

LAWS OF DELAWARE
VOLUME 85
CHAPTER 158
153rd GENERAL ASSEMBLY
FORMERLY
HOUSE BILL NO. 68

AN ACT TO AMEND TITLE 1 OF THE DELAWARE CODE TO MAKE MARCH 9TH THE 6888TH CENTRAL POSTAL DIRECTORY BATTALION DAY.

WHEREAS, in November 1944, the U.S. War Department lifted the ban on African-American women in the Women's Army Corps (WACs), leading to the formation of the 6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion; and

WHEREAS, the 6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion was a unique U.S. Army unit that had the distinction of being the only all African-American, all-female battalion to be deployed to the European Theater of Operations (ETO) during World War II; and

WHEREAS, 855 African-American women - 824 enlisted and 31 officers - served in the 6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion (nicknamed the "Six Triple Eight"), and the 6888th 7 Battalion was commissioned from February 1945 to March 1946; and

WHEREAS, the specific mission of the 6888th Battalion in World War II was to sort and clear a multi-year backlog of mail for American Army, Navy, Air Force, Red Cross, and uniformed civilian specialists who were stationed in Europe, and this represented seven million people awaiting mail; and

WHEREAS, the 6888th Battalion trained at Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia and learned to identify enemy aircraft, ships, and weapons; to climb ropes, jump trenches and crawl under logs wearing gas masks; to board and evacuate ships; and to do long marches with rucksacks; and

WHEREAS, in February 1945, the first contingent of the 6888th embarked from Camp Shank, New York to sail for Britain, and their ship, the Ile de France, survived close encounters with Nazi U-boats and arrived in Glasgow, Scotland, where a German V-1 rocket exploded near the dock, causing the women to run for cover; and

WHEREAS, upon arrival by train in Birmingham, England, the Battalion confronted warehouses stacked to the ceiling with letters and packages; and

WHEREAS, despite enduring inhumane working conditions (dark, unheated, rat-infested aircraft hangars with broken windows) and air raids, the Battalion created a new mail tracking system, worked 3 separate 8-hour shifts, 7 days per week to process an average of 65,000 parcels per shift (195,000 daily) and cleared the six-month backlog of mail in 3 months; and

WHEREAS, having resolved the immense mail backlog in Birmingham, the 6888th Battalion sailed to France for their next assignment in Rouen, where they encountered undelivered mail dating back two to three years, which the Battalion successfully processed and cleared in 3 months; and

WHEREAS, after concluding their final assignment in Paris, the last of the Battalion returned to the United States aboard the ship Claymont Victory and was disbanded in March 1946 at Fort Dix, New Jersey, with no parades, public appreciation, or official recognition of their accomplishments; and

WHEREAS, the Battalion adhered to the motto “No mail, low morale” and provided essential support to the U.S. military in the European Theater by linking service members to their loved ones back home, thereby achieving unprecedented success and efficiency in solving the military’s postal problems; and

WHEREAS, the 6888th Battalion was the largest contingent of African-American women to ever serve overseas, dispelled stereotypes and represented a change in racial and gender roles in the military; and

WHEREAS, on February 25, 2009, the 6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion was honored by President Barack Obama at the Women in Military Service for America Memorial at Arlington National Cemetery; and

WHEREAS, on November 30, 2018, a monument, inscribed “Women of Determination, Dedication and Distinction” was dedicated to the 6888th Battalion at the Buffalo Soldier Memorial Park at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas; and

WHEREAS, the 6888th Battalion was awarded the Women’s Army Corps Service Medal, the European African Middle Eastern Campaign Medal, the Army Good Conduct Medal and the World War II Victory Medal; and

WHEREAS, in 2019, the Army awarded the 6888th Battalion the Meritorious Unit Commendation; and

WHEREAS, on March 14, 2022, the Congressional Gold Medal was awarded to members of the Women’s Army Corps who were assigned to the 6888th Battalion; and

WHEREAS, four members of the 6888th Battalion were residents of the State of Delaware at the time of enlistment: 45 CPL Grace Evelyn Bryant (Elbert), 1917-2000; CPL Edith Marguerete Carter, 1918-2000; PVT Mary Crawford (Ragland), 46 1922-2010; and PVT Evelina Rachel Griffin, 1917-1988.

NOW, THEREFORE:

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF DELAWARE:

Section 1. Amend Chapter 6, Title 1 of the Delaware Code by making deletions as shown by strike through and insertions as shown by underline as follows:

§ 610. 6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion Day.

March 9 is known as 6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion Day and should be commemorated in this State by appropriate ceremonies to honor the 6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion members. In commemorating this day, citizens are encouraged to write and mail letters to family, friends, military personnel, and veterans to recognize postal employees and the important service these employees provide in connecting us to each other.

Approved August 21, 2025