

ORDINANCE NO. _____

AMENDING WHATCOM COUNTY CODE 2.150, WHATCOM COUNTY VETERANS' ADVISORY BOARD, AND CHAPTER 2.152, VETERANS' ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

WHEREAS, Whatcom County Code Chapter 2.150 directs the Whatcom County Veterans' Advisory Board and Chapter 2.152 directs the Whatcom County Veterans' Assistance Program; and

WHEREAS, Whatcom County Code Chapters 2.150 and 2.152 need to include a definition of "Veteran"; and

WHEREAS, other technical corrections to Chapters 2.150 and 2.152 are needed to update the Veterans program and appropriately place the eligibility criteria for "indigence".

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Whatcom County Council that Whatcom County Code Chapters 2.150 and 2.152 shall be amended to include the term "Veteran" as defined in RCW 73.08.005 and RCW 41.04.005.

BE IT FINALLY ORDAINED that technical corrections to Chapters 2.150 as outlined in Exhibit A, and 2.152 as outlined in Exhibit B, be incorporated to update program components and address eligibility status.

ADOPTED this ____ day of _____, 2020.

ATTEST:

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL
WHATCOM COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Dana Brown-Davis, Clerk of the Council

Barry Buchanan, Council Chair

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

WHATCOM COUNTY EXECUTIVE
WHATCOM COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Civil Deputy Prosecutor

Satpal Sidhu, County Executive

() Approved () Denied

Date Signed: _____

1 **EXHIBIT A**

2 **Chapter 2.150**

3 **WHATCOM COUNTY VETERANS' ADVISORY**
4 **BOARD**

5 Sections:

6 **2.150.010 Established.**

7 **2.150.020 Purpose.**

8 ~~**2.150.025 Indigent.**~~

9 **2.150.030 Qualifications.**

10 **2.150.040 Appointment and membership.**

11 **2.150.050 Compensation.**

12
13
14 **2.150.010 Established.**

15 There is hereby established the Whatcom County veterans' advisory board. (Ord. 2006-025 Exh. A).

16
17 **2.150.020 Purpose.**

18 The board is created pursuant to RCW [73.08.035](#) to advise the county council on the needs of local
19 ~~indigent~~ veterans, the resources available to local ~~indigent~~ veterans, and programs that could benefit
20 the needs of local ~~indigent~~ veterans and their families. The county council and county executive shall
21 consult with and solicit recommendations from the advisory board to determine the appropriate
22 services needed for local ~~indigent~~ veterans. (Ord. 2006-025 Exh. A).

23 ~~**2.150.025 Indigent.**~~

24 ~~"Indigent" means a person who is:~~

25 ~~A. Receiving one of the following types of public assistance: temporary assistance for needy families,~~
26 ~~general assistance, poverty-related veteran's benefits, food stamps or food stamp benefits transferred~~
27 ~~electronically, refugee resettlement benefits, Medicaid or supplemental security income;~~

28
29 ~~B. Receiving an annual income, after taxes, of 150 percent or less of the current federally established~~
30 ~~poverty level; or~~

31
32 ~~C. Determined by Whatcom County to be unable to pay reasonable costs for shelter, food, utilities, and~~
33 ~~transportation because his or her available funds are insufficient. (Ord. 2008-021).~~

34
35
36 **2.150.030 Qualifications.**

37 Only veterans who are residents of Whatcom County are eligible to serve as board members. [Veteran](#)
38 [status is defined per RCW 73.08.005 or RCW 41.04.005.](#) No fewer than a number constituting a
39 majority of the board members shall be members from nationally recognized veterans' service
40 organizations. The county council and county executive shall solicit representatives from either local

1 branches of nationally recognized veterans' service organizations or the veterans' community at large
2 to serve on the board. (Ord. 2006-025 Exh. A)

3
4 **2.150.040 Appointment and membership.**

5 Members of the board shall be appointed by the county executive and confirmed by the county council.
6 The board shall consist of up to nine members, appointed to terms of four years. A majority of that
7 number of potential members must be present at any meeting to constitute a quorum for purposes of
8 conducting business. Members may be reappointed and confirmed in the same manner as provided
9 herein for initial appointment. (Ord. 2006-025 Exh. A).

10
11 **2.150.050 Compensation.**

12 Service on the board is voluntary. The county council may provide for reimbursement to board
13 members for appropriate qualified expenses, consistent with county procedures and policies for such
14 reimbursement. (Ord. 2006-025 Exh. A).
15

1 **EXHIBIT B**
2 **Chapter 2.152**

3 **VETERANS' ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

4 Sections:

5 [2.152.010 Veterans' assistance program established.](#)

6 [2.152.020 Program funding.](#)

7 [2.152.030 Administration.](#)

8 [2.152.040 Veterans' advisory board.](#)

9 [2.152.050 Programs and services.](#)

10 [2.152.060 Program policies.](#)

11 [2.152.070 Indigent status and determination.](#)

12 ~~[2.152.080 Effective date.Veteran Status and determination](#)~~

13 ~~[2.152.090 Effective Date](#)~~

14 ~~[2.152.099 100 Severability.](#)~~

15
16 **2.152.010 Veterans' assistance program established.**

17 Pursuant to RCW [73.08.010](#) a Whatcom County veterans' assistance program is hereby established
18 for the purpose of developing, implementing and administering a comprehensive system of services to
19 aid Whatcom County veterans. Programs and services shall include those that meet identified basic
20 needs for individuals, as well as community programs that benefit veterans and their families. (Ord.
21 2011-033 Exh. A).

22
23 **2.152.020 Program funding.**

24 The resources of the veterans' assistance fund, authorized by RCW [73.08.080](#), will provide support for
25 ~~the~~ programs and services delivered to Whatcom County ~~indigent~~ veterans [.who are indigent](#). Funding
26 from other sources may also support the veterans' assistance program and may be used to provide
27 services to ~~nonindigent~~ Whatcom County veterans [who are not indigent](#) as allowed by state law. (Ord.
28 2011-033 Exh. A).

29
30 **2.152.030 Administration.**

31 The health department shall administer the veterans' assistance program under the authority of the
32 county executive. The health department shall establish appropriate services to be delivered under this
33 program with recommendations from the veterans' advisory board pursuant to Chapter [2.150](#) WCC.
34 (Ord. 2011-033 Exh. A).

35
36 **2.152.040 Veterans' advisory board.**

37 The health department shall provide staff to the veterans' advisory board and shall solicit
38 recommendations from the board on appropriate services for local veterans. (Ord. 2011-033 Exh. A).

1 **2.152.050 Programs and services.**

2 ~~A.~~ Programs and services delivered to eligible veterans ~~by~~under funded by the veterans'
3 assistance program will include, but is not limited to the following ~~components~~:

- 4 1. ~~A.~~ Individual financial assistance on a temporary basis to help meet basic needs.
- 5 2. ~~B.~~ Housing eviction prevention assistance.
- 6 3. ~~C.~~ Housing assistance for homeless veterans.
- 7 4. ~~D.~~ BBehavioral health services that are not paid for by other sources.
- 8 5. ~~E.~~ Legal assistance for help in securing non-VA federal benefits, proof of identity,
9 and assistance with noncriminal matters.
- 10 6. ~~F.~~ Social and support services that aid a successful return to the community after active duty.
- 11 7. ~~G.~~ Re-entry services to locally incarcerated veterans to assist with successful return to
12 the community and connection to supportive services.
- 13 8. ~~H.~~ Case management services that include helping veterans navigate the social
14 services system and connect to effective programs and services.
- 15 9. ~~I.~~ Training opportunities for veterans and community professionals working with
16 veterans.
- 17 10. ~~J.~~ Burial assistance as defined in RCW 73.08.070.
- 18 11. Veteran Service Officer (VSO) assistance with filing Veterans Administration (VA)
19 claims, pensions, access to VA healthcare and VSO services.
- 20 12. Information, referrals and assistance for veterans and their families.
- 21 13. Veteran navigator hub services to connect veterans with Whatcom County veteran
22 community.
- 23 14. Other veterans' services as approved by the county executive. (Ord. 2011-033 Exh. A).
24 ~~K. Other veterans' services as approved by the county executive. (Ord. 2011-033 Exh. A).~~

25
26 **2.152.060 Program policies.**

27 Policies for administering the veterans' assistance program shall be established by the health
28 department with recommendations from the veterans' advisory board and approval of the county
29 executive. Changes to these policies will require approval from the county executive.

30
31 Policies will outline program eligibility, access to program services, program staffing, assistance
32 limitations, fraud and abuse, and quality control measures. An appeal process for denials of service
33 also will be addressed in policy and will give final review authority to the health department director.
34 (Ord. 2011-033 Exh. A).

1 **2.152.070 Indigent status and determination.**

2 Pursuant to RCW [73.08.005](#) and ~~Chapter [2.150 WCC](#)~~, assistance to individual veterans supported by
3 the veterans' assistance fund must meet one of three statutory criteria for indigent status. Any
4 subsequent changes to the definition of "indigent" in statute shall be reflected in this policy after
5 approval from the county executive and the county council. (Ord. 2011-033 Exh. A).

6
7 **[2.152.080 Veteran status and determination.](#)**

8 [Veterans shall be defined pursuant to RCW 73.08.005 or RCW 41.04.005. Veterans who are eligible for](#)
9 [direct financial assistance from the Veterans Assistance Fund must meet criteria for indigence.](#)

10
11 **2.152.0980 Effective date.**

12 This chapter shall take effect on ~~[March 1, 2020](#)~~[September 1, 2014](#). (Ord. 2011-033 Exh. A).

13
14 **2.152.099 100 Severability.**

15 If any provision of this chapter or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the
16 remainder of this chapter or the application of the provisions to other persons or circumstances is not
17 affected. (Ord. 2011-033 Exh. A).

18