

**AN ACT**

To protect the employment rights of veterans; and for other purposes.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE NINTH NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH  
LEGISLATURE:**

Section 1. Findings. The Legislature finds that veterans returning to the CNMI after serving their tours of duty in the United States Armed Forces are often at a disadvantage in finding employment in the CNMI. The Legislature further finds that there is not presently any government agency or division charged with assisting returning veterans. The Legislature further finds that veterans should be protected from discrimination in employment.

Section 2. Amendment. 1 CMC Division 2, Chapter 7 (Department of Community and Cultural Affairs) is hereby amended by the addition of an Article 4, which shall be read as follows:

"Article 4. Division of Veterans' Affairs

§2391. There shall be a Division of Veterans' Affairs within the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs. The Division of Veterans' Affairs shall have authority over all affairs of veterans of the United States Armed Forces in all matters not within the exclusive jurisdiction of the United States Government.

§2392. Reserved.

§2393. Assistance to returning veterans. The Division of Veterans' Affairs shall assist veterans returning to the CNMI after their tours of duty in finding full-time employment. The Division of Veterans' Affairs shall:

(a) assist unemployed veterans in receiving all benefits, whether military, other federal, or local, that may be due to them;

(b) give reasonable clerical and administrative assistance to returning veterans who are in the process of searching for employment; and

(c) give reasonable clerical and administrative assistance for purposes of placement to returning veterans who wish to continue their education;

(d) keep statistical records of the employment status of veterans in the CNMI, and make such records public, insofar as may be compatible with personal privacy and confidentiality.

§2394. Discrimination against veterans prohibited. No person shall discriminate against any other person in employment, including but not limited to hiring, promotion, dismissal, and the granting of appropriate salary and benefits, because of prior military service in the United States Armed Forces Reserves. Such discrimination shall be:

(a) punishable by a fine of not more than \$2,000 (two thousand dollars);  
and

(b) actionable as a civil tort within the jurisdiction of the Northern Mariana Islands. A court that has found such discrimination may grant punitive damages if it deems fit."

Section 3. Severability. If any provision of this Act or the application of any such provision to any person or circumstance should be held invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, the remainder of this Act or the application of its provisions to persons or circumstances other than those to which it is held invalid shall not be affected thereby.

Section 4. Savings Clause. This Act and any repealer contained herein shall not be construed as affecting any existing right acquired under contract or acquired under statutes repealed or under any rule, regulation or order adopted under the statutes. Repealers contained in this Act shall not affect any proceeding instituted under or pursuant to prior law. The enactment of this Act shall not have the effect of terminating, or in any way modifying, any liability civil or criminal, which shall already be in existence at the date this Act becomes effective.

Section 5. Effective Date. This Act shall take effect upon its approval by the Governor or upon its becoming law without such approval.

**CERTIFIED BY:**

**ATTESTED TO BY:**

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/s/Juan S. Demapan

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/s/David M. Cing

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JUAN S. DEMAPAN  
PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

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DAVID M. CING  
SENATE LEGISLATIVE SECRETARY

APPROVED this 5th day of JANUARY, 1995.

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/s/Froilan C. Tenorio  
FROILAN C. TENORIO  
GOVERNOR

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS