



CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE OFFICERS

2023 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

Thanks to the \$5.4 million Local Assistance funding increase from the State Budget provided by the legislature and Governor Newsom in 2021, the CVSOs have been increasing “boots on the ground” by hiring new Veterans Service Representatives (VSRs) who can help process claims and provide outreach to underserved populations of veterans.

In addition to ensuring CVSOs have appropriate funding for their vital services, the California Association of County Veterans Service Officers (CACVSO) also advocates for state policies and programs that will benefit California’s veterans and their families, as well as active-duty servicemembers, reservists, and National Guard personnel. The CACVSO also works closely with veterans service organizations to sponsor and support legislation in support of this goal.

STATE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

• Homelessness

In early 2020, the CACVSO realigned its priorities to focus on getting homeless veterans off the street and into housing, including transitional and permanent supportive housing. The key to assisting homeless veterans is outreach and building trust among a population that usually eschews contact with social workers, including CVSOs. The pandemic severely, if not completely, curtailed CVSOs’ abilities to engage with the homeless. With most COVID restrictions being lifted by late 2022, CVSOs were able to expand their outreach efforts accordingly. CVSOs have resumed working with CalVet to record and track all homeless contact, outreach activities, and successful entry into a housing environment.

• Accreditation

Support legislation that would require an individual who is assisting a veteran with filing a claim for benefits to notify that veteran if they are not a VA-accredited representative, and make it a criminal offense to intentionally misdirect or mislead a veteran, or anyone acting on a veteran’s behalf, concerning benefits or entitlements for their own monetary gain.

• Veterans license plate fee waiver

Support legislation that would grant the license plate fee waiver to all veterans rated at 100 percent disability or through individual unemployability. Change the language on the DMV form to eliminate the requirement that the veteran have a single disability rated at 100%. Also, separate the disabled placard and make it an option for veterans with a mobility impairment.

• Restore veterans-only license plate

Support legislation that would restore the veterans-only specialized license plate, making two veteran plates available for sale — “Veteran” and “Honoring Veterans.”

• Jobs

Support legislation that would streamline and/or provide affordability to veterans seeking occupations after their military service. In addition to veterans receiving their earned VA benefits and procuring housing, obtaining a job in an occupation that provides stability and self-reliance is of the utmost importance to financial and mental well-being.

OTHER STATE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

- Support the legislative priorities of the state veterans service organizations that are in line with our own legislative priorities.
- Support legislation that would promote state income tax exemption on military retirement pay for military retirees.
- Support legislation that would raise the current state dollar limitation on property tax relief for disabled veterans.
- Support legislation which enhances healthcare/mental healthcare in support of veterans.
- Support legislation focused on women veterans.
- Support legislation focused on minority and underserved veteran communities.
- Support legislation that would require that California Disabled Veterans Business Enterprises (DVBEs) hire more disabled and non-disabled veterans. Currently, there is no requirement for DVBEs to hire veterans.
- Support legislation that would continue to encourage expansion of veterans' treatment courts to more counties by providing state funding of veterans' treatment courts in California.
- Support legislation that would reduce property tax assessment on veterans service organizations' posts and chapters.
- Support legislation that would expand laws to prevent dishonest vendors and businesses that prey on or scam veterans and active-duty military personnel by criminalizing their activities.
- Support legislation that would create a Governor's Memorial Certificate similar to the Presidential Memorial Certificate (PMC). Include information directing survivors to the CVSOs. (PMC is a signed certificate by the President to the family of deceased veterans.)

FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

- Support legislative, regulatory or policy changes that would create a federal/state/local government partnership to reduce the U.S. Department of Veterans Administration (USDVA) veterans claims backlog and expand outreach services to veterans.
- Support legislation that would authorize USDVA pharmacies to honor prescriptions written by non-USDVA physicians. Currently, the USDVA medical system will only provide prescription medication to eligible veterans if the prescription is written by a USDVA physician.
- Support legislation that would eliminate the Means Test for veterans to qualify for USDVA medical care. These income limitations have excluded some veterans who would otherwise qualify for enrollment from obtaining their primary healthcare through the USDVA.

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