

# HOUSE BILL No. 4818

July 12, 2017, Introduced by Rep. Kosowski and referred to the Committee on Military and Veterans Affairs.

A bill to prescribe the Michigan veterans' bill of rights; and to prescribe the duties of certain state agencies.

**THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF MICHIGAN ENACT:**

1           Sec. 1. As used in this act:

2           (a) "Department" means the department of military and veterans  
3 affairs.

4           (b) "Veteran" means an individual who meets both of the  
5 following criteria:

6           (i) Is a veteran as defined in section 1 of 1965 PA 190, MCL  
7 35.61.

8           (ii) Was honorably discharged.

9           Sec. 3. This act shall be known and may be cited as the  
10 "Michigan veterans' bill of rights".

11           Sec. 5. Veterans in this state have all of the following  
12 rights:

1 (a) To be treated with dignity and respect and to receive  
2 accurate, courteous, and timely service in all their contacts with  
3 the department and any other state agency that administers programs  
4 that serve veterans.

5 (b) To receive fair and equal treatment, irrespective of rank,  
6 position, or status, and be treated with tact, comprehension, and  
7 understanding in their contacts with government agencies or private  
8 entities contracted with governmental entities to provide services  
9 to veteran populations.

10 (c) To be involved in the decisions affecting their care and  
11 the formation of programs and benefits that affect their daily  
12 lives.

13 (d) To be informed of all programs and benefits for which they  
14 are eligible.

15 (e) To file an application for benefits at any time and to  
16 receive a written notice and explanation of the approval or denial  
17 of their application for benefits.

18 (f) To be provided with equal benefits in any part of this  
19 state in which they or their spouses, domestic partners, or  
20 dependents reside. Geographical location must not determine the  
21 quality or level of service or care provided.

22 (g) To housing that is or provides both of the following:

23 (i) Adequate, safe, and reliable.

24 (ii) Adequate and appropriate mental health and transitional  
25 support services, including counseling, employment training, and  
26 substance abuse treatment.

27 (h) To education and job training they require to secure

1 civilian employment.

2 (i) To receive physical and mental health services they  
3 require as a result of their service, and to receive these services  
4 free from fear of retaliation or stigma. Physical and mental health  
5 services shall not be negatively impacted or withheld from a  
6 veteran due solely to his or her veteran status. A veteran shall  
7 not be compelled to decline services or benefits against his or her  
8 will, and every reasonable effort must be made to connect veterans  
9 with the services and benefits to which they are rightly entitled.

10 Sec. 7. The rights prescribed under this act are not  
11 exhaustive. This act must not be construed to limit the rights of  
12 veterans. Instead, the rights prescribed under this act establish  
13 the minimum rights every veteran enjoys as a resident of this  
14 state. If applicable, veterans' spouses, domestic partners, and  
15 defendants who are veterans are also entitled to the rights  
16 prescribed in this act.

17 Enacting section 1. This act takes effect 90 days after the  
18 date it is enacted into law.