

New Hampshire Military Leadership Team

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

February 22, 2022

10:00am – 11:30am

Edward Cross Training Complex, Pembroke, NH

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
X	Steve Ahnen, President, NH Hospital Association
A	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
X	Margaret (Peggy) LaBrecque, Commandant, NH Veterans Home
X	Ena Lima, Director, VA Regional Benefits Offices in MA, NH & VT
A	Paul Lloyd, Chair, State Veterans Advisory Committee
A	Sarah Morrissey, Employment Service Bureau Director, NH Employment Security
X	Ginger Munson, Family Representative
A	Jeffrey Newman, Administrator, Division of Higher Education, NH Department of Education
A	Dr. Brett Rusch, Director, WRJ VA Medical Center
X	Roger Sevigny, NH Veterans Council
GUESTS IN ATTENDANCE:	
X	Marcos Lugo-Fontanez, VBA Regional Benefits Offices
X	Chris Mooney, VBA Regional Benefits Offices
X	Dave Kenney, representing State Veterans Advisory Committee
X	Kim MacKay, incoming Commandant, NH Veterans Home

Meeting Minutes

I. Welcome & Introductions

MLT members participated in the meeting in-person and via a virtual Zoom link. [Post Note: It came to the attention of the Facilitator after the meeting that a couple members used the old Webex link to try to access the meeting. Please note that the virtual platform has transitioned to Zoom. You should delete any old Webex meeting invitations from your calendar.]

Two new MLT members were introduced. Karen Hebert, Director, Division of Economic and Housing Stability, DHHS. Ed Drury, Community Behavioral Health Association. Ena Lima also announced that she has been promoted to the position of Director, VA Regional Benefits Offices in MA, NH & VT and will continue to represent the VBA Regional Benefits Offices at MLT meetings.

Additionally, Kim MacKay was introduced to the MLT by Peggy LaBrecque. Kim is the incoming new Commandant of the NHVH and will be taking over the role upon Peggy's retirement that is forthcoming this month.

II. Review of October Minutes—No corrections made to the October 2021 minutes. Peggy L. moved to accept the minutes as written. Jim A. 2nd, all members approved. The October minutes can be found on the DMAVS—MLT website page: <https://www.dmavs.nh.gov/about-us/councils-and-committees/nh-military-leadership-team>. The December 2021 meeting was canceled; no minutes to approve.

III. Initiative Status Updates

A. Legislative Updates—Warren Perry

Details are sent regarding status of all LSRs the Department is tracking in the LSR Tracker compiled by Warren P. and distributed by him and also Amy C. Each week Warren compiles updates on the status of each.

B. Veteran-Friendly Business Recognition Program Update—Amy Cook

Number of recognized businesses continue to increase. Newly revised application for 2022 available on website. Businesses in network are interested in coordinating a national recruitment campaign to encourage Veterans to choose New Hampshire for where they live, work, serve and play. This will help fill critical workforce shortages. SNHU will be hosting a national recruitment event for the Network in fall 2022. Approximately 1,800 military-connected students and alumni from multiple colleges/universities across the nation will be invited to attend. Network would also like to coordinate a CEO Round Table to bring together CEOs, TAG, Commissioners to discuss strategies for recruiting Veterans to NH.

C. Supports for Military Spouses/Families—Ginger Munson

Focus for communicating information about resources and services available to families will be on utilizing the Department's new Facebook page. On Facebook, search for "State of NH Department of Military Affairs and Veterans Services".

IV. Old Business

A. Update on efforts to develop Veteran campus in Franklin

\$21 million has been allocated to develop a Veterans Campus in Franklin, NH. Easterseals NH will be leading the efforts and coordinating community partners to collaborate. No definitive plans have been set yet, but early reports indicate there will be some housing available there as well as other services.

B. Consideration of new/additional family representation

Discussion took place regarding where the group may be able to recruit additional family representation. Fleet & Family Services at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, Reserve components, recruiters. Members will continue to seek additional family representation.

V. New Business

A. Veteran Initiatives Around the State of New Hampshire

- 1) New state system to address mental health crises—new phone #, 988, Rapid Response, Mobile Crisis, system transformation

Amy C. shared a video about the new system that will be implemented in NH. It will include the new 988 number for mental health crises, a rapid response and mobile crisis.

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=M6BPxH09tqU>

Question arose during discussion if 988 is currently active in NH? Answer confirmed post-meeting: Some phone carriers have made 988 available now; however, landlines cannot

access 988 yet and some cell phone carriers cannot either. Additionally, 988 will send your call to a call center local to your area code. So, if you have a cell phone area code for a state that has not yet activated 988, then you will not reach 988. The national roll out of 988 is scheduled for July. For now, it is safe to refer people experiencing a mental health crisis to the Suicide Prevention Hotline, the Veterans Crisis Line or 1-833-710-6477. All these numbers will continue to work after 988 is launched.

2) DHHS Closed Loop Referral System

Amy C. has been involved with the team at DHHS planning for implementation of the CLR. A RFP for the vendor will be published within the next month. This will transform the way in which referrals for healthcare and mental/behavioral services are made and tracked in NH. The DMAVS is contributing funds towards the development of the system because it will be a valuable tool to serving Veterans and accessing data and information related to the trends for the population.

VI. Information Briefs

A. Recognition and Appreciation for Peggy LaBrecque.

Peggy is retiring as the 10th, and first female, Commandant of the NH Veterans Home. Warren presented her with recognition from the Adjutant General for her service and spoke about how her service positively impacted not only the Veterans at the NHVH, but also those across New Hampshire. Peggy will be greatly missed by members of the MLT and all expressed appreciation for her contributions to the Team over the past many years.

B. Member Updates & Announcements—

1) VA Medical Center, Manchester—Kevin Forrest

An article about the Manchester VAMC was written by the State Veterans Council and published in the Fosters newspaper. Great article, well-deserved.

3/2/22 Secretary of the VA will release market recommendations to Commission for review. This will influence decisions and the future operations of all VAs. 3/2-3/15 briefings about the recommendations will be conducted. This will influence strategic planning for the VAMC.

2) VBA—Ena Lima

VBA hiring nationally for toxic exposure claims, 30 new employees hired recently for this region. Continue to work through back log of 200,000 claims. Claims are taking a little longer to process (140-160 days).

3) Dept of Military Affairs & Veterans Services—Warren Perry

NHNG currently supporting 24 hospitals + 10 long-term care facilities. Filled last two vacancies at DVS. # of appointments per month are up from recent months, but still not at pre-COVID peak. Cemetery is performing above average with regards to interments per month.

4/14/22 a young boy from California will be putting flags and flowers on headstones—he is visiting one Veterans Cemetery in every state.

Division of CBMP is working through logistics to getting funding out to providers.

4) State Veterans Council—Jim Adams

Semi-annual meeting with TAG this week

5) Civilian Aide to the Army—Pete Burdett

Annual meeting with the Secretary of the Army postponed. New date TBA.

6) Veterans Home—Kim MacKay

Recently had a small COVID outbreak at NHVH; total of 16 Veterans, only 6 active now. NHVH receiving support and resources to increase pay of current LNAs and recruit additional staff. Will be conducting on-site training. Holding off on new admissions at this time due to limited staffing. Residents participating in telehealth services with VAMC and it's going well.

VII. Next meeting date—April 26, 2022 10:00am-11:30am

Location: Edward Cross Training Complex, 722 Riverwood Dr, Pembroke, NH; Multi-purpose room

Also, virtual attendance via **Zoom** will be provided (see below). Please delete any old invitations you may have using the Webex platform!

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/97907486646?pwd=QytNQnFBZEJBQWZKcDNrZVZUUiRUT09>

Meeting ID: 979 0748 6646

Passcode: 228169

One tap mobile

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