



# 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 2019 regular session. OLR's other Acts Affecting reports are, or will soon be, available on OLR's website: <https://www.cga.ct.gov/olr/actsaffecting.asp>.

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:

<https://www.cga.ct.gov/olr/olrsums.asp>.

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

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## **Benefits**

### ***Alternate Route to Certification***

A new law requires the State Department of Education to reserve, for veterans, 10% of seats available in the existing alternate route to certification program (i.e., a program through which individuals from an alternate profession can attain their initial educator certificate) ([PA 19-62](#), effective July 1, 2019).

### ***Civil Air Patrol Employment Protection***

A new law prohibits an employer, including the state and its political subdivisions, from discriminating against, disciplining, or discharging an employee because the employee is (1) a civil air patrol member (i.e., civilian auxiliary of the U. S. Air Force) or (2) absent from work responding to certain emergencies or training as a civil air patrol member.

Also, state employees with civil air patrol service-related injuries on or after October 1, 2019, may receive sick leave with pay ([PA 19-95](#), effective October 1, 2019).

### ***Disabled Veterans and Service Member Property Tax Exemption***

A new law increases the base property tax exemption for certain disabled service members and veterans by \$500. By doing so, it also increases the additional income-based exemption for such service members and veterans, which is calculated using the base exemption, by \$250 or \$1,000 depending on income ([PA 19-171](#), effective October 1, 2019, and applicable to assessment years commencing on or after that date).

### ***Extension of In-State Student Status for Armed Forces Members' Spouses and Children***

By law, Connecticut armed forces members, and their spouses and dependent children, are entitled to in-state student classification for tuition purposes at UConn, the Connecticut State Universities, the community colleges, and Charter Oak State College ([CGS § 10a-29](#)). A new law allows the spouses and dependent children residing in the state to maintain their in-state classification if the service member is transferred out of state on military orders after the student has been accepted for matriculation in a degree-granting program ([PA 19-172](#), effective October 1, 2019).

## ***Leasing Military Department Facilities***

A new law authorizes the adjutant general to allow state armed forces members to lease or use a military facility to recognize a significant military career event (e.g., promotions) at a cost up to the facility's actual operating cost during the lease or use ([PA 19-46](#), effective July 1, 2019).

## ***Residency Requirement***

A new law removes prior law's two-year state residency requirement to be eligible for certain benefits for veterans who were not Connecticut residents at the time of enlistment or induction into the armed forces. These include, among other things:

1. admission into any hospital, upon the veterans affairs commissioner's request, at the state's expense unless other means of payment are available;
2. admission to the veterans residential services facility or healthcare center;
3. \$1,800 toward funeral expenses or cremation for certain indigent veterans;
4. cost of transporting and installing a grave headstone; and
5. temporary financial assistance ([PA 19-33](#), effective October 1, 2019).

## ***Wartime Service Benefits***

A new law extends certain state war service benefits to veterans who served less than 90 days in a war, but were separated from service because of an injury incurred or aggravated in the line of duty, even if the injury was not a service-connected disability rated by the U.S. Veterans Affairs Department, as prior law required in such circumstances. For eligible veterans (some benefits also accrue to eligible spouses and dependent children), such benefits include, among other things:

1. certain property tax exemptions (minimum of \$1,500);
2. tuition waivers for the state's public colleges and universities;
3. temporary aid from the Soldiers', Sailors' and Marines' Fund;
4. special license plate and parking privileges for disabled veterans; and
5. certain benefits related to state employment and contracts ([PA 19-33](#), effective October 1, 2019).

## ***Workforce Development***

A new law requires the workforce development board for the state's southwest region (i.e., The WorkPlace, Inc.) to, among other things, by October 1, 2019, develop and operate two pilot

programs within its workforce development region (the Military to Machinists pilot program for veterans and the Veterans Platform to Employment pilot program).

The Military to Machinists pilot program must help veterans in the region served by the program to (1) earn an advanced manufacturing certificate from a qualifying certificate program and (2) secure employment, for certificate holders, with any eligible business in the advanced manufacturing field. Under the Veterans Platform to Employment pilot program, the new law requires the southwest workforce development board to provide training and subsidized employment for veterans who have experienced long-term unemployment

The new law also requires the Department of Labor, when contacted by a veteran who is in need of employment or workforce development services to, under certain circumstances, provide the veteran with (1) contact information for the workforce development board and (2) information on the Military to Machinists pilot program ([PA 19-129](#), most provisions effective July 1, 2019).

## **Miscellaneous**

### ***Angel Investor Tax Credit***

Among other things, a new law extends the angel investor tax credit program by five years, to July 1, 2024, and increases the aggregate amount of angel investor credits Connecticut Innovators (CI) may reserve each fiscal year. The new law authorizes CI to prioritize certain unreserved credits for various businesses, including veteran-owned businesses ([PA 19-117](#), § 347, effective July 1, 2019, and applicable to income and tax years beginning on or after January 1, 2019).

### ***Cadet Nurse Corps Day***

A new law requires the governor to proclaim June 15 of each year to be Cadet Nurse Corps Day to honor women who served in the corps during World War II ([PA 19-152](#), effective upon passage).

### ***Materials for Employers on Veterans' Mental Health Conditions***

A new law requires the southwest workforce development board, among other things, to identify appropriate written materials on mental health conditions common to veterans to distribute to employers. Such mental health conditions include post-traumatic stress disorder, suicide risk, depression, and grief ([PA 19-129](#), § 3, effective July 1, 2019).

### ***Medal of Merit for Civilians***

A new law establishes a civilian medal of merit for civilians (except the armed forces' civilian employees, military personnel, or contractors) who have distinguished themselves by exceptionally

meritorious conduct that contributes significantly to accomplishing the armed forces mission ([PA 19-55](#), effective July 1, 2019).

### ***Municipal Veterans Representative***

Under prior law, any municipality that did not have a local veterans' advisory committee or provide funding for a veterans' service officer had to designate an employee to serve as a veterans' service contact person. A new law substitutes the term "municipal veterans' representative" for the term "veterans' service contact person," allows volunteers to serve in this position, and subjects them to all the existing training requirements ([PA 19-148](#), effective October 1, 2019).

### ***Signs for Veteran Memorials and Military Museum***

A new law requires the Department of Transportation to place signs indicating the location of the Veterans Memorial Park, Greater Middletown Military Museum, and Connecticut Trees of Honor Memorial which is a memorial for Connecticut military men and women who served and died ([PA 19-161](#), § 31, effective from passage).

### ***U.S.S. Indianapolis CA-35 Day***

A new law requires the governor to proclaim July 30 of each year to be U.S.S. Indianapolis CA-35 Day (1) to commemorate and honor the cruiser and the service, sacrifice, and bravery of the Connecticut sailors who served aboard the ship during World War II and (2) in recognition of its final sailing crew, the pilots who discovered the survivors, and the rescue and recovery crews ([PA 19-152](#), effective upon passage).