

OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH
PUBLIC ACT SUMMARY



PA 24-119—sHB 5285

Veterans' and Military Affairs Committee

**AN ACT CONCERNING VETERANS' SPECIALTY LICENSE PLATES
AND DRIVER'S LICENSES FOR CERTAIN FORMER ARMED FORCES
RESERVISTS**

SUMMARY: This act allows an eligible former reservist, or his or her surviving spouse, to get a veteran license plate. The act also allows an eligible former reservist (but not a surviving spouse) to receive a veteran designation on his or her driver's license or identification card. Under prior law, generally only veterans could get the designation and only veterans, current service members, and surviving spouses could get the license plate.

Under the act, an eligible former reservist is any person who served in the National Guard or a reserve component of the United States Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, or Air Force who was discharged (1) honorably, (2) under honorable conditions, or (3) with an other than honorable (OTH) discharge based on a qualifying condition (see BACKGROUND).

To receive these benefits, a former reservist or surviving spouse must submit a verification request and all available official documentation of the reservist's service to the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA). For driver's license or identification card designations, this includes documentation for discharge or release from service. Within 30 days after receiving the request, DVA must verify the service and, if the requestor is eligible, notify the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV). The reservist or spouse must also apply to DMV and pay any applicable fees.

The act specifies that receiving these benefits and being verified by DVA does not establish proof of eligibility for any other veterans' benefit. It also makes technical and conforming changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2024

BACKGROUND

Qualifying Condition

A qualifying condition is a (1) post-traumatic stress disorder or traumatic brain injury diagnosis by a licensed health care professional at a U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs facility; (2) military sexual trauma disclosed to such a health care professional; or (3) determination by the Eligibility Qualifying Review Board that sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression was more likely than not the primary reason for the OTH discharge (CGS § 27-103).