

# STATE OF NEW YORK

10418

## IN ASSEMBLY

March 4, 2026

Introduced by M. of A. STERN -- read once and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

AN ACT to amend the veterans' services law, in relation to expanding the veterans' services commission

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. Section 3 of the veterans' services law is amended to read  
2 as follows:

3 § 3. Veterans' services commission. 1. There shall be in the depart-  
4 ment a veterans' services commission, which shall consist of the members  
5 and the ex officio members provided for in this section.

6 2. (a) There shall be [~~thirteen~~] fifteen members of the commission  
7 [~~who shall be veterans~~] appointed by the governor. Thirteen members of  
8 the commission shall be veterans, including two appointed on recommenda-  
9 tion of the temporary president of the senate, one appointed on recom-  
10 mendation of the minority leader of the senate, two appointed on recom-  
11 mendation of the speaker of the assembly, and one appointed on  
12 recommendation of the minority leader of the assembly. The appointment  
13 of members made by the governor without recommendation shall be subject  
14 to advice and consent of the senate. The members of the commission shall  
15 serve for terms of three years each. Appointed members presently serving  
16 on the commission shall continue to serve for the remainder of the term  
17 appointed. Any member chosen to fill a vacancy of such an appointed  
18 member occurring otherwise than by expiration of term shall be appointed  
19 for the remainder of the unexpired term of the member whom [~~he or she~~  
20 ~~is~~] they are to succeed. Members appointed as provided in this subdivi-  
21 sion shall receive no salary or other compensation, but each shall be  
22 entitled to receive expenses actually and necessarily incurred in the  
23 performance of their duties.

24 (b) The governor shall consider the following when making appointments  
25 under this subdivision:

26 (i) members of congressionally chartered veterans' service organiza-  
27 tions or organizations approved by the U.S. Secretary of Veterans  
28 Affairs pursuant to 38 U.S.C. § 5902. The governor may solicit nomi-

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets  
[-] is old law to be omitted.

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1 nations for appointments from such organizations having a presence in  
2 the state;

3 (ii) directors of local veterans' service agencies or their designees;

4 (iii) family members of veterans or service members; and

5 (iv) individuals having substantial training, professional experience  
6 or knowledge in any of the following:

7 (A) the United States Department of Veterans Affairs;

8 (B) health care, including mental health care;

9 (C) education, including higher education, vocational education, or  
10 adult education;

11 (D) career and employment services or business management;

12 (E) housing assistance and homelessness; and/or

13 (F) legal issues unique to veterans including United States Department  
14 of Veterans Affairs benefit claims and appeals and veterans treatment  
15 courts.

16 3. Ex officio members. (a) The adjutant general of the state of New  
17 York, the commissioner of health, the commissioner of mental health, the  
18 commissioner of homes and community renewal, the commissioner of labor,  
19 and the commissioner of education shall be [~~an~~] ex officio [~~member~~]  
20 members of the commission.

21 (b) In addition, the state commissioner may appoint the head of any  
22 other state agency or their designee as a non-voting, ex officio member  
23 of the commission. Such appointments shall expire annually on December  
24 thirty-first unless such appointments are renewed by the state commis-  
25 sioner.

26 4. One of the members of the commission, which shall include the adju-  
27 tant general, shall be designated as chairperson by the governor. The  
28 designation shall be in writing and shall be filed with the commission.

29 5. The commission shall meet at least quarterly or more frequently at  
30 the call of the chairperson. A majority of the voting members of the  
31 commission shall constitute a quorum.

32 6. The commission, in addition to other powers and duties that may be  
33 assigned to it by law, shall have power, and it shall be its duty, to:

34 (a) assist the state commissioner in the formulation of policies  
35 affecting veterans and in the coordination of all operations of state  
36 agencies relating to veterans' services;

37 (b) study issues of concern to veterans, service members and their  
38 families;

39 (c) receive reports from the department with respect to the general  
40 activities of the department and from other state agencies with respect  
41 to activities specific to veterans and military families; and

42 (d) submit an annual report of its activities and policy or legisla-  
43 tive recommendations to the governor and the legislature on or before  
44 December thirty-first of each year.

45 7. The department shall maintain and regularly update a page on its  
46 website regarding the commission that shall include, but not be limited  
47 to:

48 (a) a list of all commission members including information about each  
49 member's term, the official who appointed or recommended the member and  
50 the member's contact information;

51 (b) the minutes and agenda of each meeting of the commission; and

52 (c) any additional information deemed relevant by the department or  
53 commission.

54 § 2. This act shall take effect immediately.