

STATE OF NEW YORK

8864

IN SENATE

May 30, 2018

Introduced by Sen. SEPULVEDA -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Veterans, Homeland Security and Military Affairs

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:

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

21 (b) "veteran" means a person, male or female, resident of this state,
22 who has served in the active military, naval, or air service of the
23 United States during a war in which the United States engaged and who

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

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1 has been released from such service otherwise than by dishonorable
2 discharge, or who has been furloughed to the reserve; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

47 4. The council shall meet as necessary to carry out its functions,
48 powers and duties, but such meetings shall occur at least once each
49 quarter. Furthermore, the council shall seek to consult with the network
50 directors of the veterans integrated service networks, VISN 2 and VISN
51 3.

52 5. The council shall provide a report to the governor, the temporary
53 president of the senate and the speaker of the assembly on or before
54 April first of each year, beginning in two thousand twenty. Such report
55 shall summarize the council's activity during the previous fiscal year
56 and detailing legislative recommendations appropriate to effectuate the

1 purposes of this section, and any other recommendations for improving
2 service delivery and coordination, reducing duplication and fragmenta-
3 tion and facilitating the most efficient use of existing resources. Such
4 report shall also include a proposed agenda consisting of specific
5 issues that the council plans to address during the current fiscal year.

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