



The state of Colorado 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 Colorado.

### Colorado Veteran Financial Benefits

- **Retired Military Pay Income Taxes:** The rules for the taxability of military retirement benefits are the same as the rules for any retirement pension and annuity income. Persons who were 55 to 64 years of age as of December 31 may exclude up to \$20,000 of their military retirement benefits received during the calendar year. Persons who were 65 years of age or older as of December 31, may exclude up to \$24,000 of their military retirement benefits received during the calendar year.
- **Colorado Senior and Disabled Veteran Property Tax Exemption:** A property tax exemption is available to senior citizens, Surviving Spouses of senior citizens, and disabled Veterans. For those who qualify, 50 percent of the first \$200,000 in the actual value of their primary residence is exempted. The state pays the exempted portion of the property tax. The Senior Property Tax Exemption is administered by the Department of Local Affairs, but the Treasurer's office is responsible for the distribution of state funds to counties representing the amount issued in exemptions.
- **Colorado 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) Colorado State Tax Benefits:** Generally subject to state taxes for those states with income tax. Check with the state department of revenue office.
- **Colorado Property Tax Deferral for Seniors and Active Military Personnel:** The Property Tax Deferral Program helps military personnel and seniors, many of whom live on a fixed income, continue to afford to live in their homes by deferring the payment of their property taxes. The State Treasurer's office may make tax payments directly to the county on behalf of the participant for the tax amount due. The loan is logged as a lien against the participant's property that does not have to be remitted until the participant no longer qualifies to defer their property taxes.
- **Colorado Resident Military Serving Outside of the U.S. for 305 Days or More File as a Non-Resident for Tax Purposes:** A Service member who is a full-year Colorado resident who spends at least 305 days of the tax year outside of the 50-state boundary of the United States while stationed outside of the United States for active military duty may file as a nonresident on the Colorado income tax return. The Service member's Spouse may also file as a nonresident if the Spouse accompanies the Service member outside of the country for at least 305 days of the tax year while they are stationed there on active military duty.



#### Sales Tax:

- Statewide: 2.9%
- Counties: can levy a sales tax of no more than 8.3%
- Current average sales tax (with local taxes included): 6.189%

### Recreation

**Hunting & Fishing License for Disabled Veterans:** Veteran residents with a disability rating of 60% or more are provided with a free, lifetime combination small-game hunting and fishing license.

**Hunting & Fishing License for Active Duty:** Active duty members, resident or non-resident, of Colorado and their families can get hunting and fishing licenses at the resident rate while stationed in the state.

**Resident Fishing While Home on Leave:** Active duty residents who are permanently stationed outside of the state may fish without a license while in Colorado on temporary leave.

**Free State Park Admission:** All active-duty members and Veterans are admitted free to Colorado state parks for the entire month of August and on Veterans Day. There is no residency requirement.

**State Park Admission for Disabled Veterans:** Veterans with a Disabled Veterans License Plate receive free admission to any state park or recreation area. Colorado resident disabled Veterans with at least a 60% disability can get discounted admission to all Colorado state parks with a Columbine pass.

### Education Programs

**Colorado National Guard (CONG) Tuition Assistance:** Any member of the Colorado National Guard whose sole residency in Colorado is eligible for State Tuition Assistance, up to 100% tuition paid (not to exceed \$4250 or \$475/credit hour) at any approved Colorado state-funded school depending on funding available. State funding can be used in conjunction with Federal Tuition Assistance.

**Colorado "Operation Recognition" High School Diplomas for Wartime Veterans:** Operation Recognition is a program to award High School diplomas to deserving and qualified WWII, Korea and Vietnam-era Veterans. Operation Recognition is authorized by Colorado State Law and is offered by the Colorado Board of Veterans Affairs in cooperation with the Colorado Department of Education and the Colorado Association of School Boards.

**Colorado Resident Tuition Rates for Non-resident Service Members, Veterans, and Families:** Veterans, Active Duty Service members, members of the Colorado National Guard and their dependents may qualify for residency for tuition purposes.



**Colorado 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

[Colorado State Veterans Home at Aurora](#)

[Colorado State Veterans Home at Florence](#)

[Colorado State Veterans Home at Homelake](#)

[Colorado State Veterans Home at Rifle](#)

[Colorado State Veterans Home at Walsenburg](#)

### **Eligibility for admission:**

- The Veteran must have an honorable discharge
- Veterans' Spouses/Widows, including "Gold-Star" Parents (Parent of a fallen Service Member), are eligible

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

All honorably discharged Veterans can have 5 points added to any state employment examination scores. This also includes a spouse of a Veteran unable to work because of a service-connected disability. Those with a VA service-connected disability will get 10 points added to their score.



**Paid Leave for Colorado State Employees for Military Training:** State employee receives 15 days of paid military leave per year. Colorado National Guard and Reserve Service members are eligible for paid leave for military training.

**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.

**Colorado Division of Professions and Occupations Licensure for Service Members and Spouses:** The Department of Regulatory Agencies (DORA) licenses and regulates more than 50 licensed professions and occupations in the state of Colorado and is committed to providing professional support and customer service to military personnel, including Active Duty, Reserves, National Guard, military spouses, and Veterans. In certain cases, renewal fees may be waived for service members, military spouses may receive special consideration when obtaining a Colorado professional license and service members can have military training and education count towards qualifications for licensure or certification.

## 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. Eligibility for burial in the cemetery is the same as for VA national cemeteries but includes a residency requirement.

National Cemeteries include:

Colorado Springs: [Pikes Peak National Cemetery](#)

Denver: [Fort Logan National Cemetery](#)

Las Animas: [Fort Lyon National Cemetery](#)

## Colorado VA Benefit Resources

Colorado provides Veterans with a District Benefits Office and a Regional Benefits Office, along with a VA Medical Center.

### Colorado VA District Benefits Office

- Lakewood: [Continental District](#)

### Colorado VA Regional Benefits Office

- Lakewood: [Denver Regional Office](#)

### Colorado VA Medical Centers

- Grand Junction: [VA Western Colorado Health Care System](#)



### **Important information for Colorado 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