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MADIGAN RELEASES NEW INFORMATION FOR VETERANS

Chicago — Attorney General Lisa Madigan today issued her updated guide of legal rights for Illinois service members and encouraged Illinois veterans, service members and their families to access the updated resource to ensure their legal rights are upheld.

Madigan's updated "Legal Rights of Illinois Service Members" guide was created by her Military and Veterans' Rights Bureau to provide veterans, service members and their families with information regarding veterans' legal rights and federal and state veteran benefit laws. A new version that highlights changes in laws and how those changes impact veterans' benefits is available online today at [Madigan's website](#).

"My Military and Veterans' Rights Bureau developed this free guide to help service members, veterans and their families navigate and understand various state and federal laws regarding their rights," Madigan said. "I encourage veterans and their families to call my Military and Veterans' Rights Hotline at 1-800-382-3000 to speak with real people who can answer any questions."

The "Legal Rights of Illinois Service Members" guide details new and updated laws that benefit veterans, including:

- **Credit Freeze for Active Duty Service Members:** Illinois' Consumer Fraud and Deceptive Business Practices Act now entitles active duty service members to a free credit freeze if they become victims of identity theft.
- **Real Estate Property Tax Exemption for Certain Disabled Veterans:** Qualified veterans with Department of Veterans Affairs' disability ratings are eligible to have their Illinois property taxes reduced.
- **Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (SCRA):** Active service members can no longer lose custody of a child based solely on deployments, and courts will no longer consider deployments when determining custody. Service members can also now legally terminate residential leasing agreements when they receive orders for 90-day deployments.
- **SMETA Amendment:** Helps protect jobs of Illinois residents who serve in the National Guard by ensuring that even if they serve in the National Guard of a neighboring state, they will receive the same employment protections of Illinois National Guard members.
- **Veterans Employment Preference:** Ensures that when private employers work to expand opportunities for veterans by establishing a veterans' preference in hiring, promotion or retention, these actions are allowed under the Illinois Human Rights Act.

Madigan's Military and Veterans' Rights Bureau advocates for service members and veterans and investigates and pursues enforcement actions in cases involving fraud against members of the armed services. As part of this work, Madigan previously reached a settlement with a California-based company to shut down its website, [www.GIBill.com](#), for deceptively steering service members and veterans to use their federal education benefits with the company's preferred clients in the for-profit schools industry. The Attorney General has also urged the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to immediately restore military educational benefits for student veterans who attended deceptive for-profit schools. Madigan also called on Congressional leaders to close a loophole in the Higher Education Act that has allowed many for-profit schools to exploit education benefits available to American service members, veterans and their families. Madigan has also urged the U.S. Secretary of Defense to strengthen regulations under the federal Military Lending Act (MLA) to ensure service members are better protected from abusive lending practices.

For more information about Madigan's Military and Veterans' Rights Bureau, please visit her [website](#) or contact her **Military and Veterans' Rights Hotline** at 1-800-382-3000.

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