



# Annual Report

Fiscal Year 2021-2022

The premier point of entry for Florida veterans to access earned services, benefits and support.



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.

I am honored to submit the 2022 annual report for the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs. The report highlights the outstanding accomplishments of our superb team of dedicated professionals and the unmatched support we receive from our state and federal partners.

The Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs (FDVA) is a nearly 1,500-member constitutionally chartered State Veterans' Affairs department with a \$171 million annual budget responsible for serving the nation's third largest veteran population. Operating as the premier point of entry for Florida's 1.5 million veterans, FDVA operates a network of nine state veterans' homes and provides statewide outreach to connect veterans with their earned services, benefits and support. The agency's veterans' claims examiners play a major role in the direct infusion of more than \$23.9 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're very appreciative of your unwavering support of Florida's 1.5 million 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, several layers of property tax exemptions, expanded veterans' preference, and extensive benefits, licensure and fee waivers for many activities and occupations.

The Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs ensures Florida veterans, their families and survivors have access to free 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) celebrated its eighth anniversary in 2022. The support line continued to provide confidential emotional support and connection to community resources 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The line, supported by FDVA, the Crisis Center of Tampa Bay, and their suicide prevention partners, is available to all veterans in Florida.

Working together toward a positive future for Florida veterans and their families, we'll ensure the Sunshine State continues to be the most veteran-friendly and sought after state in the nation. We are honored to serve you."

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "James S. Hartsell".

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

# Employee Salutes



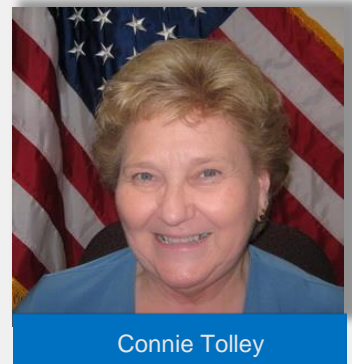
Our employees are the heart and soul of our Agency. None of the accomplishments are possible without them. While we can't highlight all of our agency's roughly 1,480 employees, we wanted to highlight a few whose dedication and service have been instrumental to our success over the years. We offer a special "shout out" to the special people below:



Mary Frazier works as a Paralegal Specialist within our Agency's Tallahassee Office. When you speak of dedicated service, none tops Mary for our Agency. Previously employed in multiple capacities in Florida State government, she has been with the State for over 46 ½ years. Mary has been with our Agency since 2013.



Connie Tolley, FDVA Homes Program Division Director, is recognized for her dedicated service to the Agency. Connie has been a stalwart mainstay within the Homes Program. Working within the program since 2010, Connie has risen to the top tier of the Homes Program and has shepherded the Agency through natural disasters, new facility construction and personnel expansions. Well done Connie!



Annemarie Whalen proudly serves the Agency as Budget Supervisor, Directorate of Administration. Annemarie has been with the State of Florida over 22 years; 13 of which have been with the Agency. Since her arrival, Annemarie has been climbing the career ladder holding positions such as Staff Assistant, Accountant III, Account Services Supervisor, Budget Specialist, and Budget Analyst before assuming her current position. Annemarie is a jewel to work with, always professional and willing to support others however she can. We salute Annemarie for her dedication and continued support to the Agency.

# Employee Salutes



Elizabeth “Liz” Smitherman has been working for the Clifford C. Sims State Veterans’ Nursing Home in the role of Risk Manager for more than 13 years. The position of Risk Manager is a never-ending responsibility and an enormous commitment, always on call keeping the facility in compliance with VA and AHCA regulations. She does not only serve veterans, she’s a veteran herself and proudly served in the U.S. Marines. We honor her steadfast commitment to the facility.



Elizabeth Smitherman



Mark (A.J.) Johnson

Mark (A.J.) Johnson works as a Veterans’ Claims Examiner Supervisor in Field Services. He began with the Agency in 2009, working as a Veterans’ Claims Examiner and climbed to his current supervisory position over the course of his 15-year service tenure. Mr. Johnson is extremely personable and consistently gets positive reviews regarding his customer service and professionalism. Kudos to Mr. Johnson!

Smitherman



Charles “Chuck” Faircloth has served the State of Florida for over 31 years, the last seven of which have been with the Agency as General Counsel. He is a veteran of the U.S. Army and a current member of the Florida General Counsels Association. Faircloth is a certified Inspector General and was recently appointed to the Employment Assistance Appeals Commission by Gov. Ron DeSantis. We wish Mr. Faircloth well in his new assignment.

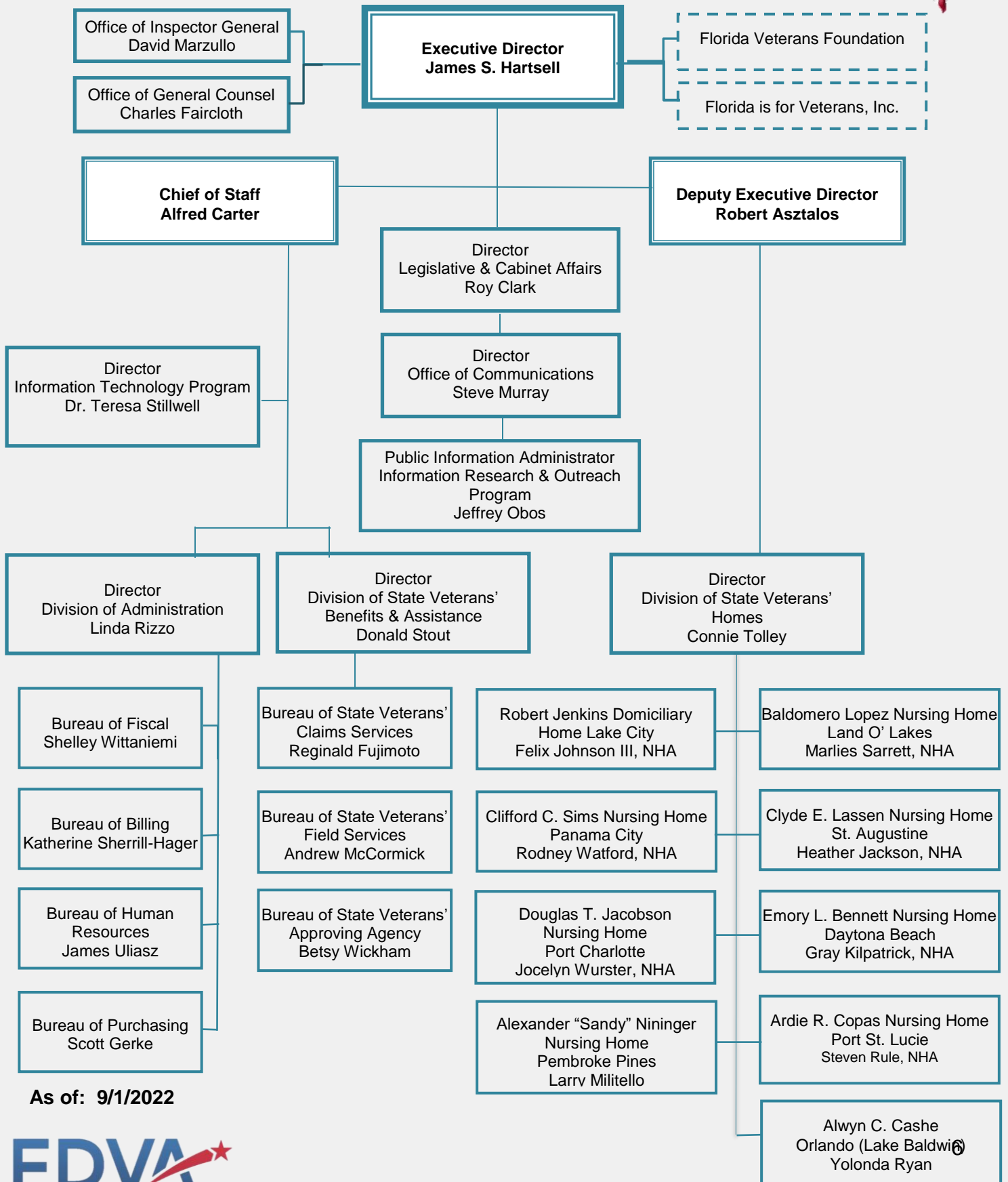
**Our Mission:** To advocate with purpose and passion for Florida veterans and link them to superior services, benefits and support.



Charles Faircloth

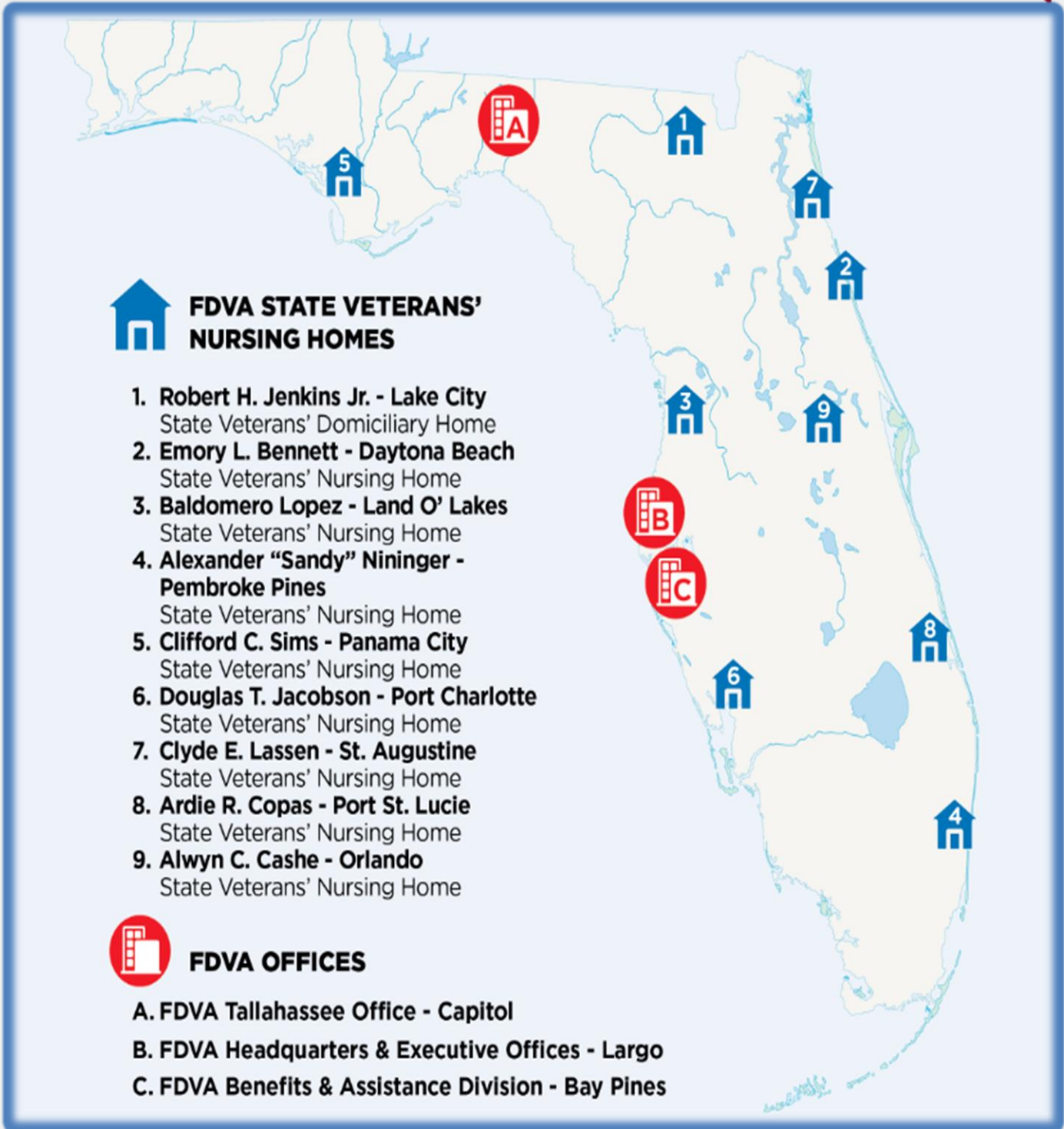
# Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs

## Who We Are



As of: 9/1/2022

# Where We Are



# 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 Capitol 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 State Veterans' Homes** provides comprehensive, high-quality health care to eligible veterans in need of long-term skilled or assisted living care.

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 (VetPop2020).

## 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. Korean War-era veterans may qualify for health care and compensation benefits who were exposed to ionizing radiation or have participated in certain radiation-risk activities such as nuclear weapons testing during military service.



# 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 triggered responses to the current wars and the manifestation of acute diseases brought on by exposure to Agent Orange.

## Peacetime

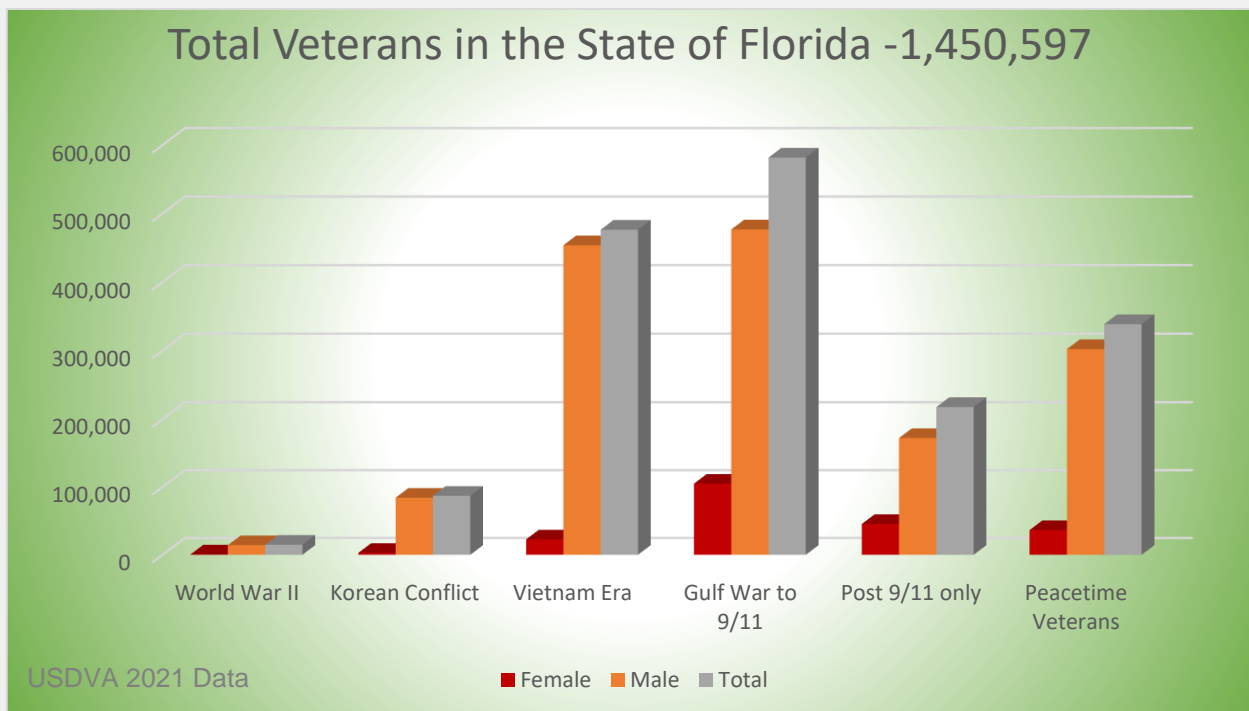
There are 338,634 (25%) peacetime veterans in Florida. Almost a quarter of Florida's veteran population served honorably during a unique and relatively conflict-free time in our history. Many of these veterans do not seek benefits, mistakenly believing that if they did not serve in combat, then they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

## Post-9/11 Veterans

There are 217,613 (16%) post-9/11 veterans in Florida. Our returning 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 2020-21	Actual FY 2021-22	Standard FY 2021-22
1. Value of cost avoidance because of retroactive compensation.	\$194,668,373	\$215,284,006	\$97,630,071
2. Value of cost avoidance because of issue resolution.	\$61,932,620	\$74,897,847	\$23,459,938
3. Number of veterans served.	81,423	73,852	105,172
4. Number of claims processed.	25,356	14,971	24,076
5. Number of services to veterans.	313,033	169,732	523,792

## Division of Executive Direction and Support Services

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

Measure	Actual FY 2020-21	Actual FY 2021-22	Standard FY 2021-22
1. Administration costs as a percent of total agency costs.	3.6%	3.7%	6.8%
2. Administrative positions as a percent of total agency positions.	2.3%	2.4%	4.9%

## Division of State Veterans' Homes

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

Measure	Actual FY 2020-21	Actual FY 2021-22	Standard FY 2020-21
1. Occupancy rate for homes in operation 2 years or longer.	97.6%	93.1%	90%
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.	870	870	870

# Division of Benefits and Assistance

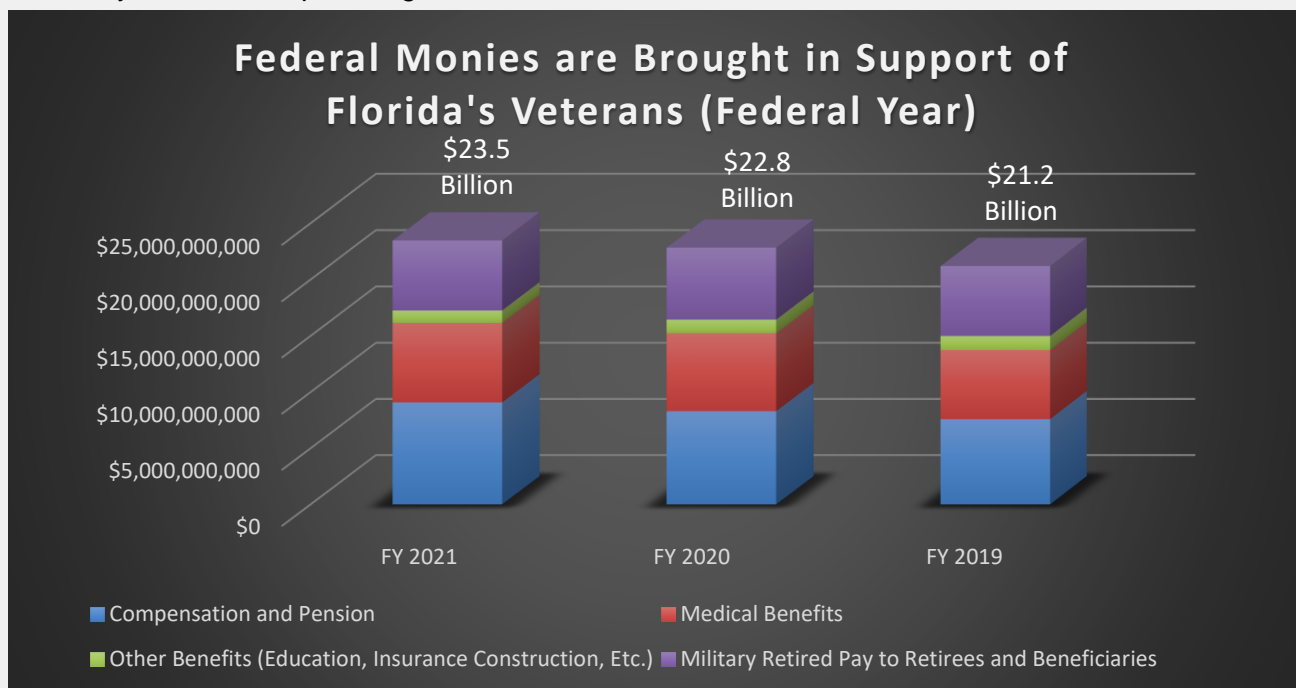


The Division of Veterans' Benefits and Assistance provides professional assistance to Florida's veterans and their families under a myriad of differing conditions and situations, and providing services including but not limited to medical claims, assistance with medical treatment and appointment issues, securing prosthetic devices, debt resolutions, compensation benefit checks, housing assistance, homeless veteran transition assistance, emergency funding, school program approval, veterans' preference investigations and determinations, voter registration and disseminating veteran data to general public.

The Division comprised of a Division Director, support staff and three Bureaus provided the following support during calendar year 2022:

- 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.)

Veterans' Claims Examiners (VCEs) and County Veteran Service Officers were trained and certified on the latest changes to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs initiatives and issues. Most notable, Claims Examiners and Service Officers received training on the PACT Act. The PACT Act was a new law that expanded VA health care and benefits for Veterans exposed to burn pits, Agent Orange, and other toxic substances. The PACT Act adds to the list of health conditions that we assume (or "presume") are caused by exposure to these substances. FDVA employees proactively assisted Florida Veterans get initial or follow-up screenings for exposure to things like Agent Orange, which was used for deforestation during the Vietnam War, and burn pits, where trash was destroyed on military bases in Iraq and Afghanistan.



**The Bureau of Veterans' Claims Services** provides counseling and assistance to veterans, their dependents and survivors, with the preparation, submission and prosecution of claims and appeals Claims.

The Bureau's primary focus for 2022 was PACT Act Claims. Veterans' Claims Examiners worked over 25,000 PACT Act packets enabling veterans to get the care they deserved. Depending on the severity of a Veteran's issues, he or she was eligible for up to \$4,000 in disability compensation.

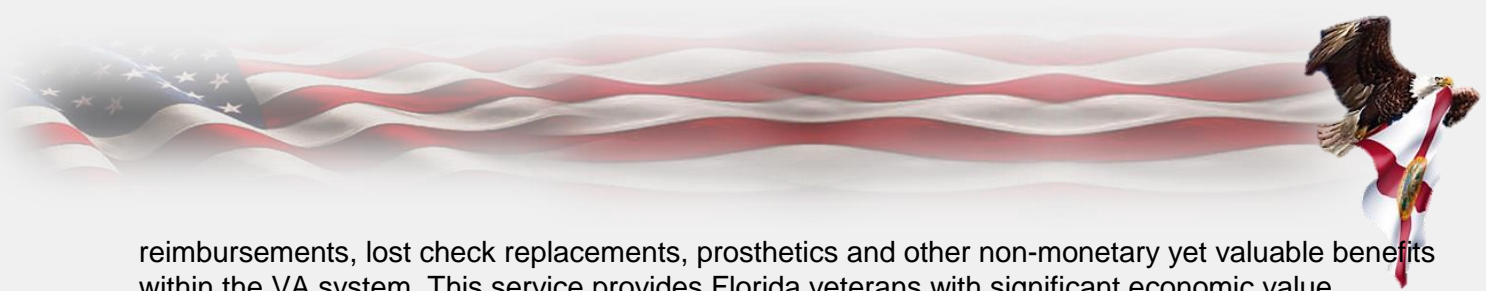


The Bureau's secondary focus centered around the Camp Lejeune Water Contamination Claims. Veterans' Claims Examiners processed approximately 450 claims for veterans who served at Camp Lejeune or Marine Corps Air Station New River for at least 30 cumulative days from August 1953 through December 1987. 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.

The Bureau also provided assistance during two hurricanes and a tornado during 2022. Claims Examiners deployed to Disaster Recovery Centers to provide on-the-spot support to veterans and their family members in the aftermath of these catastrophic events. Most veterans sought financial and mental health assistance as these calamitous events destroyed completely, or exacted significant damage, to their residences. *The photo below highlights veteran outreach at one of over 31 Disaster Recovery Centers manned by our Veterans' Claims Examiners.*



**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 within the VA system. This service provides Florida veterans with significant economic value.

**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 they also promote the use of State of Florida education benefit offerings. Attracting and retaining a young, educated veteran population is beneficial for all Floridians.

Federal Dollars Garnered in Support of Florida Veterans			
	FY 2021	FY 2020	FY 2019
Compensation and Pension	\$9,097,791,000	\$8,317,991,000	\$7,608,440,000
Medical Benefits	\$7,074,012,000	\$6,933,054,000	\$6,148,500,000
Other Benefits (Education, Insurance, Construction, Operating Expenses, Etc.)	\$1,105,018,000	\$1,206,939,000	\$1,256,485,000
Military Retired Pay to Retirees and Beneficiaries	\$6,204,864,000	\$6,388,164,000	\$6,202,932,000
<b>Annual Federal Dollar Garnered in Support of Florida Veterans</b>	<b>\$23,481,685,000</b>	<b>\$22,846,148,000</b>	<b>\$21,216,357,000</b>

The Benefits and Assistance Division has supported numerous events 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 below:



# Veterans' Claims Examiners Providing Support Following Hurricanes Ian & Nicole



# Division of State Veterans' Homes



The Division of 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.

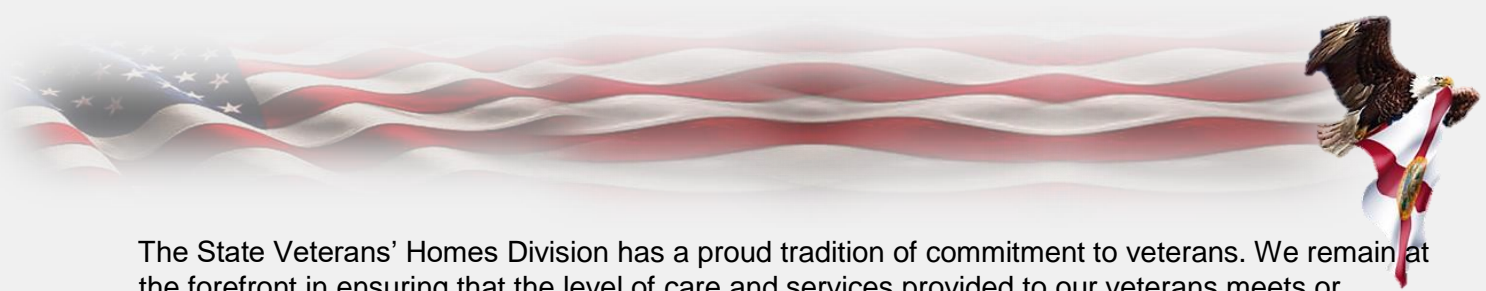
Seven of the eight skilled nursing facilities operated by FDVA have dementia-specific neighborhoods:

- 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, St. Lucie
- Alwyn C. Cashe State Veterans' Nursing Home, Orlando (Lake Baldwin)

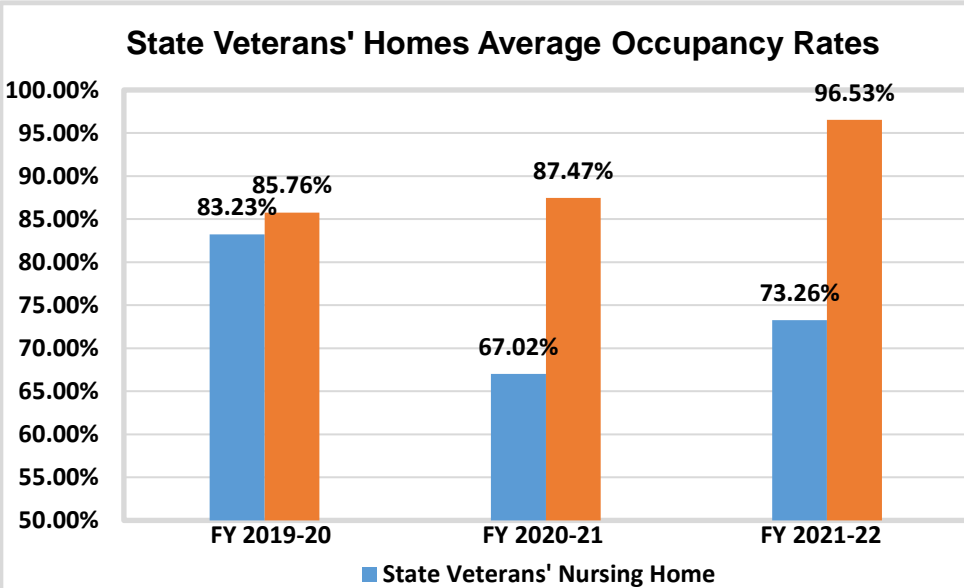
Comprehensive services and a deep concern for all veterans go hand-in-hand at our FDVA state veterans' nursing homes. A full-time staff of Registered Nurses (RN), Licensed Practical Nurses (LPN) and Certified Nursing Assistants (CNA) provides around-the-clock medical and nursing care to our veteran residents. Rehabilitative services, such as occupational and physical therapies, speech therapy and recreational activities are provided under the direct supervision of licensed therapists.

In 2021, FDVA completed the licensure process for Ardie R. Copas and Alwyn C. Cashe State Veterans' Nursing Homes and admitted our first residents. FDVA is currently seeking approval from the Agency for Health Care Administration and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to admit and bill residents with Medicare, Medicaid or VA coverage.

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.



The State Veterans' Homes Division has a proud tradition of commitment to veterans. We remain at the forefront in ensuring that 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.

**State Veterans' Homes Program Occupancy Rates**

During Fiscal Year 2020-21, the average occupancy rate for State Veterans' Homes in operation two years or longer was 65.3 percent and this was largely due to COVID recovery. The vacancies caused by the

COVID-19 virus and end-of-life departures reduced our occupancy rates by over 28 percent. As of the publication of this document, our facilities have improved to over 80% 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 97.0 percent occupancy rate.

**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 the 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 using 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.

Music therapy is a useful therapeutic tool to reduce symptoms and improve functioning among residents with trauma exposure and PTSD. In addition, music therapy may help foster resilience and engage individuals who struggle with stigma associated with seeking professional help.

State Veterans' Nursing 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 Veteran Nursing Home Residents



## Celebrating our Centenarians

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 centenarians. One resident, a Coast Guardsman who served during WWII is depicted below celebrating her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday. On December 16, 2022, Deputy Executive Director, Bob Asztalos, select Agency Staff, and three area Coast Guard units supported the 100th Birthday celebration for Jean Strickland, a resident of the Clifford Sims State Veterans Nursing Home. Jean Strickland served during WWII as Seaman2 Switchboard Operator. Impressive is that Seaman Strickland is alleged to be the oldest living female Coast Guard Veteran.





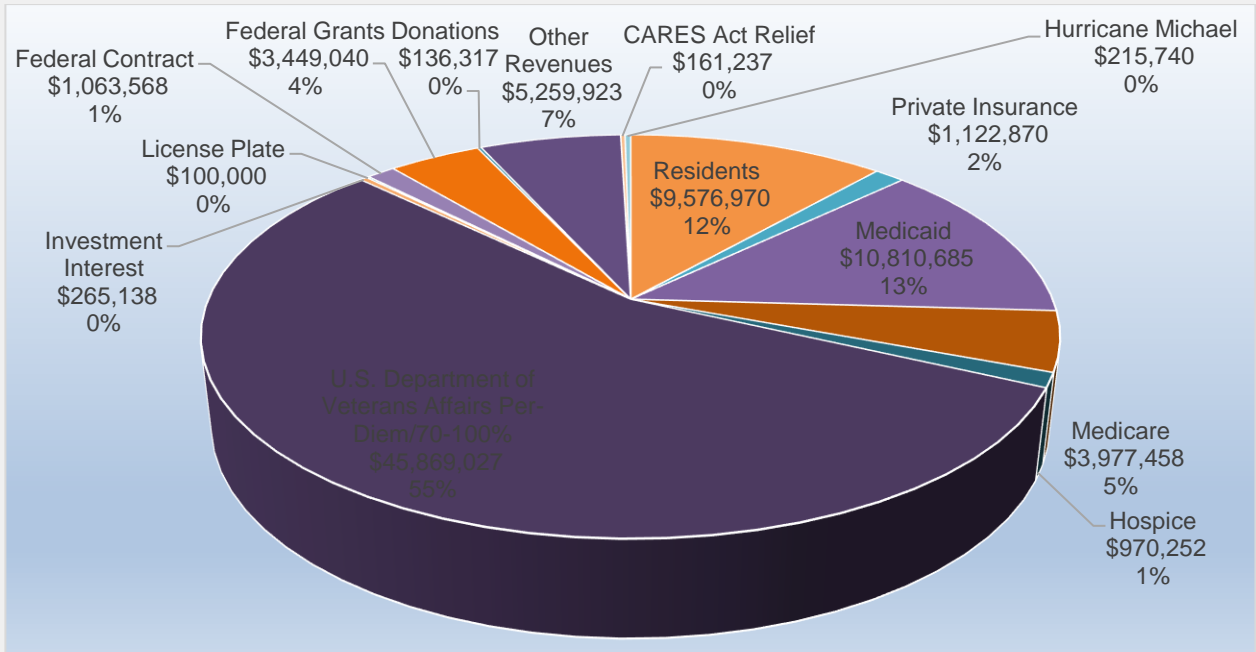
## Fiscal Impact

The Division of Administration provides day-to-day management of the agency's financial resources. This 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 COVID-19 pandemic impacted the department's revenues. Below and on the succeeding page is a snapshot of the department's revenues and expenditures:

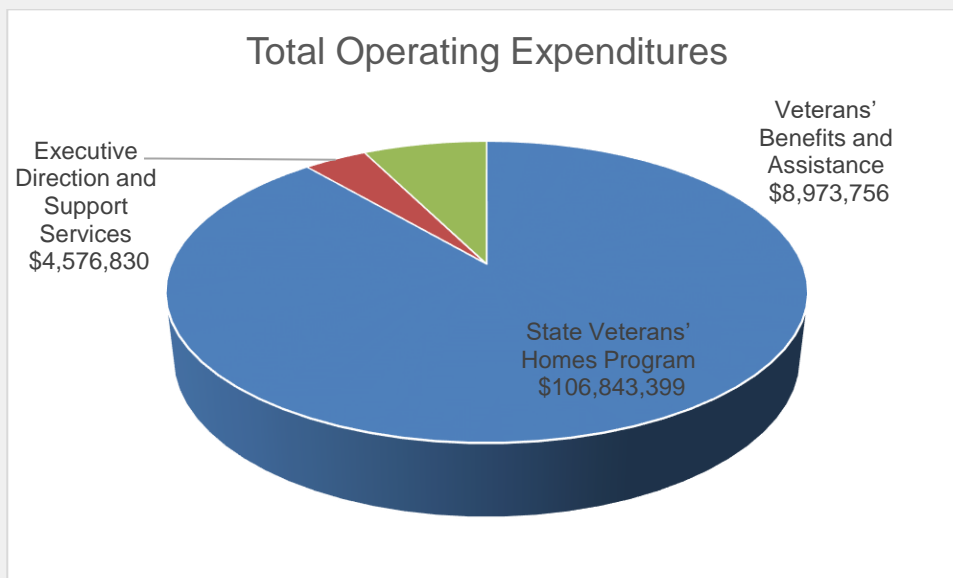
FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS	
Revenue Report	
July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022	
Revenues	State Veterans' Homes Program
Residents	\$9,576,970
Private Insurance	\$1,122,870
Medicaid	\$10,810,685
Medicare	\$3,977,458
Hospice	\$970,252
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Per-Diem/70-100%	\$45,869,027
Investment Interest	\$265,138
License Plates	\$100,000
Federal Contract	\$1,063,568
Federal Grants	\$3,449,040
Donations	\$136,317
Other Revenues	\$5,259,923
CARES Act Relief	\$161,237
Hurricane Michael	\$215,740
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>\$82,978,225</b>



## Graphical Depiction of Revenue Streams



## Agency Total Operating Expenses





FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS					
Expenditure Report					
July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022					
			State Veterans' Homes Program	Executive Direction and Support Services	Veterans' Benefits and Assistance
<b>Operating Expenditures</b>					
	Salaries and Benefits		\$ 47,446,740	\$ 2,650,041	\$ 6,179,788
	OPS		\$ 1,922,288	\$ 26,091	\$ 10,885
	Expenses		\$ 16,323,536	\$ 1,249,428	\$ 307,058
	Other Capital Outlay		\$ 692,658	\$ 6,243	\$ -
	Food Products		\$ 3,096,327	\$ -	\$ -
	Vehicle		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
	Contracted Services		\$ 23,711,330	\$ 589,644	\$ 2,421,506
	Recreational Equip. Supplies		\$ 53,960	\$ -	\$ -
	Risk Management Insurance		\$ 1,636,021	\$ 16,942	\$ 17,181
	Public Assistance		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
	Human Resources Assessment		\$ 417,556	\$ 8,475	\$ 35,424
	Data Processing Svc SRC		\$ -	\$ 29,888	\$ -
<b>Total Operating Expenditures</b>			<b>\$ 95,300,418</b>	<b>\$ 4,576,753</b>	<b>\$ 8,971,842</b>
<b>Non-Operating Expenditures</b>					
	Service Charge to General Revenue		\$ 365,237	\$ 77	\$ 1,914
	Refunds-State Revenues		\$ 655,568	\$ -	\$ -
	Investment Cost		\$ 37,624	\$ -	\$ -
	Payment Sales Tax		\$ 2,189	\$ -	\$ -
	TRF-Sweeps		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
	TRF-Inter Hurricane Irma Payback		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<b>Total Non-Operating Expenditures</b>			<b>\$ 1,060,618</b>	<b>\$ 77</b>	<b>\$ 1,914</b>
<b>Fixed Capital Outlay</b>					
	New Home Construction		\$ 2,885,762	\$ -	\$ -
	Add & Improvements to State Veterans' Homes		\$ 5,377,286	\$ -	\$ -
	Maintenance/Repair		\$ 1,701,640	\$ -	\$ -
	Deferred Building Maintenance		\$ 91,179	\$ -	\$ -
	Fees		\$ 426,496	\$ -	\$ -
<b>Total Fixed Capital Outlay</b>			<b>\$ 10,482,363</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$ 106,843,399</b>	<b>\$ 4,576,830</b>	<b>\$ 8,973,756</b>

# Agency Successes to Date



## Department Recognitions



### Governor's Gold Seal Award

The Baldomero Lopez State Veterans' Nursing Home in Land O' Lakes is a recipient of the Governor's Gold Seal Award. The Gold Seal program awards were developed and implemented by the Governor's Panel, recognizing nursing home facilities that demonstrate excellence in long-term care. Facilities that wish to be considered for the Gold Seal Award must be in operation for a minimum of 30 months and meet rigorous standards for quality of care, financial soundness, family and community involvement, training and workforce stability. Facilities must also have an excellent regulator history in the 30 months preceding their application.

### 2021-22 AHCA/NCAL National Quality Awards

The American Health Care Association and National Center for Assisted Living (AHCA/NCAL) recognized the Florida State Veterans' Homes with the Silver – Achievement in Quality Award and Bronze Commitment to Quality Award. The National Quality Award Program provides a pathway for providers of long-term and post-acute care services to demonstrate their commitment toward performance excellent for the quality of care to seniors and persons with disabilities. Five State Veterans' Homes were awarded Silver – Achievement in Quality Awards:

- 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
- Emory L. Bennett State Veterans' Nursing Home, Daytona Beach
- Robert H. Jenkins State Veterans' Domiciliary Home, Lake City



### 2022 Florida TaxWatch Productivity Awards

The Florida TaxWatch Productivity Awards are made possible through the generosity of Prudential, and the vision of the late J. E. Davis and A. D. Davis, co-founders of Florida TaxWatch. Since 1989, Florida TaxWatch has publically recognized and rewarded state employees and work units whose work significantly and measurably increases productivity and promotes innovation to improve the delivery of state services and save money for Florida taxpayers and businesses.

FDVA received the following recognitions:

#### Category: Quality of Life

##### Cash Winner

- ✓ Lindsay Mallard, Business Manager at the Douglas T. Jacobson State Veterans' Nursing Home

##### Plaque Winners

- ✓ Mark "A.J." Johnson, Benefits and Assistance Division, Bureau of Field Services



### **2022 Florida Health Care Association Awards**

Florida Health Care Association annually honors the best in the long term-care profession with a series of prestigious achievement awards. FDVA received the following awards:

#### **Category: Excellence in Long-Term Care Nursing Award**

- ✓ Deborah Thompson, Director of Nursing, Chester C. Sims State Veterans' Nursing Home, received the Administrator of the Year Award by FADONA/Long Term Care (March 2022).

#### **Category: Florida Healthcare Association Florida Leaders:**

- ✓ Marlies Sarrett, Administrator of Baldomero Lopez SVNH and Shelly Cain, Administrator of Clifford C. Sims SVNH were inducted into the Florida Health Care Association Florida Leaders Class of 2023.

#### **Category: Florida Health Care Association Special Recognition Award:**

Special recognition to Administrators for impacting the lives of residents and helping to enhance the quality of life in Florida's long-term care centers at its Annual Conference.

- ✓ FDVA received an award for impacting the lives of residents and helping to enhance the quality of life in Florida's long-term care centers at its Annual Conference.
- ✓ Emerald Coast Rotary Club in Panama City was recognized for their years of service to the Clifford C. Sims State Veterans' Nursing Home. The Club sponsors an annual Miracle League baseball game, holiday parties, such as Mardi Gras celebrations, Valentine's Day and Halloween events and other activities for the facility's residents. They also donated iPads during the COVID-19 pandemic to help residents stay connected with their loved ones.





## 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.

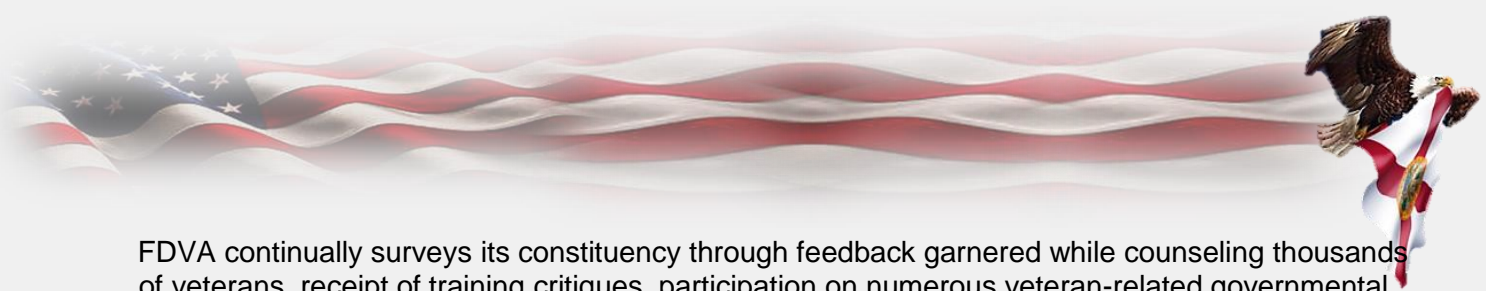


#### Division of State Veterans' Homes

The Division of State Veterans' Homes 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.

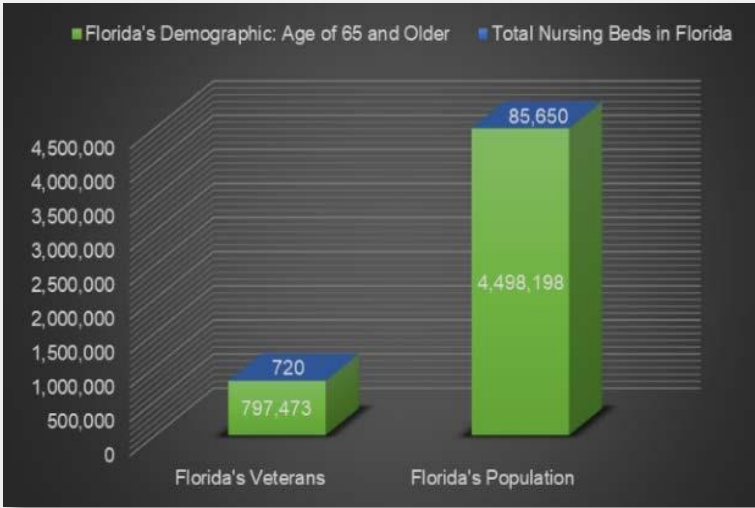
Section 292.05 (5) Florida Statutes, the Department shall conduct an ongoing study on the problems and needs of those residents of this state who are veterans of the Armed Forces of the United States and the problems and needs of their dependents. The study shall include but not be limited to:

- 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 moneys 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 Homes' Program 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 State Veterans' Homes 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.

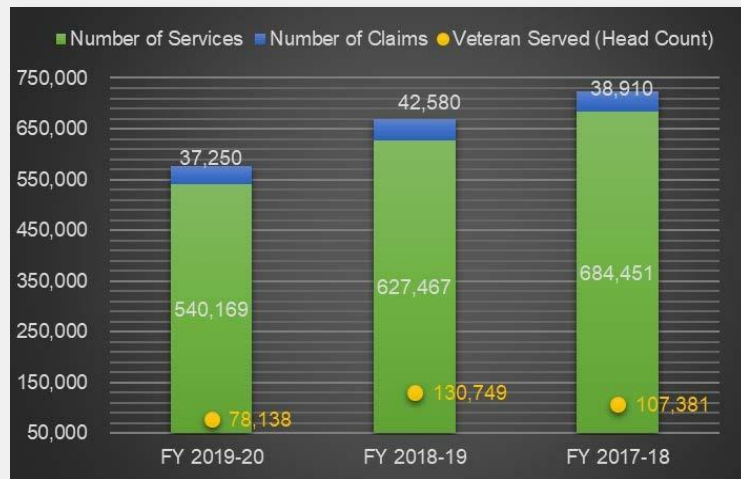
The construction of new state veterans' nursing homes is subject to approval by the Governor and Cabinet, with 35 percent of the funding provided by the Florida Legislature and 65 percent of construction costs that are matched by VA grant funding.





## Division of Veterans' Benefits and Assistance

The Division of Veterans' Benefits and Assistance has 115 employees, 76 of whom are Veterans' Claims Examiners. Their day-to-day role is to connect without charge veterans and their families with

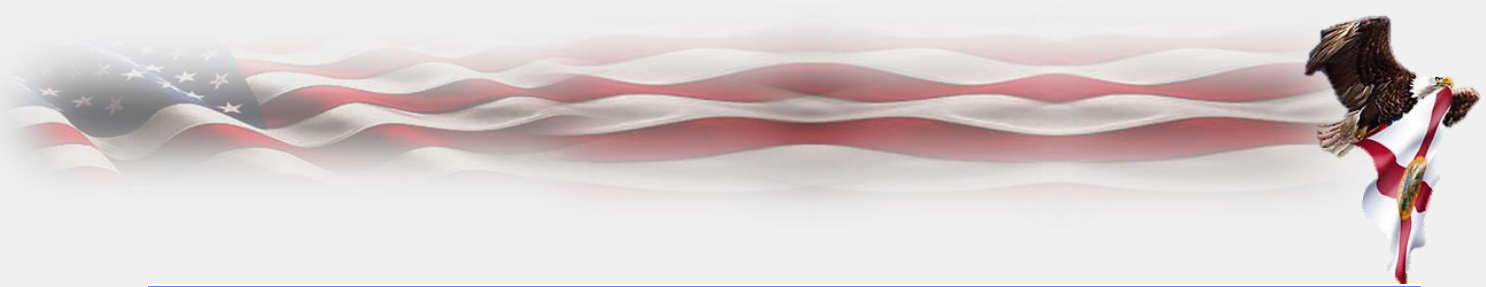


earned services, benefits and support. In addition, VCEs provide education and ongoing support to Veterans' Service Officers who serve veterans at the local government (city or county) level. The Division provides professional assistance to Florida's veterans and their dependents in an effort to obtain financial benefits and health care treatment from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). 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.)

Veterans' Claims Examiners (VCEs) are trained to resolve the myriad of issues facing veterans who served in World War II through today's conflicts, with each era having unique issues and challenges. Each day finds VCEs offering assistance and guidance at Transition Assistance Program briefings for separating service members, congressional veterans' appreciation days, and Veteran Service Organization gatherings through primarily through teleconferences this year. However, FDVA employees remain proactive in providing services to the 1.5 million veterans in Florida; fewer than 438,455 (Compensation of 421,597 plus Pension of 16,858. FY 21) 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.



## 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 2020-21	Actual FY 2021-22	Standard FY 2021-22
1. Value of cost avoidance because of retroactive compensation.	\$194,668,373	\$215,284,006	\$97,630,071
2. Value of cost avoidance because of issue resolution.	\$61,932,620	\$74,897,847	\$23,459,938
3. Number of veterans served.	81,423	73,852	105,172
4. Number of claims processed.	25,356	14,971	24,076
5. Number of services to veterans.	313,033	169,732	523,792

**(3, 4, & 5 were impacted due to COVID19 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. 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 they also promote the use of State of Florida education benefit offerings. Attracting and retaining a young, educated veteran population is beneficial for all Floridians.



## Chapter 295, FLORIDA STATUTES

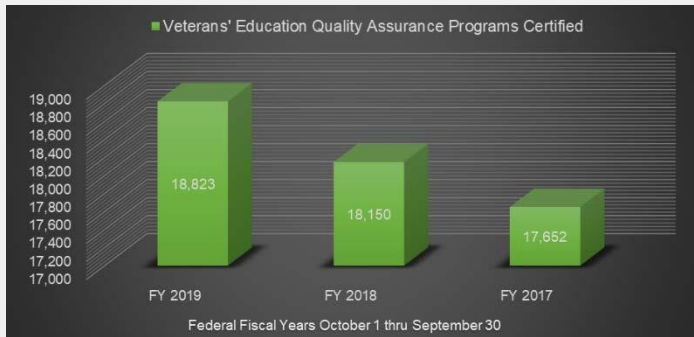
### **Office of Inspector General: Veterans' Preference**

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 that 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.

## Appendix II - County Populations and Federal Benefits Distributions




County	Veteran Population*	Total Expenditure	Other Expenditure (Construction & Operating Expenses)	Compensation & Pension	Education & Vocational Rehabilitation/ Employment	Insurance & Indemnities	Medical Care
ALACHUA	17,595	\$297,396	\$5,039	\$100,862	\$11,331	\$1,457	\$173,667
BAKER	1,817	\$23,546		\$11,383	\$1,032	\$44	\$11,087
BAY	21,921	\$226,056		\$160,519	\$10,794	\$751	\$53,991
BRADFORD	2,008	\$30,877		\$11,759	\$748	\$82	\$18,287
BREVARD	64,644	\$826,900	\$111	\$491,844	\$39,942	\$4,064	\$290,827
BROWARD	81,913	\$739,669		\$378,676	\$57,561	\$4,945	\$298,487
CALHOUN	1,104	\$10,721		\$6,357	\$171	\$21	\$4,172
CHARLOTTE	21,851	\$195,235		\$110,277	\$3,835	\$1,530	\$79,593
CITRUS	19,794	\$224,667		\$116,935	\$4,022	\$995	\$102,715
CLAY	25,389	\$336,335		\$217,454	\$27,146	\$1,619	\$90,115
COLLIER	27,499	\$146,075		\$86,122	\$5,650	\$2,608	\$51,695
COLUMBIA	6,502	\$135,639		\$46,956	\$1,433	\$438	\$86,812
DE SOTO	2,053	\$20,629		\$10,924	\$282	\$24	\$9,400
DIXIE	1,606	\$23,191		\$7,995	\$196	\$15	\$14,985
DUVAL	86,702	\$895,635	\$7,706	\$513,658	\$78,183	\$4,531	\$283,852
ESCAMBIA	37,977	\$430,862	\$2,213	\$281,636	\$25,136	\$1,825	\$117,840
FLAGLER	11,849	\$126,667		\$73,850	\$4,669	\$852	\$47,297
FRANKLIN	1,051	\$10,043		\$5,327	\$68	\$36	\$4,612
GADSDEN	2,949	\$38,173		\$19,623	\$737	\$152	\$17,663
GILCHRIST	1,500	\$24,100		\$9,345	\$331	\$43	\$14,380
GLADES	949	\$8,733		\$2,566	\$54	\$76	\$6,037
GULF	1,564	\$14,186		\$9,689	\$464	\$43	\$3,990
HAMILTON	873	\$17,529		\$7,491	\$368	\$73	\$9,597
HARDEE	1,271	\$10,257		\$5,254	\$225	\$74	\$4,704
HENDRY	1,685	\$17,601		\$9,247	\$626	\$92	\$7,636
HERNANDO	17,791	\$264,791		\$140,702	\$7,992	\$1,671	\$114,426
HIGHLANDS	10,137	\$103,625		\$55,614	\$1,692	\$532	\$45,787
HILLSBOROUGH	93,257	\$1,694,653	\$37,344	\$794,437	\$108,943	\$6,311	\$710,274
HOLMES	1,736	\$20,052		\$14,675	\$354	\$101	\$4,921

## County Populations and Federal Benefits Distributions Cont.

County	Veteran Population*	Total Expenditure	Other Expenditure (Construction & Operating Expenses)	Compensation & Pension	Education & Vocational Rehabilitation/ Employment	Insurance & Indemnities	Medical Care
INDIAN RIVER	16,407	\$139,337		\$79,381	\$3,636	\$1,872	\$54,448
JACKSON	3,946	\$45,770		\$30,029	\$784	\$264	\$14,693
JEFFERSON	1,055	\$10,002		\$5,469	\$211	\$25	\$4,298
LAFAYETTE	469	\$6,770		\$1,889	\$63	\$21	\$4,797
LAKE	30,446	\$375,990		\$215,141	\$12,095	\$2,580	\$146,174
LEE	60,134	\$508,040		\$263,515	\$18,908	\$3,836	\$221,782
LEON	17,682	\$161,169	(\$27)	\$82,716	\$11,961	\$1,080	\$65,466
LEVY	3,961	\$69,312		\$23,558	\$873	\$159	\$44,722
LIBERTY	457	\$4,374		\$2,440	\$64	\$11	\$1,859
MADISON	1,156	\$18,082		\$9,024	\$378	\$0	\$8,680
MANATEE	33,652	\$285,247		\$160,960	\$12,261	\$2,432	\$109,594
MARION	37,103	\$424,391		\$198,934	\$9,568	\$2,091	\$213,798
MARTIN	13,758	\$106,643		\$52,929	\$3,446	\$1,399	\$48,869
MIAMI-DADE	64,622	\$739,493	\$4,662	\$332,029	\$52,226	\$3,051	\$342,862
MONROE	7,667	\$63,731		\$35,665	\$5,298	\$362	\$22,405
NASSAU	8,402	\$87,902		\$56,475	\$6,040	\$471	\$24,916
OKALOOSA	36,406	\$405,390		\$302,815	\$32,601	\$2,250	\$67,724
OKEECHOBEE	2,892	\$39,893		\$19,198	\$724	\$134	\$19,836
ORANGE	71,582	\$988,995	\$30,038	\$467,412	\$74,748	\$4,386	\$382,373
OSCEOLA	18,122	\$355,415		\$183,993	\$18,576	\$788	\$152,058
PALM BEACH	82,730	\$767,043	\$9,772	\$319,373	\$34,200	\$9,219	\$384,708
PASCO	48,799	\$666,203		\$325,533	\$27,515	\$2,920	\$310,235
PINELLAS	81,888	\$1,182,298	\$50,659	\$457,696	\$37,809	\$5,333	\$580,141
POLK	47,970	\$602,076		\$316,339	\$26,096	\$2,365	\$257,276
PUTNAM	7,002	\$94,688		\$37,276	\$1,457	\$225	\$55,729
SAINT JOHNS	21,152	\$223,246	\$0	\$144,341	\$16,178	\$1,731	\$60,997
SAINT LUCIE	24,632	\$282,647		\$150,306	\$12,317	\$1,077	\$118,947
SANTA ROSA	22,243	\$331,744		\$247,022	\$25,673	\$858	\$58,191
SARASOTA	41,250	\$287,478	\$286	\$165,228	\$9,980	\$3,385	\$108,313

## County Populations and Federal Benefits Distributions Cont.



County	Veteran Population*	Total Expenditure	Other Expenditure (Construction & Operating Expenses)	Compensation & Pension	Education & Vocational Rehabilitation/ Employment	Insurance & Indemnities	Medical Care
SEMINOLE	31,184	\$301,365		\$157,273	\$19,128	\$1,850	\$123,115
SUMTER	18,275	\$199,460	\$16,610	\$96,854	\$2,118	\$1,060	\$66,208
SUWANNEE	3,938	\$59,022		\$23,292	\$898	\$148	\$34,684
TAYLOR	1,496	\$23,455		\$9,447	\$220	\$103	\$13,684
UNION	1,070	\$11,968		\$5,478	\$249	\$21	\$6,221
VOLUSIA	49,317	\$603,260		\$341,561	\$30,365	\$2,996	\$228,338
WAKULLA	2,316	\$28,370		\$14,621	\$959	\$90	\$12,700
WALTON	8,012	\$66,270		\$45,945	\$2,878	\$341	\$17,106
WASHINGTON	1,995	\$23,294		\$15,461	\$520	\$100	\$7,213
<b>FLORIDA (Total)</b>	<b>1,492,175</b>	<b>\$17,503,676</b>	<b>\$164,413</b>	<b>\$9,097,795</b>	<b>\$907,006</b>	<b>\$96,039</b>	<b>\$7,074,009</b>

**Notes:**

- \* Veteran population estimates, as of September 30, 2021, are produced by the VA Predictive Analytics and Actuary Service (VetPop 2018).
  - # Prior to FY 08, "Loan Guaranty" expenditures were included in the Education & Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (E&VRE) programs. Currently, all "Loan Guaranty" expenditures are attributed to Travis County, TX, where all Loan Guaranty payments are processed. VA will continue to improve data collection for future GDX reports to better distribute loan expenditures at the state, county and congressional district levels.
  - \*\* Unique patients are patients who received treatment at a VA health care facility. Data are provided by the Allocation Resource Center (ARC).
- Expenditure data sources: USASpending.gov for Compensation & Pension (C&P) and Education and Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (EVRE) Benefits; Veterans Benefits Administration Insurance Center for the Insurance costs; the VA Financial Management System (FMS) for Construction, Medical Research, General Operating Expenses, and certain C&P and Readjustment data; and the Allocation Resource Center (ARC) for Medical Care costs.
1. Expenditures are rounded to the nearest thousand dollars. For example, \$500 to \$1,000 are rounded to \$1; \$0 to \$499 are rounded to \$0; and "\$-" = 0 or no expenditures.
  2. The Compensation & Pension expenditures include dollars for the following programs: veterans' compensation for service-connected disabilities; dependency and indemnity compensation for service-connected deaths; veterans' pension for nonservice-connected disabilities; and burial and other benefits to veterans and their survivors.
  3. Medical Care expenditures include dollars for medical services, medical administration, facility maintenance, educational support, research support, and other overhead items. Medical Care expenditures do not include dollars for construction or other non-medical support.
  4. Medical Care expenditures are allocated to the patient's home location, not the site of care.



## 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 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. To achieve this goal, the Governor's Initiative on Lawyers Assisting Warriors (GI LAW) draws from the talent of Florida's leading law firms to provide pro bono services for military members. Through this 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. This program is a collaboration between the Governor, the Department of Military Affairs, the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs and Enterprise Florida, Inc.

GI Law took effect in May 2019 and has continued to grow over the years. As of December 2022, there have been 198 cases undertaken by law offices throughout Florida to assist military members with their legal matters.

The GI LAW program does not provide access to legal services for a) criminal, b) family law, or c) UCMJ cases. The GI LAW program acts as a clearing house only and does not assign cases to firms or attorneys. The GI LAW program does not provide legal services itself.





## Appendix III



**FLORIDA VETERANS**

— F O U N D A T I O N —

FVF

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 (VSO) and County Veteran Service Officers (CVSO). 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 this 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 majority of the Foundation Directors are retired, military disabled veterans who donate more than 40 hours per week of their time to support the Foundation's mission to align support with the FDVA mission of advocacy, to ensure greater impact for veterans throughout the state of Florida. FVF has taken charge of representing Florida veterans and their families through congressionally chartered Florida-based Veterans Service Organizations. 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. Lew Wilson continues as President & CEO and is spearheading the day-by-day activities to include increased grant and fundraising opportunities. FVF's new programs have received positive reactions from local communities and helped thousands of veterans around the state.

### **Fiscal Year 2021/2022**

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 is gaining the attention of varied levels of government within the state of Florida. These accomplishments are setting the standard for the rest of the nation to follow. This fiscal year the Foundation received \$245,000 from legislative appropriations to hire a Veterans Case Manager and help Veterans with emergency services.

### **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 150,000 benefits guides in FY 2021-2022.







### **Suicide Prevention, Opioids/Mental Health Services**

FVF is a working member of the Florida Governors 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.

### **Florida Veterans Support Crisis Hotlines**

In addition to the Foundation's Veterans Crisis Support Line, our partnership continues with the Crisis Center of Tampa Bay to support Suicide Prevention, Opioid Addiction and Mental Health issues. Approximately 12,000+ calls per quarter.

### **Aging Veteran Outreach/Forgotten Warrior Project**

FVF received a three-year grant, working in collaboration with the National Association of Veterans and Families, to provide educational seminars and claims assistance to aging wartime veterans and their Survivors in Broward and surrounding counties about the VA Pension with Aid & Attendance benefits. This has been expanded to mostly virtual seminars provided to statewide assisted living associations and facilities in local communities. This year brought 1,038 Veterans and their Survivors benefits in excess of \$17,000,000 yearly.

### **Emergency Financial Assistance**

The FVF's successful Financial Aid Program continues its partnership with the Project Vet Relief, which is managed by the American Legion of Florida. At the beginning of COVID, the FVF created the COVID-19 Project Vet Relief Fund to promote around the state of Florida and recruit donations to help our Veterans in Need caused by the COVID Pandemic. This fiscal year also added emergency dental assistance to more than 300 veterans and their families.

### **Volunteer Programs**

FVF received a grant from *Volunteer Florida* that requires us to recruit volunteers who will provide thousands of hours of volunteer services in support of our veterans. FVF currently has over five hundred volunteers who have provided over 4,100 hours to serve our veterans.

### **Forward March Ambassadors for Veterans Council**

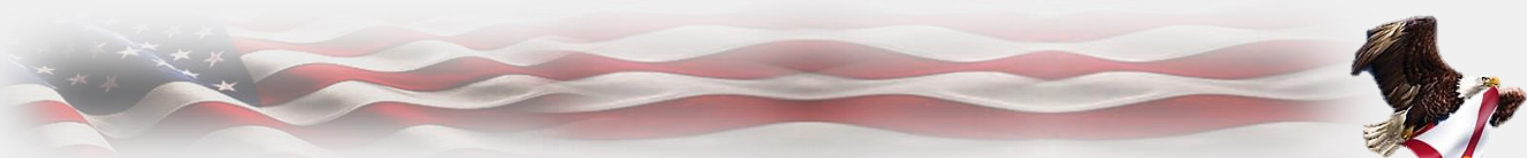
This program was born in January 2020 to help FVF with a program of sustainability and now has over 36 Ambassadors that include individuals and businesses. Ambassadors pay \$1,000 a year for three years or a lump sum of \$2,800. This ongoing program helps the foundation with a dedicated funding source for years to come. The council meets each year to connect with each other and to share ideas and programs that are working in their communities.

### **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.

### **FVF Grants**

The FVF has contracted with a full-time grant writer who is responsible to researching and applying for grants to help veterans in a variety of ways. To date we have received grants from Target, Walgreens, Leon County, RRF Foundation for Aging and more. Several grants are pending that total over \$800,000.



**Gadsden Flag License Plate**



FVF continues to promote the sale of License Plate Vouchers. Funding helps the foundation continue its mission of helping Veterans in need. The plate goes into production when 3,000 vouchers are sold. Current count is approximately 979 sold.

**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.

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

The Foundation's Program Participants Successes			
Category	Program	Veteran & Families Served	
		Number	Dollars
Veterans & Organizations	Emergency Direct Financial Assistance	2,812	\$373,000
FVF Board and Volunteers	Veterans Outreach	67,873	14,802 hours
FVF Marketing Programs	Education, Outreach, & Benefits	1,042,501	N/A
Veterans Data Services	Education and Benefits	128,603	N/A
Aging Veterans Benefits Approved	Long Term Care Assistance - Yearly	1,038 Claims	N/A
Emergency Crisis Lines	Social Services	144,000+	N/A
Veterans Benefits Guides	Educational & Emergency Services	150,000	N/A
			N/A



### Chairman, Staff & Board of Directors' Participation Events

Veteran Treatment Courts, City & County Council Meetings, Veteran 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.) 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. This year we began implementing 2021 House Bill 435, establishing the nation’s first statewide SkillBridge initiative and designating *Veterans Florida* as the state’s principal Department of Defense SkillBridge awareness and assistance organization. The Florida SkillBridge Initiative creates unprecedented opportunities for transitioning service members across the country to come to Florida, builds a highly skilled talent pipeline for employers, and firmly plants Florida’s flag as the top destination for military families.

*Veterans Florida* is backed by the State of Florida. Our board is appointed by the Governor, Speaker of the Florida House of Representatives, and the 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 to meet workforce needs.

### **Veterans Florida 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 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 *Veterans Florida* workforce 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](http://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.

During FY 2021-22, a total of 2,668 veterans in Florida and from across the nation were served seeking career assistance or job placement in Florida. Over 90 employers used *Veterans Florida* Workforce or Career Services this year.

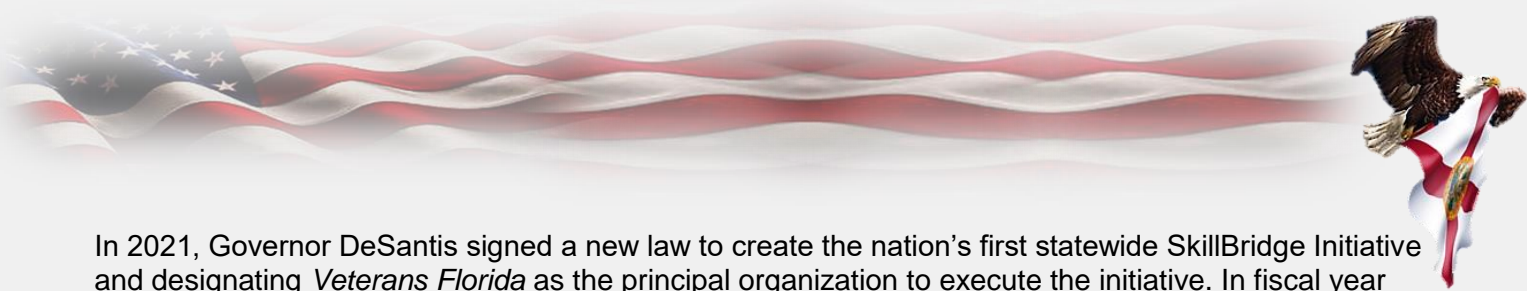
## Appendix IV

Workforce Grant Reimburse ments FY 2021-22		
Fiscal Year	Veterans Trained	Workforce Grant Reimburse ments
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
<b>FY 2021-22</b>	118	406,269
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,356</b>	<b>\$4,260,221</b>

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

### Florida SkillBridge Initiative

The DOD SkillBridge program allows transitioning service members, 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, while retaining their full military pay and benefits and help ease their military separation into their new civilian career. In fiscal year 2020, *Veterans Florida* became an authorized DOD SkillBridge provider with our Agriculture Program in partnership with the University of Florida.



In 2021, Governor DeSantis signed a new law to create the nation's first statewide SkillBridge Initiative and designating *Veterans Florida* as the principal organization to execute the initiative. In fiscal year 2022, *Veterans Florida* continued to expand the program working with more than 100 employers. This past year, 35 service members completed SkillBridge training and 32 service members are actively participating in a SkillBridge opportunity.



SkillBridge Program			
Fiscal Year	Applications Received	Participants Served	Participants Completed
FY 2020-21	48	16	1
<b>FY 2021-22</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>35</b>
Total	116	83	36

### Agriculture Program

For fiscal years 2020-23, *Veterans Florida* received a \$745,245.00 prime award from the U.S. Department of Agriculture National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) FY20 Enhancing Agricultural Opportunities for Military Veterans Competitive Grants Program to expand the *Veterans Florida* Agriculture Program building on the success of the 18-month Pilot Program (Sept 2018 - Feb 2020). Our objective for the NIFA award is for 30 veterans to complete the program. *Veterans Florida* is exceeding the program's milestones with

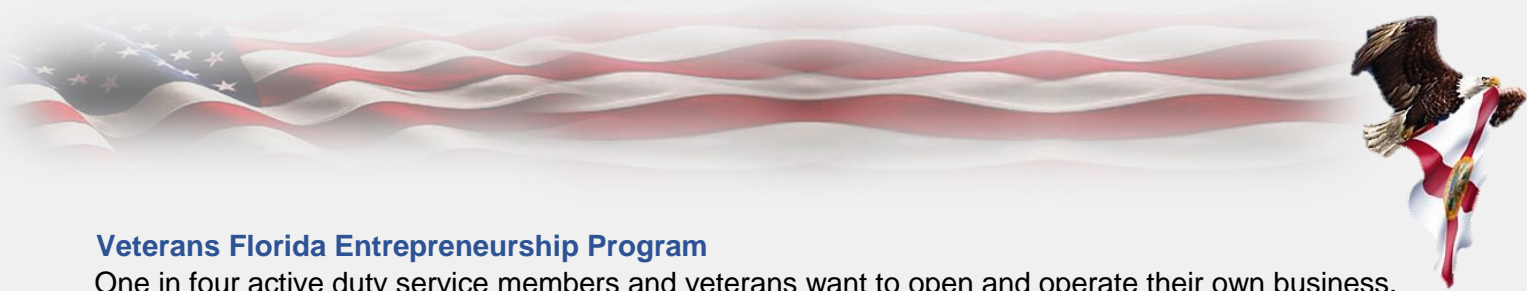




support from the University of Florida, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS). Most of the veterans who complete the Agriculture Program are placed into agriculture related employment, are starting their own farms, or furthering their education in an agriculture related degree. Additionally, we strengthened our outreach and developed relationships with thirteen (13) of the UF/IFAS Research and Education Centers (RECs) and demonstration sites around the state.

The *Veterans Florida* Agriculture Program is a six-month training fellowship that provides veterans and servicemembers a comprehensive, hands-on experience and equips them with the knowledge, skills, and abilities to be competitive for leading careers in Florida’s \$149 billion agriculture industry. The hands-on training takes place at the UF/IFAS RECs in Florida, where cutting edge research and innovations in food safety, crop production, and disease-resistant plants have played a vital role in advancing the industry. Each research center develops a structured rotation plan to introduce veterans to different production methods and challenges such as trial planning, field/site preparations, preparing plant materials, trial maintenance, data collection, harvesting, and various cropping activities depending on season, crop, and individual research program needs. Veterans in this program earn a \$15 per hour stipend through the USDA NIFA funding. *Veterans Florida* works with program participants to further their career at an agribusiness or working farm or ranch after completing the training.

Agriculture Program				
Fiscal Year	Applications	Participants	Completions	Placements
Pilot Program FY 2018-20	87	54	8	9
FY 2020-21	24	12	10	11
<b>FY 2021-22</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>28</b>
Total FY 2020-22	68	50	35	39



## Veterans Florida Entrepreneurship Program

One in four active duty service members and veterans want to open and operate their own business. Opportunity, freedom, and challenge attract them to business ownership. The *Veterans Florida* Entrepreneurship Program offers veterans on-site and virtual training, facilitation, and mentorship designed to meet the veteran where they are in their entrepreneurial journey.

The Entrepreneurship Program conducted its seventh year of operation in Fiscal Year 2021-22. Since the inception of the program in early 2016, the program has received more than 4,800 applications from veterans across the state and served 3,361 veterans.



The program features several opportunities to meet the needs of veteran entrepreneurs at different stages of their entrepreneurial journey. This approach favors tailored training over information overload. Veterans can participate in cohort-based training, workshops, networking 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 one of our entrepreneur partners.

Networking events provide veteran entrepreneurs opportunities to network with peers and connect with 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 veteran entrepreneurs, 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 based exposure.

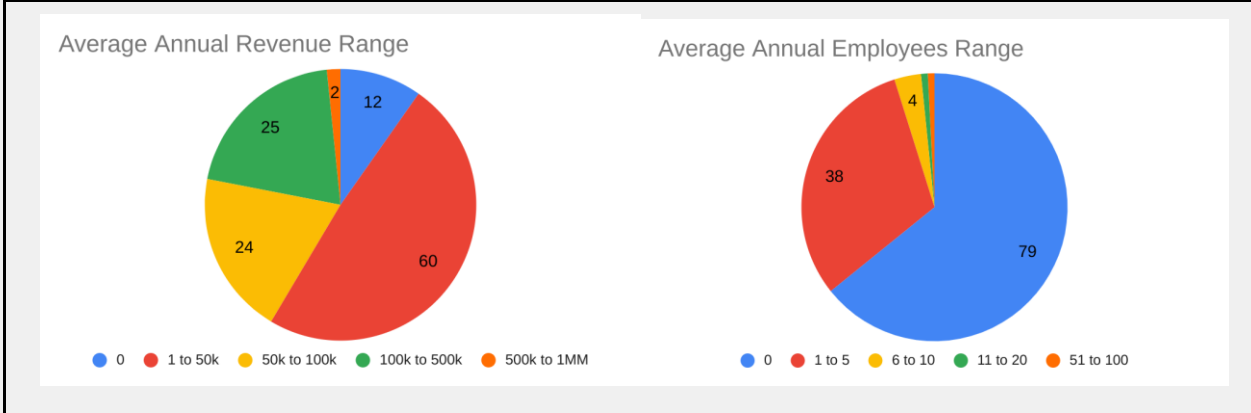
### Veterans Florida Entrepreneurship Program Network Partners for 2021-2022

Entrepreneurship Program Partners FY 2021-22		
 Tampa	 Boca Raton	 Fort Myers
 Orlando	 Melbourne	 Orlando, Tampa, Melbourne
 Tampa	 Pensacola	 Pensacola
 Tallahassee	 Tampa	

Entrepreneur Program Participants Cumulative Reported Data 2016-2021			
Revenue Generated	Capital Invested	Businesses	Hires
\$124,206,298	\$27,949,341	504	744



### Entrepreneur Program Participants Survey Respondents FY 2020-21 through FY 2021-22



Low Range Total: \$4,760,000	Low Range Total: 124
High Range Total: \$19,900,000	High Range Total: 350

Starting in 2022 we asked respondents to report ranges for revenue and employees for improved capture of metrics; this table reflects response values after completing Startup or Growth training; charts show counts of businesses reporting within the survey ranges.

### Entrepreneurship Program Participants

Fiscal Year	Applications Received	Participants Served	Program Graduates
FY 2015-16	612	424	167
FY 2016-17	458	300	147
FY 2017-18	787	393	82
FY 2018-19	910	426	96
FY 2019-20	449	294	108
FY 2020-21	601	525	262
<b>FY 2021-22</b>	1,010	989	132
<b>Total FY 2015-22</b>	<b>4,827</b>	<b>3,361</b>	<b>994</b>

### Entrepreneur Program Participants Reported Data

Revenue Generated	Capital Invested	Businesses	Hires
\$59,611,801	\$23,177,049	277	392



Agriculture Program			
Fiscal Year	Applications Received	Participants Served	Program Graduates
FY2019-20	87	54	8

**Marketing Program**

The *Veterans Florida* marketing and communications campaign supports the organization’s primary goals: Career Assistance; Entrepreneurship Training; and promoting Florida’s status as the nation’s top state for veterans, transitioning service members, and their families. The marketing team also produces all content and executes all advertising for the *Veterans Florida Expo* each year in coordination with the administration and VETS teams. The target audience is service members and veterans in the 12 months leading up to and following separation from the military.

The marketing team works closely with VISIT FLORIDA to carry out the annual marketing campaign. The marketing focus has shifted in recent years from high-volume web traffic to longer-form storytelling content, with a specific priority placed on LinkedIn. The success of that strategy is born out not only in engagement and audience size, but significant growth in targeted industries and demographics. Along with LinkedIn, email campaigns are primary drivers of inbound leads and *Veterans Florida* consistently outperforms competitors and industry averages in key metrics such as engagement and open rates. Other channels include public relations, traditional print advertising, radio, and paid search through Google’s \$10,000 per month AdGrants program.



The in-house writing team produces regular content around monthly themes highlighting our participants’ success and opportunities in targeted Florida industries. These blog posts are among the highest-performing content pieces, and have contributed to earned media coverage in major target markets. These articles were published in the first edition of the “Pursuit Meets Power” magazine that is distributed at events and promoted on our website. The marketing team executes topical webinars with veterans, service members, and economic development partners to promote our programs, answer questions, and increase visibility of Florida’s veterans support initiatives.

The marketing team has full web development, video production, and creative capabilities, allowing *Veterans Florida* to operate with the flexibility to quickly capitalize on opportunities and maximize our reach and impact. The team built our website, handles all public relations, and creates all of the content distributed on social media and the web.

The *2022 Veterans Florida Expo* returned to an in-person format on June 17 and 18, 2022 for the first time since 2019. The two-day event featured 274 total attendees, 37 employers, 15 exhibitors, 28 speakers, and 14 pitch competitors in the first ever statewide Battle of the Pitches. Andrews Nautical



won gold and received \$10,000, Clientell took silver and won \$5,000, and MatchMyPlace won \$2,500 for bronze. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive from attendees, sponsors, and exhibitors.



Marketing Metrics				
	FY 20-21	FY 21-22	% Change	Notes
Total Unique Website Visitors	73,183	93,419	27.65%	
Total Facebook Page Likes	80,858	79,317	-1.91%	Standard Facebook Scrub of Inactive Accounts
Email Newsletter Subscribers	34,996	33,725	-3.63%	Scrubbed Inactive Users
LinkedIn Followers	4,931	7,004	42.04%	Result of Prioritizing LinkedIn
Twitter Followers	702	785	11.82%	

### 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.

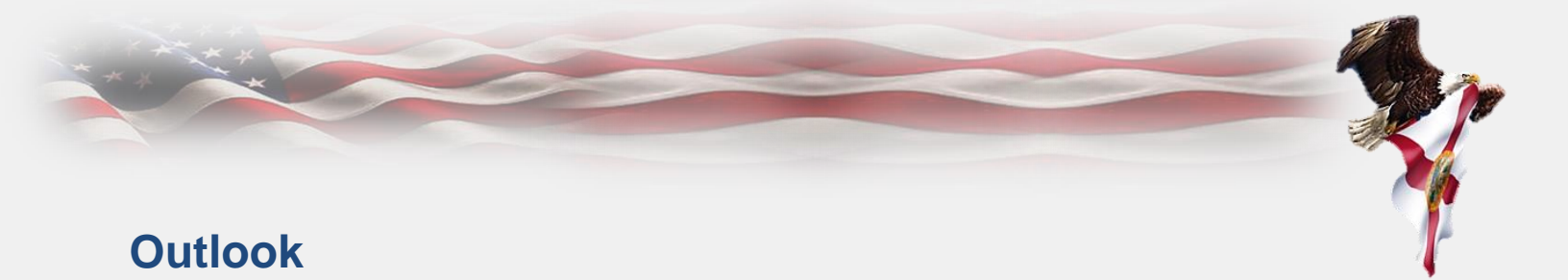
Florida Association of Veteran Owned Businesses	\$3,000	Sponsorship	Expo Sponsor
Hillsborough Community College	\$3,000	Sponsorship	Expo Sponsor
Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University FAMU	\$1,000	Exhibitor	Expo Exhibitor
Hillsborough Community College - The InLab@HCC	\$1,000	Exhibitor	Expo Exhibitor
Learning Alliance Corporation	\$1,000	Exhibitor	Expo Exhibitor
National Aviation Academy	\$1,000	Exhibitor	Expo Exhibitor
The Walt Disney Company	\$1,000	Exhibitor	Expo Exhibitor
Western Governors University	\$1,000	Exhibitor	Expo Exhibitor
Addison HVAC	\$500	Exhibitor	Expo Employer Exhibitor
Aerojet Rocketdyne	\$500	Exhibitor	Expo Employer Exhibitor
Amazon (Orlando Location)	\$500	Exhibitor	Expo Employer Exhibitor
Applied Technology Academy	\$500	Exhibitor	Expo Employer Exhibitor
AshBritt	\$500	Exhibitor	Expo Employer Exhibitor
Astro Travel & Tours, Inc.	\$500	Exhibitor	Expo Employer Exhibitor
Broward County Sheriff's Office	\$500	Exhibitor	Expo Employer Exhibitor



CAP Government	\$500	Exhibitor	Expo Employer Exhibitor
CollabFirst	\$500	Exhibitor	Expo Employer Exhibitor
Cutrale Farms	\$500	Exhibitor	Expo Employer Exhibitor
Florida International University	\$500	Exhibitor	Expo Employer Exhibitor
Florida Nursery, Growers & Landscape Association	\$500	Exhibitor	Expo Employer Exhibitor
GEICO	\$500	Exhibitor	Expo Employer Exhibitor
Home Builders Institute	\$500	Exhibitor	Expo Employer Exhibitor
Legends Airways	\$500	Exhibitor	Expo Employer Exhibitor
Navy Recruiting Reserve Command	\$500	Exhibitor	Expo Employer Exhibitor
NextEra Energy	\$500	Exhibitor	Expo Employer Exhibitor
Northrop Grumman	\$500	Exhibitor	Expo Employer Exhibitor
Okaloosa County Sheriff	\$500	Exhibitor	Expo Employer Exhibitor
Orange County Sheriff	\$500	Exhibitor	Expo Employer Exhibitor
Pensacola Police Department	\$500	Exhibitor	Expo Employer Exhibitor
Pike Corporation	\$500	Exhibitor	Expo Employer Exhibitor
Piper Aircraft, Inc	\$500	Exhibitor	Expo Employer Exhibitor
Regal Boats	\$500	Exhibitor	Expo Employer Exhibitor



Revature	\$500	Exhibitor	Expo Employer Exhibitor
Ring Power	\$500	Exhibitor	Expo Employer Exhibitor
Seminole County Sheriff	\$500	Exhibitor	Expo Employer Exhibitor
Southern States Toyotalift	\$500	Exhibitor	Expo Employer Exhibitor
Universal Orlando	\$500	Exhibitor	Expo Employer Exhibitor
VectorCSP	\$500	Exhibitor	Expo Employer Exhibitor
VetCor	\$500	Exhibitor	Expo Employer Exhibitor
Vitas Healthcare	\$500	Exhibitor	Expo Employer Exhibitor
Wounded Veterans Relief Fund	\$500	Exhibitor	Expo Employer Exhibitor
Boeing	\$9,000	Donation	Skillbridge
Other Supporters	\$810	Donation	General Mission
<b>Total FY 2021-22</b>	<b>\$332,006</b>		



## Outlook

*Veterans Florida* hit the ground running in the first year as the State of Florida's newly designated SkillBridge assistance organization, and the popularity of the initiative due to the service provided by our team grew beyond our expectations and gained traction over state lines with 70% of our accepted service members transitioning to Florida to enroll in SkillBridge internships at targeted industry employers. All funds from the Workforce Training Grant were disbursed to partnered employers ahead of schedule for the second straight year, allowing us to raise the bar on their training plans to strengthen military-to-employer talent pipelines and Florida's future veteran workforce.

The Entrepreneurship Program served the most veterans in its seven-year history by expanding our footprint across the state to meet veterans where they are and at any stage of their venture. The success of adding new partners and increasing the cohort, coworking, and networking opportunities bear out in the quality of Florida veteran small business startups at the 2022 Battle of the Pitches; where proprietary inventors and software developers took the top spots in our largest and most competitive statewide pitch competition yet.

The 2022 Expo returned to an in-person format in Orlando for the first time since 2019, and our team doubled the number of employers, sponsors, exhibitors, and pitch competitors in attendance. The 2023 Expo will be June 9-10 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.

Our partnership with the University of Florida, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences for the Agriculture Program fulfilled the 2020-23 U.S. Department of Agriculture grant's mission, and we will reapply for the award after maintaining a 100% job offer rate to veteran graduates. Adding SkillBridge to the fellowship opened the door for service members to apply, leading us to expand the program to more research farms across the state to keep pace with growing demand.

Equipped and guided by a new three-year strategic plan, *Veterans Florida* aims to build on the successes from the 2022-2023 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 to the 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



Blinded Veterans Association



Fleet Reserve Association



Jewish War Veterans



Marine Corps League



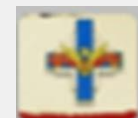
Non-Commissioned Officers Association



The American Legion



The Retired Enlisted Association



Veterans of World War I (Family Members)

# Appendix VI



## 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 e-mail 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.



# Appendix VII

## State Veterans' Nursing Home Annual Summaries



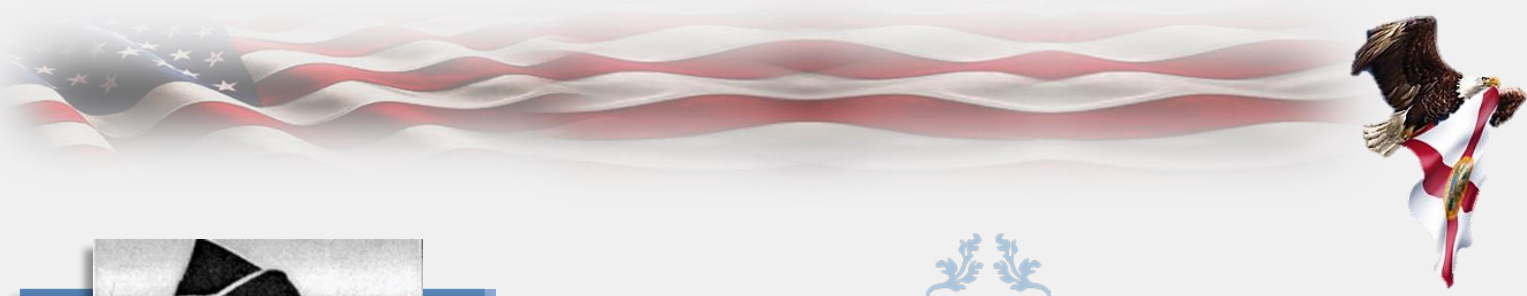
### Robert H. Jenkins Jr. State Veterans' Domiciliary Home

Lake City (Columbia County), Staffing: 69  
FY 2021-22 Occupancy Rate: 93.0% (38 Admissions, 56 Discharges)

The facility 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) 150-bed Assisted Living Facility provides a special combination of housing, personalized support services and incidental medical care to its veteran residents.

**Home Life:** 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. We don't just look after residents' essential needs: We integrate opportunities to participate in lectures, book and special interest clubs, celebrations, socials and other programs that promote healthy, vibrant lifestyles.





## Emory L. Bennett State Veterans' Nursing Home

Daytona Beach (Volusia County), Staffing: 141  
FY 2021-22 Occupancy Rate: 95.1% (43 Admissions, 58 Discharges)

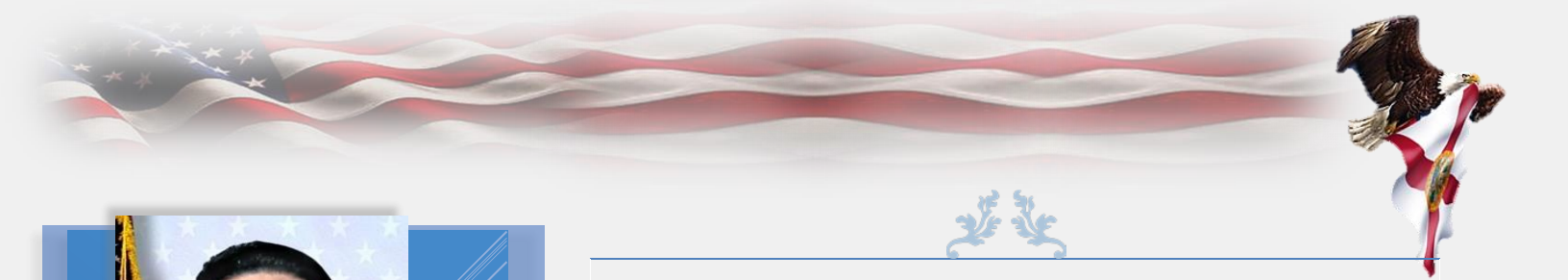
The facility opened to residents in December 1993 and is in excellent condition. Situated on 30 acres, the 69,222 square foot (appraised square footage) 120-bed facility provides skilled nursing care.

*Home Life:* At Emory L. Bennett, we are a tight-knit family of residents and staff. We enjoy great support from our volunteer organizations. Every day we focus on serving our residents with compassion, 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 2021-22 Occupancy Rate: 73.0% (24 Admissions, 48 Discharges)



The facility opened to residents in 1999. The 73,000 square foot (appraised square footage) 120-bed 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.

**Home Life:** 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. We encourage resident-driven choices, including the adoption of two cats and adding an aviary to the Baldomero Lopez family.

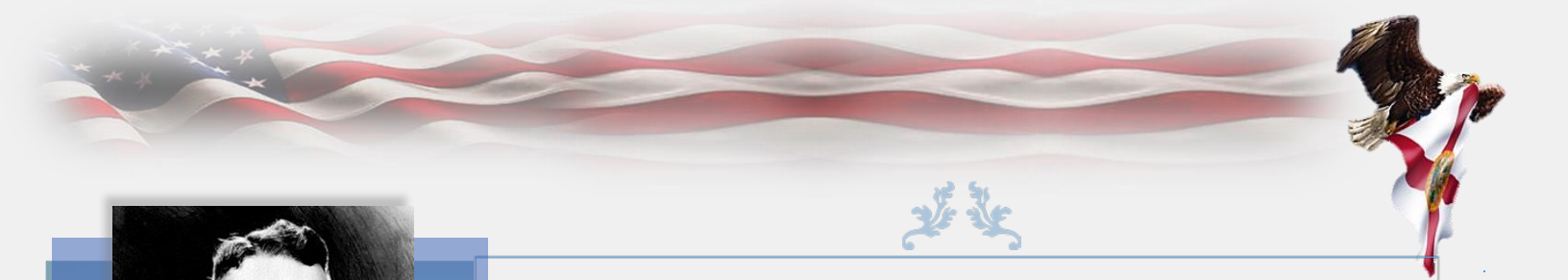
Baldomero Lopez State Veterans' Nursing Home is a recipient of the Governor's Gold Seal Award.



Agency for Health Care Administration  
Nursing Home Overall Inspection Rating



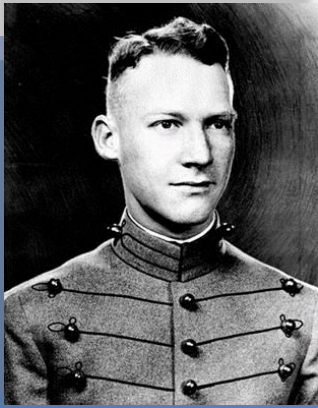
Five-Star Quality Rated  
by Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services



## Alexander “Sandy” Ninger State Veterans’ Nursing Home

Pembroke Pines (Broward County), Staffing: 145

2021-22 Occupancy Rate: 91.3% (32 Admissions, 68 Discharges)



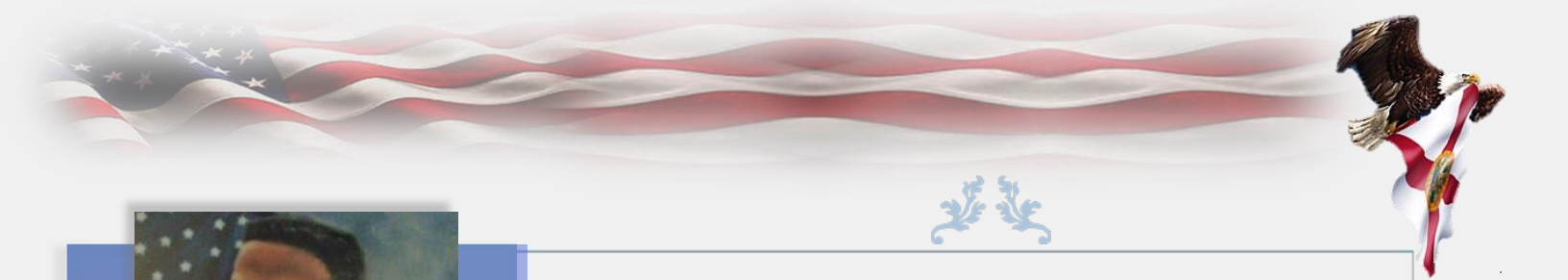
The facility opened to residents in 2001. The 83,896 square foot (appraised square footage) 120-bed facility offers skilled nursing care and can accommodate 60 residents with dementia/Alzheimer’s disease. The home provides veterans with 24-hour nursing care, daily living and recreational activities, rehabilitative therapy and nutritional cuisine.

**Home Life:** Life in the Ninger Home is anything but sedentary. Frequent outings provide the residents with an open forum to the surrounding community. The home enjoys superb community and volunteer support.



Agency for Health Care Administration  
Nursing Home Overall Inspection Rating





## Clifford C. Sims State Veterans' Nursing Home

Panama City (Bay County), Staffing: 143

FY 2021-22 Occupancy Rate: 89.4% (33 Admissions, 56 Discharges)



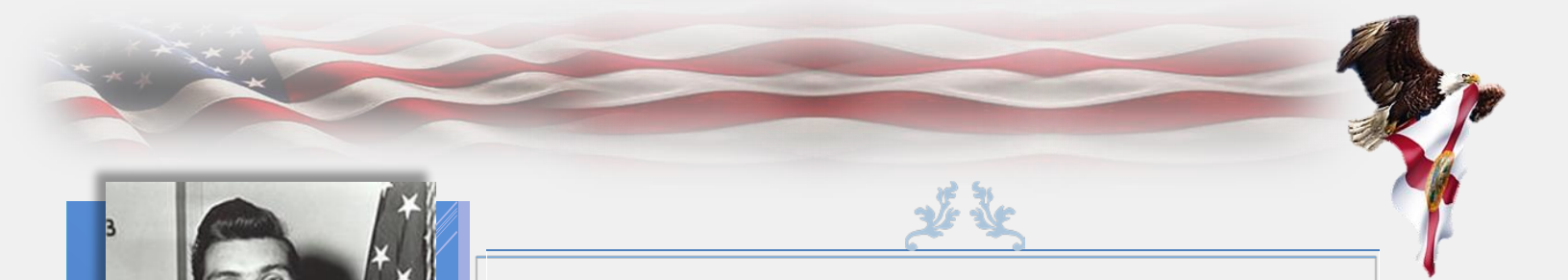
The facility opened to residents in 2003. The 75,394 square foot (appraised square footage) 120-bed facility offers skilled nursing care and can accommodate 60 residents with dementia/Alzheimer's disease. The home remains in excellent condition and is located strategically in the state to care for our veterans in their time of need. The dedicated staff provides stellar care 24 hours a day to our American heroes.

**Home Life:** *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: 143  
FY 2021-22 Occupancy Rate: 57.2% (32 Admissions, 97 Discharges)



The facility opened to residents in 2004. The 68,700 square foot (appraised square footage) 120-bed facility offers skilled nursing care and can accommodate 60 residents with dementia/Alzheimer's disease. We provide our veterans with 24-hour nursing care, daily living and recreational activities, rehabilitative therapy and nutritional cuisine.

**Home Life:** A modern skilled nursing facility surrounded by an involved community of supportive public and civic organizations, Douglas T. Jacobson actively celebrates and honors veterans.



Five-Star Quality Rated  
by Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services



Agency for Health Care Administration  
Nursing Home Overall Inspection Rating





## Clyde E. Lassen State Veterans' Nursing Home

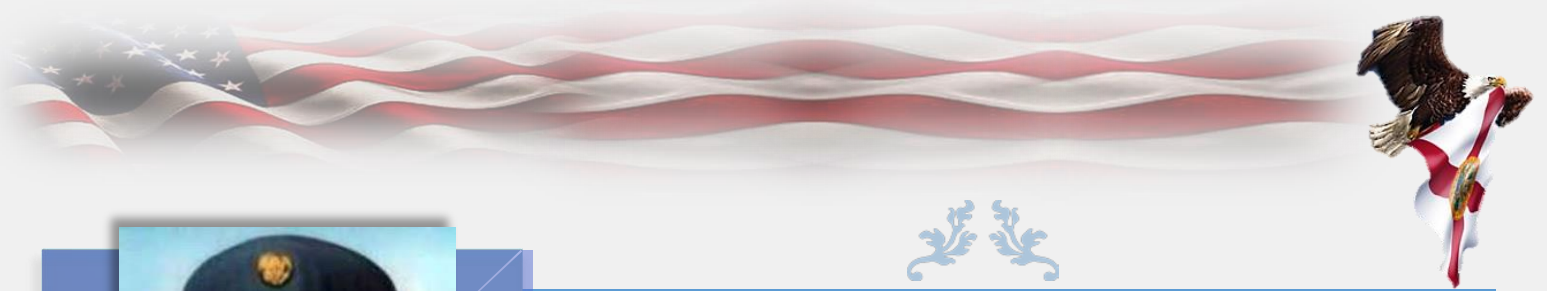
St. Augustine (St. Johns County), Staffing: 159  
FY 2021-22 Occupancy Rate: 71.9% (23 Admissions, 45 Discharges)

The facility opened in September 2010. The 89,150 square foot (appraised square footage) 120-bed 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. This state-of-the-art facility offers skilled nursing care and can accommodate 60 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.

**Home Life:** *The Clyde E. Lassen State Veterans' Nursing 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

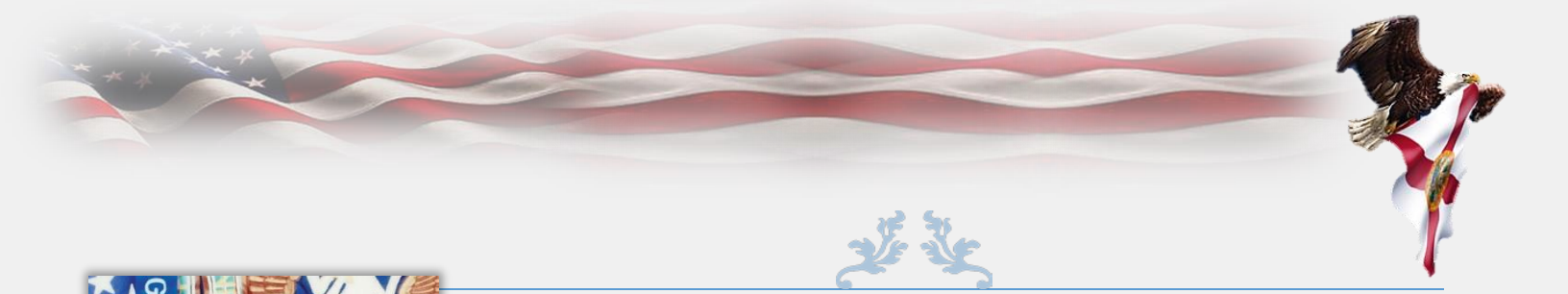
Port St. Lucie (St. Lucie County), Staffing: 117  
FY 2021-2022 Occupancy Rate: N/A.



The State Veterans' Nursing Home is named in honor of a Medal of Honor recipient from the Vietnam War - Fort Pierce and St. Lucie County native Sergeant Ardie R. Copas, an Army specialist who died in 1970 while serving in the Vietnam War.

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





## Alwyn C. Cashe State Veterans' Nursing Home

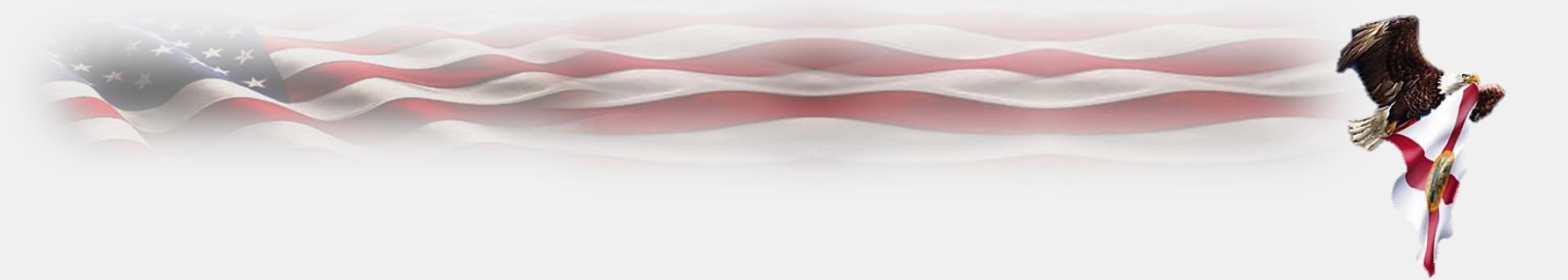
Orlando at Lake Baldwin (Orange County), Staffing: 122  
2019-20 Occupancy Rate: N/A - Facility renovation completed July 2022



Lake Baldwin SVNH is a facility formerly owned by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and donated to the State of Florida. It was remodeled and renamed the Alwyn C. Cashe State Veterans' Nursing Home 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 Alwyn C. Cashe State Veterans' Nursing Home is the first SVNH in the Nation and Florida's First to be named after a Post 911 Medal of Honor Recipient.

The 60,388 square foot (appraised square footage) 112-bed facility offers skilled nursing care and can accommodate 60 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.





FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS

*Honoring those who served U.S.*

FDVA Benefits & Assistance

727-319-7440

VSO@FDVA.STATE.FL.US

Florida Veterans Foundation

850-488-4181

Florida Vets Support Line

988 or 1-844-693-5838

