

§ 143B-1211. Powers and duties of the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs.

It shall be the duty of the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs to do all of the following:

- (1) Provide active outreach to the United States Department of Defense and the United States Department of Homeland Security and their associated establishments in North Carolina in order to support the military installations and activities in the State, to enhance North Carolina's current military-friendly environment and foster and promote business, technology, transportation, education, economic development, and other efforts in support of the mission, execution, and transformation of the United States government military and national defense activities located in the State.
- (2) Promote the industrial and economic development of localities included in or adjacent to United States government military and national defense activities and those of the State.
- (3) Provide technical assistance and coordination between the State, its political subdivisions, and the United States military and national defense activities within the State of North Carolina.
- (4) Award grants to local governments, State and federal agencies, and private entities at the direction of the Secretary. The number of grants awarded and the level of funding of each grant for each fiscal year shall be contingent upon and determined by funds appropriated for that purpose by the General Assembly.
- (5) Provide active outreach to the United States Department of Veterans Affairs, the veterans service organizations, and the veterans community in North Carolina to support and assist North Carolina's veterans in identifying and obtaining the services, assistance, and support to which they are entitled, including monitoring efforts to provide services to veterans, newly separated service members, and their immediate family members and disseminating relevant materials.
- (6) Monitor and enhance efforts to provide assistance and support for veterans living in North Carolina and members of the North Carolina National Guard and North Carolina residents in the Armed Forces Reserves not in active federal service in the areas of (i) medical care, (ii) mental health and rehabilitative services, (iii) housing, (iv) homelessness prevention, (v) job creation, and (vi) education.
- (7) Seek and receive monies from any source, including federal funds, gifts, grants, and devises, which shall be expended for the purposes designated in this Article.
- (8) Provide active outreach, coordination, formal training and standards, and official certification to localities of the State and veterans support organizations in the development, implementation, and review of local veterans services programs as part of the State program.
- (9) Work with veterans services organizations and counterparts in other states to monitor and encourage the timely and accurate processing of veterans' benefit requests by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs, including requests for service connected to health care, mental health care, and disability payments.
- (10) Manage and maintain the State's veterans nursing homes and cemeteries and their associated assets to the standard befitting those who have worn the uniform of the Armed Forces according to federal guidelines. Plan for

- expansion and grow the capacity of these facilities and any new facilities as required pending the availability of designated funds.
- (11) Manage and maintain the State's Scholarships for Children of Wartime Veterans in accordance with Part 2 of Article 14 of Chapter 143B of the General Statutes and in support of the Veterans' Affairs Commission.
 - (12) Provide administrative, organizational, and funding support to the Governor's Working Group for Veterans.
 - (12a) Provide administrative services to the North Carolina Military Affairs Commission pursuant to G.S. 143B-1310(a).
 - (13) Work with federal officials to obtain additional federal resources and coordinate veterans policy development and information exchange.
 - (14) Work with the appropriate heads of the principal departments to coordinate working relationships between State agencies and take all actions necessary to ensure that available federal and State resources are directed toward assisting veterans and addressing all issues of mutual concern to the State and the Armed Forces of the United States, including, but not limited to, quality of life issues unique to North Carolina's military personnel and their families, the quality of educational opportunities for military children, the future of federal impact aid, preparedness, public safety and security concerns, transportation needs, alcoholic beverage law enforcement, substance abuse, social service needs, possible expansion and growth of military facilities in the State, and intergovernmental support agreements with state and local governments.
 - (15) Educate the public on veterans and defense issues in coordination with applicable State agencies.
 - (16) Adopt rules and procedures for the implementation of this section.
 - (17) Assist veterans, their families, and dependents in the presentation, processing, proof, and establishment of such claims, privileges, rights, and benefits as they may be entitled to under federal, State, or local laws, rules, and regulations.
 - (18) Aid persons in active military service and their dependents with problems arising out of that service that come reasonably within the purview of the Department's program of assistance.
 - (19) Collect data and information as to the facilities and services available to veterans, their families, and dependents and to cooperate with agencies furnishing information or services throughout the State in order to inform such agencies regarding the availability of (i) education, training, and retraining facilities; (ii) health, medical, rehabilitation, and housing services and facilities; (iii) employment and reemployment services; and (iv) provisions of federal, State, and local laws, rules, and regulations affording rights, privileges, and benefits to veterans, their families, and dependents, and in respect to such other matters of similar, related, or appropriate nature not herein set out.
 - (20) Establish such field offices, facilities, and services throughout the State as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of this Article.
 - (21) Cooperate, as the Department deems appropriate, with governmental, private, and civic agencies and instrumentalities in securing services or benefits for veterans, their families, dependents, and beneficiaries.

- (22) Enter into any contract or agreement with any person, business, governmental agency, or other entity in furtherance of the purposes of this Article.
- (23) Train, assist, and provide guidance to the employees of any county, city, town, or Indian tribe who are engaged in veterans service. Authority is hereby granted to the governing body of any county, city, or town to appropriate such amounts as it may deem necessary to provide a veterans services program, and the expenditure of such funds is hereby declared to be for a public purpose; such program shall be operated in affiliation with this Department as set forth above and in compliance with Department policies and procedures.
- (24) Contribute each fiscal year to each county that applies for it an amount for the maintenance and operation of a county veterans services program. Participating counties shall furnish the Department such reports, accountings, and other information at such times and in such form as the Department may require. The amount contributed to each county under this subdivision shall be as follows:
 - a. If funds appropriated to the Department for contributions under this subdivision exceed the total amount of county requests received by December 31 of each year, the contribution to each county shall be the full amount requested by each county.
 - b. If the funds appropriated to the Department for contributions under this subdivision are insufficient to fund the full amount of county requests received by December 31 of each year, the contribution to each county shall be a pro rata share of the amount appropriated to the Department for contributions under this section, up to the amount requested by the county. (2015-241, ss. 24.1(b), 24.2; 2015-268, s. 7.3(a); 2017-57, s. 19.1(d).)