



**pennsylvania**

DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY  
AND VETERANS AFFAIRS

2014

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OFFICE OF VETERANS AFFAIRS  
BI-ANNUAL REPORT



DMVA.PA.GOV

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

State fiscal year 14-15 was a great year for Veterans within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The department set high standards and with the help of our partners in other state agencies, the Veteran Service Organizations, community partners, and the State Veteran’s Commission, we were able to meet and in many cases exceed our expectations. A key to determining our success was the comprehensive effort made to measure productivity and then translating that effort into delivering services to all of our Veterans. Throughout the SFY 14-15 great strides were made in outreach, improvement of veterans services, education of our community partners, and timely processing of veterans issues with the USDVA.

During the state fiscal year the department led an impressive list of ongoing and new initiatives that are focused on three basic tenants designed to meet the emerging needs of our Veterans and their families; Education, Awareness, and Outreach. Thanks to our

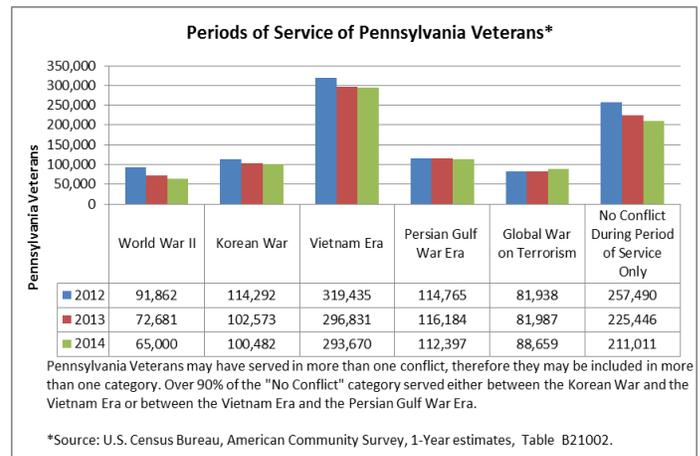
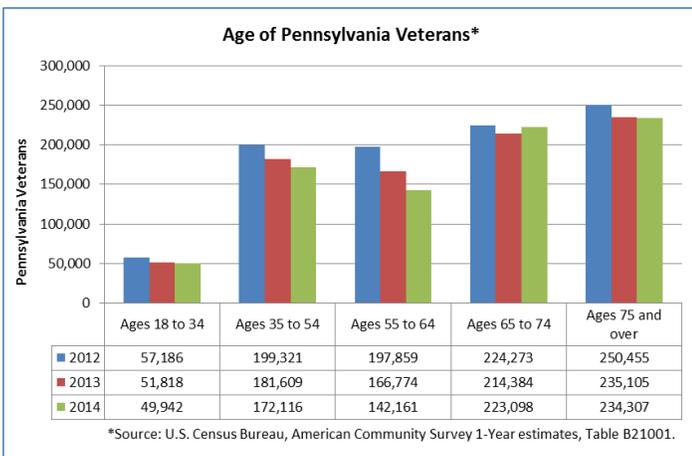
leaders at the federal, state, and local levels of government we have received great support ensuring our Veterans interests remain at the forefront of all of our business. Our Veterans advocates have been diligent and dedicated in ensuring that our Veterans receive the full measure of benefits to which they are entitled. The support and understanding of our communities and its citizens helped our Veterans to not only reintegrate into the community but also to become strong partners of those communities.

We thank all of our Veterans for their selfless service, sacrifice, and unyielding patriotism upon which our great country and this Commonwealth were formed. We look forward to continuing to serve our Veterans and their families, and continuing to work with all of the supporting organizations as we bring more benefits and services to those Veterans of the Commonwealth who have earned them.

## PROFILE OF PENNSYLVANIA VETERANS

Pennsylvania is home to 939,069 Veterans, earning us the distinction of having the fourth largest Veteran population in the Nation. Our Veterans make up 8.1% of the Commonwealth’s total population. Roughly 35% of our Veteran population is age 70 or older while 40% is between 50 and 69 years of age. The remaining 25% of our Veterans are between the age of 18 and 49. Women Veterans are 7.6% of the total Veteran population of the Commonwealth. These Veterans’ represent a broad spectrum of diversity and unique need that is based on the challenges of service that spans WWII, Korea, Viet Nam and the many facets of the Global War on Terrorism

(GWOT). Many of these Veterans reside in rural areas, making it difficult for them to seek and access the benefits, services and programs that they are eligible for as a result of their service. Our older Veterans are typically receiving care for more than one chronic illness and many require medical care and support from a caregiver or health care provider on a continuing basis. For our Veterans who live in rural Pennsylvania, finding caregiver support or transportation to a VA health care facility can be a real challenge. The Office of Veterans Affairs remains alert and agile to ensure that we are focusing on the emerging needs of our Veterans.



# MISSION

It is the mission of the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs to increase awareness of all benefits for Pennsylvania veterans and their dependents, to provide the best advice and assistance in obtaining

benefits and to provide the highest quality care to the residents of our State Veterans' Homes. We accomplish this through the three initiatives of Education, Awareness, and Access.

**E**ducation: We believe that we must continue to educate our Veterans, their families and those that serve them on the various Federal, State and Local benefits that they are eligible for. We must also educate our community leaders and fellow citizens with regard to both the military culture and the value our Veterans bring back into the community. Lastly we must continue to maintain high levels of competency and accreditation for our Veteran Service Officers and Veteran Advocates who are charged with assisting our Veterans And their families.

- ☞ Conducted professional training and annual accreditation that resulted in the accreditation of 167 Veteran Service Officers
- ☞ Conducted a Women's Veterans Symposium to educate our Women Veterans on issues affecting women Veterans.
- ☞ Implemented our Veteran Wellness initiative that leverages Mental Health First Aid training to assist Veterans and their families in identifying and reacting to the

signs of suicide before our Veterans go into crisis. We conducted two Train the Trainer courses which resulted in 42 Certified Instructors who then provided Mental Health First Aid training to more than 300 Veterans, family members and community partners in 6 communities.

- ☞ Participated in town halls, legislative breakfasts, rotary clubs Veteran EXPO's, and other gatherings to educate not only our

Veterans but also the community on those benefits we have to offer our Veterans and the contributions our Veterans bring back into community

- ☞ Participate as a member of the Viet Nam Veterans Commemorative Partner Program



**A**wareness: We have taken significant steps to increase awareness of our Veterans throughout the Commonwealth. Our Veterans are a strong presence in nearly every community of the Commonwealth and we believe that our advocacy must include a strong voice that both highlights the value and challenges that our Veterans bring into the community. It is inherent upon us to share the message of selfless-service, sacrifice and patriotism that form the foundation of military service. We cannot allow our Veterans to accept mediocrity from the Commonwealth and we cannot allow our communities to simply forget that 1 in 12 community members is a Veteran.

- ☞ Engaged our sister agencies in support of Veterans Programs and initiatives. Our inter-agency partnerships are strong and coordinated so as to provide maximum affect in support of Veterans and their families
- ☞ Utilized the Governor's Advisory Council for Veterans' Services to ensure all Veterans programs were meeting the needs of our Veterans
- ☞ Developed an official Office of Veterans Affairs Newsletter for distribution to our Veterans in both electronic and paper format.
- ☞ Developed official Newsletters at each of our six State Veterans Homes for distribution to our Veteran residents, their family

members and the community at large

- ☞ Improved and optimized the usability of the DMVA-OVA website to assist veterans in obtaining information about programs and services
- ☞ Aggressively utilized our two Mobile Outreach Vans to support various activities and conduct Veteran Outreach across the Commonwealth. These vans are specifically designed for use in rural areas to provide Veteran outreach services to Veterans who are unable to go to centers in their counties. These vans are mobile offices designed to assist Veterans in obtaining the benefits they so

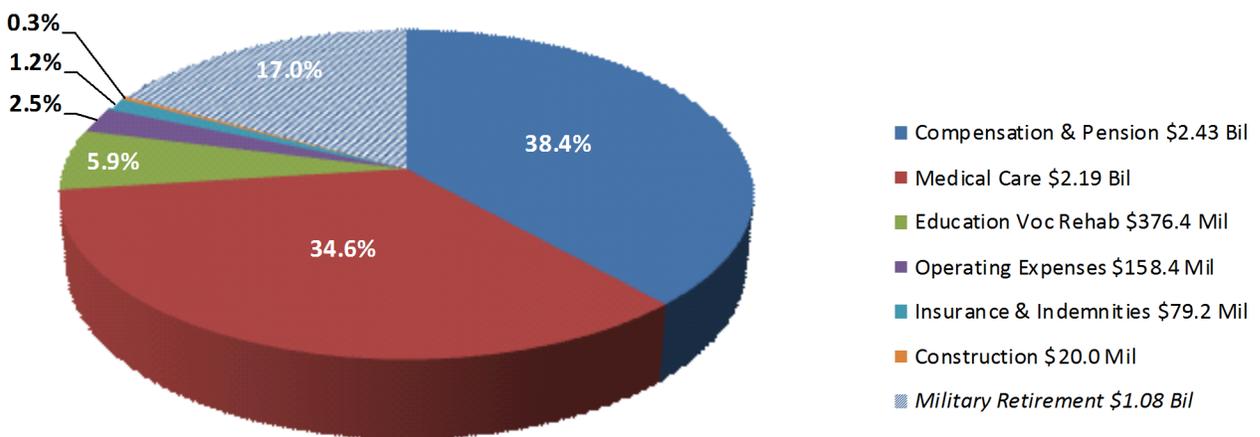
rightly deserve. Since placing the van in operation the department has realized a 20% increase in Veteran benefit receipts. Our Pennsylvania Reaching Out to Veterans (PRO-VET) initiative successfully engaged Veterans in 54 counties, participated in 61 Outreach events and interacted with 2,026 Veterans.

- ☞ Coordinated and executed Veteran employment initiatives such as the Southeastern PA Regional Veterans Consortium, the Allegheny Conference on Community Development and the Central Pennsylvania Workforce Development Initiatives.

**Access:** We have taken aggressive action to increase access for our Veterans to competent, professional and well trained Veteran Service Officers and Veteran Advocates who are dedicated to helping our Veterans and their family members to obtain the full measure of Veterans benefits to which they are entitled. We also understand the need to provide our trained Veteran Service Officers with access to state of the art automation that meets DoD and USDVA compatibility requirements. This access includes our ability to refer our Veterans to sister departments and agencies, community partners and non-profit organizations when we find gaps in service that are not covered by our Veterans benefits, services or programs.

- ☞ Implemented the Unified Claims Management Software project , a statewide solution for claims management across the Commonwealth that will provide integration and compatibility with the DoD Digits to Digits (D2D) initiative
- ☞ Implemented the DoD e-DD214 database initiative to improve access to Veterans records, periods of service and characterization of service
- ☞ Veterans' on-line donation initiative enables donors to complete secure donations that are in turn used support of our Veterans and their families. Donations are tax deductible and 100% of each donation is used to support Veteran Needs.
- ☞ Realigned Personal Care residents in our South Western Veterans Home (Pittsburgh) to provide additional Skilled Nursing beds for Veterans in need
- ☞ Real Estate Tax Exemption Program provided tax relief to 100% disabled Veterans who have a financial need. We accepted a total of 8683 Veterans in the program since its inception with an increase of 1,100 participants in this State Fiscal Year.
- ☞ Military Family Relief and Assistance Program (MFRAP). Provided \$148,459.09 to 53 Veterans and their families in need
- ☞ Veterans Temporary Assistance program through the Veteran's Trust Fund provided \$699,619.00 to 550 Veterans and their families in need
- ☞ The Amputee and Paralyzed Veterans program provided 1781 Veterans with a monthly pension for an annual expenditure of \$3.1M
- ☞ The Blind Veterans program provided 119 Veterans with a monthly pension for an annual expenditure of \$217,650.00.
- ☞ The Educational Gratuity Program provided \$95,032.92 in financial assistance to 186 children of eligible Veterans.
- ☞ Persian Gulf Bonus Program has processed 11,666 applications since the programs' inception. A total of 9,057 applications have been approved for a total program expenditure of \$3,845,562.50

## Veterans bring \$6.3 Billion\* in benefits to Pennsylvania's economy



\*Sources : VA Geographic Distribution of Expenditures (GDX) FFY2014 Report and DOD Statistical Report on the Military Retirement System, FFY2014.

**VETERANS ARE GOOD FOR PA**

**2014**

**2013**

**PA VETERAN POPULATION**  
*Ref (1 & 2)*

939,069 ↓ PA Ranks 4th

961,373 PA Ranks 4th

**VETERANS AS % OF PA**

8.1% ↓ Ranks 37th

8.5% PA Ranks 34th

**WOMEN VETERAN POPULATION**

71,289 ↑ PA Ranks 7th

71,217 PA Ranks 7th

**WOMEN VETERANS AS % OF VETERAN POPULATION**

7.6% ↑

7.4%



**\$6.3 BILLION**

**FFY2014**

**PA VETERAN-RELATED FEDERAL EXPENDITURES**  
*Ref (3 & 4)*

**\$5.8 BILLION**

**FFY2013**

**PA VETERAN-RELATED FEDERAL EXPENDITURES**  
*Ref (3 & 4)*

**TOTAL VA EXPENDITURES**  
*Ref (3)*

\$5.26B ↑ PA Ranks 8th

\$4.78B PA Ranks 7th

*VA Compensation & Pension (Direct to Veteran)*

\$2.43B ↑ PA Ranks 7th

\$2.03B PA Ranks 8th

*VA Construction*

\$20M ↓ PA Ranks 14th

\$49.4M PA Ranks 7th

*VA Education/Voc./Employ*

\$376.4M ↑ PA Ranks 11th

\$359.1M PA Ranks 8th

*VA General Operating Expenses*

\$158.4M ↑ PA Ranks 6th

\$158.3M PA Ranks 6th

*VA Insurance/Indemnities*

\$79.2M ↓ PA Ranks 5th

\$82.4M PA Ranks 5th

*VA Medical Care*

\$2.19B ↑ PA Ranks 6th

\$2.1B PA Ranks 6th

**TOTAL DoD MILITARY RETIREE PAY**  
*Ref (1 & 4)*

\$1.08B ↑ PA Ranks 14th

\$1.06B PA Ranks 14th

*Total PA Military Retiree*

51,220 ↑ PA Ranks 14th

50,904 PA Ranks 14th

*Retiree % of Total PA Veteran Population*

5.5% ↑

5.3%

- 1) VetPop2014 through VA Office of the Actuary [http://www.va.gov/vetdata/veteran\\_population.asp](http://www.va.gov/vetdata/veteran_population.asp)
- 2) U.S. Census Bureau; American Community Survey, 2013 and 2014 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, Table R2101; <http://factfinder2.census.gov>
- 3) VA Geographic Distribution of VA Expenditure (GDX) FFY2013 and FFY2014 Reports <http://www.va.gov/vetdata/expenditures.asp>
- 4) DoD Statistical Report on the Military Retirement System FFY2013 and FFY2014 [http://actuary.defense.gov/portals/15/documents/mrs\\_statrpt\\_2014.pdf](http://actuary.defense.gov/portals/15/documents/mrs_statrpt_2014.pdf)

# 2014 VA EXPENDITURES: BY COUNTY

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{Expenditures in \$000}

County	*Veteran Population	Total Expenditure	Compensation & Pension	Construction	Education & Vocational Rehab Employment	General Operating Expenses	Insurance & Indemnities	Medical Care	**Unique Patients
ADAMS	↓ 9,339	↑ \$31,252	↑ \$17,059		↑ \$2,951		↑ \$1,206	↑ \$10,036	↓ 1,454
ALLEGHENY	↓ 91,146	↑ \$615,209	↑ \$205,942	↓ \$8,911	↑ \$43,661	↓ \$24,351	↓ \$10,345	↑ \$321,999	↑ 21,458
ARMSTRONG	↓ 6,130	↓ \$33,887	↑ \$15,164		↓ \$1,053		↑ \$724	↓ \$16,945	↓ 2,046
BEAVER	↓ 17,045	↑ \$77,703	↑ \$36,792		↓ \$5,724		↑ \$1,626	↑ \$33,561	↓ 5,372
BEDFORD	↓ 4,125	↑ \$26,001	↑ \$12,661		↓ \$617		↑ \$283	↑ \$12,441	↑ 1,570
BERKS	↓ 28,090	↑ \$121,114	↑ \$61,515		↑ \$9,008		↓ \$2,012	↑ \$48,580	↑ 6,863
BLAIR	↑ 12,515	↑ \$105,963	↑ \$45,073	↑ \$777	↑ \$4,508	↓ \$781	↓ \$778	↑ \$54,045	↑ 4,896
BRADFORD	↓ 6,065	↑ \$26,324	↑ \$15,205		↑ \$1,170		↑ \$387	↑ \$9,562	↑ 1,786
BUCKS	↓ 41,481	↑ \$148,169	↑ \$88,825	↓	↑ \$16,547	↓	↓ \$4,840	↓ \$37,957	↓ 6,651
BUTLER	↑ 15,378	↑ \$105,728	↑ \$37,651	↓ \$1,204	↑ \$5,487	↑ \$1,186	↓ \$1,076	↑ \$59,124	↑ 5,529
CAMBRIA	↓ 13,995	↑ \$77,767	↑ \$43,785		↓ \$4,674		↓ \$803	↑ \$28,505	↑ 4,235
CAMERON	↓ 584	↑ \$2,225	↑ \$1,217		↓ \$95		↑ \$44	↑ \$869	↓ 147
CARBON	↓ 6,394	↑ \$32,254	↑ \$20,810		↓ \$1,357		↓ \$454	↓ \$9,634	↓ 1,389
CENTRE	↑ 9,511	↑ \$44,586	↑ \$21,173		↓ \$11,226		↑ \$694	↑ \$11,492	↑ 2,080
CHESTER	↓ 29,774	↑ \$216,759	↑ \$79,466		↑ \$12,374	↓ \$1,335	↑ \$3,708	↑ \$119,875	↑ 7,489
CLARION	↓ 3,556	↑ \$15,931	↑ \$7,156		↑ \$886	↓	↓ \$173	↓ \$7,717	↓ 1,238
CLEARFIELD	↑ 7,389	↑ \$41,995	↑ \$20,702		↓ \$2,090		↓ \$427	↑ \$18,776	↑ 2,545
CLINTON	↓ 3,483	↑ \$19,876	↑ \$11,881		↑ \$1,474		↑ \$150	↑ \$6,371	↑ 1,100
COLUMBIA	↓ 5,589	↑ \$25,810	↑ \$15,337		↑ \$1,684		↓ \$246	↑ \$8,543	↑ 1,352
CRAWFORD	↓ 8,116	↑ \$46,032	↑ \$22,202		↑ \$2,165		↓ \$528	↓ \$21,137	↑ 3,028
CUMBERLAND	↓ 21,146	↑ \$104,226	↑ \$63,816		↓ \$13,021		↓ \$2,021	↑ \$25,368	↑ 3,989
DAUPHIN	↓ 22,195	↑ \$107,823	↑ \$54,669		↑ \$10,256		↓ \$1,496	↑ \$41,401	↑ 4,829
DELAWARE	↓ 34,338	↑ \$169,670	↑ \$85,588		↑ \$13,851		↓ \$4,124	↑ \$66,106	↑ 6,980
ELK	↑ 3,007	↑ \$13,448	↑ \$7,958		↑ \$567		↓ \$83	↓ \$4,841	↓ 1,061
ERIE	↓ 21,492	↑ \$165,428	↑ \$66,512	↓ \$2,770	↓ \$9,329	↑ \$843	↓ \$1,253	↑ \$84,722	↓ 8,353
FAYETTE	↓ 11,701	↑ \$71,834	↑ \$40,990		↓ \$3,161		↓ \$718	↑ \$26,965	↑ 3,357
FOREST	↓ 638	↑ \$4,001	↑ \$2,229		↓ \$36		↓ \$16	↑ \$1,721	↑ 256
FRANKLIN	↑ 13,453	↑ \$58,407	↑ \$32,676		↓ \$4,585		↓ \$967	↑ \$20,179	↑ 2,687
FULTON	↑ 1,356	↑ \$5,817	↑ \$2,763		↑ \$299		↓ \$67	↑ \$2,688	↑ 278
GREENE	↓ 3,690	↑ \$18,591	↑ \$10,719		↑ \$848		↑ \$588	↑ \$6,436	↓ 746
HUNTINGDON	↓ 4,260	↑ \$20,611	↑ \$10,132		↓ \$1,146		↓ \$137	↓ \$9,195	↑ 1,117
INDIANA	↓ 6,628	↑ \$36,729	↑ \$20,961		↓ \$4,451		↓ \$389	↓ \$10,929	↑ 1,711
JEFFERSON	↓ 3,902	↑ \$20,215	↑ \$11,144		↓ \$1,198		↓ \$293	↑ \$7,580	↑ 1,304
JUNIATA	↓ 1,763	↑ \$5,733	↑ \$3,136		↑ \$345		↑ \$93	↑ \$2,159	↑ 387

\* Veteran population estimates, as of September 30, 2014, are produced by the VA Office of the Actuary (VetPop 2014).

\*\* Unique patients are patients who received treatment at a VA health care facility.

# 2014 VA EXPENDITURES: BY COUNTY

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{Expenditures in \$000}

County	*Veteran Population	Total Expenditure	Compensation & Pension	Construction	Education & Vocational Rehab Employment	General Operating Expenses	Insurance & Indemnities	Medical Care	**Unique Patients
LACKAWANNA	↓ 16,502	↑ \$92,864	↑ \$54,137		↑ \$5,216		↑ \$1,999	↑ \$31,512	↓ 3,681
LANCASTER	↓ 35,794	↑ \$154,784	↑ \$70,945		↑ \$11,970		↑ \$2,999	↑ \$68,869	↑ 8,626
LAWRENCE	↓ 7,222	↑ \$41,950	↑ \$20,823		↑ \$2,345		↑ \$620	↓ \$18,162	↑ 2,565
LEBANON	↑ 12,024	↓ \$117,426	↑ \$36,840	↓ \$5,822	↑ \$4,793	↓ \$4,146	↓ \$753	↑ \$65,073	↑ 4,743
LEHIGH	↓ 23,787	↑ \$81,890	↑ \$50,076		↑ \$7,581		↓ \$1,434	↑ \$22,799	↑ 4,179
LUZERNE	↓ 26,397	↑ \$202,091	↑ \$92,740	↓ \$152	↑ \$6,831	↑ \$1,299	↑ \$2,795	↑ \$98,274	↑ 7,539
LYCOMING	↑ 11,205	↑ \$45,277	↑ \$27,668		↑ \$4,413		↑ \$773	↑ \$12,423	↑ 2,723
MCKEAN	↓ 4,333	↑ \$22,362	↑ \$13,105		↑ \$972		↓ \$189	↑ \$8,096	↓ 1,461
MERCER	↑ 10,231	↑ \$49,729	↑ \$24,081		↓ \$3,207		↑ \$884	↑ \$21,557	↑ 3,557
MIFFLIN	↓ 4,299	↑ \$17,207	↑ \$9,908		↑ \$1,144		↑ \$97	↑ \$6,058	↑ 1,166
MONROE	↓ 12,757	↑ \$65,092	↑ \$35,153		↑ \$4,889		↓ \$567	↑ \$24,483	↑ 2,468
MONTGOMERY	↓ 46,756	↑ \$195,155	↑ \$106,091		↑ \$20,308		↑ \$7,133	↑ \$61,623	↓ 9,057
MONTOUR	↓ 1,389	↑ \$6,740	↑ \$4,389		↓ \$527		↓ \$106	↑ \$1,719	↑ 294
NORTHAMPTON	↑ 22,806	↑ \$79,560	↑ \$49,500		↑ \$7,389		↓ \$1,424	↑ \$21,248	↑ 3,664
NORTHUMBERLAND	↓ 8,725	↑ \$33,682	↑ \$20,095		↑ \$2,474		↑ \$1,296	↑ \$9,817	↓ 1,805
PERRY	↑ 4,143	↑ \$19,393	↑ \$10,649		↓ \$1,358		↓ \$136	↓ \$7,250	↑ 840
PHILADELPHIA	↓ 72,340	↑ \$747,935	↑ \$266,239	↑ \$357	↑ \$53,238	↑ \$124,429	↑ \$4,416	↑ \$299,255	↓ 19,858
PIKE	↑ 5,820	↑ \$31,463	↑ \$15,849		↑ \$1,760		↓ \$308	↑ \$13,545	↑ 1,295
POTTER	↑ 1,783	↑ \$9,998	↑ \$5,567		↑ \$344		↓ \$26	↑ \$4,061	↓ 569
SCHUYLKILL	↓ 13,974	↑ \$74,752	↑ \$39,600		↓ \$3,430		↓ \$715	↑ \$31,008	↓ 3,838
SNYDER	↓ 2,660	↓ \$7,510	↑ \$4,946		↑ \$635		↓ \$58	↓ \$1,872	↑ 490
SOMERSET	↑ 6,724	↑ \$35,909	↑ \$19,642		↑ \$2,229		↑ \$403	↑ \$13,634	↑ 1,977
SULLIVAN	↓ 754	↑ \$3,818	↑ \$1,541		↑ \$125		↑ \$52	↑ \$2,101	↓ 209
SUSQUEHANNA	↓ 3,797	↑ \$20,346	↑ \$11,191		↓ \$770		↑ \$293	↑ \$8,092	↓ 842
TIOGA	↓ 4,201	↑ \$23,929	↑ \$12,858		↑ \$1,092		↑ \$350	↓ \$9,629	↑ 1,306
UNION	↓ 3,300	↑ \$10,646	↑ \$7,362		↓ \$813		↑ \$330	↑ \$2,141	↓ 491
VENANGO	↓ 5,365	↑ \$28,666	↑ \$12,667		↓ \$1,301		↓ \$243	↑ \$14,455	↓ 1,999
WARREN	↓ 4,195	↑ \$23,158	↑ \$11,971		↑ \$909		↓ \$220	↓ \$10,058	↓ 1,567
WASHINGTON	↓ 17,838	↑ \$78,671	↑ \$38,649		↑ \$5,144		↓ \$849	↑ \$34,028	↑ 4,098
WAYNE	↑ 4,946	↑ \$25,375	↑ \$14,473		↑ \$1,228		↓ \$303	↑ \$9,371	↑ 1,076
WESTMORELAND	↓ 33,827	↑ \$144,801	↑ \$72,724		↓ \$9,827		↓ \$2,295	↑ \$59,955	↓ 8,179
WYOMING	↓ 2,375	↑ \$13,473	↑ \$7,556		↓ \$542		↓ \$117	↑ \$5,257	↑ 513
YORK	↑ 37,526	↑ \$137,620	↑ \$70,864		↑ \$15,769		↓ \$2,233	↑ \$48,754	↑ 7,593
PENNSYLVANIA (Totals)	↓ 939,069	↑ \$5,260,391	↑ \$2,432,807	↓ \$19,992	↑ \$376,417	↑ \$158,371	↓ \$79,167	↑ \$2,193,637	↑ 233,551

\* Veteran population estimates, as of September 30, 2014, are produced by the VA Office of the Actuary (VetPop 2014).

\*\* Unique patients are patients who received treatment at a VA health care facility.

# 2014 VA EXPENDITURES: BY CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

{Expenditures in \$000}

Congressional District	*Veteran Population		Total Expenditure		Compensation & Pension		Construction		Education & Vocational Rehab/ Employment		General Operating Expenses		Insurance & Indemnities		Medical Care		**Unique Patients	
	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑
CONG. DIST (01)	↓	32,143	↑	\$262,596	↑	\$119,304	↑	\$76	↑	\$22,432			↑	\$2,019	↑	\$118,765	↑	8,269
CONG. DIST (02)	↓	35,024	↑	\$489,421	↑	\$155,476	↑	\$281	↑	\$31,053	↑	\$124,429	↓	\$2,987	↓	\$175,196	↓	10,617
CONG. DIST (03)	↓	58,517	↑	\$381,459	↑	\$160,707	↓	\$3,770	↓	\$20,094	↑	\$2,029	↑	\$4,619	↑	\$190,240	↑	21,429
CONG. DIST (04)	↓	60,827	↑	\$244,420	↑	\$131,455			↑	\$27,386			↑	\$4,769	↑	\$80,810	↑	11,904
CONG. DIST (05)	↓	59,901	↑	\$316,837	↑	\$156,605	↑	\$850	↓	\$25,037	↓		↓	\$3,158	↑	\$131,187	↑	19,385
CONG. DIST (06)	↓	46,834	↑	\$239,407	↑	\$100,510	↓	\$3,480	↑	\$15,753	↓	\$1,660	↓	\$4,393	↑	\$113,611	↑	11,687
CONG. DIST (07)	↓	45,255	↑	\$176,077	↑	\$84,763			↑	\$13,976			↓	\$5,630	↑	\$71,707	↑	8,950
CONG. DIST (08)	↓	46,417	↑	\$161,899	↑	\$96,209	↓		↑	\$17,961	↓		↑	\$5,439	↓	\$42,290	↓	7,525
CONG. DIST (09)	↓	61,861	↑	\$377,230	↑	\$194,263	↓		↓	\$22,035	↓	\$781	↓	\$3,815	↑	\$156,336	↑	17,688
CONG. DIST (10)	↓	62,225	↑	\$275,678	↑	\$156,751	↑	\$152	↑	\$17,439			↑	\$4,046	↑	\$97,289	↑	14,393
CONG. DIST (11)	↓	61,041	↑	\$317,953	↑	\$170,703	↓		↑	\$22,039	↓		↑	\$5,242	↑	\$119,969	↑	14,144
CONG. DIST (12)	↓	61,892	↑	\$289,409	↑	\$135,857	↑	\$134	↓	\$20,102			↓	\$5,199	↑	\$128,117	↑	16,614
CONG. DIST (13)	↓	38,122	↑	\$176,717	↑	\$87,115			↑	\$16,958			↑	\$4,798	↑	\$67,846	↓	7,911
CONG. DIST (14)	↓	52,326	↑	\$475,773	↑	\$158,859	↓	\$8,908	↑	\$33,018	↓	\$24,351	↓	\$5,446	↑	\$245,190	↑	14,079
CONG. DIST (15)	↓	52,447	↑	\$209,253	↑	\$110,889	↑	\$915	↑	\$16,822	↑	\$2,485	↓	\$3,619	↑	\$74,522	↑	10,577
CONG. DIST (16)	↓	46,293	↑	\$302,687	↑	\$129,433	↑	\$791	↑	\$20,856	↓	\$1,335	↓	\$3,816	↑	\$146,456	↑	12,030
CONG. DIST (17)	↓	57,559	↑	\$339,611	↑	\$182,752	↑	\$635	↑	\$18,120	↑	\$1,299	↓	\$4,417	↑	\$132,386	↑	13,392
CONG. DIST (18)	↓	60,387	↑	\$223,965	↑	\$101,157			↓	\$15,336			↓	\$5,754	↓	\$101,719	↓	12,957
<b>PENNSYLVANIA (Totals)</b>	↓	<b>939,069</b>	↑	<b>\$5,260,391</b>	↑	<b>\$2,432,807</b>	↓	<b>\$19,992</b>	↑	<b>\$376,417</b>	↑	<b>\$158,371</b>	↓	<b>\$79,167</b>	↑	<b>\$2,193,637</b>	↑	<b>233,551</b>

\* Veteran population estimates, as of September 30, 2014, are produced by the VA Office of the Actuary (VetPop 2014).

\*\* Unique patients are patients who received treatment at a VA health care facility.

**\$6.3 BILLION**

*Combined VA and DoD federal investment in Pennsylvania Veterans in 2014.*

**\$5.26 BILLION**

*Total VA investment including healthcare, Construction, Education & Compensation.*

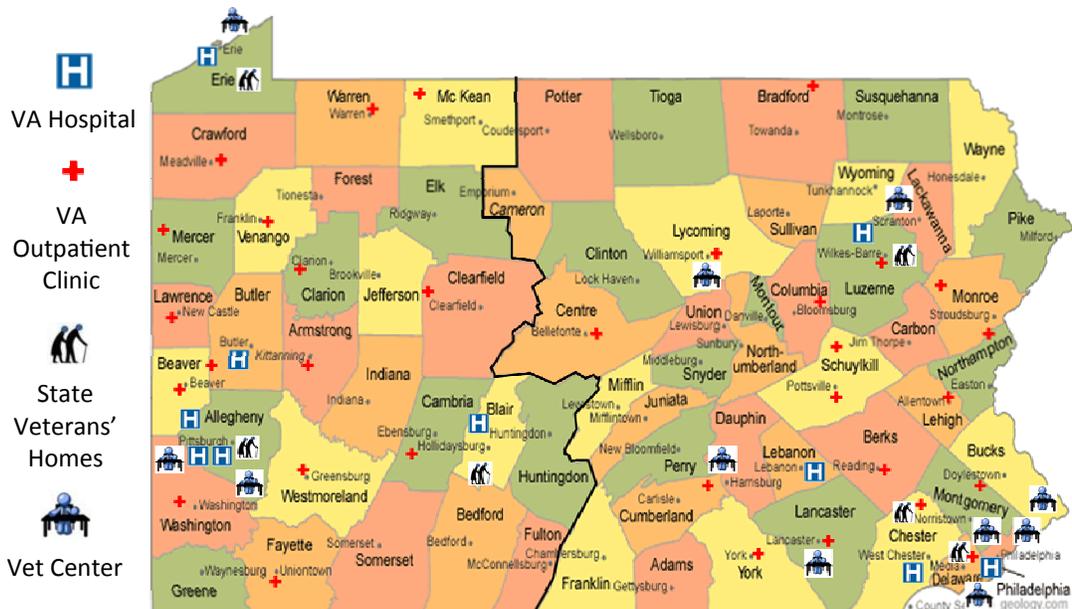
**\$2.43 BILLION**

*VA Compensation & Pension (7th Highest in the U.S.)*

**\$1.08 BILLION**

*Economic Impact of the DoD pensions alone and does not include ancillary business and work activities of these highly skilled retirees.*

# VA LOCATIONS BY COUNTY



## County Directors of Veterans Affairs

County Directors of Veterans Affairs provide county Veterans and their dependents direct assistance to identify, determine eligibility and assist in the preparation of applications for County, State and Federal veterans benefits and programs. The County Director is responsible for the payment of Burial Allowances and ensuring Grave Markers and Headstones are properly requested and placed for each deceased County Veteran. They also provide direct application for State programs like Real Estate Tax Exemption, Veterans Temporary Assistance, Blind Veterans' Pension, Amputee and Paralyzed Veterans' Pension and Education Gratuity for Veterans who are currently rated a 100% Permanent and Total by the Federal Veterans Administration.

<b>ADAMS COUNTY</b> 717-337-9835	<b>CLINTON COUNTY</b> 570-893-4339	<b>LACKAWANNA COUNTY</b> 570-963-6778	<b>PHILADELPHIA COUNTY</b> 215-686-3256
<b>ALLEGHENY COUNTY</b> 412-621-4357	<b>COLUMBIA COUNTY</b> 570-387-6501 opt. 2	<b>LANCASTER COUNTY</b> 717-299-7920	<b>PIKE COUNTY</b> 570-296-3563
<b>ARMSTRONG COUNTY</b> 724-548-3441	<b>CRAWFORD COUNTY</b> 814-333-7314	<b>LAWRENCE COUNTY</b> 724-656-2180	<b>POTTER COUNTY</b> 814-274-8290 X210
<b>BEAVER COUNTY</b> 724-770-4452	<b>CUMBERLAND COUNTY</b> 717-240-6178	<b>LEBANON COUNTY</b> 717-228-4422	<b>SCHUYLKILL COUNTY</b> 57-628-1400
<b>BEDFORD COUNTY</b> 814-623-4848	<b>DAUPHIN COUNTY</b> 717-780-6356 or 6357	<b>LEHIGH COUNTY</b> 610-782-3295	<b>SNYDER COUNTY</b> 570-837-4277
<b>BERKS COUNTY</b> 610-378-5601	<b>DELAWARE COUNTY</b> 610-891-4646	<b>LUZERNE COUNTY</b> 570-706-3960	<b>SOMERSET COUNTY</b> 814-445-1551
<b>BLAIR COUNTY</b> 814-693-3160	<b>ELK COUNTY</b> 814-776-5370	<b>LYCOMING COUNTY</b> 570-327-2365	<b>SULLIVAN COUNTY</b> 570-946-7677
<b>BRADFORD COUNTY</b> 570-265-1704	<b>ERIE COUNTY</b> 814-451-6265	<b>MCKEAN COUNTY</b> 814-887-3241	<b>SUSQUEHANNA COUNTY</b> 570-278-5955
<b>BUCKS COUNTY</b> 215-345-3307	<b>FAYETTE COUNTY</b> 724-430-1241	<b>MERCER COUNTY</b> 724-662-7511 or 7512	<b>TIOGA COUNTY</b> 570-723-8141
<b>BUTLER COUNTY</b> 724-284-5352	<b>FOREST COUNTY</b> 814-755-3404	<b>MIFFLIN COUNTY</b> 717-248-6421	<b>UNION COUNTY</b> 570-524-8676
<b>CAMBRIA COUNTY</b> 814-472-1590	<b>FRANKLIN COUNTY</b> 717-263-4326	<b>MONROE COUNTY</b> 570-517-3187	<b>VENANGO COUNTY</b> 814-432-9780
<b>CAMERON COUNTY</b> 814-389-5972	<b>FULTON COUNTY</b> 717-485-6873	<b>MONTGOMERY COUNTY</b> 610-278-3285	<b>WARREN COUNTY</b> 814-728-3478
<b>CARBON COUNTY</b> 570-325-3986	<b>GREENE COUNTY</b> 724-852-5307	<b>MONTOUR COUNTY</b> 570-271-3061	<b>WASHINGTON COUNTY</b> 724-228-6865
<b>CENTER COUNTY</b> 814-355-6812	<b>HUNTINGDON COUNTY</b> 814-643-1360	<b>NORTHAMPTON COUNTY</b> 610-829-4877 or 4876	<b>WAYNE COUNTY</b> 570-253-5970 X3114
<b>CHESTER COUNTY</b> 610-344-6375	<b>INDIANA COUNTY</b> 724-465-3815	<b>NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY</b> 570-988-4213	<b>WESTMORELAND COUNTY</b> 724-830-3530
<b>CLARION COUNTY</b> 814-226-4000 X2601	<b>JEFFERSON COUNTY</b> 814-849-3618	<b>PERRY COUNTY</b> 717-582-2131	<b>WYOMING COUNTY</b> 570-996-2258
<b>CLEARFIELD COUNTY</b> 814-765-2642	<b>JUNIATA COUNTY</b> 717-436-7728		<b>YORK COUNTY</b> 717-771-9218

# Bureau of Programs, Initiatives, Reintegration and Outreach (PIRO)

The Bureau of Programs, Initiatives, Reintegration and Outreach (PIRO) provides strategic, administrative and operational oversight to the Office of Veterans Affairs. The PIRO is responsible for directing the development and administration of new and existing Veterans' programs, initiatives, policies and operations to assist Veterans and their beneficiaries in identifying and securing a wide range of state and federal benefits and services.

This Bureau supports a wide range of operational tasks that include conducting research and analysis initiatives such as Veteran needs assessments, surveys and studies to facilitate the development of new and innovative techniques, programs and initiatives;

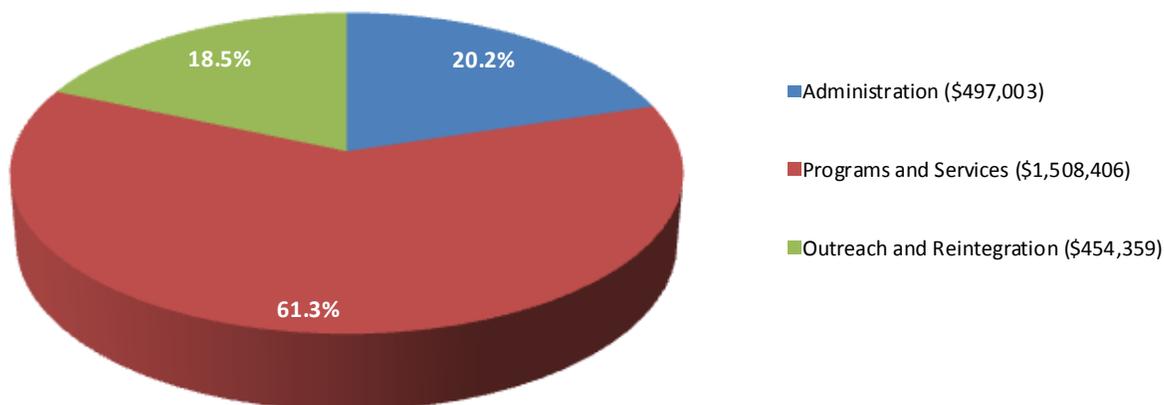
developing and directing the goals and objectives of the Division of Outreach and Reintegration and the Division of Programs and Services; as well as developing and directing the development of both short term and long term programmatic and strategic goals and objectives.

The PIRO also oversees and monitors the overall program administration of both Divisions to ensure optimal delivery of Veterans' benefits and services.

The PIRO serves as principal advisor to the Deputy Adjutant General of Veterans Affairs concerning state and federal Veterans' policy issues, Veterans' benefits and services and operational initiatives for the Office of Veterans Affairs.

## PIRO Operating Budget for SFY 2014

### Bureau of Veterans Programs, Initiatives, Reintegration and Outreach Expenses - SFY2014\*



\*Source: Budget Office, Pennsylvania Department of Military and Veterans Affairs.

# Major Accomplishments During 2014-15 State Fiscal Year

These accomplishments are all the direct result of carefully planned initiatives that were designed to increase our ability to provide for the emerging needs of our Veterans and their families. We continue to adjust our strategic plans to focus on those issues that

are foremost in our Veterans minds while leading a strong team of Federal, State and local government partners, Veteran Service Organizations and a vast array of community partners to meet their needs.

## Veteran Employment Initiatives

We have led efforts to develop regional consortiums that are dedicated to finding holistic solutions that provide quality job opportunities for Veterans. We have been successful in participating in three consortiums focused on the Southeast, Central

and Southwest portions of the Commonwealth. Our most significant challenge with these consortiums is the lack of metrics that can be used to measure success. These consortiums include:

**The Allegheny Conference on Community Development (ACCD)** is centered in the Pittsburgh regional area and consists of business leaders, that include but are not limited to Heinz Corporation, Hiring our Heroes, Service to Opportunity, Chevron, PNC Bank, the U.S. Army Transition Assistance Program, The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Soldier for Life, The Veterans Employment and Training Service, US Department of Labor, the US. Department of Energy, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce; Federal State and Local government leaders and community partners that include, but are not limited to, the Veterans Leadership Program of Western PA, The greater Pittsburgh Chamber of Commerce, the Pennsylvania Economy League of Greater Pittsburgh and the Pittsburgh Regional Alliance and a host of other public and private sector partners dedicated to improving the economy and quality of life in southwestern PA. The ACCD has completed workforce analysis that indicates “there are more than 25,000 open jobs in the 10 county region today”, they have identified the most critical in-demand jobs and they have extrapolated expected hires in the coming years; likewise they have explored the degree of confidence of companies in that area to successfully hire for those positions. ACCD has also completed analysis that indicates that approxi-

mately 10,000 Veterans will return to this region over the next five years. They are working diligently to assist Veterans to return to the area, pursue higher education and jump-start their transition into civilian careers that are available.

**Southeastern Pennsylvania Regional Veterans Consortium** consists of Business leaders (Pfizer, PECO, West pharmaceutical Services, MERCK, Accenture, Aspen Technology, EXELON Corp, COMCAST and others), Federal, State and Local government leaders, (USDVA Veteran Employment Coordinators from the Coatsville and Lebanon and Wilkes-Barre VAMC), the State Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, Office of Veterans Affairs, County Veteran Service Organizations, Various County Directors of Veterans Affairs and community partners that include The Union League of Philadelphia, The Greater Philadelphia Veterans Network (GPVN), Philly Veterans, Volunteers of America, The American Red Cross, St. Joseph’s University, Drexel University, UPENN, Syracuse University, and many others. This Consortium is fairly new and we are still working to complete a comprehensive analysis of the potential job market and better define the needs of job seeking Veterans within the region.

**The Central Pennsylvania Workforce Development Initiative** is centered in the Greater Harrisburg Area and extends north to Centre County. This coalition is in its early stages of being formed and currently consists of State Government leadership being provided by the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (OVA and the PAARNG), and the Department of Labor & Industry; The Department of Aging, The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, and Office of Vocational Rehabilitation. Our community partners include The Harrisburg Area Community College, The YWCA of Greater Harrisburg, Volunteers of America, The Strategic Business Alliance, LLC. The coalition is currently forming its leadership team and defining its Mission Statement which is centered around the principal to “Pair job seeking Veterans with employers who are committed to hiring them”. Future efforts will be mirrored around the developing ACCD initiative in the Western Part of the state and will also incorporate lessons learned from the SE PA Regional veterans Consortium.



## WESTERN PA

### Erie County

140 W. Sixth Street  
Room 210  
Erie, PA 16501  
814-451-6000

### Mercer County

103 N. Diamond  
Street  
Mercer, PA 16137  
724-662-3800

### Butler County

124 West Diamond  
Street  
Butler, PA 16001  
724-285-4731

### Beaver County

810 3rd Street  
Beaver, PA 15009  
724-728-5700

### Allegheny County

436 Grant Street  
Pittsburgh, PA 15219  
412-350-5410

### Washington County

1 S. Main Street  
Suite 2004  
Washington, PA  
15301  
724-228-6700

### Fayette County

61 E. Main Street  
Uniontown, PA 15401  
724-430-1206

### Cambria County

200 South Center  
Street  
Ebensburg, PA 15931  
814-472-5440

## EASTERN PA

### Lackawanna County

200 N. Washington  
Av.  
Scranton, PA 18503  
570-963-6773

### Northumberland County

201 Market St.  
Sunbury, PA 17801  
570-988-4167

### Dauphin County

101 Market Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17101  
717-780-6630

### York County

45 N. George Street  
York, PA 17401  
717-771-9234

### Lancaster County

50 N. Duke Street  
Lancaster, PA  
17608  
717-299-8000

### Berks County

633 Court Street  
Reading, PA 19601  
610-478-6208

### Montgomery County

2 E. Airy St.  
Norristown, PA  
19401  
610-278-3000

### Chester County

201 W. Market  
Street  
West Chester, PA  
19380  
610-344-6000

### Delaware County

201 W. Front Street  
Media, PA 19063  
610-891-4000

### Philadelphia County

Broad and Market  
Streets  
Philadelphia, PA  
19107  
215-686-6670

# Criminal Justice Initiatives

## Veterans Treatment Court And Specialty Courts

Pennsylvania leads the nation in its support for incarcerated Veterans. The Deputy Adjutant General for Veterans Affairs (DAG-VA) was appointed to serve on the Board of Directors of the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD) in support of our Veterans. From this position the DAG-VA has a strong influence on how our criminal justice system processes Veterans who find themselves involved in non-violent criminal activities. DMVA supports legislation that establishes Specialty or Veteran Treatment Courts within each county, or allows for joint courts, as established by and between the President Judges and District Attorneys of two or more counties, so as to facilitate the opportunity for eligible Veterans within the

Commonwealth to participate in these treatment courts. The Commonwealth boasts 18 Active Veterans Courts and 10 Magisterial District Court Diversion programs. As of 30 June 2015 our Veterans Courts have served 1942 eligible veterans; we currently have 409 Veterans enrolled in these courts and we have graduated a total of 769 Veterans. The recidivism rate for Veterans Court is less than 2%. Members of the DMVA-OVA staff participated in numerous Veteran Court Graduation programs across the Commonwealth. Our presence and support to these treatment courts is indicative of our commitment to the great work being done within these programs.

## Jail Diversion and Trauma Recovery for Veterans

The Office of Veterans Affairs is a strong and active partner with the Department of Corrections where we provide advocacy and Veteran Services to this minority Veteran population. DMVA-OVA was a strong advocate for a formalized Veteran Peer Specialist program to support our Veteran Treatment Courts and various other Veteran focused programs where Veteran Peer Specialists play a key role in achieving success. Our advocacy was instrumental in policy changes and

funding within DHS-OMHSAS to expand the Veteran Peer Specialist training program during the 2015-2016 State Fiscal Year (SFY). Members of the DMVA-OVA staff participated in numerous Veteran Court Graduation programs across the Commonwealth and our Outreach Teams are cleared to enter the prisons where they provide assistance within the State Prison Veteran Service Units (VSU's). Our presence and support to our incarcerated Veteran population is indicative of our commitment to this minority Veteran population.



# Veteran Wellness Initiative

Current statistics show that 22 Veterans a day complete suicide. It is inherent upon us as leaders and advocates to take aggressive action to impact this challenge in a positive way. We have formed a strong coalition of inter-agency and community partners that are dedicated to making a positive impact on the incidence of suicide within the Commonwealth. Our partnership includes The Department of Human Services, Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (DHS-OMHSAS) our Veteran Service Organizations and various Community Partners. We sponsored two Mental Health First Aid Trainer Certification courses early in the year which resulted in the certification of 42 new MHFA instructors throughout the Commonwealth. These instructors come from organizations that include the Pennsylvania Army National Guard Service Member and Family Support Teams, True North Wellness Services, The Office of Veterans Affairs, Bureau of Veterans Homes, the Pittsburgh Mercy Health Systems, DMVA-OVA Service Officers, the Erie County Adult Probation and parole office, the Cumberland County Prison, Fulton County Veteran Service Officer, the National Alliance on Mental Illness of York County, Laurency Optimal Personal Care Agency, the United Methodist Home for Children, PA Mental Health Consumers

Association, Crawford County System of Care partnership, Safe harbor Behavioral Health, Pennsylvania Psychiatric Institute, the PA Board of Probation and parole, Gaudenzia Inc., PA Home Care of Lancaster County, Green County Human Services and of course the mental Wellness Association of America, Case managers for the Volunteers of America, Kutztown University, Senior Leaders from the State Chapter of the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW State Junior Vice Chairman, VFW Veterans Service Officers, VFW State Adjutant, VFW Chief of Staff), Chaplain, 28th Infantry Division, Chaplain, US Coast Guard, AMVETS, Case Manager for the Philadelphia Veterans Multi-Service and Education Center, PAARNG Health Care professionals and the Outreach Program Coordinator for the Lebanon VA Medical Center, USDVA. Our new instructors have aggressively taken to the field to deliver Mental Health First Aid courses within our communities. Our mission is to concentrate on Service Members, Veterans, their families and our community partners to cultivate Mental Wellness thereby allowing us to provide assistance before our member goes into crisis. During State Fiscal Year 2014 we delivered the MHFA course to more than a dozen communities touching more than 300 Veterans, family members and community partners.

## DMVA Information Technology Initiatives

We have taken aggressive and positive steps to enhance our collaborative communication capabilities with our Veterans and to comply with our USDVA partners Digits to Digits (D2D) automation initiative. These initiatives are currently in early

implementation or planning stages and will become elements of our long term strategy to bring the Office of Veterans Affairs to a higher and more effective level of communications with our Veterans and our partners who support them.



## HOMELESS VETERAN INITIATIVES

The Office of Veterans Affairs has supported the Pennsylvania programs to end Veteran homelessness. These programs include the Housing and Urban Development-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH), Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF), Grant Per Diem Program (GDP), Health Care for Homeless Veterans Program (HCHV) and the Continuum of Care (COC) Program. In addition the DMVA-OVA has provided some grant funding in support of homeless initiatives during our annual grant seasons. Homeless Veteran Boot Camp initiatives are in place in Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and Coatesville. These initiatives have resulted in the permanent housing of over 1400 Veterans during SFY 2014.

*DIVISION OF  
REINTEGRAION  
AND  
OUTREACH*

The Division of Reintegration and Outreach is responsible for the administration and management of reintegration and outreach initiatives within the Office of Veterans Affairs. This office maintains a full time staff of Veteran Service Officers (VSO's) to assist Veterans in initiating and processing compensation and pension claims and claims for other services or programs. Reintegration and outreach initiatives are designed to promote the well-being of Veterans by increasing awareness and connecting Veterans with resources related to the various services, benefits, and programs that are currently available from federal, state and county agencies

## Veterans' Mobile Outreach Vans

To improve upon Veteran's Outreach the department operates two mobile outreach vans that began in May of 2013. The mobile outreach vans assist in providing information on benefits and services to Commonwealth Veterans. These are specifically designed for use in rural areas to provide Veteran Service Outreach services to Veterans who are unable to go to

centers in their counties. These vans are mobile offices designed to assist Veterans in obtaining the benefits they so rightly deserve. Since placing the van in operation the department has realized a 20% increase in Veteran benefit receipts. During FY 2014-2015, the vans have provided support to Veterans and their families at 116 outreach events and interacted with 4,348 Veterans.

## Veterans Outreach Programs

The Veterans Outreach Services appropriation has an enormous positive impact on the Veteran Outreach Program in Pennsylvania. DMVA grants funds to Veteran Service Organizations (VSOs) to provide support to accredited Veteran Services Officers and the associated costs with wages, training and equipment to execute their outreach mission. VSO's provide assistance to Veterans eligible to submit U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) claims to maximize federal benefit awards. An effective Outreach Program is the key to success in our long term programs and initiatives.

At the end of Fiscal Year 2014-2015 the return on investment (ROI) was \$93 in federal recoveries for each Veterans Outreach Services grant dollar spent.

For Fiscal Year 2014-2015 over 22,000 claims were submitted to the Federal Veterans Administration through this program.

For Fiscal Year 2014-2015 \$209,260,065 in federal dollars were received by Pennsylvania Veterans as a result of our outreach programs.

## Veterans' Trust Fund

The Veterans Trust Fund is one of the most significant initiatives DMVA utilizes to support Veterans and their families. Signed into law in 2012, this special fund relies on donations, proceeds from "Honoring Our Veterans" license plates and contributions from motorists who apply for or renew drivers' licenses and motor vehicle registrations to



fund The Veterans Temporary Assistance Program and the OVA Grant Program. On March 24, 2015, DMVA awarded Veterans' Trust Fund grants totaling \$350,000 to ten charitable organizations with 501(c)(3) status and \$100,000.00 to twelve County Directors for Veterans Affairs. The fund is carefully managed by the Deputy Adjutant General of Veterans Affairs .

## The Veterans' Temporary Assistance (VTA) Program

VTA was created by Act 124 of 2012 which created 51 Pa C.S. §1721 (c) (4) which provides for the Assistance to Pennsylvania Veterans in need. The initial budget to operate the Veterans Temporary Assistance Program was \$400,000. SFY 2014 was the initial operational year for the VTA Program so we did not have any baseline data to compare. The final expenditure for FY 2014 was \$699,619.

Due to the less restrictive nature of this program, DMVA has done a much better job of being able to assist veterans in need through the VTA program. Funding for this program is provided solely through contributions to the Veterans' Trust Fund. The OVA has an active initiative to facilitate on-line donations to support VTA from public and private donors.

# Vietnam War Commemorative Partner Program

The Governor, DMVA and Office of Veterans Affairs have signed on to become partners in honoring our Vietnam Veterans on this, the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam War. The Commemorative Partner Program is designed for federal, state and local communities, veterans' organizations and other nongovernmental organizations to assist a grateful nation in thanking and honoring our Vietnam Veterans and their families. Commemorative Partners are encouraged to

participate in the Commemoration of the Vietnam War by planning and conducting events and activities that will recognize the Vietnam Veterans and their families' service, valor, and sacrifice. The Office of Veterans Affairs sponsored the public viewing of the film "Last Days in Vietnam" on Saturday, April the 11th. We will sponsor a second event in conjunction with our "Veterans Appreciation Day and Symposium on October 10th at Ft. Indiantown Gap.

## 2014 Women Veterans Symposium

Tailored to address topics relevant to female Veterans, this 3 day symposium was focused on learning sessions to build strength, resilience and renewal. The symposium was held at the Wyndham Grand Hotel in Pittsburgh, PA from June 6-8, 2014. The symposium was co-hosted by the Governor's Advisory Council for Veterans Services, The Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare, Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (DPW-OMHSAS) and the non-profit Veteran support organization, Journey to Normal.

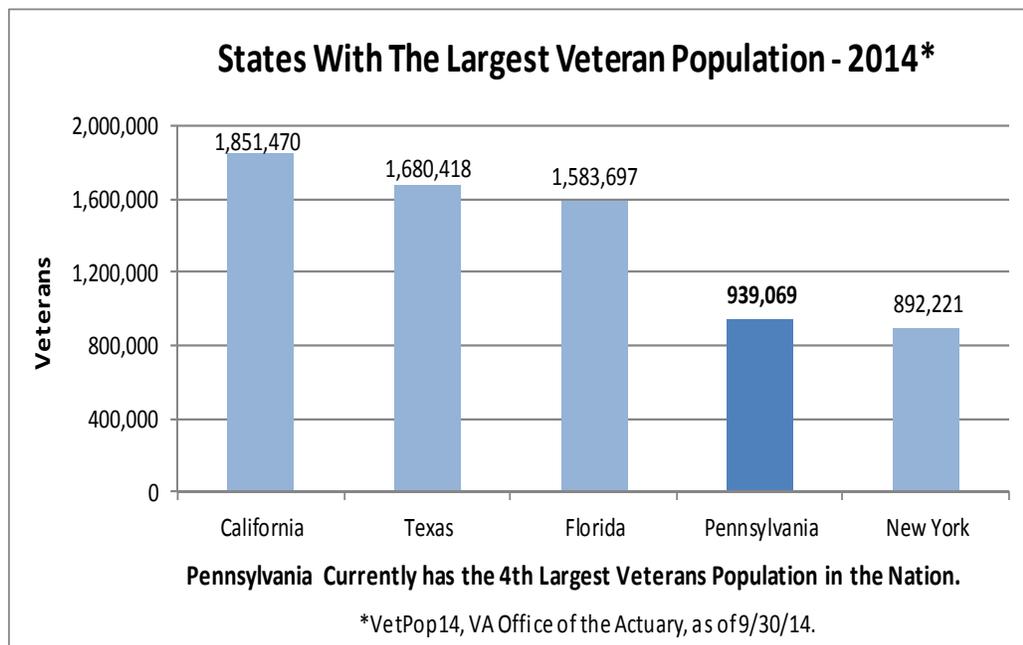
## Veterans' Driver's License Designation

On March 4, 2014 PennDOT started issuing driver's licenses with the Veterans Designation. The Office of Veterans Affairs is tasked with conducting random audits to validate "Veteran Status" and "Eligibility" for those applicants who self-certify that they are Veterans. During this State Fiscal Year 113,178 Veterans applied for

and received the Veteran designation. The Office of Veterans Affairs has audited approximately 12% of those applications. Data for SFY 2014 reflects an error rate of less than 2%. The number of Veteran Designations is projected to double at the end of 2015.



## Pennsylvania is home to the 4th largest Veteran Population in the Nation



# Veteran Service Officer Accreditation Training and Continuing Education

## Division of Programs and Services

The Office of Veterans Affairs administers all State Benefit Programs. State Benefits programs are managed under the Division of Programs and Services. This Division is responsible for the direct delivery of services to our Veterans and their families. Each program is managed by a Veteran Service Specialist (VSS) who is dedicated to providing benefits to our eligible Veterans and their families. State Benefits are legislated and funded through our State Government. These benefits often supplement USDVA benefits but they are intended as state recognition for service rendered by our Veterans. Our State Benefits Programs provide unique and much needed assistance to our Veterans

The CEU Conference is based on the continuing Education requirements of the National Association of County Veterans Service Officers (NACVSO). NACVSO requires 16 hours of annual training. New VSO's are taught an accreditation class based off federal standards which is approved by USDVA General counsel and instructed by VA Regional Employee's in accordance with 38 CFR §14.629

All VSO's accredited through DMVA and other Veterans Organizations whom have Accredited Service Officers that need to

complete their Annual Continuing Education requirements. Also a New Accreditation class is held for new Service Officers

The DMVA training conference is held annually in the fall. DMVA currently has a contract with the Mechanicsburg Park Inn for the third week of September each year to conduct our training conference. We are currently in the second year of a three year contract.

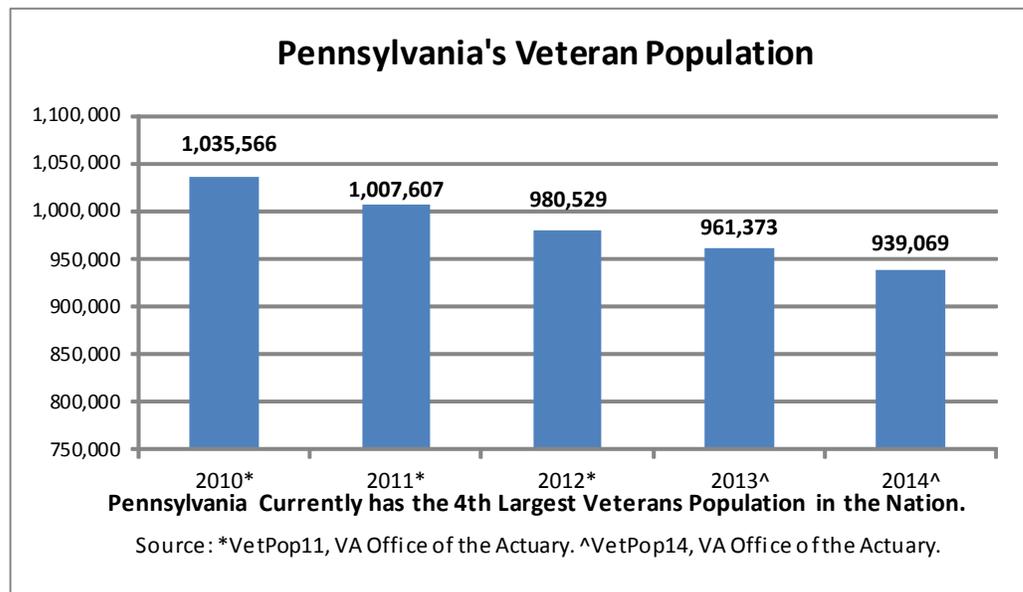
In 2014 we trained 118 VSO's in our CEU conference and 49 VSO's in our Accreditation class.

## Military Family Relief and Assistance (MFRAP) Program

MFRAP experienced two significant changes in SFY 2014. Act 66 of 2014 was adopted on June 18 2014. Eligibility was increased from two years to three years after the release from active duty. Eligibility may be extended to four year following separation from active duty if the member was discharged for medical reasons; the need for assistance is related to



exigent circumstances beyond the control of the eligible members or the disability incurred in the line of duty of the military service. From 1 July 2014 to 30 Jun2015 we paid \$148,459.09 in benefits to 53 families. The OVA has an active initiative to facilitate on-line donations to support MFRAP from public and private donors.



# Persian Gulf Veterans' Bonus

The Persian Gulf Bonus Program has processed 11,666 applications since the programs' inception. A total of 9,057

applications have been approved for a total program expenditure of \$3,845,562.50

## Amputee and Paralyzed Veterans' Pension (APVP)

APVP was changed by Act 180 of 2014 which further defined the disability requirements associated with eligibility for the program. The PVP requires a 40% disability as rated by the USDVA in each of at least two extremities to be eligible for the benefit. The PVP program continues to

grow at a manageable rate. In the period of 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015 the PVP Program has made payments to 1,781 Veterans for a total expenditure of \$3.1 Million. The PVP program is funded through a line item appropriation of over \$3.5 Million.

## Disabled Veterans' Real Estate Tax Exemption (RETX) Program

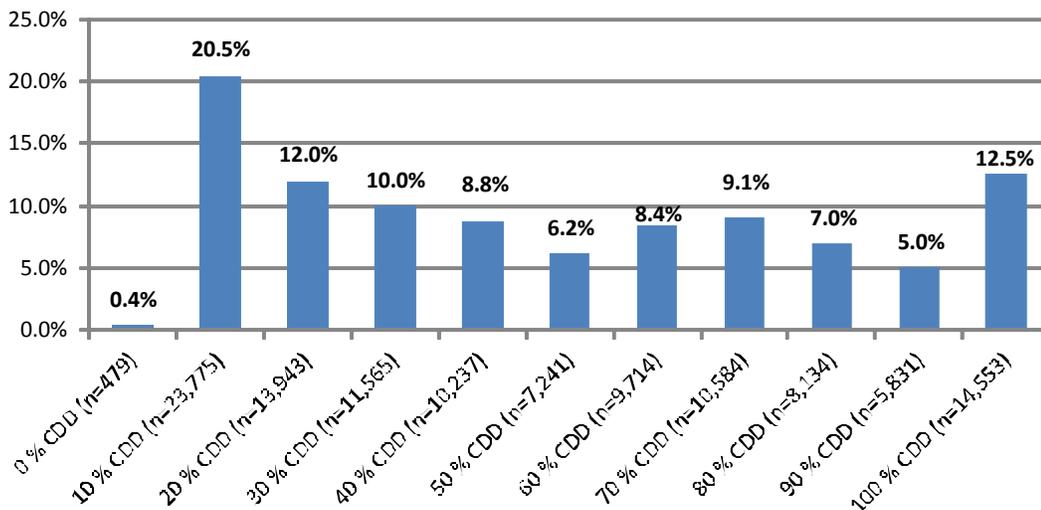
RETX provides economic relief to veterans that have been rated permanently or 100% totally disabled by the USDVA and that have demonstrated financial need in accordance with the provisions set by the State Veterans Commission. This is a shared benefit

between the Commonwealth and the Counties. As mandated in 51 Pa C.S. Chapter 89. From the period of 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015 the RETX Section has adjudicated 1,100 claims. The OVA receives approximately 300 claims for the RETX benefit each month.

### *Pennsylvania Veterans' Memorial*

A long-time dream of Pennsylvania's Veterans became a reality October 7, 2001, with the dedication of the Pennsylvania Veterans' Memorial. This Memorial honors Pennsylvania's Veterans of all eras from the Revolutionary War forward. It stands as a central location for ceremony and contemplation, education and commemoration and as a lasting tribute to those who served our state and nation in times of war and peace. The PA Veterans Memorial is located in Lebanon County at Indiantown Gap National Cemetery. The concept of the Memorial was to create a place where visitors can remember and honor the dedication and sacrifice Pennsylvania Veterans have demonstrated in defense of our freedom. The Memorial is in need of many repairs due to age. We have requested \$1.2 million to facilitate the repairs.

**Pennsylvania Veterans Receiving Compensation (N=116,056) by Combined Disability Degree (CDD) Rating\***



\* PA Veterans Receiving Compensation by CDD Rating, as of 8/31/15, Pittsburgh VA Office.

# The Bureau of Veterans' Homes (BVH)

## *The Bureau of Veterans' Homes Monthly Newsletters*

All six State Veterans' Homes have established monthly newsletters for residents, families and staff. The newsletters provide information on upcoming events, recent activities and other interesting facts and articles for sharing. Newsletters are available at the Homes and online at: [www.dmva.pa.gov](http://www.dmva.pa.gov).

### Valley Voice

presented by Delaware Valley Veterans' Home

### Merli Messenger

presented by Gino J. Merli Veterans' Center

### A New Beginning

presented by Hollidaysburg Veterans' Home

### Blockhouse Beacon

presented by PA Soldiers' & Sailors' Home

### Vet Gazette

presented by Southeastern Veterans' Center

### Old Glory

presented by Southwestern Veterans' Center

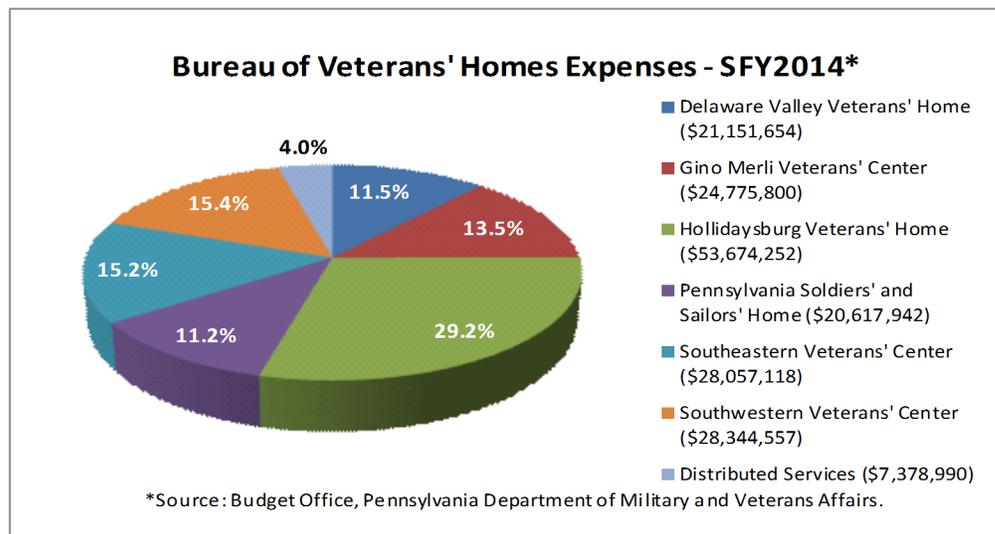
The Bureau of Veterans' Homes provides quality long term care for our elderly Veterans through the facilities and staff associated with our six State Veterans

Homes. During this period our Veterans Homes continue to be recognized for various accomplishments and improvements. These include but are not limited to:

- ☞ Hollidaysburg Veterans Home recognized in Auditor General's Report for financial savings of approximately \$500,000.
- ☞ Delaware Valley Veterans Home, Pennsylvania Soldiers and Sailors Home, and Southwestern Veterans Center received an overall 5 star rating in the U.S. News and World Report Best Nursing home list for 2015 placing them in the top 19% of nursing homes throughout the Commonwealth
- ☞ Decertified 32 personal care beds to provide additional 32 skilled nursing beds for more acutely ill Veterans in the Southwestern Veterans' Center
- ☞ We maintained a 91% fill rates throughout the Veteran Homes.
- ☞ 23 ongoing construction improvement projects throughout the State Veterans' Homes at a cost of \$27M, of which 48% was provided via grants by the Department of Veterans Affairs.
- ☞ The Department completed six construction projects throughout the six State Veterans' Homes that Enhanced

Safety and Quality of Care. Bureau of State Veterans homes conducted its bi-annual family satisfaction survey. Based upon responses from 567 family members/primary resident contacts the homes received an overall satisfaction rating of 94% with 91% of respondents indicating they would recommend the home to others.

- ☞ We realigned the revenue offices for the Bureau of State Veterans Homes providing additional management and oversight. This new organization is expected to increase homes revenue by an additional \$2 million per year.
- ☞ New admissions and marketing coordinator hired for State Veterans Homes has resulted in increased media exposure.
- ☞ All six State Veterans' Homes initiated monthly newsletters. The Delaware Valley Veterans Home received a deficiency-free survey from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs in April 2015



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*Delaware Valley  
Veterans' Home*



*Gino J Merli  
Veterans' Center*



*Holidaysburg  
Veterans'  
Center*



*PA  
Soldiers'  
and  
Sailors'  
Home*

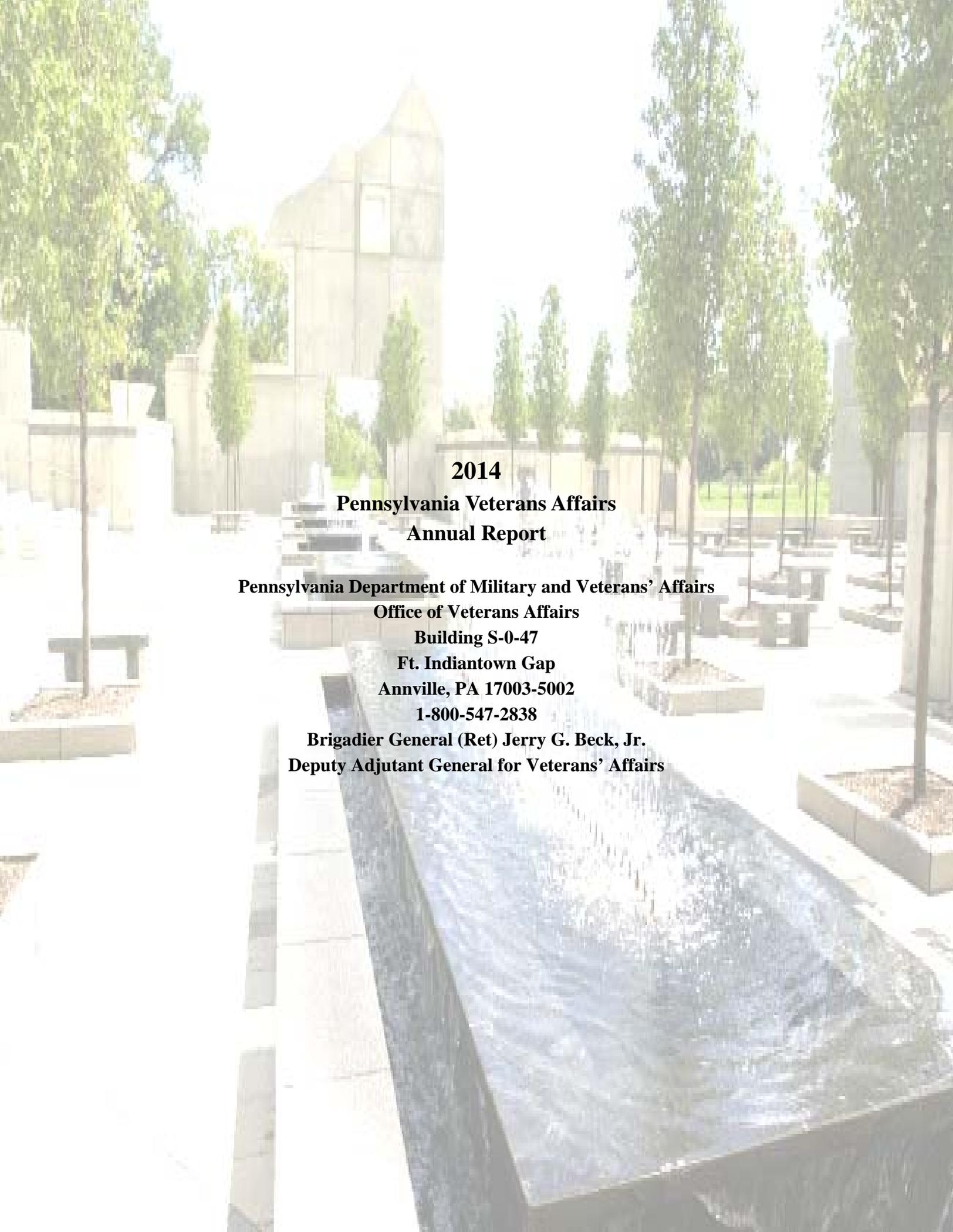


*Southwestern  
Veterans'  
Center*



*Southeastern  
Veterans' Center*





**2014**

**Pennsylvania Veterans Affairs  
Annual Report**

**Pennsylvania Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs**

**Office of Veterans Affairs**

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**Brigadier General (Ret) Jerry G. Beck, Jr.**

**Deputy Adjutant General for Veterans' Affairs**