

The Purple Heart and Disabled Veterans Equal Access Act of 2018

The Act recognizes the service of those who endured captivity during conflict, were wounded in combat or sustained a service-connected disability and the individuals approved and designated as their caregivers under a formalized Department of Veterans Affairs caregiver program.

Effective January 1, 2020, the Department of Defense expanded commissary, exchange and morale, welfare and recreation (golf courses, bowling centers, recreational lodging, RV campgrounds, movie theaters) retail eligibility to:

- Purple Heart recipients
- Former prisoners of war
- All veterans with service-connected disabilities (0-90 percent disability ratings).
- Individuals approved and designated as the primary family caregivers of eligible veterans under the Department of Veterans Affairs Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers.

Purple Heart recipients, former prisoners of war, or veterans with VA-documented service-connected disability ratings of 0-90 percent) who have been issued a Veteran Health Identification Card from VA can present their VHIC to gain entry to DoD and Coast Guard installations and some commissary stores; and at point of sale at commissaries, exchanges and MWR retail activities to complete their transactions.

The VHIC must display the veteran's eligibility status (i.e., PURPLE HEART, FORMER POW or SERVICE CONNECTED).