Plan of Operation
Of the
Department of Navajo Veterans Affairs

Article I – Establishment

A. The Department of Navajo Veterans Affairs was established within the Executive Branch of the Navajo Nation Government and is hereby continued as a Navajo Nation Department within the Division of Human Resources of the Navajo Nation.

Article II – Purpose

The purpose of the Department of Navajo Veterans Affairs shall be:

A. To identify, assess and prioritize the special needs of Navajo Veterans, their dependents and survivors and Gold Star Mothers.

B. To seek out and identify additional funding sources and make recommendation for the implementation, expansion and improvement of existing programs of the divisions and offices of the Navajo Nation to ensure that the Navajo Veterans receive the benefits and services they are entitled to.

C. To the extent permitted by federal, state or Tribal Navajo Nation law, the Department shall monitor and assess all Veterans' benefit programs made available to the Navajo Nation and its Veterans which affect the special needs and interest of Navajo Veterans for compliance with all applicable Navajo Nation, state and federal laws.

D. To recommend overall policies and legislation regarding Navajo Veterans to the Navajo Nation Council through the Navajo Nation’s respective committees and its respective communities which consider and are consistent with acceptable traditional and customary practices of the Navajo People.

E. To seek the establishment and funding of health care facilities for Navajo Veterans on the Navajo Nation.

F. To monitor, advocate and promote Navajo Nation efforts towards employment and educational training of Navajo Veterans, in business preference for Navajo Veterans, and in seeking out other services and benefits for Navajo Veterans provided by other Veteran agencies and special interest groups pursuant to established rules and regulations of the Navajo Nation.

G. To seek the establishment and funding of the Navajo Veterans' Housing Assistance Program for Navajo Veterans on the Navajo Reservation.
H. To determine, implement and provide program services for the needs and benefits of Navajo Veterans pursuant to Navajo Nation budget appropriations and pursuant to duly accepted and approved program funds received by the Navajo Nation on behalf of the Navajo Nation Veterans.

I. To administer and manage the Veterans Loan Program and all the assets and outstanding accounts receivable associated therein including, but not limited to:

a. Administration of the Veterans Loans Program in accordance with all applicable Navajo Tribal Nation laws, and the Operating Policies and Guidelines for the program, as approved by the Budget and Finance Committee of the Navajo Nation Council.

b. Servicing all accounts receivables associated with the Veterans Loan Program so as to protect the Navajo Nation's interest in property pledged to secure any loans made under the program.

c. Implementation of collect efforts in regards to funds due and owing the Navajo Nation resulting from loans made under the program.

d. Assisting the Budget and Finance committee of the Navajo Nation Council in the completion of their duties and responsibilities as set forth in their Plan of Operation as amended.

e. Recommending the negotiation and appropriation of available funds for use by the Navajo Veterans’ Loan Program.

J. To seek the establishment and funding of a Navajo Nation Veterans Cemetery.

K. To seek the establishment, funding and maintenance of the Navajo Veterans Memorial Park.

L. To administer, implement, manage and monitor the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act of 1996 (NAHASDA) of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) as it applies to Navajo Nation housing for Navajo Veterans.

K. To administer and manage the Strengthening Alliance of Veterans and Families – AmeriCorps Program of Corporation for National Service in accordance with applicable federal, state and Navajo laws, rules and regulations, and operating polices and guidelines.
L. To seek the establishment and funding of the VA Claims Examiner Program.

M. To administer and manage the Veterans Administration Medical Center (VAMC) Fee Reimbursement Traditional Healing Ceremony in collaboration with Carl T. Hayden VAMC of Phoenix, Arizona.

N. To the extent permitted by federal, state or Navajo Nation law, the Department shall assist Navajo Nation Chapters and Veterans in implementing the Navajo Nation Local Governance Act of 19958.

Article III – Authorities, Duties and Responsibilities

The responsibilities of the Department Director shall be:

1. To supervise and administer the Department of Navajo Veterans Affairs program and other duly approved programs as authorized under the provisions of this Plan of Operation for the Department of Navajo Veterans Affairs.

2. To implement, carry out and enforce authorized policies and directives as promulgate by virtue of the Plan of Operation of the Department of Navajo Veterans Affairs including, but not limited to:

   a. Representing the Department of Navajo Veterans Affairs as directed and authorized by the Navajo Nation and in dealing with the public and representatives of other organizations.

   b. Determining, evaluating and advocating for the needs of Navajo Veterans.

   c. Recommending and providing coordination for implementation of authorized federal, state and tribal program for the benefit of Navajo Veterans pursuant to all applicable Navajo Nation laws, rules and regulations.

   d. Serving as a liaison to seek and identify additional state, federal and tribal sources to insure the maximum return for Tribal Navajo Nation general funds and private matching funds.

   e. Recommending the negotiation and appropriation of available funds to use for Navajo Veterans’ program to the Budget and Finance Committee of the Navajo Nation Council through recommendation by the appropriate Navajo Nation Council Committees.

   f. Overseeing and conducting program monetary assistance and/or services to all eligible Navajo Veterans and eligible spouses, widow(er)s and dependent
children of deceased Navajo Veterans pursuant to duly approved program policies and procedures.

g. Recommending necessary budget proposals for professional and/or technical positions and services as needed to carry out the duties and responsibilities set forth herein.

h. Developing, recommending and implementing policies and procedures for the administration of all programs to Navajo Veterans under the Department of Navajo Veterans Affairs.

3. To carry out the purposes for the Veterans Loan Program as set forth in Section II of this Plan of Operation; including, but not limited to:

a. Accepting, reviewing, evaluating and processing applications for loans in accordance with Operating Policies and Guidelines adopted by the Budget and Finance Committee.

b. Closing approved loans in accordance with Operating Policies and Guidelines approved by the Budget and Finance Committee and accounting policies and procedures of the Navajo Nation.

c. Managing and servicing loan accounts arising from loans made and to take, cause to be taken all appropriate actions to protect property interests of the Navajo Nation.

d. Initiating collections procedures, including the referral of accounts to the Department of Justice for litigation or other appropriate action, for all sums due and owing the Navajo Nation arising from loans made under the program.

e. Recommending policies and procedures to the Budget and Finance committee and other appropriate Committees of the Navajo Nation Council.

f. Preparing and presenting periodic accounting and operational reports to appropriate parties.

h. Executing documents on behalf of the Navajo Nation in regards to the closing of loans, the placement and release of liens on personal property, and the release of leasehold mortgages pertaining to loans that have been paid in full.

h. Publishing or causing to be published, public information material pertaining to the program.

i. Completing such other assignments, or take such other actions as is necessary to protect the property and assets of the Navajo Nation.
Article IV – Objectives

The Department of Navajo Veterans Affairs shall be responsible for carrying out the following objectives on behalf of Navajo Veterans:

1. To advocate and provide administrative oversight and coordination for needed services for Navajo Veterans in such areas as housing, housing assistance, education, vocational, and other special training, legal, medical and small business development assistance, compensation and pensions, memorial affairs and other related Veterans’ benefits.

2. To promote utilization of benefits available pursuant to Title 238 U.S. Code and other related federal laws and regulations.

3. To promote utilization of benefits available pursuant to Arizona, New Mexico, Utah and other applicable state laws pertaining to Veterans.

4. To promote utilization of benefits available pursuant to the laws of the Navajo Nation.

5. To identify, prioritize and advocate for program services to assist special needs to Navajo Veterans.

6. To identify, prioritize and advocate for program services to assist special needs of Navajo Veterans.

7. To advocate for the preferential treatment of veterans in business and employment.

8. To report from time to time to and as requested to the Navajo Nation on the status of Navajo Nation Office of Veterans Affairs.

Article V – Organization

1. The Department of Navajo Veterans Affairs shall be administratively responsible within the Division of Human Resources, to the Executive Director.

2. The Department of Navajo Veterans Affairs shall have a central office located in Window Rock Arizona and may locate sub-offices in each agency and satellite areas of the Navajo Nation.

3. The organizational chart for the Department of Navajo Veterans Affairs is attached and incorporated as “Exhibit A” herein.
Article VI – Personnel

1. The Department of Navajo Veterans Affairs shall be supervised by a Department Director who shall be appointed selected and employed by the Executive Director of the Division of Human Resources pursuant to and in accordance with the Navajo Nation Personnel Policies Manual. The Department Director shall be an enrolled member of the Navajo Nation and preferably, an honorably discharged Veteran.

2. The Department of Navajo Veterans Affairs' staff shall be selected, employed, supervised and terminated by the Department Director, pursuant to and in accordance with the Navajo Nation Personnel Policies Manual and all other laws, regulation and benefits applicable to employees of the Navajo Nation.

Article VII – Legislative Oversight

Legislative oversight for the operation of the Department of Navajo Veterans Affairs shall be provided by the Human Services Committee of the Navajo Nation Council. In consultation with the Human Services Committee, the Budget and Finance Committee of the Navajo Nation Council shall provide the Loan Program oversight.

Article VIII – Amendments

This Plan of Operation for the Department of Navajo Veterans Affairs may be amended from time to time by the Government Services Committee of the Navajo Nation Council upon recommendation of the Human Services Committee of the Navajo Nation Council and the Budget and Finance Committee of the Navajo Nation Council relating to Navajo Veterans’ Loan Program.