



2014 Nebraska Veterans' Legislation

Provided by the Nebraska
Department of Veterans Affairs

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Introduction

This guide is offered by the Nebraska Department of Veterans' Affairs as a general overview of military and veterans' legislation that was passed by the Nebraska Unicameral in 2014. This guide is informational only and does not guarantee a grant of benefits and is not a definitive reference on Nebraska laws.

2014 Legislative Summary:

Number of Bills Introduced (excluding "A" bills), 103rd Legislature: 1115

1st Session: 655

2nd Session: 460

Number of Carryover Bills and Resolutions: 406

Number of "A" Bills Introduced, 103rd Legislature: 82

1st Session: 35

2nd Session: 47

Number of Carryover "A" Bills: 5

Number of Resolutions Introduced, 103rd Legislature: 628

1st Session: 389

2nd Session: 239

Number of CA Resolutions Introduced, 103rd Legislature: 12

1st Session: 6

2nd Session: 6

Number of Carryover Resolutions: 8

Number of Constitutional Amendments Delivered to Secretary of State, 103rd Legislature: 1

1st Session: 0

2nd Session: 1

Number of Bills to Become Law, 103rd Legislature: 405

1st Session: 220

2nd Session: 185

Number of Bills, Resolutions and Constitutional Amendments Indefinitely Postponed: 727

LB 383 Provide for Nebraska Armed Forces Pride Plates

Sponsor: Senator Charlie Janssen, District 15

Committee: Transportation and Telecommunications

Timeline:

Introduced on January 18th, 2013

Designated as Senator Janssen Priority Bill on February 20th, 2014

Passed by the Legislature with a vote of 48-0-1 on April 17th, 2014

Signed by Governor Heineman on April 22nd, 2014

Estimated effective date: July 17th, 2014

License plate issue date: January 2nd, 2016

Implementing agencies:

Nebraska Department of Motor Vehicles

Nebraska Department of Veterans' Affairs

Overview: LB 383 provides for military and veteran license plates issues through the Nebraska Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) starting January, 2016. Nebraska veterans and military members residing in Nebraska wishing to obtain Armed Forces Pride Plates must first enroll in the Nebraska Veterans' Registry maintained by the Nebraska Department of Veterans' Affairs (NDVA). www.veterans.nebraska.gov

DMV is working to obtain permission to use the logos of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard and Nebraska National Guard. Next, DMV will design a license plate for each logo which will be available in January of 2016.

The plates will be issued for a \$5.00 fee for an alphanumeric plate or \$40.00 for a specialized plate. A portion of the fees will be allocated for operation of the Nebraska Veterans' Cemetery at Alliance.

Additionally, LB 383 strikes the five dollar fee for Ex-POW and Purple Heart license plates.

LB 588 Change veteran employment preference provisions

Sponsor: Senator Dan Watermeier, District 1

Committee: Government, Military and Veterans Affairs

Timeline:

Introduced on January 23rd, 2013

Passed by the Legislature with a vote of 44-0-5 on February 13th, 2014

Signed by Governor Heineman on February 18th, 2014

Operative date: January 1st, 2015

Implementing agencies:

State of Nebraska and governmental subdivisions

Overview: LB 588 establishes the Veterans Preference Act, updating current statutes pertaining to veterans preference when seeking employment. Under the bill, veterans would be given preference for initial employment in positions with the state or its governmental subdivisions if the veteran is competent to perform the services. Spouses of veterans with a 100% service connected disability are allowed to participate in the Act. The bill requires that notification be sent to veterans that are not hired within 30 days of filling the position.

LB 737 Change qualifications for county veterans service officers

Sponsor: Senator Annette Dubas, District 34

Committee: Government, Military and Veterans Affairs

Timeline:

Introduced on January 9th, 2014

Passed by the Legislature with a vote of 48-0-1 on April 9th, 2014

Signed by Governor Heineman on April 10th, 2014

Estimated effective date: July 17th, 2014

Implementing agencies:

Nebraska Department of Veterans' Affairs

Nebraska Counties

Overview: LB 737 reduces residency requirements for the hiring of new County Veteran Service Officers and for new members of county veteran service committees. LB 737 reduces the five-year residency down to one year of residency and if there are no applicants for the position of county veterans service officer, the one-year residency requirement may be waived.

LB 740 Provide residency requirements for postsecondary education purposes for veterans and their family members

Sponsor: Senator Sue Crawford, District 45

Committee: Education

Timeline:

Introduced on January 9th, 2014

Designated as Senator Crawford Priority Bill on February 4th, 2014

Passed by the Legislature with a vote of 48-0-1 on March 24th, 2014

Signed by Governor Heineman on March 28th, 2014

Estimated effective date: July 17th, 2014

Implementing agencies:

Public colleges and universities in Nebraska

Overview: LB 740 grants residency for the purposes of in-state tuition for recently separated veterans, their spouses and dependents. Specifically, veterans who separated from a branch of the Armed Forces of the United States within the past two years are considered resident students, provided the veteran demonstrates intent to become a resident of the state of Nebraska. Intent to become a resident consists of voter registration as well as a Nebraska motor vehicle registration or Nebraska driver's license.

LB 766 Change tuition assistance program provisions for National Guard members

Sponsor: Senator Dave Bloomfield, District 17

Committee: Government, Military and Veterans Affairs

Timeline:

Introduced on January 9th, 2014

Passed by the Legislature with a vote of 48-0-1 on April 10th, 2014

Signed by Governor Heineman on April 10th, 2014

Estimated effective date: July 17th, 2014

Implementing agency:

Nebraska Military Department

Overview: LB766 updated the language of the tuition assistance program as it relates the Nebraska National Guard. LB766 removes dated language from current statutes and also clarifies who is eligible to use the state Tuition Assistance Program.

**LB 806 Change provisions of the Military Code
relating to Military Department personnel**

Sponsor: Senator Bill Avery, District 28

Committee: Government, Military and Veterans Affairs

Timeline:

Introduced on January 10th, 2014

Passed by the Legislature with a vote of 48-0-1 on April 10th, 2014

Signed by Governor Heineman on April 10th, 2014

Estimated effective date: July 17th, 2014

Implementing agency:

Nebraska Military Department

Overview: LB 806 makes several technical changes to the Nebraska Military Department statutes including: the elimination of the chief of staff of the Military Department; clarifying the delegation of authority to perform military duties when the Adjutant General is absent; and providing that the deputy adjutant general is not required to take leave or a reduction in salary when performing certain federal duties.

LB 987 Adjust individual income tax brackets for inflation and exempt social security and military retirement benefits from income taxation

Sponsor: Revenue Committee

Committee: Revenue

Timeline:

Introduced on January 21st, 2014

Designated as Revenue Committee Priority Bill on February 20th, 2014

Amended with Senator Janssen AM2458 (LB 75) on March 19th, 2014

Passed by the Legislature with a vote of 44-0-5 on May 27th, 2014

Signed by Governor Heineman on April 2nd, 2014

Estimated effective date: July 17th, 2014

Implementing agency:

Nebraska Department of Revenue

Overview: LB 987 allows a tax exemption for military retirements for taxable years beginning January 1st, 2015. The exemption applies to retirements that start on or after July 17th, 2012. Military retirees may choose one of the following elections within two calendar years from the date of their retirement:

- 1) The military retiree may elect to exclude forty percent of his or her military retirement benefit income for seven consecutive taxable years beginning with the year in which the election is made, or;

- 2) The military retiree may elect to exclude fifteen percent of his or her military retirement benefit income for all taxable years beginning with the year in which he or she turns sixty-seven years of age.

LB 1087 Create a homestead exemption for disabled veterans, widows, and widowers

Sponsor: Senator Pete Pirsch, District 4

Committee: Revenue

Timeline:

Introduced on January 22nd, 2014

Designated as Senator Pirsch Priority Bill on February 20th, 2014

Passed by the Legislature with a vote of 48-0-1 on March 31st, 2014

Signed by Governor Heineman on April 2nd, 2014

Operative date: January 1st, 2015

Implementing agency:

Nebraska Department of Revenue with verification of eligibility through the United States Department of Veterans Affairs

Overview: LB 1087 provides a homestead exemption for Honorably discharged 100% disabled veterans, unremarried widows and widowers of veteran who died because of a service connected disability or of a veteran whose death on active duty was service connected.