



Laws 2025, Chapter 30 – Military Affairs and Veterans Affairs (S.F. No. 1959)

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Article 1

Military Affairs and Veterans Affairs Appropriations

Sections 1-3 appropriate money and make transfers from the general fund and other named funds for operations of the Department of Military Affairs and the Department of Veterans Affairs, as detailed on the spreadsheet prepared by Andrew Erickson, Fiscal Analyst.

Section 4 extends two appropriations made in the 2023 legislative session for Metro Meals on Wheels and Every Third Saturday.

Article 2

Military Affairs and Veterans Affairs Policy

Section 1 (13.461, subd. 27) amends the data practices act to reflect the proposed amendment to section 197.065 in section 6.

Section 2 (192.49) contains a conforming change related to the proposal in section 4 to provide five percent of an officer's base pay as a pension offset for those activated for state active duty.

Section 3 (192.49) contains a conforming change related to the proposal in section 4 to provide five percent of enlisted servicemember's base pay as a pension offset for those activated for state active duty.

Section 4 (192.49) adds five percent of servicemember base pay as a pension offset for those activated for state active duty. This proposal is intended to reward members of the National Guard for state active service days, which are currently not recognized for purposes of determining their federal pension. (Only federal active service days are credited towards a service member's pension.)

Section 5 (193.143) increases the total aggregate bond debt the State Armory Building Commission can carry at any one time from \$15 to \$45 million.

Section 6 (197.065) permits the staff of the Department of Veterans Affairs (“MDVA”) to access the MAXIS database to verify the eligibility of applicants in connection with additional programs, including the Veterans Stable Housing Initiative and programs administered by the Veterans Programs division. MAXIS is a database that is used by state and county workers to determine eligibility for public assistance and health care.

Sections 7 and 8 (197.236, subdivision 8 and 9) make technical changes to the eligibility requirements for burial in State Veterans Cemeteries to reference the specific federal statute that determines federal burial eligibility. MDVA currently uses the federal definition to determine eligibility, and this change aligns state law with department practice.

Section 9 (197.448) defines the term “veteran of the Secret War in Laos” and provides certain benefits to individuals who meet the definition.

Subdivision 1 defines a veteran of the Secret War in Laos as an individual who: (1) was naturalized by the federal Hmong Veterans’ Naturalization Act of 2000 or (2) MDVA determines served honorably with a special guerrilla unit or with irregular forces that operated from a base in Laos in support of the United States during the Secret War in Laos.

Subdivision 2 provides how and when individuals will receive benefits under this section, and lists the benefits that will be available to the individuals.

Section 10 (197.608) increases to \$160,000 the annual grant amount that the Minnesota Association of County Veterans Service Officers is eligible to receive for administration, mandated training, and other costs. Permits up to \$60,000 of the grant to be used for technical training and travel costs.

Sections 11 and 12 (197.75 and 197.791) amends the statute providing educational benefits to the surviving spouse of a deceased veteran to permit the surviving spouse to continue accessing the benefit regardless of the whether the surviving spouse remarries.

Section 13 establishes a task force to propose criteria to determine whether an individual is veteran of the Secret War in Laos under section 6.

Section 14 directs the Minnesota Department of Administration to place a memorial plaque in the court of honor on the State Capitol grounds recognizing Gold Star and Blue Star families.



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