

ASSEMBLY, No. 4160

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MAY 28, 2020

Sponsored by:

Assemblyman DANIEL R. BENSON

District 14 (Mercer and Middlesex)

Assemblyman ANTHONY S. VERRELLI

District 15 (Hunterdon and Mercer)

Co-Sponsored by:

Assemblyman Danielsen

SYNOPSIS

Provides one-time financial assistance grant and one-time special needs grant to veterans or their surviving spouses for COVID-19 related events.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 8/24/2020)

1 **AN ACT** providing financial assistance grants to veterans or their
2 surviving spouses for COVID-19 related events.

3
4 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
5 *of New Jersey:*

6
7 1. The Legislatures finds and declares that veterans, surviving
8 spouses, and their families have been financially impacted by the
9 COVID-19 pandemic. These veterans served our country and State,
10 and they and their families made many sacrifices during their service.
11 It is essential that we support these veterans and their families in this
12 time of need. A one-time financial assistance relief grant would help
13 mitigate the negative effects and economic impact of the COVID-19
14 pandemic, and a one-time special needs grant for COVID-19 related
15 events would help mitigate their financial crisis, promote stability,
16 and prevent homelessness.

17
18 2. a. The Department of Military and Veterans Affairs shall
19 establish a temporary grant fund. The grant fund shall provide for a
20 one-time financial assistance relief grant of \$1,000 to veterans or
21 their surviving spouses. The purpose of the grant shall be to mitigate
22 the negative effects and economic impact of the COVID-19
23 pandemic on veterans, surviving spouses, and their families.

24 b. For the purposes of this section, "veteran" means a person
25 who has been honorably discharged, or discharged or released under
26 other than dishonorable conditions, from the active military service
27 of the United States, or a Reserve Component thereof, including the
28 New Jersey National Guard.

29 c. The Adjutant General of the Department of Military and
30 Veterans Affairs shall determine the application process, and shall
31 establish the eligibility documentation required for a person to be
32 considered a qualified applicant. A qualified applicant seeking to
33 participate in the program shall submit an application in such form
34 as shall be required by the department.

35 To be qualified, the applicant shall be a New Jersey resident whose
36 financial situation has been negatively impacted by the COVID-19
37 pandemic in New Jersey.

38 d. The application shall be submitted to the department, and
39 upon approval, the department, if adequate moneys are available,
40 shall issue the grant. The Adjutant General may deny an applicant
41 due to insufficient moneys available in the grant fund.

42 e. The Adjutant General shall be responsible for determining
43 whether any person seeking to be considered a qualified applicant
44 under this section, for the purpose of receiving a grant, meets the
45 eligibility requirements and adjudicating an appeal from any person
46 disputing this determination. The determination of the Adjutant
47 General shall be binding.

1 3. a. The Department of Military and Veterans Affairs shall
2 establish a temporary grant fund. The grant fund shall provide for a
3 one-time special needs grant. The purpose of the special needs grant
4 shall be to provide financial assistance to a veteran or surviving
5 spouse who needs immediate financial assistance due to a COVID-
6 19 related event. A grant under this section may be provided in
7 addition to a grant provided under section 2 of P.L. , c. (pending
8 before the Legislature as this bill). The amount of the special needs
9 grant shall not exceed \$2,000.

10 b. For the purposes of this section, "veteran" means a person
11 who has been honorably discharged, or discharged or released under
12 other than dishonorable conditions, from the active military service
13 of the United States, or a Reserve Component thereof, including the
14 New Jersey National Guard.

15 c. The Adjutant General of the Department of Military and
16 Veterans Affairs shall determine the application process, and shall
17 establish the eligibility documentation required for a person to be
18 considered a qualified applicant. A qualified applicant seeking to
19 participate in the program shall submit an application in such form
20 as shall be required by the department.

21 To be qualified, the applicant shall be a New Jersey resident who
22 needs immediate financial assistance due to a COVID-19 related
23 event.

24 d. The application shall be submitted to the department, and
25 upon approval, the department, if adequate moneys are available,
26 shall issue the grant. Any grant issued shall be paid directly to a
27 vendor or creditor of the applicant. No money shall be paid directly
28 to the applicant or a member of the applicant's family. The Adjutant
29 General may deny an applicant due to insufficient moneys available
30 in the grant fund.

31 e. The Adjutant General shall be responsible for determining
32 whether any person seeking to be considered a qualified applicant
33 under this act, for the purpose of receiving a grant, meets the
34 eligibility requirements and adjudicating an appeal from any person
35 disputing this determination. The determination of the Adjutant
36 General shall be binding.

37
38 4. a. The temporary grant funds established by the Department
39 of Military and Veterans Affairs in accordance with sections 2 and 3
40 of P.L. , c. (pending before the Legislature as this bill), shall be
41 maintained as a separate accounts and administered by the
42 Department of the Treasury to carry out the provisions of this act,
43 P.L. , c. (pending before the Legislature as this bill).

44 The State Treasurer shall administer the funds, which shall be
45 credited with:

46 (1) moneys received by the State as gifts, grants, or donations for
47 this purpose, including grants accepted by the Department of Military
48 and Veterans Affairs pursuant to section 12 of P.L.1987, c.444
49 (C.38A:3-6.2);

1 (2) moneys that the Legislature may appropriate; and
2 (3) other moneys made available including, but not limited to,
3 funds provided by the federal government.

4 b. The department may claim from the funds, an amount, which
5 shall not exceed five percent of the moneys available in the fund, to
6 cover administrative expenses.

7
8 5. The Adjutant General may adopt, in accordance with the
9 "Administrative Procedure Act," P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et
10 seq.), rules and regulations necessary to effectuate the purposes of
11 this act, P.L. , c. (pending before the Legislature as this bill).

12
13 6. This act shall take effect immediately and shall expire on the
14 first day of the 13th month after enactment.

15
16
17 STATEMENT

18
19 Veterans, surviving spouses, and their families have been
20 financially impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

21 This bill provides a one-time relief grant of \$1,000 to veterans or
22 surviving spouses to help mitigate the negative effects and financial
23 impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in New Jersey. This bill also
24 provides a one-time special needs grant, not to exceed \$2,000, to a
25 veteran or surviving spouse who needs immediate financial
26 assistance due to a COVID-19 related event.

27 Under the bill, the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs
28 will administer the application process for the grants. The Adjutant
29 General will determine the process, and establish the eligibility
30 documentation for a person to be considered a qualified applicant. A
31 qualified applicant seeking to participate in the program will submit
32 an application in such form as will be required by the department.
33 An application may be denied if there are insufficient moneys in the
34 grant fund. An applicant must be a New Jersey resident.

35 Any money approved under the special needs grant will go directly
36 to the vendor or creditor of the applicant, and no special needs grant
37 money will be issued directly to the applicant or a member of the
38 applicant's family.

39 The State Treasurer will administer the grant fund, which will be
40 credited with: (1) moneys received by the department as gifts, grants,
41 or donations; (2) moneys that the Legislature may appropriate; and
42 (3) other moneys made available including, but not limited to, funds
43 provided by the federal government.

44 For the purposes of the bill, "veteran" means a person who has
45 been honorably discharged, or discharged or released under other
46 than dishonorable conditions, from the active military service of the
47 United States, or a Reserve Component thereof, including the New
48 Jersey National Guard.