

EXECUTIVE ORDER NUMBER 42

WHEREAS, Alabama ranks as the third highest state in the nation in the number of persons it deployed to support the Global War on Terrorism with over 30,000 deployed;

WHEREAS, 133 Alabama service members have lost their lives serving their country and their state since September 11, 2001;

WHEREAS, unprecedented numbers of Alabama's service members are experiencing multiple deployments to active theaters of war, separating them from family, community and traditional supports for extended periods of time;

WHEREAS, the adjustment of returning service members and their families to the members' physical and psychological disabilities, including traumatic brain injuries (TBI), post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and other debilitating health conditions pose long-lasting and challenging implications for our state;

WHEREAS, a unified, seamless, and systematic method of accessing services for those who have served our country and our state is needed, particularly in the areas of education, employment, health, homelessness, and legal assistance; and,

WHEREAS, it is necessary to create an interagency planning and coordinating body to develop a coordinated system of services in these areas.

NOW, THEREFORE, based upon these considerations, and other good and valid reasons related thereto, I, Robert Bentley, Governor of the State of Alabama, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the State of Alabama, do hereby establish the Alabama Executive Veterans Network, to be known as AlaVetNet, for service members, veterans and their families.

BE IT ORDERED that the AlaVetNet shall consist of the chief officer, or his or her designee, of each of the following participating agencies and organizations:

1. Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs;
2. Alabama Department of Mental Health;
3. Alabama National Guard;
4. Alabama Department of Labor;
5. Serve Alabama;
6. The Office of the Attorney General;
7. Alabama Department of Education;
8. Alabama Department of Corrections;
9. Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs;
10. Alabama Department of Post-Secondary Education;
11. Alabama Commission on Higher Education;
12. Alabama Department of Public Health;
13. Alabama Medicaid Agency;

14. Alabama Department of Human Resources;
15. Alabama Department of Transportation;
16. Alabama Law Enforcement Agency;
17. The Office of the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Alabama; and,
18. Additional members as the Commissioners of the Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs and the Alabama Department of Mental Health deem necessary.

BE IT FURTHER ORDERED that the participants in the AlaVetNet shall be inclusive and reflect the racial, gender, geographic, urban/rural, and economic diversity of the state.

BE IT FURTHER ORDERED that the Commissioners of the Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs and the Alabama Department of Mental Health shall serve as the co-chairs of the AlaVetNet.

BE IT FURTHER ORDERED that the AlaVetNet shall study and evaluate all services in the state, directed at improving the well-being of service members, veterans and their families in the areas of education, employment, health, homelessness, and legal assistance. The AlaVetNet shall develop a long-range plan, reviewed annually, for a comprehensive statewide system of services to service members, veterans and their families, which, to the extent practicable, is derived from known best practices. The AlaVetNet shall provide a copy of the plan and a detailed summary of any progress toward implementation of the plan to the Governor by June 30, 2014.

BE IT FURTHER ORDERED that the AlaVetNet shall strive for interagency collaboration, public participation, and mutual sharing of information to facilitate policy decisions and the implementation of a plan for a comprehensive statewide system of care and services for service members, veterans and their families in need.

BE IT FURTHER ORDERED that the AlaVetNet shall define the roles and responsibilities of all AlaVetNet participants. The AlaVetNet shall adopt rules for the internal operation of the AlaVetNet and for governing its manner of conducting its business. The AlaVetNet shall meet at least quarterly, and the meetings shall be open to the public. The AlaVetNet, and any committees of the AlaVetNet, may meet via teleconference. All AlaVetNet members shall serve without compensation.

BE IT FURTHER ORDERED that the Advisory/Working Committees for Education, Employment, Healthcare, Homelessness, and Legal Assistance may include representatives from within the twelve (12) Regional Planning Commissions of the state. The Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs and the Alabama Department of Mental Health shall be responsible for the general administration, supervision, and monitoring of all AlaVetNet activities.

BE IT FURTHER ORDERED that this Executive Order become effective immediately upon signing and shall remain in force until such time as it is modified or rescinded by the Governor.

DONE AND ORDERED this 10 day of December, 2013.



Robert Bentley
Robert Bentley
Governor

Attested

Jim Bennett
Jim Bennett
Secretary of State