

# 2018 STATE VETERANS BENEFITS



## TEXAS VETERANS COMMISSION

*Helping Veterans Starts Here*

### **Texas Veterans Commission**

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# TEXAS VETERANS COMMISSION

## Our Mission

Since 1927, the mission of the Texas Veterans Commission is to advocate for and provide superior service to veterans that will significantly improve the quality of life for all Texas veterans, their families, and survivors.

## **TEXAS VETERANS COMMISSION - AUSTIN HEADQUARTERS**

Stephen F. Austin Building  
1700 North Congress, Suite 800  
Austin, TX 78701

### *Mailing Address:*

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Veterans' HOTLINE: 1-800-252-VETS (8387) (In-State Only)

<b>NAME</b>	<b>TITLE</b>	<b>Hometown</b>
Eliseo Cantu, Jr.	Commission Chair	Corpus Christi, TX
Rev. Richard A. McLeon, IV	Commission Vice Chair	Henderson, TX
TBD	Commission Secretary	Midlothian, TX
Kevin Barber	Commission Member	Houston, TX
Daniel P. Moran	Commission Member	Cypress, TX
Thomas Palladino	TVC Executive Director	Round Rock, TX

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## **ABOUT...**

The Texas Veterans Commission is the state agency that advocates for Texas veterans, their families, and survivors. The agency takes great pride in providing the highest level of superior service possible. The fundamental ingredient to superior service is a dedicated, professional, and well-trained workforce. More than 80% of the agency's employees are veterans, every employee is dedicated to ensuring veterans receive the benefits and services they have earned.

The services provided by the Texas Veterans Commission are tailored to the unique needs of veterans, their families, and survivors. The Texas Veterans Commission coordinates the efforts of service providers, facilitates the sharing of resources, provides innovative and effective training, awards grants to organizations addressing a broad range of veterans' needs, and creates partnerships with other levels of government to achieve the highest level of service for veterans, their families, and survivors.

## **CLAIMS REPRESENTATION AND COUNSELING**

The Claims Representation and Counseling Program helps veterans file claims with the VA for benefits and compensation. This includes service-connected disability compensation, non service-connected pension, and dependency indemnity compensation.

Claims counselors provide one-on-one personalized assistance to Texas veterans, their families, and survivors in obtaining all local, state, and federal benefits and services they are eligible to receive. Our fully-developed claims teams are accredited to represent veterans throughout the benefit application process, and must be proficient in the medical field and in VA administrative law.

Statewide Claims Counselors available free of charge to:

- Counsel, educate, and train veterans, their families, and survivors regarding VA benefits.
- Assist with processing VA claims and appeals.
- Represent you by communicating your unique situation to the VA.
- Provide you with information about the claims and/or appeals process, types of claims/appeals, and how to track your claim/appeal status.

## **TVC CLAIMS OFFICE LOCATIONS**

### **NORTHWEST DISTRICT**

VA Regional Office

701 Clay Ave., Waco, TX 76799-0001

(Phone) 254-299-9950; (FAX) 254-299-9910

Email: WACO@tvc.texas.gov

### **NORTHEAST DISTRICT**

Central Texas Veterans Health Care System

1901 Veterans Memorial Dr., Bldg. 208, Rm 119

Temple, TX 76504-7451

(Phone) 254-743-0549; (FAX) 254-743-1699

### **SOUTHWEST DISTRICT**

Frank M. Tejeda VA Outpatient Clinic

5788 Eckhert Rd, Rm. 2A122, San Antonio, TX 78240-3900

(Phone) 210-699-5308

### **SOUTHEAST DISTRICT**

VA Regional Office

6900 Almeda Rd., Houston, TX 77030-4200

(Phone) 713-383-2756; (FAX) 713-383-2746

Email: HOUSTON@tvc.texas.gov

### **AUSTIN OFFICE**

Austin VA Regional Clinic

7901 Metropolis Dr. Rm. 1-G113, Austin, TX 78744

(Phone) 512/ 823-4080; (FAX) 512/ 823-4466

## **Service-Connected Compensation**

The Texas Veterans Commission serves veterans, their families, and survivors, in matters pertaining to VA disability benefits and rights. The agency represents veterans in VA disability claims and during the VA appeals process, and assists dependents with survivor benefits.

Service-Connected Disability compensation is a tax-free benefit paid to a veteran for certain qualifying disabilities. Veterans may be eligible for disability compensation if they have a service-related disability and were not discharged under less than honorable conditions. Many veterans do not realize they may qualify for monthly payments due to health conditions that can be traced back to their military service. The VA calls these health conditions service-connected disabilities.

- Combat deployment is not required for a service-connected disability rating or compensation.
- Service-connected disabilities are rated from 0% to 100%. Compensation amounts are based on the rating and number of veteran's dependents.
- VA compensation is not subject to Federal or State taxes.
- VA will consider all disabilities when they are included within the claim.
- If service-connected disabilities rated at 60%-90% cause unemployability, the veteran may be paid at the 100% rate by VA.
- Filing a claim and establishing service-connected disabilities provides certain priorities in obtaining medical care at VA expense.
- Texas and many other states have special programs and benefits for veterans with service-connected disabilities.
- Most claim payments start to accrue within a month from the day you file, no matter how long it takes to get the claim settled. Start the process today.

## **Non Service-Connected Pension**

Non service-connected pension is a monthly benefit paid to wartime veterans who have limited or no income.

**Who qualifies?** Veterans who:

- Are 65 or older, or permanently and totally disabled;
- Were not discharged from service under less than honorable conditions;
- Meet active duty service requirements with at least 1 day during a period of war time; (combat experience is not required)
- Have a family income lower than the limit (depends on spouse/dependents)

These eligibility requirements are general and there are additional factors that affect eligibility.

**For the most Current VA Disability Compensation Rates,  
visit [www.benefits.va.gov](http://www.benefits.va.gov)**

## **Treatment for Service-Connected and Non Service-Connected Disabilities**

Eligibility for treatment of non service-connected disabilities on a space-available basis at VA hospitals and clinics (a co-payment may be required):

- Treatment of all disabilities without charge if rated 50% or more.
- VA may pay for emergency hospitalization in private facilities for service-connected disabilities if VA facilities are not available. The VA medical facility that has jurisdiction must be notified within 72 hours of admission to the private facility.
- If the veteran resides in an area that is a long distance from a VA medical facility, VA may pay for outpatient medical treatment from private doctors for any service-connected disability and for all disabilities except dental if the veteran is rated 50% or more for service-connected disabilities.
- VA furnishes, free of charge, medicines required for treatment of service-connected disabilities and for all disabilities if the veteran is rated 50% or more for service-connected disabilities.
- Prosthetic appliances and services are available at VA expense for eligible veterans.
- If a veteran is hospitalized in excess of 21 days or convalescent for one month or more for service-connected disabilities, he/she may be entitled to a temporary 100% rating during that period.
- VA pays an annual clothing allowance to veterans whose prosthetic devices for service-connected disabilities tend to wear or tear their clothing. Also the allowance is available to any veteran whose service-connected skin condition requires prescribed medication that irreparably damages the veteran's outer garments.
- A service-connected disability rating provides preference points for Federal employment under certain conditions. Educational benefits are available to the spouse and other dependents of permanent 100% service-connected veterans, of veterans who die from service-connected disabilities and of members whose active duty deaths are incurred in the line of duty.

## **Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC)**

VA may provide a monthly benefit to the surviving spouse or parent(s) upon a veteran's death

### **Who qualifies?**

To be eligible, the veteran's death must have resulted from one of these causes:

- A disease or injury incurred or aggravated in the line of duty.
- An injury, heart attack/cardiac arrest, or stroke incurred or aggravated in the line of duty or while on inactive duty for training.
- A service-connected condition that affects a vital organ or bodily process.

## **Death Pension**

VA provides pensions to low-income surviving spouses and unmarried children of deceased veterans with wartime service (combat experience is not required). The death pension provides a monthly payment to bring an eligible person's income to a level established by law.

### **Who qualifies?**

- To be eligible, spouses must not have remarried and children must be under age 18, or under age 23 if attending a VA-approved school, or have become permanently incapable of self-support because of disability before age 18.
- The veteran must have been discharged under conditions other than dishonorable and must have qualifying service.
- A surviving spouse may be entitled to a higher income limit if living in a nursing home, in need of the aid and attendance of another person, or permanently housebound.

These eligibility requirements are general and there may be additional factors that affect eligibility.

## **Burial Benefits**

Veterans, spouses, and dependents may be eligible for VA burial and memorial benefits including reimbursement of burial expenses, military funeral honors, VA headstones and markers, presidential memorial certificates, burial flags, burial in VA National Cemeteries or other veterans' cemeteries.

### ***Military Funeral Honors***

Upon request, the Department of Defense will provide military funeral honors consisting of folding and presentation of the U.S. flag and the sounding of "Taps".

### **Who qualifies?**

Active duty personnel who served a minimum of 24 consecutive months or the full period of active duty, and reservists or National Guard members called to active duty for a limited duration. Eligibility is not established by active duty training in the Reserves or National Guard.

### **How to get it?**

Family members should inform their funeral directors if they want military honors.

### ***VA Headstones & Markers***

VA furnishes upon request, at no charge to the applicant, a government headstone or marker for any deceased eligible veteran in any cemetery around the world, regardless of their date of death.

### **Who qualifies?**

Active duty personnel who served a minimum of 24 consecutive months or the full period of active duty, and reservists or National Guard members called to active duty for a limited duration. Eligibility is not established by active duty training in the Reserves or National Guard.

### **How to get it?**

- When burial or memorialization is in a national, military post, or state veterans cemetery, cemetery staff will order a headstone or marker.
- When burial is in a private cemetery, VA form 40-1330, Application for Standard Government Headstone or Marker, must be submitted with a copy of the veteran's DD214.

### ***Burial Flags***

A U.S. flag is provided, at no cost, to drape the casket or accompany the urn of a deceased veteran who served honorably in the U.S. Armed Forces. It is furnished to honor the memory of the veteran's military service to his/her country.

### **Who qualifies?**

Veterans who:

- Served on active duty a minimum of 24 consecutive months or the full period of active duty, and reservists or National Guard members called to active duty for a limited duration. Eligibility is not established by active duty training in the Reserves or National Guard.
- Served during wartime,
- Died on active duty after May 27, 1941,
- Served after January 31, 1955,
- Served during peacetime and were discharged before June 27, 1950,
- Served in the organized military forces of the Commonwealth of the Philippines while in service of the U.S. Armed Forces and who died on or after April 25, 1951.
- Certain former members of the Selected Reserves

### **How to get it?**

- Complete VA Form 21-2008, Application for U.S. Flag for Burial Purposes.

### ***Burial in National Cemetery***

Families are encouraged to prepare in advance by discussing cemetery options, collecting the veteran's military information including discharge papers, and by contacting the cemetery where burial is desired.

Gravesites in Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) national cemeteries cannot be reserved in advanced; and reservations made prior to 1962 will be honored.

## **Who qualifies?**

- Veterans discharged under other than dishonorable conditions.
- Members of Armed Forces who die on active duty.
- Members of Reserve Components & Reserve Officer Training Corps,
- Commissioned Officers,
- National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration,
- Public Health Service,
- World War II Merchant Marines, and
- Philippine Armed Forces.
- Eligible spouses and dependents (burial of dependent children is limited to unmarried children under 21 years old or 23 years old if a full-time student at an approved educational institution).

## ***Texas State Veterans Cemetery (TSVC) Program***

Eligibility rules and burial benefits for TSVCs are the same as for national cemeteries. Texas State Veterans Cemeteries are currently operating in Central Texas in Killeen, South Texas in Mission, and West Central Texas in Abilene. A new site is under development in the Coastal Bend area near Corpus Christi. Please contact the Veteran Land Board at 1-800-252-8387 for information.

**Who qualifies?** Any member of the Armed Forces of the United States who dies on active duty. Any veteran who was discharged under conditions other than dishonorable or with certain exceptions, service beginning after September 7, 1980, as an enlisted person, and service after October 16, 1981, as an officer. Service must be for a minimum of 24 continuous months or the full period for which the person was called to active duty (as in the case of a Reservist called to active duty for a limited duration). Undesirable, bad conduct, and any other type of discharge less than honorable might not qualify the individual for veteran's benefits, depending upon a determination made by a VA Regional Office.

## **Vocational Rehabilitation**

The Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) program provides educational and vocational counseling to servicemembers, veterans, and certain dependents at no charge. These counseling services are designed to help an individual choose a vocational direction, determine the course needed to achieve the chosen goal, and evaluate the career possibilities open to them. Services that may be provided include comprehensive rehabilitation evaluation to determine abilities, skills, and interests for employment, vocational counseling, and rehabilitation planning for employment services.

Other services may include:

- Job-training, job-seeking skills, resume development, and other work readiness assistance.
- Assistance finding and keeping a job, including the use of special employer incentives and job accommodations.
- On-the-Job Training (OJT), apprenticeships, and non-paid work experiences, post-secondary training at a college, vocational, technical, or business school.
- Supportive rehabilitation services including case management, counseling, and medical referrals, and independent living services for veterans unable to work due to the severity of their disabilities.

### **Who qualifies?**

Veterans who:

- Receive a discharge that is not other than honorable;
- The basic period of eligibility which VR&E services may be used is 12 years from the date of separation from active military service, or the date the veteran was first notified by VA of any new service-connected disability.
- Have a service-connected disability rating of at least 10%.

There may be additional factors that affect eligibility.

### **1151 Claim**

Compensation is available for veterans who are injured while undergoing treatment or vocational rehabilitation under VA care.

### **Who qualifies?**

Someone who had a qualifying additional disability or death that was not the result of the veteran's willful misconduct, and at least one of the following:

- Was caused by hospital care, medical or surgical treatment, or examination furnished by the VA and the proximate cause of the disability or death was carelessness, negligence, lack of proper skill, error in judgement, or similar instance of fault on the part of the VA in furnishing the hospital care, medical or surgical treatment, or examination; or event not reasonably foreseeable.
- The disability or death was proximately caused by the provision of training and rehabilitation services by the Department of Veterans Affairs as part of an approved rehabilitation program.

These eligibility requirements are general and there may be additional factors that affect eligibility.

### **How to get it?**

Meet with your local Texas Veterans Commission representative or Veterans County Service Officer who will guide you through the process and identify any paperwork required.

### **Assistance with Appeals**

You have the right to appeal decisions the VA makes. Our experts will talk you through the process and represent you.

## **Medical Care Eligibility**

The VA operates the nation's largest integrated healthcare system with more than 1,400 sites of care, including hospitals, community clinics, community living centers, domiciliaries, readjustment counseling centers, and various other facilities.

### **Who qualifies?**

Veterans may qualify for VA healthcare benefits and are not required to have a service-connected disability.

### **How to get it?**

Complete VA Form 10-10EZ, Application for Medical Benefits.

## **Health Registries**

Free medical exams and health related information is available for veterans of the Gulf War, OEF/OIF, Vietnam War and exposed to ionizing radiation.

### ***Agent Orange Registry for Vietnam Era Veterans***

Any Vietnam era veteran who:

- Served at least one day in the Republic of Vietnam between 1962 and 1975 regardless of length of service,
- Served aboard smaller river patrol and swift boats that operated on the inland waterways of Vietnam (also known as "Brown Water Veterans")
- Served in Korea from April 1, 1968 to August 31, 1971, in a unit stationed near the DMZ, or
- May have been exposed to dioxin or other toxic substance. For more information visit the Public Health section of the VA website.

### ***Gulf War, Operation Iraqi Freedom, and Operation New Dawn***

Any veteran who served on active military duty in southwest Asia during the Gulf War which began in 1990 and continues to the present, including Operation Iraqi Freedom or Operation New Dawn.

### ***Burn Pit Registry***

The use of burn pits was a common waste disposal practice at military sites in Iraq and Afghanistan. Smoke from these pits contained substances that may have short and long-term health effects. VA has created the Airborne Hazards and Open Burn Pit Registry for veterans and service members.

<https://veteran.mobilehealth.va.gov/AHBurnPitRegistry/#page/home>

### ***Exposure to Depleted Uranium***

Veterans who served in the 1991 Gulf War, Bosnia, Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation Enduring Freedom, or Operation New Dawn.

### ***Ionizing Radiation Exposure***

- Veterans who participated in the occupation of Hiroshima or Nagasaki from August 6, 1945 through July 1, 1946, or
- Internment as a Prisoner of War (POW) in Japan (or service on active duty in Japan immediately following such internment) during World War II which the Secretary of Veterans Affairs determines.

## **EMPLOYMENT**

Veterans Employment Services helps veterans find meaningful employment by conducting job searches and job matches, resumé assistance, coaching, intensive services, and working with employers, and other employment services. Veterans Employment provides one-on-one personalized assistance to eligible veterans, their family members, and survivors.

Veterans Career Advisors are located across the state in Texas Workforce Solution Centers to provide intensive services through job coaching and career guidance to eligible veterans facing significant barriers to employment.

### **TVC Employment Program Office Locations**

#### **WEST TEXAS REGION**

500 Chestnut St., Suite 1200  
Abilene, TX 79602  
(Phone) 325-795-4333

#### **GULF COAST REGION**

3555 Timmons Ln. 4th Floor  
Houston, TX 77027  
(Phone) 713-993-2416

#### **CENTRAL TEXAS REGION**

300 Cheyenne Dr.  
Killeen, TX 76542  
(Phone) 254-200-2212

#### **SOUTH TEXAS REGION**

183 S. IH 35  
New Braunfels, TX 78130  
(Phone) 830-629-2010 ext. 2607

#### **NORTH TEXAS REGION**

500 N. Akard, Suite 3030  
Dallas, TX 75201  
(Phone) 214-290-1009

## **Veterans Career Resource Division (VCRD)**

Tasked with providing individualized career services and creating a supply of job-ready veterans. Emphasis and priority is given to disabled veterans and other significant barriers to employment categories as determined by the Department of Labor.

- Job coaching
- Supportive service referrals
- Transition assistance
- Resume/Application assistance
- Job-searching techniques training
- Job posting referrals
- Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) Pre-Certification
- Job clubs
- Post-employment follow up
- VA Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment (VR&E) Orientations
- Warrior transition unit briefings

## **Family Employment Division (FED)**

The FED consists of state-level funded positions and provides job coaching to qualified spouses, family members, and caregivers of Wounded Warriors assigned to Wounded Warrior facilities. Family Career Advisors help veteran spouses and family members.

- Job search techniques training
- Resume and application assistance
- Job clubs
- Job posting referrals
- Supportive service referrals
- Post-employment follow up

## **Veterans Recruitment Division (VRD)**

Tasked with facilitating employment, training, and placement services for veterans in the State of Texas. VRD staff promote the benefits of hiring veterans to employers, employer associations, and business groups. Veterans Employer Liaisons work within the community providing a variety of services to local businesses and organizations that promote and enhance recruitment, hiring, and retention of veterans.

- Plan/attend career fairs
- Plan/attend hiring events
- Assist with training opportunities
- Assist employers with job posting development
- TVC Employment Services liaison
- Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) Pre-Certification

## **Veterans' Employment Preference**

- ***Federal-Title 5, United States Code, Section 2108***

Veterans' Preference gives eligible veterans preference in appointment over many other applicants. Veterans' preference applies, to virtually all new appointments in both the competitive and excepted service. Veterans' preference does not guarantee veterans a job and it does not apply to internal agency actions such as promotions, transfers, reassignments and reinstatements.

**<https://www.fedshirevets.gov/job/vetpref/>**

- ***State-Government Code, Chapter 657***

An individual who qualifies for a veteran's employment preference is entitled to a preference in employment with or appointment to a state agency over other applicants for the same position who do not have a greater qualification.

**<http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/GV/htm/GV.657.htm>**

## **Uniformed Services Employment and Re-Employment Rights Act**

You have the right to be reemployed in your civilian job if you leave that job to perform service in the uniformed service and:

- You ensure that your employer receives advance written or verbal notice of your service;
- You have five years or less of cumulative service in the uniformed services while with that particular employer;
- You return to work or apply for reemployment in a timely manner after conclusion of service; and
- You have not been separated from service with a disqualifying discharge or under other than honorable conditions. If you are eligible to be reemployed, you must be restored to the job and benefits you would have attained if you had not been absent due to military service or, in some cases, a comparable job.

## **EDUCATION**

Through an approval process, the Texas Veterans Commission ensures that institutions and employers are in compliance with federal guidelines and are qualified to provide the type of training offered. They administer two programs with complimentary missions - the federal program and the state program:

- Under the federal program, Veterans Education functions as the State Approving Agency (SAA) for schools and determines those programs of education and training within the state which may be approved for G.I. Bill education benefits.
- Under the state program, Veterans Education oversees the administration of the Hazlewood Act Exemption Program and reimburses certain expenses at public institutions of higher education. The state program also manages the statewide Education Coordinator Program.

Education Coordinators partner with local, state, and national veteran(s) groups to promote educational opportunities and benefits to the veteran population, work with education service officers at military installations to encourage active duty members and veterans to use federal and state educational benefits, and support wellness programs to assist students who are combat veterans reintegrate into a noncombat environment.

### **TVC Veterans Education Program Office**

AUSTIN HEADQUARTERS 1700 N. Congress, Ste. 800, P.O. Box 12277 Austin, TX 78711-2277	Phone: 512-463-3517 512-463-8128 512-463-6696
DALLAS REGION	Phone: 972-768-0442
HOUSTON REGION	Phone: 281-229-3175
SAN ANTONIO REGION	Phone: 210-557-3606
SOUTH TEXAS REGION	Phone: 361-443-1262

### ***TVC Hazlewood Benefit Program***

Phone: 512-463-8189  
512-463-6834

Email: [charles.bryant@tvc.texas.gov](mailto:charles.bryant@tvc.texas.gov)  
[dwina.bridgemohan@tvc.texas.gov](mailto:dwina.bridgemohan@tvc.texas.gov)

## **The 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 exemption, including most fee charges, at public institutions of higher education in Texas. This does NOT include living expenses, books, or supply fees.

### **Who qualifies? Veterans who:**

- Entered active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces and stated Texas as Home of Record; entered the service in Texas; or was a Texas resident;
- Received an honorable discharge or separation or a general discharge under honorable conditions as indicated on the Veteran's Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty (DD Form 214);
- Have served at least 181 days of active duty service (excluding training) and does not have federal veteran's education benefits or federal veteran's education benefits dedicated to the payment of tuition and fees only (such as Chapter 33 or 31). This is for the term or semester enrolled that does not exceed the value of Hazlewood benefits;
- Are not in default on a student loan made or guaranteed by the state of Texas;
- Enrolled in classes for which the college receives tax support (i.e., a course that does not depend solely on student tuition and fees to cover its cost), unless the college's governing board has ruled to let veterans receive the benefit while taking non-funded courses; and
- Meet the GPA and excessive hour requirement of the institution's satisfactory academic progress policy in a degree or certificate program as determined by the institution's financial aid policy.

Veterans who are granted their first Hazlewood Act exemption beginning fall, 2011 must reside in Texas during the semester or term for which the exemption is claimed. This requirement does not apply to the veterans who either received the exemption prior to the 2011-2012 academic year, have re-enlisted into active duty, or reside with a spouse who is on active duty.

### **Legacy Act (Child)**

Eligible veterans may assign unused hours of exemption eligibility to a child under certain conditions.

### **Who qualifies? A child (legacy recipient) who:**

- Is classified by the institution as a Texas resident;
- Is the biological child, stepchild, adopted child, or can be claimed as a dependent in the current or previous tax year;
- Is 25 years old or younger on the first day of the semester or term for which the exemption is claimed (unless granted an extension due to a qualifying illness or debilitating condition); and

- Meets the GPA and excessive hour requirements of the institution's satisfactory academic progress policy in a degree or certificate program as determined by the institution's financial aid policy.

Legacy recipients will receive an exemption for the number of degree certified hours reported by the institution for that term/semester. Maximum degree certified hours awarded to the Legacy recipient will be dependent upon the degree or certificate program in which the student is enrolled for that term or semester and shall be consistent with the program length as defined within the school catalog as approved by the regional accreditation commission. \*If a child to whom hours have been delegated fails to use all of the assigned hours, a veteran may re-assign the unused hours that are available to another child. Only one child will use Hazlewood Legacy benefits at a time.

### ***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 or as a result of injury or illness directly related to military service, 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 receive a 150 credit hours exemption.

### **Who qualifies? A spouse/child who:**

- Is a spouse/child of a veteran who, at the time of entry into the U.S. Armed Forces, be classified by the institution as a Texas resident, designated Texas as Home of Record, or entered the service in Texas;
- Is a spouse/child of a veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces or Texas National Guard who died as a result of service-related injuries or illness, is missing in action, or became totally disabled (100%) as a result of service-related injury or illness or is entitled to receive compensation at the 100% rate due to individual unemployability (IU) due to a service connected injury or illness;
- Has no federal veteran's education benefits, or have no federal veteran's education benefits dedicated to the payment of tuition and fees only (such as Chapter 33 or 31) for term or semester enrolled that do not exceed the value of Hazlewood benefits;
- Is classified by the institution as a Texas resident; and
- Meets the GPA and excessive hour requirements of the institution's satisfactory academic progress policy in a degree or certificate program as determined by the institution's financial aid policy. This requirement does not apply to the spouse of a MIA, KIA, or service-connected deceased veteran.

## **Post 9/11 G.I. Bill**

The Post- 9/11 GI Bill is an education benefit program for individuals who served on active duty after September 10, 2001.

### **Who qualifies?**

You may be eligible if you served at least 90 aggregate days on active duty\* after September 10, 2001, or were honorably discharged from active duty for a service-connected disability after serving 30 continuous days following September 10, 2001.

### **Benefits**

You may receive a percentage of the following payments:

- A Tuition and Fee payment that is paid to your school on your behalf.
- A Monthly Housing Allowance (MHA)\*\* that is equal to:
  1. The basic allowance for housing (BAH) payable for the zip code of your school to a military E-5 with dependents for students.
  2. One-half the BAH national average for students training solely by distance learning.
  3. The national average BAH for students pursuing training at foreign schools
- A Books and Supplies Stipend.

\* includes active service as a National Guard member under title 32 U.S.C. for the purpose of organizing, administering, recruiting, instructing, or training and active service under section 502(f) of title 32 for the purpose of responding to a national emergency.

\*\* The MHA is not payable to individuals on active duty or those enrolled at half time or less.

Generally, you may receive up to 36 months of entitlement under the Post-9/11 GI Bill. You will be eligible for benefits for 15 years from your last period of active duty of at least 90 consecutive days.

### **Approved Programs**

You can use the Post-9/11 GI Bill at colleges, universities, trade schools, and for on-the-job training, apprenticeships, and flight schools. To see what programs are currently approved for VA benefits, visit: <http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/>  
You can use the Post-9/11 GI Bill for tutorial assistance, licensing (attorney license, cosmetology license, etc.) and certification tests (SAT, LSAT, etc.)

### **Transferring Entitlement**

You must be a member of the uniformed services to transfer your unused benefits to your spouse or dependent(s). Generally, you must agree to serve four more years when transferring benefits.

## ***Yellow Ribbon***

The Post-9/11 GI Bill can cover all in-state tuition and fees at public degree granting schools, but may not cover all private degree granting schools and out-of-state tuition. The Yellow Ribbon Program provides additional support in those situations.

## **Montgomery G.I. Bill**

The MGIB-AD program, sometimes known as Chapter 30, provides education benefits to veterans and service members who have at least two years of active duty.

### ***Type of Assistance***

Assistance may be used for college degree and certificate programs, technical or vocational courses, flight training, apprenticeships or on-the-job training, high-tech training, licensing and certification tests, entrepreneurship training, certain entrance examinations, and correspondence courses. Remedial, deficiency, and refresher courses may be approved under certain circumstances. Benefits are generally payable for 10 years following your release from honorable active service.

### ***Who Qualifies?***

Eligible service members may receive up to 36 months of education benefits. The monthly benefit paid to you is based on the type of training you take, length of your service, your category, any college fund eligibility, and if you contributed to the \$600 buy-up program. You usually have 10 years to use your MGIB benefits, but the time limit can be fewer or more years depending on the situation.

You may be eligible if you have an honorable discharge; AND you have a high school diploma or GED or in some cases 12 hours of college credit; AND you meet the requirements of one of the categories below:

#### **CATEGORY I**

- Entered active duty for the first time after June 30, 1985
- Had military pay reduced by \$100 a month for first 12 months
- Continuously served for three years or two years, if that is what you first enlisted for or if you entered the Selected Reserve within a year of leaving active duty and served four years (the 2 by 4 program)

#### **CATEGORY II**

- Entered active duty before January 1, 1977
- Served at least one day between 10/19/84 and 6/30/85, and stayed on active duty through 6/30/88, (or through 6/30/87 if you entered the Selected Reserve within one year of leaving active duty and served four yrs)
- On 12/31/89, you had entitlement left from Vietnam-era GI Bill

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- On 12/31/89, you had entitlement left from Vietnam-era GI Bill

### **CATEGORY III**

- Not eligible for MGIB under Category I or II
- On active duty on 9/30/90 AND separated involuntarily after 2/2/91
- OR involuntarily separated on or after 11/30/93
- OR voluntarily separated under either the Voluntary Separation Incentive (VSI) or Special Separation Benefit (SSB) program
- Before separation, you had military pay reduced by \$1,200

### **CATEGORY IV**

- On active duty on 10/9/96 AND you had money remaining in a VEAP account on that date AND you elected MGIB by 10/9/97
- OR you entered full-time National Guard duty under title 32, USC, between 7/1/85, and 11/28/89, AND you elected MGIB during the period 10/9/96 - 7/08/97
- Had military pay reduced by \$100 a month for 12 months or made a \$1,200 lump-sum contribution

## **Montgomery GI Selected Reserve (MGIB-SR)**

MGIB-SR program provides education and training benefits to eligible members of the Selected Reserve, including the Army Reserve, Navy Reserve, Air Force Reserve, Marine Corps Reserve and Coast Guard Reserve, and the Army National Guard and the Air National Guard. Eligibility for this program is determined by the Selected Reserve components and VA makes the payments.

### ***Types of Training***

Assistance may be used for college degree and certificate programs, co-op training, technical or vocational courses, flight training, apprenticeships or on-the-job training, high-tech training, licensing and certification tests, entrepreneurship training, certain entrance examinations, and correspondence courses. Remedial, deficiency, and refresher courses may be approved under certain circumstances.

### **Who Qualifies?**

You may be entitled to receive up to 36 months of education benefits.

To qualify, you must meet the following requirements:

- Served a six-year obligation to serve in the Selected Reserve signed after June 30, 1985. If you are an officer, you must have agreed to serve six years in addition to your original obligation. For some types of training it is necessary to have a six-year commitment that begins after Sept. 30, 1990.
- Completed your initial active duty for training (IADT).
- Met the requirement to receive a high school diploma or equivalency certificate before completing IADT. You may not use 12 hours toward a college degree to meet this requirement.
- Remained in good standing while serving in an active Selected Reserve unit. You will also retain MGIB-SR eligibility if you were discharged from Selected Reserve service due to a disability that was not caused by misconduct. Your eligibility period may be extended if you are ordered to active duty.

## **Veterans Educational Assistance Program (VEAP)**

VEAP is available if you elected to make contributions from your military pay to participate in this education benefit program. The government matches your contributions on a 2-for-1 basis.

### ***Types of Training***

Assistance may be used for college degree and certificate programs, technical or vocational courses, flight training, apprenticeships or on-the-job training, high-tech training, licensing and certification tests, entrepreneurship training, certain entrance examinations, and correspondence courses. You may use these benefits for degree, certificate, correspondence, apprenticeship/on-the-job training programs, and vocational flight training programs.

Benefit entitlement is for one to 36 months depending on the number of monthly contributions. You have 10 years from your release from active duty to use VEAP benefits. If the entitlement is not used after the 10-year period, your portion remaining in the fund will be automatically refunded.

### **Who Qualifies?**

You must meet the following requirements to qualify:

- Entered service for the first time between Jan. 1, 1977, and June 30, 1985
- Opened a contribution account before April 1, 1987
- Voluntarily contributed from \$25 to \$2,700;
- Completed your first period of service and were discharged or released from service under conditions other than dishonorable.
- If you are currently on active duty and wish to receive VEAP benefits, you must have at least three months of contributions available.

## **How to Get it?**

To apply, take these steps depending on your situation:

- Make sure that your selected program is approved for VA training. VA can inform you and the school or company about the requirements.
- Obtain and complete VA Form 22-1990, Application for Education Benefits. Send it to the VA regional office with jurisdiction over the state where you will pursue education and training. If you are not on active duty, send copy 4 (Member Copy) of your DD Form 214, Certificate of Release or Discharge From Active Duty.
- If you are on active duty, you must have your enrollment approved by your base Education Services Officer, and you must have your service verified by your Commanding Officer.
- If you have started training, take your application and Member Copy of DD Form 214 to your school or employer. Ask them to complete VA Form 22-1999, Enrollment Certification, and send all the forms to VA.
- If you wish to withdraw your contributions from VEAP, obtain and complete VA Form 22-5281, Application for Refund of Educational Contributions, and send it to your nearest VA regional office.

## **Survivors and Dependents Assistance**

There are two main GI Bill programs offering education assistance to survivors and dependents of Veterans:

- The Marine Gunnery Sergeant John David Fry Scholarship (Fry Scholarship)
- The Survivors' and Dependents' Educational Assistance (DEA) Program

You may be eligible for more than one of these programs. In most situations, you will be required to make an irrevocable election between the DEA program and Fry Scholarship when you apply. Beneficiaries are not able to use the same qualifying event for more than one benefit unless you are a child of a service member that died in the line of duty prior to August 1, 2011.

## **Fry Scholarship**

The Fry Scholarship provides Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits to the children and surviving spouses of Servicemembers who died in the line of duty while on active duty after September 10, 2001. Eligible beneficiaries attending school may receive up to 36 months of benefits at the 100% level.

## **Who Qualifies?**

Children and surviving spouses of an active duty member of the Armed Forces who died in the line of duty on or after September 11, 2001 are eligible for this benefit. Children are eligible as of their 18th birthday (unless they have already graduated high school). A child may be married or over 23 and still be eligible, although their eligibility ends on their 33rd birthday. A spouse will lose eligibility to this benefit upon remarriage. A spouse has 15 years from the date of death of the Servicemember to use the benefit.

## **ENTREPRENEURS**

The Veteran Entrepreneur Program assists veterans with starting businesses and growing existing veteran-owned businesses through business planning, securing of capital, and development of business fundamentals.

The Veteran Entrepreneur Program provides veterans with business tools, resources, and direct support that can be leveraged towards business success. The program continuously observes the Texas market landscape to create programs that enhance the scope of services it delivers to veterans. Veteran Business Consultants travel across the state to conduct and facilitate training and informational seminars.

- We provide community outreach through a series of informational seminars, e-newsletters, and participation in resource partner events.
  - We provide a Business Education and Skills Training (BEST) resource library to direct veteran entrepreneurs to the many informational and partner resources available for starting and running a business.
  - We provide personalized business assistance to help guide you through all phases of your business from start-up to growth and finally exit.
  - We provide eligible veterans with a “Letter of Verification” for a new veteran-owned businesses in accordance with Senate Bill 1049.
- ***Franchise Tax and Certain Filing Fees***  
Qualifying new veteran-owned businesses that are formed in Texas between January 1, 2016 and January 1, 2020 may be eligible for an exemption from certain filing fees and the Texas franchise tax for the first five years of operation.

### **TVC Veteran Entrepreneur Program**

#### **AUSTIN HEADQUARTERS**

Phone: 512-463-5173

Email: [vep@tvc.texas.gov](mailto:vep@tvc.texas.gov)

[www.tvc.state.tx.us/Entrepreneur-Program.aspx](http://www.tvc.state.tx.us/Entrepreneur-Program.aspx)

## **GRANTS & FUNDING**

The Texas Veterans Commission (TVC) Fund for Veterans' Assistance (FVA) grant program awards reimbursement grants to eligible charitable organizations, local government agencies, and Veterans Service Organizations that provide direct services to Texas veterans and their families.

The FVA does not grant funds directly to veterans. Veterans in need of assistance are asked to visit the "Grants Awarded" page on the TVC website to find the organizations in their area for information on receiving assistance.

- ***General Assistance Grants***  
General Assistance grants offer funding to eligible organizations that provide direct services to Texas veterans and their families. Grants address a broad range of needs.
- ***Housing 4 Texas Heroes (H4TXH)***  
The H4TXH category awards grants to eligible organizations that assist Texas veterans and their families in obtaining, maintaining, or improving housing.
- ***Veterans Mental Health (VMH)***  
Veterans Mental Health grant program provides funding to eligible organizations that provide counseling, peer-delivered, and support service.
- ***Veterans Treatment Courts (VTC)***  
Veterans Treatment Courts grants offer funding to local governments to create, expand, or maintain a VTC program.
- ***Highly Rural Transportation Grants (HRTG)***  
The Highly Rural Transportation Grant Program helps address the lack of transportation resources veterans face when trying to access medical care.

### **TVC Fund for Veterans' Assistance**

#### **AUSTIN HEADQUARTERS**

Phone: 512-463-1157

Email: [grants@tvc.texas.gov](mailto:grants@tvc.texas.gov)

[www.tvc.texas.gov/Fund-for-Veterans-Assistance.aspx](http://www.tvc.texas.gov/Fund-for-Veterans-Assistance.aspx)

## **HEALTH CARE ADVOCACY**

The Texas Veterans Commission Health Care Advocacy Program was established in collaboration with Veteran Integrated Service Network (VISN) 17 and VISN 16 in 2015 to act as advocates for Texas Veterans in addressing issues involving Veterans Health Administration services related to health care. The TVC Health Care Advocacy Program advocates are strategically positioned within Veterans Health Administration (VHA) facilities, across the state of Texas, working in partnership with VHA staff to provide channels through which patients can seek solutions to problems, concerns, and unmet needs by working with health care providers and support staff to prevent and resolve patient complaints. Health Care Advocacy Program advocates interpret Veterans Health Administration medical center policies and procedures while presenting veteran concerns to appropriate personnel. Advocates assist veterans in understanding his or her rights and responsibilities and work with veterans, their families, and Veterans Health Administration facility personnel in overcoming barriers to veteran's health care.

The Health Care Advocacy Program assists veterans and their families in gaining access to VA health care facilities and resolving patient concerns and issues. In cooperation with VA health care providers and support staff, TVC advocates identifies existing and potential problems, and suggest solutions or alternatives. Advocates assist with congressional inquiries and public relations to increase community awareness and veteran awareness of VHA health care resources and other veteran services within their local communities.

### **Direct Services Provided**

- Access to internal or external (non-VA facility) appointments
- Assist veterans with complaints and grievances
- Resolve VA health care related billing
- Pharmacy / medication assistance
- Health care related testing and/or lab testing
- "Fee Basis" referrals such as outside referrals for health care services that the VA does not perform at VA facilities
- Referrals to veteran service providers within the local community

### **TVC Health Care Advocacy Program Office Locations**

#### **AMARILLO REGION**

Thomas E. Creek VA Medical Center  
6010 Amarillo Blvd. West, Amarillo, TX 79106  
(Phone) 806/355-9703; (FAX) 800/252-8387

#### **AUSTIN REGION**

Austin VA Outpatient Clinic  
7901 Metropolis Dr., Rm 1-G113 Austin, TX 78744  
(Phone) 512/ 823-4080; (FAX) 512/ 823-4466

## **BIG SPRING REGION**

George H. O'Brian, Jr. VA Medical Center  
300 Veterans Blvd., Room 147B, Big Spring, TX 79720  
(Phone) 432-263-7361, ext. 5372

## **CORPUS CHRISTI REGION**

Corpus Christi VA Specialty OPC  
205 S. Enterprise Pkwy., Corpus Christi, TX 78405-4118  
(Phone) 361-939-6669, ext. 62757 (FAX) 361-939-6511

## **DALLAS REGION**

Dallas VA Medical Center  
4500 S. Lancaster Rd., Bldg. 2, Rm 1C 423-A-G, Dallas, TX 75216-7167  
(Phone) 214-857-0454; (FAX) 214-857-0443

## **EL PASO REGION**

VA Health Care Center  
5001 N. Piedras, Rm. B-209-210, El Paso, TX 79930-4211  
(Phone) 915-564-7852 / 800-672-3782, ext. 7852; (FAX) 915-564-7843

## **FORT WORTH REGION**

Fort Worth VA Outpatient Clinic  
2201 S.E. Loop 820, Fort Worth, TX 76119-5863  
(Phone) 817-730-0077; (FAX) 817-882-6586

## **HOUSTON REGION**

Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center  
2002 Holcombe Blvd., Rm. 2A-112, Houston, TX 77566-5789  
(Phone) 713-791-1414, ext. 23728 / 800-553-2278, ext. 7785

## **McALLEN REGION**

McAllen VA Outpatient Clinic  
901 E. Hackberry Ave, Rm. 400E, McAllen, TX 78503-1991  
(Phone) 956-618-7100, ext. 67193

## **TEMPLE REGION**

Central Texas Veterans Health Care System Olin E. Teague Veterans' Center  
1901 Veterans Memorial Dr, Bldg. 2048, Rm. 1J05, Temple, TX 76504  
(Phone) 254-899-7726 / 800-423-2111, ext. 57726; (FAX) 254-743-1699

## **TYLER REGION**

Tyler VA CBOC Specialty Clinic  
3414 Golden Rd., Tyler, TX 75701-8336  
(Phone) 903-266-5900, ext. 33063 or 33906; (FAX) 903-590-3065

## **SAN ANTONIO REGION**

Audie L. Murphy Memorial VAMC  
7400 Merton Minter Dr., Ste. 105, San Antonio, TX 78229-5789  
(Phone) 210-617-5300, ext. 15901; (FAX) 210-949-3437

## **MENTAL HEALTH**

The Veterans Mental Health Program assists transitioning service members, and survivors in accessing mental health care and support. Mental health care and support includes the Military Veteran Peer Network (MVPN), licensed mental health providers, community organizations, faith-based organizations, and justice-involved veteran services.

By educating, training, and working with community organizations, the Veterans Mental Health program increases awareness of military-related traumas impacting services available to military veterans.

### **TVC Veterans Mental Health Program**

#### **AUSTIN HEADQUARTERS**

Phone: 512-463-6091

Email: [vmhp@tvc.texas.gov](mailto:vmhp@tvc.texas.gov)

[www.tvc.texas.gov/mental-health/](http://www.tvc.texas.gov/mental-health/)

[www.milvetpeer.net](http://www.milvetpeer.net)

## **WOMEN VETERANS**

The Women Veterans Program's mission is to ensure that you, the women veterans of Texas, have equitable access to federal and state veterans' benefits and services. It serves to educate and inform women veterans of their benefits and services, and to advocate on their behalf by:

1. Creating public awareness
2. Recognizing and honoring women veterans
3. Identifying needs and making legislative recommendations.

The Women Veterans Professional Network is a closed social media network that provides a safe environment for women veterans to connect with each other on the topics of employment, women's health, and entrepreneurship.

### **TVC Women Veterans Program**

#### **AUSTIN HEADQUARTERS**

Phone: 512-463-2333

Email: [texaswomenvets@tvc.texas.gov](mailto:texaswomenvets@tvc.texas.gov)

[www.tvc.texas.gov/women-veterans/](http://www.tvc.texas.gov/women-veterans/)

## **ADDITIONAL VETERAN SERVICES**

### **Texas Veterans Land Board (VLB)**

The VLB will finance the tract of land in which a veteran is interested. The VLB is self-supportive, funded by bonds and the fees submitted by each veteran.

**Who qualifies?** Veterans who have applied for a land loan on or after 12/01/2007.

### **Veterans Housing Assistance and Home Improvement Program**

The Veterans Housing Assistance and Home Improvement Program offers an interest rate reduction to qualifying veterans with disabilities.

**Who qualifies?** The veteran must have a compensable service-connected disability of 30% or greater as verified by an Award Letter from the VA. The veteran must also meet all other eligibility requirements. All Texas Veterans Land Board loans are subject to credit approval.

### **Veterans Housing Assistance Purchase Program**

The Veterans Housing Assistance Program provides financing toward the purchase of a home to qualified Texas veterans. Loans may be originated through the Texas Veterans Land Board. There is no maximum sales price with the VHAP. The VHAP is not a refinancing program. If you have an existing home loan, you cannot use the VHAP to lower your interest rate, nor can the VHAP be used as a down payment. It can only be used as a first lien on your primary residence. The term of the loan can be 15, 20, 25 or 30 years.

The VHAP must be originated in conjunction with Federal Housing Administration (FHA), Veterans Administration (VA), or conventional financing. All VLB loans require an escrow account for taxes and insurance.

### **Veterans Home Improvement Loan Program**

The Texas Veterans Land Board (VLB) will lend to eligible Texas veterans on a fixed-rate note for substantial repairs to their existing primary residence. No down payment is required. All loans are FHA-insured.

The veteran cannot advance any funds to the contractor or purchase materials prior to receipt of loan proceeds from the VLB. The VLB must be in a first or second lien position. All property improvements should be completed within six months from the date of disbursement of loan proceeds. If the veteran is required to vacate the home while the improvements are being made, the veteran must re-occupy it within 60 days after completion of the construction.

## **STATE VETERANS BENEFITS**

<https://texas.gov>

### **Special/Disabled Vehicle License Plates and Permits**

A Texas driver's license or ID card may be provided free-of-charge to a veteran who is honorably discharged, with a service-connected disability of at least 60% or more. Disabled Veterans, Former Prisoners of War, Pearl Harbor Survivors, Purple Heart, and Medal of Honor plates are among the special license plates available to eligible veterans and their survivors for personal use on their vehicles. Disabled veterans must have a service-connected disability rating of 50% or greater or 40% due to amputation of a lower extremity. Applicants must have been honorably discharged if no longer a member of the service. The surviving spouse of a person who would be eligible for military or veteran plates is entitled to continue to register one vehicle with the specialty license plate as long as the spouse remains unmarried. **For more information on specialty/disabled plates and permits, visit <http://www.dmv.org/tx-texas/special-license-plates.php>**

### **Hunting and Fishing Licenses**

Disabled Veteran Super Combo Hunting and All-Water Fishing packages available to disabled veterans for free.

**Who qualifies?** A disabled veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces is one who has a service-connected disability, as defined by the Department of Veterans Affairs, with a disability rating of 50% or greater, and who is receiving compensation from the VA for the disability. **For more information visit <http://tpwd.texas.gov/regulations/outdoor-annual/licenses>**

### **Property Tax Exemption for Veterans**

Texas law provides partial property tax exemptions for any property owned by disabled veterans, surviving spouses, and children of deceased disabled veterans. It also provides a partial exemption for residence homesteads donated to disabled veterans by charitable organizations that also extend to surviving spouses who have not remarried. The amount of exemption is determined according to the percentage of service-connected disability.

### **No Cost Medical Records**

Texas veterans are eligible for no cost medical records. The health care provider or health care facility is not required to provide more than one complete record for the patient or former patient without charge. Also, it should be noted, that some medical facilities will charge a small administrative fee for obtaining the records.

## **State Park Admission**

The State Parklands Passport provides free admission to Texas State Parks for any veteran who has a service-connected disability rating of 60% or greater, or a service-connected disability that resulted in the loss of use of a lower extremity. Applications for the State Parklands Passport can be made at the headquarters office of any Texas State Park by providing evidence of the disability rating. The State Parklands Passport is available to any veteran who meets the requirements, whether or not the veteran resides in Texas. Veterans will only receive free admission to state parks; the Passport does not exempt veterans from payment of other charges, such as parking or camping fees. For more information, visit the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department website [www.tpwd.state.tx.us](http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us)

## **Insurance**

Veterans Group Life Insurance (VGLI) is a program of post-separation insurance which allows service members to convert their SGLI coverage to renewable term insurance. All service members with full-time SGLI coverage are eligible for VGLI upon release from service.

### **How to get it?**

Veterans leaving the service must elect to convert their SGLI coverage to VGLI.

- You must apply within one year and 120 days from discharge.
- Service members who submit their application within 120 days of discharge do not need to submit evidence of good health.
- Service members who apply after the 120 day period must submit evidence of good health.

## **Free Recording of Discharges**

Under Texas State law, Local Government Code Sec. 0192.002, the County Clerk in each County is required to record, free of charge, the official discharge of each veteran who served in the U.S. Armed Forces. This free service is very important as it provides veterans with a ready source from which they can obtain a certified copy of their discharge whenever it is needed. It's the veteran's responsibility to have the DD214 or Discharge recorded. Please also note that if you do record your DD214 with the County Clerk, it then becomes a public record.

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## **Contract Preferences**

All state agencies, when purchasing goods, including agricultural goods, shall give preference to goods produced or offered by a Texas bidder. A Texas bidder that is owned by a service-disabled veteran who is a Texas resident shall be given a first preference and goods produced in this state or offered by other Texas bidders shall be given second preference if the cost to the state and quality are equal.

## **TCCVS AGENCY INFORMATION & SERVICES**

### **Texas Military Department**

The Texas Military Department (TMD) is the executive portion of the Texas Military and consists of all staff directorates and component headquarters exercising control of military forces, facilities, installations, activities and functions under the supervision of The Adjutant General. The Adjutant General is the governing officer, policy maker, head of the department and Commander of the Texas Military Forces. TMD is the state agency charged with administrative activities in support of the Texas Military Forces.

The Texas Military Forces consist of the Texas Army National Guard, Texas Air National Guard, the Texas State Guard, the Domestic Operations Task Force, and any other military force organized under state law. Through the Family Support Services Office, the TMD has a number of programs and partnerships with services available to Texas Service Members, Veterans, and families such as: Family Assistance, Transition Assistance, Mental Health & Counseling Services, Employment and Financial Assistance, Retirement Services, and TRICARE Services. <https://tmd.texas.gov/>

### **Health and Human Services Commission**

The Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) mission is to maintain and improve the health and human services system in Texas and to administer its programs in accordance with the highest standards of customer service and accountability for the effective use of funds. HHSC oversees the operations of the health and human services system, provides administrative oversight of Texas health and human services programs, and provides direct administration of some programs. HHSC's Veterans Service Division initiative is responsible for reviewing programs and benefits available for Veterans and recommends ways to improve and better coordinate those services. The initiative will work with staff at all five health and human services agencies as well as other state agencies and community-based organizations that serve Veterans. <http://www.hhsc.state.tx.us>

The Health and Human Services Commission, Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs) are a key point of access for person-centered long-term services and supports (LTSS) specialized information, referral, and assistance. ADRCs promote linkages to existing military and veteran services programs and benefits , as well as other local and state level LTSS. Programs and services available vary by region and may include: transportation, benefits and system navigation assistance, care coordination, benefits application assistance, and veteran-directed home and community-based services. The local ADRC may be contacted by calling **1-855-YES-ADRC (855-937-2372)**.

### **State Bar of Texas**

The State Bar of Texas administers the Texas Lawyers for Texas Veterans program to develop and assist pro bono legal clinics throughout the state for military veterans who otherwise cannot afford or do not have access to the legal services they need. <http://www.texasbar.com>

## **Texas Workforce Commission**

Although the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) provides employment assistance as well as education and training to the general public who are seeking employment. Along with specific federal and state statute to provide priority of service to Veterans, TWC has a long tradition of supporting Texas Veterans because we believe Veterans are equipped with the technical skills, education, professionalism, and leadership experience sought by Texas employers. The TWC Veterans program includes: <http://www.twc.state.tx.us>

- College Credit for Heroes:
- Texas Veterans Leadership Program
- State of Texas Soldier Employment Initiative
- Red, White, and You Veteran Job Fair
- Veterans Workforce Outreach Initiative
- Skills for Veterans
- Apprenticeship for Veterans
- Texas Wide Open for Veterans
- Operation Welcome Home
- Military Family Support Pilot Program

## **Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board**

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board provides leadership and coordination for the Texas higher education system. Since being created by the Texas Legislature in 1965, the Board has worked to achieve excellence for the college education of Texas students. The Board meets four times a year. Meetings occur in Austin but are usually also broadcast on the Web.

<http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/>

## **Texas Workforce Investment Council**

The Texas Workforce Investment Council assists the Governor and the legislature with strategic planning for and evaluation of the Texas workforce system, which is comprised of eight state agencies, their local program providers, and over 20 diverse and dynamic programs. The Council assists with the coordination of determining employer workforce needs and satisfaction with programs and services. The Council's partner agencies, including TVC, gather data from employer customers at appropriate intervals to determine employer needs and satisfaction. TVC's efforts to determine and respond to employer needs, thereby enhancing employment opportunities for Veterans, was initiated under the previous system strategic plan and continues under the recently approved Texas Workforce System Strategic Plan FY 2016–FY 2023. TVC's work to gather information and data by surveying employer continues, and results demonstrate a high response rate and a very high satisfaction level among employers who used the agency's employment services. <http://governor.state.tx.us/twic>

## **Texas Department of Public Safety**

The Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) proactively protects the citizens of Texas in an ever changing threat environment while always remaining faithful to the U.S. and State Constitution. DPS offers a designation of "VETERAN" on driver's licenses issued to Texas Veterans so they can easily prove their eligibility when **applying for various benefits in addition to free and discounted licenses.**

<http://www.txdps.state.tx.us>

### **Department of State Health Services**

Programs implemented by the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) are based on recommendations included in the 2008 DSHS report Behavioral Health Services for Returning Veterans and Their Families: Service Gaps and Recommendations and a 2011 update. The programs use funds appropriated by the Legislature. The primary objective is to provide Peer-to-Peer support for servicemembers, Veterans, and family members by organizing activities to identify individuals who can benefit from support services provided by trained Veterans. The activities include one-on-one mentoring, and support group discussions. The aim is to develop trust relationships built on shared life experiences in developing skills and access to resources useful in adapting to post-traumatic stress and traumatic brain injuries. <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us>

### **Department of Aging and Disability Services**

The Department of Aging and Disability Services, Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs) are a key point of access for person-centered long-term services and supports (LTSS) specialized information, referral, and assistance. ADRCs promote linkages to existing military and veteran services programs and benefits, as well as other local and state level LTSS. Programs and services available vary by region and may include: transportation, benefits and system navigation assistance, care coordination, benefits application assistance, and veteran-directed home and community-based services. <http://www.dads.state.tx.us/>

### **Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services**

The Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) is engaged in a memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs-Veterans Rehabilitation and Employment (VA-VRE) to expand employment and rehabilitation services to Veterans with disabilities in geographic areas beyond the reach of VA-VRE. DARS counselors work directly with VA employment counselors to address the unique needs in each of DARs five regions. DARS cultivates business partnerships with major employers to create employment opportunities for people with disabilities. One particular effort is the partnership with the second largest home improvement store chain designed specifically for eligible Veterans with disabilities. The program is being replicated statewide to serve more Veterans with disabilities. <http://www.dars.state.tx.us>

### **Department of Family and Protective Services**

The Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) works with communities to protect children, the elderly, and people with disabilities from abuse, neglect, and exploitation. It also works to protect the health and safety of children in daycare, foster care and other types of 24-hour care. We do this through investigations, services and referrals, regulation, and prevention programs. <http://www.dfps.state.tx.us>

### **Texas Commission on Law Enforcement**

The Texas Commission on Law Enforcement has been committed for several years now to assist and expedite the ability of Veterans to re-enter the Texas work-place in the field of law enforcement. We have had in place since 2009 a process through which Veterans with military law enforcement experience can become Texas peace officers without having to participate in redundant training. <http://www.tcole.texas.gov/>

## **Texas Department of Transportation**

The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) is organized by administration, districts, divisions and offices. Four regional support centers provide operational and project delivery support for the agency's 25 geographical districts. TxDOT's workforce is made up of engineers, administrators, financial experts, designers, architects, sign makers, accountants, purchasers, maintenance workers, travel counselors and many other professions. All of our employees work together to realize the TxDOT mission: providing safe and reliable transportation solutions for Texas. TxDOT provides funding and assistance for transportation services and programs that can be used to serve and support Veterans. <http://www.txdot.gov>

## **Department of Motor Vehicles**

The Texas Department of Motor Vehicles (TxDMV) offers a number of license plates specifically for military Veterans and military medal honorees at no fee and/or reduced fee. There are three categories of military license plates: Meritorious Service, Recognition Award, and Military Service.

Meritorious Service category license plates are issued at no fee (plate or registration) for the first set. Recognition Award category license plates require the payment of a \$3 plate fee; however, there is no requirement for the payment of annual registration fees. Military Service category license plates require the payment of the annual registration fee; however, there no plate fee. This applies to first and additional sets. <http://www.txdmv.gov>

## **Texas Department of Criminal Justice**

The Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) manages offenders in state prisons, state jails and private correctional facilities that contract with TDCJ. TDCJ honors and supports Veterans by granting them employment preferences, and fully recognizes, honors, and enforces the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act, a law which protects the civilian job rights and benefits of United States military service personnel.

TDCJ has a history of successful recruiting at military bases and continues to actively recruit personnel who are about to be honorably discharged. Military Veterans and staff have a great number of skills and quality training, along with experience handling a variety of responsibilities. <http://www.tdcj.state.tx.us>

Office of Public Utility Counsel The Office of Public Utility Counsel (OPUC) was created in 1983 in response to legislative and consumer groups concerns that residential and small commercial utility consumers were not adequately represented in utility proceedings. OPUC is charged with representing residential and small commercial consumers, as a class, in proceedings affecting utility rates and services. OPUC represents consumers' interests before the Public Utility Commission (PUC), the Texas Reliability Entity, the Electric Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT), and state and federal courts. The agency also provides information to servicemembers, veterans and their families and provides presentations, upon request, to military groups and organizations representing servicemembers and their families. <http://www.opuc.texas.gov>

### **Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation**

The Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (TDLR) is committed to providing expedited services to Veterans and military spouses and is proud to be a member of the Texas Coordinating Council for Veterans Services.

**<http://www.tdlr.texas.gov>**

- TDLR provides expedited licensing for military spouses and veterans transitioning to civilian occupations regulated by TDLR.
- Veterans are allowed to credit verified military experience, training, or education toward fulfilling licensing requirements. Currently, six TDLR programs have a corresponding MOS allowing for this credit.
- TDLR license application fees are waived for veterans if the applicant's military service, training, or education substantially meets all of the requirements of the license.

### **Commission on Jail Standards**

The Texas Commission on Jail Standards is the regulatory agency over Texas county jails. While the agency does not provide direct services to Veterans, the agency actively engages with sheriffs, county officials, and jail administrators about available resources for justice-involved Veterans.

Our activities include disseminating technical assistance memos to counties about Veterans' services found at the local, state, and federal level, writing articles on Veterans' resources in our agency newsletter, and inviting Veterans groups to speak during our agency presentations at training conferences.

As part of its regulatory requirements, the Commission mandates county jails utilize the Department of Veteran Affairs' Veteran Reentry Search Service (VRSS) to identify veterans. The VRSS provides real-time identification of veterans to county corrections officers. After justice-involved Veterans are identified, our goal is that counties can link Veterans to available services and resources.

**<http://www.tcjs.state.tx.us>**

### **Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs**

The Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA) is the state agency responsible for promoting and preserving affordable home ownership, financing the development of affordable rental housing, ensuring long-term stability and habitability of housing for low-income households, supporting community and energy assistance programs, and providing housing activities in the colonias. TDHCA is also responsible for the regulation of the state's manufactured housing industry. **<http://www.tdhca.state.tx.us>**

## **STATE GOVERNMENT AGENCIES**

### **Texas Veterans Commission (TVC)**

<http://www.tvc.texas.gov>

### **Texas Veterans Land Board (VLB)**

<http://www.glo.texas.gov/vlb>

### **Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC)**

<http://www.hhsc.state.tx.us>

### **The State Bar of Texas**

<http://www.texasbar.com>

### **The Texas Workforce Commission**

<http://www.twc.state.tx.us>

### **Texas Military Department**

The Texas Military Forces consist of the Texas Army National Guard, Texas Air National Guard, Texas State Guard, Domestic Operations Task Force, and any other military force organized under state law. <https://tmd.texas.gov/>

### **Department of State Health Services**

<http://www.dshs.state.tx.us>

### **Department of Aging and Disability Services**

The local ADRC may be contacted by calling 855-YES-ADRC (855-937-2372).

<http://www.dads.state.tx.us/>

### **Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS)**

<http://www.dars.state.tx.us>

### **Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS)**

<http://www.dfps.state.tx.us>

### **Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board**

<http://www.thecb.state.tx.us>

### **Texas Workforce Investment Council**

<http://governor.state.tx.us/twic>

### **Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation**

<http://www.tdlr.texas.gov>

## **Texas Commission on Jail Standards**

<http://www.tcjs.state.tx.us>

## **Texas Department of Public Safety**

<http://www.dps.state.tx.us>

## **Texas Commission on Law Enforcement**

<http://www.tcole.texas.gov>

## **Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs**

<http://www.tdhca.state.tx.us>

## **Texas Department of Transportation**

<http://www.txdot.gov>

## **Texas Department of Motor Vehicles**

<http://www.txdmv.gov>

## **Texas Department of Criminal Justice**

<http://www.tdcj.state.tx.us>

## **Office of Public Utility Counsel**

<http://www.opuc.texas.gov>

## ***Texas Veterans Mobile App***

The Texas Veterans Mobile App gives Texas Veterans quick access to the Veterans Crisis Line, the Hotline for Women Veterans, the Military Veteran Peer Network, and the Texas Veterans Portal. The app, which can be downloaded from both Google Play and the App Store, works on most iPhones and Android mobile phones.

## ***Texas Online: Texas Veterans Portal***

The Texas Veterans Portal provides information from federal and state agencies in a comprehensive collection of links about Veteran's benefit information. The website contains information to assist you and your family in buying a home or land, receiving education benefits, finding a job, health care resources and more. [veterans.portal.texas.gov](http://veterans.portal.texas.gov)

## **MILITARY INSTALLATIONS IN TEXAS**

### **Dyess AFB**

Arnold Boulevard and S. 7th., Dyess AFB, TX 79607

### **Fort Bliss**

Buffalo Soldier Building, 5400 Buffalo Soldier, Fort Bliss, TX 79916

### **Fort Hood**

T.J. Mills Boulevard & Battalion, Bldg 18010, 3rd Floor - Rm A308,  
Ft. Hood, TX 76544

### **Goodfellow AFB**

3005 Kearney Blvd., GAFB, TX 76908-4304

### **Joint Base San Antonio (Lackland Randolph Sam Houston)**

Hwy 90 and SW Military Rd., Lackland AFB, TX 78236-5113

### **Laughlin AFB**

548 Laughlin Dr, Bldg. 468, Laughlin AFB, TX 78843

### **Naval Air Station Corpus Christi**

10651 E St., Bldg. H-100 5th Deck, Corpus Christi, TX 78419-5021

### **Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base Fort Worth**

1510 Chenault Ave., NAS JRB Ft. Worth, Ft. Worth, TX 76127-1021

### **Naval Air Station Kingsville**

554 McCain St., Bldg. 2740, NAS Kingsville, Kingsville, TX 78363

### **Red River Army Depot**

100 James Carlow Dr., Red River Army Depot, Texarkana, TX 75507

### **Sheppard AFB**

210 Missile Rd., Sheppard AFB, TX 76311-2540

## NOTES



**TEXAS VETERANS  
COMMISSION**

***2018***

Texas Veterans Commission  
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