

# 24/7 Wall St.: The Best Cities for Veterans

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## FULL TEXT

### Special Report

Whether they've fought in battle zones in far-off lands or stood ready to defend the nation during peacetime, veterans deserve our honor and respect.

In our divided nation, treating our veterans well is something we can agree all on. A 2018 Pew Research poll reported that 72% of Americans thought the federal budget should be increased for veteran benefits.

The Bureau of Veteran Affairs estimates that roughly 19 million veterans now live in the U.S. Gulf War veterans make up the largest group at 7.8 million, followed by Vietnam veterans at 5.9 million. (World War II vets number 240,000.)

Following discharge, those men and women face immense hurdles as they adapt to civilian life after decades serving in the military. Finding a job or receiving educational assistance to train for new employment can be difficult. Sadly, because many veterans return home with the physical and emotional scars of combat, they need affordable and readily accessible healthcare.

Even more upsetting, many veterans are unable to secure affordable housing. The National Alliance to End Homelessness reports that on a single night in January 2020, more than 37,000 veterans were homeless.

Where a veteran lives can make the difference between an easy adjustment to the civilian world and a rockier path to life off the base. To determine the best cities for veterans, 24/7 Wall St. reviewed WalletHub's list of 2021's Best & Worst Places for Veterans to Live. The site grades America's 100 most populous cities on a 100-point scale in four key dimensions: employment opportunities, economy, quality of life, and health.

Among the specific considerations of the study were each city's share of military-skill-related jobs, number of veteran-owned jobs per veteran population, housing affordability, share of veterans living in poverty, retiree-friendliness, percentage of residents who are fully vaccinated, and quality of Veterans Administration health facilities. The research was based on data from eight governmental and independent sources.

**[Click here to see the best cities for veterans](#)**

The city scoring highest overall was Tampa, Florida, a Gulf Coast metropolitan area that's currently home to nearly 1.6 million veterans. Of the 50 cities on the list, in fact, nine are in the Sunshine State, suggesting that vets, like many other Americans, follow the sun when deciding where to settle. (For the general population, these are the best cities to live.)

Austin, Texas took the second spot. The Lone Star State also houses a sizable veteran population — 1.7 million.

Although not ranked in the top five, California, home to almost 1.9 million veterans, placed six cities on the list. (These are the states with the most veterans.)

Given that Florida, Texas, and California are large, populous states, it's not surprising veterans would be found in greater numbers there. It's also likely that veterans flock to areas where other veterans reside for support and shared experiences.

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