

(Added Pub. L. 103-446, title V, §509(a), Nov. 2, 1994, 108 Stat. 4665; amended Pub. L. 104-275, title V, §501(a)-(c), Oct. 9, 1996, 110 Stat. 3340.)

#### PRIOR PROVISIONS

Prior section 317, added Pub. L. 102-218, §1(a), Dec. 11, 1991, 105 Stat. 1671; amended Pub. L. 103-446, title XII, §1201(e)(4), Nov. 2, 1994, 108 Stat. 4685, related to Chief Minority Affairs Officer, prior to repeal by Pub. L. 103-446, §509(a).

#### AMENDMENTS

1996—Subsec. (b). Pub. L. 104-275, §501(a), inserted “career or” before “noncareer”.

Subsec. (d)(10) to (12). Pub. L. 104-275, §501(b), added pars. (10) and (11) and redesignated former par. (10) as (12).

Subsec. (g). Pub. L. 104-275, §501(c), added subsec. (g).

### § 318. Center for Women Veterans

(a) There is in the Department a Center for Women Veterans. There is at the head of the Center a Director.

(b) The Director shall be a career or noncareer appointee in the Senior Executive Service. The Director shall be appointed for a term of six years.

(c) The Director reports directly to the Secretary or the Deputy Secretary concerning the activities of the Center.

(d) The Director shall perform the following functions with respect to veterans who are women:

(1) Serve as principal adviser to the Secretary on the adoption and implementation of policies and programs affecting veterans who are women.

(2) Make recommendations to the Secretary, the Under Secretary for Health, the Under Secretary for Benefits, and other Department officials for the establishment or improvement of programs in the Department for which veterans who are women are eligible.

(3) Promote the use of benefits authorized by this title by veterans who are women and the conduct of outreach activities to veterans who are women, in conjunction with outreach activities carried out under chapter 77 of this title.

(4) Disseminate information and serve as a resource center for the exchange of information regarding innovative and successful programs which improve the services available to veterans who are women.

(5) Conduct and sponsor appropriate social and demographic research on the needs of veterans who are women and the extent to which programs authorized under this title meet the needs of those veterans, without regard to any law concerning the collection of information from the public.

(6) Analyze and evaluate complaints made by or on behalf of veterans who are women about the adequacy and timeliness of services provided by the Department and advise the appropriate official of the Department of the results of such analysis or evaluation.

(7) Consult with, and provide assistance and information to, officials responsible for administering Federal, State, local, and private programs that assist veterans, to encourage those officials to adopt policies which promote

the use of those programs by veterans who are women.

(8) Advise the Secretary when laws or policies have the effect of discouraging the use of benefits by veterans who are women.

(9) Publicize the results of medical research which are of particular significance to veterans who are women.

(10) Advise the Secretary and other appropriate officials on the effectiveness of the Department's efforts to accomplish the goals of section 492B of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 289a-2) with respect to the inclusion of women in clinical research and on particular health conditions affecting women's health which should be studied as part of the Department's medical research program and promote cooperation between the Department and other sponsors of medical research of potential benefit to veterans who are women.

(11) Provide support and administrative services to the Advisory Committee on Women Veterans established under section 542 of this title.

(12) Perform such other duties consistent with this section as the Secretary shall prescribe.

(e) The Secretary shall ensure that the Director is furnished sufficient resources to enable the Director to carry out the functions of the Center in a timely manner.

(f) The Secretary shall include in documents submitted to Congress by the Secretary in support of the President's budget for each fiscal year—

(1) detailed information on the budget for the Center;

(2) the Secretary's opinion as to whether the resources (including the number of employees) proposed in the budget for that fiscal year are adequate to enable the Center to comply with its statutory and regulatory duties; and

(3) a report on the activities and significant accomplishments of the Center during the preceding fiscal year.

(Added Pub. L. 103-446, title V, §509(a), Nov. 2, 1994, 108 Stat. 4666; amended Pub. L. 104-275, title V, §501(a), (d), Oct. 9, 1996, 110 Stat. 3340, 3341.)

#### PRIOR PROVISIONS

Prior sections 321, 322, and 331 to 335 were renumbered sections 1121, 1122, and 1131 to 1135 of this title, respectively.

Prior section 336, Pub. L. 85-857, Sept. 2, 1958, 72 Stat. 1123, set forth the conditions under which wartime rates were payable to any veteran otherwise entitled to compensation under subchapter IV of chapter 11 of this title, prior to repeal by Pub. L. 92-328, title I, §108(c), title III, §301(b), June 30, 1972, 86 Stat. 396, 398, effective July 1, 1973.

Prior sections 337, 341, and 342 were renumbered sections 1137, 1141, and 1142 of this title, respectively.

Prior section 343, Pub. L. 85-857, Sept. 2, 1958, 72 Stat. 1124, prescribed conditions under which wartime rates of compensation were payable, prior to repeal by Pub. L. 93-295, title II, §206(b), title IV, §401, May 31, 1974, 88 Stat. 183, 184, effective May 1, 1974.

Prior sections 351 to 355 were renumbered sections 1151 to 1155 of this title, respectively.

Prior section 356, Pub. L. 85-857, Sept. 2, 1958, 72 Stat. 1125, provided for a minimum rating for veterans with arrested tuberculosis, prior to repeal by Pub. L. 90-493, §4, Aug. 19, 1968, 82 Stat. 809, but repeal not applicable

in case of veteran who on Aug. 19, 1968, was receiving or entitled to receive compensation for tuberculosis which in the judgment of the Administrator had reached a condition of complete arrest.

Prior sections 357 to 363 were renumbered sections 1157 to 1163 of this title, respectively.

Prior sections 401 and 402 were renumbered sections 1301 and 1302 of this title, respectively.

Prior section 403, Pub. L. 85-857, Sept. 2, 1958, 72 Stat. 1127; Pub. L. 91-96, §2, Oct. 27, 1969, 83 Stat. 144, defined Reserve Officer Training Corps annual training duty and authorized travel to and from such duty as active military service for the purposes of chapter 11 of this title and former section 722 of this title, prior to repeal by Pub. L. 97-306, title I, §113(b)(1), (d), Oct. 14, 1982, 96 Stat. 1432, 1433, effective Oct. 1, 1982, with respect to deaths and disabilities resulting from diseases or injuries incurred or aggravated after Sept. 30, 1982, and Oct. 1, 1983, with respect to deaths and disabilities incurred or aggravated before Oct. 1, 1982.

Prior sections 404, 410 to 418, and 421 to 423 were renumbered sections 1304, 1310 to 1318, and 1321 to 1323 of this title, respectively.

#### AMENDMENTS

1996—Subsec. (b). Pub. L. 104-275, §501(a), inserted “career or” before “noncareer”.

Subsec. (d)(10). Pub. L. 104-275, §501(d), substituted “(42 U.S.C. 289a-2) with respect to the inclusion of women in clinical research and on” for “(relating to the inclusion of women and minorities in clinical research) and of”.

#### ASSESSMENT OF USE BY WOMEN VETERANS OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS HEALTH SERVICES

Pub. L. 104-262, title III, §323, Oct. 9, 1996, 110 Stat. 3196, provided that:

“(a) REPORTS TO UNDER SECRETARY FOR HEALTH.—The Center for Women Veterans of the Department of Veterans Affairs (established under section 509 of Public Law 103-446 [enacting this section and section 317 of this title] and repealing former section 317 of this title), in consultation with the Advisory Committee on Women Veterans, shall assess the use by women veterans of health services through the Department of Veterans Affairs, including counseling for sexual trauma and mental health services. The Center shall submit to the Under Secretary for Health of the Department of Veterans Affairs a report not later than April 1, 1997, and April 1 of each of the two following years, on—

“(1) the extent to which women veterans described in paragraphs (1) and (2) of section 1710(a) of title 38, United States Code, fail to seek, or face barriers in seeking, health services through the Department, and the reasons therefor; and

“(2) recommendations, if indicated, for encouraging greater use of such services, including (if appropriate) public service announcements and other outreach efforts.

“(b) REPORTS TO CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—Not later than July 1, 1997, and July 1 of each of the two following years, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and House of Representatives a report containing—

“(1) the most recent report of the Center for Women Veterans under subsection (a);

“(2) the views of the Under Secretary for Health on such report's findings and recommendations; and

“(3) a description of the steps being taken by the Secretary to remedy any problems described in the report.”

#### § 319. Office of Employment Discrimination Complaint Adjudication

(a)(1) There is in the Department an Office of Employment Discrimination Complaint Adjudication. There is at the head of the Office a Director.

(2) The Director shall be a career appointee in the Senior Executive Service.

(3) The Director reports directly to the Secretary or the Deputy Secretary concerning matters within the responsibility of the Office.

(b)(1) The Director is responsible for making the final agency decision within the Department on the merits of any employment discrimination complaint filed by an employee, or an applicant for employment, with the Department. The Director shall make such decisions in an impartial and objective manner.

(2) No person may make any ex parte communication to the Director or to any employee of the Office with respect to a matter on which the Director has responsibility for making a final agency decision.

(c) Whenever the Director has reason to believe that there has been retaliation against an employee by reason of the employee asserting rights under an equal employment opportunity law, the Director shall report the suspected retaliatory action directly to the Secretary or Deputy Secretary, who shall take appropriate action thereon.

(d)(1) The Office shall employ a sufficient number of attorneys and other personnel as are necessary to carry out the functions of the Office. Attorneys shall be compensated at a level commensurate with attorneys employed by the Office of the General Counsel.

(2) The Secretary shall ensure that the Director is furnished sufficient resources in addition to personnel under paragraph (1) to enable the Director to carry out the functions of the Office in a timely manner.

(3) The Secretary shall ensure that any performance appraisal of the Director of the Office of Employment Discrimination Complaint Adjudication or of any employee of the Office does not take into consideration the record of the Director or employee in deciding cases for or against the Department.

(Added Pub. L. 105-114, title I, §102(a)(1), Nov. 21, 1997, 111 Stat. 2280.)

#### EFFECTIVE DATE

Section 102(c) of Pub. L. 105-114 provided that: “Section 319 of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a), shall take effect 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act [Nov. 21, 1997].”

#### REPORTS ON IMPLEMENTATION

Section 102(b) of Pub. L. 105-114 provided that: “The Director of the Office of Employment Discrimination Complaint Adjudication of the Department of Veterans Affairs (established by section 319 of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a)) shall submit to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and to Congress reports on the implementation and the operation of that office. The first such report shall be submitted not later than April 1, 1998, and subsequent reports shall be submitted not later than January 1, 1999, and January 1, 2000.”

#### § 320. Department of Veterans Affairs-Department of Defense Joint Executive Committee

(a) JOINT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.—(1) There is established an interagency committee to be known as the Department of Veterans Affairs-Department of Defense Joint Executive Committee (hereinafter in this section referred to as the “Committee”).