
WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE IN YOUR CITY

The ask is simple: when a city job requires a bachelor's degree, let honorably discharged veterans substitute documented military experience where the duties match. No new spending program is needed.

HOW A CITY DOES IT

1. **The council or mayor directs it.** A council resolution or a mayor's directive asks HR to identify job classifications that require a degree.
2. **HR updates the job descriptions.** Each eligible classification adds language letting documented active-duty military experience substitute for the degree.
3. **HR reviews the veteran's records.** At application, HR checks the discharge papers (DD-214), the Joint Services Transcript and evaluations against the job's duties.
4. **HR reports back.** The council gets a list of the classifications that changed.

SAMPLE LANGUAGE

For a council resolution: "Directs the [City Manager / Human Resources Director] to identify city job classifications that require a bachelor's degree, amend them so that honorably discharged veterans may substitute documented military experience for the degree where the duties match, and report the results to the Council within [90] days."

For a job posting: "Bachelor's degree required, or equivalent experience. Documented active-duty military experience in a related field may substitute for the degree."

IT'S ALREADY WORKING

- **Miami-Dade County, Florida.** HR updated more than 100 classifications in 2022 so active-duty military experience could substitute for a degree. A 2025 county resolution (R-1089-25) expanded the effort, and a June 2026 report lists 485 classifications where military experience may substitute.
- **State of Michigan.** Since 2023, two years of full-time experience at the E-6 level or above can substitute for a bachelor's degree in many state job classifications.

WHAT STAYS THE SAME

- Jobs that legally require a license or degree, such as attorneys, physicians or engineers, are excluded.
- Veterans still compete for the job like any other applicant. This only removes the automatic screen-out.
- The main cost is HR staff time to review job descriptions.

THE NEXT STEP

- Once the city acts, a letter of support from the mayor or council to state lawmakers and members of Congress helps carry the idea to state jobs and the federal EARNED Act.

Sources: Miami-Dade County report on veteran degree substitution, June 2026 (miamidade.gov, Legistar matter 261045); Fox 2 Detroit, "Michigan waives state job bachelor's degree requirement for some veterans," October 4, 2023.