

Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations
Meeting Minutes
December 14, 2023

A meeting of the Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations (the JLC) was held on December 14, 2023 at 10 a.m. at the Virginia War Memorial, 621 S. Belvidere Street, Richmond.

Members Present

- Richard Shook, Air Force Association
- William Aramony, American Legion
- Glenn Yarborough, Association of the United States Army
- Denice Williams, Disabled American Veterans
- Monti Zimmerman, Military Officers Association of America
- Mark Atchison, Military Order of the Purple Heart
- Vernon Peters, Military Order of the World Wars
- Preston Curry, Paralyzed Veterans of America
- Terrance Moore, Reserve Association of America
- Dan Karnes, Roanoke Valley Veterans Council
- Rick Raskin, Veterans of Foreign Wars
- George Corbett, Vietnam Veterans of America
- Carl Holcomb, Virginia Army/Air National Guard Enlisted Association
- Kevin Hoffman, Virginia National Guard Association
- Ann Crittenden, Women Marines Association (virtual)
- Michael Dick, Chair, Board of Veterans Services
- Daniel Gade, Commissioner, Department of Veterans Services

Members Absent

- Rich Mansfield, Air Force Sergeants Association
- Richard Van Norton, AMVETS
- Thad Jones, Fifth Baptist Church Veterans Ministry
- Sha'ron D. Martin, Fleet Reserve Association
- Jack Hilgers, Legion of Valor
- John Clickener, Marine Corps League
- Michelle Ramos Domingue, Navy Mutual Aid Association
- Katherine Martinez, Student Veterans of America
- Jose Ramos, Wounded Warrior Project
- Paul Haughton, Chair, Veterans Services Foundation

Alternate Members attending, representing their VSO

- Matthew Klym, AMVETS
- Elaine Reed, Fifth Baptist Church Veterans Ministry
- David Jennings, Marine Corps League

- Meredith Burns, Navy Mutual Aid Association

Alternates Present, not representing their VSO

- James Cuthbertson, Military Order of the Purple Heart
- Joanne Smith, Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW)
- Jay Marts, Virginia National Guard Association

Commonwealth of Virginia Officials Present

- Senator Bryce Reeves
- Delegate David Reid
- Delegate Mike Cherry
- Jason Pak, Deputy Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs
- Jordan Stewart, Assistant Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs
- Steven Combs, Department of Veterans Services (DVS)
- Glendalynn Glover, DVS
- Brandi Jancaitis, DVS
- Eric Johnson, DVS
- Patrice Jones, DVS
- Jayla Plymouth, DVS
- Ravi Padma, DVS
- Alexis Bowles-Fryar, Department of Military Affairs (DMA)
- Major Andrew Czaplicki, DMA

Guests

- MacKenzie Heidelberg, Office of Congresswoman Abigail Spanberger
- Robert Pryor, Office of Congresswoman Jennifer McClellan
- Andrea Thomas, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
- Wayne Sine, RAC-MOAA
- Owen Waltman, RAC-MOAA
- Ed Mann, VFW
- Douglas Hoffman, VFW
- Richard Anderson, RPV

Items included in the Agenda Packet

- Draft Agenda
- Draft Minutes September 20, 2023 meeting
- Department of Veterans Services (DVS) Operations Update
- Point Papers – JLC 2024 Initiatives
 - JLC 2024: Enhanced Emergency Response Medical Protection
 - JLC 2024: Virginia National Guard Tuition Assistance Waiver
 - JLC 2024: Expand Tax Relief for Surviving Spouses
- New VFW proposed initiative: Stop unscrupulous firms from exploiting veterans trying to

obtain VA benefits

- Statewide Strategic Plan 2024-2029
- List of appointed JLC officers
- JLC Day at the General Assembly – January 17, 2024 – Guidelines for JLC Members & Other Participants
- Board of Veterans Services (BVS) Report to JLC
- Veterans Services Foundation (VSF) Report to JLC
- JLC 2024 Work Plan

Item I. Opening and Pledge of Allegiance

Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations (JLC) Chair Kevin Hoffman called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. and led the JLC in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Item II. Opening thoughts and meditation

JLC Chaplain Mark Atchison provided thoughts and meditation.

Item III. Roll Call of VSOs, Quorum Determination, and Introduction of Guests

The roll was called, and 18 of the 24 Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs) represented on the Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations (the JLC) were recorded as being physically present, therefore a quorum was determined. One VSOs participated electronically as recorded, bringing the total to 19 of 24 VSOs. The Board of Veterans Services and the Department of Veterans Services were recorded as present.

Item IV. Approve Agenda

Chair Kevin Hoffman proposed two changes to the draft agenda:

1. Add new Item VI – briefing on the 2024-2029 Strategic Plan by Senator Bryce Reeves, Delegate David Reid, and Delegate Mike Cherry
2. Add new Item C under “New Business” for presentation of awards/recognition by Vice Chair Monti Zimmerman

Mr. Glenn Yarborough made a **motion, seconded** by Vice Chair Monti Zimmerman, to approve the meeting agenda as amended. The motion carried by unanimous vote. The approved agenda is attached.

Item V. Approve September 20, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Mr. Steven Combs noted that there were three corrections to the draft minutes of the September 20, 2023 meeting minutes:

1. Page 3, Item I. Add that Vice Chair Monti Zimmerman led the JLC in the Pledge of Allegiance.
2. Page 4, Last Paragraph. Correct minutes – Mr. Glenn Yarborough spoke about the Gold Star Families, not Vice Chair Monti Zimmerman.
3. Page 5, Item VIIa. Correct spelling of Mr. Dan Karnes’ name: Karnes, not Carnes.

Mr. Glenn Yarborough made a **motion, seconded** by Vice Chair Monti Zimmerman, to approve the minutes as revised. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

Item VI. Briefing on Statewide Strategic Plan 2024 – 2029 Making Virginia the Best State for Veterans

Senator Bryce Reeves, Delegate David Reid, Delegate Mike Cherry briefed the JLC on the Statewide Strategic Plan, pursuant to HB1759 Workgroup (2023 General Assembly). They reviewed the Plan’s budget and legislative recommendations in preparation for the 2024 General Assembly session. A copy of the Strategic Plan is attached.

Item VII. Virginia Department of Veterans Services (VDVS) Operational Update

Commissioner Daniel Gade delivered the VDVS Operational Update, covering notable DVS operations since the last JLC meeting. He touched on the newly renamed Davis & McDaniel Veterans Care Center in Roanoke, the opening of the Jones & Cabacoy Veterans Care Center in Virginia Beach, and other highlights. A copy of the VDVS Operational Update is attached.

Item VIII. Legislative Initiatives

Chair Kevin Hoffman noted that new JLC initiatives are not usually introduced at this point in the process but stated that the VFW had a new initiative that he thought was so important that an exemption should be made to allow late introduction. There was no opposition.

Mr. Rick Raskin called the members attention to the point paper in the agenda packet – “Stop unscrupulous firms from exploiting veterans trying to obtain VA benefits.” He provided an overview of the issue and answered questions from members. Animated discussion followed.

Mr. Rick Raskin made a **motion, seconded** by Vice Chair Monti Zimmerman, to adopt the VFW proposal as the fourth JLC 2024 initiative. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

- a. Status of JLC 2024 recommendations: Legislative Officer Glenn Yarborough led the JLC in review of the three adopted JLC 2024 Initiatives included in the agenda packet.
- b. Strategic Plan Working Group Initiatives: JLC Chair Hoffman asked that the JLC vote to support the Report of the Strategic Plan Working Group. Vice Chair Monti Zimmerman made a **motion, seconded** by Mr. Glenn Yarborough, that the JLC adopt the Report and advocate for its recommendations during the 2024 General Assembly Session. The motion carried unanimously.
- c. Prioritizing of JLC 2024 Initiatives: Following discussion and debate over the rankings of the JLC 2024 Initiatives, Mr. Glenn Yarborough made a **motion, seconded** by Mr. Rick Raskin, for this priority:
 1. Expand Tax Relief for Surviving Spouses
 2. Stop unscrupulous firms from exploiting veterans trying to obtain VA benefits (claims sharks)
 3. Virginia National Guard Tuition Assistance Waiver
 4. Enhanced Emergency Response Medical Protections

The motion carries unanimously. The initiatives are attached.

- d. JLC Day on the Hill: Mr. Jay Marts and JLC Chair Kevin Hoffman covered the action plan for the January 17, 2024 JLC Day on the Hill. The plan is attached.

Item IX. Reports

- a. BVS Report: BVS Chair Michael Dick spoke briefly about the BVS report, which is attached to the minutes.
- b. VSF Report: The VSF report is attached to the minutes.

Item X. New Business

- a. Approve 2024 Meeting Schedule/Work Plan
The JLC 2024 Work Plan was accepted by unanimous consent and is attached to these minutes.
- b. Other New Business, Open Discussion, and "Good of the Order" reports
Several JLC members offered "good of the order" comments,
- c. Presentations
On behalf of MOAA, Vice Chair Monti Zimmerman presented awards to Deputy Secretary Jason Pak and Assistant Secretary Jordan Stewart to recognize and thank them for their work during the 2023 General Assembly session.

Item XI. Public Comment Period

No members of the public spoke during the comment period.

Item XII. Closing Remarks

JLC Chair Kevin Hoffman thanked the members for their work on behalf of Virginia veterans and families. He invited the members to attend the Virginia National Guard reception on January 17 at 5 p.m. at the Library of Virginia.

Item XIII. Adjourn

Chair Hoffman adjourned the meeting at 11:57 a.m.

APPROVED AGENDA

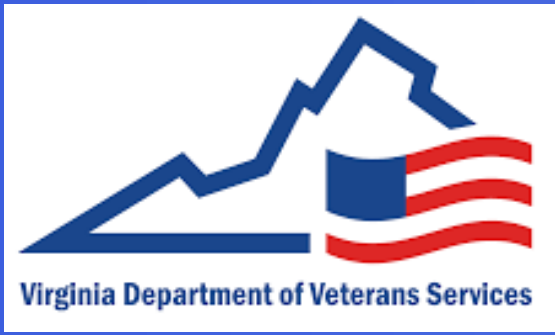
Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations

December 14, 2023

10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Virginia War Memorial

- I. Opening, Meeting Notes, and Pledge of Allegiance – *Kevin Hoffman, JLC Chairman* (10:00 – 10:05)
- II. Opening Thoughts & Meditation, *Mark Atchison, JLC Chaplain* (10:05 – 10:08)
- III. Roll call and introduction of member, quorum determination, and introduction of guests – *Kevin Hoffman, JLC Chairman* (10:08 – 10:15)
- IV. Approve Agenda – *Kevin Hoffman, JLC Chairman* (10:15 – 10:16)
- V. Approve September 20, 2023 meeting minutes – *Kevin Hoffman, JLC Chairman* (10:16 – 10:17)
- VI. Briefing on Statewide Strategic Plan 2024 – 2029 Making Virginia the Best State for Veterans – *Senator Bryce Reeves, Delegate David Reid, Delegate Mike Cherry*
- VII. Virginia Department of Veterans Services (VDVS) Operational Update – *Daniel Gade, VDVS Commissioner* (10:17 – 10:30)
- VIII. Legislative Initiatives (10:55 – 11:20)
 - a. Status of JLC 2023 recommendations (patrons, bills, meetings, etc.) – *JLC Points of Contact*
 - b. Strategic Plan Working Group Initiatives - *Kevin Hoffman, JLC Chairman*
 - c. Prioritizing of JLC 2023 Initiatives – *Kevin Hoffman, JLC Chairman*
 - d. JLC Day on the Hill – *Glenn Yarborough, JLC Legislative Officer, Jay Marts Legislative Sponsor*
- IX. Reports (11:20 – 11:25)
 - a. Board of Veterans Services (BVS) – *Michael Dick, BVS Chairman*
 - b. Veterans Services Foundation (VSF) – *Paul Haughton, VSF Chairman*
- X. New Business (11:25 – 11:45)
 - a. Approve 2024 Meeting Schedule/Work Plan – *JLC Chairman*
 - b. Other New Business, Open Discussion, and “Good of the Order” reports – *JLC Chairman*
 - c. Presentations – *JLC Vice Chairman*
- XI. Public comment period – *JLC Chair* (11:45 – 11:50)
- XII. Closing remarks – *JLC Chair* (11:50 – 12:00)
- XIII. Adjourn (12:00)



Veterans Strategic Plan Workgroup Report

January 2024



VCU

Center for Public Policy

L. Douglas Wilder School of
Government and Public Affairs



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Table of Contents

Contents

Acknowledgments	4
Executive Summary.....	6
Introduction.....	7
Strategic Plan Justification.....	8
Methodology	8
Deliverables.....	11
Strategic Plan and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).....	11
Vision.....	11
Goals, Action Items, and KPIs	11
Action Items	14
Legislative and Budgetary Actions for General Assembly Consideration	14
Administrative Actions Implemented by DVS	16
Scorecards.....	17
Recommendations for Future DVS Action	18
Conclusion.....	18
Appendices.....	20
Appendix A: Full Legislative Text	20
Appendix B: Statewide Strategic Plan.....	22
Appendix C: Full Work Group Member List.....	33
Appendix D: Meeting Schedule.....	34
Appendix E: Scorecard Resources and Calculations.....	35



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Center for Public Policy (CPP) with VCU's L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs would like to express our deep gratitude to the many voices and talents who gathered together for the strategic planning process. The workgroup members provided passionate and dedicated support for informed decision-making. DVS staff and advisors brought an incredible breadth of experience to the strategic planning process and helped to situate the workgroup's efforts within the relevant administrative context. Their contributions were invaluable to the process. The McChrystal Group collaborative consultants were dedicated to providing additional military-specific context and enhanced the group process.

Strategic Planning Workgroup Members

Commissioner Daniel Gade

Assistant Secretary Jordan Stewart

Major Andrew Czaplicki

Major Mario Flores

Major Kevin Hoffman

Senator John Bell

Delegate Mike Cherry

Senator Bryce Reeves

Delegate David Reid

Chief Warrant Officer 5 (Ret.) Phyllis Wilson

Captain (Ret.) Thurraya Kent

Senior Advisors

Steven Combs, Chief Deputy Commissioner

Kathleen Jabs, Former Deputy Secretary and Acting Secretary Veterans and Defense Affairs

Joyce Henderson, Board of Veteran Services

John Lesinski, Board of Veteran Services



Virginia Department of Veterans Services Staff Support Group

Meagan Altizar, Regional Program Manager Central / West, Virginia Values Veterans (V3)

Kim Barton, Deputy CFO

Monique Brabham, Deputy Director, Virginia Veterans Family Services

Angela Bufano, Superintendent, Albert G. Horton, Jr. Veterans' Cemetery

Tramaine Carroll-Payne, Deputy Director of Education Programs

Michele Crone, Benefits Director

Montwrace Cunningham, Virginia Military Survivors and Dependents Education Program (VMSDEP) Program Manager

James Darragh, Assistant Administrator, Virginia Care Centers

Guy Dinkins, Regional Director, Manassas Benefits Office

Kyndall Drumheller, Education Logistics Manager, Virginia War Memorial

Claudia Flores, Director of Policy and Planning

Jasmine Gore, Deputy Director for Transition and Employment, V3

Brandi Jancaitis, Director, Virginia Veteran and Family Support Program

Eric Johnson, Director of Research and Program Evaluation

Patrice Jones, Acting Deputy Commissioner, Director of Education Programs

Danielle Orbe, Human Resources Manager

Brian Wofford, Virginia Values Veterans

Collaborative Consultants – McChrystal Group

Billy Don Farris, Partner

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Olivia Monroe, Associate



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At the direction of the General Assembly, the Commissioner of the Department of Veteran Services (DVS) convened a workgroup charged with developing a statewide strategic plan for veterans and their families under HB 1759. The Veteran Strategic Plan Workgroup began meeting in June of 2023 with the purpose of making Virginia the best state for veterans. The full legislative text of HB 1759 can be found in Appendix A.

The Center for Public Policy (CPP) within Virginia Commonwealth University's (VCU) L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs and McChrystal Group facilitated monthly Workgroup meetings to develop a vision and goals for this purpose. The Workgroup first created a vision for their work:

Make Virginia the best state for service members, veterans, and their families to live, work, lead, and raise a family.

This vision emphasizes a key strategic choice on the part of the Workgroup to extend benefits to children and spouses of veterans and service members in order to strengthen Virginia's efforts towards becoming a more welcoming and supportive state for veterans, service members, and their families. Then, members worked together to establish six major goals in service of this vision:

1. Increase labor force participation rate for transitioning service members, veterans, and their families to maximize economic outcomes
2. Make Virginia the easiest state for service members, veterans, and their families to transition, reskill, and upskill
3. Attract more transitioning service members, veterans, and their families to move to Virginia through tangible economic incentives.
4. Honor veterans' service, sacrifice, and legacy by promoting and providing high quality programs and services
5. Reduce obstacles to reliable and affordable housing options for transitioning service members, veterans, and their families
6. Reduce the rate of homelessness for veterans and their families in Virginia

For each goal, Workgroup members created specific action items and key performance indicators (KPIs) to ensure that the goals are achievable and measurable. For the complete strategic plan, see Appendix B.

INTRODUCTION

The Veterans Strategic Plan Workgroup was established by the Commissioner of the Department of Veteran Services at the direction of HB 1759¹, approved by the General Assembly on March 23, 2023. The Workgroup was charged with the following responsibilities:

- Developing a statewide strategic plan that will guide legislation and budget decisions for the next five years
- Determining and identifying key performance indicators, quantifiable factors that can be compared with those of other states in determining quality of life for veterans in such states
- Assessing Virginia's current key performance indicators against those of other states
- Identifying legislative and budgetary recommendations
- Creating a scorecard of Virginia's key performance indicators to be presented to the General Assembly Military and Veterans Caucus at the first meeting of each regular session

The Workgroup was made up of 10 members according to the legislation, which mandated the membership to include the Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs or his designee; the Commissioner of the Department of Veterans Services or his designee; the Adjutant General of the Virginia National Guard or his designee; one member from the Board of Veterans Services; one additional member from the Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations; two current members of the General Assembly who previously served as members of the General Assembly Military and Veterans Caucus, one to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Delegates and one to be appointed by the Chair of the Senate Committee on Rules; two members who previously served as officers of the General Assembly Military and Veterans Caucus, one to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Delegates and one to be appointed by the Chair of the Senate Committee on Rules; and one member of a veterans organization focused on issues related to women veterans. The representative from the Board of Veterans services shifted during the course of the planning process due to leadership rotation, and the first representative remained invested in an active support role.

The group met six times from June, 2023 through November, 2023. At these meetings, Workgroup members focused on prioritizing goals for the strategic plan, crafting specific actions to reach each goal, and identifying metrics that will enable Virginia to measure progress towards each goal in comparison with other peer states.

¹ <https://lis.virginia.gov/cgi-bin/legp604.exe?231+ful+CHAP0407>



The Center for Public Policy (CPP) within Virginia Commonwealth University's (VCU) L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs and McChrystal Group were hired as consultants on this project to facilitate Workgroup meetings, build consensus among Workgroup members, manage workflow and feedback between meetings, and ultimately to generate drafts of each deliverable for Workgroup review and approval.

STRATEGIC PLAN JUSTIFICATION

As the state with the third largest veteran population in the country, Virginia is currently home to over 700,000 veterans². Virginia's veterans represent 9.2% of the state's population³, come from all branches of the military, and have served in every conflict since World War II. Most importantly, they possess invaluable leadership attributes that stand to benefit the Commonwealth. Whether acquired through active or non-active duty, military experience equips individuals with a wide range of transferable skills aligned with Virginia's workforce development goals. These skills include tactical planning, crisis management, and innovative problem-solving. Veterans are also dedicated to upholding safety and compliance while maintaining adaptability in the face of adversity--necessary skill sets for leaders in any organization, business, or agency. For these reasons, providing veterans with career training and opportunities directly contributes to greater economic growth across the Commonwealth. Moreover, veterans' strong commitment to public service enriches communities and serves as a model for future generations.

While recent census data indicates that veterans are performing well in Virginia (see Scorecard section), integration back into civilian life presents challenges. Additional support is needed to ensure that every veteran has the opportunities, tools, and resources needed to reach their full potential. As veterans continue to be a tremendous asset to all communities, an investment in Virginia's military service members is an investment in the entire Commonwealth. The strategic plan outlined in this report presents both legislative and administrative goals along with targeted actions that seek to advance opportunities for veterans to live, raise a family, and thrive in Virginia.

METHODOLOGY

Over the course of six months, facilitators met with the workgroup monthly and guided them through various small and large group activities to discuss the needs of service members, veterans, and their families and generate ideas for solutions. The workgroup examined data relevant to the needs to inform this process. The facilitators revised draft documents after each

²https://www.va.gov/vetdata/docs/SpecialReports/State_Summaries_Virginia.pdf

³ <https://www.axios.com/2023/11/10/map-where-veterans-live-us>



meeting to reflect on the conversation. In between sessions, workgroup members were asked to virtually provide input via QuestionPro surveys to ensure the next round of drafts were inclusive of all viewpoints.

Strategic Plan

The iterative process of idea generation and discussion, facilitator integration of ideas, and returning drafts to the Workgroup each month led to robust discussion and refinement of the strategic plan. Discussions illuminated the following as important frameworks for the strategic plan:

- A strong desire to address the needs of and provide support to service members, veterans, and their families instead of a narrow focus on veterans only. This focus was inclusive of military spouses as well as National Guard and Reserve Components.
- The strategic plan as a means to support service members, veterans, and their families to **lead** and **serve** in Virginia.
- DVS programs and services are comprehensive and delivered by dedicated professionals who are eager to reach more individuals and families.

A finalized strategic plan is available in the Deliverables section of this report. Through the iterative process, some needs and potential solutions were discussed and then ultimately not included. The items discussed were:

- grant funding to reduce the cost of child and family care;
- grant funding for recently unemployed or underemployed veterans; and
- the expansion of a universal Gold Star license plate that recognizes Gold Star Families, as defined by the more inclusive definition of "died while serving or from a service-connected injury or illness."

Selection of Comparison States

The Workgroup discussed various aspects that should be considered when selecting comparison states. It was important to the group that Virginia compare itself to other states with a similar composition of service member and veteran populations as well as industries that support military infrastructure, which provide ripe opportunities for employment after active-duty service. As a result of the conversations, Commissioner Gade requested that we work to compare Virginia to each border state as well as Texas and Florida (two other states with large veteran populations). All comparison states are listed on the scorecard available in the Deliverables section of this report.



Selection of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

The Workgroup engaged in robust discussions about aspirational, ideal, and realistic KPIs. A strong importance was placed on using KPIs that would measure progress toward the attainment of the six goals. Of equal importance was the availability of data for Virginia as well as the seven comparison states. KPIs selected were:

- Veterans as a percentage of adult population;
- Veteran labor force participation rate;
- Percentage of Veterans living above the poverty line;
- Number of Interstate Licensure Compacts joined;
- Veteran homeownership rates;
- Percentage of Veterans experiencing housing problems (includes problems of quality, crowding, and cost);
- Percentage of Veterans experiencing homelessness;
- Benefits Offered: Veteran dependent education benefit;
- Benefits Offered: Veteran gets “Resident” tuition rate;
- Benefits Offered: Military retirement pay exemption from state income tax;
- Benefits Offered: Veteran spouse and dependent burial at no cost, and
- National Guard & Reserve (No Active Duty) eligible for burial in State Veteran Cemeteries

Due to data constraints, many potential KPIs became aspirational and were not able to be included. There was a palpable desire to include the spouses and dependents of service members and their families in the KPIs. This was an acknowledged gap in the available data. KPIs that were discussed but not included were:

- GI Bill usage;
- Veterans Technology Education Courses (VET TEC) enrollment;
- Virginia Military Survivors and Dependents Education Program (VMSDEP) utilization;
- Property tax exemptions for disabled veterans that their surviving spouses;
- Veteran median income;
- Percentage of median household income spent on childcare;
- Veteran business ownership rate;
- Number of State Veteran Cemeteries;
- Number of Yellow Ribbon Schools; and
- Number of school districts with Purple Star designations.

Scorecard Development

Following the selection of KPIs and comparison states, data was distilled to create a scorecard to visually display how Virginia compares to the seven selected states according to each KPI. The scorecard was divided into two sections as outlined below with a description of their data



source. In general, most data was gathered from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey, Housing Assistance Council tabulations, and National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs. The scorecard is available in the Deliverables section of this report and data sources and calculations are available in Appendix E.

DELIVERABLES

Strategic Plan and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Vision

Make Virginia the best state for service members, veterans, and their families to live, work, lead, and raise a family.

Goals, Action Items, and KPIs

Goal 1: Increase labor force participation rate for transitioning service members, veterans, and their families to maximize economic outcomes.

Action 1.1: General Assembly amends the budget appropriation for Veterans Benefit Services to expand the Virginia Values Veterans (V3) grant program eligibility to include veterans and military spouse hires in businesses and nonprofit organizations with 300 or fewer employees and local governments of any size.

Action 1.2: General Assembly increases the budget appropriation for Veterans Benefit Services to \$1,000,000 for V3 grant disbursement and increases the grant amount to \$5,000 each.

Action 1.3: DVS partners with the Department of Workforce Development and Advancement to create a pilot job matching and resource navigation program for transitioning service members, veterans, and their families.

Action 1.4: General Assembly authorizes the establishment of the Military and Veterans Legislative Fellowship Program.

KPIs: Labor Force Participation Rate of Veterans; Percentage of Veterans Living Above the Poverty Line

Goal 2: Make Virginia the easiest state for service members, veterans, and their families to transition, reskill, and upskill.

Action 2.1: General Assembly authorizes a workgroup convened by the Department of Workforce Development and Advancement to determine best practices and strategies to standardize services across institutions of higher education and optimize the amount of credit received for military service and training.



Action 2.2: General Assembly amends Virginia code to ensure that dependent children and spouses of service members and veterans residing in Virginia are eligible for in-state tuition rates regardless of length of residency.

Action 2.3: General Assembly optimizes the tuition assistance program for members of the Virginia National Guard.

Action 2.4: General Assembly authorizes Virginia joining additional reciprocal credentialing compacts, specifically teacher mobility, cosmetology, physician assistant, dentist and dental hygienist, massage therapists, social work, and any other compacts as they become available.

KPIs: Number of Compacts Joined; Dependent Education Benefit; Waved Veteran Tuition Rate

Goal 3: Attract more transitioning service members, veterans, and their families to move to Virginia through tangible economic incentives.

Action 3.1: General Assembly authorizes the establishment of a Veteran Transition Tax Credit Program to incentivize transitioning service members to move to Virginia at end of their active-duty service, to include those who join the Virginia Army or Air National Guard and the Virginia-based Reserve Components.

Action 3.2: General Assembly allows Virginia procurement set asides for veteran-owned businesses operated in Virginia.

Action 3.3: General Assembly authorizes low or no-interest loans for veteran-owned small businesses operated in Virginia.

Action 3.4: General Assembly approves a Virginia constitutional amendment to standardize property tax waivers for surviving spouses of service members who died in the line of duty.

KPIs: Military Retirement Exemption from State Income Tax

Goal 4: Honor veterans' service, sacrifice, and legacy by promoting and providing high quality programs and services.

Action 4.1: DVS collaborates with DOE to provide training to support Purple Star Designation Programs in Virginia schools.

Action 4.2: General Assembly approves a budget increase for salaries for Veteran Service Representatives (VSRs) to support retention of VSRs.

Action 4.3: DVS improves partnership and influence with DBHDS to increase veteran access to behavioral health services across the Commonwealth.

Action 4.4: DVS creates a healthcare resource navigation function within DVS.



Action 4.5: General Assembly directs the Office of Data Governance and Analytics to create and execute a multi-agency data sharing agreement to share veteran-specific data with DVS in order to support data-informed outreach plans for veterans.

Action 4.6: General Assembly approves a DVS budget request for marketing resources for veteran outreach.

Action 4.7: DVS develops a long-term plan with funding requests to improve infrastructure and capital assets.

KPIs: Veteran Spouse and Dependent Burial at No Cost; National Guard & Reserve (No Active Duty) Eligible for Burial

Goal 5: Reduce obstacles to reliable and affordable housing options for transitioning service members, veterans, and their families.

Action 5.1: General Assembly establishes funding for veteran home improvement grants for depreciated housing in Virginia.

Action 5.2: General Assembly authorizes the establishment of a Veteran First Time Homebuyer Tax Credit Program in which a \$5,000 tax credit is available to military veterans who for the first time purchase a primary home in Virginia.

Action 5.3: DVS partners with Habitat for Humanity to expand Habitat for Heroes and Veterans Build to increase veteran homeownership in Virginia.

Action 5.4: DVS partners with DHCD to apply for grant funding to support a Virginia Veterans Rent Relief Program.

KPIs: Veteran Homeownership Rate; Percentage of Veterans Experiencing Housing Problems (quality, crowding, cost)

Goal 6: Reduce the rate of homelessness for veterans and their families in Virginia.

Action 6.1: DVS partners with Virginia Housing to apply for VA GPD Case Management grants that help veterans obtain and retain permanent housing.

Action 6.2: DVS partners with Virginia Housing to apply for grant funds to support a Virginia Veterans Mortgage Relief program that helps military families avoid foreclosure.

KPIs: Percent of Veterans Experiencing Homelessness



Action Items

Legislative and Budgetary Actions for General Assembly Consideration

Action Item	Justification
<p>Goal 1: Increase Labor Force Participation Rate for transitioning service members, veterans, and their families to maximize economic outcomes</p>	
<p>1.1 Expand Virginia Values Veterans (V3) grant program eligibility to include veterans and spouses in businesses and small to mid-sized nonprofit organizations. <i>Year 1 Priority</i></p>	<p>Address military spouse underemployment and root military families in Virginia following active-duty service while alleviating worker shortage in critical sectors in the Commonwealth.</p>
<p>1.2 Increase budget appropriation for Veterans Benefits Services \$1,000,000 for V3 grant distribution and individual grant amount to \$5,000 each. <i>Year 1 Priority</i></p>	<p>Strong investment in encouraging employers to hire and successfully retain veterans and military spouses.</p>
<p>1.4 Authorize Military and Veterans Fellowship Program. <i>Year 1 Priority</i></p>	<p>Provides pathway for veterans to gain education and experience in public policy preparing them to lead in state government.</p>
<p>Goal 2: Make Virginia the easiest state for service members, veterans, and their families to transition, reskill, and upskill.</p>	
<p>2.1 Authorize workgroup to study standardize services and military and service training credit across Universities.</p>	<p>Assist veterans in navigating the best path to upskill and reskill.</p>
<p>2.2 Amend state code to ensure eligibility for in-state tuition rates for dependents and spouses of veteran residents regardless of length of residency.</p>	<p>Waiving residency requirement allows more affordable access to higher education in Virginia, likely informing decisions to move or stay at the end of their service.</p>
<p>2.3 Optimize tuition assistance program for National Guard members.</p>	<p>Supports current efforts to simplify the process for members of the Virginia National Guard to access and utilize the tuition assistance program.</p>
<p>2.4 Authorize Virginia joining additional reciprocal credentialing compacts. <i>Year 1 Priority</i></p>	<p>Enables transferability of professional credentials to more easily participate in labor force, making Virginia a leader in supporting military spouses to transition.</p>
<p>Goal 3: Attract more transitioning service members, veterans, and their families to move to Virginia through tangible economic incentives.</p>	
<p>3.1 Authorize establishment of a Veteran Transition Tax Credit Program that includes those who join the Virginia Army or Air</p>	<p>Incentivizes transitioning service members to move to Virginia at end of their active-duty service.</p>



National Guard the Virginia-based Reserve Components. <i>Year 1 Priority</i>	
3.2 Allow Virginia procurement set asides for Veteran-owned businesses operated in Virginia.	Encourage veteran business ownership and support sustainability of veteran-owned businesses.
3.4 Approve state constitutional amendment to standardize property tax waivers for surviving spouses of service members (died in active duty). <i>Year 1 Priority</i>	Workgroup supports passing this action for the second time, bringing the decision of supporting surviving spouses to voters.
Goal 4: Honor veteran’s service, sacrifice, and legacy by promoting and providing high quality programs and services.	
4.2 Approve budget increase for salaries for Veteran Service Representatives (VSRs). <i>Year 1 Priority</i>	Supports retention of VSRs—a serious concern for DVS as compensation does not match the private sector and the agency is losing well-trained individuals.
4.5. Direct the Office of Data Governance and Analytics to create and execute a multi-agency data sharing agreement to share veteran-specific data with DVS. <i>Year 1 Priority</i>	Increases data sharing among state agencies and enhances data-informed outreach plans for veterans.
4.6 Approve DVS budget request for marketing resources for veteran outreach. <i>Year 1 Priority</i>	Provides additional funding to effectively reach those currently eligible for services and transitioning out of service and considering staying in Virginia.
Goal 5: Reduce obstacles to reliable and affordable housing options for transitioning service members, veterans, and their families.	
5.1 Establish funding for veteran home improvement grants for depreciated housing in Virginia.	Assist veterans who are experiencing housing problems—an area identified by
5.2 Authorize the establishment of a Veteran First Time Homebuyer Tax Credit Program with a \$5,000 tax credit. <i>Year 1 Priority</i>	Encourage veterans to move to Virginia and increase veteran homeownership rate.



Administrative Actions Implemented by DVS

Action Item	Justification
<p>Goal 1: Increase Labor Force Participation Rate for transitioning service members, veterans, and their families to maximize economic outcomes</p>	
<p>1.3 Partner with the Department of Workforce Development and Advancement to create a pilot job matching and resource navigation program for transitioning service members, veterans, and their families.</p>	<p>Enhance experience for job-seeking veterans and hiring employers—current processes lack the functionality to efficiently connect these two groups.</p>
<p>Goal 4: Honor veterans’ service, sacrifice, and legacy by promoting and providing high quality programs and services.</p>	
<p>4.1 Collaborate with Department of Education to provide training to support Purple Star Designation Programs in Virginia schools.</p>	<p>Provide additional support to faculty and staff providing services as well as the children and families they serve.</p>
<p>4.3 Improve partnership and influence with Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services.</p>	<p>Increase veteran access to behavioral health services across the Commonwealth.</p>
<p>4.4 Create healthcare resource navigation function within the agency.</p>	<p>Allow for comprehensive assistance for veterans as they navigate complex systems to receive necessary care.</p>
<p>4.7 Develop a long-term plan and funding requests to improve agency infrastructure and capital assets throughout the Commonwealth.</p>	<p>Provide decision-makers with the information they need to evaluate DVS requests for financial support and infrastructure improvements.</p>
<p>Goal 5: Reduce obstacles to reliable and affordable housing options for transitioning service members, veterans, and their families.</p>	
<p>5.3 Partner with Habitat for Humanity to expand Habitat for Heroes and Veterans Build.</p>	<p>Increase veteran homeownership in Virginia.</p>
<p>5.4 Partner with Department of Housing and Community Development to apply for grant funding to support a Virginia Veterans Rent Relief Program.</p>	<p>Improve veteran’s access to housing stability and support the viability of the rent relief program.</p>
<p>Goal 6: Reduce the rate of homelessness for veterans and their families.</p>	
<p>6.1 Partner with Virginia Housing to apply for federal Grant and Per Diem Case Management grants.</p>	<p>Help veterans obtain and retain permanent housing.</p>



6.2 Partner with Virginia Housing to apply for grant funds to support a Virginia Veterans Mortgage Relief program.

Help military families avoid home foreclosure and improve access to housing stability.

Scorecards

These two scorecards summarize all KPIs developed for this strategic plan, categorized by “Quality of Life” and “Benefits Offered”. These scorecards indicate where Virginia is outperforming peer states and where Virginia could improve outcomes. They will be presented to the General Assembly Military and Veterans Caucus at the first meeting of each regular session, in accordance with HB 1759. For more information on data sources, see Appendix X.

Quality of Life

Key

- ★ Outperforming All
- ▲ Improvement Needed

Virginia
Border State
Nonborder State



Key Performance Indicator*	Virginia	Kentucky	Maryland	North Carolina	Tennessee	West Virginia	Florida	Texas
Veterans as % of adult population	10.2% ★	7.2%	7.4%	8.0%	8.0%	8.3%	8.2%	6.7%
Veteran Labor Force Participation Rate	59.7% ★	46.9%	55.3%	44.1%	45.7%	46.4%	44.2%	57.0%
% of Veterans Living Above the Poverty Line	95.1% ★	91.5%	95.0%	92.8%	92.4%	91.3%	92.8%	93.4%
Number of Interstate Licensure Compacts Joined	7 ▲	9 ★	7	6	9 ★	8	4	5
Veteran Homeownership Rates	77.6% ▲	77.6%	79.0%	77.9%	80.4%	82.8% ★	80.1%	74.9%
% of Veterans Experiencing Housing Problems**	14.5% ▲	13.4%	15.1%	15.0%	13.2%	10.4% ★	16.9%	16.0%
% of Veterans Experiencing Homelessness	0.06% ★	0.13%	0.09%	0.11%	0.13%	0.10%	0.16%	0.12%

*Datasonces: Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey, Housing Assistance Council, National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs
 **Includes problems of quality, crowding, or cost



Benefits Offered

Key

✓	Yes	Virginia
✗	No	Border State
		Nonborder State



Key Performance Indicator	Virginia	Kentucky	Maryland	North Carolina	Tennessee	West Virginia	Florida	Texas
Veteran Dependent Education Benefit	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Veteran gets "Resident" Tuition Rate	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Military Retirement Pay Exemption from State Income Tax	First \$40,000 covered	First \$38,775 covered	\$5K at retirement, \$15K at age 55	Total	Total	Total	No state income tax for any resident	No state income tax for any resident
Veteran Spouse and Dependent Burial at No Cost	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗	No State Veteran Cemeteries	✓
National Guard & Reserve (No Active Duty) Eligible for Burial	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	No State Veteran Cemeteries	✗

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE DVS ACTION

In addition to implementing the administrative components of the veteran’s strategic plan, we recommend that DVS review and update the plan annually with key partners and stakeholders. Revisiting this plan regularly will help keep the General Assembly sufficiently informed of progress. necessary. Key metrics and performance indicators will be re-evaluated in year five to track progress. Ongoing updates will be provided to the General Assembly members by the agency’s Commissioner. To support strategic plan implementation, DVS will assign the administrative actions to the appropriate staff. As DVS already offers invaluable programming to thousands of veterans and their families annually, agency efforts will focus largely on expanding and enhancing existing offerings while increasing awareness among veterans and their families around what services are available. Finally, DVS will develop a plan and funding requests for improving infrastructure and critical assets throughout the state.

CONCLUSION

It is clear that Virginia is well positioned as a place for service members, veterans, and their families to grow and thrive. The Workgroup considered multiple ways to leverage resources already deployed in Virginia as well as develop key strategies to address the contemporary needs of service members, veterans, and their families. Implementing the legislative and budgetary actions in this plan will create policy measures that directly support service members, veterans and their families to establish roots in Virginia and provide leadership in



their community. Additionally, such changes will enable DVS staff to conduct outreach and provide high quality services more efficiently and effectively. The combination of legislative actions and DVS program initiatives outlined above will enhance our ability to make Virginia the best state for service members, veterans, and their families to live, work, lead, and raise a family.



APPENDICES

Appendix A: Full Legislative Text

CHAPTER 407

An Act to direct the Commissioner of the Department of Veterans Services to convene a work group to study and develop recommendations for implementing a statewide strategic plan to make Virginia the best state for veterans; report.

[H 1759]

Approved March 23, 2023

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. § 1. *That the Commissioner of the Department of Veterans Services shall convene a work group to study and develop recommendations for implementing a statewide strategic plan to make Virginia the best state for veterans. The work group shall consist of 10 members to be appointed as follows: the Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs or his designee; the Commissioner of the Department of Veterans Services or his designee; the Adjutant General of the Virginia National Guard or his designee; one member from the Board of Veterans Services; one additional member from the Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations; two current members of the General Assembly who previously served as members of the General Assembly Military and Veterans Caucus, one to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Delegates and one to be appointed by the Chair of the Senate Committee on Rules; two members who previously served as officers of the General Assembly Military and Veterans Caucus, one to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Delegates and one to be appointed by the Chair of the Senate Committee on Rules; and one member of a veterans organization focused on issues related to women veterans.*

The responsibilities of the work group shall include (i) developing a statewide strategic plan that will guide legislation and budget decisions for the next five years; (ii) determining and identifying key performance indicators, quantifiable factors that can be compared with those of other states in determining quality of life for veterans in such states; (iii) assessing Virginia's current key performance indicators against those of other states; (iv) identifying legislative and budgetary recommendations; and (v) creating a scorecard of Virginia's key performance indicators to be presented to the General Assembly Military and Veterans Caucus at the first meeting of each regular session.

The Commissioner of the Department of Veterans Services or his designee shall, as applicable, serve as chairman of the work group. As chairman, he shall be responsible for



convening meetings, taking and publishing minutes, and reporting the findings and recommendations of the work group in a report to the Governor and the Chairmen of the House Committee on General Laws and the Senate Committee on General Laws and Technology. The work group shall complete its meetings by November 30, 2023 and submit such report by the first day of the 2024 regular session.



Appendix B: Statewide Strategic Plan



STATEWIDE STRATEGIC PLAN 2024 - 2029



Making Virginia the Best
State for Veterans





ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This statewide plan was developed collaboratively by the Veterans Strategic Plan Workgroup established under House Bill 1759 introduced in the 2023 General Assembly Session. Convened by the Commissioner of the Department of Veterans Services (DVS), the workgroup was responsible for the study and development of recommendations for implementing a statewide strategic plan to guide legislation to make Virginia the best state for veterans.

.....

WORKGROUP MEMBERS

- Senator John Bell
- Delegate Mike Cherry
- Major Andrew Czaplicki
- Major Mario Flores
- Commissioner Daniel Gade
- Major Kevin Hoffman
- Captain (Ret.) Thurraya Kent
- Senator Bryce Reeves
- Delegate David Reid
- Assistant Secretary Jordan Stewart
- Chief Warrant Officer (CW5) (Ret.) Phyllis Wilson

DVS STAFF & ADVISORS

Support Staff

- Meagan Altizar
- Kim Barton
- Monique Brabham
- Angela Bufano
- Tramaine Carroll-Payne
- Michele Crone
- Montwrace Cunningham
- James Darragh
- Guy Dinkins

- Kyndall Drumheller
- Claudia Flores
- Jasmine Gore
- Brandi Jancaitis
- Eric Johnson
- Patrice Jones
- Danielle Orbe
- Brian Wofford

Senior Advisors

- Steven Combs
- Joyce Henderson
- Kathleen Jabs
- John Lesinski





VISION



Make Virginia the best state for service members, veterans, and their families to live, work, lead, and raise a family.

STRATEGIC GOALS

GOAL 1

Increase labor force participation rate for transitioning service members, veterans, and their families to maximize economic outcomes.



GOAL 2

Make Virginia the easiest state for service members, veterans, and their families to transition, reskill, and upskill.



GOAL 3

Attract more transitioning service members, veterans, and their families to move to Virginia through tangible economic incentives.



GOAL 4

Honor veterans' service, sacrifice, and legacy by promoting and providing high quality programs and services.



GOAL 5

Reduce obstacles to reliable and affordable housing options for transitioning service members, veterans, and their families.



GOAL 6

Reduce the rate of homelessness for veterans and their families in Virginia.



1





GOAL 1



Increase labor force participation rate for transitioning service members, veterans, and their families to maximize economic outcomes.

Action 1.1: General Assembly amends the budget appropriation for Veterans Benefit Services to expand the Virginia Values Veterans (V3) grant program eligibility to include veterans and military spouse hires in businesses and nonprofit organizations with 300 or fewer employees and local governments of any size.



Action 1.2: General Assembly increases the budget appropriation for Veterans Benefit Services to \$1,000,000 for V3 grant disbursement and increases the grant amount to \$5,000 each.



Action 1.3: DVS partners with the Department of Workforce Development and Advancement to create a pilot job matching and resource navigation program for transitioning service members, veterans, and their families.

Action 1.4: General Assembly authorizes the establishment of the Military and Veterans Legislative Fellowship Program.



 **Year 1 Legislative and Budgetary Priority**



Key Performance Indicators

Veteran Labor Force
Participation
Rate

% of Veterans Living
Above the
Poverty Line





GOAL 2 ACTIONS




Make Virginia the easiest state for service members, veterans, and their families to transition, reskill, and upskill.

Action 2.1: General Assembly authorizes a workgroup convened by the Department of Workforce Development and Advancement to determine best practices and strategies to standardize services across institutions of higher education and optimize the amount of credit received for military service and training.

Action 2.2: General Assembly amends Virginia code to ensure that dependent children and spouses of service members and veterans residing in Virginia are eligible for in-state tuition rates regardless of length of residency.

Action 2.3: General Assembly optimizes the tuition assistance program for members of the Virginia National Guard.

Action 2.4: General Assembly authorizes Virginia joining additional reciprocal  credentialing compacts, specifically teacher mobility, cosmetology, physician assistant, dentist and dental hygienist, massage therapists, social work, and any other compacts as they become available.



Year 1 Legislative and Budgetary Priority



Key Performance Indicators

Number of
Compacts Joined

Dependent
Education Benefit

Waived Veteran
Tuition Rate





GOAL 3 ACTIONS



Attract more transitioning service members, veterans, and their families to move to Virginia through tangible economic incentives.

Action 3.1: General Assembly authorizes the establishment of a Veteran Transition Tax Credit Program to incentivize transitioning service members to move to Virginia at end of their active-duty service, to include those who join the Virginia Army or Air National Guard and the Virginia-based Reserve Components. ★

Action 3.2: General Assembly allows Virginia procurement set asides for veteran-owned businesses operated in Virginia.

Action 3.3: General Assembly authorizes low or no-interest loans for veteran-owned small businesses operated in Virginia.

Action 3.4: General Assembly approves a Virginia constitutional amendment to standardize property tax waivers for surviving spouses of service members who died in the line of duty. ★

★ **Year 1 Legislative and Budgetary Priority**



Key Performance Indicator

Military Retirement
Pay Exemption from
State Income Tax





GOAL 4 ACTIONS



Honor veterans’ service, sacrifice, and legacy by promoting and providing high quality programs and services.

Action 4.1: Department of Veterans Services collaborates with Department of Education to provide training to support Purple Star Designation Programs in Virginia schools.

Action 4.2: General Assembly approves a budget increase for salaries for Veteran Service Representatives (VSRs) to support retention of VSRs.



Action 4.3: Department of Veterans Services improves partnership and influence with Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services to increase veteran access to behavioral health services across the Commonwealth.

Action 4.4: Department of Veterans Services creates a healthcare resource navigation function within the agency.

Action 4.5: General Assembly directs the Office of Data Governance and Analytics to create and execute a multi-agency data sharing agreement to share veteran-specific data with the Department of Veterans Services in order to expand the data-informed outreach plans for veterans.



Action 4.6: General Assembly approves a Department of Veterans Services budget request for marketing resources for veteran outreach.



Action 4.7: Department of Veterans Services develops a long-term plan and funding requests to improve agency infrastructure and capital assets throughout the Commonwealth.

 **Year 1 Legislative and Budget Priority**



Key Performance Indicators

Veteran Spouse and Dependent Burial at No Cost

National Guard & Reserve (No Active Duty) Eligible for Burial





GOAL 5 ACTIONS



Reduce obstacles to reliable and affordable housing options for transitioning service members, veterans, and their families.

Action 5.1: General Assembly establishes funding for veteran home improvement grants for depreciated housing in Virginia.

Action 5.2: General Assembly authorizes the establishment of a Veteran First Time Homebuyer Tax Credit Program in which a \$5,000 tax credit is available to military veterans who purchase a primary home in Virginia for the first time. ★

Action 5.3: Department of Veterans Services partners with Habitat for Humanity to expand Habitat for Heroes and Veterans Build to increase veteran homeownership in Virginia.

Action 5.4: Department of Veterans Services partners with Department of Housing and Community Development to apply for grant funding to support a Virginia Veterans Rent Relief Program.

★ **Year 1 Legislative and Budgetary Priority**



Key Performance Indicators

Veteran Homeownership Rates

% of Veterans Experiencing Housing Problems*

*Includes problems of quality, crowding, or cost





GOAL 6 ACTIONS



Reduce the rate of homelessness for veterans and their families in Virginia.

Action 6.1: Department of Veterans Services partners with Virginia Housing to apply for U.S. Department of Veterans' Affairs Grant and Per Diem (VA GPD) Case Management grants that help veterans obtain and retain permanent housing.

Action 6.2: Department of Veterans Services partners with Virginia Housing to apply for grant funds to support a Virginia Veterans Mortgage Relief program that helps military families avoid foreclosure.



Key Performance Indicator

% of Veterans
Experiencing
Homelessness





SCORECARDS

Quality of Life

Key

- ★ Outperforming All
- ▲ Improvement Needed

Virginia
Border State
Nonborder State



Key Performance Indicator*	Virginia	Kentucky	Maryland	North Carolina	Tennessee	West Virginia	Florida	Texas
Veterans as % of adult population	10.2% ★	7.2%	7.4%	8.0%	8.0%	8.3%	8.2%	6.7%
Veteran Labor Force Participation Rate	59.7% ★	46.9%	55.3%	44.1%	45.7%	46.4%	44.2%	57.0%
% of Veterans Living Above the Poverty Line	95.1% ★	91.5%	95.0%	92.8%	92.4%	91.3%	92.8%	93.4%
Number of Interstate Licensure Compacts Joined	7 ▲	9 ★	7	6	9 ★	8	4	5
Veteran Homeownership Rates	77.6% ▲	77.6%	79.0%	77.9%	80.4%	82.8% ★	80.1%	74.9%
% of Veterans Experiencing Housing Problems**	14.5% ▲	13.4%	15.1%	15.0%	13.2%	10.4% ★	16.9%	16.0%
% of Veterans Experiencing Homelessness	0.06% ★	0.13%	0.09%	0.11%	0.13%	0.10%	0.16%	0.12%

*Datasources: Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey, Housing Assistance Council, National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs
 **Includes problems of quality, crowding, or cost



Benefits Offered

Key

- ✓ Yes
- ✗ No

Virginia
Border State
Nonborder State



Key Performance Indicator	Virginia	Kentucky	Maryland	North Carolina	Tennessee	West Virginia	Florida	Texas
Veteran Dependent Education Benefit	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Veteran gets "Resident" Tuition Rate	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Military Retirement Pay Exemption from State Income Tax	First \$40,000 covered	First \$38,775 covered	\$5K at retirement, \$15K at age 55	Total	Total	Total	No state income tax for any resident	No state income tax for any resident
Veteran Spouse and Dependent Burial at No Cost	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗	No State Veteran Cemeteries	✓
National Guard & Reserve (No Active Duty) Eligible for Burial	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	No State Veteran Cemeteries	✗



Appendix C: Full Work Group Member List

Strategic Planning Committee

Name, Title	Organization, Affiliation
Senator John Bell, Member	GAMVC, Senate Rules Committee
Delegate Mike Cherry, Member	GAMVC, Speaker of the House
Major Andrew Czaplicki, Adjutant General	Virginia National Guard
Major Mario Flores, Member	Board of Veterans Services
Daniel Gade, Commissioner	Department of Veterans Services
Major Kevin Hoffman, Member	Joint Leadership Council
Captain (Ret.) Thurraya Kent, Member	Board of Veterans Services
Senator Bryce Reeves, Previous Officer	GAMVC, Senate Rules Committee
Delegate David Reid, Previous Officer	GAMVC, Speaker of the House
Jordan Stewart, Assistant Secretary	Secretary of Veterans Affairs (Designee)
Chief Warrant Officer (CW5) (Ret.) Phyllis Wilson, Member	Women-focused Veteran Organization



Appendix D: Meeting Schedule

#	Date/ Time	Objectives and Topics	Facilitators	Location
1	June 6, 2023/ 9am-12pm	Project overview; defining and synthesizing strategic priorities and goals	CPP and MG	Virtual
2	July 12, 2023/ 9am-12pm	Goal revision and action review and revision	CPP and MG	Virginia State Capitol Richmond, VA
3	August 16, 2023/ 9am-12pm	Introduction of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), pairing actions with metrics, action prioritization	CPP and MG	Virginia War Memorial, Richmond, VA
4	September 14, 2023/ 9am-12pm	Developing KPIs for goals 1-3	CPP and MG	Virginia War Memorial, Richmond, VA
5	October 18, 2023/ 9am-12pm	Feedback and refining KPIs for goals; reflection on and refining of strategic plan goals and actions	CPP and MG	Virginia War Memorial, Richmond, VA
6	November 15, 2023/ 9am-12pm	Feedback and finalization of strategic plan and scorecard; strategic action prioritization	CPP and MG	Virginia War Memorial, Richmond, VA



Appendix E: Scorecard Resources and Calculations

Housing Assistance Council (2023) <https://veteransdata.info/about-the-data>

The Housing Assistance Council (HAC) developed tabulations of the 2017-2021 American Community Survey (ACS Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) used for certain estimates). From this, HAC created data sheets per state to reflect their tabulations. The data sheets for Virginia and the seven comparison states were used to determine:

- Veterans as percentage of adult population
- Veteran homeownership rates
- Percentage of Veterans living above the poverty line
 - calculated the inverse of the number given of Veterans living in poverty
- Percentage of Veterans experiencing housing problems
 - calculated percentage per state: (number of veterans with housing problems ÷ total veteran population) X 100
- Percentage of Veterans experiencing homelessness
 - calculated percentage per state: (number of veterans experiencing homelessness ÷ total veteran population) X 100

Bureau of Labor Statistics (2023) <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/vet.pdf>

The Bureau of Labor Statistics reported on the status of employment of veterans in 2022. The scorecard includes the Veteran labor force participation rate as indicated in Table 6A. Employment status of veterans 18 years and over by state, 2022 annual averages.

National Center for Interstate Compacts (2023)

The National Center for Interstate Compacts is a technical assistance provider for interstate compacts and supplied state comparison information to CPP via personal correspondence.

National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs (NASDVA) (2023)

The benefit options checklist information was primarily sourced from the National Association NASDVA 2023 State Territory Benefits information spreadsheet provided by DVS. These items are depicted by a yes/no answer or a description of the benefit by state.





COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Department of Veterans Services

Daniel M. Gade, PhD
Commissioner

Telephone: (804) 786-0220
Fax: (804) 786-0302

Department of Veterans Services (DVS) Operations Update

Ladies and Gentlemen:

On November 20 DVS presented a virtual briefing to members and members-elect of the General Assembly entitled *"An introduction to the Virginia Department of Veterans Services and how we can help you help our veterans and families."* Delegate David Reid and Senator Bryce Reeves provided an overview of the General Assembly Military and Veterans Caucus (GAMVC) and the work of the DVS Strategic Planning Group. A copy of the briefing, along with DVS Points of Contact and the DVS One-Pager is attached.

The Suicide Prevention and Opioid Addiction Services (SOS) program, part of Virginia Veteran and Family Support (VVFS), continues to build critical community and research capacity with DVS grants. Forty-one community grants were awarded totaling almost \$4.1 million and eight research grants awarded as of November 1, 2023, totaling almost \$1,650,000. Grantees will implement, study, and expand best practices in veteran peer support, suicide prevention training, risk screening, and clinical therapies for Service Members, Veterans, and Families across the Commonwealth.

For VVFS direct services delivery in October 2023, there was a 60% increase in clients from October 2022 (153 new clients compared to 96). Veterans and families received assistance with resource connections for housing needs (36%), behavioral health support (15%), benefits assistance (10%), homeless assistance (9%), employment (9%).

DVS Benefits continues to strive to respond to the enactment of the Federal PACT Act in FY23 which drove an increase of 12% in DVS claims production over the last year. Among many efforts to meet the growing demand, the service line is innovating and pursuing new technologies such as Appeals management software, Virtual Contact Center, online digital forms, and digital signatures. Internally we have begun to develop Objectives and Key Results down to the individual level, with the intent of achieving first-in-class claims service to Virginia's veterans. We also continue to support the DVS Transition & Education team in their effort to reach more

transitioning military members and their families through Transition Assistance Program (TAP) and other associated programs.

The Veterans Education Transition and Employment (VETE) continues to bridge employment and education gaps for our transitioning service members, veterans, and dependents through the following programs and initiatives: Virginia Values Veterans (V3) Program, Military Medics and Corpsman (MMAC) Program, Virginia Women Veterans (VWVP) Program, Virginia State Approving Agency (SAA), Military Education and Workforce Initiative (MEWI), and Virginia Military Survivors and Dependents Education Program (VMSDEP).

The V3 Program commemorated its tenth anniversary at the V3 Awards Luncheon held October 11, 2023. Governor Glenn Youngkin and General Stanley McChrystal served as keynote speakers before 362 attendees. During this luncheon, V3 recognized fifteen small, medium, large, and enterprise V3 certified organizations for their advocacy and development of veteran friendly programs. V3 has certified 3,236 organizations who have hired more than 129,000 veterans since our program's inception. V3 awarded 69, \$1,000 V3 grants during FY24 to V3 certified companies with fewer than 300 employees to support veteran employment.

Military Education and Workforce Initiative (MEWI) partnered with the Virginia Military Survivors and Dependents Education Program (VMSDEP) to provide laptops to 134 VMSDEP students enrolled at colleges and universities across the Commonwealth.

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) awarded DVS three grants, totaling \$10.6M, to add additional columbarium niches at the Amelia, Dublin, and Suffolk state veterans cemeteries, part of the phased expansion of the three cemeteries. Construction is nearing completion on the Amelia and Dublin projects; the Suffolk project is scheduled to start before the end of the year. The cemeteries will host wreath placement ceremonies on December 16: Suffolk at 9 a.m., Amelia at 12 p.m., and Dublin at 1 p.m. We invite you to join us.

Resident # 1 was admitted to the Jones & Cabacoy Veterans Care Center in Virginia Beach on November 8, just ahead of the Commonwealth's Veterans Day Ceremony and JCVCC Grand Opening on November 10. Construction delays will push the opening of the Puller Veterans Care Center in Fauquier County into next year. The Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center in Richmond and the Virginia Veterans Care Center in Roanoke hosted special Thanksgiving meals for residents and their families on November 23. DVS will host a special ceremony on December 12 at 11 a.m., when the Virginia Veterans Care Center will be renamed in honor of two Virginia heroes. We invite you to join us.

The Virginia War Memorial hosted the annual Commonwealth's Patriot Day ceremony on September 11; a special ceremony marking the 40th Anniversary of the bombing of the Marine Barracks in Beirut, Lebanon on October 23; the annual Veterans Day ceremony on November 10; the "Bringing Honor Home: A Native-American Heritage Month Event" on November 28; and the annual Commonwealth's Pearl Harbor Remembrance Ceremony on December 7. All were well attended. In addition to these in-person ceremonies, the Memorial hosted virtual programs covering the

Battle of the Bulge, the Pathway to Pearl Harbor, and the World War I Christmas Truce. We invite you to join us for future programs – please visit <https://vawarmemorial.org/events/> to learn more.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dan. Gade", written in a cursive style.

Daniel Gade, PhD
Commissioner



COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
JOINT LEADERSHIP COUNCIL OF
VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

101 N. 14TH ST., 17TH FLOOR
RICHMOND VA 23219

*Air Force Association
Air Force Sergeants
Association
American Legion
AMVETS
Association of the United
States Army
Disabled American
Veterans
Fifth Baptist Church Veterans
Ministry
Fleet Reserve Association
Legion of Valor of the
U.S., Inc.
Marine Corps League
Military Officers Association
of America
Military Order of the
Purple Heart
Military Order of the
World Wars
Navy Mutual Aid Association
Paralyzed Veterans of
America
Reserve Organization of
America
Roanoke Valley Veterans
Council
Student Veterans of America
Veterans of Foreign Wars
Vietnam Veterans of America
Virginia Army/Air National
Guard Enlisted
Association
Virginia National Guard
Association
Women Marines Association
Wounded Warrior Project*

Adopted September 20,
2023

JLC 2024

**Expand Tax Relief for Surviving Spouses of Military Services
Members “Killed in Action” to also include
“Died on Active Duty”**

OBJECTIVE:

To reform the Virginia state law, Tax Relief for Surviving Spouse of a Member of the Armed Forces “Killed in Action” through a Virginia Constitutional Amendment to include died on active duty in the section that addresses surviving spouses of members of the armed forces killed in action.

BACKGROUND:

The Virginia Code Title 58.1, Chapter 32, section 58-1-3219.9 species the conditions for exemption from taxes on property of surviving spouses of members of the armed forces killed in action.

The Commonwealth of Virginia also exempts from taxation the real property, including the joint real property of husband and wife, of any veteran who has been rated by the U. S. Department of Veterans Affairs or its successor agency pursuant to federal law to have a 100% service-connected permanent and total disability, and who occupies the real property as his or her principal place of residence. This provision would cover the spouse if the veteran were 100% disabled and subsequently died.

If the military member dies before receiving a 100% rating, the surviving spouse is denied the same benefit. In the 2022 Legislative session, HB 957 was signed by the governor on April 5, 2022, that creates a, voluntary by locality, property tax provision for the above category of surviving spouse.

DISCUSSION:

- a. This constitutional amendment will equalize the benefit with the other three categories surviving spouses of those killed in action (by enemy), 100% Disabled Veterans, rated Permanent and Total by the Veterans Administration, and the surviving spouses of the 100% disabled veterans that are currently eligible to receive the property tax relief.

- b. Approximately only 1% of the American population served in our Armed Forces
- c. Through a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request, we have found that the number of service members who died on duty, meaning that their spouse received Servicemen's Group Life Insurance for the last three years was as follows:
 - 2018 – 40, 2019 – 44, 2020 – 31 In the entire the Commonwealth of Virginia per the Department of Defense statistics show 182 surviving spouses (including surviving spouses of those who were killed in action) (DoD Actuarial Report September 2021).
- d. As of September 30, 2021 the Department of Defense Office of Actuary shows a total of 182 surviving spouses of those both killed in action and died on active duty living in Virginia from all periods of service.
- e. These numbers do not let us know how many of the widowed spouses of the service member owned a Virginia home and/ or moved out of state after the death of their spouse.

RECOMMENDATION: Legislation to be introduced in the General Assembly to amend the constitution to equalize this benefit with those by changing the Code of Virginia to change “Killed in Action” to “died on active duty.”

Stop unscrupulous firms from exploiting veterans trying to obtain VA benefits.

Submitted by VFW Department of Virginia

Like many of its companion organizations on the Joint Leadership Council (JLC), the Veterans of Foreign Wars has proudly honored its commitment to “honor the dead by helping the living” by providing highly trained, certified, quality claims representatives to assist veterans and their survivors in navigating the complex bureaucracy of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) law, rules, and regulations.

For more than one-hundred years, the VFW has championed veterans and the families of veterans in identifying need, compiling documentation, filing necessary forms, and serving as fiduciary power of attorney wherever needed, always free of charge. Through our accreditation with VA, VFW’s global network of more than two thousand Veteran Service Officers (VSO) represents more than 550,000 veterans who received more than 11.2 billion dollars in earned entitlements in 2022, alone.

The VFW has long expressed concerned over bad actors (e.g., unscrupulous law firms, hyperbole-spewing self-appointed “VA claims “experts,” and other predatory charlatans) who promise large disability ratings – whether legitimate or not – in exchange for large fees or a lifetime stream of revenue siphoned from the deserving veteran’s VA disability compensation or pension.

The COVID-19 pandemic allowed non-accredited consulting groups, that the VFW calls “Claim Sharks,” to proliferate. Passage of The Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics (PACT) Act of 2022 – bipartisan legislation championed by the VFW and virtually every other Congressionally-chartered Veterans Service Organization – provided further opportunity for for-profit fraudsters to work on attaching veterans’ stipends. Their television advertisements are ubiquitous, and their spam emails appear daily in in-boxes. These fraudsters often use names that sound like legitimate VSOs and when their true colors are revealed, often change names, chameleon-like to elude Inspectors General, Department of Justice, and other investigative agencies.

On a National basis, the VFW is firmly on record as supporting legislation to prohibit the actions taken by these “Claim Sharks.”

The State of New Jersey has passed legislation making it a violation of the consumer fraud act for persons to receive compensation for advising or assisting or referring any individual to another person to advise or assist, with any veterans benefit matter, except as permitted by federal law. The VFW seeks JLC support to bring similar legislation before the Virginia General Assembly and Governor as a matter of the highest priority.

The following are some of the more egregious practices undertaken by these “Claim Sharks:”

Many of these companies enter into contracts well beyond the scope of what VA allows under law, which is clearly why these companies do not file powers of attorney, consulting agreements, or fee agreements with the VA.

Second, many of these companies purport to provide “medical consultation,” promising faster results for veterans, ignoring that VA has the duty to provide medical examinations and render medical opinions for claimants at no cost to the veteran. Many times, these private consultations result in out-of-pocket fees for veterans for medical opinions to which VA will no longer assign weight in rating the claim.

Third, the VFW believes that many of the marketing practices of these companies are predatory by regulatory and consumer protection entities because promises of no-cost consultations or guarantees of increased benefits are hollow and do, in fact, come with fees attached – often in the form of a percentage of the veteran’s compensation.

Fourth, because they lack legitimate access to claims data as do VA-Certified Powers of Attorney, these companies often ask veterans for sensitive usernames and passwords for their eBenefits or VA.gov accounts. Such access would allow these companies to circumvent VA policies and cybersecurity access controls, permit access to veterans’ sensitive and restricted information, expose personal identifying information (PII) and protected health information (PHI) to unauthorized users and criminal elements, and potentially violate numerous federal consumer protection statutes.

Finally, veterans who believe they have been scammed have little recourse. Many of these contracts include binding arbitration clauses designed to compel payment. Some contracts go so far as to include clauses that prohibit veterans from disclosing terms of the agreements or even speaking negatively about a company or their experiences, without risking defamation litigation.

The work ahead will be challenging as new Claim Sharks seem to be popping up both on the national scale and locally. This is where consumer information and consumer protection laws like this will be paramount.

We ask that the Legislature propose legislation similar to that passed by the State of New Jersey that prohibits these Claim Shark companies from preying on veterans seeking to obtain or modify their VA entitlements. The VFW and other VSOs draw no benefit from this proposed legislation. In fact, it promises to increase the workload for VA-Certified Service Officers; but it will do so while protecting the integrity of the VA system and the privacy and security of veterans personal and health data.

We also request that the new legislation add requirements for full disclosure by non-VA-accredited companies as was required for VA-accredited companies in HB 2077 passed last year.



COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA JOINT LEADERSHIP COUNCIL OF VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

101 N. 14TH ST., 17TH FLOOR
RICHMOND VA 23219

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Air Force Sergeants
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American Legion
AMVETS
Association of the United
States Army
Disabled American
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Guard Enlisted
Association
Virginia National Guard
Association
Women Marines Association
Wounded Warrior Project*

Adopted September 20,
2023

JLC 2024

Virginia National Guard Tuition Assistance Waiver

OBJECTIVE: To ensure Virginia's continued investment and commitment to the men and women of the Virginia National Guard by offering a tuition voucher for state schools in Virginia.

BACKGROUND:

1. The Virginia National State Tuition Assistance Program (STAP) is a long-standing benefit for the National Guard members which provided tuition, up to a certain amount, for eligible National Guard members.
2. In 2021 the STAP program changed to a reimbursement model causing confusion and frustration as substantial costs were shifted to service members that now required them to pay up front and request reimbursement at the conclusion of the semester.
3. In 2021 the law change eliminated the Virginia National Guard's ability to enter into agreement with schools to offer in-state tuition for those service members who live outside Virginia but belong to the Virginia National Guard. This was the first time that Virginia Guard members who live out of state were subjected, by default, to out of state tuition rates. In 2022 the legislature adjusted the requirement to require two years of out of state tuition payments before they could qualify for in-state tuition.

DISCUSSION:

1. The Virginia National Guard performs a critical and essential role in both service to the Commonwealth and to the Nation.
2. Virginia competes with surrounding states to attract talent to their National Guard.
3. The competitive landscape extends to civilian employers many of which offer substantial education assistance.
4. The Virginia National Guard is a tremendous net-positive contributor to the Commonwealth in terms of resources. The Guard receives a 26x multiplier in federal dollars to every state dollar allocated to the organization.

RECOMMENDATION: Provide a tuition waiver system for all eligible Virginia National Guard service members to attend a state school in the Commonwealth.



COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA JOINT LEADERSHIP COUNCIL OF VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

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Association
Virginia National Guard
Association
Women Marines Association
Wounded Warrior Project*

Adopted September 20,
2023

JLC 2024

Enhanced Emergency Response Medical Protections

OBJECTIVE: To ensure Virginia's continued investment and commitment to the men and women of the Virginia National Guard by offering more robust protections for those service members injured during State Emergency Response operations.

BACKGROUND:

1. The Virginia National Guard regularly responds to emergencies in the Commonwealth such as hurricanes, floods, fires, civil disturbance, as well as requests from other states for support.
2. In 2017 Virginia sent 465 service members to the United States Virgin Islands to assist with Hurricane Recovery efforts.
3. In 2023 Virginia will send 121 service members to the Southwest Border in response to Texas Governor Abbott's request.
4. When service members are on emergency response duty they do not receive the same level of medical protections as they would on active duty orders (T32 or T10).

DISCUSSION:

1. Injuries during emergency response fall under the Workmen's Comp program which offers less protection.
2. An injured SM may not be able to return to his or her civilian employer after completing emergency response duty.
3. Other states provide protections additional protection to their service members in the case of an injury such as Florida which keeps service members on orders for up to 9 months following an injury.

RECOMMENDATION: Allow any injured service members to remain on emergency service status up to 90 days to resolve a Worker's Compensation claim.

VDVS-JLC "Day on the Hill" Wednesday, January 17, 2024

PREPARATION:

Date Selection – Review GA 2024 Session & select date – **Wednesday, January 17, 2024**

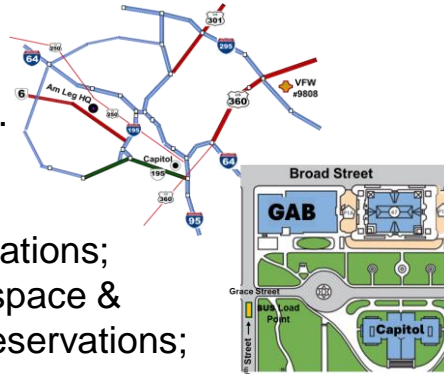


Virginia General Assembly 2024

Mon, Nov 20, 2023 - PreFiling Begins
Wed, Jan 10, 2024 – Session Opens (60 Days)
Mon, Jan 15, 2024 – MLK Day (Lobby Day)
Wed, Jan 17, 2024 – JLC "Day on the Hill"
Tue, Feb 13, 2024 – GA Chamber Crossover
Sat, Mar 9, 2024 - Session Adjourns "Sine Die"

RALLY Points & Muster Locations

– Coordinate organizations & facilities to assist with moving members to the State Capitol.



GA Staff Coordination –

Develop arrival/departure locations; Entry into facilities; Meeting space & session attendance gallery reservations; prayer & announcement.

GA Session Attendance –

Set-Up as many meetings prior to arrival.
GAMVC, House & Senate Committee Members (Chair, VChair, etc...), Individual Elected Representatives and Gallery attendance in both chambers during Session.

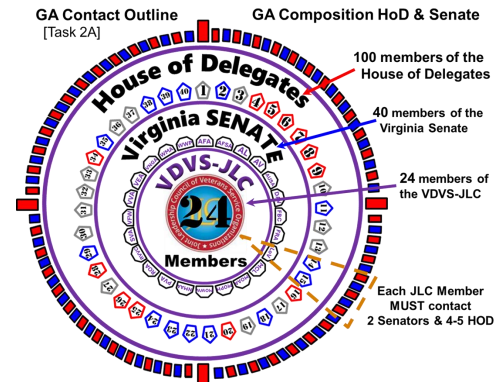
Virginia House of Delegates
Clerk of the House, G. Paul Nardo
HOUSE OF DELEGATES STAFF DIRECTORY
https://publications.virginiageeneralassembly.gov/display_publication/224
Post Office Box 406
900 E Main St, Richmond, VA 23219
Richmond, Virginia 23218

Committee Operations Director **Cathy Hooe**
O: (804) 698-1541 ; M: (804) 400-3255
CHooe@House.Virginia.gov
Committee Operations Coordinator
Debbie Callahan DCallahan@house.virginia.gov

Sergeant at Arms and House Information & Communications Services Director,
Jay Pearson JPearson@house.virginia.gov
HICS@House.virginia.gov
(o) (804) 689-1524 (c) (804) 614-4924
House Chamber – Gallery Seating

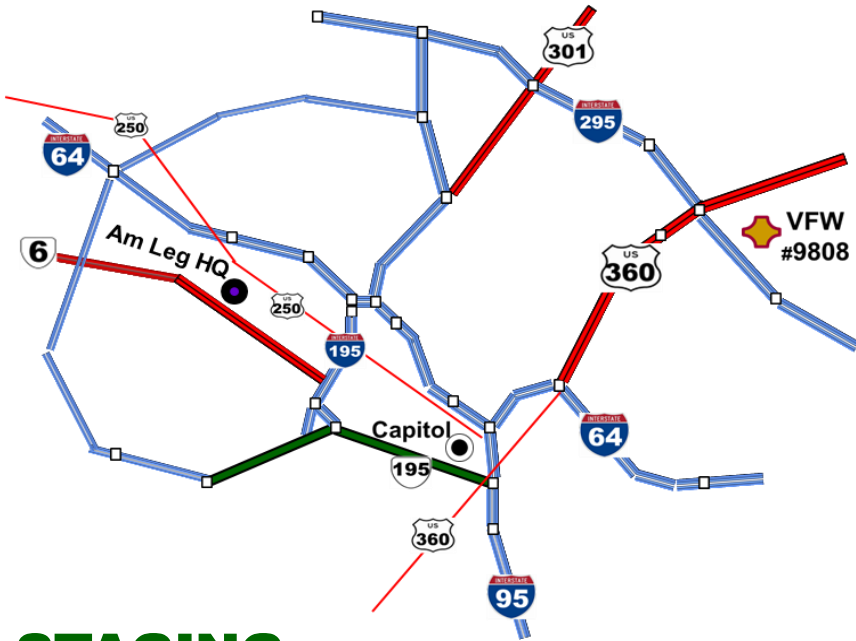
Senate of Virginia (LINK)
Susan Clarke Schaar, Clerk of the Senate
Senate Clerk's Office, Rose Ramsey
Senate Chamber - Gallery Seating
rramsey@senate.virginia.gov
(804) 698-7400 /-7402

Virginia Capitol Police Col. John McKee
(804) 786-2568 (Dispatch)
Security Screening
SGT Brigil & Officer John Nicholson



VDVS-JLC "Day on the Hill"

Wednesday, January 17, 2024



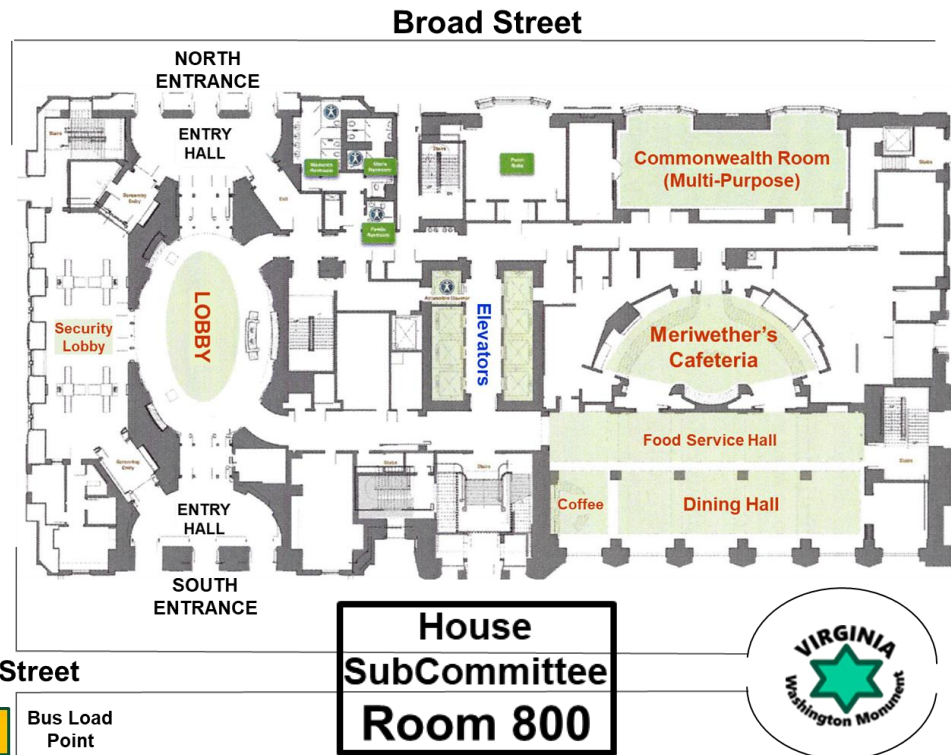
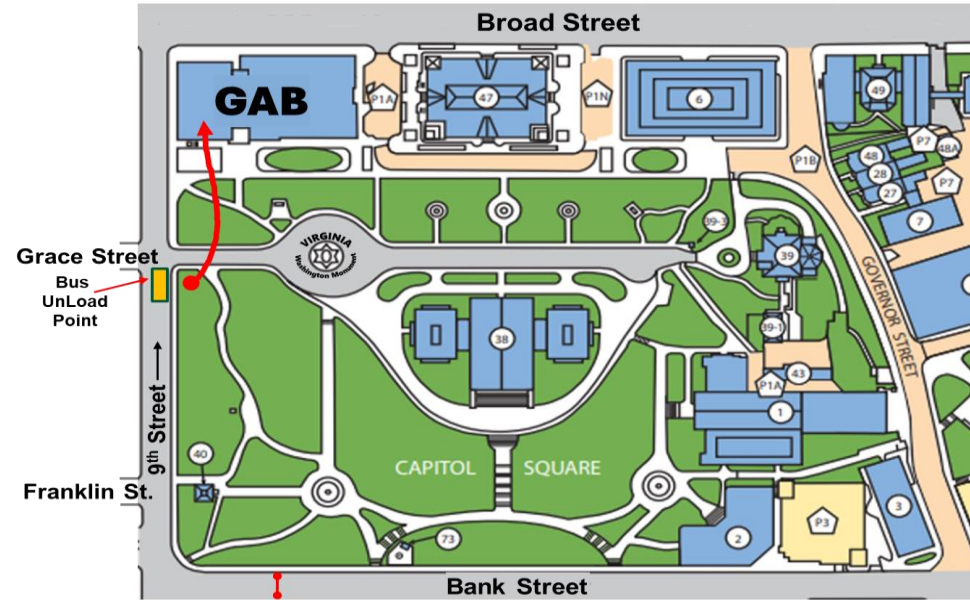
STAGING:

Assemble @ VFW & Amer Leg Rally Pts.
Bus movement to State Capitol GAB
offload 9th & Grace.

Entry of GAB @ South Entrance; proceed
thru **security** & move to elevator.

Check-In & Info Brief: Assemble at Conf
Rm 800. Welcome & info papers provided
as needed. – **ADVOCATE!!**

Virginia General Assembly and State Capitol



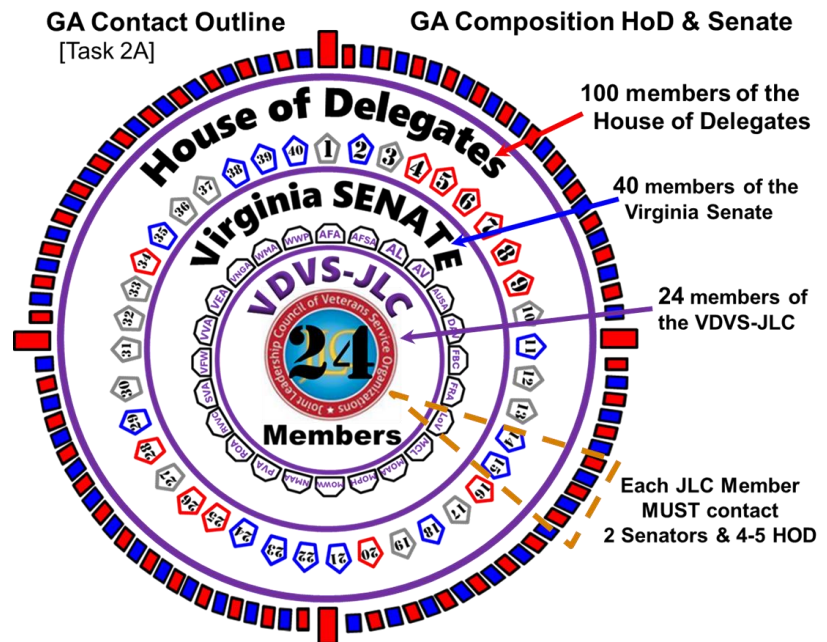
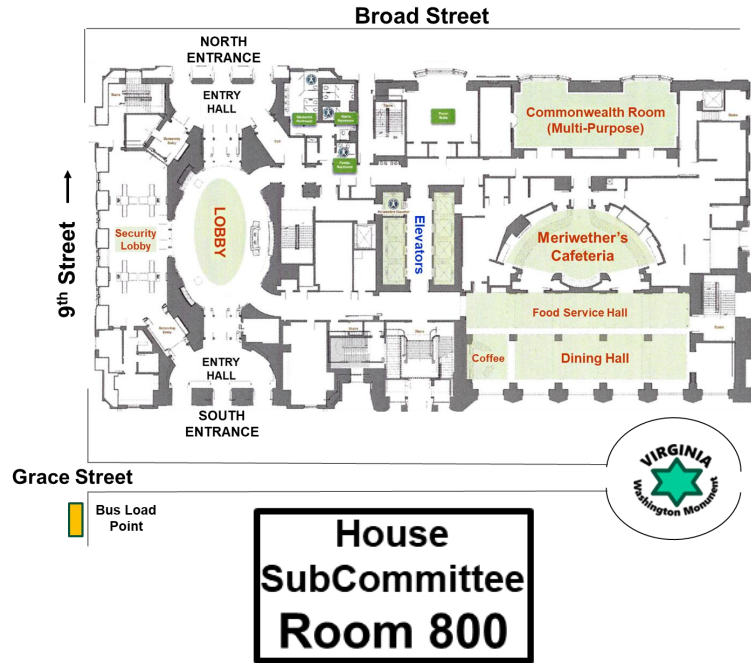
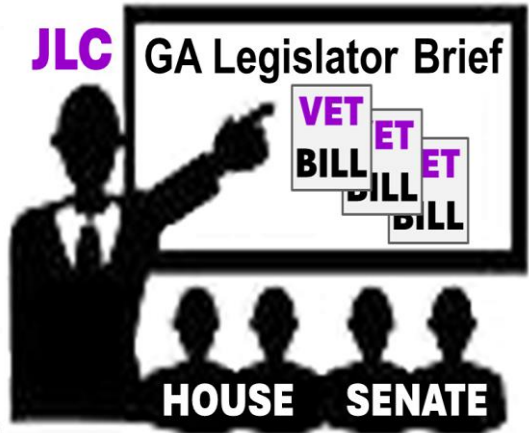
VDVS-JLC "Day on the Hill"

MOVEMENT to CONTACT:

(Staging Complete ; Assembled in Conf Room #800)

Meeting Participation/ Office Visits

- General Assembly Military & Veterans Caucus (GAMVC)
- GA Legislator Briefings
- GA Member Office Visits
- GA Session Gallery Attendance
(Opening Pray & Announcement)



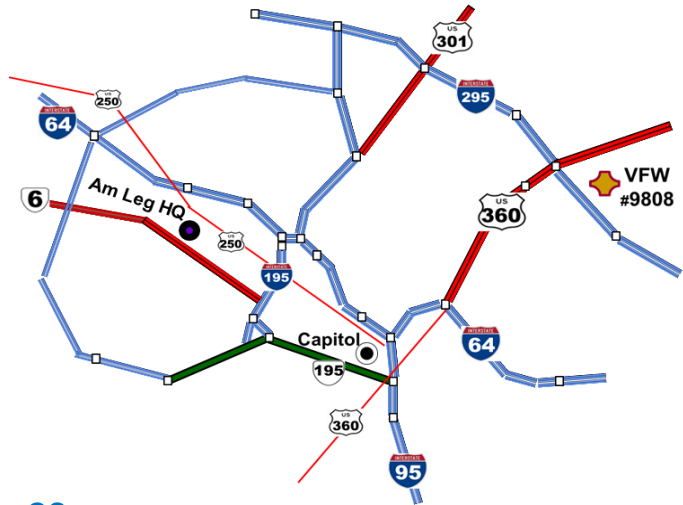
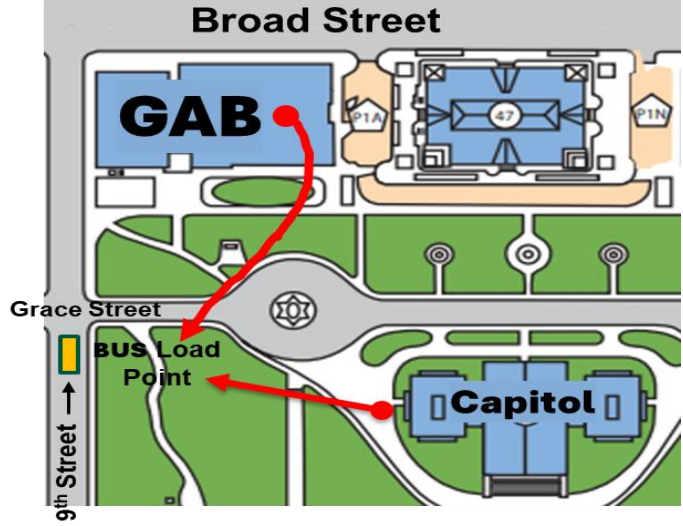
RETURN to BASE (RTB):

POST-EVENT Actions -

(Contact Complete ; Prep to Return

Depart Capitol Gallery

Move to Bus (transport) or Café (lunch)



"Thank You" to elected representatives. Repeat key message points



"FOLLOW-UP" - Invite local elected legislators to your Post's General Membership Meeting to update your members on the status of JLC legislative initiatives.



After-Action Review (AAR) - Schedule an AAR for the leadership & key participants shortly after the GA Session. Take this data & present it to the VDVS-JLC VSO membership @ the 1st Qtr 3rd Meeting SPRING (March 2024)



STAGE:

VFW Post #9808
7168 Flag Lane,
Mechanicsville, VA

Virginia General Assembly
Building **GAB** (State Capitol),
201 North 9th Street
(9th & Broad),
Richmond, VA 23219

TIMELINE – JLC Members	TIMELINE – American Legion
0700 Meet & VFW (Coffee/Donuts)	
0730 Depart VFW (Bus)	
0800 Arr GAB (Bus @ 9 th & Grace)	<p>STAGE: American Legion VA-HQ 1708 Commonwealth Ave., Richmond, VA 23230</p>
0800 GAMVC Meeting (Ldrs)	
0815 Entry (Security) GAB	
0830 Assemble in Conf Rm 800	
0915 JLC Meet Convene	
0945 Break	0930 Depart Amer Leg HQ (Bus)
1000 GA / JLC Brief Rm 800	1000 Arrive GAB (9 th & Grace)
ISSUE Discussion	1015 Entry (Security) GAB
	1030 GA / JLC meet/Brief Rm 800
1100 GA / JLC meet Adjourn	
ADVOCATE	ADVOCATE
1200 Seats (both Chambers)	1200 Seats (both Chambers)
1300 Depart for Lunch (Café)	1300 Depart for Bus
Meriwether’s Cafeteria	1330 Load & Depart GAB
1415 Load & Depart GAB	1400 Arrive Amer Leg HQ (Bus)
1445 Arrive VFW	

VDVS-JLC "Day on the Hill" EXECUTION: Duties

Duty	Primary	Alternate		23-Dec-23
Officer in Charge	Kevin Hoffman	Monti Zimmerman		
Staging Area Manager	Joanne Smith	???		
Duties:	<i>Ensure VFW Post #9808 is open and coffee & Donuts available. Assign a bus driver.</i>			
Bus Driver	???	???		
Duties:	<i>Ensure bus is operational & fueled. Know the route and destination. Have a cell phone # ???-????</i>			
Bus Captain	Rick Raskin	Terry Moore		
Duties:	<i>Marshall passengers & develop/maintain a manifest. Communicate with bus driver</i>			
GAB Manager	Jay L. Marts	Glenn Yarborough		
Duties:	<i>Secure GAB Room 800 for use. POC: Deborah Callahan, Committee Operations Coordinator 804.698.1543 E: dcallahan@house.virginia.gov</i>			
GAMVC Meeting	Kevin Hoffman	Monti Zimmerman	Glenn Yarborough	Denice Williams
Duties:	<i>Attend GAMVC meeting representing the JLC</i>			
JLC Meeting	Kevin Hoffman	Monti Zimmerman	Glenn Yarborough	Claudia Flores
Duties:	<i>Chair the JLC Meeting</i>			
House Session Attend	Monti Zimmerman	Bill Aramony		
Duties:	<i>Marshall members to assigned seating (50); coordinate with House SGT @ Arms (Jay Pearson)-House Clerk's Office; Info & Comms Svcs 804-698-1500/24, HICS@house.virginia.gov. JLC announcement by Delegate Reid #28 from the floor; AL Chaplain Madtes to conduct prayer.</i>			
Senate Session Attend	Kevin Hoffman	Bill Feasenmyer ??		
Duties:	<i>Marshall members to the assigned seating (15); coordinate with Senate Clerk's Office-Rose Ramsey Rramsey@Senate.Virginia.Gov 804.698.7400; ensure JLC announcement is made by Senator Reeves #28 from the floor; VNGA Chaplain LtCol Brett Johnson to conduct prayer</i>			



101 N. 14TH STREET, 17TH FL.
RICHMOND, VA 23219

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA BOARD OF VETERANS SERVICES

*Michael Dick,
Chairman
Victor Angry
David Ashe
Delegate Jason Ballard*

*Carl Bedell
Senator John Bell
Joe R. Campa
Delegate Mike Cherry
Scott Davidson
Robert Eisiminger
Mario Flores
Delegate Buddy Fowler
Vincent Griffith
Joyce Henderson
Carlton Kent
John Lesinski*

*Senator Mamie Locke
Terence E. McKnight
Delegate Kathleen
Murphy
Senator Bryce Reeves
Melissa Watts
Kevin Hoffman,
Chair, Joint
Leadership Council of
Veterans Service
Organizations*

*Paul Haughton
Chair, Veterans
Services Foundation
Kathy Owens
Chair, Virginia War
Memorial
Foundation*

*Daniel M. Gade, PhD,
Commissioner, Virginia
Department of
Veterans Services*

REPORT TO THE JOINT LEADERSHIP COUNCIL December 14, 2023

The Board of Veterans Services (BVS) recently welcomed three new members to the Board: Retired U.S. Army Captain Scott Davidson, currently serving as the Chief Executive Officer of the GCO Consulting Group; Army veteran Robert Eisiminger, Founder of Knight Point Systems; and Rear Admiral Vincent Griffith, USN (Ret.), currently serving as President of MRO and International Solutions, Noble.

The BVS met on September 21, 2023, at the Virginia War Memorial. Carl Bedell was nominated and unanimously elected to fill the Vice-Chairman position, replacing Ms. Thurraya Kent. The Board received a briefing by Senior Assistant Attorney General James Flaherty on the Freedom of Information Act and we received an operational update from Commissioner Gade.

Chief Deputy Commissioner Steven Combs delivered a presentation on the Virginia War Memorial Carillon project. The Board learned that the Department of General Services (DGS) is leading the restoration project with Phase 2 scheduled for completion in the Summer of 2024. DGS submitted a budget request for Phase 3 and DVS will submit a budget request for operational funding to support a planned November 2025 opening. The BVS unanimously agreed to submit a letter of support for this project to DVS Commissioner Gade and Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs Crenshaw.

Point of Contact (POC) reports presented during the September meeting included Housing / Homelessness / Justice Involved Veterans and Veteran Treatment Dockets, Veterans Cemeteries, and Education.

The next BVS meeting is scheduled for December 15. We will receive the Strategic Plan briefing from Commissioner Gade. We also look forward to receiving a report on the JLC's prioritization of the 2024 legislative initiatives.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Dick
Chairman



VIRGINIA VETERANS SERVICE FOUNDATION
Report to the Joint Leadership Council
December 14, 2023

The Virginia Veterans Services Foundation (VSF) Board of Trustees held their quarterly meeting on December 7, 2023, at the Peninsula Chamber of Commerce in Newport News, Virginia.

There have been two new appointees to the Board. The Governor appointed Marc Andersen from Northern Virginia who has dedicated his life to making investments to those who work to make a difference to serve those who fight for our country. The Speaker of the House appointed Mike Coleman to replace John Esposito.

The Foundation has hired Kayla Arestivo as its Executive Director. Kayla, a licensed professional counselor, is the CEO of Trail for Purpose, supports service members and their families in their fight to overcome the negative effects of trauma, transition, and trials that result from their service in the military. They do this by providing FREE equine-assisted therapies and mental health counseling.

The Foundation Chairman, Paul Haughton, will be stepping down effective December 15. The Vice Chairman, Brad Williamson, will fulfill the duties of the Chairman.

Financially, the Foundation is on sound footing with a balance at the end of September 2023, of \$3.2 million. The Foundation has sent requests to every VSO in Virginia that has given to the Foundation over the past 5 years. We asked that the Foundation to be considered as your organizations consider way to help Virginia Veterans. The response has been favorable so far, and we will provide you with data at your next meeting on the overall giving from VSO's for the entire year.

Attached is a copy of the Foundation Annual Report to the General Assembly, which provides specific information on 2023 operations.

The next VSF Board of Trustees meeting is scheduled for March 14, 2024, at a location to be determined.

Respectfully Submitted,
Paul Haughton
Chairman
Virginia Veterans Services Foundation

JLC 2024 Work Plan

2024 General Assembly (10 Jan – 28 Feb 2024)

- Attend JLC Day ICW **JLC Meeting 1** (VFW Post 9808 Link-Up)
- Attend Virginia National Guard Reception 17JAN (Optional)
- Attend GAMVC Reception ICW JLC Meeting (Date TBD, Optional)
- Attend GAMVC meeting every Wednesday at 0800 starting 3rd Wednesday
- Implement duty roster to provide coverage during the entire session

Spring Meeting (21 March 2024)

- Conduct AAR of 2024 General Assembly actions
- Call for potential 2025 legislation.
- Report of the Constitution and By-Laws Review Committee
- Nominating Committee requests candidates for Chair & Vice Chair

April – June

- Identify potential initiatives
- Research impacts from previous session
- Submit draft proposals for review
- 30 days out – 2025 potential initiatives distributed
- VSOs socialize with their members for feedback and suggestions

Summer Meeting (18 July 2024)

- JLC Sponsors present to the body
- Initiatives are initially accepted or rejected to move forward
- Elections for Chair and Vice-Chair

July – August

- Updated position papers for all 2025 initiatives sent to JLC members and posted on JLC webpage
- JLC Chair submits JLC 2025 Initiatives to VDVS Commissioner

Fall Meeting (19 September 2024)

- Adopt 2025 Initiatives
- Approve Appointed Officers for 2024 - 2025
- Discuss plan for engagement with Executive and Legislative branch officials prior to and during 2025 General Assembly session

November – December

- Distribute list of legislators (and legislators-elect) to JLC members with “contact assignments” for each JLC member to contact 5-7 legislators or legislators-elect about the JLC and its 2025 Initiatives
- Sponsors find and confirm patrons for JLC 2025 initiatives
- Hold VSO legislative forums; participate in legislators’ forums/town halls
- NLT November 30: JLC Chair submits Annual Report to VDVS Commissioner and Board of Veterans Services

Winter Meeting (On/around December 12, 2024)

- Review Governor’s Proposed Budget
- Receive DVS Agency proposed budget and legislation
- Review and approve any additional 2025 initiatives
- Review list of potential patrons
- Brief election results and impacts