

HB 4132 -1 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Emergency Management and Veterans

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Sub-Referral To: Joint Committee On Ways and Means

Meeting Dates: 2/5, 2/12

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

The measure creates the 2026 Oregon Veterans' Services Supplemental Investments Initiative. It takes effect on July 1, 2026.

Detailed Summary

- Provides legislative intent to fund the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs (ODVA) with no less than \$10 million from the General Fund, as measured in 2015 and adjusted for inflation as calculated by the Legislative Fiscal Office.
- Creates 12 full-time positions at the department; requires the director to establish and hire five of these positions no later than July 1, 2028; four positions by July 1, 2030, and three positions by July 1, 2032; lists position descriptions.
- Establishes the Veterans Employment Coordinator at the department; defines responsibilities and duties.
- Clarifies that the Director of ODVA shall be veteran, who received a discharge or release under other than dishonorable conditions.
- Allows, with Governor approval, the ODVA Director to hire a Deputy Director after consideration of their veteran experience.
- For purposes of establishing the **Veteran Suicide Prevention Grant Program** at ODVA, the measure:
 - Describes grant making process; allows the use of the Veteran Services Fund for grantmaking
 - Allows the department to solicit and accept gifts, grants, and donations for grantmaking; allows for rulemaking
 - Requires ODVA to submit a report to the interim committee of the Legislative Assembly related to veterans on the grant program by January 2, 2028
 - Repeals program on January 2, 2029; reverts unexpended funds back to the Veterans Services Fund
- Amends provisions of the Veterans Services Fund (ORS 406.140) to require the department to hold no more than 12 percent of the fund in reserve.
- For purposes of amending the **County Veterans Service Officer Program**, the measure:
 - Includes provisions for new county notifications
 - Establishes quarterly reporting and documentation for counties
 - Requires the director to use a distribution formula to distribute remaining funds within 90 days of the last date of the fiscal year to qualified counties
 - Allows the director to decrease program funds if there is a decrease in State Lottery Fund.
 - Requires the department to report to the interim Legislative committees related to veterans and to the Association of Counties, on the fund distribution process, no later than January 2, 2030
- Amends statutes regarding county records and requests to inspect veteran discharge papers.
- Amends provisions related to the Veteran Educational Bridge Grant program; raises maximum grant amount from \$5,000 to \$10,000.
- Requires the Judicial Department, in consultation with the Oregon Criminal Justice Commission, to study methods for providing access to veterans' treatment courts (as defined in ORS 3.450) to the residents of each county or judicial district; describes reporting and consultation requirements; requires the report be submitted to the interim committee of the Legislative Assembly related to military and veterans no later than November 1, 2026. Repeals Act on January 2, 2027.

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- Requires unexpended and unobligated moneys in the Employer Incentive Fund for bienniums ending June 30, be transferred on July 1 of each odd year to the Veterans Services Fund.
- Requires unexpended and unobligated moneys in the School Districts Unfunded Liability Fund for the biennium ending June 30, be transferred on July 1 of each odd year to the Veterans Services Fund.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Suicide prevention and mental health efforts for Veterans
- Proposed positions at ODVA and questions about service-related specialties
- Funding mechanisms

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

- 1 The amendment removes provisions related to the Employer Incentive Fund and the School Districts Unfunded Liability Fund; reorders chapter numbers

Fiscal impact: May have fiscal impact, but no statement yet issued

Revenue impact: No revenue impact

BACKGROUND:

The mission of the ODVA is to honor and serve all Oregon veterans and their families by aligning and delivering earned benefits and services that enhance and improve their lives in recognition of their service to our nation. According to the US Department of Veterans Affairs, there are an estimated 265,757 veterans living in Oregon, having served across five major war eras.