

FLORIDA VETERANS' BENEFITS GUIDE

★★★ 2015 ★★★



FDVA

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS

www.FloridaVets.org



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Thank you for reading the 2015 edition of the Florida Veterans' Benefits Guide.

Florida has earned a reputation as the most veteran friendly state in the nation. Watching over and advocating for our state's more than 1.5 million veterans are the more than 1,100 men and women of the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs.

FDVA is the premier point of entry for Florida veterans to access earned services, benefits and support. We play a critical role in advocating for former and retired service members of all ages.

Some of Florida's veterans fought for our freedom in the days before television while others never knew a time without computers and cell phones, yet they all share the admiration of a grateful nation. If they aren't receiving the benefits and services they rightfully earned, we must use every approach available to reach them and set things right.

The year 2014 saw the passage of new state laws waiving out-of-state tuition in public colleges and universities for our returning veterans, the expansion of veterans' preference in state employment, and the elimination of a one-year residency requirement for state veterans' homes admission. The newly created Florida is for Veterans, Inc. will also encourage veterans and their families from other states to relocate here to take advantage of the many available Federal, State and local benefits and services.

Our website at www.FloridaVets.org acts as a portal to help veterans find the information they need to access benefits and services more efficiently and effectively. In addition, our free mobile application, offered in the Apple and Android markets, integrates with the website and offers veterans reminders and updates about services. It also points veterans to Employ Florida Vets, the state's veteran employment website, to help them find available jobs. For those of you online, you can also join us on Facebook and LinkedIn.

Thank you for your service. We're honored to represent you.



Mike Prendergast
Colonel, U.S. Army (Ret)
Executive Director, Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs





MESSAGE FROM GOVERNOR RICK SCOTT

Florida is on a mission to become the very best place in the world to raise a family, build a great career, and enjoy a great quality of life. As Floridians and Americans, we have these opportunities and freedoms because of the service of our brave veterans like you.



I join Florida families in honoring the more than 1.5 million veterans and our active military who live in the Sunshine State. As Governor and a Navy veteran, I am committed to making sure Florida continues to be known as our country's most military friendly state.

We are working every day to ensure veterans and their families have the greatest opportunity for success here in Florida, and we'll keep working every day so that every Floridian who wants a job is able to find one.

Again, we appreciate you and your service, and thank you for making Florida your home.

Honorable Rick Scott
Governor
State of Florida

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OUR MISSION

To advocate with purpose and passion for Florida veterans and link them to superior services, benefits and support. The Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs was founded on July 1, 1989, following the passing of a Constitutional Amendment in 1988 by Florida voters establishing a state agency responsible for advocating for Florida's veterans, their families and survivors. FDVA is a Cabinet Agency, reporting to the governor and Cabinet officers, with an appointed executive director as agency head. FDVA is headquartered in Largo, with staff offices in Bay Pines and Tallahassee.

OUR VISION

FDVA is the premier point of entry for Florida veterans to access earned services, benefits and support.

VETERANS' BENEFITS: HEALTH CARE

One-time Dental Treatment

Following separation or retirement from service, veterans have 180 days to receive one-time separation dental care from the VA for certain service-connected dental conditions, if the certificate of discharge does not certify that the veteran was provided a complete dental examination and treatment prior to discharge. (38 CFR 17.161)

VA Offers Dental Insurance Program

VA partnered with Delta Dental and MetLife in 2013 to allow eligible veterans, plus family members receiving care under the Civilian Health and Medical Program (CHAMPVA), to purchase affordable dental insurance. There are no eligibility limitations based on a service-connected disability rating or enrollment priority assignment. For more information, visit Delta Dental at www.deltadentalvadip.org or MetLife at www.metlife.com/vadip.

Medical Care

To the extent resources and facilities are available, the VA provides hospital care covering the full range of medical services to veterans. Eligible veterans may receive medical treatment at any VA Medical Center or Outpatient Clinic / Community Based Clinic in Florida.

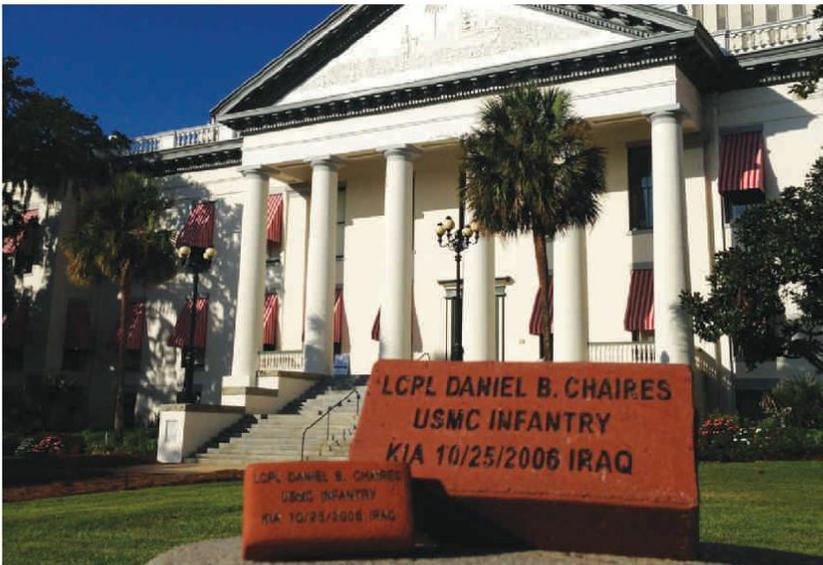


Free Health Care for Recent Combat Vets

Combat veterans who were discharged or released from active service on or after Jan. 28, 2003, are eligible to enroll in the VA health care system for five years from the date of discharge or release. The enrollment period begins on the discharge or separation date of the service member from active duty service, or in the case of multiple call-ups, the most recent discharge date. Veterans, including activated Reservists and National Guard members, are eligible if they served on active duty in a theater of combat operations after Nov. 11, 1998, and have been discharged under other than dishonorable conditions.

Affordable Care Act and Veterans

Veterans enrolled in VA health care programs have health coverage that meets the new health care law's standard. Veterans do not need to take additional steps to have health coverage and are in compliance with the health care law's coverage standards. For more information about veteran health benefits, visit www.va.gov/healthbenefits or call 1-877-222-VETS (8387).



Honor a Florida veteran you know with a dedication brick to be displayed at the new Florida Veterans Walk of Honor at the state Capitol. Visit www.floridaveteransfoundation.org to order yours today.



VETERANS' BENEFITS: EDUCATION

Florida waives out-of-state tuition fees for all honorably discharged veterans through the “Congressman C.W. Bill Young Tuition Waiver Program.”

Florida waives undergraduate-level tuition at state universities and community colleges for Florida recipients of the Purple Heart and other combat-related decorations superior in precedence to the Purple Heart. In 2014, legislation was signed expanding the waiver program to include the state’s career and technical training facilities. For more information, call (850) 245-0407.

Florida also provides four-year college educational opportunities for dependent children and spouses of veterans who died from a service connected disability or who are 100 percent service-connected permanent and total disabled veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces. (FS 295.01) For more information, call toll free (888) 827-2004. Dependent children of service members Missing In Action or Prisoners Of War may also be eligible for tuition benefits.

Florida State Colleges and Universities offering priority course registration for students now provide priority course registration to veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces who are receiving GI Bill educational benefits. The benefit also applies to spouses and dependent children receiving GI Bill benefits. Florida State Colleges and Universities also allow eligible current and former Armed Forces members to earn academic college credit for college-level training and education acquired in the military. Consult your local campus for details.

Honorably discharged veterans who were inducted into the U.S. Armed Forces prior to completing their high school education can be awarded a State of Florida High School Diploma. For more information, call (850) 245-0446 or visit <http://fldoe.org/academics/career-adult-edu/veterans-diplomas.stml>.

Post-9/11 GI Bill

Provides financial assistance for 15 years after leaving service to individuals who served on active duty a minimum of 90 days after Sept. 10, 2001. Public Law 111-32, the Marine Gunnery Sergeant John David Fry Scholarship, amends the Post-9/11 GI Bill to include the children of service members who died in the line of duty after Sept. 10, 2001



and Section 701 of The Choice Act expands it to include surviving spouses. For more information, call toll free (888) 442-4551 or visit the VA website at www.gibill.va.gov.

Montgomery GI Bill

Provides financial assistance for 10 years after leaving service to honorably discharged veterans who enlisted after June 30, 1985, and elected to participate within the first 12 months of service. For more information, call toll free (888) 442-4551.



VETERAN BENEFITS: PENSION

Pension

Pension is a needs-based benefit paid to wartime veterans who meet certain age or non-service connected disability requirements.

Aid and Attendance is an increased monthly pension amount paid to a veteran or surviving spouse. You may be eligible if you require the aid of another person in order to perform activities of daily living, such as bathing, feeding, dressing, toileting or adjusting prosthetic devices.

Dependency and Indemnity Compensation is a tax-free monetary benefit paid to eligible survivors of military service members who died in the line of duty or eligible survivors of veterans whose death resulted from a service-related injury or disease.

For eligibility requirements, contact an FDVA Veterans' Claims Examiner or County Veteran Service Officer. You may also visit <http://benefits.va.gov/benefits/factsheets.asp> or call 1-800-827-1000.



VETERAN BENEFITS: PROPERTY, INSURANCE AND BURIAL

G.I. Home Loan Guarantee

The VA may guarantee part of your loan for the purchase of a home, manufactured home, or condominium. In addition, veterans with conventional home loans now have options for refinancing to a VA guaranteed home loan as a result of the Veterans' Benefits Improvement Act of 2008. For information, call (877) 827-3702 or visit www.homeloans.va.gov.

Basic Property Tax Exemptions

Eligible resident veterans with a VA certified service-connected disability of 10 percent or greater shall be entitled to a \$5,000 property tax exemption. The veteran must establish this exemption with the county tax official in the county in which he or she resides by providing documentation of this disability.

The unremarried surviving spouse of such a disabled ex-service member, who on the date of the disabled ex-service member's death had been married to the ex-service member for at least five years, is also entitled to this exemption. (FS 196.24)

Additional Property Tax Exemptions

Any real estate owned and used as a homestead by a veteran who was honorably discharged and has been certified as having a service-connected, permanent and total disability, is exempt from taxation if the veteran is a permanent resident of Florida and has legal title to the property on January 1 of the tax year for which exemption is being claimed. (FS 196.081(1))

Any real estate owned and used as a homestead by the surviving spouse of an Armed Forces member who died from service-connected causes while on active duty is exempt from taxation if the member was a permanent resident of Florida on January 1 of the year in which the member died. (FS 196.081(4)(a))

If, upon the death of the veteran, the spouse holds the legal or beneficial title to the homestead and permanently resides there, the exemption from taxation carries over to the benefit of the veteran's spouse until such time as he or she remarries, sells, or otherwise disposes of the property. If the spouse sells the property, an exemption not to exceed the amount granted from the most recent ad valorem tax roll may be transferred



to the new residence as long as it is used as the primary residence and the spouse does not remarry. (FS 196.081(3))

Any partially disabled veteran who is age 65 or older, any portion of whose disability was combat-related, and who was honorably discharged, may be eligible for a discount from the amount of ad valorem tax on the homestead commensurate with the percentage of the veteran's permanent service-connected disability. Eligible veterans should apply for this benefit at the county property appraiser's office. (FS 196.082)

Any real estate used and owned as a homestead by any quadriplegic is exempt from taxation. Veterans who are paraplegic, hemiplegic, or permanently and totally disabled who must use a wheelchair for mobility, or are legally blind, may be exempt from real estate taxation. Check with your local property appraiser to determine if gross annual household income qualifies. The veteran must be a resident of Florida. (FS 196.101)

Service members entitled to homestead exemption in this state, and who are unable to file in person by reason of such service, may file through next of kin or a duly authorized representative. (FS 196.071)

VETERANS' GROUP LIFE INSURANCE

Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance (SGLI) may be converted to Veterans' Group Life Insurance (VGLI), a five-year term policy, renewable for life. VGLI may be converted to an individual policy within 240 days of leaving the service with any participating insurance company. For more information, call toll free (800) 669-8477 or visit www.insurance.va.gov.

Other Insurance

A veteran with a new service-connected disability, but otherwise in good health, may apply to the VA for up to \$10,000 in life insurance coverage at standard rates. Veterans who receive a new rating of zero percent or greater are eligible for the coverage. The application must be made within two years from the date of being notified of a new service-connected status. The veteran must have received an other than dishonorable discharge and released from active duty after April 25, 1951. Call toll free (800) 669-8477 or visit www.insurance.va.gov.



Burial Benefits

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs provides honorably discharged veterans, spouses and dependents with burial in a National Cemetery at no cost. Cremated remains are also accepted. Eligible spouses and dependents may be buried if they predecease the veteran. The VA provides a headstone, marker or medallion for placement on a private headstone at a private cemetery. The VA does not make funeral arrangements. Call toll free (800) 697-6947 or visit www.cem.va.gov for more information.

VETERAN BENEFITS: MOTOR VEHICLE, LICENSING AND FEE EXEMPTIONS

“V” for Veteran Designation on Driver License

Florida’s veterans can add a veteran designation to their driver license or identification card. To add the “V” to a license or ID card, veterans can visit any Florida driver license office, to include those operated by county tax collectors. Requirements: 1) present a discharge document which shows an honorable discharge from active duty; 2) pay a one-time \$1 fee, in addition to the replacement or renewal fee. If it is too soon to renew your license, you can pay a one-time \$2 fee plus other applicable service fees; 3) visit www.GatherGoGet.com to ensure you have all other documents. Veterans who need to obtain a copy of their DD-214 may request it online at www.archives.gov/veterans.

100% Disabled Veteran State ID Card

A disabled veteran ID card may be issued by the Florida Department of Veterans’ Affairs to any veteran who is a permanent resident of the state and is determined by the VA or Department of Defense to have a 100% service-connected, permanent and total disability rating. (FS 295.17) The card may be used as proof of eligibility for any state benefit except exemption of homestead property taxes. For more information, call (727) 319-7440.

Driver License & State ID Fee Exemptions

Any honorably discharged veteran who has a valid FDVA disabled veteran ID card or who has been determined to have a 100% total and permanent service-connected disability and is qualified to obtain a driver license is generally exempt from all fees. However, a fee may be applied to drivers seeking to reinstate a license. (FS 322.21(7))



The Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles or a county tax collector may issue or renew an identification card to a person who presents evidence that he or she is homeless without payment of the fees required. A \$6.25 fee may apply in offices operated by county tax collectors. Homeless veterans may prove their status with a letter from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs that establishes eligibility in the HUD-VASH program.

Disabled Veteran Motor Vehicle License Plate

An honorably discharged veteran who has been a resident of Florida continuously for the past five years or who has established a domicile in Florida, as provided by FS 222.17, may apply for one free disabled veteran “DV” license plate for an owned or leased vehicle. The veteran must provide proof of a service-connected 100-percent disability rating or that the vehicle was acquired through VA financial assistance. Note: Free license plates with a wheelchair emblem are available for those veterans permanently confined to a wheelchair and who otherwise qualify for a DV plate. Service charges may apply. (FS 320.084)

Please note: Parking spaces for persons with disabilities are for the exclusive use of individuals who have permanent or temporary mobility impairments. (F.S. 553.5041(3)). Disabled veterans who have been issued a “DV” plate may only park in designated handicapped parking spaces if they also have a mobility impairment. Disabled veterans with a mobility impairment may apply for the disabled parking plate with the wheelchair emblem to avoid possible fines and penalties. No state agency, county, municipality or agency thereof may charge the driver of a vehicle displaying a “DV” license plate any fee for parking on public streets, highways or in any metered parking space. There are exemptions to this benefit, which can be found in FS 316.1964.

Handicapped Toll Permit

Licensed drivers who operate a vehicle specially equipped for the handicapped, and are certified by a licensed physician or the VA as having permanent upper limb impairments/ disabilities substantially affecting their ability to deposit coins in toll baskets, shall pass free through all toll gates. A window sticker from the Florida Department of Transportation must be obtained and displayed. (FS 338.155(3))



Commission as a Notary Public

The state's \$10 commission fee shall not be required for a commission as a Notary Public to a veteran with wartime service who has been rated 50 percent or more for a service-connected disability. Other fees will apply. (FS 117.01(2))

Military License Plates

License plates honoring the individual Armed Services are available to the general public. Your purchase of the "Florida Salutes Veterans" or one of the state's U.S. Army, U.S. Navy, U.S. Air Force or U.S. Coast Guard license plates directly helps veterans. The \$15 surcharge goes into a trust fund for the operation and maintenance of Florida's veterans' homes. A portion of the surcharge from the U.S. Marine Corps and "Support Our Troops" license plates also supports the State Veterans' Homes Program.

The Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles also issues special use license plates for eligible military members and veterans. These special use license plates, honoring wartime service, awards and decorations, and status are issued after the applicant provides documents establishing proof of status, such as a DD-214, and upon payment of the license tax imposed by s. 320.08, F.S. License fees and taxes vary. For more information, visit www.flhsmv.gov/specialtytags/miltags.html.

Occupational License Taxes

A disabled wartime veteran who is unable to perform manual labor and is a permanent Florida resident shall be exempt from this tax up to \$50. The unremarried spouse of a deceased disabled veteran is also entitled to this exemption. (FS 205.171)

Disabled Veterans' Exemption from Fees

Total and permanently disabled Florida veterans are exempt from county and municipality building license or permit fees when making certain improvements to their residence in order to make the dwelling habitable or safe. Restrictions apply. (FS 295.16)

Florida State Park Discount Passes

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection provides a 25-percent discount on annual passes to Florida's State Parks for all active duty and honorably discharged veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces, National Guard or Reserve units of the U.S. Armed Forces or National Guard. The pass is available



for purchase at any Florida State Park staffed ranger station. Veterans with service-related disabilities, surviving spouses and parents of members of the U.S. military who have fallen in combat, and law enforcement officers and firefighters who have died in the line of duty, will receive a free lifetime family annual entrance pass. The free annual pass can only be obtained at a staffed ranger station. For specific details, call (850) 245-2157 or visit www.FloridaStateParks.org.

Hunting and Fishing

The Military Gold Sportsman's License is available for a reduced fee of \$20 to any resident who is an active or retired member of the U. S. Armed Forces, U. S. Armed Forces Reserve, National Guard, U. S. Coast Guard, or Coast Guard Reserve upon submission of a current military ID card. For more information, visit <http://myfwc.com/license/recreational/military-gold/>. The license is only available at tax collector's offices.

State hunting and fishing licenses and permits shall be issued without fees for five years to any veteran who is a Florida resident, certified or determined to be 100% totally and permanently disabled by the VA or the U.S. Armed Forces, or who has been issued a valid disabled veteran ID card by FDVA. For more information, visit <http://myfwc.com> (FS 379.353).

The Division of Forestry has designated areas of state forests as Operation Outdoor Freedom Special Hunt Areas. Active duty members and veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces with combat-related injuries have access to specialized hunting areas that are adapted to assist their needs. For more information, visit www.floridastateforests.org/operation-outdoor-freedom (FS 589.19).

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission makes it easier for Florida veterans to enter the commercial fishing industry. Applicants should visit www.MyFWC.com/License and click on Commercial Saltwater Products or call (850) 487-3122.

Certification of Discharge or Separation

At the veteran's request, the Clerk of the Circuit Court shall record, without cost, certificates of discharge or separation from the Armed Forces. (FS 28.222) CAUTION: Once on file, documents become official court records and are open to the public. To remove a military discharge record from the official court record, submit your request to the Court Clerk's office.



FLORIDA STATE VETERANS' HOMES

The Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs operates six skilled nursing facilities and one assisted living facility. All facilities are licensed by the Agency for Health Care Administration and inspected annually by AHCA and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. The homes are supervised 24 hours daily by registered and licensed nurses. Under the IRS tax code, monetary donations to specific state veterans' homes are tax deductible. Per Florida Statutes, all such donations are to be used for the benefit of the home and its residents.

Employment

For employment opportunities at the homes, call the FDVA Human Resources Office at (727) 518-3202, Ext. 5533 or visit the People First website at

<https://jobs.myflorida.com/joblist.html>

Resident Admission

Basic admission requirements for all state veterans' homes include an honorable discharge, Florida residency, and certification of need of assisted living or skilled nursing care as determined by a VA physician. For more information, call (727) 518-3202, Ext. 5562.



Veterans' Homes

The Robert H. Jenkins Jr. Veterans' Domiciliary Home in Lake City (Columbia County) opened to residents in 1990. The 150-bed Assisted Living Facility near the intersection of Interstates 10 and 75 provides a special combination of housing, personalized supportive services and incidental medical care to eligible veterans. Veterans must be able to feed and dress themselves and in need of assisted living care. Call (386) 758-0600 for more information. Address: 751 SE Sycamore Terrace, Lake City, FL 32025.

The Emory L. Bennett State Veterans' Nursing Home in Daytona Beach (Volusia County) opened to residents in 1993. The 120-bed facility provides skilled nursing care to its veteran residents. Call (386) 274-3460 for more information. Address: 1920 Mason Avenue, Daytona Beach, FL 32117.

The Baldomero Lopez State Veterans' Nursing Home in Land O' Lakes (Pasco County) opened to residents in 1999. The 120-bed facility provides skilled nursing care and can accommodate 60 residents with dementia/Alzheimer's disease. Call (813) 558-5000 for more information. Address: 6919 Parkway Boulevard, Land O' Lakes, FL 34639.

The Alexander "Sandy" Nininger State Veterans' Nursing Home in Pembroke Pines (Broward County) opened to residents in 2001. The 120-bed facility offers skilled nursing care and can accommodate 60 residents with dementia/Alzheimer's disease. Call (954) 985-4824 for more information. Address: 8401 West Cypress Drive, Pembroke Pines, FL 33025.

The Clifford C. Sims State Veterans' Nursing Home in Panama City (Bay County) opened to residents in 2003. The 120-bed facility offers skilled nursing care and can accommodate 60 residents with dementia/Alzheimer's disease. Call (850) 747-5401 for more information. Address: 4419 Tram Road, Panama City, FL 32404.

The Douglas T. Jacobson State Veterans' Nursing Home in Port Charlotte (Charlotte County) opened to residents in 2004. The 120-bed facility offers skilled nursing care and can accommodate 60 residents with dementia/Alzheimer's disease. Call (941) 613-0919 for more information. Address: 21281 Grayton Terrace, Port Charlotte, FL 33954.

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The Clyde E. Lassen State Veterans' Nursing Home in St. Augustine (St. Johns County) opened to residents in 2010. The 120-bed facility offers skilled nursing care and can accommodate 60 residents with dementia/Alzheimer's disease. Call (904) 940-2193 for more information. Address: 4650 State Road 16, St. Augustine, FL 32092.

The Ardie R. Copas State Veterans' Nursing Home in Port St. Lucie (St. Lucie County) is in the initial planning stages. When completed, the facility will offer skilled nursing care and accommodate residents with dementia/Alzheimer's disease. For more information, call (727) 518-3202, Ext. 5562.

Supporting Resident Veterans

Your purchase of the Florida Salutes Veterans or one of the state's Army, Navy, Air Force or Coast Guard license plates directly helps veterans. The \$15 surcharge goes into a trust fund for the operation



and maintenance of Florida's veterans' homes. A portion of the Marine Corps and Support Our Troops license plates also supports the State Veterans' Homes Program. Anyone can purchase these plates. You may also support the State Homes for Veterans Trust Fund by making a \$1 contribution when renewing your Driver License. Let the clerk know you're a veteran.

VETERAN EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

Employment services for veterans, military members and families are offered through the Employ Florida network consisting of CareerSource Florida, the Department of Economic Opportunity and Florida's 24 Regional Workforce Boards encompassing nearly 100 One-Stop Career Centers. These services include interviewing, resume assistance, job referrals, job search and placement assistance, Internet access, training referrals, career planning and vocational guidance. Visit <http://careersourceflorida.com> or call toll free (800) 342-3450 or (850) 245-7105 for more information.

Employ Florida Vets

Employ Florida Vets is the state's online jobs portal that provides employment services to Florida veterans.



Call toll free (866) 352-2345 or visit <http://veterans.employflorida.com/portals/veteran/> for more information.

Outreach Assistance

Local Veterans Employment Representatives develop increased hiring opportunities within the local workforce by raising employer awareness of the availability and benefit of hiring veterans. Disabled Veterans Outreach Program specialists provide services to all eligible veterans, but their efforts are concentrated on client services to those identified as most in need of assistance. A staff directory is located online at www.floridajobs.org/office-directory/division-of-workforce-services/workforce-programs/veterans-employment-program.

Reemployment Rights

A veteran has a right to be reemployed in his/her civilian job or a comparable job with associated benefits had the veteran not been absent due to military service. For more information, call toll free (866) 487-2365 or visit www.dol.gov/vets. Public employees may contact FDVA at (727) 319-7440.

Business License Fee Waivers for Veterans

The Department of Business and Professional Regulation has the ability to waive the initial licensing fee, the initial application fee, and the initial unlicensed activity fee for military veterans and their spouses at the time of discharge who apply to the Department for a state professional license. The application must be submitted within 60 months after the veteran has been honorably discharged from any branch of the U.S. Armed Forces, including the Florida National Guard. Please note, this waiver does not include examination fees or other incidental fees. The law applies to new licenses for more than 20 professions under DBPR's jurisdiction, including construction, real estate, certified public accountants and cosmetologists. Visit www.MyFloridaLicense.com for information.

Health License Fee Waivers for Veterans

If you are a military veteran, you may be eligible for a waiver of the initial application and licensure fees for all health care professions by the Florida Department of Health. Your application must be submitted within 60 months after your honorable discharge from any branch of the U.S. Armed Forces. This waiver does not include examination fees. For more information, call (850) 488-0595 or visit www.floridahealth.gov/licensing-and-regulation/armed-forces/index.html.



Veterans' Preference in Florida.

If you are a Florida resident, state and political subdivisions of the state shall give preference in employment, promotions after being deployed and retention to 1) a veteran with a compensable VA service-connected disability; 2) the spouse of a veteran with a permanent and total service-connected disability; 3) a veteran who served one day on active duty during a wartime period and was honorably discharged; 4) the unremarried widow or widower of a veteran who died as a result of a service-connected disability; 5) a veteran who has served in a qualifying campaign or expedition for which a campaign badge has been authorized, to include the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal and was honorably discharged. (FS 295.07, 295.11)

A person eligible for veterans' preference does not forfeit preference eligibility once he/she has been employed by a state agency or political subdivision. The employer is obligated to make the applicant aware that preference is available when applying for a position; however, certain positions are excluded from the law. An applicant who believes he or she was not afforded employment/promotion/retention preference may file a complaint with the FDVA. The complaint must be filed within 21 days from the date the notice is received.

For more information, call (727) 319-7462 or mail the detailed complaint to: P.O. Box 31001, St. Petersburg, FL 33731.

Florida Veteran Business Enterprises

The Florida Veteran Business Enterprise Opportunity Act aims to promote access for service-disabled and wartime veteran businesses to state contracts and encourages other such veterans to start businesses. For more information, call (850) 487-0915. The U.S. Small Business Administration also offers programs and services for veterans seeking to establish or expand small businesses. For more information, call toll free (800) 827-5722.

Vocational Rehabilitation

As part of a rehabilitation program for service-connected, disabled veterans rated at 10 percent or more and having a serious employment related handicap, the VA may pay tuition, books, expenses and a monthly living allowance. A new expanded housing benefit option is also available. For more information, call toll free (800) 827-1000.



FDVA OFFICES & CLAIMS EXAMINER SITES

*Offices include those located in federal facilities.
Claims services are provided free of charge.*

FDVA Executive Office

11351 Ulmerton Rd. #311K
Largo, FL 33778-1630
(727) 518-3202

FDVA Benefits & Assistance

9500 Bay Pines Blvd. #214
Bay Pines, FL 33708
(727) 319-7440

FDVA Capitol Office

The Capitol, Suite 2105
400 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001
(850) 487-1533

C.W. Bill Young VA Medical Center

10000 Bay Pines Blvd.
Bldg. 22, #117
Bay Pines, FL 33744-5005
(727) 398-6661 x15489

Malcom Randall VA Medical Center

1601 SW Archer Rd. #D-163
Gainesville, FL 32608
(352) 374-6029

Lake City VA Medical Center

619 S. Marion Ave. #A-163
Lake City, FL 32025-5808
(386) 755-3016 x2070

Bruce W. Carter VA Medical Center

1201 NW 16th St. #A-102
Miami, FL 33125
(305) 325-3325

James A. Haley Veterans' Hospital

13000 Bruce B. Downs Blvd. T#61
Tampa, FL 33612
(813) 972-2000 x6589

Orlando VA Medical Center

Lake Baldwin Campus
5201 Raymond St., Rm 1704
Orlando, FL 32803
(407) 599-1386 / 1318

West Palm Beach VA Medical Center

7305 North Military Trail
Bldg. 10, #113
West Palm Beach, FL 33410
(561) 422-8204

Lee County VA Healthcare Center

2489 Diplomat Parkway East
Cape Coral, FL 33909
(239) 652-1800, x20081

William Chappell Jr. VA Outpatient Clinic

551 National Health Care Dr.
Daytona Beach, FL 32114
(386) 323-7500, x37722

Eglin VA Community Based Outpatient Clinic

100 Veterans Way, Rm. 108
Eglin AFB, FL 32542
(850) 609-2740

Jacksonville VA Outpatient Clinic

1536 N. Jefferson St.
Jacksonville, FL 32209
(904) 475-5871

CareerSource Northeast Florida

1845 Town Center Blvd Suite 150
Fleming Island, FL 32203
(904) 213-3888, x2087

Orlando Lakemont Campus

2500 S. Lakemont Avenue
Room 125
Orlando, FL 32814
(407) 646-4115

New Port Richey VA Outpatient Clinic

9912 Little Rd. #D-116
Port Richey, FL 34654
(727) 869-4227

Pensacola Joint Ambulatory Care Clinic

790 Veterans Way
Pensacola, FL 32507
(850) 912-2053



**William 'Bill' Kling VA
Outpatient Clinic**
9800 W. Commercial
Sunrise, FL 33351
(954) 625-8727

Tallahassee VA Outpatient Clinic
1607 St. James Court #220
Tallahassee, FL 32308
(850) 878-0191 x2032

The Villages VA Outpatient Clinic
8900 SE 165th Mulberry Ln
Room 162
The Villages, FL 32162
(352) 674-5095

Viera VA Outpatient Clinic
2900 Veterans Way #A700
Viera, FL 32940
(321) 637-3693 / 3788

Note: *There are also FDVA Veterans' Claims Examiners at each State Veterans' Home. Call for appointment. The FDVA Capitol Office does not provide claims service.*

Free Benefits & Disability Claims Counseling

The Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs has Claims Examiners co-located with the VA Regional Office in Bay Pines, each VA Medical Center and many VA Outpatient Clinics. Assistance with claims is free and covers all state and



federal veterans' programs. FDVA, through its Bureau of State Approving Agency, also evaluates and approves secondary and post-secondary education programs so Floridians can take advantage of federal veterans' educational programs such as the Post-9/11 GI Bill. For more information or for assistance, call (727) 319-7440 or visit www.FloridaVets.org.

VA OUTPATIENT CLINICS

**Boca Raton Community Based
Outpatient Clinic**
901 Meadows Rd.
Boca Raton, FL 33433
(561) 416-8995

**Bradenton Community Based
Outpatient Clinic**
5520 State Road 64, Suite 101
Bradenton, FL 34208
(941) 721-0649

**Brooksville Community Based
Outpatient Clinic**
14540 Cortez Blvd. #108
Brooksville, FL 34613
(352) 597-8287

**Clermont Community Based
Outpatient Clinic**
805 Oakley Seaver Drive
Clermont, FL 34711
(352) 536-8200



**William Chappell Jr. VA
Outpatient Clinic**
551 National Health Care Dr.
Daytona Beach, FL 32114
(386) 323-7500

**Deerfield Beach Community Based
Outpatient Clinic**
2100 SW 10th St.
Deerfield Beach, FL 33442
(954) 570-5572

**Delray Beach Community Based
Outpatient Clinic**
4800 Linton Blvd.
Building E, #300
Delray Beach, FL 33445
(561) 495-1973

**Eglin VA Community Based
Outpatient Clinic**
100 Veterans Way
Eglin AFB, FL 32542
(866) 520-7359

**Fort Pierce Community Based
Outpatient Clinic**
1901 South 25th St, Suite 103
Ft. Pierce, FL 34947
(772) 595-5150

**Hollywood Community Based
Outpatient Clinic**
3702 Washington St. #201
Hollywood, FL 33021
(954) 986-1811

**Homestead Community Based
Outpatient Clinic**
950 Krome Ave. #401
Homestead, FL 33030
(305) 248-0874

Jacksonville VA Outpatient Clinic
1536 N Jefferson St.
Jacksonville, FL 32209
(904) 475-5800

Jacksonville VA SouthPoint Clinic
6900 Southpoint Dr. North
Jacksonville, FL 32216
(904) 470-6900

**Key Largo Community Based
Outpatient Clinic**
105662 Overseas Highway
Key Largo, FL 33037
(305) 451-0164

**Key West Community Based
Outpatient Clinic**
1300 Douglas Circle, L-15
Key West, FL 33040
(305) 293-4863

**Kissimmee Community Based
Outpatient Clinic**
2285 N. Central Ave.
Kissimmee, FL 34741
(407) 518-5004

**Lakeland Community Based
Outpatient Clinic**
4237 South Pipkin Rd.
Lakeland, FL 33542
(863) 701-2470

**Lecanto Community Based
Outpatient Clinic**
2804 W. Marc Knighton Court,
Suite A
Lecanto, FL 34461
(352) 746-8000

Lee County VA Healthcare Center
2489 Diplomat Parkway East
Cape Coral, FL 33909
(239) 652-1800

**Leesburg Community Based
Outpatient Clinic**
711 W. Main St.
Leesburg, FL 34748
(352) 435-4000

**Marianna Community Based
Outpatient Clinic**
4970 Highway 90
Marianna, FL 32446
(850) 718-5620

**Miami Healthcare for
Homeless Veterans**
1492 West Flagler St., Suite 101
Miami, FL 33135
(305) 541-5864

**Miami Outpatient
Substance Abuse Clinic**
**Bruce W. Carter VA
Medical Center**
1st Floor
Room 1E107A
305-575-7500

**Naples Community Based
Outpatient Clinic**
2685 Horseshoe Dr. S. #101
Naples, FL 34104
(239) 659-9188



**New Port Richey VA
Outpatient Clinic**
9912 Little Road
New Port Richey, FL 34654
(727) 869-4100

**Ocala Community Based
Outpatient Clinic**
1515 Silver Springs Blvd.
Ocala, FL 34470
(352) 369-3320

**Okeechobee Community Based
Outpatient Clinic**
1201 N. Parrot Ave.
Okeechobee, FL 34972
(863) 824-3232

**Orange City Community Based
Outpatient Clinic**
2583 S. Volusia Ave., Suite 300
Orange City, FL 32763
(386) 456-2080

Lake Nona Primary Care Clinic
13800 Veterans Way
Orlando, FL 32827
(407) 631-1050

**Palatka Community Based
Outpatient Clinic**
400 N. State Road 19
Suite 48 (Palatka Mall)
Palatka, FL 32177
(386) 329-8800

**Palm Harbor Community Based
Outpatient Clinic**
35209 US Hwy 19 N
Palm Harbor, FL 34684
(727) 734-5276

**Panama City Community Based
Outpatient Clinic**
Naval Support Activity, Bldg. 387
101 Vernon Ave.
Panama City Beach, FL 32407
(850) 636-7000

**Pembroke Pines Community Based
Outpatient Clinic**
7369 W. Sheridan St., Suite 102
Hollywood, FL 33024
(954) 894-1668

**Pensacola Joint Ambulatory
Care Center**
790 Veterans Way
Pensacola, FL 32507
(850) 912-2000

**Port Charlotte Community Based
Outpatient Clinic**
4161 Tamiami Trail, Suite 401
Port Charlotte, FL 33952
(941) 235-2710

**St Lucie Community Based
Outpatient Clinic**
128 SW Chamber Court
Port Saint Lucie, FL 34986
(772) 344-9288

St Lucie PTSD Clinic
126 SW Chamber Court
Port St Lucie, FL 34986
(772) 878-7876

**Sarasota Community Based
Outpatient Clinic**
5682 Bee Ridge Rd. #100
Sarasota, FL 34233
(941) 371-3349

**Sebring Community Based
Outpatient Clinic**
5901 US Highway 27 S
Sebring, FL 33870
(863) 471-6227

**St. Augustine Community Based
Outpatient Clinic**
1955 US 1 South, Suite 200
St. Augustine, FL 32086
(904) 829-0814

**St. Petersburg Community Based
Outpatient Clinic**
840 Dr. MLK Jr. Street N.
St. Petersburg, FL 33705
(727) 502-1700

**Stuart Community Based
Outpatient Clinic**
3501 SE Willoughby Blvd.
Stuart, FL 34997
(772) 288-0304

**William 'Bill' Kling VA
Outpatient Clinic**
9800 W. Commercial Blvd.
Sunrise, FL 33351
(954) 475-5500

Tallahassee VA Outpatient Clinic
1607 St. James Ct.
Tallahassee, FL 32308-5352
(850) 878-0191

Viera VA Outpatient Clinic
2900 Veterans Way
Viera, FL 32940
(321) 637-3788



The Villages VA Outpatient Clinic
8900 SE 165th Mulberry Ln.
The Villages, FL 32162
(352) 674-5000

Vero Beach Community Based Outpatient Clinic
372 17th Street
Vero Beach, FL 32960
(772) 299-4623

Crossroads Annex (Mental Health Services)
925 South Semoran Blvd.
Suite 114
Winter Park, FL 32792
(866) 998-4365

Zephyrhills Community Based Outpatient Clinic
6937 Medical View Lane
Zephyrhills, FL 33542
(813) 780-2550

VET CENTERS

If you have served in a combat zone, Vet Centers are in your community to help you and your family with readjustment counseling and outreach services.

Clearwater Vet Center
29259 US Hwy 19 North
Clearwater, FL 33761
(727) 549-3600

Clermont Vet Center
1655 E. Highway 50, Suite 102
Clermont, FL 34711
(352) 536-6701

Daytona Beach Vet Center
1620 Mason Ave., Suite C
Daytona Beach, FL 32117
(386) 366-6600

Fort Lauderdale Vet Center
3666 W. Oakland Park Blvd.
Lauderdale Lakes, FL 33311
(954) 356-7926

Fort Myers Vet Center
4110 Center Pointe Drive,
Unit 204
Fort Myers, FL 33916
(239) 652-1861

Gainesville Vet Center
105 NW 75th Street, Suite 2
Gainesville, FL 32607
(352) 331-1408

Palm Beach Vet Center
4996 10th Ave North, Suite 6
Greenacres, FL 33463
(561) 422-1201

Jacksonville Vet Center
300 East State Street, Suite J
Jacksonville, FL 32202
(904) 232-3621

Jupiter Vet Center
6650 W. Indiantown Rd.,
Suite 120
Jupiter, FL 33458
(561) 422-1220

Key Largo Vet Center Outstation
105662 Overseas Highway
Key Largo, FL 33037
(305) 451-0164

Polk County Vet Center
1370 Ariana St.
Lakeland, FL 33803
(863) 284-0841

Melbourne Vet Center
2098 Sarno Road
Melbourne, FL 32935
(321) 254-3410

Miami Vet Center
8280 NW 27th Street, Suite 511
Miami, FL 33122
(305) 718-3712

Collier County (Naples) Vet Center
2705 Horseshoe Dr. South, #204
Naples, FL 34104
(239) 403-2377



Pasco County Vet Center
5139 Deer Park Drive
New Port Richey, FL 34668
(727) 372-1854

Orlando Vet Center
5575 S. Semoran Blvd., Suite 30
Orlando, FL 32822
(407) 857-2800

Bay County Vet Center
3109 Minnesota Avenue, Suite 101
Panama City, FL 32405
(850) 522-6102

Pensacola Vet Center
4504 Twin Oaks Drive
Pensacola, FL 32506
(850) 456-5886

Pompano Beach Vet Center
2300 West Sample Road,
Suite 102
Pompano, FL 33073
(954) 984-1669

Sarasota Vet Center
4801 Swift Road, Suite A
Sarasota, FL 34231
(941) 927-8285

Okaloosa County Vet Center
6 11th Avenue, Suite G-1
Shalimar, FL 32579
(850) 651-1000

St. Petersburg Vet Center
6798 Crosswinds Drive North,
Bldg. A
St. Petersburg, FL 33710
(727) 549-3633

Tallahassee Vet Center
548 Bradford Road
Tallahassee, FL 32303
(850) 942-8810

Tampa Vet Center
3637 W. Waters Avenue,
Suite 600
Tampa, FL 33614
(813) 228-2621

VA MEDICAL CENTERS

C.W. Bill Young VA Medical Center
10000 Bay Pines Blvd.
Bay Pines, FL 33744
(727) 398-6661
(888) 820-0230

Malcom Randall VA Medical Center
1601 SW Archer Road
Gainesville, FL 32608
(352) 376-1611
(800) 324-8387

Lake City VA Medical Center
619 South Marion Avenue
Lake City, FL 32025
(386) 755-3016
(800) 308-8387

Bruce W. Carter VA Medical Center
1201 N.W. 16th St.
Miami, FL 33125
(305) 575-7000
(888) 276-1785

James A. Haley Veterans' Hospital
13000 Bruce B. Downs Blvd.
Tampa, FL 33612
(813) 972-2000
(888) 811-0107

Orlando VA Medical Center
5201 Raymond St.
Orlando, FL 32803
(407) 629-1599
(800) 922-7521

Note: A new VA Medical Center is scheduled to open at Lake Nona near Orlando in mid-2015. Some services are still being provided at the old campus. For patient information, call (407) 646-4181.

West Palm Beach VA Medical Center
7305 North Military Trail
West Palm Beach, FL 33410
(561) 422-8262
(800) 972-8262



County Veteran Service Offices

Information on current federal, state and local veterans' programs, entitlements and referral services is also available in Florida through a network of County Veteran Service Offices. The counselors are trained and accredited annually by the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs. All services are provided free of charge. A list of offices can be found online at www.FloridaVets.org.

Women Veterans' Coordinator

The Sunshine State is home to more than 160,000 women veterans. Many women veterans don't know that they are eligible for the full range of federal and state benefits. Watching over women veterans' issues in Florida is a State Women Veterans' Coordinator. For more information, call (727) 319-7440 or visit www.FloridaVets.org.





FLORIDA VETERANS FOUNDATION

The Florida Veterans Foundation, Inc. was established by the Florida Legislature in 2008 as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. As a Direct Support Organization of the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs, the Foundation provides assistance, funding and support for FDVA in carrying out its mission. Tax deductible contributions help fulfill the Foundation's mission to provide much needed assistance to Florida's veterans and their families in times of financial need, as well as advancing initiatives throughout the state that support Florida's veteran population.

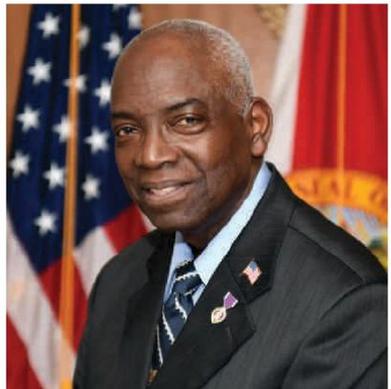
As a result of generous donations obtained, the Foundation has been able to assist thousands of veterans and their families throughout the state of Florida. Since 2013, the Foundation has conducted Homeless Veterans Stand Downs in Tallahassee and Miami, and has supported several others throughout the state helping with the mission to end veteran homelessness.

On March 31, 2014, Governor Scott signed into law F.S. 265.0031, authorizing the Foundation to construct the Florida Veterans Memorial and the Florida Veterans Walk of Honor at the State Capitol. Honor Bricks can be purchased online at www.floridaveteransfoundation.org/florida-veterans-walk-of-honor/ or by calling the Foundation at (850) 488-4181. Proceeds help fund the Foundation's Emergency Financial Aid program for Florida veterans.

Please visit www.FloridaVeteransFoundation.org or call (850) 488-4181 or 4182 to learn more about the Foundation and how you can help those who sacrificed so much in the name of freedom and democracy.



Washington Sanchez
Colonel, U.S. Army (Ret)
Chairman/CEO, Florida Veterans
Foundation, Inc.





BENEFITS AND HEALTH CARE CONTACTS

Reference	Phone	Website
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)	1-800-827-1000 or TDD 1-800-829-4833	www.va.gov www.vba.va.gov
Veterans Health Care Eligibility/ Enrollment	1-877-222-8387	www.va.gov/healthbenefits/
St. Petersburg VA Regional Office, Bay Pines	1-800-827-1000	www.benefits.va.gov/stpetersburg
Florida National Guard	(904) 823-0319	www.floridaguard.army.mil
Military Funeral Honors		www.dmdc.osd.mil/mfh/
Barrancas National Cemetery, Pensacola	(850) 453-4108/4846	www.cem.va.gov/cems/nchp/barrancas.asp
Bay Pines National Cemetery	(727) 319-6479	www.cem.va.gov/cems/nchp/baypines.asp
Cape Canaveral National Cemetery	(202) 632-8035	www.cem.va.gov/docs/factsheets/Cape_Canaveral.pdf
Florida National Cemetery, Bushnell	(352) 793-7740	www.cem.va.gov/CEMs/nchp/florida.asp
Jacksonville National Cemetery	(904) 766-5222	www.cem.va.gov/cems/nchp/jacksonville.asp
Sarasota National Cemetery	(941) 922-7200	www.cem.va.gov/cems/nchp/sarasota.asp
South Florida National Cemetery, Lake Worth	(561) 649-6489	www.cem.va.gov/cems/nchp/southflorida.asp
St. Augustine National Cemetery	(904) 766-5222	www.cem.va.gov/cems/nchp/staugustine.asp
Tallahassee National Cemetery	(202) 632-8035	www.cem.va.gov/docs/factsheets/Tallahassee.pdf
Returning Veterans	1-800-827-1000	www.oefoif.va.gov
TRICARE	1-800-444-5445	www.tricare.mil
Gulf War Veterans	1-800-749-8387	www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/gulfwar/
Women Veterans	(855) 829-6636	www.va.gov/womenvet/
Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve	1-800-336-4590	www.esgr.mil
National VA Homeless Hotline	1-877-424-3838	www.va.gov/homeless/nationalcallcenter.asp
VA eBenefits Portal	1-800-827-1000	www.ebenefits.va.gov
VA Home Loan Guaranty	1-888-611-5916	www.homeloans.va.gov
National Veteran Crisis Hotline	1-800-273-8255, Dial 1	www.mentalhealth.va.gov
Florida Relay Service - <i>For those who are deaf, hard of hearing, deaf/blind, or speech impaired</i>	Dial 7-1-1	www.ftri.org/floridarelay

FDVA

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS

www.FloridaVets.org

