

interpreter to any passport and/or CRBA appointment, provided the applicant or their attorney or third-party attendee provides advance notice of such attendance pursuant to guidance issued by the Department.

(2) Attendance by an attorney or other third party at the appointment does not excuse the in-person appearance of the applicant as outlined by 22 CFR 51.21 and 51.28.

(3) Nothing in this section abrogates any policies, security directives, and guidelines from the Department, Chief of Mission, or Diplomatic Security Service regarding admission to or conduct in a domestic passport agency or center or at a U.S. embassy or consulate overseas. All persons entering a domestic passport agency or center or a U.S. embassy or consulate overseas shall comply with all policies, security directives, guidelines, and protocols, including but not limited to those regarding security, identification, screening, electronic devices, recording, health, and conduct. Individuals may be refused entry or directed to leave the U.S. embassy or consulate for noncompliance with such policies, directives, guidelines, and protocols.

PART 51—PASSPORTS

■ 4. The authority citation for part 51 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 8 U.S.C. 1504; 18 U.S.C. 1621; 22 U.S.C. 211a, 212, 212b, 213, 213n (Pub. L. 106–113 Div. B, Sec. 1000(a)(7) [Div. A, Title II, Sec. 236], 113 Stat. 1536, 1501A–430); 214, 214a, 217a, 218, 2651a, 2671(d)(3), 2705, 2714, 2714a, 2721, & 3926; 26 U.S.C. 6039E; 31 U.S.C. 9701; 42 U.S.C. 652(k) [Div. B, Title V of Pub. L. 103–317, 108 Stat. 1760]; E.O. 11295, Aug. 6, 1966, FR 10603, 3 CFR, 1966–1970 Comp., p. 570; Pub. L. 114–119, 130 Stat. 15; Sec. 1 of Pub. L. 109–210, 120 Stat. 319; Sec. 2 of Pub. L. 109–167, 119 Stat. 3578; Sec. 5 of Pub. L. 109–472, 120 Stat. 3554; Pub. L. 108–447, Div. B, Title IV, Dec. 8, 2004, 118 Stat. 2809; Pub. L. 108–458, 118 Stat. 3638, 3823 (Dec. 17, 2004).

■ 5. Add § 51.29 to subpart B to read as follows:

§ 51.29 Attorney or other third-party assistance.

A person seeking passport services may be physically accompanied by an attorney, interpreter, or other third party of their own choice at their own expense in accordance with 22 CFR 50.52.

PART 71—PROTECTION AND WELFARE OF CITIZENS AND THEIR PROPERTY

■ 6. The authority citation for part 71 is revised to read as follows:

Authority: 22 U.S.C. 3904; 22 U.S.C. 2715; 22 U.S.C. 2715a; 22 U.S.C. 2715b; 22 U.S.C. 2715c; 22 U.S.C. 2671(b)(2); 22 U.S.C. 2671(d); 22 U.S.C. 2670(j); 22 U.S.C. 4196; 22 U.S.C. 4197.

■ 7. Revise § 71.1 to read as follows:

§ 71.1 Protection of Americans abroad.

(a) Consular officers shall perform such duties in connection with the protection of U.S. nationals abroad as may be required by regulations prescribed by the Secretary of State.

(b) U.S. citizens seeking protection, welfare, or other routine American Citizen Services, Special Consular Services, and consular crisis preparedness and response from an American Citizens Services Unit at a U.S. embassy or consulate may be assisted in related proceedings by a third party of their own choice at their own expense in accordance with 22 CFR 50.52.

(c) For purposes of this part, *consular officer* includes any United States citizen employee of the Department of State who is designated by the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Overseas Citizens Services to perform consular services overseas.

§ 71.5 [Amended]

■ 8. Amend § 71.5 by removing the words “officer of the Foreign Service” and adding “diplomatic or consular officer of the United States” in its place.

§ 71.6 [Amended]

■ 9. Amend § 71.6 by removing the words “Officers of the Foreign Service” and adding “Diplomatic or consular officers of the United States” in its place.

Rena Bitter,

Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Consular Affairs, Department of State.

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DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Coast Guard

33 CFR Part 100

[Docket No. USCG–2024–0258]

Special Local Regulations; Recurring Marine Events, Seventh Coast Guard District

AGENCY: Coast Guard, DHS.

ACTION: Notification of enforcement of regulation.

SUMMARY: The Coast Guard will enforce special local regulations for the 86th

Annual Brunswick Blessing of the Fleet event on May 11, 2024, to provide for the safety of life on navigable waterways during this event. Our regulation for marine events within the Seventh Coast Guard District identifies the regulated area for this event in Brunswick, GA. During the enforcement periods, no person or vessel may enter, transit through, anchor in, or remain within the regulated area unless authorized by the Coast Guard Patrol Commander or a designated representative.

DATES: The regulations in 33 CFR 100.701 will be enforced from 10 a.m. through 4 p.m., on May 11, 2024, for the regulated area listed in paragraph (d), Item No. 1 of Table 1 to § 100.701.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: If you have questions about this notification of enforcement, call or email Lieutenant Anthony Harris, Marine Safety Unit Savannah Waterways Division, U.S. Coast Guard; telephone 912–210–8714, email at Anthony.E.Harris@uscg.mil.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Coast Guard will enforce special local regulations in 33 CFR 100.701 for the 86th Annual Brunswick, Blessing of the Fleet event regulated area identified in paragraph (d) of Table 1 to § 100.701, Item No. 1, from 10 a.m. through 4 p.m. on May 11, 2024. This action is being taken to provide for the safety of life on navigable waterways during this event. Our regulation for recurring marine events within the Seventh Coast Guard District, § 100.701, Table 1 to § 100.701, paragraph (d), Item No.1, specifies the location of the regulated area for the Annual Brunswick Blessing of the Fleet event, which encompasses portions of the Brunswick River from the start of the East branch of the Brunswick River (East Brunswick River) to the Golden Isles Parkway Bridge. Under the provisions of 33 CFR 100.701, all persons and vessels are prohibited from entering the regulated area, except those persons and vessels participating in the event, unless they receive permission to do so from the Coast Guard Patrol Commander, or designated representative.

Under the provisions of 33 CFR 100.701, spectator vessels may safely transit outside the regulated area, but may not anchor, block, loiter in, impede the transit of festival participants or official patrol vessels or enter the regulated area without approval from the Coast Guard Patrol Commander or a designated representative. The Coast Guard may be assisted by other Federal, State, or local law enforcement agencies in enforcing this regulation. In addition to this notice of enforcement in the

Federal Register, the Coast Guard will provide notice of the regulated area via Local Notice to Mariners, Marine Safety Information Bulletins, Broadcast Notice to Mariners, and on-scene designated representatives.

Dated: May 7, 2024.

Nathaniel L. Robinson,
Commander, U.S. Coast Guard, Captain of
the Port Savannah, GA.

[FR Doc. 2024-10428 Filed 5-10-24; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

38 CFR Part 80

RIN 2900-AR68

Veteran and Spouse Transitional Assistance Grant Program

AGENCY: Department of Veterans Affairs.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is implementing provisions in the Johnny Isakson and David P. Roe, M.D. Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act to establish the Veteran and Spouse Transitional Assistance Grant Program (VSTAGP). This final rule addresses general grant application procedures and requirements to apply for VSTAGP grant funding and adopts the proposed rule with some corrections and clarifying changes.

DATES: This rule is effective June 12, 2024.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Lillian Miesemer, Senior Management and Program Analyst, Outreach, Transition and Economic Development, Veterans Benefits Administration, 1800 G Street SW, Washington, DC 20006; 202-461-9558 (this is not a toll-free telephone number). If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) or a text telephone (TTY), call the Federal Relay Service (FRS) toll-free at 1-800-877-8339.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On July 5, 2023, VA published a proposed rule in the **Federal Register** (88 FR 42891) that would establish the VSTAGP program in 38 CFR 80.1 through 80.17 pursuant to section 4304 of Public Law 116-315, the *Johnny Isakson and David P. Roe, M.D. Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act of 2020*, which was enacted on January 5, 2021.

VA provided a 30-day comment period, which ended on August 4, 2023. VA received four comments on the proposed rule. One of the four

comments was strongly in favor of the rule. We thank the commenter for their support and do not make any changes based on that comment.

The second of the four comments suggested grant recipients must have access to separating Service members and recently separated Service members. More specifically, the commenter advocated in favor of a means by which grant recipients can identify the geographical areas where separating Service members have relocated. Additionally, the commenter suggested that the Department of Defense (DoD) and VA should collaborate to encourage those enrolled in the DoD Transition Assistance Program (TAP) to take advantage of opportunities provided by recipients of grants under VA's VSTAGP program.

As noted in the proposed rule, a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) will be posted at *Grants.gov* (<https://www.grants.gov>) in accordance with § 80.4 of the proposed rule. The NOFO will require applicants for grant funding to submit proposals addressing detailed outreach strategies appropriate and tailored to the specific service delivery area served by the applicant. To meet this requirement, VA will recommend in the NOFO that applicants conduct an environmental scan as a component or means of strategic planning to gather information about available supports and services within the proposed geographic area to be served. Furthermore, the NOFO will require applicants for grant funding to demonstrate how their proposed program will promote active outreach to, recruitment of, and engagement with former members of the U.S. Armed Forces who are separated, retired, or discharged, as well as their spouses. Applicants for grant funding must design, develop, and execute program promotion and awareness activities as a part of their outreach. The NOFO will require applicants for grant funding to submit proposals explaining how their program will reach out to potentially eligible individuals, and how they will collaborate with local entities that may serve former members of the U.S. Armed Forces as well as their spouses (e.g., local military bases, VA Regional Offices, Veterans Service Organizations (VSO), faith-based organizations, social service agencies, community-based clinics, other job-training organizations), within their proposed geographic service delivery area to introduce the program to eligible participants. VA will encourage applicants to reach out to unique sub-groups of veterans and/or spouses who are likely experiencing inequitable access to jobs, job training

programs, and/or other employment services in the proposed service area.

Thus, VA will not be providing information regarding the geographical areas where separating Service members have relocated. Grant applicants will have to design, develop, and execute program promotion and awareness activities as part of their proposal, to include strategies for reaching the relevant population within their proposed geographic service delivery area. VA has no specific plans to address opportunities provided by VSTAGP grant recipients as part of the TAP curriculum but, as noted above, intends that grant applicants will be responsible for developing strategies for promotion and awareness of such services. In any event, the comments relating to how applicants are supposed to identify certain areas or populations to serve, as well as the comments relating to encouraging TAP participants to take advantage of opportunities resulting from VSTAGP grants, are beyond the scope of the rulemaking. We do not make any changes based on these comments.

The third and fourth comments were supportive of the proposed rule. The comments advocated for widespread accessibility of applications and establishment of clear evaluation criteria. VA agrees with both comments. To address the comment regarding the accessibility of applications, as required in § 80.4 of the proposed rule, and in accordance with 2 CFR 200.204, VA will publish a NOFO at *Grants.gov* (<https://www.grants.gov>). The NOFO will provide clear application procedures including detailed guidance and resources to help applicants apply for funding and navigate the application process.

Additionally, to address the comment regarding clear application criteria the NOFO will include detailed scoring criteria as required in § 80.7, with clearly identified point values for each evaluation criterion. VA will establish procedures to assess the technical merit of applications to ensure an objective review of applications. The NOFO will contain information regarding the evaluative criteria that will be used by the review panel to evaluate submitted applications to help applicants understand the standards against which an application will be scored. VA will execute a merit review process for all responsive applications, with the objective of selecting recipients most likely to be successful in delivering results based on the program objectives. See 2 CFR 200.205. This will ensure that: (1) applicants for grant funding have the opportunity to submit