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Civil Service Preference for Veterans

Introduction

Eligible Veterans are provided an absolute Veterans Preference when applying for a New Jersey civil service position. This means that qualified New Jersey Veterans who receive a passing score are placed at the top of open competitive employment lists, ahead of Non-Veterans, regardless of their scores.

Eligible Disabled Veterans are given the highest preference, being placed above both Veterans and Non-Veterans on open competitive employment lists. Veterans Preference can be established as late as 8 days prior to an open competitive employment list being issued. For an example of how this works, please visit the [Civil Service Commission's Open Competitive Exams for Veterans page](#).

Federal Veterans preference is not the same as New Jersey State Veterans preference. Refer to NJ State Law [PL 2007, Chap 115](#).

Veterans who are eligible for civil service preference are not necessarily eligible for Veterans status (pension).

Qualifying For Veterans or Disabled Veterans Preference

Veterans Preference

To qualify for Veterans Preference, the Veteran must have received an honorable discharge from active duty that includes dates of service during a [qualifying war era](#).

Note: To be eligible, a Veteran must meet the standards as outlined in NJ State Law [PL 2007, Chap 115](#). Current Servicemembers who do not have a honorable discharge as described above are not eligible.

The following documents will be needed to prove this service occurred:

- WD Form 53-55 or DD Form 214
- Honorable Discharge Certificate

Disabled Veterans Preference

To qualify for Disabled Veterans Preference, the Veteran must have received an honorable discharge from active duty that includes dates of service during a [qualifying war era](#). In addition, the Veteran must be receiving at least a 10% disability compensation from the US Department of Veterans Affairs.

Note: To be eligible, a Veteran must meet the standards as outlined in NJ State Law [PL 2007, Chap 115](#). Current Servicemembers who do not have a honorable discharge as outlined are not eligible.

The following documents will be needed to prove this service occurred:

- [Civil Service Veterans Preference Claim Form](#)
- Additional documents as needed

Note: In accordance with NJ State law, Servicemembers without a DD214 documenting an honorable discharge are not eligible.

The surviving spouse of a Veteran who died outside of service is entitled to the same preference as the Veteran, up until they remarry.

- WD Form 53-55 or DD Form 214
- Honorable Discharge Certificate
- VA Disability Award Letter
- [Civil Service Veterans Preference Claim Form](#)
- Additional documents as needed

The spouse of a Disabled Veteran is entitled to the same preference as the Disabled Veteran, provided they are not employed in a civil service position. The Disabled Veteran must also waive all preference for the duration of their spouse's civil service employment.

The surviving spouse of a Disabled Veteran is entitled to the same preference as the Disabled Veteran, up until they remarry.

The surviving spouse of any Veteran who died in service is entitled to the Disabled Veteran Preference, up until they remarry.

The parent of any Veteran who died in service is entitled to the Disabled Veteran Preference. If there is a surviving spouse as well, only one can claim preference.



Qualifying War Era Service Dates

The amount of active duty service required to qualify for Veterans Preference varies by war era.

Regardless of war era, active duty service accrued during the following Reserve or National Guard training obligations does NOT count towards the Veterans Preference active duty requirement:

- Basic Training
- Advanced Training
- Officer Candidate School
- Weekend Drills
- Annual Training

To qualify for Veterans Preference, the following war eras require at least 90 days of active duty service, begun within the specified windows:

World War II

September 16, 1940 to December 31, 1946
(including Merchant Marine Personnel)

Korean Conflict

June 23, 1950 to January 31, 1955

Vietnam Conflict

December 31, 1960 to May 7, 1975

To qualify for Veterans Preference, the following war eras require:

- At least 14 days of active duty service begun within the specified window OR at least 1 day of active duty service begun within the specified window and received a service incurred injury or disability
- The service was in the geographic area or on a ship patrolling the territorial water of the nation (or in airspace over it, in the case of Bosnia/Herzegovina)

Lebanon Crisis

July 1, 1958 to November 1, 1958

Lebanon Peacekeeping Mission

September 26, 1982 to December 1, 1987

Grenada

October 23, 1983 to November 21, 1983

Panama

December 20, 1989 to January 31, 1990

Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm

August 2, 1990 to February 28, 1991

Operations Southern and Northern Watch

August 27, 1992 to current

Somalia

December 5, 1992 to March 31, 1994

Bosnia and Herzegovina

November 20, 1995 to December 20, 1998

Haiti

September 19, 1994 to March 31, 1995

Operation Enduring Freedom

September 11, 2001 to current

Operation Iraqi Freedom

March 19, 2003 to current



Establishing Civil Service Veterans Preference

Download and fill out a [Civil Service Veterans Preference Claim Form](#). Once completed, please follow the written instructions found on the form to mail in your claim.

If you established your Veterans Preference prior to April 1, 1980, you must reestablish your preference, as Veteran Preference numbers issued prior to this date are void.

Contact Information

Mail

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Phone

888-865-8387

Fax

[Civil Service Veterans Preference Claim Form](#)

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