

House Engrossed

veterans' court fund; grant program

State of Arizona
House of Representatives
Fifty-seventh Legislature
Second Regular Session
2026

HOUSE BILL 2960

AN ACT

AMENDING TITLE 12, CHAPTER 1, ARTICLE 1, ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES, BY
ADDING SECTION 12-119.06; AMENDING TITLE 41, CHAPTER 11, ARTICLE 1,
ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES, BY ADDING SECTION 41-1610.04; RELATING TO
VETERANS' SERVICES.

(TEXT OF BILL BEGINS ON NEXT PAGE)

1 Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Arizona:

2 Section 1. Title 12, chapter 1, article 1, Arizona Revised
3 Statutes, is amended by adding section 12-119.06, to read:

4 12-119.06. Veterans' specialty court grant program; veterans'
5 treatment court fund; administration; purpose;
6 annual reports

7 A. THE VETERANS' SPECIALTY COURT GRANT PROGRAM IS ESTABLISHED FOR
8 MUNICIPALITIES AND COUNTIES IN THIS STATE TO ESTABLISH A VETERANS' COURT
9 PROGRAM. THE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS SHALL ADMINISTER THE
10 VETERANS' SPECIALTY COURT GRANT PROGRAM. THE SUPREME COURT SHALL ADOPT
11 RULES AS NECESSARY AND ESTABLISH CRITERIA TO IMPLEMENT THIS SECTION.
12 GRANT MONIES MAY BE USED TO ESTABLISH NEW VETERANS' COURT PROGRAMS AND TO
13 EXPAND AND ENHANCE EXISTING VETERANS' COURT PROGRAMS ESTABLISHED PURSUANT
14 TO SECTION 22-601.

15 B. THE VETERANS' SPECIALTY COURT GRANT PROGRAM SHALL:

16 1. SUPPORT THE REHABILITATION AND REINTEGRATION OF VETERANS AS
17 CONTRIBUTING MEMBERS OF THEIR COMMUNITIES.

18 2. PROMOTE COLLABORATION AMONG PROSECUTORS, DEFENSE COUNSELS,
19 JUDGES, COMMUNITY-BASED SUPPORT ORGANIZATIONS IN THIS STATE, THE UNITED
20 STATES DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS'
21 SERVICES.

22 3. DEVELOP AND OVERSEE INDIVIDUALIZED TREATMENT PLANS TO ADDRESS
23 THE UNDERLYING CAUSES OF JUSTICE-INVOLVED VETERANS' BEHAVIOR, INCLUDING
24 ANY OF THE FOLLOWING:

25 (a) POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER.

26 (b) TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY.

27 (c) ANGER MANAGEMENT.

28 (d) DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION.

29 (e) ALCOHOL AND DRUG ABUSE TREATMENT.

30 C. THE VETERANS' TREATMENT COURT FUND IS ESTABLISHED CONSISTING OF
31 LEGISLATIVE APPROPRIATIONS. THE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS SHALL
32 ADMINISTER THE FUND. MONIES IN THE FUND ARE CONTINUOUSLY APPROPRIATED.
33 THE FUND MAY BE USED TO PROVIDE MONIES TO MUNICIPALITIES AND COUNTIES IN
34 THIS STATE TO ESTABLISH A VETERANS' COURT PROGRAM PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION
35 AND TO EXPAND AND ENHANCE EXISTING VETERANS' COURT PROGRAMS ESTABLISHED
36 PURSUANT TO SECTION 22-601. APPLICANTS SHALL SUBMIT AN APPLICATION ON A
37 FORM PRESCRIBED BY THE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS. FUND MONIES
38 SHALL BE AWARDED ANNUALLY TO GRANTEEES AND SHALL BE USED FOR ANY RELEVANT
39 ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS, INCLUDING HIRING PERSONNEL TO ESTABLISH, MAINTAIN OR
40 ENHANCE A VETERANS' COURT PROGRAM.

41 D. THE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS SHALL COLLABORATE WITH
42 COUNTY ATTORNEYS, MUNICIPAL PROSECUTORS, PUBLIC DEFENDERS AND ANY RELEVANT
43 STAKEHOLDERS TO ESTABLISH THE BEST PRACTICES AND STANDARDS FOR THE
44 ADMINISTRATION OF VETERANS' COURT PROGRAMS AND DATA COLLECTION IN THIS
45 STATE.

1 E. ON OR BEFORE DECEMBER 31 OF EACH YEAR, EACH GRANTEE SHALL SUBMIT
2 A REPORT TO THE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS THAT INCLUDES ALL OF
3 THE FOLLOWING:

4 1. THE NUMBER OF VETERANS SERVED, SEPARATED BY TYPE OF OFFENSE,
5 DEMOGRAPHICS AND MILITARY SERVICE HISTORY.

6 2. ARREST AND RECIDIVISM RATES AMONG VETERANS' COURT PROGRAM
7 PARTICIPANTS.

8 3. VETERANS' COURT PROGRAM COMPLETION RATES AND PARTICIPANT
9 OUTCOMES.

10 4. USE OF MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT SERVICES.

11 5. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR VETERANS' COURT PROGRAM AND VETERANS'
12 SPECIALTY COURT GRANT PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT.

13 F. ON OR BEFORE MARCH 1 OF EACH YEAR, THE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF
14 THE COURTS SHALL SUBMIT A COMPREHENSIVE ANNUAL REPORT TO THE GOVERNOR, THE
15 PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE AND THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
16 THAT ANALYZES THE DATA SUBMITTED PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION E OF THIS SECTION
17 AND THAT SUMMARIZES AND INCLUDES ALL OF THE FOLLOWING:

18 1. STATEWIDE DATA ON VETERANS' COURT PROGRAMS THAT INCORPORATE
19 GRANTEE-REPORTED METRICS ON PARTICIPATION, RECIDIVISM AND TREATMENT
20 OUTCOMES.

21 2. CHALLENGES AND BARRIERS TO VETERANS' COURT PROGRAM
22 IMPLEMENTATION, BASED ON GRANTEE FEEDBACK AND DATA.

23 3. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ENHANCING THE IDENTIFICATION AND ASSESSMENT
24 OF VETERANS WITHIN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM OF THIS STATE, INCLUDING
25 DATA COLLECTION PROTOCOLS AND BEST PRACTICES FOR CROSS-AGENCY
26 COLLABORATION AND DATA SHARING AMONG FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL
27 STAKEHOLDERS.

28 4. POLICY AND FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPROVE VETERANS' COURT
29 PROGRAM AND VETERANS' SPECIALTY COURT GRANT PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS AND
30 SUSTAINABILITY.

31 Sec. 2. Title 41, chapter 11, article 1, Arizona Revised Statutes,
32 is amended by adding section 41-1610.04, to read:

33 41-1610.04. Department of veterans' services; veteran
34 identification; anticipated release;
35 confidentiality; annual report; definition

36 A. NOTWITHSTANDING ANY OTHER LAW, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL MAKE
37 REASONABLE EFFORTS TO IDENTIFY INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE VETERANS
38 IN THIS STATE.

39 B. ON A MONTHLY BASIS AND TO THE EXTENT PRACTICABLE, THE STATE
40 DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS SHALL PROVIDE TO THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS'
41 SERVICES A LIST OF INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE IDENTIFIED AS VETERANS
42 AND WHO HAVE AN ANTICIPATED RELEASE DATE WITHIN NINETY DAYS. THE
43 INFORMATION SHARED SHALL BE LIMITED TO THE MINIMUM INFORMATION NECESSARY
44 TO IDENTIFY THE INDIVIDUAL AND FACILITATE OUTREACH.

1 C. INFORMATION SHARED PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION B OF THIS SECTION IS
2 CONFIDENTIAL, IS NOT SUBJECT TO PUBLIC DISCLOSURE AND SHALL BE USED SOLELY
3 FOR THE PURPOSE OF ENABLING THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' SERVICES TO
4 PROVIDE BENEFITS COUNSELING, ASSIST WITH ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATIONS AND
5 PROVIDE INFORMATION REGARDING AVAILABLE FEDERAL, STATE OR LOCAL VETERANS'
6 BENEFITS AND SERVICES.

7 D. THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' SERVICES SHALL MAKE A REASONABLE
8 EFFORT TO CONTACT INDIVIDUALS IDENTIFIED ON THE LIST BEFORE THE
9 INDIVIDUAL'S RELEASE FROM INCARCERATION AND FOR A REASONABLE PERIOD
10 FOLLOWING THE INDIVIDUAL'S RELEASE FROM INCARCERATION FOR THE PURPOSES
11 DESCRIBED IN THIS SECTION.

12 E. THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS AND THE DEPARTMENT OF
13 VETERANS' SERVICES SHALL ENTER INTO A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING TO
14 ESTABLISH PROCEDURES FOR SECURE DATA SHARING CONSISTENT WITH APPLICABLE
15 STATE AND FEDERAL CONFIDENTIALITY LAWS.

16 F. ON OR BEFORE DECEMBER 31, 2026 AND EACH YEAR THEREAFTER, THE
17 STATE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS, IN COORDINATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF
18 VETERANS' SERVICES, SHALL SUBMIT A REPORT TO THE GOVERNOR, THE PRESIDENT
19 OF THE SENATE AND THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES REGARDING
20 THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS SECTION DURING THE PRECEDING FISCAL YEAR. THE
21 REPORT MUST INCLUDE DATA ON ALL OF THE FOLLOWING:

22 1. THE NUMBER OF CURRENTLY INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS IDENTIFIED AS
23 VETERANS AS OF JUNE 30 OF THE PRECEDING FISCAL YEAR.

24 2. THE TOTAL NUMBER OF VETERANS WHO WERE ANTICIPATED FOR RELEASE
25 FROM INCARCERATION AND WHO WERE REFERRED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS'
26 SERVICES DURING THE PRECEDING FISCAL YEAR.

27 3. THE NUMBER OF VETERANS WHO WERE ASSISTED WITH INITIATION,
28 REINSTATEMENT OR COORDINATION OF VETERANS BENEFITS BEFORE OR AFTER RELEASE
29 FROM INCARCERATION DURING THE PRECEDING FISCAL YEAR.

30 G. FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS SECTION, "VETERAN" HAS THE SAME MEANING
31 PRESCRIBED IN SECTION 41-601.