

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:

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.

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 | <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 Sep. 8, 1939 - Dec. 7, 1941 | Lebanon | | Aug. 20, 1982 - May 31, 1983 |
| <u>American Defense Service</u> (with foreign service clasp) | Army-Navy | | 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 - Liberia | | Aug. 5, 1990 - Feb. 21, 1991 |
| <u>Army of Occupation</u> (30 consecutive days of duty) | | | Operation Distant Runner - Rwanda (11th Marine Exped. Unit USS Peleliu) | | Apr. 7-18, 1994 |
| Italy | | May 9, 1945 - Sep. 15, 1947 | <u>Vietnam Service Medal</u> | | Jul. 4, 1965 - Mar. 8, 1973 |
| Germany (<i>except West Berlin</i>) | | May 9, 1945 - May 5, 1955 | <u>Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal</u> | | |
| Austria | | May 9, 1945 - Jul. 27, 1955 | 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 |
| | | | 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 (only those in direct support of 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 |
| Operation Eagle Pull - <i>Cambodia (includes evacuation)</i> | | Apr. 11-13, 1975 | | | |
| Operation Frequent Wind - <i>Vietnam (includes evacuation)</i> | | Apr. 29-30, 1975 | Southwest Asia Service Medal | | |
| Mayaguez Operation | | May 15, 1975 | Operation Desert Shield/ Operation Desert Storm (combat areas of operation only) | | 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 | Kosovo Campaign Medal | | |
| 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 & other SVS-designated aircrew mbrs. outside the Conus in direct support)</i> | | Dec. 20, 1989 - Jan. 31, 1990 | Combat Infantryman Badge & Combat Medical Badge | Army | Dec. 6, 1941 - Open |
| United Shield - <i>Somalia</i> | | Dec. 5, 1992 - Mar. 31, 1995 | Air Force Combat Action Medal | | Sep. 11, 2001 - Open |
| Operation Restore Hope - <i>Somalia</i> | | Dec. 5, 1992 - Mar. 31, 1995 | Combat Action Ribbon | 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 | Coast Guard Combat Action Ribbon | Coast Guard | May 1, 1975 - Open |
| Operation Joint Endeavor - <i>Bosnia, Croatia, the Adriatic Sea & airspace.</i> | | Nov. 20, 1995 - Dec. 19, 1996 | Combat Action Badge | Army | Sep. 18, 2001 - Open |
| Operation Vigilant Sentinel - <i>Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, & Persian Gulf.</i> | | Dec. 1, 1995 - Feb. 15, 1997 | SSBN Deterrent Patrol Insignia | 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, & Jordan.</i> | | Dec. 1, 1995 - Mar. 18, 2003 | Korea Duty | | 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, & 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 & airspace.</i> | | Dec. 20, 1996 - Jun. 20, 1998 | Korea Defense Service Medal | | 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 | Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal | | Sep. 11, 2001 - Open |
| Operation Joint Forge - <i>Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Adriatic Sea & airspace.</i> | | Jun. 20, 1998 - Mar. 23, 1999 | Afghanistan Campaign Medal | | Sep. 11, 2001 - Open |
| | | | Iraq Campaign Medal | | Mar. 19, 2003 - Open |
| | | | Air Force Expeditionary Service Ribbon with GOLD BORDER | | Apr. 2004 - Open |
| | | | Hostile Fire or Imminent Danger Pay | | Jan 1, 1971 - Present |
| | | | <hr/> <p>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.</p> | | |

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