



STATE OF WASHINGTON
VETERANS AFFAIRS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
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Meeting Minutes

Meeting attended by (VAAC Member)	Bob Wallace, Bob Garrison, Jim Sims, Charles Wharton, Shellie Willis & Tom Davis										
Date	March 23, 2022										
Time	10:30 – 1:00 pm										
Location	American Legion Post 91, 721 E. Fairhaven Avenue, Burling, WA										
Call to Order	Bob Wallace, VAAC Member										
Welcome & Invocation	Welcome by Bob Wallace Invocation by Chuck Wharton, VAAC Member VAAC Chair Welcome – Jim Sims WDVA Director Welcome – Alfie Alvarado-Ramos										
Presentations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WDVA Brief by Rafael Lozano – Below are documents that outline all the different services that WA State Department of Veterans Affairs offer for veterans and their families in Washington States • Legislators have allocated funding our agency for additional staff: Olivia Burley is our new staff who will be doing outreach as well as working with our community partners as our agency military spouse liaison; Robin Lang is our LGBTQ+ Coordinator is going to be doing outreach as well as assisting veterans in this group from helping a veteran upgrade their character of discharge especially those that were given a dishonorable discharge due to their sexual orientation, helping with accessing and filing for both federal and state benefits they earned thru their service to US Armed Forces <div style="text-align: center; margin: 10px 0;"> 2021 Fast Facts.pdf 2020 Counseling and Wellness Provid </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2022 Legislative Update – Heidi Audette Below are the bills that were approved and passed during Legislative Session January 2022 – March 2022. <p>Veteran / Military Bill Tracking including Actions for WDVA Teams</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 10%;">Bill Number</th> <th style="width: 20%;">Title</th> <th style="width: 20%;">Sponsor (Combined)</th> <th style="width: 15%;">Status</th> <th style="width: 35%;">Bill Summary</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>HB 1122</td> <td>State guard</td> <td>(Lovick)</td> <td>Del to Gov</td> <td>Eliminates the age restriction for enlistment with the Washington State Guard. Allows the adjutant</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Bill Number	Title	Sponsor (Combined)	Status	Bill Summary	HB 1122	State guard	(Lovick)	Del to Gov	Eliminates the age restriction for enlistment with the Washington State Guard. Allows the adjutant
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		retirement age			general to extend the service age of an active member of the Guard under certain conditions.	
	<u>E2SHB 1181</u>	Veterans & military suicide	APP(Orwall)	Del to Gov	Creates various outreach programs and other services to prevent suicide among veterans and military service members. Establishes a veterans suicide prevention emblem for license plates. Requires certain buildings, bridges, ferries, and parks to display a sign with the 988 National Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Crisis Hotline. Allows the Secretary of State to raise funds for a Washington State Global War on Terror Memorial.	Action: Prevention Team
	<u>SHB 1286</u>	Psychology compact	HCW(Chambers)	C 5 L 22	Adopts the Psychology Interjurisdictional Compact to allow professionals who are licensed in a compact state to provide psychological services with telecommunication technologies and temporary in-person practice.	Info: M Spouse Liaison
	<u>ESHB 1357</u>	Voters' pamphlets overseas	SGOV(Mosbrucker)	Del to Gov	Requires county auditors to mail or send a printable electronic version of the statewide and local voters' pamphlets to service and overseas voters who request them. Contains a null and void clause	
	<u>SHB 1642</u>	National guard ed. grants	CWD(Leavitt)	Del to Gov	Modifies eligibility requirements and the award amount for the Washington National Guard Postsecondary Education Grant program.	
	<u>ESHB 1733</u>	Long-term care/exemptions	APP(Paul)	C 2 L 22	Establishes exemptions from the payment of premiums under the Long-Term Services and Supports Trust Program for certain veterans, spouses and registered domestic partners of military service members, non-immigrant temporary workers, and employees who work in Washington and maintain a primary residence outside of Washington.	Info: Employment Action: Comments to website information available
	<u>SB 5518</u>	OT licensure compact	(Muzzall)	C 152 L 22	Adopts the Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact (compact) to allow professionals who are licensed in a compact state to provide interstate occupational therapy services.	Info: M Spouse Liaison
	<u>ESSB 5874</u>	Military student residency	HEWD(Nobles)	Del to Gov	Expands residency for in-state tuition purposes for active-duty military, National Guard, reservists, veteran, and dependent students. Includes state-registered domestic partners as eligible dependents of active-duty military members, National Guard members, reservists, and veterans. Adds definitions in the residency statute for "child" and "National Guard." Modifies residency for certain students to require that the student must have lived in Washington primarily for reasons other than educational for a period of one year prior to admission to a higher education institution.	

	<u>SR 8653</u>	Women in the military	(Randall)	S Adopted	Honoring Women's Army Corps (WAC) and Women in the military.
	<u>2SSB 5793</u>	State boards, etc./stipends	Wilson	Del to Gov	Authorizes stipends and reimbursement of other expenses for eligible individuals participating in class one groups. Requires agencies issuing stipends to report to the Office of Equity by 30, 2023. Requires the Office of Equity to compile agency report and report to the Governor and Legislature by August 30, 2023.
	<u>ESSB 5847</u>	Public employee PSLF info.		Del to Gov	Requires the Student Loan Advocate to create and provide information on the Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) program to public service employees. Requires the Office of Financial Management (OFM) to develop a program for state agencies to certify employment for the PSLF program by July 1, 2023. Requires state agencies to certify employment for current and past employees for the PSLF program beginning July 1, 2023. Requires the OFM to work with certain entities to develop a plan for a statewide initiative for increasing access and removing barriers for the PSLF program for all public service employees by December 1, 2024. Establishes a calculation for part-time academic employees' duties outside of assigned in-class teaching to be counted towards full-time employment for the PSLF program.

Presentations

- Suicide Prevention and Awareness and Governor's Challenge on ending Suicide among Service Members, Veterans, and their Families – Jennifer Prewitt & Constance O'Brien



WDVA Suicide
Prevention Overview

Above is a copy of the presentation.

Phone Numbers to call or share with individual in crisis are:

- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline – 800-273-8255 and press 1
- Remain on the line with the veteran and don't leave them alone
- Be transparent and honest and reassure them that you will be with them every step of the way until the veteran is connected to the resources they need
- If you come across with any individual who calls for help, please make sure to connect them to the nearest resources in your respective communities
- Passing of E2SHB - Establishing programs and measures to prevent suicide among veterans and military members

Brief Summary of Bill

- Provides for various outreach and services related to preventing suicide among veterans and military service members.
 - Creates the Veterans and Military Members Suicide Prevention Account and a suicide prevention community-based services grant program.
 - Extends and modifies the Suicide-Safer Homes Task Force.
 - Establishes a new special vehicle license plate emblem
- Veterans Readiness & Employment (VR & E) Chapter 31 – Chad Decerrano
 - Chapter 31 or VR & E is a benefit available to eligible veterans with service-connected disabilities prepare them to find and keep suitable jobs. For veterans with severe service-connected disabilities that the veteran cannot immediately consider work, VR & E offers services to improve their ability to live as independently as possible. Entitlement and eligibility, the veteran or service member must meet the criteria for entitlement and the determination for eligibility are made by several factors.



Veteran Readiness
and Employment 03

Copy of PPT for more information

- Skagit County Housing and Community Service – Sarah Hinman
 - Skagit County Housing & Community Service – is the office that handles housing and community services to residents in the county. Their office also handles the county’s Veterans Assistance Funds. The county also has a full-time staff which is their County Veterans Service Officer (CVSO) – the Veterans Service Officer; assist veterans and family members with requesting military personal records, medical records, DD214 as well as assist filing for federal and state benefits that veterans earned for their service.

- Women Veterans Advisory Committee – Shellie Willis
 - Shellie covered information on the Women Veterans Advisory Committee – members of this committee comprise of women veterans from different branch of service as well as different era. The committee’s mission:
To ensure that Washington’s women veterans have equitable access to earned federal and state benefits. Website can be access as:
<https://www.dva.wa.gov/councils-committees/women-veterans>

- Employment Security Department – Paul Pelot
 - WorkSource is available to everyone in Skagit County at:
www.worksourcewa.com
 - Veterans also have priority service by Disabled Veterans Outreach Coordinator or Local Veterans Employment Representatives in the Office. They can help reduce barriers to work by helping with transportation, wardrobe, work-required tools, or other gear. WorkSource also partners with WDVA to provide the Veterans Innovations Program and Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program benefits to veterans who qualify. (More info at www.dva.wa.gov)
 - Other programs include the YesVets hiring initiative – www.yesvets.org

Q & A

- All
 - Concern about veterans and/or family members application for the County Veterans Assistance Fund especially during the funding and ongoing. Veterans and/or family members could not access due to income threshold – in some cases the veteran or family members are only a few dollars off to meet the income threshold – why is there a different qualification in different counties and how can residents of the county request that the County Veterans Assistance Fund across the state have similar guidelines.
 - Suggestion is for residents to recommend to their respective County Commissioners that guideline on the administration of the Veterans Assistance Fund be modified when it comes to income threshold to have

	a caveat “applications will be reviewed on a case by base basis when the veteran and/or their family don’t qualify due to the household income.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Meeting Adjourned