

# Pennsylvania State Veterans Commission

## Meeting Agenda

October 4, 2024, at 1000 AM

Location: Arrowheads Community Club

1000	Call to Order	Chairman Nicholas Taylor
	Moment of Silence	Vice-Chair Connie Snavelly
	Pledge of Allegiance	Chairman Nicholas Taylor
	Introduction of Commission Members	Chairman Nicholas Taylor
	Oath of Office:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Mr. Robert Hammaker-DAV</li><li>Ms. Barbara Loncar-VFW</li></ul>	
	Chairman's Opening Remarks	Chairman Nicholas Taylor
	TAG's Opening Remarks and Comments	
	Approval of 05 September 2024 Meeting Minutes	Requires Vote
	Reading of Official and Other Communications	Chairman Nicholas Taylor
	DAG-VA Opening Remarks and Report	BG (PA) Maureen Weigl
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>PPL, BVH, PIRO</li><li>Programs Report</li></ul>	<b>Requires Vote</b>
	VISN 4	Mr. Timothy Liezert
	Committee Reports	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Legislative</li><li>Pensions/Relief/Grave Markings</li><li>RETX</li><li>MAL</li><li>Transportation</li><li>Veterans' Health</li><li>VSO Grant</li><li>Women Veterans</li><li>PAWVC Update</li></ul>	TBD
	Unfinished Business	Mr. Larry Googins
	New Business	Mr. Alvin Loveless
	Good of the Order	Vice-Chair Constance Snavelly
	Agenda Items for Next Meeting	Mr. William Hines
	Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman	Mr. Mark Baylis
	Closing Remarks	TBD
	Next Meeting	Ms. Lisa Kaye
	December 6, 2024, at 10 AM	President John Fritz
	Fort Indiantown Gap, Annville	Chairman Nicholas Taylor
	Retiring of the Colors	Chairman Nicholas Taylor
	Adjournment	Chairman Nicholas Taylor



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

The Pennsylvania State Veterans' Commission (SVC) meeting was called to order at 2:30 PM.

**Moment of Silence and Pledge of Allegiance**

Vice Chairwoman Constance Snavelly led the moment of silence.

**Commission Introductions**

BG (PA) Maureen Weigl	DAG DMVA-OVA
Mr. Nicholas Taylor	SVC Chairman; President MOAA
Mr. David Gyger	Designee, Commander Veterans of Foreign Wars
Mr. William Hines	Commander, Disabled American Veterans
Mr. Wanda Grover	Commander, Blinded Veterans of America
Mr. Alvin Loveless	President, PA State Association of County Directors of Veterans Affairs
Mr. Richard Fine	Commander, Jewish War Veterans
Ms. Diana Henry	Commandant, Marine Corps League
Mr. Troy Michaels	Designee, Adjutant, The American Legion
Ms. Lisa Kaye	Member-at-Large
Mr. Mark Baylis	Member-at-Large
Mr. Leonard Johnson	Member-at-Large
Mr. Michael Brooker	Member-at-Large
Mr. Larry Googins	President, Vietnam Veterans of America
Mr. Stanley Majocka	Commander, Italian American War Veterans
Ms. Constance Snavelly	SVC V-Chairwoman, Representative, Korean War Veterans
Mr. Chris Fidler	Director, Keystone Chapter Paralyzed Veterans of America
Mr. Michael Rang	Commander, Catholic War Veterans
Mr. Philip Arnold	Commander, Military Order of Purple Hearts
Mr. John Fritz	Commander, The American Legion

**Absent**

Mr. Paul Foresman	Commander, AMVETS
Mr. Gerry Hawk	Adjutant, AMVETS
Mr. John Getz	Adjutant, Veterans of Foreign Wars
Mr. Barbara Loncar	Commander, Veterans of Foreign Wars
Mr. Robert Hammaker	Adjutant, Disabled American Veterans

**Others Present**

Mr. Tim Liezert	VISN 4
Mr. Nathan Silcox-TEAMS	Executive Director, PA Senate VAEP
Mr. Dusty Durand-TEAMS	DMVA-PPL
Mr. Travis Davis	Executive Director DMVA-BVH
Mr. Seth Bengé	DMVA-PPL
Mr. Ed Cherry-TEAMS	DMVA-OGC
Mr. David Cowgill-TEAMS	VISN-4 Direct of Communications
Ms. Serena Cruz-TEAMS	DMVA-BVH

Mr. George Brown-TEAMS	VVA
Ms. Mary Sue Jones-TEAMS	PASACDVA-Montour County
Mr. Charles 'Chuck' Jackson-TEAMS	VFW
Mr. William Albert-TEAMS	BVA
Mr. Richard Hudzinski-TEAMS	VVA
Ms. Michelle Brandt-TEAMS	Closed Captioner
<b>Moment of Silence</b>	<b>Vice-Chair Constance Snavely</b>
<p>There are events that occur in one's lifetime that are so significant that the moment becomes ingrained in our memory like a snapshot in time. One of those events occurred on September 11, 2001, with the attack on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. That day is now referred to as Patriot Day. The 20<sup>th</sup> is POW/MIA Recognition Day, and of course, we remember our Air Force brethren who celebrate their branch's birthday on the 18<sup>th</sup> of September.</p>	
<b>Oath of Office</b>	<b>DAG-VA Maureen Weigl</b>
<p>The DAG-VA administered the Oath of Office to the following newly appointed Pennsylvania State Veterans Commission members: Mr. William Hines-DAV, Mr. Alvin Loveless-PSACDVA, Mr. John Fritz-TAL, Ms. Wanda Grover-BVA</p>	
<b>Vice-Chair Opening Remarks</b>	<b>Ms. Constance Snavely</b>
<p>As a member of the Indiantown Gap National Cemetery Memorial Council, I want to take a moment to discuss the Avenue of Flags and the continual need for casket flags. Indiantown Gap National Cemetery received special dispensation to fly casket flags along the roads in the cemetery, which is known as the Avenue of Flags. The flags are posted prior to Memorial Day and retrieved after Veterans Day. There are groups of volunteers that inspect the flags on a weekly basis and replace worn or faded flags. These flags were donated by families whose loved one had the flag draped over their coffin or folded by their urn. There is a continual need for flags as the cotton flags do not hold up well in the elements. Previously there were close to 700 flags flying in the cemetery. Now there are only approximately 300 due to a dwindling stockpile. If the family would like to personally post their donated flag near their loved ones' grave, that can be arranged. After a flag is no longer serviceable, the flag is properly retired on site and the ashes spread on the cemetery grounds. I encourage you to spread the word throughout your organizations of the continual need for casket flags. I've been able to rescue several good flags from retirement at my church sponsored Cub Scout's annual flag retirement. Families that donate flags will receive a letter of appreciation from the Indiantown Gap National Cemetery. Flags may be dropped off in a collection box at the Cemetery Administration office or at the Memorial Day or Veterans Day ceremony. If those options are not feasible, you can collect them and bring them to the SVC meeting, and I will deliver them to the cemetery. I have pamphlets available on the program. Thank you</p>	
<b>Chairman's Opening Remarks</b>	<b>Mr. Nicholas Taylor</b>
<p>The Chairman welcomed the new members, members, and guests to the meeting. He briefed on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to meet with DMVA staff and Chairwoman every Tuesday, thanked staff.</li> <li>• Attended a veteran's event in Pittsburgh (Wednesday) that consisted of veterans from several of our BVH homes with DAG, Mr. Davis and Ms. Raymond.</li> <li>• Attended the GAC-VA-noted the program of first responders with military backgrounds trained in assisting veterans in crisis.</li> <li>• Presented a Flag Day speech on June 9 at The American Legion.</li> <li>• July 20 made remarks at the PA American Legion convention.</li> <li>• Praised the event at VETCon</li> <li>• Signed 5 Educational Gratuities for September for \$47,550,00</li> <li>• Chairman announced on behalf of DMVA EDS if organizations on commission are looking to begin new programs or add to existing programs please identify ASAP.</li> </ul>	

- Chairman announced the extended time frame to apply for the MAL position on the commission to September 30, 2024.

Questions/Discussion

None.

**TAG's Opening Remarks**

**MG Mark Schindler**

TAG was unavailable for the meeting, DAG-OVA was assigned on his behalf. See those remarks under DAG-OVA remarks.

Questions/Discussion

None.

**Approval of the June 7, 2024, Meeting Minutes**

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

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

The body agreed; motion carried. Minutes approved.

**Reading of Official and Other Communications**

**Chairman Taylor**

No official communications

Questions/Discussion

None.

**Deputy Adjutant General-VA Remarks**

**BG (PA) Weigl**

DAG greeted the commission members, thanked them for attending VETCon and urged them to continue to attend all the sessions. She then introduced PA State Representative Mark Gillen from Berks County, the current Chairman of the PA House VEAP.

- He informed members he had just come from a VAEP voting meeting. He expressed how important to him it was to attend VETCon, and to meet the SVC members.
- He expressed how impressed he was with the amount and type of work everyone does on behalf of our PA veterans.
- He informed the members of his total commitment to veterans, veteran's families, and the pursuit of benefits for them. He briefly outlined his family's military history.
- He introduced Ms. Kerry Vanyo from PA State Senator Solomon's office. Ms. Vanyo, she agreed with everything Rep. Gillen said.

Questions/Discussion

None.

**BVH Bureau of Veterans Homes**

**Mr. Davis**

The Commandants from the six veteran's homes introduced themselves, provided a brief background on themselves and a brief update on the home they oversee.

- Margo Coleman-Delaware Valley Veterans' Home, Christina Dambeck-Hollidaysburg Veterans' Home, Brian Gula-Southeastern Veterans Center, Cheri Spacht-PA Soldiers', and Sailors' Home Vito Ruggiero-Gino J. Merli Veterans' Center, Cassie Betzler-Southwestern Veterans' Center

Each Commandant addressed their homes providing bed count, COVID update, past, current and any future events planned- one such event was taking a 100-year-old veteran to a MLB minor league baseball

game and how happy he was. They all expressed the joy they experience working with the veterans and the dedicated DMVA staff.	
<u>Questions/Discussion</u>	
None	
<b>DMVA Bureau of PIRO</b>	<b>Mr. Mutschler</b>
No Report:	
<u>Questions/Discussion</u>	
None	
<b>Approval of State Veterans' Programs Reports</b>	
<b>Motion:</b> Mr. Mark Baylis, MAL, made a motion to approve the programs report.	
<b>Second:</b> Mr. David Gyger, Designee VFW, seconded the motion.	
The body agreed; motion carried. Programs reports approved.	
<b>DMVA Policy, Planning, and Legislation</b>	<b>Mr. Durand</b>
Mr. Durand briefed on the following:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mr. Durand then briefed the members on the read ahead slides. He informed them that he anticipated some of the legislation will be passed this year. He noted DMVA-PPL is making progress in moving initiatives forward.</li> <li>• He said they are out session right now but are working behind the scenes with committee chairs and executive deputies to “get things aligned.”</li> <li>• Mr. Durand urged the commissioners to get their legislative proposals, ideas they would like considered together in anticipation to make the next session more fruitful.</li> </ul>	
<u>Questions/Discussion</u>	
None	
<b>VISN-4</b>	<b>Mr. Liezert</b>
Mr. Liezert reviewed/ highlighted the following talking points/slides that were available in the read ahead with the commission members:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mr. Liezert noted VISN4 is tailoring how veterans are receiving their medical plans which is more targeted around how the veteran would like it. Not medically directed which provides the veteran to interact in his own medical plan.</li> <li>• Noted the Acorn Study into each care facility. Targeting improving transportation and digital literacy.</li> <li>• Noted September is Suicide Prevention Month and two-year anniversary of 988 crisis line</li> <li>• 1.8 million Pact Act submissions with 1.5 million processed.</li> </ul>	
<u>Questions/Discussions</u>	
Mr. Liezert was asked the new formula of the 2024 flu vaccine. Mr. Liezert said he would get that.	
<b>Committee Reports</b>	
<b>Legislative Committee</b>	<b>TDB</b>
No official report	
<u>Questions/Discussion</u>	
None	
<b>Pensions/Relief/Grave Markings/State Military Cemetery Committee</b>	<b>Mr. Googins</b>

No official report.	<u>Questions/Discussions</u>
None.	
<b>RETX</b>	<b>Mr. Loveless</b>
No official Report	<u>Questions/Discussions</u>
None.	
<b>MAL</b>	<b>Vice-Chairwoman Constance Snavely</b>
The Committee and DMVA personnel reviewed and updated the Member-at-Large SOP, Candidate Evaluation Guide, and scoring sheets to improve the process for this current round of open Member-at-Large positions. The SVC is looking to fill one female veteran position and one veteran position without stipulation to gender or period served. The deadline for the open positions was extended to September 30 <sup>th</sup> . Please encourage veterans you know to apply for the positions	
<b>Transportation Committee</b>	<b>Mr. Hines</b>
Mr. William Hines briefed the members on some DAV transportation statistics. He will provide an end of the year statistic report on mileage, volunteers, number of vehicles and accompany sub-stats.	
	<u>Questions/Discussions</u>
None	
<b>Veteran Health Committee</b>	<b>Mr. Baylis</b>
Mr. Mark Baylis briefed members what he learned from attending a round table on suicide at VETCon. He noted two important programs in progress- Hero's Reach and Operation Second Chance regarding veteran suicide.	
	<u>Questions/Discussions</u>
None	
<b>VSO Grant Committee</b>	<b>TDB</b>
No official Report	<u>Questions/Discussions</u>
None.	
<b>Womens Health</b>	<b>Ms. Kaye</b>
No official report	<u>Questions/Discussions</u>
None	
<b>PAWVC</b>	<b>Mr. Fritz</b>
No official report	<u>Questions/Discussions</u>
None	
<b>Unfinished Business</b>	
None	
<b>New Business</b>	

Chairman Taylor introduced Mr. Nate Silcox the Executive Director of PA Senate VAEP. Mr. Silcox. He thanked Mr. Baylis for his involvement at VETCon round table on veteran suicide. He said there had been some good legislation signed into law, and looking forward to determining what can be wrapped up this fall period.

**Good of the Order**

Mr. Johnson-MAL thanked Mr. Durand for getting back to him with clarification on the Blind/Paralyzed Pension.

Chairman thanked all the members for attending VETCon.

Ms. Grover-BVA reminded commissioners that September 20 is national POW/MIA Day

Open house at Fort Indiantown Gap on November 16 from 11am too 3pm with a flyover scheduled around 11am. The gates will be open.

**Agenda for Next Meeting**

None

**Closing Remarks**

Chairman reminded members of the next meeting 04OCT24 and that there will be an election\.

**Next Meeting**

Friday, December 8, 10:00 AM  
Forum: Arrowheads Community Center, FIG

The minutes of this meeting are respectfully submitted by:

BG (PA) Maureen Weigl  
Deputy Adjutant General  
Veterans Affairs



**STATE VETERANS COMMISSION MEETING**  
**Friday October 4, 2024**





**DMVA MILITARY UPDATE**

# CURRENT AND FUTURE UNIT MOBILIZATIONS



FY 2024						FY 2025										
APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG
1-224 AVN DET 1 B - SWB -23 PAX																
56 SBCT - 2-112 IN - HOA#1 -1041 PAX																
56 SBCT - FLEE / FLEW - 14 PAX																
	28 MP - GTMO -111 PAX															
				56 SBCT - JMTG-E -167 PAX												
				56 SBCT - HOA#2 -685 PAX												
				213 PC - OSS -16 PAX												
				213 PC - OSS -20 PAX												
				213 PC - OIR -8 PAX												
						528 FIN - OSS - 25 PAX										
						3622 ODCO - OSS - 153 PAX										

ARNG Unit Soldiers in Theater: **1,106**  
 ARNG Soldiers at MOB/DEMOB Site: **621**  
 ARNG Individual Mob: **10**  
 Total ARNG Mob: **1,737**

**Total PANG  
 Mobilized: 806**

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

# CURRENT MOBILIZATIONS & TOTAL DEPLOYMENTS



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

**Total PANG Deployed 806**

# CURRENT AND FUTURE UNIT MOBILIZATIONS



MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN25	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP
<b>201 RHS (193)- GUAM- 86 PAX</b>																
<b>271 CBCS (193)- RCP- Various- 15 PAX</b>																
<b>112 COS (111)- Various- 44 PAX</b>												<b>148 ASOS (193)- Iraq- 15</b>				
<b>ALERT STATUS (HS)- 37 PAX</b>																
<b>RPA (HS)- 36 PAX</b>																

**Current ANG Unit Airmen Mob: 132**  
**Current ANG Individual Mob: 3**  
**Total: ANG Mob: 135**

# CURRENT MOBILIZATIONS & TOTAL DEPLOYMENTS



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



## Possible Fall Agenda

**SB 531** (Baker) An Act amending Title 51 (Military Affairs) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in State Veterans' Commission and Deputy Adjutant General for Veterans' Affairs, further providing for Veterans' Trust Fund. **09/23/2023 Passed out of House VAEP Cmte.**

**SB 1316 (Mastriano)** Global War on Terrorism Bonus. **09/17/2024 Passed out of Senate VAEP Cmte.**

**HB 2417** (Borowski) An Act amending Title 51 (Military Affairs) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, for Deputy Adjutant General for Veterans' Affairs, for qualifications and status, for specific duties and for accreditation; in veterans' organizations, further providing for grants to veterans' service officer programs; and making editorial changes. **09/05/2024 Passed out of House VAEP Cmte.**

**SB 973** (Pennycuik) An Act amending Title 51 (Military Affairs) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in general provisions, providing for veteran of Korean Armed Forces. **09/05/2024 Passed out of House VAEP Cmte.**

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

**SB 933** (Mastriano) An Act amending Title 51 (Military Affairs) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in Department of Military Affairs, further providing for advisory councils for veterans' homes. **09/05/2024 Passed out of House VAEP Cmte.**

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

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

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

## Blind, amputee and paralyzed veteran's pensions

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

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

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

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

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

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



## Passed Legislation 2023-2024

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



## 2024 Significant Dates

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

### General Assembly

**Senate:** Oct 1, 2, 7, 8, 9, 21, 22, 23, Nov 13, 14

**House:** Oct 1, 2, 21, 22, 23, Nov 12, 13

New Session Begins January 7, 2025

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

**General Election:** November 5, 2024

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

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

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



# Survey Update



Pennsylvania  
Department of Military  
and Veterans Affairs

SVH Survey Table as of September 20, 2024					SVH Survey Table as of September 20, 2024				
SVH	Regulatory Agency	Survey Reason/Type	Survey Date(s)	Status/comments	SVH	Regulatory Agency	Survey Reason/Type	Survey Date(s)	Status/comments
DWH	DOH Nursing	Annual Recertification	12/18/23 - 12/21/23	Cleared	PSSH	DOH Nursing	Annual Recertification	04/23/24 - 04/26/24	Cleared
	DOH Nursing	Abbreviated - Complaint	09/10/24	Results Pending		DOH Life Safety	Annual Recertification	04/16/24	Cleared
	DOH Nursing	Abbreviated - Complaint	01/11/24	Cleared		DHS	Annual Recertification	01/25, 01/26, 04/11	Cleared
	DOH Nursing	Abbreviated - Complaint	08/19/24	Cleared		VA	Annual Recertification	03/18/24 - 03/22/24	CAP accepted, date certain 06/13
	DOH Life Safety	Annual Recertification	02/20/24	Cleared		DOH Nursing	Annual Recertification	06/11/24 - 06/14/24	Cleared
GMVC	VA	Annual Recertification	12/19/23 - 12/22/23	CAP accepted, date certain 05/01	SEVC	DOH Nursing	Abbreviated - Complaint	03/14/24	Cleared
	DOH Nursing	Annual Recertification	08/13/24 - 08/16/24	POC accepted, date certain 10/15		DOH Life Safety	Annual Recertification	06/10/24	Cleared
	DOH Life Safety	Annual Recertification	08/21/24	POC accepted, date certain 10/21		DHS	Annual Recertification	10/04/23	Cleared
HVH	VA	Annual Recertification	02/27/24 - 03/01/24	CAP accepted, dates cert. 07/31, 10/31	SWVC	VA	Annual Recertification	02/26/24 - 03/01/24	CAP accepted, date certain 11/01
	DOH Nursing	Annual Recertification	07/15/24 - 07/18/24	Cleared		DOH Nursing	Annual Recertification	05/06/24 - 05/10/24	Cleared
	DOH Nursing	Abbreviated - Complaint	01/17/24	Cleared		DOH Nursing	Abbreviated - Complaint	08/07/24	Cleared
	DOH Life Safety	Annual Recertification	07/15/24 - 07/17/24	Cleared		DOH Nursing	Abbreviated - Complaint	07/03/24	Cleared
	DHS	Abbreviated - Incident	08/15/24	POC accepted, date certain 09/30		DOH Nursing	Abbreviated - Complaint	06/13/24	Cleared
	DHS	Annual Recertification	03/05/24 - 03/06/24	Cleared		DOH Nursing	Abbreviated - Complaint	01/30/24 - 01/31/24	Cleared
	VA	Annual Recertification	06/10/24 - 06/14/24	Cleared, provisional certification		DOH Life Safety	Annual Recertification	05/14/24 - 05/15/24	Cleared
					VA	Annual Recertification	05/07/24 - 05/10/24	CAP accepted, dates cert. 07/31, 10/31	

# Infection Prevention Update



Pennsylvania  
Department of Military  
and Veterans Affairs

COVID-19, Influenza, RSV Data							
Friday, September 20, 2024	DVVH	GMVC	HVH	PSSH	SEVC	SWVC	TOTAL
Total # of COVID + residents	1	2	0	0	1	3	7
Total # of COVID + staff	1	1	2	2	4	3	13
Total number of residents who have received the 2024/2025 COVID vaccine	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total number of Influenza+ residents	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total number of Influenza+ staff	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Total # of residents who received the 2024/2025 Influenza vaccine	124	125	0	0	95	0	344
Total # of staff who have received the 2024/2025 Influenza vaccine	0	0	1	1	0	1	3
Total # of + RSV residents	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total # of residents who require a dose of RSV vaccine	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

5 Star rating- last updated: August 28, 2024						
	DVVH	GMVC	HVH	PSSH	SEVC	SWVC
Overall	5	5	3	4	5	3
Health Inspection	4	4	2	3	3	2
Quality Measures	5	5	4	3	5	4
Staffing	5	5	5	5	5	5
Changes from July/August 2024	Unchanged	Unchanged	Unchanged	Unchanged	Unchanged	Unchanged

Resident Status: September 20, 2024				
Veteran Home	Isolation COVID	Quarantine	Isolation Influenza	Isolation RSV
DVVH	1	0	0	0
GMVC	2	0	0	0
HVH	0	0	0	0
PSSH	0	0	0	0
SEVC	1	0	0	0
SWVC	3	0	0	0

\*Influenza vaccines residents only : 344

\*COVID: 1 resident at DVVH and SEVC, 2 residents at GMVC, 3 residents at SWVC



## Pennsylvania Veterans Homes COVID-19 Update

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

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



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





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

- Region 1 - VSS Lana Evans successfully coordinated the delivery of a motorized scooter for Armstrong County Veterans Affairs office so that Veterans can easily get to the office from the parking lot that has caused much difficulty for them over the years.
- Region 2 - RPOC and VSS presented on VA and State veteran benefits to 27 veteran employees at Duquesne Light in Allegheny County. The organizers of the presentation were very pleased and plan on having us return again next year for another presentation. Four veterans were referred to their CDVA to file for VHA or VBA benefits.
- Region 3 - R3 held its kick-off meeting for the Mifflin-Juniata County Veteran Advocate Network (MJVAN) on 4 SEP at the Mifflin Co. CareerLink. PANG SFR was able to connect with two orgs for spotlight presentations on the calls they hold with families of deployed NG members.
- Region 4 - Jen (R4) served as the facilitator for the behavioral health and mental health resources breakout sessions at VETCON; Jen was able to develop many new relationships from the discussions; specifically further creating new partnering events with Elizabeth Dole Foundation focused on connecting with veteran families on suicide prevention
- Region 5 - VSS met with the Bensalem Home Depot Store. There are seven stores within that district, and they would all like to form a relationship with the PA DMVA and our community partners. Team Depot can assist with community lead projects, as well as provide materials, labor, and skilled resources to SMVF. The team captains will provide a direct line to the Home Depot foundation, which is their funding source.

### ■ **Successes**

- >21,000 Connections
- > 2,156 resources
- Building trust within the network



# Reintegration & Outreach Events



Pennsylvania  
Department of Military  
and Veterans Affairs

Outreach Statistics					
	1st Qtr	2nd Qtr	3rd Qtr	4th Qtr	Year to Date
Outreach Events Supported	684				
Mobile Outreach Van Events	8				
Veteran Interactions	1,489				
Claim referrals to County Directors and Service Organizations	338				
Claim referrals to other state, county and local organizations assisting Veterans	467				
Health Care Enrollment Referrals	306				
Number of Veterans Registry Cards distributed	235				
County Directors Office Attended	40				
Legislative attended events	33				

As of 15 September 2024

> community > commonwealth




> country

# Amputee & Paralyzed Veterans' Pension



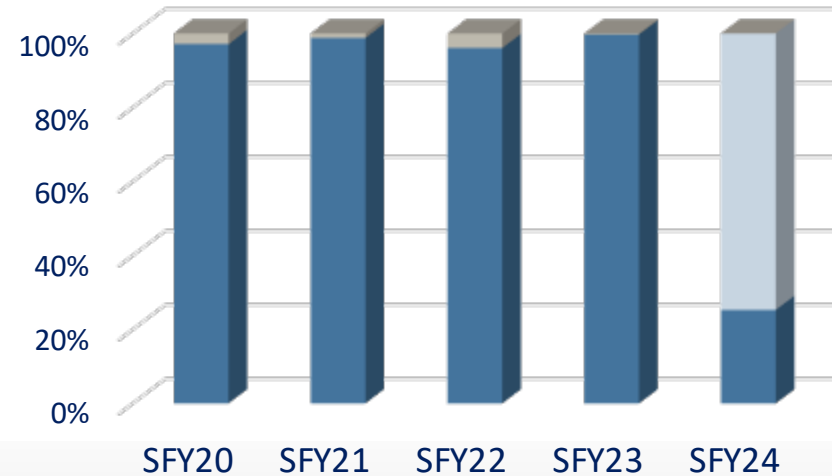
Pennsylvania  
Department of Military  
and Veterans Affairs

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

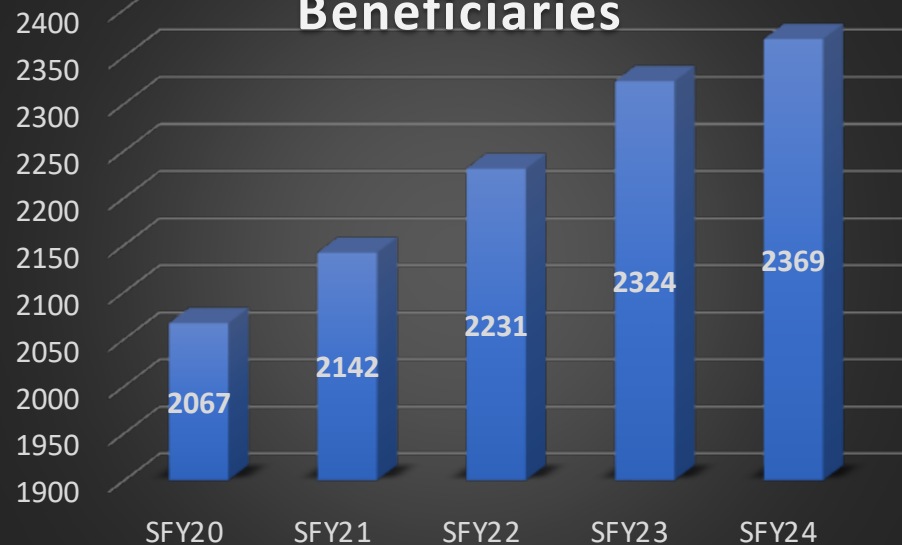
Expended \$1,053,400 .....	
Projected \$3,120,050 .....	
Lapsed \$0 .....	

*At 3/12 thru SFY24, 25.2% of budget expended.*

## Budget Execution



## Beneficiaries



**Notes:** 2,369 Veterans currently on pension.

Five-year trend shows a 15% beneficiary increase since SFY20 largely attributable to positive external factors such as the federal PACT Act of 2022.

Expect continued moderate growth.

# Blind Veterans' Pension

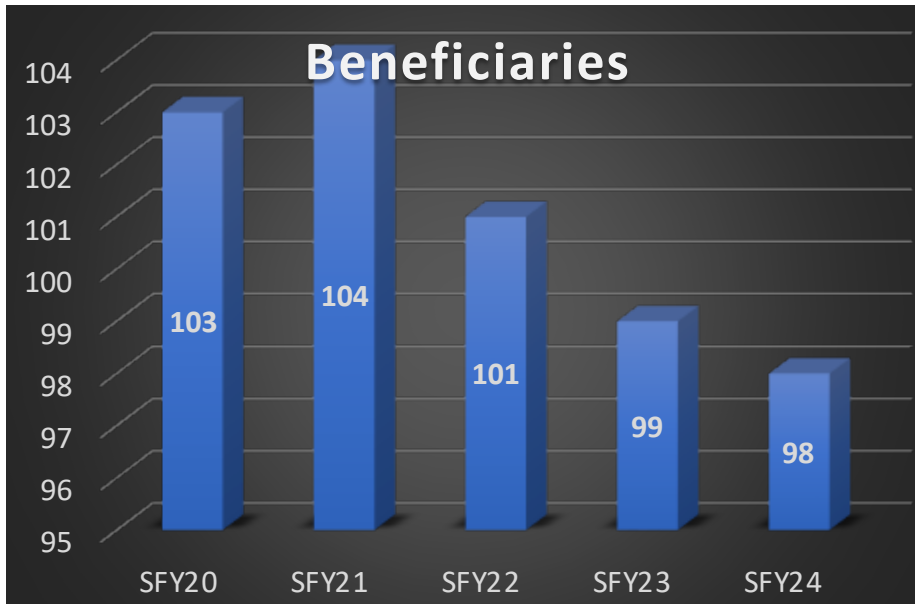


Pennsylvania  
Department of Military  
and Veterans Affairs

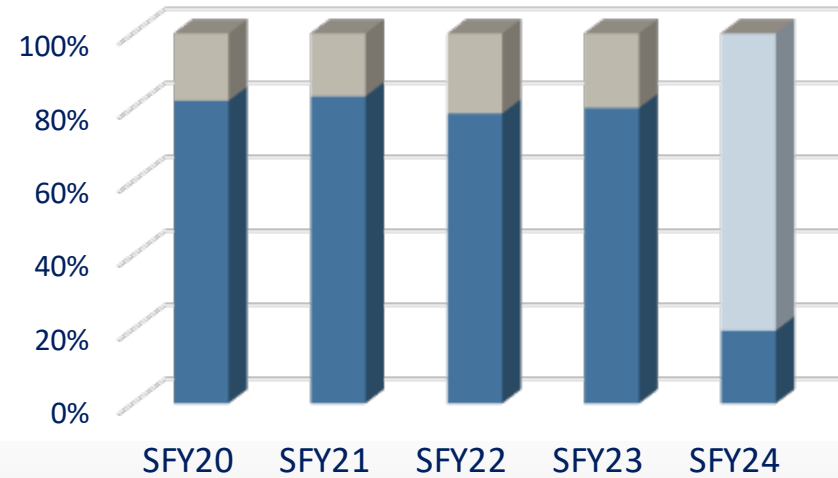
SFY24 Budget: \$222,000

Expended \$43,650 .....	
Projected \$178,350 .....	
Lapsed \$0 .....	

At 3/12 thru SFY24, 19.6% of budget expended.



## Budget Execution



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

Five-year trend shows a steady average of 100 pensioners. This beneficiary population is not significantly affected by the PACT Act of 2022 or other current external factors. Expect continued stability.



# Educational Gratuity



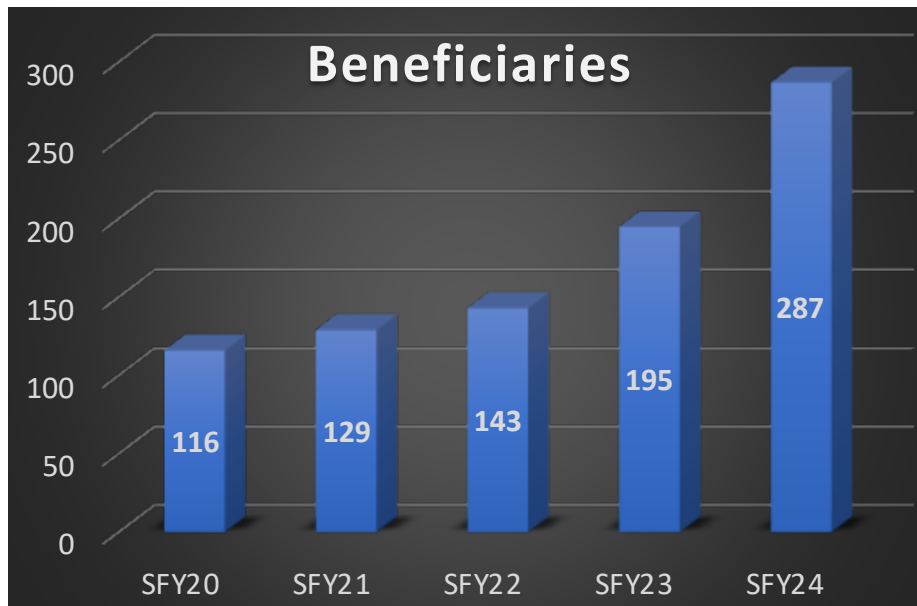
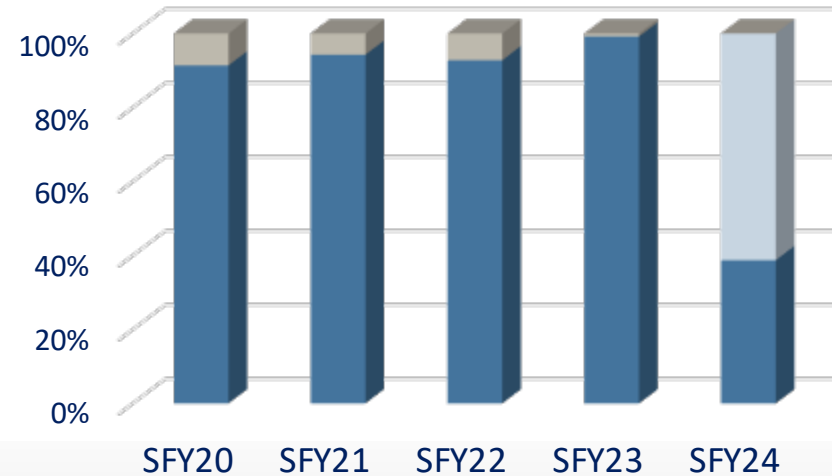
Pennsylvania  
Department of Military  
and Veterans Affairs

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

Expended \$75,500 .....	
Projected \$119,500 .....	
Lapsed \$0 .....	

At 3/12 thru SFY24, **38.6%** of budget expended.

## Budget Execution



**Notes:** Est. **300** students will receive EG this SFY.

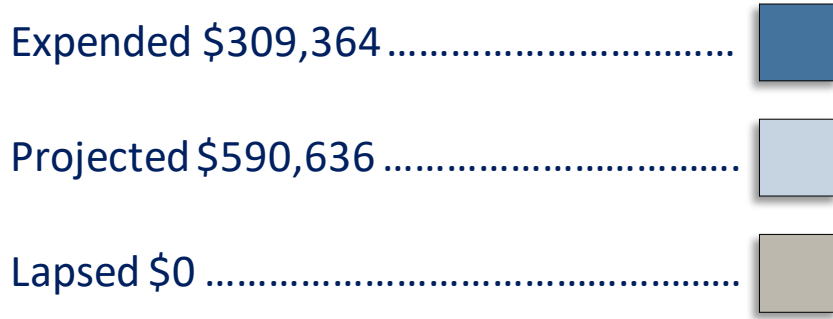
Five-year trend shows **150%** beneficiary increase since SFY20 attributable to positive external factors such as the PACT Act of 2022, Act 27 of 2024, and children of early GWOT veterans now aging into higher education. Expect continued moderate growth.

# Veterans' Temporary Assistance



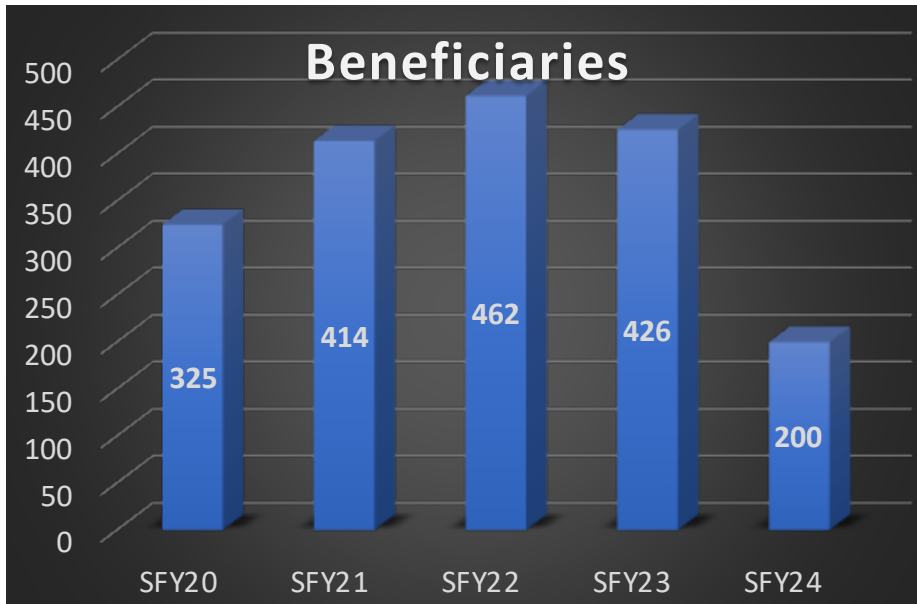
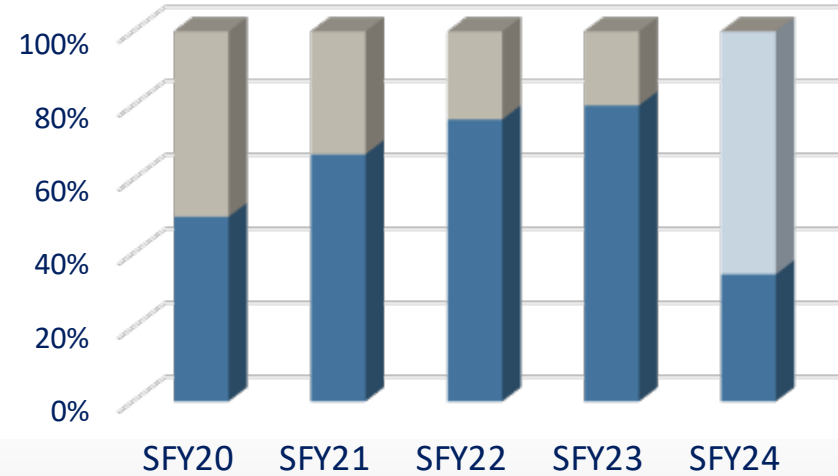
Pennsylvania  
Department of Military  
and Veterans Affairs

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



At 3/12 thru SFY24, **34.3%** of budget expended.

## Budget Execution



**Notes:** 200 VTA grants issued SFY24 to date. (\$87,400 in TS Debby disaster-related assistance granted to Tioga and Potter county veterans.)

Five-year trend shows an average of 400 VTA grants per year. At almost \$720,000 in SFY23, DMVA granted more assistance than any other year in recent history. Expect to exceed that total this SFY.

# Military Family Relief Assistance

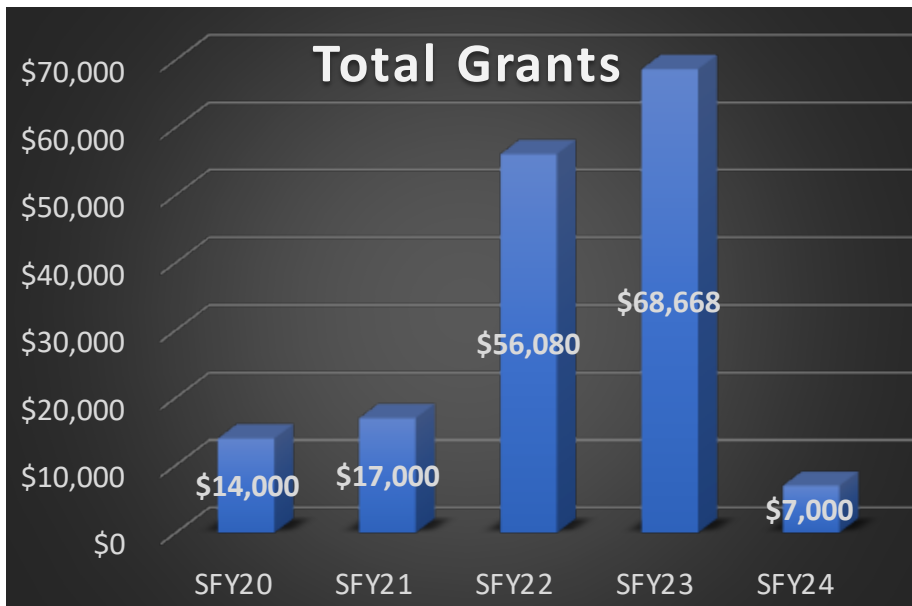
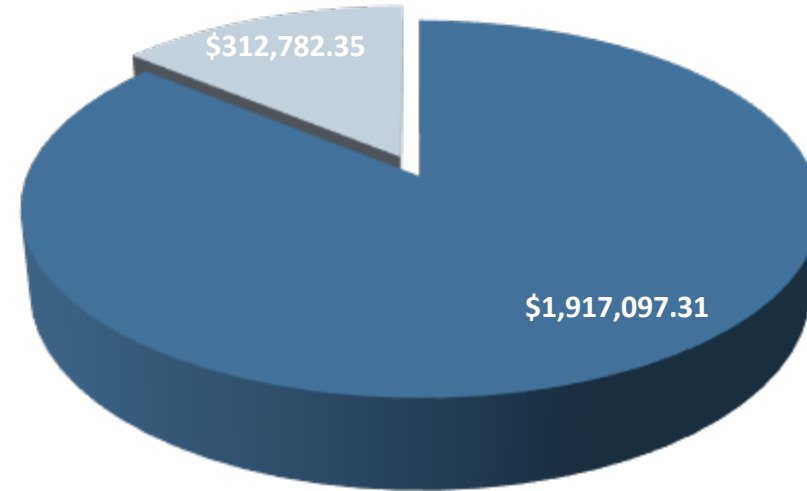


Pennsylvania  
Department of Military  
and Veterans Affairs

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

Total Donations SFY05-24: \$2,214,452  
Total Grants SFY05-24: \$1,053,670

**MFRA Fund Balance: \$1,176,209.80**








**Notes:** \$7,000 in total grants, SFY24 to date.

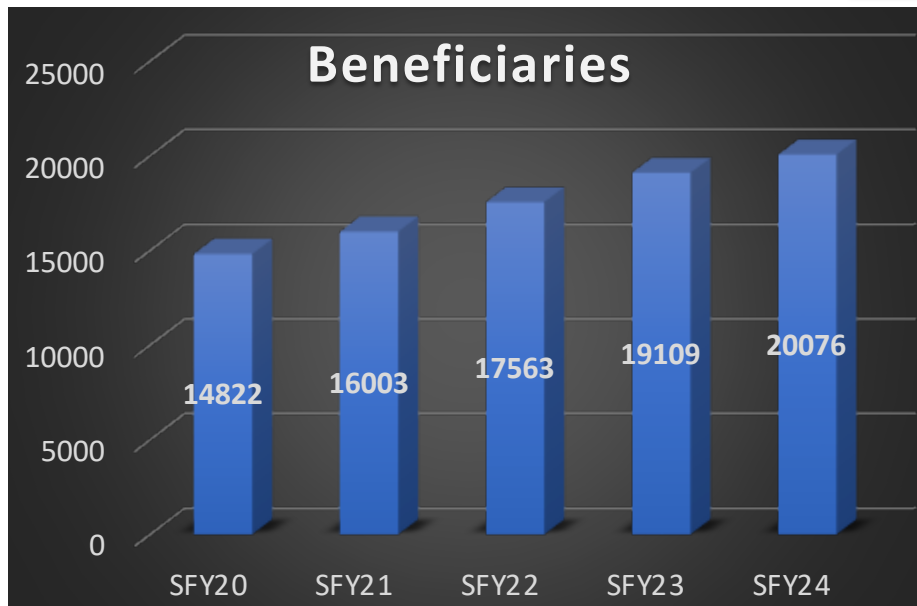
Five-year trend shows large grant increases over the last two years with low points in 2020 and 2021. Overall, the current grant trend is low compared to earlier years with higher active-duty mobilization rates. Expect continuing low grant trends.

# Disabled Vets' Real Estate Tax Exemption



Pennsylvania  
Department of Military  
and Veterans Affairs

701 Approved (81.7%) .....	
31 Denied: Financial Need .....	
32 Denied: Eligibility .....	
47 Removed: Change of Eligibility/Need .....	
47 Removed: No Response to 5-Year Review .....	



**Notes:** 20,076 Veterans and surviving spouses currently receive est. **\$68.74M** in exemptions.

Five-year trend shows beneficiary increases of approx. 1,500 per year over the last two years attributable to positive PACT Act effects on eligibility. Expect continuing increases due to positive Act 27 of 2024 effect on financial need.

# VISN 4 Access – Fiscal Year 2024 Wait Times



Clinics FY24 thru Sept. 15	Number of Appointments	Average Wait
Mental Health	371,038	5.2
Primary Care	479,171	4.7
Specialty Care	1,027,983	10.0
Other	757,539	6.5
ALL	2,635,731	7.4

FY24 data updated 9/17/2024 with appointment info as of 9/15/2024.

## VISN 4 Access – Current Average Wait Times



VISN 4 Facility	Primary Care	
	New Patients	Returning Patients
James E. Van Zandt VAMC	15	2
Abie Abraham HCC	15	1
Coatesville VAMC	25	6
Erie VAMC	20	3
Lebanon VAMC	15	3
Corporal Michael J. Crescenz VAMC	31	6
VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System (University Drive)	22	9
VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System (H.J. Heinz)	24	13
Wilkes-Barre VAMC	12	2
Wilmington VAMC	20	6

FY24 data updated 9/17/2024 with wait times as of 9/16/2024 for the last 30 days.

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

October 2024 Update

> community > commonwealth > country

### Improvements to the Access to Care website

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

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

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

FY24 data updated 9/17/2024 with wait times as of 9/16/2024 for the last 30 days.

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

# VISN 4 Care in the Community



	Care in the Community Consults (Scheduled and Completed)	Non-VA Unique Patients*
FY22	168,180	89,682
FY23	190,810	99,167
FY24 (as of 9/17/24)	203,021	103,250

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

FY24 data updated 9/17/2024 with consult info as of 9/17/2024.



## CMS Star Ratings – July 2024



Facility Name	Peer Grouping	Overall Star Rating	Hospital Summary Score
James E. Van Zandt VAMC	4	★★★	0.04
Lebanon VAMC	4	★★★★★	0.68
Corporal Michael J. Crescenz VAMC	5	★★★★	0.23
VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System (University Drive)	5	★	-1.20
Wilkes-Barre VAMC	4	★★★★	0.58
Wilmington VAMC	4	★★★★	0.35

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

# SAIL Radar



FY 24 Q2 Rank (FY24 Q1 Rank)

• Ranked out of 18 Total VISNs

↓ Rank Improved = 6 (7)

↑ Rank Worse = 6 (9)

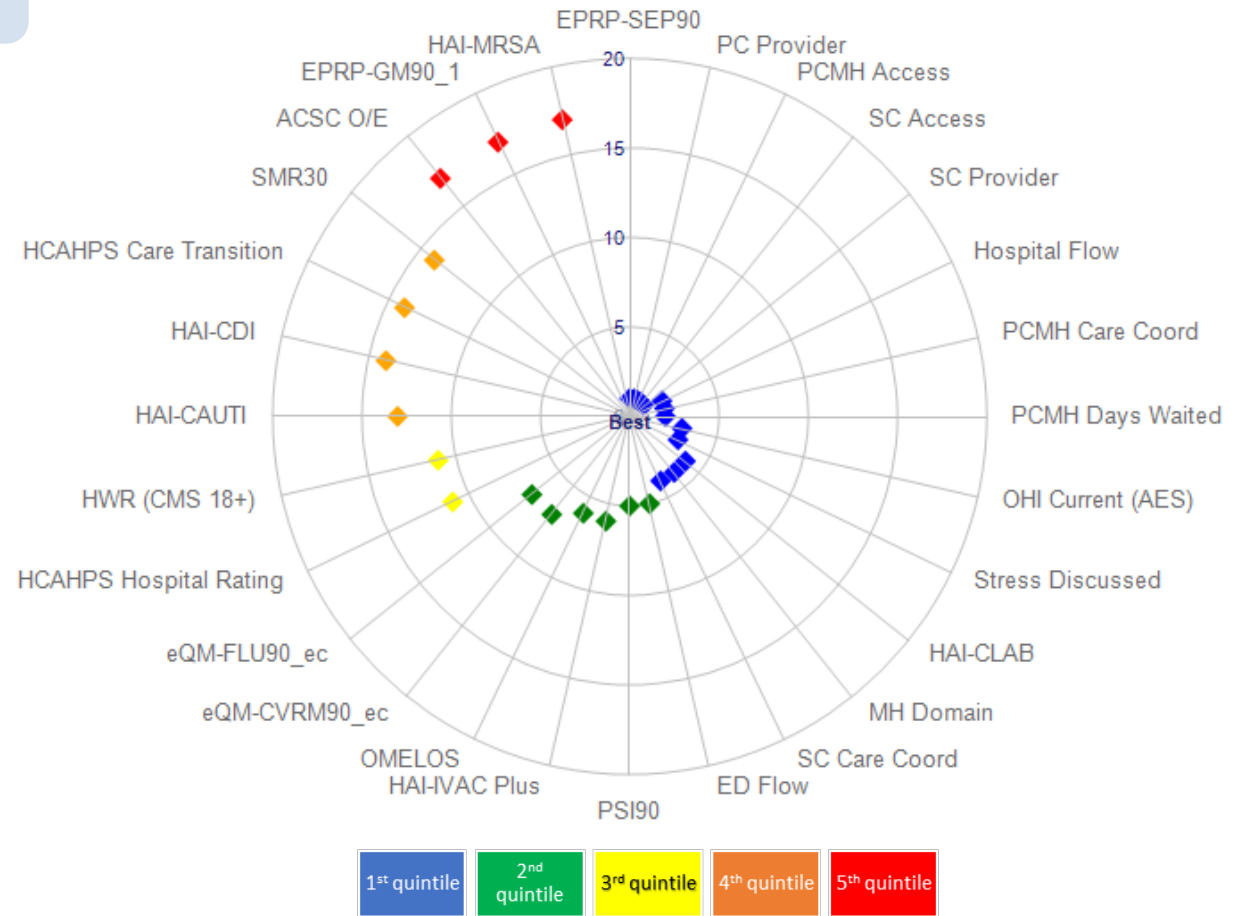
↔ No Change = 15 (11)

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

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

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

VISN 4 (FY2024Q2) (Metric)



NEXT MEETING



**Friday, December 6, 2024  
at 10:00AM**

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

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



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Health Administration  
VA Healthcare–VISN 4

## **VISN 4 Update**

**October 4, 2024**

### **Leadership Update**

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

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

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

### **Flu Vaccines**

VA Health and Wellness Clinics are currently sponsoring the [Flu Shot Campaign](#) – the flu vaccine is given at many VA facilities, as well as community clinics and pharmacies. A link where eligible Veterans can receive their flu shots is included in the read ahead.

### **New VISN 4 Website**

The VISN 4 internet website was recently updated to a new streamlined and mobile-friendly format.

<https://department.va.gov/integrated-service-networks/visn-04/>

Any current links to the old site or pages from <https://www.visn4.va.gov> will redirect to the new page above.

Please let Dave Cowgill [david.cowgill@va.gov](mailto:david.cowgill@va.gov) know if you have any questions or feedback on our new site. The link to the new website will be included in the minutes along with Dave's email address.

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

VISN 4 has consistently received the highest trust score in the nation at 94.7%. Our network also has the highest number of compliments at 79.2% and the lowest number of concerns at 11.1%. The top 5 compliments recently are interactions with staff, cleanliness of facility, quality of care, satisfaction with specialty care, and Appointment Check in process.

## **Statewide Rollout of Community Nurse Liaison Program**

On September 13<sup>th</sup> I signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with UPMC implementing a Community Nurse Liaison program at eight UPMC hospitals. The Program enhances and expands VISN 4's collaboration with UPMC, providing a seamless transition of care for veterans after an inpatient stay by coordinating discharges, identifying veterans who are not in the VA system, and enrolling new veterans into VA health care.

The Community Nurse Liaison Program model consists of embedding VA registered nurses into eight UPMC hospitals -- UPMC Presbyterian, UPMC Montefiore, and UPMC Passavant in Pittsburgh, UPMC Hamot in Erie, UPMC Harrisburg, UPMC Community Osteopathic in Harrisburg, UPMC West Shore in Mechanicsburg, and UPMC Altoona -- to streamline the care of veterans from admission to discharge. Coordinating continued care, including physical therapy, prescriptions, and follow-up appointments by working hand in hand with the community case managers, is also part of the community nurse liaison's role. Through the program, the UPMC hospitals will work closely with their local VA Medical Centers -- Pittsburgh VA Medical Center, Butler VA Medical Center, Erie VA Medical Center, Altoona VA Medical Center, and Lebanon VA Medical Center.

The new MOU builds upon the already successful Community Nurse Liaison Program between UPMC and VISN 4 that was initiated in August 2022 with UPMC Harrisburg, UPMC West Shore, and UPMC Community Osteopathic – a program that was one of the first of its kind. Over the past two years, positive outcomes of the program include the ability to identify veterans who present to a non-VA hospital on the same day/next business day, increased number of inpatient transfers to VA inpatient units, repatriation into VA post-discharge, decreased length of stay, improved trust in VA (both veterans and community providers), improved collaboration with patient aligned care teams, social work, and U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing, coordination and integrated case management, and an increase in VA enrollment.

## **Connected Care Update**

My VA Images: The VA Connected Care program offers Veterans many tools to support their care from home. My VA Images (MVAI) allows providers to request photos and videos directly from their patients to assist in their care. The app will guide patients through taking the required photos and/or videos and remind them when the images are due. It is a secure web-application that will protect patient information from upload through submission. Patients can use a smart mobile device or personal computer, avoid travel, and wait times while receiving expert health care for specified needs from anywhere, anytime.

MHV Sign-In Transition Update: Beginning September 19, 2024, the "Registration" and "Sign in" buttons will be replaced with a single "Sign in or create an account" button on My Health<sup>e</sup>Vet's home page.

- Veterans will no longer be able to create a My Health<sup>e</sup>Vet (MHV) account with a MHV user ID and password. Instead, new My Health<sup>e</sup>Vet accounts will be created using a modern (identity verified + multifactor authentication ID.me or Login.gov) account.
- New My Health<sup>e</sup>Vet accounts will not have a MHV User ID and password.
- Veterans with an existing My Health<sup>e</sup>Vet user ID and password will be able to continue using this sign in method through January 31, 2025.
- Veterans who already have a MHV user ID and password obtained before September 19, 2024, will be able to be in-person identity verified and their accounts upgraded to Premium through January 31, 2025.
- The new "Sign in or create an account" page will allow users to sign in using the same method they currently sign in to My Health<sup>e</sup>Vet.

### **HRO Highlight: Wilkes-Barre VAMC**

One of the 5 HRO Principles is "Preoccupation with Failure," was demonstrated by the care coordinator nurse monitoring a Veteran's blood pressure which was low resulted in the at the Wilkes-Barre VAMC.

Mary Smyth, RN, RPM-HT Care Coordinator was covering for another care coordinator and called a Veteran for a Blood Pressure (BP) of 90/48. The Veteran's wife answered the call and stated the Veteran was sleeping after she gave him a dose of Midodrine to increase his BP. Ms. Smyth demonstrated reluctance to simplify and asked the wife if she could take his BP while on the phone. The Veteran's BP was 86/49 and his wife stated the Veteran was very drowsy and weak.

Being sensitive to operations, Ms. Smyth asked the wife to additionally take the Veteran's pulse oxygen. Veteran's pulse oxygen turned out to be 79%, HR 48 with his oxygen on. Ms. Smyth reviewed signs and symptoms of hypoxia and confirmed with his wife that the Veteran had bluish lips and nail beds. The Veteran's wife also indicated he was able to speak, but very weak. Ms. Smyth deferred to her nursing expertise and advised the wife to call 911 immediately as it was an emergency and critical. The Veteran's wife agreed to call and hung up with Ms. Smyth. Ms. Smyth called the Veteran's wife back to check on the Veteran's status. Emergency responders were in the home and preparing to take the Veteran to the hospital.

The Veteran's wife was extremely thankful for the call and for Ms. Smyth's preoccupation with failure. The wife stated that if Ms. Smyth did not call, she would have left the Veteran continue sleeping and would not have known about his low BP oxygen levels. The Veteran was admitted to the hospital and because of Ms. Smyth's actions avoided a potentially adverse outcome.

## **New Steps to Prevent Fraud Against Veterans, Service Members and Families**

On August 9, 2024, the VA announced the [launch of VSAFE.gov and 1-833-38V-SAFE \(1-833-388-7233\)](#) — a new government-wide website and call center designed to protect Veterans, service members, and their families from fraud and scams.

These new resources will help inform Veterans and their families of common fraud schemes, give them tools to protect themselves, and provide an outlet for reporting and further assistance.

On August 9, 2024, VBA also launched the Claims Predators Fraud Prevention Communication Campaign.

VBA defines claims predators as “bad actors” that try to unlawfully charge Veterans a fee to “help” them file VA benefits claims.

VA urges Veterans to use only VA accredited representatives and released a claims predators toolkit for stakeholders to support amplification.

The public facing communication toolkit contains a frequently asked questions document, a claims predators infographic/flyer, four Native American infographics for different regions (arid, great plains, snow covered, and tropical), and a PowerPoint presentation for external audiences. A link to this toolkit was included in your read ahead material.

## **Expanded Access for Benefits for K2 Veterans and Survivors**

On August 9, 2024, VA announced several steps to [expand access to VA benefits for Veterans who served at Karshi-Khanabad \(K2\)](#) base in Uzbekistan after Sept. 11, 2001, as well as their survivors. These steps include:

- Making chronic multi-symptom illness a presumptive condition for K2 Veterans;
- Recognition of exposures at K2 as “toxic exposure risk activities” (TERAs);
- Ensuring that Military Environmental Exposures are fully taken into account when processing K2 Veterans’ claims;
- Pre-decisional review of K2 claims.

Importantly, in addition to these steps, all Veterans who served at K2 and meet basic eligibility requirements are already eligible to enroll in VA health care to get world-class, low-cost care for all their health conditions – without needing to apply for disability

compensation first. These Veterans are also eligible for presumptive benefits for the more than 300 conditions covered by the PACT Act.

Moving forward, VA will continue to evaluate additional ways to support K2 Veterans and their survivors. VA encourages all Veterans who served at K2 to apply for VA care and benefits by visiting [VA.gov](https://www.va.gov) or calling 1-800-MYVA411.



**Summary of Current Applications (Exempt)**

Count	No Activity	Review Process Started	Review App Received	New Apps Pending
20076	19514	535	27	229

**Summary of Activity from 08/23/2024 to 09/24/2024**

<b>Applications Created: 464</b>	
New	347
Review	117
<b>Applications Approved: 701</b>	
New	544
Review	157
Apps Denied (Financial Need)	31
Apps Denied (Ineligibility)	32 <i>(see summary of reasons below)</i>
Apps Removed (No Response)	47
Apps Removed (Eligibility Change)	47

**Summary of Ineligibility**

Reason	Count
The property is not owned solely by veteran, jointly or as an estate by the entirety with spouse.	8
The veteran did not serve during a period of war or armed conflict.	11
The veteran has a future exam, therefore disability is not rated as total or 100% permanent.	12
Applicant is not a citizen or resident of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.	1

**Summary of Activity: 23 Aug - 24 Sep 2024**

<b>Applications Approved</b>	<b>701</b>
New	544
Review	157

<b>Applications Denied</b>	<b>296</b>
Financial Need	31
Ineligible	32
No Response	47
Change of Eligibility	47

<b>Over Income</b>	<b>56</b>
New	27
Review	0

<b>8%</b>
5%
0%

<b>Applications Created</b>	<b>464</b>
<b>Total Adjudicated</b>	<b>997</b>