Agenda Pennsylvania State Veterans Commission
6 September 2019 at 10:00 AM Southwestern Veterans' Center

7.0	6 September 2019 at 10:00 AM	Southwestern Veterans Center
1000 (5)	CALL TO ORDER	Chairman Sam Petrovich
	Moment of Silence	Vice-Chairman Ed Burris
	Pledge of Allegiance	Chairman Sam Petrovich
1005 (5)	Commission introductions	
1010 (5)	Oath of Office Robert E. John TAL, Leonard M. Johnson DAV, Frank J. Bokan MOPH,	BG Mark Schindler
	Paul Shipley AMVETS	
1015 (5)	Approval June 7th meeting minutes	REQUIRES A VOTE
1020 (10)	DMVA Military Update	BG Mark Schindler
1030 (15)	VISN 4 Update	Mr. Tom Liezert
	OLD BUSINESS	
1045 (2)	DMVA, Policy, Planning & Legislative Affairs	Ms. Katie Merritt
1047 (5)	DMVA, Bureau of Veterans Homes	Mr. Andrew Ruscavage
1052 (15)	DMVA, Bureau of Programs, Initiatives, Reintegration and Outreach (PIRO)	Mr. Joel Mutschler
1107 (2)	Approval of Programs Report (Report provided by DMVA)	REQUIRES A VOTE
1109 (11)	Act 66 Committee report	
1120 (5)	RETX Committee report	Mr. Matthew Zamosky
1125 (5)	Legislative Committee report	Chairman Sam Petrovich
1130 (5)	Pensions & Relief/Grave markings Committee report	
1135 (5)	Bylaws Committee	Chairman Sam Petrovich
	NEW BUSINESS	
1140 (5)	Hall of Fame	REQUIRES A VOTE
	Nominee: Janice Gavern	
1145 (5)	Good of the Order	Chairman Sam Petrovich
1150 (8)	Discussion topics for next meeting	Chairman Sam Petrovich
1158 (2)		
	Friday, October 11, 2019 @ 10:00am	
	Arrowheads Community Center	
1200	ADJOURNMENT RETIRING OF COLORS	Chairman Sam Petrovich
		Chairman Sam Petrovich



DMVA MILITARY UPDATE



CURRENT AND FUTURE UNIT MOBILIZATIONS



						V.	Y							
JAN19 FEB MA	AR APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC .	JAN20	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY
	111 ATK	W- RTND	1											
		193 S	ow- o	IR- 64	PAX									
258 ATCS- OIR-	RTND	n .		211 E	IS (193)- VAR	IOUS-	47 PAX						
		4												
270 EIS (1	11)- VAR	IOUS-	RTND											
	,													
				171 A	RW- O	FS- 12	PAX							
		193 A	og- ss	S- RTN	D		201 R	HS (11	1&193)	- OIR-	158 P	ΔX		
171	ARW-R	TND		111 S	FS- OIF	R- 12 P	AX							
		171 A	RW- A	LERT S	STATU	S (HS)	- 37 PA	X						
					IS)- 36									

ARNG Unit Soldiers in Theater: 168 ARNG Soldiers at MOB/DEMOB Site: 370 ARNG Individual Mob:19 Total ARNG Mob:538

Total PANG Mobilized: 721 **Current ANG Unit Airmen Mob: 208 Current ANG Individual Mob: 26** Total: ANG Mob: 234

CURRENT MOBILIZATIONS & TOTAL DEPLOYMENTS



PAARNG Current Deployments							
MDATE	MSAD	UNIT	OPN	PAX	MISSION	Projected Return Date	
30 SEP 15	03 OCT 15	DET 1 2/104th	OEF-KU	24	MEDEVAC	02 NOV 16	
07 JAN 16	09 JAN 16	2IBCT	KFOR	96	SECURITY	07 JAN 17	
29 JAN 16	01 FEB 16	2 IBCT NATO 33	KFOR-OJG	29	POSTAL	27JAN 17/18 FEB 17	
11 MAY 16	14 MAY 16	28ID 1-110th	OEF UAE/OIR	370	SECFOR/TNG	o/a 14JUN17	
Various Individual MOB Soldiers				19	Various Missions	TBD	

Total PAARNG Deployed: 538

PAANG Current Deployments					
Unit	Opn	Pax			
193 SOW	OIR/SS	120			
111 ATKW	IPR (HS)/Various	36/12			
171 ARW	Alert Status (HS)/OIR	37/29			
Total PAANG	234				

Total PANG Deployed 725

VISN 4 Access – Fiscal Year 2019 Wait Times



Clinics	Number of			
FY19 thru July 13	Appointments	Wait <30 Days	Wait <30 Days	Average Wait
ALL	2,117,982	2,001,804	95.7%	5
Mental Health	309,057	297,631	97.6%	3.4
Primary Care	477,800	467,897	97.9%	3.5
Specialty Care	834,492	755,652	93.0%	7.4

VISN 4 Access – Current Average Wait Times



	Prima	ry Care	Mental Health Care		
VISN 4 Facility	New Patients	Returning Patients	New Patients	Returning Patients	
James E. Van Zandt VAMC	17	7	6	4	
Abie Abraham HCC	16	1	11	4	
Coatesville VAMC	15	3	14	3	
Erie VAMC	20	5	11	2	
Lebanon VAMC	17	4	12	3	
Corporal Michael J. Crescenz VAMC	24	5	15	2	
	20 (Hz)	5 (Hz)	11 (Hz)	4 (Hz)	
VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System	18 (UD)	7 (UD)	6 (UD)	1 (UD)	
Wilkes-Barre VAMC	14	3	15	7	
Wilmington VAMC	18	4	10	2	

Wait times as of 8/5/19 for last 30 days.

accesstocare.va.gov

VISN 4 Trust Data – Inpatients



Statement for Response	All of FY16	All of FY17	All of FY18	FY19 thru May	National
"I got the service I needed"					
(Effectiveness)	88.1	87.8	89.6	87.8	88.1
"It was easy to get the service I needed"					
(Ease)	83.4	83.7	83.4	83.4	83.3
"I felt like a valued customer"					
(Emotion)	84.3	85	84.2	85.4	84.9
"I trust VA to fulfill our country's					
commitment to Veterans"					
(Trust)	83.6	84	85.3	85.5	84.8

% of responses with agree or strongly agree

VISN 4 Trust Data – Outpatients



Statement for Response	All of FY16	All of FY17	All of FY18	FY19 thru May	National
"I got the service I needed"					
(Effectiveness)	85.9	86.2	87.6	87.8	82.8
"It was easy to get the service I needed"					
(Ease)	79.1	80.4	81.3	81.9	74.8
"I felt like a valued customer"					
(Emotion)	80.5	81.8	83.0	83.8	77.4
"I trust VA to fulfill our country's					
commitment to Veterans"					
(Trust)	75.4	78.2	81	80	74.6

% of responses with agree or strongly agree

VISN 4 Trust Data – Specialty Care Outpatients



Statement for Response	All of FY16	All of FY17	All of FY18	FY19 thru April	National
"I got the service I needed"					
(Effectiveness)	84.2	85.3	85.5	85.4	83.2
"It was easy to get the service I needed"					
(Ease)	75.8	78.1	76.8	79.0	74.4
"I felt like a valued customer"					
(Emotion)	79.2	79.9	79.9	81.5	78
"I trust VA to fulfill our country's					
commitment to Veterans"					
(Trust)	73.9	76.8	76.1	78.8	75.5

% of responses with agree or strongly agree

Policy Planning and Legislative Affairs



DMVA Priority Legislation – Veterans

Global War on Terror Bonus – Senator Iovinno, the Democratic Chair of the Senate Veterans Affairs Emergency Preparedness Committee (VA&EP). (awaiting introduction)

Real-estate Tax Exemption – Rep Sainato Democratic Chair of the House VA&EP Committee. Includes the SVC recommendations (awaiting introduction)

Veterans Preference Language – draft provided to House and Senate VA&EP Committee Executive Staff. (awaiting introduction)

Policy Planning and Legislative Affairs



Upcoming Bills

HB 1380 (Boback) - Amends Titles 30 (Fish) & 34 (Game), in fishing licenses, for active duty military fishing reciprocity & disabled veteran annual fishing license reciprocity; &, for active duty military & disabled veteran hunting reciprocity. – Passed House 06/27/19

HB 1521 (Pashinski) - Amends Title 3 (Agriculture), in Pennsylvania Preferred Trademark, providing for military veterans. – Passed House now in Senate Ag & Rural **Affairs**

HB 1609 (O'Mara) - Amends Title 75 (Vehicles) contributing to Veterans' Trust Fund renewing driver's license/registration – Passed House 6/20/19

SR 170 (Iovino) - Directs Joint State Government Commission to establish task force to study coordination of veterans' services in commonwealth among federal, state, local, and nonprofit programs – Set on Senate Calendar for 9/19/19

PVH Current Licensure Status



Regulatory Agency	DVVH	GMVC	нvн	PSSH	SEVC	swvc
		Dates of	Last Insp	ection		
PA Department of Health	03/2019 Full Standard Licensure Status	12/2018 Full Standard Licensure Status	10/2018 Full Standard Licensure Status	11/2018 Full Standard Licensure Status	09/2018 Full Standard Licensure Status	08/2018 Full Standard Licensure Status
PA Department of Human Services	N/A	N/A	11/2018 Full Standard Licensure Status	08/2019 *Full Standard Licensure Status	10/2018 Full Standard Licensure Status	N/A
US Department of Veterans Affairs	04/2019 Full Standard Licensure Status	02/2019 Full Standard Licensure Status	06/2019 Full Standard Licensure Status	02/2019 Full Standard Licensure Status	02/2019 Full Standard Licensure Status	05/2019 Full Standard Licensure Status

Each DMVA Pennsylvania Veterans' Home is currently licensed by the PA Department of Health, PA Department of Human Services and certified by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. HVH, PSSH, and SEVC have a Personal Care program.

Last updated: 8-15-2019



Delaware Valley Veterans' Home



Commandant – Peter Ojeda 2701 Southampton Rd, Philadelphia, PA 19154 County of Philadelphia Opened December 2002

Level of Care	Available Beds
Skilled Nursing	100
Secure	30
Total:	130

^{*}Note: 41 additional beds in renovation project



Gino J. Merli Veterans' Center



Commandant – Jim Miller 401 Penn Ave, Scranton, PA 18503 County of Lackawanna Opened: January 1994

Level of Care	Available Beds
Skilled Nursing	156
Secure	40
Total:	196



Hollidaysburg Veterans' Center



Commandant – Debbie Nesbella 138 Veterans Blvd., Duncansville, PA 16635 County of Blair Opened: June 1977

Level of Care	Available Beds
Skilled Nursing	231
Secure	26
Personal	101
Domiciliary	66
Total:	424



Pennsylvania Soldiers' and Sailors' Home



Commandant – Barb Raymond 560 E. Third St., Erie, PA 16507

County of Erie

Opened: February 1886

(133-Years of Service)

Level of Care	Available Beds
Skilled Nursing	75
Secure	32
Personal	80
Domiciliary	20
Total	207



Southeastern Veterans' Center



Commandant – Rohan Blackwood One Veterans Dr., Spring City, PA 19475 County of Chester

Opened: December 1986

*Community Living Center Newest Building in the PA Homes system opened 7/31/2012

**Elena Tedesco ADHC Coordinator

Level of Care	Available Beds
Skilled Nursing	208
Secure	30
Personal	54
Adult Day Health Care** (Jan 2021)	30
Total:	322



Southwestern Veterans' Center



Commandant – Rich Adams
7060 Highland Dr., Pittsburgh, PA 15206
County of Allegheny
Opened: Nevember 1007

Opened: November 1997

Level of Care	Available Beds
Skilled Nursing	196
Dementia	40
Total:	236

Bureau of Programs, Initiatives, Reintegration and Outreach



Initiatives

- · Regionalization Update
 - Concept & Implementation Briefing Document distributed.
 - Primed to hire Regional Program Outreach Coordinator for Region 5. Regions 1 through 4 to follow.
 - Proof of Concept for Information & Referral Database has been launched in Region 5 (SE portion of the commonwealth).
 - Resources continually be added to Information & Referral Database.
 - Resource account for PA VET CONNECT now available: RA-MVVET-CONNECT@pa.gov

Meetings/Events

- 5 Sep PWVC
- 6 Sep SVC, SWVC
- 9 Sep FTIG All Hands
- 12 Sep Coatesville VAMC AC & PA CARES MTG
- 23 Sep Pittsburgh VAMC AC Univ. Drive
- 2-4 Oct VSO Training, Erie
- 10 Oct PAWVC
- 11 Oct SVC, FTIG

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

GAC-VS

- Judiciary Committee
 - Conducted outreach to the Veteran Service Units
 - 25% increase in the number of PA Veterans Courts in 2019. Five new VTCs include: Armstrong, Lycoming, Lebanon, Indiana, and Westmoreland Counties.
- Aging Committee
 - Partnership between DMVA and PDA to reach veterans through PACE. Education on PACE for VSOs, VISN, and community providers
 - Established Expanding Long-Term Care Services Options to Veterans subcommittee. Report due to Governor's Office Dec. 31, 2019

Contact Us

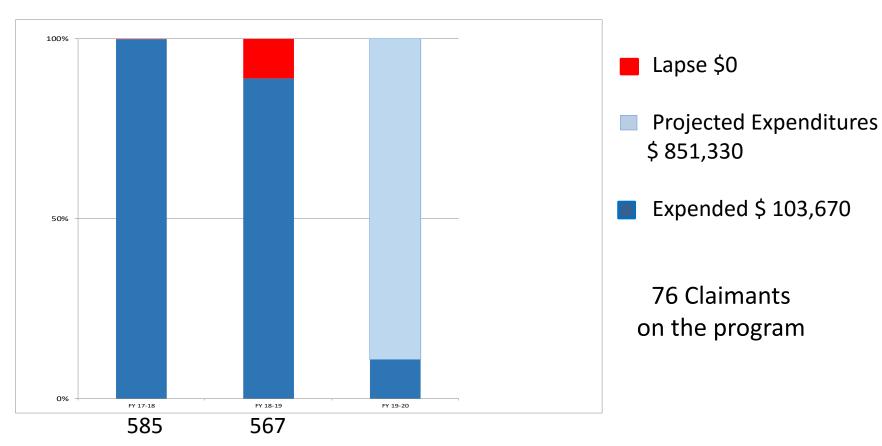
We want to hear from you. If you have ideas/initiatives that you want to share with DMVA, please contact Mr. Joel Mutschler, PIRO Bureau Director, at 717-861-8910 or RA-VA-Info@pa.gov.

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

VETERANS TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE



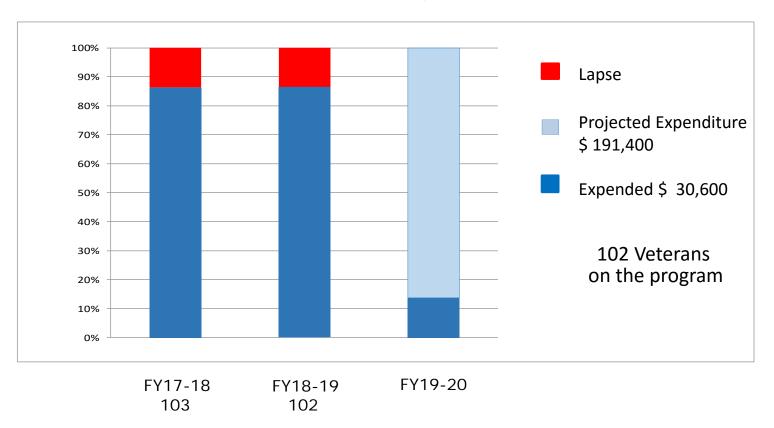
\$955,000



BLIND VETERANS PENSION



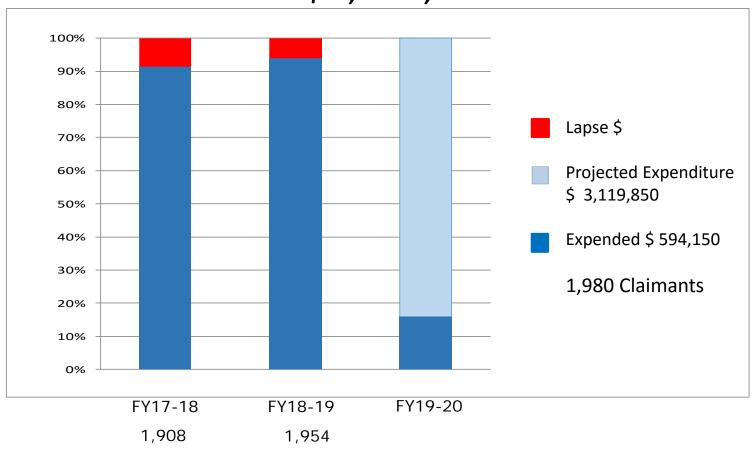
\$222,000



AMPUTEE & PARALYZED VETERANS PENSION



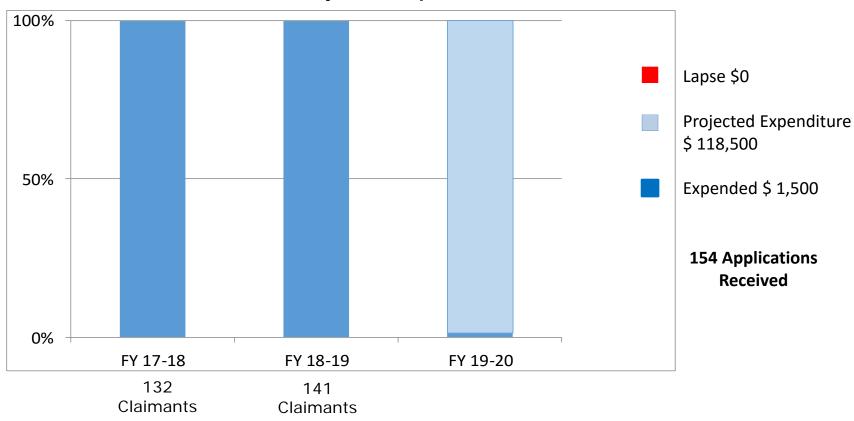
\$3,714,000



EDUCATIONAL GRATUITY

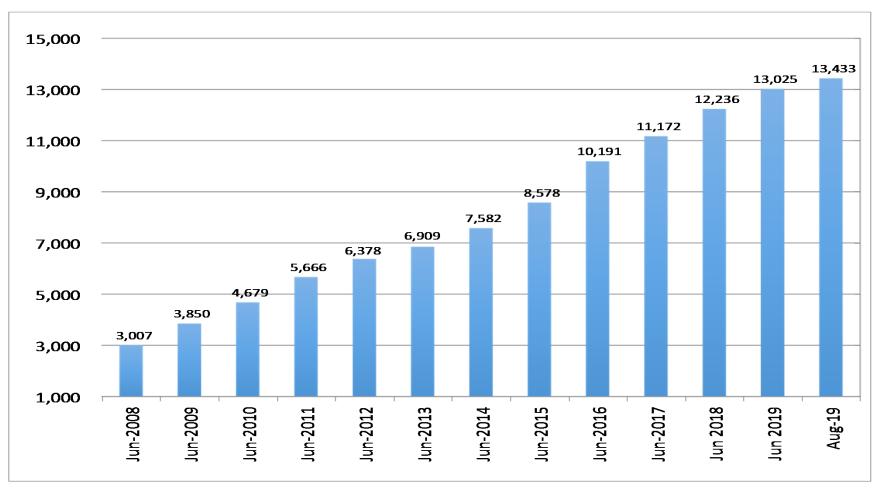


\$120,000



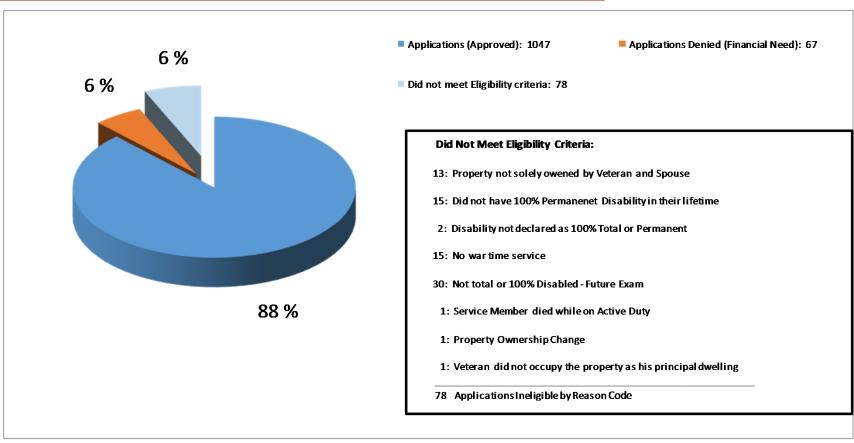
DISABLED VETERANS TAX EXEMPTION PROGRAM





DISABLED VETERANS' RETX PROGRAM





*1,408 Applications Adjudicated since 18 May 2019

MILITARY FAMILY RELIEF ASSISTANCE PROGRAM



OVERALL MFRAP CONTRIBUTIONS - FY 2005 THRU 16 August 2019

TOTAL PRIVATE CONTRIBUTIONS	\$ 130,316.83
DEPT OF REVENUE - PIT DONATIONS	\$ 1,766,948.50
TOTAL ALL CONTRIBUTIONS - PRIVATE & PIT DONATIONS	\$ 1,897,365.33
APPROVED GRANT APPLICATION PAYMENTS	\$ 874,921.86
ACCOUNT BALANCE	\$ 1,022,443.47

PENNSYLVANIA VETERANS MEMORIAL



Pennsylvania Veterans Memorial Trust Fund	
Beginning Trust Fund Balance (July 1, 2019)	\$278,760.97
Grants Received	0
Public / Private Donations	\$700
License Plate Donations	\$115
Interest	\$572.85
Refunds of Expenditures	\$0
Total Receipts	\$1,387.85
Expenses	(\$2,960.26)
Ending Balance	\$277,188.56

OVA/ VSO GRANT PROGRAM



FY 19 - 20 Claims, Compensation and Pension Summary				
Year to Date Claims Submitted Year to Date Value of Awards				
0	\$0.00			

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	2				2		
Mobile Outreach Van Events	0				0		
Veteran Interactions	12				12		
Claim referrals to County Directors and Service Organizations	2				2		
Legislator Attended Events	0				0		

Upcoming Events – September

- **Legislative Events** Representative Keller's Senior Expo
- **Events** None
- **Legislators Attending Events** None

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	\$195.00	\$465.00	31	\$48,585.00	3,239
PA Monuments LP	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0	\$0.00	0
HOV Motorcycle License Plate	\$0.00	\$45.00	\$90.00	6	\$2,910.00	194
HOV Women's License Plate	\$0.00	\$120.00	\$195.00	13	\$270.00	18
Checkoff & Donations	\$33,524.00	\$71,521.00	\$221,218.66		\$9,391,905.52	
Veterans Trust Fund Online Donations	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00		\$4,340.00	
SECA Donations	\$0.00	\$2,004.28	\$2,004.28		\$4,451.65	
Interest	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$5,016.57		\$131,933.77	
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 18-19)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$8,101.00		\$725,400.00	
VTF Grant NOFA (SFY 17-18)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00		\$778,929.18	
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	\$0.00		\$4,900.00	
Veterans Assistance	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00		\$22,901.34	
VTA	\$26,201.00	\$47,666.00	\$102,310.00		3,718,372.32	
Working Balance	\$7,323.00	\$26,219.28	\$118,578.51		\$2,499,943.65	3,451

NEXT MEETING



Friday, OCTOBER 11, 2019 at 10:00AM

Arrowheads Community Center Fort Indiantown Gap Annville, PA 17003

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

State Veterans Commission Meeting Minutes

June 7th, 2019 10:00 AM to 11:41 AM Pennsylvania Soldiers' and Sailors' Home Erie, PA 16507

Call to Order Vice-Chairman Edgar Burris

The Pennsylvania State Veterans Commission (SVC) meeting was called to order at 10:00 AM by Vice-Chairman Edgar Burris.

Moment of Silence and Pledge of Allegiance

The meeting was opened with a moment of silence by Vice-Chairman Burris and recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance led by Vice-Chairman Edgar Burris.

Commission Introductions					
Brig Gen Michael Regan Deputy Adjutant General-Air					
Chairman Samuel Petrovich (conference call)	Chairman, State Veterans Commission				
Maj Gen (Ret) Eric Weller	Deputy Adjutant General for Veterans Affairs				
Mr. Boyd Simpson	Designee, AMVETS				
Mr. John Pliska	Executive Director, AMVETS				
Mr. Thomas Hanzes	Commander, Veterans of Foreign Wars				
Mr. Robert Heister	Designee, Military Officers Association of America				
Mr. Edgar Burris	Member at Large/SVC Vice-Chairman				
Mr. Alan Will	Designee, Blind Veterans of America				
Mr. Robert Hill	President, Military Order of the Purple Heart				
Mr. Matthew Zamosky	President, PA State Association of County Directors of				
,	Veterans Affairs.				
Mr. Thomas Haberkorn	Commander, Vietnam Veterans of America				
Mr. James Vollrath (conference call)	Commander, The American Legion				
Mr. Kit Watson (conference call)	Adjutant, The American Legion				
Mr. John Cyprian	Member at Large				
Mr. Robert Ziltz	Commandant, Marine Corps League				
Mr. Gary Stopyra	Commander, Disabled American Veterans				
Mr. John Brenner	Member at Large				
Ms. Constance Snavely (conference call)	Member at Large				
	Others Present				
Mr. John Gennaro	VISN 4				
Mr. Thad Plasczynski	PSACDVA/Erie County				
Mrs. Wendy Zamosky	Guest				
Mrs. Nancy Burris	Guest				
Ms. Elizabeth Pettis	DMVA - Chief Counsel				
Ms. Katie Merritt	DMVA - Policy, Planning & Legislative Affairs				
Mr. Joel Mutschler	DMVA – PIRO				
Ms. Mia Woods	DMVA – BVH				
Commandant Barbra Raymond PA Soldiers' and Sailors' Home					
Mr. Brian Natali	DMVA-PIRO (Programs and Services)				

Mr. Rick Hamp DMVA-OVA

Mr. Greg Holler DMVA – PIRO (Programs and Services)

Approval of the April 5th, 2019 Meeting Minutes

Motion: Mr. John Pliska made a motion to approve the minutes as distributed.

Second: Mr. Alan Will seconded the motion.

The body agreed; motion carried.

Military Update Brig Gen Regan

General Regan briefed SVC members with a military update:

The Army National Guard started operations in Poland and Macedonia in support of European operations. The Air National Guard is about to move up two units with approximately 100 Airmen headed to central command over the summer. They will be gone about 90 to 120 days. As of this morning, 721 in total of PA National Guard soldiers & airmen are in some form of furlough mobilization. General Regan asked if there were any questions.

Questions/Discussions

No questions/comments noted.

VISN 4 Mr. John Gennaro

Mr. John Gennaro noted that SVC members had received his slides with updated information on leadership changes, Mission Act, patient experience, and whole health program. Mr. Gennaro briefed on the following:

Leadership/Staffing Update:

Mr. Tim Liezert continues as the acting Director of VISN 4 as of 120 days ago and remains so.

Mr. Donald Koenig is the Director of Pittsburgh Medical Center about 1 week ago. He previously served in the military as a JAG and president at local facilities in Ohio, Mercy Health Partners. Good military and private sector experience and we are confident he will do a great job running the Pittsburgh VA.

Ms. Karen Flaherty-Oxler is the Director of Philadelphia Medical Center. She was the previous VP chief nursing experience for Atlanta Healthcare system. That announcement just came today. Effective date is forthcoming. Ms. Patricia O'Kane will continue as the acting director until Ms. Flaherty-Oxler completes her onboarding (approx. 30-45 days).

Mission Act

Many veterans should have received a letter related to the Mission Act (effective 6/6/2019) and all the changes that come along with it. It enhances internal systems and strengthens our opportunities to partner in network with private sector facilities in delivery of healthcare. A fact sheet is available if anyone would like one. The main tenant of the Mission Act included an urgent care benefit over the past 24 months. Check themissionact.VA.gov website to make sure sites you are going to are within the network of urgent care centers. Check with a local VA veterans service officer to make sure you are eligible for benefits.

Drive times & wait times:

Wait times - Specialty care is 28 days & Primary care is 20 days. If these times are exceeded, the veterans will be eligible and given the choice to go to the community for care.

Drive times – Primary Care visits are 30 minutes & Specialty Care is 60 minutes. Outside of those drive times, veterans will be given the choice to go to other community facilities, a substantial new benefit for our veterans here and across the nation.

Patient Experience:

Test scores have continued to rise. VA continues to focus its effort which has been ongoing over the past 2 – 3 years on patient experience. VISN 4 has identified Butler and Lebanon to participate in the next wave of Whole Health implementation. These facilities will be part of the national Whole Health Learning Collaborative 2 and will focus efforts in one of three areas: enhancing Whole Health peer engagement, advancing Whole Health clinical care, or establishing employee Whole Health. The collaborative kicks off this month. In Erie we have been able to integrate complimentary alternative medicines into global healthcare. The Butler and Lebanon facilities are the next facilities that will have this program in the upcoming fiscal year. We can offer everything from acupuncture, chiropractic care, aromatherapy, and guided imagery as we educate our primary care staff. We have seen substantial improvements especially with chronic diseases. Patients can get off of multiple opioids and opioid/benzodiazepine combinations. This is a tremendous improvement and we will continue to see that across the VA system. Mr. Gennaro asked if there were any questions.

Questions/Discussion

No questions/comments noted.

OLD BUSINESS

DMVA Chief Counsel Ms. Elizabeth Pettis

Ms. Pettis stated she didn't have anything to report. Ms. Pettis asked if there were any questions.

Questions/Discussion

No questions/comments noted.

DMVA Policy, Planning & Legislative Affairs

Ms. Katie Merritt

Ms. Merritt reported that priorities have not changed. Quite a few bills have been provided to senators/representatives that are awaiting adoption which include: Global War on Terrorism bonus, Real Estate Tax Exemption, Veteran's Preference Language and DMVA Special Program Grant Authority. Two bills are expected to be voted on in the coming weeks:

- 1. Allow for a personal income tax screen to allow an individual to have a contribution made to the Veterans Trust Fund of \$5.00 or more that will be tax deductible.
- 2. Fishing license reciprocity for active duty military and disabled veterans.

Senate Bill 441: Rename a bridge Sgt. Christopher M. Wrinkle and Tosca Memorial Bridge in York County, was cast.

No other updates currently. Ms. Merritt asked if there were any questions.

Questions/Discussion

- Mr. Burris questioned the bills that are forthcoming and to tell the commission numbers that are assigned to those bills.
- Ms. Merritt responded that they haven't been introduced so bill numbers have not been assigned yet. When they are introduced, she will make sure that the commission receives that information.

DMVA Bureau of Veterans Homes

Ms. Mia Woods

Mr. Ruscavage was absent and represented by Ms. Woods who confirmed that a slide was present in each packet of the current licensure status of each home. All homes are fully licensed and in good standing. A PA Governor's week flyer is included in the packet as well. Ms. Woods asked if there were any questions.

Questions/Discussion

No questions/comments noted.

DMVA Bureau of PIRO Mr. Joel Mutschler

Mr. Mutschler confirmed that there was information in each packet for review. The regionalization initiative resource is being built across the commonwealth amongst our governmental and community partners. Everything is going well, and the project manager is on board and moving forward with that initiative. At the SVC April 5th, 2019 meeting Mr. Foster inquired as to the total percentage of payments we are sending to veterans living outside the commonwealth. Research revealed it was 5%. Household income/Real Estate Tax Exemption Program – if household incomes had been included it would have reduced approvals by about 25%. Mr. Mutschler asked if there were any questions.

Questions/Discussion

No questions/comments noted.

Approval of Programs Reports

Motion: Mr. Pliska made a motion to approve the programs report.

Second: Mr. Will seconded the motion.

The body agreed; motion carried.

SVC Act 66 Committee Mr. Kit Watson

Mr. Watson had no report.

SVC RETX Committee Mr. Matthew Zamosky

Mr. Zamosky had no report.

SVC Legislative Committee

Chairman Samuel Petrovich

Chairman Petrovich informed the members that several issues were to be looked into. The committee is doing so and will hopefully provide a full report for the commission at the next meeting.

Questions/Discussion

No questions/comments noted.

SVC Pensions & Relief/Grave Marking/State Military Cemetery Committee

Mr. John Brenner

Mr. Brenner reported to the members about the Blinded and Paralyzed Veterans' Pension, Grave Markers/Headstones, and Memorials.

Blinded and Paralyzed Veterans' Pension:

Presently the monthly amount is \$150. Senate Bill (SB) 276 is asking for an increase to \$180 a month, which would increase the budget \$720,000. He would like Commission to support SB 276 and maybe apply to make the monthly amount \$200, because there hasn't been an increase since the early 1990's. He would also like everyone to consider a cost of living allowance and for a means of increasing it on a regular basis.

Grave markers/Headstones:

There are many ways that our counties are supporting these efforts, which made it difficult in determining any regular standards. Post 9/11 markers and the concern that we are not getting the proper markers to go along with different periods of conflicts since 9/11. There are two examples floating around that have been purchased (Desert Storm 1990/91 and Global War on Terror, which have not been approved). The last approved marker is the Vietnam War marker, which is not accurate for those serving today. We should look at some type of

alternative like "Persian Gulf" marker from 1990 to today or bring that into post September 11th, 2001 and post 9/11 "War on Terror".

Commandant Raymond suggested that markers should be War on Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom.

We are setting goals to help improve issues with markers. We are finding the condition of many headstones, especially those from the older wars, to be broken or unidentifiable. Questions on whose responsibility is it to take care of this issue?

Memorials:

Committee discussed and that the state of PA (ACT 64 of 2018) changed the name of the memorial in Ft. Indiantown Gap to be dedicated to all PA Veterans and not just World War II. Money for the upkeep of this memorial comes from the PA Trust Fund and PA license plate sales. Donations from VA organizations we count on especially from small games of chance. So, we really do encourage each of the leaderships of those organizations to put the word out to get donations for the memorial in Ft. Indiantown Gap. The committee did set a few goals:

- 1. To work on establishing workable standards on our grave markers and do more studying on the guidelines for the upkeep of our veterans' graves in PA.
- 2. Work on increasing monthly pension from \$150 to \$180 for blind/paralyzed veterans and incorporate a cost of living (COLA) for these pensions.
- 3. Work on ways to get the word out to all involved and check on the condition of headstones and help get them fixed.

Mr. Brenner asked if there were any questions.

Questions/Discussion

Discussion to clarify approval of report for increase of pension bill to \$200. Mr. Burris informed members that it was on the report, so yes.

General Weller informed members that Mr. Petrovich can bring it to the Budget 101 meeting in August to put it in front of General Carrelli because our submission goes in September and if something could get included and supported that would be great.

Mr. Brenner asked if this is to be done as a committee for legislature?

Ms. Merritt requested a copy of report be sent to her.

Mr. Burris commented that if the broken headstones are provided by the VA, the broken stones can be replaced if a photo is taken and submitted.

Mr. Petrovich commented that the Legislative Committee should work with DMVA in supporting the issue. It is a two-group effort.

General Weller commented that the connection has already been made with those at Fort Indiantown Gap.

Motion: Mr. Pliska made a motion to support increase in Bill 276 with a COLA.

Second: Mr. Hanzes seconded the motion.

The body agreed; motion carried.

Bylaws Discussion Chairman Petrovich

Chairman Petrovich stated that the issues tasked to the legislative committee will be reported on at the next meeting.

Question/Discussion

No questions/comments noted.

NEW BUSINESS

HB 863

 ${
m HB~863-a~bill}$ that we were asked to read/study that deals with the veteran's lottery ticket. The ticket proceeds will provide a large percentage to the veterans' community.

Motion: Mr. Haberkorn made a motion to approve HB 863.

Second: Mr. Stopyra seconded the motion.

The body agreed; motion carried.

Hall of Fame

Mr. Burris announced that Ms. Mary Archey, Mr. Eugene Passarella and Mr. Edward Comly were nominees for induction into the hall of fame.

Motion: Mr. Brenner motioned to approve as a group into the hall of fame.

Second: Mr. Hill seconded the motion.

The body agreed; motion carried.

Good of The Order/Announcements

Mr. Burris asked if there was anything further for the Good of The Order/Announcements.

Questions/Discussion

No questions/comments noted.

For Next Meeting

Chairman Petrovich stated topics for next meeting will be on the Agenda.

Next Meeting

Southwestern Veterans' Center 7060 Highland Drive Pittsburgh, PA 15206

Adjournment

Mr. Burris adjourned the meeting at 10:48 a.m.

The minutes of this meeting are respectfully submitted by:

Maj. Gen (Ret) Eric G. Weller Deputy Adjutant General Veterans Affairs



APPLICATION FOR INDUCTION INTO THE HALL OF FAME

	PURPOSE: The Hall of Fame is established to recognize and honor achievements of outstanding Veterans who have completed honorable active service.					
	NOMINEE'S INFORM	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	DA	TE: 08/15/	2019	
	PLICANT NAME:	Janice Gavern)		****	
	DRESS:					
	FY, STATE: OUNTY OF RESIDENCE:	San				
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3.	NARRATIVE SUMMA	RY: APPRECIATES A	U. SHE	DOES FUR US		
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4.	DD214 OR EQUIVALE					
		pplication must be a copy	of the nom	inee's DD214 or ea	uivalent (Enlisted Record	
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5.	APPROVAL:	\sim				
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	Commission:	(Name)		(Position)	(Date)	
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If approved, the nominee will be inducted at a ceremony which will be held at the Gino J. Merli Veterans Center. Please provide on a separate sheet the names and addresses of persons you would like invited to the ceremony.



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Janice Gavern enlisted in the Air Force 51 years ago in October of 1967 – the year she graduated from high school in Scranton, PA.

Like other women in that Vietnam era, she had four choices for jobs: nurse, admin clerk, intel clerk, or personnel clerk.

The benefits of the GI Bill and training were important to her, but like others before her, she very strongly believed it was "her country too".

She was initially stationed as a personnel clerk at Lackland AFB, Texas, assembling records on officer trainees.

When her husband's enlistment was up, she moved with him to Ohio, where she worked in a training office administering skill level upgrade tests.

Her own enlistment ended early, because the base was closing. She got an early out to attend school.

She enjoyed her time in the military however, and decided to join the local Air Force Reserves unit.

A mailman in Detroit during the week, she became a personnel clerk in a Mobility Support Unit at Rickenbacker AFB, Ohio with the Reserves.

She likes to say she grew up with the Air Force. After a few more years in personnel, she was looking for a more interesting job. About that time, the Air Force was giving women a wider variety of career fields to choose from.

She became a reciprocating engine mechanic on the C-123 aircraft the Reserves flew at Rickenbacker.

Later on, as a fully qualified reciprocating engine mechanic, and a technical sergeant, she applied for the position of flight mechanic with the Operations Squadron. She got to fly as an apprentice aircraft mechanic for a few hours, before she was stopped by Headquarters, AFRes. The C-123 was still considered combat qualified, and women were not authorized to be essential crew members on combat qualified aircraft.

The Operations Squadron was forced to cancel her assignment, and she went back to maintenance.

Her organization suggested she apply for a Direct Commission through the Deserving Airman Commissioning Program.

She did, and after she graduated, she was commissioned a 2d Lt, Aircraft Maintenance Officer.

The Commander of her Operational Squadron swore her in.

By then she was working full time as an Engineering Psychologist for Air Force Civil Service. Over the years she worked as a Manpower, Personnel and Training Analyst and later a military logistician in civil service.

She graduated from the Air Force Institute of Technology with a Master of Science degree in Logistics Management.

In the Reserves, she became the Explosives Safety Officer for the F-4 unit at Wright Patterson AFB, which numbered over 1000 people.

When the unit was disbanded, she became a Category B Reservist and worked with the Proven Aircraft Division at Kelly AFB, Texas.

Adult onset asthma forced her to retire, as she was no longer world wide deployable. She had just been selected for Major, but could not stay in long enough for her line number to come up on the promotion list.

She retired with almost four years of active duty and about 22 years in the Air Force Reserves.

Her unceremonious discharge upset her enough that she did not talk about her military service for a few years.

After her daughter graduated from college, they moved to Pennsylvania to be closer to family.

She reached the point where she wanted to connect with other military veterans, so she joined the local post – Gardiner-Warner American Legion Post 154. She eventually became the Post Historian.

She survived breast cancer, a brain aneurysm, chemo therapy and radiation therapy.

Six years ago, she was appointed Deputy Commander, Woman Veterans Issues for the 15th District American Legion, Department of Pennsylvania.

The job didn't exist at the time it was created, but her Commander, and now two more Commanders felt she was doing a great job creating the program around her.

For six years now she has taken small steps to create a 15th District Woman Veterans Program. The Program includes 1. Identification of women veterans, past, present and future; 2. Identification of lines of communication to, from, and between women veterans; 3. Education of women veterans and, especially, education about women veterans; 4. Recognition of military women for their service to our country, and for their service in the American Legion; 5. Remembering and honoring women veterans through things line the Womens Memorial at Arlington Cemetery, and through attendance at their funerals; and 6. Other Activities, because where else could you put raised bed flower gardens for people in wheelchairs, and taking baby goats to the activities hour at the local veterans center nursing home.

Deputy Commander Gavern is currently working to have her District level Women Veterans Program implemented at the state level. She has created a formal Resolution to the Department of Pennsylvania which will be voted on this July at the state Convention.

On she will celebrate her 70th birthday. She continues to serve. She and her daughter are currently forming a non-profit organization called, Remember and Honor Women Veterans. Her birthday present from her daughter and herself will be a restored and driveable Vietnam era Kaiser jeep military ambulance. They plan to drive it in parades and display it at local car shows in conjunction with a tabletop display about women veterans.

She challenges you: what are you doing to make women veterans more visible, more respected, and more appreciated?

She can be reached at

Bureau of Veterans' Homes Available Beds Monthly Status Report from July 1 to 31, 2019

		Valley Veterans' Home		Average Beds		
Level of Care	Available Beds	Beds Assigned	Beds Vacant	Vacant	Percentage Filled	Waiting List Vetera
lursing Care	100	94	0		94%	41
ecured	30	30	0		100%	14
lacing						0
TOTA	AL 130	124	0	4	95%	55
Non-Veteran Cens				2	5%	
	Gino J.	Merli Veterans' Center	r, Scranton - James	Miller - Comma	ındant	
Level of Care	Available Beds	Beds Assigned	Beds Vacant	Average Beds Vacant	Percentage Filled	Waiting List Veteran
lursing Care	156	144	5		92%	4
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TOTA	AL 196	181	8	14	92%	0
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ecured	26	26	0		100%	0
ersonal Care	101	62	39		61%	0
omiciliary	66	50	16		76%	0
Placing						2
TOTA	AL 424	343	80	78	81%	0
Non-Veteran Cens	us Percent			79	12%	
	Pennsylvani	a Soldiers' & Sailors' H	lome, Erie - Barbar	a Raymond - Co	mmandant	
Level of Care	Available Beds	Beds Assigned	Beds Vacant	Average Beds Vacant	Percentage Filled	Waiting List Veteran
lursing Care	75	71	4		95%	2
secured	32	32	0		100%	3
ersonal Care	80	55	25		69%	3
omiciliary	20	20	0		100%	0
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ТОТЛ		178	29	28	86%	5
Non-Veteran Cens				29	12%	
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Level of Care	Available Beds	Beds Assigned	Beds Vacant	Average Beds Vacant	Percentage Filled	Waiting List Veteran
lursing Care	208	204	4		98%	32
ecured	30	30	0		100%	7
ersonal Care	54	53	1		98%	8
lacing						5
TOTA	AL 292	287	5	8	98%	42
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		ern Veterans' Center, F	Pittsburgh - Richard	R. Adams - Cor		
Level of Care	Available Beds	Beds Assigned	Beds Vacant	Average Beds Vacant	Percentage Filled	Waiting List Veteran
lursing Care	196	184	7		94%	13
ecured	40	31	8		78%	2
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	AL 236	215	15	20	91%	13
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Non-Veteran Census Number			
DVVH	5	5%	
GMVC	22	13%	
HVH	39	12%	
PSSH	21	12%	
SEVC	35	13%	
SWVC	34	16%	
Total	156	12%	

RETX- Exempt list(New)	mvfigsqlprod01 8/16/2019
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Summary of Current Applications (Exempt)

Count	No Activity	Review Process Started	Review App Received	New Apps Pending
13433	13099	310	24	151

Summary of Activity from 05/18/2019 to 08/16/2019

Apps Created: 910				
New	553			
Review:	357			
Apps Approved :1047				
New	625			
Review	422			
Apps Denied Fin:	67			
Apps Denied (Ineligible):	78			
Apps Removed from Exempt List (No Response):	47			
Apps Removed from Exempt List(Eligibilty Changed):	169			

Summary of Inelgible Reason

Reason	Count
Property Ownership Change	1
The property for which you claim exemption is not owned solely by you, or as an estate by the entirety with your spouse.	13
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.	15
The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs has determined that the veteran did not serve during a period of war or armed conflict.	13
The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs reported the service member~s death as a casualty while on active duty.	1
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.	30
The U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs has determined that you did not serve during a period of war or armed conflict and you have a future exam, therefore, your disability has not been rated as total or 100% permanent.	2
You do not occupy the property for which you have claimed exemption as your principal dwelling.	1
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 5/18/2019 to 8/16/2019

APPS APPROVED	1047
NEW	625
REVIEW	422

APPS DENIED	
Financial Need	67
Ineligible	78
No Response	47
Change of Eligibility	169

HH Over Income	228
NEW	177
REVIEW	51

22%
28%
12%

APPS CREATED	910
TOTAL ADJUDICATED	1408