

TEXAS MILITARY SPECIALTY LICENSE PLATE CHANGES

The 80th Texas legislature has improved vehicle licensing. Eight bills passed and were signed into law that will affect many Texas vets. SB11- creates new specialty plate designs; HB191 Standardized Military Specialty Plates and fees by category; SB0251 - Amended Disabled Veteran Parking Privileges; HB 2105 - Allows a Disabled Veteran two parking placards. New Military Specialty Plates were created by these bills: HB2282 - Legion of Merit; SB0274 - Silver Star and HB3857 - Gold Star Spouse and Gold Star Family. SB959 - Allows the International Symbol for Access, "ISA" (the wheelchair symbol) on all "specialty plates" produced by the State of Texas.

The Disabled Veteran (DV) plate has been a problem for some time. The use of that plate had its own volume of rules if the jurisdiction (city, county or government agency) allowed, the DV plate was permitted in "handicapped parking". The problem was - knowing which jurisdictions did and which jurisdictions didn't, was nearly a full time job.

If you are rated at 50% disabled by the Department of Veterans Affairs and receive compensation from the United States because of the disability, you may apply for the Disabled Veteran (DV) plate. If you are rated 40% disabled as a result of amputation of a lower limb you may also apply for the DV plate. A medical endorsement (doctor's signature) will allow you the ISA. The ISA can be applied to the DV plate or ANY OTHER specialty plate made by the State of Texas. There are two parts to this change: (1) The plate with the ISA can only have five characters. That may mean you may sacrifice "PH" on a Purple Heart plate to get the ISA. The Purple Heart Medal is present, the text "Purple Heart" is still on the plate. (2) The plate with the ISA is developed digitally so there is some flexibility.

House Bill 2105 allows the DV to apply for two disabled placards on the same form for which one applies for the DV plates. Those currently having two sets of DV plates may use the application to request the placards without going to a physician (Form VTR 615).

Senate Bill 0251 allows Disabled Veterans to park in any disabled parking space without the requirement of an ISA on the license plates or displaying a disabled person placard as long as the vehicle has DV license plates.

Four new plates were developed - Silver Star, Legion of Merit, Gold Star Spouse and Gold Star Family. Any and all specialty plates may now have the ISA. That includes the Congressional Medal of Honor, Legion of Valor, Silver Star, Congressional Delegation, National Guard ("Minute Man") and YES. The Gold Star Mother, Spouse or Family. You may request an application through the Vehicle Title and Registration Division's Special Registration Branch in Austin, their information number is (512) 374-5010. Applications for specialty plates are available for download at: www.txdot.gov.

TEXAS MILITARY PLATES - INCLUDING LATEST CHANGES

Level 1 - Meritorious Service

- Congressional Medal of Honor - Army Distinguished Cross - Distinguished Service Cross
- Navy Cross - Air Force Cross - Silver Star - Legion of Merit - Distinguished Flying Cross
No charge for first set of plates, additional set costs \$3.00, additional sets - cost of registration only, replacement sets are no charge, Legion of Merit and Distinguished Flying Cross plates (ONLY) may be personalized

Level 2 - Recognition Award

- Disabled Veteran - Prisoner of War - Pearl Harbor Survivor - Purple Heart
First set of plates costs \$3.00, additional sets - cost of registration only, replacement sets \$5.30 ea, Pearl Harbor Survivor and Purple Heart plates (ONLY) may be personalized (\$40 Fee)

Level 3 - Service Awards

- World War II Veteran - Korean War Veteran - Vietnam Veteran - Desert Shield/Storm Veteran -
Operation Iraqi Freedom Veteran - Operation Enduring Freedom Veteran - Armed Forces
- Texas National Guard - US Armed Forces Reserve - Airborne Parachutist -
US Armed Forces Auxiliary (Civil Air Patrol, Coast Guard Auxiliary, Marine Corps League)
Military Academies (US Military Academy, US Naval Academy, US Air Force Academy, West Point
First set of plates cost registration fees only, additional sets cost registration fees only, replacements are \$5.30 per set, Gold Star Mother/Family/Spouse may be personalized (\$40 fee)

Level 4 - Other Plates

- Surviving spouse of certain military vets (1 set only) same fee as required for specific plate of Vet
- Gold Star Mother/Family \$10 fees plus registration, replacements are \$5.30 per set
- Gold Star Mother/Family/Spouse may be personalized for an additional fee of \$40
Applications - Vehicle Titles & Registration Division's Special Registration Branch: www.txdot.gov.