

MOTION BY SUPERVISORS HILDA L. SOLIS

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AND LINDSEY P. HORVATH

Forward March: Moving Forward with Improved Coordination of Services for Justice-Involved Veterans in Los Angeles County

In response to the Los Angeles County (County) Board of Supervisor’s (Board) motion in November 2023, the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (MVA) provided a report back with key findings and recommendations on how the County can better serve the subsection of the 232,000 veterans who live in the County.

What was found were not surprising but should be used as a roadmap on how the County can better support justice involved veterans (JIVs) so that they are set up for success, independence, and purpose. The key findings in the report are:

- “Training – Training on military and veteran culture and the unique challenges faced by JIVs is inconsistent and non-standardized across various organizations.

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- Data Collection – Data on JIVs and the services they receive is limited and inconsistent.
- Referrals for Services – There is no clear referral pathway for JIVs seeking services, leading to fragmented support.
- Establishment of a Justice Involved Veteran Division within MVA.
- Integration of MVA staff at various touchpoints such as probation hubs, Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department Veteran Dorms, and Veteran Treatment Courts.”¹

Acknowledging that veteran culture is a culture in and of itself requires competency and understanding the veteran holistically in experience, past and present, to fully provide the needed services required to thrive. Veterans have their own set of barriers, obstacles, and strengths, as would a transition age youth – each requiring a specialized approach and resources.

WE, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors:

1. Direct the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (MVA) in consultation with the Los Angeles Sheriff’s Department, Countywide Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CCJCC), Chief Information Office, Justice, Care, and Opportunities Department, the Departments of Health Services, Mental Health, and Public Health, and other relevant Departments to move forward on implementing the recommendations in the June 17, 2024, report back, in writing, semi-annually, to the Board on its progress to:

¹ <https://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/supdocs/185783.pdf>

- a. Implement a standardized training in military and veteran culture, trauma informed care, and gender informed care for all service providers, County Departments and entities, and law enforcement agencies.
 - b. Create and maintain a comprehensive data collection process on Justice Involved Veterans (JIVs) to tailor services effectively.
 - c. Develop a coordinated referral system to link JIVs to necessary services and programs.
 - d. Foster stronger partnerships between veteran service providers and law enforcement through regular meetings, proactive engagement, and joint programs.
 - e. Establish Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs) between MVA and relevant departments – including Veteran Treatment Courts, to ensure coordinated support and streamlined services for JIVs.
 - f. MVA to be the centralized connector for JIVs, coordinating services across various touchpoints, including initial contact with law enforcement, incarceration, and reentry.
2. Direct the Chief Executive Officer to support the anticipated Public Safety Realignment Team’s AB109 recommendation to fund the implementation of the JIV Division within the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, including one-time funding to hire an evaluator to collect and analyze data on program outcomes, monitor performance metrics, and pinpoint gaps in service delivery.

3. Direct the Chief Executive Officer to strategically identify and utilize existing AB109 funding to implement a comprehensive division to coordinate and integrate services for JIVs within the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs.
4. Direct the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs in collaboration with the Countywide Criminal Justice Coordination Committee to explore the formation of a subcommittee within the County Criminal Justice Coordinating Committee (CCJCC) specifically dedicated to addressing the unique challenges faced by JIVs, including veterans, reservists, and active-duty service members.
5. Direct the Chief Executive Officer, through the Legislative Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations Branch, with the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, to explore and advocate for relevant legislation and develop legislative strategies that address the unique needs and challenges of justice-involved veterans, including active military members.

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