

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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130th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2021

Legislative Document

No. 827

S.P. 269

In Senate, March 5, 2021

An Act To Help Veterans Access Jobs, Education and Housing

Reference to the Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D M Grant'.

DAREK M. GRANT
Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator RAFFERTY of York.

1 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

2 **PART A**

3 **Sec. A-1. 10 MRSA §8003, sub-§2-A, ¶M**, as enacted by PL 2017, c. 173, §2, is
4 amended to read:

5 M. To ~~exercise discretionary authority, after consultation with licensing boards if~~
6 ~~applicable, to review and determine on a case-by-case basis, in consultation with any~~
7 applicable licensing board, examination and licensing eligibility for applications for
8 licensure submitted by ~~individuals who identify themselves as~~ veterans with military
9 service, experience and training; and

10 **Sec. A-2. 10 MRSA §8003, sub-§2-A, ¶N**, as enacted by PL 2017, c. 173, §2, is
11 amended to read:

12 N. To ~~exercise discretionary authority to~~ waive examination fees and license fees for
13 applicants for licensure who ~~identify themselves as~~ are veterans with military service,
14 experience and training.

15 **Sec. A-3. 10 MRSA §8011**, as enacted by PL 2013, c. 424, Pt. D, §2 and affected
16 by §3, is amended to read:

17 **§8011. Veterans and military spouses**

18 By January 1, 2014, each board, commission, office and agency within the department
19 listed in section 8001 or affiliated with the department under section 8001-A shall adopt a
20 process to facilitate qualified returning military veterans and qualified spouses of returning
21 military veterans or of active duty service members to qualify for professional licenses
22 granted by those boards, commissions, offices and agencies in an expeditious manner. For
23 the purposes of this section, "returning military veteran" means a veteran of the Armed
24 Forces of the United States who has been ~~honorably~~ discharged from active duty with an
25 honorable discharge or a general discharge under honorable conditions. Notwithstanding
26 any other provision of law to the contrary, the Director of the Office of Professional and
27 Occupational Regulation and each licensing board within or affiliated with the department
28 shall, upon presentation of satisfactory evidence by an applicant for professional or
29 occupational licensure, accept education, training or service completed by the applicant as
30 a member of the Armed Forces of the United States or Reserves of the United States Armed
31 Forces, the national guard of any state, the military reserves of any state or the naval militia
32 of any state toward the qualifications to receive the license.

33 **1. Endorsement.** The board, commission, office or agency ~~may~~ shall permit a
34 returning military veteran or a spouse of a returning military veteran or of an active duty
35 service member who holds a comparable license in another state to acquire a license by
36 endorsement in this State for the remainder of the term of the license from the other state
37 or until a license is obtained in this State.

38 **2. Temporary license.** The board, commission, office or agency ~~may~~ shall permit a
39 returning military veteran or a spouse of a returning military veteran or of an active duty
40 service member who holds a comparable license in another state to obtain a temporary
41 license in this State for a period of time necessary to obtain a license in this State.

1 College System or the Maine Maritime Academy, that member or veteran is eligible for in-
2 state tuition rates, regardless of the member's or veteran's state of residence.

3 The Maine Maritime Academy, the University of Maine System and the Maine
4 Community College System shall designate liaisons to provide benefits assistance to
5 enrolled and prospective students who are members of the United States Armed Forces or
6 veterans of the United States Armed Forces who have been discharged from active duty
7 with an honorable discharge or a general discharge under honorable conditions. The Maine
8 Maritime Academy shall designate at least one liaison, the University of Maine System
9 shall designate at least one liaison at each of its universities and the Maine Community
10 College System shall designate at least one liaison at each of its colleges. To the extent
11 space is available, the Maine Maritime Academy, the University of Maine System and the
12 Maine Community College System shall designate a specific location at each institution,
13 equipped with at least one computer with Internet access, where enrolled students who are
14 members of the United States Armed Forces and veterans of the United States Armed
15 Forces who have been discharged from active duty with an honorable discharge or a general
16 discharge under honorable conditions may congregate to study, to provide support to their
17 peers and to receive assistance from the designated liaison.

18 PART C

19 **Sec. C-1. 34-B MRSA §3011**, as corrected by RR 2017, c. 1, §31, is amended by
20 adding at the end a new paragraph to read:

21 In coordination with the Director of the Maine Bureau of Veterans' Services within the
22 Department of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management, the department shall
23 develop a method for identifying eligible veterans who are homeless and for assisting those
24 persons with receiving assistance under this section.

25 SUMMARY

26 Part A of this bill helps veterans access jobs in the following ways.

27 1. It requires the Director of the Office of Professional and Occupational Regulation
28 within the Department of Professional and Financial Regulation to review the examination
29 and licensing eligibility of applicants for licensure who are veterans with military service,
30 experience and training and to waive any applicable examination and licensing fees for
31 those veterans. Under current law, the director has discretion to conduct these reviews and
32 to grant these fee waivers for individuals who self-identify as veterans.

33 2. It requires each professional licensing board within or affiliated with the department
34 to grant a license by endorsement or a temporary license to a person who holds a
35 comparable license in another state and who is a returning military veteran, the qualified
36 spouse of a returning military veteran or the qualified spouse of an active duty service
37 member. Under current law, these professional licensing boards may, but are not required
38 to, provide licensure by endorsement or temporary licenses in these circumstances.

39 3. It requires each professional licensing board within or affiliated with the department
40 to permit a returning military veteran who applies for a license less than 2 years after being
41 discharged from active duty and whose military training and experience qualify the veteran
42 for a license in this State to acquire a temporary license until the full license is issued.

1 4. It clarifies that a returning military veteran who is eligible for professional and
2 occupational licensing assistance is a veteran of the Armed Forces of the United States who
3 was discharged from active duty with either an honorable discharge or a general discharge
4 under honorable conditions.

5 5. It authorizes the Department of Public Safety, Emergency Medical Services' Board
6 to waive examination and initial licensing fees for a veteran with military service,
7 experience and training who is an applicant for licensure as an emergency medical services
8 person.

9 6. It authorizes the Commissioner of Public Safety to waive initial licensing fees for a
10 veteran with military service, experience and training who is an applicant for licensure as
11 a private security guard.

12 Part B helps veterans access postsecondary education in the State by requiring the
13 University of Maine System, the Maine Community College System and the Maine
14 Maritime Academy to each designate liaisons to provide academic counseling and benefits
15 assistance to students who are members of the United States Armed Forces or who are
16 veterans of the United States Armed Forces and to designate a specific location at each
17 university or college where those students may congregate to study, to provide support to
18 their peers and to receive assistance from the liaison.

19 Part C helps veterans access housing by requiring the Department of Health and Human
20 Services, in coordination with the Director of the Maine Bureau of Veterans' Services
21 within the Department of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management, to develop a
22 method of identifying veterans who are homeless and eligible for temporary housing
23 assistance under the Bridging Rental Assistance Program.