

SENATE, No. 4296

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED JANUARY 4, 2022

Sponsored by:

Senator JOSEPH A. LAGANA

District 38 (Bergen and Passaic)

Senator VIN GOPAL

District 11 (Monmouth)

Co-Sponsored by:

Senators A.M.Bucco and Diegnan

SYNOPSIS

Requires DMVA to develop mobile application to provide guidance on available resources to veterans and their families.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 1/6/2022)

1 AN ACT concerning the development of a mobile application by the
2 Department of Military and Veterans Affairs and amending
3 N.J.S.38A:3-6.

4
5 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State
6 of New Jersey:

7
8 1. N.J.S.38A:3-6 is amended to read as follows:

9 38A:3-6. Under the direction of the Governor, the Adjutant
10 General shall:

11 (a) Exercise control over the affairs of the Department of
12 Military and Veterans' Affairs and in connection therewith make
13 and issue such regulations governing the work of the Department of
14 Military and Veterans' Affairs and the conduct of its employees as
15 may, in his judgment, be necessary or desirable.

16 (b) Be the request officer of the Department of Military and
17 Veterans' Affairs within the meaning of such term as defined in
18 section 1 of P.L.1944, c.112 (C.52:27B-1).

19 (c) (Deleted by amendment, P.L.1988, c.138.)

20 (d) Command the organized militia of the State, with
21 responsibility for recruiting, mobilization, administration, training,
22 discipline, equipping, supply and general efficiency thereof. He
23 may issue such regulations and delegate such command functions as
24 he shall deem necessary. The regulations so issued shall, insofar as
25 possible, conform to the federal laws and regulations concerning the
26 same.

27 (e) Maintain the archives and be the custodian of the records
28 and papers required, by laws or regulations, to be filed with the
29 Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs.

30 (f) Supervise, administer and coordinate those activities of the
31 selective service system for which the Governor is responsible.

32 (g) Acquire by gift, grant, purchase, exchange, eminent domain,
33 or in any other lawful manner, in the name of and for the use of the
34 State of New Jersey, all those parcels of land as shall be necessary
35 for armories and other militia facilities, and supervise the design,
36 construction, alteration, maintenance and repair of said property.

37 (h) Establish and maintain such headquarters as may be required
38 for the militia.

39 (i) Exercise the powers vested in him and perform such other
40 duties and functions as required of him by the Governor and by
41 federal and State laws and regulations.

42 (j) Exercise all of the functions, powers and duties heretofore
43 vested in the Director of the Division on Veterans' Programs and
44 Special Services.

EXPLANATION – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

1 (k) Appoint and remove officers and other personnel employed
2 within the department, subject to the provisions of N.J.S.38A:3-8
3 and Title 11A of the New Jersey Statutes and other applicable
4 statutes, except as herein otherwise specifically provided.

5 (l) Have authority to organize and maintain an administrative
6 division and to assign to employment therein secretarial, clerical
7 and other assistants in the department or the Adjutant General's
8 Office for the purpose of providing centralized support to all
9 segments of the department, including budgeting, personnel
10 administration and oversight of equal opportunity programs.

11 (m) Perform, exercise and discharge the functions, powers and
12 duties of the department through such divisions as may be
13 established by this act or otherwise by law.

14 (n) Organize the work of the department in divisions not
15 inconsistent with the provisions of this act and in bureaus and other
16 organizational units as the Adjutant General may determine to be
17 necessary for efficient and effective operation.

18 (o) Adopt, issue and promulgate, in the name of the department,
19 pursuant to the "Administrative Procedure Act," P.L.1968, c.410
20 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.), such rules and regulations as may be
21 authorized by law.

22 (p) Institute, or cause to be instituted, legal proceedings or
23 processes as necessary to properly enforce and give effect to any of
24 the Adjutant General's powers or duties.

25 (q) Make an annual report to the Governor and to the
26 Legislature of the department's operations, and render other reports
27 as the Governor shall from time to time request or as may be
28 required by law.

29 (r) Coordinate the activities of the department, and the several
30 divisions and other agencies therein, in a manner designed to
31 eliminate overlapping and duplicative functions.

32 (s) Integrate within the department, so far as practicable, all
33 staff services of the department and of several divisions and other
34 agencies therein.

35 (t) Request access to all relevant files and records of other State
36 agencies, which may be made available to the Adjutant General by
37 the head of a State agency, and request, subject to the permission of
38 the head of the State agency, any officer or employee therein to
39 provide information as necessary to assist in the performance of the
40 functions of the department.

41 (u) Supervise and operate the New Jersey Veterans' Memorial
42 Home-Menlo Park, the New Jersey Veterans' Memorial Home-
43 Vineland, the New Jersey Veterans' Memorial Home-Paramus and
44 the New Jersey Veterans' Memorial Cemetery-Arneytown.

45 (v) Supervise and operate the liaison office and the field offices
46 which serve the federal Veterans' Affairs Medical Centers.

47 (w) Make application for federal grants and programs, other than
48 education grants or funds.

1 (x) Administer the federally-funded training and rehabilitation
2 programs, except for the administration of federally-funded
3 education and training programs set forth in 38 U.S.C. s.36 et seq.

4 (y) Provide current information to the general public on State
5 and federal veterans' programs and benefits; create a comprehensive
6 public webpage for women veterans that includes, but is not limited
7 to, the following information: veterans' legal rights, benefits,
8 medical and insurance issues, education, the transition from active
9 service to civilian life, and other resources available to veterans.

10 (z) Develop and administer the New Jersey Homeless Veterans
11 Grant Program established pursuant to section 3 of P.L.2013, c.239
12 (C.38A:3-6.2b).

13 (aa) Encourage and facilitate the registration of each service
14 member residing in New Jersey with the United States Department
15 of Veterans Affairs, or its successor agency. Registration shall take
16 place, as appropriate, when the service member returns from
17 deployment on federal active duty or is discharged or as soon as
18 possible thereafter. The term "service member" shall mean
19 members of the New Jersey National Guard and members of the
20 United States Armed Forces, or a Reserve component thereof, when
21 the information on each member is made available to the
22 department.

23 (bb) Develop and coordinate a volunteer-based program
24 comprised of former service members to assist and mentor veterans
25 who become involved with the criminal justice system, while
26 criminal proceedings are pending and afterward, in accessing
27 assistance to resolve the underlying problems that led or contributed
28 to the veteran's involvement with the criminal justice system
29 including, but not limited to, offering support and guidance,
30 securing housing, employment linkages, job training, education,
31 transportation, disability compensation claims, discharge status,
32 health care and other linkages available at the local, State and
33 federal level that can ease the challenge of reentry into civilian life.
34 In addition, the Adjutant General shall develop a registry of
35 volunteer mentors and make the registry available pursuant to
36 P.L.2017, c.42 (C.2C:43-23 et al.).

37 (cc) Prepare and disseminate a directory of Veterans Diversion
38 Resource Program entities currently available within New Jersey
39 pursuant to P.L.2017, c.42 (C.2C:43-23 et al.).

40 (dd) Create a comprehensive public webpage for Gold Star
41 family members that includes, but is not limited to, the following
42 information: State benefits; State and county liaisons; a list of
43 service members from New Jersey killed in action; links to other
44 Gold Star family organizations; and such other information and
45 resources as the Adjutant General deems necessary and beneficial to
46 a Gold Star family member. A "Gold Star family member" means
47 the spouse, domestic partner, partner in a civil union, parent,

1 brother, sister, child, legal guardian, or other legal custodian,
2 whether of the whole or half blood, or by adoption.

3 (ee) Identify each New Jersey resident who enrolls in the United
4 States Military Academy, United States Naval Academy, United
5 States Coast Guard Academy, United States Merchant Marine
6 Academy, or United States Air Force Academy, and issue a New
7 Jersey State flag to that individual.

8 (ff) Provide current information to veterans and their families on
9 State and federal veterans' programs and benefits via a mobile
10 application that includes, but is not limited to, information
11 regarding veterans' legal rights, benefits, medical and insurance
12 issues, education, housing, the transition from active to civilian life,
13 and other support assistance and resources available to veterans and
14 their families.

15 (cf: P.L.2019, c.283, s.1)

16

17 2. This act shall take effect immediately.

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STATEMENT

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22 This bill requires the Department of Military and Veterans
23 Affairs (DMVA) to develop a mobile application for veterans and
24 their families. The mobile application will be a resource guide and
25 will provide veterans and their families with information related to
26 veterans' legal rights, medical and insurance issues, education,
27 housing, the transition from active to civilian life. The guide should
28 have substantially the same information as available on the DMVA
29 website, A Resource Guide for New Jersey's Military, Veterans and
30 Families, and New Jersey Veterans Benefits Guide.

31 Making these resources available through a mobile application
32 will provide veterans with an additional avenue to access DMVA
33 resources. The content on mobile applications generally loads
34 faster than websites, and mobile applications are easier to use than
35 websites and will provide veterans with a better user experience.