

73-1210a. Appointment of officers, employees and superintendents by director; fingerprinting and criminal background check; powers, duties and functions; rights and benefits preserved. (a) Except as otherwise provided by law, and subject to the Kansas civil service act, the director of the Kansas commission on veterans affairs office shall appoint:

(1) Subordinate officers and employees, subject to the approval of the governor, as are necessary to enable the director to exercise or perform the functions, powers and duties pursuant to the provisions of article 12 of chapter 73 of the Kansas Statutes Annotated, and amendments thereto;

(2) the superintendent of the Kansas soldiers' home;

(3) the superintendent of the Kansas veterans' home; and

(4) the deputy director of veterans services pursuant to K.S.A. 73-1234, and amendments thereto.

(b) Upon the commencement of the interview process, every candidate for a position in the Kansas commission on veterans affairs office that interviews claimants and provides information advice and counseling to veterans, surviving spouses, their dependents concerning compensation, pension, education, vocational rehabilitation, insurance, hospitalization, outpatient care, home loans, housing, tax exemptions, burial benefits and other benefits to which they may be entitled, or any other sensitive position, as determined by the director shall be given a written notice that a criminal history records check is required. The director of the Kansas commission on veterans affairs office shall require such candidates to be fingerprinted and submit to a state and national criminal history record check. The fingerprints shall be used to identify the candidate and to determine whether the candidate has a record of criminal history in this state or another jurisdiction. The director of the Kansas commission on veterans affairs office shall submit the fingerprints to the Kansas bureau of investigation and the federal bureau of investigation for a state and national criminal history record check. Local and state law enforcement officers and agencies shall assist the director of the Kansas commission on veterans affairs office in taking and processing of fingerprints of candidates. If the criminal history record information reveals any conviction of crimes of dishonesty or violence, such conviction may be used to disqualify a candidate for any position within the director of the Kansas commission on veterans affairs office. If the criminal history record information is used to disqualify a candidate, the candidate shall be informed in writing of that decision.

(c) Persons employed by the Kansas soldiers' home and Kansas veterans' home shall be excluded from the provisions of subsection (b). No person who has been employed by the director of the Kansas commission on veterans affairs office for five consecutive years immediately prior to the effective date of this act shall be subject to the provisions of subsection (b) while employed by the director of the Kansas commission on veterans affairs office.

(d) (1) Except as otherwise provided by law, and subject to the Kansas civil service act, the director of the Kansas commission on veterans affairs office shall appoint subordinate officers and employees, a superintendent of the Kansas soldiers' home and a superintendent of the Kansas veterans' home, as shall be necessary to enable the director of the Kansas commission on veterans affairs office to exercise or perform its functions, powers and duties pursuant to the provisions of article 19 of chapter 76 of the Kansas Statutes Annotated, and amendments thereto.

(2) (A) All subordinate officers and employees shall be within the classified service under the Kansas civil service act, shall perform such duties and exercise such powers as the director of the Kansas commission on veterans affairs office may prescribe and such duties and powers as are designated by law, and shall act for and exercise the powers of the the director of the Kansas commission on veterans affairs office.

(B) The superintendent of the Kansas soldiers' home shall be in the unclassified service under the Kansas civil service act and shall receive an annual salary fixed by the director of the Kansas commission on veterans affairs office, with the approval of the governor. The superintendent of the Kansas soldiers' home shall perform such duties and exercise such powers as the director may prescribe, and such duties and powers as are prescribed by law.

(C) The superintendent of the Kansas veterans' home shall be in the unclassified service under the Kansas civil service act and shall receive an annual salary fixed by the director of the Kansas commission on veterans affairs office, with the approval of the governor. The superintendent of the Kansas veterans' home shall perform such duties and exercise such powers as the director may prescribe, and such duties and powers as are prescribed by law.

(e) Any veterans service representative appointed by the director of the Kansas commission on veterans affairs office shall be an honorably discharged veteran or retired from the United States armed forces. No veterans service representative of the Kansas commission on veterans affairs office shall take a power of attorney in the name of the director of the Kansas commission on veterans affairs office. Nothing in this act shall be construed to prohibit any such veterans service representative from assisting any veteran with any claim in which a power of attorney is not required.

For the purpose of this subsection, "veterans service representative" means any officer or employee appointed pursuant to this section whose primary duties include:

(1) Assisting veterans and their dependents in securing benefits from the federal government and the state of Kansas.

(2) Providing information and assistance to veterans and dependents in obtaining special services and benefits based on knowledge of federal and state laws, policies and regulations pertaining to veterans benefits and services.

(3) Providing assistance to veterans service organizations participating in the veterans claims assistance program.

(f) Nothing in this act shall be construed to affect the status, rights or benefits of any officer or employee of the Kansas commission on veterans affairs under K.S.A. 73-1208a, prior to its repeal, employed by such commission on July 1, 2014.

History: L. 1986, ch. 278, § 5; L. 1997, ch. 28, § 1; L. 1998, ch. 150, § 1; L. 2007, ch. 43, § 1; L. 2008, ch. 99, § 5; L. 2014, ch. 83, § 10; July 1.