

**Guidelines for
Commonwealth of
Virginia
World War II Veterans
Honorary High School
Diploma**

State Board of Education

July 26, 2001

Guidelines for Honorary Diplomas for World War II Veterans

Introduction

In recognition of the efforts and sacrifices of veterans who served in World War II, the 2001 General Assembly designated the first full week in September as Virginia World War II Veterans Appreciation Week, beginning in September 2001. The General Assembly found that between 1939 and 1945, many young persons from Virginia and other states left school to serve in the armed forces as the United States fought World War II. These individuals made great sacrifices and suffered economic and personal loss in order to protect their country and its people and to defend humanity.¹

Many of these young people were not able to continue their education upon returning home because of financial hardship and other personal reasons. Despite educational constraints, these veterans² “reentered society and made significant contributions to our country through hard work as civilians, while gaining substantial knowledge and skills through work.”³ They “have earned and do deserve our esteem and gratitude and our acknowledgement that without their sacrifices, our lives would not be the same as they are today.”⁴

Requirements of the Code of Virginia

Pursuant to § 2.1-27.2:01 and § 22.1-17.4 of the Code of Virginia, World War II veterans who were unable to complete their high school education may apply for a Commonwealth of Virginia World War II Veteran Honorary High School Diploma if they meet the criteria specified by the Board of Education.

Any World War II veteran may apply for an honorary high school diploma by filing with the board a written statement declaring that:

1. The veteran served in a branch of the United States Armed Forces during the years between 1939 and 1945;
2. The veteran was drafted or enlisted in the United States Armed Forces; and
3. The veteran was unable to resume his education upon returning to civilian life.

Virginia Board of Education Requirements

¹ SB 1210, General Assembly 2001.

² The term *veteran* means a person who served in the active military, naval, or air service, and who was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable. 38 USC § 101.

³ SB 1210, *supra*.

⁴ *Id.*

Any veteran of World War II who is interested in receiving the Commonwealth of Virginia World War II Veteran Honorary High School Diploma must submit a statement that includes the following information:

1. The veteran's full name;
2. Branch of service;
3. Dates of service;
4. Location of last school attended; and
5. Statement affirming that the veteran:
 - a. Was drafted or enlisted in the United States Armed Forces; and
 - b. Was unable to complete his education upon returning to civilian life.

The information may be submitted by the veteran, by his or her family, or by any veterans' organization on behalf of the veteran.

To ensure that the honorary diploma will be available by Virginia World War II Veterans Appreciation Week, the first full week in September, the information must be submitted to the Department of Education no later than two weeks in advance.

The statement should be mailed to:

Office of the Board of Education
Virginia Department of Education
P.O. Box 2120
Richmond, Virginia 23218-2120

For this year, the honorary diplomas will be distributed to the veterans during Virginia World War II Veterans Appreciation Week, September 3-7, 2001.

While the Code of Virginia requires that honorary diplomas be issued annually during Virginia World War II Veterans Appreciation Week, other requests can be processed on a case-by-case basis.