

REPORT OF THE CHIEF LEGISLATIVE ANALYST

DATE: February 14, 2013

TO: Honorable Members of the Jobs and Business Development Committee

FROM: Gerry F. Miller *KEK for*
Chief Legislative Analyst

Council File No.: 12-1689
Assignment No.: 12-12-0992

Creation of a Veteran Affairs Coordinator Position

SUMMARY

On November 2, 2012, the City Council adopted Motion (Garcetti-Rosendahl) which instructed City departments to report relative to the establishment of a Veteran Affairs Coordinator position. The Motion instructed the City Administrative Officer (CAO), with the assistance of the Community Development Department (CDD), Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA), and the Office of the Chief Legislative Analyst (CLA) to report with the required Council actions to create a Veteran Affairs Coordinator position, including, position authority, budgetary actions, and recommended department in which to house the position. Additionally, the Motion instructed CDD to work with the Workforce Investment Board (WIB) and report to Council with a recommended service level for the WorkSource Center System (WCS) and with a recommendation for co-locating specialized military social workers within the WCS. Subsequent to this Council request, Councilman Garcetti's Office requested our Office to coordinate the information provided by departments and to prepare the report to Council. This report contains input from CDD, CAO, LAHSA, the LA Veterans Collaborative and information provided by the American Community Survey- U.S. Census.

According to the American Community Survey, in 2011, there were approximately 330,000 veterans in Los Angeles County. Approximately 10 percent were unemployed and nearly 12 percent were homeless. The Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) reports of the 23,000 homeless individuals in the City, 3,267 were homeless in 2011¹. The LA Veterans Collaborative reports that in 2014, nearly 30,000 veterans are expected to return to California with a majority returning to Southern California. Upon return from military service, many veterans may not only face difficulty finding employment and housing but also face problems accessing mental health services, educational opportunities, military benefits and other resources.

The City's current efforts to address the needs of veterans include the establishment of a Veterans Employment and Training Services (VETS) Subcommittee by the WIB to enhance workforce-related services for veterans. In addition, the Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles (HACLA), the Los Angeles Housing Department (LAHD) and LAHSA provide housing services to veterans through the Veteran Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) program using Housing and Urban Development funds. Lastly, in 2012, the Council allocated \$45,000 in CD 13 AB 1290 Funds to provide general support services for veterans. Upon review of these services, our Office has determined that a more coordinated approach that serves as a single-point-of-contact would be beneficial to more effectively deliver services to veterans.

In order to more effectively serve veterans, CDD has recommended the establishment of a Veteran Affairs Coordinator who would be responsible for developing a comprehensive strategy to address the needs of veterans, advocating on behalf veterans, preparing and developing legislation related to veterans, and addressing the needs of disabled veterans and other vulnerable veteran populations. Inasmuch as the qualifications and expertise for this position are unique, CDD recommends that the position be established as an exempt position that is partially funded with WIA funds for workforce-related activities and partially funded with other sources to address non-workforce-related activities. We recommend that the position be established in CDD, establish a 10 percent service level target for veterans and require the integration of military social workers in the upcoming WorkSource Center Operator procurement process. We also recommend that CDD report to Council with a recommended funding level for the VAC. Lastly, we recommend that the City Administrative Officer be instructed to identify a funding source to expand the scope of the VAC beyond allowable workforce development

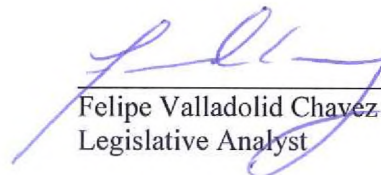
¹ Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority – 2011 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count Report.

activities. As requested, other options to establish a veteran affairs position through the Civil Service process or within the Mayor's Office are described further in the Discussion Section of this report. Approval of the recommendations listed below will result in no impact to the General Fund.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the City Council:

- 1) Authorize by Resolution Authority, a new position, Veteran Affairs Coordinator (VAC), within the Community Development Department, to be funded with Workforce Investment Act (WIA) funds, subject to review and approval by the Personnel Department as to Civil Service classification, and allocation. The VAC will assist veterans and their eligible spouses and dependents to access services and entitlements due them for their military service;
- 2) Request the WIB and instruct CDD to:
 - a. Identify a funding level for the workforce-related activities, duties and responsibilities for the VAC;
 - b. Include funding for the VAC in the Year 14 WIB Annual Plan for FY 2013-14;
 - c. Require a service level target of 10 percent for veterans in the upcoming WorkSource Center Operator procurement process;
 - d. Require specialized military social workers within the WorkSource Center System as part of its upcoming WorkSource Center Operator procurement process;
- 3) Instruct the CAO to identify a permanent funding source to expand the scope of the service of the VAC beyond allowable workforce development activities;
- 4) Instruct the CAO, with the assistance of CDD and the WIB, to define by funding source, the VAC specifications which include general duties, specific tasks, responsibilities and qualifications desired; and,
- 5) Request the Mayor's Office to include funding for the proposed VAC position in the Fiscal Year 2013-14 Mayor's Budget.


Felipe Valladolid Chavez
Legislative Analyst

Attachments: 1) Discussion Section
2) Motion (Garcetti-Rosendahl)

GFM:fvc

DISCUSSION

As requested by the Council, this report includes background information with respect to veteran demographics in Los Angeles provided by LAHSA, the Los Angeles Veteran Collaborative, and provided by the American Community Survey and the U.S. Census. Additionally, listed below are alternative options for the establishment of a VAC and a proposal by CDD for the establishment of the VAC, including, general duties and responsibilities, and a recommended department in which to house the position.

American Community Survey - U.S. Census Bureau

According to the United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey, in 2011 there were 327,987 veterans in Los Angeles County. Of these, nearly 35,000 were unemployed and nearly 10,000 were homeless in 2011. Most veterans in the same year were over 34 years of age and approximately one-third had a Bachelor of Arts degree or higher. Table 1 demonstrates the demographic characteristics of the veteran population in Los Angeles. Additionally, the Los Angeles Veterans Collaborative reports that in 2014 nearly 30,000 veterans are expected to return to California with a majority returning to Southern California.

Table 1 - U.S. Census Bureau General Veteran Demographics- 2011

	Los Angeles	California	United States
Veteran Population	327,987	1,910,994	21,458,427
Age: 18-34 years	9.3 %	9.2 %	8.2 %
Age: 35-64 years	45.3 %	45.4 %	48.8 %
Age: 65 years and over	42.7 %	45.3 %	43.0 %
High School Graduate	20.1 %	20.2 %	29.7 %
Some college or AA Deg	41.8 %	42.4 %	36.3 %
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	31.2 %	31.5 %	26.3 %
Unemployment Rate	10.5 %	11.4 %	9.1 %
Below Poverty Status	7.7 %	7.1 %	7.0 %
Disability – Any	24.7 %	25.4 %	26.2 %

Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority

According to the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA), there are currently over 9,000 homeless veterans in Los Angeles County. LAHSA further reports that in January 2011, of the 24,000 homeless persons in the City, over 3,000 were veterans. Table 2 below displays the number of homeless veterans per region in Los Angeles County.

Table 2 – Los Angeles County Homeless Veterans by Region

Region	No. of Veterans
Antelope Valley	90
San Fernando Valley	554
West Los Angeles	1,004
South Bay/Harbor	2,521
South Los Angeles	1,069
East Los Angeles	856
Metro	1,656
San Gabriel Valley	381
Total	8,131

Options for Establishment of a Veteran Affairs Position

Exempt Position

The Council may establish by Resolution Authority a new exempt position of Veteran Affairs Coordinator. CDD recommends that the proposed position be housed within CDD (or successor department) and that it be partially funded by Workforce Investment Act (WIA) funds and partially funded by other sources to be identified to allow for the provision of multiple services beyond workforce-related services. CDD also

recommends that the Council establish a 10 percent veteran service level target and that CDD and the WIB be required to include specialized military social workers within the WorkSource Center System as part of its anticipated procurement process

Council-Controlled Department

To establish a new position in a Council-controlled department, the Classification Division in the Personnel Department must first develop class specifications. Such specifications should include general duties, specific tasks, responsibilities and qualifications desired. Specifications must also include the qualifications that are commonly required of all employees. Once, the Classification Division completes this task, a communication from the General Manager, Personnel Department is submitted to the Civil Service Commission recommending adoption of any proposed new class and adoption of the related Class Specification. Following adoption by the Civil Service Commission, the Personnel Department requests the City Administrative Officer (CAO) to take the steps necessary to establish a salary for the new class. The CAO then forwards its salary recommendation to the Executive Employee Relations Committee (EERC), which requests that an Ordinance be prepared and transmitted to the Council establishing a salary for the new class as recommended. Council may provide employment authority in a City department such as CDD, the Housing Department, Department of Disability, or any other department deemed appropriate, by Resolution Authority on an interim basis or through the City's budget process as a Regular or Resolution Authority position.

Mayor's Office

The Council may request the Mayor's Office to establish a new position in the Mayor's Office. The Mayor could use the existing class of Mayoral Aide I through VII and then use "Veteran Affairs Coordinator" as a working title similar to establishment of the Gang Reduction and Youth Development Coordinator.

CDD Recommended Proposal for VAC Position

CDD reports that it currently administers the implementation and coordination of workforce development services for veterans with existing staff using WIA funds. However, CDD also reports expanding the scope of the service of the VAC beyond allowable workforce development activities would require the use of non-WIA funds.

Current and Proposed CDD/WIB Veteran Services

CDD reports that in response to the special needs of unemployed veterans and the growing number of veterans returning from the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, the WIB established the Veterans Employment and Training Services (VETS) Subcommittee. The Subcommittee has made the following recommendations to further address the needs of veterans to the WIB: 1) provide additional Workforce Development Services (WDS) staff development training to serve the veteran population; 2) dedicate additional resources and personnel, and collaborate with other agencies; 3) secure and provide additional funding to underwrite a pilot project to use Master Degree in Social Work (MSW) candidates, under the supervision of a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, to serve as Workforce Development Navigators for veterans in the WDS centers; and 4) sponsor a high-profile conference to highlight and raise awareness relative to veteran's workforce development issues.

The WIB Annual Plan Year 13 (PY) 2012-13 identifies \$20,000 for a symposium (Crossroads) to engage workforce decisions in critical discussion about services to veterans. This will serve as the basis for workforce policy and program development for veterans in the City. The Crossroads event is tentatively scheduled for March 2013. In addition, the WIB Annual Plan Year 13 identifies \$230,000 to underwrite workforce development services to veterans. CDD indicates that these services will be procured subsequent to the release of the WorkSource Center Request for Proposals (RFP) in the Spring of 2013.

CDD Recommended Service Level Target

According to CDD, for the Program Year (PY) 2012-13, the WIB requested that the CDD implement a 10 percent service level target to People with Disabilities in the WDS. Prior to this requirement, the WDS averaged an approximate 2.3 percent service level for this group. However, at the mid-point of the program year, the service level increased to 5.3 percent. Similarly, in PY 2011-12, the WDS achieved a 6.1 percent service level for veterans, but by mid-point of the year, the system essentially matched that rate at 6 percent. In raw numbers, the system served 230 veterans in PY 11-12 and has served 168 veterans in the current program year (six months) and anticipates that the number of veterans served will increase by the end of the current program year. The CDD

therefore recommends that a 10 percent service level target be included in the upcoming procurement request, and in subsequent contract periods.

Department in which to House the VAC

CDD recommends that the VAC be established within CDD and that it be tasked with assisting veterans (and their eligible spouses and dependents) to access services, resources and the entitlements due them for their military service to the country. CDD also recommends that the position be partially funded by WIA funds to address eligible workforce related needs and partially by other funding revenue streams to address activities that are not workforce-related such as housing, business development, mental health, education, and access to benefits and other resources.

Community Development Department Proposed Activities for the Veteran Affairs Coordinator

CDD recommends that, at minimum, the VAC focus on the activities listed below to address the needs of veterans and their families. We have included a recommendation to instruct the CAO to work with CDD and the WIB to further define within each category, the tasks, duties and responsibilities by funding source.

1) Comprehensive Strategy

Develop a comprehensive strategy to create partnerships among governmental, non-profit, faith-based, and community-based organizations to enhance access, coordination, and delivery of health and human services, as well as economic and workforce development services, to veterans, military personnel, and their families. This may be accomplished by increasing awareness of educational and employment opportunities available in the local community, through the City's WDS, or through the local community colleges and adult education schools.

Encourage organizations to provide job training and employment to veterans. Partner with veteran services organizations to host seminars, health fairs, job fairs, and other programs and events, which recognize the value of the military service provided by veterans, as well as connect them to services/entitlements which they earned through their military service.

2) Advocacy

Advocate on behalf of veterans and their families and assist them in obtaining services and benefits. The VAC would also facilitate applications by veterans and their families for compensation, pensions, hospitalizations, and other benefits, and connect veterans with services and benefits available at Federal, State, and City agencies. Seek public and private resources for additional assistance to veterans and their families while they readjust to civilian life and search for education and employment opportunities.

3) Governmental Liaison

Serve as a liaison to governmental bodies such as the Mayor, City Council, and Neighborhood Councils, to advise elected officials on issues affecting veterans and their families. Provide reports from veteran service organizations, as well as make recommendations to assist in the efforts to advance legislation beneficial to veterans and their families, while working to defeat legislation detrimental to them. Prepare, examine and propose federal, state and local, legislation and/or administrative action benefiting veterans and their families.

4) Vulnerable Populations

Work with governmental, private, and non-profit organizations to develop and expand programs that address "vulnerable populations" issues such as homelessness among the veteran population, and address the needs of people with disabilities among veterans.

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JOBS & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

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MOTION

PERSONNEL & ANIMAL WELFARE

BUDGET & FINANCE

According to the California Department of Veteran Affairs (CalVet), California is home to nearly two million veterans, of which, 346,000 live in Los Angeles County. As the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan scale down, veterans returning home to Los Angeles could face significant personal and economic challenges.

The City's high unemployment rate, compounded with other economic difficulties, require that the City leverage its resources with those provided by CalVet and federal agencies to maximize job placement, housing assistance and other services for war veterans. Workforce development funding has substantially decreased over the last few years. It is therefore necessary to establish a dedicated effort to coordinate employment and housing services for veterans and to leverage any City resources with colleges, faith-based organizations, and other stakeholders. By maximizing its resources and outreach efforts, the City could mitigate the potential for long-term unemployment, instability, and homelessness.

Working with the Workforce Investment Board, the City adopts service targets for its WorkSource Center System; however, a service target has never been established for veterans. In order to be strategic in addressing the needs of veterans, the City should establish a targeted level of service for this population. In addition, to better support veterans the City should establish a Veterans Affairs Coordinator position and seek to co-locate specialized military social workers within our WorkSource Center System.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the City Administrative Officer, with the assistance of the Community Development Department, the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) and Office of the Chief Legislative Analyst, be instructed to report to Council, in 30 days, with the required Council actions to create a Veteran Affairs Coordinator, including, position authority, budgetary actions, and recommended department to house the position.

I FURTHER MOVE that the Community Development Department work with the Workforce Investment Board to report back to Council with a recommended target for a veteran service level for the WorkSource Center System.

I FURTHER MOVE that the Community Development Department work with the Workforce Investment Board to report back to Council with a recommendation for co-locating specialized military social workers within the WorkSource Center System.

ADOPTED

NOV 12 2012

LOS ANGELES CITY COUNCIL

[Signature]
OCT 24 2012

PRESENTED BY:

[Signature]

ERIC GARCETTI
Councilmember, 13th District

SECONDED BY:

[Signature]

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