

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS SERVICES

COMMISSIONER'S 2022 ANNUAL REPORT

TO

GOVERNOR GLENN YOUNGKIN,

SECRETARY CRAIG CRENSHAW,

AND

THE VIRGINIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

December 1, 2022

Serving those who served

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The Virginia Department of Veterans Services
COMMISSIONER’S 2022 ANNUAL REPORT



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Mission, Vision, and Values

MISSION

To serve Virginia's veterans, members of the Virginia National Guard, Virginia residents in the Armed Forces Reserves, and their family members by ensuring they receive timely transition, employment and education assistance, benefits, behavioral health care, long-term care, and the recognition they have earned through their service to our country and Commonwealth.

VISION

To be the most veteran-friendly state in the nation by setting the national benchmark for the delivery of results-oriented and cost-effective veterans services.

VALUES

EXCELLENCE: Provide exemplary service to Virginia's veterans and their families.

COMMITMENT: An enduring commitment to helping Virginia's veterans and their families receive all earned federal and state benefits and creating an economic environment that promotes veteran-owned businesses and Virginia companies hiring veterans.

INNOVATION: Continually find new methods to reach and serve Virginia's veterans and their families.



Commissioner's Message

Fiscal Year 2022 (FY22) was an extraordinary year for the Virginia Department of Veterans Services (DVS). Our activities within DVS are oriented around the Governor's campaign pledge to make Virginia the best place for veterans to "live, work, and raise a family." Operationally, that means that we are oriented around a rephrased version of that objective - we want veterans to **STAY, WORK, and THRIVE** in the Commonwealth. We want Virginia veterans to return to Virginia after their service; we want to keep as many veterans who leave service in Virginia here after that service; we want to help veterans get jobs or grow their businesses; and we want to provide the ancillary services that will assist them in their own thriving.

The "Virginia Values Veterans" (V3) Program is one of the most effective tools we have to ensure Virginia remains the most veteran-friendly state in America. As a result of aggressive outreach to employers across Virginia, DVS enhanced veteran employment with V3 certified companies. As a result, the V3 Program surpassed 100,000 Virginia veterans hired throughout the Commonwealth, and the number of V3-certified organizations increased from 1,335 to 1,959 during this FY.

Highlight of additional accomplishments in FY22:

- VDVS established the VDVS Military Spouse Liaison program supported out of Hampton Roads working on Commonwealth wide family initiatives.
- Developed the new VDVS Suicide Prevention Program and selected the first Suicide Prevention Coordinator within the agency to work directly with support agencies.
- Our Benefits team partnered with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to hold a three-day Veteran Experience Action Center Community (VEAC) Event, serving 587 veterans with immediate responses from the VA and community partners.
- Virginia became the *first state in the nation* to bury a former reserve component service member in a State Cemetery under the new Burial Equity for Guards and Reserves Act
- The Sitter and Barfoot Veterans Care Center won the coveted award for "best nursing home in Virginia" from Newsweek Magazine
- Experienced administrators were selected for our two new Veterans Care Centers: Jones & Cabacoy Veterans Care Center in Virginia Beach and the Puller Veterans Care Center in Fauquier County. We are targeting "Month 1" (first resident) in early 2023 for the J&C VCC and Spring 2023 for the Puller VCC.

I consider it a great privilege and the highest honor to work with a team that remains passionate and dedicated to providing outstanding service to veterans and their families in any condition.



Daniel Gade, PhD.

DVS FY22 OBJECTIVES AND KEY RESULTS (OKRs)

AGENCY OBJECTIVES: STAY, WORK AND THRIVE

DVS has an agency objective to grow the number of transition service members and families that **STAY** in the Commonwealth, enhance their career opportunities through **WORK** initiatives and maximize services to enable Virginia's veteran and military family population to **THRIVE**.

STAY

DVS Key Result: Increasing percentage of transitioning service members who STAY in Virginia from 50% to 55% by the end of Governor Youngkin's term.

Approximately 20,000 service members leave military service in Virginia each year; of those, approximately 50% stay in Virginia. DVS is working with the Department of Defense (DoD), as well as local base commanders to provide and expand opportunities to inform transitioning service members, veterans, and their families of the many benefits of staying in the Commonwealth. Our goal is to increase this percentage each year of Governor Youngkin's term; the tax break on military retirement pay should help in this regard.

DVS Key Result: Integrate into the Federal Transition Assistance Program (TAP) by providing in-person briefings to 100% of TAP participants by the end of Governor Youngkin's term.

TAP classes include briefings on benefits, work transition, and entrepreneurship opportunities for transitioning veterans. DVS is working with local base commanders and DoD TAP managers to allow DVS to brief in all TAP class in Virginia, through formal partnerships and agreements. Currently, DVS' goal is to be in every TAP class at every installation as well as all virtual events and to brief 100% of the service members attending TAP.

WORK

DVS Key Result: Increasing the number of V3 certified companies from 1,730 to 6,000 by the end of Governor Youngkin's term.

Through the Virginia Values Veterans (V3) Program, DVS fulfills its mission to educate and train employers throughout the Commonwealth on the value of Virginia's veterans, and to help employers connect with these veterans. We are committed to assisting employers recruit, hire, train, and retain veterans. DVS increased the number of V3 certified companies almost 80% this year.

DVS Key Result: Increasing the number of V3 veteran hires to 25,000 per year by the end of Governor Youngkin's term.

Transition from military service is not complete on the date of discharge. The V3 Transition Program provides transition resources and assistance to veterans who now call Virginia home. V3 Transition assists transitioning veterans connect with employment, education, entrepreneurial, and supportive services, and helps educate participating veterans and veteran services providers on available resources and opportunities. Through these initiatives the number of Veterans assisted increased over 10,000 this year, with more than 103,000 veterans hired through DVS V3 assistance since program inception in 2012.

THRIVE

DVS Key Result: Grow the number of veterans owned businesses from 87,740 to 105,000 by the end of Governor Youngkin's term.

Virginia is home to over 750,000 businesses. Registered veteran owned businesses comprise more than 11% of businesses in Virginia. Through our V3 entrepreneurial enterprise and partnerships with the Virginia Employment Commission and Small Business Administration, we will continue to introduce veterans to the opportunities to sell in Virginia.

DVS Key Result: Grow the number of eVA-certified veterans service-disabled veteran owned businesses from 732 to 1050 by the end of Governor Youngkin's term.

As part of the Virginia Small, Women-owned, and Minority-owned business (SWaM) certification program, DVS works with qualifying service-disabled veterans who are small business owners to obtain a Service Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business (SDVOSB) designation in the Virginia SWaM vendor database, affording them an opportunity to sell to Virginia state and local government agencies through the eVA procurement platform. DVS has an established relationship with the Department of Small Business and Supplier Diversity to verify and certify potential vendors through the SDVOSB program. DVS has a goal to increase the number of SDVOSBs available in eVA from 732 to 1,050.

DVS Key Result: Increasing participation in VMSDEP from 3,185 to 6,000 by the end of Governor Youngkin's term.

DVS is responsible for certifying eligibility for benefits under the Virginia Military Survivors and Dependents Education Program (VMSDEP), which provides education benefits to spouses and children of military service members killed, missing in action, taken prisoner, or who have been rated by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) as totally and permanently disabled, or at least 90 percent permanently disabled as a result of military service. Through outreach and working with our university partners, DVS enabled over 3,000 surviving dependents to utilize this program. Our goal is to grow to 6000 by 2025.

DVS Locations – as of December 1, 2022

Full contact information for each office is listed on our website: www.dvs.virginia.gov

State Veterans Offices

Benefits Services + Virginia Veteran and Family Support

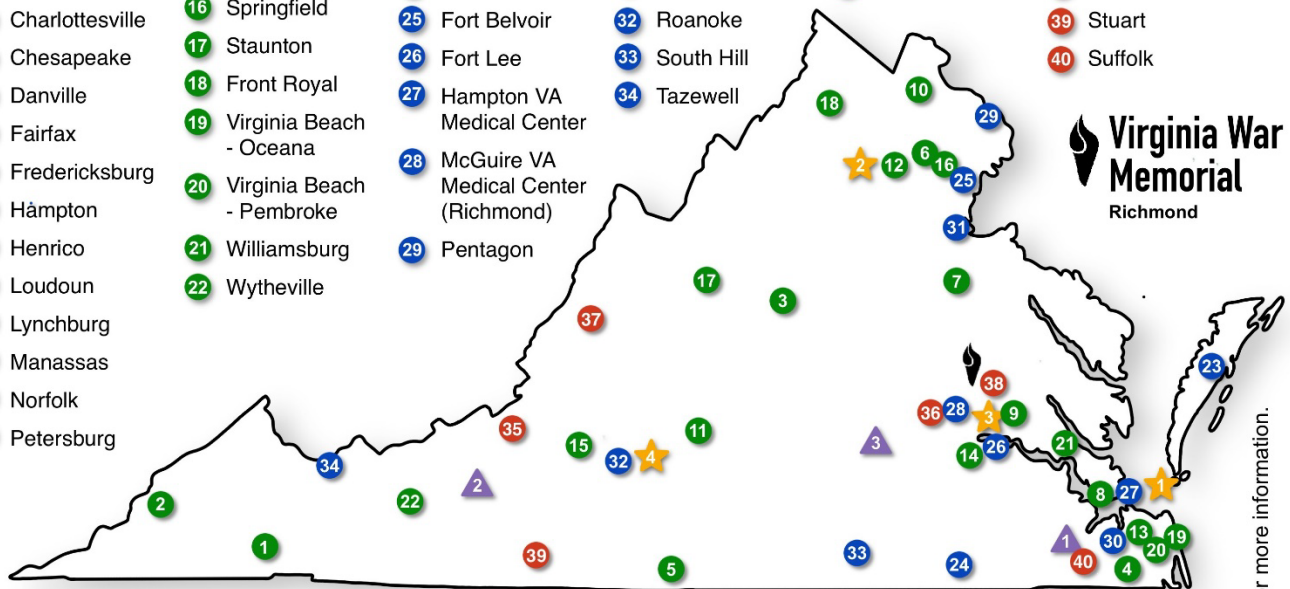
- 1 Abingdon
- 2 Big Stone Gap
- 3 Charlottesville
- 4 Chesapeake
- 5 Danville
- 6 Fairfax
- 7 Fredericksburg
- 8 Hampton
- 9 Henrico
- 10 Loudoun
- 11 Lynchburg
- 12 Manassas
- 13 Norfolk
- 14 Petersburg
- 15 Salem VA Medical Center
- 16 Springfield
- 17 Staunton
- 18 Front Royal
- 19 Virginia Beach - Oceana
- 20 Virginia Beach - Pembroke
- 21 Williamsburg
- 22 Wytheville

Benefits Services Only

- 23 Accomac
- 24 Emporia
- 25 Fort Belvoir
- 26 Fort Lee
- 27 Hampton VA Medical Center
- 28 McGuire VA Medical Center (Richmond)
- 29 Pentagon
- 30 Portsmouth
- 31 Quantico
- 32 Roanoke
- 33 South Hill
- 34 Tazewell

Virginia Veteran and Family Support Only

- 35 Blacksburg
- 36 Chesterfield
- 37 Covington
- 38 Richmond
- 39 Stuart
- 40 Suffolk



Map current as of November 2022

Care Centers

- ★ Jones & Cabacoy Veterans Care Center, Virginia Beach*
- ★ Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center, Richmond
- ★ Puller Veterans Care Center, Vint Hill*
- ★ Virginia Veterans Care Center, Roanoke

*Location opening 2023

Cemeteries

- ▲ Albert G Horton, Jr., Memorial Veterans Cemetery, Suffolk
- ▲ Southwest Virginia Veterans Cemetery, Dublin
- ▲ Virginia Veterans Cemetery, Amelia

Visit dvs.virginia.gov for more information.

DVS FY22 Results – Summary

BENEFIT SERVICES

Benefit Services provides Virginia's veterans and their family members with accurate, timely, and ethical education and assistance in obtaining the federal and state benefits they have earned through their service and sacrifice.

- 86,847** Claims submitted to U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs in FY22 (+33% from FY21)
- 19,726** Compensation and Pension claims submitted to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs in FY22 +37%% from FY21)
- 275,915** Client contacts in FY22 (+22% from FY21)
- \$4.63B** Disability compensation and pension payments to Virginia veterans and dependents in FY22 (+18.72% from FY21)

VIRGINIA VETERAN AND FAMILY SUPPORT

The Virginia Veteran and Family Support (VVFS) Program provides comprehensive coordination of and referrals to behavioral and rehabilitative health care and supportive services to Virginia's veterans, National Guard, Armed Forces Reserves, caregivers, and family members.

- 2,180** Veterans and family members served in FY22 (+438, FY21)
- 2,683** Total individual services provided in FY22 (+280, FY21)
- 351** Total behavioral health services provided in FY22 (+55, FY21)
- 36** Total rehabilitative/medical services provided in FY22 (-1, FY21)
- 2,297** Total supportive services provided in FY22 (+226, FY21)
- 1,915** Total group services provided in FY22 (+1459, FY21)
- 690** Individuals trained in Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) by VVFS (-140, FY21)
- 1,252** Individuals trained in Military Cultural Competency Training by VVFS (-149, FY21)
- 268** Veterans who received Behavioral Health/Financial Assistance through Veterans Services Foundation (+149, FY21)

STATE APPROVING AGENCY FOR VETERANS EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The Virginia State Approving Agency (SAA) for Veterans Education and Training approves educational courses and programs of instruction provided by Virginia institutions to enable eligible veterans and their dependents to enroll and receive financial assistance (GI Bill benefits) from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA). Because the SAA relies on federal funding, data is reported by Federal Fiscal Year (FFY).

- 4th** Commonwealth's ranking among the states in terms of percentage of Veterans using their GI Bill benefits in FFY21 (no change from FFY20)
- \$732M** Amount of GI Bill benefits paid to Virginia recipients in FFY21 (-5% from FFY20)
- 962** Instructional institutions in Virginia approved to provide training to Veterans and dependents in FFY21 (-3% from FFY20)

VIRGINIA MILITARY SURVIVORS AND DEPENDENTS EDUCATION PROGRAM

The Virginia Military Survivors and Dependents Education Program (VMSDEP) provides education benefits to spouses and children of military service members killed, missing in action, taken prisoner, or who became at least 90 percent disabled as a result of military service. Many VMSDEP beneficiaries also qualify for a stipend of up to \$2,200 per year to offset the cost of room, board, books, and supplies.

- 4,511** Applied for VMSDEP benefits in FY22 (+41.63% from FY21)
- 3,499** Applications approved for VMSDEP benefits in FY22 (+6.12% from FY21)
- 2,346** Unique students receiving stipend award for FY22 (+47.45% from FY21)
- \$2,833,654** Value of stipends awarded for 2021-2022 academic year (+22.56% from FY21)
- 40** Virginia public colleges and universities that applied VMSDEP benefits to students' accounts in FY22. Students used VMSDEP benefits at all 40 public institutions (no change from FY21)

VIRGINIA VALUES VETERANS TRANSITION (V3T) PROGRAM

The Virginia Values Veterans Transition Program (V3T) assesses, coordinates, and disseminates opportunities for members of the armed forces and their spouses transitioning from military to civilian life by providing a pathway to employment, education, and entrepreneurship.

- 131,733** Veterans, transitioning service members (TSMs), and military spouses reached through V3T outreach efforts in FY22 (67% increase from FY21)
- 4,408** Referrals of veteran/transitioning service member/spouses to DVS service lines and partner organizations for direct services outside of employment, education and entrepreneurship (72% increase from FY21)
- 55** Visits to Virginia military installations to conduct outreach and work with TSMs and their spouses in FY22 (working back to pre-pandemic levels)
- 4,010** Inquiries fielded and services provided to transitioning service members, Veterans and military spouses by V3T Transition Coordinators

VIRGINIA VALUES VETERANS (V3) PROGRAM

The Virginia Values Veterans (V3) Program increases employment opportunities and promotes economic development, by training and certifying organizations in veteran's workforce best practices while creating connectivity opportunity and activities.

- 599** Companies joined V3 in FY22 (+49% from FY21)
- 554** Companies became V3 Certified in FY22 (+83% from FY21)
- 17,846** Virginia veterans hired by V3 companies in FY22 (-8% from FY21)

MILITARY MEDICS AND CORPSMEN (MMAC) PROGRAM

The Military Medics and Corpsmen (MMAC) Program provides pathways to careers and credentialing in civilian healthcare for former service members with healthcare-related training and experience.

- 179** Applicants for MMAC FY22 (+4.57% from FY21)
- 124** MMAC Hires reported in FY22 (+128% from FY21)
- 64** No Medics and Corpsmen Left Behind Hires FY22 (+87.6% from FY21)
- 33** Leadership Hires FY22 (+6.25% from FY21)
- 5** Military Spouse Hires (remains equal to FY21)

VIRGINIA VETERANS CEMETERIES

Virginia's three state veterans cemeteries serve the memorial and perpetual care needs of veterans and eligible dependents. Virginia's state veterans cemeteries commemorate the personal sacrifice of those who served and those who stand ready to defend our freedom.

- 2,413** Interments conducted at the Albert G. Horton, Jr. Memorial Veterans Cemetery (Suffolk), the Virginia Veterans Cemetery (Amelia), and the Southwest Virginia Veterans Cemetery (Dublin) in FY22 (+5% from FY21)

VETERANS CARE CENTERS

Virginia's Veterans Care Centers provide long-term care, Alzheimer's/dementia care, and short-term rehabilitative care to Virginia's veterans. Domiciliary (assisted living) care is provided in Roanoke.

Sitter & Barfoot Veteran Care Center — Richmond (adjacent to the McGuire VA Medical Center)

- 160** Beds in private rooms providing skilled nursing or post-acute skilled rehabilitative care for veterans transitioning back into the community
- 40** Bed in private rooms in a secure Alzheimer's/dementia unit
- 54,916** Patient days of nursing and Alzheimer's/dementia care provided in FY22 (75% capacity) (-5% from FY21)

Virginia Veterans Care Center — Roanoke (adjacent to the Salem VA Medical Center)

- 120** Beds in semi-private rooms providing skilled nursing care
- 60** Beds in semi-private rooms in a secure Alzheimer's/dementia unit
- 16** Beds in private rooms dedicated to providing post-acute skilled rehabilitative care for veterans transitioning back into the community
- 28** Beds in semi-private rooms providing assisted living/domiciliary care
- 55,999** Patient days of nursing and Alzheimer's/dementia care provided in FY22 (78% capacity) (+11% from FY21)
- 6,043** Patient days of assisted living care provided in FY22 (59% capacity) (-23% from FY21)

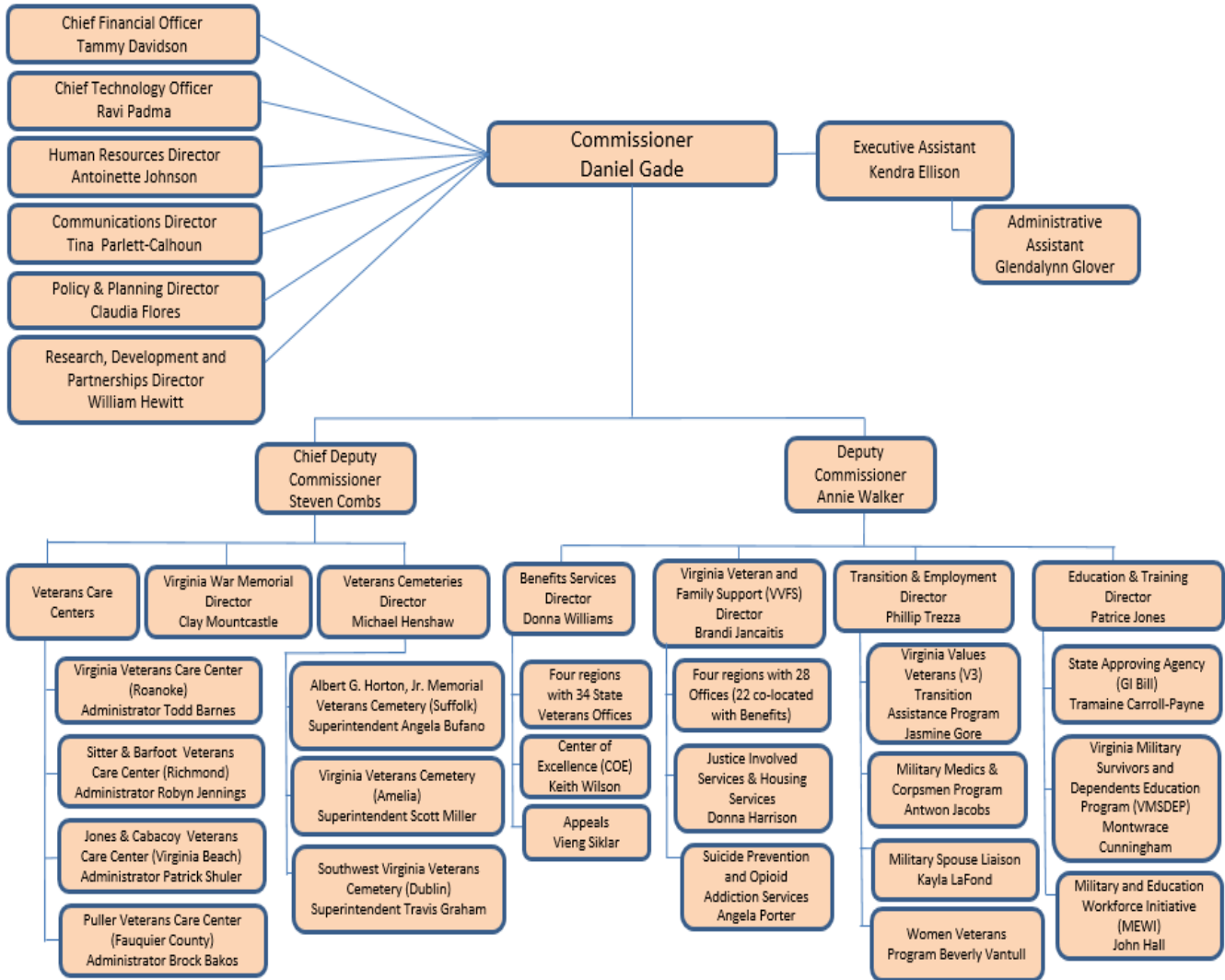
VIRGINIA WAR MEMORIAL

Honor our Veterans, Preserve our History, Educate our Youth, and Inspire Patriotism in All

- 41,134** Visitors to the Virginia War Memorial (+49.6% from FY21)
- 35,000** Viewership of Memorial Patriotic Events (+27% from FY21)
- 9,899** Engaged Learners both Virtual and Live (-24% from FY21)
- 174** Vietnam Veterans Commemorative Pins presented (-13% from FY21)
- 360** Volunteers / Guests for Hill of Heroes (+157% from FY21)

DVS Organizational Chart

Reflects personnel as of December 1, 2022



WHO ARE VIRGINIA'S VETERANS

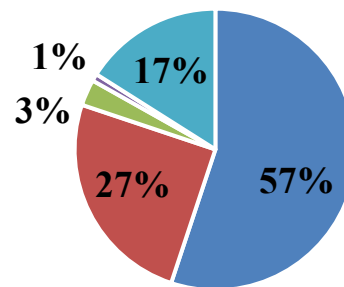
POPULATION

- 691,325** Estimated number of **Virginia Veterans** as of September 30, 2022 (*Source: USDVA, VetPop2020, Table 6L*)
- 107,976** Estimated number of **Women Veterans** – **15.6 % of our veteran population.** Virginia leads the nation with the highest percentage of women veterans.
- 120,465** **Number of Virginia veterans under 40**
- 5th** **Virginia's ranking in total veteran population.**
- 2nd** **Percentage of veterans to total state population:** When factored in as a percentage of total population, we are second in the nation (behind Alaska).

ERA OF SERVICE (AS OF SEPTEMBER 30, 2022)

- 576,476** Total war time veterans
- 114,850** Total peace time veterans
- 395,921** Gulf War Era and Post 9/11
- 186,787** Vietnam Era
- 22,766** Korean Conflict
- 3,914** World War II

Virginia Veterans by Era of Service



- Gulf War Era
- Vietnam Era
- Korean Conflict
- World War II
- Peacetime

(USDVA, VetPop2020, Table 7L.)

EDUCATION & TRANSITION

- 4th** Commonwealth's ranking among the states in terms of veterans using their GI Benefits in FFY21 (No change from FFY20).
- \$732M** Total G.I. Bill benefits paid to veterans in Virginia in FFY21 (-5% from FFY20).
- 962** Instructional institutions in Virginia approved to provide training to veterans and dependents in FFY21 (-3% from FFY20).
- 131,733** Veterans, transitioning service members (TSMs), and spouses reached through the V3 Transitions Program's outreach efforts in FY22.
- 4,408** Referrals of veterans, transitioning service members (TSMs), and spouses to partner organizations for direct services outside of employment, education and entrepreneurship in FY22

DISABLED VETERANS

- 221,856** Veterans receiving USDVA compensation or pension benefits as of September 30, 2022.
- \$4.63B** Compensation and pension payments to Virginia veterans in FFY21.

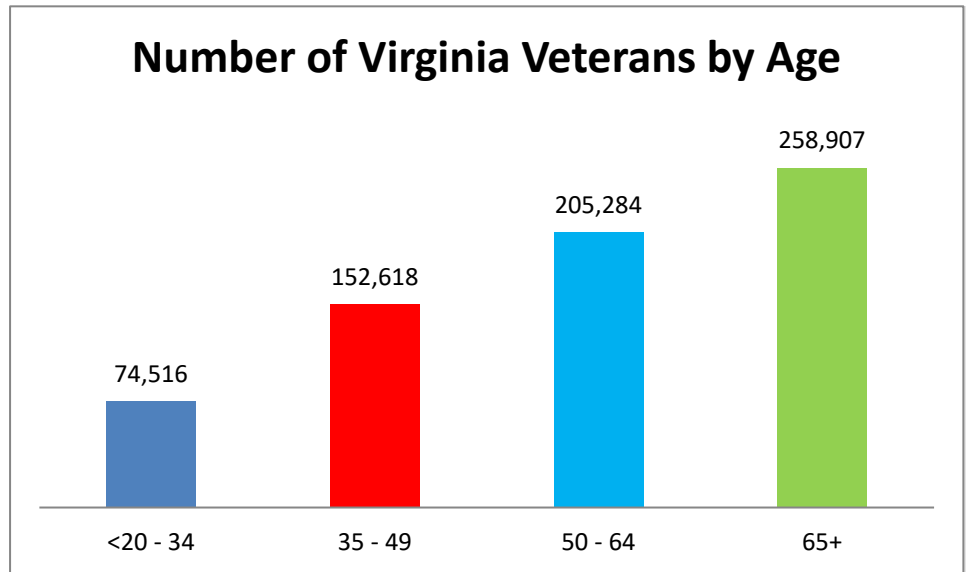
HOMELESSNESS AND HOUSING

- 392** Estimated number of homeless veterans in Virginia on a single night in January 2022 (+49, 2021)
- 47** Estimated number of unsheltered veterans in Virginia on a single night in January 2022** (+29, 2021)
- 642** Number of homeless veterans housed statewide in FY22 (June missing) (+57, 2021)
- 228** Veterans experiencing homelessness who received financial assistance through VVFS in FY22(+84, 2021)

OLDER VETERANS = 37% OF VIRGINIA'S VETERANS

258,907 Estimated number of veterans age 65+ living in Virginia as of September 30, 2022

The number of VA veterans age 65 and older is projected to decline by 6% over the next decade: **243,790** in 2032
(USDVA, VetPop2020, Table 6L)

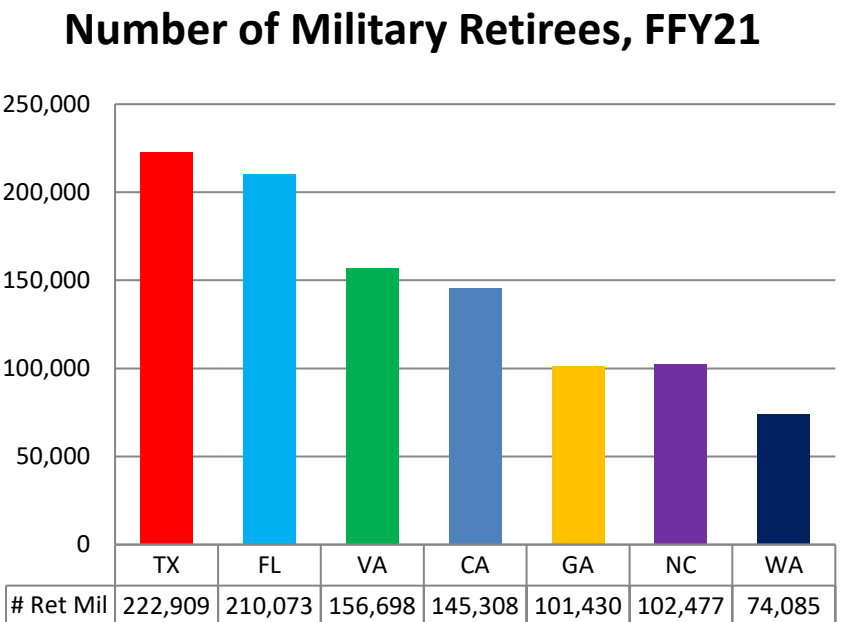


MILITARY RETIREES

156,698 Number of military retirees in Virginia as of September 30, 2021.

3rd Virginia ranks **3rd** in the nation in number of military retirees.

(DoD, Office of the Actuary, Statistical Report on the Military Retirement System FFY21)



Veterans' Economic Impact on Virginia

Virginia's veterans have a significant positive economic impact on the Commonwealth, bringing **\$12.88B** in federal funding through compensation and pension payments, construction expenditures, educational and vocational rehabilitation employment expenditures, medical expenditures, and military retiree pay.

USDVA EXPENDITURES IN VIRGINIA DURING FFY21

\$7.77B Total USDVA expenditures in Virginia

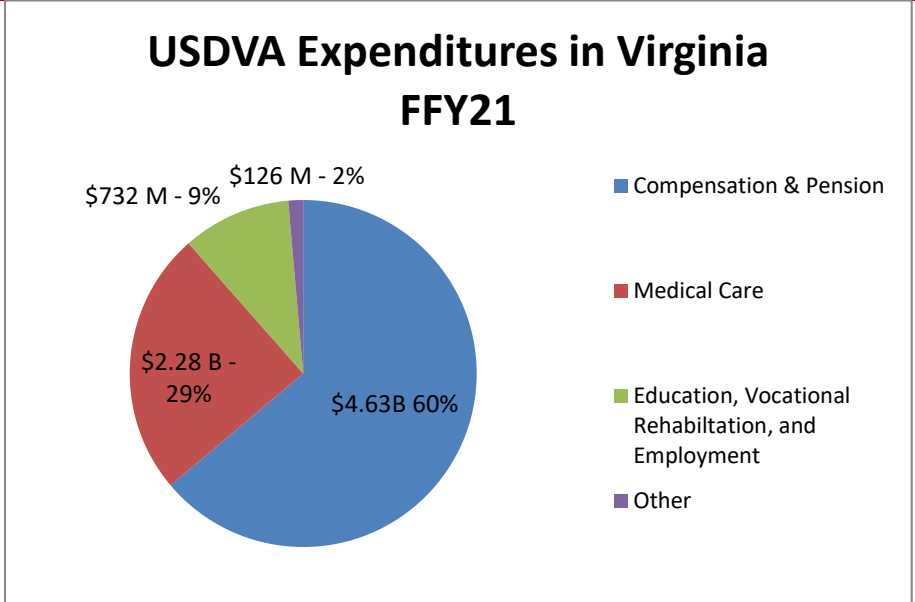
\$4.63B Compensation and pension

\$2.28B Medical Care

\$732M Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, and employment

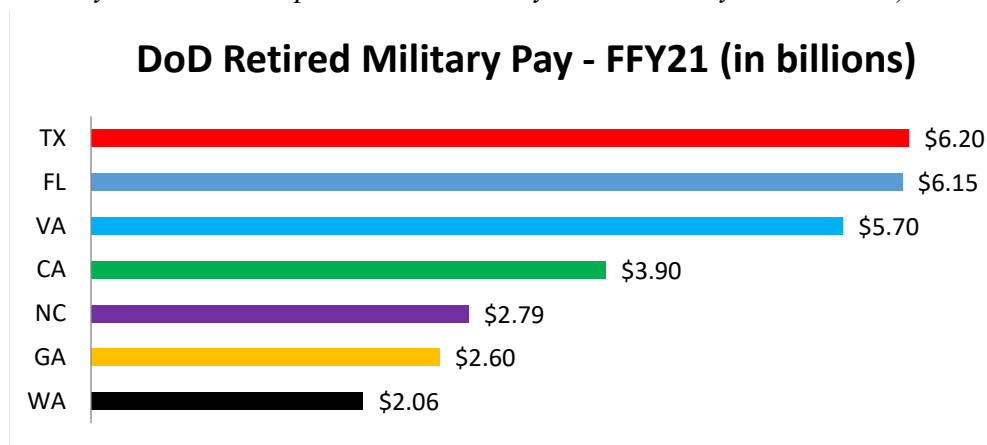
\$126M Other (General Operating, Insurance & Indemnities, Construction)

Source: U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, FFY20 Summary of Expenditures by State.
<http://www.va.gov/vetdata/Expenditures.asp>



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE MILITARY RETIREE PAY IN VIRGINIA IN FFY21

\$5.70B Retirement pay to military retirees in Virginia. Virginia ranks third in the nation for the amount of military retirement pay received. (*Department of Defense, Office of the Actuary, Statistical Report on the Military Retirement System, FFY21*).



Benefits Services

MISSION

To provide Virginia's veterans and their family members with accurate, timely, and ethical education and assistance in obtaining the federal and state benefits they have earned through their service and sacrifice.

ACTIVITIES

The Benefits Services section assists Virginia's veterans in gaining access to the federal and state benefits they are entitled to as a result of their service in the military. These benefits and services include:

- Compensation for service-connected disabilities or death;
- Income-based pensions;
- Medical care;
- Home purchase assistance;
- Education; and
- Burial benefits.

Benefit Services operates in 34 offices across the Commonwealth, strategically located to reach our veterans and their families. Veterans Service Representatives (VSRs) and Veterans Service Administrators (VSAs) are on the frontline each day working to support veterans and family members.

The Benefits Service line continued to demonstrate resiliency and adaptability as the COVID-19 pandemic resurged throughout the Commonwealth. In February, 2022 all staff returned to the office, facilitating walk-in services and in-person appointments. In addition to in-office services, the offices continue to support clients virtually.

Team Benefits provided needed services to develop and submit claims in order to assist veterans and their families to **THRIVE** in Virginia. The team filed 19,726 disability compensation claims, with a total of 86,847 submissions. The team met and worked with 13,360 new veteran clients between January and July 2022. Outreach to Transitioning Service Members (TSM) increased through briefings on Military Installations, which ultimately led to 1,722 Benefits Delivered at Discharge (BDD) claims developed and filed since January 2022. Education briefings and claims submissions are instrumental in TSM's decisions to **STAY** and **THRIVE** in Virginia. The Benefits team's efforts contributed to the \$4.63 Billion in federal compensation and disability payments to Virginia veterans in federal fiscal year 2020. This is an 19% increase over FFY20.

Benefits team members refer veterans to other service lines daily. The client interview process includes a suicide screening that may result in a referral to the Virginia Veterans and Family Support (VVFS) program, a community partner, or a VA Medical Center. VSRs screened 5,099 veterans from January to June, which is 95% of new veterans served during that period. The VSRs and VSAs also refer veterans with a 90% or higher rating to the Virginia Military Survivors and Dependents Education Program (VMSDEP) to determine further eligibility for the program.

In the East Region, Benefits team members secured a full membership on the Hampton Roads Council of Veterans Organizations, an organization dedicated to recognizing and honoring area veterans. The Council is comprised of 52 veteran organizations, councils, posts, and units. The East Region also secured a permanent

presence on Joint Base Langley-Eustis, providing more available and reliable service to transitioning active duty soldiers and airmen. The East Region team worked hard to re-establish ties with area correctional centers in order to provide on-site services to incarcerated veterans. Our VSRs made several visits to Indian Creek and St. Brides Correctional Centers, and we are currently on track to provide regular, routine assistance to these facilities commencing in FY23.

Always striving to deliver outstanding and adaptable service, the West Region restructured in-person coverage of the Harrisonburg, Roanoke, and Salem areas, as well as the Wytheville and Blacksburg areas. This restructuring resulted in 62% more claims filed in Wytheville this fiscal year and an 85% increase in veteran contacts and claims taken across the Roanoke and Salem offices. The West Regional also established new offsite service locations in Wise County (Big Stone Gap), Farmville (Lynchburg), and Patrick County (Danville), which will greatly increase our reach to veterans in rural areas.

The North Region continued to meet the need of the active duty and veteran populations across Northern Virginia. This year, the North Region focused on the growing need for services at the Dahlgren Naval Surface Warfare Center. Dahlgren supports nearly 3,000 active duty personnel (permanent and trainee personnel). In addition, with a total daily workforce of over ten thousand, nearly 85% of its civilian workforce are veterans. Further contributing to the high concentration of service members and veterans at Dahlgren, the surrounding communities boast veteran populations that average 15% of the civilian population.

The North Region expanded support to Dahlgren's in King George County and to the Naval Surface Warfare Center Indian Head in Maryland. These itinerant locations are supported by the Quantico Benefits Office through the longstanding relationship with Dahlgren Fleet and Family Services Office. Presently, VSRs support these locations twice a month with expansion of services planned in the near future.

Finally, in the Central Region, new partnerships were forged with the City of Hopewell, the Prince George County Chamber of Commerce, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and American Legion Post 146. The new partnership with the American Legion allowed DVS to establish an itinerant site at Post 146 to serve veterans in the Hopewell, Fort Lee, Petersburg, and Chester communities. The itinerant opened to the public in September 2021 and is supported on a weekly basis by VSRs from the Petersburg Benefits Office.

The Benefits' Center of Excellence (COE) houses the Benefits service line's quality assurance, statewide performance metrics, and training functions. As part of the quality assurance function, the COE reviews every claim submitted by the VSRs to ensure policies and procedures are consistently met. Benefits Services is fortunate to have a dedicated team of claims specialists based in the VA Regional Office in Roanoke. Claims specialists not only provide a quality review of all submissions, but also monitor submission error rates to identify trends within the field that may prompt further training. The COE's important work ensures that each claim submitted by DVS has the highest chance of being adjudicated appropriately by the VA.

Training and compliance to VA standards are important components to the continued success of Benefit Services. To streamline training effectiveness and oversight, the Training Team integrated with the Center of Excellence in FY22. The Training Team is comprised of a training manager, training coordinator, and two training specialists. The Training Team worked to ensure that all personnel have a complete understanding of their roles and responsibilities from day one. Basic Training is attended by all new personnel at the beginning of their Benefits career, as an introduction to Veterans Law. Quarterly and annual training for the Benefits team is conducted to accomplish training goals. All Benefits personnel maintain standards of Accreditation by

the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, according to 38 USC 5902. Additionally, the benefits team completed 312 hours of suicide prevention training supporting the Governor's suicide challenge.

Benefits is transitioning in FY23 to a new veteran claims submission system. The Training Team conducted in person training to all Benefits personnel to help prepare for the transition with lecture and hands on training. This will help pave the way for a smoother transition.

At the end of FY22, the Training Team conducted:

- 4 Basic Training Courses
- Completed 12 personnel assessments
- Conducted 9 Proficiency test sessions
- Delivered 164 training hours
- Wills for Veterans Legal Services Clinic
- Customer Service training to all 4 Regions during Quarterly Training sessions

This year, the COE implemented several new statewide performance metrics. The first of these metrics reveal the volume and reach of the Benefits Service Line. For example, the COE is now able to determine the number of new clients served among offices. This data will help the Benefits Service Line better focus outreach efforts and identify underserved veteran populations within the Commonwealth. Additionally, the COE monitors the number of "Benefits Delivered upon Discharge" (BDD) claims made by active-duty service members prior to transitioning out of the military. Collection of this data supports DVS' efforts to ensure Virginia veterans experience a smooth transition to civilian life within the Commonwealth to **STAY, WORK, and THRIVE** in Virginia.

In total, the Appeals Team held 323 Board of Veteran Appeals (BVA) Hearings in this fiscal year, a 19% increase from last year. Almost all of these hearings were held virtually, a feat made easier with our partnership across the Benefits Offices. In FY22, approximately 30% of all virtual hearings held were done at a local Benefits Office. In addition, the Appeals Team wrote and filed 437 Informal hearing Presentation briefings, a 16% increase from the prior year. Even more impressive, through a combination of professional expertise, zealous client advocacy, the Appeals Team secured over \$11.92 million in retroactive benefits for Virginia veterans.

OUTREACH AND PARTNERSHIPS

The Benefits Service Line partnered with the Veterans Benefits Administration, Veterans Health Administration, the Board of Veterans Appeals, National Cemetery Administration, Military One Source and Virginia 211 to host a three day virtual Veterans Experience Action Center (VEAC). With these invaluable partners, the VEAC responded to many veteran needs, ranging from claims and benefits assistance (including expediting benefit decisions based on financial hardship), access to health care, and support related to education and training benefits.

Veterans preregistered with VSRs from across the Service Line to participate in the VEAC event. Over the course of the three day event, 654 appointments were made, 587 veterans were served, and 29% of those served were female veterans, the highest rate of any VEAC to date. The Benefits Service Line also recorded 690 total veteran contacts from this event, which produced 16 claims, 129 submissions, and 242 referrals for

health care, or other benefits support, and 204 new VA power of attorney appointments (VA Form 21-22). In short, this event was a huge success!

As other organizations around the Commonwealth return to in-person services, the Benefits Service Line significantly increased engagement and presence with local military commands, other Veteran Services Organizations, and other supportive organizations throughout the Commonwealth. For example, the East Region conducted a series of briefings to the Navy Career Counselors at Naval Station Norfolk that will exponentially expand our reach and information resources to active duty service men and women. The West Region formed new partnerships this year with the Virginia Military Institute, Piedmont Area Veterans Council, and Garner, North Carolina Veteran Service Center.

The Outreach Coordinators and selected Social Media VSR enthusiasts worked to develop four regional social media pages with content to inform veterans of services provided by DVS. Creating content and developing policy and procedures took months of coordination with the Communications Director. The pages launched in July.

Annual Services Provided	FY20	FY21	FY22
Compensation Claims submitted to USDVA	16,873	14,368	19,726
All Claims submitted to USDVA	77,738	65,175	86,847
Client contacts	193,730	226,643	275,915
Number of offices	34	34	34
Itinerant points	42	42	41
Budget	\$8,814,957	\$8,882,941	\$9,831,058
Authorized Positions	100	100	121
Filled Positions – as of June 30	99	95	113

Number of Itinerant sites was 29 as of May 25, 2022

For more detailed information, please refer to Appendix A

Veterans Education, Transition, & Employment

VIRGINIA WOMEN VETERANS PROGRAM

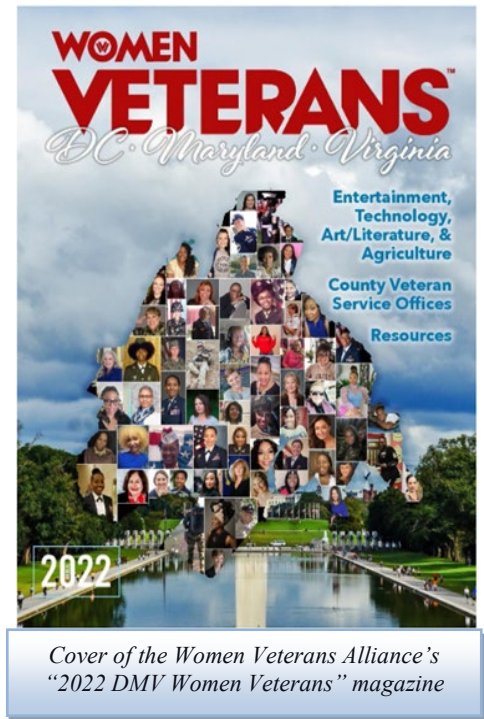
MISSION

The Virginia Women Veteran Program (VWVP) is a port of entry to provide referrals and ease of access to community resources to educate, unify, and empower Virginia's women veterans who have served in the military in all eras by ensuring they receive timely yet appropriate transition and benefits support, employment and education outreach, and health and community advocacy.

ACTIVITIES

In FY22, VWVP worked to increase strategic partnerships with local, state, and federal entities, with a focus on women-veteran-centric organizations. Through these strategic partnerships, VWVP and DVS attained numerous earned media opportunities, including social media marketing, veteran-centric newsletters, and women veteran-centric magazines. VWVP will be featured in The Women Veterans Alliance's "2022 DMV Women Veterans" magazine. Strategic partnerships extend VWVPs' visibility and impact, ensuring that more women veterans receive information on and access to local, state, and federal resources.

VWVP's second initiative in 2022 was to improve the client referral process. With the innovative use of technology and data, VWVP increased referrals and improved the processes to track referrals. As a result, since December 2021, VWVP generated over 200 referrals to sister programs within DVS and with external partners. These referrals resulted in women veterans receiving employment assistance, accessing mental health and crisis services, obtaining benefits support, admission into the Virginia Veteran Care Centers, and archiving their history with the Virginia War Memorial.



VWVP understands the importance of connecting with our women veterans virtually as well as in-person across Virginia and beyond the Commonwealth's borders. In September, the program revitalized its monthly "News You Can Use" Women Veterans Newsletter. This newsletter is a community snapshot of events and resources specific to women veterans and is a key tool for VWVP to connect with our target audience. In less than a year, VWVP doubled newsletter subscriptions and increased program visibility.

VWVP Virtual Resource Hours aimed to address the unique challenges faced by women veterans including, but not limited to, financial literacy, homelessness, military sexual trauma (MST), access to benefits, and employment. Virtual offerings provide access to women veterans with barriers to attending live events (i.e. access to childcare, transportation, or health concerns). These virtual offerings enabled Virginia women veterans to access pertinent resources from the comfort of their own homes.

During the months of December, March, and February, VWVP hosted virtual resource hours focused on accessing DVS Benefits and VVFS services and financial literacy courses led by financial experts. In March, VWVP conducted our fifth annual Virginia Women Veteran Pinning Ceremony. This event commemorated Virginia women veteran's service and accomplishments. Lieutenant Governor Winsome Earle-Sears joined Senator Jen Kiggans, Delegate Kathleen Murphy, and Delegate Jackie Glass to honor over 70 women veterans with the "Virginia Women Veterans Lead the Way" gold lapel pin. To provide access to this event throughout the state, the Virginia Women Veteran Pinning Ceremony was live-streamed on social media and garnered over one thousand virtual views. In addition, Delegate Kathleen Murphy and Delegate Jackie Glass held a women veteran roundtable discussion with over 40 women veterans in attendance.



Lieutenant Governor Winsome Earle-Sears and Senator Jen Kiggans pinning a Virginia women veteran during our 2022 Virginia Women Veteran Pinning Ceremony



Virginia Women Veteran Program Manager Beverly VanTull presenting Ms. Jacqueline Slater with the 2022 Trailblazer of the Year Award

In June, VWVP hosted the 9th annual Virginia Women Veterans Summit as a hybrid event (live event with virtual streaming) alongside the Virginia Employment Commission (VEC). The theme was "Empowered: Sister in Arms Inspiring Generations". This year's event reached over 200 live attendees and over 600 virtual views. Presentations and panel discussions focused on women-centric healthcare, alternative coping mechanisms for mental wellness, removing barriers to employment in male-dominated careers, and community resources designed for women veterans' needs. Honored guests included Governor Glenn Youngkin, First Lady Suzanne Youngkin, and US Army Reserve Officer and former US Representative Tulsi Gabbard.

As we continued to support the needs of our Virginia women veterans, VWVP's goal is to establish strategic partnerships with women veteran-centric organizations.

In FY22, we formalized relationships with the Center for Women Veterans, Minority Vets, Women Veteran Alliance, Military Women's Memorial, and Foundation for Women Warriors. Women veteran-specific needs include, but not limited to, women veteran homelessness, Military Sexual Trauma rehabilitation, and employment. VWVP will leverage strategic partnerships in FY23 to address these identified needs.

MILITARY SPOUSE SUPPORT INITIATIVE

MISSION

Advocate for military spouses across the Commonwealth through legislation and program initiatives by conducting outreach with local, state, and federal government, military installations, employers, and other key stakeholders.

VISION

Ensure all military spouses in Virginia have access to resources and services available regardless of sponsor status. This includes military/veteran caregivers and spouses of active duty, veterans, reserves, National Guard, and survivors.

ACTIVITIES

In FY22, the Military Spouse Liaison position was created by legislation and the Military Spouse Support Initiative was established in September 2021. The intent of the Military Spouse Support program is: port of entry for military spouses; provide assistance and information for spouses seeking professional licensures and credentialing; provide assistance and information for spouses seeking professional licensures and credentialing; and develop a pathway for military spouses to quickly find meaningful employment.

This year, one of the program's primary objectives was to establish partnerships that serve as resources to leverage DVS information targeted towards military spouses. These partners included veteran service organizations, employers, community leaders, military installations, and local, state, and federal agencies. The second objective for the Liaison was to conduct outreach to promote the new initiative and provide resources, referrals, and information available to military spouses at events, community engagement meetings, and one-on-one interactions. Areas of focus were childcare, licensure reciprocity, employment, and other spouse benefits.

In September, on her first week on the job, the Liaison attended MilspouseFest in Norfolk which had over 50 military spouses in attendance that were participants and vendors. The Liaison was able to connect with employers and resource organizations looking to help military spouses with employment, mental health, and community resources. It was a great way to make introductions and begin to promote the new initiative.



Kayla LaFond (Military Spouse Liaison) at MilspouseFest in Norfolk.

In December, the Liaison briefed 25 employers attending the Virginia Values Veterans (V3) Employer Certification. During the training, the Liaison spoke on the strengths a military spouse can bring to their organizations and other reasons why to consider employing military spouses. She also reiterated the resources supplied during the training and how to make job postings inclusive to the military spouse job seekers.

From March to June, the Liaison participated in a research series by The Center for a New American Security's Military, Veterans, and Society (CNAS MVS) program, whose research focused on the impacts of the shift to remote work on military spouse employment. The CNAS MVS program hosted a series of four working groups exploring the future of military spouse remote employment from the perspective of those serving military spouses, Fortune-500 employers, small business owners, and policymakers. The Liaison was able to provide information regarding passed Virginia legislation and position overview to assist the military spouses throughout the Commonwealth at each meeting. Each series topic had approximately 15 subject-matter-experts in their fields to provide insight and suggestions on how to move the needle on military spouse employment.



Deputy Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs Jason Pak, Sarah Wilson (Gold Star Spouse), Helen Tin (Gold Star Spouse), First Lady Suzanne Youngkin, Traci Voelke (Gold Star Spouse) and Kayla LaFond (Military Spouse Liaison) with the signed Proclamation for Gold Star Spouses Day at TAPS Headquarters in Arlington

On April 5, the Liaison joined Virginia First Lady Suzanne Youngkin and Deputy Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs Jason Pak at the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS) Headquarters in Arlington. The team received a tour of the newly renovated headquarters, high-level briefing of the mission of TAPS, and met three Gold Star Spouses. First Lady Youngkin presented a signed copy of Governor Youngkin's proclamation recognizing April 5 as Gold Star Spouses Day in Virginia and informed the TAPS team of the passing of House Bill 957; classification of real property owned by certain surviving spouses for tax purposes.

In April, the Liaison initiated an agency-wide "Purple Up Day" in support of Month of the Military Child. On Purple Up Day, DVS Staff across the state wore purple and submitted photos to show comradery and support of the 200,000+ military children living in Virginia. She also received stories from DVS staff that are military children to put in a newsletter that was shared with over 300 recipients.

On May 19, the Liaison shared a resource table with the DVS Benefits service-line at the first annual Command Navy Region Mid-Atlantic (CNRMA) Ombudsman Resource Fair on Naval Station Norfolk. This resource fair brought in approximately 50 ombudsman and command leadership from the Navy commands in the region. Ombudsman are the resource specialists within a Navy command that are a direct link from the command families to leadership. The Liaison was able to share resources and information specific to military spouses, veterans, and other DVS resources available to their families.

Throughout the year, the Liaison participated in two different working groups focused on childcare for military members. One working group was nationwide and conducted by the Armed Services YMCA and the other was focused on the Hampton Roads area in Virginia. Both working groups are trying to come up with different solutions to increase Child Development Center (CDC) and Child Development Home (CDH) providers which will allow more military children a spot in the CDC/CDH and off the growing waitlists.

The Liaison also worked with the Hiring Our Heroes Military Spouse Economic Empowerment Zones (MSEEZ) in Northern Virginia and Hampton Roads on their pillars of *Hire, Train, and Advocate* for the military spouse community. Both MSEEZ are comprised of local government, employers, community leaders, military organizations, and other stakeholders wanting to help the military spouse community in employment. The Northern Virginia MSEEZ hosted two virtual events in FY22, November’s Insight to the Military Spouse Pipeline for Employers and June’s Military Spouse Licensure Reciprocity with the U.S. Department of Labor. The Hampton Roads MSEEZ hosted one event called Military Spouse Strength: Transform Your Stress into Strength with Guest Speaker Kendra Lowe.

Military Spouse Metrics	FY22
Military Spouse Partner Engagement*	537
Military Spouse Outreach+	311
Community Outreach events	40

**Military Spouse Outreach was made through the DVS appointment line, email, outreach events, and newsletter dissemination.*

+Military Spouse Partners are community leaders, employers, advocates, military installations, and other stakeholders wanting to assist the military spouse community.

VETERANS EDUCATION PROGRAMS

STATE APPROVING AGENCY FOR VETERANS EDUCATION & TRAINING

The Department of Veterans Services includes two education programs: the State Approving Agency (SAA) for Veterans Education & Training and the Virginia Military Survivors and Dependents Education Program (VMSDEP).

MISSION

Enable access to post-secondary education opportunities for veterans and eligible family members.

ACTIVITIES

The State Approving Agency (SAA) for Veterans Education and Training, operating under a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), reviews, evaluates, and approves post-secondary education and training programs offered by educational institutions, businesses, and industries in Virginia, helping veterans and eligible family members to use their GI Bill® benefits to attain their educational goals.

The SAA provides support and supervision for 962 education and training institutions. While some offer only one program, many offer multiple programs, with each program requiring separate approval. The SAA must approve programs before veterans and eligible family members can enroll and receive financial assistance from the VA through the GI Bill®. In addition, the SAA ensures compliance with federal and state education regulations through on-site visits to active institutions.

The SAA conducts compliance surveys, awards actions for accuracy, and ensures payments made to eligible veterans are within VA regulations to verify enrollment data. The VA/Virginia SAA FFY22 cooperative agreement required 90% of assigned surveys to be conducted by August 15, 2022. This year, the SAA completed 100% of the assigned surveys by the end of July.

In November 2021, the Colonel John H. McHugh Tuition Fairness for Survivors Act of 2021 was signed into law. Effective August 1, 2022, public institutions were to include Chapter 35 beneficiaries to receive in-state tuition. Additionally, in this year's contract the Virginia SAA was tasked with reviewing over 400 approvals that were set to expire this fiscal year. Additionally, the SAA continued to work through revisions of the Isakson and Roe Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act of 2020, which included over 30 enactments that affected our approval process and education benefits for veterans, service members, families and survivors.

SAA's secondary mission is outreach to veterans and family members, making them aware of all the various education and training programs and eligibility criteria. Outreach is conducted through job fairs, military bases, and veteran's events hosted by DVS around the Commonwealth. Staff conducted one-on-one discussions on military bases with veterans, service members scheduled to retire or be discharged from the military, and family members. The conversations cover VA educational benefits, approved facilities, how to apply, plus On-The-Job (OJT) and apprenticeship opportunities, instructions to start Post-9/11 GI Bill® and

Transfer of Entitlement benefits for an eligible dependent. In addition, the staff continued virtual outreach during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The SAA continues to work through the approval process to ensure compliance with federal and state requirements. With the challenges of new staffing, the SAA continues to submit program approvals without any major rejections. The SAA implemented use of SharePoint for the School Certifying Officials (SCO) to submit approvals; in addition to using virtual platforms of ZOOM, MS Teams, and Google Meets to conduct technical assistance to schools.

The SAA team continues to be involved with the National Association of State Approving Agencies (NASAA). Michelle Hill, Veterans Education Manager, served as President of NASAA. Tramaine Carroll-Payne, Deputy Director of Education Programs was elected as Treasurer. All new SAA team members continue to learn and participate in the organization.

Annual Services Provided	FFY20	FFY21	FFY22
Education and training institutions supported	960	992	962
Educational program approval actions	8,222	8,960	
Number approved/% approved	7179/87%	8367/93%	
Other approval actions	1,728	1588	
Number approved/% approved	1459/84%	1433/90%	
Educational institution supervisory visits	36	61	56
% of required supervisory visits completed	61%**	100%**	100%**
Veteran student population	33,612***	51,459***	

For more detailed information, please refer to Appendix B

Note: Data is reported by the federal fiscal year (FFY) since SAA activity is tracked on that basis.

** The VA contract requires the SAA to complete 90% of the 61 assigned compliance visits.

*** Number of Veterans receiving G.I. Bill benefits in Virginia as of April 2022. This does not include Veterans who attended school but who have not received payment of GI Bill Benefits. The final count for FFY22 should be available in March 2023

SAA OKR's	FFY22
Process 100% of GI Bill approval requests within 30 days of receipt	513/502 98%*
Complete 100% of Veterans Affairs assigned compliance visits annually per agreement	56/56 100%
Increase OJT/APP active facilities by 5% quarterly	Baseline: 113 Target: 5/quarter Current: 4 new facilities approved**

*The FY22 cooperative agreement requires 90% of approvals to be processed on time.

**During FY22, the SAA scrubbed our list of over 500 facilities approved, withdrawing facilities that were no longer in business. However, we cannot determine the effect of our efforts until FFY22 numbers are available in March 2023.

VIRGINIA MILITARY SURVIVORS AND DEPENDENTS EDUCATION PROGRAM (VMSDEP)

MISSION

Provide education benefits to spouses and children of qualified military service members killed, missing in action, taken prisoner, or who became totally and permanently disabled or at least 90 percent permanently disabled as a result of military service. Military service includes service in the United States Armed Forces, United States Armed Forces Reserves, or the Virginia National Guard.

ACTIVITIES

The Virginia Military Survivors and Dependents Education Program (VMSDEP) waives tuition and required fees at Virginia public colleges and universities for qualified survivors and dependents. Some VMSDEP beneficiaries also receive a stipend to partially offset the cost of room, board, books, and supplies. The dependents must be a spouse, or child between the ages of 16 and 29, of a military service member who, while serving as an active duty member in the U. S. Armed Forces, Armed Forces Reserves, or the Virginia National Guard, during military operations against terrorism, on a peacekeeping mission, as a result of a terrorist act, or in any armed conflict, was killed or is missing in action or is a prisoner of war, or of a veteran who has been rated by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs as totally and permanently disabled or at least 90 percent permanently disabled, and has been discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable. Domiciliary or physical presence requirements also apply and are detailed in the Code of Virginia.

Effective July 1, 2019, eligibility for VMSDEP benefits expanded to include dependents of veterans with non-combat service-connected disabilities. Two tiers of benefits now exist: Tier 1 waives tuition and mandatory fees for the dependents of veterans who are rated at least 90% with permanent disabilities, but the beneficiaries do not receive a stipend; Tier 2 beneficiaries are the dependents of the veterans or service members who meet all the previous criteria but are also related to combat-related disabilities. Tier 2 beneficiaries receive the stipend as well as the waiver.

The Virginia Military Survivors and Dependents Education Fund (the Fund) provides the Tier 2 stipend funding. The stipend is used to partially offset the costs of room, board, books, and supplies. The stipend amount may vary based on determinations by the Virginia General Assembly, the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV), and the amount appropriated to the Fund.

Since July 1, 2019, the number of applications submitted has increased by 274%, and the number of dependents approved to use the benefit has grown by 447%. Based on the current average cost of tuition and mandatory fees at Virginia's public colleges and universities, each dependent would receive over \$55, 000 in waivers for a 4-year degree.¹

In FY22, VMSDEP continued to use the application portal to administer the program with support from all

¹ The \$55, 000 amount is based on the *Average for 4-year Institutions* listed in the SCHEV's [2020-21 FULL-TIME RESIDENT UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT CHARGES](#).

DVS staff, SCHEV, applicants and the schools. The portal has allowed schools and students to see benefits usage in real-time, making the approval process more efficient over the last year.

Also, during FY22, the SAA staff conducted VMSDEP outreach virtually at Fort Lee, Joint Base Langley-Eustis, and Fort Belvoir. Staff disseminated information about the Virginia Military Survivors and Dependents Education Program through multiple communications channels, including:

- DVS website;
- SCHEV website;
- State Approving Agency for Veterans Education and Training listserv;
- Virginia public college and university websites and catalogs;
- “*Opportunities: Preparing for college guide and workbook*” created by SCHEV and the Educational Credit Management Corporation annually. Printed copies are distributed to students and guidance counselors free of charge, and an electronic version is on the SCHEV website;
- DVS-developed VMSDEP informational brochure; and
- Direct outreach to veterans whose disability rating and period of service would potentially make their dependents eligible for VMSDEP benefits.

Annual Services Provided	FY20	FY21	FY22
Applications Submitted	2,432	3,185	4,511
Applications Approved	1,438	3,297	3,499
Unique students receiving stipend award	1,299	1,591	TBD
Total stipend dollars awarded	\$1,961,421	\$2,311,960	TBD
Outreach Activities	6	6	2

MILITARY EDUCATION & WORKFORCE INITIATIVE (MEWI)

MISSION

The Military Education and Workforce Initiative (MEWI) assists Veterans and service members with their transition from active duty to the workforce by providing a pathway to education, training, certifications, and the technology needed to achieve their academic endeavors. MEWI enhances employment opportunities for Virginians who have served in the United States Military and their families.

ACTIVITIES

The Virginia Training & Education Alliance (TEA) began as a pilot program in January 2017 through a grant from Altria, with the goal of training educators on Military Culture Competency. In 2018, the focus of the program expanded to facilitating relationships between educators and employers, including Bridging the Gap meetings. Bridging the Gap events bring together V3 employers and education and credentialing institutions with the intention of sharing information about employment and educational needs that would ultimately result in strengthening the school to work pipeline. As the mission of the program shifted from cultural competency to workforce, it was appropriate to rebrand the program to the Military Education & Workforce Initiative (MEWI). MEWI continues to provide services to educators and employers, with connectivity to employment pipelines, Virginia Values Veterans Transition (V3T) staff, and/or Virginia Values Veterans (V3) hiring events through various initiatives.

In 2022, MEWI continued its partnership with the Veterans Services Foundation (VSF), and Tech for Troops to assist two central Virginia community colleges, as well as Virginia Commonwealth University, in providing laptops to veterans and veterans' spouses who are enrolled as current students. As a result of the pandemic, many students were required to pivot to online learning, and the colleges were unable to meet the technology requests for all students who needed laptops during the change of modality. In 2022 MEWI was able to provide 136 laptops to this military student population.

In-demand, high-paying careers are made possible by industry-leading educational certifications. Now, these certifications are made available to veterans, spouses, and active duty service members free of charge. This is made possible through the Department of Veteran Services' partnership with the Community College Workforce Alliance (CCWA), Altria Group, and the Veteran Service Foundation to provide veterans, spouses, and active duty service members with a CCWA Credentialing Grant.

In 2022, MEWI continued the employer-credentialing program with the Community College Workforce Alliance and Veterans Services Foundation. Service members, veterans, and spouses are eligible to enroll in this program. Through these partnerships, MEWI has been able to expand our offerings to include 11 certifications and credentialing opportunities at no cost to the service member or dependent. This is made possible by a generous grant. In 2022 we were able to serve 117 veterans or veterans' spouses in acquiring certifications.

The DoD-approved Department of Veterans Services SkillBridge/HIRE VETS NOW Fellowship Program (HVNFP) provides transitioning service members the opportunity to network with Virginia Values Veterans (V3) Certified employers offering 6-12 week internships to eligible applicants, with commander approval, up

to six months prior to separation. Participation in a fellowship program, while still serving in the military, allows service members the opportunity to gain marketable skills and experience to enhance their civilian career opportunities.

Currently, there are 60 HIRE VETS NOW Fellowship Program (HVNFP) Approved Providers. In 2022 the program experienced a 50% increase in approved providers. In 2022, the HVNFP program served over 70 active duty service members. These service members were able to complete internships with some of Virginia’s most sought-after employers whose industries range from cyber security to shipbuilding and construction. These internships have led directly to high-paying careers for many of these service members proving that Virginia is the place for veterans to **STAY, WORK, and THRIVE**.

Annual Services Provided	FY20	FY21	FY22
Laptop Distribution	0	100	136
Student Veteran/ Spouse Certifications	23	65	117
Hire Vets Now Fellowship SkillBridge Employers	22	36	60

VETERANS TRANSITION AND EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS

Veterans Transition & Employment programs include the Virginia Values Veterans (V3) Program, the Virginia Values Veterans Transition (V3 Transition, or V3T) Program, and the Military Medics and Corpsmen (MMAC) Program.

VIRGINIA VALUES VETERANS (V3) PROGRAM

MISSION

The Virginia Values Veterans (V3) Program increases employment opportunities and promotes economic development by training and certifying organizations in veterans workforce best practices while creating connectivity opportunity and activities.

ACTIVITIES

V3 is a national leader in training employers to recruit, hire, train and retain military job seekers. Since its initial launch as a pilot program, the Virginia Values Veterans (V3) program has educated thousands of individuals and certified over 2,000 organizations on why hiring veterans is the best business decision they can make.

In FY22, V3 continued to experience program growth. During the second half of the fiscal year, the program developed a strategic reorganization plan. The reorganization and program restructuring was designed to initiate the alignment to services; improved user navigation/ease of user; and increased return on investment on behalf of V3 Certified Organizations. The greatest impact was demonstrated in the number of V3 Certified Organizations; within the second half of FY22, the V3 Program enrolled 417 and certified 440 new organizations.

As of July 1st the V3 Program exceed the Commonwealth's Veteran Hiring Goal of 100,000 veteran hires.

As a national leader in training employers to recruit, hire, and retain veterans, V3 remains a preferred provider with both the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) and the Human Resources Certification Institute (HRCI). V3 conducted 19 training events in FY22, and continued the partnership with PsychArmor to provide top-level training options for our employers to learn more about the veteran community as a whole. V3 also collaborated with the Virginia Chamber of Commerce Foundation and executed 12 Hire Vets Now events. Due to COVID19, the program was only able to co-host events in the second half of FY22. The V3 Program was able to expand employment opportunities for Virginia's veterans by connecting 1,028 military job seekers to 271 employers.

Additionally, the V3 employment grant provides employers with 300 and fewer employees \$1,000 for every veteran hired (on or after July 1, 2014) and retained for one-year full time, within five years of separation of active duty. Employers can receive a total of \$10,000 annually. For FY22, \$82,000 in grant monies were distributed, with another \$13,000 worth in processing at the end of the fiscal. Coupled together, the V3 Program distributed \$95,000 in grants out of the \$100,000 maximum amount allotted for the program in a given Fiscal Year.

Annual Services Provided	FY20	FY21	FY22
Companies enrolled	440	362	599
Companies certified	401	228	554
Veterans hired by certified companies	16,946	19,477	17,846
Training events conducted	14	14	19

VIRGINIA VALUES VETERANS TRANSITION PROGRAM (V3 TRANSITION)

V3 TRANSITION assesses, coordinates and disseminates opportunities for members of the armed forces and their spouses transitioning from military to civilian life by providing a pathway to employment, education and entrepreneurship.

ACTIVITIES

Transition from military service is not complete on the date of a service member’s discharge. The process of transition may take years beyond the actual transition date. Therefore, V3 TRANSITION is equipped to provide transition resources and assistance to all Virginia veterans and their spouses. The program offers a suite of services applicable to each veteran’s and transitioning service member’s unique journey.

The V3 Transition team, and their skilled and knowledgeable transition coordinators, serve as the guide and entry point to all of what the Department of Veterans Services and the Commonwealth have to offer for veterans, Transitioning Service Members (TSMs), and military families. The goal is to show the military community that Virginia is the best place to **STAY, WORK, and THRIVE**. Veterans receive the tools and support they need to build productive lives in Virginia, contributing to our economy and adding to our unmatched pool of talent.

In FY22, V3 TRANSITION connected with 131,733 veterans, transitioning military, and spouses through a variety of outreach methods, including through its close partnership with V3. V3 TRANSITION is a “go to” organization for partner organizations to participate and present on employment, education, and entrepreneurship in the Commonwealth. Additionally, the V3-V3 TRANSITION partnership provides coordination between transitioning veterans and employment services, connects veterans directly with employers who have pledged to hire veterans, and educates veterans on educational and entrepreneurial opportunities here in Virginia.

In FY22, V3 TRANSITION successfully continued the program that began in FY18 – outreach to all transitioning military who list Virginia as their home of record on their DD214 and who allow the Virginia Department of Veterans Services to receive a copy of it. V3 TRANSITION sent a Welcome Letter and information about our *Virginia Veterans Resource Guide* to over 15,000 transitioning service members with information about V3 TRANSITION, V3, and the overall services and support offered through DVS.

Annual Services Provided	FY19	FY20	FY21
TSM, Veteran, Spouse Outreach	79,133	109,055	78,807
V3T Events held	42	221	92
Transition Service Partnerships	200	199	202
Military Installation Visits	227	149	4
V3T Inquiries/Client Services	2,565	2,433	3,135

MILITARY MEDICS AND CORPSMEN (MMAC) PROGRAM

The Military Medics and Corpsmen (MMAC) Program provides pathways to careers and credentials in civilian healthcare for former service members and military spouses with healthcare-related training and experience.



ACTIVITIES

In FY22, the Military Medics and Corpsmen (MMAC) Program emerged from the pandemic to reach new hiring milestones and entering into agreements with new partner health systems.

Throughout the period, the MMAC Program maintained efficient and effective operations, facilitated veteran and military spouse hiring, and expanded partnerships. MMAC addressed veteran's career and credentialing challenges daily by recruiting, reviewing, and referring candidates to healthcare employers statewide.

On July 1, 2021, new legislation amended the Code of Virginia to expand the types of healthcare facilities eligible to participate in the MMAC Program. The legislation now permits MMAC to enter into Memorandums of Agreement with healthcare facilities such as Urgent Care Centers, specialty clinical and surgical facilities, community health clinics, and dialysis centers. The new legislation also created two additional pathways to healthcare employment. Because of this, MMAC completed the program's first ever agreement with an urgent care healthcare partner – Velocity Health.

The unique and measurable aspect of the MMAC Program is that it not only keeps veterans in Virginia but it draws veterans from across the world to come to live and work in the Commonwealth. The veterans hired in healthcare directly contribute to the state and local tax base, economy, and community as a whole. The MMAC Program also fosters a new awareness and appreciation of veterans and what they offer the healthcare workplace.

Seven years ago, MMAC began with six Memorandums of Agreement (MOAs) with Partner Healthcare Systems (PHS). In FY22 the total stood at 23 MOA-employment partners with PHS statewide. The MOA allows MMAC-Qualified employees to apply their extensive clinical skills and experience under

supervision while they obtain required civilian clinical credentials. MMAC applicants have employment opportunities through the MMAC program across the Commonwealth.

New MMAC Memos of Agreement were signed with the MMAC Partner Healthcare Systems below:

- Kaiser Permanente
- The National Neuropathy Center
- Velocity Health



Velocity Urgent Care, Virginia Beach. From left to right is Bo Lomax, Velocity Recruiter, Omar Vargas, Velocity's first MMAC hire, and MMAC Program Manager, Antwon Jacobs.

Annual Services Provided	FY20	FY21	FY22
Program Applicants	223	171	179
Total Hires	101	95	124
MMAC Qualified Hires	27	34	22
No Veteran Left Behind Hires	46	25	64
Leadership		31	33
Military Spouses		5	5

MMAC set a goal to reach 450 total hires facilitated through the program since launch and reached that goal in May 2022. The same month also saw the most hires recorded in a single month since the MMAC Program began, with a total of 32 hires.

As COVID 19 restrictions eased, the MMAC team traveled the state to meet with healthcare employers, associations and strategic partners as well as veterans, transitioning service members, military spouses and members of the National Guard and Reserves. In person meetings and visits included Western State Hospital, Piedmont Hospital, Velocity Urgent Care, Kaiser Permanente, as well as Fort Belvoir, Joint Base Langley-Eustis, Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall, Fort Lee, and Naval Station Norfolk.

MMAC played an active role in Hire Vets Now Networking events that were held in partnership with the Virginia Chamber Foundation on military installation across the Commonwealth. MMAC engaged with

over 1,000 transitioning service members and military spouses as they supported 12 networking events across five military installations.

MMAC participated in the 2022 Virginia Healthcare Conference held in person in Richmond, where the team was able to promote the program to existing and prospective healthcare partners.

The MMAC program was selected as a winner of the 2021 State Transformation in Action Recognition (STAR) Award by a panel of judges comprised of state legislators, legislative staff, and policy experts at the 75th Anniversary Meeting of the Southern Legislative Conference held in Nashville, July 10-14. The STAR Award identifies and promotes state government solutions to regional problems, focusing on policy innovations that are creative, impactful, transferable, and effective.

The 2021 STAR Award was accepted by Mark Whiting, DVS MMAC Program Manager, and Phil Trezza, Director of Transition and Employment Programs, who also presented the information about the program to the panel of judges for the award consideration.



Mark Whiting, former MMAC Program Manager (Left) and Phil Trezza, Director of Transition and Employment Programs, accept the STAR Award at the Southern Legislative Conference in Nashville, Tennessee

THE VIRGINIA VETERAN AND FAMILY SUPPORT (VVFS) PROGRAM

MISSION

To monitor and provide resource connections and care coordination for behavioral health, rehabilitative, and other related supportive services to Virginia veterans, National Guard, Armed Forces Reserves, caregivers, and families.

ACTIVITIES

The Virginia Veteran and Family Support (VVFS) Program is a focused response to the growing need to improve and expand services to our nation's veterans and their family members coping with the impact of deployment, military service, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), and operational stress and/or traumatic brain injury (TBI). It is operated by the Virginia Department of Veterans Services (DVS) in cooperation with the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS) and the Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS). VVFS serves transitioning service members, veterans of all eras who are Virginia residents, members of the Virginia National Guard or Armed Forces Reserves, and their caregivers and family members.

In accordance with Virginia Code 2.2-2001.1, the purpose and priorities of the VVFS program are:

- Build awareness of veterans service needs and the availability of the program through marketing, outreach, and training for first responders, service providers and others;
- Collaborate with relevant agencies of the Commonwealth, localities, and service providers;
- Develop and implement a consistent method of determining how many veterans in the Commonwealth are currently in need of mental health, physical rehabilitation, or other services, or may be in need of such services in the future;
- Work with veterans to develop a coordinated resources plan that identifies appropriate service providers to meet the veteran's service needs;
- Refer veterans to appropriate and available providers on the basis of needs identified in the coordinated resources plan; and
- Monitor progress toward individually identified goals in accordance with the coordinated resource plan.

DVS and VVFS operate on a metric-driven approach to monitor agency performance in support of the **THRIVE** objective. VVFS's four Objectives and Key Results (OKR) consist of the following:

1. 90% of all new VVFS clients will have a needs assessment completed within seven days of initial client contact for the purpose of creating a coordinated resource plan (FY22- 98% out of 1,390);
2. 90% of veterans with a identified behavioral health need will be connected to an appropriate resource (FY22: 98% out of 353);
3. 90% of veterans experiencing literal homelessness will be connected to a shelter/housing resource (FY22: 95% out of 189); and
4. DVS field office staff (VVFS and Benefits) will screen 95% of new Service Members, Veterans, and Families for suicide risk per month (January – June 2022: 94% out of 6,809).

In 2022, VVFS continued to expand and sustain partnerships with federal, state, and community partners in connecting Service Members, Veterans and their Families (SMVF) to resources and services. Through the Governor's Challenge to Prevent Suicide among SMVF (statewide) and the Mayor's Challenge to Prevent Suicide among SMVF (Richmond), VVFS continues trainings, such as Military Cultural Competency (MCC) and Crisis Intervention Team (CIT), to state agencies and community partners to enhance knowledge and resource connections.

Creating a continuum of care for SMVF for behavioral health, rehabilitative, and supportive services is a continual priority to ensure there is no wrong door and SMVF can quickly access services when needed.

VVFS continues its partnership with the Department of Social Services and Virginia 2-1-1 to enhance the statewide 2-1-1 system. With additional call specialists, increased training on military and veteran competency, and increased collection of data, the 2-1-1 system is better able to connect veterans 24/7 to community, state, and federal resources. The system connected 5,898 veterans, active duty military, and their family members to services in FY22. The majority of referral needs were for utility and housing assistance, social services, and job-related services.

Governor's Challenge and Mayor's Challenge to Prevent Suicide Among SMVF

VVFS continued coordination of the Governor's Challenge and the Mayor's Challenge to Prevent Suicide Among SMVF. ² The City of Richmond was one of the first eight cities in the nation to join the Mayor's Challenge, and Virginia was one of the first seven states to participate in the Governor's Challenge. The United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) sponsor both of these initiatives.

² Governor's and mayor's challenges to prevent suicide among service members, veterans, and their families. SAMHSA. (n.d.). R.f. <https://www.samhsa.gov/smvf-ta-center/mayors-governors-challenges>

The Virginia team is implementing the VA's National Strategy for the Prevention of Veteran Suicide,³ which provides a framework for using a comprehensive public health approach to address the growing challenge among the veteran population. Secretary John Littel, Health and Human Resources, and Secretary Craig Crenshaw, Veterans and Defense Affairs, co-lead the Governor's Challenge team in Virginia.

Nationwide, Governor's Challenge teams focus on three main priorities:

1. To identify SMVF and screen for suicide risk
2. To promote connectedness and improve care transitions
3. To increase lethal means safety and safety planning

Tying into these national priorities, the theme of the Virginia's Governor's Challenge team is the "3C's – *Care, Connect, and Communicate*":

- Care: The provision of accessible and culturally competent behavioral health services.
 - Strategy: Identify, screen, and refer SMVF at risk of suicide in community services.
- Connect: Bringing military/veteran specific resources and community services together; forming systemic partnerships.
 - Strategy: Increase engagement between Veterans Health Administration (VHA), Virginia Department of Veterans Services (DVS), and partner organizations for SMVF referrals.
- Communicate: Educating the SMVF population on resources and behavioral health providers on military culture and suicide prevention best practices
 - Strategy: Expand lethal means safety (particularly firearm safety) training to community stakeholders

As part of the Governor's Challenge, VVFS and Benefits service lines joined Virginia's Identify SMVF, Screen for Suicide Risk, and Refer for Services (VISR) Pilot. The goal of the VISR pilot is to develop military culture, suicide prevention, and safety planning infrastructure in community agencies (including hospitals, local departments of social services, Community Service Boards (CSBs), and the Up Center Cohen Veterans Network Clinic.

In DVS, the VISR work continues after the initial VISR pilot implementation. In FY22, VVFS assisted in expanding risk screening in the Benefits service line from eight staff in the initial pilot to all Benefits staff in January 2022. VVFS developed the training (suicide prevention, risk screening, and safety planning) and referral protocol (to VVFS for non-emergent needs and to the Veterans Crisis Line for urgent support) for the expansion among existing Benefits staff and now trains all new hires.

³ National strategy for preventing veteran suicide. *U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs*. (n.d.). R.f. https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/suicide_prevention/docs/Office-of-Mental-Health-and-Suicide-Prevention-National-Strategy-for-Preventing-Veterans-Suicide.pdf

Since January 2022, DVS has significantly increased suicide screenings. During the initial pilot, VVFS and Benefits screened approximately 420 per month. From January – June 2022, the monthly average increased to 1,063 (94% of new clients). The table below shows the total number of SMVF screened for suicide risk. A total of 680 individuals screened at risk of suicide and the VVFS and Benefits teams linked them to behavioral health resources, VVFS peer support, and other supportive services. This expansion helps ensure that the Benefits team is less likely to miss someone that is struggling and can collaborate with VVFS to link them to support to prevent a crisis or suicide.

Suicide Risk Level (C-SSRS)	January – June 2022 (All VVFS and Benefits)
No risk	5,699
Low risk	570
Moderate risk	87
High risk	23
Total	6,379

Beginning in FY23, VVFS staff are training DVS team members in the education and transition & employment service lines in suicide risk screening and prevention to continue expansion of VISR Pilot best practices.

SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

VVFS provides hands-on assistance navigating behavioral health, rehabilitative, and other supportive services, including peer and family support services to the most vulnerable veterans. This includes justice-involved veterans and those at risk for, or experiencing homelessness.

VVFS focuses supportive services in five areas:

1. **Care coordination and management;**
2. **Housing and Homeless Services;**
3. **Justice Involved Services program (JIS);**
4. **Mission: Healthy Relationships and Mission: Healthy Families (MHR, MHF);**
5. **Veteran Peer Support (VPS) Services**

CARE COORDINATION AND MANAGEMENT: REGIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

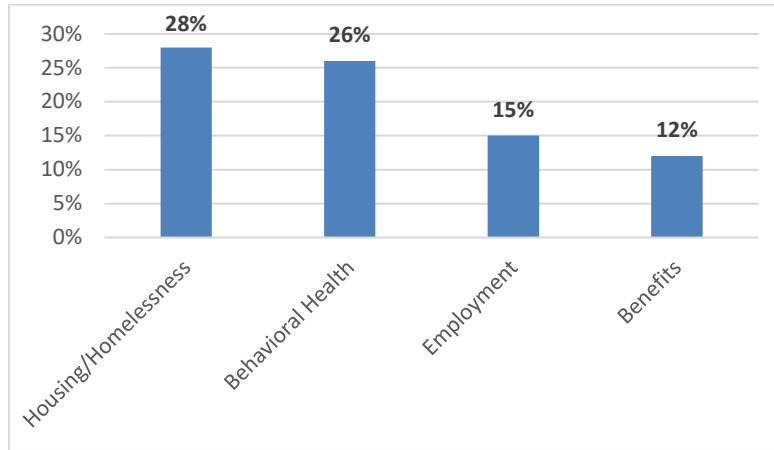
VVFS consists of four regions, which provide the core services of resource connections, care coordination, and peer and group support to veterans and their family members. Following are some of the regional capacity building initiatives that VVFS supports:

- **VISR**: VVFS staff continue to train all new DVS Benefits staff in suicide prevention, risk screening, and safety planning. In addition, VVFS staff promote military culture and suicide prevention best practices among community partners such as Veterans Service Organizations, human services providers, employment support and faith-based programs. VVFS has consulted with multiple states on the VISR Pilot including KY, MD, MN, NC, NY, and WI. In addition, VVFS is coordinating the next phase of the VISR Pilot (2.0) for the Governor's Challenge to Prevent Suicide team to grow these best practices in local communities in the Commonwealth.
- **STEP VA**: VVFS is assisting DBHDS and CSBs with the military and veterans services component of System Transformation Excellence and Performance in Virginia (STEP VA) in the public mental health system. As part of STEP VA, CSBs increased clinical services and suicide prevention among SMVF. VVFS staff provide military culture and resource training to CSB staff, partner on care coordination and peer support services delivery and expansion of suicide prevention initiatives including the Lock and Talk Virginia lethal means safety campaign. VVFS staff also assist CSBs with building internal capacity for SMVF services through staff recruitment (including specialized Navigator positions) and training.
- **Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training**: VVFS staff provide SMVF crisis intervention team training to partner agencies, law enforcement, and first responders. This training builds capacity in communities and solidifies partnerships throughout the regions for referral resources and care coordination. CIT trainings provide the program with referrals at vital intercept points to connect veterans experiencing crises to care treatment and other related supportive services.
- **Virginia National Guard**: VVFS staff continue to support ongoing planning and training with the Virginia National Guard. Through the Commander's Ready and Resilient Council (CR2C) and with the Risk Reduction, Readiness and Suicide Prevention (R3SP) office, VVFS streamlines behavioral health and supportive services referral partnerships with Readiness Centers and units statewide.
- **Military Cultural Competency (MCC) training**: VVFS staff continue to provide MCC training to community agencies, state agencies, and other providers serving veterans. VVFS is the lead MCC trainer for the VISR pilot through the Governor's Challenge for Suicide Prevention. This training builds community provider knowledge in serving SMVF and provides information on key resource connections including outreaching VVFS services. Staff provided both virtual and in-person MCC to approximately 1,300 community services providers and partners in FY22.

VVFS North Region

The North Region team is comprised of 12 team members: a Regional Director (RD), Assistant Regional Manager (ARM), Senior Resource Specialist (SRS), Veteran Justice Specialist (VJS), two Veteran Peer Specialists (VPS), and six full time Resource Specialists (RS), strategically located in five DVS offices: Springfield, Fairfax City, Manassas, Loudoun, and Front Royal.

Most significant needs of veterans and family members in the region:



Due to the close proximity to active duty military bases, the Pentagon, and Washington D.C, the North Region saw a high demand for assistance for veterans and family members, particularly with mental health needs and related supportive services. In response, the region provides a high level of peer support, including groups, and care coordination for mental health. In FY22, the region expanded capacity of direct service staff to meet the increased needs of veterans and family members in Northern Virginia. This included a new VPS and two RS. These increases in direct service staff resulted in the expansion of the DVS Manassas Office as well as the Front Royal office.

Due to high population of veterans experiencing PTSD and TBI – particularly Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF)/Operation Enduring Freedom(OEF) veterans – peer support services have been pivotal to supporting the mental health needs and recovery of these veterans. The region continues to provide virtual peer support groups to continue meeting the needs of these veterans. The region has established a network of nearly 20 clinicians to assist in bridging barriers to mental health treatment for veterans and their families. These providers offer both in-person and telehealth services. The region leverages the Veteran Services Foundation (VSF) for assessments and treatment services to veterans who cannot access the VA and have financial barriers.

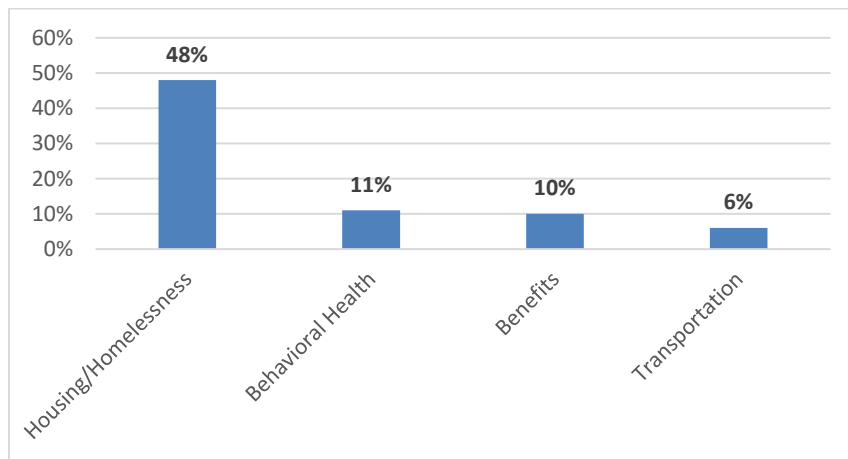
Regional staff continue to coordinate with six local homeless continua of care (CoC), the Washington D.C. VA Medical Center (VAMC), and the Martinsburg WV VAMC homeless services teams to connect veterans experiencing homelessness to permanent housing. Staff are active in meetings of Unite-Us Serving Together Collaborative and Homeless Veterans By-Name Housing to assist in care coordination with Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) and other CoC partners.

The region has supported efforts for a new Loudoun County veteran treatment docket in the past year, which will be operational in FY23. Staff are also part of the treatment teams for both the Fairfax County Veteran’s Docket and Prince William County’s Veteran Docket. They assist justice involved veterans in accessing mental health and/or substance abuse treatment, as well as employment/vocational and education services to comply with the docket and successfully graduate from the program.

VVFS West Region:

The West Region team is comprised of 12 team members: RD, ARM, SRS, VJS, two VPS, and six RS, strategically located in five DVS offices (Abingdon, Big Stone Gap, Danville, Lynchburg, and Wytheville), three CSBs (New River Valley, Piedmont, and Alleghany Highlands), and the Salem VA Medical Center. The region also provides services at satellite offices and in communities across the region. In September 2021, the West region team added critical capacity with a new VPS in the Abingdon office.

Most significant needs of veterans and family members in the region:



Key partnerships includes the region's 12 CSBs, the Highlands CSB Veteran Recovery Coordinator, Crisis Intervention Teams (CITs), Virginia Employment Commission (VEC), Virginia Department of Health (VDH), homeless CoCs, the Virginia Army National Guard, and U.S. Army Reserve. The region also provided support for the Military Culture Competency and Crisis Intervention Team trainings by implementing suicide screenings, lethal means safety planning, and coordinating referrals for the SMVF population. Other initiatives include the SWVA Crisis Intercept Mapping Collaborative and Southwest Virginia Together With Veterans (TWV).

TWV promotes best practices from the Veterans Health Administration and the Governor's Challenge to Prevent Suicide among SMVF and is designed to bolster grass roots, veteran-led, suicide prevention in rural communities. TWV program is currently in phase five of the community development process to perform the suicide prevention and awareness action plan and measure results. This process surveys key stakeholders from across SWVA to measure collaboration among people and organizations in our communities.

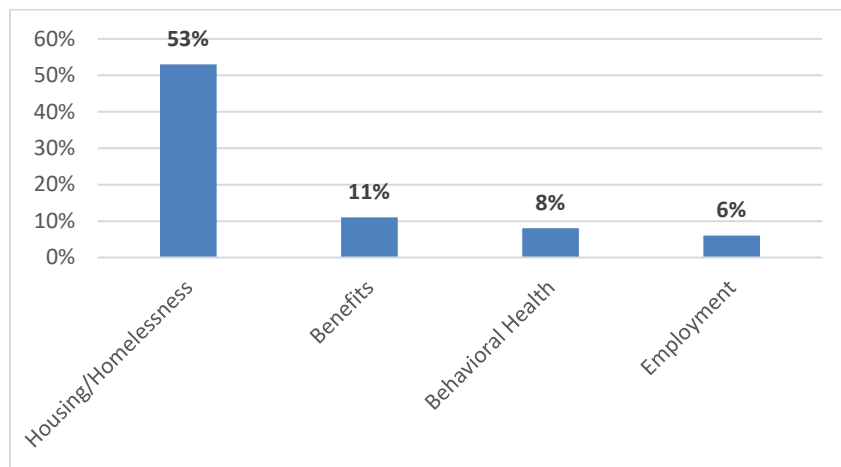
The region has provided regular behavioral health and suicide prevention trainings including Talk Saves Lives, Question Persuade and Refer (QPR), Trauma Informed Care/Adverse Childhood Experiences (TIC/ACEs), Mental Health First Aid (MHFA), and Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST). The region also facilitates Caregiver Focus Groups to better understand the unique needs of SMVF caregivers in SWVA and provide training and resource connections for the SMVF population. The

West region VPS facilitates a Veteran Peer Group in the New River Valley, as well as launched and facilitated the first VVFS statewide Female Veteran Peer Group in a virtual model.

VVFS Central Region

The Central Region team is comprised of 13 team members: an RD, ARM, SRS, five RS, one VJS, and four VPS, strategically located in five DVS offices (Charlottesville, Fredericksburg, Henrico, Petersburg, and Staunton), two offices shared with the VEC (Chesterfield and Richmond), and the Region 10 CSB office in Palmyra.

Most significant needs of veterans and family members in the region:



In FY22, the region experienced the highest number of clients in program history. These included a spectrum of needs from eviction prevention, homelessness, behavioral health, and peer support. The region coordinated with the Virginia Rent Relief and other local eviction prevention programs to assist veterans and their families facing eviction and/or housing instability. There has also been an increase in justice-involved veterans due to the Department of Corrections (DOC) early release protocol.

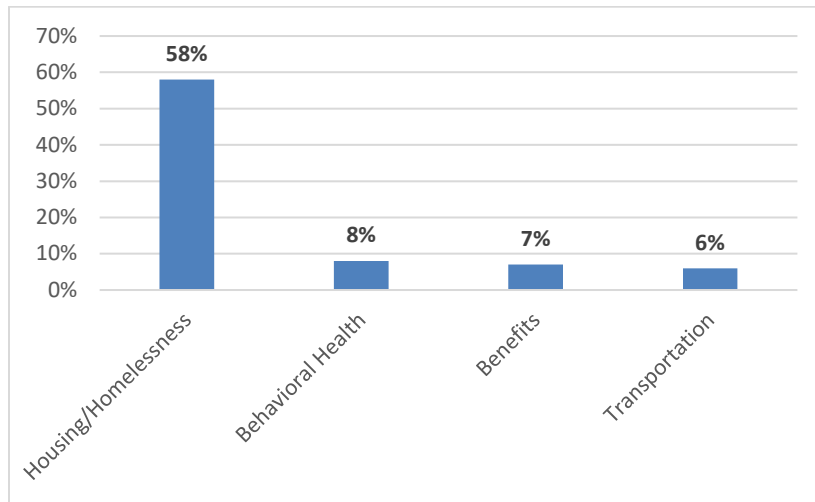
Staff continued participating in the Richmond Mayors Challenge to Prevent Suicide among SMVF. Other partners in this initiative include DBHDS, the Richmond Behavioral Health Authority, Central Virginia VAMC, first responders, the Virginia National Guard, and local Veterans Service Organizations. The team is continuing its efforts in identifying SMVF that are at-risk of suicide and improving resource connections with necessary services. This includes veterans facing housing instability who are at higher risk.

Central Region staff provided outreach to multiple Virginia National Guard Yellow Ribbon events, a resource fair hosted by the Military Retiree's Club of Richmond, and other community events. The region increased outreach to the VA CBOCs as well the VA homeless programs. They also provided trainings that included eight regional 40-hour CIT training programs. The region is continuing MCC and suicide prevention training to community partners.

VVFS East Region:

The East Region is comprised of nine members: RD, ARM, SRS, VJS, two VPS, two RS, and one RS/Family and Caregiver Support Coordinator. East Region staff are strategically located in six DVS offices (Chesapeake, Hampton, Norfolk, Oceana, Virginia Beach, and Williamsburg) and the Western Tidewater CSB office in Suffolk.

Most significant needs of veterans and family members in the region:



The East region continued to see a high number of housing, including homelessness, cases. The team coordinated with the five homeless CoCs, SSVF providers, and the Virginia Rent Relief Program/Virginia Mortgage Relief to connect veterans and their families to resources. In addition, behavioral health cases also increased and the region regularly coordinated with the Hampton VAMC, local CSBs, and private behavioral health providers such as the Cohen Clinic to access services.

As a part of the Governor’s Challenge, staff provided regular community training to partner agencies and first responders through CIT and MCC in the Hampton Roads area. The region co-hosted the Veterans Services Collaborative with the mental health team at the Hampton VAMC to bridge referrals and care transitions between the VAMC and community behavioral health/supportive services providers. The region is also a member of the Crisis Intercept Mapping team hosted by Western Tidewater Community Services Board.

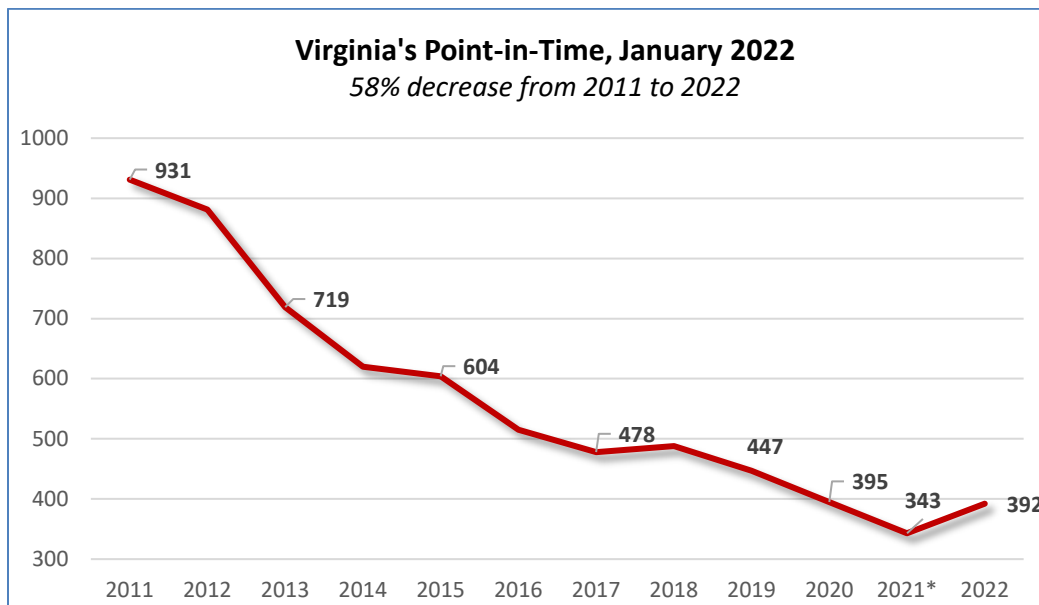
East Region team members routinely staffed tables at regional outreach events, providing information on DVS/VVFS services to the community. These include the Military Children’s Gala, the Tidewater Rod Run, and Hire Vets Now monthly events. The team worked closely with DVS Benefits to provide cross-referrals to clients.

HOUSING AND HOMELESS SERVICES

VVFS supports the Commonwealth in sustaining efforts to ensure that veteran homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring. VVFS continues to be recognized as a national leader. The VVFS Deputy Director, who also serves as the VVFS Housing Director, continues to provide statewide coordination and leadership with federal, state, and community organizations and serves on the National Coalition for Homeless Veterans' Executive Board.

CoCs held the annual Point in Time (PIT) Count the last week of January 2022. This year's preliminary data showed, for veterans experiencing homelessness: 392 veterans – 345 sheltered; 47 unsheltered. This was a 14% increase from the 2021 count of 343; however, some COCs did not conduct an unsheltered count in 2021, making the number lower.

VVFS continues to work with communities in sustaining efforts of reducing veteran homelessness through coordinated entry and targeting of resources. In coordination with partners statewide, 642 previously homeless veterans entered permanent housing in FY22.



* Some CoCs in 2021 did not conduct an unsheltered count due to Covid-19

The DVS Homeless Fund continues leveraging Veterans Service Foundation (VSF) funds, coordinating with SSVF partners across the state to fill gaps in housing veterans experiencing homelessness, and provides prevention funds for previously chronically homeless veterans. Allowable expenses include rental deposits/arrears, utility assistance, beds, and other one-time expenses that may prevent a veteran from being housed. In FY22, VVFS used \$230,000 in VSF and agency funds to assist 228 veterans with moves into permanent housing or homeless prevention.

The Dominion *Veteran EnergyShare* program, administered by VVFS and Supportive Services for Veterans Families (SSVF) providers across the state, continued in FY22 to provide utility assistance to

homeless veterans who move into permanent housing. The *Veteran EnergyShare* program is continuing with \$800,000 for calendar year 2022. This partnership has received national recognition as a best practice and has been vital in sustaining efforts in Virginia. In calendar year 2021, VVFS and SSVF providers utilized 1,228 *Veteran EnergyShare* vouchers for veterans experiencing homelessness or were at-risk.

Other housing initiatives that VVFS is involved with include expanding permanent supportive housing through participation with the Permanent Supportive Housing Steering Committee. These efforts includes participating in Health and Housing Institute facilitated by the National Academy for State Health Policy (NASHP). These efforts enhance the ability to serve veterans in need of housing and supports that may be ineligible for VA homeless resources.

VVFS JUSTICE INVOLVED SERVICES PROGRAM (JIS)

The VVFS Justice Involved Services (JIS) program provides resource connections, care coordination, and support to Virginia's veterans and service members across the criminal justice spectrum, including diversion, incarceration and while on supervision in the communities. JIS offers direct assistance to veterans and service members of any era, regardless of discharge status. The program provides services to veterans in treatment dockets, in local jails and state prisons, and on probation and/or parole supervision. The Virginia Department of Corrections (VADOC) reported 3,988 veterans in November 2022 (includes those incarcerated in state correctional facilities, on state probation and parole supervision, and state-responsible veterans in local jails).

VVFS has been instrumental in providing capacity support to treatment dockets. Below is a list of active veteran treatment dockets:

- Fairfax General District Court
- Fairfax Circuit Court
- Fairfax Juvenile & Domestic Relations Court
- Hampton Circuit Court
- Norfolk Circuit Court
- Prince William
- Spotsylvania/Rappahannock

The four VVFS Veteran Justice Specialists (VJS) (one in each VVFS region) work with justice-involved veterans pre- and post-release. The JIS program provides virtual and in-person services for justice-involved veterans.

To address the needs of justice-involved veterans (JIVs) with serious medical and mental health conditions, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Veteran Justice Outreach program staff led the Justice Involved Veterans with Special Needs discharge planning work group with the VJS staff and VADOC. In FY22, the group met to coordinate housing placements for veterans releasing from incarceration in need of assisted living facilities and nursing homes.

The VVFS Criminal Justice Director (CJD) conducts statewide collaborative quarterly meetings between the VA Veteran Justice Outreach and Healthcare for Reentry Veterans (HCRV) specialist staff and VVFS VJS staff. The group discusses program updates, issues related to the justice-involved veteran population, and training opportunities. The CJD continues to provide statewide technical assistance and advocacy on addressing the needs of the justice-involved veteran population and serves on the Academic Consortium on Criminal Justice Health (ACCJH) Board of Directors and ACCJH Racial and Social Justice Subcommittee. The goal of the ACCJH is to advance the field of health care for individuals in the criminal justice system.

In FY22, the CJD also joined the Justice and Housing workgroup led by the Corporation for Supportive Housing. The group is conducting environmental scans to address barriers to accessing housing for justice-involved individuals, reviewing tenant selection plans, holding focus group meetings, and examining background-screening criteria in housing.

VETERAN PEER SUPPORT (VPS) SERVICES

The VVFS Veteran Peer Support (VPS) program leverages professional peer training and personal experiences to develop peer-to-peer relationships with veterans to provide support in increasing self-reliance, health, wellness, and quality of life. The program has with a specific focus on veterans struggling with behavioral and rehabilitative needs affected by military service but presently disinterested in clinical treatment. VVFS Peer Specialists link with veterans who share similar military and post-military experiences to build a supportive relationship and connect to services. VVFS currently employs 10 VPS representatives across the state.

The VPS program facilitates veteran support groups that promote personal growth, self-awareness, coping strategies, and the opportunity to interact with other veterans. VVFS facilitates four virtual groups. VVFS adapted these groups to a virtual setting to facilitate connection and mutual support. In FY22, VVFS started the first Women's Veterans Group. This group assists women veterans across the commonwealth to fellowship with other women veterans and space to share their needs.

VVFS continues its work to sustain and grow partnerships with Department of Defense (DoD) and the Virginia National Guard (VaNG). Working through the behavioral health program within the National Guard, VVFS successfully assisted veterans guard members who are experiencing anxiety, depression and other issues associated with military service. VVFS also provides peer support and resource connection to the Marine Corps' District Injured Support Cell (DISC) and the Army Wounded Warrior (AW2).

VVFS continues outreach efforts to the VA and other state and community peer support programs such as DBHDS and DMAS by coordinating with these partners to expand VVFS training and resource opportunities. These partnerships increase the identification of veterans who cannot access VA services due to discharge and/or reluctance to accept services. VVFS continues to provide peer support presentations, webinars, and technical assistance to nonprofit partners such as VOCAL, Mental Health America, CSBs, Virginia Employment Commission, Virginia Department of Health, and peer specific organizations throughout the Commonwealth.

VVFS Peer Support also played a significant part in the VA's VetXL and Veterans Experience Action Center (VEAC) initiatives. These National pilot demonstration initiatives allowed veterans across the commonwealth to have instant access to VA benefits, healthcare, veteran specific resources, veteran peer support, and other supportive resources by either chat or phone. In FY22, the VPS Program has worked to streamline and provide cross connection services to incarcerated veterans involved with Veteran Justice Representatives and to Resource Specialist whose clients are at risk of suicide and/or have behavioral health barriers.

FY22 VVFS SERVICES

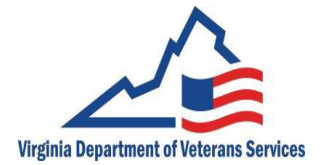
Provides resource referrals, comprehensive behavioral and rehabilitative health care coordination, and supportive services to Virginia's Veterans, National Guard, Armed Forces Reserves, caregivers and family members.

- 2,180** Veterans and family members served in FY22 (+438, 2021)
- 2,683** Total individual services provided in FY22 (+280, 2021)
- 351** Total behavioral health services provided in FY22 (+55, 2021)
- 35** Total rehabilitative/medical services provided in FY21 (-1, 2021)
- 2,297** Total supportive services provided in FY22 (+226, 2021)
- 1915** Total group services provided in FY22 (+1459, 2021)
- 0** Veterans and family members served by *Mission: Healthy Relationships* (MHR) and *Mission: Healthy Families*(MHF) in FY22* (0, 2021)
- 690** Individuals trained in Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) by VVFS (-140, 2021)
- 1,252** Individuals trained in Military Cultural Competency Training by VVFS (-149, 2021)
- 268** Veterans who received Behavioral Health/Financial Assistance through Veterans Services Foundation (+149, 2021)

HOMELESSNESS AND HOUSING

- 392** Estimated number of homeless veterans in Virginia on a single night in January 2022 (+49, 2021)
- 47** Estimated number of unsheltered veterans in Virginia on a single night in January 2022** (+29, 2021)
- 642** Number of homeless veterans housed statewide in FY22 (+57, 2021)
- 228** Veterans experiencing homelessness who received financial assistance through VVFS in FY22(+84, 2021)

The Virginia Department of Veterans Services
COMMISSIONER'S 2022 ANNUAL REPORT



Annual Services Provided	FY20	FY21	FY22
Individual Services Delivered	2,852	2,402	2,683
Outreach and Training Events	507	202	408

**Unsheltered Point in Time counts used a different methodology due to COVID-19 and homeless Continuums of Care did not consistently collect veteran status*

***MHR/MHF were not held due to COVID-19*

VETERANS CARE CENTERS

MISSION

Provide veteran residents with exceptional care in a home-like environment that enhances their sense of well-being. To achieve this, DVS veterans care centers:

- 1. Take a “whole person” approach that focuses not just on providing physical health care to residents, but also providing recreational, therapeutic, and social opportunities that contribute to overall physical and mental health;*
- 2. Operate the care centers as symbols of the Commonwealth’s commitment to her veterans; and*
- 3. Serve the greatest possible number of veterans by maintaining the highest practical facility census at state veterans care centers.*

OVERVIEW

Virginia’s veterans care centers provide residential (in-patient) care services to Virginia veterans, including skilled nursing care, Alzheimer’s/memory care, and short-term rehabilitative care. Domiciliary (assisted living) care is also provided at the Virginia Veterans Care Center (VCC) in Roanoke. All 424 beds (224 in Roanoke, 200 in Richmond) are certified for both Medicare and Medicaid. Revenue sources include: Medicaid, Medicare, per diem payments from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), and private funding sources. Honorably discharged veterans who reside in or entered active duty from Virginia with a need for skilled nursing care are eligible to reside at one of Virginia’s veterans care centers. It is an honor to care for all our Virginia veterans, whether short or long term.

COVID-19 had a substantial effect on the care centers’ operations. Census levels dropped during the last four months of FY20, and both care centers suspended new admissions while implementing highly restrictive infection control protocols (reducing/suspending in-facility activities, social distancing, and increased personal protective equipment (PPE) usage. At the same time, expenses increased due to testing requirements, PPE purchases, and extra staffing costs. Both care centers expect census to be lower until staffing levels improve and both care centers can resume substantial numbers of new admissions. The care centers are very grateful for the support they received from the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) and from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Centers (VAMC) located adjacent to each care center.

New Construction: Jones & Cabacoy VCC and Puller VCC

Two new Veterans Care Centers are nearing completion.

The Jones & Cabacoy Veterans Care Center (VCC) in Virginia Beach is named for Medal of Honor recipient Col. William A. Jones, III and SSgt. Christopher Cabacoy, a Virginia Beach native who was killed in action in Afghanistan.

The Puller VCC is named for U.S. Marine Corps Lt. General Lewis B. “Chesty” Puller, his son, Marine Corps Lt. Lewis B. Puller, Jr. and Lewis Jr.’s wife, former state Senator Linda (Toddy) Puller. Senator

Puller, along with Senators Bryce Reeves and Louise Lucas, and Delegates Kirk Cox, Rich Anderson, and Chris Stolle, among many others, was instrumental in securing funding for the new care centers.

The two new centers are 128-bed facilities with private rooms that provide residential (in-patient) care services (skilled nursing care, Alzheimer's/memory care, and long/short-term rehabilitative care). Construction of both new care centers commenced in March 2020 and will open in 2023.

Administrators for both facilities have been hired. Most senior leadership team positions have been filled or will be filled by the end of 2022, including the Directors of Nursing, HR, IT, Marketing/Admissions, Pharmacy, and Facilities. Nursing care, dietary, housekeeping, and building/grounds crews will be brought aboard in stages, until 60-70 team members are on board to welcome the first residents. Staffing will increase ahead of increased admissions; the target is for each new care center to be at full occupancy 17-20 months after opening.

Virginia Veterans Care Center

The Virginia Veterans Care Center (VVCC) in Roanoke, adjacent to the Salem VA Medical Center (VAMC), is a 224-bed facility (196 skilled, 28 assisted living) providing high-quality, short-term rehabilitative and long-term health care. 60 of the 196 beds are dedicated solely to the care of veterans who require a secure environment related to the effects of Alzheimer's/dementia. A 28-bed unit serves the needs of veterans who require assisted-living/domiciliary care.

In FY22, VVCC provided 55,999 patient days of skilled nursing or Alzheimer's/memory care, which is 78% occupancy of 196 beds and 6,043 patient days in assisted living, which is 59% capacity. Census continues to be down due to COVID-19 but has increased 7% from FY21 to FY22.

As with the entire health care sector, COVID-19 had a profound impact on VVCC operations in FY22. VVCC continues to follow strict adherence to all Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), Virginia Department of Health (VDH), and U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) infection control and prevention guidelines.

VVCC went through two cycles of COVID-19 in FY22, with several veterans contracting the virus. In spite of all the challenges, and because of the great care of VVCC's team, no veteran lost their life as a result of COVID 19 in FY22.

With almost all VVCC residents and the vast majority of staff now vaccinated, VVCC has been able to resume a more "normal" operating posture for VVCC residents, including resumption of in-person family visits, a key part of the overall care plan for veterans. Realizing that new "shocks" to they system (supply chain shortages, new COVID variants, etc.) are possible at any time, the VVCC team is optimistic as operations continue to adjust to a new normal.

ACTIVITIES

VVCC provides high-quality, on-site physical, occupational and speech therapy, as well as many other ancillary health care services. VVCC offers amenities such as Wi-Fi, a library with computer access, a chapel, solariums on each hallway, a wheelchair accessible nature trail and deck, and a no charge on-site barber shop.

Staff work throughout the year in coordination with veterans service organizations (VSOs) and over 120 individual volunteers, on an array of activities that historically includes trips to the D-Day Memorial in Bedford, Salem Red Sox baseball games, the Fishing Rodeo and other community events. On-site activities are planned as well pet therapy, an annual apple festival and entertainments. VVCC staff also help facilitate resident participation with Honor Flight.



VVCC recognizes special events and occasions, such as Military Branch Birthdays, 9/11, Run For the Wall, and Women Veterans Week. VVCC raised over \$2,600 in support of Alzheimer's Awareness month, and \$21,342 for Operation Holiday Spirit (OHS), to support the purchase of individualized holiday gifts for all care center residents.

During these unprecedented times, VVCC has received enormous community support and has increased use of technology in an effort to stay connected.

Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center

The Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center (SBVCC), located on the campus of the McGuire VAMC in Richmond, has 200 skilled nursing care beds in private rooms, of which 40 beds are dedicated to the care of Alzheimer's/memory care.

In 2022, SBVCC provided 54,916 patient days, which is 75% occupancy, or an average of 150 beds filled. Along with long-term residents, SBVCC has some veterans on a short-term basis for rehabilitation, as they transition from hospital care back to their homes and families.

As with the entire health care sector, COVID-19 continued to have an impact on SBVCC operations in FY22. Despite strict adherence to all Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), Virginia Department of Health (VDH), and U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) infection control and prevention guidelines, SBVCC continues to periodically get cases of COVID among both residents and staff. While SBVCC continues to see cases there has been no loss of life due to COVID in FY22. Testing on a weekly schedule continues to be a routine for facility staff.

With almost all SBVCC residents and the vast majority of staff now vaccinated, SBVCC has been able to resume a more normal operating posture for SBVCC residents, including resumption of in-person family visits, a key part of the overall care plan for veterans.

ACTIVITIES

SBVCC provides high-quality on-site physical, occupational, and speech therapy, therapeutic recreation, along with social and spiritual activities. Other amenities include on-site pharmacy, fully equipped barber and beauty shop, activity and game rooms, library, resident lounges in each nursing neighborhood, courtyards, and an outdoor walking trail.

Prior to COVID, SBVCC hosted a variety of events for the residents, including horseback riding at the Lonesome Dove Equestrian Center, Richmond flying Squirrels baseball games, and a trip to the Washington Football Team training camp. Volunteers form a core that helps to keep residents happy and healthy.

While SBVCC has been able to resume a more normal activity schedule, including group activities with guests, many activities drastically changed with COVID-19. Activities are still often held with individuals in their rooms and staff have become creative in doing activities such as hallway bingo, hallway trivia, and hallway Scattagories. Staff have worked diligently to help veterans keep in touch with their loved ones through social media and FaceTime. As health experts have continued to learn more about COVID-19, SBVCC has been able to hold small gatherings inside and outside (e.g. trivia, music, bingo, ice cream social, nursing home week), while maintaining masking and social distancing. SBVCC is open to indoor visitation with set infection control guidelines.



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Annual Services Provided	FY20	FY21	FY22*
<i>Virginia Veterans Care Center</i>			
Patient Days—Nursing / % of beds occupied	50,614/71%	50,614/71%	55,999/78%
Patient Days—Assisted Living / % of beds occupied	7,822/76%	7,822/76%	6,043/59%
<i>Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center</i>			
Patient Days—Nursing / % of beds occupied	58,455 / 80%	54,916 / 75%	54,916 / 75%

Additional details on Care Center services provided found in Appendix D

Veterans Cemeteries

MISSION

Provide dignified final resting places in places of honor in perpetuity for Virginia's veterans and their eligible dependents.

ACTIVITIES

Cemeteries is operating on a metric driven approach to monitor agency performance. The Objectives and Key Results (OKR) consist of the following:

- **Increase awareness of burial benefits:** Schedule at least three outreach initiatives monthly. Increase number of pre-applications from 50 per month to 70 per month and 10% annually thereafter.
- **Increase number of veteran employees in service line:** Fill 50% of current/future vacancies with veterans to reach 20% of employees with veteran status from the current 13.6% by January 2023.
- **Increase morale, retention, safety and work quality:** Send a minimum of six employees per quarter to offsite training related to their specialty.
- **Maintain cemeteries as National Shrines:** Obtain a minimum of 97% on next U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Veterans Cemetery Grants Program (VCGP) compliance inspections at each cemetery (inspection dates TBD).
- **Honor our deceased veterans:** Increase percentage of "full" military funeral honors rendered in Suffolk from the current ~10% to 100%.

The Cemetery Services section operates and lovingly maintains Virginia's three state veterans cemeteries: the Albert G. Horton, Jr. Memorial Veterans Cemetery in Suffolk; the Virginia Veterans Cemetery in Amelia; and the Southwest Virginia Veterans Cemetery in Dublin. All three provide final resting places for our veterans and their eligible family members in places of honor, dignity, respect, and remembrance. All cemeteries accommodate in-ground burial of casketed remains, in-ground inurnment of cremated remains, and above-ground inurnment of cremated remains in a columbarium. The Southwest Virginia State Veterans Cemetery also offers a green burial option for cremated remains in its scatter garden.

In FY22, Virginia's three state veterans cemeteries conducted 2,413 committal services, each of which were solemn, dignified events honoring those who took up arms to defend our nation. This represented a 5% increase in interments compared to FY21 and a 30% increase since FY20. We are honored that Virginia's veterans and their families chose our cemeteries for their loved-one's final resting place.

In FY22, several severe weather events and the continuing COVID-19 pandemic did not stop the cemeteries' staff from performing scheduled burials and providing the highest level of customer service to the families.

In FY22, the Virginia State Veterans Cemetery in Amelia nearly completed a long-anticipated \$5.2M expansion project which added 3,601 pre-placed concrete burial crypts in five new sections of the cemetery, ensuring the cemetery can conduct casketed burials for the next 12-15 years.



US flags decorate the columbarium for Memorial Day at Amelia

The VA awarded grants to DVS for phased expansion of the Suffolk (\$5.3M), Amelia (\$2.3M) and Dublin (\$1.1M) cemeteries to add additional columbarium walls. The Suffolk project also includes a second committal shelter and a cortege lane.

Virginia's state veterans cemeteries follow burial eligibility requirements set by the VA. Any member of the U.S. Armed Forces who dies on active duty, retires or is discharged from military service under conditions other than dishonorable is eligible, as are Commissioned Officers with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and some Merchant Mariners. Veteran's spouses, including widows/widowers are eligible for interment in the same gravesite as the veteran. Additionally, certain dependents, including unmarried sons/daughters under age 21, and when applicable, an unmarried adult son/daughter, who before the age of 21 became permanently incapable of self-support due to physical or mental disability, are also eligible for burial at state veterans cemeteries. In July 2021, the fee for the interment of a spouse or dependent of an eligible veteran was raised from \$300 to \$400 to help cover increased operating costs.

President Joe Biden signed the *Burial Equity for Guards and Reserves Act* in March 2022, which allowed VA-funded state and tribal cemeteries the option to inter former Guardsmen, Reservists and current ROTC members without losing future VA grant opportunities. Virginia was the first state in the nation to begin interring these newly-eligible individuals. On April 25, 2022, a former US Navy Reservist was interred in Suffolk. Since the VA does not provide a plot allowance or government-furnished headstone for these individuals, there is a \$1,700 fee for each cremation and a \$2,000 fee for each casket interred under the state's new Special Category Interment Program (SCIP).

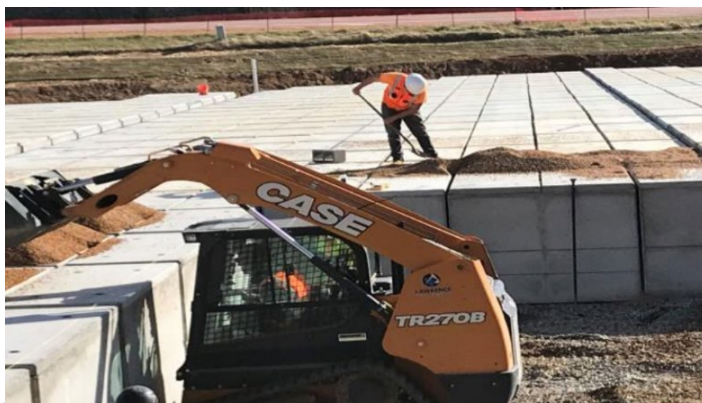
DVS encourages veterans and family members to complete a “pre-application” so that required documentation (discharge documents, marriage certificates, etc.) are on file to expedite scheduling in their time of need. Filing a pre-application is an indication of intent to be buried in a state veterans cemetery, in advance of the veteran’s or spouse’s death, and helps the families and the cemeteries successfully prepare for internment. Pre-application forms are available for download on the DVS website.

DVS receives a plot allowance from the VA for each veteran buried in a Virginia state veterans cemetery. The FFY22 reimbursement per veteran was \$828, up from \$807 in FFY21. Eligible spouses and dependents were charged a nominal fee of \$400 to offset the cost of operations. These Non-General Funds cover burial operations, grounds maintenance, operating equipment replacement and maintenance, and upkeep of cemetery buildings. The remaining Cemetery Services’ budget comes from the General Fund, and is used for personnel salaries and benefits.



The main entrance to Albert G. Horton, Jr. memorial Veterans Cemetery in Suffolk

All three cemeteries are open to the public for visitation daily during daylight hours. Cemetery administrative offices are open Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. In FY22, the Cemeteries service line launched a toll-free telephone number where callers can obtain information about each cemetery, locate a loved-one’s gravesite or schedule a burial. The new number was launched in March and is 1-855-4VA-VETS. The staff understands the importance for families to visit on weekends and holiday, so each cemetery is staffed with one employee on Easter, Mother’s Day, Father’s Day, and Independence Day, and on all Saturdays. These personnel are able to assist families with locating and accessing a loved-one’s gravesite, as well as ensuring the public restrooms are clean and accessible. Each cemetery hosts various special events and services throughout the year, such as wreath-laying ceremonies, bench and monument dedications, and flag placements each Veterans Day and Memorial Day.

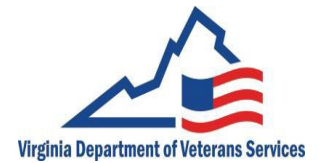


Work on the \$5.2M pre-placed burial expansion project at Amelia was near completion at the end of FY22

Memorial Day services are sponsored by local veterans groups, and Veterans Day open house events - while not formal services - educate veterans and family members about burial benefits available to veterans and eligible family members at each of our three cemeteries.

All three cemeteries held holiday wreath-laying events in December. Live wreaths with red bows were placed on each gravesite, as is done at all VA national cemeteries. Local non-profit organizations purchased the wreaths for these special events. In FY22, partner organizations supporting the Southwest Virginia Veterans

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Cemetery (Dublin) received donated funds of approximately \$10,000, while partner organizations for the Albert G. Horton, Jr. Memorial Veterans Cemetery (Suffolk) received donated funds totaling over \$75,000. The Virginia State Veterans Cemetery (Amelia) has a relatively new wreath committee, which was able to raise enough funds to place a holiday wreath on every gravesite in Amelia.

For those veterans who pass away without family, DVS cemetery staff work with local organizations and civic groups, law enforcement, public health officials, funeral directors, the Virginia Army National Guard Funeral Honors Program and individual citizens to identify the unclaimed remains of veterans who deserve a dignified final resting place. This year several unaccompanied veterans were respectfully laid to rest. Local funeral directors were also informed on procedures to request reimbursement for a casket or urn through the VA's Casket and Urn Reimbursement Program. This program provides up to \$1,900 for a wood or metal casket or up to \$145 for the cost of an urn to be used to inter unclaimed veterans in a respectful and dignified manner.

Annual Services Provided	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22
<i>Virginia Veterans Cemetery</i>				
Interments	484	488	572	596
Pre-applications on file*	3,219	3,474	3,661	3,930
<i>Horton Veterans Cemetery</i>				
Interments	1,220	1,179	1,472	1,538
Pre-applications on file*	6,876	7,408	8,255	8,979
<i>Southwest Virginia Veterans Cemetery</i>				
Interments	211	185	253	279
Pre-applications on file*	2,984	1,790	1,905	2,179

* Filing a pre-application is an indication of intent to be buried in a state veterans cemetery, and is a way to submit, in advance of the veterans death, all necessary documentation to verify eligibility for burial in a state veterans cemetery. For further information, please refer to Appendix D

Virginia War Memorial

MISSION

Honoring our Veterans, Preserving our History, Educating our Youth, and Inspiring Patriotism in All.

ACTIVITIES

The Virginia War Memorial is the Commonwealth of Virginia's memorial and educational center honoring the memory of all Virginians who demonstrated a willingness to serve and fight in defense of the United States from World War II through today. The Memorial's walls are engraved with the names of nearly 12,000 service members from Virginia who perished in combat during World War II; the wars in Korea, Vietnam, and the Persian Gulf; and, more recently, those who have lost their lives in the Global War on Terrorism. Through educational outreach, exhibits, documentary films, patriotic programming, staff and volunteers ensure that veterans who live in Virginia will thrive.

Over the past year in-person access to the Memorial allowed for deeper engagement and collaborations with our partnerships, including the WWII Heritage Alliance, which includes the National D-Day Memorial, the Hampton Roads Naval Museum, the MacArthur Memorial, the Virginia Holocaust Museum, The Stonewall Brigade Museum, Portsmouth Naval Shipyard Museum, and the Military Aviation Museum. The Virginia War Memorial is an active member of the the Virginia Association of Museums.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING EXPANDS VIRTUALLY

During FY22, the Virginia War Memorial adapted education programming to meet the needs of the state as operations slowly reopened and programs began to safely be able to take place in-person once again.

The virtual learning initiative "Livestreams: Learning from the Home Front" continues to take place about four times per month, with special programming for important dates and interesting topics that include three specific series:

1. "Salute to Service" – Focusing on specific branches and roles within the military
2. "Eyewitness to History" – Speaking with individuals who had firsthand experience with a specific event; and
3. "From the Archives and From the Collection" – Looking at the resources of the Virginia War Memorial

These presentations were free to the public and reached audiences across the nation and internationally. Partnering with Streamable Learning, the Lifelong Learning Institute, and the Battle of the Bulge Association, programs were created for specific audiences based on the educational preferences of the groups. All of these programs are recorded and are available at www.vawarmemorial.org.

Outreach programming also began as traveling interactive education tables were created for various organizations and events. Presentations were given at nursing homes, veterans posts, historic societies,

schools, museums, and special events throughout the state. At schools, informational presentations would be set up and given to hundreds of students throughout the day. The education department would also set up activity stations and informational presentations for field trips coming into the Virginia War Memorial.

The annual Teacher Institutes were held in person this year, with 51 teachers who registered to attend. Over a period of two months, five Teacher Institutes were held with nine guest speakers. The topics for this year were: Winning the Cold War, the POW Experience, From Headlines to the Front Lines: The US Media's Role in Going to War, Teaching the Unspeakable: Nazi Germany, and Mother of Invention: American Wars and New Technologies.

EVENTS

Commonwealth's Patriot Day Ceremony

Partnered with Freedom Flag Foundation for the annual ceremony. The September 2021 Program included keynote speaker Governor Ralph Northam, Navy Veteran Daniel Faul, a survivor of the attack on the Pentagon, and Mr. Faul's daughter, who was one year old at the time of the attack but is now a 2nd Lieutenant in the Space Force.

Native American Heritage Month – *Warrior Spirit*

This virtual program included Dr. Hermon Viola telling the story of the largely unknown story of Native American military service.

Commonwealth's Pearl Harbor Day Remembrance Ceremony

Honored those killed during the attack on Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1941.

K9 Veterans Day

VWM Director Dr. Clay Mountcastle and Guest Speaker, Robert Mays, a Vietnam War veteran and K-9 handler, unveiled a plaque honoring military K-9's.

From Wings to Waves – Veterans Art Gallery

This exhibit featured the work of Air Force Veteran Maureen Stewart.

Vietnam Veterans Pinning Ceremony

Governor Glenn Youngkin spoke to and took part in honoring Vietnam Veterans with commemorative pins on National Vietnam War Veterans Day.

Wreaths Across America Key Exchange

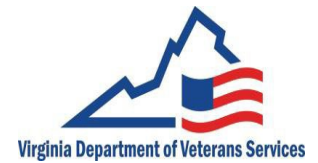
A ceremony highlighting the exchanging of the keys between J.B. Hunt Transport Services drivers along with a brief program to remember the fallen at this holiday season.

US Navy Fleet Force Band

Band played a concert in the Amphitheatre

Marocchi Memorial Scholarship

Awarded to Danielle Kruse and Yanik Alex Brandon from Charlottesville and Henrico County.



Art for the Journey

Free on campus art class in partnership with this veterans support group was attended by 32 veterans.

Christmas Parade

Curator Jesse Smith represented the Memorial in the RVA Christmas Parade driving the WWII jeep.

Virginia Voice and the Mighty Pen Project

In partnership with local non-profits, recordings by veterans with the Mighty Pen Project were made to provide audio access of their short stories to blind or vision-impaired people.

Hill of Heroes – 4rd Annual Community Event

Memorial staff and community volunteers totaling over 350 people installed 12,000 American flags on the hillside in honor of each name inscribed on the Shrine of Memory.

The Color Of Freedom-Honoring the Diversity of America’s Servicewomen

A traveling exhibit created by the Military Women’s Memorial highlighting the determination necessary to overcome discrimination on multiple fronts while also sending a message that diversity is strength.

Who They Were-Lives Worth Knowing

More than thirty names from the Shrine of Memory profiled in stories of courage, service and honor.

Commonwealth’s Veterans Day Ceremony – November 11, 2021

The annual ceremony to honor all Americans who have served in the U.S. Armed Forces. The Honorable Kathleen Jabs, Virginia’s Acting Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs delivered the keynote address. Other speakers included Major General Timothy Williams, the Adjutant General of Virginia, and Virginia Department of Veterans Services Commissioner John Maxwell. Winners of the Virginia War Memorial’s Veterans Day Essay Contest were also recognized at this ceremony.

In April 2022 the VWM hosted its twice-postponed **Virginia Forum**. History Unmasked offered over 125 Scholars, teachers, curators, archives and all those interested in Virginia History a chance to share their knowledge research and experience. The forum used the entire Memorial campus over three days.

Commonwealth’s Memorial Day Ceremony – May 30, 2022

Broadcast on CBS-6 TV and livestreamed, the ceremony reached 35,000 virtual viewers across the Commonwealth and 1,300 people attended the ceremony held in the Bruce E. Heilman Amphitheater. Virginia Lieutenant Governor Winsome Earle-Sears delivered the keynote address.

Annual Services Provided	FY20	FY21	FY22
Visitors	26,916	27,497	41,134

DVS FY22 Budget and Staffing

DVS FULL-TIME POSITION LEVELS: AUTHORIZED VS. FILLED AS OF JUNE 30, 2022

Staffing by Service Area	Authorized	Filled
Benefits	108	99
Education	10	8
Transition & Employment	26	14
Virginia Veteran and Family Support	58	49
Veterans Care Centers	602	470
Veterans Cemeteries	37	37
Virginia War Memorial	9	8
Administration	20	20
Totals	870	727



DVS FY22 BUDGET (APPROPRIATION)
AS APPROVED BY THE 2022 GENERAL ASSEMBLY (CHAPTER 1)
 (NOTE: DOES NOT INCLUDE CENTRAL ACCOUNT DISTRIBUTIONS)

Program	Fund Source				Program Total
	General Fund	Special (fee for service)	Dedicated Special (Donations)	Federal Trust (federal contract)	
Benefit Services	\$9,156,194	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$9,156,194
Virginia Veteran and Family Support	\$6,236,911	\$0	\$0	\$282,054	\$6,518,965
Education, Transition, and Employment	\$3,599,197	\$0	\$0	\$1,050,536	\$4,649,733
Care Centers	\$50,000	\$45,544,638	\$0	\$46,505,221	\$92,049,859
Cemeteries	\$1,562,090	\$348,466		\$1,855,367	\$3,765,923
Virginia War Memorial	\$2,253,075	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$2,253,075
Administration	\$2,502,878	\$319,432	\$0	\$0	\$2,822,310
Non-DVS programs:					
Granting Freedom	\$200,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$200,000
Veterans Services Foundation	\$0	\$0	\$796,500	\$0	\$796,500
DVS Total:	\$25,560,345	\$45,864,070	\$796,500	\$49,693,178	\$121,416,059

Boards

The Department of Veterans Services' work is guided and supported by two boards, comprised of legislators and citizen appointees:

1. Board of Veterans Services
2. Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations

Listed below is a short report for each board, which includes:

- Mission statement of the board;
- The board's powers and duties (from the Code of Virginia);
- A message from the board's chairman;
- A list of board members.



BVS Chairman Michael Dick (L) and Commissioner Daniel Gade (R) presents The Honorable James Icenhour, Jr. with a Certificate of Appreciation for faithful service as a member of the Board of Veterans Services.

BOARD OF VETERANS SERVICES

MISSION

The Board of Veterans Services supports the Department of Veterans Services by providing expertise and insight into best practices in benefits claims services, medical and health care management, and cemetery operations; performance measurements and general management principles; and nonprofit volunteer operations and management. The Board develops reasonable and effective policy recommendations related to the services provided to veterans of the armed forces of the United States and their eligible spouses, orphans, and dependents by the Department of Veterans Services.

§ 2.2-2454. Powers and Duties of the Board

1. Advise and make recommendations to the Commissioner of Veterans Services upon such matters as may arise in the performance of his duties;
2. Investigate issues related to the provision of care and services to veterans, upon request of the Commissioner of Veterans Services or the Governor;
3. Study all matters affecting the welfare of Virginia citizens who are veterans or dependents or survivors of such veterans, and make recommendations to the Commissioner of the Department of Veterans Services;
4. Develop recommendations for policies and procedures related to the efficient and effective delivery of the services provided by the Department of Veterans Services;
5. Establish policies related to the coordinated delivery of veterans services, in consultation with those agencies, entities, and organizations, including counties, cities, towns or other political subdivisions of the Commonwealth capable of providing such services;
6. Monitor the administration of all laws concerning veterans and their dependents;
7. Review and advise the Commissioner of the Department of Veterans Services on the Department's strategic plan;
8. Based on rigorous cost-benefit-value analysis, provide recommendations to the Department of Veterans Services regarding future projects and the acquisition of facilities that may benefit the State's veterans, including but not limited to veterans cemeteries and veterans care centers; and
9. Provide recommendations to the Department of Veterans Services and the Veterans Services Foundation created in § [2.2-2715](#) regarding gifts, grants, and other resources from public and private entities and organizations to support veterans services.

(2003, cc. [657](#), [670](#); 2004, c. [697](#); 2005, c. [758](#); 2008, cc. [467](#), [768](#); 2010, c. [64](#); 2012, cc. [33](#), [162](#); 2015, c. [319](#); 2017, cc. [89](#), [501](#); 2019, cc. [40](#), [204](#).)

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

The Board of Veterans Services (BVS) works with the Virginia Department of Veterans Services (DVS) to ensure the welfare of Virginia's veterans and advises the DVS in developing policies that enhance the support of veterans throughout the Commonwealth. The BVS is comprised of 26 members, including seven legislative members, 15 non-legislative citizen members, and four *ex officio* members.

In 2022, BVS welcomed new members. Joe Campa, who served as the 11th Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy; and Carlton Kent, who served as the 16th Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps, were appointed to the Board. We also welcomed Jamie Inman, a retired Army Colonel who served as the Chief of Staff at the Virginia Military Institute. Additionally, the Virginia Speaker of the House of Delegates, C. Todd Gilbert, reappointed Delegates Kathleen J. Murphy and Hyland F. "Buddy" Fowler to the BVS and appointed two new members: Delegate Jason Ballard currently serves as a Lieutenant Colonel in the U.S. Army Reserves and Delegate Mike Cherry is a veteran of the U.S. Air Force.

Our members continued to actively advocate for and support veterans and their families across the Commonwealth throughout 2022. As a key stakeholder in the DVS Strategic Plan, Board members received a presentation on the Commissioner's Objectives and Key Results supporting the overarching goal of helping veterans and their families to **stay, work, and thrive** in Virginia.

As part of efforts to accomplish its mission, BVS members are assigned to be a "point of contact" (POC) for a DVS program or Service Line. Through regular contact with DVS Service Line Directors, BVS POCs serve as a valuable sounding board for policy development, identifying areas of concern and/or future opportunities, and are a vital link for providing feedback to the DVS on policy decisions and associated initiatives. DVS Service Line POC reports were delivered to Board members during the August meeting. In addition, Board members worked with DVS to review and revise the agency's Objectives and Key Results as they apply to the various Service Lines, and also assisted with the annual review of the Compact with Virginia's Veterans and DVS's Annual Report to the Governor and General Assembly.

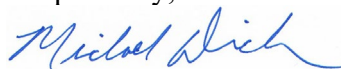
The BVS conducted its September meeting at the College of William & Mary in Williamsburg. Pursuant to the Code of Virginia, BVS adopted a policy for meetings held through electronic communication means in situations other than declared states of emergency. The BVS also received information concerning legislative initiatives adopted by the Joint Leadership Council (JLC) of Veterans Service Organizations and requested that the JLC provide additional information about the initiatives. As the 2022 Virginia Military & Student Veteran Education Summit (hosted by William & Mary and sponsored by DVS, the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia, and the Virginia Association of School Certifying Officials) was being conducted concurrently, the Board was able to receive presentations on veterans' education issues from William & Mary, Northern Virginia Community College, ECPI, and Virginia Commonwealth University. The BVS also received welcoming remarks from William & Mary President Katherine Rowe.

The members of the Board also continued to work closely with the JLC, the Veterans Services Foundation, and the Virginia War Memorial Foundation. Additionally, the BVS considers it essential to continue to

communicate frequently with General Assembly members on the needs of veterans and the implications of policy decisions affecting the DVS.

The BVS has built and sustained outstanding partnerships focused on veterans support issues throughout the Commonwealth. We look forward to working with our partners to ensure Virginia continues to be the most veteran-friendly state in the nation.

Respectfully,



Michael Dick
Colonel, USMC (Ret.)
Chairman

Board of Veterans Services members – as of December 1, 2022

Member	Position
Michael Dick	Chairman, Retired Colonel, U.S. Marine Corps College of William & Mary
Thurraya S. Kent	Vice Chair; Retired Captain, U.S. Navy
Victor Angry	A is for Angry, LLC Retired Command Sergeant Major, ARNG
David Ashe	Attorney, Alperin Law Colonel, U.S. Marine Corps Reserve
Delegate Jason S. Ballard	General Assembly of Virginia U.S. Army veteran; U.S. Army Reserves
Carl Bedell	Attorney, U.S. Army veteran
Senator John Bell	General Assembly of Virginia U.S. Air Force veteran
Joe. R. Campa, Jr.	11th Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy CEO, Kent, Campa and Kate Incorporated
Delegate Mike Cherry	General Assembly of Virginia U.S. Air Force veteran
Mario Flores	United States Army Congressional Defense Fellow U.S. Army veteran
Delegate Hyland (Buddy) Fowler	General Assembly of Virginia
Joyce Henderson	Retired Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Army
Jamie Inman	Global Logistics Director, Afton Chemical Company Retired Colonel, U.S. Army
Carlton Kent	16th Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps (Retired) President, Kent, Campa and Kate Incorporated
John Lesinski	Executive VP Colliers International Retired Colonel, U.S. Marine Corps
Senator Mamie Locke	General Assembly of Virginia
Delegate Kathleen Murphy	General Assembly of Virginia
Kathleen Owens	President, Beach Development Group Retired Commander, U.S. Navy
Senator Bryce Reeves	General Assembly of Virginia U.S. Army veteran
Susan Vervaet Riveland	Freelance Writer, U.S. Army veteran
Melissa Watts	Director of Procurement, Virginia ABC Authority
Daniel Gade (ex officio)	Commissioner, Virginia Department of Veterans Services U.S. Army Retired Lieutenant Colonel
Denice Williams (ex officio)	Chair, Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations, U.S. Marine Corps veteran
Paul Haughton, Jr.	Chair, Veterans Services Foundation Board of Trustees
Rick St. John	Vice Chair, Virginia War Memorial Foundation Board

JOINT LEADERSHIP COUNCIL OF VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS (JLC)

MISSION

The Council provides advice and assistance to the Governor, the General Assembly, and the Department of Veterans Services on matters of concern to the veterans community and provides a conduit of information to and from the veterans service organizations on policy and legislation, pending and enacted, as well as information on existing services.

§ 2.2-2682. Powers and Duties of the Council

A. The Council shall have the following powers and duties:

1. Advise the Department of Veterans Services and the General Assembly regarding (i) methods of providing support for ongoing veterans services and programs, and (ii) addressing veterans issues on an ongoing basis;
2. Recommend issues that may potentially impact veterans of the armed forces of the United States and their eligible spouses, orphans, and dependents;
3. Advise the Department of Veterans Services and the Board of Veterans Services on matters of concern to Virginia-domiciled veterans and their eligible spouses, orphans, and dependents;
4. Promote and support existing veterans services and programs;
5. Recommend and promote implementation of new efficient and effective administrative initiatives that enhance existing veterans services and programs or provide for necessary veterans services and programs not currently provided; and
6. Maintain a nonpartisan approach to maintaining and improving veterans services and programs in the Commonwealth.

B. The chairman shall report to the Commissioner and the Board of Veterans Services the results of its meetings and submit an annual report on or before November 30 of each year.

C. The Council may apply for funds from the Veterans Services Foundation to enable it to better carry out its objectives. The Council shall not impose unreasonable burdens or costs in connection with requests of agencies.

(2003, cc. [657](#), [670](#); 2008, cc. [467](#), [768](#); 2014, c. [809](#).)

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

The Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations (JLC) is comprised of 23 Veteran Service Organizations (VSOs) representing over 250,000 members. JLC members are committed to serving Virginia's over 690,000 Veterans of which 156,698 are retired and call Virginia their home. We serve these Veterans in numerous ways, and advocate for the entire military community, including the Active Duty force, the National Guard, the Armed Forces Reserves, and their families. Veterans comprise almost 10% of the Commonwealth's population, giving Virginia one of the highest per capita populations of Veterans.

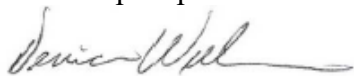
Our commitment to the Commonwealth of Virginia and supporting Veterans and their families could not be stronger. The top three priorities of our seven 2022 initiatives passed both chambers of the General Assembly. These include a DVS Suicide Prevention Coordinator, expanded real property tax relief for surviving spouses of military members killed in the line of duty, and an amendment to the Code of Virginia to grant an exemption from paramilitary activities to Veteran Service Organizations performing honor guard duties. We held a JLC 'hotwash' in April 2022 to discuss lessons learned from the last session, and set the stage for our 2023 strategy of initiatives. JLC members are working on multiple initiatives for consideration during the 2023 General Assembly session. All are published on our website and have been distributed to legislators for consideration as possible legislation or budget items.

The JLC welcomed two new Veteran Service Organizations (VSO) as member organizations of the Council in 2022: the Air Force Sergeants Association and the Wounded Warrior Project. We look forward to working with these two new VSO's on behalf of Virginia's veterans.

We deeply value our partnership with the Department of Veterans Services, Board of Veterans Services, Veterans Services Foundation, Virginia War Memorial Foundation, the Governor, and the General Assembly, as we work together to serve Virginia's veterans and their families. The Governor and the General Assembly have significantly supported the legislative and budget initiatives proposed by the JLC over the years. Every January, our members enjoy speaking with State Senators and Delegates about the merits of JLC-sponsored bills and budget amendments. We are planning our in-person JLC Day on the Hill in January, 2023. This will be the first in-person Day on the Hill in two years following the COVID-19 pandemic.

The JLC is proud to serve as a voice for all of Virginia's Veterans. The JLC looks forward to our continued involvement in the legislative process and promoting Virginia as the most Veteran-friendly state in the nation.

With deep respect and admiration,



Denice Williams
Chair

Disabled American Veterans (DAV) Representative to the Joint Leadership Council

Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations members – as of December 1, 2022

Veterans Service Organization	JLC Member	Alternate
Air Force Association	Richard Shook	Marc Boswell
Air Force Sergeants Association	Richard Mansfield	John R. Cooper
American Legion	William Aramony	Bill Feasenmyer
AMVETS	Richard Van Norton Jr.	Jay L. Marts
Association of the U.S. Army	Glenn Yarborough	Faye Earley
Disabled American Veterans	Denice Williams	Lisa Gregory
Fifth Baptist Church Veterans Ministry	Thad A. Jones	
Fleet Reserve Association	Sha'ron D. Martin	Christopher J. Murray
Legion of Valor of the U.S., Inc.	Jack Hilgers	Richard Rinaldo
Marine Corps League	John Clickener	David L. Jennings
Military Officers Association of America	Monti Zimmerman	John Down
Military Order of the Purple Heart	Mark Atchison	James Cuthbertson
Military Order of the World Wars	Vernon Peters	
Navy Mutual Aid Association	Michelle Domingue	Meredith Burns
Paralyzed Veterans of America	Preston Curry	
Reserve Organization of America	Terrence Moore	David Sitler
Roanoke Valley Veterans Council	Daniel Karnes	Perry Taylor
Veterans of Foreign Wars	Rick Raskin	Joanne Smith
Vietnam Veterans of America	George Corbett	Charles Montgomery
Va. Army/Air National Guard Enlisted Assn	Carl Holcomb	
Virginia National Guard Association	Kevin Hoffman	
Women Marines Association	Ann Crittenden	
Wounded Warrior Project	Jose Ramos	Jeremy Villanueva
Chairman, Board of Veterans Services	Michael Dick	
Chairman, Veterans Services Foundation	Paul Haughton, Jr.	
Commissioner of Veterans Services	Daniel Gade	

Appendices

Appendix A: Benefit Services

Table 1: Claims Submitted to USDVA - Sorted by Office

Table 2: Claims Submitted to USDVA - Sorted by Month

Table 3: Client Contacts - Sorted by Office

Appendix B: State Approving Agency for Veterans Education and Training

Table 1: SAA Program Approval Actions

Table 2: SAA Other Approval Actions

Table 3: SAA Compliance Visits

Table 4: SAA Other Activities in Support of Veterans Education

Appendix C: Virginia Military Survivors and Dependents Education Program (VMSDEP)

Table 1: Number of Recipients and Amount Awarded

Appendix D: Care Centers

Table 1: Virginia Veterans Care Center – Patient Days and Average Occupancy Level

Table 2: Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center – Patient Days and Average Occupancy Level

Appendix E: Cemeteries

Table 1: Cemetery Burials: *Virginia Veterans Cemetery (Amelia)*

Table 2: Cemetery Burials: *Albert G. Horton, Jr. Memorial Veterans Cemetery (Suffolk)*

Table 3: Cemetery Burials: *Southwest Virginia Veterans Cemetery (Dublin)*

APPENDIX A: BENEFIT SERVICES

**Table 1: Sorted by Office
 Claims, Evidence and Appeals Submitted to USDVA**

Office	Total Claims				
	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22
Abingdon	1,336	1,450	1,176	1,706	1,804
Accomac	1,140	1,571	1,136	535	754
Big Stone Gap	1,565	1,466	1,521		2,433
Charlottesville	2,662	3,510	3,088	2,156	2,778
Chesapeake	2,787	1,840	2,131	1,960	1,915
Danville	1,829	1,659	1,498	1,131	2,399
Emporia (new FY18)	259	618	680	541	771
Fairfax	2,780	2,167	2,406	3,844	3,587
Fort Belvoir (new FY21)	--	--	--	1,395	2,121
Fort Lee (new FY19)	--	297	1,722	1,781	2,683
Fredericksburg	3,594	6,932	4,411		4,166
Hampton VAMC	3,458	2,926	2,614	640	3,263
Hampton	5,612	6,077	4,811	2,878	1,691
Henrico	1,742	1,778	1,337	227	908
Loudoun	1,549		1,045	1,940	1,746
Lynchburg	2,051	1,634	1,629	1,252	2,060
Manassas	1,862	2,376	3,956	872	6,581
McGuire VAMC		5,735	4,655	4,537	2,128
Norfolk	7,970	7,587	6,287	5,657	7,713
Pentagon (new FY19)	--	3,016	4,384	2,323	2,406
Petersburg	1,748	1,575	1,214	819	1,418
Portsmouth	1,879	1,255	1,033	906	911
Quantico	3,666	4,840	4,897	4,500	5,755
Roanoke (no FY21 services due to COVID)	515	739	620	--	330
Salem VAMC	2,076	1,633	2,501	3,408	6,171
South Hill	1,367	878	809	464	613

The Virginia Department of Veterans Services
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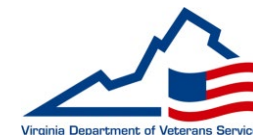


Springfield	4,108	4,762	4,531	3,572	2,951
Staunton	1,474	1,641	1,157	669	2,084
Strasburg	645	750	963	1,150	1,063
Tazewell	1,319	1,486	2,525	1,785	1,726
Virginia Beach- Oceana (new FY19)	--	415	2,159	1,296	1,621
Virginia Beach- Pembroke	2,965	2,965	2,377	1,451	1,470
Williamsburg (new FY18)	982	2,885	3,354	3,834	4,980
Wytheville (not staffed in FY20)	1,173	549	--	628	1,839
Totals	71,311	79,792	79,367	65,175	86,847

*

Claims, Evidence and Appeals Submitted to USDVA
Table 2: Sorted by Month

Month	Total Claims				
	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22
July	3,788	6,999	7,933	5,604	7,213
August	5,675	6,869	7,990	5,151	7,386
September	4,642	5,708	7,437	5,745	6,987
October	5,783	6,680	8,705	6,233	5,321
November	5,234	5,850	7,152	4,693	6,611
December	3,719	4,796	6,730,	4,921	6,308
January	4,118	6,892	8,012	4,312	6,104
February	4,156	6,387	7,037	4,786	7,614
March	4,750	7,109	5,620	6,295	8,766
April	6,722	7,095	3,578	6,821	8,379
May	7,539	6,996	3,945	6,278	8,302
June	7,617	8,053	3,599	4,336	7,856
Totals	71,311	79,792	77,738	65,175	86,847



APPENDIX B: STATE APPROVING AGENCY (SAA) FOR VETERANS EDUCATION & TRAINING

Table 1: SAA Program Approval Actions

	IHL			NCD			APP			OJT			LIC/CERT		
	FFY 20	FFY 21	FFY 22	FFY 20	FFY 21	FFY 22	FFY 20	FFY 21	FFY 22	FFY 20	FFY 21	FFY 22	FFY 20	FFY 21	FFY 22
Totals for Federal Fiscal Year	6,051	6,655	5,141	2,171	2,110	2,110	28	15	41	15	11	73	80	142	17
Number of Applications Received	6,051	6,655	5,141	2,171	2,110	2,110	28	15	41	15	11	73	80	142	17
Number Approved	5,543	6,358	4,675	1,626	1,826	1,748	28	12	15	9	2	4	64	134	0
Number Disapproved	508	297	466	580	284	362	0	3	26	6	9	69	16	8	0
Percentage of Applications Approved	92	96	91	75	87	83	100	80	37	60	18	5	80	94	100

Table 2: SAA Other Approval Actions

	IHL			NCD			APP			OJT			LIC/CERT		
	FFY 20	FFY 21	FFY 22	FFY 20	FFY 21	FFY 22	FFY 20	FFY 21	FFY 22	FFY 20	FFY 21	FFY 22	FFY 20	FFY 21	FFY 22
Totals for Federal Fiscal Year	1,017	1,080	1,340	711	402	680	64	35	58	18	20	73	14	8	12
Number of Applications Received	1,017	1,080	1,340	711	402	680	64	35	58	18	20	73	14	8	12
Number Approved	894	995	1,267	565	345	621	56	30	15	11	17	4	8	8	12
Number Disapproved	123	85	73	146	57	59	8	5	26	7	3	69	6	0	0
Percentage of Applications Approved	88	92	95	79	86	91	88	86	26	61	85	5	57	100	100

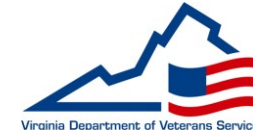


Table 3: SAA Compliance Visits

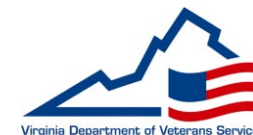
Totals for Federal Fiscal Year	IHL			NCD			APP			OJT			LIC/CERT		
	FFY 20	FFY 21	FFY 22	FFY 20	FFY 21	FFY 22	FFY 20	FFY 21	FFY 22	FFY 20	FFY 21	FFY 22	FFY 20	FFY 21	FFY 22
Number of Visits	23	34	31	9	12	13	2	5	5	2	9	7	N/A	N/A	NA

Table 4: SAA Other Activities in Support of Veterans Education

Activity	FFY20	FFY21	FFY22
Email inquiries	870	3,959	3590
Requests for application for a new facility	82	244	115
Active schools (facilities in which a veteran actively attends)	455	428 ¹	390
Number of students enrolled	33,612 ²	51,459 ²	49,558

¹ The active schools list for FFY 2021 is a snapshot of every facility that enrolled or trained a VA education beneficiary in a Virginia SAA approved facility (including on-the-job training, apprenticeships, and flight training) from January 1, 2021, through December 31, 2021.

²Number of veterans receiving G.I. Bill benefits in Virginia as of April 2021. This does not include veterans who attended school but who have not received payment of GI Bill Benefits. The final count for FFY22 should be available in March 2023.

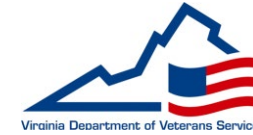


APPENDIX C: VIRGINIA MILITARY SURVIVORS AND DEPENDENTS EDUCATION PROGRAM (VMSDEP)

Table 1: 2019-2022 Number of Recipients and Amount Awarded

	2019-20		2020-21		2021-22	
	Unique # Students	Dollars	Unique # Students	Dollars	Unique # Students	Dollars
Four-Year Publics						
Christopher Newport University	16	27,410	27	44,087	63	91,100
College of William and Mary	23	36,850	44	58,050	65	85,280
George Mason University	114	171,730	154	221,610	250	308,370
James Madison University	68	117,580	96	168,234	150	210,870
Longwood University	25	42,530	39	62,730	55	69,910
Norfolk State University	38	63,920	51	78,410	72	90,070
Old Dominion University	220	343,660	264	382,010	367	432,180
Radford University	45	76,970	51	67,740	74	79,730
University of Mary Washington	40	60,360	43	67,720	64	80,680
University of Virginia	33	57,500	51	78,170	88	119,210
University of Virginia's College at Wise	5	9,270	7	11,650	7	9,240
Virginia Commonwealth University	180	301,038	262	415,340	339	422,614
Virginia Military Institute	11	20,900	17	29,272	22	34,100
Virginia State University	44	68,900	21	27,560	67	80,350
Virginia Tech	74	125,783	119	198,840	177	252,290
Four-Year Public total	936	1,524,401	1,246	1,911,423	1,860	2,365,994
Two-Year Publics						
Richard Bland College	16	22,350	12	18,530	14	14,270
Two-Year Public total	16	22,350	12	18,530	14	14,270
Community Colleges						
Blue Ridge Community College	5	4,540	1	1,440	4	3,900

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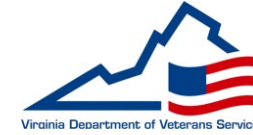


Central Virginia Community College	4	3,3350	2	1,670	3	1,950
Dabney S. Lancaster Community College	1	950	3	3,820	3	3,250
Danville Community College	1	240	0	0	1	1,320
Eastern Shore Community College	0	0	0	0	0	0
Germanna Community College	35	43,140	42	47,150	45	45,410
J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College	21	23,550	12	15,260	20	16,220
John Tyler Community College	43	49,100	33	35,270	50	47,580
Lord Fairfax Community College	5	7,390	10	9,537	7	6,490
Mountain Empire Community College	5	8,080	2	1,900	3	2,960
New River Community College	3	3,330	3	2,620	5	5,610
Northern Virginia Community College	67	79,790	68	76,200	108	102,700
Patrick Henry Community College	3	3,570	2	1,440	6	6,240
Paul D. Camp Community College	4	3,590	2	2,620	0	0
Piedmont Virginia Community College	5	6,420	7	9,760	7	8,530
Rappahannock Community College	2	1,900	2	3,570	3	1,350
Southside Virginia Community College	2	2,850	4	4,060	2	1,620
Southwest Virginia Community College	0	0	5	4,520	3	2,740
Thomas Nelson Community College	33	40,970	30	40,220	54	44,240
Tidewater Community College	91	108,150	95	108,840	134	136,730
Virginia Highlands Community College	2	2,850	3	2,620	1	1,170
Virginia Western Community College	5	7,130	3	2,860	5	4,700
Wytheville Community College	6	8,080	3	5,470	3	2,300
Community College total	343	408,970	332	380,847	467	447,010

Other Publics						
Eastern Virginia Medical School	4	5,700	1	960	5	6,380
Other Public total	4	5,700	1	960	5	6,380

Grand Total	1,274	1,909,235	1,299	1,961,421	2,346	2,833,654
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Source: SCHEV May 2020, 2021, and 2022 Reports to the General Assembly



APPENDIX D: VETERANS CARE CENTERS

Table 1: Virginia Veterans Care Center, Roanoke

Month	Patient Days: Nursing			Average # of Nursing Beds Occupied			Occupancy Level: Nursing			Patient Days: Assisted Living			Average # of Assisted Living Beds Occupied			Occupancy Level: Assisted Living		
	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY20	FY21	FY22
July	5,321	5,135	4,500	172	166	145	88%	85%	74%	972	721	589	31	23	19	52%	83%	68%
August	5,361	5,089	4,661	173	164	150	88%	84%	77%	906	741	563	29	24	18	49%	85%	65%
September	5,302	4,885	4,559	177	163	152	90%	83%	78%	828	696	521	28	23	17	46%	83%	62%
October	5,413	4,655	4,679	175	150	151	89%	77%	77%	810	689	549	26	22	18	44%	79%	63%
November	5,183	3,804	4,451	173	127	148	88%	65%	76%	760	673	539	25	22	18	42%	80%	64%
December	5,354	3,788	4,507	173	122	145	88%	62%	74%	741	662	533	24	21	17	40%	76%	61%
January	5,408	3,598	4,760	174	116	154	89%	59%	78%	7444	618	495	24	20	16	86%	71%	57%
February	5174	3,210	4,449	178	115	159	91%	58%	81%	684	533	420	24	19	15	84%	68%	54%
March	5,467	3,849	4,853	176	124	157	90%	63%	80%	762	651	477	25	21	15	88%	75%	55%
April	5,038	4,062	4,824	168	135	161	86%	69%	82%	750	625	450	25	21	15	89%	74%	54%
May	4,935	4,303	4,948	159	139	160	81%	71%	81%	750	642	465	24	21	15	86%	74%	54%
June	4,859	4,236	4,808	162	141	160	83%	72%	82%	704	571	442	23	19	15	84%	68%	53%
Annual Max Capacity	65,700	71,540	71,540	180	196	196	100%	100%	100%	21,900	10,220	10,220	60	28	28	100%	100%	100%
Total Patient Days	62,815	50,614	55,999	172	139	154	88%	71%	78%	9,411	7,822	6,043	26	21	17	66%	76%	59%

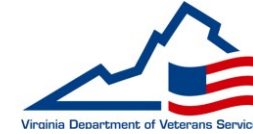
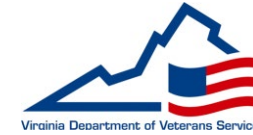


Table 2: Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center, Richmond

Month	Patient Days Nursing			Average # of Nursing Beds Occupied			Occupancy Level: Nursing		
	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY20	FY21	FY22
July	5,731	5391	4981	185	174	161	92%	87%	80%
August	5,706	5370	4863	184	173	157	92%	87%	78%
September	5,621	5326	4604	187	178	153	94%	89%	77%
October	5,751	5038	4763	186	163	154	93%	82%	77%
November	5,616	4576	4503	187	153	150	94%	77%	75%
December	5,799	4635	4666	187	150	151	94%	75%	75%
January	5,894	4706	4538	190	152	146	95%	76%	73%
February	5,660	4220	3945	195	151	141	98%	76%	70%
March	6,005	4696	4470	194	151	144	97%	76%	72%
April	5,472	4629	4404	182	154	147	91%	77%	73%
May	5,491	4962	4641	177	160	150	89%	80%	75%
June	5,207	4906	4538	174	164	146	87%	82%	73%
Annual Max Capacity	73,000	73,000	73,000	200	200	200	100%	100%	100%
Total Patient Days	67,953	58,455	54,916	186	160	150	93%	80%	75%
Monthly Average	5,663	4,871	3,771	186	160	150	93%	80%	75%



APPENDIX E: VETERANS CEMETERIES

Table 1: Virginia Veterans Cemetery (Amelia)

	FY09	FY10	FY11	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22
July	26	23	25	19	26	24	25	37	27	31	40	66	52	44
August	23	12	17	21	22	28	38	39	31	23	50	48	53	46
September	19	17	28	34	27	22	27	29	43	38	29	36	50	46
October	21	17	23	18	19	23	38	33	27	36	32	39	41	54
November	9	25	25	24	29	23	24	33	22	34	42	37	44	49
December	20	29	22	17	26	24	24	43	26	25	29	48	39	47
January	18	17	25	23	24	28	36	28	38	48	42	37	48	49
February	13	21	30	31	21	23	27	26	38	35	28	40	50	64
March	19	32	29	25	24	28	36	38	34	37	43	47	66	57
April	29	23	28	23	35	32	30	37	35	44	45	28	39	45
May	28	16	28	17	30	28	37	31	42	39	53	27	48	45
June	23	31	22	27	28	24	38	42	50	36	51	35	42	50
Total	248	263	302	279	311	307	380	416	413	426	484	488	572	596

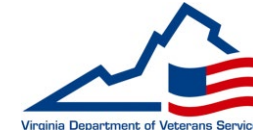


Table 2: Albert G. Horton, Jr. Memorial Veterans Cemetery (Suffolk)

	FY10	FY11	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22
July	55	51	58	61	62	82	96	101	96	105	100	111	140
August	58	47	65	86	78	78	100	98	112	114	106	110	104
September	52	46	62	58	72	82	101	77	82	73	95	116	130
October	59	70	57	68	102	84	119	82	105	110	106	118	140
November	61	75	51	66	71	76	65	82	99	105	97	98	118
December	77	63	74	61	78	91	90	84	81	82	116	125	131
January	60	82	79	89	95	104	84	88	112	126	120	137	110
February	55	66	56	61	95	88	89	95	97	94	85	131	128
March	69	75	63	75	90	89	116	106	92	103	96	147	153
April	76	59	88	89	96	101	92	91	119	113	88	96	142
May	65	68	79	76	109	89	101	106	92	107	88	138	118
June	65	64	68	69	70	90	108	124	124	88	82	145	124
Total	752	766	800	859	1,018	1,054	1,161	1,134	1,211	1,220	1,179	1,472	1,538

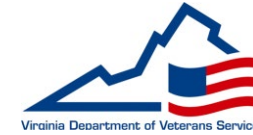


Table 3: Southwest Virginia Veterans Cemetery (Dublin)

	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22
July	17	9	7	23	19	21	21	15	23	27
August	15	20	16	22	23	14	24	29	11	27
September	14	10	14	12	15	23	19	11	31	19
October	12	13	12	20	25	18	21	13	17	29
November	19	14	17	13	14	21	16	19	13	18
December	7	7	12	20	17	18	9	13	28	23
January	13	13	20	11	16	25	23	11	29	27
February	9	8	5	12	14	19	8	17	15	17
March	17	9	10	22	16	26	24	15	18	26
April	21	18	19	12	17	19	10	13	19	22
May	15	11	13	21	16	9	22	18	22	19
June	16	8	12	13	11	15	14	11	27	25
Total	175	140	157	201	203	228	211	185	253	279

