

## **“Veteran” State ID Card very popular at Solano Vet Service Office**

Since November, 2015, the Solano County Department of Veteran Services has helped more than 1,500 Veterans complete paperwork to receive their state issued “Veteran” identification card – a convenient designation that grants Vets access to a wide range of benefits to which they are entitled.

Thanks to California Assemblyman Frazer, his bill, AB 935, passed and signed by Governor Brown in 2014, initiated legislation to include a Veteran’s designation on their driver’s license and state issued ID cards. Enacted November 12, 2015, the bill requires the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) and other departments to issue state ID cards with the word “VETERAN” on them.

Prior to AB 935, it was difficult for military Veterans to prove they served in the US armed forces. At the time, the only Federally approved military ID cards issued were military retiree ID cards, dispensed by the Veterans Administration (VA) for eligible Veterans on a limited basis. Veterans who are ineligible for one of these ID cards are often left without an official form of proof they served in the military. In fact, only 36 percent of Veterans have these types of ID cards – the other 64 percent are out of luck.

Thankfully, today, the new state-issued ID cards allow Veterans to prove they are eligible to receive state and Federal Veterans benefits without having to carry around and present a cumbersome form. Veterans also take advantage of special discount incentives at participating retailers who give discounts to those who have served in our armed forces.

In addition to the convenience of the state-issued Veteran ID cards, the biggest return on investment for my office is that the application process initiates a conversation between our Vet reps and the Veteran regarding other benefits to which they may be entitled. In fact, in addition to the 1,500 Veterans we’ve helped get state ID cards so far, we’ve helped an additional 800 folks file claims for other benefits. This truly is a win-win for Veterans in Solano County.

Applying for the state-issued Veteran ID cards is easy. Stop by the Solano County Veteran Services office today and pick up an application form. The application form certifies the person applying for the Veteran ID card is a Veteran from the active armed forces with a discharge that was issued under honorable circumstances.

Remember, one of biggest barriers to Veterans gaining access to the benefits programs to which they are entitled is having proof of military service. Take care of that today by getting a Veteran ID card. As always, our office is always willing to help. If you have any questions about the state-issued Veteran ID cards, the application form, or Veteran benefit programs in general, stop by and see us.

*Ted Puntillo is Director of Veteran’s Services for Solano County. Reach him at (707) 784-6590 or [tepuntillo@SolanoCounty.com](mailto:tepuntillo@SolanoCounty.com). The Solano County Veteran’s Services Office, 675 Texas St. in Fairfield, is open from 9 a.m. to noon and 1 to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday.*

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