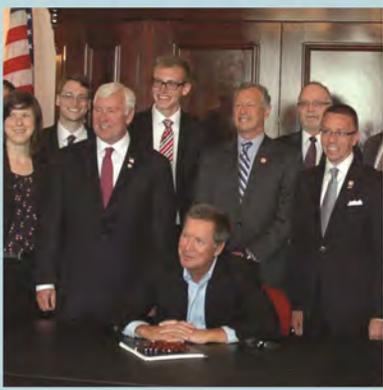




June 2014



Veteran Newsletter



Veterans in Ohio got a big hand up this month in the professional licenses and college credits that can lead to employment by the enactment of some very important legislation.

Find out more about House Bill 488 on pages 1 - 3.

Welcome to the Ohio Department of Veterans Services e-newsletter! The newsletter is a key source of information about issues of interest to our community of veterans in Ohio.

We thank you for your service to our country. Because you're a veteran, you've earned a number of benefits that you may not be aware of. Most of these benefits originate at the federal level with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). Based on the time you served, you may be eligible for compensation for injuries, health care, educational assistance, home loans or many other benefits. There are also a number of state benefits available to Ohio veterans, to include the Ohio Veterans Bonus as well as direct financial assistance from the county to veterans in need.

The place to find out what you've earned and to apply is your county veterans service office. You can locate yours in the interactive map on our department home page, www.ohiovet.gov, or by calling 1-877-OHIO-VET (1-877-644-6838).

We will continue to provide you this newsletter each month. We hope it's of value to you and your family.

House Bill 488 Helps Veterans Get Jobs and Higher Education...

Governor John Kasich signed House Bill 488 on June 16. This landmark legislation includes a number of provisions that help veterans find employment as well as get higher education degrees faster.

The bill was based on proposals that the Governor introduced in March as part of the Mid-Biennium Review (MBR). The MBR built on successes already achieved in state government fiscal, employment and related policies to keep state government moving forward and bring additional jobs to Ohio.

Have questions about veterans benefits? Call 1-877-OHIOVET (1-877-644-6838)



Veteran Newsletter

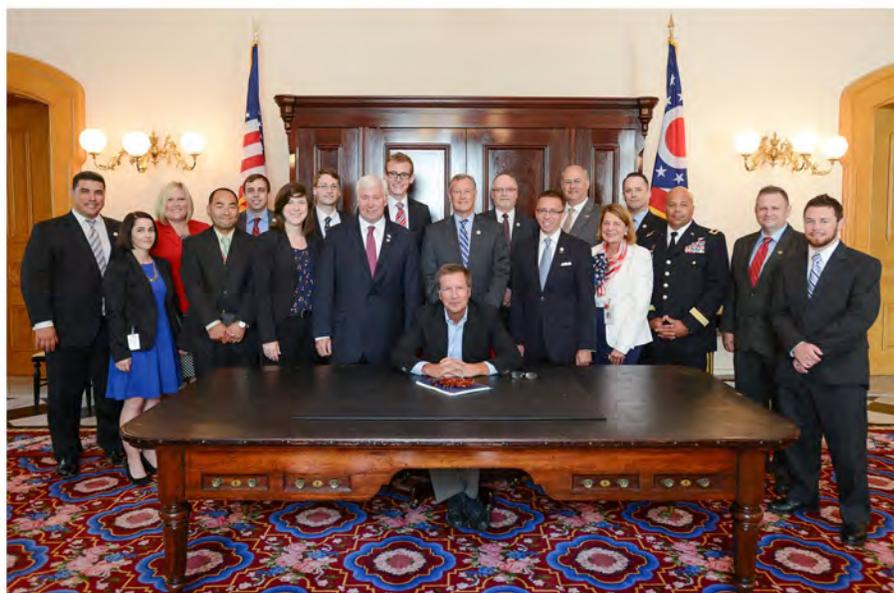
Monthly Update



“We certainly appreciate Governor Kasich’s leadership in bringing these proposals forward, and the enthusiasm of everyone in both the Ohio House and Senate to work together to make them the law of the state,” Director of the Ohio Department of Veterans Services Tim Gorrell said. “This elevates Ohio’s status as a veteran-friendly state and as a place all veterans can be proud to call home.”

The major provisions of House Bill 488 are:

- **Helping Veterans Get Jobs:** The bill makes it easier for veterans to transfer their skills to receive credit toward a professional license so they can quickly begin applying their skills in good-paying jobs that support their families, job creators and their communities.
- **Fast Track to State Licenses:** The bill provides for veterans to use GI Bill dollars to pay for national or state occupational license and certificate testing fees, creates a prioritized process to expedite licensing and certification for veterans and their spouses, and specifies a consistent and broad definition of *veteran* to allow the State of Ohio to treat all veterans equally. It also provides for the creation of a centralized website that provides state occupational licensing information to veterans and their spouses.
- **Link to Private Employers with Veterans’ Preference:** The The bill permits private sector employers to voluntarily register with the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services if they provide a preference in hiring for veterans and spouses, and requires the Ohio Department of Veterans Services to provide, on its website, a link to a list of these employers.





Veteran Newsletter

Monthly Update



Giving Veterans College Credit for Their Military Training and Experience:

House Bill 488 requires Ohio's higher education system to develop the means to make this happen. It creates the Military Transfer Assurance Guide to provide a baseline of standards, procedures and tools for granting college credit for military experience for any public college and university, providing more consistent services across the state system.

- **Academic Credit for Military Training and Experience:** The bill requires that Ohio's that higher education institutions grant free college credit to veterans for their military training and experience.
- **Better Academic Counseling for Veterans:** The bill requires that all public higher education institutions provide high-quality academic and career counseling for veterans to help them ease back into civilian life and navigate the unique programs designed to support them. Veterans would also receive priority course registration.

Helping Ohio Veterans Make the Transition to College: House Bill 488 encourages Every Ohio public college and university to implement the "best practices" of the Ohio institutions that have first-rate veteran offices or specifically assigned counselors to support transitioning veterans. The bill also requires that veterans and active military service members will be provided priority course registration at Ohio public institutions. These programs are strengthened by a provision in the bill requiring the Chancellor of the Ohio Board of Regents to report on their implementation and to recommend improvements for integrating student veterans into campus life.

Protecting Ohioans Called to Active Duty: The bill also includes a provision to increase the penalties for identity theft against an active duty military service member and their spouse, and members of the National Guard and Reserves who are called to active duty.

The many measures to help veterans that were enacted into law by House Bill 488 had their origins in the Governor's Executive Order (EO) of June 2013. This EO directed Ohio's boards and commissions to identify ways to quickly grant veterans professional licenses based on their training and experience, and the Ohio Board of Regents to simplify the process of obtaining academic credit based on military service.



Veteran Newsletter

Monthly Update



Homestead Exemption Is Enhanced for 100 Percent Disabled Veterans...

Ohio's Homestead Exemption on property tax for senior and disabled citizens was significantly enhanced for 100 percent disabled veterans by House Bill 85, signed by Governor John Kasich on June 12.

The bill allows a veteran who is rated by the VA as 100 percent disabled due to a service-connected disability to exempt an increased amount, \$50,000 of the assessed value of their primary residential home, for property tax purposes. In effect, this means that if an eligible veteran is living in a home valued at \$150,000, they will only be taxed on a value of \$100,000, providing a significant tax savings.

The bill also exempts 100 percent disabled veterans from the income limits applied to other senior or disabled citizens who are eligible for the Homestead Exemption.

This expansion of the property tax exemption is effective for tax year 2014 and years going forward. Eligible veterans must apply for the exemption through their county auditor.

A directory of county auditors is available at:

<http://www.caa.org/DIRECTORY/>



The Homestead Exemption allows Ohioans 65 and older, permanently and totally disabled Ohioans, and the surviving spouses of those who received the exemption, to exempt \$25,000 of the assessed value of their primary residential home from property taxes. Those eligible to receive the exemption must have an annual Ohio adjusted gross income of \$30,000 or less.



Veteran Newsletter

Monthly Update



Assistance for Invisible Wounds...



June is recognized nationally as PTSD Awareness Month. The emotional trauma people may suffer from combat or other violent or life-changing events can be a long-term issue for themselves, their family and their friends.

These are not issues that should be suffered in silence. The best treatment is to stay engaged with other people, and if more help is needed, reach out and seek it. A veteran can often receive help just by talking to an understanding other veteran, a member of the clergy, or a trusted friend.

If a personal crisis is looming for a veteran, they and their loved ones have a 24/7 phone resource available. Call the Veterans Crisis Line at **1-800-273-8255, press 1** (text 838255) or go online for a [Confidential Veterans Chat](#) with a trained counselor.

In cases where more intensive help is needed, a county veterans service office can help connect a veteran to one of the VA's seven Vet Centers in Ohio that specialize in mental health issues. Contact information for county veteran service offices is on the map at: <http://dvs.ohio.gov/>

No one should suffer PTSD alone, or feel that they don't need help if they're suffering emotional trauma. Above all else – reach out.

Veterans and Jobs...

The climate for veterans seeking employment in Ohio continues to improve. Many national and local companies are actively seeking veterans to join their work force. The best strategy is to prepare a resume from the online resources available, see what's out there from both online and in-person sources, dress appropriately and get out there. We'll keep providing you the latest updates here, as well as giving you the latest on major regional hiring opportunities on our [Facebook](#) page, so be sure to "like" it.



Veteran Newsletter

Monthly Update



Job Fair Info: A major job fair is scheduled in Cleveland on Thursday, June 26. The details are below:

- The U.S. Chamber of Commerce is hosting a “Hiring Our Heroes” Job Fair from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. on June 26 at Public Auditorium, 500 Lakeside Ave, Cleveland, Ohio 44114. The fair is open to active duty, members of the Guard and Reserve, veterans, and spouses. Attendees are asked to dress to meet employers and bring ID or DD-214 as proof of service. Organizations on hand include Auto Zone, the Auditor of State, the Cincinnati and Columbus police departments, the Cleveland Clinic, Fastenal Company, GE Lighting, Huntington Bank, Invacare, New York Life, PNC Bank, and many local businesses. Advanced registration is strongly encouraged; see: <http://www.hiringourheroes.org/cleveland>

Companies Looking to Hire Veterans: Many well-known national companies with Ohio operations are in the market to hire veterans in many different areas of their businesses. These companies include AEP, AT&T, Chase Bank, GE, General Motors, Home Depot, Huntington Bank, Scotts Miracle Gro, Starbucks, Walmart, Whirlpool, Verizon, and Xerox. Information on current jobs is available on the individual company web sites; go to www.google.com to search by company name and then click on their “employment” or “careers” links.

The Ohio insurance industry has 26,000 new jobs to fill by 2020. These new jobs are in a number of different skill sets, and are available in insurance companies all around the state.

For more information, see: <http://insurancecareers.org/veterans>



Several state agencies are also currently seeking veterans. Open state jobs can be viewed and applied for at:

<http://careers.ohio.gov>

Many large state employers, such as the Cleveland Clinic and local and regional hospitals and the Waterworks, are also in the market for qualified veterans.



Veteran Newsletter

Monthly Update



Local communities and counties often hire veterans for a variety of public service jobs. Search “employment” on the web sites of local government offices and agencies where you live.

For the most current information on jobs in a local area:

- The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services offices in each county, as well as regional Job Centers, can help; see “Finding Jobs In-Person” in this section.
- ***The Ohio Department of Veterans Services’ Facebook and Twitter pages will also post frequent announcements of multiple job openings across the state, so be sure to check them out at <http://dvs.ohio.gov/HOME>.***

Schools and Companies Offering Job Training: Job training that could lead to employment in the emerging shale industry and in manufacturing is available throughout Ohio. For example, Stark State College and Eastern Gateway Community College offer training targeted to shale jobs. Cincinnati State College offers training aimed at industrial jobs. Siemens Corporation offers training geared to engineering manufacturing jobs. Find out more at the schools’ and company’s web sites; conduct your search using www.google.com. Veteran-specific information on higher education is available through the Ohio Board of Regents at: <https://www.ohiohighered.org/veterans>

Finding Jobs Online: Veterans can also look for jobs online. “Ohio Means Jobs” is the state’s primary job web site, listing the vast majority of both private sector and public jobs which are open in Ohio. The site is at <https://ohiomeansjobs.com/omj/>, or simply type in “Ohiomeansjobs.com.” The available jobs are posted in the “Job Seekers” area of this recently-upgraded site.

Be sure to register and post your resume on the site; just follow the “Veterans” icon. Ohio Means Jobs automatically posts veterans’ resumes first for any job that matches the qualifications they’ve stated in their resume – so employers who go to the site will see veterans’ resumes before they see anyone else’s. The resume should be reviewed every month and electronically “updated” – which is a simple key stroke, whether any additional information is added or not – to keep it refreshed and at the head of the line for jobs.





Monthly Update



Veteran Newsletter

This web site also has an area with other resources for veterans, to include translation of military to civilian skills and a resume rater. The link is below: <http://www.ohiomeansveteranjobs.com/>

Finding Jobs In-Person: If you want to start a face-to-face job search, there's in-person assistance available throughout Ohio that knows where the local jobs are. The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (JFS) is in an active partnership with the U.S. Department of Labor to operate Job Centers regionally around the state. Contact information can be found online at:

<http://jfs.ohio.gov/owd/wia/wiamap.stm>



The Job Centers are open to all residents, but are also staffed with counselors who specifically assist veterans. Their primary clients are veterans with barriers to employment, of which long-term unemployment definitely qualifies. Counselors can also assist with skills translation and resume preparation – and they know where the jobs are locally. The Job Centers also have resources to assist disabled veterans with qualifying for, finding and keeping meaningful employment.

For a Job Fair, or any Employment Event, Be Prepared for Interviews, and Know Your Skills:

Before you attend any job fair or visit any employer, remember these common tips:

- Have a current resume;
- Have a cover letter that's geared to the type of job being sought;
- Present a professional appearance, e.g., suit and tie, or dress/skirt or pantsuit.

To prepare an effective resume, you have to be able to translate military experience to civilian experience. The Army and the Navy have developed online "cool" web sites that help veterans translate their military skills into terms civilian employers can understand. The sites, which stand for "credentialing opportunities online," allow a veteran to select their military skill code and then see the types of jobs their training and experience translates to, as well as any certifications that are needed. There is no Air Force, Marine, or Coast Guard "cool" site. However, the Air Force does offer similar resources in its Community College of the Air Force site, at the Credentialing and Education Research Tool (CERT) page; Marine skills are similar to those found in the Army and Air Force; and Coast Guard skills are similar to those found in the Navy.



Veteran Newsletter

Monthly Update



The “cool” sites are below:

<https://www.cool.army.mil/index.htm>

<https://www.cool.navy.mil/overview.htm>

Iraq Veterans, Don't Miss Out on the Ohio Veterans Bonus...

If you were boots-on-the-ground in Iraq, listen up – **the application deadline for the Ohio Veterans Bonus for veterans of the Iraq War is Dec. 31, 2014.**

The Ohio Veterans Bonus is available to veterans who served anywhere in the world during the time of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Service must have been for more than 90 days active duty, not for training. Eligible veterans must have been Ohio residents at the time of their entry into the service, and must be Ohio residents currently.

December 31, 2014 is the deadline to apply for those who served in the country of Iraq. The Bonus remains open for veterans who served in the country of Afghanistan or elsewhere in the world since Oct. 7, 2001.



The bonus pays \$100 a month to veterans who served in the countries of Afghanistan or Iraq, up to a maximum of \$1,000. For veterans who served anywhere else in the world during the eligible periods, the payment is \$50 a month up to a \$500 maximum. The maximum individual award for all eligible periods of service is \$1,500.

Veterans medically discharged due to injuries sustained in combat can receive \$1,000, plus up to \$500 for months of service elsewhere. Family members of those killed in action or who died from disease as a result of their in-theater service can receive a bonus of \$5,000 plus whatever the service member was eligible for, up to a total of \$6,500.



Monthly Update



Veteran Newsletter

Specific eligibility periods and deadlines are below:

- Iraq: eligible period is from March 19, 2003 to Dec. 31, 2011 (**deadline to apply is Dec. 31, 2014**); and
- Afghanistan or elsewhere: eligible period is, from Oct. 7, 2001 through a date to be determined by the President.

Anyone needing more information or who want to request an application can call toll-free to 1-877-OHIO VET (1-877-644-6838) option 2, or see:

https://veteransbonus.ohio.gov/odvs_web/

Veterans can also apply for the Bonus at their local Veterans Service Office in their home county. To find the location of your county office, see the Ohio map and select the appropriate county at:

<http://dvs.ohio.gov/>

Your County Veterans Service Office can also help you determine what other federal and state benefits you're eligible for and help you apply for them.

D-Day, the Sixth of June...

June 6 marked the 70th anniversary of D-Day, the day of days that saw the initial landings of the Normandy invasion in what was one of the largest military operations in history.

Thousands of troops made it ashore against fierce opposition on Omaha and Utah beaches for U.S. forces, and on Gold, Juno and Sword beaches for British, Canadian and other Allied forces. Thousands of paratroopers and glider-borne U.S. and allied soldiers landed the night before the Invasion amid equally determined opposition from both the enemy and marshy terrain. The landings themselves were preceded by an unprecedented bombardment from naval and air forces.

There are still many of the brave men who fought that day living among us. While combat veterans can easily identify with the soldiers of D-Day, 70 years later, it may be hard for some of us to imagine what these men – most of them very young men at the time – experienced that day.

They dropped out of the sky through heavy flak and landed, many of them, in a wet marsh, separated from their units and with enemy fire seeking them out of the darkness. The next morning, others jumped into heavy surf, enemy machine gun and shell fire all around, striking through the water, not knowing if they'd even make it to the beach, but very sure that the same enemy fire was hitting every angle of the



Monthly Update



Veteran Newsletter

beach they also knew they had to cross. And there were the Rangers, scaling sheer cliffs at Pointe Du Hoc, knowing they had to destroy heavy guns but not really knowing what they'd find. The risks that all these men undertook almost defies the imagination today.

Yet somehow, despite nearly insurmountable odds, these men prevailed...the airborne troops seized the bridges and key terrain that was their objectives, and the infantry took the beaches, setting the stage for the push inland through Normandy to liberate France and march into Germany. The D-Day landings marked the beginning of an unstoppable advance that led to the end of the war in Europe less than a year later.

Today, we stand in awe at what these men accomplished on June 6, 1944. We owe everyone who fought that day our profound thanks. As a nation, and as a world, we can be very grateful that they were there, and for what they did.

