

# Illinois State Veteran's Benefits 2015



**ILLINOIS JOINING FORCES**  
*Supporting Service Members, Veterans  
and their Families*



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

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

## **Veteran Housing Programs**

### **GI Loan for Heroes**

The G-I Loan for Heroes is the new Illinois Homeownership Program for Veterans and Active Service Personnel. The G-I Loan offers significantly below market homeownership financing and counseling. There are two program packages, one for Veterans and one for active duty personnel. Learn more about the GI Loan for Heroes at [www.ihda.org/homeowner/heroes.htm](http://www.ihda.org/homeowner/heroes.htm)

**Veterans' Program:** The Veterans' Program is designed for honorably discharged Veterans who qualify under the income and purchase price limits of the IHDA MRB Program. Participants will receive a substantially below market rate financing package, closing cost assistance and homeownership counseling. In addition, under federal legislation passed in December 2006, Veterans do not have to be first-time homebuyers to qualify.

**Active Duty Program:** The Active Duty program is designed for active duty service personnel in the Armed Services and Reserve Forces. Under this program, they will receive the same package as the Veterans, except they must qualify as a first time homebuyer under the IHDA MRB Program.

### **Specially Adapted Housing**

Assistance is provided for service-connected disabled veterans for the purpose of acquiring or remodeling suitable dwelling units with special fixtures or moveable facilities made necessary by the veteran's permanent and total service-connected disabilities.

### **Veteran Homes**

Illinois veteran homes are located at:

- Illinois Veterans Home, 792 N. Main Street, Anna, IL 62906 Tel: (618) 833-6302
- Illinois Veterans Home, 1015 O'Conor Avenue, LaSalle, IL 61301 Tel: (815) 223-0303 ext. 210
- Illinois Veterans Home, 1 Veterans Drive, Manteno, IL 60950 Tel: (815) 468 – 6581
- Illinois Veterans Home, 1707 N. 12th Street, Quincy, IL 62301 Tel: (217) 222 - 8641
- Illinois Veterans Home, 4250 N. Oak Park Ave, Chicago, IL (Ground broken 21 SEP 2014)

The homes are available to veterans who have been residents in Illinois for one year preceding application or entered service from Illinois with military service of one (1) day or more during WWI, WWII, the Korean, Vietnam, or Persian Gulf conflicts, or during any period of time now, or in the future recognized by the VA as a period of war. Peacetime veterans with one year of "Honorable" military service may also be eligible for admission at Quincy or Anna. A spouse, or surviving spouse, may also qualify for admittance to the Quincy Veterans Home. Residents help pay for their care by paying a monthly maintenance fee. This fee is assessed based on individual's income (not assets). The ability-to-pay-plan has a maximum charge, currently \$929 per month, and covers room, food (including special diets and supplements), medication, all levels of medical care, recreation and activities, and any special therapy or treatment prescribed by the attending physician. Some costs of care are not covered. These include, but may not be limited to, eyeglasses, hearing aids, dentures, prostheses, and special wheelchairs or mechanical devices. Such costs must be paid directly to the providers by the resident or responsible surrogate. You may contact the Home via email through the Home's Public Affairs Officer, Rick Gengenbacher at: [rick.gengenbacher@illinois.gov](mailto:rick.gengenbacher@illinois.gov).

Admission for a veteran certified to be eligible, is based upon:

- The ability of the Home to provide adequate and appropriate care and services required by the veteran's medical diagnoses and assessed needs.
- An available bed in the category required by the veteran's medical conditions and assessed needs.

### **Applications**

- Applications can be downloaded at [www.quincyivh.org/pdfs/Application.pdf](http://www.quincyivh.org/pdfs/Application.pdf).
- Required Health Questioner can be downloaded at <http://www.quincyivh.org/pdfs/HealthQuestionnaire.pdf>.

- Veterans whose applications are accepted, but who cannot be immediately admitted to the facility, are placed on the facility waiting list and are prioritized on a "first come-first served" basis. No exceptions are permitted to the policy.
- Applicants must pass background checks through the Illinois Department of corrections and the Illinois State Police.

#### Home Capacity/Care Provided

- **The Veterans' Home at Quincy** - Located in Adams County and the largest in the state. The Home provides a broad range of facilities and services including domiciliary, intermediate and skilled care. With a capacity of 551 licensed skilled care beds, the home provides a special needs unit for care of Veterans with Alzheimer's disease or related dementia. Anderson and Somerville Barracks offer a home to up to 132 domiciliary residents. Sunset State Veterans' Cemetery located on the campus provides interment and perpetual care for eligible Veterans and spouses. Over 7,000 Veterans and spouses, dating back to the Civil War rest there.
- **The Veterans' Home at LaSalle** - Located in LaSalle County. The Home provides skilled nursing care for 160 residents and an additional 40 persons in a special needs unit for Veterans suffering from Alzheimer's disease or related dementia.
- **The Veterans' Home at Anna** - Located in Union County. The Home provides skilled nursing care services to eligible Veterans and can accommodate 50 skilled nursing care residents and 12 people in 6 adjoining apartment style domiciliary units.
- **The Veterans' Home at Manteno** - Located in Kankakee County. The Home can accommodate 300 skilled care residents and 40 in the Alzheimer's/dementia unit. Manteno offers a diverse range of program and services to eligible Veterans.
- **The Prince Homeless/Disabled Veterans' Home** - Located at the Veterans' Home at Manteno. This 15-bed program is staffed with social service professionals and provides permanent supportive housing to Veterans, helping them obtain medical and education benefits to which they are entitled, and assisting them with learning/reinforcing the life skills necessary to live independently.
- **The Veterans' Home at Chicago** - Will be located in Cook County on the northwest side of the city onsite at the Reed Mental Health Center. It is scheduled to have a 200-bed capacity with a wing for Alzheimer's/dementia patients.

Visit the Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs website for contact information and benefits assistance at <http://www2.illinois.gov/veterans/Pages/default.aspx>

### **Financial Assistance Benefits**

#### **World War II Bonus Payment**

A bonus of \$10 per month for domestic service and \$15 per month for foreign service is payable to a veteran who was a resident of Illinois at time of entering service, served at least 60 days on active duty between September 16, 1940 and September 3, 1945, and received an honorable discharge. Survivors are entitled to a benefit of \$1,000, if the veteran's death was service-connected and within the period specified.

### **Korean, Vietnam and Persian Gulf Conflict Bonus**

A \$100 bonus is payable for service during one of the following periods:

Korea - June 27, 1950 - July 27, 1953

Vietnam - January 1, 1961 - March 28, 1973

Vietnam Frequent Wind - April 29, 30, 1975

Persian Gulf - August 2, 1990 - November 30, 1995

The claimant must also be in receipt of one of the following medals: Korean Service Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal Vietnam Era or the Southwest Asia Service Medal; and have been a resident of Illinois for 12 months immediately prior to entering service and have received an Honorable Discharge. (Individuals currently on active duty who served in the Persian Gulf may apply prior to discharge by also including the "Armed Forces Certificate".)

### **Vietnam Veteran Survivors Compensation**

Survivors are entitled to a payment of \$1,000 if veteran's death is service-connected or is the direct result of service-connected disabilities incurred in the period specified. A separate application is required.

### **POW Compensation**

Persons on active duty with the Armed Forces of the United States or employed by the United States Government on, or after, January 1, 1961, who were residents of Illinois 12 months prior to entry, and who were taken and held prisoner by hostile forces in Southwest Asia, are entitled to \$50 for each month or portion thereof while being held captive.

### **Global War on Terrorism Survivors' Compensation**

A \$3,000 bonus is payable to survivors of certain persons killed by terrorist acts or hostile activities during performance of military service in periods recognized as wartime by United States campaign or service medals. Residency of 1 year in Illinois prior to entering military service is required.

### **Tax Exemption**

This exemption is allowed on the assessed value of real property for which federal funds have been used for the purchase or construction of specially adapted housing for as long as the veteran, or the spouse, or unmarried surviving spouse resides on the property. The 2007 homestead legislation created two new exemptions for Veterans that take effect for the 2007 tax year:

- The **Returning Veterans' Homestead Exemption** provides qualifying Veterans a one-time \$5,000 reduction to their home's equalized assessed value (EAV). Qualifying Veterans who return from active duty in an armed conflict involving the U.S. armed forces can file an application upon their return home to receive this exemption.
- The new **Disabled Veterans' Standard Homestead Exemption** provides a reduction in a property's EAV to a qualifying property owned by a Veteran with a service-connected disability certified by the U. S. Department of Veterans' Affairs. A \$2,500 homestead exemption is available to a Veteran with a service-connected disability of at least 50%

but less than 75% or a \$5,000 homestead exemption is available to a veteran with a service connected disability of at least 75%. A disabled Veteran must file an annual application by the county's due date to continue to receive this exemption.

### **Tax Exemption for Mobile Home**

This exemption applies to the tax imposed by the Mobile Home Local Services Tax Act when that property is owned and used exclusively by a disabled veteran, spouse or unmarried surviving spouse as a home. The veteran must have received authorization of the Specially Adapted Housing Grant by the USDVA, whether benefit was used or not. Applicant must be a permanent resident of the State of Illinois on January 1 of the tax year for which the exemption is being claimed. Disabled veterans that now live in a mobile home and never received the Specially Adapted Housing Grant are not eligible. Please contact your local service office for more information.

### **Disabled Veterans License Plates and Parking**

Special military plates are available to all veterans who can meet the requirements for issue. Disabled Veteran License Plates may be issued at no cost for the first set of plates to any U.S. Armed Forces Veteran if

- (1) the veteran holds proof of a service-connected disability from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs
- (2) A licensed physician has certified that because of the service-connected disability the veteran qualifies for the issuance of a disabled placard or plate.

The below plates are available to Veterans who qualify. To determine eligibility requirements, costs, availability, and renewal procedures click on the title of the plate below that you would like to obtain.



[Afghanistan Campaign Medal](#)



[Air Force Service Cross](#)



[Armed Forces Reserves](#)



[Bronze Star](#)



[Congressional Medal of Honor](#)



[Disabled Veteran](#)





[Distinguished Flying Cross](#)



[Distinguished Service Cross](#)



[Ex-Prisoner of War](#)



[Ex-Prisoner of War](#)



[Gold Star](#)



[Illinois National Guard](#)



[Iraq Campaign Medal](#)



[Korean Service](#)



[Korean War Veteran](#)



[Marine Corps](#)



[Navy Service Cross](#)



[Paratrooper](#)



[Pearl Harbor Survivor](#)



[POW/MIA Illinois Remembers](#)



[Purple Heart](#)



[Purple Heart Motorcycle](#)



[Retired Armed Forces](#)



[Silver Star](#)



[Universal Veteran](#)



[Universal Veteran Motorcycle](#)



[U.S. Air Force](#)



[U.S. Army Veteran](#)



[U.S. Navy Veteran](#)



[Vietnam Veteran](#)



[West Point Bicentennial](#)



[Women Veterans](#)



[World War II Veteran](#)

[Source: [http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/vehicles/license\\_plate\\_guide/military/home.html](http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/vehicles/license_plate_guide/military/home.html)]

### **The Illinois Military Family Relief Fund**

The Illinois Military Family Relief Fund (IMFRF) provides monetary grants to Illinois National Guard members and Illinois residents serving in the U.S. Armed Forces Reserve Components and their families who were called to active duty as a result of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks.

IMFRF grants are intended to help Service Members and their families defray the costs of food, housing, utilities, medical services and other expenses that become difficult to afford when a wage earner has temporarily left civilian employment to be placed on active military duty. The fund also provides for those wounded in combat. Toll-Free in IL: (866) 524-4564 or 217-761-3452

### **Veterans Cash Grant**

Veterans Cash is the Lottery's first lottery ticket where 100 percent of proceeds go to support Illinois Veterans. Proceeds from the sale of this ticket are deposited into an interest bearing account in the State Treasury called the Illinois Veterans Assistance Fund. The Illinois General Assembly appropriates this money solely to IDVA who will award the money in grants, fund additional services or conduct research relating to veterans' Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, homelessness, health insurance costs, long term care and disability benefits. Since 2006, Veterans Cash has awarded more than \$6 million to organizations supporting Illinois Veterans. To apply for a Veterans Cash grant, download, complete, and mail a Veterans Cash Grant

Application, which can be found at the Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs web site at [http://www.veterans.illinois.gov/programs/veterans\\_cash.htm](http://www.veterans.illinois.gov/programs/veterans_cash.htm).

Visit the Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs website for contact information and benefits assistance at <http://www2.illinois.gov/veterans/Pages/default.aspx>

## **Employment Benefits**

### **State Government/Employment Preference**

Preference is given in Central Management Services entrance examinations to honorably discharged veterans who served in times of hostilities and peacetime. The Department of Central Management Services also conducts a Veterans Outreach Program that provides professional counseling to Veterans seeking state employment with the 45 boards, agencies, and commissions under the Governor's jurisdiction. Interested Veterans may learn more about the program or to begin the process of state employment by calling 1-800-643-8138.

### **Jobs for Vets**

- The Department of Employment Security/Illinois Job Service provides a trained "Veterans Representative" to help you get the training and job you need. An electronic statewide job search information system is available at different locations throughout the State of Illinois. Veterans should call 1-888-FOR-IETC to find their nearest Representative.
- The Department of Human Services provides services for veterans with mental/physical disabilities that assist them in returning to gainful employment.
- The Illinois Department of Commerce and Community Affairs have a number of Small Business Administration loan and Job Training Programs.

Visit the Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs website for contact information and benefits assistance at <http://www2.illinois.gov/veterans/Pages/default.aspx>

## **Education Benefits**

### **Educational Opportunities for Children (10-18 Yrs)**

Financial aid is provided annually to each child between the ages of 10 and 18 years of a veteran who died or became totally disabled as a result of service in the Armed Forces during World War I, or II, the Korean and Vietnam Conflicts or beginning February 1, 1955, until such individuals are no longer eligible for induction under the Universal Military Training and Service Act. The financial aid applies to a state educational institution of elementary grade, high school or vocational training school.

### **MIA/POW Scholarship**

Dependents of a veteran who has been declared by the Department of Defense or U.S.



Department of Veterans Affairs to be a prisoner of war; missing-in-action; to have died as the result of a service-connected disability; or be permanently disabled from service-connected causes with 100% disability; and, who was an Illinois resident or was an Illinois resident within six months of entering service may be eligible for the scholarship. Eligible dependents are entitled to full payment of tuition and certain fees to any state supported Illinois institution of higher learning consisting of the equivalent of four (4) calendar years of full-time enrollment including summer terms (i.e., 120 points).

### **State Approving Agency**

Approves training for veterans in the areas of higher education, apprenticeship training, vocational training, and on the job training.

### **Veterans' Grant**

The Illinois Veteran Grant (IVG) Program pays tuition and certain fees at all Illinois state-supported colleges, universities and community colleges for Illinois residents. An individual must:

- Be an honorably discharged veteran; and
- Reside in Illinois six months before entering the service; and
- Have at least one full year of active duty in the U.S. armed forces which includes veterans who were assigned to active duty in a foreign country in a time of hostilities in that country, regardless of length of service; and
- Return to Illinois within six months of discharge from the service.

### **Illinois National Guard Scholarship**

Any enlisted person or Lieutenant or Captain with at least one year service in the Illinois Army/Air National Guard may participate. Available for eight semesters or twelve quarters of full-time or part-time undergraduate study or graduate study at any Illinois state-controlled university or community college. Recipient is entitled to payment of tuition and certain fees.

### **Children of Veterans Scholarship**

Each county in the state shall be entitled, annually, to one honorary scholarship at the University of Illinois, for the benefit of children of veterans of WWI, WWII, Korean War, the Vietnam Conflict and any time on or after August 2, 1990 and until those persons in service are no longer eligible for the Southwest Asia Service Medal. Preference is given to the children of deceased and disabled veterans. Such children shall be entitled to receive, without charge for tuition, instruction in any or all departments of the University for a term of at least four (4) consecutive years. Details may be obtained from the University's Financial Aid Office.

Visit the Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs website for contact information and benefits assistance at <http://www2.illinois.gov/veterans/Pages/default.aspx>

## **Other State Veteran Benefits**

### **Cartage Fees**

When the federal government has furnished a headstone or marker, the ILLINOIS

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS shall pay up to the allowable reimbursement amount for the setting of such marker within Illinois. Currently, the maximum amount is \$100.00 payable upon approval of the application.

### **Graves Registration**

The Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs shall maintain a card file Roll of Honor of all veterans buried in the State of Illinois. Every person, firm or corporation owning or controlling any cemetery or burial place in this State is required to keep a permanent record of the burial of each U.S. war veteran or memorial marker erected for this purpose.

### **National Cemeteries**

- Rock Island National Cemetery, Rock Island Arsenal, Bldg. 118, Rock Island, IL 61299 Tel: (309) 782-2094/2097F [www.cem.va.gov/CEM/cems/nchp/rockisland.asp](http://www.cem.va.gov/CEM/cems/nchp/rockisland.asp).
- Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery (near Chicago) 27034 South Diagonal Road, Elwood, IL 60421 Tel: (815) 423-9958/5824F [www.cem.va.gov/CEM/cems/nchp/abrahamlincoln.asp](http://www.cem.va.gov/CEM/cems/nchp/abrahamlincoln.asp)
- Danville National Cemetery, 1900 East Main Street, Danville, IL 61832, Tel: (217) 554-4550/4291 FAX: (217) 554-4803 <http://www.cem.va.gov/CEM/cems/nchp/danvilleil.asp>
- Camp Butler National Cemetery, 5063 Camp Butler Road, Springfield, IL 62707 Tel: (217) 492 – 4070/4072F [www.cem.va.gov/CEM/cems/nchp/campbutler.asp](http://www.cem.va.gov/CEM/cems/nchp/campbutler.asp).
- Mound City National Cemetery, HWY Junction 37 & 51, Mound City, IL 62963 Tel: (314) 260-8691 or (800) 535-1117 or (314) 260-8723F [www.cem.va.gov/CEM/cems/nchp/moundcity.asp](http://www.cem.va.gov/CEM/cems/nchp/moundcity.asp).
- Quincy National Cemetery, 36th and Maine Street, Quincy, IL 62301 Tel: (309) 782-2094/2097F [www.cem.va.gov/CEM/cems/nchp/quincy.asp](http://www.cem.va.gov/CEM/cems/nchp/quincy.asp).
- Alton National Cemetery, 600 Pearl Street, Alton, IL 62003 Tel: (314) 260-8691 or (800) 535-1117 or (314) 260-8723F [www.cem.va.gov/CEM/cems/nchp/alton.asp](http://www.cem.va.gov/CEM/cems/nchp/alton.asp).

Abraham Lincoln, Danville, Camp Butler and Mound City national cemeteries have space available for casketed and cremated remains. Alton has space available for cremated remains and can accommodate casketed remains in the gravesites of previously interred family members. Quincy is closed to new interments, but can bury family members in existing gravesites.

### **Indigent Veterans**

The county Veterans Assistance Commission shall provide burial for any honorably discharged indigent veteran, or their mothers, fathers, spouse or surviving spouse, or minor children without sufficient means to defray the funeral expenses. The expense of such burial shall not exceed the sum of \$600. Emergency food, transportation, etc. are provided in certain cases. Please contact your local county Veterans Assistance Commission for more information.

### **Incarcerated Veterans Program**

The Incarcerated Veterans Transition Program (IVTP), is a multi-agency initiative operated by the Illinois Departments of Corrections, Veterans' Affairs and Employment Security, and aimed at cutting down the recidivism rate among veterans. To date, nearly 300 incarcerated veterans

have voluntarily participated in the program, which is expected to further expand to all of the state's medium and minimum-security correctional centers.

### **Veterans Conservation Corps**

The Veterans Conservation Corps is a joint program from the Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs and in cooperation with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. Volunteers are needed and there is a variety of opportunities available so there is something for everyone. If you are interested in becoming a member of Conservation Corps, the first step is to meet with a Veteran Service Officer in your area or call the Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs.

### **Veteran of the Month**

Each month, on behalf of the Illinois Governor, the Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs Director will recognize an individual who contributes to the betterment of communities and other Veterans across the State of Illinois. For more information, contact IDVA at (312) 814-5538.

### **Camping & Admission Fees**

This benefit provides for the exemption of camping and admission fees for certain disabled persons and former prisoners of war who are Illinois residents and wish to camp in parks under the control of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. Documentation is required.

### **Hunting and Fishing Privileges**

Fishing and hunting licenses are not required for disabled veterans receiving 10% or greater service-connected compensation, or total disability pension benefits. To acquire a permit, contact your local Veterans Service office.

### **State Fair**

Honorably discharged veterans of all ages and their families shall be admitted FREE, when they properly identify themselves, on Veterans' Day at the fair. Veterans Day includes a day-long program of drum corps, drill teams, and color guard competition. Admission is FREE to people 60 and older on Senior Day.

### **Necessary Documents to File Claims**

Certificate of Discharge DD 214, death certificate, marriage license, insurance policies and in some cases medical documentation.

Visit the Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs website for contact information and benefits assistance at <http://www2.illinois.gov/veterans/Pages/default.aspx>.

[Source: <http://www.military.com/benefits/veteran-benefits/illinois-state-veterans-benefits> Jan 2015 ++]

## **Military Discounts in Illinois**

1. MVDC has a list of close to 9,000 locations in Illinois that have discounts for military personnel or veterans. Similar to businesses, the state of Illinois provides discounts for its veterans and military population. If you are looking for business discounts, use the search tool at <http://militaryandveteransdiscounts.com/location/illinois.html>.

2. **Veterans Designation on driver's license:** Pending

3. **Discounted Fees and Taxes**

- Returning Veterans' Homestead Exemption provides qualifying Veterans a one-time \$5,000 reduction to their home's equalized assessed value.
- A \$2500 Homestead Exemption on property taxes for veterans that are 50%-75% service rated disabled.
- A \$5000 Homestead Exemption on property taxes for veterans that are 75% - 100% service rated disabled.
- Disabled veterans residing in a specially adapted home or a mobile home are also eligible for tax exemptions on their homes.

4. **Education Discounts**

- Education financial aid provided to children (ages 10-18) of 100% service rated disabled veterans or veterans that were KIA.
- Illinois Troops to Teachers Program can help eligible veterans with at least 6 years of honorable service transition to K-12 public school teaching.
- The Illinois Veteran Grant (IVG) Program pays tuition and certain fees at all Illinois state-supported colleges, universities and community colleges for Illinois residents.
- Children of veterans that were POWs, MIA, KIA or have 100% service rated disability are eligible for a four year full tuition scholarship at any state supported Illinois institution.

[Source: <http://militaryandveteransdiscounts.com/location/illinois.html> Jan 2015 ++]