

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **LAWHELP.ORG/NY EXPANDS TO SERVE VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES**

LawHelp.org/NY, the award-winning and principal website for low-income New Yorkers seeking legal information and referrals, is launching a new section devoted to the men and women who have served and are serving in the United States Armed Forces.

Home to over 1,000,000 Veterans, New Yorkers lead the way in service to our country. 80,000 New Yorkers have served or are currently serving in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, including more than 7,000 members of the New York Army National Guard. Many of our Veterans have been deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan more than once, which in turn has taken its toll on them and their families.

Because the variety of benefits and services available to Veterans and their families is vast and often spans many levels of local, state and federal governments and organizations, accessing them can be difficult and confusing. The [Veterans and Military](#) section, which is directly accessible from **LawHelp.org/NY's** homepage ([www.lawhelp.org/NY](http://www.lawhelp.org/NY)), provides a content rich library of over 300 Veteran's resources. By bringing together and centralizing these vast Know Your Rights resources and agency referrals, LawHelp.org/NY seeks to minimize confusion. The Veterans and Military section will serve as an invaluable one-stop tool for Veterans and their families, as well as for those agencies and organizations that serve Veterans at the local, state and national level.

The United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) reports that in 2008 over 15,000 New York State Veterans from the Iraq and Afghanistan wars sought treatment from the VA. The Canandaigua, New York VA Medical Center, which houses a suicide prevention hotline, reports receiving approximately 135 calls per day from Veterans and their families. And, in the ultimate sacrifice to our country, over 200 New York Veterans have lost their lives fighting in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The Veterans and Military section of LawHelp/NY will help Veterans and their families access a wide and ever expanding variety of benefits and resources. From rehabilitative care (physical & occupational), readjustment and post-traumatic stress

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disorders counseling, to insurance coverage on home mortgages and compensation for survivors, our Veterans have earned our collective support. Organizations and agencies such as local Veterans Affairs counselors, Veterans Outreach Centers, Disabled American Veterans, Vietnam Veterans of America, and the Wounded Warrior Project are just a few of the hundreds of organizations available to assist our Veterans and their families.

This new Veterans and Military section is also available in Spanish at LawHelp.org/NY's mirror Spanish site, [www.ayudalegalny.org](http://www.ayudalegalny.org); topic name "Los Veteranos y Militares."

LawHelp.org/NY is a joint project of New York State's legal aid organizations, pro bono programs and bar associations to provide free, easy-to-navigate resources that supply critical legal information and referrals to free legal aid for low-income individuals and families. Visitors to the website can learn about their legal rights and responsibilities, find legal aid offices in their area, and obtain information about New York courts. The site also provides interactive do-it-yourself forms for court, a directory of social services providers, and links to government websites. The legal information on LawHelp.org/NY is regularly reviewed and updated by teams of legal experts to ensure it is accurate and up-to-date.

In addition to the new Veterans and Military section, LawHelp.org/NY provides legal resources in 15 different areas, including: Consumer Rights, Housing, Public Benefits, Family & Juvenile Justice, Immigration, Education, Health, Disability, Taxes, Life Planning, Individual Rights, Workers' Rights, Seniors, and Internet and Fraud: Crimes and Prevention.

LawHelp.org/NY provides information in 35 different languages, from Albanian to Vietnamese, with a mirror site in Spanish. Since its launch in New York in 2001, state-based LawHelp websites have expanded into all 50 states and three U.S. territories. The national collaboration of sites, [www.LawHelp.org](http://www.LawHelp.org), won the 2007 Webby for Best Law Site on the World Wide Web.

LawHelp.org/NY is a Collective Project of:

Pro Bono Net  
The City Bar Justice Center  
The Legal Aid Society of New York City  
Legal Assistance of Western New York, Inc.  
Volunteers of Legal Service  
Legal Services of the Hudson Valley

Empire Justice Center  
New York State Bar Association  
Legal Services New York City  
Legal Aid Society of Northeastern New York  
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