



OREGON DEPARTMENT
of VETERANS' AFFAIRS

REPORT TO THE

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

TO THE OREGON DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS

SEPTEMBER 2026

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



ADVISORY COMMITTEE INFORMATION

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

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

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

COMMITTEE INFO AND CONTACT ONLINE

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

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

Email: odva_vaac@odva.oregon.gov



OREGON DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS LEADERSHIP

Dr. Nakeia Council Daniels, 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

CONTACT ODVA ONLINE

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

Website: www.oregon.gov/odva

Blog: www.oregondva.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/odvavet

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

Order Veteran Benefit Magazines for your organization or self:

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



ADVISORY COMMITTEE QUARTERLY MEETING AGENDA

Wednesday, Sept. 9, 2026 | 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Oregon Tech - CU Crater Lake Complex | 3201 Campus Drive, Klamath Falls OR 97601

In-person and Virtually

- I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER**
 - a. Pledge of Allegiance – Robert Van Voorhis, Immediate Past Chair
- II. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**
- III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
 - a. Approval of the [June 2026 Advisory Committee Quarterly Meeting Minutes](#)
- IV. NEW BUSINESS**
 - a. Advisory Committee Installment of FT 27 Officers– Robert Van Voorhis, Immediate Past Chair
 - b. Women Veterans Subcommittee Report – Mary J. Mayer, 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. INVITED AND AGENCY PRESENTATIONS**
 - a. Klamath County Veterans Treatment Court – Judge Adkisson, Klamath Falls County Veterans Treatment Court
 - b. BeyondTheMilitaryUniform.com – Sheronne Blasi, ODVA, Strategic Partnership Division Director
 - c. Incarcerated Veterans Program – Kim McKandes, ODVA, Incarcerated Veterans Program
 - d. Oregon Tech Veteran Resource Center – Don Stockton, Oregon Institute of Technology, Veteran Student Services Director
- VIII. ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT DISCUSSION**
- IX. OLD BUSINESS**
 - a. Advisory Committee Annual Report to the Governor - Robert Van Voorhis, Immediate Past Chair
 - b. Renewal of Subcommittee Chairs - Mary J. Mayer, Chair
- X. BUSINESS MEETING ADJOURNED**
 - a. Next Advisory Committee Quarterly Meeting
Date: Dec. 3, 2026 | Time: 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM
Location: Salem ODVA Headquarters

VETERAN TOWN HALL

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

VETERAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBER BIOS

Mary J. Mayer, Chair	Mary is a Vietnam 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.
James Little, Vice Chair	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.
Shawn Flynn, Secretary	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.
Robert VanVoorhis, Immediate Chair	Robert volunteered in 1966 for the US Army and proudly served with the 1/3rd Infantry Regiment (Old Guard) at Arlington National Cemetery and the 2/39th Infantry Regiment with the 9th ID in Vietnam. After college, he worked in software development and finance and served as a reserve deputy in King County. He is a life member of the VFW, American Legion, DAV, MOPH, and National Infantry Association. He served on the board of the SE District Oregon St. Elks and drives for John Day DAV/VA van transport.
Tim Smart	Tim Smart is a Native American veteran from Multnomah County with a distinguished record of military service. Serving first in the U.S. Navy and later in the Army National Guard from 1984 to 2009, Smart's career spans multiple wartime and peacetime periods, where he dedicated himself to protecting and supporting his country. His broad service experience provides him with valuable insight and commitment to the well-being of veterans.

Mario Smith	Mario Smith is from Multnomah County and is a dedicated advocate for veterans. Smith served in the U.S. Army, including a deployment in Afghanistan and is actively involved in veteran-focused organizations, including the Disabled American Veterans (DAV), Veterans Service Organization (VSO), the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), and the National Association for Black Veterans (NABVETS), where he contributes his lived military experience and voice to supporting and advancing veteran causes.
Ashley Taylor	Ashley is a Post 9/11 Army veteran from Columbia County, currently working on the Suicide Prevention Team at the Department of Veterans' Affairs. Ashley is also a veteran spouse and advocate of veteran's behavioral health.

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

Since our last quarterly meeting, we have continued advancing several major agency priorities while preparing for the next biennium and maintaining a strong presence in veteran communities across Oregon. It has been a particularly active period for ODVA, with significant progress on the Roseburg Veterans' Home, implementation of new and expanded programs authorized by the Legislature, continued investment in suicide prevention and behavioral health, and extensive engagement with our Tribal, federal, state and community partners.

Preparing for the 2027–29 Biennium

I am pleased to report that ODVA submitted our 2027–29 Agency Request Budget ahead of the July 31 submission deadline. The budget reflects our priorities for the coming biennium and the resources necessary to continue responding to the evolving needs of Oregon veterans and their families. This is the first phase of Executive Branch budgeting that concludes with a Legislatively Adopted Budget during the 2027 Regular Session. Our Agency Request Budget is available on the [ODVA Reports and Budget webpage](#).

Roseburg Veterans' Home

We continued to make meaningful progress toward development of Oregon's third State Veterans' Home in Roseburg. ODVA secured Department of Administrative Services approval to use the Construction Manager/General Contractor (CM/GC) delivery method. This is an important project milestone that will allow construction expertise to be incorporated during final design, improve project efficiency, and help manage construction costs and risk.

The transfer of approximately 14 acres on the Roseburg VA Medical Center campus is going through a federal review process by Congress at the time of this report, with transfer to ODVA anticipated by spring 2027. We also increased our state funding request from \$35 million to \$38.5 million due to rising construction costs to ensure the project remains in the Priority 1 listing status to receive 65% federal State Home Construction Grant funding.

Federal advocacy continues to be essential to moving this project forward. During the week of July 13, Legislative Director Jay DeFillipo and I traveled to Washington, D.C., to meet with members of Oregon's congressional delegation and key federal partners. Our discussions focused on the Roseburg project, the need for increased federal investment in the State Veterans Home Construction Grant Program, and solutions to the national backlog of approved projects awaiting federal construction funding.

Strengthening Suicide Prevention and Behavioral Health Resources

Suicide prevention continues to be one of ODVA's highest priorities, and I am encouraged by several important developments this quarter.

On July 1, we announced the inaugural recipients of the Veteran Suicide Prevention Grant Program, awarding more than \$200,000 to community-based organizations across Oregon. Created by the Legislature in 2026, this competitive grant program allows us to invest directly in locally driven, evidence-informed approaches that strengthen veteran well-being, community connection, and access to behavioral health resources.

We also completed a significant re-navigation of [BeyondTheMilitaryUniform.com](#), making our statewide veteran suicide prevention and wellness resource easier for veterans, families, and community partners to navigate and share. Resources are now more clearly organized around activities, volunteer opportunities, community connection, behavioral health services, self-guided wellness tools, and crisis support. The changes reinforce the campaign's focus on care, connection, and camaraderie and, importantly, help veterans find support before they reach a crisis.

In partnership with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, we also received 1,000 firearm safety locks and 500 firearm cleaning pads featuring 988 Veterans Crisis Line messaging. These materials are being distributed through outreach activities, including the Veteran Benefit Expo, as another practical component of our suicide prevention and lethal-means safety work.

Expanding Education Support for Veterans

The Oregon Veterans Educational Bridge Grant Program was significantly expanded effective July 1 following passage of House Bill 4132. The lifetime maximum award increased from \$5,000 to \$10,000, and eligibility was broadened to include veterans experiencing financial hardship that could jeopardize their ability to remain enrolled in a degree, apprenticeship, or vocational training program.

This expansion gives us greater flexibility to help veterans overcome financial barriers that could otherwise interrupt their education or training. Our goal is not simply to help veterans enroll, but to help them remain on track and successfully complete the education or training that supports their long-term career goals.

Strengthening Tribal Veteran Partnerships



On June 23, our Tribal Veteran Program, in partnership with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Office of Tribal Government Relations, hosted the Tribal Veteran Advocate Training Conference at the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde. The conference brought together Tribal Veteran Service Officers and advocates, County Veteran Service Officers, federal and state partners, and community organizations from across the Pacific Northwest.

Training addressed veteran suicide prevention, Native American home loan programs, dementia and Alzheimer's awareness, grant opportunities, and the long history of Native American military service. Just as important as the formal training were the relationships strengthened through the gathering and the opportunity to continue improving culturally responsive support for Tribal veterans and their families.

I returned to Grand Ronde on July 10 to deliver keynote remarks at the 2026 Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde Veterans Summit, where I was joined by Aging Veteran Services Division Director Kelly Breshears. The annual summit provided another important opportunity to listen to Tribal veterans, share resources, strengthen partnerships, and honor the longstanding contributions of Native American veterans to our nation's military.

In the Community



Our commitment to meeting veterans where they are also brought us into several important community spaces this quarter. In June, ODVA once again sponsored the 8 Seconds Juneteenth Rodeo in Portland at the Veterans Memorial Coliseum, an event that celebrates the cowboys of today and the legacy of Black rodeo, bringing together many black and brown community members from across the region. Our participation provided another opportunity to build relationships with hundreds of veteran and family attendees and increase awareness of earned veteran benefits and services available in Oregon.

On July 25, I had the honor of delivering keynote remarks at the 20th Anniversary Celebration of the National Association of Black Veterans (NABVETS) Portland Chapter. The event recognized two decades of advocacy, mentorship, and service to Black veterans and their families while providing an opportunity to celebrate the chapter's longstanding contributions to Oregon's veteran community.

Douglas County Engagement and Veteran Benefit Expo



August provided an important opportunity for ODVA to concentrate several days of engagement and outreach in Douglas County, strengthening relationships with local partners while bringing statewide veteran resources directly to the region.

On August 27, members of our leadership team and I met with key regional partners. These conversations provided an opportunity for partners to hear from me about the movements we have made in effort to build the state's third veterans home in Roseburg. The day

concluded with a public Veteran Town Hall, giving veterans and community members an opportunity to hear from ODVA about the progress that has been made and engage directly with local and veteran leaders.

We concluded the week with the Veteran Benefit Expo on August 28 in Roseburg, our signature statewide outreach event. More than 100 federal, state, county, Tribal, and community partners were invited to participate, bringing a broad spectrum of veteran resources together in one location. Veterans, service members, and their families had opportunities to connect with accredited VSOs and access information and assistance related to healthcare, employment, education, benefits, and other services.

There has been a great deal of activity across ODVA this quarter, but the common thread remains our commitment to meeting veterans where they are. Whether advocating for a new Veterans' Home, investing in community suicide prevention, strengthening Tribal partnerships, expanding education assistance, or bringing veteran-serving organizations together in local communities, our focus remains on making it easier for Oregon veterans and their families to access the benefits, services, and support they have earned.

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

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Jay DeFillipo, Legislative Director

As we move through this new season in Oregon, our work continues with a strong focus on supporting veterans through program development, administrative rulemaking, and statewide engagement. Although the 2026 legislative session wrapped earlier this year, the implementation phase is now in full motion across the agency and among our statewide partners.

A major area of activity has been the development and refinement of administrative rules connected to the legislation passed last session. We have been working diligently to ensure these rules accurately reflect legislative intent and provide clarity, consistency, and accessibility for veterans seeking services.

Veterans Educational Bridge Grant – Rulemaking Progress

The expanded Veterans Educational Bridge Grant Administrative Rules were published last month to support the new grant structure, including increased award limits, the addition of hardship eligibility, and the modernization of program processes. These updates will ensure Oregon veterans receive timely support as they navigate transitions in higher education and training pathways.

Suicide Prevention & Workforce Training Grant – Rulemaking & Implementation

Following the establishment of the statewide Suicide Prevention & Workforce Training Grant Program, administrative rulemaking is underway to implement the program effectively. This includes developing the framework for grant distribution, aligning expectations for community partners, and preparing guidance for counties and organizations seeking funding. These rules will help implement statewide coordination and improved access to crisis-prevention resources for veterans and those who support them.

Unclaimed Human Remains Bill – Continued Administrative Rule Development

ODVA also continues work on the administrative rules associated with Oregon's Unclaimed Human Remains legislation. These rules will help streamline processes, ensure dignity and respect for veterans whose remains fall under this statute, and support alignment with the responsibilities granted to ODVA in previous legislative sessions. This work is moving steadily and remains a priority as we modernize a critical aspect of Oregon's veteran support system.

Veterans Caucus Activity & Community Engagement

The Oregon Veterans Caucus remains active during the interim period. Members have been holding meetings, reviewing upcoming policy concepts, and engaging directly with stakeholders as preparations begin for the 2027 legislative session. Their engagement reflects a shared commitment across party lines to strengthening Oregon's veteran services system.

The Veteran's Caucus is planning a visit to the Roseburg Veterans Expo, connecting directly with veterans, service providers, and community organizations. This will be a meaningful opportunity to hear firsthand from veterans

across the region, highlight available resources, and reinforce the caucus's intent to prioritize veteran-centered policy solutions.

As ODVA looks toward the next legislative session, we continue evaluating statutes, agency authorities, and program structure to ensure Oregon's veteran support systems remain strong, modernized, and responsive. Updating outdated policies, improving data collection methods, and seeking new pathways to expand service access are core aspects of our ongoing work.

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

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

Thank you for your support.



AGING VETERAN SERVICES DIVISION

Kelly Breshears, Aging Veteran Services Director

Aging Veteran Outreach Program

Aging Veteran Outreach Coordinator, Lacey Carter

The Aging Veteran Outreach Program is led by the Aging Veteran Outreach Coordinator, Lacey Carter. With the continued support of several dedicated AVS team members, Lacey has worked diligently to provide veteran benefit education and connection to veteran services and claims, representation for aging veterans and their families throughout the State of Oregon. Each year the Aging Veteran Outreach Program continues to increase outreach efforts to aging veterans and their families in Oregon through participation in a wide range of events and presentations.

18 outreach events completed by Lacey from January 2026 to June 30, 2026, across **13** Oregon Counties.

Lacey is committed to meeting veterans where they are to ensure they receive excellent claims representation. Her work extends to representing veterans in the ODVA Conservatorship Program and veterans and their families in the community who are often underserved and underrepresented. In addition to this work, Lacey also provides a presentation to the Oregon DHS Adult Protected Services teams, approximately four times per year. This enhances our interagency working partnerships for the ageing veterans we serve.

Conservatorship and Representative Payee Program

Cristina Boswell, Conservatorship Manager

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

The ODVA fiduciary programs currently serve a total of **108** veterans and their dependents. The Conservatorship Program currently manages **15** real properties and approximately **\$22 million** in assets.

Program Accomplishments

One central goal to this program is ensuring each veteran we serve receives an in-person visit from their Trust Officer no less than annually. This last year we met this goal apart from two veterans who live out of state.

This year in 2026, the team has completed **168** home visits across Oregon, meeting with Conservatorship veterans and/or their dependents we serve. Conservatorship staff are out in the field each week, meeting with veterans and their families, coordinating with partner agencies, ancillary service providers, and ensuring strong property management activities to protect their estates.

Veteran Volunteer Program

Kim Johnson, Interim Veteran Volunteer Coordinator

We currently have **140** active Volunteers, and **65** volunteers logging hours within the last year, serving communities in **25** of Oregon's 36 counties. Currently, the program is on "pause" training new volunteers. We have transitioned from our previous Coordinator to our new acting Coordinator. The program is making system improvements as well as reinforcing the role/scope of volunteers, updating procedures, and focusing on additional training for current volunteers the program is blessed to have aboard.

Growing Reach and Engagement

Last quarter was the beginning of the ramp-up season for our outreach efforts. Our program connected with **485** individuals last quarter, going into our busy summer season for events. It is anticipated we will meet or exceed our annual totals from last year.

Community Presence

Our volunteers maintain a strong and visible presence at events and locations across the state. As we are now in full swing for the most busy time of year for Volunteer outreach, we have volunteers and our Coordinator attending events nearly every weekend and also some during the week.

With the transition of Kim Johnson coordinating the program, we have been successful in reengaging volunteers who previously disconnected. The program is offering fundamentals training to current volunteers to streamline process and improve our overall impact and outreach to underserved veterans in our communities.

Story of Impact

One of our newer volunteers reports he joined our program to help veterans, and after our training program, learned that he himself should apply for benefits. He applied and was assessed at 40% service-connected disability by the USDVA. He now reports he has so many more benefits that he ever imagined he would ever have, nor did he know about. He has stated "this program matters and I will support it as long as I can."

Food for thought: Veterans make up almost 20% of all the seniors in Oregon, which means about 1 in 5 Oregon seniors is also a veteran!



APPEALS AND SPECIAL ADVOCACY DIVISION

Joe Glover, Appeals and Special Advocacy Division Director

Houseless Veteran Advocacy

The Houseless Veteran Advocacy program (HVC) exists to help provide both direct and indirect support to the over 1,600 veterans in Oregon who are either experiencing houselessness, or at imminent risk of becoming houseless.

Per the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development 2025 Annual Homelessness Assessment Report to Congress, it is estimated that Oregon has the fifth highest number of veterans experiencing houselessness in the nation. Additionally, approximately 55% of these veterans are living unsheltered which is defined as lacking an adequate nighttime residence.

For direct service support, the program coordinator is working toward obtaining their certification as a Veterans Service Officer, responsible for linking veterans with federal and state resources such as federal disability payments, needs-based Pension, and free or reduced health care. This program also assists veterans with applying for federal GI Bill education benefits and Vocational, Readiness, and Employment to allow veterans to pursue higher education and training when appropriate.

Because ODVA does not provide direct housing placement, the program must rely upon networking of resources and partnerships across the state to ensure that prompt and appropriate support is being given. The networking and resource benefits that are provided to veterans and their families through this program directly help eliminate or significantly reduce the number of veterans who are experiencing houselessness, it helps eliminate or significantly reduces the number of veterans who are experiencing mental or behavioral health crises by placing a focus on enrollment and connection with Veterans Health Administration support.

Outreach events such as “Standdowns” help bring awareness of resources and support available to these veterans in their local communities, and ODVA maintains a commitment to being a presence at these events. Already this year there have been two, one in Klamath Falls, and the second in White City. Still to come for the year is North Bend (August 20th), Salem (September 2nd), Eugene (September 11th), Roseburg (September 23rd), Albany (September 24th), and Seaside (November 10th).

There are no tiered service levels for access to this program. The HVC works with veterans and families who served in the military and require support. This program work includes making sure that all veterans who are either currently experiencing houselessness or imminently at risk of losing stable housing are supported, which can include applying for discharge upgrades from the Department of Defense or Character of Service Waivers from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Accordingly, eligibility requirements to access this program or service does not require honorable service, nor does it require eligibility under ORS 408.225.

In addition to assistance applying for veteran related benefits, the HVC reviews the monthly applicants for the Oregon Veterans Emergency Financial Assistance Program (OVEFAP) that ODVA administers. The OVEFAP receives applications from veterans and surviving spouses from all over the state that are often seeking emergency support for housing and rent, but unfortunately with the average requested amount over \$3,000 per applicant, the monthly need far outweighs the program's resources. By cross-supporting these veterans with other programs that may be able to assist in supporting their needs.

The next standdown event will be on September 11th at the Eugene Fairgrounds. It will feature services such as:

Meals, Clothing, Haircuts, Local Community Resources, VA Benefits Counseling, Social Security Information, Food Stamp Referrals, Housing, Employment Referrals & Information, medical, dental, household and gear giveaway support, mental health Counseling and Referrals.

If an individual wishes to reach out to Jay Leffler, the agency's Houseless Veteran Program Coordinator, they are able to do so through a variety of different ways. ODVA has established a general email for veteran outreach and engagement: HouselessVets@odva.oregon.gov or Jay.Leffler@odva.oregon.gov. Jay can also be reached at 971-388-8219.

Houseless Veteran Coordinator - Team Success Story:

Reaching Oregon's Homeless Veterans

DMV Partnership List

Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs (ODVA) embarked on a mission to identify and assist veterans experiencing homelessness. Leveraging data from the partnership with the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), ODVA receives information on veterans who are either staying at a known shelter, or have identified as either being houseless, or receive mail through state General Delivery.

Once this list is received, the Houseless Veteran Coordinator does their best to reach these veterans by sending a combination of emails and phone calls.

Once reached, the Houseless Veteran Coordinator provides an analysis of their situation and their eligibility for benefits, both related to military service and not. Utilizing partnerships who provide direct services and support, the DMV list has already provided 114 referrals for veterans in need of assistance this year.

Notable Successes

The coordinator connected with a veteran who had become houseless along with his spouse and their four children. They had been living in an RV which was not hooked up to utilities, and was ultimately deemed uninhabitable, which led them to living together in a car.

The program coordinator connected with the family, and was able to get them connected to a caseworker as well as a housing placement support specialist. Together, they were able to find the family housing. However, this housing was not immediately available. There was a one-week gap where the family had nowhere to live.

Utilizing ODVA veteran grant funds, the agency was able to provide the family with a campground to spend the week. While there, the veteran reported that the family was able to use showers, play at the campground lake, and the camp playground. The family is using that time to take a “family camping vacation” before the school year starts for the children.

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.

Oregon Veterans Emergency Financial Assistance Program (OVEFAP)

July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026

The Oregon Veterans Emergency Financial Assistance Program (OVEFAP) is for veterans and their immediate family (spouse, unremarried surviving spouse, child, or stepchild) who are in need of emergency financial assistance. Assistance is granted ONE-TIME only and average award amounts vary.

- # of requests received: 330
- Total amount requested: \$1,459,173
- # of requests that were housing stability/homelessness related 176 (\$952,155)
- # awarded (and % awarded compared to # requested): 106, 32%
- How many of those awarded were housing related: 54
- Total amount awarded (and % compared to total amount request): \$160,875, 11%

This grant does some wonderful things for veterans experiencing financial crisis. Each month, funds are 100% expended but the need vastly outweighs funding for this program. There are many memorable awards that are worth mentioning. Here are a few:

- A father of 3 kids (8, 2, 5mos) lost his job because his new baby was born premature and spent the first few months in the NICU and he had to be there with his wife and child. Because of this they fell behind on rent. He has an understanding landlord, but they had to pay him eventually. We funded \$1430 in back rent and kept them housed. He has since found employment and is back on his feet, with a healthy baby and wife.
- An elderly veteran has pancreatic cancer after beating lymphoma. His wife has thrombocythemia. During treatments, neither of them can work because they are too weak and can't lift anything. Finding a job that meets his needs proved to be difficult. On top of that, their rental was full of mold and they had to move. We funded \$2,500 for move-in costs for a new apartment. He has since secured employment at a place that works with his treatment plan, and he is able to supplement his VA and Social Security Disability Insurance income to make a living wage.

- Another elderly veteran was in dire need of dental work. He needs several surgeries in a 12-month time span, and this includes extraction of multiple teeth, followed by implants. The total for surgeries is about \$5,000 out of pocket. He and his wife have very little money after expenses and recently had to pay funeral costs after a family member passed away, leaving nothing extra for his dental work. We funded \$2,600 to cover his rent for 3.5 months so they could save their rent money to pay for his dental work which begins in December 2026.

State Approving Agency (SAA)

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

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

Our SAA works closely with School Certifying Officials (SCO's) to provide ongoing support through supervisory visits, where SAA staff review the SCO's record keeping to identify current or potential issues that can affect student or trainee benefit payments. SAA's can train new SCO's during these visits and in follow-up communications. SAA's also review school materials annually, including course catalogs at colleges, universities, and career schools, and wage updates for apprenticeships and OJT's.

The SAA can schedule a technical visit with ETI's which is less formal than a supervisory visit and can be initiated by either the ETI or SAA. During the federal FY26, the Oregon SAA prioritized technical visits to law enforcement agencies administering OJT programs, mainly located in Eastern Oregon, as these facilities typically don't have as much direct contact with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) as other ETI's. The Oregon SAA has already visited several city police departments and county sheriff's offices to assist new School Certifying Officials at these facilities in learning the certification process and reviewing the requirements to remain approved.

In addition to the facility visits, the SAA has participated in several outreach events to inform employers about the option to become approved to administer the GI Bill® in their OJT or apprenticeship programs. The SAA has been to the Allied Coordinators Group, facilitated by the Bureau of Labor and Industries (BOLI), and two veteran resource and employment fairs in Eastern Oregon. SAA staff also visit the Department of Public Safety Standards and Training (DPSST) campus monthly to answer questions from cadets interested in receiving GI Bill® benefit payments for their OJT.

Award of First Veteran Suicide Prevention Grants

ODVA awarded the first grants through Oregon's new Veteran Suicide Prevention Grant Program, investing \$200,000 in community organizations that provide behavioral health support, suicide prevention services and workforce development opportunities for Oregon veterans.

The new grant program was established by the Oregon Legislature through House Bill 4132 earlier this year and provides funding during the 2026-27 fiscal year for community-based organizations working to improve veterans' well-being while helping them connect to meaningful career and skill development opportunities.

Effective July 1, 2026, ODVA awarded grants to:

- Umpqua Valley disAbilities Network — \$64,240
- National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Multnomah — \$50,000
- Clackamas County Social Services — \$85,760

The three organizations were selected from among proposals previously submitted through ODVA's Veteran Services Grant Program that focused specifically on veteran suicide prevention and workforce development.

While the inaugural grants are supporting veterans across Oregon during the coming year, ODVA will use the 2026-27 fiscal year to establish a permanent competitive grant process for the Veteran Suicide Prevention Grant Program in the 2027-29 biennium, pending continued legislative funding.

House Bill 4132 also authorized a new position within ODVA to support the program. In early August we launched the recruitment for our first Veteran Suicide Prevention Coordinator, who will oversee the grant program and work toward strengthening statewide collaboration around veteran suicide prevention efforts.

HOME LOAN PROGRAM REPORT

Chris Earhart, Home Loan Program Manager

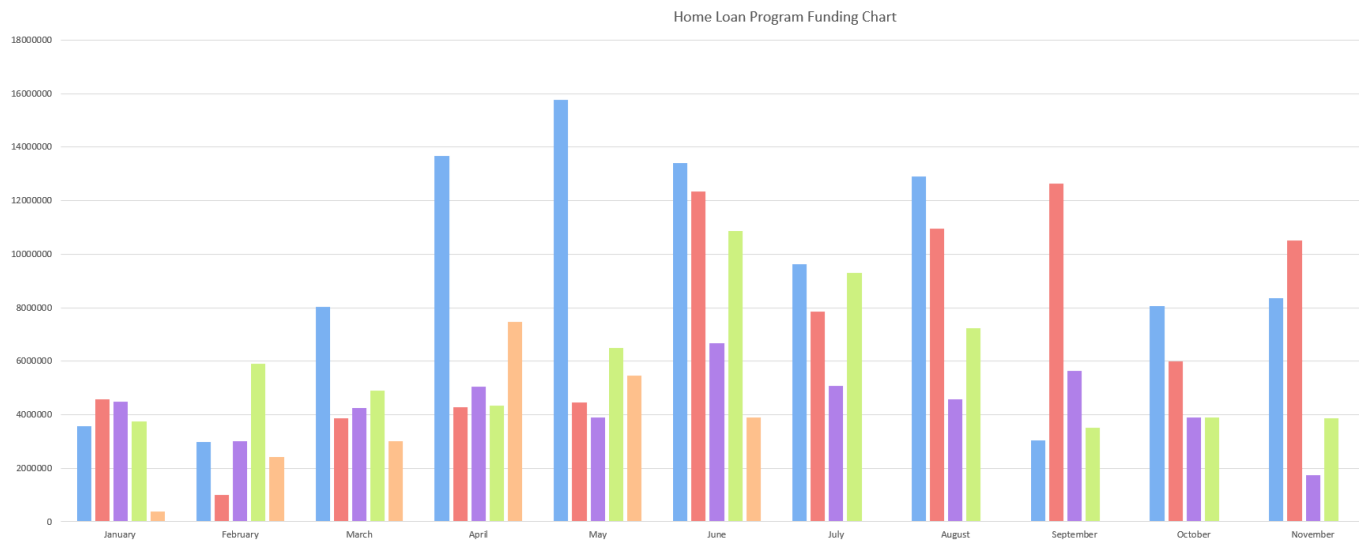
The second quarter of 2026 reflects continued positive momentum for the ODVA Home Loan Program, driven by strong borrower engagement and favorable lending conditions.

Veterans have increasingly familiarized themselves with the new online borrower portal, and adoption of both the portal and ACH payment options has been well received, enhancing convenience and modernizing the servicing experience.

Loan activity has risen significantly this quarter, supported by ODVA's interest rates remaining notably lower than both Federal VA and broader market offerings. Together, these trends highlight ongoing operational stability, sustained borrower confidence, and meaningful progress in ODVA's modernization efforts.

Home Loan Production Review

- Home Loan Program production for the 2nd Quarter of 2026 was 36 loans for \$16.5 million. For the same period in 2025, production volume was 47 loans for \$21.7 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 2nd Quarter 2026, ODVA has a total of 1,558 loans in portfolio, with a total dollar amount under servicing of \$414,816,771. Of these, 1,518 are new loans totaling \$413,219,277. 'Old' loans comprise 40 units totaling \$3,106,303.65.
- At the end of the 2nd Quarter 2025, the ODVA had a total of 1,600 loans for \$417,785,490 under servicing.

- Year over year, ODVA's portfolio saw a moderate decrease of 42 loans, representing a 2.63% decline in total units from the second quarter of 2025 to the second quarter of 2026. However, despite the slight reduction in loan count, the total dollar amount under servicing remained relatively the same. This reflects a shift toward higher-value new loans, somewhat offsetting the modest decline in the number of loans.

Loan Delinquency Review

- For the reporting period of 6/30/2026, there was one State-Owned Properties/Real Estate Owned (SOP/REO) in inventory as the result of a deed in lieu of foreclosure. ODVA has not had any foreclosures for the past 5+ years.
- At the end of 2nd Quarter 2026, there is 1 loans in default status. Our servicing portfolio remains strong as the rest of the industry is showing signs of increased delinquencies.
- At the end of 2nd 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 1 unit, expressed as 0.064% in unit delinquency on a portfolio of 1,558. 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 Q1 2026 National Delinquency Survey reports that the seasonally adjusted mortgage delinquency rate for one-to-four-unit residential properties increased to 4.44%, marking an 18-basis-point rise from Q4 2025. Foreclosure starts also increased, reaching 0.24%.
 - Based on the latest January 2026 data, the national mortgage delinquency rate declined slightly to 3.65%, a 3-basis-point improvement from December. However, serious delinquencies—borrowers 90 or more days past due or in active foreclosure—continued to climb, exceeding 850,000 and reaching their highest level since July 2022.
 - For the ODVA home loan program in Q2 2026, total delinquency stood at 1.09%, covering 17 units, reflecting a decrease from the previous quarter.

Home Loan Program Staffing News

- We completed the recruitment for our LS2 Loan Specialist. The successful candidate was internal so we will be opening up a backfill LS1 Loan Specialist position in the coming months.
- The recruitment for the Business Development Representative is currently open closing Augst 21st.

Home Loan Program Updates

- 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.
- 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.

OREGON VETERANS' HOMES

Kelly Breshears, Aging Veteran Services Director

Oregon Veterans' Home – The Dalles

Census

Oregon Veterans' Home - The Dalles has successfully increased its census to pre-COVID occupancy levels, holding at 131 residents currently.

Agency Staff Use

Due to increased census growth, the Home has experienced an increase in agency staff utilization over the past year to support operational needs and continue to meet the care needs of each resident.

Goal:	Current Usage:
Licensed Nurses: below 5%	Licensed Nurses: 11%
Certified Nursing Assistants: below 15%	Certified Nursing Assistants: 32%

Nursing Home Surveys

In June, the facility completed its annual State Survey, which was conducted in conjunction with a Complaint Survey. The survey resulted in five clinical citations and one Life Safety citation. A Plan of Correction was submitted in response to the findings, and audits related to each cited item will be completed over the next three months to ensure sustained compliance and improvement.

Events

The facility hosted its first annual 4th of July celebration, welcoming members of the community to join staff and Veterans for an afternoon of entertainment. The event featured a live band, games, a barbecue, and firework viewing. The event drew close to 600 visitors, further strengthening the connections of the home and residents to the community.

Oregon Veterans' Home – Lebanon

Census

OVHL's budgeted census goal is 145 residents or 94% occupancy. In the first quarter the Home had an average census exceeding 90% and the second quarter exceeded 95% capacity. Current census, at the time of this report, is 152 which is capacity.

Agency Staff Use

Due to staffing shortages, the Home uses temporary staffing agencies to fill gaps. This is standard practice in Nursing Homes given the continued shortage of healthcare workers. The ultimately goal is 0% utilization, however current numbers are as follows:

Goal:	Current Usage:
Licensed Nurses: below 10%	Licensed Nurses: 7%
Certified Nursing Assistants: below 5%	Certified Nursing Assistants: <1%

The Home continues to offer tuition-free, paid CNA courses which helps reduce agency usage due to hiring course graduates. Lebanon also offered its first evening CNA class.

Nursing Home Surveys

In April, Lebanon had its annual USDVA Survey. This concluded with 6 citations – 5 Health and 1 Life Safety citation. The Corrective Action Plan was submitted in June.

Events

The Homes annual Spring Fling Event theme this year was Military History. This event was open to the community, had a large Camp Adair display, and the Travelling Oregon Memorial Wall. Over 80 classic cars were onsite, in addition to live music and other family-friendly activities for residents, their families, and community visitors.

Officer Promotion



Sometimes the activities we facilitate are small and personal. In April we had a request from the son of a new resident. He is stationed in Maine and planned to fly out for his dad's birthday. He wondered if we could have his pinning promotion onsite at OVHL so his father could be present. We were planning a promotion that other residents could attend but when we realized his father would have difficulty, we scaled everything down.

In early June, with the assistance of the National Guard's Colonel Jacob Scott and our administrator (also a vet), we conducted the more intimate ceremony in the veteran's room with the son's wife on a video call. This would be the CW3's last promotion in his career. His father was there for his very first one and he wanted him present at his last one to CW4. As the CW described it, it was the perfect book ends to his career.

Awards and Accolades

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

-END OF REPORT-

APPENDIX

Summary Of Programs

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

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

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

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

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

Campus Veteran Coordinator

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Rural Veterans Healthcare Transportation Grant: During the 2019 Legislative session, and again in the 2021 session, ODVA was provided funding to create a veteran's healthcare transportation program for counties and tribes that are rural but do not meet the federal restrictions, defining the county as highly rural. Veterans are provided free rides to their healthcare and behavioral healthcare-related appointments and are not restricted to VA facilities. ODVA partners with the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) to administer this grant program.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Veterans' Emergency Financial Assistance Program: Established by HB 3504 (2005), this program aims to provide a one-time grant to veterans or their immediate family members who need emergency financial assistance. Grants are awarded monthly to veterans who experience sudden and unanticipated financial instability. Most

grant requests support keeping veterans in their homes by assisting with past-due monthly rent and mortgage payments, utility payments, home and vehicle repair, and dental and medical expenses. Applicants are also connected with a local county or tribal Veteran Service Officer for access to other veteran services and benefits and community resources to encourage financial stability.

Grant Application:

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

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

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