

California State Veteran's Benefits & Discounts



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

- Housing Benefits
- Financial Assistance Benefits
- Employment Benefits
- Veteran Business Benefits
- Education Benefits
- Other State Veteran Benefits

Housing Benefits

Veterans Homes of California

The mission of the CalVet Homes is "to provide the state's aged or disabled veterans with rehabilitative, residential, and medical care and services in a home-like environment." This mission acknowledges the tremendous sacrifice California veterans have made and recognizes them for their noble service to our nation.

The first Veterans Home in California was established in 1884 for Civil War veterans. Today, the CalVet Homes provide long-term care to resident veterans. The eight current Homes are a system of live-in, residential care facilities offering a comprehensive plan of medical, dental, pharmacy, rehabilitation services and social activities within a homelike, small community environment. Residents engage in a wide range of activities including social events, dances, patriotic programs, volunteer activities, arts and crafts, computer access, shopping trips and other off-site activities. Residents live in an atmosphere of dignity and respect—a true home for each resident veteran.

The Homes range in size from 60 residents on a 20 acre site to over 1,000 residents on 500 acres. When all eight Homes are complete, they will house and care for approximately 3,000 veterans.

Veterans who are age 55 and above and discharged from active military service under honorable conditions, are eligible to apply for admission. The age requirement is waived for disabled or homeless veterans needing long-term care.



Barstow

Located in the high desert of Southern California, off interstate 15, VHC-Barstow is midway between Los Angeles and Las Vegas and only about an hour's drive from Ontario Airport. Opened February 1996 VHC-Barstow has 400 beds, providing options for Domiciliary (Independent Living), Intermediate Care, and Skilled Nursing Care. Acute hospital care is provided at either the Jerry L Pettis Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Loma Linda for those veterans eligible for VA care or at the Barstow Community Hospital. Primary medical care is provided to domiciliary residents at the on-site clinic. For Intermediate care residents, contract physicians who visit the home regularly provide this care. The veterans home provides California veterans with a living environment that protects their dignity and contributes to their feeling of self-reliance and self-worth. Nearby Barstow College offers many cultural and educational opportunities for Home residents to enjoy.

Go to <https://www.calvet.ca.gov/VetHomes/Pages/Barstow.aspx> for features and amenities, admission and eligibility, FAQ, and contact info.



Chula Vista

Located on a 30-acre site off Telegraph Canyon Road, adjacent to Sharp Chula Vista Medical Center, the Veterans Home of California, Chula Vista (VHC-Chula Vista), is the only veterans home located in coastal, urban Southern California. With views of the Pacific Ocean and downtown San Diego, VHC-Chula Vista's location provides residents with numerous cultural and recreational opportunities.

Completed in May 2000, VHC-Chula Vista is a 400-bed long-term care facility providing options for Domiciliary - Independent Living, Licensed Residential, and Skilled Nursing Care. Employed physicians provide medical care in both the licensed outpatient clinic and the inpatient skilled nursing settings. Acute care is provided at either the La Jolla U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, or at the nearby Sharp Hospital in Chula Vista.

Go to <https://www.calvet.ca.gov/VetHomes/Pages/Chula-Vista.aspx> for features and amenities, admission and eligibility, FAQ, and contact info.



Fresno

The Veterans Home of California – Fresno is a 300-bed, long-term care facility located on 30 acres. The Veterans Home opened in October 2013, and provides California Veterans with a living environment that protects their dignity and contributes to their feeling of self-reliance and self-worth. The Home currently offers the assisted living level of care, with plans to open skilled nursing in spring of 2014, and memory care in summer of 2014. VHC-Fresno provides continuity in the lives of residents in a homelike atmosphere of dignity and respect.

Go to <https://www.calvet.ca.gov/VetHomes/Pages/Fresno.aspx> for features and amenities, admission and eligibility, FAQ, and contact info.



Lancaster

The William J. “Pete” Knight Veterans Home of California–Lancaster is located in the picturesque high-desert area of Southern California, just off the Antelope Valley Freeway (State Route 14), and only an hour’s drive north from the San Fernando Valley area of Los Angeles. Lancaster boasts one of California's most abundant fields of the vibrant orange poppies that are California's state flower. Edwards Air Force Base, famous for its Space Shuttle landings, is located close by. Completed in November 2009, the beautiful William J. “Pete” Knight Veterans Home of California–Lancaster is a 60-bed Residential Care Facility for the Elderly (RCFE), also known as assisted living. All healthcare needs, meals, transportation and activities are provided by the William J. “Pete” Knight Veterans Home of California – Lancaster, in partnership with the VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System. The Home was named in honor and memory of the late Senator William J. “Pete” Knight, a former United States Air Force Colonel who spent 32 years in dedicated service to his country and flew more than 253 missions in Vietnam. He was also considered one of the Veterans Home’s strongest and most vocal advocates when he served in the California State Senate. Lancaster and nearby Palmdale, California offer many cultural and educational opportunities for Veterans Home residents and their families to enjoy, including the Antelope Valley Fairgrounds, the Aerospace Walk of Honor, the Antelope Valley California Poppy Reserve, the JetHawks Clear Channel Baseball Stadium, the Prime Desert Woodland Preserve, the Lancaster Center for the Performing Arts, lovely parks, shopping centers and movie theaters. The veterans home provides California veterans with a living environment that protects their dignity and contributes to their feeling of self-reliance and self-worth.

Go to <https://www.calvet.ca.gov/VetHomes/Pages/Lancaster.aspx> for features and amenities, admission and eligibility, FAQ, and contact info.



Redding

With its natural beauty, abundance of recreational opportunities, and excellent quality of life, Redding combines the ambiance of a small town with the amenities of a large city. Redding is located in Northern California, just south of Shasta Lake, nestled between the Cascades and the Trinity Alps, serving the adjacent counties of Tehama, Trinity and Siskiyou. The Pacific Ocean is a 3 hour drive to the west, Reno, NV is a 3 hour drive to the east and the San Francisco Bay area is a 4 hour drive to the south. The Redding and Shasta County area has been selected by The Searchers, a nationally renowned data research

company, as one of the best places in the country to retire. The quality of life, clean air, low crime rate and affordability of housing are just a few of the 70-plus sets of criteria used in its determination. Also noted are a vast array of recreational opportunities, excellent medical facilities, and social activities that would enhance anyone's retirement plans. There are 12 major shopping destinations in the Redding area, including two enclosed malls, nine major shopping centers, and a factory outlet center. Climatologists describe the climate in the Redding area as Mediterranean, with hot, dry summers and cool, wet winters. Average high temperatures during July and August frequently exceed 90 degrees but drop to the low 50's in winter. Annual rainfall averages 33 inches, most of which falls between November and March.

Go to <https://www.calvet.ca.gov/VetHomes/Pages/Redding.aspx> for features and amenities, admission and eligibility, FAQ, and contact info.



Ventura

The Veterans Home of California–Ventura is located near the gleaming California Pacific Ocean coastline, about an hour's drive northwest of Los Angeles, 35 miles south of Santa Barbara and a few short minutes off U.S. Highway 101. Ventura is situated between the Ventura River and the Santa Clara River, with soil so fertile that citrus trees grow better in Ventura than anywhere else in the state. The United States Naval Base Ventura County is located close by. Completed in December 2009, the beautiful Veterans Home of California–Ventura is a 60-bed Residential Care Facility for the Elderly (RCFE), also known as assisted living. All healthcare needs, meals, transportation and activities are provided by the Veterans Home of California–Ventura, in partnership with the VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System. Ventura and nearby Oxnard, California offer many cultural and educational opportunities for Veterans Home residents and their families to enjoy, including the Ventura County Fairgrounds, Ventura Harbor Village, Oxnard Heritage Square, the nearby harbors areas of Ventura, Oxnard, Port Hueneme and the Channel Islands – as well as California's historic Missions and Adobes, golf courses, museums, lovely parks and shopping centers. The veterans home provides California veterans with a living environment that protects their dignity and contributes to their feeling of self-reliance and self-worth.

Go to <https://www.calvet.ca.gov/VetHomes/Pages/Ventura.aspx> for features and amenities, admission and eligibility, FAQ, and contact info.



West Los Angeles

Located in one of the most famous counties in the world, the beautiful Veterans Home of California - West Los Angeles is the largest Veterans Home in the County of Los Angeles. In a region renowned for abundant sunshine and beautiful year-round weather, the Veterans Home of California - West Los Angeles is just minutes from the scenic Pacific Ocean, historical Downtown Los Angeles, legendary Hollywood and the beautiful San Fernando Valley. Completed in September 2010, the beautiful Veterans Home of California - West Los Angeles is located at 11500 Nimitz Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90049 and is a 396-bed, state-of-the-art, long-term healthcare facility for California's Veterans. In close proximity to the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA), the Federal Building on famous Wilshire Boulevard, and an extraordinary array of museums, movie theaters, arts and cultural activities, galleries, shopping centers, restaurants, libraries, parks, beaches, family-friendly events and activities for all age groups, the West Los Angeles location offers Veteran residents and their families a wealth of cultural, social and recreational landmarks and opportunities. Adjacent to the Memory Care unit is a beautiful, open-air garden with a cozy seating area where Veteran residents can enjoy being outdoors in a safe and comfortable environment. The first garden of its kind at the Veterans Homes of California, this outside oasis is adorned with lovely trees and landscaping which makes this garden a lush and peaceful location for rest or relaxation, or a perfect spot to visit with other Veteran residents, friends or family members. The beauty of outdoor plants makes this special garden a tranquil retreat that residents of the Veterans Home of California - West Los Angeles will come to love and enjoy.

Go to <https://www.calvet.ca.gov/VetHomes/Pages/West-Los-Angeles.aspx> for features and amenities, admission and eligibility, FAQ, and contact info.



Yountville

Located in the heart of scenic Napa Valley, the Veterans Home of California-Yountville (VHC-Yountville) is a community of and for veterans. Founded in 1884, VHC-Yountville is the largest veterans' home in the United States, offering residential accommodations with a wealth of recreational, social, and therapeutic activities for independent living. Some 1,000 aged or disabled veterans (both men and women) or World War II, Korean War, Vietnam War, Desert Storm, and Operation Enduring Freedom/Operation Iraqi Freedom now live at the home. Future health care needs of veterans admitted to the Yountville Home at the Residential Care level are met by on-grounds facilities for Residential Care for the Elderly (RCFE), intermediate Care, Skilled Nursing Care, and a "Memory Care Center" for residents with various forms of dementia. General acute care is provided at Queen of the Valley Hospital in Napa, St. Helena Hospital in St. Helena, and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center in San Francisco. The Yountville Home is also a focal point for the Napa Valley Community with the 1,200 seat Lincoln Theater, a 9-hole golf course, Borman Field baseball stadium, bowling lanes, a swimming pool, and a military Base Exchange branch store. All of these facilities are available for use by resident veterans at no additional cost. Additionally, the home offers services specifically for residents including a fitness center, a resident operated television station, auto hobby shop, a 35,000 volume library, creative arts center, and a multi-faith chapel.

Go to <https://www.calvet.ca.gov/VetHomes/Pages/Yountville.aspx> for features and amenities, admission and eligibility, FAQ, and contact info.

Calvet Farm and Home Loans

Direct loans from the State of California, highly competitive rates, quick processing, unbeatable earthquake and disaster coverage, and proven ability to work well with our homeowner veterans.

Who May Be Eligible: Any veteran who served honorably on active duty in the Armed Forces of the United States, who resides in and wishes to purchase a farm or home in California.

Apply at any California Department of Veterans Affairs CalVet District Office (located in the state government section of your telephone book), or California Department of Veterans Affairs, Farm and Home Loan Division, 1227 O' Street, Sacramento, CA 95814 Tel: 1-800-952-5626 or visit <https://www.calvet.ca.gov/calvet-programs/home-loans>

Visit the California Department of Veterans Affairs website <http://www.cdva.ca.gov> for contact information and benefits assistance.

Financial Assistance Benefits

Property Tax Exemptions

Property tax exemptions on the assessed value of a home of:

- a) Up to \$111,296 if the total household income from all sources is over \$49,979 per year.
- b) Up to \$166,944 if the total household income from all sources is under \$49,979 per year.

Who May Be Eligible: a) Wartime veterans who are in receipt of service-connected disability compensation at the totally disabled rate. b) Unmarried surviving spouses or registered domestic partners of veterans who are in receipt of service-connected death benefits. c) Wartime veterans who are service-connected for loss the use of two or more limbs. d) Wartime veterans who are service-connected for blindness.

To apply contact your local County Assessor's Office (located in the county government section of your telephone book).

Motor Vehicle Registration Fees Waived

Waiver of registration fees and free license plates for one passenger motor vehicle, or one motorcycle, or one commercial motor vehicle of less than 8001 pounds unladen weight.

Who May Be Eligible: Medal of Honor recipients, American Ex-Prisoners of War and "disabled veterans" as defined in the "Disabled Veterans License Plate" section of this pamphlet.

Visit the California Department of Veterans Affairs website <http://www.cdva.ca.gov> for contact information and benefits assistance.

Employment Benefits

Employment and Unemployment Insurance Assistance

Assistance in obtaining training and employment as well assistance in obtaining unemployment insurance.

Who May Be Eligible: All veterans.

Veterans Preference in California Civil Service Examinations

Additional points added to the final score of a civil service examination as follows: a) Open Entrance Exams-15 points for a disabled veteran and 10 points for other veterans and surviving spouses. b) Open Non-promotional Entrance Exams-10 points for disabled veterans and 5 points for other veterans.

Who May Be Eligible: a) Veterans with service-connected disabilities rated at 10% or greater. b) "Wartime" veterans who served have served with honor. c) A veteran who served under honorable conditions for a period of at least 181 days d) Spouses of totally disabled service-connected veterans. e) Unmarried, surviving spouses of a veteran who has died of service-connected causes.

Visit the California Department of Veterans Affairs website <http://www.cdva.ca.gov> for contact information and benefits assistance.

Veterans Business Benefits

Business License, Tax and Fee Waiver

Waiver of municipal, county and state business license fees, taxes and fees, for veterans who hawk, peddle or vend any goods, wares or merchandise owned by the veteran, except spirituous, malt, vinous or other intoxicating liquor, including sales from a fixed location.

Who May Be Eligible: Honorably discharged veterans who engage in sales (not services) activities may be eligible. Eligibility criteria differs based upon local jurisdiction.

Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise Opportunities

Certified veteran owned businesses can participate in the state goal of awarding 3% of all state contracts to disabled veterans through the Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise (DVBE) Program.

Who May Be Eligible: Veterans with a service-connected disability rated at 10% or greater who own at least 51% of a business, and who meet other eligibility criteria.

Visit the California Department of Veterans Affairs website <http://www.cdva.ca.gov> for contact information and benefits assistance.

Education Benefits

College Tuition Fee Waivers for Veterans' Dependents

Waiver of mandatory system-wide tuition and fees at any State of California Community College, California State University or University of California campus.

Who May Be Eligible: Plan A: The spouse, registered domestic partner, child (under the age of 27) or unmarried surviving spouse of a veteran who is totally service-connected disabled, or who has died of service-connected causes may qualify. Plan B: The child of a veteran who has a permanent service-connected disability. The child's income and value of support provided by a parent cannot exceed the national poverty level.

Non-Resident College Fee Waiver

Waiver of non-resident fees (pay at California resident rate) at all State of California Community Colleges, California State University or University of California campuses. Eligibility includes the following individuals:

- A student who is a veteran of the armed forces of the United States stationed in this state on active duty for more than one year immediately prior to being discharged from the armed forces is entitled to resident classification for the length of time he or she lives in this state after being discharged up to the minimum time necessary to become a resident.
- An undergraduate student who is a member of the Armed Forces of the United States stationed in this state on active duty, except a member of the Armed Forces assigned for educational purposes to a state-supported institution of higher education.
- An undergraduate student who is a natural or adopted child, stepchild, or spouse who is a dependent of a member of the armed forces of the United States stationed in this state on active duty.
- A student seeking a graduate degree who is a member of the Armed Forces of the United States stationed in this state on active duty, except a member of the Armed Forces assigned for educational purposes to a state-supported institution of higher education. There is a two-year limit for graduate level studies.
- A student seeking a graduate degree who is a natural or adopted child, stepchild, or spouse who is a dependent of a member of the armed forces of the United States stationed in this state on active duty. There is a one-year limit for graduate level studies.

Eligible students can apply at the Admissions Office of any California system campus.

Visit the California Department of Veterans Affairs website <http://www.cdva.ca.gov> for contact information and benefits assistance.

Other State Veteran Benefits

Disabled Veteran License Plates

Waiver of registration fees and free "DV" handicap parking license plates for one passenger motor vehicle, or one motorcycle, or one commercial motor vehicle of less than 8001 pounds unladen weight.



Who May Be Eligible: A "disabled veteran" is any person who, as a result of injury or disease suffered while on active service with the armed forces of the United States, suffers any of the following:

- a) Has a disability which has been rated at 100 percent by the Department of Veterans Affairs or the military service from which the veteran was discharged, due to a diagnosed disease or disorder which substantially impairs or interferes with mobility or,
- b) Is so severely disabled as to be unable to move without the aid of an assistant device or,
- c) Has lost, or has lost use of, one or more limbs or,
- d) Has suffered permanent blindness, as defined in Section 19153 of the Welfare and Institutions Code.

Obtain a signed doctor's statement that indicates that the veteran in question has a service-connected disability with at least one of the above listed mobility impairments, complete DMV forms REG 195 and REG 256A, and mail the completed package to: DMV PLACARD, P.O. Box 942869, Sacramento, CA 94269-0001 Tel: 1-800-777-0133

Veteran Organization License Plates



These special California license plates may be ordered with the armed force or veterans service organization logo/emblem of your choice. Over 100 insignias are available, and your logo will be prominently displayed to the left of a six number/letter combination. Sequential plates are only \$30 per year. You may also "personalize" your Vets Plates (your choice of up to 6 characters) for an additional one-time fee of \$10.

If you are ordering a veterans license plate, make note of the below 3-digit code preceding the name of the organization below. This code will be needed on the DMV order screen or order form.

Note: *Click on the following individual logo names to see the images: (Generally, the image quality is better on the actual license plate decal.)*

V00 1st Armored Division Assoc.
V01 1st Cavalry Division Assoc.
V02 1st Division Society
V03 1st Marine Division Assoc.
V04 2nd Infantry Division
V06 3rd Marine Division Assoc.
V07 4th Marine Division Assoc.
V09 25th Infantry Division Assoc.
V10 82nd Airborne Division
V11 101st Airborne Division
V12 173rd Airborne Brigade
V14 Air Force Assoc.
V15 Air Force Sergeants Assoc.
V16 American GI Forum
V17 American Legion
V20 AMVETS
V22 Blinded Veterans Assoc.
V24 CA Assoc. of County Veteran Service Officers
V25 CA Department of Veteran Affairs
V30 Combat Infantry Badge Veterans
V31 Corps of Engineers
V32 Disabled American Veterans
V38 Jewish War Veterans
V39 Korean War Veterans Assoc.
V40 Marine Corps League
V47 National Guard
V48 Naval Enlisted Reserve Assoc.
V50 Paralyzed Veterans Assoc.
V51 Persian Gulf Service
V53 Reserve Officers Assoc.
V54 Retired Enlisted Assoc.
V55 Military Officers Association of America
V57 Seabees
V58 Special Forces Association
V59 US Air Force
V60 US Air Force Academy Assoc. of Graduates
V61 US Army
V62 US Coast Guard
V64 US Marine Corps
V67 US Military Academy Assoc. of Graduates - West Point

V68 US Naval Academy Alumni Assoc.
V69 US Navy
V71 US Vietnam Veterans of Southern CA
V73 Veterans of Foreign Wars
V76 Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Assoc.
V77 Vietnam Veterans of America
V78 Vietnam Veterans of CA Incorporated
V87 Association of the US Army
V92 Navy League of the US
V94 US Submarine Veterans Incorporated
V95 Air Force Reserve
W01 4th Infantry Division
W02 Distinguished Flying Cross Society
W03 63rd Infantry Division Association
W04 Lao Veterans of America
W05 11th Airborne Division
W06 POW/MIA
W09 10th Mountain Division
W13 Merchant Marine Division
W21 Tailhook Association
W22 UDT/SEAL
W23 Afghanistan Campaign Medal
W24 American Campaign Medal
W25 Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal
W26 European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal
W27 Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal
W28 Global War on Terrorism Service Medal
W29 Iraq Campaign Medal
W30 Korean Service Medal
W31 Kosovo Campaign Medal
W32 Philippine Defense Medal
W33 Philippine Independence Medal
W34 Philippine Liberation Medal
W35 Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal
W36 Southwest Asia Service Medal
W37 Vietnam Service Medal
W38 World War II Victory Medal
W39 Support Our Troops Ribbon

Vehicle Registration Fee Waiver

Waiver of registration fees and free license plates for one passenger motor vehicle, or one motorcycle, or one commercial motor vehicle of less than 8001 pounds unladen weight.

Available to Medal of Honor recipients, American Ex-Prisoners of War and "disabled veterans" as defined in the "Disabled Veterans License Plate" section of this pamphlet.

Medal of Honor recipients should complete a DMV form REG 17A, and proof of receipt of the Medal of Honor. Ex-Prisoners of War should complete a DMV form REG 17, and proof of former status as a POW.

Applications and necessary documentation should be mailed to: Department of Motor Vehicles, P.O. Box 932345, Sacramento, CA 94232 Tel: 1-800-777-0133 <http://www.dmv.ca.gov>.

Veterans Claims Representation

The Benefit: Professional, accredited, USDVA claims and ratings review, and representation in appellate processes.

Who May Be Eligible: Any veteran, dependent or veteran's survivor applying for USDVA benefits.

Fishing and Hunting Licenses

The Benefits: Reduced annual fees for fishing and hunting licenses.

Who May Be Eligible: Any veteran with a 50% or greater service-connected disability.

First time applicants must submit proof of their service-connected disability from the USDVA. Mail to The California Department of Fish and Game, License and Revenue Branch, 1740 N. Market Blvd., Sacramento, CA 95834 Tel: (916) 928-5805 <https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/>.

State of California Veterans Cemetery

The Benefit: Complete, professional burial services at no cost to veterans (\$500 fee for spouses or dependents).

Who May Be Eligible: Veterans, dependents and survivors who meet USDVA eligibility requirements for burial in a national cemetery.

State Veterans Cemeteries

- **Northern California Veterans Cemetery.** The Northern California Veterans Cemetery (NCVC) is the first California Veterans Cemetery constructed with the cooperation of the US Department of Veterans Affairs, and is operated by the state. State Veterans Cemeteries are intended to serve areas that are not adequately served by a National Cemetery. NCVC, located near Redding, California, primarily serves the veteran population in the eighteen Northern-most California counties. The currently developed area of the cemetery provides sufficient burial space for more than thirty years. Beyond that, the cemetery has the capacity for expansion of space for well beyond 100 years. Any eligible veteran, along with their spouse and eligible dependents, may be interred at the cemetery.
- **Yountville Veterans Cemetery.** The Yountville Veterans Cemetery is located on 11 acres of oak-covered hills in the northwest corner of the Yountville Veterans Home; this historic cemetery marks the resting place of over 5,700 veterans and dependents. The cemetery currently accepts only the interment of the Veteran Home's residents and their eligible dependents. Eligibility for interment is equivalent to the requirements for burial in a National Cemetery.
- **California Central Coast Veterans Cemetery.** The California Central Coast Veterans Cemetery (CCCVC) will be the second California Veterans Cemetery developed and constructed in cooperation with the US Department of Veterans Affairs, Veterans Cemetery Grants Service. The facility will be located in Monterey County in the City of Seaside. CCCVC is currently in the

design phase with the construction phase estimated to begin in November 2014. Construction is scheduled for completion in January 2016. The first phase of the cemetery will accommodate cremated remains only. Casketed burials will be included in the second phase of development. While there is currently no scheduled opening date for phase I, the California Department of Veterans Affairs is committed to widely publishing the dedication and opening. The application requirements and scheduling process will be shared as the opening draws near.

Eligibility

The VA has adopted regulations that establish the eligibility requirements for interment in a state veterans' cemetery. The regulations make the state eligibility requirements equivalent to the requirements for burial in a National Cemetery and provide for CalVet collection of information needed to determine eligibility. For eligibility requirements, go to <http://www.cem.va.gov>.

The Eligibility Determination/Pre-need Form is designed to assist in determining eligibility for burial in the NCVC on a pre-need basis. Pre-need determination allows a veteran to establish in advance, his/her eligibility for interment at the NCVC. There is no cost for pre-need determination, and it does not obligate the veteran to be interred at the cemetery.

Pre-need determination is intended to simplify and assist the veteran's next-of-kin at the time of death. There will be a \$500 interment fee for eligible spouses and dependent children at the time of need. Associated funeral expenses are incurred by the veteran and/or family.

The Eligibility Determination Form can be downloaded or is available from the local County Veterans Service Office <http://www.cacvso.org>.

National Cemeteries

The VA's National Cemetery Administration maintains 131 national cemeteries in 39 states (and Puerto Rico) as well as 33 Soldier's lots and monument sites. There are nine national cemeteries in California, of which five (Riverside National Cemetery, Sacramento Valley VA National Cemetery, San Joaquin Valley National Cemetery, Miramar National Cemetery and Bakersfield National Cemetery) are presently accepting new interments. The other national cemeteries in California are only accepting burials of family members of persons already interred, although Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery (near San Diego) still offers burial of cremated remains.

Persons eligible for burial in a national cemetery include:

- Veterans;
- Service members who die on active duty;
- Certain Reservists and National Guard members;
- World War II Merchant Mariners;
- U.S. citizens who served honorably in the Armed Forces of an Allied government during a war
- Such other persons or classes of persons as may be designated by either the Secretary of Veterans Affairs or the Secretary of the Air Force.
- Additionally, the spouse and the children (as defined) of eligible persons are also eligible for burial in a national cemetery. In some cases, parents of active duty military killed in action may also be eligible.

Burial benefits may include the following: gravesites for casket or cremation remains, headstones or markers, opening and closing of the graves, and continued perpetual care. Burial of eligible veterans and dependents is at no cost when interred at a national cemetery.

Associated funeral expenses are the responsibility of the veteran and/or family. For assistance in completing applications for cemetery and burial benefits, please contact the local County Veterans Service Office.

Burial and Plot-Interment Allowances

VA burial allowances are partial reimbursements of an eligible veteran's burial and funeral costs. When the cause of death is non-service related, the reimbursements are generally described as two payments: (1) a burial and funeral expense allowance, and (2) a plot or interment allowance.

A veteran may be eligible for a VA burial allowance if:

- the veteran paid for a veteran's burial or funeral; and
- the veteran has not been reimbursed by another government agency or some other source, such as the deceased veteran's employer; and
- the veteran was discharged under conditions other than dishonorable.

In addition, at least one of the following conditions must be met:

- the veteran died because of a service-related disability; or
- the veteran was receiving VA pension or compensation at the time of death; or
- the veteran was entitled to receive VA pension or compensation, but decided not to reduce his/her military retirement or disability pay; or
- the veteran died while hospitalized by VA, or while receiving care under VA contract at a non-VA facility; or
- the veteran died while traveling under proper authorization and at VA expense to or from a specified place for the purpose of examination, treatment, or care; or
- the veteran had an original or reopened claim pending at the time of death and has been found entitled to compensation or pension from a date prior to the date of death; or
- the veteran died on or after October 9, 1996, while a patient at a VA-approved state nursing home.

How Much Does the VA Pay?

- **Service-Related Death:** The VA will pay up to \$2,000 toward burial expenses for deaths on or after September 11, 2001. If the veteran is buried in a VA national cemetery, some or all of the cost of transporting the deceased maybe reimbursed.
- **Non-Service-Related Death:** The VA will pay up to \$300 toward burial and funeral expenses and a \$300 plot-interment allowance for deaths on or after December 1, 2001. As of October 2011, the burial and funeral expenses and the plot allowance increase to \$722. If the death happened while the veteran was in a VA hospital or under VA contracted nursing home care, some or all of the costs for transporting the veteran's remains may be reimbursed. No plot allowance is paid to the family when the burial occurs in a national or state veteran's cemetery.
- To obtain information regarding associated funeral expenses are incurred by the veteran and/or family, contact the local County Veterans Service Office.

To apply for burial benefits, complete VA Form 21-530, Application for Burial Benefits. Attach a copy of the veteran's military discharge document (DD Form 214 or equivalent), death certificate, and funeral and burial bills. The bills should indicate they have paid them in full. Please download the form or one can be obtained from the local County Veterans Service Office.

The California Women Veterans Roster

Unfortunately, women veterans have not applied for or utilized their veterans benefits as have their male counterparts, which ultimately dilutes the voice of veterans overall. The California Women Veterans Roster is an information bridge that connects California's women veterans to the various resources and benefits available to them.

The roster is strictly confidential and used solely as a link among California's women veterans. Help give women the voice they earned through service to our country. If you are a woman veteran, join the California Women Veterans Roster! If you are not a woman veteran, please give the gift of information and pass a copy of the roster application form (see below) on to a woman veteran or someone you know associated with women veterans.

The California Veterans Registry at the California Veterans Memorial

The California Veterans Registry is a permanent record of all California Veterans -- past and present -- who have served our nation since statehood was established in 1850. Whether cook or fighter pilot, mechanic or chief of staff, this memorial will honor them all, and forever immortalize the contributions that California veterans have made to their nation.

Each California veteran is entitled to the basic information of name, rank and branch of service. To create a truly living memorial, California veterans are encouraged to expand on the basic information by contributing to the enhanced registry.

Visit the California Department of Veterans Affairs website <http://www.cdva.ca.gov> for contact information and benefits assistance.

[Source: <http://www.military.com/benefits/veteran-state-benefits/california-state-veterans-benefits.html> Aug 2014

Military Discounts in California

1. MVDC has a list of close to 22,000 locations in California that have discounts for military personnel or veterans. Similar to businesses, the state of California provides discounts for its veterans and military population. Use the search tool at <http://militaryandveteransdiscounts.com/location/california.html> if you are looking for business discounts.

2. Veterans Designation on driver's license: Pending

3. Discounted Fees and Taxes

- Professional and low cost residential, assisted living and medical care facilities statewide
- DMV fees waived for POWs and certain disabled veterans
- Free license plates to those that are eligible
- Free burial services (\$500 fee for spouses and dependents)
- Free hunting and fishing licenses with veterans with a 50% service connected disability
- Farm and Home loans at discounted rates
- Free state park passes for veterans with a 50% service connected disability

4. Education Discounts - 1,000 California National Guard members can receive 100% tuition assistance. Tuition waivers for children or spouses of disabled veterans or service members that have died in action. For college fee waivers refer to <https://www.calvet.ca.gov/VetServices/Pages/College-Fee-Waiver.aspx>. You can also call CalVet's at 916-654-2573. One year nonresident college fee waiver. (If you are discharged, not a California resident and want to go to college in CA, you can pay in state tuition if enroll within one year of your discharge)

[Source: <http://militaryandveteransdiscounts.com/location/california.html> Aug 2014 ++]