

1000 (5)	CALL TO ORDER	Chairman Sam Petrovich
	Moment of Silence	Vice-Chairwoman Connie Snavelly
	Pledge of Allegiance	Chairman Sam Petrovich
1005 (5)	Commission Introduction	Chairman Sam Petrovich
1016 (10)	DMVA Military Update	Maj Gen Anthony Carrelli
1026 (10)	VISN 4	Mr. Tim Liezert
	OLD BUSINESS	
	NEW BUSINESS	
1036 (10)	DMVA, Policy, Planning & Legislative Affairs	Mr. Dusty Durand
1046 (10)	DMVA, Bureau of Veterans Homes	Mr. Andrew Ruscavage
1056 (10)	DMVA, Bureau of Programs, Initiatives, Reintegration and Outreach (PIRO)	Mr. Joel Mutschler
1106 (4)	Approval of Programs Report (Report provided by DMVA)	REQUIRES A VOTE
1110 (5)	Act 66 Committee report	Mr. Kit Watson
1115 (5)	RETX Committee report	Mr. Matthew Zamosky
1120 (5)	Legislative Committee report	Chairman Sam Petrovich
1125 (5)	Pensions & Relief/Grave markings Committee report	Vice-Chairwoman Connie Snavelly
1130 (5)	Member-at-Large Committee	Chairman Sam Petrovich
1135 (10)	Good of the Order	Chairman Sam Petrovich
	Mr. Santangelo KWV, Mr. Fidler KPVA, Mr. Johnson DAV	
1145 (10)	Discussion topics for next meeting	Chairman Sam Petrovich
1155 (5)	Next Meeting:	
	August 7, 2020	
	TBD	
1200	ADJOURNMENT	Chairman Sam Petrovich
	RETIRING OF COLORS	Chairman Sam Petrovich



STATE VETERANS COMMISSION MEETING

JUNE 5, 2020





DMVA MILITARY UPDATE



CURRENT AND FUTURE UNIT MOBILIZATIONS

[illegible]

ARNG Unit Soldiers in Theater: 103
ARNG Soldiers at MOB/DEMOB Site: 0
ARNG Individual Mob: 10
Total ARNG Mob: 113

**Total PANG
Mobilized: 906**

Current ANG Unit Airmen Mob: 282
Current ANG Individual Mob: 25
Total: ANG Mob: 307

As of 26MAY20 > community > commonwealth > country

> community > commonwealth > country

CURRENT MOBILIZATIONS & TOTAL DEPLOYMENTS



PAARNG Current Deployments

MDATE	MSAD	UNIT	OPN	PAX	MISSION	Projected Return Date
05 SEP 19	08 SEP 19	2-104 th AVN B CO	OFS 19-21	32	Aviation Support	23 JUL 20
05 SEP 19	08 SEP 19	2-104 th AVN D CO	OFS 19-21	21	Aviation Support	23 JUL 20
09 NOV 19	12 NOV 19	828 th FINANCE DET	OFS 19-21	19	Financial Management	12 DEC 20
04 JAN 20	07 JAN 20	213 th HR CO	OFS 20-22	26	Postal/Gateway Support	07 FEB 21
25 JAN 20	28 JAN 20	213 th HR CO	OSS 19-21	5	Gateway Support	28 FEB 21
Various Individual MOB Soldiers				10	Various Missions	Various based on tour
Total PAARNG Deployed: 113						

PAANG Current Deployments

Unit	Opn	Pax
193 SOW	OIR	191
111 ATKW	IPR (HS)/Various	36/12
171 ARW	Alert Status (HS)/OIR	37/31
Total PAANG Deployed		307

Total PANG Deployed 906

As of 26MAY20

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VISN 4



VISN 4 Access – Fiscal Year 2020 Wait Times



Clinics FY20 thru May 16	Number of Appointments	Wait <30 Days	Wait <30 Days	Average Wait
ALL	1,337,068	1,272,047	96.1%	4.6
Mental Health	185,744	178,930	97.4%	3.5
Primary Care	273,557	268,408	98.1%	3.4
Specialty Care	460,142	419,884	93.5%	7.1

Data updated 5/18/2020 with appointment info as of 5/16/20.

June 2020 Update

> community > commonwealth > country

VISN 4 Access – Current Average Wait Times



VISN 4 Facility	Primary Care		Mental Health Care	
	New Patients	Returning Patients	New Patients	Returning Patients
James E. Van Zandt VAMC *	0	1	7	4
Abie Abraham HCC	6	1	9	4
Coatesville VAMC	1	0	5	4
Erie VAMC	7	2	10	1
Lebanon VAMC *	0	1	12	2
Corporal Michael J. Crescenz VAMC *	0	1	11	0
VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System	2 (Hz) 8 (UD)	3 (Hz) 2 (UD)	17 (Hz) 5 (UD)	3 (Hz) 2 (UD)
Wilkes-Barre VAMC	8	0	3	2
Wilmington VAMC	11	3	12	4

* The primary care average wait times for new patients have significantly dropped since last month most likely as a result of canceled or rescheduled routine patient appointments due to COVID-19.

Data updated 5/18/2020 with wait times as of 5/11/20 for last 30 days.

accesstocare.va.gov

June 2020 Update

> community > commonwealth > country

VISN 4 Care in the Community



Care in the Community Consults (Scheduled and Completed)		Non-VA Unique Patients*
FY 16	69,678	52,726
FY 17	74,568	58,699
FY 18	87,707	62,428
FY 19	101,069	70,382
FY 20 (as of 5/17/20)	101,745	69,425

*Number of unique enrolled Veterans who receive community care at VA expense



OLD BUSINESS





NEW BUSINESS





**DMVA
POLICY, PLANNING & LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS
MR. DUSTY DURAND**



Legislation Supporting Veterans

SB 952 (Regan) Amends Title 51 (Military Affairs), in veterans' preference, repealing provisions relating to soldier defined, for purpose and definitions, repealing provisions relating to credits in civil service exams, for preference in appointment or promotion. ([Set on the Senate Calendar 5/18/2020](#))

SB 276 (Ward) Increases the monthly pension amounts for both the blind and paralyzed/amputee veterans pension programs from the current \$150 to \$180. ([Set on the Senate Calendar 5/18/2020](#))

SB 1076 (Baker) Removes the expiration date from the Military Family Relief Assistance Program. (Referred to the Senate Appropriation 4/21/2020)

HB 1787 (Sainato) – Joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, in taxation and finance, further providing for exemptions and special provisions. (Introduced and referred to House VAEP 8/30/2019)

HB 1609 (O'Mara) Would increase voluntary donation amounts to the Veterans' Trust Fund. (Final House Passage 192-0, Referred to the Senate VAEP 6/21/2019)

Legislation Supporting Veterans

HB 86 (Maloney) Requires the POW/MIA flag to be flown on state grounds and buildings when the American flag is also being flown and when the POW/MIA flag can be reasonably accommodated at the location. (Final House Passage 198-0, Referred to the Senate State Government 4/22/2020)

HB 233 (O'Neal) Second Class County Code/veterans grave decorations. The legislation would enhance current law to require cemeteries to remove flags when they become unsightly or weatherworn after Veterans Day, and for the flags to be American made. The proposal allows for a family member to remove and keep the flag from the grave after Veterans Day. Additionally, the bill would clarify current law to ensure greater communication between cemeteries, local veterans' organizations, and county commissioners, who are currently required to provide the flags. The measure applies only to Allegheny County. (Final House Passage 194-0, Set on Senate Calendar 11/19/2019)

HB 375 (Goodman) Removes the value of federal veterans disability payments and the value of all state service-connected payments from income eligibility calculations for the PACE and PACENET programs. (Final House Passage 193-0, Set on Senate Calendar 1/27/2020)

Legislation Supporting Veterans

HB 408 (Staats) Requires funeral directors and cemeteries to notify the county veterans affairs director of a deceased service person and that contact information for the director be given to the families of the deceased service person. (Final House Passage 194-0, Referred to the Senate VAEP 1/23/2020)

HB 1050 (Burns) Would establish enrollment requirements for military personnel, veterans and their families to help qualify for in-state tuition rates at public colleges and universities. (Final House Passage 192-0, [Set on Senate Calendar 5/18/2020](#))

HB 1199 (Goodman) Amends Title 51 (Military Affairs), in veterans pensions and benefits, further providing for blind veterans pension and for amputee and paralyzed veterans pension. (Introduced and Referred to the House VAEP 4/15/2019)

HB 1380 (Boback) Would provide for fishing license and hunting license reciprocity for active duty military members and disabled veterans. (Final House Passage 200-0, Referred to the Senate Game and Fisheries 7/8/2019)

HB 2082 (Gregory) Increases the monthly pension amounts for both the blind and paralyzed/amputee veterans pension programs from the current \$150 to \$200. (Referred to the Senate VAEP 2/19/2020)

Legislation Supporting National Guard

HB 1338 (Barrar) Establishes the Keystone State Challenge Academy Fund as a special fund within the Treasury. (Awaiting 2nd consideration, [Set on Calendar 5/20/2020](#))

HB 630 (Day) Would provide employment protections to Pennsylvania residents who are members of a National Guard or Reserve unit in another state. (Final House Passage 192—0, Reported from the Senate Appropriations after second consideration 2/3/2020)

Legislation Under Review

SB 957 (Bartolotta) Creates a veterans-owned small business logo to recognized Pennsylvania businesses which are 51% owned by veterans, National Guard, or reserve members ([Set on Senate Calendar 5/18/2020](#))

HB 863 (Barrar) Amends the State Lottery Law, in State lottery, further providing for statement of purpose, for powers and duties of secretary and for disposition of funds and providing for instant lottery game to benefit veterans. (Introduced and Referred to the House VAEP 3/18/2019)

HB 2022 (Kaufer) Amends Title 51 (Military Affairs), in Department of Military Affairs, establishing the Veterans' Peer Outreach and Support Network Program. (Introduced and Referred to the House VAEP 1/17/2020)

HB 2126 (Murt) Amends Title 51 (Military Affairs), in Department of Military Affairs, further providing for veterans registry; and making an editorial change. (Introduced and Referred to the House VAEP 12/16/2019)

HB 2248 (Hill-Evans) Amends Title 42 (Judiciary), in post-trial matters, for eligibility for relief, for postconviction review for veterans with traumatic brain injury or post-traumatic stress disorder & for jurisdiction & proceedings; in sentencing. (Introduced and Referred to the House VAEP 1/30/2020)



DMVA BUREAU OF VETERANS HOMES
MR. ANDREW RUSCAVAGE



BUREAU OF VETERANS' HOMES



Regulatory Agency	DVVH	GMVC	HVH	PSSH	SEVC	SWVC
Dates of Last Inspection						
PA Department of Health	02/2020 Full Standard Licensure Status	01/2020 Full Standard Licensure Status	11/2019 Full Standard Licensure Status	12/2019 Full Standard Licensure Status	10/2019 Full Standard Licensure Status	11/2019 Full Standard Licensure Status
PA Department of Human Services	N/A	N/A	11/2019 Full Standard Licensure Status	08/2019 Full Standard Licensure Status	11/2019 Full Standard Licensure Status	N/A
US Department of Veterans Affairs	04/2019 Full Standard Licensure Status	02/2020 Full Standard Licensure Status	06/2019 Full Standard Licensure Status	02/2020 Full Standard Licensure Status	02/2020 Full Standard Licensure Status	05/2019 Full Standard Licensure Status

As of 1 June 20

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> country



**DMVA BUREAU OF PROGRAMS, INITIATIVES,
REINTEGRATION AND OUTREACH
MR. JOEL MUTSCHLER**





Veterans Benefits Continue to be Available During COVID-19

While we have implemented social distancing, employees are processing applications for all programs as they are received.

- **Veterans Temporary Assistance/Military Family Relief Assistance Program** - Applications are processed as they are received. Applications for VTA are initiated through the County Director of Veterans Affairs (CDVA). If the CDVA staff are not available due to county office closure, the veteran may contact us directly at 800-547-2838 or by email at Ra-vta@pa.gov. DMVA has provided this information within the weekly DMVA Digest e-newsletter as well as social media posts through DMVA Communications staff. Applications for these programs are our priority.
- **Disabled Veteran Real Estate Tax Exemption Program** – These applications must be initiated by the local County Directors' Office of Veteran Affairs. A decrease in the number of applications is anticipated as county offices close or are unable to accept in-person appointments. DMVA does not anticipate that there will be an effect on applicants at this time. DMVA has adjusted our administrative process in relation to the effective date of applications. Specifically, if needed, correspondence (hard copy or email) from the county would meet the provision to establish the effective date.
- **Pension Programs (Amputee & Paralyzed & Blind)** – DMVA does not anticipate any delay in payments.
- **Educational Gratuity** – DMVA does not anticipate any delay in payments.
- **Discharge Records Request Programs** – DMVA does not anticipate an interruption of service related to Veterans Discharge Records Request Program. Requests are being processed as they are received. However, please note the State Archives is closed, we are working the requests we can from DMVA Archives. This effects requests for older Pennsylvania National Guard records. Also, please note the National Personnel Records Center is servicing only urgent requests related to homeless veterans, medical emergencies, and funerals, which may be faxed to 314-801-0764.
- **Outreach Events** – All outreach events have been canceled until further notice.
- **PA VETConnect** - Regional Outreach Program Coordinators (RPOCs) are assisting County Directors of Veteran Affairs (CDVA) and Veteran Advocates to enable them to better to serve our Veterans and families with additional resources. All CDVAs have been provided direct contact information for the RPOCs. RPOCs are responding to inquiries from our community partners as they are received.
- **State Veterans Commission (SVC)** – OVA has provided updates to the members of the SVC that included general information on DMVA priorities during the crisis period as well as information/links from other state agencies and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.
- **Governor's Advisory Council on Veterans Services (GAC-VS)** – DMVA remains in contact with the GAC-VS membership and continue our collaborative efforts to assist the veterans. A virtual GAC-VS meeting was held on May 20, 2020.



Initiatives

- PA VETConnect
 - This program is all about collaboration and relationship building. DMVA looks forward to more interagency/community communication and partnerships relating to assisting veterans, not just through a particular organization's lens, but from the viewpoint of "creatively helping veterans in any way possible."
 - Over 1,300 resources
- Suicide Prevention
- Interagency Partnerships

Updates

- 30 Apr 20 - Virtual town hall for Pittsburgh/Allegheny County. Approximately 130 attendees.
- 13 Apr 20 - VFHIC Virtual Town Hall. This virtual town hall presented information on resources, programs, and services in the Philadelphia area.
- 8 Apr 20 - VBA Tele-Town Hall event hosted by VA Under Secretary for Benefits. Approximately 30,000 veterans/family members

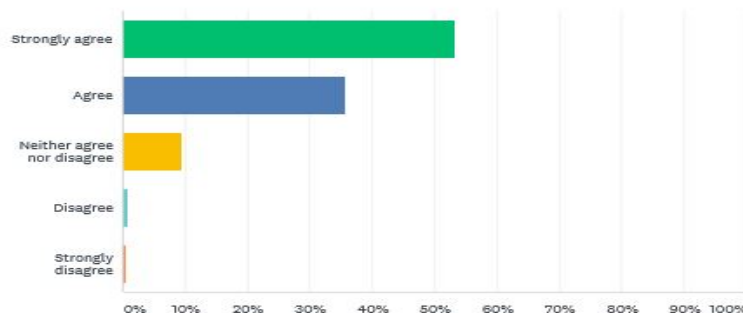
GAC-VS

- VIPS Committee
 - Plan forward being developed
- Judiciary Committee
 - Working with Federal VA on C&P exams for inmates while still incarcerated to obtain disability rating.
- Homeless Committee
 - Collaboration on Veteran re-entry from county/local incarceration
- 2020 GAC-VS Meetings
 - 19 August 2020 (meeting type unknown ATM)
 - 18 November 2020

Registry

I am satisfied with my customer experience today.

Answered: 874 Skipped: 3





- The National Institute of Corrections presents the release of Barracks Behind Bars II: In Veteran-Specific Housing Units, Veterans Help Veterans Help Themselves (Prisons Version). This paper is the fourth in the National Institute of Corrections justice-involved veteran compendium project. It highlights programs in prisons across the country that work to improve outcomes for justice-involved veterans, and - in doing so - increase safety for law enforcement officers, correctional officers, inmates, and the public. It illustrates the design/development, implementation, and sustainment of initiatives taken by enlightened, pragmatic corrections officials who have set up specialized housing—in pods, dorms, units, wings, or floors—and programming for military veterans. The publication may be found by [clicking here](#).
- PADOC Veteran Service Unit program and walks you through what the court and VSU experiences are like for justice involved veterans. The video may be found at by [clicking here](#).

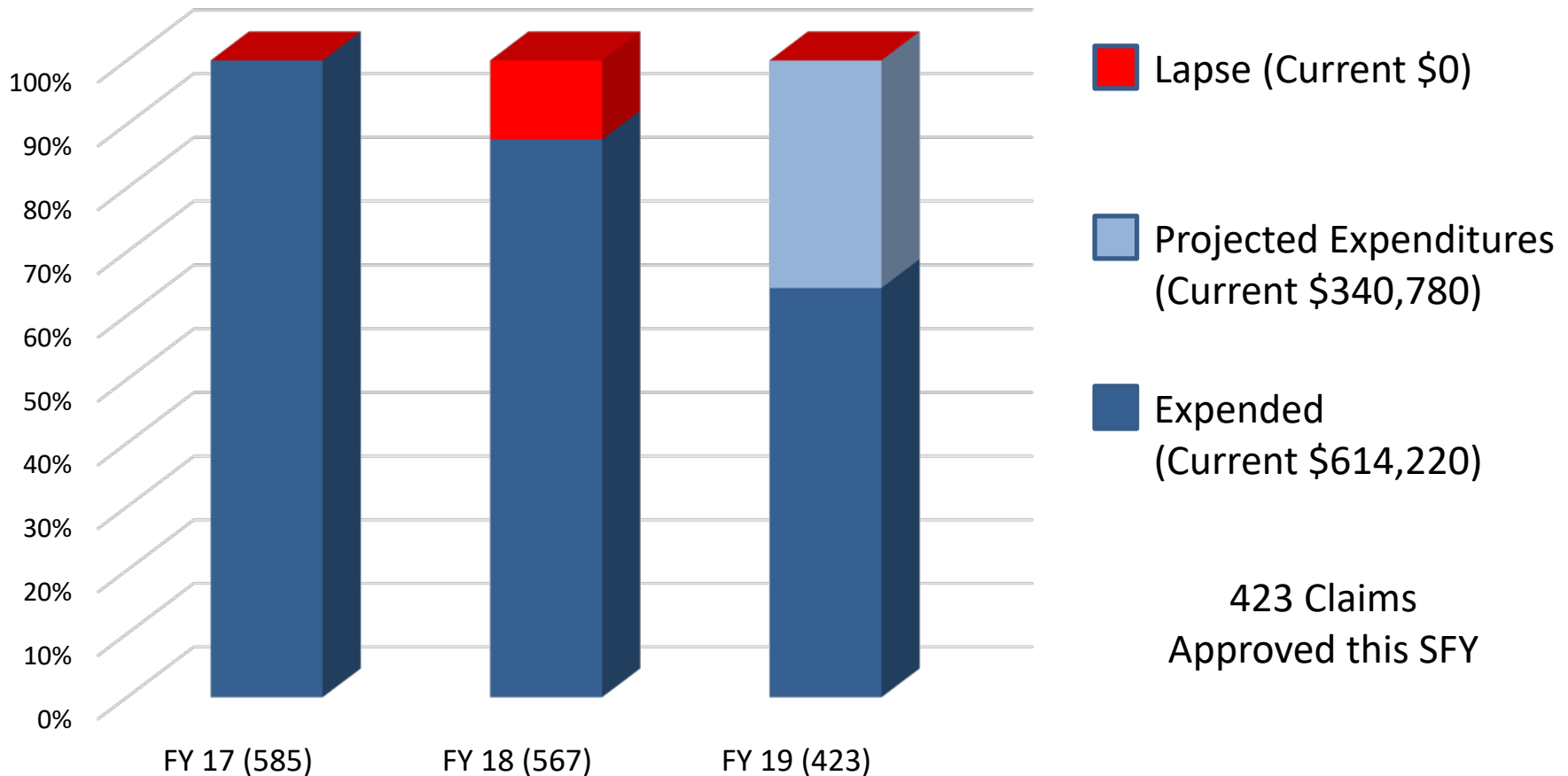
We want to hear from you. If you have ideas/initiatives that you want to share with DMVA, please contact Mr. Joel Mutschler, PIRO Bureau Director, at 717-861-8910 or RA-VA-Info@pa.gov.

Community Outreach Event may be found by clicking on the Events Calendar at www.dmva.pa.gov

VETERANS TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE



\$955,000



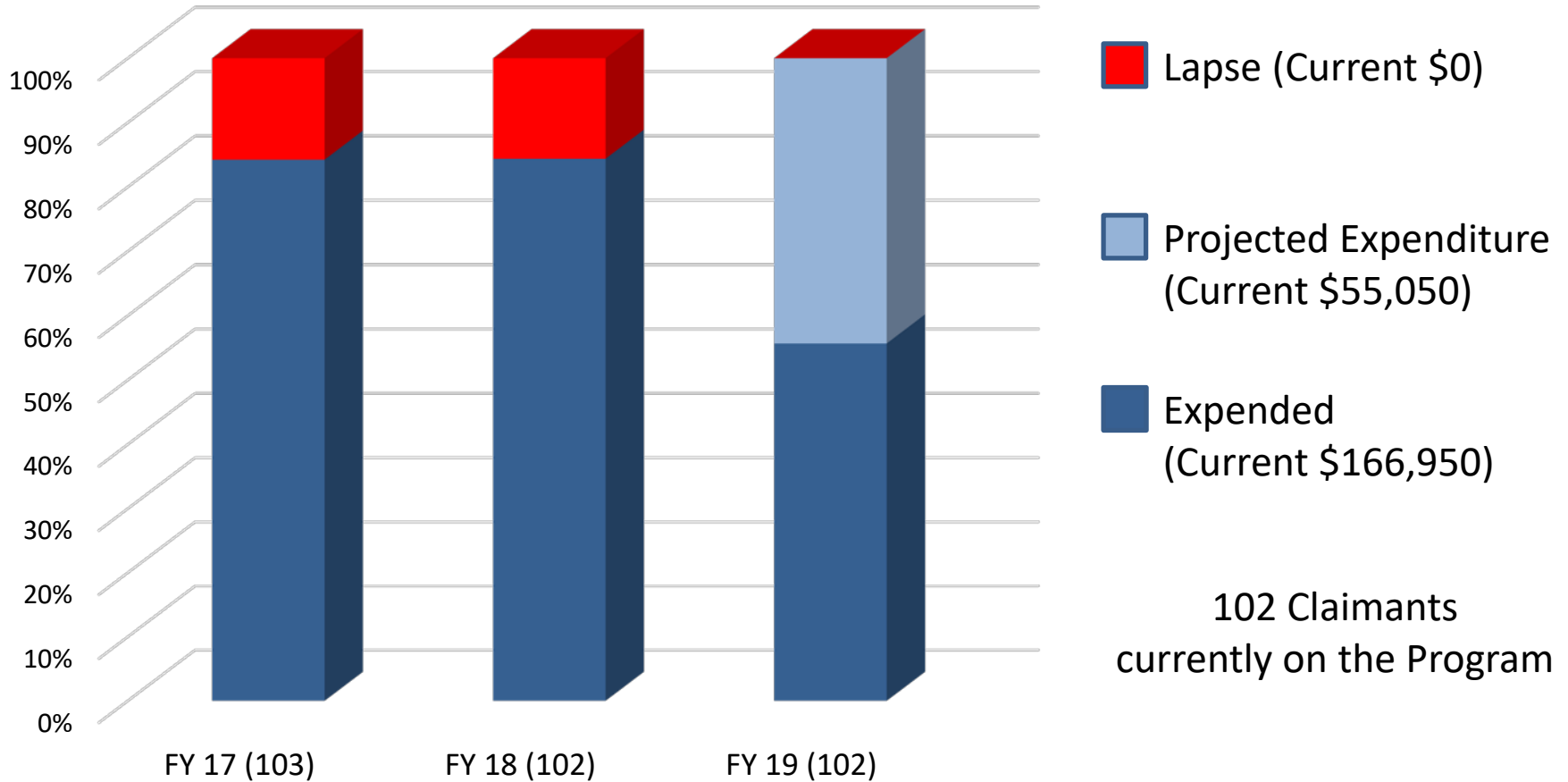
As of 30 Apr 2020

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BLIND VETERANS PENSION



\$222,000



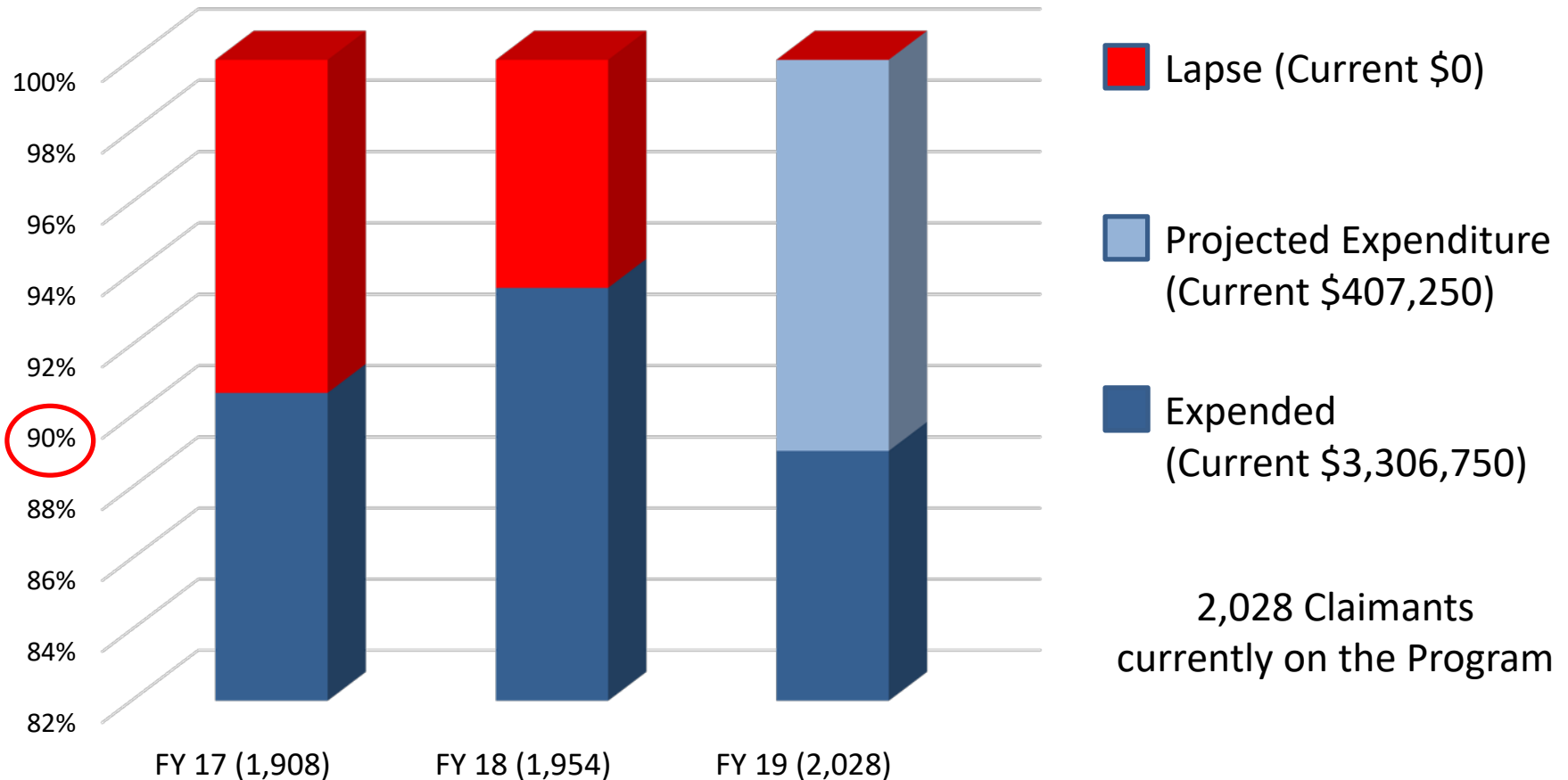
As of 30 Apr 2020

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AMPUTEE & PARALYZED VETERANS PENSION



\$3,714,000



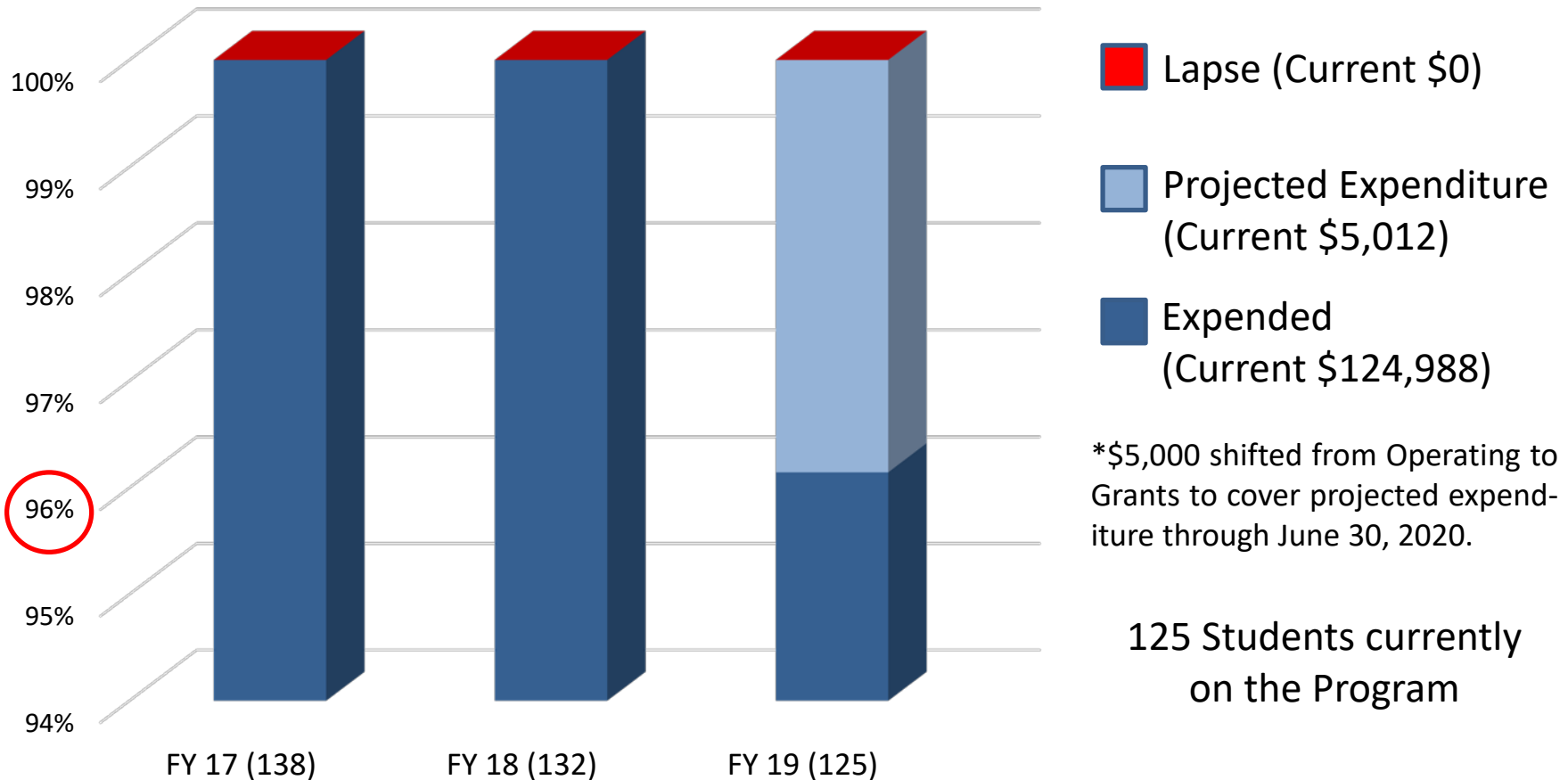
As of 30 Apr 2020

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EDUCATIONAL GRATUITY



*\$130,000



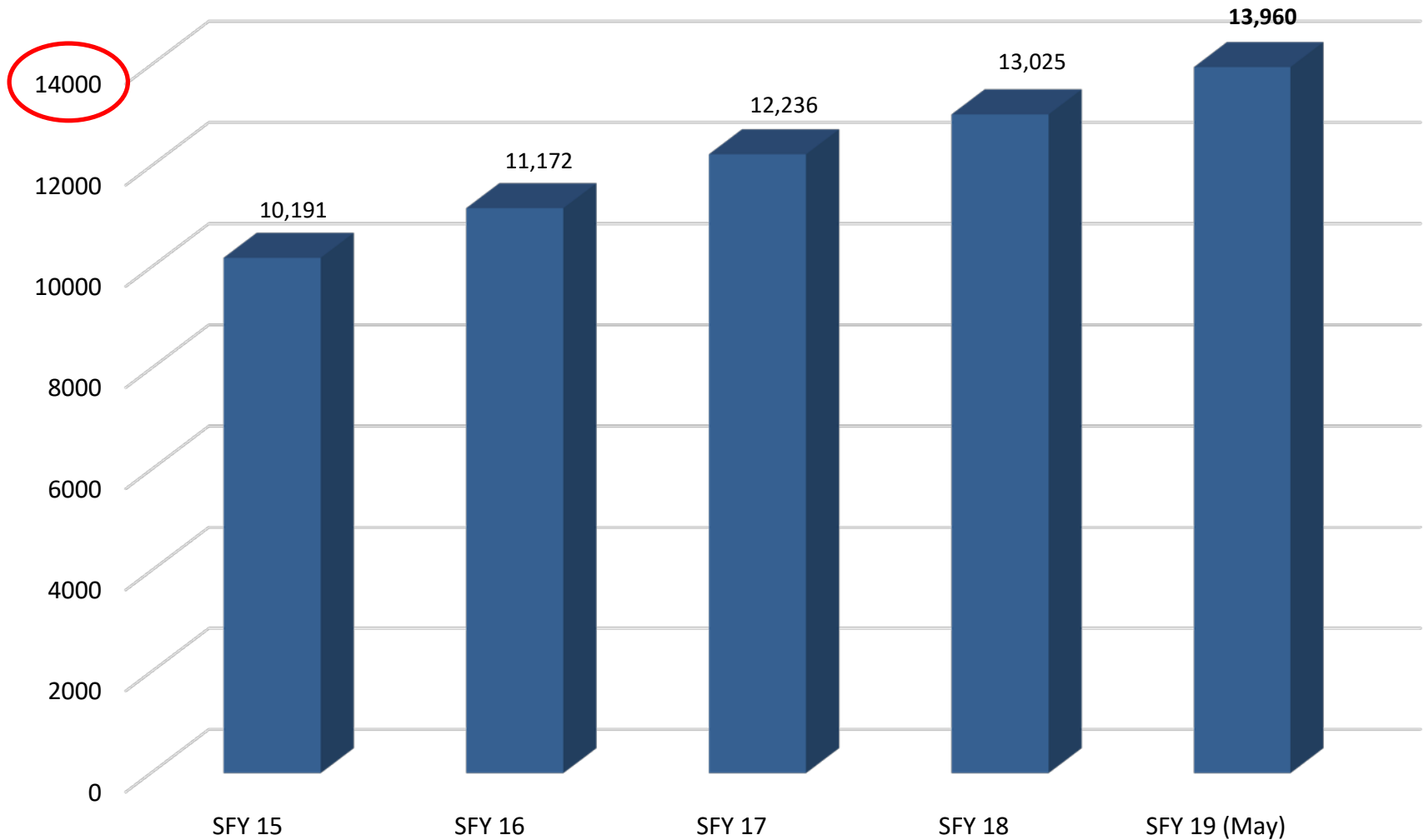
As of 30 Apr 2020

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OVERALL MFRAP CONTRIBUTIONS: FY 2005 – FY 2019 (APR 2020)

Total Private Donations.....	\$135,687.69
Total Department of Revenue, PIT Donations.....	\$1,781,971.55
Total All Contributions: Private and PIT Donations.....	\$1,917,659.24
Approved Grant Application Payments.....	\$890,921.86
Account Balance.....	\$1,026,737.38

DISABLED VETERANS TAX EXEMPTION PROGRAM



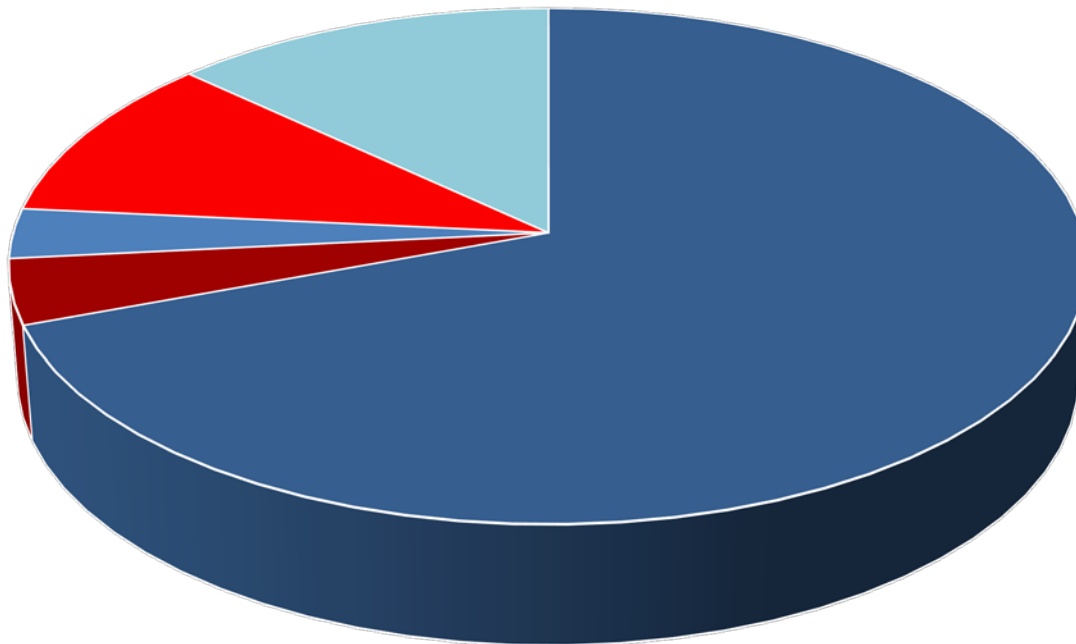
As of 21 May 2020

[> community](#) [> commonwealth](#) [> country](#)

DISABLED VETERANS TAX EXEMPTION PROGRAM



1,594 Applications Adjudicated
15 Jan to 21 May



69.3% Approved

- 1,105 Approved
- 65 Denied: Financial Need
- 50 Denied: Ineligible*
- 166 Removed: No Response
- 208 Removed: Eligibility Change

*** 50 Applications Ineligible by Reason:**

- 7 – Property claimed not owned solely by Veteran or estate by entirety with spouse
- 3 – Veteran not determined to be total and permanent 100% during lifetime
- 21 – Veteran did not served during a period of war or armed conflict
- 12 – Veteran not rated total and permanent 100% due to a future examination
- 1 – Veteran deceased
- 4 – Veteran does not occupy property as principal dwelling
- 2 – Veteran's disability not declared to be total and permanent 100%

As of 21 May 2020

> community > commonwealth > country

PENNSYLVANIA VETERANS MEMORIAL



Pennsylvania Veterans Memorial Trust Fund

Beginning Trust Fund Balance (July 1, 2019)	\$278,760.97
Grants Received	0
Public / Private Donations	\$9,636.77
License Plate Donations	\$690
Interest	\$4,210.62
Refunds of Expenditures	\$0
Total Receipts	\$14,537.39
Expenses	(\$167,245.59)
Ending Balance	\$126,052.77

As of 30 Apr 2020

[> community](#) [> commonwealth](#) [> country](#)

OVA / VSO GRANT PROGRAM SUMMARY



FY 19 - 20 Claims, Compensation and Pension Summary	
Year to Date Claims Submitted	Year to Date Value of Awards
19,224	\$175,708,311.00

FY 18 - 19 Claims, Compensation and Pension Summary	
Year to Date Claims Submitted	Year to Date Value of Awards
25,494	\$344,517,683.00

OUTREACH ENGAGEMENTS



Outreach Statistics

	1st Qtr	2nd Qtr	3rd Qtr	4th Qtr	Year to Date
Outreach Events Supported	8	16	13	0	37
Mobile Outreach Van Events	5	9	10	0	24
Veteran Interactions	65	307	613	0	985
Claim referrals to County Directors and Service Organizations	15	58	135	0	208
Legislator Attended Events	1	9	0	0	10

Upcoming Events – June

- **Legislative Events** – Representative Davidson’s Veterans Fair, East Lansdowne (TBD)
- **Events** – Donald W Jones Flag Memorial, Levittown (TBD)
- **Legislators Attending Events** – None

As of 22 May 20

> community > commonwealth > country

VETERANS' TRUST FUND



VTF Report

Source	Week	Month to Date	Fiscal Year Total		Total	# HOV Sold
Appropriation Transfer to VTF	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00		\$1,700,000.00	
HOV License Plate	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,515.00	101	\$49,635.00	3,309
PA Monuments LP	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0	\$0.00	0
HOV Motorcycle License Plate	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$120.00	8	\$2,940.00	196
HOV Women's License Plate	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$525.00	35	\$600.00	40
Checkoff & Donations	\$33,384.00	\$105,215.00	\$1,185,863.16		\$10,356,550.02	
Veterans Trust Fund Online Donations	\$0.00	\$100.00	\$738.00		\$5,078.00	
SECA Donations	\$0.00	\$207.29	\$5,444.12		\$7,891.49	
Interest	\$1,822.88	\$1,822.88	\$45,660.69		\$172,577.89	
VSO	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00		\$700,000.00	
PENNDOT Costs (SFY 16-17)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00		\$194,000.00	
PENNDOT Costs (SFY 15-16)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00		\$194,000.00	
PENNDOT Costs (SFY 14-15)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00		\$194,000.00	
PENNDOT Costs (SFY 13-14)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00		\$194,000.00	
VTF Grant NOFA (SFY 19-20)	\$0.00	\$604,184.00	\$604,184.00		\$604,184.00	
VTF Grant NOFA (SFY 18-19)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$81,681.03		\$800,000.00	
VTF Grant NOFA (SFY 17-18)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00		\$777,909.21	
VTF Grant NOFA (SFY 16-17)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00		\$641,329.75	
VTF Grant NOFA (SFY 15-16)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00		\$502,126.03	
VTF Grant NOFA (SFY 14-15)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00		\$472,473.67	
VTF Grant NOFA (SFY 13-14)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00		\$442,020.00	
Veteran Programs Training	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$3,800.00		\$8,700.00	
Veterans Assistance	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00		\$22,901.34	
VTA	\$5,380.00	\$34,742.00	\$631,568.00		4,247,630.32	
Working Balance	\$29,826.88	-\$531,580.83	-\$81,367.06		\$2,299,998.08	3,545

As of 20 May 20

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SVC ACT 66 COMMITTEE





SVC RETX COMMITTEE





SVC LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE





SVC PENSIONS & RELIEF/ GRAVE MARKING/ MILITARY CEMETERY COMMITTEE





MEMBER AT LARGE COMMITTEE





GOOD OF THE ORDER ANNOUNCEMENTS





FOR NEXT MEETING



NEXT MEETING



pennsylvania
DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY
AND VETERANS AFFAIRS

AUGUST 7, 2020

TBD

Fort Indiantown Gap

Annville, PA

Visit www.svc.pa.gov for all SVC info.

Pennsylvania State Veterans Commission

June 5, 2020

VISN Update

Good morning, everyone! This is Tim Liezert, VISN 4 network director.

You have received our slides with updated access, wait time, and trust data as a read ahead. Please let me know if you have any questions about any of that data.

1. VISN 4 Leadership Update

I am pleased to announce the appointment of Mr. Kevin Amick as the new director of the Butler VA Health Care System which was effective on April 26.

He comes to VISN 4 from the Durham VA Health Care System in Durham, North Carolina where he served as the associate medical center director. His service to VA began in 2010, and he served in various positions at the Durham VA and at the Hampton VA Medical Center in Hampton, Virginia. Kevin also served as a chief hospital corpsman and in other roles in the Navy Hospital Corps at various duty stations.

Jennifer Harkins, Associate Director for Finance and Operations, continues to serve as the Acting Director in Coatesville, and we continue to work through the process of recruiting a new facility director.

Dr. Joanne Suffoletto, the chief of staff in Butler, will be transferring to another VA in California later this year.

Dr. David Lavin, chief of staff at the Erie VA Medical Center announced that he will be retiring in September.

We are recruiting for both these Chief of Staff positions.

Jason Cave, assistant director at the Philadelphia VA, has been appointed Director of the VA Medical Center in Big Springs, Texas.

2. COVID-19 Update

Coronavirus Preparedness

VISN 4 leadership and subject matter experts have been meeting regularly since January 29 to discuss preparedness and COVID-19 response efforts network-wide. On March 9 we implemented screening measures for anyone entering our VISN 4 facilities, and on March 10, we restricted all outside visitors from our nursing homes and community living centers. On March 18, we ceased all non-urgent elective procedures to reduce unnecessary hospitalizations and to free up resources for the increasing number of Veterans diagnosed with COVID-19.

You may be aware that some community nursing home settings have a high number of positive COVID-19 tests among residents and staff. On March 17, VISN 4 started testing 100% of our CLC residents and staff to monitor the extent of infections in this highly vulnerable population. Testing will be repeated on a periodic and on-going basis to ensure a safe environment for our Veteran residents.

Things are beginning to look a bit better. No site in VISN 4 has been overwhelmed with Veterans suffering from coronavirus, but there is much more work to do. We are currently implementing plans to begin re-opening some of our services halted due to COVID-19. Erie was selected as our lead site to begin reintroducing health care services.

VISN 4 is committed to providing high-quality care while keeping Veterans safe from COVID-19. In your read ahead material, I included several ways to prevent COVID-19 exposure or transmission by accessing VA care remotely from home. Please help us spread the word that these programs are now available.

(they have the following info as a read ahead so you don't have to go through these)

- **Video or Telephone Appointments**

Rather than going to a VA facility, you can receive care at home with a video or phone appointment. To set up a VA Video Connect or phone appointment, send your provider a secure message on My HealtheVet. To learn more about VA Video Connect, visit the VA mobile app store. mobile.va.gov/app/va-video-connect

- **Prescription Refills**

Request prescription refills and order and ship medications to your home using My HealtheVet or the Rx Refill mobile app. To learn more, visit the VA mobile app store. mobile.va.gov/app/rx-refill

- **Text Message Reminders**

Annie's Coronavirus Precautions protocol sends you automated text messages with information about COVID-19, helps you monitor for symptoms, and can assist you if you need to contact your VA facility for care. The messages also provide education, general wellness tips and steps you can take to protect yourself. To learn more, visit the VA mobile app store. mobile.va.gov/annie

- **Secure Messaging**

With My HealtheVet, VA's online patient portal, you can send online secure messages to your VA health care team to ask them non-urgent health questions. myhealth.va.gov

- **Home Telehealth**

For Veterans recommended for home isolation or quarantine, your provider may use remote monitoring devices to assess your condition while you're at home. telehealth.va.gov/type/home

- **COVID Coach Mobile App**

The COVID Coach app is available for everyone and offers support for self-care and overall mental health during the coronavirus pandemic. https://www.ptsd.va.gov/appvid/mobile/COVID_coach_app.asp

(END read ahead info)

If you need more information on the VA's COVID-19 response efforts, please refer to the national VA Public Health COVID-19 webpage at www.va.gov/coronavirus.

3. Customer Service Update

VISN News

The Patient Experience teams in Pittsburgh and Philadelphia were recently highlighted at the national level for their innovative efforts to reach veterans isolated during COVID-19. Both teams have been making targeted “comfort calls” to veterans who have had or will have a birthday during quarantine, as they are unable to celebrate with friends and family during this time.

This effort has expanded into other service lines as well. In Philadelphia, they are ensuring that the elderly population is food secure, and if not, they are delivering food to them.

VSIGNALS

Overall, the National Trust score is 89.4, and in VISN 4, the trust score is 92.5, which is the 2nd highest in country.

Top 5 Compliments over last 90 days: Quality of care, Interactions with staff, Cleanliness of facility, Agent Orange related, Courtesy of Healthcare Providers.

A new filter was added for COVID related comments, and 139 comments have been received in VISN 4. Of those 139 comments, 102 were compliments or recommendations, and 47 raised concerns. Many of the concerns were related to not knowing how or when Veterans can reschedule appointments. Patient Experience representatives have been tasked with reaching out to these Veterans to provide information on facility protocols.

4. MISSION Act Update/CCN

All VISN 4 stations have transitioned to the Optum Community Care Network.

Our Veterans are also able to access Optum's Urgent Care network, comprised of more than 100 locations with over 480 providers.

Veterans now have access to more than 100,000 in-network providers, delivering quality health care across VISN 4.

5. Connected Care Update

To ensure the safety of our Veterans and Staff during the COVID-19 pandemic, VISN 4 significantly increased the use of virtual care to support Veterans in their homes. This month our network is on pace to complete at least 6 times as many video visits as we did in February. Almost all mental health and primary care visits are now being held through video or telephone. Many classes and groups continue to be held as VA Video Connect allows groups to meet virtually.

Recently, VISN 4 expanded video-to-home to other specialties such as Home-Based Primary Care, Nutrition, Home Telehealth and Veterans Justice Outreach. Our network also saw significant increases in Secure Messaging use as My HealtheVet Premium account users are encouraged to contact their providers to ensure their needs are met.

My HealtheVet Coordinators at VISN 4 medical centers are now able to assist Veterans through VA Video Connect. Veterans with a My HealtheVet account who need assistance or have questions may contact their local My HealtheVet Coordinator to set up a video link. For those Veterans who need to upgrade their account to Premium in order to use Secure Messaging, the local My HealtheVet Coordinator can complete the necessary Identity Verification process through video.

Any Veterans wishing to register for a My HealtheVet account should visit www.myhealth.va.gov, then contact their local coordinator to upgrade their account through video.

6. Tele Urgent Care

Veterans receiving health care at VA medical centers throughout VISN 4 can now obtain care with a video chat or phone call. Using VA Video Connect and the camera on their smart phone, computer, or tablet, Veterans can meet privately and securely in a virtual medical room with a licensed independent provider or physician.

Veterans can get care now by calling 1-833-TELE-URGENT (1-833-835-3874) or visit www.visn4.va.gov/tele-urgent/ for more info.

Closing

In closing, I'd like to thank you for your continued support of VA and VISN 4. We could not accomplish our mission without it. And thank you for inviting VISN 4 to join you for this meeting. Please let me know if you have any questions for me.

RETX- Exempt list(New)

-

mvfigsqlprod01
5/26/2020
rep_VADC_RETX_Exempt_List_
New

Summary of Current Applications (Exempt)

Count	No Activity	Review Process Started	Review App Received	New Apps Pending
13976	13331	582	63	148

Summary of Activity from 01/15/2020 to 05/21/2020

Apps Created : 1050	
New	574
Review:	476
Apps Approved :1122	
New	587
Review	535
Apps Denied Fin:	65
Apps Denied (Ineligible):	50
Apps Removed from Exempt List (No Response):	164
Apps Removed from Exempt List(Eligibility Changed):	208

Summary of Ineligible Reason

Reason	Count
	1
The property for which you claim exemption is not owned solely by you, or as an estate by the entirety with your spouse.	6
The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs has determined that the veteran did not have a total and/or 100% permanent disability during their lifetime.	3
The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs has determined that the veteran did not serve during a period of war or armed conflict.	21
The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs stated that you have a future exam , therefore, your disability has not been rated as total or 100% permanent.	12
Veteran Deceased	1
You do not occupy the property for which you have claimed exemption as your principal dwelling.	4
Your disability has not been declared by the U. S. Department of Veterans Affairs to be a total or 100% permanent disability.	2

Summary of Activity from 1/15/2020 to 5/21/2020

APPS APPROVED	1122
NEW	574
REVIEW	476

APPS DENIED	
Financial Need	65
Ineligible	50
No Response	164
Change of Eligibility	208

HH Over Income	128
NEW	85
REVIEW	43

11%
15%
9%

APPS CREATED	1050
TOTAL ADJUDICATED	1609

Bureau of Veterans' Homes
Available Beds Monthly Status Report
from April 1 to 30, 2020

Delaware Valley Veterans' Home, Philadelphia - Peter Ojeda - Commandant						
Level of Care	Available Beds	Beds Assigned	Beds Vacant	Average Beds Vacant	Percentage Filled	Waiting List Veteran
Nursing Care*	90	85	5		94%	59
Memory Care	30	30	0		100%	23
Placing						0
TOTAL	120	115	5	0	96%	82
Non-Veteran Census Percent				0	5%	
Gino J. Merli Veterans' Center, Scranton - James Miller - Commandant						
Level of Care	Available Beds	Beds Assigned	Beds Vacant	Average Beds Vacant	Percentage Filled	Waiting List Veteran
Nursing Care	156	138	18		88%	11
Memory Care	40	37	3		93%	2
Placing						0
TOTAL	196	175	21	6	89%	13
Non-Veteran Census Percent				7	12%	
Holidaysburg Veterans' Home, Holidaysburg - Deborah Nesbella - Commandant						
Level of Care	Available Beds	Beds Assigned	Beds Vacant	Average Beds Vacant	Percentage Filled	Waiting List Veteran
Nursing Care	231	206	25		89%	8
Memory Care	26	21	5		81%	1
Personal Care	101	49	52		49%	1
Domiciliary	66	61	5		92%	0
Placing						0
TOTAL	424	337	87	78	79%	10
Non-Veteran Census Percent				83	12%	
Pennsylvania Soldiers' & Sailors' Home, Erie - Barbara Raymond - Commandant						
Level of Care	Available Beds	Beds Assigned	Beds Vacant	Average Beds Vacant	Percentage Filled	Waiting List Veteran
Nursing Care	75	75	0		100%	11
Memory Care	32	25	7		78%	3
Personal Care	80	52	28		65%	1
Domiciliary	20	20	0		100%	0
Placing						0
TOTAL	207	172	35	28	83%	15
Non-Veteran Census Percent				32	14%	
Southeastern Veterans' Center, Spring City - Rohan Blackwood - Commandant						
Level of Care	Available Beds	Beds Assigned	Beds Vacant	Average Beds Vacant	Percentage Filled	Waiting List Veteran
Nursing Care	208	132	76		63%	45
Memory Care	30	27	3		90%	15
Personal Care	54	44	10		81%	18
Placing						0
TOTAL	292	203	89	4	70%	78
Non-Veteran Census Percent				5	9%	
Southwestern Veterans' Center, Pittsburgh - Richard R. Adams - Commandant						
Level of Care	Available Beds	Beds Assigned	Beds Vacant	Average Beds Vacant	Percentage Filled	Waiting List Veteran
Nursing Care	196	171	25		87%	24
Memory Care	40	37	3		93%	3
Placing						0
TOTAL	236	208	28	11	88%	27
Non-Veteran Census Percent				12	15%	
Recapitulation / Pennsylvania Bureau of Veterans' Homes						
Level of Care	Available Beds	*Beds Assigned	Beds Vacant	Average Beds Vacant	Percentage Filled	Waiting List Veteran
Nursing Care	956	807	149		84%	158
Memory Care	198	177	21		89%	47
Personal Care	235	145	90		62%	20
Domiciliary	86	81	5		94%	0
Placing						0
TOTALS	1,475	1,210	265	144	82%	225
Non-Veteran Census Percent				205	12%	

Non-Veteran Census Number

DVVH	5	5%
GJMVC	21	12%
HVH	39	12%
PSSH	24	14%
SEVC	18	9%
SWVC	31	15%
Total	138	12%