

AMENDED IN SENATE AUGUST 22, 2012

AMENDED IN SENATE JULY 2, 2012

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MAY 25, 2012

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2011–12 REGULAR SESSION

**ASSEMBLY BILL**

**No. 2490**

---

---

**Introduced by Assembly Member Butler**

February 24, 2012

---

---

An act to add Chapter 4 (commencing with Section 1840) to Division 8 of the Military and Veterans Code, and to add Article 6 (commencing with Section 2695) to Chapter 4 of Title 1 of Part 3 to the Penal Code, relating to veterans.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 2490, as amended, Butler. Veterans: correctional counselors.

Existing law establishes the Department of Veterans Affairs, which is responsible for administering various programs and services for the benefit of veterans. Existing law also authorizes each county board of supervisors to appoint a county veterans service officer to perform specified veterans-related services, including assisting veterans in pursuing claims for federal or state veterans' benefits.

Existing law authorizes the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to employ correctional counselors. Existing law provides that correctional officers are peace officers, as specified.

This bill would require ~~that at every state prison that is under the jurisdiction of the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation a correctional counselor shall be responsible for assisting veterans who are inmates to develop guidance policies to assist veterans who are inmates~~ in pursuing claims for federal veterans' benefits, or in

establishing rights to any other privilege, preference, care, or compensation provided under federal or state law because of honorable service in the military. The bill would ~~require the assigned correctional counselor~~ *authorize the department* to coordinate with the Department of Veterans Affairs and county veterans service officers or veterans service organizations ~~in the county in which the prison is located for advice and assistance~~ *in developing the policies.*

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes. State-mandated local program: no.

*The people of the State of California do enact as follows:*

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 4 (commencing with Section 1840) is  
2 added to Division 8 of the Military and Veterans Code, to read:

3  
4 CHAPTER 4. VETERANS IN STATE PRISON  
5

6 1840. ~~As set forth in Article 6 (commencing with Section 2695)~~  
7 ~~of Chapter 4 of Title 1 of Part 3 of the Penal Code, at every state~~  
8 ~~prison that is under the jurisdiction of the Department of~~  
9 ~~Corrections and Rehabilitation, a correctional counselor shall be~~  
10 ~~responsible for assisting veterans who are inmates in pursuing~~  
11 ~~claims for federal veterans' benefits, or in establishing rights to~~  
12 ~~any other privilege, preference, care, or compensation provided~~  
13 ~~under federal or state law because of honorable service in the~~  
14 ~~military. The assigned correctional counselor shall coordinate with~~  
15 ~~the Department of Veterans Affairs and the county veterans service~~  
16 ~~officer or veterans service organizations, or both, in the county in~~  
17 ~~which the prison is located for advice and assistance. The~~  
18 *Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation shall develop*  
19 *guidance policies relative to the release of veterans who are*  
20 *inmates. The policies shall be developed with the intent to assist*  
21 *veterans who are inmates in pursuing claims for federal veterans'*  
22 *benefits, or in establishing rights to any other privilege, preference,*  
23 *care, or compensation provided under federal or state law because*  
24 *of honorable service in the military. In developing the policies,*  
25 *the department may coordinate with the Department of Veterans*  
26 *Affairs and the county veterans service officer or veterans service*  
27 *organizations.*

1 SEC. 2. Article 6 (commencing with Section 2695) is added  
2 to Chapter 4 of Title 1 of Part 3 of the Penal Code, to read:

3  
4 Article 6. Veterans In State Prisons  
5

6 2695. ~~At every state prison that is under the jurisdiction of the~~  
7 ~~Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, a correctional~~  
8 ~~counselor shall be responsible for assisting veterans who are~~  
9 ~~inmates in pursuing claims for federal veterans' benefits, or in~~  
10 ~~establishing rights to any other privilege, preference, care, or~~  
11 ~~compensation provided under federal or state law because of~~  
12 ~~honorable service in the military. The assigned correctional~~  
13 ~~counselor shall coordinate with the Department of Veterans Affairs~~  
14 ~~and the county veterans service officer or veterans service~~  
15 ~~organizations, or both, in the county in which the prison is located~~  
16 ~~for advice and assistance. *The Department of Corrections and*~~  
17 ~~*Rehabilitation shall develop guidance policies relative to the*~~  
18 ~~*release of veterans who are inmates. The policies shall be*~~  
19 ~~*developed with the intent to assist veterans who are inmates in*~~  
20 ~~*pursuing claims for federal veterans' benefits, or in establishing*~~  
21 ~~*rights to any other privilege, preference, care, or compensation*~~  
22 ~~*provided under federal or state law because of honorable service*~~  
23 ~~*in the military. In developing the policies, the department may*~~  
24 ~~*coordinate with the Department of Veterans Affairs and the county*~~  
25 ~~*veterans service officer or veterans service organizations.*~~