

DISTRICT OFFICES

355 S. WASHINGTON STREET
DANVILLE, IN 46122
(317) 718-0404



House of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

TODD ROKITA
4TH DISTRICT, INDIANA
COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET
COMMITTEE ON HOUSE
ADMINISTRATION
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
AND THE WORKFORCE
ROKITA.HOUSE.GOV

December 10, 2013

Dear Mr. Cook,

Please see the attached documents that I printed out from the Veteran Affairs website. I wish that I could have provided you a more favorable response. Per our discussion back on 12/9/13 many of the benefits that the VA offers relate to having over 90 days of Active Duty service and/or Active Duty service during a war-time period.

I encourage you to continue looking into local or state benefits; however, again you may run into the same issue with not qualifying for federal benefits. Additionally, I encourage you to contact the VA administration, in future, to see if any changes to the VA would deem you eligible for benefits. The VA website is www.va.gov and you are always welcome to contact the office to discuss any military or veterans issue with myself or my staff.

Thank you for your time and thank you for your attendance to the Congress on Your Corner event in Monticello.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Todd Rokita".

Todd Rokita
Member of Congress

TER/aw

Enclosure:

DD FORM 1 JUL 79 214

STATEMENT OF RELEASE OR DISCHARGE FROM ACTIVE DUTY

12. RECORD OF SERVICE	YEAR (s)	MON (s)	DAY (s)
a. Date Entered AD This Period	85	03	31
b. Separation Date This Period	85	07	05
c. Net Active Service This Period	00	03	06
d. Total Prior Active Service	00	00	00
e. Total Prior Inactive Service	00	02	14
f. Foreign Service	00	00	00
g. Sea Service	00	00	00
h. Effective Date of Pay Grade	85	03	31
i. Reserve Oblig. Term. Date	00	00	00

13. DECORATIONS, MEDALS, BADGES, CITATIONS AND CAMPAIGN RIBBONS AWARDED OR AUTHORIZED (All periods of service)

MARKSMAN (HAND GRENADE)

14. MILITARY EDUCATION (Course Title, number weeks, and month and year completed)

NA

15. MEMBER CONTRIBUTED TO POST-VIETNAM ERA VETERANS' EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

YES NO

16. HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE OR EQUIVALENT

YES NO

17. DAYS ACCRUED LEAVE PAID

0.5

18. REMARKS

NOTHING FOLLOWS

RECEIVED FOR RECORD
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19. MAILING ADDRESS AFTER SEPARATION

20. MEMBER REQUESTS COPY 6 BE

SENT TO IN DIR. OF VET AFFAIRS YES NO

22. TYPED NAME, GRADE, TITLE AND SIGNATURE OF OFFICIAL AUTHORIZED TO SIGN

ROBERT D. KASSON, CPT, AGC, Asst AG

SPECIAL ADDITIONAL INFORMATION (For use by authorized agencies only)

23. TYPE OF SEPARATION RELIEF FROM ADT AND DISCHARGE FROM THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY	24. CHARACTER OF SERVICE (Includes upgrades) UNCHARACTERIZED
25. SEPARATION AUTHORITY Para 5-11, AR 635-200	26. SEPARATION CODE JFT
27. REENLISTMENT CODE RE-3	28. NARRATIVE REASON FOR SEPARATION Did not meet procurement medical fitness standards-no disability.
29. DATES OF TIME LOST DURING THIS PERIOD None	30. MEMBER REQUESTS COPY 4 TTC INITIALS

Traditional Service. Traditional National Guard and Reserve members typically serve one weekend per month and two weeks per year. Traditional members may become eligible for some VA benefits by fulfilling a service commitment. Eligibility for disability compensation requires that a disability was the result of an injury or disease incurred or aggravated in the line of duty during active duty or active duty for training. For inactive duty training, the disability must have resulted from injury, heart attack, or stroke. Other benefit programs require a specified number of days of active service.

Technician Service. Military technicians are civilian employees of the Department of the Army or Department of the Air Force who are required to maintain membership in the National Guard or Reserve in order to retain employment. Similar to traditional National Guard and Reserve members, military technicians are normally in a military status

one weekend a month and two weeks a year, and are eligible for some VA benefits. They may establish eligibility for additional benefits based on the length of Guard, Reserve, or active service.

VA BENEFITS



Disability Compensation. Disability compensation is a monthly tax-free benefit paid to Veterans who are at least 10% disabled because of injuries or diseases that were incurred or aggravated during active duty or active duty for training.



Pension. VA pension is a tax-free benefit paid to Veterans with limited income and net worth who served during a wartime period (see the FAQ section for a list of wartime periods). Generally, you must have 90 days or 24 months of active service (depending on when you served) to qualify.

Eligibility for VA Pension Benefits

Age/Disability Requirements	Active Service Requirements	
	On/Before September 7, 1980 (Enlisted) or October 16, 1981 (Officer)	After September 7, 1980 (Enlisted) or October 16, 1981 (Officer)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Age 65 or older, OR » Permanently and totally disabled (not due to own personal misconduct), OR » A patient in a nursing home receiving skilled nursing care, OR » Receiving Social Security Disability Insurance, OR » Receiving Supplemental Security Income 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » For at least 90 days with at least one day during a wartime period, OR » For at least 90 consecutive days or more if the period began or ended during a wartime period, OR » For an aggregate of 90 days or more during more than one wartime period, OR » During a wartime period, you were discharged or released because of a service-connected disability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » For at least 24 continuous months*, or the full period you were called or ordered, with at least one day during a wartime period, OR » During a wartime period, you were discharged or released because of a service-connected disability <p><i>*You are also eligible if you previously completed 24 continuous months of active service prior to the date above, or received an early discharge under Section 1171 of Title 10.</i></p>



Home Loan Guaranty. VA's Home Loan Guaranty Program connects National Guard and Reserve members with home loans that have favorable terms. Private lenders provide the loan, but VA guarantees a portion of it, allowing lenders to provide benefits such as no down payment or mortgage insurance premiums. To qualify for VA's home loan guaranty, you must meet one of the following conditions:

- » Served for 90 days or more on active duty during a wartime period, **OR**
- » Were discharged or released from active duty for a service-connected disability, **OR**
- » Have six years of service in the Selected Reserve or National Guard, **AND**
 - › Were discharged honorably, **OR**

- › Were placed on the retired list, **OR**
- › Were transferred to the Standby Reserve or an element of the Ready Reserve other than the Selected Reserve after honorable service, **OR**
- › Continue to serve in the Selected Reserve



Education. VA provides valuable education and training benefits to National Guard and Reserve members, including financial support for undergraduate and graduate degrees, vocational and technical training, licensing and certification tests, apprenticeships, and on-the-job training. You may be eligible for one or more of the following programs if you meet certain service requirements:

Eligibility for VA Education Benefits

Program	Service Requirements
Post-9/11 GI Bill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » You were honorably discharged from active duty for a service-connected disability after serving at least 30 continuous days after September 10, 2001, OR » You have at least 90 aggregate days of active service consisting of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Active duty (Title 10) supporting named contingency operations, OR › Full-time National Guard duty (Title 32) for the purpose of organizing, administering, recruiting, instructing, or training, OR › Full-time National Guard duty (Title 32 under section 502(f)) when authorized by the President or the Secretary of Defense for the purpose of responding to a national emergency declared by the President and supported by Federal funds
Montgomery GI Bill- Selected Reserve (MGIB-SR)	<p>You:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Have a 6-year obligation to serve in the Selected Reserve, AND » Completed your Initial Active Duty for Training (IADT), AND » Served in a drilling unit and remain in good standing, AND » Have a high school diploma or equivalency
Reserve Educational Assistance Program (REAP)	<p>You:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Are a member of a Reserve component, AND » Served on active duty for at least 90 consecutive days after September 10, 2001



Health Care. VA health care benefits may include all the necessary inpatient hospital care and outpatient services to promote, preserve, or restore your health.

Eligibility for VA health care requires that you served on active duty by a Federal order and completed the full period for which you were called or ordered. If you served on active duty in a theater of combat operations after November 11, 1998, you are eligible for free VA health care benefits for up to 5 years from the date of discharge or release.

Additional factors determine health care benefit eligibility for non-combat Veterans, or those with combat service prior to November 11, 1998. Learn more at www.va.gov/healthbenefits.

Transitioning to Civilian Life

Vet Centers. VA assists combat Veterans through a nationwide network of community-based Vet Centers. Counselors provide individual, group, and family readjustment counseling to help with the transition to civilian life, treat post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and help with any other issues related to military service. Other services include: outreach, education, medical referral, homeless Veteran services, employment, and VA benefit referral.



Burial. VA offers burial and memorial services to honor our Nation's deceased Veterans. For example:

- » VA can furnish an inscribed headstone or marker at any cemetery, or a medallion in lieu of a headstone, or marker to affix to one that is privately purchased

- » VA can provide a burial and/or plot allowance to partially reimburse the burial and funeral costs of a Veteran
- » VA can provide a Presidential Memorial Certificate (PMC) for the next of kin and loved ones of a deceased Veteran
- » VA can provide an American flag to drape the casket of a Veteran
- » A Veteran and his or her dependents can be buried in a VA national cemetery

Eligibility for burial benefits requires that you served on active duty, or that your death was due to an injury or disease that developed or was aggravated during active duty, active duty for training, or inactive duty for training.



Insurance. VA's life insurance programs provide financial security and peace of mind to you and your family, especially considering the risks involved in military service. Eligible Servicemembers and Veterans pay relatively low monthly premiums for coverage, which vary by insurance program. You are automatically insured under full-time Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance (SGLI) as either a:

- » Member of the Ready Reserve or National Guard who is scheduled to perform at least 12 periods of inactive training per year, **OR**
- » Servicemember who volunteers for a mobilization category in the Individual Ready Reserve (IRR)

Part-time coverage is also available to National Guard and Reserve members who do not meet the inactive training requirement above, but do perform duty at specific times.

You qualify for Veterans' Group Life Insurance (VGLI) if you are a:

- » Servicemember separating, retiring, or being released from assignment from the Ready Reserve, or a National Guard member who was covered by SGLI, **OR**
- » Member of the National Guard or Reserve covered by part-time SGLI who incurred or aggravated a disability while performing inactive duty or traveling to/from duty, **OR**
- » Member of the Individual Ready Reserve or Inactive National Guard

Additional VA Insurance benefits include:

- » **Family Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance (FSGLI)** is available to the spouses and dependent children of members of the Ready Reserve or National Guard of a uniformed service covered by full-time SGLI. FSGLI is a service members' benefit and therefore is the only one allowed to be beneficiary. Coverage is terminated on separate from service, divorce, death of the service member or if the service member elects to cancel the coverage
- » **SGLI Traumatic Injury Protection (TSGLI)** helps severely injured National Guard and Reserve members and their families with the financial burdens associated with recovery by providing a one-time payment to Servicemembers or Veterans who incur traumatic injuries (on-duty or off-duty) and suffer losses that qualify for payment under TSGLI
- » **Service-Disabled Veterans' Insurance (S-DVI)** provides life insurance coverage to National Guard or Reserve members or Veterans who incurred a service-connected disability while in an active duty status. Applications must be submitted within two

years from the date of notification of approval for a new service-connected disability by the VA. This is only for those Veterans discharged on or after April 25, 1951

- » **Veterans Mortgage Life Insurance (VMLI)** provides mortgage life insurance to severely disabled National Guard or Reserve members or Veterans who incurred a service-connected disability while in an active duty status and received a Specially Adapted Housing (SAH) grant from VA



Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment.

VA's Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) program provides education and training services, including vocational counseling and job-search assistance, to National Guard and Reserve members with service-connected disabilities. You may be eligible for assistance in preparing for, obtaining, and maintaining suitable employment through VR&E if you are:

- » A Veteran with a service-connected disability rated at 20 percent or more, **OR**
 - » Hospitalized or receiving outpatient medical care, services or treatment for a service-connected disability pending discharge from active duty, **OR**
 - » Severely ill or injured and have been referred to a military Physical Evaluation Board or are participating in the DoD/VA Integrated Disability Evaluation System process, **OR**
 - » A Veteran with a service-connected disability rated at least 10 percent, and your Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor determines you need rehabilitation because of a serious employment handicap
- You may also qualify for career counseling if you recently separated from the military or are using VA education benefits.

Frequently Asked Questions

Do I qualify for VA benefits as a National Guard or Reserve member?

Yes, generally, all National Guard and Reserve members qualify for some VA benefits. Different VA benefits may consider different factors to determine eligibility, such as length of service, type of service (such as under Title 10 or Title 32), wartime service, and/or service-related disability.

What is the difference between serving as a Traditional National Guard or Reserve member and as an Active Guard Reserve member?

Traditional National Guard and Reserve members typically serve one weekend a month and two weeks a year. Active Guard Reserve members are full-time members of a Reserve component for which they are entitled to receive pay from the Federal government. As an AGR, you establish eligibility for certain VA benefits by your active service under either Title 10 or Title 32.

What qualifies as a wartime period?

Under current law, VA recognizes the following wartime periods:

- » World War I (April 6, 1917 – November 11, 1918)
- » World War II (December 7, 1941 – December 31, 1946)
- » Korean conflict (June 27, 1950 – January 31, 1955)
- » Vietnam era (February 28, 1961 – May 7, 1975 for Veterans who served in the Republic of Vietnam during that period; otherwise August 5, 1964 – May 7, 1975)
- » Gulf War (August 2, 1990 – through a future date to be set by law or Presidential Proclamation)

Where can I go to learn more about VA benefits for National Guard and Reserve members?

Go to www.ebenefits.va.gov, your one-stop shop to learn about and apply for your VA benefits, or www.benefits.va.gov/guardreserve, a website tailored to help National Guard and Reserve members learn about your benefits.



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