

Texas State Veteran's Benefits & Discounts

2017



**TEXAS VETERANS
COMMISSION**



The state of Texas provides veteran benefits. This section offers a brief description of each of the following benefits.

- Veteran Housing Benefits
- Veteran Financial Assistance Benefits
- Veteran Education Benefits
- Veteran Employment Benefits
- Other State Sponsored Veteran Benefits

Texas Veteran Housing Programs

Texas Veterans Land Board Programs

The Texas Veterans Land Board (VLB), a division of the Texas General Land Office, administers the following three veterans' loan programs which provide low-interest loans to bona-fide Texas resident veterans who received an other-than-dishonorable discharge and served at least 90 days active duty.:

- The Land Loan Program;
- Veterans Housing Assistance Purchase Program; and
- Veterans Home Improvement Loan Program.

Refer to <http://www.glo.texas.gov/vlb/veterans-benefits/veteran-loans/eligibility.html> for additional information on these programs.

VLB Texas State Veterans Homes

The eight VLB Texas State Veterans Homes provide affordable, long-term nursing care for Texas veterans who were not dishonorably discharged, their spouses and Gold Star parents provided they meet the age and residency requirements. Costs are based on income.

The homes were built through a partnership between the VLB and the VA. The VLB owns the homes and contracts with professional long-term health care providers to operate each facility. Like all VLB programs, the Texas State Veterans Homes are self-supporting and cost Texas taxpayers virtually nothing.

Conveniently located across Texas. Each facility is designed to enhance quality of life with a clean, caring and dignified setting appropriate to those men and women who have served our country with honor.

Because the VA subsidizes much of a veteran's cost to stay at a VLB Texas State Veterans Home, daily out-of-pocket rates are well below average and include the cost of medications for veterans. Residents can choose between a spacious private or semi-private room based upon availability. Alzheimer's units at each home provide highly specialized care, including beautifully landscaped, secure courtyards.

Following are the homes currently available to vets in Texas:



1020 Tascosa Road, Amarillo, Texas 79124
806.322.8387 or 806.322.8388 fax

- **120 beds**
- **30 Alzheimer's beds**
- **Medicaid / Medicare**
- **Opened 2007**
- **Serves Panhandle area**

The Ussery-Roan Texas State Veterans Home in Amarillo opened in 2007 and provides first-class long term care for up to 120 residents, including up to 30 Alzheimer's residents in a separate, secured unit. Created and operated exclusively for Texas veterans, their spouses and Gold Star parents, the Amarillo home offers superior care that is Medicare and Medicaid certified.

The certified, secured Alzheimer's unit provides specialized care in beautiful surroundings. The Alzheimer's unit includes cozy visiting areas, a special activity area and a private dining room. A pleasant outdoor, secured courtyard surrounds the Alzheimer's unit for the comfort and convenience of the residents.



**1809 North Highway 87, Big Spring, Texas 79720-0793
432.268.VETS (8387) or 432.268.1987 fax**

- **160 beds**
- **60 Alzheimer's beds**
- **Medicaid / Medicare**
- **Opened 2001**
- **Serves West Texas area**
- **One of first four homes**
- **Rates as low as \$52 a day**

The Lamun-Lusk-Sanchez Texas State Veterans Home in Big Spring opened in 2001 and provides first-class long term care for up to 160 residents, including up to 60 Alzheimer's residents in a separate, secured unit. Created and operated exclusively for Texas veterans, their spouses and Gold Star parents, the Lamun-Lusk-Sanchez home offers superior care that is Medicare and Medicaid certified.

The certified, secured Alzheimer's unit provides specialized care in beautiful surroundings. The Alzheimer's unit includes cozy visiting areas, a special activity area and a private dining room. A pleasant outdoor, secured courtyard surrounds the Alzheimer's unit for the comfort and convenience of the residents.



**1300 Seven Oaks Road, Bonham, Texas 75418-3254
903.640.VETS (8387) or 903.640.4281 fax**

- **160 beds**
- **32 Alzheimer's beds**

- **Medicaid / Medicare**
- **Opened May 2001**
- **Serves North Texas area**
- **One of first four homes**
- **Rates as low as \$52 a day**

The Clyde W. Coper Texas State Veterans Home in Bonham opened in 2001 and provides first-class long term care for up to 160 residents, including up to 32 Alzheimer's residents in a separate, secured unit. Created and operated exclusively for Texas veterans, their spouses and Gold Star parents, the Clyde W. Coper home offers superior care that is Medicare and Medicaid certified.

The certified, secured Alzheimer's unit provides specialized care in beautiful surroundings. The Alzheimer's unit includes cozy visiting areas, a special activity area and a private dining room. A pleasant outdoor, secured courtyard surrounds the Alzheimer's unit for the comfort and convenience of the residents.



9650 Kenworthy Street, El Paso, Texas 79924
915.751.0967 or 915.751.0980 fax

- **160 beds**
- **60 Alzheimer's beds**
- **Medicaid / Medicare**
- **Opened July 2005**
- **Serves Far West Texas**
- **New, improved design**
- **Rates as low as \$52 a day**

The Ambrosio Guillen Texas State Veterans Home in El Paso opened in 2005 and provides first-class long term care for up to 160 residents, including up to 60 Alzheimer's residents in a separate, secured unit. Created and operated exclusively for Texas veterans, their spouses and Gold Star parents, the Ambrosio Guillen home offers superior care that is Medicare and Medicaid certified.

The certified, secured Alzheimer's unit provides specialized care in beautiful surroundings. The Alzheimer's unit includes cozy visiting areas, a special activity area and a private dining room. A pleasant outdoor, secured courtyard surrounds the Alzheimer's unit for the comfort and convenience of the residents.



200 Veterans Drive Floresville, Texas 78114-2709
830.216.9456 or 830.393.7764 fax

- **160 beds**
- **32 Alzheimer's beds**
- **Medicaid / Medicare**
- **Opened December 2000**
- **Serves South Central Texas area**
- **One of first four homes**
- **Rates as low as \$52 a day**
-

The Frank M. Tejada Texas State Veterans Home in Floresville opened in 2000 and provides first-class long term care for up to 160 residents, including up to 32 Alzheimer's residents in a separate, secured unit. Created and operated exclusively for Texas veterans, their spouses and Gold Star parents, the Frank M. Tejada Home offers superior care that is Medicare and Medicaid certified.

The certified, secured Alzheimer's unit provides specialized care in beautiful surroundings. The Alzheimer's unit includes cozy visiting areas, a special activity area and a private dining room. A pleasant outdoor, secured courtyard surrounds the Alzheimer's unit for the comfort and convenience of the residents.



301 East Yuma Avenue, McAllen, Texas 78503
956.682.4224 or 956.682.4668 fax

- **60 Alzheimer's beds**
- **Medicaid / Medicare**
- **Opened June 2005**
- **Serves Rio Grande Valley**
- **New, improved design**
- **Rates as low as \$52 a day**

The Alfredo Gonzalez Texas State Veterans Home in McAllen opened in 2005 and provides first-class long term care for up to 160 residents, including up to 60 Alzheimer's residents in a separate, secured unit. Created and operated exclusively for Texas veterans, their spouses and Gold Star parents, the Alfredo Gonzalez home offers superior care that is Medicare and Medicaid certified.

The certified, secured Alzheimer's unit provides specialized care in beautiful surroundings. The Alzheimer's unit includes cozy visiting areas, a special activity area and a private dining room. A pleasant outdoor, secured courtyard surrounds the Alzheimer's unit for the comfort and convenience of the residents.



1424 Martin Luther King Jr. Lane, Temple, Texas 76504-5491
254.791.8280 or 254.791.0262 fax

- **160 beds**
- **32 Alzheimer's beds**
- **Medicaid / Medicare**
- **Opened May 2000**
- **Serves Central Texas area**
- **First State Veterans Home**
- **Rates as low as \$52 a day**

The William R. Courtney Texas State Veterans Home in Temple opened in 2000 and provides first-class long term care for up to 160 residents, including up to 32 Alzheimer's residents in a separate, secured unit. Created and operated exclusively for Texas veterans, their spouses and

Gold Star parents, the William R. Courtney Home offers superior care that is Medicare and Medicaid certified.

The certified, secured Alzheimer's unit provides specialized care in beautiful surroundings. The Alzheimer's unit includes cozy visiting areas, a special activity area and a private dining room. A pleasant outdoor, secured courtyard surrounds the Alzheimer's unit for the comfort and convenience of the residents.



11466 Honor Lane (State Highway 155), Tyler, TX 75708
903.617.6150 or 903.617.6498 fax

- Opened early 2012
- New, family-style design
- 10 individual cottages
- 10 private rooms per cottage
- Accommodates 100 veterans
- 20 certified Alzheimer units
- One community building
- Serves East Texas

The Watkins-Logan Texas State Veterans Home in Tyler was dedicated in November 2011 and opened early 2012. It provides a unique setting with first-class long term care for up to 100 residents, including up to 20 Alzheimer's residents in a separate, secured unit. Created and operated exclusively for Texas veterans, their spouses and Gold Star parents, the Watkins-Logan home offers a one-of-a-kind family-style setting.

Unlike previous Texas State Veterans Homes, this one serves as a community with 10 cottages and one common building. This design approach draws residents into social connection by mixing the best communal aspects of a home while still maintaining privacy and independence for residents.

The certified, secured Alzheimer's unit provides specialized care in beautiful surroundings. The Alzheimer's unit includes cozy visiting areas, a special activity area and a private dining room. A pleasant outdoor, secured courtyard surrounds the Alzheimer's unit for the comfort and convenience of the residents.

An open kitchen, dining room and large table are at the heart of each of the 10 cottages. Family-style meals will be served at the table and residents can enjoy each other's company afterward in

a large living room with a fireplace. This hearth, or communal heart of the home, is what sets this Texas State Veterans Home apart from any other long-term care facility in Texas. A total of 10 private rooms, each with its own bathroom, will flank the hearth. Each cottage will be set up as a “non-lift” facility, where overhead tracks with slings in each resident’s room will provide safe transport of non-ambulatory residents from bed to bath.

Texas Financial Assistance Programs

Tax Exemption for Veterans

Texas law provides partial exemptions for any property owned by disabled Veterans and 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 percentage of service-connected disability.

Texas State Veteran Education Benefits

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.

A Veteran must:

- At the time of entry into active duty the U.S. Armed Forces, designated Texas as Home of Record; or entered the service in Texas; or was a Texas resident;
- Have 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);
- Served at least 181 days of active duty service (excluding training);
- Have no federal Veteran’s education benefits, or have no federal Veterans 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;
- Not be in default on a student loan made or guaranteed by the State of Texas;
- Enroll 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 reenlisted into active duty, or reside with a spouse who is on active duty.

On January 26, 2015, the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Texas ruled that the requirement that Veterans must have entered service in Texas in order to be eligible to receive the Texas Hazlewood exemption of tuition and fees at public schools (the fixed point residency requirement) was unconstitutional. On May 12, 2015, the office of the Texas State Attorney General filed an appeal in the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit. Note: The Texas Veterans Commission is not a party to appeal. Current Hazlewood eligibility requirements remain unchanged.

Legacy Act (Child)

Eligible Veterans may assign unused hours of exemption eligibility to a child under certain conditions. To qualify a child (legacy recipient) must:

- Be classified by the institution as a Texas resident;
- Be the biological child, stepchild, adopted child, or claimed as a dependent in the current or previous tax year;
- Be 25 years old or younger on the first day of the semester or term for which the exemption is claimed (unless granted an extension due to a qualifying illness or debilitating condition); and
- Meet 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 or 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 each receive a 150 credit hours exemption.

A spouse must:

- Be a spouse 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;
- Be a spouse of a Veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces or the 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 employability (IU) due to a service connected injury or illness;
- Have no federal Veterans education benefits, or have no federal Veterans 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;
- Be classified by the institution as a Texas resident; and
- Meet 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.

A child must:

- Be a 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;
- Be a child of a Veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces, Texas National Guard, or Texas Air 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 a service-related injury or illness or is entitled to receive compensation at the 100% rate due to individual employability (IU) due to a service connected injury or illness;
- Have no federal Veterans education benefits, or have no federal Veterans 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;
- Be classified by the institution as a Texas resident; and
- Meet 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 child of a MIA, KIA, or service connected deceased Veteran.

Dependent children of MIA/POWs

Dependent children of TX military personnel MIA or POW can receive an exemption for payment of tuition and some fees at public colleges and universities. Exemptions from charges for continuing education courses is optional on the part of the institution. Submit your application to the Financial aid officer of the state-supported institution of choice.

National Guard State Tuition Assistance

State Tuition Assistance (State TA) is a state funded tuition assistance program for active drilling members of the Texas Army National Guard (TXARNG), Texas Air National Guard (TXANG) and Texas State Guard (TXSG). It provides up to \$9,000 annually (\$4,500-Fall/\$4,500-Spring) in education benefits for college tuition and eligible fees at a Texas college or university.

Eligibility Requirements

- Active drilling members in "Good Standing" with TXARNG, TXANG or TXSG.
- Completed Basic Training. Members of the State Guard must complete BOT, RBOT or AIT.
- Enlisted (E1-E9), Officers (O1-O5) and Warrant Officers (WO1-CW3).
- Eligible school must be a Texas state college or university with headquarters in Texas as defined in Texas Education Code Section 61.003.
- AGR not eligible.
- Must be accepted to and registered in a qualifying institution for a minimum of 3 semester credit hrs.
- Expiration of Term of Service (ETS) or Mandatory Retirement Date (MRD) must occur after the official last day of class.
- Interstate Transfers must be complete prior to utilizing STRP.
- Applicants with Prior Service must complete enlistment process prior to utilizing STRP.
- ROTC Cadets who are utilizing the housing scholarship/option; Cadets using tuition option are not eligible.

Texas Veteran Employment Programs

Veterans Preference

Wartime veterans have preference in employment with State agencies or offices, as do widows and children of those killed on active duty. State agencies must practice veterans' preference until they have reached 40% veteran employment. Non-retired veterans who are employed by the State of Texas are entitled to claim their active duty military time toward retirement, provided they present a proper request and pay to the Retirement System the specified amount of retirement contribution for up to 60 months' military credit. Such contribution is paid at the rate which was applicable at the time the employed veteran first was covered by the state Retirement System, plus any accrued interest. We have provided a link to the State law regarding veterans' preference laws

Additionally, a veteran is entitled to reemployment rights with his last employer when he is released from the Armed Forces of the United States, providing his absence is not longer than four years. The right of reemployment is available regardless of whether the veteran was, prior to service, employed by the State, county or city government, or by private industry. Reemployment rights of veterans are now provided by both State and Federal laws. We have provided a link to the State Law regarding reemployment rights.

Other Texas State Veteran Benefits

Texas State Cemetery Program

In the November 2001 statewide elections, voters overwhelmingly approved Proposition 7, a constitutional amendment that authorized the creation of up to seven state cemeteries for veterans and their eligible dependents. The cemeteries will be built and operated through a partnership between the Texas Veterans Land Board (VLB) and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA). The USDVA will fund up to 100 percent of the construction and equipment costs. The state will own and operate the cemeteries and fund most of the cost of operations.

Eligibility for burial extends to all Texas veterans, eligible spouses & dependent children with no charge for veteran burial.

The following State cemeteries are currently available to vets:



7457 West Lake Road, Abilene, Texas 79601-8278
325.673.4446 or 325.673.4448 Fax

- **Opened June 1, 2009**
- **31 acres**
- **Phase 1: over 3,000 plots**
- **Up to 35,000 plots**

The Texas State Veterans Cemetery at Abilene is located on 63 acres donated by the City of Abilene near Lake Fort Phantom Hill, four miles north of I-20, just east of FM 600. The groundbreaking ceremony for the cemetery was held on October 30, 2007, with the dedication ceremony held on May 25, 2009. The first interment was June 1, 2009. The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs awarded \$8.1 million to build the facility which is managed by the VLB.

The cemetery includes a covered, open-air structure for committal services; a visitors center; a computer kiosk for locating specific graves or interments; an assembly area for special occasions, such as Memorial Day observances; an avenue of flags; and a memorial walkway for future monuments.

The initial phase of development contains 31 acres, and 3,524 gravesites. The cemetery will be expanded as needed and will eventually be capable of providing a final resting place for approximately 35,000 veterans and family members.

The Texas State Veterans Cemetery at Abilene proudly contains monuments donated by:

- Dyess Chiefs' Group
- VFW Post 6873
- DAV Chapter #36

To honor the deceased, you may purchase engraved memorial pavers which are placed in the assembly area of the Texas State Veterans Cemetery at Abilene. Each paver costs \$150, with proceeds going toward operations of the cemetery. Please contact the cemetery staff to learn more.



9974 IH 37 Access Road, Corpus Christi, Texas 78410-1408
361.248.4830 or 361.248.4965 fax

- **Opened December 14, 2011**
- **30 acres**
- **Phase 1: over 4,800 plots**
- **Up to 31,500 plots**

The Coastal Bend State Veterans Cemetery in Corpus Christi is located on 54 acres donated by Flint Hills Resources through Nueces County to the Texas Veterans Land Board. The cemetery is located on the southeast corner of Carbon Plant Road and IH-37. The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs awarded \$8.45 million to build the facility which is managed by the VLB.

The cemetery includes a covered, open-air structure for committal services; a visitor's center; a computer kiosk for locating specific graves; an assembly area for special occasions, such as Memorial Day observances; an avenue of flags; and a memorial walkway for future monuments.

The Groundbreaking Ceremony for the fourth Texas State Veterans Cemetery was held July 23, 2010, with the Dedication Ceremony held December 7, 2011. The first interment took place on December 13, 2011. The initial phase of development contains 30 acres, and 4,800 gravesites. The cemetery will be expanded as needed and will eventually be capable of providing a final resting place for more than 31,000 veterans and family members.

Driving Instructions:

Coastal Bend State Veterans Cemetery is located at 9974 IH-37 Access Road, Corpus Christi, Texas. The cemetery entrance is on the westbound access (Up River Road) east of Carbon Plant Road and west of Rand Morgan Road. Vehicles should exit Rand Morgan Road.



11463 State Highway 195, Killeen, Texas 76542-4945
254.616.1770 or 254.616.1769 fax

- **Opened January 4, 2006**
- **174 acres**
- **Phase 1: over 7,000 plots**
- **Up to 50,000 plots**

The Central Texas State Veterans Cemetery in Killeen is located on 174 acres previously part of Fort Hood and donated by the federal government. The construction of the cemetery was made possible through the coordination of area veterans groups, the City of Killeen, the federal government, and the VLB. The Groundbreaking Ceremony for the first Texas State Veterans Cemetery was held on November 11, 2003, with the Dedication Ceremony held on October 5, 2005. The first interment was January 4, 2006.

The initial phase of development contains 31 acres with 7,620 gravesites. The cemetery will be expanded as needed and will eventually be capable of providing a final resting place to more than 50,000 veterans and family members.

The Central Texas State Veterans Cemetery proudly contains monuments donated by:

- Local chapter of the China-Burma-India Veterans Association
- The Knights of Columbus Assembly 2370
- Military Order of the Purple Heart
- The Retired Enlisted Association
- VFW Post 9192 and the Killeen Police Department
- 1/67 Armored - 4th Infantry Division
- 2nd Brigade Combat Team – 4th Infantry Division
- DAV Chapter 147
- VFW District 14

- Special Forces Association Chapter 77
- U.S. Army Warrant Officers Association – Fort Hood
- 2/2 Infantry Regiment – 1st infantry Division
- American Legion post 573



2520 South Inspiration Road, Mission, Texas 78572-9897
956.583.7227 or 956.583.7887 fax

- **Opened December 4, 2006**
- **75 total acres**
- **Phase I: 6,190 gravesites**
- **Up to 25,000 gravesites**

The Rio Grande Valley State Veterans Cemetery is located on 75 acres purchased by the City of Mission from Bentsen Palm, Limited and donated to the Texas Veterans Land Board. The cemetery is located just off U.S. Highway 83 on South Inspiration Road about 2.5 miles south of the exit, just past Seven Oaks Golf and Country Club, near the junction of South Inspiration Road and Military Road.

The Groundbreaking Ceremony for the second Texas State Veterans Cemetery was held September 27, 2005, with the Dedication Ceremony held November 3, 2006. The first interment was December 4, 2006.

The initial phase of development contains 31 acres, and 6,190 gravesites. The cemetery will be expanded as needed and will eventually be capable of providing a final resting place for more than 25,000 veterans and family members.

To honor the deceased, you may purchase engraved memorial pavers which are placed in the assembly area of the Rio Grande Valley State Veterans Cemetery. Each paver costs \$100, with proceeds going toward operations of the cemetery. Please contact the cemetery staff to learn more.

No-Cost Medical Records

Under the Health and Safety Code, Chapter 161.201 Subchapter M, Medical or Mental Health Records, Texas veterans are eligible for no cost medical records when they are obtained to file a claim for a disability against the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA). 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.

Free Drivers License for Disabled Veterans

Under Texas Transportation Code Title 7, Chapter 521, Section 521.426, Texas drivers licenses may be furnished free of charge to veterans who have service-connected disabilities rated 60% or more by the VA or by a branch of the Armed Forces of the U.S. Application must be made prior to the time present drivers license expires. Application forms may be obtained from Department of Public Safety's license examining offices located throughout the State. A link to the to the Texas Department of Public Safety's **Drivers License information** website is <http://www.txdps.state.tx.us/DriverLicense/index.htm>. Application forms should be completed by the veteran and forwarded to the VA for verification of service-connected rating of 60% or more. If a veteran was disability-retired from military service and has no VA claim file, proof of disability must come from their respective branch of military service.

Fishing and Hunting Licenses for Disabled Veterans

Disabled veterans are eligible for special hunting and fishing licenses, at a reduced cost. A disabled veteran of the Armed Forces of the United States is one who has a service-connected disability, as defined by the Department of Veterans Affairs, consisting of the loss of use of a lower extremity or of a disability rating of 60% or more, and who is receiving compensation from the United States for the disability. A resident veteran as described in the law may hunt wild turkey and deer without a resident hunting license if he has acquired a resident exemption hunting license. A link to the Texas Parks and Wildlife website is <http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/>.

Free Park Admission for Disabled Veterans

Free admission to Texas State Parks is available to any veteran who has a service-connected disability, which is rated 60% or more by VA, or a service-connected disability, which has resulted in the loss of a lower extremity. Application may be made at the headquarters office of any Texas State park by providing satisfactory evidence of service-connected disability. If such evidence is not readily available, it can be obtained from the VA regional office where the claims folder is located. The Texas State Parklands Passport is available to any veteran who meets the disability requirements, whether or not he or she resides in Texas. The Passport provides only free admission to the State parks, and does not exempt anyone from payment of other charges, such as camping fees, etc. Go to <http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/> to link to the Texas Parks and Wildlife website.

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 Armed Forces of the United States of America. 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 is 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. See "Safeguard Your Discharge (DD214)" at <http://www.tarrantcounty.com/eveterans/cwp/view.asp?A=776&Q=432386>. Also note that the Texas Veterans Commission does not keep a record of your DD214 or Discharge.

Special License Plates

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 automobile or light commercial vehicle of one ton or less. Disabled veterans must have a service-connected disability rating of 50% or more or 40% due to amputation of a lower extremity. Former prisoners of war are eligible if they were captured or incarcerated by an enemy of the United States during a period of conflict with the United States and at the time of the capture, were citizens of the United States. Eligibility is for both former members of the Armed Forces and civilian U.S. citizens who were captured by an enemy of our government. For further information, contact either the nearest vehicle title registration office or your county tax office. Following are pictures of available specialty plates for the military community:

Specialty License Plates for the Military Community

Air Force Association



Air Force Cross



Air Medal



Air Medal with Valor



American Legion



Armed Forces Reserve



Army Distinguished Service Cross



Bronze Star



Bronze Star with Valor



Buffalo Soldiers



Civil Air Patrol



Coast Guard Auxiliary



Defense Superior Service Medal



Desert Storm



Disabled License Plate



Disabled Veteran



Disabled Veteran - Air Force



Disabled Veteran - Air Medal



Disabled Veteran - Air Medal with Valor



Disabled Veteran - Army



Disabled Veteran - Bronze Star



Disabled Veteran - Bronze Star with Valor



Disabled Veteran - Coast Guard



Disabled Veteran - Defense Superior Service Medal



Disabled Veteran - Distinguished Flying Cross



Disabled Veteran - Distinguished Service Medal - Air Force



Disabled Veteran - Distinguished Service Medal - Army



Disabled Veteran - Distinguished Service Medal - Coast Guard



Disabled Veteran - Distinguished Service Medal - Navy



Disabled Veteran - Legion of Merit



Disabled Veteran - Legion of Valor - Air Force Cross



Disabled Veteran - Legion of Valor - Army Distinguished Service Cross



Disabled Veteran - Legion of Valor - Navy Cross



Disabled Veteran - Marines



Disabled Veteran - Medal of Honor - Air Force



Disabled Veteran - Medal of Honor - Army



Disabled Veteran - Medal of Honor - Navy



Disabled Veteran - Navy



Disabled Veteran - Purple Heart



Disabled Veteran - Silver Star



Disabled Veteran - Surviving Spouse



Distinguished Flying Cross



Distinguished Service Medal - Air Force



Distinguished Service Medal - Army



Distinguished Service Medal - Coast Guard



Distinguished Service Medal - Navy



Don't Tread On Me



Enduring Freedom



Gold Star Family



Gold Star Father



Gold Star Mother



Gold Star Spouse



Honorably Discharged U.S. Air Force



Honorably Discharged U.S. Army



Honorably Discharged U.S. Coast Guard



Honorably Discharged U.S. Marine Corps



Honorably Discharged U.S. Navy



Korea Veteran



Legion of Merit



Marine Corps League



Medal of Honor - Air Force



Medal of Honor - Army



Medal of Honor - Navy



Navy Cross



Operation Enduring Freedom Afghanistan



Operation Iraqi Freedom



Pearl Harbor Survivor



Prisoner of War



Purple Heart Recipient



Silver Star



Texas National Guard



Texas Navy (Texas Navy Admiral)



U.S. Air Force



U.S. Air Force Academy



U.S. Air Force Retired



U.S. Army



U.S. Army Retired



U.S. Coast Guard



U.S. Coast Guard Academy



U.S. Coast Guard Retired



U.S. Marine Corps



U.S. Marines Retired



U.S. Merchant Marine Academy



U.S. Military Academy



U.S. Naval Academy



U.S. Navy



U.S. Navy Retired



U.S. Paratrooper



United We Stand



Vietnam Veteran



Woman Veteran



World Wildlife Fund



WWII Veterans



[Source: <http://www.military.com/benefits/veteran-state-benefits/texas-state-veterans-benefits.html> JAN 2017 ++]

Military Discounts in Texas

1. MVDC has close to 20,000 business locations in Texas that have discounts for military personnel and veterans. In addition to businesses providing discounts, the state of Tennessee also provides discounts for those that have served. To find business discounts go to <http://militaryandveteransdiscounts.com/location/texas.html> and enter your zip code and category in the search box at the top.

2. **Veterans Designation on drivers license: yes**

3. Discounted Fees and Taxes

- Free vehicle registration for certain disabled veterans, Medal of Honor, Purple heart, Pearl Harbor Survivors, former POWs, and other medal recipients
- Reduced cost specialty license plates for military and veterans
- Texas Veterans Land Board Program offers three types of loans to qualified vets

4. **Property tax and Financial Benefits** -- Texas Veterans Land Board Program offers three types of loans to qualified vets

5. Education Discounts

- In-state tuition rates for military dependents
- Tuition reimbursement
- 150 hour tuition exemption for qualified Veterans, spouses, dependents through the Hazlewood Act.

6. **State Ranking For Military Discounts: 4**

[Source: <http://militaryandveteransdiscounts.com/location/texas.html> JAN 2017 ++]