

CAL VET

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT
OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

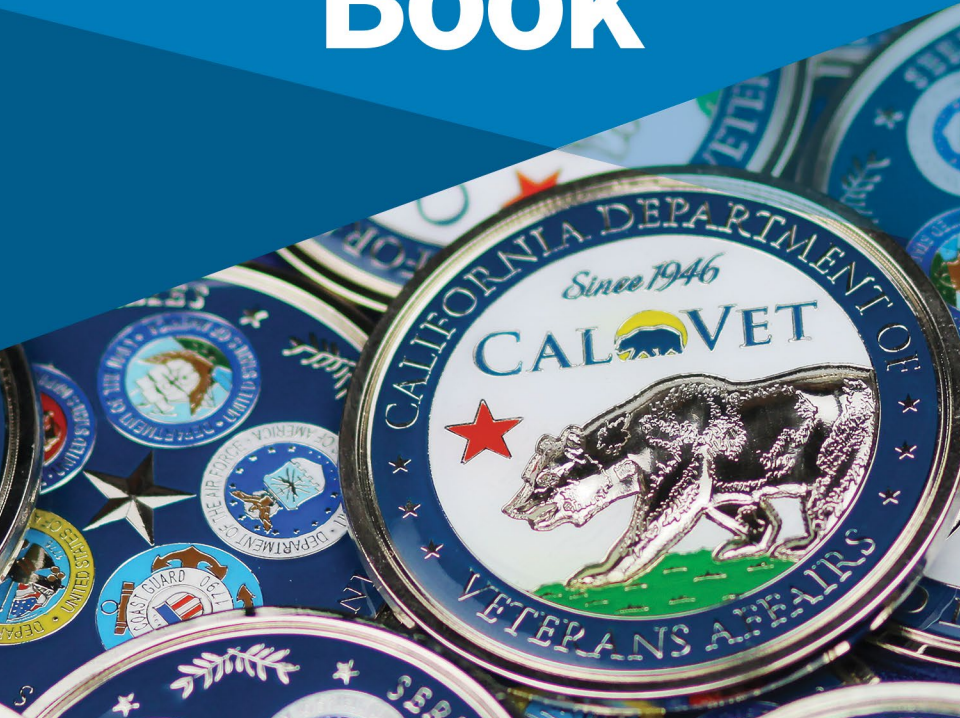
GAVIN NEWSOM

GOVERNOR, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

VITO IMBASCIANI MD

SECRETARY, CALVET

CALIFORNIA
**Veterans
Resource
Book**



CALIFORNIA
**Veterans
Resource
Book**

8TH EDITION

QUICK REFERENCE

California Department of
Veterans Affairs (CalVet)

(800) 952-5626 (Toll free)
www.calvet.ca.gov

U.S. Department of
Veterans Affairs (USDVA)

(800) 827-1000 (Toll free)
www.va.gov

Veterans Crisis
Hotline

(800) 273-8255 (Toll free)
Veterans press 1



January 2019

California Veterans

California strives to provide the highest level of support and services to our nearly 1.6 million veterans. On behalf of the state of California, I express my sincere appreciation to all who have served in the Armed Forces. Your sacrifices and contributions have protected our nation's most precious assets: 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 valuable resource and take full advantage of the benefits and services you have earned.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Gavin Newsom", written over a horizontal line.

Gavin Newsom
Governor



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 8th 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, 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 helpful information 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 1.6 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 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

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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.

For more information contact:
CalVet Veterans Service Division
CalTAP@calvet.ca.gov

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>DISABILITY COMPENSATION</p> <p>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> <p>DISABILITY PENSION</p> <p>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>	<p>None</p> <p>None</p>	<p>Visit any USDVA office, call (800) 827-1000 or file at www.va.gov. You may also apply at your local CVSO.</p>
<p>MEDICAL</p> <p>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>	<p>None</p>	<p>Visit any USDVA medical facility, call (877) 222-8387 or file at www.va.gov. You may also apply at your local CVSO.</p>
<p>COMBAT VETERANS</p> <p>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>	<p>Five years from date of discharge from active duty</p>	
<p>DENTAL</p> <p>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>	<p>180 days from separation</p>	

BENEFITS AND SERVICES	TIME LIMIT	HOW TO APPLY
EDUCATION AND TRAINING		
Up to 36 months of benefits		
Forever GI Bill - Harry W. Colmery Veterans Educational Assistance Act	The 15-year time limitation to use Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits was 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.	Visit any USDVA office, call (888) 442-4551 or file at www.gibill.va.gov . You may also apply at your local CVSO.
Post-9/11 GI Bill (Chapter 33) or	15 years from last discharge or separation. Limited extensions available.	
Montgomery GI Bill - Active Duty (Chapter 30) or	10 years from release from last period of active duty. Limited extension available.	
Montgomery GI Bill - Selected Reserve (Chapter 1606) or	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.	
Change in REAP Eligibility Reserve Educational Assistance Program (REAP/Chapter 1607)	<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>VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AND EMPLOYMENT, CHAPTER 31</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 www.benefits.va.gov/vocrehab. You may also apply at your local CVSO.</p>
<p>HOME LOAN</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. www.benefits.va.gov/homeloans.</p>
<p>LIFE INSURANCE</p> <p>www.benefits.va.gov/insurance</p> <p>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.</p>	<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>Visit any USDVA Insurance Center or call (800) 419-1473.</p>
<p>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.</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>	

BENEFITS AND SERVICES	TIME LIMIT	HOW TO APPLY
<p>LIFE INSURANCE (CONTINUED) www.benefits.va.gov/insurance</p> <p>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.</p>	<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>
<p>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.</p>	<p>Coverage terminates 120 days after service member is released from service. Spouse may convert to a commercial policy.</p>	
<p>Service-Disabled Veterans' Insurance (SDVI), also called "RH" insurance, is life insurance for service-disabled veterans. The basic coverage is \$10,000. A \$30,000 supplemental policy is available if premium payments for the basic policy are waived due to total disability.</p>	<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>
<p>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.</p>	<p>Must apply before age 70.</p>	
<p>REEMPLOYMENT The Department of Labor's website www.dol.gov contains information on employment and reemployment rights of members of the uniformed services. State Job Banks: www.careeronestop.org.</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>UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION 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 www.dol.gov contains links for each state's benefits.</p>	<p>Limited time.</p>	<p>Any State of California Employment Office, www.edd.ca.gov. (bring your DD Form 214).</p>

CHAPTER 1

California State Benefits



REGIONAL OUTREACH

The 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 1.6 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 Service 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, Butte, Humboldt, Mendocino, Del Norte, Lake, Glenn, and Colusa.
- » **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's 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

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 members provide veterans 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. - 3:30 p.m.

San Diego District Office

222 Hospitality Lane, 3rd Floor,
San Bernardino, CA, 92415
(909) 382-3290
(909) 387-3289 Alternate

Mon - Fri: 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.

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 veterans 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 obtaining an “Honoring Veterans” license plate can do so by applying online at the Department of Motor Vehicles. Before going to the DMV page, visit www.calvet.ca.gov/vetservices/pages/license-plates.aspx to select the logo you wish to add to the license plate. Click on the link for either motorcycles or cars and trucks. You’ll find a list of more than 70 emblems; make note of the code which you will need to provide on the application.

Then go to www.dmv.ca.gov/portal/dmv/detail/portal/ip2/welcome to complete your transaction. Additional information can be obtained 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.

*Note: Per California Vehicle Code (CVC) Section 22511.3 (a): Veterans displaying 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, if, the local authority has adopted an ordinance to allow the above mentioned plate holder to park without charge.

**Purple Heart license plate holder: Per CVC Section 5101.8 (f), if the applicant qualifies as a disabled veteran, (per CVC Section 22511.55), the applicant may also apply for a disabled persons parking placard and must be used/displayed in conjunction with the Purple Heart license plate to allow for special parking privileges.*

*** Please check with the local authority to verify if these special license plates have been granted special parking privileges.*

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).
- » 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. 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.
- » Limits movement without the aid of an assistive device.
- » Due to loss of, or lost use of, one or more limbs.
- » 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:

- » Completed and signed Miscellaneous Certifications (DMV Form REG256A).
- » 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. (CVSOs: Send the completed 21-4138 to the CalVet District Office to submit to the USDVA Public Contact unit.)
- » Medical Certification (Included with DMV Form REG256A) completed by one of the medical professionals indicated.

Submit all required documentation to a local DMV field office, or by mail to the DMV at:

Department of Motor Vehicles
Special Processing Unit, MS D238
P.O. Box 932345
Sacramento, CA 94232-0001

DISABLED VETERANS SPORT 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 PREQUALIFY AND APPLY

To prequalify to purchase a disabled veteran license, submit a letter from the USDVA documenting that you were honorably discharged from the US military and have a service-connected disability rating of 50 percent or greater. Send a photocopy of your identification and documentation of eligibility by:

- » Mail or apply in person at any CDFW license sales office www.wildlife.ca.gov/Explore/Organization/LRB.
- » Fax at (916) 419-7585.
- » Secure document upload - To upload your documentation, you must request a secure document upload. Send your request for a secure document upload to LRB@wildlife.ca.gov. You will receive a response with a link to upload your documentation securely. DO NOT send your documents via email.

Include:

- » Identification -
 - » Your driver's license.
 - » Your GO ID number (from your previously issued ALDS fishing or hunting license). If you do not have a GO ID number, create a customer record online to obtain a GO ID number. www.wildlife.ca.gov/Licensing/Online-Sales.
- » A letter documenting your eligibility:
 - » Disabled Veterans must submit a letter from the USDVA.
 - » Recovering Service Members must submit a letter from their Commanding Officer or a military doctor.

- » Telephone number.
- » Email address (optional, but may expedite issuance).
- » For hunting licenses only - proof of hunter education. Proof is not needed if you purchased a California hunting license after 2011. CDFW will have your hunter education on file.

After your eligibility has been verified, your customer record will be updated. Once you receive notification from CDFW that your customer record has been updated, you will be able to purchase a low cost disabled veteran sport fishing license and/or hunting license anywhere licenses are sold. To find a location near you search www.ca.wildlifelicense.com/internetsales/OutletSearch/FindOutlet.

For more information, please visit 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 facilities (including day use, camping and boating) in California State Parks at no charge. The pass is not valid for group use, sites, special events, commercial use, additional/extra vehicle fees, or for supplemental fees and cannot be used in conjunction with any other pass and/or discount. Admittance and use subject to available space. This is a lifetime pass and is valid for use of the pass holder only. Although the benefits are lifetime, the pass holder's pass card will need to be renewed every five years.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

Honorably discharged war veterans who are residents of California with an overall/combined rating at 50 percent or greater service-connected disability, were held as Prisoners of War by forces hostile to the United States, or recipients of the Medal of Honor are eligible to receive the Distinguished Veteran Pass (formerly Disabled War Veteran/Prisoner of War Pass). For complete Distinguished Veteran Pass Program Terms and Conditions visit www.parks.ca.gov/pages/737/files/dpr619.pdf.

HOW TO APPLY

Download and complete a Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR619) application found at 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 619. Application may be made in person at the Park Pass Sales Office location only:

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 8-10 weeks for processing. Once pass is received, you may use pass card for reservations and applicable benefits. The pass holder is required to present the Distinguished Veteran Pass and a valid California Driver License or California Identification Card, along with any campsite reservation or tour ticket, and to pay any supplemental fees at the park.

Information relating to the 5-year renewal process for the pass card will be provided to the pass holder prior to the expiration date printed on current issued credit card style pass card. Pass holder should notify the Park Pass Sales Office of any change of name, address, e-mail address, or telephone number in order to continue to receive benefits.

For questions or more information, please visit www.calvet.ca.gov/VetServices/Pages/State-Parks-and-Recreation-Pass.aspx or contact the Park Pass Sales Office at (800) 777-0369 ext. 2 or (916) 653-8280 or via email at passinfo@parks.ca.gov.

Note: A lost or damaged pass may be replaced only through reapplication and no refunds can be issued.

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, each pass covers entrance fees at national parks and national wildlife refuges as well as standard amenity fees at national forests and grasslands, and at lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management and Bureau of Reclamation.

A pass covers entrance and standard amenity fees for a driver and all passengers in a personal vehicle at per vehicle fee areas (or up to 4 adults at sites that charge per person). Children age 15 and under are admitted free.

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).

Passes are NON-REFUNDABLE, NON-TRANSFERABLE, and cannot be replaced if lost or stolen.

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 (does not have to be a 100 percent 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/s3fs-public/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 https://store.usgs.gov/s3fs-public/access_pass_application.pdf. Applicant must show 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.

If you need your pass within 15 days or less, it is recommended that you obtain your pass at the first site you visit.

For more information, please visit www.calvet.ca.gov/VetServices/Pages/Access-Pass-National-Parks.aspx.

VETERAN DESIGNATION ON CALIFORNIA DRIVER LICENSE AND ID CARD

Eligible veterans may now have their military service recognized by the placement of the word "VETERAN" on their California Driver License or California Identification Card. The designation provides veterans the opportunity to receive discounts offered at many stores, businesses, and restaurants. Veterans will no longer need to provide military discharge documents or share sensitive personal information to merchants in order to receive veteran- specific discounts.

Note: The California Driver License or California State Identification Card Veteran Designation does not qualify the card holder for any other benefits or compensation provided by the USDVA or CalVet.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

You may be eligible if you meet both of the requirements listed below.

- » Served on active duty, in the Reserves, or in the National Guard and
- » Received an honorable or general discharge (under honorable conditions.)

If you received an Other than Honorable, Bad Conduct, or Dishonorable character of discharge, you are not eligible for a veteran designation on your California Driver License or California Identification Card.

If you have an uncharacterized or unknown discharge status, your CVSO will verify eligibility before approving your application.

HOW TO APPLY

Contact your local CVSO to apply for the program.

To locate the CVSO office closest to you, see page 187, or call 844-737-8838. Enter your zip code when prompted and your call will be transferred.

You may also visit www.cacvso.org. Click on Contact Us and then click on your county of residence to view a list of CVSO locations, hours of operation, and contact information.

For additional information, please visit www.calvet.ca.gov/Veteran-Designation.

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.
- » Has lost the use of two or more limbs.
- » Is totally disabled as determined by USDVA or by the military service from which the veteran was discharged or has rated the disability compensation at 100 percent by reason of being unable to secure or follow a substantially gainful occupation. If a veteran has received a disability rating of 100 percent from the USDVA, the county assessor should consider the veteran qualified for the exemption without requiring further documentation of disability, such as medical files.

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 veteran 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 homeowners exemption has been granted on a property and the owner subsequently qualifies for the disabled veteran exemption, the homeowners exemption should be canceled to allow for the disabled veteran 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, 2019, the basic exemption amount is \$139,437 and the low-income exemption amount is \$209,156.

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/countycontacts.htm. Veterans may also request more information from their local CVSO (page 187).

COLLEGE FEE WAIVER FOR VETERANS' DEPENDENTS

The College 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.

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.

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 opportunity.

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 \$314,000 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;
- » 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

USDVA Claims and Benefits



VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION

The Veterans Health Administration is America's largest integrated health care system, providing care at 1,243 health care facilities, including 172 medical centers and 1,062 outpatient sites of care of varying complexity (VHA outpatient clinics), serving 9 million enrolled veterans each year.

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.

VETERANS BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION

The Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) administers all of the non-medical benefit programs for service members, veterans, dependents, and survivors. VBA operates three regional offices and one satellite office in California. Visit www.benefits.va.gov for other locations in your region.

VBA REGIONAL OFFICE LOCATIONS

Los Angeles Regional Office

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

Oakland Regional Office

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

San Diego Regional Office

8810 Rio San Diego Drive, Rm 1154
San Diego, CA 92108
(619) 400-0070

Oakland Regional Benefit Satellite Office - Sacramento

3046 Prospect Park,
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670
(800) 827-1000

NATIONAL CEMETERY ADMINISTRATION

The National Cemetery Administration (NCA) operates 136 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/cem/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 aggravated (beyond natural progression) 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.

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.

The compensation may be offset if you receive military retirement pay, disability severance pay, or separation incentive payments.

USDVA DISABILITY COMPENSATION RATES FOR VETERANS

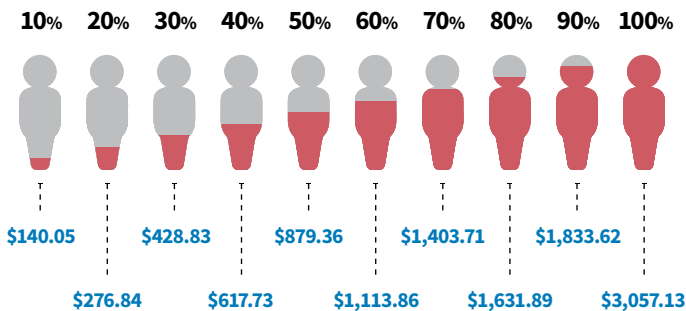
(Effective 12/01/17)

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

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 Veterans 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.

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 veterans 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. 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 officer's 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.

STEP 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.

STEP 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.

STEP 3: FORMAL APPEAL (USDVA FORM 9 OR EQUIVALENT)

When you receive a copy of the Statement of the Case in the mail, you will also get a VA Form 9. If you disagree with the Statement of the Case and want to continue your appeal to the Board of Veterans’ Appeals, you will need to return the VA Form 9 within 60 days.

STEP 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.

STEP 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. 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.

STEP 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.

APPEALS MODERNIZATION

The Veterans Appeals Improvement and Modernization Act of 2017 was signed into law August 23, 2017. You can read the law in full on Congress.gov www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/house-bill/2288.

The Act creates a new decision review process, which features three lanes:

- » Higher-Level Review – Your claim is reviewed by a more senior claims adjudicator and involves:
 - » A higher level new look review of the decision.
 - » No submission of new evidence allowed.
 - » The possibility of overturning the decision based on:
 - » A difference of opinion.
 - » A clear and unmistakable error.

The reviewer, who identifies or learns of a duty to assist error, can return the claim to the regional office for correction. You or your representative can request an informal phone call to identify specific issues.

- » Supplemental Claim – You can submit or identify new and relevant evidence to support your claim. VA will provide assistance in developing the evidence.
- » Appeal – This option allows you to appeal directly to the Board of Veterans' Appeals.
 - » Direct review: You have no new evidence and do not want a hearing.

- » Evidence submission: You have new evidence, but do not want a hearing;
- » Hearing: you have new evidence and want to testify before a Veterans Law Judge.

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.

COMPENSABLE 0 PERCENT RATING

Note: In some instances there are individuals with multiple zero percent service connected disabilities who are paid at the 10 percent rate (38 CFR 3.324)

- » USDVA health care and prescription drugs for service connected disabilities (if income limits are met).
- » Eligible veterans can use VA health care services nationwide, including through mobile health clinics that serve rural areas and via telehealth (care through a phone or computer). Note: You need to be enrolled in VA health care to use community care benefits. For general MISSION Act health care inquiries, contact VA311 (1-844-698-3211).
- » Waiver of USDVA funding fee for USDVA home loan.
- » Burial and plot allowance.
- » 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).
- » Eligibility for 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).
- » 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 & Attendance allowance for eligible disabled spouse.

50 PERCENT IN ADDITION TO THE ABOVE

- » USDVA medical treatment for any S/C or NSC condition.
- » No USDVA medical co-payments.
- » Reduced fee state sport fishing license.
- » State Parks Permit (wartime service required).
- » Regional Transit Connection Discount Card (BART, County Connection, etc.).
- » Reduced fee for state hunting license.
- » Concurrent retired disability pay for military retirees (20 plus years) (CRDP).

60 PERCENT TO 90 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.
- » Entitlement to total disability (100 percent payable) based upon individual unemployability due to a combined rating of 70 percent, with at least one S/C disability rated at 40 percent.
- » USDVA skilled nursing facility care, 70 percent or higher.

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 USDVA 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.va.gov/records/get-veteran-id-cards/vic/ using either the ID.me verification system or a DS login. Users may apply for the hard-copy card by verifying their personal details through the website and 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 a veteran's Social Security number. 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.
- » 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 \$39,69 for the SAH grant and \$7,083 for the SHA grant.

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, contact your VSO, VSR, or CVSO. You may also 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 \$21,058.69 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. All Clothing Allowance Applications forms are to be submitted to the Prosthetic and Sensory Aids Service (PSAS) at the USDVA Medical Center closest to you on or before August 1 of each calendar year.

For a listing of sites near you, see (page 107) or visit www.va.gov/directory/guide/division.asp?dnum=1.

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.
- » 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 if 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.
- » 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.

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; however, 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/gethelp/dogs_ptsd.asp.

WHAT BENEFITS DOES THE USDVA PROVIDE?

Veterans with working service dogs are provided veterinary care and equipment through USDVA Prosthetics and Sensory Aids. USDVA does not pay for boarding, grooming, food, or any other routine expenses associated with owning a dog.

For more information about emotional support dogs please visit www.ptsd.va.gov/gethelp/dogs_ptsd.asp.

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.

Under current law, the USDVA recognizes the following wartime periods to determine eligibility for USDVA Pension benefits:

- » World War I (April 6, 1917 – November 11, 1918).
- » World War II (December 7, 1941 – December 31, 1946).
- » Korean conflict (June 27, 1950 – January 31, 1955).
- » Vietnam era (February 28, 1961 – May 7, 1975 for Veterans who served in the Republic of Vietnam during that period; otherwise August 5, 1964 – May 7, 1975).
- » Gulf War (August 2, 1990 – through a future date to be set by law or Presidential Proclamation).

In addition to meeting minimum service requirements, the veteran must meet one of the following criteria:

- » Age 65 or older.

- » Totally and permanently disabled.
- » A patient in a nursing home receiving skilled nursing care.
- » Receiving Social Security Disability Insurance.
- » 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.
- » Disabled, as determined by the Commissioner of Social Security for purposes of any benefits administered by the Commissioner.
- » Unemployable as a result of disability reasonably certain to continue throughout the life of the person.
- » 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.
 - » 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?

The USDVA will base your payment amount on the difference between your countable income and a limit that Congress sets called the Maximum Annual Pension Rate, or MAPR.

- » Your countable income is how much you earn, including your Social Security benefits, investment and retirement payments, and any income your dependents receive. Some expenses, like non-reimbursable medical expenses (medical expenses not covered by your insurance provider), may reduce your countable income.
- » Your MAPR amount is the maximum amount of pension payable. Your MAPR is based on how many dependents you have, if you're married to another veteran who qualifies for a pension, and if your disabilities qualify you for Housebound or Aid and Attendance benefits. MAPRs are adjusted each year for cost-of-living increases. You can find your current MAPR amount using the tables below.

WHAT'S THE NET WORTH LIMIT TO QUALIFY FOR A VETERANS PENSION?

The USDVA recently changed the way we assess net worth to make the pension entitlement rules more clear. Net worth is the total of your or your beneficiary's assets and annual income. Your net worth also includes the net worth of your spouse. You should report all of your net worth. The net worth limit to qualify for a veterans pension as of December 1, 2018, is \$127,061.

WHAT'S THE 3-YEAR LOOK-BACK PERIOD FOR ASSET TRANSFERS?

When the USDVA receives a pension claim, the USDVA reviews the terms and conditions of any assets the veteran may have transferred in the 3 years before filing the claim.

If you transfer assets for less than fair market value during the look-back period, and those assets would have pushed your net worth above the limit for a USDVA pension, you may be subject to a penalty period of up to 5 years. You won't be eligible for pension benefits during this time.

Note: This new policy took effect on October 18, 2018. If you filed your claim before this date, the look-back period doesn't apply. (A look-back period never includes a date before October 18, 2018.)

WHAT'S A PENALTY PERIOD?

A penalty period is a length of time when a veteran isn't eligible for pension benefits because they transferred assets for less than fair market value during the look-back period. We won't pay pension benefits during a penalty period.

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 based on a higher USDVA income limit.

Since Aid & Attendance (A&A) and Housebound benefit allowances increase the pension amount, those who are not eligible for a basic pension because their income exceeds the USDVA 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, the USDVA either grants Housebound benefits or A&A.

AID & ATTENDANCE

The A&A monthly pension amount is applicable if one of the following conditions are met:

- » 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 applicable 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 using a USDVA Form 21-2680, 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 NCVC 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. 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.

NATIONAL CEMETERIES

USDVA's National Cemetery Administration maintains 136 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.

- » 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

Riverside National Cemetery

Riverside, CA

Open to new casketed and cremation interments.

(951) 653-8417

Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery

San Diego, CA

Open to columbarium interment of cremated remains only.

(619) 553-2084

Sacramento Valley National Cemetery

Dixon, CA

Open to new casketed and cremation interments.

(707) 693-2460

Golden Gate National Cemetery

San Bruno, CA

Closed to new burials.

(650) 589-7737

San Francisco National Cemetery

San Francisco, CA

Closed to new burials.

(650) 589-7737

(650) 589-1646

Los Angeles National Cemetery

Los Angeles, CA

Closed to new burials.

(310) 268-4494

San Joaquin Valley National Cemetery

Santa Nella, CA

Open to new casketed and cremation interments.

(209) 854-1040

Miramar National Cemetery

San Diego, CA

Open to new casketed and cremation interments.

(619) 553-6593

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)
- » 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 and 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 one of the following is true:

- » The veteran paid for a veteran's burial or funeral.
- » The veteran has not been reimbursed by another government agency or some other source, such as the deceased veteran's employer.
- » 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.
- » The veteran was receiving USDVA pension or compensation at the time of death.
- » The veteran was entitled to receive USDVA pension or compensation, but decided not to reduce his/her military retirement or disability pay.
- » The veteran died while hospitalized by USDVA, or while receiving care under USDVA contract at a non-USDVA facility.
- » 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.
- » 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.
- » 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, 2018, USDVA will pay a \$300 burial allowance and \$780 for a plot.
- » If the veteran died on or after October 1, 2017, but before October 1, 2018, 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.

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, 2018, USDVA will pay a \$780 burial allowance and \$780 for a plot.
- » If the veteran died on or after October 1, 2017, but before October 1, 2018, 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 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 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 e-mail. 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. Instructions can be found at www.cem.va.gov/pmc.asp.

Mail or fax applications to:

Presidential Memorial Certificates (41A1C)
National Cemetery Administration
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. 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	\$1,319.4
ADDITIONAL ALLOWANCES	
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.	\$280.09
Each Dependent Child	\$326.77
Aid & Attendance	\$326.77
Housebound	\$153.08

VETERAN'S DEATH WAS BEFORE 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	\$1,319.04	W-1	\$1,392.87	0-1	\$1,392.87
E-2	\$1,319.04	W-2	\$1,448.23	0-2	\$1,440.64
E-3	\$1,319.04	W-3	\$1,490.57	0-3	\$1,539.42
E-4	\$1,319.04	W-4	\$1,577.42	0-4	\$1,631.69
E-5	\$1,319.04			0-5	\$1,795.63
E-6	\$1,319.04			0-6	\$2,024.71
E-7	\$1,364.64			0-7	\$2,185.36
E-8	\$1,440.64			0-8	\$2,400.33
E-9	\$1,621.94			0-9	\$2,567.51
				0-10	\$2,816.11

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 21P-534EZ, Application for Dependency and Indemnity Compensation, Death Pension and/or Accrued Benefits. For assistance, contact the local CVSO (page 187).

PARENTS' DEPENDENCY AND INDEMNITY COMPENSATION

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 www.benefits.va.gov/COMPENSATION/resources-rates-read-parentsdic.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 four 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 21P-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:

- » 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.
- » The claimant entered into the marriage without knowledge of the impediment.
- » The claimant continuously cohabited with the veteran from the date of the marriage to the date of the veteran’s death.
- » 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 or by calling
(844) 737-8838.



CHAPTER 3

Health Care



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.
- » 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 veteran's 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.va.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

USDVA administers its medical benefits through an annual patient enrollment system. The enrollment system is based on Priority Groups (PG) to ensure health care benefits are readily available to all enrolled veterans. Complementing the expansion of benefits and improved access is our ongoing commitment to providing the very best in quality health care service to our patients when it is needed during that enrollment period, regardless of the treatment program or the location.

PRIORITY GROUP 1

- » Veterans with service-connected disabilities rated by USDVA as 50 percent or more disabling.
- » Veterans determined by USDVA to be unemployable due to service-connected conditions.
- » Veterans who have been awarded the Medal of Honor (MOH).

PRIORITY GROUP 2

- » Veterans with service-connected disabilities rated by USDVA as 30 percent or 40 percent disabling.

PRIORITY GROUP 3

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

PRIORITY GROUP 4

- » Veterans who receive aid and attendance or housebound benefits from USDVA.
- » Veterans who have been determined by USDVA to be catastrophically disabled.

PRIORITY GROUP 5

- » Veterans with a nonservice-connected or non-compensable service-connected disability and veterans rated by USDVA as 0 percent disabled and who have an annual income below the USDVA's geographically-adjusted income limit (based on your resident ZIP code).
- » Veterans receiving USDVA pension benefits.
- » Veterans eligible for Medicaid programs.

PRIORITY GROUP 6

- » Veterans with a compensable 0 percent service-connected disability.
- » Veterans exposed to ionizing radiation during atmospheric testing or during the occupation of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.
- » Project 112/SHAD participants.
- » Veterans of the Mexican border period or of World War I
- » 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.
- » 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

Note: At the end of this enhanced enrollment priority group placement time period, veterans will be assigned to the highest PG for which their status at that time qualifies.

PRIORITY GROUP 7

- » Veterans with gross household income below the geographically-adjusted USDVA income limit for their resident location and who agree to pay copayments.

PRIORITY GROUP 8

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

VETERANS ELIGIBLE FOR ENROLLMENT

Veterans who are rated with a noncompensable 0 percent service-connected, and are:

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

Non-service-connected, and are:

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

VETERANS NOT ELIGIBLE FOR ENROLLMENT

Veterans not meeting the criteria above, and are:

- » **Subpriority E:** Non-compensable 0 percent service-connected (eligible for care of their service-connected 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.

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 a 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.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 information 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 Suicide Prevention for American Veterans Act.

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 the USDVA online Form 1010EZ.

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 2018 is available from the IRS/SSA in July 2019.

VETERANS INCLUDED IN THE INCOME VERIFICATION PROCESS

The USDVA does not verify all enrolled veteran 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.

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.
- » 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.
- » 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.
- » 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:

- » 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; and the diagnosis and medical justification for the improvement or structural alteration.
- » 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.
- » For renters: A signed and notarized statement from the owner authorizing the improvement or structural alteration.
- » A written itemized estimate of costs for labor, materials, permits, and inspections for the home improvement and structural alteration.
- » 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?

During a medical emergency, veterans should immediately seek care at the nearest medical facility. A medical emergency is an injury, illness or symptom so severe that without immediate treatment, you believe your life or health is in danger. If you believe your life or health is in danger, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department right away.

Veterans do not need to check with USDVA before calling for an ambulance or going to an emergency department. During a medical emergency, USDVA encourages all veterans to seek immediate medical attention without delay. A claim for emergency care will never be denied based solely on USDVA not receiving notification prior to seeking care.

It is, however, important to promptly notify USDVA after receiving emergency care at a community emergency department. Notification should be made within 72 hours of admission to a community medical facility. This allows USDVA to assist the veteran in coordinating necessary care or transfer, and helps to ensure that the administrative and clinical requirements for USDVA to pay for the care are met.

For additional information, contact the nearest USDVA medical facility (page 107).

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 HealtheVet, 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 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.
- » 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, 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. To locate a USDVA Medical Center, outpatient clinic, or veteran center, see page 107.

CAREGIVER PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

VA offers various services for veterans with Family Caregivers. To sign up for any of these services, contact VA’s Caregiver Support Line —1-855-260-3274, or your local Caregiver Support Coordinator at www.caregiver.va.gov/help_landing.asp.

- » **Adult Day Health Care Centers** — These centers are a safe and active environment with constant supervision designed for veterans to get out of the home and participate in activities.
- » **Home-Based Primary Care** — This program delivers routine health care in your home when medical issues make it challenging for a veteran to travel. This service can also include physical rehabilitation, mental health care for veterans, social work, and referrals to USDVA and community services.
- » **Home Hospice Care** — During the advanced stages of a terminal disease, Home Hospice Care can offer comfort and supportive services for you and the veteran you care for in your own home. An interdisciplinary team of health care providers and volunteers from a local community hospice agency is there for you 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Grief counseling is also available for you and other immediate family members.
- » **Homemaker and Home Health Aides** — This program provides in-home care to veterans with personal care needs on a routine schedule. This care is arranged by the local USDVA medical center.

- » **Home Telehealth** — Designed for veterans who live at a distance from a USDVA medical center, the Home Telehealth program connects them with a care coordinator through technology (e.g., telephone, computers). These services may also include education and training or online and telephone-based support groups.
- » **Respite Care** — Respite care is an occasional way to take a break from your caregiving duties and relax, renew your energy, and avoid caregiver burnout. Veterans who require a caregiver may be eligible for up to 30 days of respite care each year. This care can be offered in your home, at a USDVA community living center, at a VA-contracted community residential care facility, or at an adult day health care center.
- » **Skilled Home Care** — This service provides medical care for homebound veterans. The Skilled Home Care service is similar to Home-Based Primary Care, but involves USDVA purchasing care for a Veteran from a licensed non-VA medical professional.

NEED HELP?

CAREGIVER SUPPORT COORDINATOR

Your local Caregiver Support Coordinator is a licensed professional who can support you by matching you with services for which you are eligible, and providing you with valuable information about resources that can help you stay smart, strong, and organized as you care for the veteran you love. Visit www.caregiver.va.gov/help_landing.asp and enter your Zip Code to view contact information for your area.

CAREGIVER SUPPORT LINE

With VA's Caregiver Support Line – 1-855-260-3274 – assistance is just a quick phone call away. If you're just getting started with VA, calling the Caregiver Support Line is a great first step to take to learn more about the support that's available to you.

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.
- » Was rated permanently and totally disabled due to a service-connected condition at the time of death.
- » Died of a service-connected disability.
- » Died on active duty.
- » 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 CWVV 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 CWVV program is a fee for service (indemnity plan) program. The CWVV 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:

- » 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 Form 10-10CG to determine eligibility for this program.

Learn more about how the USDVA supports family caregivers at 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
- » Post-traumatic osteoarthritis

- » Heart disease and complications
- » Stroke and complications
- » Osteoporosis, on or after October 10, 2008, when PTSD 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
- » 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
- » 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
- » 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 USDVA 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, should contact the nearest USDVA Medical Center (page 107). 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.

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?

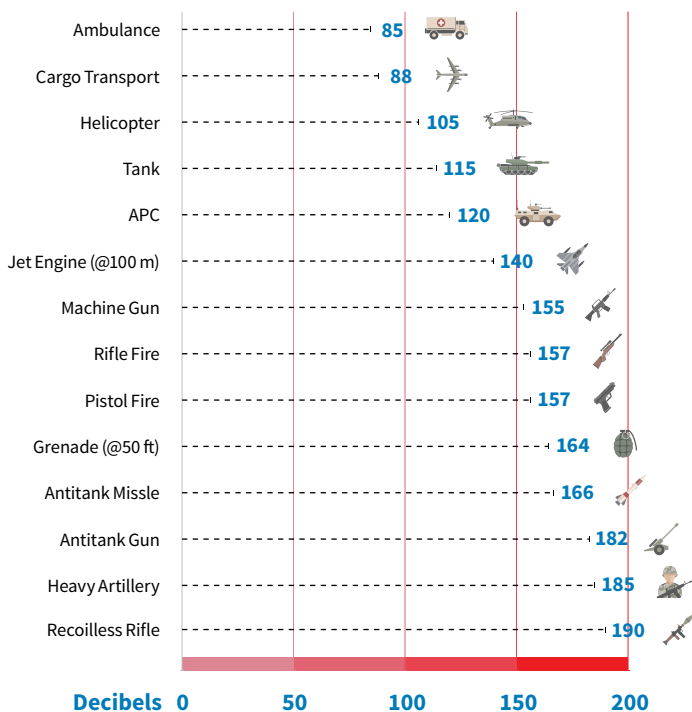
Two of the main causes of sensorineural hearing loss can be encountered commonly in the military. The first, head trauma, is the more unpredictable of the two because it is all but impossible to tell how the body will react. A single blow to the head can damage the ear, while multiple blows may cause 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 they are 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, Vet Center, or by calling the Veterans 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 member's 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, they 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 is not sure if it is an emergency, they 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.

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 www.dhcs.ca.gov/individuals/Pages/MHPContactList.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 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.

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 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 post-traumatic 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.

SOLDIERS PROJECT

The Soldiers Project is a national network of licensed mental health professionals who offer free, confidential and unlimited mental and behavioral health services to Post 9/11 military service members (active duty, National Guard, Reserves, and veterans) and their loved ones. Services are offered regardless of discharge status, branch of service, or deployment. For more information, please visit www.thesoldiersproject.org or call (877) 576-5343.

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.

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. Materials are free. For more information, visit <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/get-help/chat. 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.
- » 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 they are 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, and 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.
- » 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:** They 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 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.

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.

POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER

OVERVIEW

Post-traumatic 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 HealthVet offers a confidential, anonymous screen for PTSD at 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 AND 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 PTSD (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 93).

TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY

The USDVA's Polytrauma System of Care (PSC) 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 polytrauma and TBI. The tiered PSC integrates specialized rehabilitation services at regional centers, network sites, and local USDVA medical centers. See www.polytrauma.va.gov/system-of-care.

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
- » **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
- » **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
- » **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

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.
- » 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 107.

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 107).

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 107. For more information on the Give an Hour program (see page 96) and the Soldier's Project (see page 97).

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 Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Services Division leads 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 <https://dhcs.ca.gov/provgovpart/pages/SUD-Directories.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 usage patterns so the user can take positive action. For free, confidential on-line alcohol screening, visit www.alcoholscreening.org.

CHOICE ACT

The Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 (Public Law 113-146) (“Choice Act”), as amended by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Expiring Authorities Act of 2014 (Public Law 113-175), provides new authorities, funding, and other tools to help support and reform VA. The below summary serves as an overview of the Choice Act and is not meant to serve as an exhaustive review of the legislation.

VETERANS CHOICE PROGRAM

- » As directed by the Choice Act, USDVA will administer the “Veterans Choice Fund” to implement the Veterans Choice Program (“the Program”). The Program will operate for 3 years or until the Fund is exhausted. The Program will provide veterans who were enrolled as of August 1, 2014 or eligible to enroll as a recently discharged combat veteran with a Veterans Choice Card, and allow those veterans who are unable to schedule an appointment within 30 days of their preferred date or the clinically appropriate date, or on the basis of their place of residence to elect to receive care from eligible non-VA health care entities or providers. This is separate from USDVA’s existing program providing veterans care outside of the USDVA system. Eligible non-USDVA entities or providers must enter into agreements with USDVA to furnish care, must maintain the same or similar credentials and licenses as USDVA providers, and must submit to USDVA a copy of any medical records related to care and services provided under the Program for inclusion in the veteran’s USDVA electronic medical record.

USDVA MEDICAL FACILITIES

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

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

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
1601 Concord Avenue
Chico, CA 95928
(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

Northern California Health Care System Cont.

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

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

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

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

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)

Palo Alto Health Care System Cont.

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 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 VA Community
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

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

*Greater Los Angeles
Health Care System Cont.*

OUTPATIENT CLINIC

Bakersfield Community-Based

Outpatient Clinic

1801 Westwind Drive

Bakersfield, CA 93301

(661) 632-1800

(661) 632-1888 (Fax)

East Los Angeles Community-Based

Outpatient Clinic

5426 East Olympic Boulevard, Suite 150

Commerce, CA 90040

(323) 725-7372

Gardena Community-Based

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

California Headache and Pain Center

420 W. Las Tunas Drive

San Gabriel, CA 91776

(626) 457-1688

San Luis Obispo Community-Based

Outpatient Clinic

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

Center for Family Health

120 North 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

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

Redlands 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

*Loma Linda Health Care System
Cont.*

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. 25

**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 Veterans Health Clinic
2569 West Woodland Drive
Anaheim, CA 92801
(714) 780-5300

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

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

VETERANS BENEFIT ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

The VBE program educates, counsels, and assists qualified veterans receiving Medi-Cal of the benefits of USDVA health care enrollment.

Generous USDVA benefits include:

VETERANS BENEFIT ENHANCEMENT BENEFITS	VA HEALTH CARE	MEDI-CAL
MyHealthVet website 24/7 online self-service for appointments, prescriptions, and physician communications.	✓	
Estate Asset Recovery Medi-Cal is a cost recovery program, and on your passing, they can recover the costs of care from your estate.		✓
Mailed Prescriptions Up to a 90 day supply mailed to your home.	✓	
Specialized Care The USDVA is the leading expert in working with service connected conditions.	✓	
Nationwide Coverage The USDVA health care is a federal program and covers you wherever you go.	✓	

For more information please contact the VBE program at VBE@calvet.ca.gov or (916) 503-8087.

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 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.

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 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.

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. 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. You must contact USDVA for assistance to determine if you are eligible for education benefits. CSAAVE does not have access to veteran information.

COLLEGE FEE WAIVER FOR VETERAN 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 college fee waiver.

The College 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 adjudicated 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 adjudicated by the military or USDVA is eligible. There are no age limit restrictions for a spouse.
- » 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 for unmarried surviving spouse.

- » 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 47.

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.

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.

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.
- » Extensive opportunities in student leadership.

More than 3.3 million students have graduated from the CSU system 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 www2.calstate.edu/attend/student-services/troops-to-college.

CALIFORNIA NATIONAL GUARD EDUCATION ASSISTANCE AWARD PROGRAM

The California National Guard Education Assistance Award Program (CNG EAAP) is a State-funded grant for up to 1,000 service members in the California National Guard (CNG) or the California State Military Reserve (SMR)

or as many participants as the annual budget will allow. Participants can receive up to the amount of the Cal Grant A award for attending the University of California or the California State University, up to the Cal Grant B award for attending a community college, or up to the University of California Cal Grant A amount for attending a non-public institution. Graduates may receive an additional \$500 for books and supplies. 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 years in, the CNG or the SMR, and who:

- » Agrees to remain an active member in the CNG or the SMR throughout the participation period in the CNG EAAP.
- » Agrees to use the award to obtain a certificate, degree, or diploma that is currently not held.
- » Has been accepted to, registered at, or enrolled in a qualifying institution as defined by section 69432.7(l) of the California Education Code and has an Institutional Participation Agreement with the California Student Aid Commission.
- » Maintains enrollment of a minimum of three academic units per semester, or the equivalent, at a qualifying institution as defined by California Education Code section 69432(l).
- » Agrees to maintain at least a 2.0 cumulative grade point average (GPA) annually.
- » Is a California resident as determined by the institution (based on resident and non-resident tuition).
- » Is 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.
- » Complete the CNGEAAP application found at nationalguard.csac.ca.gov.
- » Download and print the Statement of Understanding and have it signed by the veteran's commander (link is only available from January 15 through June 1).

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

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 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 enhances or expands 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 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, 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.
- » VA may provide up to nine months of additional Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits to veterans enrolled in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) Programs. This extension cannot be transferred to dependents.

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 15, the housing allowance is paid for the first 15 days of December only. If the next semester begins January 10, 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.
 - » 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 (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 meets one of the following criteria:

- » 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.
- » 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.
- » 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.
- » 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 or apply online at 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 benefits at approved on-the-job training (OJT) facilities for skilled 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 at approved facilities for occupations such as aircraft mechanic, automotive technician, electrician, and welder. Approved apprenticeship programs must involve a combination of theoretical instruction and skilled training.

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

- » The employer must contact CSAAVE at csaaveinfo@calvet.ca.gov and request an application for approval. CSAAVE will review the application to determine compliance with applicable law. After compliance has been determined, CSAAVE will formally notify the employer of approval. USDVA is responsible for training approved employers the procedures in certifying GI Bill® veterans and beneficiaries for payment.
- » The veteran must apply to USDVA for GI Bill® education benefits www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/.
- » The approved employer will initiate the process for GI Bill® payments by submitting the appropriate documents to USDVA for eligible GI Bill® veterans and beneficiaries.

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.

HOW 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 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 and request an application.
- » The veteran must apply to USDVA for monthly educational benefits <https://benefits.va.gov/gjbill>.
- » 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), 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 <https://benefits.va.gov/gjbill> or call (888) 442-4551. 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 or apply online at <https://benefits.va.gov/gjbill>.

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>
 - » www.benefits.va.gov/gjbill/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.
- » 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 107). 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 or apply online at <https://benefits.va.gov/gibill>.

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.

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.
- » 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 or apply online at <https://benefits.va.gov/gibill>.

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 meet one of the following criteria as 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.
- » 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.va.gov/vaforms/form_detail.asp?FormNo=22-5490 or apply for DEA online at <https://benefits.va.gov/gjbill>.

Surviving spouses and dependents of veterans who are service-connected disabled should see the College Tuition Fee Waiver for Veterans 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.
- » Service-connected disabilities are rated at least 20 percent disabling by USDVA.
- » Need vocational rehabilitation to overcome barriers to employment.
- » 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 tracks of services:
 1. Reemployment (with a former employer).
 2. Rapid employment services for new employment.
 3. Self-employment.
 4. 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 or apply online at www.benefits.va.gov/vocrehab/index.asp.

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.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

The USDVA 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).
- » 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).

The number of applicants selected will depend on the availability of USDVA related work at your school, USDVA facilities, or other veterans office in your area.

HOW MUCH CAN I EARN?

You'll earn an hourly wage equal to the Federal minimum wage or your State minimum wage, whichever is greater. If you're in a work-study job at a college or university, your school may pay you the difference between the amount USDVA pays and the amount the school normally pays other work-study students doing the same job as you.

You may elect to be paid in advance for 40 percent of the number of hours in your work-study agreement, or for 50 hours, whichever is less. After you've completed the hours covered by your first payment, USDVA will pay you each time you complete 50 hours of service OR bi-weekly, whichever comes first.

WHAT TYPE OF WORK MAY I DO?

Services you perform under a USDVA work-study program must be related to USDVA work. Examples of acceptable work are:

- » The preparation and processing of necessary papers and other documents at educational institutions.
- » Any activity at a USDVA facility.
- » Any activity at Department of Defense, Coast Guard, or National Guard facilities relating to the administration of Chapters 1606 or 1607 of Title 10 U.S.C.
- » Any activity of a State veterans agency related to providing assistance to Veterans in obtaining any benefit under Title 38, U.S.C. or the laws of the State.
- » A position working in a Center for Excellence for Veteran Student Success, as established under 20 U.S.C. 1161t, which purpose is to support and coordinate academic, financial, physical, and social needs of veteran students.
- » A position working in a cooperative program carried out jointly by the USDVA and an Institution of Higher Learning.
- » Any veteran-related position in an Institution of Higher Learning, such as:
 - » Assisting with dissemination of general information regarding veteran benefits and/or services.
 - » Providing assistance to veteran students with general inquiries about veteran benefits via phone, email, or in person.
 - » Maintaining and organizing veteran-related files.

The work you actually do will depend on your interests and the type of work available.

HOW TO APPLY?

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, www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/VBA-22-8691-ARE.pdf) to any of the approved USDVA work site locations that are accepting applications for work-study students.

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 to begin 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, must 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 meet one of the following criteria:
 - » 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.
 - » 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.

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 post-secondary 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 post-secondary 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 post-secondary 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.
- » 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 post-secondary education.

Participants must meet military service requirements stipulated in the authorizing statute and be low-income, prospective first-generation college students who are preparing to enter a post-secondary institution.

The program requires that at least two-thirds of the participants in a project be both low-income and first-generation. The remaining participants must be either low-income or first-generation military veterans who served in active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces for more than 180 days and received other than a dishonorable discharge; was discharged because of a service-connected disability; was a member of a reserve component of the Armed Forces called to active duty for a period of more than 30 days; or was a member of a reserve component of the Armed Forces who served on active duty in support of a contingency operation on or after September 11, 2001; and have a high risk for academic failure.

For more information, visit www2.ed.gov/programs/triovub/index.html.

CHAPTER 5

Housing



CALVET HOME LOANS

CalVet offers a home loan benefit for veterans who want to purchase a home and live in California. The CalVet home loan benefits package includes low fees, low rates, low to no down payments, flexible guidelines, a comprehensive home protection plan, and other benefits aimed at facilitating the home ownership process for California veterans. Most honorably discharged veterans and active duty service members are eligible.

CalVet has a variety of home financing options available. Some of the options utilize the US Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) Home Loan Guarantee in conjunction with California state bond funds. Other options do not. A veteran does not need to have any USDVA entitlement to qualify for a home loan with CalVet.

CalVet offers loans on:

- » Single family homes, condos, and mobile homes on land for up to 125 % of Fannie Mae maximum loan limits (up to \$908,156 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 (Up to \$1,089,500 in some counties).
- » Home improvement loans for up to \$150,000.
- » Home rehabilitation loans with flexible terms for less than perfect properties.
- » Construction loans with flexible terms.

LOW DOWN PAYMENT

CalVet home loans are available with no down payment for those who are eligible for a loan guaranty from USDVA. Loans originated under the CalVet 97 loan program require a down payment as low as three percent of the purchase price.

LOW FEES AND CLOSING COSTS

CalVet USDVA loans receive a loan guaranty on loans that qualify for the USDVA program. On non-federal USDVA loans, CalVet provides a lender-managed loan guaranty. In most cases, a loan guaranty fee of between 1.25 and 3.30 percent of the loan amount is charged. Under certain circumstances, the fee may be added to the loan amount or even waived for veterans with a

disability. 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.

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. A borrower's rate is "locked in" when a fully executed purchase agreement is received by CalVet. 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 often require a loan pre-approval prior to making an offer on a property. Upon receipt of an application and appropriate documentation, CalVet will evaluate and extend a pre-approval letter to those veterans who meet the qualifications.

A pre-approval application can be initiated by calling toll free (866) 653-2510 or by applying online at www.calvet.ca.gov/homeloans.

REUSABLE LOANS

This home loan benefit is reusable. When a CalVet Home Loan is paid in full, a veteran is eligible to obtain a new loan subject to qualification.

ELIGIBILITY

Nearly all veterans purchasing homes in California are eligible including veterans who served during peacetime. Only 90 days of active duty and a discharge classified as "Honorable" or "Under Honorable Conditions" is required. A DD Form 214 is utilized to validate a veteran's discharge type.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.
- » 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.
- » 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 Certificate of Eligibility (CEO). 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, 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, in Yountville, 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 in meeting 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 approximately 900 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), and skilled nursing facility (SNF), with some Homes offering specialized programming for residents in the SNF level of care who are in need of memory care services.

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)

Residents in the ICF level of care 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 (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: 906

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.
- » Be eligible for health care benefits from the USDVA.

Applications for admission to one of our homes can be obtained through the local CVS0 (page 187), or online at www.calvet.ca.gov/VetHomes/Documents/vhapp.pdf.

HOW TO APPLY

- » Visit www.calvet.ca.gov/calvet-programs/veteran-homes.
- » Select the veterans home of your choice.
- » Click on the button [Apply Today] to download the application.
- » 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 CVS0 (page 187).
- » Review the application carefully.
- » Complete and sign all forms, and have your physician complete Section C.
- » Mail the completed application packet to the home you have selected.

Note: Beginning January 1, 2019, CalVet will offer the opportunity to submit an application online and to learn an applicant's position on a veterans home waitlist. The features will be available through the CalVet website.

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 2017 that 40,056 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 PTSD 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, contact CalVet at (800) 952-5626, or call USDVA's National Call Center for Homeless Veterans at 1-877-4AIDVET (1-877-424-3838), or visit 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 for the development of affordable and supportive multifamily rental housing for veterans experiencing homelessness, at risk of homelessness, or who have low income.

Affordable housing developers partner with veterans service providers to build affordable housing dwellings, including supportive and transitional housing, which will provide housing, comprehensive case management and other supportive services to assist veterans and their families to achieve housing stability and improve self-sufficiency.

NOTICE OF FUNDING AVAILABILITY

Financing through the VHHP Program for affordable multifamily housing proposals is provided through a competitive Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) application process. The most highly qualified proposals to construct, acquire, rehabilitate, or preserve affordable multifamily housing for veterans and their families. Successful applicants will be experienced affordable and supportive housing developers, partnered with service providers who are 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 affordable housing in these concentrated regions and ensure that no regions are left out, VHHP funds are distributed using geographic targeting that is responsive to where the need is highest, while providing an opportunity for proposals from rural and hard to develop regions.

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.

- » Housing 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' National 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 or email CalVet at VHHP@calvet.ca.gov.

USDVA 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 107).

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, currently experiencing homelessness, 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 107), the nearest USDVA Homeless Veterans Coordinator (page 107), or visit 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. To learn if there is an SSVF provider in your community, please visit www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf.asp and look for the list of current year SSVF providers or call VA’s National call Center for Homeless Veterans at 1-877-4AIDVET (1-877-424-3838).

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

CALOVET

VETERANS HOMES

CALVET OPERATES EIGHT

Veterans Homes

**PROVIDING OUR AGED OR DISABLED VETERANS WITH
SERVICES IN A HOME-LIKE ENVIRONMENT.**



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

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/find-a-service-provider

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). Continuum of Care 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 California, visit www.hud.gov/states/california/homeless/continuumcare/nalcoc.

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 veterans services 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.

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.
- » 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.

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 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 <https://consumers.cpuc.ca.gov/helpwithutilities/>.
- » 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 www.pge.com/en_US/residential/save-energy-money/help-paying-your-bill/longer-term-assistance/care/care.page.
- » 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 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 or call (877) 847-3663.

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.

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.

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 or call (866) 321-4435.

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 PTSD 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

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

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, through transitional and affordable housing, case management, employment assistance, mental health counseling and substance abuse treatment.

(213) 542-2600
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 South Hindry Avenue
Inglewood, CA 90301
(310) 348-7600
(310) 645-2605 (Fax)
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

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

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

VIETNAM VETERANS OF CALIFORNIA

The Vietnam Veterans of California (VVC) offers community-based services for veterans and their families. The 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. The VVC serves veterans of all eras.

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 East Southgate Drive

Sacramento, CA 95823

(916) 393-8387

(916) 393-8389 (Fax)

www.vetsresource.org/#locations

NORTH COAST VETERANS RESOURCE CENTER

Employment Counseling and 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/#locations

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/#locations

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

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

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.

3600 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 1500
Los Angeles, CA 90010
(213) 389-1500
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 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.

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_interest/homelessness_poverty/initiatives/homeless_courts/.

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.

Homeless Courts are presently operating in the following California counties:

Alameda, Bakersfield, Placer, Sacramento, Salinas, Contra Costa, San Bernardino, San Diego, Fresno, San Joaquin, Santa Clara, Santa Maria, Humboldt, Sonoma, Kern, Los Angeles, Stanislaus, Orange, and Ventura.

For more information on Homeless Courts, visit 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 post-traumatic 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.

For more information on Veteran Treatment Courts located across the country, visit the National Clearinghouse for Veterans Treatment Courts website at 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.

SERVING VETERANS ACROSS *California*

CalVet and the California Association of County Veterans Service Officers partnering to assist California's Veterans and unified in providing all of the supportive services our Veterans have earned.



WWW.CALVET.CA.GOV



Numbered Counties

- | | |
|----------------|---------------|
| 1 ALAMEDA | 8 SAN JOAQUIN |
| 2 ALPINE | 9 SANTA CLARA |
| 3 AMADOR | 10 SOLANO |
| 4 CALAVERAS | 11 STANISLAUS |
| 5 CONTRA COSTA | 12 SUTTER |
| 6 ORANGE | 13 YUBA |
| 7 SACRAMENTO | |

CHAPTER 6

Employment



STATE EMPLOYMENT

The State of California is honored to employ many current and former service members the U.S. Armed Forces. Before you begin looking for a career with the state, we recommend you apply for the veteran's 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 Veteran's Preference, please review the examination bulletin. Veteran's 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. Veteran's Preference is not granted once a person achieves permanent civil service status.

HOW DO I APPLY FOR VETERANS' PREFERENCE?

To apply for Veteran's Preference, the following must be submitted:

- » Legible copy of DD Form 214.
- » Veteran's Preference Application Form, available at <http://calhr.ca.gov/Documents/CalHR-1093.pdf>.

Note: If you are applying for Veteran's 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 Veteran's Preference will be granted, you will automatically be added to the top rank, provided your application for Veteran's Preference is approved before the eligible record is created. If you were previously successful in a state civil service exam for which Veteran's 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 Veteran's 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 Veteran's 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 Veteran's Preference pursuant to Section 18973.5.

Contact CalHR Examination Unit with questions regarding Veteran's 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, then click "Sign In to My Profile, User I.D.," and select "Create a New Profile." Once CalHR has approved your application for Veteran's Preference, your information will remain on file for all future qualifying examinations. To find job vacancy listings, visit 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:

- » 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.
 - » Was discharged or released from active duty because of a service-connected disability.
- » A homeless veteran.
- » A recently separated service member, who at any point in the previous 12 months has been unemployed for 27 or more consecutive weeks.
- » A veteran offender, who has been released from incarceration within the last 12 months.
- » A veteran who lacks a high school diploma or equivalent certificate.
- » 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.
- » 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 edd.ca.gov/Office_Locator/.

OBTAINING STATE LICENSURE WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS

The Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) protects and serves California consumers while ensuring a competent and fair marketplace. DCA accomplishes this through overseeing licensing and regulatory entities serving 3.5 million licensees in 250 license types in diverse professions and occupations ranging from accountancy to medical, security guard to contractor, cemetery to veterinary, and more. These licensing entities set and enforce minimum qualifications for the professionals, establishments, and businesses they regulate.

Veterans and their family members may be eligible for benefits such as expedited licensure or fee waivers with DCA.

For information on obtaining licensure or licensure benefits available to veterans, visit www.dca.ca.gov/about_dca/military.shtml.

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.

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 Warriors 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

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.

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 or 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 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. This Guide explains the special rights and privileges that veterans enjoy in federal civil service employment and how veteran's 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 or 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:

- » 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.
- » 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.
- » 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 Veterans 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 or call (866) 487-2365 or (800) 397-6251. To locate the district or area office, visit www.dol.gov/agencies/vets/about/regionaloffices.

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 veterans 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.

The 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.
- » Provides members of the Association with a collaborative network of resources, information, and ideas.

CACVSO recognizes the importance and merit of the congressionally chartered veteran's 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 Veterans 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

Or need a referral for:

- » Post-traumatic Stress Disorder treatment
- » Hospitalization
- » Outpatient medical and dental treatment

Services offered include:

- » Claims assistance
- » Client advocacy

CVSOs liaison with:

- » USDVA health care services
- » USDVA vet centers
- » USDVA regional offices
- » Veterans Service Organizations
- » Home loans
- » California veterans state benefits
- » Burial benefits
- » Discharge upgrade
- » Alcohol and drug dependency treatment
- » Small Business Administration
- » Case maintenance
- » Information and referral
- » CalVet 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.

ALAMEDA

6955 Foothill Boulevard
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

765 East Avenue, Suite 200
Chico, CA 95926
(530) 891-2759
(530) 895-6508 (Fax)
Mon - Fri: 8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
Mon and Wed: 12:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.
Walk-ins: Tues and Thu: 12:30 - 3:30 p.m.

CALAVERAS

300 West Daphne Street
Valley Springs, CA 95252
(209) 754-6910
(209) 754-1003 (Fax)
Mon, Tue, Wed, Fri: 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
*Walk-ins: Thu: 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. and
2 p.m.-4 p.m.*

COLUSA

251 East Webster 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) 852-2669
(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

1205 Main Street, Suite 101
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
(415) 473-6465 (Fax)
Mon - Thu: 8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.

MARIPOSA

5085 Bullion Street
Mariposa, CA 95338
(209) 966-3696
(209) 742-7405 (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, Suite 202
Napa, CA 94559
(707) 253-4558
(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
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. - 4:00 p.m.

SAN BENITO

649 San Benito Street
Hollister, CA 95023
(831) 647-7613
(831) 637-1609 (Fax)
Mon - Tue: 8 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
Walk-ins only: 1 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.

SAN BERNARDINO

222 W. Hospitality Lane, 3rd Floor
San Bernardino, CA 92415
(909) 382-3290
(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. - 5 p.m.

SAN FRANCISCO

2 Gough Street
San Francisco, CA 94103
(415) 934-4200
800-807-5799
(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.
Fri appt. only: 8 a.m. - 1 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) 458-7100
(831) 454-7116 (Fax)
Mon - Thu: 8 a.m. - 12 p.m. / 1 p.m. - 5 p.m.
Wed: 8 a.m. - 5 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 100
Santa Rosa, CA 95402
(707) 565-5960
(707) 565-5937 (Fax)
Mon - Thu: 8 a.m. - 12 p.m. / 1 p.m. - 5 p.m.
Walk-ins: Mon - Thu: 8 a.m. - 11 a.m.

STANISLAUS

121 Downey Avenue, Suite 102
Modesto, CA 95354
(209) 558-7380
(209) 558-8648 (Fax)
Mon - Fri: 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Walk-ins: Mon - Thu: 9 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
Friday by appointments

TEHAMA

444 Oak Street, Room C
Red Bluff, CA 96080
(530) 529-3664
(530) 529-3659 (Fax)
Mon - Thu: 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. / 1 - 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: 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. / 1 p.m. - 4 p.m.

Appt. only on Mon, Fri

Walk-ins on Tue, Wed and Thur

VENTURA

5740 Ralston Street, #304

Ventura, CA 93003

(805) 477-5155

(805) 477-5418 (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 - Thu: 7:30 a.m. - 12 p.m. / 1 p.m. - 4 p.m.

Fri: 7:30 a.m. - 12:00 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.

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

Veterans of Foreign Wars

10365 Old Placerville Rd Rancho

Cordova, Ca 95827

(916) 509-8712 California HQ

(816) 756-3390 National HQ

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

Pearl Harbor Survivors Association, Inc.

P.O. Box 1816

Carlsbad, CA 92018

www.pearlharborsurvivorsonline.org

**National League of Families of
American POWs/MIAs**

5673 Columbia Pike, Suite 100
Falls Church, 22041
(703) 465-7432
www.pow-miafamilies.org

Military Order of the Purple Heart

USDVA Regional Office
1301 Clay Street | MOPH Room 1145N
Oakland, CA 94612
(510) 834-0612
(703) 642-5360
(510) 637-1239 (Fax)
www.purpleheart.org

The American Legion

1601 7th Street
Sanger, Ca 93657
(844) 637-8694
www.calegion.org

Disabled American Veterans | CA

13733 Rosecrans Avenue
Santa Fe Springs, CA 90670
(562) 404-1266
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

Vietnam Veterans of America

8719 Colesville Road, Suite 100
Silver Spring, MD 20910
(301) 585-4000
www.vva.org

AMVETS Department of California

157 S.K Street
Tulare, CA 93274
(877)-526-1339
(959) 688-3407
www.amvets.org

Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA)

National Headquarters
801 Eighteenth Street NW
Washington, DC 20006
(800) 424-8200
www.pva.org

Bay Area & Western PVA

3801 Miranda Avenue
Building 7, Room E-118
Palo Alto, CA 94304
(650) 858-3936
(650) 855-9019 (Fax)
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 70
Selma, TX 78154
(210) 653-6161
(703) 549-0311 (Fax)
www.ncoausa.org

Veterans Village of San Diego

4141 Pacific Highway
San Diego, CA 92110
(619) 393-2000
(619) 497-0263 (Fax)
www.vvvsd.net

Jewish War Veterans

1811 R Street NW
Washington, DC 20009
(202) 265-6280
(202) 234-5662 (Fax)
www.jvw.org

Veterans Resource Center

P.O. Box 378
Santa Rosa, CA 95402
(707) 578-2785
www.vetsresource.org

Blinded Veterans Association

125 N. West Street, 3rd Floor
Alexandria, VA 22314
(800) 669-7079
www.bva.org

VetFund Foundation

1415 L Street, Suite 1100
Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 448-3444
(916) 448-0430 (Fax)

Women's Army Corps Veterans Association, Chapter 111

P.O. Box 663 | Weaver, AL 36277
(256) 820-6824
www.armywomen.org

American Ex-Prisoners of War

P.O. Box 3444 | Arlington, TX 76010
(817) 649-2979
www.axpow.org

Blue Star Mothers of America, Inc.

8470A SW 92nd Lane | Ocala, FL 34481
www.bluestarmothers.org

Society of Military Widows

www.militarywidows.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

VETERANS CONNECT @ THE LIBRARY

Visit the Veteran 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 Veteran 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 visit <https://calibrariesforveterans.org/veterans.html>

Veteran Resources Centers are available at the following libraries:

ALAMEDA

Alameda County Library, Dublin
Library– 200 Civic Plaza
Dublin, CA 94568
(510) 608-1117
www.aclibrary.org/

Alameda County Library
Fremont Main Library
2400 Stevenson Boulevard
Fremont, CA 94538
(510) 745-1440
www.aclibrary.org/

Oakland Public Library
Main Library
125 14th Street
Oakland, CA 94612
(510) 238-3134
<http://oaklandlibrary.org/online-services/resources-veterans>

Pleasanton Library
400 Old Bernal Avenue
Pleasanton, CA 94566
(925) 931-3400, ext. 4
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

BUTTE

Butte County Library, Chico Branch
1108 Sherman Avenue
Chico, CA 95926
(530) 891 2762
www.buttecounty.net/bclibrary/VeteransResourceStation.aspx

FRESNO

Coalinga Public Library
305 North Fourth Street
Coalinga, CA 93210
(559) 935-1676
chld.org/vrc

Fresno County Library, Central
2420 Mariposa Street
Fresno, CA 93721
(559) 600-7323
www.fresnolibrary.org/vets/index.html

Fresno County Library
Betty Rodriguez Regional Library
3040 North Cedar Avenue
Fresno, CA 93703
(559) 600-9245
www.fresnolibrary.org/vets/index.html

IMPERIAL

Camarena Memorial Library
850 Encinas Avenue
Calexico, CA 92231
(760) 768-2170
<https://calexicolibrary.org/veteransconnect>

KERN

Kern County Libraries
Beale Memorial Library
701 Truxtun Avenue
Bakersfield, CA 93301
(661) 868-0701
kerncountylibrary.org/veterans

Kern County Libraries
Kern River Valley Branch
7054 Lake Isabella Boulevard
Lake Isabella, CA 93240
(760) 549-2083
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

LOS ANGELES

Azusa City Library
729 N. Dalton Avenue
Azusa, CA 91702
(626) 812-5279
www.AzusaCA.gov/library

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

County of Los Angeles Public Library
La Puente Library
15920 East Central Avenue
La Puente, CA 91744
(626) 968-4613
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

County of Los Angeles Public Library
Lawndale Library
14615 Burin Avenue
Lawndale, CA 90260
(310) 676-0177
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

Inglewood Public Library
101 W. Machester Boulevard
Inglewood, CA 90301
Veterans Resource Center
(310) 412-5649

Long Beach Public Library
Billie Jean King Main Library
200 W. Broadway
Long Beach, CA 90802
www.longbeach.gov/library/learn/veterans-resource-center

Los Angeles Public Library
Central Library
630 West 5th Street
Los Angeles, CA 90071
(213) 305-4407
www.lapl.org/veterans

Los Angeles Public Library
Exposition Park Regional Branch
3900 South Western Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90062
(323) 290-3113
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

Los Angeles Public Library
Van Nuys Branch Library
6250 Sylmar Avenue
Van Nuys, CA 91401
(818) 756-8453
www.lapl.org/veterans

Monrovia Public Library
321 South Myrtle Avenue
Monrovia, CA 91016
(626) 256-8262
www.cityofmonrovia.org/your-government/library/veterans

Whittier Public Library
7344 South Washington Avenue
Whittier, CA 90602
(562) 567-9900
www.whittierlibrary.org/services/veterans-resource-center

MADERA

Madera County Library
121 North G Street
Madera, CA 93637
(559) 675-7872
www.maderacountylibrary.org/#!resources-for-veterans/tfoi1

MERCED

Merced County Library
Los Banos Library
1312 Seventh Street
Los Banos, CA 93635
(209) 826-5254
www.co.merced.ca.us/2237/Veterans-Connect

MONTEREY

Monterey County Free Libraries
King City Branch Library
402 Broadway Avenue
King City, CA 93930
(831) 385-3677
www2.co.monterey.ca.us/library/veterans/index.html

ORANGE

Huntington Beach Public Library
7111 Talbert Avenue
Huntington Beach, CA 92648
(714) 375-8425
www.huntingtonbeachca.gov/government/departments/library/

Mission Viejo
100 Civic Center
Mission Viejo, CA 92691
(949) 830-7100, ext. 5139
<https://cityofmissionviejo.org/services-guides/military-veterans/resource-center-city-direct-services>

RIVERSIDE

Beaumont Library District
125 E 8th Street
Beaumont, CA 92223
(951) 769-1565
bld.lib.ca.us/149/Veterans-Resource-Center

Corona Public Library
650 South Main Street
Corona, CA 92882
Veterans Resource Center
(951) 279-3746

Moreno Valley Public Library
25480 Alessandro Boulevard
Moreno Valley, CA 92553
(951) 413-3880
www.moval.org/mv-library/veterans-connect.html

Moreno Valley Public Library
Mall Library
22500 Town Cir Suite # 2078
Moreno Valley, Ca 92553
(951) 413-3761
www.moval.org/mv-library/veterans-connect.html

Riverside County Library
Palm Desert Library
73-300 Fred Waring Drive
Palm Desert, CA 92260
(951) 204-5619
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

SACRAMENTO

Sacramento Public Library
Rancho Cordova
9845 Folsom Boulevard
Sacramento, CA 95827
(916) 264-2920
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

San Bernardino County Library
Lewis Library & Technology Center
8437 Sierra Avenue
Fontana, CA 92335
(909) 514-4500

SAN DIEGO

Chula Vista Public Library
Veterans Wing
Civic Center Library
365 F Street
Chula Vista, CA 91910
(619) 585 5646
www.chulavistaca.gov/departments/library/services/veterans-connect

San Diego Public Library
Central Library
330 Park Boulevard
San Diego, CA 92101
(619) 238-6697
www.sandiego.gov/public-library/services/outreach/vrc

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

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

Oceanside Public Library
330 North Coast Highway
Oceanside, CA 92054
(760) 435-5600
www.ci.oceanside.ca.us/gov/lib/adults/vet_resources.asp

SAN FRANCISCO

San Francisco Public Library
Central Library
The Bridge at Main, 5th Floor
100 Larkin Street
San Francisco, CA 94102
(415) 557-4388
<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

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>

San Mateo County, Half Moon Bay
620 Correas Street
Half Moon Bay, CA 94019
650-726-2316
<https://smcl.org/veterans-connect>

South San Francisco Public Library
Main Branch
840 West Orange Avenue
South San Francisco, CA 94080
(650) 829-3875
<https://www.ssf.net/departments/library/services/veterans-resource-center>

SANTA BARBARA COUNTY

Santa Barbara Library Central Library
40 E. Anapamu Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 564-5621
www.santabarbaraca.gov/gov/depts/lib/default.asp

Santa Maria Public Library
421 South McClelland Street
Santa Maria, CA 93454
(805) 925-0994, ext. 2254
<https://www.cityofsantamaria.org/city-government/departments/library/using-the-library/veterans-connect-resources>

SANTA CRUZ

Santa Cruz Public Libraries
Downtown Branch
224 Church Street
Santa Cruz, CA 95060
(831) 427-7700, ext. 7671
www.santacruzpl.org/veterans

SHASTA

Shasta Public Libraries
Redding Library
1100 Parkview Avenue
Redding, CA 96001
(530) 245-7258
www.shastalibraries.org/591

SOLANO

Solano County Library
Vacaville Cultural Center
1020 Ulatis Drive
Vacaville, CA 95687
(866) 572-7587
solanolibrary.com/veterans-connect

SONOMA

Sonoma County Library
Central Santa Rosa Library
211 E Street
Santa Rosa, CA 95404
(707) 308-3020, ext. 1527 and 1539
www.sonomalibrary.org

STANISLAUS

Stanislaus County Library
Modesto Library
1500 I Street
Modesto, CA 95354
(209) 558-7814
<http://stanislauslibrary.org/veterans.shtm>

TULARE

Tulare Public Library
475 North M Street
Tulare, CA 93274
(559) 685-4500
www.tulare.ca.gov/departments/community-services/tulare-public-library/services/veterans-resource-center

Ventura County Library
E.P. Foster Library
651 East Main Street
Ventura, CA 93001
(805) 648-2716
www.vencolibrary.org/special-interests/veterans-resource-center

MINORITY VETERANS

California is a richly diverse state with an equally diverse veteran population. As of 2014, California is a minority-majority state which means no single racial or ethnic group forms a majority. While minority veterans comprise approximately 43 percent of the total California veteran population, which is roughly a total of over 730,000 veterans across the state, as a group this population of veterans are less likely to access their USDVA benefits than non-minority veterans. We are charged with identifying barriers to service and health care access, as well as increasing local awareness of minority veteran related issues by developing strategies for improving minority participation in existing USDVA benefit programs and deliver CA Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise (DVBE) opportunities and entrepreneurship training in disadvantage veterans communities across California.

For more information on outreach for minority veterans, call the CalVet Minority Veterans Division at (916) 653-1402.

MINORITY VETERANS SUPPORT

Minority veterans information and/or resources can be found on the following websites:

- » American G.I. Forum
www.agif.org
- » American Indian Warriors Association
www.aiwa.americanindiansource.com
- » American Indian Veterans Association
www.californiaindianeducation.org/aiva/
- » Native American Veterans Association
www.navavets.org
- » Center for Minority Veterans
www.va.gov/centerforminorityveterans
- » Jewish War Veterans of the USA
www.jwv.org
- » National Association for Black Veterans, Inc.
www.nabvets.weebly.com
- » Swords to Plowshares
www.swords-to-plowshares.org

To view a comprehensive Directory of Veterans Service Organizations visit www.va.gov/vso/VSO-Directory.pdf.

LOCAL NATIVE AMERICAN 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.

LESBIAN, GAY, BI-SEXUAL, TRANSGENDER AND QUESTIONING VETERANS

CalVet is committed to ensuring all veterans have access to and receive the benefits they have earned without regard to sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sex, age, and mental or physical disability. The Minority Veterans Division promotes the use of USDVA benefits, programs, and services by Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual, Transgender Veterans and Questioning (LGBTQ) veterans. We advocate on behalf of LGBTQ veterans by identifying gaps in services and by making recommendations to improve service.

We support and initiate activities that educate and sensitize the public to the unique needs of our LGBTQ veterans. In September 2014, CalVet hosted a two-day California LGBTQ Veterans Leadership Forum, the first in the nation, to identify needs, gaps and exclusions in housing, employment, healthcare, education, and legal affairs. Since then, CalVet's Minority Veterans Affairs Division has worked diligently with stakeholders across the state to ensure delivery systems conform to the needs of our LGBTQ veterans population.

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.

- » Modern Military Association of America
<https://modernmilitary.org/>
- » AVER – American Veterans for Equal Rights
www.aver.us
- » American Legion Alexander Hamilton Post 448
www.post448.org
- » The Palm Center
www.palmcenter.org
- » Swords to Plowshares
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. Nine percent of 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, call (916) 653-1402, email Womenveterans@calvet.ca.gov, 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-VAWOMEN (1-855-829-6636)

CENTER FOR WOMEN VETERANS

VA's Center for Women Veterans monitors and coordinates VA's administration of benefit services and programs for women veterans. The Center advocates for a cultural transformation that recognizes the service and contributions of women veterans and women in the military, and also raises awareness of the responsibility to treat women veterans with dignity and respect (www.va.gov/womenvet/).

WOMEN VETERAN COORDINATORS

There are Women Veteran Coordinators (WVCs) located in every regional office who function as the primary contact for women veterans. WVCs provide specific information and comprehensive assistance to women veterans, their dependents, and beneficiaries concerning USDVA benefits and related non-VA benefits. They may assist you in the claims intake, development, and processing of military sexual and personal trauma claims.

VA HEALTH CARE FOR WOMEN VETERANS

At each USDVA medical center nationwide, a Women Veterans Program Manager (WVPM) is designated to advise and advocate for women Veterans. The WVPM can help coordinate all the services you may need, from primary care to specialized care for chronic conditions or reproductive health. Woman veterans who are interested in receiving care at USDVA should contact the nearest USDVA Medical Center and ask for the WVPM, or visit www.womenshealth.va.gov/WOMENSHEALTH/womenshealthservices/healthcare_about.asp.

CALIFORNIA VETERANS BOARD

The California Veterans Board serves as an appellate body for any veteran who believes that a decision by 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 California veterans home.

The Board also provides legislative advocacy for veteran's 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

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 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.

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 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.

For more information, visit www.militaryonesource.mil.

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)



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CHAPTER 8

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.

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 15) 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 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. (CST) Monday through

Friday (except holidays). 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.

You can check the status of your Military Service Records Request through the following webpage: www.archives.gov/forms/st-louis/mpr-followup.html.

CORRECTION OF MILITARY RECORDS

The secretary of a military department, acting through a board for correction of military records, has authority to change any military record when necessary to correct an error or remove an injustice. A correction board may consider applications for correction of a military record, including a review of a discharge issued by courts martial.

The veteran, survivor, or legal representative generally must file a request for correction within three years after discovery of an alleged error or injustice. The board may excuse failure to file within the prescribed time, however, if it finds it would be in the interest of justice to do so. To justify any correction, it is necessary to show to the satisfaction of the board that the alleged entry or omission in the records was in error or unjust. Applications should include all available evidence, such as signed statements of witnesses or a brief of arguments supporting the requested correction.

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 complete this process without assistance, must use DD Form 149, Application for Correction of Military Record, attach copies of statements or records that are relevant to the case, and mail the completed form to the address identified.

APPLYING FOR REVIEW OF DISCHARGE

Each of the military services maintains a discharge review board with authority to change, correct or modify discharges or dismissals that are not issued by a sentence of a general courts-martial. The board has no authority to address medical discharges. The veteran or, if the veteran is deceased or incompetent, the surviving spouse, next of kin or legal representative may apply for a review of discharge by writing to the military department concerned, using DoD Form 293. However, if the discharge was more than 15 years ago, a veteran must petition the appropriate service Board for Correction of Military Records using DoD Form 149, which is discussed in the “Correction of Military Records” section above. A discharge review is

conducted by a review of an applicant's record and, if requested, by a hearing before the board.

Veterans with disabilities incurred or aggravated during active military service may qualify for medical or related benefits regardless of separation and characterization of service. Veterans separated administratively under other than honorable conditions may request that their discharge be reviewed for possible recharacterization, provided they file their appeal within 15 years of the date of separation. Questions regarding the review of a discharge should be addressed to the appropriate discharge review board at the address listed on DoD Form 293.

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.nationalservice.gov/.

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.

THE MISSION CONTINUES

A fellowship with the 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.

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.

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/.

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. 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.

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.

VOLUNTEERS OF AMERICA

Each year Volunteers of America touches the lives of almost 1.3 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 2017 more than 60,000 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.voaa.org/volunteer.

OPERATION GRATITUDE

Operation Gratitude annually sends more than 300,000 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 \$45-\$100 and costs the organization \$15 to assemble and ship. Since its inception in 2003, Operation Gratitude volunteers have shipped more than two million care packages. To view volunteer projects, volunteer, or donate, visit www.operationgratitude.com/express-your-thanks.

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 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. To complete a volunteer application online, visit 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, 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 or complete online at 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.

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/Memorial-Registry.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.

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.

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 <https://calguard.ca.gov/family-programs/>.

JOINT SERVICES SUPPORT NATIONAL GUARD FAMILY PROGRAM

The National Guard Family Program exists for the sole purpose of supporting and educating families along the path of their National Guard life. In addition to the national office in Washington, D.C., there is an incredible team of staff members and volunteers in each of the 54 States and Territories. In each state, there is a State Family Program Director and one to four Wing Family Program Coordinators in support of the families. There are also Family Readiness Groups/Key Volunteer Groups, Family Readiness Assistants, and Family Assistance Staff where service family members can take full advantage of any and all services available. For more information on the program, visit www.militaryonesource.mil/national-guard/national-guard-family-program.

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.militaryonesource.mil/military-life-cycle/separation-transition.

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.yellowribbon.mil/

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.

EMPLOYER SUPPORT OF THE GUARD AND RESERVE

Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) is a DoD program 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, call (800) 336-4590, call the local National Guard or Reserve unit, or visit www.esgr.mil/.

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 <https://stateguard.cmd.ca.gov/>.

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:

» **Army Utility Uniforms**

- » The “U.S. Army” nametape over the left breast pocket will be replaced with a nametape which will read “California”.

» **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.
- » **The “U.S. Army” headgear insignia will be replaced with the CSMR headgear insignia on the service cap.**

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

A&A	Aid & Attendance	DEERS	Defense Eligibility Enrollment Reporting System
ABA	American Bar Association	DFW	Department of Fish and Wildlife
AJCC	America's Job Centers of California	DGS	Department of General Services
AOS	Army OneSource	DIC	Dependency and Indemnity Compensation
BAH	Basic Allowance for Housing	DoD	U.S. Department of Defense
BDU	Battle Dress Uniform	DOM	Domiciliary or Independent Living
BVA	Board of Veteran Appeals	DPR	Department of Parks and Recreation
CACVSO	California Association of County Veterans Service Officers	DU	Depleted Uranium
CalTAP	California Transition Assistance Program	DV	Disabled Veterans
CalVet	California Department of Veterans Affairs	DVBE	Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise
CARE	California Alternative Rates for Energy Program	DVOP	Disabled Veterans Outreach Program
CAVC	Court of Appeals for Veterans' Claims	EDD	Employment Development Department
CCC	State of California Community College	EDIPI	Electronic Data Interchange Personal Identifier
CCCCV	California Central Coast Veterans Cemetery	EFSP	Emergency Food and Shelter Program
CEA	Career Executive Assignments	ESGR	Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve
CHAMPVA	Civilian Health and Medical Program	FAFSA	Free Application for Federal Student Aid
CLFMP	Camp Lejeune Family Member Program	FAN	California National Guard Family Assistance Network
CNG	California National Guard	FDC	Fully Developed Claim
CNG EAAP	California National Guard Education Assistance Award Program	FEHB	Federal Employee Health Benefits
CoC	Continuum of Care	FERA	Family Electric Rate Assistance
COE	Certificate of Eligibility	HCVRV	Healthcare for Re-entry Veterans
CPT	Cognitive Processing Therapy	HISA	Home Improvement and Structural Alteration
CRDP	Concurrent Retired Disability Pay for Military Retirees	HUD	U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
CRSC	Combat Related Special Compensation for military retirees	HUD-VASH	Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Department of Veterans Affairs Supported Housing
CSAAVE	California State Approving Agency for Veterans Education	IADT	Initial Active Duty for Training
CSMR	California State Military Reserve	ICF	Intermediate Care Facility
CSU	California State University	IRS	Internal Revenue Service
CVMR	California Veterans Memorial Registry	IV	Income Verification
CVSO	County Veterans Service Office	JCF	Joining Community Forces
CWT	Compensated Work Therapy	JSSFP	Joint Services Support Family Program
CWVV	Children of Women Vietnam Veterans	LINC	Local Interagency Network Coordinator
DD Form 214	Discharge Papers	LVER	Local Veterans Employment Representatives
DEA	Dependents Educational Assistance	MGIB	The Montgomery GI Bill®

MGIB-SR	Montgomery GI Bill-Selected Reserve	SVRC	Sacramento Veterans Resource Center
MOH	Medal Of Honor	TBI	Traumatic Brain Injury
MST	Military Sexual Trauma	TTT	Troops to Teachers
NABMW	National Association of Black Military Women	U.S. VETS	United States Veterans Initiative
NCA	The National Cemetery Administration	UC	University of California
NCVC	Northern California Veterans Cemetery	UI	Unemployment Insurance
NOD	Notice of Disagreement	USDVA	U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
NOFA	Notice of Funding Availability	USGS	U.S. Geological Survey
NPRC	National Personnel Records Center	VADIP	VA Dental Insurance Program
NVF	National Veterans Foundation	VARO	USDVA Regional Office
OEF	Operation Enduring Freedom	VBA	The Veterans Benefits Administration
OFCCP	Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs	VEAP	Veterans Educational Assistance Program
OIF	Operation Iraqi Freedom	VFW	Veterans of Foreign Wars
OPM	U.S. Office of Personnel Management	VHA	The Veterans Health Administration
OSDS	Office of Small Business and DVBE Services	VHHP	Veterans Housing and Homelessness Prevention
OTH	Other Than Honorable	VHIC	Veteran Health Identification Card
PE	Prolonged Exposure	VJO	Veterans Justice Outreach
PMC	Presidential Memorial Certificate	VOA	Volunteers of America
POA	Power of Attorney	VR&E	Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Program
POW	Prisoner of War	VRC	Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor
PSC	Polytrauma System of Care	VSO	Veterans Service Organizations
PTSD	Post-traumatic Stress Disorder	VSR	Veterans Service Representative
PVA	Paralyzed Veterans of America	VTC	Veteran Treatment Courts
RCFE	Residential Care Facility for the Elderly or Assisted Living	VVC	Vietnam Veterans of California
REAP	Reserve Educational Assistance Program	VVSD	Veterans Village of San Diego
RTC	Regional Transit Connection Discount Card (BART, County Connection, etc.)	W2VA	Welcome to VA
SAH	Specially Adapted Housing	YRRP	Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program
SB	Small Businesses		
SCRA	Service Members Civil Relief Act of 2003 (formerly known as the Soldiers' and Sailors' Civil Relief Act of 1940-SSCRA)		
SHA	Special Housing Adaptation		
SHAP	Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program		
SMR	State Military Reserve		
SNF	Skilled Nursing Facility		
SOC	Statement of the Case		
SSA	Social Security Administration		
SSOC	Supplemental Statement of the Case		
SSVF	Supportive Services for Veteran Families		



CALIFORNIA OFFERS

Education

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



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Affordable Housing

FOR ALL VETERANS



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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 1.6 million veterans and their families regarding the benefits they earned based on their military service.

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