

COMMISSION BY-LAWS OF THE VETERAN'S ASSISTANCE COMMISSION OF SANGAMON COUNTY,
ILLINOIS

ARTICLE I -NAME

Section 1. The name of this Commission shall be The Veterans Assistance Commission of Sangamon County, Illinois is also known as Veterans Assistance Commission (VAC) or Commission.

ARTICLE II – PURPOSE

Section 1. The purpose of this Commission is to promote the welfare of the veterans of the uniformed services of the United States of America whose final discharge is honorable or general under honorable conditions to include their families as governed by 330 Illinois Compiled Statutes 45 et seq. (as amended by P.A. 102-0732) entitled 'Military Veterans Assistance Act' of the Illinois Revised Statutes to include revisions and future amendments thereto by providing the just, necessary, and needed services and assistance to veterans, their families, and the families of deceased veterans.

Section 2. The Commission will act as a central service office for all veterans, their families, and the families of deceased veterans residing in the County of Sangamon.

Section 3. The Commission will have oversight of the distribution of all relief and supplies and services that may be appropriated for the benefit of veterans, their families, and the families of deceased veterans.

Section 4. The Commission will administer and process all Federal and State government claims for veteran benefits.

Section 5. The Commission will administer all the programs provided in Article VI and IX of the Illinois Public Aid Code, 305 ILCS 5 et seq., as commanded in 305 ILCS 5/12-3.

Section 6. The Commission will formulate rules and regulations that will enable it to carry out the purpose set forth herein.

Article III – JURISDICTION

Section 1. The territory to be included within the jurisdiction for this Commission will be the County of Sangamon in the State of Illinois.

Article IV – OFFICE

Section 1. The headquarters and principle office of this VAC shall be located in Sangamon County, and house VAC employees to accomplish the requirements an Article II.

Section 2. This office shall be provided, furnished and equipped by the County with all necessary supplies, including telephone, computers, printers, printing, stationary, relief orders, relief questionnaires, postage, desks, etc.

Section 3. The Commission shall have in its sole discretion the location of its headquarters and principle office.

ARTICLE V – MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. The membership of the VAC will be composed of one delegate and one alternate from each of the recognized veteran organizations in the County of Sangamon, Illinois, to include, but not limited to:

Section 2. All Posts, Camps, Ships, or Chapters of recognized veterans' organizations requesting membership in this VAC must have an office, headquarters, post home, or other official domicile located within the geographic limits of Sangamon County.

Section 3. Any recognized Veterans Organization interested in the object and purpose of this Commission and can qualify under the Statutes of the State of Illinois, subject to the rules and regulations governing admission, who are properly nominated by the Commander or Commandant of any Post, Camp, Ship, or Chapter and who files the appropriate delegate and alternate form with the Commission office before March 1 of each year, may become members of this VAC.

Section 4. A current list of the eligible and Commission approved veteran organizations will be maintained by the Commission and listed on the Commission's website.

Section 5. Each recognized Veterans Organization shall be entitled to one vote. which may be cast by the member organization's delegate or his/her alternate is present. Only one (1) delegate or alternate shall be permitted to vote for any organization other than the one they officially represent, and no proxy votes are allowed.

Section 6. The delegate and alternate will be selected as determined by each member organization and will be reported in writing to the Secretary of the Commission board to include the name of the delegate and alternate within the time for delegate and alternate submission in accordance with 330 ILCS 45/9(a)(1). The appointment of the delegate and alternate shall be signed by the chief officer of the organization on a form provided by the Secretary. Each delegate and alternate must be an Honorably Discharged Veteran.

Section 7. Should any delegate or alternate be disqualified or unable to serve, the Post, Organization, Camp, or Chapter shall, upon notice of the disqualification or inability to serve, immediately notify the Executive Board and call a vote at the Post, Camp, or Chapter for a replacement to be appointed prior to the next Commission meeting.

ARTICLE VI – OFFICERS

Section 1. Officers of this Commission shall be Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary, and Provost Marshall which make up the Executive Board.

Section 2. Officers of this Commission shall serve a two (2) year term.

Section 3. Past Chairmans shall be given honorary membership to the Executive Board with no voting rights and will serve in an advisory capacity, unless those Past Chairmans are formal delegates to the Commission.

Section 4. In the absence of a duly elected Secretary wherein the position remains unfilled, the Vice-Chairman will act as Secretary until such time as a secretary is appointed.

Section 5. Any member of this Commission shall be eligible to hold office, provided he/she is not a member of the County Board of Sangamon County, or holds any public office that may conflict with the best interest of the Veterans Assistance Commission of Sangamon County, and it is further provided that no two (2) offices are filled by persons representing the same Post, Organization, Camp, or Chapter.

Section 6. A vacancy in any office shall exist when an officer is absent from regular meetings of said Commission for three (3) consecutive meetings. A vacancy of any office occurring during the current term shall be filled by appointment of the Executive Board and ratified by the Commission.

Section 7. The Chairman

- A. The Chairman will preside at all meeting of the VAC
 - a. The Chairman along with the Superintendent will provide the agenda for each meeting and must be given to the VAC to be placed on their website accordance with the Open Meeting Act.
- B. After elected as set forth in Section 1 of this Article, shall vacate his office as delegate or alternate and the organization which they officially represent shall be entitled to fill the delegate position for the remainder of the term of office.
- C. The Chairman will only vote on matters before the commission in the event of a tie.
- D. The Chairman responsible for appointing all committee associated to the VAC. The Chairman shall be a de facto member of all committees.

Section 8. The Vice-Chairman, Provost Marshal, and Secretary shall continue to represent the Post, Chapter, Ship, Camp, or other entity of the veterans' service organization as a delegate or alternate delegate. Their voting privileges shall be unaffected.

Section 9. The Vice Chairman

- A. The Vice Chairman in the absences of The Chairman will preside at any meeting and have have the same authority and voting privileges as The Chairman.
- B. The Vice Chairman will fill the Executive Board positions in their absents or there is no person appointed into the position.
- C. The Vice Chairman shall receive additional duties based on needs of the VAC or The Chairman.

Section 10. The Secretary

- A. The Secretary shall maintain Commission records:
 - a. The list of records at a minimum are meeting minutes, meeting attendees, and list of all delegates from each Post, Organization, Camp, or Chapter.
 - b. Send via mail and/or email (with read receipts confirmed) a request for delegates and alternate delegates no later than January 1st to each Veteran Organization. All delegates shall be appointed by their Veteran organization by March 1st.
- B. Mail and/or email (with read receipts confirmed) the agenda to each Veteran Organization thirty (30) days before each quarterly meeting. This could be done through the Superintendent as well.
- C. The Secretary shall receive additional duties based on needs of the VAC or The Chairman

Section 11. The Provost Marshall

- A. The Provost Marshall shall maintain order in accordance with Roberts Book of Rules
- B. The Provost Marshall shall know the by-laws and provide guidance to The Chairman as needed.
- C. The Provost Marshall shall receive additional duties based on the needs of the VAC or The Chairman.

Section 12. A team of Commission members will be selected by The Chairman to be our Reach Out Team. This team will visit each Post, Organization, Camp, or Chapter within the jurisdiction to provide information about our Commission. The topics of discussion shall be at a minimal; upcoming officer elections, what the VAC is doing for our veterans, and any good of the order.

- A. The Reach Out team will be used when there are no delegates that have not attended two consecutive meetings or have not received any delegates from a Veteran Organization within the purview of the VAC.

ARTICLE VII – NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS OF OFFICERS

Section 1. Every even year, at the first regularly scheduled quarterly meeting nominations will be opened for the election of Officers. Officers that are elected to the office will take positions immediately.

Section 2. All nominations shall be from the floor of the delegates present at the meeting. The candidate receiving the majority of the vote for each office shall be elected. Elections shall be by written ballot unless a position is not contested. If there are no nominations for an officer, the current officer will continue their position until a special election is scheduled, or The Chairman appoints a new officer with a vote from the members.

Section 3. All officers shall be elected at 1st meeting of the year for a term of two (2) year and all officers so elected shall assume their duties at the next scheduled meeting, following their election, and shall continue in office for two years or until their successors are regularly elected.

Section 4. Officers may be elected from any Unit, Post, Camp, or Chapter and must be serving as a Delegate or Alternate from those organizations, or a currently elected Officer of this Commission at the time of election and must be in good standing with the Commission. A Delegate and Alternate from the same Unit, Post, Camp, or Chapter may not hold elected offices concurrently.

Section 5. Vacancies in any office occurring during the year shall be filled by the members of the Commission. A vacancy shall exist when an officer is absent from regular meetings of the Commission for three (3) consecutive meetings. Excused absences will not count against the office.

Section 6. In the absence of a nomination for an elected office, or a vacated elected office, the process of appointing an officer to fill the vacant office will begin with the Chairman's appointment. The Requirements as to the appointment of a candidate include:

- A. Notice of appointment must be served to the Commission members thirty (30) days prior to the vote to approve the appointment;
- B. Appointment must be approved by a majority of the Commission Members;

C. At a regularly scheduled meeting of the Commission, the appointment will be voted on by the Commission members;

D. If the candidate receives a majority vote of the Commission to approve the appointment, the candidate will assume the duties of the elected office immediately; and,

E. If the majority vote of the Commission is to deny appointment the process will start again until the Chairman's appointment is approved by the Commission members.

ARTICLE VIII – EXECUTIVE BOARD

Section 1. The Executive Board shall be composed of the four Elected Officers of the Commission and four (4) members elected at large. The four (4) at large members will be elected at the annual meeting outlined in Article VI, Section III.

Section 2. The four (4) members elected at large shall serve a term of two (2) years. All members so elected shall be installed and assume their duties at the next regular meeting and shall continue in office until their successors are regularly elected and installed.

Section 3. The Executive Board shall meet at the call of the Chairman or at the request of three (3) members of the Executive Board.

Section 4. The Executive Board shall provide oversight of the Superintendent in the interim between the regular meetings of the Commission.

Section 5. The Executive Board is only authorized to act on the Commission's behalf upon approval at a regularly scheduled meeting on business related to the VAC non-for profit. Any other action will be null and void without Commission approval to act on their behalf.

Section 6. The Executive Board shall review the budget, and proposed levy, prepared by the Superintendent before being submitted to the full Commission and the Finance Committee of the County Board.

Section 7. In addition to acting as the Executive Board to the Commission, the Executive Board shall act as the Executive Board for the Non-for Profit Organization maintained by the Superintendent.

Section 8. A quorum of the Executive Board shall consist of at least half of the members of the Executive Board plus one, in accordance with the Open Meetings Act, 5 ILCS 120/1.02.

Section 9. Notice of an Executive Board meeting shall be made at least 48 hours before the meeting by the Secretary. The Chairman or three (3) members of the Board may call for a meeting and the Secretary shall call the meeting as directed, and notice shall be posted within 48 hours as required under the Open Meetings Act.

Section 10. The Executive Board during a bonified emergency has the authority to take action ordinarily requiring Commission approval, without prior approval of the Commission. The Board will notify the Commission of the emergency action taken within 48 hours and will brief the emergency and action taken at the next regular meeting of the Commission.

ARTICLE IX – STANDING COMMITTEES

Section 1. The Chairman shall, with the consent of the Executive Board, appoint such other Committees as shall be deemed advisable to carry out the purpose of this Commission. The Chairman shall be a de facto member of all Commission committees.

ARTICLE X – THE BOARD OF APPEALS OF THE VETERAN'S ASSISTANCE COMMISSION OF SANGAMON COUNTY

Section 1. The Board of Appeals of the Veterans Assistance Commission consists of seven (7) voting members, and the VAC Provost Marshal and Secretary. The VAC Provost Marshal and the Secretary are non-voting members of the Board of Appeals. The VAC Provost Marshal and the Secretary are to ensure procedural protocol and keep a record of the appeal process. All members of the Board of Appeals must be Honorably Discharged veterans of the United States Armed Forces and provide the Superintendent with a copy of their DD214 or Honorable Discharge Certificate.

Section 2. The Chairman shall be the Chairman of the Board of Appeals.

Section 3. The remaining six (6) members shall be elected, from the Post, Organization, Camp, or Chapter to the Commission, by the Commission. If a member is unavailable from the above, the vacancy will be filled from an at large Post, Organization, Camp, or Chapter.

Section 4. The term of office is for two (2) years, except, the Chairman of the Commission shall serve on the Board of Appeals while holding the Office of Chairman.

Section 5. The Board of Appeals is created to hear any appeals of the Superintendent's rulings; to ensure that the policies and procedures of the appeal process of the Commission are adhered to.

ARTICLE XI – MEETINGS

Section 1. The regular meeting of the Commission shall be held on the third Wednesday once every quarter, with meetings typically falling in the months of January, April, July, and October, at the hour of 7:00 pm, at a location provided to the committee before the end of the meeting prior. Any meeting is subject to change based on Act of God, Natural Disaster, or Pandemic.

Section 2. Special meetings may be called by the Chairman, Superintendent, or by three (3) members of the Executive Board. The Secretary shall inform all members of the Commission at least three (3) days prior to the date of said meeting. The call for this type of meeting shall state the purpose of the special meeting, and no other business than that for which it is called shall be transacted. The meeting agenda must be posted on door of the meeting location and the Commissions website 48 hours before the meeting.

Section 3. At a minimum, half of the members of the VAC plus one, in accordance with the Open Meetings Act, 5 ILCS 120/1.02, shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of all business at any annual, regular, or special meeting, but a less number may adjourn any meeting from day to day.

Section 4. Proceedings for all business meetings shall be governed by the Illinois Open Meetings act and Roberts Rules of Order, Revised.

Section 5. The October meeting shall be the final Fiscal Year Meeting and the fiscal year of Commission shall begin January 1 of each year.

Section 6. The Superintendent will provide these reports to the VAC during regularly scheduled meetings:

- A. New Veterans served/meet with VSO(s) since the last meeting
- B. Quarterly accepted Veteran Cases, Appealed Cases, and Walk-ins
- C. Outreach conducted by The Superintendent or team members
- D. All service surveys received, with anything under the top score what changes are being made
- E. Money spent on Veterans (programs and any sub-categories)
- F. Money received through VSO cases for our Veterans
- G. Summary report regarding the Non-for Profit
- H. Any other tracking data as determined by the VAC

Section 6. The Commission shall conduct all meetings in accordance with 5 ILCS 120 "Open Meetings Act", including all amendments to the Act.

- A. The "Open Meetings Act", as amended.
- B. Each delegate of the Commission must complete the electronic training curriculum developed and administered by the Illinois Attorney General Public Access Counselor. The Commission shall designate certain employees and officers to complete the electronic training curriculum developed and administered by the Illinois Attorney General Public Access Counselor.
- C. Designees will be required to complete on-line training provided by the Illinois Attorney General's Office annually.
- D. Each elected member of the Executive Board of the Commission shall be the registered Open Meeting Act Designees and shall comply with all requirements of the Open Meeting Act.

ARTICLE XII – SUPERINTENDENT

Section 1. The Executive powers of this Commission shall be vested in the Superintendent, who shall be selected and recommended by the Executive Board to the full Commission and shall be elected by at least a majority of the full Commission and shall take office on the date designated by the Board.

Section 2. The Superintendent of the Veterans Assistance Commission has the sole authority to appoint Veteran Service Officers, assistants, and other employees as needed to carry out the mission of the Commission.

Section 3. Neither the Superintendent nor any employees of the Commission shall be allowed to hold any elected office in a VAC member veteran's organization or in Sangamon County government.

Section 4. The VAC shall be under the direction of the duly elected Superintendent, who shall investigate and report to the Veterans Assistance Commission all claims for relief under the law and shall be responsible for the daily operations of the Veterans Assistance Commission of Sangamon County.

Section 5. The Superintendent shall, under the direction of the Commission, maintain an office in the County Administration Building or other central location. Said office is to be used solely by the Commission for carrying out of its purposes. Said office shall be provided, furnished, and equipped by the County of Sangamon with all necessary equipment and supplies, as needed.

Section 6. The mission of the office shall be to provide service and assistance to the military veterans and their families and families of deceased veterans whose final discharge is honorable or general under honorable conditions and in need of assistance, and for rendering of such other services as may be considered reasonable for carrying out the purposes of the Commission.

Section 7. The term of office of the Superintendent shall be indefinite but shall be evaluated yearly prior to the end of the Fiscal Year and shall come before the Executive Board and Commission for reappointment every three (3) years.

- A. The Superintendent may be removed from office if, after investigations of a special elected committee, determines that he/she has not adequately fulfilled the duties and obligations of the office or if it is determined his/her demeanor is such as to hinder the ethical and professional performance of the office.
- B. The investigative committee, consisting of five (5) delegates or alternates, shall be elected after a written appeal to the Board is made by the delegates of no less than three (3) member organizations.
 - a. A complaint that may lead to the dismissal of the Superintendent must explicitly state, in writing, an accusation of wrongdoing along with dates, times, circumstances, and all other information directly related to the grievance.
 - b. Such a complaint must be addressed to the VAC Chairman who will then appoint an ad hoc committee to investigate the validity of the complaint. At least one VAC officer other than the Chairman shall be a member of the committee. The Committee is considered active on the morning of the first business day after all committee members are personally notified.
 - c. The committee shall complete its investigation efforts in no more than ten (10) business days. The committee will report its findings to the VAC Chairman verbally within ten (10) days and in writing within fourteen (14) business days.
 - d. The VAC Chairman shall, without unnecessary delay, call a special meeting to resolve the complaint and any directly related issues.
- C. The Commission must approve the removal of the Superintendent by a 2/3 vote of the delegates and officers present at the meeting.

Section 8. In the event of the resignation of the Superintendent, he/she must provide the Commission with a formal written notice ninety (90) days prior to the date of his/her resignation.

Section 9. Vacancy in the Superintendent's office due to death, retirement, or discharge, shall be temporarily filled by the Assistant Superintendent until such time as the Commission has selected a new Superintendent. During the temporary absence of the Superintendent due to illness, vacation, or business travel, the duties of the Superintendent shall be administered by the Assistant Superintendent.

Section 10. The Superintendent cannot have other employment that conflicts with the performance of his/her duties as the Superintendent. The said conflict will be determined by the Commission.

Section 11. The Superintendent and all members of the Executive Board shall be bonded in an amount prescribed by The Military Veterans Assistance Act.

Section 12. The Superintendent shall serve as Director of the Veterans Assistance Commission, Non-Profit Organization and be its registered agent with the State of Illinois.

Section 13. The Superintendent shall not be authorized to hold elected office of this Commission for five (5) years.

Section 14. The Superintendent must be an Honorably Discharged Veteran and a Resident of Sangamon County.

ARTICLE XIII – ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT

Section 1. The Assistant Superintendent shall be nominated by the Superintendent, and appointed by the Executive Board, duly elected by majority vote of the Commission present and shall take office on the date designated by the Board.

Section 2. The Assistant Superintendent shall report directly to the Superintendent.

Section 3. The Assistant Superintendent shall be the primary supervisor of staff, interns, and volunteers.

Section 4. The Assistant Superintendent shall manage the office, develop and submit standard operating procedures, and train staff, interns, and volunteers.

Section 5. The term of office of the Assistant Superintendent shall be indefinite but shall come before the Executive Board and Commission for review every three (3) years.

- A. The Assistant Superintendent may be removed from office if, after investigations of a special elected committee, determines that he/she has not adequately fulfilled the duties and obligations of the office or if it is determined his/her demeanor is such as to hinder the ethical and professional performance of the office.
- B. The investigative committee, consisting of five (5) delegates or alternates, shall be elected after a written appeal to the Board has been made by the delegates of no less than three (3) member organizations.
 - a. A complaint that may lead to the dismissal of the Superintendent must explicitly state, in writing, an accusation of wrongdoing along with dates, times, circumstances, and all other information directly related to the grievance.
 - b. Such a complaint must be addressed to the VAC Chairman who will then appoint an ad hoc committee to investigate the validity of the complaint. At least one VAC officer other than the Chairman shall be a member of the committee. The Committee is considered active on the morning of the first business day after all committee members are personally notified.
 - c. The committee shall complete its investigation efforts in no more than ten (10) business days. The committee will report its findings to the VAC Chairman verbally within ten (10) days and in writing within fourteen (14) business days.
 - d. The VAC Chairman shall, without unnecessary delay, call a special meeting to resolve the complaint and any directly related issues.
- C. The Commission must approve the removal of the Superintendent by a 2/3 vote of the delegates and officers present at the meeting.

Section 6. In the event of the resignation of the Assistant Superintendent, he/she must provide the Superintendent with a formal written notice ninety (90) days prior to the date of his/her resignation. Upon receipt of said resignation, the Superintendent will immediately inform the Commission.

Section 7. Vacancy in the Assistant Superintendent's office due to death, retirement, or discharge, shall be temporarily filled at the discretion of the Superintendent until such time as the Commission has selected a new Assistant Superintendent. During the temporary absence of the Assistant Superintendent due to illness, vacation, or business travel, the duties of the Assistant Superintendent shall be administered by an employee designated in writing by the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent.

ARTICLE XIV – AMENDING THE BY-LAWS

Section 1. These by-laws shall be adopted and deemed in-force following a majority vote of Commission members present at a regular meeting or at a special meeting called for that purpose.

Section 2. The By-Laws will be reviewed every even year after new officers have been voted into office.

Section 3. Any VAC member may propose an amendment to these by-laws.

- A. The proposed amendments to these by-laws shall be in writing and given to the Secretary at a regular meeting. The Secretary shall read aloud the proposed amendment at the same regular meeting.
- B. The proposed amendment shall be tabled and will be taken up at the next regular meeting, or at a special meeting called for that purpose.
- C. A proposed amendment shall be adopted and deemed to be in-force in accordance with this Article.

ARTICLE XV – DISSOLUTION

Section 1. The Commission may be dissolved at a special meeting.

- A. Dissolution of the Commission can only be made following a vote to dissolve the VAC by a majority vote of Commission members present. Absentee votes or ballots will not be counted.
- B. Individual Commission members' notes will be recorded by the Secretary.

Section 2. All outstanding bills will be paid in full before dissolution.

Section 3. Employees of the Commission must be compensated in accordance with applicable work rules promulgated by the State of Illinois, and the Federal Government.

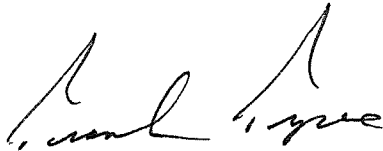
Section 4. Any funds or grant monies that have not been spent or allocated shall be returned to Sangamon County Treasury or the Granter.

ARTICLE XVI – PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

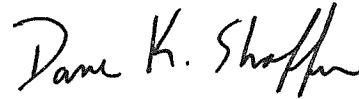
Section 1. The rules contained in Robert's Rules or Orders (revised) shall govern meetings when such rules are not in conflict with these by-laws.

The By-Laws of the VAC have been adopted in accordance with Article XIV – Amending the By-Laws, effective October 18, 2023.

There are no changes, revisions, additions, or deletions to the By-Laws after October 18, 2023.

Handwritten signature of Frank Tyree in black ink.

Frank Tyree, Chairman

Handwritten signature of Dane K. Shaffer in black ink.

Dane Shaffer, VAC Superintendent