

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2025**

**SENATE BILL 118
RATIFIED BILL**

AN ACT TO MAKE VARIOUS MODIFICATIONS TO LAWS PERTAINING TO MILITARY SERVICE MEMBERS AND VETERANS AND TO AUTHORIZE SHERIFFS TO SEND NOTICE OF THE EXPIRATION OF A CONCEALED HANDGUN PERMIT VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

PART I. REDUCE CONCEALED HANDGUN FEES FOR CERTAIN VETERANS

SECTION 1.(a) G.S. 14-415.19 reads as rewritten:

"§ 14-415.19. Fees.

...

(a1) The permit fees for a retired sworn law enforcement officer who provides the information required by subdivisions (1) and (2) of this subsection to the sheriff, in addition to any other information required under this Article, are as follows:

Application fee	\$45.00
Renewal fee	\$40.00

- (1) A copy of the officer's letter of retirement from either the North Carolina Teachers' and State Employees' Retirement System or the North Carolina Local Governmental Employees' Retirement System.
- (2) Written documentation from the head of the agency where the person was previously employed indicating that the person was neither involuntarily terminated nor under administrative or criminal investigation within six months of retirement.

The county finance officer shall remit the proceeds of the fees assessed under this subsection to the North Carolina Department of Public Safety to cover the cost of performing the State and federal criminal record checks performed in connection with processing applications and for the implementation of the provisions of this Article.

(a2) The permit fees for a person who was discharged honorably or under general honorable conditions from military service in the Armed Forces of the United States are the same as for a retired sworn law enforcement officer under subsection (a1) of this section. In addition to any other information required under this Article, an applicant claiming a reduced fee under this subsection shall provide a Form DD-214 showing the applicant has been discharged honorably or under general honorable conditions from military service in the Armed Forces of the United States, a Veterans Identification Card issued by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs, or other documentation (i) showing the person was discharged honorably or under general honorable conditions from military service in the Armed Forces of the United States and (ii) deemed satisfactory by the sheriff. The county finance officer shall remit the proceeds of the fees assessed under this subsection in the same manner as proceeds remitted under subsection (a1) of this section.

...."



SECTION 1.(b) This section becomes effective July 1, 2025, and applies to applications for concealed handgun permits and permit renewals submitted on or after that date.

PART II. PROVIDE ADDITIONAL TIME FOR MILITARY FAMILIES TO PROVIDE PROOF OF RESIDENCY FOR PUBLIC SCHOOL ENROLLMENT

SECTION 2.(a) G.S. 115C-366(a9) reads as rewritten:

"(a9) A student who is not a domiciliary of a local school administrative unit shall be permitted to register to enroll in the public schools of that unit by remote means, including electronic means, prior to commencement of the student's residency in the local school administrative unit if all of the following apply:

- (1) A parent or legal guardian is (i) on active military duty and is transferred or pending transfer pursuant to an official military order to a military installation or reservation in the State.State or (ii) will be separating from active military duty within a 12-month period.
- (2) Upon request by the local school administrative unit where the student seeks to register to enroll, a parent or legal guardian provides a copy of (i) the official military order transferring to a military installation or reservation located in the State.State, (ii) the official separation orders, or (iii) an official military document showing the anticipated date of separation or date of projected Permanent Change of Station to the State.
- (3) A parent or legal guardian completes and submits the local school administrative unit's required enrollment forms and documentation, ~~except that other than~~ proof of residency and documentation related to disciplinary actions pursuant to G.S. 115C-366(a4) shall not be required until the student transfers into the local school administrative unit, at which time they shall be required prior to commencing attendance.G.S. 115C-366(a4).
- (4) A parent or legal guardian submits proof of residency and documentation related to the disciplinary actions pursuant to G.S. 115C-366(a4) upon the child commencing attendance. If the proof of residency has not yet become available because the parent or legal guardian and child are residing in temporary housing, the local school administrative unit shall do the following:
 - a. Allow the child to enroll and begin attending school in that unit of anticipated domicile for a period of up to one year (i) from the parent or legal guardian's reporting-for-duty date, separation date from active military duty, or anticipated separation date from active military duty or (ii) through the end of the school year before being considered a resident of another local school administrative unit.
 - b. Allow a child who is a high school junior or senior to enroll and begin attending school in that unit of anticipated domicile through high school graduation.

A local school administrative unit shall make available to a student who registers to enroll pursuant to this subsection the same opportunities available to a student enrolled contemporaneously with domicilia, such as requesting or applying for school assignment, registering for courses, and applying for any other programs that require additional request or application. ~~A student enrolled pursuant to this subsection may not attend school in the local school administrative unit until proof of residency is provided in accordance with the requirements of the local school administrative unit.~~ Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to curtail a local school administrative unit's authority pursuant to G.S. 115C-366(a5)."

SECTION 2.(b) This section is effective when it becomes law and applies beginning with the 2025-2026 school year.

PART III. PROHIBIT DISCRIMINATORY ADMISSIONS POLICIES REGARDING ACTIVE DUTY SERVICE MEMBERS AND VETERANS, REQUIRE MILITARY ADMISSIONS DEFERMENT FOR CERTAIN PERSONS ADMITTED TO THE UNC SYSTEM, AND PROVIDE IN-STATE TUITION TO CERTAIN HONORABLY DISCHARGED VETERANS

SECTION 3.(a) Article 1 of Chapter 116 of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new Part to read:

"Part 8A. Military Admissions and Deferment.

"§ 116-44.9A. Definitions.

For purposes of this Part, the following definitions shall apply:

- (1) Applicant. – An individual who has applied for admission to a constituent institution of The University of North Carolina.
- (2) Armed Forces. – The United States Air Force, Army, Coast Guard, Marine Corps, Navy, Space Force, and North Carolina National Guard.
- (3) Constituent institution of The University of North Carolina. – A constituent institution of higher education of The University of North Carolina, as defined in G.S. 116-2(4), excluding the constituent high school, the North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics.
- (4) Reserve Armed Forces. – The reserve components of any of the Armed Forces.
- (5) Uniformed service. – Any of the following:
 - a. Armed Forces.
 - b. Reserve Armed Forces.
 - c. The Merchant Marine.

"§ 116-44.9B. Nondiscriminatory evaluations of applications.

A constituent institution of The University of North Carolina shall not deny admission to any applicant solely on the basis of the applicant's indication that the applicant is serving in the uniformed service or that the applicant intends to serve in the uniformed service.

"§ 116-44.9C. Deferment.

(a) Deferment Requests. – The Board of Governors of The University of North Carolina shall adopt a policy requiring constituent institutions to provide for enrollment deferment for members of the uniformed services and spouses of members of the uniformed services if the deferment is requested at least 30 days prior to enrollment in a constituent institution.

(b) Deferment Periods. – Members and spouses of members of the reserve Armed Forces shall be granted deferments of at least two years after entry into the reserve Armed Forces. All other members and spouses of members of the uniformed services shall be granted deferments of at least five years after entry into the uniformed services."

SECTION 3.(b) Article 14 of Chapter 116 of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new section to read:

"§ 116-143.3B. Tuition of qualifying veterans.

(a) Definitions. – The following definitions apply in this section:

- (1) Armed Forces. – The United States Air Force, Army, Coast Guard, Marine Corps, Navy, Space Force, the North Carolina National Guard, and any reserve component of any of these entities.
- (2) Qualifying veteran. – An individual who meets all of the following criteria:
 - a. Served active duty for not less than 90 days in the Armed Forces.
 - b. Received an Honorable Discharge from the Armed Forces.
 - c. Meets at least one of the following criteria:
 1. Graduated from high school in North Carolina on or after January 1, 2004.

2. Served active duty in the Armed Forces with a permanent station in North Carolina for at least 90 continuous days.
3. Was awarded a Purple Heart.

(b) Any qualifying veteran admitted to an institution of higher education, as defined in G.S. 116-143.1(a)(3), shall be charged the in-State tuition rate and applicable mandatory fees for enrollment, without having to satisfy the 12-month residency requirement under G.S. 116-143.1.

(c) The individual applying for the benefit of this section has the burden of proving entitlement to the benefit."

SECTION 3.(c) This section is effective when it becomes law and applies beginning with the 2025-2026 academic year.

PART IV. REGULATE COMPENSATION FOR SERVICES RELATED TO VETERANS' BENEFITS MATTERS

SECTION 4.(a) Article 14 of Chapter 143B of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new section to read:

"§ 143B-1278. Compensation for services related to veterans' benefits matters.

(a) Definitions. – Unless the context requires otherwise, the following definitions apply in this section:

- (1) Compensation. – The payment of money, anything of value, or a financial benefit.
- (2) Veterans' benefits matter. – The preparation, presentation, or prosecution of a claim affecting an individual who has filed or expressed an intent to file a claim for a benefit, program, service, commodity, pension, function, or status, the entitlement to which is determined under the laws and regulations administered by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs or the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs pertaining to veterans, their dependents, their survivors, and any other individual eligible for such benefits.

(b) Prohibitions. – A person shall not do any of the following:

- (1) Receive compensation for preparation, presentation, or prosecution of, or advising, consulting, or assisting an individual with an initial disability claim related to a veterans' benefits matter, except as permitted by this section.
- (2) Receive compensation for referring an individual to another person to prepare, present, prosecute, or advise, consult, or assist the individual with a veterans' benefits matter.
- (3) Directly or by implication guarantee or advertise that any individual is certain to receive specific veterans' benefits or that any individual is certain to receive a specific level, percentage, or amount of veterans' benefits.
- (4) A person seeking to receive compensation for advising, assisting, or consulting any individual with any veterans' benefits matter or engaging in the preparation of an initial claim for a fee shall not:
 - a. Aggressively or directly solicit business regarding any veterans' benefit matter.
 - b. Gain direct access to any personal medical, financial, or government benefits login, username, or password information.
- (5) A person seeking to receive compensation for advising, assisting, or consulting any individual with any veterans' benefits matter shall not utilize a medical professional for a secondary medical exam with whom they have an employment relationship.
- (6) Enter into any agreement related to a veterans' benefits matter that does not comply with subsection (c) of this section.

(c) Memorialization of Terms. – Before rendering any services, a person seeking to receive compensation for preparation, presentation, or prosecution of, or advising, consulting, or assisting an individual with, a veterans' benefits matter shall memorialize all terms of the agreement in a written agreement that complies with all of the following criteria:

(1) The written agreement is signed by both parties and contains all terms regarding the individual's payment of fees for services rendered, including both of the following:

a. Fees for services are contingent upon a successful outcome and shall not exceed five times the one-month increase in benefits.

b. No initial fee shall be charged.

(2) The written agreement must clearly provide at the outset of the business relationship the following disclosure: "This business is not sponsored by, or affiliated with, the United States Department of Veterans Affairs or the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, or any other federally chartered veterans' service organization. Other organizations, including, but not limited to, the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, a local veterans' service organization, and other federally chartered veterans' service organizations may be able to provide you with this service free of charge. Products or services offered by this business are not necessarily endorsed by any of these organizations. You may qualify for other veterans' benefits beyond the benefits for which you are receiving services here." This written disclosure shall appear in at least 12-point font and shall appear in a readily noticeable and identifiable place in the person's agreement with the individual seeking services. This disclosure shall also be provided orally to the individual and the individual shall verbally acknowledge understanding of the oral disclosure and sign the document in which the written disclosure appears to represent understanding of these provisions. The person offering services shall retain a copy of the written disclosure while providing veterans' benefits services for compensation to the individual and for at least one year after the date on which the service relations terminate.

(d) Penalty. – A violation of this section is an unfair trade practice under G.S. 75-1.1.

(e) Exclusions. – Nothing in this section shall apply to attorneys who are licensed to practice in the State of North Carolina."

SECTION 4.(b) This section becomes effective October 1, 2025.

PART V. AUTHORIZE REMOTE DRIVERS LICENSE RENEWALS FOR ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY AND THEIR FAMILIES

SECTION 5.(a) G.S. 20-7 reads as rewritten:

"§ 20-7. Issuance and renewal of drivers licenses.

...

(f) Duration and Renewal of Licenses. – Drivers licenses shall be issued and renewed pursuant to the provisions of this subsection:

...

(6) Remote renewal or conversion. – Subject to the following requirements and limitations, the Division may offer remote renewal of a drivers license or remote conversion of a full provisional license issued by the Division:

a. Requirements. – To be eligible for remote renewal or conversion under this subdivision, a person must meet all of the following requirements:

...

4. For a remote renewal, the most recent renewal was an in-person renewal and not a remote renewal under this

subdivision-subdivision, except that an active duty member of the Armed Forces of the United States or a reserve component of the Armed Forces of the United States, who is stationed outside of this State, and the member's spouse and dependent children may remotely renew a license a second consecutive time if either of the following applies:

- I. The license being renewed is not REAL ID compliant pursuant to the REAL ID Act of 2005, 49 U.S.C. § 30301.
- II. The license being renewed is REAL ID compliant but is being converted to a non-REAL ID compliant license for purposes of the renewal.

...."

SECTION 5.(b) This section becomes effective October 1, 2025, and applies to licenses renewed on or after that date.

PART VI. CHILDREN OF WARTIME VETERANS SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS AWARD FLEXIBILITY

SECTION 6.(a) For purposes of subsection (b) of this section, the following definitions shall apply:

- (1) Authority. – The State Education Assistance Authority.
- (2) Commission. – The Veterans' Affairs Commission of the Department.
- (3) Department. – The Department of Military and Veterans Affairs.
- (4) Program. – The program administered by the Department to award scholarship funds that is referred to as Scholarships for Children of Wartime Veterans.
- (5) Scholarship funds. – Scholarship funds awarded to the child of a North Carolina veteran under Part 2 of Article 14 of Chapter 143B of the General Statutes.
- (6) Secretary. – The Secretary of the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs.

SECTION 6.(b) Notwithstanding Part 2 of Article 14 of Chapter 143B of the General Statutes and any rules adopted or determinations made by the Veterans Affairs Commission, for the 2024-2025 academic year and the 2025-2026 academic year, the following shall apply relating to the administration of scholarship funds under the Program:

- (1) Within funds available for the Program, the following shall be determined:
 - a. Due to the sacrifice of veterans for the State of North Carolina and the unique needs and challenges of the children of wartime veterans to ensure they have the greatest opportunities to reach their higher education attainment goals, if there are additional eligible recipients, other than those identified by the Department under this Program, who are attending public colleges and universities of the State who may qualify to have their scholarships funded with monies from the Escheat Fund, the Authority, after consultation with the Secretary, may fund those scholarships with monies from the Escheat Fund.
 - b. After consultation with the Authority, the Secretary shall determine whether to prioritize the award of new applicants for the 2025-2026 academic year in Class I-A, I-B, and IV scholarships, prior to awarding Class II and III scholarships. Class II and Class III awards may be determined following awards for Class I-A, I-B, and IV depending on the availability of funds for the Program.
 - c. The Secretary, after consulting with the Authority, may determine based on the number of eligible students, including new and renewal

students, that have applied for the 2025-2026 academic year, whether to reduce the room and board allowance award for students attending a public institution and the maximum allowance award for students attending private institutions, prior to August 15, 2025.

- d. After the actions set forth in sub-subdivisions a., b., and c. of this subdivision have been taken, for awards for the 2025-2026 academic year, if funds available for the Program are still insufficient to provide scholarships to all eligible students, the Authority may adjust and standardize award amounts as necessary, including providing pro rata scholarship awards for room and board, to ensure the efficient administration of the scholarship funds.
- (2) All scholarship notifications shall include language that the award of the scholarship is contingent upon the availability of funds.
- (3) The Authority shall disburse scholarship funds in accordance with G.S. 116-204(11a).
- (4) From the total amount of funding appropriated to the Board of Governors of The University of North Carolina and allocated to the Authority in a fiscal year to support the award of scholarship funds under the Program, the Authority may use an amount of up to two and one-half percent (2.5%) for administration costs related to the Program from the allocation from the General Fund. The Authority shall place any unexpended and unencumbered appropriated funds remaining at the end of the 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 fiscal years into an institutional trust fund established in accordance with the provisions of G.S. 116-36.1. Those funds may be used for the purpose of awarding scholarships under the Program and for administration costs of the Authority related to the Program.

SECTION 6.(c) This section becomes effective June 30, 2025, and applies to awards granted for the 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 academic years.

PART VII. AUTHORIZE SHERIFFS TO SEND PERMIT EXPIRATION NOTICE VIA EMAIL

SECTION 7.(a) G.S. 14-415.14 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

"(a1) The permit application shall provide the permittee an option to consent for communications related to the permit to be sent by electronic means to a designated electronic mail address. The State Bureau of Investigation shall also create a separate paper form that a current permit holder may submit to the sheriff to provide or revoke their consent for electronic communications related to their permit."

SECTION 7.(b) G.S. 14-415.16(a) reads as rewritten:

"(a) At least 45 days prior to the expiration date of a permit, the sheriff of the county where the permit was issued shall send a written notice to the permittee explaining that the permit is about to expire and including information about the requirements for renewal of the permit. The notice shall be sent by first class mail to the last known address of the ~~permittee~~ permittee or, with consent of the permittee, by electronic means to a designated electronic mail address of the permittee. Failure to receive a renewal notice shall not relieve a permittee of requirements imposed in this section for renewal of the permit."

SECTION 7.(c) This section becomes effective October 1, 2025.

PART VIII. EFFECTIVE DATE

SECTION 8. Except as otherwise provided, this act is effective when it becomes law.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 30th day of June, 2025.

s/ Phil Berger
President Pro Tempore of the Senate

s/ Donna McDowell White
Presiding Officer of the House of Representatives

Josh Stein
Governor

Approved _____m. this _____ day of _____, 2025