Kentucky Department of Veterans Affairs

Joint Executive Council for Veterans Organizations (JECVO) Update

October 2, 2019

Update presented by

Commissioner Benjamin F. Adams, III

Brigadier General, US Army (Ret)
• Veterans Benefits Branch
• State Veteran Centers (Nursing Homes)
• State Veteran Cemeteries
• Homeless Veterans Program
• Women Veterans Program
• KyVETS Program
• Veterans Program Trust Fund
• Funding Priorities
• Legislative Update
• Major Events
Benefits Branch Field Offices

22 Field Representatives in 19 Districts

★ Primary Office
• Outstation Office

Carol Livingston (6)
270-556-0474

Jonathan Melton (19)
270-705-3331

Johnny Allen (17)
270-399-1618

VACANT (2)
270-446-9010

Frank Niederriter (11)
502-799-3588

Lisa Pittman 502-356-1551

Thomas Hanner 502-356-6674

Kenneth Pruitt 502-229-6070

Brian O’Neil (502) 287-6092

VACANT (16)
606-231-1318

Linda Knighton (15)
606-585-3833

Wendi Maxwell (12)
859-409-6551

Patrick Monk (12)

VACANT (7)
859-432-6121

Brian Bowman (8)
606-422-9791

Christopher Kenny (18)
606-629-9239

Ashley Talbot (10)
859-409-6485

VACANT (20)
859-270-3117

Hope King (3)
270-484-7887

Stephen Buford (9)
270-576-3534

VACANT (5)
859-325-8288

Mike Miller (14)
859-553-9144

VACANT
606-231-1318

Larrissa Roach (1)
270-705-6656

Revised 30 September 2019
Veteran Centers
As of 1 October 2019

Thomson-Hood Veterans Center, Wilmore, KY
(Jessamine County)
168/285 = 59% (+ 1% since last meeting)
Opened in 1991

Western Kentucky Veterans Center, Hanson, KY
(Hopkins County)
89/156 = 57% -1% since last meeting)
Opened in 2002

Eastern Kentucky Veterans Center, Hazard, KY
(Perry County)
113/120 = 94% (+2% since last meeting)
Opened in 2013

Radcliff Veterenrs Center, Radcliff KY
(Hardin County)
73/120 = 60% (+1% since last meeting)
Opened in 2017
Veterans Cemeteries
As of 1 October 2019

KVCW, Hopkinsville, Christian County, KY
- Opened March 1, 2004
- Interments:
  - Veterans: 3,265
  - Dependents: 1,213
  - Total: 4,478
- Cremated: 1,302

KVCC, Radcliff, Hardin County, KY
- Opened June 1, 2007
- Interments:
  - Veterans: 5,260
  - Dependents: 1,305
  - Total: 6,565
- Cremated: 2,056

KVCN, Williamstown, Grant County, KY
- Opened Aug 22, 2008
- Interments:
  - Veterans: 1,501
  - Dependents: 337
  - Total: 1,838
- Cremated: 711

Total: 14,036

KVCNE, Grayson, Greenup County, KY
- Opened October 1, 2010
- Interments:
  - Veterans: 916
  - Dependents: 207
  - Total: 1,123
- Cremated: 342

KVCSE, Hyden, Leslie County, KY
- Opened May 1, 2018
- Interments:
  - Veterans: 28
  - Dependents: 4
  - Total: 32
- Cremated: 11
Homeless Veterans Program

- Provides onetime direct financial assistance up to $500 ($750 maximum) to veterans facing eviction/utility cut off or to assist with temporary housing.
- Directs homeless veterans and their families to appropriate federal, state and local agencies to assist with transient housing, food, clothing, and employment assistance.
- Assists homeless veterans and those at risk, file for VA benefits, healthcare, and pensions as appropriate.
- KDVA is major supporter of Operation Victory in Louisville. Two homes rehabilitated and provided to homeless veterans in the past two years.
  - The third Operation Victory home on Parthenia Ave is expected to be completed in October.
  - Operation Victory will begin construction on the forth home as soon as Parthenia Ave project is completed.
  - Accepting applications from homeless veterans for the next 3 homes through Operation Victory.
- Homeless Veteran Program Coordinator is Eileen Ward, (502) 782-5730, email eileen.ward@ky.gov
Homeless Veterans Program

Financial Assistance

FY 2019 (1 Jul 18-30 Jun 19)
Total assistance paid out $62,457.65
Avg. per veteran $243.98
Veterans assisted with Housing 131
Veterans assisted with Utilities 125
Total veterans assisted 256

FY 2020 (1 Jul 19 to Present)
Total assistance paid out $36,450.63
Avg. per veteran $396.20
Veterans assisted with housing 58
Veterans assisted with Utilities 34
Total veterans assisted 92
Women Veterans Program

• Email address
  women.veterans@ky.gov

• Women Veterans’ Town Hall Meeting:
  • We are seeking feedback on women veterans’ issues in preparation for a future women veterans’ conference 2020
  • We will publish several dates for Town Hall meetings

• Please share any women veterans events with KDVA for us to post on our web page and social media.

• Seeking Women Veterans Coordinator while LuWanda Knuckles is on active military duty.

• Acting Women Veterans Program Coordinator April Brown, cell 502-234-4854, email april.brown@ky.gov
“Have You Served” Outreach Campaign

**Goal:** Reach the thousands of women veterans in Kentucky who are not seeking benefits and services because they don’t think of themselves as “veterans.”

**Action:** Enlist state and local government agencies and non-profit organizations to ask their clients for veterans information. Provide to these partners promotional materials for KDVA’s “Have You Served” campaign. Offer educational briefings to agency heads, elected officials, PIOs, etc., on why “Have You Served” is a more effective and accurate question than “Are You a Veteran?”

KDVA’s work brings hundreds of millions of dollars into Kentucky every year through veteran benefits. Those benefits are direct transfers from the federal government to veterans and their families. Every veteran we reach for whom we can obtain benefits is a net increase in revenue for the Commonwealth.

Every veteran we fail to reach – especially women veterans – is a veteran not served by KDVA.
Employment Support Program

KyVets Veteran Services:
- Resume review and update
- Referral to employers
- Referral to other resources
- Education & Training
- HireKy website & App (https://login.bfacmobile.com/m/hireky)

KyVets Employer Services:
- Education on why hiring veterans is good business
- Matching veterans skills and experience to employer needs
- Free advertisement of positions
- Top talent referrals
- HireKy website & App (https://login.bfacmobile.com/m/hireky)

KyVETS Program Coordinator is April Brown
(502) 782-5735, email april.brown@ky.gov or kyvets@ky.org
Veterans Program Trust Fund

• The Veterans Program Trust Fund (VPTF) supports many veteran programs and projects throughout Kentucky but for which other funds are not available.

• The VPTF is overseen by a Board of Directors appointed by the Governor. The board meets several times per year.

• The VPTF receives a steady stream of revenue from a $5 fee that is associated with the initial purchase and annual renewal of Veteran and Military License Plates, as well as tax deductible contributions from private and corporate donors.

Last Meeting 18 September 2019
• 7 Grant Applicants
• 7 Grants Approved
  Total Obligated $119,500.00

Next Meeting 8 January 2020
• 8 Grant Application Slots
• Deadline for submitting grant applications is 9 December 2019
Funding Priorities for 2020-2022

1. $480K to fund Nurse Student Loan Repayment Program (GS19 HB 296)
2. $25M to fund competitive salaries for Nursing Staff
3. $2M to fund 20 additional Benefit Reps
4. $200K to fund Homeless Veterans Program (Executive Branch Budgetary Request)
5. $2.5M to fund design work on Bowling Green Veterans Center Project (BR 125)
Veterans Legislation
2019 Enacted

- **HB 296**: Creates a student loan repayment program for registered nurses and licensed practical nurses who will be employed by KDVA

- **HB 323**: Grants occupational license reciprocity to members of the reserve, National Guard, veterans, and their spouses

- **HB 338**: Gives interview preference for state jobs to service members and their families

- **SB 55**: Adds a veterans-at-risk “Green Alert” to the “Golden Alert” System

- **HB 243**: Requires Kentucky State Police to provide personal protection to Kentucky Medal of Honor recipients at public events and ceremonies

- **HB 316**: Allows service members who receive official orders requiring relocation to terminate or suspend select services without penalty or fee

- **HB 356**: Allows service members, spouses, and dependents to maintain residency status after being accepted or enrolled in a Kentucky public postsecondary institution, if the service member receives official orders to relocate

- **HB 399**: Allows military families moving into the state on official orders to pre-enroll their children in a school district before obtaining an address
Legislative Priorities for 2020

1. Exempt Military Retired Pay and Survivor Benefits from State Income Tax to make KY competitive with surrounding states.

2. Exempt Veteran Service Organizations from property tax. (BR 127/BR 247)

3. Bowling Green Veterans Center, design and preconstruction. (BR 125)

4. Allow certification as a Service Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business (SDVOSB) by the US Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) for verification and evaluation who meet the criteria of veteran eligibility, ownership, and control.

5. Clarify eligibility for a special military license plate and provide for a special military license plate for spouses of veterans.

6. Allow veterans who are paid at the 100 percent rate for service-connected disabilities by the USDVA to purchase disabled veteran license plates with no initial fee or renewal fee.

7. Amend KRS 132.810 to expand the homestead exemption in the Constitution to include surviving un-remarried spouses of totally disabled veterans of the United States Armed Forces.

8. Designate the Honor and Remember flag as the state’s emblem of the service and sacrifice of the men and women of the US Armed Forces who have given their lives in the line of duty. (BR 85)
Major Events

October 5, 2019 1500 (Central Time)
Interment of SFC Jeremy Wayne Griffin (Afghanistan KIA)
Kentucky Veterans Cemetery West
Hopkinsville, KY

October 8, 2019
Lexington Veterans Commission Meeting
Village Branch Library
2185 Versailles Road, Lexington, KY

November 3-11, 2019
Week of Valor events and activities
Lexington & Louisville

October – November 2019 (Date TBD)
Groundbreaking Ceremony for Kentucky Gold Star Families Memorial Monument
Capitol, Frankfort, KY

June 12-13, 2020
Veterans Engagement Action Center (VEAC)
One-stop shop for Veteran Benefits, Counseling, and Services
Lexington Christian Academy
450 W. Reynolds Road, Lexington, KY
Questions

Contact us at

www.veterans.ky.gov

Kentucky Department of Veteran Affairs

@kyveterans

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(502) 564-9203