



The state of Texas 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 Texas.

Texas Veteran Financial Benefits

- **Income Taxes:** Texas does not levy a general state income tax on individuals, so you are not required to file an individual state tax return for Texas.
- **Texas Residence Homestead Tax Exemptions:** Property tax in Texas is a locally assessed and locally administered tax. **There is no state property tax.** Property tax brings in the most money of all taxes available to local government to pay for schools, roads, police and firemen, emergency response services, libraries, parks and other services provided by the local government. Veterans with 10 – 90 percent VA disability can get a reduction of their home's assessed value from \$5,000 – \$12,000 depending on disability percentage. Surviving spouses also qualify. Some counties offer homestead tax exemptions for Veterans.
- **Home Loans:** The Texas Veterans Land Board offers generally below-market interest rates for home loans for Texas Veterans, lower rates for those who have a disability rating of 30% or more; home improvement and land loans. Texas is currently the only state to offer land loans – up to \$150,000, with 5% down, and 30-year rates (depending on the Veteran's credit)

Recreation

Free Drivers License for Disabled Veterans: Veterans with at least a 60% disability rating and an honorable discharge can get a Texas driver's license or ID card for free.

Disabled Veterans Hunting & Fishing License: Disabled Veterans with a 50% or greater disability rating or who has suffered the loss of use of a foot or leg as a result of service can get a free "Super Combo" Hunting and All-Water Fishing License (you do not have to be a Texas resident to qualify). The "Super Combo" Hunting and All-Water Fishing Package is available at no cost to TX residents on active duty. Military members (and their dependents) on active duty anywhere are eligible to purchase a license at the resident rate.

Disabled Veterans State Park Admission: Any Veteran with a 60% or greater disability rating or a service-connected loss of a lower extremity is eligible for free admission to Texas state parks (you do not have to be a Texas resident to qualify).

Education Programs: Hazlewood Act

The Hazlewood Act is a State of Texas benefit that provides qualified Veterans, spouses, and dependent children with an education benefit of up to 150 hours of tuition-free college at state schools. This does NOT include living expenses, books, or supply fees.

The Veteran must have:

- Been a Texas resident when they entered the service
- Lived in Texas



- Been discharged honorably
- Served at least 181 days (active duty)
- Used up all federal VA education benefits
- Not be in default on a state student loan(s)
- Meet GPA, academic progress and credit hour requirements

Legacy Act (Child)

Veterans eligible for the Hazlewood Act can assign unused hours to a child under certain conditions. Only one child can use Hazlewood Legacy benefits at a time.

The child must:

- Be a Texas resident
- Be the biological child, stepchild, adopted child, or claimed as a dependent in the current or previous tax year
- Be 25 years old or younger on the first day of the semester or term
- Meet GPA, academic progress and credit hour requirements
- Hazlewood Act for Spouse/Child

Spouses and dependent children of eligible Active Duty, Reserve, and Texas National Guard who died in the line of duty, as a result of service-connected injury or illness, are missing in action, or who became totally disabled for purposes of employability as a result of a service-related injury or illness are entitled to each receive 50 credit hours tuition-free college.

Like the normal Hazlewood act, the Veteran must have been a Texas resident when they entered the service.

A spouse must:

- Have no federal VA education benefits
- Be a Texas resident
- Meet GPA, academic progress and credit hour requirements

A child must:

- Have no federal VA education benefits,
- Be a Texas resident
- Meet GPA, academic progress and credit hour requirements. This requirement does not apply to the child of an MIA, KIA, or service-connected deceased Veteran.

Housing: The following are the sites for Veterans Homes

Texas State Veterans Home at Amarillo

Texas State Veterans Home at Big Spring



[**Texas State Veterans Home at Bonham**](#)

[**Texas State Veterans Home at El Paso**](#)

[**Texas State Veterans Home at Floresville**](#)

[**Texas State Veterans Home at Houston**](#)

[**Texas State Veterans Home at McAllen**](#)

[**Texas State Veterans Home at Temple**](#)

[**Texas State Veterans Home at Tyler**](#)

Eligibility for admission:

- Veterans must have served in the Armed Forces (deployment necessary)
- Discharged other than on dishonorable accounts
- Spouses or un-remarried 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: Veterans Preference

By Federal law, Veterans who are disabled or who served on active duty in the United States Armed Forces during certain specified time periods or in military campaigns are eligible for preference over non-Veterans both in hiring into the Federal civil service and in retention during a reduction in force. 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. Wartime Veterans have a preference in employment with state agencies or offices, as do widows and children of those killed on active duty. State agencies must practice Veterans' preference until they have reached 40% Veteran employment.

Texas State Employee Paid Leave for Military Duty: A person who is an officer or employee of this state, a municipality, a county, or another political subdivision of this state and who is a member of the Texas military forces, a reserve component of the Armed Forces, or a member of a state or federally authorized urban search and rescue team is entitled to a paid leave of absence from the person's duties on a day on which the person is engaged in authorized training or duty ordered or authorized by proper authority for not more than 15 workdays in a fiscal year. During a leave of absence, the person may not be subjected to loss of time, efficiency rating, personal time, sick leave, or vacation 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.

Texas State Retirement Military Service Credit: Non-retired Veterans are eligible to claim their active duty military time toward State retirement. After your first retirement contribution has posted with the Employees Retirement System of Texas (ERS), you can buy up to 60 months of eligible active duty United States military service to establish service credit.

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:

Dallas: [Dallas-Fort Worth National Cemetery](#)

El Paso: [Fort Bliss National Cemetery](#)

Houston: [Houston National Cemetery](#)

Kerrville: [Kerrville National Cemetery](#)

San Antonio: [Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery](#)

San Antonio: [San Antonio National Cemetery](#)

Texas VA Benefit Resources

Texas provides Veterans with two Regional Benefits Offices and VA Medical Centers.

Texas VA Regional Benefits Office

- Houston: [Houston Regional Benefit Office](#)
- Waco: [Waco Regional Benefit Office](#)

Texas VA Medical Centers

- Bonham: [Sam Rayburn Memorial Veterans Center](#)
- Dallas: [Dallas VA Medical Center](#)
- Houston: [Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center](#)
- Kerrville: [Kerrville VA Hospital](#)
- Waco: [Doris Miller Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center](#)

Important information for Texas 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