

Missouri State Veteran's Benefits

2019



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

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

Housing Benefits

Missouri Veterans Homes.

Currently there are seven long-term skilled nursing facilities located throughout Missouri, providing 3 levels of skilled nursing care at minimal cost to veterans. Under the management of Missouri Veterans Commission these homes, in compliance with 157 Federal Department of Veterans Affairs regulations, provide a total of 1238 beds. Contact information for the Commission is: Roystan Pais, Director, Homes Program Phone: (573) 522-4227 Email: roystan.pais@mvc.dps.mo.gov. The homes can be contacted at:

- 1111 Euclid, **Cameron**, MO 64429 Phone: (816) 632-6010 | Fax: (816) 632-1361
 - Admin Lisa McGee Lisa.McGhee@mvc.dps.mo.gov
 - Admissions Sheri Roach Sheri.Roach@mvc.dps.mo.gov
- 2400 Veterans Memorial Drive, **Cape Girardeau**, MO 63701 Tel: (573) 290-5870 | Fax: (573) 290-5909
 - Admin Mindi Pruitt mindi.pruitt@mvc.dps.mo.gov
 - Admissions Sheri Roach Sheri.Roach@mvc.dps.mo.gov
- #1 Veterans' Drive, **Mexico**, MO 65265 Tel: (573) 581-1088 | Fax: (573) 581-5356
 - Admin Angela Baker Angela.Baker@mvc.dps.mo.gov
 - Admissions Jessica Wages Jessica.Wages@mvc.dps.mo.gov
- 1600 S Hickory, **Mt Vernon**, MO 65712 Phone: (417) 466-7103 | Fax: (417) 466-4040

- Admin April Cutbirth april.cutbirth@mvc.dps.mo.gov
- Admissions Peggy Williams peggy.williams@mvc.dps.mo.gov
- 620 N. Jefferson, **St. James**, MO 65559 Phone: (573) 265-3271 | Fax: (573) 265-5771
 - Admin Viviane Markle Viviane.Markle@mvc.dps.mo.gov
 - Admissions Angie Martin angie.d.martin@mvc.dps.mo.gov
- 10600 Lewis & Clark Blvd, **St Louis**, MO 63136 Phone: (314) 340-6389 | Fax: (314) 340-6379
 - Admin Brad Haggard Bradley.Haggard@mvc.dps.mo.gov
 - Admissions Buffy Huffman buffy.huffman@mvc.dps.mo.gov
- 1300 Veterans Road, **Warrensburg**, MO 64093 | Phone: (660) 543-5064 | Fax: (660) 543-5075
 - Admin Eric Hensley eric.endsley@mvc.dps.mo.gov
 - Admissions Karleen Holland Admissions.Warrensburg@mvc.dps.mo.gov

Each home employs a licensed nursing home administrator, has registered nurses on duty 24 hours per day, and provides physician care; physical, speech, occupational and recreational therapy; medications; cosmetology; maintenance, environmental and social services, and dietary specialists. Each home has a secured dementia unit that includes a dining room, activity area and enclosed courtyard. The monthly resident charge is calculated using a sliding scale based on the Veteran's ability to pay. The maximum monthly rate is fixed each year by the Commission. Currently the maximum resident charge is \$2050 per month. On a case-by-case basis the rate can be adjusted if financial hardship is documented.

Home Rules: Naturally, some rules are necessary in facilities such as Missouri Veterans Homes. Much effort is expended, however, to assure that all rules are necessary and basic. The Administrators work closely with the Resident Councils to assure sufficient input from residents. Residents' rights are clearly delineated, and each resident is given a copy upon admission. Some activities, which are a clear threat to all residents, such as smoking, possession of firearms or dangerous chemical agents, must be strictly regulated for the good of all. Generally, however, residents are afforded every possible freedom their medical condition will allow. A handbook containing all rules is provided to each applicant upon admission

There is a waiting list because strong demand for residency in our Homes. Each Home has an Admissions Coordinator who actively works to fill beds from the waiting list. Veterans may apply to multiple Homes to assure admission to the first available location.

Eligibility: To be eligible for admission to a Missouri Veterans Home (RSMo Chapter 42), a Veteran during his or her lifetime must have lived in Missouri for 180 days, meet the criteria for Veteran status established by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs, and require institutional health care services. Eligibility and admission decisions are made by a team comprised of the Administrator, Physician, Director of Nursing, Social Worker, Veterans Service Officer, and other professionals as needed.

- The Veteran must have been discharged under conditions other than dishonorable
- The Veteran must have been a resident of the State of Missouri for at least 180 days at some point in his/her life
- The Veteran must have documentation from a physician that he/she needs skilled nursing home care

- The Veteran's health condition must be such that the Home has the resources to care for him. The final decision for admission is determined by a healthcare team comprised of the Administrator, Physician, Director of Nursing, Social Worker and other professionals as needed.

Application for Admission: For admission to a Missouri Veterans Home

1. Complete online and print the following forms:
 - Application <http://mvc.dps.mo.gov/docs/homes/admission.pdf>
 - Admission Medical Information <http://mvc.dps.mo.gov/docs/homes/admissionmedical.pdf>
 - Health Care Information <http://mvc.dps.mo.gov/docs/homes/health.pdf>
 - Financial Information <http://mvc.dps.mo.gov/docs/homes/financial.pdf>
 - Privacy Notice <http://mvc.dps.mo.gov/docs/homes/privacy.pdf>
2. Obtain the following documents: and
 - Copy of DD214
 - Durable Power of Attorney Paperwork
 - Proof of Residency
3. Mail all of the following forms and documents to your first choice facility

Learn more about Missouri Vet Homes at: <http://www.mvc.dps.mo.gov/homes/>

Financial Benefits

Income Tax

Military income is not taxed if stationed outside Missouri and you and your spouse spent less than 30 days in Missouri.

Income Tax on Retired Pay

All military retirement pension income is exempt from state taxes.

Property Tax Credits

The Missouri Property Tax Credit Claim gives credit to certain senior citizens and 100% disabled individuals for a portion of the real estate taxes or rent paid for the year. The credit is for a maximum of \$750 for renters and \$1,100 for owners who owned and occupied their home. The actual credit is based on the amount of real estate taxes or rent paid and total household income (taxable and nontaxable). If you rent from a facility that does not pay property taxes, you are not eligible for a Property Tax Credit.

Tax Exemption for AO Settlement Payments

Agent Orange Settlement Payments made for the Agent Orange Fund to a veteran or his dependents are exempt from state tax.

Vietnam Veterans Survivor Grant Program

Legislation passed in 1991 provides that certain surviving widows and children of Vietnam Veterans may qualify to receive tuition-free scholarships to attend institutions of post-secondary education in Missouri.

The veteran's death must be attributable to illness that could possibly be a result of exposure to toxic chemicals such as "Agent Orange" during the Vietnam conflict in order for the survivor to qualify. The maximum annual grant amount is the least of: the actual tuition charged at the school in which you are enrolled full time, or the average amount of tuition charged to a Missouri undergraduate resident enrolled full time in the same class level and in the same academic major at the Missouri public four-year, regional institutions.

Employment Benefits

Veterans' Preference with State of Missouri Employment

Missouri Veterans receive five-point preference when testing for any position with the state, with a ten point preference for a service-connected disabled veteran. Spouses of eligible veterans can also qualify for Veterans Preference for testing.

Priority for Qualified Veterans Employment

State agencies which administer federally funded employment and training programs for veterans shall give priority to qualified veterans and other eligible persons.

Commercial Driver Exam (CDL) Exemptions

Missouri allows active duty military or retired military personnel to complete an application for waiver of skills testing to obtain a commercial driver license. Applicant must have a minimum of 60 days active duty driving experience in a commercial motor vehicle for the military (not vehicle training) within the 2 years prior to date of application for waiver. Applicants must still complete the required knowledge examinations for the commercial driver license class being applied for.

Education Benefits

Missouri Returning Heroes' Education Act

The Missouri Returning Heroes Act, established August 28, 2008, provides reduced tuition for certain combat veterans attending public institutions of higher education. To be eligible for assistance you must be a veteran who served in armed combat in the military after September 11, 2001. To meet this requirement you must have served in a combat zone as designated by the U.S. Department of Defense and as documented on field 13 of your DD214. If you were a member of the Reserves or National Guard you are considered to be a veteran who served in the military as long as you served in armed combat in a full-time capacity under a call to active service authorized by the President of the United States or the Secretary of Defense for a period of more than 30 consecutive days. Institutions will look at the following indicators to determine if you meet this requirement:

- Receipt of a combat service medal:
 - Bronze Star
 - Combat Action Badge
 - Combat Action Medal
 - Combat Infantry Badge (Army)
 - Combat Ribbon (Marine)

- Congressional Medal of Honor
 - Global War on Terror (“GWOT”) Service Medal
 - Global War on Terror (“GWOT”) Badge
 - Purple Heart
- Any other Action Badge, Combat Medal, or Expeditionary Medal or Ribbon offered within a geographic area that enables the veteran to receive a combat pay tax exclusion exemption, hazardous duty pay, imminent danger pay, or hostile fire pay
 - Any military service in a combat zone between September 11, 2001 and the present. Combat Zones recognized by the Internal Revenue Service can be found on the IRS website. Please note this list may not be comprehensive. Your institution may have to contact the Missouri Veterans Commission to determine if your service was in a combat zone.

This act limits the tuition to no more than \$50 per credit hour at public colleges and universities while enrolled in an undergraduate certificate or degree program after all other financial aid is taken into account. If you are attending an institution that measures coursework in clock hours rather than credit hours, your institution will apply a credit hour to clock hour conversion formula to determine the amount of the tuition limitation.

The tuition reduction is applied before federal and state student aid has been applied to the tuition amount. For example, if you are eligible for \$500 in federal or state student aid and you are enrolled in 12 credit hours, your tuition rate under the Act would be \$600 (12 hours x \$50/hour = \$600). The \$600 tuition would be reduced by the \$500 in aid so you would owe \$100 in tuition. In contrast, if you had to pay full tuition of, for example, \$100 per credit hour without the tuition limitation, you would owe \$700 in tuition (12 hours x \$100/hour - \$500 financial aid = \$700).

If your institution charges fees by the credit hour and does not have any charges specifically designated as tuition, MDHE recommends the institution apply the limitation to the fee. You are not required to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or otherwise apply for federal or state student aid, such as the federal GI Bill benefits or the state Access Missouri grant. The tuition limitation expires 10 years from the date of your last discharge from service. You may receive the reduced tuition through the end of the tenth year.

Recreation Benefits

Free Fishing & Hunting License

Any honorably discharged resident veteran having a service-related disability of 60% or more, or who was a prisoner of war during military service, may take fish, live bait, clams, mussels, turtles and frogs without permit (except trout permit or daily tag in areas where prescribed), and may take wildlife as provided in Chapter 7 without permit (except deer and turkey hunting permits and the Migratory Bird Hunting Permit as prescribed); provided, while hunting or fishing s/he carries a certified statement of eligibility from the Veterans Administration.

Resident Hunting & Fishing Licenses for Active Duty

All members of the United States armed forces stationed and residing in Missouri on permanent change of station status, and their immediate families residing with them, may receive resident permit privileges.

Other Missouri State Veteran Benefits

Veterans Service Officers

Service Officers are also available for any follow-up work necessary with the VA to obtain the maximum amount of earned benefits due any of the approximately 494,346 Veterans living in Missouri, and/or their dependents. VSO's are thoroughly trained and knowledgeable in all areas of Veterans benefits, including service-connected compensation, non-service connected disability pension, education and training, vocational rehabilitation, burial, and survivor benefits. They will also assist claimants with health care eligibility, VA Home Loan Guaranty, and other Veterans benefits, including those offered by the state.

Veterans Service offices are located in almost every county to make services available to Veterans close to their homes. Information concerning locations and phone numbers may be found in the local telephone directory under Missouri, State of, Veterans Commission, by contacting Central Office Headquarters at 573-751-3779, or by using the Service Officer Locator at <http://mvc.dps.mo.gov/service/serviceofficer> to locate the nearest office in your area.

Veterans Service Officers are also available to groups interested in Veterans benefits. These qualified personnel may give presentations and instruction regarding the benefits for which Veterans may be eligible as a result of military service in the U.S. Armed Forces.

State Veterans Cemeteries

Missouri Veterans Commission currently operates six State Veterans Cemeteries, one each in:

- Bloomfield: 17357 Stars & Stripes Way, Bloomfield, MO 63825 Tel: 573-568-3871
- Ft. Leonard Wood: 25350 Highway H, Waynesville, MO 65583 Tel: 573-774-3496
- Higginsville: 20109 Business Highway 13, Higginsville, MO 64037 Tel: 660-584-5252
- Jacksonville: 1479 County Road 1675, Jacksonville, MO 65260 Tel: 660-295-4237
- Springfield: 5201 South Southwood Road, Springfield, MO 65804 Tel: 417-823-3944
- St. James (closed to internment): 620 N. Jefferson, St. James, MO 65559 Tel: 573-265-3271

There is no charge for any of the services provided. These services include opening and closing of the grave, provision of a concrete grave liner, upright granite headstones, full military honors for the Veteran, and perpetual care. Those who choose cremation have the choice of in-ground burial or placement within a columbarium niche. Pre-registration for future planning purposes is also available for Veterans and their eligible family members. Veterans, spouses, and dependent children may be eligible for burial and cemetery benefits by the State of Missouri and the Federal Government.

Eligibility criteria is the same as that for a national cemetery.

- The Veteran must have been discharged from active duty under conditions other than dishonorable and have completed the required period of service as required by law.
- Death of the Veteran occurred while on active duty.
- After 7 September 1980 for enlisted and after 16 October 1981 for officers, the individual must have served 24 consecutive months on active duty or the full period for which called to active duty.
- Reservists or members of the National Guard who are eligible for retired pay as a result of 20 years creditable service are entitled to interment in a Missouri State Veterans Cemetery.

Reservists and members of the National Guard who are called to active duty by Presidential Executive Order and who satisfactorily complete the period for which they are called to duty are also eligible.

- There is no residency requirement for interment in a Missouri Veterans Cemetery.
- U.S. Citizens who served in the armed forces of a government allied with the United States during wartime may also be eligible.

To pre-certify complete the form at <https://mvc.dps.mo.gov/docs/cemeteries/precertification.pdf>. If you are unsure of your eligibility status, please contact the cemetery director at the nearest Missouri Veterans Cemetery.

- **NOTE:** Any Veteran convicted of a federal or state capital crime is barred from burial in a Missouri State Veterans Cemetery. This prohibition also includes those Veterans who commit capital crimes but avoid conviction due to death or flight.
- **NOTE:** Former spouses whose marriage to an eligible Veteran was terminated by divorce are not eligible for burial in a Missouri Veterans cemetery.

For info there are three National Cemeteries in Missouri:

- Jefferson Barracks, 2900 Sheridan Road St. Louis, MO 63125 Tel: 314-845-8320.
- Springfield, 1702 East Seminole Street, Springfield, MO 65804 Tel: 417-881-9499 (call for interment availability)
- Jefferson City, 1024 East McCarty Street, Jefferson City, MO 65101 el: 314-845-8320 (closed to new interments)

Visit the Missouri Veterans Commission website <http://www.mvc.dps.mo.gov> for contact information and benefits assistance.

World War II, Korean War, and Vietnam War Medals and Medallions

The Veterans Award Program was first established in 2000 with the creation of the World War II Veterans Award Recognition program. Award Recognition consists of a medal, medallion and certificate. World War II veterans who participated in the D-Day invasion of Europe are also eligible to receive a replica of the Jubilee of Liberty medal. In the 2003 legislative session, the Korean War Medallion was added. The Korean War award consists of a medal, medallion, and certificate. In 2006 the Vietnam War Medallion was added. The Vietnam War award consists of a medal, medallion and Certificate. Since the program began, over 41,000 Missouri veterans have received awards. Refer to <http://www.moguard.com/Assets/Pages/36/Veteran-Awards.aspx?ID=36> for additional information on the Program, award requirements, and application forms.



Free Automobile License Plates

Veterans who have service-connected disabilities, or in need of adaptive equipment. Disabled Veteran specialty license plates are available to eligible applicants at no fee (limit one set per applicant). To qualify for Disabled Veteran specialty license plates, you must be a Missouri resident who has served in and was honorably discharged from the United States Armed Forces.

In addition, Medal of Honor, Purple Heart recipients, Military Retirees, Former POWs and widows of former POWs qualify for Free Special Automobile License Plates.

Missouri has over 30 different types of military and veteran personalized license plates available to qualified individuals. Any surviving spouse of an individual who would have been eligible to obtain a United States Armed Forces, Coast Guard, Merchant Marines, Reserves, Missouri National Guard, or United States Marine Corps League special license plate may obtain the plate as long as the spouse does not remarry.

For information on obtaining plates refer to <https://dor.mo.gov/pdf/SpecialtyPlateChart.pdf> and <http://dor.mo.gov/motorv/plates>. Missouri Military and Veterans License Plate applications will require some certification paperwork such as Form DD-214, medal citations, or letter from Veterans Administration. The following plates are available:

Missouri Military & Veterans License Plates







State Veterans Benefits Guide

The 2018-2019 State Benefits guide is available at <http://mvc.dps.mo.gov/docs/veterans-benefits-guide.pdf>

Visit the Missouri Veterans Commission website <http://www.mvc.dps.mo.gov> for contact information and benefits assistance. [Source: <https://www.military.com/benefits/veteran-state-benefits/missouri-state-veterans-benefits.html> | July 2019 ++]