

Amend CSHB 3426 (House Committee Printing), by striking SECTION 13 of the bill (page 12, line 27, through page 14, line 5) and substituting the following:

SECTION 13. Subchapter B, Chapter 434, Government Code, is amended by adding Section 434.039 to read as follows:

Sec. 434.039. COORDINATION WITH COUNTY SERVICE OFFICERS AND COMMISSIONERS COURTS. The commission shall develop and adopt procedures to coordinate with county service officers and county commissioners courts to:

(1) identify the shared objectives of the commission, county service officers, and counties with a county service office in serving veterans;

(2) develop a plan for encouraging service officers to become accredited by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs;

(3) develop a procedure for consulting with counties to evaluate the state's overall approach to service delivery by county service officers and commission claims staff as part of the state's veterans assistance network;

(4) define the commission's responsibilities in overseeing claims and appeals prepared by county service officers for instances when the commission has been designated as a veteran's agent under a power of attorney;

(5) develop a process for collecting information regarding claims filed by county service officers for instances when the commission has been designated as a veteran's agent under a power of attorney, for providing technical assistance to county service officers, and for providing evaluative information, on request, to county judges or other local officials who supervise county service officers;

(6) incorporate county service officers into United States Department of Veterans Affairs appeals hearings either to represent veterans or to appear as witnesses, as needed;

(7) explore opportunities for funding county service officer travel to participate in United States Department of Veterans Affairs appeals hearings; and

(8) develop procedures to regularly update county

service officers on changes in United States Department of Veterans
Affairs policies and procedures, and other information.