



**Department of
Social Services**

Steven Banks
Commissioner

**Department of
Veterans' Services**

Loree Sutton, MD
Commissioner

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LETTER TO STUDENT VETERANS ON GI BILL DELAYS

We are aware that many student veterans have not yet received their federal GI Bill housing allowances. We've been informed by the federal government that this is due to delays in processing of claims at the US Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) while the VA is implementing new legislation known as the Forever GI Bill. It appears to be a nationwide problem, affecting hundreds of thousands of student veterans across the country.

To assist NYC student veterans who are most in need, NYC's Department of Veterans' Services (DVS) and Department of Social Services (DSS) are collaborating to identify supports and resources for students who might be adversely impacted by these delays.

We encourage any NYC student veteran who is the primary resident in a private apartment, has fallen behind in making rent payments and needs immediate assistance to visit the NYC Department of Social Services (DSS) Michael J. Handy Veterans Service Center located at 25 Chapel Street, 6th Fl, Room 606, Brooklyn, NY 11201 to have their case evaluated for emergency rent arrears funds and other benefits.

Details on what documents to bring can be found on the attached pdf document. More information on emergency rent arrears assistance is available at 718-557-1399 or on the DSS website at <https://on.nyc.gov/2yzFFtr>. As required by law, student veterans who are deemed eligible for an emergency rent arrears payment will also need to sign a repayment agreement to pay back the amount provided within twelve months of issuance, during which time the VA should be able to provide the GI Bill housing allowances that veteran students need. For any other benefits questions, student veterans should contact DVS at 212-416-5250 or info@veterans.nyc.gov.

Our city is home to approximately 12,000 student veterans, many of whom rely on the GI Bill housing allowance as their sole means to pay rent. The GI Bill is backed by the federal government and considered lawful income. It is illegal to deny housing to veterans using the GI Bill in accordance with Local Law 119/2017.

We recognize that the payment delays cause financial hardship for both student veterans who find themselves without necessary funds to pay rent as well as for landlords who have yet to receive expected rent. We urge landlords and housing managers to exercise patience with their student veteran tenants.

The City of New York stands behind our student veterans, who have served our nation and to whom we all owe a debt of gratitude.