

STATE OF NEW YORK

5931--A

Cal. No. 426

2017-2018 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

February 17, 2017

Introduced by M. of A. RAMOS, ORTIZ, CUSICK, MAGNARELLI, LUPARDO, TITONE, AUBRY, WEPRIN, McDONALD -- Multi-Sponsored by -- M. of A. PERRY, SIMON -- read once and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs -- ordered to a third reading, amended and ordered reprinted, retaining its place on the order of third reading

AN ACT to amend the executive law, in relation to establishing the New York state interagency coordinating council for service-disabled veterans, defining the powers and duties of the council and requiring an annual report by the council to the governor, the temporary president of the senate and the speaker of the assembly

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

1 Section 1. Legislative intent. The legislature hereby recognizes that
2 New York state's veterans, particularly those who suffered service-re-
3 lated disabilities, have unique needs as a result of the sacrifices they
4 made during their military service. It is also hereby acknowledged by
5 the legislature that due to the complexity of their needs, such individ-
6 uals require accessible, coordinated, and specialized services within
7 their communities from multiple state and local agencies. The legisla-
8 ture finds that there is an immediate need for a statewide comprehensive
9 program to coordinate such services.

10 § 2. The executive law is amended by adding a new section 368-a to
11 read as follows:

12 § 368-a. New York state interagency coordinating council for service-
13 disabled veterans. There is hereby established the New York state inter-
14 agency coordinating council for service-disabled veterans in the execu-
15 tive department to have and exercise the functions, powers and duties
16 provided by the provisions of this section and any other provision of
17 law.

18 1. As used in this section the following terms shall mean:

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

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1 (a) "council" means the New York state interagency coordinating coun-
2 cil for service-disabled veterans;

3 (b) "veteran" means a person, male or female, resident of this state,
4 who has served in the active military, naval, or air service of the
5 United States during a war in which the United States engaged and who
6 has been released from such service otherwise than by dishonorable
7 discharge, or who has been furloughed to the reserve; and

8 (c) "service-disabled veteran" means a veteran with a disability that
9 was incurred or aggravated in the line of duty in the active military,
10 naval, or air service.

11 2. The council shall consist of the following ten agency heads or
12 their designees: director of the division of veterans' affairs, who
13 shall serve as chair of the council, the commissioner of the office of
14 general services, the commissioner of the department of health, the
15 commissioner of the office of mental health, the commissioner of the
16 office of alcoholism and substance abuse services, the commissioner of
17 the department of labor, the commissioner of the division of housing and
18 community renewal, the commissioner of the education department, the
19 commissioner of the department of transportation, and the director of
20 the office for the aging. In addition, the council shall consist of nine
21 service-disabled veterans, three to be appointed by the governor, two to
22 be appointed by the temporary president of the senate, two to be
23 appointed by the speaker of the assembly, one to be appointed by the
24 minority leader of the senate and one to be appointed by the minority
25 leader of the assembly. The members of the council shall serve terms of
26 two years; provided, however, that of the members first appointed, the
27 members appointed by the governor shall serve for terms of three years
28 and the remaining members, appointed by the legislative leaders, shall
29 serve for terms of two years. Members of the council shall receive no
30 compensation for their services but shall be allowed their actual and
31 necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their functions here-
32 under.

33 3. The council shall have the following powers and duties:

34 (a) to promote the implementation of a comprehensive statewide program
35 of coordinated services for service-disabled veterans that includes: (1)
36 matters pertaining to educational training and retraining services and
37 facilities, (2) health, medical and rehabilitation services and facili-
38 ties, (3) employment and re-employment services including small business
39 opportunities, (4) housing options, (5) transportation options, (6) long
40 term care, (7) personal care, (8) day program services, (9) family
41 outreach and (10) other essential services that maximize existing
42 resources and administrative mechanisms;

43 (b) to disseminate general information about available services to
44 service-disabled veterans and how such services can be accessed. Such
45 information shall be posted on the division's website or be available in
46 printed form;

47 (c) to receive complaints in matters affecting service-disabled veter-
48 ans and to refer such complaints to the appropriate regulatory agencies
49 where it deems necessary or appropriate; and

50 (d) to conduct an ongoing evaluation of the needs of service-disabled
51 veterans.

52 4. The council shall meet as necessary to carry out its functions,
53 powers and duties, but such meetings shall occur at least once each
54 quarter. Furthermore, the council shall seek to consult with the network
55 directors of the veterans integrated service networks, VISN 2 and VISN
56 3.

1 5. The council shall provide a report to the governor, the temporary
2 president of the senate and the speaker of the assembly on or before
3 April first of each year, beginning in two thousand twenty. Such report
4 shall summarize the council's activity during the previous fiscal year
5 and detailing legislative recommendations appropriate to effectuate the
6 purposes of this section, and any other recommendations for improving
7 service delivery and coordination, reducing duplication and fragmenta-
8 tion and facilitating the most efficient use of existing resources. Such
9 report shall also include a proposed agenda consisting of specific
10 issues that the council plans to address during the current fiscal year.

11 § 3. This act shall take effect on the ninetieth day after it shall
12 have become a law; provided, however, that effective immediately, the
13 addition, amendment and/or repeal of any rule or regulation necessary
14 for the implementation of this act on its effective date are authorized
15 and directed to be made and completed on or before such effective date.