

Louisiana Department of Veterans Affairs

2011-2012 Guide to Veterans' Benefits



1-877-GEAUX-VA
(1-877-432-8982)
vetaffairs.la.gov

LDVA
LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS



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of Veterans Affairs
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Lane Carson
Secretary

David LaCerte
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Undersecretary

Amy Cannizaro Burris
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Debbie Smith, Human Resources Director
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Louisiana Governor Bobby Jindal

On behalf of the people of Louisiana, I want to thank you for your service to our great state and country. Louisiana has a proud military history and a strong tradition of honoring Veterans. We have a duty to honor and care for the men and women who courageously joined the armed services to protect us and fight for the many freedoms we enjoy in our country. I am proud to say that Louisiana's commitment to our Veterans as well as our active-duty and reserve-duty service members is as strong as ever.

Information on many important programs including the Military Family Assistance Fund and the Louisiana Veterans Honor Medal program is contained within this guide. I encourage you to use this resource to ensure you obtain all the state and federal Veterans benefits available. I have charged the Louisiana Department of Veterans Affairs with the vital mission of serving all 304,889 Louisiana Veterans and their families.

I want to thank those of you currently serving in our armed forces and of course, our Veterans. Thank you for your service and for dedicating your life to a cause beyond yourself. Thank you for believing in our state, our security and our freedoms. And most of all, thank you for believing in Louisiana.



**Louisiana
Department
of Veterans Affairs
Secretary
Lane Carson**

As Secretary of the Louisiana Department of Veterans Affairs (LDVA) and a combat wounded Vietnam Veteran, it is my pleasure to present the 2011-2012 Guide to Veterans Benefits. Enclosed you will find information on the many benefits and services available to Veterans and their families as well as a full listing of LDVA Parish Service Offices. Located in each of Louisiana's 64 parishes, these offices ensure that the Veterans of our state continue to receive the help they need right in their local communities. Services provided at LDVA parish offices are available to all Louisiana Veterans and their immediate family members.

Maintaining these offices is just one of the many ways LDVA supports Louisiana Veterans. Whether its through our five state-of-the-art Veterans Homes located across the state, at our Veterans Cemeteries located in north and central Louisiana, through the Military Family Assistance Fund and the LAVETBIZ business initiative, or through the Louisiana Veterans Honor Medal program, LDVA is here to serve the heroes of our state.

Thank you for your honorable service to our country. I look forward to working with you as we strive to fulfill the LDVA mission of providing comprehensive care and quality service to Louisiana's veterans and families with regard to health care, education, disability benefits, long-term care and burial honors.



Louisiana Department of Veterans Affairs Commission

Mr. Don A. Beasley
Chairman
Representing Disabled American Veterans

Mr. Charles E. Huggins
Vice Chairman
Representing American Legion

Rudy Bourg
Representing AMVETS

Mr. Richard L. Garner
Representing Military Order of the Purple Heart

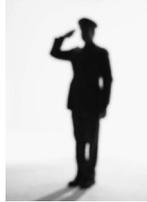
Mr. Russell J. Henry
Representing American Legion

Mr. Carroll J. Knott
Representing Veterans of Foreign Wars

Ms. Sulanda V. Lonnette
At Large Member

Mr. Lee Richard
Representing Disabled American Veterans

Ms. Precilla L. Wilkewitz
Representing Veterans of Foreign Wars



Eligibility Criteria

To qualify for most Louisiana state Veterans' benefits, programs or services, a Veteran must first establish general eligibility. Criteria, including exceptions to minimum military service requirements, is set in state law per LA Revised Statutes, Chapter 29.

General eligibility consists of two broad requirements:

1. Military Service (character; type; duration)
2. Louisiana state residency

NOTE: specific programs and/or benefits may have additional requirements.

Veterans with other than honorable discharges may be eligible for LDVA benefits if they qualify for certain federal benefits from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

Spouses and dependents of deceased Veterans who meet LDVA eligibility requirements also may be eligible for certain programs and services.

Visit vetaffairs.la.gov or call toll-free 1-877-GEAUX-VA (1-877-432-8982) to learn more.



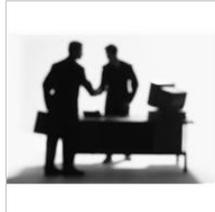
Louisiana Department of Veterans Affairs

The mission of Louisiana Department of Veterans Affairs is to provide comprehensive care and quality service to Louisiana's Veterans and their families with regard to health care, education, disability benefits, long-term care, and burial honors.

LDVA supports its mission through a variety of programs and services such as:

- Veterans Parish Service Offices located in each of Louisiana's 64 parishes
- Five state-of-the-art Veterans Homes located across the state
- Two Veterans Cemeteries, one in Keithville near Shreveport and the other in central Louisiana at Leesville
- LAVETBIZ, an initiative to support Veteran and Disabled Veteran-owned small businesses
- Military Family Assistance Fund (MFA) to provide financial support to members of the Louisiana National Guard and Military Reserves
- PTSD program at Liberty Hill in Jackson, LA
- Louisiana Veterans Honor Medal

You will find more information about these and other programs later in this guide.



Veterans Parish Service Offices

The Louisiana Department of Veterans Affairs maintains Veterans Parish Service Offices in each of Louisiana's 64 parishes, ensuring Louisiana Veterans and their families receive the assistance they need right in their local community.

Each office is staffed by LDVA Veterans Assistance Counselors (VAC) who are trained and certified through U. S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to assist Veterans with all aspects of their Federal and State benefits.

VACs are usually a Veterans first point of contact for benefits and eligibility questions and all information remains strictly confidential.

Veterans are encouraged to make a permanent copy of their Certificate of Release or Discharge (DD214) from active duty by recording it with their home parish courthouse. Louisiana law protects the confidentiality of discharge papers.

Following is a complete listing of all LDVA Veterans Parish Service Offices.

LDVA Veterans Parish Service Offices Listing by Parish

Acadia 8:00–4:30 M/W/TH/F	Clyde Fuselier 601 N. Parkeron Ave. Crowley, LA 70526	Phone 337-788-7539 Fax 337-788-4987
Allen 9:00–3:30 1st T/3rd TH	Cecil Joubert 105 N. 5th Street Oberlin, LA 70655	Phone 337-639-4370 Fax 337-353-8416
Ascension 8:00–4:30 M/W/F	Stephen Henry Courthouse Annex Gonzales, LA	Phone 225-644-7475 Fax 225-647-6917
8:45–3:45 TH	Courthouse Bldg. Donaldsonville, LA	Phone 225-474-2001
Assumption 8:00–4:30 M/W/F	Dudley LeBlanc Courthouse Annex Napoleonville, LA 70390	Phone 985-369-6335 Fax 985-369-6058
Avoyelles 8:00–4:30 M/F	John Aymond 312 N. Main Street Marksville, LA 71351	Phone 318-253-9437 Fax 318-253-7996
Beauregard 8:30–4:00 W	Larry Tomasik Courthouse Building DeRidder, LA 70634	Phone 337-463-7305
Bienville 9:00–3:00 T/TH	Bruce Parker Courthouse, Rm.122 Arcadia, LA 71001	Phone 318-263-7419

Bossier 8:00–4:30 M–F	Harold Swanson Phone 318-741-8391 Shannon Hammond Fax 318-741-7470 2292 Barksdale Blvd. Bossier City, LA 71112
Caddo 8:00–4:30 M–F	Robert Petrus Phone 318-676-7540 Kara Jackson Fax 318-676-7555 1031 Creswell Ave. Shreveport, LA 71101
Calcasieu 8:00–4:30 M–F	Michael Palmer Phone 337-491-2309 Lawrence Tomasik Fax 337-491-2374 Courthouse (Ground Floor) Lake Charles, LA 70601
Caldwell 8:00–4:30 M/W/F	Kay Scott Phone 318-649-2552 Courthouse Fax 318-649-5930 Columbia, LA 71418
Cameron 8:00–4:30 1st/3rd W	Michael Palmer Phone 337-491-2309 Courthouse Fax 337-491-2374 Ground Floor Lake Charles, LA 70601
Catahoula 8:00–3:00 TH	Charles Kimball Phone 318-744-5601 Town Hall, 108 Sicily Street Harrisonburg, LA 71340
Claiborne 8:00–4:30 M/W/F	Bruce Parker Phone 318-927-3077 Police Jury Building Fax 318-927-4809 Homer, LA 71040

Concordia	Charles Kimball	Phone 318-757-4952
8:00–4:30	109 Doty Rd.	Fax 318-757-7159
M/W/F	Ferriday, LA 71334	
Desoto	Pamela Russell	Phone 318-872-4325
9:00–3:30	Courthouse	Fax 318-872-4325
T/TH	Mansfield, LA 71052	
E. Baton Rouge	Ernest Buckner	Phone 225-925-7268
8:00–4:30	Clayton Coleman	Fax 225-925-7270
M–F	4560 North Blvd., Ste 116	
	Baton Rouge, LA 70806	
East Carroll	Steve Clampit	Phone 318-559-2353
8:30–4:00	Old Courthouse Bldg.	
TH	Lake Providence, LA 71254	
East Feliciana	Tammie Delatte	Phone 225-634-5265
8:00–4:30	4739 Hwy. 10	Fax 225-342-6022
M/T/F	Jackson, LA 70748	
Evangeline	Cecil Joubert	Phone 337-363-3862
8:00–4:30	205 Court St., Ste D	Fax 337-363-3866
M/W/F	Ville Platte, LA 70586	
Franklin	Bobby Collins	Phone 318-435-2141
8:00–4:30	Courthouse, 1st Floor	Fax 318-435-2193
M/W/F	Winnsboro, LA 71295	
Grant	Paul Stewart	Phone 318-487-5743
8:00–4:30	730 Washington St.	Fax 318-484-2238
W	Alexandria, LA 71301.	

Iberia Angela Doffoney Phone 337-373-0001
8:00–4:30 121 West Pershing St. Fax 337-373-0088
M–F New Iberia, LA 70560

Iberville Glenda Russ Phone 225-687-2714
8:45–3:45 Parish Ag. Bldg, Rm 10 Fax 225-685-0188
T/TH Plaquemine, LA 70764

Jackson Paul Doughty Phone 318-259-2100
8:30–4:00 322 6th Street
T/TH Jonesboro, LA 71251

Jefferson (East) William Shoucair Phone 504-731-4580
8:00–4:30 Yenni Bldg Fax 504-731-4582
M–F 1221 Elwood Park Blvd.
Suite 337
Metairie, LA 70003

Jefferson (West) David Holcombe Phone 504-349-5937
8:00–4:30 5001 West Bank Exp. Fax 504-349-5939
M–F Marrero, LA 70072

Jefferson Davis Chuck Davidson Phone 337-824-7301
8:00–4:30 Eastside Parish Crthse. Fax 337-824-1580
M/W/F Jennings, LA 70546

Lafayette John Hansen Phone 337-262-5628
8:00–4:30 Tim Trahan Fax 337-262-1225
M–F War Memorial Bldg.
Lafayette, LA 70501

LaFourche Desiree Jones Phone 985-447-0968
8:00–4:30 303 West Third St. Fax 985-449-5104
M–F Thibodaux, LA 70301

LaSalle Kay Scott Phone 318-992-2259
8:45–3:45 Courthouse, Rm. 21
M/W/F Jena, LA 71342

Lincoln 8:00–4:30 M/W/F	Shane Renwick Phone 318-251-4142 307 Homer St., 2nd Fl. Fax 318-251-4172 Ruston, LA 71270
Livingston 8:00–4:30 M–TH	Billy Brewer Phone 225-664-2950 8393 Florida Blvd. Fax 225-664-2949 Denham Springs, LA 70726
Madison 8:00–4:30 M/T/W/F	Steve Clampit Phone 318-574-3870 402 E. Green St. Fax 318-574-8786 Tallulah, LA 71282
Morehouse 8:00–4:30 M/W/F	Gary Haas Phone 318-283-0841 N. Franklin & E. Pine Fax 318-283-0891 Bastrop, LA 71220
Natchitoches 8:00–4:30 M/W/TH/F	Grant Bowden Phone 318-357-3106 203 Denis St. Fax 318-357-2428 Natchitoches, LA 71457
Orleans 8:00–3:30 M/T/W	Lloyd Cole Phone 504-658-2930 517 N. Rampart St. Fax 504-658-2931 5th Floor New Orleans, LA 70112
Ouachita 8:00–4:30 M–F	Paul Fontenot Phone 318-362-5137 Robert Hennington Fax 318-362-3088 704 Cypress St. West Monroe, LA 71291
Plaquemines 9:00—3:30 T	Kenny Witcherich 106 Avenue G Belle Chase, LA 70037
Pointe Coupee 9:00–3:30 W/TH	Tammie Delatte Phone 225-638-5535 206 Court St. Fax 225-638-5964 New Roads, LA 70760

Rapides 8:00–4:30 M–F	Thomas Lindsay Paul Stewart 730 Washington St. Alexandria, LA 71301	Phone 318-487-5743 Fax 318-484-2238
Red River 8:30–4:00 T	Grant Bowden Courthouse Annex Coushatta, LA 71019	Phone 318-932-4911
Richland 8:00–3:30 T/TH	Bobby Collins Courthouse Basement Rayville, LA 71269	Phone 318-728-2472
Sabine 8:00–4:30 M/W/F	Pamela Russell Courthouse, 1st Floor Many, LA 71449	Phone 318-256-4131 Fax 318-256-4131
St. Bernard 8:00–4:30 M–F	Kenneth Witcherich 8201 W. Judge Perez Chalmette, LA 70043	Phone 504-355-4468 Fax 504-355-4469
St. Charles 8:30 - 4:00 T/TH	Craig Street Courthouse Hahnville, LA 70057	Phone 985-783-2221 Fax 985-425-2791
St. Helena 8:45–3:45 F	Billy Brewer Courthouse Square Greensburg, LA 70441	Phone 225-222-6202
St. James 9:30–3:30 T	Dudley LeBlanc 2430 Louisiana Ave. Luther, LA 70071	Phone 225-869-3643
St. John 8:00–4:30 M-F	Craig Street 4080 W. Airline Hwy Reserve, LA 70084	Phone 985-479-4080 Fax 985-479-4090

St. Landry Janice Brown Phone 337-948-0238
8:00–4:30 Brian Martin Fax 337-948-0375
M–F 527 E. Prudhomme St., Ste. 4
Opelousas, LA 70570

St. Martin Brian Martin Phone 337-332-8316
8:30–4:00 101 Berard St. Fax 337-507-3286
T/TH Breaux Bridge, LA 70517

St. Mary Joseph Veeder Phone 337-828-5047
8:00–4:30 Courthouse Rm. 1 Fax 337-828-7099
M–F Franklin, LA 70538

St Tammany (W) Matt Cole Phone 985-893-6201
8:00–4:30 Old Courthouse Fax 985-893-6299
M–F Covington, LA 70433

St. Tammany (E) Rolf Klingenberg Phone 985-645-3500
8:00–4:30 520 Old Spanish Trail Fax 985-645-3528
M–F Slidell, LA 70458

Tangipahoa Carrie Morgan Phone 985-542-3498
8:00–4:30 411 W. Coleman Ave. Fax 985-543-4030
M–F Hammond, LA 70401

Tensas Charles Kimball Phone 318-766-3542
9:00–3:30 Police Jury Bldg.
T St. Joseph, LA 71366

Terrebonne Murphy Duplantis Phone 985-857-3626
8:00–4:30 Parish Gov. Towers Fax 985-857-3783
M–F Houma, LA 70360

Union Shane Renwick Phone 337-893-2072
8:30–4:00 Courthouse Annex Fax 337-368-1330
T/TH Farmerville, LA 71241

Vermilion 8:00–4:30 M–F	Barry Robinson 407 Charity St. Abbeville, LA 70510	Phone 337-893-2072 Fax 337-893-5620
Vernon 8:00–4:30 M/T/TH/F	Yurie Crockett Courthouse Square Leesville, LA 71446	Phone 337-238-6401 Fax 337-238-7021
Washington 8:00–4:30 M-F	John Miller City Hall Bld. Bogalusa, LA 70429	Phone 985-732-6607 Fax 985-732-6695
Webster 8:00–4:30 M-F	Charles Jackson 119 Pine St. Minden, LA 71055	Phone 318-371-3045 Fax 318-371-3331
W. Baton Rouge 8:00–4:30 F	Glenda Russ Courthouse Annex Port Allen, LA 70767	Phone 225-342-6686
West Carroll 8:30 - 4:00 T/TH	Gary Haas 706 East Main Oak Grove, LA 71263	Phone 318-428-2671 Fax 318-428-9767
West Feliciana 8:00–4:30 M/T/FR	Tammie Delatte 4739 Hwy. 10 Jackson, LA 70748	Phone 225-634-5265 Fax 225-342-6022
Winn 8:00–4:30 M/W/F	Paul Doughty Courthouse Winnfield, LA 71483	Phone 318-628-4584 Fax 318-628-2508



Education Benefits

A variety of state and federal education benefits are available to Louisiana Veterans and their dependents.

Contact the Veterans Parish Service Office nearest you and/or the designated Veterans representative at the learning institute of your choosing to learn about specific programs and services that may be offered beyond those listed in this booklet.

Information on federal educational benefits can be found at 1-888-GI-BILL (1-888-442-4551) and at gibill.va.gov.

POST-9/11 GI BILL

Eligibility Requirements:

Only active-duty service performed after September 11, 2001 may be considered for determining eligibility for the benefit. The program's effective date is August 1, 2009; tuition and fees are paid directly to the institution, not to the student. To be eligible, a service member or Veteran must have:

- Served at least 90 aggregate days on active-duty after September 11, 2001, to earn 40% of the benefit, and served at least 36 months to earn 100% of the benefit;

- Been honorably discharged or been honorably discharged for a service-connected disability (and served 30 continuous days after September 11, 2001).
- Transfer of education entitlement benefits to spouse or dependent while on active duty

CHAPTER 33–9/11

As amended effective August 1, 2011 and October 1, 2011

- Pays all public costs including for Masters Degrees and Doctorate programs
- Private school costs capped at \$17,500 (except for Yellow Ribbon Program)
- Prorates housing allowance to training time (i.e. training at 3/4 time = 3/4 housing allowance)
- Pays housing allowance for those solely in distance learning programs
- Covers National Guard members on state duty (Title 32)
- Eliminates interval payments
- Expands coverage to non-college degree programs, on-the-job-training, apprenticeship, and flight
- Expand reimbursement to multiple licensing and certification tests
- Allows vocational rehabilitation participants to elect the higher housing allowance offered by Post 9/11 GI Bill if otherwise eligible for Post 9/11 GI Bill
- Pays books stipend to Active Duty members
- Pays housing allowance rate changes beginning in August in lieu of January
- Provides transfer of entitlement benefits to public health service and NOAA personnel

The Yellow Ribbon GI Education Enhancement Program (Yellow Ribbon Program)

This program allows institutions of higher learning (degree-granting institutions) in the United States to voluntarily enter into an agreement with VA to fund tuition and fees. The institution can waive up to 50% of tuition and fees, and VA will match.

Who is eligible for the Yellow Ribbon Program?

Only individuals entitled to the maximum benefits rate (based on service time post-9/11) may receive 100% Yellow Ribbon benefits..

Visit gibill.va.gov or call 1-888-442-4551 for additional information.

MONTGOMERY GI BILL —ACTIVE DUTY (CHAPTER 30)

This program provides up to 36 months of educational benefits to eligible Veterans and currently pays up to \$1,321 per month for a full-time student. It is for both degree and vocational programs, certificates or correspondence courses, independent study programs, apprenticeship/on-the-job training , flight training programs, licenses and certifications, and even remedial and refresher courses, under certain circumstances.

**MONTGOMERY GI BILL –SELECTED RESERVE
(CHAPTER 1606)**

The MGIB-SR program may be available to members of the Selected Reserve. The Selected Reserve includes the Army Reserve, Navy Reserve, Air Force Reserve, Marine Corps Reserve, Coast Guard Reserve, Army National Guard, and Air National Guard. The benefit may be used for degree and certificate programs, flight training, apprenticeship/on-the-job training, and correspondence courses. Remedial, deficiency, and refresher courses may be approved under certain circumstances.

**RESERVE EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
("REAP," or "CHAPTER 1607")**

REAP was established as a part of the Ronald W. Reagan National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2005. It is a new Department of Defense education benefit program designed to provide educational assistance to members of the Reserve components called or ordered to active duty in response to a war or national emergency (contingency operation) as declared by the President or Congress. This new program makes certain reservists who were activated for at least 90 days after September 11, 2001, eligible for education benefits (or increased benefits).

VEAP – ACTIVE DUTY (CHAPTER 32)

VEAP is available to those who first entered active-duty between January 1, 1977, and June 30, 1985, and elected to make contributions from military pay to participate in the education benefit program. Contributions are matched by the government on a \$2 for \$1 basis. The benefit may be used for degree and certificate programs, flight training, apprenticeship/on-the-job training, and correspondence courses. Remedial, deficiency, and refresher courses may be approved under certain circumstances.

SURVIVORS AND DEPENDENTS EDUCATION (CHAPTER 35)

DEA provides education and training opportunities to eligible dependents of Veterans who are permanently and totally disabled due to a service-related condition or who died while on active duty or as a result of a service related condition. The program offers up to 45 months of education benefits. The benefits may be used for degree programs, and on-the-job training. Spouses may take correspondence courses. Remedial, deficiency, and refresher courses may be approved under certain circumstances.

LOUISIANA'S TITLE 29 DEPENDENTS'

EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE

This state benefit provides educational assistance to surviving spouses of certain deceased or disabled war Veterans. The benefit also includes children of Veterans rated with a 100% service-connected disability. In 1997, the benefit was amended to include children of Veterans rated with at least a 90% service-connected disability. In 1999, the benefit was amended again to include children of Veterans rated with a 100% service-connected disability due to individual un-employability.

LA NATIONAL GUARD TUITION EXEMPTION

Members are exempt from tuition at any state-funded college, university, or vocational/technical school for five years or a bachelor's degree, whichever comes first. For more information, please visit la.ngb.army.mil, or call 1-800-GOGUARD.

VA WORK STUDY PROGRAM

Full-time or 3/4 -time students in a college degree program or a vocational or professional program can earn while they learn with a VA Workstudy allowance. The VA Workstudy allowance is available to persons training under: The Post -9/11 GI Bill (Chapter 33), Montgomery GI Bill-Active Duty (Chapter 30), Vocational Rehabilitation (Chapter 31), VEAP (Chapter 32), Dependents' Educational Assistance Program (Chapter 35), and Montgomery GI Bill-Selected Reserve (Chapter 1606 and 1607).



Employment Assistance

Business and Career Solution Centers

laworks.net

1-800-259-5154

The Louisiana Workforce Commission operates local business and career solution centers to assist Veterans in finding employment and making career choices. For a complete listing of centers, go to laworks.net . For a complete staff listing of Veterans services and staff, go to:

http://www.laworks.net/WorkforceDev/VeteransServices/Vet_Main.asp

Federal VETBIZ

vetbiz.gov

1-866-584-2344

VA's Center for Veterans Enterprise helps Veterans interested in forming or expanding small businesses and helps VA contracting offices identify Veteran-owned small businesses. For more information, visit vetbiz.gov or call toll-free 1-866-584-2344.

LAVETBIZ

vetaffairs.la.gov

1-877-GEAUX-VA

LAVETBIZ is a business initiative established to provide additional opportunities for Louisiana based Veteran and service connected disabled Veteran-owned small business owners when they seek to work with the State of Louisiana. LAVETBIZ is supported by compliance mandates which are enforced through the Louisiana Division of Administration. Please contact LDVA to learn more about this program: vetaffairs.la.gov or call toll free 1-877-GEAUX-VA.

Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Chapter 31)

vba.va.gov/bln/vre/vrs.htm

1-888-442-4551

The Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Program helps Veterans with service-connected disabilities prepare for, find, and keep jobs. For Veterans with service-connected disabilities so severe that they cannot immediately consider work, the program offers services to improve their ability to live as independently as possible.

Service-connected or non-military disabling condition(s), contact the local Veterans employment representative (LVER) or disabled veterans out-reach specialist (DVOP). For a listing of locations, go to <http://www.lwc.la.gov> (veterans services) or http://www.laworks.net/Downloads/WFD/Vet_StaffLocations.pdf.



Uniformed Services Employment and

Reemployment Rights Act

dol.gov/vets/programs/userra

Phone: 225-389-0339

FAX (225) 342-3152

The Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) is a federal statute that provides job protections and employment rights to military service personnel who serve on military duty.

Veterans Employment and Training Service (VETS) staff provides technical assistance to Veterans, National Guard members, and Reservists who experience conflicts between their military commitments and civilian employment. VETS staff also assist employers by providing information about the USERRA statute and explaining employer and employee responsibilities as well as military leave policies.

In addition, the statute also covers discrimination in hiring due to the service member's military obligation.

(continued on next page)

When an alleged violation of the USERRA statute exists, a complaint may be filed with VETS. An investigation is conducted, and mediation is attempted in an effort to formally resolve the issue.

To qualify for a claim, the uniformed service member must:

- Provide advance notice of his military leave of absence to his employer and meet the duration of military service requirements
- Serve in the military under honorable conditions
- Request reinstatement within the prescribed time limit

For more information regarding USERRA, please visit: dol.gov/vets/programs/userra .

Assistance can be provided by the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserves at 1-800-336-4590 or the U.S. Department of Labor's Veterans Employment and Training Service (VETS), located in the Louisiana Workforce Commission Administration Building, Room 184, at 1001 North 23rd Street, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70802.
Phone: 225-389-0339
Fax: 225- 342-3152

State and Federal Civil Service Preference

State Civil Service

Article X of the Louisiana Constitution provides a five-point hiring preference to honorably discharged wartime Veterans who served in the United States Armed forces between the following dates:

Apr 6, 1917, through Nov 11, 1918	Sep 27, 1940, through Jul 25, 1947
Jun 25 1950, through Jan 31, 1955	Jul 1, 1958, through May 7, 1975
Aug 2, 1990, through date to be deter- mined	Service requires appropriate campaign medals

(continued on next page)

A ten point hiring preference is accorded to each honorably discharged Veteran (peacetime or wartime) who has one or more service connected disabilities, as established by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. In certain circumstances, the ten point hiring preference can be utilized by the disabled Veteran's spouse, widow, or parent. The Veterans preference also extends to layoffs over other non-Veteran employees with equal lengths of service and efficiency ratings.

Federal Civil Service

Federal law also grants a 5-and 10-point preference to Veterans applying for federal jobs.

The requirements are similar to the state requirements above. For specific information, please visit the federal Office of Personnel Management Web site at: <http://www.opm.gov/veterans/html/vetguide.asp#2>
or call (202) 606-1800.

Veterans as Apprentices

laworks.net
608-266-3132

The Louisiana Workforce Commission, Apprenticeship Division, provides information on Louisiana apprenticeship programs. Interested parties should call 225-342-3111
or visit http://www.laworks.net/ApprenticeshiAPP_MainMenu.asp .



Troops to Teachers

proudtoserveagain.com

1-800-761-3012

Troops to Teachers (TTT) is a U.S. Department of Education and Department of Defense program managed by the Defense Activity for Non Traditional Education Support (DANTES) with support offices in states across the country. The primary objective is to help recruit quality teachers for schools that serve students from low-income families and to relieve teacher shortages, especially in math, science, special education, and other critical subject areas.

TTT provides information, advice and funding to eligible Veterans, Reservists, and active-duty personnel who are about to leave active service and want to pursue teaching as a second career. In Louisiana, the state TTT office operates under LDVA.

Financial assistance may be in the form of stipends of up to \$5,000 to help pay for teacher certification programs or bonuses of \$10,000 for those who commit to teach in schools serving a high percentage of students from low-income families. (continued on next page)

Participants who accept a stipend or bonus must agree to teach for three years in districts/schools that serve a qualifying percentage of students from low-income families and must obtain licensure/certification within that time frame.

Teacher Certification

Louisiana's Department of Education Teacher Preparation site, teachlouisiana.net, offers a variety of pathways that lead to a teaching career in Louisiana and offers the ability to view a listing of Louisiana's Approved Teacher Preparation Programs and listed positions.

Individuals who have previously earned a bachelor's degree may consider enrolling in an alternative certification program through which one may teach and work toward a Louisiana teaching certificate.

Prerequisites of each alternate teaching preparation program differ, but each program type requires a minimum of a bachelor's degree. Since Praxis exams are required for state certification, the exams are part of the admission standards as well as the completion standards of alternate programs. See ets.org/praxis for more information.

Complete details on program eligibility can be accessed at proudtoserveagain.com.



Federal Benefits

Claims Assistance

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) offers a variety of benefits including education, compensation, pension, housing, and health care. LDVA maintains a claims assistance office at the VA Regional Office in New Orleans as well as Veterans Parish Service Offices in each of Louisiana's 64 parishes. LDVA staff advise and assist Louisiana Veterans and their families in filing and pursuing claims with the federal VA in a number of ways including:

- Identifying what documentation is needed to support the best possible chance of having a VA claim approved
- Monitoring the claim as it is processed and interceding as needed if problems arise.
- Explain and clarify VA procedures as they apply to claims
- If a Veteran's claim is denied by the VA and the Veteran disagrees with the denial, LDVA staff will assist the Veteran through the appeals process.

A listing of the types of benefits available through VA can be found on the next page.

Disability Compensation

A payment to Veterans who are disabled by injury or disease incurred, or aggravated as a result of military service.

Pension

Financial support for Veterans with limited income when they have 90 days or more of active-duty military service, one day of which was during a wartime period. To qualify, a Veteran must be permanently and totally disabled for reasons traceable neither to military service nor to willful misconduct or must be over 65 years of age. The Veteran must have been discharged from active-duty service under conditions other than dishonorable.

Vocational Rehabilitation

Employment assistance, training, and education are available for Veterans who were released from service under conditions other than dishonorable and have service connected disabilities.

Health Care Benefits

Medical treatment and hospital care for veterans with service connected disabilities and others who meet VA eligibility criteria.

Education Benefits

Montgomery GI Bill benefits for former active-duty service persons and eligible members of the Reserve Components.

Burial Benefits

Including burial in state or federal Veterans' cemeteries. Headstones, markers or medallions may be provided for burials in private cemeteries.

VA Guaranteed Home Loans

May be used by Veterans and unmarried surviving spouses of those who died of a service-connected disease or disability, to purchase or refinance a home.

Federal VA Compensation and Pension

vba.va.gov

1-800-827-1000

The Veterans Benefits Administration provides information on compensation and pension as well as education, vocational rehabilitation, home loans, survivor benefits, and life insurance. Benefit information for returning Veterans of Operation Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom, benefit fact sheets, and a federal benefits booklet for Veterans and dependents are available.



Outreach

vetaffairs.la.gov
1-877-GEAUX-VA

Women Veterans

Special programs and services are available for women Veterans. To learn more about these programs or to become actively involved, contact LDVA at 1-877-GEAUX-VA or online at vetaffairs.la.gov .

Homeless Veterans

Transitional housing is provided, with access to services focused on education and training, employment, health care, obtaining Veterans benefits, counseling and legal assistance. Program operations entail an initial intake and assessment and case management plan development to provide an array of support services. To apply for assistance or to receive additional information, please contact your local LDVA Veterans Parish Service Office (full listing enclosed).

Incarcerated Veterans

LDVA is committed to providing services to incarcerated Veterans and collaborates with the Louisiana Department of Corrections and VA in providing post-release benefits counseling, training and employment opportunities.



Louisiana Veterans Homes

LDVA proudly operates five state-of-the-art Veterans Homes across the state. Each home offers a variety of services including:

- Long-and short-term care
- Rehabilitative therapies
- Alzheimer's and Intermediate care
- Skilled Nursing
- Mental Health services
- Centralized Pharmacy Services
- And more

Veterans, their spouses and Gold Star parents are eligible for admission into the Veterans Homes if they are deemed to meet basic qualifying criteria.

For a listing of admission requirements, facility locations and contact information, please visit vetaffairs.la.gov or call toll free 1-877-GEAUX-VA.

Information on each facility is also located in the following pages in this guide.

**Louisiana Veterans Home
4739 Hwy 10
Jackson, LA 70748**

**Mr. Jon Salter, Administrator
Tel: (225) 634-5265
Fax: (225) 634-4057**

This 161 bed facility is located on 82 serene acres and offers a variety of amenities including two fishing ponds, a greenhouse, a nature trail, and a chapel. The staff provides complete medical care including skilled nursing, physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, Alzheimer/Dementia care, and transportation services.

Also located on the grounds of this facility is Liberty Hill Apartments for Senior Veterans.



**Northeast Louisiana Veterans
Home
6700 Hwy 165 North
Monroe, LA 71211**

**Mr. James “Ken” Houston, Administrator
Tel: (318) 362-4206
Fax: (318) 362-4241**

This 156 bed facility opened on December 3, 1996 and is located on 20 beautiful acres in north Monroe, Louisiana. It features a pecan grove, fishing pier, chapel, and huge picnic area and provides complete medical care including skilled nursing, physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, Alzheimer/Dementia care, and transportation services.



**Southwest Louisiana Veterans
Home
1610 Evangeline Rd
Jennings, LA 70546**

**Mr. Matthew Duhon, Administrator
Tel: (337) 824-2829
Fax: (337) 824-2581**

This 156 bed facility opened on November 14, 2004 and is located on 40 majestic acres in Jennings, Louisiana. Features include a 4 ½ acre fishing lake with pier, large chapel and an activities building complete with a sports and game lounge and provides complete medical care including skilled nursing, physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, Alzheimer/Dementia care, and transportation services.



**Northwest Louisiana Veterans
Home
3130 Arthur Ray Teague Pkwy
Bossier City, LA 71112**

**Mr. Byron N. Hines, Administrator
Tel: (318) 741-2763
Fax: (318) 741-2783**

This 156 bed state facility opened on April 9, 2007 and is located on 17 pristine acres in Bossier City, Louisiana. It offers a fishing lake with pier, a large chapel, and an activities building complete with a sports and game lounge as well as provides complete medical care including skilled nursing, physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, Alzheimer/ Dementia care, and transportation services .



**Southeast Louisiana Veterans
Home
4080 W. Airline Hwy
Reserve, LA 70084**

**Ms. Charlie A. Kelly, Administrator
Tel: (985) 479-4080
Fax: (985) 479-4090**

This 156 bed facility opened on June 4, 2007 and is located on 20 acres in Reserve, Louisiana. Only 27 miles from New Orleans, it is conveniently located next to the St. John's Parish Senior Citizens Center and the VA Community Based Outpatient Clinic. The facility offers a variety of amenities including a fishing lake and a large chapel, in addition to complete medical care including skilled nursing, physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, Alzheimer/Dementia care, and transportation services.



Louisiana Veterans Home



Chapel



Greenhouse



Gazebo

Fishing Pond



Veterans Cemeteries

LDVA Veterans Cemeteries

vetaffairs.la.gov

1-877-GEAUX-VA

LDVA currently operates two Veterans cemeteries which provide interment for Veterans and their dependents in a dignified and compassionate manner, commemorating their service to our country.

- Northwest Louisiana Veterans Cemetery located in Keithville near Shreveport
- Central Louisiana Veterans Cemetery located in Leesville

National Veterans Cemeteries

Alexandria National Cemetery
Visitation Only (no new interments)
209 E. Shamrock Ave.
Pineville, LA 71360

Baton Rouge National Cemetery
Visitation Only (no new interments)
220 North 19th Street
Baton Rouge, LA 70806

Port Hudson National Cemetery
20978 Port Hickey Road
Zachary, LA 70791
(225) 654-3767

Eligibility for Burial in Louisiana State Veterans Cemeteries

The military service requirement for burial in Louisiana state Veterans cemeteries must be in accordance with the eligibility standards as set by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, National Cemetery Administration. At a minimum, one must meet one of the following:

- Veteran was discharged from active-duty under other than dishonorable conditions
- Veteran died while serving on active-duty
- Veteran served at least 20 years in the National Guard or Reserves and qualified for military retirement pay (or would have qualified, except death occurred before age 60)

Spouses and dependent children of Veterans who were eligible for burial may also be interred in state Veterans cemeteries. Burial benefits may include the following: gravesites for casket or cremation remains, headstones or markers, opening and closing of the graves, and continued perpetual care. Burial of an eligible Veteran is at no cost to the Veteran. A fee is charged at the time of interment for spouses and dependent children of eligible Veterans.

Funeral Honors Program

The Military Funeral Honors Program assists families and funeral directors by providing and coordinating funeral honors for Veterans. Based on available resources, honors may include the presence of military members, folding and presentation of the flag, firing details, and the sounding of Taps.

For more information, contact the MFHP toll-free at 1 (877)944-6667.

A standard military honors ceremony consists of the firing of three rifle volleys, the sounding of "Taps," the folding of the flag, and the presentation of the flag to the next of kin. Each Veteran is entitled, by law and upon request, to at least two uniformed service personnel who will provide the basic honors. When arranging for military funeral honors, if the family desires military participation, they need to ensure their desires are expressed to their funeral director, who in turn will contact the MFHP for coordination of the honors. If no funeral director is involved, families may call the MFHP directly for assistance.

The MFHP provides funeral honors training, ammunition, and other honors assistance to Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs) upon request. The training includes both flag folding and rifle training.

For information or assistance contact MFHP toll free at 1-877-944-6667.

To contact Fort Polk CAC:

Phone: 337-531-7257/6316/1292

Toll free: 888-474-0377

Fax: 337-531-1770

E-mail: steve.humphries@US.army.mil
Casualty@Polk.Army.mil

Business hours: 8:30-4:00 M-F
1:00-2:00 S/SUN



Veterans Museums

National World War II Museum
945 Magazine Street
New Orleans, LA 70130
(504) 527-6012
nationalww2museum.org

Open daily 9am-5pm
Closed Mardi Gras Day, Thanksgiving Day,
Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

USS KIDD and Veterans Memorial
305 South River Road
Baton Rouge, LA 70802
(225) 342-1942
info@usskidd.com

Open daily 9am-5pm
Closed Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day

Louisiana Military Museum
201 Memorial Drive
Ruston, LA 71270
(318) 251-5099

Open M-F 10 am-6:30pm; Sat 10am-5pm; Sun
1pm-5pm
Free Admission

Chennault Aviation Museum
701 Kansas Lane
Monroe, LA 71203
(318) 362-5540

Open M-F, 9am-4:30pm; Sat and Sun, 1pm-4:30pm
Closed on Louisiana State holidays
Free Admission

Old Arsenal Museum
900 State Capitol Drive
Baton Rouge, LA 70802
(225) 342-0401
sos.louisiana.gov/museums

Open Tues-Sat 9am-4pm

LA Military Hall of Fame Museum
911 Revis Sirmon Loop
Abbeville, LA 70510
(337) 898-9645

Open Thurs–Sat 10:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.

8th Air Force Museum
88 Shreveport Road
Barksdale AFB, LA 71110
(318) 456-4171
8afmuseum.com

Open daily April-December, 9:30am–4pm
January–March, 9:30am–4pm, Mon–Sat
Closed Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, and New
Year’s Day



Tax Benefits

Special Property Assessment

The property value assessment (for the residential property receiving the homestead exemption) is frozen for Veterans rated with a 50% or greater service-connected disability whose 2009 adjusted gross income (and any other owner, such as a spouse) does not exceed \$64,655 and who own and occupy the residence. The same benefit is available to members of the U.S. Armed Forces and the Louisiana National Guard (who owned and last occupied such property) who are killed in action, or who are missing in action, or are a prisoner of war for a period exceeding ninety days.

In 2010, new legislation passed that allowed for a constitutional amendment which, upon approval of the voters of Louisiana, would double the Homestead Exemption for Louisiana disabled Veterans who own their own home from \$ 75,000 to \$150,000. Check with your local tax assessor's office to see if this exemption is available in your parish.

Military Retiree Pay Tax Exemption

Military retirement benefits are exempt from Louisiana state taxation.

Combat Pay Exemption

Military pay that is exempt from federal taxation, such as combat pay or hazardous duty pay, is also exempt from Louisiana state taxation.

Military Family Assistance Fund

State taxpayers can support Louisiana's National Guard and Reserve members called to active-duty on individual state income tax forms. For those interested in contributing to the Military Family Assistance Fund, there is a designated donation line on the tax form. Donations provide financial assistance for hardships created by the deployment of National Guard and Reserve members.

Louisiana National Guard Death/Disability Benefit

Louisiana National Guardsmen killed or suffering a permanent and total disability while on federal or state active duty on or after September 11, 2001, or the beneficiary of record of those killed in action may qualify for a \$250,000 death benefit or \$100,000 disability benefit from the State of Louisiana. To receive a claim form, beneficiaries of record of Louisiana National Guardsmen who were killed in action should contact:

Louisiana National Guard
Attn. The Adjutant General
Building 305
F Street
Camp Beauregard, LA 71360

Guardsmen who suffer a permanent and total disability should contact their local LDVA Veterans Parish Service Office to information on how to apply for the disability benefit.



Licensing Sportsman

“Support our Veterans” Louisiana License Plate

The new plate, which was established as House Bill 1204/Act 104 in the 2010 Legislative Session, is now available for purchase at all Louisiana State Office of Motor Vehicle locations, online at expresslane.org or by calling (225) 925-6146.

The available for purchase for a one-time fee of \$25 in addition to regular fees with proceeds going to the Military Family Assistance Fund.

Other Specialty Louisiana License Plates

- **Purple Heart Plates:** free to recipients of the Purple Heart Medal; issued in lieu of the regular Louisiana state plates. Recipients may be issues plates for each vehicle registered in his/her name. Plates are not subject to renewal requirements applicable to regular numbered plates.
- **Disabled Veterans Plates:** Free Disabled American Veteran (DAV) plates are available to any Louisiana Veteran who is at least 50% service-connected disabled.
- **“X POW” Plates:** Free upon application to any former prisoner of war in lieu of the regular Louisiana license plates. These plates feature “X POW” followed by an assigned number and are not subject to renewal requirements by the Louisiana Department of Public Safety.

- **Gold Star Family License Plates:** Available to immediate family members of armed forces members who were killed in action. The plate is issued in the same manner as other motor vehicle license plates. The applicant must present a copy of the service member's death certificate to the DMV. The charge for the plate is the same as for regular license plates and includes a handling fee of \$3.50.
- **Special Prestige License Plates for Certain Veterans and Retirees:** The Louisiana Legislature has authorized the Department of Motor Vehicles to issue prestige license plates to certain Louisiana Veterans and retired military veterans. These plates will be issued for use on any privately owned passenger car, pickup truck, or van of the veteran applicant. The cost of these plates is the same as the regular issue.
- Please visit <http://omv.dps.state.la.us> for a full listing of all available Veteran and military themed Louisiana license plates.

Hunting and Fishing Privileges: Free hunting and fishing licenses are offered to Louisiana Veterans with a 50% or higher service-connected permanent disability. Louisiana also grants resident status to active-duty service members when purchasing hunting and fishing licenses. Applications may be obtained and certified at LDVA Veterans Parish Service Offices.

Free Entrance to State Parks: Eligible Veterans are exempt from paying the day-use entrance fee to any Louisiana state park. Applications for this exemption may be obtained by contacting LDVA Veterans Parish Service Offices.



Other Programs

Military Family Assistance Fund (MFA)

Provides assistance to members of the Louisiana National Guard or Reserves and their families to help address financial hardships experienced when they are placed on active-duty status for 30 or more consecutive days. To learn more, donate to MFA or to apply for funds, please visit vetaffairs.la.gov or call toll free 1-877-GEAUX-VA.

Louisiana Veterans Honor Medal Program

Authorized by the 2008 Louisiana Legislature as a way to honor, thank and recognize Louisiana Veterans for their honorable military service. To learn more or to apply for your Louisiana Veterans Honor Medal, please visit vetaffairs.la.gov or call toll free 1-877-GEAUX-VA.

LA Welcome Home

Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program

LDVA welcomes all returning service members home from their service to our country with information on available services and benefits and participates in the Department of Defense Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program.



Veterans Service Organization

The American Legion

Mathew Farlow, Department Adjutant
602 North 5th Street
Baton Rouge, LA 70802
(225) 219-1945
adjutant@lalegion.org

AMVETS

Marion Polk
3409 England Drive
Alexandria, LA 71301
(318) 308-6500

American Ex-Prisoners of War

Beth Dawson, Department Commander
bdawson@aol.com

Disabled American Veterans

Charles Holdeman, Department Adjutant
602 North 5th Street
Baton Rouge, LA 70802
(225) 925-8396
adjutant@davdol.org

Military Order of the Purple Heart

Richard Garner
111 Falcon Drive
Bossier City, LA 71111
(318) 746-5724
rbgarner@bellsouth.net

Louisiana Veterans Coalition

Robert Griffith, Secretary/PIO

1786 Glendale Road

DeRidder, LA 70634

(337) 208-8742

griffithgrp@hotmail.com

Veterans of Foreign Wars

Department Adjutant

Precilla Wilkewitz

10185 Mammoth Avenue

Baton Rouge, LA 70814

225/928-5025

225/928-5095 (FAX)

lavfw@aol.com

Blue Star Mothers/Gold Star Mothers

Linda Furr

P.O. Box 318110

Baton Rouge, LA 70831

Phone: (225) 683-5071

lcfurr@hotmail.com

OEF/OIF

Eleanor Chapitol

1515 Poydras St.

Suite 1280

New Orleans, LA 70112

(504) 566-8478

Korean War Veterans

James Morrison

5811 Dutton Ave.

Baton Rouge, LA 70805

(225) 357-3815

Vietnam Veterans of America

Dennis Andras

3505 Lake Arrowhead

Harvey, LA 70058

(504) 382-0682

buck101st1@aol.com

PVA

Wayne Blackwell

29655 Prokop Rd.

Albany, LA 70711

(985) 974-2558

blackwell2@charter.net



U.S. Department Of Veterans Affairs

Federal VA Health Care

va.gov/health

1-877-222-8387

The Veterans Health Administration website provides information on health care benefits, health programs, facility locations, and patient information. VA also provides nursing home services to Veterans through three national programs: VA owned and operated nursing homes; state owned and operated Veterans homes; and the community nursing home program.

The Louisiana Department of Disabled American Veterans operates several vans around the state to assist Veterans who need help getting to VA medical appointments. For information about van pick-up sites in their area, contact:

- In Alexandria, LA: hospital service coordinator, 1-800-375-8387 ext. 12709
- In Shreveport, LA: hospital service coordinator at 1-800-863-7441 ext. 17025

VA Regional Office

701 Loyola Ave.
New Orleans, LA 70113
1-800-827-1000

VA Medical Centers

VA Medical Center, Alexandria
P.O. Box 69004
Alexandria, LA 71306
(318) 473-0010
1-800-375-8387

VA Medical Center, Shreveport
510 E. Stoner Avenue
Shreveport, LA 71101
(318) 221-8400
1-800-863-7441

VA Outpatient Clinics

VA Outpatient Clinic, Baton Rouge
7968 Essen Park Ave.
Baton Rouge, LA 70809
(225) 761-3400

VA Outpatient Clinic, Jennings
1907 Johnson St.
Jennings, LA 70546
(337)824-1000

VA Outpatient Clinic, Lafayette
2100 Jefferson St, Suite 102A
Lafayette, LA 70501
337-261-0734

VA Outpatient Clinic, Hammond
1135 South Morrison Ave
Hammond, LA 70403
985-902-5100

VA Outpatient Clinic, Houma
1750 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd
Houma, LA 70360
985-851-0188

VA Outpatient Clinic, Monroe
250 DeSiard Plaza Dr
Monroe, LA 71203
800-832-3525; 318-343-6100

VA Outpatient Clinic, Reserve
4080 West Airline Hwy
Reserve, LA 70084
504-565-4705

VA Outpatient Clinic, Slidell
300/340 Gateway Dr
Slidell, LA 70461
985-690-2626

VA Dental Clinic
VA Dental Clinic
801 Park Place
Mandeville, LA 70448
800-935-8387

Vet Centers

Baton Rouge Vet Center
5207 Essen Park, Suite 2
Baton Rouge, LA 70809
(225) 761-3440

Kenner Vet Center
2200 Veterans Blvd., Suite 114
Kenner, LA 70062
(504) 565-4977

Shreveport Vet Center
2800 Youree Drive
Building 1, Suite, 105
Shreveport, LA 71104
(318) 861-1776

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