



The state of Mississippi 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 Mississippi.

Mississippi Veteran Financial Benefits

- **Income Tax:** Military retirement pay is tax-free.
- **Ad Valorem Tax:** Veterans with a service-connected disability, along with an honorable discharge from military service is exempt from all Ad Valorem taxes on the assessed value of their home. Their un-remarried surviving spouses may also be eligible for this exemption.
- **Mississippi Veterans' Home Purchase Board:** The Veterans Home Purchase Board provides low-interest mortgage loans for eligible Veterans and their un-remarried surviving spouses to purchase an existing single-family home, or to construct a new home. The Veteran must have been a Mississippi resident prior to entering active duty or be a resident for 2 consecutive years prior to applying for the loan. The Veteran must have a Certificate of Eligibility for a VA loan and have an honorable discharge. The un-remarried surviving spouse of eligible Veterans who died as a result of service or service-connected injuries are also eligibles, as well as the un-remarried spouse of any eligible Veteran who has not purchased a home since the Veteran's death.

Sales Tax:

- Statewide: 7.0%
- Counties: can levy an additional sales tax of no more than 1.0%
- Current average sales tax (with local taxes included): 7.052%

Recreation

Hunting and Fishing Licenses: Veterans who have a service-connected disability from the VA are not required to purchase a hunting or fishing license, but must have proof of age, residency and disability status while hunting or fishing.

Concealed Weapon Permit Fee Exemption: Any Veteran with a service-connected disability is exempt from concealed weapon permit fees and renewal fees. The Veteran must be a resident of the state for 12 months or longer immediately preceding the filing of the application. The residency requirement may be waived if they have a valid permit from another state, are active military personnel stationed in Mississippi, or are a retired law enforcement officer establishing residency in the state. Active duty members are also exempt from the fee.

Education Programs

The Mississippi State Educational Assistance Program (SEAP): The Mississippi State Educational Assistance Program (SEAP) pays toward tuition to state and regionally accredited institutions for Service members who are not authorized Federal Tuition Assistance. The amount per semester is determined by the SEAP Board before each state fiscal year based upon funds allotted by the state legislature. SEAP is currently limited to Service members in the Mississippi



State National Guard who are not eligible for Federal Tuition Assistance. SEAP currently funds up to \$4,500.00 per year (1Jul – 30Jun) at \$250.00 per hour based on the availability of funding.

In-State Tuition for Service Members Stationed in Mississippi: Members of the United States Armed Forces on extended active duty and stationed within the State of Mississippi and members of the Mississippi National Guard may be classified as residents, for the purpose of attendance at state-supported institutions of higher learning and community and/or junior colleges of the State of Mississippi. Resident status of such military personnel who are not legal residents of Mississippi, as defined in Section 37-103-13, shall terminate upon their reassignment for duty in the continental United States outside the State of Mississippi.

Mississippi In-State Tuition for Non-Resident Veterans: Non-resident student Veterans are eligible for in-state tuition while attending Mississippi institutes of higher education.

Who is eligible for Mississippi Veteran In-state Tuition? Any person who served in the active military, naval, or air service, and who was discharged or released therefrom under conditions other than dishonorable is considered a Veteran for in-state tuition. Veteran students must present proof of service (i.e., DD214) showing military service and a discharge under other than dishonorable conditions.

Mississippi In-State Tuition for Spouse and Children of Service Members: Resident status of a Spouse or Child of a member of the Armed Forces of the United States on extended active duty shall be that of the military Spouse or parent for the purpose of attending state-supported institutions of higher learning and community/junior colleges of the State of Mississippi during the time that the military Spouse or parent is stationed within the State of Mississippi and shall be continued through the time that the military Spouse or parent is stationed in an overseas area with last duty assignment within the State of Mississippi, excepting temporary training assignments en route from Mississippi.

Mississippi 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

Mississippi State Veterans Home at Collins

Mississippi State Veterans Home at Jackson

Mississippi State Veterans Home at Kosciusko

Mississippi State Veterans Home at Oxford

Eligibility for admission:

- Discharged other than on dishonorable accounts
- Spouses who live in the home may be eligible
- Veterans out of state may be eligible depending on availability

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.

Authorized Leave for Military Duty for Mississippi State Employees: State employees receive 15 working days paid military leave per year without loss of pay, time, annual leave, or efficiency rating, on all days during which they shall be ordered to duty to participate in training at encampments, field exercises, maneuvers, outdoor target practice, or for other exercises, for periods not to exceed fifteen (15) days, and all such officers and employees shall for such periods in excess of fifteen (15) days, be entitled to leave of absence.

Credit for Military Service in Mississippi Public Employee Retirement Service (PERS): Qualifying active duty military service credit is available at no cost and for purchase. Military service performed after terminating from covered public service or while drawing a retirement allowance is not eligible for credit.

Mississippi Re-employment Rights for Military Service Members: Any person who is a member of any reserve component of the Armed Forces of the United States, or former member of the service of the United States discharged or released therefrom under conditions other than dishonorable, who, in order to perform duties or receive training with the Armed Forces of the United States or of the State of Mississippi (including active state duty, state training duty or any other military duty authorized under Title 10 or Title 32 of the United States Code), leaves a position, other than a temporary position, in the employ of any employer, and who shall give evidence of the satisfactory completion of such duty or training, and who is still qualified to perform the duties of such position, shall be entitled to be restored to his previous or a similar



position, in the same status, pay and seniority, and such period of absence for military duty or training shall be construed as an absence with leave but maybe without pay.

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. Burial is open to all Veterans who were honorably discharged. The burial is free of charge for Veterans, spouses and dependents are eligible and may pay a small fee.

National Cemeteries include:

Biloxi: [Biloxi National Cemetery](#)

Corinth: [Corinth National Cemetery](#)

Natchez: [Natchez National Cemetery](#)

Mississippi VA Benefit Resources

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

Mississippi VA Regional Benefits Office

- Jackson: [Jackson Regional Office](#)

Mississippi VA Medical Centers

- Biloxi: [Gulf Coast Veterans Health Care System](#)
- Jackson: [G.V. \(Sonny\) Montgomery VA Medical Center](#)

Important information for Mississippi 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