

Membership Eligibility Questions

Q: What are the eligibility dates for membership in The American Legion?

A: Thanks to the LEGION Act (Let Everyone Get Involved In Opportunities for National Service Act) that was signed into law July 30, 2019, the current eligibility period is Dec. 7, 1941, to the present, and includes the current war campaigns. Previously, there were seven declared war periods. Now there are two, the current war period dating back to World War II and another war era covering World War I. No other restrictions to American Legion membership changed.

Q: I'm currently on active duty. Am I eligible?

A: Yes, you are a veteran. All current active-duty military are eligible for membership.

Q: I didn't retire from the military but was on active duty during one of the qualifying time periods. Am I eligible?

A: Yes, you are a veteran. So as long as you have served at least one day of federal active duty during any qualifying period, you are eligible for membership.

Q: I served during one of the qualifying periods but was never in a combat zone. Am I eligible?

A: Yes, you are a veteran. Location of active-duty service is not a consideration for membership.

Q: I'm currently in the National Guard/Reserve. My unit was activated under Title 10 orders during a qualifying time period. Am I eligible?

A: Yes, you are a veteran. Title 10 orders are issued by the Secretary of Defense and therefore are federal orders.

Q: My National Guard unit was activated for crowd control under Title 32 orders during one of the qualifying periods. Am I eligible?

A: No, you are not eligible for membership. Title 32 orders are issued under a governor's authority, whereas Title 10 orders are issued from the Secretary of Defense.

Q: I'm currently a cadet at one of the U.S. Military Academies. Am I eligible?

A: Yes, you are a veteran. The American Legion has considered service in the military academies as eligible for membership since World War II.

Q: Can I be an honorary or social member of The American Legion?

A: No, you cannot. Per The American Legion National Constitution and By-laws, no form or class of membership is authorized except regular active or paid up for life.

Q: I served my entire military career in the National Guard/Reserves and only have a DD214 from my Active Duty for Training that I was in during one of the qualifying dates. Am I eligible?

A: Yes, you are a veteran. Since the mid-60s all basic training and occupational training schools were considered federal active-duty service.

Q: I served with allied military forces during one of the qualifying periods. Am I eligible?

A: Yes, you are a veteran, only if you were a U.S. citizen at the time of entry.

Q: I served with the Civil Air Patrol/Civilian Technical Corps/USPHS as a civilian during two qualifying periods. Am I eligible?

A: No, you are not eligible for membership. Eligible members must have federal military service during a qualifying period and received an honorable discharge or discharge under honorable conditions.

Q: I enlisted and went to basic training but received an uncharacterized discharge due to a medical condition. Am I eligible?

A: Yes, you are a veteran. Uncharacterized discharges for medical discharges are assumed to be under honorable conditions unless specifically stated otherwise. There are other categories of uncharacterized discharges and before they are determined eligible for membership the discharge should be sent to American Legion National Headquarters for determination and a record will be maintained at National on final determination.

Q: I'm eligible for American Legion membership, but I do not have a copy of my DD214 to show as proof of eligibility. How can I get one?

A: You can go to [archives.gov/veterans](https://www.archives.gov/veterans) to request another copy of your discharge papers. A copy of orders putting you on federal active duty can be used as proof of eligibility as well.