

STATE OF NEW YORK

9851

IN SENATE

April 8, 2026

Introduced by Sen. SCARCELLA-SPANTON -- read twice and ordered printed,
and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Veterans, Home-
land Security and Military 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 Assem-
bly, 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

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

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1 Affairs pursuant to 38 U.S.C. § 5902. The governor may solicit nomi-
2 nations for appointments from such organizations having a presence in
3 the state;

4 (ii) directors of local veterans' service agencies or their designees;
5 (iii) family members of veterans or service members; and
6 (iv) individuals having substantial training, professional experience
7 or knowledge in any of the following:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

55 § 2. This act shall take effect immediately.