



RENSSELAER COUNTY VETERANS NEWSLETTER

Rensselaer County
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COLD WAR VETERANS' EXEMPTION

The New York State Legislature has passed a bill which the Governor signed that would allow local governments to offer a real property tax exemption for property owned by veterans who served during the Cold War period. Rensselaer County Executive Kathleen M. Jimino has reviewed the exemption and expects to send a local law to the County Legislature for their consideration to create this exemption from county property taxes.

The following is some detailed information about the exemption, who is eligible and what will be required to apply for it.

How does the Cold War veterans' exemption work?

The exemption provides a basic property, of either 10 or 15 percent of assessed value (as adopted by the municipality) to veterans who served during the Cold War period. The law also provides an additional exemption to disabled veterans, equal to one-half of their service-connected disability ratings. The basic exemption is limited to 10 years, but there is no limit for the disabled portion of this exemption. In both instances, the exemption is limited to the primary residence of the veteran, and is applicable only to general municipal taxes, not to school taxes or special district levies.

Where the Cold War exemption is in effect, does the assessor automatically give the exemption to a Cold War veteran?

No. Where the exemption is offered by local option of the municipality, the veteran must file an application, RP-458-b, with the assessor by "taxable status date". In most towns, this date is March 1, but please check the date with your assessor to be sure. The veteran must show a discharge or release from the US Armed Forces under honorable conditions, that the service was during the Cold War period for at least one year (exclusive of active duty training), and that he or she was awarded the Cold War Recognition Certificate as authorized under Public Law 105-85 (the 1998 National Defense Authorization Act). If the veteran seeks the additional exemption available under the law, proof must be provided to show a service-connected disability.

What type of proof will be accepted?

Form DD-214, which you should have received upon separation from the service, contains some of the information the assessor needs to determine your eligibility. For this exemption, you will also need to provide the Cold War Recognition Certificate. Other written documentation also may help to prove eligibility, such as a copy of discharge orders, VA documentation for disability rating, etc. You should also have a copy of the deed to the house or other proof that you and/or your spouse are the owners of the property.

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Van Transportation...

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

For more details call 270-2760



FREE TAX PREP.....
Westside Waterfront Weed-N-Seed Troy has set up a VITA site at the Troy CYO, 237 4th Street. They will be providing free tax return preparation for individuals and families whose taxable income is below \$40,000. They will be providing this free service from Feb. 6th to April 4th on Wednesday's 6-9pm, Thursday 9am-2pm, and Saturdays 9am-2pm. For further information and/or to schedule an appointment, please call 270-4689.

Cold War Veterans' exemption continued from page 1

Where can I get a copy of my veteran's service records or other information to document my eligibility?

Check with your local office of the New York State Division of Veterans' Affairs or your County Veterans Service Agency as to how you should proceed.

What does the law mean by the "Cold War"?

The exemption is available to veterans who served on active duty (exclusive of training) for at least one year in the United States armed forces between September 2, 1945 and December 26, 1991, and who are not currently receiving either the eligible funds or alternative veterans' exemption.

What are the ownership requirements of

the Cold War exemption?

The legal title to the property must be in the name of the veteran or the spouse of the veteran or both, or the unremarried surviving spouse of the veteran. If the property is owned by more than one qualified owner, the exemption to which each is entitled may be combined. Also, if a veteran is the unremarried surviving spouse of a veteran, that person may also receive any exemption to which the deceased spouse was entitled.

What are the residential and occupancy requirements of the law?

The property must be used exclusively for residential purposes, and must also be the primary residence of a Cold War veteran or the unremarried spouse of a Cold War veteran unless that person is absent from the property due to medical reasons or institutionalized for up to five years. If a portion of the property is

used for non-residential purposes, the exemption will apply only to that portion of the property that is used exclusively for residential purposes.

What are the dollar limits on the Cold War veterans' exemption?

Once it decides to put the Cold War exemption into effect (at either 10 or 15 percent of assessed value), each county, city, town and village has the additional option of using the maximum set of exemptions established by State law or passing a local law to use a reduced maximum set of exemptions. The maximums are listed in the instructions for the Cold War veterans exemption available online or from your assessors office. You should check with your assessor to determine the maximum exemption limits in your municipality.

A Message from our County Director:

Hello All-

I received an email from a dear friend who is currently serving in Iraq, who is treating our military personnel for PTSD and other problems incurred in a war zone. She has informed me of desperately needed supplies for our deployed military members.

They are in need of egg crate mattress pads. Some of the soldiers are sleeping on old mattresses, while others are still sleeping in sleeping bags. They are also in need of sheets and blankets, but most importantly they need the egg crate mattress pads. I be-

lieve you can purchase these at Wal-Mart.

The deployed soldiers are also in need of the following listed items:

- Batteries (all sizes)
- Baby wipes
- Calling cards
- Puzzle books and magazines
- Packs of gum
- Mouthwash
- Deodorant
- Maxi pads/tampons
- Bars of soap
- Razors
- Toothpaste

- Toothbrushes
- Shampoo
- Lip balm
- Hand lotion
- Shaving cream
- Flea collars
- Individually wrapped snacks (no chocolate)

If you want to donate any of these items to a deployed soldier, but do not know one or have the funds to do so, our office will accept these items and ship them to our local deployed soldiers.

Yours in Patriotism,
BCB

Upcoming Events:



Call us by the 15th of the month and we will list your event .

February 11...Honor-a-Deceased Veteran Ceremony in the Legislative Chambers, 8:15 a.m. **John R. Dwyer Jr., USMC Peacetime**

February 21...President's Day— **Office Closed**

March 10...Honor-a-Deceased Veteran Ceremony in the Legislative Chambers, 8:15 a.m. **John P. Rogers, US Army Air Corps, WWII**

April 14...Honor-a-Deceased Veteran Ceremony in the Legislative Chambers, 8:15 a.m. **William D. Mohan, US Army Air Corps, WWII**

May 12...Honor-a-Deceased Veteran Ceremony in the Legislative Chambers, 8:15 a.m. **Edward J. Patrick Jr., US Navy, Vietnam**

May 26...Memorial Day— **Office Closed**

May 26...Veterans of Lansingburgh 12th Annual Memorial Day Parade, kick off at 11:00 a.m.

*** NOTE: Anyone wanting to honor a deceased Rensselaer County veteran, please call our office for more information 270-2760 ***



