

VETERANS AFFAIRS

IOWA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

END OF SESSION, 2010

VETERAN SERVICES FOR INCARCERATED VETERANS

House File 2321 requires city and county jail personnel to ask if a prisoner is a veteran. If so, within 24 hours, the veteran may be entitled to a visit from a veterans service officer to determine if veteran services are required or available. In addition, within 3 days, the veteran must be provided contact information for the county veterans affairs office. The prisoner is allowed to contact the county veterans affairs office to request a visit.

[Signed by Governor, Effective July 1, 2010]

VETERANS MENTAL HEALTH COVERAGE

Senate File 2201 includes a provision that will require state regulated insurance companies to cover mental health and substance abuse treatment for veterans who are employed. The provision only applies to businesses with more than 50 employees. In addition, the provision takes effect on new or renewed, state regulated, insurance policies on or after July 1, 2010.

[Signed by Governor, Effective July 1, 2010]

FAMILY VISITATION DURING DEPLOYMENT

Senate File 2226 allows a parent, who is a member of the U.S. Armed Forces, to file a petition with the court to modify visitation rights to another family member while deployed. The modification must be in the best interest of the child and will end upon return from deployment. The bill takes effective immediately.

[Sent to Governor, Effective July 1, 2010]

MILITARY SPOUSE BENEFITS

House File 2110 allows unemployment benefits for an individual who left employment because of the relocation of the individual's spouse due to a military assignment in another area. Benefits would be paid out of the Unemployment Trust Fund.

[Signed by Governor, Effective July 1, 2010]

VETERANS HOLIDAY

House File 2197 requires employers to provide Veteran's Day off for any employee that is a veteran. The employer will determine if the time off is paid or unpaid. The employee must request Veteran's Day off one month in advance. In addition, the employee must show proof of their veteran status.

[Sent to Governor, Effective July 1, 2010]

INJURED VETERANS GRANT PROGRAM

House File 755 expands eligibility for the Injured Veterans Grant Program to include veterans who have suffered an injury requiring at least 30 consecutive days of hospitalization at a military hospital.

[Signed by Governor, Effective July 1, 2010]

HOME OWNERSHIP ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

House File 2148 allows military members to use lenders that are not currently associated with the Iowa Finance Authority (IFA) to obtain mortgages through the home ownership assistance program. In addition, outside lenders are able to apply for IFA's programs.

[Signed by Governor, Effective July 1, 2010]

NOTIFICATION OF TAX ASSISTANCE

House File 2384 requires the Iowa National Guard to work with the Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs to notify service members to contact the Iowa Department of Revenue regarding current or possible tax issues while deployed. Notification must occur prior to and after deployment.

[Signed by Governor, Effective July 1,2010]

WAIVERS AND REFUNDS FOR VETERANS AND SERVICE MEMBERS

Senate File 2297 waives the fees for service members, veterans, and their families while deployed and after their deployment regarding utility disconnection, hunting and fishing licenses, and birth or death certificates. In addition, any state facilities can only charge actual costs for the use of state facilities for certain designated military events.

[Sent to Governor, Effective July 1, 2010]

EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS FOR VETERANS AND FAMILIES

Senate File 2274 extends educational benefits for service members and their family living in Iowa or on the Rock Island Arsenal for students at a community college or a state university in Iowa. In addition, the Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs is required to conduct a study regarding the need to provide greater postsecondary undergraduate education benefits for veterans and their dependents, including but not limited to dependent children of service-connected disabled veterans.

[Sent to Governor, Effective July 1, 2010]

DISABLED VETERANS JOB OPPORTUNITIES

House File 2454 requires the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Department of Workforce Development, the Department of Education, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, and the U.S. Department of Labor to develop programs to inform disabled veterans about federally funded job training opportunities in state government, and develop other job training programs to qualify for federal funding.

[Sent to Governor, Effective July 1, 2010]

BENEFITS FOR SERVICE MEMBERS AND FAMILIES

Senate File 2318 requires the Department of Administrative Services to inform state employees and their families of their rights while the family member is deployed. Allows an active member of the peace officers' retirement system to purchase service credit for military service, not required to be recognized by federal law, upon payment of the actuarial cost of the service purchase. A service member's obligation or liability to pay a premium for professional liability insurance coverage will be waived during deployment. In addition, the bill complies Iowa Code with federal regulations to enforce banking rate limitations for military personnel and their.

[Sent to Governor, Effective July 1, 2010]

OTHER BILLS OF INTEREST

- HF 2137 Updates Iowa code regarding the Iowa National Guard and enforcement of controlled substances under Military Justice (Signed by Governor, Effective July 1, 2010)
- HF 2406 Requires the Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs to promote the preservation of the U.S.S. Iowa (Signed by Governor, Effective July 1, 2010)
- HF 2414 Expands the recognized military veterans units allowed to perform honor guard services on public property to include the coast guard auxiliary (Sent to Governor, Effective July 1, 2010)
- HF 2449 Requires the Iowa Department of Economic Development to encourage and assist small businesses owned and operated by disabled veterans to obtain contracts with the State of Iowa (Signed by Governor, Effective July 1, 2010)

- HF 2531 Exempts trailer registration for any trailer that is used exclusively for displaying flags in parades or ceremonies (Sent to Governor, Effective July 1, 2010)
- HF 2532 Exempts state income taxes for qualified veterans who receive reimbursement from the Veterans Trust Fund for travel assistance, medical care, or unemployment assistance (Signed by Governor, Effective January 1, 2010)
- SF 2175 Adds military representation on certain mental health policy boards. (Sent to Governor, Effective July 1, 2010)
- SJR 2007 Promotes the preservation efforts of the U.S.S. Iowa (Signed by Governor, Effective July 1, 2010)