

CHAPTER 196

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

196.05 Duties of commissioner.

196.05 DUTIES OF COMMISSIONER.

Subdivision 1. **General duties.** The commissioner shall:

(1) act as the agent of a resident of the state having a claim against the United States for benefits arising out of or by reason of service in the armed forces and prosecute the claim without charge;

(2) act as custodian of veterans' bonus records;

(3) administer the laws relating to the providing of bronze flag holders at veterans' graves for memorial purposes;

(4) administer the laws relating to recreational or rest camps for veterans so far as applicable to state agencies;

(5) administer the state soldiers' assistance fund and veterans' relief fund and other funds appropriated for the payment of bonuses or other benefits to veterans or for the rehabilitation of veterans;

(6) cooperate with national, state, county, municipal, and private social agencies in securing to veterans and their dependents the benefits provided by national, state, and county laws, municipal ordinances, or public and private social agencies;

(7) provide necessary assistance where other adequate aid is not available to the dependent family of a veteran while the veteran is hospitalized and after the veteran is released for as long a period as is necessary as determined by the commissioner;

(8) act as the guardian of the estate for a minor or an incompetent person receiving money from the United States government when requested to do so by an agency of the United States of America provided sufficient personnel are available;

(9) cooperate with United States governmental agencies providing compensation, pensions, insurance, or other benefits provided by federal law, by supplementing the benefits prescribed therein, when conditions in an individual case make it necessary;

(10) assist in implementing state laws, rights, and privileges relating to the reemployment of veterans upon their separation from the armed forces;

(11) contact, at times as the commissioner deems proper, war veterans, as defined in section 197.447, who are confined in a public institution; investigate the treatment accorded those veterans and report annually to the governor the results of the investigations; and the heads of the public institutions shall permit the commissioner, or the commissioner's representative, to visit any veteran; and, if the commissioner, or the commissioner's representative requests any information relative to any veteran and the veteran's affairs, the head of the institution shall furnish it;

(12) assist dependent family members of military personnel who are called from reserve status to extended federal active duty during a time of war or national emergency through the state soldiers' assistance fund provided by section 197.03; and

(13) exercise other powers as may be authorized and necessary to carry out the provisions of this chapter and chapters 197 and 198, consistent with those chapters.

Subd. 2. Mission; efficiency. It is part of the department's mission that within the department's resources the commissioner shall endeavor to:

(1) prevent the waste or unnecessary spending of public money;

(2) use innovative fiscal and human resource practices to manage the state's resources and operate the department as efficiently as possible;

(3) coordinate the department's activities wherever appropriate with the activities of other governmental agencies;

(4) use technology where appropriate to increase agency productivity, improve customer service, increase public access to information about government, and increase public participation in the business of government;

(5) utilize constructive and cooperative labor-management practices to the extent otherwise required by chapters 43A and 179A;

(6) include specific objectives in the performance report required under section 15.91 to increase the efficiency of agency operations, when appropriate; and

(7) recommend to the legislature, in the performance report of the department required under section 15.91, appropriate changes in law necessary to carry out the mission of the department.

History: 1995 c 248 art 11 s 15