



VETERANS ASSISTANCE COMMISSION OF MACOUPIN COUNTY, ILLINOIS

BY-LAWS

*A Unit of Local Government Operating Pursuant to the
Illinois Military Veterans Assistance Act (330 ILCS 45)
as amended by P.A. 102-0732 and P.A. 102-1132*

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ARTICLE	TITLE
Preamble	Statement of Purpose and Formation
Article I	Name and Principal Office
Article II	Authority and Statutory Supremacy
Article III	Legal Compliance and Public Accountability
Article IV	Jurisdiction and Purpose
Article V	Membership, Delegates, and Voting
Article VI	Officers
Article VII	Meetings and Procedures
Article VIII	Committees
Article IX	Superintendent
Article X	Veteran Service Officer (VSO)
Article XI	Staffing, Training, and Accreditation
Article XII	Purpose, Financial Assistance, and Standard of Needs
Article XIII	Finances, Audit, and Fiscal Year
Article XIV	Relationship with the Macoupin County Board
Article XV	Parliamentary Authority
Article XVI	IACVAC Membership
Article XVII	NACVSO Membership and Accreditation
Article XVIII	IACO Participation
Article XIX	Indemnification
Article XX	Amendments
Article XXI	Severability
	<i>Certification of Adoption</i>

PREAMBLE

WHEREAS, Macoupin County, Illinois, is home to a proud community of men and women who have answered the call to military service across every era of American history; and

WHEREAS, The State of Illinois has, through the Military Veterans Assistance Act (330 ILCS 45), as amended, recognized the solemn obligation of each county to provide just and necessary assistance to eligible Veterans, their spouses, surviving spouses, and dependents residing within its borders; and

WHEREAS, The Veterans Service Organizations of Macoupin County — including the American Legion Posts of Carlinville, Staunton, Bunker Hill, Virden, Palmyra, Brighton, and Mt. Olive; the Veterans of Foreign Wars Posts of Carlinville, Staunton, and Mt. Olive; and the AMVETS of Mt. Olive — have come together in common purpose to form and sustain this Commission; and

WHEREAS, The Veterans Assistance Commission of Macoupin County, Illinois (hereinafter "the Commission" or "MACVAC"), organized in 2003 pursuant to the Military Veterans Assistance Act, is a distinct unit of local government created by and operating pursuant to the authority granted under 330 ILCS 45, deriving its powers exclusively from statute; and

WHEREAS, The Commission is charged with operating the central veterans service office for Macoupin County, administering financial assistance programs, providing claims development and benefits counseling through accredited Veteran Service Officers, and serving as an advocate for the Veterans of this community at the local, state, and federal levels; and

WHEREAS, The Commission is committed to operating with full transparency, fiscal integrity, and strict compliance with all applicable Illinois and Federal law, including the Open Meetings Act (5 ILCS 120), the Freedom of Information Act (5 ILCS 140), the Local Records Act (50 ILCS 205/10), the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act (5 ILCS 430), and the Local Government Audit Act (50 ILCS 310/2); and

WHEREAS, These By-Laws are adopted by the required vote of the full Commission membership to govern the framework, policies, and procedures by which the Commission shall conduct its business, consistent with 330 ILCS 45/9(f), and shall be revised as necessary to remain in compliance with current law;

NOW, THEREFORE, the Veterans Assistance Commission of Macoupin County, Illinois, hereby adopts the following By-Laws:

MISSION, VISION, AND CORE VALUES

Mission Statement. The Macoupin County Veterans Assistance Commission exists to find, serve, and advocate for every Veteran, survivor, and dependent in Macoupin County — without exception. Through expert claims development, direct financial assistance, and comprehensive benefits navigation, the Commission ensures that those who answered the call receive every benefit they have earned, delivered with the competence, urgency, and dignity their service demands.

Vision Statement. To be the most trusted, most capable, and most Veteran-centered assistance commission in the State of Illinois — where every Veteran in Macoupin County is known, every eligible claim is developed to its fullest potential, and no one who served this nation is left without the support they have earned.

Core Values.

- 1. Service Before Self** — We honor the sacrifice of Veterans by placing their needs at the forefront of everything we do.
- 2. Integrity** — We operate with transparency, accountability to the public trust, and strict adherence to all applicable federal, state, and local law and ethical standards.

3. Advocacy — We pursue every available benefit with the same determination our Veterans brought to their service. No claim is too complex, no fight too long, no Veteran too forgotten to deserve our full effort.

4. Compassion — We treat every Veteran with dignity, respect, and understanding.

5. Excellence — We hold ourselves to the highest professional standards in VSO practice, claims development, and administrative operations — because Veterans who served with excellence deserve to be served with excellence.

6. Stewardship — We responsibly manage public funds to ensure assistance reaches those in need.

7. Accountability — We measure what we do, report what we find, and answer for what we deliver. The Veterans of Macoupin County, the taxpayers who fund this Commission, and the law that governs our operations hold us to a standard we willingly accept and actively uphold.

8. Outreach — We do not wait for Veterans to find us. We find them. Through community partnerships, proactive engagement, and presence across Macoupin County, we ensure that geography, age, disability, or circumstance never prevents a Veteran from receiving what they have earned.

Statement of Authority. The Macoupin County Veterans Assistance Commission is established by law and operates pursuant to the Military Veterans Assistance Act (330 ILCS 45). The Commission is accountable to the Veterans it serves, funded by the public trust, and governed by the highest standards of statutory compliance, professional practice, and ethical conduct.

Find every Veteran. Fight for every benefit. Leave no one behind.

ARTICLE I — NAME AND PRINCIPAL OFFICE

Section 1. Name. The name of this body shall be the Veterans Assistance Commission of Macoupin County, Illinois (the "Commission" or "MACVAC").

Section 2. Statutory Creation. The Commission is a distinct unit of local government created and governed pursuant to the Military Veterans Assistance Act (330 ILCS 45), as amended, including Public Act 102-0732 and Public Act 102-1132. The Commission derives its powers exclusively from statute. It is not a private corporation. Nothing in these By-Laws shall be construed to create corporate rights or obligations beyond those granted by the MVAA and applicable State law.

Section 3. Principal Office. Pursuant to 330 ILCS 45/10, the Commission shall maintain its principal office in Carlinville, Macoupin County, Illinois, in a County-provided facility or other suitable central location within the county. The current principal office is located at 570 N. Broad Street, P.O. Box 12, Carlinville, Illinois 62626.

Section 4. Other Offices. The Commission may conduct business at such other locations within Macoupin County as may be necessary and consistent with applicable law and Commission policy.

ARTICLE II — AUTHORITY AND STATUTORY SUPREMACY

Section 1. Source of Authority. The Commission derives its authority exclusively from the Military Veterans Assistance Act (330 ILCS 45) and other applicable State and Federal law. The Commission is a unit of local government subject to Dillon's Rule; it possesses only those powers expressly granted by statute or necessarily implied therefrom.

Section 2. Majority Vote of Full Membership. Pursuant to 330 ILCS 45/9(a)(5), no undertaking, action, policy adoption, program implementation, or official act of the Commission shall be valid without approval by a majority of the full Commission membership. No committee, executive board, officer, or subgroup of the Commission may act in the place of or on behalf of the full membership on matters requiring a Commission vote.

Section 3. Interpretation and Statutory Supremacy. These By-Laws shall be interpreted and applied in a manner consistent with the Military Veterans Assistance Act. In the event of any conflict between these By-Laws and applicable State or Federal law, the controlling statute shall govern. Nothing in these By-Laws shall be construed to expand, limit, or modify the statutory authority granted to the Commission or its officers under law.

Section 4. Attorney General Enforcement. Pursuant to 330 ILCS 45/9.1, as enacted by P.A. 102-1132, compliance with Sections 8, 9, and 10 of the MVAA is subject to investigation and civil enforcement action by the Illinois Attorney General. The Commission acknowledges this oversight authority and affirms its commitment to full statutory compliance in all governance, financial, and operational matters.

Section 5. State's Attorney Opinions. Pursuant to P.A. 102-0056, the Macoupin County State's Attorney has discretionary authority to render legal opinions, without fee, on any legal question related to a MACVAC matter upon written request of the Superintendent.

ARTICLE III — LEGAL COMPLIANCE AND PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY

Section 1. Mandatory Legal Compliance. The Commission shall comply with all applicable laws, including but not limited to:

- (a) Open Meetings Act (5 ILCS 120);
- (b) Freedom of Information Act (5 ILCS 140);
- (c) Local Government Audit Act (50 ILCS 310/2);
- (d) Local Records Act (50 ILCS 205/10);
- (e) State Officials and Employees Ethics Act (5 ILCS 430); and
- (f) Illinois Human Rights Act sexual harassment prevention requirements (775 ILCS 5/2-109).

Section 2. Statements of Economic Interests and Ethics Filings. Commissioners and officers shall comply with any applicable State or County requirements regarding Statements of Economic Interests, ethics disclosures, or related filings, where required by law.

Section 3. Website Postings and Public Notices. The Commission shall maintain required public postings and notices as required by OMA and FOIA, including posting meeting schedules, posting agendas within statutory timeframes, and maintaining approved minutes availability consistent with statute and Commission practice.

Section 4. Local Records Commission Compliance. The Commission shall maintain a current List of Public Records with the Local Records Commission, maintain approved records retention schedules, and complete Disposal Certificates where required prior to lawful destruction of records.

Section 5. Ethics and Training. Commissioners, officers, and staff shall complete all trainings required by law, including OMA training, FOIA officer training, ethics training, and sexual harassment prevention training where applicable, and shall maintain documentation of completion.

Section 6. Annual Report to the Governor. Pursuant to 330 ILCS 45/8, the Superintendent shall annually report to the Governor of the State of Illinois on or before January 1 of each year, providing such portions of the Commission's transactions as are required by law. The Superintendent shall retain a copy of each such report in the Commission's official records.

ARTICLE IV — JURISDICTION AND PURPOSE

Section 1. County Jurisdiction. The jurisdiction of the Commission shall extend to the geographic boundaries of Macoupin County, Illinois.

Section 2. Residency Requirement. Assistance under the Military Veterans Assistance Act shall be administered to eligible Veterans and their families who reside within Macoupin County, except as otherwise permitted by applicable law.

Section 3. Statutory Purpose. Pursuant to 330 ILCS 45/2, the Commission shall provide just and necessary assistance and services to eligible Veterans, their spouses, surviving spouses, and dependents residing in Macoupin County. The Commission shall serve as the central service office for all Veterans Service Organizations included as members, and shall promote the welfare of the Veteran community within Macoupin County through financial assistance, claims development, benefits counseling, and coordination with local, state, and federal agencies.

Section 4. Mandamus Remedy. Pursuant to 330 ILCS 45/2, if the Macoupin County Board fails or refuses to provide just and necessary funds recommended by the Commission, the Superintendent or any member VSO may apply to the circuit court for relief by mandamus requiring the County Board to appropriate and pay such sums. This statutory remedy is preserved and is not waived or limited by any provision of these By-Laws.

ARTICLE V — MEMBERSHIP, DELEGATES, AND VOTING

Section 1. VSO Definition and Eligibility. Pursuant to 330 ILCS 45/1, a qualifying Veteran Service Organization ("VSO") is a post, ship, camp, chapter, or detachment of a congressionally chartered or state chartered organization that: (i) is formed by and for Veterans; (ii) has a paid membership of at least fifteen (15) individuals; and (iii) provides responsible aid, assistance, or services to the Veteran community. The Superintendent is responsible for verifying VSO eligibility annually prior to the March 1 delegate designation deadline.

Section 2. Composition and Representation. The Commission shall be composed of representatives from eligible VSOs located within Macoupin County in accordance with 330 ILCS 45/9(a). Macoupin County currently recognizes eleven (11) eligible Veteran Service Organizations for purposes of Commission participation:

City / Location	Organization	Post
Brighton	American Legion	Post 476
Bunker Hill	American Legion	Post 578
Carlinville	American Legion	Post 554 (Guy Baird Post)
	Veterans of Foreign Wars	Post 1104
Mt. Olive	American Legion	Post 594
	Veterans of Foreign Wars	Post 5790
	AMVETS	Post 55
Palmyra	American Legion	Post 1034
Staunton	American Legion	Post 362
	Veterans of Foreign Wars	Post 1241
Virden	American Legion	Post 386

This list reflects current recognized organizations and shall be updated by Commission resolution as organizations qualify or disqualify under statute.

Section 3. Voting Block Option. Pursuant to 330 ILCS 45/9(a)(2) and (3), constituent VSOs of the same kind (e.g., multiple American Legion posts) may choose to join together and form a voting block of up to five (5) delegates and five (5) alternates to represent all such constituent VSOs, with the combined group retaining one (1) vote. This option is available to the member organizations of this Commission and shall be exercised, if at all, by written notice to the Superintendent prior to the annual March 1 designation deadline.

Section 4. Delegate Structure. Each eligible VSO shall appoint one (1) Primary Delegate and one (1) Alternate Delegate. The Alternate shall serve in the absence or incapacity of the Primary Delegate. All delegate designations must be submitted in writing to the Superintendent, signed by a duly authorized officer of the VSO, attesting that: (i) the VSO has a minimum of fifteen (15) paid members; and (ii) the selection was made in accordance with the VSO's own rules and requirements.

Section 5. Annual Designation Process. The Commission shall publish written notice to all VSOs on or before January 1 of each calendar year calling on them to select delegates and alternates. VSOs shall have sixty (60) days to respond. Completed designation forms must be returned to the Superintendent no later than March 1, consistent with 330 ILCS 45/9(a)(1). Delivery to the Commission office constitutes submission.

Section 6. Mid-Year Vacancies. Any vacancy of a delegate or alternate occurring after the annual March designation may be filled by written submission to the Superintendent by the affected VSO. The newly designated delegate or alternate shall assume their seat at the next Commission meeting.

Section 7. Alternate Delegates. When both designated delegates of a member organization are unable to attend a scheduled meeting, the member organization may send an approved alternate to attend and participate in their place. The alternate shall be a current officer or member in good standing of the sending organization. Designation of an alternate shall be communicated to the Recording Secretary prior to the commencement of the meeting. An alternate attending pursuant to this section shall have full voting rights for the duration of that meeting and shall be counted for purposes of quorum. No alternate may represent more than one member organization at any single meeting.

Section 8. Voting Authority. Each eligible VSO shall have one (1) vote. Only one Delegate per organization may vote at any given time. All Commission actions requiring a vote shall comply with 330 ILCS 45/9(a)(5), requiring approval by a majority of the full Commission membership.

Section 9. Definition of Full Commission Membership. For purposes of voting and quorum determination, 'full Commission membership' shall mean all authorized organizational voting seats established under statute — currently eleven (11) — not merely those present at a meeting, unless vacancies exist pursuant to statute.

Section 10. Employee Voting Restriction. Pursuant to 330 ILCS 45/9(a)(6), the Superintendent and any Commission employee shall not retain voting rights as a delegate or alternate while employed by the Commission.

Section 11. Delegate Disqualification. A delegate or alternate may not be, and must resign if they become, a member of the Macoupin County Board or hold any political office that may conflict with the interests of Veterans or this Commission.

Section 12. Proxy and Remote Voting. Proxy voting — giving one's vote to another member's representative — is not permitted. Remote attendance and voting at Commission meetings are not permitted unless expressly authorized by Commission policy adopted consistent with applicable law.

Section 13. Delegate Roll and Inspector of Elections. The Superintendent shall maintain a verified record roll call voting list of all duly designated delegates and alternates for use at Commission meetings. Upon the request of any three (3) member organizations acting through their representatives, the presiding officer shall appoint one or more inspectors to verify the accuracy of the roll and the results of any vote taken. Each inspector's report shall be in writing and shall constitute prima facie evidence of the voting results.

Section 14. Delegate Compensation. No delegate or alternate shall receive compensation for services to this Commission as a delegate or alternate. Delegates and alternates shall be allowed travel expenses to meetings

they attend in person, not to exceed amounts authorized by the Macoupin County Board Personnel Travel Regulations, as approved by the Commission.

Section 14. VSO Eligibility Disputes. If a question arises as to whether a Veteran Service Organization meets the eligibility requirements to participate in the Commission, the following procedure shall apply:

- (a) Any Commission member or the Superintendent may raise a written eligibility challenge with the Superintendent no later than fifteen (15) days before the March 1 designation deadline;
- (b) The Superintendent shall review available documentation and render a written determination within ten (10) days of receiving the challenge;
- (c) Any VSO whose eligibility is disputed shall be notified in writing and afforded an opportunity to submit documentation demonstrating compliance with the fifteen (15) paid member requirement and other statutory criteria;
- (d) The Superintendent's determination may be appealed to the full Commission membership, whose majority vote shall be final and controlling for that operating year; and
- (e) Pending resolution of any eligibility dispute, the affected VSO's delegate shall not be seated until the matter is resolved, unless the Commission by majority vote determines otherwise.

ARTICLE VI — OFFICERS

Section 1. Officers. The officers of the Commission shall be: President, Vice President, Recording Secretary, and Treasurer. The Commission may establish additional non-statutory officer positions by resolution where helpful to operations, provided such positions do not dilute the statutory voting authority of the full Commission.

Section 2. Qualifications. To be an officer, a person must be a properly seated Primary Delegate (not Alternate) representative of any member VSO at the time of election. An officer may not be, and must resign if they become, a member of the Macoupin County Board or hold any political office that may conflict with the interests of Veterans or this Commission.

Section 3. Election and Term. Officers shall be elected by majority vote of the full Commission membership at the annual meeting in January of each calendar year. Each officer shall hold office for one (1) year or until a successor is duly elected and qualified, unless otherwise established by Commission policy consistent with law.

Section 4. Vacancies. Any vacancy in an officer position may be filled by election at the next regular Commission meeting or a special meeting called for that purpose. An officer absent from three (3) consecutive regular meetings without cause shall be deemed to have vacated the position by majority vote of the Commission.

Section 5. Removal. Any officer elected by this Commission may be removed by a majority vote of the full Commission membership whenever in their judgment the best interests of the Commission would be served thereby, provided that written notice of the proposed removal has been delivered to the officer and all delegates no fewer than ten (10) days in advance of the vote.

Section 6. Duties — President. The President shall preside over all Commission meetings, enforce order and procedure, sign official documents as authorized by Commission action, ensure matters requiring a full membership vote are properly presented, and conduct the Superintendent's annual written evaluation as required by 330 ILCS 45/9(d).

Section 7. Duties — Vice President. The Vice President shall assist the President and assume all presidential duties in the President's absence or incapacity.

Section 8. Duties — Recording Secretary. The Recording Secretary shall ensure minutes are prepared and distributed, maintain a confidential register of delegate contact information, assist in giving all required notices, and ensure records are maintained and made available consistent with OMA and Local Records Act requirements.

Section 9. Duties — Treasurer. The Treasurer shall support fiscal oversight functions, assist the Superintendent in preparing the annual budget and funding request, receive and make available to all delegates the Superintendent's reports of warrants issued, and assist with audit readiness as directed by Commission policy.

Section 10. Officer Compensation. No officer shall receive compensation for services to this Commission as an officer. Officers shall be allowed travel expenses to all meetings they attend in person, not to exceed amounts authorized by the Macoupin County Board Personnel Travel Regulations, as approved by the Commission.

ARTICLE VII — MEETINGS AND PROCEDURES

Section 1. Regular Meetings. The Commission shall conduct regular scheduled meetings every other month beginning in January of each calendar year (January, March, May, July, September, November), with dates and times established and posted consistent with the Open Meetings Act (5 ILCS 120). The annual meeting shall be held in January, at which officers shall be elected and the Commission's annual business shall be conducted.

Section 2. Special Meetings. Special meetings may be called by the President or upon written request of any one-fifth (1/5) of the full Commission membership acting through their delegates. Notice of the date, time, place, and purpose of any special meeting shall be provided to all delegates and alternates not fewer than five (5) days prior to the meeting, consistent with 5 ILCS 120.

Section 3. Mandatory Special Meeting — Superintendent Vacancy. Pursuant to 330 ILCS 45/10(b), as enacted by P.A. 102-1132, if a Superintendent vacancy occurs and no regular Commission meeting is scheduled within thirty (30) days of that vacancy, a specially convened meeting of the full Commission membership shall be called within that thirty (30) day period. The Recording Secretary, with the assistance of Commission staff, shall cause notice to be sent to all delegates and alternates consistent with OMA requirements.

Section 4. Notice and Agenda. Notice of the date, time, and place of all regular meetings shall be posted on the Commission website and at the Commission office at the start of each operating year. An agenda for each regular and special meeting shall be posted at the Commission's principal office, at the meeting location if different, and on the Commission's website at least forty-eight (48) hours in advance, consistent with 5 ILCS 120/2.02.

Section 5. Quorum. A quorum shall consist of a majority of the full Commission membership — currently six (6) of eleven (11) voting seats. In the event that less than a majority of members are represented at a duly noticed meeting, the only action that may be taken is to adjourn the meeting.

Section 6. Parliamentary Authority. Meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, except where inconsistent with statute, OMA, or these By-Laws.

Section 7. Minutes and Records. Minutes shall be prepared and made available consistent with OMA, and all records shall be retained under the Local Records Act and Commission-approved retention schedule.

Section 8. Closed Sessions. Closed sessions, if any, shall be conducted only as expressly authorized by OMA (5 ILCS 120), with all required procedures followed, verbatim recordings or written minutes maintained, and periodic review of closed session minutes conducted as required by law.

Section 9. Waiver of Notice. Whenever any notice is required to be given under the provisions of these By-Laws, a written waiver thereof signed by the person entitled to such notice, whether before or after the time stated therein, shall be deemed equivalent to proper notice. Attendance at any meeting shall constitute waiver of notice thereof, unless the attendee objects at the beginning of the meeting to the holding of the meeting on grounds of improper notice and does not thereafter vote or participate.

Section 10. County Board Representative. Pursuant to 330 ILCS 45/9(a), the Macoupin County Board may appoint one (1) representative to attend Commission meetings in a non-voting, observational capacity. Such representative shall have no vote and shall not participate in deliberations unless recognized by the presiding officer.

ARTICLE VIII — COMMITTEES

Section 1. Finance Committee. A Finance Committee shall be established, composed of the Treasurer and two (2) additional Commission members appointed by the President promptly after each annual meeting. It shall be the duty of this Committee to work with the Superintendent to prepare a proposed budget and annual funding request for the fiscal year beginning October 1, and to submit the proposal to the full Commission for review and vote at or before the November meeting. The Finance Committee shall have no independent authority to bind the Commission; all budget and funding actions require approval by a majority of the full Commission membership.

Section 2. Additional Committees. The President may, with Commission approval, appoint such other standing or special committees as the work of the Commission may require. The President shall serve as an ex-officio member of all committees except any nominating committee. No committee shall exercise powers that belong to the full Commission membership under statute or these By-Laws.

ARTICLE IX — SUPERINTENDENT

Section 1. Appointment and At-Will Status. Pursuant to 330 ILCS 45/9(c), the Superintendent shall be selected, appointed, or hired by a majority vote of the full Commission membership. The Superintendent is an at-will employee who shall be answerable to, and shall report to, the Commission.

Section 2. Qualification. Pursuant to 330 ILCS 45/10(a), the Superintendent shall be an honorably discharged Veteran of the Armed Forces of the United States. The Commission recommends, but does not require, that the Superintendent hold appropriate VSO accreditation; statutory VA representation requirements apply when the Superintendent or staff provide representation before the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Section 3. Core Duties. The Superintendent is the chief administrative and executive officer of the Commission. The Superintendent shall, at minimum:

- (a) Administer the Standard of Needs and all Commission-adopted policies;
- (b) Review and approve itemized claims prior to warrant issuance as required by 330 ILCS 45/9(h);
- (c) Report all warrants issued and approved to the full Commission membership at each meeting;
- (d) Maintain complete and accurate assistance and financial records;
- (e) Prepare and present financial reports and the annual budget recommendation;
- (f) Supervise Commission staff consistent with 330 ILCS 45/10(h);
- (g) Ensure compliance with County-adopted policies pursuant to 330 ILCS 45/9(g);
- (h) Ensure audit readiness and cooperate with all lawful audit processes;
- (i) Coordinate required OMA postings, FOIA responses, and records retention;
- (j) Present all matters requiring Commission action to the full Commission membership; and
- (k) Submit the annual report to the Governor on or before January 1 each year, pursuant to 330 ILCS 45/8.

Section 4. Civil Service Exemption. Pursuant to 330 ILCS 45/10, the Superintendent and all other Commission employees are employees of the Veterans Assistance Commission and are not employees of Macoupin County. All persons elected or selected to fill positions provided for in the MVAA shall be exempt from the operation and provisions of any civil service act or laws of this State.

Section 5. Bonding. The Superintendent shall be bonded in the amount required by statute and Commission policy to ensure faithful performance of duties involving public funds, consistent with 330 ILCS 45/10.

Section 6. Conflict of Interest. The Superintendent shall not serve as a Delegate or Alternate, shall not hold elected office within the Commission while employed, and shall avoid outside employment or relationships that materially conflict with official duties, consistent with ethics law and Commission policy.

Section 7. Annual Evaluation. Pursuant to 330 ILCS 45/9(d), the Commission shall complete a written annual evaluation of the Superintendent within twelve (12) months of the prior evaluation. The evaluation shall be

conducted by the President, documented in writing, provided to the entire Commission membership, and retained in official records consistent with OMA and applicable personnel policies.

Section 8. Removal. Pursuant to 330 ILCS 45/9(e), the Superintendent may be involuntarily removed if delegates from no fewer than three (3) different and separate Veteran Service Organizations file a written request calling for removal. Prior to any removal vote, the Superintendent shall be afforded due process and a fair hearing before the full Commission membership. Removal requires a majority vote of the full Commission membership.

Section 9. Vacancy. Superintendent vacancies shall be filled in accordance with 330 ILCS 45/10(b). The Commission may appoint an interim Superintendent, who must be an honorably discharged Veteran, to facilitate orderly operations pending selection of a permanent Superintendent. If the next regular meeting will not occur within thirty (30) days of a vacancy, a specially convened meeting shall be called consistent with Article VII, Section 3.

Section 10. Resignation. The Superintendent shall provide written notice of resignation to the Commission. The Commission may waive any notice period by majority vote.

Section 11. Salary. The salary of the Superintendent shall be established by majority vote of the full Commission membership consistent with the Commission's adopted Compensation and Benefits Policy. In establishing compensation, the Commission shall be guided by recognized and established salary guidelines used by the County to compensate County employees, consistent with 330 ILCS 45/10. Final salary determination rests exclusively with the Commission.

ARTICLE X — VETERAN SERVICE OFFICER (VSO)

Section 1. Statutory Requirement. Pursuant to amendments to the Military Veterans Assistance Act including Public Act 102-0269, the Commission shall have a Veteran Service Officer ("VSO") to assist eligible Veterans and eligible family members with claims development, benefits counseling, and related Veteran services as authorized by law and Commission policy.

Section 2. Accreditation Requirement. Any individual providing representation before the United States Department of Veterans Affairs ("VA") on behalf of a claimant shall be accredited in accordance with applicable Federal law and regulation, including 38 CFR Part 14.629. The Commission maintains professional accreditation through the National Association of County Veterans Service Officers ("NACVSO"), recognized by the VA for accreditation and continuing education purposes. If accreditation lapses, VA representation authority shall be suspended until accreditation is fully restored.

Section 3. Continuing Education and Mandatory Conference Attendance. The VSO shall maintain accreditation in good standing, including completion of required continuing education units ("CEUs") as required by Federal regulation and NACVSO standards. Attendance at NACVSO-sanctioned training conferences is mandatory for all accredited VSOs, as such attendance is directly tied to the maintenance of VA accreditation under 38 CFR Part 14.629. If a required conference is missed, the Superintendent shall document the reason in writing and present it to the full Commission membership at the next regular meeting. Repeated failure to attend required NACVSO training without documented cause shall constitute grounds for review of the individual's continued accreditation status.

Section 4. Professional Development — IACVAC and IACO. The VSO and Superintendent shall participate in mandatory ongoing professional development, including: (a) bi-annual IACVAC conferences, which provide training on State law, VA policy changes, and benefits programs essential to VSO practice; and (b) IACO Spring and Fall Conferences, which provide training on county government governance, ethics, public policy, and compliance standards applicable to the Commission as a unit of local government. Attendance at these conferences is expected and shall be reported to the Commission annually. Travel, lodging, and per diem expenses shall be reimbursed consistent with Macoupin County Personnel Travel Regulations, as approved by the Commission.

Section 5. Scope of Duties. The VSO shall assist eligible Veterans, spouses, surviving spouses, and dependents with:

- (a) Preparing, developing, and submitting VA disability compensation and pension claims;
- (b) Supplemental claims, higher-level reviews, and appeals as authorized under 38 CFR;
- (c) Benefits counseling and eligibility guidance;
- (d) Coordination with the Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs (IDVA) and other State and Federal agencies; and
- (e) Referrals to appropriate community resources.

The VSO shall act in accordance with the MVAA, applicable Federal law and regulation, Commission policy, and the ethical standards governing VA representation.

Section 6. Administrative Structure. The VSO may be the Superintendent if properly accredited, or may be a separate employee of the Commission. All VSOs shall operate under the administrative supervision of the Superintendent and the governance oversight of the Commission.

Section 7. Documentation and Accountability. The Commission shall maintain documentation sufficient to demonstrate VSO accreditation status, CEU completion, and compliance with all applicable training and accreditation requirements.

ARTICLE XI — STAFFING, TRAINING, AND ACCREDITATION

Section 1. Staffing. The Commission may employ staff as authorized by 330 ILCS 45/10(h) and consistent with appropriations and Commission policy. Pursuant to 330 ILCS 45/10, the Superintendent shall, as far as possible, hire secretaries and other employees from among honorably discharged military Veterans, including those who have served or may still be serving as members of the Illinois National Guard or a reserve component of the Armed Forces, who did not receive a bad conduct or dishonorable discharge, or their spouses, surviving spouses, or children. All staff positions serve at the discretion of the Superintendent.

Section 2. Required Training. Commissioners and staff shall complete all trainings required by law, including OMA training, FOIA officer training, ethics training, and sexual harassment prevention training where applicable. Documentation of completion shall be maintained in Commission records. Additionally, the Superintendent shall attend IACO-sponsored training seminars and in-service sessions relevant to county government governance, ethics, and public policy, in support of the Commission's obligations as a unit of local government under 330 ILCS 45/9(g) and applicable County policy.

Section 3. NACVSO and VA Representation Standards. When the Commission or its staff provide representation before the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, such representation shall be provided only by individuals accredited as required by 38 CFR Part 14.629 and consistent with Commission policy. The Commission maintains accreditation through NACVSO, which is VA-approved, for the purpose of providing lawful VA representation and professional standards for VSOs.

Section 4. IACVAC and NACVSO Conference Attendance. The Commission shall maintain active membership and good standing in the Illinois Association of County Veterans Assistance Commissions (IACVAC), including submission of all required surveys and reports, payment of applicable dues, and mandatory participation in bi-annual IACVAC conferences. All accredited VSOs shall attend NACVSO-sanctioned training conferences as required to maintain VA accreditation in good standing under 38 CFR Part 14.629. The Superintendent shall track and report conference attendance to the Commission annually. Failure by any accredited staff member to meet mandatory attendance requirements shall be reported to the Commission and addressed consistent with Commission personnel policy.

Section 5. IACVAC Representation and Expenses. The Commission's representation at IACVAC shall consist of the Superintendent, plus one (1) Delegate and one (1) Alternate selected annually by the Commission. The Superintendent, Delegate, and Alternate shall be authorized and encouraged to attend IACVAC meetings and conferences. Travel, lodging, and per diem expenses shall be reimbursed consistent with Macoupin County Personnel Travel Regulations, as approved by the Commission. Commission staff who hold VSO accreditation

through NACVSO, or who are pursuing such accreditation, shall also be authorized to attend IACVAC conferences where attendance supports mandatory continuing education unit (CEU) requirements or accreditation maintenance obligations under 38 CFR Part 14.629. Expenses shall be reimbursed consistent with Macoupin County Personnel Travel Regulations, as approved by the Commission.

Section 6. Operational Best Practices. The Commission shall maintain operational best practices supporting accreditation readiness, including a Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) and other administrative readiness measures adopted by Commission policy.

ARTICLE XII — PURPOSE, FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE, AND STANDARD OF NEEDS

Section 1. Standard of Needs. The Commission shall adopt, by majority vote of the full Commission membership, a written Standard of Needs and related Financial Assistance Program policies establishing eligibility thresholds, documentation requirements, categories of assistance, benefit standards, internal controls, and procedures necessary for consistent and lawful administration.

Section 2. Superintendent Approval of Claims. Pursuant to 330 ILCS 45/9(h), no warrant or payment for assistance shall be issued without presentation of an itemized statement or claim approved by the Superintendent and reported to the full Commission membership. Financial assistance shall never be given in cash; all authorizations shall be made by voucher with required supporting documentation.

Section 3. Statutory Reporting Preservation. Nothing in these By-Laws shall be construed to limit, waive, or modify any reporting obligations imposed by 330 ILCS 45/9(h) or other applicable provisions of law.

Section 4. Public Aid and DHS Coordination. In adopting and administering the Standard of Needs and related financial assistance policies, the Commission may reference applicable Illinois Department of Human Services (DHS) guidelines, Illinois Public Aid Code standards (305 ILCS 5), and other established State benchmarks as supplemental guidance for establishing eligibility thresholds, income standards, and asset limitations. Where State funds administered through DHS are involved, the Commission shall comply with all applicable DHS procedures and regulations. Final eligibility and assistance determinations shall be made by the Superintendent pursuant to Commission-adopted policy and 330 ILCS 45/9(h).

ARTICLE XIII — FINANCES, AUDIT, AND FISCAL YEAR

Section 1. Fiscal Year. The fiscal year of the Commission shall run from October 1 of each year and expire on September 30 of the following year. [NOTE: The Commission’s current operating fiscal year runs October 1–September 30. The Macoupin County Board operates on an August–September fiscal year. Alignment of fiscal years is an agenda item scheduled for review and possible amendment at the May 2026 Board meeting.]

Section 2. Statutory Oversight. Pursuant to 330 ILCS 45/9(b), the Commission and Superintendent shall maintain oversight of the distribution of all monies and supplies appropriated for Veterans assistance, subject to such rules, regulations, and audit reviews as are required by the MVAA and approved by the Commission.

Section 3. Annual Audit. Pursuant to 330 ILCS 45/9(i), the Commission shall perform an annual audit in accordance with the Governmental Account Audit Act using either the auditing services provided by Macoupin County or the services of an independent auditor whose services shall be paid for by the Commission. A copy of the audit report shall be provided to the President or Chairperson of the Macoupin County Board.

Section 4. DHS Fund Administration. Where State funds administered through the Illinois Department of Human Services are allocated to the Commission for Veterans assistance pursuant to the Illinois Public Aid Code, the administration of such funds shall be subject to applicable DHS supervision, procedures, and regulations in addition to the requirements of the MVAA. The Superintendent shall comply with all applicable DHS requirements in the administration of State-sourced funds.

Section 5. Contracts and Warrants. The Commission, through its delegates, may authorize the Superintendent or other officers to enter into contracts or execute instruments in the name of and on behalf of the Commission. Pursuant to 330 ILCS 45/2, orders of the Superintendent shall constitute proper warrants for

the expenditure of Commission funds, subject to the itemized claim and approval requirements of Section 2 of this Article.

ARTICLE XIV — RELATIONSHIP WITH THE MACOUPIN COUNTY BOARD

Section 1. Statutory Funding Sources. Funding for the Commission may be derived from three statutory sources, if applicable: (1) a tax levied under 55 ILCS 5/5-2006 and 305 ILCS 5/12-21.13, at a minimum rate of 0.02% of the last known assessed value of taxable property in Macoupin County; (2) funds from the County general corporate fund; and (3) State funds from the Illinois Department of Human Services.

Section 2. Appropriation and Administration. The County Board retains authority to levy and appropriate funds as authorized by law. Once appropriated, the Commission administers those funds consistent with the MVAA, Commission policy, and applicable fiscal control requirements. The Superintendent and Commission employees are employees of the Veterans Assistance Commission and shall not be construed to be employees of Macoupin County.

Section 3. Adopt or Adapt County Policies. Pursuant to 330 ILCS 45/9(g), the Commission shall, in writing, adopt or adapt all applicable policies already established and in place in Macoupin County, including but not limited to policies related to: compensation and payroll; employee classification and benefits; procurement and purchasing; budgeting and financial controls; ethics and conflict of interest; sexual harassment prevention; records retention; information technology and cybersecurity; workplace conduct and disciplinary standards; and risk management and insurance. Those policies shall then be considered the policies of the Commission and shall be implemented and adhered to by the Superintendent and all Commission staff. The Commission shall amend its adopted policies whenever the County Board amends an applicable policy, within sixty (60) days of such amendment. The Commission has adopted a Compensation and Benefits Policy establishing salary structures, payroll procedures, and employee benefits for Commission staff, approved by majority vote of the full Commission membership, and shall update that policy whenever the County Board amends applicable compensation guidelines, consistent with 330 ILCS 45/9(g).

Section 4. Administrative Coordination and Facilities. Pursuant to 330 ILCS 45/10, the County shall provide the Commission's office and furnish all necessary supplies, including telephone, printing, stationery, and postage. The Commission may also coordinate with County administrative offices for payroll, procurement systems, facilities usage, records systems, and audit coordination.

Section 5. Non-Interference. The County Board shall not direct or interfere with: individual eligibility determinations; Superintendent claim approvals under 330 ILCS 45/9(h); Superintendent employment decisions under 330 ILCS 45/9(c) and 9(d); or Commission voting authority under 330 ILCS 45/9(a)(5). Nothing herein prevents lawful fiscal oversight, audit review, or administrative coordination required by law.

ARTICLE XV — PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

The rules contained in the most current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern the Commission in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with the Military Veterans Assistance Act, applicable Illinois or Federal law, OMA, or these By-Laws. In the event of conflict, the MVAA and applicable law shall control.

ARTICLE XVI — IACVAC MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Membership. The Veterans Assistance Commission of Macoupin County shall maintain active membership in the Illinois Association of County Veterans Assistance Commissions, Inc. (IACVAC).

ARTICLE XVII — NACVSO MEMBERSHIP AND ACCREDITATION

Section 1. Membership. The Veterans Assistance Commission of Macoupin County shall maintain active membership and good standing in the National Association of County Veterans Service Officers (NACVSO),

the VA-approved accreditation organization through which the Commission maintains its authority to provide representation before the United States Department of Veterans Affairs under 38 CFR Part 14.629.

Section 2. Accreditation Obligation. The Commission's VA representation authority is conditioned upon maintaining active NACVSO accreditation in good standing. The Superintendent shall monitor accreditation status, ensure timely renewal of all VSO accreditations, and report accreditation status to the Commission annually. If accreditation lapses, VA representation authority shall be suspended until fully restored, and the Superintendent shall report the lapse and restoration plan to the Commission at the next regular meeting.

Section 3. Annual Conference Attendance. All accredited VSOs employed by the Commission shall attend NACVSO-sanctioned national training conferences as required to satisfy continuing education unit (CEU) requirements and maintain VA accreditation in good standing. Travel, lodging, and per diem expenses shall be reimbursed consistent with Macoupin County Personnel Travel Regulations, as approved by the Commission.

ARTICLE XVIII — IACO PARTICIPATION

Section 1. Recognition as a Unit of Local Government. The Veterans Assistance Commission of Macoupin County, Illinois is a distinct unit of local government created by statute. As such, the Commission and its Superintendent are subject to the governance standards, ethics requirements, and public policy obligations applicable to county officials and units of government in the State of Illinois, including those promoted by the Illinois Association of County Officials ("IACO").

Section 2. IACO Membership and Participation. The Commission shall maintain awareness of and, where practicable, participation in the Illinois Association of County Officials (IACO), P.O. Box 588, Rochester, Illinois 62563. The Superintendent, as the chief administrative officer of a unit of local government, is encouraged to maintain active engagement with IACO to support professional development, legislative awareness, and adherence to county governance standards.

Section 3. Mandatory Conference Attendance. The Superintendent shall attend the IACO Spring Conference and IACO Fall Conference annually, as these conferences provide essential training in county government governance, ethics, responsible public policy, and compliance standards directly applicable to the Commission's obligations under 330 ILCS 45/9(g) and its relationship with the Macoupin County Board. Attendance shall be reported to the Commission at the next regular meeting following each conference.

Section 4. Public Aid and County Compliance. As a unit of local government administering financial assistance pursuant to the Military Veterans Assistance Act and in coordination with Illinois Public Aid guidelines, the Commission shall remain current with applicable Illinois Department of Human Services standards, County policy requirements, and guidance issued through IACO relevant to the administration of public assistance programs. The Superintendent shall monitor and apply applicable Public Aid guidelines and County-adopted policies in the administration of all Veterans financial assistance programs.

Section 5. Expense Authorization. Travel, lodging, and per diem expenses for the Superintendent and any authorized Commission representative attending IACO conferences and training sessions shall be reimbursed consistent with Macoupin County Personnel Travel Regulations, as approved by the Commission.

ARTICLE XIX — INDEMNIFICATION

Section 1. General Power to Indemnify. The Commission shall have power to indemnify any person who was or is a party, or is threatened to be made a party, to any threatened, pending, or completed action, suit, or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative, or investigative, by reason of the fact that he or she is or was a director, officer, employee, or agent of the Commission, against expenses (including attorneys' fees), judgments, fines, and amounts paid in settlement actually and reasonably incurred, if such person acted in good faith and in a manner reasonably believed to be in the best interests of the Commission.

Section 2. Reimbursement of Expenses. To the extent that a present or former officer or employee of the Commission has been successful on the merits in the defense of any action, suit, or proceeding, such person

shall be indemnified against expenses (including attorneys' fees) actually and reasonably incurred in connection therewith.

Section 3. Insurance. The Commission shall have power to purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of any person who is or was an officer, employee, or agent of the Commission against any liability asserted against such person and incurred in any such capacity, whether or not the Commission would have the power to indemnify such person against such liability.

ARTICLE XX — AMENDMENTS

Section 1. Amendment Threshold. Pursuant to 330 ILCS 45/9(f), these By-Laws may only be revised by a minimum two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of approval from a majority of the full Commission membership, with notice of the proposed amendment provided to all delegates in writing consistent with OMA and Commission procedure not fewer than five (5) days before the vote.

Section 2. Automatic Conformity to Law. If statute is amended and conflicts with any provision of these By-Laws, the statute shall control and these By-Laws shall be conformed at the earliest practicable time by Commission action, consistent with 330 ILCS 45/9(f).

ARTICLE XXI — SEVERABILITY

If any provision of these By-Laws is held invalid or unenforceable by a court of competent jurisdiction, the remaining provisions shall remain in full force and effect. Any provision found to conflict with the MVAA or applicable law shall be deemed automatically superseded by the controlling statute.

CERTIFICATION OF ADOPTION

Adopted by the Veterans Assistance Commission of Macoupin County, Illinois, by the required minimum two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of approval from a majority of the full Commission membership on this _____ day of _____, 20____.

Date: _____
President, Veterans Assistance Commission of Macoupin County, Illinois

Date: _____
Recording Secretary, Veterans Assistance Commission of Macoupin County, Illinois

— END OF BY-LAWS —