



COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

Commission on Veterans Affairs

Recommendation Number: (20220119-3b): Rename the Veterans Services Office to HRD
USERRA Program

WHEREAS, the City of Austin Human Resources Department Veteran Services Office (HRDVSO) supports City employees who are veterans, guard, and reserve members of the armed forces. HRDVSO Office is a resource for individual employees, City departments, and City management.

WHEREAS, the HRDVSO was created to ensure compliance with the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 (USERRA) and is an inward-facing program meant to assist city employees in the National Guard, Reserves, or those ordered to active duty. USERRA applies to members of the Armed Forces, Reserves, National Guard, and other "Uniformed Services" (including the National Disaster Medical System and the Commissioned Corps of the Public Health Service).

WHEREAS, Texas Labor Code §302.151 assimilates United States Code 38 USC §101(2) and defines a Veteran as a person who served in the active military, naval, or air service, and who was discharged or released therefrom under conditions other than dishonorable. Active services include full-time duty in the National Guard or a Reserve component, other than full-time for training purposes. In accordance with the various statutes, Veterans are no longer serving in the armed forces. The primary purpose of the Veterans Service office was to assist city employees who are National Guard and Reserves. The majority of those that fall under USERRA are not Veterans; however, they are Guard and Reservists who have not yet become Veterans since they have not been discharged from service and met specific requirements.

WHEREAS, over 50,000 veterans living in the Capital area are not city employees who are often seeking veteran services. The name, City of Austin Veterans Service Office insinuates that they provide services for veterans. This misnomer has led many in the Veterans Community to believe the City of Austin offers services to Austin veterans. The name Veteran Service office does not reflect their primary function of assisting non-veterans who are National Guard and Reservist who are city employees.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Commission on Veteran Affairs recommends that the name of the City of Austin Human Resources Department Veterans Service Office be changed to the HRD USERRA program. This action will alleviate the confusion and assist with the efficient delivery of services.

Date of Approval: January 19, 2022

Record of the vote: Unanimous on a 7-0 vote, Commissioner Denny motion, Commissioner Salazar second, with the following members voting in favor of adoption:

Chair Jimenez

Jason Denny

Alfred Bingham

Kevin Lenau

Maria Brown-Spence

Pete Salazar

Jose Carrasco

Attest: _____ *Jonathan Babiak*

Jonathan Babiak, Staff Liaison