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Veterans, Gold Star Families get free lifetime pass to national parks, wildlife refuges, other public lands

New pass provides free lifetime access and waived recreation fees for Veterans



On Veterans Day 2022, the National Park Service will unveil a lifetime pass providing free entrance to [national parks](#) for Veterans and their families. The Interagency Military Lifetime Pass waives entrance fees for the National Park Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and standard amenity recreation fees for the Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Reclamation, U.S. Forest Service and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers sites for current military service members and their dependents, Veterans and Gold Star Families.

Veterans and their families have free access to approximately 2,000 public locations spread out across more than 400 million acres of public lands, which host activities to fit any lifestyle—from serene to high octane, including hiking, fishing, paddling, biking, hunting, stargazing, camping, and much more.

The Military Pass has been expanded to include a pass that does not expire for Veterans and Gold Star Family members. The National Defense Authorization Act of 2022 authorized a free lifetime pass to national parks and other federal recreational lands for eligible Veterans and Gold Star Families. In recent years, they were able to receive annual passes.

Are you eligible?

For purposes of this program, a Veteran is identified as an individual who has served in the United States Armed Forces, including the National Guard and Reserve, and is able to present one of the following forms of valid (unexpired) identification:

- Department of Defense Identification Card
- [Veteran Health Identification Card \(VHIC\)](#)
- [Veteran ID Card](#)
- Veterans designation on a state-issued U.S. driver's license or identification card

Gold Star Families are next of kin of a member of the United States Armed Forces who lost his or her life in a "qualifying situation," such as a war, an international terrorist attack, or a military operation outside of the United States while serving with the United States Armed Forces.

The America the Beautiful - the National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Pass (Interagency Pass) Program

The Interagency Pass Program includes a free annual pass for active-duty members of the U.S. Military and their dependents. Current Military service members must show a valid (unexpired) Department of Defense ID. Dependents of current service members must show a valid (unexpired) DD Form 1173 AD or DEC.

Other free or discounted passes, including some lifetime passes, are available for persons with permanent disabilities, fourth grade students, volunteers and senior citizens age 62 years or older.

How to get your Interagency Pass

Interagency Passes can be obtained in person while visiting a participating site. Visit [Places to Get Interagency Passes](#) for a searchable list and be sure to contact the site before you go, to make sure they are open and have passes in stock. In addition, Military passes, as well as those for seniors and persons with permanent disabilities, are available online through the [USGS Online Store](#) with an additional processing fee. Existing passes remain valid. You do not need to obtain a new pass if you already have a Lifetime Senior or Access Pass.

► For more information about eligibility and passes, visit [Free Entrance to National Parks for Veterans and Gold Star Families \(U.S. National Park Service\) \(nps.gov\)](#).

The participating agencies also offer several fee-free days for everyone throughout the year to mark days of celebration and commemoration. Examples of fee-free days include the birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr., National Public Lands Day, Veterans Day and the signing of the Great American Outdoors Act.

Fee-free days and fee policies vary among the agencies, so it's best to check the agency website or contact the site you plan to visit in advance of your trip.

[APPLY FOR A VETERAN ID CARD](#)

[APPLY FOR A VETERAN HEALTH IDENTIFICATION CARD \(VHIC\)](#)

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