

Veteran's Legislation

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Some twenty laws affecting Oregon war veterans were enacted by the 1951 session of the state legislature, including World War II veterans' bonus enabling legislation, extending state educational benefits to Korean servicemen, and giving "war veteran" status to present-day members of the active armed forces. Another measure submits to the voters a referendum which would grant the state veterans' home and farm loan to Oregon personnel on active duty since June 25, 1950. Following is a summary of the more important new veterans' laws or amendments.

1. Oregon Bonus. A \$50,000 emergency appropriation was made from the general fund to set up the bonus machinery. Another act exempts bonus employees from civil service. A third authorizes the sale of bonds to finance bonus payments.

The bonus provides payment of \$10 for each full month of domestic and \$15 for each full month of foreign or sea duty, for 90 days or more of active service between September 16, 1940, and June 30, 1946, to a maximum of \$600. The applicant must have been a bona fide resident of Oregon for at least one year immediately prior to entering active service.

The Department of Veterans' Affairs expects to issue application blanks some time between September 15 and October 1 of this year. Bonus payments should start in late October, provided the department is successful in selling \$40,000,000 in bonus bonds in late August. Deadline for applying for the bonus is December 1, 1952.

2. Educational Aid. Oregon pays up to \$50 a month to World War II veterans attending school if they were Oregon residents for one year prior to active service. This benefit has been

extended to those with service in Korea between June 25, 1950, and a date to be determined later.

3. War Veterans. Oregon law defining a "war veteran" was amended to give this status to every citizen who served in the armed forces between June 25, 1950, and the termination of the present national emergency. The law now also requires at least 90 days of continuous active service to qualify as a war veteran, whether previous wars or the present crisis.

This amendment makes today's returning servicemen entitled to county indigent fund aid; to state, county and city civil service preference; and makes the returning disabled veteran entitled to a property tax exemption, and gives this exemption to his widow in event of his death.

4. Vet's Loan Referendum. The legislature referred to the people for vote in the November, 1952 general election, a constitutional amendment which would extend the World War II veterans' home and farm loan to veterans who served 90 days or more on active duty between June 25, 1950, and the end of the present national emergency.

5. Property Tax Exemption. The previous \$1000 property tax exemption for widows of veterans, and for veterans 40 percent or more disabled, was increased to \$1500.

Other new laws include one which enables a veteran to obtain a second state home loan when the property on which he had his first loan was destroyed by fire or for other reasons not his fault; one which strengthens the public employees' reemployment rights act and extends this right to present-day servicemen; and one which enables a public employee to replenish his retirement fund when he returns from military service.