
DIGEST

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HB 979 Original

2024 Regular Session

Horton

Abstract: Provides relative to compensation for assistance with veterans benefits.

Proposed law provides relative to veterans benefits.

Proposed law provides for definitions.

Proposed law authorizes compensation for an accredited agent or attorney assisting any individual with regard to any veterans benefit matter.

Proposed law provides requirements for fee agreements and provides restrictions for the amount of fees received as compensation by an accredited agent or attorney.

Proposed law prohibits any other person other than an accredited agent or attorney from receiving compensation for assisting any individual with regard to any veterans benefit matter or referring any individual to another individual for assistance with regard to any veterans benefit matter.

Proposed law prohibits any person from receiving compensation for rendering services before the date on which a notice of disagreement is filed with respect to the individual's case.

Proposed law prohibits any person from receiving compensation for assisting with, consulting on, or preparing of any veteran's pension matter.

Proposed law provides that proposed law shall not be construed to prohibit a division of fees between attorneys that is otherwise proper under La. law and the La. Rules of Professional Conduct.

Proposed law provides that no person shall do any of the following:

- (1) Guarantee, either directly or by implication, that any individual is certain to receive specific veterans benefits or that any individual is certain to receive a specific level, percentage, or amount of veterans benefits.
- (2) Utilize a medical professional with whom he has an employment or business relationship for a secondary medical exam.
- (3) Utilize a call center or data center for processing veterans personal information.

- (4) Gain direct access to any personal medical, financial, or government benefits log-in, username, or password information of the veteran.

Proposed law requires disclosure, both orally and in writing, at the outset of the business relationship of any individual and the person receiving compensation for advising or assisting with any veterans benefits matter. Provides certain conditions for oral and written disclosure.

Proposed law requires disclosure for advertising services for veterans benefits matters.

Proposed law provides that a violation of proposed law shall be a deceptive trade practice under the Unfair Trade Practices and Consumer Protection Law, R.S. 51:1401 et seq.

Effective upon signature of governor or lapse of time for gubernatorial action.

(Adds R.S. 29:26.2)