
SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Senator Sabrina Cervantes, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular Session

AB 2219 (Schiavo) - Veterans

Version: April 8, 2026

Urgency: No

Hearing Date: August 3, 2026

Policy Vote: M.&V.A. 4 - 0, L. GOV. 7 - 0

Mandate: Yes

Consultant: Lenin Del Castillo

Bill Summary: This bill makes various changes intended to modernize the county veterans service officer program, including the requirement for timely vacancy appointments, CalVet accreditation and training standards, and a statewide digital survey to measure veteran feedback on County Veteran Service Officers (CVSO) services.

Fiscal Impact:

- The California Department of Veterans Affairs (CalVet) estimates one-time General Fund costs of approximately \$500,000 over two years for two research staff and administrative support to conduct the study regarding the configuration, structure, and operations of each CVSO. Subsequent reports that are due every three years will each result in additional, unknown General Fund costs that are likely to be less than the cost of the initial report.
- This bill could result in additional, unknown local costs to counties to administer the digital veteran satisfaction survey designed to collect feedback from veterans following appointments or services provided by county veterans service offices. These activities could be determined to be reimbursable by the Commission on State Mandates.

Background: Existing law permits the board of supervisors of each county to appoint, prescribe the qualifications of, and fix the compensation of a county veterans service officer, who must be a veteran.

Existing law requires a county veterans service officer to administer aid provided under state law, investigate claims, applications, or requests for aid, and perform any other veteran-related services requested by the county board of supervisors.

Existing law permits two or more counties to jointly establish a single county veterans service office to serve all counties that agree to the joint office.

Existing law requires a county veterans service officer to assist veterans, qualified former members of the Armed Forces, and dependents of deceased veterans or qualified former members in presenting and pursuing claims against the United States and establishing rights to benefits, privileges, preferences, care, or compensation under federal or state law. It requires the compensation and expenses of county veterans service officers to be a county charge, but requires CalVet, out of available state

moneys, to pay each county a portion of those costs in an amount determined by CalVet.

Proposed Law: This bill requires a county veterans service officer vacancy to be filled within 12 months after the position becomes vacant.

This bill requires a newly appointed county veterans service officer to obtain and maintain accreditation from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs through CalVet within nine months after appointment.

This bill requires CalVet to establish minimum training requirements to obtain and maintain accreditation through CalVet, as specified.

This bill requires CalVet, in consultation with the California Association of County Veterans Service Officers, by no later than January 1, 2029, to develop and implement a statewide work queue for appointments, claims assistance, and other services provided to veterans. It requires the statewide work queue, by no later than January 1, 2029, to be operational and accessible to all county veterans service officers.

This bill requires CalVet to coordinate with the California Association of County Veterans Service Officers on the design, data-sharing protocols, implementation, and integration of the statewide work queue with existing data systems. It provides that participation in the statewide work queue shall not negatively impact performance-based funding calculations.

This bill requires CalVet to establish a separate workload unit category for services provided through the statewide work queue.

This bill defines “statewide work queue” to mean an electronic workload management system under CalVet’s authority that distributes disability claims and appeals among county veterans service offices across the state, regardless of where the veteran lives.

This bill authorizes CalVet to review, adopt, amend, or repeal guidelines or terms, or both, to implement these provisions, and exempts those guidelines or terms from the Administrative Procedure Act.

This bill requires CalVet, in consultation with the California Association of County Veterans Service Officers, to develop a service capacity and performance framework to inform funding allocations for county veterans service offices.

This bill requires CalVet, before implementing any substantial modification to the funding allocation methodology, to submit a report to the Legislature describing the proposed framework and its anticipated fiscal and operational impact.

This bill requires the service capacity and performance framework to consider factors, as specified. It prohibits the framework from treating participation in the statewide work queue as a negative metric when measuring a county veterans service office’s performance.

This bill requires CalVet, by no later than January 1, 2029, and every three years thereafter, to prepare a report analyzing data regarding the configuration, structure, and operations of each county veterans service office, as specified. CalVet shall transmit the report to the Legislature, the Department of Finance, the State Department of Health Care Services, and the California Veterans Board.

This bill requires CalVet, in consultation with the California Association of County Veterans Service Officers, to develop a standardized statewide digital survey platform to collect feedback from veterans following appointments or services provided by county veterans service offices. It requires the survey platform to measure access, trust, service effectiveness, and overall experience while minimizing administrative burdens on counties.

This bill requires CalVet, to the extent feasible, to use existing reporting mechanisms and data systems to minimize administrative burdens on counties.

Staff Comments: County veterans service officers are the primary local point of contact for many veterans and their families seeking assistance with federal, state, and local benefits. Their services are provided free of charge and include assistance with disability compensation, pensions, health care, education, employment, housing-related referrals, family support, and other services that help veterans successfully transition to and remain stable in civilian life. According to the author: “County Veteran Service Officers, or CVSOs, are incredible local champions who embody the spirit of duty! They stand at the dynamic crossroads where policy merges with the brave individuals who have served our nation. But they do so much more than just advocate for benefits! CVSOs are essential in linking veterans to amazing opportunities in employment, education, healthcare, and family support—helping to foster a strong sense of purpose, stability, and belonging.

AB 2219 will accelerate the modernization of assistance delivery to veterans, facilitate easier access to their benefits, and provide more efficient support to those who have selflessly served our nation. This bill improves collaboration between CalVet and CVSOs to ensure that California’s veterans and their families receive the comprehensive support they truly deserve.”

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