



**2020 Annual Report**  
**Colorado Board of Veterans Affairs**

# STATE OF COLORADO

## **COLORADO BOARD OF VETERANS AFFAIRS**

### **DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AND VETERANS AFFAIRS**

#### **Members**

Jack Rudder, Chair  
Patricia Hammon, Vice Chair  
Sheila Scanlon, Secretary  
Lacey Golonka  
Duane Dailey  
Longinos Gonzalez  
Norm Steen

#### **Division of Veterans Affairs**

1355 S. Colorado Blvd, Bldg. C Suite 113  
Denver, Colorado 80222  
Phone: 303-284-6077  
FAX: 303-284-3163

David Callahan  
Acting Deputy Executive Director

Jared Polis  
**Governor**

Major General  
Laura L. Clellan  
**The Adjutant General**



### ***From the desk of Jack Rudder***

***Colorado Board of Veterans  
Affairs, Chair Rio Grande County  
Veteran Service Officer***

November 30, 2020

The Honorable Jared Polis  
Governor, State of Colorado  
200 East Colfax Avenue  
Denver, CO 80203

Senator Mike Foote  
Veterans & Military Affairs Committee  
Colorado Senate  
200 East Colfax Avenue  
Denver, CO 80203

Representative Chris Kennedy  
Veterans & Military Affairs Committee  
Colorado House of Representatives  
200 East Colfax Avenue  
Denver, CO 80203

As the Colorado Board of Veterans Affairs, we strive to hold our monthly meetings throughout the state with special emphasis on areas where we have Veterans Assistance and Veterans Trust Fund Grantees, however since the onset of the Covid 19 Pandemic in March of this year, our travels have been curtailed. At many of our meetings we are still being confused with the federal VA and we endeavor to clarify that we are not the federal VA, but an entity of the state. Especially in the rural areas, as well as urban areas, access to health care, transportation, mental health, women's issues, and sustainable housing are of great concern to Colorado's veterans. The many changes in VA healthcare benefits are very confusing and difficult for veterans to interpret and that keeps our County Service Officers busy.

In accordance with our Strategic Plan, the CBVA travels to all regions of the state, and during this period, we had meetings in Grand Junction, Florence, Aurora, Littleton, Lakewood, and Colorado Springs. Our April meeting was cancelled due to the onset of

the Covid 19 pandemic. Our meetings for May through the end of this year have all been held virtually via WebEx. Regional meetings scheduled to be held in Burlington, Cortez and Steamboat Springs had to be cancelled and held virtually.

This is a diversified board with members representing veterans from the plains, the peaks, the valleys, and from different eras of military service. Three members live in Denver/ Aurora and Colorado Springs. Four members live in the rural mountains and Valleys of Central Colorado, two of which are on the Western Slope of the State. Three members are either currently serving or have served as county commissioners (Teller, El Paso, and Grand counties). Three members are currently serving as County Veterans Service Officers, all in rural areas (Grand and Eagle counties and the San Luis Valley). We continue to hold board orientation and training retreats at the beginning of each fiscal year to ensure that the Board members understand their duties, roles and statutory requirements. The retreat for 2020 had to be cancelled this year due to the travel restrictions caused by the pandemic. It is one of our goals to stay in touch with veterans from all walks of life and all four corners of this great state.

The Veterans Trust Fund and the Veterans Assistance Grant continue to be very powerful tools provided by the state legislature to greatly assist those veterans in need. These two grants are truly appreciated by those they help. The end results of both grants, the distribution of funds to those veterans and families is, indeed, invested properly, as demonstrated by the reported outcomes and effectiveness measures. The Veterans Trust Fund awarded \$705,221.00 to 25 applicant grantees, including the four Veterans Community Living Centers. The Veterans Assistance Grant awarded \$1,072,417.00 to 30 nonprofit organizations. The number of applications and the amount allocated are all a slight increase from past years.

The Colorado Governor and the state Legislature has continued its commitment and financial support to the County Veterans Service Officers as mandated for each county. This year the state compensation to the counties for their veteran affairs office has remained at the \$1225 per month for a part time service officer, and \$2450 per month for a full time service officer. As a result of this level of funding, more counties are committed to increased services to their veterans, by increasing some part time service officers to full time positions, and some counties who historically did not have an officer have now hired part time officers. Thanks to the leadership of Board member, Norm Steen, and his affiliation with the Colorado Counties, Inc., and his presentations at their annual conference, the counties now have a much better understanding of how these funds are intended

to be used and the important role their County Veteran Service Officers play in connecting Colorado veterans with federal VA benefits and the economic impact federal benefits make to their counties. Colorado is the home to 394,145 veterans who are receiving nearly four billion dollars in federal benefits. Figures taken from FY19 Geographic Distribution of VA Expenditures, (GDX).

As the population of Colorado increases, the number of veterans increase, and the number of women veterans increase, and we must remain diligent in making sure that all our veterans are recognized and taken care of.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jack Rudder". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jack" and the last name "Rudder" clearly distinguishable.

Jack Rudder  
Chair  
Colorado Board of Veteran Affairs

## Annual Training for County Veteran Service Officers.

The 4 day, annual training conference for County Veteran Service Officers was to be held in September, however due to the Covid 19 Pandemic and its associated travel and group meeting restrictions, it was cancelled. The state DVA staff, east and west divisions, then produced over 2 ½ hours of YouTube instructional videos combined with WebX conferencing, the training was conducted virtually. CVSO's were tested over the material and will become accredited through the state offices. The assessment had a very high failure rate, in the east, and the State VSOs reviewed the questions and worked to help the County VSOs to get the understanding of the material they needed. All service officers in the west passed and reviewed their material with the division west staff. The state office sent all east service officers the resources that each officer needed and all will retest in December.

Since the inception of the YouTube resources, the state DVA staff have now produced 51 videos, encompassing over 10 hours of instruction, covering every aspect of VA benefits. These videos are now available to CVSO's on-line, 24/7. The state DVA offices also assigned state service officers to regions as trainers for the county service officers within their respective region. Once travel restrictions are lifted, the state service officers will visit all service officers in their regions in person for on-sight training with emphasis on issues particular to each county. Training can now be ongoing and continuous.

Respectfully submitted,



Patricia J. Hammon, Vice Chair  
Colorado Board of Veterans Affairs  
Eagle County Veteran Service Officer

# STATE OF COLORADO

## DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AND VETERANS AFFAIRS

Division of Veterans Affairs East  
1355 South Colorado Blvd Suite 113  
Denver, CO 80222  
(303) 284-6077 ~ (303) 284-3163 (Fax)

Richard Tremaine, MBA  
Director CDVA East

Joanne Iglesias  
Director CDVA West



Jared R. Polis  
Governor

Brigadier General  
Laura L. Clellan  
The Adjutant General

## COLORADO DIVISION OF VETERAN AFFAIRS

### 2020 REPORT ON SERVICE TO VETERANS

December 2020

For the Colorado Department of Military and Veteran Affairs  
Annual Report to the Governor

Chair, Colorado Board of Veteran Affairs

Re: State Board of Veteran Affairs Annual Report to the Governor

#### Executive Summary

In federal Fiscal Year 2019-2020, Colorado veterans continued to make a positive impact on local economies with nearly \$3.8 billion in benefits. The Colorado Division of Veterans Affairs assisted with facilitation of direct payments to veterans in the form of compensation and pension benefits exceeding \$2 billion. In other benefits, approximately \$440 million went to education and employment readiness (formerly vocational rehabilitation) and nearly \$1.3 billion was expended on medical care. The Division of Veterans Affairs is comprised of East and West regions based in Denver and Grand Junction, with staff located at the DVA East offices in Denver and Lakewood, at the DVA West office at the Western Region One Source in Grand Junction, and at the Veterans Memorial Cemetery. The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs reported the Colorado veteran population at 394,145 which is a decrease from last year by 4,638. This decrease indicates the loss of aging veterans countered by an increase in Post 9-11 veterans leaving the military with the reduction in forces. We anticipate that expenditures for VA health care will continue to increase with the aging population of Vietnam-era veterans and with the necessary care provided for our veterans from Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom.

#### Significant Activities and Accomplishments:

The pandemic affected DVA operations and both east and west offices adjusted their processes accordingly. During the initial stay at home order, staff in the Grand Junction office were able to continue to work at the Western Region One Source while the building was closed to the public, and the Denver staff worked remotely

from home while their office was closed. Services were provided to veterans virtually by phone and electronic meetings, and the Grand Junction office held recurrent virtual weekly meetings with the county veterans service officers in the west. In the ensuing months, the Grand Junction office was able to open its doors to the public due to a local variance. The Denver office remained closed, with staff working both remote and in the office to provide curbside services as needed.

The annual training conference for county veterans service officers was held virtually in September. A YouTube channel was established for the division that contained the training materials for the year as well as other educational materials assembled by the division.

The Division continues to support its mission of assisting Colorado veterans in accessing their state and federal benefits by filing claims and processing benefit requests at both our East and West Division offices. When reviewing the table below, please note that in the current assessment new claims for benefits are counted separately from the total number of associated actions filed.

**Summary of Program Assessment**

<b>COLORADO DIVISION OF VETERAN AFFAIRS</b>		
October 31, 2020		
	<b>OFFICE ACTIVITIES</b>	
<b>ITEM</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>
New Power of Attorneys	7,917	5,638
Letters to VA	4,949	4,818
New Claims	12,807	9,255
Health Care Enrollment	1,386	914
Certified/Appealed to BVA	709	419
Filings Not Otherwise Categorized	23,106	22,051
Referendum E Veteran Property Tax Exemption: Running Total	11,098	12,587

**Short and Long Term Goals**

The division continues to supply a uniform survey is supplied to veterans and other who visit any veterans service office, capturing feedback on each veteran’s experience and tracking what motivated the visit. The division is pursuing the goals set forth by the governor’s office, actively offering and tracking gatekeeper and lethal means training for veterans and other stakeholders and ensuring access to VA accreditation for eligible county veterans service officers, which makes more information and processes available to them.

**Challenges and Goals**

Overall traffic declined during the pandemic and as the state begins to normalize the division will look to outreach to encourage veterans to utilize VA benefits and services. The division struggled synchronize efforts between its East and West office and is strategizing to achieve better continuity of service. Veteran community events and Stand Downs were downscaled or postponed this year, providing a greater challenge when attempting to connect with underserved veteran populations. The division was successful in hiring a state veterans service officer with an emphasis on diversity and inclusion.

**Administrative Condition**

Pursuant to continuous improvement, the division has retained its focus on making accessible the methods by which VBA and VHA can electronically receive claims. Regular training opportunities keep service officers apprised of change in rule, law, or process. The division continues its efforts to coordinate outreach and education between its East and West offices, extending consistent service to veterans service officers and to Colorado veterans.

Please let me know if you would like any additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joanne N Iglesias".

Joanne Iglesias  
Director, Colorado Division of Veteran Affairs West

## **DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AND VETERANS AFFAIRS REPORT ON THE COLORADO STATE VETERANS AFFAIRS TRUST FUND FOR FY 19-20**

**Subject:** Colorado State Veterans Trust Fund

**Requirement:** Pursuant to §25-1-108.5 (2), C.R.S. as amended, the following report is provided for State Fiscal Year 19-20 covering the period from July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2020.

**Funds Received:** The Veterans Trust Fund (VTF) received a Long Bill appropriation of \$846,836 for FY 19-20. The Division of Veterans Affairs was authorized to expend \$42,500 for administration of the grant; the actual expenditures were \$42,486 for administration. Of the total non-administrative appropriation, \$25,000 was allocated for Board travel, \$92,023 was allocated to DVA for operations and \$24,400 allocated to the State Veterans Cemetery in Grand Junction. A total of \$705,221.60 Trust Fund monies was awarded in grants to nonprofit organizations and Veterans Community Living Centers throughout the State. Of those grant funds awarded, \$654,308.14 was expended, resulting in a 92% execution rate with an 88% execution after factoring in returned funds.

**Program Description (with eligible population):** The Colorado State Veterans Trust Fund is designed with the overall goal of assisting all veterans in need of assistance residing in the State of Colorado regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, marital or religious status. The key goals of the program are to provide sufficient support and funding to meet the needs of veterans in the four areas defined below:

- State Veteran's Community Living Centers for capital improvements or needed amenities for existing or future state veterans nursing homes.
- Operation and maintenance of existing or future State Veterans Cemeteries.
- Costs incurred by the Division of Veterans Affairs.
- Veterans programs operated by nonprofit veterans' organizations that meet criteria adopted by the board and that are selected by the Board as grant recipients.

**Non-Profit Criteria:**

Nonprofit veterans' organizations: Nonprofit veterans' organizations must be nationally recognized by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs as an organization that can provide services to veterans under Title 38, USC. This includes organizations designated by the IRS as a 501(c)19 or 501(c)23 organization.

**Program Criteria:** The Colorado Board of Veterans Affairs (BVA) established criteria for veteran programs operated by nonprofit veteran's organizations located within the State of Colorado for programs that provide assistance for veterans in need. Examples of such programs are veteran's transportation programs to medical centers and/or clinics (10.9%), homelessness prevention and intervention (36.9%) emergency needs (41.3%), Stand Downs (0.7%), medical/mental health services not provided and/or covered through the VA (0.1%), and other needed services such as food and gas or other assistance (6.8%).

**Eligible Population:** Veterans within the state of Colorado with an other than dishonorable discharge. There are no income eligibility requirements.

**Services Provided:** The following represents a breakdown by category of agencies that received funding, grants or awards during the reporting period, to include the type of service and/or assistance provided.

**Non-Profit Veterans Service Organizations and State Veterans Community Living Centers** – these organizations expended \$654,308.14 in grant funds to support veterans and their needs.

- Bruce McCandless Veterans Community Living Center in Florence was awarded \$23,500 and expended the full amount for a Scandent system, Veterans Community Living Center in Rifle was awarded \$24,400 and expended \$24,400 for improvements to the patio area, Fitzsimmons Community Living Center in Aurora was awarded \$24,752 and expended \$23,718.15 for furniture in common areas, and the Veterans Community Living Center at Homelake, in Monte Vista was awarded \$29,537.60 and expended the full amount for recliners in veteran's rooms. Spanish Peaks Veterans Community Living Center was awarded \$60,182 for the purchase of a van to transport veterans to appointments and fully expended the grant.
- Non-Profit Veterans Service Organizations expended the remaining amount of grant funds. The services provided were located throughout the state, with 55% of the grantees in rural areas and 45% in metro areas. As previously noted, services include transportation to medical appointments, emergency assistance, housing support, Stand Downs, medical/mental health assistance not provided by the VA, and other services to meet the needs of veterans. Grantees spent a higher percentage of grant funds on housing support (both homeless intervention and homeless prevention) and emergency assistance which is becoming the common needs addressed through the grant. For the third year in a row, grantees report spending a higher percentage on these items due to the increasing costs of housing in the State.

During FY 2019-2020, the (duplicated) number of veterans served by grantees was 1579 with 972 unique individuals (unduplicated) receiving services and support. This number was lower than the previous year, as COVID-19 impacted the number of veterans served overall. Of those served, 130, or 13% were women veterans.

**Program Effectiveness:** A service recipient survey is utilized to measure the effectiveness of the services provided by the grantees and to measure the outcomes or impact of the services. The survey utilizes a standard Likert scale to rate the grantee program effectiveness, and changes in well-being. Overall, 95% of the veterans rated the services favorably (strongly agree and agree) with 64% indicating a decrease in urgent needs, 41% noting an increase in well-being and 28% citing an increase in overall family well-being as a result of the program. Specific outcomes noted include gaining housing stability (33%), decreasing basic needs such as food (43%), and increased access to health care (19%). Notably, 17% cited an increase in overall mental health support, even though mental health services are not a focus on the VTF programs. Many veterans write personal notes of appreciation on the surveys.

**Evaluation of the Operation of the Program:** The most significant impact on the grant program was COVID-19. The grant programs were effectively shut down for a period of time, with some remaining closed down for longer periods of time. Many of the individuals that operate the grant program are considered high risk individuals, thus were not able to address veteran needs. Some programs did find a way to operate remotely via telephone and email contact. The veterans being served were reluctant to seek assistance or did not have the ability to operate remotely via computer, emails and video. Process improvements remain a primary focus in terms of the grant program operations. A survey was completed with grantees, seeking input on the effectiveness of trainings, the responsiveness to grantees and suggestions for changes. The survey results demonstrated that the grant program is meeting the grantee needs and providing a high level of support. The increase in the number of grantee trainings via webinars and in-person one-on-one sessions have continued. An updated and improved Grantee Handbook was provided to all grantees with specific details on VTF policies, procedures and processes. We continue to seek input from grantees for further program enhancements. The process of grant modifications in which funds from underperforming grantees were released to high performing grantees was more successful. Unfortunately, those with award increases due to the modifications were unable to fully expend those additional funds due to the timing of the pandemic. The training of Board members to

determine an organization's capacity and to make funding decisions accordingly is ongoing. The Board's strategic plan addresses this in an initiative for Board members to conduct non-monitoring visits to grantee organizations to learn more about the area they serve and the needs and the capacity of their programs. The Board was not able to fully implement the visits, but are anxious to do so in the future, even if done remotely. This education will lead to better decision-making on grant awards. As always, we continue to expand outreach to eligible entities to increase the saturation throughout the state.

**Grantees:** Please see the attached list for all grantees awarded Veterans Trust Fund monies.

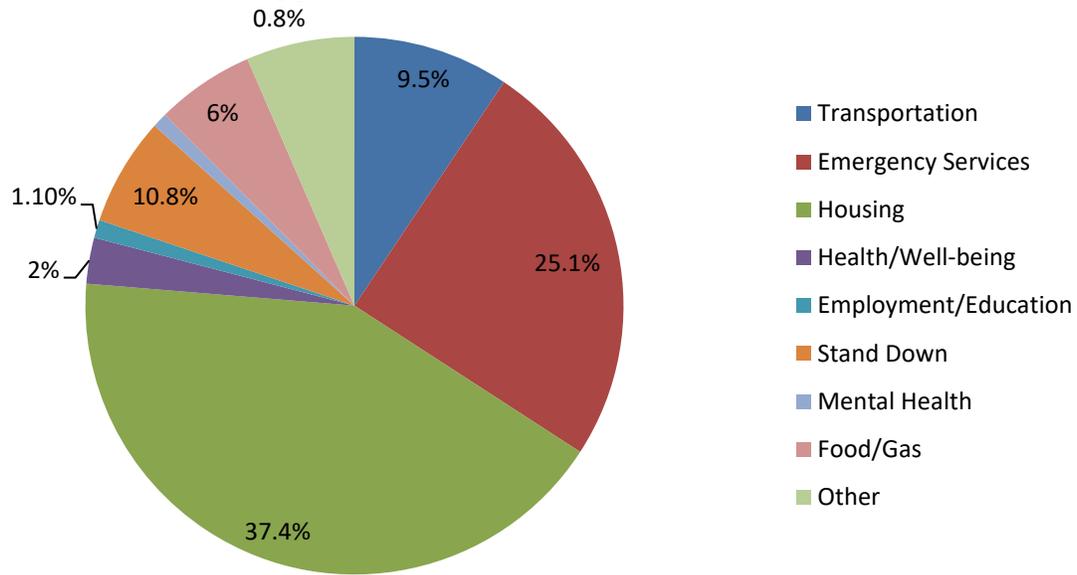
**In Closing:** Over the past sixteen years the Colorado Department of Military and Veterans Affairs and the Colorado Board of Veterans Affairs, through the Colorado Veterans Trust Fund, have provided direct benefits ranging from emergency assistance, housing assistance, work clothes, rent assistance, utility assistance and transportation to Veterans Affairs medical facilities to tens of thousands of veterans throughout the State.

FY2018-2019 Veterans Trust Fund Grantees

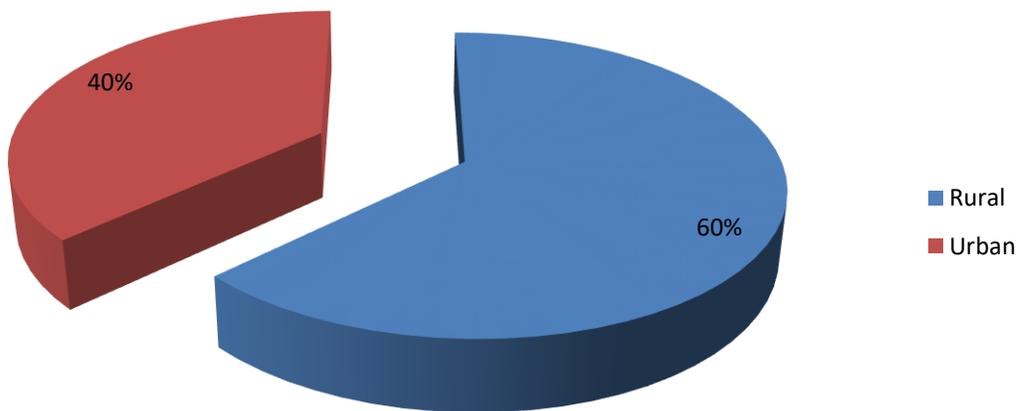
Grantee	Location	Purpose	Amount Awarded
VFW Post 12063	Westcliffe	Vet Assistance ***modification increase	\$70,750-original \$75,750-final award
DAV Chapter 48	Durango	Transport/Vet Assist/Stand Down/MH	\$94,000
VFW Post 8661	Conifer	Transport/Vet Assistance	\$8,400
American Legion Post 9	La Junta	Transport/Vet Assistance ***modification increase	\$18,000-original \$26,000-final award
American Legion Post 9-11	Palmer Lake	Vet Assistance ***modification decrease	\$5,000-original \$1,500-final award
American Legion Post 44	Steamboat Springs	Transportation	\$4,500
American Legion Post 103	Littleton	Vet Assistance	\$37,500
VFW Post 2461	South Denver	Vet Assistance ***modification decrease	\$20,000-original \$10,000-final award
American Legion Post 88	Hot Sulphur Springs	Vet Assistance	\$30,200
American Legion Post 1980	Woodland Park	Vet assistance	\$12,000
Dept. of Colorado VFW	Lakewood	Vet Assistance	\$50,000

VFW Post 4171	Golden	Vet Assistance	\$15,000
DAV Chapter 44	Cortez	Transport/Vet Assistance	\$55,000
American Legion Post 32	Longmont	Transport/Vet Assist/Stand Down	\$20,000
VFW Post 1	Denver	Veterans Assistance	\$8,000
VFW Post 5231	Cortez	Veterans Assistance *** modification increase	\$25,000-original \$43,000-final award
American Legion Post 62	Craig	Transport/Vet Assistance	\$8,000
VFW Post 5843	Meeker	Transportation	\$9,000
American Legion Post 22	Northglenn	Vet Assistance ***modification increase	\$16,000-original \$25,000-final award
American Legion Post 16	Huerfano	Transport/Vet Assistance	\$10,000
SVCLC Fitzsimons	Aurora	Furniture -common areas	\$24,752
CO Veterans Community Living Center	Rifle	Patio Improvements	\$24,400
Bruce McCandless SVCLC	Florence	Scandent system	\$23,500
SVCLC at Homelake	Monte Vista	Recliners for veteran rooms	\$29,537.60
Spanish Peaks Region Health Center VCLC	Walsenburg	Vehicle	\$60,182
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$705,221.60</b>

## Types of Services Provided



## Location of Grantees



# STATE OF COLORADO

---

## DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AND VETERANS AFFAIRS COLORADO DIVISION OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

1355 S. Colorado Blvd., Suite 113, Building C  
Denver, Colorado 80222

Phone: (303) 284-6077, Fax: (303) 284-3163

Richard Tremaine  
Director

Gail Hoagland  
Grant Administrator



Jared Polis  
Governor

Brigadier General  
Laura L. Clellan  
The Adjutant General

### Veterans Assistance Grant 2019-2020 Final Report

Pursuant to C.R.S. 28-5-712, Legislative appropriations authorized the Colorado Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMVA) Veterans Assistance Grant to receive \$1,000,000 from the general fund for FY 2019-2020. Of these funds, a total of \$950,000 was designated to be granted to non-profit or governmental agencies to provide assistance to veterans in the State. Additionally, a total of \$157,886 from the VAG Cash Fund was allocated, of which \$149,992 was designated for grant funding. This resulted in a total of \$1,099,992 of funds available to be awarded to organizations throughout the state serving veterans. The following is a final report of the administration of those monies.

The grant program received requests in the amount of \$1,827,111. A total of 30 non-profit organizations and governmental entities throughout the state were awarded grants totaling \$1,097,052. The direct services provided through the grants include the provision of shelter and housing (34.5%), emergency assistance (21.4%), education and employment assistance (1.0%), transportation (5.5%), health and well-being services (14.8%), mental health services (6.1%), substance abuse treatment (10.1%) and other forms of assistance (4.8%). These "other services" include furniture and bedding for transitioning veterans, and Stand Downs. A total of 4083 veterans were served during the contract period. Of those, 2023 were unduplicated, unique individuals. The combined allocation to administer the grant program was \$57,894, of which \$46,147 was spent. The administration of the grant was impacted during the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter as a number of site monitoring visits had to be cancelled. This resulted in some funds not utilized.

A total of \$946,254.39 was expended by the grantees, resulting in an 86% execution rate. The execution rate was impacted by a number of significant factors. Unfortunately, one grantee closed their doors as a result of a reorganization by the parent entity and returned their grant award. This was a tremendous loss to veterans, as it was the only program of its kind in the state, providing furniture to veterans transitioning into their own apartments. The furniture, such as a bed and table with chairs, made four walls into a home for these veterans. The most significant factor was COVID-19. Approximately one quarter of the grant period was impacted, otherwise, there is confidence that the execution rate would have been in the high 90% range. Many of the grantees demonstrated creativity and resiliency in adapting and finding ways of serving veterans during the pandemic. For example, during Stay at Home, one grantee that provides alternative health services to a veteran population with PTS, anxiety, and pain, provided weekly wellness calls and taught veterans techniques for self- acupressure.

During Safer at Home, many grantees found ways to conduct contactless services. An unexpected result of the pandemic was the reduction in requests for housing assistance due to the moratorium on evictions; the free transportation by RTD reducing the need for transportation assistance along with the shift to telehealth reducing the need for transport to the VA; and the general fear of going out as many of the veterans served are high risk. Of note, one grantee that is a residential substance abuse treatment program stopped new intakes, adjusted the program to ensure social distancing, and surprisingly, remained COVID-19 free.

Program evaluation measures include a service recipient survey to measure the effectiveness of the services provided by the grantees and to measure the outcomes or impact of the services. The survey utilizes a standard Likert scale to rate the grantee program as well as changes in the overall health and well-being of veterans served. Overall, 96% of the veterans rated the services favorably with 91% of veterans indicating an increase in overall well-being for themselves and their families. Another 38% reported that the services increased their mental health support and 59% noting increased health and wellbeing. These indicators demonstrate that the services provided meet the statutory intent of improving veterans overall health and wellbeing. An additional measure of housing stability was reported by 31%, increased access to health care was noted by 33%, and 45% indicated the services decreased urgent needs.

Of the total grantees, 74% are located within a metro area and 26% within rural areas.

A full list of grant recipients, location and funding amount is attached.

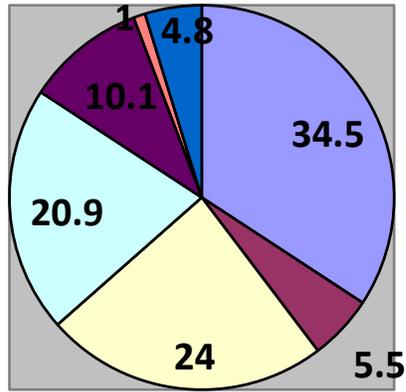
FY2019-2020 Veterans Assistance Grantees

Grantee	Location	Purpose	Amount Awarded
La Puente Home, Inc.,	Alamosa	Veteran Assistance/ Education/Employment	\$35,000
Alamosa County Veterans Services	Alamosa	Emergency/Veteran Assistance/Transportation	\$55,000
Grand County Veterans Services	Hot Sulphur Springs	Veteran Assistance/ Mental Health	\$26,500
CO Veterans Health & Wellness	Colorado Springs	Mental Health ***modification decrease	\$40,000-original award \$20,000-after modification
Pikes Peak Workforce Center	Colorado Springs	Employment/ Veteran Assistance	\$30,000
Catholic Charities of Denver	Denver/Ft. Collins	Housing/Veteran Assistance	\$35,000
Mountain Resource Center	Conifer	Emergency Assistance/ Mental Health/Educ. and Employment	\$40,000
Operation Revamp	Grand Junction	Veterans Arts Program/Health and Wellness/Mental Health	\$53,802
Sobriety House, Inc.	Denver	Substance Use/Abuse Treatment	\$95,000
Morgan County Family Center	Fort Morgan	Veterans Assistance, Mental Health	\$18,250
Archuleta County Veterans Services	Pagosa Springs	Mental Health	\$12,500
Vets for Vets of La Plata County	Durango	Mental Health	\$10,000

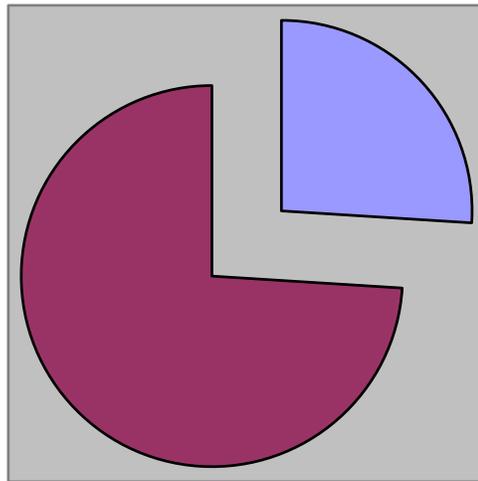
Providers Resource Clearinghouse	Aurora	Furniture/Bedding ***award returned; modification decrease	\$99,300-original award \$0.00 after modification
University of Colorado, Denver Heroes Clinic	Aurora	Dental care ***modification increase	\$25,000-original award \$75,000-after modification
Pueblo Veterans Council	Pueblo	Stand Down	\$8,060
Colorado Veterans Project	Littleton	Stand Down ***modification decrease	\$19,700-original award \$7,500-after modification
Costilla County	San Luis	Veteran Assistance/ Mental Health ***modification increase	\$9,000-original award \$18,000-after modification
Healing Warriors Program	Ft. Collins	Alternative Health/Mental Health Therapies ***modification increase	\$35,000-original award \$57,500-after modification
Douglas County Office of Veteran Affairs	Castle Rock	Emergency Assistance ***modification increase	\$10,000-original award \$12,500-after modification
Colorado Coalition for the Homeless	Denver	Emergency Assistance/Employment	\$7,500
Veterans Acupuncture Center	Denver	Alternative Health ***modification increase	\$17,500-original award \$24,000-after modification

City/County of Denver DHS	Denver	Emergency Assistance/Mental Health ***modification increase	\$50,000-original award \$60,000-after modification
Veterans for Veterans of Archuleta County	Pagosa Springs	Housing/ Emergency Assistance/Stand Down	\$80,000
Home Front Cares, Inc.	Colorado Springs	Emergency Assistance/ Housing	\$90,000
Posada	Pueblo	Veterans Assistance	\$25,000
Mt. Carmel Veteran Service Center	Colorado Springs	Veteran Assistance	\$50,000
City/County of Broomfield DHHS	Broomfield	Veteran Assistance	\$5,000
DAV Chapter 2	Pueblo	Veterans Assistance	\$7,500
El Paso County Homeless Veterans Coalition	Colorado Springs	Stand Down, Homeless Transition Program, Veterans Assistance	\$98,750
Pueblo Veterans Ritual Team	Pueblo	Transportation	\$8,790
<b>Total (after modifications)</b>			<b>\$1, 072,417</b>

# Types of Services



- Housing
- Transportation
- Emergency Serv.
- Health/Mental Health
- Substance abuse
- Educ./Employ



- Rural
- Metro



October 14, 2020

Brey Hopkins  
Deputy Director  
Colorado Board of Veterans  
Department of Military and Veteran Affairs  
1333 South Colorado Blvd. Building C, Suite 113  
Denver, CO 80222

Dear Mr. Hopkins:

The attached report reflects the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment, Workforce Development Program's (WDP) accomplishments for Program Year (PY) 2019. WDP is dedicated to providing Colorado's veterans with outstanding employment and training services and Colorado businesses with qualified veteran job seekers.

The report outlines the outreach services provided to veterans through the Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG) and state and county operated American Job Center/Workforce Center staff. The JVSG Program partners with the local workforce areas in accordance with U.S. Department of Labor/VETS Veterans Program Letters (VPL), specifically VPL 03-14 and VPL 03-14 changes 1 and 2, which outline the duties and responsibilities of the Local Veteran Employment Representative (LVER) and the Disabled Veteran Outreach Program (DVOP) Specialist. These 32 individuals are strategically located within county and state operated workforce centers with the highest veteran populations.

The mission of the JVSG program is to provide eligible transitioning service members, veterans, eligible spouses and wounded warrior caregivers with the employment and training services needed to succeed in today's workforce. As always, we look forward to the continued partnership with the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs Office as we work towards meeting the employment needs of Colorado's veterans and their families. If you have any questions about this report, please feel free to contact Colin Schneider, State Veterans Program Coordinator at (303) 318-8558 or [colin.schneider@state.co.us](mailto:colin.schneider@state.co.us).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "William Dowling".

William Dowling  
Director  
Division of Employment and Training



## Colorado Department of Labor and Employment (CDLE)

Program Year (PY) 2019 Report on Service to Veterans  
July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020

For the Colorado Department of Military and Veteran Affairs  
Annual Report to the Governor

The Colorado Department of Labor and Employment (CDLE) provides a wide array of labor and employment services to Colorado veterans throughout the State and county-run workforce centers and satellite offices around the State. CDLE effectively uses the Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG) and the State Workforce System to promote the hiring and retention of eligible veterans, spouses, and caregivers of wounded warriors. State and county Labor and Employment Specialists provide employment services that include:

- Resume and cover letter writing
- Interview tips and techniques
- Translating military experience to civilian knowledge, skills, and abilities
- Navigating online job boards and career fair resources
- Targeted job search by industry
- Providing labor market information and wage data
- Identifying community based education and training opportunities
- Due to COVID-19, most of these services are available/provided remotely

Workforce centers also refer eligible veterans to appropriate Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) training programs, registered apprenticeships, and skilled trade apprenticeship programs throughout the state. Colorado's workforce centers make referrals to various federal, state, local agencies and non-profit partners in the community that provide supportive services to those in need.

As can be seen in the following chart, 21,328 veterans registered for employment assistance through CDLE's statewide database, Connecting Colorado, during PY 2019. Connecting Colorado provides a web-based platform to help match qualified job seekers and employers in need of skilled workers. Employers can view resumes, search for qualified candidates, post job openings, and learn about the hiring incentives offered by the state. Veterans can post resumes, conduct job searches, access employment resources using self-directed virtual employment tools, or receive in person (on a limited basis due to COVID-19) or virtual staff assisted services through their local workforce center.

There was a slight decrease in the number of veterans seeking employment services even though the number of registrants increased between PY 2018 and PY 2019, even with the improving economy and an extremely low unemployment rate for veterans until the impact of COVID-19. There was also a decrease in the percentage of veterans who received staff assisted services. During PY 2019, 12,487 (59%) of the 21,328 currently registered veterans

received staff assisted services through their local workforce center. Veterans who receive staff assisted services are more likely to have higher rates of entered employment, employment retention, and average wages. For these reasons, CDLE strongly encourages veterans to visit their local workforce center to receive one-on-one staff assisted services. The table below provides a demographic breakout of all veterans registered in the system and those who received staff assisted services.

### Colorado Demographics of Veterans Served by Workforce Center Staff

PY 2019 (7/1/19-6/30/2020)

(report run 9/15/2020)

	Total Vets	Ages 18-44	Ages 45-54	Ages 55+	Post 9/11	Disabled Vets <30%	Special Disabled >30%	Recently Separated
<b>PY 2019</b>	21,328	9,559	4,695	7,069	9,232	6,872	5,330	2,849
<b>Received Staff Assisted Service</b>	12,487	5,113	2,877	4,494	5,071	4,070	3,177	1,561
<b>Percent</b>	59%	53%	61%	64%	55%	59%	60%	55%
<b>PY 2018</b>	17,692	8,027	4,192	5,464	7,686	6,004	4,748	2,660
<b>Received Staff Assisted Service</b>	12,568	5,320	3,073	4,171	5,144	4,229	3,348	1,656
<b>Percent</b>	71%	66%	73%	76%	67%	70%	71%	62%

(Source: CC 9002 report)

Note: Veterans may be counted in more than one category with the exception of age categories.

US Code Title 38, Veterans Benefits, requires CDLE to provide priority of service to veterans for all Employment and Training programs funded by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL). A “veteran” is defined as a person who served in the active military, naval, or air service and who was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable. “Priority of service” means that the veteran either receives access to employment, training and placement services provided under a qualified job training program ahead of, or, earlier in time than non-veterans (notwithstanding any other provision in laws). CDLE has issued statewide guidance on this requirement and is in full compliance with the federal mandate.

Colorado takes priority of service even further: The names of qualified veterans appear at the top of all employer-generated electronic applicant referral lists. Connecting Colorado places new job postings on a hold for up to 24 hours, which gives the veteran job seeker an opportunity to view new job openings before they are available to non-veterans. As a result, in PY 2019 the workforce centers referred 36% of registered veteran job seekers to job openings compared to 24% of non-veterans.

During PY 2019, Connecting Colorado received 519,682 job openings from 10,714 employers. Most of these job openings were a result of CDLE’s active participation with Job Central. Job Central is the public service employment website owned and managed by leading U.S. employers through their membership in the Direct Employers Association, and enables employers to outreach through a network of 50 state sites and over 6,200 cities and communities.

In addition to the state and county Labor and Employment Specialists who provide front-line services to all veterans, CDLE employs 23 full-time Disabled Veteran Outreach Program (DVOP) Specialists and 9 full-time Local Veteran Employment Representatives (LVER) staff who are assigned to workforce areas around the state. The primary role of DVOPs is to provide intensive services to “eligible veterans and eligible persons.” In order to effectively serve eligible veterans and spouses and efficiently target their services, the DVOP specialists utilize a case management approach. Under federal law, services are limited to eligible veterans and eligible persons who meet the definition of an individual with a Significant Barrier to Employment (SBE).

DVOPs provided staff services to 1,192 registered veterans; 1,176 (98.6%) of whom received intensive employment services to help them obtain suitable employment. Veterans in need of intensive services fall into one or more of the following categories:

- Disabled Veterans
- Wounded Warriors
- Homeless
- Formerly Incarcerated
- Vietnam Era
- Recently Separated
- Low Income
- Lacking a High School Diploma
- Between Ages 18-24
- Receiving Public Assistance
- An Eligible Spouse or care giver

Intensive services require more staff time than regular employment services and are coordinated comprehensive employment plans to assure access to the necessary training and supportive services. Intensive services provide support both during program participation and after job placement. The following table provides a breakout by the types of barrier for the veterans who received staff assisted services from a DVOP during PY 2019 (7/1/19-6/30/20):

**Colorado Demographics of Veterans Serviced by DVOP Specialists**

PY 2019 (7/1/19-6/30/20)

(Vets 200 report run 9/30/2020)

<b>Total Vets</b>	<b>Post 9/11</b>	<b>Disabled Vets &lt;30%</b>	<b>Special Disabled &gt;30%</b>	<b>Recently Separated</b>	<b>Homeless</b>	<b>Female</b>
1,192	616	632	552	187	171	142

DVOPs conduct outreach to identify eligible SBE veterans and other eligible persons who, without the receipt of intensive services, would not be able to obtain employment on their own. DVOPs expand the scope of their outreach and its effectiveness by working in partnership with a wide range of public and private agencies and organizations. This includes

involvement in the “Homeless Veteran Stand Downs” that take place in Pueblo, Colorado Springs, Grand Junction, Denver, and Fort Collins. During these stand downs, homeless veterans are able to receive winter clothing, personal hygiene products, haircuts, hot meals, flu shots, dental exams, and mental health resources, as well as employment services.

The LVERs primary role is to conduct employer relations and advocate on behalf of veterans regarding the valuable knowledge, skills, and abilities that veterans bring to the workforce. LVERs do this through virtual and in-person customized hiring events, networking events, job fairs, job search workshops, employer panels, and personal visits to local businesses. These events are designed to bring groups of veterans and employers together to fill employer vacancies while providing veterans with vocational and career guidance as well as information on job training, apprenticeships, and work experience opportunities offered by private employers.

JVSG performance measures can change and are effective October 1 of each year with the start of the new Federal Fiscal Year (FFY). Here are the performance measures that started October 1, 2019.

<b>VETERAN PERFORMANCE MEASURE NEGOTIATED &amp; OUTCOMES</b> Rolling Four Quarters (July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020)			
<b>Measures for JVSG Services to Veterans</b>	<b>Negotiated Baseline</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Standard Met (Yes/No)</b>
Intensive Services Rate	90.0%	98.6%	Yes
Employment Rate - 2nd Quarter After Exit	63.6%	55.4%	No
Employment Rate - 4th Quarter After Exit	58.5%	53.2%	No, Within 90%
Median Earnings - 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$6,638	\$7,208	Yes
<b>Measures for Wagner-Peyser Services to Veterans Negotiated Baseline</b>	<b>Negotiated Baseline</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Standard Met (Yes/No)</b>
Employment Rate - 2nd Quarter After Exit	61.5%	64.3%	Yes
Employment Rate - 4th Quarter After Exit	57.9%	64.0%	Yes
Median Earnings - 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$6,453	\$5,879	No, Within 90%

Source: WIOA Quarterly Performance Report, Rolling 4 Quarters (7-1-19 to 6-30-20, run 10-1-2020)

The largest negative impact is on those veterans not retaining employment 6 months after exiting case management. After having record low veteran unemployment rates of 3% or lower, it would seem that the impacts of the COVID-19 and the jump to an 11%+ unemployed rate may have hit newly employed veterans the hardest. Many times new hires are the first staff reductions made in an economic downturn. The impacts of COVID-19 have forced businesses to find new strategies for conducting operations and veteran unemployment rates have continued to drop steadily since March 2020.

The shift in business operations was a challenge for Workforce Centers also but the JVSG program had been working on a virtual case management pilot process which allowed the program to pivot to virtual platforms. This allowed the JVSG team to continue offering services to assist veterans and employers during the challenging times due to COVID-19 uninterrupted . Colorado was a national leader in the transition to virtual assistance and presented it's virtual case management platform a number of times during national webinars/conferences. The presentations demonstrated how to provide virtual case management for veterans jobseekers and hold virtual hiring and networking events for employers in desperate need of workers. Overall COVID-19 has created new challenges for veterans and employers looking to hire veterans but the JVSG program has met these challenges head on. The Colorado JVSG team will continue to use innovation to find solutions to meet the needs of Colorado's veteran population and ensure they have the support to succeed in the current economic conditions.

\*\*\*\*\*



**COLORADO**

Department of  
Natural Resources

January 15, 2021

Colorado Board of Veterans  
Department of Military and Veterans Affairs  
1355 South Colorado Blvd. Building C, Suite 113  
Denver, CO 80230

Dear Mr. Rudder,

Per your annual request, under State statute and Parks and Wildlife Commission regulation, the Division of Parks and Wildlife offers the following types of licenses and services to our states' veterans or active military:

C.R.S 33-12-106 – **(1)** (a) Any resident who displays on the resident's vehicle a Colorado disabled veteran's license plate pursuant to section 42-3-304 (3)(a) must be allowed free entrance to any state park or recreation area, not to include campgrounds, on any day of the year when such park or area is open. For the purpose of this section, display of such license plates entitles the disabled veteran and passengers in such veteran's vehicle to enter such park or recreation area free of charge. **(b)** Any resident who presents the documents necessary to satisfy the requirements of section 42-3-304 (3)(a) at a regional office or the central office of the division, or at such other locations as may be determined by the division, may obtain a transferable annual parks pass free of charge from the division.

Commission Regulation – P-7 #701.4 A disabled resident may obtain an Independence annual parks pass pursuant to 33-12-106 (1) (b), C.R.S. An Independence annual parks pass shall be issued following the Division's receipt of a completed application from a qualified resident of the state. The pass will only remain valid as long as the individual maintains their Colorado residency as defined in 33-10-102 (21), C.R.S. a. In order to qualify for an Independence annual parks pass, a resident must provide the following written proof to the Division: 5 (1) DD 214 Form or other documentation indicating the veteran received an Honorable Discharge from a branch of the Armed Services of the United States, AND (2) A qualification letter, on official stationary/letterhead, from the Veteran's Administration, Department of Veteran's Affairs, or the branch of service from which the veteran is receiving compensation that states one of the following: a. 50% or greater, service-connected permanent disability; b. Loss of use of one or both feet; c. Loss of use of one or both hands; or a d. Loss of vision in both eyes.

For pass holders who are 65 years of age or older, the pass provides a \$3.00 discount on camping, except on weekends and holidays. The applicant must be a Colorado resident and submit an application to our Denver office. If the applicant is on VA disability, they may contact the Veteran's Administration to request a letter of documentation as to their disability. In return, The Veteran's Administration can provide a form letter which will fulfill the required documentation.

C.R.S 33-12-106 – (2.3) The commission may promulgate rules to allow free entrance to any state park or recreation area, not to include campgrounds, yurts, or other amenities and services offered, for veterans on one day each year. The commission may determine by rule which day veterans are allowed free entrance to state parks and recreation areas.



Commission Regulations – CCR 445 -#700-2(j) Any vehicle occupied by a current, reserve or honorably discharged member of any United States military service, on the State observance of Veteran’s Day. At least one form of past or present military identification shall be presented at the Park entrance. Acceptable forms of military identification include:

- DD214;
- Active, retired or veteran military cards;
- The display of military license plates.

C.R.S. 33-12-106 (2.4) (a) The commission shall promulgate a rule to allow veterans, including active duty personnel, free entrance to any state park or recreation area, not to include campgrounds, yurts, or other amenities and services, for the month of August each year. The commission may promulgate a rule setting evidence standards to show a person is a veteran and issue a sticker or other device that identifies a person as a veteran for future entrance. The commission may also charge a fee for issuing the sticker or other device that identifies a person as a veteran, but the fee must be based on the direct and indirect cost of issuing the sticker or other device.

In addition to those specific programs, Veterans may also qualify for:

Veterans 64 years of age or older who are Colorado residents may also qualify for the Aspen Leaf (Senior Citizen) Annual Pass at a cost of \$70 per year.

C.R.S 33-4-104 – (1) Any active or retired member of the United States armed forces while stationed as a resident patient at any United States armed forces hospital or convalescent station located within Colorado, any resident patient at a veterans administration hospital ...may obtain a fishing license free of charge, valid for taking fish during the period of residency only, under rules and regulations of the commission.

(2) Any Colorado resident on active duty outside this state with any branch of the armed forces of the United States may obtain, from the division of wildlife, a fishing license free of charge, valid for taking fish while such person is in this state on temporary leave from such duty, but not to exceed a total of thirty days during any year. (3) (a) Any resident of this state who has received a purple heart for service in the United States armed forces or who is a disabled veteran may obtain from the division of wildlife, free of charge, a lifetime resident combination small game hunting and fishing license.

Commission Regulation #206(B)(4)(g) Wounded Warrior Hunting Licenses – The Director may make certain deer, elk, and pronghorn licenses available to qualified participants in any United States Armed Services wounded Warrior programs. Applicants must be members of the United States Armed Forces, who are residents of, or stationed in, Colorado returning from post-September 11, 2001 overseas contingency operations who have been so severely injured during combat, including combat-related support activities that they will require years of intense, ongoing care or assistance. Additionally, applicants must be members of a United States Armed Services Wounded Warrior program, as defined in 33-4-102(1.9) C.R.S., and must be assigned to a military medical treatment facility at the time of application for this program.



Commission Regulation-#206(B)(4)(i)(1)(ee) – In lieu of applying through the regular limited license draw, any active duty member of the United States Armed Forces who is stationed at any military facility in Colorado and actively deployed outside the United States, or any active duty member of the United States Armed Forces who is a Colorado resident and is deployed outside the United States, shall, upon their return to the United States, be eligible to apply for preference points for any limited license draw that occurred during their absence. Applications for preference points shall be made on forms provided by the Division and filed within six months upon the member’s return to the United States.

Commission Regulation- #206(B)(6)(d) – Any active duty member of the United States Armed Forces stationed at any military facility in Colorado and actively deployed outside the United States, or any active duty member of the United States Armed Forces who is a Colorado resident and is deployed outside the United States, shall be allowed a preference for the purchase of leftover licenses prior to their sale to the general public.

In 2020, the Division issued 529 free Independence Parks Passes (August-December), 1122 free lifetime fishing licenses, and 1481 free combination small game and fishing lifetime licenses to veterans with disabilities; we have received 2 requests for military leftover license privileges and 8 requests for military applications for preference points.

Lastly, Senate Bill 20-041 passed in July 2020, allowing Colorado Parks and Wildlife to create a free annual parks pass for resident, active members of the National Guard. This pass will be implemented in January 2021.

We look forward to continuing to serve those who have sacrificed so much. Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions or require additional information.

Sincerely,



Dan Gibbs, Director  
Colorado Department of Natural Resources

Cc: Dan Prenzl, Director, Division of Parks and Wildlife  
Brey Hopkins, Director DMVA, Division of Veterans Affairs  
Lauren Truitt, Assistant Director, I & E Branch, Division of Parks and Wildlife  
Danielle Isenhardt, Manager, License Administration, Division of Parks and Wildlife





**COLORADO**  
Department of Local Affairs  
Division of Property Taxation

January 4, 2021

Jack Rudder, Chairman  
Department of Military and Veterans Affairs  
Colorado Board of Veterans  
1355 South Colorado Blvd., Building C, Suite 113  
Denver, Colorado 80230

Dear Mr. Rudder:

Per your request, I have provided below the number of properties, actual value, and the exempted taxes for disabled veterans who received the Disabled Veterans Property Tax Exemption in 2019, payable in 2020. My office administers the program to determine if a veteran has applied on more than one property in the state or illegally claimed an exemption. Additionally, my office provides information and support for county offices and taxpayers regarding the program. At this time, we do not provide any other direct services to veterans in Colorado.

For the 2019 tax year, property taxes paid in 2020;

The total number of disabled veteran exemptions granted is; **6771**

The actual value of the exempted properties is; **\$641,064,578.00**

The total exempted property taxes for qualified disabled veterans is; **\$ 4,036,007.03**

We have not yet verified the status of the 2020 tax year applicants; those applications are currently under review. Exempt property tax amounts will be calculated after those taxes are due in January 2021.

Should you have questions regarding the program or any other activities of the Division of Property Taxation please contact me.

Sincerely yours,

JoAnn Groff

JAG:mes





December 29, 2020

Jack Rudder  
Chairman Department of Military and Veterans Affairs  
Colorado Board of Veterans  
1355 S. Colorado Blvd., Building C, Suite 113  
Denver, CO 80230

Dear Mr. Rudder,

Re: Division of Housing: Programs Serving Veterans

### **1. Fort Lyon Supportive Residential Community Program**

Details: Fort Lyon Supportive Residential Community is a two-year housing program for Coloradans experiencing homelessness and struggling with substance abuse. It combines vocational, educational, and life skills programming with community-based treatment to help people reach recovery and stability in their housing and lives after exiting the program.

Program benefits to veterans: The Fort Lyon program prioritizes veterans, meaning that any veteran referred to the program is moved to the top of the waiting list.

Number of veterans served at Fort Lyon: Approximately 11% of the individuals served in the program were veterans or 43 individuals over the course of the fiscal year.

### **2. Other Rental Assistance Programs Serving Veterans**

VASH program details: The HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) program combines Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) rental assistance for homeless veterans with case management and clinical services provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

Program benefits: Veterans in the program receive a housing rental voucher to help cover the cost of privately owned housing.

Number of veterans served by DOH VASH vouchers in FY20: 781

Other DOH housing voucher programs: The Division of Housing provides other state and federally funded housing rental vouchers.

Number of veterans served with other vouchers in FY20: 137

Sincerely,

Wendy Hawthorne  
Deputy Director Division of Housing





**COLORADO**  
**Department of Revenue**  
Executive Director's Office

Physical Address:  
1375 Sherman Street  
Denver, CO 80203

Mailing Address:  
P.O. Box 17087  
Denver, CO 80217-0087

July 1, 2020

Mr. Jack Rudder, Chairman  
Colorado Board of Veterans Affairs  
Department of Military and Veterans Affairs  
1355 S. Colorado Blvd., Building C, Suite 113  
Denver, CO 80230

Dear Chairman Rudder,

Pursuant to C.R.S. 28-5-703 below, you will find a list of veteran services that are provided by the State of Colorado, Department of Revenue.

Service Members Civil Relief Act and the Military Spouse Residency Relief Act

The department continues to ensure that service members and their qualifying spouses under the protection of the Service Members Civil Relief Act and the Military Spouse Residency Relief Act continue to receive the services, protections and tax exemptions afforded to them by these acts.

Deployed Military Motor Vehicle Taxes and Fees

A member of the U.S. Armed Forces is eligible for the exemption of registration fees and pays a \$1.00 specific ownership tax for their vehicles registered in Colorado while the service member is deployed outside the U.S. The service member must (1) show that he/she is serving outside the U.S.; AND (2) files a signed affidavit that the motor vehicle will not be operated on a highway while they are serving outside the U.S. If the service member has credit remaining on his/her motor vehicle at the time they are serving outside the U.S., the department shall place that amount of credit into a "holding" account for the service member to apply to the payment of specific ownership tax and registration fees on any vehicle owned by the service member upon the return to the U.S. per C.R.S. 42-3-107(10)(b) and 42-3-314.

Colorado VETS-2-TRUCKS Program

This program is designed for individuals who are currently serving, are close to military discharge, or were discharged within the last 90 days. They must have experience driving heavy military trucks with a safe driving record for at least the last two years. These veterans may qualify for a Colorado Commercial Driver License (CDL) without having to take the commercial driver skills test.

e-Services

With the implementation of the Colorado Driver License, Record, Identification, and Vehicle Enterprise Solution (DRIVES) on August 6, 2018 the Department has implemented enhanced e-Services that offer first time registrations, registration renewals, license plate replacements, and persons with disability military license plates to be performed online across all 64 counties. This also allows service members stationed outside of Colorado to maintain their vehicle registrations. E-Services can be accessed at [mydmv.colorado.gov](http://mydmv.colorado.gov).

Military Identifier on Identification Documents

This program allows eligible applicants to have a military identifier added to their regular or commercial driver license or identification card for no additional fee. The applicant may choose between Air Force, Army, Coast Guard, Marine Corps, National Guard or Navy. The eligible applicant must present either his/her valid military identification card or a DD214 per C.R.S. 42-2-114(10) and 42-2-303(5).

### Deployed Military License Extensions

Per C.R.S. 42-2-118(2), every license which is, at the time of its expiration, held by a member of the armed forces of the United States, then serving on active duty outside of Colorado, does not expire, but is extended for 3 years or until 9- days after the licensee returns to Colorado. No action is required for the extension, but eligible service members can update their account and receive and extension sticker if they submit and extension request by mail or online.

### Veteran Designation on Identification Documents

This program allows eligible applicants to have a veteran identifier added to their regular or commercial driver license or identification card for no additional fee. The eligible applicant must present either his/her valid military identification card or a DD214 per C.R.S. 42-2-114(11) and 42-2-303 (4).

### Expedited Driver License Services

Expedited service in state driver license offices is offered to active military members in uniform. A sign in each office states the following:

#### *We Support Our Military*

*Members of the Armed Forces in uniform will be provided expedited service.*

### Registration Late Fee

The owner of a vehicle who is active military serving outside of Colorado when the registration grace period expires, if the vehicle has not been operated on any public highway in Colorado between the time the registration period expired, including the grace period and the time the vehicle is registered will be exempt late fees per C.R.S. 42-3-112(3)(b).

### County Issuance of Qualified Exempt Military License Plates

To improve service to veterans who qualify to receive a qualified exempt military license plate (Air Force Cross, Distinguished Service Cross, Distinguished Flying Cross, Disabled Veteran, Former Prisoner of War, Medal of Honor, Navy Cross, Pearl Harbor Survivor, Purple Heart, World War II Veteran or Silver Star) the department has worked with county clerk and recorders to have these plates issued from county motor vehicle offices. This service is now offered by 50 county motor vehicle offices and continues to be offered at the state office in Lakewood. Prior to this service being offered by the counties, veterans and service members who qualified to receive these license plates were required to have the issuance of these plates be completed at the Division of Motor Vehicles office in Lakewood. Eligible veterans and service members are encouraged to contact their county motor vehicle office to see if their county participates in this program.

The Division of Motor Vehicles has special accommodations for veterans registering vehicles in Colorado and obtaining vehicle license plates as follows:

### Authorization of Military Special License Plates for Motor Vehicles Owned by Trusts

The Department of Revenue is required to issue certain military special license plates for a motor vehicle owned by a trust if the trust is created for the benefit of a natural person who is qualified to receive the special license plate and the trust name includes a natural person who is qualified to receive the special license plate per C.R.S. 42-3-213(1)(g).

### Person with Disability Military License Plates

On August 5, 2015, the department began issuing person with disability military license plates for any military license plate and increased the number of persons with disabilities license plates that an individual can be issued from one to two. To receive a person with disability military license plate, the qualifying applicant must demonstrate that they meet the requirements for the military license plate and also meet the person with disability requirements under C.R.S. 42-3-204, C.R.S. 42-3-213(1)(h) and C.R.S. 42-3-218(2)(b).

### U.S. Air Force License Plate

This plate may be issued to a serving member, honorably discharged or retired member of any component of the U.S. Air Force upon presenting a DD214 form issued by the U.S. Government or any other evidence sufficient to demonstrate that the applicant is a serving member, honorably

discharged or retired member of any component of the U.S. Air Force. This plate may be obtained upon paying a one-time fee of \$50.00 and the required taxes and fees per C.R.S. 42-3-213(17).

#### U.S. Army License Plate

This plate may be issued to any person upon presenting a DD214 form issued by the U.S. Government, an honorable discharge from the U.S. Army, or sufficient evidence to demonstrate that the applicant is an active, reserve or retired member of the U.S. Army. This plate may be obtained upon paying a one-time fee of \$50.00 and the required taxes and fees per C.R.S. 42-3-213(12).

#### U.S. Army Fourth Infantry Division License Plate

This plate may be issued to a person who supports the U.S. Army Fourth Infantry Division. This plate may be obtained upon paying a one-time fee of \$50.00 and the required taxes and fees per C.R.S. 42-3-213(20).

#### U.S. Army Special Forces License Plate

This plate may be issued to a person who has received an honorable discharge or is an active or reserve member of the U.S. Army Special Forces upon presenting proof of honorable discharge or retirement or proof that the applicant is currently an active or reserve member of the U.S. Army Special Forces. The applicant must submit orders or DD214 form that shows an awarded prefix “3” or suffix “S” or a designation of “5G”, 18/180 Series MOS, Special Forces Tab, OSS, or UNPIK-8240. This plate may be obtained upon paying a one-time fee of \$50.00 and the required taxes and fees per C.R.S. 42-3-213(18).

House Bill 17-1149 effective August 9, 2017 removed the suffix “S” from the applicant’s orders or DD214 form as proof that the applicant qualifies to be issued the U.S. Army Special Forces license plate.

#### Bronze Star Medal License Plate

This plate may be issued to any person who has been awarded the Bronze Star medal. The applicant must present to the department a copy of the military order awarding the Bronze Star and a DD214 form issued by the U.S. Government showing that the applicant received the award. This plate may be obtained upon paying a one-time fee of \$50.00 and the required taxes and fees per C.R.S. 42-3-213(14)(a).

#### Bronze Star with the “V” Medal License Plate

This plate may be issued to any person who has been awarded the Bronze Star with the “V” for valor distinction medal. The applicant must present to the Department a copy of the military order awarding the Bronze Star with the “V” and a DD214 form issued by the U.S. Government showing that the applicant received the award. This plate may be obtained upon paying a one-time fee of \$50.00 and the required taxes and fees per C.R.S. 42-3-213(14)(b).

#### Civil Air Patrol License Plate

This plate may be issued to any person that supports the Civil Air Patrol. This plate may be obtained upon paying a one-time fee of \$50.00 and the required taxes and fees per C.R.S. 42-3-213(27).

#### U.S. Coast Guard License Plate

This plate may be issued to retired, honorably discharged, active, auxiliary, or reserve members of the U.S. Coast Guard upon presenting a DD214 form issued by the U.S. Government or other evidence sufficient to demonstrate that the applicant has an honorable discharge or proof that the applicant is currently an active, auxiliary, or reserve member of the United State Coast Guard. This plate may be obtained upon paying a one-time fee of \$50.00 and the required taxes and fees per C.R.S. 42-3-213(16).

#### Distinguished Flying Cross License Plate

This plate may be issued to a natural person who has been awarded a Distinguished Flying Cross upon presenting a copy of the military order awarding the Distinguished Flying Cross or any other evidence. The first set of plates per applicant is exempt the one-time fee normally associated with specialty license plates and payment of the required taxes and fees is required. Subsequent sets of plates per

applicant will be issued upon payment of a one-time fee of \$50.00 and the required taxes and fees per C.R.S. 42-3-213(25).

#### Disabled Veteran License Plate

This plate may be issued to qualified applicants who provide documentation of authorization from either the Veteran's Administration or their branch of military service to support that they are 50 percent or more permanently disabled due to a service-connected injury. One set of plates may be issued without paying specific ownership tax and registration fees. Additional plates may be obtained upon payment of a one-time \$50.00 fee and the required taxes and fees per C.R.S. 42-3-104 and 42-3-213(5).

#### Fallen Service Member License Plate

This plate is issued to the current or past spouse, child, sibling, grandparent, or parent of a person who died in the line of duty while serving in the armed forces. The applicant for a Fallen Service Member license plate will be required to provide a DD214 form for the Fallen Service Member and other sufficient documentation to prove eligibility. The plate types include Air Force, Army, Coast Guard, Marine and Navy. The first set of plates per applicant is exempt the one-time fee normally associated with specialty license plates and payment of the required taxes and fees is required. Subsequent sets of plates per applicant will be issued upon payment of a one-time fee of \$50.00 and the required taxes and fees per C.R.S. 42-3-213(15).

#### Former Prisoner of War License Plate

This plate may be issued to individuals that were on active duty with the U.S. Armed Forces during a period of armed conflict and were incarcerated by an enemy of the U.S. One set of plates may be issued without paying specific ownership tax and registration fees. Additional plates may be obtained upon payment of a one-time \$50.00 fee and the required taxes and fees. If a deceased former prisoner of war was issued a Former Prisoner of War license plate, the surviving spouse may retain the registration of the Former Prisoner of War license plate by paying all required taxes and fees per C.R.S. 42-3-104 and 42-3-213(3).

#### Honorably Discharged Veteran License Plate

This plate may be issued to any person who has received an honorable discharge from any branch of the U.S. Armed Services or who is retired from a branch of the Armed Services. The applicant must present the form DD214 or their honorable discharge documents to obtain this plate. This plate may be obtained upon paying a one-time fee of \$50.00 and the required taxes and fees per C.R.S. 42-3-231(4).

#### Korean War Veteran License Plate

This plate may be issued to any natural person upon providing proof that he/she was a member of the U.S. Armed Forces between June 27, 1950 and January 31, 1955. The applicant must present the form DD214 or other military separation papers that indicate the dates of time served in the Armed Forces. This plate may be obtained upon paying a one-time fee of \$50.00 and the required taxes and fees per C.R.S. 42-3-213(9).

#### Medal of Honor License Plate

This plate may be issued to qualified applicants who are a recipient of the Medal of Honor. The applicant must present to the department a letter of verification from the appropriate branch of the U.S. Armed Forces that the applicant has been awarded a Medal of Honor. These individuals may obtain one set of plates without paying the specific ownership tax and registration fees. Additional plates may be obtained upon payment of a one-time \$50.00 fee and the required taxes and fees per C.R.S. 42-3-213(7).

#### Medal of Valor License Plates

These plates may be issued to a natural person who has been awarded a military award for valor. When applying for this plate, the applicant must present a copy of the military order awarding the military award for valor, which includes the following awards:

Navy Cross	Air Force Cross
Distinguished Service Cross	Silver Star

These individuals may obtain one set of plates without paying the specific ownership tax and registration fees. Additional plates may be obtained upon payment of the one-time \$50.00 fee and the required taxes and fees per C.R.S. 42-3-104 and 42-3-213(10).

#### National Guard License Plate

This plate may be issued to an individual that provides proof that he/she is an active or retired member of the Colorado National Guard. An applicant shall submit a proof of eligibility form prepared by the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs verifying active or retired status. If the owner of a vehicle registered with a National Guard license plate ceases to be an active member of the Colorado National Guard and has not qualified for retirement from the Colorado National Guard, such person shall return the special license plates to the Department upon expiration of the registration. Upon retiring from the Colorado National Guard, a person wishing to retain such special license plates shall submit a verification or retired status that is issued by the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs to establish eligibility for retention of the plate. This plate may be obtained upon paying a one-time fee of \$50.00 and the required taxes and fees per C.R.S. 42-3-218.

#### Navy Seal License Plate

This plate may be issued to a natural person who has received an honorable discharge, is retired, or is an active or reserve member of the United States Navy Seals. To qualify for the plate, an applicant must submit a DD214 form issued by the United States Government and a certification from the UDT/SEAL Association, Inc., the Rocky Mountain Chapter of the UDT/SEAL Association, Inc., or a successor organization. This plate may be obtained upon paying a one-time fee of \$50.00 and the required taxes and fees per C.R.S. 42-3-213(26).

#### North American Aerospace Defense (NORAD) Command Commemorative License Plate

This plate may be issued to any person who desires to commemorate the North American Aerospace Defense Command's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. This plate was a limited issue commemorative plate that was only issued from July 1, 2008 through January 1, 2010. Plates issued within this period may continue to be used after January 1, 2010, until they become damaged, destroyed, lost, stolen or unreadable. This plate may be obtained upon paying a one-time fee of \$50.00 and the required taxes and fees per C.R.S. 42-3-213(19).

#### Operation Desert Shield/Storm License Plate

This plate may be issued to a natural person who provides a DD214 form issued by the United States Government or other evidence sufficient to demonstrate that the applicant is a veteran of the armed services who served between August 2, 1990, and February 28, 1991. The plate may be obtained upon paying a one-time fee of \$50.00 and the required taxes and fees per C.R.S. 42-3-213(24).

#### Pearl Harbor Survivor License Plate

This plate may be issued to qualified applicants who were members of the U.S. Armed Services on December 7, 1941, and were stationed and present at Pearl Harbor located on the island of Oahu, during the hours of 7:55 a.m. to 9:45 a.m. (Hawaii Time) or offshore at a distance not to exceed three miles from the island. Additionally, this individual must have received an honorable discharge from the U.S. Armed Services and hold a current membership in a national organization of survivors on the attack on Pearl Harbor. Applicants may obtain one set without paying the specific ownership tax and registration fees. Additional plates may be obtained upon paying a one-time fee of \$50.00 and the required taxes and fees per C.R.S. 42-3-104 and 42-3-213(6).

#### Purple Heart License Plate

This plate may be issued to qualified applicants who have been awarded a Purple Heart medal for wounds received in combat at the hands of an enemy of the United States. An applicant must present a copy of the military order awarding the Purple Heart medal or other sufficient evidence that indicates that the applicant received the Purple Heart medal. These individuals may obtain one set of plates without paying specific ownership tax and registration fees. Additional plates may be obtained upon payment of a one-time \$50.00 fee and the required taxes and fees per C.R.S. 42-3-104 and 42-3-213(2).

#### Submarine Service License Plate

Implemented with House Bill 18-1244 effective January 1, 2019, this plate may be issued to qualified applicants who provides proof that he/she has received an honorable discharge, is retired, or is an active or reserve member of the Submarine Service of the United States Navy. An applicant must present a form DD 214 issued by the United States Government or other evidence sufficient to demonstrate the applicant is a veteran, active or reserve member of the Submarine Service of the United States Navy. This plate may be obtained upon paying a one-time \$50.00 fee and the required taxes and fees per C.R.S. 42-3-213(30).

#### U.S. Marine Corps License Plate

This plate may be issued to an applicant who provides proof that he/she has received an honorable discharge, is retired or is an active or reserve member of the U.S. Marine Corps. This plate may be obtained upon paying a one-time \$50.00 fee and the required taxes and fees per C.R.S. 42-3-213(8).

#### U.S. Navy License Plate

This plate may be issued to an applicant who provides proof that he/she has been honorably discharged, is retired or is an active or reserve member of the U.S. Navy. The applicant must submit the DD214 or other evidence to demonstrate that they are a qualified applicant. The plate may be obtained upon paying a one-time \$50.00 fee and the required taxes and fees per C.R.S. 42-3-213(13).

#### Veteran of Afghanistan War License Plate

This plate may be issued to an applicant who provides proof that he/she was a member of the U.S. Armed Services between October 7, 2001 and the end of the Afghanistan conflict. The applicant must submit the DD214 or other evidence to demonstrate that they are a qualified applicant. The plate may be obtained upon paying a one-time \$50.00 fee and the required taxes and fees per C.R.S. 42-3-213(21).

#### Veteran of Iraq War License Plate

This plate may be issued to an applicant who provides proof that he/she was a member of the U.S. Armed Services between March 20, 2003 and the end of the Iraq conflict. The applicant must submit the DD214 or other evidence to demonstrate that they are a qualified applicant. The plate may be obtained upon paying a one-time \$50.00 fee and the required taxes and fees per C.R.S. 42-3-213(22).

#### Vietnam Veterans License Plate

This plate may be issued to an applicant who provides proof of service in the U.S. Armed Forces during the Vietnam engagement, specifically, August 7, 1964 to May 7, 1975. Proof of service includes the DD214 or other evidence to demonstrate this requirement. This plate may be obtained upon paying a one-time \$50.00 fee and the required taxes and fees per C.R.S. 42-3-213(11). House Bill 18-1361 changed the eligibility end date from January 27, 1973 to May 7, 1975 effective August 8, 2018.

#### World War II Veteran License Plate

This plate may be issued to an applicant who provides proof that he/she was a veteran of the U.S. Armed Services between September 16, 1940, and July 25, 1947. The applicant must submit the DD214 or other documents to demonstrate that they are a qualified applicant. These individuals may obtain one set of plates without paying specific ownership tax and registration fees. Additional plates may be obtained upon payment of a one-time \$50.00 fee and the required taxes and fees per C.R.S. 42-3-104 and 42-3-213(23).

#### U.S. Army 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division License Plate

This plate may be issued to an applicant who provides proof that he/she was honorably discharged, retired, reserve, or active member of the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division of the United States Army. The applicant must submit a DD214 form issued by the United States Government or other evidence sufficient to demonstrate that the applicant is a veteran, a reserve member, or an active member of the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division of the United States Army. This plate may be obtained upon paying a one-time \$50.00 fee and the required taxes and fees per C.R.S. 42-3-213(29).

#### USS Colorado Submarine License Plate

This plate may be issued to any person who supports the USS Colorado Submarine (SSN-788). This plate may be obtained upon paying a one-time \$50.00 fee and required taxes and fees per C.R.S. 42-3-213(28).

U.S. Woman Veteran License Plate

This plate may be issued to a woman who has received an honorable discharge form, or is retired from, the United States Armed Forces. This plate may be obtained upon paying a one-time \$50.00 fee and required taxes and fees per C.R.S. 42-3-213(31).

As of January 1, 2020, the Department records indicate that 162,826 vehicles were registered in the State of Colorado with one of the military plates listed above.

During calendar year 2019, the Department hired 50 veterans. We continue to be grateful for the services provided by our veterans and we, as individuals, are mindful of their contributions to our country and ourselves when we render them service.

Sincerely,

Heidi Humphreys  
Deputy Executive Director

# STATE OF COLORADO



## DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AND VETERANS AFFAIRS Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado

### Status Report

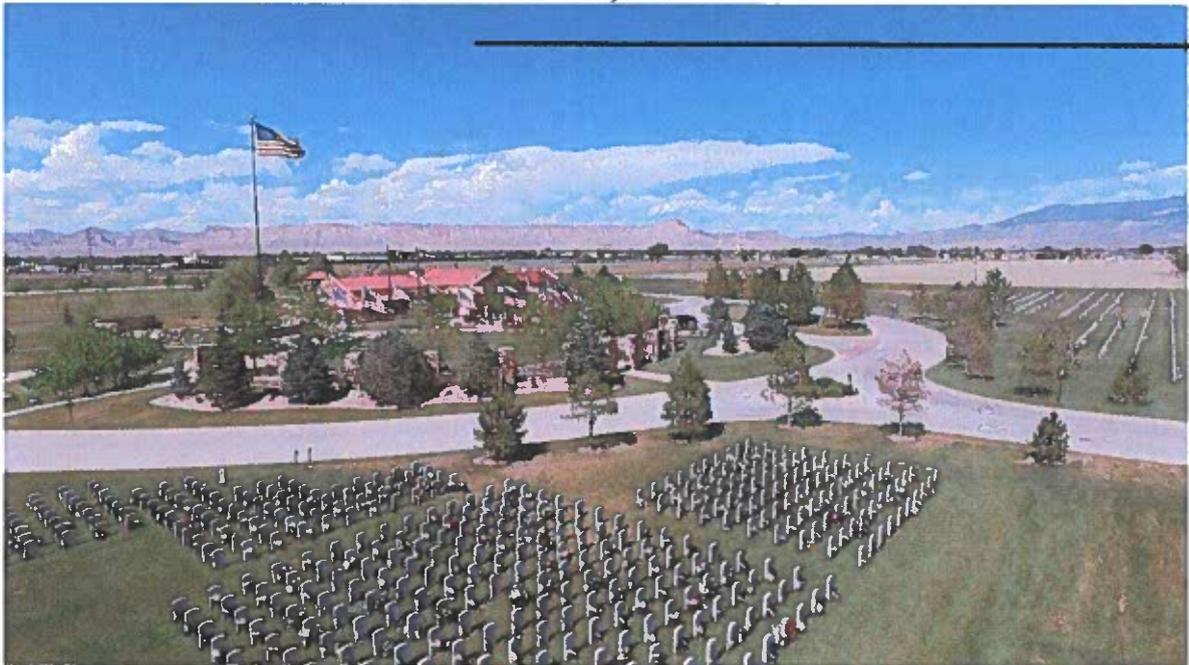
### Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado

November 1, 2019 through October 31, 2020

to the

Colorado Board of Veterans Affairs

October 18, 2020



VETERANS MEMORIAL CEMETERY OF WESTERN COLORADO  
2830 Riverside Parkway, Grand Junction, Colorado 81501

**Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado  
November 1, 2019 through October 31, 2020  
to the Colorado Board of Veterans Affairs  
October 18, 2020**

**Executive Summary**

**1. Background**

This section has been updated to reflect the additional 8 columbaria added in 2020.

**2. Physical Layout and Facilities**

This section is unchanged.

**3. Organization**

This section reflects a new Administrator, VA Work Study Intern, and an addition of Lead Groundskeeper position.

**4. Functions**

This section is unchanged.

**5. Extra-Curricular Activities**

Updates on Grand Valley Combined Honor Guard and Quarterly Military Honors services provided.

**6. Burial Operations**

**Gravesite Utilization:** Updated to reflect numbers, statistics, projections, etc. since last year's report.

**2019 – 2020 Interments by Month:** Updated to reflect numbers, statistics, projections etc., since last year's report.

**Interments by Year:** Updated to reflect numbers, statistics, projections etc., since last year's report.

**7. Customer Satisfaction**

Updated to reflect current comments.

**8. Early Registrations**

Updated to reflect numbers, statistics, projections etc., since last year's report.

## 9. Issues and Concerns

Issues and concerns from last year's report were updated to reflect their current status or eliminated if they were no longer relevant. New issues and concerns were documented.

**Water Issues:** This section has been updated to include planned mitigation through capital construction project.

There were no new issues with flooding in the administration building crawl space.

**Cemetery Funding:** Burial reimbursements from VA have increased to \$796.00 (from \$780.00) per veteran interment. Numbers for outstanding reimbursements have been updated.

**Equipment Replacement/Repair:** Reflects the status of newly acquired equipment and additional future needs.

**Personnel Issues:** Updated to reflect staff and future needs.

**Columbaria:** Reflects the status of the final columbarium, and timeframe of current build availability.

**Roadway:** This section is updated to reflect on going concerns

**In-Ground Gravesites:** Reflects minimal problems with in-ground gravesites freezing during the 2017-2018 winter season.

**Stonework:** Reflects damages due to weather conditions, and measures taken.

**Painting:** Reflects use of public service

**Silt Trap:** Reflects enhancements being made through capital construction.

**Main Line Irrigation System Breaks:** Numerous Main lines breaks experienced during reporting period.

**FIRE/Burglar Alarms:** Reflects status of video surveillance cameras at West Shop.

**Burial Operations Support System (BOSS):** Reflects inability to upload to cemetery kiosk

**NCA Audit:** Reflects updated audit date

**Rainbird Irrigation System:** Reflects continued repairs.

**GJ Regional Center:** This section reflects the continuing concern with the closing of this facility.

- 
- 10. Monuments and Memorials:** Updated to reflect a newly donated bench.
  - 11. Operations during COVID:** Reflects operational changes (March - current) during COVID
  - 12. Capital Construction:** Added to summarize current construction project.
  - 13. In Closing**

**Status Report**  
**Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado**  
**November 1, 2019 through October 31, 2020**  
**to the Colorado Board of Veterans Affairs**  
**October 18, 2020**

## **1. Background**

The Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado was authorized by the Colorado Legislature in 1999 to honor Colorado veterans. A grant to build the cemetery was obtained from the United States Veterans Administration (VA). Construction began in June 2001 and was completed in September 2002. The cemetery is located on 22.5 acres at 2830 Riverside Parkway (formerly D Road), Grand Junction, Colorado, just east of the Grand Junction Regional Center and south of the Grand Junction Readiness Center.

The cemetery opened on September 5, 2002 with a capacity of 3,337 units; 1,758 units for casketed remains and 1,579 units for cremated remains (of which 861 were columbarium [wall] niches). Additionally, there were 775 memorial garden plots available for veterans whose remains were scattered, not recovered or were donated to science. In 2011, two new columbaria were added to the cemetery, providing an additional 336 niches. In 2015, a substantial expansion project added another 1,979 gravesites, including four new columbaria providing an additional 672 niches, and improved infrastructure at the cemetery. Currently the cemetery is involved in a Capital Construction project bringing an additional 1,344 niches. The cemetery's capacity can be expanded, as necessary, in the future.

The cemetery is intended to be a dignified final resting place for Colorado's veterans of the armed services, their spouses and eligible dependents. It has been designed to provide a place of meditation and quiet contemplation for veterans, their families and friends. There are memorial walks on either side of the creek running northeast to southwest through the cemetery. These walks pass by five columbaria in front of which are benches for visitors' convenience. The other six columbaria are located at the east and west ends of the northernmost, center and southernmost windrows that cross the property. There are landscaped areas for in-ground interments, which are enhanced by thoughtful placement of trees, shrubs, and other plantings. These areas provide additional places for individual reflection.



The Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado conveys the appreciation of the people of Colorado to its veterans and their families for answering the call to duty and faithfully and honorably serving the United States of America and the State of Colorado.

## 2. Physical Layout and Facilities (Figure 1)

The Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado occupies 22.5 acres of land owned by the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs. Approximately 15 acres of this land is developed and in use.

There are four facilities onsite: an Administration Building; a Committal Shelter; a Pump House; and, a Maintenance/Storage Building (known as the West Shop). There is an attached garage/light maintenance area at the Administration Building.

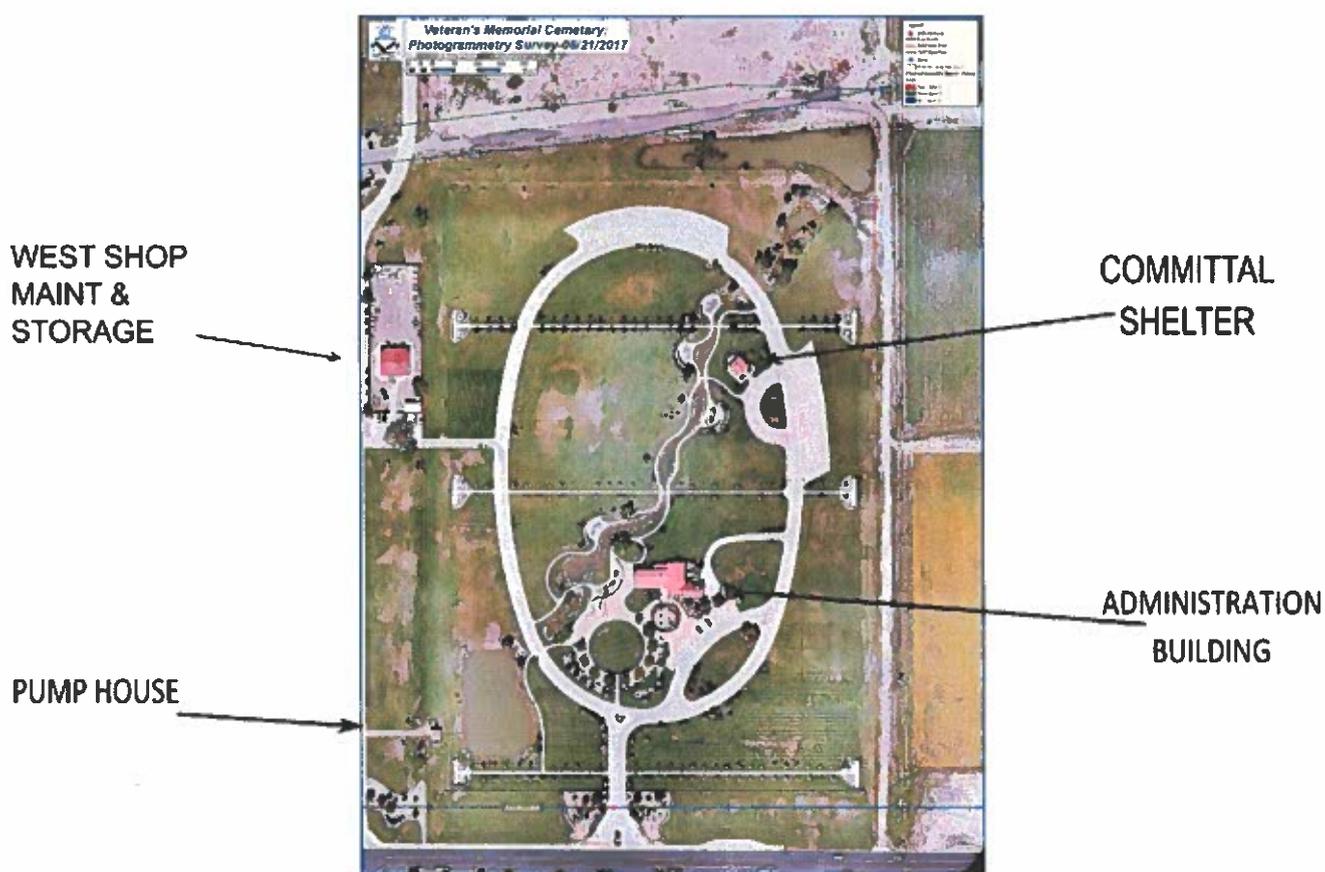


Figure 1

## 3. Organization

The organizational structure of the cemetery includes an Administrator, Cemetery Support Assistant, and four full-time grounds persons. In December 2019, Angela Ingalls was chosen to fill the vacant Administrator position. In September 2020, a Lead Groundsperson position was added and filled with the promotion of Ralph Sandoval, from the current grounds staff. The position left vacant from this promotion is to be backfilled in October. The cemetery was approved as a VA Work Study site in August, and was awarded 1300 hours per year. There is currently a retired Air Force veteran from Mesa University, filling the position. This allows for additional administrative support in the office for

25 hours a week. All employees currently report to the Administrator with oversight by the Cemetery Support Assistant.

## **4. Functions**

There are essentially four functions at the cemetery: management/administrative, operational, maintenance and landscaping. They involve various and diverse duties and responsibilities as listed below.

### **Management/Administrative Function**

#### **ELEMENTS**

#### **Interaction/coordination/scheduling (with funeral service providers and/or next-of-kin), to include:**

- Confirming eligibility of veterans, spouses, dependents for interment
- Scheduling interments
- Scheduling Committal Shelter
- Assigning gravesites, plots, niches
- Scheduling use of Visitors Room
- Making preparations for interment, to include: assisting families, (as needed), with military funeral honors, burial flags, Presidential Memorial Certificates
- Making records requests through the National Eligibility office on behalf of veterans and family members

#### **Interaction with veterans, spouses, dependents, to include:**

- Responding to inquiries
- Distributing forms
- Completing early registrations, i.e., early determinations of eligibility
- Conducting tours
- Assisting with records requests

#### **Records and documentation, to include:**

- Preparing interment record packages (VMC Forms 01 and 02, copies of discharge paperwork, residency paperwork, and interment worksheet)
- Preparing Interment Remembrances
- Preparing interment tags and temporary markers
- Preparing and distributing daily interment schedule & attachments with detailed interment instructions and map locations
- Preparing and distributing burial certificates to appropriate boards of health
- Preparing and maintaining manuals
- Developing, maintaining and updating procedures

Generating and maintaining records, to include:  
Records of interment (using USVA Burial Operations Support System [BOSS])  
Interment logs and registers  
Early registration logs  
Property lists  
PM schedules  
Non-exempt time records  
Demographic and statistical records  
Maintaining and updating grave locator system  
Preparing work schedules for operations personnel  
Preparing and distributing reimbursement requests for US Department of Veterans Affairs

**Monitoring and, when necessary, taking action with regard to systems and equipment warranties and guarantees**

**Performance of routine office tasks to include:**

Responding to in-person, telephonic, and written inquiries  
Generating routine correspondence and reports  
Ordering supplies and equipment  
Filing  
Tracking non-exempt time records  
Initiating accounting processes  
Coordinating volunteer efforts  
Assigning tasks, monitoring and maintaining appropriate records of Criminal Justice Community Service clients and Mesa County work crews

**Awareness and marketing efforts to include:**

Developing, preparing, and distributing presentations, pamphlets, booklets, posters, etc.  
Making presentations to Veterans Service Organizations and other groups

**Establishing and maintaining liaisons with appropriate agencies and organizations, to include:**

National Cemetery Administration and other USVA agencies  
Veterans Service Organizations  
Veterans Service Officers  
USVA Medical Center – Grand Junction  
Grand Junction Regional Center  
CDHS Division of Facilities Management  
Community Service Groups  
Colorado Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

**Colorado Army National Guard**

**Training and instruction to include:**

- Attendance at appropriate seminars and training sessions
- Training of new hires and support personnel
- Research and registration for position appropriate training
- Weekly safety training with staff

**Headstones, niche covers, monuments and memorial plaques to include:**

- Providing guidance for ordering headstones and niche covers along with those wishing to erect monuments, purchase memorial pillar, niche vases, rose and/or tree plaques
- Ordering headstones and niche covers
- Inspecting headstones and niche covers upon receipt for accuracy of inscription and compliance with standards
- Processing associated paperwork and making required entries into BOSS
- Selecting appropriate locations for monuments
- Assigning memorial plaques
- Generating and maintaining associated records and correspondence
- Advising families when headstones, niche covers, and/or memorial plaques have been set

**Gifts and donations to include:**

- Processing financial gifts and donations for memorial plaques, niche vases and general cash donations, and distributing associated funds

**Operational Function**

**ELEMENTS**

**Burial Operations, to include:**

- Preparing Committal Shelter for services, including: setting up microphone, podium, flags, chairs and urn table
- Preparing and transporting casket carriage to Committal Shelter
- Setting up and preparing interment locations, to include: identifying, marking, opening graves/niches, placing drapes and placement of temporary markers
- Transporting caskets/urns and flowers to gravesites
- Placing caskets and urns in gravesites

Closing gravesites and placing flowers  
Setting and removing headstones, niche covers and vases

**Planning, preparation and hosting veterans' events, to include:**

Memorial Day Ceremony  
Veterans Day Ceremony  
Wreaths Across America Ceremony  
Quarterly Military Honors for Unaccompanied Veterans  
National Vietnam War Veterans Day  
Saluting Branches Day  
Missing in America Project

**Safety and security to include:**

Operating fire and security alarm system  
Monitoring building security cameras  
Monthly inspect of on-site and equipment fire extinguishers and scheduling of yearly servicing  
Monthly inspection of on-site AED units, and scheduling of yearly manufacturer inspection and service

**Maintenance Function**

**ELEMENTS**

**Installing monuments, memorial plaques and vases**

**Custodial maintenance (i.e., janitorial services) to include:**

Maintain administrative office including restrooms  
Sweep, mop and vacuum floors  
Empty trash and transport to dumpster  
Wash windows  
Replace consumables

**Vehicle and equipment maintenance to include:**

Change oil  
Replace filters  
Lubricate as needed  
Sharpen/balance blades  
Clean equipment  
Effect minor repairs  
Schedule more extensive repairs

**Facilities repair and upkeep to include:**

- Monthly facility inspections
- Replace light bulbs
- Replace filters
- Clean and maintain facilities
- Effect minor repairs
- Schedule more extensive repairs

**Snow removal to include:**

- Remove snow from walkways and roadways using plow and/or sweeper
- Remove snow from Committal Shelter using handheld tools

**De-icing**

- De-ice walkways, Committal Shelter and roadways using commercial product and/or handheld tools

**Landscaping Function**

**ELEMENTS**

**Developing landscaping schedule of services**

- Based on varied and diverse input, develop schedule(s) for different landscaping tasks

**Irrigation system management and operation to include:**

- Install, repair, replace sprinkler heads and/or other components
- Monitor and adjust watering times in zones
- Monitor, operate and maintain irrigation system computer
- Service and lubricate pumps
- Monitor system to ensure proper operation
- Maintain ponds, stream corridor and water features
- Implement contingency measures in event of system failure
- Test system at beginning of season and ready for operation
- Shut down and winterize the system at end of season

**Landscape maintenance, to include:**

- Installing/replacing sod
- Seeding
- Weeding
- Pest control
- Irrigating
- Mowing
- Trimming
- Planting
- Pruning
- Aerating
- Fertilizing

## **5. Extra-Curricular Activities**

In addition to their daily functions, staff at the cemetery is heavily involved in other veterans-related tasks and activities on the Western Slope.

Management/Administrative staff is responsible for organizing the Grand Valley Combined Honor Guard and the cemetery director is a permanent member of its Board of Directors. As such, she is tasked with the responsibility of helping to oversee the Honor Guard and ensuring its efficient and effective deployment. The Grand Valley Combined Honor Guard has performed over 3,330 Military Funeral Honors and numerous flag presentations, parades, school appearances and other ceremonies during its sixteen year existence.

The Honor Guard's popularity has increased to the point where it is in constant demand. Again this year, the Honor Guard, which consists of approximately 27 active members, has had to decline numerous invitations because of a lack of resources, and the recent passing of 3 active guard members.

In October, 2016, we implemented a Quarterly Military Honors Service. During this service, the Grand Valley Combined Honor Guard performs military honors as a tribute and final salute in memory of all veterans who had no military honors, or were unaccompanied during their committal for the preceding three months. The Commander reads a list of the veterans' name, Branch of Service, and War Period served. Along with the GVCHG, the ceremony includes the Patriot Guard Riders, COARNG Team III, the Rocky Mountain Scots (bagpipers), the Veterans Memorial Bell, a dove release and a cannon shot. We have provided Military Honors Quarterly for thirty-five veterans during this reporting period.

The cemetery's management/administrative staff have been, and continue to be, responsible for many other events, including:

### **Memorial Day Activities – Annually in May**

- Ensuring proper decoration of Cemetery and placement of individual flags on gravesites
- Retreat Ceremony the night before Memorial Day
- Flag Retirement and Burning Ceremony the night before Memorial Day

Memorial Day Program and Ceremony at Cemetery

**Veterans Day Activities – Annually in November**

- Ensuring proper decoration of cemetery
- Veterans Day program and ceremony

**Other Veterans-Related Activities (in Grand Junction, Fruita and Palisade)**

- Fourth of July Parades and Ceremonies
- Fall Festival Parade
- Veterans Day Parade
- Wreaths Across America Program
- Local School Presentations
- Veterans Stand-downs
- Town Hall meetings
- Veterans Community Resource events
- Veterans Caregiver Summit

**6. Burial Operations**

**Gravesite Utilization** (Figure 2).

Based on the total interments as of October 10, 2020, the average interment rate is 1.5/ day, or 7.5/ week, since the opening of the cemetery in 2002.

Currently, cremation is the preferred disposition, making up 74% of all interments. 80% of those opting for cremation choose a columbarium niche over an in-ground niche.

INTERMENT LOCATIONS			Average	Months	Approx.			
	Total Available	In Use	Remainder Available	Percent In Use	Percent Available	Monthly Use	Remaining to Zero	Date of Zero
<b>Vall Niche</b>	1869	1811	58	96.90%	3.10%	8.22	7.06	5/8/2021
<b>In-Ground Niche</b>	1736	826	910	47.58%	52.42%	3.75	242.70	9/15/2040
<b>Single Vault</b>	733	274	459	37.38%	62.62%	1.24	369.04	1/31/2051
<b>Double Vault</b>	1748	775	973	44.34%	55.66%	3.52	276.58	6/28/2043
<b>Conventional</b>	576	25	551	4.34%	95.66%	0.11	4,855.41	8/1/2419
<b>Memorial Garden Plot</b>	775	207	568	26.71%	73.29%	0.94	604.49	6/3/2070
	<b>7,437</b>	<b>3,918</b>	<b>3,519</b>					

Cemetery Opened : 9/5/2002

(Note: There are no reserved spaces except when both a husband and wife are veterans and choose to exercise their right to an individual gravesite. In those cases, a space is reserved for the survivor next to the decedent; totals do not reflect double occupancies)

**2019 - 2020 Interments by Month** (Figure 3)

CY 2019 had 339 interments, up from 311 in CY 2018. Interments for CY2020 are running at a pace that, if it keeps up, will total ~ 333.

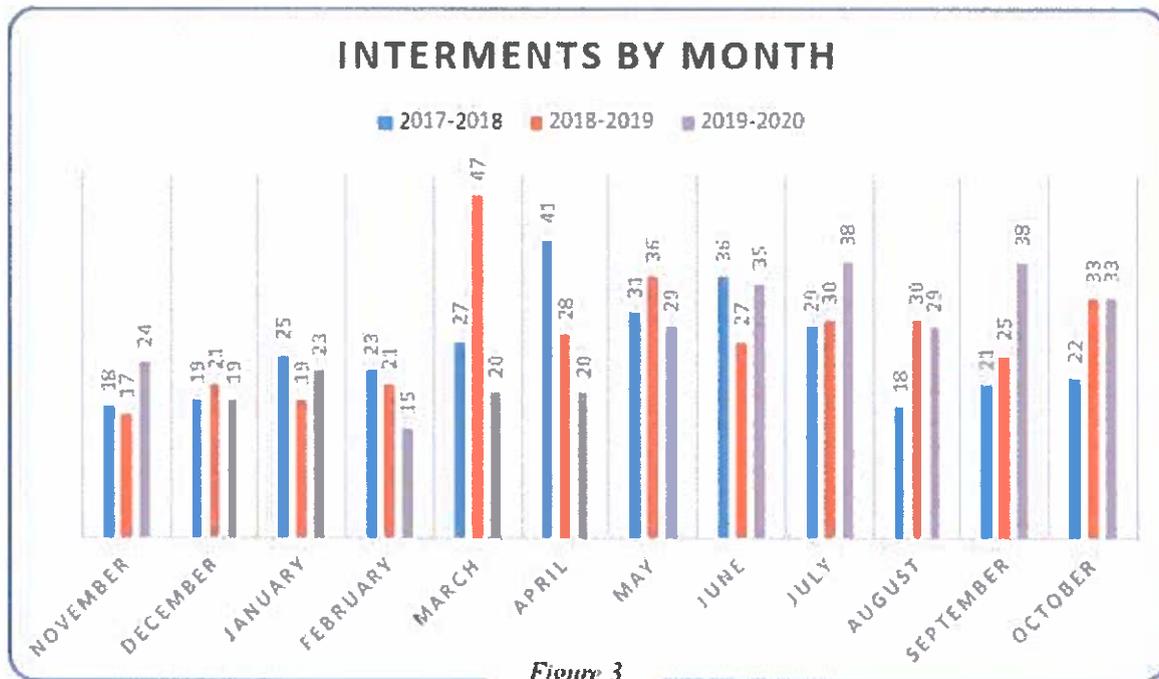


Figure 3

**Interments by Year** (Figure 4)

The interments of 4,827 veterans, spouses and/or dependents are broken down by year below

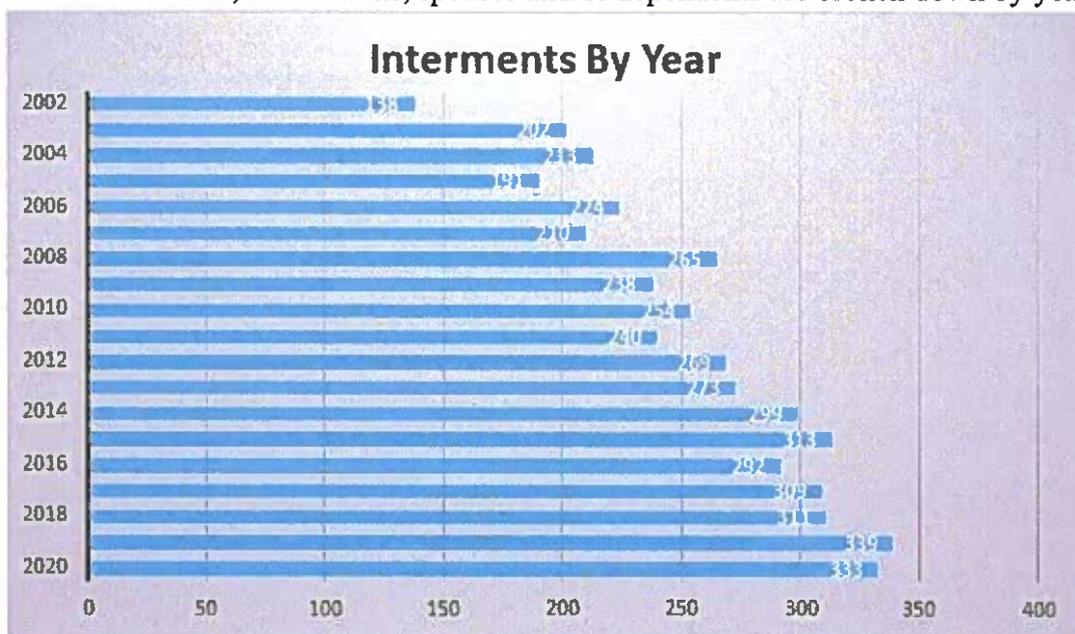


Figure 4

## 7. Customer Satisfaction

Survey forms were given to ~ 50% of the next-of-kin to those who were interred during the previous quarter. All surveys are anonymous; however, many respondents sign their names. On the surveys, there is room for any comments a respondent may wish to make. The responses the cemetery has received from the most recent survey are shown below (these are typical of the majority of responses):

### Comments from Customer Satisfaction Survey

1. "My contacts, Steve and Angela" were so kind, caring and very professional"
2. "Outstanding, dignified ceremony for my father. My family members, who had the honor to attend a military funeral prior to this one, were impressed almost beyond words at the professionalism, protocol, tradition and overall execution of this very moving ceremony. It has provided us with the closure our family needed in the most wonderfully memorable way possible."
3. "The military honors provided exceeded our expectations. Thank You"
4. "Everyone was so helpful and kind when my world was upside down. The service was perfect"
5. "The staff was excellent. The military veterans honor guard and ceremony was excellent and greatly appreciated"
6. "Thank you so much for the high quality, friendly, compassionate, thoughtful care you give veterans and families. We are thankful to have this facility"
7. "Everyone was very nice and the military honors were exceptional. Very, Very pleased!"
8. "My husband was born, raised and enlisted in Grand Junction and he chose to be laid to rest there, even though we live in NC"
9. "Due to the current virus restrictions, options for a service program & attendance were confusing and disheartening. Our family recognizes that this situation is not a fault of the cemetery or funeral staff. Everyone was kind and courteous...sometimes apologetic. Life 'is what it is' ...sometimes tough. Thank you for your concerns and excellent care of the cemetery."
10. "With this COVID-19 outbreak, we were thankful that we were able to have John's brother interred on March 19th. We would like to come in and prearrange our services as soon as this virus has run its course."

All responses are kept on file at the cemetery and are available to anyone wishing to review them. The cemetery has historically maintained a log at the front desk where visitors were invited to share their opinions. Due to COVID disinfecting procedure, this log, (along with other materials), have temporarily been removed from the front desk to ease the cleaning in the office. The Division of Veterans Affairs West is creating a new survey via qualtrics and will be released in November.

## **8. Early Registrations**

In an attempt to better serve the local veterans' community and at the same time attempt to predict future needs, the Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado offers Early Registration, a service not usually provided at most veterans cemeteries. Four years ago, the National Cemetery Administration started a similar program to pre-determine eligibility in a National Cemetery. The NCA's turn-around time is approximately twelve months from the date of mailing to receipt of acknowledgement.

Early Registration allows a veteran to receive an early determination of eligibility for interment at this cemetery. A veteran will complete a cemetery form (VMC Form 1) and submit it with a copy of his or her discharge paper (e.g., DD214). If the veteran's home of record was not in Colorado, proof of current Colorado residency is required.

The cemetery determines the veteran's eligibility for interment and keeps copies of the paperwork on file so that, when the time comes, it will be one less thing for the family to worry about. For those who did not complete early registration, there have been several instances where eligibility for interment could not be immediately determined, e.g., the family could not find the discharge paper. This delayed the interment until eligibility could be determined.

The ancillary benefit to the cemetery of such a program is that it allows cemetery staff to estimate future interments and incorporate the information into short and long range planning.

As of October 10, 2,815 veterans have completed the early registration. This represents 5,241 likely interments, including these veterans, their spouses and eligible dependents.

## **9. Issues and Concerns**

### **Water Issues**

#### **(Silt Buildup) Lower pond/Upper Pond/Stream Bed**

As previously reported, silt remains an issue at the cemetery.

This silt problem had been increasing over the years, and, during the expansion project, the silt in the upper pond was excavated. The silt in the lower pond and stream bed are in dire need of silt removal and liner repair. Mitigation of the silt issue will be rectified through phase II of the capital construction project, currently taking place at the cemetery. Please see Capital Construction notes in section 12.

#### **Flooding of Administration Building Crawl Space**

There were no new developments with this issue during the timeframe covered by this report.

## **Cemetery Funding**

In February 2020, The Department of Veteran Affairs changed the application for reimbursements. The required form is more detailed and requires substantially more time to complete for every eligible veteran. With this change, the prior delay in reimbursement time became considerably less.

Burial reimbursements from the VA were increased to \$796.00 per veteran in October, 2019. This is up from \$780.00 as previously reported. This amount represents 80% of the actual cost to inter an individual veteran. Spouses or other eligible dependents are not reimbursed. Federal reimbursements only account for about half of the cemetery's budget.

Currently, the accrued balance of outstanding reimbursements is at \$15,124 for this reporting period.

## **Equipment Replacement/Repair**

During this reporting period, we were able to procure a gas Gator and a small gas tiller.

Additional future needs include equipment to maintain the silt issues in the upper and lower pond, streamside, and silt trap; two commercial mowers, two UTV's, and a tractor with implements. Some of these purchases will be made with funds from the Capital Construction project currently underway. Please see Capital Construction notes in section 12.

## **Personnel Issues and Needs**

The cemetery staff currently consists of six FTE's, two in the office and four on the grounds crew. A new position for a Level 2 Grounds Lead was approved in August, and a Level 1 crew member was promoted. At this time, his prior position is vacant and it has been posted as available. Cemetery administrator is awaiting Human Resources to send qualifying applicants to interview.

Cemetery Director position was redefined to a Cemetery Administrator, and the position was filled in December, 2019.

As the cemetery grows with additional families to serve along with the increased interest in early registration, an additional FTE in the office would aid in service to our families and community partners. This position would lead to more in-person communication with families, a more timely response to inquiries and development of updated record keeping and data storage. As interments increase yearly, so does the number of columbaria niches and headstones to maintain. there will be a need to increase the grounds crew by an additional FTE to continue to maintain the cemetery.

## **Last Columbarium**

The final columbarium is filling up quickly. There are currently 51 niches remaining. The first of the columbaria that are currently under construction, is scheduled to be available for use as of November 10, 2020.

## **Roadway and Sidewalks**

Concrete maintenance is a continued need at the cemetery. A donation was made to the cemetery in August 2020 in the amount of \$25,000 which will be used to repair the section that requires the most immediate attention. It was determined that the sinking pillar in the assembly area would be the best use of these funds, as continued deterioration would lead to a more costly repair, and a hazard to visitors. Even with this repair, there are additional hazards throughout the cemetery. These hazards are currently being mitigated with temporary repairs. As the cemetery ages, yearly expenses will increase for the care and maintenance of the roadways, and concrete pathways. An estimated \$25,000/year could be easily spent on repairs and maintenance.

## **In-Ground Gravesites**

We did not experience any issues with in-ground gravesites due to heavy snow and freezing during the 2019 - 2020 winter season. Our winter was mild and remained easy to excavate with the mini-excavator or by hand digging graves.

## **Stonework**

A combination of water and weather conditions has created damage to the back of Columbarium 8, resulting in separation of the stone veneer. Repairs were completed October 8, at the cost of \$1,700.00. With this damage in consideration, measures were taken to better construct the columbaria that are currently being built. Please see Capital Construction notes in section 12.

## **Painting**

Due to COVID restrictions, The Eagle Scouts have been unable to assist with painting projects this year. In their absence, we have been utilizing public service through the Department of Justice to assist with these needs.

## **Silt Trap**

Our silt trap needs to be excavated at least once per year, due to the extremely silty ditch water. The long term solution to this problem will be addressed with phase II of the current Capital Construction project. The size and location of the silt trap has been redesigned to aid in effective use and aid in cleaning. The needed equipment to allow cemetery staff to treat and clean the trap and stream area, is also to be acquired with the project. Please see Capital Construction notes in section 12.

## **Main Line Irrigation System Breaks**

We continued to experience major breaks in the irrigation system water lines this past year. This is due to the age of the system, its heavy usage and, in some cases, faulty installations. It continues to be a fairly costly spring ritual.

## **Fire Alarm/Security Alarm**

The west shop security cameras, (as well as live and recorded video), can now be viewed at the administration office. Additional indoor dome cameras were added to both the West Shop and the Administration office in March 2020. This was in response to undocumented damage at the West Shop.

## **Burial Operations Support System (BOSS)**

BOSS is up and running with minimal issues. With the loss of Vision Technologies' contract with NCA, we are unable to upload interment and gravesite location data from BOSS to our kiosk/gravesite locator. In researching the possible options for a replacement computer and software/support, the cost has been prohibitive for us to act on at this time. We were given a quote of \$12,000 to get the kiosk operating as it should.

## **NCA Audit**

The NCA triennial audit that was previously scheduled for September 2020, has been postponed due to COVID. The cemetery is scheduled to be audited on August 10th & 11th, 2021.

## **Rainbird Irrigation System**

This summer the Rainbird Irrigation computer went down causing damage to the software and loss of programming. We no longer have contracted technical support. It is functionable with manual inputs, and we have had little difficulty with this operation. This system is in need of updating in order to have it function as it is intended. This will be a priority for the spring 2021, as the added irrigation with capital construction will create difficulties in how the system is currently functioning.

## **GJ Regional Center**

The Regional Center is still operational at this time. One of our main concerns regarding the possible closure was our network which was through the Regional Center. We installed fiber to the Cemetery's main Administration building. Working with State OIT, we were able to upgrade our system and migrate our network from the Regional Center to DMVA. This was a relatively smooth process and we appreciate the support of our OIT team from the east.

The second concern is the status of the facility when it is vacated. As of this date and time, there has been no formal announcement as to who our new neighbors might be. Our intent is to advocate for the cemetery to remain hallowed grounds as a final resting place for our veterans and their dependents. We have expressed interest in a strip of land adjacent to the cemetery, at no cost to us. This zero dollar exchange has not been approved as of this date and time.

## **10. Monuments and Memorial Benches**

A memorial bench was donated by the VFW Auxiliary 4663 in April of this year. At this time, the bench has not been designed or set. Due to copyright, the post secretary was requesting approval for use of the VFW Auxiliary seal to use in the design of the bench. The delay is unknown, and monthly contacts are being made with the post secretary.

## **11. COVID Operations Update**

With the onset of COVID and the Governors shut down orders in March, cemetery operations were affected. The practices of the NCA were implemented, and with this, military honors & committal services were suspended. Cemetery administrative staff were sent home to work, (due to being high risk), and DVA West Director assisted in the office. Minimal grounds staff came in to assist with direct interments only, which families were allowed to witness from a distance.

During this period of time, a list was maintained of all interments that took place without services, and families were informed that services would be provided at a later date. Seventy-two interments took place under these conditions.

Quarterly Military Honors scheduled for April, were canceled due to gathering restrictions. Those veterans who were scheduled to be honored on that day, were added to the July quarterly service.

In May, the staff was called back to the cemetery in phases, with appropriate measures in place.

As of July 1st, interments were scheduled again allowing military honors services and committal services with very strict measures in place. Only eight chairs were allowed in the committal shelter to allow for appropriate distancing and masks were required. Sanitizing materials were provided, and volunteers were kept at a distance. Cleaning of all decor and furniture was done before and after services. We are still operating with these measures in place.

By the end of July, the families of the seventy-two decedents, who had a loved one interred without services, were contacted and the scheduling of services began. For deceased veterans, the option of quarterly honors was also provided in addition to private family services. In order to accommodate the daily interments, as well as the added Military Honor and Committal services, the cemetery opened up the schedule to include services on the hour. With the heat of August temperatures rising, these services were scheduled in the early hours. As of this date, twenty-three veterans remain unscheduled. The cemetery continues to maintain a list of these veterans and make periodic contact with the families.

In addition to the above procedural alterations, the Memorial Day ceremony (with public attendance), was cancelled. A virtual presentation was made from prior events and new recordings were added. The virtual presentation was made available online, and media releases were made. Cemetery staff were present for the day, and the customary events were still honored. Taps was played, a wreath was laid by the DVA West and GJVA Director, and families were served in the best manner possible.

The July 4th parade and the Fruita Fall Festival parades were both cancelled this year, by the respective towns. In lieu of the 4th of July event, the Grand Junction VA sponsored a drive-through car show and parade at the CLC. The cemetery was invited, and did participate with one of the military jeeps, and staff driving.

## **12. Capital Construction**

In September, 2018, the cemetery received \$2.5M in state funding to increase the columbaria interment capacity, add corresponding infrastructure, regrade and replace liners in the irrigation retention ponds and stream, and to build a new silt mitigation system. The project also included funding for new and replacement equipment, including the needed silt vacuum extractor and a front dump hopper with attachments. In addition, 1% of the supply cost of the project was allocated to Art in Public Places, intended to bring additional art into the cemetery.

The work was broken into two substantial phases consisting of the addition of eight Columbaria with landscape, necessary irrigation, sidewalks and benches as Phase I. Phase II being the silt mitigation and pond and stream improvements. Equipment acquisition and Art in Public Places to take place independent of the construction phases.

Actual work for Phase I began in September 2020, and is expected to be complete by the end of November. This addition will increase columbarium spaces by 1,344 niches and should last about twelve years. It is projected that the first of the completed columbaria, will be available for use around November 10, 2020.

During Phase I, damages discovered to an existing columbaria, brought awareness to design improvements that could mitigate future repair expenses. These changes were made and these new units will be placed with a cast cap. Placement of these caps can be added to existing columbaria at a later date. In order to deter damages to these older units, consideration of this addition is recommended.

Work on Phase II of this project is scheduled to begin at the end of October, 2020. In order to minimize time without irrigation this phase was scheduled for a period that irrigation is unavailable, (October 2020 - March 2021). This phase includes draining, regrading, relining and landscaping of the retention ponds and stream along with the relocating and building of a more useful and easier to care for silt trap.

A board determined that the funds from Art in Public Places be spent on a carillon bell system and requisition of an art piece to be added to the waterfall/committal area. A donation was made to the cemetery to enhance the budget for the carillon system, therefore allowing more funds to be spent on the art piece. At this time, the board is awaiting presentations by select artists. This is scheduled for October 21st.

The equipment acquisition associated with this project has allowed for a cab to be added to one of the grounds maintenance vehicles making it useful in all weather conditions. A front load tractor will be purchased to aid in burial operations, which will also reduce equipment movement and travel in burial areas. The silt vacuum for maintenance to all associated irrigation areas is the most crucial of these acquisitions. This piece of equipment will allow for the cemetery staff to properly care for the new improvements made in Phase II.

### **13. In Closing**

The Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado continues to be revered in not only the local community, but within the entire State of Colorado. You can not enter the cemetery without admiring the beauty of the meticulously cared for grounds. Families gather here, not only to grieve, but to celebrate lives, remember friends, and reflect. This location serves as a reminder of the sacrifices made and the commitments promised. It is a history lesson to children and a civics lesson to all. The State, its residents, the Department of Veteran's Affairs are dedicated to veterans, and this cemetery reflects how grateful we are for the service that was selflessly given to our nation.

In addition to the rewarding purpose of the cemetery, we strive to be a contributing presence in the veteran community. With event participation, building of partnerships, outreach and involvement, our purpose spreads wider than our 22 acres.

As this cemetery ages, additional funding to maintain this monument will be needed. At 18 years since inspection, we have grown at an unexpected pace, and we are seeing that this pace will not slow. Looking forward to future demand, aging facilities, budget constraints and minimal increase in federal funding, there is concern. Exploration of additional funding continues, with the intention to maintain the high levels service, owed to those who have served, and their families.

As the new administrator, I am proud, and thankful, to be a part of such a rewarding purpose. It is my intention to see that our objectives remain clear and focused on the development, care, efficient operation, and management of this facility. All of this, without compromising the quality of service to our community.

The cemetery and its staff continue to express gratitude for the support from the veterans' community. Because of our benefactors, we are allowed to focus on, and effectively serve, the needs of families who have faithfully and honorably served this country,

*Status Report, Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado, November 1, 2019 through October 31, 2020, to the Colorado Board of Veterans Affairs, October 18, 2020*

Respectfully submitted,



Angela Ingalls  
Administrator  
Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado  
Grand Junction, Colorado