



The New Mexico Department of Veterans Services

2021 ANNUAL REPORT



TABLE OF CONTENTS



Message From The Cabinet Secretary	2
DVS Vision, Mission Statement, & Core Values	3
Organizational Chart	4
Directory of DVS Divisions	5
Secretary-Designate Sonya L. Smith	6
Field Services Division	7
Women Veterans Program.....	9
State Benefits Division	11
Cemeteries & Memorial Operations Bureau.....	16
Military Honors Burial Program.....	17
Forgotten Heroes Program.....	19
Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Angel Fire.....	20
Health Care Division	21
Veterans Business Outreach Center	22
Administrative Services Division	24
State Approving Agency Bureau.....	26
Data About New Mexico’s Veteran Populatio	27

Message From New Mexico Department of Veterans Services (DVS) Secretary Sonya L. Smith

“Serving Those Who Served.”

This is the official motto of the New Mexico Department of Veterans Services (DVS)—the state agency that serves New Mexico’s veterans and their families. It’s a motto that defines what we do at DVS, and what New Mexico’s veterans and their families have come to expect from us. Because we take our commitment seriously, our agency has also adopted, “Every day is Veterans Day” as our internal motto. It reminds us of the privilege we have every day to help make the lives of our veterans and their families better.

2020 was the most unusual year in the agency’s 17-year existence. The COVID-19 pandemic created a public health crisis unlike anything the world has seen in several generations. In response, in mid-March, DVS—along with all other government and public service agencies in New Mexico—shifted from in-person assistance to remote assistance. However, this did not deter us from our mission of helping veterans file VA claims, state veterans’ benefits, or helping veterans with any other issues in their lives.

DVS Veterans Service Officers (VSOs)—those who in typical years are the DVS staff that sit down to work with veterans--tackled this challenge with their usual enthusiasm by providing assistance from home or other remote locations by phone, email, or regular “snail mail.” Our VSOs can assist anyone from across the state; and last year assisted more than 17,000 veterans or eligible dependents of veterans.

The pandemic also forced the cancellation of conferences, workshops, ceremonies, benefits outreaches, and other public events that DVS typically presents or participates with other agencies. But one event that DVS took extra measures to present was the annual *Forgotten Heroes Funeral Service* on September 24 at the Santa Fe National Cemetery. This is the funeral where DVS is joined by the New Mexico National Guard, Daniels Family Funeral Services of Albuquerque, Bernalillo County, and the cemetery to lay to rest the cremated remains of veterans who, upon death, are unclaimed by family members. The private ceremony was a “final salute” for 29 forgotten heroes who, by virtue of this ceremony, were not forgotten nor alone in the end.

As 2021 gets underway, DVS will continue to offer telework assistance by phone, email, or mail. We want veterans and their families to know that we still offer the same excellent level of assistance. We encourage veterans not to neglect filing for VA claims or state veterans’ benefits. After all, these are benefits that veterans have *earned* through serving our country. It can be a complicated process--but we are here to help. Please contact any of our VSOs found on page 8 for help. It will be an honor to assist you.



Sonya L. Smith
DVS Secretary

Sonya L. Smith
DVS Secretary

THE NEW MEXICO DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS SERVICES (DVS)

DVS Mission

To provide the highest quality service and advocacy for New Mexico's veterans and their families.

DVS Vision

To be recognized as a premier agency that anticipates and meets the changing needs of New Mexico's veterans and their families by investing for tomorrow—and delivering today.

DVS Core Values (C.A.R.E.S)

Commitment

DVS is committed to the agency's mandate—the sole reason of the agency's existence—of serving our state's veterans and their families.

Accountability

DVS will hold the agency's employees to the highest standards expected of a premier professional service organization.

Respect

DVS will treat every veteran, regardless of their rank while they were in military service, with the respect and gratitude they have earned for sacrificing to serve and protect our country.

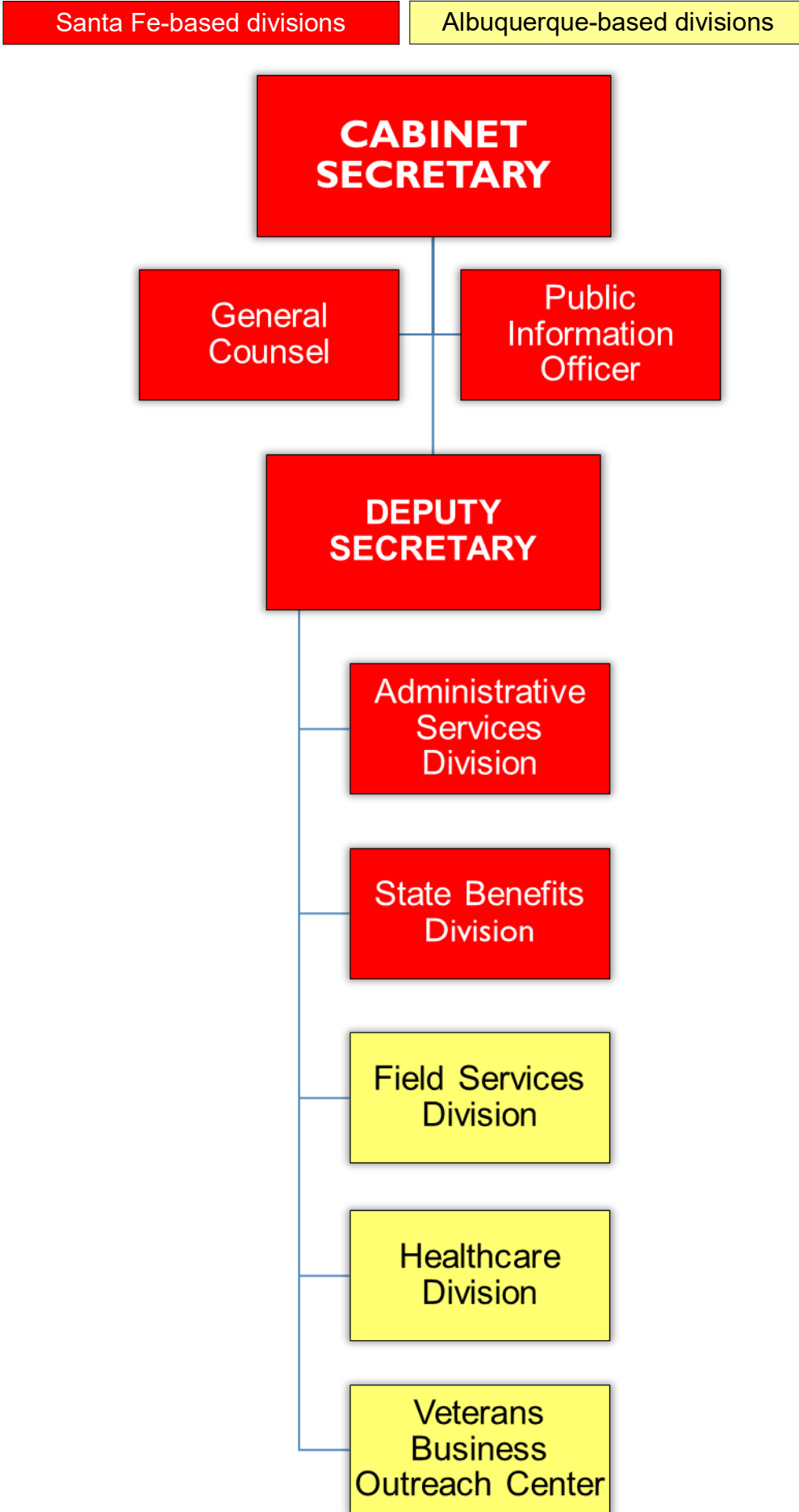
Empathy

DVS staff are all veterans, are closely related to a veteran, or strongly support those who have served in the military—and therefore understand and have a strong compassion for all veterans and their families.

Stewardship

DVS staff will ensure responsible stewardship of the human, financial, and informational programs and resources entrusted to us. We will improve performance through the use of innovative technologies, evidence-based practices, and sound business principles.

DVS Organizational Chart



Directory of DVS Main Offices

OFFICE OF THE CABINET SECRETARY

406 Don Gaspar Ave.
Santa Fe, NM 87501

CABINET SECRETARY

Executive Assistant
General Counsel
Public Information Officer

Sonya L. Smith

Shannon Quintana
Gabrielle Sanchez-Sandoval
Ray Seva

(505) 827-6334

827-6352

SANTA FE MAIN ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

Bataan Memorial Bldg.
407 Galisteo St.
Santa Fe, NM 87501

DEPUTY SECRETARY

Bryan Osterhage

Administrative Services Division

Budget Bureau
State Approving Agency Bureau
Information & Technology Services

Monica Maestas-Acting Director

Monica Maestas—*Chief Financial Officer*
Marilyn Dykman—*Bureau Chief*
Terrence Rickard—*Chief Information Officer*

State Benefits Division

Administrative Support
State Benefits Bureau

Ed Mendez—Director

Silvia Varela—*Administrative Assistant* (505) 827-6300
Jeff George—*Bureau Chief*

Cemeteries & Memorials Bureau

David Walker—*Bureau Chief*

State Veterans Cemeteries

Angel Fire
Ft. Stanton
Gallup

Randal Myklebust—*Supervisor* (505) 225-4341
David Flores—*Supervisor* (505) 383-4381
Gilbert Lopez—*Supervisor* (505) 905-9770

Vietnam Veterans Memorial

DB Herbst—*Site Manager* (575) 377-2293

ALBUQUERQUE NE HEIGHTS OFFICE

5201 Eagle Rock Ave. NE
Albuquerque, NM 87113

Receptionist

(505) 383-2400

Field Services Division

Larry Campos—Director

13 Field Offices/ 25 Outreach Offices (see pages **20-21** for contact information)
Women Veterans Program (director position temporarily vacant)

Health Care Division

Jemia Warner—Director

Veterans Business Outreach Center

Rich Coffel—Director

383-2401

Veterans Business Regional Advisor
(southern NM)

Jim Cassidy

(575) 624-6002

DOWNTOWN ALBUQUERQUE OFFICE

Dennis Chavez Federal Bldg./4th Floor
500 Gold Ave. SW
Albuquerque, NM 87102

Administrative Assistant
to Field Services Director

Jovanna Dutchover

346-4873

Two DVS Veterans Service Officers (see page 8 for contact info)

DVS Cabinet Secretary Sonya L. Smith



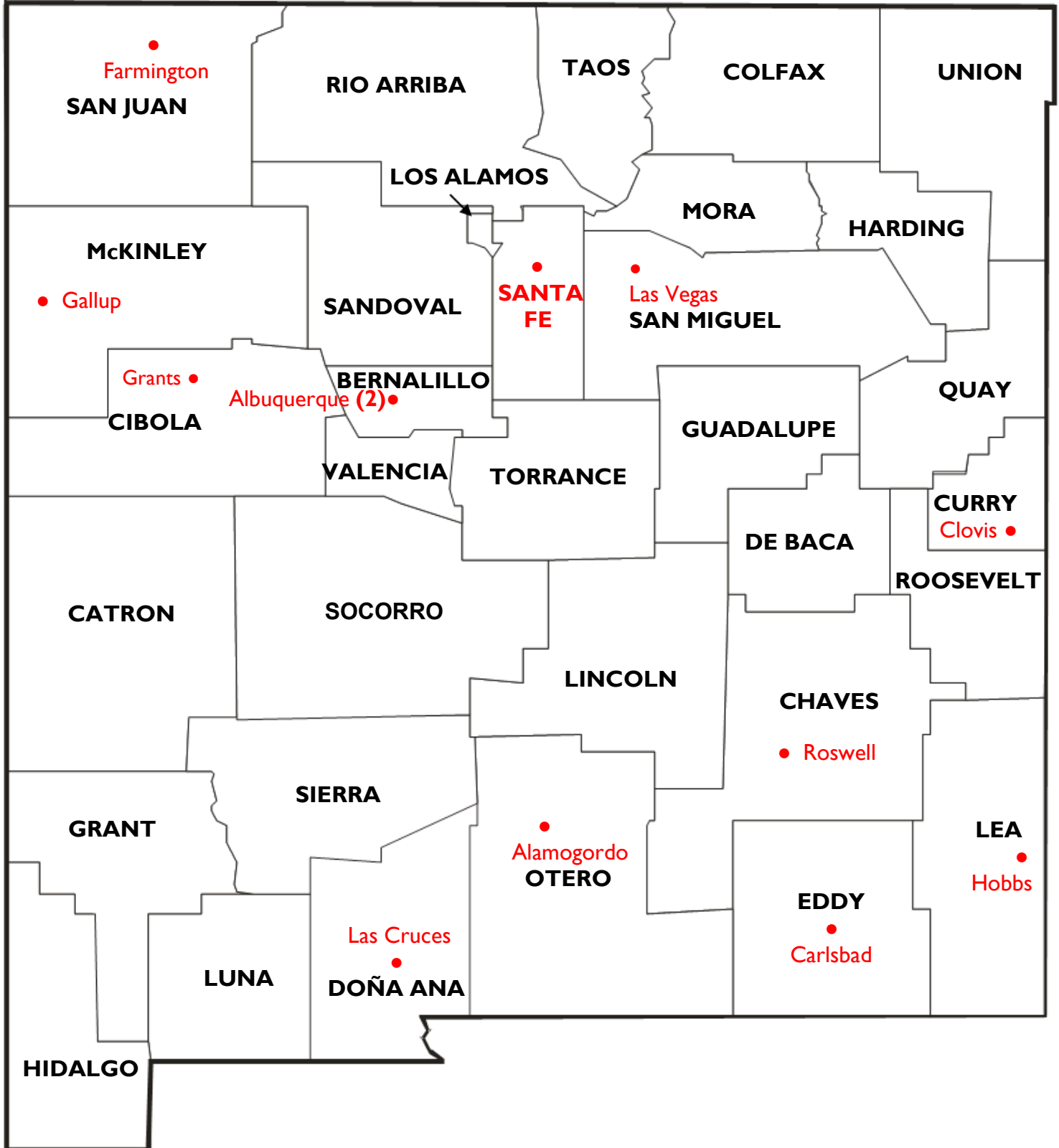
Sonya L. Smith was appointed as Secretary of the New Mexico Department of Veterans Services (DVS) by Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham on October 23, 2020, following the retirement of Judy M. Griego as cabinet secretary. She was unanimously confirmed for the post by the state senate on February 17 during the 2021 New Mexico Legislature.

Secretary Smith comes to DVS from the New Mexico Department of Health as a special projects coordinator--specifically helping guide the efforts of the agency's COVID-19 testing team. Prior to that, she served as director of compliance at Southwest Care Center in Santa Fe, and before that, as the clinical compliance manager at the University of New Mexico Truman Health Services Clinic.

As a member of the United States Air Force Reserve, Secretary Smith was activated to serve as a medical technician in Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm. Upon receiving her honorable discharge, she earned a Bachelor's Degree in Health Services Management from Norfolk State University in her hometown of Norfolk, VA, and a Master's Degree in Health Care Compliance from Argosy University.

FIELD SERVICES DIVISION

The heart and soul of DVS is the group of 19 nationally-certified veterans service officers (VSO's) working in the agency's 14 field offices throughout the state as shown below. These VSO's are the "boots on the ground" staff that work with veterans or their eligible dependents with filing VA claims, filing for state veterans benefits, or assisting with any other issues. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the VSO's are working remotely via phone or email and can assist veterans or family members from anywhere in New Mexico. Their contact information is found on the following page.



DVS Field Offices & Veterans Service Officers (VSOs)

*During the COVID-19 pandemic, DVS VSOs are providing assistance by phone or email...
for any veteran or eligible dependent—regardless of where they live.*

Alamogordo

Larry Weatherwax

(575) 491-3127

larry.weatherwax@state.nm.us

Grants

George Garcia

(505) 288-7605

george.garcia2@state.nm.us

Las Vegas, NM

Martín Márquez

(505) 520-5079

martinM.marquez@state.nm.us

Albuquerque

Victoria Bader

(505) 225-5253

victoria.bader@state.nm.us

Gallup

Durrell Tsosie

(505) 218-0348

durrell.tsosie@state.nm.us

Arturo Marlow

(505) 331-8838

arturo.marlow@state.nm.us

Johnny Martinez

(505) 274-3609

johnW.martinez2@state.nm.us

Hobbs

Dalton Boyd

(575) 241-0714

dalton.boyd2@state.nm.us

Rio Rancho

Dustin Newsom

(505) 221-7190

dustin.newsom@state.nm.us

Carlsbad

Dagmar Youngberg

(575) 988-5900

dagmar.youngberg@state.nm.us

Las Cruces

George Vargas

(575) 520-2634

george.vargas@state.nm.us

Roswell

Danielle Thompson

(575) 416-2284

danielle.thompson@state.nm.us

Clovis

Matt Barela

(575) 825-9602

matthew.barela@state.nm.us

Rosa Bycenski

(505) 216-8782

rosa.bycenski@state.nm.us

Santa Fe

(position is temporarily vacant)

Farmington

Beverly Charley

(505) 327-2861

beverly.charley@state.nm.us

Craig Chumley

(505) 870-1349

craig.chumley@state.nm.us

DVS Women Veterans Program Bureau

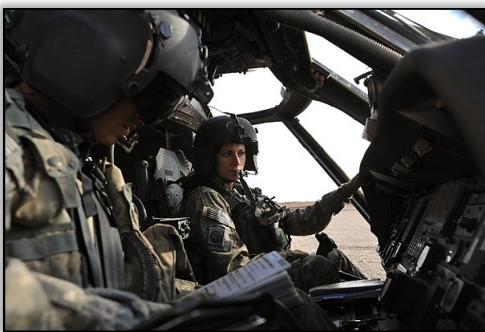
The DVS Women Veterans Program works under the direction of the Field Services Division to focus on outreach and benefits assistance for women veterans.



According to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), women represent the fastest growing segment of our nation's women veteran population. The data indicates there are 2 million women veterans in America—about 10% of the total veteran population of 19.5 million. In New Mexico, VA data shows there are 16,600 women veterans—nearly 11% of the state's veteran population of 151,279.

These are numbers and percentages unprecedented in the history of our country. Unlike the past, today's women service members are no longer confined to desk or administrative jobs. Women today are serving as pilots, commanding warships, squadron leaders, senior-ranking officers, and other positions that were traditionally the domain of males.

As these women service members retire or fulfill their military commitments, the country must be ready to fulfill its obligation by not only providing them benefits as veterans but also as *women* veterans—with unique issues such as women's health issues, Military Sexual Trauma, running a household, and other issues and concerns unique to women.



The DVS Women Veterans Program recognizes this, and strives to improve the awareness of women veterans about their eligibility for VA and state veterans' benefits and services. The program manager also assesses the needs of New Mexico's women veterans, and makes recommendations to the DVS cabinet secretary regarding existing and possible future benefits and programs.

The program manager can also help women veterans file VA claims or file for state veterans benefits. The manager also represents DVS and the state of New Mexico at national, state, and local women veterans' events, both as an outreach opportunity and learn about other national and state women veterans programs and services that may benefit women veterans in New Mexico. For assistance, contact DVS Women Veteran Program Manager Robin Wilson at robin.wilson@state.nm.us or (505) 372-9106.



FIELD SERVICES DIVISION

End-of-Fiscal-Year Report

FY20 (Jul. 1, 2019-Jun. 30, 2020)

TOTAL OFFICE VISITS **9,795***

**Note: State-ordered COVID-19 office closures began March 23.
DVS VSO's began providing assistance via phone and email on this date*

PHONE CALLS **4,211**
EMAILS **2,996**

New POA assignments

DVS	690
AL	2
DAV	21
VFW	25
Total	738

Non POA Claims **158**

Federal Benefits

Intent to File	602
S/C Claims Field	2,444
NSC Pension Field	350
Health Care	362
Miscellaneous	4,961
Total	8,719

Federal VA Benefits referred to other service organizations

Tax Exemption	1,056
100% Service-connected disabled	372
License Plates	600
Parks Passes	248
Hunting & Fishing Licenses	148
Education	12
Scholarships	2
Total	2,438

STATE BENEFITS DIVISION

The DVS State Benefits Division encompasses the state benefits bureau and the cemetery & memorial operations bureau. It oversees the many state veterans benefits that are described beginning on page 12 that are available for honorably-discharged veterans living in New Mexico.

The cemetery & memorial operations bureau oversees the DVS State Cemetery Program and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Angel Fire. More information about the program and memorial can be found beginning on page 15.

The state benefits division director also strives to identify additional benefits—bringing these to the attention of the cabinet secretary for possible introduction to state legislators for consideration as state law. The director also coordinates with the DVS Field Services Division for outreach throughout the state to increase awareness about these available benefits and programs.

State Benefits Division 2020 End-of-Year Report

End of State FY21 (July 1-December 31, 2020)

Property Tax Exemptions	2,929
Property Tax Waivers	1,036
License Plate Applications	1,219
State Parks & Museum Passes	692
Lifetime Hunting & Fishing Licenses	458
Wartime Scholarships	88
Vietnam Veteran Scholarships	15
WWII or Korean War Veteran Diplomas	1

State Benefits Bureau



Veterans Tax Exemptions

Veterans Property Tax Exemption

Any veteran who served a minimum of 90 days consecutive active duty, was honorably discharged, and is a legal resident of New Mexico qualifies for a \$4,000 reduction in the taxable value of their real property for county taxation purposes. If not applied towards a property, the veteran may receive

a 1/3 discount off of their vehicle registrations. This benefit is also available to non-remarried surviving spouses of a veteran who would have otherwise qualified for this benefit.

Disabled Veteran Property Tax Exemption

Any veteran who has been rated 100% service-connected disabled (permanent & total) by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and is a legal resident of New Mexico qualifies for a complete property tax waiver on their primary residence. This benefit is also available to non-remarried surviving spouses of a veteran who would have otherwise qualified for this benefit.

Exemption from Excise Taxes on Vehicle Purchases

Any veteran who has suffered the loss or complete loss of use of one or more limbs due to their military service shall be exempted from excise taxes when purchasing a new vehicle.

Veterans Service Organization Property Tax Exemption

Any U.S. Congressionally-chartered Veterans service organization is exempt from paying property tax on the property of its facility. Many VSO's—especially those in rural areas of the state—have been devoting much of their fundraising revenue to paying property tax.



Veterans Education Benefits

Vietnam Veteran Scholarship

Veterans who have been residents of New Mexico for a minimum of ten years, have served in the Vietnam War, and were issued the Vietnam Campaign or Service Medal are eligible. This scholarship pays full tuition and provides a stipend for all books at any state-funded post-secondary school.

Wartime Veteran Scholarship Fund

Can be used by any veteran who has served in combat since August 1, 1990, and who has exhausted all available federal G.I. Education Benefits options. Veterans must be residents of New Mexico for at least ten years and have also been awarded a campaign medal. Tuition and fees for books are also capped on an annual basis.

In-State Tuition for Veterans

Veterans, their spouses and their children no longer have to wait to establish “in-state” residency status when applying for college. Those who wish to use their G.I. Education Benefit Bill can now immediately take advantage of less-expensive “resident” in-state tuition rates at any state funded college, university, vocational school or vocational training program.

World War II, Korean, and Vietnam War Veterans High School Diploma

Any veteran who left a New Mexico high school before graduating to serve in World War II, the Korean War, or Vietnam War will be awarded a valid high school diploma issued from the high school they were attending.

Children of Deceased Veterans Scholarship

A child between the ages of 16-26 whose parent was killed in action or died as a result of their combat wounds, was a member of the New Mexico National Guard and passed away while on activation by the Governor, or was a New Mexico State Police Officer who was killed in the line of duty, qualifies for a full tuition waiver at any state-funded post-secondary school. A \$150 stipend per semester will also be issued to help pay for books or fees.

Military Children School Enrollment Priority

Priority enrollment status is automatically assigned to incoming students or the New Mexico schools system whose active-duty, National Guard or Reservist parent is transferred to a New Mexico military facility.

VETERANS RECOGNITION BENEFITS

National Guard and Reserve Defined as Veterans

In New Mexico, veteran status is given to anyone honorably discharged after serving six consecutive years as a member of any national guard or reserve component unit. Veteran status is also given to any commissioned officers of the Public Health Service or the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration who served on active duty in service of the United States.

Veterans License Plates

Honorably discharged veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces are eligible for special veterans license plates—provided they show proof of eligibility. The two plates below are available for a one-time vehicle registration fee. Recipients are responsible for any annual vehicle license fees.



Armed Forces Veteran (any branch)



Woman Veteran (any branch)



Medal of Honor Recipient



Purple Heart Recipient



Ex-Prisoner of War

The three special-recognition plates shown above are available free of charge for any qualified veteran who can provide proof of eligibility:



Disabled Veteran License Plate

Honorably-discharged veterans rated at least 50 percent service-disabled are entitled to two free license plates.

Gold Star Family License Plate

For families with a son, daughter, stepson, stepdaughter, parent or step-parent killed in combat action. There is a four-plate limit per family. The first plate is free, and fees will be waived for the lifetime of the recipient. The remaining three plates are also free, but recipients are responsible for annual registration fees.



Patriot License Plate

The *Patriot License Plate* can be purchased by any licensed New Mexico driver who wants to recognize the contribution and sacrifice of the men and women who are serving or have served in the U.S. Armed Forces. The one-time fee is \$27. (Regular vehicle registration fees still apply.)



Special MacArthur Service Medal

The Special MacArthur Service Medal is issued members of the 200th/51st Coast Artillery Units who were residents of New Mexico at their original time of entry into the U.S. Military and served under General Douglas MacArthur in the Philippine Islands during World War II. The medal is also available to surviving family members of the 200th/51st units

Other State Veterans Benefits

Service Member Child Custody Protection

Child custody arrangements cannot be modified while a parent is deployed for military service. All child custody issues involving a deployed parent must wait to be resolved until the deployed parent returns to New Mexico.



New Mexico Personnel Office Veterans Hiring Preference

All veterans honorably discharged from the U.S. Armed Forces or anyone currently serving in the National Guard shall have five (5) points added to their final passing numerical scores on screening examinations performed by the NM State Personnel Office. Veterans honorably discharged with a service connected disability will have ten (10) points added to their final passing numerical score.

5% Procurement Advantage for Veteran-Owned Businesses or Contractors

The state of New Mexico shall set aside an additional 5% hiring preference for veteran-owned businesses or contractors over the existing 5% preference currently established for locally-owned businesses during the bidding process for state contracts and jobs.



Military Discharge Papers Protection

Military discharge papers filed with county clerks in the state of New Mexico shall only be made available to the veteran who filed them, the veteran's next-of-kin, or a person designated by a court of law as the veteran's general power-of-attorney.

Deceased Military Person's Disposition Arrangements

A person designated as the immediate contact on the Department of Defense (DoD) Emergency Data Form of an active-duty member of the U.S. Armed Forces can determine the means of disposition of that deceased Armed Forces member. The designee is authorized to make burial, funeral and disposition arrangements.

Veterans Free and Reduced-Fee Recreational Benefits

Veterans Day Recreation and Museum Privileges

Every Veterans Day holiday, any New Mexico resident who was honorably discharged from the U.S. Armed Forces or is currently on active-duty—along with their spouse and children—is entitled to free use of any New Mexico state park. Admission fees will be also be waived for campsites, the Museum of New Mexico, the New Mexico Museum of Natural History, and the New Mexico Museum of Space History.

State Parks Day-Pass and Three Free Camping Nights for Disabled Veterans

Any veteran rated 50% or higher service-connected disabled may obtain an annual free day-use pass and three free nights of camping for personal use only. Qualified veterans may apply for these passes by showing proper identification and proof of disability at any DVS field office.

Free State Parks Monuments and Museums Pass for Disabled Veterans

Any veteran rated 50% or higher service-connected disabled may apply for a free state monument and museum pass for personal use only. Qualified veterans can apply for this pass by showing proper identification and proof of disability at any DVS field office.



Lifetime Hunting and Fishing License for 100% Service-Connected Disabled Veterans

Any veteran who is a New Mexico resident and is rated 100% service-connected disabled is eligible for a free lifetime New Mexico small-game hunting and fishing license.

Reduced-Fee Hunting and Fishing License for Disabled Veterans

New Mexico's 26,000 service-connected disabled veterans may apply for a reduced fee \$10 small-game & fishing license--no matter *what percentage their disability*.

Hunting Fee Discount for Non-Resident Disabled Veterans Undergoing Rehabilitation

Hunting licenses for deer, antelope, elk, javelina and turkey may be sold to non-resident disabled U.S. Armed Forces members or veterans at resident license-fee rates if the applicant is undergoing a rehabilitation program utilizing hunting activities supported by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) or an authorized nonprofit organization.

Temporary Hunting and Fishing License for Active-Duty Military Personnel

Any active duty military personnel, National Guard or Reserve member who is a legally domiciled resident of New Mexico can apply for a temporary active duty fishing or small game hunting license. Applicants must show proof of residency and not claim residency elsewhere. Applicants may also apply if they are on active duty outside the state but are currently on leave here in New Mexico for not more than 30 days.

DVS State Cemetery & Memorial Operations Bureau

All honorably discharged deceased veterans of the United States Armed Forces are entitled to a military burial with military honors provided by an Honor Guard. According to the latest VA data, nearly half of New Mexico's 156,595 veterans live beyond the VA's designated 75-mile service-area radius of its two national cemeteries: The Santa Fe National Cemetery in northern New Mexico, and the Ft. Bayard National Cemetery in the southwestern part of the state. DVS created the State Cemetery & Memorial Operations Bureau in 2013 to build four rural-area cemeteries. DVS successfully applied for funding from the VA's Cemetery Grant Program, which funds VA-funded-but state-managed veterans cemeteries.



Ft. Stanton State Veterans Cemetery

New Mexico's first state veterans cemetery was built in Ft. Stanton in Lincoln County (*left photo*). The 14.8-acre, \$5.7 million cemetery opened on Veterans Day, 2017, featuring 510 in-ground crypts, and 140 columbarium and in-ground niches for interment of cremated remains. As of December 2020, 125 veterans & spouses have been laid to rest at the facility.

Ft. Stanton Merchant Marine & Military Cemetery (*right photo*) Since 2017, DVS has managed the adjacent Ft. Stanton Merchant Marine & Military Cemetery, which opened in 1899 to bury members of the U.S. Merchant Marines who perished from Tuberculosis while being treated at the adjacent Ft. Stanton Hospital. The cemetery also accepted burials from hospital staff and local-area veterans. More than 1,000 remains are interred at the old cemetery, which stopped accepting burials in 2014.



Gallup State Veterans Cemetery

A second facility, the Gallup State Veterans Cemetery (*left photo*) opened on Memorial Day 2019. The 20.6-acre, \$6.6 million cemetery has space 443 in-ground crypts, 140 in-ground cremains gravesites, and 400 columbarium niches. As of December 2020, 90 veterans & spouses have been interred at the cemetery.



Angel Fire State Veterans Cemetery (*right photo*)

The latest facility, the Angel Fire State Veterans Cemetery, opened on July 23, 2020 as the third state veterans cemetery managed by DVS. The 10.3-acre, \$3.2 million dollar cemetery is located in the meadow below the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and features 100 in-ground crypts, 100 in-ground cremains gravesites, and 200 columbarium niches. As of December 2020 29 veterans & spouses have been interred at the cemetery.



Carlsbad State Veterans Cemetery A fourth state veterans cemetery is currently in the pre-construction planning phase to be built in Carlsbad. DVS anticipates VA funding to be approved in the next 2-3 years.

Military Honors Burial Program: Providing *The Final Salute*

There are 33 all-volunteer Honor Guards throughout the state to provide a military funeral and “Final Salute” for deceased honorably discharged veterans.

The DVS Cemeteries & Memorials Bureau oversees the state’s *Military Honors Burial Program* which, courtesy of these Honor Guards, provides a burial befitting someone who was honorably discharged from military service.



The Honor Guards are composed of trained uniformed men and women to perform the ceremonial military funeral duties of covering and uncovering of a casket with an American Flag, the folding and presentation of the flag to a widow or family member, a Rifle Volley, and bugle rendition of *Taps*.

This service is provided free to the family of a deceased honorably-discharged veteran. DVS ensures that all units undergo annual training, and are compensated for their duties with a small stipend for each service performed.

It is up to a veterans’ family and/or a local funeral home to schedule an Honor Guard at a funeral. Any veterans’ service organization can form an Honor Guard. Please contact the DVS State Cemetery Division for more information.

New Mexico’s Honor Guards

ACOMA

American Legion Post 116
PO Box 116
Acoma Pueblo, NM 87034
(505) 362-2868

ALBUQUERQUE

American Legion Post 69
9000 4th St. NW
Alameda, NM 87114
(505) 379-1136

ALBUQUERQUE

Women Veterans of NM
PO Box 36648
Albuquerque, NM 87176
(505) 306-3756

ALAMOGORDO

Marine Corps League Det. 850
PO Box 4171
Alamogordo, NM 88311
(575) 434-4774

ALBUQUERQUE

Marine Corps League Det. 381
PO Box 81552
Albuquerque, NM 87198
(505) 926-0600

CAPITAN

American Legion Post 57
PO Box 245
Capitan, NM 88316
(505) 354-3421

ALBUQUERQUE

American Legion Post 13
1201 Mountain Road NE
Albuquerque, NM 87102
(505) 243-1901

ALBUQUERQUE

47th NM Regiment Honor Guard
PO Box 21842
Albuquerque, NM 87154
(505) 298-9800

CARLSBAD

Carlsbad Veterans Honor
Guard PO Box 605
Carlsbad, NM 88220
(575) 885-4834

(list continues on next page)

CUBA

American Legion Post 23
PO Box 1074
Cuba, NM 87013
(575) 385-6787

FARMINGTON

VFW Post 2182
5513 Highway 64
Farmington, NM 87401
(505) 327-2182

GRANTS/BLUEWATER

Mt. Taylor TSO DZIL Honor
Guard/PO Box 215
Bluewater, NM 87005
(505) 280-5483

LAS CRUCES

El Perro Diablo Detachment #478
PO Box 7322
Las Cruces, NM 88006
(575) 523-1236

PORTALES

American Legion Post 31
PO Box 275
Portales, NM 88130
(575) 226-0302

ROSWELL

Roswell Veterans Honor Guard
702 Broken Arrow
Roswell, NM 88201
(575) 623-8985

SANTA FE

VFW Post 2951
307 Montezuma St.
Santa Fe, NM 87504
(505) 983-9045

SILVER CITY

American Legion Post 18
2323 Kimberly Drive
Silver City, NM 88061
(575) 338-2460

ESPAÑOLA

American Legion Post 17
PO Box 1273
Española, NM 87532
(505) 753-6712

FRUITLAND

Upper Fruitland Chapter
PO Box 1257
Fruitland, NM 87416
(505) 960-5032

HOBBS

Lea Co. Marine Corps League
PO Box 862
Hobbs, NM 88240
(575) 399-9307

LAS VEGAS

Vietnam Veterans/Northern NM
Chapter 1063 Honor Guard
PO Box 3211
Las Vegas, NM 87701

RATON

VFW Post 1793
PO Box 716
Raton, NM 87740
(575) 445-3318

SANTA CRUZ

DAV/Luchetti Castner Ch. 13
PO Box 1759 Santa Cruz, NM
87567

SHIPROCK

VFW Post 9517
PO Box 2506
Shiprock, NM 87420
(505) 327-2182

SOCORRO

DAV Chapter 24
PO Box 1584
Socorro, NM 87801
(575) 418-7513

ESTANCIA

American Legion Post 22
PO Box 656
Estancia, NM 87016
(505) 384-3096

GRANTS

VFW Post 3221
202 Davis Street
Grants, NM 87020
(505) 287-2328

ISLETA PUEBLO

Isleta Pueblo Veterans Association
PO Box 338
Isleta, NM 87002
(505) 514-7332

MORA

VFW Post 1131
PO Box 0555
Mora, NM 87732
(575) 387-2618

RIO RANCHO

Marine Corps League Det. 1316
PO Box 44304
Rio Rancho, NM 87174
(505) 892-5618

SANTA FE

American Legion Post 1
1601 Berry Ave.
Santa Fe, NM 87505
(505) 469-6270

SILVER CITY

Marine Corps League Det. 1328
PO Box 2251
Silver City, NM 88062
(575) 574-0361

TAOS

VFW Post 3259
523 Upper Ranchitos Road
Taos, NM 87571
(575) 779-7850



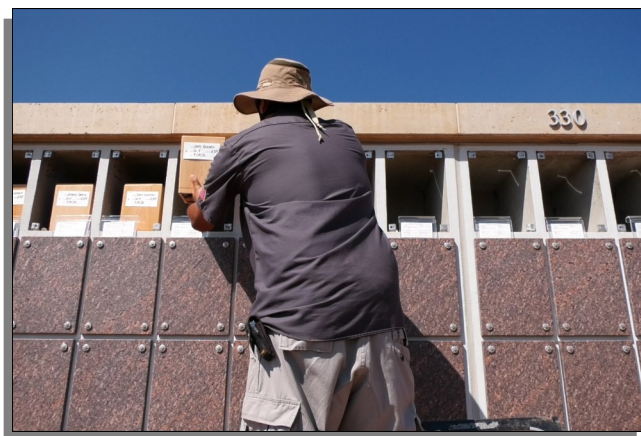
The Forgotten Heroes Funeral Program

The New Mexico Department of Veterans Services' *Forgotten Heroes Funeral Program* ensures that, in the event no family member comes forward to claim the body of a veteran upon death, the unclaimed deceased veteran is provided with a military funeral at the Santa Fe National Cemetery.

The program was developed in 2009 through a collaborated effort between DVS, Bernalillo County, and the State Office of the Medical Investigator to provide military funerals for unclaimed deceased Bernalillo County veterans whose cremated remains had been kept in possession by local funeral homes. DVS and Bernalillo county expressed a desire to provide a funeral befitting someone who had sacrificed to serve our country as a member of the United States Armed Forces.

The concept was introduced to all 33 counties in New Mexico. The *Forgotten Heroes Program* designates the state as the family of record of any verified unclaimed deceased veteran. Verification of an honorable discharge from the United States Armed Forces is done by county officials and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

After an unclaimed deceased veteran is cremated, DVS takes possession of the urns containing the cremains and contacts the Santa Fe National Cemetery and an Honor Guard to provide a military funeral. The public is invited to serve as "family"—with the Governor delivering the Eulogy—providing the farewell and final salute these veterans have earned through their service to our country.



Photos are from the September 24, 2020 Forgotten Heroes Funeral, where the unclaimed cremated remains of 29 deceased veterans were laid to rest with military honors at the Santa Fe National Cemetery. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the funeral was closed to the public—with only masked and social-distance-observing staff from DVS, the New Mexico National Guard Daniels Family Funeral Services, and the Santa Fe National Cemetery carrying out the duties providing the "final salute" for the deceased veterans.

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Angel Fire



The DVS Cemetery & Monuments Bureau manages the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Angel Fire—which was the first major Vietnam War memorial in the United States. It is located off U.S. Highway 64 in Angel Fire (Colfax County) in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains on the Enchanted Circle Scenic Byway of northeastern New Mexico.

The Memorial was built by Victor and Jeanne Westphall, the parents of U.S.

Marine 1st Lt. David Westphall of Albuquerque who was among sixteen Marines killed in an ambush on May 22, 1968 in South Vietnam.



**USMC 1st Lt.
David Westphall**

The Westphalls were compelled to build a 32-acre memorial honoring not only their son, but all Americans who served during the war. It was dedicated in 1971—on the three-year anniversary of David's death. The monument received national attention and is credited for inspiring the creation of the national Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. in 1982. Five years later, the Westphall Memorial was recognized by Congress as a memorial of national significance. In 2004, the David Westphall Foundation donated the Memorial to the New Mexico State Parks Division—becoming the state's 33rd state park.



On July 3, 2017, the Memorial was transferred to DVS, which with full support from the state parks division, successfully petitioned the Legislature that “the memorial is not a park. It is not a place for families to picnic or hike. It is hallowed ground for visitors to reflect upon and honor the service and sacrifice of American service members during the Vietnam War. It is especially sacred for family and friends of the 58,200 who lost their lives—398 of whom were from New Mexico.”

2020 Visitor Count

The number of visitors to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial was drastically lower in 2020 than in typical years because many annual events were cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Crowd-size limitations, social-distancing protocols, and the urging by the Department of Health to cancel statewide travel also added to a drop in attendance.



HEALTH CARE DIVISION



The mandate of the DVS Health Care Division is to educate veterans about VA and non-VA health care, and help veterans engage and navigate the process to apply for health care.

The division has formed a strong partnership with the New Mexico VA Health Care System (NMVAHCS) <https://www.albuquerque.va.gov>—which provides the bulk of VA health care for veterans in New Mexico. The

NMVAHCS encompasses the main Raymond G. Murphy VA Medical Center in Albuquerque, the fifteen VA Community-Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOC's) throughout the state, and the four regional Vet Centers (Farmington, Santa Fe, Albuquerque, Las Cruces) that provide behavioral health counseling for veterans.

More information about the CBOC's and Vet Centers can be found at:

www.va.gov/directory/Guide/state.asp?STATE=NM.

As part of an aggressive effort to educate and assist veterans, the health care division and the NMVAHCS collaborate on conferences and outreach visits throughout the state.

For veterans in the southern, eastern, and southeastern part of New Mexico, the DVS Health Care Division collaborates with the El Paso VA Health Care System (<https://www.elpaso.va.gov>), the Amarillo VA Health Care System in Amarillo, TX (<https://www.amarillo.va.gov>), and the West Texas VA Health Care System in Big Spring, TX, (<https://www.bigspring.va.gov>).



The health care division can also assist veterans who choose VA-approved, non-VA health care options, and veterans who are not eligible for VA health care.

Transportation for Health Care



The health care division launched the DVS Rural Transportation Program in January of 2020 to address the critical need facing many rural New Mexico veterans: The lack of transportation options for accessing their VA health care.

To address this problem, DVS successfully applied for a VA Highly Rural Veterans Transportation Grant. DVS is collaborating with the Disabled

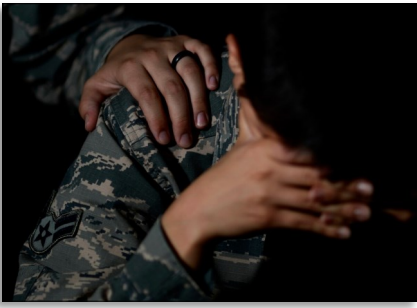
American Veterans (DAV) to launch the initial phase of providing free round-trip transportation to veterans in Cibola, Colfax, Guadalupe, and

Socorro counties. DVS is in the process of completing this initial phase to collaborate with other transportation companies to serve veterans in five additional counties.

Suicide Awareness and Prevention

Veteran suicide awareness and prevention is another key platform for the DVS Healthcare Division. The division is a key partner in the city of Albuquerque's participation in the national *Mayor's Challenge to Prevent Suicide Among Service Members, Veterans, and their Families* organized by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).





Albuquerque was one of *eight cities selected to participate to form interagency teams to increase suicide prevention support for veterans in their communities. The goal is to reduce suicides among service members, veterans and their families using a public health approach to suicide prevention.* https://www.va.gov/homeless/mayors_challenge.asp

Veteran Homelessness

Ending veteran homelessness is another focus of the DVS Health Care Division. DVS is a strong supporter of the New Mexico Veterans Integration Center (“the VIC”) in Albuquerque—a registered non-profit agency that runs the state’s only shelter for homeless veterans.

The DVS Health Care Division participates in outreaches by the VIC to help homeless veterans—and ensure they get their earned VA or state veterans benefits. DVS Veterans Service Officers refers veterans who, in the process of seeking benefits assistance are identified as homeless or near-homeless, to the VIC for immediate short-term and long-term “re-integration” assistance.

www.nmdvs.org



The New Mexico State Veterans Home

DVS works in an advisory capacity to the state Department of Health (DOH). DVS Veterans Service Officers regarding the New Mexico State Veterans Home in Truth or Consequences. DVS Veterans Service Officers make regular outreach visits to assist residents of the home and their families or caretakers with the veterans’ benefits needs.

The home sits on sixteen picturesque acres near Elephant Butte Lake. It is the only state-managed facility dedicated to the long-term housing and care of elderly honorably discharged veterans, their spouses, or parents of service members killed in combat action.

The state veterans home has 135 nursing home and 10 assisted living beds--providing long term sub-acute memory care, and assisted living care.

A new \$24 million Memory & Long Term Assisted Care wing (*right photo*) opened in 2017. The new 68,000 square foot state-of-the-art facility features a 39-bed long-term memory care unit, a 20-bed skilled nursing unit, a rehabilitation section for inpatient and outpatient services, and a unique therapy pool heated by water supplied from an underground natural thermal spring. For admission policy and procedures, or for additional information about the home, go to <https://www.nmhealth.org/about/ofm/lta/nmsvh> or please call the home at (575) 894-4200 .



The New Mexico Veterans Business Outreach Center (VBOC)



The New Mexico Veteran’s Business Outreach Center (VBOC) was created in 2010 by the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) to increase the agency’s effort of helping entrepreneurial-minded veterans, transitioning active duty personnel, and spouses.

DVS was the only state government agency—and just one of a handful of recipients in the nation--selected by the SBA to create a “one-stop-shop” to provide this assistance.

New Mexico’s VBOC can help with everything from business planning, start-up and expansion funding, marketing, landing federal contracts, and anything else a small business needs to launch and grow. In addition to providing private one-on-one business counseling, the VBOC conducts numerous *Boots to Business* small-business development workshops throughout the year for veterans...and at military installations for transitioning active-duty service members. The VBOC also presents a yearly *Southwest Veterans Business Conference*—bringing in small-business experts from across the nation to provide invaluable instruction and insight on a much larger scale. (*note: The 2020 Southwest Veterans Business Conference was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic*)

Though based in the DVS Albuquerque Northeast Heights office, the VBOC also serves veterans and active-duty personnel in Colorado. During the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, VBOC Director Rich Coffel can still provide assistance via phone or email: (505) 220-9932 or richardL.coffel@state.nm.us.

Entrepreneurial-minded veterans, transitioning active-duty personnel, and their spouses in southern and southeast New Mexico can contact VBOC Business Advisor Jim Cassidy at (505) 228-3024 or jamesM.cassidy@state.nm.us,

VBOC 2020 End-of-Year Report

- Number of entrepreneurial-minded veterans counseled 338
- Number of federal contracts VBOC helped secure for clients 47
 - Value of the 47 federal contracts \$4.5 million
- Number of new business started 33
- Number of Boots-to-Business classes presented 10
- COVID-19 assistance inquiries 124

Help for Job-Seeking Veterans



DVS has formed a strong partnership with the New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions (DWS) to help veterans, transitioning active-duty service members, and their spouses with employment and training opportunities.

DWS employs a state veterans workforce coordinator to manage the federally funded Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG) program. This grant employs several Local Veterans' Employment Representatives (LVER's) for veterans' job development, and promotes the value hiring of veterans to

employers.

The JVSG program also utilizes the Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) to assist eligible veterans who have significant barriers to employment. The grant also provides job readiness skills, job training referrals, and community-based resource referrals. LVERs and DVOPs are assigned to 12 workforce connections centers permanently, and nine workforce connections centers on an out-station basis.



The grant also provides assistance with “Stand Downs” for homeless veterans, the Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program, the VA Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Program, the VA Supportive Services to Veterans and Families Program, veterans suicide prevention, the veterans court program, veterans job/career fairs, veteran small-business initiatives, apprenticeships, internships, work-study programs, and other veteran-related activities.

Additional information about DWS is available at www.dws.state.nm.us, the Workforce Connections Online System at <https://www.jobs.state.nm.us>, or the U.S. Department of Labor Veterans' Employment and Training Service website at www.dol.gov/vets.

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES DIVISION

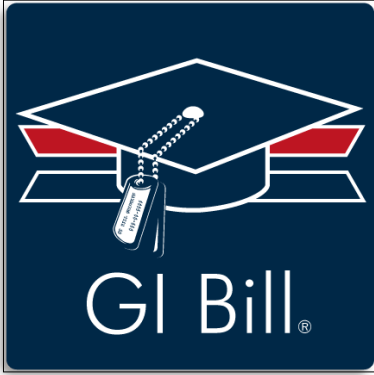
The DVS Administrative Services Division manages all financial and administrative matters for the agency. The division works with the cabinet secretary to create the agency's operational budget—according to the parameters set by the overall state budget passed each year by the state legislature and signed into law by the governor.

In addition, the division oversees all inter and intra-agency administrative, information technology, human resources, supply, safety, and other infrastructure matters.

DVS Expenditures (in dollars)

	FY20 (Actual) (7/1/19 - 6/30/20)	FY21 (Budgeted) 7/1/20 - 6/30/21
<u>Sources</u>		
General Fund Transfers	5,978,700	5,227,000
Federal Revenue	420,100	595,000
Other Revenue	205,700	150,000
TOTAL	5,604,500	5,972,000
<u>Uses</u>		
Personal Services & Employee Benefits	3,569,900	4,620,100
Contractual Services	348,600	391,900
Other	821,500	960,000
TOTAL	4,739,900	5,972,000
<u>Full-Time Equivalent Employees</u>		
Permanent	56	63
Term	3	4
TOTAL	59	67

THE DVS State Approving Agency Bureau (SAA)



The DVS Administrative Services Division oversees the New Mexico's State Approving Agency (SAA), which every state must have to ensure the quality and integrity of post-secondary education, licensure, and vocational training programs for use by a veteran's U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) GI Bill® education benefit.

The mission of the DVS SAA Bureau is to promote and safeguard quality education and training for student-veterans. The bureau ensures greater educational and training opportunities to meet the changing needs of student-veterans. It protects available GI Bill® education benefit resources by assisting the VA with preventing fraud, waste, and abuse of the GI Bill® education benefit.

With the passage of Public Law 111-377 in August of 2011, and the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Improvements Act of 2010, state approving agencies nationwide were tasked with supporting the VA in performing compliance surveys of approved programs.

The DVS SAA Bureau reviews, evaluates, and approves education and training programs—making sure they comply with strict state and federal criteria. The bureau does this by making on-site supervisory and inspection visits to institutions throughout the state. Technical assistance for interested colleges, universities, and other post-secondary education institutions is also provided upon request. In addition to this regulatory responsibility, the DVS SAA Bureau is also active in outreach activities throughout the state to promote awareness of the GI Bill® education benefit.

SAA End-of-Year Data For Federal Fiscal Year 2020 (Oct. 1, 2019-Sep. 30, 2020)

New Mexico's SAA has received the highest rating of "Satisfactory" by the VA.

Number of program and other approvals	2,660
Number of program and other disapprovals	932
Number of compliance surveys	15
Technical Assistance	1,423
Outreach Events	9
Number of Liaisons with state or federal agencies	597

Notes:

- *The number of approvals decreased in FFY20 due to three school closures related to the COVID -19 pandemic. Three additional schools closed due to downsizing—for a total of six school closures in New Mexico.*
- *One university merged its four branches into extension campuses, and is counted as part of the main campus approval.*
- *The GI Bill® is a federally registered trademark of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)*



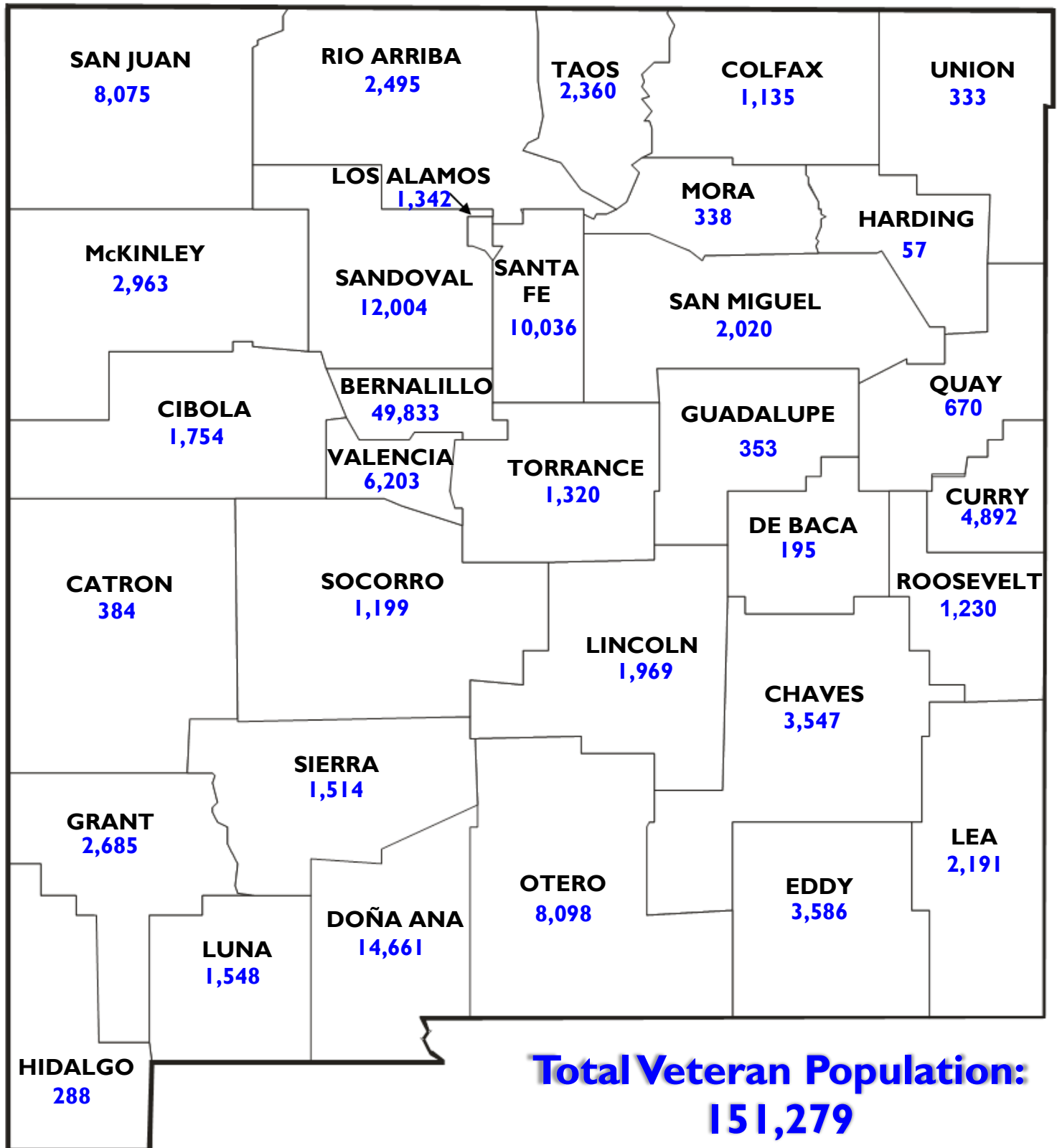
VA Expenditures in New Mexico

Federal FY19 (Oct. 1, 2018-Sep. 30, 2019) (latest data)

Total VA Expenditures	\$1,751,262,000
Compensation & Pension	921,513,000
Medical Care	729,529,000
Education, Vocational Rehab, Employment	73,088,000
General Operating Expenses	16,372,000
Insurance & Indemnities	9,218,000
Construction	1,542,000

New Mexico's Veteran Population (Map View)

The population data in the following pages is based on the VA's latest actuarial projections developed by the VA's Office of the Actuary (OACT). Using the best available veteran data, the VA calculates the veteran population according to key demographic characteristics such as age, gender, period of service, and race/ethnicity. These projections may differ from data collected by the U.S. Census Bureau.



New Mexico's Veteran Population (by County)

<u>Rank</u>	<u>County</u>	
1	Bernalillo	49,833
2	Dona Ana	14,661
3	Sandoval	12,004
4	Santa Fe	10,036
5	Otero	8,098
6	San Juan	8,075
7	Valencia	6,203
8	Curry	4,892
9	Eddy	3,586
10	Chaves	3,547
11	McKinley	2,963
12	Grant	2,685
13	Rio Arriba	2,495
14	Taos	2,360
15	Lea	2,191
16	San Miguel	2,020
17	Lincoln	1,969
18	Cibola	1,754
19	Luna	1,548
20	Sierra	1,514
21	Los Alamos	1,342
22	Torrance	1,320
23	Roosevelt	1,230
24	Socorro	1,199
25	Colfax	1,135
26	Quay	670
27	Catron	384
28	Guadalupe	353
29	Mora	338
30	Union	333
31	Hidalgo	288
32	De Baca	195
33	<u>Harding</u>	<u>57</u>
	TOTAL	151,279

New Mexico's Veteran Population

National "General" Population **330,829,270**

(Source: U.S. Census "World Clock" as of Noon EDT, January 17, 2021)

National Veteran Population **19,541,961**

(Source: U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs—as of Sep. 30, 2020)

National Veteran Percentage of Population **5.9%**

New Mexico's Population **2,100,920**

New Mexico's Veteran Population **151,279**

New Mexico's Veteran Percentage of Population **7.2%**

Five Largest Veteran-Populated Counties in New Mexico

Bernalillo	49,833
Doña Ana	14,661
Sandoval	12,004
Santa Fe	10,036
Otero	8,098
Total	94,632

Nearly 63% of New Mexico's veterans live in these five counties

Albuquerque Metro Area Veteran Population

Bernalillo	49,833
Sandoval	12,004
Santa Fe	10,036
Valencia	6,203
Total:	78,076

52% of New Mexico's veterans live in the four-county Albuquerque metro area

Service Eras of New Mexico's Veterans

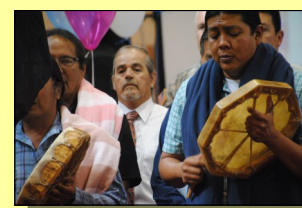
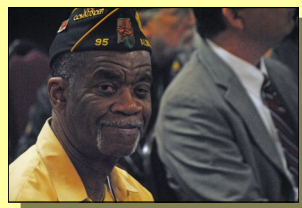
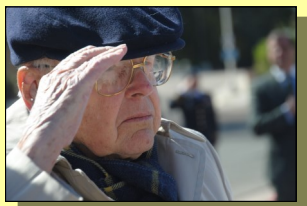
Wartime Veterans	122,549
Peacetime Veterans	28,730
Pre-WWI and/or WWI	0
Between WWI-WWII	13
WWII Era Veterans	3,108
WWII only	2,910
WWII & Korea	92
WWII, Korea, & Vietnam	106
Between WWII & Korean War Era	139
Korean War Era Veterans	7,329
WWII & Korea	92
WWII, Korea, & Vietnam	106
Korea Only	6,045
Korea & Vietnam	1,086
Between Korean War Era & Vietnam	8,694
Vietnam War Era Veterans	53,251
WWII, Korea, & Vietnam	106
Korea & Vietnam	1,086
Vietnam Only	48,606
Vietnam, & Gulf War	2,818
Vietnam, Gulf War, & Post-9/11	416
Vietnam, Post-9/11	219
Between Vietnam War & Gulf War Eras	19,855
Gulf War Era Veterans (includes Post-9/11)	63,703
Vietnam & Gulf War	2,818
Vietnam, Gulf War, & Post-11	416
Gulf War Only	21,968
Gulf War & Post 9/11	13,853
Post 9/11 only	24,430

Age Breakdown of New Mexico's Veterans

<u>Age</u>	<u>Total</u>
18-19	62
<u>20-29</u>	<u>6,264</u>
20-24	1,776
25-29	4,488
<u>30-39</u>	<u>14,166</u>
30-34	6,323
35-39	7,843
<u>40-49</u>	<u>17,187</u>
40-44	8,343
45-49	8,844
<u>50-59</u>	<u>25,698</u>
50-54	11,669
55-59	14,029
<u>60-69</u>	<u>30,289</u>
60-64	15,151
65-69	15,138
<u>70-79</u>	<u>37,010</u>
70-74	21,745
75-79	15,265
80-84	9,502
85+	11,101
TOTAL	151,279

Racial Makeup of New Mexico's Veteran Population

<u>Race</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>% of Vet Population</u>
White	83,639	55%
Hispanic	47,455	31%
Native American	9,850	6%
African American	7,490	5%
Asian	1,190	<1%
Other	1,655	1%
TOTAL	151,279	



New Mexico's Women Veteran Population

Number of Veterans in the USA	19,541,961
Number of Women Veterans in the USA:	2,030,586
Percentage of the USA's Veterans That Are Women:	10.4%

Number of Veterans (Male & Female) in New Mexico: 151,279

Number of Women Veterans in New Mexico:	16,633
Percentage of New Mexico's Veterans That Are Women:	11%

Age Breakdown of New Mexico's Women Veterans

<u>Age Group</u>	<u>Number</u>
18-19	17
20-29	1,227
30-39	2,721
40-49	3,019
50-59	3,712
60-69	4,004
70-79	1,078
80+	855