

Veterans Discounts

Last year the VA's Veterans Canteen Service (VCS) launched an online shopping site exclusively available to Veterans enrolled in the VA, their families and VA employees. It requires the Veteran to register for the service, during registration, you must show proof of military service such as DD214, VA card, license showing Veteran status. I signed up in less than five minutes. I used my DD214 but crossed out my social security number. It is a smart idea to not give out your SSN to anyone. I did some checking on items and found them very competitive. I compared some computer items to Amazon prices and found them to be almost the same. The site is shopvcs.com. Products sold on shopvcs.com include sportswear, jewelry, home décor, electronics, and military items. Also available are ticketing and travel services such as deals for hotels, theme parks, concert tickets and more. As always, make sure you compare prices before purchasing. Many businesses offer discounts, here are a few.

Home Depot also offers a Veterans discount of 10% for all purchases, with a maximum discount of \$500 per year. I signed up for this program a couple years ago when I needed some new home appliances. It was rather easy, I showed my VA medical card and received a discount the same day. I created an account with Home Depot and all I have to do my is give the check-out person my phone number and get the discount. Lowes also offers a 10% discount but their program is slightly different, you much sign up on-line for personal shopping card. It is not a credit card but does verify your Veteran status.

Although I've not used it, CVS Pharmacy offers a VetRewards Card with a 20% discount when you shop online at cvs.com. According to their website, "You're eligible to receive Veterans Advantage discounts if you've served in any branch of service or during any period of service, both wartime and peacetime. Next of kin — spouse, mother, father, brother, sister, son or daughter — also can join."

Cabela's website offers "the active military, veterans, retirees, National Guardsmen and Reservists of our Armed Forces a 5% discount every day, year-round at U.S. Cabela's and Bass Pro Shops stores, simply present proper ID at checkout. Exclusions apply*." This is another discount I've not used but might be of interest to Veterans. Proof of service is by VA card, driver's license, if it shows Veteran status or DD 214.

Minnesota and North Dakota offer the option of having an indicator of Veteran status on their driver's license. In order to get the designation, you must provide a DD214 showing honorable service and may have to pay an extra fee. ND license shows a V next to the state flag. MN license has the word Veteran below the smaller photo image. Related to licenses, all states must be compliant with the Real ID Act by October 2020. Real IDs will then be required for boarding an airplane or obtaining access to some federal buildings.