



OREGON DEPARTMENT
of VETERANS' AFFAIRS

REPORT TO THE

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

TO THE OREGON DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS

DECEMBER 2025



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This report is available and can be downloaded at:
www.oregon.gov/odva/Connect/Pages/Advisory-Committee.aspx



ADVISORY COMMITTEE INFORMATION

Since the Advisory Committee was established in 1945, it has held a distinct and fundamental role in advising the Director and staff of ODVA. Advisory Committee members are military veterans appointed by the Governor, act as advocates for veteran issues, and represent veteran concerns across Oregon. The Advisory Committee is fortunate to have volunteer members from every generation of veterans and communities across this state who bring diverse talents and experiences. As an Advisory Committee, they are informed by the broader veterans' community that they serve. As such, all Oregon veterans, their families, and our partners are invited to attend and participate in the quarterly meetings held across the state.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS *See member bios [here](#)*

Robert “Bob” Van Voorhis, Chair, USA.....	John Day
Christina Wood, Vice Chair, USAF.....	Portland
Mary Mayer, Secretary, USAF.....	Portland
Christopher Waine, USA.....	Hermiston
Ashley Taylor, USA.....	Scappoose
Shawn Flynn, USA.....	Portland
Mario Smith, USA	Portland
Tim Smart, USN	Gresham
James Little, USN	Roseburg

COMMITTEE INFO AND CONTACT ONLINE

Learn more about the committee, meetings, or learn how to apply to be appointed by the Governor to serve as a member of the Veterans Advisory Committee.

Webpage: www.oregon.gov/odva/Connect/Pages/Advisory-Committee.aspx

Email: odva_vaac@odva.oregon.gov



OREGON DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS LEADERSHIP

Dr. Nakeia Council Daniels, USA	Director
Jamal Fox.....	Deputy Director
Rex Emery, USN.....	Chief Operating Officer
Esmeralda Boies, USAF.....	Executive Assistant to the Director
Jay DeFillipo, USA.....	Legislative Director
Nicole Hoeft.....	Strategic Communications Director
Nicole Dolan.....	Chief Financial Officer
David Kampff, USAF.....	Chief Information Officer
Jerrika Self.....	Human Resources Administrator
Kelly Breshears.....	Aging Veteran Services Division Director
Sheronne Blasi, USN.....	Strategic Partnerships Director
Joseph Glover, USN.....	Appeals & Special Advocacy Director
Staci Perez, USAF.....	Chief Auditor Executive

CONTACT ODVA ONLINE

Learn more about agency programs, access a staff directory, or learn about federal and state veteran benefits using the links below:

Website: www.oregon.gov/odva

Blog: www.oregondva.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/odvavet

Subscribe: <https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/ORDVA/subscriber/new>

Order Veteran Benefit Magazines for your organization or self:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/VeteransBenefitMagazine>



ADVISORY COMMITTEE QUARTERLY MEETING AGENDA

Wednesday, Sept 3, 2025 | 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM | Blue Mountain Community College - Pendleton

- I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER**
 - a. Pledge of Allegiance
- II. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**
- III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
 - a. Approval of the [September 2025 VAC Quarterly Meeting Minutes](#)
- IV. GOVERNOR'S OFFICE**
- V. ODVA DIRECTOR'S REPORT**
- VI. AGENCY PRESENTATIONS**
 - a. Roseburg Veterans' Home Project Update – Dr. Nakeia Council Daniels
 - b. Tribal Veteran Program – Jon Taylor, Tribal Veteran Coordinator
 - c. Home Loan Program – Chris Earhart, Home Loan Program Manager
- VII. ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT DISCUSSION**
- VIII. OLD BUSINESS**
- IX. NEW BUSINESS**
 - a. Committee Meeting Schedule 2025-2030 – Secretary Mary J. Mayer
 - b. Formation of Subcommittees; Scope and Focus – Chair Robert Van Voorhis
 - c. Women Veterans Subcommittee – Secretary Mary J. Mayer
 - d. Suicide Prevention Subcommittee – Ashley Taylor
 - e. Transportation Subcommittee – Chair Robert Van Voorhis
- X. BUSINESS MEETING ADJOURNED**
 - a. Next Advisory Committee Quarterly Meeting
Date: March 4, 2026 | Time: 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM
Location: Virtual

VETERAN TOWN HALL

Following every quarterly business meeting, the VAC holds a Town Hall inviting the public to ask questions or share information with the committee and Director. This time is set aside for individuals to bring up broader veteran community issues. Community members are also invited to submit written public comments to the committee by emailing odva_vaac@odva.oregon.gov.

VETERAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBER BIOS

Robert VanVoorhis, Chair	Robert volunteered in 1966 for the US Army and proudly served with the 1/3rd Infantry Regiment (Old Guard) at Arlington National Cemetery and the 2/39th Infantry Regiment with the 9th ID in Vietnam. After college, he worked in software development and finance and served as a reserve deputy in King County. He is a life member of the VFW, American Legion, DAV, MOPH, and National Infantry Association. He served on the board of the SE District Oregon St. Elks and drives for John Day DAV/VA van transport.
Christina Wood, Vice Chair	Christina enlisted in the Air Force in 1998 as a Serbian Croatian Cryptologic Linguist, ultimately serving a decade in the military intelligence community before separating to follow her husband's career overseas. While living at USAG Yongsan, Korea and USAG Wiesbaden, Germany she dedicated herself to the local nonprofit organizations supporting military families with morale, welfare, and scholarship support. Retiring to Oregon in 2015 she established a second career in nonprofit work. She is an active community volunteer focusing on public education and veterans' advocacy issues. Christina, her husband, and their four incredibly adaptable "Army brats" call Portland home.
Mary J. Mayer, Secretary	Mary is a Vietnam era woman veteran and native of Portland, retired from the United States Air Force in 2002. Mary is involved with MOAA Portland Chapter, United Veteran Groups of Oregon (UVGO), Air and Space Forces Association and NCMA. She also has a history of serving veterans with her positions on numerous veteran committees and boards, in addition to other community involvement.
Christopher Waine	Chris served with the 1-25th Infantry Support Battalion out of Ft. Lewis WA where he worked as a wrecker operator providing field level repair and vehicle recovery for Deuce Four infantry's Critical Response Team. He is semiretired and operates a business in Eastern Oregon. Chris is a lifetime member of Disabled Veterans of America and has over 15 years of personal experience navigating Veteran Benefits and Health Administrations.
Ashley Taylor	Ashley is a Post 9/11 Army veteran from Columbia County, currently working on the Suicide Prevention Team at the Department of Veterans' Affairs. Ashley is also a veteran spouse and advocate of veteran's behavioral health.

Shawn Flynn	Shawn served in the Army as an Airborne Ranger in the medical field. Residing in Multnomah County, he is the Chairman for Veterans Affairs Portland NAACP and NABVETS, specifically partnered to enhance VSO functions. He also works with black businesses to help them grow; financing, mentoring, connecting and recruiting.
Mario Smith	Mario Smith is from Multnomah County and is a dedicated advocate for veterans. Smith served in the U.S. Army, including a deployment in Afghanistan and is actively involved in veteran-focused organizations, including the Disabled American Veterans (DAV), Veterans Service Organization (VSO), the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), and the National Association for Black Veterans (NABVETS), where he contributes his lived military experience and voice to supporting and advancing veteran causes.
Tim Smart	Tim Smart is a Native American veteran from Multnomah County with a distinguished record of military service. Serving first in the U.S. Navy and later in the Army National Guard from 1984 to 2009, Smart's career spans multiple wartime and peacetime periods, where he dedicated himself to protecting and supporting his country. His broad service experience provides him with valuable insight and commitment to the well-being of veterans.
James Little	James Little, of Roseburg, enlisted in the Navy at 17, serving 30 years as an enlisted man and commissioned officer, retiring as a Chief Warrant Officer W-4. His career included key assignments in major historical events and leadership roles, including overseeing officer assignments and strategic deployments. He received 29 medals and ribbons for his service. After retiring, he worked as a Department of Defense Exercise Engineer training military air traffic controllers. A 100% service-connected disabled veteran, he is the author of Brotherhood of Doom: Memoirs of a Navy Nuclear Weaponsman and Sweet & Sour Uncle. He has held leadership roles in multiple veterans' organizations and has been recognized for his humanitarian contributions, including the Four Chaplains Legion of Honor and Bronze Medallion awards.

REPORT TO THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE FROM DIRECTOR DR. NAKEIA COUNCIL DANIELS

Executive Branch Budget Reduction Exercise

During the November Legislative Days, ODVA presented its 2025–27 Reduction Plan before the Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Transportation and Economic Development. This plan was developed in response to the Legislative Fiscal Office's statewide directive asking all agencies to identify five percent reduction options across all fund types.

In my testimony, I reiterated ODVA's core mission: to honor and serve Oregon veterans and their families by delivering the benefits and services they have earned. Every reduction option we identified was evaluated against that standard. We focused on protecting veteran-facing services, maintaining agency positions, avoiding long-term harm to programs, ensuring that any options were realistic and implementable, and incorporating sustainable cost-saving practices that strengthen the agency moving forward.

This reduction planning is an exercise being conducted by all state agencies and does not represent an actual budget reduction at this time. However, we have approached it with seriousness and responsibility, recognizing that if the Legislature determines that reductions are necessary, those decisions will be made during the 2026 Regular Session.

Oregon Veteran Population Trends & FY 2024 Federal Expenditure Outcomes

During the November Legislative Days, I also provided testimony to both the House Committee on Veterans and Emergency Management and the Senate Committee on Veterans, Emergency Management, Federal, and World Affairs, offering an overview of Oregon's changing veteran population and the significant federal investment brought into the state through earned veteran benefits. The information presented to both committees including updated demographic trends and FY 2024 federal expenditure outcomes which I've summarized below.

As of September 2024, nearly 260,000 veterans (259,911) reside in Oregon, with 77% having served during a wartime era. Vietnam-era veterans continue to make up the largest cohort at 35%, followed by Post-9/11 (25%), Peacetime (23%), Gulf War (13%), Korean War (3%), and World War II veterans (0.5%), whose numbers continue to decline.

Oregon's veteran population is steadily aging: more than half (51%) of Oregon's veterans are age 65 or older, and national projections indicate that older veterans will remain one of the largest service populations for at least the next two decades. At the same time, demographic shifts are reshaping the future of veteran services. Veterans of color now represent 15.4% of Oregon's veteran population and are projected to make up more than 20% of Oregon's veteran population by 2034. Women veterans—now estimated at 10% of the statewide veteran population—remain one of Oregon's fastest-growing groups and are projected to rise to 13% by 2034 as more women serve in roles historically closed to them. LGBTQ+ veterans and houseless veterans also face persistent disparities. Approximately 2.8% of Oregon veterans identify as LGBTQ+, and 0.5% are estimated to be experiencing houselessness.

Federal Expenditures and Economic Impact (FY 24): ODVA's collaborative work with County and Tribal Veteran Service Offices, national service organizations, and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs continues to generate significant economic benefit for Oregon veterans and the state. In FY 24, federal VA expenditures in Oregon totaled nearly \$4.2 billion, an increase of nearly 5% over FY 23.

More than \$1.9 billion in disability and pension payments were awarded to 33% Oregon veterans and their families in FY 24. Federal VA healthcare investments exceeded \$2 billion for nearly 97,000 veterans are enrolled in the VA healthcare system. Federal veteran education benefits brought more than \$125 million into Oregon, supporting 7,340 veterans who used their GI Bill® benefits across trade schools, colleges, and universities.

Engagements

NASDVA Annual Training Conference: I attended the National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs (NASDVA) Annual Training Conference held September 7–10 in Cheyenne, Wyoming. The conference is comprised of state directors, federal partners and national veteran-serving organizations to receive briefings and strategic discussions on emerging issues facing veterans and the systems that support them. The gathering offered valuable insight into national policy updates, best practices across states and the evolving needs of veterans and their families. Across multiple sessions, states emphasized the need for closer coordination with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, particularly around data sharing, outcome measurements and program modernization. Presenters highlighted the importance of addressing the full spectrum of veteran needs including mental and behavioral health, housing stability, employment transitions, and support for families, women veterans and other underserved groups. States also shared best practices for strengthening the capacity of local veteran-serving organizations, particularly in rural and tribal communities.



Left to right: Director Daniels and other national state DVA directors at the NASDVA Annual Training Conference; Salem Mayor Julie Hoy, U.S. Army Col. (Ret.) Kevin Dial, Director Daniels, Eric Davis, Veteran Affairs Constituent Services for Senator Ron Wyden, ODVA Appeals and Special Advocacy Director Joe Glover, and ODVA Legislative Director Jay DeFillipo at ODVA's Statewide Veterans Day Ceremony at Oregon State Capitol Park on November 11; U.S. Iraq War Marine veteran Cesar Romero helped lead the 250th Marine Corps Birthday Celebration ODVA hosted at the Oregon State Capitol Building on November 10, 2025, which included a traditional cake cutting ceremony; Two U.S. Army National Guard members fold the flag in honor of eight veterans whose cremated remains were laid to rest at a memorial ceremony at Willamette National Cemetery on October 22, 2025. ODVA staff worked tirelessly to confirm the cremains of the eight veterans and one dependent family member for military funeral honors.

Internment of Veteran Cremains at Willamette National Cemetery: ODVA held an interment ceremony at Willamette National Cemetery on Oct. 22, laying to rest nine individuals—eight veterans and one dependent family

member—whose cremated remains had been held for decades at Oregon State Hospital after going unclaimed. At least five of the veterans served during World War I and were born between 1880 and 1911, representing both Oregon-born service members and those who migrated from across the U.S. and the Philippines. Their dates of death ranged from 1932 to 1966. This event reflects ODVA's commitment to ensuring that every service-era veteran is honored with full military honors and laid to rest with dignity, regardless of how much time has elapsed since their service.

Marine Corps 250th Birthday Celebration at the Oregon State Capital: On November 10th, ODVA hosted a commemorative ceremony inside the Oregon State Capitol to celebrate the 250th birthday of the United States Marine Corps, as part of Oregon's participation in the national Marine250 commemoration effort. The event brought together Marine veterans, families, community partners, and state leaders in recognition of 250 years of valor, sacrifice, and the enduring spirit of *Semper Fidelis*. The ceremony featured guest speakers, the official Marine Corps Birthday Message, a ceremonial cake-cutting honoring both the youngest and oldest Marines present, and reflections on the distinguished legacy of the Corps. This milestone celebration served as a meaningful opportunity to honor Oregon's Marine veterans and highlight their continued contributions to our state and nation.

Statewide Veterans Day: ODVA hosted the Statewide Veterans Day Ceremony on the grounds of the Oregon State Capitol in Salem, honoring service members from every era. Some regular ceremonial elements were not available due to the federal shutdown however more than an estimated 300 veterans, families, elected officials, community leaders, and partner organizations were in attendance, reflecting the statewide commitment to honoring military service and sacrifice.



Women Veteran Conference: The biennial Oregon Women Veterans Conference was held September 27th at the Riverhouse Lodge in Bend and drew approximately 250 women veterans from across the state. We were honored to have keynote speakers such as Erin McMahon—Director of the Oregon Department of Emergency Management and retired U.S. Army Brigadier General—and Melissa A. Washington, Navy veteran and founder of the Women Veterans Alliance, as well as a pre-recorded address from Phyllis J. Wilson, President of the National Military Women's Memorial. Workshops focused on leadership development, benefit navigation, health and wellness, and veteran business entrepreneurship. The event was sponsored by the Oregon Lottery and a broad coalition of veteran-service organizations, ensuring ODVA can offer this conference at no cost to women veteran attendees.

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Jay DeFillipo, Legislative Director

As we transition from summer into winter, legislative activity is turning toward preparations for the 2026 Regular Session. The Legislature held its final set of pre-session Legislative Days from November 17–19, which serve as a forum for committees to receive updates, review agency reports, and establish priorities for the upcoming session.

During this period, Director Daniels briefed both the House and Senate veteran policy committees on Oregon's updated veteran population data, recently released by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. These updated figures provide a more accurate picture of Oregon's evolving veteran community and will help inform legislative deliberations, particularly as the state considers policies affecting veteran housing, health care access, behavioral health, and benefit delivery.

Because the 2026 session is a short session, state agencies generally do not introduce new legislative concepts unless directed by the Governor. However, ODVA did provide an update on its budget outlook, especially considering the state's broader fiscal environment. The agency is currently participating in a statewide budget reduction planning exercise, evaluating potential options should revenue forecasts require adjustments. These are preliminary assessments only; actual reductions, if needed, will not be known until after the February 4 revenue forecast. ODVA continues to work closely with legislative partners to ensure they have accurate, timely information as veteran-related legislation is developed.

In addition to legislative preparation, ODVA continues to advance its Administrative Rules work. The agency is finalizing new rules for the Home Loan Program, including the launch of the refinance option, and is refining rules governing Veteran Service Officers (VSOs). ODVA is also incorporating use of the Veterans Summary of Benefits letter to verify veteran status across applicable program areas. This rules work is ongoing and essential, ensuring ODVA's policies remain current, legally aligned, and accessible to the public.

I invite members of the Advisory Committee and the public to stay informed by subscribing to ODVA's Legislative Digest at: <https://www.oregon.gov/odva/connect/pages/legislation.aspx>

It remains an honor to serve Oregon's veterans, and I look forward to continuing our work with the Legislature to advance policies that strengthen and support those who have served our state and nation.

AGING VETERAN SERVICES DIVISION

Kelly Breshears, Aging Veteran Services Director

Aging Veteran Outreach Program

The Aging Veteran Outreach Program is led by the Aging Veteran Outreach Specialist, Lacey Carter. With the help of several dedicated AVS colleagues who have kindly supported her efforts this past year, Lacey has worked diligently to provide veteran benefit education and connection to veteran services and claims representation, for aging veterans and their families, throughout the State of Oregon.

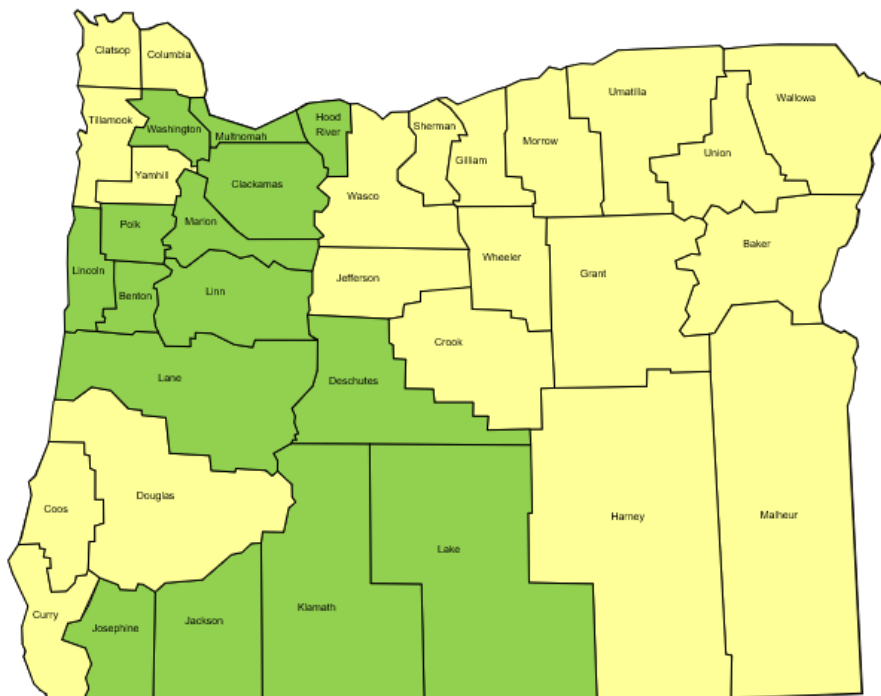
The Aging Veteran Outreach Program was able to dramatically increase outreach efforts to aging veterans and their families in Oregon through participation in a wide range of events and presentations. Through forty-two (42) completed outreach events (as of this writing), in fifteen (15) different Oregon counties, we have connected with a total of approximately 19,395 Oregonians this year alone. And Lacey still has at least two more events scheduled to complete before we bid farewell to 2025.

Outreach events and activities completed or scheduled, beginning in January 2025 and continuing through December 2025, include the following:

- Presentation for Oregon Health & Science University's Veteran Employee Resource Group *[Virtual]*
- Oregon State Salem Spring RV Show *[Marion County]*
- Willamette Sportsman Show *[Linn County]*
- PNW Sportsman's Show *[Multnomah County]*
- Saltwater Sportsman's Show *[Marion County]*
- Clackamas County Resource Fair *[Clackamas County]*
- Spring Lane County Home & Garden Show *[Lane County]*
- Willamette Valley Arms Collectors Association Spring Gun Show *[Lane County]*
- Tualatin Senior Resource Fair *[Clackamas County]*
- ACCESS Senior Fair *[Jackson County]*
- Oregon Knife Collectors Association Annual Knife Show *[Lane County]*
- Presentation to Lane Council of Governments' (LCOG) Senior & Disability Services *[Virtual]*
- Oregon State University Gerontology Conference *[Benton County]*
- Willamette Agate and Mineral Society Inc. (WAMSI) River of Gems Show 2025 *[Polk County]*
- LCOG Senior & Disability Services Employee Resource Fair *[Lane County]*
- Oregon Library Association Conference *[Lane County]*
- American Association of Retired Persons - Oregon Aging Well Expo *[Washington County]*
- Bend Health Fair *[Deschutes County]*
- Leading Age Oregon Annual Conference *[Deschutes County]*
- Elder Abuse Awareness Event & Resource Fair – Klamath Falls *[Klamath County]*
- Elder Abuse Awareness Event & Resource Fair – Lakeview *[Lake County]*

- Presentation to Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS), Aging and People with Disabilities (APD) Division, Adult Protective Services ‘Fundamentals’ Training for New Employees – Ongoing, Approximately Every 2-months *[Virtual]*
- Healthy Aging – Healthy Living 2nd Annual Senior & Lifestyle Expo Florence *[Lane County]*
- ODVA Vet Expo *[Marion County]*
- American Legion Oregon State Annual Convention *[Marion County]*
- Lincoln County Fair *[Lincoln County]*
- Oregon Senior Games *[Linn and Benton Counties]*
- Presentation to Marion County Probate Court *[Marion County]*
- WAMSI End of Summer Show *[Polk County]*
- Oregon State Fair *[Marion County]*
- 20th Annual Northwest Regional Hospital Medicine Conference *[Hood River County]*
- Southern Oregon Senior Resource Fair *[Josephine County]*
- Annual Age Well Expo *[Klamath County]*
- OHCA Annual Conference *[Multnomah County]*
- Coordinated Care Oregon Annual Conference *[Marion County]*
- Chinook Winds Senior Fair *[Lincoln County]*
- Oregon State Salem Fall RV Show *[Marion County]*
- DHS/APD ‘Power Hour’ Presentation *[Virtual]*
- Lane County Fall Home Improvement Show *[Lane County]*
- American Diabetes Association State of Diabetes: Oregon - Scheduled for November *[Multnomah County]*
- Oregon Gerontological Association (OGA) Presentation - Scheduled for December *[Virtual]*

In addition to several virtual statewide events, the Aging Veteran Outreach Program conducted outreach through events and/or presentations in the following fifteen Oregon counties:



Lacey is excited and passionate about not only expanding the reach of the Aging Veteran Outreach Program in 2026, but to also making every effort she can to meet each aging veteran where they are, in their life, and their physical location. Lacey is also committed to targeting the program's efforts to serve those aging Oregon veterans who have historically been underrepresented and those aging veterans living in underserved Oregon communities.

Claims representation of veterans and their loved ones being served through the ODVA Conservatorship Program, and for several aging veterans in general, is an important and ongoing focus for Lacey through her work in the Aging Veteran Outreach Program. It is always a priority of the Aging Veteran Outreach Program to ensure our most vulnerable veterans, and their families, especially those being served in programs under the AVS Division, are receiving the highest level of representation to obtain benefits they have earned, deserve and often greatly need.

Lacey remain a participating member in the Oregon Social Services Fraud Working Group, the Oregon Aging and Disability Resource Connection Advisory Council and recently joined to serve on the Oregon State Plan on Aging Advisory Workgroup. The Aging Veteran Outreach Program established a new partnership in 2025 dedicated to connecting ODHS APD Adult Protective Services (APS) employees with the ODVA, AVS Division. As part of the ongoing partnership, Lacey now provides a presentation to new APS employees participating in each 'Fundamentals' cohort approximately four times/year. She continues to act as a resource for the ODVA Veteran Volunteer Program and represents the AVS Division as an evaluator for ODVA's Oregon Emergency Financial Assistance Program applications on a regular basis.

Veterans in Oregon are aging. Over half of the Oregon veteran population is over the age of sixty-five (65) years old. As we continue to lose our Oregon veterans, due not only to their age but also to the lasting physical and mental impacts of their military service, it is more urgent than ever that programs like the Aging Veteran Outreach Program remain resolute in their commitment to connecting aging veterans to their earned benefits. Sadly, while conducting outreach throughout the state this past year, it became obvious there are still many veterans and/or their eligible dependents, who are not receiving their earned benefits or who don't even know about veteran benefits that they may be entitled to. This work is not done. The mission to see veterans, specifically aging veterans, in Oregon thrive, continues, and our commitment to them remains steadfast.

APPEALS AND SPECIAL ADVOCACY DIVISION

Joe Glover, Appeals and Special Advocacy Division Director

Appeals Team

The Appeals team is a team of four subject-matter expert Veterans Service Officers (VSO) whose primary responsibility it is to conduct appeals in front of federally appointed judges at the Board of Veterans' Appeals (BVA) as well as conduct Higher Level Review (HLR) hearings and Pre-Determination (Pre-D) Hearings with the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA). These hearings all require extensive research and strong skill-based knowledge of VA law.

At the BVA level, this program works to help veterans and their families receive benefits that they are entitled to due to military service, but specifically target advocacy focusing on assisting veterans and families after they have received a denial or a less than ideal outcome for disability benefits as well as medical billing and benefits sought, and have filed a Notice of Disagreement. These hearings are primarily conducted virtually where a claimant can join the hearing from any internet connected device. This Virtual Hearings model has been very effective in allowing claimants the opportunity to be able to conduct a hearing with minimal impact to home, family, or work life, and have eliminated the need to drive to Portland to attend a hearing in-person at the Portland VA Regional Office. During the pandemic this virtual model was particularly critical to the safety of claimants and ODVA staff who were able to hold these hearings uninterrupted while still being able to socially distance themselves in a protected manner.

In FY25, the Appeals team conducted 182 BVA hearings.

Another key component to this program team is the advocacy work that is done through the mechanism known as the HLR. The pathway to the HLR is similar to a BVA appeal, but it has the additional requirement that no additional evidence can be submitted. For these HLRs, the Appeals VSOs must argue the merits of the case solely with the evidence of record and must show that the VA either misapplied the law or overlooked key evidence in the file at the original time of the filing.

In FY25, the Appeals team conducted 17 HLRS.

The third pathway that our Appeals team assists veterans and their families is through a process known as a Pre-D hearing. When a veteran receives either a debt, a proposal for a reduction in benefits, or a proposal to deny medical benefits, before a decision is made, the VBA will submit a proposal. When addressing a proposal, it is critical that it be addressed within 60 days. If done so within this timeframe, it allows for the veteran or claimant to have a Pre-D hearing done without an immediate loss of monetary or medical benefits. Pre-D hearings are critical particularly when a veteran or claimant receives a debt notification because this Pre-D hearing can not only argue the validity of the debt but can also assist the claimant with establishing a manageable repayment plan to help ensure that the claimant is not put into a dire financial hardship or houseless situation to repay the money owed.

In FY25, the Appeals team conducted 63 Pre-D hearings.

In total, this team of four VSOs conducted 262 hearings, and were a significant contributor to the almost \$84 million in federal disability retro dollars that ODVA assisted in bringing home to Oregon veterans and their families, all free of charge.

Appeals Success Story:

ODVA first started working with a veteran in 2019, when she visited a county office to file for service connection for disabilities resulting from their time in the service. She is a part of the LGBTQ+ community and unfortunately was kicked out of the military with a dishonorable discharge due to their sexuality in 1978. She had previously been denied benefits due to this dishonorable discharge.

The VSO began working the claim and helped submit everything in coordination with ODVA.

In August 2020, they were evicted from their residence and became homeless. Their VSO helped with placement in a shelter, but they bounced around between numerous shelters while their claim was being worked on.

In July 2021, the veteran received the disappointing news that their claim was denied, and an appeal was filed.

In August 2022, the VSO who had been working the case retired, and the case was transferred to ODVA's LGBTQ+ Veteran Coordinator, Ian Michael.

In September 2024, Ian was able to share the good news that the veteran's character of service had been upgraded, but the issue of their service-connected disability was still under appeal and homeless instability was still a daily struggle.

In December 2024, the veteran shared the message with Ian, "Please share my information with anyone that will help to keep me from sleeping in the cold.". It was then that ODVA used emergency grant funds to pay for the veteran to be housed over the Christmas holidays in a Motel 6.

On July 21, 2025, the veteran's appeal date finally arrived. Ian argued the case in front of the Board of Veterans' Appeals (BVA) as a free service offered by the state.

In August, the veteran received the decision back from the BVA. The veteran's claim was fully awarded, 100% Permanent and Total Disability. A retro payment of \$212,134.80 and \$3,831.30 per month.

Almost 50 years after she was unjustly discharged from the service, her honorable service, and her rightful status as a disabled veteran is now honored and recognized.

Her story is remarkable, but it is also a reflection of the tireless efforts of the team, the programs such as the Emergency Grant, and particularly the caring and hard work of the LGBTQ+ Veteran Coordinator and the County Veterans Service Officer.

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS DIVISION

Sheronne Blasi, Strategic Partnerships Division Director

State Approving Agency

State Approving Agencies (SAAs) nationally have been around since the origin of the GI Bill® to promote and safeguard quality education and training programs, ensure greater education and training opportunities for veterans, and protect the integrity of the GI Bill®. SAAs in each state work under a Cooperative Agreement with the Department of Veterans' Affairs (VA) to review, evaluate, approve, and exercise oversight of schools and training facilities to ensure state and federal quality criteria are met for veterans using their G.I. Bill® funds.

ODVA has been successfully administering the SAA for the State of Oregon since October 2019. The Oregon SAA exercises oversight of 200+ approved education and training facilities which include colleges and universities, professional certificate programs (such as cosmetology and commercial truck driving schools), flight schools, apprenticeships, and on-the-job training programs (OJT). Thanks to the tireless work of the two full-time SAA staff, Eboni Frederick-Pettway and Lisa Deneen, the Oregon SAA has developed a reputation with our education partners for providing excellent service and support while earning the VA's top rating for SAA's each year during their annual review.

In addition to annual reviews of all currently approved facilities, and approvals of new facilities in the State, the SAA staff conducts supervisory visits (as decided on cooperatively between VA partners and the SAA) to help identify issues in selected Education and Training Institutions' (ETI's) record keeping or certifications so these issues can be corrected early on to help prevent errors that can affect veterans' benefit payments while they are enrolled in academic or training programs. SAA's often visit facilities that have experienced turnover in School Certifying Officials (SCO's), an increase in veteran enrollment, or other changes at the ETI that might affect GI Bill® beneficiaries. During supervisory visits, SAA's can review student records and train newly hired SCOs to help the ETI successfully administer the GI Bill® and ensure accuracy in benefits administration. Supervisory visits have proven a valuable tool to prevent findings during VA audits that can negatively affect the ETI's standing with the VA and their ability to continue to administer the benefits. This ensures that more ETI's can maintain compliance with VA regulations and keep their doors open to offer education and training opportunities for Oregon's veterans.

Veterans Educational Bridge Grant (VEBG)

The Veterans Educational Bridge Grant Program provides financial assistance to veterans who are unable to complete their education or training due to debt on a student account or the unavailability of one or more required classes or periods of training.

The program, which the 20219 Oregon State Legislature established with the passage of House Bill 2201, provides grants to eligible veterans to alleviate financial stress during a gap period when required courses or training hours are unavailable, allowing them to stay in school or their apprenticeship training and finish their program. Due to a law change during the 2023 legislative session, veterans with debt on a student account can also apply for a Bridge Grant which pays the school directly to clear the debt so they can

continue their education. Legislative interest in the Bridge Grant is ongoing as a measure that was introduced during the 2025 session that would increase individual awards to \$10,000 and open eligibility to veterans in qualified programs experiencing additional instances of financial hardship. The measure did not pass during the 2025 legislative session.

To be eligible to apply for a Bridge Grant, a veteran must be an Oregon resident, meet the definition of a veteran per ORS 408.225, and be enrolled in an academic or training program that meets one of the following criteria:

- Is approved to administer GI Bill® benefits.
- Is a career school licensed by the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC).
- Is an apprenticeship program registered with the Bureau of Labor and Industry (BOLI).
- Is an on-the-job training (OJT) program administered by a public employer with the State of Oregon.

Since Diandra joined ODVA in July, 2024, she has been prioritizing outreach to schools and training facilities across the state via site visits and resource fairs to share information about the Bridge Grant with community partners who have assisted eligible veterans to apply for the grant. Thanks to these outreach efforts, knowledge of the Bridge Grant has become more widespread, and applications have increased more than 100% Diandra's tenure in the position.

The VEBG has recently seen an increase in the number of veteran apprentices applying for Bridge Grants due to a shortage of apprenticeable hours available in many of the trades. Out-of-work veteran apprentices can receive a Bridge Grant to help sustain their household finances until more work becomes available. Diandra has conducted focused outreach with several apprenticeship committees, traveling all over the State giving presentations at meetings and retreats to inform training agents about this valuable resource for veterans in the trades.

GI Bill® is a registered trademark of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. More information about education benefits offered by VA is available at the official U.S. government website at www.benefits.va.gov/gibill



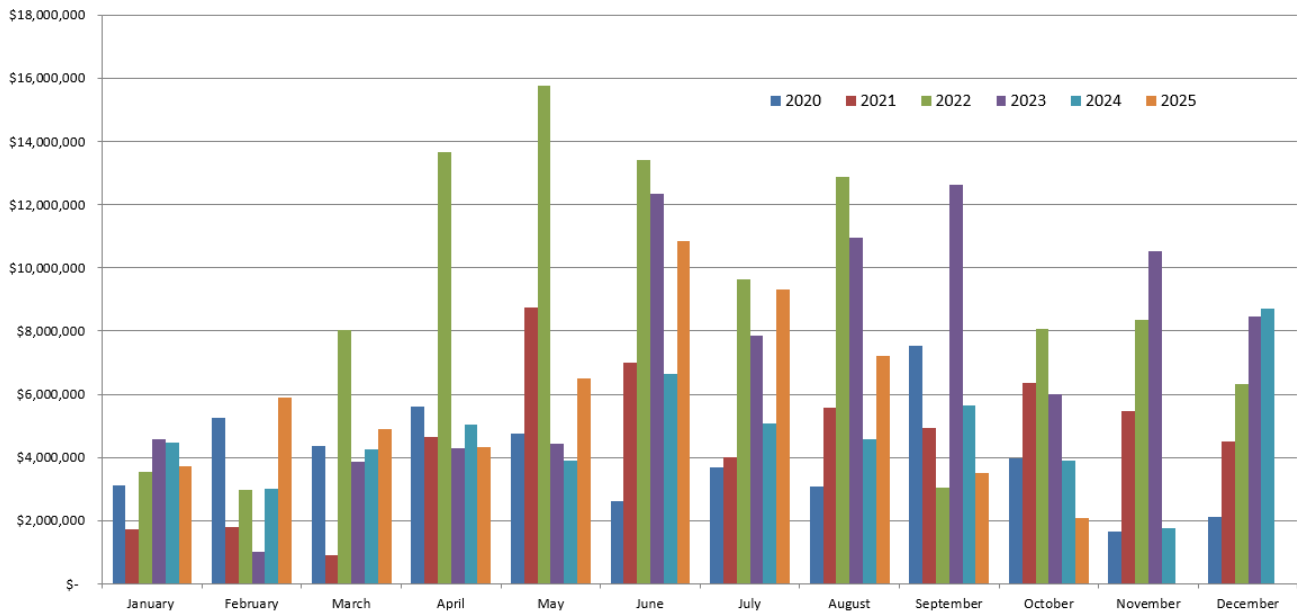
HOME LOAN PROGRAM REPORT

Chris Earhart, Home Loan Program Manager

I'm honored to introduce myself as the new Home Loan Program Manager at the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs (ODVA). It's a privilege to serve generations of those who have served our nation and to help Oregon veterans and their families achieve and maintain the dream of homeownership.

For nearly 80 years, ODVA's Veteran Home Loan Program has stood as a symbol of Oregon's enduring commitment to its veterans—providing more than \$8 billion in low-interest home loans to over 335,000 veterans since 1945. This proud legacy continues today as we work to strengthen and modernize the program to meet the needs of a new generation of Oregon veterans and their families.

Home Loan Production Review



- Home Loan Program production for the 3rd Quarter 2025 was 51 loans for \$21.9 million. For the same period in 2024, production volume was 35 loans for \$13.6 million.
- The chart above shows a 2020 - 2025 monthly production comparison of dollar volume funded for the OrVet Home Loan program.
- At the end of the 3rd Quarter 2025, ODVA has a total of 1,611 loans in portfolio, with a total dollar amount under servicing of \$422,675,661. Of these, 1,562 loans and \$419,473,538 are 'new' loans. 'Old' loans were at 49 units totaling \$3,202,123. At the end of the 3rd Quarter 2024, the ODVA had a total of 1,559 loans for \$391,550,857 under servicing. Year over year, our servicing portfolio increased by \$31,124,804, which represents an increase of 7.95%.

Loan Delinquency Review

- For the reporting period of 09/30/2025, there were no State-Owned Properties/Real Estate Owned (SOP/REO) in inventory. ODVA has not had any foreclosures for the past 5+ years.
- At the end of 3rd Quarter 2025, there are 0 loans in a Foreclosure status and 1 loan in process for a deed in lieu of foreclosure. Our servicing portfolio remains strong as the rest of the industry is showing signs of increased delinquencies.
- At the end of 3rd Quarter 2025, ODVA has 1 loan in a bankruptcy status.
- The total of all loans reporting in the 90-day or greater delinquency position was at 10 units, expressed as 0.62% in unit delinquency on a portfolio of 1,611. This is a minor increase from the previous quarter.
- ODVA servicing portfolio performance shows a continued reduced 90+ day delinquency rate as compared to other Government and private sector residential loan programs. The Mortgage Bankers Association publishes a quarterly National Delinquency Survey, and the following represents nationwide comparative data from the most recently available Third Quarter 2025 report:
 - Compared to last quarter, the seasonally adjusted mortgage delinquency rate increased for all loans outstanding. By stage, the 30-day delinquency rate increased 2 basis points to 2.12 percent, the 60-day delinquency rate increased 4 basis points to 0.76 percent, and the 90-day delinquency bucket remained unchanged at 1.11 percent. For this reporting period, the total delinquency for the ODVA home loan program was 2.36% at 38 units, which has increased from the prior quarter.

Home Loan Program Updates

- We provided payment relief to our Federally employed Veterans who were affected by the government shutdown in October/November
- New Loan Servicing System Implementation
 - We are actively transitioning to our new servicing platform, Mitas, which will replace our legacy system. This upgrade will enhance efficiency, accuracy, and borrower experience.
- We are preparing to launch a new online borrower portal in mid-January 2026. Features will include:
 - Viewing loan details (balance, interest rate, payment history, etc.)
 - Setting up and managing ACH payments
 - Access to additional self-service tools and resources
- Enhanced Communication & Outreach
 - We are increasing engagement and visibility with our Veterans, lending partners, title and escrow companies and other community stakeholders.
 - Our goal is to improve transparency, responsiveness, and collaboration across all touchpoints.

-END OF REPORT-

FACT SHEET

ROSEBURG OREGON VETERANS' HOME



BACKGROUND

- CFR Title 38, Chapter I, Part 59 currently designates the maximum need for veterans' nursing home and domiciliary beds at 907 in the state of Oregon. The Dalles (151) and Lebanon (154) have a combined 305 beds.
- ORS 408.385 (2011) cited Roseburg as the site for Oregon's 3rd veterans' home.
- In 2012, ODVA successfully submitted the initial construction grant application for the Roseburg Veterans' Home project to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) State Veterans Home Construction (SVHCG) Program.
- ODVA partnered with USDVA in 2021 to incorporate the Roseburg Veterans' Home build into the Roseburg VAMC campus.
- ODVA contracted an owner's representative to manage the project in collaboration with ODVA's Construction Project Manager.
- Current cost estimates range from \$99M to \$135M through 2028. Cost estimates vary and Buy America Build America Act (BABAA) can impact cost of final build.
- The Home is planned as a 130,000 SF licensed skilled nursing small homes model for veterans' care, 154-bed single story wood framed with memory care on 13.4 acres on the current Roseburg VA Health Care System site in Roseburg, Oregon.

USDVA STATE VETERANS' HOME CONSTRUCTION GRANT

- USDVA SVHCG Program requires states to have 35% matching funds committed prior to inclusion on a nationwide Priority 1 list of projects. (Note: List includes safety projects, bed replacements and new home construction)
- In 2012, upon initial application, Roseburg was placed on the Priority 2 list awaiting required 35% state/local matching funds.
- In 2024 during the Regular Legislative Session Roseburg was allocated the state matching funds. ODVA then submitted a certification of committed funds to USDVA in April 2024 to establish Priority 1 grant eligibility.
- Latest USDVA - SVHCG Priority List was published on May 30, 2025, with Roseburg listed as #80 on the Priority 1 list.
- Once a project is on the Priority 1 list, it is then sub-prioritized based on factors such as safety and state bed availability needs. (CFR Title 38, Chapter I, Part 59, 59.50)
- Oregon is listed as #80 on the list with a sub priority group of 1.7.



ODVA ADVOCACY

- ODVA Advocates for Federal funding through several entities including Oregon's congressional delegation, national organizations that represent veterans including the National Association of State Veterans Directors (NASDVA), National Association of State Veterans Homes (NASVH) and other Veteran Service Organizations.
- In Sept 2025, ODVA Director and Legislative Director conducted a series of Capital Hill visits and met with Congressional members and staff from both House and Senate Veterans and Appropriation committees to advocate for State Veteran Homes.
- ODVA Director met with USDVA-SVHCG Program Director and manager to better understand the process
- ODVA Director met with Senate and House Veterans Committee Staff on the future of SVHCG and future congressional actions.

ROSEBURG VA MEDICAL CENTER LAND TRANSFER

- In Nov 2021, ODVA provided the Roseburg VA MC, who currently owns the land, with a draft MOU that outlines the intended transfer 13+ acres to the state.
- The MOU draft is currently with the USDVA and now that the feasibility study is complete, ODVA and Roseburg is actively working toward the execution of a MOU that will formalize the agreement to transfer USDVA federal land to the state for the intention of building the state's third Veterans' Home.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

- An ODVA project team was developed in 2021 and consists of the contracted Owner's Representative, Architect, and ODVA Construction Project Manager.
- Project Team is collaborating with USDVA to determine details of the land transfer including conducting surveys such as wetlands, archeological, tribal, historic, etc. and consulting with the USDVA Roseburg on a holistic campus study which accounts for the addition of the Roseburg home.
- ODVA has contracted CBTWO Architects to manage site layout and conceptual design based on the Lebanon model.
- Preliminary schedule and budgets have been continuously updated in collaboration with the project team since Q3-2021.



Keep informed of Roseburg Veterans' Home Project Updates via email from the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs at <https://arty.io/s/OVHRoseburg>.

Summary Of Programs

Aging Veteran Outreach: The Aging Veteran Outreach Coordinator position was established in 2017, and coordinates services directed at aging veterans residing in their homes or care facilities around the state. The position is integral to the Agency's mission to ensure aging and vulnerable veterans receive the highest quality and priority representation from an ODVA veteran service officer. The outreach coordinator works with the Department of Human Services and other agencies on aging in conjunction with the Federal VA to ensure each aging Veteran has applied for benefits and is receiving all entitlements through USDVA and other government and nonprofit entities.

More information: www.oregon.gov/odva/Resources/Pages/Aging-Veterans.aspx

Appeals and Claims: The United States Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA), Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA), involves a complex legal system. To qualify for benefits, veterans, their dependents, and survivors must file a claim against the United States by providing evidence they are eligible to receive the benefit through the submission of legal, military, and medical evidence.

ODVA employs state-certified and federally accredited Veterans Service Officers (VSOs), who are subject matter experts in Federal VA law (Chapter 38 United States Code and Chapter 38 Code of Federal Regulations). These VSOs represent veterans, their dependents, and survivors before the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) and the Board of Veterans Appeals (BVA) in claims and appeals through a signed Power of Attorney.

More information: Email ORVets.Benefits@odva.oregon.gov

Campus Veteran Resource Center Grant: Senate Bill 143 (2017) established the Campus Veteran Resource Center Grant Program to support campus veteran resource centers and resource coordinators on the campuses of Oregon community colleges and public universities. The grant funds aim to help veterans successfully transition from military service to college life, succeed in college and complete educational goals, and transition from college to the workforce.

More information: www.oregon.gov/odva/agency-programs/grants/Pages/Campus-Grant.aspx

Conservatorship and Representative Payee Programs: In 1964, the Legislative Assembly authorized the Conservatorship program to manage the financial affairs of veterans who could not oversee their affairs and had no other recourse. Today, ODVA's Conservatorship Program provides professional fiduciary services to manage the income and assets of veterans and their dependents deemed incompetent by the Federal VA to manage their federal resources. Conservatorship clients are appointed to ODVA as Conservators by a circuit court judge.

Conservatorship helps to ease the burdens often associated with paying bills, collecting funds on debts owed to the Veteran, corresponding with creditors, and buying or selling real estate or other investments. Professional fiduciaries work closely with family members and other interested parties, such as guardians, to plan for the welfare and best interests of the Veteran.

In 2014, SB 251 clarified the law to allow ODVA to act as fiduciary and Representative Payee for veterans. Representative Payees serve veterans deemed incompetent by managing the Veteran's monthly income provided by the USDVA and the Social Security Administration. The Representative Payee applies for benefits, establishes budgets, and arranges payment for care and other bills for services for the client. The Representative Payee works with the USDVA, Social Security Administration, guardians, family members, social workers, and other responsible individuals to ensure the veterans' financial needs are met within their ability to pay.

Learn more: www.oregon.gov/odva/Benefits/Pages/Long-Term-Care.aspx

County Veterans Service Officers Program (CVSO's): ODVA's statewide partnership with counties began when the legislature appropriated money to aid counties in promoting services to veterans on a local level. It is an effective network of trained County Veterans Service Officers (CVSO) in all 36 counties who provide veterans, their eligible dependents, and survivors with VA benefits and claims representation.

CVSOs are not supervised by ODVA; however, the Agency provides initial and ongoing training, certification and accreditation, guidance and support, and outreach to the CVSOs. The ODVA Appeals Team in Portland handles most CVSO appeal cases for the USDVA.

Locate a County VSO: www.oregon.gov/odva/Services/Pages/County-Services.aspx

Highly Rural Transportation Grant: Highly Rural Transportation Grant: Since 2014, ODVA has administered the US Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) Highly Rural Transportation Grant (HRTG), which provides free transportation to and from VA and VA-authorized medical appointments for any veteran living in one of ten Oregon's VA defined highly rural counties. The agency partners with ODOT to distribute grant funding to its transportation district partners within each of the ten counties. Services include door-to-door pick-up and drop-off in ADA-compliant vehicles, with assistance in loading or unloading at no cost to the Veteran. The program runs year-to-year, and transportation services are subject to grant fund availability each federal fiscal year. As of the end of 2022, veterans living in highly rural counties have received free rides totaling more than 2 million miles.

Locate transportation: www.oregon.gov/odva/Services/Pages/Transportation-Services.aspx

Home Loan Program: A constitutional amendment approved by voters in 1944 established the Veterans' Home and Farm Loan Program to fund the purchase of homes and farms by Oregon residents who served in the armed forces during World War II. Persons who joined the armed forces on or after September 1, 1940, were eligible to receive loans if they served for at least 90 days after mobilization and were honorably separated, discharged, or furloughed into a reserve unit.

Today, this program provides low-interest rate mortgages on single-family, owner-occupied homes to qualified veterans. The Home Loan program is a historically self-supporting program that uses other funds. Revenues are derived from loan and contract repayments, proceeds from bond sales, fee and rental income, and investment earnings. No General Fund monies are used in its operations.

More information: www.oregon.gov/odva/Home-Loans/Pages/default.aspx

Houseless Veterans: The 2019-21 LAB established the Agency's first Houseless Veteran Coordinator. ODVA began the Houseless Veteran Program upon hiring its first Houseless Veteran Coordinator in June 2021. The Houseless Veteran Coordinator collaborates with federal, state, county, and tribal agencies, Veterans Service Officers, and community homeless service providers to meet the urgent and unique needs of Oregon's diverse veteran communities. In addition to advocating for Oregon veterans experiencing houselessness or at risk of being houseless, the program provides direct service to veterans and their families seeking federal and state veterans' benefits, including access to local VA health care, documentation of service, as well as other available state benefits, and local homeless services organizations and low-income assistance programs.

More information: www.oregon.gov/odva/Resources/Pages/Homeless-Veterans.aspx

Incarcerated Veterans: First established in 2016 and codified by HB 4038 (2018), the Incarcerated Veterans Program is in its seventh full year of operation and has been highly successful. This program aims to work with veterans entering the state prison system and transitioning to release. Since the program began in August 2016, the ODVA Incarcerated Veteran Coordinators, in coordination with the Oregon Department of Corrections, met with over 3,500 individuals transitioning through the state prison system to determine veteran status and then provide assistance as needed to veterans and their families.

To facilitate a successful transition to the community and to reduce recidivism rates for veterans, the ODVA Incarcerated Veterans Coordinator also collaborates with the US Department of Veteran Affairs' re-entry social worker to meet with veterans when they are transitioning out of the prison system to identify available resources, ensure all possible benefit claims are filed and enroll veterans in Federal VA healthcare.

Learn more: www.oregon.gov/odva/Resources/Pages/Justice-Involved-Veterans.aspx

LGBTQ+ Veterans: Senate Bill 946 (2015) created the LGBTQ+ Veterans program that offers direct services to veterans in the LGBTQ+ community, assists with military records corrections, discharge upgrades, and service-connected claims work for VA benefits. The program also provides extensive outreach to LGBTQ+ veterans. It helps enroll veterans with specialized health care through a Veterans Health Administration LGBTQ+ Veteran Care Coordinator. Through these efforts, veterans within the LGBTQ+ community now receive trauma-informed and dignity-affirming care while also connecting these veterans with state and local services.

Learn more: www.oregon.gov/odva/Resources/Pages/LGBTQ-Veterans.aspx

National Service Organizations (NSO): ODVA partners with national veteran service organizations in Oregon that provide veteran benefit and claims representation, like state, county, and tribal Veterans Service Officers; however, they do not work under ODVA's Power of Attorney and are not trained and certified by ODVA. The American Legion, Disabled American Veterans, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and the National Association of Black Veterans participate in this funding opportunity.

Oregon Veterans' Homes: The 1993 Legislative Assembly authorized the Director of Veterans' Affairs to establish and administer a State Veterans' Home to provide long-term care for needy, disabled veterans. The Dalles was selected as the first Oregon Veterans' Home location and opened in the fall of 1997. The 1995 Legislative Assembly laid the groundwork for establishing a second Veteran's Home to be operated by a non-government entity. The statute limits Oregon to two Veteran's homes until they are constructed and operated for a period to determine efficiency and feasibility. Cited in Lebanon, the second OVH opened in 2014. The 2011 Legislative Assembly, through HB 2578, gave authority to build a third Veterans' Home in Roseburg.

Care at the Oregon Veteran's Homes is an "earned benefit" available to veterans, their spouses, and parents who had a child die while serving in the United States Armed Forces. Qualifying veterans must have served as defined by the Federal VA to be eligible for this benefit. Both homes provide rehabilitative and long-term nursing services by staff whose knowledge and skills meet the unique needs of veterans. In addition, both homes have an endorsed memory care community, which allows them to care for veterans with Alzheimer's and other dementias.

Learn about Oregon Veterans' Homes: www.oregon.gov/odva/Vets-Homes/Pages/default.aspx

Rural Veterans Healthcare Transportation Grant: During the 2019 Legislative session, and again in the 2021 session, ODVA was provided funding to create a veteran's healthcare transportation program for counties and

tribes that are rural but do not meet the federal restrictions, defining the county as highly rural. Veterans are provided free rides to their healthcare and behavioral healthcare-related appointments and are not restricted to VA facilities. ODVA partners with the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) to administer this grant program.

Locate transportation: www.oregon.gov/odva/Services/Pages/Transportation-Services.aspx

State Approving Agency: In 2019, ODVA assumed Oregon's State Approving Agency (SAA) function under a contract with the USDVA. The SAA monitors and approves eligible schools and training facilities that administer federal GI Bill® education benefits to ensure compliance with applicable state and federal laws designed to protect the integrity of the GI Bill® program. ODVA receives federal funds primarily to cover salary-related costs, and some state funding supplements the program.

More information: www.oregon.gov/odva/agency-programs/Pages/SAA.aspx

Military Help Line: Military Help Line: Since 2017, ODVA has contracted with Lines for Life to provide a military and veterans crisis hotline that provides 24/7, confidential crisis supports for veterans and their loved ones. ODVA does not retain funds to administer this program.

Call the Lines for Life Military Helpline today: 1-888-457-4838 or www.linesforlife.org/get-help-now/services-and-crisis-lines/military-helpline/

Training, Certification and Outreach: ODVA is responsible for the training, certification, and accreditation of all counties, tribal, and state Veterans Service Officers (VSOs) operating under ODVA's power of attorney with the USDVA. Training is conducted on the latest Federal VA legal, medical, and process information and eligibility information about accessing Veterans Health Administration (VHA) and National Cemetery Administration (NCA) benefits.

ODVA trains and accredits VSOs to file defensible claims for disability compensation and pension benefits on behalf of veterans and their families. Claims are filed through ODVA's Powers of Attorney (POA) or a national service organization's POA, as the claims are legal documents reviewed and adjudicated by the US Department of Veterans Affairs.

More information: Email ORVets.Benefits@odva.oregon.gov

Tribal Veterans Service Officer Program (TVSO's): SB 80 (2017) directed ODVA to provide aid and assistance to federally recognized Indian tribes in Oregon regarding programs and services for Native American veterans overseen by the tribes. The legislation also codified efforts of the federal VA's Office of General Counsel, supporting the accreditation of tribal Veterans' representatives in Oregon.

The budget includes pass-through funding for a Tribal Veterans Service Officer (TVSO) Program to provide direct veteran VA benefits and claims representation through the federally recognized tribes in Oregon. ODVA partners with tribal governments with a Memorandum of Understanding with ODVA. As with County VSOs, Tribal VSOs are not supervised by ODVA; however, the Agency provides training, certification, accreditation, guidance and support, and outreach support to their programs. The majority of TVSO appeal cases are also handled by ODVA's Appeals office in Portland.

Locate a Tribal Veteran Services Office: www.oregon.gov/odva/Services/Pages/Tribal-Veteran-Services.aspx

Veteran Services Grant: House Bill 2891 (2017) established the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs Veteran Services Grant Fund. The grant funds aim to leverage existing programs and resources available to veterans in local communities. Eligible grant recipients are not-for-profit organizations, local and tribal governments, and other related entities that provide direct services to veterans in Oregon. Services provided free of charge to veterans include legal assistance, housing and services, outreach to tribal veterans, behavioral health services, peer-to-peer support services, and employment assistance programs.

More information: www.oregon.gov/odva/agency-programs/grants/Pages/Veteran-Services-Grant.aspx

Veteran Volunteer Program: Established by HB 2908 in 2017, the Veteran Volunteer Program, was created to train and coordinate volunteer activity around the state to identify aging veterans who are not yet receiving veteran benefits and connect them with County or Tribal Veteran Service Offices to learn about potential state and federal earned benefits. Once a veteran has been referred to a local Veteran Service Office, volunteers provide follow-up to ensure that the veterans have access to any services or benefits needed. In addition to educating veterans about their earned benefits, volunteers provide vital information about other state resources such as food stamps, Medicaid, and housing programs for which veterans may qualify. While not trained VSOs, these volunteers help to guide veterans to the various offices where they can receive assistance.

Learn more about volunteering: www.oregon.gov/odva/Benefits/Pages/Volunteer-Program.aspx

Veterans Educational Bridge Grant: House Bill 2201 (2019) created the ODVA Veterans Educational Bridge Grant Program to assist veterans in education or training programs who experience an interruption in their degree or training progress due to the unavailability of necessary courses or student debt, preventing them from registering for classes. The bill also provided funding for a grant administrator to implement and oversee the grant program.

The grant program's purpose is to provide financial assistance to veterans when classes or training hours are not available or have student debt preventing course registration. The Bridge Grant can help stabilize the Veteran's household finances until they are able to access classes or training hours, which will allow them to resume their benefit payments. The program aims to support veterans' successful completion of their academic programs and transition to civilian career and community life

More information: www.oregon.gov/odva/agency-programs/grants/Pages/Educational-Bridge-Grant.aspx

Veterans' Emergency Financial Assistance Program: Established by HB 3504 (2005), this program aims to provide a one-time grant to veterans or their immediate family members who need emergency financial assistance. Grants are awarded monthly to veterans who experience sudden and unanticipated financial instability. Most grant requests support keeping veterans in their homes by assisting with past-due monthly rent and mortgage payments, utility payments, home and vehicle repair, and dental and medical expenses. Applicants are also connected with a local county or tribal Veteran Service Officer for access to other veteran services and benefits and community resources to encourage financial stability.

Grant Application:

www.oregon.gov/odva/Documents/VS1024%20Oregon%20Veterans%E2%80%99%20Emergency%20Financial%20Assistance%20Program%20Application_02-2022.pdf

Women Veterans: House Bill 3479 (2015) created funding and authority for a program to improve outcomes for Oregon women veterans in five specific areas: outreach, advocacy, data, research, and policy. Focused outreach and advocacy are achieved via listening sessions and ongoing outreach to women veterans around Oregon to increase awareness of women veterans and their unique experiences, issues, and needs, as well as to assist in claims filing, especially related to difficult or challenging claims.

Learn more: www.oregon.gov/odva/Resources/Pages/Women-Veterans.aspx