

**STATE OF ILLINOIS**  
**20 ILCS 2805/38 VETERANS' SERVICE-RELATED AILMENTS TASK FORCE**  
**BYLAWS**

**ARTICLE I**

Purpose:

Section 1-1. Pursuant to 20 ILCS 2805/38, the Veterans' Service-Related Ailments Task Force is created.

Section 1-2. The Task Force shall review and make recommendations regarding veterans' service-related ailments that are not recognized by the U.S. Department of Veterans' Affairs, including exploring why certain service-related ailments are not recognized and determining what may be done to have them recognized.

Section 1-3. The Task Force shall assess ways the State of Illinois can improve the rate at which disability compensation claims are approved by the federal government and correct the disparity between the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' approval of disability compensation for Illinois veterans and that which is approved for veterans in other states.

**ARTICLE II**

Membership:

Section 2-1. The Task Force shall have 15 members comprised as follows:

- (a) The Director of Veterans' Affairs or the Director's designee.
- (b) 2 Members from the House of Representatives appointed one each by the Speaker of the House and the House Minority Leader.
- (c) 2 Members of the Senate appointed one each by the President of the Senate and the Senate Minority Leader.
- (d) One veteran, appointed by the Director of Veterans' Affairs.
- (e) One medical professional with experience working with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, appointed by the Director of Veterans' Affairs.
- (f) 4 representatives from a variety of veteran's organizations representing geographic diversity in the State, appointed by the Director of Veterans' Affairs.

(g) 4 members, one of whom shall be appointed by the chair of the Veterans' Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives, one of whom shall be appointed by the minority spokesperson of the Veterans' Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives, one of whom shall be appointed by the chair of the Veterans Affairs Committee of the Senate, and one of whom shall be appointed by the minority spokesperson of the Veterans Affairs Committee of the Senate. Those appointed to the Task Force under this paragraph shall be members of different Illinois counties' Veterans Assistance Commissions, Veteran Service Officers, and VITAS officials.

Section 2-2. Members shall serve until December 31, 2022. Vacancies in membership shall be filled by the corresponding Appointing Authority.

Section 2-3. Task Force members shall select from amongst themselves a chairperson or co-chairpersons at the initial Task Force meeting.

Section 2-4. All members of this Task Force must complete Ethics training and Harassment training provided by the Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs prior to the first official meeting of the Task Force.

### **ARTICLE III**

#### **Meetings (Subject to the Open Meetings Act):**

Section 3-1. The Task Force shall meet at least once every two months and at other times as determined by the Task Force.

Section 3-2. The Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs shall provide administrative and other support to the Task Force.

Section 3-3. Notice shall be sent electronically to each member not less than ten (10) day preceding each meeting.

Section 3-4. A quorum shall be present in order to conduct business. A quorum shall consist of a majority of the appointed members. A member of the Task Force is present to conduct business if attending a meeting in person, or by audio or video conference. One-third of the Task Force members must be in attendance for the Task Force to convene.

Section 3-5. Minutes of each meeting shall be sent electronically to each Task Force member. Minutes of the Task Force shall be kept in accordance with the Open Meetings Act.

Section 3-6. All Task Force meetings shall be open to the public unless a meeting or portion thereof qualifies for a closed session in accordance with the Open Meetings Act.

Section 3-7. The Chairperson or Co-Chairs shall work with the Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs to prepare an Agenda prior to each meeting. The approval of Minutes from the previous meeting shall be included on each Agenda. The agenda shall be distributed to the members of the Task Force at least five (5) days prior to a scheduled meeting.

Section 3-8. Each Task Force member shall have one vote on each motion. Except as otherwise provided in these Bylaws, all motions shall be passed by a majority vote of the members present.

Section 3-9. All business shall be conducted in accordance with the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order, unless otherwise specified in these Bylaws.

Section 3-10. The Chairperson or Co-Chairs shall preside at all Task Force meetings. In the absence of the Chairperson or Co-Chairs, the Task Force shall appoint a presiding officer for that meeting by majority vote.

#### **ARTICLE IV**

##### **Task Force Officers:**

Section 4-1. Task Force members shall select from amongst themselves a chairperson or co-chairpersons at the initial Task Force meeting. The chairperson or co-chairpersons shall have the duties and responsibilities described in these Bylaws.

Section 4-2. If the chairperson or co-chairpersons' membership on the Task Force is vacated for any reason, or a Co-Chair resigns from that office, the other Co-Chair shall serve as Chair until the appointment of a new Co-Chair by the Task Force members

Section 4-3. The chairperson or co-chairpersons, upon taking office, may appoint a secretary plus other officers as may be deemed necessary to properly conduct the affairs of the Task Force.

#### **ARTICLE V**

##### **Committees:**

Section 5-1. The Chairperson or Co-Chairs may form standing or ad hoc committees of the Task Force, at a meeting of the Task Force. In addition, the Chairperson or Co-Chairs may establish any advisory committees to ensure maximum public participation in the Task Force's planning, organization, and implementation review process. If established, advisory committees shall (i) advise and assist the Task Force in its duties and (ii) help the Task Force to identify issues of public concern.

Section 5-2. The Chair of each committee shall be a Task Force member, appointed by the Chairperson or Co-Chairs. The Chairperson or Co-Chairs shall be responsible for selecting the members of the committee. Persons who are not members of the Task Force may serve as members of a Committee.

Section 5-3. The Committee Chair shall promptly notify all Committee members and the Department of all dates, times, and locations for all regularly scheduled, rescheduled or special meetings of the committee.

Section 5-4. All committee meetings shall be open to the public unless a meeting or portion thereof qualifies for a closed session in accordance with the Open Meetings Act. Minutes of committee meetings shall be kept in accordance with the Open Meetings Act.

Section 5-5. A quorum shall be present in order to convene a committee and conduct business. A quorum shall consist of a majority of the members of the committee. A member of a committee is present to conduct business if attending a meeting in person, or by audio or video conference.

Section 5-6. All committee business shall be conducted in accordance with the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order, unless otherwise specified in these Bylaws.

Section 5-7. Each committee member shall have one vote on each motion. All motions shall be passed by a majority vote of the members present.

## **ARTICLE VI**

### **Remuneration and Reimbursement:**

Section 6-1. Task Force members shall serve without compensation but may be reimbursed for their expenses incurred in performing their duties.

Section 6-2. Members of the Task Force shall be subject to the Travel Regulations promulgated by the Illinois Travel Regulation Council.

Section 6-3. For the purpose of travel expense reimbursement, expenses incurred by Task Force members participating singly, or as a unit of the whole, or as a total Task Force, shall be considered to be official business of the State and of the Task Force when such expenses are incurred as a participant in the following activities:

- (a) Regular and special meetings of the Task Force.
- (b) Committee meetings of the Task Force.
- (c) Hearings authorized by the Task Force.

## **ARTICLE VII**

### Limitations of Liabilities:

Section 7-1. This Task Force shall not incur, or cause to be incurred, any liability or obligation nor make any contract, implied or executed, on behalf of the Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs.

Section 7-2. Task Force members shall not represent the Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs to the public or General Assembly without prior approval of the Director of the Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs.

## **ARTICLE VIII**

### Amendments:

Section 8-1. These Bylaws may be amended at any regular council meeting by a vote of quorum of the members of said Task Force attending such regular meeting, provided that the proposed amendment shall have been submitted in writing and read at the preceding regular meeting of said Task Force; and further provided, that written notice shall have been given to all members at least ten (10) days in advance of the date when such amendment is to be voted upon, notifying said members that at such meeting a proposal to amend the Bylaws is to be voted upon. These Bylaws are not a legally binding document and are to be used only as suggested structure for the Veterans' Service-Related Ailments Task Force and its meetings.

## **ARTICLE IX**

### Conclusion:

Section 9-1. The Task Force shall prepare a report that summarizes its work and makes recommendations resulting from its study. The Task Force shall submit the report of its findings and recommendations to the Governor and General Assembly by December 31, 2022. The Task Force is dissolved on December 31, 2023.

Section 9-2. All Task Force members must be in compliance with these set forth Bylaws, and deviations could lead to a member's replacement, as administered by Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs Director or the Veterans' Service-Related Ailments Task Force Chairperson or Co-Chairpersons.