

**CHAPTER 100--H.F.No. 3454**

*An act relating to veterans and military affairs; expanding the powers of the adjutant general; modifying veterans home provisions; modifying provisions related to armories; amending policy provisions related to veterans; extending the availability of a grant for the veterans Meals on Wheels program; amending Minnesota Statutes 2022, sections 13.02, subdivision 3a; 13.785; 190.16, subdivisions 3, 6a; 192.25; 192.501, by adding a subdivision; 192.67; 193.143; 193.29, subdivisions 1, 4; 193.36, subdivisions 2, 3, by adding subdivisions; 197.63, subdivision 1; 198.005; 198.006; 375.34; 375.35; 609.396; Laws 2010, chapter 333, article 2, section 23, as amended; Laws 2023, chapter 38, article 1, section 3, subdivisions 2, 3.*

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

Section 1. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 13.02, subdivision 3a, is amended to read:

Subd. 3a. **Criminal justice agencies.** "Criminal justice agencies" means all state and local prosecution authorities, all state and local law enforcement agencies, the Sentencing Guidelines Commission, the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension, the Department of Corrections, the Minnesota National Guard, and all probation officers who are not part of the judiciary.

Sec. 2. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 13.785, is amended to read:

**13.785 VETERANS OR MILITARY AFFAIRS DATA CODED ELSEWHERE.**

Subdivision 1. **Scope.** The sections referred to in this section are codified outside this chapter. Those sections classify veterans or military affairs data as other than public, place restrictions on access to government data, or involve data sharing.

Subd. 2. **Department of Veterans Affairs.** (a) **Certain veterans benefits and military certificates of discharge.** Access to military certificates of discharge and to files pertaining to claims for certain veterans benefits is governed by section 196.08.

(b) **Environmental Hazards Information and Assistance Act.** Disclosure of summary data and of the identity of a veteran about whom information is received under sections 196.19 to 196.26, is governed by section 196.25.

Subd. 3. **Veterans rewards and privileges; service officers.** Data maintained by county veterans service officers are classified under section 197.603.

Subd. 4. **Deceased veterans data.** Data relating to veterans deceased as a result of service-connected causes are classified under section 197.225.

Subd. 5. **Veterans stable housing.** Data maintained for purposes of the veterans stable housing initiative is classified under section 196.081.

Subd. 6. **Service member data; disclosure to adjutant general.** Access to data on a service member of the military forces by the adjutant general of the Minnesota National Guard is governed by section 192.67, subdivision 2.

Sec. 3. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 190.16, subdivision 3, is amended to read:

Subd. 3. **Contracts; agreements.** ~~When prescribed or required by the laws of the United States and any rules or regulations made thereunder, and~~ Notwithstanding any state law to the contrary, the adjutant general shall be the contracting authority and officer for any construction, improvement or maintenance program or project, or any other program or project financed either in whole or in part by moneys made available by the federal government and may execute agreements and contracts for and in behalf of the state therefor, including a dedication of the primary use and purpose of such buildings, air bases, roads, utilities or other structures or facilities required in the training, housing, and maintenance of the military forces of the state for periods up to and including 25 years.

Sec. 4. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 190.16, subdivision 6a, is amended to read:

Subd. 6a. **Rental of ~~Camp Ripley~~ military facilities.** The adjutant general or the adjutant general's designee may rent buildings or other facilities at Camp Ripley of the Minnesota National Guard to persons under terms and conditions specified by the adjutant general or designee. Subject to any prohibitions or restrictions in any agreement between the United States and the state of Minnesota, proceeds of rentals under this subdivision must be applied as follows:

- (1) payment of increased utilities, maintenance, or other costs directly attributable to the rental;
- (2) other operating and maintenance or repair costs for the building or facility being rented; and
- (3) maintenance and improvement of buildings or other facilities at Camp Ripley.

Rentals under this subdivision must be made under terms and conditions that do not conflict with the use of Camp Ripley the facilities for military purposes.

Sec. 5. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 192.25, is amended to read:

#### **192.25 EXEMPTION FROM PROCESS; TRANSFER TO CIVIL AUTHORITIES.**

Subdivision 1. **Exemption from process.** No member of the guard shall be arrested, or served with any summons, order, warrant or other civil process after having been ordered to any duty or while going to, attending or returning from any place to which the member is required to go for military duty; but nothing herein shall prevent an arrest by order of a military officer or for a felony or breach of the peace committed while not in the actual performance of assigned duties. The articles of equipment personally owned by such members shall be exempt from seizure or sale for debt.

Subd. 2. **Transfer to civil authorities.** When probable cause exists that a criminal offense, other than a crime designated as a purely military offense in section 192A.021, has been committed by any officer or enlisted member of the military forces while on duty status other than federal duty, the officer or enlisted member may be turned over by superior officers to the proper civil authorities of the county or municipality in which the offense occurred for adjudication of such crime, to include imposition of pretrial restraint, but trial and punishment by the civil authorities shall not preclude trial and additional punishment or dismissal from the service by court-martial for any military offense resulting from the commission of said crime.

Sec. 6. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 192.501, is amended by adding a subdivision to read:

Subd. 1e. **Referral bonus program.** (a) The adjutant general may establish a program to provide a bonus for referrals leading to enlistment in or commissioning into the Minnesota National Guard.

(b) The adjutant general may determine eligibility criteria for the bonus. The adjutant general must specify all criteria for the bonus in regulations and publish changes as necessary.

(c) The referral bonus payments must be made on a schedule that is determined and published in department regulations by the adjutant general.

(d) If the adjutant general determines that a referral bonus was paid to an individual who was ineligible, the adjutant general may seek to recoup the bonus.

(e) If the adjutant general implements a referral bonus program, the adjutant general must:

(1) notify the legislative committees with jurisdiction over the Minnesota National Guard;

(2) develop internal controls for the referral bonus program aimed at preventing fraud, waste, and abuse of government resources, and publish these internal controls in regulation;

(3) by January 16 each year, submit regulations developed under this subdivision to the legislative committees with jurisdiction over the Minnesota National Guard; and

(4) maintain an accurate record of the recipients and benefits paid under this subdivision and summarize this information in the agency performance report, including information regarding the rank and unit locations of bonus recipients.

Sec. 7. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 192.67, is amended to read:

**192.67 OFFENDERS; ~~TRANSFER TO CIVIL AUTHORITIES;~~ SERVICE MEMBER DATA.**

~~Subdivision 1. **Transfer to civil authorities.** When any criminal offense is committed by any officer or enlisted member of the military forces while on duty status other than federal duty, the officer or enlisted member shall be turned over by superior officers to the proper civil authorities of the county or municipality in which the offense occurred for punishment for such crime, but such trial and punishment by the civil authorities shall not preclude trial and additional punishment or dismissal from the service by court-martial for any military offense resulting from the commission of said crime.~~

Subd. 2. **Service member data.** Notwithstanding any provision of chapter 13 or other state law, all confidential data on individuals and private data on individuals, as defined by section 13.02, subdivisions 3 and 12, pertaining to any service member of the military forces and maintained by any government entity, including but not limited to investigative reports and law enforcement data, including but not limited to all data collected and defined under section 13.82 pertaining to any service member of the military forces, must be made accessible to the adjutant general of the Minnesota National Guard upon request of the Office of the State Judge Advocate, except for data under chapter 5B. All information, data, and records obtained under this subdivision may be accessed, copied, transmitted, or provided to the adjutant general without a court order or request from the subject of the data when the matter involves any officer or enlisted member of the military forces. ~~The adjutant general may only use data made accessible under this subdivision in support of military justice and Minnesota National Guard administrative and disciplinary actions.~~

Sec. 8. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 193.143, is amended to read:

**193.143 STATE ARMORY BUILDING COMMISSION, POWERS.**

Such corporation, subject to the conditions and limitations prescribed in sections 193.141 to 193.149, shall possess all the powers of a body corporate necessary and convenient to accomplish the objectives and

perform the duties prescribed by sections 193.141 to 193.149, including the following, which shall not be construed as a limitation upon the general powers hereby conferred:

(1) To acquire by lease, purchase, gift, or condemnation proceedings all necessary right, title, and interest in and to the lands required for a site for a new armory and all other real or personal property required for the purposes contemplated by the Military Code and to hold and dispose of the same, subject to the conditions and limitations herein prescribed; provided that any such real or personal property or interest therein may be so acquired or accepted subject to any condition which may be imposed thereon by the grantor or donor and agreed to by such corporation not inconsistent with the proper use of such property by the state for armory or military purposes as herein provided.

(2) To exercise the power of eminent domain in the manner provided by chapter 117, for the purpose of acquiring any property which such corporation is herein authorized to acquire by condemnation; provided, that the corporation may take possession of any such property so to be acquired at any time after the filing of the petition describing the same in condemnation proceedings; provided further, that this shall not preclude the corporation from abandoning the condemnation of any such property in any case where possession thereof has not been taken.

(3) To construct and equip new armories as authorized herein; to pay therefor out of the funds obtained as hereinafter provided and to hold, manage, and dispose of such armory, equipment, and site as hereinafter provided. The total amount of bonds issued on account of such armories shall not exceed the amount of the cost thereof; provided also, that the total bonded indebtedness of the commission shall not at any time exceed the aggregate sum of \$15,000,000.

(4) To provide partnerships with federal and state governments and to match federal and local funds, when available.

(5) To sue and be sued.

(6) To contract and be contracted with in any matter connected with any purpose or activity within the powers of such corporations as herein specified; provided, that no officer or member of such corporation shall be personally interested, directly or indirectly, in any contract in which such corporation is interested.

(7) To employ any and all professional and nonprofessional services and all agents, employees, workers, and servants necessary and proper for the purposes and activities of such corporation as authorized or contemplated herein and to pay for the same out of any portion of the income of the corporation available for such purposes or activities. The officers and members of such corporation shall not receive any compensation therefrom, but may receive their reasonable and necessary expenses incurred in connection with the performance of their duties; provided however, that whenever the duties of any member of the commission require full time and attention the commission may compensate the member therefor at such rates as it may determine.

(8) To borrow money and issue bonds for the purposes and in the manner and within the limitations herein specified, and to pledge any and all property and income of such corporation acquired or received as herein provided to secure the payment of such bonds, subject to the provisions and limitations herein prescribed, and to redeem any such bonds if so provided therein or in the mortgage or trust deed accompanying the same.

(9) To use for the following purposes any available money received by such corporation from any source as herein provided in excess of those required for the payment of the cost of such armory and for the payment

of any bonds issued by the corporation and interest thereon according to the terms of such bonds or of any mortgage or trust deed accompanying the same:

(a) to pay the necessary incidental expenses of carrying on the business and activities of the corporation as herein authorized;

(b) to pay the cost of operating, maintaining, repairing, and improving such new armories;

(c) if any further excess money remains, to purchase upon the open market at or above or below the face or par value thereof any bonds issued by the corporation as herein authorized, provided that any bonds so purchased shall thereupon be canceled.

(10) To adopt and use a corporate seal.

(11) To adopt all needful bylaws and rules for the conduct of business and affairs of such corporation and for the management and use of all armories while under the ownership and control of such corporation as herein provided, not inconsistent with the use of such armory for armory or military purposes.

(12) Such corporation shall issue no stock.

(13) No officer or member of such corporation shall have any personal share or interest in any funds or property of the corporation or be subject to any personal liability by reason of any liability of the corporation.

(14) The Minnesota State Armory Building Commission created under section 193.142 shall keep all money and credits received by it as a single fund, to be designated as the "Minnesota State Armory Building Commission fund," with separate accounts for each armory; and the commission may make transfers of money from funds appertaining to any armory under its control for use for any other such armory; provided such transfers shall be made only from money on hand, from time to time, in excess of the amounts required to meet payments of interest or principal on bonds or other obligations appertaining to the armory to which such funds pertain and only when necessary to pay expenses of construction, operation, maintenance, ~~and~~ debt service, and other obligations reasonable and necessary, of such other armory; provided further, no such transfer of any money paid for the support of any armory by the municipality in which such armory is situated shall be made by the commission.

(15) The corporation created under section 193.142 may designate one or more state or national banks as depositories of its funds, and may provide, upon such conditions as the corporation may determine, that the treasurer of the corporation shall be exempt from personal liability for loss of funds deposited in any such depository due to the insolvency or other acts or omissions of such depository.

(16) The governor is empowered to apply for grants of money, equipment, and materials which may be made available to the states by the federal government for leasing, building, and equipping armories for the use of the military forces of the state which are reserve components of the armed forces of the United States, whenever the governor is satisfied that the conditions under which such grants are offered by the federal government, are for the best interests of the state and are not inconsistent with the laws of the state relating to armories, and to accept such grants in the name of the state. The Minnesota State Armory Building Commission is designated as the agency of the state to receive such grants and to use them for armory purposes as prescribed in this chapter, and by federal laws, and regulations not inconsistent therewith.

Sec. 9. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 193.29, subdivision 1, is amended to read:

Subdivision 1. **Armory board.** The adjutant general may delegate authority for the control, operation, and use of each armory building and grounds occupied by any of the military forces of the state ~~shall be~~

~~vested in~~ to an armory board consisting of officers, warrant officers, or enlisted personnel representing the organization or organizations quartered therein, as hereinafter provided, except that the commission-owned armories which have been or may be constructed or acquired and operated under the provisions of sections 193.139 to 193.149, and acts supplementary thereto shall be controlled and operated as provided therein.

Sec. 10. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 193.29, subdivision 4, is amended to read:

Subd. 4. **Rentals; proceeds.** The armory board may rent an armory to entities or individuals under terms and conditions ~~the board determines~~ as determined by the adjutant general, but rentals may not conflict with the use of the armory for military purposes. The proceeds of rentals and all other income accruing to each armory constitutes the armory fund and must be applied by the armory board of each armory, as the adjutant general shall direct, for its maintenance, extension, improvement, and equipment, but all armory funds and all allowances from the state accruing to commission-owned armories must be paid to the commission.

Sec. 11. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 193.36, subdivision 2, is amended to read:

Subd. 2. **May sell and convey property in certain cases.** In any case when the adjutant general finds it advantageous for military training, the adjutant general may sell and convey property to the municipality or county in which the property is located at a price to be determined by an appraiser to be selected by the adjutant general. The money received must be credited to the general fund and is appropriated to the adjutant general to be used: (1) as a contribution for the construction or acquisition of an armory, armories, or armory facilities to replace the one sold; or (2) for the maintenance, operation, repair, rehabilitation, or improvement of existing armory facilities. The money may also be transferred to the Minnesota State Armory Commission: (1) for the replacement of an armory, armories, or armory facilities constructed or acquired by the commission; or (2) for the maintenance, operation, repair, rehabilitation, or improvement of facilities owned by the commission. If the money received is not expended for the purposes stated in this subdivision within ten years after the old armory has been sold, the appropriation to the adjutant general as provided in this subdivision lapses. In the event that both the municipality and the county desire to purchase the armory, the municipality must be given first priority to purchase the armory. In addition to money, the adjutant general may consider local government contributions to include the donation of land, provision of utilities to provide for a new armory, or other expenditures by the municipality or county.

If the municipality or county does not purchase the property after a reasonable opportunity, the adjutant general may sell and convey it to any person after a public sale of the property by first advertising for bids or proposals for three consecutive weeks in a newspaper of general circulation in the area that the property is located and accepting the proposal most favorable to the department. The adjutant general may reject all proposals. The proceeds of the sale must be credited as provided in this subdivision. The adjutant general may lease any armory remaining unsold to the municipality for public purposes.

Sec. 12. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 193.36, is amended by adding a subdivision to read:

Subd. 2a. **May sell and convey property in certain cases to limited resource municipalities.** The adjutant general may sell and convey property to a municipality at a price to be determined by the adjutant general with the condition that the property remain in public use by the municipality for no less than 25 years, if the adjutant general:

- (1) finds it advantageous for military training;
- (2) intends to sell and convey property located in a municipality; and

(3) determines that the municipality in which the property is located lacks sufficient property tax base or other resources to purchase the property at the appraised value.

Sec. 13. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 193.36, is amended by adding a subdivision to read:

Subd. 2b. **Exchange of property.** The adjutant general with the approval of the Land Exchange Board may exchange any property for any publicly or privately held property without regard for value when the adjutant general finds it advantageous for military training, operations, or reduction of management costs.

Sec. 14. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 193.36, subdivision 3, is amended to read:

Subd. 3. **Disposition of unsuitable armory sites and buildings.** The adjutant general with the approval of the governor, may sell and convey on behalf of the state any state armory sites and buildings which in the judgment of the adjutant general are unsuitable for military purposes or which have been condemned by proper authority as unsafe. Money received from the sale of such armories shall be paid into the state treasury and credited to the ~~general fund~~ maintenance appropriation of the Department of Military Affairs or the Minnesota State Armory Building Commission as determined by the adjutant general.

Sec. 15. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 193.36, is amended by adding a subdivision to read:

Subd. 4. **Bond financed property.** Notwithstanding a provision to the contrary in this section, all conveyances, sales, or exchanges under this section of state bond financed property, as defined in section 16A.695, subdivision 1, are subject to section 16A.695, subdivision 3.

Sec. 16. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 197.63, subdivision 1, is amended to read:

Subdivision 1. **Issuance without charge.** A certified copy of a birth, death, marriage, divorce, dissolution of marriage record, or certified copy of veteran's discharge recorded pursuant to section 386.20, shall be issued promptly by the officer charged with the keeping of the records upon the request of, and without any charge to, any veteran, the surviving spouse or next of kin of the veteran, a county veteran service officer appointed pursuant to section 197.60, or a service ~~officers~~ officer of any veterans organization chartered by the Congress of the United States; or the Department of Veterans Affairs; for use in the presentation of claims to the United States Veterans Administration or in connection with any veterans organization or the Department of Veterans Affairs. The word "veteran" as used in this section means any man or woman who is a veteran as defined in section 197.447, and who is a citizen of the United States or resident alien.

Sec. 17. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 198.005, is amended to read:

#### **198.005 ADMINISTRATORS.**

The commissioner shall appoint an administrator for each of the veterans homes. The administrators act as the administrative head for their respective veterans homes. The administrators shall have a current Minnesota nursing home administrator's license and shall serve in the unclassified service. The salaries of the administrators are not subject to section 43A.17, subdivision 1. ~~The administrators serve at the pleasure of the commissioner and report directly to the commissioner.~~

Sec. 18. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 198.006, is amended to read:

**198.006 SUPPLEMENTAL PROGRAMS.**

(a) The commissioner must work with federal, state, local, and private agencies to develop alternative institutional and noninstitutional care programs for veterans to supplement the mission of the homes. Veterans shall be afforded the least restrictive, most appropriate level of care available.

(b) The commissioner may work with federal, state, local, and private entities to make available appropriate dental services for veterans homes residents. The commissioner may engage with the United States Department of Veterans Affairs to support the dental benefits program authorized under this paragraph.

(c) The commissioner may provide adult day care center programs that offer therapeutic and rehabilitation health care services to veterans and support services for caregivers of veterans. If the commissioner provides adult day care center programs, the commissioner may collect fees from program participants. The commissioner is authorized to apply for and accept federal funding for purposes of this paragraph.

(d) The commissioner may operate a central pharmacy to provide any veterans home resident with pharmaceuticals prescribed as part of the resident's care plan. Any pharmacy established under this paragraph must comply with state and federal law, including any applicable rules. The commissioner may engage with the United States Department of Veterans Affairs to support the central pharmacy authorized under this paragraph.

Sec. 19. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 375.34, is amended to read:

**375.34 MEMORIAL DAY AND VETERANS DAY, APPROPRIATION FOR OBSERVANCE.**

The county board of each county may appropriate funds from the revenue fund of the county ~~not more than \$3,500 annually~~ to aid in the observance of Memorial Day in commemoration of the noble and valiant deeds of the nation's soldier dead and Veterans Day.

Sec. 20. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 375.35, is amended to read:

**375.35 ~~\$300~~ APPROPRIATIONS TO MILITARY SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS FOR MEMORIAL DAY AND VETERANS DAY.**

A county board may also appropriate funds annually ~~not more than \$300~~ to each post of a recognized military service persons' organization or society, holding charter from Congress or incorporated in this state, organized and existing in the county, to defray the expenses of Memorial Day and Veterans Day exercises.

Sec. 21. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 609.396, is amended to read:

**609.396 UNAUTHORIZED PRESENCE AT ~~CAMP RIPLEY~~ MILITARY INSTALLATIONS.**

Subdivision 1. **Misdemeanor.** A person is guilty of a misdemeanor if the person intentionally and without the authorization of the adjutant general or a duly appointed commander in accordance with federal regulations enters or is present on the Camp Ripley Military Reservation or in any campground, any military reservation, any armory, any installation, or any facility owned or controlled by the state or federal government for military purposes.

Subd. 2. **Felony.** A person is guilty of a felony and may be sentenced to not more than five years imprisonment or to payment of a fine of not more than \$10,000, or both, if:



(1) the person intentionally enters or is present in an area ~~at the Camp Ripley Military Reservation~~ that is posted by order of the adjutant general as restricted for weapon firing or other hazardous military activity; and

(2) the person knows that doing so creates a risk of death, bodily harm, or serious property damage.

Sec. 22. Laws 2010, chapter 333, article 2, section 23, as amended by Laws 2011, First Special Session chapter 12, section 47, is amended to read:

**Sec. 23. PLANNING NEW VETERANS CEMETERIES.**

(a) The commissioner of veterans affairs shall determine a suitable site and plan for ~~three~~ four new state veterans cemeteries, one to be located in northeastern Minnesota, one to be located in northwestern Minnesota, one to be located in southeastern Minnesota, and one to be located in southwestern Minnesota. In determining the site for a cemetery, the commissioner shall consider available public land options and shall seek proposals for donated land from interested counties, local communities, civic organizations, veterans service organizations, and individuals.

(b) For determining the veterans cemetery site in southeastern Minnesota, the commissioner shall give priority consideration to land owned and proposed for donation by the county of Fillmore.

(c) The commissioner's planning process for a state veterans cemetery must include, at a minimum, the following actions:

(1) determining the need for the cemetery;

(2) investigating the availability of suitable land for the cemetery;

(3) assessment of impacts of the cemetery;

(4) encouragement of support from veteran service organizations and local governments; and

(5) preparation and submission of a preapplication for a grant from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs for commitment of funding for establishing the cemetery.

(d) By January 15, 2011, the commissioner shall report to the chair and ranking minority member of the house of representatives and senate committees having responsibility for veterans affairs with a report of the commissioner's progress in implementing this section.

**EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective the day following final enactment.

Sec. 23. Laws 2023, chapter 38, article 1, section 3, subdivision 2, is amended to read:

Subd. 2. <b>Veterans Programs and Services</b>	56,523,000	31,214,000
--	------------	------------

The amounts that may be spent for each purpose are specified in the following subdivisions. The base is \$30,258,000 in fiscal year 2026 and each fiscal year thereafter.

(a) **State's Veterans Cemeteries.** \$4,282,000 each year is for the operation of the state's veterans

cemeteries. The base for this appropriation is \$3,782,000 in fiscal year 2026 and each fiscal year thereafter.

(b) **Veterans Service Organizations.** \$500,000 each year is for grants to the following congressionally chartered veterans service organizations as designated by the commissioner: Disabled American Veterans, Military Order of the Purple Heart, the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Vietnam Veterans of America, AMVETS, and Paralyzed Veterans of America. This funding must be allocated in direct proportion to the funding currently being provided by the commissioner to these organizations.

(c) **Honor Guards.** \$200,000 each year is for compensation for honor guards at the funerals of veterans under Minnesota Statutes, section 197.231.

(d) **Minnesota GI Bill.** \$200,000 each year is for the costs of administering the Minnesota GI Bill postsecondary educational benefits, on-the-job training, and apprenticeship program under Minnesota Statutes, section 197.791.

(e) **Gold Star Program.** \$100,000 each year is for administering the Gold Star Program for surviving family members of deceased veterans.

(f) **County Veterans Service Office.** \$1,550,000 each year is for funding the County Veterans Service Office grant program under Minnesota Statutes, section 197.608.

(g) **Camp Bliss.** \$150,000 each year is for a grant to Camp Bliss as provided under article 2, section 9.

(h) **Veterans on the Lake.** \$50,000 each year is for a grant to Veterans on the Lake for expenses related to retreats for veterans, including therapy, transportation, and activities customized for veterans. These are onetime appropriations.

(i) **Veteran Resilience Project.** \$300,000 each year is for a grant to the veteran resilience project. Grant funds must be used to make eye movement desensitization and reprocessing therapy available to veterans, veterans' spouses, current military service members, and current military service members' spouses who are suffering from posttraumatic stress disorder and trauma. The base for this appropriation

is \$200,000 in fiscal year 2026 and each fiscal year thereafter.

The veteran resilience project must report to the commissioner of veterans affairs and the chairs and ranking minority members of the legislative committees with jurisdiction over veterans affairs policy and finance by January 15 of each year on the program. The report must include an overview of the program's budget, a detailed explanation of program expenditures, the number of veterans and service members served by the program, and a list and explanation of the services provided to program participants.

(j) **CORE Program.** \$1,225,000 each year is for the Counseling and Case Management Outreach Referral and Education (CORE) program.

(k) **LinkVet Call Center.** \$369,000 each year is for the operation of the state's LinkVet Call Center.

(l) **Recently Separated Veterans Program.** \$350,000 each year is for operation of the recently separated veterans program. The commissioner of veterans affairs may use Department of Defense and other veteran data that were provided with an appropriate disclosure to assist with connecting veterans to resources and new programming. The commissioner may use money for personnel, research, marketing, technology solutions, and professional or technical contracts. The base for this appropriation is \$300,000 in fiscal year 2026 and each fiscal year thereafter.

(m) **Homeless Veterans and SOAR Program.** \$1,035,000 each year is to operate the homeless veteran registry and homeless programs and to assist veterans, former service members, and veterans' and former service members' dependents with obtaining federal benefits through the Social Security Administration. The commissioner of veterans affairs may use money for personnel, training, research, marketing, and professional or technical contracts. The base for this appropriation is \$1,344,000 in fiscal year 2026 and each fiscal year thereafter.

(n) **Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans.** \$7,865,000 the first year and \$1,075,000 the second year are for grants to the Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans to provide assistance throughout

Minnesota to veterans and veterans' families who are homeless or in danger of homelessness, including assistance with:

- (1) supportive services to maintain housing;
- (2) employment;
- (3) legal issues;
- (4) housing and housing-related costs;
- (5) transportation;
- (6) the acquisition and creation of permanent supportive housing; and
- (7) property management of permanent supportive housing.

Of these amounts, \$6,350,000 the first year is for the establishment of permanent supportive housing options for homeless veterans and former service members. This is a onetime appropriation and is available until June 30, 2026. \$440,000 the first year is for the direct veteran assistance grant. This is a onetime appropriation. Any unencumbered balance remaining in this subdivision in the first year for grants to the Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans does not cancel and is available for the second year. Assistance authorized under this paragraph must be provided only to a veteran who has resided in Minnesota for 30 days prior to the veteran's application for assistance and according to other guidelines established by the commissioner. To avoid duplication of services, the commissioner must ensure that this assistance is coordinated with all other available programs for veterans.

(o) **Veterans Bonus Program.** \$15,000,000 the first year is for service bonuses to Post-9/11 Veterans and Gold Star families under Minnesota Statutes, section 197.79. This is a onetime appropriation and is available until June 30, 2024.

(p) **Metro Meals on Wheels.** \$540,000 each year is for a grant to Metro Meals on Wheels to provide: (1) home-delivered meals to veterans; and (2) technical, enrollment, outreach, and volunteer recruitment assistance to member programs. Metro Meals on Wheels must report to the commissioner of veterans affairs and the chairs and ranking minority members

of the legislative committees with jurisdiction over veterans affairs policy and finance by September 1 each year with a detailed explanation of how the grant money was used and the number of veterans and service members served by the program. This is a onetime appropriation. Any unencumbered balance does not cancel at the end of the first year and is available for the second year.

(q) **Minnesota Military and Veterans Museum.** \$225,000 the second year is for a grant to the Minnesota Military and Veterans Museum for museum staff to provide direct services to veterans and their families. The base for this appropriation is \$300,000 in fiscal year 2026 and each fiscal year thereafter.

(r) **Every Third Saturday.** \$100,000 each year is for a grant to Every Third Saturday to provide veterans with emergency assistance and internships. Every Third Saturday must report to the commissioner of veterans affairs and the chairs and ranking minority members of the legislative committees with jurisdiction over veterans affairs policy and finance no later than September 1, 2024, and by September 1 of each subsequent year. Each report must include, at a minimum, a detailed explanation of how the grant money was used and the number of veterans served by the program. These are onetime appropriations.

(s) **Veteran Homelessness Initiative.** \$4,311,000 the first year and \$1,311,000 the second year are for an initiative to prevent and end veteran homelessness.

(t) **Veterans Campground Wastewater System Upgrades.** \$744,000 the first year is for one or more grants to the Veterans Campground on Big Marine Lake, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, to design, engineer, permit, and construct wastewater systems on campground property to increase the capacity of wastewater systems. This is a onetime appropriation.

**EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective the day following final enactment.

Sec. 24. Laws 2023, chapter 38, article 1, section 3, subdivision 3, is amended to read:

Subd. 3. <b>Veterans Health Care</b>	90,025,000	100,797,000
--------------------------------------	------------	-------------

(a) The base for this appropriation in fiscal year 2026 is \$93,387,000 and \$94,435,000 in fiscal year 2027 and each fiscal year thereafter.

(b) \$88,885,000 the first year and \$99,847,000 the second year may be transferred to a veterans homes special revenue account in the special revenue fund in the same manner as other receipts are deposited according to Minnesota Statutes, section 198.34, and are appropriated to the commissioner of veterans affairs for the operation of veterans homes facilities and programs. If the amount available in fiscal year 2024 is insufficient, the amount appropriated in fiscal year 2025 is available in fiscal year 2024. The base for this transfer is \$92,437,000 in fiscal year 2026 and \$93,485,000 in fiscal year 2027.

(c) The department shall seek opportunities to maximize federal reimbursements of Medicare-eligible expenses and provide annual reports to the commissioner of management and budget on the federal Medicare reimbursements that are received. Contingent upon future federal Medicare receipts, reductions to the veterans homes' general fund appropriation may be made.

(d) \$400,000 each year is for the department to staff Veteran Community Health Navigators in community-based hospitals.

(e) \$190,000 the first year is for the working group established under article 2, section 8.

Presented to the governor May 7, 2024

Signed by the governor May 8, 2024, 12:41 p.m.