

DIRECTOR OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

GENERAL SUMMARY

The primary function of the job is to assume responsibility for all activities, functions, and policies related to the assigned department, including the department's budget and staff. This position provides strategic direction, under the general guidance of the Grand Traverse County Veterans Affairs Committee, and consistent with the County's overall mission and policies. This position is responsible for implementing the policies and procedures to aid the Veterans of the armed forces, their families and/or survivors. The Director of Veterans Affairs performs the administrative and technical duties required to establish and maintain a program to assist Veterans in obtaining educational, financial, social services and other benefits available through the Federal, State and/or local legislation.

Employees must meet the minimum requirements, conditions of employment, and be able to successfully perform all essential duties and responsibilities with or without reasonable accommodations.

This position may require irregular hours. May also be required to work on-call in an emergency. This position may require travel by the employee in the employee's own vehicle.

PRIMARY DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES (may include but are not limited to the following)

- Plans, develops, and implements policies and procedures necessary to assist Veterans of the armed forces, their families, or survivors in obtaining educational, financial, social services, and other benefits available either through the Federal, State, or local legislation or from private organizations.
- Supervises and directs staff in the interviewing of applicants seeking the various types of benefits available to Veterans, their families, and/or survivors and assists in handling complex and/or unusual matters.
- Serves as the liaison between the department and the Veteran's Affairs Committee, Service clubs, Grand Traverse County administration, local units, and the public.
- Supervises all staff of the department, including interviewing and selecting of job applicants, training, overseeing work, participating in disciplinary decisions and actions, and establishing and evaluating appropriate performance standards in accordance with County objectives.
- Assists in determining whether the Veteran qualifies for assistance from various Federal, State and County resources, prepare claims with supporting documents, and arranges for Veterans to apply to those agencies that provide services for them.
- Provides comprehensive customer service, including delivery of accurate, prompt, and courteous assistance on complex policies, guidelines, and standard practices to internal and external customers, both verbally and in writing. Investigates and resolves complaints and concerns from customers and constituents.
- Directs, manages, administers, monitors other veterans' groups, and oversees all operations and activities of the department in a manner that conforms to the mission, goals, and objectives of the County.

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- Ensures compliance with statutory responsibilities and directives; evaluates and communicates the impact of potential legal or regulatory changes on the department and the County.
- Develops strategic plans for the department, including evaluating operations and functions, developing business plans and strategic initiatives, developing, and implementing new procedures and policies for improvement, assessing staffing needs, and analyzing financial and operations data.
- Prepares the annual budget for the department; reviews financial reports to ensure adherence to budget; prepares budget adjustments; reviews and authorizes accounts payable/receivable activities; manages assigned accounts and funds.
- Manages contracts with vendors and contractors. Develops requests for proposal/price packages, selects vendors/contracts, specifies contract terms, provides direction to, and oversees/evaluates the work of vendors/contractors. Interview and assist veterans, their survivors, and dependents to secure benefits under programs aiding veterans such as service-connected disability, non-service-connected disability pension, survivor's pension, home loans, death benefits, discharge upgrades, and employment assistance.
- Researches, develops, advises applicants, and writes appeals of Department of Veteran Affairs' decisions to be presented to the Board of Veterans Appeals (BVA) and the Court of Appeals for Veteran claims (CAVC).
- Manage, monitor, oversee County Veterans Burial program to provide allowance for burials and grave marker installation for wartime veterans and their dependents.
- Prepare VA Committee agenda, minutes, and Annual Report.
- Develop and oversee all strategic and tactical marketing initiatives and plans that include print, online, and social networking opportunities.
- Manage the content of County Veterans' Affairs website and subsidiary sites to ensure that they are current, dynamic, and relevant.
- Manage overall fundraising & grant efforts, documenting payments and expenditures, optimizing the grant process, preparing progress reports, and ensuring compliance with grant regulations.
- Ability to maintain confidentiality of sensitive and personal client information.

EDUCATION, FORMAL TRAINING, AND EXPERIENCE (minimum requirements)

- Bachelor's Degree in a relevant field (Business Administration, Social Work, etc.)
- Four to six years of directly relevant, Veterans counseling work and/or any equivalent combination of experience and training that would provide the knowledge, ability, skills to meet the responsibilities of this position.

CERTIFICATIONS, LICENSES

- National Association of County Veteran Service Officers (NACVSO) accreditations from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' Office of General Counsel. Personal Identity Verification card issued by USDVA to access VA databases as dictated by agency regulatory rules.
- Maintain 16 Continuing Education Units per year.

CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT (minimum requirements - legal or contractual pre-employment obligations and/or requirements, such as drug testing, background check, etc.)

A background check may be required initially and periodically for an individual hired, transferred, reclassified, promoted, or currently working in this job. Appointment to or continued employment in this job is contingent upon a satisfactory background check which may include but is not limited to confirmation of a persons' identity; review of criminal conviction records; verification of educational degree, license, or certificate required for the position; review of Department of Motor Vehicles records; Department of Justice fingerprint scan; and/or drug and alcohol testing as required and allowable by law.

A satisfactory background check is defined as the absence of a criminal history record which bears a demonstrable relationship to the applicant's or employee's suitability to perform the required duties and responsibilities of the position.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

Work involves the development of new guidelines and techniques, establishing criteria or developing new information where guidelines may not exist for all situations and considerable independent judgment, personal discretion, and resourcefulness are needed to interpret circumstances, and to make decision in major areas where there may be uncertainty in approach, methodology, and interpretation. Errors at this level could lead to extraordinary costs, major litigation, destruction of property, loss of funding, or failure of the agency to accomplish its mission and may require the intervention of the County's senior executives to resolve.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ABILITIES, COMPETENCIES (minimum requirements)

- Advanced proficiency in English grammar, spelling, punctuation, and simple mathematical functions such as addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, percentages, ratios, etc.
- Advanced knowledge of Federal, State, and local legislation, regulations, and ordinances relevant to the department; considerable knowledge of Federal, State and local legislation related to the special benefits and services for Veterans and their dependents
- Considerable knowledge of the methods, practices, policies, and procedures for obtaining Veterans benefits and services
- Ability to direct a Veterans counseling and assistance service and to supervise assigned personnel
- Knowledge of governmental accounting, budgeting, financial management, and procurement
- Thorough knowledge of County functions, organization, and the department's role and relationships with other agencies/jurisdictions
- Knowledge and ability to use a personal computer to prepare reports, maintain records, search for and compile data

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- Advanced interpersonal skills necessary to develop and maintain effective and appropriate working relationships with customers, co-workers, and representatives of other agencies
- Knowledge of supervisory and employee management principles, as well as knowledge of labor relationship and union contract negotiations
- Knowledge of applicable employee rights, protections, and avenues of appeal
- Skill in assigning, prioritizing, monitoring, and reviewing work assignments
- Skill in mentoring and training employees with varying educational backgrounds and aptitudes
- Skill in crisis management, including the management of critical incidents
- Ability to work in a unionized environment; ability to negotiate and facilitate labor/management issues; ability to make tough personnel decisions firmly, fairly, and respectfully
- Ability to take initiative and drive organizational excellence
- Ability to develop and execute strategic plans, champion, and manage change, and articulate County leadership's priorities
- Ability to represent the County appropriately and effectively at a variety of community events and activities in support of positive public relations initiatives, and develop liaison relationships between the community and the County
- Ability to persuade others to gain concurrence or to resolve problems and gain cooperation
- Ability to interpret and explain complex policies, processes, regulations, and applicable laws in layman's terms
- Ability to consistently demonstrate sound ethics and judgment
- Ability to think analytically and apply sound judgment, solve problems, make effective decisions, and act with integrity
- Ability to facilitate meetings effectively and efficiently
- Ability to accurately organize and maintain paper documents and electronic files
- Ability to maintain the confidentiality of information and professional boundaries
- Ability to use County resources effectively and efficiently