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*If Veterans don't help Veterans, who will?*

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# California State Veteran's Benefits

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

- [Housing Benefits](#)
- [Financial Assistance Benefits](#)
- [Employment Benefits](#)
- [Veteran Business Benefits](#)
- [Education Benefits](#)
- [Other State Veteran Benefits](#)

## California Veteran Housing Programs

### Veterans Homes of California

The 8 current Homes are a system of live-in, residential care facilities offering a comprehensive plan of medical, dental, pharmacy, rehabilitation services and social activities within a homelike, small community environment. Residents engage in a wide range of activities including social events, dances, patriotic programs, volunteer activities, arts and crafts, computer access, shopping trips and other off-site activities. Residents live in an atmosphere of dignity and respect—a true home for each resident veteran.

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

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

### Calvet Farm and Home Loans

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

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

## California Financial Assistance Benefits

### Property Tax Exemptions

The California Constitution and Revenue and Taxation Code Section 205.5 provides a property tax exemption for the home of a disabled veteran or an unmarried spouse of a deceased disabled veteran. There is a basic \$122,128 exemption or a low-income (less than \$52,470) \$183,193 exemption available to a disabled veteran who, because of an injury incurred in military service:

- is blind in both eyes; or
- has lost the use of two or more limbs; or
- is totally disabled as determined by the VA or by the military service from which the veteran was discharged.

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

### Motor Vehicle Registration Fees Waived

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

Who May Be Eligible: Medal of Honor recipients, American Ex-Prisoners of War and some permanently and totally disabled veterans.

## California Employment Benefits

### Veterans Preference in California Civil Service Examinations

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

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

## California Veteran Business Benefits

### Business License, Tax and Fee Waiver

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

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

### Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise Opportunities

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

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

## California Education Benefits

### College Tuition Fee Waivers for Veterans' Dependents

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

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

### Non-Resident College Fee Waiver

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

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

- An undergraduate student who is a natural or adopted child, stepchild, or spouse who is a dependent of a member of the armed forces of the United States stationed in this state on active duty.
- A student seeking a graduate degree who is a member of the Armed Forces of the United States stationed in this state on active duty, except a member of the Armed Forces assigned for educational purposes to a state-supported institution of higher education. There is a two-year limit for graduate level studies.
- A student seeking a graduate degree who is a natural or adopted child, stepchild, or spouse who is a dependent of a member of the armed forces of the United States stationed in this state on active duty. There is a one-year limit for graduate level studies.

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

## **Other California State Veteran Benefits**

### **Disabled Veteran License Plates**

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

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

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

Obtain a signed doctor's statement that indicates that the veteran in question has a service-connected disability with at least one of the above listed mobility impairments, complete DMV forms REG 195 and REG 256A, and mail the completed package to:

DMV PLACARD  
P.O. Box 942869  
Sacramento, CA 94269-0001  
1-800-777-0133

### **Veterans Claims Representation**

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

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

### **Fishing and Hunting Licenses**

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

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

### **State Parks and Recreation Pass**

The Benefit: The use of all basic State Park System operated facilities, including camping and day use, at no further charge. The pass is not valid at units operated by local government, private agencies, or concessionaires and it is not valid for special events, group campsites, and commercial use or for supplemental fees.

Who May Be Eligible: Any honorably discharged war veteran who is a resident of California with a 50% or more service-connected disability, or was held as a prisoner of war by forces hostile to the United States, or recipients of the Congressional Medal of Honor.

**State of California Veterans Cemetery**

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

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

Visit the [California Department of Veterans Affairs](#) website for more information on any of these programs.