



November 11<sup>th</sup> is Veterans Day but we celebrate and find ways to honor Veterans the entire month of November. Growing up, you may remember having Veterans Day ceremonies in school. You may have had a guest speaker wearing a uniform. You may not recall if that Veteran was Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard, National Guard or Reserves but you knew he or she was a former service member. You also may not have taken note which campaign, battle, war or peacetime exercise that Veterans participated in but you understood that that person was brave and that they fought for our country. What do we really know about Veterans Day and how it came to be?

**It was originally called Armistice Day, commemorating the end of World War I.**

World War I officially ended when the Treaty of Versailles was signed on June 28, 1919. However, the fighting ended about seven months before that when the Allies and Germany put into effect an armistice on the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month.

For that reason, Nov. 11, 1918, was largely considered the end of “the war to end all wars” and dubbed Armistice Day. In 1926, Congress officially recognized it as the end of the war, and in 1938, it became an official holiday, primarily a day set aside to honor veterans of World War I. But then World War II and the Korean War happened, so on June 1, 1954, at the urging of veterans service organizations, Congress amended the commemoration yet again by changing the word “armistice” to “veterans” so the day would honor American veterans of all wars. Our country has since experienced more war time periods in many areas of the world. Arguably we are still fighting the longest War in U.S. History currently. Now more than ever, the average American can say that they know someone who served, or has a friend who is related to or also knows someone who has served. Veterans Day grants us a specified window of time to honor all service members.

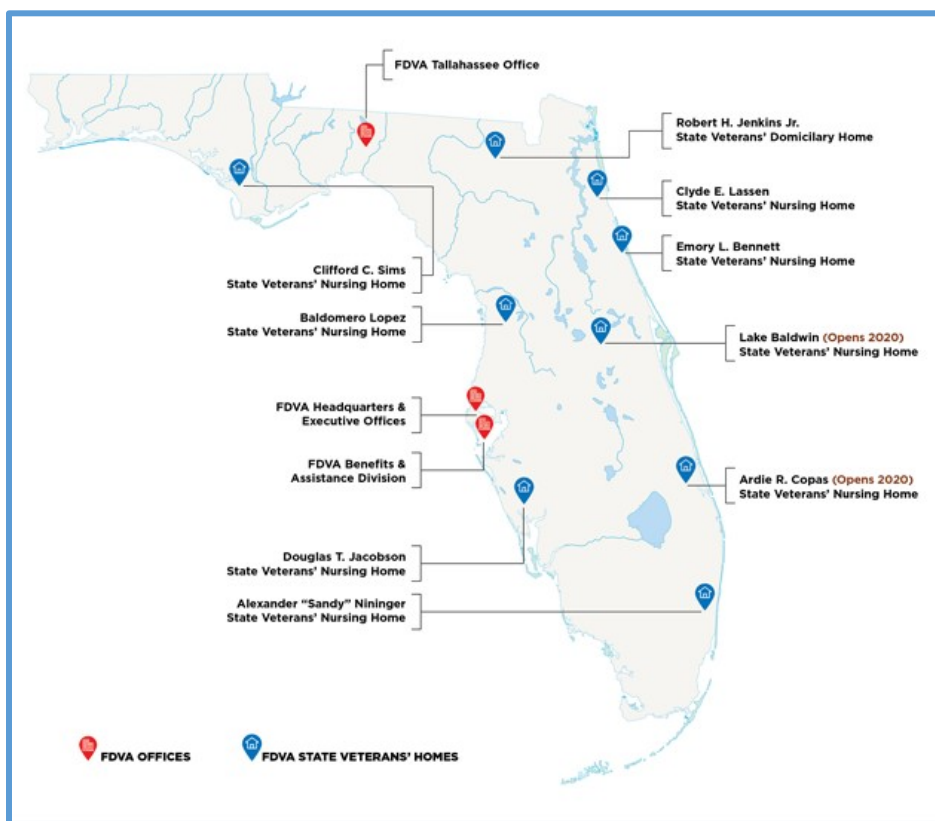
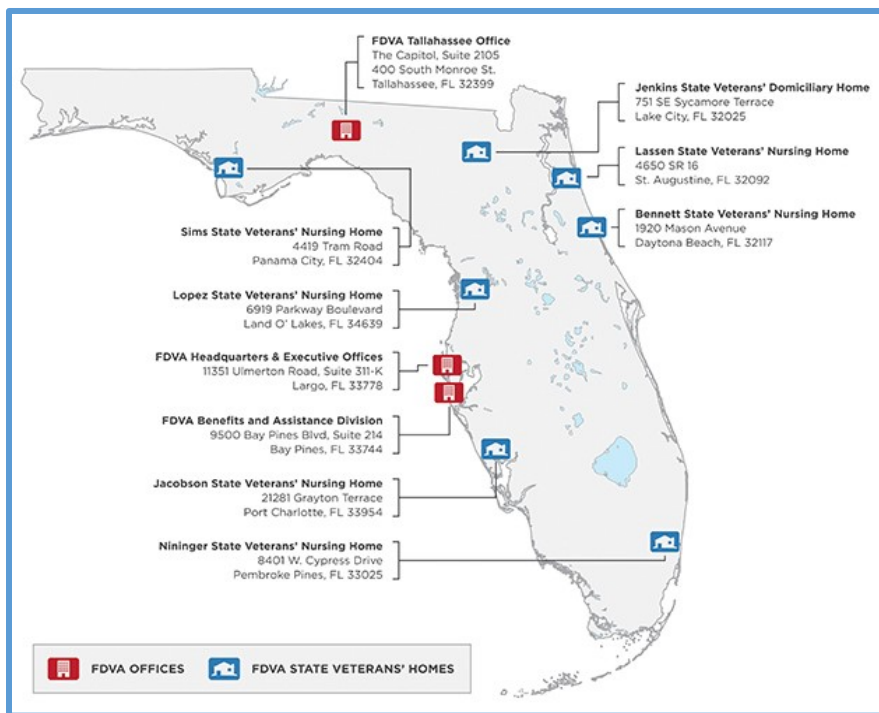


Veterans Day is not to be confused with Memorial Day. Memorial Day occurs in May and is a time to remember those who gave their lives for our country, particularly in battle or from wounds they suffered in battle. Veterans Day honors all of those who have served the country in war or peace — dead or alive — although it's largely intended to thank living veterans for their sacrifices.

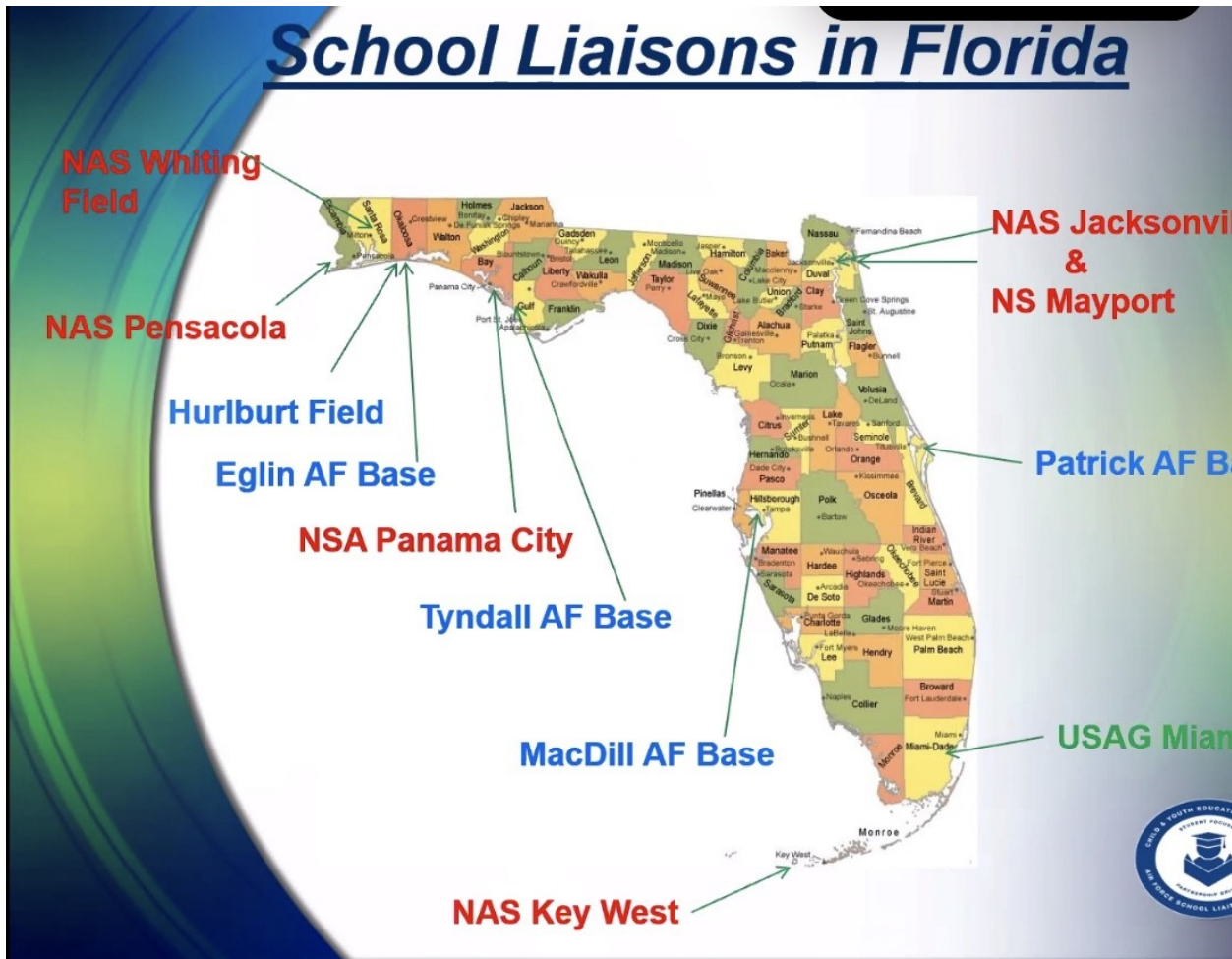
Florida is Veteran friendly state. Fiscal 2017 demographic information from the VA's Veteran Population Projection Model 2016. The VA reports there are 20.0 million veterans living in the United States. (<https://www.floridavets.org/our-veterans/profilefast-facts/>)



- There are 1,525,400 veterans in the State of Florida. There are 1,381,170 male veterans and 144,229 female veterans.
- *Note:* Florida has the third largest veteran population in the nation, behind California with 1,681,730 veterans and Texas with 1,584,844 veterans.
- There are 1,172,800 wartime veterans in the State of Florida.
- There are 352,600 peacetime veterans in the State of Florida.
- There are 31,000 World War II veterans in the State of Florida.
- There are 105,000 Korean War veterans in the State of Florida.
- There are 498,000 Vietnam-era veterans in the State of Florida.
- There are 188,024 Gulf War veterans in the State of Florida. *(1990 to 9/11/01)*
- There are 177,494 Post-9/11 veterans in the State of Florida *(9/12/01 to present)*
- There are 789,717 veterans in Florida 65 years of age and over. (There are 761,682 male veterans 65 years of age and older and 28,033 female veterans 65 years of age and older.)



# School Liaisons in Florida



For local unit PTA's in Florida, these statistics reveal that there are many Veteran's children in our school systems. The military has a saying that once a military kid, always a military kid. Whether a family has just transitioned out of the military or has been separated from the military for some time, those children of Veteran's and their families need continued support. Local units can provide a liaison (PTA Military Liaison or PML) to Active Duty and Veteran's families on their board. Provide a point of contact for families to reach out to when they arrive to your school. Hillsborough County School District has a Military Liaison assigned to the district to assist military families assigned to MacDill AFB or Veterans families. Not all counties have one so check with your local school district if you live near a military base/installation/station.

Local units can provide programs that support military connected students and their families: Sponsorship or buddy programs, ice cream socials, family game nights, reading bingo or neighborhood meet up. If you are located near a base or installation, there are many professionals that can come talk to your families such as the School Liaison Officers, The Exceptional Family Member Program Manager, the Child and Youth Services Directors or Military Family Life Consultants. You can also visit the website for the Military Child Education Coalition, ([www.militarychild.org](http://www.militarychild.org)) and select from close to 200 topics for parents to show to military families in one of your programs. There are also workshops and webinars for administrators and teachers as to how to support military and veterans families. All available at no cost. Teachers can apply for C.E.U.'s after completing these workshops.

Lean on local American Legions ([www.legion.org](http://www.legion.org)) or AMVETS ([www.amvets.org](http://www.amvets.org)) organizations. If you live near a Veteran's Administration ([www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov)) facility, you can reach out to them to gather information to share with your Veteran families. Florida Veterans information: (<https://www.floridavets.org/>).

Find unique ways to honor Veterans Day including but not limited to:

1. Host a Veterans Day ceremony. Invite Veteran parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles to attend.

2. Build a Veteran's Wall. Have children decorate a start or make a poster of their favorite Veteran and display prominently. During this the time of COVID restrictions, share your Veteran wall on all of your social media platforms as well as websites associated with the school.
3. Thank Veterans on your social media, newsletters and marquees.
4. Invite a Veteran to speak at an assembly or in History and Civics Classes.
5. Ask a military kid in your school or PTA to write about what Veterans Day means to them or hold an essay contest and post or share the winner's work.
6. Ask students to write letters to Veterans and deliver or mail them to a Veterans Home. You can partner with local assistive living and long term care facilities to try to locate Veterans to support.
7. Go on a Virtual Field trip to a military museum. Most museums are adding the virtual tours to their menu. Once restrictions or lifted from COVID, plan a field trip to a military museum near you. Find one here: (<https://www.defense.gov/Explore/Features/story/Article/1641588/guide-to-us-military-museums/>)
8. **Wear a red poppy** to show support for veteran and active duty service members. The American Legion Auxiliary distributes red crepe paper poppies on Memorial Day and Veterans Day nationwide. The poppies are all handmade by veterans as part of their therapeutic rehabilitation, and donations received in exchange for the flowers go directly to assist disabled and hospitalized veterans in our communities. Contact your local American Legion office to find out where you can get one in your community. (<https://www.alaforveterans.org/poppy/>)



More resources for Veteran's Families:

[www.militaryonesource.com](http://www.militaryonesource.com),  
[www.militarychild.org](http://www.militarychild.org)  
<https://www.operationwearehere.com/ArtTherapy.html>,  
<https://www.veteransflorida.org/>,  
<https://www.veteransflorida.org/veteran-resources/>,  
<https://www.military.com/benefits/veteran-state-benefits/florida-state-veterans-benefits.html>,  
<https://www.hiringourheroes.org/>  
<https://www.militaryonesource.mil/confidential-help/specialty-consultations/transitioning-veterans>  
<https://floridavets.org/>  
<https://benefits.va.gov/gibill/>  
<https://www.veteranscrisisline.net/>  
<https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/help-yourself/veterans/>  
[www.legion.org](http://www.legion.org)  
[www.amvets.org](http://www.amvets.org)  
<https://www.moaa.org/>  
<https://floridavets.org/our-veterans/gold-star-families/>  
<https://www.floridatrend.com/article/23810/military-bases-in-florida>  
<https://fl.ng.mil/about/Pages/Florida-Army-National-Guard.aspx> (FLARNG)