

NYSDVS, Albany Law School & NY Health Foundation to Provide Education Access Opportunity In Support of NY Veterans

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EINPresswire.com/ -- A new collaboration between the NYS Department of [Veterans'](#) Services, [Albany Law School](#)'s Online Programs, and the [New York Health Foundation](#) will expand professional development opportunities for Veterans Service Officers (VSOs), the dedicated

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*NYSDVS Commissioner
Viviana M. DeCohen*

servicemembers who guide veterans through complex Veterans Affairs claims and help ensure they receive the full benefits they have earned.

Starting in 2026, Albany Law School will provide access to specialized online courses for VSOs across New York State. With advanced courses in many subjects already in place—such as mental health law, government ethics, and constitutional rights and remedies—this collaboration will empower those in the VSO role to better assist veterans and military families facing increasingly complex legal and administrative challenges, including housing insecurity, discharge upgrades, and access to benefits.

VSO training will not only result in more effective and expansive services for veterans, leading to improved direct and indirect health outcomes, but also support the professional development of VSOs. Some VSOs do not hold undergraduate degrees, and this program offers those without a prior bachelor's degree the opportunity to learn alongside their credit-seeking peers, resulting in formal recognition of program completion from an accredited and highly regarded institution of higher education. The program seeks to support learners' career advancement and help secure their rightful recognition as dedicated professionals fully equipped to advocate for those they serve.

Albany Law School has also created a specialized pathway for Veterans Service Directors that includes coursework in areas such as human resources and healthcare law. The first cohort is expected to begin in late spring, with a graduation date planned for Veterans Day 2026. Credits will be offered, if desired, for those with an undergraduate degree.

"Veterans Service Officers are the trusted guides standing shoulder-to-shoulder with those who served, ensuring no Veteran or Military Family ever has to navigate the benefits system alone. New York State and our department are recognized leaders in preparing and accrediting these advocates, and this exciting new partnership with Albany Law School and the New York Health Foundation reflects our shared commitment to excellence, equity, and empowerment. By opening new pathways for advanced education and professional development, we are further strengthening the support network for all who served – and honoring their service by investing in those who serve them," said New York State

Department of Veterans' Services Commissioner Viviana M. DeCohen.



"This is such a meaningful program—designed to provide education and support to veterans who are themselves serving other veterans in administrative and advocacy roles. Not all of the participants will have undergraduate degrees, which makes the opportunity to equip them with legal and administrative tools even more impactful," said Jonathan Rosenbloom, Associate Dean for Online Education. "We are thrilled to provide access to education for this extremely deserving population. This collaboration directly supports our mission of offering accessible, flexible, and relevant courses to a variety of learners."

The program will be administered via Albany Law School's existing infrastructure, course schedule, and delivery methods, including short class terms, asynchronous weekly learning modules, and access to practitioner faculty who are heavily involved in the learning process through activities such as direct participation in discussions and providing substantive feedback on graded work.

"We envision that graduates of this program will bring their enhanced legal advocacy skills back to their community-based organizations, helping to strengthen services at the local level. As these professionals share their knowledge and apply what they have learned, veterans and military families across New York State will benefit—particularly through improved access to legal support, which can directly and indirectly lead to better health and well-being outcomes," said Tom Rosenberger, Assistant Dean for Online Programs.

“Albany Law School is very proud to be partnering with the New York State Department of Veterans’ Services and the New York Health Foundation to provide access to education for New York’s veteran population and those who assist veterans. Our established online education programs provide a perfect platform for providing education opportunities that are flexible, accessible, and carefully designed to meet the needs of our veterans population.” said Albany Law School President and Dean Cinnamon Carlarne. “We look forward to the Veterans Service Officers and Veterans Service Directors offering their unique perspectives in our online courses and becoming part of the greater Albany Law School community.”

“Veterans and military families are less likely to attain the benefits, services, and resources earned by virtue of their service — VA healthcare enrollment, disability compensation, non-service-connected pension, education benefits, employment preferences, etc. — if they lack competent representation in their claims and appeals. Without someone in their corner, they can be left out of the life-changing benefits they are entitled to,” said Benjamin Pomerance ’13, Deputy Counsel at the New York State Department of Veterans’ Services.

“Access to skilled advocates can mean the difference between a veteran getting the benefits they’ve earned—or going without critical care,” said David Sandman, Ph.D., President and CEO of the New York Health Foundation. “By supporting the training and professional development of Veterans Service Officers, this collaboration will strengthen the systems that serve veterans and help improve their health and wellbeing across New York State.”

About the New York State Department of Veterans’ Services:

The New York State Department of Veterans’ Services proudly serves New York’s Veterans, Service Members, and Military Families, connecting them with benefits, services, and support. All who served should contact the Department at 888-838-7697 or via its website – veterans.ny.gov – to meet in-person or virtually with an accredited Veterans Benefits Advisor to receive the benefits they have earned. Follow DVS on Facebook, Instagram, X, LinkedIn, Threads, and Bluesky Social.

About Albany Law School:

Albany Law School is a small, private school located in the heart of New York State’s capital where it has educated lawyers and leaders since 1851. The institution offers students an innovative, rigorous curriculum taught by a committed faculty. It has an affiliation agreement with University at Albany that includes shared programs, and access for students and faculty to learn from one another.

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