



State of Maryland

2018 REPORT Chapter 707 of the Acts of 2017

State Government- Department of Veterans Affairs- Veterans' Services  
Specialists

Submitted by: The Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs

## Chapter 707 of the Acts of 2017

### 2018 Report to Maryland Governor Larry Hogan and The Maryland General Assembly From: George Owings, Secretary, Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs Status of the Veterans' Services Specialists in State Government (SB857/HB1275)

Introduced during the 2017 Maryland Legislative Session and signed in to law by Governor Hogan on May 25, 2017, SB857/HB1275 created Veterans' Services Specialists in State Government to coordinate services with the Outreach and Advocacy Program Director in the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Specialists will attend training, provide the Department of Veterans Affairs with certain information and post information on their respective Department or Agency websites. Information required for posting on websites includes veteran services offered by the respective Department or Agency and a link to the Department of Veterans Affairs Outreach and Advocacy Program.

The Act also requires the Department of Veterans Affairs to coordinate meetings and an annual training, and submit a progress report each January to the Governor and Maryland General Assembly. The Act took effect October 1, 2017. In advance of the Act taking effect, the first meeting of the Veterans' Services Specialists and the Department of Veterans Affairs took place on September 22, 2017.

#### Meetings

- Twenty-two veterans' services specialists attended the first meeting on September 22, 2017
- Agenda:
  - Program overview and requirements of the law
  - Department of Disabilities Briefing: Best Practices for Collaboration
  - Maryland State Police Briefing: Military Liaison Program
  - Existing cross agency collaborations
  - Small group activity to discuss current veteran programs, identify gaps in services, and make recommendations to improve collaboration
- The second meeting is scheduled for February 16, 2018
  - Agenda will include statewide web page discussion, employee survey, onboarding process

#### Initial steps

- Veterans Day "Thank You for Your Service" Email Message
- Employee Survey- The MD State Police internal employee survey was shared with liaisons, feedback was requested, and discussion on statewide replication will be discussed at the next meeting
- Employee Emails- The MDVA Outreach Program is receiving an increased number of emails from state employees seeking information on services for their self or family members
- Agency Briefings- MDVA Outreach Director provided two briefings for Department of General Services staff. The law and MDVA programs were discussed

## Goals for CY18

The following goals were suggested during the first program meeting.

- Analyze the current state government onboarding process, improve information access to veterans, establish who is a veteran and create access lines, respect voluntary gathering of information
- Provide VA information during onboarding, place information on employment web page, days before and after deployment, “welcome veterans back”, brand veterans services as “operation thank you” for enhanced outreach to veterans in or who may be seeking state employment
- Annual training, local and state VA information provided for liaisons
- Increase inclusion of veterans training and experience in the state workforce by translating military job and career field classification codes into state agency career opportunities



### Contact

Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs  
16 Francis Street  
Annapolis, MD 21401  
410-260-3838

Program Contact  
Outreach and Advocacy Director  
410-260-3842