

**Enrolled**  
**House Bill 4132**

Sponsored by Representatives EVANS, BOWMAN, PHAM H, Senators MANNING JR, SOLLMAN; Representatives ANDERSEN, BUNCH, CHAICHI, CHOTZEN, DOBSON, GAMBA, GOMBERG, GRAYBER, HUDSON, ISADORE, JAVADI, KROPF, LEVY B, LEWIS, MARSH, MCDONALD, MUNOZ, NELSON, NGUYEN D, OWENS, RIEKE SMITH, RUIZ, TRAN, WALTERS, WATANABE, WISE, Senators DRAZAN, FREDERICK, GIROD, MEEK, PATTERSON, SMITH DB (Presession filed.)

CHAPTER .....

AN ACT

Relating to veterans; creating new provisions; amending ORS 192.390, 406.020, 406.462, 408.115 and 408.425; and prescribing an effective date.

**Be It Enacted by the People of the State of Oregon:**

**SECTION 1. This 2026 Act shall be known and may be cited as the 2026 Oregon Veterans' Services Supplemental Investments Initiative.**

**DIRECTOR AND DEPUTY DIRECTOR**

**SECTION 2.** ORS 406.020 is amended to read:

406.020. The Department of Veterans' Affairs shall be under the supervision and control of the Director of Veterans' Affairs. The Governor shall appoint the director subject to confirmation by the Senate in the manner provided in ORS 171.562 and 171.565. The appointment may not be made without the written approval of the Advisory Committee provided for in ORS 406.210. The director shall be a veteran[,] **who received a discharge or release under other than dishonorable conditions**, chosen on the basis of executive and administrative ability.

**SECTION 3. The Director of Veterans' Affairs, subject to approval by the Governor, may appoint a deputy director. In appointing a deputy director, the director shall consider the experience that a veteran may bring if a veteran is appointed to the position. The deputy director serves at the pleasure of the director, has full authority to act for the director and is subject to the control of the director.**

**VETERANS SUICIDE PREVENTION GRANT PROGRAM**

**SECTION 4. (1) As used in this section, "veteran" has the meaning given that term in ORS 408.225. "Veteran" includes a disabled veteran as defined in ORS 408.225.**

**(2) The Department of Veterans' Affairs shall develop and implement a grant program for veteran suicide prevention and workforce training and preparation. The purpose of the grant program is to help veterans with suicide prevention and transition to the workforce and business community.**

(3) Under the grant program, the department shall award grants through a request for proposal process to entities involved in pairing suicide prevention with workforce training and preparation.

(4) The department shall:

(a) Develop criteria for entities that provide programs for suicide prevention and workforce training and preparation;

(b) By rule, establish processes and procedures for veterans to apply for assistance from entities that are awarded a grant under the grant program; and

(c) Prioritize awarding grants to entities that provide opportunities for veterans to participate in the veterans' local communities.

(5) The department may solicit and accept gifts, grants and donations from public and private sources to further the purposes of this section.

(6) The department may use moneys in the Veterans' Services Fund established pursuant to Article XV, section 4f, of the Oregon Constitution, to develop, implement and maintain the grant program.

(7) The department may adopt rules to implement the provisions of this section.

**SECTION 5.** (1) Not later than January 2, 2029, the Department of Veterans' Affairs shall prepare and submit a report to the interim committees of the Legislative Assembly related to veterans on the status of the grant program developed and implemented under section 4 of this 2026 Act.

(2) The department shall use moneys in the Veterans' Services Fund established pursuant to Article XV, section 4f, of the Oregon Constitution, for the initial moneys used to develop, implement and maintain the grant program under section 4 of this 2026 Act.

#### **COUNTY VETERANS' SERVICE OFFICER PROGRAM**

**SECTION 6.** ORS 406.462 is amended to read:

406.462. (1) Moneys appropriated to the Director of Veterans' Affairs for the purposes described in ORS 406.450 must be distributed to county governing bodies and expended for the purposes of ORS 406.450 and may not be used to supplant moneys currently budgeted by the director for services provided by county veterans' service officers.

(2) The director shall distribute moneys appropriated to the director for the purposes described in ORS 406.450 on a quarterly basis as follows:

(a) Each fiscal year, the director shall notify each county governing body of the amount of moneys to be distributed to the county governing body for the fiscal year.

(b) The county governing body shall provide the director a copy of the county's budget for the services to be provided by the county veterans' service officer for the fiscal year.

(c) At the end of each calendar quarter, the county governing body shall provide the director a report on the moneys the county expended during the calendar quarter for the services provided by the county veterans' service officer.

(d) Upon receipt of the county governing body's quarterly report, the director shall distribute to the county governing body a portion of moneys allocated to the county governing body in an amount that is based on the proportion of all moneys budgeted for all services provided by county veterans' service officers that were expended during the calendar quarter.

(e) At the end of each calendar quarter, the county governing body may also provide the director documentation for moneys the county expended during a previous calendar quarter in the fiscal year for the services provided by the county veterans' service officer that the county had not previously reported to the director and for which the county governing body has not received a distribution of moneys from the director. Upon receipt of the documentation, the director shall distribute to the county governing body a portion of moneys allocated to the county governing body in an amount that is based on the proportion of all

moneys budgeted for all services provided by county veterans' service officers that were expended during the calendar quarter within which the county expended the moneys for which the county governing body provided the director documentation.

(3) At the end of each fiscal year, the director shall calculate the remaining moneys not distributed during the fiscal year and distribute the remaining moneys using a formula established under ORS 406.454 to each county governing body that expended 90 percent or more of the moneys that the county budgeted for services provided by the county veterans' service officer for the fiscal year as specified under subsection (2)(b) of this section. The director shall distribute the remaining moneys within 90 days from the last date of the fiscal year.

[2] (4) Notwithstanding subsection (1) of this section, the director may reduce the amount of moneys distributed to county governing bodies for county veterans' service officers if there is a decrease in the amount of General Fund or State Lottery Fund revenues appropriated to the director for the purposes described in ORS 406.450 for the same period of time.

**SECTION 7. Not later than January 2, 2030, the Department of Veterans' Affairs shall prepare and submit a report to the interim committees of the Legislative Assembly related to veterans and the Association of Oregon Counties on the distribution of moneys under the process provided by the amendments to ORS 406.462 by section 6 of this 2026 Act.**

### COUNTY RECORDS: VETERAN DISCHARGE PAPERS

**SECTION 8.** ORS 408.425 is amended to read:

408.425. (1) Each county clerk who receives a request to inspect veteran discharge papers that are recorded under ORS 408.420 shall produce the recorded discharge papers for inspection if:

- (a) The request for inspection is made in writing;
- (b) The request sets forth the name, address and telephone number of the requester;
- (c) The request sets forth the name and the date of birth or the last four digits of the Social Security number of the veteran; and
- (d) The request is made by:
  - (A) The veteran or [*the spouse, legal guardian*] **a person holding a power of attorney for the veteran** or personal representative of the veteran;
  - (B) A county veterans' service officer appointed under ORS 408.410;
  - (C) A representative of the Department of Veterans' Affairs; or
  - (D) A licensed funeral establishment seeking to ascertain if a decedent was a veteran for the purpose of obtaining veteran's burial benefits.

(2) This section does not create a cause of action and may not be asserted as the basis of a per se negligence claim.

(3) Each county clerk may adopt additional policies in order to protect recorded discharge papers from malicious or unlawful use and policies regarding copying of recorded discharge papers.

(4) Each county clerk shall maintain in the records of the county clerk a copy of each request for inspection of recorded discharge information for a period of at least 10 years after the date the request is received by the county clerk.

**SECTION 9.** ORS 192.390 is amended to read:

192.390. (1) Notwithstanding ORS 192.338, 192.345 and 192.355 and except as otherwise provided in ORS 192.398, public records that are more than 25 years old shall be available for inspection.

(2) **This section does not apply to records that are exempt from disclosure pursuant to ORS 192.355 (37) or 408.425.**

### VETERAN EDUCATIONAL BRIDGE GRANT PROGRAM

**SECTION 10.** ORS 408.115 is amended to read:

408.115. (1) The Veteran Educational Bridge Grant Program is established within the Department of Veterans' Affairs. Under the program, the department shall conduct outreach and provide grants to veterans who:

(a) Are pursuing and enrolled in a course of study that is in or part of:

(A) Any program for which United States Department of Veterans Affairs education benefits may be used;

(B) A career school licensed under ORS 345.010 to 345.340;

(C) An apprenticeship program that is registered with the State Apprenticeship and Training Council; or

(D) An on-the-job training program offered by a public employer;

*[(b)(A) Are eligible to receive federal, state or other financial assistance based on prior service in the Armed Forces of the United States; or]*

*[(B) Demonstrate a need for student financial aid from any federal or state assistance program, including Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965;]*

*[(c)(A)] (b)(A)* Are unable to complete a degree, apprenticeship or training program within the expected completion period because one or more required courses or apprenticeship or training hours are not available until a later date; *[or]*

(B) Have debt on a student account due to an overpayment of federal or state tuition benefits or prior course withdrawal that prevents enrollment in a future term; *[and]* **or**

**(C) Are experiencing an instance of financial hardship that is interfering with or could endanger the ability to remain enrolled in a degree, apprenticeship or training program; and**

*[(d)] (c)* Are making satisfactory academic **or training** progress *[or progress]* in a program described in paragraph (a) of this subsection.

(2) Grants under the program:

(a) May not exceed *[\$5,000]* **\$10,000** per veteran; and

(b) May be made only when there are sufficient moneys in the Veteran Educational Bridge Grant Program Fund established under ORS 408.125 to make the grants.

(3) The Department of Veterans' Affairs shall adopt rules for the implementation and operation of the program, including eligibility requirements for grant applicants.

(4) As used in this section, "veteran" has the meaning given that term in ORS 408.225 and includes disabled veterans, as defined in ORS 408.225.

## VETERANS' TREATMENT COURT

**SECTION 11. (1) As used in this section:**

(a) **"Service member" means a person who is a member of the Armed Forces of the United States, the reserve components of the Armed Forces of the United States or the National Guard.**

(b) **"Veteran" means a person who:**

(A) **Served as a member of the Armed Forces of the United States, the reserve components of the Armed Forces of the United States or the National Guard; and**

(B) **Received an honorable discharge, a general discharge under honorable conditions or a discharge under other than honorable conditions.**

(c) **"Veterans' treatment court" means a treatment drug court program, as defined in ORS 3.450, that serves service members and veterans.**

(2) **The Judicial Department, in consultation with the Oregon Criminal Justice Commission, shall study methods for providing access to veterans' treatment courts to the residents of each county or judicial district. The study must include the identification and recommendation of innovative, cost-efficient and data-driven means to extend the availability of veterans' treatment courts that are consistent with applicable standards developed under ORS 137.680. The commission shall assist the department in conducting the study.**

(3) In conducting the study and developing recommendations, the department and the commission may consult with stakeholders and entities that engage with veterans' treatment courts.

(4) The department shall submit a report on its findings in the manner provided by ORS 192.245, and may include recommendations for legislation, to the interim committees of the Legislative Assembly related to the military and veterans no later than November 1, 2026.

SECTION 12. Section 11 of this 2026 Act is repealed on January 2, 2027.

**EXPENDITURE LIMITATIONS**

**SECTION 13.** Notwithstanding any other law limiting expenditures, the limitation on expenditures established by section 2 (3), chapter 526, Oregon Laws 2025, for the biennium ending June 30, 2027, as the maximum limit for payment of expenses from lottery moneys allocated from the Veterans' Services Fund established under ORS 406.140 to the Department of Veterans' Affairs, for strategic partnership, is increased by \$353,115, for the purposes of a grant program for veteran suicide prevention and workforce training and preparation under section 4 of this 2026 Act.

**CAPTIONS**

**SECTION 14.** The unit captions used in this 2026 Act are provided only for the convenience of the reader and do not become part of the statutory law of this state or express any legislative intent in the enactment of this 2026 Act.

**EFFECTIVE DATE**

SECTION 15. This 2026 Act takes effect on July 1, 2026.

**Passed by House March 3, 2026**

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Timothy G. Sekerak, Chief Clerk of House

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Julie Fahey, Speaker of House

**Passed by Senate March 6, 2026**

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Rob Wagner, President of Senate

**Received by Governor:**

.....M.,....., 2026

**Approved:**

.....M.,....., 2026

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Tina Kotek, Governor

**Filed in Office of Secretary of State:**

.....M.,....., 2026

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Tobias Read, Secretary of State