

VETERANS
BENEFITS
OVERVIEW

BENEFITS THAT MAY BE AVAILABLE

★ FEDERAL

★ STATE

★ LOCAL

★ MISCELLANEOUS

FEDERAL BENEFITS

- ★ BURIAL BENEFITS Oct 7
- ★ VA HEALTHCARE Oct 14
- ★ VA DISABILITY COMPENSATION Oct 21
- ★ VA NON-SERVICE-CONNECTED PENSION Oct 28
- ★ SURVIVOR'S BENEFITS Nov 18

BURIAL BENEFITS

What will the VA pay (or provide)?

- ★ Burial and/or plot allowance for eligible veterans
- ★ Headstone, grave marker, or niche marker
- ★ Memorial Certificates “signed” by the current President

Cemeteries: Beech Grove veterans section, state (Winchendon & Agawam), & federal (Bourne)

VA HEALTHCARE

- ★ Must meet time in service requirements
- ★ Discharge under Honorable conditions
- ★ If veteran meets certain qualifying criteria, automatically eligible
 - ★ If veteran does not meet any of the qualifying criteria, eligibility is based on prior year's household income

VA DISABILITY COMPENSATION

- ★ Monthly, tax-free monetary benefit (10% or more) that is payable to veteran only
- ★ Claim can be filed for:
 - ★ Illness or injury that incurred while serving in the military, or
 - ★ Military service made existing condition worse, or
 - ★ Illness incurred after service from exposure during military service
- ★ Physical or mental health conditions covered
- ★ 30% or higher, receive higher amount with dependents

VA NON-SERVICE-CONNECTED PENSION

- ★ Monthly, tax-free monetary benefit for low income veterans who fall below yearly income and asset limits (\$138,489 for CY 2022)
- ★ Veteran must meet wartime service & discharge requirements
- ★ Three levels:
 - ★ Pension: no medical conditions, but veteran must be 65 or older or permanently & totally disabled
 - ★ Housebound - additional amount added to pension if veteran is housebound due to medical condition(s)
 - ★ Aid & Attendance – additional amount added to pension if veteran needs assistance from another person with ADLs

VA SURVIVOR'S BENEFITS - PENSION

- ★ Monthly, tax-free monetary benefit for low income un-remarried surviving spouse and unmarried dependent child(ren) of veterans who fall below yearly income and asset limits (\$138,489 for CY 20%22)
 - ★ Income limit is lower than it is for veterans
- ★ Veteran must meet wartime service & discharge requirements
- ★ Same three levels as for veteran: Pension, Housebound, & Aid & Attendance

VA SURVIVOR'S BENEFITS - DIC

Dependency and Indemnity Compensation

- ★ Monthly, tax-free monetary benefit
- ★ Eligibility is based on certain qualifying conditions
- ★ Payable to surviving spouse*, minor child or dependent/disabled adult child, or parent**

* Spouse - married to veteran for at least 1 year

** Parent - income must fall below a certain amount

STATE BENEFITS

★ FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE (CHAPTER 115)

★ PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTIONS

★ DISABLED VETERAN ANNUITY

Nov 4

★ WELCOME HOME BONUSES

★ RMV VETERANS BENEFITS

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE (CH. 115)

- ★ Non-taxable monetary assistance for veterans and their eligible survivors who meet income and asset limits
- ★ Administered by VSO in community of residence
- ★ Can assist with shelter, heat, and/or medical expenses
- ★ May also assist with hearing aids, glasses, and dental
- ★ If low income & without means to pay for burial, may pay burial expenses up to \$4,000 for a burial that costs no more than \$5,000 for veteran and spouse – without being enrolled in this program.

PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTIONS

Mass. General Law Chapter 59, section 5

- ★ Veteran with service-connected disability rating between 10% and 100% can get partial abatement on annual property taxes
- ★ Surviving spouse of a veteran who died from a service-connected disability can receive 100% exemption of property taxes
- ★ Must re-apply every year

DISABLED VETERAN ANNUITY

- ★ Massachusetts resident
- ★ 100% service-connected veteran (including IU)
- ★ Un-remarried surviving spouse of service member/veteran whose death is rated as service-connected by VA
- ★ Parent of service member/veteran whose death is rated as service-connected by VA

WELCOME HOME BONUSES

★ Must have lived in Massachusetts for at least 6 months prior to entry into military & received an Honorable discharge

World War II

Korea

Vietnam

Persian Gulf

Global War on Terror

National Guard COVID Activation

Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal recipient
(not during other bonus qualifying dates)

RMV VETERAN BENEFITS

★ “Veteran” designation on license or ID

★ License Plates:

Bronze Star

Silver Star

Purple Heart

Legion of Valor

Distinguished Flying Cross

Medal of Honor

Ex-POW

Pearl Harbor Survivor

Veteran with or without branch logo

Disabled veteran

LOCAL & MISCELLANEOUS BENEFITS

- ★ WESTPORT VETERAN-DESIGNATED PARKING
- ★ VETERAN ID CARD
- ★ MILITARY DISCOUNTS
- ★ DISABLED VETERAN PX & COMMISSARY PRIVILEGES
- ★ ONLINE MILITARY EXCHANGES
- ★ NATIONAL PARK ACCESS

WESTPORT VETERAN-DESIGNATED PARKING

★ Available at

- ★ Town Hall (north side of building)

- ★ Town Hall Annex (south side of building)

★ Proof of veteran status displayed in or on car:

- ★ Veteran license plate OR

- ★ Placard from the VSO



VETERAN ID CARD

- ★ Can be used in place of state-issued ID or DD214 as proof of military service for discounts
- ★ Active duty, Reserve, or National Guard
- ★ Honorable or General Under Honorable discharge only



VETERAN ID CARD

- ★ Can apply online ONLY and will need a login to either:
 - ID.me or
 - LOGIN.gov
 - or
 - MyHealtheVet
- ★ Need email address and smartphone that you can access email (and ideally text messages)
- ★ Need to upload digital files of
 - DD214
 - your picture
 - front & back of ID
- ★ Can get physical ID or digital ID or both

MILITARY/VETERAN DISCOUNTS

- ★ Many retailers offer discounts to veterans, but you have to ask
- ★ Some retailers require you to register online, then show identification in store (Lowe's & Home Depot are 2 examples)
- ★ Some businesses offer discounts only around certain holidays (Memorial Day, 4th of July, Veterans Day)

EXCHANGE & COMMISSARY PRIVILEGES

- ★ Effective 1/1/2020, access to US military installation exchanges and commissaries granted to:
 - ☑ Purple Heart recipients
 - ☑ Former POWs
 - ☑ Veterans with service-connected disability rating of 0% to 90%
 - ☑ Caregiver of a veteran eligible in the above categories
- ★ Certain MWR facilities are also available at the discretion of the branch of service or base commander

ONLINE MILITARY EXCHANGES

- ★ Effective 11/11/2017, all honorably discharged veterans – including Reserve and Guard - became eligible to shop at online military exchanges
- ★ Does not grant base access
- ★ Tax-free shopping
- ★ Check eligibility online at: www.shopmyexchange.com/account/register

NATIONAL PARK ACCESS

- ★ Effective 11/11/2020
- ★ Veterans and Gold Star families
- ★ Free access to national parks, wildlife refuges, and other Federal lands managed by the Dept. of the Interior
- ★ Lifetime pass available online (\$10 processing fee) or free in person at sites that issue passes.

RESOURCES – FEDERAL BENEFITS

- ★ Burial: www.va.gov/burials-memorials/
- ★ VA Healthcare: www.va.gov/health-care/
- ★ Disability: va.gov/disability
- ★ Pension: www.va.gov/pension/
- ★ Survivor: www.va.gov/family-member-benefits/

RESOURCES – STATE BENEFITS

- ★ Chapter 115 Financial Assistance Program: www.mass.gov/service-details/financial-help-for-veterans-and-family-members
- ★ Property Tax: www.sec.state.ma.us/cis/cisvet/vetprptax.htm
- ★ Disabled Veteran Annuity: www.mass.gov/service-details/veteran-annuity-payment
- ★ RMV Benefits: www.sec.state.ma.us/cis/cisvet/vetmotor.htm or www.mass.gov/info-details/disabled-veteran-fee-and-tax-exemptions
- ★ Welcome Home Bonuses: www.mass.gov/orgs/veterans-bonus-division

RESOURCES – MISCELLANEOUS BENEFITS

- ★ Veteran ID Card: eauth.va.gov/accessva/#forVeterans/
- ★ Discounts: www.westport-ma.com/veterans-services/pages/military-veteran-discounts
- ★ On-base Exchange & Commissary Access: www.va.gov/resources/commissary-and-exchange-privileges-for-veterans/
- ★ Online Exchanges: www.shopmyexchange.com/veterans
- ★ National Parks: <https://www.nps.gov/planyourvisit/veterans-and-gold-star-families-free-access.htm>