

Senate File 2282 - Introduced

SENATE FILE 2282
BY COMMITTEE ON VETERANS
AFFAIRS

(SUCCESSOR TO SSB 3079)

A BILL FOR

1 An Act relating to veterans services and making appropriations.
2 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

1 Section 1. NEW SECTION. 35.4 Power of attorney.

2 The provisions of this chapter and chapters 35A, 35B,
3 35C, and 35D do not limit the ability of a veterans' service
4 organization recognized pursuant to 38 C.F.R. §14.628(c) to
5 represent a veteran in the United States department of veterans
6 affairs benefit claims process or to be granted the power of
7 attorney for a veteran with the United States department of
8 veterans affairs. A veteran may grant a veterans' service
9 organization that is recognized pursuant to 38 C.F.R.
10 §14.628(c) power of attorney for the purposes of filing claims
11 with the United States department of veterans affairs.

12 Sec. 2. Section 35A.5, subsection 6, paragraph b,
13 subparagraph (2), Code 2026, is amended to read as follows:

14 (2) All ~~funds~~ moneys received by the department for the
15 purposes established in subparagraph (1) shall be deposited
16 in the county ~~commission of veteran affairs training~~ veterans
17 services excellence training program and administration account
18 established in [section 35A.16, subsection 4](#).

19 Sec. 3. Section 35A.5, subsection 9, Code 2026, is amended
20 to read as follows:

21 9. Verify each executive director and administrator of a
22 county commission of veteran affairs ~~is fully qualified to work~~
23 ~~in the person's position. Qualifications include but are not~~
24 ~~limited to~~ has all of the following credentials:

25 a. The person has obtained certification that is federally
26 required for the executive director's or administrator's
27 position within twelve months of beginning the person's
28 employment.

29 b. The person has obtained a personal identification
30 verification card necessary to access the veterans benefits
31 management system within twelve months of beginning the
32 person's employment.

33 c. The person maintains certification that is federally
34 required for the executive director's or administrator's
35 position.

1 *d.* The person maintains an active personal identification
2 verification card and has access to the veterans benefits
3 management system.

4 *e.* The person is ~~proficient in the use of electronic~~
5 ~~mail, general computer use, and use of the internet to access~~
6 ~~information regarding facilities, benefits, and services~~
7 ~~available to veterans and their families in compliance with~~
8 education and training standards established by the commandant.

9 Sec. 4. Section 35A.5, Code 2026, is amended by adding the
10 following new subsections:

11 NEW SUBSECTION. 16A. Establish and maintain a statewide
12 standardized electronic claim system to be used by county
13 veterans service offices for submission of all United States
14 department of veterans affairs claims.

15 NEW SUBSECTION. 16B. Communicate county veterans service
16 office performance metrics to county commissions of veteran
17 affairs and boards of supervisors through quarterly reports.

18 Sec. 5. Section 35A.13, subsection 5, paragraph e, Code
19 2026, is amended to read as follows:

20 *e.* Notwithstanding paragraphs "*a*", "*b*", and "*c*", moneys
21 transferred under [subsection 6](#) to the county ~~commission of~~
22 ~~veteran affairs training~~ veterans services excellence training
23 program and administration account shall be expended as
24 provided in [section 35A.16](#).

25 Sec. 6. Section 35A.13, subsection 6, Code 2026, is amended
26 to read as follows:

27 6. For the fiscal year beginning July 1, ~~2024~~ 2026, and
28 for each subsequent fiscal year, there is transferred to the
29 county ~~commission of veteran affairs training~~ veterans services
30 excellence training program and administration account of
31 the county ~~commissions of veteran affairs~~ veterans services
32 excellence fund created in [section 35A.16](#), from the moneys
33 transferred pursuant to [section 99G.39](#) from the lottery fund to
34 the veterans trust fund, three hundred thousand dollars.

35 Sec. 7. Section 35A.16, Code 2026, is amended to read as

1 follows:

2 **35A.16 County ~~commissions of veteran affairs~~ veterans**
3 **services excellence fund — appropriation.**

4 1. *a.* A county ~~commissions of veteran affairs~~ veterans
5 services excellence fund is created within the state treasury
6 under the control of the department. The fund shall consist of
7 appropriations made to the fund and any other moneys available
8 to and obtained or accepted by the department from the federal
9 government or private sources for deposit in the fund. Moneys
10 in the fund are appropriated to the department to be used to
11 incentivize counties to effectively increase veteran outreach
12 and efficiency in the application for individual federal
13 veteran compensation.

14 *b.* There is appropriated from the general fund of the state
15 to the department, for the fiscal year beginning July 1, ~~2009~~
16 2026, and for each subsequent fiscal year, the sum of nine
17 hundred ninety thousand dollars to be credited to the county
18 ~~commissions of veteran affairs~~ veterans services excellence
19 fund.

20 2. Notwithstanding [section 12C.7](#), interest or earnings on
21 moneys in the ~~county commissions of veteran affairs~~ fund shall
22 be credited to the ~~county commissions of veteran affairs~~ fund.
23 Notwithstanding [section 8.33](#), moneys remaining in the ~~county~~
24 ~~commissions of veteran affairs~~ fund at the end of a fiscal year
25 shall not revert to the ~~general fund of the state~~.

26 3. *a.* If sufficient moneys are available, the department
27 shall annually ~~allocate ten thousand dollars~~ make allocations
28 from the fund to each county commission of veteran affairs, or
29 to each county sharing the services of an executive director
30 or administrator pursuant to [chapter 28E](#), ~~to~~. For the fiscal
31 year beginning July 1, 2026, the department shall allocate
32 moneys equally to each qualifying county. For the fiscal year
33 beginning July 1, 2027, and each subsequent fiscal year, the
34 department shall allocate moneys based on performance criteria
35 determined by the department. The moneys shall be used to

1 provide services to veterans pursuant to [section 35B.6](#) and
2 provide for and maintain accreditation in accordance with
3 the policies and procedures of the department and the United
4 States department of veterans affairs. Each county receiving
5 an allocation shall annually report on expenditure of the
6 allocation ~~in on~~ a form ~~agreed to~~ provided by the department
7 ~~and county representatives~~.

8 *b.* If a county fails to be in compliance with the
9 requirements of [section 35B.6](#) on June 30 of each fiscal year,
10 all moneys received by the county pursuant to [this subsection](#)
11 during that fiscal year shall be reimbursed to the ~~county~~
12 ~~commissions of veteran affairs~~ fund.

13 *c.* Moneys distributed to a county under [this subsection](#)
14 shall be used to supplement and not supplant any existing
15 funding provided by the county or received by the county from
16 any other source. The department shall adopt a maintenance
17 of effort requirement for moneys distributed under this
18 subsection.

19 4. A county ~~commission of veteran affairs~~ veterans services
20 excellence training program and administration account shall
21 be is established within the ~~county commissions of veteran~~
22 ~~affairs~~ fund. Any moneys remaining in the fund after the
23 allocations under [subsection 3](#) shall be credited to the account
24 and are appropriated to the department to fund the county
25 ~~commission of veteran affairs training program under section~~
26 ~~35A.5, subsection 6, and training for department personnel.~~
27 In addition, from the moneys transferred to the account
28 from the veterans trust fund created in [section 35A.13](#), the
29 department shall annually allocate three thousand dollars to
30 each county ~~commission of veteran affairs, or to each county~~
31 ~~sharing the services of an executive director or administrator~~
32 ~~pursuant to [chapter 28E](#), to be used for national training~~
33 ~~and related expenses of county veteran service officers and~~
34 ~~appropriate staff.~~ Moneys in the account are appropriated
35 to the department to provide training and support for county

1 commissions of veteran affairs, including but not limited to
2 a statewide standardized electronic claim system for county
3 submissions of claims to the United States department of
4 veterans affairs and education and training for county veterans
5 service officers.

6 Sec. 8. Section 35B.6, subsection 1, paragraph d, Code 2026,
7 is amended by adding the following new subparagraph:

8 NEW SUBPARAGRAPH. (4) Utilize the statewide standardized
9 electronic claim system authorized and provided by the
10 department of veterans affairs to file all claims for United
11 States department of veterans affairs benefits.

12 Sec. 9. Section 35B.7, Code 2026, is amended to read as
13 follows:

14 **35B.7 Meetings — report — budget.**

15 The commission shall meet monthly and at other times as
16 necessary. At the monthly meeting, the commission shall
17 determine who are is entitled to county benefits and the
18 probable amount required to be expended. The commission shall
19 also review quarterly performance reports generated by the
20 department of veterans affairs to assess the effectiveness
21 of delivery of federal benefits. The commission shall meet
22 annually to prepare an estimated budget for all expenditures
23 to be made in the next fiscal year and certify the budget to
24 the board of supervisors. The board may approve or reduce the
25 budget for valid reasons shown and entered of record and the
26 board's decision is final.

27 Sec. 10. Section 99G.39, subsection 3, Code 2026, is amended
28 to read as follows:

29 3. Two million five hundred thousand dollars in lottery
30 revenues shall be transferred each fiscal year to the veterans
31 trust fund established pursuant to [section 35A.13](#) prior to
32 deposit of the lottery revenues in the general fund of the
33 state pursuant to [section 99G.40](#). However, if the balance
34 of the veterans trust fund is fifty million dollars or more,
35 the moneys ~~shall be~~ are appropriated to the department of of

1 veterans affairs for distribution, with the first three hundred
2 thousand dollars transferred to the county veterans services
3 excellence training program and administration account created
4 in section 35A.16, and the remainder allocated to county
5 directors of veteran affairs, with fifty percent of the moneys
6 to be distributed equally to each county and fifty percent of
7 the moneys to be distributed to each county based upon the
8 population of veterans in the county, so long as the moneys
9 distributed to a county do not supplant moneys appropriated by
10 that county for the county director of veteran affairs.

11 EXPLANATION

12 The inclusion of this explanation does not constitute agreement with
13 the explanation's substance by the members of the general assembly.

14 This bill provides that the provisions of Code chapters 35,
15 35A, 35B, 35C, and 35D do not limit the ability of a veterans'
16 service organization to represent a veteran in the United
17 States department of veterans affairs benefit claims process
18 or to be granted power of attorney by a veteran for those
19 purposes.

20 The bill replaces the county commissions of veteran
21 affairs fund and training program account with the county
22 veterans services excellence fund and training program and
23 administration account. Moneys in the fund are appropriated
24 to the department of veterans affairs (IDVA) to be used to
25 incentivize counties to effectively increase veteran outreach
26 and efficiency in the application for individual federal
27 veteran compensation.

28 Under current law, IDVA annually allocates \$10,000 from the
29 fund to each county commission of veteran affairs (CCVA) or to
30 each county sharing the services of an executive director or
31 administrator, and each county must report on the expenditure
32 of its allocation in a form agreed to by IDVA and the county
33 representatives. The bill strikes the specified allocation
34 amount. The bill provides that for FY 2026-2027, each county
35 shall receive an equal amount of moneys from the fund. For

1 subsequent fiscal years, allocations shall be based on
2 performance criteria established by IDVA.

3 The bill requires the veterans services excellence training
4 program and administration account to fund training and support
5 for CCVAs and strikes provisions that credit remaining moneys
6 in the fund to the account and that allocate \$3,000 to each
7 CCVA or each county sharing the services of an executive
8 director or administrator for training expenses.

9 The bill requires IDVA to verify that each executive
10 director and administrator of a CCVA be in compliance with
11 education and training standards established by the commandant
12 and removes the requirement to verify they are proficient in
13 general computer use.

14 The bill requires IDVA to create a statewide standardized
15 electronic claim system through which county veterans service
16 offices must submit all United States department of veterans
17 affairs claims and requires IDVA to communicate county veterans
18 service office performance metrics to CCVAs and boards of
19 supervisors. A CCVA must review the quarterly performance
20 report generated by IDVA.

21 Under current law, when the balance of the veterans
22 trust fund is \$50 million or more, lottery revenues that
23 would otherwise be deposited in the veterans trust fund is
24 distributed to county directors of veteran affairs. The bill
25 provides that the first \$300,000 of these moneys is transferred
26 to the county veterans services excellence training program and
27 administration account.