

2024 Annual Report



FDVA

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS

Honoring those who served U.S.

James S. Hartsell

Major General, U.S. Marine Corps (Retired)

Executive Director

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Executive Director's Message

To: The Governor of the State of Florida, Members of the Cabinet, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

It is my honor to submit the 2024 annual report for the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs. This report showcases the many and varied accomplishments of our dedicated team of professionals and the tremendous support we receive from our state and federal partners.

The Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs (FDVA) is an over 1,506-member constitutionally chartered State Veterans' Affairs department with a \$218 million annual budget responsible for serving the nation's second largest veteran population. Operating as the premier point of entry for Florida's 1.4 million veterans, FDVA operates a network of eight state veterans' homes and one domiciliary and provides statewide outreach to connect veterans with their earned services, benefits and support. The agency's State Veterans' Service Officers play a major role in the direct infusion of more than \$27.9 billion annually for veterans into Florida's economy through federal compensation, education and pension benefits, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' medical services and military retired pay.



We are extremely appreciative of your innovative and unwavering support of Florida's veterans, their families and survivors. Florida offers unique benefits such as in-state tuition rates for veterans and their families using the Post-9/11 GI Bill, expedited business and health licensing fee waivers, and testing reimbursement for certain career fields; property tax exemptions, expanded veterans' preference, specialty vehicle licenses and driver license and State ID fee exemptions and more.

FDVA ensures Florida veterans, their families and survivors have access to earned mental health resources and necessary support. Florida remains a major participant in the "Governor's Challenge to Prevent Suicide Among Service Members, Veterans and their Families," a national call to action asking state, military and civilian interagency teams to collaborate, plan and implement suicide prevention best practices and policies for service members, veterans and their families statewide. The Florida Veterans Support Line, 1-844-MyFLVet (693-5838) or 211 celebrated its tenth anniversary in 2024. New this year, FDVA expanded its support to the Hope Florida initiative supporting veterans during personal crisis and environmental disasters by jointly manning Points of Distribution and Multi-Agency Resource Centers with our State Veterans' Service Officers.

We will continue to explore innovative ways to service Veterans within their respective communities to ensure the Sunshine State continues to be the most veteran-friendly, appreciated, and sought after state in the nation. It is a true honor to serve you and the citizens of Florida!

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'James S. Hartsell', written in a cursive style.

James S. Hartsell
Major General, U.S. Marine Corps (Ret)
Executive Director



Our Mission: To advocate with purpose and passion for Florida’s veterans and link them to superior services, benefits and support.

Following World War II, the State of Florida recognized the need to provide services to returning service members and created a division within state government to connect veterans with their earned benefits. To address the growing Veteran population, Florida voters in 1988 overwhelmingly approved a Constitutional Amendment to create a Cabinet Agency to *“Honor Those Who Served U.S.”*

Today with 1.4 million veterans, Florida is the most veteran-friendly state in the nation. The Florida Department of Veterans’ Affairs is the premier point of entry for Florida veterans to access earned services, benefits and support. We honor you by advocating for your earned benefits and services and by staying abreast of the changing conditions impacting our veterans, active and reserve/guard service members, and their families.

FDVA operates a network of nine State Veterans’ Homes and provides statewide outreach to connect veterans, their families, and survivors with earned services, benefits and support.

If you have questions regarding veterans’ issues in Florida, please contact one of our State Veterans’ Service Officers at (727) 319-7440 or via email at FDVA.VSO@FDVA.FL.GOV. We provide our services to you at no charge.

You can also learn more about veterans’ issues by following us on X, formerly Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn. A free Mobile App is also available for downloading. We also feature a free monthly email subscription newsletter highlighting Veterans’ issues. Links to all can be found on the front page of the FDVA website at www.FloridaVets.org.

Working together toward a positive future for Florida veterans and their families, Florida continues to be the most veteran-friendly, appreciated, and sought after state in the nation. We recognize we can’t do it alone. We depend on our veterans as force multipliers to accomplish our comprehensive mission. We honor many of these veterans who have gone above and beyond the call of duty following their military service by inducting them into the Florida Veterans’ Hall of Fame.

Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame

The Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame recognizes and honors those military veterans who, through their works and lives during or after military service, have made a significant contribution to the state of Florida through civic, business, public service or other pursuits. It is not a traditional military hall of fame, as it focuses on post-military contributions to the State of Florida.

Class of 2024 Inductees

Augustus Aikens, Colonel, U.S. Army (Ret)

Ronald Beasley, Captain, U.S. Navy (Ret)

Jennifer S. Carroll, Lieutenant Commander, U.S. Navy (Ret)

Thomas Corey, U.S. Army (Deceased)

Arthur F. (Chip) Diehl III, Brigadier General, U.S. Air Force (Ret)

Loretta Ford, U.S. Army (Deceased)

Lorraine Holland, Major, U.S. Army (Ret)

Beatrice Love-Moore, Chief Yeoman, U.S. Navy (Ret)

Lionel Lowry, U.S. Air Force

John McGee, Major, U.S. Army (Ret)

Carl Miller, U.S. Marine Corps

Charles Mohr, Colonel, U.S. Army (Ret)

Jerry Neff, Brigadier General, U.S. Army (Ret)

Ronald Rook, Colonel, U.S. Marine Corps (Ret) Deceased

Karen "Sue" Roper, Lieutenant Commander, U.S. Navy (Ret)

Steven Saladino, U.S. Army

Kurt Schuh, Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Air Force (Ret)

Jon Shebel, U.S. Marine Corps

James Stavridis, Admiral, U.S. Navy (Ret)

Harold Youmans, Colonel, U.S. Army (Ret)



Employee Salutes

Our employees are the heart and soul of our Agency. None of the accomplishments are possible without them. While we can't highlight all of our agency's roughly 1,506 employees, we wanted to highlight a few whose dedication and service have been instrumental to our success over the years. We offer a special "shout out" to the special people below:



Erin Hall has been the Director of Rehabilitation at the Douglas T. Jacobson State Veterans' Home in Port Charlotte for approximately 18 months. During this time, she learned how to navigate an electronic medical record system, as well as all the clinical programs, standard operating procedures and facilitated a new team. Erin leads the therapy department seamlessly and she does it with a smile on her face. She has been instrumental in initiating the Caerus Strength Trainer system with significant results in her skilled nursing population. She has supplied the facility with the excitement of the value of therapy, where nursing, family members and other veterans see the impact of strength training and refer others to therapy where therapeutic intervention may be beneficial.



Marlies Sarrett is one of our longest serving State Veterans' Home Administrators in the Agency. She started with FDVA in October 2012 and has effectively served her veterans and staff of the Baldomero Lopez State Veterans' Nursing Home since her arrival. During her tenure, she has garnered numerous accolades for the facility to include both Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) Five-Star and National Healthcare Association Quality Awards. Impressive is that Marlies has operated the facility with the least amount of Staffing Agency of all comparable facilities during her tenure. Her residents and their loved ones rave about the excellent service they receive at the facility, and that the environment is always pleasant and welcoming. Kudos to Marlies and her team of dedicated professionals.



Melissa Mahoney proudly serves FDVA as the Health Operations Manager. Melissa joined the agency in 2019 as the Billing Supervisor and transferred into Human Resources in 2022 as a Human Resource Analyst, where she within two months was promoted to Human Resource Manager. She has more than 15 years of third-party billing experience and a bachelor's degree in Health Services Administration. She has maintained her history of excellent performance when fulfilling her responsibilities to her teammates. Melissa's work is critical to the overall personnel administration goals and has always performed in an accurate, timely, proficient, and consistent manner.



Employee Salutes



Mary Frazier has more than 50 years of service with the State of Florida and more than 12 with the Department. Her cooperative services have contributed to promoting public awareness of benefits and services, state initiatives and federal grants offered to Florida's 1.4 million veterans and their families. Mary has also personally supported Agency initiatives, and mentored new employees on the nuances of administration within State government. As a state employee, she has worked beyond her potential with the strongest commitment to ethics, performance, customer service and efficiency for a half century. It is for reason Mary is and continues to be an integral part of FDVA. We are proud and impressed with her outstanding efforts to render assistance with compassion, selflessness, and courage to the Agency and Floridians in their time of need.



Mary Frazier



Betsy Wickham

Betsy Wickham has provided more than 13 years of dedicated service to the State of Florida as the Chief, State Approving Agency, Division of Benefits and Assistance. She has consistently displayed exceptional skill in management of Veteran Education Programs across the State of Florida, encompassing colleges, universities, trade schools, and specialty training programs. Time after time, Betsy has exhibited expert skills in managing high volumes of assessments, validations, and certifications required annually by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. She is continually asked to provide her expertise to workshops, conferences, and seminars across the county. Truly an asset, we salute Besty for all she does for our Agency, the State, and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.



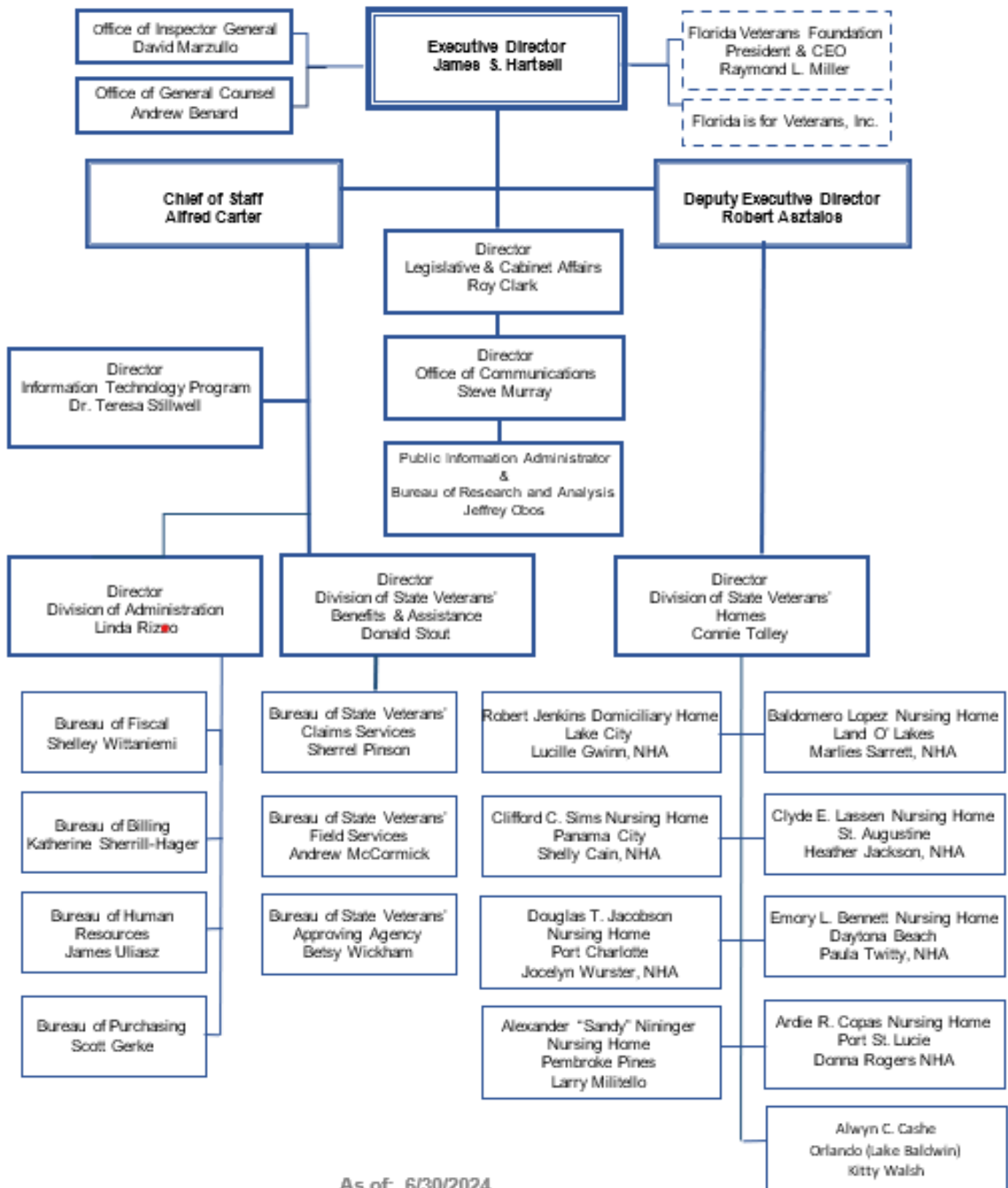
Retired U.S. Army Colonel Roy Clark has served the State of Florida for nearly nine years as Legislative and Cabinet Affairs Director. In this capacity, Roy has been the catalyst for passing of many Veteran-focused bills and initiatives. In addition to coordinating legislative matters, Roy handles a myriad of calls from veterans and constituents seeking support for benefits, legislative, and mental health matters. Colonel Clark also serves as Agency appointee for many boards and committees such as the Suicide Prevention Coordinating Council. Extremely knowledgeable, professional and charismatic, Roy is the perfect choice for the Legislative and Cabinet Affairs Director position.



Roy Clark

Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs

Who We Are



Where We Are



FDVA STATE VETERANS' HOMES

- 1. Robert H. Jenkins Jr. - Lake City**
State Veterans' Domiciliary Home
- 2. Emory L. Bennett - Daytona Beach**
State Veterans' Nursing Home
- 3. Baldomero Lopez - Land O' Lakes**
State Veterans' Nursing Home
- 4. Alexander "Sandy" Nininger - Pembroke Pines**
State Veterans' Nursing Home
- 5. Clifford C. Sims - Panama City**
State Veterans' Nursing Home
- 6. Douglas T. Jacobson - Port Charlotte**
State Veterans' Nursing Home
- 7. Clyde E. Lassen - St. Augustine**
State Veterans' Nursing Home
- 8. Ardie R. Copas - Port St. Lucie**
State Veterans' Nursing Home
- 9. Alwyn C. Cashe - Orlando**
State Veterans' Nursing Home

FDVA OFFICES

- A. FDVA Tallahassee Office**
- B. FDVA Headquarters & Executive Offices - Largo**
- C. FDVA Benefits & Assistance Division - Bay Pines**

FUTURE LOCATION

- 10. Collier County**



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS

Honoring those who served U.S.

What We Are About

The Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs (FDVA) is a Cabinet agency responsible for assisting Florida veterans, their families and survivors in improving their health and economic well-being through quality benefit information, advocacy, education and long-term health care. FDVA's main administrative office is in Largo with a Capital office in Tallahassee. Its two primary program areas are located throughout the state:



The Division of Veterans' Benefits and Assistance provides professional assistance to Florida veterans and their dependents in obtaining financial benefits and health care treatments from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

The Division of Long-Term Care Services provides comprehensive, high-quality health care to eligible veterans in need of long-term skilled or assisted living care, and adult day health services in the future.

Florida has the third largest veteran population in the nation (1,450,597). Fiscal Year 2022 (Federal Year: 10/1/2021-9/30/2022) demographic information from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Veteran Population Projection Model 2022.

World War II

There are 14,823 (1%) World War II veterans in Florida.

Korean War

There are 87,015 (7%) Korean War-era veterans in Florida, who served during 1950 to 1955. Korean War veterans are more prone to suffer from disabilities related to cold injuries as a result of exposure to severe cold climates.

What We Are About

Vietnam War

There are 476,454 (36%) Vietnam-era veterans in Florida, who served from 1961 to 1975. FDVA has seen a slight decrease in this population but an increase in disability claims filed on behalf of Vietnam veterans due to the expansion of the PACT Act and the manifestation of acute diseases brought on by exposure to Agent Orange.

Peacetime

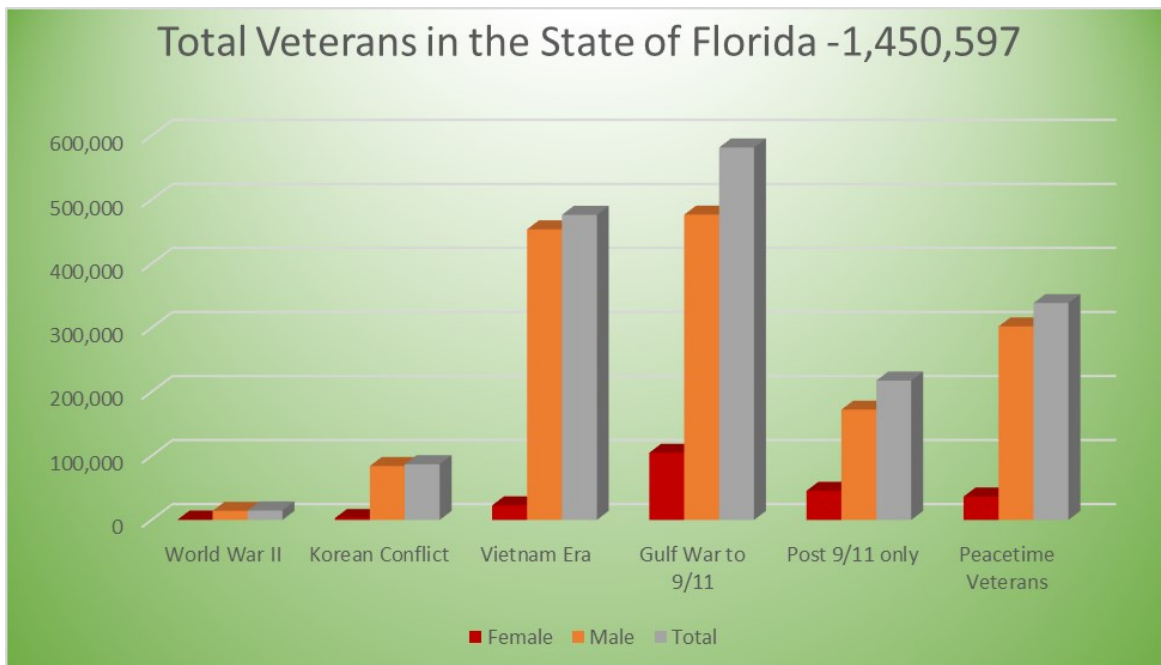
There are 338,634 (25%) peacetime veterans in Florida. Almost a quarter of Florida's veteran population served honorably during this relatively conflict-free time in our history. Many of these veterans do not seek benefits, mistakenly believing that if they did not serve in combat, they must not qualify for veteran benefits and programs.

Gulf War to 9/11

There are 195,521 (15%) Gulf War-era veterans in Florida, from Gulf War 1990 to pre-9/11. The VA recognizes certain illnesses and diseases are presumed to be related to military service in designated areas of Southwest Asia that may entitle them to VA disability compensation benefits.

Post-9/11 Veterans

There are 217,613 (16%) post-9/11 veterans in Florida. These younger veterans, much like the Greatest Generation of World War II, are seeking employment, housing and education opportunities for themselves, their spouses and families. Research suggests that 10% to 18% of these service members are likely to have Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) after they return.



- Note:** (1) Veterans serving in more than one period are counted only once in the total.
(2) Period consists of 16 mutually exclusive categories.
(3) Women Veterans comprise approximately 10% of population during conflicts

Agency Performance Measures

Division of Veterans' Benefits and Assistance

Provide information and advocacy to Florida veterans, their families and survivors, and assist them in obtaining all federal and state benefits due to them.

Measure	Actual FY 22-23	Actual FY 23-24	Standard FY 23-24
Value of cost avoidance - Retroactive Compensation	\$ 230,331,508.00	\$ 255,067,480.00	\$ 101,574,325.00
Value of cost avoidance - Issue Resolutions	\$ 66,041,027.00	\$ 99,465,187.00	\$ 24,407,719.00
Number of Veterans served	197,084	177,361	107,275
Number of Claims processed	41,100	44,833	24,558
Number of services to Veterans	416,673	441,279	534,268

Division of Executive Direction and Support Services

Provide effective and responsive management to support the divisions and programs serving veterans.

Measure	Actual FY 2022-23	Actual FY 2023-24	Standard FY 2023-24
1. Administration costs as a percent of total agency costs.	3.5%	4.76%	6.8%
2. Administrative positions as a percent of total agency positions.	2.0%	2.28%	4.4%

Division of Long-Term Care

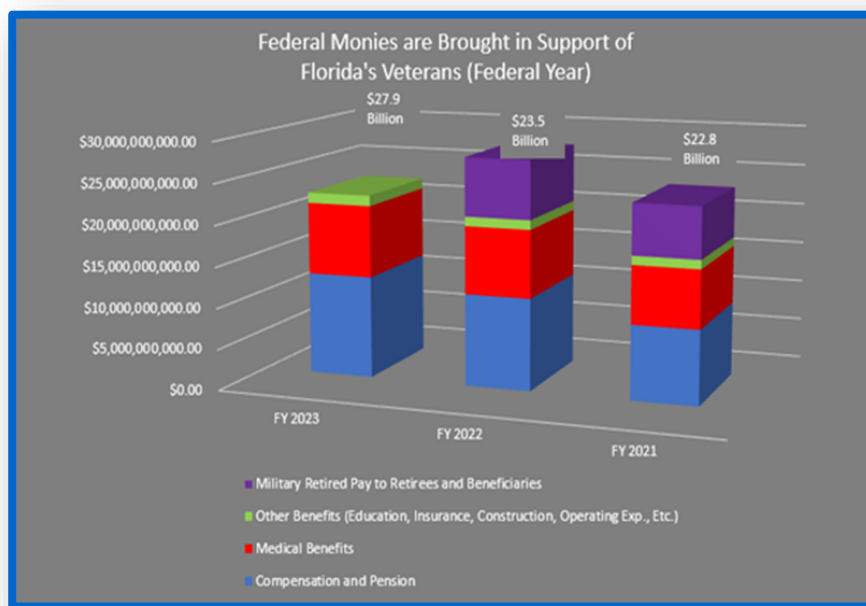
Provide quality long-term health care services to eligible Florida veterans.

Measure	Actual FY 2022-23	Actual FY 2023-24	Standard FY 2023-24
1. Occupancy rate for homes in operation 2 years or longer.	87.95%	93.90%	92%
2. Percent of state veterans' homes in compliance with quality of care health care regulations.	100%	100%	100%
3. Number of state veterans' homes beds available.	1,102	1,102	1,102

Division of Benefits and Assistance

The Division of Veterans' Benefits and Assistance provides professional assistance to Florida's veterans and their dependents in an effort to obtain financial benefits and health care treatment from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). State Veterans' Service Officers perform a myriad of services to include, but not limited to: outreach, military record retrieval, appeals processing, emergency management support, and nursing home resident status reviews.

State Veterans' Service Officers are trained to resolve the myriad of issues facing veterans who honorably served in World War II through today's conflicts, with each era having unique issues and challenges. Each day finds State Veterans' Service Officers offering assistance and guidance at Transition Assistance Program briefings for separating service members, congressional veterans' appreciation days, and Veteran Service Organization gatherings. FDVA employees remain proactive in providing services to the 1.4 million veterans in Florida; fewer than 438,455 (Compensation of 421,597, plus Pension of 16,858) currently receive VA service-connected compensation and pension benefits (not to be confused with military retirement benefits). Our efforts to reach these veterans, counsel them regarding benefits they may have earned, and assist them in garnering those benefits are expanding. For every state dollar expended for this division, more than \$41 in federal monies are brought into Florida. The FY 2023 federal monies brought in to the state totaled over \$27 Billion dollars.



The Bureau of Veterans' Claims provides counseling and assistance to veterans, their dependents and survivors, with the preparation, submission and prosecution of claims and appeals for state and federal benefits, as well as applications to correct military records. The bureau also supports the VA's initiatives of Homeless Outreach, Women Veterans' Integration, and 'Fully Developed Claims' program.

The Bureau's primary responsibility is to work directly with the decision resources in the VA Regional Office to expedite claims and to influence, through proactive advocacy, the most positive outcome. To this end, Veterans' Claims Services provides a quality control function by reviewing completed VA benefits rating decisions and paralegal due process assistance in the prosecution of veterans' disagreements with and appeals of VA rating decisions and debt identification and relief.

Division of Benefits and Assistance

The Bureau is also mandated by statute to train and certify County Veteran Service Officers. To maintain proficiency with the rapid changes in veterans' programs, the bureau provides training twice a year during the counties' semi-annual conferences.

The Bureau's secondary focus centered around Camp Lejeune (North Carolina) Water Contamination Claims. State Veterans' Service Officers processed approximately 450 claims for veterans who served at Camp Lejeune or Marine Corps Air Station New River for at least 30 cumulative days from August 1953 through December 1987. Claims included but were not limited to adult leukemia, aplastic anemia and other myelodysplastic syndromes, bladder cancer, kidney or liver cancer, multiple myeloma, non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, and Parkinson's disease.

State Veterans' Service Offices deployed to Disaster Recovery Centers and Multi-Agency Resource Centers to provide on-the-spot support to veterans and their family members in the aftermath of several hurricanes. Most veterans sought financial and mental health assistance as these calamitous events destroyed or exacted significant damage to their residences.



The Bureau of Veterans' Field Services provides benefits counseling services in a total of 48 locations; 33 of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical facilities in Florida, one county resource center, four Veterans Affairs VET Centers, three Military bases and seven State Veterans' Homes. The bureau also provides outreach activities for FDVA throughout the State. In addition, Field Services assists in staffing the state's Disaster Recovery Centers when established by the Division of Emergency Management. The bureau's primary responsibility is to work directly with the decision resources in the VA Regional Office to expedite claims and to influence, through proactive advocacy for state and federal veteran benefits with the most positive outcomes. The focus of Field Services is face-to-face contact with the client and the resolution of any number of issues related to the submission of claims for compensation, pension, or medical care. They also perform extensive outreach and help veterans navigate the confusing and cumbersome process to obtain benefits from the VA. The services can result in monetary benefits, but often result in determining, verifying and obtaining eligibility for medical treatments, medications, wheelchairs, hearing aids, ambulance bill reimbursements, lost check replacements, prosthetics and other non-monetary yet valuable benefits.

Division of Benefits and Assistance

The Bureau of State Approving Agency (SAA) for Veterans' Education and Training is charged under the provisions of Title 38, United States Code and the federal contract entered into between FDVA and the VA and governed by Florida Statute 295.124. The Bureau is 100-percent federally funded. The Bureau reviews, evaluates and approves programs of veterans' education at Florida's institutions of higher learning and non-college degree schools for participation in VA Education Benefit programs. GI Bill®-eligible veteran flight training and employer On-the-Job and apprenticeship training also falls under the SAA's purview.

Education is an essential tool to ensure a successful transition from active duty to veteran status. As emphasized during FDVA outreach activities, the SAA works diligently to safeguard quality education program offerings in the state, they encourage the use of all federal GI Bill® education benefit programs and also promote the use of state of Florida education benefit offerings. Attracting and retaining a young, educated veteran population is beneficial for all Floridians.

The Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs contracts with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to certify education and specialty skills programs offered to Veterans and their family members throughout the state of Florida. Below depicts the certifications completed by the Agency's State Approving Agency personnel annually:



Outreach/Support Events and Activities:

The Benefits and Assistance Division has supported numerous events and activities this year, many of which were as a result of new requirements under the law, or natural disasters. Some of the outreach events and activities are highlighted on the next page:

Division of Benefits and Assistance



BOLDLY SERVING MORE THAN 35 YEARS



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS

www.FloridaVets.org



Division of Long-Term Care



The Division of Long-Term Care, formerly State Veterans' Homes program, provides comprehensive, high-quality health care on a cost-effective basis to eligible veterans in need of either long-term skilled nursing care or assisted living services. Care is provided to veterans with qualifying war or peacetime service, who are residents of Florida preceding admission, and who require skilled care as certified by a VA physician. Admission criteria are based on the need to maintain a safe environment for all residents. The skilled nursing and assisted living homes only admit those persons whose needs can be met within the accommodations and services it provides with consideration for all residents.

Assisted Living level care is provided at the Robert H. Jenkins Jr. State Veterans' Domiciliary Home in Lake City, and includes rehabilitative assistance and other therapeutic measures to eligible ambulatory veterans who are not in need of hospitalization or skilled nursing services. The focus of care in the Domiciliary Home is preparing veterans to function at their highest level of independence. A multidisciplinary approach is followed with the veterans participating in an established care plan.

Skilled-nursing home care provides full-service, long-term residential nursing care to eligible veterans in eight State Veterans' Nursing Homes. The homes are supervised 24-hours daily by registered and licensed nurses.

Seven of the eight skilled nursing facilities operated by FDVA have dementia-specific neighborhoods:

- Alexander "Sandy" Nininger State Veterans' Nursing Home, Pembroke Pines
- Baldomero Lopez State Veterans' Nursing Home, Land O' Lakes
- Clifford C. Sims State Veterans' Nursing Home, Panama City
- Clyde E. Lassen State Veterans' Nursing Home, St. Augustine
- Douglas T. Jacobson State Veterans' Nursing Home, Port Charlotte
- Ardie R. Copas State Veterans' Nursing Home, Port St. Lucie
- Alwyn C. Cashe State Veterans' Nursing Home, Orlando

Comprehensive services and a deep concern for all veterans go hand-in-hand at our FDVA state veterans' homes. A full-time staff of Registered Nurses, Licensed Practical Nurses and Certified Nursing Assistants provides around-the-clock medical and nursing care to our veteran residents.

Rehabilitative services, such as occupational and physical therapies, speech therapy and recreational activities are provided under the direct supervision of licensed therapists.

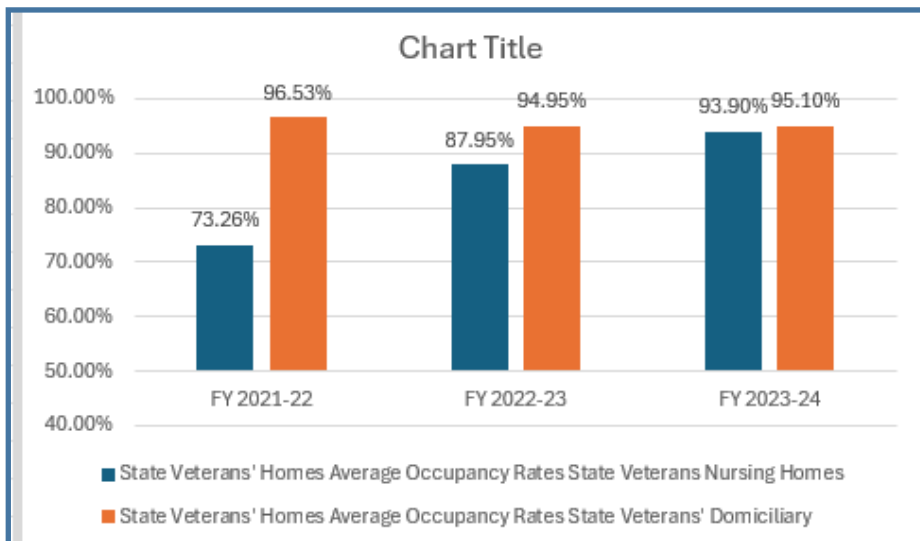
A variety of on- and off-site recreational and social activities are provided to encourage active minds, bodies and spirits, and slow the process of physical and mental decline. A wide range of other medical services is also offered. These include dental, podiatric and dermatological care. In spacious dining rooms, residents are provided with wholesome meals prepared under the supervision of licensed dietitians.

Division of Long-Term Care

The Division of Long-Term Care has a proud tradition of commitment to veterans. We remain at the forefront in ensuring the level of care and services provided to our veterans meets or exceeds the highest standards in an environment that enhances the quality of life of each veteran.

Division of Long-Term Care Occupancy Rates

During Fiscal Year 2023-24, the average occupancy rate for State Veterans' Homes in operation two years or longer was 93.9 percent and this was largely due to us regrowing our census while managing staffing shortages. The occupancy rates increased by 6% during this time period as end-of-life departures slowed and staffing increased to allow us to serve more veterans within our facilities. As of the publication of this document, our facilities have improved to over 96% occupancy.



Assisted living facilities traditionally operate at a lower occupancy than skilled nursing facilities, and the department is proud to announce the Robert H. Jenkins Jr. State Veterans' Domiciliary Home in Lake City had an occupancy rate far above the 90 percent performance measure goal for the year and achieved a 95.10 percent occupancy rate. This is despite having 5% of its rooms down for much needed renovations.

Quality of Care

Delayed onset Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) has typically been observed among the elderly, who may develop PTSD stemming the development of symptoms after exposure to single or multiple traumatic events. Music therapy is offered, in addition to standard treatment, to address symptoms for PTSD. For example, it will be used as a way to build rapport and allow residents to express themselves nonverbally since some of our residents with PTSD have a difficult time talking about the trauma. Music can help prompt memories, when a resident is unable to reprocess a memory due to not remembering it. It can also be used as a tool to ground the residents because music can prompt feelings of calmness. The State Veterans' Homes use music therapy with residents to help them to express themselves and their emotions in words. Music in a group setting can reduce isolation and feelings of detachment, and increase pleasurable emotions.

State Veterans' Homes continue to be the long-term care leaders in providing the most extraordinary programs that produce the highest quality of health care for our Florida veterans.

Honoring our Veterans' Home Residents

Celebrating our Heroes

We honor the legacy of our veterans during historical celebrations such as Memorial Day, Veterans Day, the Fourth of July and the like; but we also honor our resident heroes. On Aug. 13, 2024, Deputy Executive Director Bob Asztalos accompanied Lieutenant Governor Jeanette Nuñez during her visit with residents at the Robert H. Jenkins Jr. Veterans' Domiciliary Home in Lake City. Residents shared stories and received special desserts from the lieutenant governor as part of her 'LG on Mission' initiative to connect Veterans and their families with earned services, benefits and support. On June 5, 2024, Lieutenant Governor Jeanette Nuñez visited with World War II Veterans at the Emory L. Bennett State Veterans' Nursing Home in Daytona Beach, as part of the state's official D-Day commemoration efforts. *(Photos are featured below.)*



Fiscal Impact

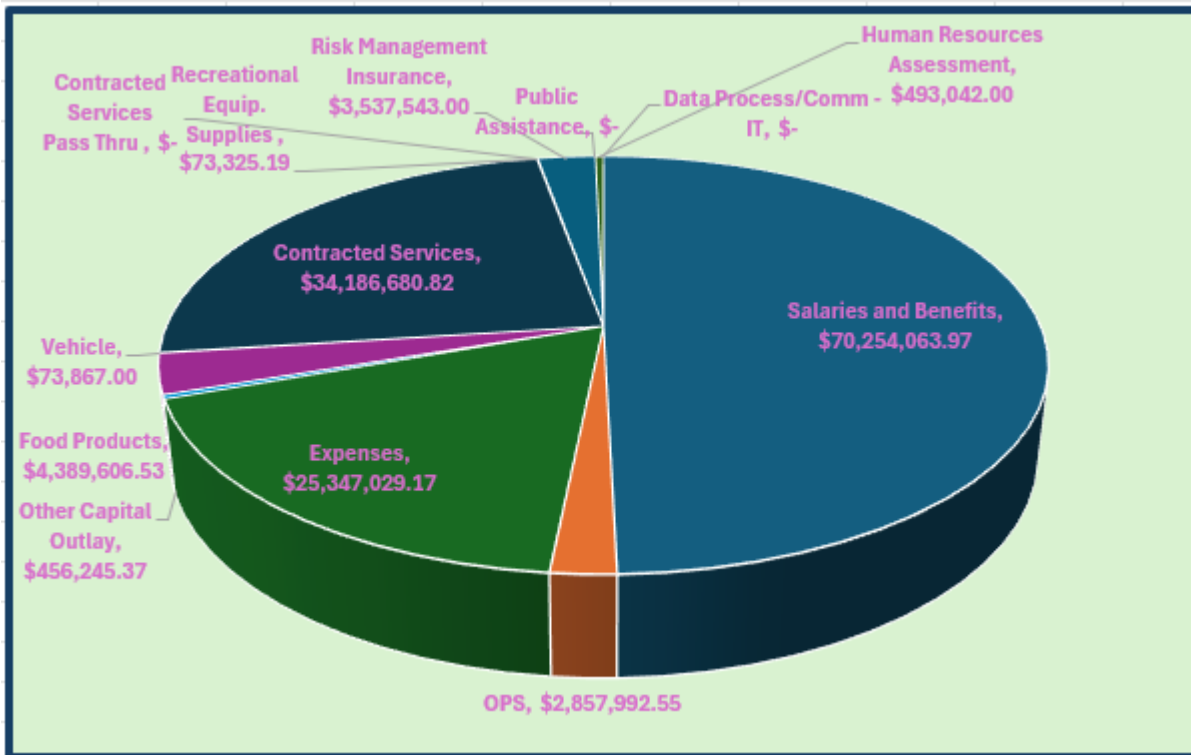
The Division of Administration provides day-to-day management of the agency’s financial resources. The revenue is generated through operations of the long-term care facilities and indirectly through the preparation of compensation claims, educational assistance, and state of Florida approved subsidies such as license plates revenue, donations, federal contracts, and donations. The department’s revenue was impacted by multiple factors affecting our environment. These include but are not limited to: hurricanes and hurricane recovery, changes in MEDICAID/ MEDICARE policy, changes in Per Diem standards and rates, and resident payee source characterization. Below and on the succeeding page is a snapshot of the department’s revenues and expenditures:

July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024							
		516002	339117	000222	261001		
Revenues		O & M TF	G&D TF	GR	Federal TF	Total	
Residents		\$ 14,794,815				\$ 14,794,815	
Private Insurance		\$ 1,568,343				\$ 1,568,343	
Medicaid		\$ 10,692,697				\$ 10,692,697	
Medicare	(1)	\$ 3,043,450				\$ 3,043,450	
Hospice		\$ 803,608				\$ 803,608	
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Per-Diem/70-100%	(2)	\$ 84,948,931				\$ 84,948,931	
Investment Interest	(3)	\$ 1,290,035	\$ 17,133			\$ 1,307,168	
License Plate	(4)		\$ 100,000			\$ 100,000	
Federal Contract	(5)	\$ 1,475,399				\$ 1,475,399	
Federal Grants	(6)				\$ 101,537	\$ 101,537	
Donations	(7)		\$ 64,728			\$ 64,728	
Other Revenues	(8)	\$ 5,699,945		\$ 2		\$ 5,699,947	
CARES Act Relief	(9)					\$	-
Hurricane Michael	(10)					\$	-
Total Revenues		\$ 124,317,223	\$ 181,861	\$ 2	\$ 101,537	\$ 124,600,623	

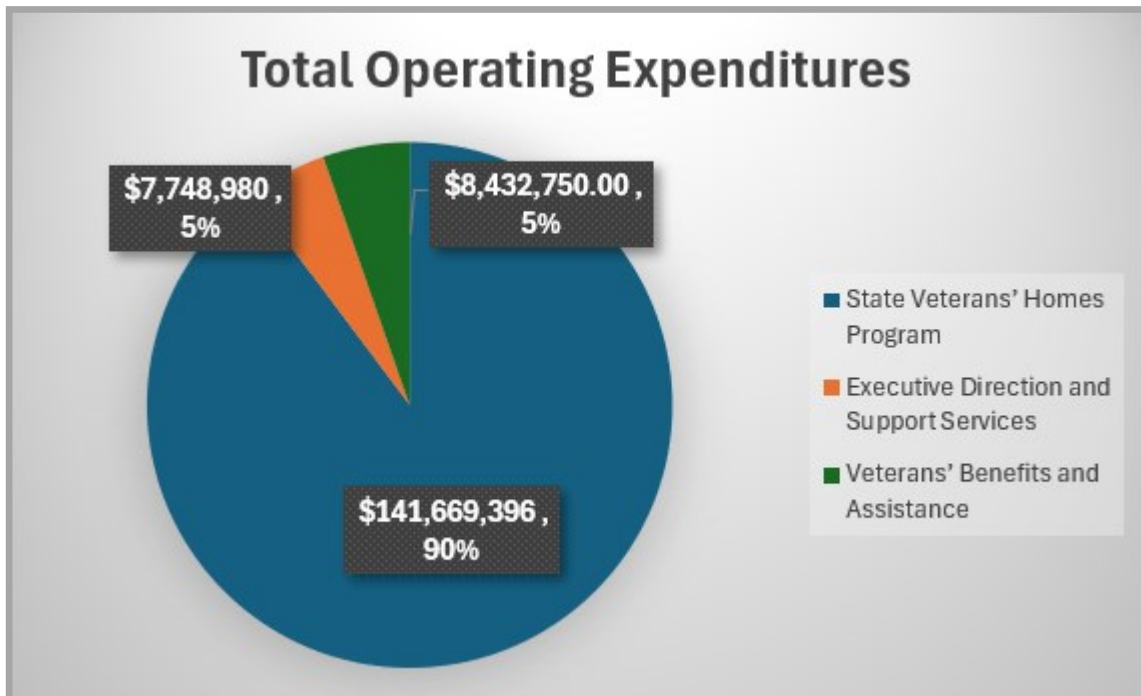
Total Revenue

\$124,600,623

Graphical Depiction of Revenue Streams



Agency Total Operating Expenses



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS
ANNUAL REPORT INFORMATION

July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024

		State Veterans' Homes Program	Executive Direction and Support Services	Veterans' Benefits and Assistance
Operating Expenditures				
Salaries and Benefits		\$ 70,254,064	\$ 3,424,815	\$ 7,924,493
OPS		\$ 2,857,993	\$ 31,875	\$ 8,741
Expenses		\$ 25,347,029	\$ 1,498,983	\$ 419,724
Other Capital Outlay		\$ 456,245	\$ 1,211,565	\$ -
Food Products		\$ 4,389,607	\$ -	\$ -
Vehicle		\$ 73,867	\$ -	\$ -
Contracted Services		\$ 34,186,681	\$ 1,424,476	\$ 16,000
Contracted Services Pass Thru		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Recreational Equip. Supplies		\$ 73,325	\$ -	\$ -
Risk Management Insurance		\$ 3,537,543	\$ 118,468	\$ 24,332
Public Assistance		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Human Resources Assessment		\$ 493,042	\$ 10,121	\$ 39,461
Data Process/Comm - IT		\$ -	\$ 28,677	\$ -
Total Operating Expenditures		\$ 141,669,396	\$ 7,748,980	\$ 8,432,750
Non-Operating Expenditures				
Service Charge to General Revenue		\$ 439,793	\$ 29	\$ 2,195
Refunds-State Revenues		\$ 1,207,759	\$ -	\$ -
Investment Cost		\$ 51,671	\$ -	\$ -
Payment Sales Tax		\$ 4,405	\$ -	\$ -
Transfer to GR		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Transfer Inter		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Total Non-Operating Expenditures		\$ 1,703,628	\$ 29	\$ 2,195
Fixed Capital Outlay				
New Home Construction		\$ 264,432	\$ -	\$ -
Add & Improvements to State Veterans' Homes		\$ 378,732	\$ -	\$ -
Maintenance/Repair		\$ 1,938,843	\$ -	\$ -
Deferred Building Maintenance		\$ 611,134	\$ -	\$ -
Fees		\$ 17,676	\$ -	\$ -
Total Fixed Capital Outlay		\$ 3,210,817	\$ -	\$ -
Total		\$ 146,583,841	\$ 7,749,009	\$ 8,434,945

Appendix I - Actions Taken Relevant to Florida Statutes

Appendix I

Actions Taken Relevant to Florida Statutes

Chapter 292, FLORIDA STATUTES

Section 292.05 (4) Florida Statutes, the Department may apply for and accept funds, grants, gifts, and services from the state, the United States Government or any of its agencies, or any other public or private source and may use funds derived from these sources to defray clerical and administrative costs as may be necessary for carrying out its duties.



Division of Long-Term Care

The Division of Long-Term Care, created under Chapter 296, Florida Statutes, applies for and receives federal funds from the VA including per diem reimbursements, as well as construction and renovation grants. Our homes accept funds from Medicare, Medicaid, hospice, private insurance reimbursements and from individual residents in the form of co-payments for services rendered. Our network of veterans' homes also accepts cash donations, as well as gifted items and services for the benefit of the residents.

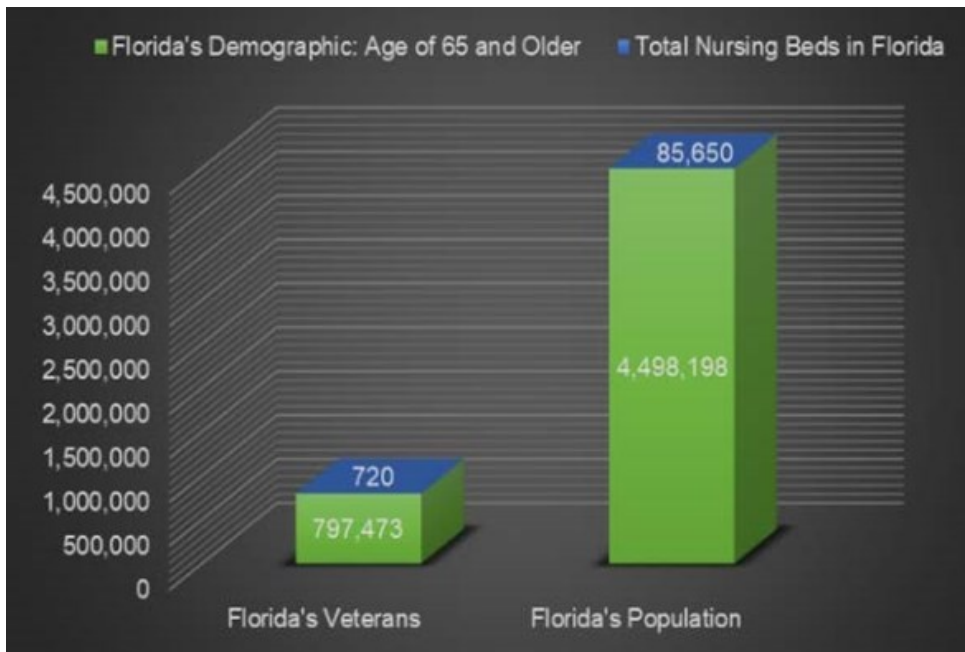
Section 292.05 (5) Florida Statutes, the Department shall conduct an ongoing study on the problems and needs of those residents of this state who are veterans of the Armed Forces of the United States and the problems and needs of their dependents. The study shall include but not be limited to:

- A survey of existing state and federal programs available for such persons that specifies the extent to which such programs presently are being implemented, with recommendations for the improved implementation, extension or improvement of such programs.
- A survey of the needs of such persons in the areas of social services, health care, education and employment, and any other areas of determined need, with recommendations regarding federal, state and community services that would meet those needs.
- A survey of federal, state, public and private monies available that could be used to defray the costs of state or community services needed for such persons.

FDVA continually surveys its constituency through feedback garnered while counseling thousands of veterans, receipt of training critiques, participation on numerous veteran-related governmental committees, regular meetings with veterans' organizations and their leadership, and analyses of official VA data and reports.

FDVA's Bureau of Research and Analysis reaches out to veteran communities and performs ongoing analyses of veterans' needs. FDVA attends Florida Veterans Council meetings with veteran service organization representatives throughout the state, as a best-effort to gather information on veterans and their needs, and to disseminate information on available benefits to as many veterans as we can reach.

Section 292.05 (7) Florida Statutes, the Department shall administer this chapter and shall have the authority and responsibility to apply for and administer any federal programs and develop and coordinate such state programs as may be beneficial to the particular interests of the veterans of this state. Such programs shall be subject to chapters 215 and 216.



The Division of Long-Term Care may apply to receive federal funds that provide for facility renovations and monthly per diem reimbursements for the cost of care for its eligible residents.

The total number of beds currently available in the Division of Long-Term Care is 1,102. Of those, 952 are nursing home beds and 150 are for assisted living care. The veteran population over 65 years old in Florida is estimated to be 797,473.

According to Florida's Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA), Florida has about 702 skilled nursing facilities with a total of 85,650 nursing home beds and 3,132 assisted living facilities with a total of 110,849 assisted living care beds. Florida's over-65 population is estimated to be about 4,498,198, with more than half a million diagnosed with Alzheimer's or related dementias.

The construction of new state veterans' homes is subject to approval by the Governor and Cabinet, with 35 percent of the funding provided by the Florida Legislature and 65 percent of construction costs matched by VA grant funding.

Division of Veterans' Benefits and Assistance

The Division of Veterans' Benefits and Assistance has 115 employees, 76 of whom are State Veterans' Service Officers (SVSO). Their day-to-day role is to connect without charge veterans and their families with earned services, benefits and support. In addition, SVSOs provide education and ongoing support to Veterans' Service Officers who serve veterans at the local government (city or county) level. The Division provides professional assistance to Florida's veterans and their dependents in an effort to obtain financial benefits and health care treatment from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Success is measured by the number of veterans the department assists and the number of issues resolved for those veterans. "Assistance" is seen in a variety of components, including medical treatment, prescriptions, prosthetic devices, benefit checks, school program approval, veterans' preference investigations and determinations, voter registration and disseminating veteran data to the general public.

The Division is comprised of a Division Director, support staff and three Bureaus:

- Bureau of Veterans' Claims and Assistance (§ 292.05 (1) F.S.)
- Bureau of Field Services (§ 292.05 (1) F.S.)
- Bureau of State Approving Agency (§ 292.05 (4) F.S.)

Division of Veterans' Benefits and Assistance

Provide information and advocacy to Florida veterans, their families and survivors, and assist them in obtaining all federal and state benefits due to them.

Measure	Actual FY 22-23	Actual FY 23-24	Standard FY 23-24
Value of cost avoidance - Retroactive Compensation	\$ 230,331,508.00	\$ 258,844,342.00	\$ 101,574,325.00
Value of cost avoidance - Issue Resolutions	\$ 66,041,027.00	\$ 99,465,187.00	\$ 24,407,719.00
Number of Veteran served	197,084	245,000	107,275
Number of Claims processed	41,100	44,833	24,558
Number of service to Veterans	416,673	441,279	534,268

(3, 4, & 5 were impacted due to COVID-19 restrictions – unable to see veterans at offices)

State Approving Agency (SAA) for Veterans' Education and Training

Under the provisions of Title 38 United States Code and the contract maintained between the FDVA and the VA, the SAA is charged with inspecting, approving and supervising programs and courses offered by accredited and non-accredited educational institutions (public and private) as well as training organizations, which are approved to participate in GI Bill® education benefit programs. Approval and compliance documents are furnished to VA, by the SAA, so that eligible veterans or other eligible persons enrolled in such courses may receive veteran education benefits. **The Bureau is 100-percent federally funded.**

Chapter 295, FLORIDA STATUTES

Office of Inspector General: Veterans' Preference

Under Veterans' Preference Act of 1944, provisions of Title 5, United States Code *"The state and all political subdivisions of the state shall give preference in employment, promotions after being deployed, and retention."* The FDVA Office of Inspector General coordinates Veterans' Preference investigations and enforcement for Florida's veterans pursuant to Section 295.065, Florida Statutes et seq.

Section 295.07 Florida Statutes, provides the State and political subdivisions shall give preferences in appointment, retention in positions of employment and promotion to eligible veterans.

Section 295.11 Florida Statutes, describes the Investigation process, tasking FDVA, upon written request of any aggrieved person who has applied to a state agency or with a political subdivision which was awarded to a nonveteran.

State Approving Agency (SAA) for Veterans' Education and Training

Under Section 295.124 Florida Statutes, FDVA maintains a contract with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) which funds the State Approving Agency for Veterans' Education and Training. Costs are reimbursed 100 percent by VA and include coverage of clerical and administrative expenses of the Bureau, which is within the Division of Veterans' Benefits and Assistance. Important is that these certifications are done across the state by a staff of only 11 personnel.



Appendix II - County Populations and Federal Benefits Distributions

County/ Congressional District	Veteran Population*	Total Expenditure	Compensation & Pension	Construction	Education & Vocational Rehabilitation/ Employment	Insurance & Indemnities	Medical Care
ALACHUA	16,904	\$ 391,784	\$ 138,176	\$ 581	\$ 13,267	\$ 643	\$ 239,117
BAKER	1,764	\$ 31,408	\$ 17,203	\$ -	\$ 1,195	\$ 29	\$ 12,981
BAY	21,468	\$ 310,456	\$ 224,692	\$ -	\$ 14,650	\$ 519	\$ 70,595
BRADFORD	1,982	\$ 42,264	\$ 16,548	\$ -	\$ 1,169	\$ 167	\$ 24,380
BREVARD	63,338	\$ 1,094,652	\$ 672,481	\$ -	\$ 49,251	\$ 1,930	\$ 370,990
BROWARD	77,355	\$ 919,153	\$ 502,439	\$ -	\$ 61,909	\$ 2,581	\$ 352,223
CALHOUN	1,083	\$ 12,701	\$ 7,813	\$ -	\$ 127	\$ 0	\$ 4,761
CHARLOTTE	20,717	\$ 257,924	\$ 149,731	\$ -	\$ 4,224	\$ 592	\$ 103,377
CITRUS	16,684	\$ 297,879	\$ 157,700	\$ -	\$ 5,663	\$ 586	\$ 133,930
CLAY	26,056	\$ 483,557	\$ 333,376	\$ -	\$ 30,455	\$ 353	\$ 119,372
COLLIER	23,220	\$ 182,088	\$ 113,525	\$ -	\$ 6,672	\$ 1,073	\$ 60,817
COLUMBIA	6,500	\$ 179,828	\$ 65,155	\$ -	\$ 2,245	\$ 141	\$ 112,287
DE SOTO	2,009	\$ 27,196	\$ 14,477	\$ -	\$ 782	\$ 178	\$ 11,757
DIXIE	1,571	\$ 29,172	\$ 11,022	\$ -	\$ 299	\$ 84	\$ 17,767
DUVAL	88,313	\$ 1,206,397	\$ 763,956	\$ -	\$ 83,797	\$ 1,811	\$ 356,832
ESCAMBIA	37,051	\$ 560,820	\$ 377,503	\$ -	\$ 28,826	\$ 982	\$ 153,508
FLAGLER	10,679	\$ 175,718	\$ 110,660	\$ -	\$ 5,843	\$ 289	\$ 58,926
FRANKLIN	1,002	\$ 10,883	\$ 6,518	\$ -	\$ 197	\$ 2	\$ 4,165
GADSDEN	3,100	\$ 51,749	\$ 27,568	\$ -	\$ 1,187	\$ 49	\$ 22,946
GILCHRIST	1,427	\$ 31,243	\$ 13,376	\$ -	\$ 433	\$ 10	\$ 17,424
GLADES	1,092	\$ 12,955	\$ 3,579	\$ -	\$ 9	\$ 0	\$ 9,366
GULF	1,491	\$ 18,510	\$ 12,894	\$ -	\$ 458	\$ 20	\$ 5,139
HAMILTON	932	\$ 22,444	\$ 10,962	\$ -	\$ 156	\$ 3	\$ 11,324
HARDEE	1,172	\$ 12,439	\$ 6,598	\$ -	\$ 420	\$ 102	\$ 5,319
HENDRY	1,513	\$ 23,841	\$ 13,092	\$ -	\$ 638	\$ 16	\$ 10,095
HERNANDO	19,649	\$ 339,337	\$ 188,597	\$ -	\$ 9,172	\$ 362	\$ 141,207
HIGHLANDS	9,057	\$ 133,245	\$ 74,756	\$ -	\$ 1,859	\$ 172	\$ 56,458
HILLSBOROUGH	95,861	\$ 2,061,933	\$ 1,095,905	\$ -	\$ 114,124	\$ 2,174	\$ 849,730
HOLMES	1,740	\$ 26,265	\$ 18,917	\$ -	\$ 606	\$ 95	\$ 6,648

County Populations and Federal Benefits Distributions

County/ Congressional District	Veteran Pop- ulation*	Total Expendi- ture	Compensation & Pension	Construc- tion	Education & Vocational Rehabilita- tion/ Employ- ment	Insurance & Indemnities	Medical Care
INDIAN RIVER	15,446	\$168,020	\$102,700	\$ -	\$4,145	\$628	\$60,547
JACKSON	3,740	\$59,385	\$39,801	\$ -	\$1,333	\$124	\$18,127
JEFFERSON	1,004	\$15,505	\$8,502	\$ -	\$365	\$6	\$6,632
LAFAYETTE	457	\$7,420	\$2,643	\$ -	\$79	\$3	\$4,695
LAKE	32,048	\$499,483	\$298,747	\$ -	\$15,828	\$1,015	\$183,893
LEE	51,724	\$620,622	\$341,247	\$ -	\$20,030	\$2,351	\$256,993
LEON	16,103	\$211,292	\$115,078	\$76	\$13,141	\$520	\$82,478
LEVY	4,082	\$85,128	\$32,084	\$ -	\$1,089	\$34	\$51,920
LIBERTY	420	\$4,834	\$2,913	\$ -	\$54	\$0	\$1,866
MADISON	1,139	\$26,840	\$12,473	\$ -	\$617	\$151	\$13,600
MANATEE	28,965	\$380,534	\$217,331	\$ -	\$13,733	\$1,246	\$148,224
MARION	36,271	\$556,198	\$282,411	\$ -	\$11,568	\$886	\$261,334
MARTIN	13,072	\$131,074	\$67,997	\$ -	\$3,828	\$899	\$58,350
MIAMI-DADE	60,028	\$913,738	\$433,733	\$ -	\$57,058	\$1,164	\$421,783
MONROE	7,086	\$77,377	\$45,748	\$ -	\$4,955	\$112	\$26,562
NASSAU	9,357	\$131,122	\$89,548	\$ -	\$7,386	\$347	\$33,840
OKALOOSA	36,479	\$564,754	\$435,122	\$ -	\$38,388	\$521	\$90,723
OKEECHOBEE	3,031	\$51,385	\$25,326	\$ -	\$877	\$15	\$25,166
ORANGE	69,378	\$1,218,614	\$628,067	\$1,928	\$81,000	\$2,111	\$505,507
OSCEOLA	18,875	\$473,144	\$256,152	\$ -	\$21,484	\$522	\$194,986
PALM BEACH	75,220	\$933,474	\$407,082	\$ -	\$43,200	\$6,973	\$476,218
PASCO	45,130	\$870,750	\$448,578	\$ -	\$33,016	\$1,035	\$388,121
PINELLAS	76,182	\$1,279,741	\$566,056	\$75	\$36,981	\$2,676	\$674,104
POLK	48,809	\$808,440	\$451,311	\$ -	\$29,654	\$1,139	\$326,336
PUTNAM	7,135	\$117,219	\$53,533	\$ -	\$1,759	\$97	\$61,830
SAINT JOHNS	22,353	\$344,716	\$237,234	\$4	\$20,029	\$833	\$86,616
SAINT LUCIE	23,772	\$388,409	\$208,291	\$ -	\$14,111	\$698	\$165,309
SANTA ROSA	22,254	\$474,104	\$359,569	\$ -	\$29,984	\$469	\$84,082
SARASOTA	36,453	\$373,009	\$213,836	\$6,440	\$12,448	\$2,121	\$138,164
SEMINOLE	28,212	\$386,973	\$208,612	\$ -	\$24,457	\$678	\$153,226
SUMTER	17,628	\$228,463	\$141,714	\$ -	\$2,389	\$845	\$83,516
SUWANNEE	3,736	\$77,888	\$34,357	\$ -	\$1,048	\$68	\$42,414

County Populations and Federal Benefits Distributions

County/ Congressional District	Veteran Population*	Total Expenditure	Compensation & Pension	Construction	Education & Vocational Rehabilitation/ Employment	Insurance & Indemnities	Medical Care
TAYLOR	1,515	\$ 29,596	\$ 14,354	\$ -	\$ 348	\$ 31	\$ 14,863
UNION	1,132	\$ 16,720	\$ 7,640	\$ -	\$ 348	\$ 89	\$ 8,643
VOLUSIA	47,744	\$ 772,736	\$ 455,692	\$ -	\$ 35,856	\$ 1,564	\$ 279,624
WAKULLA	2,428	\$ 43,017	\$ 24,631	\$ -	\$ 1,298	\$ 5	\$ 17,083
WALTON	7,515	\$ 92,296	\$ 65,090	\$ -	\$ 4,295	\$ 210	\$ 22,700
WASHINGTON	2,069	\$ 29,296	\$ 20,498	\$ -	\$ 548	\$ 37	\$ 8,214

Hope Florida

Hope Florida, an initiative led by First Lady Casey DeSantis, utilizes Hope Navigators to guide Florida veterans towards prosperity, economic self-sufficiency, and hope on an individualized basis. These dedicated professionals play a crucial role in assisting individuals to recognize immediate barriers, set long-term goals, and create strategic plans. They ensure inclusive community involvement, fostering collaboration among the private sector, faith-based communities, nonprofits, and government entities. Hope Navigators work closely with veterans, breaking down silos and maximizing support by engaging various sectors within the community. Regardless of discharge status, age, or gender, these navigators extend their support to all Florida veterans, including Gold Star Families, veteran widows, and spouses and children of veterans. They address common obstacles like housing, employment, disability and education benefits, mental health care, and financial matters. Hope Florida—A Pathway for Patriots, began its public launch in November 2023, officially becoming part of the Hope Florida family.

In 2024, Hope Navigators made a significant impact, serving more than 492 Florida veterans. Notably, 81% of veterans facing housing challenges achieved more stable housing, resulting in 110 program participants sustaining housing and saving taxpayers an estimated \$1,705,000 annually. Seven program participants successfully moved from homelessness to housing, saving taxpayers an estimated \$217,000 per year. The commitment to meeting basic needs was evident, with 93% of veterans requesting services having their needs met. Additionally, 84% of veterans with benefit barriers were able to access services to address their specific needs. This data undeniably reflects the effectiveness of the FDVA Hope Navigator program.



The Governor's Initiative on Lawyers Assisting Warriors (GI LAW)

The GI LAW offers legal representation in civil cases to help reduce the burden that some active military members may face. Governor DeSantis is committed to ensuring our service members have the support of the state's legal community and its best legal minds. GI LAW draws from the talent of Florida's leading law firms to provide pro bono services for military members. Through the initiative, our state's men and women in uniform will receive local counsel in a variety of civil matters, including actions in local courts. Participating attorneys will dedicate time and expertise to ensure a prompt and fair resolution of legal matters. The program is a collaboration between the Governor's Office, the Department of Military Affairs, Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs and Enterprise Florida, Inc.

GI Law took effect in 2019 and has continued to grow. There have been 198 cases undertaken by law offices



throughout Florida to assist military members with their legal matters. The program does not provide access to legal services for a) criminal, b) family law, or c) UCMJ cases. The program acts as a clearing house only and does not assign



In 2008, the Florida Legislature established the Florida Veterans Foundation (FVF) as a Direct Support Organization for the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs (FDVA). The Foundation operates for the direct and indirect benefit of the veterans of Florida, the FDVA, State Veterans' Service Organizations and County Veteran Service Officers. The FVF is also a nonprofit organization operating for charitable and educational purposes under Section 501(C)(3). While many of Florida's veterans successfully transitioned to a post-military career, some encountered challenges that impede their progress. Veterans report priority services needed during their transition were employment assistance, transportation, housing, legal issues, mental health and utility assistance in emergencies.

The FVF team is composed of a volunteer Chairman and Board of Directors. The FVF collaborates with various entities and state agencies with an interest in solving issues that ultimately affect Florida and the economy. Our staunch effort is realizing successes throughout the veteran community and gaining incredible interest at all levels of the government within Florida and through recognized accomplishments.

FVF Chairman Commander Dennis O. Baker, USN (Ret) is past president of the Foundation, and continues to lead the charge to help our veterans. Raymond Miller is the Chief Operating Officer and is in charge of day-to-day operations. Brooke Dennison is the Outreach Coordinator and is responsible for Social Media and is the foundation's webmaster.

Fiscal Year 2023/2024

The Florida Veterans Foundation has aggressively approached service to Florida veterans through collaboration with statewide associations, organizations, private businesses and state agencies, who have a vested interest in solving those issues that plague veterans and ultimately affect Florida and the economy. Our approach is measured through outreach and educational services and programs to help 1) find veterans to register for VA benefits 2) help veterans in emergency crisis situations 3) make veterans aware of the many resources available to them to enhance their quality of life. This is accomplished through the enlistment of services and resource organizations with similar missions. Our efforts continue to be successful within the veterans' communities and are gaining the attention of varied levels of government within the state of Florida and from other states keen on supporting veterans in their communities. These accomplishments are setting the standard for the rest of the nation to follow. This fiscal year the Foundation received \$360,000 from legislative appropriations. These funds are directed at Emergency Financial Assistance. Additionally, \$300,000 was allocated toward the Governor's Challenge for Veteran's Suicide Prevention. This campaign is being managed by the FVF.

Florida Veterans' Benefits Guides

FVF continues its mission to support the education, outreach and funding of the *Florida Veterans' Benefits Guide* in print and digital versions. FVF printed 175,000 benefits guides in FY 2023-2024.

Suicide Prevention, Opioids/Mental Health Services

FVF is a working member of the Florida Governor’s Challenge program to help develop an aggressive implementation plan for the prevention of suicide among service members, veterans and their families.

FVF continues to collaborate with Tampa Bay’s area 2-1-1 Crisis Center to provide support for statewide campaigns that will connect the veteran population to Veteran Peer service providers at all levels regarding issues such as Suicide Prevention, Opioid Abuse, PTSD, and Mental Health Treatment.

State Veterans’ Home Dental Support

The FVF has partnered with the FDVA’s State Veterans’ Homes to provide dental care for veterans in need. This program has allowed many veterans to receive care which has benefited their overall health. For some it has put a smile back on their face.

Emergency Financial Assistance

The FVF’s successful Financial Aid Program continues its partnership with Project Vet Relief, which is managed by the American Legion of Florida. The fiscal year brought many challenges. The foundation was able to provide direct support totaling \$328,732.06.

Veterans Legal Services

FVF continues its mission to provide education and outreach through its collaborators and partners for the *Florida Veterans Legal Helpline*, which is run by Bay Area Legal Services. Florida veterans can get an appointment with an experienced attorney who can provide direct advice and assistance.

Veterans Housing

The FVF partnered with Lieutenant Governor Jeanette Nuñez and FDVA leadership for the first annual 5K Run for Veterans in Tallahassee. \$10,000.00 was raised to financially support a new roof placement for the Homefront Veteran Housing. The Board of Realtors of Tallahassee donated \$5734.35 to purchase new appliances for Homefront.

Veterans Transportation Services

FVF partnered with Disabled American Veterans and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to provide two transport vans. These vans, driven by volunteers, allow veterans to attend their scheduled medical appointments which are located away from the veterans’ residence. Total cost for two vans was \$94,535.49.

Gadsden Flag License Plate

FVF continues to promote the sale of the Gadsden Flag License Plate. Funding helps the foundation continue its mission of helping veterans in need. As of January 2024, 18,701 license plates have been purchased. This continuous funding has helped expand the services provided by FVF.



Veterans Served - Foundation Successes - FVF Board/Staff & Collaborations

The Foundation collaborates with many organizations around the state where we work together in a variety of ways to include the following: Internal, External, Team, Cross-Departmental, Community, Virtual, Strategic Alliance and Online. FVF Direct Financial Assistance included: Individual veterans & their families, homeless veterans housing, meals, and other items needed, claims assistance, recognition programs and more. Below are successful Foundation accomplishments.

Category	Program	Totals
Veterans & Organizations	Emergency Direct Financial Assistance	Dollars
Governor’s Challenge—Veterans’ Suicide Prevention	Statewide Program	\$300,000.00
FVF Dental Program	State Veterans’ Homes	\$45,110.65
FVF Van Donations	Outreach Partners DAV/VA	\$94,535.49
Veterans’ Benefit Guides	Educational	\$93,089.91
Veterans’ Housing	Roof Repair / Appliances Home Front	\$15,734.35
Veterans’ Dental	Mission of Mercy	\$25,000.00
Direct Veteran Support	Project Vet Relief	\$328,732.06
Community Outreach	Veteran Support	\$14,196.46

Chairman, Staff & Board of Directors’ Participation Events

Veteran Treatment Courts, City & County Council Meetings, Veterans Day Ceremonies, Mission United Advisory Council, Florida Veterans Council, Commanders Meetings, Veteran Awards, Homeless Veterans Events, Burial & Memorial Services, Senior Veterans’ Coalition Meetings, Statewide Association Conferences and more.





Veterans Florida (Florida is for Veterans, Inc.) *Veterans Florida* (Florida is for Veterans, Inc.) is a non-profit corporation created by the State of Florida in 2014 to help veterans fully transition to civilian life in the Sunshine State. Our mission is to attract and retain veterans to our great state and to make Florida their permanent residence. *Veterans Florida* is backed by the State of Florida. Our board is appointed by the Governor, Speaker of the Florida House of Representatives and President of the Florida Senate. Additionally, our staff is composed of veterans with experience in state veterans' programs, economic development and workforce development. Our unique programs assist Florida businesses recruit, train, and hire veterans and servicemembers to meet workforce needs.

Veterans Employment and Training Services (VETS) Program (s. 295.22, F.S.)

Workforce and Career Services Programs

To better serve the needs of veteran job seekers and employers, *Veterans Florida* maintains the Career Services Program. This program houses our largest grant program, the Workforce Training Grant, which reimburses eligible companies for 50 percent of the training cost for every new veteran employee hired and trained, up to \$8,000 per employee.



The Workforce Training Grant provides resources to Florida's targeted industry employers to hire, retain, and train veterans to augment their skill set developed during military service. The goal is to give veterans technical skills that are marketable, usable and transferable. The VETS Team actively works with employers to translate military experience into comparable civilian experience requirements. The team educates employers and their human resources teams on the value and capabilities veterans bring to the workforce.

The Career Services Program allows *Veterans Florida* to actively recruit qualified veterans to fill positions at a network of Florida employers. Veterans can register at veteransflorida.org for assistance. Veterans Services Specialists or Coordinators reach out to every veteran who contacts *Veterans Florida* to provide employment services such as resume assistance, interview preparation, career matching, and counsel veterans on additional resources available to them. The VETS Team annually attend at least 25 in-state and out of state career and resource fairs, three in-state airshows, and several on-base activities sharing opportunities with veterans and servicemembers.

During FY 2023-2024, a total of 3,112 veterans in Florida and from across the nation were served seeking career assistance or job placement in Florida. The top five states included veterans from Florida, Virginia, North Carolina, Georgia and Texas seeking services. More than 120 employers used *Veterans Florida* Workforce or Career Services this year.

For FY 2023-24, Veterans Florida received over 300 applications as a result of a partnership with the University of Florida in the VETS-HASTE Program (Veterans Hardware Security Training and Education), which will provide industry-driven courses and hands-on learning to 10 Florida veterans. The training started in May 2024 and will conclude in November 2024. Selected veteran participants will receive a \$10,000 stipend and \$2,500 for travel from the University. The partnership is a three-year endeavor and will result in 30 veterans trained and ready for careers in hardware security.



Workforce Grant Reimbursements FY 2016-23		
Fiscal Year	Trained	Reimbursements
FY 2015-16	1	\$2,520
FY 2016-17	117	\$476,070
FY 2017-18	187	\$687,483
FY 2018-19	303	\$712,765
FY 2019-20	393	\$1,112,985
FY 2020-21	237	\$862,129
FY 2021-22	118	\$406,269
FY 2022-23	197	\$918,750
Total	1,553	\$5,178,971

Workforce Veteran Training Grant Program began January 2016 after receiving initial funding from the State.

Florida SkillBridge Initiative

The DOD SkillBridge program provides transitioning servicemembers, with commander approval during their last six months of military service, the opportunity to work for a civilian employer to sharpen critical industry skills and obtain specialized training. The program is designed to reduce the employment gap for veterans between their military separation and civilian life. Servicemembers participating in SkillBridge can maintain their military compensation and benefits.

This arrangement benefits employers by providing access to a highly skilled workforce without incurring full training costs. Florida’s SkillBridge initiative provides a job pipeline for transitioning servicemembers, which encourages them to relocate to the state and establish permanent residency.

In 2020, *Veterans Florida* became an authorized DOD SkillBridge provider with our Agriculture Program in partnership with the University of Florida. In 2021, *Veterans Florida* became the first statewide organization to become an authorized SkillBridge provider and the Legislature designated *Veterans Florida* as the state’s principal organization for the SkillBridge initiative. *Veterans Florida* continues to expand the program working with more than 100 employers, private businesses and state government agencies to offer SkillBridge. This past year 88 servicemembers completed SkillBridge training.

SkillBridge Program FY 2024-24	
Fiscal Year	Trained
FY 2020-21	1
FY 2021-22	35
FY 2022-23	96
FY 2023-24	88
Total	220

Entrepreneurship Program

Florida has the third-largest number of veteran-owned businesses generating \$57.7 billion in sales. Veterans are self-employed at a higher rate than civilians. The Veterans Florida Entrepreneurship Program offers veterans training, facilitation, and mentorship designed to meet the veteran where they are in their entrepreneurial journey.


The Entrepreneurship Program conducted its ninth year of operation in Fiscal Year 2023-24. Since the inception of the program in early 2016, the program has received more than 7,900 applications from veterans across the state and served 6,343 veterans. The program features several opportunities to meet the needs of veteran entrepreneurs. This approach favors tailored training over information overload. Veterans can participate in cohort-based training, workshops, networking, and/or coworking.

Cohort-based training provides multiple training modules to a small group of prescreened participants in a facilitated discussion environment over the course of several weeks. Cohorts are designed to help veteran entrepreneurs with starting their business, or growing their business after startup. These cohorts delve deeply into all aspects of entrepreneurship and are hosted by one of our entrepreneur partners. Cohort attendance is reserved for a maximum of 15 veterans. Acceptance into this portion of the program is managed by the partners.

Workshops provide veteran entrepreneurs with topical general business training to groups of participants of any size over the course of a few hours. Training in general business topics such as legal structures, stakeholders, launching, marketing, franchising, acquisitions, and other issues that business owners frequently face. Workshops are open to all interested veteran entrepreneurs and are hosted by our entrepreneur partners.

Networking events provide veteran entrepreneurs opportunities to network and connect with peers and resources. Networking offers entrepreneurs personal growth, developing professional connections and building a sense of community. Networking events are conducted by our entrepreneur partners and provide veterans interested in entrepreneurship the ability to learn about program opportunities, network with peers, and connect with resources to assist them on their entrepreneurial journey. Networking events are open to all interested veterans, mentors, entrepreneurs, and community business leaders.

Coworking space provides veteran entrepreneurs with shared office space and access to local resources. Partners offering coworking space may provide unlimited or near unlimited 24/7 access to office space, desk (private preferred), member-only events and workshops, conference room access, discounted venue rental, mailing and business address, access to mentorship from local business leaders and professional consultants, and Lean Startup programming.

Entrepreneurship Program Partners FY 2023-24		
 <p>Tampa</p>	 <p>Fort Lauderdale</p>	 <p>Destin and Fort Walton Beach</p>
 <p>Jacksonville, Orlando, Panhandle, Space Coast and Tampa</p>	 <p>Boca Raton</p>	 <p>Fort Myers</p>
 <p>Miami and Panhandle</p>	 <p>Bonita Springs</p>	 <p>St. Petersburg</p>
 <p>Jacksonville</p>	 <p>Orlando</p>	 <p>Lakeland</p>
 <p>Tallahassee</p>	 <p>Orlando</p>	 <p>Melbourne</p>
 <p>St. Petersburg</p>	 <p>Miami and Tampa</p>	

Entrepreneur Program Participants					
Fiscal Year	Served*	Cohort Trained	Fiscal Year	Served*	Cohort Trained
FY 2015-16	424	167	FY 2020-21	525	262
FY 2016-17	300	147	FY 2021-22	989	132
FY 2017-18	393	82	FY 2022-23	1,614	173
FY 2018-19	426	96	FY 2023-24	1,368	244
FY 2019-20	304	108			
			Total	6,343	1,411

* Served includes veteran participation in any program element offered in the Entrepreneurship Program including workshops and networking.

Marketing Program

The *Veterans Florida* marketing and communications campaign supports the organization’s primary goals - Career Assistance, SkillBridge placements, Entrepreneurship Training - and promotes Florida’s status as the nation’s top state for veterans, transitioning servicemembers, and their families. The target audience is servicemembers, veterans and spouses in the 24 months leading up to separation from the military and 36 months following separation. The marketing team produces all content and executes all advertising for the Veterans Florida Expo each year in coordination with the team.

The marketing team works closely with VISIT FLORIDA to carry out an annual marketing campaign. The marketing focus is social advertising on Florida’s natural beauty. VISIT follows up by directing veterans and servicemembers to our website. The success of that strategy is reflected in engagement and audience size, and significant growth in targeted industries and demographics. Along with LinkedIn, email campaigns are primary drivers of inbound leads. Audiences in social media platforms - LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter/X and Instagram - showed growth this fiscal year. The marketing team produces content highlighting servicemember and veteran success and opportunities in targeted Florida industries. Articles and posts are among the highest-performing content pieces, and have contributed to earned media coverage in major target markets. The marketing team promotes sponsored events, resulting in engagement with veterans, servicemembers, employers, and economic development partners to promote opportunities, answer questions, and increase visibility of Florida’s veterans support initiatives.



legendaryltd.com/collections

Marketing Metrics				
	FY 22-23	FY 23-24	% Change	Notes
Total Facebook Page Likes	78,394	78,809	+52	
Email Newsletter Subscribers	26,750	24,577	-8.2	Scrubbed Inactive Users
LinkedIn Followers	8,148	9,068	+11.3	
Twitter Followers	844	929	+10.1	
Instagram Followers	1,457	1,523	+4.5	

In 2023, *Veterans Florida* partnered with Legendary LTD of Tarpon Springs, to design and produce t-shirts for marketing/promotional use during the year. Later we partnered with them to produce and sell shirts to support our mission and activities with “Living the Dream” and “Land of the Free,” 50% of the proceeds are donated to *Veterans Florida*.

The 2024 Veterans Florida Expo was held June 7 and 8 at the Hilton Tampa Airport Westshore. The two-day event connects servicemembers, veterans and their families with SkillBridge, career and entrepreneurship opportunities and resources in Florida. Attendees can network with other veterans, hear success stories, meet with veteran-friendly employers, and watch Florida’s top veteran entrepreneurs in the Battle of the Pitches competition. The Expo featured over 40 employers and exhibitors, 25 speakers, 12 pitch competitors in the Battle of the Pitches, and more than 170

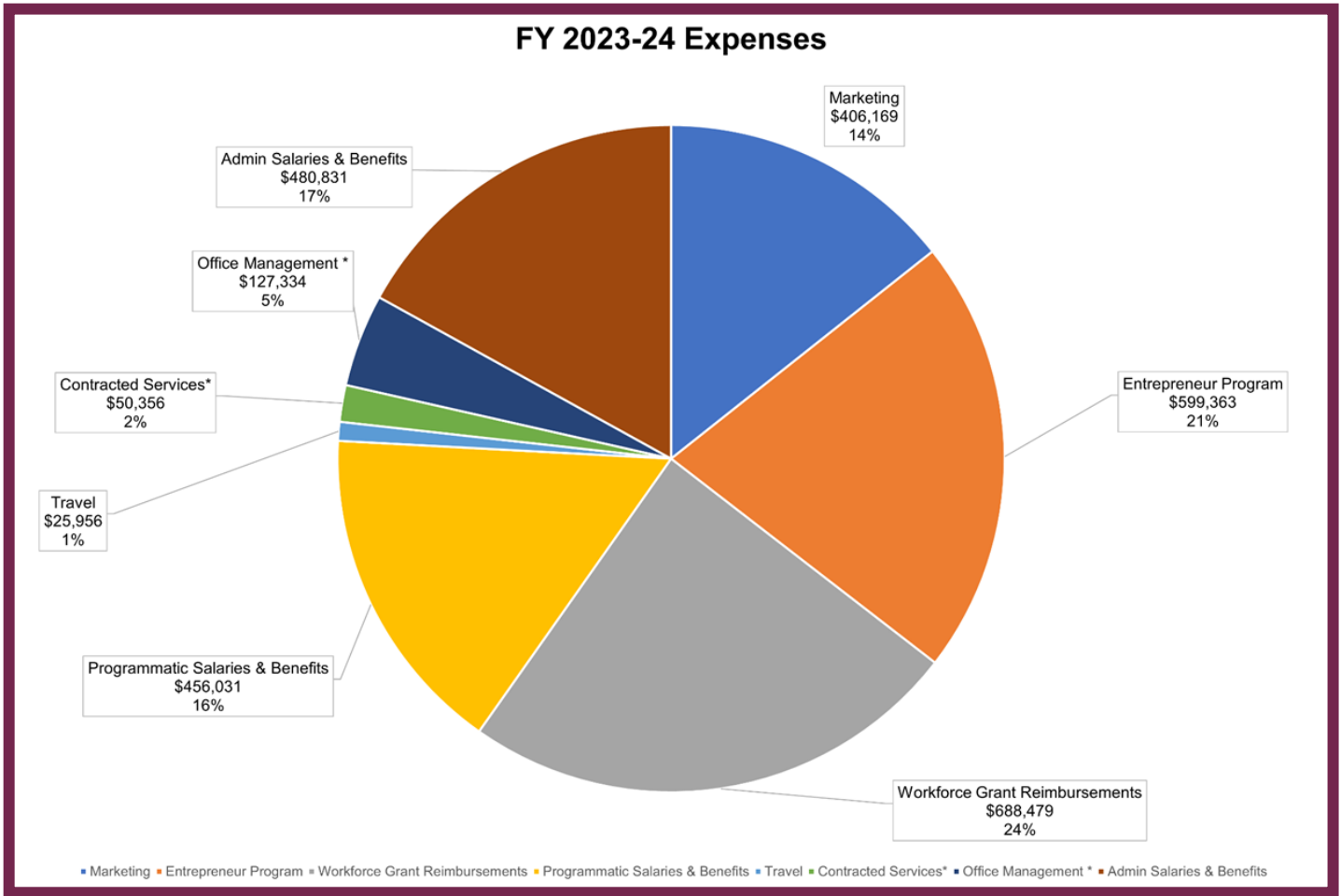


attendees. Expo sponsors included Boeing, CareerSource Florida, Blue Waters Development Group, and the Tampa Bay Rays.

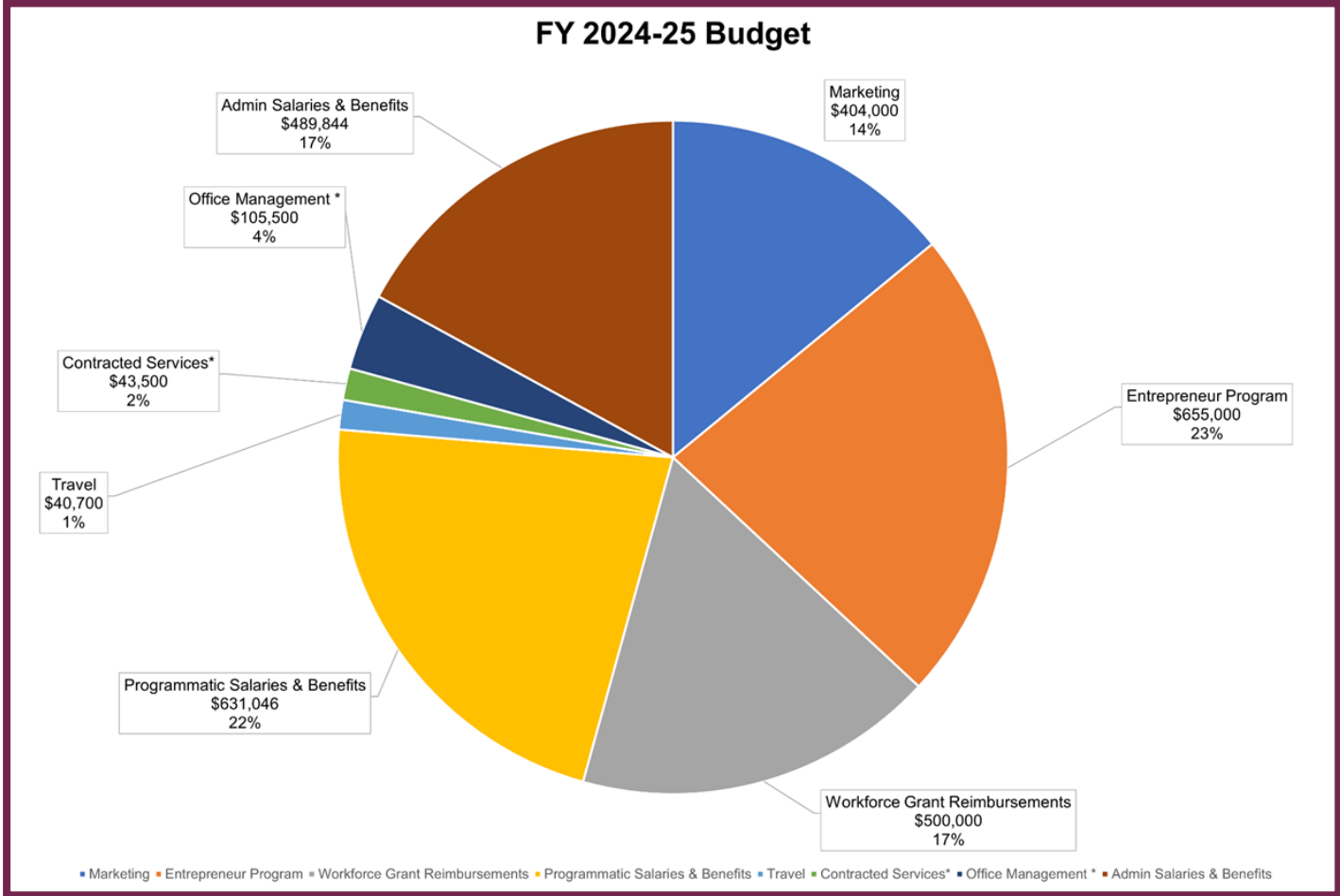
The Expo pitch competitors were Entrepreneur Program participants that completed a partner cohort during fiscal year 2023-24. *Veterans Florida* awarded \$17,500 to the following veteran-owned businesses: Vig Solutions awarded \$10,000; Broken Veteran 3D Designs awarded \$5,000; and Priority Objective Consulting awarded \$2,500. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive from attendees, sponsors, and exhibitors.

Financial Summary

Veterans Florida derives revenue from many sources, with the primary funder being the State of Florida.



*Programmatic Salaries & Benefits includes salaries and benefits of employees providing direct services to servicemembers, veterans and their families. Office Management includes operational expenses such as office supplies and equipment, lease of office space, software, phone and internet services, dues/subscriptions, postage/shipping, office maintenance, and printing. Contracted Services such as business insurance, accounting, auditing services, HR/ Payroll, legal services, IT support, and bank services support the organization’s internal operations.



Contracts FY 2022-2023

The corporation entered into the following contracts to carry out its duties.

Contracts				
Sept 11, 2023	Efrain Torres	Freelance Writer	\$500	Oct 9, 2024
Sept 18, 2023	City of Jacksonville	2023 Sea and Sky Air Show Sponsorship	\$25,000	Oct 22, 2023

Contracts

Oct 3, 2023	DocuSign	eSignature Software	\$4,131	June 30, 2024
Oct 10, 2023	PCB Entertainment, LLC	2024 Gulf Coast Jam Sponsorship	\$100,000	June 2, 2024
Oct 18, 2023	Strategic Digital Services, LLC	Logo Redesign	\$750	Oct 25, 2023
Nov 2, 2023	Morale, Welfare and Recreation Fund at MacDill AFB	2024 MacDill Tampa Bay AirFest Sponsor	\$15,000	Mar 30, 2024
March 11, 2024	Florida Veterans Foundation	Florida Veterans Benefits Guide Advertising	\$5,000	Dec 31, 2024
April 26, 2024	Silver Productions	Expo Video Production	\$5,750	June 30, 2024
May 8, 2024	BowStern Marketing Communications	Website Redesign and Development	\$18,550	Oct 1, 2024
June 19, 2024	Carr, Riggs & Ingram	Auditing & Form 990 Tax Preparation	\$13,610	Dec 31, 2024
June 27, 2024	Central Groves Corporation	Office Lease	\$307,420	Aug 31, 2029

Development

The *Veterans Florida* team works diligently to raise additional public and private funds to augment state of Florida funded programs. Sponsors may choose to target funds specifically to the VETS program, events such as our annual Expo, or for general operations to support the *Veterans Florida* mission. Our successful development efforts are a direct result of our proactive approach to forging relationships with donors, keeping them engaged, and providing measurable insights into the impact of their support. Given the overwhelmingly positive feedback from existing and potential sponsors and upward trends, we are confident the future will yield even greater outcomes for veterans returning to civilian life and for our economic impact within the state of Florida.

Awards/Sponsorships			
Organization	Amount	Type	Purpose
USDA - AGVETS Program (Program Ended Aug 31, 2023)	\$31,375	Grant	Agriculture Program
Boeing	\$40,000	Grant	VETS Program
Boeing	\$10,000	Sponsorship	Expo Sponsor
Career Source Florida	\$10,000	Sponsorship	Expo Sponsor
Blue Water Development Group	\$4,000	Sponsorship	Expo Sponsor
Tampa Bay Rays	\$3,000	Sponsorship	Expo Sponsor
Learning Alliance	\$1,050	Exhibitor	Expo Exhibitor
Schiller International University	\$1,050	Exhibitor	Expo Exhibitor
Palm Beach Sheriff Office	\$500	Exhibitor	Expo Employer
CAP Government	\$500	Exhibitor	Expo Employer
Citrus County Sheriff's Office	\$500	Exhibitor	Expo Employer
Etairos Health	\$500	Exhibitor	Expo Employer
Florida International University	\$500	Exhibitor	Expo Employer
Home Builders Institute	\$500	Exhibitor	Expo Employer

Awards/Sponsorships

Integrated Power Services	\$500	Exhibitor	Expo Employer
Launch Credit Union	\$500	Exhibitor	Expo Employer
Marion County Sheriff's Office	\$500	Exhibitor	Expo Employer
MasTec Inc	\$500	Exhibitor	Expo Employer
Navy Recruiting Reserve Command	\$500	Exhibitor	Expo Employer
Orange County Sheriff's Office	\$500	Exhibitor	Expo Employer
Pasco Sheriff Office	\$500	Exhibitor	Expo Employer
RoadSafe Traffic Systems	\$500	Exhibitor	Expo Employer
Synergy Equipment	\$500	Exhibitor	Expo Employer
Woodmen Life	\$400	Donation	General Mission
Other Supporters	\$370	Donation	General Mission
Legendary LTD	\$368	Shirt Sales	General Mission
Total FY 2023-24	\$109,163		



Outlook

As *Veterans Florida* nears its tenth anniversary of helping veterans transition to civilian careers, Gov. Ron DeSantis signed House Bill 1329 into law in June 2024, providing a refined and enhanced scope of work for the next ten years and beyond. House Bill 1329:

- Designates *Veterans Florida* as the initial point of military transition assistance for veterans and their spouses, connecting them with state benefits and resources, career placement, and entrepreneur training.
- Specifies the target market for *Veterans Florida* as servicemembers and their spouses with 24 months or less prior to their discharge and for up to 36 months after discharge.
- Prioritizes highly skilled employment opportunities as defined by the state’s targeted industries list.
- Focuses the scope of the Veterans Employment and Training Services Program to provide support for veterans seeking certifications or licenses in high-demand fields.

The clarity and focus of this new law elevates the role of *Veterans Florida* as a key part of the state’s economic development.

The legislation also created two new ex-officio positions on the Board; a member of the Florida House of Representatives and a member of the Florida Senate appointed by the House Speaker and Senate President respectively. Sen. Jay Collins and Rep. Danny Alvarez, each a veteran, were appointed to the new spots.

The Florida Department of Veterans’ Affairs will procure a third-party vendor to develop and implement an occupational license reciprocity system (Specific Appropriation 607, Chapter 2024-231, Laws of Florida) for veterans and spouses moving to Florida with professional licenses. The selected vendor will coordinate work efforts with *Veterans Florida* and the portal will be housed on the *Veterans Florida* website.

In September 2024, *Veterans Florida* was awarded \$772,349 as a prime award from the Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences for the Agriculture Program for 2024-27. The Agriculture Program is a unique six-month training designed specifically for veterans and servicemembers seeking to establish or advance their careers in Florida’s thriving agriculture sector. Over the course of the three-year program, *Veterans Florida* will work with the University of Florida to provide agriculture training to 30 veterans. Veterans will receive a comprehensive, hands-on learning experience that equips veterans and servicemembers with the essential knowledge and skills needed to excel in various roles within the industry. Veterans enrolled in the program will receive a stipend, the average stipend is \$16,800 per veteran.

To better serve veterans, servicemembers, spouses and businesses, *Veterans Florida* began a redesign of the website to improve and streamline access to *Veterans Florida* services, and better highlight the qualities and benefits that attract families and businesses to the state.

The first cohort training of the VETS-HASTE program concluded in November 2024. *Veterans Florida* and the University of Florida will begin accepting applications for the next cohort in early 2025 with classes to begin in late spring. This will be the second year of this three-year program. Each of the ten veterans per cohort currently living in Florida receives a \$10,000 stipend, \$2,500 for travel and lodging, a week of hands-on training at the UF campus in Gainesville,

virtual instruction, and the opportunity for internships with businesses in this sector.

The 2025 Expo will be June 6-7 at the Hilton Tampa Airport Westshore to allow more veterans to experience the state of Florida's official economic opportunity event for the military community.

Equipped and guided by our strategic plan and our enhanced scope of work contained in House Bill 1329, *Veterans Florida* aims to build on the successes from 2024-25 state funding and explore additional private funding partners that support our programs and services.

The unwavering support from the state of Florida, those who served, statewide partners, and industry leaders push us each day to connect those who served with our powerful career and entrepreneurship tools, training, and resources that make Florida the nation's most veteran-friendly state.



Associated Veteran Service Organizations



As the accredited representative of 10 veterans' organizations, FDVA has the opportunity to prosecute claims before the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs on behalf of veterans who have placed their trust in these organizations by completing an "Appointment of Veterans Service Organization as Claimant's Representative" designation. There are no fees charged to veterans for FDVA services.

Listed are the veterans' service organizations that this department represents in claims processing with the VA.



American Ex -Prisoners of War



American Red Cross

American Red Cross



Blinded Veterans Association



Fleet Reserve Association



Jewish War Veterans



Marine Corps League



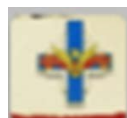
Non-Commissioned Officers Association



The American Legion



The Retired Enlisted Association



Veterans of World War I (Family Members)

Certified County Veteran Service Officers

In rendering assistance to the veterans of Florida, FDVA works closely with all county and city veteran service officers. A listing of each county veteran service officer, their location, phone number and email address is available at <http://floridavets.org/locations/>. If you are reading the FDVA Annual Report online, your computer will let you go directly to the site by pressing and holding down the Ctrl key on your keyboard and left clicking your mouse on the link.

The FDVA website <http://floridavets.org/> provides many references and programs that can assist veterans and their families at the federal, state, county and city level. All agencies work together in assisting Florida's veterans, their families and survivors to improve their health and economic well-being.



FDVA
FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS
Honoring those who served U.S.

HELPLINE

- Health Care
- Education
- Earned Benefits

FDVA.VSO@FDVA.FL.GOV
727-319-7440

 **HOPE FLORIDA**

A PATHWAY FOR PATRIOTS

HopeNavigators@fdva.fl.gov

833-GET-HOPE

State Veterans' Home Annual Summaries



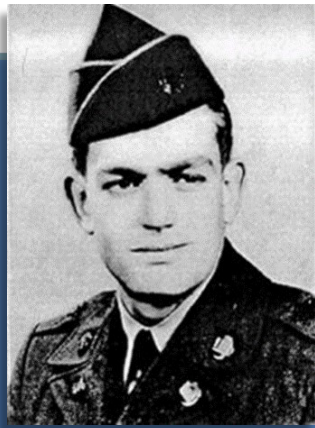
Robert H. Jenkins Jr. State Veterans' Domiciliary Home

Lake City (Columbia County), Staffing: 71
FY 2023-24 Occupancy Rate: 95.1% (50 Admissions, 45 Discharges)

The 150-bed Robert H. Jenkins Jr. State Veterans' Domiciliary Home in Lake City is the very first Veterans' Home in Florida and the only Assisted Living Facility, having opened to residents in May 1990. With ongoing maintenance and energy-saving and quality of life renovations, the home is in excellent condition. The 71,648 square foot (appraised square footage) facility provides a special combination of housing, personalized support services and incidental medical care to its veteran residents.

Set on a quiet property with deer and wild turkey observed nearly every evening, Jenkins' residents enjoy diverse outings and multiple activities on the grounds and in the local community. The Domiciliary Home prides itself in providing excellent customer service in a home-like environment.





Emory L. Bennett State Veterans' Nursing Home

Daytona Beach (Volusia County), Staffing: 137
FY 2023-24 Occupancy Rate: 94.3% Admissions 57, Discharges 48

The 120-bed Emory L. Bennett State Veterans' Nursing Home in Daytona Beach opened to residents in December 1993. Situated on 30 acres, the 69,222 square foot (appraised square footage) skilled nursing facility provides quality care and a secluded respite for our seasoned veterans. This Four Star Quality Rated home ranks in the top 20 percent of skilled nursing homes.

At the veterans' home resides a tight-knit family of residents and staff. They not only enjoy the love and care of the staff, but enjoy great support from local volunteer organizations. Every day the Bennett staff focuses on serving the residents with compassion and top-notch care, sharing their lives, and providing peace of mind for their families.



Agency for Health Care Administration
Nursing Home Overall Inspection Rating



Baldomero Lopez State Veterans' Nursing Home

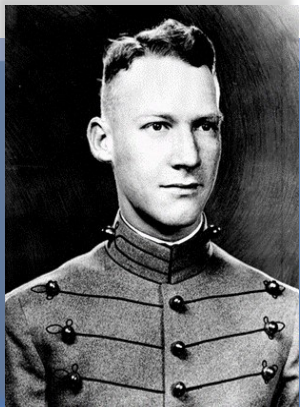
Land O' Lakes (Pasco County), Staffing: 148
FY 2023-24 Occupancy Rate: 91.4% (181 Admissions, 176 Discharges)

The 120-bed Baldomero Lopez State Veterans' Nursing Home in Land O' Lakes opened to residents in 1999. The 73,000 square foot (appraised square footage) veterans' home provides skilled nursing care and can accommodate 60 residents with dementia/Alzheimer's disease. The dedicated staff provides stellar care 24 hours a day to our American heroes residing at this residence. This Five-Star Quality Rated home is in the top 10 percent of skilled nursing homes.

Set on a quiet property, veteran residents enjoy diverse outings and activities. The Home prides itself on incorporating family and community members into our events, and fostering deep friendships among the residents.



Agency for Health Care Administration
Nursing Home Overall Inspection Rating



Alexander "Sandy" Nininger State Veterans' Nursing Home

Pembroke Pines (Broward County), Staffing: 149

FY 2023-24 Occupancy Rate: 93.0% (188 Admissions, 190 Discharges)

The 120-bed Alexander "Sandy" Nininger State Veterans' Nursing Home in Pembroke Pines opened to residents in 2001. The 83,896 square foot (appraised square footage) skilled nursing facility offers quality care and is equipped to accommodate 60 residents with dementia/Alzheimer's disease. The home provides veterans with 24-hour nursing care, daily living and recreational activities, rehabilitative therapy and nutritional cuisine.

Life in the Nininger Home is anything but sedentary. Frequent outings provide the residents with an open forum to the surrounding community. Sandy Nininger residents and staff commune together as family. They host events for all special occasions, and receive superb support from community volunteer service organizations.



Agency for Health Care Administration
Nursing Home Overall Inspection Rating



Clifford C. Sims State Veterans' Nursing Home

Panama City (Bay County), Staffing: 148

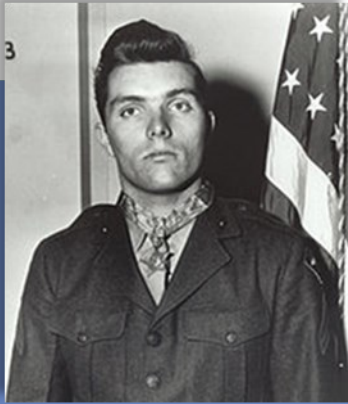
FY 2023-24 Occupancy Rate: 95.3% (226 Admissions, 234 Discharges)

The 120-bed Clifford C. Sims State Veterans' Nursing Home in Panama City opened to residents in 2003. The 75,394 square foot (appraised square footage) facility offers skilled nursing care and can accommodate 60 residents with dementia/Alzheimer's disease. The home is located strategically in the state to care for our north Florida veterans in their time of need. The home provides residents with 24-hour nursing care, daily living and recreational activities, rehabilitative therapy and nutritional cuisine.

The skilled nursing facility is located in a beautiful, wooded setting, surrounded by wildlife and nature. The residents enjoy regular outdoor activities and frequent offsite events such as ballgames, movies, restaurants and shopping.



Agency for Health Care Administration
Nursing Home Overall Inspection Rating



Douglas T. Jacobson State Veterans' Nursing Home

Port Charlotte (Charlotte County), Staffing: 141
FY 2023-24 Occupancy Rate: 92.2% (147 Admissions, 136 Discharges)

The 120-bed Douglas T. Jacobson State Veterans' Nursing Home in Port Charlotte opened to residents in 2004. The 68,700 square foot (appraised square footage) facility offers skilled nursing care and can accommodate 60 residents with dementia/Alzheimer's disease. The skilled nursing facility offers veterans 24-hour nursing care, daily living and recreational activities, rehabilitative therapy and nutritional cuisine.

A modern skilled nursing facility surrounded by an involved community of supportive public and civic organizations, the veterans' home actively celebrates and honors veterans.



Agency for Health Care Administration
Nursing Home Overall Inspection Rating



Clyde E. Lassen State Veterans' Nursing Home

St. Augustine (St. Johns County), Staffing: 157
FY 2023-24 Occupancy Rate: 97.3% (162 Admissions, 168 Discharges)



The 120-bed Clyde E. Lassen State Veterans' Nursing Home in St. Augustine opened its doors to residents in 2010. The 89,150 square foot (appraised square footage) facility offers skilled nursing care and can accommodate 60 residents with dementia/Alzheimer's disease. The home is a LEED-certified Gold facility that respects the environment while providing a warm, caring atmosphere for its residents. The home provides residents with 24-hour nursing care, daily living and recreational activities, rehabilitative therapy and nutritional cuisine.

The veterans' home, situated in a lodge-like setting, prides itself in customer care and services. Residents enjoy a wide variety of special events and diverse activities.



Agency for Health Care Administration
Nursing Home Overall Inspection Rating



Ardie R. Copas State Veterans' Nursing Home

Port St. Lucie (St. Lucie County), Staffing: 163
FY 2023-24 Occupancy Rate: 43.3% (145 Admissions, 114 Discharges)

The 120-bed Ardie R. Copas State Veterans' Nursing Home in Port St. Lucie opened to residents in July 2022. The veterans' home is named in honor of a Medal of Honor recipient from the Vietnam War - Fort Pierce and St. Lucie native Sergeant Ardie R. Copas, an Army Specialist at the time, who died in 1970 while serving in the Vietnam War.

The state-of-the-art 28.5 acre facility offers private and semi-private rooms with 24-hour nursing care and can accommodate residents with dementia/Alzheimer's disease.

The veterans' home, situated in a lodge-like setting, offers superb residential care and services. Residents enjoy a wide variety of special events and diverse activities as it is collocated near entertainment, recreational and dining venues.




Agency for Health Care Administration
Nursing Home Overall Inspection Rating



Alwyn C. Cashe State Veterans' Nursing Home

Orlando at Lake Baldwin (Orange County), Staffing: 156
FY 2023-24 Occupancy Rate: 21.6% (238 Admissions, 233 Discharges)

The 112-bed Alwyn C. Cashe State Veterans' Nursing Home in Orlando opened its doors to residents in August 2022. It was named in honor of U.S. Army Sergeant First Class Alwyn C. Cashe, who is noted as the First African-American Gulf War Servicemember to receive the Medal of Honor. The veterans' home is the first in the Nation and Florida's first to be named after a Post-9/11 Medal of Honor Recipient.

The 60,388 square foot (appraised square footage) facility, a former VA Community Living Center, offers skilled nursing care and can accommodate residents with dementia/Alzheimer's disease. The home provides residents with 24-hour nursing care, daily living and recreational activities, rehabilitative therapy and nutritional cuisine.



35 *Years*
FDVA

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS

www.FloridaVets.org