



Mississippi VA



OUR MISSION

“To Honor Mississippi Veterans and
their dependents through
SUPERIOR service, care, and
assistance.”



**County Veteran
Service Officer
State Certification
and Federal
Accreditation**



Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) § 14.629 Requirements for accreditation of service organization representatives; agents; and attorneys.

(a) ***Service Organization Representatives.*** A recognized organization shall file with the Office of the General Counsel, VA Form 21 (Application for Accreditation as Service Organization Representative) for each person it desires accredited as a representative of that organization. The form must be signed by the prospective representative and the organization's certifying official. For each of its accredited representatives, a recognized organization's certifying official shall complete, sign and file with the Office of the General Counsel, not later than five years after initial accreditation through that organization or the most recent recertification by that organization, VA Form 21 to certify that the representative continues to meet the criteria for accreditation specified in paragraph (a)(1), (2) and (3) of this section. In recommending a person, the organization shall certify that the designee:



- . (1) Is of good character and reputation and has demonstrated an ability to represent claimants before the VA;
- . (2) Is either a member in good standing or a paid employee of such organization working for it not less than 1,000 hours annually; is accredited and functioning as a representative of another recognized organization; or, in the case of a county veterans' service officer or tribal veterans' service officer recommended by a recognized State organization, meets the following criteria:
 - (i) Is a paid employee of the county or tribal government working for it not less than 1,000 hours annually;
 - (ii) Has successfully completed a course of training and an examination which have been approved by the appropriate District Chief Counsel; and
 - (iii) Will receive either regular supervision and monitoring or annual training to assure continued qualification as a representative in the claim process; and
- (3) Is not employed in any civil or military department or agency of the United States.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 501(a), 5902)



Mississippi Code 1972 (2024)
Title 35 - WAR VETERANS AND PENSIONS (§§ 35-1-1 — 35-9-1)
Chapter 3 - WAR VETERANS; MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS (§§ 35-3-1 — 35-3-31)
Section 35-3-21 - County veteran service offices and officers



In order to maintain offices and pay personnel for the purpose of assisting all residents of the State of Mississippi who served in the military or naval forces of the United States during any war, their relatives, beneficiaries or dependents, to receive from the United States any and all compensation, hospitalization, insurance or other aid or benefits to which they may be entitled under existing or hereafter enacted laws of the United States, the boards of supervisors in the various counties in the state are hereby authorized and empowered, in their discretion, to expend out of the general county fund, or special veterans' fund herein authorized to be set up, or from both of such funds, such monies necessary to defray the office operating expenses and salary of the county veteran service officers.

Two (2) or more counties may, upon resolution duly adopted by the board of supervisors of each of such counties, agree to establish one (1) veteran service office for all of such counties. When two (2) or more counties enter into such an agreement, each county shall pay such amount mutually agreed upon and duly adopted by resolution of the respective boards of supervisors.



County veteran service officers shall be (a) honorably discharged or honorably released veterans; (b) the surviving spouse or child of any such veteran, living or deceased; or (c) any person employed as a county veteran service officer in any county of this state on March 30, 1990. From and after July 1, 1990, county veteran service officers shall be certified by the Mississippi State Veterans Affairs Board which, among any other criteria it may establish, shall require such officers to (a) attend one (1) of the annual training programs provided for such officers by the Mississippi State Veterans Affairs Board, (b) successfully complete a written examination each year on the duties and responsibilities of and assistance available to such officers and veterans, (c) have certification and be accredited according to 38 CFR Section 14.629 administered by the Mississippi State Veterans Affairs Board, and (d) follow the rules and regulations promulgated by the Mississippi State Veterans Affairs Board.



County veteran service officers who annually receive and complete such instruction in a manner satisfactory to the Veterans Affairs Board and in accordance with this section shall be certified by the board. No county veteran service officer shall be entitled to receive any compensation for his services, to which he is otherwise entitled by law, unless he is annually certified by the board. Persons who cannot meet the accreditation standards of hours worked for county veteran service officers may be certified by the Mississippi State Veterans Affairs Board as Veterans Resource Advisors and be entitled to receive any compensation for his services as authorized by law.

County veteran service officers may be employed, in the discretion of the boards of supervisors, either full time or part time.

County veteran service officers shall be authorized and empowered to act for a veteran under a written power of attorney authorized by the veteran for the purpose of assisting with claims, benefits, and appeals in an administrative hearing before the United States Department of Veterans Affairs and any of its boards or departments, and shall be immune from legal action only for such actions except in cases of abuse, fraud or breach of fiduciary duty.



The boards of supervisors of the various counties are authorized and directed to provide necessary office space and communications connectivity for county veteran service officers.

The boards of supervisors of the various counties are further authorized and empowered to pay all necessary and actual expenses of county veteran service officers who attend a school of instruction within the State of Mississippi for such county veteran service officers.

It shall also be the duty of the boards of supervisors to aid the United States to defeat all unjust claims for aid or benefit therefrom.

Such expenditures may be made by the several counties acting alone, or in cooperation with other counties, and in cooperation with any federal or state agency carrying out such purposes.

In the event that the general revenues of the county levied under and within the limits of existing taxing statutes are not sufficient to pay the expenses authorized herein, the board of supervisors may, in its discretion, levy an additional tax not to exceed one (1) mill on all taxable property in the county to defray such expenses or any part thereof. Any tax levy made under authority of this chapter shall not be considered in refunding homestead exemption losses under Title 27, Chapter 33, Mississippi Code of 1972.

