

CHAPTER 70
FORMERLY
HOUSE BILL NO. 127

AN ACT TO AMEND TITLE 29 OF THE DELAWARE CODE RELATING TO THE DELAWARE COMMISSION OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF DELAWARE:

Section 1. Amend Chapter 87, Title 29 of the Delaware Code by making insertions as shown by underline as follows:

§ 8721 Delaware Commission of Veterans' Affairs — Duties and responsibilities.

~~(a) The Commission shall assume all duties and responsibilities of the current appointed Veterans' Affairs Committee.~~

~~(b)~~(a) The Commission shall hire through the State Merit System employment process and employ an Executive Director, a clerical assistant and such other personnel as are necessary to perform those duties prescribed by the Commission. All employees of the Commission, including the Executive Director, shall be veterans as defined in § 8720(b) of this title. Said Executive Director shall be authorized to use the designation "Delaware Office of Veterans' Services" when promoting, performing or furthering the work of the Commission. Said Executive Director and staff shall report to the Secretary of State on all administrative matters and shall report to the Commission on all substantive matters.

~~(c)~~(b) The Commission shall have the power of oversight in the administration of the Delaware State Veterans' Home and shall have the authority to promulgate such rules, regulations and policy as is necessary to the operation of a veterans' home provided, however, such rules, regulations and policy are not inconsistent with the other provisions of this chapter.

~~(d)~~(c) The Commission shall have the power to operate and/or administer a Delaware Veterans' Memorial Cemetery in the State and shall have the authority to promulgate such rules and regulations governing the operation of a cemetery as it deems necessary; provided, however, such rules and regulations are not inconsistent with the provisions of this chapter.

~~(e)~~(d) The Commission shall establish a repository for all veterans' "Statement of Service" or similar documentary verification of active armed service.

~~(f)~~(e) The Commission shall establish and administer the "Delaware Veterans Trust Fund" which will provide financial assistance or grants to honorably discharged veterans to cover costs associated with medical and dental needs; medical transportation; homelessness support; home repairs and safety modifications; household utilities; and educational or retraining programs.

~~(g)~~(f) The Commission shall represent the State in concert with other states' veterans' agencies and the U.S. Veterans' Administration on matters of mutual interest and concern.

~~(h)(g)~~ The Commission shall coordinate with and advise all departments and agencies of the State on all matters pertaining to education, training, employment, medical and financial benefit programs for veterans, their dependents and survivors.

~~(i)(h)~~ The Commission shall initiate, review, and/or sponsor state legislation pertaining to veterans.

~~(j)(i)~~ The Commission and/or its Executive Director shall augment, not replace nor infringe upon, the functions of the service officers (representatives) of veterans' organizations; provided, however, the Commission may appoint a service officer in each county, such service officer to be accountable and responsible to the Commission.

~~(k)(j)~~ The Commission shall submit to the Governor and to the General Assembly an annual report of the Commission's activities and recommendations.

Approved June 26, 2019