

Operating Procedures and Policies of the Pennsylvania State Veterans' Commission

2 June 2023

Table of Contents

1. Purpose.....	2
2. Scope.....	2
3. Regulations and Policies.....	2
a. Regulations pertaining to the Commission's Operations.....	2
b. Other Commissions and Boards Requirements.....	2
c. Operating Procedures of the Member At-Large Nomination Committee.....	2
d. Open Meetings.....	2
e. Commission Meeting Frequency.....	2
4. Terminology.....	3
5. Roles and Responsibilities.....	3
a. The Commission.....	3
b. The Adjutant General.....	4
c. Chairman.....	4
d. Vice Chairman.....	4
e. Executive Secretary.....	4
f. Commissioners.....	5
6. Planning.....	5
a. Introduction.....	5
b. Scope.....	5
c. Metrics Needed.....	5
d. Approval Process.....	6
e. Continuity.....	6
f. Timing.....	6
7. Procedures.....	6
a. Selection of Commissioners At-Large.....	6
b. Onboarding.....	6
c. Creating and Disestablishing of Committees.....	6
d. Selection of Committee Chairs.....	6
e. Selection of Committee Members.....	7
f. Committee Operations.....	7
g. Commission Meeting Agenda Preparation.....	7
h. Managing Public Comments.....	8
i. Conduct of Voting in Commission Meetings.....	8

j.	Meeting Minutes and Distribution.....	8
k.	Resolutions Reference Guide.....	9
l.	Maintaining the Commission’s Webpage.....	9
m.	Commission Budget Submissions.....	10
n.	Official Travel Expense Procedure.....	10
o.	Election Procedures.....	10
p.	Bylaws Reviews.....	11
q.	Legal Counsel.....	11
r.	Conflicts of Interest Prevention.....	11
8.	References/Supplementary Information.....	12

1. Purpose.

This document, the Operating Procedures and Policies of the Pennsylvania State Veterans’ Commission (OPP), is intended to outline in one place the operating procedures and to list affecting regulations and policies for the State Veterans’ Commission. The OPP supplements, but does not overrule, the statute (Chapter 17 of 51 Pa.C.S.) and the bylaws. It is intended to provide each commissioner the necessary tools and requisite guidance to effectively perform their duty. It is meant to be a dynamic document that should evolve to meet future needs of the commission.

2. Scope.

These procedures apply to the members of the Commission and department officials when acting as part of the Commission, and to those committees the commissioners may form.

3. Regulations and Policies.

a. Regulations pertaining to the Commission’s Operations.

- 1) [43 Pa. Code § 1.14](#). Use and release of personal information.
- 2) [43 Pa. Code Chapter 5](#). Bureau of Veterans Affairs (programs involving the commission).

b. Other Commissions and Boards Requirements.

- 1) Governor’s Advisory Council on Veterans Services (GACVS) per [Executive Order 2013-03 as amended](#).
- 2) Pennsylvania Long-Term Care Council Aging Commission per [Act 64 of 2015](#), and revised by [Act 63 of 2021](#).

c. Operating Procedures of the Member At-Large Nomination Committee.

State Veterans’ Commission Member-at-Large Nomination and Appointment Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) (and Training Manual) 23 August 2018, as amended

d. Open Meetings.

Observers may attend and participate in Commission meetings. They may comment during the public comment portion. See [Sunshine Act, 65 Pa.C.S. §§ 701-716](#).

e. Commission Meeting Frequency.

There will be at least six (6) regular meetings in a calendar year agreed upon between the Adjutant General and the chairman

4. Terminology.

- a. **Commission:** Pennsylvania State Veterans' Commission (SVC)
- b. **Commissioner:** An individual appointed in writing to the commission by the governor and acting in an official capacity as a commissioner.
- c. **Department:** Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMVA)
- d. **Designee:** A person attending a meeting in the absence of a commissioner to represent a designated organization, per 51 Pa.C.S. § 1702.
- e. **Ex Officio:** A person serving on the commission not necessarily through election or appointment, but because the commission needs their expertise or influence in that position.
- f. **Member:** An appropriate term for individuals who are assigned by its commissioners to provide service to the commission or one its committees. They are not designated by 51 Pa.C.S. §1702 but are necessary to task accomplishment. They will not represent themselves as commissioners.
- g. **Office of Veterans Affairs (OVA):** an agency within the DMVA specifically assigned to administer the operational, daily, veterans affairs duties of the department and commission (e.g., operating benefits programs and state veterans homes); and coordinates with other agencies within the department for those services it requires in the performance of its duties (e.g., budget formulation, legal advice, legislative assistance). The Executive Secretary serving as a department deputy adjutant general leads this agency.
- h. **Proxy:** A person authorized to represent a commissioner in voting. Proxies are required to vote the position of the person they represent.

5. Roles and Responsibilities.

- a. **The Commission.**
 - 1) Advise the Adjutant General and the department on all matters pertaining to the status, welfare, benefits, employment and support of veterans and veterans' programs in the Commonwealth and shall perform such other functions as are provided by law. See also 51 Pa.C.S. § 1704 on specific powers and duties.
 - 2) Utilize meetings, committee actions, and routine and special investigations to proactively seek out and openly discuss pertinent issues in order to make policy and procedure recommendations to the Adjutant General.
 - 3) Make written recommendations to the governor through the Adjutant General on matters of legislation to be brought before the General Assembly after appropriate investigation (51 Pa.C.S. § 1704(3)). These legislative recommendations should appear before the commencement of a legislative cycle whenever possible and must meet the intent of the commission's goals and objectives.
 - 4) Establish and maintain intermediate term goals and objectives. See Section 6 and supporting procedures in Section 7.
 - 5) In its advisory role, the commission will advocate for:
 - a) veteran interests in state and federal laws and regulations
 - b) effective and accessible healthcare services
 - c) employment services for veterans
 - d) services which effectively assist military personnel in transitioning to civilian life as veterans
 - e) GI Bill accessibility and use in the commonwealth
 - f) effective and efficient mechanisms to assist eligible veterans and dependents with state and federal claims, benefits and programs (e.g., Veterans Service Officer Grant Program, PA VETConnect and PA Veterans Registry)
 - g) community support for veterans and veterans' programs (e.g., Veterans Trust Fund)
 - 6) In its investigative role, examples:
 - a) monitor the quality of care and a home-like environment in state veterans' homes
 - b) monitor the work of other state commissions, boards, agencies and organizations as they may relate to the veteran community

- c) monitor significant veterans' initiatives made by other states and provide policy recommendations as to how they may or may not be appropriate for Pennsylvania's veterans
 - 7) Ensure its representation on the Pennsylvania Long-Term Care Council
 - 8) Ensure its co-chair responsibilities on the Governor's Advisory Council on Veterans Services are fulfilled.
 - 9) Provide advisement to the Deputy Adjutant General for Veterans Affairs per 51 Pa.C.S. § 1712.
- b. The Adjutant General.**
 - 1) Ensures the commission fulfills its purpose and functions as outlined in the statutes.
 - 2) Seeks the advice of the commission on all matters pertaining to the status, welfare, benefits, employment and support of veterans and veterans' programs in the Commonwealth.
 - 3) Advises the commission on any findings or recommendations reported to the governor resulting from Governor's Advisory Council for Veterans Services activities.
 - 4) Provides advice from the department's/administration's point of view on the commission's goals and objectives and the issues it confronts.
 - 5) Ensures the Executive Secretary fulfills the duties and responsibilities assigned by the statute and bylaws and as elaborated upon herein.
 - 6) Votes, as appropriate, as an ex-officio commissioner.
- c. Chairman.**
 - 1) Be a voting or non-voting commissioner but must be a veteran.
 - 2) Be the chief executive officer and shall, subject to the orders and resolutions of the commission, supervise and control its business affairs to ensure those orders and resolutions are effectively and efficiently implemented.
 - 3) Acts in an ex-officio capacity when attending committee meetings, but not hold a vote.
 - 4) Convenes and presides over regularly scheduled commission meetings.
 - 5) Knows the governing statute and the bylaws of the commission.
 - 6) Assists the commissioners in the forming and instructing of committees.
 - 7) Leads the effort in determining the yearly top priority actions and issues of the commission.
 - 8) Serves as co-chairman of the Governor's Advisory Council on Veterans Services and reports on its activities and findings unless the commission selects a designee to serve in the role.
 - 9) Serves as an appointed member on the Pennsylvania Long-Term Care Council and reports on its activities and findings unless the commission selects a designee to serve in the role.
 - 10) Works closely with the vice chairman and Executive Secretary for required administrative and logistics support.
- d. Vice Chairman.**
 - 1) Be a voting or non-voting commissioner but must be a veteran.
 - 2) In the absence of the chairman, performs the duties of the chairman and when so acting, shall have all the powers of, and be subject to, all the restrictions upon the chairman.
 - 3) Performs such other duties as the commissioners may prescribe.
 - 4) Shall assume the position of the chairman for the remainder of his or her term in the event of the death, removal, or resignation of the chairman.
 - 5) Maintains a list of priority actions or issues for the chairman and their status for periodic reporting.
- e. Executive Secretary.**
 - 1) Works closely with the chairman to provide the day-to-day administration of those governance and policy duties defined in the statute as belonging to the commission.
 - 2) Provides experts as needed or requested by the commission.
 - 3) Maintains and publishes a roster of the commission and committee membership.
 - 4) Directs OVA staff or the department, as appropriate, to:
 - a) arrange for meeting locations, space and attendant requirements of the commission

- b) designate a recording secretary for the accurate account of commission's proceedings and produce minutes for each meeting.
- c) provide administrative and logistical support to the committees.
- d) provide officers and committees with all necessary materials.
- e) keep a systematic filing of letters received, copies of letters sent, committee reports, membership rosters, etc.
- f) attend to official correspondence.
- g) provide notice of commission meetings.
- h) prepare with the chairman, in advance, the order of business for each meeting.
- i) provide minutes prior to proceedings and call the chairman's attention to unfinished business.
- j) provide an agenda, minutes of the previous meeting, lists of committees and committee reports, a copy of the statutes and bylaws.
- k) arrange reimbursement of per diem, subsistence, and travel expenses pursuant to the statute.
- l) maintain the Resolutions Reference Guide. See Procedures below.

f. Commissioners.

- 1) Always focus on the mission of advocating for Pennsylvania veterans.
- 2) Serve the public interest and the veteran community, not the organizations to which they belong.
- 3) Attend and actively participate in all Commission meetings.
- 4) Cast an informed vote on all matters.
- 5) Be well-prepared for meetings including reviewing read-ahead materials.
- 6) Possess a knowledge of DMVA Veterans programs.
- 7) Appoint committee members.
- 8) Actively participate in at least one committee.
- 9) Be knowledgeable about the legislative process and issues affecting the Commission.
- 10) Voice concerns raised by the public and organizations in the veteran community.
- 11) Recognize that authority to act is granted to the Commission as a whole, not to individual members.

6. Planning.

a. Introduction.

Planning is the process which creates a detailed blueprint that, when implemented, is meant to achieve specific organizational goals and objectives. The planning process begins with the selection of a topic or issue of concern to the commissioners and the assignment of the topic to a committee for further exploration. From this exploration, the committee proposes goals and objectives to the commissioners. Goals are the outcomes to be achieved, whereas objectives are the specific actions and measurable steps needed to achieve a goal. Goals and objectives must work in tandem.

b. Scope.

Goals and objectives are not intended to be limited in scope. All areas pertaining to veterans' issues such as legislation, regulations, programming, budgeting, staffing, or any other initiative are to be considered. Nor should the commission's concerns be limited to what the department controls as many of the above are not the exclusive domain of one department in this state.

c. Metrics Needed.

Objectives must be measurable to be of value to mission accomplishment. As for the overarching goal that produced the objective, it should at least define a wanted end state (the vision behind the goal) and achievable.

d. Approval Process.

Goals and objectives are meant to be ultimately agreed upon by vote of the committee of the whole (that is, the voting commissioners). This helps prioritize what the commission focuses upon. Therefore, the various committees, created by the commission in the first place, are expected to present their recommendations for goals and objectives as part of a proper and effective process.

e. Continuity.

Approved goals and objectives from a previous commission shall continue in effect until achieved or changed by a succeeding commission. However, all goals and objectives are to be reviewed annually as part of the process of reviewing the need for a committee to continue.

f. Timing.

Approval and reapproval of goals and objectives by the commission should be done as soon as practicable but no later than December of each year. This will allow for the commission to be ready to take action with the starts of the biennial legislative sessions and the annual appropriation cycles, to include being prepared for testimony and advice when needed by the Adjutant General and governor.

7. Procedures.

a. Selection of Commissioners At-Large.

The procedures found in the “State Veterans’ Commission Member-at-Large Nomination and Appointment Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) (and Training Manual) 23 August 2018, as amended will be followed.

b. Onboarding.

- 1) New members will familiarize themselves with the applicable statutes, bylaws and this document outlining operating procedures prior to attending their first meeting.
- 2) New members will undergo an onboarding training process (TBD) as soon as practicable. This will be a requirement before being sworn in and seated as a commissioner.

c. Creating and Disestablishing of Committees.

- 1) See bylaws.
- 2) The commission may establish by resolution standing or special (“ad hoc”) committees. Special committees should be short term in nature to address a specific issue or project.
- 3) Committees should be created to address areas of special concern to the commission as a whole which require targeted efforts. Broad mission (purpose) statements are to be avoided.
- 4) The committee shall have such powers and duties as delegated by the commission and as described in the committee appointment memorandum.
- 5) Committees must be active and produce results.
- 6) When a committee has accomplished its goals and objectives, or no longer serves its intended purpose, it should be reviewed for continuance or disestablishment.
- 7) At the meeting following the election of the chairman, the commissioners will address the need for existing standing and special committees as interests and issues of the commission will vary from year to year.
- 8) The commissioners will ensure that committees are properly staffed to ensure they are viable.
- 9) The commissioners will form the nominating committee for seeking commissioners at-large. See paragraph 3.b. above for the guiding procedures.

d. Selection of Committee Chairs.

See bylaws.

e. Selection of Committee Members.

- 1) Committee members, other than committee chairmen, may be drawn from the ranks of the statute designated organizations, organizations registered with the Department of State, state or federal agencies. As stated in the bylaws, the chair must be a commissioner.
- 2) Standing committees should retain at least one person from the previous year's committee to ensure continuity.
- 3) The Executive Secretary will provide a liaison from the department to assist in providing administrative/logistics services when requested or to provide subject matter expertise.

f. Committee Operations.

Committees are vital to the operation and effectiveness of the commission. The commissioners will appoint committee members with expertise in the subject/topic area of a committee.

- 1) Committee chairmen will:
 - a) submit their committee's intermediate term (two-three years) goals and objectives to the commissioners for approval.
 - b) report on their committee's actions each commission meeting, or at the call of the commission. These reports are expected to be brief unless a discussion over a decision needed from the commissioners is required. A written summary will be provided to the Executive Secretary (or designated OVA staff member).
 - c) report to the commissioners when a unanimous decision on an action (by consensus or resolution) does not occur.
 - d) maintain a current contact roster of members for the Executive Secretary's use.
- 2) Committee members will:
 - a) actively contribute to the work of the committee or step down for replacement if unable to serve.
 - b) be expected to comply with all policies and procedures of the commission and interact in a collegial fashion with members the committee, commission, and department.
 - c) are expected to meet at least monthly to order to accomplish to accomplish goals and objectives.

g. Commission Meeting Agenda Preparation.

- 1) The agenda of the Commission will focus on issues and programs of veterans and their families, not on military and National Guard needs unless pertaining to services for veterans.
- 2) The meeting agenda items may be modified, to include deletions and additions, or rearranged to suit the needs of the Commission for that meeting.
- 3) A roll call will be taken at each meeting to formally establish the presence of a quorum.
- 4) Action items will require the use of a motion in accordance with the Rules of Order.
- 5) Any agenda style meeting the needs of the Commission is acceptable pending approval by the commissioners.
- 6) Items for consideration in the agenda are:
 - a) Registration
 - b) Call to Order
 - c) Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance
 - d) Roll Call to establish quorum
 - e) Recognition of guests/visitors
 - f) Review and adoption of the agenda
 - g) Opening Remarks of the chairman
 - h) Correspondence and Announcements
 - i) Approval of Minutes of Prior Meetings
 - j) Presentations (as needed)
 - k) Committee Reports
 - l) Unfinished Business
 - m) New Business

- n) Public Comments (can be time limited)
- o) Good of the order
- p) Action Item Assignments
- q) Adjournment (to include Salute to the Colors)

h. Managing Public Comments.

While the Sunshine Act found in 65 Pa.C.S. requires open meetings, there is no stipulation requiring it receive comments from the public during the meeting. Nonetheless, the purpose of the commission specified in the statute and bylaws should allow for other organizations to bring forth issues to the attention of the commission. Certain rules must apply to proceed in an orderly manner:

- 1) The commission regular meeting is not a forum for personal complaints. Such matters should be handled after the meeting as appropriate.
- 2) Other individuals representing organizations not part of the commission may bring issues before the commission during the Public Comment/Good of the Order portion of the meeting.
- 3) These individuals shall present their comments with civility and respect. Otherwise, the chair will act to cease the disruption; and may use recess or adjournment if deemed in the public interest.
- 4) Individuals will be given five minutes to present their issue. Further discussion, if advised by the commissioners, would occur at a subsequent meeting.

i. Conduct of Voting in Commission Meetings.

- 1) See bylaws.
- 2) Non-voting commissioners will not be counted against the quorum requirement.
- 3) The presence of the Adjutant General or his designee counts against the quorum requirement.
- 4) As an ex officio member of the commission, the Adjutant General has a vote.
- 5) A commissioner who is a non-voting member may preside over meetings as the chair but cannot vote.
- 6) The chair of the commission otherwise has voting privileges unless restricted by the bylaws or statute, but it is recommended that he/she, to maintain neutrality, vote only to break a tie.
- 7) All votes on motions will be recorded by ayes, noes and abstentions.
- 8) A two-thirds majority of the commissioners present is required:
 - a) to close, limit or extend debate
 - b) to suspend the rules
 - c) to propose amending a statute or the commission bylaws
 - d) to close nominations
 - e) to remove an officer or request expelling of a member by the governor
 - f) to object to the consideration of a motion

j. Meeting Minutes and Distribution.

- 1) Written minutes shall be kept of each open meeting; after approval by the commission, such minutes shall be made available for public inspection and copying.
- 2) The minutes will meet the requirements of Section 706 of the Sunshine Act or other applicable law.
- 3) These items must be recorded:
 - a) Kind of meeting (regular, special, emergency)
 - b) Date of meeting and place
 - c) Attendance
 - d) Whether the minutes of the last meeting were approved or dispensed with
 - e) All main motions, including the name of the person introducing the motion
 - f) Results of votes.
- 4) In addition to the record filings of the Executive Secretary and distributions to his/her, the following distribution of approved Commission minutes and any attached reports will occur, by hardcopy and/or electronically:
 - a) The Adjutant General

- b) The commissioners
- c) The members of the House and Senate Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committees
- d) On the commission page of the department's website.

k. Resolutions Reference Guide.

- 1) The Executive Secretary will maintain a current Resolutions Reference Guide for the use of the commissioners to prevent redundant decisions and discussions, help to onboard new commissioners, and help to determine necessary policy, regulatory and legislative changes.
- 2) A copy will be published annually on the commission's webpage.
- 3) All resolutions by the committee of the whole (the commissioners) will be categorized by subject and then listed by date of decision.
- 4) A sampling of possible subject categories include:
 - a) Benefits Programs (Federal)
 - b) Benefits Programs (State)
 - c) Bylaws
 - d) Budget, Finances and Appropriations
 - e) Correspondence
 - f) Economic Opportunity (Employment and Business)
 - g) Education
 - h) Elections
 - i) Incarcerated Veterans
 - j) Government Affairs
 - k) Grant Programs
 - l) Healthcare
 - m) Homelessness
 - n) Membership
 - o) MOUs/MOAs/Contracts
 - p) Officers
 - q) Outreach Programs
 - r) Policy and Procedures
 - s) POW/MIA
 - t) PTSD/Suicide/Substance Abuse
 - u) Public Affairs/Relations
 - v) Reimbursement and Travel Related
 - w) Special Events/Community Events
 - x) Women Veterans
 - y) Rescinded Resolutions
 - z) Retired Resolutions

l. Maintaining the Commission's Webpage.

- 1) The Executive Secretary will ensure that commissioners and their status as representatives of an organization or at-large will be posted to the commission's website page.
- 2) Means to contact the commission ("Contact us") will be created, maintained and monitored by the Executive Secretary for proper distribution.
- 3) It is recommended that a shared drive to which commissioners have access be established rather than using mass distribution, except where special urgency is required.

m. Commission Budget Submissions.

1) Budget Cycle Overview:

Task	Timing	Duration
Budget instructions and program policy guidance received	August	Milestone
Department drafts its budget proposal	August-September	2 mos.
Commission submits its requests to department	August	1 mo.
Department reviews commission submission	September	1 mo.
DTAG-OVA and TAG approve, amend, deny submission	September	Milestone
Department submits its budget to the Gov's Budget Office (GBO)	October	1 mo.
GBO conducts iterative budget analysis	October-February	4 mos.
Gov submits executive budget proposal to General Assembly	February/March*	Milestone
General Assembly reviews for appropriations	February-June	5 mos.
Budget hearings conducted	February/March	1 mo.
Appropriations enacted	June-August	Milestone
Current FY rebudgeting cycle	April-September	6 mos.

* In an election year, March

2) Commission Submission Instructions: SVC reviews program policy guidance and completes the Program Operational Request (POR) template(s) with justifications for requests. Template(s) for new initiatives or program requirements may be prepared, discussed and submitted to the Executive Secretary at any time during the year but no later than 31 August to the Office of Veterans Affairs, Attn: DAG-VA, Room #211, Edward Martin Hall., Bldg. 0-47, Fort Indiantown GAP, Annville, PA.

3) Review and Approval Process: OVA Staff will review POR's and schedule discussions with members of the SVC as required to gain full understanding of the ask. DAG-VA will incorporate PORs in the OVA budget submission and in compliance with any guidance furnished by the Governor's Budget Office (GBO) and the Adjutant General.

n. Official Travel Expense Procedure.

- 1) See bylaws.
- 2) The Administrative Officer/SVC Coordinator will contact commission members no later than one week prior to scheduled or required meetings to make travel arrangements as needed.
- 3) State policy regarding authorization of lodging and rental vehicles may vary. Check with the SVC Coordinator a minimum of one week prior to confirm current policy on availability and reservations.
- 4) Commissioners must retain and submit itemized receipts (gas, lodging, tolls, meals) when completing the DMVA Travel Expense Disclosure Form at each meeting.
- 5) Expenses incurred after the meeting (tolls, meals during homebound travel, for example), must be submitted as soon as practicable.
- 6) Lodging, meals and incidentals will be reimbursed at the Federal rate at the time of the meeting or event.

o. Election Procedures.

- 1) Commissioners will be inaugurated as soon after they are appointed by the governor and before they are seated, whether designated commissioners or commissioners at-large.
- 2) The following process will be used by the Executive Secretary to perform elections for chairman and vice chairman:
 - a) The chair turns the floor over to the Executive Secretary.
 - b) The Executive Secretary opens the floor for nominations for chairman/vice chairman.
 - c) When a nomination is given, the Executive Secretary states "I receive the nomination for [NAME]" for chairman/vice chairman. The Executive Secretary asks three (3) times, "are there any other nominations for chairman/vice chairman? Hearing none, nominations are closed.

- d) If only one nomination is received, the Executive Secretary states, “All those that accept the nomination of [NAME] signify by saying *aye*. All opposed say *no*. The ayes/no’s have it.”
 - e) If more than one nomination is received, the Executive Secretary asks that commissioners write the name of their nominee on the ballot. The ballots are collected by the Executive Secretary’s assistant. The Executive Secretary must count them and announce the electee. When the elections are over the Executive Secretary turns the floor back to the new chairman to accept.
- 3) The inauguration of the new chairman and vice-chairman will occur at the meeting following the election meeting, at which time the oath of office will be administered.

p. Bylaws Reviews.

- 1) The commission will review the bylaws and the OPP at least every two years.
- 2) The commissioners will constitute a special committee to help accomplish this task.

q. Legal Counsel.

- 1) The commission will be assigned an assistant attorney from the Office of General Council to provide information and advice about statutes and legal issues to avoid liabilities and legal problems.
- 2) Legal counsel advice is expected to be solution-seeking in both the best interest of veterans and the Adjutant General. Advice will typically center upon:
 - a) General legal advice about commission activities.
 - 2) Assurance that commission decisions and actions fall within statutory authority.
 - 3) Review of proposed statute, regulatory and policy proposals and revisions where the commission has responsibilities to ensure the drafting of such is in legally correct language.
 - 4) Questions about conflict of interest.

r. Conflicts of Interest Prevention.

Commissioners must understand when a conflict of interest may be in play. In short, conflicts of interest involve the concepts of benefit and bias. What follows below is how to recognize a conflict of interest and how to avoid it:

- 1) Questions to ask yourself when evaluating a potential conflict of interest include:
 - a) Will your interests benefit as a result of your official action?
 - b) Would a reasonable person conclude that a private or personal interest impairs your independent and impartial judgment in the exercise of your official duties?
- 2) Some commissioner level conflicts of interest are:
 - a) Having or acquiring a personal benefit in a decision to be made by the commission, to include a grant, contract, sale, lease, or purchase.
 - b) Accepting compensation, a gratuity, or a reward from someone else who has a beneficial interest in a contract, sale, lease, purchase or grant resulting from, or which will result from, from a commission action.
 - c) Acting on a commission matter involving an entity in which you have a beneficial interest, or an entity in which you serve as an officer, agent, employee, or member.
 - d) Using your official position to secure or convey a special privilege or exemption for yourself or others.
 - e) Non-financial interests, professional or business activities, or obligations that conflict with the performance of official duties.
 - f) Assisting other persons, or sharing in compensation, in transactions involving the state when you had responsibility for these transactions as a commissioner.

8. References/Supplementary Information.

- a.** Chapter 17, Pa. C.S. 51
- b.** Chapter 7, Pa. C.S. 65
- c.** 43 PA Code
- d.** State Veterans' Commission Bylaws
- e.** State Veterans' Commission Member-at-Large Nomination and Appointment Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) (and Training Manual) 23 August 2018, as amended
- f.** Executive Order 2013-03 as amended (GAC-VS)
- g.** Act 64 of 2015, and revised by Act 63 of 2021

By Resolution of the Commissioners

NICHOLAS M. TAYLOR

Chairman

Official:

/s/

MAUREEN WEIGL

Executive Secretary to the Commission