

South Carolina State Veteran's Benefits

NOV 2016



SOUTH CAROLINA DIVISION OF
Veterans' Affairs

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

- Veteran Housing Benefits
- Veteran and Active Duty Financial Assistance Benefits
- Veteran Employment Benefits
- Veteran Dependent Education Benefits
- Other State Sponsored Veteran Benefits

Veteran Housing Programs

Specially Adapted Housing

Provides for the exemption of state, county, and municipal taxes on the residence of veterans who have lost the use of their lower extremities or who has paralysis of one lateral half of the body resulting from injury to the motor centers of the brain.

State Veterans Nursing Homes

There are three facilities in South Carolina: the E. Roy Stone Veterans Pavilion (ERSP), which is located in Columbia, the Richard Michael Campbell (RMC) Veterans Nursing Home in Anderson, and the Veterans' Victory House (VVH) in Walterboro.

Admission to these facilities is limited to veterans who have been separated from the U.S. Armed Forces under general or honorable conditions and qualify as South Carolina residents who are in need of skilled or intermediate nursing home care. To obtain additional information, or to apply for admission, contact

your local county veterans affairs officer or the nursing home. For details on each facility refer to the following websites listed at <http://va.sc.gov/nursing.html>

- ERSP http://www.state.sc.us/dmh/dir_facilities.htm#CMT
- RMC <http://www.state.sc.us/dmh/victoryhouse>
- VVH <http://www.state.sc.us/dmh/campbell>



ERSP



RMC



VVH

Financial Assistance Benefits

Admissions Tax Exemption

Provides for the exemption of admissions taxes to athletic contests in which junior American Legion athletic teams are participants unless the proceeds are given to individual players in the form of salary or otherwise. For more information, call 803.612.1171.

Income Tax Exemption on Military Retirement Pay

Any person retired from the uniformed services or their surviving spouse, shall be allowed an exemption from the S.C. State Income Tax of \$3,000 until age 65. At age 65 \$10,000 of retirement pay is exempt. For more information, call 803.898.5709.

Property Taxes - Homestead Exemption

All persons who have been declared permanently and totally disabled by the Social Security Administration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, other state or federal agencies, are eligible for a homestead exemption in an amount set by the General Assembly. This also applies to persons over age 65. For more information, contact your county and municipal tax offices.

Property Tax Exemption

Provides that the dwelling house in which a veteran resides who has been rated as permanently and totally disabled by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs may be tax exempt. The tax exemption may be transferred when purchasing another dwelling. For more information, contact your county and municipal tax offices. The Department of Revenue can be found on the web at www.sctax.org, or call 803.898.5700.

Tax Exemption for Compensation, Pension, Disability Retirement Pay and VA Payments

Provides that federal tax exempt moneys received from pension or compensation provided by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, or disability pay from the Armed Forces will not be included in SC tax. For more information, call 1.800.827.1000.

Parking Fee Exemption

Provides for an exemption of municipal parking meter fees when a veteran's vehicle bears a disabled veteran ("V" tag), Purple Heart or Medal of Honor license plate. For more information, contact your county and municipal government offices.

Active Duty Pay Relevant to the SC Department of Revenue & Taxation

Non-resident armed services personnel who are legal residents of other States stationed within South Carolina by virtue of military orders, are not subject to South Carolina income tax on their service pay. They are, however, subject to tax on any other income earned in South Carolina by spouses of service personnel. For more information, visit the Department of Revenue on the web at www.sctax.org/default.htm, or call 803.898.5700.

Employment Benefits

Veterans Preference

Preference will be granted to eligible members for employment and/or an appointment in public departments or public works operating on a merit system.

Eligible members:

- Must be Honorably discharged from the Armed Forces of the U.S.
- Must possess the skills and knowledge required for the position involved.

Veterans Reemployment Rights

Employees of the State/any political subdivision thereof, on or after June 25, 1950 has been, or will be, commissioned, enlisted/selected for service in the Armed Forces of the U.S. shall be entitled to a leave of absence from his/her duties as an employee of the State/any political subdivision thereof, without loss of seniority or efficiency or register rating.

The Federal Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA), enacted in October 1994, provides reemployment protection and other benefits for veterans and employees who perform military service. It clarifies the rights and responsibilities of National Guard and Reserve members, as well as their civilian employers. USERRA was significantly updated in 1996 and 1998 and applies almost universally to all employers, regardless of the size of their business. Contact the US Department of Labor at 1.866.487.2365, or the US Department of Defense Employer Support of the Guard and Reserves (ESGR) at 1.800.336.4590, or visit them on the web at www.esgr.mil.

Education Benefits

Education Assistance (Fee tuition for certain veteran's children)

Provides for free tuition to the children of certain war veterans attending South Carolina state supported colleges and universities as well as state supported post high school technical education institutions. Certain residency requirements apply. For questions or to apply contact 803.647.2434. Click [here](#) to download the Application for Tuition Assistance for Certain War Veterans Children.

Other State Veteran Benefits

Credit of State Retirement for Military Service

An active member of one of the retirement systems administered by the South Carolina Public Employee Benefit Authority may also establish up to six years of service credit for any period of military service for which he or she does not already have service credit in one of the correlated defined benefit plans. Go to www.retirement.sc.gov and log into Member Access to request a cost estimate.

Free Hunting & Fishing Licenses

Provides for free hunting/fishing license to veterans who are totally disabled. License must be applied for directly from SC Department of Natural Resources showing proof of disability. For more information, call SCDNR at 803.734.3838, or visit them on the web at www.dnr.sc.gov.

State Parks Totally Disabled Persons

Provides that any South Carolina resident who is a permanently and totally disabled veteran may enter any state park at a reduced rate upon presentation of supporting disability documentation. The veteran may also apply for a reduced fee "Palmetto Passport." Certain services may require an additional fee. For more information, call South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism at 803.734.0156, or visit them on the web at www.southcarolinaparks.com.

Special License Plates

Upon establishing proof of eligibility to entitlement, the S.C. Department of Public Safety may issue special motor vehicle license plates to the following:

- National Guard
- National Guard Retirees
- Purple Heart Recipients
- Disabled Veterans
- U.S. Armed Forces Retirees
- Ex-Prisoners of War
- Medal of Honor Recipients
- Pearl Harbor Survivors
- Normandy Invasion Survivors
- Marine Corps League
- Gold Star Family



Presentation of the State Flag to Families of Deceased Members of the South Carolina National Guard

Provides that the State Adjutant General's Office shall present to the family of each deceased member of

the South Carolina National Guard a flag of the State of South Carolina, appropriate for use as a burial flag, upon application of a member of the family of the deceased. For more information, call 803.734.0200.

Cemetery

The M.J. "Dolly" Cooper Veterans Cemetery opened in December 2007. Currently, 1,219 veterans, spouses and dependents, have been buried with another 3,817 registered (pre-certified) with the cemetery for burials in the future. "Pre-certified" means the cemetery has determined eligibility after receiving and reviewing copies of a veteran's DD-214 or discharge document and marriage certificate on file so when there is a need, scheduling a burial can be done without delay. For eligibility information and a Pre-Certification Application form, click on the links on this page.



**M.J. "Dolly" Cooper Veterans Cemetery
140 Inway Drive
Anderson, SC 29621
864.332.8022**

The State of South Carolina through the National Cemetery Administration State Cemetery Grant Program received a grant to build and initially equip this cemetery. Upon completion, operating and maintaining the cemetery was turned over to the State of South Carolina, as part of the South Carolina Office of Veterans Affairs.

Phase I of cemetery construction consisted of 30 acres with an administration office building, a Committal Shelter, Flag Plaza, Memorial Walk, four Columbarium Walls, maintenance bays and buildings with approximately 23 acres designated for over 16,000 burials or cremation interments. Phase II, which is currently in the design and bid process, should be started in the summer of 2013.

It is the policy of cemetery administration to assist every veteran and her/his family in any way that we can to include verifying service records, determining eligibility, helping obtain service records from the National Personnel Records Center and providing names and phone numbers of other veteran agencies who provide other services (health, death benefits, etc.). The cemetery office is open Monday through Friday 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and is closed on federal and state holidays. The cemetery is open seven days a week year-round. During Eastern Standard Time, the hours are 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and are 8:00 a.m. to dusk during Daylight Saving Time. We encourage personal visits to the cemetery.



Recording of Discharges

A certified copy of the recorded discharge may be obtained upon request. Any person desiring a certified copy of any discharge or certificate of lost discharge, may apply to the County Clerk of Court or the County Veterans Affairs Officer in which the discharge or certificate of lost discharge is registered and shall be furnished a certified copy. Fees for furnishing a certified copy of discharge or DD Form 214 may be established by each county, but may not exceed fifty cents.

Marriage, Birth, Death and Divorce Verification

Provides for the verification of marriage, birth, death, and divorce records without cost when such is required by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, the S.C. Division of Veterans Affairs, the County Veterans Affairs Offices, or any out of state Veterans Affairs entities. For more information, call 803.734.0200.

Visit the South Carolina Veterans Affairs website <http://va.sc.gov> for contact information and benefits assistance.

[Source: <http://www.military.com/benefits/content/veteran-state-benefits/south-carolina-state-veterans-benefits.html> NOV 2016 ++]

Military Discounts in South Carolina

1. MVDC has close to 4000 business locations in South Carolina that have discounts for military personnel and veterans. In addition to businesses providing discounts, the state of Rhode Island also provides discounts for those that have served. To find business discounts, enter your zip code and category in the search box at <http://militaryandveteransdiscounts.com/location/south-carolina.html>,

2. **Veterans Designation on drivers license:** Yes

3. **State Discounted Fees and Taxes for veterans**

- Free hunting and fishing licenses to qualified veterans who are totally disabled
- Reduced admission to state parks for permanently and totally disabled veterans who are South Carolina residents.

- Parking fee exemption for municipal meters for veterans' vehicles displaying disabled veteran "V" tag, Purple Heart or Medal of Honor license plate

4. Property tax and Financial Benefits for veterans

- Exemption of state, county, and municipal taxes on the residence of veterans who have lost the use of the use of their lower extremities or who have paralysis of one lateral half of the body resulting from injury to the motor centers of the brain.
- Compensation, pension, disability, retirement pay, and VA payments are exempt from state tax.
- Homestead exemption for permanently and totally disabled veterans

5. State Education Discounts for veterans

- Priority given to reimbursement of tuition for state institutions due to activation
- Free tuition to the children of certain war veterans attending SC state supported colleges and universities as well as state supported post high school technical education institutions

6. To find businesses that provide military and veteran discounts refer to <http://militaryandveteransdiscounts.com>.

[Source: <http://militaryandveteransdiscounts.com/location/south-carolina.html> NOV 2016 ++]