

2018-20 Strategic Plan

Department of Veterans Services [912]

Mission

To serve Virginia's veterans, members of the Virginia National Guard, Virginia residents in the Armed Forces Reserves, and their family members, by ensuring they receive timely transition, employment and education assistance, benefits, health care and long-term care and recognition they have earned through service to our country and Commonwealth.

Vision

To be the most veteran-friendly state in the nation by setting the national benchmark for the delivery of results-oriented and cost-effective veterans services.

Values

Excellence: Provide exemplary service to Virginia's veterans and their families.

Commitment: An enduring commitment to helping Virginia's veterans and their families receive all earned federal and state benefits; and create an economic environment that promotes veteran-owned businesses and Virginia companies hiring veterans.

Innovation: Continually find new methods to reach and serve Virginia's veterans and their families.

Finance

Financial Overview

The department's funding comes from a variety of general and nongeneral fund sources.

General Fund:

- All operations for the Benefit Services section, the Virginia War Memorial, the Military Medics and Corpsmen (MMAC) program, and the Virginia Military Survivors and Dependents Education Program (VMSDEP) and;
- The majority of operations for the Virginia Veteran and Family Support (VVFS) program, the Veterans Cemetery Services section, the Virginia Values Veterans (V3) Program, the Virginia Transition Assistance Program (VTAP), the Virginia Women Veterans Program, and the Administrative Services section.

Non-general Fund Federal Trust:

- G.I. Bill program certification and audit operations of the VETE section;
- A portion of the operating budgets for the Veterans Care Center Services section (in the form of a per diem paid per patient day) and the Veterans Cemetery Service section (in the form of a plot allowance) comes from federal sources.

Nongeneral Fund Special:

- Medicaid and Medicare (Part A and B) reimbursement covers a portion of the operating costs of the Veterans Care Center Services section and the administrative services section; and
- A portion of the Veterans Care Center Services and the Veterans Cemetery Services sections' operating budgets comes from private funds (fee for service);

Nongeneral Fund Dedicated Special Revenue:

- The Veterans Services Foundation, a separate agency as of July 1, 2017, accepts donated funds and allocates funds to DVS to support DVS programs and services. These supplemental funds primarily support the Virginia Veteran and Family Support program, the Virginia Values Veterans (V3) Program, Veterans Care Center Services, the Virginia Women Veterans Program, and the Virginia Transition Assistance Program (VTAPo). Donors are able to earmark their donations to VSF for specific DVS programs.

Biennial Budget

	2019 General Fund	2019 Nongeneral Fund	2020 General Fund	2020 Nongeneral Fund
Initial Appropriation for the Biennium	20,661,608	64,422,945	21,222,312	70,220,052
Changes to Initial Appropriation	0	0	274,000	7,000,000

(Changes to Initial Appropriation will be 0 when the plan is created. They will change when the plan is updated mid-biennium.)

Customers

Anticipated Changes to Customer Base

- Data show veteran populations will decline for next 25 years nation-wide, including in Virginia.
- However, Virginia may continue to hold steady in the number of military retirees, women veterans and Post-9/11 veterans. (Population Data Source: USDVA, VetPop 2016, Table 6L)
- Virginia's veteran population is estimated at about 715,000, and
- Virginia ranks #1 in:
 - Veteran Full-Time Employed Rate
 - Labor Force Growth Rate;
 - Veteran Labor Force Participation Rate;
 - Veteran Owned Small Businesses; and
 - Women veterans as a percentage of the total state veteran population.
- Two new veterans care centers anticipated to open in 2022 will greatly expand our ability to serve veterans in need of high-quality skilled nursing care or short-term rehabilitative care services. The Puller Veterans Care Center (VCC) will be a 128-bed facility in Fauquier County, to serve Northern Virginia; and the Jones & Cabacoy VCC will be a 128-bed facility built in the City of Virginia Beach to serve Hampton Roads.
- DVS still anticipates Culpeper National Cemetery reaching full capacity within the next 10-15 years, which will lead to a potential fourth state veterans cemetery to meet the burial needs of veterans in central Virginia.

Current Customer List

Predefined Group	User Defined Group	Number Served Annually	Potential Number of Annual Customers	Projected Customer Trend
Veteran	Veterans/family members using their G.I. Bill benefits at approved post-secondary educational and training institutions	52,435	60,000	Stable
Higher Education Institutions	Approved post-secondary educational and training institutions	969	1,100	Stable
Veteran	Patient Days of Assisted Living (Domiciliary) care provided to care center residents	12,498	21,900	Decrease
Veteran	Patient Days of Skilled Nursing care provided to care center residents	132,291	138,700	Increase
Veteran	Number of interments at state veterans cemeteries (veterans and family members)	1,915	2,000	Increase
Veteran	Veterans and family members for whom DVS has filed a disability or pension claim with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs	18,419	20,000	Increase
Resident	Visitors to the Virginia War Memorial (includes all visitors, some of whom are not Virginia residents)	41,134	100,000	Increase
Veteran	Veterans hired through the Virginia Values Veterans (V3) Program	13,121	15,000	Stable

Partners

Name	Description
Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS) and Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS)	Program Partnership - Virginia Veteran and Family Support program.
Department of General Services (DGS) and Virginia Capitol Police	Maintenance and security for the Virginia War Memorial.
DGS and DBHDS	Capital construction project procurement, contracting, real estate acquisition, and program management support.
Virginia Employment Commission and other state agencies	Program Partnership - Virginia Values Veterans (V3) Program and Virginia Transition Assistance Program (VTAP)
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs medical centers	Medical care, patient referral, and shared services.

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, State Cemetery and State Homes Grant Programs	Grant funding for construction of new state veterans cemeteries and state veterans homes, and expansion/renovation of existing facilities
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Education Services	Funding for the Virginia State Approving Agency for Veterans Education and Training (SAA) - GI Bill program certification and audit functions.
Military Servicemembers and Veterans	Serve as a living reminder of the service and sacrifice of Virginia's men and women in uniform - past, present, and future.
Veterans Service Organizations	Program partnerships, volunteer and logistical support, financial donations, special events.
Citizens of the Commonwealth	The Virginia War Memorial exists because of the citizens of the Commonwealth and because of the service and sacrifice of her sons and daughters.
Virginia Department of Education	The Virginia War Memorial produces educational films to teach history to middle and high school students, then works with the Department of Education to distribute the films to middle and high schools across the Commonwealth.
Similar venues	The Virginia Historical Society, National Museum of the Marine Corps, National D-Day Museum, Virginia Holocaust Museum, and others serve as educational partners to the Virginia War Memorial.
Volunteers	Volunteers perform a variety of functions critical to the operation of the Virginia War Memorial and veterans care centers.
Boards and Councils: Board of Veterans Services (BVS) and Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations (JLC)	Citizen, veteran, and legislative participation in setting strategic direction for the Agency. Input on defining DVS veterans programs and services.
Donors - through the Veterans Services Foundation (VSF) and the Virginia War Memorial Foundation (VWMF)	The VSF receives and raises donated funds to provide supplemental funding for DVS programs and services. The VWMF receives and raises donated funds to support the Virginia War Memorial's education programs and capital construction projects.

Agency Goals

- **Augment the new Virginia economy with mission-ready, relevantly-skilled veterans by creating seamless transitions for veterans with high quality education and workforce services that accelerate career opportunities.**

Summary and Alignment

The Virginia Department of Veterans Services, in partnership with federal, state, local, non-profit, and private agencies, will augment the new Virginia economy with mission-ready, relevantly-skilled veterans by creating seamless transitions for veterans with high quality education and workforce services that accelerate career opportunities.

Associated State Goal

Economy: Be a national leader in the preservation and enhancement of our economy.

Associated Societal Indicator

Employment Growth

Objectives

- » **Create employment opportunities for veterans.**

Description

The Virginia Department of Veterans Services (DVS), in partnership with other state agencies, assists Virginia employers to recruit, hire, and retain veterans. The Virginia Values Veterans (V3) Program increases employment opportunities and promotes economic development by training and certifying organizations in Veterans Workforce Best Practices. The Virginia Transition Assistance Program (VTAP) provides valuable connections and guidance for transitioning service members with V3 companies, education and entrepreneurship opportunities and a new specialized focus on assisting women veterans. The Military Medics and Corpsermen (MMAC) program provides connections between transitioning medics and corpsermen to Healthcare Providers to fill critical gaps in Virginia's healthcare needs and provide meaningful employment opportunities for veterans.

Objective Strategies

- Promote V3 membership and certification through employer engagement, high-touch customer service, updated technology, collaboration with VTAP and strategic marketing.
- Recognize Virginia employers who complete V3 training and to hire veterans.
- Continue to increase, monitor, and strategically market V3 certifications made by private and public sector employers.
- Increase the number medics and corpsermen in MMAC hired at a participating Healthcare Providers.
- Increase the number of Healthcare Providers that work with the MMAC program.

Measures

- ◆ Number of Medics and Corpsmen hired by Partner Healthcare Systems
- ◆ Number of veterans hired annually by Virginia Values Veterans (V3) program-certified companies.

» **Provide widest access to G.I. Bill-approved education and training opportunities for Virginia veterans and their dependents through the approval and ongoing supervision of post-secondary education and training programs.**

Description

Ensuring veterans have the widest access to education and training opportunities hinges on the timely, accurate, and consistent approval and supervision of G.I. Bill-approved programs/courses of instruction.

Objective Strategies

- Process all requests for GI Bill program approval within 30 days of receipt.

Measures

- ◆ Percentage of G.I. Bill program approval requests processed within 30 days of receipt.

» **Ensure access to Virginia Military Survivors and Dependents Education Program benefits for qualified applicants.**

Description

The Department of Veterans Services is responsible for certifying eligibility for benefits offered through the Virginia Military Survivors and Dependents Education Program (VMSDEP). Ensuring access to these benefits hinges on a timely review of the required documents and approval of eligible applications.

Objective Strategies

- Ensure VMSDEP applications are processed and an eligibility determination is made within 46 days of submission in the VMSDEP on-line application system.

Measures

- ◆ Percentage of Virginia Military Survivors and Dependents Education Program (VMSDEP) eligibility determinations made by the Virginia Department of Veterans Services (DVS) within 46 days of the application-submission date.

• **Improve outcomes for veterans and their families in the areas of behavioral health, rehabilitative services, supportive services, health, and financial stability**

Summary and Alignment

The Virginia Department of Veterans Services, in partnership with federal, state, local, non-profit, and private agencies, will improve outcomes for veterans and their families in the areas of behavioral health, rehabilitative services, supportive services, health, and financial stability.

Associated State Goal

Health & Family: Inspire and support Virginians toward healthy lives and strong and resilient families.

Objectives

» **Provide readily accessible, expert assistance to Virginia's veterans and family members in the development and submission of service-connected disability and pension claims to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and in accessing other federal, state, and local veterans programs and services.**

Description

The Virginia Department of Veterans Services (DVS) Benefits Service Section develops and submits service-connected disability and pension claims to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) on behalf of Virginia veterans. The VA adjudicates each claim (makes a rating decision). If a claim is approved, the veteran is awarded a disability rating (0% to 100% disabled, in increments of 10%). A veteran's disability rating, plus other factors such as the number of dependents, determines the veteran's monthly disability payment from the VA. The disability rating also determines priority access to VA medical care. DVS Benefits also assists with death and survivor benefits, represents veterans in the appeals process, and in conjunction with partner service lines and other agencies, connects veterans and family members to a wide variety of federal, state, and local veterans programs and services. Providing readily accessible and expert assistance is dependent on the following factors: • Location and professional working environment: DVS Benefits offices are strategically located across the Commonwealth to ensure ready access for veterans. The offices must be equipped and maintained to a high standard in order to create a professional working environment for both customers and staff; • Staffing levels: Each office must be adequately staffed with a minimum of two Veterans Service Representatives (VSR), with more in high population areas, in order to provide services during normal business hours, plus support outreach activities and services at itinerant locations; • Training: initial training for new VSRs to achieve USDVA accreditation takes between 4 and 6 months before a VSR can assist veterans. Access to a veteran's record is controlled by the USDVA and can further delay full qualification of a VSR by additional 2-5 months. Ongoing proficiency training and evaluation is also key to maintaining high service standards; • Recruitment and retention: initial VSR training,

USDVA accreditation, and access to USDVA records takes 6-12 months before DVS personnel can fully assist veterans. Because of this, recruitment and retention of qualified, motivated individuals is important to providing a high level of service to veterans and families;

- Outreach and itinerant services: help make more veterans aware of the services available to them and increase the “reach” of the Benefits Services, especially in rural areas.

Objective Strategies

- Focus on recruitment and retention by offering competitive salaries, a professional working environment, and recognition for quality work;
- Ensure employees have the right tools to do the job;
- Focus on initial and ongoing proficiency training;
- Set and maintain standardized policies related to office operations, outreach, etc. and;
- Create culture of continuous improvement.

Measures

- ◆ Number of disability compensation and pension claims submitted by the Virginia Department of Veterans Services (DVS) to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA).
- ◆ Number of personal veteran contact annually with the Benefits Services division.

» **Assess Virginia veterans, members of the Virginia Guard and Armed Forces Reserves not in active federal service, and family members of those veterans and service members served by the Virginia Veteran and Family Supportive (VVFS) program for behavioral health, rehabilitative, and supportive services.**

Description

The Virginia Veteran and Family Support (VVFS) program of DVS, working in conjunction with federal, state, local, and community partners, specializes in closing service gaps, eliminating barriers to services, and enhancing response systems for veterans and their family members in the Commonwealth. Veterans in need of behavioral health support and those experiencing homelessness are two primary target populations.

Objective Strategies

- Build awareness of veterans' service needs and the availability of the program through marketing, outreach, and training for first responders, service providers and others;
- Collaborate with relevant agencies of the Commonwealth, localities, and service providers;
- Develop and implement a consistent method of determining how many veterans in the Commonwealth are currently in need of mental health, physical rehabilitation, or other services, or may be in need of such services in the future;
- Work with veterans to develop a coordinated resources plan that identifies appropriate service providers to meet the veteran's service needs;
- Refer veterans to appropriate and available providers on the basis of needs identified in the coordinated resources plan; and
- Monitor progress toward individually identified goals in accordance with the coordinated resource plan.

Measures

- ◆ 80% of VVFS clients experiencing literal homelessness will be connected to a shelter/housing resource
- ◆ 80% of VVFS clients with an identified behavioral health need will be connected to an appropriate resource
- ◆ 90% of all new VVFS clients will have a needs assessment completed in 7 days of initial contact for purpose of creating a coordinated resource plan

» **Serve the greatest possible number of veterans by maintaining the highest practical facility census at state veterans care centers.**

Description

DVS operates two veterans care centers – the Virginia Veterans Care Center (VVCC) in Roanoke and the Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center (SBVCC) in Richmond. Maintaining the highest possible facility census ensures that DVS is maximizing the potential capacity of the facilities' nursing and domiciliary (assisted living) care for Virginia's veterans. In addition, the veterans care centers must maintain a strong census to ensure an adequate revenue stream to 1) deliver quality services; 2) remain economically viable, and 3) not have to turn to the General Fund for support. The target occupancy percentage is 90 to 95% for the nursing care section and 60% for the domiciliary care section. The General Assembly and U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) has provided funding for the

construction and opening of two new care centers, the Puller Veterans Care Center (PVCC) and Jones and Cabacoy Veterans Care Center (J&CVCC), both anticipated opening in 2022.

Objective Strategies

- Promote the services offered by Virginia's veterans care centers through marketing efforts targeted at Virginia veterans and their families, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) medical facilities, hospitals in the community, and other facilities.
- Promote the new care centers through marketing efforts, community outreach and town hall presentations and other events with the strong support of state legislators, veterans service organizations (VSO) and other groups.

Measures

- ◆ Rate of occupancy in the Domiciliary Care section.
- ◆ Rate of occupancy in the Nursing Care section.

• Honor our veterans and military, and their families, for their service and sacrifice.

Summary and Alignment

The Commonwealth of Virginia is home to over 700,000 veterans who have served the cause of freedom in war and in peace. Our veterans have gallantly protected our nation's principles and freedoms throughout our history. Their service and sacrifice underscores dramatically the fact that freedom is not free - dedicated men and women must step forward to defend it and to sustain it. By honoring our veterans in all we do, we will ensure that their service and sacrifice to the Nation and to the Commonwealth is not forgotten.

Associated State Goal

Public Interest: Engage and inform citizens to ensure we serve their interests.

Objectives

» Honor our Veterans, Preserve our History, Educate our Youth, and Inspire Patriotism in All.

Description

The Virginia War Memorial is the Commonwealth of Virginia's monument to honor the memory of Virginia's men and women who demonstrated a willingness to serve and fight to defend our way of life from World War II to the present, and through its Education Center, serves as the Center of Excellence for the Commonwealth in education of Virginian's experience of war from the birth of our nation to the present. In its educational mission, the Virginia War Memorial hosts a variety of internal and outreach programs, collects artifacts and research materials, and produces the "Virginians at War" documentary series in collaboration with the Virginia War Memorial Foundation. The Virginia War Memorial hosts numerous exhibitions, seminars, and ceremonies, including the Commonwealth's Memorial Day, Patriot Day, and Veterans Day ceremonies.

Objective Strategies

- Develop new programs and initiatives designed to attract more visitors to the Memorial and to reach more middle and high school students and teachers.
- Distribute "Virginians at War" documentary films and other educational programs through the Memorial's student seminars, teacher institutes, and other school programs. Virginia War Memorial teacher institutes are designed to familiarize teachers with the Virginia War Memorial and the "Virginians at War" film series provided to educators.

Measures

- ◆ Number of visitors to the Virginia War Memorial.

» Serve the burial, memorial, and perpetual care needs of Virginia's veterans and eligible dependents by meeting or exceeding service standards set by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Description

DVS operates three state veterans cemeteries – in Amelia, Dublin, and Suffolk. These cemeteries, in conjunction with fully operational national veterans cemeteries in Culpeper and Quantico, service the burial, memorial, and perpetual care needs of Virginia veterans and eligible dependents. The National Cemetery Administration (NCA) of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) sets service delivery standards for national and state veterans cemeteries. Meeting or exceeding these service delivery standards will help ensure that Virginia state veterans cemeteries serve the burial, memorial, and perpetual care needs of Virginia's veterans and eligible dependents.

Objective Strategies

- Order headstones within ten working days of the interment or inurnment. Headstones include markers for full casket ground burial, cremation ground burial, and columbarium placement.
- Install headstones/markers within six working days of receipt.

- Install headstones within 60 working days of the interment or inurnment.

Measures

- ◆ Percentage of headstones/markers placed within 60 working days of the interment or inurnment.

- **Manage public resources efficiently and effectively**

Summary and Alignment

By improving the efficiency, effectiveness, accuracy, and accountability of Administrative Services, the department will ensure full compliance with state internal control, accounting, and human resource requirements.

Associated State Goal

Government and Citizens: Be recognized as the best-managed state in the nation.

Associated Societal Indicator

Government Operations

Objectives

- » **Ensure that resources are used efficiently and programs are managed effectively, and in a manner consistent with applicable state and federal requirements.**

Description

The Department of Veterans Services (DVS) is audited by the Auditor of Public Accounts (APA). To ensure that resources are used efficiently and programs are managed effectively, and in a manner consistent with applicable state and federal requirements, DVS will take positive measures to prevent any audit points on the APA audit. If audit points are found, DVS will implement corrective measures to avoid any repeat audit points on future APA audits.

Objective Strategies

- Develop a biannual review/revision schedule for all agency financial management policies to ensure currency/compliance with state and federal requirements.
- Develop a correction plan for all audit points within 30 days of receiving an audit report from the Auditor of Public Accounts (APA). The plan will be submitted to the Department of Accounts.
- Initiate corrective action for all audit points within 60 days of receiving an APA audit report.
- Work to avoid repeat audit points.

Measures

- ◆ Number of repeat audit points.

Major Products and Services

Veterans Benefits: Provides free assistance to Virginia veterans and eligible dependents in accessing federal and state veterans benefits. DVS operates 34 benefit services offices.

Veterans Care Centers: Delivers skilled nursing care, Alzheimer's/memory care, and short-term rehabilitative care to Virginia's veterans, predominantly those 65 and older, at veterans care centers in Richmond (Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center, 200 beds) and Roanoke (Virginia Veterans Care Center, 224 beds). New 128-bed care centers are being built in Virginia Beach (Jones & Cabacoy Veterans Care Center), and Fauquier County (Puller Veterans Care Center), with both new VCCs opening in 2022.

Veterans Cemeteries: Serves the memorial needs of Virginia veterans and eligible dependents at state veterans cemeteries in Amelia (Virginia Veterans Cemetery), Dublin (Southwest Virginia Veterans Cemetery), and Suffolk (Albert G. Horton, Jr. Memorial Veterans Cemetery).

Veterans Education Services: Ensures access to higher education opportunities for Virginia veterans and eligible dependents by certifying that programs of instruction at post-secondary education institutions in Virginia meet federal requirements, enabling Virginia veterans and eligible dependents to use their G.I. Bill education benefits. Audits education programs to ensure compliance with federal regulations. Leads DVS activities in support of the Virginia Military Survivors and Dependents Education Program (VMSDEP).

Transition and Employment Services: Supports the creation of employment opportunities through the Virginia Values Veterans (V3) Program. Assists veterans to transition from military service to employment, education/training, or entrepreneurship through the Virginia Transition Assistance Program (VTAP). Oversees the Military Medic & Corpsmen (MMAC) program, which provides service members with specialized medical training an opportunity for employment at partner Virginia health care providers, a pathway to licensure and long-term medical careers, and a solution to health care staffing shortages in Virginia's health care industry.

Virginia Veteran and Family Support: In cooperation with the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS) and the Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS), VVFS works to help Virginia's most vulnerable veterans and family members by providing timely assessment, treatment, and support through an extensive network of federal, state, and local partnerships, to promote recovery and resilience. VVFS serves veterans of any era who are Virginia residents, members of the Virginia National Guard and Armed Forces Reserves not in active federal service, and family members of those veterans and service members. VVFS serves our most vulnerable veterans, including justice-involved veterans, incarcerated veterans, and those at risk for, or experiencing homelessness. VVFS specializes in closing service gaps and enhancing response systems for all veterans in the Commonwealth and their families, by referring them to mental health, physical rehabilitation, and other services as needed.

Virginia War Memorial: The Virginia War Memorial is the Commonwealth of Virginia's monument to honor the memory of Virginia's men and women who demonstrated a willingness to serve and fight to defend our way of life from World War II to the present. Through its Education Center, the Memorial serves as the Center of Excellence for the Commonwealth in education of Virginian's experience of war from the birth of our nation to the present. The expansion of the Shrine of Memory and the construction of neww education and exhibit space, and an underground parking garage, was completed in February 2020.

Performance Highlights

In FY19, the Department of Veterans Services:

- Filed **18,419** disability compensation claims on behalf of Virginia veterans and families (**79,876 total submissions**), contributing to **\$3.2 Billion** in federal compensation and disability payments to Virginia veterans.
- **Opened two new offices** to better serve veterans closer to their homes: on Fort Lee and just outside NAS Oceana, bringing the total number of offices to **33** (office 34 – on Fort Belvoir – opened in October 2019).
- Virginia Veterans & Family Services (VVFS) delivered **3,196** individual supportive services to veterans and their families. VVFS worked with partners statewide to **assist 950 homeless veterans** and their families with obtaining secure housing and 292 veterans with receiving financial assistance.
- Provided higher education access through over 900 programs approved for GI Bill use. Virginia veterans received more than **\$800 Million** in G.I. Bill benefits.
- Performed 1,915 burials at Virginia's three state veterans cemeteries.
- Hosted 41,134 visitors at the Virginia War Memorial.
- Had **over 79,000 contacts with transitioning service members and spouses** through outreach conducted by Virginia Transition Assistance Program.
- Helped **30 MMAC-qualified medics and corpsmen** secure high-demand healthcare positions.

Staffing

Authorized Maximum Employment Level (MEL)	1098
Salaried Employees	767
Wage Employees	163
Contracted Employees	7

Key Risk Factors

Benefit Services funding and staffing (hiring/retention): DVS operates 34 benefits services offices. In the past, staff turnover and funding constraints impacted the section's ability to keep all offices fully staffed and operational. This is especially significant because it takes approximately one to two years for a new Veterans Service Representative (claims agent) to become fully trained and proficient. While state human resource (HR) policies provide agencies with HR tools to help agencies recruit and retain qualified staff, funding constraints limited the section's ability to offer competitive salary/benefits packages to attract, train, and retain claims agents. Increased funding in fiscal years 2016, 2017, and 2018, coupled with the authorization to hire additional staff, new equipment, and myriad other changes, have partially remedied turnover and training issues. The Agency will closely monitor resource levels to ensure that recent successes are sustained into the next decade.

Virginia War Memorial (funding and staffing to support the increased number of visitors, expanded education mission, and new wing): With the opening of the Paul & Phyllis Galanti Education Center in 2010, the number of annual visitors to the Virginia War Memorial increased significantly to 64,693 in 2016. The number dropped to 41,134 in FY19 due to the ongoing expansion project, but due to the increased program and exhibition space in the new C. Kenneth Wright Pavilion, the number of visitors could grow to 100,000 a year by 2024. The past decade has seen a significant expansion of the Memorial's education mission, with its broad focus on all Virginians and more specific focus on middle and high school students and their teachers. The new Wright Pavilion will allow the Memorial to reach even more Virginians. The opening of the expansion will increase operating, maintenance, and security costs in FY20 and beyond.

Cemetery Services (staffing/resource levels, building/grounds maintenance, and equipment replacement): funding and staffing levels at the state veterans cemeteries are sufficient to meet current burial and building/grounds maintenance requirements and to operate a phase replacement plan for cemetery equipment. Close attention must be paid to ensure continued alignment of cemetery resources with the increasing number of burials, and to ensure that critical maintenance reserve and equipment replacement requirements continue to be addressed. Cemetery staffing must also be closely monitored to ensure adequate manpower to perform an increasing number of interment services and to maintain the

cemetery grounds to national shrine standards. The Agency must also continue to plan at least 3-5 years in the future to ensure federal grant funding is available to support phase expansion of in-ground and above-ground burial capacity at each cemetery.

Management Discussion

General Information About Ongoing Status of Agency

Compact with Virginia's Veterans: Making Virginia America's most veteran friendly state.

The Code of Virginia requires the Commissioner of Veterans Services to: "*Establish and implement a compact with Virginia's veterans, which shall have a goal of making Virginia America's most veteran friendly state. The compact shall be established in conjunction with the Board of Veterans Services and supported by the Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations and shall: (i) include specific provisions for technology advances, workforce development, outreach, quality of life enhancement, and other services for veterans and (ii) provide service standards and goals to be attained for each specific provision in clause (i). The provisions of the compact shall be reviewed and updated annually. The Commissioner shall include in the annual report required by this section the progress of veterans services established in the compact.*"

In support of the Compact, the Department of Veterans Services (DVS), in conjunction with the Board of Veterans Services (BVS) and the Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations (the JLC) established the following overarching goals:

1. Ensure Virginia veterans and eligible family members receive timely assistance in filing for federal and state disability benefits.
2. Deliver long-term skilled nursing care, assisted-living (domiciliary) care, Alzheimer's/ memory care, and short-term rehabilitation services to Virginia veterans at Virginia's Veterans Care Centers.
3. Connect veterans, Guardsmen and Reservists not in federal service, and their family members to a network of services designed to help them overcome the challenges of stress-related and traumatic brain injuries and rehabilitative needs that result from military service.
4. Provide Virginia's veterans, their spouses, and other eligible family members an honored final resting place at state veterans cemeteries that meet national shrine standards.
5. Ensure veterans and their dependents have approved educational programs through which they may receive their educational benefits.
6. Ensure that veteran homelessness is a rare, brief, and nonrecurring experience.
7. In conjunction with other state agencies, create employment opportunities for Virginia veterans in state government and the private sector.
8. Honor Virginians who served and sacrificed in the cause of freedom and liberty for the Commonwealth and the nation in time of war, and honor all of Virginia's veterans by preserving their history, educating our youth, and inspiring patriotism in all Virginians.
9. Coordinate with other state agencies to afford Virginia's veterans business, employment, transportation, and other appropriate opportunities through technology advances, workforce development, outreach, quality of life enhancement, and other services for veterans and their families.

DVS established the following goals and objectives for the 2018-2020 biennium in conjunction with the Board of Veterans Services (BVS) and the Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations (the JLC):

DVS Goal #1: Augment the new Virginia economy with mission-ready, relevantly-skilled veterans by creating seamless transitions for veterans with high quality education and workforce services that accelerate career opportunities. (WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT)

DVS Objectives in support of Goal #1:

1. Provide widest access to G.I. Bill-approved education and training opportunities for Virginia veterans and their dependents;
2. Continue to expand veterans transition and employment programs statewide, with emphasis on Central and Southwestern Virginia;
3. Continue to work toward Governor Ralph Northam's goal of 65,000 total V3 (Virginia Values Veterans Program) hires by the end of his administration;
4. Veteran Entrepreneurship Ecosystem Coordinator to build strategic partnerships with state, federal, nonprofit and other organizations and agencies working with, or providing resources to, veteran entrepreneurs;
5. Women Veterans Program Manager to build strategic focus on women veterans, and a continued focus on the annual Virginia Women Veterans Summit; and
6. Continue to create pathways to career success for transitioning medics and corpsmen.

DVS Goal #2: Improve outcomes for veterans and their families in the areas of behavioral health, rehabilitative services, supportive services, health and financial stability. (QUALITY OF LIFE ENHANCEMENT)

DVS Objectives in support of Goal #2:

1. Provide expert assistance in the development and submission of service-connected disability and pension claims to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and in accessing other federal, state and local veterans programs and services;
2. Continue to meet demand for DVS services across Virginia;
3. Continue to build programs and interagency support for justice-involved veterans, including veteran treatment dockets and post-incarceration support networks;
4. Strengthen local communities and local/state/federal partnerships to create safe, permanent supportive housing for veterans and their families; and

5. Strengthen local communities and local/state/federal partnerships to address veteran suicide mitigation and prevention in Virginia.

DVS Goal #3: Honor our veterans and military, and their families, for their service and sacrifice. (OUTREACH and OTHER SERVICES FOR VETERANS)

DVS Objectives in support of Goal #3:

1. Complete expansion of the Virginia War Memorial in FY20;
2. Commence construction of new Veterans Care Centers in FY20 and open in FY22: the Puller Veterans Care Center in Vint Hill, Fauquier County and the Jones & Cabacoy Veterans Care Center in Virginia Beach; and
3. Expand the Albert G. Horton, Jr. Memorial Veterans Cemetery (Suffolk) and the Virginia Veterans Cemetery (Amelia) to provide additional in-ground burial spaces. Conduct outreach and manage the resulting increased burials and expanded grounds maintenance requirements for perpetual care at the state veterans cemeteries.

DVS Goal #4: Manage public resources efficiently and effectively. (OUTREACH and OTHER SERVICES FOR VETERANS)

DVS Objectives in support of Goal #4:

1. Work with Executive and Legislative branches to address service requirements/shortfalls created by increased demands for DVS services;
2. Find solutions to address employee recruitment and retention issues, especially in Northern Virginia;
3. Address critical shortfalls in agency infrastructure, management, and employee training and professional development;
4. Continue strong partnerships with the General Assembly, the JLC, and the BVS to effectively advocate for Virginia's veterans, National Guard and Reserves and their families; and
5. Inform veterans of the services provided by DVS through targeted media campaigns and engagement with media resources around Virginia. Continue statewide outreach, presentations and attendance at events around Virginia by DVS staff and Service Line Directors to share resources and information about all the services and programs available to veterans and family members.

Information Technology

Overview of the current state of IT in the agency:

The current state of information technology for the Virginia Department of Veterans Services (DVS) is very good. The DVS IT Department continues to achieve full compliance/top score ratings for all COV and VITA/NG mandates (Continuity Plan Assessment, IT Security Program, Agency Preparedness Assessment, etc.).

Our IT Security Program continues to protect our agency data by:

1. Creating and enforcing DVS IT security policies to ensure compliance with all COV and VITA/NG security requirements;
2. Educating all DVS staff on IT security best practices for safe data management and communications;
3. Utilizing VITA/NG security services at our DVS locations in order to provide a secure computing environment for our agency networks and devices; and
4. Continuing to achieve full compliance/clean evaluations from the Auditor of Public Accounts (APA) and Department of Accounts (DOA) on our IT systems and security audits.

Although our IT staff is few in number, we continue to provide timely and effective IT services and excellent customer service to our agency employees and customers. All DVS employees are currently receiving the necessary technology tools (newer computers with current operating systems, updated office productivity software, new/upgraded business systems applications/ services, email/device encryption services, etc.) to conduct general business functions as required by our agency mission statement. Several of our business applications and functions, used for daily operations, have been upgraded to utilize web/cloud based technology and now have the ability to interface with other systems when they come online.

Within DVS there are three mission-critical business applications:

1. The Cardinal financial application system;
2. The Point Click Care Clinical Accounts Receivable (AR) and Financial System (PCCS); and
3. The Vetraspec claims development system.

The Cardinal financial application is an enterprise and fully automated financial system created to reduce audit problems relating to internal controls and financial reporting and to minimize delays with producing financial information and management reports.

The PCCS AR and Financial applications are utilized at both DVS veterans care centers: Virginia Veterans Care Center (VVCC) in Roanoke and Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center (SBVCC) in Richmond. It is used to track medical and financial information for all veterans admitted into both care centers.

Vetraspec is the web-based, hosted claims processing system in use at DVS Benefits Services offices to process claims for veterans. Vetraspec is in use at all 34 DVS Benefit Services offices located around the Commonwealth for performing veteran's claims development, tracking, and reporting.

Other operational initiatives that the DVS IT Division must manage are: VITA/NG Partnership program requests and projects, DVS information security and data integrity, and DVS systems and applications support; all of which are critical to the agency being able to meet its mission and objectives.

Factors impacting agency IT:

The DVS IT Department currently has two classified positions and five contract positions:

1. One Chief Information Officer (CIO), who serves as:
 - The DVS IT Director / Lead System Support Engineer;
 - The Agency Information Technology Resource (AITR) for COV and VITA/NG IT coordination and management; and
 - The Emergency Coordination Officer (ECO) for the Governor and Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) disaster recovery and continuity of operations coordination and management.
2. IT Supervisor/Lead IT Engineer; and
3. Five IT Program Specialists (contract).

These seven positions support all of DVS, which includes over 930 employees spread across business units located around the Commonwealth. Due to this low support to staff ratio, DVS IT has limited ability to provide internal applications development or IT audit functions to meet DVS' growing business needs. As a result, these services must be handled and prioritized by the DVS CIO and either outsourced or utilize other COV agency services where needed and is possible.

Simultaneously, the management of VITA projects and IT activities, equipment procurements, and VITA/NG infrastructure and billing issues continue to impact the DVS IT staff's ability to always effectively serve internal and external customers due to the multiple requests for information and tasks these efforts require on a daily basis. Increasing VITA/NG charges continue to have a financial impact on DVS operations and the ability to obtain and afford all required/beneficial IT systems and services to keep DVS operations going smoothly and at low operating costs. Many VITA/NG solutions and technologies, such as the VITA/NG wireless network solutions, new voice/telephony systems, MPLS Internet/data transfer circuits and devices, etc. may be too costly for our agency to justify these expenditures and usually cannot afford to implement at all/any locations. We are in need of these technologies and have new expansions and projects that will require these capabilities, but really need VITA/NG to make them affordable in order for us to implement and utilize them in order to better serve our customers. DVS hopes to interact with more veterans/outside entities using web-based and other automated systems. Since these transactions would require DVS to purchase the necessary hardware and software to implement these solutions, this will cause an increase to agency expenditures and possibly necessitate the hiring of additional qualified DVS IT staff to support these solutions.

Anticipated or desired changes to agency IT:

Due to only minor increases in financial capital for IT projects and possible increased VITA billing rates for the current and upcoming budget cycles, no major IT Projects are anticipated in the near future. IT recommends that one additional IT fulltime position be added to the IT section to serve as a system support engineer and that additional full-time positions be assigned to each new veterans care center prior to opening.

Estimate of Technology Funding Needs

Workforce Development

As noted in the "Key Risk Factors" section, the Department of Veterans Services faces several challenges in the area of workforce development, including:

- Benefit Services section funding and staffing (hiring/training/retention);
- Virginia Veteran and Family Support funding and staffing (increased service demands/service delivery);
- Virginia War Memorial funding and staffing (increased number of visitors and expanded education mission, opening of new wing); and
- Cemetery Services staffing (must keep pace with increased number of burials and workload).

Physical Plant

The DVS Physical Plant (agency owned/operated) consists of two veterans care centers, three veterans cemeteries, and the Virginia War Memorial. The Benefit Services section; Education, Training, and Employment Services section; Virginia Veteran and Family Support program; and Administrative Services section operate from state-owned or leased offices, or from space provided by community partners.

The veterans of the Commonwealth of Virginia, and, indeed, all of its citizens, hold DVS facilities to the highest standard. The Virginia War Memorial is the Commonwealth of Virginia's monument to honor the memory of Virginia's men and women who demonstrated a willingness to serve and fight to defend our way of life from World War II to the present. Virginia state veterans cemeteries are held to the highest standards. Virginia's veterans care centers are held as model facilities for the delivery of skilled nursing, Alzheimer's/memory, and short-term rehabilitative care.

The Department's physical plant is excellent, due to the exceptional work and dedication of all DVS employees and to the continued support of the Governor, General Assembly, and Department of General Services. Operating, maintaining, and improving the DVS physical plant will

continue to be a top priority of the Department.

Supporting Documents

Title	File Type
DVS 2019 Annual Report	Adobe PDF
Virginia Veterans Resource Guide	Adobe PDF
Virginia Department of Veterans Services website	Link

Service Area Plan

Education Program Certification for Veterans [10814]

Description of this Program / Service Area

In 2018, the General Assembly amended the Appropriation Act to remove Program 10814 [Education Program Certification for Veterans] as a separate appropriation and move it under 46703, Veterans Education, Transition and Employment, to accurately reflect budget and service line alignment within DVS.

Mission Alignment

Products and Services

Description of Major Products and Services

Anticipated Changes

Factors Impacting

Financial Overview

Biennial Budget

	2019 General Fund	2019 Nongeneral Fund	2020 General Fund	2020 Nongeneral Fund
Initial Appropriation for the Biennium	0	0	0	0
Changes to Initial Appropriation	0	0	0	0

Supporting Documents

Title	File Type
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Service Area Plan

Veterans Care Center Operations [43013]

Description of this Program / Service Area

The Veterans Care Center Services section operates two long-term care facilities for veterans: the Virginia Veterans Care Center (VVCC), a 224-bed facility adjacent to the Salem Veterans Affairs (VA) Medical Center in Roanoke, and the Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center (SBVCC), a 200-bed facility adjacent to the McGuire VA Medical Center in Richmond. Beginning in 2022, there will be four care centers with the completion of the Puller Veterans Care Center (PVCC), a 128-bed facility in Vint Hill, Fauquier County, and the Jones & Cabacoy Veterans Care Center (JCVCC), a 128-bed facility in the City of Virginia Beach.

Mission Alignment

This Service Area directly aligns with and supports the Department of Veterans Services mission of serving Virginia’s veterans by providing health care and comfort to veterans in a clean and safe environment.

Products and Services

Description of Major Products and Services

Assisted Living Services (VVCC Only): Provides residents with a limited number of activities of daily living, medication administration, and/or monitoring of behavior patterns.

Nursing Care Services and Skilled Care Services: Administration of medication and treatments, monitoring behavior, changes in medical condition, and care for residents by licensed nurses, physical therapists, occupational therapists, or speech language therapists.

Alzheimer’s/Memory Care Services: Secure wards with administration of medication and treatments, monitoring behavior, changes in medical condition, and care for residents with dementia and Alzheimer’s.

Short-term Rehabilitation Services: In-house rehabilitation services for service members and veterans in need of short-term rehabilitation services.

Products / Services					
Product / Service	Statutory Authority	Regulatory Authority	Required Or Discretionary	GF	NGF
Nursing Care Services and Skilled Care Services	Code of Virginia § 2.2-2001	12VAC5-371 38 CFR §§ 51.1- 51.210 is Federal VA regulation governing state veterans homes; 38 CFR §§ 42.483.1 – 483.480 is Federal requirements for all long-term care (nursing home) facilities.	Required	50,000	72,809,427
Assisted Living Services (VVCC Only) - Funds for this service are included in top line NGF number	Code of Virginia § 2.2-2001	12VAC5-371; 38 CFR §§ 51.1- 51.210 is Federal VA regulation governing state veterans homes; 38 CFR §§ 42.483.1 – 483.480 is Federal requirements for all long-term care (nursing home) facilities.	Required	0	0
Alzheimer’s/Memory Care Services - Funds for this service are included in top line NGF number	Code of Virginia § 2.2-2001	12VAC5-371 38 CFR §§ 51.1- 51.210 is Federal VA regulation governing state veterans homes; 38 CFR §§ 42.483.1 – 483.480 is Federal requirements for all long-term care (nursing home) facilities.	Required	0	0
Short-term Rehabilitation Services - Funds for this service are included in top line NGF number	Code of Virginia § 2.2-2001	12VAC5-371 38 CFR §§ 51.1- 51.210 is Federal VA regulation governing state veterans homes; 38 CFR §§ 42.483.1 – 483.480 is Federal requirements for all	Required	0	0

		long-term care (nursing home) facilities.			
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Anticipated Changes

In 2022, DVS will open two new Veterans Care Centers (VCC): Jones & Cabacoy VCC in the City of Virginia Beach, and Puller VCC in Vint Hill, Fauquier County. Both facilities will be 128-bed facilities, built to current USDVA design standards, offering short-term rehabilitation, skilled nursing care and Alzheimer's/memory care services.

Factors Impacting

Resident Census

- Virginia's veterans care centers draw residents from across the Commonwealth. However, the majority of Virginia Veterans Care Center (VVCC) residents are admitted from the Salem VA Medical Center, adjacent to the VVCC, and from hospitals in the Roanoke area. Similarly, the Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center (SBVCC) admits primarily from the McGuire VA Medical Center and hospitals in the Richmond area. Both VVCC and SBVCC maintain strong ties with veterans service organizations and operate ongoing public awareness campaigns to ensure that veterans and their family members are aware of Virginia's veterans care centers.
- Care center residents requiring hospitalization must be discharged, but care and consideration is made to try to promptly readmit these former residents following their hospital stay.
- Virginia's care centers must maintain a strong census to ensure adequate operating funds and the delivery of high quality services. It is the goal of DVS that our veterans care centers, once fully operational, should not have to rely on General Fund support for daily operations.
- Bond funding has been approved for the construction of new care centers in Fauquier County and Virginia Beach. Additionally, in 2019, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) awarded federal grant funds for both projects.

Staffing

- The Virginia Veterans Care Center (VVCC) strives to maintain consistent staffing levels, however, it faces challenges in recruiting and retention of nursing and support staff, due to competition from local hospitals and long-term care facilities. Competition in the area of wages, benefits, and working conditions for all staff in health care is especially strong. Given the VVCC is adjacent to the Salem VA Medical Center and the close proximity of area hospitals and other long-term care facilities, the problem of nursing recruitment and retention is exacerbated.
- The Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center (SBVCC) strives to maintain consistent staffing levels, however, it also faces competition for healthcare workers in the Richmond area, which is intense, as there are over 10 hospitals and over 30 nursing care facilities with which SBVCC competes affecting nursing, dietary and housekeeping. In the Richmond area, the competition in wages, benefits, and working conditions is fierce with so many businesses competing for qualified employees.

Financial Overview

Virginia's veterans care centers receive no regular operating support from the general fund; current operations rely on nongeneral fund revenue from Medicare, Medicaid, private insurance, and a per diem from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Biennial Budget

	2019 General Fund	2019 Nongeneral Fund	2020 General Fund	2020 Nongeneral Fund
Initial Appropriation for the Biennium	50,000	60,077,320	50,000	65,809,427
Changes to Initial Appropriation	0	0	0	7,000,000

Supporting Documents

Title	File Type
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Case Management Services for Veterans Benefits [46701]

Description of this Program / Service Area

This service area assists Virginia veterans and family members in the development and submission of service-connected disability and pension claims, as well as death and survivor benefits, to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. It represents veterans in the appeals process, assists with eligibility for state veterans benefits, and works in conjunction with partners to connect veterans to their federal and state veterans benefits.

Mission Alignment

This service area directly aligns with the department’s mission of ensuring that Virginia’s veterans and their families receive the federal and state veterans benefits they have earned through service and sacrifice.

Products and Services

Description of Major Products and Services

Claims development and submission: Prepare and submit disability compensation, pension, and other claims to the VA at one of our 34 offices around the Commonwealth. Gathering and developing evidence (medical records, unit histories, etc.) necessary to support the claims application package.

Legal representation of veterans: Represent veterans and family members in the appeals process, including hearings at the USDVA Regional Office in Roanoke, and before the Board of Veterans Appeals in Washington, D.C.

Service Disabled, Veteran Owned Small Business (SDVOSB) Program: In support of the Small Business and Supplier Diversity agency (SBSD), Benefits staff certifies that an applicant for the SDVOSB Program qualifies or not.

Products / Services					
Product / Service	Statutory Authority	Regulatory Authority	Required Or Discretionary	GF	NGF
Claims development and submission	Code of Virginia § 2.2-2001 38 USC §§ 5901-5902, 5904	38 CFR § 14.629	Required	8,418,957	0
Legal representation of veterans - Funds included in top line GF number	Code of Virginia § 2.2-2001		Discretionary	0	0
Service Disabled, Veteran Owned Small Business (SDVOSB) Program - Funds included in top line GF number	Code of Virginia § 2.2-2001		Discretionary	0	0

Anticipated Changes

DVS opened new Benefit Offices in Fairfax County on Fort Belvoir, in the City of Virginia Beach near NAS Oceana and at Fort Lee south of Richmond in FY2019.

Factors Impacting

1. Experience levels of Veterans Service Representatives (VSRs): Training (initial, refresher, ongoing) is critical to agency success. It takes one to two years of training and on-the-job experience for new VSRs to become fully proficient. It is vital that the Benefits Services section has the funding and staff resources necessary to adequately support the intensive and sustained training program to deliver top-quality service to Virginia veterans and families.
2. Recruiting, retention, and turnover: Staff turnover and funding constraints impact the section’s ability to keep all offices fully staffed and operational. Accredited personnel shortfalls cause temporary office closures and reduced services to Virginia’s veterans. While the Commonwealth’s human resource (HR) policies provide agencies with HR tools to help recruit and retain qualified staff, funding constraints severely limit the section’s ability to offer competitive salary/benefits packages to attract, train, and retain qualified personnel. Increased FY16 funding began to remedy turnover and training issues and additional funds in FY17 and FY18 continue recent progress in this area, however, salaries in the metropolitan areas, Northern Virginia, in particular, continue to lag substantially behind private business and the federal government.
3. Functionality and appearance of DVS field offices: DVS must continue to ensure that agency personnel have the tools (IT and office equipment, supplies, etc.) necessary to serve our customers. DVS has focused extensively in the past three years on the functionality and appearance of DVS field offices to ensure that Virginia veterans and family members are served in a professional environment.

Financial Overview

The operations of the Benefit Services section are supported entirely by the General Fund (GF).

Biennial Budget

	2019 General Fund	2019 Nongeneral Fund	2020 General Fund	2020 Nongeneral Fund
Initial Appropriation for the Biennium	7,996,947	0	8,144,957	0
Changes to Initial Appropriation	0	0	274,000	0

Supporting Documents

Title **File Type**

Virginia Veteran and Family Support Services [46702]

Description of this Program / Service Area

The Virginia Veteran and Family Support (VVFS) program is operated by the Virginia Department of Veterans Services (DVS), in cooperation with the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS), the Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS), and many other federal, state, local, and community partners.

VVFS was established in 2008 (as the Virginia Wounded Warrior Program) in response to the growing need to improve and expand services to our nation’s veterans and their family members coping with the impact of deployment, military service, posttraumatic stress (PTSD), operational stress and/or traumatic brain injury (TBI). VVFS monitors and coordinates the delivery of behavioral health, rehabilitative, and supportive services for Virginia veterans and their families.

VVFS works to ensure Virginia veterans do not slip through the cracks, by providing timely assessment, treatment, and support through an extensive network of federal, state, and local partnerships, to promote recovery and resilience. VVFS serves veterans of any era who are Virginia residents, members of the Virginia National Guard and Armed Forces Reserves not in active federal service, and family members of those veterans and service members.

VVFS serves our most vulnerable veterans, including justice-involved veterans, incarcerated veterans, and those at risk for, or experiencing homelessness. VVFS specializes in closing service gaps and enhancing response systems for all veterans in the Commonwealth and their families, by referring them to mental health, physical rehabilitation, and other services as needed. VVFS Resource Specialists also help them achieve individually identified goals and periodically monitor their progress toward achieving those goals. VVFS core services include peer and family support, and hand-on assistance navigating supportive services.

Mission Alignment

The mission of the VVFS aligns directly with the Department’s mission of serving Virginia veterans and their families.

Products and Services

Description of Major Products and Services

Products / Services					
Product / Service	Statutory Authority	Regulatory Authority	Required Or Discretionary	GF	NGF
Monitor and coordinate mental health and rehabilitative services support	Code of Virginia § 2.2-2001.1		Required	4,584,824	282,054
Housing Development & Homeless Services - - Funds included in top line GF/NGF number	Code of Virginia § 2.2-2001.1		Required	0	0
Criminal Justice and Reentry Services - - Funds included in top line GF/NGF number	Code of Virginia § 2.2-2001.1		Required	0	0
Retreats, family support: Mission:Healthy Relationships; Mission:Healthy Families - - Funds included in top line GF/NGF number	Code of Virginia § 2.2-2001.1		Discretionary	0	0

Anticipated Changes

Hiring of additional resource specialists and peer recovery specialists is necessary to ensure sufficient staff capacity to meet growing needs in specific regions of the Commonwealth.

Factors Impacting

1. Building and maintaining successful partnerships with other agencies and entities: An extensive network of federal, state, local, and community partners ensure the best possible outcomes for VVFS clients.

2. Flexibility and adaptation: The needs of VVFS clients are both evolving and emerging based on current events, for example VVFS is now working with military families where both spouses are active-duty and facing deployments. VVFS must continue to be responsive to the changing needs of veterans and families.
3. Resources for funding and staffing: VVFS must have the funding and staffing resources to recruit, hire, and retain highly qualified professionals in order to deliver quality services to Virginia's veterans and family members. VVFS will closely monitor funding and staffing levels to ensure that resources are sufficient to meet requirements in FY19/20 and beyond.

Financial Overview

The Virginia Veteran and Family Support is supported primarily by the General Fund (GF), but Nongeneral Funds (NGF) also support VVFS operations. NGF monies listed in the Appropriation Act come from grants, primarily federal grants. Donated funds also support VVFS operations – these are held in the Veterans Services Fund and are allocated to support VVFS programs and services (this spending is accounted for in Program 46704). The VVFS appropriation includes up to \$200,000 (GF) per year for the VHDA-operated Granting Freedom program.

Biennial Budget

	2019 General Fund	2019 Nongeneral Fund	2020 General Fund	2020 Nongeneral Fund
Initial Appropriation for the Biennium	4,584,824	282,054	4,584,824	282,054
Changes to Initial Appropriation	0	0	0	0

Supporting Documents

Title **File Type**

Veterans Education, Transition, and Employment Services [46703]

Description of this Program / Service Area

Education Services

This service area is responsible for:

- Approving education institutions and establishments operating in Virginia, in order that eligible veterans and their dependents may enroll and receive financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) while pursuing an approved educational course or program through the G.I. Bill. Approved educational programs, including: state colleges/universities, private and for-profit colleges/universities, technical/trade schools, licensing/certification programs, and OJT/Apprenticeship programs.
- Conducting compliance surveys of approved educational facilities that have at least one veteran/dependent enrolled to verify enrollment data, awards actions, and previous payments for accuracy; and to ensure that payments made to eligible veterans and their dependents are in keeping with USDVA regulations.
- Leading DVS activities (program administration and eligibility determination) in support of the Virginia Military Survivors and Dependents Education Program (VMSDEP).

Employment and Transition Services

- This service area is responsible for:
- Supporting the creation of employment opportunities for Virginia veterans through the Virginia Values Veterans (V3) Program.
- Assisting veterans transitioning from military service to achieve success through employment, education, or entrepreneurship through the Virginia Transition Assistance Program (VTAP).
- Providing transitioning military service members with specialized medical training an opportunity for employment at partner healthcare providers through the Military Medics and Corpsmen (MMAC) Program.
- Providing outreach and targeted services to Virginia’s women veterans through the Virginia Women Veterans Program Manager and Annual Virginia Women Veterans Summit.

Mission Alignment

The Virginia Department of Veterans Services (DVS) recognizes the importance of providing educational, transition, and employment opportunities for veterans and their eligible dependents. The Veterans Education and Transition & Employment sections' mission aligns with the departmental philosophy to support the education, transition, employment, and personal development of veterans and their families.

Products and Services

Description of Major Products and Services

Products / Services					
Product / Service	Statutory Authority	Regulatory Authority	Required Or Discretionary	GF	NGF
State Approving Agency (SAA) [GI Bill]	Title 38 USC § 3001- 3699A		Required	0	904,188
Virginia Transition Assistance Program	Code of Virginia § 2.2-2001.2		Required	3,183,921	0
Virginia Values Veterans (V3) - Funds included in above GF number	Code of Virginia § 2.2-2001.2		Required	0	0
Military Medics and Corpsmen Program - Funds included in above GF number	Code of Virginia § 2.2-2001.4		Required	0	0
Virginia Military Survivors & Dependents Education Program (VMSDEP) - Funds included in above GF number	Code of Virginia § 23.1-608		Required	0	0

Anticipated Changes

For Education programs:

DVS has spearheaded the formation of the Virginia Association of School Certifying Officials (VASCO). VASCO is comprised of school certifying

officials (SCOs) and will take on the role of offering training and professional development for both new and seasoned SCOs in Virginia. DVS will partner with VASCO to assist with training workshops and conferences. This partnership will help provide more training opportunities for the schools and a streamlined way for DVS to address changes and other issues without an increase in workload.

For Employment and Transition programs:

Governor Northam has set a goal of 35,000 veteran hires by Virginia companies or state agencies by the end of his term in January 2021. The V3 program is streamlined with lessons learned and best practices to meet the Governor’s goal and to create a more efficient and customer focused program. V3 has an updated website providing easier access to information and is now mobile-phone friendly.

Only July 1, 2018, with the 2019-2020 biennial budget, VETE gained a new full-time Virginia Women Veterans Program Manager. This positions will work with partners across the Commonwealth to provide veterans with targeted assistance, resources, guidance and connections as well as to continue to build networks and relationships with our local, state and federal government partners, educational institutions, non-profit organizations, veterans service organizations (VSOs) and other community groups to support women veterans.

Factors Impacting

- G.I. Bill program certification and audit functions are funded through a contract with the USDVA, which determines how much each state will receive per fiscal year. Federal contract amounts limit the number of employees who may be hired to support required program certification and audit functions.
- Resource levels must be carefully monitored to ensure that DVS has the resources necessary to meet all requests for program certification, and to perform the number of audits required annually by the USDVA.
- Staffing: Expanding capacity for V3, MMAC, VTAP, Entrepreneurship and Women Veterans is contingent on available resources.
- Building and maintaining successful partnerships with Virginia businesses, Governor’s Workforce Board, Local Planning Groups, key stakeholders and military installations.
- Increase engagement with employers after veterans are hired, to assist in retention efforts, contingent on available resources.
- Flexibility and adaptability: continuing to expand online-based resources and tools to create larger reach to companies and veterans in transition.
- Communications and outreach: utilizing earned media, social media campaigns, branding, and other avenues to expand participation by both veterans and companies to connect job-seeking veterans with high-quality, high-paying jobs in the Commonwealth at companies that appreciate their military service.

Financial Overview

V3, VTAP, MMAC, and the Virginia Women Veterans program are funded through the General Fund. The number of veterans these programs can serve is dependent on funding levels. As the number of veterans served by the programs grows in future fiscal years, additional resources may be required to meet demand for services. V3 utilizes non-general (donated) funds to enhance employer outreach and training programs. The Virginia Women Veterans Summit also utilizes partnership/sponsorship funds to make the annual conference a successful event.

Biennial Budget

	2019 General Fund	2019 Nongeneral Fund	2020 General Fund	2020 Nongeneral Fund
Initial Appropriation for the Biennium	3,071,227	904,188	3,183,921	904,188
Changes to Initial Appropriation	0	0	0	0

Supporting Documents

Title **File Type**

Service Area Plan

Veterans Services Fund Administration [46704]

Description of this Program / Service Area

This service area is responsible for distributing the nongeneral appropriation funds transferred to DVS by the Veterans Services Foundation (VSF), as of July 1, 2017.

Mission Alignment

As of July 1, 2017 the Veterans Services Foundation is a separate agency of the Commonwealth, governed and administered by a board of trustees, through the Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs. DVS and VSF continue to maintain strong ties and work together to fund DVS programs and services for Virginia veterans.

Products and Services

Description of Major Products and Services

Products / Services					
Product / Service	Statutory Authority	Regulatory Authority	Required Or Discretionary	GF	NGF
Financial support for DVS programs and services	Code of Virginia § 2.2-2715.1		Required	0	0

Anticipated Changes

None

Factors Impacting

Economic factors affects donors ability and/or willingness to give.

Financial Overview

The majority of funds coming into the VSF are earmarked by donors for specific programs and service lines within DVS. The Foundation also solicits and accepts non-restricted donations that can be allocated to support any DVS program/service

Biennial Budget

	2019 General Fund	2019 Nongeneral Fund	2020 General Fund	2020 Nongeneral Fund
Initial Appropriation for the Biennium	0	796,000	0	796,000
Changes to Initial Appropriation	0	0	0	0

Supporting Documents

Title	File Type
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General Management and Direction [49901]

Description of this Program / Service Area

The Commissioner and Deputy Commissioners lead agency operations. They are supported by the Directors of Communications, Human Resources, and Technology; by the Chief Financial Officer; and by the Administrative Services team. The Administrative Services section provides fiscal, payroll, procurement, information technology, human resources, development, legislative, and budget support for agency operations. Legal services are provided by the Office of the Attorney General.

Mission Alignment

The Administrative Services section supports the department’s seven service delivery sections in serving Virginia veterans and family members. The Commissioner and Deputy Commissioners lead the agency. The Directors of Communications, Human Resources, and Technology; the Chief Financial Officer; and the Administrative Services team provides multiple services to the department's service-delivery sections.

Products and Services

Description of Major Products and Services

Communications: Marketing and outreach, agency brochures and information to media, veterans, other agencies and the public.

Fiscal management and financial reporting: Budgeting, auditing, accounts payable/receivable, payroll processing, procurement, construction project tracking and cost reporting, and coordination of receipt and spending of donated funds to the Veterans Services Foundation.

Human Resources: Employee recruitment and selection, evaluations, position classification and compensation, grievance processing, and administration of benefits plans.

Legislation and Policy: Coordination of budget and legislative strategy with key stakeholders, tracking and disseminating information on veterans legislation during Session. Development and promulgation of agency operating and management policies. Coordination and management of BVS and JLC. Management of the agency’s strategic plan. Management the policy and regulations for §§ 58.1-3219.5, 58.1-3219.9

IT/COOP: IT systems architecture and infrastructure planning, support, and project management; information security management and data integrity planning, support, and oversight; Continuity of Operations (COOP) and Disaster Recovery lead.

Legal: Provided by the Office of the Attorney General

Products / Services					
Product / Service	Statutory Authority	Regulatory Authority	Required Or Discretionary	GF	NGF
Communications	Code of Virginia §§ 2.2-2003, 2.2-2004				
Fiscal management and financial reporting	Code of Virginia §§ 2.2-2003, 2.2-2004				
Human Resources	Code of Virginia §§ 2.2-2003, 2.2-2004				
Legislation and Policy	Code of Virginia §§ 2.2-2003, 2.2-2004				
IT/COOP	Code of Virginia §§ 2.2-2003, 2.2-2004				
Legal	Code of Virginia § 2.2-507				

Anticipated Changes

The expansion of the Virginia War Memorial, to be completed in 2020, and opening the two new veterans care centers in 2022, will require growth of the agency’s administrative support structure.

Factors Impacting

- Resource levels for staffing and funding;
- Changes in state policies regarding HR, financial management;
- Coordination with state central agencies such as VITA, Department of Accounts, Department of General Services, and Auditor of Public Accounts.

Financial Overview

The majority of funding for the Administrative Services section comes from a General Fund appropriation, while a portion comes from Nongeneral Funds transferred from the Department's service sections.

Biennial Budget

	2019 General Fund	2019 Nongeneral Fund	2020 General Fund	2020 Nongeneral Fund
Initial Appropriation for the Biennium	2,357,446	416,298	2,357,446	416,298
Changes to Initial Appropriation	0	0	0	0

Supporting Documents

Title **File Type**

State Veterans Cemetery Management and Operations [50206]

Description of this Program / Service Area

Virginia’s three state-operated veterans cemeteries provide honorable burial and memorial services to Virginia’s veterans and eligible dependents. The Virginia Veterans Cemetery is located in Amelia, the Albert G. Horton, Jr. Memorial Veterans Cemetery in Suffolk, and the Southwest Virginia Veterans Cemetery in Dublin.

Mission Alignment

This service area directly aligns with the department’s mission of ensuring that Virginia’s veterans and their eligible dependents receive the perpetual care they have earned through service and sacrifice.

Products and Services

Description of Major Products and Services

Internments: In-ground casketed remains, In-ground cremated remains; above ground columbarium for cremated remains. All three state veteran cemeteries must meet U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs/National Cemetery Administration (UDDVA/NCA) rules and requirements.

Perpetual care of gravesites: In-ground casketed remains, In-ground cremated remains; above ground columbarium for cremated remains. All three state veteran cemeteries must meet USDVA/NCA n rules and requirements.

Advanced planning for interment and inurnment services: Explaining burial benefits, filling out pre-applications and conducting outreach to communities, veterans service organizations (VSOs) and our veterans boards.

Coordination with funeral directors, local, state and federal agencies: Upon the veteran’s death, collect all paperwork, verify eligibility and enter forms in the Burial Operation Support System (BOSS) for space assignment and ordering the requested grave marker.

Coordination and Burial of unclaimed cremated remains: DVS partners with the government entities, funeral homes and private organizations to identify the unclaimed remains fo veterans. Remains stored at funeral homes, crematories, and medical examiners facilities are transferred to DVS, and we provide a dignified ceremony and final resting place at one of our state veterans cemeteries.

Products / Services					
Product / Service	Statutory Authority	Regulatory Authority	Required Or Discretionary	GF	NGF
Internments	Code of Virginia § 2.2-2001		Required	1,429,809	2,011,585
Perpetual care of gravesites - Funding included above	Code of Virginia § 2.2-2001		Required	0	0
Advanced planning for interment and inurnment services - - Funding included above	Code of Virginia § 2.2-2001		Required	0	0
Coordination with funeral directors, local, state and federal agencies - - Funding included above	Code of Virginia § 2.2-2001		Required	0	0
Coordination and Burial of unclaimed cremated remains - - Funding included above	Code of Virginia § 2.2-2001		Required	0	0

Anticipated Changes

No anticipated changes until Culpeper National Cemetery is closed to new burials (expected to happen sometime in the next 10-15 years unless USDVA/NCA purchases additional land adjacent to the cemetery to enable expansion or there is a drop in burial rates at Culpeper National).

The number of internments is anticipated to increase.

Factors Impacting

- Because Virginia’s state veterans cemeteries do not charge for burial plots, pre-planning efforts focus instead on eligibility determination

through the “pre-application” process, in which veterans and/or family members may submit the necessary documents to the cemetery to determine eligibility; the documents are kept on file until needed. Submission of these documents does not commit the veteran to be buried at the cemetery.

- Virginia’s veterans cemeteries will continue to focus marketing efforts on veterans of all ages, in order to make them aware of the benefits offered by Virginia’s veterans cemeteries before they opt to purchase a plot in a privately owned/operated cemetery.
- The Albert G. Horton, Jr. Memorial Veterans Cemetery, in Suffolk, is in close proximity to the Navy, Air Force, Army, and Coast Guard bases in the Tidewater region and thus has a large veteran and retire population on which to draw.
- The opening of the Southwest Virginia Veterans Cemetery (Dublin) in 2011 ensured that the memorial needs of veterans living in Southwest Virginia and the Shenandoah Valley are met.
- The Virginia Veterans Cemetery in Amelia ensures the memorial needs of veterans living in the greater Richmond metro area and Piedmont region are met.
- Northern Virginia is served by national cemeteries in Quantico and Culpeper.
- National cemeteries in Tennessee, North Carolina, and West Virginia serve small populations of Virginia veterans.

STAFFING

- Staffing levels are determined by numerous factors, the most important of which are the number of in-ground burials per year and the number of developed gravesites, both of which increases the workload of the cemetery grounds staff regarding current operations and ongoing grounds maintenance.
- Vehicle and equipment mechanic: A dedicated vehicle and equipment mechanic is needed when the number of burials per year exceeds 300.

BUDGETING

- Management and procurement of a phased replacement program for maintenance equipment, building furnishings and office equipment;
- Maintenance of cemetery grounds through seeding, fertilization, and weed control and old and worn out equipment must be replaced in a timely fashion; and
- Creation of an advertising campaign in order to reach a greater number of veterans. Such efforts would help to offset the efforts of private cemeteries to sell gravesite spaces to veterans who are unaware of their right to a free burial in a veterans cemetery. These veterans are generally aged 25 to 50 and do not belong to a veterans groups, which might have provided them with information about burial in a veterans cemetery.

WEATHER

- Potential effect on the ability of cemetery staff and funeral parties to safely reach the cemetery; and
- Potential difficulties to conduct scheduled funeral services include winter ice and snow, which raises the risk of injuries caused by falls; and in the summer there is the threat of heatstroke/sunstroke, with the attendant risk of liability.

OTHER RESOURCES

- Volunteer assistance: Local veterans, citizens, and Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs) give selflessly of their time to assist in many facets of cemetery operations, especially involving the annual Memorial Day, Veterans Day, and Wreaths Across America ceremonies. Veterans groups and individuals have also donated such items as benches, improving the overall appearance of the cemeteries;
- Local funeral homes: Cemetery personnel work with local funeral directors to help ensure that veterans and their families receive the information needed to contact any of our Virginia’s veterans cemeteries in their time of need;
- Local veterans and VSO posts/chapters do a great deal to assist with communications and marketing the cemeteries at no cost to DVS; and
- Local newspapers/TV stations/radio stations/media: One of the best sources for getting cemetery information out to the public is through local media outlets, which do stories on the cemeteries at Memorial Day and Veterans Day, as well as some coverage of unclaimed remains burials.

Financial Overview

Funding for the Cemetery Services section comes from a mix of state, federal, and private funds.

Nongeneral fund revenue comes from two sources. DVS receives a plot allowance from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs for each veteran buried. A \$300 fee is charged for each spouse or dependent buried. Nongeneral funds received are based on the number of burials performed.

Biennial Budget

	2019 General Fund	2019 Nongeneral Fund	2020 General Fund	2020 Nongeneral Fund
Initial Appropriation for the Biennium	1,129,809	1,946,585	1,429,809	2,011,585
Changes to Initial Appropriation	0	0	0	0

Supporting Documents

Title	File Type
2019 Virginia State Veterans Cemetery Studyyyyy	Adobe PDF

Virginia War Memorial Management and Operations [50209]

Description of this Program / Service Area

The Virginia War Memorial is the Commonwealth’s memorial to honor its war dead from World War II to the present, and all patriotic Virginians who rendered faithful service and sacrifice in the cause of freedom and liberty for the Commonwealth and the nation in time of war. The Memorial honors these Virginians by passing their stories of sacrifice forward through various education programs, “Virginians at War” documentary films, lectures, seminars, teacher institutes, conferences, exhibits, and ceremonies. The Memorial includes the Shrine of Memory with the statues, reflecting pool, eternal flame, amphitheater, memorial plantings and the Galanti Education Center, and opening in 2020, the expanded Shrine of Memory and the new C. Kenneth Wright Pavilion.

Mission Alignment

The mission of the Virginia War Memorial aligns with the Department of Veterans Services mission of serving Virginia's veterans and their eligible dependents.

Products and Services

Description of Major Products and Services

Honoring Virginians who served through historic preservation: In addition to the Shrine, recording the Missing in Action as a result of the Vietnam War, preserving the dignity of military medals, ribbons, certificates or other artifacts that come into our possession and making reasonable efforts to determine the rightful owner; *Virginians at War* documentary film series; Research library and artifact displays preserve Virginia’s war history and stories.

Indoor and outdoor venue space for DVS, boards, legislators, VSOs and community groups: Paul & Phyllis Galanti Education Center, Heilman Amphitheater, Hargrove Plaza, and the new Wright Pavilion are available to DVS and outside groups for educational, legislative or community events (non-political)

Products / Services					
Product / Service	Statutory Authority	Regulatory Authority	Required Or Discretionary	GF	NGF
Shrine of Memory	Code of Virginia § 2.2-2001.3		Required	1,471,355	0
Educational programs, events and Teacher Institutes - Funding included above	Code of Virginia § 2.2-2001.3		Required	0	0
Honoring Virginians who served through historic preservation - funding included above	Code of Virginia § 2.2-2001.3		Required	0	0
Indoor and outdoor venue space for DVS, boards, legislators, VSOs and community groups	Code of Virginia § 2.2-2001.3		Discretionary	0	0

Anticipated Changes

The expansion of the Shrine of Memory will honor those lost in the Global War on Terrorism and future conflicts. The newly expanded C. Kenneth Wright Pavilion, opening in 2020, will greatly enhance the Virginia War Memorial’s ability to provide world-class preservation and education programs. It will house a Virginia Medal of Honor Gallery, Distance Learning Studio, Veterans Art Gallery, Research Library, 350-seat divisible Lecture Hall, and administrative space - relocated to provide for a major Exhibit Hall in the Galanti Center. The construction project will also triple parking capacity.

Factors Impacting

Funding and staffing levels are the primary factors impacting the Virginia War Memorial to fulfill its mission. Tthe Memorial's employees conduct dozens of programs annually and host thousands of visitors a year. The demand for Memorial programs and facilities will grow with the 2020 opening of the 28,000 square foot addition.

Financial Overview

Funding for Virginia War Memorial operations and maintenance comes entirely from General Funds. The number of visitors to the Memorial has steadily increased as a result of the many patriotic events and educational programs offered at the Memorial. Additional funding was provided for FY20 to support the increased maintenance and security requirements of the expansion.

The Virginia War Memorial Foundation, a 501(c)(3), supports the Virginia War Memorial's education programs and capital projects. Educational programs developed by the Memorial and funded through the Foundation, such as the *Virginians at War* film series, are now used in middle and high schools statewide.

Biennial Budget

	2019 General Fund	2019 Nongeneral Fund	2020 General Fund	2020 Nongeneral Fund
Initial Appropriation for the Biennium	1,471,355	0	1,471,355	0
Changes to Initial Appropriation	0	0	0	0

Supporting Documents

Title **File Type**