



Rensselaer County  
Unified Family Services  
Veterans Service Agency  
1600 Seventh Avenue  
Troy, NY 12180  
Phone: (518) 270-2760  
FAX: (518) 270-2956  
Www.rensco.com

#### Van Transportation...

- \* **Don't drive** and need to get to the Stratton VA Medical Center?
- \* We offer complimentary van transportation to and from the VAMC for **most morning** medical appointments.

For more information please call (518) 270-2760.



### VETERANS CRISIS LINE

**1-800-273-8255**  
PRESS 1

**\*\*Confidential chat at  
Veterans CrisisLine.net  
or text to 838255\*\***  
TTY service 1-800-799-4889

**Confidential support 24  
hours a day, 7 days a  
week, 365 days a year,  
for veterans and their  
loved ones**

## Rensselaer County Veterans Newsletter

KATHLEEN M. JIMINO  
County Executive

PETER K. GOEBEL  
Director

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### NYS Alternative Veterans' Property Tax Exemption

#### Alternative Veterans' Exemption - Overview

The alternative exemption provides a property tax exemption of 15% of assessed value to Veterans who served during wartime and an additional 10% to those who served in a combat zone.

The law also provides an additional exemption to disabled Veterans equal to one-half of their service-connected disability ratings. The application form for the alternative exemption is RP-458-a; it must be filed with your local assessor. The alternative exemption is also applicable only to general municipal taxes and not to school taxes or special district levies. Unlike the eligible funds veterans' exemption, however, the alternative exemption is limited to the primary residence (including, at local option, cooperative apartment) of a Veteran, and is not based on eligible funds.

*Eligibility: What does the law mean by a "period of war"?*

The exemption is available to Veterans who served on active duty in the United States Armed Forces during the Persian Gulf Conflict (on or after August 2, 1990); Vietnam war (December 22, 1961- May 7, 1975); Korean war (June 27, 1950—January 31, 1955); World War II (December 7, 1941— December 31, 1946); World War I (April 6, 1917—November 11, 1918); the Mexican Border Period (May 9, 1916—April 5, 1917) or the Spanish-American War (April 21, 1898—July 4, 1902). The dates of the Korean and Vietnam Wars and the Persian Gulf Conflict are prescribed in the State law, while the dates of the other wars are derived from federal law. Also eligible for the exemption are certain individuals who served during World War II in the US Merchant Marines and persons who served overseas in a civilian capacity during World War II either in the American Field Service under the United States Armies and the United States Army Groups or as a flight crew and aviation ground support employee of American Airlines' contract with the Air Transport Command.

*May a veteran who did not serve during a "period of war" qualify for the exemption?*

Yes, a Veteran who is a recipient of an Armed Forces expeditionary medal, a Navy expeditionary medal, a Marine Corps expeditionary medal, or a Global War on Terrorism expeditionary medal may qualify.

*If the qualifying Veteran is deceased, can the alternative exemption still be granted?*

Yes, provided that the title to the property is in the name of the Veteran's unremarried, surviving spouse, who continues to use the home as the primary residence. A Veteran who also is the unremarried surviving spouse of a qualifying Veteran also may receive any exemption to which the deceased spouse entitled. In the event that both husband and wife are deceased, the exemption can be continued for the Veterans' dependent mother, father, child or children under 21 who have legally received the property and who use it as their primary residence.

## A Message From the Veterans Service Agency Director.....

### “It Happened Again!”

The sister of a Veteran who recently passed away sought a military funeral for her brother; who earned it, and whom she said did want one. We were unable to help her before the funeral because neither the Veterans Service Agency nor the County Clerk had a record of the Veteran. Thankfully, she did eventually find his Discharge Document.

Don't let this happen to you! We have many ways to assist Veterans; but the veteran or family have to take the first step.

Veterans-Please register your DD-214's and Discharge Documents at the Veterans Service Agency (County Office Building, 1600 7th Ave., Troy, NY 12180), AND at the County Clerk's Office (105 3rd St., Troy). You will receive a Veteran Identification Card through the Return the Favor Discount Program. Do this here in Rensselaer County, and wherever you may live in the future.

Register with the VAMC in Albany. Keep copies of your documents in a safe location; and tell your relatives where they are and what you want!

Join with other local Veterans and join your Local Veterans Organizations. They exist to serve. There are many choices. They all offer something. They all can use assistance. Help them! Help yourself and your family. Let them know what you desire! They will help us help you. There are many to choose from. Call our office at (518) 270-2760, for a list of county Veterans Organizations.

FIND YOUR NICHE!

Sincerely,  
*Peter K. Goebel*

### A TRIBUTE TO VIETNAM ERA VETERANS ANDS THEIR FAMILIES with Emphasis on La Salle Institute Alumni

On Tuesday, March 29, 2016, the La Salle Institute Alumni Association in partnership with the Capital District of NY Chapter of the Association of the United States Army (AUSA), will host a Tribute to Vietnam Era Veterans and their families with emphasis on La Salle Institute Alumni.

The event will be held at the La Salle Institute lower gymnasium (174 Williams Road, Troy, NY) from 7pm to 10pm.

This event is a fundraiser for the La Salle Institute JROTC Leadership Program. It is open to all Veterans of all Services, Active Duty, National Guard and Reserves, La Salle Alumni and La Salle Parents (past and present), Veterans organizations and families of all and anyone else interested in honoring our Vietnam War Era Veterans. Admission is \$25.

The evening will feature Gary Ferris as DJ in the style of the “Good Morning Vietnam” Armed Forces Radio Show. A special tribute will be made to five La Salle graduates who gave their last full measure: Bernard J. Wait '49, US Army, James J. Masotti '55, US Army, Donald J. Egan '60, USMC, Glenn R. Brust '64, US Army, and William F. McNulty '64, US Navy.

Please join us for this special evening and help us pay tribute to a great group of American Heroes, our Vietnam Veterans, as the community and the Nation pause to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the Vietnam War. March 29, 2016 is Vietnam Veterans Day. Heavy hors d'oeuvres, coffee, tea, soda, and water will be served.

Tickets and sponsorships are available on the La Salle website ([www.lasalleinstitute.org](http://www.lasalleinstitute.org)) Alumni section. For additional info contact LTC (Ret, US Army) Nick Laiacona, event Chair and La Salle Alumni President, [nlaiacona43@gmail.com](mailto:nlaiacona43@gmail.com) or call Grace Reuter at La Salle at 518-283-2500 x283.

## Upcoming Events...



*Call our office to inquiry about listing your event*

March 14th...Honor-A-Deceased Veteran Ceremony—County Legislative Chambers at 8:15 am:

*William J. Baker, US Army, WWII*

March 29th...A Tribute to Vietnam Veterans at La Salle Institute (see article above)

April 7th...Veterans Job Fair @ Albany VAMC, 3rd Floor Auditorium—call 626-JOBS

April 11th...Honor-A-Deceased Veteran Ceremony-County Legislative Chambers at 8:15 am:

*David W. Walsh, USMC, Korea*

April 22nd...The Not Too Far From Home Comedy Tour fundraiser for the Saratoga Warhorse Foundation at the Saratoga-Wilton Elks Lodge #161, tickets-\$15 advance purchase/ \$20 at the door, call (518)584-2585 for more info

## **NYS COLD WAR VETERANS' PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION**

### **Cold War Veterans' Exemption—Overview**

#### ***How does the Cold War Veterans' exemption work?***

The exemption provides a basic property, of either 10 or 15 percent of assessed value (as adopted by the municipality) to Veterans who served during the Cold War period. The law also provides an additional exemption to disabled Veterans, equal to one-half of their service-connected disability ratings. The basic exemption is limited to 10 years, but there is no limit for the disabled portion of this exemption. In both instances, the exemption is limited to the primary residence of the Veteran, and is applicable only to general municipal taxes, not to school taxes or special district levies.

#### ***Where the Cold War exemption is in effect, does the assessor automatically give the exemption to a Cold War Veteran?***

No. Where the exemption is offered by local option of the municipality, the Veteran must file an application, RP-458-b, with the assessor by "taxable status date". In most towns, this date is March 1, but please check the date with your assessor to be sure. The Veteran must show a discharge or release from the US Armed Forces under Honorable Conditions and that the service was during the Cold War period. If the veteran seeks the additional exemption available under the law, proof must be provided to show a service-connected disability.

#### ***What type of proof will be accepted?***

Form DD-214, which you should have received upon separation from the service, contains some of the information the assessor needs to determine your eligibility. Other written documentation also may help to prove eligibility, such as a copy of discharge orders, VA documentation for disability rating, etc. You should also have a copy of the deed to the house or other proof that you and/or your spouse are the owners of the property.

#### ***Where can I get a copy of my Veteran's service records or other information to document my eligibility?***

Check with your local office of the New York State Division of Veterans' Affairs or your County Veterans Service Agency as to how you should proceed.

#### ***What does the law mean by the "Cold War"?***

The exemption is available to Veterans who served on active duty (exclusive of training) in the United States Armed Forces between September 2, 1945 and December 26, 1991, and who are not currently receiving either the eligible funds or alternative veterans' exemption.

#### ***What are the ownership requirements of the Cold War exemption?***

The legal title to the property must be in the name of the Veteran or the spouse of the Veteran or both, or the unremarried surviving spouse of the Veteran. If the property is owned by more than one qualified owner, the exemption to which each is entitled may be combined. Also, if a Veteran is the unremarried surviving spouse of a Veteran, that person may also receive any exemption to which the deceased spouse was entitled.

#### ***What are the residential and occupancy requirements of the law?***

The property must be used exclusively for residential purposes, and must also be the primary residence of a Cold War Veteran or the unremarried spouse of a Cold War Veteran unless that person is absent from the property due to medical reasons or institutionalized for up to five years. If a portion of the property is used for non-residential purposes, the exemption will apply only to that portion of the property that is used exclusively for residential purposes.

#### ***What are the dollar limits on the Cold War Veterans' exemption?***

Once it decides to put the Cold War exemption into effect (at either 10 or 15 percent of assessed value), each county, city, town and village has the additional option of using the maximum set of exemptions established by State law or passing a local law to use a reduced maximum set of exemptions. The maximums are listed in the instructions for the Cold War Veterans exemption available online or from your assessors office. You should check with your assessor to determine the maximum exemption limits in your municipality.

**\*\*\*Rensselaer County Cold War Veterans Exemption is 10%\*\*\***

# VETERANS JOB FAIR

**April 7, 2016**

**ALBANY STRATTON VAMC  
113 Holland Ave, Albany, NY  
3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Auditorium**

**10am – 2pm**



**Open to Active Duty Service Members, Reservists,  
National Guard, Veterans of all Eras and their spouses**

***Dress for success and bring your  
Resume, VA / Military ID and / or your DD214***

***Participating employers include:  
Public (Federal/State/Local) & Private***

**Veterans interested in a career at the VA call 626-JOBS  
If you are a Veteran Call 626-MyVA to Enroll for VA Healthcare Today**

***Sponsored by Stratton VAMC Vocational Services***



## No One Left Behind 5K Race

*From the Battlefield to the Home front:  
Serving our Veterans in the Capital District*

**Saturday, May 14<sup>th</sup> 2016  
Grafton Lakes State Park**

Sign-in at 8 am ~ Race begins at 9 am  
Course is a combination of paved and wooded trails  
and will be digitally timed.

\$15 when registering by May 13 ~ \$20 day of the event  
Open to all ages and all abilities.

\*\*\* Park entrance fee is included in registration\*\*\*

REGISTER:

<http://www.mhepinc.org/projects/heroes-at-home/no-one-left-behind-5k>

Questions? Call 518.545.6781 or email  
heroesathomerensco@gmail.com

With support from Grafton Lakes State Park



## RETURN THE F.A.V.O.R. VETERAN DISCOUNT PROGRAM

### ARE YOU ELIGIBLE?

Eligibility for the Rensselaer County Veterans' Discount Program is for Veterans or the widows/widowers of Veterans.

Eligibility for a Veterans ID Card is dependent on being an honorably discharged Veteran of the United States Military.

The Veteran or widow/widower **MUST** apply for the card in person.

Receipt of the Veterans FAVOR card is dependent on the Veteran or widow/widower's filing of an original Discharge (DD-214 / Report of Separation) at the Rensselaer County Clerk's Office.

### WHERE DO I APPLY?

**Rensselaer County Clerk's Office  
105 Third Street  
Troy, NY 12180  
(518) 270-4080**