

BY-LAWS
OF THE SAN DIEGO MILITARY AND VETERANS ADVISORY COUNCIL

Article I – Name

The Council shall be known as the San Diego Military and Veterans Advisory Council, referred to hereafter in this document as the “Council”.

Article II – Authority

The Council was created by the San Diego County Board of Supervisors as the San Diego Veterans Advisory Council by Ordinance No. 7294 dated May 5, 1987. The name of the Council was changed by Ordinance No. 10582 effective January 10, 2019 to represent active and reserve military service members and veterans in San Diego County.

Article III – Policy Statement

The function of this Council is to advise, consult, and provide public outreach for the Board of Supervisors regarding issues important to active duty service members, veterans, and authorized family members¹ of active duty personnel and veterans.

Article IV – Purpose

- a. To serve as an information resource to the Board of Supervisors on issues related to military service members, veterans, and authorized military and veteran family members (hereto known as authorized family members¹).
- b. To develop and make policy recommendations to the Board of Supervisors, County Chief Administrative Officer and County departments regarding services to military service members, veterans, and family members.
- c. Promote equal justice before the Veterans Administration and the California Department of Veterans Affairs for San Diego County Veterans and active duty or reserve personnel.
- d. Promote equal economic and political opportunity including equity in health, housing, education, and employment for military personnel, veterans, and family members.
- e. Promote the protection of the dignity and integrity of every San Diego County veteran.
- f. Review and research legislation affecting active duty, reservists, veterans, and their authorized family members, and provide consulting and advisory services to the Board of Supervisors to assure legislation aligns with the needs of San Diego County military personnel, veterans, and authorized family members.

Article V – Duties and Functions

- a. Advisory. Provide senior advisory and consulting services to the Board of Supervisors relating to active duty and reserve service members, veteran, and authorized family member issues relevant to the San Diego County military and veteran community.
 - (1) Develop and make policy recommendations and respond to request from the Board of Supervisors to review issues or pending legislation relating to military and veterans’ issues.
 - (2) Collect and disseminate up-to-date accurate information on issues of concern to military and veterans of San Diego County.
 - (3) Perform work assigned by the Board of Supervisors.

¹ Authorized family member is a term relating to status as an active duty, retired military, or veteran spouse or family member in the Department of Defense’s Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) or other government enrollment system.

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- (4) Provide at least once each calendar year, a report of its activities.
- b. Advisory/Consulting Services.
 - (1) Provide advisory/consulting services and assistance to appropriate departments, when asked, in the development of plans for services to military service members, veterans, and authorized family members.
 - (2) Review, analyze, and recommend to the Board those County projects and service priorities relating to the military and veteran community of San Diego County.
 - (3) Research and develop, as requested, recommendations for specific pending legislation and regulations impacting military, veteran and authorized family members' quality of life, employment, and benefits.
- c. Public Outreach.
 - (1) Provide and promote a coordinated effort of public and private sector organizations engaged in service to military service members, veterans, and authorized family members to facilitate a regional approach to the provision of those services.
 - (2) Provide a regional public forum for discussion of issues relating to military and veteran's services and issues.
 - (3) Receive and hear specific complaints and problems relevant to the lives of military, veterans, and authorized family members of the San Diego veteran community. To investigate when appropriate, make findings and report those findings to the Board of Supervisors or other County officials or departments, as appropriate.
 - (4) Provide liaison and assistance to various groups relative to the status of military and veterans within San Diego County, and work for the ongoing development of constructive community educational programs.
 - (5) Maintain a list of military and veteran groups in the county and make available to all interested groups and persons, information compiled by the Council. The Council shall also act as a liaison with veteran organizations and obtain their views on subjects being studied.
 - (6) Develop and maintain a talent bank of military, veterans, and authorized family members to receive input from all interested groups and persons regarding information compiled by the Council. The Council shall also act as a liaison with military and veteran organizations and obtain their views on subjects being studied.
 - (7) Develop and maintain a talent bank that can be used as subject matter experts, recruit qualified veterans to serve as a member of Council committees, and secure appointment by the Board of Supervisors to vacancies on boards and commissions of the County.

Article VI-Membership

- a. There shall be nine (9) members of the Council, hereafter in the document referred to as "Council Members" or "Members". Council Members shall be veterans with honorable military service and discharge, a resident of San Diego County and be sensitive to and supportive of military and veteran issues.
- b. Membership Composition by District. Five (5) Council Members shall be appointed by the Board of Supervisors with each of the five (5) Supervisors nominating one (1) Council Member from their respective district. Four (4) Council Members shall be appointed by the Board as Members-at-Large.
- c. Vacancies. A vacancy will occur when any of the following events occur before expiration of Member's term or term completion:
 - (1) Death of the incumbent
 - (2) Resignation of the incumbent

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(3) The incumbent is no longer a legal resident of San Diego County

(4) Unexcused absences as described in Article VI, Section f.

Vacancies will be reported to the nominating Supervisor, the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors, and the OMVA by the Chair or designated representative. If a vacancy occurs in mid-term, the new appointee shall serve for the unexpired term of the member being replaced.

- d. Recruitment. Council Members will be recruited from a diverse community population that represents all service members and veterans. The diverse population will reflect comprehensive representation of age, socio-economic status, gender, ethnic background, military experience, and geographic distribution. The Clerk of the Board of Supervisors will advertise and coordinate open Council seats with coordination through the nominating District Supervisor and/or the Board of Supervisors.
- e. Terms of Members. Those members nominated by a Supervisor shall serve a term which shall run concurrent with the term of the Supervisor. The term shall expire on the date of expiration of the term of the nominating Supervisor, or at such time as he or she ceases to hold office, whichever occurs first. Any member whose term has expired hereunder shall continue his or her duties until his or her successor has been appointed. The reelection of a member of the Board of Supervisors shall not automatically extend the term of any member of the Council. Membership shall be limited to two consecutive terms. For the purpose of this limitation, a term shall include any appointments to fill a vacancy for one-half or more of a term. Members of a citizen committee whose terms have expired shall continue to serve until such time as they are either replaced or reappointed.
- f. Absences. Unexcused absences from more than one-third of the regularly scheduled meetings in any 12-month period or three consecutive regularly scheduled meetings.
 - (1) It shall be the responsibility of the Chair to notify the Council Member and the appointing Supervisor that the position has been vacated due to unexcused absences.
 - (2) A member who desires to be excused from a meeting must submit in writing to the Chair a request for excused absence at least 48 hours prior to the meeting.
 - (3) Excused and unexcused absences will be read into the minutes as a matter of record.
- g. Ex-Officio Advisor. The County Military and Veteran Affairs Officer shall act as an ex-officio, non-voting member of the Council.
- h. Partners for Success. The Council will collaborate with subject matter experts from industry, Department of Defense, Department of Labor, Community Veteran Businesses, the Veteran Administration, and other organizations as subject matter experts to accomplish Council mission. The Council will invite San Diego County military installations to participate as non-voting subject matter experts, as appropriate.
- i. New Council Members.
 - (1) New Council Members will be provided an orientation information package and opportunities to become acclimatized to the Council's duties and responsibilities. All new members will complete required training within 60 days of their appointment.
 - (2) Training completion certifications will be provided to the County's Office of Military and Veterans Affairs (OMVA) administrative staff for verification with a copy to the Council Chair.
- j. Current Council Members.
 - (1) Current Council Members will complete required update and recertification training as required.

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- (2) Training Completion certificates will be provided to the County's OMVA administrative staff for verification with a copy to the Council Chair.
- (3) Council members who term out will be provided a brief off-boarding process.

Article VII – Officers

An Executive Committee consisting of a Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, and Secretary shall be elected from the members of the Council.

Article VIII-Duties of the Officers

- a. Duties of the Chair.
 - (1) The Chair shall preside over all regular and special meetings.
 - (2) The Chair shall establish committees and coordinate the appointment of members thereto, except the Executive Committee.
 - (3) The Chair shall act as an ex-officio member on all committees.
 - (4) The Chair shall represent the Council or designate a representative to public functions.
 - (5) The Chair shall represent the Council as a member of the OneVA Community Action Board and other Veteran Administration community programs and services.
 - (6) The Chair shall work with the Board of Supervisors and the Director of the OMVA on Council activities.
 - (7) The Chair shall work regularly with the Director of the OMVA in planning and implementing Council action.
- b. Duties of the Vice-Chair. The Vice-Chair shall assume the duties of the Chair when the Chair is absent or unable to perform the duties of the Chair.
- c. Duties of the Secretary.
 - (1) The Secretary shall keep attendance of all meetings using an agreed upon method.
 - (2) The Secretary shall coordinate the completion of the Council minutes with the County's OMVA.
 - (3) The Secretary shall record minutes of the Executive Committee.
 - (4) The Secretary shall serve as parliamentarian.

Article IX – Vacancy of Officer Position(s)

If for some reason an office becomes vacant, the Council may nominate candidates for the office in question from among its members at the first regular meeting after the vacancy is declared and then elect a person for the remaining term of office through a simple majority vote.

Article X – Removal of Officers

A Member of the Executive Committee may be removed from the Executive Committee by a two-thirds vote of the full Council. Removal of an Executive Committee member must be based upon violations of Council duties. Examples of this can include non-performance of council duties or failure to attend Council meetings.

Article XI – Election of Executive Committee

- a. Nominations for the Executive Committee will be accepted from the Council at the June and August meetings.
- b. The Council shall elect an Executive Committee from its members at its regularly scheduled August meeting on odd numbered years. Each officer must be elected by an affirmative vote of a majority of the Council.

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- c. The term of office shall be from September 1st following their election and extend for a period of 24 months.
- d. No individual may serve more than two consecutive terms in any one office for a total of 48 months.

Article XII – Meetings

- a. The Council shall establish an agreed upon schedule of meetings.
- b. All meetings shall be held in compliance with the requirements of the Ralph M. Brown Act.
- c. The Council will hold six bi-monthly meetings each year.
- d. Meetings will be conducted in February, April, June, August, October, and December of each year. Variations of the meeting schedule will be authorized based upon a simple majority vote of the Council. Variations to the meeting schedule will be published through the Office of Military and Veterans Affairs on the Health and Human Services website at least 30 days prior to the change. Special meeting of the Council will be called by the Chair or by four (4) Council Members within the procedures of the Ralph M. Brown Act.
- e. Written notice of regular Council meetings shall be provided to Council Members, military and veterans organizations or any person who previously requested notice one week prior to the meeting.
- f. Except where required by the Ralph M. Brown Act, notification electronically is the accepted communication method for meeting announcements.
- g. Meetings date and location will be the 2nd Saturday of each scheduled bi-monthly meeting at 9:30 a.m. The meeting will be announced in a manner that is consistent with the Brown Act. Council shall hold one regular meeting bi-monthly or special meeting under this Article.
- h. A quorum shall consist of five (5) Council Members or more than half of the appointed voting Council members, whichever is less.

Article XIII- Voting Procedures

- a. Each Council Member, including the Chair, has one vote.
- b. A simple majority vote of those Council Members present within the Quorum and voting is required to carry an item.
- c. Council Members who have an organizational conflict of interest shall abstain from voting. Organizational conflict of interest is defined as the individual benefitting financially, personally, or professionally from the action being voted upon.
- d. Voice votes on any matter are accepted unless a Council Member specifically requests a roll call vote to be taken.
- e. Records shall be kept of Council actions and roll call votes.

Article XIV – Audience Participation.

The public will be allowed to participate in open discussions with the Council at a time designated by the Chair. Participants are limited to three (3) minutes unless extended by the Chair. Discussions shall include statements of general interest or specific items for discussion and consideration. Generally, key community input will be based upon the planned agenda. There shall also be time on the agenda for the public to comment on matters not on the agenda but that are within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Council.

Article XV – Establishment of Committees

The Council may appoint committees for the purpose of carrying out the functions and duties of the Council.

- a. The Council Chair shall recommend and establish committees.
- b. Membership in the committees will include at least one (1) Council Member with the Chair as an ex-officio member.
- c. Committees will consist of not less than three (3) committee members.
- d. Committees will include, as appropriate, subject matter experts for specific topics, projects, and focus areas.
 - (1) These subject matter experts will act in the capacity of a volunteer consultant are at no cost to the County.
 - (a) Volunteer consultants shall not be considered as a service for or employment by the County.
 - (2) The actions and recommendations of committees shall not be deemed the action of the Council or its members unless placed on the agenda and adopted by a simple majority of the Council based upon a quorum.
 - (3) Committees shall cease to exist upon completion of their assignments.
- e. Committee Chairpersons shall be appointed by the Council Chair or designated by Committee members, in the absence of an appointment.
- f. If a temporary ad hoc subcommittee is not subject to the Ralph M. Brown Act, the subcommittee's work may be conducted face to face, via electronic or teleconferencing methods to be designated by the Chair or coordinated by the Committee Chair.

Article XVI – Advocacy

- a. The Council shall not release policy statements or press releases that have not been approved by the Board of Supervisors and the Chief Administrative Officer, or his or her authorized representative. All policy statements must meet the procedures and guidelines of the Office of Intergovernmental and Public Affairs. All policy statements must be vetted and approved by the Executive Committee before being taken through County procedures. Any member of the Council may file and have published a minority report in which any other member may join. Such a minority report shall be published and presented to the Board of Supervisors concurrently as part of the document containing the majority report.
- b. Council positions on legislation must be approved by a majority of a quorum of the Council in an open meeting. Positions of the Council on legislation shall then be taken to the Board of Supervisors in accordance with Board Policy A-74.

Article XVII-By-Laws

- a. Amendment of By-Laws: These By-Laws may be amended by an affirmative vote of two-thirds of those members present at any regular meeting providing the amendments have been submitted to the membership in writing at least one month prior to the meeting. All amendments must be approved by the Board of Supervisors.
- b. By-Laws Revisions/Update:
 - (1) Original by-laws dated February 11, 1988
 - (2) Revised by the Council February 11, 1988
 - (3) Approved by the Council February 11, 1988
 - (4) Approved by the Board of Supervisors (date not described in documentation)
 - (5) Section VI Paragraph C, paragraph updated and approved by the Board June 7, 1994 (41)

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Article XVIII-Parliamentary Authority

Unless otherwise prescribed in these by-laws and Rules of Procedures, all Council and committee meetings shall be governed by the Procedural Rules adopted by the Council and by Roberts Rules of Order Newly Revised.

Article XIX - Lifespan

The Council shall have a permanent lifespan, subject to dissolution by the Board of Supervisors.

Article XX-Current and Future By-Law Changes

Any proposed changes in the provisions of this Article shall be submitted to the full Council for review and comment prior to said proposed changes being considered by the Board of Supervisors.

Article XXI-Staff Support and Mileage

- a. The County of San Diego Office of Military and Veterans Affairs will provide normal clerical support.
- b. Council members are authorized to receive mileage reimbursement for official Council business.