

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2025 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader - Revised

Senate Bill 872

(Senator Jennings)

Finance

Environment and Transportation

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

This bill authorizes counties and municipalities to grant hiring and promotion preferences 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. Any such preference, if awarded, does not violate any State or local equal employment opportunity law. The bill further authorizes counties or municipalities that use selection tests to hire or promote employees to award 10 credit points on the test, or their equivalent, to the same individuals. A county or municipality that elects to offer hiring or promotion preferences or credits under the bill may adopt a local law granting the preferences or credits before implementing the preferences or credits.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. The bill pertains only to local governments.

Local Effect: None. The bill is authorizing in nature for county and municipal governments. Awarding discretionary preferences or credits has no direct effect on local governmental finances.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Bill Summary:

Definitions

An “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.

An “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.

Selection Test Credit

For a county or municipality that uses a selection test for the hiring or appointment of employees, the county or municipality may adopt a local law providing 10 credit points, or its equivalent, on a selection test for:

- an eligible spouse;
- an eligible veteran;
- the spouse of an eligible veteran who has a service connected disability; or
- the surviving spouse of a deceased eligible veteran.

Further, a local law adopted for the purpose of awarding credit points to those individuals specified may also add two additional credit points, or its equivalent, on a selection test for a former prisoner of war. Credits may not be granted to (1) a current employee of the county or municipality or (2) an eligible veteran who is convicted of a crime after being discharged from or completing military service.

Current Law:

Definition

An “eligible service member” means a full-time active duty member of any branch of the uniformed services of the United States.

Hiring and Promotion Preferences

An employer may grant a hiring and promotion preference to an eligible veteran, an eligible spouse, the spouse of an eligible veteran who has a service-connected disability, or the

surviving spouse of a deceased eligible veteran. Granting this preference does not violate any State or local equal employment opportunity law. The State and local governments are not considered employers.

State Employees within the State Personnel Management System

For positions in the State Personnel Management System for which selection tests are used, the following credits may be applied to the results of selection tests for applicants who are otherwise qualified and have at least the minimum passing score on a selection test for:

- current State employees (one-quarter point for each year of State service, up to 5 points);
- veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces, an eligible spouse, spouses of veterans with service-connected disabilities, and surviving spouses of a deceased eligible veteran (10 points, plus 2 points for a former prisoner of war);
- residents of high unemployment counties for specified positions in correctional facilities (5 points);
- State residents (5 points); and
- individuals with a disability (5 points).

Additional Information

Recent Prior Introductions: Similar legislation has not been introduced within the last three years.

Designated Cross File: HB 1443 (Delegate Griffith, *et al.*) - Environment and Transportation.

Information Source(s): Department of Budget and Management; Department of Veterans and Military Families; Maryland Department of Labor; Baltimore, Cecil, Frederick, and Montgomery County; Maryland Municipal League; City of Frederick; Department of Legislative Services

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