

# SENATE BILL 243

P1, F2, K3

6lr0724  
CF HB 721

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By: Senators Simonaire, Brooks, Carozza, Ellis, Gallion, Gile, Smith, West, ~~and~~  
~~Watson~~ Watson, Attar, Feldman, Harris, Hester, Kagan, Kramer, and  
M. Washington

Introduced and read first time: January 15, 2026

Assigned to: Education, Energy, and the Environment

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Committee Report: Favorable with amendments

Senate action: Adopted

Read second time: February 16, 2026

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## CHAPTER \_\_\_\_\_

1 AN ACT concerning

### 2 **Uniformed Services Spouses Act**

3 FOR the purpose of applying certain provisions of law regarding priority registration at  
4 public institutions of higher education, resources and support at community colleges,  
5 senatorial and Delegate scholarships, and preferences in hiring by the Public Service  
6 Commission to the spouses of active service members and veterans; altering the  
7 veterans to whom certain provisions of law regarding priority registration at public  
8 institutions of higher education, resources and support at community colleges,  
9 senatorial and Delegate scholarships, preferences in hiring by private employers,  
10 and credits on selection tests for State personnel apply; and generally relating to  
11 active service members, veterans, and the spouses of veterans and service members.

12 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,

13 Article – Education

14 Section 15–124, 16–109, 18–405(d)(3), 18–406(g), and 18–501(b)(2)(iii)

15 Annotated Code of Maryland

16 (2022 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

17 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,

18 Article – Education

19 Section 18–401 and 18–501(a)

20 Annotated Code of Maryland

21 (2022 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

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#### EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

Underlining indicates amendments to bill.

~~Strike out~~ indicates matter stricken from the bill by amendment or deleted from the law by amendment.



1 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
 2 Article – Labor and Employment  
 3 Section 3–714(a) and (b)  
 4 Annotated Code of Maryland  
 5 (2025 Replacement Volume)

6 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
 7 Article – Public Utilities  
 8 Section 18–111(a) and (b)  
 9 Annotated Code of Maryland  
 10 (2025 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

11 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,  
 12 Article – State Personnel and Pensions  
 13 Section 7–207(c)(1)(i), (2), and (3)  
 14 Annotated Code of Maryland  
 15 (2024 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

16 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
 17 Article – State Personnel and Pensions  
 18 Section 7–207(c)(1)(iii)  
 19 Annotated Code of Maryland  
 20 (2024 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

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

23 **Article – Education**

24 15–124.

25 (a) **(1)** In this section[, “eligible”] **THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE**  
 26 **MEANINGS INDICATED.**

27 **(2)** **“ELIGIBLE service member”** means:

28 [(1)] **(I)** An active service member; and

29 [(2)] **(II)** A veteran who has received an [honorable] **OTHER THAN**  
 30 **DISHONORABLE** discharge or a certificate of satisfactory completion of service.

31 **(3)** **“ELIGIBLE SPOUSE”** **MEANS THE SPOUSE OF AN ELIGIBLE**  
 32 **SERVICE MEMBER.**

1 (b) Subject to subsection (c) of this section, a public institution of higher education  
2 shall grant priority registration for courses to an eligible service member **OR ELIGIBLE**  
3 **SPOUSE**.

4 (c) The priority registration requirement under subsection (b) of this section:

5 (1) Applies only within 15 years after the eligible service member **WHO**  
6 **WOULD RECEIVE OR WHOSE ELIGIBLE SPOUSE WOULD RECEIVE PRIORITY**  
7 **REGISTRATION** was last on active duty; and

8 (2) Does not apply after an eligible service member's **OR ELIGIBLE**  
9 **SPOUSE'S** fourth academic year.

10 (d) Each public institution of higher education shall adopt policies necessary to  
11 implement this section.

12 16–109.

13 Each community college shall:

14 (1) Ensure all student advisors are trained on the unique needs and  
15 resources available for students who are **[veterans]**:

16 (I) **VETERANS; OR**

17 (II) **SPOUSES OF VETERANS;**

18 (2) Employ at least one employee who, as a component of the employee's  
19 job duties and responsibilities, provides comprehensive and intensive enrollment and  
20 advising services to current and prospective students who are **[veterans]**:

21 (I) **VETERANS; OR**

22 (II) **SPOUSES OF VETERANS; and**

23 (3) Establish a veterans resource center on campus to:

24 (i) Provide access to federal and State veterans **AND SPOUSES OF**  
25 **VETERANS** resources;

26 (ii) Serve as a quiet place for veterans **AND SPOUSES OF VETERANS**  
27 to study;

1 (iii) Enable veterans **AND SPOUSES OF VETERANS** to connect to  
2 other veterans **AND SPOUSES OF VETERANS**, helping them renew the bonds of service;  
3 and

4 (iv) Be the central hub for all activities on campus related to veterans  
5 **AND SPOUSES OF VETERANS**.

6 18-401.

7 There is a program of senatorial scholarships in this State that are awarded under  
8 this subtitle.

9 18-405.

10 (d) Each Senator may award not more than 10% of the funds available under this  
11 subtitle to applicants planning to attend accredited undergraduate, graduate, or  
12 professional institutions outside the State, provided the applicant:

13 (3) Is an active service member **OR THE SPOUSE OF AN ACTIVE SERVICE**  
14 **MEMBER** who is domiciled in this State.

15 18-406.

16 (g) A recipient of a senatorial scholarship who is an active service member **OR**  
17 **THE SPOUSE OF AN ACTIVE SERVICE MEMBER** and otherwise meets the conditions of  
18 subsection (a) or (b) of this section may be domiciled in this State rather than eligible for  
19 in-State tuition under this article.

20 18-501.

21 (a) There is a program of Delegate Scholarships in this State that are awarded  
22 under this subtitle.

23 (b) A scholarship awarded under this subtitle may be used at:

24 (2) An accredited undergraduate, graduate, or professional institution  
25 outside the State, if the applicant:

26 (iii) Is an active service member **OR THE SPOUSE OF AN ACTIVE**  
27 **SERVICE MEMBER** who is domiciled in this State; and

## 28 **Article – Labor and Employment**

29 3-714.

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





1                                   4.     the surviving spouse of a deceased eligible veteran.

2                                   (ii)    An appointing authority shall apply a credit of two additional  
3 points on any selection test for a former prisoner of war.

4                                   (3)    The following applicants are ineligible for a credit under this  
5 subsection:

6                                   (i)     a current State employee; and

7                                   (ii)    an eligible veteran who is convicted of a crime after being  
8 discharged from or completing military service.

9                                   SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect  
10 October 1, 2026.

Approved:

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Governor.

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President of the Senate.

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Speaker of the House of Delegates.