



Commission on Veterans Affairs Orientation Outline 2024

What is the Commission on Veterans Affairs (CVA)?

The Montgomery County Commission on Veterans Affairs was established by County legislation in 2008 with the goal of the Commission to provide advice to the County Executive and County Council on the status of programs and services related to the needs of Veterans. Veterans have made an important contribution to the community by their service in the Armed Forces of this Nation, and Montgomery County is committed to showing its commitment and support for all veterans and their families.

Duties of the Commission on Veterans Affairs

The Commission duties include:

1. research, assemble, analyze and disseminate information and educational materials relating to activities and programs that will assist in meeting the needs of veterans and their families;
2. institute and conduct educational and other programs, meetings, and conferences to promote the rights and opportunities for veterans;
3. advise the Executive and the Council on the status of programs and services in the State and County related to the needs of veterans and their families; and
4. assist in planning appropriate public acknowledgement of the contributions made by veterans and assist in planning commemoration activities recognizing the contributions made by veterans.

Lobbying

The word "lobby" is defined as "to conduct activities (as engaging in personal contacts or the dissemination of information) with the objective of influencing public officials and especially members of a legislative body with regard to legislation and other policy decisions. The Commission was established to advise the Executive and the Council on the status of programs and services in the State and County impacting veterans and their families but may also engage in advocacy or lobbying activity at the state or federal levels with approval by the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs. **See Lobbying Chart from the Office of County Executive and the Office of the County Attorney.**

Representation

CVA members may represent the CVA at meetings or when giving testimony on legislation or other matters, only when they are authorized to do so by the Chair. CVA members may not identify the CVA with a position unless it is an established position of the CVA.

Required Meetings

At the call of the Chair, but not less than 9 times per year.

Monthly Commission Meeting Location

Meetings are held on the 3rd Tuesday of the month from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Meetings are currently held virtually via Zoom. When meetings are in person, the Commission meets at the Department of Health and Human Services, 401 Hungerford Drive, Rockville, 1st Floor 1A/1B Conference Room. An Annual Planning Meeting of the Commission is held at an offsite location for the purpose of setting goals for the year's activity. Full Commission Meetings are not held in July and August. As possible, we adjust meeting dates in order to accommodate days of major religious observances. A staff person needs to be in attendance at all official Commission or Committee meetings.

Terms of Appointment

While the law establishing the CVA states that members serve 3-year terms, Article XI, Section 2-148 (a)(1) of the County Code, which applies to all County boards, committees and commissions, states that “no individual should ordinarily serve more than 2 consecutive full terms...” Further, section 2-148 (a)(2) states that “[A]ny individual who has served 2 full terms on a group is not eligible to serve on the same group until one year has elapsed. The appointing authority [the County Executive] may waive this restriction if: (A) no other qualified applicant is available; or (B) other unique circumstances justify the reappointment of the particular individual.” Per the County Attorney’s Office on March 15, 2024, the ex officio members on the Commission don’t have term end dates, so ex-officio members can continue to serve without being reappointed until they are replaced by their Agency Head, Department Head or the County Executive.

Membership Composition

Voting Members:

The Commission has **16 voting members** (9 Veterans, 4 public, 3 ex officio), appointed by the County Executive and confirmed by the County Council.

1) The Executive should appoint **9** members who are veterans and who may be members of Veterans groups such as:

- Vietnam Veterans of America,
- American Veterans (AMVETS),
- Disabled American Veterans,
- Veterans of Foreign Wars,
- Women Veterans of America,
- American Legion, or
- Military Order of the Purple Heart.

2) The Executive must appoint **4** members to represent the general public.

3) The Executive must designate **3** ex-officio members or their designees:

- Director, Dept. of Health and Human Services,
- County Executive, and
- Director, Montgomery College

Non-Voting Member(s):

The Executive must invite a representative of the County’s Congressional delegation who is either a member of the delegation or an individual designated to represent the delegation to be a non-voting member of the Commission. The Executive must also appoint a member from the Commission on People with Disabilities to be a non-voting member of the Commission.

Attendance/Removal from the Commission

A member of a commission who misses more scheduled meetings or hearings than the number of allowed absences, computed by the following table, or who misses 3 consecutive scheduled meetings, is automatically removed. Scheduled meeting or hearing means any meeting or hearing for which at least 7 days advance notice was given and which was held as scheduled.

Number of Meetings Held in One Year	Allowed Absences
1 – 4	1
5 – 8	2
9 – 12	3
13 – 16	4
17+	5

Attendance will be taken at the Full Monthly Commission Meetings.

Photo Identification Cards

Due to security, Commissioners are encouraged to obtain a photo I.D. card from the Security Office located on the terrace level of the Executive Office Building, 101 Monroe Street, Rockville. Photo I.D. cards are processed strictly **by appointment only**. Photo ID cards can also be obtained at Public Safety Headquarters, 100 Edison Park, 1st Floor, Gaithersburg. To schedule an appointment, please visit www.montgomerycountymd.gov/pol/security/appointments.html. Remember to present a government issued photo I.D. for identification purposes and photo ID application. The application for a photo I.D. card is being provided in this orientation material.

General Volunteer Registration Form

Completion of this form is required by all volunteers. The County provides General Liability Coverage for volunteers. Details of coverage may be discussed with the Division of Risk Management. **Please complete the General Volunteer Registration Form.**

Committees

- Nominating Committee
- Selection Committee

Liaison Activities of the Commission

- Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse
- Commission on Aging
- Mental Health Advisory Committee
- Commission on People with Disabilities
- Public Relations

The CVA will be asked to send representatives to other advisory groups and does so as members' interest permit, or other groups will send representatives to the CVA.

Commission Meeting Procedures

- Committee meetings may be conducted informally, but the parliamentary procedures of Roberts Rules of Order govern formal actions or decisions on controversial matters. See **Summary of Roberts Rules**.
- The published agenda forms the structure of the meeting.
- Action Items – the business of the CVA is conducted by voting on action items.
- Notice of Meetings – advanced notice of all CVA meetings will be e-mailed prior to the meeting. E-mails will include the following:
 - Agenda
 - Meeting Summary Minutes of the previous meeting
 - Monthly Meeting and Event Calendar
 - Attendance Report
 - Other information as needed

You can also view the agenda and meeting minutes online at www.montgomerycountymd.gov/cva. Please contact Carly Clem via email at carly.clem@montgomerycountymd.gov or call 240-777-1252 (Office), 202-853-1109 (Work Cell) if you would like a hard copy of these documents.

Timing and Adoption of Minutes

The Maryland Open Meetings Act requires public bodies to “have minutes . . . prepared” “as soon as practicable” after their meetings. § 3-306(b); see also § 3-307(d)(1) (providing that the nineteen public bodies subject to § 3-307 “shall approve meeting minutes in a timely manner”). As explained by the Compliance Board, a draft summary of a meeting does not become a set of “minutes” until the public body has adopted it as minutes. See 6 OMCB Opinions 187, 190 (2009) (“To qualify as minutes of the public body, the public body must approve them.”); see also 14 OMCB Opinions 3, 3-4 (2020) (concluding that

computer-generated “notes” of a meeting did not constitute minutes because they had not been reviewed and adopted by the members of the public body). Section 3-306(b)'s timelines.

Posting of Documents Online

Only final documents including minutes, letters, etc. should be posted online. Drafts can be sent to Commissioners for comment. There's no requirement that the public participate/provide feedback/commentary on a board's work product. The only obligation to the public is that meetings are open and accessible.

Alternative Formats

Alternative formats of our documents are available upon request by contacting staff.

Reasonable Accommodations

If you need a reasonable accommodation to participate in any of our meetings, please feel free to discuss this with staff. Sign language interpreting services will be provided with advance notice.

Mileage/Dependent Care Reimbursement

CVA members traveling to and from official meetings are entitled to mileage reimbursement. Mileage forms should be submitted quarterly. All mileage reimbursement requests must be submitted by **June 30**, the end of the County's fiscal year.

- Mileage to the full monthly CVA meetings and official meetings is reimbursed at the flat rate of \$10 per meeting. Persons certified to use MetroAccess are eligible to be reimbursed for \$10 per meeting to cover the cost of the trip. Requests for reimbursement should be submitted using the **Reimbursement Form for Members of Board, Committees and Commissions**.
- Child Care and dependent care expenses are reimbursed at \$30 per meeting for attending the full CVA meeting, the Steering Committee meeting and other Committee or Workgroup meetings. Requests for reimbursement should be submitted using the **Reimbursement Form for Members of Boards, Committees and Commissions**.

Annual Report

By November 1st each year, the Commission must submit to the County Executive and County Council, and any other appropriate agency, an annual report on its functions, activities, and accomplishments.