

RCL Branch 594 Policies and Procedures

Branch Service Officer (Tab 16)

REF: Section 113-115 of the Service Officers Handbook

General

1. Branch Service Officers assist Veterans by identifying those with unmet health needs and benefits from VAC and then by making appropriate referrals to Command Service Officers. Services provided by the Legion to Veterans, spouses and their families are provided at no cost, and there is no requirement to be a Legion member.
2. All claims initiated by the Legion start with the completion of the Legion Claim Form (see Annex A) which can be found on the Legion web site www.legion.ca. Careful completion of this form is of great assistance to the Command Service Officer who will represent the Veteran to initiate a disability claim. The RCL Claim Form should be completed as fully as possible, and all authorities must be signed. These authorities give the Legion the right to act as the applicant's representative, to access CSDN, to request and review Service Health records and other VAC documentation. The completed forms and any supporting documentation must be forwarded to the Command Service Officer and the Veteran will be contacted directly by the Command Service Officer. Copies of the completed form may be retained by the Branch Service Officer. Branch Service Officers must not submit applications to VAC.

Appointment of RCL Branch 594 Service Officer

2. The President will recommend for approval by the Executive Committee and General Membership, someone within the Branch membership who is willing to take on the role and responsibilities of the Branch Service Officer. That person will be responsible to provide reports to the President and Branch Executive Committee.

Composition of a Service Branch Committee

3. Although not necessary, the Branch Service Officer may wish to have one or two other members form a Committee to review requests and get advice. Where possible, it would be good to have a Veteran or someone in the Branch who has worked with Veterans.

Duties of the Branch Service Officer

4. For guidance, general responsibilities of Branch Service Officers should include the following:
 - a. Establish an outreach program to contact Veterans who may require assistance in your community.
 - b. Maintain an on-going liaison and referrals with the Command Service Officer.
 - c. Assist Veterans in completing the Legion Claim Form.

- d. Refer Veterans and their families to the Command Service Officer for assistance with VAC disability claims and health benefits and services.
- e. Schedule regular visits of the Command Service Officer at the Branch to meet with Veterans and their families or to host information sessions.
- f. Process all request for benevolent funds through the Poppy Trust Fund Committee.
- g. Respect the confidentiality of individual Veterans and their families and store files in appropriate manner to ensure confidentiality.
- h. Receive approval of the Poppy Trust Fund Committee before incurring any expenses out of Poppy Trust Funds; Branch Service Officers must not submit applications to VAC.

Additional Information: The Toll-Free line for the Dominion Command Service Bureau is 1-877-534-4666 (1-877-LEGION6).

Prepared by: Comrades Chris Ricard and Archie Neilson.
Date: May 7, 2021