

1 **COORDINATION OF SERVICES FOR VETERANS**

2 2013 GENERAL SESSION

3 STATE OF UTAH

4 **Chief Sponsor: Peter C. Knudson**

5 House Sponsor: Paul Ray

6

LONG TITLE

7 **General Description:**

8 This bill creates a veterans' services coordinator position and requires certain
9 government entities to provide data to the Utah Department of Veterans' Affairs.

10 **Highlighted Provisions:**

11 This bill:

- 12 ▶ creates a veterans' coordinator position and qualifications;
- 13 ▶ requires government entities to designate a veterans' services specialist within each
- 14 entity;
- 15 ▶ requires contractors receiving government entity funds to participate;
- 16 ▶ provides for training of agency veterans' services specialists; and
- 17 ▶ requires an annual report to the Government Operations Interim Committee.

18 **Money Appropriated in this Bill:**

19 None

20 **Other Special Clauses:**

21 None

22 **Utah Code Sections Affected:**

23 AMENDS:

24 **71-8-1**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2007, Chapters 173 and 329

25 **71-8-3**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2007, Chapter 173

26 ENACTS:



- 28 **71-8-5**, Utah Code Annotated 1953
- 29 **71-8-6**, Utah Code Annotated 1953
- 30 **71-9-6**, Utah Code Annotated 1953



32 *Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:*

33 Section 1. Section **71-8-1** is amended to read:

34 **71-8-1. Definitions.**

35 As used in this chapter:

36 (1) "Contractor" means a person who is or may be awarded a government entity
37 contract.

38 [~~(1)~~] (2) "Council" means the Veterans' Advisory Council.

39 [~~(2)~~] (3) "Department" means the Department of Veterans' Affairs.

40 [~~(3)~~] (4) "Executive director" means the executive director of the Department of
41 Veterans' Affairs.

42 [~~(4)~~] (5) "Government entity" means the state and any county, municipality, local
43 district, special service district, and any other political subdivision or administrative unit of the
44 state, including state institutions of education.

45 (6) "Specialist" means a full-time employee of a government entity who is tasked with
46 responding to and assisting veterans who are employed by or come to the entity for assistance.

47 [~~(5)~~] (7) "Veteran" means:

48 (a) an individual who has served on active duty in the armed forces for at least 180
49 consecutive days or was a member of a reserve component, and who has been separated or
50 retired under honorable conditions; or

51 (b) any individual incurring an actual service-related injury or disability in the line of
52 duty whether or not that person completed 180 days of active duty.

53 Section 2. Section **71-8-3** is amended to read:

54 **71-8-3. Duties of executive director -- Services to veterans.**

55 The executive director shall:

56 (1) be responsible for the administration and the operation or support of the following
57 veteran-related operations:

58 (a) Utah State Veterans' Nursing Homes and Programs;

- 59 (b) Utah State Veterans' Cemetery and Memorial Park;
- 60 (c) Title 71, Chapter 10, Veteran's Preference;
- 61 (d) any locally or federally funded programs for homeless veterans within the state; and
- 62 (e) any federally funded education services for veterans within the state;
- 63 (2) maintain liaison with local, state, and federal veterans' agencies and with Utah
- 64 veterans' organizations;
- 65 (3) provide current information so that veterans, their surviving spouses and family
- 66 members, and Utah veterans' organizations will be aware of benefits to which they are, or may
- 67 become, entitled;
- 68 (4) reach out and assist veterans and their families in applying for benefits and
- 69 services;
- 70 (5) develop and maintain a system for determining how many veterans are employed
- 71 by the various government entities within the state and keeping track of them; [~~and~~]
- 72 (6) cooperate with other state entities in the receipt of information to create and
- 73 maintain a record of veterans in Utah[-]; and
- 74 (7) report annually to the Government Operations Interim Committee on the:
- 75 (a) services provided to veterans; and
- 76 (b) coordination of veterans' services by government entities with the department
- 77 including the preparation of an annual report.

78 Section 3. Section **71-8-5** is enacted to read:

79 **71-8-5. Veterans' services coordinator qualifications -- Duties.**

- 80 (1) The veterans' services coordinator shall:
- 81 (a) be a veteran;
- 82 (b) have the education and experience in the use of computer technology, including
- 83 databases, to collect, manage, and store information; and
- 84 (c) have some education and experience in public relations.
- 85 (2) The veterans' services coordinator shall be responsible to:
- 86 (a) identify all government entities that provide services for veterans;
- 87 (b) develop a process for coordination of veterans' services across all government
- 88 entities; and
- 89 (c) develop and provide training for veterans' affairs specialists on the coordination of

90 veterans' services with the department.

91 Section 4. Section **71-8-6** is enacted to read:

92 **71-8-6. Government entity participation.**

93 (1) Each government entity that provides services to or for veterans shall:

94 (a) assign a full-time employee who is a veteran as a veterans' services specialist to
95 coordinate the provision of veterans' services with the department; and

96 (b) provide the department with nonprotected or nonprivate information about services
97 provided to veterans.

98 (2) Each governmental entity that provides services to veterans shall post on the entity's
99 website:

100 (a) all services available for veterans from the entity and the contact information for the
101 veterans' services specialist; and

102 (b) a link to the department with the contact information for the veterans' services
103 coordinator.

104 (3) Each government entity that does not provide services to veterans shall, upon a
105 request for services by a veteran, direct the veteran to contact the department and provide the
106 veteran with the department contact information.

107 Section 5. Section **71-9-6** is enacted to read:

108 **71-9-6. Government entity veterans' affairs specialist -- Duties -- Training.**

109 (1) Each government entity providing veterans with services shall appoint or designate
110 a full-time employee as a veterans' affairs specialist.

111 (2) The veterans' affairs specialist shall:

112 (a) coordinate the provision of veterans' services by the government entity with the
113 department; and

114 (b) attend annual training by the department on coordination processes including
115 providing nonprotected or nonprivate information to the department.

Legislative Review Note
as of 12-14-12 10:55 AM

Office of Legislative Research and General Counsel