Non-Military ID Access to Military Facilities

**Implementation of the Purple Heart and Disabled Veteran Equal Access Act of 2018 —FAQs**

**Q1: Are disabled veterans eligible for privileges at military commissaries and military exchanges, and for MWR activities privileges?**

A: Yes. Veterans with a Department of Veterans Affairs-documented, service-connected disability rating are eligible for Defense Department and Coast Guard commissary, exchange and MWR retail privileges.

**Q2: If I don’t have a service-connected disability, but I meet one of the other new-user categories, am I eligible for privileges?**

A: Yes. If you don’t have a service-connected disability, you are eligible for privileges under Section 1065 of Title 10, United States Code, if you are:

Purple Heart veteran recipient

A former prisoner of war veteran

An individual assessed, approved and designated as a primary family caregiver of an eligible veteran under the VA Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers

**Q3: What’s the definition of a service-connected disability?**

A: A service-connected disability is an injury or illness incurred or aggravated during active military service, as determined by the VA.

**Q4: I was in the reserves, am I included?**

A: Yes. Reserve members who are veterans with a VA-documented, service-connected disability rating or are a Purple Heart veteran recipient, a former POW or an individual assessed, approved and designated as a primary family caregiver of an eligible veteran under the VA Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers are eligible under Section 1065 of Title 10, USC.

**GAINING ACCESS**

**Q1: As a newly eligible veteran or caregiver who does not have any other affiliation with the military services that provides access to military installations, how do I get an ID card that will get me on military installations to access my privileges?**

A: Veterans eligible solely under Section 1065 of Title 10, USC, (Purple Heart recipients, former POWs and those who have a VA-documented, service-connected disability rating from 0%-90%) who are eligible to receive a Veteran Health Identification Card must obtain one from the VA to facilitate DOD and Coast Guard installation access.

The VHIC must display the eligibility status “PURPLE HEART,” “FORMER POW” or “SERVICE CONNECTED.” Visit https://www.va.gov/healthbenefits/vhic for information regarding eligibility for the VHIC and the application process. If an eligible veteran with a 0% service-connected condition is ineligible to obtain a VHIC due to having an income too high for VA health care enrollment, the DOD will temporarily accept VA Health Eligibility Center Form H623A (indicating placement in Priority Group 8E), paired with an acceptable credential such as a REAL ID-compliant driver’s license or a U.S. passport, until the DOD and VA identify a long-term credential for this small group of veterans.

Initially, caregivers eligible solely under Section 1065 will receive a letter from the VA Office of Community Care indicating that they are the approved and designated primary family caregiver of an eligible veteran under the Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers and are eligible for these privileges.

For installation access, entry to some commissaries and at the point of sale at commissaries, exchanges and MWR retail facilities, eligible caregivers will need to show an acceptable credential along with their eligibility letter. Acceptable credentials include:

DOD common access card, when otherwise eligible

DOD uniformed services identification card, when otherwise eligible

REAL ID-compliant driver’s license issued by a state, territory, possession or the District of Columbia

REAL ID-compliant non-driver’s ID card issued by a state, territory, possession or the District of Columbia

Enhanced driver’s license issued by a state, territory, possession or the District of Columbia

U.S. passport or passport card

Foreign passport bearing an unexpired immigrant or non-immigrant visa or entry stamp Federal personal identity verification card, when otherwise eligible

VHIC

Transportation Worker Identification Card

Veterans who meet one of the new eligibility criteria who are also uniformed service retirees, Medal of Honor recipients, veterans with 100% service-connected disability ratings or veterans with 100% unemployability ratings due to a service-connected condition are eligible for a DOD-issued ID card and privileges broader than those granted under Section 1065. These veterans should obtain and use the DOD-issued credential for access to installations and privileges. DOD credentials are issued at Real-Time Automated Personnel Identification System ID card sites on DOD installations.