

1 A bill to be entitled
 2 An act relating to rental assistance for veterans;
 3 creating s. 420.5098, F.S.; providing legislative
 4 findings; creating the Veterans' Rental Assistance
 5 Grant Program; authorizing the Florida Housing Finance
 6 Corporation to provide certain grants to eligible
 7 applicants for a specified purpose; providing
 8 eligibility requirements for the program; authorizing
 9 rulemaking; providing an effective date.

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 11 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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 13 **Section 1. Section 420.5098, Florida Statutes, is created**
 14 **to read:**

15 420.5098 Veterans' Rental Assistance Grant Program.-

16 (1) The Legislature finds that:

17 (a) Honorably discharged veterans have earned and deserve
 18 the highest level of social welfare support.

19 (b) Honorably discharged veterans deserve reasonable
 20 access to housing.

21 (c) Some honorably discharged veterans are only able to
 22 secure housing through renting.

23 (d) Lower-income honorably discharged veterans may not
 24 have the financial means to provide a security deposit and first
 25 and last month's rent, which many landlords require before

26 issuing a lease.

27 (e) Providing rental assistance for eligible honorably
28 discharged veterans would help eliminate barriers to housing.

29 (2) The Veterans' Rental Assistance Grant Program is
30 created to provide security deposit assistance for low-income,
31 honorably discharged veterans.

32 (3) The Florida Housing Finance Corporation is authorized
33 to provide one-time grants under the program from funds of the
34 corporation in amounts up to \$2,000 to eligible applicants for
35 the purpose of assisting in the payment of security deposits for
36 rental housing.

37 (4) To be eligible to receive a rental assistance grant
38 under this section, a person must meet all of the following
39 requirements:

40 (a) Be an honorably discharged veteran of a branch of the
41 United States Armed Forces. A DD-214 form issued at the time of
42 separation is required as proof of honorable discharge from a
43 branch of the United States Armed Forces. However, if a DD-214
44 form is not available, other documentation may be acceptable if
45 recognized by the United States Department of Defense or the
46 United States Department of Veterans Affairs, as determined by
47 the Florida Housing Finance Corporation.

48 (b) Be a resident of this state. A Florida driver license
49 or Florida identification card is required as proof of
50 residency.

51 (c) Have an annual household income that is at or below
52 140 percent of the area median income. Annual household income
53 must be verified in the manner required by the Florida Housing
54 Finance Corporation, which may include background checks and a
55 review of documentation such as bank statements and W-2 forms.

56 (d) Apply to the Florida Housing Finance Corporation in
57 the manner prescribed by the corporation.

58 (5) The Florida Housing Finance Corporation may adopt
59 rules to implement this section.

60 **Section 2.** This act shall take effect July 1, 2025.