

FIRST REGULAR SESSION

HOUSE BILL NO. 80

103RD GENERAL ASSEMBLY

INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE GRIFFITH.

0507H.011

DANA RADEMAN MILLER, Chief Clerk

AN ACT

To amend chapters 42, 191, and 301, RSMo, by adding thereto ten new sections relating to veterans, with penalty provisions.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the state of Missouri, as follows:

Section A. Chapters 42, 191, and 301, RSMo, are amended by adding thereto ten new sections, to be known as sections 42.028, 191.2600, 191.2605, 191.2610, 191.2615, 191.2620, 191.2625, 191.2630, 301.3181, and 301.3182, to read as follows:

42.028. 1. As used in this section, the following terms mean:

(1) "Compensation", payment of any money, thing of value, or financial benefit;

(2) "Person", an individual; corporation; business trust; estate; trust; partnership; limited liability company; association; joint venture; public corporation; government or governmental subdivision, agency, or instrumentality; or any other legal or commercial entity. The term "person" shall not include the Missouri veterans commission;

(3) "Veterans benefits matter", the preparation, presentation, or prosecution of any claim affecting any person who has filed or expressed an intent to file a claim for any benefit, program, service, commodity, function, or status, entitlement to which is determined under the laws and regulations administered by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs or the Missouri veterans commission, pertaining to veterans, their dependents, their survivors, and any other individual eligible for such benefits.

2. Except as permitted under federal law, no person shall receive compensation for advising or assisting any individual with regard to any veterans benefits matter.

EXPLANATION — Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted from the law. Matter in **bold-face** type in the above bill is proposed language.

17 **3. No person shall receive compensation for referring any individual to another**
18 **person to advise or assist such individual with any veterans benefits matter.**

19 **4. A person seeking to receive compensation for advising or assisting any**
20 **individual with any veterans benefits matter shall, before rendering any services,**
21 **memorialize all terms regarding the individual's payment of fees for services rendered**
22 **in a written agreement, signed by both parties, that adheres to all criteria specified**
23 **within 38 CFR 14.636.**

24 **5. No person shall receive any compensation for any services rendered before the**
25 **date on which a notice of disagreement is filed with respect to any individual's case.**

26 **6. No person shall guarantee, either directly or by implication, that any**
27 **individual is certain to receive specific veterans benefits or that any individual is certain**
28 **to receive a specific level, percentage, or amount of veterans benefits.**

29 **7. No person shall receive excessive or unreasonable fees as compensation for**
30 **advising or assisting any individual with any veterans benefits matter. The factors**
31 **articulated within 38 CFR 14.636 shall govern determinations of whether a fee is**
32 **excessive or unreasonable.**

33 **8. (1) No person shall advise or assist for compensation any individual**
34 **concerning any veterans benefits matter without clearly providing, at the outset of the**
35 **business relationship, the following disclosure, both orally and in writing:**

36 **This business is not sponsored by, or affiliated with, the United**
37 **States Department of Veterans Affairs or the Missouri Veterans**
38 **Commission, or any other federally chartered veterans service**
39 **organization. Other organizations, including, but not limited to,**
40 **the Missouri Veterans Commission, your local veterans service**
41 **agency, and other federally chartered veterans service**
42 **organizations, may be able to provide you with this service free of**
43 **charge. Products or services offered by this business are not**
44 **necessarily endorsed by any of these organizations. You may**
45 **qualify for other veterans benefits beyond the benefits for which**
46 **you are receiving services here.**

47 **(2) The written disclosure shall appear in at least twelve-point font and shall**
48 **appear in a readily noticeable and identifiable place in the person's agreement with the**
49 **individual seeking services. The individual shall verbally acknowledge understanding of**
50 **the oral disclosure and shall sign the document in which the written disclosure appears,**
51 **to represent understanding of these provisions. The person offering services shall retain**
52 **a copy of the written disclosure while providing veterans benefits services for**

53 compensation to the individual and for at least one year after the date on which the
54 service relationship terminates.

55 9. (1) No person shall advertise for-compensation services in veterans benefits
56 matters without including the following disclosure:

57 This business is not sponsored by, or affiliated with, the United
58 States Department of Veterans Affairs or the Missouri Veterans
59 Commission, or any other federally chartered veterans service
60 organization. Other organizations, including, but not limited to,
61 the Missouri Veterans Commission, your local veterans service
62 agency, and other federally chartered veterans service
63 organizations, may be able to provide you with these services free
64 of charge. Products or services offered by this business are not
65 necessarily endorsed by any of these organizations. You may
66 qualify for other veterans benefits beyond the services that this
67 business offers.

68 (2) If the advertisement is printed, including, but not limited to, advertisements
69 visible to internet users, the disclosure shall appear in a readily visible place on the
70 advertisement. If the advertisement is verbal, the spoken statement of the disclosure
71 shall be clear and intelligible.

72 10. No person who advises or assists, or seeks to advise or assist, for
73 compensation any individual concerning any veterans benefits matter shall gain direct
74 access to the individual's:

- 75 (1) Personal medical information;
- 76 (2) Personal financial information;
- 77 (3) Personal information in any application for government benefits; or
- 78 (4) User name or password for any application or service.

79 11. Any person who violates this section is guilty of a class A misdemeanor.

191.2600. Sections 191.2600 to 191.2630 shall be known and may be cited as the
2 "Veterans Traumatic Brain Injury Treatment and Recovery Act".

191.2605. As used in sections 191.2600 to 191.2630, unless the context indicates
2 otherwise, the following terms mean:

3 (1) "Alternative therapies", any therapies for a condition that are not considered
4 the standard or conventional therapies for that condition including, but not limited to,
5 hyperbaric oxygen therapy;

6 (2) "Commission", the Missouri veterans commission;

7 (3) "Facility", a public or private health clinic, outpatient health clinic,
8 community health center, hospital, or other facility authorized under rules of the
9 department of health and senior services to provide hyperbaric oxygen therapy under
10 sections 191.2600 to 191.2630;

11 (4) "Fund", the veterans traumatic brain injury treatment and recovery fund
12 established in section 191.2615;

13 (5) "Health care practitioner", a person who is licensed to provide medical or
14 other health care in this state and who has prescriptive authority including, but not
15 limited to, a physician;

16 (6) "Hyperbaric oxygen therapy" or "therapy", treatment for posttraumatic
17 stress disorder or traumatic brain injury that is based on a valid prescription from a
18 health care practitioner and that is delivered through:

19 (a) A hyperbaric chamber approved by the United States Food and Drug
20 Administration; or

21 (b) A hyperbaric oxygen device that is approved by the United States Food and
22 Drug Administration;

23 (7) "Physician", a person licensed to practice medicine in this state under
24 chapter 334;

25 (8) "Posttraumatic stress disorder", a mental health condition that is triggered
26 by a terrifying event, such as by either experiencing or witnessing a life-threatening
27 event, including, but not limited to, military sexual trauma, or as a secondary sequela to
28 body trauma;

29 (9) "Traumatic brain injury", an acquired injury to the brain. The term
30 "traumatic brain injury" does not include brain dysfunction caused by a congenital or
31 degenerative disorder or birth trauma;

32 (10) "Veteran", any person defined as a veteran by the United States
33 Department of Veterans Affairs or its successor agency.

 191.2610. Any facility in this state that provides hyperbaric oxygen therapy to a
2 veteran shall be eligible for reimbursement for such therapy from the commission if the
3 following conditions are satisfied:

4 (1) The veteran receiving the therapy has been diagnosed, by a health care
5 practitioner, with posttraumatic stress disorder or a traumatic brain injury and has
6 demonstrated that he or she previously sought services for posttraumatic stress disorder
7 or a traumatic brain injury through the Veterans Health Administration service
8 delivery system or, if available to the veteran, through the private health insurance
9 system;

10 (2) The veteran receiving the therapy voluntarily agreed to the therapy;

11 **(3) The facility complies with applicable fire codes, oversight requirements, and**
12 **any treatment protocols required under sections 191.2600 to 191.2630;**

13 **(4) The veteran receiving the therapy resides within this state;**

14 **(5) Any hyperbaric chamber used to treat the veteran meets the minimum**
15 **standards for patients established by the United States Food and Drug Administration;**

16 **(6) The facility complies with the federal Health Insurance and Portability**
17 **Accountability Act of 1996 for the veteran receiving the therapy;**

18 **(7) The facility's treatment protocols for hyperbaric oxygen therapy are aligned**
19 **with the medical standards demonstrated in published clinical trials for hyperbaric**
20 **oxygen therapy that occurred under the direction of an institutional review board;**

21 **(8) The hyperbaric oxygen therapy is delivered solely by health care**
22 **practitioners in accordance with federal and state law;**

23 **(9) Before providing hyperbaric oxygen therapy to the veteran, the facility**
24 **established a treatment plan consistent with the requirements of sections 191.2600 to**
25 **191.2630;**

26 **(10) A prescription order for hyperbaric oxygen therapy was issued by a health**
27 **care practitioner before the facility provided the therapy;**

28 **(11) The facility verified that both the facility and the veteran met the**
29 **requirements under sections 191.2600 to 191.2630 for reimbursement before proceeding**
30 **with the therapy;**

31 **(12) Before providing the therapy, the facility estimated the costs of the therapy,**
32 **including the costs of cognitive testing to be conducted before and after the therapy;**

33 **(13) The facility retains in the veteran's health care file information on the type**
34 **of cognitive testing performed as well as the results of the cognitive testing;**

35 **(14) The veteran is not charged or billed for the therapy by the facility or any**
36 **other entity and is not liable for the costs of the therapy or any expenses incurred in**
37 **accordance with sections 191.2600 to 191.2630;**

38 **(15) The facility and any health care practitioners involved in the hyperbaric**
39 **oxygen therapy agree to cooperate with the commission to provide an annual data**
40 **summary treatment report sufficient to assess the efficacy of alternative treatment**
41 **modalities for treating veterans with posttraumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain**
42 **injuries; and**

43 **(16) The facility receives advance approval from the commission as described in**
44 **section 191.2615.**

191.2615. 1. (1) There is hereby created in the state treasury the "Veterans
2 **Traumatic Brain Injury Treatment and Recovery Fund". The fund shall consist of any**
3 **appropriations, gifts, bequests, or public or private donations to such fund. The state**

4 treasurer shall be custodian of the fund. In accordance with sections 30.170 and 30.180,
5 the state treasurer may approve disbursements. The fund shall be a dedicated fund and,
6 upon appropriation, moneys in this fund shall be used solely for reimbursements to
7 facilities for hyperbaric oxygen therapy provided to veterans, for administrative
8 expenses incurred by the commission in distributing such reimbursements, and for
9 studies on the use of alternative therapies to treat veterans with posttraumatic stress
10 disorder and traumatic brain injuries.

11 (2) Notwithstanding the provisions of section 33.080 to the contrary, any moneys
12 remaining in the fund at the end of the biennium shall not revert to the credit of the
13 general revenue fund.

14 (3) The state treasurer shall invest moneys in the fund in the same manner as
15 other funds are invested. Any interest and moneys earned on such investments shall be
16 credited to the fund.

17 2. Any facility that intends to seek reimbursement from the fund for hyperbaric
18 oxygen therapy provided to a veteran shall request advance approval from the
19 commission for reimbursement before providing such therapy. Upon approval by the
20 commission, the commission shall set aside the appropriate amount of funds to ensure
21 full payment for the veteran's therapy. If moneys remaining in the fund are insufficient
22 to ensure full payment, the commission shall deny the facility's request for advance
23 approval.

24 3. If at the end of the six-month period immediately following the date the
25 commission approved the facility's request for advance approval the facility has not
26 submitted any bills to the commission for the veteran or provided any therapy for the
27 veteran, the commission shall notify the veteran and the facility that the funding
28 reserved for the veteran shall expire within thirty days if the facility fails to notify the
29 commission that therapy is scheduled or continued. If the facility fails to notify the
30 commission that therapy is scheduled or continued within thirty days, the commission
31 shall release the funds reserved for the veteran and make them available for another
32 veteran's therapy under sections 191.2600 to 191.2630.

33 4. After receiving advance approval from the commission and providing
34 hyperbaric oxygen therapy to a veteran in accordance with sections 191.2600 to
35 191.2630, the facility shall not bill the veteran for the therapy but shall submit the bill
36 for the therapy to the commission.

37 5. The commission shall pay the bill for the therapy received in accordance with
38 subsection 4 of this section from the fund within forty-five days of receipt. If the costs of
39 the therapy exceed the availability of moneys remaining in the fund, the facility shall not
40 hold the veteran responsible for any payment, and the commission shall not have any

41 **obligation to make payments to the facility in an amount that exceeds the amount that**
42 **was set aside upon advance approval as described in subsection 2 of this section.**

43 **6. The commission shall seek reimbursement for payments made to facilities for**
44 **treating veterans with hyperbaric oxygen therapy from any of the following entities**
45 **based on the efficacy of treatments as demonstrated in the healing of traumatic brain**
46 **injuries through hyperbaric oxygen therapy by cognitive testing, brain scans, or other**
47 **assessment protocols medically accepted by the United States Food and Drug**
48 **Administration or the United States Department of Defense under the War Risk**
49 **Insurance Act, as amended:**

50 **(1) The Tricare program of the United States Department of Defense;**

51 **(2) Appropriate federal agencies, including the Veterans Health Administration;**

52 **and**

53 **(3) Any other responsible third-party payer.**

54 **7. The department of health and senior services shall award funds to entities to**
55 **study the use of alternative therapies to treat veterans with posttraumatic stress**
56 **disorder and traumatic brain injuries.**

191.2620. 1. Any facility may approve hyperbaric oxygen therapy for a veteran
2 **in accordance with sections 191.2600 to 191.2630.**

3 **2. A licensing board shall not revoke, fail to renew, suspend, or take any action**
4 **against a health care practitioner based solely on the health care practitioner's**
5 **recommendations to a veteran regarding access to or treatment with hyperbaric oxygen**
6 **therapy.**

7 **3. No state agency shall take any action, or assist in any action, against a health**
8 **care practitioner's Medicare or Medicaid certification based solely on the health care**
9 **practitioner's recommendation that a veteran have access to hyperbaric oxygen therapy.**

10 **4. No official, employee, or agent of the state shall block or attempt to block**
11 **access to hyperbaric oxygen therapy by a veteran who meets all requirements to receive**
12 **such therapy under sections 191.2600 to 191.2630.**

13 **5. Counseling, advice, or recommendations provided by a health care**
14 **practitioner consistent with the medical standards of care shall not be considered a**
15 **violation of sections 191.2600 to 191.2630.**

16 **6. Hyperbaric oxygen therapy may be used under the direction of an**
17 **institutional review board with a national clinical trial number for the purpose of**
18 **collecting clinical trial data.**

191.2625. 1. Any facility that receives reimbursement from the fund shall:

2 **(1) Provide reports on individual veterans and groups of veterans to the**
3 **commission on measured health improvements from accepted and approved cognitive**

4 testing protocols, brain imaging, or other medical assessments approved by the industry,
5 the United States Food and Drug Administration, the United States Department of
6 Defense, Tricare, or the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services conducted before
7 and after therapy; and

8 (2) Submit an annual report to the commission with the following information:

9 (a) The number of veterans who received hyperbaric oxygen therapy at the
10 facility;

11 (b) The demographics of the veterans who received hyperbaric oxygen therapy
12 at the facility;

13 (c) The number of actual hyperbaric oxygen therapy dives by veterans
14 completed at the facility;

15 (d) Cognitive test results of veterans who received hyperbaric oxygen therapy at
16 the facility; and

17 (e) Any testimonials provided by veterans voluntarily.

18 2. (1) Before January first each year, the commission shall prepare a report
19 detailing each treatment of hyperbaric oxygen therapy provided to a veteran in
20 accordance with sections 191.2600 to 191.2630, the provider type for each treatment
21 provided, the number of veterans treated or served, the treatment outcomes for the
22 veterans treated or served, and a detailed accounting of the moneys used in the fund
23 during the immediately preceding fiscal year.

24 (2) The commission shall submit the report prepared under subdivision (1) of
25 this subsection to the governor, the president pro tempore of the senate, the speaker of
26 the house of representatives, and the director of the department of health and senior
27 services.

28 3. Before January thirtieth each year, the department of health and senior
29 services shall submit to the governor a report containing:

30 (1) Findings and recommendations related to the administration of sections
31 191.2600 to 191.2630;

32 (2) Findings and recommendations from any studies funded under section
33 191.2615 regarding the efficacy of alternative therapies to treat posttraumatic stress
34 disorder and traumatic brain injuries; and

35 (3) Recommendations on budgetary, legislative, or regulatory changes needed to
36 expand access to alternative therapies for veterans with posttraumatic stress disorder
37 and traumatic brain injuries.

191.2630. The commission and the department of health and senior services shall
2 jointly promulgate all necessary rules and regulations for the administration of sections
3 191.2600 to 191.2630. Any rule or portion of a rule, as that term is defined in section

4 **536.010**, that is created under the authority delegated in this section shall become
5 effective only if it complies with and is subject to all of the provisions of chapter 536 and,
6 if applicable, section 536.028. This section and chapter 536 are nonseverable and if any
7 of the powers vested with the general assembly pursuant to chapter 536 to review, to
8 delay the effective date, or to disapprove and annul a rule are subsequently held
9 unconstitutional, then the grant of rulemaking authority and any rule proposed or
10 adopted after August 28, 2025, shall be invalid and void.

301.3181. Any person who served as a member of the Armed Forces of the
2 United States in Afghanistan and Iraq, who was awarded the Afghanistan Campaign
3 medal and the Iraq Campaign medal, may apply for Afghanistan and Iraq Veteran
4 vehicle license plates, for any motor vehicle the person owns, either solely or jointly,
5 other than an apportioned motor vehicle or a commercial motor vehicle licensed in
6 excess of twenty-four thousand pounds gross weight. Any such person shall make
7 application for the license plates authorized by this section on a form provided by the
8 director of revenue and furnish such proof of service in Afghanistan and Iraq, the
9 awarding of the Afghanistan Campaign medal and the Iraq Campaign medal, and
10 status as currently serving in a branch of the Armed Forces of the United States or as an
11 honorably discharged veteran as the director may require. Upon presentation of the
12 proof of eligibility, payment of a fifteen-dollar fee in addition to the regular registration
13 fees, and presentation of documents that may be required by law, the director shall then
14 issue license plates bearing letters or numbers or a combination thereof as determined
15 by the director, with the words "AFGHANISTAN & IRAQ VETERAN" in place of the
16 words "SHOW-ME STATE". Such plates shall bear the Afghanistan Campaign medal
17 and the Iraq Campaign medal on the left side, with the Afghanistan Campaign medal
18 appearing farthest to the left and the Iraq Campaign medal appearing immediately to
19 the right of the Afghanistan Campaign medal. Notwithstanding the provisions of
20 section 301.144, no additional fee shall be charged for the personalization of license
21 plates issued pursuant to this section. The plates shall be clearly visible at night and
22 shall be aesthetically attractive, as prescribed by section 301.130. There shall be no limit
23 on the number of license plates any person qualified pursuant to this section may obtain
24 so long as each set of license plates issued pursuant to this section is issued for a vehicle
25 owned solely or jointly by such person. License plates issued pursuant to this section
26 shall not be transferable to any other person except that any registered co-owner of the
27 motor vehicle may operate the motor vehicle for the duration of the year licensed in the
28 event of the death of the qualified person.

301.3182. Any person who served as a member of the Armed Forces of the
2 United States in Afghanistan, who was awarded the Afghanistan Campaign medal, may

3 **apply for Afghanistan Veteran vehicle license plates, for any motor vehicle the person**
4 **owns, either solely or jointly, other than an apportioned motor vehicle or a commercial**
5 **motor vehicle licensed in excess of twenty-four thousand pounds gross weight. Any such**
6 **person shall make application for the license plates authorized by this section on a form**
7 **provided by the director of revenue and furnish such proof of service in Afghanistan,**
8 **the awarding of the Afghanistan Campaign medal, and status as currently serving in a**
9 **branch of the Armed Forces of the United States or as an honorably discharged veteran**
10 **as the director may require. Upon presentation of the proof of eligibility, payment of a**
11 **fifteen-dollar fee in addition to the regular registration fees, and presentation of**
12 **documents that may be required by law, the director shall then issue license plates**
13 **bearing letters or numbers or a combination thereof as determined by the director, with**
14 **the words "AFGHANISTAN VETERAN" in place of the words "SHOW-ME STATE".**
15 **Such plates shall bear the Afghanistan Campaign medal on the left side.**
16 **Notwithstanding the provisions of section 301.144, no additional fee shall be charged**
17 **for the personalization of license plates issued pursuant to this section. The plates shall**
18 **be clearly visible at night and shall be aesthetically attractive, as prescribed by section**
19 **301.130. There shall be no limit on the number of license plates any person qualified**
20 **pursuant to this section may obtain so long as each set of license plates issued pursuant**
21 **to this section is issued for a vehicle owned solely or jointly by such person. License**
22 **plates issued pursuant to this section shall not be transferable to any other person except**
23 **that any registered co-owner of the motor vehicle may operate the motor vehicle for the**
24 **duration of the year licensed in the event of the death of the qualified person.**

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