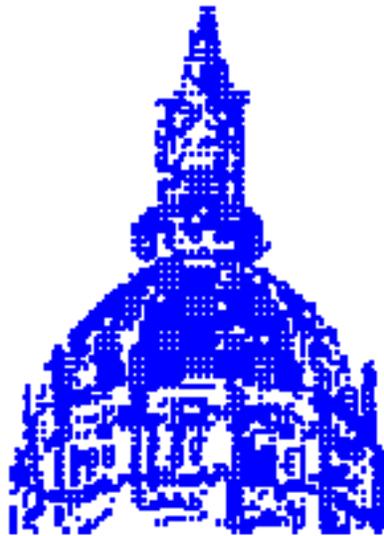


Office of Legislative Research
Connecticut General Assembly



OLR ACTS AFFECTING

Veterans and the Military



Veronica Rose, Principal Analyst

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NOTICE TO READERS

This report provides brief highlights of new laws (public acts) affecting veterans and the military passed during the 2006 session. At the end of each summary we indicate the public act (PA) number. At this point, not all acts have yet been signed by the governor. The acts are effective October 1, 2006, unless otherwise indicated.

Not all provisions of the acts are included here. Complete summaries of all 2006 public acts will be available in the fall when OLR's *Public Act Summary* book is published; some are already on OLR's webpage:

<http://www.cga.ct.gov/olr/OLRPASums.asp>

Readers are encouraged to obtain the full text of acts that interest them from the Connecticut State Library, the House Clerk's Office, or the General Assembly's website: <http://www.cga.ct.gov/>

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USE OF MILITARY FACILITIES

This new act expands the types of facilities that the adjutant general of the Connecticut National Guard may let organizations use, from armories to military facilities. It limits the leasing of the facilities to government agencies, military and nonprofit organizations, and organizations receiving state aid. The act specifies that it must not be construed to allow leases that conflict with military use.

Beginning August 1, 2007, the act requires the adjutant general to submit an annual report showing each military facility's lease revenue and expenses for the 12-month period ending on June 30 of the same year. The reports go to the Military Department and the Veterans' and Public Safety and Security committees (**PA 06-46**).

FEDERAL PROTECTIONS TO MEMBERS IN STATE ACTIVE SERVICE

This new law gives to National Guard members whom the governor orders into state active service (e. g., riot control and disaster response) the same protections two federal laws give to service members in federal active service, except those pertaining to life insurance. The laws are the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) and

Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (SCRA).

USERRA provides reemployment rights and protections for members returning from serving in the armed forces. SCRA provides rights and protections to people in active-duty service. It addresses such issues as interest rates, rental and lease agreements, eviction, health and life insurance, mortgage foreclosure, civil judicial proceedings, and income tax payments (**PA 06-62**).

LOWERING OF THE U.S. FLAG

This new law requires that, whenever the governor prescribes that the state flag be flown at half-staff following the death of an armed forces member in the line of duty, she must prescribe that the national flag be flown at half-staff for the same period as the state flag (**PA 06-138**, October 1, 2006).

COMMEMORATIVE NAMING OF HIGHWAYS AND BRIDGES

A new law designates (1) Route 10 in Granby as the "Veterans Memorial Highway," (2) Bridge Number 03161 on Route 3 over I-91 in Rocky Hill as the "Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve Memorial Bridge," and (3) Bridge Number 4320A on I-84 eastbound over Washington Street and Bridge Number 4320B on I-84 westbound over

Washington Street “In Honor of the United States Army’s First Infantry Division” (**PA 06-133**, effective upon passage).

**LEAVE FOR STATE
EMPLOYEES IN THE MILITARY**

This new law gives state employees called to active military service in the National Guard or the military reserves vacation and sick leave accrual for the entire period of active service rather than just the first 30 days. It applies to employees called to duty for (1) federal or state post-September 11 2001 anti-terrorism or homeland security-related duty or (2) the Afghanistan or Iraq wars.

By law, unchanged by the act, a guard member or reservist accrues such time and receives full state pay during the first 30 days of active duty. By law, a state employee called to active duty receives partial state pay (to make up the difference, if any, between his military pay and his state pay) for any active service time beyond 30 days (**PA 06-146**, effective upon passage).

**VETERANS’ PROPERTY TAX
EXEMPTION, THE DEFINITION
OF VETERAN AND THE
REPORTING OF VETERAN’S
BENEFITS**

A new law excludes veterans’ disability payments when determining income for purposes of income-based property tax exemptions for veterans, the

blind, and people with total disabilities.

The act explicitly includes the reserve components of the U. S. Armed Forces, including the National Guard performing duty under Title 32 of federal statutes (e. g. , on certain homeland security missions), in the definition of “armed forces.” It thereby makes guard members’ Title 32 service qualifying service for state veterans’ benefits, as is already the case with federal Title 10 service. Veterans’ benefits include college tuition waivers, local property tax exemptions, burial in a state veterans’ cemetery, and admission to the state Veterans’ Home.

Annually, beginning July 15, 2007, the act requires state agencies and towns that provide veterans’ benefits to submit annual reports to the veterans’ affairs commissioner showing the number of recipients and the type, value, and description of benefits for the 12-month period ending on June 30. The commissioner must compile, and annually, beginning August 1, 2007, report the data for the 12-month period ending on June 30, to the Military Department and the Public Safety and Security Committee (**PA 06-153**).

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