§ 173. Election to administer veteran assistance by county public welfare district; organization. 1. When a majority of the veteran organizations in a county, by and through their respective county divisions, file with the clerk of the board of the supervisors of the county, a petition addressed to the board of supervisors of the county requesting that veteran assistance be administered by such county, the board of supervisors may, by resolution passed by a majority vote, establish a division or bureau, or direct that a division or bureau be established, within the county department of public welfare, and under the direction of the county commissioner of public welfare, for the purpose of administering veteran assistance.

2. In the event that the county board of supervisors shall pass such a resolution, it shall also authorize and direct the county commissioner of public welfare to appoint a veteran, as herein defined, as deputy commissioner or director of the veteran assistance division or bureau, as the case may be.

3. The county commissioner shall transfer to the veteran assistance division or bureau so much of the staff of the county welfare department as may be necessary or practicable to administer and execute the functions, powers and duties assigned to such division or bureau. Officers and employees shall be transferred without further examination or qualification and they shall retain their respective civil service classification and status. The civil service qualifications for all positions in the veteran assistance division or bureau shall be the same as required for the same or similar positions in the other divisions or bureaus of the county department of welfare, except that the qualifications for the position of the deputy commissioner or director, as the case may be, shall also require that he be a veteran.

4. The salaries or compensation paid to employees of the veteran assistance division or bureau shall be subject to reimbursement by the state under the same terms and conditions as are applicable to other employees of the county department of public welfare under the provisions of this chapter.

5. Upon recommendation of the county commissioner of public welfare, the county board of supervisors may authorize, by resolution passed by a majority vote, the veteran assistance division or bureau to administer, in addition to veteran assistance, such other forms or categories of public assistance and care as may be practicable or necessary, provided that sufficient qualified staff shall be available for transfer or assignment to the veteran assistance division or bureau to execute and perform the additional functions and duties so assigned to such division or bureau.

6. The board of supervisors may also authorize the commissioner of public welfare to establish and operate a branch of the veteran assistance division or bureau in each or any major population center in the county.