



2025 Acts Affecting Veterans and the Military

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Notice to Readers

This report provides summaries of new laws (public acts) significantly affecting veterans and the military enacted during the 2025 regular legislative session. OLR's other Acts Affecting reports are, or will soon be, available on [OLR's website](#).

Each summary indicates the public act (PA) number. Not all provisions of the acts are included. The report does not include vetoed acts unless the veto was overridden. Complete summaries of public acts are, or will soon be, available on [OLR's website](#).

Readers are encouraged to obtain the full text of acts that interest them from the [General Assembly's website](#) of the Connecticut State Library.

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Benefits

100% P&T Veteran Property Tax Exemption

Last year, the legislature fully exempted from property tax a primary dwelling or motor vehicle for each former member of the armed services (i.e. veteran) who has a service-connected permanent and total disability rating (often referred to as “P&T rating”) from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (U.S. DVA). This year, the legislature specified that a veteran qualifies for the exemption if he or she is determined by the U.S. DVA to be permanently and totally disabled based on a 100% service-connected disability rating. Relatedly, it allowed municipalities that had already published their 2024 grand lists to reflect this change and make other corresponding changes to their FY 26 budgets and tax levies ([PA 25-2](#), §§ 4-6, effective upon passage and the exemption provisions are applicable to assessment years commencing on or after October 1, 2024).

The legislature made several additional changes to this exemption which include, among others, (1) authorizing municipalities to expand or limit the exemption in specified ways; (2) limiting the exemption to the portion of the dwelling the veteran actually resides in; (3) explicitly excluding commercial and rental properties; (4) generally expanding it to cover mobile homes, dwellings possessed as tenants for life, certain leased property, and property held in trust for qualifying veterans; (5) establishing specific documentation and verification requirements; (6) making it portable to other municipalities like the other veteran-related property tax exemptions; and (7) explicitly requiring veterans to disclose if their disability rating changes ([PA 25-168](#), §§ 233-239, effective October 1, 2025, and applicable to assessment years starting on or after that date).

Municipal Option Veteran Property Tax Exemptions

This session, the legislature established two new municipal-option veteran-related property tax exemptions that provide similar benefits as the 100% P&T exemption (see above) for (1) surviving spouses of active duty servicemembers killed in the line of duty and (2) state residents determined by U.S. DVA to have a service-connected total disability based on individual unemployability rating. Additionally, it allowed municipalities to choose to limit or expand these exemptions by (1) exempting up to two acres of the dwelling lot; (2) extending them to certain eligible surviving spouses of qualifying veterans who died before the exemption took effect; or (3) limiting the exemption amount based on the median assessed value of residential property in the municipality ([PA 25-168](#), §§ 234, 237 & 240-242, generally effective October 1, 2025).

Veteran Disability Benefit Disregard for Public Defender Services

Under a new law, the income eligibility guidelines used to determine whether someone qualifies as an indigent defendant for public defender services must exclude all U.S. DVA service-connected disability benefits from consideration ([PA 25-95](#), § 14, effective July 1, 2026).

Veteran Disability Benefit Income Disregards

A new law requires the Department of Social Services, as allowed by federal law, to disregard (1) U.S. DVA administered non-service-connected pension benefits and (2) housebound pension benefits granted to a veteran, or to a surviving spouse, when determining income for certain means-tested public assistance programs. The income disregards apply to: (1) HUSKY A and D; (2) the Medicare Savings Program; (3) the Connecticut Energy Assistance Program; (4) the State Supplement Program; (5) Temporary Family Assistance; (6) State-Administered General Assistance; (7) the Connecticut Home Care Program for Elders; and (8) the State-Appropriated Fuel Assistance Program ([PA 25-95](#), §§ 2-8, effective July 1, 2025, and applicable to applications filed on or after that date).

Health Care

Health Care Discrimination

A new law specifically prohibits health care providers from knowingly discriminating in providing health care services due to various characteristics, including status as a veteran. But the act specifies that it does not (1) require the delivery of futile health care and services that conflict with a provider's professional judgment or ethical considerations, (2) affect the professional standard of care, or (3) interfere with public health planning. The act classifies discrimination by health care providers as a discriminatory practice under the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities laws ([PA 25-154](#), effective October 1, 2025).

Nursing Home Waiting List Exception

A new law adds an exception to the requirement that a nursing home that accepts state funds to care for indigents generally admit people from its waiting list in the order that they submitted completed applications. The act's exception requires a nursing home to admit a veteran regardless of the waiting list if the (1) nursing home has a contract with the U.S. DVA to provide care for veterans and (2) veteran applicant (a) meets the U.S. DVA's service-connected and other applicable eligibility criteria and (b) is eligible for care at the nursing home.

As under existing law, a nursing home must accept certain transfers from a nursing home that is closed or closing, regardless of the list. If a nursing home skips over an applicant on the waiting list,

it must, by law, make a dated notation on the list explaining the decision ([PA 25-15](#), § 10, effective July 1, 2025).

UConn Health Neuromodulation Center

Legislation enacted this session requires the UConn Health Center to establish a Center of Excellence for Neuromodulation Treatments. It allows the health center to collaborate with an in-state hospital to provide neuromodulation treatments to patients at this center. UConn Health [reports](#) that the center will be focused on stroke recovery for veterans ([PA 25-168](#), § 140, effective upon passage).

Education

Education Services for Military-Connected Students

Under a new law, local and regional school boards must take specified steps to ensure a minimally disruptive transition of a military-connected student who (1) enrolls at a school after the school year begins and (2) has an individualized education plan or 504 plan from a prior school.

The new law also allows military-connected students (1) to stay enrolled in a school until the end of the school year if the servicemember relocates on orders and remains in the armed forces and (2) if they are enrolled in grade 11, to continue to be enrolled in a school for an additional school year while the servicemember remains in the armed forces ([PA 25-15](#), §§ 7 & 8, effective July 1, 2025).

Fee Waivers at Public Higher Education Institutions

A new law expands the higher education tuition waiver program to cover extension fees for eligible National Guard members and veterans with wartime service. Specifically, it requires the regional community-technical colleges, the Connecticut State University System, and UConn to waive fees for educational extension programs, including for courses taken during summer and winter school sessions or intersessions. Prior law required these institutions to waive only tuition.

The new law also establishes a tuition fee waiver for eligible National Guard members and veterans with wartime service who attend Charter Oak State College, with generally the same eligibility requirements as the tuition waiver program at the state's other public higher education institutions ([PA 25-95](#), §§ 9-13, effective July 1, 2025).

Student Loan Reimbursement Program

This session, the legislature made various changes to the student loan reimbursement program, which reimburses eligible people for up to \$5,000 of their student loan payments per year for up to

four years. This program requires participants to volunteer at a nonprofit organization for at least 50 unpaid hours for each year they participate. A new law specifies that those who complete their volunteer work through the U.S. armed forces do not need to adhere to the requirement that the hours be unpaid ([PA 25-174](#), § 214) .

Transportation

The Borinqueneers License Plates

Under a new law, the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) commissioner must, by January 1, 2026, issue commemorative license plates in recognition of “The Borinqueneers,” the primarily Puerto Rican members of the 65th Infantry Regiment of the U.S. Army who served with distinction. The new law gives a portion of the \$60 fee for this plate to the Hispanic-American Veterans of Connecticut, Inc. for bilingual services and assistance to veterans and service members ([PA 25-15](#), § 3, effective January 1, 2026).

Purple Heart License Plates

A 2025 law allows veterans and servicemembers who get a license plate commemorating the Military Order of the Purple Heart on or after July 1, 2025, to be reimbursed for the cost of joining a chapter of the order in order to get the license plate. The Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) commissioner must determine the application process for this reimbursement ([PA 25-15](#), § 4, effective on effective July 1, 2025).

Reduced Fare for Public Buses

A new law requires the Department of Transportation (DOT) to give up to a 50% fare discount for state-owned or -controlled public buses to veterans, people age 65 or older, people age 18 or younger, and people with disabilities. It allows the commissioner to require these individuals to (1) get a DOT-issued reduced fare transit identification card and (2) present it to DOT employees or third-party contractors who are responsible for fare inspection duties, to receive the fare discount ([PA 25-65](#), § 37, effective October 1, 2025).

Veteran License and Identification Renewal Fee Waivers

This session, the legislature required DMV to waive, or provide vouchers for waiving, the driver’s license or identity card renewal fee for veterans who attend a one-day Stand Down event hosted by DVA. These DVA events offer services, supplies, and assistance to veterans ([PA 25-15](#), § 5, effective July 1, 2025).

Women Veterans' License Plates

A new law requires the DMV commissioner, if requested by a woman veteran or servicemember, to register a motor vehicle and issue a special certificate of registration and a set of license plates commemorating the woman's service ([PA 25-15](#), § 2, effective July 1, 2025).

Studies

Dental Services for Veterans

This session, the legislature required the DVA commissioner to evaluate dental services provided to veterans in the state and identify areas for improvement, like expanding access to them and increasing enrollment in U.S. DVA's dental insurance program. The commissioner must report on his evaluation and recommendations to the Veterans' and Military Affairs Committee by February 1, 2026 ([PA 25-15](#), § 9, effective upon passage).

Unaccredited Assistance, Guidance, or Advice on Veteran Benefits

Under a new law, the DVA commissioner, in consultation with other state officers, must study the impact on Connecticut residents of (1) unaccredited businesses or agents that advise, guide, or assist on veteran benefits matters and (2) their fee structures. The study must also evaluate whether predatory practices exist in providing advice, guidance, or assistance on veteran benefits matters and whether Connecticut residents have been harmed by these practices. By February 1, 2026, the DVA commissioner must submit a report to the governor and the Veterans' and Military Affairs Committee detailing the study's findings and recommendations for legislation to protect state residents from identified predatory practices ([PA 25-95](#), § 18, effective July 1, 2025).

Veteran Property Tax Exemptions and the Municipal Veteran Representative Program

The legislature passed a law this year requiring DVA to enter into a memorandum of understanding with UConn for its School of Public Policy to conduct veteran-related studies on (1) veteran property tax exemptions and (2) the municipal veteran representative program. The new law also requires the DVA commissioner to set up an eight-member advisory committee to advise UConn on the studies' design and scope. The law requires UConn to submit its findings and recommendations for legislation to the legislature by January 1, 2027 ([PA 25-95](#), § 17, effective July 1, 2025).

Miscellaneous

Aircraft and Unmanned Aircraft

A new law generally prohibits anyone from intentionally projecting a laser on or at an aircraft or its flight path, but it exempts members of the U.S. and state armed forces (and police officers) performing their official duties. Violations are a class A misdemeanor ([PA 25-65](#), § 28, effective October 1, 2025).

Another new law prohibits (1) operating an unmanned aircraft (i.e. drone) at a height of less than 250 feet above ground level of specified critical infrastructure facilities or within 100 horizontal feet of one and (2) using an unmanned aircraft to surveil a critical infrastructure facility without prior approval from the facility's owner or administrator. It exempts certain individuals while performing their official duties, including U.S. or state armed forces members. The act also prohibits equipping an aircraft or unmanned aircraft with a deadly weapon, dangerous instrument, firearm, ammunition, explosive, or incendiary device, with certain exemptions, including for U.S. or state armed forces member performing official duties. In both cases, violations are a class A misdemeanor ([PA 25-1](#), §§ 6-8, effective October 1, 2025).

DVA Office of Advocacy and Assistance Staffing

During the 2025 session, the legislature increased the (1) overall number of required staff at DVA's Office of Advocacy and Assistance from 10 to 19 and (2) number of certain positions that must be hired within the office ([PA 25-95](#), § 15, effective July 1, 2025).

Military Awards

State military medals, awards, ribbons, or other honors are generally established legislatively in state statute or authorized federally. Beginning July 1, 2025, a new law authorizes the adjutant general to establish awards or ribbons he may bestow on members of the state armed forces, as well as remove any awards or ribbons he creates on or after this date. But it specifies that he cannot remove any state military award, ribbon, or other honor or decoration created by his office before July 1, 2025, or by the legislature ([PA 25-15](#), § 6, effective July 1, 2025).

National Women Veterans Recognition Day

A new law establishes June 12 of each year as National Women Veterans Recognition Day to recognize the significant contributions of women who bravely and honorably served in the U.S. armed forces. Under the law, suitable exercises may be held in the State Capitol and elsewhere as the governor designates ([PA 25-20](#) and [PA 25-59](#), effective upon passage).

Small Business Express Program Preference for Disabled Veteran-Owned Businesses

A new law allows the Department of Economic and Community Development to give preference to disabled veteran-owned businesses that apply for the Small Business Express Program. To qualify for this preference, the small business must be majority-owned by one or more disabled veterans with a U.S. DVA disability rating of at least 30% ([PA 25-95](#), § 16, effective July 1, 2026).

Veteran Exemption for Security Officers Carrying Less Lethal Weapons

Under a new law, applicants for security officer licenses who intend to carry less lethal weapons (i.e. a baton or pepper spray) while on duty must receive and complete Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection-approved training on how to use the weapon. Active military members, and veterans within two years of a discharge, are exempt from the training requirement if they received equivalent training while serving. By law, the same exception applies to other training requirements for security officer license applicants ([PA 25-157](#), § 3, effective October 1, 2025).

Veterans' Month

A new law establishes November of each year as Veterans' Month in recognition of the service and sacrifice of individuals who have served in the armed forces to protect the United States and the state ([PA 25-15](#), § 1, effective July 1, 2025).

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