

SB 448-FN - AS AMENDED BY THE SENATE

01/29/2026 0061s
03/26/2026 1209s

2026 SESSION

26-2026
06/08

SENATE BILL **448-FN**

AN ACT modifying the definition of veteran.

SPONSORS: Sen. Innis, Dist 7; Sen. Long, Dist 20; Sen. Avard, Dist 12; Sen. McGough, Dist 11; Sen. McConkey, Dist 3; Sen. Ward, Dist 8; Sen. Murphy, Dist 16; Sen. Pearl, Dist 17; Sen. Rochefort, Dist 1; Sen. Gannon, Dist 23; Sen. Carson, Dist 14; Sen. Perkins Kwoka, Dist 21; Sen. Abbas, Dist 22; Rep. Harvey-Bolia, Belk. 3; Rep. See, Merr. 26; Rep. Sellers, Graf. 10; Rep. Thibault, Merr. 25

COMMITTEE: Executive Departments and Administration

AMENDED ANALYSIS

This bill changes the definition of veteran and expands eligibility for state benefits and programs that depend on veteran status, ensuring that individuals discharged under honorable conditions, including those with a general discharge under honorable conditions, are not excluded from eligibility.

Explanation: Matter added to current law appears in ***bold italics***.
Matter removed from current law appears [~~in brackets and struckthrough.~~]
Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.

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STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty-Six

AN ACT modifying the definition of veteran.

Be it Enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court convened:

1 1 Statutory Construction; Definition of Veteran. Amend RSA 21:50, I(a)(2)(A) to read as follows:

2 (A) ~~[An honorable discharge]~~ **Any discharge under honorable conditions**; or

3 2 New Hampshire Veterans' Home; Command and Employees. Amend RSA 119:6 to read as
4 follows:

5 119:6 Commandant and Employees. The board shall appoint, or may remove, for just cause, a
6 commandant of the home. ~~[Honorably discharged veterans as defined in RSA 119:1]~~ **A veteran as**
7 **defined by RSA 21:50** shall have preference for employment in the home if qualified by the New
8 Hampshire division of personnel.

9 3 Preference of Resident Laborers and Veterans; Employment of Veterans. Amend RSA 283:4, I
10 to read as follows:

11 I. In public employment of clerks, office help, mechanics, laborers, inspectors, supervisors,
12 foremen, janitors, peace officers, and relief employees in the construction of public works, public
13 projects and in the conduct of city, town or district departments by a county, city, town, or district, or
14 by persons contracting therewith for such construction, carrying out of relief projects and in the
15 conduct of city, town, or district departments, preference shall be given to citizens of the state who
16 have served in the armed forces of the United States, for not less than 90 days, in times of war, and
17 ~~[have been discharged honorably therefrom, or released from active duty therein]~~ **meet the**
18 **definition of "veteran" in RSA 21:50**, if equally qualified for said employment and if registered in
19 accordance with the provisions of RSA 283:7. Where such employment is obtained from relief rolls or
20 for persons in need, in cases of equal or greater need preference shall be given to such veterans.

21 4 Property Taxes; Certain Disabled Veterans. Amend the introductory paragraph in RSA 72:36-
22 a to read as follows:

23 72:36-a Certain Disabled Veterans. Any person, who is ~~[discharged from military service of the~~
24 ~~United States under conditions other than dishonorable]~~ **a veteran as defined by RSA 21:50**, or an
25 officer who is honorably separated from military service, who owns a specially adapted homestead
26 which has been acquired with the assistance of the Veterans Administration or which has been
27 acquired using proceeds from the sale of any previous homestead which was acquired with the
28 assistance of the Veterans Administration, the person or person's surviving spouse, shall be exempt
29 from all taxation on said homestead, provided that:

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1 5 Reemployment of Veterans; Veterans Guaranteed Reemployment. Amend RSA 97:1 to read as
2 follows:

3 97:1 Veterans Guaranteed Reemployment. Each county, town, city, precinct, school board or
4 other political subdivision of the state shall reemploy a veteran of any branch of the military service
5 of the United States who has been placed on inactive status or [~~been given a discharge other than~~
6 ~~dishonorable~~] **is a veteran as defined by RSA 21:50** and who, within 90 days after being so made
7 inactive or discharged, in writing, notifies the treasurer or other fiscal agent of such political
8 subdivision that he **or she** desires to be reinstated in the position he **or she** held with such political
9 subdivision at the time he **or she** entered said military service.

10 6 Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children. Amend RSA 110-D:3,
11 XX to read as follows:

12 XX. "Veteran" [~~means a person who served in the uniformed services and who was~~
13 ~~discharged or released there from under conditions other than dishonorable~~] **shall have the same**
14 **meaning as in RSA 21:50.**

15 7 Honorable Discharge; References Amended. Amend the following RSAs by replacing
16 "honorable discharge" or "an honorable discharge" with "a discharge under honorable conditions
17 pursuant to RSA 21:50": RSA 115-A:16; 115-A:29, I-II; 115-B:1, II(a); 115-B:1, II(c); 165:5; 175:1,
18 XXII; 176:10; 261:86, I(d); 261:87-b, I; 275-G:1, II; 466:8, I; and 651-A:13.

19 8 Honorably Discharged; References Amended. Amend the following RSAs by replacing
20 "honorably discharged" with "discharged under honorable conditions pursuant to RSA 21:50": RSA
21 72:28, IV(a); 72:28-b, IV; 72:35, I; 99-F:2, VI(a)(1)-(3); 100-A:4, VI(a)(2); 119:1, I; 119:2, II; 261:86,
22 I(c)-(e); 261:141, VIII(c); 261:157-a; and 291:3.

23 9 Effective Date. This act shall take effect 60 days after its passage.

**SB 448-FN- FISCAL NOTE
AS INTRODUCED**

AN ACT modifying the definition of veteran and relative to lifetime hunting and fishing license fees for disabled veterans.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Estimated State Impact				
	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029
Revenue	\$0	Indeterminable Decrease		
<i>Revenue Fund(s)</i>	Fish and Game Fund, Lifetime Licenses Account			
Expenditures*	\$0	Indeterminable Increase		
<i>Funding Source(s)</i>	Fish and Game Fund, Lifetime Licenses Account			
Appropriations*	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<i>Funding Source(s)</i>	None			

*Expenditure = Cost of bill

*Appropriation = Authorized funding to cover cost of bill

METHODOLOGY:

This bill amends the state’s definition of “veteran” across several statutes. Specific to Fish and Game licenses, this bill, effective January 1, 2027:

- Requires the Fish and Game Department (“Department”) to issue lifetime combination hunting and fishing licenses to veterans under this new definition.
- Establishes a sliding scale discount on license fees based on United States Department of Veterans Affairs disability ratings, ranging from a 75% discount for 0–29% disability, 50% for 30–49%, 75% for 50–99%, and no fee for 100% disability.
- Requires the Department to refund a proportional portion of license fees to all veterans with any disability rating who previously purchased a lifetime combination license.

The Department currently offers a discount of 50% off the regular cost to veteran state residents purchasing a hunting, fishing, or combination hunting and fishing lifetime license, if the purchaser has a permanent disability rating of 80%-99%. The Department states it cannot determine how many lifetime combination licenses were sold to veterans meeting the new definition with disability ratings below 80%, nor how many would qualify for refunds under the proposed change. Since license costs vary by purchaser age, and the number of qualifying veterans is unknown, the Department anticipates an indeterminable loss of revenue from discounted sales and an indeterminable increase in expenditures due to required refunds.

For informational purposes, the Department states that from 2022 to 2024 an average of 1,367 lifetime combination licenses were sold annually at \$1,534.29 each, totaling approximately \$2.1 million in revenue.

AGENCIES CONTACTED:

Fish and Game Department and Department of Military Affairs and Veterans Services