

**CLARK COUNTY  
STAFF REPORT****DEPARTMENT:** Department of Community Services (DCS)**DATE:** October 14, 2014**REQUEST:** The Board of County Commissioners approves the recommended changes to the Clark County Code 2.29, Veterans Assistance (previously Veterans Relief).**CHECK ONE:** Consent ☐ CAO ☒ Hearing

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**BACKGROUND**

The Department of Community Services manages the Veterans Assistance Program and provides support to the Veterans Advisory Board. The Advisory Board reviews and recommends updates to the Veterans Assistance Program policies and procedures, and occasionally requests updates to Clark County Code 2.29 (Veterans Assistance). The Board recommended changes that update the code to reflect current terminology and procedures.

- The chapter title is changed from "Veterans Relief" to "Veterans Assistance".
- The name "Veterans Resource Committee" is updated to "Veterans Advisory Board." This makes the name consistent with other County advisory boards.
- The term "relief" is replaced with "assistance" throughout the chapter.
- Nationally recognized veterans' organizations will now register with the County Department of Community Services, instead of the County Auditor, and will only have to register in even numbered years instead of every year. Registrations will no longer expire every December.
- A stipulation is added providing for two-year terms for Veterans Advisory Board members, from January through December.
- Program records (of assistance provided) will be maintained by the Department of Community Services, instead of the Veterans Advisory Board.
- In approving organizations to provide veterans services, the Veterans Advisory Board will work with Clark County.
- The income limit for dental assistance only may not exceed 200 percent of the federal poverty level (150% of the federal poverty level is the income limit for other veterans' services).
- Section 2.29.090 Rule 6: Payment of rental of meeting place is deleted.

The Committee's recommended changes require approval by the Board of County Commissioners. The Veterans Advisory Board developed the changes, which are shown in bold in the attached Proposed Code. The Prosecuting Attorney's office reviewed and approved the changes.



**COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

The changes were developed by a subcommittee of the Veterans Advisory Board, and were discussed and approved at the July 9, 2014 open meeting.

**BUDGET AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

The requested action falls within existing budget authority.

**FISCAL IMPACTS**

☐ Yes (see attached form)

☒ No

**ACTION REQUESTED**

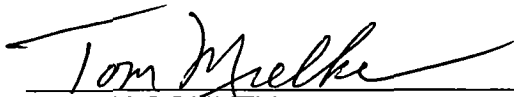
The Board of County Commissioners approves the recommended changes to the Clark County Code 2.29, Veterans Assistance (previously Veterans Relief).

**PRIMARY STAFF CONTACT:** Pete Munroe, ext. 7801



Vanessa Gaston, Director  
Department of Community Services

Approved: *October 14, 2014*



CLARK COUNTY  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

**DISTRIBUTION**

Vanessa Gaston, Director, Department of Community Services  
Chris Horne, Prosecuting Attorney's Office  
Pete Munroe, Veterans Program Manager  
Samantha Whitley, Veterans Program Coordinator  
Kelly Perez de la Cruz, Contracts Assistant

ORDINANCE NO. 2014-10-04

**An ordinance relating to the adoption of amendments to the Veterans' Relief Program, approves the recommended changes to the Clark County Code 2.29, Veterans' Assistance (previously Veterans' Relief), including of changes to the title of the code chapter and the name of the advisory board, to reflect current terminology and procedures for Veterans' Assistance.**

WHEREAS, RCW 73.08.010 requires counties to provide sums to aid indigent veterans and their families; and

WHEREAS, the Veterans' Resource Committee has recommended adoption of clarifying language to the Clark County Code (CCC); and

WHEREAS, the Board finds, following a duly-advertised public hearing, that adoption of this ordinance will further the public welfare; now, therefore,

BE IT ORDERED, RESOLVED AND DECREED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF CLARK COUNTY, STATE OF WASHINGTON, AS FOLLOWS:

**Section 1. Amendatory.** Section 2 of Resolution 1978-01-79, as most recently amended by Section 1 of Ordinance 2006-08-07 and codified as Clark County Code 2.29.010, are each amended to read as follows:

**2.29.010 Veterans' organizations to provide relief—Registration.**

Each nationally recognized veterans' organization in Clark County wishing to provide ~~((relief))~~ assistance to indigent veterans shall register with the Clark County ~~((auditor))~~ Community Services and the ~~((veterans' resource committee (CCVRC)))~~ Clark County Veterans' Advisory Board (CCVAB) during October of each year, and shall provide a copy of the organization's charter and a letter of appointment which will provide the name and signatures of the commander/president and adjutant/secretary authenticating said submission. Each organization so registered or the veterans' community at large will be offered membership in the Clark

County (~~((veterans' resource committee))~~) Veterans' Advisory Board . The filing required by this section shall be valid only until December of the following year. The CC(~~(VRC))~~AB shall maintain a copy of the member organization charter and signatures on file.

**Section 2. Amendatory.** Section 3 of Resolution 1978-01-79, as most recently amended by Section 1 of Ordinance 2004-07-12 and codified as Clark County Code 2.29.020, are each amended to read as follows:

**2.29.020 Reporting.**

~~((Clark County veterans' resource committee shall maintain as permanent records and shall file each October with the Clark County department of community services a detailed statement of the amount of relief furnished during the preceding year, and the names of all persons to whom such relief shall have been furnished, together with a brief statement of the basis for relief from the relief committee upon whose recommendations the orders were drawn and shall provide appropriate reports as requested by member veterans organizations and/or other approved support agencies of Clark County.))~~

Clark County Department of Community Services shall maintain detailed records of the amount of veteran assistance furnished during the preceding year, and the names of all persons to whom such relief has been furnished, together with a brief statement of the basis for assistance and shall provide appropriate reports as requested by the Veterans' Advisory Board, and member veterans' organizations and/or other approved agencies of Clark County.

**Section 3. Amendatory.** Section 3 of Resolution 1997-05-17, as most recently amended by Section 4 of Ordinance 2004-07-12 and codified as Clark County Code 2.29.030A, are each amended to read as follows:

**2.29.03((0A))1 County service officer.**

Clark County, in conjunction with the Clark County ((\*)Veterans' ((resource-committee)) Advisory Board, shall provide for administration of veterans ((relief)) assistance, and will provide and appoint an individual to act as the ((veteran's-service-o)) County Service Officer. The ((veteran's-service-officer)) County Service Officer shall be responsible to Clark County and CCV((RC))AB for determining and certifying veteran eligibility, insuring compliance with the rules governing ((aid))assistance as required by Clark County Code Section 2.29.040 up to and including Section 2.29.((090))085. The ((veteran's-service-officer)) County Service Officer shall also provide for issuance of vouchers and daily administration of the ((relief)) assistance fund.

**Section 4. Amendatory.** Section 4 of Resolution 1997-05-17, as most recently amended by Section 5 of Ordinance 2004-07-12 and codified as Clark County Code 2.29.035, are each amended to read as follows:

**2.29.035 Contracting for services.**

Clark County, or other agencies under contract with the Clark County ((veterans'-resource-committee)) Veterans' Advisory Board to provide for the administration of veterans' ((relief)) assistance or veterans' support programs, shall be authorized to enter into contracts with other individual organizations, and agencies to provide for services for qualified veterans at the request of the Clark County ((veterans'-resource-committee)) Veterans' Advisory Board ; provided, the contract is in compliance with Chapter 73.08 RCW, the Clark County Code, and the contract between the Clark County ((veterans'-resource-committee)) Veterans' Advisory Board and the agency providing services. The amount of the contract shall be limited to the amount recommended by the Clark County ((veterans'-resource-committee)) Veterans' Advisory Board

and approved by Clark County. All proposals from individuals, agencies and/or organizations desiring to support veterans shall be heard, reviewed by the CCV(~~RC~~)AB with their recommendations forward to Clark County.

**Section 5. Amendatory.** Section 5 of Resolution 1978-01-79, as most recently amended by Section 6 of Ordinance 2004-07-12 and codified as Clark County Code 2.29.0040, are each amended to read as follows:

**2.29.040 (~~Rules~~)—Veterans’ aid administration (~~rules adopted~~).**

The (~~rules and~~) regulations set out in Sections 2.29.050 through 2.29.0(~~90~~)85 of this chapter are adopted and are to be controlling in the administration of the operational functioning of furnishing (~~veterans’ relief and/or~~) assistance through appropriate agencies approved by Clark County and the Clark County Veterans’ Advisory Board.

**Section 7. Amendatory.** Section 6 of Resolution 1978-01-79, as most recently amended by Section 1 of Ordinance 2013-07-10 and codified as Clark County Code 2.29.050, are each amended to read as follows:

**2.29.050 Eligibility for veterans’ aid.**

- (1) No veteran or member of his/her family shall be entitled to receive veterans’ (~~aid~~) assistance unless they and/or their family have been legal residents of the State of Washington for not less than twelve (12) months immediately prior to the application for (~~relief~~) assistance. Proof of residence qualifications must be made to the satisfaction of the (~~Veteran’s~~) County Service Officer responsible for providing veterans relief, and applicants are required to furnish reasonable proof in support thereof.
- (2) The applicant shall furnish documentary evidence showing that the applicant meets the definitions of “veteran,” as defined in RCW 41.04.005 and 41.04.007, including a veteran who has received a general discharge under honorable conditions or has received a medical or physical discharge with an honorable record.

- (3) Proof that the veteran and/or their family income does not exceed one hundred fifty percent (150%) of the current federally-established poverty level for Washington State, adjusted for family size. For urgent dental assistance only, a veteran's income may not exceed two hundred (200%) percent of the federal poverty level.
- (4) For the limited purpose of veterans utilizing a center that provides referral and other information, chaplain services, and social interaction; indigency shall include those who affirm they are unable to pay reasonable costs for shelter, food, utilities and transportation because their available funds are insufficient.

**Section 8. Amendatory.** Section 8 of Resolution 1978-01-79, as most recently amended by Section 9 of Ordinance 1997-05-17 and codified as Clark County Code 2.29.070, are each amended to read as follows:

**2.29.070 Limitations on relief benefits.**

Limitations on ~~((relief and/or))~~ assistance shall be prescribed in the Clark County ~~((p))~~Policies and ~~((p))~~Procedures ~~((m))~~Manual for Veterans' Assistance Fund and shall be reviewed annually by the CCV~~((RC))~~AB and the recommended changes shall be forwarded to Clark County for approval.

**Section 9. Amendatory.** Section 9 of Resolution 1978-01-79, as most recently amended by Section 7 of Ordinance 1991-05-01 and codified as Clark County Code 2.29.080, are each amended to read as follows:

**2.29.080 Rule 4: Applications for relief and warrants.**

(1) No applications for ~~((relief))~~assistance will be honored or warrants issued except to cover emergency need. Each application for ~~((relief))~~assistance shall be signed by the applicant that the application is for emergency need and not to supplement any other pensions, insurance compensation, or public assistance received by the veterans or his family.

(2) The ~~((veteran's))~~ County S~~((s))~~ervice ~~((e))~~Officer is authorized to refuse to approve an application for ~~((relief))~~assistance for any purpose where it has been determined after investigation that the person is not entitled to ~~((relief))~~assistance for any of the following reasons:

- (a) Having remained on homeless prevention assistance for three (3) or more consecutive years;
- (b) Misrepresentation in applying for~~((relief))~~assistance; or
- (c) Having received ~~((relief))~~assistance from more than one (1) county, veteran's post or organization in a single year.

**Section 10. Amendatory.** Section 3 of Resolution 1981-11-78, as most recently amended by Section 10 of Ordinance 1997-05-17 and codified as Clark County Code 2.29.085, are each amended to read as follows:

**2.29.085 Screening of applicants.**

- (1) The ~~((veteran's))~~ County S~~((s))~~ervice ~~((e))~~Officer shall screen each applicant applying for ~~((relief))~~ assistance, to determine if such person is qualified for ~~((relief))~~assistance pursuant to the requirements and restrictions of this chapter and the ~~((p))~~Policies and ~~((p))~~Procedures ~~((m))~~Manual for Veterans' Assistance Fund.
- (2) The ~~((veteran's))~~ County S~~((s))~~ervice ~~((e))~~Officer shall determine if each application and voucher are in compliance with the funding limitations outlined in this chapter and the ~~((p))~~Policies and ~~((p))~~Procedures ~~((m))~~Manual for Veterans' Assistance Fund.
- (3) Individuals applying for benefits and subsequently denied the same by the county service officer may appeal such decision, or request a waiver of other than state regulated requirements, by applying in writing, with all supporting documentation, to the Clark



County ((\*)Veterans' ((resource)) Advisory Board ((a))Appeals ((e))Committee. Said committee's decision on all appeals, or requests for waivers, will be final.

**Section 11. Repealer.** Section 10 of Resolution 1978-01-79, as most recently amended by Section 11 of Ordinance 1997-05-17 and codified as Clark County Code 2.29.090, are each hereby repealed.

ADOPTED on this 14<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2014.

Attest:

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
FOR CLARK COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Rebecca Jiltoz  
Clerk to the Board

Tom Mielke  
Tom Mielke, Chair

APPROVED AS TO FORM ONLY:

Anthony F. Golik,  
Prosecuting Attorney

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David Madore, Commissioner

By: Christopher Horne  
Christopher Horne, WSBA #12557  
Chief Civil Deputy

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Edward L. Barnes, Commissioner