

Governor Phil Murphy

Governor Murphy Signs Bill to Increase Annual Payments from State to Certain New Jersey Veterans with Disabilities

09/15/2022

TRENTON – In recognition of increases to the cost of living over the past few decades and in honor of New Jersey's veterans, Governor Phil Murphy today signed bill A-1477 (https://pub.njleg.state.nj.us/Bills/2022/A1500/1477_T1.PDF) to increase annual payments from the State to veterans with certain disabilities resulting from their wartime service. Annual payments to eligible veterans will increase from \$750 to \$1,800.

Prior to the bill becoming law, payments to veterans with certain disabilities covered under the Paraplegic and Hemiplegic Veterans' Allowance program had not increased since 1981, while payments to blind veterans covered under the Blind Veterans' Allowance Program had not increased since 1971.

"A lot has changed over the past several decades, and it is important for our State to keep up with the rising cost of living in our support for New Jersey veterans," said Governor Murphy. "Veterans who were disabled in the line of duty made an immeasurable sacrifice on behalf of our nation. Ensuring these veterans receive the financial assistance they need and deserve from our state is how we can honor that sacrifice."

"Thanks to the hard work of advocates, Governor Murphy, and the Legislature, this benefit will help our Garden State veterans grappling each day with some of wartime's most catastrophic physical injuries," said Brig. Gen. Lisa J. Hou, D.O, Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Military and Veteran Affairs. "This benefit will certainly support the quality of life of those who have sacrificed so much for our country."

Funding to enable this change in payments to eligible veterans was a part of the Governor's initial FY23 budget proposal and was included in the final budget signed in June 2022.

This law will help approximately 200 veterans in New Jersey. Benefits (https://www.state.nj.us/military/assets/documents/NJ%20Veterans%20Benefits%20Guide.pdf) eligibility includes veterans with loss of sight, amputations of hands, feet or limbs, osteochondritis, multiple sclerosis, permanent paralysis in their limbs or certain portions of the body.

The increase will take place on January 1, 2023.

Sponsors of the bill include Senators Linda Greenstein and Michael Testa, and Assembly members Daniel Benson, Anthony Verrelli, and Raj Mukherji.

"Veterans with service-connected disabilities sacrificed so much to protect our country and deserve compensation for their efforts," said Senator Greenstein. "Several decades have gone by since these payments to veterans have been increased. Considering the exponential increases seen in cost of living over the years, this is unacceptable. While the increase of compensation in this bill cannot fully repay the sacrifice our disabled veterans gave, it can hopefully provide some aid as they live out the rest of their lives."

"I am proud this legislation will be signed into law. It is our duty to ensure the well-being of New Jersey's veterans and their spouses," said Senator Testa. "Some veterans have suffered significant disabilities in the line of duty including permanent paralysis and loss of sight. This law will offer some much needed financial relief and stability to these injured veterans and their loved ones during their time of need."

"This annual allowance increase is long overdue," said Assemblymen Benson, Verrelli, and Mukherji in a joint statement. "\$750 does not stretch as far as it used to and it is time we acknowledge that by providing our disabled veterans with the financial assistance they have earned. After everything these veterans have sacrificed for our country, we owe it to them to do all that we can to help them support themselves and their families."

Governor Phil Murphy

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