

STATE OF NEW YORK

7475--A

2023-2024 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

May 24, 2023

Introduced by M. of A. CUNNINGHAM -- read once and referred to the Committee on Corporations, Authorities and Commissions -- committee discharged, bill amended, ordered reprinted as amended and recommitted to said committee

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:

1 Section 1. The public service law is amended by adding a new section
2 66-w to read as follows:

3 § 66-w. Utility discount program. 1. (a) Notwithstanding any other
4 provision of law, the commission is authorized and directed to require a
5 gas corporation, electric corporation or municipality to establish a
6 discount program for veterans no later than ninety days after the effec-
7 tive date of this section. Such program shall offer a yearly benefit to
8 veterans in the form of a ten percent discount on utility bills. The
9 fiscal impact of such program shall not be borne by customers and shall
10 not be added to bills rendered by a gas corporation, electric corpo-
11 ration or municipality to customers.

12 (b) A gas corporation, electric corporation or municipality which
13 offers such discount program shall conspicuously advertise the avail-
14 ability and amount of such discount on the website of such gas corpo-
15 ration, electric corporation or municipality. The availability and
16 amount of such discount shall also be conspicuously advertised on the
17 accessibility page of the website of such gas corporation, electric
18 corporation or municipality.

19 2. (a) For the purposes of this section, "veteran" shall mean a resi-
20 dent of the state who (i) is the primary named utility service account-
21 holder; (ii) has had a total household income of less than fifty thou-
22 sand dollars for the most recent two consecutive income tax years
23 beginning in two thousand twenty, as verified by the department of taxa-

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

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1 tion and finance; and (iii) served in and who received any honorable or
2 general discharge from the United States army, navy, air force, marine
3 corps, coast guard and/or the reserves thereof, and/or the army national
4 guard, air national guard, New York guard or New York naval militia.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

52 (b) A telephone corporation which offers such discount program shall
53 conspicuously advertise the availability and amount of such discount on
54 the website of such telephone corporation. The availability and amount
55 of such discount shall also be conspicuously advertised on the accessi-
56 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 on the one hundred eightieth day after
11 it shall have become a law.