

HB 1041

2026

A bill to be entitled  
An act relating to business development incentives for veterans and military spouses; creating s. 295.189, F.S.; providing a short title; providing legislative findings and intent; providing definitions; requiring the Department of State to waive specified fees for certain businesses; providing eligibility and registration requirements for such waivers; providing applicability; providing tax exemptions for certain businesses; providing eligibility requirements for such exemptions; requiring the Department of Revenue to establish procedures for claiming such exemptions; providing applicability; providing for rulemaking and interagency cooperation; providing annual reporting requirements; providing an effective date.

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

Section 1. Section 295.189, Florida Statutes, is created to read:

295.189 Business development incentives for veterans and military spouses.—

(1) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the "Florida Veterans and Military Spouses Business Development Act."

(2) LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS AND INTENT.—

26       (a) The Legislature finds that veterans and military  
27 spouses contribute significantly to this state's economy through  
28 their skills, expertise, and entrepreneurial efforts.

29       (b) The Legislature recognizes the challenges of frequent  
30 relocations and economic instability faced by many military  
31 spouses.

32       (c) It is the intent of the Legislature that this act  
33 attract and support veteran-owned and military spouse-owned  
34 businesses by providing incentives.

35       (3) DEFINITIONS.—As used in this section, the term:

36       (a) "Military spouse" means a spouse of:

37       1. An active duty member of the United States Armed  
38 Forces; or

39       2. A veteran.

40       (b) "Veteran" has the same meaning as in s. 1.01(14).

41       (c) "Veteran-owned or military spouse-owned business"  
42 means a business entity:

43       1. That employs 200 or fewer permanent full-time  
44 employees.

45       2. That, together with its affiliates, has a net worth of  
46 \$5 million or less or, if a sole proprietorship, has a net worth  
47 of \$5 million or less including personal and business  
48 investments.

49       3. That is organized to engage in commercial transactions.

50       4. That is domiciled in this state.

51       5. That is at least 51 percent owned and operated by one  
52       or more veterans or military spouses.

53       6. The management and daily business operations of which  
54       are controlled by one or more veterans or military spouses.

55       7. That has a professional license, if required by the  
56       industry, in the name of a veteran or military spouse who owns  
57       the business entity.

58       (4) FEE WAIVER.—

59       (a) The Department of State shall waive all fees for:

60       1. A new business established by a veteran or military  
61       spouse.

62       2. An existing veteran-owned or military spouse-owned  
63       business that relocates to this state.

64       (b) The Department of State shall establish registration  
65       requirements for such fee waivers, which must include:

66       1. For veterans, a DD Form 214 or another acceptable form  
67       of identification as specified by the United States Department  
68       of Veterans' Affairs; or

69       2. For military spouses, verification of a military spouse  
70       relationship and that the other spouse is on active duty or a  
71       veteran.

72       (c) The fee waivers apply to veteran-owned or military  
73       spouse-owned businesses established between July 1, 2026, and  
74       June 30, 2031.

75       (5) TAX EXEMPTIONS.—

76        (a) Eligible veteran-owned and military spouse-owned  
77        businesses shall receive:

78        1. A 5-year tax exemption from the corporate income tax  
79        and the franchise tax.

80        a. A business that is 100 percent veteran-owned or  
81        military spouse-owned shall receive the 5-year tax exemption  
82        after being in business for at least 5 years.

83        b. A business that is at least 51 percent veteran-owned or  
84        military spouse-owned but does not qualify for the tax exemption  
85        under sub subparagraph a. shall receive the 5-year tax exemption  
86        after being in business for at least 7 years.

87        2. A one-time sales tax exemption on equipment and  
88        supplies directly related to business operations.

89        (b) The Department of Revenue shall establish procedures  
90        for claiming the tax exemptions.

91        (c) For veteran-owned and military spouse-owned businesses  
92        relocating to this state, the tax exemptions apply for 5 years  
93        after the date on which the business is established.

94        (6) ADMINISTRATION.—The Department of Veterans' Affairs  
95        and the Department of State shall:

96        (a) Develop rules for administering this section.  
97        (b) Ensure interagency cooperation for seamless  
98        implementation of this section.

99        (7) ANNUAL REPORTING.—Beginning December 31, 2026, and  
100        each December 31 thereafter, the Department of Veterans' Affairs

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101 shall submit a report to the Governor, the President of the  
102 Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives that  
103 includes:

104 (a) The number of veteran-owned and military spouse-owned  
105 businesses that were established in this state or that relocated  
106 to this state.

107 (b) Economic metrics such as job creation and tax revenue  
108 impact from veteran-owned and military spouse-owned businesses.

109 (c) Demographic data for the participating veterans and  
110 military spouses.

111 **Section 2.** This act shall take effect July 1, 2026.