

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS, VETERANS
AFFAIRS AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

06/29/2026-REPORTED OUT TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES AND JUDICIARY

BILL NO. 36-0279

Thirty-Sixth Legislature of the Virgin Islands

May 8, 2026

An act amending title 3 Virgin Islands Code by creating the position of Women Veterans Coordinator within the Office of Veterans Affairs

PROPOSED BY: Senator Marise C. James
Sponsors: Avery A. Lewis, Angel L. Bolques, Jr. and
Dwayne M. DeGraff
Co-sponsors: Ray Fonseca and Novelle E. Francis, Jr.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the Virgin Islands:

SECTION 1. Title 3 Virgin Islands Code, chapter 1, is amended by inserting section 8d to read:

“§8d. Office of Veterans Affairs; Women Veterans Coordinator

(a) The position of Virgin Islands Women Veterans Coordinator is created within the Office of Veterans Affairs. The coordinator shall be a veteran as defined in section 8a of this chapter and an active member of the National Association of State Women Veterans Coordinators at all times while in the position. The responsibilities of the coordinator, who shall work under the direction of the Director of Veterans Affairs, include the following:

(1) conduct outreach and provide assistance to women veterans and their spouses and dependents regarding veteran’s benefits and other benefit programs that provide services and resources to women veterans and their spouses and dependents.

1 (2) provide assistance in applying for federal and state benefits and aid that
2 women veterans and their spouses and dependents may be entitled to and helping appeal
3 any denial of benefits and aid.

4 (3) develop and distribute informational material for women veterans and their
5 spouses and dependents regarding veterans' benefits and other benefit programs that
6 provide services and resources to women veterans and their spouses and dependents.

7 (4) ensure compliance with all existing policies and regulations pertaining to the
8 needs of women veterans on the territorial and federal level and make recommendations
9 to the Director regarding the improvement of benefits and services to women veterans.

10 (5) liaise between the Office of Veterans Affairs, the United States Department
11 of Veterans Affairs, nursing homes, territorial agencies, community groups, advocates
12 and other veterans and military organizations and interested parties.

13 (6) advocate for all women veterans in the territory.

14 (7) develop and maintain a clearinghouse for information and resources for
15 women veterans.

16 (8) plan, develop, organize, coordinate, and promote programs, service, events
17 and activities that recognize, educate and honor women veterans, to include seminars,
18 veteran human rights conferences, veterans' benefits and resources events, and veterans'
19 cultural competence training.

20 (9) include the contributions of women veterans on behalf of the United States
21 and the Virgin Islands on the official website of the Office of Veterans Affairs.

22 (10) to the extent such information is available, compile and submit quarterly
23 reports to the Director regarding the status of women veterans in the Virgin Islands
24 including:

25 (A) the demographics of women veterans in the Virgin Islands;

(B) the number of women veterans listed by island; and

(C) the unique needs of the women veterans population.

(b) The Women Veterans Coordinator shall submit an annual report to the Director and the Governor of the Virgin Islands. The report shall include a description of the Women Veterans Coordinator's activities for the calendar year and the programs developed under the provisions of this section.

BILL SUMMARY

This bill amends title 3 Virgin Islands Code, chapter 1, by creating the position of Women Veterans Coordinator within the Office of Veterans Affairs.

BR25-0839/May 6, 2026/PFA