

AN ACT concerning the Department of Veterans' Affairs.

**Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,
represented in the General Assembly:**

Section 5. The Department of Natural Resources (Conservation) Law of the Civil Administrative Code of Illinois is amended by changing Section 805-305 as follows:

(20 ILCS 805/805-305) (was 20 ILCS 805/63a23)

Sec. 805-305. Campsites and housing facilities. The Department has the power to provide facilities for overnight tent and trailer campsites and to provide suitable housing facilities for student and juvenile overnight camping groups. The Department of Natural Resources may regulate, by administrative order, the fees to be charged for tent and trailer camping units at individual park areas based upon the facilities available. However, for campsites with access to showers or electricity, any Illinois resident who is age 62 or older or has a Class 2 disability as defined in Section 4A of the Illinois Identification Card Act shall be charged only one-half of the camping fee charged to the general public during the period Monday through Thursday of any week and shall be charged the same camping fee as the general public on all other days. For campsites without access to showers or electricity, no camping fee authorized by this Section shall be

charged to any resident of Illinois who has a Class 2 disability as defined in Section 4A of the Illinois Identification Card Act. For campsites without access to showers or electricity, no camping fee authorized by this Section shall be charged to any resident of Illinois who is age 62 or older for the use of a campsite unit during the period Monday through Thursday of any week. No camping fee authorized by this Section shall be charged to any resident of Illinois who is a veteran with a disability or a former prisoner of war, as defined in Section 5 of the Department of Veterans' ~~Veterans~~ Affairs Act. No camping fee authorized by this Section shall be charged to any resident of Illinois after returning from service abroad or mobilization by the President of the United States as an active duty member of the United States Armed Forces, the Illinois National Guard, or the Reserves of the United States Armed Forces for the amount of time that the active duty member spent in service abroad or mobilized if the person (i) applies for a pass at the Department office in Springfield within 2 years after returning and provides acceptable verification of service or mobilization to the Department or (ii) applies for a pass at a Regional Office of the Department within 2 years after returning and provides acceptable verification of service or mobilization to the Department; any portion of a year that the active duty member spent in service abroad or mobilized shall count as a full year. Nonresidents shall be charged the same fees as are

authorized for the general public regardless of age. The Department shall provide by regulation for suitable proof of age, or either a valid driver's license or a "Golden Age Passport" issued by the federal government shall be acceptable as proof of age. The Department shall further provide by regulation that notice of these reduced admission fees be posted in a conspicuous place and manner.

Reduced fees authorized in this Section shall not apply to any charge for utility service.

For the purposes of this Section, "acceptable verification of service or mobilization" means official documentation from the Department of Defense or the appropriate Major Command showing mobilization dates or service abroad dates, including: (i) a DD-214, (ii) a letter from the Illinois Department of Military Affairs for members of the Illinois National Guard, (iii) a letter from the Regional Reserve Command for members of the Armed Forces Reserve, (iv) a letter from the Major Command covering Illinois for active duty members, (v) personnel records for mobilized State employees, and (vi) any other documentation that the Department, by administrative rule, deems acceptable to establish dates of mobilization or service abroad.

For the purposes of this Section, the term "service abroad" means active duty service outside of the 50 United States and the District of Columbia, and includes all active duty service in territories and possessions of the United States.

(Source: P.A. 99-143, eff. 7-27-15; 99-642, eff. 7-28-16.)

Section 10. The Illinois Lottery Law is amended by changing Section 21.6 as follows:

(20 ILCS 1605/21.6)

Sec. 21.6. Scratch-off for Illinois veterans.

(a) The Department shall offer a special instant scratch-off game for the benefit of Illinois veterans. The game shall commence on January 1, 2006 or as soon thereafter, at the discretion of the Director, as is reasonably practical. The operation of the game shall be governed by this Act and any rules adopted by the Department. If any provision of this Section is inconsistent with any other provision of this Act, then this Section governs.

(b) The Illinois Veterans Assistance Fund is created as a special fund in the State treasury. The net revenue from the Illinois veterans scratch-off game shall be deposited into the Fund for appropriation by the General Assembly solely to the Department of Veterans' ~~Veterans~~ Affairs for making grants, funding additional services, or conducting additional research projects relating to each of the following:

- (i) veterans' post traumatic stress disorder;
- (ii) veterans' homelessness;
- (iii) the health insurance costs of veterans;
- (iv) veterans' disability benefits, including but not

limited to, disability benefits provided by veterans service organizations and veterans assistance commissions or centers;

(v) the long-term care of veterans; provided that, beginning with moneys appropriated for fiscal year 2008, no more than 20% of such moneys shall be used for health insurance costs; and

(vi) veteran employment and employment training.

In order to expend moneys from this special fund, beginning with moneys appropriated for fiscal year 2008, the Director of Veterans' Affairs shall appoint a 3-member funding authorization committee. The Director shall designate one of the members as chairperson. The committee shall meet on a quarterly basis, at a minimum, and shall authorize expenditure of moneys from the special fund by a two-thirds vote. Decisions of the committee shall not take effect unless and until approved by the Director of Veterans' Affairs. Each member of the committee shall serve until a replacement is named by the Director of Veterans' Affairs. One member of the committee shall be a member of the Veterans' Advisory Council.

Moneys collected from the special instant scratch-off game shall be used only as a supplemental financial resource and shall not supplant existing moneys that the Department of Veterans' ~~Veterans~~ Affairs may currently expend for the purposes set forth in items (i) through (v).

Moneys received for the purposes of this Section,

including, without limitation, net revenue from the special instant scratch-off game and from gifts, grants, and awards from any public or private entity, must be deposited into the Fund. Any interest earned on moneys in the Fund must be deposited into the Fund.

For purposes of this subsection, "net revenue" means the total amount for which tickets have been sold less the sum of the amount paid out in the prizes and the actual administrative expenses of the Department solely related to the scratch-off game under this Section.

(c) During the time that tickets are sold for the Illinois veterans scratch-off game, the Department shall not unreasonably diminish the efforts devoted to marketing any other instant scratch-off lottery game.

(d) The Department may adopt any rules necessary to implement and administer the provisions of this Section.

(Source: P.A. 97-464, eff. 10-15-11; 97-740, eff. 7-5-12; 98-499, eff. 8-16-13; revised 9-2-16.)

Section 15. The Department of Veterans Affairs Act is amended by changing Sections 0.01 and 20 as follows:

(20 ILCS 2805/0.01) (from Ch. 126 1/2, par. 65.9)

Sec. 0.01. Short title. This Act may be cited as the Department of Veterans' ~~Veterans~~ Affairs Act.

(Source: P.A. 86-1324.)

(20 ILCS 2805/20)

Sec. 20. Illinois Discharged Servicemember Task Force. The Illinois Discharged Servicemember Task Force is hereby created within the Department of Veterans' ~~Veterans~~ Affairs. The Task Force shall investigate the re-entry process for service members who return to civilian life after being engaged in an active theater. The investigation shall include the effects of post-traumatic stress disorder, homelessness, disabilities, and other issues the Task Force finds relevant to the re-entry process. For fiscal year 2012, the Task Force shall include the availability of prosthetics in its investigation. For fiscal year 2014, the Task Force shall include the needs of women veterans with respect to issues including, but not limited to, compensation, rehabilitation, outreach, health care, and issues facing women veterans in the community, and to offer recommendations on how best to alleviate these needs which shall be included in the Task Force Annual Report for 2014. The Task Force shall include the following members:

(a) a representative of the Department of Veterans' ~~Veterans~~ Affairs, who shall chair the committee;

(b) a representative from the Department of Military Affairs;

(c) a representative from the Office of the Illinois Attorney General;

(d) a member of the General Assembly appointed by the

Speaker of the House;

(e) a member of the General Assembly appointed by the House Minority Leader;

(f) a member of the General Assembly appointed by the President of the Senate;

(g) a member of the General Assembly appointed by the Senate Minority Leader;

(h) 4 members chosen by the Department of Veterans' ~~Veterans~~ Affairs, who shall represent statewide veterans' organizations or veterans' homeless shelters;

(i) one member appointed by the Lieutenant Governor; and

(j) a representative of the United States Department of Veterans Affairs shall be invited to participate.

Vacancies in the Task Force shall be filled by the initial appointing authority. Task Force members shall serve without compensation, but may be reimbursed for necessary expenses incurred in performing duties associated with the Task Force.

By July 1, 2008 and by July 1 of each year thereafter, the Task Force shall present an annual report of its findings to the Governor, the Attorney General, the Director of Veterans' Affairs, the Lieutenant Governor, and the Secretary of the United States Department of Veterans Affairs.

If the Task Force becomes inactive because active theaters cease, the Director of Veterans' ~~Veterans~~ Affairs may reactivate the Task Force if active theaters are reestablished.

(Source: P.A. 97-414, eff. 1-1-12; 98-310, eff. 8-12-13; revised 9-8-16.)

Section 20. The Task Force on Inventorying Employment Restrictions Act is amended by changing Section 10 as follows:

(20 ILCS 5000/10)

Sec. 10. Definitions. As used in this Act:

"State agencies" shall mean the following State agencies, boards, and commissions: Department on Aging, Department of Agriculture, Office of Appellate Defender, Office of the State's Attorneys Appellate Prosecutor, Illinois Arts Council, Office of the Attorney General, Auditor General, Capital Development Board, Department of Central Management Services, Department of Children and Family Services, Civil Service Commission, Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, Illinois Commerce Commission, Illinois Community College Board, State of Illinois Comprehensive Health Insurance Plan, Office of the Comptroller, Department of Corrections, Criminal Justice Information Authority, Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities, Illinois Deaf and Hard of Hearing Commission, Commission on Discrimination and Hate Crimes, State Board of Education, Illinois Educational Labor Relations Board, State Board of Elections, Illinois Emergency Management Agency, Department of Employment Security, Environmental Protection Agency, Illinois State Fair, Illinois

Finance Authority, Department of Financial and Professional Regulation, Office of the First Lady, Illinois Gaming Board, Office of the Governor, Guardianship and Advocacy Commission, Department of Healthcare and Family Services, Board of Higher Education, Historic Preservation Agency, Illinois Housing Development Authority, Illinois Human Rights Commission, Department of Human Rights, Department of Human Services, Illinois State Board of Investment, Department of Juvenile Justice, Office of the Lieutenant Governor, Department of Labor, Illinois Labor Relations Board, Illinois Law Enforcement Training Standards Board, Illinois Liquor Control Commission, Illinois Lottery, Governor's Office of Management and Budget, Illinois Medical District Commission, Department of Military Affairs, Department of Natural Resources, Pollution Control Board, Prairie State 2000 Authority, Property Tax Appeal Board, Department of Public Health, Illinois Prisoner Review Board, Illinois Racing Board, Department of Revenue, Office of the Secretary of State, State Fire Marshal, Illinois State Police, State Police Merit Board, State Retirement Systems, Office of the State Treasurer, State Universities Civil Service System, State Universities Retirement System, Illinois Student Assistance Commission, Illinois Supreme Court, Illinois Teachers' Retirement System, Illinois State Toll Highway Authority, Department of Transportation, Department of Veterans' Affairs ~~Veterans Affairs~~, Governor's Office of Women's Affairs, and Illinois

Workers' Compensation Commission.

(Source: P.A. 96-593, eff. 8-18-09.)

Section 25. The Illinois Procurement Code is amended by changing Section 45-67 as follows:

(30 ILCS 500/45-67)

Sec. 45-67. Encouragement to hire qualified veterans. A chief procurement officer may, as part of any solicitation, encourage potential contractors to consider hiring qualified veterans and to notify them of any available financial incentives or other advantages associated with hiring such persons. In establishing internal guidelines in furtherance of this Section, the Department of Central Management Services may work with an interagency advisory committee consisting of representatives from the Department of Veterans' ~~Veterans~~ Affairs, the Department of Employment Security, the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, and the Department of Revenue and consisting of 8 members of the General Assembly, 2 of whom are appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, 2 of whom are appointed by the President of the Senate, 2 of whom are appointed by the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives, and 2 of whom are appointed by the Minority Leader of the Senate.

For the purposes of this Section, "qualified veteran" means an Illinois resident who: (i) was a member of the Armed Forces

of the United States, a member of the Illinois National Guard, or a member of any reserve component of the Armed Forces of the United States; (ii) served on active duty in connection with Operation Desert Storm, Operation Enduring Freedom, or Operation Iraqi Freedom; and (iii) was honorably discharged.

The Department of Central Management Services must report to the Governor and to the General Assembly by December 31 of each year on the activities undertaken by chief procurement officers and the Department of Central Management Services to encourage potential contractors to consider hiring qualified veterans. The report must include the number of vendors who have hired qualified veterans.

(Source: P.A. 98-1076, eff. 1-1-15; revised 9-9-16.)

Section 30. The Nursing Home Care Act is amended by changing Section 2-215 as follows:

(210 ILCS 45/2-215)

Sec. 2-215. Conflicts with the Department of Veterans' ~~Veterans~~ Affairs Act. If there is a conflict between the provisions of this Act and the provisions of the Department of Veterans' ~~Veterans~~ Affairs Act concerning an Illinois Veterans Home not operated by the Department of Veterans' Affairs, then the provisions of this Act shall apply.

(Source: P.A. 90-168, eff. 7-23-97.)

Section 35. The Viet Nam Veterans Compensation Act is amended by changing Sections 3 and 5 as follows:

(330 ILCS 30/3) (from Ch. 126 1/2, par. 57.53)

Sec. 3. The widow or widower, child or children, mother, father, person standing in loco parentis, brothers and sisters, in the order named, of any deceased person shall be paid the compensation to which the deceased person would be entitled under Section 2 of this Act. Where such deceased person would have qualified for compensation under Section 2 except for his death and his death was connected with such service and resulted from such service during the time period specified in Section 2, his survivors, in the order named in this Section, shall be paid \$1000.

Where a preceding beneficiary fails to file a claim for compensation after the official notice of death the Department of Veterans' Affairs ~~Illinois Veterans' Commission~~ may proceed to process applications from succeeding beneficiaries, and such beneficiaries may then proceed to qualify upon submission of satisfactory proof of eligibility.

(Source: P.A. 78-295.)

(330 ILCS 30/5) (from Ch. 126 1/2, par. 57.55)

Sec. 5. The Department of Veterans' Affairs ~~Illinois Veterans' Commission~~ has complete charge and control of the general scheme of payments authorized by this Act and shall

adopt general rules for the making of such payments, the ascertainment and selection of proper beneficiaries and the amount to which such beneficiaries are entitled, and for procedure.

If the person to whom compensation is payable under this Act is under legal disability, it shall be paid to the person legally vested with the care of such legally disabled person under the laws of his State of residence. If no such person has been so designated for the legally disabled person, payment shall be made to the chief officer of any hospital or institution under the supervision or control of any State or of the Veterans Administration of the United States in which such legally disabled person is placed, if such officer is authorized to accept moneys for the benefit of the incompetent. Any payments so made shall be held or used solely for the benefit of the legally disabled person.

As used in this Section, a person under legal disability means any person found to be so disabled by a court of competent jurisdiction of any State or the District of Columbia or by any adjudication officer of the Veterans Administration of the United States.

(Source: P.A. 83-706.)

Section 40. The Prisoner of War Bonus Act is amended by changing Section 2 as follows:

(330 ILCS 35/2) (from Ch. 126 1/2, par. 57.62)

Sec. 2. The widow or widower, child or children, mother, father, person standing in loco parentis, brothers and sisters, in the order named, of any deceased person shall be paid the compensation to which the deceased person would be entitled under Section 1 of this Act.

Where a preceding beneficiary fails to file a claim for compensation after the official notice of death the Department of Veterans' Affairs ~~Illinois Veterans' Commission~~ may proceed to process applications from succeeding beneficiaries and such beneficiaries may then proceed to qualify upon submission of satisfactory proof of eligibility.

(Source: P.A. 78-293.)

Section 45. The Veterans Burial Places Act is amended by changing Section 3 as follows:

(330 ILCS 110/3) (from Ch. 21, par. 59c)

Sec. 3. For the purpose of locating the burial places of United States War Veterans, the different Veteran organizations, their auxiliaries and affiliated organizations in the State of Illinois are authorized, without expense to the State, to collect the required data and prepare and file with the Department of Veterans' Affairs the information provided for in section 1 hereof. For filing and recording this report, the Department of Veterans' Affairs ~~Illinois Veterans'~~

~~Commission~~ may charge a fee of 25 cents for a single report and not to exceed 50 cents per folio for reports containing more than one name and more than one folio. A representative of the Department of Veterans' Affairs may visit cemeteries of the State or resort to any other reliable means to locate the burial places of United States War Veterans.

(Source: P.A. 81-167.)

Section 50. The Illinois Vehicle Code is amended by changing Section 3-626 as follows:

(625 ILCS 5/3-626)

Sec. 3-626. Korean War Veteran license plates.

(a) In addition to any other special license plate, the Secretary, upon receipt of all applicable fees and applications made in the form prescribed by the Secretary of State, may issue special registration plates designated as Korean War Veteran license plates to residents of Illinois who participated in the United States Armed Forces during the Korean War. The special plate issued under this Section shall be affixed only to passenger vehicles of the first division, motorcycles, motor vehicles of the second division weighing not more than 8,000 pounds, and recreational vehicles as defined by Section 1-169 of this Code. Plates issued under this Section shall expire according to the staggered multi-year procedure established by Section 3-414.1 of this Code.

(b) The design, color, and format of the plates shall be wholly within the discretion of the Secretary of State. The Secretary may, in his or her discretion, allow the plates to be issued as vanity plates or personalized in accordance with Section 3-405.1 of this Code. The plates are not required to designate "Land Of Lincoln", as prescribed in subsection (b) of Section 3-412 of this Code. The Secretary shall prescribe the eligibility requirements and, in his or her discretion, shall approve and prescribe stickers or decals as provided under Section 3-412.

(c) (Blank).

(d) The Korean War Memorial Construction Fund is created as a special fund in the State treasury. All moneys in the Korean War Memorial Construction Fund shall, subject to appropriation, be used by the Department of Veterans' ~~Veteran~~ Affairs to provide grants for construction of the Korean War Memorial to be located at Oak Ridge Cemetery in Springfield, Illinois. Upon the completion of the Memorial, the Department of Veterans' ~~Veteran~~ Affairs shall certify to the State Treasurer that the construction of the Memorial has been completed. Upon the certification by the Department of Veterans' ~~Veteran~~ Affairs, the State Treasurer shall transfer all moneys in the Fund and any future deposits into the Fund into the Secretary of State Special License Plate Fund.

(e) An individual who has been issued Korean War Veteran license plates for a vehicle and who has been approved for

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benefits under the Senior Citizens and Persons with Disabilities Property Tax Relief Act shall pay the original issuance and the regular annual fee for the registration of the vehicle as provided in Section 3-806.3 of this Code.

(Source: P.A. 99-127, eff. 1-1-16; 99-143, eff. 7-27-15; 99-642, eff. 7-28-16.)

Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect January 1, 2018.