



The state of Massachusetts 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 Massachusetts.

Massachusetts Veteran Financial Benefits

- **Income Tax:** Military retirement pay is tax-free.
- **Property Tax Exemption:** Veterans who have a disability rating may be eligible for a property tax exemption of \$400 to \$1500. Spouses and surviving spouses may also be eligible for the exemption.

To qualify, all Veterans must:

- be at least 10% disabled by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
 - be legal residents of Massachusetts
 - be occupying the property as his/her domicile on July 1st in the year of application
 - have lived in Massachusetts for at least six months prior to entering the service (spouses exempted)
 - have lived in Massachusetts for five consecutive years immediately prior to filing for a property tax exemption
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- **Vehicle Sales Tax Exemption for Disabled Veterans:** Disabled Veterans are eligible for a motor vehicle sales tax exemption (applicable only to one motor vehicle owned and registered for personal, non-commercial use).
 - **Disabled Veteran Annuity:** An annuity in the amount of \$2,000, which is payable biannually on August 1st and February 1st in two installments of \$1,000 each is available for Veterans who have a 100% disability rating, along with their spouses. This also includes Gold Star Parents as well.
 - **Welcome Home Bonus:** The Commonwealth of Massachusetts provides a bonus to Veterans who lived in Massachusetts immediately prior to entry in the armed forces. In case of the death of a Veteran, the spouse and children, mother or father, brother or sister, or other dependents of the deceased Veteran (in that order) are eligible for a bonus.
 - **State Tax Benefits for those in a Combat Zone:** Massachusetts Department of Revenue (DOR) follows the federal rules for granting an extension of time to file income tax returns and to pay taxes due for those serving in a combat zone, or who are hospitalized as a result of such service, during the period designated as the period of combatant activities. This extension applies to members of the Armed Forces, as well as individuals serving in support of the Armed Forces, serving in a combat zone. The extension period is for the time of service in the combat zone area or hospitalization attributable to such service plus 180 days. The extension of time to file returns also applies to Spouses of personnel serving in combat areas if a joint return is filed. Certain combat pay of military personnel serving in a combat zone is excluded from federal gross income and therefore is not subject to federal income tax. Massachusetts income tax law incorporates the provisions of the Federal Tax Code so that combat pay will be excluded from Massachusetts income to the extent that it is excluded from federal income.



Recreation

Resident Hunting/Fishing Licenses for Non-Resident Military Personnel: Non-resident military personnel stationed in Massachusetts may apply for and receive hunting and fishing licenses at the resident rate.

Free Fishing or Hunting License for Disabled Persons: Disabled Massachusetts residents (blind, paraplegic) may qualify for a free MA freshwater fishing license. Disabled Massachusetts residents (paraplegic) may qualify for a free MA hunting license.

Free State Park Parking for Disabled Veterans and Purple Heart Recipients: Day-use parking fees are waived for vehicles bearing a disabled Veteran license plate/ placard or Purple Heart Recipient License plate. This waiver does not apply to camp fees and is subject to available parking. The ParksPass is not valid at the following locations – Quabbin Reservoir Boat Launch Areas, Squantum Point, North Point or Draw Seven Commuter lots.

Education Programs

Categorical Tuition Waiver for Veterans and Active Duty Members: The Commonwealth of Massachusetts offers a tuition waiver to all Veterans and active duty service persons who are permanent and legal residents of Massachusetts. This waiver can be used at any Massachusetts state or community college or university campus.

Tuition and Fee Waivers for Guard Members: The Massachusetts National Guard Education Assistance Program provides a 100% tuition and fee waiver for Massachusetts National Guard Service members attending a state college, university, or community college program. Your assistance can continue as long as you are in good standing academically and until you have reached 130 semester hours.

UMass Boston and Suffolk University, Veterans Upward Bound Program: The UMass Boston Veterans Upward Bound Program and the Suffolk University Veterans Upward Bound Program provides a unique opportunity for Veterans of all ages to gain access to information about college and career awareness, acquire the academic skills required for entry into higher education and/or to acquire the equivalent of a high school diploma.

Housing: The following are the sites for Veterans Homes

Massachusetts State Veterans Home at Holyoke

Massachusetts State Veterans Home at Chelsea

Eligibility for admission:

- Veterans must have an honorable discharge
- Veterans must have served in the Armed Forces for 90 consecutive days during wartime



Employment and Job Training: Veterans Preference

All honorably discharged Veterans can have 5 points added to any state employment examination scores. Those with a VA service-connected disability will get 10 points added to their score. Spouses and surviving spouses of certain disabled or deceased Veterans can have the 10-point preference extended to them and added to any test scores. Veterans also get preference over non-veterans with the same ratings on classified service employment registers.

Massachusetts' Veterans are entitled to Veterans' preference in civil service exams. If you attain a score of 70% or higher, you are entitled to go to the top of the exam list, with disabled Veterans having top priority. If you apply for a promotional exam, you get two points added to your score. If you apply for a civil service job for which there is no exam, you are entitled to Veterans' preference in a "provisional appointment." If you apply for a position in the labor force, you are not required to take an exam and you go to the top of the list.

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. Eligible Veterans can be buried at no cost. There will be a nominal fee for the burial of spouses and eligible dependents.

National Cemeteries include:

Ayer: [Woodlawn Cemetery Soldiers' Lot](#)

Bourne: [Massachusetts National Cemetery](#)

Massachusetts VA Benefit Resources

Massachusetts provides Veterans with a Regional Benefits Office and a VA Medical Center.

Massachusetts VA Regional Benefits Office

- Boston: [Boston Regional Office](#)

Massachusetts VA Medical Centers

- Bedford: [Edith Nourse Rogers Memorial Veterans Hospital \(Bedford VA\)](#)
- Brockton: [VA Boston Healthcare System, Brockton Campus](#)
- Jamaica Plain: [VA Boston Healthcare System, Jamaica Plain Campus](#)
- Leeds: [VA Central Western Massachusetts Healthcare System](#)
- West Roxbury: [VA Boston Healthcare System, West Roxbury Campus](#)

Important information for Massachusetts 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