

VFW Eligibility Information

The fundamental difference between our organization and other veterans' organizations, and one in which we take great pride, is our eligibility qualifications. There are three primary requisites for membership in the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States: (1) Citizenship (2) Honorable service in the armed forces of the United States (3) Service entitling the applicant to the award of a recognized campaign medal or as set forth in the Congressional Charter and By-Laws and Manual of Procedure and Ritual.

Sec. 103--ELECTION, NOTIFICATION, OBLIGATION: After the applicant has filled out the application card, giving in detail the pertinent information required, it should be handed to the Post Adjutant or Quartermaster along with the admission fee and dues. The fee and dues are held by the Post Quartermaster and credited to the applicant until such time as the Post shall vote on the application. A temporary receipt shall be issued to the applicant.

The application will be referred to a Post Reviewing Committee of three members. The committee shall make a careful review of the facts set forth on the application card and other bona fide evidence of eligibility. Such bona fide evidence shall be any form or document attesting to honorable and overseas service, and the appropriate campaign ribbon, if applicable. With respect to applications of National Members-at-Large or Department Members-at-Large, the Adjutant General or the Department Adjutant shall make a careful review of the facts set forth on the application card and other bona fide evidence of eligibility. Such bona fide evidence shall be any form or document attesting to honorable and overseas service, and the appropriate campaign ribbon, if applicable. After such review, the Reviewing Committee shall recommend the applicant's election or rejection.

The Post Reviewing Committee shall not recommend acceptance of an application unless eligibility has been fully determined. The Post is accountable for the eligibility of every member accepted into membership. With respect to National Members-at-Large, the National Headquarters is accountable for the eligibility of every member accepted into membership. With respect to Department Members-at-Large, the Department Headquarters is accountable for the eligibility of every member accepted into membership. The importance of pride of membership and pride in our eligibility requirements should be impressed on every member and every Reviewing Committee member.

The original application of every member shall remain permanently on file in the records of the Post. The original application of every Department Member-at-Large shall remain permanently on file in the records of the Department. The original application of every National Member-at-Large shall remain permanently on file in the records of the National Headquarters.

CHECKING ELIGIBILITY: A careful check of eligibility at the time a person joins will save a great deal of trouble and embarrassment later. A veteran who is not accepted for membership because of ineligibility at the time of application is only disappointed. A member who is removed for ineligibility after having paid dues for several years is justifiably angry.

Assuming that a person is a United States citizen and has an honorable discharge from the U.S. armed forces, it only remains to be proven that the person has earned a recognized campaign medal or badge; served in Korea between June 30, 1949 until present; or earned Hostile Fire or Imminent Danger Pay eligibility.

Discharges issued during and immediately after World War II have a section on the back listing the medals and decorations which have been earned. Persons discharged later received a DD-214, "Report of Separation" form, which lists the medals and decorations on the front. Lost separation documents can be replaced by completing and submitting GSA Standard Form 180, "Request Pertaining to Military Records."

There is always a possibility of an omission on the separation documents. If an applicant claims entitlement to a medal which is not shown on the individual's separation papers, that person may request verification and correction of records by submitting a GSA Standard Form 180.

The GSA Standard Form 180 is available from any office of the Veterans' Administration or state Veterans' Departments. The form must be completed and signed by the veteran in order to receive the information requested or authorize the release of the information to the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

ELIGIBILITY REGULATIONS: The following is to be used as a guide in determining eligibility for membership. The following campaign medals and the periods issued have been authorized by the United States of America, and the holder of any such medal or medals is recognized as possessing the campaign medal requisite of eligibility.

VFW ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

Campaign Medals	Military Service	Qualifying Dates	Campaign Medals	Military Service	Qualifying Dates
<u>Expeditionary</u>	Navy/Marine Corps	Feb. 12, 1874 - Open	Germany (<i>West Berlin</i>)		May 9, 1945 - Oct. 2, 1990
<u>Spanish Campaign</u>	Army Navy	May 11, 1898 - Aug. 16, 1898 Apr. 20, 1898 - Dec. 10, 1898	Korea		Sep. 3, 1945 - Jun. 29, 1949
<u>Army of Cuba Occupation</u>	Army	Jul. 18, 1898 - May 20, 1902	Japan		Sep. 3, 1945 - Apr. 27, 1952
<u>Army of Puerto Rico Occupation</u>	Army	Aug. 14, 1898 - Dec. 10, 1898	<u>Navy Occupation Service Medal</u>		
<u>Philippine Campaign</u>	Army Navy	Feb. 4, 1899 - Dec. 31, 1913 Feb. 4, 1899 - Sep. 15, 1906	Italy		May 8, 1945 - Dec. 15, 1947
<u>China Relief Expedition</u>	Army Navy	Jun. 20, 1900 - May 27, 1901 Apr. 5, 1900 - May 27, 1901	Trieste		May 8, 1945 - Oct. 26, 1954
<u>Cuban Pacification</u>	Army Navy	Oct. 6, 1906 - Apr. 1, 1909 Sep. 12, 1906 - Apr. 1, 1909	Germany (<i>except West Berlin</i>)		May 8, 1945 - May 5, 1955
<u>Mexican Service</u>	Army Navy	Apr. 12, 1911 - Jun. 16, 1919 Apr. 12, 1914 - Feb. 7, 1917	Austria		May 8, 1945 - Oct. 25, 1955
<u>First Nicaraguan Campaign</u>	Navy	Jul. 29, 1912 - Nov. 14, 1912	Asiatic Pacific		Sep. 2, 1945 - Apr. 27, 1952
<u>Haitian Campaign</u>	Navy	Jul. 9, 1915 - Dec. 6, 1915 Apr. 1, 1919 - Jun. 15, 1920	<u>Korean Service Medal</u>		
<u>Dominican Campaign</u>	Navy	May 4, 1916 - Dec. 5, 1916	Army, Navy, Air Force		Jun. 27, 1950 - Jul. 27, 1954
<u>World War I Victory</u> (with battle or service clasp incl. Siberia and European Russia)	Army Navy	Apr. 6, 1917 - Apr. 1, 1920 Apr. 6, 1917 - Mar. 30, 1920	<u>Navy & Marine Corps Expeditionary Medal</u>		
<u>Army Occup. of Germany</u>	Army	Nov. 12, 1918 - Jul. 11, 1923	Cuban Military Operation		Jan. 3, 1961 - Oct. 23, 1962
<u>Second Nicaraguan Campaign</u>	Navy	Aug. 27, 1926 - Jan. 2, 1933	Thailand Military Operation		May 16, 1962 - Aug. 10, 1962
<u>Yangtze Service</u>	Navy	Sep. 3, 1926 - Oct. 21, 1927 Mar. 1, 1930 - Dec. 31, 1932	Iranian, Yemen & Indian Ocean Operation		Dec. 8, 1978 - Jun. 6, 1979 Nov. 21, 1979 - Oct. 20, 1981
<u>China Service</u>	Navy	Jul. 7, 1937 - Sep. 7, 1939 Sep. 2, 1945 - Apr. 1, 1957	Lebanon		Aug. 20, 1982 - May 31, 1983
<u>American Defense Service</u> (with foreign service clasp)	Army-Navy	Sep. 8, 1939 - Dec. 7, 1941	Libyan Expedition		Jan. 20, 1986 - Jun. 27, 1986
<u>European-African- Middle Eastern Campaign</u>	Army-Navy	Dec. 7, 1941 - Nov. 8, 1945	Persian Gulf		Feb. 1, 1987 - Jul. 23, 1987
<u>American Campaign</u> (30 consecutive or 60 non- consecutive days of duty outside continental limits of the U.S.)	Army-Navy	Dec. 7, 1941 - Mar. 2, 1946	Panama (pre and post invasion)		Apr. 1, 1988 - Dec. 19, 1989 Feb. 1, 1990 - Jun. 13, 1990
<u>Asiatic-Pacific Campaign</u>	Army-Navy	Dec. 7, 1941 - Mar. 2, 1946	Operation Sharp Edge - <i>Liberia</i>		Aug. 5, 1990 - Feb. 21, 1991
<u>Army of Occupation</u> (30 consecutive days of duty)			Operation Distant Runner - <i>Rwanda</i> (11th Marine Exped. Unit USS Peleliu)		Apr. 7-18, 1994
Italy		May 9, 1945 - Sep. 15, 1947	<u>Vietnam Service Medal</u>		
Germany (<i>except West Berlin</i>)		May 9, 1945 - May 5, 1955	Jul. 4, 1965 - Mar. 8, 1973		
Austria		May 9, 1945 - Jul. 27, 1955	<u>Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal</u> (30 consecutive or 60 non-consecutive days of duty)		
			Lebanon		Jul. 1, 1958 - Nov. 1, 1958
			Taiwan Straits		Aug. 23, 1958 - Jan. 1, 1959
			Quemoy & Matsu Islands		Aug. 23, 1958 - Jun. 1, 1963
			Vietnam		Jul. 1, 1958 - Jul. 3, 1965
			Congo		Jul. 14, 1960 - Sep. 1, 1962
			Laos		Apr. 19, 1961 - Oct. 7, 1962
			Berlin		Aug. 14, 1961 - Jun. 1, 1963
			Cuba		Oct. 24, 1962 - Jun. 1, 1963

Campaign Medals	Military Service	Qualifying Dates	Campaign Medals	Military Service	Qualifying Dates
Congo		Nov. 23-27, 1964	Operation Desert Thunder - <i>Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, UAE, Oman, Yemen, Egypt, Jordan, Persian Gulf, Gulf of Oman, Red Sea support.</i>		Nov. 11, 1998 - Dec. 22, 1998
Dominican Republic		Apr. 23, 1965 - Sep. 21, 1966			
Korea		Oct. 1, 1966 - Jun. 30, 1974			
Cambodia		Mar. 29, 1973 - Aug. 15, 1973	Operation Desert Fox - <i>Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, UAE, Oman, Yemen, Egypt, Jordan, Persian Gulf, Gulf of Oman, USN Red Sea support.</i>		Dec. 16, 1998 - Dec. 22, 1998
Thailand (only those in direct support of Cambodia)		Mar. 29, 1973 - Aug. 15, 1973			
Operation Eagle Pull - <i>Cambodia (includes evacuation)</i>		Apr. 11-13, 1975	Southwest Asia Service Medal		
Operation Frequent Wind - <i>Vietnam (includes evacuation)</i>		Apr. 29-30, 1975	Operation Desert Shield/ Operation Desert Storm (combat areas of operation only)		Aug. 2, 1990 - Nov. 30, 1995
Mayaguez Operation		May 15, 1975	Personnel assigned to support units serving in Israel, Egypt, Turkey, Syria, Jordan.		Jan. 17, 1991 - Apr. 11, 1991
El Salvador		Jan. 1, 1981 - Feb. 1, 1992	Kosovo Campaign Medal		
Lebanon		Jun. 1, 1983 - Dec. 1, 1987	Operation Allied Force - <i>Kosovo Air Campaign</i>		Mar. 24, 1999 - Jun. 10, 1999
Operation Urgent Fury - <i>Grenada</i>		Oct. 23, 1983 - Nov. 21, 1983	Kosovo Defense Campaign - <i>Ground Action</i>		Jun. 11, 1999 - Open
Eldorado Canyon - <i>Libya</i>		Apr. 12-17, 1986	Combat Infantryman Badge & Combat Medical Badge	Army	Dec. 6, 1941 - Open
Operation Earnest Will - <i>Persian Gulf (only those participating in, or in direct support)</i>		Jul. 24, 1987 - Aug. 1, 1990	Combat Action Ribbon	Navy, Marine, Coast Guard	Dec. 6, 1941 - Open
Operation Just Cause - <i>Panama (USS Vreeland & other SVS-designated aircrew mbrs. outside the Conus in direct support)</i>		Dec. 20, 1989 - Jan. 31, 1990	Combat Action Badge	Army	Sep. 18, 2001 - Open
United Shield - <i>Somalia</i>		Dec. 5, 1992 - Mar. 31, 1995	SSBN Nuclear Deterrent Patrol Breast Insignia	Navy	Jan. 21, 1961 - Open
Operation Restore Hope - <i>Somalia</i>		Dec. 5, 1992 - Mar. 31, 1995	Korea Duty		Jun. 30, 1949 - Open
Operation Uphold Democracy - <i>Haiti</i>		Sep. 16, 1994 - Mar. 31, 1995	Service on the Korean Peninsula or in its territorial waters for 30 consecutive or 60 non-consecutive days of duty.		
Operation Joint Endeavor - <i>Bosnia, Croatia, the Adriatic Sea & airspace.</i>		Nov. 20, 1995 - Dec. 19, 1996	Korea Defense Service Medal		Jul. 28, 1954 - Open
Operation Vigilant Sentinel - <i>Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, & Persian Gulf.</i>		Dec. 1, 1995 - Feb. 15, 1997	Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal		Sep. 11, 2001 - Open
Operation Southern Watch - <i>Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Persian Gulf, Bahrain, Qatar, UAE, Oman, Gulf of Oman W of 62° E Long., Yemen, Egypt, & Jordan.</i>		Dec. 1, 1995 - Mar. 18, 2003	Afghanistan Campaign Medal		Oct. 24, 2001 - Open
Operation Maritime Intercept - <i>Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Red Sea, Persian Gulf, Gulf of Oman W of 62° E Long., Bahrain, Qatar, UAE, Oman, Yemen, Egypt, & Jordan.</i>		Dec. 1, 1995 - Mar. 18, 2003	Iraq Campaign Medal		Mar. 19, 2003 - Open
Operation Joint Guard - <i>Bosnia, Croatia, Adriatic Sea & airspace.</i>		Dec. 20, 1996 - Jun. 20, 1998	Air Force Expeditionary Service Ribbon with GOLD BORDER		Apr. 2004 - Open
Operation Northern Watch - <i>Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Persian Gulf W of 56° E Long., and Incirlik AB, Turkey (only pers. TDY to ONW)</i>		Jan. 1, 1997 - Mar. 18, 2003	Hostile Fire or Imminent Danger Pay		
Operation Joint Forge - <i>Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Adriatic Sea & airspace.</i>		Jun. 21, 1998 - Open			

This information is to be used for guideline purposes only. The separation document or DD 214 **MUST** reflect campaign medal service to establish eligibility. Service in Korea without the issuance of a campaign medal can be established with additional, support documentation. Hostile Fire or Imminent Danger Pay can be established with pay records.