



The state of Illinois 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 Illinois.

Illinois Veteran Financial Benefits

- **Income Tax:** Active duty military members and retired Veterans' income payments are tax-free.
- **World War II Bonus Payment:** A bonus of \$10 per month for domestic service and \$15 per month for foreign service is payable to a Veteran who was a resident of Illinois at time of entering service, served at least 60 days on active duty between September 16, 1940 and September 3, 1945, and received an honorable discharge. Survivors are entitled to a benefit of \$1,000 if the Veteran's death was service-connected and within the period specified.
- **Korean, Vietnam, Persian Gulf, and Global War on Terrorism (OIF, OEF) Bonus:**
A \$100 bonus is payable for service during one of the following periods: Korea – June 27, 1950 – July 27, 1953 Vietnam – January 1, 1961 – March 28, 1973 Vietnam Frequent Wind – April 29, 30, 1975 Persian Gulf – August 2, 1990 – November 30, 1995 Global War on Terrorism – September 11, 2001 – TBD
You must also be in receipt of one of the following medals: Korean Service Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal Vietnam Era Southwest Asia Service Medal, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Iraq Campaign Medal, or the Afghanistan Campaign Service Medal; and have been a resident of Illinois for 12 months immediately prior to entering service. Some service periods require an Honorable Discharge and foreign service requirements.
- **Vietnam Veteran Survivors Compensation:** Survivors are entitled to a payment of \$1,000 if the Veteran's death is service-connected or is the direct result of service-connected disabilities incurred in the period specified. A separate application is required.
- **POW Compensation:** Persons on active duty with the Armed Forces of the United States or employed by the United States Government on, or after, January 1, 1961, who were residents of Illinois 12 months prior to entry, and who were taken and held prisoner by hostile forces in Southwest Asia, are entitled to \$50 for each month held captive.
- **Specially Adapted Housing Tax Exemption:** Up to a \$100,000 reduction in the property's value for taxation purposes is available for homes that were purchased or modified with the Specially Adapted Housing Grant for as long as the Veteran, spouse, or unmarried surviving spouse live there.

Mobile homes purchased with the Specially Adapted Housing Grant are also exempt from county mobile home tax.

- **Returning Veterans' Homestead Exemption:** Qualifying veterans receive a one-time \$5,000 reduction to their home's assessed value.
- **Disabled Veterans' Standard Homestead Exemption:** A reduction in the assessed value of the home of a Veteran with a service-connected disability. For veterans with a disability between 30 – 50 percent the exemption is \$2,500; for veterans with a 50 – 70 percent disability the exemption is \$5,000; Veterans with a service-connected disability of at least 70% are exempt from property taxes on their primary residence. The unmarried surviving spouse of a service member killed in



the line of duty is exempt from paying property taxes on the primary residence. You must file an annual application with the county to receive this exemption.

Sales Tax:

- Statewide: 6.25%
- Counties: can levy an additional sales tax of no more than 4.75%
- Current average sales tax (with local taxes included): 7.79%

Recreation

Camping & Admission Fees: Illinois Veterans are exempt from admission fees to any Illinois state park, this is determined by their period of military service spent abroad.

Hunting and Fishing Licenses: Disabled Veterans receiving a disability rating of 10% or more are not required to purchase a fishing and hunting license. Veterans who served abroad are eligible for a 50% discount on fishing and hunting licenses.

Education Programs

Educational Opportunities for Children (10-18 Yrs): Financial aid is available for children between 10 and 18 years old of those who died or became totally disabled as a result of wartime military service. The financial aid applies to a state educational institution of elementary grade, high school or vocational training school.

MIA/POW Scholarship: Dependents of a Veteran who has been declared by the DOD or VA to be a POW/MIA, died as the result of a service-connected disability, or permanently disabled from service-connected causes with 100% disability; and, who is an Illinois resident or was an Illinois resident within six months of entering service may be eligible for the scholarship. Eligible dependents are entitled to full payment of tuition and certain fees to any state-supported Illinois institution of higher learning consisting of the equivalent of four (4) calendar years of full-time enrollment including summer terms (i.e., 120 points).

Illinois Veterans' Grant: The Illinois Veteran Grant (IVG) Program pays tuition and certain fees at all Illinois state-supported colleges, universities and community colleges for Illinois residents.

An individual must:

- have an honorable discharge
- reside in Illinois six months before entering the service
- have at least one full year of active duty in the military
- return to Illinois within six months of discharge

Illinois National Guard Grant: The Illinois National Guard (ING) Grant pays tuition and eligible fees (registration, graduation, general activity, matriculation, and term fees) at all Illinois public universities or public community colleges. Recipients who have completed less than 10 years of



active guard time may accumulate up to 120 eligibility units. Recipients who have completed more than 10 years of active duty guard time may accumulate up to 180 eligibility units.

Children of Veterans Scholarship: Each county in the state shall be entitled, annually, to one honorary scholarship at the University of Illinois, for the benefit of children of Veterans of WWI, WWII, Korean War, the Vietnam Conflict and any time on or after August 2, 1990 and until those persons in service are no longer eligible for the Southwest Asia Service Medal. Preference is given to the children of deceased and disabled Veterans. Such children shall be entitled to receive, without charge for tuition, instruction in any or all departments of the University for a term of at least four (4) consecutive years. Details may be obtained from the University's Financial Aid Office.

Housing: The following are the sites for Veterans Homes

Illinois State Veterans Home at Anna

Illinois State Veterans Home at LaSalle

Illinois State Veterans Home at Manteno

Illinois State Veterans Home at Quincy

Eligibility for admission:

- Veterans must be honorably discharged
- Veterans must be residents of Illinois
- Have served at least one day or more
- Veterans served during a period of war (peacetime Veterans also eligible)
- Spouses, surviving spouses, and Gold Star parents of Veterans are also eligible
- Monthly costs are based on income

Employment and Job Training: Veterans Preference

Honorably discharged Veterans who served during wartime get preference in-state job hiring.

Education Requirements for Police & Firefighters: The educational requirements needed to join the Illinois State Police will be waived for Veterans who have been honorably discharged with a campaign service medal for Afghanistan or Iraq. The Illinois Conservation Police will waive their educational requirements for honorably discharged Veterans who have certain campaign medals. The educational requirement for a firefighter or municipal police officer is waived for Veterans discharged honorably after 24 months of active duty or 180 days in combat.

State Licenses & Credentials: Licenses & Credentials testing and fees for EMT, CNA, EMR, and CDL may be waived if you have military experience in that job.



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 interment in the State Veterans Cemetery follows National Cemetery Administration eligibility requirements. Spouses may also be eligible for burial.

National Cemeteries include:

Alton: [Alton National Cemetery](#)

Alton: [North Alton Confederate Cemetery](#)

Chicago: [Confederate Mound](#)

Danville: [Danville National Cemetery](#)

Elwood: [Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery](#)

Fort Sheridan: [Fort Sheridan National Cemetery](#)

Mound City: [Mound City National Cemetery](#)

Quincy: [Quincy National Cemetery](#)

Rock Island: [Rock Island Confederate Cemetery](#)

Rock Island: [Rock Island National Cemetery](#)

Springfield: [Camp Butler National Cemetery](#)

Illinois VA Benefit Resources

Illinois provides Veterans with a Regional Benefits Office and VA Medical Centers.

Illinois VA Regional Benefits Office

- Chicago: [Chicago Regional Office](#)

Illinois VA Medical Centers

- Chicago: [Jesse Brown VA Medical Center](#)
- Danville: [VA Illiana Health Care System](#)
- Hines: [Edward Hines Jr. VA Hospital](#)
- Marion: [Marion VA Medical Center](#)
- North Chicago: [Captain James A. Lovell Federal Health Care Center](#)

Important information for Illinois 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