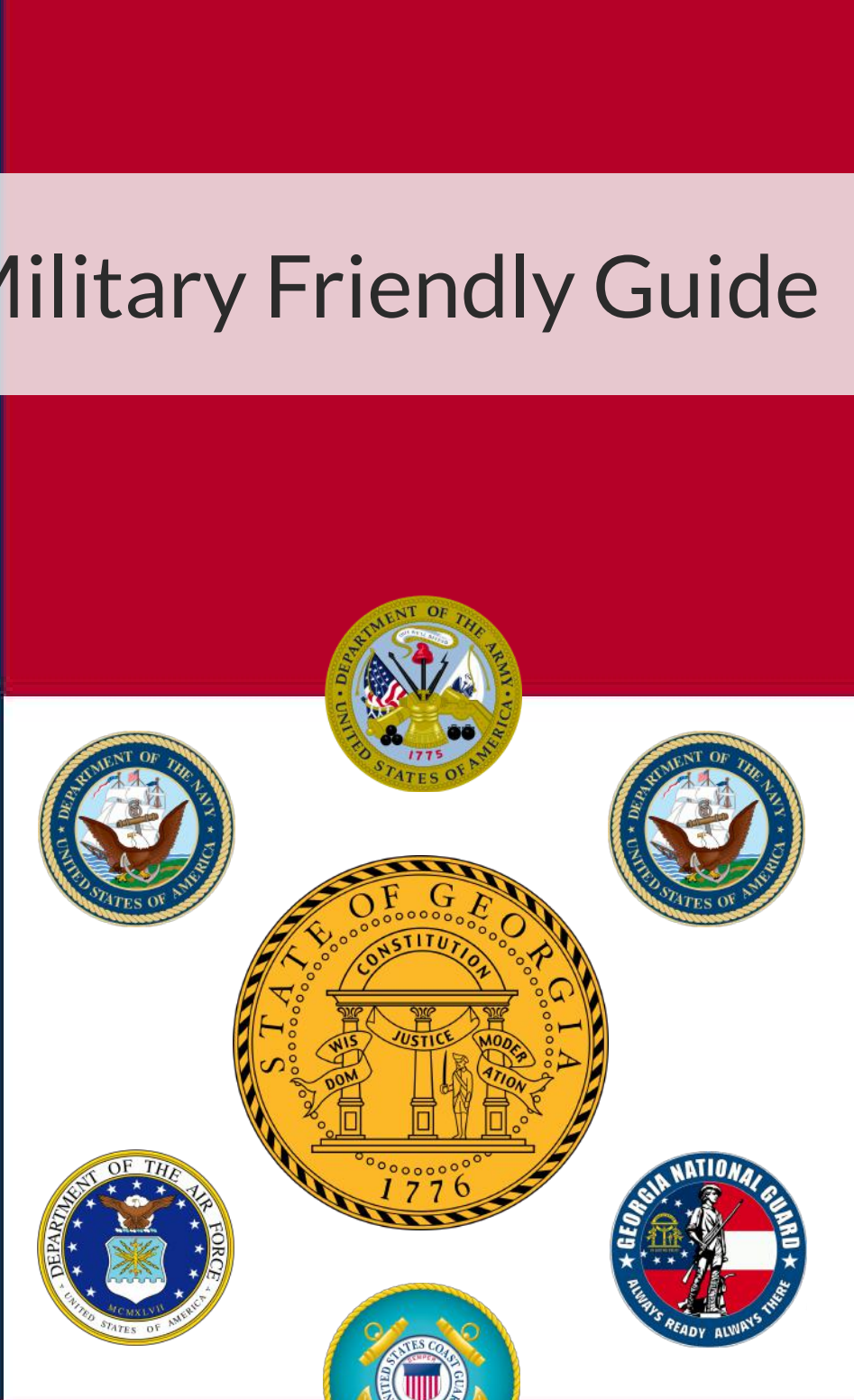
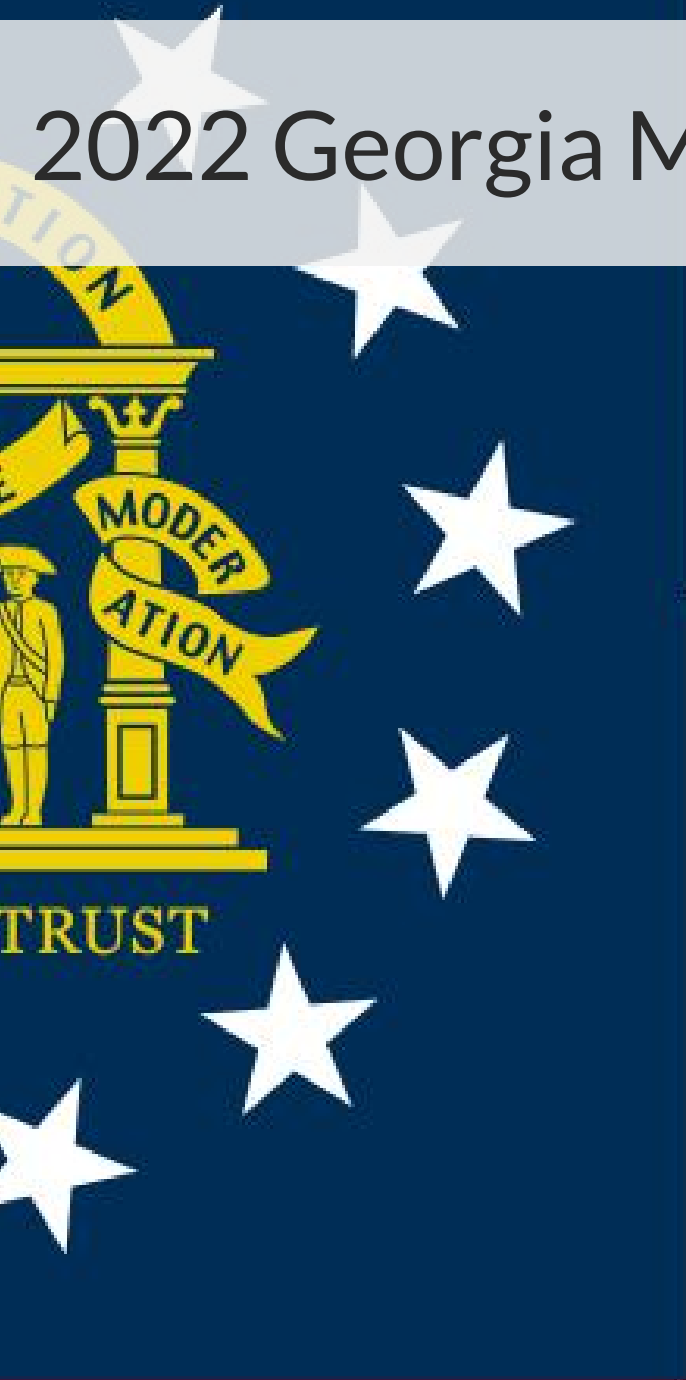


2022 Georgia Military Friendly Guide



A Summary of Georgia State Laws,
Programs, and Benefits for Military
Members and Families

2022 GEORGIA MILITARY FRIENDLY GUIDE

Table of Contents

	Page
Educational Benefits.....	3
Unemployment Compensation and Employment Protection.....	4
Tax, Retirement, and Financial Benefits.....	5
Protections.....	6
Voting.....	6
Licenses, Registrations, and Fees	7
Professional Licensure and Training.....	8
Family Support and Other Benefits.....	10

Educational Benefits



School Choice and Enrollment for Military Children

- Authorizes military-school children to attend any school with a district that includes any portion of the military base at which their parent is stationed (O.C.G.A. § [20-2-295](#))
- Allows children of service members to pre-enroll in a new school surrounding the base their parent(s) have been assigned to before establishing residency. This helps with class pre-registration, enrolling in specialized learning opportunities, and joining charter school lotteries (O.C.G.A. § [20-2-150](#); O.C.G.A. § [20-2-2066](#); O.C.G.A. § [20-2-2081](#))

Excused School Absences

- Provides excused absences for students if they are undergoing tests or physical exams for military service (O.C.G.A. § [20-2-690.1](#))
- Provides five school absences per school year for military children prior to a parent's combat deployment and during a parent's combat leave (O.C.G.A. § [20-2-692.1](#))
- Allows up to five absences per school year for students whose parents are active duty to enable them to attend events related to their parents' military services (O.C.G.A. § [20-2-692.1](#))

HOPE and Zell Miller Scholarships

- Allows students in the Georgia National Guard or military reserves to meet residency requirements for HOPE scholarships and grants (O.C.G.A. § [20-3-519.1](#))
- Extends eligibility time for the HOPE and Zell Miller Scholarships so that students' military service will not constitute a failure to be enrolled if all other requirements are met (O.C.G.A. § [20-3-519.2](#))

HERO Scholarships

- Provides the Georgia HERO Scholarship grant in the sum of \$2,000 per award year for a student whose parent was killed or received a 100 percent disability as a result of injuries (O.C.G.A. § [20-3-486](#))

Technical College System of Georgia Academic Credit

- Provides academic credit to active duty military or veteran students for college level learning acquired from military service prior to enrollment at the college (O.C.G.A. § [20-4-38](#))

Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children

- Provides for coordination among member states regarding movement of military children among schools located in those states (O.C.G.A. § [20-17-2](#))

Educational Grants to Children of Georgia National Guard

- Provides certain grants to children of members of the Georgia National Guard (O.C.G.A. § 20-3-480 through 20-3-482)

University of North Georgia Military Scholarships

- Provides certain scholarships to cadets who enroll at the University of North Georgia (O.C.G.A. § 20-3-420 through 20-3-427)
- Provides grants to certain military-bound students attending the University of North Georgia of \$1,500 per academic semester (O.C.G.A. § 20-3-441, 442)

Service Cancelable Loans

- Provides service cancelable educational loans to members of the Georgia National Guard who are enrolled at the undergraduate level in a private or public college or public postsecondary technical or vocational school located in the state (O.C.G.A. § 20-3-374)
- Allows for members of the Georgia National Guard to receive loan assistance for graduate degree programs (O.C.G.A. § 20-3-374)

Unemployment Compensation and Employment Protection



Employment Protection

- Provides protection from disqualification of employment security benefits for leaving a work position for purposes relating to military deployment (O.C.G.A. § 34-8-194)

State Employees

- Provides various protections for Georgia state employees who also serve as military members (O.C.G.A. § 38-2-279)
 - Leave of absence privileges
 - Employment rights
 - Compensation rights
 - Retirement and death rights
 - Telecommunication rights for purposes of meetings

Reemployment Rights After Military Service

- Provides protections for service members to retain their former job in the private industry after the completion of their military service (O.C.G.A. § 38-2-280)
- Provides five points of employment preferences to veterans and 10 points to disabled veterans for state jobs (O.C.G.A. § 43-1-9)

Tax, Retirement, and Financial Benefits



Property Tax Exemption for Military Spouse

- Provides a property tax exemption of \$32,500 for an un-remarried spouse of a service member killed in action (O.C.G.A. § [48-5-52.1](#))

Income Tax Exemption

- Exempts income tax from National Guard or reserve military income while in a combat zone (O.C.G.A. § [48-7-6](#))

Life Insurance Premium Tax Credit

- Provides a tax credit for qualified life insurance premiums for National Guard and Air National Guard members (O.C.G.A. § [48-7-29.9](#))

Retirement Income

- Provides state income tax exemptions for military retirement income when received by the surviving family member of a deceased veteran (O.C.G.A. § [48-7-27](#))
- Adds an income tax exemption of up to \$17,500 of military retirement income for individuals less than 62 years of age and an additional exemption of \$17,500 for individuals less than 62 years of age who have at least \$17,500 of earned income (O.C.G.A. § [48-7-27](#))

Penalty Exemption

- Provides an exemption from penalties for taxes that military members accrued while deployed in a combat zone (O.C.G.A. § [48-13-21](#))

Compensation for Volunteer Duty

- Authorizes the Department of Defense to compensate guardsmen who volunteer for active duty (O.C.G.A. § [38-2-250](#))

Retirement Benefits

- Establishes creditable service benefits for veterans for retirement and pensions (O.C.G.A. § [47-1-5, 6](#))
- Establishes Employees' Retirement System of Georgia credit for service in the National Guard (O.C.G.A. § [47-2-90](#))
- Establishes Georgia Military Pension Fund for members of the National Guard (O.C.G.A. § [47-24-40](#))

'Senator Jack Hill Veterans' Act'

- Offers taxpayers the opportunity to contribute to the Technical College System of Georgia Foundation through the Department of Revenue (O.C.G.A. § [48-7-64](#))

Protections



Protection from Arrest During Military Service

- Provides military members privilege from arrest (except for treason, felony, or breach of the peace) during their attendance at drills, parades, meetings, encampments, and while going to, during, and returning from the performance of any active duty (O.C.G.A. § [17-4-2](#))

Liability Protection

- Provides exemption from liability for actions while engaging in training or duty activities with the National Guard, does not apply to vehicular accidents (O.C.G.A. § [50-21-24](#))

Body Art Notification

- Requires body art studios to display a warning that any body art can disqualify one from military service (O.C.G.A. § [31-40-8](#))

Service Contracts

- Allows service members to terminate certain contracts if they are ordered to relocate for more than 90 days to a location that does not offer these services. Services include health spas, television, video, audio programming, and internet (O.C.G.A. § [10-4-214](#); O.C.G.A. § [13-1-16](#))

Voting



Voter Registration

- Provides certain privileges for service members, along with their spouse and dependents residing overseas to register for absentee voting while they are absent from their country (O.C.G.A. § [21-2-219](#))

Absentee Ballots

- Allows for easier dissemination of absentee ballots to Georgia military service members (O.C.G.A., [Title 21, Chapter 2, Article 10](#))

Licenses, Registrations, and Fees



Sportsman Licenses

- Provides a 20 percent discount for lifetime sportsman licenses to certain veterans and active duty military members (O.C.G.A. § [27-2-3.1](#))
- Provides a one-year-free sportsman license for returning veterans (O.C.G.A. § [27-2-4](#))
- Provides a 25 percent discount off state park fees for veterans and active duty military members (O.C.G.A. § [12-3-9.1](#))

Driver's Licenses: Motor Vehicle Ad Valorem Tax Exemptions

- Provides exemptions and special driver's license plates for disabled veterans (O.C.G.A. § [48-5-478](#))
- Provides exemptions and special driver's license plates for prisoners of war (O.C.G.A. § [48-5-478.1](#))
- Provides exemptions and special driver's license plates for Purple Heart and Medal of Honor recipients (O.C.G.A. § [48-5-478.2](#), [478.3](#))
- Provides exemptions for veterans' organizations (O.C.G.A. § [48-5-478.4](#))
- Provides exemptions for Georgia National Guard members (O.C.G.A. § [40-5-36](#))

Special Driver's Licenses

- Allows for issuance of veterans' licenses to Georgia residents who are military veterans of a country that is an ally of the United States (O.C.G.A. § [40-5-36](#))
- Allows Georgians under the age of 18 who have enlisted in the military to immediately receive a driver's license without having to wait a year (O.C.G.A. § [40-5-24](#))

License Plates

- Provides a Gold Star special license plate for the family of services members killed in action (O.C.G.A. § [40-2-85.3](#))
- Adds the Meritorious Service Medal to the list of medals available for special license plates (O.C.G.A. § [40-2-85.1](#))
- Adds a special license plate for Army Rangers (O.C.G.A. § [40-2-85.4](#))
- Provides a special license plate for Georgia residents who are military veterans of a country that is an ally of the United States (O.C.G.A. § [40-2-85.1](#))

Weapons Carry Renewal

- Provides up to a six-month grace period for the renewal of a weapons carry license for service members if the license expires while on active duty (O.C.G.A. § [16-11-129](#))

Identification Card Confirmation

- Allows notaries to accept a valid Veterans Health Identification Card issued by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs as confirmation of identity (O.C.G.A. § [45-17-8](#))

Professional Licensure and Training



Professional Licensure for Military Spouses

- Military spouses who have a professional license from another state qualify for most temporary certificates, certificates by endorsement, or expedited certificates upon moving to Georgia with their service member or transitioning service member spouse (O.C.G.A. § [20-2-200.2](#))
- Provides a temporary professional license for spouses of military service members who have a professional license from another state (O.C.G.A. § [43-1-35](#))
- Allows transitioning service members and military spouses to receive an expedited license to practice certain professions in Georgia (O.C.G.A. § [43-1-34](#), [35](#))
- Requires professional licensing boards under the purview of the Georgia Office of Secretary of State to provide expedited licenses by endorsement and receipt of all required materials within 90 days from the application date to spouses of military service members within Georgia (O.C.G.A. § [43-1-35](#))

Professional Licensure and Training continued



Credits for Licensing Examinations and Trainings

- Provides point credits for veterans taking examinations given by professional licensing boards (O.C.G.A. § [43-1-9](#))
- Provides points for purposes of a minimum grade on each of the parts or subjects of such an examination (O.C.G.A. § [43-1-10](#))
- Provides that any licensing examination that a veteran takes be first graded without reference to veteran credit (O.C.G.A. § [43-1-11](#))
- Authorizes the Georgia Public Safety Training Center to use funds to reimburse or provide for certain costs incurred in training active duty, retired, or honorably discharged members of the United States Armed Forces who attend basic law enforcement training to the extent that funds are appropriated by the General Assembly (O.C.G.A. § [35-5-5](#))

Expired Licenses

- Provides for a service member whose license to practice a profession expired while serving on active duty outside the state to practice said profession for a period of six months (O.C.G.A. § [43-1-31](#))
- Provides for a service member whose accounting license to practice said profession expired while serving on active duty outside the state to practice said profession for a period of six months (O.C.G.A. § [43-3-33](#))

Cosmetology Licenses

- Provides a temporary professional cosmetology license for service member or their spouses, who have a professional license from another state (O.C.G.A. § [43-10-8](#))

Contractor Licenses

- Provides a temporary professional contractor [electrical contractor, plumber, conditioned air contractor, or utility contractor] a license for military service members who have obtained a military specialty or certification of training or experience that substantially meets or exceeds the requirements to have a professional license (O.C.G.A. § [43-14-15](#))
- Provides a temporary professional license for military service members who have a professional residential light commercial contractor license and who have obtained a military specialty or certification of training or experience that substantially meets or exceeds the requirements to have a professional license (O.C.G.A. § [43-41-18](#))

Private Immigration Services Licenses

- Provides a temporary professional license for spouses of military service members who have a professional private immigration assistance services license from another state (O.C.G.A. § 43-20A-12)

Military Firefighter Training

- Allows military firefighter training to be accepted as a substitute for basic firefighter courses by the Georgia Firefighters Standards and Training Council (O.C.G.A. § 25-4-9)

Attorney Practice

- Permits clerks of superior courts, who would otherwise be prohibited from practicing law in his/her name, to serve as a judge advocate or any other role in an active duty or reserve component of the armed forces (O.C.G.A. § 15-6-52)

Family Support and Other Benefits



Medical Assistance

- Provides certain protections and access to Medicaid for certain military dependents who are absent from the state due to the member's military service to be added to a database to indicate the need for medical assistance upon return to this state (O.C.G.A. § 49-4-158)

Rental Agreements & Liability

- Allows military service members to terminate residential rental agreements in a variety of circumstances (O.C.G.A. § 44-7-22)
- Limits liability of military service member for residential rent when they receive permanent change of station orders or temporary duty orders (O.C.G.A. § 44-7-37)

Child Custody During Deployment

- Provides procedures for child custody in the event of military deployment of a parent (O.C.G.A. § 19-9-3)

Protecting Military Children Act

- Requires child welfare agencies to notify military installation family advocacy programs in cases of child abuse or neglect allegations involving an active duty parent or guardian (O.C.G.A. § 19-7-5)

Honor Guard

- Authorizes use of Georgia National Guard as honor guard for veterans' funerals (O.C.G.A. § 38-2-12)

Family Support and Other Benefits continued



War Veterans' Definition

- Expands the definition of “war veteran” to extend eligibility for time of service as it relates to the Georgia State War Veterans’ Home (O.C.G.A. § [38-4-50](#))

Women’s Veterans’ Offices

- Creates a Women’s Veterans’ Office under the Department of Veterans Services to improve awareness of eligibility and assess the needs of women veterans (O.C.G.A. § [38-4-13](#))

Provider Compact

- Allows all physicians, psychologists, physical therapists, audiologists and speech pathologists, occupational therapists, and counselors to practice telemedicine and temporarily practice in-person across state lines under certain circumstances. This gives transitioning service members more flexibility in accessing services and allows spouses that are qualifying practitioners to work in Georgia (O.C.G.A. § [43-10A-51](#); O.C.G.A. § [43-28-21](#); O.C.G.A. § [43-39-6](#) through [43-39-8](#); O.C.G.A. § [43-39-22](#); O.C.G.A. § [43-44-31](#))
- Reduces barriers for social workers, counselors, and marriage and family therapists in order to increase access to mental health professionals for service members, veterans, and their families (O.C.G.A. § [43-10A-3](#) through [43-10A-5](#); O.C.G.A. § [43-10A-7](#), [8](#); O.C.G.A. § [43-10A-11](#); O.C.G.A. § [43-10A-16](#), [17](#); O.C.G.A. § [43-10A-20](#) through [43-10A-22](#); O.C.G.A. § [43-10A-51](#))

Augusta-Richmond Cemetery

- Creates the Augusta-Richmond state cemetery for veterans. [no code]