

# THE HERO ACT

Status

Signed Into Law

Law

Chapter 178 of the  
Acts of 2024

## *An Act Honoring, Empowering and Recognizing Our Service Members and Veterans (HERO Act)*

Building upon recent Senate initiatives to update veterans' services, the **HERO Act** boosts support for hundreds of thousands of individuals across the state who have served in the United States military, including nearly 30,000 women veterans and thousands of LGBTQ+ veterans.

*The HERO Act was signed into law by Governor Healey on August 8, 2024.*

*Supporting Massachusetts  
Veterans through the HERO Act*

### Highlights

- 1 Mental Health**
  - Expands access to behavioral health treatment by allowing veterans to be reimbursed for visits to outpatient behavioral health providers.
  - Establishes a working group to study the benefits of alternative therapies, such as psilocybin, for treating veterans' mental health challenges.
- 2 Disability Benefits:** Increases the **disabled veteran annuity** from \$2,000 to \$2,500, phased in over two years, and will be one annual payment on August 1.
- 3 Employment:** Increases the **Vet-Hire Tax Credit**, a tax credit for small businesses hiring chronically unemployed or low-income veterans, to \$2,500.
- 4 Families:** Requires public school districts to provide support services to military-connected students when a parent or guardian is called to active duty.
- 5 Recognition**
  - Requires flags to be flown at half-staff from the day of death until the day of interment for any military service member residing in Massachusetts.
  - Aligns the state Chapter 115 definition of a veteran with the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs definition.
  - Revises Chapters 115 and 115A of the General Laws for gender-neutral and inclusive language.