



RENSSELAER COUNTY VETERANS NEWSLETTER

Rensselaer County
Unified Family Services
Veterans Service Agency
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Director

NYS & Local Retirement Military Service Credit

You may be entitled to receive additional credit toward your retirement benefit for your military service.

There are different sections of the law that allow the crediting of military service. Once your request is received, it will be determined under what section(s) you qualify and which would be most advantageous to you.

In most cases, purchasing additional service credit will increase your retirement benefit. However, there are certain situations where doing so may not increase your benefit. Please visit www.osc.ny.us/retire/members/military-service-credit.php and visit their *Publications page* and refer to the booklet that applies to your plan and tier.

Most members can use their *Benefit Projection Calculator* to estimate their retirement benefit. Try estimating your retirement benefit with and without the military service credit to see how it will change if you purchase all or part of your military service.

If you are in one of the following groups, you currently cannot estimate your retirement benefit using the benefit calculator. However, you can contact the Call Center at (518)474-7736 to determine if purchasing credit for your military service would be beneficial:

- Employees' Retirement System (ERS) Tier 5 and 6 members in the Article 15 retirement plan;
- Certain ERS members in special 20 or 25 year retirement plans; and
- Police and Fire Retirement System (PFRS) members who joined on or after July 1, 2009.

Rules for Receiving Military Service Credit under the Various Statutes of Law

Article 20 of the Retirement and Social Security Law

Eligibility

VETERANS MUST:

- Have been honorably discharged;

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Van Transportation...

- * Don't drive and need to get to the Albany VA Medical Center ?
- * We offer complimentary van transportation to and from the VAMC for *most morning* medical appointments.

For more details call:
270-2760.



VETERANS CRISIS LINE

1-800-273-8255
PRESS 1

**Confidential chat at
Veterans CrisisLine.net
or text to 838255**
TTY service 1-800-799-4889

Confidential support 24
hours a day, 7 days a week,
365 days a year, for veterans
and their loved ones.

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- Have at least five years of credited service in the Retirement System;
- Have not received credit for this service in any other public retirement system in New York State; and
- Apply for and purchase military service credit prior to retirement.

Estimate Your Cost

For Tier 1,2,3,4 and 5 members, the cost will be 3 percent of the compensation you earned during the year of credited service immediately prior to receipt of your application, times the number of years of military service being claimed. These payments are *not* deposited into your contribution account and are not available to borrow against with a Retirement System loan.

How to Apply—Regardless of when you served, to apply for military service credit you can:

1. Scan and email your Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty papers (DD-214) to msunit@osc.state.ny.us and include your name and contact information. You'll receive an email acknowledging that your request was received.
2. Fax your name, contact information and a copy of your DD-214 to (518) 486-6405 or (518) 402-7799.
3. Mail your name, contact information and a copy of your DD-214 to:

Military Service Unit
110 State Street
Albany, NY 12244-0001

You'll receive an acknowledgement letter once your request starts to be processed. If you have questions, email msunit@osc.state.ny.us.

Section 243 of the Military Law

Eligibility

VETERANS MUST:

- Be a member of the Retirement System before entering the military;
- Enter the military within six months of your last employment; and
- Have returned to your position while your Retirement System membership was still active.

Cost depends on your plan and tier.

Section 242 of the Military Law

Eligibility

VETERANS MUST:

- Be a member of the Retirement System before entering the military; and
- Return to public employment.

Cost depends on your plan and tier.

Note: Members who were called to active military duty from 8/1/90-12/31/92 and/or 9/11/01-12/31/05, who were not receiving full salary from a participating employer and are otherwise eligible to receive retirement service credit for the active military duty under Section 242 or 243 of the New York State Military Law, can be credited with this service without having to make contributions.

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Federal Legislation

The following federal legislation, for pension purposes, allows a reemployed person to be treated as not having incurred a break in service with their employer during the person's period of military service, as specified in the legislation.

Veteran Reemployment Rights Statue (VRR)

Veterans must have been employed by a participating employer of the Retirement System within the six months prior to entering the military and must have applied for reemployment with the same employer within 90 days from their discharge date.

Uniform Services Employment Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA)

This act replaces the VRR, effective December 12, 1994. Veterans must have been a member of the Retirement System prior to entering the military. This statue does not specify a limit on the period of time in advance of military service that employees may leave employment. If employers consider they were properly notified, so will the Retirement System. If military service exceeds 180 days, you must have applied for reemployment with the same employer within 90 days from the date of discharge.

REQUIREMENTS FOR MILITARY SERVICE UNDER ARTICLE 20

To be eligible to receive credit for your military service under Article 20, you must:

- Have been honorably discharged;
- Have at least five years of credited service in the Retirement System at the time you apply for your military service credit;
- Have not received credit for this service in any other public retirement system in New York State; and
- Apply for and purchase military service credit prior to retirement.

If you are covered by a plan that has a maximum service limit, your military service credit cannot be used to exceed the maximum service limit.

- For Tier 1 through 5 members, payment of 3 percent of the compensation you earned during the year of credited service immediately prior to the receipt of your application, times the number of years of credit you are seeking, must be paid into the Retirement System's Pension Accumulation Fund. For Tier 6, members, the cost is 6 percent. THESE PAYMENTS ARE REFUNDABLE ONLY IF THE MILITARY SERVICE CREDIT CANNOT BE USED IN THE CALCULATION OF A BENEFIT.
- Payments must be made in a period no longer than the amount of credit being granted.
- Prorated credit will be granted for partial payment.

If you do not have a copy of your DD-214, you may want to first check with your County Veterans Service Agency to see if it is on file, Rensselaer County VSA (518) 270-2760. If not, you may obtain one by writing to: National Personnel Records Center (NPRC), Military Personnel Records, 1 Archives Drive, St. Louis, MO 63138.

A request form to send to NPRC is available through your local County VSA and also through the National Archives website at <http://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/index.html>

A Message From the Veterans Service Agency Director

As our busy Memorial Day season ends and summer begins, please remember all of our veterans and what they did for our country. I was blessed to be able to participate with many other veterans, as well as members of the public, during the visit of the Vietnam Traveling Wall to the Capital District, at Halfmoon. I was able to read names of those who paid the ultimate sacrifice in the Republic of Vietnam, along with our County Executive Kathy Jimino. This was very moving. I want to thank New York State Senator Kathy Marchione for sponsoring this tribute to our veterans, as well as all the volunteers who worked so tirelessly in making this event such a huge success. If you missed the event in Halfmoon, the Traveling Wall will also be in the Capital District from August 25th through August 28th at the Town Hall in Princetown, NY hosted by the Town of Princetown; from September 8th through September 12th at the Fulton Montgomery Community College campus in Johnstown, NY hosted by the FMCC; and from September 14th through September 19th at Washington Park in Albany, hosted by the Tri-County Council of Vietnam Era Veterans. Visit the wall if you can and volunteer to help if you are able.

Remember to obtain a Lifetime Liberty Pass from New York State if you have a 40 percent or greater service-connected disability. Information is available at <http://nyparks.com> or call (518) 474-2324.

Discounted hunting and fishing licenses and preference for Deer Management Permits from NYS DEC are also available. For more information, contact your DEC Regional Sporting License Office at (518) 402-8845 or go online at contact@dec.ny.gov.

Remember that this year the great Schaghticoke Fair will be held from August 31st through September 5th over the Labor Day weekend. Stop by our booth. See you at the Fair.

Thank you all for what you do for our Veterans. Help other Veterans. Find your niche!

Sincerely,

Peter H. Goebel

Upcoming Events:



Call us at (518) 270-2760 to have your event listed in the newsletter.

August 6th... 7th Annual Honor Our Veterans Car Show at the Stratton VAMC 10am-3pm

August 8th...Honor-a-Deceased Veteran Ceremony in the Legislative Chambers, 8:15 a.m., *Wilfred J. Brooks, US Army - Vietnam Era*

August 20th... Amateur Boxing Event at the Stratton VAMC, Weigh-in's: 12 noon, Bouts start: 3pm

September 12th...Honor-a-Deceased Veteran Ceremony in the Legislative Chambers, 8:15 a.m., *Ralph Vartigian, US Navy-WWII*

September 24th... Heroes at Home Patriot Ruckmarch—register at: <http://www.mhepinc.org/projects/heroes-at-home>

October 1st... 2016 Capital Region Stand-Down at the Colonie BPO Elks #2192, 11 Elks Lane, Latham from 8am-1pm

October 10th...COLUMBUS DAY—OFFICE CLOSED

October 11th... Honor-a-Deceased Veteran Ceremony in the Legislative Chambers, 8:15 a.m., *Allen MacRoberts, US Navy-Vietnam*