

**Department:** County Human Services

**Program Contact:** Erin Grahek

**Program Offer Type:** Existing Operating Program

**Program Offer Stage:** As Proposed

**Related Programs:**
**Program Characteristics:**

### Executive Summary

Aging, Disability & Veterans Services Division (ADVSD) operates the County Veterans Service Office as part of the continuum of services the Division provides. The office works with Veterans to ensure they receive equitable and efficient access to quality services and programs that meet their diverse needs. Veterans Services supports anyone who served on active duty with the U.S. Armed Forces and their families by providing advocacy, access, and assistance to obtain all entitlements and benefits through the Federal Veterans Administration contributing to overall quality of life.

### Program Summary

**ISSUE:** Accessing Federal Veterans' benefits is complex and the wait time to obtain a decision can be long thereby delaying access to needed benefits for Veterans and their families.

**PROGRAM GOAL:** The goals of Veterans Services are to provide information, assistance, and advocacy to all who served in the military in order to improve their access to pension, disability, and health benefits. Veterans Services leverage strong community partnerships, resulting in increased community referrals for underrepresented Veterans.

**PROGRAM ACTIVITY:** Veterans Service Officers (VSOs) are trained and accredited by the Oregon Department of Veterans Affairs to represent Veterans and their families in their claims for benefits. VSOs are versed in applicable Federal and State laws to provide the best representation possible, free of charge. VSOs provide comprehensive counseling on Veterans Administration (VA) benefits; assist with VA healthcare enrollment; prepare and submit claims for VA compensation and pension; initiate and develop appeals; network with Federal, State, and local agencies; and provide outreach to Veterans involved with the justice system. ADVSD has committed to supporting Veterans by leading the County's Veterans Services Task Force to strengthen the network of community partners. The Veterans Service Office is also a supporting partner in "A Home for Everyone" efforts to end chronic homelessness for Veterans through participation in the "By Name List," a registry for Veterans who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. This effort increases awareness about VSOs and the services they provide in assisting Veterans to navigate the claims process as quickly and smoothly as possible. VSOs promote equity to Veterans and military families identified within underrepresented communities who face barriers to access Federal, State, and local benefits. The VSOs help Veterans apply for various services with different eligibility standards and conduct over 2,300 annual face-to-face appointments. At any given point in time the VSOs are serving over 8,100 Veterans in Multnomah County. The VSOs implement intentional and targeted outreach with multiple access options for LGBTQ Veterans, women Veterans, Veterans within communities of color, Veterans experiencing homelessness, justice-involved Veterans, as well as Veterans and military families experiencing socio-economic disparities.

### Performance Measures

| Measure Type | Primary Measure   | FY18 Actual | FY19 Purchased | FY19 Estimate | FY20 Offer  |
|--------------|---|-------------|----------------|---------------|-------------|
| Output       | # of Veterans with new representation with Veterans Services <sup>1</sup>                             | 761         | 890            | 820           | 820         |
| Outcome      | # of Veterans or eligible family members with new claims filed in the fiscal year                     | 300         | 335            | 316           | 316         |
| Outcome      | New monthly compensation or pension awarded for ongoing benefit to Veterans due to VSO representation | \$487,893   | \$606,349      | \$547,121     | \$547,121   |
| Outcome      | New retroactive benefits awarded to Veterans because of VSO representation in the last fiscal year    | \$3,030,809 | \$2,300,894    | \$2,665,852   | \$2,665,852 |

### Performance Measures Descriptions

<sup>1</sup>Representation is done by VSOs who are trained, accredited, and appointed as Power of Attorneys by Oregon Department of Veterans Affairs to represent Veterans and their families in their claims for benefits.

Revenue/Expense Detail

|                         | Proposed General Fund | Proposed Other Funds | Proposed General Fund | Proposed Other Funds |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Program Expenses</b> | <b>2019</b>           | <b>2019</b>          | <b>2020</b>           | <b>2020</b>          |
| Personnel               | \$473,852             | \$272,042            | \$499,488             | \$293,490            |
| Contractual Services    | \$0                   | \$7,270              | \$5,000               | \$25,000             |
| Materials & Supplies    | \$28,079              | \$13,153             | \$26,693              | \$7,544              |
| Internal Services       | \$107,670             | \$50,445             | \$101,399             | \$28,649             |
| <b>Total GF/non-GF</b>  | <b>\$609,601</b>      | <b>\$342,910</b>     | <b>\$632,580</b>      | <b>\$354,683</b>     |
| <b>Program Total:</b>   | <b>\$952,511</b>      |                      | <b>\$987,263</b>      |                      |
| <b>Program FTE</b>      | 4.73                  | 3.27                 | 4.71                  | 3.29                 |

| <b>Program Revenues</b>   |            |                  |            |                  |
|---------------------------|------------|------------------|------------|------------------|
| Intergovernmental         | \$0        | \$325,625        | \$0        | \$329,683        |
| Beginning Working Capital | \$0        | \$17,285         | \$0        | \$25,000         |
| <b>Total Revenue</b>      | <b>\$0</b> | <b>\$342,910</b> | <b>\$0</b> | <b>\$354,683</b> |

Explanation of Revenues

\$329,683 - Oregon Department of Veterans Affairs  
 \$25,000 - Federal/State Beginning Working Capital

Significant Program Changes

Last Year this program was: FY 2019: 25025-19 ADVSD Veterans Services