

HB 2845-11
(LC 1227)
4/7/25 (CPA/ps)

Requested by Representative EVANS

**PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO
HOUSE BILL 2845**

On page 1 of the printed bill, line 2, after “provisions;” delete the rest of the line and insert “amending ORS 192.390, 406.020, 406.140, 406.462, 408.115 and 408.425; and declaring an emergency.”.

Delete lines 4 through 22 and delete pages 2 through 5 and insert:

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

“FUNDING GOAL

“SECTION 2. It is the goal of the Legislative Assembly to fund the Department of Veterans’ Affairs at a level that is no less than \$10,000,000, from the General Fund, as measured in 2015 and adjusted for inflation as calculated by the Legislative Fiscal Office.

“ADDITIONAL STAFF POSITIONS

“SECTION 3. (1) No later than the dates specified in subsections (2), (3) and (4) of this section, the Director of Veterans’ Affairs shall establish, hire for and staff within the Department of Veterans’ Affairs the following additional full-time equivalent positions:

“(a) Two coordinators for incarcerated veterans.

1 **“(b) One women veterans coordinator**

2 **“(c) One addiction services coordinator.**

3 **“(d) One behavioral health coordinator.**

4 **“(e) One state approving agency staff.**

5 **“(f) Two coordinators for houseless veterans.**

6 **“(g) Two financial recovery ombudspersons.**

7 **“(h) One bridge grant support coordinator.**

8 **“(i) One veterans employment coordinator.**

9 **“(2) The director shall establish, hire for and staff four of the posi-**
10 **tions listed in subsection (1) of this section no later than July 1, 2026.**

11 **Three of the positions must be:**

12 **“(a) One coordinator for incarcerated veterans.**

13 **“(b) One addiction services coordinator.**

14 **“(c) One veterans employment coordinator.**

15 **“(3) The director shall establish, hire for and staff four of the re-**
16 **maining positions listed in subsection (1) of this section no later than**
17 **July 1, 2027.**

18 **“(4) The director shall establish, hire for and staff the four re-**
19 **maining positions listed in subsection (1) of this section no later than**
20 **July 1, 2028.**

21 **“SECTION 4. The position of Veterans Employment Coordinator is**
22 **created in the Department of Veterans’ Affairs. The responsibilities**
23 **of the coordinator include, but are not limited to, all of the following:**

24 **“(1) Assisting veterans with finding employment.**

25 **“(2) Providing veterans with career and job resources.**

26 **“(3) Serving as a liaison between the Department of Veterans’ Af-**
27 **fairs and county veterans’ service officers.**

28 **“(4) Contacting any service member who separates from the Oregon**
29 **National Guard within two weeks from the date of separation.**

30 **“(5) Contacting any service member who separates from the Armed**

1 **Forces of the United States and who resides in or is moving into this**
2 **state within two weeks from the date the coordinator is informed of**
3 **the service member separating and residing in or moving into this**
4 **state.**

5
6 **“DIRECTOR AND DEPUTY DIRECTOR**

7
8 **“SECTION 5.** ORS 406.020 is amended to read:

9 “406.020. The Department of Veterans’ Affairs shall be under the super-
10 vision and control of the Director of Veterans’ Affairs. The Governor shall
11 appoint the director subject to confirmation by the Senate in the manner
12 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
14 406.210. The director shall be a veteran[,] **who received a discharge or**
15 **release under other than dishonorable conditions,** chosen on the basis
16 of executive and administrative ability.

17 **“SECTION 6. The Director of Veterans’ Affairs, subject to approval**
18 **by the Governor, may appoint a deputy director. In appointing a dep-**
19 **uty director, the director shall consider the experience that a veteran**
20 **may bring if a veteran is appointed to the position. The deputy director**
21 **serves at the pleasure of the director, has full authority to act for the**
22 **director and is subject to the control of the director.**

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

25
26 **“SECTION 7. (1) As used in this section, ‘veteran’ has the meaning**
27 **given that term in ORS 408.225. ‘Veteran’ includes a disabled veteran**
28 **as defined in ORS 408.225.**

29 **“(2) The Department of Veterans’ Affairs shall develop and imple-**
30 **ment one or more pilot programs for suicide prevention and workforce**

1 preparation. The purpose of the pilot programs is to help veterans with
2 suicide prevention and transition to the workforce and business com-
3 munity.

4 “(3) The department shall implement the pilot programs under this
5 section by awarding grants through a request for proposal process to:

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

9 “(b) Entities that provide temporary, low-barrier suicide prevention
10 programs; and

11 “(c) Courtney Place Veterans Housing.

12 “(4) The department shall:

13 “(a) Develop criteria for entities that provide programs for suicide
14 prevention and workforce training and preparation;

15 “(b) By rule, establish processes and procedures for veterans to ap-
16 ply for assistance from entities identified in subsection (3) of this sec-
17 tion; and

18 “(c) Prioritize awarding grants to entities that provide opportunities
19 for veterans to participate in the veterans’ local communities.

20 “(5) The department may solicit and accept gifts, grants and do-
21 nations from public and private sources to further the purposes of this
22 section.

23 “(6)(a) The department may use moneys in the Veterans’ Services
24 Fund established pursuant to Article XV, section 4f, of the Oregon
25 Constitution, to develop, implement and maintain the pilot programs
26 under this section.

27 “(b) The department shall use moneys in the Veterans’ Services
28 Fund established pursuant to Article XV, section 4f, of the Oregon
29 Constitution, for the initial moneys used to develop, implement and
30 maintain the pilot programs under this section.

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

3 “SECTION 8. Not later than January 2, 2027, the Department of
4 Veterans’ Affairs shall prepare and submit a report to the interim
5 committees of the Legislative Assembly related to veterans on the
6 status of pilot programs developed and implemented under section 7
7 of this 2025 Act.

8 “SECTION 9. (1) Section 7 of this 2025 Act is repealed on January
9 2, 2028.

10 “(2) All moneys for the pilot programs developed and implemented
11 under section 7 of this 2025 Act that are unexpended and unobligated
12 on the date of the repeal of section 7 of this 2025 Act shall revert to
13 the Veterans’ Services Fund and become available for use pursuant to
14 Article XV, section 4f, of the Oregon Constitution.

15
16 **“VETERANS’ SERVICES FUND**

17
18 “SECTION 10. ORS 406.140 is amended to read:

19 “406.140. There is established in the State Treasury, separate and distinct
20 from the General Fund, the Veterans’ Services Fund, to be administered by
21 the Oregon Department of Administrative Services. Interest earned by the
22 fund is credited to the fund. Pursuant to Article XV, section 4f, of the
23 Oregon Constitution, one and one-half percent of the net proceeds from the
24 Oregon State Lottery shall be deposited in the Veterans’ Services Fund. All
25 moneys transferred from the State Lottery Fund and all other moneys au-
26 thorized to be transferred to the Veterans’ Services Fund from whatever
27 source are appropriated continuously to provide services for the benefit of
28 veterans. **The department shall hold no more than 12 percent of the**
29 **fund in reserve.**

1 **“COUNTY VETERANS’ SERVICE OFFICER PROGRAM**

2
3 **“SECTION 11.** ORS 406.462 is amended to read:

4 **“406.462. (1)** Moneys appropriated to the Director of Veterans’ Affairs for
5 the purposes described in ORS 406.450 must be distributed to county gov-
6 erning bodies and expended for the purposes of ORS 406.450 and may not be
7 used to supplant moneys currently budgeted by the director for services
8 provided by county veterans’ service officers.

9 **“(2) The director shall distribute moneys appropriated to the direc-**
10 **tor for the purposes described in ORS 406.450 on a quarterly basis as**
11 **follows:**

12 **“(a) Each fiscal year, the director shall notify each county govern-**
13 **ing body of the amount of moneys to be distributed to the county**
14 **governing body for the fiscal year.**

15 **“(b) The county governing body shall provide the director a copy**
16 **of the county’s budget for the services to be provided by the county**
17 **veterans’ service officer for the fiscal year.**

18 **“(c) At the end of each calendar quarter, the county governing body**
19 **shall provide the director a report on the moneys the county expended**
20 **during the calendar quarter for the services provided by the county**
21 **veterans’ service officer.**

22 **“(d) Upon receipt of the county governing body’s quarterly report,**
23 **the director shall distribute to the county governing body a portion**
24 **of moneys allocated to the county governing body in an amount that**
25 **is based on the proportion of all moneys budgeted for all services**
26 **provided by county veterans’ service officers that were expended dur-**
27 **ing the calendar quarter.**

28 **“(e) At the end of each calendar quarter, the county governing body**
29 **may also provide the director documentation for moneys the county**
30 **expended during a previous calendar quarter in the fiscal year for the**

1 services provided by the county veterans' service officer that the
2 county had not previously reported to the director and for which the
3 county governing body has not received a distribution of moneys from
4 the director. Upon receipt of the documentation, the director shall
5 distribute to the county governing body a portion of moneys allocated
6 to the county governing body in an amount that is based on the pro-
7 portion of all moneys budgeted for all services provided by county
8 veterans' service officers that were expended during the calendar
9 quarter within which the county expended the moneys for which the
10 county governing body provided the director documentation.

11 “(3) At the end of each fiscal year, the director shall calculate the
12 remaining moneys not distributed during the fiscal year and distribute
13 the remaining moneys using a formula established under ORS 406.454
14 to each county governing body that expended 90 percent or more of the
15 moneys that the county budgeted for services provided by the county
16 veterans' service officer for the fiscal year as specified under sub-
17 section (2)(b) of this section. The director shall distribute the remain-
18 ing moneys within 90 days from the last date of the fiscal year.

19 “[2)] (4) Notwithstanding subsection (1) of this section, the director may
20 reduce the amount of moneys distributed to county governing bodies for
21 county veterans' service officers if there is a decrease in the amount of
22 General Fund or State Lottery Fund revenues appropriated to the director
23 for the purposes described in ORS 406.450 for the same period of time.

24 **“SECTION 12. Not later than January 2, 2027, the Department of**
25 **Veterans' Affairs shall prepare and submit a report to the interim**
26 **committees of the Legislative Assembly related to veterans and the**
27 **Association of Oregon Counties on the distribution of moneys under**
28 **the process provided by the amendments to ORS 406.462 by section 11**
29 **of this 2025 Act.**

1 **“COUNTY RECORDS: VETERAN DISCHARGE PAPERS**

2
3 **“SECTION 13.** ORS 408.425 is amended to read:

4 “408.425. (1) Each county clerk who receives a request to inspect veteran
5 discharge papers that are recorded under ORS 408.420 shall produce the re-
6 corded discharge papers for inspection if:

7 “(a) The request for inspection is made in writing;

8 “(b) The request sets forth the name, address and telephone number of the
9 requester;

10 “(c) The request sets forth the name and the date of birth or the last four
11 digits of the Social Security number of the veteran; and

12 “(d) The request is made by:

13 “(A) The veteran or [*the spouse, legal guardian*] **a person holding a**
14 **power of attorney for the veteran** or personal representative of the vet-
15 eran; **or**

16 “[(B) *A county veterans’ service officer appointed under ORS 408.410;*]

17 “[(C) *A representative of the Department of Veterans’ Affairs; or*]

18 “[(D)] **(B)** A licensed funeral establishment seeking to ascertain if a
19 decedent was a veteran for the purpose of obtaining veteran’s burial benefits.

20 “(2) This section does not create a cause of action and may not be as-
21 serted as the basis of a per se negligence claim.

22 “(3) Each county clerk may adopt additional policies in order to protect
23 recorded discharge papers from malicious or unlawful use and policies re-
24 garding copying of recorded discharge papers.

25 “(4) Each county clerk shall maintain in the records of the county clerk
26 a copy of each request for inspection of recorded discharge information for
27 a period of at least 10 years after the date the request is received by the
28 county clerk.

29 **“SECTION 14.** ORS 192.390 is amended to read:

30 “192.390. (1) Notwithstanding ORS 192.338, 192.345 and 192.355 and except

as otherwise provided in ORS 192.398, public records that are more than 25 years old shall be available for inspection.

“(2) This section does not apply to records that are exempt from disclosure pursuant to ORS 192.355 (37) or 408.425.

“VETERAN EDUCATIONAL BRIDGE GRANT PROGRAM

“SECTION 15. ORS 408.115 is amended to read:

“408.115. (1) The Veteran Educational Bridge Grant Program is established within the Department of Veterans’ Affairs. Under the program, the department shall conduct outreach and provide grants to veterans who:

“(a) Are pursuing and enrolled in a course of study that is in or part of:

“(A) Any program for which United States Department of Veterans Affairs education benefits may be used;

“(B) A career school licensed under ORS 345.010 to 345.340;

“(C) An apprenticeship program that is registered with the State Apprenticeship and Training Council; or

“(D) An on-the-job training program offered by a public employer;

“[(b)(A) Are eligible to receive federal, state or other financial assistance based on prior service in the Armed Forces of the United States; or]

“[(B) Demonstrate a need for student financial aid from any federal or state assistance program, including Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965;]

“[(c)(A)] **(b)(A)** Are unable to complete a degree, apprenticeship or training program within the expected completion period because one or more required courses or apprenticeship or training hours are not available until a later date; [or]

“(B) Have debt on a student account due to an overpayment of federal or state tuition benefits or prior course withdrawal that prevents enrollment in a future term; [and] **or**

“(C) Are experiencing an instance of financial hardship that is in-

1 **terfering with or could endanger the ability to remain enrolled in a**
2 **degree, apprenticeship or training program; and**

3 “[(d)] (c) Are making satisfactory academic **or training** progress [*or*
4 *progress*] in a program described in paragraph (a) of this subsection.

5 “(2) Grants under the program:

6 “(a) May not exceed [\$5,000] **\$10,000** per veteran; and

7 “(b) May be made only when there are sufficient moneys in the Veteran
8 Educational Bridge Grant Program Fund established under ORS 408.125 to
9 make the grants.

10 “(3) The Department of Veterans’ Affairs shall adopt rules for the imple-
11 mentation and operation of the program, including eligibility requirements
12 for grant applicants.

13 “(4) As used in this section, ‘veteran’ has the meaning given that term in
14 ORS 408.225 and includes disabled veterans, as defined in ORS 408.225.

15 16 **“VETERANS’ COURT**

17
18 **“SECTION 16. (1) The Department of Veterans’ Affairs shall work**
19 **with the Oregon Criminal Justice Commission and the Judicial De-**
20 **partment to develop a plan for establishing and maintaining a**
21 **veterans’ court in each county or judicial district.**

22 **“(2) The Judicial Department shall submit a report on the plan in**
23 **the manner provided by ORS 192.245, and may include recommen-**
24 **dations for legislation, to the interim committees of the Legislative**
25 **Assembly related to veterans no later than September 15, 2026.**

26 **“(3) As used in this section, ‘veterans’ court’ means a specialized**
27 **court or court program for defendants who are military veterans.**

28 **“SECTION 17. Section 16 of this 2025 Act is repealed on January 2,**
29 **2027.**

