



**Ottawa County**  
Department of Veteran Affairs

## **ARTICLE I - THE ORGANIZATION**

### **Section 1: Name**

The name of the Committee is the Ottawa County Veteran Affairs Committee, hereafter referred to as OCVAC.

### **Section 2: Legal Status**

OCVAC is an Advisory Committee to the Ottawa County Board of Commissioners.

### **Section 3: Statement of Purpose**

The Committee's mission is to provide advisory recommendations regarding Veterans Affairs matters to the Ottawa County Board of Commissioners, and to review and approve requests brought to the Committee through the Soldiers & Sailors Relief Committee and other funds where the Director has concerns.

### **Section 4: Inclusive Process**

OCVAC is committed to inclusive representation of Ottawa County Veterans Affairs. All individuals and corporations interested in the vision or mission of OCVAC may bring forward issues to OCVAC for consideration.

## **ARTICLE II - MEMBERSHIP**

### **Section 1: Membership**

Membership in OCVAC shall consist of:

- 3-7 members of Ottawa County who:
  - Are appointed by the County Board of Commissioners, with appointment being on the recommendation of the posts/chapters of each chartered veterans' organization in the county;
  - Must be honorably discharged from the military and served in a wartime period or received an armed forces campaign or service medal; and
  - Have demonstrated knowledge, skills, and experience in public service, business, or finance.
- The OCVAC shall select a Chairman, Vice Chairman, and Secretary at the annual meeting.
- The Ottawa County Veterans Affairs Department staff will record and maintain minutes of each meeting for the Committee.

## **Section 2: Term of Office**

Members of OCVAC shall be appointed for a term of four (4) years each. Terms for members first appointed shall be staggered so that no more than two (2) vacancies are scheduled to occur in a single year.

## **Section 3: Vacancies and Resignations**

Vacancies shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointments for the unexpired terms (by the County Board of Commissioners, with appointment being on the recommendation of the posts of each chartered veterans' organization in the county). A member may resign by written notice to the Ottawa County Board of Commissioners. The resignation will be effective upon its receipt by the Ottawa County Board of Commissioners, or a subsequent time as set forth in the notice of resignation.

## **ARTICLE III - MEETINGS**

### **Section 1: Regular Meetings**

Regular meetings of the members will be held monthly at a place and time determined by the Committee. OCVAC shall establish an annual calendar for regular meetings at its annual meeting. This calendar will be affirmed by a vote of the OCVAC and distributed/published.

### **Section 2: Special Meetings**

Special meetings of the OCVAC may be called by the Chair or Vice Chair at the direction of a majority of members, County Administrator, or as otherwise determined by law. Any request for a meeting by members must state the purpose or purposes of the proposed meeting.

### **Section 3: Notice of Meetings**

Written notices containing time and place of all meetings of OCVAC will be given either personally, by e-mail, or through miottawa.org public calendar to each member not less than seven days before a regular meeting and not less than two days before a special meeting, and notices of meetings shall be in accordance with the requirements of the Open Meetings Act. The notice of a regular meeting does not need to state the purpose or purposes of the meetings or the business to be transacted. In reference to any meeting, no notice of a recessed meeting must be given if the time and place to which the meeting is recessed is announced at the meeting. At the recessed meeting, the only business that may be transacted is business which might have been transacted at the original meeting.

#### **Section 4: Annual Meeting**

The OCVAC shall host an Annual Meeting every January, or in another month designated by the Committee, upon a majority vote of those members in attendance when the vote is called.

#### **Section 5: Quorum and Voting**

A simple majority of OCVAC members will constitute a quorum at any meeting. The vote of a majority of the members present at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall constitute an action of the OCVAC. If at any meeting the members in attendance comprise less than a quorum, a majority of those present may recess the meeting until a quorum has been obtained.

#### **Section 6: Conduct of Meetings**

Meetings of the OCVAC will be presided over by the Chair, or in his/her absence, the Vice Chair. Meetings will be held in accordance with Roberts Rules of Order.

#### **Section 7: Compensation**

With prior approval by OCVAC, Committee Members are authorized to incur such expense as shall be necessary while performing duties for OCVAC. The members of the Board shall be entitled to receive per diem and mileage for attending meetings.

### **ARTICLE IV - OFFICERS**

#### **Section 1: Election or Appointment**

The OCVAC will elect a Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary at the current year annual meeting by a simple majority vote with nominations from the floor.

#### **Section 2: Term of Office**

The term of office for all officers will commence upon their election or appointment and will continue until the next annual meeting of the OCVAC and until their respective successors are chosen or until their resignation.

#### **Section 3: Resignation**

An Officer may resign by written notice to OCVAC. The resignation will be effective upon its receipt by the OCVAC or at a subsequent time specified in the notice of the resignation.

#### **Section 4: Chairperson**

The Chairperson will preside over meetings of OCVAC and will notify the Ottawa County Board of Commissioners of all resolutions of OCVAC and may appoint sub-Committees as provided below.

## **Section 5: Vice Chairperson**

The Vice Chairperson will, in the absence or disability of the Chairperson, serve as acting Chairperson.

## **Section 6: Secretary**

The Secretary will be responsible for recording and maintaining the minutes of each meeting and for other administrative duties as assigned by the Chairperson.

## **Section 7: Term Limits for Chairperson and Vice Chairperson**

The Chairperson may be elected to the position of Chairperson for a maximum of two consecutive years. The Vice-Chairperson may also only be elected to the position of Vice-Chairperson for a maximum of two consecutive years.

# **ARTICLE V - COMMITTEES**

## **Section 1: Ad-Hoc Committees**

Ad-Hoc Committees may be formed to respond to veteran-related subjects of interest in the County.

# **ARTICLE VI - INDEMNIFICATION**

## **Section 1: Indemnification**

The Ottawa County Board of Commissioners will, to the extent permitted by law, indemnify members against expenses (including attorney fees, judgments, fines, and amounts paid in settlement actually and reasonably incurred by them in connection with any actions or suits brought or threatened against them), but only insofar as such expenses resulted from the person's involvement with OCVAC.

## **Section 2: Rights to Continue**

This indemnification will continue to a person who has ceased to be a member or officer of OCVAC. Indemnification may continue as to a person who has ceased to be a volunteer, employee, or agent of OCVAC.

## **ARTICLE VII - MISCELLANEOUS**

### **Section 1: Effective Date**

These bylaws shall take effect when approved by a majority of the total membership of the OCVAC and approved by the County Board of Commissioners. Bylaws may be modified in the same manner.

### **Section 2: Duration**

The OCVAC shall continue indefinitely unless terminated by action of the Ottawa County Board of Commissioners.

### **Section 3: Communications**

The OCVAC serves as an advisory committee to the County Commissioners. The County Commissioners provide instruction to the County Administrator, the County Administrator directs the Director of the County Department of Veterans' Affairs, and the Director of the County Department of Veterans' Affairs reports to the County Administrator and informs the OCVAC. The Communications flow chart is below for reference.

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## **Certification**

The Secretary of the Ottawa County Veteran Affairs Committee hereby represents and affirms that on the [insert date], the within bylaws were approved by a majority of the members of the Ottawa County Veteran Affairs Committee. The undersigned furthermore certifies that these bylaws were approved by the County Board of Commissioners on the [insert date] under motion [insert motion number].

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[Insert Name Here], Acting Secretary

Ottawa County Veterans Affairs Committee

[Date]

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[Insert Name Here], Chairman

Ottawa County Board of Commissioners

[Date]



**Ottawa County**  
Department of Veteran Affairs

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**1. Chairperson:**

**Responsibilities:**

- **Leadership:** Preside over meetings of the Ottawa County Veterans Affairs Committee (OCVAC), ensuring orderly conduct and adherence to agenda.
- **Representation:** Serve as the primary spokesperson and representative of OCVAC in dealings with external stakeholders, including government agencies, community organizations, and the public.
- **Strategic Oversight:** Provide strategic direction and vision for OCVAC initiatives, ensuring alignment with the mission and goals of serving Ottawa County veterans.
- **Committee Coordination:** Coordinate activities and responsibilities of committee members, fostering collaboration and effective teamwork.
- **Decision Making:** Facilitate decision-making processes, seeking consensus among committee members on key issues and policy decisions.

**Qualifications:**

- Experience in leadership or management roles, preferably within veterans' advocacy or community service.
  - Strong communication and interpersonal skills.
  - Ability to effectively chair meetings and manage group dynamics.
  - Dedication to supporting veterans and enhancing veterans' services in Ottawa County.
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**2. Vice Chairperson:**

**Responsibilities:**

- **Support to Chairperson:** Assist the Chairperson in their duties and responsibilities, stepping in to preside over meetings in their absence.
- **Committee Coordination:** Collaborate with the Chairperson to coordinate committee activities and initiatives.

- **Leadership Development:** Work with the Chairperson to develop and mentor committee members, ensuring continuity and succession planning.
- **Special Projects:** Take on special projects or assignments delegated by the Chairperson or committee, contributing to the overall effectiveness of OCVAC.

**Qualifications:**

- Previous experience serving on boards or committees, preferably in veterans' affairs or related fields.
  - Strong organizational and multitasking abilities.
  - Team-oriented with a commitment to serving the veteran community.
  - Ability to provide leadership and support to the Chairperson and committee members.
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**3. Secretary:**

**Responsibilities:**

- **Meeting Documentation:** Record accurate minutes of OCVAC meetings, including discussions, decisions, and action items.
- **Correspondence:** Manage correspondence for OCVAC, including drafting and distributing communications to committee members and external stakeholders.
- **Records Management:** Maintain official records and documents of OCVAC, ensuring accessibility and confidentiality as needed.
- **Meeting Logistics:** Assist in scheduling meetings, preparing agendas, and coordinating logistical details.

**Qualifications:**

- Strong attention to detail and organizational skills.
- Proficiency in notetaking and minute-writing.
- Familiarity with administrative tasks and office procedures.
- Ability to handle sensitive information with discretion.



**COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS**  
**Act 192 of 1953**

AN ACT to create a county department of veterans' affairs in certain counties, and to prescribe its powers and duties; to create the county veteran service fund and to provide for contributions to and expenditures from that fund; and to transfer the powers and duties of the soldiers' relief commission in those counties.

**History:** 1953, Act 192, Eff. Oct. 2, 1953;—Am. 2018, Act 210, Eff. Sept. 24, 2018.

*The People of the State of Michigan enact:*

**35.621 County department of veterans' affairs; creation; administration; committee; appointment, qualifications, and terms of members; vacancies.**

Sec. 1. (1) The county board of commissioners may create a county department of veterans' affairs. The county department of veterans' affairs shall be under the administration of a committee of 3 to 7 veterans, appointed by the county board of commissioners. Members appointed to the committee shall be residents of the county who have served honorably on active duty in the United States Armed Forces.

(2) Committee members appointed under subsection (1) shall include the following:

(a) At least 1 member representing a congressionally chartered veterans' organization within the county, to be appointed upon the recommendation of the posts of each chartered veterans' organization within the county.

(b) At least 1 independent member who may or may not be a member of a congressionally chartered veterans' organization within the county.

(3) Each committee member appointed under this section shall have demonstrated knowledge, skills, and experience in public service, business, or finance.

(4) If an opening on a committee of veterans occurs, the county board of commissioners shall provide notice of that opening to 1 or more newspapers within the county and to veteran service organizations within the county.

(5) Notwithstanding the provisions of any law to the contrary, a member of the county board of commissioners of a county is eligible for appointment under this section.

(6) Committee members appointed by the county board of commissioners under this section shall be appointed for a term of 4 years each. However, the terms for committee members first appointed shall be staggered so that not more than 2 vacancies are scheduled to occur in a single year. Vacancies shall be filled in the same manner as original appointments for the unexpired terms.

**History:** 1953, Act 192, Eff. Oct. 2, 1953;—Am. 1958, Act 156, Eff. Sept. 13, 1958;—Am. 1968, Act 204, Imd. Eff. June 24, 1968;—Am. 1973, Act 153, Imd. Eff. Dec. 6, 1973;—Am. 1996, Act 108, Imd. Eff. Mar. 5, 1996;—Am. 2004, Act 11, Imd. Eff. Feb. 26, 2004;—Am. 2012, Act 235, Imd. Eff. June 29, 2012;—Am. 2016, Act 420, Eff. Apr. 4, 2017.

**35.622 Soldiers' relief commission; abolition, transfer of powers and duties to county department of veterans' affairs.**

Sec. 2. In any county in which the board of supervisors adopts the provisions of this act, section 2 of the act creating the soldiers' relief commission created under the provisions of Act No. 214 of the Public Acts of 1899, as amended, being section 35.22 of the Compiled Laws of 1948, is hereby declared to be inoperative and the powers and duties of commission are hereby transferred to the county department of veterans' affairs created under the provisions of this act, and wherever soldiers' relief commission is used in Act No. 214 of the Public Acts of 1899, as amended, and Act No. 235 of the Public Acts of 1911, as amended, being sections 35.801 to 35.804 of the Compiled Laws of 1948, it shall mean the county department of veterans' affairs herein created.

**History:** 1953, Act 192, Eff. Oct. 2, 1953;—Am. 1958, Act 156, Eff. Sept. 13, 1958.

**35.623 Administrative committee of county department; selection of officers, expenses; veterans' service officer, appointment; offices.**

Sec. 3. The committee shall select a chairman and a secretary. The committee is authorized to incur such expense as shall be necessary in carrying out the provisions of this act within the budget set up by the board of supervisors. The members of the committee shall be entitled to receive the same per diem and mileage in attending meetings as members of the board of supervisors. The committee shall appoint a veterans' service officer and such other employees as shall be necessary from time to time to carry out the provisions of this act. In the selection of the veterans' service officer hereby authorized, the committee shall consult with and request the assistance of any association or council of organized veterans in such county, and any

recommendation from such association or council of veterans as to the personnel to be appointed by said committee under the provisions of this act, while not binding on said committee, shall be given the greatest consideration. The board of supervisors shall furnish, equip and maintain reasonably adequate office facilities for the county department of veterans' affairs.

**History:** 1953, Act 192, Eff. Oct. 2, 1953.

**35.623a County veteran service fund; creation; grant program; veteran service operations; eligibility; exemption; audit; retroactive applicability.**

Sec. 3a. (1) The county veteran service fund is created within the state treasury.

(2) The state treasurer may receive money or other assets from any source for deposit into the fund. The state treasurer shall direct the investment of the fund. The state treasurer shall credit to the fund interest and earnings from fund investments.

(3) Money in the fund at the close of the fiscal year remains in the fund and does not lapse to the general fund.

(4) The Michigan veterans affairs agency is the administrator of the fund for auditing purposes.

(5) Money in the fund may be used to cover necessary administrative and implementation costs incurred by the Michigan veterans affairs agency, as specifically appropriated from the fund.

(6) The Michigan veterans affairs agency shall create and operate a grant program that provides grants to counties for allowable expenditures related to county veteran service operations. The Michigan veterans affairs agency shall make grants from the fund, upon appropriation, to each county that enters into a grant agreement with the Michigan veterans affairs agency and meets the conditions listed in subsection (8) for the sole use of supporting allowable expenditures made by the county's veteran service operations. A grant must be disbursed within 60 days after the date that the Michigan veterans affairs agency receives a completed and signed grant agreement from the county requesting the grant. The total disbursement for each grant must be determined by combining the following amounts:

(a) Except as otherwise provided in this subdivision, a base amount of \$50,000.00. In a fiscal year when money in the fund is insufficient to support the \$50,000.00 base amount, an amount equal to and not to exceed the total amount appropriated to the fund for the fiscal year beginning October 1 divided by 83. A disbursement under this subdivision must be used for 1 of the following purposes:

(i) Establishing new capacity and capabilities for a county to provide veteran service operations.

(ii) Enhancing and increasing existing veteran service operations through local county offices.

(b) A per capita amount according to the number of veterans residing in each county to support allowable expenditures related to county veteran service operations. The amount in this subdivision must be determined by dividing the amount remaining in the fund after accounting for all disbursements under subdivision (a) by the total number of veterans residing in this state and multiplying the resulting dollar amount by the number of veterans residing in the county receiving the grant. Population figures for veterans residing in this state and in each county of this state must be obtained from the most recent Geographic Distribution of VA Expenditures (GDX) Report published by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs.

(7) If the amount remaining in the fund after accounting for all disbursements under subsection (6)(a) is less than the amount obtained by multiplying \$1,000.00 by the number of counties receiving grants, the Michigan veterans affairs agency shall not perform a calculation under subsection (6)(b) and shall not disburse the portion of grant funds described under that subsection.

(8) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (10), to be eligible to receive a grant under subsection (6) in the fiscal year ending September 30, 2021, and each fiscal year thereafter, by no later than September 30 of each year a county must satisfy all of the following as certified in a form and manner prescribed by the Michigan veterans affairs agency:

(a) For the fiscal year ending September 30, 2021 and each fiscal year thereafter, maintain at least 70% of the total county funding for veteran service operations for the fiscal year immediately preceding October 1, 2018. If a county reduces the level of county funding for veteran service operations below 70% of the total county funding for veteran service operations for the fiscal year immediately preceding October 1, 2018, the county shall not utilize grant funding awarded under subsection (6) to supplant those reductions.

(b) Demonstrate an effort to achieve both of the following:

(i) Establish remote access to the United States Department of Veterans Affairs computing systems.

(ii) Require county veteran service officers to obtain a PIV card.

(c) Submit quarterly reports to the Michigan veterans affairs agency in accordance with the reporting requirements determined by that agency.

(d) Provide no less than 20 hours per week toward veteran service operations. Upon request, the Michigan veterans affairs agency may grant an exemption from this requirement. In determining whether or not to grant

an exemption under this subdivision, the Michigan veterans affairs agency shall consider necessary information and factors, including, but not limited to, the total veteran population of a county and any existing agreements that promote coordination of services between counties.

(e) Submit financial reports to the Michigan veterans affairs agency on a regular basis, as determined by that agency, demonstrating that the county expended the grant funds received under subsection (6) directly and solely for allowable expenditures related to county veteran service operations during the period of the report.

(9) If the Michigan veterans affairs agency determines, by audit or otherwise, that a county expended the grant funds received under subsection (6) for purposes other than for allowable expenditures related to county veteran service operations, the Michigan veterans affairs agency shall notify the county of its findings and recover any misused grant funds before issuing any new grants to the county.

(10) Retroactive to the fiscal year ending September 30, 2020, and for the fiscal years ending September 30, 2021 and September 30, 2022, the Michigan veterans affairs agency may suspend the requirements in subsection (8) to allow a county to utilize available money in a county veteran service fund for the purposes of forming an emergent need relief program to provide direct financial assistance through its veteran service operations in the county. In establishing an emergent need relief program, the Michigan veterans affairs agency and counties shall ensure all other available resources are applied before awarding assistance under this program.

(11) As used in this section:

(a) "Accredited veteran service officer" means an individual who has met the qualifications for accreditation under 38 USC 5904 and 38 CFR 14.629.

(b) "Allowable expenditures" means those expenditures determined by the Michigan veterans affairs agency to be necessary and proper to support veteran service operations in this state.

(c) "County veteran service fund" or "fund" means the fund created in subsection (1).

(d) "PIV card" means a personal identity verification card issued by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs.

(e) "Veteran service operations" means assistance and programming of any kind to meet the needs of veterans in this state. Veteran service operations include, but are not limited to, providing assistance, programming, and services for the purpose of assisting veterans in this state and providing advice, advocacy, and assistance to veterans, servicemembers, dependents, or survivors by an accredited veteran service officer to obtain United States Department of Veterans Affairs health, financial, or memorial benefits for which they are eligible.

**History:** Add. 2018, Act 210, Eff. Sept. 24, 2018;—Am. 2018, Act 514, Imd. Eff. Dec. 28, 2018;—Am. 2021, Act 34, Imd. Eff. June 24, 2021;—Am. 2022, Act 233, Imd. Eff. Dec. 13, 2022.

### **35.624 County department; powers and duties.**

Sec. 4. The county department of veterans' affairs shall perform such duties and exercise such powers as shall be necessary in carrying out the provisions of this act and any and all other benefits to which veterans may be entitled as prescribed by the county department of veterans' affairs.

**History:** 1953, Act 192, Eff. Oct. 2, 1953.