

Introduction

Georgia is proud of the benefits available to veterans in the state.

This book is intended to provide an overview of these benefits with general explanations and descriptions of each.

For a full understanding of any benefit, as well as assistance applying, please visit any office of the Georgia Department of Veterans Service (GDVS).

The GDVS exists to serve the veterans of Georgia and their families. The department offers a wide range of superb services and programs, including excellent veterans benefits assistance; devoted claims and appeals support; skilled nursing home care; compassionate cemetery committal services; and rewarding veterans education, on-the-job training, and apprenticeship training program management.

GDVS representatives strive to ensure Georgia's veterans receive all of the earned federal and state benefits to which they are entitled. For more information regarding benefits or other veterans issues, call 404-656-2300 or visit veterans.georgia.gov.

The benefits described in this book are available to Georgia veterans pursuant to the authority of the state constitution, the Official Code of Georgia Annotated (O.C.G.A.), and the authority vested in the GDVS and other state government agencies.

References to specific sections of the law governing certain benefits are included in an appendix at the back of this book.

Please remember – no benefit is automatic; eligible veterans must apply for their earned benefits in order to receive them.

Disclaimer: This book is intended for informational purposes only, and no assurance of benefits is implied. To verify eligibility, please contact a GDVS Field Office near you.

Defining “Veteran”

Who qualifies as a veteran when applying for veterans benefits?

Per *Title 38 U.S. Code § 101 - Definitions*, the term “veteran” means a person who served in the active military, naval, air, or space service, and who was discharged or released therefrom under conditions other than dishonorable.

The term “active duty” means —

- Full-time duty in the Armed Forces, other than active duty for training;
- Full-time duty (other than for training purposes) as a commissioned officer of the Regular or Reserve Corps of the Public Health Service *(i)* on or after July 29, 1945, or *(ii)* before that date under circumstances affording entitlement to “full military benefits” or *(iii)* at any time, for the purposes of chapter 13 of this title;
- Full-time duty as a commissioned officer in the commissioned officer corps of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration or its predecessor organization the Coast and Geodetic Survey *(i)* on or after July 29, 1945, or *(ii)* before that date *(I)* while on transfer to one of the Armed Forces, or *(II)* while, in time of war or national emergency declared by the President, assigned to duty on a project for one of the Armed Forces in an area determined by the Secretary of Defense to be of immediate military hazard, or *(III)* in the Philippine Islands on December 7, 1941, and continuously in such islands thereafter, or *(iii)* at any time, for the purposes of chapter 13 of this title;
- Service as a cadet at the United States Military, Air Force, or Coast Guard Academy, or as a midshipman at the United States Naval Academy; and authorized travel to or from such duty or service;
- A Reservist or member of the National Guard called to Federal active duty or disabled from a disease or injury incurred or aggravated in line of duty or while in training status also qualify as a veteran.



Regarding Tax Exemptions

The GDVS makes no guarantees regarding the awarding of tax exemptions.

This book describes tax exemptions as they are written in Georgia law. However, the administration of tax exemptions is as interpreted by the tax commissioners of Georgia's 159 counties. GDVS personnel will assist veterans in obtaining the necessary documentation for filing.

To obtain verification letters of disability compensation from the Department of Veterans Affairs, please call 1-800-827-1000 and request a ***"Summary of Benefits"*** letter.

The actual filing of documents is the veteran's responsibility.

Any questions pertaining to tax exemptions at the local level should be asked to and answered by the County Tax Commissioner's Office. The GDVS can ONLY verify the status of a veteran's or surviving spouse's eligibility.

Disabled Veteran Homestead Tax Exemption

This exemption is available to honorably discharged Georgia veterans who are considered disabled according to any of several criteria.

In order to qualify, the disabled veteran must own the home and use it as a primary residence. This exemption is extended to the un-remarried surviving spouse or minor children as long as they continue to occupy the home as a residence.

Available to honorably discharged Georgia veterans considered disabled by any of these criteria:

- VA-rated 100 percent permanent and totally disabled
- VA-rated less than 100 percent disabled but entitled as 100 percent rate due to unemployability
- Entitled to receive a statutory award from VA for:
 - Loss or permanent loss of use of one or both feet
 - Loss or permanent loss of use of one or both hands
 - Loss of sight in one or both eyes
 - Permanent impairment of both eyes *



- Surviving, un-remarried spouses of qualified deceased veterans
- Surviving minor children of qualified deceased veterans

** – Central visual acuity of 20/200 or less in the better eye (with corrective glasses) or central visual acuity of more than 20/200 if there is a field defect in which the peripheral field has contracted to such an extent that the widest diameter of visual field subtends on angular distance no greater than 20 degrees in the better eye.*

Any qualifying disabled veteran may be granted an exemption of up to \$109,986 according to an index rate set by the United States Secretary of Veterans Affairs. The amount is set per 38 U.S.C. 2102.

The value of the property in excess of this exemption remains taxable.

For more information on tax exemptions, visit dor.georgia.gov, call 404-724-7000, contact your County Tax Commissioner's office, or consult a tax professional.

Military Retirement Income Tax Exemption

Veterans who retired from the military and are under 62 years of age are eligible for an exemption of up to \$17,500 of military retirement income. An additional exemption of up to \$17,500 is available to veterans under 62 who have at least \$17,500 of earned, taxable income.

Veterans ages 62 to 64 are eligible for Georgia's existing retirement income tax exemption for up to \$35,00. Those over the age of 65 are eligible for an exemption of up to \$65,000.

Other Tax Exemptions

Abatement of Income Taxes for Combat Deaths

Georgia law provides that service personnel who die as a result of wounds, disease, or injury incurred while serving in a combat zone as a member of the U.S. armed forces are exempt from all Georgia income taxes for the taxable year of death. Additionally, such taxes shall not apply for any prior taxable year ending on or after the first day served in the combat zone.



Ad Valorem Tax on Vehicles

This exemption applies to either the annual property tax or the title tax, whichever is applicable.

This exemption is for veterans who are verified by VA to be 100 percent totally and permanently service-connected disabled and veterans rated unemployable who are receiving or who are entitled to receive statutory awards from VA for: (1) loss or permanent loss of use of one or both feet; (2) loss or permanent loss of use of one or both hands; (3) loss of sight in one or both eyes; or (4) permanent impairment of vision of both eyes to a prescribed degree.

The exemption is granted on only ONE vehicle the veteran owns and upon which the free Disabled Veteran (DV) license plate is attached. Veterans who qualify for the Purple Heart or Medal of Honor specialty license plates are also exempt.

For more information on vehicle tax exemptions, contact your local County Tax Office.

Business Certificate of Exemption

Georgia veterans are eligible for a certificate granting exemption from any occupation tax, administrative fee, or regulatory fee imposed by local governments for peddling, conducting a business, or practicing a profession or semi-profession for a period of ten years, if they meet all of these conditions:

- discharged under honorable conditions, and
- service-connected disability rating of 10 percent or more.

To apply, veterans should gather the following and take the complete packet to their local County Probate Court:

- a copy of their DD Form 214,
- a current copy of their VA “Summary of Benefits” letter,
- and a completed VS Form 40-025 (which can be obtained at a GDVS Veteran Field Service Office).

Once verified, the Clerk of the Probate Court will issue a notarized letter/affidavit from the Judge confirming eligibility. The Probate Court Office should then submit your notarized letter/affidavit to your County Tax Commissioner and the Georgia Secretary of State’s Office to register your business.

For verification of a veteran’s disability compensation, contact the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs at 1-800-827-1000 to request a “**Summary of Benefits**” letter.



Extension of Filing Deadline for Combat Deployment

The tax filing deadline for combat deployed military personnel (those who served on active duty as members of the U.S. armed forces in combat activities during a period designated by the President) is extended until 180 days after such deployment ends.

Sales Tax Exemption for Vehicle Purchase/Adaptation

A disabled veteran who receives a VA grant for the purchase and special adapting of a vehicle is exempt from paying the state sales tax on the vehicle (only on the original grant).

Driving Licenses and Personal ID Cards

Veteran's Driver's License and Personal ID

This special version of a Georgia driver's license or personal identification card includes a U.S. flag and the word VETERAN prominently displayed on the front.

Any honorably discharged veteran is entitled to a free veteran driver's license. A member or former member of the National Guard who served on active duty and received a DD Form 214 also qualifies.

Veterans must be a current resident of Georgia to apply for a veteran driver's license.

A member or former member of the National Guard with 20 or more years of creditable service also qualifies. The veteran should obtain certification from the Adjutant General of the State of Georgia and include it with the other required documentation.

In order to obtain a veteran's driver's license, the applying veteran must take their DD Form 214 and proof of residency, together with all required identifying documents (birth certificate or passport; Social Security card; two documents showing residential address; and, if applicable, name change documentation), **directly to a Georgia Department of Driver Services (DDS) office.**

A DDS representative will administer a vision exam, verify the veteran's eligibility, and issue a veteran's driver's license.



National Guard Driver's License

Any member of the Georgia National Guard or Reserve who is in good standing and has completed at least one year of satisfactory service is eligible for a free National Guard Driver's License.

You must bring a completed Certificate of Eligibility (DS-318) obtained from the local National Guard Commanding Officer when applying for this license at your local DDS office.

Honorary Driver's License – Spouse

The spouse of a qualified veteran, whose disabilities preclude operating a motor vehicle, is eligible for a free honorary driver's license. The surviving un-remarried spouse of an eligible deceased veteran may also receive a free honorary veteran driver's license.

You must be a current Georgia resident to qualify.

In order to obtain a free honorary driver's license, take proof of the veteran's qualifying service and residency to any GDVS Veterans Field Service Office. Also provide verification of spouse's disabilities that preclude operating a motor vehicle or a copy of spouse's death certificate, whichever is applicable.

A service officer will verify eligibility and issue a completed Certificate of Eligibility (DS-516) which must be taken to a local Department of Driver Services office when applying for a license.

License Plates

To apply for any of the many specialty license plates for veterans, you must complete Form MV-9W (available at dor.ga.gov/documents/forms) from the Motor Vehicle Division of the Georgia Department of Revenue and take it, along with a copy of your DD Form 214 (or other supporting documentation for certain plates), to your county tax office.

In general, veterans license plates are available to:

- Georgia veterans discharged under honorable conditions
- Surviving, unremarried spouses of qualified deceased veterans



Many of these plates are available for no registration fee, manufacturing fee, or annual fee. Applicants are entitled to a second plate upon payment of a \$25 manufacturing fee in addition to a \$20 annual fee. Veterans license plates are available for motorcycles and include simpler designs than full-size plates.

License plates are available for veterans, retired military, and active or retired members of a reserve component. Specialty plates are also available for select military campaigns, distinguished military medals, and Gold Star families.

To view all military/veteran specialty plates and qualifications, please visit dor.georgia.gov.

License Plates: Disabled Veteran

Honorably discharged Georgia veterans considered disabled by VA must meet several requirements to qualify for Disabled Veteran license plates:

- VA-rated 100 percent permanent and totally disabled
- VA-rated less than 100 percent disabled but paid at the 100 percent rate due to individual unemployability
- Entitled to receive a statutory award from VA for:
 - Loss or permanent loss of use of one or both feet
 - Loss or permanent loss of use of one or both hands
 - Loss of sight in one or both eyes
 - Permanent impairment of both eyes

Disabled Veteran license plates are also available to the surviving, un-remarried spouses or surviving minor children of qualified deceased veterans for a vehicle that was previously registered in the veteran's name.

Verification:

- You must provide a letter from VA indicating disability percentage and service connection. GDVS Veterans Service Officers can assist you in obtaining this letter.
- Alternatively, qualified veterans may obtain a certified statement from an authorized physician and take it to a GDVS Veterans Field Service Office along with discharge paperwork or proof of active-duty service and verification of residency.



Fees:

- There is no registration fee, manufacturing fee, or annual fee for a set of two plates, to be fixed to the front and back of the veteran's vehicle. Applicants are entitled to a second set of plates upon payment of a \$25 manufacturing fee in addition to a \$20 annual fee.
- Veterans with a 100 percent service-connected permanent and total disability rating are exempt from ad valorem taxes on one vehicle.
- Disabled Veterans plates are issued to vehicles under 15,000 pounds that are not used for commercial purposes. They are not issued for motor homes.

Hunting and Fishing Licenses

Hunting and fishing licenses are administered by the Wildlife Resources Division of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources. For more information, visit georgiawildlife.com or call 800-366-2661.

Georgia residency is a requirement for each of the following:

Returning Veterans

A One Time Veterans License is available free to military veterans who served on active federal duty for 90 or more days and were honorably discharged on July 1, 2005, or later. This free license is valid for one year from date of issue, is available to Georgia residents, and may be issued only once.

The One Time Veterans Hunting and Fishing License is a full privilege sportsman's license and includes all state paid recreational hunting and fishing privileges (some additional no-cost state licenses may be required).

After the One Time Veterans Hunting and Fishing License expires, veterans may apply for a discounted full privilege veterans lifetime license.

Discounted Lifetime Licenses

Honorably discharged resident veterans may purchase a Georgia Adult Lifetime Sportsman's License at a 20% discount (\$600, ages 16 - 49).



Veterans may purchase a Senior Discount Lifetime License beginning at age 60 (\$315), or an Older Adult Lifetime License at age 50 (\$375).

Permanently and Totally Disabled

Veterans with a permanent and total disability rating from VA (or another government agency) for a physical or mental impairment are eligible for a 3-year disability sportsman's license at a steep discount from regular license cost.

Veterans disabled for mental impairment may obtain a discounted disability fishing license.

Totally Blind

Eligible for a free lifetime honorary fishing license.

Age 65 and Older

Seniors born before July 1, 1952, are eligible for a free senior lifetime sportsman's license.

Seniors born on July 1, 1952, or after may purchase low-cost lifetime or annual licenses.

Other Special State Provisions

Driving License Renewal Extension for Combat Deployed

Military personnel on active duty can request a Georgia driver's license/ID card renewal through the mail. The same privilege is also extended to a military person's spouse and any licensed dependents or ID card holders living with the person who is on duty in a foreign domain or in a state other than Georgia.

Georgia also allows a six-month grace period for a service member whose Georgia driver's license expires while on active duty outside the state. Service members are allowed to drive in Georgia on an expired Georgia driver's license for six months after the date he/she is discharged or reassigned back into the state.

Employment Preference

A 5-point credit is extended to war veterans seeking employment with the State of Georgia. A 10-point credit is extended to veterans with a VA service-connected disability rating of 10 percent or more. The same privilege is extended to the spouse of a qualified veteran.



High School Diplomas for Certain War Veterans

A veteran who failed to receive a high school diploma due to an interruption of education by service in World War II, Korea, or Vietnam is eligible to obtain a diploma.

Veterans should apply to the board of education of the school district where they attended high school.

Motor Fuel Service for Disabled Veterans

When a gasoline station offers both full-service and self-service, a station employee shall, upon request, provide full-service at the self-service price to a disabled veteran, provided: 1) the disabled veteran is driving a vehicle bearing Disabled Veteran license plates, and 2) the disabled veteran is not accompanied by a person capable of pumping fuel (16 years or older and not disabled).

Parking for Disabled Veterans

If a Disabled Veteran license plate is properly displayed, the veteran is authorized to park in parking areas designated for persons with disabilities. (No additional parking permit is required.)

State Park Entrance Fee Reduction

Georgia veterans with a discharge from the U.S. armed forces under honorable conditions and a VA service-connected disability rating are eligible for a 25 percent reduction of the entrance fee to state parks, historical sites, and recreational areas.

To apply, bring your DD Form 214, verification of service-connected disability, and proof of residency to a GDVS Veterans Field Service Office. A service officer will verify eligibility and forward the application to the GDVS Central Office. If approved, the state park discount card will be mailed.

Vital Records

Veterans and their families may obtain copies of marriage, divorce, birth, and death documents without charge, provided the copies are to be used for establishing disability or death claims.

For assistance, contact the Georgia Department of Public Health, Office of Vital Records: 404-679-4702 or dph.georgia.gov.



About the GDVS: Appeals Assistance

The GDVS Appeals Division assists veterans and their families who choose to dispute the disposition of their claims for veterans benefits.

GDVS Appeals Officers assist veterans at personal or decision review officer (DRO) hearings before the local VA Hearing Officer or before the Board of Veterans Appeals from Washington, D.C.

The Appeals Division is located within the Atlanta VA Regional Office Building at 1700 Clairmont Road, Decatur, GA 30033.

Please call ahead before visiting, as this office is open on an appointment-only basis: 404-929-5345.

About the GDVS: Veterans Education & Training

By law, the Georgia Department of Veterans Service is designated as the State Approving Agency (SAA), responsible for approving and supervising all institutions and establishments in Georgia that offer education and training under the provisions of the Veterans Educational Assistance Program (GI Bill).

Within the GDVS, the SAA function is performed by the Veterans Education & Training Division.

This division is responsible for ensuring approved institutions and establishments meet and maintain acceptable standards so eligible persons who attend may receive educational assistance from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

These programs must have SAA approval before veterans and other eligible persons may receive educational benefits (GI Bill) from VA under the authority of Title 38, U.S. Code and Chapter 1606 Title 10.

Federal and state laws require stringent regulatory compliance of all institutions and establishments approved for veterans attendance. The responsibilities of approval, annual inspections, and ensuring corrective action when necessary, constitute a vital function of the Georgia SAA.



The SAA has the responsibility of ensuring educational institutions and establishments meet and maintain acceptable standards so eligible persons who attend may receive educational assistance from VA. This includes all public and private schools and all establishments offering apprenticeship and other on-the-job training.

The satisfactory performance of these duties requires SAA personnel to have extensive knowledge in education administration and a full understanding of the laws and regulations that govern and control the Veterans Educational Assistance Program.

For further information concerning approved universities, colleges, technical and trade schools, flight schools, correspondence schools, as well as apprenticeship and on-the-job training programs, contact the SAA staff.

Contact: 404-656-2306 or saaga@vs.state.ga.us.

On-the-Job Training Programs

On-the-Job (OJT) programs may be approved for a wide variety of entry-level jobs. Once approved, a veteran participates in the OJT program while working under the employer's supervision. The veteran receives monthly VA education benefits in addition to a regular salary.

In order to apply, a veteran must be employed full-time with an employer who can provide training in a bona fide trade or skill in which the veteran is not already qualified.

Apprenticeship Programs

Apprenticeship training is similar to OJT, but includes theoretical instruction as well as practical training. While learning a trade as an "apprentice," the veteran is taught by a skilled worker, a "journeyman." Once approved, the veteran receives VA education benefits while working full-time and earning wages.

Apprenticeship programs differ from OJT in that they are normally two or more years in length. They require a minimum of 144 hours of related classroom instruction per year. The employer, local technical college, union, or the Federal Bureau of Apprenticeship Training usually provides classroom instruction.



The SAA approves non-registered programs. Both the Federal Bureau of Apprenticeship Training and the SAA approve registered apprenticeship programs. Some examples of approved programs are carpenter, electrician, brick mason, and plumber.

About the GDVS: War Veterans Nursing Homes

The GDVS operates two skilled nursing care homes for eligible war veterans located in Georgia. One is in Augusta and the other is in Milledgeville.

The primary mission of these homes is to provide high quality skilled nursing home care to veterans while seeking to improve their quality of life and overall health.

Eligibility criteria:

- The veteran must be a current Georgia resident and meet one of the following conditions:
 - Resided in Georgia two years immediately preceding the date of application
 - Resided in Georgia five or more of the past 15 years
- The veteran must have served on active duty in the U.S. armed forces during one of the following periods:
 - World War II: December 7, 1941 – December 31, 1946
 - Post-World War II: January 1, 1947 – June 26, 1950
 - Korea: June 27, 1950 – January 31, 1955
 - Cold War: January 31, 1955 – August 1, 1990
 - Vietnam: July 1, 1964 – May 7, 1975
 - Persian Gulf: August 2, 1990 – present
- The veteran must have a discharge under other than dishonorable conditions.
- The veteran must be approved as eligible for skilled nursing care by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).
- The veteran must be free of contagious infectious disease and behavioral and psychiatric problems.
- The veteran must not need to be sustained by line-operated mechanical means.

To apply for admission, contact the Admissions Office of one of the homes or any GDVS Veterans Field Service Office.



A nominal daily fee is charged. Eligible veterans may apply for the federal Aid & Attendance benefit to help offset this fee. Veterans with a service-connected disability rating of 70 percent or higher or whose admission is due to a service-connected condition do not have to pay the fee, as this care and treatment is paid in full by VA.

Georgia War Veterans Nursing Home – Augusta

The Georgia War Veterans Home in Augusta is a 192-bed skilled nursing care facility located adjacent to the campus of Augusta University, across from the Charlie Norwood VA Medical Center. It is operated under an interagency agreement between the GDVS and Augusta University.

Dedicated in 1969, the home was the first of its kind built with federal financial grant assistance. It is accredited by The Joint Commission.

Along with the provision of skilled nursing care, the home serves as a teaching facility to acquaint medical, dental, pharmacy, and allied health students with the medical conditions and diseases of the aged. This provides students with practical experience and helps them gain expertise in treating the disabled and the elderly.

Additionally, the home contains a GDVS Veterans Field Service Office to assist veterans in the area.

Georgia War Veterans Home – Milledgeville

The Georgia War Veterans Home is a 550-bed skilled nursing care facility comprised of four buildings located on approximately 17 acres. The home provides skilled nursing care and specialty care for Alzheimer's residents. It is accredited by The Joint Commission.

The home is operated through an agreement with STG International.

Additionally, the home contains a GDVS Veterans Field Service Office to assist veterans in the area.

About the GDVS: Veterans Memorial Cemeteries

The Georgia Veterans Memorial Cemeteries, established for the interment of faithful and honorable military veterans and eligible family members, are shrines recognizing all Georgia veterans.



There are two Georgia Veterans Memorial Cemeteries, located in Glennville and Milledgeville, open for interment of qualified veterans and dependents.

Each cemetery includes a welcome center, a chapel, in-ground interment areas, and columbaria connected by paved roadways and walkways in beautiful, well-landscaped settings. Grave-site locators are available for the convenience of visitors.

Eligible for interment:

- Veterans with a discharge other than dishonorable
- Members of the Reserves or National Guard who were eligible for retirement pay at the time of death (or who would have been entitled to retirement pay at age 60)
- Members of the U.S. armed forces killed in the line of duty while on active duty or active duty for training
- Members of the U.S. armed forces who otherwise died on active duty
- Certain other veterans as defined in federal law
- Spouses, unmarried dependents under the age of 21, and eligible life-long dependents of any of the above

Proper paperwork is required to determine eligibility. The veteran's name; rank; serial, social security, and VA claim numbers; date of birth and date of death must be provided to cemetery personnel. A copy of the veteran's DD Form 214 or other proof of service is required. A copy of the marriage certificate is required for the spouse to be buried with the veteran.

Standard upright, granite headstones are used to mark the burial sites of casketed and cremated remains. Small granite covers are used to mark the niches of cremated remains placed in a columbarium.

Plots, vaults, niches, and markers are provided at no charge. Use of the committal chapel for interment services is also free. The family is responsible for all other expenses.

The vaults provided are concrete-lined and double-depth for the veteran and spouse or dependent. (If the veteran selects interment for cremated remains, the spouse or dependent must also select interment for cremated remains.)



The GDVS pledges to honor the dignity and memory of each person. Cemetery staff will make the interment as compassionate and comfortable as possible, ensuring the committal service and any other requests are handled respectfully. They will assist family and friends in every way possible during their time of sorrow.

Business hours are from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday.

Interment hours are from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Monday-Friday.

Visiting hours are from 8 a.m. to dusk daily, including weekends and holidays.

Georgia Veterans Memorial Cemetery – Glennville

Georgia Veterans Memorial Cemetery – Glennville

8819 U.S. Highway 301, Glennville, GA 30427

912-654-5398 veterans.ga.gov/gvmc-glennville

Georgia Veterans Memorial Cemetery – Milledgeville

Georgia Veterans Memorial Cemetery – Milledgeville

2617 Vinson Highway, Milledgeville, GA 31061

478-445-3363 veterans.ga.gov/gvmc-milledgeville

About the GDVS: Women and Minority Veterans Office

The Women and Minority Veterans Office's mission is to provide information, advocacy, outreach, and support to Georgia's women veterans, veterans who are part of racial and ethnic populations, and their families. Please contact 404-656-2300 for assistance.

About the GDVS: Suicide Prevention and Outreach Office

The Suicide Prevention and Outreach Office's mission is to provide information, training, outreach, and support to Georgia's military servicemembers, veterans, and their families. Please contact 404-656-2300 for assistance



About the GDVS: External Affairs and Communications

GDVS External Affairs and Communications supports the department's internal and external communications and outreach missions with the ultimate goal of keeping Georgia's veterans and their families informed of important news and events.

The division produces informational materials such as this book, brochures, cards, calendars, and other items.

The division maintains veterans.georgia.gov, which is home to the department's official news feed and calendar of events as well as the most up-to-date version of this book, contact information, and information about the other divisions of the GDVS. The division continuously updates Georgians about important veterans news via social media.

Stay informed by joining the GDVS communities at facebook.com/gavetsvc, twitter.com/gavetsvc, or linkedin.com/company/gavetsvc.

Contact: 404-656-5933 or gavetsvc@vs.state.ga.us.

Veterans Field Service Offices

GDVS Veterans Field Service Offices are located throughout Georgia and staffed by VA accredited veteran service officers who advise veterans and their families regarding earned federal and state veterans benefits.

Visit veterans.georgia.gov/field-offices for updates and holiday schedules.

Albany

1303 W. Broad Ave., Albany, GA 31707

229-430-1797

veterans.georgia.gov/albany

9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday

Americus

1601 N. Martin Luther King Blvd., Ste 220, Americus, GA 31719

229-931-2546

veterans.georgia.gov/amicus

9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday



Athens

9249 U.S. Highway 29, Suite D, Athens, GA 30601
706-733-0188, ext. 45575 veterans.georgia.gov/athens
9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday

Atlanta

Floyd Veterans Memorial Bldg., West Tower, Suite 460
205 Jesse Hill, Jr. Drive SE, Atlanta, GA 30334
404-656-5940 veterans.georgia.gov/atlanta
9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday

Augusta - GWVNH

1101 15th St., Augusta, GA 30901-3196
706-721-4301 veterans.georgia.gov/augusta
9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday

Augusta

Charlie Norwood VA Medical Center, Room 1D-264
950 15th St., Augusta, GA 30901-3196
706-733-0118, ext. 32277 veterans.georgia.gov/augusta-vamc
8:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m., Monday-Friday

Bainbridge

307 East Broughton St., Bainbridge, GA 39817-4003
229-248-2599 veterans.georgia.gov/bainbridge
9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Tuesday-Wednesday

Blairsville

Blairsville VA Community Based Outpatient Clinic
1294 Georgia Highway 515 East, Blairsville, GA 30512
706-835-3980, ext. 344584 veterans.georgia.gov/blairsville
8:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m., Monday-Friday

Brunswick

11 Judicial Lane, Suite 203, Brunswick, GA 31520
912-264-7360 veterans.georgia.gov/brunswick
9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday

Brunswick - CBOC

93 Benchmark Way, Brunswick, GA 31520
(912) 261-2355 , ext. 46050 veterans.georgia.gov/brunswick-cboc
9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday



Canton

220 Brown Industrial Parkway, Suite 150, Canton, GA 30114-2779
770-720-3538 veterans.georgia.gov/canton
9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday

Carrollton

Trinka Davis Veterans Village Outpatient Clinic, Room E-083
180 Martin Drive, Carrollton, GA 30117
678-423-4970, ext. 352589 veterans.georgia.gov/carrollton
8:30 a.m.-4 p.m., Monday-Friday

Cartersville

320 W. Cherokee Ave., Room 105, Cartersville, GA 30120
770-387-3746 veterans.georgia.gov/cartersville
9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday

Cedartown

142 West Ave., Cedartown, GA 30125
770-749-2209 veterans.georgia.gov/cedartown
9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday and Friday; 8 a.m.-noon, Wednesday

Columbus

2100 Comer Avenue. Suite 100A, Columbus, GA 31904
706-649-1265 veterans.georgia.gov/columbus
9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday

Conyers

983 Taylor St., Conyers, GA 30012
770-388-5075 veterans.georgia.gov/conyers
9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday

Dalton

305 Point North Place, Suite 7, Dalton, GA 30722
706-272-2355 veterans.georgia.gov/dalton
9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday

Decatur - VAMC

Atlanta VA Medical Center, Room 1C204
1670 Clairmont Road, Decatur, GA 30033-4004
404-728-7664 veterans.georgia.gov/decatur-vamc
9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday



Decatur - CBOC

Atlanta VA Clinic, Room 1A101
250 N. Arcadia Road, Decatur, GA 30030
404-297-1540, ext. 315427 veterans.georgia.gov/decatur-cboc
9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday

Demorest

185 Scoggins Drive, Demorest, GA 30535
706-894-1049 veterans.georgia.gov/demorest
9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday

Dublin

Carl Vinson VA Medical Center, Room 124-6, Ward 6A
1826 Veterans Blvd., Dublin, GA 31021-3699
478-272-1210 ext. 72562 veterans.georgia.gov/dublin
9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday

Fort McPherson

Fort McPherson/East Point VA Community Based Outpatient Clinic
1701 Hardee Ave., S.W., Bldg. 129, Rm. 2C221, Atlanta, GA 30310
404-230-5683, ext. 394801 veterans.georgia.gov/fort-mcpherson
9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday

Fort Moore

Soldier for Life Center, Room 1405
8150 Marne Road, Fort Moore, GA 31905
706-545-5338 veterans.georgia.gov/fort-moore
9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday

Fort Stewart

Soldier for Life Transition Assistance Program, Second Floor, Room 216
972 William Wilson Avenue, Fort Stewart, GA 31415
912-767-6720 veterans.georgia.gov/fort-stewart
9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday

Gainesville

311 Green St. NW, Room 312, Gainesville, GA 30501-6060
770-531-6060 veterans.georgia.gov/gainesville
9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday



Glennville

Georgia Veterans Memorial Cemetery
8819 U.S. Highway 301, Glennville, GA 30427
912-654-5159 veterans.georgia.gov/glennville
9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday

Greensboro

113 N. Main St., Suite 117, Greensboro, GA 30642
706-453-7455 veterans.georgia.gov/greensboro
9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday

Griffin

837 Memorial Drive, Griffin, GA 30223
770-412-4074 veterans.georgia.gov/griffin
9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday

Hinesville

Hinesville VA Community Based Outpatient Clinic
500 E. Oglethorpe Highway, Room C-127, Hinesville, GA 31313
912-408-2948 veterans.georgia.gov/hinesville
9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday

Jasper

Pickens County VA Community Based Outpatient Clinic
934 East Church Street, Jasper, GA 30143
706-301-5720 ext. 504712 veterans.georgia.gov/jasper
9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday

LaFayette

101B East Patton Street, Suite A, LaFayette, GA 30728-2519
706-996-8056 veterans.georgia.gov/lafayette
9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday

LaGrange

Department of Labor, 1002 Longley Pl, LaGrange, GA 30240
706-845-4355 veterans.georgia.gov/lagrange
9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday

Lawrenceville

Lawrenceville VA Community Based Outpatient Clinic
455 Phillip Blvd., Suite 200, Room 106, Lawrenceville, GA 30046
678-225-0350, ext. 431964 veterans.georgia.gov/lawrenceville
8:30 a.m.-4 p.m., Monday-Friday



Lyons

126 W. Grady Ave., Lyons, GA 30436

912-526-8860 veterans.georgia.gov/lyons

9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday

Macon

5566 Thomaston Road, Macon, GA 31221

478-476-8868, ext. 46694 veterans.georgia.gov/macon

9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday.

Marietta

1150 Powder Springs St., Suite 350, Marietta, GA, 30064

770-528-3254 veterans.georgia.gov/marietta

9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday

Marietta - Chattahoochee VECTR

980 South Cobb Drive, Marietta, GA, 30060

770-528-4920 veterans.georgia.gov/marietta-vectr

9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday

Marietta - Cobb Multi-Specialty Clinic

1263 Cobb Parkway North, Marietta, GA, 30062

770-852-3400, ext. 611569 veterans.georgia.gov/marietta-cboc

9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday

Milledgeville - GWVH

Georgia Veterans War Home, Wheeler Bldg, Room D-100

2249 Vinson Highway, Milledgeville, GA 31061

478-445-6900 veterans.georgia.gov/milledgeville

9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday

Moultrie

101 East Central Ave., Room 127, Moultrie, GA 31768

229-891-7135 veterans.georgia.gov/moultrie

9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday

Newnan

22 East Broad St., Room 119, Newnan, GA 30264

770-254-7408 veterans.georgia.gov/newnan

9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday



Oakwood

Oakwood VA Community Based Outpatient Clinic
4175 Tanners Creek Drive, Suite 111, Flowery Branch, GA 30542
404-321-6111, ext. 498225 veterans.georgia.gov/oakwood
8:30 a.m.-4 p.m., Monday-Friday

Rome

201 Calhoun Ave., Rome, GA 30161
706-295-6026 veterans.georgia.gov/rome
9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday

St. Marys

St. Marys VA Community Based Outpatient Clinic
2603 Osborne Road, Suite E, St. Marys, GA 31588
912-510-3440 veterans.georgia.gov/st-marys
9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday

Savannah

Savannah VA Community Based Outpatient Clinic
1170 Shawnee St., Savannah, GA 31419
912-920-0214, ext. 412191 veterans.georgia.gov/savannah
9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday

Statesboro

3A West Altman St., Statesboro, GA 30458
912-871-1104 veterans.georgia.gov/statesboro
9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday

Thomasville

406 Smith Ave., Thomasville, GA 31792
229-225-4050 veterans.georgia.gov/thomasville
9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday

Tifton

1824 Ridge Ave. North, Tifton, GA 31794
478-272-1210, ext. 46233 veterans.georgia.gov/tifton
9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday

Valdosta

Valdosta VA Community Based Outpatient Clinic
348 Enterprise Drive, Valdosta, GA 31601
229-316-2970 veterans.georgia.gov/valdosta
9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday



Warner Robins - VECTR

Georgia Veterans Education Career Transition Resource Center (VECTR)
1001 South Armed Forces Blvd., Warner Robins, GA 31088
478-218-3906 veterans.georgia.gov/warner-robins
9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday

Waycross

415 Lott St., Waycross, GA 31501
912-285-6340 veterans.georgia.gov/waycross
9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday

Waynesboro

Burke County Office Park, Room 107
715 West Sixth St., Waynesboro, GA 30830-0093
706-554-3874 veterans.georgia.gov/waynesboro
9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday

Zebulon

Pike County VA Outpatient Clinic
9528 US Highway 19 North, Zebulon, GA 30295
770-567-7511 veterans.georgia.gov/zebulon
9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday

Other State Agencies Assisting Veterans

Besides the GDVS, there are several state agencies an interance in assisting veterans.

Many are members of the Returning Veterans Task Force (RVTF), an intra-state task force that investigates how Georgia's state government agencies can coordinate services to better assist service members transitioning from active duty back into society.

For more information on RVTF agencies and the services they provide, visit veterans.georgia.gov/rvtf.

For general information on other Georgia state government agencies, call 1-800-GEORGIA or visit georgia.gov/agencies.

Council of Accountability Court Judges of Georgia

• Assists in the development of veterans treatment courts
404-656-2613 gaaccountabilitycourts.org



Georgia Department of Behavioral Health & Developmental Disabilities

- Provides treatment and support services to people with mental health challenges and substance use disorders and assists individuals who live with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

404-657-2252 dbhdd.georgia.gov

Georgia Department of Community Health

- Provides Georgians with access to affordable, quality health care through effective planning, purchasing, and oversight.

404-656-4507 dch.georgia.gov

Georgia Department of Defense

- Coordinates and supervises all agencies and functions of the Georgia National Guard, including the Georgia Army National Guard, the Georgia Air National Guard, the Georgia State Defense Force, and Youth Challenge Academies.

678-569-3911 ga.ng.mil

Georgia Department of Human Services

- Delivers a wide range of human services designed to promote self-sufficiency, safety, and well-being for all Georgians.

- Gives priority to veterans for enrollment in Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP), which serves the unemployed age 55 and older looking to re-enter the workforce.

844-694-2347 dhs.georgia.gov

Georgia Secretary of State

- Engages veterans in the elections process as members of the electorate and volunteers at the polls.

- Assists veterans in navigating the processes of applying for business, corporate, and other professional licensing.

404-656-2881 sos.georgia.gov

Georgia Veterans Education Career Transition Resource Center (VECTR)

- Offers career counseling, educational coaching, and workforce training for veterans entering Georgia's public postsecondary educational systems and workforce.

478-218-3900 gavectr.org



Technical College System of Georgia

- Provides support for veterans pursuing education
404-679-1667 tcsj.edu/military_landing.php

University System of Georgia

- Provides support for veterans pursuing education
404-962-3110 usg.edu/student_affairs/military

WorkSource Georgia

- Aids job-seeking veterans and their families, including job search workshops, résumé and cover letter assistance, and resources for transitioning into the civilian workforce.

404-232-3527

tcsj.edu/worksource/resources-for-practitioners/worksource-vets/

Other State Agencies of Interest to Veterans

Georgia Department of Driver Services

- Offers commercial and regular passenger vehicle driver's licenses, driver's permits, and state identification cards.

404-657-9300 dds.georgia.gov

Georgia Department of Natural Resources

- Protects, conserves and enhances the state's natural, historic and cultural resources for present and future generations.

404-656-3500 gadnr.org

Georgia Department of Revenue

- Offers information about taxes for individuals, corporations, and tax professionals.

855-406-5221 dor.georgia.gov

Appendix: Frequently Asked Questions

Records

How do I obtain a copy of my DD Form 214?

If your Home of Record is listed as Georgia, the Georgia Department of Veterans Service may have a copy of your DD Form 214 on file. Contact the GDVS at 404-656-5940 to request a copy.

You may also file a request via the National Archives: archives.gov/veterans.

If you are requesting a DD Form 214 for a deceased family member, the request must be filed via the National Archives.



How do I obtain military medals from service?

You will need to complete a Standard Form 180 (SF 180), sign and mail it to the Military Records section of the National Personnel Records Center, St. Louis, MO. For assistance, you may contact any GDVS Veterans Field Service Office, call the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs at 800-827-1000, or visit archives.gov/veterans/replace-medals.

How do I obtain a Vietnam War Certificate of Honor?

As part of the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam War, the State of Georgia and the GDVS wants to honor every Vietnam War veteran in the state.

The Vietnam War Certificate of Honor is available to every Georgia veteran with honorable service during the Vietnam War. This includes veterans with service in country and those who served in other capacities.

Each certificate is personalized with the Vietnam War veteran's name, rank, branch of service, and dates of service printed over the Seal of the State of Georgia and includes the official U.S. Department of Defense's Vietnam War Commemorative Partner logo.

To learn more or apply for a certificate, contact GDVS External Affairs and Communications at gavetsvc@vs.state.ga.us or 404-656-5933.

What is a Veteran Identification Card? How do I get one?

The Veterans Identification Card Act 2015 (Public Law 114-31) was enacted on July 20, 2015. The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs is responsible for administering this program.

It does not replace your Veteran Health Identification Card or your Department of Defense ID Card.

As of July 1, 2018, VA is issuing the Veterans Identification Card (VIC) to veterans who apply online at va.gov/records or speak to a representative at a VA Medical Center or CBOC near you. Call 1-800-827-1000 for more details.

Federal Benefits

Can the GDVS help me apply for federal veterans benefits?

Absolutely. GDVS personnel are certified to counsel veterans on their eligibility for federal veterans benefits and assist them in applying. Find an office near you by visiting veterans.georgia.gov/field-offices or review the list of field offices beginning on page 21 of this book.

I have been advised to apply to VA for compensation.

What is compensation, and how do I apply?

Compensation is a tax-free benefit program that evaluates a disability presumed to have been caused by active-duty military service. Generally, the degree of disability specified is also designed to compensate for considerable loss of working time from exacerbations or



illnesses. The GDVS is happy to assist with the application process. Find an office near you by visiting veterans.georgia.gov/field-offices or review the list of field offices beginning on page 21 of this book. For additional information, see the compensation topic at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs website, va.gov.

My spouse died of a service-connected disability.

What benefits am I entitled to, and how do I apply?

The entitlement is referred to as Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC). This benefit pays a monthly payment to a surviving spouse, child, or parent of a veteran whose death was determined to be service connected. The GDVS is happy to assist with the application process.

Find an office near you by visiting veterans.georgia.gov/field-offices. For additional information, see the DIC topic at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs website, va.gov.

I had an emergency and went to a non-VA facility.

What do I do now?

During medical or mental health emergency, veterans are encouraged to seek immediate medical attention without delay. They do not need to check with VA before calling an ambulance or going to an emergency department.

Veterans are eligible to receive VA-authorized emergency care at an in-network facility if VA is notified within 72 hours of the start of care.

Providers should report your emergency treatment through VA's Emergency Care Reporting (ECR) portal, <https://emergencycarereporting.communitycare.va.gov/>, or by calling 844-724-7842. They also need to contact the local VA medical center to coordinate follow-on care and transfer activities, if necessary.

Veterans in Georgia

How many veterans live in Georgia?

As of April 2023, the National Center for Veterans Analysis and Statistics estimated 678,304 veterans living in Georgia.

For more in-depth figures, including county-by-county breakdowns, visit the NCVAS website: va.gov/vetdata.

Can I have a list of all the veterans in an area?

The Georgia Department of Veterans Service does not maintain a list of all veterans living in Georgia. While we do maintain lists of veterans receiving services or assistance, that information is confidential and is not available to the public.



How do I locate a veteran?

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and the Georgia Department of Veterans Service are limited, by law, to the extent they can help locate a veteran. VA will try to forward a letter to a veteran, but it is up to the veteran to contact the sender of the letter.

The proper procedure is to write a letter to the veteran and place it in an unsealed envelope, bearing the veteran's name, with sufficient postage to cover mailing costs. Forward that letter and envelope to VA. Include a cover letter detailing as much identifying information about the veteran as possible: full name, date of birth, last known address, service serial number, VA claim number, Social Security number, last military address, rank, and date of discharge.

Mail the request to: VA Regional Office-Atlanta, Attention: Privacy Act Office (211D), 1700 Clairmont Road, Decatur, GA 30330.

VA will forward the letter to the veteran's address if it is known. If the address is unknown or if the letter is returned undeliverable, VA will return the writer's original letter.

Employment

How do I find a job with the GDVS?

As vacancies occur within the GDVS, they are announced and recruited via the Team Georgia Careers website: team.georgia.gov/careers. This is the primary recruiting site for job vacancies in Georgia state government agencies.

What other job resources are available from the state?

The Technical College System of Georgia's Office Workforce Development offers assistance to job-seeking veterans and their families through WorkSource Georgia. Job search workshops, résumé and cover letter assistance, and resources for transitioning into the civilian workforce are a few of the services provided for veterans.

Find more information on WorkSource Vets at tcsg.edu/worksource/resources-for-practitioners/worksource-vets/.

Feedback

How can I provide feedback?

If you would like to report a problem, make a suggestion, give a compliment, or otherwise convey feedback on your experience with GDVS Veterans Field Service Office personnel, please use the form at veterans.georgia.gov/feedback.

For any other issue, questions, or concerns, please direct your comments to GDVS External Affairs and Communications at gavetsvc@vs.state.ga.us. Your feedback will be forwarded to the appropriate office.



Appendix: O.C.G.A. References

The following are references to the specific sections of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated wherein the relevant law may be found: e.g., the law pertaining to Veterans Driving Licenses is found in Title 40, Chapter 5, Article 2, abbreviated as: O.C.G.A. 40-5-36.

To search the O.C.G.A., visit lexisnexis.com/hottopics/gacode.

Homestead Tax Exemptions

Disabled Veterans
O.C.G.A. 48-5-48
O.C.G.A. 48-5-380

Standard Homestead Exemption
O.C.G.A. 48-5-44

10-Acre Exemption for 65 and Older
O.C.G.A. 48-5-48.3

\$4,000 Exemption for 65 and Older
O.C.G.A. 48-5-47

Educational Purposes Exemption for 62 and Older
O.C.G.A. 48-5-52

Floating Inflation-Proof Exemption for 62 and Older
O.C.G.A. 48-5-47.1

Other Tax Exemptions

Abatement of State Income Taxes
O.C.G.A. 48-7-37

Ad Valorem Tax on Vehicles
O.C.G.A. 40-2-69

Business Certificate of Exemption
O.C.G.A. 43-12-1
O.C.G.A. 43-12-2

Military Retirement Income Tax Exemption
O.C.G.A. 48-7-27

Sales Tax on Vehicles
O.C.G.A. 48-8-3

State Income Tax
O.C.G.A. 40-7-36

Driving Licenses/ID Cards

Veteran's Driver's License
O.C.G.A. 40-5-36

Veteran's ID Card
O.C.G.A. 40-5-103

License Plates

Veteran
O.C.G.A. 40-2-85.1

Woman Veteran
O.C.G.A. 40-2-85.1

Retired Military
O.C.G.A. 40-2-85.1

Commemorative Service
O.C.G.A. 40-2-85.1

Military Medal
O.C.G.A. 40-2-85.1

Purple Heart
O.C.G.A. 40-2-84
O.C.G.A. 48-5-478.2

Medal of Honor
O.C.G.A. 40-2-68

Reserve Component
O.C.G.A. 40-2-65