

FREDERICK COUNTY VETERANS ADVISORY COUNCIL
BYLAWS

ARTICLE I. **NAME**

The name of this organization shall be the Frederick County Veterans Advisory Council (VAC).

ARTICLE II. **PURPOSE**

The VAC advises the Frederick County Executive and County Council on issues of importance to military Veterans and their families.

ARTICLE III. **AUTHORITY**

The authority for the VAC is derived from Sections 1-2-200 through 1-2-209 of the Frederick County Code.

ARTICLE IV. **POWERS AND DUTIES**

The VAC shall serve in an advisory role to the County Executive and County Council. Among its responsibilities and duties, the VAC shall:

- a. Collaborate with established military Veteran oriented service organizations to evaluate, develop and promote new and existing programs and services for Veterans and their families within Frederick County.
- b. Collaborate with other County Commissions, Boards and Councils, and County staff with regard to policies, programs, and concerns related to Veterans' interests.
- c. Collaborate with the County Executive and County Council to develop and promote programs and services in the State and County related to the needs of Veterans and their families.
- d. On or before July 1 of each year, provide a report to the County Executive and the County Council on its activities and progress in meeting its goals. The VAC shall post the report on the VAC website.

ARTICLE V. **APPOINTMENT AND TERMS OF MEMBERS**

Section 1. Composition of the VAC:

- a. Subject to confirmation by the County Council, the County Executive shall appoint up to seven (7) members to the VAC, all of whom shall be registered voters and residents of Frederick County, not less than four (4) of whom shall have been separated from military service by honorable discharge or under honorable conditions.
- b. Three (3) members may be non-veterans, who represent a variety of organizations that provide services to Veterans such as:
 - a. A post-secondary educational institution; or
 - b. A member of a Veterans' Service Organization.

Section 2. Appointment and Terms of VAC members:

- a. The term of office of each of the members shall be for a period of two years.
- b. Of the initial seven (7) members, three (3) shall be appointed for a one-year term; and four (4) shall be appointed for a two-year term.
- c. Members may be reappointed, but may not serve more than three full consecutive two-year terms.
- d. Vacancies shall be filled on the same basis as the original appointments for the unexpired terms. Members shall continue in office until their successors are appointed and qualified.
- e. A VAC member may be removed by the County Executive for cause.

Section 3. Ex officio non-voting members:

Ex officio members shall include:

- a. A representative from the U. S. Department of Veterans Affairs, such as:
 - a. Department of Veterans Affairs Veterans Center;
 - b. Department of Veterans Affairs Veteran Experience Office; or
 - c. Veterans Health Administration Community Based Outpatient Clinic/Fort Detrick location.
- b. The Director of Frederick County Workforce Services, or the Director's designee.
- c. The Director of the Frederick County Health Department, Behavioral Health Services Division, or the Director's designee.
- d. A Veteran Liaison from Frederick Memorial Hospital or one of its affiliates.
- e. A member of the Frederick County Council.
- f. A member of the Maryland General Assembly who represents Frederick County.
- g. A representative from the office of a member of the U.S. Congress who represents Frederick County.

Section 4. County Staff:

- a. A County Staff member should be designated by the County Executive as a liaison to assist the VAC.

Section 5. Resignations:

- a. A member may resign at any time by giving notice to the Executive Committee or Chair. Unless otherwise specified in the notice, the resignation shall take effect upon receipt thereof by the Executive Committee or Chair. Acceptance of the resignation shall not be necessary to make it effective.
- b. Any voting member of the VAC who fails to attend at least 50% of the meeting during any period of 12 consecutive months shall be considered to have resigned.

Section 6. Vacancies on the VAC:

- a. Vacancies occurring at any time during a member's term should be filled for the remainder of the unexpired term with a person with the same or similar background of the member being replaced.
- b. Upon a vacancy, the following steps shall be taken:

- i. The Division of Citizens Services notifies the Office of the County Executive of the vacancy;
- ii. The Office of the County Executive advertises the opening and receives applications;
- iii. The Nominating Committee (Article VIII, Section 3) receives applications referred from the Office of the County Executive and interviews referred applicants;
- iv. The Nominating Committee makes recommendations to the VAC for each applicant;
- v. Applicants who are approved by the VAC are recommended to the County Executive;
- vi. The County Executive selects a county resident for appointment to the VAC, with consideration being given to the recommended applicants; and
- vii. The County Executive forwards the appointment to the County Council for confirmation.

ARTICLE VI. **CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

Section 1. Members are subject to the provisions of the Frederick County Ethics Law.

Section 2. Members with conflicts of interest shall disclose such conflicts and recuse themselves from participating in and voting on such matters.

ARTICLE VII. **OFFICERS**

Section 1. The Chair and Vice Chair will be selected by the members of the VAC. The Chairperson (Chair) and Vice-Chairperson (Vice-Chair) of the VAC shall serve for a period of one year and shall be elected by the members at the regular meeting in January of each year.

Section 2. The Chair shall preside over all VAC meetings.

Section 3. The Vice-Chair shall assume the duties of the Chair in his/her absence.

ARTICLE VIII. **COMMITTEES**

Section 1. There shall be an Executive Committee consisting of the Chair, Vice-Chair, Immediate Past chair when sitting as a member of the VAC, at large designee(s) to be determined by the Chair, and the designated County staff member. The designated County Staff member shall be a non-voting member. The Executive Committee shall meet on a regular basis at least quarterly and at other times at the discretion of the Chair. The Executive Committee has the power to act on behalf of the VAC between meetings if action or a decision is necessary prior to the next meeting and shall report its action to the VAC. To the extent permitted by the Maryland Open Meetings Act (“Open Meetings Act”), the Executive Committee may conduct an emergency vote by telephone only after other available options have been considered.

Section 2. The Chair of the VAC may create committees and appoint their chairpersons as needed from the membership of the VAC and shall assign the responsibilities of these committees. The Chair

may also establish *ad hoc* committees to assist in carrying out the VAC's responsibilities. Standing and ad hoc committees may include non-voting members. The chairperson of an *ad hoc* committee must be a voting member of the VAC duly appointed by the Chair of the VAC.

Section 3. The quorum for a committee is a majority of the membership of the committee.

ARTICLE IX. **MEETINGS**

Section 1. The VAC shall meet as frequently as determined by the VAC, but not less than quarterly. Meeting locations shall be determined by the VAC Chair and shall be in Frederick County, open to the public and ADA accessible.

Section 2. Special meetings, workshop sessions, retreats, work sessions of the VAC may be called by the Chair at any time or at the written request of a majority of the current members. Reasonable notice shall be given to all members of the VAC of the date, time, place and reason for such special meeting.

Section 3. All meetings shall comply with the requirements of the Open Meetings Act.

Section 4. Notice of the date, time, and place of the VAC meetings shall meet the requirements of the Open Meetings Act.

Section 5. A majority of the VAC voting members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of regular business.

Section 6. Agendas for each VAC meeting shall be developed by the Chair and designated County staff member and provided to the members in advance of the meeting. The agendas will be posted to the Frederick County Government website before each meeting, as required by the Open Meetings Act.

Section 7. The order of business at regular meetings shall be as follows.

- a. Call to Order
 - a. Establishment of a quorum
 - b. Approval of agenda
- b. Old Business
 - a. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meetings
- c. Chair's comments
- d. Presentation(s)
- e. Public Comment
- f. Subcommittee reports
- g. New Business
- h. Announcements
 - a. Upcoming events
- i. Adjournment

Section 8. The minutes of all VAC meetings, including a record of those in attendance, excused absences and unexplained absences, shall be kept by the designated County staff member who has been trained on the requirements of the Maryland Open Meetings Act. Copies of such minutes shall be sent to all members of the VAC prior to the next meeting. The Division of Citizens Services will retain the minutes for at least the minimum time period required by the Open Meetings Act. Minutes will be posted to the Frederick County Government website following approval by the VAC.

ARTICLE X. **VOTING**

Section 1. Each VAC member shall be entitled to one vote, except as provided in Section 2.

Section 2. Members appointed under Article V, Section 3, of these Bylaws are non-voting advisory members.

Section 3. An affirmative vote of the majority of the voting VAC members present at any meeting at which a quorum is present is necessary to approve any motion, resolution or any other action of the VAC.

Section 4. There shall be no voting by proxy.

ARTICLE XI. COMPENSATION

Section 1. Members of the VAC shall receive no compensation for their services.

ARTICLE XII. ADOPTION OF THE BYLAWS AND AMENDMENTS TO THE BYLAWS

Section 1. The bylaws shall not take effect until approved by a majority of the voting VAC members and approved by the County Executive.

Section 2. The bylaws may be amended at any meeting of the VAC by an affirmative vote of at least 5 of the voting members of the VAC, provided the amendment(s) has/have been submitted to the VAC members in writing at a previous meeting, reviewed by the County Attorney's Office and voted to be submitted to the County Executive for approval.

Section 3. Copies of these bylaws and a list of current members shall be provided to all VAC members and will be posted on the VAC website. The bylaws and the membership list are public records.

ARTICLE XIII. PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

All questions on parliamentary procedure not covered by these bylaws shall be governed by the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order.