

# Pennsylvania State Veterans Commission Meeting Agenda

September 5, 2024, at 2:30 PM

Location: Wyndham Grand Hotel, Pittsburgh, PA

1000	Call to Order	Chairman Nicholas Taylor
	Moment of Silence	Vice-Chair Constance Snavelly
	Pledge of Allegiance	Chairman Nicholas Taylor
	Introduction of Commission Members	Chairman Nicholas Taylor
	Oath of Office: Ms. Wanda Grover-BAV Alvin Loveless-PSACDVA Mr. William Hines-DAV Mr. Robert Hammaker-DAV Mr. John Fritz	MG Mark Schindler
	Vice-Chairman's Opening Remarks	Vice-Chair Constance Snavelly
	Chairman's Opening Remarks	Chairman Nicholas Taylor
	TAG's Opening Remarks and Comments	
	Approval of 7 June 2024 Meeting Minutes	<b>Requires Vote</b>
	Reading of Official and Other Communications	Chairman Nicholas Taylor
	DAG-VA Opening Remarks and Report	BG (PA) Maureen Weigl
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• PPL, BVH, PIRO</li><li>• Programs Report</li></ul>	<b>Requires Vote</b>
	VISN 4	
	Committee Reports	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Legislative</li><li>• Pensions/Relief/Grave Markings</li><li>• RETX</li><li>• MAL</li><li>• Transportation</li><li>• Veterans' Health</li><li>• VSO Grant</li><li>• Women Veterans</li><li>• PAWVC Update</li></ul>	TBD Mr. Larry Googins Mr. Alvin Loveless Ms. Constance Snavelly Mr. William Hines Mr. Mark Baylis TBD Ms. Lisa Kaye President David Gyger
	Unfinished Business	Chairman Nicholas Taylor
	New Business	Chairman Nicholas Taylor
	Good of the Order	SVC Commissioners
	Agenda Items for Next Meeting	SVC Commissioners
	Closing Remarks	Chairman Nicholas Taylor
	Next Meeting	
	Friday, October 4, 2024, 10AM	
	Arrowheads Community Club	
	Building 9-65 Fort Indiantown Gap	
	Annville, Pa 17003-5002	
	Retiring of the Colors	Chairman Nicholas Taylor
	Adjournment	Chairman Nicholas Taylor



**Call to Order** **Chairman Nicholas Taylor**

The Pennsylvania State Veterans' Commission (SVC) meeting was called to order at 10:00 AM.

**Moment of Silence and Pledge of Allegiance**

Vice-Chairman Snavelly led the moment of silence: This month is filled with many significant military dates from the Navy's, "Don't Give Up the Ship" Day from the War of 1812, to Flag Day, the Army's birthday, and Women's Veterans Day. But as a room full of veterans, let us pay particular attention to June 6<sup>th</sup>, the date marking the D-Day Invasion and the storming of Normandy, France, by British, Canadian, and American troops in WWII in a bold strategy to push the Nazis out of Western Europe and turn the tide of the war for good. An estimated 2,501 American soldiers perished in battle that day. And June 25<sup>th</sup>, which marks the anniversary of the start of the Korean War which resulted in 33,739 battle deaths. Let us never forget those comrades who went on before us who fought for freedom and democracy.

**Commission Introductions**

Mr. Marc Ferraro	(TAG Designee) DMVA Executive Deputy Secretary
BG (PA) Maureen Weigl	DMVA-OVA Deputy Adjutant General
Mr. Nicholas Taylor	SVC Chairman; President, MOAA
Mr. Paul Foresman	Commander, AMVETS
Mr. David Gui	Adjutant, Disabled American Veterans
Mr. Jesiah Schrader	President, PA State Association of County Directors of Veterans Affairs
Ms. Constance Snavelly	SVC V-Chair Woman, Representative, Korean War Veterans
Mr. James Hogan	Adjutant, The American Legion
Mr. Larry Googins	President, Vietnam Veterans of America
Mr. David Gyger	Commander, Veterans of Foreign Wars
Mr. John Getz	Adjutant, Veterans of Foreign Wars
Mr. William Albert	Blind Veterans of America
Mr. Stanley Majocka	Commander, Italian American War Veterans
Ms. Lisa Kaye	Member-at-Large
Mr. Mark Baylis	Member-at-Large
Mr. Michael Brooker	Member-at-Large
Mr. Leonard M. Johnson	Member-at-Large
Mr. Gerald Hawk	Executive Director, AMVETS
Mr. Michael Rang	Commander, Catholic War Veterans
Mr. Philip Arnold	Adjutant, Military Order of Purple Hearts
Mr. Jeff Beiler	VISN 4

**Absent**

Mr. Timothy Alexander	Commander, Disabled American Veterans
Mr. Steven Lavelle	Commander, The American Legion
Mr. Chris Fidler	Director, Keystone Chapter Paralyzed Veterans of America
Mr. Richard Fine	Commander, Jewish War Veterans

**Others Present**

Mr. Nate Silcox	Executive Director, PA Senate VAEP
Mr. Nicholas Farron	PA Senate-VAEP

Mr. David Cowgill	VISN 4 Communications Director
CMS Shawn Phillips	PANG-Army
Ms. Angela Watson	Director, DMVA-Communications
Mr. Gregory Holler-TEAMS	SVC Administrator, DMVA-OVA
Mr. David George	DMVA-PIRO (Programs and Services)
Mr. Craig Andrews-TEAMS	DMVA-Communications
Mr. Kristopher Brown	DMVA-Communications
Mr. Joseph Butera	DMVA-Communications
Mr. Dusty Durand	Director, DMVA-PPL
Mr. Michael Hillman-TEAMS	Executive Director, PA House VAEP
Mr. Jeffrey Cavanaugh-TEAMS	Research Analyst, PA Senate VAEP
Mr. Isaac Evans-TEAMS	Research Analyst, PA Senate
Ms. Taylor Dippery-TEAMS	Executive Secretary, DMVA-OVA DAG
Mr. Bradley Rank-TEAMS	DMVA-PIRO (Programs and Services)
Mr. Paul Devincenzo	DMVA-PIRO (Outreach)
Ms. Jennifer Spitler	DMVA-PIRO (Outreach)
Ms. Karen Olsen	DMVA-PIRP (Outreach)
Ms. Lana Evans	DMVA-PIRO (Outreach)
Mr. Rick Hamp	Special Assistant-DAG-DMVA-OVA
Mr. Joel Mutschler	Director-PIRO
Ms. Serena Cruz-TEAMS	DMVA-BVH, Administrative Assistant
Mr. Dusty Durand	Director, DMVA-PPL
Ms. Sara Herr	DMVA-PPL
Mr. Brian Natali	DMVA-PIRO (Programs and Services)
Mr. Edward Cherry	DMVA-OCC
Mr. Joseph Batt	DMVA-OCC
Ms. Erica Moore	DMVA-PIRO (Outreach-VETConnect)
Mr. Charles Matter	DMVA-OVA
Ms. Marilyn Kelly-Cavotta	DMVA-OVA
Mr. Carl Curtis	VVA
Ms. Allison Kobzowicz	Joint State Government Commission
Mr. Matt Hollenbeck	TAL
Mr. David Wagner	DAV
Mr. Richard Hudzinski	VVA
Mr. Jeff Seller	VA
Mr. Charles Jackson	VFW
Ms. Barbara Loncar	VFW-Sr. Vice Commander
Ms. Claudette Williams	Womens' War Museum (Presenter)
Ms. Leslie Majocka	Guest
TEAMS Virtual Guests	18

**Vice Chairwoman's Opening Remarks**

**Vice Chairwoman Snavely**

Vice Chairwoman Snavely stated: The topic for this month's meeting is to consider submitting awards to recognize deserving veterans in our community and organizations. This room is filled with the senior leadership of the Veteran Service Organizations. As such, we should look for opportunities to recognize and award our outstanding fellow veterans and civilians who contribute much to our veterans' health and wellbeing. The Pennsylvania Veterans Service Award was approved in 2016 and is perfect to use in these circumstances. I prepared a handout with information using updated slides from the June 2016, SVC meeting and an example of an award I'm submitting for one of the veterans in the Honor Guard. The PAARNG Form 638 is now used to submit awards. I asked Greg to send the form and this packet to

everyone in attendance. I'd previously submitted awards for veterans, however, since then, I learned that the form must now be sent electronically. An issue with that that I still need to work through is that one must have access to the PA online site to complete and submit the form. I will update the SVC body as I continue working on this issue. Thank you.

Questions/Discussion

None

**Chairman's Opening Remark**

**Chairman Taylor**

Chairman Taylor briefed the SVC members on the following:

- Chairman Taylor recognized Mr. Nate Silcox Executive Director PA Senate VAEP
- He informed the members he was honored to be the keynote speaker at FTIG National Cemetery for the Memorial Day services on May 26,2025
- The Chairman noted to the members to save the date (04SEP-07SEP 2024) Vet Conference in Pittsburgh where the next meeting will be held and said more information will follow. He did inform members the next meeting will be held on 05SEP24 (Thursday)
- Informed he signed one Educational Gratuity
- Briefed members on some upcoming activities:
  - Governor's Council on Women and Women Veterans June 13 at 1:30PM any questions ask Marilyn Kelly-Cavotta
  - Informed members the Pennsylvania Council of Chapters will hold its quarterly meeting on June 8, 2024
  - Informed members he will be attending a five-day event at The American Legion HQ and make a few remarks
  - Informed the members he will be master of ceremonies at the 249 birthday of the U.S. Army annual ball, held in NJ

Questions/Discussion

None

**TAG's Opening Remarks**

**EDS Marc Ferraro (Designee)**

EDS Ferraro acted on behalf of TAG. He greeted the members and briefed them on the following:

- EDS told the members TAG is currently with the 193<sup>rd</sup> Special Ops and presenting them with the Governor's citation for their outstanding work they did with the long-term facilities and hospitals.
- EDS briefed on deployments: Approximately 1200 soldiers deployed with majority in Africa, 130 airmen deployed throughout the world and US. There are another 1500 soldiers and airmen preparing for deployment. There is a battalion getting ready to replace the current battalion in the Horn of Africa which will most likely be a yearlong deployment
- EDS stated there were many Memorial Day events at FTTG and other DMVA locations
- EDS informed the members TAG attended the PA Guard and Veterans Day event at the Capitol where 17 guardsmen were sworn in and 100-year-old WW2 Battle of the Bulge Veteran Ben Berry was honored for his service, as well as the PA National Guard for their critical performance at the Battle of the Bulge. He also said there will be a Battle of the Bulge event in December 2024 at FTIG.

Mr. Ferraro briefed the members on the new re-organizations of DMVA-OVA in the next 18 to 24 months. He briefed from slides that were attached to the read ahead, and can be found on the SVC website at <https://www.dmva.pa.gov/Veterans/Commissionsandcouncils>

Questions/Discussion

None.

**Approval of the April 5, 2024, Meeting Minutes**

**Motion:** Mr. David Gyger, VFW, made a motion to approve the minutes.

**Second:** Mr. Leonard Johnson, MAL, seconded the motion.

The body agreed; motion carried. Minutes approved with Chairman Taylor’s request for the April 5, 2024 minutes, requested corrections were made.

**Reading of Official and Other Communications**

**Chairman Taylor**

Chairman Taylor informed the members that he had sent a letter to Mr. Richard Fine the listed Commander of the PA Jewish War Veterans organization, enquiring on his health and status with the JWV. Also to draw Mr. Fine’s attention that the JWV have not attended a SVC meeting in quite some time, and to ascertain how they would like to proceed with their SVC membership; as well as inform him he can assign a designee. The Chairman said he will follow up with a telephone call.

Questions/Discussion

None.

**Deputy Adjutant General-OVA**

**BG (PA) Maureen Weigl**

DAG-OVA briefed members on the following:

- DAG-OVA told the members that Executive Director of BVH Mr. Travis Davis will not be briefing today due to being on vacation, and she will do a short brief on his behalf.
- BVH census is now over 1100, the highest in the last three years.
- The BVH homes will be hosting a lot of activities, and she encouraged the members to visit the homes and participate in the activities.
- She informed the members she will send out a draft agenda for the VETCon very soon.

Questions/Discussion

None.

**DMVA Policy, Planning, and Legislation**

**Mr. Durand**

Mr. Durand and Mr. Bengé briefed members on the following:

- Mr. Durand briefed on the slides that were provided to the members in the read ahead they were sent, which is also posted on the SVC website.
- Mr. Durand did say that SB126 is on its way to being passed, it must have the house concur on the rules change/amend then to the Senate for a vote and to the Governor for his signature; everyone is certain it will pass. The passage process was addressed and clarified in the question section by Mr. Nate Silcox-Senate-VAEP after Mr. Hudzinski asked for clarification.
- Mr. Silcox also informed the members of bill 1160 which will make a designate day Vietnam Veterans Day, and bill 1192 allowing the DMVA to lease land and use monies for the Military Family Fund.  
This bill eliminates veterans’ compensation from being counted as income for the Real Estate Tax Exemption Program.
- Mr. Durand encouraged the members to spread the word about the two MAL openings for the SVC and advise for them to apply.
- In closing Mr. Durand addressed the appointments-MAL and to the home’s councils. Those dates are set for service. If a qualified person is appointed after the start of the begin date, they still only serve until the end date. If no person is appointed qualified after the end date that member will be able to continue to serve until replaced.

Questions/Discussion

Mr. Baylis-MAL asked if bill 126 includes the elimination of military retirements/pensions. It appears it only covers veteran disability compensation.

Mr. Johnson asked if a bill will be passed soon providing increased funding for the PA Blind/Paralyzed Pension, and if so which amount-three were proposed. He was told those bills are tied up in budget negotiations.

Mr. Baylis asked what the procedure would be for a veteran organization to join the SVC- he cited the Navy Club. Mr. Durand explained the veteran organization would have to have a state representative formulate a bill to place that particular veteran organization on the SVC which would then have to be voted on passed, and signed into law by the Governor.

**DMVA Bureau of Homes**

**Mr Davis**

DAG-OVA covered that on behalf of Mr. Davis (see above).

Questions/Discussion

None

**DMVA Bureau of PIRO**

**Mr. Mutschler**

Mr. Mutschler briefed on the following:

- Informed members of DMVA-OVA PIRO guiding principal of working together in a collective focus to enhance the well-being of veterans within communities as a collaborating effort together-One Team.
- Mr. Mutschler stressed the importance of cross training with all partners, he cited the cross training with TAL and VFW and focusing on rural areas, such as western PA, to reach those veterans and how effective it is, and how it improves the delivery of services both federal and state.
- VETConnect has a network of over 2000 resources. Held over 300 events and had over 6000 interactions with veterans. They had many personal interactions with veterans helping with home repairs as well as critical interventions with veterans experiencing personal difficulties.
- VETConnect is engaging with corporations to provide a review of benefits to their employees by our VSOs. The most recent was at the request of Bank of America.
- Working with AARP and the PA OAG to ensure veterans are not taken advantage with their benefits.
- Working with the Governor Shapiro on the suicide prevention challenge to prevent suicide in families. Mr. Rick Hamp is the lead on this program and he his working with the research at the University of Pittsburgh and Department of Health, as well as the PA National Guard.
- Mr. Mutschler noted the growing number of tiny veteran housing villages in the greater Harrisburg area which also includes combining benefits.
- He drew the members attention to the read ahead slides in the growing increases the RETX, Educational Gratuity, Blind and Paralyzed Pension programs.

Questions/Discussion

Mr. Johnson asked if there was any deceive movement on the monetary increase with the Blind/Paralyzed Pension. Mr. Mutschler said there are three bills with different increase amounts but currently are in the negotiation stage at the Capitol.

**Approval of State Veterans' Programs Reports**

**Motion:** Mr. Paul Foresman, AMVETS, approve the programs report.

**Second:** Mr. Larry Googins, VVA, seconded the motion.

The body agreed; motion carried. Programs reports approved.

**VISN-4**

**Mr. Jeff Beiler**

Mr. Beiler directed the members to his materials in the read ahead slides and talking points. He briefly highlighted some information:

- He noted VISN 4 is consistently trending up in trust/deliverable services throughout the network.
- VA creating a “compelling circumstances exception for certain former service members “willful and persistent misconduct”. VA will review the compelling circumstances underlying the discharge
- Update on “moon-shot” cancer program- brought services to over 9000 veterans in 30 locations by the end of 2025, increased cancer care in rural areas as well.
- There has been a 20% increase in providing healthcare to veterans.
- Increased homelessness care and placements.

#### Questions/Discussions

**Question 1:** Rich Hudinski brought up the fact that some SSVF vendors don’t provide transportation to Veterans when trying to find housing for them and this creates a barrier for Veterans with transportation issues. Sounded like there may have been a change in SSVF vendors in the WB area and the previous vendor would provide transportation to go look at housing with the Veteran but the new vendor does not offer that?

**Response from VISN 4:** Services provided by an SSVF grantee are submitted in an application by the grantee through the Notice of Fund Availability (NOFA) process: A NOFA is published in the Federal Register in accordance with 38 CFR 62.40, which announces the availability of funds for supportive services grants. Several services are mandated by statute or the NOFO such as case management, connection to VA services and benefits, and legal services. Transportation services are not mandated, but can be offered in a variety of ways, based on locations and resources, and SSVF grantees are encouraged to use or share community and public resources when possible.

“1h. Connections to Transportation Options for Grantee:

1: Direct; 2. Indirect; 3 Both SSVF participants should be supported to connect with transportation on an as-needed basis, for housing stability purposes when the Veteran lacks access to a car or public transportation. Where available, grantees should help participants take advantage of subsidized transportation and free bus passes in their jurisdiction. These are typically offered for low income people who have disabilities or are elderly. Participants should also be connected to local shuttle services to VA Medical Centers, shuttles that typically leave from Veteran service organization sites. To supplement local transportation assistance, grantees have the option to provide transportation to participants themselves to transport participants to service appointments, including health appointments, and housing search- related destinations. When transportation is provided, grantees must devise a written policy requiring that all drivers have a valid driver’s license, cell phone access inside the vehicle, and training on agency transportation procedures. Such policies also must call for insurance for all vehicles used to transport participants. Note, in addition to the resource access approach outlined here, transportation may also be paid for directly by SSVF temporary financial assistance. When transportation is needed, the grantee can use ride sharing companies (Uber, Lyft, etc). In order to justify the need, grantees must provide documentation of the purpose and show that traditional public options are not available.”

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“2g. Transportation Assistance

A grantee may provide transportation assistance if it will enhance housing stability. For example, a participant may require assistance with transportation to a job interview or a medical appointment. Because the use of public transportation is generally less expensive than the use of private vehicles and may be more sustainable in the long-term, grantees should consider providing public transportation tokens or vouchers before offering financial assistance for personal vehicles. If sufficient public transportation options are not locally available, a grantee may provide car repair or maintenance assistance on behalf of a 2g.

Transportation Assistance A grantee may provide transportation assistance if it will enhance housing stability. For example, a participant may require assistance with transportation to a job interview or a

medical appointment. Because the use of public transportation is generally less expensive than the use of private vehicles and may be more sustainable in the long-term, grantees should consider providing public transportation tokens or vouchers before offering financial assistance for personal vehicles. If sufficient public transportation options are not locally available, a grantee may provide car repair or maintenance assistance on behalf of a participant. **“(car repair is an option under GHSA which has a cap – again should talk to their case manager)”**

**Question 2: From Mark Baylis:** My question to Mr. Leizert’s stand in was in regard to homeless Veterans finding housing. A previous organization receiving grants from Dept of VA to provide homeless Veteran housing assistance money had a staff person to be the liaison with landlords and take transportation challenged Veterans to see apartments. The new VA grant recipients don’t have a staff person for that function. I asked him if they could add the requirement to provide that service (housing locator / transport person) to the grant requirements for this year’s applicants to be SSVF / HUDVASH providers.

**Response from VISN 4:** -Case Management is one of the mandated services:

Role of Case Manager in Coordinating Provision of Supportive Services:

An effective case manager should be familiar with the area or community in which the program operates and actively cultivate a working knowledge and connections to relevant area resources such as affordable housing providers; emergency, medical and other care professionals; public benefits offices; employment training and job placement programs; affordable daycare; legal or credit counseling services; transportation, etc.”

Should the Veteran have concerns with their case manager, or the SSVF agency not providing necessary services, it is encouraged that the Veteran first talk to the appropriate person at that agency to inquire further about their individualized plan. This will help the Veteran with self-advocacy as well as helping to develop out another goal, or modify an existing goal, in the Veterans permanent housing stability plan which may include referral to community resources or exploring housing options where the Veteran has more access to transportation. The Veteran can also speak with a VA Liaison (case manager, peer support, etc.) to which they can address any issues identified by the Veteran.

David Cowgill  
 Communications Manager  
 VA Healthcare- VISN 4

<b>Legislative Committee</b>	<b>TDB</b>
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No report.  <div style="text-align: center;"><u>Question/Discussion</u></div> None	
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<b>Pensions/Relief/Grave Markings/State Military Cemetery Committee</b>	<b>Mr. Googins</b>
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Mr. Googins, No official report  <div style="text-align: center;"><u>Questions/Discussions</u></div> . However, mentioned that the VISN 4 care system in Pittsburgh is excellent. He then lodged a complaint that the Pittsburgh VA has admitted they are understaffed, and that should be a priority over handing out pay raises and bonuses to VA executives.	
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<b>RETX</b>	<b>Mr. Schrader</b>
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Mr. Schrader, No official report. However, he will be leaving his role with the SVC, and Mr. Alvin Loveless will be the new PASCDVA representative.

Questions/Discussions

None.

**Member-At-Large Committee**

**Vice Chairwoman Constance Snavelly**

Vice Chairwoman Snavelly briefed: The Committee provided recommendations for updating all the Member at Large documents. Mr. Durand and Mr. Batt are in the process of reviewing and compiling the changes. I will get with Dusty to help finalize the documents. The hope was to have the announcements for the two opening positions posted yesterday. However, issues prevented that from happening. In the meantime, the Committee will be prepared to review all applications for the July appointments as soon as they come in.

Questions/Discussions

None

**Transportation Committee**

**Mr. Hines**

Mr. Hines briefed on the following:

- DAV has 126 Vans, 9 are currently out of service- 6 at auction and 3 were in accidents. However, 1 has been repaired and awaiting payment from VA.
- Mr. Hines said these are YTD numbers through April: transported 18,510 vets, 45,870 volunteer hours, 1,014,814 miles
- All the above numbers are increases from last fiscal year

Questions/Discussions

None

**Veteran Health Committee**

**Mr. Baylis**

Mr. Baylis, No official report

- Mr. Baylis did inform members that the Long-Term Care Council he participates in has finalized their aging plan for PA and said there were no changes from his previous reporting.

Questions/Discussion

None

**VSO Grant Committee**

**TBD**

No report

Questions/Discussions

None

**Womens Health**

**Ms. Kaye**

Ms. Kaye, No official report.

- Ms. Kaye informed members she is part of the Joint State Government Commission. She introduced Ms. Allison Kobzowicz who is the policy analyst. Ms. Kobzowicz said the JSGC received Senate Resolution 46 on Women Veterans Healthcare, and the task force is moving forward, interacting with veterans and medical experts.
- Ms. Kaye invited the members to meet with her and Ms. Kobzowicz after the meeting to share any ideas or suggestions with them.

Some of what was said was inaudible.

<u>Questions/Discussion</u>	
None	
<b>PAWVC</b>	<b>Mr. Gyger</b>
Mr. Gyger, no report	
<u>Questions/Discussions</u>	
None	
<b>Unfinished Business</b>	
Chairman Taylor said HOF SOP is finished and will go to legal counsel for review. He said he will present it after the review and the new incoming commanders are in place at the SVC	
<u>Questions/Discussions</u>	
None	
<b>New Business</b>	
Chairman stressed to the members the importance of their attendance at VETCon in Pittsburgh.	
<u>Questions/Discussion</u>	
None	
<b>Good of the Order</b>	
None	
<b>Presentation: Women Veterans Museum</b>	<b>Ms. Claudette Williams</b>
Ms. Williams, a 30-year retired army veteran, provided an overview of the Women Veterans Museum, which is in Monroe County, PA. She briefed from the slides in the read ahead-see slides for details. However, a few items are highlighted.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ms. Williams and other women veterans after experiencing a public understanding of the major roles women play in the military-past, present and will in the future decided to educate by forming a museum dedicated to women in the military.</li> <li>• Once the VFW did a story in their magazine the museum received a lot of attention both visitors and receiving artifacts.</li> <li>• The museum unexpected had visitors that were allied Korean War Veterans seeking assistance. Ms. Williams then moved the museum to begin doing research, finding resources and networking with the VA to assist. She mentioned how grateful she is to now be connected to the PA DMVA.</li> <li>• She said she went back to school to get her master's in therapy to treat veterans in her area that are recently released from the prison in the area that are addicted to drugs/alcohol.</li> </ul>	
<b>Agenda for Next Meeting</b>	
PSACDVA President Schrader suggested that the MAL committee add a position dedicated to having a Gulf War Veteran on the commission. Ms. Snavelly, chairwomen of committee said it's in process. Chairman Taylor said he will assist to work on it now, "no need to wait for a legislative committee chair.	
Mr. Gyger mentioned something, but it was inaudible.	
Mr. Johnson mentioned something but is was inaudible.	
Mr. Baylsis mentioned something about a presenter but mostly was inaudible. Chairman Taylor said maybe the presenter can be arranged at the October meeting, but not the September meeting.	
<b>Closing Remarks</b>	

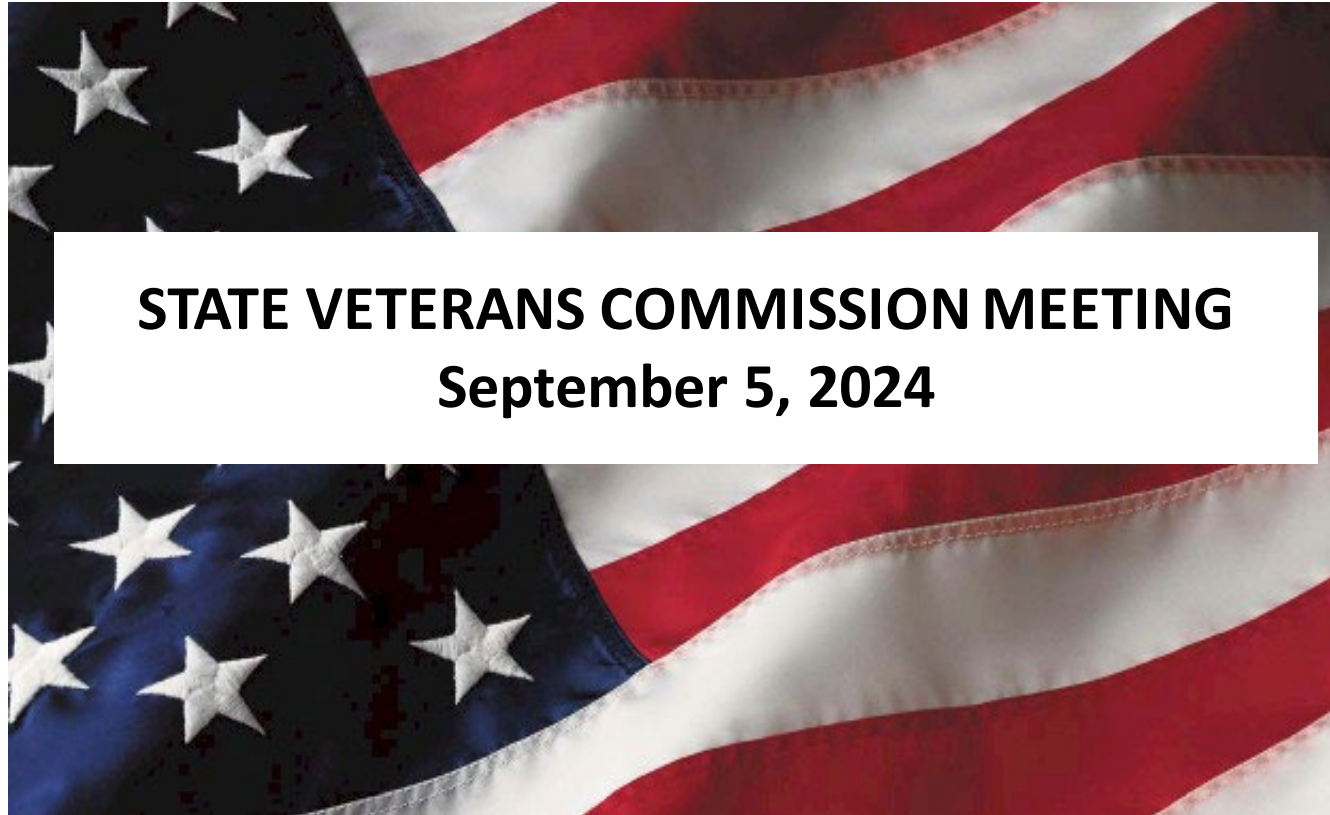
None.

**Next Meeting**

Thursday September 5, 2024, at 10:00 AM  
Wyndham Grand Hotel-Downtown  
600 Commonwealth PL  
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

The minutes of this meeting are respectfully submitted by:

BG (PA) Maureen Weigl  
Deputy Adjutant General-Office of Veterans Affairs



**STATE VETERANS COMMISSION MEETING**  
**September 5, 2024**



**DMVA MILITARY UPDATE**

# CURRENT AND FUTURE UNIT MOBILIZATIONS



2025																
APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG
1-224 AVN DET 1 B - SWB -23 PAX																
56 SBCT - 2-112 IN - HOA#1 -1022 PAX																
56 SBCT - FLEE / FLEW - 13 PAX																
28 MP - GTMO -108 PAX																
					56 SBCT - JMTG-E -167 PAX											
					56 SBCT - HOA#2 -685 PAX											
					213 PC - OSS -16 PAX											
					213 PC - OSS -20 PAX											
						213 PC - OIR -8 PAX										
									528 FIN - OSS - 25 PAX							
										3622 ODCO - OSS - 159 PAX						

ARNG Unit Soldiers in Theater: **1,106**  
 ARNG Soldiers at MOB/DEMOB Site: **0**  
 ARNG Individual Mob: **6**  
 Total ARNG Mob: **1,112**

**Total PANG  
 Mobilized: 806**

**Current ANG Unit Airmen Mob: 113  
 Current ANG Individual Mob: 15  
 Total: ANG Mob: 128**

As of 19AUG24

> community > commonwealth > country



# CURRENT MOBILIZATIONS & TOTAL DEPLOYMENTS



PAANG Current Deployments		
Unit	Opn	Pax
193 SOW	OFS-OIR-OSS, Other	8/1
111 ATKW	IPR (HS), OFS-OIR-OSS, TS	36/6/40
171 ARW	Alert Status (HS), OFS-OIR-OSS	37
<b>Total PAANG Deployed</b>		<b>128</b>

**Total PANG Deployed 806**



# CURRENT MOBILIZATIONS & TOTAL DEPLOYMENTS



<b>PAANG Current Deployments</b>		
<b>Unit</b>	<b>Opn</b>	<b>Pax</b>
193 SOW	CENTCOM, AFRICOM	1/16
111 ATKW	IPR (HS), Various	36/44
171 ARW	Alert Status (HS), OFS-OIR-OSS	37/1
<b>Total PAANG Deployed</b>		<b>135</b>



## Possible Fall Agenda

**HB 2417** (Borowski) An Act amending Title 51 (Military Affairs) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, for Deputy Adjutant General for Veterans' Affairs, for qualifications and status, for specific duties and for accreditation; in veterans' organizations, further providing for grants to veterans' service officer programs; and making editorial changes. **08/02/2024 House VAEP Subcommittee Meeting.**

**SB 933** (Mastriano) An Act amending Title 51 (Military Affairs) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in Department of Military Affairs, further providing for advisory councils for veterans' homes. **08/02/2024 House VAEP Subcommittee Meeting.**

**SB 973** (Pennycuick) An Act amending Title 51 (Military Affairs) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in general provisions, providing for veteran of Korean Armed Forces. **08/02/2024 House VAEP Subcommittee Meeting.**

**SB 1192** (Gebhard) An Act amending Title 51 (Military Affairs) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in Department of Military Affairs, further providing for Fort Indiantown Gap; and establishing the Service Members, Veterans and their Families Fund. **08/02/2024 House VAEP Subcommittee Meeting.**

**HB 1722** (Krupa) An Act amending Title 51 (Military Affairs) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in professional and occupational licenses, providing for military medical personnel pilot program. **09/27/2024 Referred to House VAEP Cmte.**

**HB 2392** (D Miller) An Act amending the act of October 24, 2018 (P.L.733, No.118), known as the Assistance and Service Animal Integrity Act. **06/07/2024 Referred to House VAEP Cmte.**

**HB 2452** (Guenst) An Act amending the act of March 4, 1971 (P.L.6, No.2), known as the Tax Reform Code of 1971, in personal income tax, further providing for classes of income; in corporate net income tax, further providing for definitions; and providing for personal health investment tax credit. **09/05/2024 House VAEP Cmte Meeting**

**SB 531** (Baker) An Act amending Title 51 (Military Affairs) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in State Veterans' Commission and Deputy Adjutant General for Veterans' Affairs, further providing for Veterans' Trust Fund. **10/03/2023 Referred to House VAEP Cmte.**

## Blind, amputee and paralyzed veteran's pensions

**HB 1091** (Williams, D) \$270/month. **05/23/23 Awaiting 2nd Consideration, laid on the table.**

**HB 542** (Gregory) \$250/month. **3/20/23 Introduced and referred to House VAEP Cmte.**

**SB 189** (Ward, J) \$200/month. **05/01/23 Awaiting 2<sup>nd</sup> Consideration, re-referred to Senate Appropriations.**

[Report on RETX bills](#): HB 248, HB 674, HB 717, HB 1227, HB 1401, HB 2044, SB 177, SB 194, SB 450, SB 844, SB 947

[Report crossed chambers bills](#): HB 1139, HB 1283, HB 1626, HB 1747, HB 1963, HB 269, HB 363, HB 71, HB 877, SB 1139, SB 1160, SB 1192, SB 162, SB 194, SB 248, SB 411, SB 438, SB 479, SB 531, SB 698, SB 933, SB 973

[Report on passed bills](#): HB 157, SB 141, SB 146, HB 1086, HB 2301, HB 73, SB 126, SB 447, SR 196, SR 46, HR 335



## Passed Legislation 2023-2024

**HB 1086** (Takac) An Act amending Title 51 (Military Affairs) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in Department of Military Affairs, further providing for veterans registry; and making an editorial change. **Act 71 of 2024 Signed 07/17/2024**

**HB 157** (Pashinski) An Act amending Title 3 (Agriculture) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, providing for qualified veterans and qualified veteran business entities. **Act 21 of 2023 Signed 11/01/2023**

**HB 2301** (Nelson) An Act amending Title 75 (Vehicles) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in registration of vehicles, GWOT Expeditionary Medal, Women Veterans, Borinqueneers Congressional Gold Medal. Fee exemption for loss of eye, limb, CMOH, Purple Heart, POW. **Act 60 of 2024 Signed 7/15/2024**

**HB 73** (Kerwin) An Act amending Title 75 (Vehicles) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in registration of vehicles, providing for Operation Inherent Resolve veterans plate. **Act 36 of 2024 Signed 07/01/2024**

**SB 126** (Mastriano) An Act amending Title 51 (Military Affairs) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, providing for the exclusion of veterans' benefit payments from income for Commonwealth programs. **Act 27 of 2024 Signed 06/17/2024**

**SB 141** (Mastriano) An Act amending Title 51 (Military Affairs) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in decorations, medals, badges and awards, further providing for authorized decorations, medals, badges and awards. **Act 16 of 2023 Signed 10/23/2023**

**SB 146** (Brewster) An Act amending Title 30 (Fish) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in fishing licenses, further providing for exemptions from license requirements. **Act 1 of 2024 Signed 03/28/2024**

**SB 447** (Mastriano) An Act amending Title 51 (Military Affairs) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in Department of Military Affairs, establishing the PA VETConnect Program. **Act 70 of 2024 Signed 07/17/2024**

**HR 335** (Takac) A Resolution establishing the Pennsylvania Task Force on Agent Orange to study and issue a report on how best to connect veterans who were exposed to Agent Orange and their families with the VA benefits for which they may be eligible. **Adopted 3/27/2024**

**SR 196** (Coleman) A Resolution directing the Pennsylvania Commission on Sentencing to conduct a thorough and comprehensive study on the effects that post-traumatic stress disorder or injury, military sexual trauma and traumatic brain injury have on service members, veterans and their families who are directly or indirectly involved or implicated in any portion or component of the criminal justice system. **Adopted 6/12/2024**

**SR 46** (Pennycuik) A Resolution directing the Joint State Government Commission to establish the Task Force on Women Veterans' Health Care. **Adopted 6/22/2023**



## 2024 Significant Dates

**Continuing Resolutions:** Federal Budget has passed to fund all federal departments until October 1, 2024

### General Assembly

**Senate:** Sept 16, 17, 18, 30, Oct 1, 2, 7, 8, 9, 21, 22, 23, Nov 13, 14

**House:** Sept 23, 24, 25, 30, Oct 1, 2, 21, 22, 23, Nov 12, 13

New Session Begins January 7, 2025

**Last day to REGISTER before General Election:** October 21, 2024

**General Election:** November 5, 2024

General Assembly Schedule can be found at: [Session Information - PA General Assembly \(state.pa.us\)](https://www.state.pa.us/session-information)

For all Pennsylvania Election dates: [Upcoming Elections \(pa.gov\)](https://www.pa.gov/elections)

**Now is the time to start considering proposals for next year.**

# Survey Updates



SVH Survey Table as of August 16, 2024

SVH	Regulatory Agency	Survey Reason/Type	Survey Date(s)	Status/comments
DVVH	DOH Nursing	Annual Recertification	12/18/23 - 12/21/23	Cleared
	DOH Nursing	Abbreviated - Complaint	01/11/24	Cleared
	DOH Life Safety	Annual Recertification	02/20/24	Cleared
	VA	Annual Recertification	12/19/23 - 12/22/23	CAP accepted, date certain 05/01
GMVC	DOH Nursing	Annual Recertification	08/13/24 - 08/16/24	Results Pending
	DOH Life Safety	Annual Recertification	09/12/23	Cleared
	VA	Annual Recertification	02/27/24 - 03/01/24	CAP accepted, dates cert. 07/31, 10/31
	DOH Nursing	Annual Recertification	07/15/24 - 07/18/24	POC accepted, date certain 09/04
HVH	DOH Nursing	Abbreviated - Complaint	01/17/24	Cleared
	DOH Nursing	Annual Recertification	07/15/24 - 07/17/24	POC accepted, date certain 08/26
	DOH Life Safety	Abbreviated - Incidents	08/15/24	Results Pending
	DHS	Annual Recertification	03/05/24 - 03/06/24	Cleared
	VA	Annual Recertification	06/10/24 - 06/14/24	Cleared, provisional certification

SVH Survey Table as of August 16, 2024

Regulatory Agency	Survey Reason/Type	Survey Date(s)	Status/comments
DOH Nursing	Annual Recertification	04/23/24 - 04/26/24	Cleared
DOH Life Safety	Annual Recertification	04/16/24	Cleared
DHS	Annual Recertification	01/25, 01/26, 04/11	Cleared
VA	Annual Recertification	03/18/24 - 03/22/24	CAP accepted, date certain 06/13
DOH Nursing	Annual Recertification	06/11/24 - 06/14/24	POC accepted, date certain 08/09
DOH Nursing	Abbreviated - Complaint	03/14/24	Cleared
DOH Life Safety	Annual Recertification	06/10/24	Cleared
DHS	Annual Recertification	10/04/23	Cleared
VA	Annual Recertification	02/26/24 - 03/01/24	CAP accepted, date certain 11/01
DOH Nursing	Annual Recertification	05/06/24 - 05/10/24	Cleared
DOH Nursing	Abbreviated - Complaint	08/07/24	Cleared
DOH Nursing	Abbreviated - Complaint	07/03/24	Cleared
DOH Nursing	Abbreviated - Complaint	06/13/24	Cleared
DOH Nursing	Abbreviated - Complaint	01/30/24 - 01/31/24	Cleared
DOH Life Safety	Annual Recertification	05/14/24 - 05/15/24	Cleared
VA	Annual Recertification	05/07/24 - 05/10/24	CAP accepted, dates cert. 07/31, 10/31

# Infection Prevention Update



Pennsylvania  
Department of Military  
and Veterans Affairs

COVID-19, Influenza, RSV Data							
Friday, August 9, 2024	DVVH	GMVC	HVH	PSSH	SEVC	SWVC	TOTAL
Total # of COVID + residents	9	2	0	0	0	1	12
Total # of COVID + staff	5	4	1	0	4	2	16
Total # of residents + for RSV	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total # of residents who ONLY received the 2nd 2023/2024 VACCINE	88	117	111	94	122	111	641
Total # of residents who have received the RSV vaccine	136	142	166	116	152	135	848

5 Star rating- last updated: July 31, 2024						
	DVVH	GMVC	HVH	PSSH	SEVC	SWVC
Overall	5	5	3	4	5	3
Health Inspection	4	4	2	3	3	2
Quality Measures	5	5	4	3	5	4
Staffing	5	5	5	5	5	5
Changes from June/July 2024	Staffing Changed: 4 to 5	Unchanged	Unchanged	Unchanged	Overall changed: 4 to 5 Staffing Changed: 4 to 5	Overall Changed: 4 to 3 Quality Measures: 5 to 4

Resident Status: August 16, 2024			
	Isolation COVID	Quarantine	Isolation RSV
	9	0	0
	2	0	0
	0	1	0
	0	0	0
	0	0	0
	1	0	0

\*Covid vaccines residents only (2<sup>nd</sup> dose): 641  
1 Resident at SWVC  
(residents): 848

\*COVID: 9 Residents at DVVH, 2 Residents at GMVC,  
RSV vaccines

\*Quarantine: 1 Resident at HVH

\*RSV: None



## Pennsylvania Veterans Homes COVID-19 Update

COVID-19 links for information related to the Veterans Homes and skilled nursing facilities.

- <https://www.dmva.pa.gov/Pages/default.aspx>
- <https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/coronavirus/Pages/LTCF-Data.aspx>
- <https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/coronavirus/Pages/Monitoring-Dashboard.aspx>
- <https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/coronavirus/Pages/Guidance/SNF-Guidance.aspx>
- <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/19MpLoPxayE1MDwQJJYZxlSN64V4FJSJPGzfvVBb5Mw/edit#gid=1511961664>



- Our Servicemember, Veterans, and their Families (SMVF) Community
  - Comprises approximately 14% of Pennsylvania's total population
  - Find resources and link to our team through PA VETConnect – [dmva.pa.gov/vetconnect](https://dmva.pa.gov/vetconnect)
- PACT Act Impact:
  - Over 1.5M Total Veterans/Survivors nationwide completed PACT Act-related claims
    - Over 52,000 from PA Veterans/Survivors PACT Act-related; nearly 74,000 non-PACT related claims (as of 16 August 2024)
    - PACT Act-related impact across state veterans' programs, i.e., Disabled Veterans' Real Estate Tax Exemptions, Pensions, and Educational Gratuity.
  - Visit [www.va.gov/PACT](https://www.va.gov/PACT) to get the latest information and updates
- Expanding Outreach Efforts
  - Pennsylvania Salutes You for Your Service: [www.pa.gov/welcome-back-veterans](https://www.pa.gov/welcome-back-veterans)
  - Sign up for PA Veterans Registry and the *DMVA Digest* – [register.dmva.pa.gov](https://register.dmva.pa.gov)







### We build relationships that amplify service to the SMVF community

- Region 1 - VSS meet an affordable housing organization out of Butler County that houses Veterans. She was asked to come and speak to a Veteran who was struggling to get personal care and VA assistance. VSS met with the Veteran and got him directed to the VHA where he is now enrolled and assigned a case worker to get services in his home set up. VSS also reached out to RPOC to see if there was an organization that could provide household goods that the Veteran needed. RPOC reached out to Veterans Miracle Center who will be donating items for the Veteran.
- Region 2 - The Pitt FO VSO encountered a WV veteran while doing outreach who was staying at VAPHS CLC for rehab. The veteran has since been released back to her home in WV but currently has no income. The RPOC reached out to the VOP from the Wheeling, WV Vet Center who was then able to provide three resources for financial assistance to the veteran while she is waiting her VBA claim to be adjudicated.
- Region 3 – VSS attended the equine therapy program at Stars and Stripes in Adams County and was able to interact with 5 veterans including a Vietnam Veteran whose condition is worsening. She was able to educate him on presumptive related to AO and referred him to the CDVA office. Also spoke with several women veterans educating them on benefits and women veterans programming.
- Region 4 – Valhalla Veteran Services had an emergency last week with a shortage of volunteers - RPOC connected with a combat veteran group that meets with the Scranton Vet Center, which resulted in 4 new volunteers to assist as needed back up to assist at the facility for the military share program.
- Region 5 – VSS helped the surviving Mother of a Veteran who died of suicide get grants from the Cannoneers Club and the Travis Manion Foundation to defray the costs of burial. I also had her contact the VA to report his death, terminate his Disability Compensation, and apply for Burial Benefits.

### ■ **Successes**

- >20,600 Connections
- > 2,153 resources
- Building trust within the network



# Reintegration & Outreach Events



Pennsylvania  
Department of Military  
and Veterans Affairs




Outreach Statistics					
	1st Qtr	2nd Qtr	3rd Qtr	4th Qtr	Year to Date
Outreach Events Supported	61				
Mobile Outreach Van Events	7				
Veteran Interactions	1,033				
Claim referrals to County Directors and Service Organizations	321				
Claim referrals to other state, county and local organizations assisting Veterans	290				
Health Care Enrollment Referrals	183				
Number of Veterans Registry Cards distributed	148				
County Directors Office Attended	29				
Legislative attended events	22				

# Amputee & Paralyzed Veterans' Pension



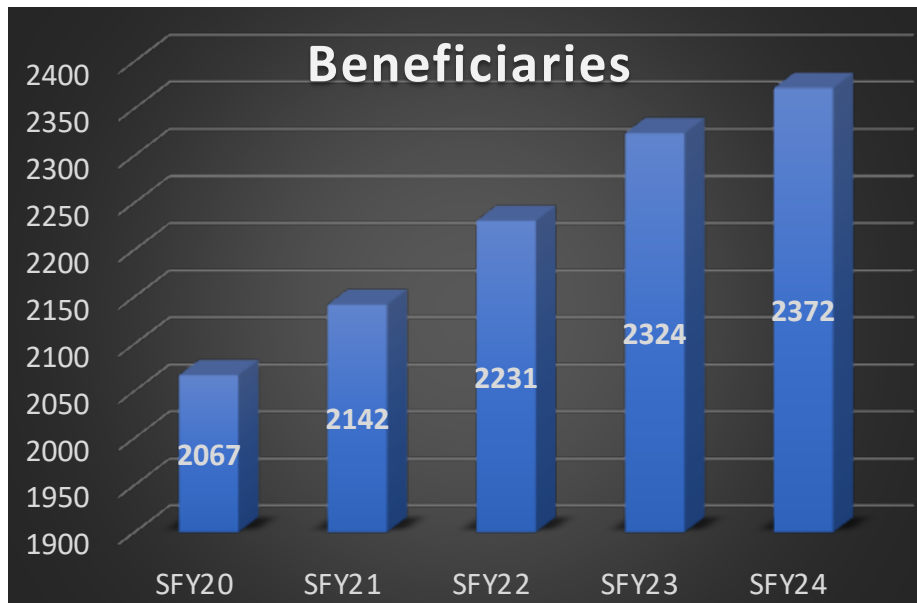
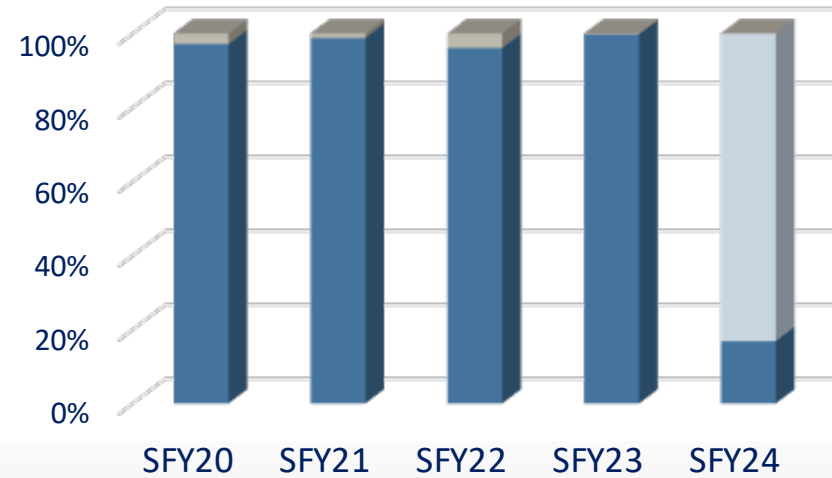
Pennsylvania  
Department of Military  
and Veterans Affairs

**SFY24 Budget: \$4,173,000**

Expended \$702,550 .....	
Projected \$3,470,450 .....	
Lapsed \$0 .....	

*At 2/12 thru SFY24, 16.8% of budget expended.*

## Budget Execution



**Notes:** 2,372 Veterans currently on pension.

Five-year trend shows a 15% beneficiary increase largely attributable to positive external factors such as the federal PACT Act of 2022.

# Blind Veterans' Pension



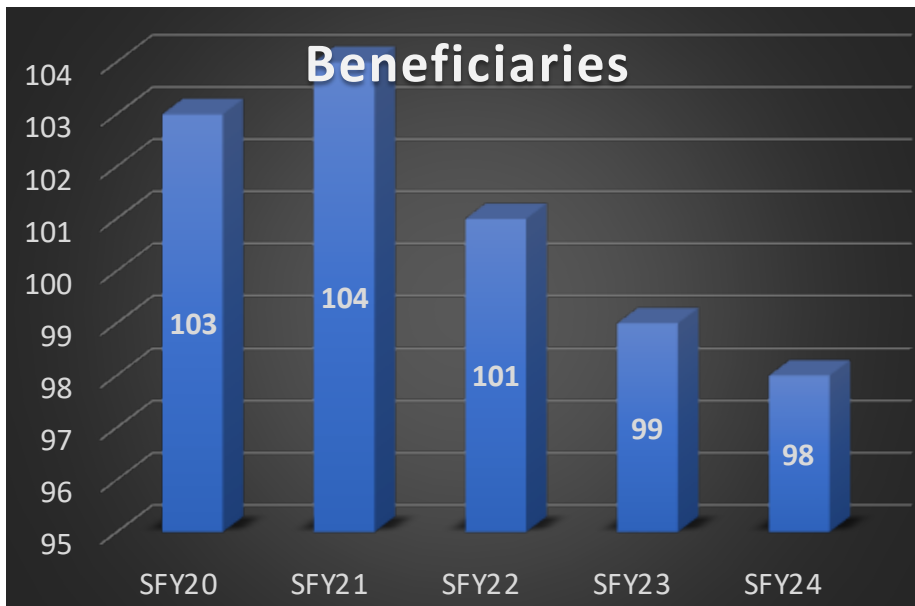
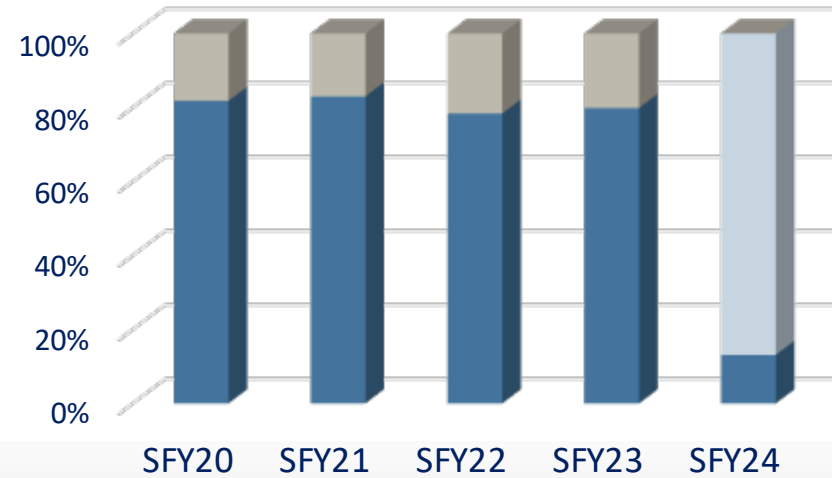
Pennsylvania  
Department of Military  
and Veterans Affairs

SFY24 Budget: \$222,000



At 2/12 thru SFY24, 13.1% of budget expended.

## Budget Execution



**Notes:** 98 Veterans currently on pension.

Five-year trend shows a steady average of 100 pensioners. This beneficiary population does not appear to be affected by the PACT Act or other external factors.

# Educational Gratuity



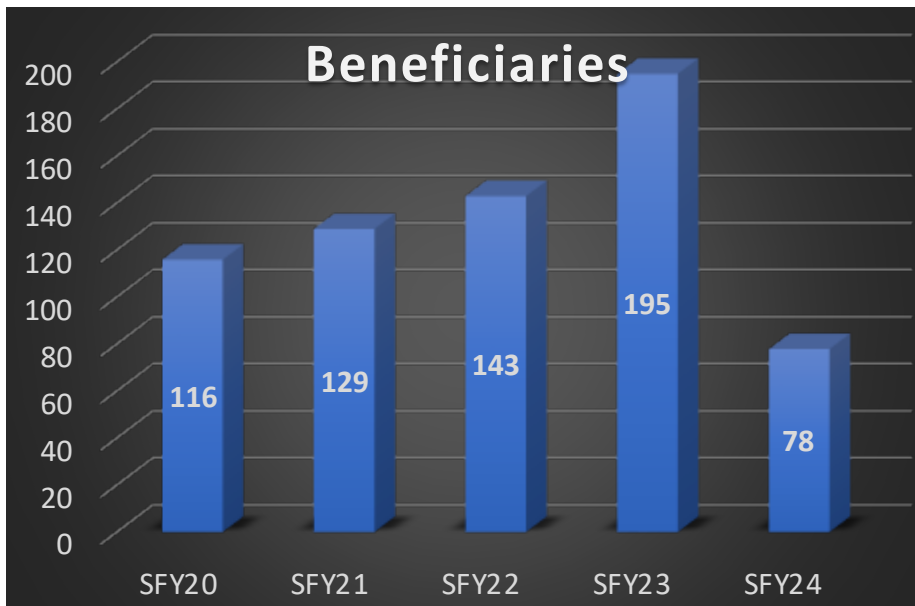
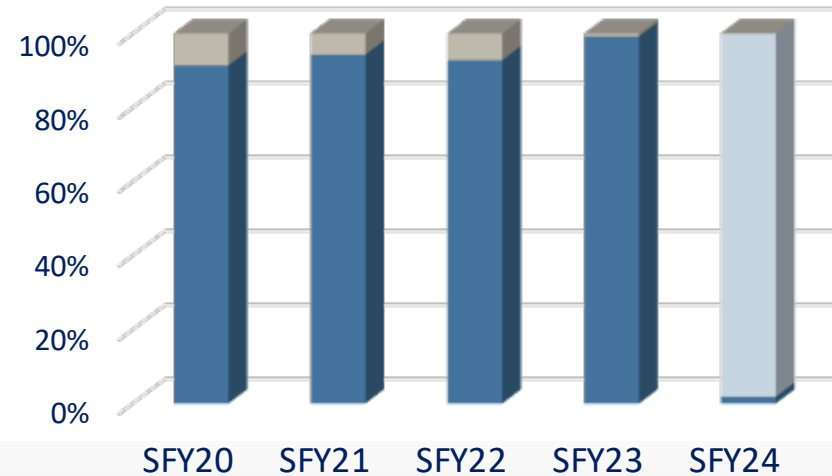
Pennsylvania  
Department of Military  
and Veterans Affairs

**SFY24 Budget: \$195,000**



*At 2/12 thru SFY24, 1.8% of budget expended.*

## Budget Execution



**Notes:** Over 200 new and returning students will rely on EG this year. (Fall semester data entry has just begun with 78 new students.)




Five-year trend shows 30% beneficiary increase beginning in SFY22 largely attributable to positive external factors such as the PACT Act.

# Veterans' Temporary Assistance



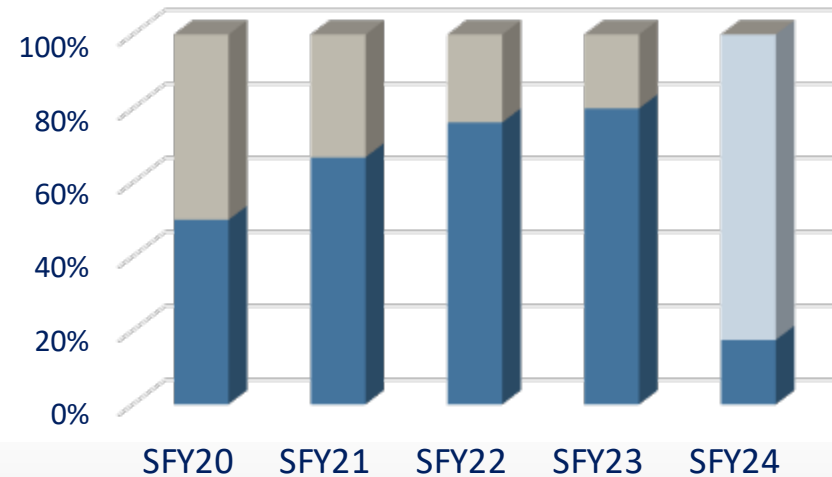
Pennsylvania  
Department of Military  
and Veterans Affairs

**SFY24 VTF Allowance: \$900,000**

Expended \$157,046 .....	
Projected \$742,954 .....	
Lapsed \$0 .....	

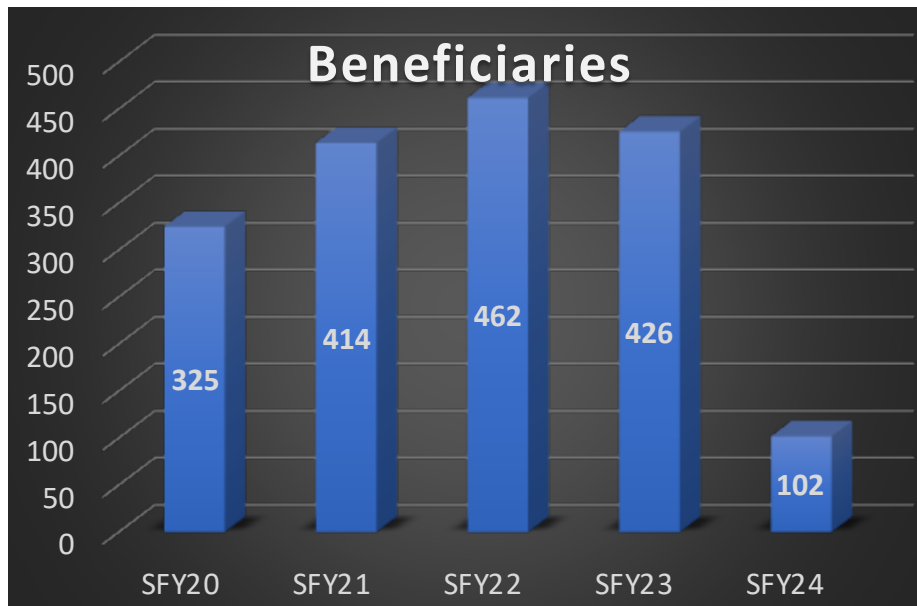
*At 2/12 thru SFY24, 17.4% of budget expended.*

## Budget Execution



**Notes:** 102 VTA grants issued, SFY24 to date.

Five-year trend shows an average of approx. 400 VTA grants per year. At almost \$720,000 in SFY23, DMVA granted more assistance than any other year in recent history. The program is on track to meet or exceed that total this year.



# Military Family Relief Assistance

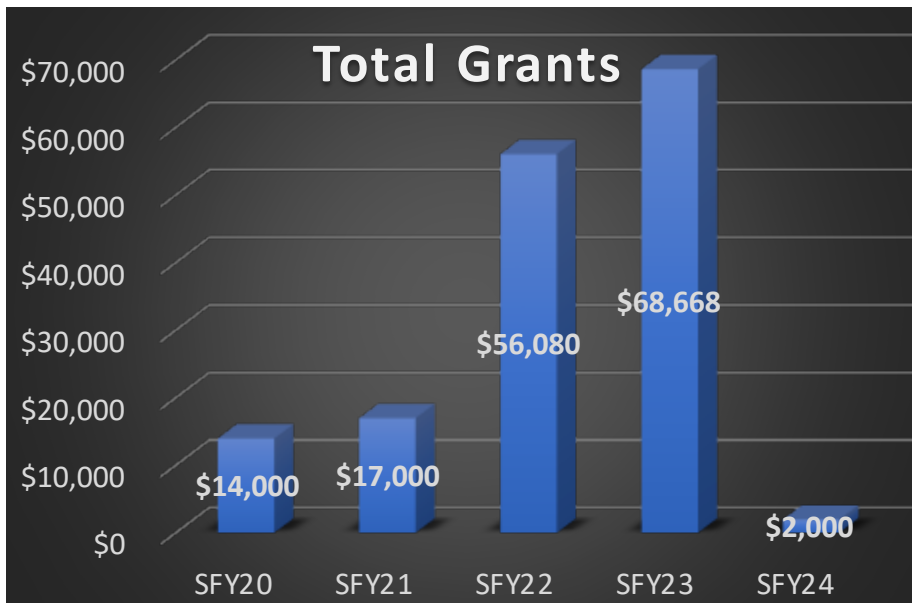
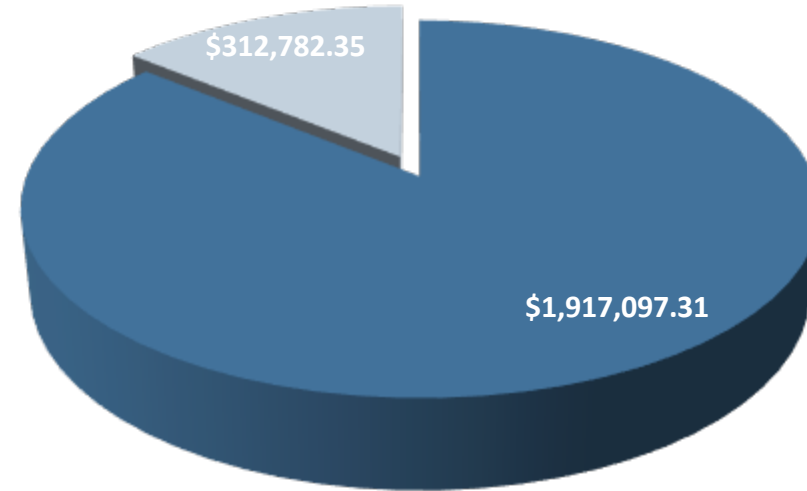


Pennsylvania  
Department of Military  
and Veterans Affairs

- Personal Income Tax Donations .....
- Private/Cash/Other Donations .....

Total Donations SFY05-24: \$2,214,452  
Total Grants SFY05-24: \$1,048,670

**MFRA Fund Balance: \$1,181,209.80**








**Notes:** \$2,000 in total grants, SFY24 to date.

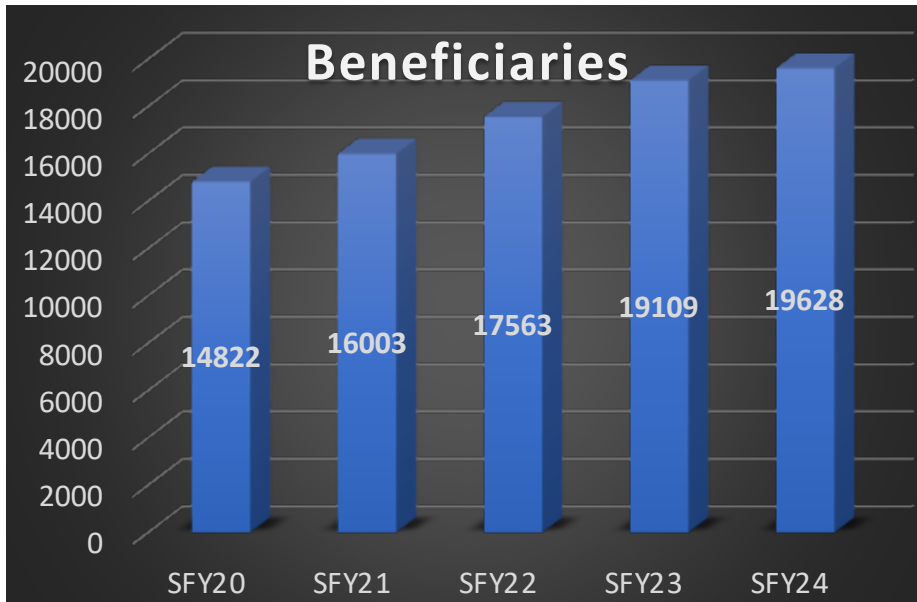
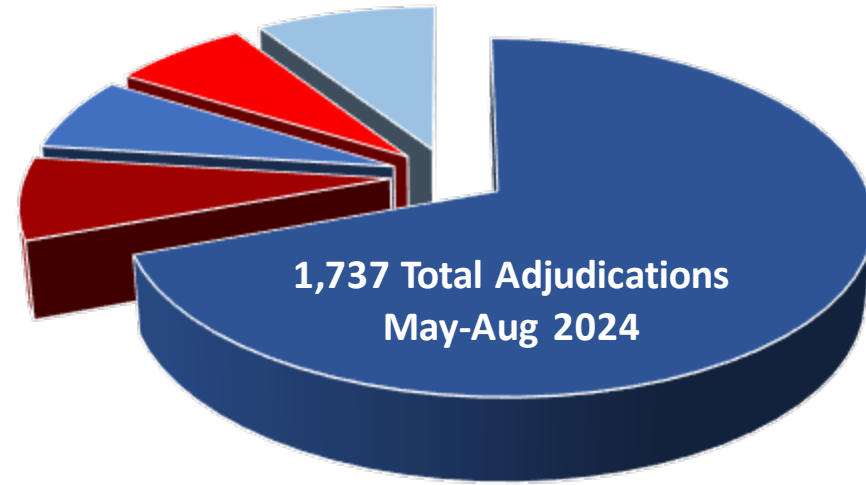
Five-year trend shows large grant increases over the last two years with low points in 2020 and 2021. Overall, the current grant trend is low compared to earlier years with higher active-duty mobilization rates.

# Disabled Vets' Real Estate Tax Exemption



Pennsylvania  
Department of Military  
and Veterans Affairs

1,364 Approved (78.5%) .....	
43 Denied: Financial Need .....	
76 Denied: Eligibility .....	
114 Removed: Change of Eligibility/Need .....	
139 Removed: No Response to 5-Year Review .....	



**Notes:** 19,628 Veterans and surviving spouses currently receive est. \$59.23M in exemptions.

Five-year trend shows beneficiary increases of approx. 1,500 per year over the last two years attributable to positive PACT Act effects on eligibility. Expect further upcoming increases due to positive Act 27 effects on financial need.



# VISN 4 Access – Fiscal Year 2024 Wait Times



Clinics FY24 thru AUG 4	Number of Appointments	Average Wait
Mental Health	325,183	5.2
Primary Care	422,754	4.8
Specialty Care	899,033	10.0
Other	661,197	6.5
ALL	2,308,167	7.3

FY24 data updated 8/5/2024 with appointment info as of 8/4/2024.

## VISN 4 Access – Current Average Wait Times



VISN 4 Facility	Primary Care	
	New Patients	Returning Patients
James E. Van Zandt VAMC	19	2
Abie Abraham HCC	11	2
Coatesville VAMC	24	7
Erie VAMC	15	2
Lebanon VAMC	18	3
Corporal Michael J. Crescenz VAMC	26	5
VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System (University Drive)	14	9
VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System (H.J. Heinz)	24	11
Wilkes-Barre VAMC	12	1
Wilmington VAMC	20	6

FY24 data updated 8/5/2024 with wait times as of 8/4/2024 for the last 30 days.

[www.accesstocare.va.gov](http://www.accesstocare.va.gov)

September 2024 Update

> community > commonwealth > country

### Improvements to the Access to Care website

Average wait times for all VHA medical centers and clinics are now calculated to include additional steps in the appointment process that had not been captured in the past.

- For **new patient** appointments, average wait time is calculated from the earliest time a request for care is consistently recorded in the scheduling system to the date the appointment is completed – or the date it is scheduled to occur if not yet completed.
- For **established patient** appointments, average wait times are measured from the date agreed upon between a Veteran and provider for future care and ends on the date care is received, or the date that care is scheduled to occur if it has not yet occurred.

The upgraded calculation makes the website more reflective of the complete process of requesting and receiving care. Averages are representative of general performance and may not represent individual experience. Average wait times are never used to determine eligibility for community care.

FY24 data updated 8/5/2024 with wait times as of 8/4/2024 for the last 30 days.

[www.accesstocare.va.gov](http://www.accesstocare.va.gov)

# VISN 4 Care in the Community



	Care in the Community Consults (Scheduled and Completed)	Non-VA Unique Patients*
FY22	168,180	89,682
FY23	190,810	99,167
FY24 (as of 8/5/24)	178,284	96,623

\*Number of unique enrolled Veterans who receive community care at VA expense

FY24 data updated 8/5/2024 with consult info as of 8/5/2024.

# CMS Star Ratings – Preview Report July 2024



Facility Name	Peer Grouping	Overall Star Rating	Hospital Summary Score
James E. Van Zandt VAMC	4	★★★	0.04
Lebanon VAMC	4	★★★★★	0.33
Corporal Michael J. Crescenz VAMC	5	★★★★★	0.41
VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System (University Drive)	5	★	-1.31
Wilkes-Barre VAMC	4	★★★★	0.39
Wilmington VAMC	4	★★★★	0.10

- The CMS Star ratings, available publicly, show 67% of applicable VISN 4 facilities performing at 4 or 5 stars (5 stars being the highest rating).
  - Lebanon increased from 4 to 5 stars
  - Wilmington increased from 3 to 4 stars
- Six facilities are included in star ratings due to number of patient discharges.
- CMS Star ratings update annually.

# SAIL Radar



**FY 24 Q2 Rank (FY24 Q1 Rank)**

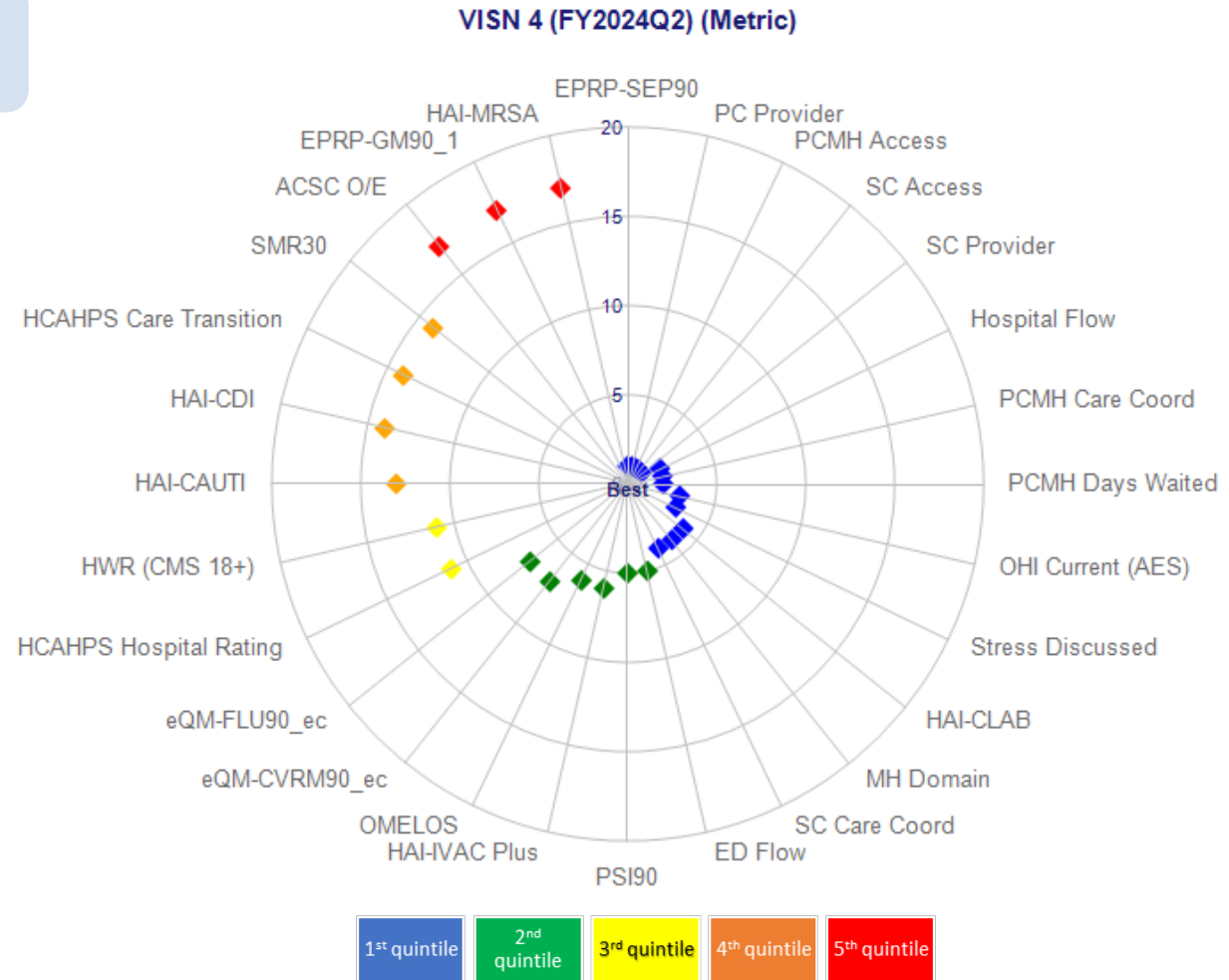
- **Ranked out of 18 Total VISNs**

↓ Rank Improved = 6 (7)  
↑ Rank Worse = 6 (9)  
↔ No Change = 15 (11)

\*\*Note – preferred direction in rank is down

**5** Main Measures ranked **1<sup>st</sup> in performance** among 18 total VISNs

**13** Main Measures in the **1<sup>st</sup> Quintile** among 18 total VISNs



NEXT MEETING



**Friday, October 4, 2024  
at 10:00AM**

**Arrowheads Community Club  
9-65 Fisher Avenue  
Fort Indiantown Gap  
Annville, PA 17003**

**\*VISIT [www.dmva.pa.gov/veterans/commissionsandcouncils](http://www.dmva.pa.gov/veterans/commissionsandcouncils) FOR SVC INFO\***



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Health Administration  
VA Healthcare–VISN 4

## **VISN 4 Update**

**September 5, 2024**

### **Leadership Update**

Kathryn Barley is currently serving as the Acting Associate Director at the Lebanon VA.

Robert Wentling is currently serving as the Acting Assistant Director at Lebanon.

Paul Woodland, the Chief of Police at the Wilmington VA continues to serve as our Acting VISN 4 Security Officer.

### **Patient Experience Update- Trust**

VISN 4 has consistently received the highest trust score in the nation at 94.7% and continues to trend up. Our network also has the highest number of compliments at 78.6% and the lowest number of concerns at 10.8%. The top 5 compliments recently are interactions with staff, cleanliness of facility, quality of care, satisfaction with specialty care, and courtesy of healthcare providers.

### **Connected Care Update**

New MHV Sign-In Transition Process: In 2025, Veterans will need to start using either Login.gov or ID.me to sign-in to VA websites or apps, including My HealtheVet. The VA is moving to a more modern experience with these two secure sign-in account options (Login.gov and ID.me).

- Login.gov is our government's one account provider for VA and other government benefits and services. The U.S. General Services Administration creates and maintains this account.
- ID.me is a non-government account provider that contracts with government and non-government organizations. ID.me creates and maintains this account.

This transition helps to meet Veterans' requests for a simpler sign-in experience while continuing to improve security standards, comply with federal policies, and ensure Veteran data and identity protection. Therefore, after January 31, 2025, Veterans will not be able to sign-in to VA websites or apps with a My HealtheVet user ID and password. After September 30, 2025, Veterans will not be able to sign-in with a DS Logon username and password.



We encourage Veterans to create a Login.gov or ID.me account now. If Veterans already have one of these accounts but have not yet used it, they are encouraged to start now so they have time to get used to it before the upcoming change. With Login.gov or ID.me, Veterans will have access to all the same information and services they use today.

**Annie Registration:** Annie is VAs messaging service that empowers Veterans to take an active role in their care. Text messages received from Annie can include reminders to take medication, tips for reducing stress, instructions to prepare for an upcoming appointment, and more. Once Veterans are registered for Annie and have chosen a health subscription, they will begin to receive automated text messages. Annie requires an online registration followed by the option to interact with Annie via text message, online, or both. To use Annie, Veterans must have a Login.gov, ID.me, My Health eVet Premium Account credential (until January 31, 2025), or DS Logon credential (until September 30, 2025).

Once registered for Annie, a Veteran can subscribe to receive text messages about specific health interests. There are many health subscriptions to choose. If one is of interest, a Veterans will text SUB, followed by the health subscription's keyword to Annie (75338). For example, to subscribe to the Annie medication reminder health subscription (MED), a Veteran will text SUB MED. More information about Annie can be found at the VA Mobile App Store.

**VA Health and Benefits App:** Veterans can manage their VA health care, benefits, and payments from their mobile phone. With the VA Health and Benefits app, Veterans can access the information below. Get started today by downloading the app via the Apple App Store or the Google Play Store.

- Health Care Tools: Refill and track VA prescriptions/Send and receive VA secure messages/Review VA appointments/Access VA vaccination records
- Benefits Tools: Check disability ratings/Submit evidence for claims or appeals/Review claim or appeal status/Download common VA benefits' letters
- Payment Tools: Review payments VA sent/Update direct deposit information
- Facility Locator: Find VA facilities and services
- Veterans Crisis Line: Get quick access to the Veterans Crisis Line

### **HRO Highlight- Altoona VAMC**

One of VHA's seven HRO values is "Support a Culture of Safety", which was demonstrated to a Veteran recently by the collaborative efforts of the VISN 4 Clinical Contact Center (CCC) and the Altoona James E. Van Zandt VA Medical Center (Altoona VAMC).

In the early morning of March 12, 2024, a 49-year-old 100% service-connected male Veteran called the VISN 4 CCC. The call originated from an adjacent hotel to the

Altoona VAMC, during which the Veteran self-reported having a weapon in his possession and fearing coming out of his hotel room, sharing thoughts of a hitman waiting outside the hotel room door. The Veteran was requesting a VA Police escort to the Altoona VAMC to seek care.

VA Police Lieutenant Melanie Rininger was briefed by VA Police Senior Officer Douglas Smalley and VA Police Dispatcher Ashley Nevling, all from the Altoona VAMC, of the situation and began to collect intel while also conducting a Random Anti-terrorism Measure (RAM) to ensure safety around the main entrance at Central Registration of Altoona VAMC. Once complete, Lieutenant Rininger directly called the Veteran's personal cell phone. He answered, stating he was on the phone currently with an "ANDREA" from the VA Crisis Line, but requested to stay on the line with Lieutenant Rininger because he trusted VA Police. While trying to connect back to the VA Crisis Line for a three-way conversation the call dropped with the VA Crisis Line and only VA Police (Lieutenant Rininger) remained on the line. Lieutenant Rininger offered to have VA Crisis Line recontacted to return on the line, but the Veteran declined. During the three (3) hour conversation with Lieutenant Rininger, VA Police Captain Warren Edward and VA Police Deputy Chief Brandon Lape joined at precise moments to negotiate with the Veteran and to comply with local Altoona Police Department who were outside of the hotel door.

The conversation between the Veteran and VA Police during the duration of this call included gaining the trust of the Veteran, respecting the Veteran and honoring his service, relating to the Veteran with military experience to deescalate the situation, and using procedures to help the Veteran feel he was safe to lay prone on the floor and comply with local police commands. Local police were able to access the hotel room, secure the Veteran safely, and transport him to a local Altoona hospital for care. The interventions of our VA Police made a deep impact and saved this Veteran's life during a critical moment. Their invaluable service proved that they are true heroes and embrace the ICARE values. Their efforts, dedication, teamwork, communication, and critical thinking avoided a worst-case scenario that could have escalated quickly. All HRO principles were put into action during this situation - Sensitivity to Operations and Reluctance to Simplify were present throughout the entirety; Preoccupation with Failure and Deference to Expertise were present as every staff member involved became a problem solver and deferred to experts in other departments to handle certain aspects of the situation; the officer's Commitment to Resilience was also present when the call was dropped by Crisis Support, maintaining contact with the Veteran and rectifying the situation. We are incredibly proud of this team and what they were able to do to help save the life of this Veteran!

### **Preventing Suicide among Veterans**

VA marked the two-year anniversary of the 988 Suicide and Crisis lifeline on July 16, 2024. Since the 988, press 1 launch CL has answered more than 1,638,138 calls,

representing a 22.7% increase in calls per day since the launch. This means that more Veterans than ever are getting the support they need from caring, qualified responders during times of crisis.

There were 1,002,725 contacts in FY23 (calls, chats, and texts). In FY 24, from October 1, 2023, to May 31, 2024, there were 722,418 contacts (calls, chats, and texts).

There was a total of 77,730 calls, 11,518 chats and 7,201 texts received for a grand total of 96,449 contacts in May 2024.

### New Cooperative Agreements

On June 24, 2024, VA announced \$10 million in new funding for eligible states, territories, and Tribal governments through cooperative agreements to better inform Veteran suicide prevention strategies.

These cooperative agreements will provide funding and technical assistance intended to establish, coordinate, and manage suicide mortality review committees, which identify and characterize suicide deaths.

Suicide mortality review committees help establish a local understanding of suicide, identify populations or locations of special concern, and inform the development and implementation of data-informed suicide prevention strategies for Veterans.

This funding opportunity advances VA's National Strategy for Preventing Veteran Suicide, the Biden-Harris administration's strategy to reduce military and Veteran suicide, and President Biden's Unity Agenda for the nation.

### **PACT Act Update**

On May 21, 2024, VA granted its 1 millionth PACT Act-related disability compensation claim to Veterans and survivors since President Biden signed the bill into law on Aug. 10, 2022.

Benefits (as of 7/20//2024):

PACT Act-related claims submitted: 1,831,307

PACT Act-related claims processed: 1,521,436

Grant Rate: 75%

Backdated benefits awarded: More than \$6.6 billion

Health Care (as of 7/14/2024):

New enrollees over past year: 413,915 (26.9% increase, 87,764 more enrollees from the same time period last year)

Toxic exposure screenings: 5,679,507 (approximately 45% reporting at least one potential exposure)

Outreach:

More than 584 in-person events are already scheduled in 2024.

Record total claims submissions in 2023: 2.43 million, 39% increase over 2022.

Record total intent-to-file submissions in 2023: 2.3 million, 62% increase over 2022.

Earned media: 82,000+ PACT Act news articles since passage.

Paid media: \$10+ million in paid media, contributing to 21+ million total views of VA.gov/PACT

PACT Act Outreach activities (this includes all events that included PACT ACT information/briefings since August 2022) : 16,542

### **Ending Homelessness among Veterans**

VA has taken aggressive action to combat Veteran homelessness. In calendar year 2023 VA permanently housed 46,552 homeless Veterans, exceeding its goal to house 38,000 by 22.5%.

On July 1, 2024, VA announced it is awarding \$26.8 million in legal services grants to a total of 108 public and non-profit organizations, all with the goal of increasing access to legal services for eligible Veterans experiencing or at risk for homelessness.

This grant program is enabled by the Johnny Isakson and David P. Roe, M.D., Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act of 2020 and ensures at least 10% of funding supports the provision of legal services for women Veterans. Individual grant awards are up to \$300,000 for a 14-month grant cycle starting Aug. 1, 2024. Grant recipients will deliver a variety of legal services to Veterans.

VA announced its 2024 goals in support of its efforts to prevent and end Veteran homelessness on March 14, 2024.

Specifically, in fiscal year 2024, VA will:

Place at least 41,000 Veterans experiencing homelessness into permanent housing.

Ensure that at least 95% of the Veterans housed in FY 2024 do not return to homelessness during the year.

Engage with at least 40,000 unsheltered Veterans to help them obtain housing and other wraparound services.

As of June 30, 2024:

34,764 Veterans have been permanently housed, representing 84.8% of the goal. VA is currently on track to meet this goal but is monitoring it closely to ensure that homeless Veterans are connected to the housing resources they need.

97.0% of the Veterans housed so far have remained in housing. 1,039 Veterans have returned to homelessness, representing 3.0% of the Veterans housed. VA is monitoring this goal closely to ensure that Veterans stay housed or are re-engaged by VA services if they return to homelessness.

31,294 unsheltered Veterans have been engaged, representing 78.2% of the goal. VA is currently on track to meet this goal but is monitoring it closely to ensure that unsheltered homeless Veterans are connected to the housing resources they need.



**Authorized Monthly Status Report July 1 to 31 2024 Midnight**

**Delaware Valley Veterans Home, Philadelphia PA - Margo Coleman - Commandant**

Level of Care	Authorized Beds	Beds Assigned	Beds Vacant	Filled %	Non-Veteran Census %	Admissions	Discharges/Expirations	Attaining Adm Veteran	Attaining Adm Non-Veteran
Nursing Care	171	160	11	94%	6%	8	6	63	28

**Gino J. Merli Veterans Center, Scranton PA - Vito Ruggiero - Commandant**

Level of Care	Authorized Beds	Beds Assigned	Beds Vacant	Filled %	Non-Veteran Census %	Admissions	Discharges/Expirations	Attaining Adm Veteran	Attaining Adm Non-Veteran
Nursing Care	196	177	19	90%	15%	9	7	22	24

**Southwestern Veterans Center, Pittsburgh PA - Cassie Betzler - Commandant**

Level of Care	Authorized Beds	Beds Assigned	Beds Vacant	Filled %	Non-Veteran Census %	Admissions	Discharges/Expirations	Attaining Adm Veteran	Attaining Adm Non-Veteran
Nursing Care	236	148	88	63%	14%	4	6	19	9

**Hollidaysburg Veterans Home, Hollidaysburg PA - Christina Dambeck - Commandant**

Level of Care	Authorized Beds	Beds Assigned	Beds Vacant	Filled %	Non-Veteran Census %	Admissions	Discharges/Expirations	Attaining Adm Veteran	Attaining Adm Non-Veteran
Nursing Care	257	179	78	70%	13%	8	8	11	5
Personal Care	167	72	95	43%		2	3	2	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>424</b>	<b>251</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>59%</b>		<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>7</b>

**Pennsylvania Soldiers & Sailors Home, Erie PA - Cheri Spacht - Commandant**

Level of Care	Authorized Beds	Beds Assigned	Beds Vacant	Filled %	Non-Veteran Census %	Admissions	Discharges/Expirations	Attaining Adm Veteran	Attaining Adm Non-Veteran
Nursing Care	107	105	2	98%	12%	6	4	12	7
Personal Care	100	56	44	56%		2	3	7	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>78%</b>		<b>8</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>7</b>

**Southeastern Veterans Center, Spring City PA - Brian Gula - Commandant**

Level of Care	Authorized Beds	Beds Assigned	Beds Vacant	Filled %	Non-Veteran Census %	Admissions	Discharges/Expirations	Attaining Adm Veteran	Attaining Adm Non-Veteran
Nursing Care	238	175	63	74%	9%	5	9	62	15
Personal Care	54	33	21	61%		0	4	9	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>292</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>71%</b>		<b>5</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>16</b>

**Summary / Pennsylvania Bureau of Veterans Homes**

Veteran Census/Event	Authorized Beds	Beds Assigned	Beds Vacant	Filled %	Non-Veteran Census %	Admissions	Discharges/Expirations	Attaining Adm Veteran	Attaining Adm Non-Veteran
Nursing Care	1205	944	261	78%	12%	40	40	189	88
Personal Care	321	161	160	50%		4	10	18	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,526</b>	<b>1105</b>	<b>421</b>	<b>72%</b>		<b>44</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>91</b>

Veteran Status: NonVeteran/Veteran	Male Vets	Male Non-Vets	Female Vets	Female Non-Vets	Total Vets	Total Non-Vets	Total Vets %	Total Non-Vet %	VH Totals
DVVH	148	1	2	9	150	10	94%	6%	160
GMVC	147	0	3	27	150	27	85%	15%	177
SWVC	125	3	3	17	128	20	86%	14%	148
HVH	204	2	15	30	219	32	87%	13%	251
PSSH	134	2	7	18	141	20	88%	12%	161
SEVC	175	1	14	18	189	19	91%	9%	208
<b>Totals</b>	<b>933</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>977</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>88%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>1105</b>

**Authorized Monthly Status Report June 1 to 30 2024 Midnight**

**Delaware Valley Veterans' Home, Philadelphia PA - Margo Coleman - Commandant**

Level of Care	Authorized Beds	Beds Assigned	Beds Vacant	Filled %	Non-Veteran Census %	Admissions	Discharges/Expirations	Attaining Adm Veteran	Attaining Adm Non-Veteran
Nursing Care	171	158	13	92%	6%	4	7	60	29

**Gino J. Merli Veterans' Center, Scranton PA - Vito Ruggiero - Commandant**

Level of Care	Authorized Beds	Beds Assigned	Beds Vacant	Filled %	Non-Veteran Census %	Admissions	Discharges/Expirations	Attaining Adm Veteran	Attaining Adm Non-Veteran
Nursing Care	196	176	20	90%	16%	9	6	20	21

**Southwestern Veterans' Center, Pittsburgh PA -Richard Adams - Commandant**

Level of Care	Authorized Beds	Beds Assigned	Beds Vacant	Filled %	Non-Veteran Census %	Admissions	Discharges/Expirations	Attaining Adm Veteran	Attaining Adm Non-Veteran
Nursing Care	236	151	85	64%	13%	13	3	17	8

**Hollidaysburg Veterans' Home, Hollidaysburg PA - Christina Dambeck - Commandant**

Level of Care	Authorized Beds	Beds Assigned	Beds Vacant	Filled %	Non-Veteran Census %	Admissions	Discharges/Expirations	Attaining Adm Veteran	Attaining Adm Non-Veteran
Nursing Care	257	179	78	70%	13%	7	6	9	7
Personal Care	167	73	94	44%		0	4	2	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>424</b>	<b>252</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>59%</b>		<b>7</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>7</b>

**Pennsylvania Soldiers' & Sailors' Home, Erie PA - Cheri Spacht - Commandant**

Level of Care	Authorized Beds	Beds Assigned	Beds Vacant	Filled %	Non-Veteran Census %	Admissions	Discharges/Expirations	Attaining Adm Veteran	Attaining Adm Non-Veteran
Nursing Care	107	103	4	96%	11%	2	5	7	7
Personal Care	100	57	43	57%		1	0	6	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>77%</b>		<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>7</b>

**Southeastern Veterans' Center, Spring City PA - Brian Gula - Commandant**

Level of Care	Authorized Beds	Beds Assigned	Beds Vacant	Filled %	Non-Veteran Census %	Admissions	Discharges/Expirations	Attaining Adm Veteran	Attaining Adm Non-Veteran
Nursing Care	238	179	59	75%	9%	2	4	61	12
Personal Care	54	37	17	69%		1	0	7	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>292</b>	<b>216</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>74%</b>		<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>13</b>

**Summary / Pennsylvania Bureau of Veterans Homes**

Veteran Census/Events	Authorized Beds	Beds Assigned	Beds Vacant	Filled %	Non-Veteran Census %	Admissions	Discharges/Expirations	Attaining Adm Veteran	Attaining Adm Non-Veteran
Nursing Care	1205	946	259	79%	12%	37	31	174	84
Personal Care	321	167	154	52%		2	4	15	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,526</b>	<b>1113</b>	<b>413</b>	<b>73%</b>		<b>39</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>85</b>

Veteran Status: Non-Veteran/Veteran	Male Vets	Male Non-Vets	Female Vets	Female Non-Vets	Total Vets	Total Non-Vets	Total Vets %	Total Non-Vet %	VH Totals
DVVH	146	1	2	9	148	10	94%	6%	158
GJMVC	144	0	3	29	147	29	84%	16%	176
SWVC	128	2	3	18	131	20	87%	13%	151
HVH	205	2	14	31	219	33	87%	13%	252
PSSH	135	2	7	16	142	18	89%	11%	160
SEVC	180	2	16	18	196	20	91%	9%	216
<b>Totals</b>	<b>938</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>983</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>88%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>1113</b>



**Authorized Monthly Status Report May 1 to 31, 2024 Midnight**

**Delaware Valley Veterans' Home, Philadelphia PA - Margo Coleman - Commandant**

Level of Care	Authorized Beds	Beds Assigned	Beds Vacant	Filled %	Non-Veteran Census %	Admissions	Discharges/ Expirations	Attaining Adm Veteran	Attaining Adm Non-Veteran
Nursing Care	171	161	10	94%	6%	8	4	65	28

**Gino J. Merli Veterans' Center, Scranton PA - Vito Ruggiero - Commandant**

Level of Care	Authorized Beds	Beds Assigned	Beds Vacant	Filled %	Non-Veteran Census %	Admissions	Discharges/ Expirations	Attaining Adm Veteran	Attaining Adm Non-Veteran
Nursing Care	196	173	23	88%	16%	11	5	21	24

**Southwestern Veterans' Center, Pittsburgh PA -Richard Adams - Commandant**

Level of Care	Authorized Beds	Beds Assigned	Beds Vacant	Filled %	Non-Veteran Census %	Admissions	Discharges/ Expirations	Attaining Adm Veteran	Attaining Adm Non-Veteran
Nursing Care	236	141	95	60%	13%	0	9	20	11

**Hollidaysburg Veterans' Home, Hollidaysburg PA - Christina Dambeck - Commandant**

Level of Care	Authorized Beds	Beds Assigned	Beds Vacant	Filled %	Non-Veteran Census %	Admissions	Discharges/ Expirations	Attaining Adm Veteran	Attaining Adm Non-Veteran
Nursing Care	257	178	79	69%	13%	5	10	9	6
Personal Care	167	77	90	46%		1	0	2	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>424</b>	<b>255</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>60%</b>		<b>6</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>6</b>

**Pennsylvania Soldiers' & Sailors' Home, Erie PA - Cheri Spacht - Commandant**

Level of Care	Authorized Beds	Beds Assigned	Beds Vacant	Filled %	Non-Veteran Census %	Admissions	Discharges/ Expirations	Attaining Adm Veteran	Attaining Adm Non-Veteran
Nursing Care	107	106	1	99%	11%	6	3	5	4
Personal Care	100	56	44	56%		1	2	6	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>78%</b>		<b>7</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>4</b>

**Southeastern Veterans' Center, Spring City PA - Brian Gula - Commandant**

Level of Care	Authorized Beds	Beds Assigned	Beds Vacant	Filled %	Non-Veteran Census %	Admissions	Discharges/ Expirations	Attaining Adm Veteran	Attaining Adm Non-Veteran
Nursing Care	238	181	57	76%	9%	5	3	54	14
Personal Care	54	36	18	67%		0	1	6	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>292</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>74%</b>		<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>16</b>

**Summary / Pennsylvania Bureau of Veterans' Homes**

Veteran Census/Events	Authorized Beds	Beds Assigned	Beds Vacant	Filled %	Non-Veteran Census %	Admissions	Discharges/ Expirations	Attaining Adm Veteran	Attaining Adm Non-Veteran
Nursing Care	1205	940	265	78%	11%	35	34	174	87
Personal Care	321	169	152	53%		2	3	14	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,526</b>	<b>1109</b>	<b>417</b>	<b>73%</b>		<b>37</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>89</b>

Veteran Status: Non-Vet/ Veteran	Male Vets	Male Non-Vets	Female Vets	Female Non-Vets	Total Vets	Total Non-Vets	Total Vets %	Total Non-Vet %	VH Totals
DVVH	149	1	2	9	151	10	94%	6%	161
GJMVC	142	0	3	28	145	28	84%	16%	173
SWVC	120	2	3	16	123	18	87%	13%	141
HVH	207	2	14	32	221	34	87%	13%	255
PSSH	138	2	6	16	144	18	89%	11%	162
SEVC	182	2	16	17	198	19	91%	9%	217
<b>Totals</b>	<b>938</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>982</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>89%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>1109</b>



**Summary of Current Applications (Exempt)**

Count	No Activity	Review Process Started	Review App Received	New Apps Pending
19626	19106	493	27	344

**Summary of Activity from 05/23/2024 to 08/22/2024**

Apps Created: 1569	
New:	1042
Review:	527
Apps Approved: 1364	
New:	795
Review:	569
Apps Denied (Need):	43
Apps Denied (Eligibility):	76
Apps Removed (No Response):	139
Apps Removed (Eligibility Changed):	114

**Summary of Ineligible Reason**

Reason	Count
The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs determined that the veteran did not have a total and/or 100% permanent disability during their lifetime.	4
No Response for Requested Information.	3
The property for which the veteran claimed exemption is not owned solely by the veteran, or jointly or as an estate by the entirety with the spouse.	20
The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs determined that the veteran did not serve during a period of war or armed conflict.	30
Spouse remarried.	1
The veteran's disability has not been declared by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to be a total or 100% permanent disability.	2
The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs has scheduled the veteran for future exams, therefore, the disability has not been rated as total or 100% permanent.	16

**Summary of Activity: 23 May - 22 Aug 2024**

<b>Applications Approved</b>	<b>467</b>
New	795
Review	569

<b>Applications Denied</b>	<b>296</b>
Financial Need	43
Ineligible	76
No Response	139
Change of Eligibility	114

<b>Over Income</b>	<b>56</b>
New	81
Review	4

<b>12%</b>
10%
1%

<b>Applications Created</b>	<b>1,569</b>
<b>Total Adjudicated</b>	<b>1,736</b>



# Pennsylvania VetCon

PITTSBURGH 2024

PA National Guard Association | PA Dept. of Military & Veterans Affairs

# Agenda

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## Wednesday, September 4, 2024

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1pm: PA VetCon Opening Ceremony

1:30pm - 4pm Main Speaker Series:

President & CEO Zack Shamberg – Pennsylvania Health Care Association

Deputy Assistant Secretary for Intergovernmental Affairs, Zaneta Adams – Office of Public & Intergovernmental Affairs

Secretary Valerie Arkoosh – Pennsylvania Department of Human Services

Under Secretary for Health Dr. Shereef Elnahal – Department of Veterans Affairs

John Schwartz/Kate Kleinert – Center for Combating Elder Financial Abuse

6pm- 8pm: Military Trade Show/Silent Auction

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## Thursday, September 5, 2024

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8am -Noon Main Speaker Series:

Secretary Jason Kavulich – Pennsylvania Department of Aging

BG Henry Huntley – Director of State, Local and International Engagement, Office of Intergovernmental Affairs Department of Veterans Affairs

Deputy Secretary Richard Vilello – Pennsylvania Department of Community & Economic Development

Deputy Secretary Kelly Primus – Pennsylvania Department of Drugs & Alcohol Programs

Secretary Nancy Walker – Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industries

Secretary Dr. Laurel Harry – Pennsylvania Department of Corrections

The Honorable Patrick Murphy –32nd Under Secretary of the US Army & US Congressman

Mr. Anthony Love – Principal Advisory, Inter/Intra-Agency Collaboration and Director of Community Engagement for the Department of Veterans Affairs, Veterans Health Administration, Homeless Programs.

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# Thursday, September 5, 2024

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1pm - 5pm: Veteran Service Officer Training  
*\*Mandatory for accredited Veterans Services Officers*

1pm - 2pm: Pennsylvania War Veterans Council meeting

2:30pm - 4pm: Pennsylvania State Veterans Commission meeting

1pm -2:30pm Panel/Work Group Sessions

Homelessness and Housing  
Employment  
Behavioral and Mental Health  
Women's Health  
Veteran Corrections & Judicial

3pm - 5pm Panel/Work Group Sessions

Homelessness and Housing  
Employment Working  
Behavioral and Mental Health  
Women's Health  
Veteran Corrections & Judicial

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# Friday, September 6, 2024

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8am - Noon: Main Speaker Series

Dr. Debra Bogen – Pennsylvania Department of Health

Senior Executive Ivan Denton – US Department of Labor (DOL) Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS)

Mr. Timothy Liezert – VISN4 Network Director

Mr. Joshua Jacobs – Under Secretary for Benefits within the US Department of Veterans Affairs

Director Jennifer Vandermolen – Pittsburgh Regional Office

Deputy Secretary Cheryl Cook - Department of Agriculture

Mr. Joe Savage – Senior Regional Advisor with the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness

Dr. Desmarie J. DeCuir – VISN4 Women Health Program Manager

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# Friday, September 6, 2024

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## 1pm -2pm Panel/Work Group Sessions

Homelessness and Housing  
Employment  
Behavioral and Mental Health  
Women's Health  
Veteran Corrections & Judicial

## 2:15pm - 3:15pm Panel/Work Group Sessions

Homelessness and Housing  
Employment  
Behavioral and Mental Health  
Women's Health  
Veteran Corrections & Judicial

## 3:30pm - 4pm Conference Closing Ceremony

National

# POW/MIA

RECOGNITION DAY

Honoring their **sacrifice**.  
Earnestly **searching** for those still missing.



SEPTEMBER 20, 2024 | **#OURPROMISE** | [WWW.DPAA.MIL](http://WWW.DPAA.MIL)





[DPAA Home](#) / [Families](#) / [Search Our Missing](#)

## ACCOUNTING FOR OUR MISSING PERSONNEL

The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency's mission is to provide the fullest possible accounting for our missing personnel from past conflicts to their families and the nation. Within this mission, we search for missing personnel from World War II (WWII), the Korean War, the Vietnam War, the Cold War, the Gulf Wars, and other recent conflicts. Our research and operational missions include coordination with hundreds of countries and municipalities around the world.

At present, more than 81,500 Americans remain missing from WWII, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, the Cold War, and the Gulf Wars/other conflicts. Out of the more than 81,500 missing, 75% of the losses are located in the Indo-Pacific, and over 41,000 of the missing are presumed lost at sea (i.e. ship losses, known aircraft water losses, etc.).

### OUR MISSING FACTS & FIGURES

**TOTAL MISSING**

Missing as of 1973\*  
**84609**

Accounted For\*\*  
**3399**

Unaccounted For  
**81210**

**WWII**

Missing as of 1973\*  
**73677**

Accounted For\*\*  
**1637**

Unaccounted For  
**72040**

**KOREAN WAR**

Missing as of 1973\*  
**8157**

Accounted For\*\*  
**694**

Unaccounted For  
**7463**

**VIETNAM WAR**

Missing as of 1973\*  
**2641**

Accounted For\*\*  
**1066**

Unaccounted For  
**1575**

**COLD WAR**

Missing as of 1973\*  
**128**

Accounted For\*\*  
**2**

Unaccounted For  
**126**

**GULF WAR AND LIBYA OPERATIONS**

Missing\*  
**6**

Accounted For\*\*  
**0**

Unaccounted For  
**6**

\*Casualty numbers are related to only those associated to our mission starting from 1973 to present and don't reflect the total number of missing from each conflict.  
\*\*To respect the next-of-kin, individuals are only displayed as "Accounted For" in the grids and case profiles when (1) DPAA has made the identification, and (2) the next-of-kin has been notified.  
Numbers that are not associated with individual names will continue to update as soon as an identification has been made.