) and Caregiver. Using these programs may reduce or eliminate your cost for medical supplies, office visits or prescriptions.

## **CHAMPVA**

A health care benefits program that provides coverage to the spouse or widow(er) and to the dependent children of a qualifying sponsor who:

- » is rated permanently and totally disabled due to a service-connected disability; or
- » was rated permanently and totally disabled due to a service-connected condition at the time of death; or
- » died of a service-connected disability; or
- » died on active duty; and
- » the dependents are not otherwise eligible for DoD TRICARE benefits.

Under CHAMPVA, the USDVA shares the cost of covered health care services and supplies with eligible beneficiaries.

## **CHILDREN OF WOMEN VIETNAM VETERANS PROGRAM**

The CWV health care program is a federal health benefits program administered by the USDVA for children with certain birth defects born to women Vietnam veterans. The CWV program is a fee for service (indemnity plan) program. The CWV program provides reimbursement for medical care-related conditions associated with certain birth defects except spina bifida, which is covered under the USDVA's Spina Bifida program.

Children whose biological mother is a Vietnam veteran, who were conceived after the date on which the veteran entered the Republic of Vietnam, during the period beginning on February 28, 1961, and ending May 7, 1975, and who have one of the covered birth defects, as determined by the VBA are eligible for the program.

## **SPINA BIFIDA HEALTH CARE PROGRAM**

The Spina Bifida health care program is a health benefit program administered by the USDVA for Vietnam and certain Korean veterans' birth children who have been diagnosed with spina bifida (except spina bifida occulta). The program provides reimbursement for medical services and supplies.

## CAMP LEJEUNE FAMILY MEMBER PROGRAM

The CLFMP is for family members of veterans who were stationed at Camp Lejeune between August 1, 1953, through December 31, 1987. During this time, veterans and family members living or serving at U.S. Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C., were potentially exposed to drinking water contaminated with industrial solvents, benzene and other chemicals.

The Honoring America's Veterans and Caring for Camp Lejeune Families Act of 2012 (H.R. 1627, now Public Law 112-154) requires the USDVA to provide health care to veterans who served on active duty at Camp Lejeune, and to reimburse eligible Camp Lejeune family members for health care costs related to one or more of the following 15 specified illnesses or medical conditions listed in the law:

- » Bladder cancer;
- » Breast cancer;
- » Esophageal cancer;
- » Female infertility;
- » Hepatic steatosis;
- » Kidney cancer;
- » Leukemia;
- » Lung cancer;
- » Miscarriage;
- » Multiple myeloma;
- » Myelodysplastic syndromes;
- » Neurobehavioral effects;
- » Non-Hodgkin's lymphoma;
- » Renal toxicity;
- » Scleroderma;

## CAREGIVER PROGRAM

Primary caregivers of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) veterans may be eligible to receive a stipend and access to health care coverage if they are not already entitled to care or services under a health plan contract, including Medicare, Medicaid or worker's compensation. Mental health counseling, including marriage and family counseling, will also be provided. Caregivers may also be eligible for travel, lodging and per diem when they accompany the veteran for care or attend training. Caregivers need to complete USDVA Form 10-10CG, Application for Comprehensive Assistance

for Family Caregivers Program to apply for USDVA's Comprehensive Assistance Family Caregivers Program. The USDVA will use the information provided on the form 10-10CG to determine eligibility for this program.

Learn more about how the USDVA supports family caregivers at [www.caregiver.va.gov](http://www.caregiver.va.gov).

---

## **PRESUMPTIVE HEALTH CONDITIONS**

Normally, claimants must show proof of relationship between service and the condition being claimed; however, the USDVA presumes that specific disabilities diagnosed in certain veterans were initiated by their military service because of unique circumstances in particular geographic locations or situations.

### **WHAT CONDITIONS ARE PRESUMED TO BE CAUSED BY MILITARY SERVICE?**

Traditionally, there are three categories veterans may qualify for a service-connected disability based on a condition to be presumed by military service. These groups are veterans who were diagnosed with a chronic disease such as arthritis, diabetes, or hypertension within one year of being released from active duty; veterans diagnosed with Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis, also known as Lou Gehrig's disease, at any time after discharge or release from qualifying active service in which they have continuous service of 90 days or more; and veterans who served in the conflicts/geographic regions associated with the diagnosed conditions identified below:

### **FORMER PRISONERS OF WAR**

Imprisoned for any length of time, and disability at least 10 percent disabling:

- » psychosis;
- » any of the anxiety states;
- » dysthymic disorder or depressive neurosis;
- » cold injury;
- » posttraumatic osteoarthritis;
- » heart disease and complications;

- » stroke and complications;
- » osteoporosis, on or after October 10, 2008, when Posttraumatic Stress Disorder is diagnosed.

Imprisoned for at least 30 days, and disability at least 10 percent disabling:

- » Avitaminosis;
- » Beriberi;
- » Chronic dysentery;
- » Helminthiasis;
- » Malnutrition (including optic atrophy);
- » Pellagra and any other nutritional deficiency;
- » Any other nutritional deficiency;
- » Irritable bowel syndrome;
- » Peptic ulcer disease;
- » Peripheral neuropathy, except where directly related to infectious causes;
- » Cirrhosis of the liver;
- » Osteoporosis, on or after September 28, 2009;

## **VIETNAM ERA VETERANS (EXPOSED TO AGENT ORANGE)**

Served in the Republic of Vietnam between January 9, 1962, and May 7, 1975; blue water veterans; U.S. Navy and Coast Guard ships in Vietnam; Korean Demilitarized Zone between April 1, 1968, and August 31, 1971; Thailand military bases between February 28, 1961, and May 7, 1975; herbicide tests and storage outside Vietnam; and Agent Orange residue on airplanes used in the Vietnam War:

- » AL amyloidosis;
- » chloracne or other acne form disease similar to chloracne;
- » porphyria cutanea tarda;

- » soft-tissue sarcoma (other than osteosarcoma, chondrosarcoma, Kaposi's sarcoma or mesothelioma);
- » Hodgkin's disease;
- » multiple myeloma;
- » respiratory cancers (lung, bronchus, larynx, trachea);
- » non-Hodgkin's lymphoma;
- » prostate cancer;
- » acute and sub-acute peripheral neuropathy;
- » type 2 diabetes;
- » chronic B-cell leukemia;
- » ischemic heart disease; and
- » Parkinson's disease.

## **ATOMIC VETERANS (EXPOSED TO IONIZING RADIATION)**

Participated in atmospheric nuclear testing; occupied or was a prisoner of war in Hiroshima or Nagasaki; service before February 1, 1992, at a diffusion plant in Paducah, Kentucky, Portsmouth, Ohio, or Oak Ridge, Tennessee; or service before January 1, 1974, at Amchitka Island, Alaska:

- » leukemia (except for chronic lymphocytic leukemia);
- » cancers of the bile ducts, bone, brain, breast, colon, esophagus, gall bladder, liver (primary site, but not if cirrhosis or hepatitis B is indicated), lung (including bronchiolo-alveolar cancer), pancreas, pharynx, ovary, salivary gland, small intestine, stomach, thyroid, urinary tract (kidney/renal, pelvis, urinary bladder, and urethra);
- » multiple myeloma; and
- » lymphomas (other than Hodgkin's disease).

## **GULF WAR VETERANS (UNDIAGNOSED ILLNESS)**

Served in the Southwest Asia Theater of Operations during the Gulf War with condition at least 10 percent disabling by December 31, 2016. Included are medically unexplained chronic multi-symptom illnesses defined by a cluster

of signs or symptoms that have existed for six months or more, such as:

- » Chronic fatigue syndrome;
- » Fibromyalgia;
- » Functional gastrointestinal disorders; and
- » Any diagnosed or undiagnosed illness that the Secretary of Veterans Affairs determines warrants a presumption of service connection.

Signs or symptoms of an undiagnosed illness include: fatigue, skin symptoms, headaches, muscle pain, joint pain, neurological symptoms, respiratory symptoms, sleep disturbance, GI symptoms, cardiovascular symptoms, weight loss, and menstrual disorders.

The USDVA also has regulations concerning presumptive service connection for certain diseases among service in Southwest Asia beginning on or after the start of the first Gulf War on August 2, 1990, through the conflict in Iraq and on or after September 19, 2001, in Afghanistan.

The area defined in Persian Gulf Service encompasses Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, the neutral zone between Iraq and Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Oman, the Gulf of Aden, the Gulf of Oman, the Persian Gulf, the Arabian Sea, the Red Sea, and the airspace above these locations.

There are nine specific infectious diseases associated with military service during this period that are prevalent in Southwest Asia, have been diagnosed among U.S. troops serving there, and are known to cause long-term adverse health effects:

- » Brucellosis;
- » Campylobacter Jejuni;
- » Coxiella Burnetii (Q fever);
- » Malaria;
- » Mycobacterium Tuberculosis;
- » Nontyphoid Salmonella;
- » Shigella;
- » Visceral Leishmaniasis; and
- » West Nile virus.

Veterans who have been diagnosed with any of the above conditions or were exposed to any herbicides throughout their military service should contact the local CVSO (page 187) for assistance.

---

# DEPLETED URANIUM

## WHAT IS DEPLETED URANIUM?

Depleted Uranium (DU) is a byproduct of the uranium enrichment process that makes nuclear fuel. Depleted uranium has approximately 60 percent of the radioactivity and the same chemical toxicity as natural uranium, which is present in small amounts in our environment and to which we are all exposed through our food and water. In the early 1960s, the U.S. began testing DU for projectile use because of its ability to penetrate armor made with less dense metals.

## WHEN IS DEPLETED URANIUM HAZARDOUS?

Depleted uranium is a chemical and radiation health hazard primarily if internalized, such as through embedded fragments, contaminated wounds, and inhalation or ingestion. When a projectile made with DU penetrates a vehicle, small pieces of DU are created that can scatter and become embedded in muscle and soft tissue. In addition to DU wounds, service members exposed to DU in struck vehicles may inhale or swallow small airborne DU particles. Simply riding in a vehicle with DU weapons or DU shielding will not expose a service member to significant amounts of DU or external radiation.

## WHAT ARE THE HEALTH EFFECTS OF DEPLETED URANIUM?

The potential for health effects from internal exposure is related to the amount of DU that enters a person's body. If DU enters the body, it may remain in the body. Studies show high doses may especially affect the kidneys. Researchers and clinicians continue to monitor the health of these veterans.

## WHO MAY BE AT RISK?

Veterans who served in a combat zone on or after August 1990 or in an area that DU was used may have been exposed. DU exposure has been divided into three categories:

- » **Level 1:** Personnel who were in, on, or near combat vehicles when they were struck by DU rounds or who entered immediately after to attempt rescue;

- » **Level 2:** Personnel who routinely entered DU-damaged vehicles or fought fires involving DU munitions;
- » **Level 3:** Personnel involved in all other DU exposures.

## DEPLETED URANIUM FOLLOW-UP PROGRAM

The USDVA's Depleted Uranium Follow-up Program was established at the Baltimore VA Medical Center to study health effects of DU exposure and to provide recommendations for treatment, including surgical removal of embedded fragments. The program for veterans exposed to DU from embedded fragments involves detailed physical exams and clinical tests of organ system function.

In addition, a screening program for other veterans concerned about DU exposure during combat involves an exposure questionnaire and a mail-in, 24-hour urine test for DU.

Veterans who believe they were exposed to harmful DU conditions, such as being in a vehicle when it was struck by friendly fire or in a vehicle or building after it had been struck by friendly fire, and would like to be screened for DU exposure, contact the nearest USDVA Medical Center (page 108). They may be eligible to be awarded a service-connected disability. For information on the DU Follow-Up Program, visit [www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/depleted\\_uranium/followup\\_program.asp](http://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/depleted_uranium/followup_program.asp).

---

## HEARING LOSS AND TINNITUS

### WHAT IS HEARING LOSS?

Hearing loss is damage to the ear(s) that impairs an individual's ability to perceive sound. The impairment ranges from mild hearing loss to total hearing loss and can either be temporary or permanent depending on the cause.

### WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT FORMS OF HEARING LOSS?

There are three main forms of hearing loss: conductive hearing loss, sensorineural hearing loss and mixed hearing loss. Conductive hearing loss is caused by damage to the outer or middle ear and can usually be repaired or will heal over time, making it unlikely to result in total hearing

loss. Sensorineural hearing loss is caused by damage to the inner ear (cochlea) or the retro cochlea nerves (nerves that connect the ear to the brain). Unlike conductive hearing loss, sensorineural hearing loss is often total and irreparable. Mixed hearing loss is a combination of conductive and sensorineural hearing loss. It can either be caused at once, or be caused by a buildup of ailments to the ear.

### **HOW ARE THE TYPES OF HEARING LOSS DIFFERENT?**

Conductive hearing loss is usually caused by temporary factors. Many illnesses or some drugs, such as aspirin, can cause partial hearing loss as a symptom or a side-effect. Other causes can be foreign objects caught in the ear, malformation of the outer ear from birth or accident, tumors growing within the ear or even something as simple as a buildup of ear wax. Sensorineural hearing loss can be caused by the same things as conductive hearing loss. It can also be suffered after noise exposure, head trauma or simply the natural aging process. Mixed hearing loss is simply a combination of conductive and sensorineural hearing loss and can be caused by anything that would inflict both forms of hearing loss or be a compound of different sources.

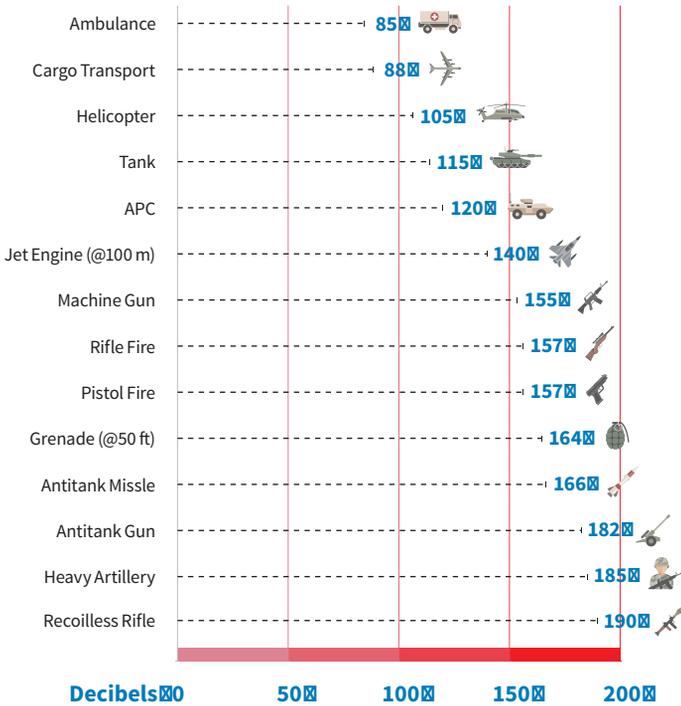
### **WHAT CAN CAUSE MILITARY HEARING LOSS?**

Two of the main causes of sensorineural hearing loss can be encountered commonly in the military. The first, head trauma, is the more unpredictable of the two because it is all but impossible to tell how the body will react. A single blow to the head can damage the ear, while multiple blows may cause no immediate damage to a person's hearing. The second cause, noise-induced hearing loss, is caused by sustained exposure to dangerous levels of sound. Anything at or above 85 decibels will eventually cause damage to the ear.

### **WHAT IS A DECIBEL?**

A decibel is a measurement that determines the noise level of a sound. Decibels are measured by studying the amount of pressure a sound places on the eardrum, which then transmits them through the ear. In higher decibels, the amount of pressure placed upon the ear can damage the sensitive hair cells of the inner ear. Once damaged, these cells cannot regrow or repair, so any damage incurred is permanent. It is important to note that the further an individual is from the noise source the lower a sound will be when it reaches the ear, so decibels are not exact measurements.

The following are decibel levels associated with common military noises. These are averages and will vary with distance, conditions and types of equipment.



## WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF HEARING LOSS?

Symptoms of hearing loss will vary depending on its cause. If an individual is suffering from hearing loss as a symptom of a disease, other symptoms may help determine its cause. A veteran who is using medication to treat a disease and notices a hearing loss should consult a doctor to determine whether changing to another medication or a lower dosage is appropriate. The main symptom of noise-induced hearing loss is tinnitus or a sudden decrease in sound perception. With head trauma, the symptoms can be the same as noise-induced hearing loss or a faint popping noise which signals damage to the ear drum.

## WHAT IS TINNITUS?

Tinnitus is usually a symptom of noise-induced hearing loss. It typically manifests itself as a ringing in the ear, although it can sound like clicking,

popping, snapping or whistling. One of the causes of tinnitus is damage to the nerves of the inner ear. If damaged enough, the nerves can become bent and constantly register sound input as they will be making continuous contact with the other hairs of the ear. In other cases, tinnitus can be caused by a tumor in the ear which allows the ear to hear the blood passing through the tumor.

### **HOW IS HEARING LOSS TREATED?**

Sadly, most cases of hearing loss cannot be treated. When it is a symptom of a larger ailment, hearing loss can be recovered when the disease is treated. With noise-induced hearing loss or head trauma, the damage is usually permanent; however, technology has made it possible to compensate for hearing loss. A hearing aid can be used to mimic the outer and middle ear if they are damaged. For the cochlea (inner ear), a cochlear implant can mimic the nerves that are damaged and relay sound to the brain.

### **WHAT CAN I DO IF I SUFFER FROM HEARING LOSS?**

Veterans who have experienced hearing loss or suffer from tinnitus should contact their local CVSO (page 187) to file a claim for compensation. If awarded a disability rating, the veteran may be eligible for monthly compensation and hearing aids, repairs, and future batteries could all be provided at no charge.

---

## **MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES**

### **VETERANS IN CRISIS SHOULD CALL THE VETERANS CRISIS LINE AT (800) 273-8255 (PRESS 1), OR TEXT 838255.**

Because suicide prevention is the top clinical priority of the USDVA, it is important for former service members to know there is somewhere they can turn if they are facing a mental health emergency – whether it means urgent care at a USDVA emergency department, a Vet Center or through the Veterans Crisis Line.

Effective July 5, 2017, all Veterans Health Administration (VHA) medical centers are prepared to offer emergency stabilization care for former service members who present at the facility with an emergent mental health need. What this means is that former service members with an Other Than Honorable (OTH) administrative discharge may receive care for their mental health emergency

for an initial period of up to 90 days, which can include inpatient, residential or outpatient care.

During this time, VHA and the Veterans Benefits Administration will work together to determine if the mental health condition is a result of a service-related injury, making the service member eligible for ongoing coverage for that condition.

#### **KEY FACTS:**

- » It is estimated that there are a little more than 500,000 former service members with OTH discharges.
- » It is known that the rate of death by suicide among veterans who do not use USDVA care is increasing at a significantly greater rate than that among veterans who do use USDVA care.
- » USDVA views the decision to provide immediate care to these former service members as a moral and humanitarian obligation. The focus is on saving lives.
- » All care must be provided within the USDVA health care system. USDVA is not authorized to use CHOICE or Non-USDVA care for this initiative.

#### **HOW TO ACCESS SERVICES**

- » A former service member may decide when he/she is in distress and requires emergency mental health care.
- » A USDVA provider will assess the patient to determine whether or not it is a true mental health emergency and requires immediate attention.
- » Former service members may enter the system to use this benefit by visiting a USDVA emergency room or Vet Center or by calling the Veteran Crisis Line.
- » Former service members may be treated using USDVA's tentative eligibility authority, but will still need to have their claim adjudicated by VBA. If the former service member is subsequently found not to be eligible, they can be billed for services.

#### **EXPLANATION OF INITIATIVE**

- » A former service member with an OTH administrative discharge may

qualify for a 90-day episode of care which can include inpatient, residential or outpatient care.

- » When presenting for emergency mental health care, a request for an administrative decision regarding the character of service for USDVA health care purposes will be referred to the local USDVA regional office (VARO) on the former service members behalf. VHA will submit the USDVA Form 7131, Exchange of Beneficiary Information and Request for Administrative and Adjudicative Action to the VARO to facilitate this process. In making determinations of health care eligibility, current criteria will be used to determine service connection.

## RURAL ACCESS

If a former service member in a rural area is experiencing a mental health emergency, he/she should go immediately to the nearest emergency room for an assessment. The local ER should notify the local USDVA who will make all attempts to provide the 90-day benefit at a community based outpatient clinic; via telemedicine, where available; or at a local Vet Center.

It is important to note, however, for this initiative, USDVA cannot pay for care provided at a community emergency department. USDVA can only pay for the 90-day episode of care once the former service member enters the USDVA system.

If an OTH former service member lives in a rural area and thinks they may be in need of mental health care, but he/she is not sure if it is an emergency, he/she should call the Veterans Crisis Line at 800-273-TALK (Press 1). They will notify the local USDVA who will make all attempts to provide the 90-day benefit at a Community Based Outpatient Center, via telemedicine, where available or at a local Vet Center if appropriate.

## CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH CARE SERVICES

The Department of Health Care Services' veterans enhancement project helps veterans who are receiving Medi-Cal services obtain the veteran benefits they are entitled to. Veterans receiving Medi-Cal services may also qualify for federal benefits for themselves and their families. For more information visit [www.dhcs.ca.gov/services/medi-cal/pages/veterans.aspx](http://www.dhcs.ca.gov/services/medi-cal/pages/veterans.aspx).

## **CALIFORNIA COUNTY ADULT MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES**

California's public mental health system offers services to specifically address the recovery needs of adults with serious and persistent mental illnesses and children with serious emotional disturbances. Each county has a telephone number, which can be called any time, day or night, for information on local mental health services. For more information on California County Adult Mental Health Services, visit <http://www.dhcs.ca.gov/services/MH/Pages/default.aspx>.

## **NETWORK OF CARE FOR VETERANS**

The Network of Care web site provides a comprehensive listing of mental health and other resources for service members, veterans and their families. Visit Network of Care at [www.networkofcare.org](http://www.networkofcare.org) and click on 'Service Members, Veterans & Their Families in California.' Choose the county of residence, and click on 'Service Directory' to find the services needed.

## **NOT-FOR-PROFIT MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES FOR VETERANS, SERVICE MEMBERS, AND FAMILIES**

### **COURAGE TO CALL**

Courage to Call is dedicated to helping current and former service members, including veterans who served in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. This dedication extends to military families and loved ones. All Courage to Call staff have been in the military or have been military family members. They have firsthand knowledge of the rigors of the military and military family life, constant deployments, and transitioning out of the military. They are dedicated to helping veterans and their loved ones get the services and assistance they need and deserve. They can help veterans find supportive information, access and referrals throughout San Diego County. For more information, visit [www.211sandiego.org/courage-to-call](http://www.211sandiego.org/courage-to-call).

### **GIVE AN HOUR**

Give an Hour is a nationwide nonprofit organization that connects U.S. military personnel and loved ones affected by the current conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan with a range of free mental health services in their communities. Visit [www.giveanhour.org](http://www.giveanhour.org) to find an area provider.

## NATIONAL VETERAN FOUNDATION

The National Veteran Foundation (NVF) is staffed by a team of veterans (from Vietnam, the Cold War, Iraq, and Afghanistan) who are specially trained in the delivery of crisis information and referral services, as well as a team of licensed volunteer counselors to whom all crisis calls are routed. More than 350,000 veterans in need of medical treatment, substance abuse or posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) counseling, USDVA benefits advocacy, food, shelter, employment training, legal aid, or suicide intervention, have now been served by NVF. They specialize in providing human service programs to veterans and their families. For more information, visit [www.nvf.org](http://www.nvf.org).

## SOLDIER'S PROJECT

The Soldier's Project is a statewide network of licensed mental health professionals who offer free psychological treatment to military service members (active duty, National Guard, Reserves and veterans) who have served or who expect to serve in the conflicts in Iraq or Afghanistan. To find a therapist in your area, visit [www.thesoldiersproject.org](http://www.thesoldiersproject.org) or call (877) 576-5343 toll free.

## WORDS TO PLOWSHARES

Swords to Plowshares is a community-based, not-for-profit veteran service organization that provides wrap-around care to more than 2,000 veterans in the San Francisco Bay Area each year. The organization is committed to helping veterans break through the cultural, educational, psychological and economic barriers they often face in their transition to the civilian world. For more information, visit [www.swords-to-plowshares.org](http://www.swords-to-plowshares.org).

## VET TO VET

Vet to Vet is dedicated to helping veterans and others who have psychiatric conditions establish meaningful lives in the community. The group works to improve and increase mental health services through community education and service and is based on the concept of mutual help. Vet to Vet is made up of people with mental illness or psychiatric conditions who happen to be veterans. The organization provides training on how to establish ongoing peer support, and materials are free. For more information, visit [vet2vetusa.org/home/tabid/37/default.aspx](http://vet2vetusa.org/home/tabid/37/default.aspx).

---

# SUICIDE PREVENTION

Veterans can be at risk for suicide for a variety of reasons. Some are coping with aging, stress, or lingering effects stemming from their military service that have never been addressed. Many have underlying mental health conditions, in some cases aggravated by their military service that increase their risk. Many recently discharged veterans have difficulty with their relationships or their transition back to civilian life. As part of its efforts to address this problem, the USDVA has established a toll-free, confidential Veterans Crisis Line at (800) 273-8255 ((800) 273-TALK). The hotline, staffed by mental health professionals 24 hours a day, seven days a week, has received more than 2 million calls since it was established in 2007. USDVA also offers a texting service at 838255.

Veterans and their families can chat online with trained counselors at [www.VeteransCrisisLine.net](http://www.VeteransCrisisLine.net). Registration with USDVA or enrollment in USDVA health care is not necessary. The USDVA also has full-time suicide prevention coordinators at each of its 144 hospitals.

## WHEN TO SEEK HELP FOR YOURSELF OR ANOTHER PERSON

Learn the signs of suicide risk, and seek help immediately if you notice any of the following warning signs:

- » Threatening to hurt or kill oneself;
- » Looking for ways to kill oneself;
- » Trying to get pills, guns, or other means to harm oneself;
- » Talking or writing about death, dying or suicide;
- » Feeling hopeless;
- » Experiencing rage, uncontrolled anger or seeking revenge;
- » Acting reckless or engaging in risky activities;
- » Feeling trapped, like there is no way out;
- » Abusing drugs or alcohol;
- » Withdrawing from friends or family;
- » Having dramatic changes in mood;

- » Feeling like there is no reason for living, no sense of purpose in life;
- » Sleeping too much or too little; or
- » Giving away possessions.

## HOW TO TALK WITH SOMEONE ABOUT SUICIDE

- » **Ask Directly** - Are you considering suicide/having thoughts of killing yourself?
- » **DO** - ask the question if you've identified warning signs or symptoms;
- » **DO** - ask the question in such a way that is natural and flows with the conversation;
- » **DON'T** - ask the question as though you are looking for a "no" answer; "You aren't thinking of killing yourself are you?"
- » **DON'T** - wait to ask the question when he/she is halfway out the door.

## WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU THINK SOMEONE IS SUICIDAL?

- » Don't keep the suicidal behavior a secret. Talk with the person about it first and, if you can, get help from a family member, close friend, or even employer of the person and work together to address it.
- » Don't leave him or her alone if you are concerned. Try to get the person to seek immediate help from his or her doctor or the nearest hospital emergency room, or call the Veterans Crisis Line at (800) 273-8255, press 1.
- » Never negotiate with someone who has a gun. Get to safety and call 911.
- » If the veteran has taken pills, cut himself or herself or done harm to himself or herself in some way call 911 immediately.

## WHAT FACTORS HELP PROTECT PEOPLE FROM SUICIDE?

- » Family, friends, social support, close relationships, battle buddy;
- » Coping/problem solving skills;
- » Ongoing health and mental health care relationships;
- » Reasons for living – goals and activities/involvement; and
- » Cultural and religious beliefs that discourage suicide.

## MYTHS AND REALITIES ABOUT SUICIDE

- » **Myth:** Asking about suicide will plant the idea in a person's head.  
**Reality:** Asking about suicide does not create suicidal thoughts any more than asking about chest pain causes a heart attack. The act of asking the question simply gives the veteran permission to talk about his or her thoughts or feelings.
- » **Myth:** There are talkers and there are doers.  
**Reality:** Most people who die by suicide have communicated some intent, wish, or desire to kill themselves. Willingness to talk about suicide offers an opportunity to intervene before suicidal behaviors occur.
- » **Myth:** If somebody really wants to die by suicide, there is nothing that can be done about it.  
**Reality:** Most suicidal ideas are associated with underlying conditions that are highly treatable, such as depression, anxiety, or health problems. Providing treatment for these underlying conditions can save a life.

The acute risk for suicide is often time-limited. It is vital to be able to help someone find a safe environment to survive the immediate crisis.

- » **Myth:** He/she really wouldn't commit suicide because...
  - » just made plans for a vacation,
  - » has young children at home,
  - » made a verbal or written promise,
  - » knows how dearly their family loves them.
- » **Reality:** Suicidal thinking can overwhelm even the most rational person. Anyone experiencing significant suicidal thoughts must be taken seriously and referred to a health care provider who can evaluate their condition and provide treatment as appropriate.

## WHERE TO GET HELP

### VETERANS SUICIDE PREVENTION HOTLINE

The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is a free, 24-hour hotline available to anyone in suicidal crisis or emotional distress. Veterans can call the Lifeline number, (800) 273-TALK (8255), and press “1” to be routed to the Veterans Suicide Prevention Hotline. If an individual prefers not to talk to a USDVA counselor, the Lifeline number will route the caller to one of the nine crisis centers in California that are accredited to operate a suicide prevention hotline. Individuals may also visit the website [www.veteranscrisisline.net](http://www.veteranscrisisline.net) and chat confidentially online with a representative or send a text to 838255 to receive confidential support.

### VETERANS CHAT

Veterans Chat allows veterans, their families, and friends to anonymously chat with a trained USDVA counselor. If, during the online chat, it is determined that the person is in crisis, the counselor can take immediate steps to transfer the person to the USDVA’s Suicide Prevention Hotline, where further crisis intervention, counseling and referral services are provided. To access online chat services, visit [www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org).

### USDVA SUICIDE PREVENTION COORDINATORS

Each USDVA Medical Center has a suicide prevention coordinator to make sure veterans receive needed counseling and services. To locate a suicide prevention coordinator, visit [www.veteranscrisisline.net](http://www.veteranscrisisline.net).

---

## POSTTRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER

### OVERVIEW

Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is a disorder that can occur after experiencing a traumatic event. PTSD symptoms usually start soon after the traumatic event, but may be delayed several months or years. Symptoms also may come and go over many years. Symptoms that last longer than four weeks, cause great distress, or interfere with work/home life, may indicate PTSD. Symptoms of PTSD include reliving the event, avoiding places or things that remind you of the event, a shift to more negative thoughts and feelings,

feeling numb, and feeling keyed up (also called hyperarousal). If you think you have PTSD, it is important to get treatment. There are good treatments available for PTSD – treatment can help you get better.

## SCREENING

In order to develop PTSD, a person must have experienced a trauma. Almost everyone who experiences trauma will experience some symptoms as a result. Yet most people do not develop PTSD. If you have experienced trauma, you may want to undergo screening in order to determine whether you have PTSD. A screen is a very short list of questions which helps to determine whether a person needs to be assessed further. A positive screen does not mean a person has PTSD. A positive screen means that this person should be assessed further by a mental health provider. My HealtheVet offers a confidential, anonymous screen for PTSD at [www.myhealth.va.gov/mhv-portal-web/ptsd-screening](http://www.myhealth.va.gov/mhv-portal-web/ptsd-screening). None of the results are stored or sent anywhere. You can choose to print a copy of the results for your own records or to give to your physician or a mental health professional.

## USDVA PROGRAMS & SERVICES

### EVIDENCE-BASED PSYCHOTHERAPIES

Evidence-based psychotherapy is the most-highly recommended treatment for PTSD and is one of many effective treatments. Each USDVA medical center offers one or more specific evidence-based psychotherapies for PTSD. Many medical centers and clinics provide other treatments and additional psychotherapy services for posttraumatic stress (in addition to those below).

### COGNITIVE PROCESSING THERAPY

Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT) is a structured, psychotherapy for the treatment of PTSD. It involves teaching individuals to identify how traumatic experiences have impacted their thinking. It also teaches individuals to evaluate and change their thoughts. CPT usually takes 12 sessions and can be delivered in individual or group format. The goal in CPT is that clients learn to have more healthy and balanced beliefs about themselves, others and the world.

## PROLONGED EXPOSURE THERAPY

Prolonged Exposure (PE) Therapy is an individual treatment for PTSD and related problems. PE typically lasts for 10-15 sessions and has been shown to work for a number of individuals with varying traumas. During treatment, clients will learn about PTSD: its causes, symptoms, and the reasons you are continuing to have symptoms. In later sessions, clients start facing safe situations that they have stayed away from because they trigger memories of a trauma. These steps will begin a process of recovery and improving the quality of your life.

For individuals in mental health crisis, here are important contacts:

- » If there is an emergency, call 911 or go to your nearest emergency room.
- » To speak with a trained USDVA counselor, call the Veterans Crisis Line at (800) 273-8255, and then press 1 if you are a veteran or service member. This free USDVA service is open 24/7.
- » To speak with a combat veteran, call USDVA's Veteran Combat Call Center at (800) 927-8387.

For more information about available mental health services, see the Mental Health Services section (page 94).

---

## TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY

The USDVA's Polytrauma System of Care (PSC) ([www.polytrauma.va.gov/system-of-care](http://www.polytrauma.va.gov/system-of-care)) is an integrated network of specialized rehabilitation programs dedicated to serving veterans and service members with Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) and polytrauma. Services available through PCS include: interdisciplinary evaluation and treatment, development of a comprehensive plan of care, case management, patient and family education and training, psychosocial support, and application of advanced rehabilitation treatments and prosthetic technologies.

The PSC either directly provides, or formally links with, key components of care that address the lifelong needs of individuals with impairments resulting from poly-trauma and TBI. The tiered PSC integrates specialized rehabilitation services at regional centers, network sites and local USDVA medical centers.

## POINTS TO REMEMBER

USDVA has a Polytrauma/TBI national system of care composed of four components:

- » **Polytrauma Rehabilitation Centers** are regional referral centers for acute inpatient medical and rehabilitation care. [www.polytrauma.va.gov/system-of-care/care-facilities/polytrauma-rehabilitation-centers.asp](http://www.polytrauma.va.gov/system-of-care/care-facilities/polytrauma-rehabilitation-centers.asp)
- » **Polytrauma Network Sites** provide post-acute rehabilitation and coordinate polytrauma services within the veterans Integrated Service Networks (VISNs). [www.polytrauma.va.gov/system-of-care/care-facilities/network-sites.asp](http://www.polytrauma.va.gov/system-of-care/care-facilities/network-sites.asp)
- » **Polytrauma Support Clinic** teams provide outpatient interdisciplinary rehabilitation evaluation and treatment services within their catchment areas. [www.polytrauma.va.gov/system-of-care/care-facilities/support-clinic-teams.asp](http://www.polytrauma.va.gov/system-of-care/care-facilities/support-clinic-teams.asp)
- » **Polytrauma Point of Contact** at each USDVA facility deliver a more limited range of rehabilitation services and facilitate referrals to other PSC programs, as necessary. [www.polytrauma.va.gov/system-of-care/care-facilities/points-of-contact.asp](http://www.polytrauma.va.gov/system-of-care/care-facilities/points-of-contact.asp)

---

## MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA

Military Sexual Trauma (MST) is the term used to refer to sexual assault or sexual harassment that occurred while the veteran was in the military. Some veterans, both men and women, suffered personal or physical assault while on active duty and they may still struggle with fear, anxiety, embarrassment, or profound anger as a result of these experiences. Examples of this can be but are not limited to rape, physical assault, domestic battering, and stalking.

Some difficulties that can be experienced by survivors of MST include:

- » Disturbing memories or nightmares;
- » Feelings of numbness;
- » Trouble sleeping;

- » Depression, anger and irritability;
- » Relationship difficulties;
- » Problems with drugs and alcohol; and
- » Physical health problems.

USDVA provides free, confidential counseling and treatment for mental and physical health conditions related to experiences of MST. Veterans do not need to have a service-connected disability to receive treatment. This benefit is available even if the veteran is not eligible for other USDVA care. Incidents need not have been reported or documented when they occurred.

Every USDVA medical facility has a designated MST Coordinator who serves as a contact person for MST-related issues. This person is the veteran's advocate and can help the veteran find and access USDVA services and programs, state and federal benefits, and community resources. To locate the local MST Coordinator, see page 108.

Every USDVA facility has providers knowledgeable about treatment for the effects of MST. Many have specialized outpatient mental health services focusing on sexual trauma. To accommodate veterans who do not feel comfortable in mixed-gender treatment settings, some USDVA facilities have separate programs for men and women. All residential and inpatient MST programs have separate sleeping areas for men and women.

For more information, contact a local USDVA medical facility (page 108).

Additionally, Vet Centers have specially trained sexual trauma counselors and all conversations and records are kept confidential and are not accessible by the USDVA. The Soldier's Project and Give an Hour also offer resources for veterans who wish not to be seen by the USDVA. For more information on Vet Centers, see page 108. For more information on the Give an Hour and Soldier's Project, see page 97, 98.

---

## **SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS**

Treatment and recovery services are available throughout California for veterans who have a problem with alcohol, drugs, or misuse of prescription

drugs. Services range from emergency counseling and initial assessment to detoxification services and residential or long-term outpatient treatment.

Confidential programs and services are available to veterans who find alcohol, illicit drugs or prescription drugs are impacting their relationships or their ability to maintain employment, housing or family relationships. In addition to services provided by the USDVA health care system, county and community-based resources may be available.

## **DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH CARE SERVICES**

The Substance Use Disorder Services Divisions lead the effort to reduce alcoholism and drug addiction in California by developing, administering, and supporting prevention, treatment and recovery programs. They endeavor to help Californians understand that alcoholism and drug addiction are chronic conditions that can be successfully prevented and treated.

If you, or someone you know, has a problem with alcohol or drugs, treatment services are available throughout California to help you get on the road to recovery. These range from emergency counseling and initial assessment to detoxification services and residential or long-term outpatient treatment. Please contact your local County Alcohol and Other Drugs Programs at [www.dhcs.ca.gov/individuals/pages/dmc-countynumbersdirectory.aspx](http://www.dhcs.ca.gov/individuals/pages/dmc-countynumbersdirectory.aspx).

## **CONFIDENTIAL ON-LINE SELF-ASSESSMENT SCREENING TOOLS**

Veterans concerned about whether drugs or alcohol are harming their health and putting them at risk for other problems, can assess their consumption patterns using a free, confidential online tool. By answering a few short questions about past and present use of various drugs, such as marijuana, cocaine, tobacco, inhalants or alcohol users can get confidential feedback about the likely risks of drug and alcohol use and advice about when and where to seek more information, evaluation, and help. The assessment only takes a few minutes to complete and gives personalized confidential results based on age, gender, and use patterns so the user can take positive action. For free, confidential on-line alcohol screening, visit [www.alcoholscreening.org](http://www.alcoholscreening.org). For free, confidential on-line drug screening, visit [www.drugscreening.org](http://www.drugscreening.org).

---

# USDVA MEDICAL FACILITIES

## USDVA SIERRA NEVADA HEALTH CARE SYSTEM (888) 838-6256

### Medical Center

Sierra Nevada Medical Center  
975 Kirman Avenue  
Reno, NV 89502  
(775) 786-7200

### Outpatient Clinic

Sierra Foothills Outpatient Clinic  
11985 Heritage Oaks Place  
Auburn, CA 95603  
(530) 889-0872

Carson Valley Outpatient Clinic  
925 Ironwood Drive, Suite 2102  
Minden, NV 89423  
(775) 782-5265

Diamond View Outpatient Clinic  
110 Bella Way  
Susanville, CA 96130  
(530) 251-4550 or (877) 816-8572

Lahontan Valley Outpatient Clinic  
345 West A Street  
Fallon, NV 89406  
(775) 428-6161  
(775) 428-6171 (Fax)

### MST Coordinator

(775) 428-6161, then press 2

## USDVA NORTHERN CALIFORNIA HEALTH CARE SYSTEM (800) 382-8387

### Medical Center

Sacramento Medical Center  
10535 Hospital Way  
Mather, CA 95655  
(916) 843-7000

### Outpatient Clinic

McClellan Outpatient Clinic  
5342 Dudley Boulevard  
Sacramento, CA 95652  
(916) 561-7400 or (800) 382-8387

Redding Outpatient Clinic  
351 Hartnell Avenue  
Redding, CA 96002  
(530) 226-7555

Chico Outpatient Clinic  
280 Cohasset Road  
Chico, CA 95926  
(530) 879-5000

Martinez Outpatient Clinic  
150 Muir Road  
Martinez, CA 94553  
(925) 372-2000

Oakland Outpatient Clinic  
2221 Martin Luther King Jr. Way  
Oakland, CA 94612  
(510) 267-7800

Fairfield Outpatient Clinic  
103 Bodin Circle, Travis AFB  
Fairfield, CA 94535  
(707) 437-1800

Mare Island Outpatient Clinic  
201 Walnut Avenue  
Vallejo, CA 94592  
(707) 562-8200

Yreka Rural Outpatient Clinic  
101 E. Oberlin Drive  
Yreka, CA 96097  
(530) 841-8500  
(530) 842-9640 (Fax)

Yuba City Outpatient Clinic  
425 Plumas Street  
Yuba City, CA 95991  
(530) 751-4500  
(530) 673-3735 (Fax)

### **Vet Clinics**

Oakland Behavioral Health Clinic  
525 21st Street  
Oakland, CA 94612  
(510) 587-3400

McClellan Dental Clinic  
5401 Arnold Avenue  
McClellan, CA 95652  
(916) 561-7800

Sacramento Mental Health  
Clinic at Mather  
10535 Hospital Way, Building 649  
Sacramento, CA 95655  
(916) 366-5420

### **Vet Center**

Sacramento Vet Center  
1111 Howe Avenue, Suite 390  
Sacramento, CA 95825  
(916) 566-7430  
(916) 566-7433 (Fax)

Citrus Heights Vet Center  
5650 Sunrise Boulevard, Suite 150  
Citrus Heights, CA 95610  
(916) 535-0420  
(916) 535-0419 (Fax)

Chico Vet Center  
250 Cohasset Road, Suite 40  
Chico, CA 95926  
(530) 899-6300  
(530) 891-0102 (Fax)

Oakland Vet Center  
2221 Martin Luther King Jr. Way  
Oakland, CA 94612  
(510) 763-3904  
(510) 763-5631 (Fax)

4B Pacific Western Regional Office  
420 Executive Court North, Suite A  
Fairfield, CA 94534  
(707) 646-2988  
(707) 646-2960 (Fax)

Concord Vet Center  
1333 Willow Pass Road, Suite 106  
Concord, CA 94520  
(925) 680-4526

### **Homeless Coordinator**

Northern California Homeless  
Coordinator  
(916) 843-9090

### **MST Coordinator**

Dr. Catherine Novotny  
(925) 372-2554

## **USDVA CENTRAL CALIFORNIA HEALTH CARE SYSTEM (888) 826-2838**

### **Medical Center**

Fresno Medical Center  
2615 E. Clinton Avenue  
Fresno, CA 93703  
(559) 225-6100

### **Outpatient Clinic**

South Valley Outpatient Clinic  
1050 N. Cherry Street  
Tulare, CA 93274  
(559) 684-8703

USDVA Merced Outpatient Clinic  
340 E. Yosemite Avenue  
Merced, CA 95340  
(209) 381-0105

### **Vet Center**

Fresno Vet Center  
1320 E. Shaw Avenue, Suite 125  
Fresno, CA 93710  
(559) 487-5660  
(559) 487-5399 (Fax)

Fresno Mobile Vet Center  
3515 West Dakota Avenue  
Fresno, CA 93722  
(559) 487-5660

### **Homeless Coordinator**

Fresno Homeless Coordinator  
(559) 225-6100, ext. 5764

### **MST Coordinator**

(559) 225-6100, ext. 5468

## **USDVA PALO ALTO HEALTH CARE SYSTEM (800) 455-0057**

### **Medical Center**

Medical Center Palo Alto  
3801 Miranda Avenue  
Palo Alto, CA 94304  
(650) 493-5000

Livermore Division  
4951 Arroyo Road  
Livermore, CA 94550  
(925) 373-4700

Menlo Park Division  
795 Willow Road  
Menlo Park, CA 94025  
(650) 614-9997

### **Outpatient Clinic**

Capitola Outpatient Clinic  
1350 N. 41st Street, Suite 102  
Capitola, CA 95010-3906  
(831) 464-5519

Fremont Clinic  
39199 Liberty Street  
Fremont, CA 94538  
(510) 791-4000  
(510)-791-4036 (Fax)

Modesto Clinic  
1225 Oakdale Road  
Modesto, CA 95355  
(209) 557-6200

Monterey Clinic  
3401 Engineer Lane  
Seaside, CA 93955  
(831) 883-3800

San Jose Clinic  
80 Great Oaks Boulevard  
San Jose, CA 95119  
(408) 363-3000

Sonora Clinic  
13663 Mono Way  
Sonora, CA 95370  
(209) 588-2600  
(209) 946-9458 (Fax)

Stockton Clinic  
7777 South Freedom Drive  
French Camp, CA 95231  
(209) 946-3400  
(209) 946-9458 (Fax)

#### **Vet Center**

Santa Cruz County Vet Center  
1350 41st Avenue, Suite 102  
Capitola, CA 95010  
(831) 464-4575  
(831) 464-6597 (Fax)

Modesto Vet Center  
1219 N. Carpenter Road, Suite 12  
Modesto, CA 95351  
(209) 569-0713  
(209) 569-0718 (Fax)

Peninsula Vet Center  
2946 Broadway Street  
Redwood City, CA 94062  
(650) 299-0672  
(650)-299-0677 (Fax)

San Jose Vet Center  
278 North 2nd Street  
San Jose, CA 95112  
(408) 993-0729  
(408) 993-0829 (Fax)

**Homeless Coordinator**  
Menlo Park Division  
(650) 493-5000, ext. 22751  
(800) 455-0057

**MST Coordinator**  
Ann Lefevre  
(650) 493-5000, ext. 2-25000

## **SAN FRANCISCO USDVA MEDICAL CENTER (877) 487-2838**

**Medical Center**  
San Francisco Medical Center  
4150 Clement Street  
San Francisco, CA 94121  
(415) 221-4810

**Outpatient Clinic**  
Clearlake Outpatient Clinic  
15145 Lakeshore Drive  
Clearlake, CA 95422  
(707) 995-7200

SFVAMC Downtown Clinic  
401 3rd Street  
San Francisco, CA 94107  
(415) 281-5100

Eureka Veterans Clinic  
930 W. Harris Street  
Eureka, CA 95503  
(707) 269-7500

San Bruno Outpatient Clinic  
1001 Sneath Lane, Suite 300, 3rd Floor  
San Bruno, CA 94066  
(650) 615-6000

Santa Rosa Clinic  
3841 Brickway Boulevard  
Santa Rosa, CA 95403  
(707) 569-2300

Ukiah Community Based  
Outpatient Clinic  
630 Kings Court  
Ukiah, CA 95482  
(707) 468-7700

### Vet Center

San Francisco Vet Center  
505 Polk Street  
San Francisco, CA 94102  
(415) 441-5051  
(415) 441-5051 (Fax)

Eureka Vet Center  
2830 G Street, Suite A  
Eureka, CA 95501  
(707) 444-8271  
(707) 444-8391 (Fax)

North Bay Vet Center  
6225 State Farm Drive, Suite J  
Rohnert Park, CA 94928  
(707) 586-3295  
(707) 586-9055 (Fax)

### Homeless Coordinator

San Francisco Homeless Coordinator  
Health Care-Homeless Vets  
(415) 281-5100  
(800) 733-0502

### MST Coordinator

(415) 221-4810

## USDVA GREATER LOS ANGELES HEALTH CARE SYSTEM (800) 952-4852

### Medical Center

West Los Angeles Medical Center  
11301 Wilshire Boulevard  
Los Angeles, CA 90073  
(310) 478-3711

Sepulveda Ambulatory Care Center  
16111 Plummer Street  
Los Angeles, CA 91343  
(818) 891-7711

Los Angeles Ambulatory Care Center  
351 E. Temple Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012  
(213) 253-2677

### Outpatient Clinic

Bakersfield Community Based  
Outpatient Clinic  
1801 Westwind Drive  
Bakersfield, CA 93301  
(661) 632-1800  
(661) 632-1888 (Fax)

East Los Angeles Outpatient Clinic  
5426 East Olympic Boulevard, Suite 150  
Commerce, CA 90040  
(323) 725-7372

Gardena Outpatient Clinic  
1251 Redondo Beach Boulevard,  
3rd Floor  
Gardena, CA 90247  
(310) 851-4705

Lancaster Community Based  
Outpatient Clinic  
547 West Lancaster Boulevard  
Lancaster, CA 93534  
(661) 729-8655

Oxnard Outpatient Clinic  
2000 Outlet Center Drive, Suite 225  
Oxnard, CA 93033  
(805) 604-6960

Pasadena  
420 W. Las Tunas Drive  
San Gabriel, CA 91776  
(713) 473-6300

San Luis Obispo - Pacific  
Medical Plaza  
1288 Morro Street, Suite 200  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401  
(805) 543-1233  
(805) 547-1179 (Fax)

Santa Barbara Community Based  
Outpatient Clinic  
4440 Calle Real  
Santa Barbara, CA 93110  
(805) 683-1491

Santa Maria Community Based  
Outpatient Clinic  
1550 East Main Street  
Santa Maria, CA 93454  
(805) 354-6000

Sepulveda Outpatient Clinic and  
Nursing Home  
16111 Plummer Street  
North Hills, CA 91343  
(818) 891-7711

Ventura Community Based  
Outpatient Clinic  
120 N. Ashwood Avenue  
Ventura, CA 93003  
(805) 658-5800

### Vet Center

Antelope Valley Vet Center  
38925 Trade Center Drive, Suite J  
Palmdale, CA 93551  
(661) 267-1026

East Los Angeles Vet Center  
5400 E. Olympic Boulevard, Suite 140  
Commerce, CA 90022  
(323) 728-9966  
(323) 887-1082 (Fax)

West Los Angeles Vet Center  
5730 Uplander Way, Suite 100  
Culver City, CA 90230  
(310) 641-0326  
(310) 641-2653 (Fax)

Los Angeles Veterans Resource Center  
1045 W. Redondo Beach Boulevard,  
Suite 150  
Gardena, CA 90247  
(310) 767-1221  
(310) 767-1403 (Fax)

Sepulveda Vet Center  
9737 Haskell Avenue  
Sepulveda, CA 91343  
(818) 892-9227

Ventura Vet Center  
790 E. Santa Clara Street, Suite 100  
Ventura, CA 93001  
(805) 585-1860  
(805) 585-1864 (Fax)

### Homeless Coordinator

Los Angeles Homeless Coordinator  
(213) 253-2677, ext. 34453

### MST Coordinator

(213) 253-2677

## USDVA LOMA LINDA HEALTH CARE SYSTEM (800) 741-8387

### Medical Center

Loma Linda Medical Center  
11201 Benton Street  
Loma Linda, CA 92357  
(909) 825-7084

### Outpatient Clinic

Blythe Rural Health Clinic  
1273 Hobson Way  
Blythe, CA 92225  
(760) 921-1224

Corona Health Clinic  
800 Magnolia Avenue, Suite 101  
Corona, CA 92879  
(951) 817-8820

Murrieta Clinic  
28078 Baxter Road, Suite 540  
Murrieta, CA 92563  
(951) 290-6500

Palm Desert Clinic  
41-990 Cook Street,  
Building F, Suite 1004  
Palm Desert, CA 92211  
(760) 341-5570

Rancho Cucamonga Clinic  
8599 Haven Avenue, Suite 102  
Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91730  
(909) 946-5348

Redland Blvd Outpatient Clinic  
25828 Redlands Boulevard  
Redlands, CA 92374  
(909) 825-7084, ext. 6930

Victorville Clinic  
12138 Industrial Boulevard, Suite 120  
Victorville, CA 92395  
(760) 951-2599

### Vet Center

Corona Vet Center  
800 Magnolia Avenue, Suite 110  
Corona, CA 92879  
(951) 734-0525  
(951) 734-0063 (Fax)

High Desert Vet Center  
15095 Amargosa Road, Suite 107  
Victorville, CA 92394  
(760) 261-5925  
(760) 241-7828 (Fax)

San Bernardino Vet Center  
1325 E. Cooley Drive, Suite 101  
Colton, CA 92324  
(909) 801-5762  
(909) 801-5767 (Fax)

Temecula Vet Center  
40935 County Center Drive, Suite A  
Temecula, CA 92591  
(951) 302-4849  
(951) 296-0598 (Fax)

### Homeless Coordinator

Loma Linda Homeless Coordinator  
(909) 825-7084, ext. 2388

### MST Coordinator

(909) 825-7084, ext. 2595

## USDVA LONG BEACH HEALTH CARE SYSTEM (888) 769-8387

### Medical Center

Long Beach Medical Center  
5901 East 7th Street  
Long Beach, CA 90822  
(562) 826-8000

### Outpatient Clinic

Anaheim  
2569 W. Woodland Drive  
Anaheim, CA 92801  
(714) 780-5400

Santa Ana Outpatient Clinic  
1506 Brookhollow Drive  
Santa Ana, CA 92704  
(714) 434-4600

Villages at Cabrillo Health Clinic  
2001 River Avenue, Building 28  
Long Beach, CA 90806  
(562) 826-8000

Laguna Hills Health Clinic  
25292 McIntyre Street  
Laguna Hills, CA 92653  
(949) 269-0700

Whittier/Santa Fe Springs Clinic  
10210 Orr and Day Road  
Santa Fe Springs, CA 90670  
(562) 466-6080

### Vet Center

North Orange County Vet Center  
12453 Lewis Street, Suite 101  
Garden Grove, CA 92840  
(714) 776-0161

### Homeless Coordinator

Long Beach Homeless Coordinator  
(562) 826-8000

## USDVA SAN DIEGO HEALTH CARE SYSTEM (800) 331-8387

### Medical Center

San Diego Medical Center  
3350 La Jolla Village Drive  
San Diego, CA 92161  
(858) 552-8585

### Outpatient Clinic

Chula Vista (South Bay)  
835 3rd Avenue  
Chula Vista, CA 91910  
(619) 409-1600

Escondido  
815 E. Pennsylvania Avenue  
Escondido, CA 92025  
(760) 466-7020

Imperial Valley  
1600 South Imperial Avenue  
El Centro, CA 92243  
(760) 352-1506

Mission Valley  
8810 Rio San Diego Drive  
San Diego, CA 92108  
(619) 400-5000

Oceanside  
1300 Rancho del Oro Road  
Oceanside, CA 92056  
(760) 643-2000

### **Vet Center**

San Diego Vet Center  
2790 Truxton Road, Suite 130  
San Diego, CA 92106  
(858) 642-1500  
(619)294-2535 (Fax)

San Marcos Vet Center  
One Civic Center Drive, Suite 140  
San Marcos, CA 92069  
(760) 744-6914  
(760) 744-6919 (Fax)

Chula Vista Vet Center  
180 Otay Lakes Road, Suite 108  
Chula Vista, CA 91902  
(877) 618-6534  
(619) 479-8539 (Fax)

South Orange County Vet Center  
26431 Crown Valley Parkway, Suite 100  
Mission Viejo, CA 92691  
(949) 348-6700  
(949) 348-6719 (Fax)

### **Homeless Coordinator**

San Diego Health Care for Homeless  
Veterans Clinic  
(619) 400-5157

### **MST Coordinator**

Carolyn Allard  
(858) 642-1662

## **USDVA NETWORK HOMELESS COORDINATORS**

### **Northern California**

Danica Bollsvich  
VISN 21 Network Homeless Coordinator  
901 Market Street, Suite 380  
San Francisco, CA 94103  
(415) 489-3312  
(707) 235-4517 cell  
Danica.Bollsvich@va.gov

### **Southern California**

Jennifer Gerrib  
VISN 22 Network Homeless Coordinator  
300 Oceangate, Suite 700  
Long Beach, CA 90802  
(562) 826-5219  
jennifer.gerrib@va.gov

---

## COVERED CALIFORNIA

Veterans who do not qualify for USDVA health care, or who need health care coverage for their families, can get health insurance through the state-run health insurance marketplace, Covered California. It's the only place to get federal premium assistance to help you buy private insurance.

To find out more, visit [www.coveredca.com](http://www.coveredca.com) and enter some basic information such as your income and number of dependents and you will get a quick estimate of what you would pay for health insurance. The lower your income, the more financial assistance you may receive in paying for your family's health insurance coverage. Covered California can also help you access health insurance through the Medi-Cal program if you qualify.

The Covered California website offers a handy comparison tool that enables you to make choices regarding the type of coverage you want and shows how each of the companies offering that level of coverage compares in service and cost. You can also call (800) 300-1506 for assistance, or visit a certified enrollment counselor, insurance agent, or county services agency.

All Californians can sign up during the annual open-enrollment period, which begins in the fall. If you have a life-changing event, such as losing your employer health insurance coverage, getting married, having a child or moving, you may be eligible to sign up at any time during the year. Medi-Cal enrollment is year-round.

---

**CALVET**  
WOMEN VETERANS

*Join the Roster!*

As part of the CalVet Women Veterans Roster, you will become part of a network of women veterans who receive information about benefits, services, and events specific to women veterans.



**SIGN UP  
TODAY**



[www.calvet.ca.gov/womenvets/pages/womenveterans-roster.aspx](http://www.calvet.ca.gov/womenvets/pages/womenveterans-roster.aspx)

CH/04

---

# Education



---

# EDUCATION BENEFITS FOR CALIFORNIA VETERANS

## CALIFORNIA STATE APPROVING AGENCY FOR VETERANS EDUCATION

The California State Approving Agency for Veterans Education (CSAAVE) operates under contract with the USDVA as required by Title 38 of the U.S. Code. A division within CalVet, CSAAVE takes very seriously our duty to ensure our California veterans and other eligible beneficiaries receive the education and training they are paying for with their earned GI Bill® benefits.

CSAAVE approves or disapproves education and training programs, prevents abuses, and promotes quality in education by evaluating and monitoring education and training programs at institutions, before veterans and beneficiaries can utilize the GI Bill®.

GI Bill® education benefits may be used at qualifying institutions of higher learning (colleges and universities), non-degree institutions (vocational and technical schools), apprenticeship or on-the-job training, flight schools, and licensing and certification exams, where CSAAVE has granted approval.

CSAAVE reviews the applications of institutions and entities seeking approval to train and educate eligible recipients of GI Bill® benefits administered by the USDVA. As a condition of approval, CSAAVE conducts on-site and technical visits to monitor compliance with approval standards and the requirements of applicable laws and regulations. CSAAVE also conducts liaison activities designed to provide information, interpretation, or assistance with understanding USDVA programs and compliance with Title 38.

CSAAVE participates in outreach activities to promote and encourage eligible veterans and beneficiaries to use the GI Bill®. As a liaison, CSAAVE connects with various school certifying officials, military education officials, training establishments, and business officials to assist them with understanding how to better serve and support enrolled students.

In the event CSAAVE suspends or disapproves an institution or program based on a violation of Title 38, formal notification is provided to the institution. Notification of school action is also made available to veterans or beneficiaries using GI Bill® benefits, by posting information on our

CalVet website. CSAAVE reports to USDVA on the status of each institution in California approved for the training and education of veterans and beneficiaries using GI Bill® benefits.

For more information about CSAAVE, please visit [www.calvet.ca.gov/csaave](http://www.calvet.ca.gov/csaave).

GI Bill® benefits may also be used for programs other than attending college. GI Bill® benefits may also be used by eligible veterans and dependents who are employed and learning a new skill.

## **COLLEGE FEE WAIVER FOR VETERANS DEPENDENTS**

The College Fee Waiver for Veteran Dependents waives mandatory system-wide tuition and fees at a State of California Community College (CCC), California State University (CSU), or University of California (UC) campus. If eligibility criteria are met, use of the California College Fee Waiver for Veteran Dependents may be applied to state-supported programs in the CCC, CSU, and UC systems.

Some programs at a CCC, CSU, and UC campus are considered self-supported, commonly referred to as extension courses or extended education, and they are not covered under the fee waiver.

The fee waiver program does not cover the expense of books, parking, room and board, or any other school specific fees. All applicants must meet California residency requirements.

There are four different College Fee Waiver plans:

### **PLAN A**

- » The unmarried child of a veteran who is totally disabled due to service-connected disabilities or whose death was officially rated as service-connected is eligible, based on a rating by the military or USDVA. The child must be over 14 years old and under 27 years old to be eligible. If the child is a veteran, then the age limit is extended to age 30.
- » The spouse of a wartime veteran rated as service-connected and totally disabled by the military or USDVA is eligible. There are no age limit restrictions.
- » The unmarried surviving spouse of a wartime veteran whose death has been rated as service-connected by the military or USDVA is eligible. There are no age limit restrictions.

- » Any dependent of any veteran who has been declared missing in action, captured in the line of duty by hostile forces, or forcibly detained or interned in the line of duty by a foreign government or power by the DoD is eligible.

The veteran must have served at least one day of active duty during a period of war defined by law, or during any time in which the veteran was awarded a campaign or expeditionary medal. Concurrent receipt of benefits under Plan A and USDVA Chapter 35 benefits is prohibited. To receive benefits under Plan A, a dependent must sign an “Election to Receive College Fee Waiver Benefits” statement acknowledging this fact. There are no income restrictions under Plan A. To be eligible, the event which caused basic entitlement to benefits (i.e., the date the veteran died of service-connected causes or the date military or USDVA rated the veteran as totally disabled as a result of service-connected disabilities) must have occurred prior to the child’s 21st birthday.

The definition of “wartime veteran” can be found on page 69.

## PLAN B

The child of a veteran with a service-connected disability, or had a service-connected disability at the time of death, or died of service-related causes based on a military or USDVA rating, is eligible. The child’s annual income, which includes the child’s adjusted gross income, plus the value of support provided by a parent, may not exceed the annual income limit. The current academic year entitlement is based upon the previous calendar year’s annual income. To view this year’s income limit, visit [www.calvet.ca.gov/VetServices/Pages/College-Fee-Waiver.aspx](http://www.calvet.ca.gov/VetServices/Pages/College-Fee-Waiver.aspx).

Under Plan B, wartime service is not required and there are no specific age requirements. Children are the only dependents eligible under this plan. There is no prohibition against receiving concurrent USDVA Chapter 35 benefits.

## PLAN C

Any dependent of any member of the California National Guard, who in the line of duty while on active service to the state, was killed, died of a disability resulting from an event that occurred while in active service to the state, or is permanently disabled as a result of an event that occurred while in the service to the state is eligible. Surviving spouses who have not remarried are also eligible.

“Active service to the state,” for the purpose of this benefit, means a member of the California National Guard activated pursuant to Section 146 of the Military and Veterans Code. A copy of those orders pursuant to Section 146, not Section 143, must be furnished to establish eligibility.

## **PLAN D**

Medal of Honor recipients and children of Medal of Honor recipients under the age of 27 and who meet income requirements may qualify. Benefits under Plan D are limited to undergraduate studies only. There is no prohibition against receiving concurrent USDVA Chapter 35 benefits.

## **HOW TO APPLY**

To apply and to get more information, contact your local CVSO (page 187) or the admissions office of any California college system campus. You may download an application by visiting [www.cacvso.org](http://www.cacvso.org).

## **NON-RESIDENT COLLEGE FEE WAIVER**

The Non-Resident College Fee Waiver waives non-resident fees at all CCC, CSU, or UC campuses.

## **WHO IS ELIGIBLE?**

A student who is a veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces stationed in this state on active duty for more than one year immediately prior to being discharged is entitled to resident classification. This classification is valid for the length of time the veteran lives in this state after being discharged up to the minimum time necessary to become a resident.

An undergraduate student who is a member of the U.S. Armed Forces stationed in this state on active duty is eligible, except a member of the armed forces assigned for educational purposes to a state-supported institution of higher education.

An undergraduate student who is a natural or adopted child, stepchild, or spouse who is a dependent of a member of the armed forces stationed in this state on active duty is eligible.

A student seeking a graduate degree, who is a member of the U.S. Armed Forces stationed in this state on active duty except a member of the armed

forces assigned for educational purposes to a state-supported institution of higher education, is eligible. There is a two-year limit for graduate-level studies.

A student seeking a graduate degree who is a natural or adopted child, stepchild, or spouse who is a dependent of a member of the U.S. Armed Forces stationed in this state on active duty is eligible. There is a one-year limit for graduate level studies.

## HOW TO APPLY

Veterans or dependents should contact the admissions office of any CCC, CSU, or UC campus or a local CVSO (page 187).

## TROOPS TO COLLEGE

The California State University system offers unlimited opportunities to help veterans, active-duty service members, and their families meet their personal and professional goals. With 23 campuses and more than 4,000 courses, the

CSU system is committed to providing:

- » Supportive institutional values and administration;
- » academic support programs and services, such as veteran-focused advising, mentoring and counseling;
- » financial support and advice specifically for veterans;
- » priority registration for classes;
- » academic credit granted in General Education Area E for completion of Basic Training; and
- » extensive opportunities in student leadership.

More than 3.3 million students have graduated from the CSU and have helped to shape the future of California and the nation. That's why a CSU education is more than just a learning experience – it's an opportunity to make a difference.

If you are on active duty, a veteran, a military spouse, or a family member with questions about completing your degree at the CSU, find out more at [www.calstate.edu/veterans](http://www.calstate.edu/veterans).

# CALIFORNIA NATIONAL GUARD EDUCATION ASSISTANCE AWARD PROGRAM

The California National Guard Education Assistance Award Program (CNG EAAP) issues financial awards to qualifying members of the California National Guard (CNG) and State Military Reserve (SMR). This financial education benefit can pay for up to 100 percent of fees at a CCC, CSU, or UC campus. It can also be used for eligible California proprietary and public institutions. With combined military training and a civilian education in areas such as engineering, nursing, communications and information technology, California's National Guard members will be able to serve on two fronts.

## WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO QUALIFY FOR AN AWARD?

- » An active member of, and has served two (2) years in, the CNG or the SMR;
- » Agree to remain an active member in the CNG or the SMR throughout the participation period in the CNG EAAP;
- » Agree to use the award to obtain a certificate, degree, or diploma that is currently not held;
- » Have been accepted to, registered at, or enrolled in a qualifying institution as defined by section 69432.7(l) of the California Education Code;
- » Maintain enrollment of a minimum of three (3) academic units per semester, or the equivalent, at a qualifying institution as defined by California Education Code section 69432(l);
- » Agree to maintain at least a 2.0 cumulative grade point average (GPA) annually;
- » California resident as determined by the institution (based on resident and non-resident tuition); and
- » Not receiving a Cal Grant award check for the same academic year.

## HOW TO APPLY

- » Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) found at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov).

- » Complete the CNGEAAP application found at [nationalguard.csac.ca.gov/disclaimer.aspx](http://nationalguard.csac.ca.gov/disclaimer.aspx).
- » Download and print the Statement of Understanding found at [www.calguard.ca.gov/education](http://www.calguard.ca.gov/education) and have it signed by the veteran's commander. (Link is only available from January 15th through June 1st)

*Note: Discretionary summers will not be covered by the CNGEAAP. Only participants attending mandatory summers will be eligible for an award check.*

For additional information visit [nationalguard.csac.ca.gov](http://nationalguard.csac.ca.gov).

---

## USDVA EDUCATION BENEFITS

### EDUCATION BENEFITS AND PROGRAMS FOR VETERANS

There are several education programs veterans can use for a wide variety of approved education and training programs administered by the USDVA. The programs include: apprenticeship and on-the-job training, college degree and certificate programs, flight training, and correspondence courses. Each program provides different benefits to different groups of individuals and usually offers a specific number of benefit “months.”

Typically, most education benefits can be collected for 36 months; however, the maximum that can be collected under any combination of USDVA education programs is 48 months. Please note that veterans can only use one USDVA education benefit for training at a time. For more detailed information regarding USDVA education benefits, visit [www.gibill.va.gov](http://www.gibill.va.gov) or call (888) GIBILL-1 (442-4551).

Please note that the following list of education programs is not all inclusive, as each individual's benefit eligibility is different. Pay careful attention when choosing an education program. If a veteran gives up one education benefit in favor of another, it is an irrevocable choice. Veterans are encouraged to check with the school's certifying official to determine which benefit best meets their educational goals.

## FOREVER GI BILL®

The Harry W. Colmery Veterans Educational Assistance Act, also known as the “Forever GI Bill,” will allow more veterans to use the GI Bill and allow more time to use it. Some of the changes will go into effect immediately, most will not. The majority of the changes enhance or expand education benefits for veterans, service members, families and survivors.

Some new provisions that go into effect immediately include:

- » The 15-year time limitation to use Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits is eliminated for veterans who left active duty on or after January 1, 2013, children who became eligible for the Fry Scholarship on or after January 1, 2013, and all Fry scholarship eligible spouses.
- » USDVA is now authorized to restore benefits and provide relief to veterans affected by school closures or disapprovals.
- » Reservists who had eligibility under the Reserve Educational Assistance Program (REAP) and lost it due to the program sunset provision will have that service credited toward the Post-9/11 GI Bill program. USDVA is in the process of identifying the approximately 2,800 reservists affected by this and will send them letters with instructions.
- » Certain work-study is permanently authorized; previously it had to be re-approved by Congress every few years.
- » Anyone eligible for GI Bill can use their benefits at an accredited independent study program at an area career and technical school, or a postsecondary vocational school providing postsecondary level education. There is no action for you to take here, as these programs will go through the normal course of approval by the appropriate State Approving Agency.
- » The VetSuccess on Campus program will be available to students across the country.
- » USDVA will help veterans to more clearly identify schools that offer them priority enrollment.

For a list of all the provisions in the Forever GI Bill please visit

<https://www.benefits.va.gov/GIBILL/FGIBSummaries.asp>.

## POST-9/11 GI BILL®

The Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008, also known as Chapter 33, provides financial support for education, housing, plus other benefits to eligible individuals.

### WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

A veteran may be eligible if they have at least 90 days of aggregate service on or after September 11, 2001, or were discharged with a USDVA service-connected disability after 30 days. Veterans must also have received an honorable or medical discharge to be eligible.

Based upon the length of aggregate active service, veterans are eligible for a percentage of tuition and housing benefits under Chapter 33 that range from 40 percent to 100 percent. The following depicts the percentage of benefit ranges:

- » **100 percent of benefit** - 36 months of active duty service, or discharged for a service-connected disability after 30 days of continuous service
- » **90 percent of benefit** - 30 total months of active service
- » **80 percent of benefit** - 24 total months of active service
- » **70 percent of benefit** - 18 total months of active service
- » **60 percent of benefit** - 12 total months of active service
- » **50 percent of benefit** - 6 total months of active service
- » **40 percent of benefit** - 90 or more days of active service

*Note: Qualifying service time excludes service on active duty in entry level and skill training; however, active service performed by National Guardsmen under Title 32 USC for the purpose of organizing, administering, recruiting, instructing, or training the National Guard or under section 502(f) for the purpose of responding to a national emergency now counts towards eligibility.*

## WHAT BENEFITS DO STUDENTS RECEIVE UNDER THE POST-9/11 GI BILL®?

This new education benefit goes well beyond helping to pay for tuition. Depending on each individual's "rate of pursuit" (full- or part-time study) and situation, veterans may qualify for:

- » **Tuition and Fees:** These payments are issued directly to the school on behalf of the individual at the time the certificate of enrollment is processed.
- » **On Active Duty:** Individuals on active duty may be allotted the total amount of tuition and fees for all public schools. The amount is not limited to the state maximum; however, effective August 1, 2015, private and foreign school costs are capped at \$21,084.89 annually. Students on active duty may receive a books-and-supplies stipend.
- » **Not On Active Duty:** The amount allotted is prorated according to length of service. The amount is limited to the highest amount of tuition and fees charged for full-time, undergraduate training at a public institution of higher learning in the state in which the student is enrolled. Effective August 1, 2015, private and foreign school costs are capped at \$21,084.89 annually. The Yellow Ribbon Program still exists for out-of-state fees and costs above the cap.
- » **Monthly Housing Allowance:** This payment is issued directly to the student at the beginning of each month for education and training pursued the previous month. The amount is prorated based upon rate of pursuit, rounded to the nearest multiple of 10. If a student is training at a rate of pursuit of 75 percent, he/she would receive 80 percent of the Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) rate. In prior years, students enrolled exclusively in online training were not eligible for the housing allowance; however, it is now payable to students (other than those on active duty). The housing allowance payable is equal to one half the national average BAH for an E-5 with dependents. Effective August 1, 2015, the payable rate for a full-time student online is \$783. Break or interval pay is not payable under any USDVA education benefit program unless under an Executive Order of the President or due to an emergency, such as a natural disaster or strike. That means that if the semester ends December 15th, the housing allowance is paid for the first 15 days of December only. If the next semester begins January 10th, payment will be made for the remaining days of January.

*Note: Students using other USDVA education programs are included in this change. Monthly benefits will be prorated in the same manner.*

- » **Books and Supplies Stipend:** This payment is issued directly to the student when the school certifies and USDVA processes the enrollment. This benefit is prorated based on length of service. The books and supplies stipend can also be paid to students attending school while on active duty.
- » **Yellow Ribbon Payments:** This program allows degree-granting institutions to enter into a voluntary agreement with USDVA to fund tuition expenses that exceed the highest public in-state undergraduate tuition rate for individuals eligible for the 100 percent payment tier. The institution can contribute up to 50 percent of those expenses and USDVA will match the same amount as the institution. This payment is issued to the school when the school certifies and USDVA processes the student's enrollment.
- » **College Fund or "Kicker":** These payments are issued directly to the student based on "rate of pursuit" and the education benefits program under which the kicker is payable. These payments are now made on a monthly basis. In the past they were made through a lump sum.
- » **Rural Benefit Payments:** This one-time, lump-sum payment of \$500 is issued directly to a student who resides in a county with six persons or fewer per square mile (as determined by the most recent decennial census), and who either:
  - » physically relocates at least 500 miles to attend an educational institution, or
  - » travels by air (any distance) to physically attend an educational institution, if no other land-based transportation exists.

## **WHAT KIND OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING DOES THE POST-9/11 GI BILL® COVER?**

- » **Graduate and Undergraduate Degrees:** Courses must be offered by a degree-granting institution of higher learning and approved for GI Bill® benefits.
- » **Tutorial Assistance and Reimbursement:** Available when essential to correct a deficiency and received for a course in progress.

- » **National Entrance and Certification Exams:** Reimbursement of fees paid to take national admissions tests (e.g., SAT, ACT, GMAT, LSAT) and licensing exams (e.g. CPA Exam, Bar Exam, NCLEX Exam for nursing, etc.).
- » **Non-College Degree (NCD) Programs:** Pays actual net cost for in-state tuition and fees at public NCD institutions. At private and foreign institutions, pays the actual net costs for in-state tuition and fees or \$22,805.34, whichever is less. Also pays up to \$83 per month for books and supplies.
- » **On-The-Job and Apprenticeship Training:** Pays a monthly benefit amount prorated based on time in program and up to \$83 per month for books and supplies.
- » **Vocational Flight Programs:** Per academic year, pays the actual net costs for in-state tuition and fees assessed by the school or \$13,031.61, whichever is less.
- » **Correspondence Training:** Per academic year, pays the actual net costs for in-state tuition and fees assessed by the school or \$11,076.86, whichever is less.

## WHAT IS THE ELIGIBILITY PERIOD?

The period of eligibility for the Post-9/11 GI Bill® ends 15 years from the date of the last discharge or release from active duty.

## TRANSFER OF POST-9/11 GI BILL® BENEFITS TO DEPENDENTS

The Post-9/11 GI Bill® also offers some service members the opportunity to transfer their GI Bill® to their spouse or children. Any member of the Armed Forces (active duty or Selected Reserve, officer or enlisted) on or after August 1, 2009, who is eligible for the Post 9/11 GI Bill®, and:

- » Has at least 6 years of service in the Armed Forces on the date of election and agrees to serve 4 additional years in the Armed Forces from the date of election; or
- » Has at least 10 years of service in the Armed Forces (active duty and/or selected reserve) on the date of election, is precluded by either standard policy (service or DoD) or statute from committing to 4 additional years, and agrees to serve for the maximum amount of time allowed by such policy or statute; or

- » Is or becomes retirement-eligible and agrees to serve an additional four years of service on or after August 1, 2012. A service member is considered to be retirement eligible if he or she has completed 20 years of active duty or 20 qualifying years of reserve service.

An individual approved to transfer an entitlement to educational assistance under this section may transfer the individual's entitlement to:

- » The individual's spouse;
- » One or more of the individual's children; or
- » Any combination of spouse and child.

A family member must be enrolled in the Defense Eligibility Enrollment Reporting System (DEERS) and be eligible for benefits at the time of transfer to receive transferred educational benefits.

*Note: After an individual has designated a child as a transferee under this section, the individual retains the right to revoke or modify the transfer at any time.*

To apply for the Post-9/11 GI Bill® education benefit, complete USDVA Form 22-1990 found at [www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/vba-22-1990-are.pdf](http://www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/vba-22-1990-are.pdf) or apply online at [www.gibill.va.gov](http://www.gibill.va.gov).

## MONTGOMERY GI BILL®

The Montgomery GI Bill® (MGIB) program, commonly known as Chapter 30, provides up to 36 months of education benefits. Generally, eligibility is for 10 years following a veteran's release from active duty. This benefit may be used for degree and certificate programs, flight training, apprenticeship/on-the-job training and correspondence courses. The monthly benefit paid is based on the type of training taken, length of service, and whether the DoD put extra money in the veteran's MGIB Fund (called "kickers").

### WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

To be eligible, a veteran must have an honorable discharge, a high school diploma or GED or, in some cases, 12 hours of college credit, and meet the requirements of one of the categories below:

- » **Category I:** Entered active duty for the first time after June 30, 1985; paid \$1,200 into the MGIB program; and continuously served for 3 years,

or 2 years if that is what the veteran first enlisted for, or 2 years if the veteran entered the Selected Reserve within a year of leaving active duty and served 4 years (“2 by 4” Program);

- » **Category II:** Entered active duty before January 1, 1977; served at least 1 day between October 19, 1984, and June 30, 1985, and stayed on active duty through June 30, 1988 (or June 30, 1987 if the veteran entered the Selected Reserve within 1 year of leaving active duty and served 4 years); and on December 31, 1989, the veteran had entitlement left from Vietnam-Era GI Bill®;
- » **Category III:** Not eligible for MGIB under Category I or II; on active duty on September 30, 1990, and separated involuntarily after February 2, 1991; or involuntarily separated on or after November 30, 1993; or voluntarily separated under either the Voluntary Separation Incentive or Special Separation Benefit program; before separation, had military pay reduced by \$1,200;
- » **Category IV:** On active duty on October 9, 1996, had money remaining in a VEAP account on that date, and elected MGIB by October 9, 1997; or entered full-time National Guard duty under Title 32, U.S.C., between July 1, 1985 and November 29, 1989, and elected MGIB during the period of October 9, 1996, through July 8, 1997; had military pay reduced \$100 a month for 12 months or made a \$1,200 lump-sum contribution.

## **APPRENTICESHIP AND ON-THE-JOB TRAINING PROGRAMS**

Eligible beneficiaries may obtain on-the-job training (OJT) for professions such as a cook, machine tool operator, medical secretary, pharmacist assistant, police officer, or paramedic lasting six months to two years. In another example, eligible beneficiaries may pursue apprenticeship opportunities for occupations such as aircraft mechanic, automotive technician, electrician, and welder lasting from two to five years. Approved programs involve a combination of theoretical instruction and skill training.

### **HOW DO ON-THE-JOB TRAINING AND APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS WORK?**

- » The employer must offer training of at least 6 months long, leading to the development of required qualifying skills and wage earnings.

- » The employer must contact CSAAVE at [csaaveinfo@calvet.ca.gov](mailto:csaaveinfo@calvet.ca.gov) and request an application.
- » The veteran must apply to USDVA for monthly educational benefits ([www.gibill.va.gov](http://www.gibill.va.gov)).
- » The employer maintains work and training records, evaluates the trainee's progress, agrees to at least one wage increase during the training period, and certifies the trainee's hours to USDVA each month.

## WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

Veterans and service members eligible for the MGIB (Chapter 30), Post-Vietnam Era Veterans' Education Assistance Program (Chapter 32), Post-9/11 GI Bill® (Chapter 33), Survivors' and Dependents' Educational Assistance Program (Chapter 35), and MGIB - Selected Reserve Program (Chapter 1606) are eligible for OJT and Apprenticeship Training programs.

## LICENSE AND CERTIFICATION TESTING

Eligible beneficiaries may obtain reimbursement for the cost of license or certification test fees.

When a license or certification test is required for jobs that are subject to state or other government regulations, USDVA can reimburse you for taking the test. Licensing and/or certification may play a key role in advancing your career in jobs such as an attorney, cosmetologist, certified safety professional, therapist, medical technician, C++ certification, and/or tests such as the SAT, ACT, GRE, or LSAT. Training programs, registration fees, preparation guides, or other test processing fees are not eligible for reimbursement by USDVA.

## WHAT DOES REIMBURSEMENT OF CERTIFICATION AND/OR LICENSE TESTS WORK?

USDVA must receive your request for reimbursement within one year of when you take the test.

- » The test must be a specific for a field of employment and not a certificate you receive for completing training.
- » The test must be approved for USDVA purposes.
- » The test provider must contact CSAAVE at [csaaveinfo@calvet.ca.gov](mailto:csaaveinfo@calvet.ca.gov) and request an application.

- » The veteran must apply to USDVA for monthly educational benefits ([www.gibill.va.gov](http://www.gibill.va.gov)).
- » The veteran must apply to USDVA for reimbursement of the cost of the test.

## WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

Veterans and other eligible service members that qualify for Montgomery GI Bill® (MGIB), or MGIB Selected Reserves, Reserve Education Assistance Program, Veterans Educational Assistance Program (VEAP), or Dependents Educational Assistance (DEA) benefits.

For more information about your eligibility, payment, or reimbursement of GI Bill® benefits contact USDVA at [www.gibill.va.gov](http://www.gibill.va.gov) or call (888) 442-4551, or for the hearing impaired call (800) 829-4833.

To apply for the MGIB education benefit, complete USDVA Form 22-1990 found at [www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/vba-22-1990-are.pdf](http://www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/vba-22-1990-are.pdf) or apply online at [www.gibill.va.gov](http://www.gibill.va.gov).

To find out if an employer or test is approved, visit the USDVA website:

- » **OJT/Apprenticeship**  
<http://inquiry.vba.va.gov/weamspub/searchInst.do>
- » **License and Certification**  
<http://inquiry.vba.va.gov/weamspub/buildSearchLCCriteria.do>  
[http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/licensing\\_certification.asp](http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/licensing_certification.asp)

## MONTGOMERY GI BILL: SELECTED RESERVE

The Montgomery GI Bill - Selected Reserve (MGIB-SR) Program, Chapter 1606, may be available to a veteran who is a member of the Selected Reserve. The Selected Reserve includes the Army Reserve, Navy Reserve, Air Force Reserve, Marine Corps Reserve and Coast Guard Reserve, and the Army National Guard and the Air National Guard. Members of the Selected Reserve may use this education assistance program for up to 36 months on a degree program, certificate or correspondence courses, cooperative training, independent study programs, apprenticeship/on-the-job training, and vocational flight training programs. Remedial, refresher and deficiency training are available under certain circumstances.

## WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

To qualify, reservists and National Guardsmen must:

- » Have a six-year obligation to serve in the Selected Reserve signed after June 30, 1985. Officers must have agreed to serve six years in addition to the veteran's original obligation. For some types of training, it is necessary to have a six-year commitment that begins after September 30, 1990;
- » Complete initial active duty for training (IADT);
- » Meet the requirement to receive a high school diploma or equivalency certificate before completing IADT. Veterans may not use 12 hours toward a college degree to meet this requirement; and
- » Remain in good standing while serving in an active Selected Reserve unit. Veterans who were discharged from Selected Reserve service due to a disability that was not caused by misconduct retain MGIB-SR eligibility. The eligibility period may be extended if a veteran is ordered to active duty.

Eligibility for this program is determined by the Selected Reserve components. USDVA makes the payments under this program. Generally, a reservist has 10 years from the date they first become eligible under this program to use the benefits, provided he/she remains in the Selected Reserve during this time. The 10-year period may be extended if the reservist is unable to train because of a disability caused by service in the Selected Reserve. If the reservist is called to active duty, the period of eligibility will be extended by the length of the period of active duty service plus four months.

## HOW TO APPLY

Ask your Selected Reserve unit for a DD Form 2384-1, Notice of Basic Eligibility. The Selected Reserve unit enters the service member's eligibility into the DoD personnel system so USDVA can verify eligibility. Complete USDVA Form 22-1990, Application for Education Benefits, and send it to the nearest USDVA regional office (page 31). Service members who started training should take their application and Notice of Basic Eligibility to the school or employer, ask them to complete USDVA Form 22-1999, Enrollment Certification (not available online), and send all the forms to USDVA.

To apply for the MGIB-SR education benefit, complete USDVA Form 22-1990 found at [www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/vba-22-1990-are.pdf](http://www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/vba-22-1990-are.pdf) or apply online at [www.gibill.va.gov](http://www.gibill.va.gov).

## RESERVE EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

REAP chapter 1607 provides educational assistance to members of the reserve components called or ordered to active duty in response to a war or national emergency declared by the President or Congress.

### CHANGE IN REAP ELIGIBILITY

The National Defense Authorization Act of 2016 ended REAP on November 25, 2015. Some individuals will remain eligible for REAP benefits until November 25, 2019, while others are no longer eligible.

The Post-9/11 GI Bill® in many ways has replaced REAP because it also provides educational assistance benefits for reserve and National Guard members called to active duty on or after September 11, 2001, and in many cases provides a greater benefit than REAP.

The USDVA is committed to ensuring that reservists, National Guard members, and veterans understand this change, and we are working to identify individuals who no longer have eligibility for REAP and inform them of potential eligibility to other benefit programs.

This change affects beneficiaries differently:

- » **Current REAP beneficiaries** – Veterans who were attending an educational institution on November 24, 2015, or during the last semester, quarter, or term ending prior to that date, are eligible to continue to receive REAP benefits until November 25, 2019.
- » **REAP beneficiaries not attending school** – Veterans who applied for REAP but were not attending an educational institution on November 24, 2015, or during the last semester, quarter, or term ending prior to that date are no longer eligible to receive REAP benefits. You may be eligible to receive benefits under the Post-9/11 GI Bill.
- » **New REAP applicants** – Veterans who have not enrolled in school and applied for REAP benefits prior to November 25, 2015, are no longer eligible for REAP benefits. However, in most cases, you will be eligible for the Post-9/11 GI Bill.

You may be eligible for Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits depending on the dates of your periods of service. New applications for REAP received on or after November 25, 2015, will be evaluated to determine your eligibility for all programs, including Post-9/11 GI Bill, and may award you benefits under a different program.

If you're using REAP but would like to make an irrevocable election to use the Post-9/11 GI Bill instead, please call (888) GIBILL-1 (7 a.m. - 6 p.m. CST Monday - Friday) to speak with an education call center agent.

For more information please visit [www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/reap.asp](http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/reap.asp).

## **POST-VIETNAM ERA VETERANS' EDUCATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

The Post-Vietnam Era Veterans' Education Assistance Program (VEAP), Chapter 32, is available if a veteran elected to make contributions from military pay to participate in this education benefit program. Contributions are matched on a \$2 for \$1 basis by the government. A veteran may use these benefits for degree, certificate, correspondence, apprenticeship/on-the-job training programs, and vocational flight training programs. In certain circumstances, remedial, deficiency, and refresher training may also be available.

Benefit entitlement is 1 to 36 months depending on the number of monthly contributions. A veteran has 10 years from the veteran's release from active duty to use VEAP benefits. If there is unused entitlement after the 10-year period, the veteran's portion remaining in the fund will be automatically refunded.

### **WHO IS ELIGIBLE?**

To be eligible for VEAP, a veteran must meet the following requirements:

- » Entered service for the first time between January 1, 1977, and June 30, 1985;
- » Opened a contribution account before April 1, 1987;
- » Voluntarily contributed from \$25 to \$2,700;
- » Completed the first period of service; and

- » Was discharged or released from service under conditions other than dishonorable.
- » If a veteran is currently on active duty and wishes to receive VEAP benefits, they must have at least 3 months of contributions available.

Contributions may be withdrawn if the veteran does not meet the basic eligibility requirements, or if the veteran formally requests a refund of the contributions withheld.

To apply for the VEAP education benefits, complete USDVA Form 22-1990 found at [www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/vba-22-1990-are.pdf](http://www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/vba-22-1990-are.pdf) or apply online at [www.gibill.va.gov](http://www.gibill.va.gov).

## **SURVIVORS' AND DEPENDENTS' EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

The Survivors' and Dependents' Educational Assistance Program (DEA), Chapter 35, provides education and training opportunities to dependents of veterans who are permanently and totally disabled with a USDVA rating of 100 percent due to a service-related condition, or who died while on active duty or as a result of a service-related condition. The program offers dependents up to 45 months of education benefits, which may be used for degree and certificate programs, apprenticeship, and on-the-job training. In addition, spouses may take a correspondence course. Remedial, deficiency, and refresher courses may be approved under certain circumstances.

### **WHO IS ELIGIBLE?**

To be eligible for DEA, an individual must be the son, daughter, or spouse of:

- » A veteran who died or is permanently and totally disabled as the result of a service-connected disability. The disability must arise out of active service in the Armed Forces;
- » A veteran who died from any cause while such permanent and total service-connected disability was in existence;
- » A service member missing in action or captured in line of duty by a hostile force;
- » A service member forcibly detained or interned in line of duty by a foreign government or power; or

- » A service member who is hospitalized or receiving outpatient treatment for a service connected permanent and total disability and is likely to be discharged for that disability.

## HOW LONG AM I ELIGIBLE FOR?

- » Children of a veteran who wish to receive benefits for attending school or job training must be between the ages of 18 and 26. In certain instances, it is possible to begin before age 18 and to continue after age 26. Marriage is not a bar to this benefit, but benefits may not be used while a veteran child is on active duty. To pursue training after military service, discharge must not be under dishonorable conditions. USDVA can extend the period of eligibility by the number of months and days equal to the time spent on active duty. This extension cannot generally go beyond the 31st birthday; however, there are some exceptions.
- » For a veteran spouse, benefits end 10 years from the date USDVA determines eligibility or from the date of death of the veteran. If USDVA rated the veteran permanently and totally disabled with an effective date of 3 years from discharge, a spouse will remain eligible for 20 years from the effective date of the rating. This change is effective October 10, 2008, and no benefits may be paid for any training taken prior to that date.
- » For surviving spouses (spouses of service members who died on active duty) benefits end 20 years from the date of death.

To apply for DEA, complete USDVA Form 22-5490 found at [www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/vba-22-5490-are.pdf](http://www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/vba-22-5490-are.pdf) or apply for DEA online at [www.gibill.va.gov](http://www.gibill.va.gov).

Surviving spouses and dependents of veterans who are service-connected disabled should see the College Tuition Fee Waiver for Dependents (page 120).

## VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AND EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

The Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Program (VR&E) is also called the Chapter 31 program. The mission of VR&E is to help veterans with service-connected disabilities rated 20 percent or higher by USDVA prepare for, find, and keep suitable jobs. For veterans with service-connected disabilities so severe they cannot immediately consider work, VR&E offers services to improve their ability to live as independently as possible.

The VR&E Program is designed to help a service-connected disabled veteran overcome employment handicaps imposed by such disability, so that the veteran is able to find and keep suitable employment as well as achieve maximum independence in daily living. The primary goal of the program is to train disabled veterans for appropriate employment. Education benefits for school attendance may be authorized if that is determined to be the best way to prepare a particular veteran for entry or re-entry into the labor force. Services generally last up to 48 months, but they can be extended in certain instances.

## **WHO IS ELIGIBLE?**

Usually, a veteran must first be awarded USDVA disability compensation to be eligible for the VR&E Program. In some cases, a veteran who is awaiting discharge from the service because of a disability may be eligible. Veterans must also meet the following conditions:

- » Served on or after September 16, 1940; and
- » Service-connected disabilities are rated at least 20 percent disabling by USDVA; and
- » Need vocational rehabilitation to overcome barriers to employment; and
- » Less than 12 years since USDVA notified the veteran of qualified service-connected disabilities.

## **HOW DOES VR&E WORK?**

- » An individualized, written agreement of services, resources, and criteria used to achieve successful rehabilitation is outlined.
- » Once the Rehabilitation Plan/Agreement is developed and signed, a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (VRC) or case manager will work with the veteran to implement the plan to achieve suitable employment or independent living.
- » The VRC coordinates services such as tutorial assistance, training in job-seeking skills, medical and dental referrals, adjustment counseling, payment of training allowance, if applicable, and other services as required to achieve rehabilitation.

- » Depending on their circumstances, veterans will work with VRCs to select one of the following five tracks of services:
  - » Reemployment (with a former employer);
  - » Rapid employment services for new employment;
  - » Self-employment;
  - » Employment through long term services; or
  - » Independent living services.
- » The Rehabilitation Plan/Agreement is reviewed annually to determine whether any changes may be needed to better serve the veteran.

Recent legislation now allows those who are eligible for both VR&E benefits and Post-9/11 GI Bill® benefits to choose the Post-9/11 GI Bill's® monthly housing allowance instead of the VR&E subsistence allowance.

To apply for VR&E benefits, complete USDVA Form 28-1900 found at [www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/vba-28-1900-are.pdf](http://www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/vba-28-1900-are.pdf) or apply online at [www.vba.va.gov/bln/vre](http://www.vba.va.gov/bln/vre).

## **USDVA WORK-STUDY PROGRAM**

The Work-Study Program operated by the USDVA is available to any eligible veteran or dependent receiving USDVA education benefits and attending school three-quarter time or more. An individual working under this program may work at a school's veterans office, USDVA Regional Office, USDVA Medical Facility, CalVet, or other approved USDVA employment sites.

### **HOW DOES IT WORK?**

To apply for a USDVA work-study position within an approved site, the student must obtain an enrollment certification (USDVA Form 22-1999-6) from their school's veterans office and submit an application (USDVA Form 22-8691) to any of the approved USDVA work site locations that are accepting applications for work study students. The work-study student will earn an hourly wage equal to the federal minimum wage or the state minimum wage, whichever is greater, for work completed during or between periods of enrollment. These wages are tax-free. A work study student will be given a USDVA contract with an allotted amount of hours per semester/per contract, but the total number of hours worked cannot be more than 25 times the number of weeks in the

enrollment period. If a work-study student is in a work-study job at a college or university, the school may pay the student the difference between the amounts USDVA pays and the amount the school normally pays other work-study students doing the same job as the USDVA work-study student.

USDVA's work-study allowance is available to persons training on a full-time or three-quarter time basis under the following programs:

- » Post-9/11 GI Bill® (38 U.S.C. Chapter 33)  
(Veterans and transfer-of-entitlement recipients)
- » Montgomery GI Bill® -Active Duty (38 U.S.C. Chapter 30)
- » REAP Participants
- » Montgomery GI Bill® -Selected Reserve (10 U.S.C. Chapter 1606)
- » Post-Vietnam Era Veterans' Educational Assistance Program  
(38 U.S.C. Chapter 32)
- » Dependents' Educational Assistance Program (38 U.S.C. Chapter 35)
- » Eligible dependents under 38 U.S.C. Chapter 35 may use work-study only while training in a State.
- » National Call to Service Participants
- » Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment Program (38 U.S.C. Chapter 31)

USDVA selects students for the work-study program based on different factors. Such factors include:

- » Ability of the student to complete the work-study contract before the end of his or her eligibility to education benefits; and
- » Job availability within normal commuting distance to the student.

The number of applicants selected will depend on the availability of a position at an approved USDVA work-study site location. Veterans with service-connected disabilities of at least 30 percent may be given priority consideration.

#### **WHAT ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF ACCEPTABLE WORK?**

- » Processing USDVA paperwork at schools or USDVA offices.

- » Performing outreach services under the supervision of a certified USDVA Work Site Supervisor.
- » Performing services at USDVA medical facilities, at USDVA Regional Offices, or at USDVA's National Cemetery Administration.

For more information about education benefits, contact your local CVSO (page 187).

---

## OTHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS FOR VETERANS

### TROOPS TO TEACHERS PROGRAM

Troops to Teachers (TTT) was established in 1993 to assist transitioning service members and veterans in beginning new careers as K-12 school teachers in public, charter, and Bureau of Indian Affairs schools. The program provides counseling and referral services for participants to help them meet education and licensing requirements to teach and subsequently helps them secure a teaching position. Since 1993, more than 20,000 veterans have successfully transitioned to a career in education.

**Stipends** of up to \$5,000 may be available for eligible participants to assist with obtaining the required education level, teacher certification, and licensing. Participants must:

- » be enrolled in an accredited institution that will result in licensure as a full time teacher;
- » commit to full time teaching in an eligible or high need school for a period of three years;
- » if not retired or discharged due to service-connected physical disability, commit to serve three years in reserves.

*Note: A participant may not receive a stipend if eligible for Chapter 33 (Post 9/11) benefits.*

**Bonuses** of up to \$10,000 may be available for eligible participants as an incentive to teach in an eligible or high need school.

- » For academic subjects, a baccalaureate or advance degree from an accredited institution of higher education is required.
- » For career or technical subjects, participants must:
  - » have the equivalent of one year of college from an accredited institution of higher education or the equivalent in military education and training as certified by the DoD; or
  - » meet the certification or licensing requirements in the State in which the participant will be teaching.
- » Participants must commit to full time teaching in an eligible or high need school for a period of three years.
- » If not retired or discharged due to service-connected physical disability, participants must commit to serve three years in the reserves.

*Note: The maximum amount of financial assistance provided to eligible TTT participants may not exceed \$10,000.*

For more information on the California TTT Program, visit [www.proudtoserveagain.com](http://www.proudtoserveagain.com).

## **VETERANS UPWARD BOUND PROGRAM**

Veterans Upward Bound is designed to motivate and assist veterans in the development of academic and other requisite skills necessary for acceptance and success in a program of postsecondary education. The program provides assessment and enhancement of basic skills through counseling, mentoring, tutoring and academic instruction in the core subject areas. The primary goal of the program is to increase the rate at which participants enroll in and complete postsecondary education programs.

All veterans Upward Bound projects must provide instruction in mathematics through pre-calculus, laboratory science, foreign language, composition and literature. Projects may also provide short-term remedial or refresher courses for veterans who are high school graduates but have delayed pursuing postsecondary education. Projects are also expected to assist veterans in securing support services from other locally available resources such as the Veterans Administration, state veterans agencies, veteran associations, and other state and local agencies that serve veterans.

Other services include:

- » education or counseling services designed to improve the financial and economic literacy of participants;
- » instruction in reading, writing, study skills, and other subjects necessary for success in education beyond high school;
- » academic, financial, or personal counseling;
- » tutorial services;
- » mentoring programs;
- » information on postsecondary education opportunities;
- » assistance in completing college entrance and financial aid applications;
- » assistance in preparing for college entrance exams;
- » information on the full range of federal student financial aid programs and benefits; and
- » guidance and assistance in alternative education programs for secondary school dropouts that lead to receipt of a regular secondary school diploma, entry into general education development programs or postsecondary education

To be eligible for the program you must:

- » Be a U.S. Military veteran with 181 or more days active duty service and discharged on/after January 31, 1955, under conditions other than dishonorable; and
- » meet the criteria for low-income status according to guidelines published annually by the U.S. Department of Education, AND/OR a first-generation potential college graduate; and
- » demonstrate academic need for Veterans Upward Bound according; and
- » meet other local eligibility criteria as noted in the local project's Approved Grant Proposal, such as county of residence, etc.

For more information, visit [www.navub.org](http://www.navub.org).

CH/05

---

# Housing



---

## CALVET HOME LOANS

CalVet offers great home loan benefits for veterans living in California who want to purchase a home in California. A CalVet home loan saves borrowers money and provides home protection that is typically less expensive than that available elsewhere. CalVet expanded eligibility so most honorably discharged veterans and active duty service members wanting to buy a home are eligible.

CalVet's Home Loan program is not the federal loan guaranty program provided by USDVA. Rather, CalVet is a lender of home loan funds. Like a commercial bank, CalVet has a variety of loan options available, one of which is the federal USDVA guaranty program. Unlike commercial lenders, CalVet offers a robust program that includes low-cost home insurance, which covers fire/hazard, earthquake, and flood damage.

CalVet offers loans on:

- » Single family homes, condos, and mobile homes on land for up to 125 percent of Fannie Mae maximum loan limits (up to \$849,562 in some counties);
- » Mobile homes in a park for up to \$175,000;
- » Farm loans for up to 150 percent of Fannie Mae maximum loan limits (\$1,019,475 in some counties);
- » Home improvement loans for up to \$150,000;
- » Rehabilitation loans may be an option for houses not up to USDVA standards;
- » Construction take-out or construction loans for building a new home.

Veterans benefit from this great loan program from day one! It is the State of California's way of thanking veterans for their service to this country. This program is available to veterans at no cost to California taxpayers. CalVet Home Loan program features include:

- » Low or no down payment
- » Low fees/closing costs
- » Competitive interest rates

- » Low cost group home insurance - fire/hazard and earthquake and flood only
- » Low home insurance deductibles
- » Fast and friendly service by a state agency dedicated to assisting our veterans and families

## LOW DOWN PAYMENT

CalVet home loans are available with no down payment for those who are eligible for a loan guaranty from USDVA or with a down payment of just three percent of the purchase price for the CalVet 97 loan program.

## LOW FEES AND CLOSING COSTS

CalVet obtains a loan guaranty on loans that qualify for the USDVA program. On non-federal USDVA loans, CalVet provides a lender-managed loan guaranty. In all cases, a loan guaranty fee of between 1.25 and 3.30 percent of the loan amount will be charged. Under certain circumstances, the fee may be added to the loan amount. This is a one-time fee, and will not affect the interest rate or monthly installment unless it is financed in the loan. A loan origination fee (common with most loans) of 1 percent of the loan amount is also charged. This fee must be paid in escrow.

CalVet does not charge many of the closing costs charged by other lenders, e.g., underwriting fees, processing fees, tax service fees, flood certification fees, or document fees.

## INTEREST RATES

Interest rates for new loans are reviewed frequently to ensure the rates CalVet offers are competitive in the market. Interest rates are subject to change without notice. Current rates are posted on the CalVet website, [www.calvet.ca.gov/homeloans](http://www.calvet.ca.gov/homeloans). A borrower's rate is "locked in" when a fully executed purchase agreement is received. If rates are reduced while the loan is being processed, the borrower will receive the benefit of the lower rate at no additional cost.

## FREE PRE-APPROVAL

In the current real estate market, borrowers need to be pre-approved before placing an offer on a property. CalVet offers pre-approvals at no cost. By completing an application and providing military documents, income,

and asset verification, CalVet will determine the veteran's eligibility, credit worthiness, and loan amount, and CalVet will extend a pre-approval letter to those who meet the qualifications. A preapproval application can be filled out online at [www.calvet.ca.gov/homeloans](http://www.calvet.ca.gov/homeloans) or by calling (866) 653-2510 toll free to have a pre-approval package sent.

## REUSABLE LOANS

A veteran may obtain a new CalVet loan each time they decide to change residences. Once the previous loan has been paid off, a veteran may obtain a new loan with the current features, subject to eligibility and financial qualification.

## HOME PROTECTION PLANS

To ensure that the investment is safe and sound, CalVet provides comprehensive protection for the veteran and veteran's family. CalVet loan holders get the most comprehensive structural coverage available in California against flood and earthquake damage. CalVet provides guaranteed replacement cost for these perils, and the deductible is a low \$500 on flood claims, and \$500 or 5 percent of the coverable loss (whichever is greater) on earthquake and mudslide claims. Should disaster strike, the homeowner will be on the way to recovery in days and at a considerable savings over the costs associated with private policies. Most loans also include guaranteed replacement cost fire and hazard coverage, with low premiums and a low \$250 deductible.

If you are a property owner with a CalVet Home loan and you experienced property loss or were required to evacuate your home, please contact our Claims Adjuster's 24-hour hotline at (800) 626-1613. If you have questions about your homeowner insurance, please call the CalVet Home Protection Unit, Monday – Friday, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at (866) 421-6978.

CalVet loan holders under the age of 62 at the time of loan funding have the option to purchase life insurance, at competitive group rates, to pay off the full balance of the home loan in the event of death while insured. Both the veteran and veteran's spouse have the opportunity to apply, and there is no disqualification for an existing military disability. In most cases, the insurance premium will be included in the monthly loan payment, so there is no separate bill to pay. CalVet's easy application process usually requires completion of only one form. Coverage ends when the veteran pays the loan

in full or the insured reaches the age of 70, whichever occurs first. Veterans can enjoy peace of mind knowing their family home is protected.

## ELIGIBILITY

Nearly all veterans purchasing homes in California are now eligible, including veterans who served during peacetime. Only 90 days of active duty and a discharge classified as “Honorable” or “Under Honorable Conditions” are required. Information to confirm the veteran’s eligibility is on the DD Form 214. Service members currently on active duty are eligible after meeting the 90 days of active duty requirement. A statement of service from the service member’s current command is required. Current members of the National Guard and the U.S. Military Reserves who qualify as first-time home buyers or purchase in certain targeted areas are eligible as well. Former members of the National Guard and/or Reserves whose only active duty was for training purposes are not eligible. However, if during service, the veteran was ordered to active duty by Presidential Executive Order, the veteran may be eligible. For information about eligibility, call CalVet at (916) 503-8359 or (866) 653-2510 toll free. More information is available at [www.calvet.ca.gov/homeloans](http://www.calvet.ca.gov/homeloans).

## HAVING TROUBLE MAKING CALVET HOME LOAN PAYMENTS?

CalVet loan holders who have suffered a hardship and are unable to afford their monthly CalVet home loan payment may qualify for a loan term extension that will reduce the loan payment. For details, call the CalVet Collection Unit at (916) 503-8356 or (800) 700-2127 toll free, or visit our website at [www.calvet.ca.gov/homeloans/pages/hardship-assistance.aspx](http://www.calvet.ca.gov/homeloans/pages/hardship-assistance.aspx).

Certain state and federal laws may protect service members who are struggling financially because of activation and deployment. The Service Members Civil Relief Act of 2003 (SCRA), formerly known as the Soldiers’ and Sailors’ Civil Relief Act of 1940 (SSCRA), is a federal law that gives all military members some important rights as they enter active duty or are called to deployment. One benefit of the SCRA is the ability to reduce loan interest rates to 6 percent under certain circumstances.

Additionally, the California Military Families Financial Relief Act allows for the deferral of loan payments for members of the Reserves or National Guard who are called to active duty. Homeowners may call the CalVet Loan Servicing Unit at (916) 503-8362 or (866) 653-2507 toll free, or send an e-mail to [loanserv@calvet.ca.gov](mailto:loanserv@calvet.ca.gov).

---

## USDVA HOME LOAN GUARANTY

USDVA provides a home loan guaranty benefit and other housing-related programs to help service members and veterans buy, build, repair, retain, or adapt a home for personal occupancy. USDVA Home Loans are provided by private lenders, such as banks, mortgage companies, and CalVet Home Loans (a state agency). USDVA guarantees a portion of the loan, enabling the lender to provide more favorable terms.

USDVA home loans can be used to:

- » buy a home, or a condominium unit in a USDVA-approved project;
- » build a home;
- » simultaneously purchase and improve a home;
- » improve a home by installing energy-related features or making energy efficient improvements; or
- » buy a manufactured home and/or lot.

The guaranty USDVA provides to lenders allows them to provide veterans with more favorable terms, including:

- » no down payment as long as the sales price does not exceed the appraised value;
- » no private mortgage insurance premium requirement;
- » a limit to the amount that can be charged for closing costs;
- » closing costs may be paid by the seller;
- » no penalty for paying off the loan early; and
- » possible USDVA assistance for those who run into difficulty making payments.

Veterans do not have to be a first-time homebuyer to use a USDVA Home Loan Guaranty. The benefit may be used more than once so long as the prior USDVA loan has been sold and the loan paid in full, or a qualified veteran-transferee (buyer) agrees to assume the USDVA loan and substitute his or her entitlement for the same amount of the entitlement originally used by the veteran seller.

To be eligible, a service member or veteran must have suitable credit, sufficient income, and a valid Certificate of Eligibility (COE). The home must be for the veteran's personal occupancy.

The spouse of a veteran can also apply for home loan eligibility under one of the following conditions:

- » Un-remarried spouse of a veteran who died while in service or from a service-connected disability.
- » Spouse of a service member missing in action or a Prisoner of War.
- » Surviving spouse who remarries on or after age 57 and on or after December 16, 2003.

*(Note: a surviving spouse who remarried before December 16, 2003, and on or after attaining age 57, must have applied no later than December 15, 2004, to establish home loan eligibility. USDVA must deny applications from surviving spouses who remarried before December 6, 2003, that are received after December 15, 2004.)*

- » Surviving spouses of certain totally disabled veterans whose disability may not have been the cause of death.

Certain U.S. citizens who served in the armed forces of a government allied with the United States in World War II may be eligible. Individuals with service as members in certain organizations, such as public health service officers, cadets at the United States Military, Air Force, or Coast Guard Academy, midshipmen at the United States Naval Academy, officers of National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration, merchant seaman with World War II service, and others may also apply for eligibility.

After establishing eligibility, the veteran will need a COE. The COE verifies to the lender that the veteran qualifies for a USDVA-backed loan. Veterans may apply for a COE through the lender, online at the eBenefits portal, [www.ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits-portal/ebenefits.portal](http://www.ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits-portal/ebenefits.portal), or by completing USDVA Form 26-1880 request for COE and mailing it to:

**USDVA Loan Eligibility Center**

Attn: COE (262)

P.O. Box 100034

Decatur, GA 30031

If you are unable to print the form you may call (888) 768-2132 and follow the prompts for eligibility. USDVA will mail the form. Contact the local CVSO (page 187) for assistance in completing the application.

---

## **VETERANS HOMES OF CALIFORNIA**

The first Veterans Home of California was established in 1884 for Civil War and Mexican-American War veterans. Today, CalVet operates eight veterans homes located throughout the state. The veterans homes provide residential and long-term care services in a home-like environment that promotes dignity and features individualized care. Our homes assist residents to ensure they have coverage to meet their health care needs. Residents enjoy enriched activity opportunities including social events, dances, patriotic programs, volunteer activities, arts and crafts, computer access, shopping trips, and other on/off-site activities.

Our veterans homes range in size from serving 60 residents in small assisted living facilities to 1,000 residents on a 500-acre campus. Each home is distinctive within its region and offers its own unique environment, levels of care combinations, and social and recreational activities. The levels of care include domiciliary or independent living (DOM), residential care facility for the elderly or assisted living (RCFE), intermediate care facility (ICF), skilled nursing facility (SNF), and SNF Memory Care for our veterans with symptoms of Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia or cognitive decline.

### **LEVELS OF CARE DEFINITIONS**

#### **INDEPENDENT LIVING—DOMICILIARY (DOM)**

DOM is for residents who may have some functional limitations, but who are independent and able to perform activities of daily living with no assistance. Non-nursing staff provide supervision. DOM residents have access to the Home's outpatient clinic, dining facilities, and other services, and may be elevated to higher levels of care when they require greater assistance or nursing support. DOM services are available at our homes in Barstow, Chula Vista and Yountville.

## ASSISTED LIVING—RESIDENTIAL CARE FACILITY FOR THE ELDERLY (RCFE)

RCFE, also known as assisted living, is available for residents who require assistance and supervision with some activities of daily living. RCFE services may include care by licensed nurses. RCFE is available at our homes in Chula Vista, Fresno, Lancaster, Redding, Ventura, West Los Angeles, and Yountville.

## INTERMEDIATE CARE FACILITY (ICF)

ICF require intermittent licensed nursing assistance with medications and treatments, and they generally require certified nursing assistance with some daily living activities. ICF differs from skilled nursing care by the degree of need for the services of licensed nurses. ICF is available at our homes in Barstow and Yountville.

## SKILLED NURSING FACILITY CARE (SNF)

SNF care provides the 24-hour services of licensed nurses. It is more comprehensive than intermediate care, but less comprehensive than acute care. SNF patients may receive rehabilitation therapy, nursing, pharmaceutical, activity, and dietary services. A memory care program within the SNF level of care provides a supervised environment for veterans with symptoms of moderate-to-severe confusion or memory loss, or for veterans who have difficulty making decisions, solving problems, or caring for themselves due to cognitive decline. SNF care is available at our homes in Barstow, Chula Vista, Fresno, Redding, West Los Angeles, and Yountville. SNF memory care is available in Fresno, Redding, West Los Angeles, and Yountville.



### Veterans Home of California – Barstow

100 East Veterans Parkway  
Barstow, CA 92311  
(800) 746-0606

Resident Capacity: 220

*Levels of Care: DOM, ICF, SNF*



### Veterans Home of California – Chula Vista

700 East Naples Court  
Chula Vista, CA 91911  
(888) 857-2146

Resident Capacity: 305

*Levels of Care: DOM, RCFE, SNF*



### **Veterans Home of California – Fresno**

2811 West California Avenue

Fresno, CA 93706

(855) 769-5792

Resident Capacity: 300

*Levels of Care: RCFE, SNF, SNF Memory Care*



### **Veterans Home of California – Lancaster**

45221 30th Street West

Lancaster, CA 93536

(888) 272-6030

Resident Capacity: 60

*Levels of Care: RCFE*



### **Veterans Home of California – Redding**

3400 Knighton Road

Redding, CA 96002

(855) 769-5791

Resident Capacity: 150

*Levels of Care: RCFE, SNF, SNF Memory Care*



### **Veterans Home of California – Ventura**

10900 Telephone Road

Ventura, CA 93004

(888) 272-2104

Resident Capacity: 60

*Levels of Care: RCFE*



### **Veterans Home of California – West LA**

11500 Nimitz Avenue

Los Angeles, CA 90049

(877) 605-1332

Resident Capacity: 396

*Levels of Care: RCFE, SNF, SNF Memory Care*



### **Veterans Home of California – Yountville**

260 California Drive

Yountville, CA 94599

(800) 404-8387

Resident Capacity: 1,021

*Levels of Care: DOM, RCFE, ICF, SNF, SNF Memory Care*



## CalVet

Headquarters for the Veterans Homes  
Division  
1227 O Street, Suite 324  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
(800) 952-5626

## ADMISSION ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

All eligible veterans are encouraged to apply for admission. To be admitted to a veterans home, a veteran must:

- » be at least 55 years of age or be disabled or homeless;
- » have served in active duty in the U.S. military and have been discharged under conditions other than dishonorable;
- » be eligible for a level of care provided by the veterans home (contact the individual home for information on levels of care and eligibility requirements);
- » be a California resident; and
- » be eligible for health care benefits from the USDVA.

Applications for admission to one of our homes can be obtained through the local CVSO (page 187), or online at [www.calvet.ca.gov/vethomes/documents/vhcapp.pdf](http://www.calvet.ca.gov/vethomes/documents/vhcapp.pdf).

## HOW TO APPLY

1. Visit [www.calvet.ca.gov/calvet-programs/veteran-homes](http://www.calvet.ca.gov/calvet-programs/veteran-homes).
2. Select the veterans home of your choice.
3. Click on the button [Apply Today] to download the application.
4. Print the application packet or call the home of your choice to request a packet be mailed to you. Applications can also be obtained through the local CVSO (page 187).
5. Review the application carefully.

6. Complete and sign all forms, and have your physician complete Section C.
7. Mail the completed application packet to the Home you have selected.

---

## **PROGRAMS FOR VETERANS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS**

Although, it is difficult to get an accurate count of veterans experiencing homelessness due to the transient nature of the homeless population, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) estimates in 2016 that 39,471 veterans were homeless on any given night nationwide.

Approximately 12,700 veterans of Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom, and Operation New Dawn were homeless in 2010. The number of young veterans experiencing homelessness is increasing, but only constitutes 8.8 percent of the overall homeless veteran population.

Veterans often suffer from conditions that make it difficult to find and maintain gainful employment and pay for housing. Along with the high rates of posttraumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain injury, the USDVA has found that approximately 55 percent of veterans experiencing homelessness suffer from mental health issues, 70 percent are affected by substance abuse issues, and 40 percent of women veterans experiencing homelessness report severe forms of mental illness, mostly due to higher rates of military sexual trauma.

CalVet is addressing veteran homelessness by working with various government and non-government agencies and organizations throughout California to provide advocacy and services needed by the homeless population and veterans dealing with the threat of homelessness. To find housing assistance programs available in your area, call (800) 952-5626 or visit [www.va.gov/homeless](http://www.va.gov/homeless).

## VETERANS HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION

The Veterans Housing and Homelessness Prevention (VHHP) program is a collaboration between the California Department of Veterans Affairs, the California Department of Housing and Community Development and the California Housing Finance Agency to provide voter-approved Proposition 41 general obligation bond financing to fund the development of rental housing for veterans experiencing homelessness, or who have extremely low income.

Affordable housing developers must partner with veterans service providers to build affordable housing dwellings, including supportive and transitional housing, which will provide housing, case management, and supportive services to assist veterans and their families to achieve housing stability and improve self-sufficiency.

### NOTICE OF FUNDING AVAILABILITY (NOFA)

Funding for housing developments is provided through a competitive application process utilizing the Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) structure. NOFA awards are made to qualifying developers and nonprofit entities to construct, acquire, rehabilitate, or preserve affordable multifamily housing for veterans and their families. Successful applicants will be experienced development organizations that are partnered with service providers experienced in serving the veteran population.

Veterans who are experiencing homelessness and/or have extremely low incomes and are in need of housing can be found throughout California. Large concentrations of veterans experiencing housing instability, however, are limited to a few regions within the state. To encourage the development of housing within these regions and ensure that none of these regions are left out, NOFA funds are awarded throughout California with specific allocations of funds within geographic regions with high concentrations of veterans.

### PROGRAM GOALS

- » Make available at least \$75 million annually for the development and preservation of affordable housing and related facilities to assist veterans and their families achieve housing stability.
- » House veterans at a variety of income levels, with a focus on veterans experiencing temporary or chronic homelessness.

- » Ensure 50 percent of the funding serves extremely low-income veterans and 60 percent of the housing reach extremely low-income households and shall be permanent supportive housing.
- » Prioritize housing to be developed in areas with especially high concentrations of California’s most vulnerable veterans, while preserving funding for other areas.

*Note: The VHHP Program does not provide funding directly to individuals. If you are a veteran in need of housing assistance please contact the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs’ Nation Call Center for Homeless Veterans Hotline at (877) 4AID VET ((877) 424-3838) or the California Department of Veterans Affairs at (877) 741-8532 or by email at VHHP@calvet.ca.gov.*

For more information on the VHHP Program, please visit the California Department of Housing and Community Development website at [www.hcd.ca.gov/grants-funding/active-funding/vhhp.shtml](http://www.hcd.ca.gov/grants-funding/active-funding/vhhp.shtml) or email CalVet at VHHP@calvet.ca.gov.

## **U.S. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS HOMELESS PROGRAMS**

Every USDVA Medical Center has a Homeless Veterans Coordinator responsible for helping veterans experiencing homelessness access USDVA and community-based care, conducting outreach, case management, referrals to benefits counselors, linkage to health care, and housing assistance. For a complete listing of USDVA health care facilities and Homeless Veterans Coordinators, see contact information on (page 108).

### **HUD-VASH**

Through a cooperative partnership, the Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Department of Veterans Affairs Supported Housing (HUD-VASH) program provides long-term case management, supportive services, and permanent housing support. HUD provides “Housing Choice” Section 8 vouchers designated for HUD-VASH to participating public housing authorities to assist with rent payment.

To be eligible for this program, veterans must be eligible for USDVA health care, be homeless, and participate in case management services to obtain and sustain permanent independent community housing. For eligibility

criteria, contact the county’s Continuum of Care Coordinator (page 161), the nearest USDVA Homeless Veterans Coordinator (page 108), or visit [www.va.gov/homeless/hud-vash\\_eligibility.asp](http://www.va.gov/homeless/hud-vash_eligibility.asp).

## **SUPPORTIVE SERVICES FOR VETERAN FAMILIES**

The Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) program provides grants and technical assistance to community-based, nonprofit organizations to help very low-income veterans and their families living in or transitioning to permanent housing. Grantees provide eligible veteran families with outreach, case management and assistance in obtaining USDVA and other benefits. Grantees may also provide time-limited payments to third parties (e.g., landlords, utility companies, moving companies, and licensed child care providers) if these payments help veteran families stay in or acquire permanent housing on a sustainable basis. For more information on the SSVF program and providers, visit [www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf.asp](http://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf.asp) or call toll-free at (877) 737-0111.

## **DOMICILIARY CARE**

Domiciliary Care for Homeless Veterans is designed to provide state-of-the-art, high-quality residential rehabilitation and treatment services for veterans with multiple and severe medical conditions, mental illness, addiction, or psychosocial deficits. For additional information regarding USDVA homeless prevention programs, visit [www.va.gov/homeless/dchv.asp](http://www.va.gov/homeless/dchv.asp).

## **HOMELESS PATIENT ALIGNED CARE TEAMS**

The Homeless Patient Aligned Care Teams program is a coordinated “medical home” specifically tailored to the needs of veterans experiencing homelessness that integrates clinical care with delivery of social services with enhanced access and community coordination. Implementation of this model is expected to address many of the health disparity and equity issues facing the homeless veteran population and result in reduced emergency department use and hospitalizations, improved chronic disease management, and improved housing readiness with fewer veterans returning to homelessness once housed. For more information visit [www.va.gov/homeless/h\\_pact.asp](http://www.va.gov/homeless/h_pact.asp).

## HOMELESS VETERANS DENTAL PROGRAM

The Homeless Veterans Dental Program provides dental treatment for eligible veterans in a number of programs: Domiciliary, Residential Rehabilitation Treatment, USDVA Grant and Per Diem, Compensated Work Therapy/ Transitional Residence, Health Care for Homeless Veterans (contract bed), and Community Residential Care. For more information, visit [www.va.gov/homeless/dental.asp](http://www.va.gov/homeless/dental.asp).

## HOMELESS VETERAN SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

The Homeless Veteran Supported Employment Program provides vocational assistance, job development and placement, and ongoing support to improve employment outcomes among homeless veterans and veterans at risk of homelessness. Formerly homeless veterans who have been trained as Vocational Rehabilitation Specialists provide these services. For more information, visit [www.va.gov/HOMELESS/employment\\_programs.asp](http://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/employment_programs.asp).

## COMPENSATED WORK THERAPY

The Compensated Work Therapy (CWT) program is comprised of three unique programs which assist homeless veterans in returning to competitive employment: Sheltered Workshop, Transitional Work, and Supported Employment. Veterans in CWT are paid at least the federal or state minimum wage, whichever is higher. For more information, visit [www.va.gov/health/cwt](http://www.va.gov/health/cwt).

## STATEWIDE SERVICES AND OFFICES

California is home to many nonprofit and community-based organizations that provide a variety of statewide services to homeless veterans and veterans at risk of becoming homeless. For a statewide directory of California homeless service organizations, visit [www.calvet.ca.gov/vetservices/documents/homeless%20resources.pdf](http://www.calvet.ca.gov/vetservices/documents/homeless%20resources.pdf).

## CONTINUUM OF CARE

HUD allocates homeless assistance grants to organizations that participate in local homeless assistance program planning networks. Each of these networks is called a Continuum of Care (CoC). CoC committees at the city, county and state level coordinate their efforts to identify the needs of local homeless populations, the resources currently available in the community to address those needs, and additional resources needed to fill identified

gaps. The CoC process is a community-based approach that encourages the creation of collaborative and comprehensive systems to meet the diverse needs of local homeless populations.

To find contact information for homeless assistance coordinators in Northern California, visit [www.hud.gov/local/ca/homeless/continuumcare/ncalcoc.cfm](http://www.hud.gov/local/ca/homeless/continuumcare/ncalcoc.cfm).

To view contact information for homeless assistance coordinators in Southern California, visit [www.hud.gov/local/ca/homeless/continuumcare/scalcoc.cfm](http://www.hud.gov/local/ca/homeless/continuumcare/scalcoc.cfm).

## STAND DOWNS

Stand Downs are typically one- to three-day events organized by community-based veterans services organizations and nonprofit organizations, with cooperation from a variety of state, federal, and private agencies. Stand Downs provide vital services for veterans, such as food, shelter, clothing, health screenings, benefits counseling, and referrals to a variety of other necessary services like housing, employment, and substance abuse treatment. In addition, veterans have access to Homeless Courts where they are able to resolve minor violations and warrants. CalVet is committed to assisting veteran service organizations who wish to conduct stand downs in their communities. For more information call (800) 952-5626. To volunteer and/or find a list of all California Stand Down events, visit [www.calvet.ca.gov/VetServices/Pages/Stand-Downs.aspx](http://www.calvet.ca.gov/VetServices/Pages/Stand-Downs.aspx).

## CALL CENTERS FOR VETERANS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

Trained call center counselors are available 24/7 to offer veterans experiencing homelessness, and veterans at risk of becoming homeless free referrals to local homeless shelters.

- » The National Call Center for Homeless Veterans Hotline was founded by USDVA to ensure that veterans experiencing homelessness or veterans at risk for homelessness have free, 24/7 access to trained counselors. The hotline is intended to assist homeless veterans and their families, USDVA Medical Centers, federal, state and local partners, community agencies, service providers and others in the community. To be connected with a trained USDVA staff member, call (877) 4AID-VET or (877) 424-3838.

- » National Coalition for Homeless Veterans is the resource and technical assistance center for a national network of community-based service providers and local, state and federal agencies that provide emergency and supportive housing, food, health services, job training and placement assistance, legal aid and case management support for hundreds of thousands of veterans experiencing homelessness each year. To find a local shelter, call (800) 838-4357 or visit [www.nchv.org](http://www.nchv.org).
- » 2-1-1 Information and Referral Search provides free and confidential information and referral for help with food, housing, employment, health care, counseling and more. For more information, call 2-1-1 or visit [www.211.org](http://www.211.org).

National Resource Directory provides access to services and resources at the national, state and local levels that support recovery, rehabilitation and community re-integration. Wounded warriors, service members, veterans, or family members may visit [www.nrd.gov](http://www.nrd.gov) to connect with a caregiver who supports the local area.

## FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE WITH UTILITIES

Several organizations throughout California provide financial utility bill assistance for veterans and their family members.

- » California Alternative Rates for Energy Program (CARE) offers low-income consumers a 20 percent discount on energy bills. For more information, visit <http://cpuc.ca.gov/General.aspx?id=976>.
- » The California Public Utilities Commission provides assistance in negotiating a more affordable payment to utility companies if a customer has trouble paying his/her energy, telephone, or water bill. For more information, visit <http://consumers.cpuc.ca.gov/consumercontent.aspx?id=6479>.
- » Family Electric Rate Assistance (FERA) Program provides assistance to families with slightly higher incomes. FERA is available for customers of Southern California Edison, San Diego Gas and Electric Company, and Pacific Gas and Electric Company. For more information, visit <http://consumers.cpuc.ca.gov/ConsumerContentPage.aspx?pageid=977>.

- » The Energy Savings Assistance Program provides no-cost weatherization for low-income households who meet the CARE income guidelines. For more information, visit <http://consumers.cpuc.ca.gov/consumerprograms>.
- » The Department of Community Services and Development can connect people to home energy assistance, energy crisis intervention, and low-income weatherization programs. For more information, visit <http://www.csd.ca.gov>.
- » Lifeline Telecommunications Program provides a discount for landline service with unlimited local incoming and outgoing calls. For more information, visit <http://consumers.cpuc.ca.gov/ults>.
- » Additionally, some utilities have emergency payment assistance programs for their customers. For more information, visit <http://consumers.cpuc.ca.gov/assistanceplans>.

## ASSISTANCE IN OBTAINING FOOD

### CALFRESH (FOOD STAMPS)

The CalFresh Program, formerly known as Food Stamps and federally known as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), can add to your food budget to put healthy and nutritious food on the table. The program issues monthly electronic benefits that can be used to buy most foods at many markets and food stores. The CalFresh Program helps to improve the health and well-being of qualified households and individuals by providing them a means to meet their nutritional needs. For more information or to apply for CalFresh, visit [www.calfresh.ca.gov](http://www.calfresh.ca.gov) or call (916) 654-1896.

### SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program is the name for the federal food stamp program. The name reflects the changes made to meet the needs of clients, including a focus on nutrition and an increase in benefit amounts. State programs may have different names. The online application system allows individuals to apply for the program through a secured site. For more information, call (877) 847-FOOD (3663) or apply online at [www.c4yourself.com/c4yourself/index.jsp](http://www.c4yourself.com/c4yourself/index.jsp).

## EMERGENCY FOOD AND SHELTER PROGRAM

The Emergency Food and Shelter Program (EFSP) expands the work of local social service agencies (nonprofit and government) in assisting people with economic emergencies. United Way serves as the fiscal agent for the EFSP, and EFSP staff is housed in United Way's headquarters. For more information about United Way, visit [www.efsp.unitedway.org/efsp/website/index.cfm](http://www.efsp.unitedway.org/efsp/website/index.cfm).

## EMERGENCY FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Food banks solicit and warehouse donated food and other products. This food is then distributed to a variety of community agencies which serve people in need. Many food banks provide food to hundreds of organizations that would likely not be able to obtain a steady supply of food or store enough food to meet the needs of the people they serve. Some food banks also operate programs that distribute food directly to individuals. To locate a nearby food bank, visit [www.cafoodbanks.org](http://www.cafoodbanks.org) or call (510) 272-4435.

---

# COMMUNITY BASED VETERANS SERVICE PROVIDERS

## VETERANS VILLAGE OF SAN DIEGO

Veterans Village of San Diego (VVSD), also known as Vietnam Veterans of San Diego, is dedicated to extending assistance to needy and homeless veterans of all wars and eras and their families by providing housing, food, clothing, substance abuse recovery and mental health counseling, job training, and job search assistance. VVSD operates a residential treatment program that offers veterans up to one year of treatment with case management, classroom instruction, individual therapy, job readiness counseling, and posttraumatic stress disorder therapy, if needed. VVSD also operates sober-living programs and programs that serve veterans with children.

4141 Pacific Highway  
San Diego, CA 92110  
(619) 393-2000  
(619) 497-0263 (Fax)  
[www.vvsd.net](http://www.vvsd.net)

## NEW DIRECTIONS

New Directions assists veterans in becoming healthy, sober, and self-sufficient by offering a wide array of services, including treatment for co-occurring disorders, job training and placement, parenting and money management classes, legal and financial assistance, counseling, remedial education, and resources for alumni. Clients leave New Directions with a job, housing, a savings account, computer skills, renewed self-confidence, and the support of mentors and peers.

11303 Wilshire Boulevard, USDVA Building 116  
Los Angeles, CA 90073  
(310) 914-4045  
(310) 914-5495 (Fax)  
(310) 914-5966 (24-Hour Assistance)  
[www.ndvets.org](http://www.ndvets.org)

## U.S. VETERANS INITIATIVE

U.S. Veterans Initiative (U.S. VETS) is the largest nonprofit organization in the country that works to reintegrate homeless and at-risk veterans. U.S. VETS offers assistance in Inglewood, Long Beach and Riverside, California through transitional and affordable housing, case management, employment assistance, mental health counseling and substance abuse treatment.

(213) 542-2600  
[www.usvetsinc.org](http://www.usvetsinc.org)

## U.S. VETS INITIATIVE - INGLEWOOD

U.S. VETS - Inglewood offers homeless veterans over 500 beds of transitional and permanent housing and a host of support services. Special needs programs include a Non-Custodial Fathers' Program, which offers parenting classes and reunites fathers with their children. The High Barriers Program is designed to address additional barriers some veterans face (such as older workers) in getting back to work.

733 S. Hindry Avenue  
Inglewood, CA 90301  
(310) 348-7600  
(310) 645-2605 (Fax)  
[www.usvetsinc.org/inglewood](http://www.usvetsinc.org/inglewood)

## U.S. VETS INITIATIVE - LONG BEACH

U.S. VETS - Long Beach is located at the Villages at Cabrillo, the former 26-acre Cabrillo/Savannah Naval housing site. The site provides a seamless and comprehensive array of services to homeless and at-risk veterans.

2001 River Avenue  
Long Beach, CA 90810  
(562) 200-7300  
(562) 388-7991 (Fax)  
[www.usvetsinc.org/longbeach](http://www.usvetsinc.org/longbeach)

## U.S. VETS INITIATIVE – INLAND EMPIRE

U.S. VETS – Inland Empire at the March Air Reserve Base provides stable housing and a variety of support services that gives homeless veterans the skills to become self-sufficient. The project offers services to homeless veterans from both Riverside and San Bernardino counties and hope to the more than 7,000 veterans living on the streets of the Inland Empire. Services include: outreach and assessment, residential substance abuse treatment, residential employment program, career center, senior and disabled housing, and food services.

15105 6th Street  
March Air Reserve Base, CA 92518  
(951) 656-6892  
(951) 656-6890 (Fax)  
[www.usvetsinc.org/inland-empire](http://www.usvetsinc.org/inland-empire)

## SWORDS TO PLOWSHARES

Swords to Plowshares works to heal the wounds, to restore dignity, hope, and self-sufficiency to all veterans in need, and to prevent and end homelessness and poverty among veterans. Founded in 1974, Swords to Plowshares is a community-based, not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization that provides needs assessments and case management, employment and training, housing and legal assistance to veterans in the San Francisco Bay Area.

1060 Howard Street  
San Francisco, CA 94103  
(415) 252-4788  
[www.swords-to-plowshares.org](http://www.swords-to-plowshares.org)

## VIETNAM VETERANS OF CALIFORNIA

The Vietnam Veterans of California (VVC) offers community based services for veterans and their families. VVC has several programs located in Sacramento, Eureka, Santa Rosa and Menlo Park. Their focus is on employment and training support, transitional housing, and alcohol and drug recovery. VVC serves veterans of all eras.

[www.vva.org](http://www.vva.org)

## SACRAMENTO VETERANS RESOURCE CENTER

The Sacramento Veterans Resource Center (SVRC) is a multi-function campus with the most comprehensive mix of services for veterans in Northern California, including:

- » **Employment Counseling and Training:** The SVRC helps veterans obtain career training and self-sustaining employment opportunities.
- » **Supportive Housing:** The SVRC offers 52 onsite and 8 offsite beds for homeless veterans, including female veterans with children. Their supportive housing programs offer up to 24 months of stable living, combined with comprehensive supportive services to effectively end the cycle of homelessness and assist veterans in the acquisition of permanent housing and sustainable-wage jobs. The Jon Oberg Center is a state-licensed, 22-bed transitional housing program for veterans and non-veterans in need of drug/alcohol recovery services.
- » **The Veterans Business Outreach Center (VBOC)** is a Small Business Administration-funded business center for veterans who own or are interested in starting a small business. In addition to comprehensive consulting provided by industry experts, VBOC also conducts statewide Town Hall workshops in California, Nevada, and Colorado. These workshops bring both private and public agencies together to provide resources for veterans with small business needs.

7270 E. Southgate Drive

Sacramento, CA 95823

(916) 393-8387

(916) 393-8389 (Fax)

[www.vetsresource.org/vrc-sacramento.html](http://www.vetsresource.org/vrc-sacramento.html)

## NORTH COAST VETERANS RESOURCE CENTER

Employment Counseling & Training: The North Coast Veterans Resource Center offers career training and self-sustaining employment opportunities, career assessment, counseling, and support services. Eligible veterans who are homeless have access to stable housing.

**Supportive Housing:** The 12-bed Victorian “Eureka House” provides transitional housing to veterans in Eureka. The veterans residing in the house work toward training, employment and permanent housing goals.

109 4th Street  
Eureka, CA 95501  
(707) 442-4322  
(707) 442-4113 (Fax)

[www.vetsresource.org/vrc-north-coast.html](http://www.vetsresource.org/vrc-north-coast.html)

## NORTH BAY VETERANS RESOURCE CENTER

The North Bay Veterans Resource Center offers career development and job search workshops, with resume preparation instruction, a Winning the Employment Game workshop, and transitional housing and training assistance.

2455 Bennett Valley Road, C-105  
Santa Rosa, CA 95402  
(707) 578-8387  
(707) 578-2788 (Fax)

[www.vetsresource.org/vrc-north-bay.html](http://www.vetsresource.org/vrc-north-bay.html)

## INTERFAITH

Interfaith programs are designed to overlap, to be comprehensive, and to offer wrap-around services that assist clients in finding long-term solutions that enable them to become self-sufficient. Interfaith provides food, showers, housing, clothing, counseling, employment and ongoing support.

The Betty & Melvin Cohn Center  
550 West Washington Avenue, Suite B  
Escondido, CA 92025  
(760) 489-6380  
(760) 740-0837 (Fax)

[www.interfaithservices.org/contact](http://www.interfaithservices.org/contact)

## **VOLUNTEERS OF AMERICA**

Volunteers of America's (VOA) Mather location provides temporary assistance to prevent homelessness, case management, housing counseling, and supportive services to prevent homelessness amongst the veteran population. This program is funded using the USDVA SSVF grant.

### **Volunteers of America Northern California and Northern Nevada**

10636 Schirra Avenue  
Mather, CA 95655  
(916) 228-3153  
(916) 442-1861 (Fax)  
[www.voa-ncnn.org](http://www.voa-ncnn.org)

### **Volunteers of America Greater Los Angeles**

The Volunteers of America Greater Los Angeles has several programs to meet the needs of veterans and their families. Like their colleagues in northern California, they too provide services under the SSVF grant, and supportive services for women veterans, transitional housing, residential facilities for Iraq and Afghanistan veterans, employment assistance, re-entry services, and low-income housing.

Hollywood Veterans Center  
4969 Sunset Boulevard  
Los Angeles, CA 90027  
(213) 286-0324  
[www.voala.org](http://www.voala.org)

## **VETERANS TRANSITION CENTER OF MONTEREY**

The Veterans Transition Center offers transitional housing on the property formerly known as Fort Ord. The Center's Coming Home to Patton Park program offers homeless veterans the tools they need to successfully reintegrate and become self-sufficient. In a clean and sober environment, veterans can access case management services, life skills workshops, substance abuse counseling, and temporary living quarters while they seek employment and permanent housing. The program is tailored to meet the needs of each individual and provides veterans and their families transitional housing for up to 24 months. For more information, visit [www.vtcmonterey.org](http://www.vtcmonterey.org) or call (831) 883-8387.

## USDVA JUSTICE OUTREACH INITIATIVE

Each USDVA Medical Center employs a designated facility-based Veterans Justice Outreach (VJO) specialist responsible for direct outreach, assessment, and case management for justice-involved veterans in local courts and jails, and liaison with local justice system partners. For more information on the VJO Initiative and to find a VJO Specialist in the area, visit [www.va.gov/homeless/vjo.asp](http://www.va.gov/homeless/vjo.asp).

### Homeless Courts

Homeless courts are special court sessions held in local shelters or other community sites designed for homeless citizens to resolve outstanding misdemeanor warrants. Homeless defendants sometimes fail to appear in traditional courts, not because of disregard for the court system, but because of the status of their condition. Many homeless people are reluctant to attend court given the uncertainty of court proceedings and the threat of custody. Unresolved legal issues can ultimately preclude homeless people from accessing desperately needed services such as employment, housing, public assistance, and treatment programs.

The American Bar Association (ABA) has also developed and approved policies related to homeless courts, including basic principles for homeless court programs, which can be found at [www.americanbar.org/groups/public\\_services/homelessness\\_poverty/initiatives/homeless\\_courts.html](http://www.americanbar.org/groups/public_services/homelessness_poverty/initiatives/homeless_courts.html).

The ABA Commission on Homelessness and Poverty offers technical support. For information, contact the ABA Washington Office at (202) 662-1693 or email [homeless@abanet.org](mailto:homeless@abanet.org).

Homeless Courts are presently operating in the following California counties:

<b>Alameda</b>	<b>Los Angeles</b>	<b>San Joaquin</b>
<b>Contra Costa</b>	<b>Orange</b>	<b>Santa Clara</b>
<b>Fresno</b>	<b>Sacramento</b>	<b>Sonoma</b>
<b>Humboldt</b>	<b>San Bernardino</b>	<b>Ventura</b>
<b>Kern</b>	<b>San Diego</b>	

For more information on Homeless Courts, visit [www.calvet.ca.gov/vetservices/pages/homeless-courts.aspx](http://www.calvet.ca.gov/vetservices/pages/homeless-courts.aspx).

## VETERAN TREATMENT COURTS

Veteran Treatment Courts (VTC) are specialty courts for veterans at the County level. The VTC offer alternatives to case proceedings that address underlying problems that may have contributed to minor offenses. Veteran treatment courts lead to the placement of many veterans into USDVA mental health and physical health treatment programs, including veterans with posttraumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain injury, military sexual trauma, substance abuse, or mental health condition. In many cases, counseling and other medical appointments are required and incorporated into the treatment programs designed to treat the underlying medical conditions.

Participating veterans are ordered to complete the recommended treatment plan and comply with any other terms and conditions of probation imposed by the court. Participating veterans also receive assistance with housing and disability claims filed with the USDVA.

For information on local veteran treatment courts and statutes in place to assist you as you circumvent the criminal justice system, a veteran's attorney should contact a Veterans Justice Outreach Specialist at [www.va.gov/homeless/vjo.asp](http://www.va.gov/homeless/vjo.asp).

For more information on Veteran Treatment Courts located across the country, visit the National Clearinghouse for Veterans Treatment Courts website at [www.justiceforvets.org](http://www.justiceforvets.org).

## HEALTH CARE FOR RE-ENTRY VETERANS

Health care for Re-entry Veterans (HCRV) addresses the community re-entry needs of incarcerated veterans. HCRV works to prevent homelessness, reduce the impact of medical, psychiatric, and substance abuse problems upon community readjustment, and decrease the likelihood of re-incarceration for members leaving prison. For more information, visit [www.va.gov/homeless/reentry.asp](http://www.va.gov/homeless/reentry.asp).

# CALVET

VETERANS HOMES

CALVET OPERATES EIGHT

*Veterans Homes*

PROVIDING OUR AGED OR DISABLED VETERANS WITH  
SERVICES IN A HOME-LIKE ENVIRONMENT.



[WWW.CALVET.CA.GOV](http://WWW.CALVET.CA.GOV) | (800) 952-5626

CH/06

---

# Employment



---

## STATE EMPLOYMENT

The state of California is honored to employ many current and former service members and veterans of the United States Armed Forces. Before you begin looking for a career with the state, we recommend you apply for the veterans preference. It will give you an edge when applying for a job.

### VETERANS' PREFERENCE

Veterans' Preference is an assistance program for veterans who seek employment with the state. Preference can be applied to a veteran's eligibility for qualifying open and non-promotional examinations. To determine if the exam being administered qualifies for Veterans' Preference, please review the examination bulletin. Veterans' Preference will be awarded as follows:

1. Any veteran, widow or widower of a veteran, or spouse of a 100 percent disabled veteran, who achieves a passing score in an entrance examination, shall be ranked in the top rank of the resulting eligibility list. Any veteran who has been dishonorably discharged or released is not eligible for Veterans' Preference.
2. An entrance examination is defined, under the law, as any open competitive examination.
3. Veterans' Preference is not granted once a person achieves permanent civil service status.

### HOW DO I APPLY FOR VETERANS' PREFERENCE?

To apply for Veterans' Preference, the following must be submitted:

1. Legible copy of DD Form 214
2. Veteran's Preference Application Form, available at <https://jobs.ca.gov/pdf/CALHR1093.pdf>

*Note: If you are applying for Veterans' Preference as a spouse, widow or widower of a veteran, additional documentation is required. Please review the specific requirements on the instructions section of the Veteran's Preference Application Form (CALHR 1093).*

Submit copies of completed CALHR 1093 Form and supporting documents to:

**California Department of Human Resources**

ATTN: Examination Unit

1515 S Street

Sacramento, CA 95811

Once CalHR has approved your application for Veterans' Preference, your information will remain on file for all future qualifying examinations.

**HOW VETERANS' PREFERENCE IS APPLIED TO OPEN ELIGIBILITY LISTS**

If you are currently competing in a state civil service examination for which Veterans' Preference will be granted, you will automatically be added to the top rank, provided your application for Veterans' Preference is approved before the eligible record is created. If you were previously successful in a state civil service exam for which Veterans' Preference was granted, you must provide a copy of your approval letter to the testing office that administered the examination in order to request that your preference be applied.

**VETERANS MAY PARTICIPATE IN PROMOTIONAL EXAMINATIONS**

Persons retired from the United States military or honorably discharged from active duty shall be eligible to compete in promotional examinations, including examinations for Career Executive Assignments (CEA), for which they meet the minimum qualifications as prescribed by the class specification. Persons receiving passing scores shall have their names placed on the promotional eligibility lists resulting from these examinations. In evaluating minimum qualifications, related military experience shall be considered state civil service experience in a class deemed comparable by CalHR, based on the duties and responsibilities assigned.

**VETERANS WHO ARE CURRENT/FORMER EMPLOYEES**

Individuals receiving Veterans' Preference are not eligible for Career Credits pursuant to Sections 18950.1, 18951, and 18951.5. Veterans who achieve permanent civil service status with the state are not eligible to receive Veterans' Preference pursuant to Section 18973.5.

Permanent civil service status is the status of an employee who is lawfully retained in his/her position after completion of the applicable probationary period. This includes permanent intermittent, part-time, and full-time appointments. In addition, individuals who at any time achieved permanent

civil service status and subsequently resigned or were dismissed from state civil service are not eligible to receive Veterans' Preference pursuant to Section 18973.5.

Contact CalHR Examination Unit with questions regarding Veterans' Preference:

### **California Department of Human Resources**

1515 S Street  
Sacramento, CA 95811  
(866) 844-8671

Telephone Communication Service for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing:  
California Relay Service, From TDD: (800)735-2929, From Voice (800) 735-2922.  
California Relay (Telephone) Service, From TTY: 711 (National Relay Service)

## **STEPS TO GETTING A STATE JOB**

To apply for state employment, create an account online. Visit [jobs.ca.gov](https://jobs.ca.gov), then click "Sign In to My Profile, User I.D.," and select "Create a New Profile." Once CalHR has approved your application for Veterans' Preference, your information will remain on file for all future qualifying examinations. To find job vacancy listings, visit [www.jobs.ca.gov/CalHRPublic/Landing/Veterans.aspx](https://www.jobs.ca.gov/CalHRPublic/Landing/Veterans.aspx).

## **PROGRAMS FOR VETERANS**

The Employment Development Department (EDD) is California's designated state workforce agency. The Veteran Program is a grant-funded program administered by the EDD Workforce Services Branch. The EDD Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists and Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVER) staff are located at the America's Job Centers of California (AJCC) to coordinate, along with partner agencies, a wide array of services, including but not limited to, employment services, job training, vocational education, supportive services, and participation in community college programs.

### **DVOP Specialists and Intensive Services to Eligible Veterans and Spouses**

The DVOP specialists must provide intensive services to eligible veterans and eligible spouses to meet their employment needs, prioritizing service to special disabled and other disabled veterans, and to other eligible veterans.

Statute requires that DVOP specialists place maximum emphasis on assisting veterans who are economically or educationally disadvantaged.

Priority of service must continue to be provided to special disabled and other disabled veterans as well as to the eligible veterans based on the priorities determined by the Secretary of Labor.

The DVOP specialist must limit their activities to providing services to eligible veterans and eligible spouses who meet the definition of an individual with a Significant Barrier to Employment if that individual attests to belonging to at least one of the six groups listed below:

1. A special disabled and/or disabled veteran who:
  - » is entitled to compensation (or who but for the receipt of military retired pay would be entitled to compensation) under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs; or
  - » was discharged or released from active duty because of a service-connected disability;
2. A homeless veteran;
3. A recently separated service member, who at any point in the previous 12 months has been unemployed for 27 or more consecutive weeks;
4. A veteran offender, who has been released from incarceration within the last 12 months;
5. A veteran who lacks a high school diploma or equivalent certificate; or
6. A low-income veteran.

### **LVER Staff and Employer Outreach/Facilitation**

The LVER staff must perform specific duties related to outreach to the employer community to assist veterans in gaining employment. LVER staff promote the advantages of hiring veterans to employers, employer associations, and business groups. The LVER staff advocates for all veterans served by the AJCC with business, industry, and other community-based organizations by participating in appropriate employer outreach activities such as:

- » Planning and participating in job and career fairs;
- » Conducting employer outreach;

- » In conjunction with employers, participating in job searches and workshops, and establishing job search groups;
- » Coordinating with unions, apprenticeship programs and businesses or business organizations to promote and secure employment and training programs for veterans;
- » Promoting credentialing and licensing opportunities for veterans; and
- » Coordinating and participating with other business outreach efforts.

The LVER staff plays an important role in assisting with the development of the service-delivery strategies for veterans in their assigned AJCC, as well as educating all AJCC partner staff about current employment initiatives and programs for veterans.

Special assistance is available for veterans with service connected disabilities. To locate the nearest AJCC, call the America's Service Locator at (877) US-2JOBS toll free or visit [www.americasjobcenter.ca.gov](http://www.americasjobcenter.ca.gov).

## CALJOBS

CalJOBS provides online access to California's workforce resources, including employment and labor market information for the State of California. The system allows both employers seeking to fill job openings and individuals seeking employment to easily search for jobs, build resumes, access career resources, and gather information on education and training programs. CalJOBS can be accessed 24/7 using any computer with internet access. It has the largest database of job seekers in California, and provides information about jobs throughout the State.

Veterans receive a 24-hour priority on job listings, can view job opportunities anywhere in California, and can submit applications directly to employers for consideration. For more information, visit [www.caljobs.ca.gov](http://www.caljobs.ca.gov).

## WORK FOR WARRIORS

Work for Warriors is a state and federally funded free job-placement program for use by veterans of all eras including active National Guard, active Reserve, spouses, and Gold Star families to assist them in finding civilian employment in their region. Since its inception in 2012, Work for Warriors has helped reduce the overall veteran unemployment rate by 25 percent working with a network of over 350 private sector business partners.

Work for Warrior’s team of employment specialists’ help to match each individual’s skillsets to the needs of civilian employers. Work for Warriors also provides assistance with developing a resume and honing interview skills.

Contact information:

Phone: (916) 854-4426

Email: [apply@workforwarriors.org](mailto:apply@workforwarriors.org)

[www.workforwarriors.org](http://www.workforwarriors.org)

## **APPRENTICESHIP**

Apprenticeships combine classroom instruction with paid, supervised, on-the-job training by experts in the field. The California Department of Industrial Relations Division of Apprenticeship Standards maintains a database of available apprenticeships by craft and geographic region and ensures that apprenticeships are not exploited. Candidates must meet minimum qualifications, including physical ability and willingness to work under the required job conditions, and apply with an employer in the field, the appropriate union, or EDD. Aptitude and other tests may be required and there may be a waiting list. For a list of local or regional apprenticeship opportunities, visit [www.dir.ca.gov/databases/das/aigstart.asp](http://www.dir.ca.gov/databases/das/aigstart.asp).

Interested employers can find information on how apprenticeships work and how to contact the Division of Apprenticeship Standards by visiting [www.dir.ca.gov/das/employers.htm](http://www.dir.ca.gov/das/employers.htm) or [www.dir.ca.gov/das/veterans.html](http://www.dir.ca.gov/das/veterans.html).

## **UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS**

The Unemployment Insurance (UI) program operates under federal and state law to provide benefit payments to eligible workers who have become unemployed through no fault of their own or are working less than full-time at the time they file their claim. The program is financed by contributions from employers who pay a tax based on a percentage of wages of workers covered by the program. Members who have served in the military for the last 18 months and become unemployed should call the EDD immediately to file for UI benefits. When filing for UI benefits, recently discharged veterans must provide information from their Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty, DD Form 214 or NOAA Form 56-16 (or when not available, Orders to Report, or Orders of Release may be used). If you do not have this

documentation, EDD can help veterans obtain the necessary information to file a claim. The eApply4UI application is available online at [www.edd.ca.gov](http://www.edd.ca.gov) or by calling at (800) 300-5616.

---

## FEDERAL EMPLOYMENT

The federal government has laws providing veterans' preference and special appointing authorities for veterans and recognizes that hiring veterans is just good business.

By law (Title 5 USC, Section 2108), veterans who are disabled or who serve on active duty in the Armed Forces during certain specified time periods or in military campaigns are entitled to preference over non-veterans both in federal hiring practices and in retention during reductions in force.

Furthermore, the National Defense Authorization Act of 2006 (Public Law 109-163) extends veterans' preference to individuals who served on active duty for a period of more than 180 consecutive days, any part of which occurred during the period beginning on September 11, 2001, and ending on a future date prescribed by Presidential proclamation or by law as the last date of Operation Iraqi Freedom; and, who were discharged or released from active duty in the armed forces under honorable conditions.

Preference does not have as its goal the placement of a veteran in every vacant federal job; this would be incompatible with the merit principle of public employment. It does not apply to promotions or other in-service actions either. However, preference does provide a uniform method by which special consideration is given to qualified veterans seeking federal employment.

Preference applies in hiring from civil service examinations, for most excepted service jobs, and when agencies make temporary appointments or use direct hire and delegated examining authorities from the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM). OPM's Vet Guide can be viewed at [www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/veterans-services](http://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/veterans-services). This Guide explains the special rights and privileges that veterans enjoy in federal civil service employment and how veterans preference and the special appointing authorities for veterans operate within the system.

When applying for federal jobs, eligible veterans should claim preference on their application or resume. Applicants claiming 10-point preference due to a service-connected disability must complete Standard Form (SF) 15, Application for 10-Point Veteran Preference.

The Department of Labor's Office of the Assistant Secretary for Policy and Veterans' Employment and Training Service helps veterans determine the type of preference to which they are entitled, the benefits associated with the preference and the steps necessary to file a complaint due to the failure of a federal agency to provide those benefits.

For more information, visit the United States Office of Personnel Management website at [www.usajobs.gov](http://www.usajobs.gov) or [www.fedshirevets.gov](http://www.fedshirevets.gov).

## **VIETNAM ERA VETERANS READJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE ACT**

Vietnam era veterans, special disabled veterans, and veterans who served on active duty during a war or in a campaign or expedition for which a campaign badge has been authorized are protected in employment by the Vietnam Era Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974, as amended, 38 USC 4212.

The law requires that employers with federal contracts or subcontracts of \$25,000 or more provide equal opportunity and affirmative action for Vietnam era veterans, special disabled veterans, and veterans who served on active duty during a war or in a campaign or expedition for which a campaign badge has been authorized.

A Vietnam-era veteran is a person who:

1. Served on active duty for a period of more than 180 days, any part of which occurred between August 5, 1964, and May 7, 1975, and was discharged or released with other than a dishonorable discharge;
2. Was discharged or released from active duty for a service connected disability if any part of such active duty was performed between August 5, 1964 and May 7, 1975; or
3. Served on active duty for more than 180 days and served in the Republic of Vietnam between February 28, 1961, and May 7, 1975.

A special disabled veteran is a person who is entitled to compensation under laws administered by USDVA for a disability rated at 30 percent or more; or

rated at 10 or 20 percent, if it has been determined that the individual has a serious employment disability; or a person who was discharged or released from active duty because of a service-connected disability.

As part of Affirmative Action, federal contractors and subcontractors are required to list with the local state employment service all employment openings except for executive and top management jobs, jobs which the contractor expects to fill from within and jobs lasting 3 days or less.

If a covered veteran believes they have been discriminated against by a federal contractor or subcontractor, they may file a complaint. Complaints may be filed with the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) or through the local Veteran's Employment Representative at a local state employment service office.

If any covered veteran believes a contractor of the United States has failed to comply or refuses to comply with contract provisions relating to the employment of veterans, the veteran may file a complaint with the OFCCP.

For more information visit; [www.dol.gov/ofccp/regs/compliance/vevraa.htm](http://www.dol.gov/ofccp/regs/compliance/vevraa.htm) or call (866) 487-2365 or (800) 397-6251. To locate the district or area office, visit [www.dol.gov/vets/aboutvets/regionaloffices/map.htm](http://www.dol.gov/vets/aboutvets/regionaloffices/map.htm).



*California*

# VETERANS LICENSE PLATE PROGRAM

Purchasing a Veterans License Plate helps increase awareness and directly supports veteran programs.

For more information, visit [www.calvet.ca.gov](http://www.calvet.ca.gov) or call your local County Veterans Service Office at (844) 737-8838.



Proceeds from the California Veterans License Plate program go to support veteran services in California.

CH/07

---

# Advocacy and Assistance



---

# CALIFORNIA COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE OFFICES

The California Association of County Veterans Service Officers (CACVSO) is an organization of trained professional veterans advocates. In California, the CVSO plays a critical role in the veterans advocacy system and is often the initial contact in the community for veteran services. Through the CVSO, the CACVSO is committed to providing a vital and efficient system of services and advocacy to veterans, their dependents and survivors.

CACVSO:

- » Promotes the welfare and rights of veterans statewide through legislative advocacy;
- » Provides training and education to CVSOs and their employees;
- » Promotes the mission of CVSOs throughout the state; and
- » Provides members of the Association with a collaborative network of resources, information and ideas.

CACVSO recognizes the importance and merit of the congressionally chartered veterans service organizations, and is committed to fostering a mutually beneficial relationship with them for the common good of all veterans. It is the intent of CACVSO that every veteran residing in California receives the benefits and services for which they are entitled to by law.

## SERVICES PROVIDED BY MEMBER COUNTIES

**A Veteran Service Office can assist:**

- » Veterans
- » Widows and widowers of deceased veterans
- » Children of deceased or disabled veterans
- » Parents who lost a child in military service

### Who have questions about:

- » Compensation
- » Pension
- » Education benefits
- » Life insurance
- » Health care benefits
- » Home loans
- » California veterans state benefits
- » Burial benefits
- » Discharge upgrade

### Or need a referral for:

- » Posttraumatic Stress Disorder treatment
- » Hospitalization
- » Outpatient medical and dental treatment
- » Alcohol and drug dependency treatment
- » Home loans
- » Small Business Administration

### Services offered include:

- » Claims assistance
- » Client advocacy
- » Case maintenance
- » Information and referral

### CVSOs liaison with:

- » USDVA health care services
- » USDVA vet centers
- » USDVA regional offices
- » Veterans service organizations
- » CalVet Farm and Home Loan assistance
- » Outreach to the elderly, disabled, Vietnam era veterans, the incarcerated, minorities, and women veterans

---

# DIRECTORY OF COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE OFFICES

Many counties have various branch locations. Please contact your counties central CVSO to find the branch nearest you, or visit [www.calvet.ca.gov/VetServices/Pages/CVSO-Locations.aspx](http://www.calvet.ca.gov/VetServices/Pages/CVSO-Locations.aspx).

## ALAMEDA

6955 Foothill Boulevard, Suite 300  
Oakland, CA 94605  
(510) 577-1926  
(510) 577-1947 (Fax)  
*Mon - Fri: 8:30 a.m. - 12 p.m. / 1 p.m. - 5 p.m.*

## AMADOR

11401 American Legion Way  
Jackson, CA 95642  
(209) 223-6476  
(209) 267-0419 (Fax)  
*Mon - Fri: 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.*

## BUTTE

2445 Carmichael Drive  
Chico, CA 95928  
(530) 891-2759  
(530) 895-6508 (Fax)  
*Mon, Wed (appt. only): 8 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. / 12:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.*  
*Tue, Thu (appt. only): 8 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.*  
*Fri: 8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. / 12:30 p.m. - 4 p.m.*

## CALAVERAS

509 East Saint Charles Street  
San Andreas, CA 95249  
(209) 754-6624/6331  
(209) 754-9049 (Fax)  
*Mon - Fri: 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.*

## COLUSA

251 East Weber Street  
Colusa, CA 95932  
(530) 458-0388  
(530) 458-0492 (Fax)  
*Mon - Fri: 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.*

## CONTRA COSTA

10 Douglas Drive, Suite 100  
Martinez, CA 94533-4078  
(925) 313-1481  
(925) 313-1490 (Fax)  
*Mon - Fri: 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. / 1 p.m. - 4 p.m.*

## DEL NORTE

810 H Street  
Crescent City, CA 95531  
(707) 464-2154  
(707) 465-0409 (Fax)  
*Mon - Fri: 8 a.m. - 12 p.m. / 1 p.m. - 5 p.m.*

## EL DORADO

130 Placerville Drive, Suite B  
Placerville, CA 95667  
(530) 621-5892  
(530) 621-2218 (Fax)  
*Mon, Tue, Thu: 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.*  
*Wed: 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.*  
*Fri: 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.*

## **FRESNO**

1320 East Shaw Avenue, Suite 105

Fresno, CA 93710

(559) 600-5436

(559) 221-0031 (Fax)

*Mon - Thu: 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.*

*Fri: 8 a.m. - 12 p.m.*

## **GLENN**

525 West Sycamore Street, Suite A5

Willows, CA 95988

(530) 934-6524

(530) 934-6355 (Fax)

*Mon - Fri: 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.*

## **HUMBOLDT**

1105 6th Street, Suite F

Eureka, CA 95501

(707) 445-7611

(707) 476-2487 (Fax)

*Mon - Fri: 8:30 a.m. - 12 p.m. / 1 p.m. - 4 p.m.*

## **IMPERIAL**

217 South 10th Street

El Centro, CA 92243

(442) 265-3200

(442) 265-3208 (Fax)

*Mon - Fri: 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.*

## **INYO/MONO**

County Services Building

207 West South Street

Bishop, CA 93514

(760) 873-7850

(760) 873-7851 (Fax)

*Mon - Thu: 7 a.m. - 5 p.m.*

## **KERN**

1120 Golden State Avenue

Bakersfield, CA 93301

(661) 868-7300

(661) 631-0519 (Fax)

*Mon - Fri: 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.*

## **KINGS**

Kings County Government Center

1400 West Lacey Boulevard, Building #4

Hanford, CA 93230

(559) 852-2659

(559) 584-0438 (Fax)

*Mon - Fri: 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.*

## **LAKE**

255 North Forbes Street

Lakeport, CA 95453

(707) 263-2384

(707) 262-1861 (Fax)

*Mon - Fri: 8 a.m. - 12 p.m. / 1 p.m. - 5 p.m.*

## **LASSEN**

Veterans Memorial Building

1205 Main Street

Susanville, CA 96130

(530) 251-8192/4988

(530) 251-4901 (Fax)

*Mon - Fri: 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.*

## **LOS ANGELES**

Bob Hope Patriotic Hall

1816 South Figueroa Street

Los Angeles, CA 90015

(213) 744-4825

(213) 744-4444 (Fax)

## **MADERA**

200 West Fourth Street  
Madera, CA 93637  
(559) 675-7766  
(559) 675-7911 (Fax)  
*Mon - Fri: 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.*

## **MARIN**

10 North San Pedro Road, Suite 1010  
San Rafael, CA 94903  
(415) 473-6193  
*Mon - Thu: 8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.*

## **MARIPOSA**

5085 Bullion Street  
Mariposa, CA 95338  
(209) 966-3696  
(209) 966-3293 (Fax)  
*Tue, Wed: 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.*

## **MENDOCINO**

405 Observatory Avenue  
Ukiah, CA 95482  
(707) 463-4226  
(707) 463-4637 (Fax)  
*Mon - Thu: 8 a.m. - 12 p.m. / 1 p.m. - 5 p.m.*

## **MERCED**

3376 North Highway 59, Suite D  
Merced, CA 95341  
(209) 385-7588, ext. 5417  
(209) 725-3848 (Fax)  
*Mon - Fri: 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.*

## **MODOC**

202 West 4th Street, Suite F  
Alturas, CA 96101  
(530) 233-6209  
(530) 233-3866 (Fax)  
*Mon - Thu: 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.*

## **MONTEREY**

1200 Aguajito Road, Room #003  
Monterey, CA 93940  
(831) 647-7613  
(831) 647-7618 (Fax)  
*Mon - Fri: 8 a.m. - 11 a.m. / 1 p.m. - 4 p.m.*

## **NAPA**

650 Imperial Way  
Napa, CA 94559  
(707) 253-6072  
(707) 299-1489 (Fax)  
*Mon - Fri: 7 a.m. - 4 p.m.*

## **NEVADA**

988 McCourtney Road  
Grass Valley, CA 95949  
(530) 273-3396/3397  
(530) 272-3182 (Fax)  
*Mon - Fri: 8 a.m. - 12 p.m. / 1 p.m. - 5 p.m.*

## **ORANGE**

County Operations Center  
1300 South Grand Avenue,  
Building B #247  
Santa Ana, CA 92705  
(714) 480-6555  
(714) 567-7674 (Fax)  
*Mon, Wed, Thu, Fri: 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.*  
*Tue: 9:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.*

## **PLACER**

1000 Sunset Boulevard, Suite 115  
Rocklin, CA 95765  
(916) 780-3290  
(916) 780-3299 (Fax)  
*Mon - Fri: 8 a.m. - 12 p.m. / 1 p.m. - 5 p.m.*

## **PLUMAS**

Health & Human Services Center  
270 County Hospital Road, Suite #206  
Quincy, CA 95971-9216  
(530) 283-6275 or (800) 801-6330  
(530) 283-6425 (Fax)  
*Mon - Fri: 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.*

## **RIVERSIDE**

4360 Orange Street  
Riverside, CA 92501  
(951) 955-3060  
(951) 955-3063 (Fax)  
*Mon - Thu: 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.*

## **SACRAMENTO**

2007 19th Street  
Sacramento, CA 95818  
(916) 874-6811  
*Mon - Thu: 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.*  
*Fri: 9:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.*

## **SAN BENITO**

649 San Benito Street  
Hollister, CA 95023  
(831) 647-7613  
(831) 647-7618 (Fax)  
*Mon - Tue: 8 a.m. - 12 p.m. / 1 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.*  
*Fri: 8 a.m. - 12 p.m.*

## **SAN BERNARDINO**

175 West 5th Street, 2nd Floor  
San Bernardino, CA 92415/0470  
(909) 387-5516  
(909) 387-6090 (Fax)  
*Mon - Fri: 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.*

## **SAN DIEGO**

5560 Overland Drive, Suite 310  
San Diego, CA 92123  
(858) 694-3222  
(858) 505-6961 (Fax)  
*Mon - Fri: 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.*

## **SAN FRANCISCO**

2 Gough Street  
San Francisco, CA 94103  
(415) 934-4201  
(415) 934-4240 (Fax)  
*Mon - Thu: 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. / 1 p.m. - 4 p.m.*

## **SAN JOAQUIN**

105 South San Joaquin Street  
Stockton, CA 95202  
(209) 468-2916  
(209) 468-2918 (Fax)  
*Mon - Fri: 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.*

## **SAN LUIS OBISPO**

801 Grand Avenue  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401  
(805) 781-5766  
(805) 781-5769 (Fax)  
*Mon - Fri: 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.*

## **SAN MATEO**

550 Quarry Road  
San Carlos, CA 94070  
(650) 802-6598  
(650) 595-2419 (Fax)  
*Mon - Thu: 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.*

## **SANTA BARBARA**

624 West Foster Road, Suite A  
Santa Maria, CA 93455  
(805) 346-7160  
(805) 346-7158 (Fax)  
*Mon - Fri: 8 a.m. - 12 p.m. / 1 p.m. - 5 p.m.*

## **SANTA CLARA**

68 North Winchester Boulevard  
Santa Clara, CA 95050  
(408) 918-4980  
(408) 553-6016 (Fax)  
*Mon - Fri: 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.*

## **SANTA CRUZ**

842 Front Street  
Santa Cruz, CA 95060  
(831) 454-7276  
(831) 454-7116 (Fax)  
*Mon - Thu (appt. only):  
8 a.m. - 12 p.m. / 1 p.m. - 5 p.m.  
Wed: 8 a.m. - 12 p.m.*

## **SHASTA**

1855 Shasta Street  
Redding, CA 96001  
(530) 225-5616  
(530) 245-6454 (Fax)  
*Mon - Fri: 8 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. / 1 p.m. - 4 p.m.*

## **SISKIYOU**

105 East Oberlin Road  
Yreka, CA 96097  
(530) 842-8010  
(530) 841-4314 (Fax)  
*Mon - Thu: 8 a.m. - 12 p.m. / 1 p.m. - 5 p.m.*

## **SOLANO**

675 Texas Street, Suite 4700  
Fairfield, CA 94533-6340  
(707) 784-6590  
(707) 784-0927 (Fax)  
*Mon - Fri: 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. / 1 p.m. - 4 p.m.*

## **SONOMA**

3725 Westwind Boulevard, Suite 101  
Santa Rosa, CA 95402  
(707) 565-5960  
(707) 565-5937/5980 (Fax)  
*Mon - Thu: 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.*

## **STANISLAUS**

3500 Coffee Road, #19  
Modesto, CA 95355  
(209) 558-7380  
(209) 558-8648 (Fax)  
*Mon - Fri: 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.*

## **TEHAMA**

444 Oak Street, Room C  
Red Bluff, CA 96080  
(530) 529-3664/3039  
(530) 529-3659 (Fax)  
*Mon - Thu: 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.*

## **TRINITY**

100 Memorial Drive  
Weaverville, CA 96093  
(530) 623-3975  
*Mon - Thu: 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.*

## **TULARE**

3348 West Mineral King  
Visalia, CA 93291  
(559) 713-2880  
(559) 713-3747 (Fax)  
*Mon - Thu: 7:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
Fri: 8 a.m. - 12 p.m.*

## **TUOLUMNE**

105 Hospital Road  
Sonora, CA 95370  
(209) 533-6280  
(209) 533-6282 or (209) 533-6284 (Fax)  
*Mon, Fri (appt. only) Tue - Thu (Walk-in)*

## **VENTURA**

5740 Ralston Street, #304  
Ventura, CA 93003  
(805) 477-5155  
(805) 477-5418 (Fax)  
*Mon - Fri: 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.*

## **YUBA/SUTTER**

5730 Packard Avenue, Suite 300  
Marysville, CA 95901  
(530) 749-6710  
(530) 749-6711 (Fax)  
*Mon - Fri: 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.*

## **YOLO**

120 West Main Street, Suite A  
Woodland, CA 95695  
(530) 406-4850  
(530) 666-7456 (Fax)  
*Mon - Fri: 7:30 a.m. 12 p.m. / 1 p.m. - 4 p.m.*

---

# **DIRECTORY OF VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS**

### **Congressional Medal of Honor Society**

National Headquarters  
40 Patriots Point Road  
Mt. Pleasant, SC 29464  
(843) 884-8862  
[www.cmohs.org](http://www.cmohs.org)

### **Veterans of Foreign Wars**

1510 J Street, Suite 110  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
(916) 449-8850  
(816) 756-3390  
[www.vfw.org](http://www.vfw.org)

### **CA Association of County Veterans Service Officers, Inc.**

5560 Overland Avenue, Suite 310  
San Diego, CA 92123  
(858) 694-3222  
(858) 505-6961 (Fax)  
[www.cacvso.org](http://www.cacvso.org)

### **Pearl Harbor Survivors Association, Inc.**

P.O. Box 1816  
Carlsbad, CA 92018-1816  
[www.pearlharborsurvivorsonline.org](http://www.pearlharborsurvivorsonline.org)

### **National League of Families of American POWS/MIAS**

5673 Columbia Pike, Suite 100  
Falls Church, VA 22041  
(703) 465-7432  
[www.pow-miafamilies.org](http://www.pow-miafamilies.org)

### **Military Order of the Purple Heart**

MOPH Room 1145N  
USDVA Regional Office  
1301 Clay Street  
Oakland, CA 94612  
(510) 834-0612  
(703) 642-5360  
(510) 637-1239 (Fax)  
[www.purpleheart.org](http://www.purpleheart.org)

### **The American Legion**

401 Van Ness Avenue, Room 117  
San Francisco, CA 94102-4587  
(844) 637-8694  
[www.legion.org](http://www.legion.org)  
[www.calegion.org](http://www.calegion.org)

### **Disabled American Veterans:**

#### **Department of California**

13733 Rosecrans Avenue  
Santa Fe Springs, CA 90670  
(562) 404-1266  
[www.dav.org](http://www.dav.org)

#### **National Guard Association of California**

3336 Bradshaw Road, Suite 230  
Sacramento, CA 95827  
(916) 362-3411  
(916) 362-3707 (Fax)  
[www.ngac.org](http://www.ngac.org)

#### **Vietnam Veterans of America**

8719 Colesville Road, Suite 100  
Silver Spring, MD 20910  
(301) 585-4000  
[www.vva.org](http://www.vva.org)

#### **AMVETS Department of California**

4647 Forbes Boulevard  
Lanham, MD 20706  
(877)-726-8387  
(301) 459-9600  
[www.amvets.org](http://www.amvets.org)

#### **Paralyzed Veterans of America**

National Headquarters  
801 Eighteenth Street NW  
Washington, DC 20006-3517  
(800) 424-8200  
[www.pva.org](http://www.pva.org)

### **Bay Area & Western Paralyzed Vets of America**

3801 Miranda Avenue  
Building 7, Room E-118  
Palo Alto, CA 94304  
(650) 858-3936  
(650) 855-9019 (Fax)  
[www.bawpva.org](http://www.bawpva.org)

#### **Allied Council of the Veterans Home**

Veterans Home of California–Yountville  
260 California Drive  
Yountville, CA 94599  
(707) 944-4933

#### **Non Commissioned Officers Association**

9330 Corporate Drive, Suite 701  
Selma, TX 78154  
(210) 653-6161  
(703) 549-0311 (Fax)  
[www.ncoausa.org](http://www.ncoausa.org)

#### **Veterans Village of San Diego**

4141 Pacific Highway  
San Diego, CA 92110  
(619) 393-2000  
(619) 497-0263 (Fax)  
[www.vvsvd.net](http://www.vvsvd.net)

#### **Jewish War Veterans**

1811 R Street NW  
Washington, DC 20009  
(202) 265-6280  
(202) 234-5662 (Fax)  
[www.jwv.org](http://www.jwv.org)

#### **Veterans Resource Center**

P.O. Box 378  
Santa Rosa, CA 95402  
(707) 578-2785  
[www.vetsresource.org](http://www.vetsresource.org)

### **Blinded Veterans Association**

125 N. West Street, 3rd Floor  
Alexandria, WA 22314  
(800) 669-7079  
[www.bva.org](http://www.bva.org)

### **VetFund Foundation**

1415 L Street, Suite 1100  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
(916) 448-3444  
(916) 448-0430 (Fax)  
[www.calvetfund.com](http://www.calvetfund.com)

### **Women's Army Corps Veterans Association, Chapter 111**

P.O. Box 663  
Weaver, AL 36277  
(256) 820-6824  
[www.armywomen.org](http://www.armywomen.org)

### **American Ex-Prisoners of War**

P.O. Box 3444  
Arlington, TX 76010  
(817) 649-2979  
[www.axpow.org](http://www.axpow.org)

### **Blue Star Mothers of America, Inc.**

32 Oneida Avenue  
Selden, NY 11784  
[www.bluestarmothers.org](http://www.bluestarmothers.org)

### **Society of Military Widows**

[www.militarywidows.org](http://www.militarywidows.org)

### **Military Officers Association of America**

CalMOAA  
[www.cal-moaa.org](http://www.cal-moaa.org)

### **Swords to Plowshares**

1060 Howard Street  
San Francisco, CA 94103  
(415) 252-4788

2719 Telegraph Avenue  
Oakland, CA 94612

(510) 844-7500  
[www.swords-to-plowshares.org](http://www.swords-to-plowshares.org)

---

## **VETERANS CONNECT @ THE LIBRARY**

Visit the Veterans Resource Center at a participating public library near you to learn about state and federal education, employment, housing, health, disability, and other benefits that may be available to you and your family.

Call a Veterans Resource Center library to schedule a one-on-one consultation with trained volunteers, many of whom are veterans themselves or who have had professional experience assisting veterans, or just drop by and check out the collection of library books and other library materials selected especially for veterans.

Days and hours vary by site. Call or check the website. Most sites take appointments. For a list of libraries by name see <https://calibrariesforveterans.org/veterans.html>

Veteran Resources Centers are available at the following libraries:

## **ALAMEDA**

Oakland Public Library, Main Library  
125 14th Street  
Oakland, CA 94612  
(510) 238-3134  
[oaklandlibrary.org/blogs/from-main-library/veteran-resource-center-online](http://oaklandlibrary.org/blogs/from-main-library/veteran-resource-center-online)

Pleasanton Library  
400 Old Bernal Avenue  
Pleasanton, CA 94566  
(925) 931-3400, ext. 4  
[www.cityofpleasantonca.gov/gov/depts/lib/services/vets.asp](http://www.cityofpleasantonca.gov/gov/depts/lib/services/vets.asp)

San Leandro Public Library  
300 Estudillo Avenue  
San Leandro, CA 94577  
(510) 577-3992  
[www.sanleandro.org/depts/library/services/veterans\\_resource\\_center.asp](http://www.sanleandro.org/depts/library/services/veterans_resource_center.asp)

## **BUTTE**

Butte County Library  
Chico Branch  
1108 Sherman Avenue  
Chico, CA 95926  
(530) 891 2762  
[www.buttecounty.net/bclibrary/VeteransResourceStation.aspx](http://www.buttecounty.net/bclibrary/VeteransResourceStation.aspx)

## **FRESNO**

Coalinga Public Library  
305 N Fourth Street  
Coalinga, CA 93210  
(559) 935-1676  
[chld.org/resources-for-veterans](http://chld.org/resources-for-veterans)

Fresno Central Library  
2420 Mariposa Street  
Fresno, CA 93721  
(559) 600-7323  
[www.fresnolibrary.org/vets/index.html](http://www.fresnolibrary.org/vets/index.html)

Betty Rodriguez Regional Library  
3040 North Cedar Avenue  
Fresno, CA 93703  
(559) 600-9245  
[www.fresnolibrary.org/vets/index.html](http://www.fresnolibrary.org/vets/index.html)

## **IMPERIAL**

Camarena Memorial Library  
850 Encinas Avenue  
Calexico, CA 92231  
(760) 768-2170  
[calexicolibrary.org/veteransconnect](http://calexicolibrary.org/veteransconnect)

Imperial County Free Library  
Calipatria Branch  
105 South Lake Avenue  
Calipatria, CA 92233  
(760) 348-2630  
[www.co.imperial.ca.us/library/index.asp?fileinc=veterans](http://www.co.imperial.ca.us/library/index.asp?fileinc=veterans)

## **KERN**

Kern County Libraries  
Beale Memorial Library  
701 Truxtun Avenue  
Bakersfield, CA 93301  
(661) 868-0701  
[kerncountylibrary.org/veterans](http://kerncountylibrary.org/veterans)

Kern County Libraries  
Kern River Valley Branch  
7054 Lake Isabella Boulevard  
Lake Isabella, CA 93240  
(760) 549-2083  
[kerncountylibrary.org/veterans](http://kerncountylibrary.org/veterans)

## **KINGS**

Kings County Library  
Hanford Branch Library  
401 North Douty Street  
Hanford, CA 93230  
(559) 852-4014  
[www.kingscountylibrary.org/veterans-resources](http://www.kingscountylibrary.org/veterans-resources)

## **LOS ANGELES**

City of Commerce Public Library  
Rosewood  
5655 Jillson Street  
Commerce, CA 90040  
(323) 722-4805, ext. 2851  
[www.cityofcommercepubliclibrary.org/library/?q=content/veterans-resource-center](http://www.cityofcommercepubliclibrary.org/library/?q=content/veterans-resource-center)

County of Los Angeles Public Library  
La Puente Library  
15920 East Central Avenue  
La Puente, CA 91744  
(626) 968-4613  
[www.colapublib.org/veterans](http://www.colapublib.org/veterans)

County of Los Angeles Public Library  
Lancaster Library  
601 West Lancaster Boulevard  
Lancaster, CA 93534  
(661) 948-5029  
[www.colapublib.org/veterans](http://www.colapublib.org/veterans)

County of Los Angeles Public Library  
Lawndale Library  
14615 Burin Avenue  
Lawndale, CA 90260  
(310) 676-0177  
[www.colapublib.org/veterans](http://www.colapublib.org/veterans)

County of Los Angeles Public Library  
Norwalk Library  
12350 Imperial Highway  
Norwalk, CA 90650  
(562) 868-0775  
[www.colapublib.org/veterans](http://www.colapublib.org/veterans)

Los Angeles Public Library  
Central Library  
630 West 5th Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90071  
(213) 228-7300  
[www.lapl.org/veterans](http://www.lapl.org/veterans)

Los Angeles Public Library  
Exposition Park Regional Branch  
900 South Western Avenue  
Los Angeles, CA 90062  
(323) 290-3113  
[www.lapl.org/veterans](http://www.lapl.org/veterans)

Los Angeles Public Library  
Mid Valley Regional Library  
16244 Nordhoff Street  
North Hills, CA 91343  
(818) 895-3650  
[www.lapl.org/veterans](http://www.lapl.org/veterans)

Los Angeles Public Library  
6250 Sylmar Avenue  
Van Nuys, CA 91401  
(818) 756-8453  
[www.lapl.org/veterans](http://www.lapl.org/veterans)

Monrovia Public Library  
321 South Myrtle Avenue  
Monrovia, CA 91016  
(626) 256-8262  
[www.cityofmonrovia.org/your-government/library/veterans](http://www.cityofmonrovia.org/your-government/library/veterans)

Palmdale City Library  
City of Palmdale Public Library  
700 East Palmdale Boulevard  
Palmdale, CA 93350  
(661) 267-5600  
[www.cityofpalmdale.org](http://www.cityofpalmdale.org)

Whittier Public Library  
7344 South Washington Avenue  
Whittier, CA 90602  
(562) 567-9900  
[www.tinyurl.com/whittierveterans](http://www.tinyurl.com/whittierveterans)

## **MADERA**

Madera County Library  
Central Branch  
121 North G Street  
Madera, CA 93637  
(559) 675-7872  
[www.maderacountylibrary.org/#!resources-for-veterans/tfoi1](http://www.maderacountylibrary.org/#!resources-for-veterans/tfoi1)

## **MARIN**

Marin County Library  
South Novato Library  
931 C Street  
Novato, CA 94949  
(415) 506-3165  
[www.marinlibrary.org/veterans](http://www.marinlibrary.org/veterans)

## **MERCED**

Merced County Library  
Los Banos Library  
1312 Seventh Street  
Los Banos, CA 93635  
(209) 826-5254  
[ca-mercedcounty2.civicplus.com/2237/Veterans-Connect](http://ca-mercedcounty2.civicplus.com/2237/Veterans-Connect)

## **MONTEREY**

Monterey County Free Libraries  
King City Branch Library  
402 Broadway Avenue  
King City, CA 93930  
(831) 385-3677  
[eMCFL.org/veterans](http://eMCFL.org/veterans)

## **ORANGE**

Mission Viejo  
100 Civic Center  
Mission Viejo, CA 92691  
(949) 470-3076  
[cityofmissionviejo.org/departments/library](http://cityofmissionviejo.org/departments/library)

## **PLACER**

Roseville Public Library  
225 Taylor Street  
Roseville, CA 95678  
(916) 774-5221, ext. 2  
[rosevillepl.libguides.com/c.php?g=591299](http://rosevillepl.libguides.com/c.php?g=591299)

## **RIVERSIDE**

Beaumont Library District  
125 E 8th Street  
Beaumont, CA 92223  
(951) 769-1565  
[bld.lib.ca.us/149/Veterans-Resource-Center](http://bld.lib.ca.us/149/Veterans-Resource-Center)

Moreno Valley Public  
25480 Alessandro Boulevard  
Moreno Valley, CA 92553  
(951) 413-3880  
[library.booksite.com/7252/nl/?list=CNL1&group=EB159](http://library.booksite.com/7252/nl/?list=CNL1&group=EB159)

Riverside County Library  
Mead Valley Library  
21580 Oakwood Street  
Perris, CA 92570  
(951) 943-4075  
[rivlib.info/website/veterans-690](http://rivlib.info/website/veterans-690)

Riverside County  
Palm Desert Library  
73-300 Fred Waring Drive  
Palm Desert, CA 92260  
(951) 204-5619  
[rivlib.info/website/veterans-690](http://rivlib.info/website/veterans-690)

Riverside Public Library  
SSgt. Salvador J. Lara  
Casa Blanca Library  
2985 Madison Street  
Riverside, CA, 92504  
(951) 826-2120  
[riversideca.gov/library/vrc.asp](http://riversideca.gov/library/vrc.asp)

## **SACRAMENTO**

Sacramento Public Library  
Central  
828 I Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
(916) 264-2766  
[www.saclibrary.org/veterans](http://www.saclibrary.org/veterans)

Sacramento Public Library  
Rancho Cordova  
9845 Folsom Boulevard  
Sacramento, CA 95827  
(916) 264-2920  
[www.saclibrary.org/veterans](http://www.saclibrary.org/veterans)

Sacramento Public Library  
Southgate Branch  
6132 66th Avenue  
Sacramento, CA 95823  
(916) 264-2920  
[www.saclibrary.org/veterans](http://www.saclibrary.org/veterans)

## **SAN BERNARDINO**

Ontario City Library  
Ovitt Family Community Library  
215 East C Street  
Ontario, CA 91764  
(909) 395-2226  
[www.ontarioca.gov/library/veterans-resource-center](http://www.ontarioca.gov/library/veterans-resource-center)

Upland Public Library  
450 N Euclid Avenue  
Upland, CA 91786  
(909) 931-4200  
[ci.upland.ca.us/#Veterans\\_Resource\\_Center](http://ci.upland.ca.us/#Veterans_Resource_Center)

## **SAN DIEGO**

Chula Vista Public Library  
“Veterans Wing” – Civic Center Library  
365 F Street  
Chula Vista, CA 91910  
(619) 585 5646  
[www.chulavistaca.gov/home/showdocument?id=14565](http://www.chulavistaca.gov/home/showdocument?id=14565)

San Diego Central Library  
330 Park Boulevard  
San Diego, CA 92101  
(619) 238-6697  
[www.sandiego.gov/public-library/  
services/outreach/vrc.shtml](http://www.sandiego.gov/public-library/services/outreach/vrc.shtml)

San Diego Public Library  
Mission Valley Branch  
2123 Fenton Parkway  
San Diego, CA 92108  
(858) 573-5007  
[www.sandiego.gov/public-library/  
services/outreach/vrc.shtml](http://www.sandiego.gov/public-library/services/outreach/vrc.shtml)

San Diego Public Library  
Point Loma/Hervey Branch Library  
3701 Voltaire Street  
San Diego, CA 92107  
(619) 531-1539  
[www.sandiego.gov/public-library/  
services/outreach/vrc.shtml](http://www.sandiego.gov/public-library/services/outreach/vrc.shtml)

Oceanside Public Library  
330 North Coast Highway  
Oceanside, CA 92054  
(760) 435-5600  
[www.ci.oceanside.ca.us/gov/lib/adults/  
vet\\_resources.asp](http://www.ci.oceanside.ca.us/gov/lib/adults/vet_resources.asp)

## **SAN FRANCISCO**

San Francisco Public Library  
Central Library  
100 Larkin Street  
San Francisco, CA 94102  
(415) 557-4388  
[https://sfpl.org/index.  
php?pg=1019321101](https://sfpl.org/index.php?pg=1019321101)

## **SAN LUIS OBISPO**

San Luis Obispo County Library  
Arroyo Grande Branch  
800 West Branch Street  
Arroyo Grande, CA 93420  
(805) 473-7165  
[www.slolibrary.org/index.php/vets](http://www.slolibrary.org/index.php/vets)

## **SAN MATEO**

San Mateo County Libraries  
East Palo Alto Branch  
2nd Floor Community Learning Office  
2415 University Avenue  
East Palo Alto, CA 94303  
(650) 323-0362  
<https://smcl.org/veterans-connect>

South San Francisco Public Library  
840 West Orange Avenue  
South San Francisco, CA 94044  
(650) 829-3875  
[www.ssf.net/veterans-connect](http://www.ssf.net/veterans-connect)

## **SANTA BARBARA COUNTY**

Santa Maria Public Library  
421 South McClelland Street  
Santa Maria, CA 93454  
(805) 925-0994, ext. 2254  
[www.cityofsantamaria.org/city-  
government/departments/library](http://www.cityofsantamaria.org/city-government/departments/library)

## **SANTA CRUZ**

Santa Cruz Public Libraries  
Downtown Branch  
224 Church Street  
Santa Cruz, CA 95060  
(831) 427-7700, ext. 7671  
[www.santacruzpl.org/veterans](http://www.santacruzpl.org/veterans)

## SHASTA

Shasta Public Libraries  
Redding Library  
1100 Parkview Avenue  
Redding, CA 96001  
(530) 245-7258  
[www.shastalibraries.org/591](http://www.shastalibraries.org/591)

## SOLANO

Solano County Library  
Vacaville Cultural Center  
1020 Ulatis Drive  
Vacaville, CA 95687  
(866) 572-7587  
[solanolibrary.com/veterans-connect](http://solanolibrary.com/veterans-connect)

## STANISLAUS

Stanislaus County Library  
Modesto Library  
1500 I Street  
Modesto, CA 95354  
(209) 558-7814  
[www.stanislauslibrary.org/veterans.shtm](http://www.stanislauslibrary.org/veterans.shtm)

## TULARE

Tulare Public Library  
475 North M Street  
Tulare, CA 93274  
(559) 685-4500  
[www.tularepubliclibrary.org](http://www.tularepubliclibrary.org)

## VENTURA

Camarillo Library  
4101 Las Posas Road  
Camarillo, CA 93010  
(805) 383-5682  
[library.booksite.com/7382/nl/?list=CNL9](http://library.booksite.com/7382/nl/?list=CNL9)

Ventura County Library  
E.P. Foster Library  
651 East Main Street  
Ventura, CA 93001  
(805) 648-2716  
[www.ventcolibrary.org/special-interests/veterans-resource-center](http://www.ventcolibrary.org/special-interests/veterans-resource-center)

---

# MINORITY VETERANS

The Minority Veterans Division is the CalVet model for inter-and intra-agency cooperation, to ensure all veterans receive equal service regardless of race, origin, religion, gender, or sexual orientation. Dignity and an acceptable quality of life are the products we seek to deliver to all veterans no matter what their circumstance. Of the nearly 1.7 million veterans in California, approximately 633,128 are self-identified as an ethnic minority. While minority veterans comprise roughly a third of the total California veteran population, as a group, they are less likely to access the veteran benefits they have earned than non-minority veterans.

The Minority Veterans Division promotes the use of USDVA benefits, programs, and services by minority veterans. We advocate on behalf of minority veterans by identifying gaps in services as well as proudly supporting and initiating activities that educate and sensitize the public to their unique needs.

For more information on outreach for minority veterans, call the CalVet Minority Veterans Division at (916) 653-1402.

## MINORITY VETERANS SUPPORT

Minority veteran information and/or resources can be found on the following websites:

- » Center for Minority Veterans  
[www.va.gov/centerforminorityveterans](http://www.va.gov/centerforminorityveterans)
- » Swords to Plowshares  
[www.swords-to-plowshares.org](http://www.swords-to-plowshares.org)
- » American G.I. Forum  
[www.agif.org](http://www.agif.org)
- » Jewish War Veterans of the USA  
[www.jwv.org](http://www.jwv.org)
- » National Association for Black Veterans, Inc.  
[www.nabvets.org](http://www.nabvets.org)

To view a comprehensive Directory of Veterans Service Organizations visit [www.va.gov/vso/VSO-Directory.pdf](http://www.va.gov/vso/VSO-Directory.pdf).

## LOCAL INDIAN HEALTH SERVICES

The primary goal of the California Area Indian Health Services is to raise the health status of American Indians to the highest possible level. To achieve this goal, the California Area Indian Health Services supports tribal governments and urban Indian communities in the development and administration of comprehensive health care delivery systems that meet the needs of Indian people. For more information visit [www.ihs.gov](http://www.ihs.gov).

## LGBT VETERANS

The Minority Veterans Division promotes the use of USDVA benefits, programs, and services by LGBT veterans. We advocate on behalf of LGBT veterans by identifying gaps in services and make recommendations to improve service. We support and initiate activities that educate and sensitize the public to the

unique needs of minority and LGBT veterans. The following phone numbers may provide further assistance for LGBT veterans in crisis:

- » **Veterans Crisis Line: 1 (800) 273-8255, press 1**
- » **National LGBT Crisis Line: 1 (888) 843-4564**
- » **Veteran Care Line: 1 (800) 455-0057**

## **LGBT VETERANS ADVOCACY GROUPS**

The following organizations are provided as an informational primer and do not include every LGBT Veterans Advocacy Group.

- » **AMPA – American Military Partner Association**  
[www.militarypartners.org](http://www.militarypartners.org)
- » **AVER – American Veterans for Equal Rights**  
[www.aver.us](http://www.aver.us)
- » **SLDN – Service members Legal Defense Network**  
[www.sldn.org](http://www.sldn.org)
- » **American Legion Alexander Hamilton Post 448**  
[www.post448.org](http://www.post448.org)
- » **The Palm Center**  
[www.palmcenter.org](http://www.palmcenter.org)
- » **Swords to Plowshares**  
[www.swords-to-plowshares.org](http://www.swords-to-plowshares.org)

---

## **WOMEN VETERANS**

If you are a woman who served in the U.S. military, regardless of how long, where or when you served, you may be entitled to benefits and services from the federal government and from the State of California. Ten percent of our veterans who reside in California are women and more women veterans are making the Golden State their home each year. CalVet provides information, advocacy, outreach, and support to all women veterans and their families in California.

For more information visit [www.calvet.ca.gov/womenvets](http://www.calvet.ca.gov/womenvets), call (916) 653-1402 or visit the CalVet Women Veterans page on Facebook.

## **CALIFORNIA WOMEN VETERANS ROSTER**

Sign up for the CalVet Women Veterans Roster to stay connected and to receive updated information about benefits, programs, services, events, and resources throughout California.

## **WOMEN'S MILITARY HISTORY WEEK**

Each year, the Governor may proclaim the third week of March as Women's Military History Week. During the entire month of March, we recognize the many achievements of women and we especially honor the contributions of women who served in the U.S. Armed Forces.

## **U.S. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS WOMEN VETERAN SERVICES**

**WOMEN VETERANS CALL CENTER: 1-855-VA-WOMEN (1-855-829-6636)**

### **VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION**

The Veterans Health Care Act of 1992 authorized new and expanded services for women veterans. These services include: counseling for trauma related to sexual assault on a priority basis; specific health care services such as Pap smears, mammography, and general reproductive health care at many USDVA facilities; and mental health services to include substance abuse counseling, evaluation, and treatment of sexual assault in the military and Posttraumatic Stress Disorder.

The Women Veterans Health program promotes the health, welfare, and dignity of women veterans and their families by ensuring equitable access to timely, sensitive, and quality health care. There is a full-time women veterans program manager at every USDVA Medical Center, a women's liaison at every community-based outpatient clinic, and a Women Veterans Coordinator at every regional office.

### **VETERANS BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION**

The Women Veterans Coordinator will assist women veterans with the development of claims and assist in handling them for gender specific conditions, including trauma from sexual assault and harassment. Additionally, a special pocket guide is available and describes benefits and services for women veterans titled "Women Veterans: 25 Frequently

Asked Questions.” To view the PDF, please visit [www.visn12.va.gov/docs/wvh/25FAQs.pdf](http://www.visn12.va.gov/docs/wvh/25FAQs.pdf).

You may also call CalVet’s Women Veterans Division at (916) 653-1402 or contact the division via email at [WomenVeterans@calvet.ca.gov](mailto:WomenVeterans@calvet.ca.gov).

---

## **CALIFORNIA VETERANS BOARD**

The Veterans Board serves as an appellate body for any veteran who believes that a decision by the CalVet with respect to that veteran is incorrect. This pertains to state benefits only such as denial of a home loan, student waiver, or admission into a veterans home.

The Board also provides legislative advocacy for veterans’ issues by participating in the legislative process by way of testifying in person or in writing to the Legislature on behalf of veterans on matters relevant to the welfare of the Veteran Community.

The California Veterans Board consists of seven members appointed by the Governor. All Board members are veterans. The Board meets several times each year in different communities throughout California and meetings are open to the public.

### **California Veterans Board**

1227 “O” Street, Suite 103

Sacramento, CA 95814

(916) 653-2041

[www.calvet.ca.gov/Pages/California-Veterans-Board.aspx](http://www.calvet.ca.gov/Pages/California-Veterans-Board.aspx)

---

# DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

## MILITARY ONESOURCE

Military OneSource is a free service provided by the DoD to service members and their families to help with a broad range of concerns, including money management, spouse employment and education, parenting and childcare, relocation, deployment, reunion, and the particular concerns of families with special-needs members. The organization can also address more complex issues, like relationships, stress, and grief. Services are available 24 hours a day by telephone with professionally trained consultants and online. Many Military OneSource staff members have military experience (veterans, spouses, Guardsmen, Reservists), and all receive ongoing training on military matters and military lifestyle. The program can be especially helpful to service members and their families who live some distance from installations.

Military OneSource is provided by the DoD at no cost to active duty, Guard and Reserve (regardless of activation status) members, and their families. It is a virtual extension of installation services. For more information, visit [www.militaryonesource.com](http://www.militaryonesource.com) or call (800) 342-9647.

## ARMY ONESOURCE

Army OneSource (AOS) is an Army program under the Family and Morale, Welfare, and Recreation Command. While it is mainly an Army program, AOS supports military members and families of all branches, components, status, and locations throughout the world by connecting them with resources within their communities. AOS strives to ensure military members and families not living in the immediate vicinity of an active duty installation still have adequate access to benefits and support they have earned. AOS consists of a workforce of Community Support Coordinators who proactively engage the community to develop these resources. To find the local Community Support Coordinators or to download a services locator application, visit [www.myarmyonesource.com](http://www.myarmyonesource.com).

## INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE

The Internal Revenue Service is committed to providing assistance to all veterans. We work with community and government partners to provide timely federal tax-related information to veterans about tax credits and benefits, free tax preparation, financial education, and asset-building opportunities available to veterans. Visit [www.irs.gov/individuals/information-for-veterans](http://www.irs.gov/individuals/information-for-veterans) for more information.

---

## JOINING COMMUNITY FORCES

Joining Community Forces (JCF) is a voluntary military cooperative partnership organized to provide multi-service networking for training and assistance to ensure “Total Force Family Readiness.” The main purpose of JCF is to provide assistance to military and veteran families regardless of service component. The goal of the JCF is to strengthen existing family assistance delivery systems in the event of military mobilization, deployment, or natural disaster through the interaction of committee members. In addition, the committee serves the purpose of linking outside organizations (nonprofits, faith based, and military associations) and military branches together to make a stronger support network for military personnel and their families throughout California. Many of JCF’s support tools are effective in helping currently serving military members and their families, and this relationship allows CalVet to grow its support base with both professional and volunteer assistance to veterans. [www.jointservicessupport.org/communityforces](http://www.jointservicessupport.org/communityforces).



**CALVET IS COMMITTED TO PROVIDING**  
*Affordable Housing*  
**FOR ALL VETERANS**



**WWW.CALVET.CA.GOV | (800) 952-5626**

CH/08

---

# Other Benefits and Services



---

## MILITARY RECORDS

Veterans or their next of kin who need assistance in obtaining service records, a DD Form 214, or replacement awards and medals must formally request them through the National Personnel Records Center (NPRC). The NPRC is the records custodian for most discharged and retired members of all branches of service. The fastest way to obtain a copy is through their website, [www.archives.gov/veterans](http://www.archives.gov/veterans).

Records can also be requested by mailing or faxing a Standard Form SF-180, Request Pertaining to Military Records to:

### **The National Personnel Records Center**

1 Archives Drive  
St. Louis, MO 63138  
(314) 801-9195 (Fax)

The SF-180 is also available at CalVet District Offices (page 16) or at the local CVSO (page 187).

Records requests must contain certain basic information, including:

- » The veteran's complete name used while in service;
- » Service number;
- » Social Security number;
- » Branch of service;
- » Dates of service;
- » Date and place of birth (especially if the service number is not known).

If the veteran's records may have been involved in the 1973 fire, the following information must also be included:

- » Place of discharge;
- » Last unit of assignment;
- » Place of entry into the service, if known.

Call NPRC's customer service staff at (314) 801-0800 if you have questions or require same-day service. Due to the large number of calls received at this

number, hold times are often long. However, once you reach a technician, he or she will be happy to assist you with an emergency service. Customer service lines are answered from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. (CST). Please note that these requests are only for burial or medical emergencies. All requests must be signed and dated by the veteran or next-of-kin.

## **CORRECTION OF MILITARY RECORDS**

Individuals who served in the military may find an error or injustice in their military personnel records. In that case, the individual can apply for a correction through their military service's Board for the Correction of Military Records. The requests must be filed within three years of discovery of the error or injustice. This process may not be used to request an upgrade of a veteran's discharge, as that is discussed in the following section.

Any person with military records, or his or her heirs or legal representative, may apply to the appropriate service's Board for the Correction of Military Records. The Army, Air Force, and Coast Guard have separate boards. The Navy operates the board for both Navy personnel and members of the United States Marine Corps.

Applying for a correction to military records is a simple process. However, it is highly recommend that the services of your CVSO be used. Veterans who choose to do it for themselves must use DD Form 149, Application for Correction of Military Record, attach copies of statements or records that are relevant to the case, sign item 16, and mail the completed form to the appropriate address on the back side of the form.

The Board will correct the military records only if it can be proven that the veteran was the victim of error or injustice by providing evidence, such as signed statements from the veteran and other witnesses, or copies of records that support the case. The Board will not contact witnesses; but it will review their signed statements if submitted with a veteran's request.

## **APPLYING FOR REVIEW OF DISCHARGE**

Veterans must make their application for discharge upgrade within 15 years of discharge. If the veteran's discharge is more than 15 years old, then the veteran must apply for a change to military records using the process detailed in the previous section. The CVSO is available to help veterans through this process. However, if veterans choose to do this themselves, they must use a

DD Form 293, Application for the Review of Discharge or Dismissal from the Armed Forces of the United States. The DD Form 293 is available online or from most DoD installations.

Attach copies of statements or records that are relevant to the case, sign item 9 of the form, and mail the completed form to the appropriate address on the back side of the form. The Board will upgrade the discharge only if the veteran can prove that the discharge was inequitable or improper by providing evidence, such as signed statements from the veteran and other witnesses or copies of records that support the case. It is not enough to provide the names of witnesses. The Board will not contact witnesses to obtain statements. The veteran should contact witnesses to get their signed statements to submit with their request.

A veteran's personal statement is important. It should be written clearly and concisely in Section 8 of DD Form 293. Carefully read the instructions on the back of the form concerning issues. Explain what happened and why it is improper or inequitable.

---

## RE-ENTRY VETERANS BENEFITS

The Health Care for Re-Entry Veterans (HCRV) Program helps incarcerated veterans successfully transition to the area they will be living when released. A Re-Entry Specialist from HCRV goes to each correctional facility several times each year to meet with veterans six months before their release. With a little planning, many of the challenges commonly faced at release can be sorted out while veterans are still incarcerated.

The USDVA's Re-Entry Specialist helps with health care enrollment. If the veteran is already enrolled, the Re-Entry Specialist will ensure their paperwork is up to date. Following enrollment with the USDVA, the Re-Entry Specialist will meet individually with veterans who are within six months of their earliest possible release date.

*Note: To resume their award for compensation or pension benefits on the date they are released from incarceration, USDVA must receive notice of release within one year from the veteran's release date. For questions and assistance with resuming USDVA compensation or pension benefits, contact a CVSO (page 187).*

While incarcerated, CalVet recommends that veterans utilize the counselors and teachers trained to assist them in their preparation in the transition back into society. For more information, visit [www.va.gov/homeless/reentry.asp](http://www.va.gov/homeless/reentry.asp), or contact:

### **Health Care for Re-entry Veterans Program**

Attn: Re-Entry Specialist

Susanne.Adams@va.gov

795 Willow Road, Building 347 (180 D)

Menlo Park, CA 94025

(650) 493-5000

The compensation and pension benefits veterans receive from the USDVA change when they are incarcerated in a federal, state, or local penal institution. The amount the veteran will be paid depends on the type of benefit and reason for incarceration.

## **DISABILITY COMPENSATION PAY**

Veterans receiving monthly disability compensation benefits will have their payment reduced beginning with the 61st day of imprisonment for a felony. For example, if the payment before going to prison was \$243 or more, the new payment amount will be \$123 (10 percent rate). Veterans receiving \$123 before they were imprisoned will only receive a payment of \$61.50 (1/2 of the 10 percent rate).

*Note: Compensation payments will not be reduced for veterans who are released from incarceration, participated in a work release or half-way house program, paroled, and completed their sentence. For questions and assistance with resuming USDVA compensation or pension benefits, contact a CVSO (page 187).*

## **PENSION PAY**

A veteran's monthly pension benefits payments will be discontinued effective on the 61st day of imprisonment following conviction of a felony or misdemeanor.

## **USDVA MEDICAL CARE**

Although incarcerated veterans do not forfeit their eligibility for medical care, current regulations restrict USDVA from providing hospital and outpatient care to an incarcerated veteran who is an inmate in an institution of another government agency when that agency has a duty to give the care or services.

## **INCARCERATED VETERANS BENEFITS FOR DEPENDENTS**

If an incarcerated veteran has dependents, then the USDVA can take all or part of the amount of compensation that a veteran does not receive and apportion it to their spouse, children, and dependent parents. For questions and assistance regarding the apportionment of USDVA compensation or pension benefits, contact a CVSO (page 187).

---

## **VOLUNTEER SERVICES**

### **VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES FOR VETERANS**

Communities across the country are growing stronger because veterans are finding ways to apply their skills and leadership at home. Whether you have one day to give, or you are looking for a long-term role of service, there is an opportunity for you to report for duty in your community.

#### **USDVA VOLUNTARY SERVICE**

The USDVA voluntary service is committed to engaging American citizens in service and providing lasting benefits to the veterans and communities in which they live. To view volunteer projects in the area, volunteer, or donate, visit [www.volunteer.va.gov/unitedweserve.asp](http://www.volunteer.va.gov/unitedweserve.asp).

#### **TEAM RUBICON**

Is it a disaster relief organization? A veteran-focused enterprise? The truth is, it's both. Team Rubicon sees its mission as twofold: using veterans to improve disaster response while using disasters as an opportunity to serve again. Team Rubicon unites the skills and experiences of military veterans with first responders to rapidly deploy emergency response teams. To view volunteer projects in the area, volunteer, or donate, visit [www.teamrubiconusa.org](http://www.teamrubiconusa.org).

## THE MISSION CONTINUES

A fellowship with Mission Continues involves 20 hours of service per week for 26 weeks at a local nonprofit organization. Fellows are encouraged to choose a nonprofit organization to serve, based on their own personal passions. Current and alumni fellows have worked at organizations addressing issues ranging from disaster preparedness to education for low-income youth to training service dogs for wounded veterans. These host organizations include Habitat for Humanity, American Red Cross, Big Brothers, Big Sisters, and Mothers Against Drunk Driving.

The Mission Continues devised a new way for veterans to continue serving at home – the service platoon. A service platoon is a team of veterans, active duty service members, guardsmen, and reservists that mobilizes together to solve a specific challenge in their community. To view volunteer projects in the area, volunteer, or donate, visit [www.missioncontinues.org](http://www.missioncontinues.org).

## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES FOR VETERANS AND CIVILIANS

Our veterans put everything on the line to protect our freedom. We may never be able to repay them for their sacrifice, but we can show them just how much we appreciate all that they've done.

Everyone can do something to show veterans know how much we appreciate their service. What will you do?

## THE MISSION CONTINUES

There is no better way to bring a community together than by enabling them to serve alongside one another. Service missions are single or multi-day projects that allow veterans and civilians to serve together. Volunteers at a service mission may build a playground in an under-resourced community, plant a community garden, or renovate a school that serves at-risk youth. To view volunteer projects in the area, volunteer, or donate, visit [www.missioncontinues.org](http://www.missioncontinues.org).

## DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

Disabled American Veterans offers a wide range of opportunities for individuals who want to make good on the commitment we've given our nation's heroes. Volunteer at our nation's USDVA hospitals drive veterans to appointments or provide specialized help based on individual needs. No

matter who you are or what your level of experience, you can stand by our nation's veterans. To view volunteer projects in the area, volunteer, or donate, visit [www.dav.org/help-dav/volunteer/volunteer-locally-help-the-va](http://www.dav.org/help-dav/volunteer/volunteer-locally-help-the-va).

## **PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA**

Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA) volunteers do invaluable work that makes a real difference to veterans, their communities and paralyzed veterans chapters. Becoming a paralyzed veterans volunteer has never been easier. Each PVA chapter offers its own volunteer program with a variety of opportunities to contribute, plus you can commit to as many hours as you choose. Find the PVA chapter closest to you. To view volunteer projects in the area, volunteer, or donate, visit [www.pva.org/ways-to-give/volunteer-for-veterans](http://www.pva.org/ways-to-give/volunteer-for-veterans).

## **THE AMERICAN LEGION**

The American Legion is dedicated to improving support for active duty service members and veterans during their time of transition and rehabilitation and will continue to provide members with volunteer opportunities. To view volunteer projects in the area, volunteer, or donate, visit [www.legion.org/volunteers](http://www.legion.org/volunteers).

## **VOLUNTEERS OF AMERICA**

Each year Volunteers of America touches the lives of more than two million people in over 400 communities in 46 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico through programs that are staffed by full-time, paid professionals who have adopted this same ideal of service as their full-time mission. However, Volunteers of America still depends on an army of modern-day volunteers who offer their free time to support our volunteer programs nationwide. In fact, in 2013 more than 55,000 volunteers devoted more than one million hours to hundreds of Volunteers of America programs and activities nationwide. To view volunteer projects, volunteer, or donate, visit [www.voa.org/veterans](http://www.voa.org/veterans).

## **OPERATION GRATITUDE**

Operation Gratitude annually sends more than 150,000 care packages filled with snacks, entertainment, hygiene and hand-made items, plus personal letters of appreciation, to new recruits, veterans, first responders, wounded warriors, care givers, and to individually named U.S. service members deployed overseas. Their mission is to lift the spirits and meet the evolving

needs of active duty and veteran communities, and provide volunteer opportunities for all Americans to express their appreciation to members of our military. Each package contains donated product valued at \$75-\$100 and costs the organization \$15 to assemble and ship. Since its inception in 2003, Operation Gratitude volunteers have shipped more than one million care packages. To view volunteer projects, volunteer, or donate, visit [www.operationgratitude.com](http://www.operationgratitude.com).

## CALIFORNIA VOLUNTEERS

California Volunteers is the state office that manages programs and initiatives aimed at increasing the number of Californians engaged in volunteer service. To learn more about volunteering in the state of California, visit [www.californiavolunteers.org](http://www.californiavolunteers.org) or call (888) 567-SERV.

## STUDENT VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

Student volunteers are an important part of the USDVA medical centers' treatment team. They act as community liaisons and provide a valuable element of caring for veterans in their area. Student volunteer opportunities may be available in the areas of audiology and speech pathology, outpatient and ambulatory care, physical therapy, medical administration, research, nursing, social work, and many others.

For a list of student volunteer opportunities, contact a local USDVA facility by calling (800) 827-1000 or visit the USDVA volunteer service website at [www.volunteer.va.gov](http://www.volunteer.va.gov). To complete a volunteer application online, visit [www.volunteer.va.gov/apps/volunteernow](http://www.volunteer.va.gov/apps/volunteernow).

---

# CALIFORNIA VETERANS MEMORIAL REGISTRY

The California Veterans Memorial Registry (CVMR) is a permanent record to honor California veterans, past and present, who have served our nation since statehood. It was established in 1850. Whether a cook or fighter pilot, mechanic or chief of staff, this memorial honors all of our veterans. The CVMR forever immortalizes the contributions that California veterans have made to their nation.

Each California veteran who received an honorable discharge is encouraged to register on the CVMR and is entitled to list name, rank, and branch of service. To create a truly living memorial, California veterans may expand on their basic information by making a donation to the enhanced registry.

The enhanced registry allows California veterans to include a photograph (preferably in military uniform) for a donation of \$35. A 100-word statement may be included for a donation of \$15. These fees are deposited into the California Veterans Memorial Registry Fund, which is provided for maintenance and data entry into the registry. Additional donations are accepted and encouraged.

The 100-word statement is a veteran's opportunity to describe their military experience, or that of a loved one. The written statement can include such information as medals awarded, duty stations, nicknames, anecdotes, hometown, or other relevant information. Visitors to the CVMR will be able to refer to this information forever and recall the military experience of a father or mother, grandfather or grandmother, sister or brother, cousin or friend.

A CVMR enrollment form can be downloaded at [www.calvet.ca.gov/vetservices/documents/veteransmemorialform.pdf](http://www.calvet.ca.gov/vetservices/documents/veteransmemorialform.pdf) or complete online at [www.calvet.ca.gov/vetservices/pages/cvrregister.aspx](http://www.calvet.ca.gov/vetservices/pages/cvrregister.aspx).

The names of Californians who served in the military can be found by visiting the CVMR online at [www.calvet.ca.gov/vetservices/pages/vet-registry.aspx](http://www.calvet.ca.gov/vetservices/pages/vet-registry.aspx).

For more information, call (916) 653-2573. To submit an enrollment form, mail it to:

**California Veterans Memorial Registry**

1227 O Street, Room 105  
Sacramento, CA 95814

## **REGISTRY OF CALIFORNIA VETERANS MEMORIALS**

There are memorials located throughout the Golden State dedicated to our military service members and veterans. These memorials range in size from a simple plaque on a wall in a public building or in a park, to large structures, such as buildings, bridges and even freeways. The California

Veterans Memorial Registry is a central repository for information about these memorials. The California Veterans Memorial Registry is available on CalVet's website at [www.calvet.ca.gov/vetservices/pages/registry-of-california-veterans-memorials.aspx](http://www.calvet.ca.gov/vetservices/pages/registry-of-california-veterans-memorials.aspx).

## HELP US FIND CALIFORNIA'S VETERANS MEMORIALS

The work on the registry has been a journey, rather than a destination, and it is our sincere hope that we will be able to record information on most of the memorials in California over time, knowing that we may never identify and register them all. Our goal is to list the location, description and condition, and provide a map of all known veterans memorials as a further tribute to those who served in the military. With the invaluable help provided by cities, counties, veterans organizations, and members of the public, CalVet continues compiling information and adding it to the registry.

If you know of a memorial that is not in the registry, you will find a link below to an easy-to-complete survey form for the purpose of providing information about additional memorials. We would greatly appreciate your taking the time to print, complete, and send the survey to the address indicated. A separate survey form for each memorial is required. Please provide as much relevant information as possible. Thank you very much for your help.

To print the survey, please visit [www.calvet.ca.gov/vetservices/documents/memorialsurvey.pdf](http://www.calvet.ca.gov/vetservices/documents/memorialsurvey.pdf).

---

## CALIFORNIA NATIONAL GUARD

The Army National Guard is the oldest component of the U.S. Armed Forces and has participated in every U.S. conflict since it was organized by the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1636. The Army National Guard, the Air National Guard, and the California State Military Reserve are part of the California State Military Department.

Many men and women choose to join the National Guard either directly or after they are discharged from active duty service and do so for a variety of reasons. The Guard offers a series of benefits ranging from competitive pay and education assistance, to insurance and retirement benefits. A broad range of skills are learned through schools and job training, and leadership

opportunities are numerous. Beyond these tangible benefits, most Guard members agree that the greatest benefit is the continued opportunity to serve one's country, state, and community. For more information, visit [www.calguard.ca.gov](http://www.calguard.ca.gov).

## **FAMILY ASSISTANCE NETWORK**

The California National Guard Family Assistance Network (FAN) maintains a database of civilian, government, and military agencies that provide assistance to families struggling with issues related to active duty. For assistance locating a FAN specialist, Child & Youth specialist, Family Readiness Assistance, or an Airman & Family Readiness Program manager, call (800) 449-9662 for immediate assistance or visit [www.calguard.ca.gov/readyfamilies](http://www.calguard.ca.gov/readyfamilies).

## **WE CARE MEETINGS**

FAN also hosts monthly “We Care” meetings open to all branches of the service. These meetings give service members and their families, friends, and employers the opportunity to establish a local social support group, receive advice and support from people who understand what they are going through, and keep current on military news and benefits. To find a We Care meeting nearby, visit [www.calguard.ca.gov/readyfamilies/pages/operationwecare.aspx](http://www.calguard.ca.gov/readyfamilies/pages/operationwecare.aspx).

## **JOINT SERVICES SUPPORT FAMILY PROGRAM**

The Joint Services Support Family Program (JSSFP), headquartered in Massachusetts, provides extensive nationwide support to service members and their families to help them deal with the stresses of deployment, mobilization, and reintegration. For more information on the services that JSSFP can provide, visit [www.jointservicessupport.org/fp/default.aspx](http://www.jointservicessupport.org/fp/default.aspx).

## **TRANSITION ASSISTANCE ADVISOR**

The Transition Assistance Advisor serves as a statewide point of contact and coordinator providing technical support to managers, supervisors, and Guard members and their family members, regarding the benefits and entitlements available through the USDVA. Transition Assistance Advisors also provide technical assistance in resolving entitlements to TRICARE. For more information visit [www.jointservicessupport.org/WS/transitionsupport.aspx](http://www.jointservicessupport.org/WS/transitionsupport.aspx).

## YELLOW RIBBON REINTEGRATION PROGRAM

The Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program (YRRP) is a DoD-wide effort to help National Guard and Reserve service members and their families connect with local resources before, during, and after deployments. Not to be confused with the education benefit, the YRRP events bring together service providers that can assist veterans and their families in accessing information on veterans benefits, health care, education/training opportunities, financial, and legal benefits. DoD works in conjunction with federal partners, including the Small Business Administration, and the Departments of Labor and Veterans Affairs, to provide up-to-date and relevant information to the members of the all-volunteer force and their families. In addition, CalVet gives comprehensive benefits presentations at most Yellow Ribbon events occurring within the state. For more information visit [www.jointservicessupport.org/yrrp/default.aspx](http://www.jointservicessupport.org/yrrp/default.aspx).

## TRICARE

TRICARE Reserve Select is a premium-based health plan available worldwide to Selected Reserve members of the Ready Reserve (and their families) who are not eligible for, or enrolled in, the Federal Employee Health Benefits (FEHB) program (as defined in Chapter 89 of Title 5 USC) or currently covered under FEHB, either under their own eligibility or through a family member.

For information about enrollment, eligibility, benefits, authorizations, and claims, call (877) TRICARE (874-2273), or visit [www.tricare.mil/contactus/callus.aspx](http://www.tricare.mil/contactus/callus.aspx).

## EMPLOYER SUPPORT OF THE GUARD AND RESERVE

Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) is a DoD agency that seeks to develop and promote a culture in which all American employers support and value the military service of their employees. It does so by recognizing outstanding support, increasing awareness of the law, and resolving conflicts through mediation.

Why is employer support important? Almost half of our military force resides in the Reserve Component which is comprised of the National Guard and Reserve. The men and women who serve in the Reserve component are

unique in that they also have civilian employers. Support of America's employers and the employees they share with the nation ensures the viability of the all-volunteer force, and strengthens our national security.

To reach the local ESGR Committee for information or assistance, visit [www.esgr.org](http://www.esgr.org), call (800) 336-4590, call the local National Guard or Reserve unit, or visit [www.calguard.ca.gov/j1/pages/esgr.aspx](http://www.calguard.ca.gov/j1/pages/esgr.aspx).

---

## **CALIFORNIA STATE MILITARY RESERVE**

The California State Military Reserve (CSMR) is an all-volunteer state defense force authorized by law under the California Military and Veterans Code as sworn members of the California Military Department. The CSMR's primary mission is to support the Soldiers and Airmen of the California National Guard in its homeland defense and homeland security missions, and in its service to California during times of state emergencies.

The CSMR offers men and women who have left military service the opportunity to continue to serve their state and their communities.

To learn more about the CSMR, including eligibility requirements and application procedures, visit [www.calguard.ca.gov/csmr](http://www.calguard.ca.gov/csmr).

## **UNIFORMS FOR RETIRED AND SEPARATED PERSONNEL**

Retired military members and discharged veterans who served honorably in time of war may wear the uniform, insignia, and qualifications corresponding to the rank or rating at time of separation. This authority is authorized by Federal law (10 USC, 772). The wear and appearance of the uniform will conform to the standards of the specific branch of service that the uniform represents.

Wearing a uniform is appropriate at ceremonies or official functions when the dignity of the occasion and good taste dictate, such as memorial services, weddings, funerals, balls, patriotic or military parades, ceremonies in which any active or reserve military unit is participating, and meetings or functions of military associations. This includes important holidays, such as Memorial

Day and Veterans Day. Only the Service Dress Uniform can be worn. No work, Battle Dress Uniform (BDU), or PT uniform shall be worn by retired or veteran members.

Retired or separated personnel are prohibited from wearing the uniform in connection with personal enterprises, business activities, or while attending or participating in any demonstration, assembly or activity for the purpose of furthering personal or partisan views on political, social, economic, or religious issues.

*Note: This is standard throughout the Army, Marines, Navy, and Coast Guard. The Air Force further allows wear of the uniform for social gatherings of a military nature.*

## **CALIFORNIA STATE MILITARY RESERVE COMPONENT**

The uniform for the CSMR will follow the above guidelines; however, the appearance of the uniform will adhere to the following changes:

### **1. Army Utility Uniforms**

- » The “U.S. Army” nametape over the left breast pocket will be replaced with a nametape which will read “California”.

### **2. Army Service Uniform**

- » The “U.S.” insignia will be replaced with a “CA” insignia.
- » All authorized “U.S. Army” buttons will be replaced with California State “Eureka” buttons.
- » The black nameplate will be replaced with a red nameplate.

### **3. The “U.S. Army” headgear insignia will be replaced with the CSMR headgear insignia on the service cap.**



# ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

<b>A&amp;A</b>	Aid & Attendance	<b>FAN</b>	California National Guard Family Assistance Network
<b>ABA</b>	American Bar Association	<b>FDC</b>	Fully Developed Claim
<b>AJCC</b>	America's Job Centers of California	<b>FEHB</b>	Federal Employee Health Benefits
<b>AOS</b>	Army OneSource	<b>FERA</b>	Family Electric Rate Assistance
<b>BAH</b>	Basic Allowance for Housing	<b>HCRV</b>	Healthcare for Re-entry Veterans
<b>BDU</b>	Battle Dress Uniform	<b>HISA</b>	Home Improvement and Structural Alteration
<b>BVA</b>	Board of Veteran Appeals	<b>HUD</b>	U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
<b>CACVSO</b>	California Association of County Veterans Service Officers	<b>HUD-VASH</b>	Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Department of Veterans Affairs Supported Housing
<b>CaITAP</b>	California Transition Assistance Program	<b>IADT</b>	Initial Active Duty for Training
<b>CaIVet</b>	California Department of Veterans Affairs	<b>ICF</b>	Intermediate Care Facility
<b>CARE</b>	California Alternative Rates for Energy Program	<b>IRS</b>	Internal Revenue Service
<b>CAVC</b>	Court of Appeals for Veterans' Claims	<b>IV</b>	Income Verification
<b>CCC</b>	State of California Community College	<b>JCF</b>	Joining Community Forces
<b>CCVCV</b>	California Central Coast Veterans Cemetery	<b>JSSFP</b>	Joint Services Support Family Program
<b>CEA</b>	Career Executive Assignments	<b>LINC</b>	Local Interagency Network Coordinator
<b>CHAMPVA</b>	Civilian Health and Medical Program	<b>LVER</b>	Local Veterans Employment Representatives
<b>CLFMP</b>	Camp Lejeune Family Member Program	<b>MGIB</b>	The Montgomery GI Bill®
<b>CNG</b>	California National Guard	<b>MGIB-SR</b>	Montgomery GI Bill-Selected Reserve
<b>CNG EAAP</b>	California National Guard Education Assistance Award Program	<b>MOH</b>	Medal Of Honor
<b>CoC</b>	Continuum of Care	<b>MST</b>	Military Sexual Trauma
<b>COE</b>	Certificate of Eligibility	<b>NABMW</b>	National Association of Black Military Women
<b>CPT</b>	Cognitive Processing Therapy	<b>NCA</b>	The National Cemetery Administration
<b>CRDP</b>	Concurrent Retired Disability Pay for Military Retirees	<b>NCVC</b>	Northern California Veterans Cemetery
<b>CRSC</b>	Combat Related Special Compensation for military retirees	<b>NOD</b>	Notice of Disagreement
<b>CSAAVE</b>	California State Approving Agency for Veterans Education	<b>NOFA</b>	Notice of Funding Availability
<b>CSMR</b>	California State Military Reserve	<b>NPRC</b>	National Personnel Records Center
<b>CSU</b>	California State University	<b>NVF</b>	National Veterans Foundation
<b>CVMR</b>	California Veterans Memorial Registry	<b>OEF</b>	Operation Enduring Freedom
<b>CVSO</b>	County Veterans Service Office	<b>OFCCP</b>	Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs
<b>CWT</b>	Compensated Work Therapy	<b>OIF</b>	Operation Iraqi Freedom
<b>CWVV</b>	Children of Women Vietnam Veterans	<b>OPM</b>	U.S. Office of Personnel Management
<b>DD Form 214</b>	Discharge Papers	<b>OSDS</b>	Office of Small Business and DVBE Services
<b>DEA</b>	Dependents Educational Assistance	<b>OTH</b>	Other Than Honorable
<b>DEERS</b>	Defense Eligibility Enrollment Reporting System	<b>PE</b>	Prolonged Exposure
<b>DFW</b>	Department of Fish and Wildlife	<b>PMC</b>	Presidential Memorial Certificate
<b>DGS</b>	Department of General Services	<b>POA</b>	Power of Attorney
<b>DIC</b>	Dependency and Indemnity Compensation	<b>POW</b>	Prisoner of War
<b>DoD</b>	U.S. Department of Defense	<b>PSC</b>	Polytrauma System of Care
<b>DOM</b>	Domiciliary or Independent Living	<b>PTSD</b>	Post-traumatic Stress Disorder
<b>DPR</b>	Department of Parks and Recreation	<b>PVA</b>	Paralyzed Veterans of America
<b>DU</b>	Depleted Uranium	<b>RCFE</b>	Residential Care Facility for the Elderly or Assisted Living
<b>DV</b>	Disabled Veterans	<b>REAP</b>	Reserve Educational Assistance Program
<b>DVBE</b>	Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise	<b>RTC</b>	Regional Transit Connection Discount Card (BART, County Connection, etc.)
<b>DVOP</b>	Disabled Veterans Outreach Program	<b>SAH</b>	Specially Adapted Housing
<b>EDD</b>	Employment Development Department	<b>SB</b>	Small Businesses
<b>EDIPI</b>	Electronic Data Interchange Personal Identifier	<b>SCRA</b>	Service Members Civil Relief Act of 2003 (formerly known as the Soldiers' and Sailors' Civil Relief Act of 1940-SSCRA)
<b>EFSP</b>	Emergency Food and Shelter Program		
<b>ESGR</b>	Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve		
<b>FAFSA</b>	Free Application for Federal Student Aid		

<b>SHA</b>	Special Housing Adaptation
<b>SHAP</b>	Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
<b>SMR</b>	State Military Reserve
<b>SNF</b>	Skilled Nursing Facility
<b>SOC</b>	Statement of the Case
<b>SSA</b>	Social Security Administration
<b>SSOC</b>	Supplemental Statement of the Case
<b>SSVF</b>	Supportive Services for Veteran Families
<b>SVRC</b>	Sacramento Veterans Resource Center
<b>TBI</b>	Traumatic Brain Injury
<b>TTT</b>	Troops to Teachers
<b>U.S. VETS</b>	United States Veterans Initiative
<b>UC</b>	University of California
<b>UI</b>	Unemployment Insurance
<b>USDVA</b>	U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
<b>USGS</b>	U.S. Geological Survey
<b>VADIP</b>	VA Dental Insurance Program
<b>VARO</b>	USDVA Regional Office
<b>VBA</b>	The Veterans Benefits Administration
<b>VEAP</b>	Veterans Educational Assistance Program
<b>VFW</b>	Veterans of Foreign Wars
<b>VHA</b>	The Veterans Health Administration
<b>VHHP</b>	Veterans Housing and Homelessness Prevention
<b>VHIC</b>	Veteran Health Identification Card
<b>VJO</b>	Veterans Justice Outreach
<b>VOA</b>	Volunteers of America
<b>VR&amp;E</b>	Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Program
<b>VRC</b>	Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor
<b>VSO</b>	Veterans Service Organizations
<b>VSR</b>	Veterans Service Representative
<b>VTC</b>	Veteran Treatment Courts
<b>VVC</b>	Vietnam Veterans of California
<b>VVSD</b>	Veterans Village of San Diego
<b>W2VA</b>	Welcome to VA
<b>YRRP</b>	Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program

# Special Thanks

CalVet thanks the many individuals and organizations who contributed to the production of our Veterans Resource Book. Thanks to you, we provide vital information to California's 1.7 million veterans and their families about the benefits they earned based on their military service.

## CalVet Veteran Services Division

---

### **Keith Boylan**

Deputy Secretary, Veteran Services

### **Angela Yamamoto**

Assistant Deputy Secretary,  
Veteran Services

### **Roberto Herrera**

Director of Transition Assistance

### **David Peterson**

Outreach Analyst

## CalVet Communications Division

---

### **June Iljana**

Deputy Secretary, Communications

### **Thora Chaves**

Manager, Communications

### **Cathy Kenny**

Manager, Communications

### **Steven Wilson**

Public Information Officer

### **Thomas Moralez**

Creative Director