BILL'S HOME TECH

Home & Small Business Tech Solutions

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milConnect and DEERS Online: Your Benefits, Simplified

Managing your military benefits and records from home, in plain English

Tech Made Simple. Service Made Personal.

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THE 60-SECOND VERSION

1 Two Systems, in a Breath

The whole picture quickly.

Here's the whole thing simply. DEERS is the Defense Department's official database of who's entitled to military benefits — the record of you and your eligible family members. milConnect is the website where you log in to see and manage what's in DEERS: your personal details, your family members, your TRICARE health coverage, your ID-card information, and official letters you can download.

You sign in with one of a few secure methods, review that your information is correct, and make the updates you're allowed to make from home. It replaces a lot of phone calls and in-person trips.

- DEERS = the official database of benefit eligibility.
- milConnect = the website to view and manage your DEERS information.
- Sign in securely, then check and update your records.
- Handle TRICARE, ID-card info, and official letters online.

> **TIP**
>
> The first time, just sign in and look around when nothing's urgent. Confirm your name, address, and family members are correct. Finding your way around calmly now makes it easy the day you actually need something.

DEERS

2 What DEERS Is

The database behind your benefits.

DEERS — the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System — is the master list of everyone eligible for military benefits: service members, retirees, and their enrolled family members. Nearly every benefit, from TRICARE health care to base access to ID cards, checks DEERS to confirm you're entitled to it. If something's wrong in DEERS, benefits can be denied, so keeping it accurate matters.

- It records who is eligible for military benefits, and for which ones.
- It lists your enrolled family members (dependents).
- TRICARE, ID cards, and base access all rely on it being correct.
- You don't log into DEERS directly — you manage it through milConnect.

Think of DEERS as the official record and milConnect as the window and the controls for it. The most common reason to care about DEERS is making sure your family members are correctly enrolled and your information is current, because errors there cause real problems with health coverage and benefits.

> **GOOD TO KNOW**
>
> Keeping DEERS up to date — especially after life changes like a marriage, a new child, a move, or a death — is one of the most important things a military family can do to avoid benefit headaches down the road.

MILCONNECT

3 What milConnect Is

Your window and controls.

milConnect is the official website where you actually see and manage your benefits information. Once you sign in, it shows your DEERS record and gives you tools to update your profile, manage TRICARE, request ID-card appointments, and download official documents — all from home.

- View your personal information and your listed family members.
- Update your address, contact details, and some family information.
- Manage TRICARE health-plan enrollment.
- Download eligibility and benefit letters as PDFs.
- Handle ID-card related tasks.

It's a single front door to a lot of separate tasks that used to mean phone calls or office visits. Not everything can be changed online — some updates require documents or an in-person visit — but a great deal can be handled from your own computer, which is a real convenience.

SIGNING IN

4 How to Sign In

The secure front door.

Because milConnect holds sensitive information, it uses secure sign-in methods rather than a simple password. There are a few accepted ways in, and you only need one. Most people today find Login.gov the easiest, since it's the government's shared secure sign-in used across many agencies.

- Login.gov — the government's shared secure sign-in; straightforward to set up.
- DS Logon — a Defense Department sign-in used across military websites.
- CAC card — a Common Access Card with a card reader, for those who have one.
- You only need one of these; pick whichever you can set up most easily.

1. Go to the official milConnect website.
2. Choose your sign-in method (Login.gov is a good default).
3. Follow the prompts to log in or create that sign-in account.
4. Complete the two-step verification if asked.
5. You're in — milConnect opens to your information.

WATCH OUT

If you don't have any of these yet, Login.gov is usually the simplest to create, and because it's used across many government services, the same account will help you elsewhere too. Setting it up once is well worth the few minutes.

CHECK YOUR RECORD

5 Checking Your Record Is Correct

The first thing to do.

Once you're in, the most valuable first task is simply to review that your information is accurate. Errors in DEERS are the root of most benefit problems, so a careful read-through now can save a great deal of trouble later.

- Check your name, date of birth, and Social Security number are right.
- Check your current mailing address and contact details.
- Check that each eligible family member is listed and their details are correct.
- Note anything wrong or out of date to correct.

Pay special attention to your enrolled family members, since their health coverage and benefits depend on being correctly listed. If you spot an error, the next chapter covers what you can fix online and what needs documents or a visit.

WATCH OUT

If a family member who should be covered isn't listed, or someone's details are wrong, don't ignore it — incorrect DEERS information can cause TRICARE claims to be denied. Correct it promptly, as some fixes require supporting documents.

Rather not do this yourself? I'll come to your home and set it up for you — a flat $99 first visit across Portage County, Ohio and nearby communities. Outside the area? I also help remotely by phone or screen-share. Book at billshometech.com/book or call (330) 200-8042.

UPDATING

6 Updating Your Information

What you can change from home.

milConnect lets you make many updates yourself, while some important changes require documents or an in-person visit to a DEERS/ID-card office. Knowing which is which saves a wasted trip — or a wasted wait.

Usually you can do online

- Update your mailing address, email, and phone numbers.
- Update some contact and profile details.
- Manage certain TRICARE enrollment choices.

Usually needs documents or a visit

- Adding a new family member (marriage, a new baby) — needs official documents.
- Removing a family member or recording a death — needs documents.
- Some identity and eligibility changes.

For the document-based changes, milConnect will tell you what's needed, and you typically take those papers to a DEERS/ID-card office. The online system is for the everyday updates and for starting the more involved ones.

> **GOOD TO KNOW**
>
> Life events — marriage, a new child, divorce, a move, retirement, or a death — are the moments when DEERS most needs updating. Handle them promptly, since benefits for the whole family can hinge on the record being current.

TRICARE

7 Managing TRICARE Health Coverage

Your health plan, from home.

TRICARE is the military health program, and milConnect is a main place to view and manage your enrollment. You can see which plan you're on, make certain changes, and confirm that your family members are correctly covered.

- View your current TRICARE plan and who's covered.
- Make certain enrollment changes when you're eligible to.
- Confirm family members' coverage matches their DEERS listing.
- Download proof-of-coverage letters when you need them.

Because TRICARE coverage flows directly from your DEERS record, the two go hand in hand: if a family member isn't showing as covered, the fix usually starts with correcting their DEERS entry. Keeping both accurate keeps health claims smooth.

> **WATCH OUT**
>
> If you're navigating a TRICARE enrollment change or a coverage question, have your plan details handy and don't rush — and remember that TRICARE also has its own support line for questions the website can't answer.

LETTERS

8 Getting Official Letters

Proof you can download.

A genuinely handy milConnect feature is the ability to download official letters proving your eligibility or benefits — the kind of document you might be asked for by a provider, a school, or another agency. Instead of requesting one by mail, you print it yourself in minutes.

- Eligibility letters confirming your benefit status.
- Proof-of-coverage letters for TRICARE.
- Other benefit-related documents, depending on your situation.
- All downloadable as PDFs you can print or email.

Look for a 'correspondence,' 'letters,' or 'proof of coverage' section once you're signed in. Being able to produce an official letter on demand is one of those quiet conveniences that saves a lot of waiting when someone asks you to prove your benefits.

SECURITY

9 Keeping Your Account Secure

Protecting sensitive information.

Your milConnect account holds very sensitive personal and benefit information, so a few security habits are well worth it. The secure sign-in methods already help; these habits finish the job.

- Use a strong, unique password for your Login.gov or DS Logon account.
- Turn on two-step verification — it's one of the best protections there is.
- Sign in only on your own trusted devices, and log out when done.
- Never share your login, and never give your details to someone who calls or emails you.

WATCH OUT

No legitimate government office will call, text, or email to ask for your milConnect or Login.gov password or a verification code. Anyone who does is a scammer — hang up or delete it, and go to the official website directly instead.

COMMON QUESTIONS

10

Common Questions

The practical worries, answered.

“What's the difference between DEERS and milConnect again?”

DEERS is the official database of who's eligible for benefits; milConnect is the website you use to view and manage what's in DEERS. You don't log into DEERS directly — milConnect is the window and the controls for it.

“Which sign-in should I use?”

Any one of Login.gov, DS Logon, or a CAC card reader works, and you only need one. For most people without a card reader, Login.gov is the simplest to set up, and it's reused across many government services.

“Can I fix everything online?”

Many everyday updates — address, contact details, some TRICARE choices — can be done online. Bigger changes like adding or removing a family member usually need official documents and often an in-person visit to a DEERS/ID-card office, which milConnect will explain.

“What if I'm helping an older veteran or a surviving spouse?”

These systems are used by retirees and surviving family members too, and it's common to help a loved one navigate them. The same steps apply; just make sure you're acting with their knowledge and that their record reflects their current situation.

A HAND

11

If You'd Like a Hand

Signed in and sorted, together.

These government systems can feel daunting, and it's a good thing to tackle together. We can get you a secure sign-in set up, log into milConnect, review your DEERS record and family members for errors, make the updates that can be done online, figure out what needs a document or a visit, pull any official letters you need, and lock the account down with two-step verification.

Being able to manage your hard-earned benefits from your own computer, confidently and securely, saves trips and worry — and it's a privilege to help a veteran or military family do exactly that.

GOOD TO KNOW

The next page is your quick-reference cheat sheet — what each system is, how to sign in, and the key tasks — with my number on it if you'd like a hand.

CHEAT SHEET

Everyday Cheat Sheet

Keep this page handy. It points you straight to what to do for each task.

I want to...	Do this...
Know what DEERS is	The official database of who's eligible for military benefits
Know what milConnect is	The website where you view and manage your DEERS records and benefits
Sign in	Go to milConnect and log in with Login.gov, DS Logon, or a CAC card reader
Check my record is correct	Review your personal info and listed family members for errors
Update family or address	Use the 'Update and view my profile' area; some changes need documents
Handle TRICARE	View and change your TRICARE health plan enrollment from the benefits area
Get an official letter	Download eligibility or benefit letters as a PDF to print or email
Keep it secure	Use a strong password and two-step verification; never share your login
Get help	Call Bill: (330) 200-8042

AT A GLANCE

A Picture to Follow Along

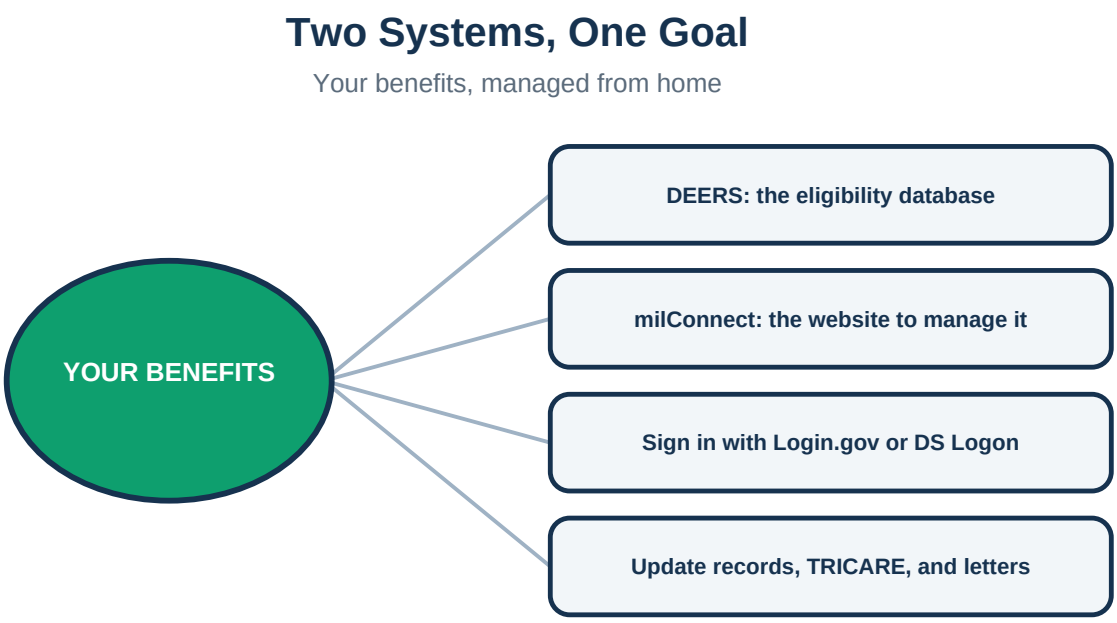


Illustration — a schematic. Set-up screens differ; each takes only a few minutes.

AT A GLANCE

A Second Look

Getting In and Around

Four calm steps

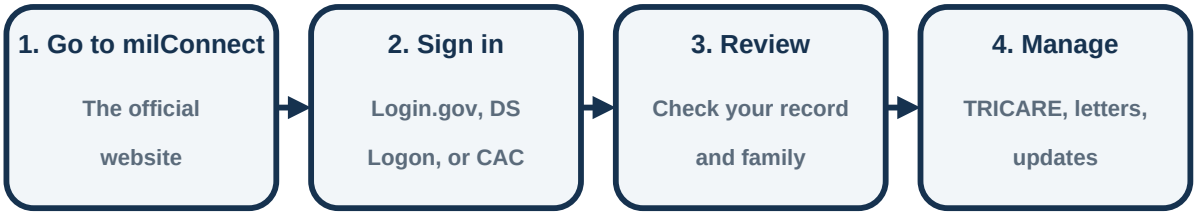


Illustration — a schematic. The order is a suggestion; do one box at a time.

A schematic of the plan — company steps vary; the order does not have to.

BEFORE YOU GO

A Note From Bill

A quick note from Bill. I write these guides to make home tech a little less frustrating, and I do my best to keep every step accurate and up to date. Still, every home, device, and setup is a bit different, so I can't promise a guide will match yours exactly or fix your particular problem. These guides are for general information only — they're not professional, legal, or financial advice, and they don't replace your device's own manual or the manufacturer's instructions. Please go slow, use your own good judgment, and use everything here at your own risk. If a step involves electrical wiring, a gas appliance, a water heater, plumbing, or climbing a ladder — or if anything just doesn't feel safe — please stop and call a licensed professional (or give me a call at 330-200-8042). Bill's Home Tech and Bill Davis can't be responsible for any damage, data loss, or injury that results.

HOW I CAN HELP

Your Visit — and My Promise

You don't have to remember all of it — just that a friendly, patient person is one call away, whenever you'd rather have a hand.

KEY SPECS

In your home — $99 flat for the first visit, no contracts and no surprises, with a 30-day come-back-free follow-up. In-home visits cover Portage County, Ohio and nearby communities.
Outside the area? Remotely — $49 for a screen-share session (free for Support Plan members, $39/mo), refundable if I can't fix it — and credited toward a visit if you'd rather have me in person. Book either at billshometech.com/book.

GOOD TO KNOW

My promise — If you're not 100% satisfied with your visit, I'll come back at no charge, or refund the full $99. No questions, no awkwardness. That's how I'd want to be treated.

Whenever you're ready, I'll come to your home anywhere in Portage County, Ohio and nearby communities, at your pace. Too far for a house call? I also help remotely. Book at billshometech.com/book or call (330) 200-8042. — Bill

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