DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS SERVICES

Clinician Recruitment Program

- Replaces the Physician Recruitment Program with the Clinician Recruitment Program and expands program eligibility.
- Makes changes to the required contract terms.
- Permits the Director of Veterans Services (DVS Director) to allocate funds.

Resident benefit funds

- Eliminates the requirement that the Superintendent of the Ohio Veterans' Homes establish rules for the operation of the residents' benefit funds.

Veteran peer counseling network

- Eliminates the Veteran Peer Counseling Network.

Claims register

- Eliminates the DVS Director's duty to keep a register of all claims filed by DVS.

Veterans' home site survey

- Requires the DVS Director to survey potential sites in central Ohio for the construction of a new state veterans home.

Clinician Recruitment Program

(R.C. 5907.17)

Eligibility

The act renames the Physician Recruitment Program as the Clinician Recruitment Program. The change in name reflects the act's expansion of program eligibility from just physicians to physicians, advanced practice registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, physician's assistants, registered nurses, registered nurse aides, and any Ohio Veterans' Home employee who is a licensed medical professional in Ohio and is not exempt from a student loan program under a union contract or other law.

To be eligible for the program under the act, a clinician must:

- Be licensed in Ohio by an appropriate licensing authority and work in that discipline at an Ohio Veterans' Home;
- Have worked at an Ohio Veterans' Home for at least one year;
- Not have been subject to formal discipline while employed at an Ohio Veterans' Home;
- Provide sufficient evidence to determine that the clinician attended a school or medical program accredited by a national or regional accrediting organization; and

- Agree to the terms of the contract provided under the provision.

These eligibility requirements replace existing, physician-specific requirements.

Contract

The act makes changes to the terms of the contract to require clinicians to agree to maintain appropriate licensure and to provide services for a specified number of years of one or more years.

Scope of program

The act changes the category of individuals served by the program to "residents of the Ohio veterans' homes." Formerly, the category of individuals served by the program were "patients of one or more specified institutions administered by the department (of veterans services)" (DVS).

Allocation of funds

The act permits the DVS Director or a designee to allocate funds among clinicians recruited under the program for any purpose considered necessary to best serve clinician staffing needs.

Resident benefit funds

(R.C. 5907.11)

The act eliminates the requirement that the Superintendent of the Ohio Veterans' Homes establish rules for the operation of the residents' benefit funds. Under continuing law, the Superintendent may, with the approval of DVS, establish local funds for each veterans' home. Each fund must be used for the entertainment and welfare of the residents and is operated for the exclusive benefit of the residents of the associated home. The funds generate revenue from donations and the sale of commissary items at the associated home.

Veteran peer counseling network

(R.C. 5902.20, repealed)

The act eliminates the Peer Counseling Network and the DVS Director's duty to adopt rules for it. Under former law, the Veteran Peer Counseling Network offered Ohio veterans the opportunity to work with other veterans to help overcome issues unique to veterans. The DVS Director was charged with adopting rules to administer the Network.

Claims register

(R.C. 5902.06, repealed)

The act eliminates the DVS Director's duty to keep a register showing the situation and disposition of any claim filed by DVS. Former law required the DVS Director to keep such a register.

Veterans' home site survey

(Section 759.10)

The act directs the DVS Director to investigate sites in or near the Columbus metropolitan area for the construction of a state veterans' home and to issue a report on the Director's findings to the General Assembly and Governor by September 30, 2026. The report must include an evaluation of the relevant grant approval criteria for priority-one funding under the State Veterans Home Construction Grant Program operated by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, as well as an estimate of the state's share of facility construction and land acquisition costs under the grant program for each site.