GIVING BACK, FORMING COMMUNITY & SAVING LIVES:

Various studies have shown that forming bonds in the community and staying active helps veterans adjust back into civilian life. Because NYS automatically grants EMT certifications to those who have completed military medic training, Mark Johns encourages returning troops or veterans to consider becoming a volunteer firefighter or emergency responder. As a volunteer, you may qualify for additional benefits and services, including:

- **NYS Volunteer Firefighter Income Tax Credit**
- **NYS Volunteer Firefighter Real Property Tax Credit**
- **Length of Service Award Program**
- **College Tuition Reimbursement**
- **Participation in Municipal Health Insurance Plans**
- **Partial and Total Disability Benefits**
- **Learn more at www.recruitNY.org or by contacting your local volunteer fire department.**

Honoring Our Heroes:

NYS offers two dozen different military awards to veterans who currently live in-state or were NYS residents at the time of their military service. These medals and recognitions include the NYS Conspicuous Service Cross, Medal for Merit and Conspicuous Service Star, as well as many others, such as the Desert Storm Service Medal, Operation Enduring Freedom Service Ribbon and Operation Iraqi Freedom Service Ribbon.

To learn more about NYS veteran recognitions, please visit http://dmna.ny.gov/awards/ or contact Mark Johns' office.

MARK**JOHNS**

Honoring Our Heroes

- **Returning to Civilian Life**
- **Education**
- **Jobs**
- **Homes**
- **Tax Relief**
- **Long Term Care**

& Much More Inside….

MARK JOHNS HAS GOT YOUR BACK

Mark wants to make sure every NYS veteran has the best opportunities, care and support as they move on after their service. This guide will help inform veterans about just some of the many programs and services available through the state, and help connect you with the right support. To learn more about any of these programs, please visit: www.veterans.ny.gov or dial 1-888-VETSNYS (838-7697)

Returning to Civilian Life: NYS Division of Veterans' Affairs has an office in every county with trained personnel to help you adjust back into civilian life.

- **NYS Division of Veterans' Affairs**
  447 South Avenue
  Rochester, NY 14620
  1-888-838-7697
- **Monroe County Veterans' Service Agency**
  (585) 753-6040

Moving Forward is a free, online educational and life-coaching program that teaches problem-solving skills to help returning veterans better handle civilian life's challenges. Learn more at: startmovingforward.org.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOU

Education: Veterans Tuition Award

This program provides full tuition or $5,895 *(whichever is less)* to NYS veterans pursuing their undergraduate or graduate degrees at any NYS college or university. Some vocational programs also qualify. Most NYS veterans who served in overseas combat since 1961 and were honorably discharged qualify.

Jobs:

- One-Stop Career Centers: these statewide centers offer priority service to veterans on a variety of topics including:
  - Career counseling
  - Skills assessment
  - Job search assistance
  - Resume preparation
  - Information on civil service positions
  - Referrals to other agencies that provide veterans assistance
  - Access and assistance with the US Department of Labor's Veterans' Employment and Training Services
- Veterans Job Bank: an online job bank for veterans powered by the National Resource Directory.
  Get started at: www.nrd.gov/home/veterans_job_bank

Homes: Homes for Veterans Program

This program provides fixed-rate mortgages at 0.5% below existing rates as well as $3,000 toward closing costs (or 3% of your requested loan, whichever is less). Through this program, the minimum borrower cash needed is only 1%. Veterans do not need to be a first-time homebuyer to qualify.

Tax Relief: NYS Veterans' Property Tax Exemptions

There are three different exemptions to provide veterans with additional tax relief, in addition to existing STAR or Enhanced STAR for Seniors exemptions. Exemptions are not automatic, so please be sure to discuss them with your assessor.

Long Term Care: NYS Veterans Nursing Homes

Our area's closest veterans nursing home, Batavia, provides veterans with skilled nursing care and rehabilitative services.

MORE PROGRAMS & SERVICES

Women Veterans Specific Support:

The state works in conjunction with the federal government to ensure the needs of women veterans are met with gender-specific health programs, planning and support initiatives. Learn more: www.womenshealth.va.gov or call their hotline at 1-855-VA-WOMEN (829-6636).

Hunting Licenses & Fishing Permits:

NYS offers free or reduced rates for active members of NYARNG, US Reserves or active military and disabled veterans, including small and big game hunting licenses, trapping, and fishing permits.

Mental Health:

In addition to the variety of mental health services available to veterans through the federal government, Mark Johns also wants veterans to be aware of:

- NYS HOPEline: providing confidential support for anyone struggling with alcohol, substance abuse or gambling.
  Dial: 1-877-8-HOPENY.
- Veterans Crisis Line: providing confidential support via text (send a text to: 838255), online chat (via www.veteranscrisisline.net) or through a hotline (call: 1-800-273-8255).
- Monroe County Lifeline: 585-275-5151

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