

A PUBLICATION OF THE NEW JERSEY DIVISION OF PENSIONS AND BENEFITS

Veteran Status

Public Employees' Retirement System • Teachers' Pension and Annuity Fund • Police and Firemen's Retirement System

A veteran is a person who holds an honorable discharge from active military or naval service of the United States and who served during the time periods shown in the chart below:

WAR ERA

SERVICE DATES

- World War II September 16, 1940 to December 31, 1946
- Korean Conflict June 23, 1950 to January 31, 1955
- Lebanon Crisis July 1, 1958 to November 1, 1958
- Vietnam Conflict December 31, 1960 to May 7, 1975
- Lebanon Peacekeeping Mission September 26, 1982 to December 1, 1987
- Grenada Peacekeeping Mission October 23, 1983 to November 21, 1983
- Panama Peacekeeping Mission December 20, 1989 to January 31, 1990
- Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm August 2, 1990 to February 28, 1991
- Operation Northern Watch and
Operation Southern Watch August 27, 1992 to May 1, 2003
- Operation Restore Hope in Somalia December 5, 1992 to March 31, 1994
- Operations Joint Endeavor/Joint Guard -
Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina November 20, 1995 to June 20, 1998
- Operation Enduring Freedom September 11, 2001 to present
- Operation Iraqi Freedom March 23, 2003 to present

Members of the Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS) or Teachers' Pension and Annuity Fund (TPAF) who are military veterans may be entitled to special retirement benefits. Applicants to the Police and Firemen's Retirement System (PFRS) may also use these dates to request exception to the maximum age requirement for PFRS membership. This fact sheet will help you determine if you qualify for veteran status in the retirement system.

Veteran status for World War II, the Korean Conflict, or the Vietnam Conflict can be granted as long as the member had at least 90 days of continuous active military service, any part of which fell within the dates listed above.

Service with the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC) and Women's Army Corps (WAC) qualifies for veteran status.

Any honorably discharged member of the American Merchant Marine who served at least 90 days during World War II also qualifies for veteran status.

For veteran status during the Lebanon Crisis, Lebanon Peacekeeping Mission, the Grenada Peacekeeping Mission, the Panama Peacekeeping Mission, Operation Desert Shield/Storm, Operation Northern Watch, Operation Southern Watch, Operation Restore Hope in Somalia, Operations Joint Endeavor or Joint Guard in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Operation Enduring Freedom, or Operation Iraqi Freedom the member must have served at least 14 days in the country or region or on ships patrolling in the territorial waters of these nations.

- If the military service began *after* the starting date of conflict, only one of the 14 days in the areas of hostility must fall within the service dates specified.
- If the member's service started *prior* to the beginning of the period of hostility, then the member must have served at least 14 days within the dates specified.

The full 90 or 14-day requirement for service is not required if the veteran was discharged because of a service-incurred disability.

EXCLUSIONS

Absent Without Leave (AWOL) must be deducted from active service. If this reduces the active service to less than the 90 or 14-day service requirement, veteran status will be denied.

Veteran status cannot be granted if an individual received a dishonorable discharge, a discharge from the draft, disenrollment from the Coast Guard Reserve, or a discharge from the reserve with no evidence of active service in time of war.

Veteran status cannot be granted if the individual's service was:

- State Militia;
- Student training corps during World War II;
- In the Armed Forces of the Allies during World War II when not a citizen of the United States at the time of that service;
- Military service during peacetime;
- Military service for training purposes. Also, courses of education and training under the Army Specialized Training Program or the Navy College Training Program where the courses were a continuation of the individual's civilian courses and were pursued to completion;
- As a cadet or midshipman at one of the service academies; or
- Any military service performed pursuant to the provisions of Section 511(d) of Title 10, United States Code, pursuant to enlistment in the Army National Guard or as a reserve for service in the Army Reserve, Naval Reserve, Air Force Reserve, Marine Corps, or Coast Guard Reserve.

ESTABLISHING VETERAN STATUS

Individuals wishing to establish veteran status with the retirement system should submit copies of their discharge papers (Form DD 214) to:

**NJ Department of Military and
Veterans Affairs
ATTN: DVP-VBB
PO Box 340
Trenton, NJ 08625-0340**

Since the NJ Department of Military and Veterans Affairs also makes determinations of veteran's preference for Civil Service and property tax appeals, a note should be attached to say that the discharge is being sent for pension purposes. Include your address on the note.

If you do not have your discharge papers (Form DD 214), you should write to:

**National Personnel Records Center
Military Personnel Records
9700 Page Avenue
St. Louis, MO 63132-5100**

You can also request your discharge papers online at: www.archives.gov/research_room/vetrecs

To obtain discharge papers for the Merchant Marines, you should write to:

**Maritime Administration (MAR-250)
400 7th Street S.W., Room 7302
Washington, D.C. 20590**

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AVAILABLE

For information on purchasing service credit for military service, see Fact Sheet #1, *Purchasing Service Credit*. For information on the qualifications and benefits for Veteran Retirement, see Fact Sheet #4, *Applying for Retirement* (PERS and TPAF). For information on age limits for enrollment in the PFRS, see Fact Sheet #8, *Enrollment Eligibility and Age Limits* (PFRS). These fact sheets are available over the Internet at: www.state.nj.us/treasury/pensions

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This fact sheet is a summary and not intended to provide total information.
Although every attempt at accuracy is made, it cannot be guaranteed.