

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

New Mexico State Park Lifetime Veteran Pass

Effective July 1, 2025, New Mexico resident veterans, as defined by [House Bill 161](#), will be eligible for a lifetime pass good for day-use and camping access to all New Mexico State Parks. The New Mexico State Parks Division (NMSP) is partnering with the Department of Veterans Services (NMDVS) to develop and implement this new benefit.

What is House Bill 161?

[House Bill 161](#) created a new veteran benefit providing all New Mexico resident veterans free access to state parks, including day-use and camping access at all locations operated by the State Parks Division of the Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department. This bill was introduced in the 2025 legislative session and signed into law by Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham.

What is the NMSPs Lifetime Veteran Pass

To comply with the requirements of House Bill 161, the State Parks Division in cooperation with the Department of Veterans Services developed a pass that allows New Mexico resident veterans free day-use and camping access to all New Mexico's state parks. The pass is a hang-tag pass that when displayed on the rearview mirror of a vehicle allows the holder free access to state parks.



What does the NM State Parks Lifetime Veteran Pass cover at New Mexico State Parks?

The State Parks Lifetime Veteran Pass grants the holder free day-use and camping access to state parks operated by the State Parks Division. The Lifetime Veteran Pass will cover the regular day-use fee, camping fee, and utility fees for the pass holder. This pass can be used to make campground reservations through the state park [central reservation system](#).

What is not covered by the NM State Parks Lifetime Veteran Pass?

- Reservation fees charged by our contract central reservation system are not covered by this pass. Passholders will be responsible for paying the reservation fee if using the central reservation system which ranges from \$3.50 to \$10.00 per reservation.
- Group shelter, group camping area, and rally site fees are not covered by this pass.
- Fees for special facilities such as event facilities, corrals, cabins, and yurts are not covered by this pass.

Can out-of-state veterans get the Lifetime Veteran Pass?

No. The new lifetime veterans pass is only available to New Mexico resident veterans.

What if I have a Federal Parks pass or Federal Military pass?

The Federal pass is not valid for New Mexico State Parks access.

What if I already have the annual disabled veterans pass for NMSPs, do I still have to reapply for the new pass?

Yes. The new application allows for validation of address and veteran status. It also allows the ability to exchange the current pass that is only valid for 1-year, for the lifetime pass.

Will my disabled veterans pass for the NM State Parks continue to be accepted?

Yes. NMSPs will continue to accept the passes issued in 2025 to our disabled veterans through the date of expiration in 2026. Once it expires, they will need to contact NMDVS to obtain the new lifetime pass.

Where and how can Veterans apply for a pass?

The Department of Veterans Services (NMDVS) will issue these passes. Veterans interested in taking advantage of this benefit should contact NMDVS for more information.

Who should I contact with questions about the pass?

Veterans can reach out to the NMDVS for inquiries about eligibility, applications, or general information. Call: 1-866-433-8387, email: vet.benefits@dvs.nm.gov, visit: <https://www.nmdvs.org/> or click this [link](#) to go directly to the [application](#).

Can family members use the pass?

No. The pass is issued specifically to the veteran and is non-transferable.

How long does it take to receive the pass after applying?

Processing times vary depending on the submission method.

- Walk-in applicants with a completed application can receive their pass the same day.
- Applicants who submit their application by postal mail or electronically can expect to receive their pass within 14 days after receiving all the required documentation below:

Required Documentation to apply for the pass:

1. A completed application form; AND
2. A copy of DD 214 (Report of Separation) for military veterans; NOAA Form 56-16 for Commissioned Officers discharged from NOAA; and PHS Form 1867 for Uniformed Officers discharged from PHS, or equivalent Department of Defense document (NOTE: any Department of Defense Document, submitted in lieu of a DD 214, which does not verify dates and character of service will not be accepted); AND
3. Proof of New Mexico residency
 - Copy of Current New Mexico Driver's License/ NM State issued picture ID.
 - Copy of Current NM Voter's Registration
 - Latest copy of a New Mexico State Income Tax Return

Why must the Veteran sign the pass?

The signature establishes agreement to terms and conditions for use.

Can pass holders get a refund if a Veteran/Military Annual Camping Pass was purchased before July 1, 2025?

No. Refunds will not be made for annual camping passes already purchased.

How does this impact the Active-Duty Military Annual Camping Pass that State Parks already offers?

The Active-Duty Military/Veteran Annual Camping Pass (ACP) will be changed to just an Active-Duty Military ACP. New Mexico Resident Veterans will no longer need to purchase an ACP as the new Lifetime Veteran Pass will cover their camping fees. New Mexico resident active-duty military personnel will still be eligible to purchase the discounted ACP at \$150.00 per year.

Are reservations still required for camping?

Yes. Reservations are still required for camping at many New Mexico State Parks through [ReserveAmerica](#). Some parks offer walk up campsites with no reservation required. Please verify with the state park you wish to visit prior to travel.

Are reservation fees also free if scheduled on Reserve America website?

No. Reservation fees will still be charged by the contract central reservation system to provide reservation services for the New Mexico State Parks.

How will the reservation system know if I have a NM State Parks Lifetime Veteran pass?

Each Veteran will receive detailed instructions on how to link and input their pass in the [ReserveAmerica](#) system to ensure all benefits are granted to the user.

How many days of camping will the NM State Parks Lifetime Veteran Pass allow?

The Veteran Pass does not have a limit on use. However, there are rules that impose limits on stay at individual parks. Those limits apply to all passes, including the NM State Parks Lifetime Veteran Pass.

Stay limits are:

From May 1st to September 30th campers may reside in a park for a maximum of seven (7) days out of any 20-day period.

From October 1st through April 30th campers may reside in a park for a maximum of fourteen (14) days out of any 20-day period.

Campers must completely remove camping equipment and gear from the park after reaching the maximum stay limit.

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