

**ASSEMBLY BILL**

**No. 1560**

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**Introduced by Assembly Member Mathis**

January 4, 2016

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An act to add Sections 699.6 and 971.5 to the Military and Veterans Code, relating to veterans.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1560, as introduced, Mathis. Veterans: substance abuse programs.

Existing law establishes the Department of Veterans Affairs, which is responsible for administering various programs and services for the benefit of veterans. Under existing law, the department is authorized to assist every veteran of the United States in establishing the veteran's right to any privilege, preference, care, or compensation provided for by the laws of the United States or of the state.

This bill would, notwithstanding any other law, specifically authorize the department to refer a veteran to drug and alcohol treatment programs for veterans that are administered by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs. The bill would also authorize the department to, by regulation, create a form for the purpose of making these referrals.

Existing law authorizes each county board of supervisors to appoint a county veterans service officer to perform specified veterans-related services. Under existing law, the county veterans service officer is required to assist every veteran of the United States in establishing the veteran's right to any privilege, preference, care, or compensation provided for by the laws of the United States or of the state.

This bill would, notwithstanding any other law, specifically authorize a county veterans service officer to refer a veteran to drug and alcohol treatment programs for veterans that are administered by the United

States Department of Veterans Affairs. The bill would authorize a county veterans service officer to use the form described above for the purpose of making these referrals.

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. Section 699.6 is added to the Military and  
2 Veterans Code, to read:

3 699.6. (a) Notwithstanding any other law, the department may  
4 refer a veteran to drug and alcohol treatment programs for veterans  
5 that are administered by the United States Department of Veterans  
6 Affairs.

7 (b) The department may, by regulation, create a form for the  
8 purpose of making a referral pursuant to subdivision (a).

9 SEC. 2. Section 971.5 is added to the Military and Veterans  
10 Code, to read:

11 971.5. (a) Notwithstanding any other law, a county veterans  
12 service officer may refer a veteran to drug and alcohol treatment  
13 programs for veterans that are administered by the United States  
14 Department of Veterans Affairs.

15 (b) A county veterans service officer may use a form developed  
16 by the department pursuant to Section 699.6 for the purpose of  
17 making a referral pursuant to subdivision (a).