



**MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF  
VETERANS & MILITARY FAMILIES**

**Office of the Secretary**

**WES MOORE**

*Governor*

**ARUNA MILLER**

*Lt. Governor*

**ANTHONY WOODS**

*Secretary*

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**Secretary Tony Woods Formally Announces New Department Name, “Maryland Department of Veterans and Military Families”**

New name aligns with the department’s mission to serve all who serve, including military families

ANNAPOLIS, MD – Secretary Tony Woods today announced the Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs has officially changed its name to the Department of Veterans and Military Families.

"Before I deployed to Afghanistan, I thought military service was toughest on our soldiers. After I deployed, I realized it was toughest on our families," **said Gov. Moore**. "Our military families sacrifice everything so their loved ones can serve; they are just as much a part of the American story as those in the armed forces. This important name change recognizes that fundamental truth."

The inclusion of “Military Families” in the Department’s official name better reflects the diverse community it serves including dependents, veteran caregivers, and survivors. Members of this broader military connected community play an important role in ensuring the well-being of our service members and veterans and are similarly eligible for earned benefits and resources.

The Departmental name change resulted from legislation, [SBO411](#) and [HBO431](#), championed by Senator Dawn Gile and Delegate Andrew Pruski. Governor Moore signed the bills into law on April 9, 2024.

The legislation renames the Department and mandates the appointment of a Deputy Secretary of Military Family Policy and Programs, who will be responsible for overseeing agency strategy, policy, and initiatives to respond to the unique needs of our military and veteran families.

“Since the founding of the Department in 1999, military families have always been included in our mission statement,” **said Secretary Tony Woods**. “Changing our name better reflects our mission and serves as an important reminder that military

families - including dependents, veteran caregivers, and survivors - play a vital role in service to the nation and they have an advocate in our Department to support them through life's transitions.”

The Department of Veterans and Military Families will work closely with the newly established Maryland Commission on Veterans and Military Families to implement policy recommendations dedicated to veterans and military families. These recommendations will be presented to the Maryland General Assembly and Moore-Miller Administration in December 2024.

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