

Veterans Tax Workoff Program. This is an opportunity for Stoneham Veterans, as defined by M G L Ch. 4, sec. 7, cl.43rd, as amended by the Acts of 2014, Ch. 62 to earn up to \$500 real estate tax credit by working in various Town departments. A Veteran's status needs to be verified by the Town's Veterans Services Department.

- This benefit will become effective July 1 and run through June 30
- For the program's introduction I am requesting (20) positions available to Veterans, or volunteers willing to work in their place @ \$500 for a total of \$10,000.
- MGLA Ch. 59 sec. 5N states in any city or town which accepts this section, the board of selectmen of a town, or in a municipality having a town council form of government, the town council or the mayor, with the approval of the city council in a city, may establish a program to allow Veterans as defined in clause Forty-third of section 7 chapter 4, to volunteer to provide services to that city or town.
- In exchange for such volunteer services, the town shall reduce the real property tax obligations of that veteran on the veteran's tax bills and that reduction shall be **in addition** to any exemption or abatement to which that person is otherwise entitled; provided, however, that person shall receive a rate of \$10 per hour; and provided further, that the reduction of the real property tax shall not exceed \$500 in a given year. The rate of hourly pay will reflect the \$10 per hour beginning July 1, 2014
- A City or Town, by vote of its legislative body, subject to its charter may adjust exemption in this clause by: (i) allowing an approved representative for persons physically unable to provide such services to the City or Town; or (ii) allowing the maximum reduction the real property tax bill to be based on volunteer service hours in a given tax year. (hours worked multiplied by \$10 per hour as of July 1, 2014)
- It shall be the responsibility of the town to maintain a record for each taxpayer including, but not limited to, the number of hours of service and the total amount by which the real property tax has been reduced and to provide a copy of that record to the assessor in order that the actual tax bill reflect the reduced rate.
- The town shall have the power to create local rules and procedures for implementing this section in a way that is consistent the intent of this section. Nothing in this section shall be construed to permit the reduction of workforce or otherwise replace existing staff.

- The amount by which a person's property tax liability is reduced in exchange for voluntary services shall not be considered income (State), wages or employment for the purposes of taxation as provided in chapter 62, for the purposes of withholding taxes as provided in chapter 62B, for the purposes of workers' compensation as provided in chapter 152 or any other applicable provisions of the General Laws. While providing such volunteer services, that person shall be considered a public employee for the purposes of chapter 258 and those services shall be deemed employment for the purposes of unemployment insurance as provided in chapter 151A. This applies to Mass. State tax only, not Federal tax.
- The town by vote of its legislative body, subject to its charter, may adjust the exemption in this clause by: (i) allowing an approved representative for persons physically unable to provide such services to the town; allowing the property tax bill to be based on volunteer service hours in a given tax year, rather than (\$500).

Eligibility

- Applicant must be a Veteran under MGL Ch 4, sec 7, cl. 43 as amended by the Acts of 2005, ch. 130.
- A Veteran who is currently participating in Senior tax work off program is not eligible to participate in this (Veterans) program. Applicants may participate in Veterans program or Senior program, not both.
- Veteran must be homeowner and occupy the home. If the home is in a trust, the Veteran must be the beneficiary and trustee of the trust according to State guidelines.
- If the Veteran is deceased or has a VA disability his/her spouse may volunteer in his/her place.
- Income must not exceed \$31,000 for a single person or \$45,000 for a couple
- Assets must not exceed \$150,000. The home in which Veteran resides is not considered an asset.
- Veteran or volunteer may not participate in program for two consecutive years unless quota is not met.
- Veteran or volunteer working in his/her place must undergo and pass a CORI check

All interested applicants

- Must be determined eligible by the VSO and Assessor's office.
- Submit an application with The Veteran's Office after confirmed eligibility.
- The rate of service will be \$10 per hour as of July 1. However, the credit that participant receives can never be below the State minimum wage.
- Applicant must notify VSO and work site supervisor of any changes that affect eligibility i.e. Sale of property, not inhabiting home.
- Applicant must turn in signed document hours by department head monthly to the Stoneham VSO

Placement

- Determined by matching applicant's skills, interests, and availability with job requests
- Selected participants will be notified in writing of placement
- If there are more applicants than available openings, a lottery will be held which applicants will be selected

Time frame

- Applications can be picked up at any time at the Stoneham Veterans office
- Applications must be submitted to Assessor's office by August 1
- Applicants will be selected by October 1
- Work time frame between October 1, and April 1

Additional information: Contact Jim Devlin, Director Stoneham Veterans Services

781 279 2664 or 781 363 9970 jdevlin@ci.stoneham.ma.us