

Minnesota State Veteran's Benefits

June 2019



The Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs runs Minnesota's five state Veterans Homes and assists Minnesota's 370,000 Veterans and their dependents to obtain the benefits and services provided by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs. The primary source of contact for all county benefits and services are County Veterans Service Officers (CVSO). CVSO's are located in each of Minnesota's counties and can be contacted by calling 1-888 LinkVet (546-5838) or through www.macvso.org. The Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs Central Office is located in the Veterans Service Building in St. Paul, Minn.

The state of Minnesota provides several veteran benefits. Below offers a brief description of each of the following:

- Housing
- Financial
- Employment
- Education
- Recreation
- Other State Veteran Benefits

Housing Benefits

Minnesota Veterans' Homes

Minnesota Veterans' Homes are located in Fergus Falls, Hastings, Luverne, Minneapolis and Silver Bay. There is also an Adult Day Center located in the Minneapolis Veterans' Home. The Adult Day Center provides a broad array of therapeutic health care services – delivered by trained, highly dedicated professionals. It is a Veteran-based community that allows participants to connect with other Veterans in

a safe, comfortable environment. The Adult Day Center allows participants to achieve the highest attainable level of physical, mental and social well-being – with the independence of living at home. It also provides much-needed respite – and a full array of support services – for Veterans’ caregivers.

Admission to Minnesota Veterans Homes is available to honorably discharged veterans who entered service from Minnesota, or are current residents, who served 181 consecutive days on active duty, unless discharged earlier because of disability incurred in the line of duty. The spouse of an eligible Veteran who is at least 55 years old and meets residency requirements. The applicant must also be able to demonstrate a medical or clinical need for admission. Residents contribute to the cost of their care according to their means. Applications can be downloaded at https://mn.gov/mdva/assets/2017-11-06-admission-application_tcm1066-279874.pdf.

Fergus Falls Home



821 North Park Street Fergus Falls, MN 56537 (218) 736-0400 1-877-VET HMFF (1-877-838-4633)

Set among the rolling hills and blue lakes of Northwest Minnesota is an award-winning, caring home for Veterans and their spouses. Residents here enjoy the look and feel of a small-town community, complete with an inn and specialized shops and services. Each residence includes a living room and activity area – with personalized double and single rooms. Dining spaces provide a warm and cozy environment for delicious home-cooked meals. The casual elegance of our public areas invites community, conversation and connection. Every day – as you pass our Walk of Honor – you’re reminded of our nation’s gratitude for our Veterans and their service.

Fergus Falls offers everything to meet your physical, social and spiritual needs: • Skilled Nursing Care • Veterans Village – Providing Innovative, Specialized Dementia Care • Medical Service with 24-hour Nursing Care • Social Services • Individualized Recreational Services with over 200 Outings per year • Rehabilitation Services, including Physical, Occupational and Speech Therapy • Mental/Behavioral Health Service • In House VA Community-Based Outpatient Clinic • Dedicated Chapel with Chaplain and Spiritual Care Service • Beautiful Dining Spaces with Individualized Nutritional Services • Pharmaceutical Service • Medical Transportation Service Locally and to Fargo, ND • Barber and Beauty Services • End of Life Care with Family Hospice Suite • Multiple Daily Activities

Hastings Home



1200 East 18th Street Hastings, Minnesota 55033 (651) 539-2400 1-877-VET-3803 (1-877-838-3803)

The mission of the Minnesota Veterans Homes is “serving those who have served” by providing quality health care in an environment of trust, dignity and sharing. At the Minnesota Veterans Home – Hastings, we are committed to providing a full continuum of high quality care and service focusing on rehabilitation, reintegration into the community, and supportive care for optimal enrichment of our Residents’ lives. Our care is enhanced by the natural beauty of our surroundings. We are located in Hastings – a tranquil, cozy community just minutes from the Twin Cities. Our beautiful 128-acre wooded campus includes nature trails, a biking path, an outdoor pavilion, a heated screened porch for year-round use, a horseshoe pit and much more. The campus has 179 domiciliary beds in private and semi-private rooms.

Hasting’s Residents enjoy an assortment of services designed to meet their individual needs, including:

- Nursing staff on-site 24 hours a day to provide individualized care
- Physicians and Nurse Practitioners on-site
- Medication management
- Meal services and snacks
- Social services
- Therapeutic recreation
- Sobriety support
- Vocational rehabilitation
- Sheltered work opportunities
- Mental health services
- Transportation to medical appointments
- Chaplain services
- Benefits assistance
- Cashier/banking
- Linen service
- Pharmaceutical services

Luverne Home



1300 North Kniss Avenue P.O. Box 539 Luverne, Minnesota 56156 (507) 283-6200 (877) LUV VETS or (877) 588-8387

Nestled in a friendly small town 30 miles from Sioux Falls, SD, the Minnesota Veterans Home - Luverne offers three distinct living spaces to meet each Resident's unique needs, including a 17-bed special care unit for those with advanced dementia. During our 25-year history, our staff of 200 employees have cared for almost 1,000 residents since opening in 1994. Our staff follows the Eden Philosophy social model of care to help provide spontaneity and make life worth living for Residents in their care. Each one features a living room, dining room, kitchenette, laundry room and several sitting/conversation areas. A computer and gaming room are available for Resident use.

The Eden philosophy guides us in creating a home-like atmosphere for our Residents and their families. We are committed to creating a community where life is truly worth living - with activities and interactions that Residents find meaningful and enjoyable. Our Residents have access to the outdoors, to plants and animals, and to numerous opportunities for interaction with the community. Creating this Eden-centered environment is a never-ending process. We continue to grow as a place where Residents want to live, families want to visit and our staff enjoys working.

Our Residents are a vital part of the Luverne community. Dedicated volunteers provide special activities. School kids visit regularly in our popular Adopt a Grandparent Program. There are abundant opportunities for shopping trips, meals out, participating in the fair and much more. Our internal environment is enhanced through consistent staffing and a range of small group activities.

We offer everything to meet your physical, social and spiritual needs: • Skilled Nursing Care, including specialized Dementia Care • Medical Service with 24-hour Nursing Care • Social Services • Individualized Recreational Services • Rehabilitation Services, including Physical, Occupational and Speech Therapy • Mental/Behavioral Health Service • Chaplain and Spiritual Care Service • Nutritional Service • Pharmaceutical Service • Medical Transportation Service, Locally and to Sioux Falls • Barber and Beauty Service • Wireless Internet (in portions of the building)

Minneapolis Home



5101 Minneapolis Ave., S Minneapolis, MN 55417 (612) 548-5700 www.minnesotaVeteran.org

The Minneapolis Veterans Home is located on a peaceful 53 acre wooded campus overlooking the Mississippi River near Minnehaha Falls. The campus contains 291 skilled nursing bed and 50

domiciliary beds in private and semiprivate rooms. Visiting friends and family will enjoy all of the activities and amenities that our campus and the Twin Cities have to offer:

- Walking and biking distance to a variety of city parks and lakes.
- Mall of America within 5 miles.
- VA Medical Center within 1 mile.
- Metro Transit stops on campus.
- Walking distance to Light Rail

Our residents enjoy an assortment of services designed to meet their physical, social, and spiritual needs. These include: • Skilled Nursing Care with a specialty in Dementia Care • Dental services • Medical Service with 24-hour Nursing Care • Social Services • Recreational therapy • Rehabilitation Services, including Physical, Occupational and Speech Pathology Therapy • Mental Health Service • Chaplain and Spiritual Care Services • Diet and Nutritional Service • Pharmaceutical Services • Transportation to Minneapolis VA Health Care System for hospital appointments, treatment and emergency care • Barber and Beautician Services • Therapeutic work programs and special events to enhance quality of life and promote independence for the aging.

Silver Bay Home



45 Banks Boulevard Silver Bay, Minnesota 55614 (218) 353-8700 1-877-SBY VETS (1-877-729-8387)

Overlooking beautiful Lake Superior, the Minnesota Veterans Home - Silver Bay has four distinct neighborhood living spaces for Residents that combine the look and feel of a north woods lodge with all the comforts of a single-family home. Each residence includes a living room, dining room and kitchen, where meals and activities are offered to fit each Resident's individual preference. Personal choice is a way of life at the Silver Bay Veterans Home. Residents can sleep in or rise early. Whenever you want to eat, we'll prepare a delicious, nutritious meal for you. Everything revolves around our Residents and their daily routine. Our Home features a variety of private spaces for Residents and their families, including a large game room, craft shop, four season porch and private dining areas. The surrounding area abounds with opportunities for boating, fishing, hunting, and all kinds of outdoor activities.

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enjoying the outdoors and fresh, northern Minnesota air. Our specialties include our garden, our pontoon boat, our club car rides, and our participation in the community

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SOAR

The Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs (MDVA) has partnered with the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) and the United States Social Security Administration (SSA) to provide Minnesota's homeless and at-risk Veterans with expanded access to Social Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) benefits.



SOAR, which stands for SSI/SSDI, Outreach, Access, and Recovery, is a program designed to increase access to SSI/SSDI for those who are eligible who are experiencing or at-risk of homelessness and have a mental illness, medical impairment, and/or co-occurring substance use disorder. Eligible Veterans are able to work with a trained MDVA SOAR advocate who will assist them with collecting the necessary information (personal and medical records), completing necessary SSA forms to file a comprehensive application packet to SSA, and aiding them through the determination process. For more information about the MDVA SOAR process, please contact Paul Williams at (651) 201-8233. To refer someone to receive assistance under the SOAR Program, please contact LinkVet at 1-888-LinkVet. For a copy of the SOAR brochure refer to https://mn.gov/mdva/assets/2018-01-soar-brochure_tcm1066-322758.pdf.

MN Operation for Veterans Empowerment (MOVE)

The Minnesota Operation for Veterans Empowerment (MOVE) is a state program that helps homeless veterans at the Union Gospel Mission in St. Paul, Minnesota. The program offers one-on-one case management with a Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs (MDVA) Outreach Representative. While you are getting case management services, you also can get a bed at the missions at no cost to you. The case managers work with veterans to figure out what resources they need to find housing and improve their situation. To apply for the MOVE program, call the MDVA receptionist at 1-651-296-2562.

Minnesota Homeless Veteran Registry

The Registry connects Veterans experiencing homelessness with housing and services in their community. It also helps programs serving Veterans to coordinate their efforts. Participation is voluntary for Veterans. Anyone can refer a Veteran to join. As part of Heading Home: Minnesota's Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness, the State of Minnesota and its partners have committed to end homelessness among Veterans.

The Minnesota Homeless Veteran Registry will ensure that Veterans experiencing homelessness have access to appropriate housing and services. Anyone who served in the U.S. Armed Forces, Reserves, or National Guard can join the Registry, regardless of the type of discharge. If you are a Veteran and choose to join, a team of housing and service professionals will work together to help you access housing and services that meet your needs. Participation is voluntary. You do not have to join, and choosing not to participate will not affect your eligibility for services. Anyone who knows of a homeless Veteran is encouraged to call 1-888-LinkVet (546-5838).

Veterans can choose to join directly and anyone can refer a Veteran to join by completing the release of information form at https://mn.gov/mdva/assets/2017-09-hvr-statewide-tennessen-warning-v3_tcm1066-310738.pdf. Authorized users may log-in to the Registry [here](#). If you have questions about the Registry, please contact LinkVet toll-free at 1-888-546-5838.

Financial Benefits

Income Taxes

Military pay and retirement pay are not taxed by the state.

Disabled Veterans Property Tax Exemption

Disabled veterans with a 70 percent or greater VA disability may qualify for a reduction in the assessed value of their home. The reduction varies depending on the amount of disability. Some surviving spouses may also qualify.

Short Term Financial Assistance (Subsistence)

The Subsistence program provides temporary assistance with shelter payments (rent/mortgage), current utility bills and health insurance premiums to eligible Veterans and their dependents. This benefit is income and asset based, and is designed to assist Veterans for up to six months for those who are unable to work his/her normal occupation due to a temporary disability, or who are permanently disabled and are waiting to receive a permanent disability benefit from VA Compensation, VA Pension, Social Security or other long term benefit. Veterans must provide proof of the temporary disability by his/her doctor on a medical report, and must have worked within one year of the date on the medical report. Surviving spouses may also be eligible for this benefit without a temporary disability if he/she applies within the first 12 months of his/her Veteran spouse's death. After that time limit the surviving spouse must provide proof of his/her own temporary disability via a medical report. Please contact your County Veteran Service Officer for assistance in applying for Subsistence benefits.

Special Needs Grant

Special Needs assistance provides a once-per-lifetime financial grant to help Veterans and dependents stabilize their lives in a time of hardship. Requests are reviewed and approved on a case-by-case basis and applicants must demonstrate future sustainability beyond the requested amount of assistance. Approved amounts of assistance are paid directly to the vendors chosen by the Veteran as part of their application.

Contact your County Veteran Service Officer for assistance in applying for Special Needs benefits. Find your CVSO at www.macvso.org or by calling 1-888-LinkVet (546-5838), MDVA's one-stop customer service line for all Minnesota Veterans and their families.

MDVA Grants

Since 1993, the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs has provided as many as 90 grants annually to legislatively selected organizations in Minnesota whose mission and purpose is to assist Veterans, and their families. The Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs SOT competitive grant program was launched in February 2016. These grants are financed from sales of the Minnesota "Support Our Troops" License Plates.

Minnesota organizations with programs designed to “support and improve the lives of Veterans and their families” now may apply for grants ranging from \$1,000 to \$100,000. MDVA accepts applications for the SOT grant twice per year. [Sign-up here](#) to receive alerts for upcoming grant cycles! The current grant cycle application window is now closed as of 4 p.m. Friday, April 26. If you have any questions consult <https://mn.gov/mdva/resources/federalresources/grants/q-a-addendum.jsp>.

Employment Benefits

Resources for Veterans Looking for Employment

Looking for employment is a daunting task for anyone and it can be especially challenging for Veterans. Frequently, a Veteran's military training and experience does not easily translate to fit the requirements that a civilian company seeks. Additionally, there is an overwhelming amount of resources to help Veterans find employment. As a first step, MDVA partners with the [Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development](#) (DEED) to support Veterans as they put their military skills to work in a new career. The three basic steps for every Veteran should include:

1. Visit your nearest [Minnesota Workforce Center](#) and contact a Veteran employment representative. Make sure you indicate that you are a Veteran
2. Use the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities [MyMilitary GPS Lifeplan](#) to create a career goal
3. Post your resume on www.MinnesotaWorks.net

On the Job Training and Apprenticeship Programs

Both on-the-job (OJT) and apprenticeship training programs are available for Veterans using their federal U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs education benefits, including the Post-9/11 GI Bill. These programs allow Veterans to learn a trade or skill through training on the job participation rather than attending formal classroom instruction. A Veteran generally enters into a training contract for a specific period with an employer or union, and at the end of the training period, the Veteran gains job certification or journeyman status. Approved employers can use this benefit as a recruiting tool by using wages and stipend to attract Veteran candidates.

Apprenticeship -- There is a shortage of skilled workers throughout many of the trades within Minnesota. Good apprenticeship training is a benefit to both employer and the employee. Apprenticeship is a company's investment in its employees and business future. Employees learn a skilled profession while earning a steadily increasing wage as their knowledge and skill increases. The employer develops a program integrating on-the-job training with related technical instruction. The Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry oversees the state's apprenticeship programs. It regulates, supervises and promotes apprenticeship programs that have been approved and meet state standard. For additional information contact the [Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry](#).

Apprentice Occupations in Minnesota -- You might be surprised at the number of occupations that qualify for apprenticeship programs within Minnesota. In general, an occupation may qualify for an apprenticeship program requires at least 2,000 hours of hands-on training to learn essential skills in conjunction with 144 hours of related technical instruction each year. Apprenticeship training is common in the following occupations:

- [Construction](#)
- [Graphic production](#)
- [Power Trade](#)
- [Manufacturing](#)
- [Service](#)
- [Professional](#)

MN Veterans Preference Act

The Minnesota Veterans Preference Act (VPA) grants most Veterans a limited preference over non-Veterans in hiring and promotion for most Minnesota public employment positions, as granted in Minnesota Statutes 197.48, 43A.11, and 197.455. These statues may apply to certain spouses of Veterans. The Minnesota VPA Statutes apply to Minnesota public employment, "civil service laws, charter provisions, ordinances, rules or regulations of a county, city, town, school district, or other municipality or political subdivision of this state."

Minnesota currently provides for a limited preference for Veterans in hiring and promotion in State and local government positions. Veterans applying for an open competitive position in a Minnesota county, city, school district or other political subdivision, who receive a passing rating, may choose to receive a credit of 10 extra points. Veterans with a compensable service-connected disability, who receive a passing rating, may choose to receive a credit of 15 extra points. Spouses of deceased Veterans or disabled Veterans who cannot qualify because of their disability, may also choose to receive extra points. For promotional positions, a service-connected disabled Veteran rated 50% or greater may choose to receive a credit of five extra points.

For Minnesota State Agency positions, once minimum qualifications are met, disabled Veterans are ranked ahead of Veterans, who are ranked ahead of non-Veterans. Recently separated Veterans, who served on or after September 11, 2001, must be considered for the position. The top five recently separated Veterans must be granted an interview.

For Minnesota State and local governmental positions, no Veteran who has completed an initial hiring probationary period shall be removed from such position or employment, except for incompetency or misconduct shown after a hearing, upon due notice, upon stated charges, in writing. A veteran facing

removal must choose either a Veterans Preference Hearing or the Collective Bargaining Grievance Procedure, but not both. The Veterans Preference Hearing shall be held before the local civil service review body or before a single arbitrator. The Veteran has 30 days to request a hearing and to choose either the civil service review body or an arbitrator. If an arbitrator is chosen a list of seven arbitrators will be requested from the Bureau of Mediation Services and the employer and the veteran will each strike a name until one remains. The hearing is held and the removal is either upheld or reversed, or a lesser discipline is crafted based on the facts. Either party may appeal the decision to the District Court within 15 days. All costs associated with the hearing will be borne by the governmental employer, except for the veteran's attorney fees. However, if the Veteran prevails and the level of the alleged incompetency or misconduct requiring discharge is reversed, the governmental employer shall pay the Veteran's reasonable attorney fees.

A Veteran who has been denied Veterans preference rights, either in the hiring or the discharge process, may petition ([Veterans Preference Petition](#)) the Commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs for relief. The Commissioner then orders a hearing before an Administrative Law Judge (ALJ), who is from the independent Office of Administrative Hearings. The ALJ holds the hearing and issues Findings of Facts, Conclusions of Law and Recommendations. The Commissioner then makes the final decision. Either party then has 30 days to appeal to the Minnesota Court of Appeals.

Education Benefits

Minnesota GI Bill

The Minnesota GI Bill program provides assistance to eligible Minnesota Veterans, currently serving military, National Guard and Reserve members who served after September 11, 2001 and eligible spouse and children. The Program provides a maximum benefit of \$10,000, up to age 62. Eligible participants can use the benefit in Higher Education, On-the-job training (OJT)/Apprenticeship or License and Certification. For more details refer to the brochure at https://mn.gov/mdva/assets/2018-11-21-mn-gi-bill-brochure_tcm1066-359825.pdf. Note that this program is different than the Federal GI Bill (Montgomery, Post 9-11, Veterans Education Assistance Program, Dependents Education Assistance Program, or Vocational rehabilitation). See the [MDVA page on Federal GI Bill Programs](#).

Eligibility Requirements

- Veteran who is serving or has served honorably in any branch of the United States armed forces at any time, or;
- Non-Veteran who has served honorably for a total of five credible years or more cumulatively as a member of the Minnesota National Guard or any other active or reserve component of the United States armed forces, and any part of that service occurred on or after September 11, 2001, or;
- Surviving spouse or children of a person who has served in the military at any time on, and who has died or has a 100% VA determined permanent and total disability as a direct result of that military service and must be eligible to receive federal education benefits under Chapter 33 Fry Scholarship, or Chapter 35 and provide a certificate of eligibility
- Minnesota Resident – see specific program for requirements

Higher Education Veterans Programs

MDVA's Higher Education Veterans Programs helps connect you with educational benefits and resources to succeed in college. We support the success of Veterans, current military members and their families at Minnesota's colleges and universities by providing on-site comprehensive information about benefits and resources as well as creating institutional readiness in support of the unique needs of these students. This nation-leading program provides staff at colleges and universities throughout Minnesota to help identify and remove barriers to Veterans' enrollment and access to benefits, as well as to create and manage campus Veterans resource centers.

In 2006, the Minnesota Legislature passed a number of initiatives addressing the unique needs of students who are Veterans. In order to assist Minnesota's colleges and universities fulfill these requirements, the MDVA created the Higher Education Veterans Programs. The program consists of a director and regional coordinators located throughout the state. Specifically, the Higher Education Veterans Program coordinators help schools establish Veteran friendly policies and procedures. They can also help with things like:

- Payment extensions while awaiting properly applied for educational benefits
- Military transfer credit
- Veteran resident status
- Options for withdrawal from classes due to deployment

On-campus Veterans Resource Centers are unique to Minnesota and provide an environment where Veterans, military members and their families feel welcome. They also provide space for interaction with other Veterans and family members of Veterans. This space is a way for Veterans to connect with each other and representatives from the Higher Education Program. For more information call 1-800-456-8519 or +1 (651) 556-0596 (international) or 1-800-627-3529 TT. [Download our brochure](#), or for more information on the Campus Rep program and Veteran Education Benefits visit www.MyMilitaryEducation.org.

On-Campus Resource Centers

MDVA's Higher Education Veterans Programs helps connect students with educational benefits and resources to succeed in college. We support the success of Veterans, current military members and their families at Minnesota's colleges and universities by providing on-site comprehensive information about benefits and resources.

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- Payment Extensions While Waiting for Educational Benefits
- Military Transfer Credits
- Veteran Resident Status

- Options for Withdrawal from Classes Due to Deployment

On-campus Veterans Resource Centers are unique to Minnesota and provide an environment where Veterans, military members and their families feel welcome. They also provide space for interaction with other Veterans and family members of Veterans. This space is a way for Veterans to connect with each other and representatives from the Higher Education Program. For more information:

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- Download our [brochure](#), or for more information on the Campus Rep program and Veteran Education Benefits visit www.MyMilitaryEducation.org.

State Approving Agency

The State Approving Agencies (SAA) are authorized by Title 38 of the United States Code. Each state has a SAA that is responsible for ensuring the quality and integrity of programs of education and training for the use of GI Bill benefits. Benefits may be used in high schools, adult education centers, employers who provide on-the-job training and apprenticeship training, license and certification testing, vocational training, as well as all certificate and degree levels of post-secondary education both public and private. The SAA initiates approval for GI Bill benefits for new facilities in Minnesota and conducts compliance surveys. They also initiate the approval of all new programs at private for-profit institutions and conduct an annual review of their catalogs. The mission of the SAA is to:

- Promote and safeguard quality education and training for Veterans;
- Ensure greater educational and training opportunities to meet the changing needs of Veterans; and
- Protect the GI Bill[®] resources available for those programs by Assisting the VA in preventing fraud, waste, and abuse in the administration of the GI Bill[®].

Within Minnesota, there are more than 200 institutions and 6,500 programs that are approved for GI Bill[®] benefits. Learn more about whether a particular institution or program is approved for [VA educational benefits](#).

The GI Bill and the Minnesota GI Bill offer a great opportunity for Veterans to use their educational benefits while learning a skill or trade. Apprenticeship programs must be registered with the [Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry](#). If the program you are interested in is not listed or if you are interested in an On-the-Job Training opportunity, please contact the Minnesota State Approving Agency at (651) 757-1569 or SAA.Group.MDVA@state.mn.us.

Surviving Spouse & Dependent Education Benefit

Surviving Spouse and Dependent Education assistance is provided to spouses and dependents, including adopted and step-children, whose Veteran spouse and/or Veteran parent died while on active duty, or as a result of a service-connected condition. The Veteran must have been a resident of Minnesota when entering the U.S. military, or have been a resident of Minnesota for at least six months prior to passing away due to a service connected disability as determined by the USDVA. Applicants must be Minnesota residents and the spouse cannot be remarried. There is no age limitation for eligible survivors.

If found eligible, survivors are allowed admission to Minnesota postsecondary education institutions either operated by this state or is operated publicly or privately and maintains academic standards substantially equivalent to those of comparable institutions operated in this state. Surviving spouses and dependents will be able to attend free of tuition until he/she obtains a bachelor's degree. In addition,

MDVA will pay \$750 per fiscal year for fees, books and supplies, and/or room and board. You may apply for this benefit by accessing the application below and submitting directly to MDVA or applying with assistance through your County Veterans Service Officer.

- [Surviving Spouse/Dependent Application Form](#)
- [Surviving Spouse/Dependent Renewal Application Form](#)

Veteran Recreation Benefits

Veterans Campground on Big Marine Lake

The Veterans Campground on Big Marine Lake is a family campground that provides facilities and opportunities for recreation, rest, and recovery for all who have served in the Armed Forces of the United States, whether still serving or have served in the past, their Families, and sponsored friends.

Minnesota State Park Vehicle Permits

Any active military service personnel stationed outside of Minnesota within the past 90 days can get a free one-day Minnesota state park vehicle permit. Bring your current military orders and military ID, and let the park attendant know your military status when you arrive.

Military personnel or their Dependents who have a Federal government access pass to Federal recreational sites can get a free one-day Minnesota state park vehicle permit. Bring your Federal access pass and military ID, and let the park attendant know your military status when you arrive.

Any resident Veteran with any level of service-connected disability can get a free one-day Minnesota state park vehicle permit. Bring a copy of your determination letter and a photo ID, and let the park attendant know your military status when you arrive.

Any Veteran who has a permanent and total service-connected disability can get a free annual Minnesota state park permit. Present a copy of your determination letter or VA ID card to the park attendant for the free annual sticker, which must be placed on a vehicle that is owned by the Veteran. If the Veteran with the permanent service-connected disability does not own the vehicle transporting the Veteran, you can still get a free one-day Minnesota state park permit.

Cross Country Ski Pass Exemptions

Minnesota residents who have served at any time during the preceding 24 months in federal active service outside the United States and has been discharged from active service is exempt from the pass requirement if the resident possesses official military discharge papers (DD214). Minnesota residents in the US Military who are stationed outside the state and home on leave are also eligible for a pass exemption, (must have leave form).

Fishing Licenses

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, (DNR) has a number of benefits for military Service members and Veterans:

- A person in the U.S. Armed Forces who is stationed or training in the state may purchase a resident fishing license. (Includes those in training at Camp Ripley.)
- A resident who has served at any time during the preceding 24 months in federal active service outside the United States and has been discharged from active service may take fish without a license. Discharged residents must carry proof of Minnesota residency and official military discharge papers. Trout stamps are not required. (Note: Free sturgeon tags are available only from the DNR License Center in St. Paul.)
- Any Minnesota Veteran with a 100% service-connected disability may obtain a permanent angling license. These permanent licenses are available only from the DNR License Center. A trout stamp is not required with this license.

The following are Exempt from Fishing License Requirements:

- Minnesota residents in the U.S. Military who are stationed outside the state and home on leave. Military staff must carry leave or furlough papers.
- Patients of a U.S. Veterans Administration hospital (with written permission of the superintendent or chief executive of the institution).

Residents on Leave Hunting License

Those who have maintained legal residency in Minnesota (must have a valid MN DL or Public Safety ID) and who are serving in the U.S. Military and stationed outside the state may:

- Hunt small game without a license while on leave. No Minnesota Waterfowl Stamp or Pheasant Stamp is needed but must have a Federal Migratory Bird Stamp to hunt waterfowl.
- May hunt deer (Firearms: Code 232; Archery: Code 233, Muzzleloader: Code 234), bear (Code 663), and wild turkeys (Spring: Code 615; Fall: Code 654) and Wolf (Early Season Firearm: Code 691; Late Firearm Code 692; Trapping Code 693) without charge after obtaining the appropriate licenses and tags from an ELS license agent by presenting official leave papers.
- Does not include Moose, Elk or Deer bonus permits. Such service personnel must carry proof of Minnesota residency and official leave papers on their person while hunting. Licenses are valid immediately upon issuance.

Residents Discharged Hunting License

Minnesota residents discharged from the U.S. Armed Forces within 10 days of the start or during the Firearms Deer Season may purchase a Firearms Deer License during the season upon showing official discharge papers. The license is valid immediately after purchase.

Veterans who have served at any time during the preceding 24 months in federal active service outside the United States and have been discharged from active service may:

- Take small game without a license. Discharged residents must carry proof of Minnesota residency and official military discharge papers. No state stamps required. (Federal stamp required for migratory waterfowl hunting.)
- Obtain a free deer license. Eligibility is limited to one deer license per person per year. Discharged residents must provide proof of residency and a copy of their official military discharge papers. (Firearms: Code 232, Archery: Code 233, Muzzleloader: Code 234).
- Obtain a free wolf license. Eligibility is limited to one wolf license per person per year. Discharged residents must provide proof of residency and a copy of their official military

discharge papers. (Early Firearms Season: Code 694, Late Firearm Season Code 695; Trapping Code 696)

Veterans who have served at any time during the past 24 months, in active service as a member of the United States armed forces, including the National Guard or other military reserves will receive first preference in drawings for special deer hunts, bear and turkey permits.

Resident 100% Disabled Veterans Hunting License

With proof of a 100% service-related disability may obtain a free Small Game License (241) and a free Firearms (242), or Muzzleloader (240), or Archery (243) Deer License from an ELS license agent. In addition, a disabled Veteran is exempt from purchasing state pheasant or waterfowl stamps, but must purchase a turkey stamp and license to hunt turkeys and a federal duck stamp to hunt waterfowl. Disabled Veterans with 100% service connected disability will receive first preference in drawings for special deer hunts, bear and turkey permits.

Note: Military personnel and Veterans who are issued firearms deer licenses under these provisions may take antlerless deer, but are restricted to bucks-only hunting in those lottery deer permit areas that have an either-sex permit quota of zero. To participate in special deer hunts, they must apply and be drawn. They may also purchase bonus permits.

Resident Veteran 100% Permanent Card

Resident Veterans who have 100% permanent service-connected disability as defined by the United State Department of Veterans Affairs may apply for a permanent card that may be presented to an agent annually to receive a free Small Game and/ or a Deer License. This card will assist with the process of receiving these types of license's, however all eligibility requirements must be meet prior to receiving the license(s).

Resident Purple Heart Recipients

Purple Heart recipients must purchase licenses, but will receive first preference in drawings for antlerless deer permits, bear and turkey permits.

Nonresident Hunting and Fishing Licenses

- Nonresident Spouses of residents on active military duty may purchase resident hunting and fishing licenses. Nonresidents must provide proof of Spouse's residency and active military duty.
- A person in the U.S. Armed Forces who is stationed in the state may purchase resident hunting and fishing licenses, but not moose or elk licenses.

Firearms Safety Training

Military personnel who are on active duty and has successfully completed basic training in the US armed forces, reserve component, or National Guard may obtain a hunting license or approval authorizing hunting regardless of whether the person is issued a firearms safety certificate. Note: They must be on active duty, home on leave with leave papers (they then qualify only for that time frame). Once discharged or no longer on active duty, they must complete the firearms safety training course or online adult course the same as all others born after Dec 31, 1979.

Other Minnesota State Veteran Benefits

Minnesota State Veterans Cemeteries (3)

Minnesota State Veterans Cemeteries provide dignified burial services to Minnesota veterans and their eligible dependents and survivors. They are managed and maintained by the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs. They provide:

- Gravesite or Columbarium Niche
- Pre-placed Grave liner (Standard Size)
- Headstone/Niche Cover
- Perpetual Care
- Veteran Cost is \$0 all burial options
- Spouse/Eligible Dependent cost is \$745 (all burial options)

Pre-Registration -- This ensures your eligibility in advance and eliminates delays in providing military documents to the cemetery. [Pre-registration applications](#) are available at the cemetery office or at your local County Veterans Service Office (CVSO). Contact your CVSO at www.macvso.org or by calling 1-888-LinkVet (546-5838) MDVA's one-stop customer service line for all Minnesota Veterans and their families.

Burial Arrangements -- The funeral director or the next of kin makes burial arrangements for an eligible Veteran, spouse or dependent at the time of need by contacting the Minnesota State Veterans Cemetery. A spouse or dependent is buried based upon the eligibility of the Veteran. To establish the Veteran's eligibility, a copy of the Veteran's military discharge document or a DD214 must be provided. If these documents are not available, the cemetery must be provided with sufficient military information to allow the cemetery to access federal U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and/or military records to establish eligibility. The cemetery staff will set a tentative date for the committal service pending verification of service and character of discharge, and will notify the applicant when the committal service is scheduled. The proposed date and time will be approved only when the cemetery verifies eligibility and confirms the arrangements.

Floral Policies -- Fresh cut flowers may be placed on graves at any time. Temporary containers and water are provided in locations around the main cemetery drive. Floral items will be removed from graves by cemetery personnel as soon as they become faded or unsightly. Artificial flowers may be placed on graves during the periods specified on the floral regulation signs located around the main cemetery drive. Plantings, statues, vigil lights, breakable objects of any nature and any other type of commemorative items are not permitted on the graves. [Full floral policy available here.](#)

Committal Services -- The cemetery can do seven committal services per day, Monday - Friday, on a first-come first served basis, every hour from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. (3 p.m. is cremation only). Committal services are limited to 20 minutes. All committal services should be brief and need to start on the hour at the scheduled time. Families who extend their services can greatly affect others who have reserved the following time. All committal services are held in the committal service building rather than at the actual gravesite because of burial rates and operational considerations. This ensures the family's safety and provides a fitting location for [military honors](#) and the ability of our staff to continue cemetery operations. The remains are removed from the committal service building for burial following the family's departure and are never left unattended by cemetery staff. Clergy services and other arrangements are the responsibility of the family or family representative. These arrangements are normally coordinated through the chosen funeral director.

Casket -- A pre-placed grave liner will be provided, by the cemetery, for all casket burials. Traditional gravesites are available for individuals who choose to purchase a sealed burial vault from their chosen funeral director.

Cremation (In-ground) -- In-ground cremation gravesites provide a traditional burial option for cremated remains. In-ground cremation gravesites are marked with an upright granite headstone. The choice for the placement of cremated remains either in-ground or above-ground will need to be determined by the next-of-kin.

Cremation (Columbarium) -- The columbarium provides an above-ground option for cremated remains. Columbarium niches are marked with a granite niche cover. The choice for the placement of cremated remains either in-ground or above-ground will need to be determined by the next-of-kin.

Bronze Star Grave Markers -- The Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs offers bronze stars to mark the grave site of any veteran buried in the state, where permitted. Bronze Star Markers are available through your local county veterans service officer.

Hours of Operation -- All cemetery offices are open from 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Monday - Friday (closed on State Holidays). Visitors may visit the cemetery grounds during daylight hours, seven days per week.

Locations and contact information:

- [Minnesota State Veterans Cemetery - Little Falls](#): 15550 Hwy 115, Little Falls, MN 56345 Phone: (320) 616-2527 FAX: (320) 616-2529 Email: info.cemlf@state.mn.us.



- [Minnesota State Veterans Cemetery - Preston](#): 715 Highway 52, Preston, MN 55965 Phone: (507) 765-7320 Fax: (507) 765-3793 Email: Info.CemPR@state.mn.us.



- [Minnesota State Veterans Cemetery – Duluth](#): 4777 Highway 53, Saginaw, MN 55779 Phone: (218) 520-0120 Fax: (507) 729-1343 Email: Info.CemDU@state.mn.us.



Dental Assistance

Dental benefits are provided to Veterans and their dependents for routine dental, extraction, and denture procedures. This benefit is income and asset based, and upon MDVA approval of eligibility you and your dependents may receive up to \$1,000 for annual routine dental care paid to your choice of providers. If your dental provider determines that dentures are necessary, MDVA will issue an additional denture authorization for up to \$3,000 of once-per-lifetime benefits, and if needed, an additional once-per-lifetime extraction authorization for up to \$2,000 specifically for tooth extractions in preparation for the dentures.

If you qualify for this benefit, you may be eligible for other state Veterans benefits, to include optical, special needs grants and disaster relief. Please contact your County Veteran Service Officer for assistance or more information on this and other benefits. Find your CVSO at www.macvso.org or by calling 1-888-LinkVet (546-5838), MDVA's one-stop customer service line for all Minnesota Veterans and their families.

Optical Assistance

Upon application, optical benefits are provided on an annual basis to Veterans and their dependents. This benefit is income and asset-based, and upon approval of eligibility you and your dependents may receive up to \$400 paid to your choice of providers for annual eye exams and prescription eyewear, to include contact lenses.

If you qualify for this benefit, you may be eligible for other state Veterans benefits, to include dental, special needs grants and disaster relief. Contact your County Veteran Service Officer for assistance or more information on this or other benefits. Find your CVSO at www.macvso.org or by calling 1-888-LinkVet (546-5838), MDVA's one-stop customer service line for all Minnesota Veterans and their families.

Claims

St. Paul Claims Office -- The St. Paul Claims Division represents Veterans and their dependents, who live within the jurisdiction of the St. Paul VA Regional Office, who seek federal Veterans benefits with regards to compensation, non-service connected pension, vocational rehabilitation or educational benefits. The division has an established relationship with County Veterans Service Officers and the Federal Department of Veterans Affairs to ensure Veterans are appropriately served. St. Paul Claims Office: (612) 970-5662

Northwest/Fargo Claims Office -- The Northwest/Fargo Claims Division represents Veterans and their dependents, who live within the 15 Minnesota counties under the jurisdiction of the Fargo VA Regional Office, who seek federal Veterans benefits with regards to compensation, non-service connected pension, vocational rehabilitation or educational benefits. The division has an established relationship with 15 northwest Minnesota County Veterans Services Officers and the Federal Department of Veterans Affairs to ensure Veterans are appropriately served. Northwest/Fargo Claims Office: (701) 451-4641

If you have questions about what benefits and programs you may be eligible to receive, contact your County Veterans Service Officer (CVSO) www.macvso.org or call 1-888-LinkVet. The Federal VA Benefits Line is (800) 827-1000

Minnesota Service CORE

This is a nation-leading program designed to bring essential, community-based services directly to Veterans and their families across Minnesota at no cost to them. Due to its unique structure, this program also provides resources to previously underserved areas in greater Minnesota. By partnering with Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota (LSS), CORE provides comprehensive assistance through the existing statewide network of resources. Services include individual and family counseling, financial counseling, debt management, addiction counseling, disability services and in-home counseling. The goal is to help Veterans and their families develop skills and draw on their own strengths to bring about successful and lasting family stability.

LSS case workers are based in field offices located throughout the state, including the Twin Cities metro area, Alexandria, Bemidji, Brainerd, Detroit Lakes, Duluth, Fergus Falls, Mankato, Moorhead, St. Cloud and Willmar. For more information, or to request services through CORE contact your County Veterans Service Officer. Find your CVSO at www.macvso.org or by calling 1-888-LinkVet (546-5838), MDVA's one-stop customer service line for all Minnesota Veterans and their families.

Discharge Certificates

Veterans' benefits require that applicants provide a copy of their form DD 214 or discharge record, which is evidence of their veteran status. This is an important document and must be safeguarded. If you do not have a copy of your DD 214, contact your County Veterans Service Officer for assistance in obtaining it. If you have a copy of your DD 214 it is recommended that it be recorded in your county courthouse, or at the very least be sure to keep it in a safe place and inform a family member or trusted individual of its location.

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Visit the Minnesota Department of Veterans Services website <http://mn.gov/mdva> for contact information and benefits assistance.

[Source: <https://www.military.com/benefits/veteran-state-benefits/minnesota-state-veterans-benefits.html> | JUN 2019 ++]

