

**186.041 Special military-related license plates.****(Effective July 15, 2026)**

- (1) Each initial and renewal application by a person who meets the criteria of paragraph (a) of this subsection and each initial application by a person who meets the criteria of paragraph (b), (c), or (d) of this subsection for a special military license plate shall be accompanied by proof as set forth in subsection (10) of this section that the person is associated with the United States Army, United States Navy, United States Air Force, United States Marine Corps, United States Space Force, United States Coast Guard, United States Coast Guard Auxiliary, Kentucky National Guard, Merchant Marines with service between December 7, 1941, and August 15, 1945, or Civil Air Patrol in one (1) of the following ways:
  - (a) A member of the Armed Forces of the United States;
  - (b) A retired member;
  - (c) A member of the National Guard or Reserve component who has completed his or her term of service, or has retired with a minimum of twenty (20) years of service; or
  - (d) A veteran who received a discharge under honorable conditions, or the veteran's surviving spouse, and:
    1. Performed one hundred eighty (180) days of active-duty service;
    2. Received an early release due to injuries or other medical condition, or at the convenience of the service;
    3. Received a hardship discharge;
    4. Was separated or retired due to a disability; or
    5. Was determined to have a service-connected disability incurred during the enlistment.
- (2) The member, retired member, veteran, reservist, or his or her spouse who is eligible under subsection (9) of this section may purchase an unlimited number of special military-related license plates described in subsection (1) of this section, annually for vehicles they own or lease. A disabled veterans license plate shall expire on July 31.
- (3) A recipient of the Distinguished Service Cross, Navy Cross, or Air Force Cross shall be eligible for a Service Cross license plate upon submission of an application to the Kentucky Department of Veterans' Affairs. The recipient shall be required to include with the initial application for a Service Cross license plate a copy of the general order that authorized the award and the recipient's Department of Defense form number 214. The Department of Veterans' Affairs shall verify the documentation submitted with the application for a Service Cross license plate, and if the individual applying for the plate is confirmed to be a recipient of the Distinguished Service Cross, Navy Cross, or Air Force Cross, the Department of Veterans' Affairs shall submit the applicant's name to the Transportation Cabinet's Division of Motor Vehicle Licensing not later than September 1 preceding the year that the Service Cross license plate is to be initially issued or renewed. When the Service Cross license plate is ready, the plate shall be sent to the county clerk in the county of the applicant's residence. The Transportation Cabinet's Division of Motor Vehicle Licensing shall inform each applicant in writing that the Service Cross

license plate is ready and may be picked up at the county clerk's office. The Transportation Cabinet shall prescribe the type of application form required by this subsection and shall supply the Department of Veterans' Affairs with the application form required by this subsection.

- (4) A person who is a former prisoner of the enemy during World War I, World War II, the Korean War, or the Vietnam War, or the spouse of a deceased former prisoner of war, shall be eligible for a former prisoner of war license plate by submitting written proof from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs or other appropriate federal agency stating the period of time the person or person's spouse was a prisoner of war. If a former prisoner of war dies with a vehicle licensed as authorized under this section, the person's surviving spouse may retain the license plate for use on the same vehicle or on another vehicle that complies with KRS 186.164(7).
- (5) A person who is certified by the Kentucky chapter of the Pearl Harbor Survivors Association as being a survivor of the attack on Pearl Harbor shall be eligible for a Pearl Harbor license plate and shall be required to attach to the special military-related license plate application written evidence from the Kentucky chapter of the Pearl Harbor Survivors Association that the person:
  - (a) Was a member of the United States Armed Forces on December 7, 1941;
  - (b) Was on station on December 7, 1941, during the hours of 7:55 a.m. to 9:45 a.m., Hawaii time, at Pearl Harbor, the island of Oahu, or offshore at a distance not to exceed three (3) miles;
  - (c) Was discharged honorably from the United States Armed Forces; and
  - (d) Is certified by the Kentucky chapter of the Pearl Harbor Survivors Association.
- (6) A person who is eligible to receive a Gold Star Mothers, Gold Star Fathers, or Gold Star Spouses license plate under KRS 186.164(16)(a) may receive up to two (2) Gold Star Mothers, Gold Star Fathers, or Gold Star Spouses license plates free of charge and may purchase additional license plates by paying the same fee as for special military-related plates issued under KRS 186.162(2)(d) annually for vehicles he or she owns or leases.
- (7) The surviving spouse of a Purple Heart recipient, or a Kentucky National Guard member or a retired member, who possessed a vehicle licensed with the Purple Heart recipient special license plate or the Kentucky National Guard special license plate, may retain the license plate for use on the same vehicle or another vehicle that complies with KRS 186.164(7). The surviving spouse may renew the license plate indefinitely, provided the appropriate registration fee is paid annually.
- (8) A person who is attending or who is a graduate of the United States Air Force Academy, the United States Military Academy, the United States Naval Academy, the United States Coast Guard Academy, or the United States Merchant Marine Academy shall be eligible for a special military service academy license plate. A special military service academy license plate under this subsection shall use the same plate template as the standard special military license plate under subsection (1) of this section, with stickers to identify the various service academies. The Transportation Cabinet shall promulgate administrative regulations pursuant to

KRS Chapter 13A to establish the proof required to demonstrate current attendance at or graduation from a service academy. An eligible applicant may receive up to two (2) special military service academy license plates.

- (9) (a) The legally married spouse of a member of the Armed Forces of the United States who meets the criteria for a special military license plate under subsection (1) of this section shall be eligible for a special military license plate. A special military license plate under this subsection shall use the same template as the standard special military license plate under subsection (1) of this section, with a sticker identifying the plate as that of a military spouse.
- (b) An applicant who is eligible for a special military license plate under this subsection shall present as proof of eligibility an original or copy of his or her marriage certificate establishing marriage to the member of the Armed Forces of the United States and an original or copy of one (1) of the following:
1. His or her unexpired DD-1173 form; or
  2. Any identification document outlined in subsection (10) of this section issued to his or her spouse.
- (10) Prior to receiving a special military-related plate requested under subsection (1) of this section, the applicant shall present as proof of eligibility, an original or copy of his or her:
- (a) Unexpired Veteran Identification Card or Veteran Health Identification Card issued by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs;
  - (b) DD-2, DD-214, DD-256, DD-257, or NGB-22 form; or
  - (c) Unexpired Geneva Conventions Identification Card issued by the United States Department of Defense.

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**History:** Amended 2026 Ky. Acts ch. 161, sec. 101, effective July 15, 2026. -- Amended 2024 Ky. Acts ch. 100, sec. 6, effective July 15, 2024. -- Amended 2021 Ky. Acts ch. 92, sec. 5, effective June 29, 2021. -- Amended 2020 Ky. Acts ch. 42, sec. 1, effective July 15, 2020. -- Amended 2017 Ky. Acts ch. 137, sec. 1, effective June 29, 2017. -- Amended 2014 Ky. Acts ch. 91, sec. 1, effective January 1, 2015. -- Amended 2010 Ky. Acts ch. 14, sec. 1, effective July 15, 2010; ch. 33, sec. 2, effective July 15, 2010; and ch. 113, sec. 1, effective July 15, 2010. -- Amended 2008 Ky. Acts ch. 30, sec. 1, effective July 15, 2008; and ch. 49, sec. 1, effective July 15, 2008. -- Amended 2007 Ky. Acts ch. 39, sec. 2, effective June 26, 2007. -- Amended 2006 Ky. Acts ch. 146, sec. 1, effective July 12, 2006. -- Amended 2005 Ky. Acts ch. 133, sec. 5, effective June 20, 2005. -- Amended 2004 Ky. Acts ch. 30, sec. 1, effective July 13, 2004. -- Amended 2002 Ky. Acts ch. 347, sec. 1, effective July 15, 2002. -- Amended 2001 Ky. Acts ch. 37, sec. 1, effective June 21, 2001; and ch. 45, sec. 1, effective June 21, 2001. -- Repealed and reenacted 2000 Ky. Acts ch. 453, sec. 1, effective July 14, 2000. -- Amended 1994 Ky. Acts ch. 405, sec. 35, effective July 15, 1994; ch. 416, sec. 3, effective July 15, 1994; and ch. 428, sec. 4, effective July 15, 1994. -- Amended 1992 Ky. Acts ch. 60, sec. 1, effective July 14, 1992. -- Amended 1988 Ky. Acts ch. 150, sec. 2, effective July 15, 1988. -- Amended 1986 Ky. Acts ch. 457, sec. 2, effective July 15, 1986. -- Amended 1982 Ky. Acts ch. 203, sec. 3, effective July 15, 1982. -- Amended 1976 Ky. Acts ch. 17, sec. 1, effective June 19, 1976; and ch. 133, sec. 5, effective June 19, 1976. -- Amended 1974 Ky. Acts ch. 74, Art. IV, sec. 20(9). -- Created 1970 Ky. Acts ch.

191, sec. 1.