



STATE OF IOWA

GOVERNOR TERRY E. BRANSTAD

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
JODI TYMESON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR KIM REYNOLDS

Iowa Code Chapter 35, 35A, 35B

Personnel: 13

Camp Dodge: Executive Director, 2 benefit specialists, 4 program personnel
Iowa Veterans Cemetery: 5 personnel (3 outside/ 2 inside)
Federal Building: 1 benefit specialist

Mission: SERVE VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES

Responsibilities:

- Iowa Veterans Cemetery – must maintain National Cemetery standards
- Administer all state programs (see handout)
- Connect veterans with their benefits (federal, state, county)
- High quality training for county VA directors (2 schools per year)
- Graves registration and maintenance of discharge records
- Provide records when needed (IVH, IVC, funeral directors, etc)
- Staff the Iowa Commission of Veterans Affairs
- Nursing Home Program
- Participate in veterans events
- Maintain partnerships with:
 - County Veterans Affairs Directors and County VA Commissions
 - Iowa Commission of Veterans Affairs
 - Veterans Affairs and VA Hospitals
 - Department of Public Defense
 - All veterans organizations, state departments & agencies, public, private, and non-profit groups serving veterans and their families

Goals:

1. Ensure the department is efficient and effective at fulfilling the mission.
2. Strengthen partnership with county VA directors and commissions. Since the department is so small, the county system must be the main point of contact for veterans to seek assistance. The department must support the counties with high quality training and other assistance as needed.
3. Strengthen partnership with Iowa Commission of Veterans Affairs to ensure veterans are informed and connected with their benefits.
4. Improve outreach efforts to veterans by ensuring all groups can be reached – county offices, 800#, website, new social media.

Please visit our website: <https://va.iowa.gov>

Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs
7105 NW 70th Avenue / Camp Dodge, Bldg. 3663
Johnston, IA 50131-1824
Phone 515-242-5331 / Fax 515-242-5659

STATE OF IOWA VETERANS BENEFITS

Benefit Specialists - Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs

The IDVA staff includes benefit specialists, accredited by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, who specialize in federal VA benefits, as well as state benefits. They advise veterans and family members of veterans concerning federal VA benefits they may be entitled to receive. These include pension, disability compensation, and other ancillary benefits. Benefit specialists can also represent claimants with federal claims – and review all correspondence pursuant to those claims – to determine if an award action or denial was correct. IDVA's benefit specialists can be reached at: 515.242.5331 or 800.838.4692.

Education Programs

The Iowa Department of Education has been designated by the governor of the state of Iowa as the location for the Iowa State Approving Agency. This Agency is responsible for approving all GI Bill programs in Iowa for veterans and other eligible persons. (Program approval is a function of the State Approving Agency, not the Department of Veterans Affairs.) For more information, call 515.281.3490 or 515.281.3317 or visit IDVA's webpage for a link to approved schools and training establishments.

High School Diploma

"Operation Recognition" furnishes an *honorary* high school diploma to qualifying veterans who did not complete high school due to armed service enlistment. The application form is used by the IDVA and the Department of Education to establish eligibility for honorably discharged veterans. An application form can be found on the IDVA website.

Injured Veterans Grant - \$10,000 Maximum

This grant provides \$2,500 per month – up to \$10,000 – to members or former members of the U.S. military who are residents of Iowa and were seriously injured in the Iraq or Afghanistan theatre of operation. To be eligible for the full \$10,000, the individual must have been evacuated to a hospital outside of combat and remain under some type of medical care for a minimum of 91 days. Veterans who are under medical care for less than 91 days receive \$2,500 each month that medical care is needed. For additional information, visit:
https://va.iowa.gov/benefits/injured_vets_grant.html.

Iowa Veterans Cemetery

The Iowa Veterans Cemetery is centrally located approximately 10 miles west of Des Moines, near Van Meter. The cemetery is available to all veterans, their spouses, and dependent children for burial. Honorably discharged veterans are interred at no charge and spouses/dependents are buried for a \$300 fee. For further information and regulations, call the cemetery: 515.996.9048, or visit their website: <https://va.iowa.gov/vetcemetery>.

Iowa Veterans Home - Marshalltown

The Iowa Veterans Home in Marshalltown, Iowa is available for honorably discharged veterans, as well as their spouses or widows for long term care needs. Visit their website: <http://ivh.iowa.gov>.

Lifetime Hunting/Fishing License for Disabled Veterans

Veterans in receipt of at least a 0% service connected disability can receive a lifetime hunting or fishing license for a \$7.00 fee. In order to qualify, the Iowa veteran resident must have served on active federal service and was disabled as a result of that service. A DNR application can be found here:
<http://www.iowadnr.gov/license/files/542-1412.pdf>.

Military Services Member Home Ownership Assistance Program

This \$5,000 grant is available to service members who are buying a home in the state of Iowa. Members must have served on active duty on or after September 11, 2001 and purchased a home after March 10, 2005. Call 800.432.7230 for more information or visit:
http://www.ifahome.com/en/for_home_buyers/military_homeownership_program.

National Guard Tuition Benefits

Present Iowa National Guard members in good standing are eligible for up to \$2,700 per semester for full time enrollment. Part-time students are eligible for \$196 per semester hour. Additionally, Guard members who are mobilized will receive a tuition refund. Visit their website:

<http://www.iowanationalguard.com/education/tuitionassistance.htm>

Property Tax Exemption

This benefit reduces a veteran's assessed home value for property tax purposes by \$1,850. In order to qualify, a service member must have served on active duty during a period of war or for a minimum of 18 months during peacetime. More information may be found here:

<http://www.iowa.gov/tax/forms/54146.pdf>

Veteran's License Plates

Honorably discharged veterans are eligible to purchase specialty veteran license plates for their vehicle. These special plates are available for an additional charge through the Iowa Department of Transportation. Visit:

<http://www.iamvd.com/ovs/plates/index/htm> for details.

Veterans Trust Fund

The State of Iowa has established a multi-million dollar fund to provide certain services to veterans. Beginning in December 2007, interest from this fund has been available to provide relief for Iowa veterans and their families. At this time, interest funds are received monthly and approved applicants are placed on a waiting list based on the date received and approved. Currently, funds are used for unemployment or underemployment assistance due to service-related causes; assistance with vision, hearing, dental care, durable medical equipment, and prescription drugs; counseling and substance abuse services; housing repair; and transitional housing in an emergency. Trust fund expenditures are approved through the Iowa Veterans Commission. For a complete list of eligibility services, contact your local VA county director, the IDVA, or visit: <https://va.iowa.gov>.

Vietnam Veterans Conflict Bonus

This bonus program is for Iowa residents who served on active duty for at least 120 days and between July 1, 1973 and May 31, 1975. Veterans who served in Vietnam will receive \$17.50 for each month served. Veterans that served outside of Vietnam during this time will receive \$12.50 for each month of service. The maximum bonus amount is \$500 for veterans who served in Vietnam and \$300 for those who were not in country.

This program is an extension of the original bonus created following the Vietnam War to honor soldiers for service through June 30, 1973. The Federal government has since expanded the Vietnam era to include July 1, 1973 to May 31, 1975, both dates inclusive. Vietnam-era veterans who received a bonus for service prior to July 1, 1973, will have that amount included in the maximum compensation amount for the new bonus.

*** If you were denied the original Vietnam bonus for time served from July 1, 1958 through June 30, 1973, you may be eligible to apply for a retroactive bonus. In order to qualify, you need to have applied and been denied an original bonus due to residency, been inducted into the military in Iowa, and not have received a bonus from another state. ***

Applications for these benefits can be found on IDVA's website:

<https://va.iowa.gov>

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