



General Assembly

February Session, 2026

Raised Bill No. 5408

LCO No. 2047



Referred to Committee on VETERANS' AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

Introduced by:
(VA)

AN ACT CONCERNING TRAINING FOR VETERANS' SERVICE OFFICERS AND MUNICIPAL PROVIDERS OF VETERANS' ASSISTANCE.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Subsection (b) of section 27-102l of the 2026 supplement to
2 the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu
3 thereof (*Effective October 1, 2026*):

4 (b) (1) The commissioner may appoint a manager to administer an
5 Office of Advocacy and Assistance for the aid and benefit of veterans
6 and their spouses, eligible dependents and family members. The office
7 shall have a staff of not less than nineteen men and women, including
8 not less than fourteen veterans' service officers, and not less than three
9 clerical personnel. The manager and veterans' service officers shall be
10 veterans, as defined in subsection (a) of section 27-103, or veterans who
11 were awarded the armed forces expeditionary medal for service by the
12 armed forces.

13 (2) (A) The manager shall develop a training module on (i) assisting

14 and serving [women] veterans with regard to any available state or
15 federal services or benefits, and (ii) identifying and advising such
16 veterans of any community or nonprofit programs focused on assisting
17 and serving such veterans and of any other charitable or social service
18 organizations that may be able to provide assistance with services or
19 benefits. The manager shall dedicate a portion of such module to
20 assisting, serving and advising women veterans and to addressing
21 issues unique to women veterans. The manager shall hold and provide
22 instruction for an annual training session, in accordance with such
23 module, to each veterans' service officer and any member of a municipal
24 veterans advisory committee, director of municipal veterans services or
25 municipal veterans representative, as described in subsection (c) of
26 section 27-135, or representative from an Operation Academic Support
27 for Incoming Service Members center at a public institution of higher
28 education in this state.

29 (B) At least one of the veterans' service officers shall be a woman
30 having a demonstrated interest in the concerns of women veterans, who
31 shall be responsible for addressing those concerns, and, effective upon
32 the next opening of a veterans' service officer position occurring on or
33 after July 1, 2010, at least two of the veterans' service officers shall be
34 individuals having bilingual proficiency in English and Spanish, within
35 existing authorized positions. At least two of the veterans' service
36 officers shall, in addition to carrying out the duties under this section,
37 be responsible for overseeing and supporting municipalities'
38 compliance with the provisions of section 27-135. Each veterans' service
39 officer shall (i) successfully complete a course in veterans' benefits not
40 later than one year after commencement of employment, (ii) attend the
41 training session described in subparagraph (A) of this subdivision, and
42 (iii) be assigned to one of the five congressional districts of the state.

43 (3) The office staff shall, at least twice annually, conduct a training
44 course for any member of a municipal veterans advisory committee,
45 director of municipal veterans services or municipal veterans
46 representative. The office staff shall include in such training course a

47 summary of (A) state and federal services and benefits [,] for veterans,
48 community or nonprofit programs focused on assisting and serving
49 veterans and other charitable or social service organizations that may be
50 able to provide assistance with services or benefits, (B) the requirements
51 under section 27-135, and (C) any assistance the office staff may provide
52 to any such member, director or representative related to such
53 requirements.

54 (4) (A) The office shall develop a written outreach plan identifying (i)
55 strategies for conducting outreach to veterans and their spouses, eligible
56 dependents and family members for purposes of providing assistance
57 in claims for veterans' services or benefits, and (ii) to the extent possible,
58 specific events and other opportunities to provide such assistance that
59 are sponsored by the office or in which the office is participating. The
60 office shall update such written outreach plan as necessary to improve
61 the efficacy of its outreach efforts.

62 (B) The manager and each veterans' service officer shall electronically
63 track information relating to outreach conducted or attended by the
64 office, including, but not limited to, the title or type of any outreach
65 event conducted or attended and the number of veterans or their
66 spouses, eligible dependents or family members to whom substantive
67 services or referrals were provided.

68 (C) The office shall utilize the notifications received from the
69 administrator of each nursing home and assisted living facility in the
70 state, pursuant to subdivision (2) of subsection (c) of this section, to
71 develop an annual schedule for each veterans' service officer to visit
72 nursing homes and assisted living facilities. The office shall compile any
73 information collected as a result of such visits and provide quarterly
74 reports on such information to the Board of Trustees for the Department
75 of Veterans Affairs.

76 (D) The office shall provide quarterly reports to the Board of Trustees
77 for the Department of Veterans Affairs on (i) concerns raised by veterans

78 or their spouses, eligible dependents or family members, which
79 concerns shall be summarized by type, frequency and resolution, (ii)
80 petitions filed by veterans or their spouses, eligible dependents or
81 family members received by the commissioner under section 27-102l(d)-
82 54 of the regulations of Connecticut state agencies for the four preceding
83 months, and (iii) copies of any such petitions.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>October 1, 2026</i>	27-102l(b)

Statement of Purpose:

To provide for expanded training to (1) Office of Advocacy and Assistance veterans' services officers, and (2) municipal veterans representatives and other municipal providers of veterans' assistance.

[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]