



The Ultimate NYC Guide for Veterans Transitioning to College

NYC CONSORTIUM FOR VETERAN & MILITARY-CONNECTED STUDENTS

Transitioning from military to civilian and academic life?

This guide serves as your key to unlocking the numerous opportunities and support systems available to aid you in this significant journey.

Within the New York City metropolitan area (NYC), you'll find a wealth of resources tailored specifically to Veterans like you. From housing options and career guidance to healthcare services, benefits assistance, and community networks, this guide provides quick access to the areas where you may need assistance.

Explore the Veteran-specific programs, organizations, and initiatives that exist to empower you. Let this guide be your trusted companion, providing essential information and connecting you with the resources and opportunities that will pave the way for your success.

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This expanded edition was developed through the NYC Consortium for Veteran & Military-Connected Student Support, which has broadened the guide's resources and extended its reach to military-connected students across New York City.

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Housing

Finding suitable housing is a crucial aspect of your transition from military to civilian life. The NYC area offers a variety of housing resources tailored to support Veterans like you. It is important to know that landlords in NYC must recognize your [BAH as a "lawful source of income."](#) Discrimination against Veterans using BAH to afford rent is illegal. Explore the following resources to assist you in securing housing as you embark on this new chapter.

Housing (continued)

Here's where you can find affordable housing and rental properties:

- [NYC Housing Connect](#): This valuable platform provides listings and lotteries for affordable rentals and homeownership opportunities.
- [Apartments.com](#): Consider using this popular apartment search website, which provides comprehensive listings and search filters to simplify your apartment search process.

Here are helpful organizations that can help if you are facing homelessness:

- [Volunteers of America's Supportive Services for Veterans and Families \(SSVF\)](#): Through the following partner programs, SSVF works with veterans and their families to obtain VA and other public benefits, including housing assistance:
 - [HELP USA](#)
 - [Jericho Project](#)
 - [Services for the Underserved \(SUS\)](#)
- [HUD-VASH](#): This collaborative program between HUD and VA combines HUD housing vouchers with VA supportive services to help homeless Veterans and their families find and sustain permanent housing.
- [New York City One Shot Deal](#): Provides one-time assistance for unexpected expenses.
- [New York City Department of Veterans' Services](#): NYC DVS connects veterans to housing resources that fit their needs. Explore the Veteran Housing Ladder for guidance at every stage, plus tools for utility assistance, donation centers, and eviction prevention information.

The following directories provide additional comprehensive information and resources to help you meet your housing needs:

- [Community Service Society New York City Housing Resources](#)
- [New York City Affordable Housing Services \(AHS\)](#)
- [NYC City Limits NYC Toolkit](#)

Veterans ready to purchase a home have several trusted resources to guide the process.

- The [U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs VA Home Loan Information](#) page outlines eligibility, benefits, and steps to use your earned home loan benefit.
- [Veterans United Home Loans](#) offers education and personalized support throughout the homebuying journey.
- [Veterans Homebuyers Network](#) connects Veterans with tools and professionals to help them successfully navigate the path to homeownership.

These resources are designed to assist you in navigating the housing market and finding housing options that align with your needs. Remember to explore additional local resources to enhance your housing search and support you during your transition.

Career & Employment

Securing meaningful employment is a pivotal aspect of your transition from military to civilian life. The following resources are dedicated to assisting Veterans like yourself in navigating the job market and preparing for successful careers:

- [Bob Woodruff Foundation Your Job Path](#): Veterans and military spouses seeking their next professional step are encouraged to visit this hiring portal to explore job opportunities tailored to their skills and experience.
- [FourBlock](#): Their career readiness program is designed to equip Veterans with the knowledge and skills necessary for a successful transition to professional careers. Benefit from comprehensive career development workshops, mentorship opportunities, and networking events to enhance your career readiness.
- [American Corporate Partners](#): Through their mentoring program, you will gain access to a network of professional mentors who provide guidance and support as you prepare for and transition into the workforce. This program offers valuable insights and connections to prepare you to navigate the job market with confidence.
- [Viscardi Center](#): The center offers a range of employment services and programs tailored specifically to individuals with disabilities, including Veterans. Explore their resources, career counseling, and job placement assistance to help you find meaningful employment.
- [America Works](#): Their comprehensive services include job placement, vocational training, and ongoing support to help you achieve your career goals.
- [Hiring Our Heroes](#): Connects service members, veterans, and military spouses with opportunities at American businesses, as well as a digital tool to develop your resume.
- [Helmets to Hardhats](#): Connects transitioning service members, veterans, and National Guard and Reserve personnel with skilled training and quality career opportunities in the construction industry.
- [OPLIGN Small Business Veteran America](#): SBVA connects small business owners with qualified veterans, increasing visibility of local job opportunities and driving economic growth through meaningful employment.
- [Onward Ops](#): The program connects new Veterans with trained sponsors from their destination community, focusing on the first 12 months after leaving the military and transitioning to civilian life.
- [50Strong](#): Partners with employers and education organizations to create scalable career pathways for military talent through virtual events, job boards, and mentorship programs.
- Contact your college or university career service office for help with your resume and job search!

These employment resources are designed to support you throughout your career transition journey. Take advantage of these programs, platforms, and organizations to enhance your job search, develop essential skills, and establish a strong foundation for a successful professional career.

Well-Being

Your health and well-being are of utmost importance during your transition from military to civilian life. The following resources are dedicated to providing comprehensive medical, dental, and mental health support for Veterans like yourself:

- [James J. Peters Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center](#) and [New York Harbor Healthcare System](#): These VA facilities provide primary and specialty care to Veterans in the NYC metropolitan area. To determine your eligibility and access services, contact James J. Peters VA at (718) 584-9000 ext. 5353 or New York Harbor Healthcare System at (718) 836-6600 ext. 21807.
- [Vet Centers](#): Vet Centers provide confidential counseling and support to eligible Veterans, service members, and their families, including assistance with military-to-civilian transition, trauma, and other challenges. Connect with your [local Vet Center](#) to learn more about the support and services available to you.
- [Veterans Crisis Line](#): Available 24/7, the Veterans Crisis Line offers free and confidential support. Simply dial 988 and press 1 to connect with trained professionals who can assist you during times of crisis.
- [NY Presbyterian Military Family Wellness Center](#): This center specializes in providing care and support for military families and Veterans. Call (212) 821-0783 to make an appointment.
- Veterans rated 100% permanent and total for service-connected disabilities qualify for free comprehensive [VA dental care](#) (Class IV) and [annual eye exams](#). Placed in Priority Group 1, they receive no-cost care—including glasses and hearing aids—through VA medical centers.

Whether you require primary care, specialized treatments, mental health support, or dental services, these organizations are here to help you maintain your well-being throughout your transition and beyond.

Education

As you transition from military to civilian life, education and training benefits can open doors to a wide range of career paths. Start by checking your [federal](#) and [New York State](#) VA education benefit rates to understand what you're eligible for. The resources below highlight VA and state education benefits, along with academic support and other resources to help you navigate your educational journey and set yourself up for success.

Federal Benefits

Post-9/11 GI Bill® (Ch. 33)	• Covers tuition and fees up to the annual cap • Monthly Housing Allowance (MHA) • Yellow Ribbon Program: Many schools participate; • VA and school split additional tuition costs not covered by the cap
Veteran Readiness & Employment (Ch. 31)	• For Veterans with service-connected disabilities • Covers tuition, fees, and provides career and employment support
Montgomery GI Bill® Active Duty (Ch. 30)	• For veterans who served on active duty (generally at least 2–3 years). • Provides a monthly education benefit for up to 36 months of training. • Can be used for college, vocational/technical training, flight training, apprenticeships, etc. • Benefits typically must be used within 10 years of leaving active duty.
Montgomery GI Bill Selected Reserve (Ch. 1606)	• For members of the Selected Reserve (Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard Reserves, Army National Guard, Air National Guard). • Eligibility generally ends when you leave the Selected Reserve. • Can also be used for college, technical/vocational training, flight training, apprenticeships, and some certificate programs.
Survivors' & Dependents' Educational Assistance (Ch. 35)	• Spouses and children of Veterans or service members who died, are captured or missing, or are permanently and totally disabled due to a service-connected disability may qualify for the Survivors' and Dependents' Educational Assistance (DEA) program, also called Chapter 35, which can help cover the cost of school or job training.

Education (continued)

<u>Active Duty Tuition Assistance (TA)</u>	• Active Duty Tuition Assistance (TA) is a Department of Defense program that helps eligible service members fund voluntary, off-duty education. It covers tuition and select course fees for approved degree or certificate programs at institutions meeting DoD requirements.
<u>Yellow Ribbon Program</u>	• Veterans who qualify for the Post 9/11 GI Bill® at the 100% benefit level may also be eligible for the Yellow Ribbon Program. This program provides additional financial support for schools with tuition and fees that exceed the coverage offered by the Post 9/11 GI Bill®.
<u>Edith Nourse Rogers Science Technology Engineering Math (STEM) Scholarship</u>	• This scholarship offers additional benefits to eligible Veterans utilizing the Post-9/11 GI Bill® or dependents using the Fry Scholarship. It provides up to 9 months (or the stated cap) of training benefits specifically tailored for high-demand fields.
<u>Rudisill Supreme Court Decision on Veterans' Education Benefits</u>	• The U.S. Supreme Court ruled that Veterans who qualify for both the Montgomery GI Bill® (MGIB) and the Post-9/11 GI Bill® (PGIB) may use benefits from either program for up to 48 months total, potentially allowing additional education benefits for those with separate qualifying service periods.
<u>Selected Reserve Montgomery GI Bill® Kicker Program</u>	• The Kicker is an additional payment paired with the basic Montgomery GI Bill® and is available only to those eligible for MGIB-AD (Chapter 30) or MGIB-SR (Chapter 1606) programs.

New York State Military/Veteran Education Benefits

New York State Veterans Tuition Award	• Award covers tuition up to the cost of undergraduate tuition at a state-operated SUNY. • Open to undergraduate, graduate, and approved vocational training students in NYS • Full-time or part-time study eligible • Must be a NYS legal resident for 12 continuous months before the term
Military Residency Waiver	• Residency requirements are waived for service members on full-time active duty in NYS, and for their spouses and dependents.
Military Enhanced Recognition Incentive and Tribute (MERIT) Scholarship	• The MERIT Scholarship offers financial assistance to children, spouses, and other financial dependents of members of the United States Armed Forces or state-organized militias who, while New York State residents, died or suffered a severe and permanent disability in the line of duty, whether in combat or otherwise.
Regents Awards for Children of Deceased & Disabled Veterans	• Provides annual education funding for students whose parent served during designated wartime or emergency periods and, as a result, died, is 40%+ VA service-connected disabled, MIA, or a POW. The Veteran must be a NYS resident at present or at the time of death.
New York State Veterans Tuition Award	• Award covers tuition up to the cost of undergraduate tuition at a state-operated SUNY. • Open to undergraduate, graduate, and approved vocational training students in NYS • Full-time or part-time study eligible • Must be a NYS legal resident for 12 continuous months before the term

New York Division of Military & Naval Affairs Education Benefits

<u>Credentialing Assistance</u>	• Funds courses and exams for industry-recognized credentials in fields like IT, logistics, management, medical, and trade skills. May not cover tuition costs beyond the cap.
<u>Federal Tuition Assistance Program</u>	• The National Guard supports your civilian education goals and can help cover the cost of tuition. Federal Tuition Assistance (FTA) — as opposed to State Tuition Assistance (RIRP) — is available through <u>ArmyIgnitED</u>.
<u>Recruitment Incentive & Retention Program (RIRP)</u>	• RIRP is a New York State program designed to recruit and retain members for the State Military Forces (Army and Air National Guard, and Naval Militia). This competitive program will pay the cost of tuition up to SUNY tuition rates per semester.

These VA education benefits are designed to assist you in achieving your educational and career goals. Whether you're pursuing a degree, vocational training, or other educational opportunities, these programs can provide crucial financial support and resources. Take advantage of these resources and explore additional VA programs that may be available to further support your educational journey.

Education Support

Accessing academic support as you transition to college can help you build confidence, strengthen your skills, and establish a strong foundation for success.

- [Warrior-Scholar Project \(WSP\)](#) partners with colleges and universities nationwide to offer intensive, immersive, one-week academic boot camps for enlisted veterans and transitioning service members. Programs focus on College Readiness, STEM, and Business. The resources below highlight VA and state education benefits, along with academic support and other resources to help you navigate your educational journey and set yourself up for success.
- Make use of campus academic resources. Once enrolled, familiarize yourself with the academic support services available at your institution. Take advantage of tutoring, writing centers, study skills workshops, and other resources to strengthen your academic skills and navigate the transition to college-level coursework. Seeking support early can help you address challenges before they become obstacles to your success.

The following colleges and universities are members of the **NYC Consortium for Veteran and Military-Connected Students** and proudly work to support Veterans in their transition to academic life.

SCHOOL OR ORGANIZATION	DEGREES OFFERED
Columbia University	Bachelor's, Master's, Doctoral
CUNY, Bronx Community College	Associate's
CUNY, LaGuardia Community College	Associate's

SCHOOL OR ORGANIZATION	DEGREES OFFERED
CUNY Office of Veterans Affairs (COVA)	Associate's, Bachelor's, Master's, Doctoral
Fordham University	Bachelor's, Master's, Doctoral
Lehman College	Bachelor's, Master's, Doctoral
New School	Bachelor's, Master's, Doctoral
New York University	Bachelor's, Master's, Doctoral
Project for Return & Opportunity in Veterans Education (PROVE)	N/A
St. John's University	Bachelor's, Master's, Doctoral
SUNY Westchester Community College	Associate's

SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABILITY RESOURCES

If you're a Veteran facing disability challenges, numerous resources are available to provide assistance and support. The following organizations and programs are dedicated to helping Veterans apply for and access disability benefits and services:

- [New York State Department of Veterans' Services](#): This department offers support in filing a claim for disability compensation. Book an appointment by calling (888) 838-7697 or [clicking here](#). They can guide you through the process and ensure you receive the benefits you're entitled to.
- [DAV \(Disabled American Veterans\)](#): DAV provides a range of services and support for disabled Veterans. They assist with benefits claims, transportation to medical appointments, employment resources, and more.
- [Veteran Benefits Administration](#): The VBA is responsible for administering disability compensation programs. They provide comprehensive information and resources related to disability benefits.
- [Wounded Warrior Project](#): WWP offers a wide range of programs and services to support Veterans with disabilities. They provide assistance with benefits claims, mental health support, physical rehabilitation, and more.

These resources can help connect you with disability services:

- [NYC Office of Disability Services](#): The NYC Office of Disability Services provides support and resources for disabled individuals, including Veterans. Explore their website to access information on disability rights, benefits, and services available in the NYC area.
- [Institute for Career Development](#): ICD offers vocational training and job placement assistance for individuals with disabilities, including Veterans. They provide customized programs to help you develop new skills and achieve your career goals.

These resources are committed to supporting Veterans with disabilities, ensuring you have access to the benefits, services, and opportunities you deserve. Reach out to these organizations to explore the support they offer and find the resources that best suit your needs.

STAYING SOCIALLY CONNECTED

Transitioning from military service to civilian life can be a challenging process, and maintaining social connections is crucial for a successful transition. Staying socially connected can provide a sense of belonging, support, and community, which are vital for overall well-being. Here are some reasons why staying socially connected is important:

1. [Sense of Belonging](#): Building connections with fellow Veterans and community members can help create a sense of belonging and camaraderie. By engaging in social activities, you can find others who share similar experiences and understand the challenges you may face during the transition.
2. [Emotional Support](#): Social connections provide a valuable support system, allowing you to share your thoughts, concerns, and experiences with others who can provide empathy and guidance. Having a strong support network can help reduce feelings of isolation, anxiety, and depression.
3. [Networking Opportunities](#): Building a diverse network of contacts can open doors to various opportunities, including employment prospects, educational resources, and mentorship programs. By staying socially connected, you can tap into the knowledge, skills, and experiences of others who may assist you in your post-military endeavors.

To help you stay socially connected, here are some valuable resources and organizations:

- [OURVETERANS.NYC](#): This platform serves as a public listing of events and information specifically intended for Veterans and their family members in the NYC Metro area. It offers a comprehensive directory of resources, support groups, and social events tailored to the needs of Veterans.
- [Student Veterans of America \(SVA\)](#): Connect with your school's chapter of SVA, a national organization dedicated to supporting student Veterans during their transition to higher education. SVA provides a sense of community, resources, and advocacy for student Veterans across the country.
- Local [Veterans of Foreign Wars \(VFW\)](#) and [American Legion](#): Reach out to your local chapters of the VFW and the American Legion. These organizations offer social opportunities, community service projects, and advocacy for Veterans.
- [Exit 12 Dance Company](#): This contemporary dance group, composed of Veterans and military family members, uses dance as a tool for storytelling, healing, and creating connections within the community.
- [VetTix](#): From sporting events and concerts to educational and family activities, Vet Tix offers access to sporting events, concerts, performing arts, educational, and family activities with an online sign-up process, verification of service, and a small delivery fee.
- [Theater Development Fund](#): The Theater Development Fund offers discounted tickets to Veterans groups.
- [Endeavor Veteran Program](#) offers weekly equine-assisted sessions for Veterans and Active Duty Military Personnel.

OTHER RESOURCES

During your transition from military service to civilian life, there are additional resources available to assist you in accessing benefits and addressing any concerns related to your military service. Here are some frequent topics that can provide guidance and support:

Obtaining Military Service and Medical Records

It is essential to have a copy of your final military service and medical records, as they are crucial for accessing benefits and services. A copy of your military service records can be requested from the [National Archives](#).

Filing for a Discharge Upgrade

If you believe that your discharge characterization from the military does not accurately reflect your service or circumstances, you have the option to pursue a discharge upgrade. A discharge upgrade can impact your eligibility for certain benefits and opportunities. There are resources available to assist you through this process. Consider the following options:

- Contact your local Veterans Service Organization (VSO): VSOs have trained personnel who can guide you through the discharge upgrade process, provide support, and help gather necessary documentation.
- Seek legal assistance: Consider consulting with a lawyer who specializes in military law or Veterans' issues. They can provide legal advice, review your case, and help you navigate the discharge upgrade process.
- [Veteran Advocacy Project](#) offers free legal services through their Discharge Upgrade Clinic.
- [New York Legal Assistance Group](#) offers free legal services and financial counseling for veterans.

Please note that the discharge upgrade process may vary depending on your specific circumstances and the branch of the military in which you served. It is recommended to consult with a knowledgeable professional or organization to ensure you have the most accurate and up-to-date information for your situation.

Veteran Service Officer

VSOs are trained professionals who assist Veterans and their families in navigating the process of accessing and securing benefits and services provided by the VA. They play a crucial role in helping Veterans understand and apply for healthcare, disability compensation, education benefits, and other support programs. VSOs provide personalized guidance, advocacy, and support, ensuring that Veterans receive the benefits they deserve and easing the burden of navigating the VA system. VSOs are often affiliated with a government or private organization. Look up your closest VSOs at any of the following: [New York State Department of Veterans' Services](#), [American Legion](#), [Veterans of Foreign Wars](#), [Amvets](#), [Vietnam Veterans of America](#), [Disabled American Veterans](#), and [Paralyzed Veterans of America](#).

Remember, these resources are meant to provide guidance and support during your transition, and they can help you navigate the complexities of assessing benefits and addressing discharge-related concerns. Utilize them as valuable tools to ensure you receive the support and recognition you deserve for your military service.