

## Press Release

On Sunday, Aug. 16, Illinois Gov. Bruce Rauner signed Senate Bill 107, which expands the current Homestead Exemption for Veterans with Disabilities in Illinois.

Beginning in property tax year 2015, payable 2016, veterans with a service-connected disability rating of at least 30 percent can qualify for exemptions at the following levels:

- Veterans with a VA service-connected disability rating of 30 to 49 percent can receive an exemption which takes \$2,500 off of their primary dwelling's equalized assessed value (EAV).
- Veterans with a VA service-connected disability rating of 50 to 69 percent can receive an exemption that takes \$5,000 off of their primary dwelling's EAV.
- Veterans with a VA service-connected disability rating of 70 percent or greater can receive an exemption that makes all of their primary dwelling's EAV exempt from property taxation.

To be eligible, the property must be the veteran's primary residence as of 1 Jan 2015 with an equalized assessed value of less than \$250,000, and it cannot be used for commercial purposes. The veteran must apply through the Henry County Assessment Office.

On August 29th, the Henry County Assessment office mailed the revised PTAX-342-R (Annual Verification of Eligibility for Standard Homestead Exemption for Veterans with Disabilities) form to 140 previously qualified Henry County Veterans with instructions to return the completed form along with their 2015 VA award certification letter from the VA. The completed PTAX form and award certification must be submitted to Henry County Assessment Office, 307 W. Center St., Cambridge, IL 61238 no later than October 15, 2015.

If you do not have a current VA award certificate, you can call the Department of Veterans Administration at 1(800) 827-1000 or log onto [www.ebenefits.va.gov](http://www.ebenefits.va.gov). Or you can call Superintendent Dan Swanson or Secretary Curtis Potter at (309) 937-3450/3451 at Henry County Veterans Assistance Commission.

Jack Hayes, Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs (Kewanee Armory) and Dan Swanson, Superintendent, Henry County Veterans Assistance Commission, will conduct a Veteran Outreach on October 1, 2015. This walk-in service is to assist veterans with enrolling in e-benefits and assist with printing the required verification letter. The one day event is October 1<sup>st</sup> at the following locations:

8:00 a.m. to 12 noon    Kewanee Senior Citizen Center  
   200 E South St  
   Kewanee, IL

1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.    Geneseo Library  
   805 N Chicago St  
   Geneseo, IL

Under the new law, more Henry County Veterans may qualify at the lower service connected percentage rate. As of the end of the 2014 Federal Fiscal Year there were approximately 4,500 veterans in Henry County, with 92 veterans at 30 to 40 percent service-connected; 82 veterans 50 to 60 percent service-connected and 156 veterans rated at 70 percent or more. Please help us reach out to area veterans.