

## CHAPTER 273

**AN ACT** concerning exemptions from certain construction permit surcharge fees, amending P.L.1989, c.223, and making an appropriation.

**BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:

1. Section 1 of P.L.1989, c.223 (C.52:27D-126e) is amended to read as follows:

C.52:27D-126e Waiving of construction permit, enforcing agency fees for certain construction projects to benefit disabled persons.

1. a. Notwithstanding the provisions of the "State Uniform Construction Code Act," P.L.1975, c.217 (C.52:27D-119 et seq.), or any rules, regulations or standards adopted pursuant thereto, to the contrary, the governing body of any municipality which has appointed an enforcing agency pursuant to the provisions of section 8 of P.L.1975, c.217 (C.52:27D-126) may, by ordinance, provide that no person shall be charged a construction permit surcharge fee or enforcing agency fee for any construction, reconstruction, alteration or improvement designed and undertaken solely to promote accessibility by disabled persons to an existing public or private structure or any of the facilities contained therein.

The ordinance may further provide that a disabled person, or a parent or sibling of a disabled person, shall not be required to pay any municipal fee or charge in order to secure a construction permit for any construction, reconstruction, alteration or improvement which promotes accessibility to his own living unit.

For the purposes of this subsection, "disabled person" means a person who has the total and permanent inability to engage in any substantial gainful activity by reason of any medically determinable physical or mental impairment, including blindness, and shall include, but not be limited to, any resident of this State who is disabled pursuant to the federal Social Security Act (42 U.S.C.416), or the federal Railroad Retirement Act of 1974 (45 U.S.C.231 et seq.), or is rated as having a 60% disability or higher pursuant to any federal law administered by the United States Veterans' Act. For purposes of this paragraph "blindness" means central visual acuity of 20/200 or less in the better eye with the use of a correcting lens. An eye which is accompanied by a limitation in the fields of vision such that the widest diameter of the visual field subtends an angle no greater than 20 degrees shall be considered as having a central visual acuity of 20/200 or less.

b. (1) Notwithstanding the provisions of the "State Uniform Construction Code Act," P.L.1975, c.217 (C.52:27D-119 et seq.) or any rules, regulations or standards adopted pursuant thereto to the contrary, the governing body of any municipality which has appointed an enforcing agency pursuant to the provisions of section 8 of P.L.1975, c.217 (C.52:27D-126) shall not charge a person who has a service-connected disability declared by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs, or its successor, to be a total or 100% permanent disability that would entitle them to a property tax exemption under section 1 of P.L.1948, c.259 (C.54:4-3.30) or a spouse, parent, sibling, or guardian of the disabled veteran, a construction permit surcharge fee or enforcing agency fee for any construction, reconstruction, alteration, or improvement designed and undertaken solely to promote accessibility by the disabled veteran to his own living unit.

(2) A municipality that has granted an exemption from a construction permit surcharge fee or enforcing agency fee pursuant to paragraph (1) of this subsection may apply to the Department of Community Affairs, in accordance with rules and regulations promulgated by the Commissioner of Community Affairs for this purpose, for reimbursement of those exempt fees.

2. There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Community Affairs the sum of \$20,000 for the purpose of providing reimbursements to municipalities for exemptions required to be granted from construction permit surcharge fees or enforcing agency fees pursuant to this act.

3. This act shall take effect immediately.

Approved January 19, 2016.