

# 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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Affairs pursuant to 38 U.S.C. § 5902. The governor may solicit nominations for appointments from such organizations having a presence in the state;

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

(A) the United States Department of Veterans Affairs;

(B) health care, including mental health care;

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

(D) career and employment services or business management;

(E) housing assistance and homelessness; and/or

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

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

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

4. One of the members of the commission, which shall include the adjutant general, shall be designated as chairperson by the governor. The designation shall be in writing and shall be filed with the commission.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

§ 2. This act shall take effect immediately.