STATE OF NEW YORK

2406

2023-2024 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

January 20, 2023

Introduced by Sen. BAILEY -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Veterans, Homeland Security and Military Affairs

AN ACT to amend the executive law and the veterans' services law, in relation to establishing a program for the sharing of veteran contact information

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

Section 1. Section 354-a of the executive law, as amended by chapter 602 of the laws of 2021, is amended to read as follows:

§ 354-a. Information on status of veterans receiving assistance. **1. The division shall establish and maintain a program for the sharing of veteran contact information between veteran related programs and the division. Such program shall consist of any veteran related program under any department, division, bureau, board, commission and agency of the state and political subdivisions thereof including, but not limited to: (a) programs that offer property tax exemptions, income tax exemptions, and/or tax credits to veterans under the department of taxation and finance; (b) programs that offer discounts to state parks, historic sites, and recreational facilities to veterans under the office of parks, recreation and historic preservation; (c) programs that deliver career services to veterans under the department of labor; (d) programs that facilitate long term services and supports for veteran seniors under the department for the aging; (e) programs that provide financial assistance to veterans with disabilities, programs that facilitate the creation of affordable housing specifically for veterans, and programs that support veteran home ownership under the department of housing and community renewal; (f) programs that facilitate the creation of affordable housing specifically for veterans under the office of temporary and disability assistance and/or the office of mental health; (g) programs that provide free or reduced fee sporting license and/or**

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

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privileges to veterans under the department of environmental conservation; and (h) programs that provide postsecondary education benefits to veterans and veteran family members under the higher education services corporation.

2. Departments, divisions, bureaus, boards, commissions and agencies of the state and political subdivisions thereof, which provide assistance, treatment, counseling, care, supervision or custody in service areas involving health, mental health, family services, criminal justice or employment, including but not limited to the office of addiction services and supports, office of mental health, office of probation and correctional alternatives, office of children and family services, office of temporary and disability assistance, department of health, department of labor, local workforce investment boards, office for people with developmental disabilities, and department of corrections and community supervision, shall request assisted persons to provide information with regard to their veteran status and military experiences. Individuals identifying themselves as veterans, including individuals requesting and obtaining a veterans notation on their driver's license or non-driver identification card pursuant to sections four hundred ninety and five hundred two of the vehicle and traffic law, shall be advised that the division of veterans' services and local veterans' service agencies established pursuant to section three hundred fifty-seven of this article provide assistance to veterans regarding benefits under federal and state law. Information regarding veterans status and military service provided by assisted persons solely to implement this section shall be protected as personal confidential information under article six-A of the public officers law against disclosure of confidential material, and used only to assist in the diagnosis, treatment, assessment and handling of the veteran's problems within the agency requesting such information and in referring the veteran to the division of veterans' services for information and assistance with regard to benefits and entitlements under federal and state law.

§ 2. Section 7 of the veterans' services law is amended to read as follows:

§ 7. Information on status of veterans receiving assistance. 1. The department shall establish and maintain a program for the sharing of veteran contact information between veteran related programs and the department. Such program shall consist of any veteran related program under any department, division, bureau, board, commission and agency of the state and political subdivisions thereof including, but not limited to: (a) programs that offer property tax exemptions, income tax exemptions, and/or tax credits to veterans under the department of taxation and finance; (b) programs that offer discounts to state parks, historic sites, and recreational facilities to veterans under the office of parks, recreation and historic preservation; (c) programs that deliver career services to veterans under the department of labor; (d) programs that facilitate long term services and supports for veteran seniors under the department for the aging; (e) programs that provide financial assistance to veterans with disabilities, programs that facilitate the creation of affordable housing specifically for veterans, and programs that support veteran home ownership under the department of housing and community renewal; (f) programs that facilitate the creation of affordable housing specifically for veterans under the office of temporary and disability assistance and/or the office of mental health; (g) programs that provide free or reduced fee sporting license and/or

privileges to veterans under the department of environmental conservation; and (h) programs that provide postsecondary education benefits to veterans and veteran family members under the higher education services corporation.

2. Departments, divisions, bureaus, boards, commissions and agencies of the state and political subdivisions thereof, which provide assistance, treatment, counseling, care, supervision or custody in service areas involving health, mental health, family services, criminal justice or employment, including but not limited to the office of addiction services and supports, office of mental health, office of probation and correctional alternatives, office of children and family services, office of temporary and disability assistance, department of health, department of labor, local workforce investment boards, office for people with developmental disabilities, and department of corrections and community supervision, shall request assisted persons to provide information with regard to their veteran status and military experiences. Individuals identifying themselves as veterans shall be advised that the department of veterans' services and local veterans' service agencies established pursuant to section fourteen of this article provide assistance to veterans regarding benefits under federal and state law. Information regarding veterans status and military service provided by assisted persons solely to implement this section shall be protected as personal confidential information under article six-A of the public officers law against disclosure of confidential material, and used only to assist in the diagnosis, treatment, assessment and handling of the veteran's problems within the agency requesting such information and in referring the veteran to the department of veterans' services for information and assistance with regard to benefits and entitlements under federal and state law.

§ 3. This act shall take effect on the one hundred eightieth day after it shall have become a law; provided, however, that:

(a) that the amendments to section 354-a of the executive law made by section one of this act shall not affect the repeal of such section and shall be deemed repealed therewith;

(b) if section 2 of part PP of chapter 56 of the laws of 2022 shall not have taken effect on or before such date then section two of this act shall take effect on the same date and in the same manner as such chapter of the laws of 2022, takes effect; and

(c) 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.