

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

16
17 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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

21 295.189 Business development incentives for veterans and
22 military spouses.—

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

25 (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.