

Membership Eligibility

To be eligible for membership in The American Legion, you must have been honorably discharged from the U.S. military and served at least one day on active duty in the following periods:

4/6/17 - 11/11/18

World War I

12/7/41 - 12/31/46

World War II

6/25/50 - 1/31/55

Korean War

2/28/61 - 5/7/75

Vietnam War

8/24/82 - 7/31/84

Lebanon and Grenada

12/20/89 - 1/31/90

Panama

8/2/90 - present (until cessation of hostilities as determined by the U.S. Government).

Persian Gulf

12/7/41 - present (new open eligibility period approved in 2019, until cessation of hostilities as determined by the U.S. Government)

Other

You are also eligible for membership if:

- Your basic training time was on federal activation orders and during the above periods.
- You were federally activated subsequent to and during any of the periods given above.
- Your activations were for training or for missions; check the title and subsection of your activation orders.

Under eligibility guidelines for Legion membership, the term "active duty" as used in our national constitution includes "active duty for training."

However, our guideline further defines National Guardsmen and reservists as eligible under services to federal activation orders Title 10, Subsection 672 or Subsection 12301, created following Desert Storm to replace Subsection 672. In other words, to determine eligibility for service members in the National Guard or reserves, the activation order is the authority line. Non-eligible activation orders are Title 32 for the National Guard and Title 10 Subsection 270 for the reserves.

ELIGIBILITY

The Let Everyone Get Involved in Opportunities for National Service Act of 2019 – The LEGION Act – offers American Legion membership eligibility to any U.S. military Veteran who served at least one day of active military duty since Dec. 7, 1941, and was honorably discharged or is serving now.

You are also eligible for membership if:

- Your basic training time was on federal activation orders and during the above period.
- You were federally activated subsequent to and during the period given above.
- Your activations were for training or for missions; check the title and subsection of your activation orders.

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Space Force

Per Title 36 of the US Code, Chapter 217, Section 21703,

An individual is eligible for membership in the corporation [The American Legion] only if the individual—

(1) has served in the Armed Forces of—

(A) the United States at any time during—

(i) the period from April 6, 1917, through November 11, 1918; or

(ii) any time after December 7, 1941; or

(B) a government associated with the United States during a period or time referred to in subclause (A) of this clause and was a citizen of the United States when the individual entered that service; and

(2) was honorably discharged or separated from that service or continues to serve honorably during or after that period or time.

The United States Space Force was created by the National Defense Authorization Act of 2020, signed by the President on December 20, 2019. It became Public Law No: 116-92,

“§9081. The United States Space Force

“(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established a United States Space Force as an armed force within the Department of the Air Force....

(c) SPACE FORCE AS AN ARMED FORCE.—Section 101(a)(4) of title 10, United States Code, is amended by inserting “Space Force,” after “Marine Corps,”.

Thus, as amended, Section 101(a)(4) of title 10, United States Code reads:

(4) The term “armed forces” means the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Space Force, and Coast Guard.

Therefore, as title 10 of the United States Code now includes Space Force as an “Armed Force” and our federally chartered membership criteria uses the same wording [“has served in the Armed Forces....any time after December 7, 1941”] there are no necessary acts required to extend membership to all who have served or continue to serve in the United States Space Force.