



WISCONSIN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ACT MEMO

2011 Wisconsin Act 209
[2011 Senate Bill 338]

**License Fee Waivers for
Veterans and Service Members**

Under current law, a number of state agencies and boards (“licensing agencies”) regulate professions and occupations by issuing licenses, permits, or other credentials (“licenses”).

2011 Wisconsin Act 209 requires the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) to establish a program under which licensing agencies grant fee waivers to qualified veterans and service members who are applying for a broad array of professional or occupational licenses. The definition of “licensing agencies” under the Act encompasses the Departments of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection; Children and Families; Financial Institutions; Health Services; Natural Resources; Public Instruction; Revenue; Safety and Professional Services and its examining boards and affiliated credentialing boards; Transportation; and Workforce Development, as well as the Board of Commissioners of Public Lands, the Government Accountability Board, and the Office of the Commissioner of Insurance. The term “licenses” covers a broad array of credentials issued by those agencies. In addition, Act 209 provides that the Wisconsin Supreme Court may request that the DVA verify eligibility for a fee waiver for a person seeking a license to practice law in the state.

The DVA is responsible for verifying that an individual is qualified to receive a fee waiver. The person may receive the waiver only for an *initial* license, and cannot have received a previous fee waiver under the program for any type of license. Further, the person must be: (1) an individual (rather than a business); (2) a resident of the state; and (3) either a veteran, as defined in s. 45.01 (12) (a) to (f), Stats., a member of the National Guard or Reserves who has served under honorable conditions for at least one year beginning on the date of enlistment, or a person who was discharged from the Reserves or the National Guard with an honorable discharge or a general discharge under honorable conditions.

Effective Date: Act 209 has a three-month delayed effective date of July 1, 2012.

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This memo provides a brief description of the Act. For more detailed information, consult the text of the law and related legislative documents at the Legislature’s Web site at: <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/>.