



The state of Pennsylvania 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 Pennsylvania.

Pennsylvania Veteran Financial Benefits

- **Pennsylvania Retirement Income Taxes:** Generally, you should not include the amount of income you received from a commonly recognized retirement plan that was sponsored by your employer's Pennsylvania qualifying retirement or old age benefit program or disability retirement program.
- **Pennsylvania Retired Military Pay Taxes:** As long as you retire from the military with either years' service, because of service incurred disability or age, your retirement income is not taxable.
- **Military Pay for Federal Service outside Pennsylvania is not Subject to Pennsylvania State Income Taxes:** Military pay for Pennsylvania National Guard and Army Reserve members who perform Federal funded active duty service outside Pennsylvania is exempt from Pennsylvania's personal income tax. Military pay for those on active duty outside Pennsylvania is not taxed.
- **Pennsylvania State Income Tax Benefits for Differential Pay for Reserve Component Service Members:** Pennsylvania taxes the difference between military pay and regular wages when an employer compensates a Service member. However, differential pay is not subject to Pennsylvania personal income tax for Service members on active duty in combat zones or hazardous duty zones.
- **Pennsylvania Disabled Veterans' Real Estate Tax Exemption:** A Veteran will be exempt from the payment of all real estate taxes levied upon any building, including the land upon which it stands, occupied by him/her as their principal dwelling.
- **Pennsylvania 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.

Sales Tax:

- Statewide: 6.0%
- Counties: can levy an additional sales tax of no more than 2.0%
- Current average sales tax: 6.121%

Recreation

Hunting/Fishing/Trapping License for Disabled Veterans: Wartime Veterans with a 100% disability rating may be eligible for free hunting, fishing, and trapping licenses. Veterans with a 60 – 90% disability rating can get a reduced-fee license.

Active Duty Hunting & Fishing: Residents home on leave can get a free fishing license and reduced-fee hunting license. Non-residents stationed in Pennsylvania can get a fishing license for the resident rate.]



Education Programs

Pennsylvania “Operation Recognition” Diplomas for Wartime Veterans: “Operation Recognition” is a state law that authorizes school districts to grant a high school diploma to any honorably discharged Veteran who served in the United States military in World War II the Korean Conflict and the Vietnam War.

Pennsylvania Postsecondary Educational Gratuities Program: This program honors individuals who lost their lives protecting the citizens of Pennsylvania by helping their children fund their education. The Postsecondary Educational Gratuities Program (PEGP) provides a waiver for tuition, fees, and on-campus room and board costs charged by public postsecondary institutions. This waiver applies only to charges that remain after all other grants (federal, state, and outside scholarships) have been applied to the student’s account.

Pennsylvania Educational Gratuities: The Pennsylvania Educational Gratuities provides financial assistance to Children of honorably discharged Veterans who have service-connected disabilities and served during established war service dates or armed conflict or Children of Veterans who die or died in service during a period of war or armed conflict. Payment will not exceed \$500.00 per term or semester per qualified Child to each approved educational institution upon submission by that approved educational institution of proof of matriculation of the applicant. Educational gratuities payments are paid directly to the Educational Institution and may not be made for longer than 4 scholastic years.

Pennsylvania National Guard Education Assistance Program (EAP): Together with the Pennsylvania Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, PHEAA administers the Pennsylvania National Guard Education Assistance Program (EAP) for students who enter into a service commitment with the Pennsylvania National Guard for six years.

Pennsylvania State Grant Program: The Pennsylvania State Grant Program has helped Veterans finance post-secondary education. The program considers all Veterans without regard to the financial status of their Family. The number of money applicants can expect to receive is based on the individual financial situations as well as the type of school attended in Pennsylvania.

Pennsylvania 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

Pennsylvania State Veterans Home at Erie

Pennsylvania State Veterans Home at Hollidaysburg

Pennsylvania State Veterans Home at Philadelphia

Pennsylvania State Veterans Home at Pittsburgh

Pennsylvania State Veterans Home at Scranton

Pennsylvania State Veterans Home at Spring City

Eligibility for admission:

- Veterans must have served in the Armed Forces (deployment necessary)
- Discharged other than on dishonorable accounts
- Spouses or unmarried surviving spouse (including Gold Star Parents) are also eligible provided they meet the age and residency requirements
- Costs are based on income

Employment and Job Training: Veteran Preference

Honorably discharged Veterans who served on active duty after August 2nd, 1990, spouses of disabled Veterans, and surviving spouses of disabled Veterans can get 10 additional points on their test scores for state employment.

Pennsylvania State Employee Leave of Absence for Military Duty: State employees receive 15 days paid military leave per year. In addition, they are entitled to an unpaid leave of absence from their respective duties without loss of seniority or efficiency rating on all days in excess of 15 days per year during which they shall be engaged in training or other military duty under orders authorized by Federal or State law.

Pennsylvania Employee Re-employment following Emergency or Military Duty: Upon completion of emergency or military duty, any member of the Pennsylvania National Guard or any other Reserve component of the U.S. Armed Forces shall be restored by his/her employer to their previous employment position and status, or a position of similar seniority, status, and pay which was held prior to the Service member's deployment or mobilization. If the Service member



is not qualified to perform the duties of such position due to disability sustained during mobilization or deployment, but otherwise qualified to perform the duties of any other position in the employ of his/her former employer, then a position in which he/she is qualified to perform with like seniority and pay (or the closest approximation thereof consistent with the case) shall be offered.

Pennsylvania State Employee Military Service Credit for State Retirement: Honorably discharged Veterans employed by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for a period of at least three years may be eligible to purchase credit for active-duty military time.

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. Eligibility for interment in the State Veterans Cemetery follows National Cemetery Administration eligibility requirements.

National Cemeteries include:

Anncville: [Indiantown Gap National Cemetery](#)

Bridgeville: [National Cemetery of the Alleghenies](#)

Carlisle: [Ashland Cemetery Soldiers' Lot](#)

Newtown: [Washington Crossing National Cemetery](#)

Philadelphia: [Mount Moriah Cemetery Naval Plot](#)

Philadelphia: [Mount Moriah Cemetery Soldiers' Lot](#)

Philadelphia: [Philadelphia National Cemetery](#)

Pittsburgh: [Allegheny Cemetery Soldiers' Lot](#)

York: [Prospect Hill Cemetery Soldiers' Lot \(PA\)](#)



Pennsylvania VA Benefit Resources

Pennsylvania provides Veterans with a District Benefits Office and two Regional Benefits Office, along with multiple VA Medical Centers.

Pennsylvania VA District Benefits Office

- Philadelphia: [North Atlantic District](#)

Pennsylvania VA Regional Benefits Office

- Pittsburgh: [Pittsburgh Regional Office](#)
- Philadelphia: [Philadelphia Regional Office](#)

Pennsylvania VA Medical Centers

- Altoona: [James E. Van Zandt VA Medical Center](#)
- Butler: [VA Butler Health Care Center](#)
- Coatesville: [Coatesville VA Medical Center](#)
- Erie: [Erie VA Medical Center](#)
- Lebanon: [Lebanon VA Medical Center](#)
- Philadelphia: [Corporal Michael J. Crescenz VA Medical Center](#)
- Wilkes-Barre: [Wilkes-Barre VA Medical Center](#)

Important information for Pennsylvania 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