

CHAPTER.....

AN ACT relating to veterans; providing for the optional collection and reporting of certain information relating to the health of veterans; providing for outreach and continuing education concerning certain issues relating to the health of veterans; requiring the statewide information and referral system to provide nonemergency information and referrals to the general public to include information concerning service-connected disabilities and diseases; and providing other matters properly relating thereto.

Legislative Counsel's Digest:

Existing law requires the Director of the Department of Veterans Services to assist veterans and their family members in obtaining benefits and to disseminate information relating to veterans' benefits. (NRS 417.090) **Section 5** of this bill requires the Director to: (1) prescribe a questionnaire for veterans concerning their experience in the military and any service-connected disabilities and diseases; and (2) annually submit the information obtained through the questionnaire to the Division of Public and Behavioral Health of the Department of Health and Human Services. **Section 6** of this bill requires the Director to conduct public outreach programs to provide information and raise public awareness concerning service-connected disabilities and diseases and survivor benefits available to family members of veterans. **Section 6** also requires the Director to collaborate with certain nonprofit organizations to identify veterans and descendants of veterans who have service-connected diseases and refer such persons for appropriate services. **Section 7** of this bill requires the Director to: (1) collaborate with the United States Department of Veterans Affairs when carrying out the provisions of this bill; and (2) submit to the Department of Health and Human Services, the Governor and the Legislature an annual report concerning the measures taken by the Director to carry out the provisions of this bill.

Existing law requires the Department of Health and Human Services to establish and maintain a statewide information and referral system to provide nonemergency information and referrals to the general public concerning the health, welfare, human and social services provided by public or private entities in this State. (NRS 232.359) **Section 8** of this bill requires that system to include information concerning service-connected disabilities and diseases.

Section 9 of this bill requires the Division of Public and Behavioral Health to provide free continuing education courses or information concerning issues related to the health of veterans, including service-connected disabilities and diseases, to providers of health care and certain other persons. **Section 9** also requires the Division to compile and submit to the Governor, the Department of Veterans Services and the Legislative Committee on Senior Citizens, Veterans and Adults with Special Needs an annual report on the health of veterans in this State.

Sections 10-12, 14-16, 18 and 20 of this bill authorize certain providers of health care to: (1) ask each new patient or client who is over 18 years of age if he or she is a veteran; and (2) if the patient or client indicates that he or she is a veteran, provide the patient or client with the contact information for the Department of Veterans Services. **Sections 10-12 and 14** additionally authorize professional licensing boards that license physicians, physician assistants, osteopathic



physicians, advanced practice registered nurses and chiropractors to ask applicants for the renewal of a license whether the applicant inquires into the veteran status of patients.

EXPLANATION – Matter in *bolded italics* is new; matter between brackets ~~omitted material~~ is material to be omitted.

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEVADA, REPRESENTED IN
SENATE AND ASSEMBLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Chapter 417 of NRS is hereby amended by adding thereto the provisions set forth as sections 2 to 7, inclusive, of this act.

Sec. 2. *As used in sections 2 to 7, inclusive, of this act, unless the context otherwise requires, the words and terms defined in sections 3 and 4 of this act have the meanings ascribed to them in those sections.*

Sec. 3. *“Provider of health care” means a physician, physician assistant, advanced practice registered nurse, osteopathic physician, chiropractor, psychologist, marriage and family therapist, clinical professional counselor, clinical social worker, alcohol and drug abuse counselor, clinical alcohol and drug abuse counselor or problem gambling counselor.*

Sec. 4. *“Veteran” means a person who:*

1. Was regularly enlisted, drafted, inducted or commissioned in the:

(a) Armed Forces of the United States;

(b) National Guard or a reserve component of the Armed Forces of the United States; or

(c) Commissioned Corps of the United States Public Health Service or the Commissioned Corps of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration of the United States; and

2. Was separated from such service under conditions other than dishonorable.

Sec. 5. 1. *The Director shall develop and post on an Internet website maintained by the Department a questionnaire to be given to veterans who contact the Department using information provided by providers of health care pursuant to sections 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 18 and 20 of this act. The questionnaire must be designed to obtain information concerning:*

(a) The veteran’s experience in the military, including, without limitation, the branch of the military in which the veteran served, the veteran’s job while in the military, any battle, conflict or war in which the veteran served and the locations where the veteran was stationed;



(b) Any service-connected disabilities and diseases, including, without limitation, diseases presumed to be service-connected pursuant to 38 C.F.R. §§ 3.303 to 3.344, inclusive, from which the veteran may suffer; and

(c) Whether the veteran is enrolled with and receiving benefits from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs.

2. On or before January 31 of each year, the Director shall submit the information obtained pursuant to this section to the Division of Public and Behavioral Health of the Department of Health and Human Services.

Sec. 6. *1. The Director shall conduct public outreach programs which must include, without limitation, posting information concerning the topics described in this subsection on an Internet website maintained by the Director. The programs may also include, without limitation, public service announcements and the distribution of brochures and other media for display in the offices of persons who provide services to veterans and the families of veterans. The programs must be designed to provide information and raise public awareness concerning:*

(a) Service-connected disabilities and diseases, including, without limitation, diseases presumed to be service-connected pursuant to 38 C.F.R. §§ 3.303 to 3.344, inclusive; and

(b) Survivor benefits available to family members of veterans.

2. The Director shall collaborate with nonprofit organizations that provide services to veterans and their families, including, without limitation, the American Heart Association or its successor organization, the American Lung Association or its successor organization and the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society or its successor organization, to:

(a) Identify veterans and the children and grandchildren of veterans who have service-connected disabilities and diseases, including, without limitation, diseases presumed to be service-connected pursuant to 38 C.F.R. §§ 3.303 to 3.344, inclusive; and

(b) Refer any such persons to appropriate services offered by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs.

Sec. 7. *The Director shall:*

1. Collaborate with the United States Department of Veterans Affairs to carry out the duties prescribed by sections 5 and 6 of this act.

2. On or before January 31 of each year, submit to the Director of the Department of Health and Human Services, the Governor and the Director of the Legislative Counsel Bureau for



transmittal to the Legislature a report that includes, without limitation:

(a) A description of the actions taken during the immediately preceding year pursuant to section 6 of this act and an evaluation of the effectiveness of those actions; and

(b) A summary of any referrals made pursuant to subsection 2 of section 6 of this act during the immediately preceding year.

Sec. 8. NRS 232.359 is hereby amended to read as follows:

232.359 1. The Department, in collaboration with any state or local agencies or community-based organizations which provide information and referral services concerning health, welfare, human and social services and any group established by the Governor to implement a statewide information and referral system concerning health, welfare, human and social services, shall establish and maintain a statewide information and referral system to provide nonemergency information and referrals to the general public concerning the health, welfare, human and social services provided by public or private entities in this State. The system must:

(a) Integrate any information and referral systems previously established by state agencies, local agencies or community-based organizations with the system established pursuant to this section;

(b) Be the sole system in this State which is accessible to a person by dialing the digits 2-1-1 and which provides nonemergency information and referrals to the general public concerning the health, welfare, human and social services provided by public or private entities in this State;

(c) Be accessible to a person using the public telephone system by dialing the digits 2-1-1; ~~and~~

(d) Include information that is updated periodically ~~{};~~ *and*

(e) Include information concerning service-connected disabilities and diseases, including, without limitation, diseases presumed to be service-connected pursuant to 38 C.F.R. §§ 3.303 to 3.344, inclusive.

2. In establishing the statewide information and referral system, the Department, any state or local agencies or community-based organizations which provide information and referral services concerning health, welfare, human and social services and any group established by the Governor to implement a statewide information and referral system concerning health, welfare, human and social services shall consult with representatives of:

(a) The Public Utilities Commission of Nevada;

(b) Telephone companies which provide service through a local exchange in this State;



- (c) Companies that provide wireless phone services in this State;
- (d) Existing information and referral services established by state agencies, local agencies or community-based organizations;
- (e) State and local agencies or other organizations that provide health, welfare, human and social services;
- (f) Nonprofit organizations; and
- (g) Such other agencies, entities and organizations as determined necessary by the Department, any state or local agencies or community-based organizations which provide information and referral services concerning health, welfare, human and social services or any group established by the Governor to implement a statewide information and referral system concerning health, welfare, human and social services.

3. The Public Utilities Commission of Nevada, each telephone company which provides service through a local exchange in this State and each company that provides wireless phone services in this State shall cooperate with the Department, any state or local agencies or community-based organizations which provide information and referral services concerning health, welfare, human and social services and any group established by the Governor to implement a statewide information and referral system concerning health, welfare, human and social services in the establishment of the statewide information and referral system.

Sec. 9. Chapter 439 of NRS is hereby amended by adding thereto a new section to read as follows:

1. The Division shall, in collaboration with the United States Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Veterans Services:

(a) Establish continuing education courses concerning the health of veterans and make those courses available at no cost to providers of health care and any person who provides services related to the health or welfare of veterans and family members of veterans; or

(b) Provide information concerning the health of veterans to providers of health care and any person who provides services related to the health or welfare of veterans and family members of veterans.

2. Continuing education courses established pursuant to subsection 1 or information provided pursuant to that subsection must include, without limitation, information concerning service-connected disabilities and diseases, including, without limitation, diseases presumed to be service-connected pursuant to 38 C.F.R. §§ 3.303 to 3.344, inclusive.



3. *On or before April 1 of each year, the Division shall:*

(a) Compile a report concerning the health of veterans in this State. The report must include, without limitation:

(1) Information concerning trends in cancers, other illnesses and deaths related to service-connected disabilities and diseases, including, without limitation, diseases presumed to be service-connected pursuant to 38 C.F.R. §§ 3.303 to 3.344; and

(2) A summary of the information submitted to the Division pursuant to section 5 of this act.

(b) Submit the report to the Governor, the Department of Veterans Services and the Director of the Legislative Counsel Bureau for transmittal to the Legislative Committee on Senior Citizens, Veterans and Adults with Special Needs created by NRS 218E.750.

4. *As used in this section, "provider of health care" has the meaning ascribed to it in section 3 of this act.*

Sec. 10. Chapter 630 of NRS is hereby amended by adding thereto a new section to read as follows:

1. A physician or physician assistant may:

(a) Ask each new patient who is 18 years of age or older if he or she is a veteran and document the response in the medical record of the patient; and

(b) Provide the contact information for the Department of Veterans Services to any such patient who indicates that he or she is a veteran.

2. The Board may ask each applicant for the renewal of a license as a physician assistant or a biennial registration pursuant to NRS 630.267 if the applicant performs the actions described in subsection 1. If such a question is asked, the Board must allow the applicant to refuse to answer.

3. As used in this section, "veteran" has the meaning ascribed to it in section 4 of this act.

Sec. 11. Chapter 632 of NRS is hereby amended by adding thereto a new section to read as follows:

1. An advanced practice registered nurse may:

(a) Ask each new patient who is 18 years of age or older if he or she is a veteran and document the response in the medical record of the patient; and

(b) Provide the contact information for the Department of Veterans Services to any such patient who indicates that he or she is a veteran.

2. The Board may ask each applicant for the renewal of a license as an advanced practice registered nurse if the applicant



performs the actions described in subsection 1. If such a question is asked, the Board must allow the applicant to refuse to answer.

3. As used in this section, "veteran" has the meaning ascribed to it in section 4 of this act.

Sec. 12. Chapter 633 of NRS is hereby amended by adding thereto a new section to read as follows:

1. An osteopathic physician or physician assistant may:

(a) Ask each new patient who is 18 years of age or older if he or she is a veteran and document the response in the medical record of the patient; and

(b) Provide the contact information for the Department of Veterans Services to any such patient who indicates that he or she is a veteran.

2. The Board may ask each applicant for the renewal of a license as an osteopathic physician or physician assistant if the applicant performs the actions described in subsection 1. If such a question is asked, the Board must allow the applicant to refuse to answer.

3. As used in this section, "veteran" has the meaning ascribed to it in section 4 of this act.

Sec. 13. (Deleted by amendment.)

Sec. 14. Chapter 634 of NRS is hereby amended by adding thereto a new section to read as follows:

1. A chiropractor may:

(a) Ask each new patient who is 18 years of age or older if he or she is a veteran and document the response in the record of the patient; and

(b) Provide the contact information for the Department of Veterans Services to any such patient who indicates that he or she is a veteran.

2. The Board may ask each applicant for the renewal of a license as a chiropractor if the applicant performs the actions described in subsection 1. If such a question is asked, the Board must allow the applicant to refuse to answer

3. As used in this section, "veteran" has the meaning ascribed to it in section 4 of this act.

Sec. 15. Chapter 641 of NRS is hereby amended by adding thereto a new section to read as follows:

1. A psychologist may:

(a) Ask each new patient who is 18 years of age or older if he or she is a veteran and document the response in the record of the patient; and



(b) Provide the contact information for the Department of Veterans Services to any such patient who indicates that he or she is a veteran.

2. As used in this section, "veteran" has the meaning ascribed to it in section 4 of this act.

Sec. 16. Chapter 641A of NRS is hereby amended by adding thereto a new section to read as follows:

1. A marriage and family therapist or clinical professional counselor may:

(a) Ask each new client who is 18 years of age or older if he or she is a veteran and document the response in the record of the client; and

(b) Provide the contact information for the Department of Veterans Services to any such client who indicates that he or she is a veteran.

2. As used in this section, "veteran" has the meaning ascribed to it in section 4 of this act.

Sec. 17. (Deleted by amendment.)

Sec. 18. Chapter 641B of NRS is hereby amended by adding thereto a new section to read as follows:

1. A clinical social worker may:

(a) Ask each new client who is 18 years of age or older if he or she is a veteran and document the response in the record of the client; and

(b) Provide the contact information for the Department of Veterans Services to any such client who indicates that he or she is a veteran.

2. As used in this section, "veteran" has the meaning ascribed to it in section 4 of this act.

Sec. 19. (Deleted by amendment.)

Sec. 20. Chapter 641C of NRS is hereby amended by adding thereto a new section to read as follows:

1. An alcohol and drug abuse counselor, clinical alcohol and drug abuse counselor or problem gambling counselor may:

(a) Ask each new client who is 18 years of age or older if he or she is a veteran and document the response in the record of the client; and

(b) Provide the contact information for the Department of Veterans Services to any such client who indicates that he or she is a veteran.

2. As used in this section, "veteran" has the meaning ascribed to it in section 4 of this act.

Sec. 21. (Deleted by amendment.)



Sec. 22. The provisions of subsection 1 of NRS 218D.380 do not apply to any provision of this act which adds or revises a requirement to submit a report to the Legislature.

Sec. 23. This act becomes effective on July 1, 2019.

