

Department of Veterans' Affairs

Prepared by the North Dakota Legislative Council staff

July 2010



County veterans' service officers accreditation - In Senate Bill No. 2007 the Legislative Assembly provided \$50,000 from the general fund to develop and provide training to county veterans' service officers. In addition, the Legislative Assembly in House Bill No. 1057 provided \$20,000 from the general fund for Department of Veterans' Affairs accreditation training for all county veterans' service officers. House Bill No. 1057 requires county veterans' service officers to maintain accreditation. The bill provides the commissioner of veterans' affairs may use up to two of the Department of Veterans' Affairs' existing FTE positions as training officers for the 2009-11 biennium. The commissioner of veterans' affairs must provide a report regarding the number of county veterans' service officers accredited, the agency or organization through which each officer has been accredited, and an accountability report with respect to the use of the funds for the training program offered through the Department of Veterans' Affairs to county veterans' service officers to the Legislative Council by December 1, 2009. The commissioner must also present followup reports to the Legislative Management by July 1, 2010, and December 1, 2010. The board of county commissioners of each county must report to the Legislative Management on the status of the county's compliance with the accreditation requirement by December 1, 2010.

The Department of Veterans' Affairs contracted for training by the National Association of County Veterans Service Officers in April 2010. The training was attended by 56 county veterans' service officers leaving 4 county veterans' service officers not in compliance with the accreditation requirement. The department has offered the remaining county veterans' service officers not in compliance the opportunity to attend other National Association of County Veterans Service Officers training events. Expenditures for the spring training event totaled \$13,000.

The department also plans to:

- Develop a training program that will allow for certification by various veterans' organizations and the National Association of County Veterans Service Officers.
- Develop a training/reference manual.
- Provide additional training sessions.

The department has provided information regarding the accreditation of county veterans' service officers to the Legislative Management's interim Government Services Committee.

The department's staff members also provide training on certain topics.