

Assembly Bill No. 44–Committee
on Government Affairs

CHAPTER.....

AN ACT relating to veterans; revising the titles of the deputy directors of the Department of Veterans Services; revising certain duties of the Director of the Department; and providing other matters properly relating thereto.

Legislative Counsel's Digest:

Existing law requires the Director of the Department of Veterans Services to appoint: (1) a Deputy Director for Programs and Services; and (2) a Deputy Director for Health and Wellness. (NRS 417.030) **Section 1** of this bill changes the titles of the deputy directors appointed by the Director to: (1) the Deputy Director of Benefits; and (2) the Deputy Director of Healthcare Services.

Existing law requires the Director to assist veterans, certain members presently serving in the Armed Forces of the United States and certain persons related to veterans in preparing, submitting and presenting claims against the United States and any state for adjusted compensation and other benefits to which the person is entitled. (NRS 417.090) **Section 2** of this bill removes the obligation of the Director to assist such persons in preparing, submitting and presenting claims for adjusted compensation, while leaving in place the requirement that the Director assist such persons with other types of claims.

Existing law requires the Director to ensure that each person who participates as an advocate for veterans in a volunteer program sponsored by the Department is assigned a veterans service officer employed by the Department that will offer assistance to the volunteer. (NRS 417.090) **Section 2** removes that requirement and instead requires the Director to provide each such volunteer with: (1) the opportunity to participate in annual training; and (2) mentorship upon request.

Existing law requires the Director to provide semiannual training to each veterans service officer employed by the Department. (NRS 417.090) **Section 2:** (1) increases the frequency of such training to quarterly; and (2) additionally requires the Director to offer such training to representatives of veterans service organizations who are accredited by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs.

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. NRS 417.030 is hereby amended to read as follows:
417.030 1. The office of Director of the Department of Veterans Services is hereby created.

2. The Director must be appointed by and serves at the pleasure of the Governor.

3. The Director shall appoint such deputy directors as are necessary to assist the Director in performing the duties prescribed in this chapter, including, without limitation, a Deputy Director ~~for~~



~~Programs and Services~~ of *Benefits* and a Deputy Director ~~{for Health and Wellness}~~ of *Healthcare Services*.

4. Any person to be eligible for appointment as the Director or the Deputy Director ~~{for Programs and Services}~~ of *Benefits* must:

- (a) Be an actual and bona fide resident of the State of Nevada;
- (b) Possess an honorable discharge from some branch of the Armed Forces of the United States; and
- (c) Have at least 4 years of experience in management or administration.

5. Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, any person to be eligible for appointment as the Deputy Director ~~{for Health and Wellness}~~ of *Healthcare Services* must:

- (a) Be an actual and bona fide resident of the State of Nevada;
- (b) Possess an honorable discharge from some branch of the Armed Forces of the United States; and
- (c) Have at least 4 years of experience in health care management or health care administration.

➤ If no person is available for appointment who possesses all the qualifications required by this subsection, the Director may waive the qualification set forth in paragraph (b) for a person who is otherwise qualified for appointment pursuant to paragraphs (a) and (c).

Sec. 2. NRS 417.090 is hereby amended to read as follows:

417.090 1. The Director shall:

(a) Assist veterans, and those presently serving in the Armed Forces of the United States who are residents of the State of Nevada, their spouses, domestic partners, widows, widowers, children, dependents, administrators, executors and personal representatives, in preparing, submitting and presenting any claim against the United States, or any state, for ~~{adjusted compensation}~~ insurance, pension, disability compensation, vocational training, education, rehabilitation or any other benefit to which they may be entitled under the laws of the United States or of any of the states, and assist them in obtaining any aid or benefit to which they may be entitled under the laws of the United States or of any of the states.

(b) Aid, assist, encourage and cooperate with every service organization recognized nationally or in this State insofar as the activities of such organizations are for the benefit of veterans, servicemen and servicewomen and the spouses, domestic partners, widows, widowers, children, dependents, administrators, executors or personal representatives of such veterans, servicemen and servicewomen.



(c) Give aid, assistance and counsel to each and every problem, question and situation, individual as well as collective, affecting any veteran, serviceman or servicewoman, or their dependents, or any group of veterans, servicemen and servicewomen, when in their opinion such comes within the scope of this chapter.

(d) Coordinate activities of veterans' organizations.

(e) Serve as a clearinghouse and disseminate information relating to veterans' benefits.

(f) Conduct any studies which will assist veterans to obtain compensation, insurance, pension, disability compensation, vocational training, education, rehabilitation or any other benefit to which veterans may be entitled under the laws of the United States or of any state.

(g) Aid, assist and cooperate with the office of coordinator of services for veterans created in a county pursuant to NRS 244.401.

(h) Take possession of any abandoned or unclaimed artifacts or other property that has military or historical value for safekeeping. The Director may:

(1) Transfer such an artifact or other property to:

(I) The Nevada State Museum or the Nevada Historical Society, upon its written request, if the artifact or other property has, in the opinion of the requesting institution, historical value and is worthy of preservation; or

(II) Any other governmental agency or nonprofit entity, including, without limitation, a veterans' organization and the United States Department of Veterans Affairs, upon its written request, if the artifact or other property was not requested by the Nevada State Museum or the Nevada Historical Society; or

(2) Destroy or otherwise dispose of the artifact or other property.

↪ An action may not be maintained by any person against the holder or former holder of an artifact or other property because of the transfer, destruction or other disposal of the artifact or other property pursuant to this paragraph.

(i) Develop plans and programs to assist veterans who have suffered sexual trauma while on active duty or during military training.

(j) Create and maintain a statewide database of information relating to veterans to assist the Department in identifying and communicating with veterans and connecting veterans with benefits and opportunities for which they are eligible.

(k) Create and maintain a registry of governmental agencies and private entities that provide services and resources to veterans,



service members and their families and publish a digital copy of the registry on the Internet website maintained by the Department.

(l) Ensure that each generation of veterans is recognized annually through a ceremony, information campaign or other form of public acknowledgment.

(m) Establish, operate and maintain veterans' cemeteries in this State, and may, within the limits of legislative authorization, employ personnel and purchase equipment and supplies necessary for the operation and maintenance of the cemeteries.

(n) Establish, manage, maintain and operate veterans' homes in this State, and may, within the limits of legislative authorization, employ personnel and purchase equipment and supplies necessary for the operation and maintenance of veterans' homes.

(o) If the board of county commissioners of any county makes the request required pursuant to subsection 2 of NRS 244.401, provide to the coordinator of services for veterans in the county training and certification as a veterans service officer.

(p) If training and certification is requested pursuant to paragraph (o), submit an application, on behalf of the coordinator of services for veterans, to the United States Department of Veterans Affairs for accreditation or official recognition as a veterans service officer.

(q) Serve as the primary public advocate for Nevada veterans.

(r) Ensure that each person who participates as an advocate for veterans in this State in a volunteer program sponsored by the Department is ~~assigned to a veterans service officer employed by the Department that will offer assistance to the volunteer.~~ :

(1) Offered the opportunity to participate in annual training; and

(2) If requested by the volunteer, provided mentorship.

(s) Provide ~~semiannual~~ *quarterly* training to each veterans service officer employed by the Department regarding the benefits, services, programs and assistance available to veterans.

(t) Additionally offer the quarterly training described in paragraph (s) to representatives of veterans service organizations who are accredited by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs.

(u) Connect veterans experiencing homelessness to housing and organizations that provide support in housing and other related areas to decrease homelessness among veterans.

~~{(u)}~~ (v) Create, coordinate and support programs and resources for the prevention of suicide among veterans, including, without limitation, programs and resources to increase knowledge of how to



recognize the signs of a potentially suicidal veteran and resources to which veterans who are potentially suicidal may be referred.

2. The Director shall:

(a) Establish an internal policy for guidance to employees of the Department regarding the transfer, destruction or other disposal of artifacts and other property pursuant to paragraph (h) of subsection 1; and

(b) Post the policy on the Internet website maintained by the Department.

Sec. 3. This act becomes effective on July 1, 2023.

20 ~~~~~ 23

