



Virginia Military Friendly Guide

A Summary of the Commonwealth's Rights, Privileges, Benefits, and Services for Active Duty Service Members, National Guardsmen, Reservists, Veterans, and their Families

This guide can also be accessed online at
<https://www.vada.virginia.gov/>

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LETTERS FROM STATE LEADERS



LETTER FROM THE GOVERNOR

Servicemembers, Veterans, and Families:

It is my aim to make Virginia the most Military, Veteran, and Family friendly state in the nation—and your first choice to live, work, and raise a family.

Serving Military members, Veterans, and Families is a priority for Virginia. As Governor, it is a primary focus of my Administration to provide you with the best and most accessible rights, privileges, benefits, and services available.

I am pleased to present Virginia's first Military Friendly Guide. It provides a complete collection of the rights, privileges, benefits, and services the Commonwealth provides for our Military and Veteran communities. I encourage you to use it often and take advantage of all that our Commonwealth has to offer.

I am proud to serve as your Governor. I will remain ever vigilant and responsive to your needs and seek opportunities to increase Virginia's Military Value. As specially valued members of our Commonwealth, you strengthen the spirit of Virginia. I value your service, present and past. Together, we will make Virginia even stronger.

Sincerely,

Glenn Youngkin

Governor



LETTER FROM THE SECRETARY OF VETERANS AND DEFENSE AFFAIRS

Servicemembers, Veterans, and Families:

Thank you for serving our nation. The Commonwealth is one of the most important states in the union with respect to national defense as evidenced by the critical missions we host, and the over \$105 billion economy generated by military investments annually. You make that so, and we value your contributions dearly.

With the nation's highest number of Veterans in the workforce per capita, and the second largest active-duty population, Virginians set the standard for service to our great nation—past and present. The Commonwealth has a proud history of leading the charge in support of our Military, Veterans, and Families. This guide is the first comprehensive compilation of the rights, privileges, benefits, and services afforded to you by the Commonwealth. Please use it to your full advantage.

While these benefits are notable, our work continues. I look forward to listening to you and leading the way to improve your rights, privileges, benefits, and services. Thank you for answering the call to serve—this guide, and the Commonwealth's leadership—serves you.

Sincerely,

Craig Crenshaw

Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs



CHILDCARE



CHILDCARE

1. MCCYN-Plus Program

Virginia participates in the Military Child Care in Your Neighborhood (MCCYN)-Plus pilot program through Child Care Aware of America. MCCYN-Plus utilizes the Commonwealth-level quality rating system, VQB5, to provide faster, more accessible DoD accreditation to childcare programs across the Commonwealth. Since military families who are unable to access childcare on military installations can only apply for free assistance at DoD-accredited childcare programs, Virginia's participation in MCCYN-Plus provides a wider range of childcare options for families to utilize free assistance.

Additional information and the application process for MCCYN-Plus can be accessed at <https://www.childcareaware.org/standards-for-becoming-an-approved-mccyn-plus-provider-in-virginia/>

2. Child Care Subsidy Program

The Virginia Department of Education's Child Care Subsidy program assists families in paying childcare costs. This program is open to applicants with children under age 13 who are not eligible to attend public school where public education is available, or children under 18 with special needs who reside with the applicant. This program is available for all active duty service members in Virginia who serve as caregivers to dependents.

Families may apply for assistance through the <https://www.childcare.virginia.gov/providers/child-care-subsidy> website portal.

3. Military Parents Equal Opportunity Act

Protects a deploying service member's access to custodial or visitation rights. Establishes that court orders limiting these rights on the basis of deployment be entered as such and be temporary. Also mandates that the non-deploying parent or guardian provide the court 30 days advance written notice of any change of address and any change of telephone number. Additionally, it affords the deploying member the right to delegate their visitation rights to a family member, including a stepparent, with whom the child has a close and substantial relationship. Either the deploying or non-deploying member may, upon demonstrating a material change in circumstances, file a motion to rescind the order delegating or providing visitation rights. If changes to custodial or visitation rights are pursued upon returning from a deployment, the court shall set a hearing on the matter that shall take precedence on the court's docket, and shall be set within 30 days of the filing of the motion.

[\(Va. Code § 20-124.7-10\)](#)







4. School Registration for Relocating Military Families

A child of a person on active military duty (with a pending relocation) shall be allowed to enroll in the school division of the child’s intended residence if documentation is provided at the time of enrollment. Documentation can include military orders of the service member parent or an official letter from the service member’s command indicating such relocation. Eligible students may register, remotely or in-person, for courses and other academic programs and participate in the lottery process for charter schools and college partnership laboratory schools in the school division in which such student will reside at the same time and in the same manner as students who reside in the local school division.

[\(Va. Code § 22.1-3\)](#)

Additional information for military connected students, to include enrollment information referenced in the next benefit, can be found here: <https://www.doe.virginia.gov/programs-services/student-services/military-families>

5. School Enrollment for Students Residing on a Military Installation

Any local school board of a school division in which a military installation or other military housing is located shall establish and implement policies to provide for the enrollment to any school of any student residing on a military installation or in military housing within the school division upon the request of their parent if space in the school is available. As used in this section, “military installation” means a base, camp, post, station, yard, center, homeport facility for any ship, fort, or other activity under the jurisdiction of the Department of Defense, including any leased facility, that is located in whole or in part within the Commonwealth.

[\(Va. Code § 22.1-7.2\)](#)

6. Winchester STARBASE

STARBASE is a Department of Defense educational program, sponsored by the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs where students participate in challenging activities in science, technology, engineering and math. The STARBASE mission is to expose our nation’s youth to the technological environments and positive civilian and military role models found on Active, Guard, and Reserve military bases and installations, nurture a winning network of collaborators, and build mutual loyalty within our communities, by providing 5 days, (25 hours) of exemplary hands-on instruction and activities that meet or exceed the National Standards. The Winchester STARBASE Academy at the Winchester Readiness Center immerses students in a unique classroom experience where all activities are student-centered, hands-on, encourage higher order thinking, and incorporate STEM applications in the real world.

Additional information can be found here: <https://www.starbasewinchester.com/>



7. ChalleNGe Youth Academy

The ChalleNGe Youth Program (located on Virginia’s State Military Reservation in Virginia Beach, Virginia) is approximately an 18-month program for those between 16-18 years old, broken up into two phases. The first (residential) phase is a structured, quasi-military style environment designed to promote self-esteem, confidence, and pride. It starts with two weeks of acclimation consisting of physical, leadership, and mental challenges designed to test the candidates’ potential for success. This is followed by a 20-week period that consists of academics (credit recovery or GED test preparation), post-residential goal development, physical fitness, counseling (both individual and group), life skills, and team building. Candidates complete the program with a one year (post-residential) mentorship period in the cadet’s community with the guidance and assistance of a screened, trained, and matched mentor. It is funded through the Federal and State governments, meaning there is no charge to the parent or guardian.

Additional information can be found here:
<https://www.vachallenge.org/admissions/>

8. Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children

The Virginia Council on the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children (Virginia Council) was formed to assist in easing the transition of the children of military families into school as a result of frequent moves and deployment of their parents. Created by the 2009 General Assembly, Virginia joins other states participating in the compact. ([Va. Code § 22.1-361](#))

Additional information can be found here:
<https://www.doe.virginia.gov/programs-services/student-services/vulnerable-students-wellbeing-student-success/military-families/virginia-council-on-the-interstate-compact-on-educational-opportunity-for-military-children>



SPOUSE EMPLOYMENT



SPOUSE EMPLOYMENT

9. Expedited Licenses for Military Spouses

Dictates that named regulatory boards for professional occupations expedite the issuance of licenses, permits, certificates, or other documents required for the practice of any business, profession, or occupation for individuals who hold the same or similar authorization required by another jurisdiction. This is provided that they are a spouse of either a service member on active duty orders assigned to a military installation in the Commonwealth (or any surrounding jurisdiction) or a veteran separated from active-duty service within one year of the submission of an application to a board. If the board is unable to complete their review of the documentation provided or make a final determination of substantial equivalency within 20 days, the board shall issue a temporary license, permit, or certificate, provided the applicant otherwise meets the qualifications set out. [\(Va. Code § 54.1-119\)](#)

Health professionals can find additional information from the Virginia Department of Health Professions at: <https://www.dhp.virginia.gov/PractitionerResources/MilitaryServices/>

All other professionals can find information from the Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation at: https://www.dpor.virginia.gov/Military_and_Veterans_Services

10. Licensure Reciprocity for Military Spouse Teachers

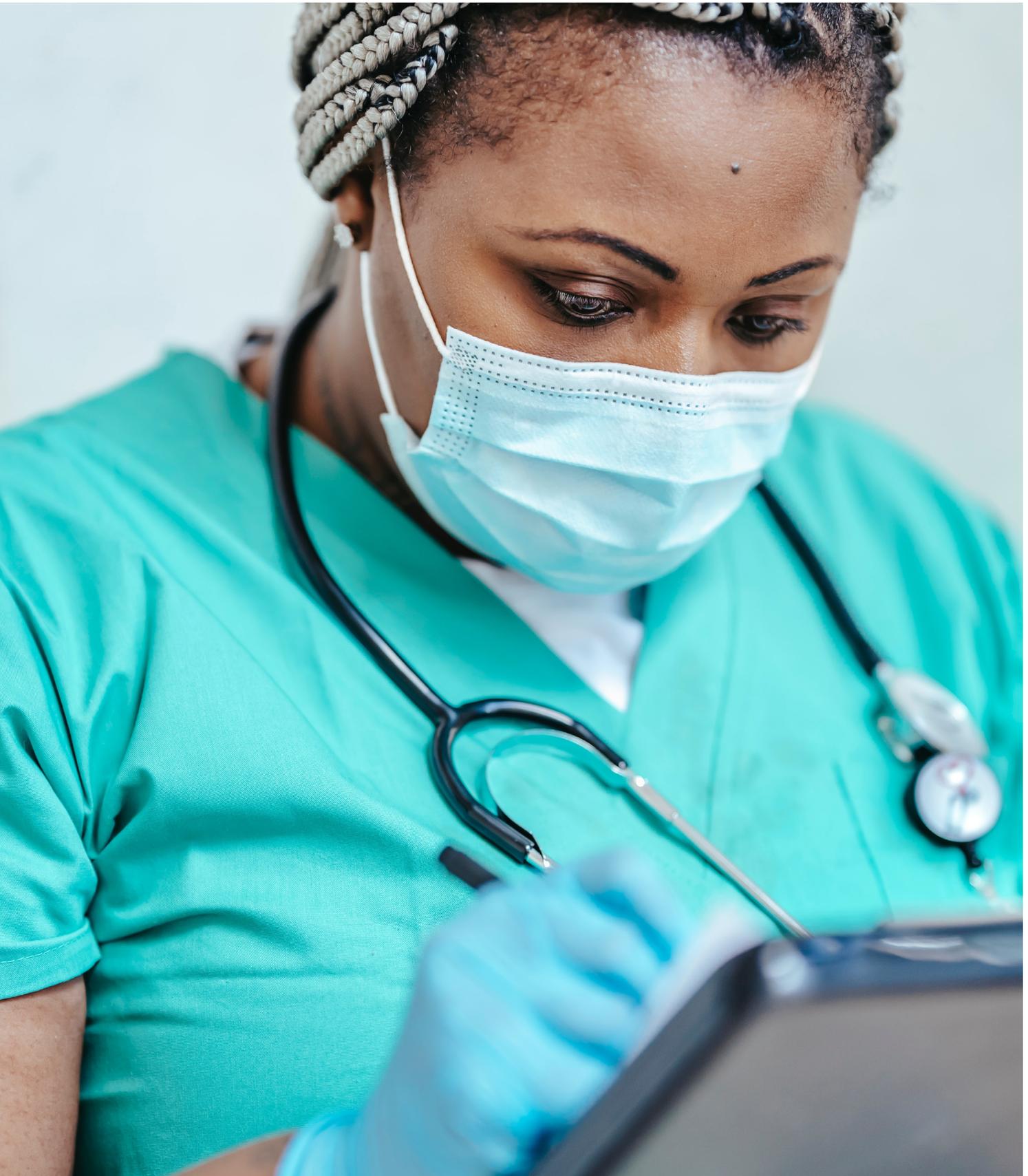
Provides **license reciprocity** for any spouse of an active duty **or reserve** member of the United States **Armed Forces** or Virginia **National Guard** who has obtained a valid out-of-state license, with full credentials and without deficiencies, that is in force at the time the application for a Virginia license. Each such individual shall establish a file in the Department of Education by submitting a complete application packet. No service requirements or licensing assessments shall be required for any such individual. Other licensing assessments, as prescribed by the Board of Education, may be required, but any such individual shall be exempt from any professional teacher’s assessment requirements. [\(Va. Code § 22.1-298.1\)](#)

11. Board of Nursing Expedited Licensing for Military Spouses

As a member of the Nurse Licensure Compact, this provision provides the Virginia Board of Nursing the authority to expedite application processing, to the extent possible, for an applicant for licensure or certification by the Board upon submission of evidence that the applicant, who is licensed or certified in another state, is relocating to the Commonwealth pursuant to a spouse’s official military orders. [\(Va. Code § 54.1-3005\)](#)

Additional resources associated with the application process and licensure compact can be found at the following locations:

<https://www.dhp.virginia.gov/Boards/Nursing/PractitionerResources/>





12. Occupational Therapy Interstate Licensure Compact

Connects Compact states facilitating interstate practice of occupational therapy with the goal to improve public access to services. Additionally, this Compact is designed to:

- Enhance the states' abilities to protect the public's health and safety
- Encourage the cooperation of member states in regulating multi-state occupational therapy practice
- Support spouses of relocating military members
- Improve the exchange of licensure, investigative, and disciplinary information between member states
- Facilitate the use of telehealth technology in order to increase access to services

[\(Va. Code § 54.1-2956.7:1\)](#)

Additional information can be found here:
<https://otcompact.org/>

13. Physician Assistance Licensure by Endorsement for Military Spouses

Authorizes the Board of Medicine to issue a license by endorsement to an applicant for licensure as a physician assistant if the applicant is the spouse of an active duty member of the Armed Forces of the United States or the Commonwealth, holds current certification from the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants, and holds a license as a physician assistant that is in good standing, or that is eligible for reinstatement if lapsed, under the laws of another state. Licensure is managed by the Virginia Department of Health Professions. [\(Va. Code § 54.1-2951.1\)](#)

Additional information can be found here: <https://www.dhp.virginia.gov/PractitionerResources/MilitaryServices/>





14. Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Counselor Licensure Reciprocity

Beginning 1 January, 2024, Virginia will become a signatory state to the Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Interstate Compact and permit eligible licensed professional counselors in this field to practice in the Commonwealth provided that they are licensed in at least one member state.

Additional information can be found here:

<https://trackbill.com/bill/virginia-house-bill-2033-audiology-and-speech-language-pathology-interstate-compact-va-to-become-a-signatory-to-compact/2305259/>

15. State Tax Residency Waiver for Spouses

Establishes that a spouse of a service member does not lose or acquire state residency or domicile for state tax purposes solely due to their presence in a particular state in compliance with military orders.

[\(50 U.S.C. § 3901-4043\)](#)

16. Sustained In-State Tuition Benefits

In-state tuition benefits are extended to any of the following members living in the Commonwealth: active duty members, active guard or reserve members, veterans, surviving spouses, and any child of an active duty member or veteran who claims Virginia as his home state and filed Virginia tax returns for at least 10 years during active duty service. [\(Va. Code § 23.1-506\)](#)



17. Military Survivors & Dependents Education Program

Qualified surviving spouses and dependents, including stepchildren previously claimed on service member's tax returns or DEERS profile, are eligible for a waiver of tuition and mandatory fees for admission to certain institutions of higher education if the military service member was killed, became a prisoner of war, or is disabled. Eligibility is contingent on whether the service member established a domicile:

- At the time of entering such active military service or called to active duty as a member of the Reserves of the Armed Forces of the United States or Virginia National Guard

- At least five years immediately prior to, or had a physical presence in the Commonwealth for at least five years immediately prior to, the date on which the dependent's admission application was submitted.
- On the date of his death and for at least five years immediately prior to his death or had a physical presence in the Commonwealth on the date of his death

[\(Va. Code § 23.1-608\)](#)

If you're interested in this program, please begin your application process here: <https://www.dvs.virginia.gov/education-employment/virginia-military-survivors-and-dependents-education-program-2-2-2>

Or you may call (804) 225-2083.

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**IT IS A PRIMARY FOCUS OF MY
ADMINISTRATION TO PROVIDE YOU
WITH THE BEST AND MOST ACCESSIBLE
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SERVICES AVAILABLE.**

- Governor Glenn Youngkin

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EDUCATION



EDUCATION

18. Tuition Protection for Service-Disabled Veterans

Mandates that public institutions of higher education refund tuition payments or mandatory fees paid by any veteran student for any course from which such veteran student is forced to withdraw, for the first time, due to a service-connected medical condition during a semester, as certified in writing by a physician licensed to practice medicine and who treated the veteran student for such medical condition. However, such refund shall not be issued when three-quarters of the course has been completed at the time that the veteran student withdraws from the course. ([Va. Code § 23.1-607.1](#))

19. Military Training & Education as Qualifications for Licensure

Dictates that named regulatory boards for professional occupations shall accept the military training, education, or experience of a service member honorably discharged from active military service in the armed forces of the United States, to the extent that such training, education, or experience is substantially equivalent to the requirements established by law and regulations of the respective board for the issuance of any license, permit, certificate, or other document. These provisions shall not apply to the Board of Medicine in the regulation of the practice of medicine or osteopathic medicine. Nor shall this subsection apply to the Board of Dentistry in the regulation of dentists or oral and maxillofacial surgeons. Interested members should contact the Virginia Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation. ([Va. Code § 54.1-118](#))

Additional information can be found here:
https://www.dpor.virginia.gov/Military_and_Veterans_Services

20. Professional & Occupational Credential Extensions

Holds that any license, permit, certificate shall be held not to have expired during the period of such person's service outside the United States, in the armed services of the United States. However, no extension granted under this section shall exceed five years from the date of expiration of the document. The provisions of this code also apply to the spouse of a member of the armed services of the United States if the spouse accompanies the member during periods of service outside of the United States. ([Va. Code § 54.1-117](#))

21. Virginia Values Veterans (V3) Transition Program

The Virginia Values Veterans Transition Program (V3 Transition) offers transitioning service members and their spouses the best Virginia has to offer. By providing peer-to-peer support through the transition process, V3 Transition works alongside the transitioning service member or spouse to make referrals that address specific needs. The referral services could include, but are not limited to, resume review, introduction to the Virginia Labor Market index, connection with the Virginia Values Veterans (V3) certified companies for employment, and other VDVS programs, as applicable. The V3 Transition core areas of focus are those seeking employment, education, and entrepreneurship, but the program will also assist those with needs outside of those three core areas. ([Va. Code § 2.2-2001.2](#))

Want to learn more? Start here: <https://www.dvs.virginia.gov/education-employment/virginia-transition-assistance-program-vtap>



22. Virginia Values Veterans (V3) Program

Virginia is the first state to create an official program dedicated to improving the employment of Veterans by training employers on national best practices to recruit, hire, train, and retain veterans. The V3 Program helps employers develop and implement long-term strategies and nationally recognized best practices in recruiting, hiring, and retaining Veterans.

[\(Va. Code § 2.2-2001.2\)](#)

Companies seeking to become certified participants in this program, as well as job seekers looking for employment, can find additional information here: <https://dvsv3.com/>

23. Virginia Career Works

Virginia Career Works advances economic stability and growth by preparing and connecting people who want to work with employers who need to hire through its training providers and network of professional partners. It is Virginia's vital link between meaningful employment and growing businesses, changing lives, and advancing economic prosperity. Eight agencies collaborate on Virginia's workforce needs, to include the veteran-focused Virginia Employment Commission and VA Department of Veteran Services.

Additional information can be found here: <https://virginiacareerworks.com/>

24. Veterans Preference Rating

If any veteran, surviving spouse, child, or member of the National Guard applies for employment with the Commonwealth that is based on the passing of any written examination, their grade or rating on such examination shall be increased by five percent. If the veteran has a service-connected disability rating fixed by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, his grade or rating shall be increased by 10 percent on such written examination. Such increases shall apply only if the veteran passes such examination.

[\(Va. Code § 2.2-2903\)](#)

Additional information about Veteran's Preference specifically can be found here: <https://www.fedshirevets.gov/job-seekers/veterans/veterans-preference/>

If you have additional workforce related questions, please contact Virginia's Department of Human Resources Management here: <https://www.dhrm.virginia.gov/>

25. Education & Employment Assistance for Cyber Professionals

Through the Institute for Veteran & Military Families at Syracuse University, Virginia became one of only four priority-access states participating in the CyberVetsUSA Program. This program is committed to connecting cyber and cyber-security veterans with training pilot programs, apprenticeships, employment opportunities, education, training, and financial support. They also identify possibilities for academic credit for prior military training.

Additional information can be found here:
<https://www.cybervets.virginia.gov/>

26. Grants for Cyber Professionals

The State Council of Higher Education in Virginia (SCHEV) administers the Cybersecurity Public Service Grant Program. The purpose of this program is to encourage public service to recent graduates of Virginia institutes with degrees in Cybersecurity or a related field by partnering with qualified public and private organizations to provide up to \$20,000 in combined state and employer match benefits. The Grant may be renewed up to two additional times, for a maximum of three total years, subject to employer commitments upon initial awarding, available funds, number of applicants and prioritization of employer and position. To be eligible, recipients must begin full-time employment within one year of graduation from an accredited Virginia institution of higher education, or separation from active duty service in the Armed Forces of the United States. ([Va. Code § 23.1-203](#))

Additionally eligibility criteria, and details on how to apply, can be found here:
<https://www.cybervets.virginia.gov/>



27. Military Medics & Corpsmen Program

This unique program provides tailored employment and education support to veterans, transitioning Combat Medics and Medical Technicians, and military spouses. Pathways include methods to practice clinical skills without the need for civilian healthcare credentials and referral programs for hospital management employment, among other opportunities.

Opportunities can be found here:
<https://www.dvs.virginia.gov/education-employment/military-medics-corpsmen-mmcp-program>



28. State Approving Agency (SAA) for Veterans Education & Training Directorate

The State Approving Agency (SAA) for Veterans Education and Training directorate of the Virginia Department of Veteran's Services ensures that every Veteran or eligible person has a full and fair opportunity to reach his or her fullest potential through access to the G.I. Bill approved post-secondary educational, training/licensure/certification, entrepreneurial institutions, V3 certified employers, and Virginia Colleges and Universities.

They have multiple benefits services offices available at their website here:

<https://www.dvs.virginia.gov/education-employment/state-approving-agency>

29. In-State Tuition Appeals

Each public institution of higher education must establish an appeal process for those students who are denied eligibility for in-state tuition but believe they are afforded that designation in accordance with the benefits listed below. If the final administrative decision, after an appeal is submitted, is not favorable to the applicant, the prospective student may file a petition to the circuit court within the appropriate jurisdiction, but must do so within 30 days of written receipt of the final decision. In any such action, the institution shall forward the record to the court, whose function is only to determine whether the decision reached by the institution could reasonably be said, on the basis of the record, not to be arbitrary, capricious, or otherwise contrary to law. ([Va. Code § 23.1-510](#))

Additional information can be found from the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia here:

<https://www.schev.edu/financial-aid/in-state-residency/guidelines-for-in-state-residency-tuition>

30. In-State Tuition Waiver

Any student enrolled in a comprehensive community college may be awarded academic credit provided that the student has successfully completed a military training course or program as part of his/her military service. The training course or program must be applicable to the student's certificate of degree requirements and recommended for academic credit by a national higher education association that provides academic credit recommendations for military training courses or programs. ([Va. Code § 23.1-505](#))

31. Purple Star Designation

The Virginia Purple Star Designation is awarded to military-friendly schools that have demonstrated a major commitment to students and families connected to our nation's military. In order to earn this designation, schools must demonstrate their military cultural competencies and develop an academic environment that is conditioned for the success of military-connected students.

Details on the application process can be found here: https://www.doe.virginia.gov/support/student_family/military/va-psdp/index.shtml



32. Academic Credit for Military Training

All dependents of active duty military personnel or activated/temporarily-mobilized reservists or guard members, who are assigned to a permanent duty station or workplace in the Commonwealth, shall be afforded the same educational benefits as any other individual who is eligible for in-state tuition. Such dependents are eligible for such benefits for as long as they are continuously enrolled in a public institution of higher education or private institution of higher education or transfer between them, regardless of any change of duty station or residence of the military service member. Continuous enrollment requirements shall be waived if the dependent verifies that a break of no longer than one year was required in order to support a spouse or parent on order for a change of duty assignment or location. ([Va. Code § 23.1-2907](#))

33. Credits 2 Careers Program

This program translates military service into certain college credits, giving veterans a head start on their degree programs. Eligible veterans can build a record of prior learning and experiences to an estimate of college credits which can apply towards the Virginia Community College Program. The Credits 2 Careers Program also helps identify where veterans can get credits for military experience and certifications, previous education or degrees, and certifications from previous civilian employment.

Additional information can be found here:
www.credits2careers.org

34. Course Credit for Deployed Members

This statute mandates that public institutions of higher education implement policies that provide students called to active military duty during an academic semester with the opportunity to earn full course credit. Such policies shall provide, as one option, that such students who have completed 75 percent of the course requirements at the time of activation and who meet other specified requirements receive full course credit. Additionally, such institutions shall employ policies for the purpose of awarding academic credit to students for educational experience gained from service in the Armed Forces of the United States. Finally, they must also enact policies that recognize the scheduling difficulties and obligations encountered by active duty members of the Armed Forces of the United States. ([Va. Code § 23.1-904](#))

35. Scholarships for VA National Guard Voluneer Cadets (NG)

The Virginia National Guard shall provide financial assistance to cadets for tuition, mandatory fees, and other necessary charges. Each cadet, between the ages of 16 and 25, shall agree to serve as a commissioned officer in the Virginia National Guard for a term in accordance with Guard policy and regulation. This benefit is contingent on admission and acceptance into the Virginia Military Institute (VMI), and serves as an alternate path to commissioning (e.g. Military Academy, Officer Training School, ROTC, etc.). ([Va. Code § 23.1-2507](#))

Information on VMI can be found here:
<https://www.vmi.edu/>

HOUSING



HOUSING

36. Protection of Rental Agreements

Service Members, Reservists, full-time National Guardsmen, and their spouses may terminate rental agreements without penalty provided they either:

Have received permanent change of station orders to depart 35 miles or more from the location of their current dwelling unit, or received temporary duty orders in excess of three months' duration to depart 35 miles or more from the location of their current dwelling unit, or are discharged/released from active or full-time duty, or ordered to report to government-supplied quarters.

Additionally, landlords are prohibited from requiring these protected individuals, who are eligible under the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (SCRA), from waiving their SCRA rights in order to proceed with rental agreements. ([Va. Code § 55.1-1235](#))

37. Property Tax Exemptions for Service-Disabled Vets & Surviving Spouses

Exempts from taxation the land and/or property, including the joint holdings of married individuals, of any veteran who has been rated by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to have a 100 percent service-connected, permanent, and total disability, and who occupies the property as his principal place of residence. If these provisions apply to you, please visit your local Virginia Department of Veteran Services office.

([Va. Code § 58.1-3219.5](#))

Additional information can be found here:
<https://www.dvs.virginia.gov/benefits/real-estate-tax-exemption>

38. Housing/Homelessness Resources

Through stellar collaborative relationships with community-based, state, and federal partners, **Virginia became the first state in the nation to functionally end veteran homelessness.** To continue to support all veterans in getting into a home, the Virginia Veteran and Family Support program provides an array of resources to assist those struggling to get into a home, ranging from information about home loan benefits, "HopeNow" counseling, foreclosure data, national directories, and assistance with housing searches.

All of these resources can be found here:
<https://www.dvs.virginia.gov/virginia-veteran-and-family-support-2/resources/housinghomelessness>



HEALTHCARE



HEALTHCARE

39. Continued Insurance Coverage for Activated Guard (NG)

If a member of the Virginia National Guard is called to state active duty by the Governor, the employer shall ensure that the member has the option of continuing, at the member's expense, his health care coverage, life insurance, or long-term care insurance.

[\(Va. Code § 44-102.1\)](#)

40. Special Needs Medicaid Waivers

The Special Needs Medicaid Waiver program is a state-specific Medicare initiative that provides funding for long-term care services for use in the community instead of in nursing homes or hospitals. Active duty service members who are legal residents of another state where applicable policy has been enacted may enroll eligible family members on Virginia's waiver list as early as possible so they can progress towards the top of that list prior to separation/retirement. Enrollment is available at any time and service members have the flexibility to change their state of legal residence as long as they meet requirements.

Those who'd like to learn more can go to:
<https://www.militaryonesource.mil/family-relationships/special-needs/support-for-families/medicaid-waivers-for-military-families>

41. Virginia Peer Recovery Network

As part of the Mental Health of America Program, this specialist network connects veterans, service members, and their families with a host of resources for those seeking support with mental health, addiction, impacts of COVID-19, substance abuse, crisis intervention, and depression.

You can learn more here: <https://www.dvs.virginia.gov/virginia-veteran-and-family-support-2>

42. Access to the Veterans Treatment Court Program

Any veterans docket authorized and established as a local specialty docket in accordance with the Rules of Supreme Court of Virginia shall be deemed a "Veterans Treatment Court Program," as that term is used under federal law or by any other entity, for the purposes of applying for, qualifying for, or receiving any federal grants, other federal money, or money from any other entity designated to assist or fund such state programs. However, judicial districts, working with Commonwealth attorneys, must petition the Supreme Court of Virginia to establish a docket under these guidelines.

[\(Va. Code § 18.2-254.2\)](#)

Information about these benefits can be found here: Justice Involved Veterans <https://info.nicic.gov/jiv>

Virginia Veteran and Family Support Program
<https://www.dvs.virginia.gov/virginia-veteran-and-family-support-2/vvfs>

PROTECTIONS



PROTECTIONS

43. Opportunity for Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Businesses

Mandates that, in the solicitation or awarding of contracts, no public body shall discriminate against a bidder or offeror because of status as a service-disabled veteran, or any other basis prohibited by state law related to discrimination of employment. Moreover, such bodies shall establish programs consistent with this chapter to facilitate the participation of small businesses, businesses owned by women, minorities, and service-disabled veterans in procurement transactions. ([Va. Code § 2.2-4310](#))

Additional information about Virginia's Small, Women-owned, Minority owned (SWaM) certification program can be found here:

<https://www.dvs.virginia.gov/benefits/virginia-swam-program-sdvosb-designation>

<https://www.sbsd.virginia.gov/>

44. Protection from Predatory Loans

As part of the Office of Attorney General's Consumer Protection Section, this code dictates that a licensee shall not knowingly make a short-term loan to a person who is a member of the military services of the United States or the spouse or other dependent of a member of the military services of the United States. Prior to making a short-term loan, every licensee shall inquire of every prospective borrower if he is a member of the military services of the United States or the spouse or other dependent of a member of the military services of the United States. ([Va. Code § 6.2-1816](#))





45. Protection for Overseas Military Voters

Absentee ballots received after the close of the polls on any election day, but cast by covered voters (e.g. a uniformed-service voter or an overseas voter who is registered to vote in this state) shall be counted if the voter is found entitled to vote. This is provided that the ballot is requested on or before the deadline and received before 5:00 p.m. on the second business before the State Board meets to ascertain the results of the election.

[\(Va. Code § 24.2-709 / Va. Code § 24.2-452\)](#)

Detail on how to cast your vote can be found here: <https://www.elections.virginia.gov/casting-a-ballot/military-overseas>

46. Zero Penalty Contract Termination for Services

A service member, their spouse, or dependents may terminate contract services without penalty provided that the member of the United States Armed Forces or Virginia National Guard person receives a permanent change of station or temporary duty orders in excess of three months' duration. Services eligible for termination under this clause include telecommunications services, internet, television, athletic club or gym memberships, satellite radio, or service for an alarm system. [\(Va. Code § 44-102.1\)](#)

47. Protection from False Representation

It is unlawful for any person, with the intent to obtain any services, to falsely represent himself to be a member or veteran of the United States Armed Forces, Armed Forces Reserves, or National Guard by wearing the uniform or any medal or insignia authorized for use by the members or veterans of the United States Armed Forces, Armed Forces Reserves, or National Guard by federal or state law or regulation and obtain any services through such false representation. ([Va. Code § 18.2-177.1](#))

48. Protection of Veterans Retirement Benefits

It is a violation of the Virginia Consumer Protection Act for any individual to advertise, arrange, offer, or enter into any assignment of right to receive a veteran's pension or retirement benefits as outlined in the provisions of 37 U.S.C. Va. Code § 701 or 38 U.S.C. Va. Code § 5301(a). This is without regard to whether the transaction is characterized or structured as a loan, assignment, loan secured by assignment, pledge, or other arrangement. ([Va. Code § 2.2-2001.5](#))

Additional information about the Virginia Office of Attorney General Consumer Protection Section can be found here: <https://www.oag.state.va.us/consumer-protection/>

49. Access to Legal Counsel

This provision provides the court the flexibility and authority to assess reasonable attorney fees and costs against any party as the court deems appropriate where appointment of council is required pursuant to 50 U.S.C. Va. Code § 3931 or 3932 or another section of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act. Any attorney fees assessed shall not exceed \$125 unless the court deems a higher amount appropriate. ([Va. Code § 8.01-15.2](#))

50. Protection of Retiree Pension Benefits

This provision ensures that any determination of military retirement benefits shall be in accordance with the federal Uniformed Services Former Spouses' Protection Act (10 U.S.C. 1408 et seq.). It allows the court to direct payment of a percentage of the marital share of any pension, profit-sharing or deferred compensation plan or retirement benefits, whether vested or nonvested, which constitutes marital property and whether payable in a lump sum or over a period of time. However, the court shall only direct that payment be made as such benefits are payable and no such payment shall exceed 50 percent of the marital share of the cash benefits actually received. ([Va. Code § 20-107.3](#))

51. Protection of Gender Identity & Sexual Orientation

Any person who was separated from active military, naval, or air service with an other than honorable discharge due solely to such person's sexual orientation or gender identity or expression may petition the Department to have their discharge recorded with the Department as honorable. Persons whose discharge status is changed pursuant to such petition shall be afforded the same rights, privileges, and benefits authorized by state law and local ordinances as any other veteran who was honorably discharged. ([Va. Code § 2.2-2001.6](#))

Information about Virginia's complete Human Rights Act can be found here: <https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacodepopularnames/virginia-human-rights-act/>

TAX & FINANCIAL BENEFITS



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WITH THE NATION'S HIGHEST NUMBER OF VETERANS IN THE WORKFORCE PER CAPITA, AND THE SECOND LARGEST ACTIVE-DUTY POPULATION, VIRGINIANS SET THE STANDARD FOR SERVICE TO OUR GREAT NATION—PAST AND PRESENT.

- Secretary Craig Crenshaw

”

TAX & FINANCIAL BENEFITS

A detailed and comprehensive list of all available income subtractions, for the purpose of taxable income calculations (to include the one referenced below) can be found here:

<https://www.tax.virginia.gov/subtractions>

52. Combat Zone & Hazardous Duty Area Tax Exemptions

Establishes that military pay and allowances earned by military personnel while serving by order of the President of the United States with the consent of Congress in a combat zone or qualified hazardous duty area be subtracted in computing Virginia taxable income. ([Va. Code § 58.1-322.02](#))

53. VA National Guard Tax Exemption (NG)

Establishes that the wages or salaries received by any person for active and inactive service in the National Guard of the Commonwealth of Virginia be subtracted in computing Virginia taxable income. However, this is not to exceed the amount of income derived from 39 calendar days of such service or \$5,500, whichever amount is less. Additionally, only those persons in the ranks of O6 and below shall be entitled to this deduction. ([Va. Code § 58.1-322.02](#))

For additional information on the recent increase to this benefit, see: <https://lis.virginia.gov/cgi-bin/legp604.exe?231+ful+HB2373H1>

54. Pay & Allowances for Activated Guard Personnel (NG)

Virginia ensures that its Guardsmen are equitably compensated for State Active Duty Service. Specifically, this code establishes that those members of the Virginia National Guard, who are called into state active duty, but not in the service of the United States, shall receive pay and allowances equal to their rank and years of service, as determined by the Department of Military Affairs. The Adjutant General may increase state active duty pay on an annual basis by a rate not to exceed the most recent percentage increase in basic pay for members of the Armed Forces. ([Va. Code § 44-83](#))

55. Resident Taxable Income Subtraction for Military Retirement Pay

Allows Veterans over 55 to deduct up to \$40,000 of retired military pay from their Virginia taxable income. As of 2023, this program is currently in the second phase of implementation, allowing for \$20,000 to be subtracted for the 2023 tax year. The amount exempted increases by \$10,000 yearly until 2025 when the full amount of \$40,000 becomes eligible for exemption. ([Va. Code § 58.1-322.02](#))



56. Military Pay Income Tax Exemption

Establishes that no state income tax shall be levied or imposed against compensation received from military or naval service, nor any return required to be filed, by persons in the Armed Forces of the United States stationed on military or naval reservations within Virginia who are not domiciled in Virginia. Additionally, allows for fifteen thousand dollars of military basic pay for military service personnel, on extended active duty for periods in excess of 90 days, to be subtracted in computing Virginia taxable income. However, the subtraction amount shall be reduced dollar-for-dollar by the amount by which the taxpayer's military basic pay exceeds \$15,000 and shall be reduced to zero if such military basic pay amount is equal to or exceeds \$30,000.

[\(Va. Code § 58.1-321 / Va. Code § 58.1-322\)](#)



57. Medal of Honor Recipient State Income Tax Exemption

Establishes that any amount received as military retirement income by an individual awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor be subtracted in computing Virginia taxable income.

[\(Va. Code § 58.1-322.02\)](#)

58. Disabled Veterans Real Property Tax Exemption

Disabled Veterans or surviving spouses may apply for a real property tax exemption and receive a decision prior to purchasing a qualifying property. The appropriate designated officer is required to process the application for an exemption within 15 business days of receiving the application and send a letter to the applicant stating whether the application is approved or denied.

For Additional Information See:

<https://lis.virginia.gov/cgi-bin/legp604.exe?231+sum+HB2414>

59. Military Death Gratuity Tax Exemption

Establishes that the military death gratuity payment made after September 11, 2001, to the survivor of deceased military personnel killed in the line of duty be subtracted in computing Virginia taxable income. However, the subtraction amount shall be reduced dollar-for-dollar by the amount that the survivor may exclude from their federal gross income in accordance with Va. Code § 134 of the Internal Revenue Code. [\(Va. Code § 58.1-322.02\)](#)

60. Burial fees for Military Spouses

Virginia provides funds to pay the burial fees of any Virginia-resident spouse or surviving spouse of an active duty member or veteran of the United States Armed Forces who is buried at a veterans cemetery operated by the Department of Veterans Services.

Additional Information can be found here:

<https://trackbill.com/bill/virginia-house-bill-2362-military-spouses-burial-fees/2312665/>

LICENSES, PERMITS, REGISTRATIONS & FEES



LICENSES, PERMITS, REGISTRATIONS & FEES

61. Veteran Indicator on State-Issued License

Virginia residents who have been honorably discharged from active military service, or served honorably for greater than 180 days in the National Guard or Reserves, are entitled to be issued driver's licenses, permits, and identification cards displaying an indicator that the holder is a veteran. This is provided that the applicant requests such an indicator and provides proof of such veteran status. No additional fee shall be charged for the veteran indicator. Applications should be processed through the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles.

[\(Va. Code § 46.2-328.2\)](#)

Additional information can be found here:

https://www.dmv.virginia.gov/drivers/#id/vet_id.asp

62. Disabled Veteran's Passport Benefits

Veterans with a 100 percent service-connected disability rating are eligible to apply and receive a Disabled Veteran's Passport that entitles the bearer to enter state parks in the Commonwealth without the payment of a parking or admission fee as well as receive a 50 percent discount on camping and swimming fees, picnic shelter rentals, and other Department-provided equipment rentals. The passport shall be valid for as long as the determination of the 100 percent service-connected disability by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs remains in effect.

[\(Va. Code § 10.1-202.2\)](#)

Applications can be made here:

<https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/state-parks/passes>

63. Entitlement to State Licenses to Hunt, Trap, or Fish

Any member of the armed forces of the United States, on active duty, when authorized by the commanding officer of a military installation, shall be entitled to applications for a state residence license to hunt, trap, or fish. Such member must both reside in and be stationed on a military installation or ship within the Commonwealth. The privileges of this license shall be limited to hunting, trapping, or fishing only within the boundaries of that military reservation. All hunting and fishing licenses and permits, to include those referenced below, are managed through Virginia's Department of Wildlife Resources. [\(Va. Code § 29.1-319\)](#)

Additional information can be found here:

<https://dwr.virginia.gov/hunting/regulations/licenses/>

64. National Guard Passport Benefits

Members of the Virginia National Guard will soon be eligible to apply for a National Guard Passport through the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation. The passport entitles the bearer to enter state parks in the Commonwealth without the payment of a parking or admission fee.

Learn more here:

<https://lis.virginia.gov/cgi-bin/legp604.exe?231+sum+HB1388>



65. Special Hunting Permit

The Director, or other comparable official representing any veteran's hospital or military hospital, may permit any organized group of patients actually residing in the hospital or actively receiving outpatient care permission to hunt or fish in any lands of the Commonwealth where it is otherwise legal to do so. The application for such a permit shall state the dates upon which it will be used, the general area in which it will be used, and the name of the person or organization responsible for the group.

[\(Va. Code § 29.1-312\)](#)

66. Special Fishing & Hunting Licenses

Any member living in the Commonwealth who is on active duty military service, disabled due to a service-connected disability, and receiving medical treatment from a hospital located in Virginia, adjoining state, or the District of Columbia, may apply for and shall receive a one year, non-transferable state license to fish. Additionally, organized groups of military veterans residing in veterans' hospitals shall be exempt from the requirement to obtain a saltwater recreational fishing license and resident veterans with a service-connected disability of at least 30% are eligible to receive a lifetime license to hunt and freshwater fish at reduced cost or no cost.

[\(Va. Code § 29.1-302.01 / Va. Code § 28.2-302.5\)](#)



67. Concealed Weapons or Firearms Licenses

Service members and veterans of the U.S. Armed Services, currently 21 years of age or older, can be issued a five-year concealed handgun permit provided that they present evidence of equivalent experience through proof of current military service or an honorable discharge from any branch of the armed services. If a permit holder's five-year permit expires during an active-duty military deployment outside of the permittee's county or city of residence, such permit shall remain valid for 90 days after the end date of the deployment. In order to establish proof of continued validity of the permit, such a permittee shall carry with him and display, upon request of a law-enforcement officer, a copy of the permittee's deployment orders or other documentation from the permittee's commanding officer that order the permittee to travel outside of his county or city of residence and that indicate the start and end date of such deployment.

[\(Va. Code § 18.2-308.02\)](#)

Interested applicants should connect with the Virginia State Police: <https://vsp.virginia.gov/services/firearms/resident-concealed-handgun-permits/>

68. Motor Vehicle Driver's License Extensions

Expired driver's licenses, held by service members or family members residing with them, shall be held not to have expired during the period of the licensee's service outside the Commonwealth in the armed services of the United States, and 180 days thereafter. However, no extension granted shall exceed three years from the date of expiration shown on the individual's driver's license.

[\(Va. Code § 46.2-221.2\)](#)

Covered members must apply for an extension through the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles: <https://www.dmv.virginia.gov/drivers/#military.asp>



69. Use Tax Exemption for Pre-Owned Motor Vehicles

No tax shall be imposed on vehicles being registered for the first time in the Commonwealth when the applicant holds a valid, assignable title or registration issued to him by another state or a branch of the United States Armed Forces. This is provided that the service member has owned the vehicle for longer than 12 months or has owned the vehicle for less than 12 months and provides evidence of a sales tax paid to another state. ([Va. Code § 58.1-2403](#))

70. Motorcycle License Endorsement

Any person who holds a valid Virginia driver's license and is a member, the spouse of a member, or a dependent of a member of the United States Armed Services shall be issued a motorcycle classification by mail upon documentation of successful completion of a basic motorcycle rider course approved by the United States Armed Services and documentation of his assignment outside the Commonwealth. ([Va. Code § 46.2-328](#))

Additional information about how to apply for a motorcycle license can be found here: <https://www.dmv.virginia.gov/drivers/#motorcycle.asp>



71. Commercial Motor Vehicle Driver's License Waiver

Applicants for commercial motor vehicle licenses may have their driving skills tests waived if they are duly licensed by a commensurate military license at the time of application. Certain elements of the applicant's driving record, in combination with certain driving experience, may be substituted for the skills test. Applications are managed by the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles Troops to Truck program. ([Va. Code § 46.2-341.14:01](#))

Additional information can be found here: https://www.dmv.virginia.gov/drivers/#troops_trucks.asp

72. Special License Plate for Military Medal Awardees

Members awarded the **Medal of Honor**, **Navy/Marine Corps Medal**, **Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal**, or **Air Medal** are eligible to receive special license plates for their personal motor vehicle. Unremarried surviving spouses of persons eligible are also able to receive said licenses. This is on receipt of an application and written confirmation from one of the armed services of the United States that the applicant has been awarded the cited Medal. No additional fee shall be charged for the issuance of these license plates. However, additional sets shall be charged the prescribed fee. Additionally, Virginia exempts the one-time fee and annual fees for **Medal of Honor** and **Purple Heart** recipients who apply for the respective plates. Finally, Virginia does not charge the one-time fee when applying for plates reflecting the **"V" for Valor** for any plate currently issued by the Department displaying a military decoration. Applications are managed by the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles. ([Va. Code § 46.2-745](#))

Additional information can be found here: <https://www.dmv.virginia.gov/vehicles/#splates/category.asp?category=M>

MORE BENEFITS



MORE BENEFITS

73. Gold Standard Digital Hub

The Gold Standard Digital Hub will be a state-of-the-art single point of access for all resources available to servicemembers, veterans, and families. It will deliver public and private resources in one place, eliminating redundancies and providing greater awareness of benefits while fostering new public and private partnerships. Upon completion, it can be accessed at <https://vesa.dvs.virginia.gov/>.

74. Compensation for Educators Called to Active Duty

Public school employees whose active duty service with the regular armed forces of the United States, National Guard, or other reserve component has required their absence from their full-time employment in a school division shall receive supplemental pay as determined by and from the relevant local school division if the military compensation of such employee is less than the regular salary paid to such employee by the school division. ([Va. Code § 22.1-289.2](#))

75. Disposition of Surplus Materials

This provision provides two distinct benefits for businesses. Firstly, it permits the donations of surplus computers and related equipment to organizations in the Commonwealth granted tax-exempt status under Va. Code § 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code that refurbish computers and related equipment for donation to veterans and active military, naval, or air service members. Additionally, it permits that surplus materials can be sold, prior to public sale or auction, to service-disabled veteran-owned businesses, veterans service organizations, active military-owned businesses, and military spouse-

owned businesses. This process is managed by the Virginia Department of General Services. ([Va. Code § 2.2-1124](#))

Additional information can be found here:
<https://dgs.virginia.gov/office-of-surplus-property-management>

76. Representation with the Virginia Military Advisory Council (VMAC)

The VMAC was created as an advisory council to the Governor and executive branch of state government to maintain a collaborative, communicative, and coordinating relationship between the Commonwealth and the leaders of each military installation located in Virginia. The VMAC holds quarterly meetings to explore issues impacting quality of life for service members and their families, relations between the installations and surrounding civilian communities, as well as effects of encroachment. This provision mandates that the Governor invite representatives of the major military commands and installations located in the Commonwealth or in jurisdictions adjacent thereto to represent their command or installation at the meetings of the Council. ([Va. Code § 2.2-2666.1-2](#))

Additional information can be found here:
<https://www.vada.virginia.gov/initiatives/vmac/>





77. Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations

The Virginia Department of Veterans Services maintains the Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations (the JLC) as a conduit to bring concerns of the veteran community and policy recommendations directly to the Governor of Virginia. The JLC is composed of representatives from nearly 30 qualifying veterans service organizations (VSOs) such as the American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars

Additional information can be found here: <https://www.dvs.virginia.gov/dvs/joint-leadership-council-veterans-service-organizations-2>





For More Information, Contact:

Secretary of Veterans and
Defense Affairs

E-Mail: VADA@Governor.Virginia.gov

Phone: 804.225.3826

This guide can also be accessed online at
<https://www.vada.virginia.gov/>