

LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH SERVICES

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Education Credits for Military Training

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You wished to know if legislation has been considered in Alaska that would allow veterans to use certain types of military training in lieu of education, for the purpose of satisfying requirements for State of Alaska jobs.

Briefly, Alaska has not considered legislation described above, according to our review. Also, we did not identify any such legislation enacted in other states.¹

Alaska

We searched Alaska's Bill Action and Status Inquiry System (BASIS) from the 18th Legislature (1993-1994) through the 29th Legislature (2015-2016) for legislative measures that would allow veterans to use certain types of military training in lieu of education, for the purpose of satisfying requirements for State of Alaska jobs. In our review of BASIS, we did not identify any such legislation considered in Alaska. Additionally, we queried officials at the Alaska Department of Military and Veterans Affairs who were unaware of any such efforts. Below we highlight a few loosely related bills from the last few sessions that may be of interest to you.

- In 2017, HB 2—"An Act relating to a voluntary preference for veterans by private employers," has been introduced. The bill can be tracked on BASIS at www.legis.state.ak.us/basis/get_bill.asp?bill=HB%20%20%202&session=30. The same legislation was considered in 2015, as HB 6, which passed the house but did not make it through the senate. HB 6 and its history can be viewed at http://www.legis.state.ak.us/basis/get_bill.asp?bill=HB%20%20%206&session=29.²
- Also in 2015, SCR 9—"Encouraging the University of Alaska to consider accepting upper division undergraduate credits awarded to members of the military and to veterans toward masters degrees offered by the University of Alaska system"—was considered. The resolution, which did not gain any traction in the senate, can be viewed at http://www.legis.state.ak.us/basis/get_bill.asp?bill=SCR%20%209&session=29.
- In 2013, HB 84 was enacted as Ch28 SLA 13 (AS 08.01.064). The bill was entitled "An Act relating to applying military education, training, and service credit to occupational licensing and certain postsecondary education and employment training requirements; providing for a temporary occupational license for qualified military service members; and providing for an effective date." The measure and its history can be accessed at http://www.legis.state.ak.us/basis/get_bill.asp?bill=HB%20%2084&session=28.

Also, detailed information regarding provisions in Alaska that provide special consideration for military professional licensing is viewable at the Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development's website at <https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/web/cbpl/ProfessionalLicensing/MilitaryLicensing.aspx>.

Finally, you may wish to peruse the U.S. Army's official benefit webpage pertaining to Alaska at http://myarmybenefits.us.army.mil/Home/Benefit_Library/State_Territory_Benefits/Alaska_.html. The page includes benefits for Alaska service members and veterans in a number of areas including education and employment.

¹ While we believe our review to be thorough, it is possible that relevant legislation eluded us.

² A similar bill, Senate Bill 2, was also considered in 2015. It did not get out of the senate.

Other States

We also looked to see if other states had enacted measures that would allow veterans to use certain types of military training in lieu of education, for the purpose of satisfying requirements for state jobs. While we did not identify any such laws, we did find information pertaining to employment preferences for veterans, which we provide below.

Pennsylvania's veteran preference law contains a section titled "Lack of training, age or physical impairment." It states that, "The lack of academic or scholastic training or experience, age, loss of limb or other physical impairment which does not in fact incapacitate any such soldier shall not be deemed to disqualify him, provided he possesses the other requisite qualifications to satisfactorily perform all of the duties which the position requires." Full text of the law is viewable at <http://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/legis/LI/consCheck.cfm?txtType=HTM&ttl=51&div=0&chpt=71>

At least five states (Kansas, Maine, Minnesota, Tennessee, and Texas) require an interview for veterans applying for public employment. For example, Kansas law requires employers at the state and local level to interview any veteran who applies for a job so long as he or she can "competently perform the duties of the position." The law is accessible at http://www.ksrevisor.org/statutes/chapters/ch73/073_002_0001.html. The Kansas employment website contains answers to frequently asked questions regarding veteran preference at <https://admin.ks.gov/services/state-employment-center/veterans>.

Texas law sets a requirement that state agencies interview a certain number of veterans based on the total number of interviews scheduled. A state agency can also designate an open position as a veteran's position and only accept applications from individuals entitled to veteran employment preference. Each state agency in Texas must also set a goal of hiring a number of veterans equal to at least 20 percent of the total number of employees. The Texas measure can be viewed at <http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/GV/htm/GV.657.htm>.

New York State enacted legislation in 2013 requiring state agencies to select veterans for all temporary appointments rather than using temporary employment service companies at <http://legislation.nysenate.gov/pdf/bills/2013/S5504A>. The New York program website is accessible at <https://www.cs.ny.gov/vetportal/job-seekers.cfm>.

Finally, in 2013, Washington State Governor Jay Inslee signed Executive Order 13.01, directing each state agency to develop annual veteran employment plans to increase the representation of veterans in their workforce. The order also created the Veterans Employee Resource Group, a cross-agency group of veterans in state service to provide advice and assistance on veteran recruitment, retention, and development strategies. The executive order can be viewed at www.governor.wa.gov/sites/default/files/exe_order/eo_13-01.pdf.

As you may know, Alaska's veteran preference law is codified at AS 39.25.159. It stipulates that veterans are eligible for a state employment hiring preference. In a numerical rating system, veterans receive points equal to five percent of the total points available from the assessment device added to their score; for disabled veterans or former prisoners of war, points equal to ten percent of the total points available from the assessment device will be awarded. If numerical ratings are not used, a veteran will be given consideration and a disabled veteran or prisoner of war will be given an opportunity to interview.

We hope this is helpful. If you have questions or need additional information, please let us know.