



OREGON DEPARTMENT
of VETERANS' AFFAIRS

REPORT TO THE

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

TO THE OREGON DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS

JUNE 2026

1859

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|---|---------|
| Advisory Committee Information | Page 2 |
| Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs Leadership | Page 3 |
| Advisory Committee Quarterly Meeting Agenda | Page 4 |
| Advisory Committee Bios | Page 5 |
| Director's Report | Page 7 |
| Legislative Report | Page 10 |
| Aging Veteran Services Division Report | Page 12 |
| Appeals and Special Advocacy Division Report | Page 13 |
| Strategic Partnerships Division Report | Page 15 |
| Home Loans Program Report | Page 17 |
| Appendix | Page 20 |

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 Morales Wood, Vice Chair, USAF..... | Portland |
| Mary Mayer, Secretary, USAF..... | Portland |
| Ashley Taylor, USA..... | Scappoose |
| Shawn Flynn, USA..... | Portland |
| Mario Smith, USA | Portland |
| Tim Smart, USN | Gresham |
| James Little, USN | Roseburg |
| 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, USADirector
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, June 3, 2026 | 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Columbia River Maritime Museum | Barbey Building | 1792 Marine Drive, Astoria, OR 97103

In-person and Virtually

- I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER**
 - a. Pledge of Allegiance – Robert Van Voorhis, Chair
- II. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**
- III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
 - a. Approval of the [March 2026 Advisory Committee Quarterly Meeting Minutes](#)
- IV. NEW BUSINESS**
 - a. Advisory Committee Officer Elections – Robert Van Voorhis, Chair
 - i. Call for Nominations from the Floor – Robert Van Voorhis
 - b. Women Veterans Subcommittee Report – Christina Morales Wood, Subcommittee Chair
 - c. Suicide Prevention Subcommittee Report – Ashley Taylor, Subcommittee Chair
 - d. Transportation Subcommittee – Robert Van Voorhis, Subcommittee Chair
- V. GOVERNOR'S OFFICE**
 - a. Jonna Papaefthimiou, Veteran Advisor for the Office of Governor Tina Kotek
- VI. ODVA DIRECTOR'S REPORT**
 - a. Dr. Nakeia Council Daniels, Director
- VII. AGENCY PRESENTATIONS**
 - a. Legislative Briefing – Jay DeFillipo, Legislative Director
 - b. Veteran Houseless Program – Mark Newell, Veteran Volunteer Program Coordinator
- VIII. ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT DISCUSSION**
- IX. OLD BUSINESS**
- X. BUSINESS MEETING ADJOURNED**
 - a. Next Advisory Committee Quarterly Meeting
Date: Sept 9, 2026 | Time: 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM
Location: Klamath Falls

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

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|------------------------------------|--|
| 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 Morales 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 woman veteran and native of Portland, retired from the United States Air Force in 2002. Mary is involved in top leadership positions with the MOAA Portland Chapter, MOAA Oregon State Council of Chapters, United Veterans' Groups of Oregon (UVGO), Air and Space Forces Association, and the American Association of University Women (AAUW). She serves as the Veteran Representative on the Governor's Commission on Senior Services and the Oregon Home Care Commission. She also has a history of serving veterans with her positions on numerous veteran committees and boards, in addition to other community involvement. |
| 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. |

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|--------------|---|
| 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

As we move into summer, ODVA continues to remain engaged at the local, state, and federal levels in support of Oregon's veterans and their families. This quarter my focus included advocacy work in Washington, D.C., continued engagement around the Roseburg Veterans' Home project, and meaningful opportunities across Oregon to honor veterans and strengthen community partnerships and connection.

NASDVA Winter Conference

Members of the ODVA leadership team and I recently returned from Washington, D.C., where we participated in the National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs (NASDVA) Winter Conference.

NASDVA brings together state departments of veterans affairs from across the country to align priorities, share best practices, and advocate collectively for the veterans we serve nationwide. One of the most important moments of the week was NASDVA's testimony before the United States Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs on March 4.

That testimony reinforced the importance of the work we do every day here at ODVA and highlighted the critical role states play in the broader veteran support system. A central message was clear: state departments of veterans affairs are not supplemental - we are essential. Across the country, states are often the first point of contact for veterans and families seeking assistance. State agencies help veterans navigate disability claims, access earned benefits, connect to healthcare, secure long-term care, and receive support in their communities.

NASDVA President Terry Prince's testimony emphasized the need for stronger federal-state collaboration, improved data sharing, and targeted federal investment to address veteran suicide prevention, access gaps, and long-term care challenges nationwide. The testimony also underscored how state agencies act as a force multiplier for the federal VA system, particularly in reaching veterans at the community level. You can watch the hearing beginning at 1:40:38: https://youtu.be/vUHor_FQwJ8?si=W6NnrpoEugzDNVly.

Roseburg Veterans' Home Federal Funding Advocacy

Following the NASDVA Conference, Legislative Director Jay DeFillipo and I spent time on Capitol Hill meeting with members of Oregon's congressional delegation to continue advancing one of ODVA's top priorities—the Roseburg Veterans' Home project. Across each of these meetings, discussions focused heavily on the federal State Veterans Home Construction Grant Program and the ongoing challenges impacting projects nationwide. We emphasized the importance of securing additional federal investment and addressing the growing national construction backlog so projects like Roseburg can move forward.

We also discussed the current status of the Roseburg project, including escalating construction costs nationally and the importance of continued federal advocacy. Encouragingly, every office demonstrated a strong understanding of the significance of this project and expressed continued support for efforts to secure funding.



Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day Ceremony: ODVA held its annual Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day Ceremony, honoring the service and sacrifice of Vietnam-era veterans across Oregon. March 30 marks the completion of the withdrawal of U.S. combat troops from Vietnam in 1973. More than 58,000 Americans—including 801 Oregonians—lost their lives during the war, and 33 Oregon service members remain missing in action. Today, more than 121,000 Vietnam-era veterans call Oregon home, representing more than 40% of Oregon’s veteran population.

For many Vietnam veterans, the recognition and welcome home they deserved never came. Oregon’s observance of Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day serves as an opportunity to acknowledge their service, honor their sacrifice, and recognize their resilience.

This year’s ceremony featured remarks from Advisory Committee leadership and fellow Vietnam veterans, including Chair Robert Van Voorhis, Secretary Mary J. Mayer, and Vietnam Veterans of America State President Bill Duncan. Established in 2011, the event remains one of ODVA’s most meaningful annual observances and reflects Oregon’s enduring commitment to Vietnam veterans and their families.

Photos of the event are shared here: [2026 Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day Ceremony | Flickr](#)



Military Officers Association of America: This quarter also included engagement with veteran service organizations and community partners throughout the state. I was honored to serve as guest speaker for the May chapter meeting of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA), where I presented on ODVA’s work “Meeting Veterans in Their Communities Across Oregon.” The conversation included a robust discussion around outreach, trust-building, and equitable access to veteran services statewide. I deeply appreciated the opportunity for dialogue and was honored to receive an honorary MOAA membership.

Photos of the event are shared here: [MOAA Portland Chapter Brunch Meeting | Flickr](#)

Honor Flight: I was once again honored to serve as a keynote speaker at the annual send-off banquet for Honor Flight of Northwest Oregon, a nonprofit organization that provides veterans with free, guided trips to Washington, D.C., to visit the memorials built in honor of their service and sacrifice. This year’s Honor Flight included three World War II veterans, four Korean War veterans, and 18 Vietnam-era veterans. The banquet brought together more than one hundred family members, volunteers, and supporters to recognize the veterans participating in this once-in-a-lifetime experience. The evening served as a meaningful reminder of the importance of preserving opportunities that recognize and celebrate the service of Oregon’s veterans across every generation, but especially as they age.

Photos of the event are shared here: [Honor Flight of Northwest Oregon Spring 2026 Send-Off Banquet | Flickr](#)

As of this reporting period, ODVA is also actively preparing for Oregon’s annual Statewide Memorial Day Ceremony, one of the agency’s most solemn and meaningful observances. Memorial Day serves as an important reminder that the work we do every day is deeply connected to those who served our nation—and especially to those who made the ultimate sacrifice in defense of our freedoms. It is a time to reflect not only on service and sacrifice, but also on our continued responsibility to care for veterans, support their families, and ensure that their legacy is honored through meaningful action.

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Jay DeFillipo, Legislative Director

Here we are at another start to an Oregon spring with the thoughts of summer in the air. The 2026 Oregon Legislative Session ended at the beginning of March. The session centered on stabilizing state budgets, expanding housing supply, strengthening behavioral health systems, and modernizing veterans' services. Lawmakers advanced bipartisan packages on homelessness response, wildfire resilience, public safety modernization, and targeted economic development. Veterans' legislation was a notable priority, with HB 4132 serving as the session's expansion of ODVA programs and statewide suicide prevention and workforce training efforts. Technical alignment and statutory cleanup measures rounded out the session's work.

Rep. Evans' HB 4132 was signed by the governor at the end of session bringing additional capabilities and resources to the agency. The language in the law includes a statewide Suicide Prevention & Workforce Training Grant Program, funded through an approved grant of \$200,000 for the remainder of this biennium and \$400,000 for the next biennium. It also includes a position to administer that grant. The law goes on to expand the Veteran's Educational Bridge Grant allowing for an increased amount that individuals can request and adds hardship as an allowable reason to request grant money. Another area of the law allows the ODVA director to adjust quarterly distribution of County Veterans' Service Officer (CVSO) funds to ensure all money appropriated is used and excess is distributed to other counties in need. The bill also calls for a study on expanding access to veterans' treatment courts by the Judicial Department and Criminal Justice Commission. The final part of the law is language that provides protections for Veterans DD214 from public release through a County Courthouse.

The second piece of legislation affecting the Veteran landscape is HB 4099. HB 4099 establishes a statewide Task Force on responding to Veterans in crisis, charged with examining how Oregon agencies, counties, and emergency management systems respond to veterans experiencing acute mental health or crisis situations. The task force must submit a report to the interim legislative committee on emergency management and veterans by September 15, 2026, outlining findings and recommendations. The intent is the report will help influence legislation in the 2027 session.

Many of you may have noticed the series of Administrative Rules Announcements that have come out. A lot of work is going into the Administrative Rules process to update our rules with new laws while also fixing some out-of-date ones. The Cremains bill from the 2023 legislative session has a new series of rules associated with the process after receiving legislative authority to move forward. ODVA is also working on the rules for the new bills such as HB 4132 and HB 4099.

Our focus has also started to tune into the 2027 session. We are looking at statute and ways the agency needs to adjust to meet the needs of every veteran. Expansion in data gathering and updating outdated policies is my current focus while new ideas continue to flow for the future of the agency and our support to Oregon Veterans.

I always encourage the public and members of the committee to sign up for ODVA's Legislative Digest found at <https://www.oregon.gov/odva/connect/pages/legislation.aspx>

As always It is an honor to be able to serve the Veterans of our great state, and I look forward to the months ahead as I continue to work on helping our legislature pass legislation that helps our Veterans.

AGING VETERAN SERVICES DIVISION

Kelly Breshears, Aging Veteran Services Director

Veteran Volunteer Program – Impact Update (April 27, 2026)

Across Oregon, a quiet force is at work—veterans continuing to serve, this time in their own communities. The Veteran Volunteer Program continues to expand its reach and impact across Oregon. We currently have 133 active Veteran Volunteers, serving communities in 24 of Oregon’s 36 counties. In March alone, we trained 17 new volunteers, strengthening our capacity to connect with veterans statewide.

Growing Reach and Engagement

Our program has already connected with 7,045 individuals in 2026, a significant increase from 5,066 people at this same point last year—an increase of 1,979 individuals.

In 2025, volunteers contributed over 3,045 hours of service, reaching nearly 16,000 people through direct outreach, education, and support.

Community Presence

Our volunteers maintain a strong and visible presence at events and locations across the state, including:

- Military installations such as Camp Withycombe, Camp Rilea, and Kingsley Field Air National Guard Base
- Statewide gatherings like the Elks Lodge Convention and Woodcarvers Convention
- Community events including the La Pine Rhubarb Festival and Kiwanis Pancake Breakfasts
- Major public shows such as the Portland Boat Show, Willamette Sportsman’s Show, and International Car Show
- Ongoing outreach at senior centers, continuous care communities, and VA hospital facilities

Additionally, partnerships continue to grow. The Elks are distributing “Welcome Home Kits” to veterans, each including a Veteran Benefit Magazine—ensuring critical information reaches those who need it most.

Story of Impact

The true measure of this program isn’t just in numbers—it’s in outcomes. Beyond numbers, the program’s true value lies in individual lives changed.

One volunteer assisted a Veteran Service Officer with research on a long-denied claim originally filed in 2002. Through persistent effort and hours of reviewing records, the volunteer uncovered critical supporting evidence. As a result, the veteran received a retroactive award of \$649,241.16.

More importantly, the outcome restored something even greater than financial compensation: validation, dignity, and pride in service.

APPEALS AND SPECIAL ADVOCACY DIVISION

Joe Glover, Appeals and Special Advocacy Division Director

LGBTQ+ Veteran Program

The LGBTQ+ Veteran program originated from Oregon Senate Bill 946 (2015), which recognized the need to support the greater than 8,000 underserved veterans from the LGBTQ+ community and their families. This bill received bipartisan support and established the first ever dedicated LGBTQ+ Veteran Coordinator and program in the country.

This program works to help LGBTQ+ veterans and their families receive benefits that they are entitled to due to military service, but also specifically target advocacy focusing on assisting veterans with benefit challenges stemming from discriminatory discharges from policies such as “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” as well as assisting with identity-confirming name changes to military discharge paperwork for transgender veterans.

A key component to the program is the advocacy work that is done as a certified Veterans Service Officer (VSO). The pathway to VSO certification is typically a year-plus long effort with numerous milestones, trainings, and shadowing of other VSOs before receiving certification. This is in addition to the other casework that is being done with veterans and their families.

To ensure that the agency and program are reaching veterans where they are, the program visits “Pride” events around the state each year. Where June is recognized as “Pride Month”, Pride events happen in Oregon starting in late May and run through October.

ODVA first started visiting Pride events in 2022, and since then the efforts have grown significantly. In addition to standard outreach booths, ODVA hosts “Veteran Villages” inside Pride events in Portland, Albany, Eugene, Bend, and Coos Bay.

While hosted by ODVA, these Veteran Villages bring between 15 and 20 different agencies, state, federal, and county together to offer direct claims, benefits, health care advocacy, employment programs, housing support, suicide prevention, paid leave assistance, clothing drives, and food distribution. The Veteran Village reflects one guiding truth: helping veterans grow stronger, together, and reaching veterans where they are.

From these efforts since 2022, the Veteran Village has connected with more than 5,000 veterans, and from them have resulted in numerous successful outcomes to include:

- Over \$2 million in retroactive service-connected benefits secured
- Over \$250,000 in ongoing monthly VA awards
- 100+ veterans newly connected to VA healthcare
- 100% partner and veteran satisfaction reported

For many, the Village is the first place they have felt both safe and seen as their whole selves. The Village demonstrates how inclusion, safety, and trust accelerate access to earned benefits and improve long-term wellbeing outcomes.

When we take care of, educate, support, and advocate for one another, we strengthen the entire system of care — ensuring veterans are met where they are, when they are ready.

One attendee shared: *“When I saw the Navy flag flying here — at Pride, with my people — I cried. For the first time, I felt like a veteran and myself at the same time.”*

LGBTQ+ Veteran Program Success Story:

In 2023, a veteran who is a part of the LGBTQ+ community visited Eugene Pride. It was there that they discovered the Veteran Village.

The veteran had been kicked out of the military with General, Under Honorable discharge, and the narrative reason on their DD214 read, “Homosexuality Acts” which although technically under honorable conditions, they had never identified as a veteran, never sought benefits, and because of the nature of their discharge, they continued to live as if their military service had never existed.

Despite their experience, they felt encouraged to go and visit the Village to find out about services and programs that they might be eligible for.

Working with the LGBTQ+ Veteran Program, they immediately filed for a discharge upgrade with the Department of Defense to remove the discriminatory narrative from their DD-214. At the same time, they filed for disability compensation benefits from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs – Veterans Benefits Administration.

Due to missing or incomplete records, their claim took approximately 15 months to complete, and unfortunately was only minorly successful.

The veteran and our caseworker were undeterred, and they drafted a plan. Over a multi-year fight, together they submitted 26 different submittals, six different claims, and two Higher Level Review hearings.

While the veteran’s narrative reason for discharge is still pending and unresolved, the veteran’s claim casework has been overwhelmingly successful. In three years since first visiting the Veteran Village booth, they have received \$50,000 in tax-free retroactive payments, \$2,700 per month in disability financial support as they are 90% service connected, with several things still being pursued.



STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS DIVISION

Sheronne Blasi, Strategic Partnerships Division Director

The **Strategic Partnerships Team** is made up of Special Advocacy Coordinators (e.g. Tribal Veterans, Incarcerated Veterans, Campus Veterans); the Veterans Education Team (State Approving Agency, Campus Veteran Coordinator, and an Education Manager); a Grants Coordinator; a Grants Specialist; and the Division Director.

Rural Veterans Healthcare Transportation Grant

The Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT), partnerships with ODVA, has awarded seven (7) Rural Veterans Healthcare Transportation Grant (RVHTG) awards for the 25-27 biennium. This was a very tough evaluation process due to the number of applications compared to available grant funds. These grant funds will help ensure many Oregon veterans will have a way to access healthcare that might not exist otherwise.

RVHT Awardees:

- Basin Transit Service Transportation District
- Coos County Area Transportation District
- Jefferson County
- Malheur County
- The Klamath Tribes
- Tillamook County Transportation District
- Wheeler County Community Transportation

In addition to the awards above, **Rogue Valley Transportation District (RVTD)** received funding from ODOT's Technical Resource Center to provide training, technical assistance, and planning across the state. RVTD will use these funds to hire a statewide outreach coordinator to promote veteran transportation options across Oregon, including RVHTG services, VA Highly Rural Transportation Grant services, and other local resources.

ODOT is also engaged in conversations with the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) regarding the possibility of additional veterans' transportation funding in the next fiscal year/biennium from a federal grant.

These grants are in addition to the VA's Highly Rural Transportation Grant that ODVA administers to Baker, Gilliam, Grant, Lake, Harney, Malheur, Morrow, Sherman, Wallowa and Wheeler counties. ODVA also awarded transportation grants to Lake, Linn and Wheeler counties as part of our 2025-27 Veteran Services Grant.

Veterans Educational Bridge Grant

The Veterans Educational Bridge Grant Program (VEBG) was originally created in the 2019 Oregon Legislative session with the passage of House Bill 2201 to provide financial assistance (up to \$5,000

lifetime maximum) to veterans unable to complete a degree program within the expected completion timeline due to unavailability of course offerings. Since then, VEBG was expanded in the 2023 Legislative Session, which expanded eligibility to include additional programs of study and training, eliminated the requirement that veterans be eligible for GI Bill® benefits, added language to be more inclusive of apprenticeship and On-The-Job Training (OJT) programs, and allowed VEBG funds to be used to pay off debt on student accounts.

The VEBG was expanded again in the 2026 Oregon State Legislative Session with the passage of House Bill 4132. HB 4132 expands eligibility for the VEBG to include instances of financial hardship for veterans enrolled in eligible academic or training programs. Additionally, the requirement that a veteran prove eligibility for other federal or state financial assistance is eliminated, and the maximum grant award is increased to \$10,000 per veteran (lifetime maximum).

Changes to VEBG outlined in HB 4132 will go into effect on July 1, 2026. The VEBG Coordinator, Diandra Dzib, and the Veterans Education Manager, Kim Douthit, are currently working on updating the program application and partnering with ODVA Comms to update the program flyer and website. The updated Oregon Administrative Rules (OAR), Chapter 274, have been posted for public comment as of May 1, 2026. ODVA's Administrative Rules Coordinator, Jay DeFillipo, is holding a public hearing for comment on the amended OAR May 15, 2026, at 2:00pm via Zoom.

Incarcerated Veteran Program

As part of ODVA's ongoing outreach to incarcerated veterans, we have worked with the Oregon Department of Corrections (ODOC) to establish a Veteran Benefit Specialist (VBS) position at Coffee Creek Correctional Facility (CCCF), which is ODOC's intake facility. A VBS is a veteran in custody who works with other veterans to ensure they understand USDVA claims processes and the specific issues impacting incarcerated veterans. The VBS receives an incentive from ODOC for this work like other adult in custody positions.

VBSs assist by verifying veterans' status upon intake at CCCF, identifying the assistance most needed from ODVA Incarcerated Veteran Coordinators, and helping veterans understand what evidence and forms must be provided to the USDVA for claims or an apportionment of monthly compensation currently being paid by the VA. This support helps veterans minimize overpayments resulting from their incarceration, transfer withheld monetary benefits to family members, begin gathering evidence needed for future disability claims, and plan for their transition back to their communities.

The VBS at CCCF shares information gathered from veterans transitioning into custody with ODVA's Incarcerated Veteran Coordinators through an ODOC staff member. This provides our Coordinators with a communication channel that did not exist previously and allows them to prepare forms and gather needed details before they meet with both newly incarcerated female and male veterans during their biweekly visits.

In just the four months since the CCCF position was created, the time required for veteran meetings has been cut in half while improving their quality and focus. It has also strengthened our strategic partnership with ODOC by helping us jointly improve service to veterans in custody.



HOME LOAN PROGRAM REPORT

Chris Earhart, Home Loan Program Manager

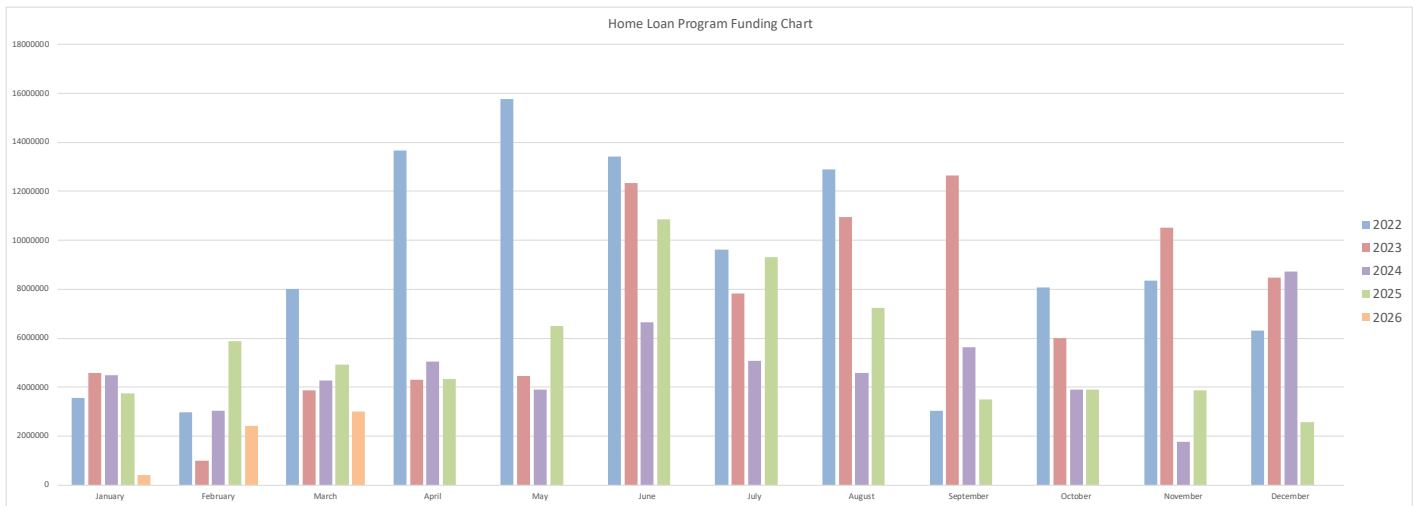
The first quarter of 2026 marked a period of steady operational performance and meaningful modernization for the ODVA Home Loan Program. While overall loan production slowed compared to the same period in 2025, portfolio value continued to grow, reflecting a shift toward higher value new loans and ongoing stability within our servicing operations. Delinquency rates remain exceptionally low, particularly when measured against rising national trends, underscoring the continued financial resilience of Oregon veterans and the strength of ODVA's servicing practices.

Q1 also represented a significant step forward in improving the borrower experience. The launch of monthly mortgage statements in January and the rollout of the online borrower portal in April modernized how veterans access, manage, and understand their home loans. Alongside these service improvements, strategic system modernization projects and two interest rate reductions demonstrate ODVA's continued commitment to efficiency, accessibility, and meaningful financial value for Oregon's veteran homeowners.

Overall, the first quarter of 2026 reflects both operational stability and forward momentum, positioning the program for continued growth and enhanced service delivery in the months ahead.

Home Loan Production Review

- Home Loan Program production for the 1st Quarter of 2026 was 11 loans for \$5.8 million. For the same period in 2025, production volume was 36 loans for \$14.5 million.
- 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 1st Quarter 2026, ODVA has a total of 1,574 loans in portfolio, with a total dollar amount under servicing of \$416,191,026. Of these, 1,532 are new loans totaling \$413,219,277. 'Old' loans comprise 42 units totaling \$2,971,749.66.



- At the end of the 1st Quarter 2025, the ODVA had a total of 1,581 loans for \$402,099,484 under servicing.
- Year over year, ODVA’s portfolio saw a small decrease of 7 loans, representing a 0.44% decline in total units from the first quarter of 2025 to the first quarter of 2026. However, despite the slight reduction in loan count, the total dollar amount under servicing increased by \$14.1 million, or 3.50%. This reflects a shift toward higher-value new loans, offsetting the modest decline in the number of loans.

Loan Delinquency Review

- For the reporting period of 03/31/2026, 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 1st Quarter 2026, there are 0 loans in a Foreclosure status. Our servicing portfolio remains strong as the rest of the industry is showing signs of increased delinquencies.
- At the end of 1st Quarter 2026, ODVA has 0 loans in a bankruptcy status.
- The total of all loans reporting in the 90-day or greater delinquency position was at 4 units, expressed as 0.25% in unit delinquency on a portfolio of 1,574. This is a minor decrease 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’s most recent Q4 2025 National Delinquency Survey shows that seasonally adjusted mortgage delinquencies for one-to-four-unit residential loans increased to 4.26%, up 27 basis points from Q3 2025. The foreclosure inventory rate rose to 0.53%, a 3 basis-point increase
 - Looking at the data for January 2026 (the latest available), the total U.S. mortgage delinquency rate edged down slightly to 3.65%, a 3-basis-point decline from December. However, serious delinquencies (90+ days past due or in foreclosure) continued to rise, reaching over 850,000 borrowers, the highest level since July 2022
 - For the ODVA home loan program in Q1 2026, total delinquency stood at .70%, covering 11 units, reflecting a decrease from the previous quarter.

Home Loan Program Staffing News

- We completed the requisition for a Quality Control and Compliance Analyst (OPA 2) who started with ODVA Monday May 18th.
- We will be opening the requisition for a Business Development Representative in May.

Home Loan Program Updates

- Monthly mortgage statements launched in January, replacing the old coupon-book system with clearer, up-to-date monthly account information.
- The online borrower portal went live in early April, giving veterans digital tools to make payments, review loan details, access documents, and manage their accounts.
- The refinance program entered a soft launch in April, offering a 30-year rate-and-term refinance and incorporating lender feedback ahead of full rollout.
- System modernization continues, including upgrades to the Loan Origination System and document management tools to streamline internal and partner workflows.
- Interest rates have been reduced twice in 2026, providing meaningful savings to veterans during a challenging mortgage market year.

-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 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