

## New MVA feature: Donate to veterans fund when registering vehicles online



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Maryland drivers who go online to apply for or renew registration can donate to a state veterans fund at the same time, starting Nov. 11.

The state Motor Vehicle Administration will work with the Maryland Department of Veterans and Military Families to steer donations to the Maryland Veterans Trust Fund. The nonprofit group helps veterans and their families who are facing temporary financial hardships with expenses such as rent, mortgage payments and utilities.

“The Maryland Veterans Trust Fund exists to meet veterans where they are — often in moments of crisis — and provide timely, meaningful assistance,” said Heather Gerald, the fund’s executive director, in an announcement.

The donation option, along with expanded veterans services offices, will help make support for veterans more accessible across the state year-round, MVA Administrator Chrissy Nizer said in an announcement.

The MVA has opened veteran service program offices in nine MVA branches across the state, including new locations in Annapolis and Waldorf. The offices, open by appointment from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, are staffed by professionals who help veterans apply for benefits.

These offices have helped more than 6,000 veterans, dependents and survivors secure more than \$54 million in federal benefits.

The MVA also offers services specifically for veterans and military personnel. Some include waivers to skip the skills test when applying for a commercial driver’s license; an exemption from state emissions testing for active-duty personnel stationed out-of-state or overseas and “veteran” labels on driver’s licenses for easier access to benefits.

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