

THE VA HOME BUYER'S PLAYBOOK

How Veterans Buy Homes Without a
Down Payment or Closing Costs

\$0

DOWN PAYMENT

\$0

CLOSING COSTS



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A NOTE BEFORE YOU READ

This guide is written for every veteran — whether you've never heard of the VA loan, you've used it before, or you're PCSing and wondering if you have time to buy. Read the chapters that apply to your situation. Every one of them will save you money.

The Offer No One Else Is Making

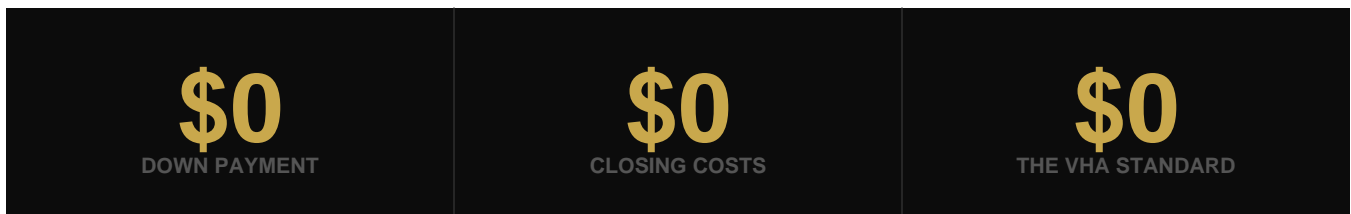
Why \$0 down AND \$0 closing costs is different — and why most veterans have only heard half of it.

You've Heard the \$0 Down Part. Here's What's Missing.

Every VA lender in America advertises zero down. You've scrolled past those ads a hundred times. It's not news. And that's exactly the problem — because the down payment is only half the financial obstacle standing between a veteran and homeownership.

The other half is closing costs. On a typical home purchase, closing costs run between \$9,000 and \$13,000 out of pocket — even with a VA loan. Most veterans find this out at the closing table. Some have the money. Many don't. Almost none of them knew it was coming.

This guide exists because of that gap. Because \$0 down means nothing if you're sitting at a closing table writing a \$10,000 check you didn't plan for.



What Closing Costs Actually Are

Closing costs are fees paid at the time of closing a real estate transaction. They cover a range of services required to complete the purchase:

Fee Type	Typical Range
Lender origination fees	0.5% – 1% of the loan amount
Appraisal fee	\$500 – \$900
Title insurance & settlement	\$1,500 – \$3,000
Recording fees	\$50 – \$250
Prepaid interest	Depends on close date
Homeowner's insurance prepaid	\$800 – \$1,500
Property tax escrow	2 – 3 months upfront

THE VHA PROMISE

\$0 down and \$0 closing costs on every VA purchase we can structure it. Veteran-owned real estate brokerage. 12 years. Hundreds of veterans served. This guide shows you exactly how it works.

Your VA Loan Benefit Explained Simply

Eligibility, entitlement, COE — everything you need to know without the jargon.

Do You Qualify?

The VA loan is available to a broader range of servicemembers and veterans than most people realize. Here is who qualifies:

- ✓ Active duty servicemembers — after 90 consecutive days of service
- ✓ Veterans — generally 90 days during wartime, 181 days during peacetime
- ✓ National Guard and Reserve members — 6 years of service in most cases
- ✓ Surviving spouses — of servicemembers who died in the line of duty or from a service-connected disability

NOT SURE IF YOU QUALIFY?

Do not self-reject. The eligibility rules are more flexible than most veterans assume. Let a VA-specialized brokerage check your Certificate of Eligibility (COE) — it takes about five minutes and costs you nothing.

The Certificate of Eligibility (COE)

The COE is the document that proves your eligibility to lenders. It shows your VA entitlement — the dollar amount the VA will guarantee on your loan. You do not need to obtain your COE before starting the homebuying process. A VA-experienced team pulls it for you.

Your Entitlement — The Part Most Veterans Don't Know

Your VA loan benefit is not a one-time use. It is an entitlement that restores in most cases when you sell, refinance, or pay off the home you used it on. Many veterans have used their VA loan benefit two, three, even four times.

In many cases you can also have two VA loans active at the same time — one on an existing home and a new one for a new purchase. This is the PCS wealth play covered in Chapter 08.

1944

YEAR VA LOAN CREATED

0%

DOWN PAYMENT REQUIRED

No PMI

EVER

The VA Funding Fee

The VA funding fee is a one-time fee charged by the VA to help sustain the loan program. On a first-use VA loan it is 2.3% of the loan amount. On a \$400,000 home that is \$9,200.

Two things veterans often don't know about the funding fee:

- It rolls into the loan — you do not pay it out of pocket at closing. It adds approximately \$50 per month to your payment.
- If you have a VA disability rating of 10% or higher, the funding fee is completely waived. Zero.

DISABILITY RATING WAIVER

If you have a service-connected disability rating of 10% or higher, you pay no VA funding fee. This saves veterans thousands of dollars. Check your rating before you close.

The \$0 Down Formula

How the down payment disappears on a VA purchase.

The VA loan eliminates the down payment entirely. That is not a promotion or a temporary offer — it is a permanent feature of the program built into the legislation since 1944. Here is the exact mechanism.

How It Works

On a conventional mortgage, you are required to make a down payment — typically 3% to 20% of the purchase price. This money reduces the lender's risk by giving them immediate equity in the property.

On a VA loan, the federal government guarantees a portion of the loan on your behalf. This guarantee replaces the down payment as the lender's security. The result: you purchase the home with no money toward the down payment.

Loan Type	\$300k Home	\$400k Home	\$500k Home
Conventional (3% down)	\$9,000	\$12,000	\$15,000
Conventional (10% down)	\$30,000	\$40,000	\$50,000
Conventional (20% down)	\$60,000	\$80,000	\$100,000
VA Loan (0% down)	\$0	\$0	\$0

What No PMI Means for Your Monthly Payment

Private Mortgage Insurance (PMI) is an additional monthly fee required on conventional loans when the down payment is less than 20%. PMI protects the lender — not you. It adds \$150 to \$350 per month to your payment and continues until you build enough equity.

VA loans have no PMI. Ever. This saves the average veteran \$200 per month — \$2,400 per year — for as long as they hold the loan.

THE NO-PMI ADVANTAGE

On a \$400,000 VA loan vs. a conventional loan with 5% down, the PMI savings alone amount to approximately \$18,000 over 7 years. That is money that stays in your pocket.

The \$0 Closing Costs Formula

How VHA guarantees your closing costs hit zero — and what happens when seller concessions alone are not enough.

This is the chapter most veteran home buying guides do not write. Because most brokerages cannot make this promise. Here is the full mechanism — both steps — and why having the right brokerage is the difference between paying closing costs and paying nothing.

Step 1 — Seller Concessions

When VHA writes your purchase offer, we negotiate for the seller to cover your closing costs as a condition of the deal. This is called seller concessions. On a VA loan, the seller can contribute up to 4% of the purchase price toward your closing costs, prepaid items, and other fees.

In most market conditions — and especially in a buyer's market — sellers agree to concessions because they want to close the deal. VHA builds this negotiation into every offer from day one. It is not an afterthought.

Purchase Price	Max Seller Concessions (4%)	Typical Closing Costs	Covered?
\$300,000	\$12,000	\$8,000 – \$10,000	Yes — fully
\$400,000	\$16,000	\$9,000 – \$13,000	Yes — fully
\$500,000	\$20,000	\$11,000 – \$15,000	Yes — fully

Step 2 — The VHA Credit Guarantee

Here is what separates VHA from every other brokerage making this promise. In competitive markets or on certain deals, a seller may not agree to cover the full amount of closing costs through concessions. Most brokerages stop there — and the veteran ends up paying the remainder out of pocket.

VHA does not stop there.

Because VHA controls both the real estate transaction and the financing side of your deal, we can apply a credit on the financing side to cover any closing costs that seller concessions do not fully eliminate. The two sides of the transaction work together from day one — coordinated by one team — so the gap is always closed.

The result is a guaranteed path to \$0 closing costs on every deal we can structure it — regardless of how much the seller agrees to cover.

STEP 1	STEP 2	RESULT
Seller concessions negotiated into the offer. Covers most or all closing costs.	VHA applies a credit on the financing side to cover any remaining closing costs.	\$0 Closing Costs. Every deal VHA can structure it.

THE VHA GUARANTEE

VHA commits to \$0 down and \$0 closing costs on every VA purchase we can structure. Step 1: we negotiate seller concessions at the offer stage. Step 2: VHA covers any remaining closing costs through a credit on the financing side. You never reach the closing table with an unexpected bill.

Why Most Veterans Still Pay Closing Costs

Seller concessions are available to any veteran working with a VA loan. So why do most veterans still pay closing costs?

- Their agent does not build closing cost negotiation into the offer strategy from day one.
- Their agent and their lender are two separate people who have never coordinated — so nobody plugs the gap when concessions fall short.
- Most brokerages simply do not have the tools or relationships to credit the financing side when needed.

THE BROKERAGE DIFFERENCE

VHA is not a standard real estate brokerage. We control the full transaction — real estate and financing — coordinated by one team from offer to close. That coordination is how both steps of the \$0 closing costs formula work together. No other brokerage in your market is making this guarantee because no other brokerage is structured to deliver it.

What You Still Pay

Complete transparency: two costs are not part of the closing cost structure and are paid by the buyer on every transaction.

- **Earnest money deposit** — typically 0.5% to 1% of the purchase price. This is a good-faith deposit held in escrow and applied toward the purchase at closing. You are not losing this money.
- **Home inspection fee** — typically \$300 to \$500 paid directly to an independent inspector. This protects you from buying a home with hidden defects. It is money well spent.

Down payment: \$0. Closing costs: \$0. The only upfront costs are earnest money and inspection — both of which protect your interests in the transaction.

VA vs. Conventional Side by Side

The numbers that make the VA loan the best home financing product in America for those who qualify.

The Full Comparison

VA LOAN	CONVENTIONAL LOAN
Down Payment \$0 — eliminated entirely	Down Payment 3% – 20% (\$12k – \$80k on \$400k home)
Closing Costs \$0 — structured out with VHA	Closing Costs \$9,000 – \$13,000 typically out of pocket
PMI None. Ever.	PMI \$150 – \$350/month if under 20% down
Credit Requirements More flexible than conventional	Credit Requirements Typically 620+ with stricter guidelines
Funding Fee Rolls into loan (~\$50/mo on \$400k)	Origination Fees Paid at closing, out of pocket
Reuse Yes — restores after payoff/sale	Reuse N/A — not a benefit program
Second VA Loan Yes — in many circumstances	Multiple Loans Requires full down payment each time

THE BOTTOM LINE

For a veteran buying a \$400,000 home, the VA loan saves approximately \$40,000 to \$93,000 at closing compared to conventional options — plus \$200+ per month in PMI savings over the life of the loan. There is no better mortgage product in America for those who qualify.

The 5 Myths Costing Veterans Homes

Every reason veterans give themselves for not buying — and why almost all of them are wrong.

MYTH 1 I Don't Have Good Enough Credit

Veterans consistently underestimate their credit options with a VA loan. VA loans have more flexible credit requirements than conventional loans. Scores in the low 600s, past collections, and gaps in employment have all been navigated successfully on VA transactions. The only way to know for certain is to run a soft credit check — which does not affect your score and takes 60 seconds.

MYTH 2 I Already Used My VA Loan

Your VA loan benefit is an entitlement — not a one-time voucher. In most cases it restores when you sell or pay off the home you used it on. Many veterans have used their benefit two, three, even four times. In some circumstances you can have two VA loans active simultaneously. Do not make assumptions. Have your entitlement status checked.

MYTH 3 VA Loans Take Too Long — My Offer Won't Compete

Modern VA purchases close in 21 to 30 days — the same timeline as a conventional loan. The VA appraisal is thorough but well within normal timeframes. The real reason VA offers struggle is poor representation. A brokerage with deep VA transaction experience knows how to write and present a VA offer so it competes and wins.

MYTH 4 I Don't Have Money for Closing Costs

That is exactly what this guide addresses. Closing costs on a VA purchase can be negotiated to zero through seller concessions built into the offer from day one. A VA-specialized brokerage that understands how to structure this eliminates closing costs entirely on deals where the market cooperates.

MYTH 5 The Monthly Payment Will Be Too High Without a Down Payment

The math often surprises veterans. On a \$380,000 home, the VA loan payment runs approximately \$2,300 to \$2,500 per month including taxes and insurance. Average two-bedroom rent in most metro markets runs \$1,800 to \$2,200 and rises every year. The gap is smaller than you think — and the mortgage never goes up. The rent does.

Your Step-by-Step Buying Timeline

From deciding to buy to keys in hand — exactly what happens and when.

Most veterans don't know what the process looks like from the inside. Here it is, step by step.

STEP **Soft Credit Check — Day 1**

1 A soft pull gives you and your brokerage a clear picture of your credit profile without affecting your score. This takes 60 seconds and tells you exactly where you stand before anything else happens.

STEP **COE and Pre-Approval — Days 1–3**

2 Your Certificate of Eligibility is pulled simultaneously with your pre-approval. Pre-approval confirms your purchase price range and makes your offer credible from the moment it's submitted. Target: have this in hand before you look at a single home.

STEP **Home Search — Days 3–30**

3 You identify homes in your target area, price range, and timeline. Your brokerage provides guidance on VA minimum property requirements so you don't fall in love with a home that won't clear the VA appraisal.

STEP **Offer — Day of Acceptance**

4 Your brokerage writes an offer that includes seller concessions for closing costs, is priced to compete, and is positioned correctly to the listing agent. Offer strategy is where \$0 closing costs is won or lost.

STEP **Under Contract to Closing — 21–30 Days**

5 Home inspection (your cost: \$300–\$500). VA appraisal ordered. Underwriting review. Clear to close issued. Final walkthrough. Closing day — you show up, sign, and get keys.

STEP **Closing Day**

6 Down payment: \$0. Closing costs: \$0. You sign the documents and receive the keys. The only money you have brought to this point is earnest deposit (applied to the transaction) and inspection fee.

PCS TIMELINE NOTE

If you are relocating on military orders, VHA completes this process remotely. We provide video walkthroughs, manage inspections on your behalf, and coordinate closing around your report date. Veterans have closed on Arizona homes from overseas.

The PCS Wealth Play

How active duty veterans use the VA loan at every duty station to build a real estate portfolio — built on a benefit they earned.

This chapter is for active duty servicemembers. If you are not active duty, this chapter still applies if you expect future PCS moves — or if you simply want to understand the long-term wealth potential of the VA loan benefit.

The Strategy in Four Steps

0
1

Buy near the base with a VA loan.

\$0 down. \$0 closing costs — structured by your brokerage. Your BAH covers most or all of your mortgage payment depending on your rank and duty station.

0
2

Live in the home during your tour.

VA loans require owner occupancy — you must live in the home. During your tour, you are building equity every month while your BAH effectively covers the mortgage.

0
3

When you PCS out, rent the home instead of selling.

Rent in most military markets is strong. Your mortgage payment stays fixed. Many veterans break even or cash flow positive from day one of renting. Either way — you now own an appreciating asset you bought for zero dollars down and zero closing costs.

0
4

Repeat at the next duty station.

Your VA entitlement restores in many circumstances, or you use remaining entitlement for a second VA loan. You now have two properties. Do this at three or four duty stations and you have a real estate portfolio built entirely on a benefit you earned by serving.

THE BAH MATH

At most duty stations, BAH for an E-5 with dependents is within \$200–\$400 of a VA mortgage payment on a median-priced home. You are essentially using a government housing allowance to build equity in an asset you own. That asset appreciates. Your rent payment would not.

The Numbers on a Real Example

Purchase: \$380,000 home, VA loan, \$0 down, \$0 closing costs.

- Monthly principal & interest at 6.5%: approximately \$2,403
- Property taxes and insurance: approximately \$300
- Total monthly payment: approximately \$2,700
- E-5 with dependents BAH (typical major military market): \$2,100 – \$2,500
- Out-of-pocket difference: \$200 – \$600/month to own vs. effectively nothing in rent
- Home appreciation at 5% annually on \$380,000: approximately \$19,000 per year in equity growth

Your Next Step

You have the knowledge. Here is how Veteran Home Advantage helps you execute it.

You Now Know More Than Most Veterans Ever Will

Most veterans who rent today are not renting because they chose to. They are renting because nobody ever showed them what they had earned. This guide was built to close that gap.

You now understand the VA loan benefit, how the down payment is eliminated, how closing costs are negotiated to zero at the offer stage, how your credit options are more flexible than you thought, and how to build long-term wealth through VA purchases at every duty station.

What VHA Does for You

- ✓ We specialize exclusively in VA home purchases — this is all we do
- ✓ We structure every offer to deliver \$0 down and \$0 closing costs
- ✓ We pull your COE and soft credit check at no cost and with no commitment
- ✓ We represent you as your real estate brokerage from search to closing
- ✓ We do remote purchases for veterans on PCS or overseas orders
- ✓ Veteran-owned. 12 years. Hundreds of veterans served.

Ready to See What Your Deal Looks Like?

Start with a free, 60-second soft credit check. No hard inquiry. No commitment. Just clarity on exactly what you qualify for and whether VHA can structure your deal at \$0 down and \$0 closing costs.

Call or Text: 844-440-VETS

VeteranHomeAdvantage.com

\$0 Down · \$0 Closing Costs · Veteran-Owned · 12 Years



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