

Diplomas for Veterans of World War II

Based on the aging population of our World War II veterans, legislation to award them high school diplomas comes at a time when recognizing their service to our country is timely. If you, or a family member, left a New Mexico high school to serve in the United States armed forces during World War II, the enactment of New Mexico House Bill 125 on Veterans High School Diplomas enables you to receive your high school diploma.

For a New Mexico school board to issue a high school diploma to a World War II veteran, the veteran must be an honorably discharged member of the armed forces of the United States who left high school before graduation to serve in World War II. In addition the veteran must have been:

- a resident of New Mexico,
- in active service between December 7, 1941 and December 31, 1946, and
- scheduled to graduate from a New Mexico high school after 1940 and before 1951.

Veterans who hold a high school equivalency diploma may also apply. High school diplomas may be issued posthumously. Qualifying veterans, or a person acting on his or her behalf, must submit a copy of the veteran's discharge paper (DD214) along with a completed application form.

New Mexico HB 125 on Veterans High School Diplomas was approved by the 46th Legislature of the State of New Mexico, and signed into law by Governor Bill Richardson in 2003.

Similar laws have been enacted in at least 18 states whose legislatures have approved the program in cooperation with their Veterans Affairs and Departments of Education. Contact information for **New Mexico**, **Colorado** and **Wyoming** are:

- State Benefits, New Mexico Department of Veterans Services, P. O. Box 2324, Santa Fe, NM 87504
- Operation Recognition, Colorado Board of Veterans Affairs, 789 Sherman Street, Suite 260, Denver, CO 80203, 303-894-7474,
- Operation Recognition, Wyoming Veterans Administration Commission, 5905 CY Ave., Casper, WY 82604, 800-833-5987.