

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE BILL

No. 447 Session of  
2023

INTRODUCED BY MASTRIANO, DUSH, BARTOLOTTA AND SCHWANK,  
FEBRUARY 24, 2023

REFERRED TO VETERANS AFFAIRS AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS,  
FEBRUARY 24, 2023

AN ACT

1 Amending Title 51 (Military Affairs) of the Pennsylvania  
2 Consolidated Statutes, in Department of Military Affairs,  
3 establishing the PA VETConnect Program.

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

6 Section 1. Title 51 of the Pennsylvania Consolidated  
7 Statutes is amended by adding a section to read:

8 § 714. PA VETConnect Program.

9 (a) Establishment.--The PA VETConnect Program is  
10 established.

11 (b) Participants.--The program may include Federal agencies,  
12 State agencies, county directors of veterans' affairs, veterans'  
13 service organizations, accredited postsecondary educational and  
14 technical institutions, the health care provider community,  
15 businesses and nonprofit organizations.

16 (c) Purpose.--The program shall:

17 (1) Improve the health and well-being of veterans and  
18 the families of veterans through referrals, community

1 engagement and consistent network communication.

2 (2) Organize participants under subsection (b) to  
3 cooperate with network partners to provide for proactive  
4 solutions to address the problems faced by veterans.

5 (d) Requirements.--Program requirements shall be determined  
6 by the department and information shall be disseminated to the  
7 greatest extent possible on how to best navigate and utilize  
8 available resources to improve the health and well-being of  
9 veterans and the families of veterans.

10 (e) Duties of department.--The department shall develop the  
11 program, which shall contain a mission statement that shall be  
12 clearly communicated to network advocates, partners and  
13 participants under subsection (b). The department shall:

14 (1) Coordinate with Federal agencies, State agencies,  
15 county directors of veterans' affairs, veterans' service  
16 organizations, accredited postsecondary educational and  
17 technical institutions, the health care provider community,  
18 businesses and nonprofit organizations, identified by the  
19 department, that provide programs, initiatives, reintegration  
20 outreach and related services to veterans and the families of  
21 veterans.

22 (2) Provide Welcome Home to Pennsylvania information to  
23 recently separated service members.

24 (3) Provide information regarding program initiatives,  
25 resources, training opportunities, veterans' service  
26 organizations and services available to be utilized by  
27 individuals or groups who support veterans and their families  
28 as volunteers and offer outreach and support for veterans.

29 (4) Coordinate with county directors of veterans'  
30 affairs by providing information of veterans who request

1 support for Federal and State benefits and programs.

2 (5) Coordinate with veterans' service officers from  
3 veterans' service officer grant programs or other veterans'  
4 service officers to assist veterans in applying for Federal  
5 veteran benefits.

6 Section 2. This act shall take effect in 60 days.