§503. Powers and duties

The director has the following powers and duties. [PL 1997, c. 455, §19 (AMD).]

1. Employment of personnel. The director may employ, subject to approval of the appointing authority and the Civil Service Law, the personnel necessary to administer this chapter. The director may employ a deputy director, a superintendent of the cemetery system, a deputy superintendent of the cemetery system, a supervisor of veterans' services, a deputy supervisor of veterans' services and veterans' services officers. The director and other employees referred to in this subsection must be veterans as defined by 38 United States Code, Section 101(2) who were separated with an honorable discharge.
[PL 2025, c. 98, §1 (AMD).]

2. Expenditures. The director may make expenditures approved by the commissioner necessary to carry out this chapter.
[PL 1997, c. 455, §19 (AMD).]

3. Agent. The director shall act, upon request, as the agent of any Maine resident who has a legitimate claim against the United States for any benefit accruing as a result of any federal or state military service and, in cooperation with all public and private agencies, shall prosecute the claim without charge.
[PL 2001, c. 662, §61 (AMD).]

4. Record.
[PL 2001, c. 662, §61 (RP).]

5. Rules.
[PL 1991, c. 626, §9 (RP).]

6. Other duties.
[PL 2001, c. 662, §61 (RP).]

7. Marketing and outreach program. The director shall implement, as a core function of the bureau, a marketing and outreach program to increase, to the greatest extent practicable, awareness of services and benefits available to veterans and family members of veterans and to encourage veterans to seek the benefits and services to which they are entitled. The director is authorized to employ personnel dedicated to the marketing and outreach program objectives described in this subsection. The director is authorized to enter into memoranda of understanding with other state agencies to allow for the sharing of information to achieve the objectives of the program. Upon request of the director, agencies required to enter into memoranda of understanding with the director include, but are not limited to, the Bureau of Motor Vehicles under the Department of the Secretary of State, the Bureau of Parks and Lands under the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, the Department of Health and Human Services, the University of Maine System and the Maine Community College System. The marketing and outreach program objectives must include, but are not limited to:

A. Identifying residents of the State who are veterans; [PL 2015, c. 465, Pt. A, §3 (NEW).]

B. Increasing awareness of the bureau for veterans and family members of veterans; [PL 2015, c. 465, Pt. A, §3 (NEW).]

C. Implementing media and technology to encourage veterans to self-identify to the bureau and communicating to veterans and family members of veterans about the services and benefits available to them; [PL 2015, c. 465, Pt. A, §3 (NEW).]

D. Attendance by bureau personnel at events organized for and by veterans that, as determined by the director, facilitate the objectives of this subsection; and [PL 2015, c. 465, Pt. A, §3 (NEW).]

E. Establishing benchmarks to measure the effectiveness of marketing and outreach efforts. [PL 2015, c. 465, Pt. A, §3 (NEW).]

The program objectives listed in this subsection may also be used to assist the commissioner to identify residents of this State who are military retirees or former members of the Army National Guard or Air National Guard who completed service requirements but never served on active duty pursuant to section 3, subsection 1, paragraph D, subparagraph (21).
[PL 2015, c. 465, Pt. A, §3 (NEW).]

8. Records management system. The director shall acquire and maintain an electronic database with secured remote access capabilities to facilitate management of records of veterans, spouses of veterans and veterans' dependents served by the bureau. When selecting a records management system, the director shall ensure that, at a minimum, the system supports the bureau in meeting the following objectives:

A. Reducing reliance on paper records; [PL 2015, c. 465, Pt. A, §3 (NEW).]

B. Allowing for immediate access by authorized users to update records; [PL 2015, c. 465, Pt. A, §3 (NEW).]

C. Displaying a complete record of assistance provided by the bureau to veterans and veterans' family members; and [PL 2015, c. 465, Pt. A, §3 (NEW).]

D. Providing efficient and timely customer service to veterans seeking assistance from the bureau. [PL 2015, c. 465, Pt. A, §3 (NEW).]
[PL 2015, c. 465, Pt. A, §3 (NEW).]

9. Change in treatment of certain discharges.

[PL 2023, c. 202, §1 (RP).]

SECTION HISTORY

PL 1983, c. 460, §3 (NEW). PL 1985, c. 785, §B174 (AMD). PL 1989, c. 502, §A139 (AMD). PL 1991, c. 626, §9 (AMD). PL 1993, c. 694, §3 (AMD). PL 1997, c. 455, §19 (AMD). PL 1997, c. 643, §Q7 (AMD). PL 2001, c. 662, §61 (AMD). PL 2009, c. 406, §8 (AMD). PL 2015, c. 465, Pt. A, §3 (AMD). PL 2021, c. 37, §1 (AMD). PL 2023, c. 202, §1 (AMD). PL 2025, c. 98, §1 (AMD).

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