

# STATE OF NEW YORK

1201

2023-2024 Regular Sessions

## IN SENATE

January 10, 2023

Introduced by Sen. PARKER -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Energy and Telecommunications

AN ACT to amend the public service law, in relation to establishing discount programs for veterans

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

Section 1. The public service law is amended by adding a new section 66-u to read as follows:

§ 66-u. Utility discount program. 1. (a) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the commission is authorized and directed to require a gas corporation, electric corporation or municipality to establish a discount program for veterans no later than ninety days after the effective date of this section. Such program shall offer a yearly benefit to veterans in the form of a ten percent discount on utility bills. The fiscal impact of such program shall not be borne by customers and shall not be added to bills rendered by a gas corporation, electric corporation or municipality to customers.

(b) A gas corporation, electric corporation or municipality which offers such discount program shall conspicuously advertise the availability and amount of such discount on the website of such gas corporation, electric corporation or municipality. The availability and amount of such discount shall also be conspicuously advertised on the accessibility page of the website of such gas corporation, electric corporation or municipality.

2. (a) For the purposes of this section, "veteran" shall mean a resident of the state who (i) is the primary named utility service account holder; (ii) has had a total household income of less than fifty thousand dollars for the most recent two consecutive income tax years beginning in two thousand twenty, as verified by the department of taxation and finance; and (iii) served in and who received any honorable or

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

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1 general discharge from the United States army, navy, air force, marine  
2 corps, coast guard and/or the reserves thereof, and/or the army national  
3 guard, air national guard, New York guard or New York naval militia.

4 (b) A primary named utility service accountholder shall provide the  
5 gas corporation, electric corporation or municipality an authenticat-  
6 ed copy of his or her discharge papers to be eligible for such  
7 discount to demonstrate eligibility under paragraph (a) of this subdivi-  
8 sion.

9 § 2. The public service law is amended by adding a new section 89-q to  
10 read as follows:

11 § 89-q. Water discount program. 1. (a) Notwithstanding any other  
12 provision of law, the commission is authorized and directed to require  
13 waterworks corporations and municipal water systems to establish a  
14 discount program for veterans no later than ninety days after the effec-  
15 tive date of this section. Such program shall offer a yearly benefit to  
16 veterans in the form of a ten percent discount on water utility bills.  
17 The fiscal impact of such program shall not be borne by customers and  
18 shall not be added to bills rendered by a waterworks corporation or  
19 municipal water system to customers.

20 (b) A waterworks corporation or municipal water system which offers  
21 such discount program shall conspicuously advertise the availability and  
22 amount of such discount on the website of such waterworks corporation or  
23 municipal water system. The availability and amount of such discount  
24 shall also be conspicuously advertised on the accessibility page of the  
25 website of such waterworks corporation or municipal water system.

26 2. (a) For the purposes of this section, "veteran" shall mean a resi-  
27 dent of the state who (i) is the primary named waterworks or municipal  
28 water system service accountholder; (ii) has had a total household  
29 income of less than fifty thousand dollars for the most recent two  
30 consecutive income tax years beginning in two thousand twenty, as veri-  
31 fied by the department of taxation and finance; and (iii) served in and  
32 who received any honorable or general discharge from the United States  
33 army, navy, air force, marine corps, coast guard and/or the reserves  
34 thereof, and/or the army national guard, air national guard, New York  
35 guard or New York naval militia.

36 (b) A primary named waterworks or municipal water system service  
37 accountholder shall provide the waterworks corporation or municipal  
38 water system an authenticated copy of his or her discharge papers  
39 to be eligible for such discount to demonstrate eligibility under para-  
40 graph (a) of this subdivision.

41 § 3. The public service law is amended by adding a new section 91-b to  
42 read as follows:

43 § 91-b. Telephone discount program. 1. (a) Notwithstanding any other  
44 provision of law, the commission is authorized and directed to require a  
45 telephone corporation to establish a discount program for veterans no  
46 later than ninety days after the effective date of this section. Such  
47 program shall offer a yearly benefit to veterans in the form of a ten  
48 percent discount on telephone bills. The fiscal impact of such program  
49 shall not be borne by customers and shall not be added to bills rendered  
50 by a telephone corporation to customers.

51 (b) A telephone corporation which offers such discount program shall  
52 conspicuously advertise the availability and amount of such discount on  
53 the website of such telephone corporation. The availability and amount  
54 of such discount shall also be conspicuously advertised on the accessi-  
55 bility page of the website of such telephone corporation.

1 (c) Participation in the federal government's Lifeline or Affordable  
2 Connectivity program, or any successor program the commission shall deem  
3 sufficient, shall satisfy the telephone corporation's or cable tele-  
4 vision company's obligation to establish a discount program under para-  
5 graph (a) of this subdivision, unless the commission deems it insuffi-  
6 cient to satisfy such requirements.

7 (d) Before applying a discount under paragraph (a) of this subdivi-  
8 sion, a telephone corporation may require proof of eligibility from the  
9 primary named telephone service accountholder for the calendar year in  
10 which the discount is sought.

11 2. (a) For the purposes of this section, "veteran" shall mean a resi-  
12 dent of the state who (i) is the primary named telephone service  
13 accountholder; (ii) has had a total household income of less than fifty  
14 thousand dollars for the most recent two consecutive income tax years  
15 beginning in two thousand twenty, as verified by the department of taxa-  
16 tion and finance; and (iii) served in and who received any honorable or  
17 general discharge from the United States army, navy, air force, marine  
18 corps, coast guard and/or the reserves thereof, and/or the army national  
19 guard, air national guard, New York guard or New York naval militia.

20 (b) A primary named telephone service accountholder shall provide the  
21 telephone corporation an authenticated copy of his or her discharge  
22 papers to be eligible for such discount to demonstrate eligibility under  
23 paragraph (a) of this subdivision.

24 § 4. The public service law is amended by adding a new section 224-d  
25 to read as follows:

26 § 224-d. Cable discount program. 1. (a) Notwithstanding any other  
27 provision of law, the commission is authorized and directed to require a  
28 telephone corporation, as defined in subdivision seventeen of section  
29 two of this chapter, and a cable television company, as defined in  
30 section two hundred twelve of this article, that provides cable service  
31 to customers in New York, to establish a discount program for veterans  
32 no later than ninety days after the effective date of this section. Such  
33 program shall offer a yearly benefit to veterans in the form of a ten  
34 percent discount on cable bills. The fiscal impact of such program shall  
35 not be borne by customers and shall not be added to bills rendered by a  
36 telephone corporation or cable television company to customers.

37 (b) A telephone corporation or cable television company which offers  
38 such discount program shall conspicuously advertise the availability and  
39 amount of such discount on the website of such telephone corporation or  
40 cable television company. The availability and amount of such discount  
41 shall also be conspicuously advertised on the accessibility page of the  
42 website of such telephone corporation or cable television company.

43 (c) Participation in the federal government's Lifeline or Affordable  
44 Connectivity program, or any successor program the commission shall deem  
45 sufficient, shall satisfy the telephone corporation's or cable tele-  
46 vision company's obligation to establish a discount program under para-  
47 graph (a) of this subdivision, unless the commission deems it insuffi-  
48 cient to satisfy such requirements.

49 (d) Before applying a discount under paragraph (a) of this subdivi-  
50 sion, a telephone corporation or cable television company may require  
51 proof of eligibility from the primary named cable service accountholder  
52 for the calendar year in which the discount is sought.

53 2. (a) For the purposes of this section, "veteran" shall mean a resi-  
54 dent of the state who (i) is the primary named cable service account-  
55 holder; (ii) has had a total household income of less than fifty thou-  
56 sand dollars for the most recent two consecutive income tax years

1 beginning in two thousand twenty, as verified by the department of taxa-  
2 tion and finance; and (iii) received any honorable or general discharge  
3 from the United States army, navy, air force, marine corps, coast guard  
4 and/or the reserves thereof, and/or the army national guard, air  
5 national guard, New York guard or New York naval militia.

6 (b) A primary named cable service accountholder shall provide the  
7 telephone corporation or the cable television company an authenticated  
8 copy of his or her discharge papers to be eligible for such discount to  
9 demonstrate eligibility under paragraph (a) of this subdivision.

10 § 5. This act shall take effect immediately.