

Chapter 273

(House Bill 1443)

AN ACT concerning

**Local Government – Hiring and Promotion Preferences for Veterans and
Spouses of Service Members and Veterans
(Families Serve Act)**

FOR the purpose of authorizing counties and municipalities to grant, ~~by local law,~~ a preference in the hiring and promotion to eligible veterans, spouses of eligible service members, spouses of certain eligible veterans and eligible service members, and surviving spouses of deceased eligible veterans; authorizing counties and municipalities to adopt a local law that allows for the application of a certain credit on a selection test for eligible spouses, eligible veterans, spouses of certain eligible veterans, and surviving spouses of deceased eligible veterans; and generally relating to hiring and promotion preferences for veterans and spouses of service members and veterans.

BY renumbering

Article – Local Government
Section 1–204 through 1–206
to be Section 1–205 through 1–207, respectively
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2013 Volume and 2024 Supplement)

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,

Article – Labor and Employment
Section 3–714
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2016 Replacement Volume and 2024 Supplement)

BY adding to

Article – Local Government
Section 1–204
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2013 Volume and 2024 Supplement)

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,

Article – Local Government
Section 12–109(a)(2)
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2013 Volume and 2024 Supplement)

BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,

Article – State Personnel and Pensions

Section 7–207(c)(1)
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2024 Replacement Volume and 2024 Supplement)

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That Section(s) 1–204 through 1–206 of Article – Local Government of the Annotated Code of Maryland be renumbered to be Section(s) 1–205 through 1–207, respectively.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Article – Labor and Employment

3–714.

(a) (1) In this section the following words have the meanings indicated.

(2) “Eligible service member” means a full–time active duty member of any branch of the uniformed services of the United States.

(3) “Eligible veteran” means a veteran of any branch of the uniformed services of the United States who has received an honorable discharge or a certificate of satisfactory completion of service, including:

(i) the National Guard;

(ii) the military reserves;

(iii) the Commissioned Corps of the Public Health Service; and

(iv) the Commissioned Corps of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

(4) “EMPLOYER” INCLUDES A COUNTY OR MUNICIPAL CORPORATION.

(b) [An] **SUBJECT TO SUBSECTION (D) OF THIS SECTION**, AN employer may grant a preference in hiring and promotion to:

(1) an eligible veteran;

(2) the spouse of an eligible veteran who has a service–connected disability;

(3) the spouse of an eligible service member; or

(4) the surviving spouse of a deceased eligible veteran.

(c) Granting a preference under subsection (b) of this section does not violate any State or local equal employment opportunity law.

(D) ~~FOR IF AN EMPLOYER WHO THAT~~ IS A COUNTY OR MUNICIPAL CORPORATION CHOOSES TO GRANT A PREFERENCE UNDER SUBSECTION (B) OF THIS SECTION, THE COUNTY OR MUNICIPAL CORPORATION ~~SHALL MAY~~ ADOPT A LOCAL LAW THAT PROVIDES FOR THE HIRING AND PROMOTION PREFERENCE ~~AUTHORIZED UNDER SUBSECTION (B) OF THIS SECTION~~ BEFORE IMPLEMENTING THE PREFERENCE.

Article – Local Government

1-204.

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

(2) “ELIGIBLE SPOUSE” HAS THE MEANING STATED IN § 7-207 OF THE STATE PERSONNEL AND PENSIONS ARTICLE.

(3) “ELIGIBLE VETERAN” HAS THE MEANING STATED IN § 7-207 OF THE STATE PERSONNEL AND PENSIONS ARTICLE.

(B) (1) IF A COUNTY OR MUNICIPALITY USES A SELECTION TEST FOR THE HIRING OR APPOINTMENT OF EMPLOYEES, THE COUNTY OR MUNICIPALITY MAY ADOPT A LOCAL LAW THAT ALLOWS FOR THE APPLICATION OF A CREDIT OF 10 POINTS, OR ITS EQUIVALENT, ON A SELECTION TEST FOR:

(I) AN ELIGIBLE SPOUSE;

(II) AN ELIGIBLE VETERAN;

(III) THE SPOUSE OF AN ELIGIBLE VETERAN WHO HAS A SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABILITY; OR

(IV) THE SURVIVING SPOUSE OF A DECEASED ELIGIBLE VETERAN.

(2) A LOCAL LAW ADOPTED UNDER PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION:

(I) MAY ALLOW FOR THE APPLICATION OF A CREDIT OF TWO ADDITIONAL POINTS, OR ITS EQUIVALENT, ON ANY SELECTION TEST FOR A FORMER PRISONER OF WAR; AND

(II) IF NECESSARY, SHALL CLARIFY THE APPLICATION OF ANY SPECIAL CREDIT APPLIED UNDER § 1–205 OF THIS SUBTITLE.

(C) THE FOLLOWING APPLICANTS ARE INELIGIBLE FOR A CREDIT UNDER THIS SUBSECTION:

(1) A CURRENT EMPLOYEE OF A COUNTY OR MUNICIPALITY; AND

(2) AN ELIGIBLE VETERAN WHO IS CONVICTED OF A CRIME AFTER BEING DISCHARGED FROM OR COMPLETING MILITARY SERVICE.

12–109.

(a) Frederick County may:

(2) require a county employee, as a condition of employment, to elect to receive the payment of wages by debit card or, subject to [§ 1–205(b)] § 1–206(B) and (c) of this article, by direct deposit.

Article – State Personnel and Pensions

7–207.

(c) (1) (i) In this subsection the following words have the meanings indicated.

(ii) “Eligible spouse” means an individual who is married to a full–time active duty member of any branch of the uniformed services of the United States.

(iii) “Eligible veteran” means a veteran of any branch of the uniformed services of the United States who has received an honorable discharge or a certificate of satisfactory completion of service, including the National Guard and the military reserves.

SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect October 1, 2025.

Approved by the Governor, May 6, 2025.