



State of Florida
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS

Office of the Executive Director

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LONG RANGE PROGRAM PLAN

September 27, 2021

Mr. Chris Spencer, Policy Director
Office of Policy and Budget
Executive Office of the Governor
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Eric Pridgeon, Staff Director
House Appropriations Committee
221 Capitol
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1300

Tim Sadberry, Staff Director
Senate Committee on Appropriations
201 Capitol
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1300

Dear Directors:

Pursuant to Chapter 216, Florida Statutes, our Long Range Program Plan (LRPP) for the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs is submitted in the format prescribed in the budget instructions. The information provided electronically and contained herein is a true and accurate presentation of our mission, goals, objectives and measures for Fiscal Year 2022-23 through Fiscal Year 2026-27. The internet website address that provides the link to the LRPP located on the Florida Fiscal Portal is <http://floridavets.org/about-us/long-range-program-plan/>. This submission has been approved by James S. "Hammer" Hartsell, Executive Director.

Sincerely,

James S. "Hammer" Hartsell
Major General, U.S. Marine Corps, Retired
Executive Director

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Long Range Program Plan

Fiscal Years 2022-23 through 2026-27



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

FDVA

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS

www.FloridaVets.org

James S. "Hammer" Hartsell, Major General, U.S. Marine Corps, Retired
Executive Director

Agency Mission and Goals

MISSION

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

VISION

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

AGENCY GOALS

The Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs (FDVA) has identified three goals from the Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Threat Analysis. Goals one and two concentrate on external customer service improvement and enhancement. Goal one establishes that services and activities of the Division of Veterans' Benefits and Assistance are directly focused on Florida veterans, their families and survivors. Goal two ensures that Florida veterans have the availability of much needed long-term health care services by establishing, maintaining and as needed, expanding the Division of State Veterans' Homes. Goal three directly supports FDVA's mission to advocate for and effectively meet its statutory responsibility to all Florida veterans. Objectives and associated outcomes are defined to measure and evaluate the progress towards each goal and are directly correlated to the Legislature-approved Agency Performance Measures.

- Goal One:** Provide information and advocacy to Florida veterans, their families and survivors, and assist them in obtaining all Federal and State benefits due to them.
(Division of Veterans' Benefits and Assistance)
- Goal Two:** Provide quality long-term health care services to eligible Florida veterans.
(Division of State Veterans' Homes)
- Goal Three:** Provide effective and responsive management to support divisions and programs serving veterans.
(Executive Direction and Support Services)

***"Always do more than is required of you."
~ Gen. George S. Patton Jr. ~***

Agency Objectives

- ❖ To increase value of cost avoidance due to retroactive compensation.
- ❖ To increase value of cost avoidance due to veterans' issue resolutions.
- ❖ To maintain a minimum occupancy rate at State Veterans' Homes in operation two years or longer.
- ❖ To operate FDVA State Veterans' Homes in compliance with Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA), Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), and U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) rules and regulations.
- ❖ To provide quality, cost effective and efficient executive leadership and administrative support services.

Agency Service Outcomes and Performance Projections Tables

DIVISION OF VETERANS' BENEFITS AND ASSISTANCE

GOAL ONE: Provide information and advocacy to Florida veterans, their families and survivors, and assist them in obtaining all Federal and State benefits due to them.

Objective 1A: To increase value of cost avoidance due to retroactive compensation.

Outcome: Increase value of cost avoidance due to retroactive compensation by 2% per year.

Baseline/ Year	FY 2022-23	FY 2023-24	FY 2024-25	FY 2025-26	FY 2026-27
\$70,747,000 2005-2006	\$99,582,672	\$101,574,325	\$103,605,812	\$105,677,928	\$107,791,487

Objective 1B: To increase value of cost avoidance due to veterans' issue resolutions.

Outcome: Increase value of cost avoidance due to veterans' issue resolutions by 2% per year.

Baseline/Year	FY 2022-23	FY 2023-24	FY 2024-25	FY 2025-26	FY 2026-27
\$17,417,140 2006-2007	\$23,929,137	\$24,407,720	\$24,895,874	\$25,393,791	\$25,901,667

Agency Service Outcomes and Performance Projections Tables

DIVISION OF STATE VETERANS' HOMES

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

Objective 2A: To maintain a minimum occupancy rate at State Veterans' Homes in operation two years or longer.

Outcome: Percentage occupancy for homes in operation two years or longer.

Baseline/ Year	FY 2022-23	FY 2023-24	FY 2024-25	FY 2025-26	FY 2026-27
90% 1999-2000	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%

Objective 2B: To operate FDVA State Veterans' Homes in compliance with Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA), Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), and U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) rules and regulations.

Outcome: Percentage of State Veterans' Homes in substantial compliance with AHCA, CMS, and USDVA rules and regulations.

Baseline/ Year	FY 2022-23	FY 2023-24	FY 2024-25	FY 2025-26	FY 2026-27
100% 2002-2003	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Agency Service Outcomes and Performance Projections Tables

EXECUTIVE DIRECTION AND SUPPORT SERVICES

GOAL THREE: Provide effective and responsive management to support divisions and programs serving veterans.

Objective 3A: To provide quality, cost effective and efficient executive leadership and administrative support services.

Outcome: Maintain administrative costs as a percentage of total agency costs under 6.8%.

Baseline/ Year	FY 2022-23	FY 2023-24	FY 2024-25	FY 2025-26	FY 2026-27
6.8% 2005-2006	6.8%	6.8%	6.8%	6.8%	6.8%

Outcome: Maintain administrative and support positions as a percentage of total agency positions under 4.4%.

Baseline/ Year	FY 2022-23	FY 2023-24	FY 2024-25	FY 2025-26	FY 2026-27
4.4% 2005-2006	4.4%	4.4%	4.4%	4.4%	4.4%

Linkage to Governor's Priorities

FDVA affirms its goals as a veteran advocate and provider of long-term health care services to eligible Florida veterans. FDVA's focus is to be an advocate and facilitator for progress on Florida veterans' issues consistent with Gov. Ron DeSantis' top priorities. Listed below are those priorities and the FDVA goals associated with each.

GOVERNOR'S PRIORITIES

1. Restore and Protect Florida's Environment

- I. Secure \$2.5 billion over four (4) years to improve water quality, quantity and supply.
- II. Prioritize Everglades' restoration and the completion of critical Everglades' restoration projects.
- III. Prevent fracking and off-shore oil drilling to protect Florida's environment.

2. Improve Florida's Education System

- I. Increase access to and expand options for quality educational choices for Florida families.
 - ❖ Goal One: The Division of Veterans' Benefits and Assistance will provide information and advocacy to Florida veterans, their families and survivors, and assist them in obtaining all Federal and State benefits due to them.

The Bureau of State Approving Agency will review, audit, evaluate, approve and oversee schools and training facilities to ensure the quality standards of education programs and training under established State and Federal criteria are met. As of June 2020, more than 61,256 Floridians currently use GI Bill benefits to further their secondary education. This number includes both veterans and eligible family members.
- II. Revamp Florida's curriculum to lead the nation and expand civics and computer education.
 - ❖ Goal One: The Division of Veterans' Benefits and Assistance will provide information and advocacy to Florida veterans, their families and survivors, and assists them in obtaining all Federal and State benefits due to them.

The Bureau of State Approving Agency will review, audit, evaluate, approve and oversee schools and training facilities to ensure that education programs and training meet the established State and Federal standards.
- III. Maintain the Florida higher education system's status as number one in the nation while still making necessary adjustments to improve it.
 - ❖ Goal One: The Division of Veterans' Benefits and Assistance will provide information and advocacy to Florida veterans, their families and survivors, and assist them in obtaining all Federal and State benefits due to them.

The Bureau of State Approving Agency will review, audit, evaluate, approve and oversees schools and training facilities to ensure the quality standards of the

Linkage to Governor's Priorities

education programs and training under the established State and Federal criteria.

IV. Provide quality career and technical education options for Florida's students and workforce.

- ❖ Goal One: The Division of Veterans' Benefits and Assistance will provide information and advocacy to Florida veterans, their families and survivors, and assist them in obtaining all Federal and State benefits due to them.

Under the GI Bill, the Division of Veterans' Benefits and Assistance advocates for the veterans and their families to garner earned educational benefits on both State and Federal levels.

State: FDVA will advocate within the State Legislature to provide additional assistance to our veterans seeking vocational rehabilitation and employment assistance in Florida.

Federal: The Division of Veterans' Benefits and Assistance will advocate with purpose and passion for Florida veterans and link them with Federal educational benefits and financial support available to them through the GI Bill.

- ❖ Goal Three: Provide effective and responsive management to support divisions and programs serving veterans.

FDVA supports a direct-support veteran organization Veterans Florida (Florida Is For Veterans, Inc.) with the Veterans Employment and Training Program. Veteran Florida serves as the State's principal assistance organization under the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) SkillBridge program; prescribes duties of a corporation to facilitate administration of the SkillBridge program.

3. Economic Development and Job Creation

I. Focus on diversifying Florida's job market, including a focus on an expansion of the financial services and technology sectors.

- ❖ Goal One: The Division of Veterans' Benefits and Assistance will provide information and advocacy to Florida veterans, their families and survivors, and assists them in obtaining all Federal and State benefits due to them.

With approximately 1.5 million veterans, Florida is the most veteran-friendly state in the nation. The Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs is the premier point of entry for Florida veterans to access earned services, benefits and support.

- ❖ Goal Three: Provide effective and responsive management to support divisions and programs serving veterans.

FDVA supports a direct-support veteran organization Veterans Florida (Florida Is For Veterans, Inc.) with the Veterans Employment and Training Program. Veteran Florida serves as the State's principal assistance organization under the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) SkillBridge program; prescribes duties of a corporation to facilitate administration of the SkillBridge program.

II. Maintain Florida's status as a low-tax state and continue to find opportunities to reduce taxes and fees.

Linkage to Governor's Priorities

FDVA supports the Governor's Initiatives on Lawyers Assisting Warriors (GI LAW) program and the Bay Area Legal Service. The GI Law leverages Florida's leading law firms' talent to provide pro bono (no charge) services to military members.

FDVA advocated for the successful passage of Amendment 6, *Homestead Property Tax Discount for Spouses of Deceased Veterans*.

FDVA will support the Governor's Salute Our Soldiers (SOS) Housing Loan Program for Florida's veterans and service members. Florida Housing administers the program to assist over 1,000 veterans and active-duty military members with down payments, closing cost assistance, low-interest rate first mortgages, and down payment and closing cost forgiveness options.

- III. Reduce existing regulations, and stop any new regulations that do not serve the public health, safety, and welfare.
- IV. Prioritize infrastructure development to meaningful projects that provide regional and statewide impact, primarily focused on safety and improved mobility.
 - ❖ Goal One: The Division of Veterans' Benefits and Assistance will provide information and advocacy to Florida veterans, their families and survivors, and assist them in obtaining all Federal and State benefits due to them.
 - ❖ Goal Two: The Division of State Veterans' Homes will provide comprehensive, high-quality health care to eligible veterans in need of long-term skilled or assisted living care.

FDVA will provide a safe and secure environment in our State Veterans' Homes for our residents, staff and visitors.

FDVA will maintain high-quality continuity of care for residents in our State Veterans' Homes in the event of a natural or man-made disaster.

FDVA has two new State Veterans' Nursing Homes under construction to meet elder and disabled veterans' needs. The number of skilled nursing beds currently available with the Division of State Veterans' Homes is 720. However, according to the VA's Veteran Population Projection Model 2018, the veteran population over 65 years and older in Florida is estimated to be 797,473 for FY 2019 (Federal Fiscal Year).

- ❖ Goal Three: Provide effective and responsive management to support divisions and programs serving veterans.

Forward March brings together our State agencies, veterans' service organizations, private partners and local community providers to combined energy and resources to ensure Florida provides the very best services and support for our veterans and their families. The primary goal is to close the identified gaps in services.

4. Health Care

- I. Focus resources on continuing to combat the opioid crisis and substance abuse in general, and addressing mental health.

Linkage to Governor's Priorities

- ❖ Goal One: The Division of Veterans' Benefits and Assistance provides information and advocacy to Florida veterans, their families and survivors, and assist them in obtaining all Federal and State benefits due to them.

The Bureau of Claims Services will ensure veterans receive care and compensation for their service-connected disabilities through our Veterans' Claim Examiners. As the number of veterans needing assistance grows, FDVA looks to support their needs by expanding our Veterans' Claims Services.

FDVA will address veteran suicide prevention by finding ways to fund veterans' mental health services for veterans and their families through alternative treatment options.

FDVA will establish the Veterans' Care Coordinator Program, which provides peer-to-peer crisis counseling, behavioral health care referrals and partner with the Florida 2-1-1 Network to provide services for veterans and their families.

FDVA supports the Governor's Challenge website and Facebook page. Governor's Challenge supports efforts to use evidence-based practices to prevent and reduce the suicide of our service members, veterans, and their families. FDVA encouraged all interested stakeholders to increase their statewide suicide prevention efforts to reduce veteran suicide rates in the community.

- ❖ Goal Three: The Executive Direction and Support Services provides effective and responsive management to support divisions and programs serving veterans.

FDVA will seek to integrate, train and expand the work of Veterans' Service Organizations.

Forward March brings together our State agencies, veterans' service organizations, private partners and local community providers to combined energy and resources to ensure Florida provides the very best services and support for our veterans and their families.

FDVA will seek to support the Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) Housing Assistance pilot program. The program provides additional behavioral health services and supportive housing assistance services to homeless adults with serious mental illness and substance use disorders.

- II. Promote innovation in health care that reduces the cost of medical procedures and services and increases access to care for Floridians.

- ❖ Goal Two: The Division of State Veterans' Homes will seek to provide comprehensive, high-quality health care to eligible veterans in need of long-term skilled or assisted living care.

- ❖ Goal Three: The Executive Direction and Support Services will provide effective and responsive management to support divisions and programs serving veterans.

Forward March brings together our State agencies, veterans' service organizations, private partners and local community providers to combined energy and resources to ensure Florida provides the very best services and support for our veterans and

Linkage to Governor's Priorities

their families. The primary goal is to close the identified gaps in services.

III. Reduce the cost of prescription drugs through State and Federal reform.

5. Public Safety

- I. Continue to uphold immigration law to protect our borders and communities.
- II. Support local and State law enforcement's ability to investigate and prevent criminal activity.
- III. Develop and implement comprehensive threat assessment strategies to identify and prevent threats to the public.
 - ❖ Goal Two: The Division of State Veterans' Homes will seek to provide comprehensive, high-quality health care to eligible veterans in need of long-term skilled or assisted living care.

FDVA will maintain high-quality continuity of care for residents in our State Veterans' Homes in the event of a natural or man-made disaster.

FDVA will provide a safe and secure environment in our State Veterans' Homes for our residents, staff, and visitors.

IV. Continue efforts to enhance safety in our schools.

6. Public Integrity

- I. Protect taxpayer resources by ensuring the faithful expenditure of public funds.
 - ❖ Goal Three: Provide effective and responsive management to support divisions and programs serving veterans.
- II. Promote greater transparency at all levels of government.
 - ❖ Goal Three: Provide effective and responsive management to support divisions and programs serving veterans.
- III. Hold public officials and government employees accountable for failure to serve the public interest at all times.
 - ❖ Goal Three: Provide effective and responsive management to support divisions and programs serving veterans.

Veterans' Preference Act of 1944, provisions of Title 5, U.S. 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 the Veterans' Preference for Florida's Veterans' Section 295.05 (7) F.S. Veterans' Preference in Hiring and Retention, and Section 295.11 F.S. Investigation; administrative hearing for not employing the preferred applicant.

Trends and Conditions Statements

AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

The mission of the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs (FDVA or 'the department') is to advocate with purpose and passion for Florida veterans and link them to superior services, benefits and support. We assist Florida veterans, their families and survivors to improve their health and economic well-being through quality benefit information, advocacy, education and long-term health care.

FDVA is the premier point of entry for Florida veterans to access earned services, benefits and support. In 1988, Florida citizens endorsed a constitutional amendment to create the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs as a separate agency charged with providing advocacy and representation for Florida's veterans and to intercede on their behalf with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

The department is organized into three divisions and six program offices to address the support system for the department operations. FDVA has two program divisions that provide direct services to veterans and their families: The Division of Veterans' Benefits and Assistance (B&A) and the Division of State Veterans' Homes (SVH). The Division of Administration and other six programs are associated with the significant leadership and support of the FDVA's Executive Direction and Support Services (EDSS). Additionally, the department provides oversight and administrative support to the two direct-support organizations, "The Florida Veterans Foundation," and the "Veterans Florida (Florida is for Veterans, Inc.)."

Division of Veterans' Benefits and Assistance

The division's primary responsibility is to assist all former and present members of the Armed Forces of the United States and their dependents in an effort to obtain health care treatment from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), securing their financial benefits and other benefits or privileges that persons earn under any Federal or State law or regulation by reason of their service in the military. All services provided by the Division of Veterans' Benefits and Assistance are without charge to the claimant (Chapter 292, Florida Statutes). The division also acts as the State Approving Agency for veterans' education and training (in accordance with 38 U.S. Code 1771 - Limitations) through an annual contract between the Federal and State government (Chapter 295, Florida Statutes).

The Division operations are comprised of three bureaus.

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 for Federal and State benefits as well as applications to correct military records. The bureau also supports the VA's initiatives of Homeless Veterans Outreach, Women Veterans' Integration and mental health services for veterans and their families. The bureau is also mandated by statute to train and certify County Veteran Service Officers (CVSO).

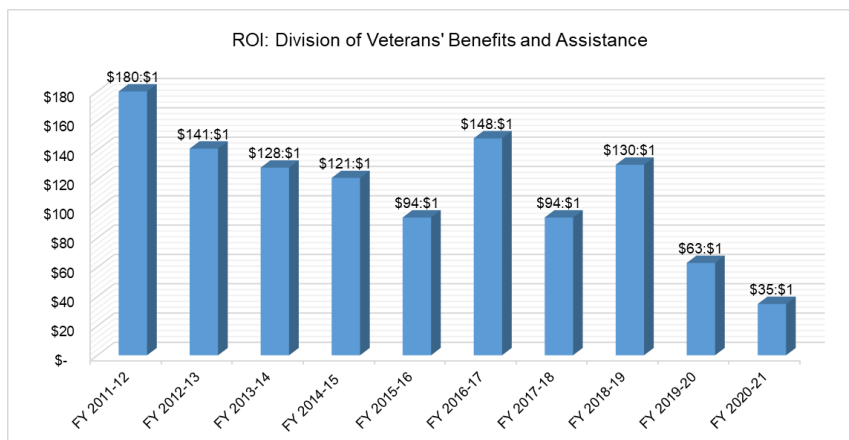
Bureau of Veterans' Field Services provides benefits counseling services in 33 of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical facilities in Florida four (4) Veterans

Trends and Conditions Statements

Affairs VET Centers, three (3) Military bases and seven (7) State Veterans' Homes. The bureau also provides outreach activities for FDVA throughout the State. 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 with the most positive outcomes.

Bureau of State Approving Agency (SAA) duties fulfill the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) contract requirements for monitoring veteran education programs' quality and integrity and enforcing approval-related laws per Section 295.124 Florida Statute, under the provisions of Title 38, U.S. Code. The bureau reviews, evaluates and approves programs of veterans' education at the GI Bill® VA Education Benefits program participated educational institutions in Florida.

The Outcome of Current Operations and Success of Fiscal Implications at the Division of Veterans' Benefits and Assistance



The last ten (10) years average Return on Investment (ROI) is \$113 for every State dollar spent within the Division of Veterans' Benefits and Assistance.

Improvements or Changes at the Division of Veterans' Benefits and Assistance

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, in-person services were affected during the VA Federal Building shutdown. As a result, the division shifted the operations to telework. In addition, the division developed a Veterans' Benefits and Assistance Statewide phone number and email box to provide continuing assistance to veterans and their families during the pandemic. Temporally, the Board of Veterans Appeals (BVA) hearings were suspended.

SAA maintained electronic communications with VA contractual obligations, veterans' beneficiaries and the participating facilities. During in-state travel restrictions, the SAA performed all compliance survey audits of facilities remotely. In addition, SAA ensured to provide consistent, accessible and reliable assistance to the veterans' beneficiaries and the participating facilities regarding the statutory change of U.S. Law No: 116-128 and HR 6322 U.S. Law No: 116-140 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic crisis.

Strategic Planning in Process

The department is attempting to streamline the following consequences at the Veterans'

Trends and Conditions Statements

Benefits and Assistance that are obstacles to operational efficiency.

The department has experienced a turnover rate of sixteen (16) percent over the past four (4) years with its Veterans' Claims Examiners (VCE), almost double the current average turnover rate in the State. Often, experienced and trained veterans' advocates are leaving for the same job with higher-paying positions at the Department of Defense, County Veterans Service Offices, Congressional Offices and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

The department continues to provide Florida veterans with more timely assistance, reduce the backlog of cases and increase Federal funds infusion into the State of Florida. However, the department is operating in overcapacity of workload situation in providing support to veterans for the submission of claims, representation at hearings, debt relief, community outreach, and providing additional support to the new veterans' program initiatives. In addition, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs constantly changes policies, procedures, techniques, and programs that impact the Veterans Claims Examiner's and County Veterans Service Officer's procedure developments and services.

Division of State Veterans' Homes

In 1990, FDVA expanded the services provided to Florida veterans by opening the Robert H. Jenkins Jr. State Veterans' Domiciliary Home in Lake City. The home assists eligible veterans who are disabled by age or disease, but who are not in need of hospitalization or skilled nursing services. In addition, from 1993 through 2010, six (6) State Veterans' Nursing Homes were built and opened in Daytona Beach, Land O' Lakes, Pembroke Pines, Panama City, Port Charlotte and St. Augustine. The department is preparing to open two new State Veterans' Nursing Homes Port St. Lucie and Lake Baldwin in Orlando. These facilities provide comprehensive, high-quality, skilled nursing care on a cost-effective basis to eligible veterans (Chapter 296, Florida Statutes).

Outcome of Current Operations and Success of Fiscal Implications at the State Veterans' Homes

State Veterans' Homes	Opening: Month, Year	Age as of July-2021
Robert H. Jenkins Jr. SVDH	May, 1990	31.2
Emory L. Bennett SVNH	December, 1993	27.6
Baldomero Lopez SVNH	April, 1999	22.3
Alexander Nininger SVNH	June, 2001	20.1
Clifford C. Sims SVNH	October, 2003	17.8
Douglas T. Jacobson SVNH	January, 2004	17.5
Clyde E. Lassen SVNH	September, 2010	10.8
Lake Baldwin SVNH	December, 2021	0.0
Ardie R. Copas SVNH	August, 2021	0.0

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The existing seven (7) State Veterans' Homes have maintained the last five (5) years' average occupancy above the approved standards of 90 percent. The Homes operate with 1,335 positions; about 27% of operational & support staff and 73% of direct care staff as of FY 2020-21. The direct care staff includes Registered Nurses (RN), Licensed Practical Nurses (LPN), and Certified Nursing Assistants (CNA). Per the Federal and State requirements, the minimum direct care staffing ratio is 3.6 per resident/per day. Therefore, to maintain the quality of care of the veterans' residents and comply with the Federal and State statutory, the department utilizes additional staffing support from employee's overtime and temporary staffing services through a contracted direct care service providers.

The department utilizes other services from contracted providers, including housekeeping, medical therapy, pharmacy, dietary, and software services. The department implemented "MatrixCare" data operating and electronic health records (EHR) management system for protected health information (PHI) of residents at the State Veterans' Homes. In addition, the department has contracted with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to provide canteen service at the new State Veterans' Nursing Home in Lake Baldwin.

The department provides routine maintenance, repair, replacement and emergency repairs for each of the eight (8) State Veterans' Nursing Homes and the State Veterans' Domiciliary Home. Also, the department maintains and replaces medical and non-medical equipment and furniture that has reached or exceeded its useful life at all nine (9) State Veterans' Homes.

Improvements or Changes at the Division of State Veterans' Homes

State Veterans' Homes Construction Projects

The department is diligently working on construction projects for two new State Veterans' Nursing Homes. 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 the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs matches as a Federal cost-share grant.

- ❖ **Ardie R. Copas State Veterans' Nursing Home in Port St. Lucie:** The facility has received the certificate of occupancy from the AHCA in March 2021. The City of Port St. Lucie also issued a certificate of occupancy for the facility. The open house for the home was August 27, 2021.
- ❖ **Lake Baldwin State Veterans' Nursing Home in Orlando:** The VA Community Living Center was built in 1998 by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and was donated to the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs through the State of Florida in 2016. With AHCA approval, the home is anticipated to be open by the end of the calendar year 2021.

COVID-19 Pandemic and Other Natural Disaster Consequences

The department implements strategic changes as needed for operational improvement. In the past few years, during the natural disasters consequences and the COVID-19 pandemic, the following emergency improvements and repairs were made at the State

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Veterans' Homes with the assistance of Federal cost-share (Federally funded) of 65 percent and a State cost-share of 35 percent.

- The department has equipped all State Veterans' Homes with emergency generators to provide continuous electricity supply to the facilities during emergency disasters under the AHCA implemented Emergency Environmental Control Rule 59A-4.1265 and Rule 58A-5.036, Florida Administrative Code.
- The department addressed the disaster emergency repairs at the Clifford Chester Sims State Veterans' Nursing Home for losses associated with Hurricane Michael from October 2018.

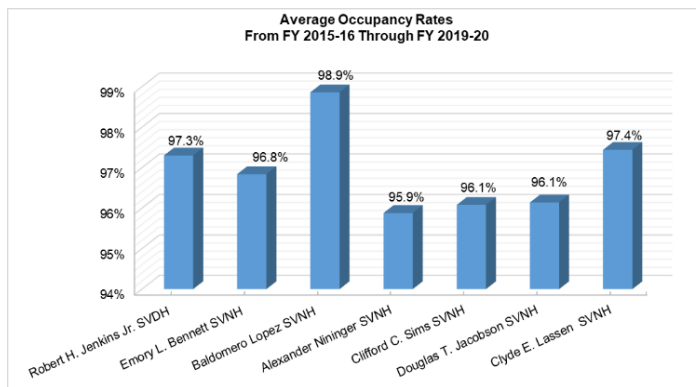
The department has utilized additional funds in the Federal Coronavirus Aid Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act to assist with the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic includes the purchase of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and supplies and other COVID-19 related matters. The department also installed an ultraviolet light sanitization airborne pathogen system at all nine (9) State Veterans' Homes.

Strategic Planning in Process

The department is attempting to streamline the following consequences at the State Veterans' Homes that are obstacles to operational efficiency.

Nurses Staffing

The licensed direct care staff ensures care plan interventions are implemented and maintained through their actions and the appropriate care and monitoring of each



resident based on their needs. In addition, the direct care staff provides additional supervision and assistance to the residents who struggle with mental or neurological impairments. Examples of these conditions include Post Traumatic Stress Disorders (PTSD) and Dementia.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the State Veterans' Homes have

maintained an annual average occupancy of 95 percent and above. However, the number of direct care positions at each facility was initially budgeted based upon an 82 percent of occupancy rate. The direct care staffing for the division has not been updated with the increasing occupancy at the facilities.

During FY 2020-21, the overall employee turnover rate is higher at the State Veterans' Homes, especially with the direct care staff. In addition, the department struggled to fill vacancies for direct care positions.

Department's Revenue

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, FDVA had temporarily dismissed the new resident

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admissions at the State Veterans' Homes for over six (6) months, and it opened with limited admissions per month. The lower occupancy at the facilities directly impacted the department's revenue. The shortfall of revenue created consequences with financial obligations within the State Veterans' Homes.

Executive Directions and Support Services (EDSS)

The Executive Direction administers the divisions and programs and executes strategic plans carrying out the its mission serving Florida 1.5 million veterans and their families. FDVA Executive Directions and Support Services compose of a Division and the following programs.

Division of Administration provides administrative support to the department's day-to-day functions including Bureau of Human Resource (HR), Fiscal Bureau, Purchasing Bureau and Billing Bureau.

The **Bureau of Human Resources (HR)** supports veterans, FDVA and its employees by administering an effective and efficient human resource program with a goal to attract, develop, retain and reward a high-performance workforce. HR provides a variety of services and performs a variety of functions in its role as the administrator of human resources for FDVA.

Information Technology (IT) provides secured IT infrastructure and reliable services to the department including hardware and software installations, upgrades, maintenance, telephony, network management, industry standards compliance, threat and risk mitigation, data management and retrieval, and system development.

Office of General Counsel provides legal representation and counsel to the agency and its employees. In addition, the office supports all FDVA divisions with legal services, including legislation drafting, public records requests, and contract reviews, among others.

Office of Inspector General (IG) is the central point for audits and investigations in order to promote economy and efficiency; and prevent and detect fraud, waste and abuse in programs and operations. In addition, the IG coordinates Veterans' Preference investigations in accordance with 296.065 Florida Statutes.

Office of Communications provides oversight and direction of the department's public affairs program of community outreach, media relations, social media engagement, branding and employee communications linking veterans and their families to earned services, benefits and support. In addition, the Office of Communications provides emergency coordination services to the department in liaison with the Executive Office of the Governor and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

FDVA Office of Legislative Affairs coordinates the Department's legislative agenda and develops legislative policies and initiatives. The office also tracks and assesses the impact of legislation on the department and coordinates support in solving constituent issues for legislative and government offices across the State of Florida.

Office of Veterans' Information Research and Outreach serves as the official veteran's data collection and data reporting body for the department. The office

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supports the department with Federal and State veteran statistic data and maintains data standards in a secure and transparent reporting environment. The office also provides liaison service to veteran organizations with veteran data and outreach.

The Outcome of Current Operations and Success of Fiscal Implications

In the last few years, the executive directions promoted the following initiative to fulfill the department's vision; *Florida is the nation's most veteran-friendly state*. The FDVA is the premier point of entry for veterans to access earned services, benefits and support.

The Florida Governor's Challenge unveiled an initiative to use evidence-based practices to prevent suicide among our service members, veterans, and their families.

Forward March Veterans' Advocacy Campaign brings together the combined energy and resources of our State agencies, Veterans' Service Organizations, private partners and local community providers to ensure Florida is providing the very best services and support for our veterans and their families.

COVID-19 Vaccines for Homebound Veterans project was unveiled with the effort of three State agencies. FDVA provided coordination support to the Florida Department of Health and Florida Division of Emergency Management with identified veterans of World War II and the Korean War who were unable to travel to receive a COVID-19 vaccine.

K9s For Warriors Program provides service dogs to veterans who are suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) at no cost to veterans in order to help them to restore their physical and emotional independence.

University of South Florida Alternative Treatment Options for Veterans is an alternative treatment therapies research project to help veterans suffering from PTSD.

Five Star Veterans Homeless Housing and Integration provide a residential environment to help veterans get back on their feet.

Florida Veterans Legal Helpline through helpline *Bay Area Legal Services* attorneys provide compassionate and effective legal assistance to veterans in the State of Florida.

Statewide Department of Defense (DoD) SkillBridge Program allows servicemembers to gain workforce training at civilian employers while on active duty as they are transitioning out of the military. The Veterans Florida (Florida is for Veterans, Inc.) is a designated organization to administer the program in the State of Florida.

Governor's Initiative on Lawyers Assisting Warriors (GI LAW) Program supports Florida's leading law firms in providing pro bono (no charge) legal services to Florida-based active duty military members. Florida now has eight (8) different law firms representing service members pro bono through the GI LAW program. The FDVA Office of General Counsel provides training and assistance on the GI LAW program to Florida military base legal offices.

Trends and Conditions Statements

Department Partnerships

Florida Veterans Foundation

In 2008, the Florida Legislature established the Florida Veterans Foundation (FVF) as a Direct Support Organization of the 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). The FVF team is composed of a volunteer veteran Chairman, the Board of Directors, a full-time, a part-time employee and one intern.

Foundation's mission is to align support with the FDVA mission of Advocacy to ensure greater impact for veterans throughout the State of Florida. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Foundation has partnered with the American Legion of Florida and created the COVID-19 Project Relief Fund to help veterans affected by the pandemic with various needs.

Veterans Florida (Florida is for Veterans)

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. Veterans Florida administers the Veterans Employment and Training Services Program to create and operate small businesses and secure meaningful skills-based employment. In addition, Veterans Florida implemented powerful tools for Florida businesses to recruit trained veterans to meet workforce needs. Veterans Florida connect veterans with the employer and assist them in establishing a business through the Career Services Program, Veterans Agriculture Program, Entrepreneurship Program and the U.S. Department of Defense SkillBridge Program. Veterans Florida staff is composed of veterans with experience in state veterans' programs, economic development, and workforce development. FDVA provides support services to properly oversee and execute duties established under Section 295.21(3), Florida Statutes.

[List of Potential Policy Changes Affecting the Agency Budget Request](#)

The department has not identified any policy changes affecting the Legislative Budget Request.

FDVA continues to work closely with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) and monitor the requirements and feasibility of future long-term care needs for Florida's veterans. The department will analyze the possibility of new homes construction and other options to assist aged and disabled veterans. FDVA continues to monitor and adjust to Federal programs' changes, always-remaining current on USDVA directives and new benefits regulations.

Each department division/program has distinct priorities and functions and serves its respective stakeholders pursuant to the duties and responsibilities conferred upon the department. The priorities and policies of each program are considered when determining the department goals and objectives. In providing a wide range of services,

Trends and Conditions Statements

it is also necessary to consider the trends and conditions that affect Florida as a whole when formulating the strategic direction of FDVA. Without funding assistance by the State Government, many worthwhile programs, projects and services would not be undertaken.

DEPARTMENT PRIORITIES FOR THE FIVE-YEAR PERIOD 2022-23 through 2026-27

FDVA's Long Range Program Plan for Fiscal Years 2022-23 through 2026-27 includes goals and priorities consistent with the needs of Florida veterans. The department's priorities take into account statutory mandates as well as the needs, character and complexity of the population we serve. These goals acknowledge the changing needs of veterans, from the decreasing World War II and Korean War veteran population to the increasing number of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF), and Operation New Dawn (OND) service members transitioning to veteran status.

As the needs of the veteran population of the State are assessed, and new requirements emerge, the department will pursue opportunities to expand their role in the long-term care arena. Multiple source data compiled by the USDVA, Census Bureau and health care entities relate that veteran illnesses/conditions or service-connected infirmity have grown substantially with each conflict.

This trend points to an increased need for short-term and long-term health care for veterans beyond the capacity that exists in Florida today. It further points to an increased need to conduct research, compile and analyze data to ensure the department is reaching out to the diverse population of veterans in the state. Embracing new technology initiatives will be paramount to effectively transition the department to meet future regulatory and compliance requirements. FDVA will strive to address new initiatives while maintaining the Division of State Veterans' Homes with minimum fiscal impact to the state. Importantly, the department will seek out opportunities to partner with other agencies, departments and organizations to maximize the limited resources available to meet our veterans' needs both today and well into the future.

Department priorities were selected in terms of the greatest positive impact for Florida veterans and return on investment to the state when applicable. The department's expansion in outreach activities, promoting new initiatives, increasing the number of long-term health care beds for our aging veterans, or providing quality care in our State Veterans' Homes promotes the department's vision for *"the FDVA as the premier point of entry for Florida veterans to earned services, benefits and support."* A self-examination was accomplished at FDVA through a 2021 Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis. Anticipated department priorities for the five (5) year period from FY 2022-23 through 2026-27 are prioritized based on the needs and SWOT analysis. The department's strengths promote and provide support to serve Florida's 1.5 million veterans, their families and provide excellent quality of care to elder and disabled veterans at the State Veterans' Homes. The identified weaknesses provide an opportunity to develop a strategy to hire the best available professional workers and develop methods to train current staff and address increased employee

Trends and Conditions Statements

turnover. The department seeks to strengthen staff capacity and comparative pay to recruit, train and retain qualified staff. In addition, the department is seeking resources to increase technology equipment for telework, improve technology equipment and software systems. The department developed and executed an emergency coordination plan for the COVID-19 pandemic and natural disaster emergencies.

List of Changes Which Would Require Legislative Action

The department's requests followed the Governor's directives for improved efficiencies and effectiveness of State government. Department is focusing on the following priorities that will request Legislators' support during the 2022 Legislative Session.

Priorities for the Division of Veterans' Benefits and Assistance

- I. Additional funds request for an annual salary increase for Veterans' Claims Examiners and Veterans' Claims Examiners Supervisors at the Bureau of Veterans' Claims Services and Bureau of Field Services within the Division of Veterans' Benefits and Assistance.
- II. Additional staffing requests for Veterans' Claims Examiner positions and a Benefits Training Program Manager at the Division of Veterans' Benefits and Assistance. The Training Program Manager would train department staff and Veterans Service Officers across Florida's 67 counties.

Priorities for the Division of State Veterans' Homes

- I. Additional funds request for an annual salary increase for the direct care staff at the State Veterans' Homes. Direct care staff includes registered nurses, senior registered nurses, registered nurse supervisors and senior licensed practical nurses.
- II. Increase in budget authority for Contracted Services to meet the increasing cost and utilizations at the State Veterans' Homes. The contracted services include agency staffing, housekeeping, therapy or other medical services, pharmacy services, canteen service contract with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs at Lake Baldwin, and other contracted services within the Division of State Veterans' Homes.
- III. Additional staffing requests for the direct care (Mission Essential Skilled Nursing) positions at all six (6) State Veterans' Nursing Homes to ensure adequate staffing levels to maintain the Federal and State mandated requirements.
- IV. Continuing funds request for the Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) at the State Veterans' Homes. These projects encompass site-specific maintenance plans, replacement of fixed capital outlay, and emergency repairs at the facilities.
- V. Authority for the remaining balance of the required staff for the start-up operations of a State Veterans' Nursing Home at Lake Baldwin in Orlando.
- VI. Authority for the remaining balance of the required staff for the start-up operations at the Ardie R. Copas State Veterans' Nursing Home in Port St. Lucie.

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- VII. Budget authority to purchase and replace furniture, medical and non-medical equipment for the State Veterans' Homes. The State Veterans' Homes will replace old and obsolete medical and non-medical equipment that have reached or exceeded its useful life.
- VIII. Additional funds request for site-specific facilities plans for maintenance, repair and replacement of fixed capital outlay, and emergency repairs for four (4) State Veterans' Nursing Homes and the State Veterans' Domiciliary Home operated by the department. The Deferred building maintenance program implemented by the department is designed to extend the service life of the State Veterans' Homes while maintaining an appropriate and safe environment for the resident veterans.

Priorities for Executive Directions and Support Services

- I. Additional funds request to replace Electronic Time Clock at all nine (9) State Veterans' Homes. The new electronic time-keeping system can directly interface with the PeopleFirst Information system. The system will improve accuracy and assist management in addressing three critical control issues: overall control of labor costs, minimizing compliance risk and improving workforce productivity.
- II. Increase in budget authority to support the conversion of desktop computers to laptop computers and implement mandated upgrades of the department's current operating systems to Microsoft Windows 11 across the department.
- III. Increase in budget authority to support the five-year replacement plan of Information Technology (IT) equipment. The replacements include computers, laptops, servers, air-cards, printers, power supply source and medical treatment computer carts (Med Carts) at the State Veterans' Homes.
- IV. Increase in budget authority to support the outreach activities for the department's new initiative Veterans Suicide – Prevention Outreach Program. The advocacy campaign targeted the department's effort on a meaningful and impactful scale by reaching, educating and offering referrals services to Florida's veterans and their dependent family members.
- V. Budget authority to implement maintenance management and work-order software at the State Veterans' Homes to promote the preservation and maintenance of equipment in good condition and improve repair prioritization flow.
- VI. Additional staffing request for a Senior Attorney position at the Office of General Counsel within the Executive Direction and Support Services.

Priorities for the Veterans' Organizations

FDVA requests budget authority to support the Veterans Florida (Florida is For Veterans, Inc.) for the following programs.

- I. The department requests an increase in funding to ensure that the organization Veterans Florida will meet the duties and responsibilities established by the Legislature under Section 295.21(3), Florida Statutes, to assist veterans to secure meaningful skills-based employment.

Trends and Conditions Statements

- II. The department requests the Entrepreneur Training and Workforce Training Grants to support the organization to implement the Florida VETS Entrepreneurship Program across a network of Florida universities. These funds provide staffing and direct services to execute duties established under Section 295.22(3), Florida Statutes, to implement and administer the Veterans Employment and Training Services Program.

Further, FDVA maintains essential operating budget levels to carry out the general support functions to serve Florida's veteran population and their significant issues and comply with new initiatives and regulations from both the Federal and State governments. The department will continue its efforts to meet compliance deadlines while streamlining operational processes, and managing through the COVID-19 pandemic.

During the coming five (5) years, the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs will strive to ensure Florida maintains its special recognition as the most veteran-friendly State in our nation. We will pursue initiatives that allow us to remain at the forefront of veteran advocacy and ensure we maintain safe and secure State Veterans' Homes for those in need of care during fragile years.

The department will continue to lead the Governor and First Lady's efforts to reduce suicide among Florida's civilian population, especially servicemembers, veterans and their families, through a host of public health and social programs and initiatives.

The department will convene a state interagency military and civilian team of leaders, organizations and businesses to develop an implementation plan to advance the VA's National Strategy for Preventing Suicide while incorporating evidence-based strategies, programs, and practices. These evidence-based approaches, at end state, will help communities sharpen their focus on preventative measures that will lead to the greatest impact on preventing suicide. Critical to our success, as with all levels of society (local, State, and Federal) will address gaps in responses, track the progress of prevention efforts and evaluate their impact. Then, evaluate data produced through program implementation and monitoring to provide information on what works to reduce rates of suicide and associated risk and protective factors. Finally, communicate these activities across all social media platforms to ensure this important issue remains at the forefront of State level concerns.

The department will further focus more on Women Veteran issues through the creation of a "Fact Finding Committee on Women Veteran Benefits and Communications." The Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs Fact Finding Committee on Women Veteran Benefits and Communications is created to assess the needs of Women Veterans in Florida and if veterans' benefits, and FDVA and VA communications are tailored correctly to Women Veterans. Florida has approximately 1.5 million veterans of which 165,000 are women. It is important that State and Federal veteran benefits are accessed by all eligible veterans. Because services and communications are generally geared toward male veterans, this Fact Finding Committee will assess from Women Veterans their opinions and any recommendations for improvement. The Fact Finding Committee is an extension of the FDVA's Operation Roll Call initiative and will build on

Trends and Conditions Statements

its findings.

Further, FDVA will remain mindful of state budget constraints and realities, and only request personnel and funding essential to its mission of veteran advocacy and providing quality long-term care.

A consolidated list of benefits available to veterans and their families is located on the Department's web site at www.FloridaVets.org.

List of All Task forces and Studies in Progress

#	Task Forces and Studies in Progress	Bill or Statutes	Web Address - Implementing Bill or Statutes
1.	Area Agency on Aging Council Pasco-Pinellas (AAAPP)	Section 20.19(4), F.S.	agingcarefl.org
2.	Florida Council on Homelessness	Section 20.19(4), F.S.	myflfamilies.com/service-programs/homelessness
3.	Florida Veterans Council	Section 295.21(4), F.S.	floridaveteranscouncil.org
4.	Florida Defense Support Task Force	Section 288.987, F.S.	enterpriseflorida.com/fdstf/resources
5.	Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame Council	Section 265.003(3), F.S.	floridaveteranshalloffame.org
6.	Florida Women's Hall of Fame Council	Section 14.24(4), F.S.	flwomenshalloffame.org
7.	Interagency Advisory Council on Loss Prevention	Section 284.50, F.S.	myfloridacfo.com/division/risk/lossprevention
8.	Jail Diversion and Trauma Recovery-Priority to Veterans	Section 394-658(1), F.S.	myflorida.com/apps/vbs/adoc/F31139
9.	Veterans State Advisory Council	Section 265.003(3), F.S.	fla-acme.org
10.	National Association of State Approving Agencies	Section 1004.075(GI Bill), F.S.	nasaa-vetseducation.com
11.	National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs	Section 20.37 & Section 295 F.S.	nasdva.us
12.	National Association of State Veterans Homes	Section 51.50 U.S.C. & Section 296 F.S.	nasvh.org/state-homes/statedir.cfm
13.	Florida Health Care Association (FHCA)	Section 400 (Part I & II), F.S.	fhca.org/consumers/veterans_resources
14.	National Association of State Women Veterans Coordinators	Section 14.24(4) & Section 295, F.S.	naswvc.org/state-coordinators
15.	Florida State Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged	Rule Chapter 41-2.014, F.A.C	fdot.gov/ctd
16.	St. Petersburg Veterans' Coalition	Section 20.19(4), F.S.	nchv.org/index.php/help/help-florida
17.	Substance Abuse and Mental Health in Florida	Section 394 (Part IV), F.S.	myflfamilies.com/service-programs/samh
18.	VISN 8 Management Assistance Council	Section 295, F.S.	visn8.va.gov

List of All Task forces and Studies in Progress

19.	The Florida Defense Alliance	Section 288.980, F.S.	enterpriseflorida.com/fdstf/resources
20.	2020 Census Statewide Complete Count Committee	13 U.S.C. CENSUS & Section 10.11, F.S.	flgov.com/2020/01/06
21.	Florida Suicide Prevention Interagency Action Plan Committee	Section 14.2019, F.S.	myflfamilies.com/service-programs/samh
22.	Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration Advisory Council	Section 394.66 & 397.305 F.S.	samhsa.gov/about-us/advisory-councils
23.	Governor's Initiative on Lawyers Assisting Warriors (GI Law)	Section 397.485, F.S.	enterpriseflorida.com/floridadefense/lawyers-assisting-warriors
24.	Housing Loan Program for Military and Veterans	Section 420.5088(1) & 518.01 (9), F.S.	enterpriseflorida.com/newsprogram-for-military-and-veterans
25.	National Roadmap to Empower Veterans and End Suicide	Section 394.66 & 397.305 F.S.	whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions
26.	Paychecks for Patriots, Florida Department of Economic Opportunity	Section 295.22, F.S.	floridajobs.org/paychecks-for-patriots
27.	Military and Veterans Assistance Program, Florida Office of Attorney General	Section 292.12, F.S.	myfloridalegal.com/MVAP
28.	Financial Frontlines, Florida Department of Financial Services	Section 292.12, F.S.	myfloridacfo.com/YMM/financialfrontlines/
29.	Serve Save Succeed, Florida Department of Financial Services	Section 292.12, F.S.	myfloridacfo.com/ServeSaveSucceed/
30.	Hope for Healing Florida	Section 295.156, F.S.	hopeforhealingfl.com/

As of June 30, 2021

Performance Measures and Standards

LRPP Exhibit II



Exhibit II – Performance Measures and Standards

Department: Veterans' Affairs			Department No: 50	
Program: Services to Veterans			Code: 50100000	
Service/Budget Entity: Division of Veterans' Benefits and Assistance			Code: 50100700	
NOTE: Approved primary service outcomes must be listed first.				
Approved Performance Measures for FY 2021-22 (Words)	Prior Year Approved Standards FY 2020-21 (Numbers)	Prior Year Actual FY 2020-21 (Numbers)	Approved Standards FY 2021-22 (Numbers)	Requested Standards FY 2022-23 (Numbers)
Value of cost avoidance because of retroactive compensation.	\$95,715,756	\$194,668,373	\$97,630,071	\$99,582,672
Value of cost avoidance because of issue resolution.	\$22,999,939	\$61,932,620	\$23,459,938	\$23,929,137
Number of veterans served.	103,110	81,423	105,172	107,275
Number of claims processed.	23,604	25,356	24,076	24,558
Number of services to veterans.	513,522	313,033	523,792	534,268
<i>Office of Policy and Budget - June 2021</i>				

Exhibit II – Performance Measures and Standards

Department: Veterans' Affairs			Department No: 50	
Program: Services to Veterans			Code: 0100000	
Service/Budget Entity: Division of State Veterans' Homes			Code: 50100100	
NOTE: Approved primary service outcomes must be listed first.				
Approved Performance Measures for FY 2021-22 (Words)	Prior Year Approved Standards FY 2020-21 (Numbers)	Prior Year Actual FY 2020-21 (Numbers)	Approved Standards FY 2021-22 (Numbers)	Requested Standards FY 2022-23 (Numbers)
Occupancy rate for homes in operation 2 years or longer.	90%	69.2%	90%	90%
Percent of State Veterans' Homes in compliance with quality of care health care regulations.	100%	100%	100%	100%
Number of State Veterans' Homes beds available	870	870	1,102	1,102
<p>Note: As of June 30, 2021, the Ardie Copas State Veterans' Nursing Home was certified by Agency for Health Care Administration for 120 beds, and the State Veterans' Homes in Lake Baldwin are expected to be certified with 112 beds. The 232 beds out of the 1,102 are for our two new homes are expected to be certified and/or occupied in FY 2021-22.</p>				
<i>Office of Policy and Budget - June 2021</i>				

Exhibit II – Performance Measures and Standards

Department: Veterans' Affairs			Department No: 50	
Program: Services to Veterans			Code: 50100000	
Service/Budget Entity: Executive Direction and Support Services			Code: 50100400	
NOTE: Approved primary service outcomes must be listed first				
Approved Performance Measures for FY 2021-22 (Words)	Prior Year Approved Standards FY 2020-21 (Numbers)	Prior Year Actual FY 2020-21 (Numbers)	Approved Standards FY 2021-22 (Numbers)	Requested Standards FY 2022-23 (Numbers)
Administration costs as a percent of total agency costs.	6.8%	3.8%	6.8%	6.8%
Administrative positions as a percent of total agency positions.	4.4%	2.0%	4.4%	4.4%
<i>Office of Policy and Budget - June 2021</i>				

Assessment of Performance for Approved Performance Measure LRPP Exhibit III



Exhibit III

LRPP Exhibit III: PERFORMANCE MEASURE ASSESSMENT

Department: Veterans' Affairs
Program: Services to Veterans
Service/Budget Entity: The Division of Veterans' Benefits and Assistance
Measure: Number of Veterans Served

Action:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Performance Assessment of <u>Outcome</u> Measure | <input type="checkbox"/> Revision of Measure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Performance Assessment of <u>Output</u> Measure | <input type="checkbox"/> Deletion of Measure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adjustment of GAA Performance Standards | |

Approved Standard	Actual Performance Results	Difference (Over/Under)	Percentage Difference
103,110	81,423	(-21,687)	(-21%)

Factors Accounting for the Difference:

Internal Factors (check all that apply):

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Personnel Factors | <input type="checkbox"/> Staff Capacity |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Competing Priorities | <input type="checkbox"/> Level of Training |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Previous Estimate Incorrect | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Identify) |

Explanation:

Due to COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, both Veterans Health Administration (VHA) and the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) services were closed to the public. Relatedly, FDVA offices co-located at these respective VHA facilities and VBA facility remained closed.

External Factors (check all that apply):

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Resources Unavailable | <input type="checkbox"/> Technological Problems |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Legal/Legislative Change | <input type="checkbox"/> Natural Disaster |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Target Population Change | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Identify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> This Program/Service Cannot Fix the Problem | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Current Laws Are Working Against the Agency Mission | |

Explanation:

Due to COVID-19 pandemic health restrictions, both Veterans Health Administration (VHA) and the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs services were closed to the public. Relatedly, FDVA offices co-located at these respective VHA facilities and VBA facility remained closed.

Management Efforts to Address Differences/Problems (check all that apply):

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Training | <input type="checkbox"/> Technology |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Personnel | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Identify) |

Exhibit III

Recommendations:

As the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs operations slowed due to COVID- 19, it echoed in Division of Veterans' Benefits and Assistance. As a result, FDVA pivoted and made adjustments to reach out to our veterans using telework operations; relying on our group email address and telephone service. We continue to expand the use of "virtual" hearings with the VA as they implemented this unique service options into place in response to COVID-19.

Office of Policy and Budget – June 2021

Exhibit III

Recommendations:

As the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs operations slowed due to COVID- 19, it echoed in Division of Veterans' Benefits and Assistance. As a result, FDVA pivoted and made adjustments to reach out to our veterans using telework operations; relying on our group email address and telephone service. We continue to expand the use of "virtual" hearings with the VA as they implemented this unique service options into place in response to COVID-19.

Office of Policy and Budget – June 2021

Exhibit III

briefings with personnel on PPE to keep staff and residents' safe. Each State Veterans' Home incorporated screening the staff, vendors and visitors at the entrance. Provided weekly COVID-19 tests to the residents and staff. The COVID-19 positive tested residents were immediately admitted to a hospital.

Implemented the COVID-19 vaccination distribution plan to all seven State Veterans' Homes for residents, front-line healthcare personnel and Homes Program office staff members.

Office of Policy and Budget – June 2021

Performance Measure Validity and Reliability Exhibit IV



FDVA 

Exhibit IV

LRPP EXHIBIT IV: Performance Measure Validity and Reliability

Department: Veterans' Affairs

Program: Services to Veterans

Service/Budget Entity: Division of Veterans' Benefits and Assistance

Measure: Value of Cost Avoidance Because of Retroactive Compensation

Action (check one):

- Requesting revision to approved performance measure.
- Change in data sources or measurement methodologies.
- Requesting new measure.
- Backup for performance measure.

Data Sources and Methodology:

The data source "VetraSpec" is a web-based veterans' claims management software system, which is being currently used by more than 32 States.

A veteran files a claim for benefits on a specific date, but the determination is not made on that date. The process is lengthy and cumbersome, and can take years. If a veteran is awarded a monetary benefit each month, that monthly benefit is judged to have become valid back to the date of the original claim. While the veteran will receive that amount for each month in the future, 'retroactive compensation' refers to a bulk award given to a veteran for those months when the claim was in process. The value of the retroactive award garnered by a veteran is entered into the VetraSpec system upon notice of the claim decision. The figure can be retrieved and totaled with other awards whenever warranted.

Validity:

The performance measure is valid because it measures the increase in the dollar amount associated with "Retroactive Compensation" activities of the Division of Veterans' Benefits and Assistance, Bureau of Veterans' Claims Services and compares that quantifiable amount to prior years' data. The dollar value of 'retroactive compensation' is a direct cost avoidance to the State of Florida, which would otherwise be required to provide needed services. Also, the veteran is able to take this money and insert it directly back into Florida's economy in the form of housing, goods and services.

Reliability:

The performance measure is reliable because amount of "Retroactive Compensation" is a quantifiable value. "Retroactive Compensation" amounts are entered into VetraSpec. The dollar value of the service can be accessed and totaled for any given time period (usually quarterly/annually). USDVA costs and Bureau quantification methods are standardized.

Office of Policy and Budget – June 2021

Exhibit IV

LRPP EXHIBIT IV: Performance Measure Validity and Reliability

Department: Veterans' Affairs

Program: Services to Veterans

Service/Budget Entity: Division of Veterans' Benefits and Assistance

Measure: Value of Cost Avoidance Because of Issue Resolution

Action (check one):

- Requesting revision to approved performance measure.
- Change in data sources or measurement methodologies.
- Requesting new measure.
- Backup for performance measure.

Data Sources and Methodology:

The data source "VetraSpec" is a web-based veterans' claims management software system, which is being currently used by more than 32 States.

The Division of Veterans' Benefits and Assistance helps veterans navigate the confusing and complex process to obtain benefits from the USDVA. The services result in monthly monetary benefits, in addition to determining, verifying and obtaining eligibility for medical treatment, medications, wheelchairs, hearing aids, ambulance bill reimbursement, lost check replacement, eye glasses, home improvement disability grants, clothing allowances, parking placards, prosthetics, and other benefits within the VA system. This service provides Florida veterans with significant economic value. These activities are called 'issue resolutions.' Issue resolutions are measured in terms of the dollar value of the benefit received. Those dollar benefits are either clear (ambulance bill reimbursement) or given a consistent value determined by the USDVA (handicap parking placards). The value of the issue satisfied for the veteran is entered into the VetraSpec system by the FDVA Veterans' Claims Examiners. The figure can be retrieved and totaled with other awards whenever warranted.

Validity:

The performance measure is valid because it measures the increase in the dollar amount associated with "Issue Resolutions" and compares that quantifiable amount to prior years' data. The values are consistent and clearly defined for the claims examiners.

Reliability:

The performance measure is reliable because the amount of "Issue Resolution" is a quantifiable value. "Issue Resolution" amounts are entered into VetraSpec. The dollar value of the service can be accessed and totaled for any given time period (usually quarterly/annually). USDVA costs and Bureau quantification methods are standardized.

Office of Policy and Budget – June 2021

Exhibit IV

LRPP EXHIBIT IV: Performance Measure Validity and Reliability

Department: Veterans' Affairs

Program: Services to Veterans

Service/Budget Entity: Division of Veterans' Benefits and Assistance

Measure: Number of Veterans Served

Action (check one):

- Requesting revision to approved performance measure.
- Change in data sources or measurement methodologies.
- Requesting new measure.
- Backup for performance measure.

Data Sources and Methodology:

To meet Federal government 2016 Digit to Digit data management requirements and to facilitate operating within this new digital environment, FDVA has converted to a digital data compliant platform known as "VetraSpec." VetraSpec, currently in use by 32 States, does not currently track all veterans claims we support that are initiated by County Veteran Service Officers, as counties have no requirement to purchase a U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs compatible Digit-To-Digit (electronic) claim filing and tracking software.

FDVA personnel providing any form of service to a veteran record the data in VetraSpec. The system uses a variety of factors (name, birth date, social security number, etc.) to determine if the veteran has been seen during the fiscal year. All first visits during a fiscal year are determined to be either "unique" or "other" veterans' and a count of those veterans' results in the number of veterans served in a given period. Resources consist of FDVA representative entering the information into VetraSpec and resulting database reports.

Germane to this new digital operating environment is that the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs now sends veterans' claims to whichever VA Regional Office has the lowest workload in claims processing.

Validity:

The performance measure is valid because it demonstrates the number of new veterans being serviced by FDVA Veterans' Claims Examiners (VCE's) for claims and related earned benefits and services, and validates the department's mission of outreach to all veterans across the State is working. It is a valid determination of claims specific workload for the VCE's.

Reliability:

The performance measure is reliable because the information is consistently recorded in the database and can be replicated in the multiple reports required each year. The process is clearly defined and the database is set up to determine if the veteran is unique to the fiscal year.

Office of Policy and Budget – June 2021

Exhibit IV

LRPP EXHIBIT IV: Performance Measure Validity and Reliability

Department: Veterans' Affairs

Program: Services to Veterans

Service/Budget Entity: Division of Veterans' Benefits and Assistance

Measure: Number of Claims Processed

Action (check one):

- Requesting revision to approved performance measure.
- Change in data sources or measurement methodologies.
- Requesting new measure.
- Backup for performance measure.

Data Sources and Methodology:

The data source "VetraSpec" is a web-based veterans' claims management software system, which is being currently used by more than 32 States.

A claim is a request filed by a veteran seeking a benefit or service. Each one of these claims processed by FDVA Veterans' Claims Examiners is entered into VetraSpec. The database stores and calculates the number of claims processed in any given period.

Validity:

The performance measure is valid because increasing the number of claims processed shows the increase in value of service to veterans by the department in Florida. It is a valid determination of workload for FDVA's Claims Examiners.

Reliability:

The performance measure is reliable because the process is clearly defined and the database can make a simple count of claims filed in a fiscal year. The information is consistently recorded in the database and can be replicated in the multiple reports required each year.

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Exhibit IV

LRPP EXHIBIT IV: Performance Measure Validity and Reliability

Department: Veterans' Affairs

Program: Services to Veterans

Service/Budget Entity: The Division State Veterans' Homes

Measure: Number of State Veterans' Homes Beds Available

Action (check one):

- Requesting revision to approved performance measure.
- Change in data sources or measurement methodologies.
- Requesting new measure.
- Backup for performance measure.

Data Sources and Methodology:

The Agency for Health Care Administrations had issued operating licenses with an allowable maximum beds capacity for each State Veterans' Homes (one assisted living State Veterans' Domiciliary home and eight State Veterans' Skilled nursing facilities). Each of the skilled nursing facilities was constructed and licensed for 120 beds, except one which has 112 beds. The Agency for Health Care Administration has licensed the State Veterans' Domiciliary Home for 150 beds.

Methodology: Examine nine (9) facilities licenses and add total beds.

Validity:

The measure is valid because it measures the numbers of State Veterans' Homes beds in Florida.

Reliability:

The measure is reliable because the number of beds is quantifiable, i.e., additional homes (beds) are constructed and licensed or they are not. The process of construction and licensure is formal, measured and certifiable. Collection method is standardized.

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Exhibit IV

LRPP EXHIBIT IV: Performance Measure Validity and Reliability

Department: Veterans' Affairs

Program: Services to Veterans

Service/Budget Entity: The Division of State Veterans' Homes

Measure: Occupancy Rate for Homes in Operations 2 Years or Longer

Action (check one):

- Requesting revision to approved performance measure.
- Change in data sources or measurement methodologies.
- Requesting new measure.
- Backup for performance measure.

Data Sources and Methodology:

The measure reflects the need for and utilization of veterans' homes in Florida. The data source is the Health Information System database—the software tool utilized by the department for billing and resident care tracking.

Methodology: A 'patient care day' is a unit of time (one calendar day) during which the services of the facility are used or held for their use (bed hold) by a resident. When the billing month closes, the total number of patient care days is added, then divided by the number of days in the month. That quotient is further divided by the total number of beds in the facility. The final number is the occupancy rate for the facility, reflecting the percentage of occupancy for the month. Each month's average is added at the end of the fiscal year, and then divided by twelve to give the occupancy rate for the fiscal year.

Validity:

The measure is valid because it gauges the actual utilization of State Veterans' Homes. Use of a facility is a signal of need, and if the facilities are needed the State is justified in their operation. The number of beds is quantifiable and fixed, as are the number of days in each calendar month.

Reliability:

The measure is reliable because it is verifiable and repeatable. The number of patient care days is constantly audited by the various insurance companies and Centers for Medicare/Medicaid Services in the billing cycles, and the accuracy is validated through those audits.

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Exhibit IV

LRPP EXHIBIT IV: Performance Measure Validity and Reliability

Department: Veterans' Affairs

Program: Services to Veterans

Service/Budget Entity: The Division of State Veterans' Homes

Measure: Percent of State Veterans' Homes in Compliance with Quality of Care Health Care Regulations

Action (check one):

- Requesting revision to approved performance measure.
- Change in data sources or measurement methodologies.
- Requesting new measure.
- Backup for performance measure.

Data Sources and Methodology:

The data sources are the survey results from the Agency for Health Care Administration, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

The methodology involves extensive onsite inspections by each of the regulatory agencies listed. Upon completion of the inspection, results are given with explanations of findings. FDVA staff participate in the exit conference and examine the final reports for notices of non-compliance with quality of care regulations.

Validity:

The measure is a valid gauge of quality of care in a facility because the licensing and inspecting organizations are recognized authorities in the long-term care field. The application of inspection interpretations is standardized by State policy and training.

Reliability:

The measure is reliable because the surveys represent a uniformly applied standard to which all long-term care facilities are held in Florida and the United States. The surveys are repeated at unannounced periods, and none are at the same time, so high standards of care must be maintained at all times.

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Exhibit IV

LRPP EXHIBIT IV: Performance Measure Validity and Reliability

Department: Veterans' Affairs

Program: Services to Veterans

Service/Budget Entity: Executive Direction and Support Services

Measure: Administration Costs as a Percent of Total Agency Costs

Action (check one):

- Requesting revision to approved performance measure.
- Change in data sources or measurement methodologies.
- Requesting new measure.
- Backup for performance measure.

Data Sources and Methodology:

The data source is the Legislative Appropriations System/Planning and Budgeting Subsystem and the General Appropriations Act. The expenditure portion is from the Florida Accounting Information Resource (FLAIR).

The amount of the Executive Direction and Support Services (EDSS) expense is divided by the total department expense for the fiscal year, yielding a percent of administrative support cost within the department as a whole.

Validity:

The performance measure is valid because keeping administrative costs low allows the department to focus their resources to the direct benefit of their constituents — Florida's veteran population.

Reliability:

The measure is reliable because it is a measurable quantity for both the agency as a whole and the division. The definition of 'expense' is clearly outlined by the Legislature, as are the processes for completing year-end expense reports. The General Appropriations Act sets a budget that will maintain the EDSS costs within the parameters of the performance measure, and fiscal year end expense reports validate those goals have been met. FLAIR has tight controls by the Comptroller to ensure accurate reporting of expenditures.

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Exhibit IV

LRPP EXHIBIT IV: Performance Measure Validity and Reliability

Department: Veterans' Affairs

Program: Services to Veterans

Service/Budget Entity: Executive Direction and Support Services

Measure: Administrative Positions as a Percent of Total Agency Positions

Action (check one):

- Requesting revision to approved performance measure.
- Change in data sources or measurement methodologies.
- Requesting new measure.
- Backup for performance measure.

Data Sources and Methodology:

The data source is the General Appropriations Act (GAA), listing the number of positions allocated to a budget entity and the total number of positions allocated to the department.

The number of Executive Direction and Support Services positions is divided by the total number of department positions, yielding a percent of administrative support positions within the department as a whole.

Validity:

The performance measure is valid because the bulk of department positions should be in direct contact with veteran clients, assisting them with their needs.

Reliability:

The measure is reliable because it is a verifiable quantity for both the department as a whole and the division. The GAA is a public document that anyone can cross check. A simple ratio will always generate a value that is comparable and repeatable across multiple years.

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Associated Activities Contributing to Performance Measures and Cost Summary Exhibit V & VI



Exhibit V: Identification of Associated Activity Contributing to Performance Measures

Measures Number	Approved Performance Measures for FY2021-22 (Words)	Associated Activities Title
1	Increase value of cost avoidance due to retroactive compensation. Standard: \$97,630,071	Veterans' Benefits and Assistance, number of claims processed: FY 2020-21 Outcome = 25,356
2	Increase value of cost avoidance due to issue resolution. Standard: \$23,459,938	
3	The number of veterans served. Standard: 105,172	Number of veterans served: FY 2020-21 Outcomes = 81,423
4	The number of services to veterans. Standard: 523,792	Number of service to veterans (Bureau of Veterans' Field Services): FY 2020-21 Outcome = 126,411 Number of services to veterans (Bureau of Veterans' Claims Service): FY 2020-21 Outcome = 313,033
5	The number of claims processed. Standard: 24,076	Veterans' Benefits and Assistance, number of claims processed: FY 2020-21 Outcome = 25,356
6	Occupancy rate for State Veterans' Homes in operation for two (2) years or longer. Standard: 90%	Veterans' Domiciliary Home - Lake City/Columbia County: FY 2020-21 Outcome = Resident Days 43,116, Rate 78.8% Veterans' Nursing Home - Daytona Beach/Volusia County: FY 2020-21 Outcome = Resident Days 32,674, Rate 74.6% Veterans' Nursing Home - Land O' Lakes/Pasco County: FY 2020-21 Outcome = Resident Days 30,233, Rate 69.0% Veterans' Nursing Home - Pembroke Pines/Broward County: FY 2020-21 Outcome = Resident Days 29,856, Rate 68.2% Veterans' Nursing Home - Panama City/Bay County: FY 2020-21 Outcome = Resident Days 27,429, Rate 62.6% Veterans' Nursing Home - Port Charlotte/Charlotte County: FY 2020-21 Outcome = Resident Days 25,054, Rate 57.2% Veterans' Nursing Home - St. Augustine/St. Johns County: FY 2020-21 Outcome = Resident Days 31,484, Rate 71.9%
7	Percent of State Veterans' Homes in compliance with quality of care health care regulations. Standards: 100%.	
8	Number of State Veterans' Homes beds available. Standards: 870.	Health Care Number of Veterans' Homes Beds Available for FY 2020-21: 870
9	Administration costs as a percent of total agency costs. Standards: 6.8%.	
10	Administrative positions as a percent of total agency positions. Standards: 4.4%.	

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Exhibit VI: Unit Cost Summary

NUCSSP03 LAS/PBS SYSTEM
BUDGET PERIOD: 2009-2023
STATE OF FLORIDA

SP 08/30/2021 16:27

SCHED XI: AGENCY-LEVEL UNIT COST SUMMARY
AUDIT REPORT VETERANS' AFFAIRS, DEPT OF

SECTION III - PASS THROUGH ACTIVITY ISSUE CODES SELECTED:

TRANSFER-STATE AGENCIES ACTIVITY ISSUE CODES SELECTED:

1-8:

AID TO LOCAL GOVERNMENTS ACTIVITY ISSUE CODES SELECTED:

1-8: ACT5140 ACT5141

AUDIT #1: THE FOLLOWING STATEWIDE ACTIVITIES (ACT0010 THROUGH ACT0490) HAVE AN OUTPUT STANDARD
(RECORD TYPE 5) AND SHOULD NOT:

*** NO ACTIVITIES FOUND ***

AUDIT #2: THE FCO ACTIVITY (ACT0210) CONTAINS EXPENDITURES IN AN OPERATING CATEGORY AND SHOULD NOT:
(NOTE: THIS ACTIVITY IS ROLLED INTO EXECUTIVE DIRECTION, ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT AND INFORMATION
TECHNOLOGY)

*** NO OPERATING CATEGORIES FOUND ***

AUDIT #3: THE ACTIVITIES LISTED IN AUDIT #3 DO NOT HAVE AN ASSOCIATED OUTPUT STANDARD. IN ADDITION, THE
ACTIVITIES WERE NOT IDENTIFIED AS A TRANSFER-STATE AGENCIES, AS AID TO LOCAL GOVERNMENTS, OR A PAYMENT OF
PENSIONS, BENEFITS AND CLAIMS (ACT0430). ACTIVITIES LISTED HERE SHOULD REPRESENT TRANSFERS/PASS THROUGH
THAT ARE NOT REPRESENTED BY THOSE ABOVE OR ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS THAT ARE UNIQUE TO THE AGENCY AND
ARE NOT APPROPRIATE TO BE ALLOCATED TO ALL OTHER ACTIVITIES.

*** NO ACTIVITIES FOUND ***

AUDIT #4: TOTALS FROM SECTION I AND SECTIONS II + III:

DEPARTMENT: 50	EXPENDITURES	FCO
FINAL BUDGET FOR AGENCY (SECTION I):	151,064,301	10,557,350
TOTAL BUDGET FOR AGENCY (SECTIONS II + III):	151,064,336	10,557,350
DIFFERENCE:	35-	
(MAY NOT EQUAL DUE TO ROUNDING)	=====	=====

Glossary of Terms and Acronyms

Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA): State of Florida agency that champions accessible, affordable, quality health care for all Floridians.

CFR: The Code for Federal Regulations is an arrangement of the general and permanent rules published in the Federal Register by the executive departments and agencies of the Federal Government. The CFR presents the official and complete text of agency regulations. It is a single publication divided into 50 titles covering broad subject areas of Federal regulations.

CMS: Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services is a Federal agency within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services that administers the Medicare program and works in partnership with state governments to administer Medicaid, CHIP, and health insurance portability standards.

COVID-19: Corona-Virus Infections Disease 2019 is a type of virus. In December 2019, a newly identified virus has caused a worldwide pandemic of respiratory illness.

Medicaid: Medicaid is a program funded by the U.S. Federal and State governments that pay medical expenses for people who are unable to cover some or all of their own medical expenses. Medicaid program was established in Florida in 1970, and the primary beneficiaries are poor women and children, and people with disabilities.

Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF): Operation Enduring Freedom began Oct. 7, 2001 with allied air strikes on Taliban and al Qaeda targets. The operation was launched to stop the Taliban from providing a safe haven to al Qaeda and to stop al Qaeda's use of Afghanistan as a base of operations for terrorist activities. After 13 years, the United States and NATO end their combat mission with Afghanistan on Dec. 28, 2014.

Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF): Also known as the Iraq War, the conflict covers the period March 20, 2003 through Sept. 1, 2010.

Operation New Dawn (OND): The new name was given to reflect a reduced U.S. role to the Iraq War, which was known as Operation Iraqi Freedom until Sept. 1, 2010.

State Veterans' Nursing Homes (SVNH): State owned, operated and managed facility that provides twenty-four (24) hour skilled nursing care to disabled veterans.

State Veterans' Domiciliary Home (SVDH): State owned, operated and managed facilities that provide a supervised living arrangement in a home-like environment for adults who are unable to live alone because of age-related impairments or physical, mental or visual disabilities.

Trends and Conditions Analysis (TCA): Consolidated statements that review the trends in the veteran population, veterans' needs, opportunities to address veterans' needs, threats/problems, and factors that influence related outcomes as they apply to department priorities.

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA): A Federal Cabinet-level agency that provides near-comprehensive health care services to eligible military veterans at VA medical centers and outpatient clinics located throughout the country; several non-health care benefits including disability compensation, vocational rehabilitation, education

Glossary of Terms and Acronyms

assistance, home loans, and life insurance; and provides burial and memorial benefits to eligible veterans and family members.

Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA): Component of the USDVA responsible for providing benefits and services to veterans and their families in a responsive, timely, and compassionate manner in recognition of their service to the nation.

Veterans' Claims Examiners (VCE): Skilled paralegal advocates responsible for assisting veterans in pursuing benefits from the USDVA through the claims process.

Veterans Health Administration (VHA): Component of the USDVA responsible for delivery of quality medical care on a timely basis within the law to all authorized veterans and eligible dependents and survivors.

VA Medical Center (VAMC): There are seven VA Medical Centers (hospitals) in Florida, with associated outpatient clinics to provide medical care to eligible veterans - a part of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.