

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE BILL

No. 129 Session of 2025

INTRODUCED BY MASTRIANO, BAKER, LAUGHLIN, PENNYCUICK, ROBINSON,
J. WARD AND MILLER, JANUARY 22, 2025

REFERRED TO VETERANS AFFAIRS AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS,
JANUARY 22, 2025

AN ACT

1 Amending Title 51 (Military Affairs) of the Pennsylvania
2 Consolidated Statutes, in Department of Military and Veterans
3 Affairs, further providing for advisory councils for
4 veterans' homes.

5 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
6 hereby enacts as follows:

7 Section 1. Section 704(a), (b), (d) and (f) of Title 51 of
8 the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes are amended and the
9 section is amended by adding a subsection to read:

10 § 704. Advisory councils for veterans' homes.

11 (a) Establishment of advisory council.--There is hereby
12 established an advisory council for each veterans' home operated
13 by the Commonwealth to provide stakeholders with a means to
14 advise the Adjutant General on the resident care, management,
15 operations and compliance of facilities and services in
16 veterans' homes to ensure high-quality health care and well-
17 being for residents of veterans' homes. Each advisory council
18 shall consist of 15 members and the Adjutant General or the

1 Adjutant General's designee, who shall serve ex officio. [Twelve
2 of the members shall be appointed by the Governor from a list of
3 nominations submitted to the Adjutant General by the
4 Pennsylvania War Veterans' Council.] The following shall apply:

5 (1) Ten of the members shall be appointed by the
6 Governor from a list of nominations submitted to the Adjutant
7 General by the Pennsylvania War Veterans' Council. Appointees
8 under this paragraph shall be veterans from the local
9 community of the veterans' home.

10 (2) Three of the members shall be appointed by the
11 Governor from a list of nominations submitted to the Adjutant
12 General by current residents of the veterans' home and shall
13 include a family member of a current or former resident of
14 the veterans' home.

15 (3) The Speaker of the House of Representatives and the
16 President pro tempore of the Senate shall each appoint one
17 member from their respective bodies to serve on each council.
18 [The remaining member on the advisory council shall be
19 selected by the residents of the veterans' homes.]

20 (4) The department shall designate a subject matter
21 expert to attend each advisory council's meeting to provide
22 input on the resident care, management, operations and
23 compliance of facilities and services in each veterans' home.

24 (b) Term of office and officers.--

25 (1) Each member of the councils appointed from the
26 General Assembly shall serve for the duration of that General
27 Assembly. [The eight] Except as provided under paragraph (2),
28 the thirteen members appointed by the Governor shall serve a
29 term of three [years, provided that the initial eight members
30 selected by the Governor shall serve as follows: three

1 members for one year, three members for two years and two
2 members for three years as designated by the Governor.]
3 years.

4 (2) The initial thirteen members selected by the
5 Governor on or after the effective date of this paragraph
6 shall serve as follows: four members for one year, four
7 members for two years and five members for three years as
8 designated by the Governor.

9 (3) Each council shall organize as soon as possible and
10 shall annually elect a president, vice president and
11 secretary from the voting members.

12 * * *

13 (d) Quorum and time of meetings.--~~[Six]~~ Eight members of a
14 council shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of conducting
15 the business of the council. Each advisory council shall meet at
16 least quarterly and at other times at the call of the president.
17 Each advisory council shall conduct meetings in accordance with
18 65 Pa.C.S. Ch. 7 (relating to open meetings).

19 * * *

20 (f) Power and duty of advisory councils.--Each veterans'
21 home advisory council shall advise the Adjutant General as to
22 the resident care, management, operation and the [~~adequacy~~]
23 compliance of facilities and services at their respective homes.

24 (g) Annual reports.--Each advisory council shall submit an
25 annual report to the department that identifies the work of the
26 advisory council, includes an overall assessment of the resident
27 care, management, operations and compliance of facilities and
28 services in each veterans' home and provides recommendations.
29 The department shall submit a consolidated report on the annual
30 reports submitted by each advisory council under this subsection

1 to the Adjutant General and the chair and minority chair of the
2 Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committee of the
3 Senate and the chair and minority chair of the Veterans Affairs
4 and Emergency Preparedness Committee of the House of
5 Representatives no later than January 30, 2026, and each year
6 thereafter.

7 Section 2. The amendment or addition of 51 Pa.C.S. § 704(a)
8 (1) and (2) and (b) (1) and (2) shall apply upon the expiration
9 of a member's term on the advisory council appointed by the
10 Governor before the effective date of this section.

11 Section 3. This act shall take effect immediately.