

Dear Veteran:

First let me take this opportunity to say thank you for your sacrifice and commitment to serving in our Armed Forces. For your service and dedication, New York State has provided several benefits available only to New York State's veterans.

This brochure describes programs designed to help you find employment and educational opportunities, as well as health and other state benefits.

Taking advantage of these services through the New York State Division of Veterans' Affairs may help you and your family make the transition from the battlefield to civilian life.

I hope you will find this information useful. As always, if you have any questions or I may be of any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact my office.

Sincerely,



Pete Harkham
New York State Senator
40th Senate District



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR
PETE HARKHAM

40th Senate District

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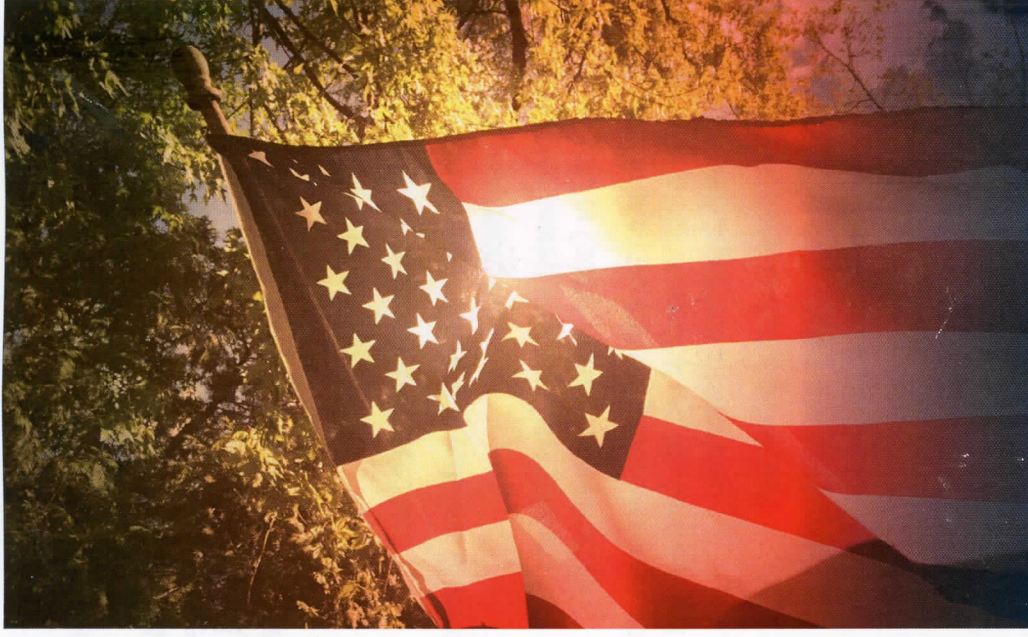
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NEW YORK STATE
VETERANS'
BENEFITS

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Courtesy of
Senator Pete Harkham



RECENTLY DISCHARGED VETERANS

If you are a veteran who has been recently discharged from service, there are several important measures you need to follow to ensure that you receive all of the benefits that you are entitled to. First, you need to secure your discharge certificate - DD Form 214. If you need help obtaining your DD Form 214, contact the New York State Division of Veterans' Affairs at 1-888-VETS-NYS (1-888-838-7697) or by email at

DVAInfo@veterans.ny.gov. You also need to:

- Enroll in VA health care within your first 12 months from separation; and
- Visit your nearest New York State Veterans Counselor or County Veteran Service Agency.

It is helpful to bring the following documentation when you visit: Form DD214, medical records, bank account information and dependent information.

To locate a veterans counselor, please visit www.veterans.ny.gov or call 1-888-VETS-NYS (1-888-838-7697) or by email at DVAInfo@veterans.ny.gov.

VETERAN EMPLOYMENT

The New York State Division of Veterans' Affairs is proud to provide veterans and their eligible spouses with One-Stop Career Centers. These centers will assist you and your eligible spouse in:

- Career counseling;
- Skills assessment;
- Job search assistance;
- Resume preparation;
- Information on Civil Service positions; and
- Referrals to other agencies that provide services to veterans.

For more information on these programs, please visit veterans.ny.gov/employment.html or call the Department of Labor toll-free at 1-888-4-NYSDOL.

VETERAN HEALTH BENEFITS

Veterans' health benefits are administered by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). While the VA provides a medical benefits package to all enrolled veterans, you must apply to receive these benefits. To be sure you qualify for these benefits, you need to fill out form 10-10 EZR, which is provided online for your convenience at www.va.gov/healthbenefits/. If you require further assistance, call the VA's toll-free number at 1-877-222-8387.

You can also visit www.va.gov for more information.

VETERAN STATE BENEFITS

There are several additional benefits New York State offers only to veterans and disabled veterans, including reduced costs for hunting and fishing licenses, Disabled Veterans' E-ZPass program, Operation Recognition and others. To learn more about what New York State has to offer to veterans and their families, please visit veterans.ny.gov, call 1-888-VETS-NYS (1-888-838-7697) or email DVAInfo@veterans.ny.gov.

HELPING OUR HEROES: ASSISTING SERVICE-DISABLED VETS

The Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Business Act creates a six percent contract preference "set-aside" for service-connected disabled veteran-owned businesses. This helps New York State's approximately more than 100,000 service-disabled veterans to pursue successful new business ventures and be better able to compete for millions of dollars in New York State contracts.

- Eligible businesses can get certified through New York State's Office of General Services (OGS). Once certified, disabled-veteran operated companies can bid on state contracts.
- Information about the program can be found at veterans.ny.gov/business, including a contact form that businesses can use to begin the certification process and a list of frequently asked questions.

- Veterans may also contact OGS directly by calling 844-579-7570, or by sending an email to veteransdevelopment@ogs.ny.gov.

This important law provides an enormous boost to our service disabled veterans, opening the door to major new business opportunities.

CONFIDENTIAL VETERANS CRISIS LINE

The crisis line provides veterans free, confidential support 24/7/365, even if they are not registered with the VA or enrolled in VA healthcare.

Toll-free and confidential, the Veterans Crisis Line connects veterans and their families and friends with professional, caring Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) responders, many of whom are veterans themselves. The responders provide support for an array of issues, such as chronic pain, relationship problems, anxiety and depression, sleeplessness and even homelessness.

Confidential assistance is only a call, click or text away:

- Call 1-800-273-8255 and press 1
- Send a text message to 838255.

"HIRE-A-VET" TAX CREDIT

When New York's servicemen and women return home, they should be welcomed with the promise of economic opportunity. The Hire-A-Vet Credit encourages the employment of qualified veterans. Businesses may earn up to \$5,000 for hiring a qualified veteran, and up to \$15,000 for hiring one who is disabled. For assistance, please call the New York State Department of Labor at: 1-888-4-NYSDOL or visit their website at www.labor.ny.gov.

VETERAN EDUCATION BENEFITS

There are several education assistance opportunities for veterans through the New York State Division of Veterans' Affairs. Benefits include:

- Veteran-friendly campuses;
- Veterans' Tuition Awards; and

- Vocational Rehabilitation to assist those with service related disabilities.

To establish eligibility for tuition awards, please contact the Higher Education Service Corporation's (HESC) scholarship unit at 1-888-697-4372.

For more conclusive information regarding what is offered, please visit veterans.ny.gov or call toll-free at 1-888-VETSUNYS (838-7697).

POST-9/11 GI BILL AND OTHER EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) administers a variety of education benefit programs. Many veterans and active duty personnel can qualify for more than one education benefits program, including:

- The Post-9/11 GI Bill
- Montgomery GI Bill - Active Duty (MGIB-AD)
- Montgomery GI Bill - Selected Reserve (MGIB-SR)
- Reserve Educational Assistance Program (REAP)
- Veterans Educational Assistance Program (VEAP)
- Educational Assistance Test Program (Section 901)
- Survivors and Dependents Educational Assistance Program (DEA)
- National Call to Service Program
- Veterans Retraining Assistance Program
- Vocational Rehabilitation Program and Counseling
- Free education and counseling services are available to service members and veterans.

For information on these programs and more, visit the VA website at: <http://www.gibill.va.gov/benefits/index.html>.

Need more help?

For assistance, schedule an appointment with a New York State Division of Veterans' Affairs (NYS DVA) State Veterans Counselor or call the DVA Help Line at 1.888.838.7697

ADDITIONAL NY STATE EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS

In addition to the programs mentioned, New York State offers educational benefits for its veterans and their families. Most of these programs are administered by the New York State Higher Education Services Corporation (HESC).

Veterans Tuition Awards

The Veterans Tuition Awards are for full-time study and part-time study for eligible veterans matriculated in New York State.

- For full-time study, a recipient shall receive an award of up to the full cost of undergraduate tuition for New York State residents at the State University of New York, or actual tuition charged, whichever is less.
- For part-time study, awards will be prorated by credit hour.

Learn More by visiting the HESC website:
http://www.hesc.ny.gov/content.nsf/SFC/Veterans_Tuition_Awards

or

Schedule an appointment with a DVA State Veterans Counselor. Call the DVA Help Line at 1.888.838.7697

Other awards include:

- NYS Military Service Recognition Scholarships:
http://www.hesc.ny.gov/content.nsf/SFC/New_York_State_Programs

and

- Regents Awards for Children of Deceased & Disabled Veterans: http://www.hesc.ny.gov/content.nsf/SFC/NYS_Regents_Awards_for_Children_of_Deceased_and_Disabled_Veterans