

CHAPTER 207

AN ACT concerning agreements with public and private entities to provide legal services to homeless veterans and supplementing Title 38A of the New Jersey Statutes.

BE IT ENACTED by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:

C.38A:3-6.2c Short title.

1. This act shall be known and may be cited as the “Homeless Veterans Legal Services Act of New Jersey.”

C.38A:3-6.2d Provision of legal services to homeless, at risk of homelessness veterans.

2. a. Subject to the availability of funds appropriated for this purpose, including but not limited to funding appropriated through section 3 of P.L.2013, c.239 (C.38A:3-6.2b), the New Jersey Homeless Veterans Grant Program, the Adjutant General of the New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans’ Affairs shall enter into agreements with public or private entities to fund a portion of the legal services specified in this act, that are provided by such entities to homeless veterans and veterans at risk of homelessness.

b. The Adjutant General shall ensure that, to the extent practicable, agreements established under this section are made with entities located in the northern, central and southern regions of the State.

c. Legal services shall include legal services provided by public or private entities that address the needs of homeless veterans and veterans at risk of homelessness as follows:

(1) Legal services related to housing, including eviction defense, representation in landlord-tenant cases, and representation in foreclosure cases.

(2) Legal services related to family law, including assistance in court proceedings for child support, divorce, estate planning and family reconciliation.

(3) Legal services related to income support including assistance in obtaining public benefits.

(4) Legal services related to criminal defense, including defense in matters symptomatic of homelessness, such as outstanding warrants, fines and driver’s license revocation, to reduce recidivism and facilitate the overcoming of reentry obstacles in employment or housing.

(5) Such other legal services as the Adjutant General deems appropriate.

d. In developing and carrying out agreements under this section, the Adjutant General shall, to the extent practicable consult with veterans service organizations; and coordinate appropriate outreach relationships with such organizations.

e. The Adjutant General may require entities that enter into agreements under this section to submit periodic reports on legal services provided to homeless veterans and veterans at risk of homelessness.

3. Section 3 of P.L, 2013, c.239 (C.38A:3-6.2b) is amended to read as follows:

C.38A:3-6.2b “New Jersey Homeless Veterans Grant Program.”

3. There is established in the Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs the "New Jersey Homeless Veterans Grant Program." The purpose of this program shall be to award grants to organizations that assist homeless veterans in this State from funds appropriated to the department from the "Homeless Veterans Grant Fund" established pursuant to section 4 of P.L.2013, c.239 (C.54A:9-25.33). The grants shall be allocated on a competitive basis except grants allocated to public or private entities that provide legal services to homeless

veterans and veterans at risk of homelessness shall be allocated pursuant to section 2 of P.L.2019, c.207 (C.38A:3-6.2d). The Adjutant General of the Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs shall develop criteria for the granting of awards. An organization that wishes to apply for a grant under this program shall submit an application to the Adjutant General. The application shall, at the minimum, include a description of how the organization will assist homeless veterans. The Adjutant General may adopt, in accordance with the "Administrative Procedure Act," P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.), rules and regulations necessary to effectuate the grant program.

4. This act shall take effect immediately.

Approved August 5, 2019.