



The state of Montana 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 Montana.

Montana Veteran Financial Benefits

- **Retired Military Pay Income Taxes:** Montana taxes all pension and retirement income received while residing in Montana to the extent it is taxable on the federal return. The state does allow a pension and annuity income exemption of up to \$4,070 per individual if certain income limitations are met. If you received retirement income other than Tier II Railroad benefits, you should complete state form W, Worksheet IV in order to determine the amount of your exclusion. Your retirement exclusion is limited to the lesser of the taxable retirement income that you received or \$4,700, as long as your federal adjusted gross income is \$30,000 or less and you are filing a single return, filing jointly with your Spouse and only one of you has taxable retirement income, or you are filing as head of household. If both you and your Spouse have received retirement income and you are filing jointly with your spouse, and your federal adjusted gross income is \$33,910 or less, you both can exclude the lesser of the taxable retirement income that you receive personally or \$4,070 each for a maximum of \$8,140.
- **Montana 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.
- **Montana Veterans' Clubhouse Tax Exemption — Incompetent Veterans' Trusts:** A clubhouse or building erected by or belonging to any society or organization of honorably discharged United States military personnel that is used primarily for educational, fraternal, benevolent, or purely public charitable purposes rather than for gain or profit, together with the personal property necessarily used in the building, is exempt from taxation. The exemption provided for in this section applies even if a business, intended primarily for the use of the members, is required to be open to the public and is operated in a portion of the building. All property, real or personal, in the possession of legal guardians of incompetent Veterans of U.S. military service or minor dependents of the Veterans, when the property is funded or derived from funds received from the United States as a pension, compensation, insurance, adjusted compensation, or gratuity, is exempt from all taxation as the property of the United States while held by the guardian, but not after title passes to the Veteran or minor in the minor's own right on account of the removal of legal disability.

Sales Tax:

- Statewide: None
- Counties: cannot levy any sales tax
- Gasoline Tax: 51.15 cents/gallon (includes all state, local, and federal taxes)



Recreation

Hunting and Fishing Licenses: Montana Veterans with a disability rating may be eligible for a discount on hunting and fishing licenses. Active duty, non-residents and their families can buy hunting and fishing licenses at the residential rate.

Education Programs

Montana Board of Regents of Higher Education Tuition Waivers for Veterans, War Orphans, Surviving Dependents of Deceased National Guard Service Members: The Montana Board of Regents of Higher Education offers tuition waivers for Veterans, war orphans and surviving dependents of deceased National Guard Service members at campuses of the Montana University System. A short description of these benefits is listed below. Students are eligible for continuation of a waiver, from year to year, unless otherwise limited, provided reasonable academic progress is maintained in accordance with the campus's satisfactory progress policy generally used in administering federal financial aid. This provision does not apply to senior citizens and faculty and staff waivers. No combination of waivers/discounts can exceed the total tuition charged by the campus.

Grateful Nation Montana, Financial and Educational Assistance: Grateful Nation Montana was formed for the specific purpose of facilitating college educations for the children of service members killed while on active duty in Iraq or Afghanistan, Grateful Nation links eligible students with the financial resources and non-monetary support they will need to have a successful college experience. They target both the financial and educational needs of these children. Even with sufficient financial resources in place, the road to a successful college education may not be assured for these students, who face many hurdles growing up without a parent. Participating colleges and universities provide student tutoring and mentoring to eligible students during their high school years so that these students are academically and emotionally prepared to succeed in college.

Montana 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

Montana State Veterans Home at Columbia Falls

Montana State Veterans Home at Glendive

Eligibility for admission:

- Discharged other than on dishonorable accounts
- A spouse may be eligible depending on availability
- The Veteran must require skilled nursing care
- Veterans pay on the needs required

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. Some spouses or un-remarried surviving spouses may also be eligible.

Paid Military Leave for Montana Public Employees: Public employees receive 15 workdays of paid military leave per year. Unused military leave must be carried over to the next calendar year, or academic year if applicable, but may not exceed a total of 240 hours in any calendar or academic year. Public employees performing military service and who has been an employee for a period of at least 6 months are eligible for paid leave.

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. Spouses may be buried along with the Veteran. There is a small charge for burial. Non-residents may also be eligible.

National Cemeteries include:

Laurel: [Yellowstone National Cemetery](#)

Missoula: [Fort Missoula Post Cemetery](#)



Montana VA Benefit Resources

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

Montana VA Regional Benefits Office

- Fort Harrison: [Fort Harrison Regional Office](#)

Montana VA Medical Centers

- Miles City: [Miles City VA Clinic and Community Living Center](#)

Important information for Montana 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