

# **BENEFITS AVAILABLE TO IDAHO VETERANS**



**351 Collins Road  
Boise, Idaho 83702  
(208) 780-1300  
[www.veterans.idaho.gov](http://www.veterans.idaho.gov)**



Dear Veteran,

We have prepared this Guide to help you learn more about Veterans benefits available from the federal, state and local governments. Our intent is to ensure that Idaho Veterans and their families receive all entitlements due under the law, are relieved to the extent possible of financial hardship, receive every opportunity for self-improvement through higher education and are afforded proper recognition for their service to the Nation.

I hope you find the material in this booklet helpful. If you need additional information, please visit our website, [Veterans.Idaho.gov](http://Veterans.Idaho.gov). If you'd like to speak with someone regarding your specific circumstances, please give us a call at (208) 780-1300, and we'll make sure we connect you with the person or agency that will be able to help.

Thank you for your service to our great Nation.

Semper Fi,

David E. Brasuell, Colonel, USMC, (Ret)  
Administrator  
Idaho Division of Veterans Services

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# IDAHO DIVISION OF VETERANS SERVICES

The Idaho Division of Veterans Services is one of twenty-nine agencies under the auspices of the Department of Self-Governing Agencies. The Idaho Veterans Affairs Commission, an advisory commission to the Division, has five members appointed by the Governor. The Division is managed by an Administrator who is recommended by the Commission and appointed by the Governor. He reports directly to the Governor.

The Division administers Title 65, Chapters 1 & 2 and Title 66, Chapter 9, *Idaho Code*, and Division staff members also work with federal, state, and local organizations involved with serving Veterans. The Division is composed of a headquarters staff, the Office of Veterans Advocacy, the Educational Assistance and Oversight Office, the Idaho State Veterans Homes in Boise, Lewiston and Pocatello, and the Veterans Cemetery. Division staff offices are located at 351 Collins Road in Boise, adjacent to the Boise VA Medical Center and the Idaho State Veterans Home.

## OFFICE OF VETERANS ADVOCACY

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The Division provides assistance to Veterans in the Homes, as well as outreach and assistance to all Idaho Veterans and their families, in order to ensure they receive the benefits they are entitled to. They assist Veterans in the completion and submission of VA Disability Compensation and Non-Service Connected Pension Claims, assist surviving spouses with VA Survivor Benefit Claims, and can assist with correcting Official Military Records. The office administers the Emergency Relief Program, which provides monetary assistance to qualified Veterans and their families.

The OVA Headquarters, located at 444 Fort Street, Boise, is staffed with four Service Officers and the Program Supervisor. An additional five Service Officers are based in the three Idaho State Veterans Homes, and there is one Service Officer based in Post Falls.

The Office of Veterans Advocacy also provides training and guidance to county Service Officers, to Veterans Service Organization Post Service Officers, and to Tribal Veterans Representatives.

## VETERANS EDUCATION

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The Education Coordinator's office is located at 351 Collins Road in Boise. The main purpose of this office is to approve educational, vocational, apprenticeships, certificate, licensing, and on the job training programs for funding by the VA. In addition to this responsibility, the Veterans Education Coordinator serves as the subject matter expert for all questions pertaining to educational benefits and the GI Bill and individual Veterans are encouraged to make an appointment and discuss their questions and explore educational options. The Education Coordinator also reaches out to Idaho Veterans through Transition Assistance Program briefings, job fairs, education fairs, Troop to Teachers programs, and Yellow Ribbon events to increase awareness of the many educational opportunities available through the GI Bills.

This office works directly with facilities, Veterans, and the VA Regional Processing Office in Muskogee, Oklahoma, confirming adherence to regulations and preventing waste, fraud and abuse by conducting supervisory, inspection and school requested visits, as well as compliance audits at private profit and not for profit schools; providing technical assistance on GI Bill policies and procedures for school officials, certifying officers, and Veterans.

The Education Coordinator also helps gain approval for GI Bill payments to apprenticeship and on-the-job training programs by actively engaging with local businesses, state and local municipalities, and established apprenticeship programs to help them meet VA administrative requirements. There are currently over 115 active OJT and apprenticeship sites across Idaho that are serving Veterans using their GI Bill benefits. Approved programs range from traditional colleges and universities, to electrical and plumbing apprenticeships, to non-college degree programs such as beauty schools, EMT, Paramedic certifications, to on the job training with the Idaho State Police and Police and Sheriff departments.

References for approved programs and facilities using the GI Bill can be found at [www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/education\\_programs.asp](http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/education_programs.asp). Additional State scholarship information can be found at [www.veterans.idaho.gov/benefits-a-services/education](http://www.veterans.idaho.gov/benefits-a-services/education).

## VETERANS HOMES

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There are three Medicare and Medicaid certified Idaho State Veterans Homes. The Boise Home accommodates 131 skilled nursing care and 36 residential/domiciliary residents. The Pocatello and Lewiston Homes each accommodate 66 skilled nursing care residents.

Honorably discharged Veterans and their spouses who require skilled nursing care are eligible for admission to the nursing homes. Spouses are not eligible for admission to the residential/domiciliary unit at the Boise home. There are limits to the number of spouses that can be residing in a home at any given time.

### **BOISE HOME**

320 Collins Road  
Boise, ID 83702  
208-780-1600  
[boise@veterans.idaho.gov](mailto:boise@veterans.idaho.gov)



### **POCATELLO HOME**

1957 Alvin Ricken Drive  
Pocatello, ID 83201  
208-235-7800  
[pocatello@veterans.idaho.gov](mailto:pocatello@veterans.idaho.gov)



### **LEWISTON HOME**

821 21st Avenue  
Lewiston, ID 83501  
208-750-3600  
[lewiston@veterans.idaho.gov](mailto:lewiston@veterans.idaho.gov)



## VETERANS CEMETERY

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The Division operates Idaho's Veterans Cemetery in Boise, which provides dignified interment services to eligible Veterans and their families. The Cemetery encompasses 76 acres and supports a variety of interment options; Veterans and families may choose:

- A full casket, in-ground interment with an upright granite marker.
- A columbarium niche, cremation interment with a granite niche cover;
- An in-ground, cremation interment with a flush-to-the-ground granite marker;
- A scattering garden, set in a natural draw of the Boise foothills, that includes a location for an inscribed marker in memory of the deceased;

Military Funeral Honors are coordinated by the Cemetery. An Honor Guard detail of at least two members of the Armed Services is provided for a Veteran's interment service. Honors include the sounding of Taps and a flag folding and presentation.

Pre-registration allows a Veteran and spouse to establish, in advance, their eligibility for interment at the Idaho State Veterans Cemetery in order to simplify and assist the Veteran's next-of-kin at the time of death. There is no cost for pre-registration and it does not obligate the Veteran to be interred at the Cemetery. The key items for pre-registration are a copy of the Veteran's discharge papers and, for married Veterans, a copy of a marriage certificate that is valid in the state of Idaho.

Eligible Veterans are interred at no cost; there is a charge equal to the current VA plot allowance for spouses. Additionally, VA will pay a burial and funeral allowance for Veterans who, at the time of death, were entitled to receive pension or compensation, or would have been entitled if they were not receiving military retirement pay.

The Cemetery is at 10100 Horseshoe Bend Road in Boise. You can reach the Cemetery at 208-780-1340, or at [cemetery@veterans.idaho.gov](mailto:cemetery@veterans.idaho.gov).





# FEDERAL VA BENEFITS

## MEDICAL

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To the extent resources and facilities are available the VA provides hospital care covering the full range of medical services to veterans. Eligible veterans may receive medical treatment at any VA Medical Center or Community Based Outpatient Clinic.

**One-time Dental Treatment** - The VA provides one-time separation dental care for certain service-connected dental conditions, if the certificate of discharge does not certify that the veteran was provided a complete dental examination and treatment prior to discharge.

**VA Health Care for Combat Vets** - Combat veterans who were discharged or released from active service on or after January 28, 2003, are eligible to enroll in the VA health care system for five years from the date of discharge or release. The enrollment period begins on the discharge or separation date of the service member from active duty service, or in the case of multiple call-ups, the most recent discharge date. Veterans, including activated Reservists and National Guard members, are eligible if they served on active duty in a theater of combat operations after November 11, 1998, and have been discharged under other than dishonorable conditions.

**Military Sexual Trauma Assistance (MST)** - Some veterans may have experienced personal assault or sexual trauma while serving in the military. These kinds of experiences can sometimes affect Veterans' mental and physical health, even many years later. Veterans can apply for disability compensation for any current difficulties that are related to their service, including difficulties related to personal assault or military sexual trauma (MST). You do not need a VA service-connected disability rating to be eligible for free MST-related treatment through the VA. No documentation is required to receive MST-related treatment. MST specialists and/or Women Veterans Coordinators are available at every VA Regional Office to assist male and female Veterans filing claims related to personal assault or MST. You can find a list of VA Regional Offices by calling 1-800-827-1000 or visiting <http://www.va.gov>. For more information about MST-related treatment, visit [www.mentalhealth.va.gov/msthome.asp](http://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/msthome.asp)



## DISABILITY

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**Disability Compensation:** The VA can pay you compensation if you are at least 10% disabled as a result of your military service.

**Disability Pension:** The VA can pay you a pension if you are a wartime veteran with limited income and you are no longer able to work

**Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC).** This is a benefit payable to certain survivors of:

- Service members who died on active duty
- Veterans who died from service-related disabilities
- Certain veterans who were being paid 100% VA disability compensation at time of death

This benefit is payable to some surviving spouses and children of deceased wartime veterans. The benefit is based on financial need.

There is no time limit for applying for the benefits described above.

## EDUCATION

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**Montgomery G.I. Bill** - Provides financial assistance to honorably discharged veterans who first entered active duty after June 30, 1985, and elected to participate within the first 12 months of service. Call toll free 1-888-442-4551. This bill also includes a program for certain reservists and National Guard members.

**Veterans Educational Assistance Program (VEAP)** - This program is for veterans who entered active duty for the first time after December 31, 1976, and before July 1, 1985, and contributed funds to this program.

**Vocational Rehabilitation** - The Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) Program is available to assist veterans with service-connected disabilities to prepare for, find and keep suitable jobs. For veterans with service-connected disabilities so severe that they cannot immediately consider work, this program offers services to improve their ability to live as independently as possible. For more information, call toll free 1-800-827-1000.

**Post 9/11 GI Bill**– This is a federal education benefit program for individuals who served on active duty a minimum of 90 aggregate days after September 10, 2001. Public Law 111-32, the Marine Gunnery Sergeant John David Fry Scholarship, amends the Post-9/11 GI Bill to include the children of service members who die in the line of duty on or after September 10, 2001. For more information, call toll free 1-888-442-4551 or visit the VA website at <http://www.gibill.va.gov/>

**Survivors & Dependents Educational Assistance** - Some family members of disabled or deceased veterans are eligible for education benefits. Spouses generally have 10 years from either the date they become eligible or the date of the veteran's death; VA may grant an extension. Children generally must be between the ages of 18 and age 26 to receive benefits, though extensions may be granted.

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## HOME LOANS

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The VA may guarantee part of your loan for the purchase of a home, manufactured home, or condominium. In addition, veterans with conventional home loans now have options for refinancing to a VA guaranteed home loan as a result of the Veterans' Benefits Improvement Act of 2008. For information, call 1-877-827-3702 or visit <http://www.homeloans.va.gov/>

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## LIFE INSURANCE

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**Veterans' Group Life Insurance (VGLI)** - Servicemembers Group Life Insurance (SGLI) may be converted to VGLI, a five year term policy, renewable for life. VGLI may be converted to an individual policy with any participating insurance company.

**Service-Disabled Veterans' Insurance (SDVI)** - A veteran with a new service-connected disability, but otherwise in good health, may apply to the VA for up to \$10,000 in life insurance coverage at standard rates. Veterans who receive a new rating of zero percent or greater are eligible for the coverage. The application must be made within two years from the date of being notified of a new service-connected status. The veteran must have been discharged under other than dishonorable conditions and released from active duty after April 25, 1951.

For more information, call toll free 1-800-669-8477 or visit [www.insurance.va.gov](http://www.insurance.va.gov)

## VETERANS SMALL BUSINESS OWNERSHIP

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The U.S. Small Business Administration offers programs and services for veterans seeking to establish or expand small businesses. SBA's Express and pilot programs offer streamlined and expedited loan procedures for active duty military members and veterans. For information, call toll free 1-800-827-5722, or visit <http://www.sba.gov/content/express-programs>.

## BURIAL BENEFITS

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The VA provides honorably discharged veterans, spouses and dependents with burial in a National Cemetery at no cost. Cremated remains are also accepted. Eligible spouses and dependents may be buried if they predecease the veteran.

The VA provides a headstone, marker, or a medallion for placement on a private headstone, at private cemeteries. The VA does not make funeral arrangements. Call toll free 1-800-697-6947 or visit <http://www.cem.va.gov/> for more information.

Generally, the VA can pay a burial allowance for veterans who die of service-related causes. There is no time limit for filing claims in service-connected death cases. For certain other veterans, the VA can pay for burial and funeral expenses and for a plot. In cases in which the veteran's death was not service-connected, claims must be filed within two years after burial or cremation. For those veterans buried in a State Veterans Cemetery the VA pays the plot allowance to the State Veterans Cemetery where the veteran is buried.

## HOMELESS VETERANS SERVICES

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VA provides specialized homeless services at its medical centers and through community-based partners with a goal that no veteran will have to become or remain homeless. If you are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless pick up the phone and call for help. The number for the National Call Center for Homeless Veterans is 1-877-424-3838. The call center will connect you with the closest VA Medical Center to best address your specific needs.

# IDAHO VETERANS BENEFITS

## EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE

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The Idaho Department of Labor provides several services to Veterans and active duty military members.

- Veterans receive priority in job search assistance, referrals and training.
- Veterans Representatives trained and dedicated to helping Veterans solve employment issues.
- Referrals to formal and/or informal assistance for Veterans employment.

Contact the Department of Labor for more information: [www.labor.idaho.gov](http://www.labor.idaho.gov)

## FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

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In cases of extreme emergency, wartime Veterans in need of assistance can receive grants of up to \$1,000. Veterans must have entered the military from Idaho, or lived within the state for at least five years. The event or emergency must have occurred within 90 days of the request. For assistance with emergency grants contact the Office of Veterans Advocacy at 208-780-1380.

## TAX BENEFITS

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The state has rules allowing low income individuals to reduce their property taxes. These rules are based on the income earned by the individual in a given year.

All military retirement income is subject to state income tax prior to age 65. Retirement benefits paid by the United States to a retired member of the U.S. Military or an un-remarried widow if the recipient is age 65 or older, or disabled and age 62 or older are deductible. The amount of deduction varies from year to year.

Disability income is not taxed by the State of Idaho.

## HIRING PREFERENCE FOR VETERANS

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Idaho provides United States military Veterans who have been on active service, other than active duty for training, and have been discharged honorably, with hiring preference when they apply for public-sector jobs. For those classified positions that require an examination under the State of Idaho's merit system, preference points are added to the final passing score of qualifying veterans and their qualifying spouses or widows/widowers, which may improve their position on a list of qualified candidates. Preference points are added only for initial appointment; not for promotions, transfers, or reassignments. Veterans preference requires public employers to provide additional consideration for eligible Veterans, but it does not guarantee the Veteran a job. A DD214 may be requested to verify Veteran status.

### Preference Points:

- All Veterans discharged under honorable conditions, or the widow or widower of a preference eligible Veteran, as long as she or he remains unmarried, are eligible for five preference points.
- Disabled Veterans with a present service connected disability of 10% or more, or are Purple Heart recipients, are eligible for ten preference points. Widows or widowers of any disabled Veteran or Purple Heart recipient may also claim the ten points if he or she remains unmarried. Spouses of disabled Veterans may claim preference if the Veteran is unable to qualify for any public employment because of a service-connected disability.
- Disabled Veterans who have a service connected disability of 30% or more receive ten preference points, and shall be offered an interview if they are one of the top twenty-five qualified applicants.

Disabled Veterans are eligible to open a closed announcement for any position with the State of Idaho for which a register is maintained. Veterans within 120 days of discharge may also be eligible to open a closed announcement for which there is an active register.

## RECREATION

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### *Admission to Parks:*

The Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation offers Idaho service-connected disabled Veterans rated at 100%, permanent and total disability free camping and day-use access within Idaho's State Parks.

Upon proof of eligibility, a lifetime, wallet-sized pass is issued allowing Idaho Veterans the opportunity to take advantage of their discount

To apply for your Idaho State Park Pass go to <http://parksandrecreation.idaho.gov/activities/camping> and click on "Discounts & Fees."

### *Hunting & Fishing Licenses:*

Resident disabled American veterans may be eligible for reduced fees for hunting and fishing licenses and tags. The DAV license, \$5, allows the disabled veteran to purchase reduced fee Disabled American Veteran tags for deer \$10.75, elk \$16.50, bear \$6.75, or turkey \$10.75. They must submit a letter from the Veterans Affairs office verifying a service-connected disability rating of 40 percent or greater. Such documentation may bear any date prior to license application. Documentation for the resident DAV license will be required only for the initial application and will not be required for subsequent applications.

Nonresident disabled American veterans with a disability rating of 40 percent or more by Veterans Affairs are eligible for nonresident DAV reduced fees for licenses and tags. Documentation for the nonresident DAV license is the same as for residents (above). The nonresident DAV hunting with 3-day fishing license, \$31.75, allows the nonresident disabled veteran to purchase reduced fee nonresident Disabled American Veteran tags for deer \$23.75, elk \$39.75, bear \$23.75, or turkey \$19.75.

## PROFESSIONAL LICENSES

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If you hold a professional license that was issued in Idaho it will be good for six months following discharge. Idaho also has a number of agreements with professional licensing agencies that allow Veterans to convert their military service into a civilian professional license. For more information please visit the Idaho Bureau of Occupational Licenses website at <http://ibol.idaho.gov/IBOL/>.

## EDUCATION BENEFITS

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### *In-State Tuition:*

Honorably discharged U.S. Veterans who have served for at least two years, who designate Idaho their intended domicile or who have Idaho listed as their home of record are eligible for in-state tuition rates at Idaho public colleges and universities. The Veteran must begin their studies and must actively establish domicile in Idaho within a year or their date of separation.

### *Veterans Centers:*

Idaho's colleges and universities are extremely Veteran-friendly, and each of them has a Veteran's center or office that is dedicated to helping Veterans transition from active duty to campus life. You can find out about their programs and services at the following websites:

University of Idaho - <http://www.uidaho.edu/dos/veteransaffairs>

Boise State University - <http://veterans.boisestate.edu/>

Idaho State University - <http://www.isu.edu/veterans/>

College of Southern Idaho - <http://www.csi.edu/veteransServices/>

College of Western Idaho - <http://cwidaho.cc/future-students/veterans-services>

Lewis & Clark College - <http://www.lclark.edu/programs/veterans/>

North Idaho College - <http://www.nic.edu/websites/default.aspx?dpt=64>



## VETERANS SPECIALTY LICENSE PLATES

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The following Veterans Specialty Licenses Plates are available through the Idaho Department of Transportation:



Veteran



Gold Star Family



Medal of Honor Recipient



Disabled Veteran



National Guard



Former Prisoner of War



Purple Heart Recipient



Support Our Troops



Pearl Harbor Survivor

License plates can be obtained at: <http://www.itd.idaho.gov/DMV/>

Most of the plates shown require documentation of status, such as a DD-214.

## VETERANS DESIGNATION ON DRIVER'S LICENSE

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As of November 11, 2014 honorably discharged Veterans will have the option of having "Veteran" printed on their driver's license. You will simply need to present your DD214, or other proof of honorable service, when you have your license issued or renewed.

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# Notes

# Notes

## IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

Idaho Division of Veterans Services .....	208-780-1300		
Idaho State Veterans Homes			
Boise .....	208-780-1600	Pocatello .....	208-236-6340
Lewiston .....	208-799-3422		
Office of Veterans Advocacy			
Boise .....	208-780-1380	Pocatello .....	208-236-6358
Lewiston .....	208-799-5084	Post Falls .....	208-446-1092
Veterans Cemetery .....	208-780-1340		
Education/GI Bill Info .....	208-780-1334		
VA Medical Centers			
Boise .....	208-422-1000	Spokane .....	800-325-7940
Salt Lake .....	800-613-4012	Walla Walla .....	888-687-8863
VA Community Based Outpatient Clinics			
Caldwell.....	208-454-4820	Mountain Home ....	208-580-2001
Lewiston .....	208-746-7784	Twin Falls .....	208-732-0947
Pocatello .....	208-232-6214	Coeur d'Alene .....	208-665-1700
Salmon .....	208-756-8515		
VA Regional Office .....	1-800-827-1000		
VA Home Loans.....	1-888-244-6711		
VA Direct Deposit.....	1-877-838-2778		
VA Vocational Rehabilitation - Boise .....	208-334-1063		

For additional phone numbers, refer to the **IDVS Veterans Resource Directory** at:  
[http://www.veterans.idaho.gov/images/stories/PDF\\_Files/Division/2014\\_Directory.pdf](http://www.veterans.idaho.gov/images/stories/PDF_Files/Division/2014_Directory.pdf)