

House Bill 2845

Sponsored by Representatives EVANS, LEWIS, HELFRICH, MCLAIN; Senators MEEK, PATTERSON (Presession filed.)

SUMMARY

The following summary is not prepared by the sponsors of the measure and is not a part of the body thereof subject to consideration by the Legislative Assembly. It is an editor's brief statement of the essential features of the measure **as introduced**. The statement includes a measure digest written in compliance with applicable readability standards.

Digest: Makes ODVA create more positions and hire staff. Makes ODVA create pilot programs on suicide prevention and workforce training. Makes ODOT accept an ID issued by USDOD or USDVA. (Flesch Readability Score: 65.7).

Requires an appropriation to the Department of Veterans' Affairs from the General Fund to be in an amount not less than \$10,000,000 in 2015 dollars, adjusted for inflation.

Requires the Director of Veterans' Affairs to add additional full-time positions within the department.

Allows the director to appoint a deputy director, subject to approval by the Governor. Requires the director and deputy director to be a veteran who has received a discharge or release under other than dishonorable conditions.

Directs the department to develop and implement one or more pilot programs for suicide prevention and workforce training and preparation. Allows moneys in the Veterans' Services Fund to be used for the pilot programs.

Requires the Department of Transportation to accept, for issuing a driver license, an identification card issued by the United States Department of Defense or the United States Department of Veterans Affairs.

A BILL FOR AN ACT

Relating to veterans; creating new provisions; and amending ORS 406.020 and 807.040.

Be It Enacted by the People of the State of Oregon:

SECTION 1. This 2025 Act shall be known and may be cited as the 2025 Oregon Veterans' Services Supplemental Investments Initiative.

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS APPROPRIATIONS FROM THE GENERAL FUND

SECTION 2. An appropriation to the Department of Veterans' Affairs out of the General Fund may not be in an amount that is less than less \$10,000,000, as measured in 2015 and adjusted for inflation as calculated by the Legislative Fiscal Office.

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS ADDITIONAL STAFF POSITIONS

SECTION 3. The Director of Veterans' Affairs shall establish, hire for and staff within the Department of Veterans' Affairs the following additional full-time equivalent positions:

- (1) Two incarcerated veterans coordinators.**
- (2) One women veterans coordinator**
- (3) One addiction services coordinator.**
- (4) One behavioral health coordinator.**

NOTE: Matter in **boldfaced** type in an amended section is new; matter *[italic and bracketed]* is existing law to be omitted. New sections are in **boldfaced** type.

- 1 (5) One state approving agency staff.
- 2 (6) Two houseless veterans coordinators.
- 3 (7) Two financial recovery ombudspersons.
- 4 (8) One bridge grant support coordinator.

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6 **DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS**
7 **QUALIFICATIONS TO BE DIRECTOR OR DEPUTY DIRECTOR**
8

9 **SECTION 4.** ORS 406.020 is amended to read:

10 406.020. The Department of Veterans' Affairs shall be under the supervision and control of the
11 Director of Veterans' Affairs. The Governor shall appoint the director subject to confirmation by
12 the Senate in the manner provided in ORS 171.562 and 171.565. The appointment may not be made
13 without the written approval of the Advisory Committee provided for in ORS 406.210. The director
14 shall be a veteran[,] **who received a discharge or release under other than dishonorable con-**
15 **ditions**, chosen on the basis of executive and administrative ability.

16 **SECTION 5.** The Director of Veterans' Affairs, subject to approval by the Governor, may
17 **appoint a deputy director. The deputy director must be a veteran who received a discharge**
18 **or release under other than dishonorable conditions. The deputy director serves at the**
19 **pleasure of the director, has full authority to act for the director and is subject to the con-**
20 **trol of the director. The appointment of the deputy director shall be by written order filed**
21 **with the Secretary of State.**

22
23 **VETERANS SUICIDE PREVENTION PILOT PROGRAMS**
24

25 **SECTION 6.** (1) As used in this section, "veteran" has the meaning given that term in
26 ORS 408.225. "Veteran" includes a disabled veteran as defined in ORS 408.225.

27 (2) The Department of Veterans' Affairs shall develop and implement one or more pilot
28 programs for suicide prevention and workforce preparation. The purpose of the pilot pro-
29 grams is to help veterans with suicide prevention and transition to the workforce and busi-
30 ness community.

31 (3) The department shall implement the pilot programs under this section by awarding
32 grants to:

33 (a) Entities involved in pairing suicide prevention and housing with workforce training
34 and preparation in the agriculture, fishery, forestry or natural resources industries; and

35 (b) Entities that provide temporary, low-barrier suicide prevention programs.

36 (4) The department shall:

37 (a) Develop criteria for entities that provide programs for suicide prevention and
38 workforce training and preparation;

39 (b) By rule, establish processes and procedures for veterans to apply for assistance from
40 entities identified in subsection (3) of this section; and

41 (c) Prioritize awarding grants to entities that provide opportunities for veterans to par-
42 ticipate in the veterans' local communities.

43 (5) The department may solicit and accept gifts, grants and donations from public and
44 private sources to further the purposes of this section.

45 (6) The department may use moneys in the Veterans' Services Fund established pursuant

1 to Article XV, section 4f, of the Oregon Constitution, to develop, implement and maintain the
2 pilot programs under this section.

3 (7) The department may adopt rules to implement the provisions of this section.

4 **SECTION 7.** On or before November 15, 2026, the Department of Veterans' Affairs shall
5 prepare and submit a report to the interim committees of the Legislative Assembly related
6 to veterans' services on the status of pilot programs developed and implemented under sec-
7 tion 6 of this 2025 Act.

8 **SECTION 8.** (1) Section 6 of this 2025 Act is repealed on January 2, 2028.

9 (2) All moneys for the pilot programs developed and implemented under section 6 of this
10 2025 Act that are unexpended and unobligated on the date of the repeal of section 6 of this
11 2025 Act shall revert to the Veterans' Services Fund and become available for use pursuant
12 to Article XV, section 4f, of the Oregon Constitution.

13
14 **DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**
15 **PROOF OF VETERAN STATUS**
16

17 **SECTION 9.** ORS 807.040 is amended to read:

18 807.040. (1) The Department of Transportation shall issue a driver license to any person who
19 complies with all of the following requirements:

20 (a) The person must complete an application for a license under ORS 807.050.

21 (b)(A) As required by ORS 807.021, a person applying for a driver license or driver permit must
22 provide the Social Security number assigned to the person by the United States Social Security
23 Administration or a written statement that the person has not been assigned a Social Security
24 number.

25 (B) As used in this paragraph, a "driver license" or "driver permit" means a driver license or
26 driver permit that is not a:

27 (i) Real ID;

28 (ii) Commercial driver license; or

29 (iii) Commercial learner driver permit.

30 (c) The person must submit to collection of biometric data by the department that establish the
31 identity of the person as described in ORS 807.024.

32 (d) The person must not be ineligible for the license under ORS 807.060 and must be eligible for
33 the license under ORS 807.062.

34 (e) The person must successfully pass all examination requirements under ORS 807.070 for the
35 class of license sought.

36 (f) The person must pay the appropriate license fee under ORS 807.370 for the class of license
37 sought.

38 (g) The person must pay the Student Driver Training Fund eligibility fee.

39 (h) If the application is for a commercial driver license, the person must be the holder of a Class
40 C license or any higher class of license.

41 (i) If the application is for a commercial driver license, the department must have received and
42 recorded, in a form approved by the department, the report of a medical examination that establishes
43 that the person meets the medical requirements to operate a commercial motor vehicle. The de-
44 partment, by rule, shall establish medical requirements for purposes of this paragraph. The medical
45 requirements established under this paragraph may include any requirements the department deter-

1 mines are necessary for the safe operation of vehicles permitted to be operated under the class of
 2 license for which the requirements are established.

3 (j) If the application is for a Real ID commercial driver license or a commercial driver license
 4 that is not a Real ID, the person must:

5 (A) Have at least one year's driving experience, including relevant experience obtained in the
 6 military;

7 (B) Not be subject to a lifetime suspension of commercial driving privileges under ORS 809.520;

8 (C) Not be otherwise ineligible to hold a commercial driver license;

9 (D) Hold a commercial learner driver permit if the person must complete a skills demonstration
 10 under ORS 807.070 (3);

11 (E) Submit valid documentation, as defined by the department by rule, that the person is a citi-
 12 zen or lawful permanent resident of the United States or is a citizen of a country with a Compact
 13 of Free Association with the United States; and

14 (F) Provide the Social Security number assigned to the person by the United States Social Se-
 15 curity Administration for verification by the department with the administration.

16 (k) The person must present acceptable documents to prove identity, date of birth and address.
 17 The department shall determine by rule which documents are acceptable to prove identity, date of
 18 birth and address.

19 (L) If the application is for a Real ID, the person must comply with the requirements under the
 20 vehicle code for issuance of Real IDs.

21 (2) Except as provided in subsection (3) of this section, acceptable documents to prove identity,
 22 date of birth or address under subsection (1)(k) of this section when a person is applying for a driver
 23 license, driver permit or identification card that is not a Real ID, a commercial driver license, or
 24 a commercial learner driver permit, include but are not limited to the following:

25 (a) An unexpired valid passport from the person's country of citizenship;

26 (b) An unexpired valid consular identification document issued by the consulate of the person's
 27 country of citizenship, if the department determines that the procedure used in issuing the consular
 28 identification document is sufficient to prove the person's identity;

29 (c) A driver license, driver permit or identification card issued by this state that expired not
 30 more than 13 years from the date of the current application; [or]

31 (d) A driver license, driver permit or identification card issued by another state that:

32 (A) Is unexpired; or

33 (B) Expired not more than one year from the date of the current application[.]; or

34 (e) **An identification card issued by the United States Department of Defense or the**
 35 **United States Department of Veterans Affairs.**

36 (3) The department may refuse to accept any document described in subsection (2) of this section
 37 that is presented as proof of identity, date of birth or address, if the department has reason to be-
 38 lieve that:

39 (a) The document is fraudulent, has been altered or does not belong to the person presenting the
 40 document; or

41 (b) The procedures used by the agency that issued the document are no longer sufficient for
 42 proving a person's identity or date of birth.

43 (4) Subsection (1)(j)(E) of this section does not apply to a limited term commercial driver license
 44 or a limited term commercial learner driver permit issued under ORS 807.730.

45 (5) The department shall work with other agencies and organizations to attempt to improve the

1 issuance system for driver licenses.

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CAPTIONS

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5 **SECTION 10. The unit captions used in this 2025 Act are provided only for the conven-**
6 **ience of the reader and do not become part of the statutory law of this state or express any**
7 **legislative intent in the enactment of this 2025 Act.**

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