

HOUSE BILL No. 6403

September 27, 2018, Introduced by Rep. Wentworth and referred to the Committee on
Military and Veterans Affairs.

A bill to amend 1953 PA 192, entitled

"An act to create a county department of veterans' affairs in certain counties, and to prescribe its powers and duties; to create the county veteran service fund and to provide for contributions to and expenditures from that fund; and to transfer the powers and duties of the soldiers' relief commission in those counties,"

by amending section 3a (MCL 35.623a), as added by 2018 PA 210.

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF MICHIGAN ENACT:

1 Sec. 3a. (1) The county veteran service fund is created within
2 the state treasury.

3 (2) The state treasurer may receive money or other assets from
4 any source for deposit into the fund. The state treasurer shall
5 direct the investment of the fund. The state treasurer shall credit
6 to the fund interest and earnings from fund investments.

7 (3) Money in the fund at the close of the fiscal year shall
8 remain in the fund and shall not lapse to the general fund.

1 (4) The Michigan veterans affairs agency shall be the
2 administrator of the fund for auditing purposes.

3 (5) The Michigan veterans affairs agency shall create and
4 operate a grant program that provides grants to counties for county
5 veteran service operations. The Michigan veterans affairs agency
6 shall make grants from the fund, upon appropriation, to each county
7 ~~department of veterans' affairs~~ that meets the conditions listed in
8 subsection (7) for the sole use of the county's veteran service
9 operations. The total disbursement for each grant shall be
10 determined by combining the following amounts:

11 (a) A base amount of \$25,000.00.

12 (b) A per capita amount according to the number of veterans
13 residing in each county. The amount in this subdivision shall be
14 determined by dividing the amount remaining in the fund after
15 accounting for all disbursements under subdivision (a) by the total
16 number of veterans residing in this state and multiplying the
17 resulting dollar amount by the number of veterans residing in the
18 county receiving the grant. Population figures for veterans
19 residing in this state and in each county of this state shall be
20 obtained from the most recent Geographic Distribution of VA
21 Expenditures (GDX) Report published by the United States Department
22 of Veterans Affairs.

23 (6) If the amount remaining in the fund after accounting for
24 all disbursements under subsection (5) (a) is less than the amount
25 obtained by multiplying \$1,000.00 by the number of counties
26 receiving grants, the Michigan veterans affairs agency shall not
27 perform a calculation under subsection (5) (b) and shall not

1 disburse the portion of grant funds described under that
2 subsection.

3 (7) To be eligible for receiving a grant under subsection (5),
4 within 1 year of the effective date of the amendatory act that
5 added this section, and annually after that date, a county
6 ~~department of veterans' affairs~~ must satisfy all of the following
7 as certified in a form and manner prescribed by the Michigan
8 veterans affairs agency:

9 (a) Maintain a minimum level of county funding for veteran
10 service operations equal to the level of county funding for veteran
11 service operations for the fiscal year preceding the effective date
12 of the amendatory act that added this section.

13 (b) Establish remote access to the United States Department of
14 Veterans Affairs computing systems and require county veteran
15 service officers to obtain a PIV card.

16 (c) Submit quarterly reports to the Michigan veterans affairs
17 agency in accordance with the reporting requirements determined by
18 that agency.

19 (d) Provide no less than 20 hours per week toward veteran
20 service operations.

21 (e) Submit financial reports to the Michigan veterans affairs
22 agency on a regular basis, as determined by that agency,
23 demonstrating that the county ~~department of veterans' affairs~~
24 expended the grant funds received under subsection (5) directly and
25 solely on veteran service operations during the period of the
26 report. If the Michigan veterans affairs agency determines, by
27 audit or otherwise, that a county ~~department of veterans' affairs~~

1 expended the grant funds received under subsection (5) for purposes
2 other than veteran service operations, the Michigan veterans
3 affairs agency shall reduce the grant disbursement provided to the
4 county ~~department of veterans' affairs~~ in the succeeding fiscal
5 year by an amount equal to the total of all amounts improperly
6 expended.

7 (8) As used in this section:

8 (a) "Accredited veteran service officer" means an individual
9 who has met the qualifications for accreditation under 38 USC 5904
10 and 38 CFR 14.629.

11 (b) "County veteran service fund" or "fund" means the fund
12 created in subsection (1).

13 (c) "PIV card" means a personal identity verification card
14 issued by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs.

15 (d) "Veteran service operations" means assistance and
16 programming to meet the needs of veterans in this state. Veteran
17 service operations include, but are not limited to, providing
18 advice, advocacy, and assistance to veterans, servicemembers,
19 dependents, or survivors by an accredited veteran service officer
20 to obtain United States Department of Veterans Affairs health,
21 financial, or memorial benefits for which they are eligible.

22 Enacting section 1. This amendatory act takes effect 90 days
23 after the date it is enacted into law.