

TITLE 9: VEHICLE CODE
DIVISION 2: REGISTRATION AND LICENSES

§ 2116. Veteran License Plates.

(a) *Definition.* For purposes of this Act, the term “veteran” means a person who served in active duty in the United States military service in the Army, Navy, Marine Corp, Coast Guard, Army, Air National Guard or active reserve component of the Army, Air Force or Navy, and who was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable.

(b) *Application.* In lieu of the license plates contracted on behalf of the Bureau of Motor Vehicles, in order to qualify for a veteran’s license plate the applicant must submit the following along with the application for vehicle registration:

1. Copy of the Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty from the Department of Defense (DD214); or
2. Individuals otherwise qualified under subsection (a)(1) of this section shall obtain certification from the Military and Veterans Affairs Office, provided that he/she produces documents, if DD214 is not available, which signifies proof that he/she served in the U.S. military services.

(c) *Color and Design.* A veteran license plate shall be the same standard size and shape as regular passenger vehicle license plates with the additional features as follows:

1. Below the line “HAFA ADAF” will be the word “VETERAN” (in black lettering) bordered on the left by the United States Flag and on the right by the CNMI Flag;
2. On the next line, centered on the license plate, will be the license plate number (in blue lettering) in alpha numeric format designating branch of service and numerical sequence. For example, A001 (Army), NG045 (National Guard), or R610 (Reserves). For a qualified person with a disability, the veteran license plate shall display the International Symbol of Accessibility in the same size as the letters and numbers on the license plate.
3. Any additional regulations or design specifications needed to implement the provisions of this section shall be prescribed by the Commissioner of the Department of Public Safety or his designee.

(d) *Fee.* The fee for the issuance of a veteran license plate for first time registration and renewal(s) shall be 25% less than the fee charged for a similar license plate for the same class of vehicle. Additionally, no fee shall be charged for the issuance of a veteran license plate to a veteran rate by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs at a one hundred percent permanent and total disability. The veteran license plate must be for a non-commercial vehicle registered to the veteran, or legal guardian applying for benefits under this section. A copy of the decision letter issued by the Regional Veterans Affairs Office which indicates approved disability rating must be furnished to the Department of Public Safety and the Department of Finance in order to waive the veteran license plate fees.

(e) *Issuance.* A veteran license plate shall be issued only to the registered owner or lessee of the vehicle on which they are to be displayed.

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1. Registration for a veteran license plate shall not be limited to one vehicle per veteran.

2. Veteran license plates issued under this section shall not be transferable to any other person, provided that the Commissioner of the Department of Public Safety or his designee shall allow the survivor of the qualified person, upon request, to retain the front license plate as a memorial.

3. Veteran license plates shall be assigned to noncommercial passenger motor vehicles and noncommercial motorcycles.

(f) The Department of Public Safety shall commence planning for the design and issuance of the veteran license plates and shall implement the distribution of veteran license plates within 90 days after the effective date of this Act.

(g) Special Gold Star License Plates. The Bureau of Motor Vehicles shall, upon application, issue gold star license plates. The type and style of gold star license plates shall be determined by the Director of the Bureau of Motor Vehicles and the Office of Veterans Affairs, except that a gold star shall appear on one side of the plate. Applicants shall apply on forms prescribed by the Director of the Bureau of Motor Vehicles, and the applicant's eligibility will be certified by the Office of Veterans Affairs. The plates shall be re-issued to the original holder of the plates. The Director of the Bureau of Motor Vehicles may adopt rules to implement the provisions of this Section. Except for a new or renewed registration, applications for the issuance of gold star license plates shall not exceed the fee charged for a similar license plate for the same class of vehicle.

(h) Eligibility for the Issuance of a Gold Star License Plate. Gold Star License Plates shall only be issued to parents, inclusive of mother, father, stepmother, stepfather, and mother through adoption, father through adoption, and foster parents who stood in *loco parentis*, children, stepchildren, children through adoption, brothers, sisters, half brothers, and half sisters of a member of the Armed Forces of the United States, spouses, widows and widowers.

Source: PL 14-16, § 3; subsection (d) amended by PL 18-22 § 2 (Oct. 8, 2013), modified; (g), (h) enacted by PL 19-26 § 2 (Dec. 14, 2015).

Commission Comment: PL 14-16 was enacted on June 18, 2004 and contained a short title, findings and purpose, severability, and savings clause provisions. PL 14-16 stated in pertinent part:

Section 1. Short Title. This Act may be cited as the "Veteran's License Plate Act of 2004."

Section 2. Findings and Purpose. The Legislature finds that in recognition of the Commonwealth's veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces during World War II and the Korean and Vietnam Wars, and in other conflicts, that a significant gesture in expressing the gratitude of the people to our veterans is to commemorate their courageous deeds by making available license plates designed specifically for these distinguished members of our community. Other states and territories have provided such a visible tribute to its veterans and it is time that the

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Commonwealth also remembers the contributions and the sacrifices made by the sons and daughters of the Commonwealth that have led to the freedom we enjoy today.

The Commission struck the figure “100%” from subsection (d) pursuant to [1 CMC § 3806\(e\)](#). PL 18-22, contained, in addition to savings and severability clauses, the following:

Section 1. Findings and purpose. The Legislature finds that many brave men and women of the Commonwealth willingly answered the call to defend the freedoms we are enjoying by fighting for our country not only in foreign lands but also in our islands. Furthermore, the Legislature finds that many men and women put their lives on the line so they make our country a safer place to live in. Additionally, the Legislature finds that the sacrifices these selfless and valiant men and women made in leaving their families to face adversities in foreign lands such as Korea, Vietnam, Kosovo, Kuwait, Afghanistan, Horn of Africa, and Iraq merits recognition and a meaningful way to show our gratitude is by lowering the license plate fees for Veterans. The Legislature further finds that no fee shall be charged for the issuance of a veteran license plate to a veteran rate by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs at a one hundred percent (100%) permanent and total disability. Other states and territories have provided such benefits to its veterans and it is time that the Commonwealth also remembers the contributions and the sacrifices made by the sons and daughters of the Commonwealth that have led to the freedom we enjoy today. Additionally, the Legislature finds that in order for a veteran to avail to the discounted benefit, he or she must have at least served 160 consecutive active service days and must have been honorably discharged from the United States Armed Forces. The Legislature further finds that veterans must be certified eligible by the CNMI Veterans Office and must not have more than a misdemeanor criminal offense within each one year period in order to avail of the discounted benefit. Therefore, the intent of this Act is to amend Title 9, Division 2 Chapter 1 § 2116 (Public Law 14-16).

In addition to severability and savings clauses PL 19-26 (Dec. 14, 2015) contained the following Findings and Purpose section:

Section 1. Findings and purpose. The Commonwealth Legislature strongly recognizes that the freedom that we have today is through the hard sacrifices of our members serving in the U.S. Armed Forces. The Commonwealth Legislature further recognizes that the price of our freedom comes at the cost of the lives of our soldiers who fought to protect our liberties. The Commonwealth Legislature finds that Guam honors the families who have lost a loved one who fought overseas through Guam Public Law 30-161. Guam Public Law 30-161 honors our fallen heroes by recognizing their ultimate sacrifices through the issuance of special gold star license plates to their families. To honor our fallen

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men and women, the Commonwealth Legislature concurs with the need to also establish special gold star license plates for the families who have lost a loved one while serving our country. The plates shall serve as a reminder of the ultimate sacrifice they made so that we may enjoy the very freedom we have today.