



RENSSELAER COUNTY VETERANS NEWSLETTER

Rensselaer County
Unified Family Services
Veterans Service Agency
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STEVEN F. McLAUGHLIN
County Executive

PETER K. GOEBEL
Director

NYS & Local Retirement Military Service Credit

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.

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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- 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 statute 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 County Executive

Rensselaer County has proudly answered the call to duty since the founding of this great nation. From the Revolution to the Civil War, World War I, World War II, Korea, Vietnam, Persian Gulf and the War on Terror, our veterans have stood bravely on the frontlines of freedom. We owe our veterans and families a tremendous debt for their service and sacrifice in protecting our country through our history.

Having met our veterans, or talked with family members and friends, during recent years, I am awed by the courage and selflessness of those who left Rensselaer County to travel to far off lands and defend the freedoms and security we enjoy today. Our veterans are the true heroes of our nation and deserve respect and support. The Hall of Heroes in the County Office Building, and the monthly Honor a Deceased Veteran ceremony bear witness to the great acts of courage by our veterans and serves as a tribute for future generations.

As County Executive, I have vowed to never forget the contributions of our veterans. As Assemblyman, I fought to ensure veterans and their families received the care and respect they have earned. As your new County Executive, I will work to provide county services to our veterans and advocate for you on the state and federal levels. My staff and I will also be responsive to your concerns, comments and suggestions.

I look forward to working with county Veterans Service Agency Director Peter Goebel, Legislature Chair Mike Stammel and Veterans Committee Chair Jake Ashby in the coming months to provide the services and support earned by our veterans. We enjoy the freedom and way of life your service provided, and you deserve the access to the services and support you have earned.

Sincerely,

Steven F. McLaughlin

Upcoming Events:



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

March 12th...Honor-a-Deceased Veteran Ceremony in the Legislative Chambers at 8:30 am,

Abbott L. Wiley – USA – WWII

April 5th... Military Children's Day with the Rensselaer County Sheriff's Office, call Dianna Rios at (518) 694-5160

April 9th...Honor-a-Deceased Veteran Ceremony in the Legislative Chambers at 8:30 am,

Earl W. Coons – USA, T/Sgt-WWII

May 14th...Honor-a-Deceased Veteran Ceremony in the Legislative Chambers at 8:30 am,

*Joseph C. Rustin-USN, AN – KWE/Cold War; Paul T. Rustin-USN, FN- KWE/Cold War; and
Theodore H. Rustin-USN, SN-Cold War*

May 24th... Melrose/ Schaghticoke/ Valley Falls/Johnsonville Memorial Day Parade, step off @ 7pm in Melrose

May 26th... East Greenbush Memorial Day Parade, step off @ 10 am

May 27th... Rensselaer Memorial Day Parade, ceremony @ 1pm - step off @ 2 pm

May 28th... MEMORIAL DAY—OFFICE CLOSED

May 28th... Sand Lake Memorial Day Parade, step-off @ 10am

May 28th... Hoosick Falls Memorial Day Parade, step off @ 10am

May 28th... Castleton Memorial Day Parade, step off @ 10am

May 28th... 22nd Annual Lansingburgh Memorial Day Parade, step off @ 11 am rain or shine

May 28th... Berlin Memorial Day Parade, step off @ 11am

May 28th... Poestenkill Memorial Day Parade @ 11am

May 28th... North Greenbush Memorial Day Parade, step off @ 1:30 pm

May 28th... Nassau Memorial Day Parade, step-off @ 2pm