



OREGON DEPARTMENT  
*of* VETERANS' AFFAIRS

# Strategic Plan

2025-2030

Revised Spring 2025





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# Recognition

**Military Service:** Native Americans have a long and distinguished history of military service, demonstrating exceptional bravery and making profound sacrifices. Despite a long, painful history of challenges with the United States government, Native Americans have served in the U.S. Armed Forces at some of the highest rates per capita of any ethnic group.

**Land:** We acknowledge the many Tribes and bands of Native Americans who call Oregon their ancestral territory, including Burns Paiute, Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw, Confederated Tribes of Cow Creek Lower Band of Umpqua, Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, Confederated Tribes of Umatilla Indian Reservation, Coquille Tribe, and Klamath Tribes; and honor the ongoing relationship between the land, plants, animals, and people indigenous to this place we now call Oregon. We recognize the continued sovereignty of the nine federally recognized Tribes who have ties to this place and thank them for continuing to teach us how we might all be here together, and we continue to strive to work on a government-to-government basis with the nine federally recognized Tribes.



# Message From ODVA Director

Dr. Nakeia Council Daniels



I am pleased to present the 2025 – 2030 Oregon Department of Veterans’ Affairs (ODVA) Strategic Plan. It is our vision for the agency's future and shows our plan to achieve that vision and, ultimately, the objectives of our mission. Our plan is both forward-looking and focused on short-term, tactical goals, such as how we recruit.

On January 11, 2023, Governor Kotek's letter to agency leaders outlined her expectations for agency performance: “A core part of my vision for the next four years is to improve customer service for Oregonians – [...]. That means being more efficient and effective and creating systems that will empower our collective 42,000 public servants to deliver for Oregonians.”

We aim to help ODVA become more agile and responsive in meeting the needs of veterans and their families by leveraging the governor's tools, her expectations of agencies, and the strategic planning process to bring these together in a unified organizational approach.

This is not new work; it does not change the direction the agency has been heading. However, it is a new approach based on performance management principles, systems, and actions to achieve results. It is a dynamic process that assesses the current state of the agency, identifies the ideal we are moving toward, and sets goals with milestones to measure our progress.

Finally, at first glance, this plan appears internally focused. This is intentional. We begin by ensuring that our foundation is strong so that we can deliver outstanding services to veterans and their families. To ensure the high esteem and confidence of the public, as well as the confidence of our governor and Oregon legislators in our agency, is well and truly earned.

As ODVA marks its 80th anniversary in 2025, we honor eight decades of service by looking boldly to the future. This milestone is more than a celebration of our history—it is a recommitment to delivering exceptional service to Oregon’s veterans and their families. It is a call to foster a workplace culture rooted in diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility. And it is a renewed pledge to strengthen our internal operations, align our resources with our mission, and ensure that every veteran we serve has the opportunity to thrive.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dr. Nakeia Council Daniels". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Dr. Nakeia Council Daniels, Director



## MISSION

To honor and serve all Oregon veterans and their families by aligning and delivering earned benefits and services that enhance and improve their lives in recognition of their service to our nation.



## VISION

All veterans and their families thrive in Oregon.



## VALUES

Stewardship  
Excellence  
Respect  
Vision  
Inclusivity  
Commitment  
Equity

# Who We Are and What We Do

The Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs (ODVA) was established in 1945 to fulfill a promise made by then-Governor Earl Snell to “provide every possible service and assistance to our returning veterans.” Nearly 80 years later, ODVA continues to honor that commitment by serving more than 260,000 Oregon veterans from all eras of service. Our mission is to honor and serve all Oregon veterans and their families by aligning and delivering the benefits and services they have earned—enhancing and improving their lives in recognition of their service to our nation.

ODVA partners with local, state, tribal, and federal governments, as well as community-based organizations, to deliver a comprehensive range of veteran-focused programs and services. We are a connector, convener, and advocate—uniting the efforts of government agencies, nonprofit and private organizations, and veteran service partners to address systemic barriers and improve access to earned benefits. Together, we work to ensure that veterans receive the support they need to thrive in Oregon.

Our values and mission are deeply rooted in service. We embrace Oregon’s responsibility to support its veterans and their families, including those historically underserved or negatively impacted by discriminatory policies. This includes women veterans, LGBTQ+ veterans, aging veterans, incarcerated veterans, tribal veterans from Oregon’s nine federally recognized Tribes, and veterans of color. We believe that no veteran should be left behind.

Throughout our history, ODVA has evolved to meet the changing needs of Oregon’s veteran community:

**1944:** Oregon voters amended the state constitution to create the Oregon Veterans’ Home Loan Program, the state’s first dedicated benefit for veterans.

**1945:** ODVA was formally established to administer the Home Loan Program and serve as the state’s primary advocate for veterans and their families.

**1964:** ODVA launched Conservatorship Services to protect vulnerable veterans unable to manage their finances, safeguarding their earned benefits.

**1995:** The state authorized pass-through funding to counties, enhancing the capacity of local Veteran Service Offices to support veterans in their communities.

**1997:** The first Oregon Veterans’ Home opened in The Dalles, providing long-term, skilled, and memory care to veterans and Gold Star Families.

**2014:** A second Veterans’ Home was established in Lebanon, expanding access to high-quality care in the Willamette Valley.

**2005:** ODVA began providing accredited training for Veteran Service Officers, strengthening claim representation for veterans across the state.

**2015:** ODVA launched the nation’s first dedicated positions for LGBTQ+ veterans, and created special advocacy for women veterans and veterans who are incarcerated.

**2016:** Oregon voters passed Measure 96, dedicating 1.5% of state lottery proceeds to fund veteran services—ODVA’s most significant expansion since 1945.

**2017–2021:** The agency implemented 12 new programs and grants, addressing critical gaps in service and expanding support for underserved veterans.

**2019:** ODVA’s Education Program was established to serve as the State Approving Agency for GI Bill® institutions, created a Campus Veteran Coordinator position, and initiated the Campus Veteran Resources Center Grant, ensuring quality higher education opportunities for Oregon veterans.

**Today:** Construction is underway for a third Veterans’ Home in Roseburg, supported by state, local, and federal partnerships.

Today, ODVA administers dozens of veteran services and is organized into five primary benefit functions—Aging Veteran Services, Appeals and Special Advocacy, Home Loan Program, Oregon Veterans’ Homes, and Strategic Partnerships—supported by operational functions including: Director’s Office, Communications, Financial Services, Facility Services, Human Resources, Records, and Information Services.

Thanks to our work and partnerships, in fiscal year 2023 alone, veterans in Oregon received nearly \$4 billion in U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs federal benefits. These benefits not only deliver on the nation's promise to care for its veterans—they are a critical economic engine for Oregon communities, helping reduce reliance on state-funded services, support public health, and strengthen Oregon’s skilled workforce.

ODVA is proud to build on the foundation of our 2014–2019 and 2023 strategic frameworks. Over the past decade, the State of Oregon has demonstrated its continued commitment to veterans by supporting the launch of new and responsive programs that address emerging and underserved needs across our diverse veteran population. ODVA’s 2025–2030 Strategic Plan builds on this momentum by focusing on strengthening the agency’s internal systems, data, and core operational functions to better align resources, enhance service delivery, and increase impactful advocacy. As we work to strengthen our internal systems and functions, we also remain committed to prioritizing the needs of Oregon’s veterans particularly in the areas of suicide prevention, homelessness, and the unique needs of the veterans who call our Veterans’ Homes their home.

Our strategy deepens our commitment to meeting veterans where they are, removing barriers to access, and driving innovation across all areas of our work. As we honor our 80-year legacy, we remain steadfast in our vision: That all veterans and their families thrive in Oregon.



SWOT stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. SWOT analysis is a technique for assessing these four aspects of the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs. It is a tool to analyze what we do best and to devise a successful strategy for the future.

## Strengths

- **Advocacy**—We are passionate about the work we do for veterans' needs and are willing to help in any way that we can.
- **Partnerships**—Support for our mission to honor and serve Oregon veterans and their families comes from a broad community, including the governor, the legislature, federal agencies, nine federally recognized Tribes, local governments, other state agencies, and local community organizations.
- **Leadership and Employee Engagement**—We have an authentic and energized executive leadership team that is grounded in Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility as a shared value, and is committed to making strategic changes to achieve the most meaningful outcomes. Backed by a hardworking and talented staff focused on the needs of veterans, we are united in our mission to deliver exceptional results where they matter most.

## Weaknesses

- **Engagement**—While some veterans remain unaware of ODVA or may be hesitant to engage with government programs, there is significant opportunity to build trust through expanded outreach and collaboration. Strengthening and deepening partnerships with other organizations can help us better meet the diverse needs of Oregon's veteran community.
- **Policies and Processes**—Many of our processes and policies are outdated, and our resources are operating at or beyond capacity. Current policies are inadequate to support the agency's evolving needs in areas such as training, onboarding, and skills development.
- **Budget** – We are in the early stages in developing departmental budget systems that align with results accountability.
- **Lack of data and data management maturity**—Due to a lack of data, we struggle to establish effective metrics for most program areas, thus impacting our ability to fully support veterans and their families. The agency lacks the ability to treat data as an asset, manage it securely, and create an evidence-based, data-informed decision-making process. With the appropriate data, we will be better able to understand and meet the growing needs of our veteran population.

## Opportunities

- **Operational Rebalance and Expansion**—Significant staff and leadership transitions in recent years have created a valuable opportunity to reassess agency operations with fresh perspectives, allowing a renewed focus on cross-divisional collaboration, standardization of best practices, and stronger interagency partnerships. As ODVA’s programs continue to expand, so does the need for a more robust and well-aligned team—both in staffing levels and management capacity.
- **Programs**—We are rebuilding critical committees, expanding the capacity of services in Veterans Homes, emphasizing inclusive outreach to better serve historically marginalized veterans. Additionally, recent changes in laws both at the state and federal present new opportunities for strategic outreach and engagement.
- **All Agency and Staff**—We have a dedicated workforce with strong knowledge of veteran programs across divisions. There is potential to enhance effectiveness by aligning efforts with real time data and performance metrics. As we move toward becoming both a learning agency and a trauma informed organization. We will further strengthen interdepartmental communication and mutual support for each other.
- **Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility (DEIA)**—Continue building on recent progress to embed diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility into all aspects of ODVA’s operations. Opportunities exist to further align programs and outreach with the evolving needs of Oregon’s increasingly diverse veteran population, expand culturally responsive services, and foster a more inclusive workplace culture.

## Threats

- **Internal Partnerships** — The agency faces increasing strain as it introduces new programs. Outdated or missing policies, outmoded IT infrastructure, and limited capacity to meet modern compliance requirements hinder our ability to effectively stand up the new programs. The pace of growth and change has outpaced internal systems and processes, leaving the agency underprepared to manage the operational demands of expanded staffing, evolving policies, and emerging program requirements.
- **Programmatic**—The agency faces increasing strain as it supports numerous new programs introduced since the allocation of Lottery Funds. Outdated or missing policies, aging IT infrastructure, and limited capacity to meet modern compliance requirements hinder our ability to adapt effectively. The pace of growth and change has outpaced internal systems and processes, leaving the agency underprepared to manage the operational demands of expanded staffing, evolving policies, and emerging program requirements.

The assessment of agency performance comes from various sources, including legislators and the governor, through direct guidance, as well as the governor’s expectations of agencies, and Key Performance Measures (KPMs).

We've asked agency staff and managers for input—it is our goal that they see their influence in the plan. Staff have contributed to the development of departmental SWOT assessments and goal setting. Gallup surveys (appendix), reviews from labor officers, and input from subject matter experts, as well as staff with an interest in strategic planning, have all contributed to the development of the plan.

This plan has been developed from feedback received from veterans and their families, as well as external partners who serve on our advisory committee and other service organizations.

In the future, greater outreach will occur through listening sessions with ODVA program teams and agency-wide quarterly reviews of performance measures, as well as through the implementation of a staff virtual suggestion box. We will conduct internal audits and solicit audits from the Secretary of State's Office and private consulting firms.



# Ideal State, Strategy, and Goals

ODVA's 2025–2030 Strategic Plan emphasizes identifying where we are going, the ideal state, providing a strategy for getting there, and having measurable goals that strengthen our ability to deliver services and adapt to the evolving needs of Oregon's veteran community. To support this vision, the agency will pursue several agency-wide and division-specific SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) goals over the next five years. These goals are intentionally designed to drive operational excellence, advance equity, and connect day-to-day work with long-term strategic direction.

## **A Core Practice: Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA)**

**Ideal State:** ODVA would have an inclusive, anti-racist agency culture that contributes to outstanding service delivery for all veterans. All employees feel seen and heard, have opportunities to do their best, experience a sense of belonging, and recognize that their contributions are valued. Every employee is given the chance, systems, and motivation to maximize their unique strengths and contributions, which help drive the success of ODVA's mission.

**Strategy:** The Deputy Director will guide this strategy.

- Form an agency Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility Committee committed to advancing DEIA within our organization, as well as for veterans, their families, and the communities we serve.
- Hire a DEIA Manager to lead the agency's efforts.
- Engage the expertise of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion consulting firms to provide guidance and training in executing the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility core practices.
- Provide an agency equity lens tool to guide decision-making and actions.

**Goals:** To build an inclusive, anti-racist agency culture and improve service delivery for all veterans, ODVA will:

### **Increasing Workforce Diversity**

- **Specific:** Improve hiring practices to attract and retain underrepresented groups.
- **Measurable:** Increase the percentage of diverse employees of color, LGBTQ+, women, and veterans with disabilities in ODVA's workforce by 15% over two years.

- **Achievable:** Expand hiring manager outreach. Partner with diverse job boards, veteran organizations, and institutions to broaden applicant pools.
- **Relevant:** A workforce that reflects Oregon’s highly diverse veteran community ensures equitable service delivery.
- **Time-Bound:** Start quarterly review of recruitment metrics starting in 2026.

### **Strengthening Staff Competency in Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility**

- **Specific:** Ensure all staff receive training in Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility, and culturally responsive service.
- **Measurable:** Reach 90% staff participation in annual Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility training by July of each year.
- **Achievable:** Offer both online and in-person Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility learning modules tailored to veteran services.
- **Relevant:** Staff education is crucial for delivering inclusive and equitable services.
- **Time-Bound:** Begin rollout in June 2026; maintain annual compliance.

### **Expand Equitable Access to Veteran Services and Support**

- **Specific:** Conduct equity reviews of ODVA programs to identify and remove barriers to access.
- **Measurable:** Complete at least 3 equity assessments per year with recommendations and follow-up.
- **Achievable:** Use an internal equity assessment toolkit developed by the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility Advisory Committee.
- **Relevant:** Equity audits help ensure ODVA programs reach all veteran populations fairly.
- **Time-Bound:** Begin first assessments in Q1 2027; report findings annually.

### **Expected Outcomes:**

- To ensure that marginalized veterans and their families are best served through our policies, programs, and services.
- Employees work in and veterans interact with an equitable environment.
- All ODVA employees can thrive, evidenced by increased ODVA productivity.
- All ODVA employees feel a sense of belonging in ODVA

## **ODVA's Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility Statement**

The Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs (ODVA) recognizes the harm done to marginalized and underserved veterans and their families and is committed to addressing these inequities through our policies, programs, and services as a veteran-focused agency. ODVA intends to continue leading veteran equity initiatives nationally. The ODVA is committed to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility within our organization and for our veterans. This commitment is reflected in agency staffing, programming, and efforts to serve and honor veterans through our leadership, advocacy, and strong partnerships. Our actions, outlined in our Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility mission, Affirmative Action, and Strategic Plans, demonstrate this commitment.

The following principles guide our approach:

- Modeling and promoting a welcoming, safe, and inclusive organizational culture for the veterans, their families, and caregivers we serve, and where ODVA's staff can thrive, including the many veterans who have chosen ODVA for their post-military careers.
- Accountability for "Equity IN" focused on hiring a diverse staff, retention, inclusion, community engagement, communications, and sustainable best practices
- Accountability for "Equity OUT" focused on technology access, unintended consequences, workforce development, community building, outreach, and partnerships
- Foster an inclusive environment where all veterans receive fair and unbiased service from the agency staff
- Advance diverse, equitable, and inclusive access through culturally responsive programs focused on engaging veterans
- Advocate, support, and provide resources for veterans experiencing behavioral health concerns

Ensure everyone needing Veteran services and benefits that are owed to them, or their families can receive access and follow up by agency staff regardless of economic or social status, military service period, physical ability, ethnicity, national origin, or gender identity or expression.

## Every Veteran Approach

**Ideal State:** All veteran communities in our state are aware of their earned benefits, and ODVA is well-resourced to meet their needs. ODVA will provide effective outreach to educate and inform Oregon’s veterans, with a special emphasis on underserved veterans, including women, and those who have been disenfranchised due to factors such as age, ethnicity, race, religion, disability, socioeconomic status, gender, LGBTQ+ status, or other cultural contexts.

**Strategy:** The Chief Operating Officer will guide this strategy.

- Engage consulting firms' expertise to conduct research, reviews, and development.
- Determine how we will identify every veteran in Oregon. Explore the creation of a new software tool that enables us to better understand the needs and demographics of Oregon veterans.
- Hire, onboard, and train a data analyst.
- Create an infrastructure to identify and communicate with all veterans in Oregon.
- Evaluate the present support provided by ODVA and partners by veteran demographics.
- Project the support capability that ODVA and its partners will need to provide for veteran services.
- Create a roadmap to expand service capacity and enhance veteran accessibility of those services, delivering the benefits earned by veterans in Oregon.

**Goals:** In support of ODVA’s commitment to reach all Oregon veterans, particularly those historically underserved, the agency will:

### Create a Roadmap for the Every Veteran Approach

- **Specific:** Develop a clear, actionable roadmap that outlines desired outcomes, strategies, milestones, and goals for reaching and serving all Oregon veterans, especially those who have been historically underserved and disproportionately marginalized.
- **Measurable:** Deliver a completed roadmap to guide ODVA’s outreach and service delivery strategy for the 2027–2029 biennium with a phased implementation strategy spanning five years.
- **Achievable:** Partner with a qualified consulting firm and ODVA’s Executive Leadership Team to co-create the shared vision and framework.
- **Relevant:** Ensure all Oregon veterans, including women, LGBTQ+ veterans, veterans of color, and others marginalized by systems of power, are aware of ODVA and can access their earned benefits.
- **Time-Bound:** The roadmap is completed and approved by July 2026, with quarterly progress updates provided to the Executive Leadership Team starting in 2026.

## Review and Plan for Capacity to Serve Every Oregon Veteran

- **Specific:** Conduct a comprehensive assessment of ODVA's current staffing, programs, infrastructure, and resources, and develop a plan to scale service capacity in alignment with Every Veteran Approach.
- **Measurable:** Produce a detailed capacity report including staffing levels, organizational structure, service reach, resource gaps, key position backups, and a five-year plan integrating wellness, trauma-informed care, succession planning, and cross-training for staff.
- **Achievable:** Engage a project management team to lead the analysis and develop the necessary tools, such as updated org charts and capacity projections.
- **Relevant:** Building internal readiness is essential to delivering equitable, accessible, and consistent services across all veteran demographics.
- **Time-Bound:** Capacity report and plan completed by July 2027, with quarterly status reports presented to the Executive Leadership Team beginning in 2027.

### Expected Outcomes:

- Every veteran in Oregon is aware of their earned benefits.
- Services are easily accessible and available to meet the needs of Oregon veterans.
- ODVA is aware of every veteran in Oregon and effectively interacts with them, meeting them where they are in terms of communication preferences and providing available services to the greatest extent possible.

## Complete a PESTLE Analysis

- **Specific:** Examine the external landscape through a PESTLE (Political, Economic, Sociological, Technological, Legal, Environmental) lens to identify key factors influencing veteran services and ODVA's strategic direction.
- **Measurable:** Produce a comprehensive analysis report that will inform the agency's strategic plan and the implementation of the Every Veteran Approach through 2030.
- **Achievable:** Contract with a consulting firm to lead the analysis and collaborate with ODVA's Executive Leadership Team, the Veterans' Advisory Committee, and partner veteran organizations.
- **Relevant:** Understanding these external forces ensures ODVA remains proactive, responsive, and resilient in delivering veteran services across Oregon.
- **Time-Bound:** The PESTLE report will be finalized by September 2026, with quarterly check-ins on progress, consultant performance, and data integration into ODVA's strategic efforts. Quarterly status reports will be presented to the Executive Leadership Team beginning in 2025.

## Division-Level SMART Goals

Beginning in 2026–2027, each ODVA division will develop and report on one SMART goal per year, aligned with the agency's strategic priorities. These goals are:

1. Developed from the division and the agency's SWOT analysis.
2. Influenced by the agency's strategic priorities.
3. Reported quarterly to the Executive Leadership Team to ensure accountability and support beginning in February of 2026.

# Strategic Development and Timing

## Connecting To Day-To-Day Work Through Input, Assessments, Goals, and Measuring Our Progress

At the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs, our strategic plan reflects a strong commitment to continuous improvement and purposeful action. It outlines the steps we are taking to strengthen the operational processes that support our veteran-focused programs and to foster a workplace culture rooted in Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility. We are intentionally embracing new, inclusive approaches that help us identify and remove systemic barriers to accessing veteran services—ensuring every veteran in Oregon feels seen, supported, and honored.

This plan does not shift our course—it builds on our momentum. It is designed to help us move more effectively toward our goals, with greater alignment and agility to respond to evolving needs. We intentionally centered Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility in the development of this plan, challenging outdated norms and reaffirming our commitment to cultivating an anti-racist, welcoming, and affirming environments for all.

To keep this plan relevant and forward-looking, we will revisit and refine it annually. Each year, we will celebrate accomplishments, reassess priorities, set new goals, and extend the strategic horizon by an additional year. This approach creates a living strategy—one that evolves with our agency and the communities we serve.

For the first time, every operational and program area has engaged in a SWOT analysis assessment of their current state and contributed goals to the agency-wide plan. These provide transparency and a foundation for cross-agency collaboration. Moving forward, we will continue to strengthen this process by having each program develop goals that will sustain excellence in core functions and identify opportunities to enhance or expand services in alignment with the agency's Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility and Every Veteran Approach strategies.

This year also marks the beginning of a new chapter in how we measure progress. Program areas will begin reporting on their progress toward achieving their goals—not only as an accountability exercise, but to maintain clarity, overcome obstacles, and ensure resources are aligned with results. This effort is about support and collaboration. It is about building a stronger connection between our work, our budget, and the outcomes we deliver to Oregon veterans and their families.

Together, through shared ownership and ongoing reflection, we will continue advancing toward a future where every veteran in Oregon has access to the benefits and opportunities they have earned.

# Strategic Development Revisions

**2014:** 2014-2019 Strategic Framework, Director Smith

**2023:** 2023 – 2028 ODVA Strategic Plan, Director Fitzpatrick

**2024:** 2023 – 2028 ODVA Strategic Plan, updated spring 2024, Director Daniels

**2025:** 2025 – 2030 ODVA Strategic Plan, Director Daniels

# Strategic Plan Development Timeline

## 2025-27 Strategic Plan Development

2025	2026	2027
<b>STRATEGIC PLAN DEVELOPMENT</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agency SWOT</li> <li>Agency SMART Goals</li> <li>DEIA Plan/Affirmative Action</li> <li>Operations Calendar</li> <li>IS Strategic Plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Division SMART Goals</li> <li>Equity Lens Guide</li> <li>Staff Wellness Initiative</li> </ul>	
<b>STRATEGIC PLAN APPENDICES</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Division SWOTs</li> <li>Division Goals for the New Year</li> <li>Division Annual Accomplishments</li> <li>Gallup Survey</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PESTLE Analysis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Risk Register</li> <li>Veteran's Journey (workflow mapping)</li> </ul>
<b>INPUTS</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>External Partner Feedback</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Audits (Internal, Secretary of State, Consultants)</li> <li>Staff Virtual Suggestion Box</li> <li>Performance Metrix and Targets</li> <li>Key Performance Measures (KPMs)</li> </ul>	
<b>HOLD THE GAIN</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communications Plan + Intranet</li> <li>PAFs are tied to agency goals (DEIA and Every Veteran)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quarterly employee appraisals (PAF – Performance Accountability Feedback model) are tied to SMART Goals</li> <li>Program Improvement Projects (PIPs)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Performance Management System – QTRs</li> </ul>

## Quarterly Cadence For Updates, Progress Reports, and Deliverables

Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
<b>ODD NUMBERED YEAR   FULL LEGISLATIVE SESSION</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Executive Leadership Team (ELT) agenda item: division reports on SWOT and goals (1 division per meeting)</li> <li>ELT SMART report outs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>June 30 - DEIA Plan/Affirmative Action Plan</li> <li>June 30 – Updated Strategic Plan is published</li> <li>ELT SMART report outs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff Wellness Initiative</li> <li>ELT SMART report outs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An all-day retreat for ELT strategic planning: Each ELT member celebrates their accomplishments from the previous year and discusses their number one goal for the new year.</li> <li>December 30 - Employee Climate Survey (Gallup)</li> <li>ELT SMART report outs</li> </ul>
<b>EVEN NUMBERED YEAR   SHORT LEGISLATIVE SESSION</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ELT SMART report outs</li> <li>March - Agency Request Budget (ARB) Kick-Off</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>June 30 - DEIA Plan/Affirmative Action Plan</li> <li>June 30 – Updated Strategic Plan is published</li> <li>ELT SMART report outs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>August 1 – ARB is due</li> <li>Staff Wellness Initiative</li> <li>ELT SMART report outs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An all-day retreat for the ELT's strategic planning: Each ELT member celebrates their accomplishments from the previous year and discusses their top goal for the new year.</li> <li>December 30 - Employee Climate Survey (Gallup)</li> <li>ELT SMART report outs</li> </ul>

# Appendix

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42	Measuring, Monitoring and External Factors



- Focus on building partnerships to better assist aging veterans.
- Engage in training for compassion fatigue.
- Movement on replacing the IT system and getting rid of paper files.



# Appeals and Special Advocacy

## SWOT and Goals

		To have no wrong door for veterans and their families through advocacy support and services	
		Favorable	Unfavorable
Internal	Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Frequently engages in work with external partners leading to strong professional working relationships</li> <li>Communicative and collaborative strength internally and across divisions</li> <li>Expert level knowledge by a dedicated team in support of advocacy roles</li> <li>Established credibility, independence, and objectivity</li> <li>Clear organizational identity in mission and vision</li> </ul>	<b>Weaknesses</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lacking more substantial policies with external partners</li> <li>Lack of budget understanding</li> <li>Expectations for full state coverage of constant high-level need can lead to frustration and burnout</li> <li>Lack of dedicated budgets for outreach and special recurring events</li> <li>Reliance on outdated technology to deliver benefits and services</li> </ul>
	Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthen and refresh old or outdated rules and policies</li> <li>Strengthen relationships with VSOs and NSOs</li> <li>Opportunity to establish expectations and standardization of work completed on behalf of agency clients to ensure alignment with the agency vision</li> <li>Strengthen the collaboration with other state agencies working together to cross-multiply advocacy support</li> <li>Strengthen relationships with the VBA, VHA, and BVA</li> </ul>	<b>Threats</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of ability to acquire and aggregate data to identify needs and trends</li> <li>Limited internal resources and a reliance on external partners</li> <li>Tokenized expertise can lead to frustration and burnout</li> <li>External orders to close federal programs lead to previously unnecessary challenges with partners and eroding public perception of effectiveness</li> <li>Federal rules regarding representation and the restricted ability to advocate in certain aspects of veterans and survivor benefits</li> </ul>
External			

Appeals and Special Advocacy is responsible for providing advocacy and access to earned benefits for veterans, their eligible dependents, and survivors. The program offers benefits counseling, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs – Veterans Benefits Administration claims assistance, appellate representation, certification and training for ODVA, County, and Tribal Veterans Service Officers, emergency assistance, and other service delivery partnerships across the state.

The division employs coordinators for traditionally underserved and overlooked veterans, including women, houseless, and those who are a part of the LGBTQ+ community. These coordinators work directly with veterans, their families, and a network of other supports across the state to help address challenges and barriers unique to their needs.

### 2025 Appeals and Special Advocacy Division Goals

- Updating rules and policies affecting advocacy support
- IT Modernization of technology platforms used by the division to better aggregate and share data
- Review and recommend revised KPMs for tracking the work that the division and agency are doing
- Continue to explore new opportunities to reach veterans and families not previously engaged
- Strengthening the agency’s relationships with partners and unlocking potentials to meet the needs of veterans and families statewide



# Communications SWOT and Goals

		Reaching Every Veteran Through Purposeful Communication	
		Favorable	Unfavorable
Internal	<b>Strengths</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong public goodwill and trust from the veteran community</li> <li>• Broad range of veteran-focused programs across the service continuum</li> <li>• Effective partnerships with federal VA, state agencies, and community organizations</li> <li>• Robust storytelling and content strategies that engage audiences</li> <li>• Deep understanding of veteran needs and concerns</li> <li>• High responsiveness to emerging veteran issues</li> <li>• Targeted outreach capabilities (e.g., by population such as houseless veterans)</li> <li>• Established veteran partnerships and resource networks</li> <li>• Clear, effective communications reducing public confusion</li> </ul>	<b>Weaknesses</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diverse demographics and fractured audiences require complex, segmented communication</li> <li>• Navigating social media and ADA compliance policies remains challenging</li> <li>• Legacy RSS and weekly email systems have not fully transitioned to updated platforms</li> <li>• Small team capacity strained by 13 new or expanded programs since 2017</li> <li>• Lack of formalized agency-wide communication policies</li> <li>• Limited funding for outreach and communications campaigns</li> </ul>	
	<b>Opportunities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utilize A/B testing through GovDelivery and social media to improve engagement</li> <li>• Expand and modernize RSS feed and email systems</li> <li>• Leverage compelling veteran stories and content to boost audience connection</li> <li>• Communicate programs across all stages of the veteran journey</li> <li>• Enhance website design and usability; grow digital presence</li> <li>• Collect DD214 and discharge data to enable targeted follow-up communications</li> <li>• Increase use of in-house distribution lists for outreach</li> <li>• Strengthen regional collaboration and resource listings (e.g., Boise VA Clinic)</li> <li>• Maximize GovDelivery tools for segmented, scalable communications</li> <li>• Promote Oregon Veterans' Homes as key assets with strong public support</li> </ul>	<b>Threats</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of formal social media policies and compliance could create risk</li> <li>• Limited and inconsistent funding affects responsiveness to program needs</li> <li>• Persistent misconceptions and confusion about VA and ODVA available benefits (e.g., legal aid)</li> <li>• Veterans self-excluding due to misunderstanding eligibility ("not a veteran" mindset)</li> <li>• Poor understanding of VA structure and benefits during military-to-civilian transition</li> <li>• Incomplete access to DD214/Member-6 hinders follow-up communication</li> <li>• Increased targeting of veterans by scams and misinformation</li> <li>• Shrinking veteran population may reduce engagement and reach</li> <li>• Communications team remains understaffed despite a twofold increase in program communication needs since 2017</li> </ul>	
External			

The Communications Division of the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs (ODVA) is responsible for ensuring clear, accurate, and accessible information reaches Oregon veterans, their families, stakeholders, and the general public. This section manages all aspects of internal and external communications, including public relations, media outreach, crisis communications, website content, digital and print materials, social media, branding, and agency-wide messaging. Communications supports ODVA's mission by raising awareness of veteran benefits, programs, and initiatives, while also promoting transparency and engagement across all levels of the agency's work.

In addition to strategic communications, the section includes two critical public-facing service areas: Records and the Front Desk. The Records team manages the intake, processing, and safeguarding of vital military and benefits-related documents for Oregon veterans, ensuring timely and secure access to service records, discharge documents (DD-214s), and other essential files. This function plays a key role in helping veterans access the benefits they've earned.

The Front Desk team serves as the agency's first point of contact for veterans and their families, providing responsive customer service, benefits navigation, and referrals to the appropriate programs and services—both within ODVA and across federal, state, and local partners. Whether responding to walk-in visitors, phone calls, or online inquiries, this team plays a vital role in connecting veterans to the support and resources they need.

## 2025 Communications Division Goals

- **Develop Executive Briefing Book for Leadership Continuity:** Create and publish an ODVA Executive Briefing Book that includes the agency's structure, missions, functions, tasks, and authorities. This resource will serve as a foundational guide for current and future leadership, ensuring continuity in decision-making and alignment with agency goals.
- **Streamline SOPs and Workflow for Increased Efficiency:** Review, update, and standardize all Communications team Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and workflows. This refresh will identify efficiencies and role clarity to improve productivity in a resource-limited environment and ensure consistency across all communications functions.
- **Expand Administrative Capacity Through Cross-Division Support:** Onboard and train designated administrative support staff from the front desk to perform at least three identified administrative functions for the Communications team. This will improve workload distribution and operational support without increasing FTE.
- **Implement Program-Level Records Coordination:** Establish and train Agency Records Coordinators within each ODVA program area to support compliance with state records management requirements. Communications will lead this initiative in partnership with Records and Information Management, ensuring integration of new programs and communications products into ODVA's records retention schedule.



# Facility and Construction Management SWOT and Goals

	Favorable	Unfavorable
Internal	<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very strong team of high performers</li> <li>• Team is respectful of both internal and external customers</li> <li>• Leadership is approachable and collaborative</li> <li>• Recent huge steps forward in Procurement area with policies, processes, knowledge base</li> <li>• Good communication and information sharing amongst team</li> </ul>	<p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staffing levels cause us to be reactionary rather than proactive</li> <li>• Lack of budgetary flexibility for repairs at Veterans' Homes as they arise</li> <li>• Communication / tracking mechanism for Veterans' Homes projects</li> <li>• Lack of written SOP's, policies, processes</li> <li>• No work ticket system (CMMS)</li> </ul>
External	<p><b>Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Remodel: More effective use of space and reduce Deferred Maintenance backlog</li> <li>• Recent creation of Procurement &amp; Contract Assistant position</li> <li>• More procurement delegation of authority from DAS due to current Procurement staffing</li> <li>• ODVA Intranet as a staff resource for Facilities information</li> </ul>	<p><b>Threats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilities staff expected to be "Security"</li> <li>• Impact on existing staff caused by turnover</li> <li>• Compliance by other departments to procurement policies and procedures</li> <li>• Very outdated HVAC controls at Salem HQ: potential for system failure</li> <li>• Vandalism of memorials (public perception and costs)</li> </ul>

The Facility Services Section of the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs (ODVA) is responsible for the planning, maintenance, and improvement of the agency's physical infrastructure, ensuring that ODVA facilities remain safe, functional, and aligned with the agency's mission to serve Oregon veterans. The team oversees capital improvement projects, manages day-to-day building operations, and plays a key role in emergency preparedness and continuity planning.

In 2025, Facility Services is advancing several high-priority initiatives, including continued progress on the development of the future Roseburg Veterans' Home. The section is preparing to finalize design drawings once federal funding is secured through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs State Home Construction Grant Program. Facility Services is also pursuing federal grant funding to support major HVAC system replacements at the Oregon Veterans' Home in Lebanon and is nearing substantial completion of similar projects at the Dalles and Salem locations. Additionally, construction has begun on the second-floor remodel at the agency's Salem headquarters.

The procurement function for the agency resides in Facilities. To achieve procurement equity at ODVA, we are implementing the following strategies. We'll strive to enhance outreach by improving the dissemination of information about procurement opportunities to underrepresented businesses. We'll also diversify ODVA's supplier base by actively seeking out and supporting veteran-owned, minority-owned, women-owned, and emerging small businesses. Additionally, we'll implement monitoring and reporting systems to track progress in achieving procurement equity targets.

The section is also leading ODVA's emergency management and continuity of operations (COOP) efforts, including transferring emergency plans into the Veoci platform, updating evacuation procedures and maps, and conducting preparedness exercises. Through its work, the Facility Services Section helps ensure that ODVA's physical environments are well-maintained, resilient, and capable of supporting the critical services provided to veterans and their families.

## **2025 Facility Services Goals**

- Continue to push forward with the Roseburg Veterans' Home project, being ready to finalize design drawings once federal funding is awarded through the USDVA's State Home Construction Grant Program.
- Complete the initial application for federal grant funding (65%) for the Lebanon HVAC Replacement project and have a plan in place for the project's remaining funding.
- Reach substantial completion of The Dalles HVAC Replacement project.
- Complete Salem HVAC Replacement project, including final invoice.
- Begin construction on Salem 2nd Floor Remodel.
- Emergency Management - Transfer COOP information into Veoci platform, hold a tabletop exercise, complete evacuation planning and preparedness process, post updated maps in the HQ building, and practice at least one building evacuation.



# Financial Services SWOT and Goals

		To ensure fiscal stewardship within ODVA.	
		Favorable	Unfavorable
Internal	<b>Strengths</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Willingness to help others</li> <li>• Accuracy/attention to detail</li> <li>• diversity an extensive knowledge and experience</li> <li>• payment processing</li> <li>• customer service</li> </ul>	<b>Weaknesses</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication</li> <li>• Transparency</li> <li>• Cross training</li> <li>• Adapting to change</li> <li>• Working together as a team</li> </ul>	
	<b>Opportunities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internal cross training</li> <li>• Agency trainings, CFO outreach, brown bag lunches</li> <li>• Process documentation</li> <li>• Learn from others across the agency</li> </ul>	<b>Threats</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employee turnover</li> <li>• Reduced use of home loans</li> <li>• Artificial intelligence in bill paying</li> <li>• Direction of new executive leaders</li> <li>• Outsourcing of accounting functions</li> </ul>	
External			

The Financial Services Section of the Oregon Department of Veterans’ Affairs (ODVA) is responsible for managing the agency’s financial operations with integrity, transparency, and accountability. This team ensures the effective stewardship of public resources across all ODVA programs and services, including the administration of the Home Loan Program, grant funds, and state and federal allocations that support veteran benefits and outreach efforts across Oregon.

Financial Services oversees a wide range of essential functions, including budgeting, accounting, and financial reporting. The section works closely with agency leadership to develop and monitor ODVA’s biennial budget, ensure compliance with state and federal financial regulations, and support data-driven decision-making through accurate fiscal analysis and forecasting.

In addition, Financial Services ensures the timely and accurate processing of payments, reimbursements, and fiscal transactions, supporting both internal operations and services delivered to veterans and community partners. By upholding high standards of fiscal responsibility, the Financial Services Section plays a key role in maintaining public trust and ensuring that ODVA remains well-positioned to fulfill its mission of serving and honoring Oregon’s veterans and their families.

## 2025 Financial Services Goals

- Ensure process/procedure documentation exists for all positions within financial services
- Cross-training of all positions in financial services. Starting with the following areas:
  - ACH deposits
  - Conservatorship accounting
  - Debt payments
  - Accounts Receivable
- Provide agency-wide financial training.
  - Required for those employees who manage budgets, approve travel, and authorize purchases both with SPOTS cards and without, using the Buy Decision and COBID.
- Start the CFO communication process: both written and in forums on a recurring basis
  - Memo from CFO
- Budget to Actuals report for managers. Including budget 101 meetings that match the cadence of budget development and implementation.



# Home Loan Program SWOT and Goals

		Meeting the Home Financing needs for Oregon veterans.	
		Favorable	Unfavorable
Internal	<b>Strengths</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Highly Qualified Staff</b> – HL program Staff has extensive experience</li> <li>• <b>Knowledgeable</b> – The HL Program Staff are well versed in ODVA Policies</li> <li>• <b>Diverse Skillset</b> – Each team member brings a unique skill set, allows for collaboration</li> <li>• <b>Minimum Internal Competitiveness</b> – The Team does not compete against each other but works together for the good of the veteran</li> <li>• <b>Great Customer Service</b> – By servicing our own loans, we work directly with our Oregon veteran borrowers</li> </ul>	<b>Weaknesses</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Small Team Communications</b> – Team communications may be delayed due to periodic absences</li> <li>• <b>Systems</b> – Risk due to aged and unsupported systems</li> <li>• <b>Staffing Levels</b> – Our Team is thin. We lack staff to cover extended absences.</li> <li>• <b>Lack of Technical Writers</b> – With a small staff, we lack the ability to update written policies, procedures, desk manuals and provide updates to our broker/lender partners.</li> <li>• <b>Lack of Career Growth</b> – With a small staff, the Team lack the opportunity for advancement.</li> </ul>	
	<b>Opportunities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Marketing</b> – Consistent marketing for the HL program is minimal</li> <li>• <b>Outreach to Underserved Markets</b> – Minimal marketing penetration to underserved markets</li> <li>• <b>Social Media</b> – The HL Program should have a dedicated Social Media presence like other Agency programs.</li> <li>• <b>New Broker/Lender Training</b> – Ability to provide training to new brokers/lenders. Development of a “Welcome Package” as new broker/lenders come on board</li> <li>• <b>Refinance program</b> – The new Refinance Program will bring additional business to the HL program</li> </ul>	<b>Threats</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Short Staffing</b> – With a thin staff, any abrupt interruption like a long-term absence or extended vacancy will create delivery issues</li> <li>• <b>Refinance Program Funding</b> – A viable source of funds will need to be available when the program rolls out</li> <li>• <b>Training for new employees</b> – Training for new staff is reliant on existing employees who must defer their primary responsibilities when training.</li> <li>• <b>Systems</b> – As indicated previously, our aged and unsupported systems are a threat</li> <li>• <b>Interest Rate Sensitivity</b> – HL Program rates are historically below market rates. However, HL program staffing levels cannot handle increased volume levels.</li> </ul>	
External			

The Oregon Department of Veterans’ Affairs (ODVA) Home Loan Program is one of the most enduring and impactful state benefits available to Oregon veterans. Established over 80 years ago, the program provides low-interest-rate mortgages on single-family, owner-occupied homes to eligible and qualified Oregon veterans. Oregon is one of only five states authorized to offer a veteran home loan program using Qualified Veteran Mortgage Bonds (QVMB), making this benefit both rare and valuable.

What sets ODVA’s Home Loan Program apart is that the agency handles both the origination and servicing of all loans—ensuring a veteran-centered experience from start to finish. Over its lifetime, the program has provided more than \$8 billion in home loans, helping over 350,000 Oregon veterans achieve and maintain homeownership. With competitive interest rates, no private mortgage insurance requirement, and a strong commitment to accessibility, the Home Loan Program continues to serve as a powerful tool for financial stability and long-term housing security for those who have served.

## 2025 Home Loan Program Goals

- Successfully transition to the Mitas Loan Servicing System
- Successfully recruit and hire a Business Development Representative
- Successfully implement the Home Loan Refinance Program
- Successfully participate in the 2025 Bond Sale, with a look forward to a Taxable Bond Sale to facilitate the Refinance Program
- Successfully participate in the recruitment, hiring, and training of a new Home Loan Program Manager



# Human Resources SWOT and Goals

		To be a trusted and valued strategic partner.	
		Favorable	Unfavorable
Internal	<b>Strengths</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Frequently engages in multidepartment teamwork to complete tasks promptly</li> <li>Communicative and strong at building relationships</li> <li>Good customer service</li> <li>Dedicated HR Staff committed to serving veterans (internally and externally)</li> <li>Collaborative approaches with managers</li> </ul>	<b>Weaknesses</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lacking formal documented processes</li> <li>Lacking budget understanding (Agency-wide)</li> <li>Lack of formal training in Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility</li> <li>No training program</li> <li>Need desk manuals for all employees, including notation of duties and training for all positions, especially for new hires</li> </ul>	
	<b>Opportunities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Restart Safety Committee Meetings and form a Wellness Committee</li> <li>Position description review, improvements, and adding DEIA language</li> <li>Cross-training among team members</li> <li>Improving transition processes with new hires onboarding and offboarding</li> <li>Developing meaningful connections with unions</li> </ul>	<b>Threats</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of data-informed decisions</li> <li>Lack of diversity metrics for employees</li> <li>Employee burnout from workload (Team and Agency-wide)</li> <li>Limited duration employees encompass half the HR four-person team</li> <li>Large amount of high-level positions' time being used to complete administrative tasks</li> </ul>	
External			

The Human Resources (HR) Section of the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs (ODVA) is dedicated to supporting the agency's mission by fostering a talented, engaged, and resilient workforce. HR provides comprehensive services that span the entire employee lifecycle—from recruitment and onboarding to performance management, professional development, employee relations, and retirement transitions. In collaboration with agency leadership, HR helps ensure ODVA attracts and retains skilled professionals who are committed to serving Oregon's veterans and their families.

With a strong focus on equity, inclusion, and organizational well-being, the Human Resources team plays a critical role in cultivating a positive workplace culture. HR supports the implementation of agency-wide initiatives, including workforce and succession planning, labor relations, and compliance with state personnel policies and collective bargaining agreements. The team also works to enhance employee engagement, provide responsive guidance on workplace matters, and facilitate leadership development and training opportunities.

Through strategic partnership, policy guidance, and responsive service, ODVA's Human Resources Section helps build and sustain a workforce that reflects the agency's values of service, integrity, and excellence—ensuring that all employees are supported in their efforts to make a meaningful difference in the lives of Oregon's veterans.

## 2025 Human Resources Goals

- Strategic partner to the Executive Leadership Team in leading culture change and creating a professional work environment, starting with an employee code of conduct policy and Potential Conflict of Interest forms. [“Every Veteran Initiative” is supported by creating a highly effective organization.]
- Revamp the recruitment process to embed ethical practices at every stage, ensuring transparency, fairness, and equity in candidate evaluation and selection. This includes developing standardized procedures to mitigate biases, promoting diversity and inclusion, and ensuring that recruitment practices align with the organization’s values, enterprise policies, and legal standards. This will set the foundation for a diverse, inclusive, and respectful workplace from the outset of the employee’s career.
- Establish a formalized, systematic process for regularly reviewing and enhancing agency position descriptions to ensure they are clear, accurate, and reflective of employees’ duties and responsibilities. This initiative will prioritize alignment with the evolving nature of work and organizational needs while integrating inclusive language that supports the agency’s commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA). By embedding DEIA principles and ensuring job descriptions accurately capture the scope and expectations of each role, the agency will strengthen transparency, role clarity, and equitable employment practices.
- Systematically refine and formalize the agency’s employee life cycle processes to foster a cohesive and supportive experience from recruitment to offboarding. This involves optimizing onboarding to effectively assimilate new employees into the organizational culture, establish clear role expectations, and promote early engagement. Additionally, the offboarding process will be strengthened to facilitate comprehensive knowledge transfer, capture valuable employee feedback, and ensure a smooth transition for departing staff, contributing to organizational continuity and improvement.



# Information Services SWOT and Goals

	Favorable	Unfavorable
Internal	<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Well trained staff who are highly adaptable</li> <li>Have a fully staffed team for 1st time ever</li> <li>Capability in delivering business value through technology</li> <li>Excel at problem solving and critical thinking</li> <li>Heavily aligned with enterprise and industry best practices</li> <li>Created/sustains positive external relationships</li> <li>Great communication (frequency, content, knowledge, etc.)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resources are stretched thin across numerous domains</li> <li>ODVA has a change-resistant culture which limits IT involvement</li> <li>Required to comply with DAS policy/process in addition to agency</li> <li>IT has only 1 manager position</li> <li>Shadow IT is present in numerous divisions</li> <li>Rebuilding IT takes time, and process is difficult to translate into business terms for understanding from ODVA leadership</li> </ul>
External	<p><b>Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establishing and maturing IT Governance</li> <li>Executive leadership changes provide chance to renew support for IT</li> <li>Technological advancements through modernization</li> <li>Continued alignment with business programs</li> <li>Process improvement for IT/Business programs</li> </ul>	<p><b>Threats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agency relies on legacy applications for mission critical functions</li> <li>IT owns numerous non-IT processes that are mission critical</li> <li>Lack of accountability within the agency for poor IT practices</li> <li>Executive leadership circumvent IT when engaging legislation</li> <li>Competing priorities from executive leaders</li> <li>Lack of data governance, data integrity, and trained data staff</li> </ul>

The Information Services Section of the Oregon Department of Veterans’ Affairs (ODVA) plays a vital role in supporting the agency’s mission by delivering reliable, secure, and forward-looking technology solutions. Guided by a five-year Information Technology (IT) Strategic Plan, the section aligns technology investments and initiatives with ODVA’s broader Strategic Plan to ensure that IT resources effectively support current and future agency operations. The mission of Information Services is to provide timely and effective technology services that empower ODVA’s business programs to serve and support Oregon veterans and their families. With a vision to be a customer-focused, flexible, and responsive operation, the section strives to model excellence in efficient, integrated, and user-friendly technology services.

Information Services operates under core guiding principles that emphasize the importance of strong customer service, open communication, and sustainable, operationally supportable solutions. It is committed to providing value in every interaction, maintaining transparency with internal customers on project progress and problem-solving efforts, and ensuring that technology tools are cohesive, integrated, and easy to use. By working closely with agency programs to define business needs and deliver solutions that align with those needs, the Information Services team ensures technology is not only a support function but also a strategic enabler of ODVA’s work on behalf of Oregon’s veterans.

## 2025 Information Services Goals

- Fully onboard Fresche Solutions for legacy application support and IT project
- Complete Home Loan Servicing IT project
- Fully instantiate and mature ODVA IT Governance committee and prioritization of agency IT projects

- Implement Zero Trust Network Access (ZTNA) with internal Wi-Fi network capabilities
- Stand up ODVA Intranet

## **ODVA IT Strategic Plan (2023–2028)**

The Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs 2023–2028 Information Technology (IT) Strategic Plan outlines a clear vision for modernizing and strengthening the agency's digital infrastructure to better support its evolving mission. Over the past four years, ODVA's Information Services Division has fostered a culture of accountability and implemented the best practices aligned with state enterprise standards and industry benchmarks.

Key achievements include the successful refinement of Directory Services, the implementation of standardized processes for managing workstations, the implementation of active device health monitoring, the establishment of a request process for purchasing IT assets, and the procurement of contractor-based services dedicated to ensuring the continuity of operations for agency RPG and COBOL-based legacy applications. We have also continued to mature our IT Governance, ensuring that technology investments are prioritized and aligned with the agency's strategic goals, providing greater transparency and responsiveness to future needs.

Looking ahead, the IT Strategic Plan provides a roadmap for aligning technology with business priorities, embracing enterprise thinking, and adopting new and emerging technologies to enhance service delivery for Oregon veterans and their families.



# Legislative SWOT and Goals

		Favorable		Unfavorable	
Internal	<b>Strengths</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Depth of knowledge in legislative affairs</li> <li>Strong network of peers, supporters and contributing stakeholders in the legislative process</li> <li>Strong supportive relationship with the Legislative Body enabling easy access to lobby for Agency needs</li> <li>Collaborative environment with other Agencies and governmental organizations</li> <li>Clear mission of the Agency enables focus legislative initiatives</li> </ul>		<b>Weaknesses</b>	
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No legislative staff in the Agency only Legislative Director</li> <li>No Rules Coordinator in the Agency, only Legislative Director</li> <li>Need process for program recommendations for legislative initiatives</li> <li>Agency Rules are extremely out of date due to years of neglect and need significant review and revisions</li> <li>Agency has no defined research ability and relies on individual support for required research on legislative initiatives and processes.</li> <li>No Rules Coordinator requires Legislative Director to perform both duties resulting in longer process times and less quality control</li> </ul>	
External	<b>Opportunities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a legislative process that enables agency support to proposed initiatives</li> <li>Opportunity to use the Veterans Caucus to message agency initiatives and champion agency intent</li> <li>Utilize collaborative relationship with the Legislative Body to lobby for agency legislative priorities</li> <li>Strengthen partnerships with other State agencies, Federal Partners, NGOs and Veterans Organizations through Veteran Legislative policy leadership</li> </ul>		<b>Threats</b>	
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Legislative Inquiries continue to increase as Veteran programs are threatened by federal government. Increase will soon overwhelm workload.</li> <li>Legislature continues to lack research arm for veteran issues despite standing up a Veterans Caucus and causes agency to help Legislative body correct language to meet the needs of Veterans.</li> <li>Increase of legislature initiatives that become law with no growth in Legislative staff will impact implementation of new programs.</li> <li>Rules process under new Governor Directive requires additional resources to meet the directive</li> </ul>	

The legislative function serves as the agency’s primary liaison to the Oregon Legislature, U.S. Congressional delegation, and key policy stakeholders, playing a critical role in shaping, monitoring, and advancing veteran-related policy at both the state and federal levels.

ODVA’s legislative staff lead the development and coordination of agency proposals, provide analysis and testimony on proposed legislation, and work closely with lawmakers to support policies that improve the lives of Oregon veterans and their families. In addition to tracking and responding to Congressional concerns, the team is responsible for the agency’s Oregon Administrative Rules (OARs) and internal policies to ensure compliance and alignment with state goals.

## 2025 Legislative Goals

- Develop an Agency Legislative Policy based on the Director’s intent, organizational needs, and Every Veteran strategy
- Develop legislative initiatives that focus on advocating and supporting the Every Veteran Approach
- Enhance agency legislative partners through collaboration and mutual support initiatives
- Promote an agency culture that supports and understands the legislative and administrative rules-making process

- Review, refine, repeal, adopt, and update organizational administrative rules to meet the needs of the organization
- Develop and implement an agency policy committee



# Strategic Partnerships SWOT and Goals

		All Veterans Thrive In Oregon.	
		Favorable	Unfavorable
Internal	<b>Strengths</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunities for mentorship from experienced coworkers</li> <li>• Staff have diverse educational and vocational backgrounds</li> <li>• Respect and admiration from shareholders and partners</li> <li>• Proactive work culture with high levels of trust to do one's job between employees and managers</li> <li>• A strong/reliable IS team that seems to be innovating agency systems/networks to maximize performance/security</li> </ul>	<b>Weaknesses</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agency departments understaffed</li> <li>• Special advocacy programs are under-supported</li> <li>• Brand recognition- ODVA is often confused for the Federal VA or VA medical systems</li> <li>• DEI innovation/training has been centralized at the leadership level and has not trickled down to employees beyond standard DAS trainings</li> <li>• Lack of written policies and procedures</li> </ul>	
	<b>Opportunities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internal cross training</li> <li>• Agency trainings, CFO outreach, brown bag lunches</li> <li>• Develop new partnerships &amp; strengthen existing ones</li> <li>• External agencies: 30 min briefing during "all staff" mtg</li> <li>• Building "Self-Care" program in divisions</li> <li>• Exit Interview with Deputy Director</li> <li>• Create self-help packets for veterans</li> <li>• Process documentation</li> <li>• Learn from others across the agency</li> </ul>	<b>Threats</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Burnout &amp; risks associated w/dealing w/veterans' trauma</li> <li>• Coordinators mental health, meet w/Vets</li> <li>• Continued/ongoing changes in senior leadership and leadership styles</li> <li>• Uncertainty around future program funding (existing and new programs)</li> </ul>	
External			

The Strategic Partnerships Division of the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs plays a critical role in expanding access to services and benefits for veterans across the state. The division administers pass-through funding to support County and Tribal Veteran Service Offices and National Service Organizations, helping to ensure that veterans have local access to expert benefits navigation and advocacy. It oversees a variety of grant programs designed to meet urgent and long-term needs, including the Veteran Suicide Awareness and Prevention Grant, Veteran Emergency Financial Assistance Grant, which provides critical financial support including housing stability; the Veterans' Educational Bridge and Campus Veteran Resource Center Grants, which helps student veterans overcome disruptions in their academic progress; the Veteran Services Grant, which funds outreach and direct services through community partners; and both the federal Highly Rural Veteran Transportation Grant and the state-funded Rural Veteran Healthcare Transportation Grant, which provide essential transportation to healthcare services for veterans in rural and highly rural areas.

In addition to these programs, the division prioritizes outreach to historically underserved veteran populations. This includes specialized efforts to support incarcerated veterans with benefits access and reentry assistance, engagement with Oregon's nine federally recognized Tribes to improve services for Tribal veterans, and coordination of campus resources for student veterans to help them succeed in higher education. The Strategic Partnerships Division also oversees Oregon's State Approving Agency, which ensures that education and training programs meet federal standards for veteran benefit eligibility. Further, the division builds and maintains partnerships that enhance statewide veteran services, including oversight of pass-through funding for Oregon's Military Helpline and

management of Charitable Check-off funds that support veteran suicide awareness and prevention initiatives. Through these efforts, the Strategic Partnerships Division advances ODVA's mission to serve and honor every Oregon veteran.

## **2025 Strategic Partnerships Goals**

- Intentional focus on team and individual self-care
- Succession Planning
  - Creation of Desk Manuals (aka standard operating procedures, SOPS)
  - Cross training (involving other parts of the agency as appropriate)
- Continuing to create new partnerships



# Measuring, Monitoring and External Factors

## **Measuring**

Our progress will be tracked through transparent goal setting, quarterly progress reporting, and an annual review of strategic plan milestones. We will hold ourselves accountable to our partners, our staff, and the public through clear communication and measurable outcomes—demonstrating our commitment to continuous improvement and our mission to honor and serve every Oregon veteran.

## **Monitoring – Gallup Survey**

ODVA recently partnered with Gallup to administer an agency-wide employee engagement survey—an effort aligned with one of the governor’s top priorities. This tool goes beyond measurement; it reflects our shared vision for what is possible when all state employees are empowered to do their best work. By listening to our staff and acting on their feedback, we aim to improve the employee experience—recognizing that an engaged workforce is essential to delivering high-quality service to the Oregonians we serve. Please see below.

## **External Factors – PESTLE Analysis**

In addition, ODVA conducted a PESTLE analysis to evaluate the broader external environment and its evolving impact on our work. This analysis considers six key external factors—Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal, and Environmental—and helps us remain proactive, adaptive, and aligned with statewide trends and challenges. Please see below.

Together, these tools provide critical insight into both internal and external drivers that shape our strategic direction. We will use the findings from the Gallup survey and PESTLE analysis to guide our decision-making, inform our strategic planning, and continuously improve our workplace and service delivery.

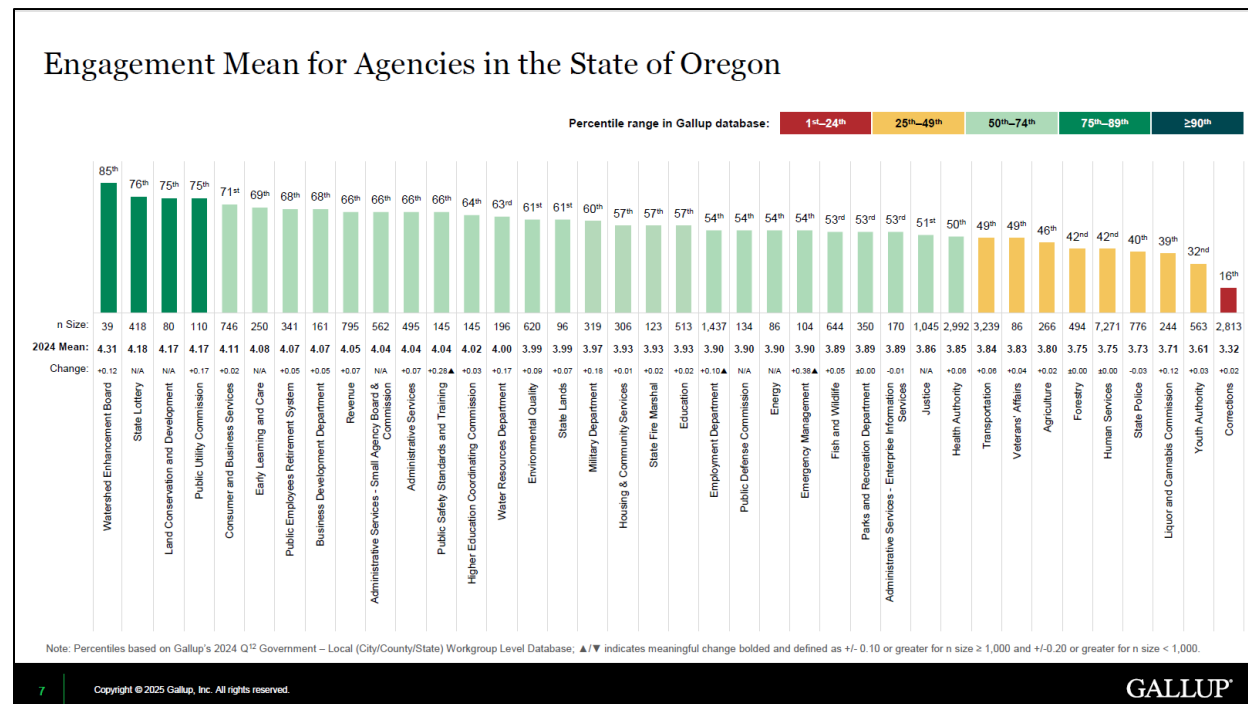
# Gallup Survey: Turning Feedback into Forward Progress

The 2023 Employee Engagement Survey established the baseline for staff engagement at the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs (ODVA), marking the agency's first use of a formal survey to assess employee experience. With the results of the 2024 survey now available, agency leadership is taking meaningful action based on employee feedback.

Newly released aggregate data provides additional insights, including statewide participation rates, comparative rankings across Oregon state agencies, and overall satisfaction levels. These benchmarks offer valuable context for ODVA's results and highlight areas for growth and opportunity.

A key objective of the employee engagement survey is to assess how effectively leaders communicate, build trust, and manage change at every level of the organization. One of the most visible and impactful ways managers can respond to this feedback is through the development of team-level action plans.

Beginning in May 2025, each division manager will review and discuss the Gallup Survey results with their teams. Based on this feedback, divisions will identify one focus area and develop a corresponding action plan for improvement. Action plans must be completed collaboratively with staff by July 31, 2025, allowing for at least three months of implementation before the release of the 2025 survey.



# Employee Engagement Item-Level Results

n Size = 86		■ %1 (Strongly Disagree) ■ %2 ■ %3 ■ %4 ■ %5 (Strongly Agree)					P-TILE	CURRENT MEAN	MEAN Δ	PAST MEAN
<b>ENGAGEMENT MEAN</b>						<b>30<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>3.83</b>	<b>+0.04</b>	<b>3.79</b>	
	<b>Q00 Overall Satisfaction</b>	9	23	47	17	21 <sup>st</sup>	3.65	+0.19	3.46	
<b>GROWTH</b> How do I grow?	<b>Q12 Learn &amp; Grow</b>	10	5	14	35	36	30 <sup>th</sup>	3.83	<b>+0.22 ▲</b>	3.61
	<b>Q11 Progress</b>	10	11	12	27	41	36 <sup>th</sup>	3.78	-0.06	3.84
<b>TEAMWORK</b> Do I belong?	<b>Q10 Best Friend</b>	25	16	21	25	14	16 <sup>th</sup>	2.88	+0.01	2.87
	<b>Q09 Quality</b>	5	16	34	44		42 <sup>nd</sup>	4.15	-0.08	4.23
	<b>Q08 Mission</b>	5	7	8	33	48	44 <sup>th</sup>	4.12	+0.02	4.10
<b>INDIVIDUAL</b> What do I give?	<b>Q07 Opinions</b>	13	6	19	27	36	31 <sup>st</sup>	3.67	+0.16	3.51
	<b>Q06 Development</b>	8	5	20	22	45	38 <sup>th</sup>	3.91	<b>+0.33 ▲</b>	3.58
	<b>Q05 Cares</b>	6	19	11	61		39 <sup>th</sup>	4.20	-0.04	4.24
	<b>Q04 Recognition</b>	18	8	19	25	29	30 <sup>th</sup>	3.39	+0.03	3.36
<b>BASICS</b> What do I get?	<b>Q03 Do Best</b>	5	7	16	32	40	30 <sup>th</sup>	3.95	+0.13	3.82
	<b>Q02 Materials</b>	13	14	34	37		28 <sup>th</sup>	3.91	-0.17	4.08
	<b>Q01 Expectations</b>	6	14	34	44		19 <sup>th</sup>	4.12	-0.14	4.26

Note: Percentiles based on Workgroup Level\_Overall\_Overall Q<sup>®</sup> Database (2019-2023); Due to rounding, percentages may sum to 100% ±1; Numerical values shown when 5% or higher; ▲/▼ indicates meaningful change bolded and defined as ±0.10 or greater for n size ≥1,000 and ±0.20 or greater for n size <1,000.

## PESTLE analysis 2026

Our PESTLE analysis is currently under development, with an expected completion date in our 2026 strategic plan update.

PESTLE Factor	Analysis
<p><b>Political</b> (State or federal policy, rules, new laws, and upcoming elections)</p>	<p>The following Oregon state laws directly impact veterans, their families, or their caregivers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ORS 408.225 &amp; ORS 407.087 – Definition of a veteran, and Veterans Preference</li> <li>- ORS 408.500 – OVEFAP</li> <li>- ORS 408.115 &amp; OAR 274-036-0220 – Veterans Educational Bridge Grant</li> <li>- ORS 274-040-0015 – Oregon Veterans Homes Eligibility</li> <li>- OAR 813-005-0005 (59) OHCS eligibility</li> <li>- OAR 274-039-0010 (13) Rural Transportation Eligibility</li> <li>- OAR 629.024.0035 Veterans Special Access Pass and Active-Duty Military Waiver (Oregon State Parks)</li> <li>- ORS 413.650 Oregon Veteran Dental Program</li> <li>- OAR 635-010-0157 Oregon Hunting and Fishing Permit – Free Resident License for Disabled Veterans</li> <li>- ORS 811.616 Wounded Warrior Placard</li> </ul>

PESTLE Factor	Analysis
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ORS 307.250 Oregon Disabled Veteran or Surviving Spouse Property Tax Exemption</li> </ul>
<b>Economic</b> (The broad economic climate we are in, such as inflation rates, interest rates, economic growth, and property prices.)	To be completed
<b>Social</b> (The population growth rates, cultural aspects, age distribution, and changing social behaviors.)	<p>The total population of Oregon is X.</p> <p>An estimate of the total number of veterans residing in Oregon is Y.</p> <p>Approximately Z veterans transition to Oregon annually from the Armed Forces.</p>
<b>Technological</b> (The availability of technology and the rate of technological change for you and your customers.)	To be completed
<b>Legal</b> (The laws directly connected to us and our area of activity.)	To be completed
<b>Environmental</b> factors (surrounding environment, weather, natural disasters, geographical position, climate change, and sustainability)	To be completed

Additionally, we completed an environmental scan questionnaire to gain a deeper understanding of our programs and services, which is available upon request.