

Stricken language would be deleted from and underlined language would be added to present law.

State of Arkansas
95th General Assembly
Fiscal Session, 2026

A Bill

SENATE BILL 38

By: Joint Budget Committee

For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT TO MAKE AN APPROPRIATION FOR PERSONAL SERVICES AND OPERATING EXPENSES FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2027; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Subtitle

AN ACT FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS APPROPRIATION FOR THE 2026-2027 FISCAL YEAR.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

SECTION 1. REGULAR SALARIES - OPERATIONS. There is hereby established for the Department of Veterans Affairs for the 2026-2027 fiscal year, the following maximum number of regular employees.

Item No.	Class Code	Title	Maximum No. of Employees	Maximum Annual Salary Rate Fiscal Year 2026-2027
(1)	ESE15A	SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS	1	GRADE EXE04
(2)	EEX09A	CHIEF OF STAFF I	1	GRADE EXE01
(3)	FAC08C	CHIEF FISCAL OFFICER I	1	GRADE SPC09
(4)	MHA03C	NURSING HOME DIRECTOR	1	GRADE SPC09
(5)	MHA01C	NURSING HOME ADMINISTRATOR	2	GRADE SPC08
(6)	MHA02C	NURSING HOME ASSISTANT ADMIN	2	GRADE SPC06



(7)	CPR03C GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS SPECIALIST	1	GRADE SPC05
(8)	HDH02C HR ADMINISTRATOR I	1	GRADE SPC05
(9)	FAC05P ACCOUNTING SUPERVISOR/EXPERT	1	GRADE SPC04
(10)	FAC03P ACCOUNTING COORDINATOR	1	GRADE SPC03
(11)	SCM04P LICENSED MASTER SOCIAL WORKER	1	GRADE SPC02
(12)	SCM06P LICENSED SOCIAL WORKER	1	GRADE SPC01
(13)	PVC02C CEMETERY SERVICE ADMINISTRATOR	1	GRADE SGS12
(14)	PVS01C VETERANS SERVICE ADMINISTRATOR	1	GRADE SGS12
(15)	CPR06C PUBLIC INFORMATION MANAGER	1	GRADE SGS09
(16)	HDH08P HR SUPERVISOR/EXPERT	1	GRADE SGS08
(17)	PPR05P PROCUREMENT SUPERVISOR/EXPERT	1	GRADE SGS08
(18)	PVS03P VETERANS SERVICE OFFICER SUPV/EXP	1	GRADE SGS08
(19)	PVC01C CEMETERY MANAGER	2	GRADE SGS07
(20)	HDH05P HR COORDINATOR	1	GRADE SGS07
(21)	PQA01P QUALITY ASSURANCE COORDINATOR	2	GRADE SGS07
(22)	PVS02P VETERANS SERVICE OFFICER	13	GRADE SGS07
(23)	RRE01C FOOD & BEVERAGE MANAGER	2	GRADE SGS06
(24)	FFS02P FISCAL SUPPORT COORDINATOR	4	GRADE SGS06
(25)	TMA04P MAINTENANCE SUPERVISOR/EXPERT	4	GRADE SGS06
(26)	CPR07P PUBLIC INFORMATION SPECIALIST	1	GRADE SGS06
(27)	PAS01P ADMINISTRATIVE ANALYST	1	GRADE SGS05
(28)	PPR04P PROCUREMENT SPECIALIST	3	GRADE SGS05
(29)	PAS02P ADMINISTRATIVE COORDINATOR	3	GRADE SGS04
(30)	FFS04P FISCAL SUPPORT SPECIALIST	1	GRADE SGS04
(31)	HDH07P HR SPECIALIST	3	GRADE SGS04
(32)	PRC05P RESIDENTIAL CARE SUPERVISOR/EXPERT	3	GRADE SGS04
(33)	THT01I CERTIFIED NURSING ASSISTANT	146	GRADE SGS03
(34)	TFS05P KITCHEN SUPERVISOR/EXPERT	4	GRADE SGS03
(35)	TMA05P MAINTENANCE TECHNICIAN	13	GRADE SGS03
(36)	PAS03P ADMINISTRATIVE SPECIALIST	4	GRADE SGS02
(37)	TFS01P COOK	9	GRADE SGS01
(38)	MNU05C NURSING ADMINISTRATOR	2	GRADE MED08
(39)	MNU04P NURSE PRACTITIONER	1	GRADE MED08
(40)	MNU07C REGISTERED NURSE MANAGER	1	GRADE MED07
(41)	MNU08P REG. NURSE SUPERVISOR/EXPERT	2	GRADE MED06
(42)	MNU06P REGISTERED NURSE	18	GRADE MED05

(43)	MNU02P LICENSED PRACTICAL NURSE SUPV/EXP	1	GRADE MED03
(44)	MNU01P LICENSED PRACTICAL NURSE	39	GRADE MED02
(45)	IIA01C CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER I	1	GRADE IST10
(46)	IUS04P USER SUPPORT SPECIALIST	<u>1</u>	GRADE IST02
	MAX. NO. OF EMPLOYEES	305	

SECTION 2. APPROPRIATION - STATE OPERATIONS. There is hereby appropriated, to the Department of Veterans Affairs, to be payable from the Miscellaneous Agencies Fund Account, for personal services and operating expenses of the Department of Veterans Affairs - State Operations for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2027, the following:

ITEM	FISCAL YEAR
<u>NO.</u>	<u>2026-2027</u>
(01) REGULAR SALARIES	\$1,328,091
(02) PERSONAL SERVICES MATCHING	476,999
(03) MAINT. & GEN. OPERATION	
(A) OPER. EXPENSE	197,906
(B) CONF. & TRAVEL	69,594
(C) PROF. FEES	0
(D) CAP. OUTLAY	0
(E) DATA PROC.	0
(04) AID TO COUNTY VETERANS' SERVICE OFFICES	516,000
(05) PROMOTIONAL ITEMS	<u>4,000</u>
TOTAL AMOUNT APPROPRIATED	<u><u>\$2,592,590</u></u>

SECTION 3. EXTRA HELP - VETERANS' HOMES. There is hereby authorized, for the Department of Veterans Affairs - Veterans' Homes for the 2026-2027 fiscal year, the following maximum number of part-time or temporary employees, to be known as "Extra Help", payable from funds appropriated herein for such purposes: thirty (30) temporary or part-time employees, when needed, at rates of pay not to exceed those provided in the Uniform Classification and Compensation Act, or its successor, or this act for the appropriate classification.

SECTION 4. APPROPRIATION - VETERANS' HOMES - CASH. There is hereby appropriated, to the Department of Veterans Affairs, to be payable from the cash fund deposited in the State Treasury as determined by the Chief Fiscal Officer of the State, for personal services and operating expenses of the Department of Veterans Affairs - Veterans' Homes - Cash for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2027, the following:

ITEM NO.	FISCAL YEAR 2026-2027
(01) REGULAR SALARIES	\$11,204,827
(02) EXTRA HELP	45,339
(03) PERSONAL SERVICES MATCHING	4,811,875
(04) OVERTIME	550,000
(05) MAINT. & GEN. OPERATION	
(A) OPER. EXPENSE	14,903,703
(B) CONF. & TRAVEL	52,500
(C) PROF. FEES	1,176,000
(D) CAP. OUTLAY	313,000
(E) DATA PROC.	0
(06) PROMOTIONAL ITEMS	6,000
(07) SPECIAL MAINTENANCE	<u>72,831</u>
TOTAL AMOUNT APPROPRIATED	<u>\$33,136,075</u>

SECTION 5. APPROPRIATION - NW AR STATE VETERANS' HOME - CASH. There is hereby appropriated, to the Department of Veterans Affairs, to be payable from the cash fund deposited in the State Treasury as determined by the Chief Fiscal Officer of the State, for matching funds for land acquisition, improvements, construction, renovation, and purchase of equipment for a State Veterans' Home in Northwest Arkansas for the Department of Veterans Affairs - NW AR State Veterans' Home - Cash for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2027, the following:

ITEM NO.	FISCAL YEAR 2026-2027
(01) NW AR STATE VETERANS HOME	<u>\$15,000,000</u>

SECTION 6. APPROPRIATION - NW AR STATE VETERANS' HOME - FEDERAL. There is hereby appropriated, to the Department of Veterans Affairs, to be payable from the federal funds as designated by the Chief Fiscal Officer of the State, for land acquisition, improvements, construction, renovation, and purchase of equipment for a State Veterans' Home in Northwest Arkansas for the Department of Veterans Affairs - NW AR State Veterans' Home - Federal for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2027, the following:

ITEM NO.	FISCAL YEAR
	2026-2027
(01) NW AR STATE VETERANS HOME - FEDERAL	<u>\$30,000,000</u>

SECTION 7. APPROPRIATION - VETERANS' CEMETERIES - STATE. There is hereby appropriated, to the Department of Veterans Affairs, to be payable from the Miscellaneous Agencies Fund Account, for personal services and operating expenses of the Department of Veterans Affairs - Veterans' Cemeteries - State for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2027, the following:

ITEM NO.	FISCAL YEAR
	2026-2027
(01) REGULAR SALARIES	\$689,586
(02) PERSONAL SERVICES MATCHING	287,096
(03) MAINT. & GEN. OPERATION	
(A) OPER. EXPENSE	158,350
(B) CONF. & TRAVEL	0
(C) PROF. FEES	0
(D) CAP. OUTLAY	0
(E) DATA PROC.	0
(04) CEMETERY REALIGNMENT AND MAINTENANCE	<u>50,000</u>
TOTAL AMOUNT APPROPRIATED	<u>\$1,185,032</u>

SECTION 8. EXTRA HELP - VETERANS' CEMETERIES - CASH. There is hereby authorized, for the Department of Veterans Affairs - Veterans' Cemeteries - Cash for the 2026-2027 fiscal year, the following maximum number of part-time or temporary employees, to be known as "Extra Help", payable from funds appropriated herein for such purposes: five (5) temporary or part-time

employees, when needed, at rates of pay not to exceed those provided in the Uniform Classification and Compensation Act, or its successor, or this act for the appropriate classification.

SECTION 9. APPROPRIATION - VETERANS' CEMETERIES - CASH. There is hereby appropriated, to the Department of Veterans Affairs, to be payable from the cash fund deposited in the State Treasury as determined by the Chief Fiscal Officer of the State, for personal services and operating expenses of the Department of Veterans Affairs - Veterans' Cemeteries - Cash for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2027, the following:

ITEM	FISCAL YEAR
<u>NO.</u>	<u>2026-2027</u>
(01) REGULAR SALARIES	\$28,020
(02) EXTRA HELP	24,000
(03) PERSONAL SERVICES MATCHING	14,213
(04) MAINT. & GEN. OPERATION	
(A) OPER. EXPENSE	453,475
(B) CONF. & TRAVEL	17,600
(C) PROF. FEES	0
(D) CAP. OUTLAY	125,000
(E) DATA PROC.	0
(05) PROMOTIONAL ITEMS	<u>6,500</u>
TOTAL AMOUNT APPROPRIATED	<u><u>\$668,808</u></u>

SECTION 10. APPROPRIATION - MILITARY FUNERAL HONORS PROGRAM. There is hereby appropriated, to the Department of Veterans Affairs, to be payable from the Military Funeral Honors Fund, for operating expenses of the Department of Veterans Affairs - Military Funeral Honors Program for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2027, the following:

ITEM	FISCAL YEAR
<u>NO.</u>	<u>2026-2027</u>
(01) MILITARY FUNERAL HONORS EXPENSES	<u><u>\$45,900</u></u>

SECTION 11. APPROPRIATION - NLR CEMETERY EXPANSION 2 - FEDERAL. There

is hereby appropriated, to the Department of Veterans Affairs, to be payable from the federal funds as designated by the Chief Fiscal Officer of the State, for construction and expansion expenses for the North Little Rock Veterans' Cemetery of the Department of Veterans Affairs - NLR Cemetery Expansion 2 - Federal for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2027, the following:

ITEM NO.	FISCAL YEAR 2026-2027
(01) CONSTRUCTION AND EXPANSION EXPENSES	<u>\$2,000,000</u>

SECTION 12. APPROPRIATION - OPERATIONS - DISABLED VETERANS' SERVICES OFFICE. There is hereby appropriated, to the Department of Veterans Affairs, to be payable from the Miscellaneous Agencies Fund Account, for personal services and operating expenses of the Department of Veterans Affairs - Disabled Veterans' Services Office for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2027, the following:

ITEM NO.	FISCAL YEAR 2026-2027
(01) REGULAR SALARIES	\$33,205
(02) PERSONAL SERVICES MATCHING	15,547
(03) MAINT. & GEN. OPERATION	
(A) OPER. EXPENSE	3,000
(B) CONF. & TRAVEL	0
(C) PROF. FEES	0
(D) CAP. OUTLAY	0
(E) DATA PROC.	<u>0</u>
TOTAL AMOUNT APPROPRIATED	<u>\$51,752</u>

SECTION 13. APPROPRIATION - OPERATIONS - ARKANSAS VETERANS' CHILD WELFARE SERVICE. There is hereby appropriated, to the Department of Veterans Affairs, to be payable from the Miscellaneous Agencies Fund Account, for personal services and operating expenses of the Department of Veterans Affairs - Arkansas Veterans' Child Welfare Service for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2027, the following:

ITEM NO.	FISCAL YEAR 2026-2027
(01) REGULAR SALARIES	\$48,400
(02) PERSONAL SERVICES MATCHING	19,037
(03) MAINT. & GEN. OPERATION	
(A) OPER. EXPENSE	4,182
(B) CONF. & TRAVEL	0
(C) PROF. FEES	0
(D) CAP. OUTLAY	0
(E) DATA PROC.	0
(04) GRANTS/AID-ASSISTANCE TO MINOR CHILDREN	<u>107,762</u>
TOTAL AMOUNT APPROPRIATED	<u><u>\$179,381</u></u>

SECTION 14. SPECIAL LANGUAGE. NOT TO BE INCORPORATED INTO THE ARKANSAS 36 CODE NOR PUBLISHED SEPARATELY AS SPECIAL, LOCAL AND TEMPORARY LAW.

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS. At the close of the fiscal year ending June 30, ~~2025~~ 2026, the Chief Fiscal Officer of the State shall authorize up to \$50,000 of the balance of funds remaining in the Miscellaneous Agencies Fund Account for the Department of Veterans Affairs for operations to be transferred into a sub-fund created within the Miscellaneous Agencies Fund Account to support the state veteran cemetery realignment and maintenance expenses in the appropriation entitled "Cemetery Realignment and Maintenance Expenses".

Any carry forward of unexpended balance of funding as authorized herein, may be carried forward under the following conditions:

- (1) Prior to June 30, ~~2025~~ 2026 the Agency shall by written statement set forth its reason(s) for the need to carry forward said funding to the Department of Finance and Administration Office of Budget;
- (2) The Department of Finance and Administration Office of Budget shall report to the Arkansas Legislative Council all amounts carried forward by the September Arkansas Legislative Council or Joint Budget Committee meeting which report shall include the name of the Agency, Board, Commission or Institution and the amount of the funding carried forward from the first fiscal year to the second fiscal year, the program name or line item, the

funding source of that appropriation and a copy of the written request set forth in (1) above;

(3) Each Agency, Board, Commission or Institution shall provide a written report to the Arkansas Legislative Council or Joint Budget Committee containing all information set forth in item (2) above, along with a written statement as to the current status of the project, contract, purpose etc. for which the carry forward was originally requested no later than thirty (30) days prior to the time the Agency, Board, Commission or Institution presents its budget request to the Arkansas Legislative Council/Joint Budget Committee; and

(4) Thereupon, the Department of Finance and Administration shall include all information obtained in item (3) above in the budget manuals and/or a statement of non-compliance by the Agency, Board, Commission or Institution. The provisions of this section shall be in effect only from July 1, ~~2025~~ 2026 through June 30, ~~2026~~ 2027.

SECTION 15. COMPLIANCE WITH OTHER LAWS. Disbursement of funds authorized by this act shall be limited to the appropriation for such agency and funds made available by law for the support of such appropriations; and the restrictions of the State Procurement Law, the General Accounting and Budgetary Procedures Law, the Revenue Stabilization Law, the Regular Salary Procedures and Restrictions Act, or their successors, and other fiscal control laws of this State, where applicable, and regulations promulgated by the Department of Finance and Administration, as authorized by law, shall be strictly complied with in disbursement of said funds.

SECTION 16. LEGISLATIVE INTENT. It is the intent of the General Assembly that any funds disbursed under the authority of the appropriations contained in this act shall be in compliance with the stated reasons for which this act was adopted, as evidenced by the Agency Requests, Executive Recommendations and Legislative Recommendations contained in the budget manuals prepared by the Department of Finance and Administration, letters, or summarized oral testimony in the official minutes of the Arkansas Legislative Council or Joint Budget Committee which relate to its passage and adoption.

SECTION 17. EMERGENCY CLAUSE. It is found and determined by the

General Assembly, that the Constitution of the State of Arkansas prohibits the appropriation of funds for more than a one (1) year period; that the effectiveness of this Act on July 1, 2026 is essential to the operation of the agency for which the appropriations in this Act are provided, and that in the event of an extension of the legislative session, the delay in the effective date of this Act beyond July 1, 2026 could work irreparable harm upon the proper administration and provision of essential governmental programs. Therefore, an emergency is hereby declared to exist and this Act being necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health and safety shall be in full force and effect from and after July 1, 2026.