



General Assembly

January Session, 2023

Raised Bill No. 1131

LCO No. 4802



Referred to Committee on VETERANS' AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

Introduced by:
(VA)

AN ACT CONCERNING VETERANS' SPECIALTY LICENSE PLATES AND DRIVER'S LICENSES FOR CERTAIN FORMER MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL GUARD.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 14-20b of the general statutes is repealed and the
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2023*):

3 (a) The Commissioner of Motor Vehicles, at the request of any veteran
4 or member of the armed forces or the surviving spouse of such veteran
5 or member, shall register any motor vehicle owned or leased for a period
6 of at least one year by such person and shall issue a special certificate of
7 registration and a set of number plates for each such motor vehicle,
8 including a special certificate of registration and a set of number plates
9 for any motor vehicle used exclusively for farming purposes by any
10 such veteran or member of the armed forces, or the surviving spouse of
11 such veteran or member, who is engaged in agricultural production as
12 a trade or business. The plates shall expire and be renewed as provided
13 in section 14-22. The commissioner shall charge a fee for such plates,
14 which fee shall cover the entire cost of making such plates and shall be

15 in addition to the fee for registration of such motor vehicle. The
16 commissioner shall charge a fee of fifteen dollars to replace such plates
17 that become mutilated or illegible. Any such member of the armed
18 forces who is dishonorably discharged shall return such plates to the
19 commissioner not later than thirty days after such discharge. The
20 commissioner shall not renew such plates for any motor vehicle owned
21 or leased by any such member of the armed forces who is dishonorably
22 discharged. As used in this subsection, "veteran" and "armed forces"
23 have the same meanings as provided in section 27-103.

24 (b) (1) The Commissioner of Motor Vehicles, at the request of any
25 person who was a member of the Hmong Laotian special guerilla units,
26 which units served in the United States secret war in the Kingdom of
27 Laos during the Vietnam War, or the surviving spouse of such person,
28 and after verification from the Department of Veterans Affairs as
29 provided under subdivision (2) of this subsection, shall register any
30 motor vehicle owned or leased for a period of at least one year by such
31 person and shall issue a special certificate of registration and a set of
32 number plates for each such motor vehicle, including a special certificate
33 of registration and a set of number plates for any motor vehicle used
34 exclusively for farming purposes by any such person, or the surviving
35 spouse of such person, who is engaged in agricultural production as a
36 trade or business. The plates shall expire and be renewed as provided
37 in section 14-22. The commissioner shall charge a fee for such plates,
38 which fee shall cover the entire cost of making such plates and shall be
39 in addition to the fee for registration of such motor vehicle.

40 (2) Any person who was a member of the Hmong Laotian special
41 guerilla units, or the surviving spouse of such person, may submit a
42 request to the Department of Veterans Affairs to be listed as a veteran,
43 based on such service, for the purpose of obtaining a special certificate
44 of registration and a set of number plates under subdivision (1) of this
45 subsection. Such person, or the surviving spouse of such person, shall
46 provide to said department (A) an affidavit stating (i) when such person
47 served, (ii) where such person served, (iii) the unit in which such person
48 served, and (iv) the capacity in which such person served; (B) any

49 available corroborating witness affidavits; (C) any available official
50 documentation of service; and (D) any other documents supporting
51 such person's or such surviving spouse's affidavit. Said department
52 shall, not later than thirty days after receipt of such request, verify
53 whether such person was a member of the Hmong Laotian special
54 guerilla units and, if so, notify the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles of
55 such request and verification.

56 (c) [Any such member of the armed forces who is dishonorably
57 discharged shall return such plates to the commissioner not later than
58 thirty days after such discharge. The commissioner shall not renew such
59 plates for any motor vehicle owned or leased by any such member of
60 the armed forces who is dishonorably discharged.] (1) The
61 Commissioner of Motor Vehicles, at the request of any person who was
62 discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable from
63 service in the National Guard or the surviving spouse of such person,
64 and after verification from the Department of Veterans Affairs as
65 provided under subdivision (2) of this subsection, shall register any
66 motor vehicle owned or leased for a period of at least one year by such
67 person and shall issue a special certificate of registration and a set of
68 number plates for each such motor vehicle, including a special certificate
69 of registration and a set of number plates for any motor vehicle used
70 exclusively for farming purposes by any such person, or the surviving
71 spouse of such person, who is engaged in agricultural production as a
72 trade or business. The plates shall expire and be renewed as provided
73 in section 14-22. The commissioner shall charge a fee for such plates,
74 which fee shall cover the entire cost of making such plates and shall be
75 in addition to the fee for registration of such motor vehicle.

76 (2) Any person who was discharged or released under conditions
77 other than dishonorable from service in the National Guard, or the
78 surviving spouse of such person, may submit a request to the
79 Department of Veterans Affairs to be listed as a veteran, based on such
80 service and discharge or release therefrom, for the purpose of obtaining
81 a special certificate of registration and a set of number plates under
82 subdivision (1) of this subsection. Such person, or the surviving spouse

83 of such person, shall provide to said department all available official
84 documentation of such service and discharge or release therefrom. Said
85 department shall, not later than thirty days after receipt of such request,
86 verify such person's service and discharge or release and, if so verified,
87 notify the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles of such request and
88 verification.

89 Sec. 2. Section 14-36h of the general statutes is repealed and the
90 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2023*):

91 (a) Each motor vehicle operator's license issued by the Commissioner
92 of Motor Vehicles in accordance with section 14-36 and each identity
93 card issued by said commissioner in accordance with section 1-1h shall
94 contain the following: (1) The person's full legal name; (2) the person's
95 date of birth; (3) the person's gender; (4) the person's height and eye
96 color; (5) the person's assigned operator's license or identity card
97 number; (6) the person's address of principal residence in this state; (7)
98 the person's signature; (8) the person's photograph or digital image; and
99 (9) if applicable, the person's status as a veteran, as provided in
100 subsections (e) and (f) of this section.

101 (b) If any person does not reside in any state, territory or possession
102 of the United States because such person is on active military duty with
103 the United States Armed Forces, and such person's home state of record
104 is Connecticut, as reflected in the records of the United States
105 Department of Defense, United States Department of Homeland
106 Security or any federal department under which the United States Coast
107 Guard operates, such person may obtain a Connecticut operator's
108 license or identity card, provided such person: (1) Does not have an
109 operator's license or identity card issued by another state, territory or
110 possession of the United States, or surrenders any such license or
111 identity card; (2) has a current APO or FPO mailing address; (3)
112 designates such person's home address as 60 State Street, Wethersfield,
113 CT 06161; and (4) meets all other requirements for obtaining an
114 operator's license or identity card in this state.

115 (c) The commissioner shall provide that each such license or identity
116 card document contains physical security features designed to prevent
117 tampering, counterfeiting or duplication of the document.

118 (d) Each such document shall also contain one or more machine-
119 readable technology feature or component, including, but not limited to,
120 a bar code or magnetic strip.

121 (e) Any person who is a veteran may submit a request to the
122 Department of Veterans Affairs to have [his or her] such person's status
123 as a veteran contained on [his or her] such person's motor vehicle
124 operator's license or identity card. Said department shall, not later than
125 thirty days after receipt of such request, verify whether such person is a
126 veteran and, if so, notify the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles of such
127 request and verification. The Commissioner of Motor Vehicles shall
128 indicate such person's status as a veteran on any motor vehicle
129 operator's license or identity card issued to such person upon original
130 issuance or renewal of a motor vehicle operator's license or identity card
131 or upon issuance of a duplicate motor vehicle operator's license or
132 identity card.

133 (f) (1) Any person who was a member of the Hmong Laotian special
134 guerilla units, which units served in the United States secret war in the
135 Kingdom of Laos during the Vietnam War, may submit a request to the
136 Department of Veterans Affairs to be listed as a veteran, based on such
137 service, on [his or her] such person's motor vehicle operator's license or
138 identity card. Said department shall, not later than thirty days after
139 receipt of such request and the documents required under subdivision
140 (2) of this subsection, verify whether such person was such a member
141 and, if so, notify the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles of such request
142 and verification. The Commissioner of Motor Vehicles shall indicate
143 such person's status as a veteran on any motor vehicle operator's license
144 or identity card issued to such person upon original issuance or renewal
145 of a motor vehicle operator's license or identity card or upon issuance of
146 a duplicate motor vehicle operator's license or identity card.

147 (2) Any such person who was a member of the Hmong Laotian
148 special guerilla units shall submit to the Department of Veterans Affairs,
149 in addition to the request under subdivision (1) of this subsection, (A)
150 an affidavit stating (i) when such person served, (ii) where such person
151 served, (iii) the unit in which such person served, and (iv) the capacity
152 in which such person served; (B) any available corroborating witness
153 affidavits; (C) any available official documentation of service; and (D)
154 any other documents supporting such person's affidavit.

155 (g) Any person who was discharged or released under conditions
156 other than dishonorable from service in the National Guard may submit
157 a request to the Department of Veterans Affairs to be listed as a veteran,
158 based on such service, on such person's motor vehicle operator's license
159 or identity card. Said department shall, not later than thirty days after
160 receipt of such request and the documents required under subdivision
161 (2) of this subsection, verify such person's service and discharge or
162 release and, if so verified, notify the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles of
163 such request and verification. The Commissioner of Motor Vehicles
164 shall indicate such person's status as a veteran on any motor vehicle
165 operator's license or identity card issued to such person upon original
166 issuance or renewal of a motor vehicle operator's license or identity card
167 or upon issuance of a duplicate motor vehicle operator's license or
168 identity card.

169 (2) Any such person who was discharged or released under
170 conditions other than dishonorable from service in the National Guard
171 shall submit to the Department of Veterans Affairs, in addition to the
172 request under subdivision (1) of this subsection, all available official
173 documentation of such service and discharge or release therefrom.

174 [(g)] (h) As used in this section: (1) "Full legal name" means the most
175 complete version of the name that appears on a person's certificate of
176 birth, official passport or other document or documents accepted by the
177 Commissioner of Motor Vehicles to verify the person's identity, unless
178 the person presents a marriage license or certificate, a certificate of civil
179 union, a divorce decree or an order of a court of competent jurisdiction

180 pertaining to a permanent change of the person's name; and (2)
181 "veteran" has the same meaning as provided in section 27-103, or any
182 former member of the armed forces who is entitled to retirement pay
183 under 10 USC Chapter 1223, as amended from time to time, or, but for
184 age, would be so entitled.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>October 1, 2023</i>	14-20b
Sec. 2	<i>October 1, 2023</i>	14-36h

Statement of Purpose:

To grant eligibility for veterans' specialty license plates and driver's licenses from the Department of Motor Vehicles to former members of the National Guard who do not qualify for federal veterans' benefits.

[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]