OREGON DEPARTMENT *of* VETERANS' AFFAIRS

REPORT TO THE

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

TO THE OREGON DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS

DECEMBER 2026

OREGON DEPARTMENT of VETERANS' AFFAIRS

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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

Mary J. Mayer, Chair, USAF.....Portland

James Little, Vice Chair, USN .....Roseburg

Shawn Flynn, Secretary USA.....Portland

Robert "Bob" Van Voorhis, Immediate Past Chair, USA.....John Day

Ashley Taylor, USA.....Scappoose

Mario Smith, USA .....Portland

Tim Smart, USN .....Gresham

Vacant.....

Vacant.....

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.....Advisory Committee Administrator/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

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

OREGON DEPARTMENT of VETERANS' AFFAIRS

ADVISORY COMMITTEE QUARTERLY MEETING AGENDA

Wednesday, December 2, 2026 | 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM
Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs – Room 106
700 Summer Street NE, Salem, OR 97301
In-person and Virtually

I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER
a. Pledge of Allegiance – Mary J. Mayer, Chair

II. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES
a. Approval of the September 2026 Advisory Committee Quarterly Meeting Minutes

IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS
a. Women Veterans Subcommittee Report – Mary J. Mayer, Subcommittee Chair
b. Suicide Prevention Subcommittee Report – Ashley Taylor, Subcommittee Chair
c. Transportation Subcommittee – Robert Van Voorhis, Subcommittee Chair

V. NEW BUSINESS
a. Governor's Office – Jonna Papaefthimiou, State Resilience Officer, Office of Governor Tina Kotek
b. Director's Report – Dr. Nakeia Council Daniels, Director
c. Legislative Update – Jay DeFillipo, Legislative Director
d. Advisory Committee Discussion on the ODVA Quarterly Report

VI. INVITED PRESENTATIONS
a. Veteran Service Grant Recipient: Reveille & Retreat Project – Dakota Olson-Harris, President
b. Oregon Veteran Emergency Financial Assistance Grant – Sheronne Blasi, ODVA Strategic Partnership Division Director
c. LGBTQIA+ Veterans Program – Ian Michaels, ODVA LGBTQIA+ Veterans Program

VII. BUSINESS MEETING ADJOURNED
a. Next Advisory Committee Quarterly Meeting
Date: March 3, 2027 | 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

Mary J. Mayer, Chair	Mary is a Vietnam veteran and native of Portland who retired after an illustrious 30 year career in the United States Air Force in 2002.Throughout her military career, she served in a variety of intelligence, personnel policy, administration, contracting, program management, and special duty assignment positions -- in the continental United States and overseas in Southeast Asia, Panama (two tours), and Spain. Notable military awards earned include the Legion of Merit and Bronze Star Medal. After retiring from the military, she went to work for industry as the Deputy Vice President and Senior Director for Global Procurement and Supply Management for KBR Government and Infrastructure. Mary is currently making major contributions of her time, talent, and treasure in support of her community by serving in various organizations associated with the aging, military/veterans, women's issues, and the arts. She is involved in top leadership positions with the MOAA Portland Chapter, MOAA Oregon State Council of Chapters, United Veterans' Groups of Oregon, Air & Space Forces Association, and the American Association of University Women. She serves as the Veteran Representative on the Governor's Commission on Senior Services and the Oregon Home Care Commission. She also serves on the Ambassador Board of the Orchestra Nova Northwest and the Veterans' Care Centers of Oregon Board. At the present time, she serves as the Chair of the Women Veterans Subcommittee for the Advisory Committee.
James Little, Vice Chair	James Little, of Roseburg, enlisted in the Navy at 17, serving 30 years as both an enlisted man and commissioned officer, retiring as a Chief Warrant Officer W-4. His career included key assignments during major historical events and leadership roles overseeing officer assignments and strategic deployments. He earned 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 authored Brotherhood of Doom: Memoirs of a Navy Nuclear Weaponsman and Sweet & Sour Uncle. He has led veterans' organizations and received awards including the Four Chaplains Legion of Honor and Bronze Medallion.
Shawn Flynn, Secretary	Shawn Flynn is a U.S. Army veteran and healthcare executive with over 30 years of leadership in medical technology, sterile processing, and hospital systems innovation. He currently serves as Business Unit Director for Sterile Processing at Skytron and is a national advocate for higher standards in surgical instrument reprocessing, including certification legislation. Outside his professional role, Shawn is deeply involved in veteran advocacy across Oregon. He chairs the Veterans

	Affairs Committee for the NAACP Portland Branch, co-chairs the Portland Veterans Day Parade Committee, and is involved with NABVETS and the Multnomah County Veterans Task Force. His leadership reflects a lifelong commitment to service, equity, and Oregon's veteran community.
Robert Van Voorhis, Immediate Past 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.
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.
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.
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.

OREGON DEPARTMENT of VETERANS' AFFAIRS

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

Since our September meeting in Klamath Falls, ODVA and busy summer months engaging on issues across the state, ODVA has continued implementing legislation from the 2026 session, preparing for the 2027–29 biennium, advancing projects, and responding to emerging issues among Oregon veterans and their families.

Budget Development and Legislative Implementation

Following submission of our 2027–29 Agency Request Budget in July, ODVA has continued working with the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) through the next phase of the state budget process. At the same time, we have worked to begin implementing several provisions of House Bill 4132 (2026 Session). More information about that work can be found in the Legislative Report.

To highlight just a few of these efforts, ODVA's Strategic Partnerships Division has continued developing the administrative framework for the new Veteran Suicide Prevention Grant Program, including establishing a competitive grant process for future funding opportunities. ODVA has also worked closely with the Oregon Judicial Department on its legislatively directed review and proposed plan to expand Veterans Treatment Courts to every Oregon county.

Strengthening Veteran Suicide Prevention

I am pleased to report that ODVA has hired the first Veteran Suicide Prevention Coordinator. Authorized through HB 4132, this position will provide dedicated capacity to support the Veteran Suicide Prevention Grant Program and strengthen statewide prevention partnerships and efforts such as Beyond the Military Uniform.

ODVA's Beyond the Military Uniform initiative also continues to demonstrate strong growth. From July through September, BeyondTheMilitaryUniform.com reached 39,906 users, a 177% increase over the previous quarter. Since its September 2024 launch, the website has attracted nearly 260,000 visitors, generated more than 7,700 resource link clicks, and recorded 188 crisis planning toolkit downloads.

These results are encouraging as we continue connecting veterans, families, and caregivers with opportunities for community connection, wellness, behavioral health support, and crisis resources.

Roseburg Veterans' Home

While federal construction funding continues to be the project's most significant challenge, ODVA has made steady progress toward construction readiness. This quarter, we continued coordinating with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) on property boundary adjustments and the revised Quitclaim Deed necessary to advance the land transfer. We also submitted the required wetlands mitigation permit application to state and federal regulators in October.

Construction procurement has progressed following DAS approval of the Construction Manager/General Contractor delivery method. A September pre-proposal conference drew representatives from at least 10 contractors. The selected contractor will help complete final design and pre-construction planning.

On September 9, I also provided testimony to the Senate Interim Committee on Veterans, Emergency Management, Federal and World Affairs, highlighting progress on Roseburg and the continued need for federal investment in the State Veterans Home Construction Grant Program.

Community Engagement and Honoring Oregon Veterans



On September 27, I joined Gold Star families and community partners at Willamette National Cemetery for the dedication of a new Gold Star Memorial, honoring the families whose loved ones made the ultimate sacrifice in service to our nation. *View more photos from the Gold Star Memorial event.*



In October, ODVA convened the 2026 Campus Veterans Summit, bringing together campus veteran coordinators, faculty, staff, student leaders, and community partners to strengthen support for veterans pursuing higher education. After visiting so many campus and hearing presentations from some of our Campus Veteran Resource Center partners during our Advisory Committee meetings, I was pleased to participate and connect with those doing this important work across Oregon's campuses. Pictured right, LBGTQIA+ Veteran Outreach Coordinator briefing the attendees of the conference on the important work of special advocacy and specific services for historically underrepresented veterans.



On November 3, I participated in the 30th anniversary of Living History Day at Milwaukie High School, a remarkable program connecting students directly with veterans and preserving firsthand stories of military service across generations. *View more photos from the Gold Star Memorial event.*



During Veterans Day week, I was honored to participate in veteran recognition events in Linn County, including a celebration honoring women veterans that featured ODVA's I Am Not Invisible exhibit, and the Linn County Veteran of the Year Banquet recognizing veterans who continue serving their communities long after leaving the military. This years Linn County Veteran of the Year was awarded to U.S. Army veteran Tony Tangermann. A Vietnam veteran, Tony has dedicated decades to serving fellow veterans through Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 585, coordinating outings for veterans at the Oregon Veterans' Home in Lebanon, supporting scholarships, and building wheelchair ramps to help veterans and their families remain independent. *View more photos from the Annual Veterans Recognition at Lebanon Senior Center and the 2026 Linn County Veteran of the Year Banquet events.*

On November 11, ODVA hosted Oregon's Statewide Veterans Day Ceremony at the State Capitol State Park in Salem, bringing together veterans, military families, state leaders, and community partners to honor generations of service and sacrifice by our country's veterans and current servicemembers – our future veterans. We were honored to have Governor Tina Kotec as our keynote speaker as well as a phenomenal panel of speakers and elements that drew and estimated 350 attendees out to help celebrate and honor our nations veterans and servicemembers. *View more photos from the 2026 Statewide Veterans Day Event.*

I look forward to discussing these updates with you at our meeting and, as always, hearing your perspectives as we continue this work together.

OREGON DEPARTMENT of VETERANS' AFFAIRS

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Jay DeFillipo, Legislative Director

As 2026 comes to a close, so does the current biennium, ushering in the 2027 legislative session. With the November elections behind us, attention now turns to the legislative process of developing, passing, and implementing the ideas and priorities that have emerged over the past year.

This time of year also marks the end of the beginning of budget development within the Executive Branch and state agencies. Agencies submitted their Agency Recommended Budgets (ARBs) to the Governor, who is now developing her Governor's Recommended Budget (GRB). The Governor has already highlighted several key priorities, including economic development, affordability and housing, education, and data center legislation. From a veterans' perspective, funding for the Roseburg Veterans Home, tax relief, and mental health services remain priority areas that legislators continue to focus on improving.

As part of the long session, state agencies may advance legislative concepts through the Governor's Office. The Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs (ODVA) is advancing two legislative concepts focused on improving services and administrative efficiency for Oregon veterans. LC 0168 – Expanding Veteran Outreach Through State Agency Data Sharing would allow state agencies that already collect veteran status information to share veteran contact information with ODVA, with the veteran's authorization, helping connect more veterans to earned benefits and services while maintaining privacy protections. Meanwhile, LC 0169 – Redirecting Veterans' Donations, Gifts, and Grants to the Appropriate Trust Fund would modernize Oregon law by ensuring donations and grants received by ODVA are deposited into the agency's current trust fund structure rather than an outdated and unused account, improving administrative consistency and fiscal management.

We look forward to the session and advancing these and many other important initiatives through the legislative process to better support Oregon's veterans and their families.

Turning to administrative rules, the agency is on the cusp of publishing rules related to the Suicide Prevention and Workforce Grant programs. These rules implement legislation passed in 2026 under HB 4132. In addition, we are currently working through the CVSO Funding Administrative Rules and will enter a public comment period on December 1. Finally, we expect to publish the final administrative rule regarding unclaimed human remains.

As we begin the next legislative session, we will continue evaluating statutes, agency authorities, and program structures to ensure Oregon's veteran support systems remain strong, modern, and responsive. Updating outdated policies, improving data collection methods, and identifying new opportunities to expand access to services remain central to our work on behalf of Oregon's veterans.

I encourage everyone to stay connected through the ODVA Legislative Digest, available at: www.oregon.gov/odva/connect/pages/legislation.aspx.

It remains an honor to serve Oregon's Veterans, and I look forward to the continued work ahead as we build on legislative momentum and strengthen the systems that serve those who have served. Thank you for your support.

OREGON DEPARTMENT of VETERANS' AFFAIRS

AGING VETERAN SERVICES DIVISION

Kelly Breshears, Aging Veteran Services Director
Kyle Deets, Aging Veteran Services Assistant Director

Aging Veteran Outreach Program

Aging Veteran Outreach Coordinator, Lacey Carter

The Aging Veteran Outreach Program is led by the Aging Veteran Outreach Coordinator, Lacey Carter. With the continued support of several dedicated AVS team members, Lacey has worked passionately and diligently to provide veteran benefit education, outreach connection, veteran services and claims representation for aging veterans and their families throughout the State of Oregon. Each year, the Aging Veteran Outreach Program continues to increase outreach efforts to aging veterans and their families in Oregon through participation in a wide range of events and presentations. Since the outreach season is winding down, Lacey will have an opportunity to focus on both claims work and outreach initiatives for 2027.

Program Accomplishments:
Lacey conducted aging veteran outreach at sixteen (14) different events from July 2026 through September 2026, across ten (10) Oregon counties; making for a total of thirty-six (34) events in calendar year 2026, to date. Lacey is dedicated to meeting veterans where they are, to ensure they receive benefit information and exceptional claims representation. Her work extends to representing veterans and their dependents in the ODVA Conservatorship Program, as well as veterans and their families in the community, who are often underserved and underrepresented.

In addition, Lacey provides regular presentations to staff in the Oregon Department of Human Services Adult Protective Services' teams. She also serves as a member of the Oregon Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) Advisory Council, participates in the Oregon Dementia and Healthy Brain Initiative and is in training to become an Ambassador for the State Library of Oregon's Talking Book and Braille Library. Her collaborative work enhances our interagency working partnerships for the aging veterans we serve.

Conservatorship and Representative Payee Program

Hannah Moran, Lead Worker

Program update:
Through its fiduciary programs, ODVA acts as court-appointed Conservator or USDVA/SSA appointed representative payee to deliver critical services to the state's most vulnerable veterans. These programs provide stability and increased quality of life for the clients we serve.

The ODVA fiduciary programs currently serve a total of **106** veterans and their dependents. The Conservatorship Program currently manages 15 real properties and the programs combined manage approximately $24 million in assets.

Program Accomplishments
One central goal of this program is ensuring each veteran we serve receives an in-person visit from their Trust Officer, no less than annually.

As of August 31, 2026, the team completed 191 home visits across Oregon, meeting with almost every veteran served by the conservatorship program. We anticipate this number to exceed 200 by the end of the year. This means our fiduciary team visits each veteran multiple times throughout the year, depending on their individual needs. The team has met this goal at 99%, with only 3 veterans who live out of state that we have not seen this year. The team has completed more home visits in 2026 than in 2025, all with one position two positions vacant.

Conservatorship staff are out in the field each week, meeting with veterans and their families, coordinating with partner agencies, ancillary service providers, and ensuring strong property management activities to protect veterans' estates and real property assets. The staff wear many hats and become subject matter experts in many diverse subjects, to provide the highest quality fiduciary services possible to our veterans.
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Veteran Volunteer Program

Kim Johnson, Interim Veteran Volunteer Coordinator

Program update:
We currently have 140 active Volunteers, 54 of which have logged hours within the last year, serving communities in 25 of Oregon's 36 counties. The program is still "paused" for training new volunteers as Kim and leadership review the program as a whole for potential improvements.

A few of the changes we are reviewing are volunteer participation, potential changes to the current electronic reporting system used by volunteers to log events and hours, and mandatory update training for all volunteers. Additionally, the program is making other systematic improvements, as well as reinforcing the role/scope of volunteers, updating procedures, and focusing on additional training for the active volunteers the program is blessed to have aboard. Kim has a meeting this month with Julie Maw, who serves as the statewide volunteer coordinator for the Long-Term Care Ombudsman's office (LTCO). LTCO has run a very successful volunteer program for almost five decades. Kim is meeting with Julie to discuss their electronic reporting system as well as other aspects of the program that have lent to their success.

Program Accomplishments:
Growing Reach and Engagement
As of October 2026, we are at the end of our busy season for the volunteer program outreach. We've completed 35 outreach events so far this year and have 6 events remaining to finish out 2026. This was made possible from the work of 54 active volunteers completing about 1,672 hours.

Community Presence
As we are winding down our busy season we continue to calendar outreach events for the 2027 season. Our volunteers are particularly skilled at identifying potential outreach opportunities throughout the calendar year.

OREGON DEPARTMENT of VETERANS' AFFAIRS

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 162 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 20 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 56 Pre-D hearings.

In total, this team of four VSOs conducted 238 hearings, and were a significant contributor to the almost $80 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:

A veteran was assigned to our office needing assistance with a BVA hearing for six denied service -connected disability claims.

This veteran served during Vietnam and was suffering from multiple disabilities. Working with their county VSO, they filed a claim for the conditions in March of 2024. The claims were denied in August 2024.

In June of 2025 veteran filed for a Higher-Level Review for all conditions. In July of 2025, the conditions were denied again by the Decision Review Officer.

The veteran filed an appeal before the Board of Veterans Appeals at the end of July 2025.

When he initially sought assistance, he was extremely frustrated and discouraged. He felt that his concerns had not been heard previously that he had been overlooked by the VA, and that no one had taken the time to truly listen to him and help him navigate the appeals process.

Through individualized support, consistent communication, and preparation for his BVA hearing, he and his appeals VSO worked together to ensure his concerns were clearly heard, and that his claims received the attention they deserved.

Over time the veteran developed confidence in the process and felt he finally had someone advocating for him and listening to his concerns for the first time since starting the process.

His hearing was scheduled for December of 2025.

In March of 2026 he finally received the outcome he was hoping for.

He was granted service connection for all six conditions. As a result of these grants, the veteran received over $100,000 in retroactive compensation. The veterans combined disability rating was awarded at 100%, so he now also receives over $4000 a month in tax free compensation.

Because ODVA's services are completely free, the veteran has kept 100% of these funds throughout the entire process.

Beyond the significant financial outcome, perhaps the most meaningful success was the transformation in the veteran's experience. He shared that he went from feeling dismissed and unheard to feeling supported, valued and vindicated.

This case demonstrates the profound impact that personalized advocacy, compassionate communication, and dedicated representation can have on a veteran's life. It reinforces the importance of ensuring every veteran feel heard, understood and supported throughout the appeals process.

OREGON DEPARTMENT of VETERANS' AFFAIRS

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS DIVISION

Sheronne Blasi, Strategic Partnerships Division Director

The Strategic Partnerships Team provides supportive funding to counties, Tribes, and the National Service Organizations to expand and enhance their Veterans Service Officer programming. The division is also responsible for developing, administering and monitoring several grants including:

- Veteran Services Grant
- Campus Veteran Resource Center Grant
- Veterans Educational Bridge Grant
- Highly Rural Transportation Grant (VA)
- Rural Veteran Healthcare Transportation Grant (administered by ODOT)
- Veteran Suicide Prevention & Workforce Development Grant
- Veteran Suicide Awareness & Prevention Grant

The division has several Special Advocacy Coordinators including:

- Tribal Veteran Coordinator
- Two Incarcerated Veteran Coordinators
- Veteran Suicide Prevention Coordinator

The division contains the Veterans Education Team including:

- Veteran Educational Manager
- Campus Veteran Coordinator
- Veteran Education Bridge Grant Coordinator
- State Approving Agency Team

Veterans Educational Bridge Grant (VEBG)

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

The program was established during the 2019 legislative session with the passage of House Bill 2201, to provide 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.

A law change in 2023 expanded grant eligibility to allow veterans with debt on a student account to apply for the VEBG which pays the school directly to clear the debt so the veteran can continue their education. During the 2026 short legislative session, eligibility for the VEBG was further expanded to include instances of financial hardship that may affect a veteran's ability to remain in their academic or training program. The expansion also increased the lifetime maximum individual award to $10,000.

To be eligible for a VEBG a veteran must be an Oregon resident, meet the definition 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.

As of November 1, 2026, ODVA has awarded 48 grants for the 2025–2027 biennium that began on July 1, 2025. A total of $150,753 in grant funds has been awarded so far to help veterans continue pursuing their academic and training goals. For comparison, at the end of the 2023-2025 biennium, ODVA only awarded 22 Bridge Grants for a total of $74,604.

Much of the increase in applications and awards is due to the VEBG Coordinator's strong commitment to outreach. She has participated in campus site visits with ODVA's Campus Coordinator, presented at ODVA's Campus Veteran Coordinator Summit, and engaged apprenticeship coordinators through multiple conferences and events. Her partnership with the Veterans' Liaison at the Bureau of Labor and Industries (BOLI) has strengthened connections with trade leaders. Through presentations at the Allied Coordinators Conference and the Jobs for Veterans State Grant Conference, she has successfully expanded and diversified outreach efforts to reach more eligible veterans.

Veterans Educational Bridge Grant (VEBG) Success Story

Recently, ODVA approved a Bridge Grant for a veteran who had to withdraw from school due to an injury. Because the veteran could not work during an extended recovery period, they incurred student debt after dropping courses mid-term and exhausted their savings while supporting their family. As a result, the veteran faced both financial hardship and possible foreclosure. The grant enabled the veteran to pay off their student debt, re-enroll for the Fall 2026 term using USDVA Veteran Readiness and Employment (VRE) benefits, and bring their mortgage current, allowing the family to remain in their home.

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

<u>Highly Rural Transportation Grant (HRTG)</u>

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) Highly Rural Transportation Grant (HRTG) provides free transportation for veterans traveling to and from VA, and VA approved medical appointments in Oregon's highly rural communities. The program offers door-to-door service using ADA-compliant vehicles, including assistance with loading and unloading, at no cost to the veteran. Oregon's participating counties include Baker, Gilliam, Grant, Harney, Lake, Malheur, Morrow, Sherman, Wallowa, and Wheeler counties.



The Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs (ODVA) has administered the HRTG program for thirteen years in partnership with local transportation districts in all ten eligible counties. The program also works closely with County Veteran Service Offices (CVSOs) to promote services and connect veterans with benefits assistance. An estimated 6,716 veterans reside within Oregon's participating highly rural counties, underscoring the importance of accessible transportation services in these communities.

By providing reliable transportation to medical appointments, the HRTG helps reduce barriers to healthcare access for veterans who live long distances from VA and VA approved facilities. The program supports veteran health and well-being by ensuring transportation challenges do not prevent geographically isolated veterans from receiving needed medical care.

HRTG 2025-2026 Grant Cycle Metrics:

$488,500 was awarded for the federal 2025-2026 grant cycle, supporting transportation services in all 10 participating counties and statewide program administration.

- 170 unique (unduplicated) veterans served
- 1,495 trips completed
- 127,348 miles traveled
- 3,716 transportation hours provided

Program Historical Metrics (September 2014 – September 2026)

- 40,937 trips completed since program inception
- **2,666,862 miles traveled since 2014!!!**
- 89,270 transportation hours provided
- Greater than 98% veteran satisfaction rate historically

OREGON DEPARTMENT of VETERANS' AFFAIRS

HOME LOAN PROGRAM REPORT

Chris Earhart, Home Loan Program Manager

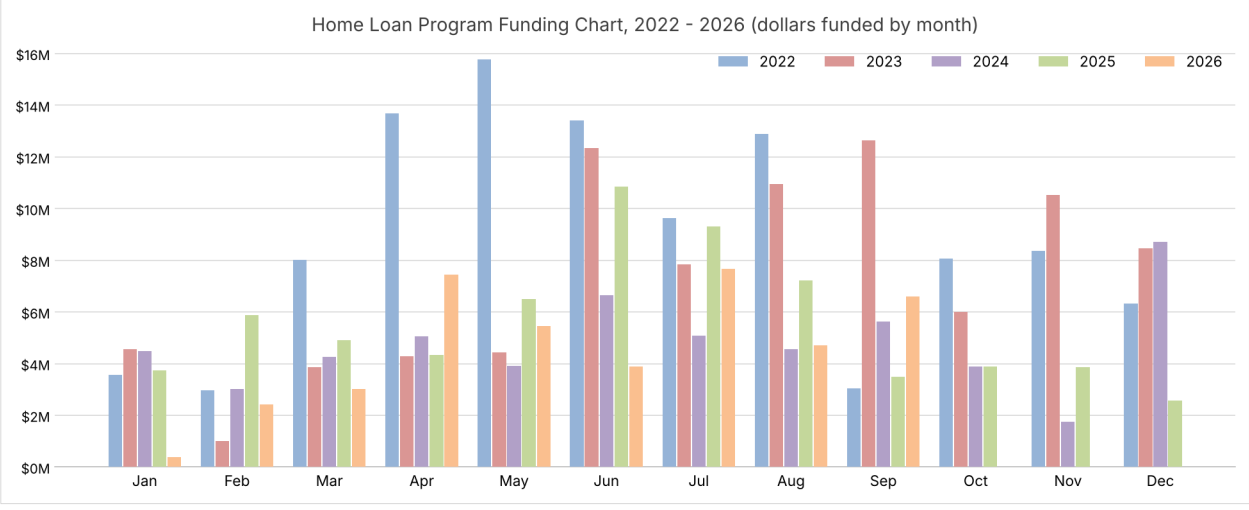
The third quarter of 2026 reflects steady performance for the ODVA Home Loan Program in a rising-rate market. Production held close to last year's pace even as market mortgage rates climbed through the quarter.

The online borrower portal and ACH payment options launched earlier this year continue to give veterans convenient ways to manage their loans, and the program consolidated its mail to a single Salem address on August 1, 2026, simplifying how veterans and partners reach us.

Freddie Mac's weekly average 30-year fixed mortgage rate rose from 6.55% in mid-July to 7.03% by September 24, 2026, the first time above 7% since January 2025. ODVA's interest rates were unchanged through the quarter and remained well below market offerings. With a Business Development Representative joining the team in November, the program is positioned to expand awareness among Oregon veterans heading into 2027.

Home Loan Production Review

- Home Loan Program production for the 3rd Quarter of 2026 was 43 loans for $21.6 million. For the same period in 2025, production volume was 51 loans for $21.9 million.
- Year to date through September 30, 2026, the program has funded 95 loans for $46.4 million.
- As of November 3, 2026, the pipeline holds 27 loans totaling $12.6 million, from application through closing documents.
- The chart below shows a 2022 - 2026 monthly production comparison of dollar volume funded for the OrVet Home Loan program.



- At the end of the 3rd Quarter 2026, ODVA has a total of 1571 loans in portfolio, with a total dollar amount under servicing of $428,367,799. Of these, 1,534 are new loans totaling $425,581,250. 'Old' loans comprise 37 units totaling $2,786,549.
- At the end of the 3rd Quarter 2025, the ODVA had a total of 1617 loans for $417,785,490 under servicing.

- Year over year, ODVA's portfolio decreased by 46 loans, a 2.84% change in total units from the third quarter of 2025 to the third quarter of 2026. While overall loan count decreased year over year, the total portfolio loan amount increased by 2.53%, highlighting the continued rise in housing costs and resulting loan balances.

Loan Delinquency Review

- For the reporting period of 9/30/2026, there was one State-Owned Properties in inventory obtained through Deed in Lieu of Foreclosure. ODVA has not had any foreclosures for the past 5+ years, and no loans were in foreclosure at the end of the quarter.
- At the end of the 3rd Quarter 2026, there are 2 loans in default status (90 or more days past due).
- At the end of the 3rd Quarter 2026, ODVA had 0 loans in a bankruptcy status.
- The total of all loans reporting in the 90-day or greater delinquency position was 7 units, expressed as 0.44% in unit delinquency on a portfolio of 1571. This is an increase from 1 unit at the end of the previous quarter.
- ODVA servicing portfolio performance continues to compare favorably with other Government and private sector residential loan programs.
    - The Mortgage Bankers Association's Q2 2026 National Delinquency Survey (released August 13, 2026, the most recent available) reports that the seasonally adjusted delinquency rate for one-to-four-unit residential properties decreased to 4.37%, down 7 basis points from Q1 2026 and up 44 basis points from a year earlier. Foreclosure inventory rose to 0.67%, while foreclosure starts fell to 0.20%.
    - The seriously delinquent rate (90 or more days past due or in foreclosure) rose for the fourth consecutive quarter to 2.06%. In Oregon, the total past-due rate was 2.73% for all loans, 4.08% for VA loans, 9.07% for FHA loans and 1.78% for conventional loans.
    - For the ODVA home loan program in Q3 2026, total delinquency stood at 1.97%, covering 31 units, an increase from 17 units (1.09%) in the previous quarter but still well below national standards.

Home Loan Program Staffing News

- We completed the recruitment for our Business Development Representative. The new representative begins November 16, 2026, and will lead statewide outreach to veterans, veteran organizations, real estate professionals and lending partners, with the goal that every veteran living in or moving to Oregon knows about the program.
- A limited-duration Loan Specialist 2 Loan Processor joins the team on November 9, 2026, adding additional processing capacity.
- Our Payoff and Reconveyance Specialist was promoted to Loan Specialist 1, matching the level of work the role performs.
- The recruitment for the Loan Specialist 1 Post-Closing Coordinator closed November 3, 2026.
- The Public Service Representative 4 ACH and Eligibility Specialist recruitment will be opening soon.

Home Loan Program Updates

- All Home Loan mail now goes to Attn: Home Loans, 700 Summer St NE, Salem, OR 97301. The former PO Box was retired August 1, 2026, after borrowers were notified in June.

- Updated Program Guidelines for lenders and brokers are in development to give partners one clear, current reference. Partners will be notified before any change takes effect.
- Interest rates were unchanged during the quarter after two reductions earlier in 2026, and continue to provide meaningful savings to veterans as market rates rise.

OREGON DEPARTMENT of VETERANS' AFFAIRS

OREGON VETERANS' HOMES

Kelly Breshears, Aging Veteran Services Director
Kyle Deets, Aging Veteran Services Assistant Director

Oregon Veterans' Home – The Dalles

Oregon Veterans' Home – Lebanon Program Director, Sharlane Keener
OVHL's budgeted census has increased from 145 last quarter to 147. Our total resident capacity is 154 individuals. We maintain strong census numbers with the third quarter's daily census average being 149.9 which is above 97% of full census.

We continue to receive and process applications. We now have a short waiting list of complete, processed, and admission-ready applicants.

Census 9/30/26	**152**					
Veterans	138	91%		Male Vets	126	83%
Spouses	14	9%		Female Vets	12	8%

Agency Staff Use
Due to staffing shortages in Licensed Nurses (LNs), Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs), and Certified Medication Assistants (CMAs), both facilities use temporary staffing agencies to fill gaps. This is standard practice in Nursing Homes, post-COVID. Each facility ultimately would like 0% utilization but has attainable goals in place. Our tuition-free CNA classes has helped us work towards the goal of 0% agency use. We have had 5 classes this year and a sixth one starting in November. Classes produced 33 graduates of which we hired 21. 17 of the 21 are still with us.

Goal	3rd Quarter
Licensed Nurses: <5%	Licensed Nurses: 9%
Certified Nursing Assistants: 0%	Certified Nursing Assistants: <1%

Nursing Home Surveys
As stated in last quarter's report, OVHL had its annual Federal VA Survey in April. The audit process for the Corrective Action Plan for citations will be completed by 10/31/26. We are expecting our State Survey to happen at any time now.

Activities and Events
OVHL continues to offer regular activities popular with residents as well as offering new opportunities. Residents enjoyed numerous onsite activities as well as shopping, restaurant, movie, baseball, football, and casino outings, Onsite OVHL hosted an author book signing with Chris Warner, the Matt Baker Comedy Show, and a Paradise of Samoa Dancers Performance. We had beautiful weather for Freedom Fest(July 4th) for residents, their families, and friends. Summer weather allowed for more trips to the Oregon Aquarium, fishing at the local VVA Pond, and ADA Accessible Deep Sea Fishing in Depoe Bay. In early September, close to 30 residents were able to enjoy the great outdoors either for the day or overnight at the ADA Accessible Camp Attitude in Foster. They are already looking forward for next year's trip. Also in September we had four veterans participate in an Honor Flight to DC.

We are so lucky to be supported by many community groups some of whom bring the party to us by BBQing for all those on campus. One September Saturday while the Salem Elks hosted a Soda Float Social in our Auditorium, the Road Maggots stopped by as they made OVHL a stop on one of their rides. It was a unique experience to see the Road Maggots come in off their bikes to enjoy Root Beer Floats from the Elks and engage with our Veterans.

We now look forward to the Fall and Holiday Season Events the fourth quarter will bring.

Our Veterans Continue to Give

Our honored veteran residents have already given so much to this country. While they may no longer be active duty, many do not stop giving. One of our veterans connected with Wigs for Kids. He grew his hair for 18 months and had it cut on August 10th. His long braid was sent to the organization to be crafted into a child's wig. In addition to his hair, Ryan wants to help cover the cost that goes into making the wig, fitting it for a child and providing the supplies and support a child needs. This is estimated to be about $2600.00 and Ryan is aiming to raise at least $1600.00 through a Go Fund Me account. At the time of this report, he is just over $1000.00





Awards and Accolades

- CMS Five-Star Rating: 5 star for Staffing, 3 star for Quality Measures and 2 Star Overall (unchanged)
- Pinnacle customer satisfaction scores: 99% favorability rating and an average overall score of 4.9/5 (unchanged)

** As stated last quarter, we are currently we are capped at a 2 star for survey due to the red hand of shame (abuse tag) which will fall off when we have our state survey in the fall as long as we don't get another abuse tag.

Additional Pics: Camp Attitude









Road Maggot & John

Oregon Veterans' Home – The Dalles
Sarah Reed – Program Director

Census
Oregon Veterans' Home - The Dalles has successfully increased its census to pre-COVID occupancy levels, holding at 130 residents currently. However, for most of Q3, the facility maintained a census of 134 to 136.

Agency Staff Use
Due to increased census growth, the facility has experienced an increase in agency staff utilization over the past quarter to support operational needs and continue to meet the care needs of each resident. During Q3, there was a high usage of a 1 staff member to 1 resident ratio (1:1) that contributed to the CNA percentage. A 1:1 is used when a resident has behaviors that require additional supervision.

Goal:	**Current Usage:**
Licensed Nurses: below 10%	Licensed Nurses: 10%
Certified Nursing Assistants: below 20%	Certified Nursing Assistants: 30%

Nursing Home Surveys
In June, the facility completed its annual State Survey, which was conducted in conjunction with a Complaint Survey. The survey resulted in five clinical citations and one Life Safety citation. Due to one of the citations being a harm tag resulting from a resident on resident, self-reported incident, the facility was reduced from a 5 Star CMS facility, to a 3 star. However, they are now back in compliance with the state.
November opens the survey window for the VA and survey preparations have been happening building wide.

Events
The facility hosted a variety of events this quarter. Some of the highlights were:

- Annual Resident Council Ice Cream and Staff Appreciation Social
- OVH Beach Bash featuring treasure digging, live music, food, Hawaiian shirt contest, beach volleyball, and additional beach-themed activities
- Water Gun Fights
- September 11 Local Heroes Cookie Social honoring local first responders

-END OF REPORT-

APPENDIX

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 Coordinator
ODVA's Campus Veterans Coordinator works directly with veterans resource coordinators at public universities and community colleges to help build a supportive community for veteran-serving campus professionals through advocacy, training, and regular meetings. The Campus Veterans Coordinator facilitates connections between campus partners and regional resources such as county and Tribal VSOs, VA medical and mental health care services, and others.

More information: www.oregon.gov/odva/Services/Pages/Campus-Veteran-Services.aspx

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 Suicide Prevention and Workforce Grant: Established by HB 4132 (2026), this new grant program funds organizations that combine suicide prevention efforts with workforce training and employment support for veterans. The program uses Veterans' Services Fund resources to expand access to mental-health support and workforce development across Oregon.

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