

# STATE OF NEW YORK

5195--B

2023-2024 Regular Sessions

## IN SENATE

February 27, 2023

Introduced by Sens. SKOUFIS, ASHBY -- 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 -- committee discharged, bill amended, ordered reprinted as amended and recommitted to said committee

AN ACT to amend the the veterans' services law, the social services law and the vehicle and traffic law, in relation to removing the requirement that a veteran served during wartime to be granted certain benefits

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

1 Section 1. Subdivision 1 of section 13 of the veterans' services law  
2 is amended to read as follows:  
3 1. A state veterans' service agency established by the department  
4 pursuant to this article shall have power and it shall be its duty to  
5 inform military and naval authorities of the United States and assist  
6 members of the uniformed services and veterans, who are residents of  
7 this state, and their families, in relation to (1) matters pertaining to  
8 educational training and retraining services and facilities, (2) health,  
9 medical and rehabilitation services and facilities, (3) provisions of  
10 federal, state and local laws and regulations affording special rights  
11 and privileges to members of the uniformed services and ~~war~~ veterans  
12 and their families, (4) employment and re-employment services, and (5)  
13 other matters of similar, related or appropriate nature. The state  
14 veterans' service agency also shall perform such other duties as may be  
15 assigned by the state commissioner.  
16 § 2. Subdivision 1 of section 15 of the veterans' services law is  
17 amended to read as follows:  
18 1. A local veterans' service agency shall have power under the direc-  
19 tion of the state veterans' service agency, and it shall be its duty to

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

LBD01439-07-3

1 inform military and naval authorities of the United States and assist  
2 members of the uniformed services and veterans, who are residents of  
3 this state, and their families, in relation to (1) matters pertaining to  
4 educational training and retraining services and facilities, (2) health,  
5 medical and rehabilitation services and facilities, (3) provisions of  
6 federal, state and local laws and regulations affording special rights  
7 and privileges to members of the uniformed services and ~~[war]~~ veterans  
8 and their families, (4) employment and re-employment services, (5) the  
9 process of submitting an application for a discharge upgrade to the  
10 discharge upgrade advisory board, and (6) other matters of similar,  
11 related or appropriate nature. The local veterans' service agency may  
12 also assist families of members of the reserve components of the  
13 uniformed services and the organized militia ordered into active duty to  
14 ensure that they are made aware of and are receiving all appropriate  
15 support available to them and are placed in contact with the agencies  
16 responsible for such support, including, but not limited to, the divi-  
17 sion of military and naval affairs and other state agencies responsible  
18 for providing such support. The local veterans' service agency also  
19 shall perform such other duties as may be assigned by the state commis-  
20 sioner.

21 § 3. Section 168 of the social services law, as added by chapter 871  
22 of the laws of 1948, subdivision 1 and paragraph 5 of subdivision 2 as  
23 amended by section 86 of part PP of chapter 56 of the laws of 2022,  
24 subdivision 2 as amended by chapter 467 of the laws of 1991, paragraph 7  
25 of subdivision 2 as amended by chapter 606 of the laws of 2021, para-  
26 graph (i) of subdivision 3 as amended by chapter 610 of the laws of  
27 1960, paragraphs (n), (p), (q), (r), (s), (t) and (u) of subdivision 3  
28 as added by chapter 219 of the laws of 1983, paragraph (o) of subdivi-  
29 sion 3 as added by chapter 643 of the laws of 1959, subdivision 4 as  
30 amended by section 78 of part B of chapter 436 of the laws of 1997, is  
31 amended to read as follows:

32 § 168. Definitions. As used in this title:

33 1. Veteran means a person~~[, male or female,]~~ who has served in the  
34 armed forces of the United States ~~[in time of war,]~~ or who was a recipi-  
35 ent of the armed forces expeditionary medal, navy expeditionary medal or  
36 marine corps expeditionary medal for participation in operations in  
37 Lebanon from June first, nineteen hundred eighty-three to December  
38 first, nineteen hundred eighty-seven, in Grenada from October twenty-  
39 third, nineteen hundred eighty-three to November twenty-first, nineteen  
40 hundred eighty-three, or in Panama from December twentieth, nineteen  
41 hundred eighty-nine to January thirty-first, nineteen hundred ninety,  
42 and who ~~[(+1)]~~ (a) has been honorably discharged or released under honor-  
43 able circumstances from such service or furloughed to the reserve, or  
44 ~~[(+2)]~~ (b) has a qualifying condition, as defined in section one of the  
45 veterans' services law, and has received a discharge other than bad  
46 conduct or dishonorable from such service, or ~~[(+3)]~~ (c) is a discharged  
47 LGBT veteran, as defined in section one of the veterans' services law,  
48 and has received a discharge other than bad conduct or dishonorable from  
49 such service.

50 2. ~~[In time of war means the periods herein set forth for the follow-~~  
51 ~~ing wars and conflicts:~~

52 ~~(1) Civil war, from twentieth day of April, eighteen hundred sixty one~~  
53 ~~to and including the ninth day of April, eighteen hundred sixty five.~~

54 ~~(2) Spanish-American war, from the twenty-first day of April, eighteen~~  
55 ~~hundred ninety-eight to and including the eleventh day of April, eigh-~~  
56 ~~teen hundred ninety-nine.~~

1 ~~(3) Philippine insurrection, from the eleventh day of April, eighteen~~  
2 ~~hundred ninety nine to and including the fourth day of July, nineteen~~  
3 ~~hundred two.~~

4 ~~(4) World war I, from the sixth day of April, nineteen hundred seven-~~  
5 ~~teen to and including the eleventh day of November, nineteen hundred~~  
6 ~~eighteen.~~

7 ~~(5) World war II, from the seventh day of December, nineteen hundred~~  
8 ~~forty one to and including the thirty first day of December, nineteen~~  
9 ~~hundred forty six, or who was employed by the War Shipping Adminis-~~  
10 ~~tration or Office of Defense Transportation or their agents as a~~  
11 ~~merchant seaman documented by the United States Coast Guard or Depart-~~  
12 ~~ment of Commerce, or as a civil servant employed by the United States~~  
13 ~~Army Transport Service (later redesignated as the United States Army~~  
14 ~~Transportation Corps, Water Division) or the Naval Transportation~~  
15 ~~Service, and who served satisfactorily as a crew member during the peri-~~  
16 ~~od of armed conflict, December seventh, nineteen hundred forty one, to~~  
17 ~~August fifteenth, nineteen hundred forty five, aboard merchant vessels~~  
18 ~~in oceangoing, i.e., foreign, intercoastal, or coastwise service as such~~  
19 ~~terms are defined under federal law (46 USCA 10301 & 10501) and further~~  
20 ~~to include "near foreign" voyages between the United States and Canada,~~  
21 ~~Mexico, or the West Indies via ocean routes, or public vessels in ocean-~~  
22 ~~going service or foreign waters and who has received a Certificate of~~  
23 ~~Release or Discharge from Active Duty and a discharge certificate, or an~~  
24 ~~Honorable Service Certificate/Report of Casualty, from the Department of~~  
25 ~~Defense or who served as a United States civilian employed by the Ameri-~~  
26 ~~can Field Service and served overseas under United States Armies and~~  
27 ~~United States Army Groups in world war II during the period of armed~~  
28 ~~conflict, December seventh, nineteen hundred forty one through May~~  
29 ~~eighth, nineteen hundred forty five, and who (i) was discharged or~~  
30 ~~released therefrom under honorable conditions, or (ii) has a qualifying~~  
31 ~~condition, as defined in section one of the veterans' services law, and~~  
32 ~~has received a discharge other than bad conduct or dishonorable from~~  
33 ~~such service, or (iii) is a discharged LGBT veteran, as defined in~~  
34 ~~section one of the veterans' services law, and has received a discharge~~  
35 ~~other than bad conduct or dishonorable from such service, or who served~~  
36 ~~as a United States civilian Flight Crew and Aviation Ground Support~~  
37 ~~Employee of Pan American World Airways or one of its subsidiaries or its~~  
38 ~~affiliates and served overseas as a result of Pan American's contract~~  
39 ~~with Air Transport Command or Naval Air Transport Service during the~~  
40 ~~period of armed conflict, December fourteenth, nineteen hundred forty-~~  
41 ~~one through August fourteenth, nineteen hundred forty five, and who (iv)~~  
42 ~~was discharged or released therefrom under honorable conditions, or (v)~~  
43 ~~has a qualifying condition, as defined in section one of the veterans'~~  
44 ~~services law, and has received a discharge other than bad conduct or~~  
45 ~~dishonorable from such service, or (vi) is a discharged LGBT veteran, as~~  
46 ~~defined in section one of the veterans' services law, and has received a~~  
47 ~~discharge other than bad conduct or dishonorable from such service.~~

48 ~~(6) Korean conflict, from the twenty seventh day of June, nineteen~~  
49 ~~hundred fifty to and including the thirty first day of January, nineteen~~  
50 ~~hundred fifty five.~~

51 ~~(7) Viet Nam conflict, from the first of November, nineteen hundred~~  
52 ~~fifty five to and including the seventh day of May, nineteen hundred~~  
53 ~~seventy five.~~

54 ~~(8) Persian Gulf conflict, from the second day of August, nineteen~~  
55 ~~hundred ninety to and including the end of such conflict.~~

56 ~~3.] Veteran organization means the:~~

- 1 (a) Grand Army of the Republic;
- 2 (b) United Spanish War Veterans;
- 3 (c) American Legion;
- 4 (d) Disabled American Veterans;
- 5 (e) Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States;
- 6 (f) Jewish War Veterans of the United States, Incorporated;
- 7 (g) Catholic War Veterans, Incorporated;
- 8 (h) Army and Navy Union of the United States;
- 9 (i) Italian American War Veterans of the United States, Incorporated;
- 10 (j) Polish Legion of American Veterans, Incorporated;
- 11 (k) The Marine Corps League;
- 12 (l) Military Order of the Purple Heart, Inc.;
- 13 (m) Amvets.
- 14 (n) American Veterans of World War II;
- 15 (o) Veterans of World War I, U.S.A., Inc.
- 16 (p) Polish-American Veterans of World War II;
- 17 (q) Masonic War Veterans of the state of N.Y., Inc.;
- 18 (r) American Gold Star Mothers, Inc.;
- 19 (s) Regular Veterans Association, Inc.;
- 20 (t) Vietnam Veterans of America;
- 21 (u) Eastern Paralyzed Veterans Association;

22 [~~4-~~] 3. Veteran assistance means safety net assistance given pursuant  
23 to the provisions of this title, to the persons eligible therefor.

24 § 4. Subdivision 3 of section 404-a of the vehicle and traffic law, as  
25 added by chapter 601 of the laws of 1987, is amended to read as follows:

26 3. Registration of vehicles owned by severely disabled veterans. The  
27 commissioner shall assign to such motor vehicles, including any vans or  
28 pick-up trucks used for transporting handicapped veterans which are not  
29 used for commercial purposes and which are owned by such veterans or a  
30 not-for-profit corporation serving such veterans, a distinctive number  
31 and issue and deliver in such manner as the commissioner may prescribe  
32 to the owner a certification of registration, in such form as the  
33 commissioner shall prescribe and two number plates, called disabled  
34 veteran plates. Said severely disabled veteran plates shall conform to  
35 the requirements of section four hundred one of this [~~chapter~~] article,  
36 but shall bear distinctive marks to distinguish them from number plates  
37 to be issued to other persons, qualifying under this [~~chapter~~] article.  
38 The commissioner in his discretion, may issue, for any registration  
39 year, only one plate as a set for a motor vehicle, in which event a set  
40 of severely disabled veteran plates for a motor vehicle shall consist of  
41 one plate. Where a severely disabled veteran owns more than one vehicle  
42 and such vehicle or vehicles is or are used by severely disabled members  
43 of the owner's family who reside with the owner, the commissioner shall  
44 issue one set of plates for each additional vehicle used by such severe-  
45 ly disabled veteran, provided that such user qualifies as a severely  
46 disabled veteran in the manner required by this section. For purposes of  
47 this subdivision, the term "severely disabled veteran" shall mean [~~any~~  
48 ~~member of the armed forces of the United States who served in time of~~  
49 ~~war,~~] a veteran as defined in section eighty-five of the civil service  
50 law, and whose disability qualifies him as a severely disabled person  
51 within the meaning of such term as defined in subdivision four of this  
52 section.

53 § 5. This act shall take effect immediately.