



2015 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 2015. This guide is informational only and does not guarantee a grant of benefits and is not a definitive reference on Nebraska laws.

2015 Legislative Summary:

Number of Bills Introduced (excluding "A" bills), 104th Legislature, 1st Session: **664**

Number of "A" Bills Introduced, 104th Legislature, 1st Session: **59**

Number of Resolutions Introduced, 104th Legislature, 1st Session: **377**

Number of Bills to Become Law, 104th Legislature, 1st Session: **243**

Number of Bills, Resolutions and Constitutional Amendments Indefinitely Postponed, 104th Legislature, 1st Session: : **60**

**LB 55 Provide authority to the Adjutant General
to make expenditures for a disaster or emergency**

Sponsor: Senator Jim Scheer, District 19

Committee: Government, Military and Veterans Affairs

Timeline:

Introduced on January 8th, 2015

Passed by the Legislature with a vote of 46-0-3 on May 20th, 2015

Signed by Governor Ricketts on May 26th, 2015

Estimated effective date: August 30th, 2015

Implementing agencies:

Nebraska National Guard

Overview:

LB 55 provides the Adjutant General of the State of Nebraska with the authority to expend funds up to twenty-five thousand dollars in response to a disaster or emergency without the proclamation of a state of emergency by the Governor.

LB 109 Change residency requirements for veterans, spouses, and dependents or eligible recipients attending a public college or university

Sponsor: Senator Sue Crawford, District 45

Committee: Education

Timeline:

Introduced on January 8th, 2015

Passed by the Legislature with a vote of 49-0-0 on February 20th, 2015

Signed by Governor Ricketts on February 26th, 2015

Estimated effective date: February 26th, 2015

Implementing agencies:

Nebraska Public Institutions of Higher Learning

Overview:

LB 109 harmonizes Nebraska statutes with federal law regarding in-state tuition for recently separated veterans, their spouses and dependents. In 2014, the Legislature passed LB 740 (Crawford) which granted in-state tuition for veterans who left active duty service within the past two years as well as their spouses and dependents, provided that the veteran demonstrates intent to become a resident of the state of Nebraska. Since then, Congress passed HR 3230 (Also known as the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014.) which requires all public colleges and universities to charge no more than resident tuition for veterans who left active duty within the past three years as well as their spouses and dependents. HR 3230 goes into effect July 1, 2015.

LB 146 Provide for disposition of unclaimed cremated remains in a veteran cemetery

Sponsor: Senator Sue Crawford, District 45

Co-Sponsor: Senator Dave Bloomfield, District 17

Co-Sponsor: Senator Matt Hansen, District 26

Co-Sponsor: Senator Tommy Garrett, District 3

Committee: Health and Human Services

Timeline:

Introduced on January 9th, 2015

Passed by the Legislature with a vote of 44-0-5 on March 12th, 2015

Signed by Governor Ricketts on March 18th, 2015

Estimated effective date: August 30th, 2015

Implementing agencies:

Veterans Service Organizations

Nebraska Funeral Homes

Overview:

LB 146 establishes a voluntary process for funeral homes to work with veteran service organizations to locate, identify and inter unclaimed cremated remains of veterans and their dependents for the purposes of burial in a veteran cemetery.

Veteran service organizations must have a 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(19) status, be organized for the benefit of veterans burial and interment, and be recognized by the Memorial Affairs Division of the United States Department of Veteran Affairs or the Nebraska Department of Veterans Affairs.

Eligible veteran service organizations must make reasonable efforts to locate the authorizing agent and must possess the remains for a period of no less than one year before internment of the remains. The remains cannot be scattered. Funeral homes who use this process must keep a record identifying the veteran service organization who received the remains of each veteran or dependent for a minimum of five years.

LB 219 Change and eliminate child custody provisions and adopt the Uniform Deployed Parents Custody and Visitation Act

Sponsor: Senator Sue Crawford, District 45

Committee: Judiciary

Timeline:

Introduced on January 13th, 2015

Passed by the Legislature with a vote of 49-0-0 on February 20th, 2015

Signed by Governor Ricketts on February 26th, 2015

Estimated effective date: January 1st, 2016

Implementing agencies:

State of Nebraska Court System

Overview:

LB 219 adopts the Uniform Deployed Parents Custody and Visitation Act. The act provides a clear legal framework for parents and judges to use to make arrangements for children subject to a Parenting Plan when a military parent is deployed. The bill creates a framework to establish a plan for reducing disruption for the child when a military member with parenting time gets deployed. The court must find the plan to be in the best interest of the child. The bill also clarifies that any arrangements made to accommodate deployment end when deployment ends.

**LB 264 Provide for issuance of credentials under the Uniform
Credentialing Act based on military education, training, or experience**

Sponsor: Senator Adam Morfeld, District 46

Co-Sponsor: Senator Sue Crawford, District 45

Co-Sponsor: Senator Tommy Garrett, District 3

Co-Sponsor: Senator Rick Kolowski, District 31

Co-Sponsor: Senator Jeremy Nordquist, District 7

Committee: Health and Human Services

Timeline:

Introduced on January 14th, 2015

Passed by the Legislature with a vote of 48-0-1 on May 7th, 2015

Signed by Governor Ricketts on May 13th, 2015

Estimated effective date: August 30th, 2015

Implementing agencies:

Department of Health and Human Services

Applicable Boards of Health

Overview:

LB 264 provides issuance of credentials based on military education, training or service and includes a date of December 15, 2015 to specify methods to meet the minimum standards through military service. The bill seeks to address the high unemployment of military veterans and their spouses by amending the minimum standards required for a credential in the health professions and shifts the burden of proving satisfactory military education, training, or service from each individual applicant to the department and applicable board, for all similarly situated applicants, to allow the department to make the credentialing decision based on standard criteria for education, training, or service.

LB 272 Create a voluntary veterans preference in private employment

Sponsor: Senator Sue Crawford, District 45

Co-Sponsor: Senator Tommy Garrett, District 3

Co-Sponsor: Senator Adam Morfeld, District 46

Co-Sponsor: Senator Jeremy Nordquist, District 7

Co-Sponsor: Senator Dan Watermeier, District 1

Committee: Government, Military and Veterans Affairs

Timeline:

Introduced on January 14th, 2015

Passed by the Legislature with a vote of 45-0-4 on March 6th, 2015

Signed by Governor Ricketts on March 12th, 2015

Estimated effective date: August 30th, 2015

Implementing Organization:

Private Companies

Overview:

LB 272 establishes a voluntary hiring preference for private companies. Under the bill, private employers may adopt a hiring preference for veterans and spouses of 100 percent disabled veterans. This preference policy must be in writing and applied uniformly to decisions regarding hiring and promotion. Employers seeking to implement a voluntary veterans preference policy must notify the Department of Labor. The Department of Labor shall maintain a registry of employers with a voluntary veterans preference employment policy.

**LB 305 Allow veterans aid fund to be
used for transportation costs for veterans**

Sponsor: Senator David Schnoor, District 15

Co-Sponsor: Senator Sue Crawford, District 45

Co-Sponsor: Senator Tommy Garrett, District 3

Co-Sponsor: Senator Adam Morfeld, District 46

Co-Sponsor: Senator Jeremy Nordquist, District 7

Committee: Government, Military and Veterans Affairs

Timeline:

Introduced on January 15th, 2015

Passed by the Legislature with emergency clause by a vote of 47-0-2 on February 27th

Signed by Governor Ricketts on March 5th, 2015

Estimated effective date: March 5th, 2015

Implementing agencies:

Nebraska Department of Veterans' Affairs

Overview:

LB 305 would add "Transportation" as an allowable expenditure from the Nebraska Veterans Aid Fund which currently furnishes food, shelter, fuel, wearing apparel, or medical or surgical aid or in assisting with the funeral expenses of eligible veterans and their dependents.

Transportation funds may be provided in support of health, safety or employment with preference given to locally available transportation services or to preauthorized repairs to privately owned vehicles which are registered and insured in Nebraska.

LB 479 Change provisions relating to memorials to veterans

Sponsor: Senator Dave Bloomfield, District 17

Co-Sponsor: Senator Lydia Brasch, District 16

Co-Sponsor: Senator Colby Coash, District 27

Co-Sponsor: Senator Sue Crawford, District 45

Co-Sponsor: Senator Al Davis, District 43

Co-Sponsor: Senator Tommy Garrett, District 3

Co-Sponsor: Senator Mike Groene, District 42

Co-Sponsor: Senator Bill Kintner, District 2

Co-Sponsor: Senator Bob Krist, District 10

Co-Sponsor: Senator Adam Morfeld, District 46

Co-Sponsor: Senator David Schnoor, District 15

Committee: Government, Military and Veterans Affairs

Timeline:

Introduced on January 20th, 2015

Passed by the Legislature with a vote of 49-0-0 on May 20th, 2015

Signed by Governor Ricketts on May 26th, 2015

Estimated effective date: August 30th, 2015

Implementing agencies:

State of Nebraska and Political Subdivisions

Overview:

LB 479 strikes language from N.R.S. § 80-201 that specifies the specific wars or conflicts that can be memorialized on public lands or within public buildings. The new language allows counties, townships, cities, and villages to erect or aid in the erection of statutes, monuments, or memorials commemorating the services of the members of the armed forces of the United States of America and no longer specifies any conflict or war.

**LB 640 Provide for retrocession of jurisdiction for land on
which the Omaha National Cemetery is located**

Sponsor: Senator Tommy Garrett, District 3

Committee: Government, Military and Veterans Affairs

Timeline:

Introduced on January 21st, 2015

Passed by the Legislature with a vote of 47-0-2 on May 20th, 2015

Signed by Governor Ricketts on May 26th, 2015

Estimated effective date: August 30th, 2015

Implementing agencies:

State of Nebraska

Overview:

LB 640 provides for the retrocession of jurisdiction for land on which the Omaha National Cemetery in Sarpy County will be located.

**LB 642 Change provisions relating to motorboat, motor vehicle,
and trailer registration and titling and eliminate a fee for certain license plates**

Sponsor: Senator Tommy Garrett, District 3

Co-Sponsor: Senator John Stinner, District 48

Committee: Transportation and Telecommunications

Timeline:

Introduced on January 21st, 2015

Passed by the Legislature with a vote of 46-0-3 on May 21st, 2015

Signed by Governor Ricketts on May 27th, 2015

Estimated effective date: August 30th, 2015

Implementing agencies:

Nebraska Department of Motor Vehicles

Overview:

LB 642 was amended to include language from LB 97 which removed the additional five dollar fee charged for Pearl Harbor and disabled American veteran license plates.

***LR 23 Urge the United States Dept. of Veterans Affairs to provide veterans with direct access to health care services in each local community in Nebraska**

Sponsor: Senator Riepe, District 12

Co-Sponsors:

Senator Baker	Senator Haar	Senator Mello
Senator Bloomfield	Senator Hadley	Senator Morfeld
Senator Bolz	Senator Hilkemann	Senator Murante
Senator Brasch	Senator Hughes	Senator Pansing Brooks
Senator Campbell	Senator Johnson	Senator Scheer
Senator Coash	Senator Kintner	Senator Schilz
Senator Craighead	Senator Kolowski	Senator Schnoor
Senator Crawford	Senator Kolterman	Senator Schumacher
Senator Davis	Senator Krist	Senator Seiler
Senator Ebke	Senator Kuehn	Senator Smith
Senator Friesen	Senator Larson	Senator Stinner
Senator Gloor	Senator Lindstrom	Senator Sullivan
Senator Groene	Senator McCollister	Senator Watermeier
	Senator McCoy	Senator Williams

Committee: Government, Military and Veterans Affairs

Timeline:

Introduced on January 14th, 2015

Adopted by the Legislature on May 28th, 2015

Signed by the President/Speaker on May 29th, 2015

Overview:

LR 23 acknowledges veterans lack continuity of care and access to local physicians and hospitals. LR 23 resolves to provide veterans the opportunity to access local health care services without the impediments set forth in the CHOICE Program implemented on November 4, 2014 by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs. LR 23 will also support and promote local economies, especially rural hospitals and local physicians.

* A Legislative Resolution (LR) is a non-binding proposal to make a formal expression of opinion by the Legislature

2016 Carryover Legislation - Veterans

LB#	Sponsor	Description	Committee	Status
190	Bloomfield, et al	Change concealed handgun permit application provisions	Judiciary	Select File
428	Garrett, Schnoor	Provide an exemption from motor vehicle taxation for certain veterans	Revenue	General File
634	Garrett, et al	Provide for issuance of permits fees under the Game Law to prisoners of war	Nat. Resource	General File
20	Krist, et al	Change the income tax exemptions for social security benefits and military retirement benefits	Revenue	Hearing 02-04-15
191	Bloomfield, et al	Exempt food sold by veterans service organizations from sales and use taxes	Revenue	Hearing 02-06-15
222	Harr, Garrett	Create the Fallen Heroes Memorial Commission and provide duties	GMVA	Hearing 01-28-15
251	Nordquist, et al	Adopt the Veterans Subsidized Training and Employment Act	Bus & Labor	Hearing 02-02-15
267	Crawford, et al	Change the income tax exemption for military retirement income	Revenue	Hearing 01-28-15
454	Garrett, et al	Change provisions relating to the taxation of military retirement benefits	Revenue	Hearing 02-04-15
614	Kintner, et al	Change provisions relating to the taxation of military retirement benefits	Revenue	Hearing 02-04-15
636	Garrett, et al	Provide for a discounted permit under the Game Law for deployed military members and spouses on leave	Nat. Resource	Hearing 03-12-15
637	Garrett, et al	Provide for resident permits under the Game Law for spouses of military personnel as prescribed	Nat. Resource	Hearing 03-12-15
638	Garrett, et al	Change permit expiration provisions for members of the armed forces or their spouses under the Concealed Handgun Permit Act	Judiciary	Hearing 03-20-15