Pennsylvania State Veterans Commission
Meeting Agenda

September 5th, 2025 at 10AM **Location: Lickdale Outreach Center**
****Virtual**- outside commuting distance**

1000	Call to Order	Chairman Nicholas Taylor
	Moment of Silence	Vice-Chair Constance Snavely
	Pledge of Allegiance	Chairman Nicholas Taylor
	Administration of Oath	MG John Pippy
	• Bill Zelner- AMVETS, Commander • Bernie McDonald- AMVETS, Ex. Director • Jesiah Schrader- CDVA, President • Lory Liebegott- DAV, Commander • Victoria McCoy- MCL, Commandant • William Roland Jr.- VFW, Commander • Patrick Love- TAL, Commander • Michael Brooker- MAL	
	Introduction of Commission Members	Chairman Nicholas Taylor
	Vice-Chair's Opening Remarks	Vice-Chair Constance Snavely
	Chairman's Opening Remarks	Chairman Nicholas Taylor
	TAG's Opening Remarks and Comments	MG John Pippy
	Approval of 06 June 2025 Meeting Minutes	**Requires Vote**
	Reading of Official and Other Communications	Chairman Nicholas Taylor
	DAG-VA Opening Remarks and Report	BG (PA) Maureen Weigl
	• PPL, BVH, PIRO	
	• Programs Report	**Requires Vote**
	VISN 4	Ms. Denise Boehm
	Committee Reports	
	• Governance Committee	Mr. Michael Brooker
	❖ Governance Committee Read Ahead	
	• Legislative	Mr. Mark Baylis
	• Pensions/Relief/Grave Markings	Mr. Larry Googins
	• RETX	Mr. Jesiah Schrader
	• MAL	Vice-Chair Constance Snavely
	❖ MAL Selection Process	
	• Transportation	Mr. Robert Hammaker
	• Veterans' Health	Mr. Leonard Johnson
	• VSO Grant	Mr. John Getz
	• Women Veterans	Ms. Pauline Bozdech-Veater
	PAWVC Update	Mr. Woody Hogan
	Unfinished Business	Chairman Nicholas Taylor
	New Business	Chairman Nicholas Taylor
	❖ Security	Mr. Bruce Kanis
	Agenda Items for Next Meeting	SVC Commissioners
	Good of the Order	SVC Commissioners
	Closing Remarks	Chairman Nicholas Taylor
	Next Meeting 23 October 2025, at 1500 Valley Forge Casino & Resort 1160 First Ave King of Prussia, PA 19406	
	Retiring of the Colors	Chairman Nicholas Taylor
	Adjournment	Chairman Nicholas Taylor

State Veterans' Commission Meeting Minutes
June 6, 2025
10:00AM
Hartranft Conference Room, Fort Indiantown Gap

Call to Order	**Chairman Nicholas Taylor**

The Pennsylvania State Veterans' Commission (SVC) meeting was called to order at 10:00AM on June 6, 2025.

Moment of Silence and Pledge of Allegiance

There are many significant US Military historical and important days in the month of June to include D Day, Flag Day, and the birth of the Army. It is important that we take moments like these to appreciate our narrative so we can understand what the U.S. symbolizes and how far we've come since the inception of the United States of America. However, let us focus on June 27th, when PTSD Awareness is observed, which highlights those who have gone to war and have been affected by post-traumatic stress disorder. This is a disease caused by excessive trauma, so on this day, we recognize and try to support those survivors.

Commission Introductions

Mr. Marc Ferraro	TAG Designee-DMVA-EDS
Mr. Keith Graham	DAG Designee- DMVA-OVA
Mr. Nicholas Taylor	SVC Chairman, President - MOAA
Ms. Denise Boehm	VA-Healthcare, VISN 4
Mr. Mark Baylis	Member-at-Large
Ms. Pauline Bozdech-Veater	Member-at-Large
Mr. Leonard Johnson	Member-at-Large
Mr. Michael Brooker	Member-at-Large
Mr. John Fritz	Commander, The American Legion
Mr. James Hogan	Adjutant, The American Legion
Mr. Peter Verbos	Commander, MOPH
Ms. Constance Snavely	SVC V-Chairwoman, Representative, Korean War Veterans
Mr. M. B. Kanis	Commander, Jewish War Veterans
Ms. Diana Henry	Commandant, Marine Corps League
Mr. Gerry Hawk	Executive Director, AMVETS
Mr. Paul Foresman	Commander, AMVETS
Mr. John Getz	Adjutant, Veterans of Foreign Wars
Mr. William Hines	Commander, Disabled American Veterans
Mr. Robert Hammaker	Adjutant, Disabled American Veterans
Ms. Wanda Grover - TEAMS	Commander, Blinded Veterans of America
Mr. Michael Rang	Commander, Catholic War Veterans
Mr. Alvin Loveless - TEAMS	President, PA State Association of County Directors of Veterans Affairs
Mr. Larry Googins -TEAMS	President, Vietnam Veterans of America

Absent

Mr. Stanley Majocka	Commander, Italian American War Veterans

Mr. Chris Fidler	Director, Keystone Chapter Paralyzed Veterans of America
Mr. Phil Arnold	Commander, MOPH
Ms. Barbara Loncar	Commander, Veterans of Foreign Wars
Others Present	
Mr. Richard Hudzinski	VVA/LVMAC
Mr. Chris Kintner	TAL
Mr. Richard Hamp	DMVA- Special Assistant - DAG - OVA
Mr. Dusty Durand	DMVA-PPL
Mr. Jeff King	DMVA- PIRO
Mr. David Cowgill-TEAMS	VISN-4 Direct of Communications
Ms. Michelle Brandt-TEAMS	Closed Captioner
Mr. Brian Natali	DMVA- PIRO
Ms. Angela Watson	Director, DMVA Communications
Mr. Edward Cherry- TEAMS	DMVA- OCC
Mr. Craig Andrews- TEAMS	DMVA- Communications
Mr. Carl Curtis - TEAMS	
Mr. David Gyger - TEAMS	VFW
Mr. John Noll	DMVA

Administration of Oath — **Mr. Marc Ferraro**

The Oath was administered to Mr. M. B. Kanis upon his appointment as the Commander of the Jewish War Veterans.

Certificates of Appreciation — **Chairman Nicholas Taylor**

Certificates of Appreciation were presented to the following Commissioners:

- Commandant Diana Henry, Marine Corps League
- Executive Director Gerry Hawk, AMVETS
- Commander William Hines, DAV
- Commander Paul Foresman, AMVETS
- Commander John Fritz, The American Legion.

Vice-Chair Opening Remarks — **Vice-Chair Constance Snavely**

No opening remarks

Chairman's Opening Remarks — **Chairman Nicholas Taylor**

- Thanked the departing commissioners for their time, service, and dedication over the years.
- Attended the PA War Veterans Council meeting on May 1, 2025.
- Attended the GAC-VS meeting at the Department of Agriculture on May 7, 2025.
- Continue to have Bi-weekly VTC with General Wiegl, Keith Graham, Rick Hamp, Brian Natali, Seth Benge, Dusty Durand, John Noll, and Connie Snavely.
- May 12, 2025, was invited to provide testimony to the house of VA and Emergency Preparedness committee. Specifically on House Bill 1257, real estate tax exemption. We were informed recently that the bill has moved out of committee.
- Represented the SVC at Fort Indiantown Gap National Cemetery on Sunday, 25 May, Memorial Day event.
- MOAA activities: 7-10 April was down in Washington DC to participate in advocacy and action. The PA team met with all but 3 US members in congress. Topics presented were: Incentivizing

Military spouse hiring, to continue the unaccompanied housing improvements, improving access to health care for military families, ending the wait for toxic exposed veterans, and supporting veteran caregivers.

- Juneteenth message will be sent to Becky to distribute prior to the federal holiday.
- The second annual Veterans convention will be held at Valley Forge Hotel and Casino; more information will be coming over the summer.

Questions/Discussion

None

DMVA Opening Remarks **Designee- Mr. Marc Ferraro**

- TAG is in Pittsburgh and Erie this week attending veterans' events and to wish a veteran resident a happy 100th birthday.
- Reviewed the total deployments, and the current and future mobilization for the PANG.
- A big change is coming to the National Guard. A memorandum was published in late April from the secretary of Defense about restructuring of the Army Corps, a lot of changes are coming to the Army and Army National Guard.
    - One example of change is that there will no longer be a Stryker brigade in PA. Changing over to a mobile brigade combat team.
- TAG and the DMVA have attended well over 35-40 events towards the end of the month of May. TAG likes to get out and promote the department and what the SVC is doing in support of our veterans.
- Lickdale will be opening on time, ribbon cutting details are coming.
- Budget doesn't look like it will pass on time, by 30 June. There has been a lot of back and forth about raising some of the pension benefits from 180 to 200.

Questions/Discussion

None.

Approval of April 4th, 2025, Meeting Minutes

Motion: Mr. John Getz, Adjutant, Veterans of Foreign War, made a motion to approve the minutes.

Second: Mr. Robert Hammaker seconds the motion.

The body agreed; motion carried. Minutes approved

Reading of Official and Other Communications **Chairman Nicholas Taylor**

- Invitation by Chairman Solomon to provide testimony on the real estate tax exemption to the committee.
- 30 May received and email from Gerry Hawk, Executive Director for AMVETS, informing Chairman Taylor that he will be stepping away from his position.
- 2 June received and email from Mr. Alvin Loveless indicating his resignation as president of the PA State Association of County directors for Veterans affairs, effective 13 June. Jesiah Schrader will be taking over as president and representative on this commission.

Questions/Discussion

None

Deputy Adjutant General-VA Remarks **Designee- Keith Graham**

- During the Month of May a ton of events were attended, including Memorial Day.

- Fishing Derby Day was held on 5 June, three of the eastern veteran homes, (Gino Merli Veterans' Center, Delaware Valley Veterans' Home, Southeastern Veterans' Center) were able to fish for free thanks to Dauphin County Anglers and Conservationist. About 75-95 veterans attended.
- Lickdale Veteran outreach center should be fully operational around 1 July.
    - In the future the SVC Meetings will be held in this conference room.
    - Space available to host VSO
- VETCon 2025 invites will be coming out soon.
- County Directors' Association meeting is next week. The majority of PIRO will be out there supporting the conference, providing training and other resources.
- House Bill 1257- keeping unified voice- this is the probably the furthest this bill has moved in the last 12 Years.
- Reminder that for any engagements DMVA is here to support your engagement event. Please let us know how we can help.
- Mr. Graham thanked the outgoing commanders for their patients over the past 9 months and providing guidance and pointing him in the right direction. Also thanked the commanders that are sticking around and continuing to help and support as we move forward.

Questions/Discussion

- Rich Hudzinski asked what is moving over to Lickdale? Mr. Graham answer: Programs and services has moved -managed by Mr. Jeff King, Subject Matter Experts (SME)- Mental health & Behavioral health, Transportation and housing specialists, Grants and analysis, and the Outreach team will all be moving out to the Lickdale location. Long term plan- working with DoD to get a DEER Station into the facility as well.
- Rich Hudzinski asked if Region five is moving into the facility as well? Mr. Graham answered: No, because we will have the FIG team there full-time.
- Mr. Ferraro commented: There was an intent to move the military in but with all the turmoil with the force structure that will probably not happen. We Offered some space to the federal VA for the return-to-work overflow. Are open to other organizations, that serve as veterans, to come in and talk to see if it would be a good fit for them and provide services to the facility.

DMVA Policy, Planning, and Legislation **Mr. Gilbert Durand**

- Explained the new format / document they are working off, also trying to find a way to make a dashboard available so the SVC has access to the information. As this form becomes available electronically, you'll be able to click the bill and read the bill language right from the site.
- There were 86 bills that have been introduced that affect the Veterans. Only tracking those that moved out of committee. Will continue to do analysis and look at those that expect to move out as well.
- No bills on the calendar for next week but anticipate them moving as we get closer to the budget.
- House bill 1257, constitutional amendment for the real estate tax exemption, anticipate that was held over so it should move in the next week or two.
- General Assembly is in session most of the month of June, if budget doesn't pass it will roll into July. 2025 PA Elections are coming up.
- Introduce Paul Davis, who recently joined his staff and will be doing constituent services but also working on the legislative activities with Mr. Seth Benge. Mr. Davis came from one of the house members offices.

Questions/Discussion

- Mr. Leonard Johnson asked on senate bill 534, paralyzed pension, should it be stated in there the increase of $180 or $200? Mr. Durand answered: basically, that is the change in the bill but will need to look and see where it is specifically now.
- Mr. Mark Baylis asked for clarification on whether there was a written notice of what the SVC would like to see out of those options for the pension? If the answer is "no", should there be? Mr. Durand response: I don't believe there has been any official correspondence with the General assembly on that bill. Mr. Durand believes it would be helpful to have a letter submitted.

BVH Bureau of Veterans Homes **Mr. Keith Graham**

- The department of health was in at Gino Merli for their annual survey, no issues to report. Waiting for VA to return.
- Zero COVID positive residents and staff. Currently we have 1160 resident in our care, filled at 76%, over 80% in nursing.
- Staffing still an issue, referral bonuses for newly hired RNs, LPNs, and CNAs for current Nurses is $4,000.
- Ribbon cutting for Hollidaysburg is looking to be around August or September of 2025.
- Gino Merli annual golf tournament was held this past week. Sold out at over 250 golfers.
- BVH will be speaking at the County Directors conference in Erie.
- State Veterans Homes week is the 16th-20th

Questions/Discussion

None

DMVA Bureau of PIRO **Mr. Keith Graham**

- Region 4 there was a pass and change in laws that made Korean Veterans of Korea services eligible for VA service. This hasn't been a smooth process. Karen Olson, one of the VSO and VSS, up in that area has taken the task to resolve any issues.

Questions/Discussion

None

State Veterans' Programs **Mr. Jeff King**

- Reviewed the Programs slides
  - Mr. King wanted to point out that the VTA comes from the veterans' trust fund. We are allotted $900,000/year. This is an individual grant program to veterans and their families to help with unexpected expenses and loss of income.
  - Real Estate Tax Exemption will be at 23,000 veterans as of today (6June25)
  - Rulemaking projects are still moving ahead at full steam. There was a public comment period during April, received about 9 comments from people around the public, 13 comments from the independent regulatory leave commission. In the process of answering those comments and concerns currently and putting together a final regulation. Once that is in, it will go back through an abbreviated interagency review and back to the IRRC where they will schedule a public hearing.

Questions/Discussions

- Mr. Graham praised Mr. King and his team of 5 on their hard work in managing these Real Estate Tax Exemption program in the commonwealth. The team is averaging about 1000 applications in 1-2 months.

- Mr. King stated the SVC owns the Real Estate Tax Exemption program, it's being managed on behalf of the SVC by Mr. King and his team.
- Mr. Leonard Johnson asked if the extension for the five-year review is included in the program. Mr. King answered: The five-year review is specifically for financial need, so every five years if you are on the program you will submit an application for review. The application is reviewed to see if you still have the need for this program.
- Mr. Leonard Johnson asked if the five-year review will be extended out to 10 years? Mr. King answered: There is a bill out right now attempting to extend that period out to 10 years. There's a bit of difficulty with that as the five-year review acts as a backstop for a lot of people. We catch a lot of people who have fallen out of eligibility over that 5-year period.
- Mr. King mentioned house bill 1144 has passed through the full house and has been sent over to the senate. Senate Bill 534 has passed out of committee and is at the full senate for vote now.
- Mark Baylis asked about a veteran that he works with who has a glass eye. Does he qualify for blind veterans? Or would it have to be both eyes effected? Mr. King answered: They are looking to see if that veteran has a 90% or higher service-connect visual disability. You could have one eye completely removed and have good vision – you are not considered blind.

Approval of State Veterans' Programs Reports

Motion: Mr. Mark Baylis, Member at Large, made the motion to approve the programs report.

Second: Mr. William Hines seconded the motion.

The body agreed; motion carried. Programs reports approved.

VISN-4 **Ms. Denise Boehm**

- David DiGiacomo continues as the interim Deputy Network Director. Mr. Elizabeth Katrancha is now the Associate Director for patient care services at the Altoona VAMC. Mike Amos is the interim Associate Director at Wilmington VA. Thomas Bennett is the Chief of police at Butler, also serving as our VISN 4 chief security officer. Nicole Lynn is VISN 4 Business Implementation Manager.
- VA is still in the midst of a hiring freeze that will go into the middle to the 3rd week of July. Despite that there are over 70 positions that are exempt from the hiring freeze. Some leadership positions were recently exempted from the hiring freeze to include medical center directors.
- VISN 4 Transportation manager did meet with our State Veterans Commission on 5 May. There was an overview of the work that the VA is doing to incorporate VTN/ VetRide of quarters 3 and 4 fiscal year. VISN 4 - SVC partner did bring up some items and determining lifecycles for the vehicles. Also identifying vehicles that need repair and need to return because they are at the end of their lifecycle. VISN 4 is also able to meet with the request of our current VTN/VetRide implementation project. A VISN 4-wide transportation gap analysis is also underway with local VAMCs identifying each county in their jurisdiction and the transportation services available within each – upon completion, we will provide a roll up to this committee to share the findings.
- Continuing to have the highest trust score across the VA enterprise with a 95.1%. Top compliments received are: Quality of care, Cleanliness of our facilities, interactions with staff, and satisfaction with specialty care. Implemented a system in all the facilities that allow veterans to give feedback the same day.
- My HealtheVet on VA.gov did change how veterans interact with the system, with ID.me and ID.gov. Resources available at all medical centers/ clinics to help any veteran be able to get access to their records.

- Announcement to major survivor benefits, Survivors assistance has that information available. It started in June. VA created a white glove survivor outreach teams to assist with eligible survivors through their dependency and indemnity compensation claims process.
- Veteran access encompasses everything from Medicare to homeless veterans and outreach. There will be many initiatives underway regarding access and how to expand access to all veterans. Will be partnering up with DMVA and take advantage of the extra space at the Lickdale location.

Questions/Discussions

- Mr. William Hines asked if the VA was importing the information or using volunteers to import that information. Ms. Denise Boehm answered the VA is putting in the information.
- Mr. Rich Hudzinski asks about the survivor pension, disability, and white glove team. Is it in their instructions to try to do this automatically upon the notification of the death of a veteran? Ms. Denise Boehm answered that it is going to be part of the goal moving forward. Rolled into this is a new process called SAMS (Survivor Assistance Memorial Service), this is going to be a part of the VA social workers process. Part of the role of the SAMS POC will be to immediately make contact with VBA and identify what, if any, benefits are available to start the process. It will be a push from the VA site rather than a pull from the survivors.
- Mr. Rich Hudzinski asked if the VHA has a will in the track? Thought it was the VBA notification of the death of a veteran? Ms. Denise Boehm answered the VHA will ensure that the VBA has that information. The VHA and VBA reach out to the survivor to get the processes started.

Committee Reports

Legislative Committee **Mr. Mark Baylis**

- New Member of the committee, now have 3 members in the committee.
- Brought to the floor a motion to increase the Blind Veteran's Pension to $200.00

Questions/Discussion

None

Motion

Motion: Mr. Mark Baylis, MAL, made a motion to increase the Blind Veteran's Pension to $200

Second: Mr. James Hogan second the motion

The body agreed; motion carried.

Pensions/Relief/Grave Markings/State Military Cemetery Committee **Mr. Larry Googins**

- Pensions/Reliefs: was discussed previously in the program's reports
- Grave Markings: wanted to remind the commission about Wreaths Across America (WAA), since the SVC will not be meeting until September. Vietnam Veterans of America national organization are working with WAA to put wreaths on Vietnam Veterans graves.
- Really good information about the real estate tax exception. Critically important to know if someone transfers ownership of their home, they need to be aware of how that will affect the tax exemption.

Questions/Discussions

None

RETX **Mr. Alvin Loveless**

- RETX Committee has had a meeting and is throwing full support behind HB1257. Chairman Taylor has already met with the war counsel and Governors' counsel.

- Chairmen Taylor tenets of testimony: HB1257 basically is requesting constitutional change and the tenants of that will exclude reserve components, it will clarify the inclusion of veterans compensated at the 100% disability rate including through individual unemployability. It will extend the eligibility to the unmarried surviving spouse of a servicemember who died in the line of duty, was a POW, or Declared MIA. The one tenant of the bill that the commission, neither the commission or WVC voted upon was for the allowance of optional local levels exemptions for partially disabled veterans. Meaning that counties could at their discretion implement tax exemptions for partially disabled veterans. In addition to those editions items about this amendment would simplify the language in the PA Constitution that would allow the Gen. Assembly to adjust the other criteria through legislative action and not through a constitutional change.

Questions/Discussions

None.

MAL **Vice-Chairwoman Constance Snavely**

- The Committee, Dusty, and Joe Batt, did a lot of work last year on the SOP and the application. The updated SOP date is 6 June 25.
- The Vacancy Announcement and application instructions for the upcoming open Member at Large position was advertised on the DMVA website. The closing date for applications was June 2nd. The committee now has eight applications to review, rate, and rank order by July 2nd. The Committee will then recommend the top candidates to the SVC Chairman to submit to TAG.
- Looking for a volunteer to add to the committee, since one member is moving on.

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Questions/Discussions

None

Transportation Committee **Mr. Robert Hammaker**

- John Noll is joining committee making it a 2-member committee.
- 350 volunteers in the month of April, 5000 volunteer hours, 80,000 miles. Transported over 2000 veterans.
- Purchased 7 new vans.
    - The problem is spending 4-5 hours/ day dealing with the VA to get documents back from the VA. Getting vehicles back that don't even operate. Must send rollbacks to pick them up and that is paid out of the grant money.
- Plans on working on fixing the financial waste with the vehicles sitting around and not being used.

Questions/Discussions

- Chairman Taylor mentioned that the committee could probably make a suggestion on how the VA may be able to do it better. Mr. Hammaker stated that this has been done several times by making calls to the VA and nobody wants to take responsibility.
- Mr. Rich Hudzinski stated that a committee has been formed and is addressing the issue of the turnaround times, stationing, and drive times to pick up vehicle-transport veterans-return vehicle. There's a meeting in September after the GAP analysis. The action is moving along, it's organized, and the VA is cooperating.
- Mr. Hudzinski commented that the hospital have all be used to running their own operation and the coordination is different in different hospitals and were trying to get that all unified and the VA is trying to help with that process.

Veteran Health Committee	**Mr. Leonard Johnson**

- Working on adding another member to the committee, 2 members so far.
- Pharmacogenetic testing, PGX Testing, right now does not cost a veteran. You only need to go have one tube of blood drawn and with all the things coming out with the toxic exposure, the medicines that you are taking, this will cross-reference everything and anything that comes down the pipe. It will tell you what is harmful to you or what you need, what medicine is not good. It's about a 5 page document that will be sent to Ms. Yeagley to share with the commissioners.

Questions/Discussions

None

VSO Grant Committee	**Mr. John Getz**

- The committee had a meeting last month with the Grants team in order to get a better understanding of what we have been doing and haven't been doing properly. To learn what needs to be done and the movements that need to be made. Another meeting is coming up on the 28th to discuss other issues that are happening. Once there's a full understanding on what needs to be done and corrected there will be another meeting held with all of the VSO members involved.

Questions/Discussions

None.

Womens Health	**Ms. Pauline Bozdech-Veater**

- June 12 is the day to honor women veterans. Senator Pennycuick is holding an event on June 10 at noon to honor women veterans.
- Spent time talking with General Weigl and Marilyn. One of the big issues is communication. So often women veterans do not know they are eligible for benefits. Encourage everyone to reach out to the female veterans and get them to register in the PA veteran's system, as well as making them aware of the VA.
- Lieutenant Parson, cryptographer during WWII, a Navy Lieutenant at the age of 104 has passed. Her memorial service is 12 June.

Questions/Discussions

None

Pennsylvania War Veterans Council	**Mr. John Fritz**

- Next meeting is in September
- Met with Representative Solomon and pushed along the $200 increase on HB 1257.

Questions/Discussions

- Chairman Taylor commented that was important information and can include that in the letter. Asks the other VSOs if you support that information to also do that.

Governance Committee	**Mr. Michael Brooker**

- Thanked the Chairman for submitting recommendations for improvement to both bylaws and OPP.
- Our first task was to review the Bylaws. The bylaws are a general and overarching document and should not require major revisions. That was the case as the GC had very minor changes to section 4.1 meetings. In addition to the cleanup of a few spelling/format errors.

- Second, a more daunting task was to review the OPP of the SVC. This review brought two issues to the forefront that we have set aside time for discussion and consensus moving forward.
  - **First disconnect**: The way we are doing business as a commission. Whether we are a commission as a whole versus autonomy of the chair. Is the chair a CEO or a manager/facilitator of our meeting?
    - Example: The GC in our work will bring something forward from the committee to the commission. We share, have discussion, vote, then go to TAG for approval. The MAL Committee- elects MAL, meets and has discussion but the process bypasses the commission as a whole and goes straight to the chair for approval, then to TAG for the recommendation to the Governor.

Questions/Discussions on First Disconnect

- Mr. Mark Baylis commented that we are a team sport and the way it is written the commission should all be involved.
- Mr. Leonard Johnshon asked if all the commissioners should be involved in always having a report ready? Mr. Brooker responded that it is part two of the discussion, we work better when we are a team, and we all should participate.
- Ms. Connie Snavely commented that MAL should be an exception. If the MAL packets had to go out to everybody to rate the applicant, it would slow down the process. Plus, a MAL individual would need to be exempted from that if they are reapplying for their position, or another term. I think voting for themselves or seeing everyone else that they are up against should not be allowed. I would think that the MAL committee should be one exemption the to rule of a whole-body decision. Mr. Brooker responded that the commission would not be a part of the committee, but we would be able to understand the process. The commission would not be a part of the rankings. There are items in the OPP that address conflict of interest, if a MAL would want to run again they would recuse themselves. Ms. Snavely responded the individual resumes are reviewed and rated, plus the candidates have phone interviews. The Governors suspense date would be missed if all that information would need to be sent out to every commissioner.
- Mr. Brooker suggested that the MAL committee should have a MAL member on the committee. The VSO has their own perspective on what a candidate would bring or benefit to the commission. A MAL who may be a member of a VSO, not actively involved, might have a whole different perspective or some expertise that the commission would need or use to be beneficial.
- Ms. Diana Henry asked maybe the commission should have input into the process of selecting the MAL, not the actual candidates, voting on nonmembers of the MAL specifically? Chairman Taylor responded what Mr. Brooker is saying is when the committee goes through its deliberations / recommendations, let's inform the rest of the commission that this is what the committee did. Instead of having a letter from just the Chairman, but a letter stating that the MAL did their due diligence and the commission supports the committee's recommendation. Ms. Henry response to clarify, why should the commission have an input on MAL selected when there is a committee and a chair to make that decision?
- Mr. James Hogan stated he doesn't understand why the purview of this commission would either change or affect that decision, just holding up the process. Mr. Brookers responded that the MAL terms are known, the process needs to begin a month or two sooner to be able to bring the recommendation to the commission.
- Mr. Mark Baylis stated that we do a process like this all the time. It's not an unreasonable thing to expect the MAL chair to stand up at the podium and tell what the standard were, how they look at it, and what their decision was for us to vote. To alienate ourselves from the voting process is incomprehensible.

- Mr. Richard Hudzinski agrees with Mr. Baylis that this is about corporate reporting back to a corporate board. In a regular board the nominees are presented back, these are the recommendations, this is how we did it. At one point we had no say in the appointees. The SVC Commission and the PA War Veterans Council went to the Governor and got approval for the SVC to be involved in the process. MAL committee is representing the SVC so the commission should hear the results back of the work done.
- Chairman Taylor presented the question to vote on the process. Option A: Keep the process the same. MAL to Chair to TAG. Option B: Committee briefing the commission, approval of commission, to chair, to the TAG. The committee voted Option A with 6 votes and Option B with 10 votes. So, what will happen is the committee will go through the process and make the recommendation, inform the commission and go from there.
    - Mr. Larry Googins asked: Can you describe the procedure? Will the committee recommend an individual? When it's presented to the commission what happens? What if the commission does not approve? Chairman Taylor response: The process will be the MAL committee will go through the review process, look at applications, rank order the applicants 1,2,3. The commission will vote to accept the recommendation, with the committee chair explaining the standards and how they were applied. If the commission does not approve the process will be reviewed to find the discrepancy or why the objection.
    - Ms. Snavely responded the MAL committee is like HR and a body is not involved in HR decisions. The MAL decision must be sent to the General by 2 July, SVC does not meet before suspense date. Mr. Marc Ferraro states that suspense dates are arbitrary in this. The Governors office states that the MAL will stay in place even though their term is expired. Mr. Ferraro stated he is not advocating prolonging the process, but to look at what your backward planning factors are, to understand your process and how much time you will need to do that.
    - Mr. Joe Batt asked, "is what you are looking for just basically for your situational awareness? Where the MAL committee is taking our advice to the chair so everybody has visibility on the process?" Mr. Brooker responded yes and that it gets approval of the commission. Generally, there's been very little disagreement overall and the commission would approve it. The overarching issue is the OPP is written that the commission is the body that takes action not specifically the chair as CEO. Chairman Nick, to great credit, had to act as a CEO to move things along. Mr. Batt agrees the commission has been a team and voted as a team, but the recommendation was that Chairman Taylor set up the committee to lighten the load on the commission as a whole. So if a MAL Committee was to bring up their finding/recommendations in a form of an FY essay email in which they propose to pass it along to the Chairman and then along to the TAG. Does not recommend changing the procedures for which the voting takes place for MAL. Mr. Brooker stated it's not to vote for the MAL it's a vote to approve the process. Chairman Taylor stated he heard what the commission says and will go forward, with the understanding, the approval of the process after the committee chair explains to the commission on how this is done. Consensus of the commission was received.

- **Second disconnect:** Committee structure, the role and effectiveness of the committees. Becky put together a tracker that shows each of the 7 standing committees and some of the ad hoc committees. You can see the areas in red where there are basically no reports. The committee should be the engine that drives the commission. You can see a trend over the last 2 years, less than 1/3 of the time a report is given. The OPP requires committees to meet at least monthly and there's a planning process in section 6. Currently the 7 standing committees are formed through

appointment orders from the chair, with varying degrees of specifics on their task, deliverable, and timelines. The GC is asking are standing committees the best tool to achieve the desired goal and mission to advise the TAG? Example: there are committees of one and no other volunteer participation. It's like pulling teeth to get people to volunteer or participate in committees. Committee reports issues examples: frequent nothing to report, infrequent meetings, too broad of a focus. No concrete results or outcomes details that no mechanism for accountability on the committees are supposed to do.

- Propose a paradigm shift in the way the commission does business to meet the goal of advising the TAG. Utilizing the planning process outlined in the OPP and establishment of just ad hoc committees which we would call "action teams." This would focus the efforts on a few specific and achievable tasks or topics that could be tackled in a defined time period by interested commissioner stakeholders.
    - What are the sources of the tasks or topics? One important one is that the SVC never has a discussion amongst the commissioners on what is important. The meetings generally have very little time for discussion due to the current format.
    - VSO input- in the coming months, many VSOs will hold both state and national conventions is there an opportunity to seek input from posts and chapters regarding issues at the state level.
    - Direct communication with the SVC- Ask a commissioner button on the SVC page of the DMVA website.
    - Probably the most important source is through better collaboration and partnership with DMVA. The GC believes that the SVC can be a force multiplier, if given the opportunity, to provide supporting fire in tackling key issues/challenges to PA veterans.
    - For the commission, this change will involve a heavy lift, but we believe, with renewed focus, the SVC is up to the task.
- An example of something the action team can tackle. The VA transportation issue. There is already some good work and progress being made in this area, but a concerted effort of digging into possible solutions with the VA as the lead could yield positive results.
- Need clarification on the role of the Chair, to work on the OPP. Is the consensus of the chair, the manager, and facilitator of the meeting vice the CEO? Or leave it as is which is more the manager facilitator model than the CEO model.

<u>Questions/Discussions on Second Disconnect</u>

- Mr. Mark Baylis questioned if the Veteran Health briefings were slid under the transportation line? What do the pink boxes indicate? Mr. Brooker answered that the information was taking from the meeting minutes. Ms. Yeagley explained that the information was taking from the meeting minutes and if in the minutes it stated "no report" that's why the box is pink.
- Chairman Taylor asked what is the will of the commission? To keep the OPP as is or to take a look at modifying the changes? Mr. Brooker responded that there are two issues to look at. One binging the chairman acting or not acting as a CEO. The second issue is to look at revising the committee structure. Shrink down the focus on topics that are brough forward and that can be measurable, provided advice to the TAG on other issues discussed/voted on.
- Mr. Mark Baylis suggests clarity on the adjustment. One of the big frustrations with the health committee was there were no options in the commission to try and change a health system. Maybe goals could have been letters of recommendation to the people that can make changes in those areas. There should be some mechanism to try to make recommendations or suggestions when we see a gap. Mr. Baylis was frustrated that

there was not much mechanism to the institute some for of change or improvement. Chairman Taylor asked what would the recommendation for that mechanism be? Mr. Baylis answered that it would be to have some form of ability to vote and to send recommendations to the people that have the ability to make the changes. An example would be to see TMS bring stimulation as a PTSD treatment model. Mr. Brooker observation is the that the veterans health committee, committee of one, with a very broad goal, we did not give you the tools that you needed to accomplish the task.

- Chairman Taylor proposed the question to table this discussion until the next SVC meeting? To allow the commissioners time to think about these issues that have been brought up. To also allow the new commissioners coming on board to weigh in on the subject.
    - Ms. Polly Veater commented it would be helpful to know what the SVC commission is looking for in a report. I think tabling until the next SVC meeting would make sense.
    - Mr. Brooker commented that 3 months of marking time is an example of the SVC dysfunction. The proposals are simple and direct; the committee has an opportunity to propose a meeting with TAG to explain how the GC thinks the SVC can do a better job. To Ms. Pollys point, within the OPP we've written this section on mentorship. The GC is trying to put in the OPP how the transition should occur from one member to another as a MAL or VSO.

Motion to postpone OPP discussion

Motion: Mr. Larry Googins, VVA, made the motion to postpone OPP Discussion until the next SVC meeting 5 SEPT.

Second: Mr. Gerry Hawk seconded the motion.

3 opposed; Motion carried by majority to postpone OPP discussion until 5 SEPT.

Approval of the changes in the Bylaws

Motion: Mr. Michael Brooker, Member at Large, made the motion to approve the change in the Bylaws.

Second: Mr. James Hogan seconded the motion.

The body agreed; motion carried. Bylaws change was approved.

Unfinished Business

None

New Business

None

Good of the Order

Mr. Gerry Hawk stated that Mr. Brooker had a very good discussion. Asked for some of the information be received prior to the meetings so the commission has time to digest it and make better decisions.

Agenda for Next Meeting

- Discussion on the OPP

Closing Remarks **Chairman Nicholas Taylor**

A very productive meeting today. Chairman Taylor will be working with the DMVA over the summer on various things.

We know we will have new commanders coming on board in September. Chairman Taylor asks the various veterans service organization, that are going to have a new leader, to contact Becky so we can update our SVC member chart. (Name, phone number, email address).
Next Meeting
Friday, September- 5th, 10:00 AM Forum: Arrowheads Community Center, FIG Annville, PA 17003

The minutes of this meeting are respectfully submitted by:

BG (PA) Maureen Weigl
Deputy Adjutant General
Veterans Affairs

SAVE THE DATE

PA National Guard Association | PA Dept. of Military & Veterans Affairs

October 22-25 2025

Valley Forge Casino & Resort

1160 First Ave, King of Prussia, PA 19406

COLLABORATING TO BETTER SERVE
PENNSYLVANIA VETERANS
AND
GUARD MEMBERS

COMMITTEE REPORTS

REPORT GIVEN - X

COMMITTEE NOT ACTIVE

NO REPORT- O

DATE	Legislative	Pensions/Relief /Grave Markings	RETX	MAL	Transportation	Veterans' Health	VSO Grant	Women Veterans	Governance Committee	PAWVC Update	ACT 66
12/3/2021	X	O	O	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X
1/7/2022	X	X	O	-	-	X	-	X	-	-	X
2/4/2022	X	O	X	-	-	X	-	X	-	-	X
4/8/2022	X	X	O	-	-	X	X	X	X	-	
6/3/2022	O	O	O	-	-	X	X	X	X	-	
9/9/2022	O	O	O	-	-	X	X	X	X	X	
10/7/2022	X	X	O	-	-	X	X	O	X	O	
12/2/2022	X	X	X	-	-	X	X	X	X	X	
1/6/2023	X	O	O	-	-	O	X	O	X	O	
2/3/2023	O	O	O	-	-	O	X	O	X	O	
4/14/2023	X	O	O	-	-	X	X	O	X	O	
6/16/2023	X	O	O	-	X	X	O	O	O	O	
9/8/2023	X	O	O	-	X	X	O	O	X	O	
10/13/2023	X	O	O	-	X	X	O	X	-	-	
12/8/2023	X	O	X	X	X	X	O	O	-	O	
1/12/2024	X	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	O	
4/5/2024	O	O	X	X	X	O	O	O	-	O	
5/3/2024	O	O	O	X	X	O	X	O	-	X	
6/7/2024	O	O	O	X	X	O	O	O	-	O	
9/5/2024	O	O	O	X	X	X	O	O	-	O	
10/4/2024	X	X	O	X	X	X	O	X	-	O	
12/6/2024	X	O	O	X	X	O	O	O	-	O	
2/7/2025	O	O	O	X	X	O	X	O	-	O	
4/4/2025	O	O	O	X	X	X	X	O	X	O	

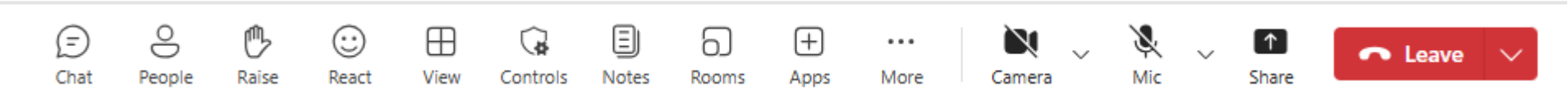
Pennsylvania
Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

STATE VETERANS COMMISSION MEETING
05 September 2025

As it is against the law in Pennsylvania to record, by audio and/or video, someone else without their permission under most circumstances, please note that this meeting will be recorded for administrative purposes only. By continuing to participate, you are providing your consent.

*Please enter your **Full name and organization in the chat** for attendance purposes*

Chat function can be used to submit comments or questions



Click here to raise your hand

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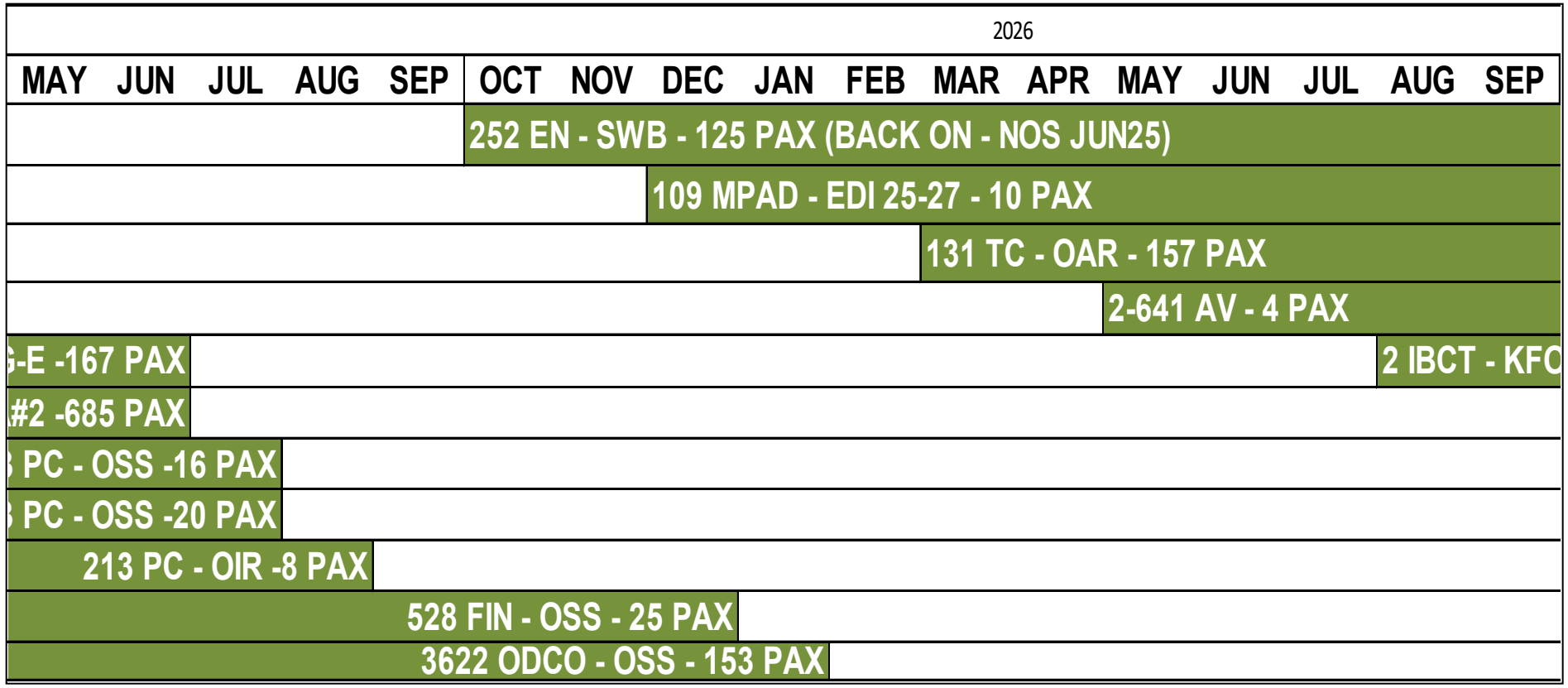
- MOMENT OF SILENCE
- PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
- ADMINISTRATION OF OATH
- INTRODUCTION OF COMMISSION MEMBERS
- VICE CHAIRMAN OPENING REMARKS
- CHAIRMAN OPENING REMARKS

Pennsylvania
Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

DMVA MILITARY UPDATE
MG Pippy

CURRENT AND FUTURE UNIT MOBILIZATIONS

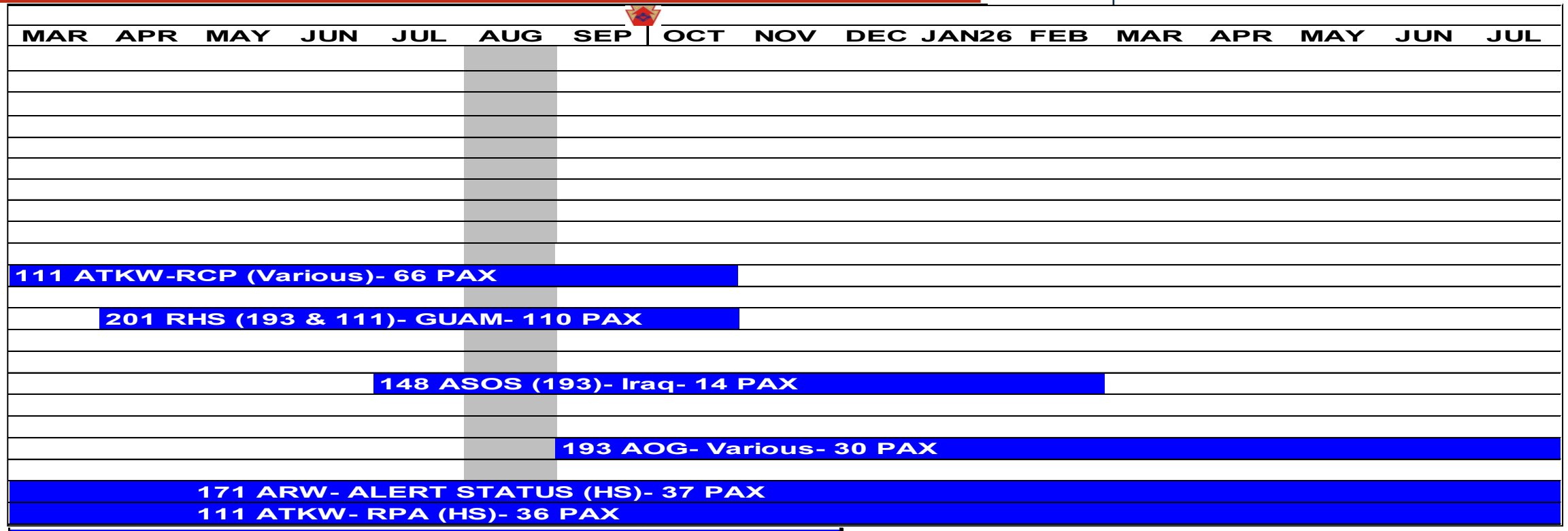
Pennsylvania
Department of Military and Veterans Affairs



ARNG Unit Soldiers in Theater: 164
ARNG Soldiers at MOB/DEMOB Site: 0
ARNG Individual Mob: 9
Total ARNG Mob: 173

CURRENT AND FUTURE UNIT MOBILIZATIONS

Pennsylvania
Department of Military and Veterans Affairs



PAANG Current Deployments

Unit	Opn	Pax
193 SOW	CENTCOM, PACOM, EUCOM	20/57/3
111 ATKW	IPR (HS), PACOM, CENTCOM	36/53/66
171 ARW	Alert Status (HS)	37
Total PAANG Deployed		272

Current ANG Unit Airmen Mob: 263
Current ANG Individual Mob: 9
Total: ANG Mob: 272

As of 06AUG25

> community > commonwealth > country

Pennsylvania
Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

- APPROVAL OF 6 JUNE 2025 MEETING MINUTES
- READING OF OFFICIAL AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

Pennsylvania
Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

DAG-VA Opening remarks
BG (PA) Maureen Weigl

Pennsylvania
Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

PPL

Policy, Planning, and Legislative Affairs

Pennsylvania
Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

Introduced	Initial Committee	1st Consideratio	2nd Consideratio	Appropriation	3rd Consideratio	2nd Chamber Committee	1st Consideratio	2nd Consideratio	2nd Chamber Appropriation	3rd Consideratio	Presented to the Gov	Signed by Gov
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

Bill Number	Title	Primary sponsor	Last action	Progress Code
SB232	An Act amending Title 30 (Fish) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in fishing licenses, further providing for disabled veterans and former prisoners of war and for deployed Pennsylvania National Guard members and repealing provisions relating to reserve component of armed forces members.	Sen. Tracy Pennycuick (R)	2025-06-30 Act 21 of 2025	13
SB129	An Act amending Title 51 (Military Affairs) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, further providing for advisory councils for veterans' homes.	Sen. Doug Mastriano (R)	2025-06-30 Act 20 of 2025	13
HB304	An Act amending Title 51 (Military Affairs) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in general provisions, providing for veteran of Korean Armed Forces.	Rep. Melissa Cerrato (D)	2025-06-30 Act 10 of 2025	13
HB491	An Act amending Title 42 (Judiciary and Judicial Procedure) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in juvenile matters, providing for concurrent jurisdiction on military installations.	Rep. Chris Pielli (D)	2025-06-27 Act no. 6 of 2025	13
HB553	An Act authorizing the Department of General Services, with the approval of the Governor, to grant and convey to Susquehanna Regional Transportation Authority certain lands situate in the City of Harrisburg, Dauphin County; authorizing the transfer of an easement interest in lands for a portion of the Project 70 lands owned by the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission, known as Lake Winola Access, in Overfield Township, Wyoming County, to the Department of Transportation; authorizing the Department of General Services, with the approval of the Governor and the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, to convey to Tioga County a tract of land, and to accept a tract of land from Tioga County, both tracts being located in Charleston Township, Tioga County; and authorizing the Department of General Services, on behalf of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, with the approval of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and the Governor, to grant and convey to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, solely for the use of the Pennsylvania Game Commission, a parcel in Lehigh Township, Carbon County, in exchange for a tract partly in Nesquehoning Borough and partly in Lehigh Township, Carbon County, to be conveyed to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, acting by and through the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and added to Lehigh Gorge State Park.	Rep. Nate Davidson (D)	2025-06-30 Act No. 12 of 2025	13

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Pennsylvania
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1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

Bill Number	Title	Primary sponsor	Last action	Progress Code
HB799	An Act amending Title 51 (Military Affairs) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, providing for veterans' benefits and services workplace posting; and making an editorial change.	Rep. Daniel J. Deasy (D)	2025-07-07 Act 31 of 2025	13
HB865	**An Act amending Title 51 (Military Affairs) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in Military Family Education Program, further providing for definitions, for eligibility, for Military Family Education Program grants and for limitations.**	**Rep. Arvind Venkat (D)**	2025-07-07 Act 32 of 2025	13
SB475	An Act amending Title 42 (Judiciary and Judicial Procedure) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in organization and jurisdiction of courts of common pleas, further providing for problem-solving courts; and, in sentencing, further providing for modification or revocation of order of probation.	Sen. Amanda M. Cappelletti (D)	2025-07-21 Act 38 of 2025	13
HB1405	An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in certification of teachers, further providing for career and technical instructional certificate.	Rep. Brian Munroe (D)	2025-06-25 S - Second consideration , 2025-06-26 S - Voted Favorably From Committee - Senate Appropriations, 2025-06-26 S - Re-reported as committed - Senate Appropriations	10
SB173	An Act amending Title 51 (Military Affairs) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in general provisions, providing for veteran of Korean Armed Forces.	Sen. Tracy Pennycuick (R)	2025-03-19 H - First consideration	8
SB130	An Act amending Title 51 (Military Affairs) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, providing for burial benefits.	Sen. Doug Mastriano (R)	2025-06-04 H - First consideration	8
SB308	**An Act amending Title 51 (Military Affairs) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in military educational programs relating to medical officer or health officer incentive program, further providing for definitions, for establishment of program, for program stipend, for additional incentives, for recoupment of incentive payments, for adjustment of stipend amounts and for eligibility; and making editorial changes.**	**Sen. Scott Hutchinson (R)**	**2025-06-04 H - First consideration**	8
SB327	An Act amending Title 53 (Municipalities Generally) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in employees, further providing for automatic certification.	Sen. Chris Gebhard (R)	2025-06-17 H - Reported as committed - House Judiciary - House Judiciary, 2025-06-17 H - First consideration	8

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1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

Bill Number	Title	Primary sponsor	Last action	Progress Code
HB968	An Act amending Titles 30 (Fish) and 34 (Game) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in fishing licenses, providing for active duty military fishing reciprocity and for disabled veteran annual fishing license reciprocity; and, in hunting and furtaking licenses, providing for active duty military hunting reciprocity and for disabled veteran annual hunting license reciprocity.	Rep. Chris Pielli (D)	2025-06-23 H - Third consideration and final passage , 2025-06-24 S - Referred to - Senate Game and Fisheries	7
SB511	An Act amending Title 38 (Holidays and Observances) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in veteran recognition, providing for Korean War Veterans Armistice Day.	Sen. Doug Mastriano (R)	2025-06-09 S - Third consideration and final passage , 2025-06-10 H - Referred to - House Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness	7
SB472	An Act amending the act of April 9, 1929 (P.L.177, No.175), known as The Administrative Code of 1929, in administrative organization, further providing for department heads, for gubernatorial appointments and for deputies.	Sen. Kristin Phillips-Hill (R)	2025-04-02 S - Third consideration and final passage , 2025-04-03 H - Referred to - House State Government	7
HB1102	**An Act amending Title 51 (Military Affairs) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in military educational programs relating to medical officer or health officer incentive program, further providing for definitions, for establishment of program, for program stipend, for additional incentives, for recoupment of incentive payments, for adjustment of stipend amounts and for eligibility; and making editorial changes.**	**Rep. Chris Pielli (D)**	**2025-05-05 H - Third consideration and final passage , 2025-05-16 S - Referred to - Senate Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness**	7
HB993	An Act amending Title 51 (Military Affairs) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in veteran-owned small businesses, providing for veteran-owned business logotype; and imposing a penalty.	Rep. John C. Inglis III (D)	2025-05-06 H - Third consideration and final passage , 2025-05-12 S - Referred to - Senate Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness	7
HB1144	**An Act amending Title 51 (Military Affairs) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in veterans' pensions and benefits, further providing for blind veteran's pension and for amputee and paralyzed veteran's pension.**	**Rep. Dan K. Williams (D)**	**2025-05-22 H - Third consideration and final passage, 2025-05-22 S - referred to Senate VAEP**	**7**
SB64	An Act amending Title 51 (Military Affairs) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in military leave of absence, further providing for military family relief assistance; in veteran-owned small businesses, providing for veteran-owned business logotype; and imposing a penalty.	Sen. Camera Bartolotta (R)	2025-06-09 S - Amended on third consideration , 2025-06-23 S - Meeting Scheduled - 06/24/2025 - Voting Meeting (Senate Appropriations), Rules Committee Conference Room 6/24/25 - Voting Meeting, Rules Committee Conference Room, 2025-06-24 S - Voted Favorably From Committee as Amended - Senate Appropriations - Senate Appropriations , 2025-06-24 S - Re-reported as amended - Senate Appropriations	6

Policy, Planning, and Legislative Affairs

Pennsylvania
Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

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1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

Bill Number	Title	Primary sponsor	Last action	Progress Code
HB414	An Act amending Titles 23 (Domestic Relations) and 51 (Military Affairs) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, enacting the Uniform Deployed Parents Custody and Visitation Act; making repeals; and making editorial changes.	Rep. Craig Williams (R)	2025-06-26 H - Re-reported as committed - House Appropriations - House Appropriations, 2025-06-26 H - Laid out for discussion , 2025-06-26 H - Third consideration and final passage	6
SB146	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.	Sen. Lisa Baker (R)	2025-03-25 S - Third consideration and final passage	6
SB436	An Act amending Title 23 (Domestic Relations) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in child protective services, further providing for definitions, for reporting procedure, for disposition of complaints received, for responsibility for investigation, for access to information in Statewide database, for information in Statewide database and for release of information in confidential reports.	Sen. Tracy Pennycuick (R)	2025-06-23 S - Second consideration , 2025-06-23 S - Re-referred to - Senate Appropriations	4
SB533	An Act amending Title 34 (Game) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in hunting and furtaking licenses, further providing for license requirements; and, in special licenses and permits, further providing for regulated hunting grounds permits.	Sen. Devlin J. Robinson (R)	2025-06-25 S - Second consideration , 2025-06-25 S - Re-referred to - Senate Appropriations	4
SB144	An Act providing compensation to persons in active service in connection with the Global War on Terrorism or their beneficiaries; authorizing the incurring of indebtedness and the issue and sale of bonds by the Commonwealth for the payment of compensation contingent upon electorate approval; establishing the Global War on Terrorism Veterans' Compensation Bond Fund and the Global War on Terrorism Veterans' Compensation Bond Sinking Fund; imposing a penalty; making appropriations; and making a repeal.	Sen. Doug Mastriano (R)	2025-01-29 S - Second consideration , 2025-01-29 S - Re-referred to - Senate Appropriations	4
SB534	**An Act amending Title 51 (Military Affairs) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in veterans' pensions and benefits, further providing for blind veteran's pension and for amputee and paralyzed veteran's pension.**	**Sen. Judy Ward (R)**	**2025-05-06 S - Second consideration , 2025-05-06 S - Re-referred to - Senate Appropriations**	**4**

Policy, Planning, and Legislative Affairs

Pennsylvania
Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

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1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

Bill Number	Title	Primary sponsor	Last action	Progress Code
HB1342	An Act amending the act of June 28, 1995 (P.L.89, No.18), known as the Conservation and Natural Resources Act, in Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, further providing for fees and charges.	Rep. Mike Armanini (R)	2025-06-26 H - Voted Favorably From Committee as Amended - House Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness - House Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness , 2025-06-26 H - Reported as amended - House Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness - House Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness , 2025-06-26 H - First consideration , 2025-06-26 H - Re-committed to - House Rules - House Rules	3
HB412	An Act amending Title 51 (Military Affairs) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in Pennsylvania National Guard, further providing for association group life insurance for Pennsylvania National Guard.	Rep. Joe Hamm (R)	2025-02-04 H - First consideration	3
HB427	An Act amending Title 51 (Military Affairs) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, providing for burial benefits.	Rep. Craig T. Staats (R)	2025-02-04 H - First consideration	3
HB430	An Act imposing the duty on Department of Environmental Protection to prohibit the construction or installation of wind turbines that negatively affect military installations.	Rep. Zachary Mako (R)	2025-03-17 H - First consideration , 2025-04-09 H - Removed from table , 2025-04-22 H - Placed on HVS , 2025-06-04 H - Laid on the table (Pursuant to House Rule 71)	3
HB200	An Act establishing the Family and Medical Leave Program, the Family and Medical Leave Fund and the Family and Medical Leave Advisory Board; conferring powers and imposing duties on the Department of Labor and Industry; and imposing penalties.	Rep. Dan L. Miller (D)	2025-03-18 H - Voted Favorably From Committee - House Labor and Industry - House Labor and Industry, 2025-03-18 H - Reported as committed - House Labor and Industry - House Labor and Industry, 2025-03-18 H - First consideration, March 18, 2025, 2025-06-11 H - Removed from table , 2025-06-16 H - Placed on HVS	3
HB1126	**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.**	**Rep. Nancy Guenst (D)**	**2025-04-08 H - First consideration**	**3**
HB1269	An Act amending the act of April 9, 1929 (P.L.177, No.175), known as The Administrative Code of 1929, in administrative organization, further providing for advisory boards and commissions; and, in powers and duties of the Department of Health and its departmental administrative and advisory boards, establishing the Brain Injury Advisory Board.	Rep. Shelby Labs (R)	2025-05-07 H - First consideration	3

Policy, Planning, and Legislative Affairs

Pennsylvania
Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

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1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

Bill Number	Title	Primary sponsor	Last action	Progress Code
HB862	**An Act authorizing the Department of General Services, with the approval of the Governor and the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, to convey to Tioga County a tract of land, and to accept a tract of land from Tioga County, both tracts being located in Charleston Township, Tioga County.**	**Rep. Clint Owlett (R)**	**2025-05-13 H - First consideration**	**3**
HB1257	**A Joint Resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, further providing for exemptions and special provisions.**	**Rep. Tarah Probst (D)**	**2025-06-16 H - Reported as amended - House Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness, 2025-06-16 H - First consideration, 2025-06-16 H - Re-committed to - House Rules**	3
HB575	An Act amending Titles 51 (Military Affairs) and 53 (Municipalities Generally) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in professional and occupational licenses, further providing for definitions and providing for policy for the award of academic credit for military training; and making editorial changes.	Rep. Jacob D. Banta (R)	2025-03-17 H - Reported with request to re-refer to the House Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committee - House Education - House Education , 2025-03-17 H - Re-referred to - House Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness - House Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness, 2025-03-17 H - Corrective Reprint, Printer's No. 959, March 17, 2025	2
HR93	A Resolution directing the Joint State Government Commission to conduct a comprehensive study and issue a report on Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps programs in schools in Pennsylvania.	Rep. Joe Webster (D)	2025-03-25 H - Voted Favorably From Committee - House Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness - House Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness , 2025-03-25 H - Reported as committed - House Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness - House Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness , 2025-05-14 H - Laid on the table (Pursuant to House Rule 71)	2

2025-2026 Session
General Assembly
Senate: Sep 8, 9, 10, **Oct** 20, 21, 22, 27, 28, 29 **Nov** 17, 18, 19 **Dec** 8, 9, 10
House: Sep 22 (NV), 23 (NV), 24 (NV), 29, 30 **Oct** 1, 6, 7, 8, 27, 28, 29 **Nov** 17, 18, 19 **Dec** 8 (NV), 9 (NV), 10 (NV), 15, 16, 17
NOT a "sine die" year, so legislation will carry over to next year.

2025 Pennsylvania Elections: Upcoming Elections

Nov 4th, 2025 Municipal Election
Last day to register to vote: Oct. 20, 2025
Last day to request a mail-in or absentee ballot: Oct. 28, 2025

Pennsylvania
Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

BVH

Pennsylvania
Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

Survey Update

SVH Survey Table as of August 22, 2025				
SVH	Regulatory Agency	Survey Reason/Type	Survey Date(s)	Status/comments
DVVH	DOH Nursing	Annual Recertification	07/21/25 - 07/24/25	CAP accepted, date certain 9/22/25
	DOH Nursing	Abbreviated - Complaint	08/21/25	Pending
	DOH Nursing	Abbreviated - Complaint	05/07/25	Cleared
	DOH Nursing	Abbreviated - Complaint	09/10/24	Cleared
	DOH Life Safety	Annual Recertification	07/22/25	CAP accepted, date certain 9/22/25
	VA	Annual Recertification	12/17/24 - 12/20/24	CAP accepted, date certain 8/1
GMVC	DOH Nursing	Annual Recertification	06/03/25 - 06/06/25	Cleared
	DOH Nursing	Abbreviated - Complaint	05/13/25	Cleared
	DOH Life Safety	Annual Recertification	06/10/25	Cleared
	VA	Annual Recertification	07/15/25 - 07/18/25	CAP accepted, date certain 11/28/25
HVH	DOH Nursing	Annual Recertification	06/09/25 - 06/12/25	Cleared
	DOH Nursing	Abbreviated - Complaint	12/02/24	Cleared
	DOH Nursing	Abbreviated - Complaint	08/05/25	Cleared
	DOH Life Safety	Annual Recertification	06/18/25	Cleared
	DHS	Annual Recertification	01/29/25 - 01/30/25	Cleared
	DHS	Abbreviated - Incident	05/29/25	Cleared
	DHS	Abbreviated - Complaint	11/06/24	Cleared
	VA	Annual Recertification	07/14/25 - 07/18/25	POC under development

SVH Survey Table as of August 22, 2025				
SVH	Regulatory Agency	Survey Reason/Type	Survey Date(s)	Status/comments
PSSH	DOH Nursing	Annual Recertification	03/04/25 - 03/07/25	Cleared
	DOH Life Safety	Annual Recertification	03/11/25	Cleared
	DHS	Annual Recertification	02/06/25	Cleared
	DHS	Abbreviated - Incident	04/10/25	Cleared
	VA	Annual Recertification	07/07/25 - 07/11/25	CAP accepted, date certain 10/10/25
SEVC	DOH Nursing	Annual Recertification	05/06/25 - 05/09/25	Cleared
	DOH Nursing	Abbreviated - Incident	07/01/25	Cleared
	DOH Nursing	Abbreviated - Complaint	03/20/25	Cleared
	DOH Nursing	Abbreviated - Complaint	11/18/24	Cleared
	DOH Nursing	Abbreviated - Complaint	10/01/24	Cleared
	DOH Life Safety	Annual Recertification	05/20/25	Cleared
	DHS	Annual Recertification	11/13/24	Cleared
	DHS	Abbreviated - Incident	01/03/25	Cleared
	VA	Annual Recertification	07/14/25 - 07/18/25	POC under development
SWVC	DOH Nursing	Annual Recertification	04/21/25 - 04/25/25	Cleared
	DOH Nursing	Abbreviated - Complaint	07/01/25	Cleared
	DOH Nursing	Abbreviated - Complaint	12/27/24	Cleared
	DOH Life Safety	Annual Recertification	04/28/25	Cleared
	VA	Annual Recertification	06/10/25 - 06/13/25	CAP Accepted, date certain 10/27/25

Pennsylvania
Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

Infection Prevention Update

COVID-19, Influenza, RSV Data

Friday, August 22, 2025	DVVH	GMVC	HVH	PSSH	SEVC	SWVC	TOTAL
Total # of COVID + residents	0	0	0	0	0	2 (1 in house and 1 in hospital	2
Total # of COVID + staff	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Total number of residents who have received the 2024/2025 COVID vaccine	186	152	174	120	176	128	936
Total # of + RSV residents	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total # of residents who received a dose of RSV vaccine	23	48	73	25	54	31	254

5 Star Rating - Last Updated: July 30, 2025

	DVVH	GMVC	HVH	PSSH	SEVC	SWVC
Overall	5	5	4	4	4	3
Health Inspection	3	4	2	3	3	2
Quality Measures	5	5	5	2	3	4
Staffing	5	5	5	5	5	5
Changes from June/July 2025	Unchanged	Unchanged	Unchanged	Unchanged	Unchanged	Unchanged

Resident Status: August 22, 2025

Veteran Home	Isolation COVID	Quarantine	Isolation RSV
DVVH	0	0	0
GMVC	0	0	0
HVH	0	0	0
PSSH	0	0	0
SEVC	0	0	0
SWVC	2	0	0

COVID vaccines residents only: 936 *COVID: 2 Residents at SWVC *RSV: None

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/19MpLoPxayE1MDwQJJYCZxlSN64V4FJSJPGzfvVBb5Mw/edit#gid=1511961664

Pennsylvania
Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

BUREAU OF VETERANS PROGRAMS, INITIATIVES, REINTEGRATION, AND OUTREACH

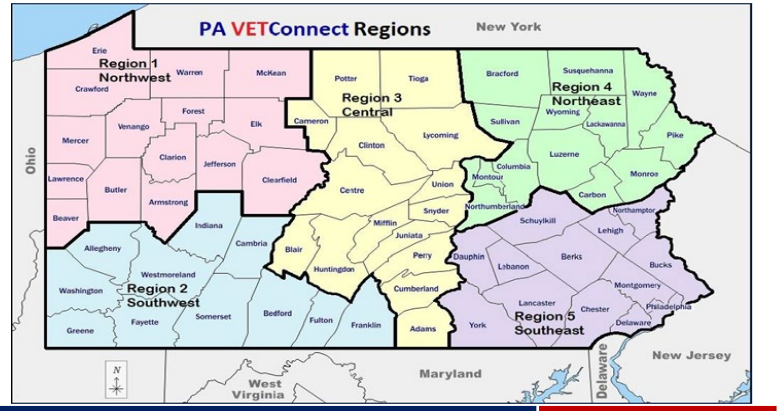
PA VETConnect

Pennsylvania
Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

We build relationships that amplify service to the SMVF community

- Region 1 – RPOC and Erie CDVA Joe Benacci are working with a Veteran who has purchased a home in Erie that needs several modifications. So far, we have secured a wheelchair ramp, contractor to widen interior doorway and Meals On Wheels to provide a few meals while he and his wife get established.
- Region 2 – RPOC was introduced to a VA Pittsburgh Research Specialist through another VHA employee. She is recruiting for veteran participants to take part in a research study on Mental Health Disorders that is currently underway. We will share the research flyer across the region and have invited her to speak at our next bimonthly CDVA call about the study
- Region 3 – Discovered a new NPO resource called Cell Phones for Soldiers. They provide a free smart phone and 12 months of free unlimited text, data and talk to veterans (any era, any branch and must meet characterization and income criteria). Application is online. Veteran or advocate can refer to program. They are looking to increase awareness and use of their program in PA. Informed them of PA Navigate and PA 211.
- Region 4 – VSS has been helping develop the Weatherly American Legion coffee club and since then the legion has expressed interest in venturing into other programs that can support the veterans in their community. She connected them with Valor Clinic Foundation and have a follow up meeting to look at organizing a stand down at their location.
- Region 5 – RPOC was contacted by the American Legion regarding a veteran in a nursing home in Upper Dauphin County and his wheelchair had broken and he was unable to afford to replace it. Erica was able to get a wheelchair from the Middletown Lions Club to be provided to the veteran.

- **Successes**
  - >29,000 Connections
  - Building trust within the network
  - PA VETConnect now Powered by PA Navigate – Connecting Veterans with resources and support



> community > commonwealth > country

Reintegration and Outreach Events Overview

Pennsylvania
Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

Outreach Statistics

	SFY 23-24	SFY 24-25	1st Qtr	2nd Qtr	3rd Qtr	4th Qtr	Year to Date
Outreach Events Supported	373	432	33				**33**
Veteran Interactions	6,375	6,637	698				**698**
Women Veterans	N/A	662	86				**86**
Family Members or Caregivers	N/A	1,624	201				**201**
Claim referrals to County Directors and Service Organizations	1,352	2,218	218				**218**
Claim referrals to other state, county and local organizations assisting Veterans	1,753	1,734	195				**195**
Health Care Enrollment Referrals	995	1,148	73				**73**
Number of Veterans Registry Cards distributed / enrolled	1,019	1,873	191				**191**
County Directors Office Attended	162	210	14				**14**
Legislative attended events	150	185	7				**7**

As of 20 August 2025

Pennsylvania
Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

Programs Report

Amputee & Paralyzed Veteran's Pension

Pennsylvania
Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

SFY25/26 Budget: $4,408,050

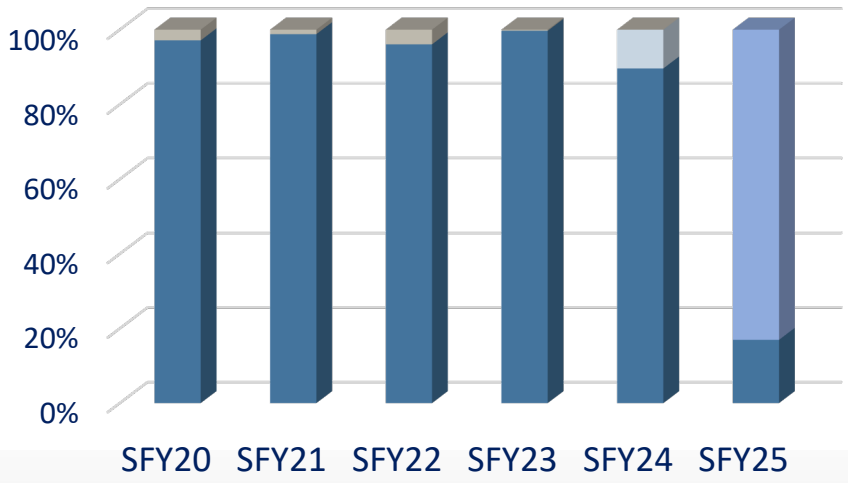
Expended $747,600 .....

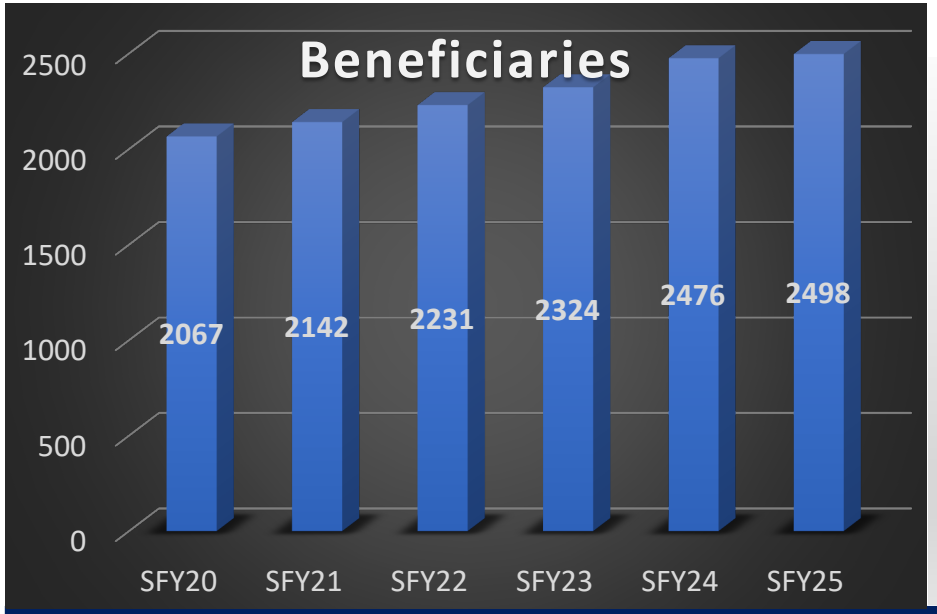
Projected $3,660,450 .....

Lapsed $0 .....

At 1/6 thru SFY, 17% of budget expended.

Budget Execution





Notes: 2,498 Veterans currently on pension.

Five-year trend shows an 18% beneficiary increase largely attributable to positive external factors such as the federal PACT Act of 2022.

Currently experiencing surge in applications covered by a supplement to the budget.

Blind Veteran's Pension

Pennsylvania
Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

SFY24/25 Budget: $222,000

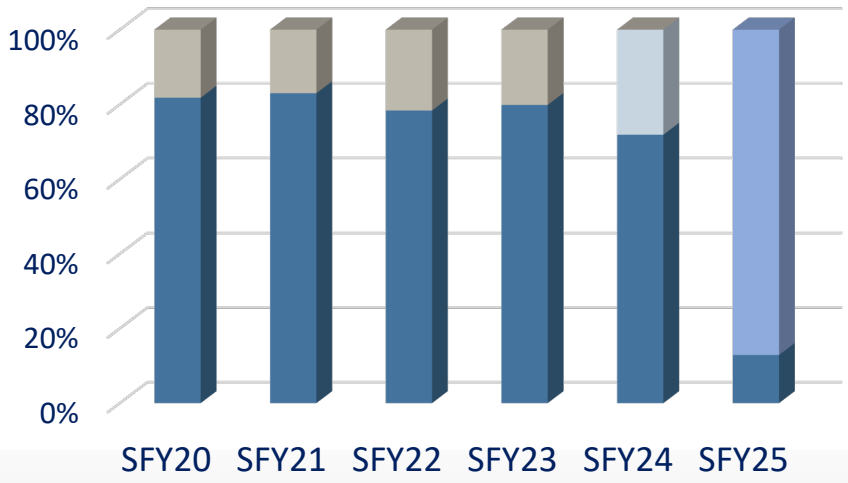
Expended $28,650 .....

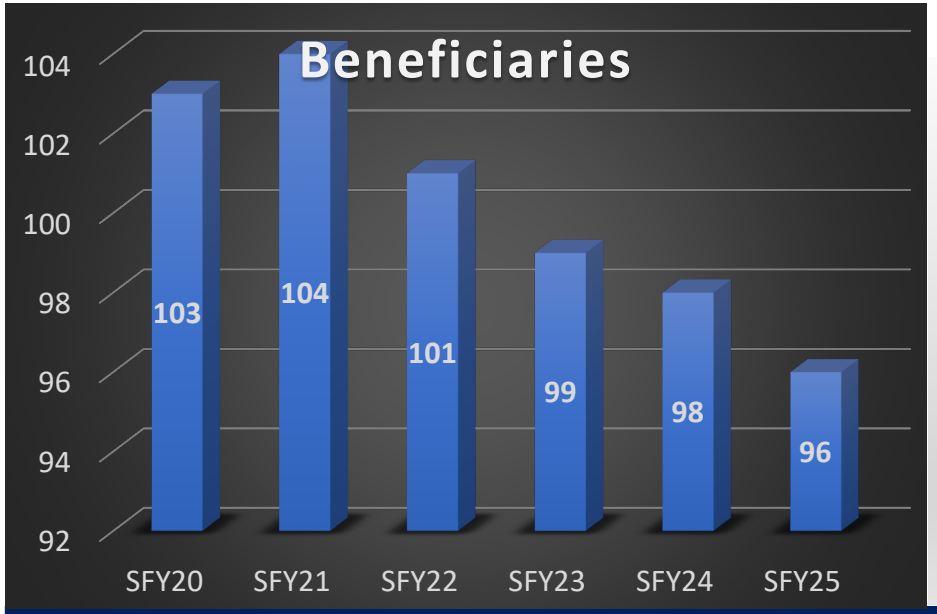
Projected $193,350 .....

Lapsed $0 .....

At 1/6 thru SFY, 13% of budget expended.

Budget Execution





Notes: 96 Veterans currently on pension.

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

Expect continued stability.

Educational Gratuity

Pennsylvania
Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

SFY24/25 Budget: $350,000

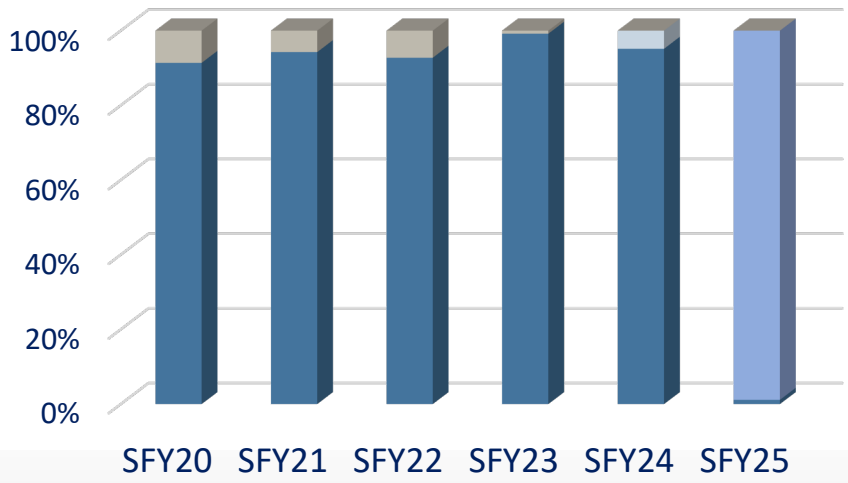
Expended $4,000 .....

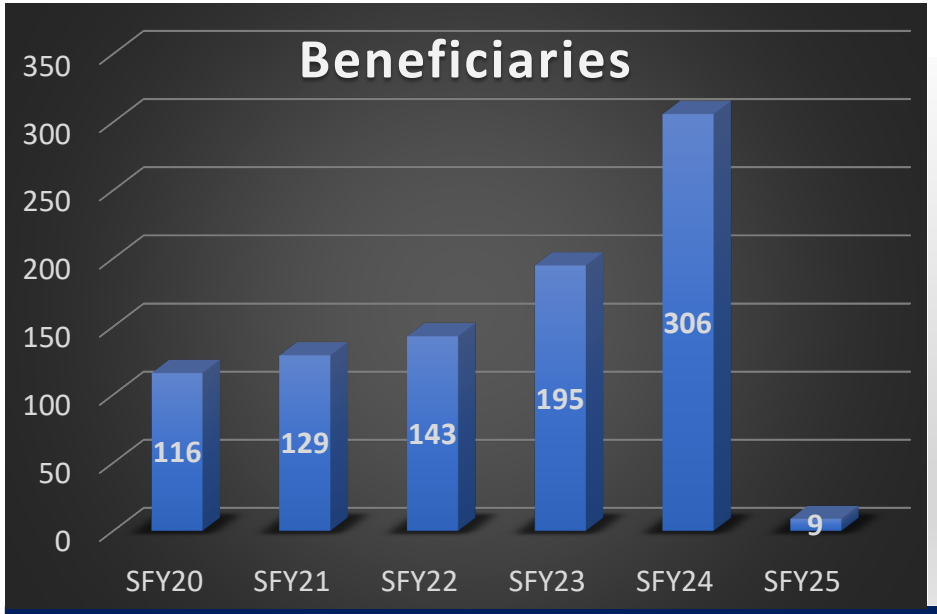
Projected $346,000 .....

Lapsed $0 .....

At 1/6 thru SFY, 1% of budget expended.

Budget Execution





Notes: 9 gratuities have been paid 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.

Veterans' Temporary Assistance

Pennsylvania
Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

SFY24/25 VTF Allowance: $900,000

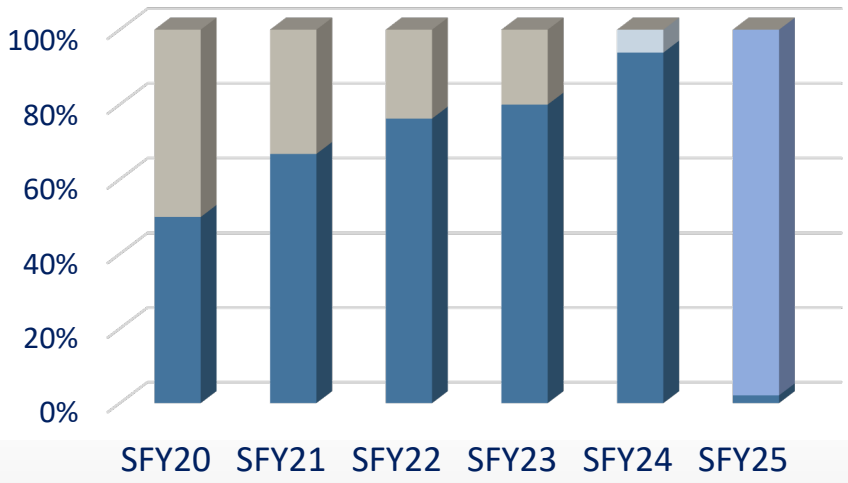
Expended $19,200 .....

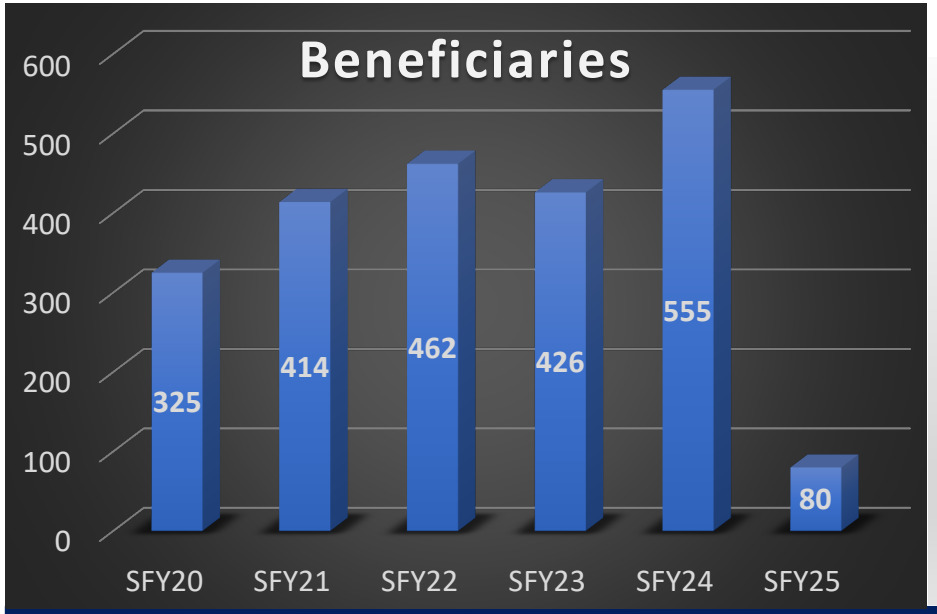
Projected $880,800 .....

Lapsed $0 .....

At 1/6 thru SFY, 2% of budget expended.

Budget Execution





Notes: 80 grants issued SFY to date.

Five-year trend shows an average of 436 VTA grants per year.

Expect to expend the total $900,000 VTF allowance this SFY.

Military Family Relief Assistance

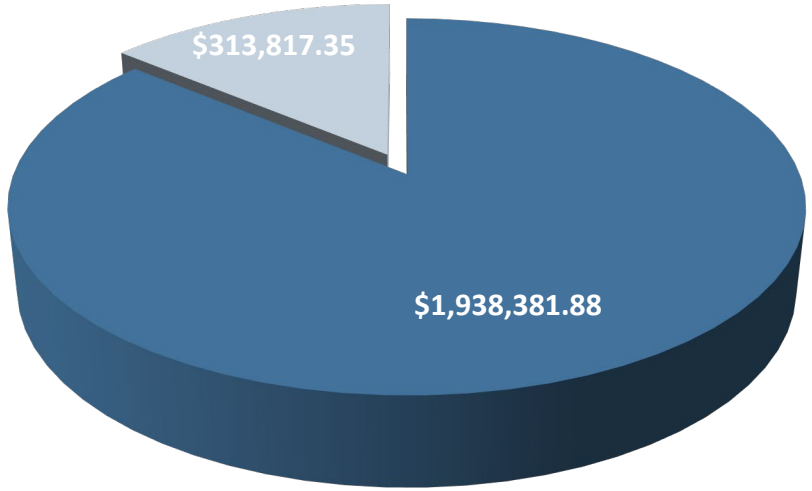
Pennsylvania
Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

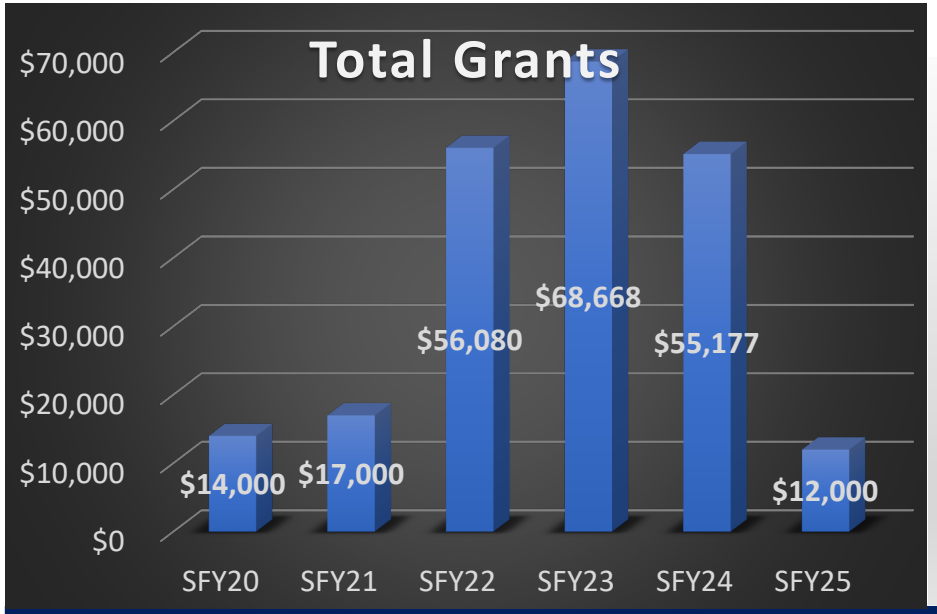
Personal Income Tax Donations .....

Private/Cash/Other Donations .....

Total Donations SFY05-25: $2,252,198
Total Grants SFY05-25: $1,115,847

MFRA Fund Balance: $1,136,351





Notes: $12,000 in total grants SFY to date.

Five-year trend shows large grant increases over the last two years with low points in 2020-2021 (COVID-19). Overall, the current grant trend is low compared to earlier years with higher active-duty mobilization rates.

Expect grants to continue trending at $50-$75K.

Disabled Vets' Real Estate Tax Exemption

Pennsylvania
Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

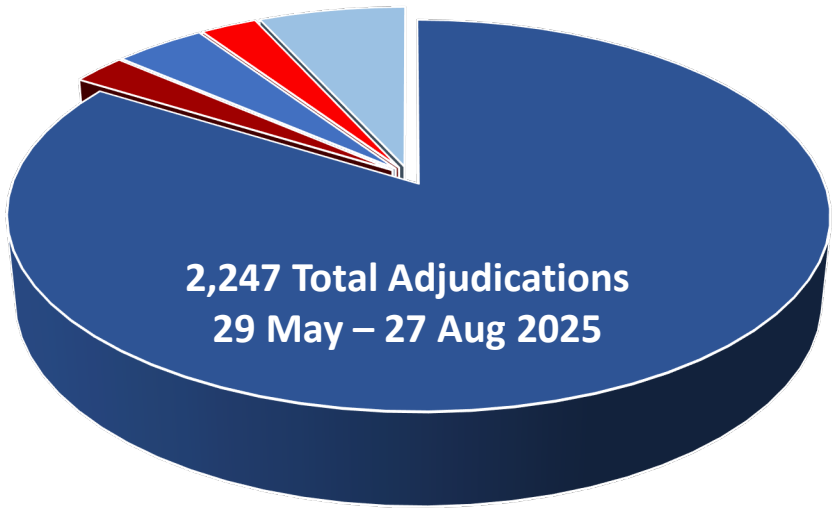
1,884 Approved (83.8%) .....

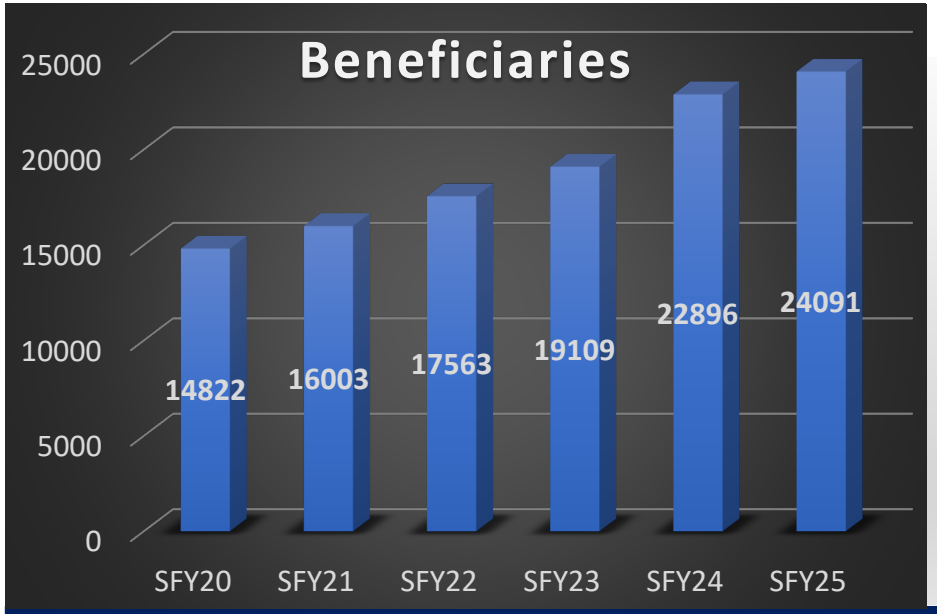
56 Denied: Financial Need .....

95 Denied: Eligibility .....

153 Removed: Change of Eligibility/Need .....

59 Removed: No Response to 5-Year Review .....





Notes: 24,091 Veterans and surviving spouses currently receive est. **$82.5M** in exemptions.

61.5% beneficiary increase over the last 5 years is attributable to federal PACT Act and Act 27 of 2024 effects on eligibility and need.

Expect continuing increases.

INDEPENDENT REGULATORY REVIEW COMMISSION

Notice of Comments Issued

Section 5(g) of the Regulatory Review Act (71 P.S. § 745.5(g)) provides that the Independent Regulatory Review Commission (IRRC) may issue comments within 30 days of the close of the public comment period. IRRC comments are based upon the criteria contained in section 5.2 of the Regulatory Review Act (71 P.S. § 745.5b).

IRRC has issued comments on the following proposed regulation. The agency must consider these comments in preparing the final-form regulation. The final-form regulation must be submitted within 2 years of the close of the public comment period or it will be deemed withdrawn.

Reg. No.	*Agency/Title*	*Close of the Public Comment Period*	*IRRC Comments Issued*
13-6	Department of Military and Veterans Affairs State Veterans' Programs 55 Pa.B. 1421 (February 15, 2025)	03/17/25	04/16/25

Department of Military and Veterans Affairs
Regulation # 13-6 (IRRC # 3429)

State Veterans' Programs

April 16, 2025

We submit for your consideration the following comments on the proposed rulemaking published in the February 15, 2025 *Pennsylvania Bulletin*. Our comments are based on criteria in Section 5.2 of the Regulatory Review Act (RRA) (71 P.S. § 745.5b). Section 5.1(a) of the RRA (71 P.S. § 745.5a(a)) directs the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (Department) to respond to all comments received from us or any other source.

Subchapter A. GENERAL PROVISIONS

the Commission. Since the rulemaking is a product of both agencies, what is the need to delegate authority to a bureau within the Department? We recommend that this section be deleted from the final-form rulemaking.

3. Section 5a.4. Waiver of regulations.—Clarity; Implementation procedures.

This section will allow the Adjutant General, "in his or her sole discretion," to waive requirements in the chapter for "good cause." We have two concerns. First, the term "good cause" is vague and should be defined. Second, the process under which waivers are granted is unclear. Must a waiver be requested by a member of the regulated community? Can the Adjutant General grant a waiver upon his or her own initiative or upon the request of a

Pennsylvania
Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

VISN 4 REPORT

VISN 4 Access – Fiscal Year 2025 Wait Times

Pennsylvania
Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

Clinics FY25 thru August 16	Number of Appointments	Average Wait
Mental Health	369,827	4.9
Primary Care	447,587	3.9
Specialty Care	970,161	10.2
Other	776,862	6.7
ALL	2,564,437	7.3

FY25 data updated 8/17/2025 with appointment info as of 8/16/2025.

VISN 4 Access – Current Average Wait Times

Pennsylvania
Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

VISN 4 Facility	Primary Care	
	New Patients	Returning Patients
James E. Van Zandt VAMC	25	2
Abie Abraham HCC	13	2
Coatesville VAMC	22	4
Erie VAMC	13	2
Lebanon VAMC	17	3
Corporal Michael J. Crescenz VAMC	23	5
VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System (University Drive)	43	5
VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System (H.J. Heinz)	21	8
Wilkes-Barre VAMC	10	2
Wilmington VAMC	17	5

FY25 data updated 8/18/2025 with wait times as of 8/18/2025 for the last 30 days.

www.accesstocare.va.gov

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.

FY25 data updated 8/18/2025 with wait times as of 8/18/2025 for the last 30 days.

www.accesstocare.va.gov

VISN 4 Care in the Community

Pennsylvania
Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

Care in the Community Consults (Scheduled and Completed)		Non-VA Unique Patients*
FY23	190,810	99,167
FY24	211,725	103,826
FY25 (as of 8/18/25)	198,535	101,519

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

FY25 data updated 8/18/2025 with consult info as of 8/18/2025.

SAIL Radar

Pennsylvania
Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

FY25 Q2 Rank vs. FY25 Q1 Rank 18 Total VISNs

Rank Improved = **8**

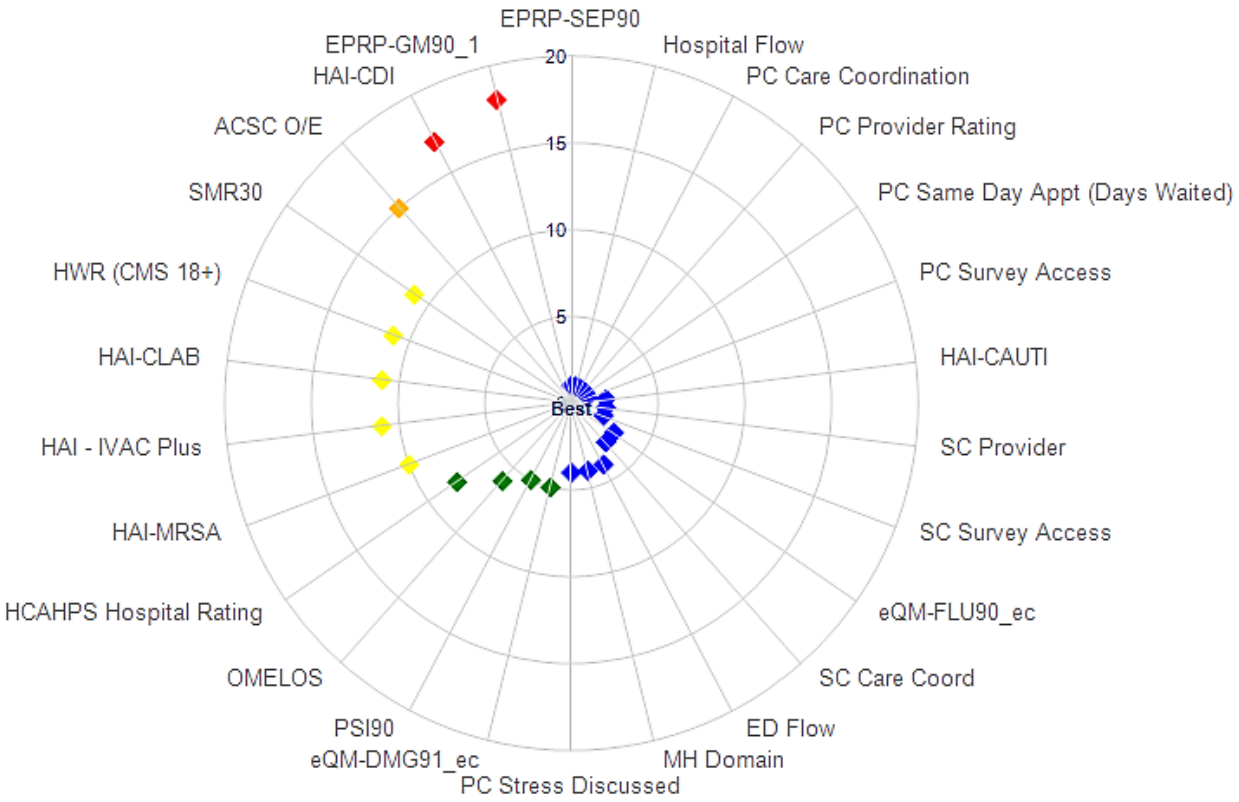
Rank Worse = **5**

No Change = 13

14 Main Measures in the **1st Quintile**

2 Main Measures in the **5th Quintile**

VISN 4 FY25 Q2 Metric



1st quintile | 2nd quintile | 3rd quintile | 4th quintile | 5th quintile

Committee Reports

Legislative	Mr. Mark Baylis
Pensions/Relief/Grave Markings	Mr. Larry Googins
RETX	Mr. Jesiah Schrader
MAL	Vice-Chair Constance Snavely
Transportation	Mr. Robert Hammaker
Veterans' Health	Mr. Leonard Johnson
VSO Grant	Mr. John Getz
Women Veterans	Ms. Pauline Bozdech-Veater

Pennsylvania
Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

- PAWVC Update
- Unfinished Business
- New Business
- Agenda items for next meeting
- Good to the order
- Closing Remarks

NEXT MEETING

Pennsylvania
Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

23 OCTOBER 2025 at 03:00PM

VALLEY FORGE CASINO & RESORT
1160 FIRST AVE
KING OF PRUSSIA, PA 19406

FOR SVC INFO VISIT: www.dmva.pa.gov/veterans/commissionsandcouncils

Get in Touch

Adams, Franklin, Fulton, Perry, Cumberland, and Huntington Counties

e-mail: CPAHFcontact@gmail.com
Website: centralpahonorflight.org

Honor Flight National Network Website:
Honorflight.org

Central PA Honor Flight

"Escorting our Heroes"

Our Mission:

To celebrate veterans

We will take these veterans to Washington, D.C. to show them the monuments and memorials erected in their honor.

To then Welcome them Home.

After our visit to DC we want to welcome the veterans home in Pennsylvania style

Anyone can help!

If you have any time or skills you can help!

Can You Help?

Central PA Honor Flight Begins our Mission
September 20th, 2025!!

We need many volunteers to help our local veterans get to D.C., and then welcome them back home. Contact us via e-mail or phone to help.

Please visit: centralpahonorflight.org
e-mail: CPAHFcontact@gmail.com
phone: 717-259-3313 and leave a message

We need volunteers who know

- Technology
- Marketing
- Fund Raising
- Management
- Legal help
- CPA experience
- Medical Experience
  - EMT
  - Paramedics
  - Nurses
  - Doctors

Meet and help our Nations Heros

ANY HONORABLY DISCHARGED VETERAN WHO HAS SERVED IN ANY BRANCH DURING THE YEARS 1941-1975* IS ENTITLED TO A FREE TRIP!

ADDITIONALLY ANY HONORABLY DISCHARGED VETERAN (ANY SERVICE TIMEFRAME) WHO IS SUFFERING FROM A TERMINAL ILLNESS IS ALSO ENTITLED TO A FREE TRIP

Our Mission:

To celebrate regional veterans to Washington, D.C. to show them the monuments and memorials erected in their honor. To then Welcome them back home to Pennsylvania!

RETX- Exempt list(New)
-

mvfigsqlprod01
8/27/2025
rep_VADC_RETX_Exempt_List_New

Summary of Current Applications (Exempt)

Count	No Activity	Review Process Started	Review App Received	New Apps Pending
24091	23675	381	35	154

Summary of Activity from 05/29/2025 to 08/27/2025

Apps Created : 1814	
New	1357
Review:	457

Apps Approved :1884	
New	1401
Review	483

Apps Denied Fin:	56
Apps Denied (Ineligible):	95
Apps Removed from Exempt List (No Response):	59
Apps Removed from Exempt List (Eligibility Changed):	153

Summary of Ineligible Reason

Reason	Count
It has been determined that the information submitted with your application does not substantiate your financial need for the exemption.	1
The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs has determined that the veteran did not have a total and/or 100% permanent disability during their lifetime.	9
The property for which you claim exemption is not owned solely by you, or as an estate by the entirety with your spouse.	24
The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs has determined that the veteran did not serve during a period of war or armed conflict.	31
The U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs has determined that you did not serve during a period of war or armed conflict and you have a future exam, therefore, your disability has not been rated as total or 100% permanent.	4
Spouse Remarried	2
You do not occupy the property for which you have claimed exemption as your principal dwelling.	1
Your disability has not been declared by the U. S. Department of Veterans Affairs to be a total or 100% permanent disability.	3
The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs stated that you have a future exam , therefore, your disability has not been rated as total or 100% permanent.	19

Summary of Activity: 29 May - 27 Aug 2025

Applications Approved	**1,884**
New	1401
Review	483

Applications Denied	**363**
Financial Need	56
Ineligible	95
No Response	59
Change of Eligibility	153

Over Income	**61**	**FALSE**
New	51	4%
Review	10	2%

Applications Created	**1,814**
Total Adjudicated	**2,247**

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Administration
VA Healthcare–VISN 4

VISN 4 Update

September 5, 2025

Leadership Update

Robert Kling, Associate Director at the VA Pittsburgh, is currently serving as the Interim VISN 4 Deputy Network Director.

Ashley Klick continues to serve as the Acting Chief Nursing Officer for VISN 4 while I am detailed to the Network Director position.

Prachi Asher, the VA Pittsburgh Deputy Director is currently serving as their Acting Director.

Patrick Strollo, MD, Associate Chief of staff of Medicine Service at the VA Pittsburgh is currently service as their Acting Chief of Staff.

Jeston Robinson, Assistant Director at the VA Pittsburgh is currently serving as their Acting Associate Director.

Tony Cuzzola, Chief Supply Chain Officer at the Erie VA is currently serving as their Acting Associate Director.

Ashley Keller, is currently serving as the Acting Associate Director at the Altoona VA.

Thomas Bennett, the Chief of Police at the Butler VA, is currently serving as the Acting Chief VISN 4 Security Officer.

Nicole Lynn, VISN 4 Deputy Business Implementation Manager is currenting serving as the VISN Business Implementation Manager.

Transportation Update

The Veteran Transportation Service (VTS) at each VAMC in VISN 4 has completed the first round of entering DAV/Donated Vehicles and DAV/Volunteer drivers into the VA-approved VetRide software system. We are currently performing a quality assurance check on the entries while also building insightful reporting capabilities. VISN 4 will

use VetRide to track vehicle usage statistics including the number of rides, miles, passengers, etc., as well as maintenance details. This is particularly important as we strive towards providing program information and transparency to our VAMC leadership and Veteran Service Organization partners. Our initial test reports have been successful – for example, we can now see the number of passengers we couldn't transport, the reasons for denied transportation – by zip code. We anticipate completing both projects across VISN 4 by September 30, 2025.

Patient Experience Update – Trust

VISN 4 continues to have the highest trust Score across the enterprise at 95.2%.

Our network also has the highest number of compliments at 80.2% and the lowest number of concerns at 10.2%. The top 5 compliments recently are quality of care, wait time at facility, cleanliness of facility, interactions with staff, and satisfaction with specialty care.

Simplified travel claims submissions now available on VA mobile app

On August 11th, the VA announced that eligible Veterans can now submit and track "mileage-only" travel claims directly from a smartphone or mobile device via the VA Health and Benefits mobile app.

The app, which has more than three million downloads, automatically identifies when a Veteran's appointment may be eligible for mileage reimbursement and displays a prompt on the home screen. Submissions require just a few taps to confirm details.

The new feature will potentially reduce the number of paper claim submissions, which can take longer for VA to process.

Veterans who meet certain criteria, such as having a service-connected disability rating of 30% or higher, are eligible for health care travel reimbursement if they traveled in their own vehicle from their home address to their VA medical appointment.

A link with be included with the minutes for more information about how to use the mobile app and its new features, or to download the app visit the Mobile VA Health and Benefits page.

Connected Care Update

Transition to VA.gov: My HealtheVet on VA.gov is VAs new Veteran-facing health portal home within VA.gov – the one place for Veterans to manage their benefits and health. On June 5, 2025, Veterans were redirected from the My HealtheVet portal to VA.gov when using Secure Messaging, Medications, and Medical Records. Veterans are encouraged to go to www.VA.gov/my-health to manage their health care.

Also, after September 30th, 2025, Veterans accessing their MHV accounts exclusively through DS Logon will not have access to their accounts unless they transition to a new modern credential through ID.me or Login.gov. Please visit the link below to obtain a new account. You may also visit your local VA facility to get help with the transition from your MHV Coordinator or Virtual Health Resource Center.

https://www.va.gov/resources/creating-an-account-for-vagov/

HRO Highlight: Wilkes-Barre VAMC

A female Veteran came into the specialty clinic for cardiology and endocrinology appointments. Nicole Pfeil, LPN was the nurse that day rooming the Veteran. After speaking with her, the Veteran stated she was 'hungry', new to the area and had not lived here long enough to receive the assistance she needed for food, income needs etc. Ms. Pfeil, applying reluctance to simplify, also noticed that the Veteran had a significant weight loss from prior recordings due to lack of adequate food, meals, income etc.

Being preoccupied with failure, she did not want to see this Veteran leave without the needed resources and was able to coordinate help. Since this was during nurse's week at the VA, Ms. Pfeil not only gave the Veteran the hoagie that was intended to be her own but packed up the remaining food from her co-workers' nurses' luncheon (with approval). She contacted numerous resources to inquire about getting help with food insecurity for this veteran. She was also able to acquire a gas card for the Veteran as she was worried about getting home that day and lived a distance away.

After finding the resources needed, Ms. Pfeil took the time to help carry the boxes of food to the Veteran's car, helping her load everything. She spent a great amount of time and was persistent in making sure this Veteran had her essential needs taken care of and showed compassion for this female veteran. Ms. Pfeil truly displayed the HRO principles and was a true Hero that day to the Veteran for her extraordinary care and service.