

Chapter 286

(House Bill 646)

AN ACT concerning

Vehicle Registration – Special Plates for Veterans – Fees

FOR the purpose of requiring the Motor Vehicle Administration to charge a certain additional fee on the issuance of special registration plates for recipients of an individually earned, combat-related armed forces medal; requiring that the additional fee under this Act be credited to the Maryland Veterans Trust Fund; making technical corrections; and generally relating to the fees charged for certain special registration plates for veterans.

BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
Article – State Government
Section 9–913(e)
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2014 Replacement Volume and 2019 Supplement)

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
Article – State Government
Section 9–913(g)
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2014 Replacement Volume and 2019 Supplement)

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
Article – Transportation
Section 13–619.1
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2012 Replacement Volume and 2019 Supplement)

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

Article – State Government

9–913.

(e) (1) There is a Maryland Veterans Trust established for the purpose of providing monetary and other assistance to:

- (i) veterans and their families; and
- (ii) public and private programs that support veterans and their families.

(2) There is a Maryland Veterans Trust Fund.

(g) The Fund consists of:

(1) gifts and grants that the Trust receives under § 9–914.2(a)(1) of this subtitle; and

(2) contributions to the Fund from:

(i) the sale of tickets from instant ticket lottery machines under § 9–112(d) of this title; [and]

(ii) the donations from video lottery facility players under § 9–1A–04(d)(19) of this [article] **TITLE; AND**

(III) THE DESIGNATED FEES FROM SPECIAL REGISTRATION PLATES FOR RECIPIENTS OF AN INDIVIDUALLY EARNED, COMBAT–RELATED ARMED FORCES MEDAL UNDER § 13–619.1 OF THE TRANSPORTATION ARTICLE.

Article – Transportation

13–619.1.

(a) (1) The owner of a motor vehicle, or a lessee of the vehicle under a lease not intended as security, or a director, officer, employee, or partner of a business entity that owns the vehicle may apply to the Administration for the assignment of a special registration number and special registration plates under this section for a vehicle included in one of the following classes:

(i) A Class A (passenger) vehicle;

(ii) A Class E (truck) vehicle with a one ton or less manufacturer’s rated capacity;

(iii) A Class M (multipurpose) vehicle; or

(iv) A Class D (motorcycle) vehicle.

(2) To be eligible for a special registration described under subsection (c)(2)(i) of this section, an applicant shall provide proof that is satisfactory to the Administration that the applicant is a recipient of an individually earned, combat–related[,] armed forces medal.

(3) To be eligible for a special registration described under subsection (c)(2)(ii) of this section, an applicant shall provide proof that is satisfactory to the

Administration that the applicant is an honorably discharged veteran of a branch of the armed forces of the United States.

(4) To be eligible for a special registration described under subsection (c)(2)(iii) of this section, an applicant shall provide proof that is satisfactory to the Administration that the applicant is a recipient of the U.S. Department of Defense Gold Star for surviving spouses, parents, and next of kin of members of the armed forces who lost their lives in combat.

(b) (1) In addition to the annual registration fee otherwise required under this title, an owner of a vehicle assigned a special registration under this section shall pay a fee as determined by the Administration each time new registration plates are issued for the vehicle.

(2) The fee shall be calculated to [recover]:

(I) RECOVER the costs incurred by the Administration in carrying out the provisions of this section; **AND**

(II) RESULT IN A SURPLUS OF AT LEAST \$10 FOR EACH ISSUANCE OF NEW REGISTRATION PLATES UNDER THIS SECTION.

[(2) The additional fee charged under this section shall be retained by the Administration for the purpose of recovering the Administration's costs under this section, and may not be credited to the Gasoline and Motor Vehicle Revenue Account for distribution under § 8-403 or § 8-404 of this article.]

(3) (I) THE PORTION OF THE ADDITIONAL FEE CHARGED UNDER PARAGRAPH (2)(I) OF THIS SUBSECTION SHALL BE RETAINED BY THE ADMINISTRATION FOR THE PURPOSE OF RECOVERING THE ADMINISTRATION'S COSTS UNDER THIS SECTION.

(II) THE PORTION OF THE ADDITIONAL FEE CHARGED UNDER PARAGRAPH (2)(II) OF THIS SUBSECTION:

1. MAY NOT BE RETAINED BY OR TRANSFERRED TO ANY AGENCY OF THE STATE FOR ANY PURPOSE; AND

2. SHALL BE CREDITED TO THE MARYLAND VETERANS TRUST FUND ESTABLISHED UNDER § 9-913 OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT ARTICLE.

(III) NO PORTION OF THE ADDITIONAL FEE CHARGED UNDER THIS SUBSECTION MAY BE CREDITED TO THE GASOLINE AND MOTOR VEHICLE REVENUE ACCOUNT FOR DISTRIBUTION UNDER § 8-403 OR § 8-404 OF THIS ARTICLE.

(c) Special registration plates issued under this section:

(1) May consist of any combination of letters, numerals, or both; and

(2) Shall include:

(i) For registration plates issued for an applicant described in subsection (a)(2) of this section:

1. An emblem or logo as authorized by the Administration that depicts the applicant's armed forces medal; and

2. Except on plates issued for Class D (motorcycle) vehicles, words describing the medal printed across the bottom of the plates;

(ii) Words or an emblem or logo indicating that the special registration plate holder is an honorably discharged veteran of a branch of the armed forces of the United States; or

(iii) An emblem or logo indicating that the registration plate holder is the recipient of the U.S. Department of Defense Gold Star.

(d) (1) The Administration, in consultation with the U.S. Department of Defense and appropriate representatives of the various branches of the armed forces, shall adopt regulations specifying those armed forces medals that are of the type described in subsection (a)(2) of this section and which, when awarded to an individual, qualify that individual to apply for special registration under this section.

(2) The Administration may adopt other regulations as necessary to govern the issuance of special registration numbers and special registration plates under this section.

(e) If, whether by act of the parties or by operation of law, the title or ownership interest in a vehicle assigned a special registration under this section is transferred from the joint names of a husband and wife to the individual name of either spouse, the transferee may continue to use the same special registration plates issued under this section on the vehicle after the transfer.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July 1, 2020.

Enacted under Article II, § 17(c) of the Maryland Constitution, May 8, 2020.