



THE AMERICAN LEGION DEPARTMENT OF IOWA



2020 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

1. Military Homeownership Assistance Program

The Military Homeownership Assistance Program is one of the most attractive benefits within Home Base Iowa's arsenal aimed at the recruitment of out of state veterans.

In recent years, funding for the Military Homeownership Assistance Program has not lasted much beyond the first quarter of the fiscal year.

The Military Homeownership Assistance Program continues to be marketed to veterans even after the funds have been exhausted for the fiscal year and veterans are placed on a waiting list.

The American Legion supports increased funding for the Military Homeownership Assistance Program to make the program available throughout the entire fiscal year.

2. Veterans' Treatment Courts

The American Legion urges the State of Iowa to establish and expand Veterans Treatment Courts.

Veteran Treatment Courts are hybrid Drug Courts and Mental Health Courts and have evolved out of the growing need for a treatment court model designed specifically for justice-involved veterans to maximize efficiency and economize resources.

Many veterans that enter the veteran treatment courts are not aware of their federal, state, county and a variety of additional benefit programs, such as Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) benefits for compensation, pension and health care.

Grouping justice-involved veterans into a specific court docket significantly expedites access to veteran-specific resources, including benefits and treatment earned through military service and provides options for treatment as opposed to incarceration.

3. Support Licensure and Certification of Servicemembers, Veterans and Spouses

The Department of Defense (DOD) provides some of the best vocational training in the nation for its military personnel and establishes, measures and evaluates performance standards for every occupation within the Armed Forces.

There are many occupations in the civilian workforce that require a license or certification. In the Armed Forces, these unique occupations are performed to approved military standards that may meet or exceed the civilian license or certification criteria.

The American Legion supports efforts to eliminate employment barriers for veterans that impede the timely and successful transfer of military job skills to the civilian labor market.

In addition, The American Legion support efforts to eliminate spouse employment barriers through advocacy for the recognition and acceptance of spouses' credentials, as long as the spouse meets standards set forth by the credentialing board.