



The state of California offers many veteran benefits for service members and Veterans that have served in the Armed Forces of the United States of America. These benefits include income and property tax exemptions, financial exemptions, education and training programs, hunting and fishing licenses, vehicle registrations, and assistance with employment. Your residency, military career, and disability status may result in certain differences in what benefits you may be eligible for. The following are benefits for the state of California.

## California Veteran Financial Benefits

- **California Taxes on Retired Military Pay:** Follows federal tax rules. All private, local, state and federal pensions are fully taxed.
  - **California State Taxes on U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Military Disability Retired Pay:** Military Disability Retirement Pay received as a pension, annuity or similar allowance for personal injury or sickness resulting from active service in the Armed Forces should not be included in taxable income if any of the following conditions apply:
    - You were entitled to receive a disability payment before September 25, 1975;
    - You were a member of the military (active or reserves) or were under a binding written commitment to become a member on September 24, 1975;
    - You receive disability payments for a combat-related injury. This is a personal injury or sickness that:
      - Resulted directly from armed conflict
      - Took place while you were engaged in extra-hazardous service
      - Took place under conditions simulating, including training exercises such as maneuvers
      - Was caused by an instrumentality of war
  - **California State Taxes on U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Disability Dependency and Indemnity Compensation:** Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) is a tax-free monetary benefit paid to eligible survivors of military service members who died in the line of duty or eligible survivors of Veterans whose death resulted from a service-related injury or disease.
  - **Military Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP)/ Reserve Component Survivor Benefit Plan (RCSBP)/ Retired Serviceman's Family Protection Plan (RSFPP) California State Tax Benefits:** Generally subject to state taxes for those states with income tax. Check with a state department of revenue office
  - **California Veteran's Property Tax Exemption:** The Veterans' Exemption provides an exemption of property not to exceed \$4,000 for qualified Veterans who own limited property. The Veterans' Exemption may be claimed by a person currently serving in the military service or one who has been honorably discharged, the unmarried Surviving Spouse or either parent of a deceased Veteran meeting the service requirements. In order to qualify for this exemption, the claimant may not own property, real or personal, worth more in aggregate than \$5,000 if the claimant is single. If married, the couple may not own property worth more than \$10,000. In addition, the claimant must have lived in California on the lien date, January 1.
  - **California Disabled Veteran Property Tax Exemptions:** The Disabled Veterans' Exemption reduces the property tax liability on the principal place of residence of qualified Veterans who, due to a service-connected injury or disease, have been rated 100% disabled or are being compensated at the 100% rate due to unemployability. An unmarried Surviving Spouse of a qualified Veteran may also claim the exemption.



- **California Business License, Tax and Fee Waiver for Veterans:** The Business License, Tax, and Fee Waiver benefit waives municipal, county, and state business license fees, taxes, and fees for 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. Honorably discharged Veterans who engage in sales (not services) activities may be eligible. Eligibility criteria will differ based upon local jurisdiction. If your county/city licensing authority offers this benefit and they establish eligibility for your specific business, submit proof of honorable discharge to the authority.

#### Sales Tax:

- Statewide: 7.25% (includes a mandatory local rate of 1.25%)
- Municipalities: can levy an additional sales tax up to 3.0%
- Current average sales tax (with local taxes included): 8.3645%

## Recreation

**Fishing and Hunting Licenses:** Veterans with a 50% or greater service-connected disability rating may be eligible for a fishing and hunting licenses at reduced fees (residency of California is not required).

**State Parks and Recreation Pass:** California residential Veterans with honorable discharges with a 50% or more service-connected disability rating, former POW, or Medal of Honor recipient is eligible for a free pass to all California state parks. This pass is valid for a day uses, along with camping. However, this pass is not valid at units operated by local government, private agencies, or concessionaires. It does not allow for special events, group campsites, and commercial use. There may be supplemental fees associated with reservations and fees for online scheduling.

## Education Programs

**College Tuition Fee Waivers for Veterans' Dependents:** Waiver of mandatory system-wide tuition and fees at any State of California Community College, California State University or University of California campus. This program does not cover the expense of books, parking or room, and board. There are four plans under which dependents of Veterans may be eligible.

**California Non-Resident College Fee Waiver:** The Non-Resident College Fee Waiver waives non-resident fees at all State of California Community Colleges, California State University, or University of California campuses.

**California National Guard Education Assistance Award Program (CNG EAAP):** The California National Guard Education Assistance Program (CNG EAAP) issues financial awards to qualifying members of the California Army or Air National Guard and State Military Reserve. The grant can pay up to 100% of fees at the Universities of California, California State University and California Community Colleges, and eligible California non-public institutions.

**California Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children:** It is the purpose of this compact to remove barriers to educational success imposed on children of military families because of frequent moves and deployment of their parents by:



- Facilitating the timely enrollment of children of military families and ensuring that they are not placed at a disadvantage due to difficulty in the transfer of educational records from the previous school district or variations in entrance or age requirements
- Facilitating the student placement process through which children of military families are not disadvantaged by variations in attendance requirements, scheduling, sequencing, grading, course content or assessment
- Facilitating the qualification and eligibility for enrollment, educational programs, and participation in extracurricular academic, athletic and social activities
- Facilitating the on-time graduation of children of military families
- Providing for the promulgation and enforcement of administrative rules implementing the provisions of this compact
- Providing for the uniform collection and sharing of information between and among member states, schools and military families under this compact
- Promoting coordination between this compact and other compacts affecting military children
- Promoting flexibility and cooperation between the educational system, parents and the student in order to achieve educational success for the student

**Housing:** The following are the sites for Veterans Homes

**California State Veterans Home at Barstow**

**California State Veterans Home at Chula Vista**

**California State Veterans Home at Fresno**

**California State Veterans Home at Lancaster**

**California State Veterans Home at Redding**

**California State Veterans Home at Ventura**

**California State Veterans Home at West Los Angeles**

**California State Veterans Home at Yountville**

### **Eligibility for admission:**

- Veterans must have an honorable discharge
- Veterans must be 55 years or older (age requirement is waived for disabled or homeless veterans needing long-term care)

### **Employment and Job Training: Veteran's Preference**

Veterans, their surviving spouses, or spouses of 100% disabled Veterans who pass a test for state employment will be automatically ranked in the top rank of all participants.

**California Business License Tax and Fee Waiver:** A Veteran receives a waiver of municipal, county and state business license fees, taxes and fees, for 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. Honorably discharged Veterans who engage in sales (not services) business activities are eligible. Eligibility criteria will differ based upon local jurisdiction. Proof of honorable discharge must be made to the local appropriate county/city licensing authority.

**Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act:** Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) protect civilian job rights and benefits for Veterans and members of Reserve components. USERRA also makes major improvements in protecting service member rights and benefits by clarifying the law, improving enforcement mechanisms, and adding Federal Government employees to those employees already eligible to receive the Department of Labor assistance in processing claims.

## Burials and Memorials

Please note that your preference regarding burial in a national cemetery and use of a headstone provided by VA should be documented and kept with your paperwork and medical records.

National Cemeteries include:

Arvin: [Bakersfield National Cemetery](#)

Dixon: [Sacramento Valley National Cemetery](#)

Los Angeles: [Los Angeles National Cemetery](#)

Riverside: [Riverside National Cemetery](#)

San Bruno: [Golden Gate National Cemetery](#)

San Diego: [Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery](#)

San Diego: [Miramar National Cemetery](#)

San Francisco: [San Francisco National Cemetery](#)

Santa Nella: [San Joaquin Valley National Cemetery](#)

## California VA Benefit Resources

California provides Veterans with a District Benefits Office and several Regional Benefit Offices, along with VA Medical Centers.

### California VA District Benefits Office

- Oakland: [Pacific District](#)

### California VA Regional Benefits Office



- Los Angeles: [Los Angeles Regional Office](#)
- San Diego: [San Diego Regional Office](#)
- Oakland: [Oakland Regional Office](#)

## California VA Medical Centers

- Fresno: [Central California VA Health Care System](#)
- Livermore: [Livermore](#)
- Loma Linda: [VA Loma Linda Healthcare System](#)
- Long Beach: [VA Long Beach Healthcare System](#)
- Los Angeles: [VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System \(GLA\)](#)
- Mather: [VA Northern California Health Care System](#)
- Menlo Park: [Menlo Park](#)
- Palo Alto: [VA Palo Alto Health Care System](#)
- San Diego: [VA San Diego Healthcare System](#)

### Important information for California Veteran Benefits:

For Veterans applying for VA benefits for the first time, you must submit a copy of your DD 214 (discharge paperwork). This will provide your discharge status, along with your full name, social security number, branch of service, and dates for which you served. Honorable and general discharges qualify a Veteran for most VA benefits.

You should always keep your paperwork, along with your medical records, in a safe place where you and your family can have access to them. It is imperative to have it in a location where it cannot be destroyed or tampered with, which includes a safe.

Your eligibility for most VA benefits is based upon discharge from active military service under other than dishonorable conditions. Active service means full-time service as a member of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, or as a commissioned officer of the Public Health Service, the Environmental Services Administration or the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Any Veteran discharged from the military under the conditions of "Dishonorable" due to bad conduct discharges issued by general courts-martial may bar VA benefits. Veterans in prison and parolees may be eligible for certain VA benefits. VA regional offices can clarify the eligibility of prisoners, parolees, and individuals with multiple discharges issued under differing conditions.

\*This information is accurate as of December 2019