

1 **ARTICLE 16**

2 **RELATING TO VETERANS AFFAIRS**

3 SECTION 1. Section 30-24-10 of Chapter 30-24 of the General Laws entitled "Rhode
4 Island Veterans Home" is hereby amended to read as follows:

5 **30-24-10. Admissible to home – Fees.**

6 (a) Any person who has served in the army, navy, marine corps, coast guard, or air force
7 of the United States for a period of ninety (90) days or more and that period began or ended during
8 any foreign war in which the United States shall have been engaged or in any expedition or
9 campaign for which the United States government issues a campaign medal, and who was
10 honorably discharged from it, and who shall be deemed to be in need of care provided at the Rhode
11 Island veterans' home, may be admitted to that facility subject to such rules and regulations as shall
12 be adopted by the director of human services to govern the admission of applicants to the facility.
13 Any person who has served in the armed forces of the United States designated herein and otherwise
14 qualified, who has served less than the ninety-day (90) period described in this section, and who
15 was honorably discharged from service, and who, as a result of the service, acquired a service-
16 connected disability or disease, may be admitted. No person shall be admitted to the facility unless
17 the person has been accredited to the enlistment or induction quota of the state or has resided in the
18 state for at least two (2) consecutive years next prior to the date of the application for admission to
19 the facility.

20 (b)(1) The director shall, at the end of each fiscal year, determine the net, per-diem
21 expenses of maintenance of residents in the facility and shall assess against each resident who has
22 "net income", as defined in this section, a fee equal to ~~eighty~~ one-hundred percent (~~80-100~~%) of the
23 resident's net income, provided that fee shall not exceed the actual cost of care and maintenance for
24 the resident; and provided that an amount equal to ~~twenty~~ one-hundred percent (~~20-100~~%) of the
25 maintenance fee assessed shall be allocated to, and deposited in, the veterans' restricted account.
26 For the purposes of this section, "net income" is defined as gross income minus applicable federal
27 and state taxes and minus:

28 (i) An amount equal to ~~one hundred fifty dollars (\$150)~~ three hundred dollars (\$300) per
29 month of residency and fifty percent (50%) of any sum received due to wounds incurred under
30 battle conditions for which the resident received the purple heart; and

31 (ii) The amount paid by a resident for the support and maintenance of his or her spouse,
32 parent(s), minor child(ren), or child(ren) who is/are blind or permanently and totally disabled as
33 defined in title XVI of the Federal Social Security Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 1381 – 1383d, subject to a
34 maximum amount to be determined by rules and regulations as shall be adopted by the director.

1 (2) The fees shall be paid monthly to the home and any failure to make payment when due
2 shall be cause for dismissal from the facility. Prior to dismissal, the resident shall be afforded
3 administrative due process.

4 (c) Admissions to the veterans' home shall be made without discrimination as to race, color,
5 national origin, religion, sex, disability, marital status, age, sexual orientation, gender identity or
6 expression, assets, or income.

7 (d) Laundry services shall be provided to the residents of the Rhode Island veterans' home
8 at no charge to the residents, with such funds to cover the cost of providing laundry services for
9 residents of the Rhode Island veterans' home derived from monies appropriated to the ~~department~~
10 ~~of human~~ office of veterans services.

11 SECTION 2. Section 30-25-14 of the General Laws entitled "Burial of Veterans" is hereby
12 amended to read as follows:

13 **30-25-14. Rhode Island veterans' memorial cemetery.**

14 (a) The Rhode Island veterans' memorial cemetery, located ~~on the grounds of the Joseph~~
15 ~~H. Ladd school~~ in the town of Exeter, shall be under the management and control of the director of
16 the ~~department of human~~ office of veterans services. The director of the ~~department of human~~ office
17 of veterans services shall appoint an administrator for the Rhode Island veterans' memorial
18 cemetery who shall be an honorably discharged veteran of the United States Armed Forces and
19 shall have the general supervision over, and shall prescribe rules for, the government and
20 management of the cemetery. He or she shall make all needful rules and regulations governing the
21 operation of the cemetery and generally may do all things necessary to ensure the successful
22 operation thereof. The director shall promulgate rules and regulations, not inconsistent with the
23 provisions of 38 U.S.C. § 2402, to govern the eligibility for burial in the Rhode Island veterans'
24 memorial cemetery. In addition to all persons eligible for burial pursuant to rules and regulations
25 established by the director, any person who served in the army, navy, air force, or marine corps of
26 the United States for a period of not less than two (2) years and whose service was terminated
27 honorably, shall be eligible for burial in the Rhode Island veterans' memorial cemetery. The director
28 shall appoint and employ all subordinate officials and persons needed for the proper management
29 of the cemetery. National guard members who are killed in the line of duty or who are honorably
30 discharged after completion of at least twenty (20) years' of service in the Rhode Island national
31 guard and their spouse shall be eligible for interment in the Rhode Island veterans' memorial
32 cemetery. For the purpose of computing service under this section, honorable service in the active
33 forces or reserves shall be considered toward the twenty (20) years of national guard service. The
34 general assembly shall make an annual appropriation to the ~~department of human~~ office of veterans

1 services to provide for the operation and maintenance for the cemetery. The director shall charge
2 and collect ~~a grave liner~~ fees per interment of the eligible spouse and/or eligible dependents of the
3 qualified veteran ~~equal to the department's cost for the grave liner.~~ equal to the U.S. Department of
4 Veterans Affairs burial plot allowance as set forth annually on October 1, for the burial of an
5 eligible veteran in a state veterans cemetery.

6 (b) No domestic animal shall be allowed on the grounds of the Rhode Island veterans'
7 memorial cemetery, whether at large or under restraint, except for seeing eye guide dogs, hearing
8 ear signal dogs or any other service animal, as required by federal law or any personal assistance
9 animal, as required by chapter 9.1 of title 40. Any person who violates the provisions of this section
10 shall be subject to a fine of not less than five hundred dollars (\$500).

11 (c) The state of Rhode Island office of veterans' ~~affairs~~ services shall bear the cost of all
12 tolls incurred by any motor vehicles that are part of a veteran's funeral procession, originating from
13 Aquidneck Island ending at the veterans' memorial cemetery, for burial or internment. The
14 executive director of the turnpike and bridge authority shall assist in the administration and
15 coordination of this toll reimbursement program.

16 SECTION 3. This article shall take effect upon passage.