

Dear Veteran:

First and foremost, I want to offer my sincere thanks for your service in the armed forces. Your service, courage and sacrifice have provided your fellow Americans with freedom, safety and peace of mind.

As your representative, I am honored to be able to find ways to continue to support our military men and women and their immense sacrifice. We are constantly working to help Michigan's veterans by making you aware of changes and providing directions about programs for which you may be eligible. I hope you will find this information helpful and make use of these programs.

It is my privilege to represent you in Lansing. If you ever have any questions or concerns about state government please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Dave Pagel

State Representative

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2013 MICHIGAN VETERANS UPDATE



Financial help is available for veterans who need assistance

The Michigan Veterans Trust Fund Emergency Grant Program provides financial aid to wartime veterans who encounter temporary or unexpected financial difficulty. Examples of qualifying situations include unexpected hospitalization not covered by insurance or delay in receiving unemployment benefits. For information about the program, please contact your county's VA office, call the Michigan Department of Military and Veterans Affairs at 517-481-8000 or visit www.michigan.gov/dmva.

STATE REPRESENTATIVE **DAVE PAGEL**



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DID YOU KNOW?

Unemployment among veterans in Michigan is unacceptably high, and Michigan veterans rank last in terms of utilizing available federal benefits. As a state we must do all we can to assist our veterans with navigating the process of applying for and receiving VA benefits.

Free hunting and fishing licenses for disabled veterans

This month the governor signed into law bills introduced in the House that give all active duty military members and permanently disabled military veterans access to free hunting and fishing licenses. The men and women in our military put their lives on the line to protect this country. Offering them these free licenses is a very small way we can reward them for their immense service.





**THANK YOU
FOR YOUR SERVICE!**

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Please contact my office with any questions or concerns

Military service = job training

Our brave men and women serving in the military receive some of the finest training in the world, not just in military tactics but in areas that can help them transition to great careers in civilian life. Now, thanks to legislation we passed in the state House, a person's military service can help veterans waive training classes and tests for certain professions.

The five bills passed by the House allows for military training to be counted toward the licensing and education process for emergency medical technicians (EMTs), firefighters, boiler operators, mechanical contractors, and residential building contractors.

These laws are aimed at addressing the challenges facing our military service members upon returning home from their tour of duty. The military servicemen and women do so much for our country, it is part of my job as a legislator to ensure veterans have the tools to adjust to civilian society.

Bill would give military vets information on community college credits

Did you know veterans can submit their military transcripts for potential college credit? If not, you're not alone. That's why we recently introduced legislation in the House that requires community colleges to inform applicants of this benefit for veterans. The legislation would require community colleges to inform qualified applicants that they may submit their military transcript for potential credit and then inform the applicant, after an evaluation has taken place, if they are eligible to receive credit based on their transcripts. The bill does not require colleges to award credit.

Veteran designation on driver's licenses

Veterans face enough hurdles returning to civilian life; proving they've served their country admirably shouldn't be one of them. That's why, starting May 1, 2014, veterans can apply for a special designation on their driver's licenses and state identification cards to help eliminate more red tape. This law will eliminate a lot of the red tape many veterans face when identifying themselves. It will ensure veterans can easily identify themselves, which will give them easier access to jobs and opportunities. Our hope is that this will help make sure the more than 650,000 veterans in Michigan are receiving the benefits they deserve.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT VETERANS BENEFITS

Q. WHAT QUALIFIES A VETERAN FOR BENEFITS?

A. 180 days of active duty service with an honorable discharge qualifies you as a veteran in Michigan. To qualify for a pension, active duty service beginning after 1980 must total a minimum of 24 months, though exceptions are made based on income, injury, or other extenuating circumstances.

Q. WHAT MEDICAL BENEFITS ARE AVAILABLE?

A. If a condition is service-related, total care with no co-pays is available to many veterans. An annual financial assessment (Means Test) is used to determine co-pays for most veterans.

Q. ARE SPOUSES OF VETERANS ELIGIBLE FOR ANY BENEFITS?

A. Possibly. Aid and Attendance benefits, dependent on income, may be available for in-home or assisted living care. A veteran can also transfer GI bill benefits to a spouse or child.

Q. WHAT BURIAL BENEFITS ARE AVAILABLE TO VETS AND THEIR SPOUSES?

A. Other than those dishonorably discharged, all veterans and their spouses are eligible for burial in a national cemetery. There also are burial allowances for wartime veterans, low-income veterans, and those drawing veteran pensions or compensation.

Q. WHAT FINANCIAL BENEFITS ARE AVAILABLE TO VETERANS OR THEIR SPOUSES?

A. There are many financial benefits available to veterans and their families. Please contact the Michigan Department of Veterans Affairs to discuss what options you may be eligible for or visit www.michigan.gov/dmva.

YOU MAY BE MISSING A BENEFIT YOU ARE ELIGIBLE FOR

The United States Department of Veterans Affairs is always expanding the list of presumptive conditions, medical conditions recognized as resulting from military service in specific areas or exposure to debilitating conditions or substances during duty. Many veterans are not aware that their medical conditions could be the result of being stationed in the wrong place at the wrong time and are service connected disabilities. Visit www.vba.va.gov/VBA for a list of qualifying illnesses.

The Aid and Attendance benefit for war era veterans and their spouses who require medical assistance to meet their daily needs is often overlooked. Routine Medical Care for any veteran who was honorably discharged and who can't afford care is often missed. Dependency and Indemnity Compensation for a survivor of a veteran whose death was the result of a disease or injury incurred or aggravated in the line of duty is also frequently missed by eligible veterans.