STATE OF NEW YORK

7708--A

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

May 1, 2025

Introduced by Sen. FERNANDEZ -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Veterans, Homeland Security and Military Affairs -- committee discharged, bill amended, ordered reprinted as amended and recommitted to said committee

AN ACT to amend the veterans' services law, in relation to the establishing a veterans' bill of rights

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

Section 1. The veterans' services law is amended by adding a new section 29-e to read as follows:

§ 29-e. Veterans' bill of rights. 1. The department shall establish, print, publish and distribute a veterans' bill of rights. Such bill of rights shall include the following or substantially similar text describing the existing rights of veterans under current law:

"VETERANS' BILL OF RIGHTS

You as a veteran have a right:

1. To apply for veterans' benefits for which you may be eligible;

2. To receive assistance from your local state veterans' service agency and all offices of the New York state department of veterans' services;

3. To receive, upon request, an explanation of any services and benefits available under federal and New York state laws, rules and regulations;

4. To receive written notice and an explanation of the approval or denial of your application for benefits available through the New York state department of veterans' services;

5. To be treated with dignity and respect;

6. To appeal, subject to applicable law, an adverse determination or denial of your application for services or benefits available through the New York state department of veterans' services;

7. To expect confidentiality to the extent provided by law;

EXPLANATION--Matter in *italics* (underscored) is new; matter in brackets [-] is old law to be omitted.

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8. To receive fair and equal treatment without regard to sex, race, religion, disability, ethnicity, gender identity or national origin; and

9. To receive, upon request, information relating to assistance provided to veterans in the state of New York including but not limited to: legal services; educational, employment, or housing opportunities; assistance with discharge upgrades and/or character of service determinations; tax benefits, including real property and personal taxes; and the veterans notation on New York state driver's license or non-driver identification cards."

2. The department shall conspicuously post the veterans' bill of rights on the department's website and shall make the veterans' bill of rights available to county and city veterans' service agencies.

§ 2. This act shall take effect on the ninetieth day after it shall have become a law. Effective immediately, the addition, amendment, and/or repeal of any rule or regulation necessary for the implementation of this act on its effective date are authorized to be made and completed on or before such effective date.