

# California Vet License Plates

## Veterans License Plates



Special California license plates may be ordered with the armed force or veterans service organization logo/emblem of your choice. Over 100 insignias are available, and your logo will be prominently displayed to the left of a six number/letter combination. Sequential plates are only \$30 per year. You may also "personalize" your Vets Plates (your choice of up to 6 characters) for an additional one-time fee of \$10. All proceeds from the sale of vets plates are used to expand veteran services statewide. Whether you're a veteran or proud of our veterans who have defended America, get your application for Veterans Plates today. Information on how to obtain Veterans plates can be obtained from your local County Veterans Service Office which can be determined at <http://www.cacvso.org/page/2011-1-22-13-52-31/>, DMV office or by calling the CalVet at (916) 653-2573. You may also visit the DMV License Plate website <http://dmv.ca.gov/ipp2/welcome.do?localeName=en> or download information and an application form at [http://www.calvet.ca.gov/Files/VetServices/License\\_Plate\\_Application.pdf](http://www.calvet.ca.gov/Files/VetServices/License_Plate_Application.pdf). The [available logos and emblems](http://www.cacvso.org/page/2011-1-19-59-license-plate-logos/) are on display at the California Association of Veterans Service Officers, Inc. web site <http://www.cacvso.org/page/2011-1-19-59-license-plate-logos/>.

The State of California also offers special license plates to honor Gold Star Families and the service of the following categories of veterans:

- 100% Service-connected disabled veterans
- Medal of Honor recipients
- Recipients of other high decorations
- Former American Prisoners of War
- Pearl Harbor survivors
- Purple Heart recipients

## Gold Star



World War I mothers of sons and daughters in service displayed a Blue Star flag with both pride and concern...knowing their children were in harm's way. The Blue Star represented both their pride, and their hope. A large part of the Blue Star program was to initiate whatever efforts they could to some day bring their children safely home.

When the war began claiming the lives of many of young Americans, a new flag developed. When a son or daughter was killed in action a gold star was sewn over the blue one, completely covering it. In May 1918, the Women's Committee of National Defenses suggested to President Woodrow Wilson that those mothers who had lost a family member in the war should wear a black band on their upper-left arm, adorned with a gold star. In a letter affirming his support for this proposal, President Wilson referred to these women as "Gold Star Mothers." It was the beginning a new tradition of patriotic support for those who serve our Nation in uniform.

#### How to Obtain a Gold Star Family License Plate

The Gold Star Family License Plates became available to order from the Department of Motor Vehicles on December 1, 2010. In order to obtain a Gold Star Plate, family members will need to visit their local County Veterans Service Office (CVSO). The CVSO will be able verify your status as a Gold Star Family member and complete the necessary paperwork for you to take the Department of Motor Vehicles. The family members who qualify under the provisions of this program include:

- Widow/Widower
- Biological Parent/Adoptive Parent
- Stepparent/Foster Parent
- Biological Child/Adoptive Child
- Stepchild/Sibling/Half Sibling
- Grandparent/Grandchild

Proof of relationship will be required but not scrutinized as those that have served in WWII may be without documentation proving relationship. This proof may include, but is not limited to any of the following: a birth certificate and ID card, a signed letter or affidavit from their relative stating the relationship, marriage certificate, adoption papers, registered domestic partner papers, etc.

- A DD1300
- A letter from the Federal Government (DOD, the War Department, Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force, Coast Guard, Merchant Marines)
- A telegram from the Federal Government (DOD, the War Department, Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force, Coast Guard, Merchant Marines)
- A letter from the Commanding Officer.
- A Purple Heart Citation that states the recipient was killed.
- Any form of verifiable official notification

Once relationship and proof of service-related casualty is confirmed, a [Gold Star License Plate Application \(VSD 5-1918\)](#) and [Department of Motor Vehicles \(DMV application\)](#) will be filled out by the family member and taken to DMV. Please make sure that the form is signed and dated by the County Veterans Service Officer.

## Disabled Veterans

For more information on how to apply for the Disabled Veterans License Plates, visit our [Benefits Overview](#) section.



Service-connected disabled veterans with any of the conditions listed below may receive, free of charge, a set of special "DV" plates which permit free parking at all parking meters in the state with no time limit, and allows for parking in handicapped zones. USDVA proof of service connection is required.

The veterans service-connected disability must:

- Be rated at 100% service-connected AND must substantially impair or interfere with mobility.
- Require the use of an assistive device for mobility.
- Have resulted in the loss or loss of use of one or more limbs.
- Have rendered the veteran permanently blind.

### **California Vehicle Code Section 5007.**

(a) The department\* shall, upon application and without additional fees, issue a special identification license plate or plates to a disabled person or disabled veteran, pursuant to procedures adopted by the department.

(b) The special identification plates issued to a disabled person or disabled veteran shall run in a regular numerical series which shall include one or more unique two-letter codes reserved for disabled person license plates or disabled veteran license plates. The International Symbol of Access adopted pursuant to Section 3 of Public Law 100-641 commonly known as the "wheelchair symbol" shall be depicted on each plate.

(c) (1) Prior to issuing any disabled person or disabled veteran a special identification license plate, the department shall require the submission of a certificate, in accordance with paragraph (2), signed by the physician or surgeon substantiating the disability, unless the applicant's disability is readily observable and uncontested. The disability of any person who has lost, or has lost use of, one or more lower extremities or both hands, or who has significant limitation in the use of lower extremities, may also be certified by a licensed chiropractor. The blindness of any applicant shall be certified by a licensed physician or surgeon who specializes in diseases of the eye or a licensed optometrist. (2) The physician or other person who signs a certificate submitted under this subdivision shall retain information sufficient to substantiate that certificate and, upon request of the department, shall make that information available for inspection by the Medical Board of California.

(d) The special identification license plate shall, upon the death of the disabled person or disabled veteran, be returned to the department within 60 days or upon the expiration of the vehicle registration, whichever occurs first.

## Medal of Honor



Any California recipient of the Medal of Honor is eligible for one set of free commemorative license plates.

### California Vehicle Code Section 5101.6.

(a) Any person otherwise eligible under this article who is a Congressional Medal of Honor recipient may apply for special license plates for the vehicle under this article. The special license plates assigned to the vehicle shall run in a separate numerical series and shall have inscribed on the license plate the words "Congressional Medal of Honor" or "Medal of Honor." The department\* shall reserve and issue the special license plates to all applicants providing the proof required by subdivision

(b) The applicant shall, by satisfactory proof, show that the applicant is a Congressional Medal of Honor recipient.

(c) Special license plates may be issued pursuant to subdivision (a) only for a vehicle owned or co-owned by a Congressional Medal of Honor recipient.

(d) Upon the death of a person issued special license plates pursuant to this section, his or her surviving spouse may retain the special license plates subject to the conditions set forth in this section. Upon the death of the spouse, the retained, special license plates shall be returned to the department either (1) within 60 days following that death or (2) upon the expiration of the vehicle registration, whichever occurs first.

(e) Any vehicle exempted from fees by Section 9105 and by Section 10783 of the Revenue and Taxation Code shall lose the exemption upon the death of the Congressional Medal of Honor recipient.

(f) Sections 5106 and 5108 do not apply to this section.

## Legion of Valor



Veterans who are recipients of some of the other highest decorations for valor are eligible for special Legion of Honor license plates.

### California Vehicle Code Section 5101.4.

(a) Any person otherwise eligible under this article who is a recipient of the Army Medal of Honor, Navy Medal of Honor, Air Force Medal of Honor, Army Distinguished Service Cross, Navy Cross, or Air Force Cross may apply for special license plates for the vehicle under this article.

- (b) The applicant, by conclusive evidence, shall show that the applicant is a recipient of one of the nation's highest decorations for valor, as specified in subdivision.
- (c) The special license plates issued under this section shall contain the words "Legion of Valor" and shall run in a regular numerical series. An adhesive sticker denoting which of the nation's highest decorations for valor, as specified in subdivision (a), is held by the applicant shall be affixed in a recess provided for it on the license plates.
- (d) Upon the death of a person issued special license plates pursuant to this section, his or her surviving spouse may retain the special license plates subject to the conditions set forth in this section. Upon the death of the spouse, the retained special license plates shall be returned to the department\* either (1) within 60 days following that death or (2) upon the expiration of the vehicle registration, whichever occurs first.
- (e) Sections 5106 and 5108 do not apply to this section.

### **Ex-Prisoners of War**



Former American Prisoners of War are eligible for one set of free commemorative license plates.

#### **California Vehicle Code Section 5101.5.**

- (a) Any person otherwise eligible under this article who is a former American prisoner of war may apply for special license plates for the vehicle under this article. The special plates assigned to the vehicle shall run in a separate numerical series and contain a replica design of the American Prisoner of War Medal followed by the letters "POW" and four numbers. The special license plates issued under this subdivision also shall contain the following words: "Ex-Prisoner of War." The department\* shall, pursuant to this article, reserve and issue the license plates provided for by this section only to persons who show by satisfactory proof his or her former prisoner of war status. Any person otherwise issued license plates within this series pursuant to this article prior to January 1, 1982, may retain them.
- (b) Special license plates may be issued pursuant to subdivision (a) only for a vehicle owned or co-owned by a former American prisoner of war.
- (c) Upon the death of a person issued special license plates pursuant to this section, his or her surviving spouse may retain the special license plates subject to the conditions set forth in this section. Upon the death of the spouse, the retained special license plates shall be returned to the department either (1) within 60 days following that death or (2) upon the expiration of the vehicle registration, whichever occurs first.
- (d) Any vehicle exempted from fees by Section 9105 and by Section 10783 of the Revenue and Taxation Code shall lose the exemption upon the death of the former American prisoner of war.
- (e) Sections 5106 and 5108 do not apply to this section.
- (f) The department shall recall all former prisoner-of-war license plates issued pursuant to this section prior to January 1, 1999, and shall issue to the holder of those plates, without charge, the revised plates authorized by this section.

(g) This section shall become operative on July 1, 1999.

### **Pearl Harbor Veterans**



Any veteran who was stationed at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, is eligible for special Pearl Harbor Survivor plates.

#### **California Vehicle Code Section 5101.3.**

(a) Any person otherwise eligible under this article who qualifies under subdivision (b) may apply for special license plates that shall run in a separate numerical series and shall contain the words "Pearl Harbor Survivor." The plates may be issued for any vehicle, except a vehicle used for transportation for hire, compensation, or profit, or a motorcycle, which is owned or co-owned by the person.

(b) To qualify for issuance of the special plates, the applicant by satisfactory proof shall show all of the following: (1) The applicant was a member of the United States Armed Forces on December 7, 1941, and received an honorable discharge from military service. (2) The applicant was on station at Pearl Harbor, the Island of Oahu, or offshore within a distance of three miles, on December 7, 1941, during the hours of 7:55 a.m. to 9:45 a.m., Hawaii time, as certified by a California chapter of the Pearl Harbor Survivors Association.

(c) Upon the death of a person issued special license plates pursuant to this section, his or her surviving spouse may retain the special license plates subject to the conditions set forth in this section. Upon the death of the spouse, the retained special license plates shall be returned to the department\* either (1) within 60 days following that death or (2) upon the expiration of the vehicle registration, whichever occurs first.

(d) Sections 5106 and 5108 do not apply to this section.

### **Purple Heart**



Any veteran who was the recipient of a Purple Heart is eligible for special Purple Heart plates.

#### **California Vehicle Code Section 5101.8.**

(a) Any person otherwise eligible under this article who is a Purple Heart recipient may apply for special license plates for vehicles that are not used for transportation for hire, compensation, or profit, under this article. The special plates assigned to the vehicle shall run in a separate numerical series, shall have inscribed on the plate the Purple Heart insignia, and shall contain the

words "Combat Wounded" and "Purple Heart" or at least the letters "PH" as part of the numerical series. The department\* shall reserve and issue the special plates to all applicants providing the proof required by subdivision.

(b) The applicant, by satisfactory proof, shall show that the applicant is a Purple Heart recipient.

(c) Special plates may be issued pursuant to subdivision (a) only for a vehicle owned or co-owned by a Purple Heart recipient and may not be transferred to any other person, including the coowner of the vehicle. The special plates shall be surrendered to the department upon the death of the Purple Heart recipient.

(d) When an applicant for the Purple Heart license plate qualifies as a disabled veteran, as specified in subdivision (b) of Section 22511.55, the applicant may also apply for a distinguishing placard described in subdivision (a) of Section 22511.55 to be used in conjunction with the Purple Heart license plate for the purpose of allowing special parking privileges pursuant to subdivision (a) of Section 22511.5.

(e) Sections 5106 and 5108 do not apply to this section.