

TEXAS STATE VETERANS BENEFITS



TEXAS VETERANS COMMISSION

Helping Veterans Starts Here

Texas Veterans Commission

P.O. Box 12277 • Austin, TX 78711-2277

ph: 800-252-8387 • fax: 512-475-2395

info@tvc.texas.gov • www.tvc.texas.gov



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

Mailing Address:

Texas Veterans Commission
P.O. Box 12277
Austin, TX 78711-2277

Hours: 8:00 am - 5:00 pm

Phone: 512-463-6564/5538

Email: info@tvc.texas.gov

Web: www.tvc.texas.gov

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

The Veterans' Call Center is a joint partnership between the Texas Veterans Commission and the Veterans Land Board to connect veterans to the benefits and services earned through their military service.

Texas Veterans Portal: veterans.portal.texas.gov

<u>NAME</u>	<u>TITLE</u>
Laura Koerner	Commission Chair
Kevin Barber	Commission Vice Chair
Kimberlee Shaneyfelt	Commission Secretary
Mike Hernandez	Commission Member
Mary Dale	Commission Member
Thomas P. Palladino	TVC Executive Director

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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 DEPARTMENT

The Claims Department 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 (DIC)/survivor's pension.

Claims Benefit Advisors 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. The 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 Benefit Advisors are available free of charge to:

- Advise, 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 DISTRICT LOCATIONS

NORTHWEST DISTRICT

VA Regional Office
701 Clay Ave., Waco, TX 76799-0001
(Phone) 254-299-9950; (FAX) 254-299-9910
Email: northwestclaims@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
Email: northeastclaims@tvc.texas.gov

SOUTHWEST DISTRICT

Northeast Veterans Center
9504 IH 35 N., Suite 219, San Antonio, TX 78233
(Phone) 210-650-0422
Email: southwestclaims@tvc.texas.gov

SOUTHEAST DISTRICT

VA Regional Office
6900 Almeda Rd., Houston, TX 77030-4200
(Phone) 713-383-2756; (FAX) 713-383-2746
Email: southeastclaims@tvc.texas.gov

More locations available, please call 800-252-8387

CLAIMS RESOURCES AND INFORMATION

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.
- The 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.

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.

Treatment for Service-Connected and Non Service-Connected Disabilities

Eligibility for treatment of non service-connected disabilities is 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 recovering 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.

**For the most Current VA Disability Compensation Rates,
visit www.benefits.va.gov**

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 in need of the aid and attendance of another person, living in a nursing home, 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 and take to the Post Office for issuance of the flag.

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 advance; and reservations made prior to 1962 will be honored.



Texas State Veterans Cemetery (TSVC) Program

Eligibility rules and burial benefits for TSVCs are the same as for national cemeteries. TSVCs are currently operating in Central Texas in Killeen, South Texas in Mission, West Central Texas in Abilene, and the newest location 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.

Veteran Readiness and Employment

The Veteran Readiness and Employment (VR&E) program provides educational and vocational counseling to service members, 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 an “other than honorable” discharge;
- 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. Claims 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. Complete VA Form 10-10EZ, Application for Medical Benefits.

Health Registries

Free medical exams and health related information are 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 vessels operating not more than 12 nautical miles seaward from the demarcation line of the waters of Vietnam and Cambodia between January 9, 1962 and May 7, 1975;
- 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 (OIF), Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and Operation New Dawn

Any veteran who served on active military duty in southwest Asia during the Gulf War which began in 1990 and ongoing to a date yet to be determined.

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>

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.



VETERAN COUNTY SERVICE OFFICERS (VCSOs)

Texas VCSOs are professional, highly qualified county service officers who are dedicated to provide services to all eligible veterans, dependents, and survivors. VCSOs, employed by their respective county, are knowledgeable individuals who know their way around the VA system. They can assist veterans and their families in a number of ways. VCSOs can help you with compensation/pensions, medical care, military records, grave markers and veteran home loans. Some counties may also have dedicated funds to assist you with temporary shelter/utilities, food/health supplies, medical/dental, job placement, counseling, and transportation. Their services are free.

To find your local VCSO, call 800-252-8387 or visit **<https://www.texvet.org/county>** or **<https://www.tvc.texas.gov/partners/>**



VETERANS EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

Veterans Employment Services (VES) assists veterans with finding long-term and meaningful employment through job matching services and one-on-one job coaching. Veterans Employment offers one-on-one assistance to veterans at American Job Centers, U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) facilities, and military installations in more than 75 cities throughout Texas. Services are provided through the Department of Labor Veteran Employment and Training Services (DOL-VETS) Jobs for Veterans State Grants and state-level general revenue appropriations.

The Veterans Employment Services work in conjunction with the Texas Workforce Commission and Workforce Solutions American Job Centers to provide priority service to eligible veterans and qualified individuals. Veteran Career Advisors are specially trained to provide intensive services to veterans with significant barriers to employment, assist in preparation of job applications and résumés, perform job matches and job searches, and provide other employment services.

VETERANS EMPLOYMENT SERVICES DISTRICT LOCATIONS

WEST TEXAS DISTRICT

500 Chestnut St., Suite 1534
Abilene, TX 79602
(Phone) 325-670-9547

GULF COAST DISTRICT

3555 Timmons Ln. 4th Floor
Houston, TX 77027
(Phone) 832-681-2566

CENTRAL TEXAS DISTRICT

300 Cheyenne Dr.
Killeen, TX 76542
(Phone) 254-200-2014

SOUTH TEXAS DISTRICT

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

NORTH TEXAS DISTRICT

2421 Westport Parkway, Suite 200
Fort Worth, TX 76117
(Phone) 817-531-7600

Veteran Employment Services executes three major functions:

1. Veterans Career Resources

Veterans Career Resources consists of Veteran Career Advisors and Rural Veteran Career Advisors who are tasked with providing individualized career services and ensure veterans are job ready. Emphasis and priority are offered to disabled veterans and other categories of veterans in accordance with priorities determined by the Secretary of Labor. Resources include:

- Career guidance and transition assistance.
- Comprehensive assessment interviews.
- Job coaching and job posting referrals.
- Job-searching techniques training.
- Post-employment follow-up.
- Resume/application assistance.
- Supportive service referrals.
- VA Veteran Readiness and Employment (VR&E) services.
- Workshops (virtually and in-person); and
- Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) Pre-Certification.

2. Veterans Recruitment

Veterans Recruitment consists of Veterans Employer Liaisons (VEL) who facilitate employment, training, and placement services for veterans in the state of Texas. VELs promote the benefits of hiring veterans to employers, employer associations, state and federal agencies, and other business groups.

Resources include:

- Career hiring events (in-person & virtually).
- Coordinate with apprenticeship programs, businesses, and organizations to promote and secure employment for all veterans.
- Employer outreach and workshops.
- Hiring authorities' training and informing federal contractors of the process to recruit qualified veterans.
- Job posting development and job searches.
- Warrior Transition Unit briefings, and
- Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) pre-certification.

3. Family Employment

Family Employment provides job coaching to qualified spouses, family members, and caregivers of active-duty service members, and veterans who are not eligible for Disabled Veterans Outreach Program Specialist (DVOP) federally funded services. Resources include:

- Job search techniques training and job posting referrals.
- Resume and application assistance with post-employment follow-up and
- Supportive service referrals.

Veterans' Employment Preference

Federal Title 5, United States Code, Section 2108 (5 USC 2108)

Veterans' Preference gives eligible veterans preference in appointment over many other applicants. Veterans' preference applies to all new appointments in the competitive service and many in the 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. Eligibility can be based on dates of active duty service, receipt of a campaign badge or Purple Heart, or a service-connected disability. Not all active duty service may qualify for veterans' preference. Only veterans discharged or released from active duty in the armed forces under honorable conditions (under an honorable or general discharge) are eligible for veterans' preference.

Understanding how veterans' preference works can be a challenge. In accordance with title 5, United States Code, Section 2108 (5 USC 2108) veterans' preference eligibility can be based on dates of active duty service, receipt of a campaign badge, receipt of a Purple Heart, or a service-connected disability. Please know that not all active duty service may qualify for veterans' preference.

Only veterans discharged or released from active duty in the armed forces under honorable conditions are eligible for veterans' preference. This means you must have been discharged under an honorable or general discharge. Under the Veterans Opportunity to Work (VOW) to Hire Heroes Act of 2011, an individual who has reason to believe s/he will be entitled to veterans' preference upon discharge may apply for a position in advance of the discharge, and receive consideration as a preference eligible, if the service member is able to provide a certification that s/he is expected to be discharged or released from active duty under honorable conditions not later than 120 days from the date of the certification; the circumstances of the discharge are verified at the time of actual appointment.

If you are a "retired member of the armed forces" you are not included in the definition of preference eligible unless you are a disabled veteran OR you retired below the rank of major or its equivalent.

There are basically three types of preference eligibility:

1. Sole Survivorship (0 point preference eligible),
2. Non-disabled (5 point preference eligible), and
3. Disabled (10 point preference eligible).

<https://www.fedshirevets.gov/job-seekers/veterans-preference/#content>

Staff Locations of TVC Veterans Employment Services (VES) Staff:

VES staff work and support the American Job Centers (AJC) in each of the 28 Local Workforce Development Board Areas (LWDA) in Texas. Veterans seeking employment assistance should first contact their closest job center by resourcing Career One Stop at <https://www.careeronestop.org/LocalHelp/local-help.aspx>. Then register and create a profile in the Work in Texas portal at: <https://www.workintexas.com/vosnet/Default.aspx>.

Websites to Local Workforce Development Boards in Texas are:

- Workforce Solutions Panhandle - <https://wspanhandle.com>
- Workforce Solutions South Plains - <https://workforcesouthplains.org>
- Workforce Solutions North Texas - <https://ntxworksolutions.org>
- Workforce Solutions for North Central Texas - <https://dfwjobs.com>
- Workforce Solutions for Tarrant County - <https://workforcesolutions.net>
- Workforce Solutions Greater Dallas - <https://www.wfsdallas.com>
- Workforce Solutions Northeast Texas - <https://www.netxworkforce.org>
- Workforce Solutions East Texas - <https://www.easttexasworkforce.org>
- Workforce Solutions of West Central Texas - <https://wfswct.org>
- Workforce Solutions Borderplex - <https://www.borderplexjobs.com>
- Workforce Solutions Permian Basin - <https://workforcepb.org>
- Workforce Solutions Concho Valley - <https://cvworkforce.org>
- Workforce Solutions for the Heart of Texas - <https://www.hotworkforce.com>
- Workforce Solutions Capital Area - <https://www.wfscapitalarea.com>
- Workforce Solutions Rural Capital Area - <https://workforcesolutionsrca.com>
- Workforce Solutions Brazos Valley - <https://bvjobs.org>
- Workforce Solutions Deep East Texas - <https://www.detnetwork.org>
- Workforce Solutions Southeast Texas - <https://setworks.org>
- Workforce Solutions Golden Crescent - <https://www.gcworkforce.org>
- Workforce Solutions Alamo - <https://www.workforcesolutionsalamo.org>
- Workforce Solutions for South Texas - <https://southtexasworkforce.org>
- Workforce Solutions of Coastal Bend - <https://www.workforcesolutionscb.org>
- Workforce Solutions Lower Rio Grande Valley - <https://www.wfsolutions.org>
- Workforce Solutions Cameron - <https://www.wfscameron.org>
- Workforce Solutions Texoma - <https://www.workforcesolutionstexoma.com>
- Workforce Solutions of Central Texas - <https://workforcesolutionsctx.com>
- Workforce Solutions Middle Rio Grande - <https://www.wfsmrg.org>
- Workforce Solutions Gulf Coast - <https://www.wrksolutions.com>

Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment 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 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 re-employed, 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.

To Obtain Additional Information: Important USERRA-related resources and compliance assistance materials for employees and employers are available through the Veterans' Employment and Training Service website at www.dol.gov/agencies/vets/programs/userra, which contains a USERRA elaws Advisor, FAQs, fact sheets, and links to the statute and implementing regulations. The toll-free information and helpline, available 8a.m. - 8p.m. Eastern Time, is 1-866-4-USA-DOL (1-866-4872365). The Department of Defense's Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve also provides resources at www.esgr.mil.



VETERANS EDUCATION

The Veterans Education Department (VetsEd) is responsible for the oversight and administration of two programs focused on veteran education benefits:

Federal Benefits: As a partner with the Department of Veteran Affairs, VetsEd functions as the State Approving Agency (SAA) and provides opportunities for VA beneficiaries to obtain training and education under the GI Bill®.

State Benefits and Veteran Services: As a department within the Texas Veterans Commission (Commission), VetsEd aids public institutes of higher education and veterans or family members with:

- the administration of the Hazlewood Tuition Exemption;
- creating an awareness of veteran education programs and benefits;
- promoting the creation of veteran-focused services and programs on campuses; and
- connecting veterans and their families to resources and available ancillary benefits and services.

TVC VETERANS EDUCATION PROGRAM CONTACTS

The VetsEd Department provides several ways for customers to contact us directly, each focused on specific services.

AUSTIN HEADQUARTERS
P.O. Box 12277
Austin, TX 78711-2277

Phone: 512-463-3168
Email: educationservices@tvc.texas.gov

Veterans Education Customer Service
Phone: 512-463-3168 or 877-898-3833

Hazlewood Tuition Exemption
educationservices@tvc.texas.gov

SAA Approvals
education.approvals@tvc.texas.gov

SAA Compliance & Certification
compliance@tvc.texas.gov

All other Inquiries
education@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 IS ELIGIBLE?

VETERAN

A veteran's DD Form 214 must contain the following:

- Home of record at time of entry into active duty or place of entry into active duty of Texas;
- At least 181 days of active duty, excluding initial entry training (multiple otherwise qualifying DD Form 214s can be combined to reach the 181 day threshold); and
- Honorable or Under Honorable Conditions (General) character of. Additionally, the veteran must reside in Texas while using the benefit.

LEGACY TRANSFER TO CHILD

Veterans who meet all eligibility requirements for the Hazlewood Act may transfer their unused benefit to a child. The child must:

- Be under 26 years old;
- The biological child, stepchild, adopted child, or claimed by the veteran as a dependent on federal income taxes for the previous year;
- Classified by the institution of attendance as a resident; and
- Enrolled in a degree or certificate program at the Texas public institution of higher education where the benefit is used.

SPOUSE

Spouses of veterans rated by VA as 100% disabled or that have a service-connected death, receive their own Hazlewood Act if:

- The veteran's DD Form 214 lists Texas as the home of record at time of entry into active duty or the place of entry into active duty, and
- The spouse is classified by the institution of attendance as a resident.

CHILDREN

Children of veterans rated by VA as 100% disabled or that have a service-connected death, receive their own Hazlewood Act if:

- The veteran's DD Form 214 lists Texas as the home of record at time of entry into active duty or the place of entry into active duty, and
- The child is classified by the institution of attendance as a resident.

Visit the Hazlewood Act website (www.tvc.texas.gov/education/hazlewood/) for more specific details on eligibility requirements or visit the veterans' webpage of the Texas public institution of higher education where the exemption will be used.

HOW TO APPLY:

1. Apply and be accepted to a Texas **public** institution of higher education of your choice. Go to www.applytexas.org to apply, or use your institution's application for admission, and
2. Follow the Hazlewood Act application procedures at www.tvc.texas.gov/education/hazlewood/ and your institution's veterans webpage.

WHAT ELSE TO KNOW?

This booklet is meant to provide only general information on the Hazlewood Act. Eligibility requirements for the exemption can be complex. Other factors that may affect a student's eligibility are:

- Eligibility for the Post 9/11 GI Bill®; students must use this benefit first before they can use the Hazlewood Act.
- Default on a state guaranteed student loan.
- For spouses and children of 100% disabled veterans, the VA disability must be permanent and total, not temporary.
- Low grade point average.
- Attempting an excessive number of undergraduate hours.

It is the Texas public institution of higher education that will process the student's application and determine eligibility, not the Texas Veterans Commission.

FEDERAL EDUCATION BENEFITS

The Veterans Education department approves education and training programs offered by colleges, universities, trade schools, training facilities, and employers in Texas and for which the various G.I. Bill[®] benefits can be used. Texas Veterans Commission ensures that institutions and employers comply with federal guidelines and are qualified to provide the type of training offered.

G.I. Bill[®] benefits may be used for approved programs and costs such as:

- School, college and university tuition
- Training program costs
- Degree and Certificate programs
- Flight training
- On the-job training programs
- Apprenticeship programs
- Licensing and Certification Exams

G.I. Bill[®] education and training benefits include the Montgomery G.I. Bill[®], the Post-9/11 G.I. Bill[®], Survivors & Dependent Assistance, and the Veteran Readiness and Employment, Career Counseling, VET TEC, and similar programs.

- Visit <https://www.va.gov/educaton> to learn more about applying for, using your education and training benefit, transferring entitlements, and additional benefits that may be available to you.
- Visit <https://www.va.gov/gi-bill-comparison-tool/> to learn more about where you can use your benefits and how those benefits are applied at different schools.



VETERAN ENTREPRENEURS

The Veteran Entrepreneur Program (VEP) 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.

- The VEP provides community outreach through a series of informational seminars, e-newsletters, and participation in resource partner events.
- The VEP directs veteran entrepreneurs to the many informational and partner resources available for starting and running a business.
- The VEP provides personalized business assistance to help guide you through all phases of your business from start-up to growth and finally exit.

TVC VETERAN ENTREPRENEUR

AUSTIN HEADQUARTERS

P.O. Box 12277

Austin, TX 78711-2277

Phone: 512-463-0519

Email: vep@tvc.texas.gov

<https://www.tvc.texas.gov/entrepreneurs/>



FUND FOR VETERANS' ASSISTANCE

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

The FVA does not provide funds directly to veterans. Veterans in need of assistance are asked to visit the TVC website to find organizations serving their area. Veteran in need should apply for services at grant-funded organizations listed in the following Assistance Directories:

<https://www.tvc.texas.gov/grants/assistance>

- **General Assistance (GA)**
General Assistance grant-funded services address a broad range of needs, including Employment Support, Financial Assistance, Pro Bono Legal Services Referral Services, Supportive Services, and Transportation Services.
- **Housing For Texas Heroes (H4TXH)**
The H4TXH grant-funded services assist low-income and disabled Texas veterans with critical home repairs and modifying homes to improve accessibility and independent living.
- **Veterans Mental Health (VMH)**
Veterans Mental Health grant-funded services provide counseling and treatment to veterans and their families in diagnosed conditions or peer-delivered services from trained individuals.
- **Veterans Treatment Courts (VTC)**
Veterans Treatment Courts grants offer funding to local governments to support rehabilitation for veterans involved in the court system.
- **Veterans County Service Officer (VCSO)**
Veterans County Service Officer funding is reserved for VCSOs to address the needs of Texas veterans and their families in the General Assistance, Housing For Texas Heroes, and Veterans Mental Health grant programs.

TVC FUND FOR VETERANS' ASSISTANCE

AUSTIN HEADQUARTERS

P.O. Box 12277

Austin, TX 78711-2277

Phone: 512-463-1157

Email: grants@tvc.texas.gov



HEALTH CARE ADVOCACY

The TVC Health Care Advocacy Department (HCAD) 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.

Our HCAD advocates interpret VHA medical 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 VA facility personnel in overcoming barriers to veterans' health care.

The HCAD 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 HCAD advocates identify existing and potential problems, and suggest solutions or alternatives. Advocates assist with constituent 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
- Enrollment / Eligibility
- Appointments
- VA billing issues
- Prescription / Pharmacy assistance
- Care in the Community / MISSION Act assistance
- Assistance with MRIs, X-rays, or lab tests
- Assistance with VA health care issues

Health Care Locations

AUSTIN HEADQUARTERS

1700 N. Congress Ave., Suite #800, Austin, TX 78701

Email: healthcare@tvc.texas.gov

(Phone) 512-937-7274; (Cell) 806-670-3958

<https://www.tvc.texas.gov/health-care-advocacy/>

Health Care Contact Emails:

- **District 1** – Northeasthealthcare@tvc.texas.gov
- **District 2** – Northwesthealthcare@tvc.texas.gov
- **District 3** – Southeasthealthcare@tvc.texas.gov
- **District 4** – Southwesthealthcare@tvc.texas.gov



VETERANS MENTAL HEALTH

The Veterans Mental Health Department (VMHD) is focused on ensuring access to competent mental health services for service members, veterans, and their families. VMHD accomplishes this task by providing training, certification, and technical assistance across Texas. In addition to connecting veterans in need directly to local services, VMHD also works with partners at the national, state, and local level to address veteran-specific issues including suicide prevention/intervention, veteran homelessness, military cultural competency, peer support services, military-related trauma, women and rural veterans, and justice involvement. Across all programming, VMHD is fortunate to have the broadest definition of veteran regardless of discharge status, branch of services, or having served one day or a career. All services including training, technical assistance, and direct services provided across VMHD programming are offered freely to all who are in need.

Military Veteran Peer Network (MVPN)

The MVPN is made of TVC-Certified Peer Service Coordinators and their peer volunteers strategically placed within the local mental health authorities across Texas to create a statewide peer-to-peer network for any service member, veteran, or family member. The MVPN provides services including direct peer-to-peer support, training on suicide prevention and military cultural competency, coordination of mental health first aid, and warm-handoffs to local resources based on the individual needs of the veteran and family.

Justice Involved Veteran (JIV) Program

The JIV Program works to improve veteran services across the entire criminal justice continuum. The JIV Coordinators serve as resource to provide technical assistance and training to all Veteran Treatment Courts across Texas. The JIV Program also partners with the local and state law enforcement to deliver officers relevant trainings such as trauma affected veterans and crisis intervention strategies. JIV Coordinators also collaborate with the local jail and state prison systems to better ensure that incarcerated veterans have access to veteran-specific services and programming.

Veteran Provider Program

The aim of the Veteran Provider program is to offer licensed clinicians and any mental health professionals with training and technical assistance aimed at promoting military cultural competency. Based on the unique mental health needs of the veteran community, the Veteran Provider Program offers trainings tailored to the needs of the audience as it relates to suicide prevention, lethal means restriction, military traumas, and evidence-based practices. The Veteran Provider Program also oversees technical assistance to a team of veteran counselors focused on providing evidence-based treatments to trauma affected veterans in rural settings.

Community & Faith-Based Partner Program / Homeless Veteran Initiative

The intent of the Community & Faith-Based Partner Program is to involve stakeholders of all denominations in developing/implementing strategies to support the wellbeing of veterans and their families at the local level.

AUSTIN HEADQUARTERS

P.O. Box 12277

Austin, TX 78711-2277

Email: vmhd@tvc.texas.gov

Phone: 512-638-3521

512-463-6091

Website: www.milvetpeer.net

MENTAL HEALTH



WOMEN VETERANS

The Women Veterans Program (WVP) bridges the gap between Texas women veterans and the services and benefits they have earned. The program ensures that the women veterans of Texas have equitable access to federal and state veterans' benefits and services. WVP works to increase support for women veterans throughout Texas by collaborating with federal, state, county, municipal, and private agencies that provide services to women veterans.

Outreach

The Women Veterans Program informs women veterans about the services and benefits available to them through the Texas Veterans Commission and provides guidance and direction to women veterans applying for grants, benefits, or services including, but not limited to:

- Education (i.e. Hazlewood Act, Montgomery GI Bill, and Post 9/11 GI Bill)
- Claims
- Employment
- Health Care Advocacy
- Mental Health - Military Veteran Peer Network, Peer-to-Peer Support
- Veteran Entrepreneur Program

Education

The Women Veterans Program, in coordination with federal, state, county, municipal, and private agencies, plans and conducts conferences, seminars, training workshops, and state-wide community events to:

- Improve the awareness of women veteran's eligibility for federal and state benefits and services
- Assess the needs of women veterans with respect to benefits and services
- Connect women veterans to those agencies that meet the needs of women veterans

Recognition

The Women Veterans Program creates public awareness by recognizing and honoring the women veterans of this state and women who serve in the military through various events and outreach including annual women veteran's community outreach campaigns and Women Veterans Day events, the number of women veterans who identify as a veteran increases.

Women Veterans Professional Network

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. <https://goo.gl/DsYEFJ>

AUSTIN HEADQUARTERS

P.O. Box 12277

Austin, TX 78711-2277

<https://www.tvc.texas.gov/women-veterans/>

Phone: 832-728-3624

Email: texaswomenvets@tvc.texas.gov

VETERAN STATE BENEFITS

Texas Veterans Network

The Texas Veterans Network is a collaboration of organizations formed to facilitate the delivery of veteran services and benefits from a diversity of sources. It provides a more comprehensive presentation of services for those leaving the military as well as those who are already veterans. Members include Texas Veterans Commission, Combined Arms, Texas A&M, Texas Workforce, Walmart, and more. This partnership connects federal, state, local government and nonprofit agencies in order to effectively serve more military, veterans, and their families in both urban and rural areas of Texas. Texas Veterans Network may be accessed through:

Unite Texas - <https://texas.uniteus.com/veterans-network>

Combines Arms - <https://www.combinedarms.us/tvn>

Special/Disabled Vehicle License Plates and Permits

A Texas driver's license, an ID card, or disabled veteran license plates may be provided free-of-charge to a veteran who is honorably discharged with a service-connected disability of at least 50% and over or 40% due to amputation of a lower extremity. 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 <https://www.txdmv.gov/motorists/license-plates/specialty-license-plates>

Hunting and Fishing Licenses

Disabled Veteran Super Combo Hunting and All-Water Fishing packages available free-of-charge to a veteran who is honorably discharged with a service connected disability rating of 50% or greater, and who is receiving compensation from the VA for the disability.

For more information visit <http://pwd.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. Some medical facilities may charge a small administrative fee for obtaining the records.

Federal Park Admission

Gold Star Families and US military veterans are eligible to receive free access to more than 2,000 federal recreation areas, including national parks, wildlife refuges, and forests. www.nps.gov

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. 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

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. You must apply within one year and 120 days from discharge. If you submit application within 120 days of discharge, you do not need to 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.

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.

STATE GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

Texas Veterans Land Board (VLB)

In 1946 the Texas Veterans Land Board (VLB) was established to administer benefits exclusively for Texas Veterans. Since then, the VLB has funded more than 200,000 loans for Veterans and Military Members in Texas. The VLB is proud to serve those who have served our country. Contact the VLB at **1-800-252-8387**, email VLBinfo@glo.texas.gov or visit <https://vlb.texas.gov/index.html>

Land Loan Program

The VLB Veterans Land Loan Program is the only one of its kind in the nation, giving Texas Veterans and Military Members the opportunity to borrow up to \$150,000 to purchase land at competitive interest rates while typically requiring a minimum five percent down payment for tracts of one acre or more.

The program is easy to use and offers Texas Veterans and Military Members exclusive financing towards the purchase of their own piece of Texas. The bonds used to fund the program are retired from loan repayments and the cost of administering the program is financed through a small fee charged on each loan.

Veterans Housing Assistance Program (VHAP)

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 originate 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 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.

Texas State Veterans Homes

Texas State Veterans Homes provide affordable, long-term nursing care for qualified Veterans, spouses and Gold Star Parents. Texas State Veterans Homes are owned by the state of Texas and are regulated by both the Texas Health and Human Services Commission as well as the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). Third-party operators manage the day-to-day operations of the Veterans homes. The Texas Veterans Land Board oversees the operators and has an on-site representative in each Veterans home. The VA does not own or manage Texas State Veterans Homes.

There are many advantages to living in a Texas State Veterans Home from the Veteran-centered care, the VA per diem that helps alleviate some costs of care (including therapy and medication) and the camaraderie of living with fellow veterans who have similar life experiences.

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

The Veterans' Call Center is a joint partnership between the Texas Veterans Commission and the Veterans Land Board to connect veterans to the benefits and services earned through their military service.

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 A.G. 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. 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. 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, 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. www.texasbar.com

Texas Workforce Commission

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 they believe veterans are equipped with the technical skills, education, professionalism, and leadership experience sought by Texas employers. The TWC Veterans program includes: 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. www.theccb.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. 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. 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 service members, 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. 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. ADRC’s 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, veteran-directed home and community-based services. <https://hhs.texas.gov/hhs-services>

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 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. <https://hhs.texas.gov/about-hhs/leadership/advisory-committees/dars-programs-services-have-transferred-new-agencies>

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. www.dfps.state.tx.us

Texas Commission on Law Enforcement

The Texas Commission on Law Enforcement has been committed for several years to assist and expedite the ability of veterans to re-enter the Texas workplace in the field of law enforcement. They 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. 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. 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. 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. www.tdcj.state.tx.us

The Office of Public Utility Counsel (OPUC)

The 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 service members, veterans and their families and provides presentations, upon request, to military groups and organizations representing service members 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. 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.

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. 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 colonies. TDHCA is also responsible for the regulation of the state's manufactured housing industry. www.tdhca.state.tx.us

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 the veteran and their family in buying a home or land, receiving education benefits, finding a job, health care resources and more. veterans.portal.texas.gov

TEXAS MILITARY INSTALLATIONS

Dyess AFB - Arnold Boulevard and S. 7th., Dyess AFB, TX 79607
www.dyess.af.mil Phone: (325) 696-0212

Ellington Field Joint Reserve AFB - 11210 Blume Ave., Houston, TX 77034
<http://www.militarybases.us/air-force/ellington-field-joint-reserve-base/>

Fort Bliss - HQ, US Army Garrison, Fort Bliss ATTN: IMBL-ZA, 1741 Marshall Road
Fort Bliss, Texas 79916 **<https://home.army.mil/bliss/>** Phone: (915) 568-2121

Fort Hood - T.J. Mills Boulevard & Battalion, Bldg 18010, 3rd Floor - Rm A308,
Ft. Hood, TX 76544 **<https://home.army.mil/hood/>** Phone: (254) 287-2520

Goodfellow AFB - 351t Kearney Blvd., GAFB, TX 76908-4304
www.goodfellow.af.mil Phone: (325) 654-1110

Joint Base San Antonio (Lackland Randolph Sam Houston) -
2330 Stanley Rd., San Antonio, TX 78234 **www.jbsa.mil**
Lackland (210) 671-1110; *Randolph* (210) 652-1110; *Sam Houston* (210) 221-1110

Laughlin AFB - 548 Laughlin Dr., Bldg. 468, Laughlin AFB, TX 78843
www.laughlin.af.mil Phone: (830) 298-5620

Naval Air Station Corpus Christi - 10651 E St., Bldg. H-100 5th Deck,
Corpus Christi, TX 78419-5021 Phone: (361) 961-2372
https://cnic.navy.mil/regions/cnrse/installations/nas_corpus_christi.html

Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base Fort Worth
1510 Chenault Ave., NAS JRB Ft. Worth, Ft. Worth, TX 76113
https://cnic.navy.mil/regions/cnrse/installations/nas_jrb_fort_worth.html
Phone: (817) 782-5000

Naval Air Station Kingsville
554 McCain St., Suite #214, NAS Kingsville, Kingsville, TX 78363
https://cnic.navy.mil/regions/cnrse/installations/nas_kingsville.html
Phone: (361) 516-6500

Red River Army Depot - 100 James Carlow Dr., Red River Army Depot,
Texarkana, TX 75507 **www.redriver.army.mil**
Phone: (903) 334-4137

Sheppard AFB - 1810 J. Ave., Sheppard AFB, TX 76311-2540
www.sheppard.af.mil Phone: (940) 676-2511





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