

**UTAH STATE VETERANS BENEFITS
FACT SHEET
Serving Utah's 161,000 Veterans
UPDATED March 2009**

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of Veterans' Affairs***
550 Foothill Drive, Suite #202
P.O. Box 58897
Salt Lake City, Utah 84158-0897
(801) 326-2372 fax (801) 326-2369
Toll Free Number 1-800-894-9497
E-mail berni.davis@va.gov or
tcknight@utah.gov
Web Page: veterans.utah.gov

(Note: Summaries have been composed describing Utah State Veterans Benefits by paraphrasing essential excerpts of the Utah State Code. For complete legal information consult the legal code.)

PROPERTY TAX ABATEMENT: A Utah permanent place-of-residence property tax exemption equivalent to the military service-connected disability rating percentage is provided for disabled veterans or for their unremarried widows or minor orphans. Veteran's disability rating must be at least 10%. The maximum property tax exemption, rated at 100% military service-connected disability, is \$228,505. To figure out how much your tax abatement will be multiply your percentage of disability by 228,505. Example: 10% disability X 228,505 = \$22,850.50 tax abatement. This amount is then subtracted from the taxable value of the property and taxes are paid on the remaining amount. To apply for Utah Disabled Veterans Property Tax Exemption, request an official statement showing that VA rating from the U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs (VA) at 1-800-827-1000, then that statement, along with a copy of the veteran's U.S. Military active duty release/discharge certificate or other satisfactory evidence of eligible military service, and the tax exemption application, **on or before September 1st**, to the applicable county treasurer, tax assessor or clerk/recorder located in the county courthouse or county government building of each county seat. All property must be on record as of January 1st of the year you wish to file. However, a recent change allows qualified widows and orphans an exemption to that rule. NOTE: Effective January 1, 2008 disabled veterans will only be required to file

for property tax abatement one time. After the initial filing it will automatically renew each year although the counties may request that all information be verified. However, veterans will have to re-file if all or a portion of their abatement is used towards tangible personal property, if their service-connected disability percentage changes, the veteran dies, sales the property or no longer claims that property as their primary place of residence. (Utah Code 59-2-1104 & 1105)

Purple Heart Tuition Waiver:

Utah public institutions of higher learning are required to waive the tuition of a Utah resident admitted to an undergraduate program of study leading to a degree or certificate, if the student is a recipient of a Purple Heart. **Recent changes have expanded this benefit to include a Masters Degree.**

Scott B Lundell Tuition Waiver For Military Members' Surviving Dependents

This Bill waives the undergraduate tuition at state institutions of higher education for surviving dependents of Utah resident military members killed in the line of duty after 9/11/2001. The waiver in this section does not apply to fees, books, or housing expenses. The Utah Department of Veterans Affairs is the administering agency for this benefit. Call 1-800-894-9497 or (801) 326-2372 for information on how to use this benefit.

Honorary High School Diplomas

Veterans from WWII, Korea and Vietnam who left High School for military service are eligible to receive Honorary High School Diplomas from the school they left. Contact the local school district for information on how to receive the diploma.

VETERANS UPWARD BOUND: VUB is funded by the Department of Education and sponsored by Weber State University. VUB provides a valuable service by assisting veterans in obtaining admission to post-secondary schools. Instruction and tutoring are provided free of charge to veterans in math, English and basic computer applications. The services are provided to veterans in Salt Lake, Davis and Weber Counties. For more information, please contact 801-626-7173.

DRIVERS LICENSE PRIVILEGES: Driver licenses possessed by persons on U.S. military active duty shall be valid 90 days after active duty discharge, unless driver licenses are suspended or revoked for cause by a police department or other judicial entity. (Utah Code Vol 2, Section 41).

VETERANS LICENSE PLATES: Utah Veterans license plates may be purchased from any DMV for an initial \$25.00 contribution to the Utah State Department of Veterans Affairs plus a \$10.00 plate transfer fee. In addition to normal vehicle registration and property tax fees. There will also be a yearly \$15.00 renewal fee. Proceeds from the sale and renewal of these plates help fund veteran programs within the state. Utah veteran's license plates display colored decal emblems of the U.S. military branch in which served (Air Force, Army, Coast Guard, Navy, Marines as well as the American Legion) and are further inscribed "**UTAH HONORS VETERANS**". Utah special group license plates for Purple Heart recipients, Pearl Harbor Survivors or former POW's are exempt of application and renewal fees; however, regular registration and property tax fees still must be paid. Proper evidence to present for special group plates includes Military Order of the Purple Heart or Pearl Harbor Survivors Association membership cards, or DD-214 (& equivalent WD AGO 5355) military discharge certificates. A "Disabled Veteran" plate is also available for Veterans with a service-connected disability. This plate has a one-time \$15 fee and no additional renewal fees. Military documentation or VA form 20-5455 must be presented to prove eligibility for this plate. **NOTE:** This Plate does not qualify for disabled parking privileges. You need not wait until renewal time to purchase the license plates. (Utah Code Vol 2 Section 41; Utah State Tax Commission/Motor Vehicle regulations).

Purple Heart Fee Exemption: Effective 4/30/07, a recipient of a **Purple Heart** is exempt from paying the following motor vehicle license and registration fees: automobile driver education fee; motor vehicle registration fee; license plate issuance fees; uninsured motorist identification fee; and local option

transportation corridor preservation fee. The only fee due is property tax or age-based fee.

DISABLED LICENSE PLATES / WINDSHIELD PLACARDS: Disabled license plates having the blue & white international symbol of accessibility decal may be obtained by submitting a TC 842 application form, accompanied by a certification from a licensed physician stating: (1) the disability limits or impairs ability to walk as defined in the 1991 Federal Uniform System for Handicapped Parking, and (2) the time period the physician determines the disability will continue. **Disabled veterans applying for Utah disability license plates should note that veteran disability letters from the VA Regional Office are not acceptable evidence** to Tax Commission/Motor Vehicle offices. However, **licensed physician certifications by VA doctors are acceptable evidence,** provided the following is stated in the letter: (1) the disability limits or impairs ability to walk as defined in the 1991 Federal Uniform System for Handicapped Parking, and (2) the time period the physician determines the disability will continue. Normal fees for plate transfer, registration, and property taxes still must be paid upon initial application and renewal of disability license plates. Upon request, one additional disability windshield placard may be issued to disabled persons applying for or already possessing disability special group license plates. For more information, telephone toll-free 800-DMV-UTAH. (Utah Code vol 2 Section 41).

VETERANS JOB REPRESENTATIVES: Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVER) and Disabled Veterans Outreach Person (DVOP) are located statewide in the larger employment offices of the Utah Dept. of Workforce Services. They provide intensive employment related services for targeted veterans: referral to job opportunities, resume writing, referral letters, veteran's preference, employment counseling, etc. Please see attached list of Veteran Representatives. (Utah Code Vol 2 Section 35.)

VETERANS JOB PREFERENCE: Eligible veterans or un-remarried spouses are granted either 5 or 10 points, as applicable, for employment preference, added to the

results of any written &/or oral exam or other related qualifying technique, by any Utah government entity (state, county, municipality, special district or other political subdivision or administration.) The U.S. Dept. of Labor will protect the veteran's rights to the Veterans Job Preference. (Utah Code Vol 3, Section 71).

VETERANS HIRING PRIORITY: Any officers, agents or representatives of the state, or any contractor performing work for Utah state government, who willfully fails to hire a military veteran shall be guilty of a misdemeanor. (Utah Code Vol 3, Section 71).

MILITARY LEAVE : Utah state, county or municipal government employees, who are members of the organized reserve/ national guard, are allowed full pay* for 15 days of military leave per year for annual military encampment. Military leave is in addition to and distinguished from annual accrued vacation leave with pay. (Utah Code Vol 3 Section 67 & USERRA federal Uniformed Services Employment & Reemployment Rights Act.) *Some exceptions apply; see local Human Resources Rep for details

VETERANS REEMPLOYMENT RIGHTS: Veterans and members of the National Guard and Reserves may be eligible for reemployment with their civilian employers if they meet certain requirements under the Uniformed Services Employment & Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA). USERRA also provides protection against discrimination in employment because of service in the uniformed services (Title 38, chap 43 USC). Inquiries regarding reemployment rights should be directed to the U.S.D.L., Veterans Employment & Training Services (801-524-5703) (Utah Code Vol 3, Section 67 & USERRA federal Uniformed Services Employment & Reemployment Rights Act, as amended.)

UTAH STATE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS: The *Utah State Department of Veterans Affairs* is located at 550 Foothill Dr. Suite #202, Salt Lake City, Utah 84113 (the corner of Wasatch & Foothill) on the VA Medical Center Campus. The mission of the office is to provide counsel, assist veterans and their dependents with VA claims processing,

establish veterans' rights to state and federal benefits and to provide information and advisory services. Veteran service officers under contract provide an outreach assistance program to rural Utah veterans, in conjunction with the Utah State Department of Veterans Affairs. **U.S. active duty military service discharge certificates (DD-214's) are on file in the office for veterans discharged after 1980, and some records for WWII and Korean era veterans. DD-214's are only on file for veterans with Utah residency or with a Utah forwarding address at the time of release from active duty.** DD-214 certified copies are provided free of charge; toll free 1-800-894-9497. The Utah National Guard Headquarters in Draper Utah maintains file copies of National Guard Bureau record of separation certificates (NGB 22's) for completed service in the Utah Army National Guard & Utah Air National Guard (1950-present). NGB 22 certified copies are free of charge; phone 801-432-4534. (Utah Code Vol 1, Section 17 & Vol 3, Section 71).

UTAH STATE VETERANS NURSING HOME: The first Utah State Veterans Nursing Home, located on the Salt Lake City VA Medical Center Campus, phone 801-584-1900; fax 801-584-1960, address, 700 Foothill Drive, SLC, UT. 84113-1104, was dedicated on 22 April 1998 and became operational in May 1998. Quality nursing and health care services are provided for Utah veterans with U.S. military service during peacetime or wartime. While wartime service is not a requirement for admission to the nursing home, wartime veterans with one day or more of wartime service, as recognized by state and federal laws, have top priority. A veteran's spouse or surviving spouse may also qualify for admittance to the Utah State Veterans Nursing Home, providing the marriage to the veteran occurred at least one year before the application. (Utah Code Vol 2, Section 26). **Note: The Utah Legislature has appropriated \$19.7 million to construct a Veterans nursing home in Ogden. Dedication will be November 2009. To inquire about residency, or to make a donation call 1-800-613-4012.**

UTAH STATE VETERANS CEMETERY & MEMORIAL PARK: Located at 17111 Camp Williams Road in Bluffdale, phone number,

(801) 254-9036, fax number (801) 254-5756. This states veteran's cemetery generally follows the eligibility requirements of VA National Cemetery System, including: any U.S. Armed Forces active personnel dying while performing duty or after having served during wartime. Reservist and National Guard retired personnel with 20 years of service are eligible for burial also. Surviving spouses and dependent children also are eligible to be buried in the Utah State Veterans Cemetery & Memorial Park, under rules established by the state of Utah. (Utah Code Vol 3, Section 71).

FREE USE OF ARMORIES: Organizations of war veterans are entitled to have free use of state of Utah armories as meeting places, provided such use should not interfere with the use of armories by the National Guard or organized militia of Utah. (Utah Code Vol 3, Section 71).

FISHING LICENSE PRIVILEGES: Utah Disabled Veteran Fishing Licenses are available for Veterans, free of charge, from the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources. To qualify a Veteran must have obvious physical handicaps, such as, permanently confined to a wheelchair, paraplegic, minus at least one limb, permanently requiring crutches or blind. (Utah Code Vol. 1, Section 23).

SPECIAL FUN TAGS: Allow free admission to most of the 41 state-controlled parks, campgrounds and other recreation areas throughout Utah. These are free of charge to disabled veterans & other disabled persons. The Utah Special Fun Tags also allows a \$2.00 off, camping fee discount Monday through Thursday, excluding holidays. Utah Special Fun Tags are available to disabled veterans upon application to the Utah Division of Parks and Recreation, along with a VA letter documenting 10% or greater military service-connected disability rating. **Please call the State Parks and Recreation office at (801) 538-7220 or toll free at 1-877-UTPARKS to have an application mailed to you or log on to www.stateparks.utah.gov to download.** Applications can be mailed or faxed to (801) 538-7378 (Utah Code Vol 1, Section 23).

America the Beautiful Pass: A lifetime entrance pass to most national parks, monuments, historic sites, recreation areas,

and national wildlife refuges that charge an entrance fee. The Passport admits the pass holder and any accompanying passengers in a private vehicle. Where entry is not by private vehicle, the passport admits the pass holder, spouse, and children. The Pass **MAY** also provides a 50% discount on federal use fees charged for facilities and services such as camping, swimming, parking, boat launching, and cave tours. It does not cover or reduce special recreation permit fees or fees charged by concessionaires. A Pass must be obtained in person at any federal area where an entrance fee is charged or at one of the agencies administering the Pass. It is available to citizens or permanent residents of the United States who are medically determined to be blind or permanently disabled. Veterans may obtain a passport by showing proof of a medically determined permanent disability or eligibility for receiving benefits under federal law. A letter from the Department of Veterans Affairs stating the veteran's disability rating will suffice. Agencies administering the Pass are Bureau of Land Management, Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Reclamation, Army Corps of Engineers, National Park Service, and Forest Service.

BUS / TRAX REDUCED FARE CARDS: Greatly discounted fares (65% reduced) to ride Utah Transit Authority (UTA) busses and TRAX light rail system are available for veterans meeting one of the following criteria: Forty percent (40%) or greater military service-connected disability rating by VA, in receipt of VA non-service connected pension or regardless of disability rating for veterans & others with transportation disabilities that cause either difficulty boarding or getting off a bus/light rail system, difficulty standing in a moving bus/light rail system, difficulty reading bus/light rail system schedules & understanding information signs, difficulty hearing announcements by bus/light rail system, or difficulty hearing announcements by bus/light rail systems operators. Persons receiving Social Security Disability benefits, SSI, or Medicare also get the UTA Reduced Fare Cards. Elderly persons age 65 and over qualify for Senior Passes at the same price as Reduced Fare Cards. To obtain UTA Reduced Fare Cards for .50 cent regular fares or \$18.00 monthly fares, do the following: 1. Go to either UTA location at 167

S. Main St. or 3600 S. 700 W. in SLC, 2. Complete UTA Reduced Fare Card application form, 3. Present evidence (a VA letter verifying service connected disability rating or non service connected pension, 4. pay \$2.00 for UTA photo identification to incorporate on UTA Reduced Fare Card. (Utah Code Vol 4 Section 72, Utah Transit Authority Regulations & U.S. Transportation Regulations)

COMMUNITY BASED OUTPATIENT

CLINICS: Following is a list of the clinics that provide medical treatment to veterans. It is recommended that you contact the clinic to ascertain the requirements of the clinic.

Ogden: 982 Chambers St., S. Ogden, UT 84403, 801-479-4105. **Roosevelt:** 210 W. 300 N. Roosevelt, UT 84066, 435-722-6108, **Orem:** 740 W. 800 N. Ste. 440, Orem, UT 84057 801-235-0953, **St. George:** 1067 E. Tabernacle Suite 7, St. George, UT 84770, 435-634-7608, **Nephi:** 48 W. 1500 N., Nephi, UT 84648, 435-623-3129, **Fountain Green:** 300 W. 300 S., Fountain Green, UT, 84632, 435-623-3129. **Green River:** 1400 Uinta Drive, Green River, WY. 82935, 307-872-4508. **Pocatello:** 444 Hospital Way Suite 801, Pocatello, ID. 83201, 208-232-6214. **Ely:** 6 Steptoe Circle, Ely, NV. 89301, 775-289-2788 ext. 105. For further information on the clinics, please contact the VA Hospital at 1-800-613-4012.

GENERAL INFORMATION:

The Veterans Administration Regional Office (VARO) is located on the campus of the George E. Wahlen VA Medical Center in Salt Lake City, UT. The address to the VARO is 550 Foothill Drive, Salt Lake City, UT 84158. You can contact the VA by calling 1-800-827-1000.

VA HOSPITAL: The George E. Wahlen VA Medical Center is located at 500 Foothill Drive, Salt Lake City, UT. They can be reached at 801-582-1565 or toll free, from within Utah, at 1-800-613-4012.

The Salt Lake City "Vet Center" is located at 1354 E. 3300 S., SLC, UT. They can be reached at 801-584-1294, or toll free from within Utah at 1-800-613-4012 ext. 1294. The Salt Lake Vet Center has a new program called the "Global War on Terrorism Outreach Program". The purpose of this

program is to identify returning veterans' needs and issues, provide information, link vets with agencies that can provide valuable resources and to actively network current clients with other veterans.

The Provo "Vet Center" is located at 1807 North 1120 West, Provo, UT. They can be reached at 801-377-1117 or toll free from within Utah at 1-800-246-1197.

Both centers provide counseling and referral services especially designed for "wartime" veterans. They also provide an extensive outreach program aimed at helping the men and women who proudly served our country.

HOMELESS VETERANS FELLOWSHIP:

The Homeless Veterans Fellowship is located at 541 23rd St., Ogden, UT. They can be reached at 801-392-7662. HVF provides transitional housing for up to eighteen months for veterans. They can also provide emergency food bags and personal hygiene items. Coffee and donuts provided during open hours.

VALOR HOUSE: Located on the campus of the VA Hospital, in Salt Lake City, UT, the Valor House provides transitional housing to homeless veterans for up to two years. There are a total of 60 beds available. For more information regarding this program, please contact Rich Landward at (801) 582-1565 ext. 2703 or 1-800-613-4012 ext. 2703.

Outreach Services: The Utah Department of Veterans Affairs, through contracts with service officers from local Veterans Service Organizations, provides assistance and information to veterans and their families in filing claims for VA or other veterans' related benefits. The service officers travel the state on a monthly basis meeting with veterans, who are unable to travel to Salt Lake City, at various Department of Workforce Services locations throughout the state. For a schedule call 1-800-894-9497 or visit veterans.utah.gov

UTAH DEPARTMENT OF WORKFORCE SERVICES
VETERANS REPRESENTATIVES

Cedar City: 176 East 2nd North / Jake Huntsman (435) 865-6531
Clearfield: 1290 East 1450 South / David Maxfield (801) 776-7805 /
Sam Sanchez (801) 776-7826
Logan: 180 N 100 W / Scott Clark (435) 792-0309
Midvale: 7292 South State Street / Garth Anderson (801) 567-3976
Moab: 457 West Kane Creek Blvd. / Nathan Wilcox (435) 719-2623
Ogden: 480 27th Street / Steve Hadley (801) 626-0338 /
Robert Ferreira (801) 626-0373
Price: 475 West Price River Drive #256 / Steve Wilkinson (435) 636-2348
Provo: 150 E. Center St. Suite #4120 / Al Yardley (801) 344-1254
Provo: 1550 N. 200 W. / Theon Laney (801) 342-2665
Richfield: 115 East 100 South / Jerry Winget (435) 893-0008
SLC Dwtwn: 158 South 200 West / Carl Moore (801) 524-9121
SLC Metro: 720 South 200 East / Jeremy Hanson (801) 536-7051
SLC South: 5735 South Redwood Road / Paul Williams (801) 269-4837
St. George: 162 North 400 East / Sam Williams (435) 986-3576
Tooele: 305 North Main Street / Lynn Gehring (435) 833-7384
Vernal: 1050 West Market Drive / John Kijek (435) 781-4124
West Valley: 2750 South 5600 West Suite A / Sharon Welsh (801) 840-4422

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
VETERANS EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING SERVICE

Dale Brockbank, Director
140 East 300 South, Suite #209
Salt Lake City, Utah 84111
(801) 524-5703

NATIONAL SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

AMERICAN LEGION: 550 Foothill Drive Suite #203, Salt Lake City (801) 326-2380
Service Officer: Dino Genco

VFW: 550 Foothill Drive Suite #203, Salt Lake City (801) 326-2385
Service Officer: Mark Lamb

DAV: 550 Foothill Drive Suite #202, Salt Lake City (801) 326-2375
Service Officer: Eric McGinnis
Service Officer: Daniel Rioux
Service Officer: Lou Estrada
Service Officer: J.C. Wicks

Purple Heart: 550 Foothill Drive Suite #203, Salt Lake City (801) 326-2471

Check List for Veterans Benefits

Ask the Veteran (or spouse) the following questions:

Veterans Pension/ Death Pension requirements

- When did you serve?
 - Looking for wartime service:
 - WWII: Dec 7th 1941- Dec 31st, 1946
 - Korean War: June 27th, 1950 – Jan 31st, 1955
 - Vietnam: Aug 5th, 1964- May 7th, 1975 except for Veterans who were “in country” then the beginning date is Feb 28th, 1961
 - Gulf War: Aug 2nd, 1990- present
 - If the Veteran has wartime service, they only had to be in the military for at least one day even if they did not go to war. Also they had to serve a minimum of 90 days, unless the discharge was after 1980, then the minimum service requirement is 2 years.
- The next requirement for pension: Is the Veteran or spouse 65 years or older? Or Is the Veterans permanently and totally non-service connected disabled?
- If they meet the age and service requirements the next step to eligibility is income- this is an income based benefits for very low income Veterans and spouses.
- The income allowable is adjusted by qualifying medical expenses, so if the Veteran has a good income but high medical expenses, they should apply. If they have a high income and low medical expenses, they probably won't qualify. The best bet is to have the apply, it's not up to anyone but the VA to determine who will qualify.
 - VA form 21-526 for veterans
 - VA Form 21-534 for spouses

Aid and Attendance and Housebound Benefit

- These are not stand alone benefits; they are additional monthly benefits paid on top of the pension or compensation benefit and cannot be applied for individually.
 - If a Veteran is in medical need for regular aid and attendance or is considered housebound, they may be eligible for this additional allowance.
 - The criteria for these benefits is based on the activities of daily living that the individual needs assistance with: eating, dressing, bathing, protecting themselves for environmental hazards ect. A statement for the caretaker or facility should be submitted to detail the type of care the individuals needs.
 - Also, Veterans who are not in need of aid and attendance but do have a spouse who is, can receive the allowance for the spouse.

Disability Compensation

- This benefit is for Veterans who have a permanent, chronic disability that resulted due to military service. This can include injuries or illness that occurred on, as a result of, or were aggravated by military service.
- In order to get service connection, the Veterans must be able to show 1- proof of a current disability, 2- evidence of an injury or illness occurring on active duty, 3- a nexus or connection between that injury and the current disability, such as ongoing medical treatment or a doctors statement linking those two.
- There is no statute of limitations on filing, however, only the Veteran may apply and once they are deceased, no application can be made.
- VA form 21-526

Bernie Davis
Utah Vet Affairs
801-326-2372
WWW.VETERANS.UTAH.GOV