



OREGON DEPARTMENT  
of VETERANS' AFFAIRS

REPORT TO THE

# VETERANS

## ADVISORY COMMITTEE

SEPTEMBER 2025



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Advisory Committee Information	Page 2
Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs Leadership	Page 3
Veterans Advisory Committee Quarterly Meeting Agenda	Page 4
Advisory Committee Bios	Page 5
Director's Report	Page 7
Legislative Report	Page 10
Aging Veteran Services Division Report	Page 12
Appeals and Special Advocacy Division Report	Page 15
Strategic Partnerships Division Report	Page 17
Home Loans Program Report	Page 19
Appendix	Page 21

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



## ADVISORY COMMITTEE INFORMATION

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

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

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

### **COMMITTEE INFO AND CONTACT ONLINE**

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

**Webpage:** [www.oregon.gov/odva/Connect/Pages/Advisory-Committee.aspx](http://www.oregon.gov/odva/Connect/Pages/Advisory-Committee.aspx)

**Email:** [odva\\_vaac@odva.oregon.gov](mailto:odva_vaac@odva.oregon.gov)



## OREGON DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS LEADERSHIP

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

### **CONTACT ODVA ONLINE**

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

**Website:** [www.oregon.gov/odva](http://www.oregon.gov/odva)

**Blog:** [www.oregondva.com](http://www.oregondva.com)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/odvavet](http://www.facebook.com/odvavet)

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

**Order Veteran Benefit Magazines** for your organization or self:

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



## ADVISORY COMMITTEE QUARTERLY MEETING AGENDA

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

- I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER**
  - a. Pledge of Allegiance
- II. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**
- III. INSTALLMENT OF NEW OFFICERS**
- IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
  - a. Approval of the [June 2024 VAC Quarterly Meeting Minutes](#)
- V. GOVERNOR'S OFFICE**
- VI. ODVA DIRECTOR'S REPORT**
- VII. ODVA PROGRAM REPORTS**
  - a. Legislative Briefing – Jay DeFillipo, Legislative Director
  - b. Aging Veteran Services – Kelly Breshears, Division Director
  - c. Appeals and Special Advocacy – Joe Glover, Division Director
  - d. Home Loans Program – Rex Emery, Chief Operating Officer
  - e. Strategic Partnerships – Sheronne Blasi, Division Director
- VIII. INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATIONS**
  - a. ODVA Grants – Brenna Bandstra, Grants Coordinator
  - b. Veteran Resource Centers and Student Veterans – Joe Mah, Campus Veteran Coordinator
- IX. OLD BUSINESS**
  - a. VAC Annual Report to the Governor
- X. NEW BUSINESS**
  - a. ODVA Grants Writing Assistance
  - b. Meeting Schedule for 2025-2028
  - c. Discussion on sub-committees
- XI. BUSINESS MEETING ADJOURNED**
  - a. Next Advisory Committee Quarterly Meeting  
Date: December 3, 2025 | Time: 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM  
Location: In-person – ODVA Headquarters; Salem, Oregon

### 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](mailto:odva_vaac@odva.oregon.gov).

## VETERAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBER BIOS

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

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





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

This past quarter marked a period of significant progress for ODVA and the veterans we serve. From securing a strong and stable 2025–27 budget to advancing key legislation and major projects like the third Oregon Veterans' Home, the agency has built critical momentum to expand and strengthen services statewide. At the same time, ODVA has continued to engage deeply with communities across Oregon, working alongside counties, Tribes, and partners to ensure every veteran has access to the benefits and support they have earned. The following report highlights these accomplishments and the agency's ongoing commitment to honoring and serving veterans through both statewide initiatives and community-driven efforts.

**2025–27 Budget Update** - The Oregon Legislature's 2025 Regular Session wrapped up with numerous veteran-focused bills passing and ODVA's 25-27 biennial budget being adopted through HB 5038. Governor Kotek signed ODVA's 2025–27 budget bill on July 17. The adopted budget is strong and stable, increasing ODVA's total funding by nearly \$13 million to just over \$192 million. This investment sustains current services while supporting critical programs and operations.

Seventy-seven percent of ODVA's Policy Option Packages were approved, including investments in housing stability, behavioral health, education, tribal veteran services, emergency assistance, and data improvements. Major highlights include new staff positions to strengthen operations, \$35 million to construct Oregon's third Veterans' Home in Roseburg, and sustained or increased funding for key veteran programs including \$16 million in grants and pass-through funding to counties, Tribes, and partners who deliver vital local services to veterans. ODVA's 2025-27 Legislatively Adopted Budget factsheet highlighting funding for programs is in the appendix of this report.

ODVA also successfully advanced three key veteran bills that strengthen support for Oregon veterans. House Bill 2341 improves outreach by ensuring veterans' email addresses are shared with ODVA, creating new avenues for communication. House Bill 2344 directs ODVA to maintain and update the World War II memorial on the Capitol Mall and develop an accompanying educational tool to preserve Oregon's history. House Bill 2559 streamlines veterans access to state services by allowing agencies to accept a federal VA benefits summary letter as proof of eligibility. More details and information about veteran bills and session outcomes can be found in the Legislative Report.

**Third Oregon Veterans Home in Roseburg** - ODVA reached a significant milestone this quarter in its long-standing effort to expand long-term care for Oregon's veterans. The proposed Oregon Veterans' Home in Roseburg has advanced to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs State Home Construction Grant Program Priority 1 list for FY 2025, currently ranked 80 of 80 proposed projects. This advancement was made possible through Governor Tina Kotek's leadership, Douglas County's long-standing advocacy, and the Legislature's 2024 allocation of \$35 million, which secured the required state match to qualify to move to the Priority 1 list for federal construction grant funding consideration. While the project awaits funding, ODVA will continue to work with the Roseburg VA Medical Center toward a Memorandum of Understanding to transfer the federal land to the state and continue project readiness to ensure construction can begin once federal grant funding is awarded. This marks a major step toward establishing Oregon's third Veterans' Home and expanding access to high-quality, affordable long-term care for our veterans and their spouses in Southern Oregon.



## Agency Engagements



**Pictured left to right:** 75th anniversary ceremony at the Oregon Korean War Memorial in Wilsonville; Joe Glover, Appeals and Special Advocacy Division Director, and Director Dr. Nakeia Daniels visit ODVA's table during the 8 Seconds Rodeo in Portland; Veterans participate in the Korean War commemoration, paying tribute to those who were lost; Attendees explore resources and services at ODVA's Veteran Benefit Expo and 80th Anniversary Celebration; Director Daniels with attendees at the Lincoln County Veterans Services Office's 2nd Annual Women Veterans Day Luncheon.

In June, I had the privilege of attending and speaking at the 75th anniversary commemoration of the Korean War at the Oregon Korean War Memorial in Wilsonville. The ceremony, attended by veterans, community leaders, Wilsonville Mayor Shawn O'Neil, and Consul General Eunji Seo from the Republic of Korea, paid tribute to the service and sacrifice of Korean War veterans. During the event, nine veterans and family members were presented with Ambassador for Peace medals in recognition of their service.

Later that month, ODVA joined the 8 Seconds Rodeo in Portland, now in its third year, which honored the legacy of Black rodeo cowboys and cowgirls while celebrating Juneteenth. With more than 8,000 attendees at the Veterans Memorial Coliseum, the event combined high-energy performances with powerful storytelling. ODVA was proud to sponsor this year's celebration and connect veterans and their families with benefits and services.

On June 16, ODVA hosted the Veteran Benefit Expo and 80th Anniversary Celebration, bringing together more than 665 attendees, 40 ODVA staff volunteers, and nearly 70 partner organizations. With over 150 veteran service providers and subject matter experts on hand, the event highlighted ODVA's legacy of service while ensuring veterans had direct access to programs and resources.

In addition, I was honored to serve as the keynote speaker at the Lincoln County Veterans Services Office's 2nd Annual Women Veterans Day Luncheon. This event provided an important opportunity to honor the contributions of women veterans, build connections, and celebrate community in recognition of National Women Veterans Day.

Looking ahead, ODVA is excited to host the Oregon Women Veterans Conference on September 27, 2025, at the Riverhouse Lodge Conference and Events Center in Bend. Themed *"Stronger Together: Community and Connection"*, this biennial event is the largest gathering of women veterans in the state and has been hosted by ODVA since 1998. The conference is free and open to all women veterans, bringing together service members from every era to honor their contributions, diversity, and strength. More information is available at [www.wvc.oregondva.com](http://www.wvc.oregondva.com).

## ODVA Signs Agreement with Siletz Indian Tribe to Assist Tribal Veterans



**Pictured left to right:** Chairman Delores Pigsley, members of the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians with Director Daniels and ODVA leadership following the signing of ODVA's sixth Tribal MOU to provide funding for tribal veteran services; Honoring Native and veteran traditions at the Grand Ronde Tribal Veterans Summit and Pow Wow.

This quarter, ODVA also deepened its commitment to serving Oregon's Tribal veterans through historic partnerships and community engagements.

On June 27, ODVA signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, creating a framework for collaboration and expanded resources dedicated to supporting Siletz veterans and their families. The agreement, signed by ODVA Director Dr. Nakeia Council Daniels and Tribal Council Chairman Delores Pigsley, was commemorated in Salem with Tribal leaders, veterans, and ODVA staff in attendance. This milestone paves the way for the Tribe's first Tribal Veterans Service Officer (TVSO), jointly funded by ODVA and the Tribe, to ensure Siletz veterans have direct access to the federal and state benefits they have earned. This MOU marks ODVA's sixth formal partnership with Oregon's nine federally recognized Tribes.

Dr. Daniels also represented ODVA at the annual Tribal Advocate Conference and was honored to speak at the Grand Ronde Tribal Veterans Summit, gatherings that celebrate the strength of Native American and veteran cultures while reinforcing ODVA's role as a partner in advocacy, recognition, and service delivery for Tribal veterans across the state.

## LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Jay DeFillipo, Legislative Director

---

With the end of the 83<sup>rd</sup> Oregon Legislature, the work in the legislative field is pivoting to implementation. The session saw one of the largest introductions of legislation in Oregon history with 2037 House Bills and 1,267 Senate Bills introduced during session. Of these, just over 200 Veteran bills were introduced. In the end only a total of 640 bills were sent to the Governor for signature.

ODVA had three bills that were sponsored by the agency and another handful of bills that have a direct impact on veterans or the operations of ODVA that passed. Several of these bills and our budget bill call for changes in funding authorizations. To implement these bills, I am working closely with our COO, CFO and Deputy on the directed changes in the language. This will continue over the next few months as we implement these in time for the bill enactments on January 1, 2026.

These are some of the bills that passed:

**HB 2341: (Agency Bill)** Adds a uniformed service member's or veteran's e-mail address to the information that the Director of Human Services, Early Learning System Director, Director of Transportation and Director of the Oregon Health Authority are required to provide to the Director of Veterans' Affairs.

**HB 2344: (Agency Bill)** Relating to the World War II Memorial located on the Capitol Mall to ensure ODVA has authority and funding to make needed structural and administrative changes to the memorial.

**HB 2559: (Agency Bill)** Allows state agencies to use a summary of benefits letter from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs when determining eligibility for benefits or services, including the Veterans Dental Program.

**HB 5038: (Agency Budget Bill)** Appropriates moneys from the General Fund to the Department of Veterans' Affairs for certain biennial expenses.

**HB 2386:** Provides the Department of Veterans' Affairs with authority to adopt rules to implement the laws concerning the unclaimed remains of veterans, veterans' spouses and dependents and survivors of veterans

**HB 3920:** The measure modifies the tuition waiver available for dependents of disabled or deceased service members and Purple Heart recipients. It raises the age by which a dependent child can apply for the waiver from 23 to 31 and allows an exemption to the age limit for anyone qualifying for the Federal Survivors' and Dependents' Educational Assistance (DEA) program. Additionally, it removes the restriction of applying for a Graduate Degree within one year.

**HB 3968:** Adds Space Force to the components of the Armed Forces of the United States.

**SB 150:** Prohibits receiving compensation for performing certain services for or on behalf of an applicant or a claimant for a veteran's benefit except as provided in applicable federal or state law.

**SB 159:** Authorizes the Department of Transportation to issue qualifying owners veterans' recognition registration plates for use on mopeds and motorcycles.

**SB 230:** Directs the Oregon Health Authority to require oral health care providers to complete an intake screening with an enrollee of the Veterans Dental Program within 60 days after the enrollee initiates contact with the provider.

These bills can be tracked and reviewed by signing up for the ODVA Legislative Digest, a comprehensive list of bills that are tracked for the Agency. To sign up to receive this information by email: [www.oregon.gov/odva/connect/pages/legislation.aspx](http://www.oregon.gov/odva/connect/pages/legislation.aspx). The final Digest for the 2025 Session was published on July 4.

Wearing my other legislative hat as a Rules coordinator, I was excited to be able to attend the 2025 National Association of Secretaries of States where I participated in Rule writing workshops and shared best practices with Rules Coordinators from all over the US. This will greatly enhance my abilities to support the agency's rules coordination needs.

On that note I am happy to report that ODVA Veterans Home Loan Refinancing Program and rewrite of the ODVA Home Loan rules are on its last leg as the permanent rules will be published by the end of the month. A lot of effort went into this with the Home Loan program team and it will be exciting to see this cross the finish line. Once published the team will work on releasing the new refinance options to the public.

That wraps up the Legislative update. I encourage all our veterans to participate in the legislative process and ensure your voices are heard. The Oregon Legislative Information system at [Oregon State Legislature](http://Oregon State Legislature) provides easy to understand information on the legislature and information on how to testify on bills. It is an honor to be able to serve the Veterans of our great state, and I look forward to the months ahead as I continue to work on helping our legislature pass legislation that helps our Veterans.



## AGING VETERAN SERVICES DIVISION

Kelly Breshears, Aging Veteran Services Director

---

### Protecting Vulnerable Veterans – Conservatorship and Representative Payee Program

ODVA is committed to prioritizing resources and services for aging veterans who represent more than half of Oregon's veteran population. Veterans make up almost 20% of all the seniors in Oregon. The fiduciary program enables ODVA to act as court-appointed conservator and 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. This stability decreases potential evictions, criminal activity and homelessness while encouraging communities to embrace veterans. An additional benefit of the program is that it reduces the risk of these vulnerable veterans being targeted for financial fraud and abuse.

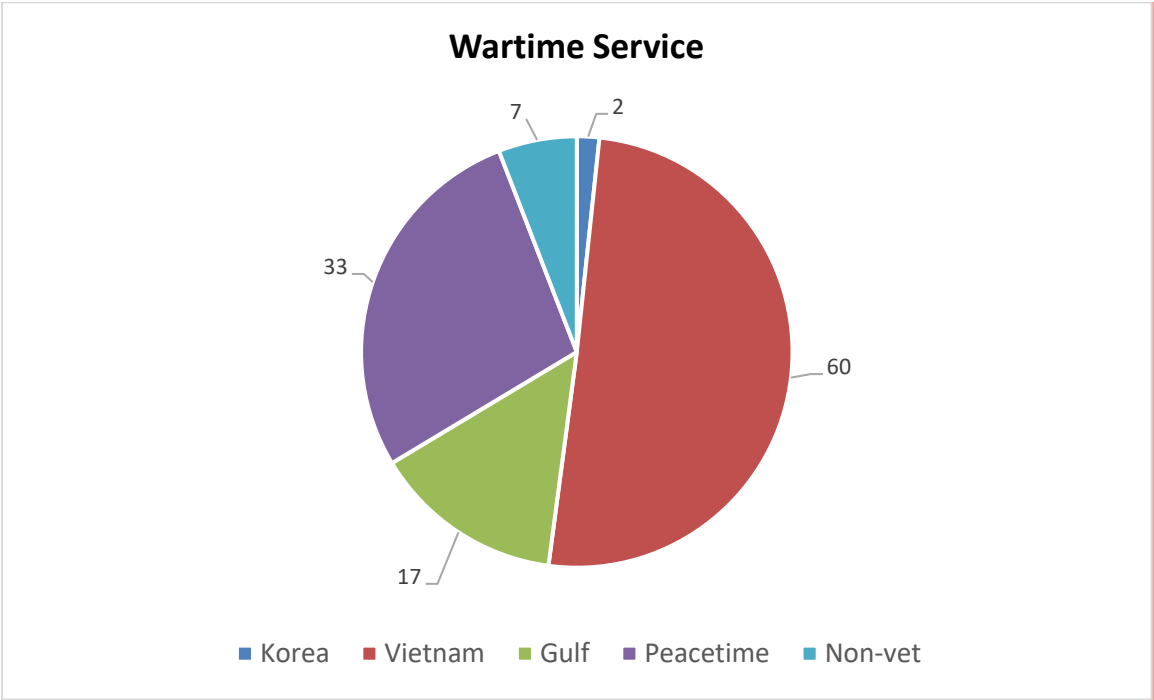
The second oldest program at ODVA, the Conservatorship Program, was created during the 1964 legislative session. On September 16, 2025, the program will celebrate 60 years of continuous service to veterans, their dependents, and survivors with all their financial management needs. In 2013, the Representative Payee program was added as an additional service to assist incapacitated veterans who need assistance with managing their monthly income but may not meet the court requirements for a conservatorship.

ODVA has served as conservator for 1,695 and as representative payee for 259 veterans and their dependents since the inception of the programs. We are honored to serve our veterans in this program, some for most of their entire adult lives. Our most tenured protected person has been served by the program since 1969 at the age of 22.

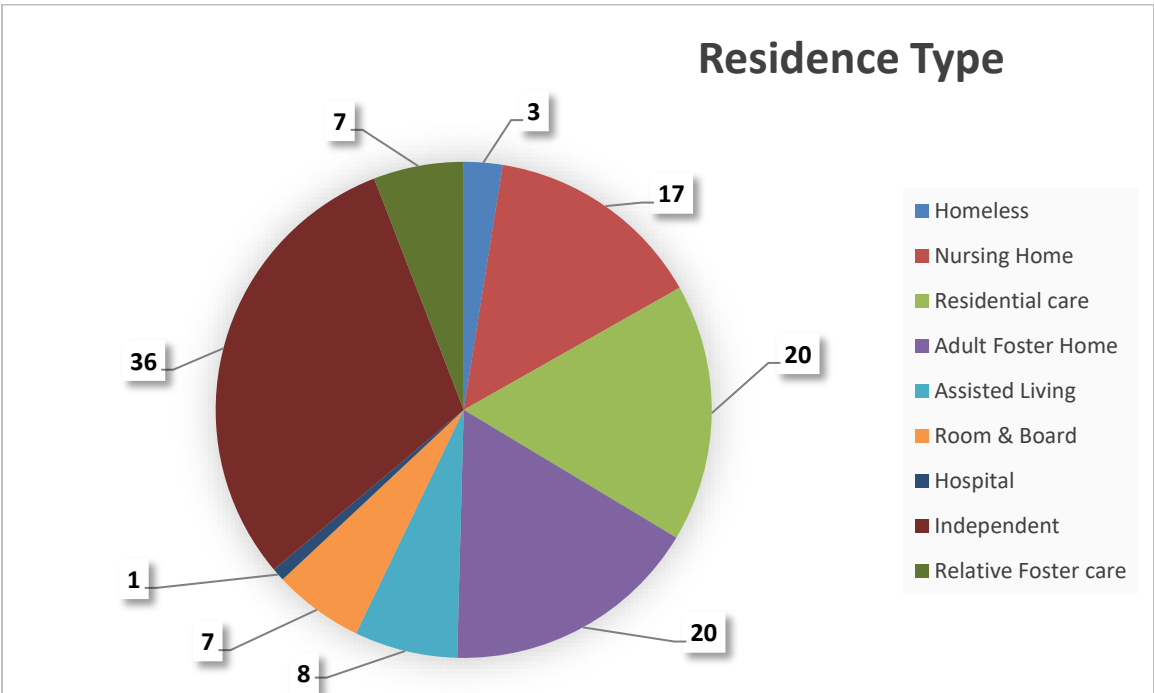
The ODVA Conservatorship and Representative Payee Programs currently serve a total of 119 of veterans and their dependents. Veterans served through these programs have all been deemed incapable of handling their own finances and/or managing their own assets. These veterans are extremely vulnerable, and many have already faced hardships such as homelessness, addiction issues, and financial abuse prior to coming into ODVA's programs. The Conservatorship Program currently manages 12 real properties and approximately \$28 million in assets being handled by 3 trust officers, 3 Trust Officer Assistants, and 1 Representative Payee. ODVA is often the most constant presence in these veterans' lives, and the first one they call when a need arises.

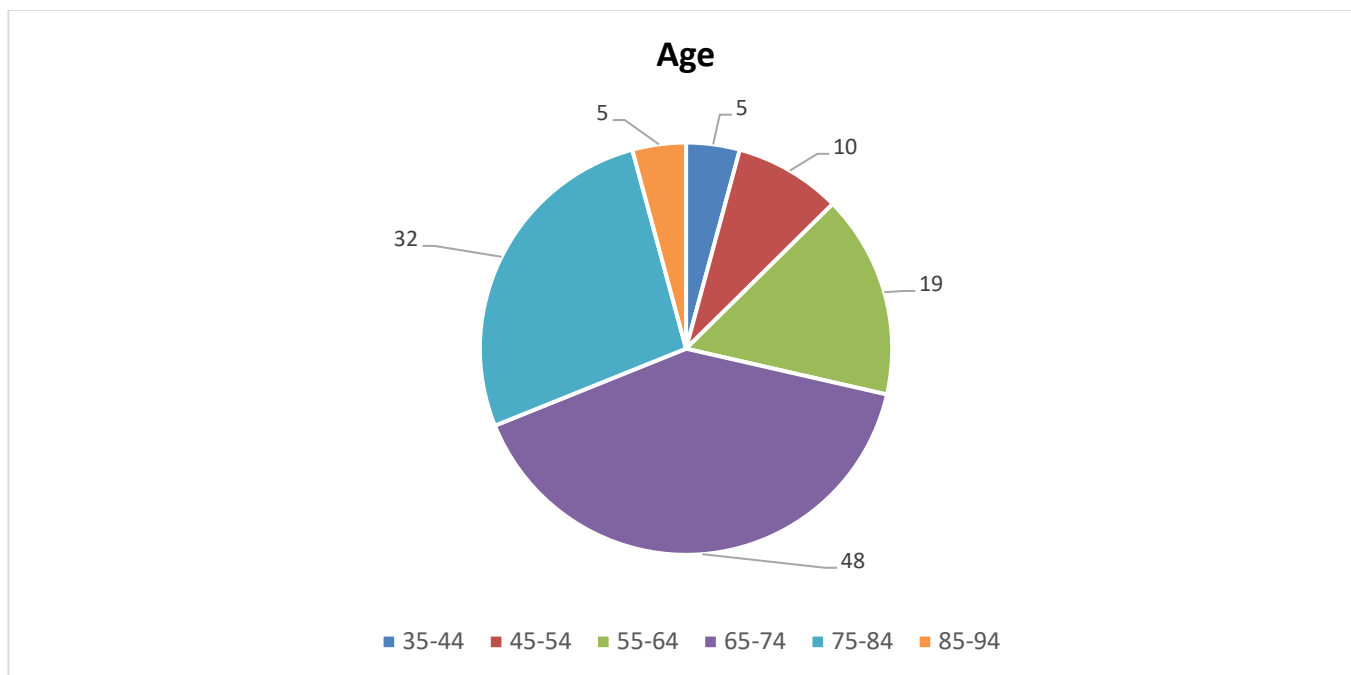
The role of conservator involves having extensive knowledge of and participation in our client's lives. As conservator, ODVA staff manage all financial aspects of the veteran or protected person's life. This includes establishing a budget, paying all bills, managing real property (including the purchase/sale real property), managing all assets (including making sure all assets are properly insured), assisting our clients with housing needs, addressing billing issues for medical care, arranging vacations, applying for benefits, etc. There are some circumstances that require our staff to set up either an income cap trust or a special needs trust. This is done through the court in order for our clients to qualify for a public assistance program.

Program Veteran Demographics



\*Note: Some veterans may have more than one period of service.





### Recent Program Accomplishments

One goal the employees in the program set was to complete annual in person visits to all conservatorship clients in the program. This goal was established to allow staff an opportunity to meet their veterans face to face, build rapport, and assess their living conditions to ensure we are properly addressing any unmet needs. These visits are vitally important for veterans in the program who own real property as it gives the Trust Officer a chance to look over the property, talk to the veteran about any issues they may have with the home, and arrange for repairs.

Due to high staff turnover during the last 2 years, this year is the first-year employees will be able to meet this goal. Staff have already completed 52 of the 72 visits this year. They are on track to complete all home visits before November. This is a huge accomplishment that staff have been working very hard to complete.



## APPEALS AND SPECIAL ADVOCACY DIVISION

Joe Glover, Appeals and Special Advocacy Division Director

---

### Claim Submittals, Retroactive and Monthly Awards, and Research

Much has been covered about the public facing programs of special advocacy such as the Women Veteran Program, the LGBTQ+ Veteran Program, and the Houseless Veteran Program.

Behind the scenes, there has been a team of four individuals who are vital to the division and agency's mission of helping to ensure that all veterans and families in Oregon thrive.

When a claimant works with any state, county, or Tribal Veterans Service Officer (VSO), and that VSO submits advocacy work on their claimant's behalf, that submittal is sent to ODVA. Once received by ODVA, this team is responsible for ensuring that all veteran and survivor claims that are submitted with the proper documentation attached, and that signatures are signed. The team is then responsible for submitting that casework to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs – Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA). Last fiscal year, this team submitted 39,967 separate submittals, ensuring that claims and casework were submitted timely and properly.

Additionally, ODVA has a requirement to report the number of federal retroactive and monthly award dollars that Oregon veterans and their families receive. This information is critical to help show the impact of the work that directly helps them thrive. Last fiscal year, there were 11,970 decisions rendered by the VBA that resulted in monthly and retroactive dollars received. In FY25, there was a total of \$26,126,887.00 in monthly awards and \$84,231,539.61 in retro dollars from 13,603 different awards.

Without this team, and their hard work, this data would not be possible to acquire. Their primary responsibility is to review the decisions that were made on our claimant's behalf, pull the information out of the federal database, and put it into the ODVA record. As a part of this work, they are responsible for reviewing the amount of federal retroactive dollars that our claimants receive, as well as their new monthly awards, and inputting this information into the system. This work is very time-consuming and attention to detail is critical.

A third component of the work that this team does is research data requests on behalf of the VSO community. Before submitting a well-grounded and legally supported claim, often it requires research to be completed while building the package. This team assists VSOs with research by receiving requests via a shared email inbox. This research can include checking service records for evidence of injuries or hospitalizations in service, looking for assignments to military units, or potentially evidence of medals or awards. All of these can be vital to helping support a veteran's claim for benefits. In FY25, this team handled almost 1,500 research and upload requests.

Another task that this team is responsible for is the uploading of VBA Decisions, Ratings, and Code Sheets from the VBA database into the ODVA VetraSpec casework management program. This process was

necessitated by the agency signing an MOU with the VBA in March 2022 certifying that the agency will receive all decisions paperwork virtually, removing approximately 90% of the agency paper mail. In FY25, this team processed almost 150,000 documents.

A final aspect of this team's work is to help determine if a claimant is already represented by another service organization, private attorney, or independent claims agent, and if so, what work may have already been done on their behalf. This information is critical to VSO advocacy efforts because of VBA rules that require that new and relevant evidence be provided in cases where claimed conditions may have previously been pursued but were not successful, or where an appeal may already be pending or docketed.

### **Claim Submittals, Retroactive and Monthly Awards, and Research - Team Success Story:**

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs representation laws state that once a veteran claimant passes away, the previously established representation and access to records is removed from view.

These restrictions can make working with surviving spouses particularly difficult because of a lack of access to previous records and often the federal online system for veterans does not reflect the efforts for spousal claim support.

During this last quarter, a County VSO office found themselves in that very scenario.

The VSO attempted to obtain access to records for work on a claim by taking representation but found that they still did not have access to the records. They emailed the team looking for information and support.

Working with the Quality Control team, the administrative support team was able to provide the VSO with the missing information which provided the VSO with the knowledge on how to pursue the benefit with the claimant.

As a result of this work and the new laws surrounding the PACT Act, the VBA awarded the surviving spouse a retroactive award of greater than \$230,000.

## STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS DIVISION

Sheronne Blasi, Strategic Partnerships Division Director

---

### September is Suicide Prevention Month

#### Suicide Among Oregon Veterans

Sadly, Oregon veterans face a significantly higher rate of death by suicide than both the general population in Oregon and the national veteran suicide rate. In Oregon, 139 Veterans died by suicide in 2021 (most recent year available), a rate of 49.6 per 100,000. (June 22, 2024). Veteran suicide is a serious public health concern, with veterans facing unique challenges and stressors that can increase their risk of suicide.

Suicide awareness and prevention is a priority for ODVA and below are areas in which ODVA has focused resources and partnered with others to try and destigmatize seeking assistance and reduce the rates of death by suicide.

#### Charitable Checkoff Funding to Address Veteran Suicide Awareness & Prevention

Generous contributions received from Oregonians through the Charitable Checkoff program go directly to helping address this critical need for behavioral health support and suicide prevention efforts for Oregon's veterans.

As in prior years, a portion of the funds received through Charitable Checkoff contributions are made available to Oregon counties, federally recognized Tribes, and public universities and community colleges for Veteran Suicide Prevention & Awareness campaigns and related activities. These grants have allowed communities to engage directly with their local veterans, and their friends and families around the importance of seeking assistance and the availability of federal, state, and local resources.

In 2024, ODVA launched a statewide outreach campaign to further raise awareness about the risks of veteran suicide, and the efforts and opportunities to prevent these tragedies. The focus is on connecting veterans to resources, activities, lethal means safety information, and community initiatives that support wellbeing and connection, including guidance on creating plans to seek help when needed. The campaign also connects veterans and their families to federal, state and local behavioral healthcare resources.

Using Charitable Checkoff donations, ODVA hired a professional marketing firm to design, implement, monitor, and maintain this outreach campaign. The initial phase of the campaign was to conduct outreach to older veterans, women veterans, and veterans living in rural/highly rural parts of Oregon. We know that veterans living in more rural areas can experience feelings of isolation. Outreach was conducted through mailers, billboard ads, and radio ads.

The behavioral health and networking resource website is [BeyondtheMilitaryUniform.com](https://BeyondtheMilitaryUniform.com).

Recently, ODVA updated the website to include a section specifically for families and caregivers. Viewers can also make a recommendation for a resource by submitting it through the website.

### **Other ODVA Efforts to Reduce the Rate of Veteran Suicide**

ODVA continues to co-lead, along with the Oregon Health Authority (OHA), Oregon's work on the Governor's Challenge to Prevent Suicide Among Military Members, Veterans, and Their Families. ODVA and OHA are joined in this work by key partners and stakeholders such as the VA, counties and Tribes, and non-profits such as the Oregon Alliance and NAMI Multnomah.

Oregon's efforts so far have been focused on postvention, which is an organized immediate, short-term, and long-term response in the aftermath of a suicide to promote healing and mitigate the negative effects of exposure to suicide. Oregon law requires postvention work for youth but not for adults.

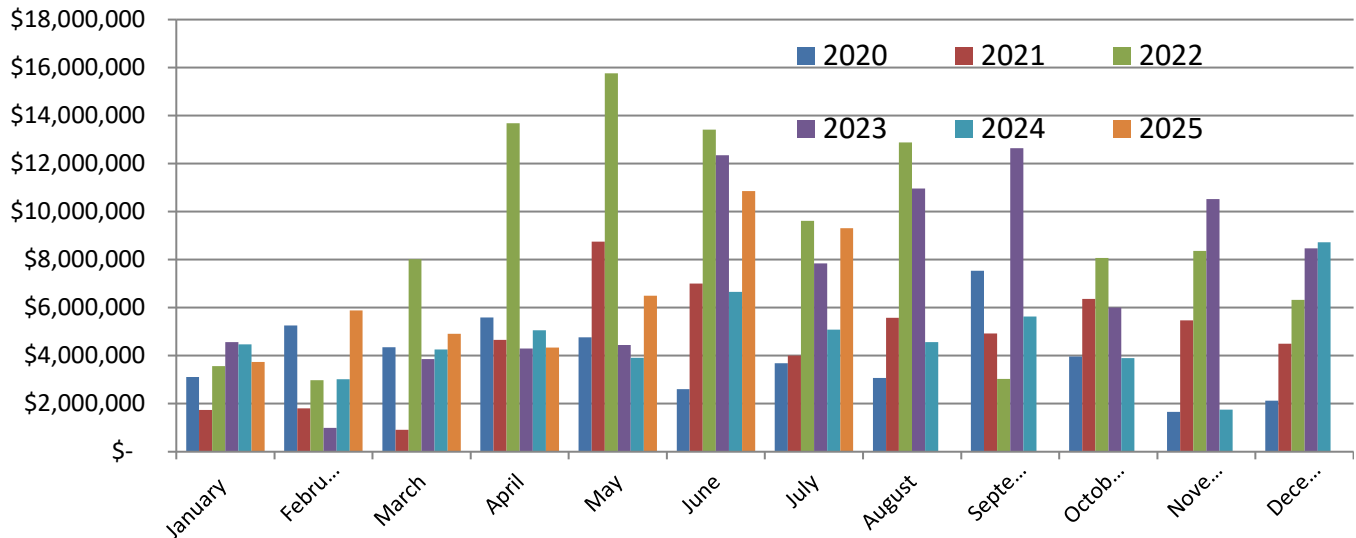
Oregon's Governor's Challenge team worked with an organization to develop and provide CONNECT training last month to those who work in this field. Connect Suicide Prevention and Postvention Training Services increase the capacity of professionals and communities to prevent suicide, using a public health approach, and key elements of the National Suicide Prevention Strategy. Our comprehensive training – tailored to each audience's unique needs – has community planning built right in.

Additionally, ODVA received funding in its 2025-27 budget for the agency's first Veterans Behavioral Health Coordinator, and we look forward to bringing someone onto the team!



## HOME LOAN PROGRAM REPORT

Cody Cox, Home Loan Program Manager



### Home Loan Production Review

- Home Loan Program production for the 2nd Quarter 2025 was 47 loans for \$21.7 million. For the same period in 2024, production volume was 36 loans for \$15.6 million.
- The chart below shows a 2020 - 2025 monthly production comparison of dollar volume funded for the OrVet Home Loan program.
- At the end of the 2nd Quarter 2025, ODVA has a total of 1,600 loans in portfolio, with a total dollar amount under servicing of \$417,785,490. Of these, 1,551 loans and \$414,508,224 are 'new' loans. 'Old' loans were at 49 units totaling \$3,277,266. At the end of the 2nd Quarter 2024, the ODVA had a total of 1,560 for \$390,563,177 under servicing. Year over year, our servicing portfolio increased by \$27,222,312, which represents an increase of 6.97%.
- The total amount of Assets Under Management is at the highest level since my tenure started on December 2013.

### Loan Delinquency Review

- For the reporting period of 06/31/2025, there were no State-Owned Properties/Real Estate Owned (SOP/REO) in inventory. ODVA has not had any foreclosures for the past 5+ years.
- At the end of 2nd Quarter 2025, there is 1 loan in a Foreclosure status. Our servicing portfolio remains strong as the rest of the industry is showing signs of increased delinquencies.
- At the end of 2nd Quarter 2025, ODVA has one loan in a bankruptcy status.
- The total of all loans reporting in the 90-day or greater delinquency position was at 7 units, expressed as 0.4% in unit delinquency on a portfolio of 1,578. This is minor increase from the previous quarter.
- ODVA servicing portfolio performance shows a continued reduced delinquency rate as compared to other Government and private sector residential loan programs. The Mortgage Bankers Association

publishes a quarterly National Delinquency Survey, and the following represents Oregon specific comparative data from the most recently available Second Quarter 2025 report. The delinquency rate expressed as a percentage of total loans (units) past due for the Federal Veterans Affairs home loan program in Oregon was 3.45%, unchanged from the previous quarter. FHA home loans in Oregon were at 7.77%, an increase from the prior quarter. Conventional Prime home loans Oregon was at 1.72, a decrease from the prior quarter. For this reporting period, the total delinquency for the ODVA home loan program was 1.3% at 21 units, which has increased from the prior quarter.

**-END OF REPORT-**

## APPENDIX



## 2025-27 LEGISLATIVE ADOPTED BUDGET

### LEGISLATIVELY ADOPTED BUDGET

#### VETERAN SERVICES INVESTMENTS

The 2025-2027 Legislatively Adopted Budget for ODVA continues investments in agency programs that address many of the challenges facing today's diverse veterans across a broad spectrum of needs.

With a focus on housing stability, behavioral health, education, equity, honoring veterans, and operational capacity, this budget enables ODVA to continue delivering critical and essential services while meeting the evolving needs of those we serve.

**Supports Veteran Housing Stability**  
through programs and grants that support housing stability and prevent homelessness.

**Invests in Veteran Behavioral Health**  
by improving access to behavioral health services for veteran.

**Continues Support for Veteran Education**  
by helping veterans overcome barriers to achieve education goals.

**Reaches Underserved Veterans**  
by ensuring historically marginalized and underserved veterans are supported.

**Honors and Serves Veterans at Every Life Stage**  
by investing in programs and services that honor veterans' service.

**Strengthens ODVA's Operations and Technology**  
by building a fully equipped agency to meet current and future needs.

#### 2023-25 LAB TO 2025-27 LAB BUDGET COMPARISON

	2023-25 Legislatively Approved Budget	2025-27 Legislatively Adopted Budget
General Fund	\$ 9,423,180	\$ 9,797,550
Lottery Funds	\$ 22,352,358	\$ 23,138,467
Other Funds	\$ 143,525,696	\$ 155,141,950
Federal Funds	\$ 3,932,620	\$ 4,123,106
<b>Total Funds</b>	<b>\$ 179,233,854</b>	<b>\$ 192,201,073</b>
Positions	103	105

\*Excludes Debt Service, Non-Limited, and Roseburg Veterans' Home.

#### AGENCY LEGISLATION

**HB 2341:** Adds a uniformed service member's or veteran's e-mail address to the information that the Director of Human Services, Early Learning System Director, Director of Transportation and Director of the Oregon Health Authority are required to provide to the Director of Veterans' Affairs.

**HB 2344:** Relating to the World War II Memorial located on the Capitol Mall to ensure ODVA has authority and funding to make needed structural and administrative changes to the memorial.

**HB 2559:** Allows state agencies to use a summary of benefits letter from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs when determining eligibility for benefits or services, including the Veterans Dental Program.

#### 2025-27 LEGISLATIVELY ADOPTED BUDGET (LAB) INVESTMENTS BY PROGRAM

	Operations Program	Home Loan Program	Appeals and Special Advocacy	Strategic Partnerships	Oregon Veterans' Homes	Aging Veteran Services
General Fund	\$ 228,356	\$ -	\$ 5,069,933	\$ 3,769,522	\$ -	\$ 729,739
Lottery Funds	\$ 2,768,376	\$ -	\$ 2,168,419	\$ 14,599,233	\$ -	\$ 3,602,439
Other Funds	\$ 23,754,796	\$ 5,983,204	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 125,403,950	\$ -
Federal Funds	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,961,694	\$ 2,161,412	\$ -
<b>Total Funds</b>	<b>\$ 26,751,528</b>	<b>\$ 5,983,204</b>	<b>\$ 7,238,352</b>	<b>\$ 20,330,449</b>	<b>\$ 127,565,362</b>	<b>\$ 4,332,178</b>
Positions	47 (46.25 FTE)	13 (12.75 FTE)	17 (17.0 FTE)	12 (11.75 FTE)	4 (4.0 FTE)	12 (12.0 FTE)

\*Excludes Debt Service, Non-Limited, and Roseburg Veterans' Home.





## 2025-27 LAB GRANTS AND PASS-THROUGH TO PARTNERS

	General Fund	Lottery Funds	Federal Funds	Total Funds
County Veteran Service Offices	\$ 2,122,422	\$ 8,115,726	\$ -	\$ 10,238,148
National Service Organizations	\$ 138,891	\$ 564,444	\$ -	\$ 703,335
Tribal Veteran Service Offices	\$ -	\$ 596,937	\$ -	\$ 596,937
Veteran Services Grant	\$ -	\$ 972,653	\$ -	\$ 972,653
Highly Rural Veteran Transportation Grant*	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 1,000,000
Rural Veteran Healthcare Transportation Grant**	\$ -	\$ 650,000	\$ -	\$ 650,000
Campus Veteran Resource Center Grant	\$ -	\$ 800,000	\$ -	\$ 800,000
Veteran Educational Bridge Grant	\$ -	\$ 552,665	\$ -	\$ 552,665
Veterans' Emergency Financial Assistance	\$ 121,898	\$ 200,000	\$ -	\$ 321,898
Oregon Military Helpline	\$ -	\$ 395,978	\$ -	\$ 395,978

\* Pending Federal Approval; \*\*Revenue Only

## POLICY OPTION PACKAGES

Package 100	MITAS On-Going Services & Maintenance	\$1,000,000 OF
Package 101	Strengthen ODVA Human Resources	\$236,597 OF   1 POS
Package 105	Strengthen Home Loan Staffing	\$206,855 OF   1 POS
Package 106	Strengthen ODVA Finance Unit	\$397,380 OF   1 POS
Package 109	Strengthen ODVA Directors Office	\$343,737 OF   1 POS
Package 110	Data & Performance Measures	\$248,612 OF   1 POS
Package 112	Veteran Behavioral Health Coordinator	\$221,352 LF   1 POS
Package 114	Tribal Veteran Service Office Funding	\$275,000 LF
Package 115	Veterans Emergency Financial Assistance	\$200,000 LF
Package 116	Veterans Educational Bridge Grant	\$350,000 LF
Package 117	Campus Veteran Resource Grant	\$800,000 LF
Package 118	Veteran Services Grant	\$350,000 LF
Package 119	Legacy Application Support (AS400)	\$325,000 OF
Package 121	Electronic Claim Tracking & Processing	\$60,000 LF
Package 122	World War II Memorial Update and Expansion	\$115,000 OF
Package 125	Capital Construction of OVH (Roseburg) (HB 5006 Special Appropriation)	\$35,000,000 OF
Package 126	ODVA & Vet Homes Capital Construction DM	\$6,644,725 OF

## 2025-27 LEGISLATIVELY ADOPTED BUDGET

Oregon Department  
of Veterans' Affairs 2025-27  
Legislatively Adopted Budget is  
estimated to be posted online  
in October 2025 at  
[www.oregon.gov/odva/](http://www.oregon.gov/odva/)

## VETERAN LEGISLATION

Read about 2025 Session  
legislation impacting  
Oregon veterans by scanning  
the QR code or visit  
[www.oregon.gov/odva/  
Connect/Pages/Legislation.aspx](http://www.oregon.gov/odva/Connect/Pages/Legislation.aspx)



## LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR

Contact ODVA's Legislative  
Director Jay DeFillipo at  
[jay.defillipo@odva.oregon.gov](mailto:jay.defillipo@odva.oregon.gov)

## 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](http://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](mailto:ORVets.Benefits@odva.oregon.gov)

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

More information: [www.oregon.gov/odva/agency-programs/grants/Pages/Campus-Grant.aspx](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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 of time 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](http://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](http://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](http://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/](http://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](mailto: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](http://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](http://www.oregon.gov/odva/agency-programs/grants/Pages/Veteran-Services-Grant.aspx)

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

Learn more about volunteering: [www.oregon.gov/odva/Benefits/Pages/Volunteer-Program.aspx](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://www.oregon.gov/odva/Resources/Pages/Women-Veterans.aspx)