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*If Veterans don't help Veterans, who will?*

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# Missouri State Veteran's Benefits

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

- [Housing Benefits](#)
- [Financial Assistance Benefits](#)
- [Employment Benefits](#)
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## Missouri Veteran Housing Programs

### Missouri Veterans Homes

A current total of seven skilled nursing homes are located throughout Missouri, providing 3 levels of skilled nursing care at minimal cost to the veteran.

Under the management of Missouri Veterans Commission, these homes are located in Cameron, Warrensburg, Mexico, St. Louis, St. James, Cape Girardeau, and Mt. Vernon. Each Missouri Veterans 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. 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 skilled nursing services.

## Missouri Financial Assistance Benefits

### 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.

### Income Tax Exemption for Military Retirement Pension

Beginning January 1, 2010, 15% of a military retirement pension income will be exempt from state taxes. This tax deduction will increase 15% annually until January 1, 2016, when all military retirement pension income will be tax free.

## **Missouri 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 State 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.

## **Other Missouri State Veteran Benefits**

### **Veterans Service Officers**

Located in nearly every county of the state, Veterans Service Officers and Assistants are highly trained individuals who provide counseling and assistance in completing and submitting applications for VA and State Veterans Benefits, as well as any necessary follow-up claimwork. These services are provided free of charge to Missouri's veterans and their dependents.

### **State Veterans Cemeteries**

Missouri Veterans Commission currently operates five State Veterans Cemeteries, one each in Springfield, Higginsville, Bloomfield, Ft. Leonard Wood, and Jacksonville. 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.

### **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.

The World War II Veterans? 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.

The Korean War Medallion was added in 2003 and 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 been awarded the World War II Veterans? Award Recognition.

In the 2003 legislative session, the Korean War Medallion was added. The Korean War award consists of a medal, medallion, and certificate.

### **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.

**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.

**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 Permit privileges for Permanent Change of Station**

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.

Visit the [Missouri Veterans Commission](#) website for more details on any of these programs.