

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS SERVICES

COMMISSIONER'S 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

TO

GOVERNOR RALPH S. NORTHAM,

ACTING SECRETARY KATHLEEN T. JABS,

AND

THE VIRGINIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

December 1, 2021

Serving those who served

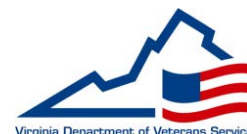


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The Virginia Department of Veterans Services

COMMISSIONER’S 2021 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 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 2021 (FY21) was an extraordinary year for the Virginia Department of Veterans Services (VDVS). Undoubtedly, COVID-19 hindered our in-person services, especially in the winter months of the year, as we focused on employee and veteran safety. Yet, we saw opportunities to balance virtual offerings with more in-person services toward the end of FY21, and resume many outreach activities that were regular elements of our work within the community. We expect even more success going forward as we round out our workforce, manage COVID-19 as endemic, and work with current and future stakeholders to serve Virginia's veterans and their families in new and more optimal ways.

By using virtual methods to serve veterans and their families, we solidified another path to reaching Virginia's 713,000+ veterans. We successfully held a second Women Veterans Virtual Summit, and broadcasts of both Veterans Day and Memorial Day ceremonies reached thousands of Virginians. The Virginia Veteran and Family Support (VVFS) program increased its group services for veterans over last year, and more virtual peer sessions played a role in this increase. Benefits' outreach resulted in over 226,000 contacts, greater than FY18, FY19, and FY20; combined with an annual claims success rate above our goal, we contributed to the \$3.90 billion in disability benefits that reached Virginia's veterans. The Virginia Military Survivors and Dependents Education Program (VMSDEP) ended the fiscal year with a record number of applications. Companies certified through the V3 program hired over 20,000 veterans. At the same time, VDVS's V3 Transitions (V3T) program provided transition assistance to over 78,000 talented veterans, transitioning service members and their spouses, mostly through virtual means, including virtual hiring fairs. The Communications team aggressively pursued earned media, resulting in a visible presence across the Commonwealth that is an essential element of our awareness campaign.

Both our Cemeteries division and Veterans Care Centers persevered through unique challenges. Cemeteries flawlessly honored veterans during a period of increased interments, all while a major expansion project at our Amelia Cemetery was ongoing. Following a difficult start to the Fiscal Year, COVID cases at our Veterans Care Centers decreased drastically following widespread vaccinations, allowing more family visits and the resumption of many quality of life activities for residents.

Throughout 2021, VDVS aligned our strategic goals, objectives and intent to becoming a port of entry for veterans and families to access earned benefits and needed resources. As a port of entry to and provider of direct services, we also focused on instilling a framework of inclusiveness that creates sustainable change, innovation, and productivity across the agency.

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.

Service through teamwork.

John Maxwell
Commissioner

Compact with Virginia's Veterans

The Code of Virginia, §2.2-2004(17) requires the Commissioner of Veterans Services to:

Establish and implement a compact with Virginia's veterans, which shall have a goal of making Virginia America's most veteran-friendly state. The compact shall be established in conjunction with the Board of Veterans Services and supported by the Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations and shall (i) include specific provisions for technology advances, workforce development, outreach, quality of life enhancement, and other services for veterans and (ii) provide service standards and goals to be attained for each specific provision in clause. The provisions of the compact shall be reviewed and updated annually. The Commissioner shall include in the annual report required by this section the progress of veterans services established in the compact.

The Virginia Department of Veterans Services (VDVS), in conjunction with the Board of Veterans Services (BVS) and the Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations (JLC), set this standard for the Compact for FY21 and FY22:

The Virginia Department of Veterans Services will unify the state's efforts in veterans services. With a highly trained and professional workforce, we will serve as a primary port of entry to federal, state and community resources, connecting veterans and their families to earned benefits. We will optimize technology advances to enrich services and increase outreach. We will advocate for veteran quality of life enhancements and prioritize accessibility of services for transitioning service members, veterans, and their families throughout the Commonwealth

VDVS, BVS, and JLC adopted goals, priorities, and recommendations for the 2022-2024 biennium in support of the Compact with Virginia's Veterans. Each goal or objective is classified according to the following provisions required by the Compact:

- *Unify the state's efforts in veterans services;*
- *Serve as a primary port of entry to federal, state, and local veterans benefits;*
- *Holistically connect veterans and families to earned benefits;*
- *Enrich services and increase outreach; and*
- *Invest in the VDVS team*

OVERARCHING GOALS IN SUPPORT OF THE COMPACT

The Virginia Department of Veterans Services' overarching goal is to make Virginia the most veteran-friendly state in the nation.

In support of the Compact, the Virginia Department of Veterans Services (VDVS), in conjunction with the Board of Veterans Services (BVS) and the Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations (JLC), established the following overarching goals:

1. Ensure Virginia veterans and eligible family members receive timely assistance in filing for federal and state disability benefits.
2. Deliver long-term skilled nursing care, assisted-living (domiciliary) care, Alzheimer's/ memory care, and short-term rehabilitation services to Virginia veterans at Virginia's Veterans Care Centers.
3. Connect veterans, Guardsmen and Reservists not in Federal service, and their family members, to a network of services designed to help them overcome the challenges of stress-related and traumatic brain injuries and rehabilitative needs that result from military service.
4. Provide Virginia's veterans, their spouses, and other eligible family members an honored final resting place at state veterans cemeteries that meet national shrine standards.
5. Ensure veterans and their dependents have approved educational programs through which they may receive their educational benefits.
6. Ensure that veteran homelessness is a rare, brief, and nonrecurring experience.
7. In conjunction with other state agencies, create employment opportunities for Virginia veterans in state government and the private sector.
8. Honor Virginians who served and sacrificed in the cause of freedom and liberty for the Commonwealth and the nation in time of war, and honor all of Virginia's veterans by preserving their history, educating our youth, and inspiring patriotism in all Virginians.
9. Coordinate with other state agencies to afford Virginia's veterans business, employment, transportation, and other appropriate opportunities through technology advances, workforce development, outreach, quality of life enhancement, and other services for veterans and their families.

The following goals, objectives, and priorities were established for FY21 by VDVS, the JLC, and BVS:

VDVS FY21 GOALS IN SUPPORT OF THE COMPACT:

VDVS Goal #1: Make Virginia the most veteran-friendly state in the nation

VDVS Objectives in support of Goal #1:

1. Unify the Commonwealth's efforts in Veterans Services among state agencies, stakeholders, and community partners;
2. Prioritize accessibility of services throughout the Commonwealth;
3. Improve outcomes for veterans and their families in the areas of behavior health, rehabilitative services, supportive services, and financial stability;
4. Holistically connect veterans and their families to earned benefits, resources, and opportunities;
5. Provide the residents of Virginia's veterans care centers with exceptional person-centered care in an enriching environment that enhances their sense of physical, emotional, and social well-being;
6. Advocate for quality of life enhancements for transitioning service member, veterans, and their families;
7. Improve the agency's effectiveness at reaching and serving Virginia's veterans and families through the implementation of technology;
8. Continue strong partnerships with the General Assembly, the JLC, and the BVS to effectively advocate for Virginia's veterans, National Guard and Reserves and their families; and
9. Inform veterans of the services provided by VDVS through targeted media campaigns and engagement with media resources around Virginia. Continue statewide outreach, presentations and attendance at events around Virginia by VDVS team members to share resources and information about all the services and programs available to veterans and family members.

VDVS Goal #2: Serve as a Primary Port of Entry to federal, state and community resources

VDVS Objectives in support of Goal #2:

1. Improve veterans' and their families' access to services through any entry point into VDVS;
2. Strengthen local, state, and federal partnerships and advocate for federal and state resources to improve services;
3. Serve as a port of re-entry for justice involved veterans;
4. Increase outreach and community awareness; anticipate and address requirements / shortfalls created by increased demands for VDVS services;
5. Align VDVS support and partner resources to achieve equity in access;

6. Offer in-person and virtual services that facilitate service imminently following engagement;
7. Enhance access to education and employment opportunities for transitioning service members, veterans, and their families; and
8. Enhance the security of VDVS applications while integrating ease-of-use features that promote awareness and resource connections for veterans and families

VDVS Goal #3: Enhance the strength of Team VDVS through employee development, support, and collaboration

VDVS Objectives in support of Goal #3:

1. Foster a supportive, collaborative, equitable and inclusive culture;
2. Identify and address shortfalls in agency infrastructure;
3. Recruit a diverse workforce; create an environment and opportunities that encourage the retention of talented, skilled, and experienced teammates;
4. Institutionalize a Professional Development Program that fosters technical enhancements, leadership, individual and team growth;
5. Institute a compensation plan based on skillsets, experience, and level of responsibility; and
6. Ensure that resources are used efficiently and programs are managed effectively, and in a manner consistent with applicable state and federal requirements.

JLC FY21 PRIORITIES IN SUPPORT OF THE COMPACT

The JLC submitted eight recommendations (initiatives) to the Governor and General Assembly for consideration during the 2021 Session. Two of the eight were adopted: Priorities 6 and 8.

To read the JLC's annual report, or view the 2021 priorities, please visit:

<https://www.dvs.virginia.gov/dvs/joint-leadership-council-veterans-service-organizations-2>

JLC Priority #1: That the Governor and General Assembly approve an individual income tax subtraction for 100% service-connected disabled veterans with a federal adjusted gross income, not exceeding 150% of the federal poverty level for a four-person household, who have not already claimed another exemption. *Status: Legislation introduced, but left in Senate Finance and Appropriations*

JLC Priority #2: That the Governor and General Assembly approve \$50,000 to create a grant program to incentivize small to medium-sized Virginia employers to hire members of the Virginia National Guard and Armed Forces Reserves. *Status: Legislation introduced, but left in House Appropriations*

JLC Priority #3: That the Governor and General Assembly amend the Code of Virginia to provide a real estate property tax exemption to both the surviving spouses of service members who were “Killed in Action” and those who “died while serving or from a service connected injury or illness.” *Status: Introduced, but left in House Privileges and Elections*

JLC Priority #4: That the Governor and General Assembly expand the Virginia Disabled Veteran's Passport to any Virginia veteran who has been found to have a service-connected compensable or non-compensable disability. *Status: Legislation left in House Agriculture, Chesapeake, and Natural Resources*

JLC Priority #5: That the Governor and General Assembly grant a 50% reduced price annual passes to Virginia State parks to members of the Virginia National Guard *Status: Not introduced*

JLC Priority #6: That the Governor and General Assembly further reduce the cost of license plates to recognize the service and commitment of our National Guard members, by changing the current 50% reduced price for a maximum of two license plates per household and registrations to 100% reduction for a single (1) license plate and registration. *Status: Legislation passed House and Senate; Governor approved effective July 1, 2021*

JLC Priority #7: That the Governor and General Assembly support changes to the current Virginia tax laws for a partial exemption of military retirement pay to reduce state tax on military retirement income. *Status: Legislation introduced but passed-by indefinitely in Senate Finance and Appropriation*

JLC Priority #8: That the Governor and General Assembly take action to restore the funding for critical DVS programs and services. *Status: Introduced Budget and budget approved by General Assembly included restored funding*

BVS FY21 PRIORITIES IN SUPPORT OF THE COMPACT

The Board of Veterans Services formed three workgroups in FY21 to study policy issues related to Benefit Services, Education, and Veterans and the Arts.

The Benefit Services Workgroup:

Course of Work: This Working Group studied the strategy for continued growth and the obstacles that may hinder that growth, and the current economic impact of received benefits by Virginia veterans. Areas of focus included the opening of offices and hybrid operations as the nation recovers from the COVID pandemic.

Current Status: The Working Group studied employee retention and recruitment as a result of staffing shortages since the onset of the COVID pandemic, but also due to salary concerns. The Working Group focused on the salary classification review for VDVS staff and attorneys, offering support for this effort. The Board's Point of Contact (POC) for Benefit Services, Mr. Carl Bedell, continues to work with VDVS to address issues identified by the workgroup.

The Education Workgroup:

Course of Work: This Working Group worked to: assess how education programs at Virginia's institutions of higher education are addressing the needs of student veterans, gather information today about the needs of student veterans attending Virginia's higher education institutions, review published research discussing the challenges facing student veterans, and examine the structural, procedural, and administrative mechanisms that may hinder the efforts of student veterans to achieve their education goals.

Current Status: The working group's efforts to survey student veterans is still a focus of effort. Chairman Dick noted the working group is resetting following COVID-19 and moving forward.

The Veterans and the Arts Workgroup:

Course of Work: This Working Group focused on research and attention on arts as an economic and small business endeavor in Virginia and how policy recommendations can support and strengthen current or potential efforts. The Working Group surveyed existent arts programming accessible to Virginia Veterans and military families and found a plentiful and diverse variety of programs available to serve the community.

Current Status: The Working Group found that the missing link for arts programs for veterans and their families is the difficulty in connecting those needing or wanting services to the services themselves. The Working Group recommended that VDVS partner with other arts organizations as part of the VDVS strategic objective to be a Port of Entry to services. Upon conclusion of their work, the Veterans in the Arts Working Group was disbanded following the Board's acceptance of their final report.

VDVS Locations – FY21

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

Benefits Services Offices

- 1 Abingdon
- 2 Accomac
- 3 Big Stone Gap
- 4 Charlottesville
- 5 Chesapeake
- 6 Danville
- 7 Emporia
- 8 Fairfax
- 9 Fort Belvoir
- 10 Fort Lee
- 11 Fredericksburg
- 12 Hampton
- 13 Hampton VA Medical Center
- 14 Henrico
- 15 Loudoun
- 16 Lynchburg
- 17 Manassas
- 18 McGuire VA Medical Center (Richmond)
- 19 Norfolk
- 20 Oceana/Virginia Beach
- 21 Pentagon
- 22 Petersburg

- 23 Portsmouth
- 24 Quantico
- 25 Roanoke
- 26 Salem VA Medical Center
- 27 South Hill
- 28 Springfield
- 29 Staunton
- 30 Strasburg
- 31 Tazewell
- 32 Virginia Beach
- 33 Williamsburg
- 34 Wytheville

* **VVFS:** Underlined offices indicate co-location of VVFS and Benefits Services offices.

Care Centers

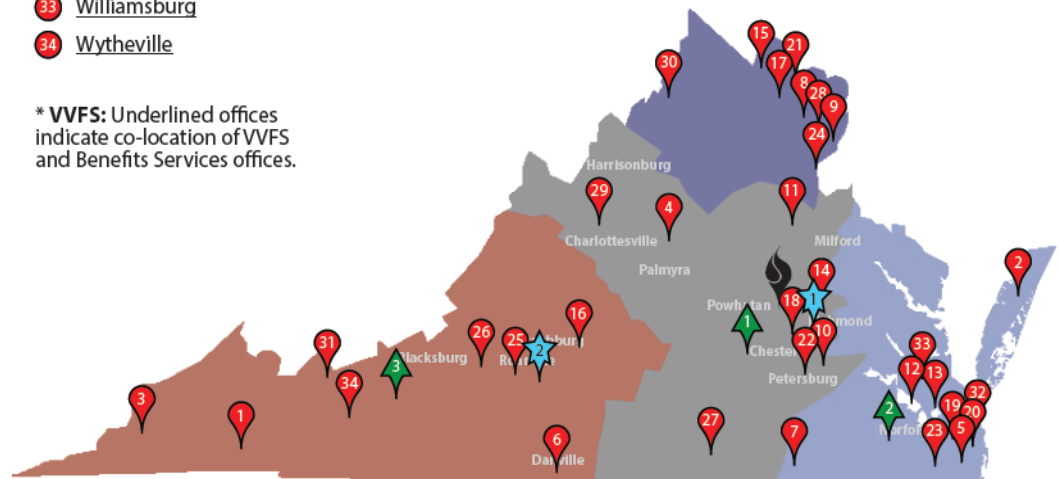
- ★ Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center, Richmond
- ★ Virginia Veterans Care Center, Roanoke

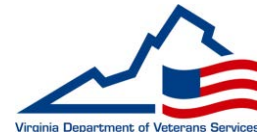
Virginia Veteran and Family Support Regions

- North
- East
- Central
- West

Cemeteries

- 1 Virginia Veterans Cemetery, Amelia
- 2 Albert G. Horton, Jr., Memorial Veterans Cemetery, Suffolk
- 3 Southwest Virginia Veterans Cemetery, Dublin
- Virginia War Memorial Richmond





VDVS FY21 Results – Summary

BENEFIT SERVICES

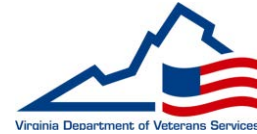
Benefit Services provides Virginia's veterans and their family members with accurate, timely and ethical education and assistance in obtaining the federal and state benefits they have earned through service and sacrifice to our Commonwealth and nation.

- 65,175** Claims submitted to U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs in FY21 (-16.2% from FY20)
- 14,368** Compensation and Pension claims submitted to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs in FY21 (-14.8% from FY20)
- 226,643** Client contacts in FY21 (+17% from FY20)
- \$3.90B** Disability compensation and pension payments to Virginia veterans and dependents in FY21 (+8.8% from FY20)

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. (Resource Specialist and Peer Specialist vacancies affected the volume of services delivered.)

- 1,742** Veterans and family members served in FY21 (-28 from FY20)
- 2,403** Total individual services provided in FY21 (-449 from FY20)
- 296** Total behavioral health services provided in FY21 (-85 from FY20)
- 36** Total rehabilitative/medical services provided in FY21 (-4 from FY20)
- 2,071** Total supportive services provided in FY21 (-360 from FY20)
- 456** Total group services provided in FY21 (+33 from FY20)
- 0** Veterans and family members served by *Mission: Healthy Relationships* (MHR) and *Mission: Healthy Families* (MHF) in FY21 (-114 from FY20)
- 831** Individuals trained in Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) by VVFS (-328 from FY20)
- 1,401** Individuals trained in Military Cultural Competency Training by VVFS (-936 from FY20)
- 119** Veterans who received Behavioral Health/Financial Assistance through Veterans Services Foundation (-37 from FY20)



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 based on Federal Fiscal Year (FFY).

4th Commonwealth's ranking among the states in terms of Veterans using their GI Bill benefits in FFY20 (same as FFY19)

\$771M Amount of GI Bill benefits paid to Virginia recipients in FFY20 (-10% from FFY19)

992 Instructional institutions in Virginia approved to provide training to Veterans and dependents in FFY20 (+3.3% from FFY19)

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 \$1,900 per year to partially offset the cost of room, board, books, and supplies.

3,185 Applied for VMSDEP benefits in FY21 (+30.9% from FY20)

3,297 Applications approved for VMSDEP benefits in FY21 (+129% from FY20)

1,591 Unique students received stipend award for FY21 (+22% from FY20)

\$2,311,960 Stipends awarded for 2020-2021 academic year (+17.87% from FY20)

40 Virginia public colleges and universities that applied VMSDEP benefits to students' accounts in FY21. Students used VMSDEP benefits at 40 of 40 public institutions (+5.2 from FY20)

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.

- 78,807** Veterans, transitioning service members (TSMs), and spouses reached through V3T outreach efforts in FY21 (-27.7% from FY20)
- 2,553** Referrals of Veteran/transitioning service member/spouses to partner organizations for direct services outside of employment, education and entrepreneurship (+98.7% from FY20)
- 4** Visits to Virginia military installations to conduct outreach and work with TSMs and their spouses in FY20 (military installation restrictions affected V3T visits)
- 92** V3T-sponsored transition events held in partnership with community-based support and transition organizations in FY21, (-58.4% from FY20)

VIRGINIA VALUES VETERANS (V3) PROGRAM

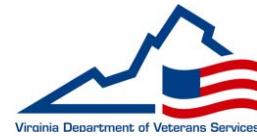
The Virginia Values Veterans (V3) Program increases employment opportunities and promotes economic development, by training and certifying organizations in veteran's workforce best practices while creating connectivity opportunity and activities.

- 348** Companies joined V3 in FY21 (-19% from FY20)
- 20,579** Virginia veterans hired by V3 companies in FY21 (+39% from FY20)
- 14** Training events in FY21 (same as FY20)

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.

- 171** Applicants for MMAC FY21 (-26.4% from FY20)
- 27** MMAC Hires reported in FY21 (+111.5% from FY20)
- 25** No Medics and Corpsmen Left Behind Hires FY20 (-59.2% from FY20)
- 31** Leadership Hires FY20 (+10.2% from FY20)
- 5** Military Spouse Hires (new statistic for 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.

2,297 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 FY21 (+24% from FY20)

VIRGINIA WAR MEMORIAL

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

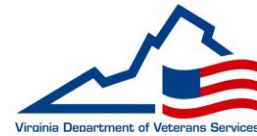
11,259 Educational Outreach Virtual Visitors in FY21 (+82.4% from FY20)

27,497 Visitors to the Virginia War Memorial in FY21 (+2.7% from FY20)

180 Educational Outreach, Professional Development, Family Education, and Patriotic Programs conducted in FY20 (+68.7% from FY20)

8 Group tours provided in FY20 (-85% from FY20)

991 Hours of service provided by Virginia War Memorial volunteers in FY20 (-82.5% from FY20)



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)

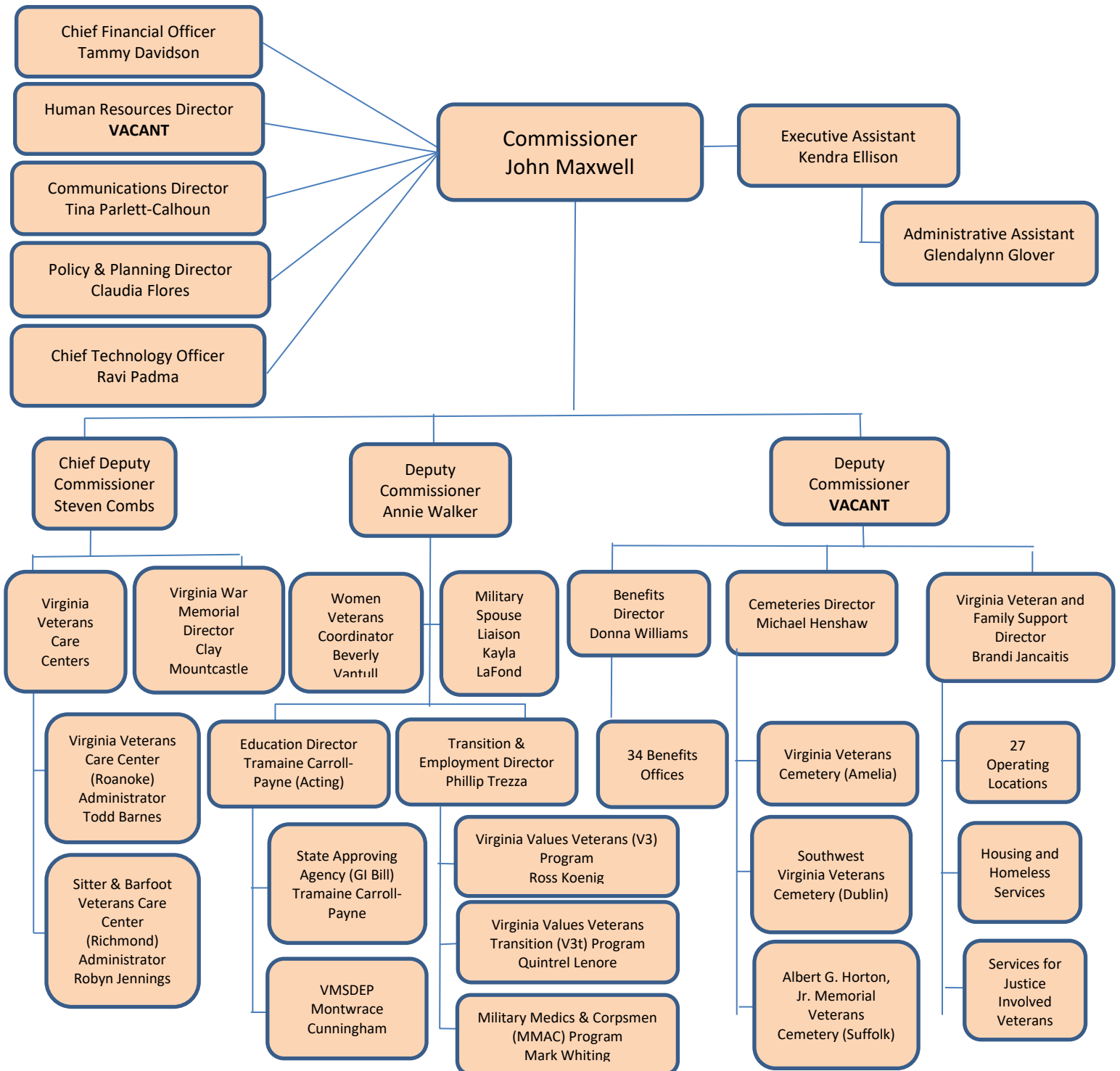
- 160** Beds in private rooms providing skilled nursing or post-acute skilled rehabilitative care for veterans transitioning back into the community
- 40** Bed in private rooms in a secure Alzheimer's/dementia unit
- 58,455** Patient days of nursing and Alzheimer's/dementia care provided in FY21 (80% capacity) (-13% from FY20)

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
- 50,614** Patient days of nursing and Alzheimer's/dementia care provided in FY21 (71% capacity) (-17% from FY20)
- 7,822** Patient days of assisted living care provided in FY21 (76% capacity) (-16% from FY20)

VDVS Organizational Chart

Reflects personnel as of December 1, 2021



Who are Virginia's Veterans?

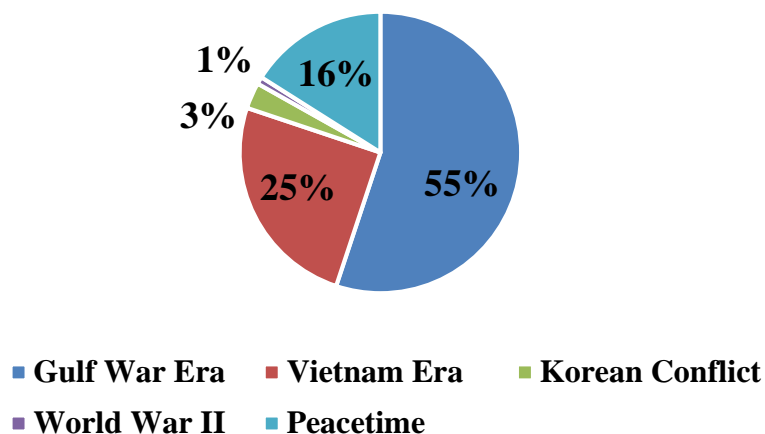
POPULATION

713,344	Estimated number of Virginia Veterans as of September 30, 2021 (<i>Source: USDVA, VetPop 2018, Table 6L</i>)
109,368	Estimated number of Women Veterans – 15 % of our veteran population . Virginia leads the nation with the highest percentage of women veterans.
130,655	Number of Virginia veterans under 40
7th	Virginia's ranking in total veteran population.
2nd	Percentage of Veterans to total state population. In terms of raw numbers, Virginia is 7 th in overall largest veterans population – but when factored in as a percentage of total population, we are second in the nation (behind Alaska).

ERA OF SERVICE (AS OF SEPTEMBER 30, 2021)

593,909	Total war time
119,435	Total peace time
409,937	Gulf War Era and Post 9/11
184,050	Vietnam Era
23,949	Korean Conflict
5,180	World War II

Virginia Veterans by Era of Service



(USDVA, VetPop2018, Table 7L.)

NOTE: 29,207 Virginia Veterans served during multiple war time periods (ex. – 130 served in WWII, Korea, and Vietnam) and their numbers are counted in multiple war time categories.

EDUCATION & TRANSITION

- 51,459** Number of Veterans receiving G.I. Bill benefits in Virginia in FFY20. Virginia ranks 4th in the nation in number of Veterans receiving G.I. Bill benefits.
- \$771M** Total G.I. Bill benefits paid to Veterans in Virginia in FFY20.
- 3,297** Applications approved for VMSDEP benefits in FY21.
- 78,807** Veterans, transitioning service members (TSMs), and spouses reached through the V3 Transitions Program's outreach efforts in FY21.
- 2,553** Referrals of veterans, transitioning service members (TSMs), and spouses to partner organizations for direct services outside of employment, education and entrepreneurship in FY21.

DISABLED VETERANS

- 218,486** Veterans receiving USDVA compensation or pension benefits as of September 30, 2020.
- \$3.90B** Compensation and pension payments to Virginia veterans in FY20.

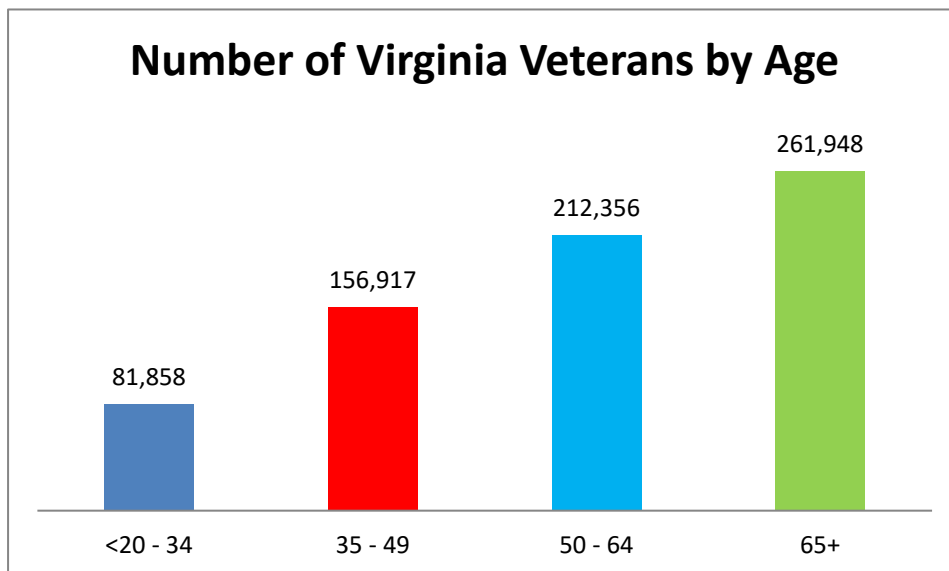
HOMELESSNESS AND HOUSING

- 343** Estimated number of homeless veterans in Virginia on a single night in January 2021 (-52 from 2020)
- 18** Estimated number of unsheltered veterans in Virginia on a single night in January 2021 (-54 from 2020)
- 585** Number of homeless veterans housed statewide in FY21 (-362 from FY20)
- 144** Veterans experiencing homelessness who received financial assistance through VVFS in FY21 (-40 from FY21)

OLDER VETERANS = 37% OF VIRGINIA'S VETERANS

261,948 Estimated number of veterans age 65+ living in Virginia as of September 30, 2021

The number of VA veterans age 65 and older is projected to remain steady over the next decade, being at **257,719** in 2030 (*USDVA, Table 6L*)

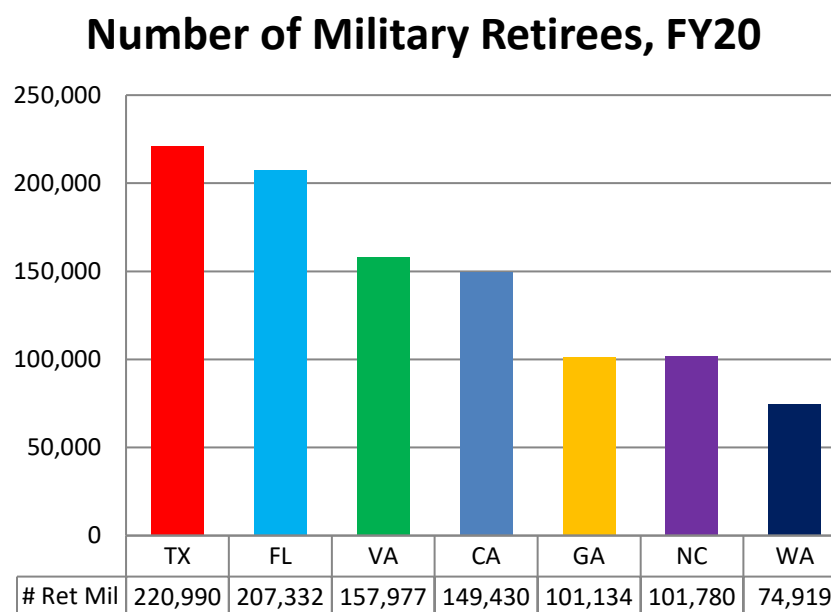


MILITARY RETIREES

157,977 Number of military retirees in Virginia as of September 30, 2020.

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

(DoD, Office of the Actuary, Statistical Report on the Military Retirement System FY20)



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 FFY20

\$7.03B Total USDVA expenditures in Virginia

\$3.90B Compensation and pension

\$2.20B Medical Care

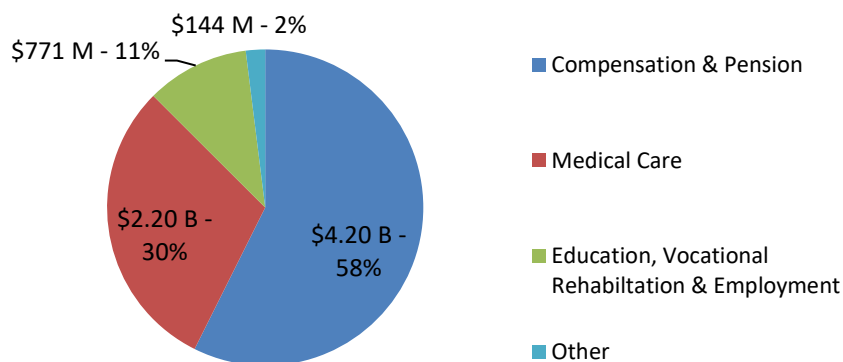
\$7.71M Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, and employment

\$144.1M 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>

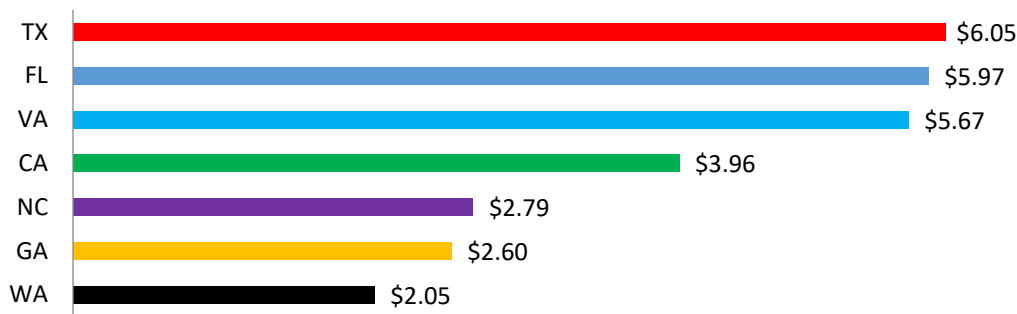
USDVA Expenditures in Virginia FFY20

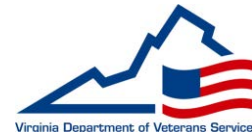


U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE MILITARY RETIREE PAY IN VIRGINIA IN FFY20

\$5.58B 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, FFY20*).

DoD Retired Military Pay - FFY20 (in billions)





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 service and sacrifice to our Commonwealth and nation.

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 are:

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

Benefits Services are an integral part of VDVS; Veterans Service Representatives (VSRs) and Veterans Service Administrators (VSAs) are on the frontline each day working to support veterans. Veterans and their family members gain assistance in filing disability claims under the authority provided in 38 USC 5902. VDVS has 34 Benefits offices around the Commonwealth located in a variety of spaces including military bases, college campuses, U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) Medical Centers, and business office complexes throughout the state. The variety of locations gives Benefit Services the best opportunity to reach a diverse military population.

COVID-19 related disruptions and restricting walk-in services affected VDVS staff, offices, and veterans; they also impacted the lengthy process to file compensation and pension claims. However, Benefits continued a phased approach to returning to in-person appointments, while continuing to conduct virtual services. Benefits' hybrid model began as a COVID response but will continue to maintain flexibility for veterans and family members. With this hybrid model, Benefits staff had more than 226,000 client contacts and filed 65,175 actions for VA consideration; 14,368 of those became disability compensation or pension claims for Virginia's veterans. Virginia veterans received \$3.90B in VA disability compensation and pension benefits during FFY20. The investment in VDVS continues to pay dividends for our veterans and for Virginia's economy, with a 79.78% claims approval rating.

In coordination with the Virginia Veterans and Family Support (VVFS) program, the Benefits team incorporated the Virginia's Identify Service Members, Veterans, and their Families (SMVF), Screen for Suicide Risk, and Refers for Services (VISR) program to help prevent suicides among SMVF. As such, all personnel performed screenings of new and at-risk clients for suicidal tendencies and made appropriate referrals. In FY21 Benefits successfully trained 100% of personnel on VISR protocols and screening.

Benefits continued working with Virginia Department of Corrections and VVFS Criminal Justice Director to ensure Benefits services were provided to incarcerated veterans. In FY21, in-person visits to the correctional facilities were prohibited, however, Benefits personnel worked with incarcerated veterans via email and fax with the assistance of the correction facility. The Benefits staff also responded to written inquiries from incarcerated veterans for assistance with initial claims, appeals, and other benefits.

In FY21, a Blacksburg itinerant location was created and collocated with the Virginia Veterans and Family Support (VVFS) program. The Blacksburg site is manned by the VSR from the Wytheville office. The VSR at Wytheville covers both locations in an effort to reach more veterans and have broadened coverage in the rural Western Region.

The Center of Excellence (COE) reviewed every claim submitted by the VSRs to ensure VA regulations were being met consistently. Benefits Services was fortunate to have a dedicated team of claims specialists based in the VA Regional Office in Roanoke; they maintained consistency so that each claim submitted by VDVS had the highest chance of being granted by the VA.

The COE coordinated and was a conduit between multiple stakeholders. The COE, Appeals Team, and Training Team worked closely with the VA, and trained VSRs to ensure that our veterans were provided with the most accurate, up-to-date information on their benefits. Federal laws, policies, and guidance sometimes evolve quickly and Benefits Services needed to be informed of these changes to ensure quality service. By maintaining a close relationship with the VA, the COE remained up-to-date on changes within the federal system, new guidelines, and policies that affect VSRs and veterans alike. These efforts also kept staff abreast of changes, allowing them to better advocate, and provide expertise and resources.

Our award-winning Appeals Team includes licensed Attorneys, Appeals Specialists, and an assistant who provided top-notch legal assistance to claimants challenging adverse VA decisions during the VA Appellate Process. This no-cost representation offered to Virginia Veteran's generated over \$11.5M in retroactive disability compensation awards in FY21 (up from \$4.5 million in FY20). Retroactive disability compensation awards are often life changing for many veterans and help families move forward financially, including educational assistance and access to healthcare. These awards convey additional material benefits to veterans beyond their monetary value, to include access to healthcare, tax exemptions, and educational assistance for veterans and their families.

The Appeals Team also assisted VSRs in the field with advice and knowledge on the appeals process for veterans' claims and a vast array of issues concerning veteran's entitlements. The close connections between VSRs and the Appeals Team ensured that veterans across the Commonwealth received expert assistance and legal advice no matter where they live. This dedication to service was recognized on both a state and national level when the Appeals Team was awarded the 2021 Governor's Honor Award for Personal and Professional Excellence and the 2021 Abraham Lincoln Pillars of Excellence Award. National recognition not only brought extreme pride to the Appeals Team, but also shed light on best practices for other states to use.



The Appeals Team used technology during the pandemic to make sure veterans were represented during their appeals hearings and won retroactive disability compensation awards during a pandemic when it was most needed. The Appeals Team's successfully utilized the Virtual Telehearing Program when testifying at the Board of Veterans Appeals. This resource has enabled veterans to take advantage of their rights to a hearing despite longstanding challenges such as distance and transportation.

*2021 Governor's Honor Award for
Personal and Professional
Excellence*

In FY21, the Appeals Team represented veterans and their survivors at 323 hearings before the Board of Veterans Appeals (BVA) in Washington, D.C., with a success rate of 75%. The volume of BVA hearings has increased by approximately 40% in FY21, up from 231 BVA hearings in FY20. Since the pandemic, 99% of these hearings were held virtually using a computer with a camera and internet connection. The Appeals Team's advocacy also extended beyond the BVA hearing itself. During FY21, the Board of Veterans Appeals remanded 399 Legacy appeals for additional development.

VDVS signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Board of Veterans Appeals to address new levels of appellate workload created after the enactment of the AMA on February 19th, 2019. As a result, the Appeals Team is now required to write an Informal Hearing Presentation (IHP), or legal brief, for each AMA appeal filed under the Board's Direct or Evidence Dockets within 120 days of when the Board requests one. In FY21 the Appeals Team wrote and filed 369 IHPs.

Training and compliance to VA standards are essential to the continued success of Benefits services. The Training Team is comprised of a training manager, training coordinator, and two training specialists who ensure that all personnel have a complete understanding of their roles and responsibilities. All new personnel attend Basic Training at the beginning of their Benefits career as an introduction to Veterans Law. Benefit Services staff also attend quarterly and annual training, and they maintain standards of accreditation by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, according to 38 USC 5902. Several years prior to COVID, the Training Team began constructing a virtual platform that would allow training to be less restrained due to distance, travel constraints, and funding. This was the groundwork for the hybrid telework that would be implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Training Team continued to deliver exceptional services and support that kept new and established personnel engaged and compliant with all training requirements for VDVS and VA.

At the end of FY21, the Training Team had conducted:

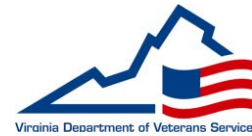
- Six Basic Training Courses (20% increase from FY20),
- Completed 25 personnel assessments (10% decrease from FY20),
- Conducted five Proficiency Tests, (37.5% decrease from FY20),
- Delivered 14.3 training hours (59% decrease from FY20)

Outreach and Partnerships

The Benefits Service line continued to grow external partnerships to advance veterans interests in Virginia. Benefits Services partnered with the Greater Richmond Bar Association, McGuireWoods Law Firm, and

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Capital One Bank to offer free limited legal services to Veterans consisting of wills, durable power of attorney, and medical directive forms. Over 100 volunteers participated in this legal clinic, including over 50 attorney volunteers from McGuire Woods and Capital One, clinic support organizers from McGuire Woods and VDVS, and 46 document execution volunteers from VDVS. Over 50 veterans participated and received legal devices to assist with their estate planning. There are plans to conduct another no-cost legal document clinic in FY22.

In FY21, Regional Outreach Coordinators began creating Google Business pages for all 34 DVS offices. Google Business provided veterans and their families with locations, directions, services, office hours, and phone numbers of each office with a simple Google search. Google Business was an additional source of outreach that assisted VSRs to reach new clients, increased overall visibility of VDVS, and ensured that customers can find information easily and quickly. Google Business pages created free advertising on Google Maps and Google Searches, permitted each office to statistically track how often the office is being searched, and allowed veterans to leave ratings and reviews based on their interactions with the office. With limited advertisement funding within the budget, the no-cost addition of Google Business was a tremendous resource.

Our current social media presence increased over the last year. As face-to-face interactions became more limited, it became imperative for VSRs to distribute information and continue outreach through social media. Benefits Services had a social media presence on all major platforms including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn. Research showed the average Millennial or Generation Z veteran does not regularly listen to local radio or watch local TV, therefore, VDVS requires a multi-mode approach to reach Virginia's veterans. This demographic will only continue to grow and Benefits Services is embracing social media outreach that is inclusive of younger veterans and their families as well.

Annual Services Provided	FY19	FY20	FY21
Compensation Claims submitted to USDVA	18,419	16,873	14,368
All Claims submitted to USDVA	79,792	77,738	65,175
Client contacts	223,965	193,730	226,643
Number of offices	33	34	34
Itinerant points	42	42	42
Budget	\$7,996,947	\$8,814,957	\$8,882,941
Authorized Positions	100	100	100
Filled Positions – as of June 30	97	99	95

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 FY21 the VWVP program maximized virtual outreach efforts and sustained its development as a collaborative program and resource connector. The program provided referral access to community resources to educate, unify, and empower Virginia's women veterans. The VWVP's intent is: to support Virginia being recognized as the most women veteran-friendly state in the nation; to expand advocacy to enhance the lives of Virginia's women veterans while increasing community visibility; and to create access to a wide array of veteran benefits tailored to meet women's needs.

This year the program's primary objective was to use virtual systems to increase women veterans' awareness across the Commonwealth of the benefits and programs they have earned through their military service. Additionally, VWVP worked to utilize various digital platforms to bridge the virtual information gap by connecting women veterans directly to appropriate VDVS programs and local service providers to help meet their immediate and long-term needs. This included transition assistance, employment and educational opportunities, health and community advocacy.

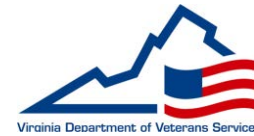
VWVP utilized various digital systems to support virtual resource workshops and office hours online to share information about services and benefits available from the Virginia Department of Veteran Services (VDVS), U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), and other women veteran organizations. One way we kept the connection was through an online events-focused newsletter called "News You Can Use." This newsletter was a tool to provide a community snapshot with a list of events and information of interest to Virginia women veterans.



*Veterans and Defense Affairs Secretary
Carlos Hopkins and Virginia Women
Veterans coordinator Beverly VanTull*

In September, VWVP partnered with the VA's Patient Experience Office, the VA's Center for Women Veterans, Ft. Lee's Soldier for Life program, and the Virginia Employment Commission to provide and share information about breast cancer and domestic violence awareness seminars. Also, VA Acting Deputy Secretary and Air Force Veteran Pamela Powers moderated a series of woman veteran-focused information sessions and live stream forums titled "Women Veterans Experience." This series focused on supporting the "whole woman veteran" needs from tools for

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resilience in a COVID environment, women's health, advice on transitioning, employment, building business entrepreneurship, and beyond.

In October, the Women In Military Service for America Memorial invited VWVP to facilitate the "Connecting in Your State – How to Build a Network" training session at their annual Ambassador Symposium and Virtual Training. We continued to emphasize the importance of building partnerships with local state veteran agencies. At the same time, we highlighted VDVS services and our collaborative efforts to increase support to women veterans across the Commonwealth.

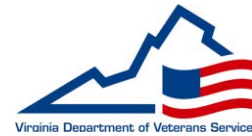
Our women veterans stayed connected while they learned helpful tips on managing stress, pain management techniques, self-care tips to enhance the work-life balance, and nutrition from our partners such as Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA) and Military Sisterhood Initiative (MSI). In addition, VWVP hosted a variety of Virginia women veteran virtual office hour workshops. The most popular session was "Answering the Call to Serve Again: The Entrepreneurship mindset." This session was a collaboration between the Virginia Department of Small Business and Supplier Diversity (SBSD), VA Office of Small & Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU), and VWVP to increase women veterans' knowledge of small business operations from starting a business to expanding their economic impact. We also had sessions encouraging women veterans to consider community service with veteran service organizations and becoming part of Virginia Veteran Citizen boards to impact community legislation.

VWVP started the new year with a virtual health and wellness series to help Virginia's women veterans get started on the right path. The series theme was *"New Year ReNew You: Establishing Positive Relationships."* We collaborated with the Barbara Giordano Foundation to host our first virtual Virginia Women Veteran Health and Wellness Series and Open Forum 2021. These virtual sessions were held as a 4-part series in the evening to meet the needs of our women veterans with full daily schedules. This series was designed to help women veterans share their stories, experiences and receive tools to encourage healthy relationships. We shared local resources from New York and Virginia throughout the meeting and taught how to access additional online health and wellness programs/services.



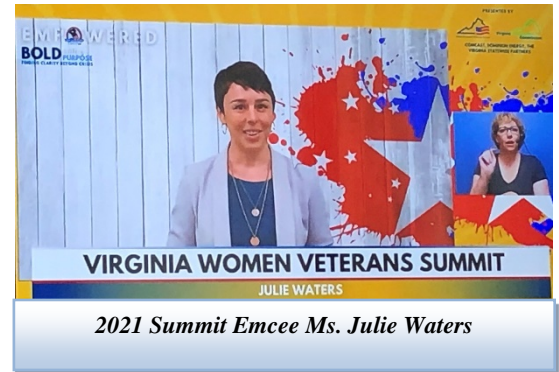
In March, VWVP held our 4th annual Women Veterans Week virtually during Women's History Month. There were daily social media video highlights from our senior leadership and Virginia legislators acknowledging the contributions women veterans have made to Virginia and our nation. In addition, VWVP invited women veterans to share their experiences during the "Brave Women Warriors: Grit and Grace" Livestream session. This *"Learning from the Home Front"* Livestream panel at the Virginia War Memorial celebrated women veterans from all eras and all military branches for Women's History Month.

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During this engaging panel discussion, the community heard the voices and stories of women who have served (and are currently serving) our country. Also, VWVP invited community engagement from the National Association of Women Business Owners (NAWBO) members. The President of the NAWBO-Richmond Chapter, Ms. Sarah Sladek, and her team provided seven business development virtual coaching workshops. They provided tools to support women veteran-owned businesses for their economic growth, network building, and discovering new outreach opportunities in the community.

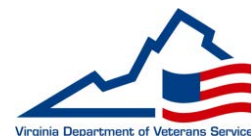
In June, VWVP hosted the eighth annual Women Veterans Summit as a virtual event for the second year in a row alongside the Virginia Employment Commission (VEC). The theme was *"Empowered: Bold with a Purpose, Finding Clarity Beyond Crisis."* This year's event reached over 900 registrants, included 18 viewing hours over two days with almost 70 speakers and 30 partners. Virtual presentations and panel discussions focused on services for women veterans in Virginia, such as art & music therapy, entrepreneurship, employment opportunities, mentorship, financial literacy, personal health, mental wellness, and community resources designed for women and veterans' needs.



During the annual summit, VWVP honored another fantastic group of outstanding women veterans and V3 employers who supported the veteran community with their contributions to Virginia's women veterans. This year's Trailblazer of the Year recipient was US Navy Veteran and professional photographer Laura Hatcher. U.S. Marine Veteran Denice Williams, the DAV representative to the JLC, was the recipient of the 2021 Change Maker of the Year Award. Also, one of our previous award winners, Dr. Francoise Bonnell, became the Director of Museums Education and Interpretation at Ft. Monroe Authority. She was a pivotal program partner and Director of Education at the Army Women's Museum on Ft. Lee. We also honored 24 Virginia Values Veterans (V3) Companies for their commitment to hiring women veterans. The top V3 employers who received special awards included Booz Allen Hamilton as our Enterprise Company; Gryphon Technologies as our Large Company; Vector CSP as our Medium Company and IntellecTechs as our Small V3 Company. This is the third consecutive year that Intellectechs has been recognized for its commitment to hiring women veterans.

As we continued to support the needs of our Virginia women veterans, VWVP stayed connected to state and federal resource partners, and national organizations that provide support services. Some of these groups included the National Association of Women Business Owners (NAWBO), the Center for Women Veterans under the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), and the National Association State Women Veterans Coordinator (NASWVC). In addition, VWVP grew our relationships with many partners such as the US Department of Agriculture (USDA), Women Business Center (WBC), Veterans Business Outreach Center (VBOC), Women Veteran Small Business Initiatives under the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), and others. As a result, VWVP is poised to advance its support of the diverse needs of Virginia women veterans as they work on their vision and goals to grow within the Commonwealth.

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Annual Services Provided	FY19	FY20	FY21
Women Veterans Outreach Engaged	1,009	2,251	2,016
Women Veteran referrals	57	85	156
Community Outreach events	51	32	31
Resources			
Budget	\$124,000	\$124,000	\$124,000
Authorized Positions	1	1	1
Filled Positions	1	1	1



Veterans Education Programs

STATE APPROVING AGENCY FOR VETERANS EDUCATION & TRAINING

The Virginia 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).

STATE APPROVING AGENCY FOR VETERANS EDUCATION & TRAINING

MISSION

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

ACTIVITIES

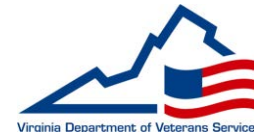
The State Approving Agency (SAA) for Veterans Education and Training, operating under a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), reviews, evaluates, and approves post-secondary education and training programs offered by educational institutions, businesses, and industries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

SAA provides support and supervision for 992 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, SAA ensures compliance with federal and state education regulations through on-site visits to active institutions.

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 FFY21 cooperative agreement required 90% of assigned surveys to be conducted by August 15, 2021. This year, the SAA completed 100% of the assigned surveys remotely due to the restrictions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Also, the SAA was a pilot state that participated in the National Association of State Approving Agencies (NASAA) Lumina Grant Risk-Based Survey Pilot. Eleven risk-based surveys (RBS) were conducted through the pilot, surveying all facility types. Risk-based surveys provide an in-depth overview of the entire school. Each RBS focuses on risk assessments and identifying potential issues such as the school's financial soundness or concerns with advertising, student records, and complaints. In addition, by participating in the pilot, Virginia provided feedback to assist with training for Risk Base Surveys required in FFY 23.

On January 5, 2021, the Isakson and Roe Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act of 2020 passed, which included over 30 enactments that affected our approval process and education benefits for veterans, service members, families and survivors. The SAA continues to work through the approval

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process to ensure compliance with federal and state requirements. The SAA had no delays with program approvals, using electronic means to continue the approval process. School Certifying Officials (SCO) could access approval documentation, and the staff sustained the use of virtual platforms of ZOOM and Google Meets to conduct technical assistance to schools.

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 VDVS 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 team continues to be involved with the National Association of State Approving Agencies (NASAA). Deputy Commissioner Annie Walker completed her last term as president of the organization. Michelle Hill, Veterans Education Manager, served as Vice President of NASAA. Martina Murray, Director of Education Programs, continues as the vice-chair of the Constitution and By-Laws committee. Tramaine Carroll-Payne, Deputy Director of Education Programs, stepped down as chair of the Audit Committee and now assists the Treasurer. Christopher Link, Veterans Education Manager, continues as the chair of the IHL/NCD committee. Bobbie Blakley continues to serve as vice-chair of the Honors and Awards committee. All new SAA team members continue to learn and participate in the organization.



VDVS Deputy Commissioner Annie Walker speaking at the virtual NASAA Midwinter Meeting, February 2021

Annual Services Provided	FFY19	FFY20	FFY21
Education and training institutions supported	969	960	992
Educational program approval actions	5,688	8,222	8,960
Number approved/% approved	4,798/84%	7179/87%	8367/93%
Other approval actions	888	1,728	1588
Number approved/% approved	562/63%	1459/84%	1433/90%
Educational institution supervisory visits	61**	36	61
% of required supervisory visits completed	100%**	61%**	100%**
Veteran student population	32,694***	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 2021. This does not include Veterans who attended school but who have not received payment of GI Bill Benefits. The final count for FFY21 should be available in March 2022

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, Reserves, the Virginia National Guard, or Virginia National Guard Reserve, 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.

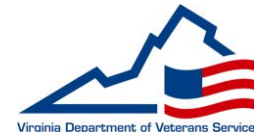
Effective July 1, 2019, eligibility for VMSDEP benefits expanded to include dependents of veterans with non-combat service-connected disabilities. Two tiers of benefits now exist: Tier 1 waives tuition and mandatory fees for the dependents of veterans who are rated at least 90% with permanent disabilities, 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 can 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 164%, and the number of dependents approved to use the benefit has grown by 413%. Based on the current average cost of tuition and mandatory fees at Virginia's public colleges and universities, each dependent would receive over \$52,000 in waivers for a 4-year degree.

In FY21, VMSDEP continues to use the application portal to administer the program with support from all VDVS 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. In FY21,

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VMSDEP staff conducted outreach to veterans and transitioning service members by presenting at several school training that focused on changes to the portal to be more efficient.

Also, during FY21, 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:

- VDVS 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;
- VDVS-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	FY19	FY20	FY21
Applications Submitted	1,207	2,432	3,185
Applications Approved	640	1,438	3,297
Unique students receiving stipend award	1,274	1,299	1,591
Total stipend dollars awarded	\$1,909,235	\$1,961,421	\$2,311,960
Outreach Activities	6	6	6

MILITARY EDUCATION & WORKFORCE INITIATIVE (MEWI)

MISSION

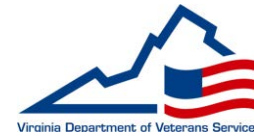
The Military Education & Workforce Initiative (formerly known as the Training and Education Alliance) assists with filling the gap employers have with industry standards and requirements, by assisting with creating programs and credentialing opportunities within colleges and institutions. The MEWI provides educators and students with connectivity to other Virginia Department of Veterans Services offerings such as Virginia Values Veterans Transition (V3 Transition) and/or Virginia Values Veterans (V3) hiring events.

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

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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 2021, MEWI partnered with the Virginia Veterans Services Foundation (VSF), and *Tech for Troops* to assist two central Virginia community colleges with technology shortages. 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 April 2021, MEWI facilitated 125 laptops being donated to student veterans and spouses. In September 2021, MEWI facilitated the distribution of an additional 100 laptops to those same two community colleges.

MEWI continued its employer-credentialing program with the Community College Workforce Alliance and Veteran Services Foundation. Service members, Veterans, and spouses are eligible to enroll in 11 different certification programs at the Community College Workforce Alliance, at no cost to the service member or dependent. These credentials are entry and advanced level manufacturing and IT certifications including MT1, Lean Practitioner, and AWS. Over 60 service members, veterans and spouses received training this fiscal year, paid by a generous grant.

MEWI facilitated the DOD approval process for the Hire Vets Now Fellowship SkillBridge program. The Hire Vets Now Fellowship SkillBridge program was initially the result of a Memorandum of Understanding between VDVS and Navy Region Mid-Atlantic (NRMA). This year, MEWI obtained direct DOD SkillBridge approval allowing the agency to work with all branches of the military without additional requirements and procedures. There are currently 37 active employers.

Annual Services Provided	FY19	FY20	FY21
Laptop Distribution	0	0	100
Student Veteran/Spouse Certifications	19	23	65
Hire Vets Now Fellowship Skillbridge Employers	16	22	36

Veterans Transition & Employment Programs

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, and retain veterans. Since starting out as a pilot program, V3 has educated thousands of individuals with hundreds of companies on why hiring veterans is the best business decision they can make.

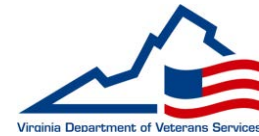
In FY21, V3 continued to surpass all goals and expectations: 1,335 companies are certified, 155 state agencies are certified and 932 businesses, state agencies and localities are enrolled and working toward certification, for a total of 2,422 member companies/agencies.

A new goal of 35,000 veteran hires during Governor Northam's term was set in January 2018, and as of June 30, 2021, there were 53,877 hires during the Northam Administration. V3 achieved the goal in record time and as of June 30, 2021, the total number of veteran hires over its 9+ years of existence is 84,908 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 14 training events in FY21, 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 partnered with the Virginia Chamber of Commerce Foundation to execute two virtual HireVetsNow events, allowing the program to reach more Transitioning Service Members (TSMs).

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. In FY21, the V3 employment grant was capped at \$100K, however, more companies met the mark and were eligible for the grant. Those companies received the grant at the beginning of FY22.

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Annual Services Provided	FY19	FY20	FY21
Companies enrolled	432	429	348
Veterans Hired by Certified Companies	13,121	14,773	20,579
Training Events Conducted	14	14	14

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 and may take years beyond that actual transition date. As such, V3 TRANSITION is designed 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 (TSM) unique journey.

In FY21, V3 TRANSITION connected with 78,807 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.

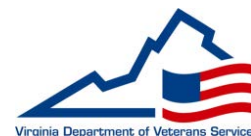
V3 TRANSITION successfully continued the program that began in FY18: outreach to all transitioning military who list Virginia as their home of record on their DD214 and who allow the Virginia Department of Veterans Services to receive a copy of it. V3 TRANSITION sent a Welcome Letter and information about our *Virginia Veterans Resource Guide* to 12,424 transitioning service members with information about V3 TRANSITION, V3, and the overall services and support offered through VDVS.

V3 TRANSITION also hosts employment workshops and recruiting events throughout Virginia and continues to be innovative in seeking out ways to connect transitioning military to jobs in the Commonwealth. Partnerships through either the USO Pathfinder Program or directly with installation transition offices (TAP) have resulted in reaching TSMs prior to separation, providing a warm hand-off to the local community resource providers best equipped to provide direct services needed, and creating opportunities for our staff to teach transition and professional development workshops on base. V3 TRANSITION either hosted or was a collaborative partner in hosting 92 events in FY21, and made 2,553 referrals to local resources.

V3 TRANSITION continued to host a DoD approved Skill Bridge program with the Navy on Naval Station Norfolk, which came about through a FY18 Memorandum of Understanding between VDVS and Navy Region Mid-Atlantic. Skill Bridge allows transitioning service members within 180 days of separation to intern for 6-12 weeks at with employers while still on active duty. Under this agreement, employers must be V3 Certified, develop a training program for interns, and the TSMs are not permitted to receive compensation from the employers during the program. This now includes the Hire

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Vets Now Fellowship Program, launched in September 2019 and held in coordination with the Virginia Chamber of Commerce. In FY21, 85 service members completed the Hire Vets Now Fellowship Program, with 44 of those accepting an employment offer from their respective fellowship employer.

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

Despite many challenges in FY21, the MMAC Program maintained efficient and effective operations, facilitated veteran and military spouse hiring, expanded partnerships, and helped facilitate the passage of groundbreaking new MMAC legislation. Even with limited staff, MMAC addressed veteran's career and credentialing challenges daily by recruiting, reviewing, and referring candidates to healthcare employers statewide.

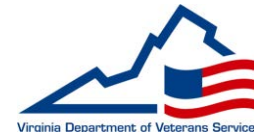
A major program milestone occurred on July 1, 2021, when legislation unanimously passed by both the House and the Senate and signed by Governor Northam became effective. The legislation amends The Code of Virginia to expand the types of healthcare facilities eligible to participate in the MMAC Program. 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 creates two additional pathways to healthcare employment.

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.

Now in its sixth year, MMAC began with six Memorandums of Agreement (MOA) with Partner Healthcare Systems (PHS). In FY21 the total stood at 17 MOA 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 care credentials. Almost anywhere in the Commonwealth, an MMAC Applicant would like to live or work, there is very likely an employment opportunity waiting for them.

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

- Eastern Virginia Medical School
- Fort Norfolk Medical Plaza
- Ortho Virginia
- Piedmont Geriatric Hospital
- Virginia Center for Behavioral Rehabilitation
- VCU Health System

Annual Services Provided	FY19	FY20	FY21
Program Applicants	202	223	171
Total Hires	67	101	95
MMAC Qualified Hires	30	27	34
No Veteran Left Behind Hires	37	46	25
Leadership	N/A	28	31
Military Spouse	N/A	N/A	5
Budget	\$400,000	\$400,000	\$400,000
Authorized Positions	3	3	3
Filled Positions – as of June 30, 2021	3	3	3

The MMAC Program stepped into the fight against COVID-19 and supported Virginia's healthcare systems in a variety of ways:

- MMAC staff distributed a COVID-19 related messages to the HR, clinical, and senior leadership at all MMAC Partner Healthcare Systems (PHS). The message offered suggested staffing alternatives, modification of the MMAC MOA, and fast-tracking of MMAC applicants to meet increased staffing demand.
- A brief four-question COVID-19 Readiness Survey was sent to those on the MMAC Applicant and Inquiry database. The responses helped create a contact list of candidates available for potential referral to healthcare employers statewide. In the 20 days after release, 118 responses were received.
- Following Governor Northam's announcement that the Virginia Medical Reserve Corps (VMRC) was activated to respond to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the VMRC link was sent to respondents to the MMAC readiness survey who indicated a willingness to volunteer were sent.
- Veterans in Long Term Care are one of the most vulnerable populations. In collaboration with Robyn Jennings, Administrator, VDVS Sitter and Barfoot Veterans Care Center, the MMAC team created a unique COVID-19 employment opportunity called: "Veterans Caring for Veterans." An Employee Work Profile (EWP) was developed and approved for the special paid support position

of Clinical Care Technician. The Clinical Care Technicians assisted with a variety of duties ranging from COVID-19 screening to supporting patient care and activities of daily living, to interacting with veterans one-on-one and as a group.

- MMAC Program Manager Mark Whiting served on the Virginia Healthcare Workforce Advisory Council COVID-19 Work Group.
- When MMAC was notified of any COVID-19 related positions opened by Partner Healthcare System, they were immediately given high-priority and special focus.
- Special Constant Contact COVID-19 Hiring Alerts were sent on a regular basis that highlighted COVID-19 job openings and volunteer opportunities with the Virginia Medical Reserve Corps.

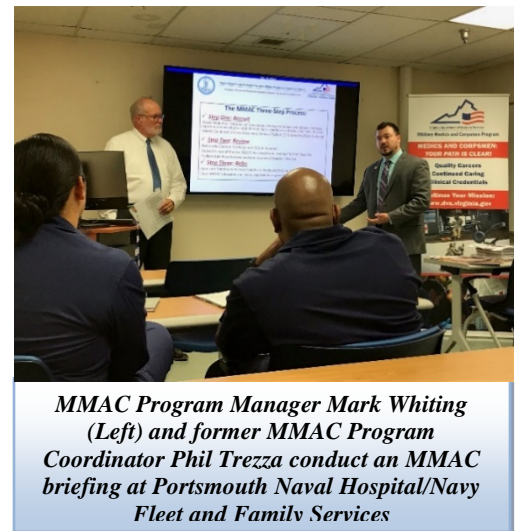
In FY21 MMAC maintained positive and productive relationships with many key stakeholders and VSOs. MMAC was featured in the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' *VA Advantage* e-newsletter. The title of the post was, "Veterans Benefits 2020: Most Unique or Newest State Benefit." MMAC received two applications and three inquires that referenced this post after the publication of this article.

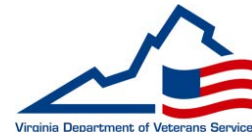
MMAC leadership met with the leadership of the Virginia Telehealth Alliance. The goal of the collaboration is to improve healthcare delivery via telehealth-equipped MMAC-Qualified Applicants providing care for veterans throughout the Commonwealth and especially in rural areas via partnerships with Community Health Clinics.

MMAC Program Manager Mark Whiting collaborated with Wisconsin-based Veteran Service Organizations, the state veterans agency, their Secretary of Veteran's Services, and Heroes To Healthcare to implement an MMAC-like program in their state.

MMAC Program Manager Mark Whiting was featured on a radio/podcast interview on the veteran-focused show, "Coming Home Well." The interview included a discussion of the MMAC Program, an overview of VDVS services, and how MMAC Applicants make ideal responders to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

MMAC staff met with key Non-Commissioned Officers in the National Guard Bureau and U.S. Army Medical Center of Excellence. This meeting resulted in National Guard staff offering to share MMAC information with all National Guard Combat Medics, State Surgeons, and senior medical leadership.





THE VIRGINIA VETERAN AND FAMILY SUPPORT 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 (VDVS) in cooperation with the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS) and the Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS). VVFS serves veterans of all eras who are Virginia residents, members of the Virginia National Guard or Armed Forces Reserves (not in active federal service), and their family members.

The purpose and priorities of the VVFS program are:

- Build awareness of veterans service needs, and of VVFS as a resource to help address those needs, 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.

In 2021, VVFS continued investing in its partnerships with federal, state, and community partners to connect service members, veterans, and their families (SMVF) to resources and services. Due to COVID-19, VVFS shifted services to provide increased virtual care coordination to SMVF in need of resources while offering in-person services as needed. Through the Governor's Challenge and the Mayor's Challenge to Prevent Suicide among Service Members, Veterans, and their Families in Virginia, VVFS

expanded virtual training, such as Military Culture Competency (MCC) and Crisis Intervention Training (CIT), to state agencies and community partners to enhance knowledge and resource connections.

Creating continuums of care for SMVF for behavioral health, rehabilitative, and supportive services is a priority for VVFS; in doing so, the program is an important port of entry for SMVF to 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 4,755 veterans, active duty military, and their family members to services in FY21. 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 Service Members, Veterans, and their Families

VVFS has continued its efforts as members of the [Governor's Challenge and the Mayor's Challenge to Prevent Suicide Among Service Members, Veterans and their Families](#). 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 (USDVA) and the Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) sponsor both of these initiatives.

The Virginia team is implementing the USDVA's [National Strategy for the Prevention of Veteran Suicide](#), which provides a framework for using a comprehensive public health approach to address the growing public health challenge among the veteran population. Virginia Secretary of Health and Human Resources and Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs, co-lead the Governor's Challenge team in Virginia.

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

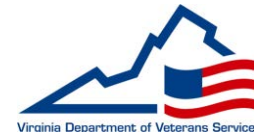
1. To identify SMVF and screen for suicide risk
2. To promote connectedness and improve care transitions
3. To increase lethal means safety and safety planning

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 and community services together; forming systemic partnerships.
 - Strategy: Increase engagement between VA Veterans Health Administration (VHA), Virginia Department of Veterans Services (VDVS), and partner organizations for SMVF referrals.

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- **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 the Benefits Division of VDVS joined *Virginia's Identify SMVF, Screen for Suicide Risk, and Refer for Services (VISR)* pilot. The goal of the VISR pilot was to develop military culture, suicide prevention, and safety planning infrastructure in community agencies, including hospitals, local departments of social services, Community Service Boards (CSBs).

As part of the VISR initiative, VVFS trains all new VDVS 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. This includes Military Cultural Competency (MCC) and Transition Awareness Training for state and community agencies. VVFS provided both virtual and in-person training in response to COVID-19 and trained over 1,400 in MCC in FY21

During the initial VISR pilot screening phase (February – August, 2020), VISR pilot partner agencies identified 3,014 SMVF, of whom 2,311 were screened for suicide risk; 30% of those screened were at risk of suicide (defined as at least low risk, but also includes individuals at moderate and high risk). At-risk individuals were linked to behavioral health and supportive services responsive to their level of need. Prior to VISR pilot training and infrastructure development in these community agencies, some of these individuals may have been missed and at risk of crisis or suicide without life-saving support.

VISR SMVF Totals for February - August 2020 (Totals Across Sectors)	
Served	3,014
Screened for Suicide	2,311
Screened at Risk	696
Safety Plan Established	619
Referred to VHA	42
Referred to Military Treatment Facility (MTF)	18
Referred to VDVS	104

Since the end of the VISR pilot in August 2020, VVFS expanded risk screening in the Benefits service line from eight staff in the initial pilot to 77 staff members by July 2021. 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.

The table below shows the major increase in the total number of SMVF (426) screened for suicide risk during the initial phase (February-August 2020) of the VISR pilot by eight Benefits staff members compared to the total screened (412) in just the month of July 2021 by 77 staff. In July 2021, 61 individuals

screened at risk of suicide and the VVFS and Benefits teams linked them behavioral health resources. 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)	February – August 2020 (total VSRs screening = 8)	July 2021 (total VSRs Screening = 77)
No risk	378	351
Low risk	40	48
Moderate risk	6	13
High risk	2	0
Total	426	412

To grow the best practices identified through the initial VISR Pilot in local communities in the Commonwealth, VVFS is coordinating the next phase of the VISR (2.0) for the Governor's Challenge to Prevent Suicide team.

VVFS consulted with multiple states on the VISR pilot including KY, MD, MN, NC, NY, and WI. Staff also distributed VDVS/USDVA resource business cards that list the USDVA Suicide Crisis Hotline on one side and VVFS contact information for non-crisis services on the other. VVFS, DBHDS, and the USDVA disseminated the cards to State Police, local police departments, first responders, and other service providers across the Commonwealth.

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. **Case 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**

CASE COORDINATION AND MANAGEMENT: REGIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

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

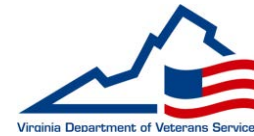


- **STEP VA:** VVFS is assisting DBHDS and CSBs with the military and veterans services component of System Transformation Excellence and Performance in Virginia (STEP VA) in the public mental health system. As part of STEP VA, CSBs will increase clinical services and suicide prevention among SMVF. VVFS staff provide military culture and resource training to CSB staff, and partner on care coordination and peer support services delivery. VVFS staff also assist CSBs with building internal capacity for SMVF services through staff recruitment and training.
- **Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Training:** VVFS staff provide SMVF crisis intervention 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 training provides 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. In addition, over the last year, VVFS and DBHDS helped the R3SP office implement the Lock and Talk Virginia Lethal Means Safety (LMS) campaign. Suicide Intervention Officers in each unit were trained in LMS and distributed gunlocks and medication lock boxes to Service Members and families to increase safety and suicide prevention.
- **Military Cultural Competency (MCC) Training:** VVFS staff 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 provider knowledge in serving SMVF and provides information on key resource connections including outreaching VVFS services.

COVID-19:

In FY21, VVFS maintained a hybrid posture through both virtual services and in-person services to meet different needs while prioritizing safety. In addition to ongoing care coordination, staff invested significant effort in maintaining real-time awareness on service partner and resource operational posture, adjusting referrals and client advocacy accordingly. With clients, staff observed a decrease in new clients, but an increase in returning clients and the length of time working with these clients. By June, client referrals had increased noticeably, though lengths of interaction remain longer than pre-COVID. Given the community-based nature of VVFS, staff were more equipped to shift to both full-time telework and later hybrid operations. A small number of key barriers were identified (relating largely to paper documents and internet access), but most have been resolved on a case-by-case basis and operations otherwise continue with only minor limitations.

VVFS North Region serves approximately 218,200 veterans and their families in 14 counties and six independent cities in Northern Virginia.



The North Region team is comprised of 12 team members: a Regional Director, Assistant Regional Manager, Senior Resource Specialist, Veteran Justice Specialist, two Veteran Peer Specialists, and six Resource Specialists, , strategically located in five VDVS offices (Fairfax, Loudoun, Manassas, Springfield, and Strasburg).

Due to the close proximity to 21 active duty military bases, the Pentagon, and Washington D.C, staff experienced 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 2021, the region will increase its capacity of direct service staff to meet increased needs of veterans and family members in Northern Virginia. This included a new veteran peer specialist and two resource specialists. These increases in direct service staff resulted in the expansion of the DVS Manassas Office as well as the Strasburg office which is scheduled to move to Winchester.

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. Since the onset of the pandemic, the region transitioned its in-person peer support groups to a virtual format to continue meeting the needs of these veterans.

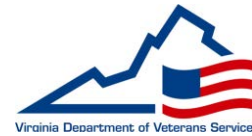
VVFS connects veterans and family members to licensed mental health clinicians who have experience working with veterans with PTSD and TBI. The region has established a network of nearly 20 clinicians to assist in bridging these barriers to mental health treatment. Due to COVID-19, many of the providers are offering telehealth services. The region leverages the Veteran Services Foundation for assessments and treatment 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 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.

Staff are part of the treatment teams for both the Fairfax County Veteran's Docket and Prince William County's Veteran Docket, working directly with judges, attorneys, probation/parole personnel, and a VA Justice Coordinator. VVFS, in collaboration with Veteran Mentors, 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 serves approximately 99,500 veterans and their families in Southwest Virginia, which includes 32 counties and 13 independent cities.

The West Region team is comprised of 12 team members: Regional Director, Assistant Regional Manager, Senior Resource Specialist, Veteran Justice Specialist, Veteran Peer Specialist, and six Resource



Specialists, strategically located in five VDVS offices (Abingdon, Big Stone Gap, Danville, Lynchburg, and Wytheville,), three CSBs (New River Valley, Piedmont, and Alleghany Highlands), and the Salem VAMC. The region also provides services at satellite offices and in communities across the region. In 2021, the West region team added critical capacity with a new Veteran Peer Specialist position in the Abingdon office.

Key partnerships and initiatives included the SWVA Crisis Intercept Mapping Collaborative and Southwest Virginia Together With Veterans (TWV). These initiatives included implementing suicide screening and lethal means safety planning for SMVF with partners in the region and bridging gaps in services through coordinated referrals. SWVA Together With Veterans continues promoting best practices from the Veterans Health Administration and the Governor's Challenge to Prevent Suicide designed to bolster grass roots, veteran-led, suicide prevention in rural communities. The SWVA TWV program is currently in phase four of five of the community development process. SWVA TWV and the Mental Illness Research, Education and Clinical Center (MIRECC) completed the second Community Assessment and Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities and Threat assessment as well as the MIRECC Action Plan. This process surveys key stakeholders from across SWVA to measure collaboration among people and organizations in our communities.

The region is involved in stakeholder collaboration and continues to participate in outreach across the region. This includes several suicide prevention committees and coalitions that address barriers to services specific to SWVA. This has also bolstered partnerships with the three VAMCs that serve veterans living in western and southwestern Virginia, including Beckley, West Virginia, James H. Quillen (Mountain Home), Tennessee, and Salem. Within these partnerships, VVFS West Region has worked closely with Salem VAMC and New River Valley Community Services to bridge partnerships in implementing the Salem VAMC telehealth program.

West Region staff provided training including Trauma Informed Care/Adverse Childhood Experiences (TIC/ACEs), Talk Saves Lives, Question Persuade and Refer, and Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST). The region also participated in a Caregiver Focus Group launched in August 2021 with a focus on better understanding the unique needs of SMVF caregivers in SWVA. The West Region Veteran Peer Specialist (VPS) currently facilitates one Veteran Peer Group in the New River Valley. The West Region VPS created and currently maintains the first VDVS VVFS Female Veteran Peer Group in a virtual model in FY21.

VVFS Central Region serves more than 158,500 veterans and their family members in Central Virginia, encompassing 29 counties and nine independent cities.

The Central Region team is comprised of 13 team members: a Regional Director, an Assistant Regional Manager, Senior Resource Specialist, five Resource Specialists, one Justice Resource Specialist, and four Veteran Peer Specialists, strategically located in five VDVS offices. (Charlottesville, Fredericksburg, Henrico, Petersburg, and Staunton), two offices shared with the Virginia Employment Commission (Chesterfield and Richmond), and the Region 10 CSB office in Palmyra. In 2021, the Central region team added critical capacity with a new Veteran Peer Specialist position in the Staunton office.

Due to the impacts of COVID-19, VVFS Central Region staff have experienced a high case volume (which continues to increase), mainly related to housing instability, literal homelessness, behavioral health, unemployment, and peer support. The increased strain on community partners has increased VVFS length and level of interaction with clients, but the region has still been successful in connecting to services. Throughout the year, outreach and services were conducted both in-person and virtually.

Regional staff continue to play a role in the delivery of MCC training, and have assisted in providing it virtually to a broad range of audiences. Key attendees include CSBs and other behavioral health providers.

Regional CIT trainings resumed in the Central Region and included the addition of new training programs in the Crater and Chesterfield areas. VVFS assisted with the veterans' component of their 40-hour training module. This increases the number of CIT programs VVFS is involved with to eight. Over the FY, interactions with law enforcement assisting veterans in crisis has created additional opportunities for training and collaboration with hostage negotiation and special response teams.

VVFS East Region: The East Region serves approximately 248,800 veterans and their families in the Greater Hampton Roads area, which includes 21 counties and 11 independent cities.

The East Region is comprised of nine members: Regional Director, Assistant Regional Manager, Veteran Justice Specialist, two Veteran Peer Specialists (one added this year), one Senior Resource Specialist, two Resource Specialists, and one Resource Specialist/Family and Caregiver Support Coordinator (the team built out this family and caregiver support capacity this year). East Region staff are strategically located in six VDVS offices (Chesapeake, Hampton, Norfolk, Oceana, Virginia Beach, and Williamsburg) and the Western Tidewater CSB office in Suffolk. In 2021, the East region team added critical capacity with a new Senior Resource Specialist position in the Hampton office.

The East Region continued to see high number of housing, including homelessness, cases across the region. They regularly coordinate with the five homeless CoCs and the Virginia Rent Relief Program to connect veterans and their families to resources. In addition, behavioral health cases increased and they refer these veterans and their families to Hampton VAMC, CSB, and private behavioral health providers such as the Cohen Clinic.

In FY21, VVFS developed a new partnership with Safe Harbor Recovery Center as they serve men and women diagnosed with substance use disorders. East Region successfully connected veterans to the Safe Harbor Recovery Center along with receiving referrals from the center as well. In addition, East Region's Veteran Peer Specialist provides a monthly overview of VDVS/VVFS services to veterans currently in the program.

As a part of the Governor's Challenge, staff provide regular community training to partner agencies and first responders through CIT in the Hampton Roads area. In addition, the region continues to train community providers on MCC both in person and virtually. The East Region team co-hosts the Veterans Services Collaborative with the mental health team at the Hampton VA Medical Center to bridge referrals and care transitions between the VAMC and community behavioral health and supportive services

providers. The region is also a member of the Crisis Intercept Mapping team hosted by Western Tidewater Community Services Board.

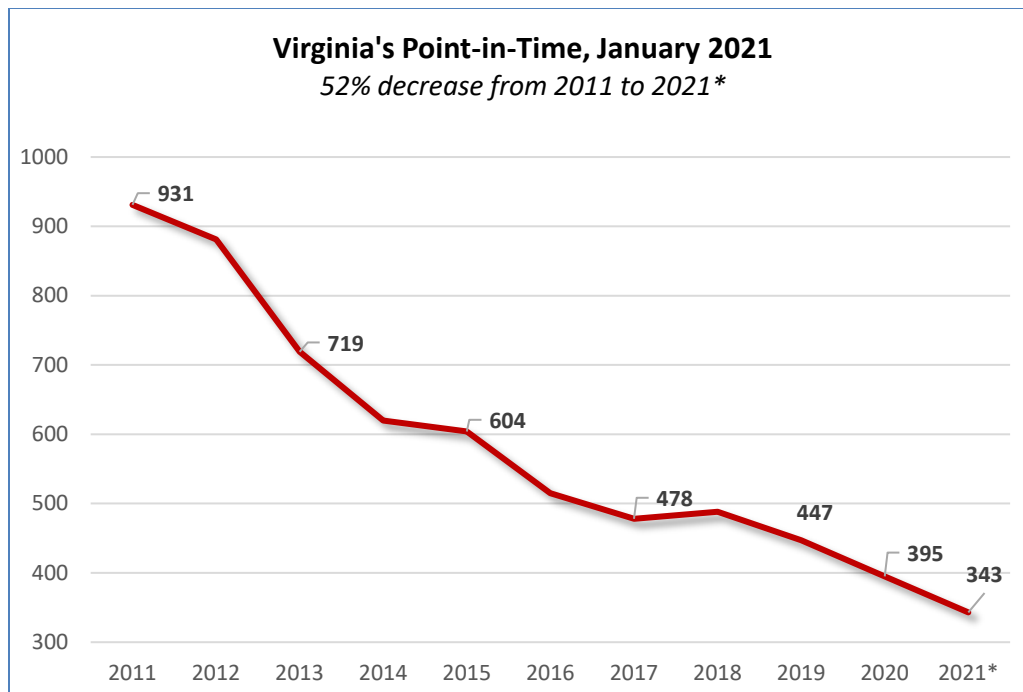
With some of the stress associated with COVID-19, the region added another Veteran Peer Specialist (VPS) to work with veterans and support them through behavioral health challenges. East Region's VPS provide monthly Peer Support groups virtually. East Region's Resource Specialist/Family and Caregiver Support Coordinator leads a monthly Family and Caregiver Support Strategy workgroup to increase the identification of caregivers in VVFS services and help staff determine if caregiving contributes to BH/other service needs. The workgroup is designing staff resource training and Client Management System enhancements for caregiver support statewide.

HOUSING AND HOMELESS SERVICES

VVFS continues to be a national leader in supporting the Commonwealth in sustaining efforts to ensure that veteran homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring. 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.

The Governor's Coordinating Council on Homelessness (GCCH), chaired by the Secretary of Commerce and Trade and the Secretary of Health and Human Resources, continues to maintain the goal of the reduction and elimination of veteran homelessness as a key priority. As chair of the GCCH Veterans Committee, the VVFS Housing Director collaborates with three federal agencies, seven state agencies, and local homeless Continua of Care (CoC) partners to recommend strategies to the GCCH. In addition, the committee aligns priorities and works together to fill gaps and remove barriers in housing homeless veterans. In coordination with partners statewide, 585 previously homeless veterans entered permanent housing in FY21.

CoCs held the annual Point in Time (PIT) Count the last week of January 2021. This year's preliminary data showed, for veterans experiencing homelessness: 343 veterans – 325 sheltered; 18 unsheltered (due to COVID-19, some CoCs did not conduct an unsheltered count). This was a 13% decrease from the 2020 count of 395, and overall reduction of 63% since 2011. Women veterans experiencing homelessness had a 7% increase from 2020, increasing from 39 to 42. VVFS continues to work with communities in sustaining efforts of reducing veteran homelessness through coordinated entry and targeting of resources.



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

The VDVS Homeless Fund leverages Veterans Service Foundation (VSF) funds and coordinates 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 FY21, VVFS used \$135,531 in VSF funds to assist 144 veterans with moves into permanent housing or homeless prevention.

The Dominion *Veteran EnergyShare* program, in conjunction with the VDVS Homeless Fund and administered by VVFS and Supportive Services for Veterans Families (SSVF) providers across the state, continued in FY21 to provide utility assistance to homeless veterans who move into permanent housing. The *Veteran EnergyShare* program is continuing as \$800,000 for calendar year 2021. This partnership has received national recognition as a best practice and has been vital in sustaining efforts in Virginia. In calendar year 2020, VVFS and SSVF providers utilized 1,203 *Veteran EnergyShare* vouchers for veterans experiencing homelessness or were at-risk.

In response to COVID-19, there has been an increase in homeless funding through SSVF for veterans through the CARES Act. This funding has prioritized higher risk veterans utilizing motel/hotel as emergency shelter and quickly moving veterans into permanent housing when possible. VVFS is also coordinating with the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) Rent Relief Program (RRP) to prevent evictions for veterans financially affected due to COVID.

Other housing priorities that VVFS is coordinating with through the GCCH is expanding permanent supportive housing and supports through the Permanent Supportive Housing Steering Committee. These efforts includes participating in Advancing Housing-Related Supports for Individuals with Substance Use Disorders State Medicaid Learning Collaborative with the Department of Medical Assistance Services (DMAS). This initiative provided technical assistance and planning support to better align and target housing and supportive services under the upcoming Medicaid Housing Support Need Benefit (Summer 2022) to individuals with substance use disorders and experiencing homelessness, including those involved in the criminal justice system. These efforts will 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)

VVFS Justice Involved Services program (JIS) 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. In addition veterans can be referred electronically through the VVFS Justice mailbox-justice.vvfs@dvs.virginia.gov. The four VVFS Veteran Justice Specialists (VJS), one in each VVFS region, work with justice-involved veterans pre- and post-release. The Criminal Justice Director (CJD) oversees referrals and services delivery. Due to COVID-19, the JIS program has also expanded virtual services to connect with justice-involved veterans.

To address the needs of justice-involved veterans (JIVs) with serious medical and mental health conditions, VVFS leads the Justice Involved Veterans with Special Needs work group with the USDVA and VADOC. The CJD also conducts statewide collaborative quarterly meetings between the USDVA 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. In FY21, the CJD was appointed to Academic Consortium on Criminal Justice Health (ACCJH) Board of Directors and also serves on the 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.

The CJD collaborates with other key partners, including:

- The Virginia Department of Corrections (VADOC)
- The Virginia Regional Jail Association
- The Virginia Sheriffs' Association (VSA)
- The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)
- The Attorney General's office
- Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS)

Veteran Treatment Dockets

In FY21, the Criminal Justice Director (CJD) and Veteran Justice Specialists promoted the creation of veteran treatment dockets in collaboration with the Supreme Court of Virginia, and provided technical

assistance to various jurisdictions, including Loudoun and Chesterfield counties, Lynchburg, and Staunton. As of FY21, there are seven veteran treatment dockets in Virginia:

1. Fairfax County General District Court
2. Fairfax County Circuit Court
3. Fairfax County Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court
4. Hampton Circuit Court
5. Norfolk Circuit Court
6. Prince William General District Court
7. Rappahannock (Spotsylvania) Circuit Court

VVFS VJS regional staff are active members of the veteran docket team and connect veterans to resources in the community. The VJS team continued to work with veteran dockets during the pandemic via virtual meetings and videoconferencing.

Virginia was selected as one of five states to receive the Veterans Treatment Court Statewide Strategic Planning Technical Assistance from the Center for Court Innovation (CCI). As part of this effort, VVFS serves on the Veterans Docket Statewide Strategic Planning team. The goal of the team is to create new veteran dockets and increase veteran identification in the criminal justice system, particularly in local and regional jails.

Funding from the Bureau of Justice Assistance, granted to the Virginia Supreme Court, Office of the Executive Secretary (OES) is assisting in supporting these activities. One of the tools leveraged to increase identification of veterans in the criminal justice system is the USDVA's *Veterans Reentry Search Services* (VRSS) system. VVFS assisted the development of a VRSS training to expand usage among jails. Currently, only eight jails using the VA's VRSS system. As part of this effort, the Virginia team also developed the first veteran treatment docket curriculum.

Compensation and Pension (C&P) Examination Process

The CJD serves as the statewide contact for the VA and VA-contracted vendors to request C&P exams for incarcerated veterans and collaborates with the VADOC and the VA. Due to the COVID-19, in-person C&P exams for incarcerated veterans were suspended, but in-person exams resumed in March 2021. VVFS and VADOC collaborates with one of the VA-contracted vendors to conduct C&P psych exams via telehealth.

MISSION: HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS & MISSION: HEALTHY FAMILIES

Mission: Healthy Relationships (MHR) and *Mission: Healthy Families* (MHF) are retreats held at various locations in Virginia and focus on effective communication skills through the provision of individualized and group support in a workshop format.

Mission: Healthy Relationships is a program focused on relationship enhancement and effective communication skills for couples. MHR was adapted from "8 Hours to a Lifetime of Relationship Satisfaction," a workshop designed by the National Multiple Sclerosis Society in conjunction with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families.

Couples who experienced military transition, deployments, and/or are coping with the effects of operational combat stress, PTSD, TBI or other trauma-related experiences are taught a skills-based approach to relationship strengthening, enhancing relationship communication and resiliency skills and are provided connections to behavioral health, rehabilitative and supportive services. The goal is to improve the overall health and well-being and relationship satisfaction of the couples who attend the weekend-long workshop. In FY21, VVFS postponed workshops due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mission: Healthy Families (MHF) retreats enhance family well-being for veteran families by allowing the families to step away from daily stressors and support one another as a unit. The retreats allow adults and children to engage in activities, which help strengthen skill building, resiliency and communication skills within the family unit. The weekend provides time for families to engage in directed and non-directed activities that focus on strengthening relationships and the health and welfare of each member of the family. In FY21, VVFS postponed the retreats due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

VETERAN PEER SUPPORT (VPS) SERVICES

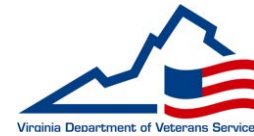
VPS program leverages professional peer training and personal experiences to develop peer-to-peer relationships with veterans to provide support in increasing self-reliance, health, wellness, and quality of life. Peer services focus on veterans struggling with behavioral and rehabilitative needs affected by military service but who are disinterested in clinical treatment. VVFS Peer Specialists link with veterans who share similar military and post-military experiences in an effort to relate to the client.

With the hiring of six new VPS employees and a Peer Services Director (PSD), the program has increased its capacity to interact and assist these veterans. These interactions are based on trust and knowledge of military service, thus giving the VPS the opportunity to successfully direct the veteran toward a more productive and meaningful life.

The VPS program facilitates veteran support groups, providing structure to promote personal growth, self-awareness, coping strategies, and the opportunity to interact with other veterans. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, VVFS adapted these groups to a virtual setting to facilitate connection and mutual support. The growth of these virtual meetings helps to meet the need of veterans to avoid isolation within their communities. In FY21, VVFS started the first Women's Veterans Group. This group assists women veterans across the Commonwealth to fellowship with other female veterans and space to share their needs. VVFS plans to expand all groups to in person once the pandemic has ceased to be a factor.

VVFS continues its work to sustain and grow partnerships with DOD and the Virginia National Guard (VAANG). Working through the Suicide Prevention Coordinators within the National Guard, VVFS successfully assisted veterans guard members that 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). The DISC supplies support to Marine Corps Wounded, Ill and Injured within the state.

VVFS continues outreach efforts to the USDVA and other state and community partners such as DBHDS and DMAS. Coordinating with these peer support partners expand VVFS training and resource



opportunities. These partnerships increase the identification of veterans that cannot access VA services due to discharge and/or reluctance to accept services.

SNAPSHOT OF VVFS SERVICES

During the pandemic, the severity and complexity of services required by veterans and families increased. At the same time, VVFS experienced higher than normal staff turnover, and a reduction in new veterans accessing services; however, VVFS also saw an increase in both previous clients returning for services, and the length of time they needed our services. With pandemic restrictions, VVFS significantly reduced its in-person outreach events, contributing to the decrease in new clients accessing services. However, since the end of FY21 and the start of FY22, VVFS is starting to return to pre-pandemic levels in the number of clients served.

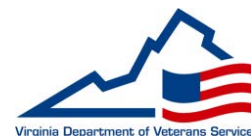
Below are the data on resource referrals, comprehensive behavioral and rehabilitative health care coordination, and supportive services to Virginia's Veterans, National Guard, Armed Forces Reserves, caregivers and family members. (Change from 2020 denoted in italics).

1,742	Veterans and family members served in FY21 (-28)
2,403	Total individual services provided in FY21 (-449)
296	Total behavioral health services provided in FY21 (-85)
36	Total rehabilitative/medical services provided in FY21 (-4)
2,071	Total supportive services provided in FY21 (-360)
456	Total group services provided in FY21 (+33)
0	Veterans and family members served by <i>Mission: Healthy Relationships</i> (MHR) and <i>Mission: Healthy Families</i> (MHF) in FY21* (-114)
831	Individuals trained in Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) by VVFS (-328)
1,401	Individuals trained in Military Cultural Competency Training by VVFS (-936)
119	Veterans who received Behavioral Health/Financial Assistance through Veterans Services Foundation (-37)

HOMELESSNESS AND HOUSING

343	Estimated number of homeless veterans in Virginia on a single night in January 2021** (-52)
18	Estimated number of unsheltered veterans in Virginia on a single night in January 2021** (-54)
585	Number of homeless veterans housed statewide in FY21 (-362)
144	Veterans experiencing homelessness who received financial assistance through VVFS in FY21 (-40)

The Virginia Department of Veterans Services COMMISSIONER'S 2021 ANNUAL REPORT



ANNUAL SERVICES PROVIDED

Annual Services Provided	FY19	FY20	FY21
Individual Services Delivered	3,196	2,852***	2,403***
Outreach and Training Events	729	507***	202***

**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*

****Services and events decreased 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, VDVS 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 depressed 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

The two new Veterans Care Centers will be 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 their target opening is in late summer of 2022.

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 by insurgents 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.

Administrators for the two facilities will be hired several months prior to first residents entering the facilities. Key staff, including the Directors of Nursing, HR, IT, Marketing/ Admissions, and Maintenance, followed by direct care, pharmacy, dietary, housekeeping, and building/grounds crews, will then be brought aboard. VDVS anticipates approximately 60 team members on board before the first resident is admitted. Staffing will increase ahead of increased admissions; each care center expects to be a 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 FY21, VVCC provided 50,614 patient days of skilled nursing or Alzheimer’s/memory care, which is 71% occupancy of 196 beds and 7,822 patient days in assisted living, which is 76% capacity. Census was down due to COVID-19.

As with the entire health care sector, COVID-19 had a profound impact on VVCC operations in FY21. 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, VVCC lost 32 residents to COVID-19. The VVCC team was deeply impacted by the losses, and extends our deepest sympathy to the family and friends of each resident.

The first doses of the COVID-19 vaccine were administered to VVCC residents and staff in January 2021, and since then, not a single resident has been lost to COVID-19. VVCC’s in-house pharmacy is licensed to administer the COVID-19 vaccine (including booster shots) to residents and staff. Between October 22 and December 16, 2020, 37 VA medical personnel were deployed to VVCC from VA Medical Centers across the nation. Some stayed just a few days, others for several weeks. VDVS extends its sincere appreciation and heartfelt thanks to the VA team members who helped get VVCC through a rough patch.

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.

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.



Apple Festival 2021

Staff work throughout the year in coordination with 30 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, and the Fishing Rodeo. On-site activities are planned as well, including equine activities, an annual apple festival and two carnivals. VVCC staff also help facilitate resident participation with Honor Flight.

VVCC recognizes special occasions, including Valentine's Day and Women Veterans Week in March, with individualized recognition. VVCC raised approximately \$3,000 in September for Alzheimer's Awareness month, and approximately \$12,150 for Operation Holiday Spirit (OHS), to purchase holiday gifts for all care center residents. OHS donations also provide funding and equipment for resident activities and special needs.

Despite COVID-19 visitation restrictions, VVCC staff helped residents and families stay connected virtually, through drive-by visits and the construction of an outdoor visitation station. During these unprecedented times, VVCC has received enormous community support and has increased use of technology in effort to stay connected.



Ball Game 2021



Vietnam Veterans Day Pinning Ceremony 2021

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 2021, SBVCC provided 58,455 patient days, which is 80% occupancy, or an average of 160 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 had a profound impact on SBVCC operations in FY21. 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 lost 12 residents to COVID-19. The SBVCC team was deeply impacted by the losses, and extends our deepest sympathy to the family and friends of each resident.

The first doses of the COVID-19 vaccine were administered to SBVCC residents and staff in January 2021, and since then, not a single resident has been lost to COVID-19. SBVCC's in-house pharmacy is licensed to administer the COVID-19 vaccine (including booster shots) to residents and staff. Between October 22 and November 17, 2020, 19 VA medical personnel were deployed to SBVCC from VA Medical Centers across the nation. Some stayed just a few days, others for several weeks. VDVVS extends its sincere appreciation and heartfelt thanks to the VA team members who helped get SBVCC through a rough patch.

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.

Unfortunately, many activities drastically changed with COVID-19. Activities are often held with individuals in



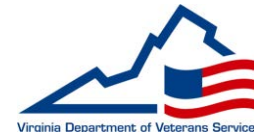
Veterans Celebrating Cinco de Mayo

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, ice cream social), while maintaining masking and social distancing. SBVCC has been able to open up to indoor visitation with set infection control guidelines and maintain a no contact station for our veterans and families to use inside and outside.



*Staff Cook-Out for Army Birthday
Celebration*

The Virginia Department of Veterans Services
COMMISSIONER'S 2021 ANNUAL REPORT



Annual Services Provided	FY19	FY20	FY21*
<i>Virginia Veterans Care Center</i>			
Patient Days—Nursing / % of beds occupied	62,080 / 94%	62,815/88%	50,614/71%
Patient Days—Assisted Living / % of beds occupied	12,498 / 57%	9,411/92%	7,822/76%
<i>Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center</i>			
Patient Days—Nursing / % of beds occupied	70,211 / 96%	67,953 / 93%	58,455 / 80%
Resources **			
<i>Virginia Veterans Care Center</i>			
Appropriation	\$27,455,001	\$32,943,941	\$32,736,804
Authorized f/t Positions	288	262	262
Filled f/t Positions – June 30	239	249	239
<i>Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center</i>			
Appropriation	\$32,672,319	\$39,865,486	\$43,213,054
Authorized f/t Positions	313	313	313
Filled f/t Positions – June 30	290	287	261

Appropriation levels for the veterans care centers reflect the maximum amount that each has the authority to spend. Because the care centers rely on facility-generated revenue (Medicaid, Medicare, VA per diem, etc.) they can only spend what they earn, which is usually less than authorization.

Both care centers received supplemental operating funds from CARES, CAA, and ARPA in FY20-22.

Additional details on Care Center services provided found in Appendix C

Veterans Cemeteries

MISSION

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

ACTIVITIES

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 soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines, Coast Guardsmen 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. Southwest Virginia State Veterans Cemetery also offers a green burial option for cremated remains in its scatter garden.

In FY21, Virginia's three state veterans cemeteries conducted 2,297 committal services, each of which were solemn, dignified events honoring those who took up arms to defend our nation. This represented a 24% increase in interments compared to FY20. We are honored that Virginia's veterans and their families chose our cemeteries for their loved-one's final resting place. In FY21, 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. Our staff conducted cemetery tours for the Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs, the Virginia Board of Veterans Services, and welcomed state and federal elected and appointed officials.

In May, the Virginia State Veterans Cemetery in Amelia began a long-anticipated \$5.2M expansion project which will add 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.

Virginia's veterans cemeteries submitted two VA grant applications to the National Cemetery Administration for additional columbaria at both Southwest Virginia Veterans Cemetery in Dublin, and the Virginia Veterans Cemetery in Amelia.



The Marine Corps League conducts a rifle volley during an unaccompanied veteran's service at Amelia

In September, the VA conducted their required annual VA grant compliance inspection of the Albert G. Horton, Jr. Memorial Veterans Cemetery in Suffolk. The cemetery was found to be fully compliant with NCA standards, scoring a 90% overall rating.

Virginia's state veterans cemeteries follow burial eligibility requirements set by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (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 for interment in a state veterans cemetery. Also eligible for burial - if they meet certain requirements - are members of the Reserves and National Guard, Commissioned Officers with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and Merchant Marines. Veteran's spouses, including widows/widowers are eligible for internment 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.

VDVS 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 at 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 VDVS website.

In FY21, VDVS once again saw a rise in pre-application filings at each cemetery; The Virginia Veterans Cemetery (Amelia) saw an 5% increase; Albert G. Horton, Jr. Memorial Veterans Cemetery (Suffolk) saw a 8% increase; and the Southwest Virginia Veterans Cemetery (Dublin) saw a 6% increase. Cemetery staff conduct dozens of outreach events in communities around Virginia each year to explain what the state has to offer and get information and pre-applications into the hands of veterans. The local VSOs are often significant partners in these outreach events.

VDVS receives a plot allowance from the VA for each veteran buried in a Virginia state veterans cemetery. The FY21 reimbursement per veteran was \$807, up from \$796 in FY20. Eligible spouses and dependents were charged a fee of \$300 to offset the cost of operations, which was increased to \$400 beginning in FY22, due to increased costs. These federal plot allowance accounts for approximately 45% of cemetery operating funds and the spouse fee 10%. The remaining Cemetery Services' budget (45%) comes from the General Fund. These funds are used for burial operations, grounds maintenance, operating equipment replacement and maintenance, the upkeep of cemetery buildings and grounds, and for personnel costs.



Holiday wreaths on display at the Southwest Virginia State Veterans Cemetery in Dublin

All three cemeteries are open to the public for visitation Monday through Friday during daylight hours. The staff understand the importance for families to visit on weekends and holidays, so each cemetery has an employee on site on Easter, Mother's Day, Father's Day, and Independence Day, and on all Saturdays. Staff assist families with locating and accessing gravesites, and they ensure 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.



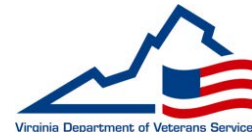
An autumn sunrise at Albert G. Horton, Jr. Memorial Veterans Cemetery in Suffolk

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.

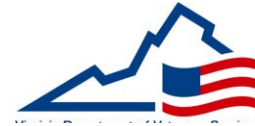
For those veterans who pass away without family, VDVS cemetery staff work with local organizations and civic groups, law enforcement, public health officials, funeral directors, the Virginia Army National Guard Funeral Honors Program and individual citizens to identify the unclaimed remains of veterans who deserve a dignified final resting place. This year several unaccompanied veterans were respectfully laid to rest.

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Annual Services Provided	FY19	FY20	FY21
Virginia Veterans Cemetery			
Interments	484	488	572
Pre-applications on file*	3,219	3,474	3,661
Horton Veterans Cemetery			
Interments	1,220	1,179	1,472
Pre-applications on file*	6,876	7,408	8,255
Southwest Virginia Veterans Cemetery			
Interments	211	185	253
Pre-applications on file*	2,984	1,790	1,905
Resources			
Budget	\$1,888,307	\$3,076,394	\$3,572,868
General Fund	\$1,088,538	\$1,129,809	\$1,519,035
Non-General Fund	\$799,769	\$1,946,585	\$2,053,833
Authorized positions	28	32	36
Filled positions as of June 30	28	28	35

* 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. Through educational outreach, exhibits, documentary films, and patriotic programming, staff and volunteers strive to continually educate people of all ages and backgrounds.

An expansion was added to the Virginia War Memorial with the Grand Opening of the new facilities on February 29, 2020 – the 64th Anniversary of the Memorial's dedication. The addition includes the *C. Kenneth Wright Pavilion* with a new Exhibit Hall, Virginia Medal of Honor Gallery, Veterans Art Gallery, a Distance Learning Center and a 350 capacity presentation hall. Historic Richmond and Storefront for Community Design nominated the expansion design for the 2020 Golden Hammer Award stating that the "building provides the Richmond community, and beyond, with space for thoughtful contemplation, honors the fallen... the Virginia War Memorial has evolved from a passive space for remembrance and contemplation into a true museum and educational center."

In March 2021, the names of two Virginia soldiers killed in action were added onto the walls of the *Shrine of Memory: 20th Century* and the *Shrine of Memory: Global War on Terrorism and Beyond*: U.S. Army Private First Class Richard J. Harris of Henrico County, was wounded and died on October 5, 1951 in Korea and U.S. Army Staff Sergeant Ben H. Maxwell of Appomattox, who lost his life April 18, 1983 during the bombing of the U.S. Embassy in Beirut, Lebanon. They join the close to 12,000 Virginia heroes who were killed in action in from World War II through today that are memorialized on the walls of the Shrines of Memory.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING EXPANDS VIRTUALLY

During FY21, the Virginia War Memorial and the Virginia War Memorial Foundation adapted operations with health and safety in mind during the pandemic. Education programs and field trips that normally brought visitors and students to the Memorial could not take place for many months so virtual learning initiatives were developed to continue the mission to preserve history and educate the public. Under the brand of *Livestreams: Learning from the Home Front*, several series were created:

- *Salute to Service* – honors and focuses on specific branches and certain roles in the military
- *Eyewitness to History* – people with firsthand accounts of major events share their experiences
- *From the Archives* and *From the Collection* – highlights Virginia War Memorial resources
- *Speak with a Veteran* – virtual outreach program connects students with Vietnam veterans

These free, online presentations expanded the audience for educational programming to many communities throughout the Commonwealth, and beyond, which never would have been possible with traditional, in-person events. Livestreams in honor of Black History Month, Native American Heritage Month and Women's History Month shared inspiring and remarkable stories of a diverse group of service members. In partnership with Retirement Unlimited Inc., Lifelong Learning Institute and Streamable Learning, the Virginia War Memorial also conducted specially tailored programs for their subscribers. These livestream presentations were viewed by about 11,000 participants since the Virginia War Memorial developed their virtual education series.

In an effort to support students and educators who were also adapting to learning outside of the traditional classroom, the Virginia War Memorial has made recordings of *Livestreams: Learning from the Home Front* and the popular, award-winning *Virginians at War* documentary series, available for free to watch online. A library of additional digital content was also created and organized by topic and conflict, making it easy to incorporate into lesson plans for families who were teaching their children at home during the pandemic. The annual Teacher Professional Development Institute was also conducted virtually and featured the topics *Voices of the Vietnam War* and *The Army and the Global War on Terror*. What once may have been viewed as a restriction and challenge, the necessary adaptation to online and digital education programs proved to be a resource, which allowed many different communities to learn about the veterans and history of the Commonwealth as well as expand the reach and renown of the Virginia War Memorial.

EVENTS

Commonwealth's Patriot Day Ceremony

This virtual event included a showing of the Virginia War Memorial's documentary film, "A New Century, A New War."

Native American Heritage Month - A Celebration of Veterans

This virtual program included retired Air Force Vietnam veteran and Chief Emeritus Ken Adams of the Upper Mattaponi Tribe, Chickahominy tribal elder Powhatan Red Cloud-Owen, and author and curator emeritus with the Smithsonian Institution, Dr. Herman J. Viola, and Iraq War veteran Debra Kay Mooney.

Commonwealth's Pearl Harbor Day Remembrance Ceremony

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

TGA 5K *They Gave All* - Virtual Race

Participants were invited to run, walk, wheel, or march in formation anytime during the week leading up to Veterans Day,

Sacred Scenes: American Parks and Battlefields – Veterans Art Gallery

This exhibit featured the photography of US Army veteran Amanda Ransom and the late Frank Lee Ruggles, a US Army Paratrooper.

Korean War Veterans Armistice Day

A virtual presentation that included former Virginia Governor L. Douglas Wilder, recipient of a Bronze Star for his service during the Korean War.

Marocchi Memorial Scholarship

Awarded to Reed Jones from Abingdon High School to attend Virginia Tech (Army ROTC).

Art for the Journey

Free on campus art class in partnership with this veterans support group was attended by 24 veterans.

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 – 3rd Annual Community Event

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

World War II: The Air War - Day Long Virtual Program

This nine-part program continued the partnership with the Lifelong Learning Institute in Chesterfield had 432 attendees.

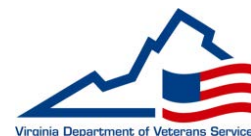
The Walkway of Honor: Southside Initiative

This fundraising initiative was led by Joyce Ellen French and Terry Daniels to raise awareness of the Virginia War Memorial Foundation and its mission.

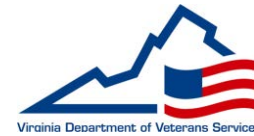
Annual ceremonies continued to bring Virginians together, both in person and virtually, to create shared experiences. On November 11, 2020, the annual *Commonwealth's Veterans Day Ceremony* to honor all Americans who have served, or are currently serving, in the U.S. Armed Forces. The Virginia War Memorial's Director, Dr. Clay Mountcastle, served as Master of Ceremonies, and Virginia Governor Ralph Northam delivered the keynote address. Other speakers included the Virginia Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs, Carlos Hopkins, 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 May, the *Commonwealth's Memorial Day Ceremony*, supported by CBS-6 broadcasting and livestreaming across the Commonwealth, was held in the Bruce E. Heilman Amphitheater. This ceremony recognized names added to the Shrine of Memory in 2020, and the nearly 12,000 Virginians who made the ultimate sacrifice and who served in the United States Armed Forces. Virginia War Memorial Director, Dr. Clay Mountcastle, with VDVS Commissioner John Maxwell as featured speaker and Virginia's Acting Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs, Kathleen T. Jabs, provided the keynote address. Acting Secretary Jabs and Gold Star Family member Mike Harris, cousin of PFC Richard Harris, placed a wreath in the Shrine of Memory: Global War on Terrorism and Beyond. An estimated 800 people attended the ceremony, contributing to the total of 1,300 visitors on Memorial Day.

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Annual Services Provided	FY19	FY20	FY21
Visitors	41,134	26,916	27,497
Total Annual Budget	\$1,471,335	\$1,808,577	\$2,269,626
Authorized Positions	10	11	11
Filled Positions – June 30	10	11	11

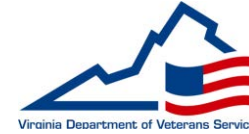


VDVS FY21 Budget and Staffing

VDVS POSITION LEVELS – AUTHORIZED VS. FILLED AS OF JUNE 30, 2021

Staffing by Service Area	Authorized	Filled
Benefits	108	97
Education	10	5
Transition & Employment	26	21
Virginia Veteran and Family Support	54	39
Veterans Care Centers	602	500
Veterans Cemeteries	36	35
Virginia War Memorial	11	11
Administration	19	19
Totals	866	727

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VDVS FY21 BUDGET (APPROPRIATION)
AS APPROVED BY THE 2021 GENERAL ASSEMBLY (CHAPTER 1289)
 (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	\$8,766,970	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$8,766,970
Virginia Veteran and Family Support	\$4,504,866	\$0	\$0	\$282,054	\$4,786,920
Education, Transition, and Employment	\$2,894,306	\$0	\$0	\$1,045,536	\$4,088,115
Care Centers	\$50,000	\$45,544,638	\$0	\$34,505,221	\$80,049,859
Cemeteries	\$1,497,559	\$348,466		\$1,705,367	\$3,551,392
Virginia War Memorial	\$2,229,536	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$2,229,536
Administration	\$2,272,164	\$375,434	\$0	\$0	\$2,647,598
Non-VDVS programs:					
Granting Freedom	\$200,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$200,000
Veterans Services Foundation	\$0	\$0	\$796,500	\$0	\$796,500
VDVS Total:	\$21,696,393	\$45,920,072	\$796,500	\$37,538,178	\$106,320,390

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 (r) at Virginia War Memorial
Pearl Harbor Remembrance Ceremony. Next to Chairman
Dick is Pearl Harbor survivor Mr. Len Gardner*



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 (VDVS) to ensure the welfare of Virginia's veterans and advises the VDVS 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.

Our members continued to actively advocate for and support veterans and their families across the Commonwealth throughout 2021. As a key stakeholder in the VDVS Strategic Plan, Board members reviewed the Commissioner's top three strategic priorities supporting the Compact with Virginia's Veterans. Lines of effort supporting these priorities include suicide prevention, technological improvements, capacity to meet support requirements for increasing numbers of veterans and family members requiring services, agency infrastructure needs, and strategic communication improvements. The Board will form a work group in 2022 to assist VDVS in developing metrics to measure agency progress and success in achieving objectives.

As part of efforts to accomplish its mission, BVS members are assigned to be a "point of contact" (POC) for a VDVS program or service area. Through regular contact with VDVS 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 VDVS on policy decisions and associated initiatives.

Our members demonstrated their commitment to furthering veteran concerns and issues. Board member Julie Waters served as the emcee for the 2021 Virginia Women Veterans Virtual Summit. Board members, Senator Kathleen Murphy and Ms. Lyla Kohistany co-authored an article on Women Veterans for the Spring edition of the *Virginia Capitol Connections Quarterly* and Senator Mamie Locke and Colonel Carl Bess, USAF (Ret.), co-authored an article for the Summer/Fall edition of *Virginia Capitol Connections Quarterly Magazine* on how Virginia is working to prevent veteran suicide, citing support for Virginia's Identify, Screen, and Refer (VISR) Pilot Program and military culture awareness training. The article highlighted the ways VDVS' Virginia Veterans and Family Support program is helping to connect veterans with behavioral health and supportive services at the federal, state, and local/community level.

The members of the Board also continued to work closely with the Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations, 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 VDVS.

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, 2021

Member	Position
Michael Dick	Chairman, Retired Colonel, Marine Corps College of William & Mary
Thuraya S. Kent	Vice Chair; Retired Captain, U.S. Navy
Victor Angry	Founder, A is for Angry, LLC Retired Command Sergeant Major, ARNG
David Ashe	Attorney Marine Corps veteran
Carl Bedell	Attorney Army veteran
Senator John Bell	General Assembly of Virginia Air Force veteran
Carl Bess	Retired Colonel, Virginia Air National Guard
Paige Cherry	Treasurer, City of Portsmouth Army veteran
Jenny Dye	Senior Staff Counselor Virginia Tech; Military Spouse
Mario Flores	U.S. Army Reserve Member
Delegate Hyland (Buddy) Fowler	General Assembly of Virginia
Delegate Dan Helmer	General Assembly of Virginia Army veteran
James Icenhour, Jr.	Retired Major, U.S. Air Force
John Lesinski	Colliers International Retired Colonel, 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 Army veteran
Susan Vervaet Riveland	Adjunct Professor Rider University Army veteran
Delegate Marcus Simon	General Assembly of Virginia Army veteran
Melissa Watts	Director of Procurement, Virginia ABC Authority
John Maxwell	Commissioner, Virginia Department of Veterans Services
Denice Williams	Acting Chair, Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations
Jack Lanier	2 nd Vice Chair, Veterans Services Foundation
Linda Schreiner	Chair, Virginia War Memorial Foundation Board

JOINT LEADERSHIP COUNCIL OF VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS (THE 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 20 Veteran Service Organizations (VSOs) representing over 250,000 members. JLC members are committed to serving Virginia's over 713,000 Veterans of which 157,977 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. JLC members are working on multiple initiatives for consideration during the 2022 General Assembly session. All are published on our website and have been distributed to legislators for consideration as possible legislation or budget items.

As we moved forward from the COVID posturing of 2020, we were able to meet in person for our July and September meetings with all CDC precautions in place and with the dedicated help of the Department of Veterans Services and the Virginia War Memorial staff.

During our July 2021 meeting, we recognized the strong and committed leadership of Chairman William Ashton as he concluded his term. We are grateful for his service on the JLC both as Chairman and as the Fleet Reserve Association (FRA) Representative. I am honored to serve as the Acting Chair of the JLC while I continue to represent the Disabled American Veterans (DAV).

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. Normally every January, our members visit the General Assembly at the start of the session and enjoy speaking with State Senators and Delegates about the merits of JLC-sponsored bills and budget amendments. Although we were unable to meet with legislators in person due to COVID in 2020, we maximized our efforts virtually. We also attended virtual committee meetings when appropriate to advocate for our initiatives.

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

Acting Chairwoman

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

The Virginia Department of Veterans Services
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Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations members – as of December 1, 2021

Veterans Service Organization	JLC Member	Alternate
Air Force Association	Richard Shook	
American Legion	William Aramony	Richard Oertel
AMVETS	John Cooper	Richard Mansfield
Association of the U.S. Army	Glenn Yarborough	Faye Earley
Disabled American Veterans	Denice Williams	Lisa Gregory
Fleet Reserve Association	Sha'ron D. Martin	William Ashton
Iraq & Afghanistan Veterans of America	Lauren Augustine	
Legion of Valor of the U.S., Inc.	Jack Hilgers	Richard Rinaldo
Marine Corps League	John Clickener	
Military Order of the Purple Heart	Mark Atchison	James Cuthbertson
Military Order of the World Wars	Vernon Peters	Alvin Chandler
Military Officers Association of America	Monti Zimmerman	John Down
Navy Mutual Aid Association	Michelle Domingue	Meredith Burns
Paralyzed Veterans of America	Preston Curry	
Reserve Organization of America	Terrence Moore	
Roanoke Valley Veterans Council	Daniel Karnes	
Veterans of Foreign Wars	Rick Raskin	Harold Sayles
Vietnam Veterans of America	George Corbett	Charles Montgomery
Va. Army/Air National Guard Enlisted Assn	Robert Barnette	Carl Holcomb
Virginia National Guard Association	Kevin Hoffman	
Chairman, Board of Veterans Services	Michael Dick	
Chairman, Veterans Services Foundation	John Lesinski	
Commissioner of Veterans Services	John Maxwell	

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				
	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21
Abingdon	1,556	1,336	1,450	1,176	1,706
Accomac	810	1,140	1,571	1,136	535
Big Stone Gap	1,439	1,565	1,466	1,521	1,722
Charlottesville	1,580	2,662	3,510	3,088	2,156
Chesapeake	1,933	2,787	1,840	2,131	1,960
Danville	1,270	1,829	1,659	1,498	1,131*
Emporia (new FY18)	--	259	618	680	541
Fairfax	2,786	2,780	2,167	2,406	3,844
Fort Belvoir (new FY21)	--	--	--	--	1,395
Fort Lee (new FY19)	--	--	297	1,722	1,781
Fredericksburg	1,842	3,594	6,932	4,411	3,596
Hampton VAMC	2,285	3,458	2,926	2,614	640*
Hampton	3,341	5,612	6,077	4,811	2,878
Henrico	1,715	1,742	1,778	1,337	227
Loudoun	40	1,549	780	1,045	1,940
Lynchburg	1,048	2,051	1,634	1,629	1,252
Manassas	160	1,862	2,376	3,956	872
McGuire VAMC	7,044	6,124	5,735	4,655	4,537
Norfolk	5,693	7,970	7,587	6,287	5,657
Pentagon (new FY19)	--	--	3,016	4,384	2,323
Petersburg	1,304	1,748	1,575	1,214	819
Portsmouth	2,031	1,879	1,255	1,033	906
Quantico	1,272	3,666	4,840	4,897	4,500
Roanoke (no FY21 services due to COVID)	656	515	739	620	--
Salem VAMC	1,190	2,076	1,633	2,501	3,408

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South Hill	1,024	1,367	878	809	464
Springfield	1,544	4,108	4,762	4,531	3,572
Staunton	1,358	1,474	1,641	1,157	669
Strasburg	693	645	750	963	1,150
Tazewell	1,255	1,319	1,486	2,525	1,785
Virginia Beach- Oceana (new FY19)	--	--	415	2,159	1,296
Virginia Beach- Pembroke	2,229	2,639	2,965	2,377	1,451
Williamsburg (new FY18)	N/A	982	2,885	3,354	3,834
Wytheville (not staffed in FY20)	1,131	1,173	549	--	628
Totals	50,229	71,311	79,792	79,367	65,175

* The Danville Office was in a temporary location for the majority of FY21 contributing to lower numbers. The Hampton VA office size did not permit COVID social distancing protocols so the staff worked from other offices assisting veterans from the Hampton VA.



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

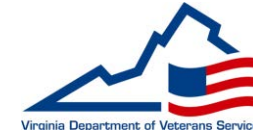
Month	Total Claims				
	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21
July	3,884	3,788	6,999	7,933	5,604
August	4,857	5,675	6,869	7,990	5,151
September	3,572	4,642	5,708	7,437	5,745
October	4,022	5,783	6,680	8,705	6,233
November	3,836	5,234	5,850	7,152	4,693
December	3,716	3,719	4,796	6,730	4,921
January	4,118	4,118	6,892	8,012	4,312
February	4,266	4,156	6,387	7,037	4,786
March	4,862	4,750	7,109	5,620	6,295
April	4,201	6,722	7,096	3,578	6,821
May	4,143	7,539	6,996	3,945	6,278
June	4,752	7,617	8,053	3,599	4,336
Totals	50,229	71,311	79,792	77,738	65,175

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Table 3: Client Contacts – Sorted by Office

	Walk-Ins					Phone/Email					Total	Contacts				
	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21		FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21
Abingdon	1,833	1,286	1,287	912	419	1,698	1,421	1,536	1,523	3,123	3,531	2,707	2,823	2,435		3,542
Accomac	1,536	1,503	1,285	859	29	3,143	3,387	3,044	3,529	5,289	4,679	4,890	4,329	4,388		5,318
Big Stone Gap	1,482	1,375	1,354	998	565	2,162	1,815	1,955	3,014	4,458	3,644	3,190	3,309	4,012		5,023
Charlottesville	1,775	1,463	1,792	1,525	255	6,262	3,778	3,693	5,117	8,206	8,037	5,240	5,485	6,642		8,461
Chesapeake	4,412	5,829	4,028	2,733	370	5,195	6,171	3,852	4,906	13,354	9,607	12,000	7,880	7,639		13,724
Danville	3,054	2,953	2,782	1,608	217	2,737	2,253	2,996	2,906	5,607	5,791	5,206	5,688	4,604		5,823
Emporia	1,808	162	775	787	307	0	274	915	1,615	3,253	0	436	1,690	2,402		3,560
Fairfax	1,808	1,526	1,912	1,703	396	4,895	5,848	5,663	6,361	7,540	6,703	7,374	7,575	8,064		7,936
Fort Belvoir	--	--	--	500	192	--	--	--	1,408	3,116	--	--	--	1,908		3,308
Fort Lee	--	--	575	871	345	--	--	715	3,200	5,250	--	--	1,290	4,071		5,595
Fredericksburg	3,836	6,464	6,155	4,129	452	4,273	7,465	9,492	5,991	1,3911	8,109	13,929	15,647	10,120		14,363
Hampton VAMC	3,178	3,487	4,743	3,076	378	1,771	1,479	2,370	3,928	3,256	4,949	4,966	7,113	7,004		3,634
Hampton	4,690	4,089	3,945	2,623	377	3,825	3,856	3,401	6,089	1,5747	8,515	7,945	7,346	8,712		16,124
Henrico	1,631	1,729	1,831	1,369	11	3,889	4,038	3,812	4,206	56	5,520	5,767	5,643	5575		67
Loudoun	21	930	954	600	272	120	2,567	3,483	3,769	5,676	141	3,497	4,437	4,369		5,908
Lynchburg	1,693	2,058	1,716	1,342	409	2,249	4,532	4,502	3,270	4,264	3,942	6,590	6,218	4,612		4,673
McGuire VAMC	24,207	20,839	10,929	7,690	416	23,847	19,996	12,093	10,583	7,375	48,054	40,835	23,022	18,273		7,791
Manassas	170	1,199	1,842	2,439	530	738	3,488	3,825	6,981	14,710	908	4,687	5,667	9,420		15,240
Norfolk	10,257	13,182	17,435	10,572	1,078	13,369	17,774	24,410	17,973	19,710	23,626	30,956	41,845	28,545		20,788
Pentagon	--	--	3,905	3,531	342	--	--	4088	5,826	4,664	--	--	7,993	9,357		1,620
Petersburg	2,684	2,787	1,044	853	197	6,090	3,535	1,264	2,782	4,850	8,774	6,322	2,308	3,635		5,047
Portsmouth	1,157	1,144	690	711	182	7,396	7,067	4,679	2,905	161	8,553	8,211	5,369	3,316		223
Quantico	2,176	2,207	2,755	2,278	1,018	4,150	4,992	5,179	5,838	6,361	6,326	7,199	7,934	8,116		7,379
Roanoke	593	576	681	370	--	1,115	534	1,108	1,014	--	1,708	1,110	2,622	2,622		--
Salem VAMC	1,654	1,833	1,514	2,349	992	1,673	1,768	1,108	3,302	6,505	3,422	3,807	2,622	5,651		7,497
South Hill	1,180	1,070	735	492	238	1,958	1,849	520	831	1,926	3,029	2,429	1,255	338		2,164
Springfield	1,971	1,990	3,015	2,248	460	3,184	4,399	9,606	9,325	16,059	6,370	8,210	12,621	11,573		16,519
Staunton	2,063	1,424	1,232	968	403	2,472	2,849	1,931	2,742	7,579	4,912	3,726	3,163	3,710		2,127
Strasburg	811	882	751	363	159	2,235	2,250	1,095	1,918	3,255	3,061	2,085	1,846	2,281		3,414
Tazewell	2,026	1,434	1,514	1,363	439	1,725	2,160	1,423	2,001	3,719	4,186	3,070	2,937	3,364		4,159
VB-Oceana	--	--	508	1,157	367	--	--	148	1,839	4,947	--	--	656	2,996		5,314
VB-Pembroke	5,623	4,549	5,721	2,804	380	6,638	8,643	6,365	7,132	9,530	14,266	11,971	12,086	9,936		9,910
Williamsburg	0	855	1,504	1,297	581	0	0	1,487	2,905	9,242	0	1,357	2,991	4,202		9,109
Wytheville	1,313	915	325	--	161	2,104	2,424	632	--	638	3,737	3,132	957	--		799
Totals	88,834	91,740	91,234	67,120	12,936	99,416	125,26	132,731	146,729	223,337	211,039	222,844	224,367	213,892		226,643



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

Table1: State Approving Agency Program Approval Actions

	IHL			NCD			APP			OJT			LIC/CERT		
	FFY 19	FFY 20	FFY 21	FFY 19	FFY 20	FFY 21	FFY 19	FFY 20	FFY 21	FFY 19	FFY 20	FFY 21	FFY 19	FFY 20	FFY 21
Totals for Federal Fiscal Year	3,843	6,051	6655	1,795	2,171	2110	28	28	15	18	15	11	4	80	142
Number of Applications Received															
Number Approved	3,281	5,543	6358	1,479	1626	1826	28	28	12	6	9	2	4	64	134
Number Disapproved	562	508	297	316	580	284	0	0	3	12	6	9	0	16	8
Percentage of Applications Approved	85	92	96	82	75	87	100	100	80	50	60	18	100	80	94

Table 2: SAA Other Approval Actions

	IHL			NCD			APP			OJT			LIC/CERT		
	FFY 19	FFY 20	FFY 21	FFY 19	FFY 20	FFY 21	FFY 19	FFY 20	FFY 21	FFY 19	FFY 20	FFY 21	FFY 19	FFY 20	FFY 21
Totals for Federal Fiscal Year	476	1017	1080	198	711	402	34	64	35	17	18	20	0	14	8
Number of Applications Received															
Number Approved	380	894	995	139	565	345	34	56	30	9	11	17	0	8	8
Number Disapproved	96	123	85	59	146	57	0	8	5	8	7	3	0	6	0
Percentage of Applications Approved	80	88	92	70	79	86	100	88	86	53	61	85	0	57	100

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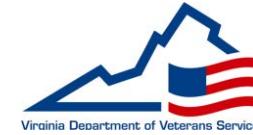


Table 3: SAA Compliance Visits

	IHL			NCD			APP			OJT			LIC/CERT		
	FFY 19	FFY 20	FFY 21	FFY 19	FFY 20	FFY 21	FFY 19	FFY 20	FFY 21	FFY 19	FFY 20	FFY 21	FFY 19	FFY 20	FFY 21
Totals for Federal Fiscal Year															
Number of Visits	40	23	34	16	9	12	0	2	5	4	2	9	N/A	N/A	N/A

Table 4: SAA Other Activities in Support of Veterans Education

Activity	FFY19	FFY20	FFY21
Email inquiries	870	870	3,959
Requests for application for a new facility	90	82	244
Active schools (facilities in which a veteran actively attends)	457	455	428 ¹
Number of students enrolled	32,694 ²	33,612 ²	51,459 ²

¹ The active schools list for FFY 2021 is a snapshot of every facility that enrolled or training a VA education beneficiary in a Virginia SAA approved facility (including on-the-job training, apprenticeships, and flights) from January 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020.

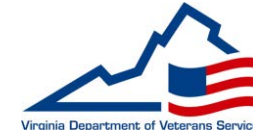
²Number of veterans receiving G.I. Bill benefits in Virginia as of April 2020. This does not include veterans who attended school but who have not received payment of GI Bill Benefits. The final count for FFY19 should be available in March 2020.

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

Table 1: 2018-2021 Number of Recipients and Amount Awarded

	2018-19		2019-20		2020-21	
	Unique # Students	Dollars	Unique # Students	Dollars	Unique # Students	Dollars
Four-Year Publics						
Christopher Newport University	18	30,236	16	27,410	27	44,087
College of William and Mary	19	34,240	23	36,850	44	58,050
George Mason University	101	163,560	114	171,730	154	221,610
James Madison University	58	101,174	68	117,580	96	168,234
Longwood University	27	45,140	25	42,530	39	62,730
Norfolk State University	36	57,490	38	63,920	51	78,410
Old Dominion University	209	331,710	220	343,660	264	382,010
Radford University	55	87,420	45	76,970	51	67,740
University of Mary Washington	29	47,550	40	60,360	43	67,720
University of Virginia	34	59,150	33	57,500	51	78,170
University of Virginia's College at Wise	7	11,410	5	9,270	7	11,650
Virginia Commonwealth University	187	296,800	180	301,038	262	415,340
Virginia Military Institute	12	22,800	11	20,900	17	29,272
Virginia State University	46	71,750	44	68,900	21	27,560
Virginia Tech	52	88,150	74	125,783	119	198,840
Four-Year Public total	890	1,448,580	936	1,524,401	1,246	1,911,423
Two-Year Publics						
Richard Bland College	12	19,970	16	22,350	12	18,530
Two-Year Public total	12	19,970	16	22,350	12	18,530
Community Colleges						
Blue Ridge Community College	6	3,590	5	4,540	1	1,440
Central Virginia Community College	5	2,880	4	3,3350	2	1,670

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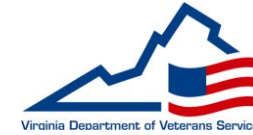


Dabney S. Lancaster Community College	0	0	1	950	3	3,820
Danville Community College	1	950	1	240	0	0
Eastern Shore Community College	0	0	0	0	0	0
Germanna Community College	29	37,400	35	43,140	42	47,150
J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College	12	12,640	21	23,550	12	15,260
John Tyler Community College	44	46,285	43	49,100	33	35,270
Lord Fairfax Community College	5	4,310	5	7,390	10	9,537
Mountain Empire Community College	7	10,220	5	8,080	2	1,900
New River Community College	6	8,800	3	3,330	3	2,620
Northern Virginia Community College	68	79,940	67	79,790	68	76,200
Patrick Henry Community College	3	4,520	3	3,570	2	1,440
Paul D. Camp Community College	1	1,430	4	3,590	2	2,620
Piedmont Virginia Community College	5	5,950	5	6,420	7	9,760
Rappahannock Community College	3	2,380	2	1,900	2	3,570
Southside Virginia Community College	5	6,900	2	2,850	4	4,060
Southwest Virginia Community College	7	8,810	0	0	5	4,520
Thomas Nelson Community College	51	65,510	33	40,970	30	40,220
Tidewater Community College	99	118,660	91	108,150	95	108,840
Virginia Highlands Community College	1	1,900	2	2,850	3	2,620
Virginia Western Community College	8	8,570	5	7,130	3	2,860
Wytheville Community College	5	7,140	6	8,080	3	5,470
Community College total	371	438,785	343	408,970	332	380,847

Other Publics						
Eastern Virginia Medical School	1	1,900	4	5,700	1	960
Other Public total	1	1,900	4	5,700	1	960

Grand Total	1,274	1,909,235	1,299	1,961,421	1,591	2,311,760
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Source: SCHEV May 2019, 2020, and 2021 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		
	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY19	FY20	FY21
July	5,339	5,321	5,135	172	172	166	96%	88%	85%	1,056	972	721	34	31	23	57%	52%	83%
August	5,440	5,361	5,089	175	173	164	97%	88%	84%	1,067	906	741	34	29	24	57%	49%	85%
September	5,209	5,302	4,885	174	177	163	96%	90%	83%	1,042	828	696	35	28	23	58%	46%	83%
October	5,412	5,413	4,655	175	175	150	97%	89%	77%	1,116	810	689	36	26	22	60%	44%	79%
November	5,177	5,183	3,804	173	173	127	96%	88%	65%	1,088	760	673	36	25	22	60%	42%	80%
December	5,097	5,354	3,788	164	173	122	91%	88%	62%	1,119	741	662	36	24	21	60%	40%	76%
January	4,977	5,408	3,598	161	174	116	89%	89%	59%	1,081	7444	618	35	24	20	58%	86%	71%
February	4,619	5174	3,210	165	178	115	92%	91%	58%	951	684	533	34	24	19	57%	84%	68%
March	5,322	5,467	3,849	172	176	124	95%	90%	63%	1,043	762	651	34	25	21	56%	88%	75%
April	5,124	5,038	4,062	171	168	135	95%	86%	69%	1,040	750	625	35	25	21	58%	89%	74%
May	5,218	4,935	4,303	168	159	139	94%	81%	71%	975	750	642	31	24	21	52%	86%	74%
June	5,146	4,859	4,236	172	162	141	95%	83%	72%	920	704	571	31	23	19	51%	84%	68%
Annual Max Capacity	65,700	65,700	65,700	180	196	196	100%	100%	100%	21,900	10,248	10,248	60	28	28	100%	100%	100%
Total Patient Days	62,080	62,815	50,614	170	172	139	94%	88%	71%	12,498	9,411	7,822	35	26	21	57%	66%	76%

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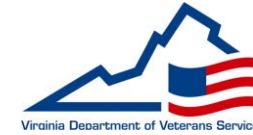
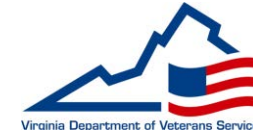


Table 2: Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center, Richmond

Month	Patient Days Nursing			Average # of Nursing Beds Occupied			Occupancy Level: Nursing		
	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY19	FY20	FY21
July	5,983	5,731	5391	193	185	174	97%	92%	87%
August	6,016	5,706	5370	194	184	173	97%	92%	87%
September	5,743	5,621	5326	191	187	178	96%	94%	89%
October	5,978	5,751	5038	193	186	163	96%	93%	82%
November	5,859	5,616	4576	195	187	153	98%	94%	77%
December	5,877	5,799	4635	190	187	150	95%	94%	75%
January	5,952	5,894	4706	192	190	152	96%	95%	76%
February	5,420	5,660	4220	194	195	151	97%	98%	76%
March	5,978	6,005	4696	193	194	151	96%	97%	76%
April	5,776	5,472	4629	193	182	154	96%	91%	77%
May	5,949	5,491	4962	192	177	160	96%	89%	80%
June	5,680	5,207	4906	189	174	164	95%	87%	82%
Annual Max Capacity	73,000	73,000	73,000	200	200	200	100%	100%	100%
Total Patient Days	70,211	67,953	58,455	193	186	160	96%	93%	80%
Monthly Average	5,851	5,663	4,871	193	186	160	96%	93%	80%



APPENDIX E: VETERANS CEMETERIES

Table 1: Virginia Veterans Cemetery (Amelia)

	FY08	FY09	FY10	FY11	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21
July	17	26	23	25	19	26	24	25	37	27	31	40	66	52
August	13	23	12	17	21	22	28	38	39	31	23	50	48	53
September	15	19	17	28	34	27	22	27	29	43	38	29	36	50
October	25	21	17	23	18	19	23	38	33	27	36	32	39	41
November	13	9	25	25	24	29	23	24	33	22	34	42	37	44
December	22	20	29	22	17	26	24	24	43	26	25	29	48	39
January	15	18	17	25	23	24	28	36	28	38	48	42	37	48
February	16	13	21	30	31	21	23	27	26	38	35	28	40	50
March	19	19	32	29	25	24	28	36	38	34	37	43	47	66
April	19	29	23	28	23	35	32	30	37	35	44	45	28	39
May	18	28	16	28	17	30	28	37	31	42	39	53	27	48
June	21	23	31	22	27	28	24	38	42	50	36	51	35	42
Total	213	248	263	302	279	311	307	380	416	413	426	484	488	572

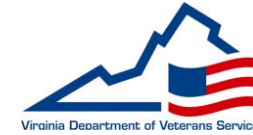


Table 2: Albert G. Horton, Jr. Memorial Veterans Cemetery (Suffolk)

	FY09	FY10	FY11	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21
July	36	55	51	58	61	62	82	96	101	96	105	100	111
August	51	58	47	65	86	78	78	100	98	112	114	106	110
September	48	52	46	62	58	72	82	101	77	82	73	95	116
October	49	59	70	57	68	102	84	119	82	105	110	106	118
November	36	61	75	51	66	71	76	65	82	99	105	97	98
December	65	77	63	74	61	78	91	90	84	81	82	116	125
January	59	60	82	79	89	95	104	84	88	112	126	120	137
February	54	55	66	56	61	95	88	89	95	97	94	85	131
March	62	69	75	63	75	90	89	116	106	92	103	96	147
April	59	76	59	88	89	96	101	92	91	119	113	88	96
May	53	65	68	79	76	109	89	101	106	92	107	88	138
June	66	65	64	68	69	70	90	108	124	124	88	82	145
Total	638	752	766	800	859	1,018	1,054	1,161	1,134	1,211	1,220	1,179	1,472

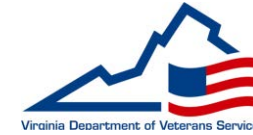


Table 3: Southwest Virginia Veterans Cemetery (Dublin)

	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21
July	28	17	9	7	23	19	21	21	15	23
August	13	15	20	16	22	23	14	24	29	11
September	10	14	10	14	12	15	23	19	11	31
October	11	12	13	12	20	25	18	21	13	17
November	8	19	14	17	13	14	21	16	19	13
December	11	7	7	12	20	17	18	9	13	28
January	10	13	13	20	11	16	25	23	11	29
February	10	9	8	5	12	14	19	8	17	15
March	11	17	9	10	22	16	26	24	15	18
April	10	21	18	19	12	17	19	10	13	19
May	6	15	11	13	21	16	9	22	18	22
June	15	16	8	12	13	11	15	14	11	27
Total	143	175	140	157	201	203	228	211	185	253

