

# VFW Eligibility Information

The fundamental differences between our organization and other veterans organizations, and one in which we take great pride, are our eligibility qualifications. There are three primary requisites for membership in the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States: (1) U.S. 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:

**Applications.** After the applicant has filled out the application card, it should be provided to the post adjutant or quartermaster, together with the dues (and admission fee, if applicable). A receipt shall be given to the applicant.

An applicant may be recommended after eligibility has been fully determined by the post reviewing committee. With respect to a department member-at-large, the department headquarters is responsible for the eligibility determination.

The original application of every member will be retained on file with the adjutant.

**Balloting on Applications.** Before voting on the application during a post meeting, the commander shall allow the members present an opportunity to state their objections, if any, to the admission of the applicant. Unless one member present shall request a written ballot, a vote shall be taken and a majority of the votes cast shall decide acceptance or rejection of the application.

**Rejection of Applicant.** Should an applicant be rejected by the post, the admission fee and dues shall be returned. After one year (12 months), he may again make application, but a person shall not be proposed for membership more than twice in one post. An applicant rejected in one post may apply to another post or become a department member-at-large.

**Notification.** The member shall be notified of his acceptance and that he is in good standing, subject to the by-laws governing the organization. The member shall receive a membership card and will be eligible to receive a lapel pin.

**Obligation.** New post members may receive the obligation according to the ritual.

**CHECKING ELIGIBILITY:** Proof of service to establish eligibility for membership rests with the applicant. The post is responsible for assuring the eligibility of every member accepted to membership. 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. Those people in the armed forces of the United States shall become eligible for membership immediately upon arrival on hostile soil, in hostile waters or the airspace above in the performance of service.

Discharges issued during and immediately after World War II have a section on the back listing the medals and decorations that 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' Affairs 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. Request for records can also be obtained through the National Personnel Records Center at [www.archives.gov/veterans](http://www.archives.gov/veterans).

For subsequent service, refer to Sec. 101 of the Manual of Procedure.

**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	<b><u>Navy Occupation Service Medal</u></b>		
<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	<b><u>Korean Service Medal</u></b>		Jun. 27, 1950 - Jul. 27, 1954
<u>Dominican Campaign</u>	Navy	May 4, 1916 - Dec. 5, 1916	<b><u>Navy &amp; Marine Corps Expeditionary Medal</u></b>		
<u>World War I Victory</u> ( <i>with battle or service clasp incl. Siberia and European Russia</i> )	Army Navy	Apr. 6, 1917 - Apr. 1, 1920 Apr. 6, 1917 - Mar. 30, 1920	Cuban Military Operation		Jan. 3, 1961 - Oct. 23, 1962
<u>Army Occup. of Germany</u>	Army	Nov. 12, 1918 - Jul. 11, 1923	Thailand Military Operation		May 16, 1962 - Aug. 10, 1962
<u>Second Nicaraguan Campaign</u>	Navy	Aug. 27, 1926 - Jan. 2, 1933	Iranian, Yemen & Indian Ocean Operation		Dec. 8, 1978 - Jun. 6, 1979 Nov. 21, 1979 - Oct. 20, 1981
<u>Yangtze Service</u>	Navy	Sep. 3, 1926 - Oct. 21, 1927 Mar. 1, 1930 - Dec. 31, 1932	Lebanon		Aug. 20, 1982 - May 31, 1983
<u>China Service</u>	Navy	Jul. 7, 1937 - Sep. 7, 1939 Sep. 2, 1945 - Apr. 1, 1957 Sep. 8, 1939 - Dec. 7, 1941	Libyan Expedition		Jan. 20, 1986 - Jun. 27, 1986
<u>American Defense Service</u> ( <i>with foreign service clasp</i> )	Army - Navy		Persian Gulf		Feb. 1, 1987 - Jul. 23, 1987
<u>European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign</u>	Army - Navy	Dec. 7, 1941 - Nov. 8, 1945	Panama ( <i>pre and post invasion</i> )		Apr. 1, 1988 - Dec. 19, 1989 Feb. 1, 1990 - Jun. 13, 1990
<u>American Campaign</u> ( <i>30 consecutive or 60 non-consecutive days of duty outside continental limits of the U.S.</i> )	Army - Navy	Dec. 7, 1941 - Mar. 2, 1946	Operation Sharp Edge - Liberia		Aug. 5, 1990 - Feb. 21, 1991
<u>Asiatic-Pacific Campaign</u>	Army - Navy	Dec. 7, 1941 - Mar. 2, 1946	Operation Distant Runner - Rwanda ( <i>11th Marine Exped. Unit USS Peleliu</i> )		Apr. 7-18, 1994
<u>Army of Occupation</u> ( <i>30 consecutive days of duty</i> )			<b><u>Vietnam Service Medal</u></b>		Jul. 4, 1965 - Mar. 8, 1973
Italy		May 9, 1945 - Sep. 15, 1947	<b><u>Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal</u></b>		
Germany ( <i>except West Berlin</i> )		May 9, 1945 - May 5, 1955	Lebanon		Jul. 1, 1958 - Nov. 1, 1958
Austria		May 9, 1945 - Jul. 27, 1955	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
			Congo		Nov. 23-27, 1964

Campaign Medals	Military Service	Qualifying Dates	Campaign Medals	Military Service	Qualifying Dates
Dominican Republic		Apr. 23, 1965 - Sep. 21, 1966	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
Korea		Oct. 1, 1966 - Jun. 30, 1974			
Cambodia		Mar. 29, 1973 - Aug. 15, 1973			
Thailand <i>(only those in direct support of Cambodia)</i>		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
Operation Eagle Pull - <i>Cambodia (includes evacuation)</i>		Apr. 11-13, 1975			
Operation Frequent Wind - <i>Vietnam (includes evacuation)</i>		Apr. 29-30, 1975	<b><u>Southwest Asia Service Medal</u></b>		
Mayaguez Operation		May 15, 1975	Operation Desert Shield/ Operation Desert Storm <i>(combat areas of operation only)</i>		Aug. 2, 1990 - Nov. 30, 1995
El Salvador		Jan. 1, 1981 - Feb. 1, 1992	Personnel assigned to support units serving in Israel, Egypt, Turkey, Syria, Jordan.		Jan. 17, 1991 - Apr. 11, 1991
Lebanon		Jun. 1, 1983 - Dec. 1, 1987			
Operation Urgent Fury - <i>Grenada</i>		Oct. 23, 1983 - Nov. 21, 1983	<b><u>Kosovo Campaign Medal</u></b>		
Eldorado Canyon - <i>Libya</i>		Apr. 12-17, 1986	Operation Allied Force - <i>Kosovo Air Campaign</i>		Mar. 24, 1999 - Jun. 10, 1999
Operation Earnest Will - <i>Persian Gulf (only those participating in, or in direct support)</i>		Jul. 24, 1987 - Aug. 1, 1990	Kosovo Defense Campaign - <i>Ground Action</i>		Jun. 11, 1999 - Open
Operation Just Cause - <i>Panama (USS Vreeland &amp; other SVS-designated aircrew mbrs. outside the Conus in direct support)</i>		Dec. 20, 1989 - Jan. 31, 1990	<b><u>Combat Infantryman Badge &amp; Combat Medical Badge</u></b>	Army	Dec. 6, 1941 - Open
United Shield - <i>Somalia</i>		Dec. 5, 1992 - Mar. 31, 1995	<b><u>Air Force Combat Action Medal</u></b>		Sep. 11, 2001 - Open
Operation Restore Hope - <i>Somalia</i>		Dec. 5, 1992 - Mar. 31, 1995	<b><u>Combat Action Ribbon</u></b>	Navy - Marine Coast Guard	Dec. 6, 1941 - Open Dec. 6, 1941 - April 30, 1975
Operation Uphold Democracy - <i>Haiti</i>		Sep. 16, 1994 - Mar. 31, 1995	<b><u>Coast Guard Combat Action Ribbon</u></b>	Coast Guard	May 1, 1975 - Open
Operation Joint Endeavor - <i>Bosnia, Croatia, the Adriatic Sea &amp; airspace.</i>		Nov. 20, 1995 - Dec. 19, 1996	<b><u>Combat Action Badge</u></b>	Army	Sep. 18, 2001 - Open
Operation Vigilant Sentinel - <i>Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, &amp; Persian Gulf.</i>		Dec. 1, 1995 - Feb. 15, 1997	<b><u>SSBN Deterrent Patrol Insignia</u></b>	Navy	Jan. 21, 1961 - 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, &amp; Jordan.</i>		Dec. 1, 1995 - Mar. 18, 2003	<b><u>Korea Duty</u></b>		Jun. 30, 1949 - 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, &amp; Jordan.</i>		Dec. 1, 1995 - Mar. 18, 2003	Service on the Korean Peninsula, its airspace and territorial waters for (30 consecutive or 60 non-consecutive days of duty)		
Operation Joint Guard - <i>Bosnia, Croatia, Adriatic Sea &amp; airspace.</i>		Dec. 20, 1996 - Jun. 20, 1998	<b><u>Korea Defense Service Medal</u></b>		Jul. 28, 1954 - 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	<b><u>Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal</u></b>		Sep. 11, 2001 - Open
Operation Joint Forge - <i>Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Adriatic Sea &amp; airspace.</i>		Jun. 20, 1998 - Mar. 23, 1999	<b><u>Afghanistan Campaign Medal</u></b>		Sep. 11, 2001 - Open
			<b><u>Iraq Campaign Medal</u></b>		Mar. 19, 2003 - Open
			<b><u>Air Force Expeditionary Service Ribbon with GOLD BORDER</u></b>		Apr. 2004 - Open
			<b><u>Hostile Fire or Imminent Danger Pay</u></b>		Jan 1, 1971 - Present

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.

# NOTES