

1 AN ACT concerning State government.

2 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,**  
3 **represented in the General Assembly:**

4 Section 5. The Department of Veterans Affairs Act is  
5 amended by changing Section 2 as follows:

6 (20 ILCS 2805/2) (from Ch. 126 1/2, par. 67)

7 Sec. 2. Powers and duties. The Department shall have the  
8 following powers and duties:

9 To perform such acts at the request of any veteran, or his  
10 or her spouse, surviving spouse or dependents as shall be  
11 reasonably necessary or reasonably incident to obtaining or  
12 endeavoring to obtain for the requester any advantage, benefit  
13 or emolument accruing or due to such person under any law of  
14 the United States, the State of Illinois or any other state or  
15 governmental agency by reason of the service of such veteran,  
16 and in pursuance thereof shall:

17 (1) Contact veterans, their survivors and dependents  
18 and advise them of the benefits of state and federal laws  
19 and assist them in obtaining such benefits;

20 (2) Establish field offices and direct the activities  
21 of the personnel assigned to such offices;

22 (3) Create and maintain a volunteer field force; the  
23 volunteer field force may include representatives from the

1 following without limitation: educational institutions,  
2 labor organizations, veterans organizations, employers,  
3 churches, and farm organizations; the volunteer field  
4 force may not process federal veterans assistance claims;

5 (4) Conduct informational and training services;

6 (5) Conduct educational programs through newspapers,  
7 periodicals, social media, television, and radio for the  
8 specific purpose of disseminating information affecting  
9 veterans and their dependents;

10 (6) Coordinate the services and activities of all state  
11 departments having services and resources affecting  
12 veterans and their dependents;

13 (7) Encourage and assist in the coordination of  
14 agencies within counties giving service to veterans and  
15 their dependents;

16 (8) Cooperate with veterans organizations and other  
17 governmental agencies;

18 (9) Make, alter, amend and promulgate reasonable rules  
19 and procedures for the administration of this Act;

20 (10) Make and publish annual reports to the Governor  
21 regarding the administration and general operation of the  
22 Department;

23 (11) (Blank); ~~and~~

24 (12) (Blank); and-

25 (13) Provide informational resources and education to  
26 veterans returning from deployment regarding service

1 animals for individuals with disabilities, including, but  
2 not limited to, resources and education on service animals  
3 that guide people who are blind, pull a wheelchair, alert a  
4 person with hearing loss, protect a person having a  
5 seizure, assist a person with a traumatic brain injury, and  
6 calm a person with post-traumatic stress disorder during an  
7 anxiety attack or psychiatric episode.

8 The Department may accept and hold on behalf of the State,  
9 if for the public interest, a grant, gift, devise or bequest of  
10 money or property to the Department made for the general  
11 benefit of Illinois veterans, including the conduct of  
12 informational and training services by the Department and other  
13 authorized purposes of the Department. The Department shall  
14 cause each grant, gift, devise or bequest to be kept as a  
15 distinct fund and shall invest such funds in the manner  
16 provided by the Public Funds Investment Act, as now or  
17 hereafter amended, and shall make such reports as may be  
18 required by the Comptroller concerning what funds are so held  
19 and the manner in which such funds are invested. The Department  
20 may make grants from these funds for the general benefit of  
21 Illinois veterans. Grants from these funds, except for the  
22 funds established under Sections 2.01a and 2.03, shall be  
23 subject to appropriation.

24 The Department has the power to make grants, from funds  
25 appropriated from the Illinois Military Family Relief Fund, for  
26 benefits authorized under the Survivors Compensation Act.

1 (Source: P.A. 99-314, eff. 8-7-15; 99-576, eff. 7-15-16.)