

# New Hampshire Military Leadership Team

*A Meeting to Build Partnerships & Improve Services for  
New Hampshire Veterans, Service Members and their Families*

December 27, 2022

10:00am – 11:30am

Virtual Meeting via Zoom

## New Hampshire Military Leadership Team Attendance

A	Major General David Mikolaities, Adjutant General, NH National Guard
X	Warren Perry, Deputy Adjutant General, NH National Guard; MLT Co-Chair
X	Kevin Forrest, Director, Manchester VA Medical Center; MLT Co-Chair
X	Amy Cook, Administrator, Community Based Military Programs, NH DMAVS; MLT Facilitator
X	Jim Adams, Chair, NH State Veterans Council
A	Steve Ahnen, President, NH Hospital Association
X	Matt Albuquerque, Next Step Bionics and Prosthetics
X	Pete Burdett, Civilian Aide to the Secretary of the Army
X	Madeline Dreusicke, NH State Veterans Council
X	Ed Drury, Community Behavioral Health Association
X	Brendan Finn, NH State Veterans Council
A	William Gaudreau, Director, Division of Veteran Services, NH DMAVS
X	Jason Grower, Regional Director of Operations, Dead River Company
X	Karen Hebert, Director, Division of Economic and Housing Stability, DHHS
A	Ena Lima, Director, VA Regional Benefits Offices in MA, NH & VT
A	Paul Lloyd, Chair, State Veterans Advisory Committee
X	Kim MacKay, Commandant, NH Veterans Home
A	Sarah Morrissey, Employment Service Bureau Director, NH Employment Security
A	Vacant, Family Representative
A	Vacant, State Approving Agency, Education
A	Dr. Brett Rusch, Director, WRJ VA Medical Center
X	Roger Sevigny, NH Veterans Council
<b>Guests In Attendance</b>	
X	Sarah Classy, VA Regional Benefits Offices in MA, NH & VT

## Meeting Minutes

### I. Welcome, Introductions, Membership Updates

This is Amy Cook's last meeting as she will be moving to a new position at NAMI NH.

- II. Review of October Minutes**—October 2022 minutes were reviewed. Brendan F. moved to accept the minutes. Pete B. 2<sup>nd</sup>, all members approved. The October 2022 minutes can be found on the DMAVS—MLT website page: <https://www.dmavs.nh.gov/about-us/councils-and-committees/nh-military-leadership-team>.

### III. MLT Initiative Status Updates

#### A. Legislative Update—Warren Perry

831 LSRs have been published to date and there will probably be about 200+ more. Establishing PFAS registry in NH—may be related to the PFAS registry that Bill Gaudreau takes names for already. A bill for voter registration that may affect military; discrimination against Veterans and price discrimination against other protected classes; a bill to recognize Space Force; authorized

license decals, workforce training programs. Tracking about 19 others but don't relate directly to Veterans. Will start scheduling hearings pretty soon.

**B. NHVFB Program**

A monthly Lunch & Learn Series continues to have good attendance and a schedule is being developed for 2023. DCBMP will also be hosting a new series in 2023 they are calling the Frago Series. This webinar series will have topics of interest for the military/Veteran community, focusing on topics they may find useful during life transitions and challenges, and will be promoted to NH military/Veterans but also those outside New Hampshire. Anyone is welcome to attend.

Information about the Lunch & Learn Series and recordings of webinars:

<https://www.dmavs.nh.gov/about-us/nh-veteran-friendly-businesses/nh-vfb-lunch-learn-series>

Information about the Frago Series: <https://www.dmavs.nh.gov/transition-and-career-resources-militaryveterans/militaryveteran-learning-series>

**IV. Old Business**

**A. Franklin Campus**

Met with Kathy Coon (COO, Easterseals) & Ginger Munson in December. Still in exploratory phase to determine what services need to be on campus. Have contractor to start work on buildings. They also presented at SVAC. There may be an opportunity to relocate the Tilton CBOC to the Franklin campus. Will be important for leaders within the Veteran community to give Easterseals good feedback about what is needed and would be useful. Ginger has distributed a survey to community partners to provide feedback. This will be sent out by Amy after the meeting. Discussion took place about ideas that can be shared with Easterseals.

**B. Family Representative vacancy—review**

Karen will put out through child support team to see if they have ideas. Jim is also working through a couple possibilities as well and will be able to update soon.

**V. New Business**

None

**VI. Information Briefs**

**A. VA Medical Center, Manchester—Kevin Forrest**

Received news that the OR will be out of commission until about 4/1 due to water damage. In interim staff have been doing procedures at WRJ VA. They also are sharing space at Lowell CBOC for pain procedures. Kevin speaking with other NH hospitals as well. Rebuilt laboratory and moved into new space—target for opening up a stat lab to support urgent care and outpatient clinics is 1/9. Continue with PACT Act toxic exposure screenings. They've seen an increase in enrollment as a result of the screenings. New Public Affairs Officer starting in January.

Dr. Rusch will be taking over as Interim Director at VA Connecticut effective 1/3/23. It's forecast to be for 90 days then Dr. Rusch will return. Becky Rhodes will be taking over in WRJ VA until he returns.

**B. VBA—Sarah Classy**

Gearing up for PACT Act claims processing. Continue to encourage people to file claims. Will prioritize cancer claims. VBA willing to do presentations for outreach purposes. Let Sarah or Ena know. Discussion took place about how VSOs are procedurally connecting people to VA for services as well.

**C. DHHS—Karen Hebert**

Electric/Heating assistance programs—Karen has information she can distribute, then please distribute through own channels so it can be promoted to as many people as possible this winter. Administered through Dept of Energy. CAPs are where you apply and they do home visits if you cannot visit the office. They also may do phone applications. An omnibus bill has been signed that will result in many Medicaid recipients losing benefits if they do not complete a renewal. DHHS can help with transition to new healthcare plans if necessary. For military families, they may be affected

if they receive SNAP (food benefits). SNAP emergency allotment could be ending in February and this could be a significant reduction in benefits for some families. DHHS will be messaging where assistance can be obtained if necessary. Received \$4m from GOFERR to add capacity for winter shelters and fund warming shelters in each county as well. The emergency assistance related to housing will be ending soon as well.

**D. DMAVS—Warren Perry**

DVS—about 240 appointments/month and each appointment they are promoting filing under PACT Act. 100% staffed and they are all trained. Cemetery getting ready for next expansion. Wreaths will be picked up on 1/7/23. Averaging 115 burials per month. DCBMP—Amy's position will be vacant for a bit of time to ensure that the right person is hired. Legislative approval was received to move Amy and Shawn from unclassified to classified system. Need to pursue final approvals. A new person will be hired when those pieces are completed. DMAVS will be working through next legislative session.

**E. NH Veterans Home--Kim MacKay**

126 residents and 5 pending. Increased numbers for female population. Staffing continues to be a problem. Food service industry in particular in addition to nursing and volunteers who can help with food service.

**VII. Next meeting date**

March 28, 2023; 10am-12:00pm

Edward Cross Training Complex, Pembroke, NH