

VETERANS AFFAIRS

IOWA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

END OF SESSION, 2009

- MORTGAGE PROTECTION FOR SERVICE MEMBERS** House File 706 prohibits foreclosure of mortgages on active members of the National Guard, reservists, and their families. In addition, the bill increases penalties from a simple misdemeanor to a serious misdemeanor for persons who foreclose mortgages on active members of Iowa National Guard and their families. The bill requires the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Commerce to notify banks and members of the National Guard and reservists of the law.
[HF 706 Signed by Governor, Effective July 1, 2009]
- IN-STATE TUITION FOR VETERANS** Senate File 451 requires that the community colleges and the Regent Universities charge in-state tuition, for undergraduate study. This applies to veterans whom are eligible for benefits under, or have exhausted the benefits, of the federal Post 9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008, their spouses, and their dependents. All eligible individuals must be residents of Iowa during their course of study to qualify.
[SF 451 Signed by Governor, Effective July 1, 2009]
- DEFINITION OF A VETERAN** House File 503 expands the definition of a veteran to an individual who served at least 18 months and was honorably discharged and served starting April 6, 1917. Current law defines a veteran to include an individual who served in the Armed Forces of the United States only during certain periods of time during various wars and conflicts. This does not change the property tax exemption for certain veterans.
[HF 503 Signed by Governor, Effective July 1, 2010]
- FLAGS FLOWN AT HALF STAFF** Senate File 112 requires that flags be flown at half-staff at the State Capitol in recognition of the death of a member of the Armed Forces while serving on active duty. In addition, the flags will be presented to the service member's family.
[SF 112 Signed by Governor, Effective July 1, 2009]
- INTERSTATE COMPACT FOR EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES** House File 214 allows Iowa to join the Interstate Compact of Educational Opportunities for Military Children. The compact will remove barriers imposed on children of military families because of frequent moves and deployment of their parents.
[HF 214 Signed by Governor, Effective March 26, 2009]
- INCOME TAX FILING EXTENSION** Senate File 253 grants military personnel serving out of the country, but not in a combat or hazardous duty zone, the same extra time to file an Iowa tax return as those serving in such areas.
[SF 253 Signed by Governor, Effective retroactively January 1, 2008]
- PREFERENTIAL HIRING OF VETERANS** Senate File 186 removes the requirement that a person must be a resident of Iowa to receive a veterans preference in appointment or employment of a governmental position.
[SF 186 Signed by Governor, Effective July 1, 2009]

PRESCRIPTION DRUG BENEFITS FOR VETERANS	Senate File 440 directs nursing homes to help residents, upon admission, identified as eligible for benefits through the US Department of Veterans Affairs gain access to prescription drug benefits. The nursing homes must also assist the Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs in identifying individuals residing in nursing homes on July 1, 2009, who are eligible for the prescription drug benefit. This provision does not apply to the state mental health institutes and the Iowa Veterans Home. [SF 440 Signed by Governor, Effective July 1, 2009]
VETERANS AND ASSISTED LIVING PROGRAMS	Senate File 203 requires assisted living programs that receive Medicaid to assist the Department of Veterans Affairs in identifying residents who qualify for federal veterans benefits. The assisted living program is also required to assist the Commission of Veterans Affairs in determining eligibility for current residents in the program on July 1, 2009. [SF 203 Signed by Governor, Effective July 1, 2009]
COUNTY VA OFFICE HOURS	House File 283 requires that the annual appropriation to county Veterans Affairs commissioners be used only for services to veterans. Each county must meet the compliance requirements or lose the annual appropriation. Each county that shares an executive director or administrator must meet the minimum number of hours of service. [HF 283 Signed by Governor, Effective July 1, 2009]
COUNTY VA REPORTS	Senate File 254 requires the Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs to file an annual report to the Governor and the Legislature on counties regarding training requirements, operating schedules, hours of services provided, number of veterans per county, and the amount of compensation to veterans. [SF 254 Signed by Governor, Effective July 1, 2009]
CHAUFFER EXEMPTION AT VETERANS HOME	House File 321 exempts authorized persons who transport residents or patients of the Iowa Veterans Home from obtaining a chauffeur's license. [HF 321 Signed by Governor, Effective July 1, 2009]
VOLUNTEERS AT VETERANS HOME	House File 505 requires the Iowa Veterans Home to complete record checks on prospective or current volunteers at the home. [HF 505 Signed by Governor, Effective July 1, 2009]
INVOLUNTARY DISCHARGE FROM VETERANS HOME	Senate File 407 allows the Commandant of the Iowa Veterans Home to involuntarily discharge a resident under certain circumstances. The resident may appeal the decision of involuntary discharge. Current law does not allow for any involuntary discharges. [SF 407 Signed by Governor, Effective July 1, 2009]

OTHER BILLS OF INTEREST

SF 241	US Department of Veterans Affairs code update (Signed by Governor, effective July 1, 2009)
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