

Chapter 344

(House Bill 1614)

AN ACT concerning

Public Safety – Military Service Members – Civil Relief

FOR the purpose of providing that certain rights granted to members of the Maryland National Guard under this Act are in addition to the rights granted by federal law; establishing that the intent of this Act is to supplement certain rights and protections provided by a certain federal statute; authorizing a certain service member to terminate a certain contract at a certain time under certain circumstances; providing for the method by which a certain service member may terminate a certain contract; requiring a certain service provider to provide a service member with a certain notice under certain circumstances; authorizing a certain service member to reinstate the provision of a certain service in a certain manner under certain circumstances; prohibiting a certain service member from being charged certain costs under certain circumstances; providing that a certain service member is not liable for the payment for certain services after a certain date; defining certain terms; and generally relating to the rights of individuals engaged in military service.

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
Article – Public Safety
Section 13–704
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2011 Replacement Volume and 2017 Supplement)

BY adding to
Article – Public Safety
Section 13–704.1
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2011 Replacement Volume and 2017 Supplement)

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Article – Public Safety

13–704.

(a) The rights granted to members of the National Guard by this section **AND § 13–704.1 OF THIS SUBTITLE** shall be in addition to the rights granted to them by federal law, including the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act and the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act.

(b) (1) The following provisions of federal law shall be adopted as State law and applied to members of the National Guard as described therein.

(2) The Servicemembers Civil Relief Act applies only when members of the National Guard are ordered to military duty under this title or Title 10 or Title 32 of the United States Code for a period of 14 consecutive days or longer.

(3) The Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act applies to the following individuals when ordered to military duty for any period of time:

(i) members of the National Guard when ordered to military duty under this title or Title 10 or Title 32 of the United States Code, whether or not the member is a resident of or employed in this State; and

(ii) residents of this State who are members of the National Guard in another state or the District of Columbia, when ordered to military duty by the chief executive officer of that jurisdiction or under Title 10 or Title 32 of the United States Code.

(c) (1) A member of the National Guard whose employment and reemployment rights under this section have been violated may bring a civil action for economic damages, including lost wages and benefits.

(2) If the court determines that a member of the National Guard is entitled to judgment in an action filed under this subsection, the court may award the member:

(i) any damages to which the member may be entitled under subsection (a) of this section;

(ii) reasonable counsel fees and other costs; and

(iii) any other appropriate relief.

13-704.1.

(A) (1) IN THIS SECTION THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS INDICATED.

(2) “MILITARY SERVICE” MEANS:

(I) IN THE CASE OF A SERVICE MEMBER WHO IS A MEMBER OR RESERVE MEMBER OF THE ARMY, NAVY, AIR FORCE, MARINE CORPS, OR COAST GUARD, FULL-TIME DUTY IN THE ACTIVE MILITARY SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES, INCLUDING:

1. FULL-TIME TRAINING DUTY;
2. ANNUAL TRAINING DUTY; AND
3. ATTENDANCE WHILE AT A SCHOOL DESIGNATED AS A SERVICE SCHOOL BY FEDERAL LAW OR BY THE SECRETARY OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENT CONCERNED;

(II) IN THE CASE OF A MEMBER OR RESERVE MEMBER OF THE MARYLAND NATIONAL GUARD, SERVICE UNDER A CALL TO:

1. ACTIVE SERVICE AUTHORIZED BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OR THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR A PERIOD OF MORE THAN 30 DAYS IN RESPONSE TO A NATIONAL EMERGENCY DECLARED BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES; OR

2. ACTIVE DUTY FOR A PERIOD OF MORE THAN 30 CONSECUTIVE DAYS;

(III) IN THE CASE OF A SERVICE MEMBER WHO IS A COMMISSIONED OFFICER OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE OR THE NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION, ACTIVE SERVICE; OR

(IV) ANY PERIOD DURING WHICH A SERVICE MEMBER IS ABSENT FROM DUTY ON ACCOUNT OF SICKNESS, WOUNDS, LEAVE, OR OTHER LAWFUL CAUSE.

(3) "SERVICE MEMBER" MEANS AN INDIVIDUAL ENGAGED IN MILITARY SERVICE.

(B) THIS SECTION IS INTENDED TO SUPPLEMENT RIGHTS AND PROTECTIONS PROVIDED IN THE FEDERAL SERVICEMEMBERS CIVIL RELIEF ACT (50 U.S.C. APP. 501 ET SEQ.).

(C) (1) IN ADDITION TO THE RIGHTS AND PROTECTIONS REGARDING CONSUMER TRANSACTIONS, CONTRACTS, AND SERVICE PROVIDERS INCLUDED IN TITLE III OF THE FEDERAL SERVICEMEMBERS CIVIL RELIEF ACT (50 U.S.C. APP. 531 THROUGH 538), A SERVICE MEMBER MAY TERMINATE A CONTRACT DESCRIBED IN PARAGRAPH (2) OF THIS SUBSECTION AT ANY TIME AFTER THE DATE THE SERVICE MEMBER RECEIVES MILITARY ORDERS TO RELOCATE FOR A PERIOD OF MILITARY SERVICE OF AT LEAST 90 DAYS TO A LOCATION WHERE THE SERVICE MEMBER WOULD BE UNABLE TO USE THE SERVICES UNDER THE CONTRACT.

(2) THIS SECTION APPLIES TO A CONTRACT TO PROVIDE ANY OF THE

FOLLOWING:

- (I) TELECOMMUNICATION SERVICES;**
- (II) INTERNET SERVICES;**
- (III) TELEVISION SERVICES;**
- (IV) ATHLETIC CLUB OR GYM MEMBERSHIPS; AND**
- (V) SATELLITE RADIO SERVICES.**

(3) (I) A SERVICE MEMBER MAY TERMINATE A CONTRACT UNDER THIS SECTION BY DELIVERING A WRITTEN OR ELECTRONIC NOTICE OF THE TERMINATION AND A COPY OF THE SERVICE MEMBER'S MILITARY ORDERS TO THE SERVICE PROVIDER.

(II) IF A SERVICE MEMBER TERMINATES A CONTRACT, THE SERVICE PROVIDER SHALL PROVIDE THE SERVICE MEMBER WITH A WRITTEN OR ELECTRONIC NOTICE OF THE SERVICE MEMBER'S RIGHTS POSTED ON THE MARYLAND NATIONAL GUARD'S INTERNET WEBSITE.

(D) (1) A SERVICE MEMBER WHO TERMINATES OR SUSPENDS THE PROVISION OF SERVICES UNDER THIS SECTION AND WHO IS NO LONGER IN ACTIVE MILITARY SERVICE MAY REINSTATE THE PROVISION OF SERVICE ON THE SAME TERMS AND CONDITIONS AS ORIGINALLY AGREED TO WITH THE SERVICE PROVIDER BEFORE THE TERMINATION OR SUSPENSION ON WRITTEN NOTICE TO THE PROVIDER THAT THE SERVICE MEMBER IS NO LONGER IN ACTIVE MILITARY SERVICE.

(2) WRITTEN NOTICE UNDER THIS SUBSECTION SHALL BE GIVEN WITHIN 90 DAYS AFTER TERMINATION OF THE SERVICE MEMBER'S ACTIVE MILITARY SERVICE.

(E) A SERVICE MEMBER WHO TERMINATES, SUSPENDS, OR REINSTATES THE PROVISION OF SERVICES UNDER THIS SECTION:

(1) MAY NOT BE CHARGED A PENALTY, FEE, LOSS OF DEPOSIT, OR ANY OTHER ADDITIONAL COST BECAUSE OF THE TERMINATION, SUSPENSION, OR REINSTATEMENT; AND

(2) IS NOT LIABLE FOR PAYMENT FOR ANY SERVICES AFTER THE EFFECTIVE DATE OF THE TERMINATION OR SUSPENSION, UNTIL THE EFFECTIVE

DATE OF ANY REINSTATEMENT OF SERVICES.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect October 1, 2018.

Approved by the Governor, April 24, 2018.