

35A.5 Duties of the department.

The department shall do all of the following:

1. Maintain and disseminate information to veterans and the public regarding facilities, benefits, and services available to veterans and their families and assist veterans and their families in obtaining such benefits and services.
2. Maintain information and data concerning the military service records of Iowa veterans.
3. Assist county veteran affairs commissions established pursuant to chapter 35B. The department shall provide to county commissions suggested uniform benefits and administrative procedures for carrying out the functions and duties of the county commissions.
4. Permanently maintain the records including certified records of bonus applications for awards paid from the war orphans educational fund under chapter 35.
5. Collect and maintain information concerning veterans affairs.
6. Conduct two service schools each year for the Iowa association of county commissioners and executive directors.
7. Assist the United States veterans administration, the Iowa veterans home, funeral directors, and federally chartered veterans service organizations in providing information concerning veterans service records and veterans affairs data.
8. Maintain alphabetically a permanent registry of the graves of all persons who served in the military or naval forces of the United States in time of war and whose mortal remains rest in Iowa.
9. After consultation with the commission, provide training to executive directors of county commissions of veteran affairs pursuant to section 35B.6. The department may adopt rules in accordance with chapter 17A to provide for training of county veteran affairs executive directors.
10. Establish and operate a state veterans cemetery and make application to the government of the United States or any subdivision, agency, or instrumentality thereof, for funds for the purpose of establishing such a cemetery. The state may enter into agreements with any subdivision of the state for assistance in operating the cemetery. The state shall own the land on which the cemetery is located.

The department shall have the authority to accept federal grant funds, funding from state subdivisions, donations from private sources, and federal "plot allowance" payments. The department through the director shall have the authority to accept suitable cemetery land, in accordance with federal veterans cemetery grant guidelines, from the federal government, state government, state subdivisions, private sources, and any other source wishing to transfer land for use as a veterans cemetery. The department may lease or use property received pursuant to this subsection for any purpose so long as such leasing or use does not interfere with the use of the property for cemetery purposes and is not contrary to federal or state guidelines. All funds received pursuant to this subsection, including lease payments or funds generated from any activity engaged in on any property accepted pursuant to this subsection, shall be deposited into an account dedicated to the establishment, operation, and maintenance of a veterans cemetery and these funds shall be expended only for those purposes.

Notwithstanding section 8.33, any moneys in the account for a state veterans cemetery shall not revert and, notwithstanding section 12C.7, subsection 2, interest or earnings on moneys deposited in the fund shall be credited to the account.

11. Authorize the sale, trade, or transfer of veterans commemorative property pursuant to chapter 37A.
12. Adopt rules pursuant to chapter 17A and establish policy for the management and operation of the department. Prior to adopting rules, the department shall submit proposed rules to the commission for review pursuant to the requirements of section 35A.3.
13. Provide information requested by the commission concerning the management and operation of the department and the programs administered by the department.
14. Carry out the policies of the department.

2005 Acts, ch 115, §13, 40; 2006 Acts, ch 1107, § 1; 2006 Acts, ch 1185, §65; 2007 Acts, ch 202, §4, 5