

DEFINITION OF MASSACHUSETTS VETERAN
MGL chapter 178 section 48 acts of 2024

To be eligible for veterans benefits, one must be a "veteran" or a dependent of a "veteran". The HERO Act recently expanded the definition of a veteran for state benefits and access to the Massachusetts State Veterans Homes.

See below for service requirements and exceptions:

- Any person who served at least 90 days (either during wartime or peace time) in the United States Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force, Coast Guard, or Space Force, as well as commissioned officers of the United States Public Health Service and National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration
- Any person who received any discharge except dishonorable.
- Any person that is considered a veteran by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs
- Any person who was awarded a service-connected disability during active duty or training, including as a reservist or member of the national guard.
- Any person who meets the above requirements and served

See below for eligibility based on service era:

ERA of Service	DATES	Requirement for Veteran Status
WWI	6-Apr-1917 11-Nov-1918	90 days of active duty service, one (1) day during “wartime” and a last discharge or release under anything other than dishonorable.
PEACETIME	12-Nov-1918 15-Sep-1940	90 days of regular active duty service and a last discharge or release under anything other than dishonorable.
WWII (Merchant Marine: 7-Dec-1941 through 31-Dec-1946)	16-Sep-1940 25-Jul-1947	90 days of active duty service, one (1) day during “wartime” and a last discharge or release under anything other than dishonorable.
PEACETIME	26-Jul-1947 24-Jun-1950	90 days of regular active duty service and a last discharge or release under anything other than dishonorable.
KOREA	25-Jun-1950 31-Jan-1955	90 days of active duty service, one (1) day during “wartime” and a last discharge or release under anything other than dishonorable.
Korean Defense Service Medal	28-Jul-1954 (to be determined later)	90 days of active duty service, last discharge under anything other than dishonorable and the Korean Defense Service Medal
VIETNAM I	1-Feb-1955 4-Aug-1964	90 days of regular active duty service and a last discharge or release under anything other than dishonorable.
VIETNAM II	5-Aug-1964 7-May-1975	90 days of active duty service, one (1) day during “wartime” and a last discharge or release under anything other than dishonorable.
PEACETIME	8-May-1975 1-Aug-1990	90 days of regular active duty service and a last discharge or release under anything other than dishonorable.
Lebanon Campaign *	25-Aug-1982 (to be determined later)	90 days of active duty service, one (1) day during “wartime” and a last discharge or release under anything other than dishonorable.
Grenada Campaign *	25-Oct-1983 15-Dec-1983	90 days of active duty service, one (1) day during “wartime” and a last discharge or release under anything other than dishonorable.
Panama Campaign *	20-Dec-1989 31-Jan-1990	90 days of active duty service, one (1) day during “wartime” and a last discharge or release under anything other than dishonorable.
PERSIAN GULF	2-Aug-1990 (to be determined later)	90 days of active duty service, one (1) day during “wartime” and a last discharge or release under anything other than dishonorable.

*Naval and Marine DD214 must indicate Expeditionary Medal. All DD214’s must specify campaign: Lebanon, Granada, or Panama.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For GUARD MEMBERS to qualify they must have 90 days and have been activated under Title 10 of the U.S. Code - OR- Members who were activated under Title 10 or Title 32 of the U.S. Code or Massachusetts General Laws, chapter 33, sections 38, 40, and 41 must have 90 days, at least one of which was during wartime, per the above chart. • For RESERVISTS to qualify, they must have been called to regular active duty, at which point their eligibility can be |
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determined by the above chart.

Training Duty Exception: Active duty service in the armed forces shall not include active duty for training in the Army or Air National Guard or active duty for training as a Reservist in the Armed Forces of the United States.

Minimum Active Service Exception (Purple Heart or Service-Connected Disability or Death)

Wartime Service

If his or her last discharge or release from wartime service was under anything other than dishonorable, then a person who served on active duty in the Armed Forces of the United States under Title 10 of the United States Code during 1 day of wartime service or a person on full time Massachusetts National Guard duty under Title 32 of the United States Code during at least 1 day of wartime service or a person on full time Massachusetts National Guard duty under [sections 38, 40](#) and [41 of chapter 33](#) of the general laws during at least 1 day of wartime service, who sustained a service-connected disability during such wartime service or was awarded the Purple Heart during such wartime service or who died during such wartime service under conditions other than dishonorable, is excused from completing the 90-day active service requirement during such wartime service.

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Peacetime

If his or her last discharge or release from active service was under anything other than dishonorable, then a person who served on active duty in the Armed Forces of the United States under Title 10 of the United States Code during peacetime, who sustained a service-connected disability while on active duty during peacetime or who died on active duty during peacetime under conditions other than dishonorable, is excused from completing the 90-day active service requirement during peacetime.