

## COUNTY VETERAN SERVICE OFFICER

### JOB FUNCTIONS

The County Veteran Service Officer (CVSO) advises local veterans and their dependents of their rights and entitlements under the various federal and state laws, counsels them, and actively assists them by filling out necessary forms, directing these forms to the proper area and obtaining papers and obtaining documents in support of VA claims.

The work of the County Veteran Service Officer (CVSO) is generated through inquiries concerning veterans' benefits. It is also generated through action of the service officer in seeking out those who need and may be entitled to assistance with VA issues.

In Mississippi, the County Veteran Service Officer (CVSO) is an employee hired by the Board of Supervisors; However, to maintain the position the CVSO must attend the County Veteran Service Officer annual training and certification testing as mandated by Mississippi Law through the Mississippi State Veterans Affairs Board.

#### Some Examples of Work:

- Interview local veterans, their dependents and others about VA benefits and issues.
- Receive and make phone calls to veterans, dependents, and others regarding VA benefits and issues
- Guide veterans and their dependents in applying for VA Pension Benefits; in applying for VA Compensation Benefits; applying and maintaining admission and enrollment of eligible veterans to Veteran hospitals and clinics; applying for VA insurance benefits; applying for VA educational benefits; applying for VA death benefits and other benefits available that may be available through the VA system
- Select, provide, and prepare proper forms for submission to the VA and other agencies as needed and requested
- Assist claimants with paperwork. Review paperwork for completeness and correctness before submitting to the VA for processing of claims. The information should be directed through the MS State Veterans Affairs or another Power of Attorney (if assigned at the VARO) for review and direction of the claim within the VA.
- Direct the public to proper contact or areas as needed and requested
- Attend MS State Veterans Affairs Board County VSO training and complete testing for annual certification
- Maintain knowledge of veterans' law, regulations, administrative procedures, and policies
- Advise veterans, dependents and others of the rights and benefits established under the federal and state laws
- Review VA decisions and paperwork for information, documentation, appeal action and follow up action
- Communicate with other County Veteran Service Officers, MS State Veterans Affairs, VA staff, and others regarding VA benefits and information

## MISSISSIPPI CODE of 1972

\*\*\* Current through the 2014 Regular Session and 1st and 2nd Extraordinary Sessions \*\*\*

TITLE 35. WAR VETERANS AND PENSIONS  
CHAPTER 3. WAR VETERANS; MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

Miss. Code Ann. § 35-3-21 (2014)

## § 35-3-21. County veteran service offices and officers

In order to maintain offices and pay personnel for the purpose of assisting all residents of the State of Mississippi who served in the military or naval forces of the United States during any war, their relatives, beneficiaries or dependents, to receive from the United States any and all compensation, hospitalization, insurance or other aid or benefits to which they may be entitled under existing or hereafter enacted laws of the United States, the boards of supervisors in the various counties in the state are hereby authorized and empowered, in their discretion, to expend out of the general county fund, or special veterans' fund herein authorized to be set up, or from both of such funds, such monies necessary to defray the office operating expenses and salary of the county veteran service officers.

Two (2) or more counties may, upon resolution duly adopted by the board of supervisors of each of such counties, agree to establish one (1) veteran service office for all of such counties. When two (2) or more counties enter into such an agreement, each county shall pay such amount mutually agreed upon and duly adopted by resolution of the respective boards of supervisors.

County veteran service officers shall be (a) honorably discharged or honorably released veterans of any war or police action in which the Armed Forces of the United States have been, are or shall be committed for action; (b) the surviving spouse or child of any such deceased veteran; or (c) any person employed as a county veteran service officer in any county of this state on March 30, 1990. From and after July 1, 1990, county veteran service officers shall be certified by the Mississippi State Veterans' Affairs Board which, among any other criteria it may establish, shall require such officers to (a) attend at least one (1) of the two (2) annual training programs provided for such officers and (b) successfully complete a written examination each year on the duties and responsibilities of and assistance available to such officers and veterans. The programs shall be developed by the State Veterans' Affairs Board. The program shall include a period of instruction which shall be not more than three (3) days for veteran service officers receiving initial certification, and not more than two (2) days for veteran service officers being recertified. County veteran service officers who annually receive and complete such instruction in a manner satisfactory to the Veterans' Affairs Board and in accordance with this section shall be certified by the board. No county veteran service officer shall be entitled to receive any compensation for his services, to which he is otherwise entitled by law, unless he is annually certified by the board.

County veteran service officers may be employed, in the discretion of the boards of supervisors, either full time or part time, but may not hold any other elective or appointive position. However, this paragraph shall not apply to county veteran service officers who may be serving in such capacity before March 31, 1990.

The boards of supervisors of the various counties are further authorized and empowered to pay all necessary and actual expenses of county veteran service officers who attend a school of instruction within the State of Mississippi for such county veteran service officers.

It shall also be the duty of the boards of supervisors to aid the United States to defeat all unjust claims for aid or benefit therefrom.

Such expenditures may be made by the several counties acting alone, or in cooperation with other counties, and in cooperation with any federal or state agency carrying out such purposes.

In the event that the general revenues of the county levied under and within the limits of existing taxing statutes are not sufficient to pay the expenses authorized herein, the board of supervisors may, in its discretion, levy an additional tax not to exceed one (1) mill on all taxable property in the county to defray such expenses or any part thereof. Any tax levy made under authority of this chapter shall not be considered in refunding homestead exemption losses under Title 27, Chapter 33, Mississippi Code of 1972.

**HISTORY:** SOURCES: Codes, 1942, § 7519.7; Laws, 1946, ch. 221, § 6; Laws, 1948, ch. 500, § 6; Laws, 1950, ch. 465, § 6; Laws, 1966, ch. 536, § 1; Laws, 1968, ch. 480, § 1; Laws, 1976, ch. 444; Laws, 1977, ch. 358; Laws, 1980, ch. 472; Laws, 1983, ch. 399; Laws, 1990, ch. 504, § 1; Laws, 1991, ch. 342 § 1; Laws, 1996, ch. 399, § 1, eff from and after