Kentucky
Department of Veterans Affairs

American Legion Update

January 17, 2020

Update presented by
Commissioner Keith L. Jackson

Lieutenant Colonel, US Army (Ret)
Agenda

• Introductions/New Appointments
• KDVA Organization
• Veterans Benefits Branch
• State Veteran Centers
• State Veteran Cemeteries
• Homeless Veterans Program
• Women Veterans Program
• KyVETS Program
• Veterans Program Trust Fund
• Capital Projects
• Additional Budget Requests (Funding Priorities)
• Legislative Update
• Recent Successes & Major Events
Introductions

CW5(R) Dean Stoops
Deputy Commissioner

MSG (R) Al Duncan
Cemeteries Branch Manager

Corey Ann Jackson
Budget Manager/Policy Advisor
Introduction

Sixth Commissioner of the Kentucky Department of Veterans Affairs

Keith L. Jackson
Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Army (Retired)
Benefits Branch

- KRS 40.317 directs the Kentucky Department of Veterans’ Affairs to assist veterans and their families in obtaining earned veterans’ benefits from the federal government.
- These benefits may include, but are not limited to:
  - healthcare,
  - employment services,
  - rehabilitation services,
  - educational assistance,
  - housing services,
  - disability compensation, and
  - pension benefits.
- Field Services Branch consists of a Branch Manager, administrative staff, 3 Regional Administrators, and 23 Veteran Benefit Field Representatives (VBFRs) in 19 district offices strategically located across the Commonwealth.
- These field reps process approximately 350 claims per month and represent ~22% of Kentucky’s ~300,000 veterans.
Benefits Branch Field Offices

23 Field Representatives in 19 Districts

- **Primary Office**
- **Outstation Office**

- **Covington Field Office** opens 22 January 2020 at the Kenton County Administration Building, 1840 Simon Kenton Way, Room 3008, Covington, KY.
- **Harrodsburg Field Office** moving to Danville National Guard Armory, 482 Stanford Ave, Danville, KY. Opening for business on 15 February 2020.

Revised 10 January 2020
Veteran Centers

• Pursuant to KRS 40.325, the Kentucky Department of Veterans Affairs (KDVA), Office of Kentucky Veterans Centers (OKVC), headed by an Executive Director, administers the four (4) Kentucky state veterans’ homes (“SVHs”).

• With a staff of 700+ employees, OKVC is responsible for the care of approximately 450+ veterans and provides the highest level of quality support, skilled nursing, and long-term care for the men and women who served honorably on active duty with the U.S. Armed Forces.

• **Top Rated Veterans Centers** - In October 2019, **for the first time ever – all of Kentucky’s state veterans long-term care centers earned the top rating (5-Stars)** from the federal agency that oversees long-term care facilities.* The federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) created the Five-Star Quality Rating System to help consumers, their families, and caregivers compare nursing homes more easily.

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Veteran Centers

- Radcliff Veterans Center (RVC)
  Radcliff, KY

- Thompson-Hood Veterans Center (THVC)
  Wilmore, KY

- Eastern Kentucky Veterans Center (EKVC)
  Hazard, KY

- Western Kentucky Veterans Center (WKVC)
  Hanson, KY

*Bowling Green Veterans Center (BGVC)
  Bowling Green, KY
Veteran Centers
As of 1 January 2020

Thomson-Hood Veterans Center, Wilmore, KY
(Jessamine County)
151/285 = 53% (-3% from last month)
Opened in 1991

Western Kentucky Veterans Center, Hanson, KY
(Hopkins County)
90/156 = 58% (+2% from last month)
Opened in 2002

Eastern Kentucky Veterans Center, Hazard, KY
(Perry County)
113/120 = 92% (+2% from last month)
Opened in 2013

Radcliff Veterans Center, Radcliff KY
(Hardin County)
67/120 = 55% (-5% from last month)
Opened in 2017
Veteran Cemeteries

- The Cemeteries Branch consists of five (5) operational state veterans cemeteries located throughout the Commonwealth.
- KRS 40.315 directs KDVA to establish, operate and maintain these cemeteries for the interment of our Active Duty, National Guard, Reserve personnel, military veterans, and their eligible dependents.
- This is accomplished with Veterans Cemetery Grants from the U.S. Veterans Administration. One hundred percent of the construction and the initial equipping of a new state veterans cemetery are funded through a federal grant. The state of Kentucky then assumes the responsibility for total operational expenses once established.
- **Top Rated Veterans Cemetery** - In July 2019, the National Cemetery Administration visited Kentucky Veterans Cemetery North (KVCN) in Williamstown, KY. Following a rigorous inspection, the cemetery received an overall compliance percentage of **96 percent**.* And was rated as one of the **top State Veteran Cemeteries in the country** for 2019.

*National Cemetery Administration (1 August 2019). Veterans Cemetery Grants Compliance Review Program; Preliminary Findings Report for Kentucky Veterans Cemetery North*
Veteran Cemeteries
Veterans Cemeteries
As of 1 January 2020

KVCW, Hopkinsville, Christian County, KY

Opened March 1, 2004
Interments:
Veterans 3,322
Dependents 1,232
Total 4,554

Cremated 1,335

KVCC, Radcliff, Hardin County, KY

Opened June 1, 2007
Interments:
Veterans 5,377
Dependents 1,334
Total 6,711

Cremated 2,113

KVCN, Williamstown, Grant County, KY

Opened Aug 22, 2008
Interments:
Veterans 1,532
Dependents 347
Total 1,879

Cremated 731

KVCNE, Grayson, Greenup County, KY

Opened October 1, 2010
Interments:
Veterans 938
Dependents 216
Total 1,154

Cremated 351

KVCSE, Hyden, Leslie County, KY

Opened May 1, 2018
Interments:
Veterans 38
Dependents 6
Total 44

Cremated 13

Total: 14,342
Funeral Honors Stipend

- VSOs must verify the service of the veteran for whom the burial honors are being performed.
- Honors performed for veterans buried outside of the Commonwealth of Kentucky are not compensable.
- All stipend requests must be submitted to KDVA within 90 days of burial honors being performed.
- Ensure the VSO Post Name and Number is correct.
- The VSO must be registered as a State Vendor and received a State Vendor ID Number. That Vendor ID Number will start with a KY or KS.
- VSO’s must register for a State Vendor # at [https://finance.ky.gov/services/eprocurement/Pages/doingbusiness.aspx](https://finance.ky.gov/services/eprocurement/Pages/doingbusiness.aspx)
- For additional information, contact the Burial Honors Program Coordinator at 502-782-5731 or e-mail a [Alvin.Duncan@ky.gov](mailto:Alvin.Duncan@ky.gov)
Homeless Veterans Program

- Provides onetime direct financial assistance up to **$350 ($500 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 a major supporter of Operation Victory in Louisville. Three 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 December.
  - 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 $80,725.14
Avg. per veteran $325.50
Veterans assisted with housing 152
Veterans assisted with Utilities 82
Veterans assisted with emergency shelter 11
Veterans helped with other 3
Total veterans assisted 248
Women Veterans Program

- Email address: women.veterans@ky.gov
- There are ~24,000 women veterans in Kentucky.
- Women Veterans Newsletter.
- 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.
- Women Veterans Program Coordinator Candace Bradley, cell 502-545-4193, email candace.bradley@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.
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

Please email any upcoming job fairs or job listings for us to post on our web page and social media.
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 9 January 2020
- 10 Grant Applicants
- 9 Grants Approved
Total Obligated $157,000.00

Next Meeting 15 April 2020
- 8 Grant Application Slots
- Deadline for submitting grant applications is 14 February 2020
KDVA Capital Projects 2020-2022

1. KDVA Maintenance Pool $1,000,000
2. THVC Resurface Driveway & Parking Lot $1,000,000
3. RVC Construct Staff Parking Lot $450,000
4. KVCC Resurface Parking Lot $300,000
5. THVC Dishwasher and Hood Vent Replacement $200,000
6. EKVC Facility Roof Replacement $400,000
7. WKVC Heat Tape Repair/New Water Temp Control System $300,000
8. WKVC HVAC Replacement $1,000,000
9. RVC Outside Storage Building $200,000
10. EKVC Replace Cooling Towers $400,000
11. WKVC Replace Cooling Tower $350,000
12. THVC Steam Boiler Replacement $300,000
13. Construct Bowling Green Veterans Center (Warren County) $30,000,000

General Funds $12,240,000
Federal Funds $22,660,800
Total $35,900,000
## Additional Budget Requests 2020-2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>FY20-21 Requested</th>
<th>FY21-22 Requested</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Defined Calculations (COT, Fleet, retirement increase, healthcare costs, etc.)</td>
<td>$2,127,100</td>
<td>$2,873,300</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Competitive Salaries for Nursing Staff</td>
<td>$7,492,600</td>
<td>$7,530,100</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Fill Veteran Centers Nursing &amp; Non-Nursing Staff Vacancies</td>
<td>$6,408,100</td>
<td>$6,421,700</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Fund Nurse Student Loan Repayment Program</td>
<td>$240,000</td>
<td>$240,000</td>
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<td>5. Fund 20 Additional Veteran Benefit Field Representatives</td>
<td>$1,412,800</td>
<td>$1,792,100</td>
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<td>6. Fund Homeless Veterans Program</td>
<td>$200,000</td>
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<td>7. Fund VSO Burial Honors Program</td>
<td>$342,000</td>
<td>$348,000</td>
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<td>8. Fund Indigent Burial Program</td>
<td>$35,000</td>
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<td>9. Fund CFOC Vacancies</td>
<td>$605,500</td>
<td>$709,200</td>
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<td>10. Fund CFOC Salary Increases</td>
<td>$705,400</td>
<td>$806,600</td>
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<td>11. Fund Fleet Vehicles for VBFRs and Vet Cemetery Auto Technician</td>
<td>$345,100</td>
<td>$100,100</td>
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<td>12. Fund Salary Increase for Vet Centers Non-nursing Staff</td>
<td>$1,321,800</td>
<td>$1,334,200</td>
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<td>13. Debt Service for Bowling Green Veterans Center</td>
<td>$865,000</td>
<td>$865,000</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Additional Budget Request</strong></td>
<td><strong>$22,100,300</strong></td>
<td><strong>$23,260,300</strong></td>
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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

2. HB 36: Exempt Veteran Service Organizations from property tax. (Rep. M. Koch)


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. (Potential Sponsor)

5. HB 276: Clarify eligibility for a special military license plate and provide for a special military license plate for spouses of veterans. (Rep S. Heavrin)

6. HB 277: 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. (Rep S. Heavrin)

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. (No Sponsor Yet)
8. HB 17: 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. (Reps. C. Massey, L. Bechler, K. Bratcher, J. Gooch Jr., D. Lewis, K. Moser, M. Prunty, B. Reed, S. Riley, B. Rowland, D. Schamore, W. Thomas, S. Westrom, B. Wheatley)


10. BR 109: Veteran Suicide Memorial Mile Interstate-75 in Whitley County. (Rep. R. Huff)

11. BR 974: Amend KRS 159.075 Pre-enrollment and Preadmission of Military child to include transfers from Active Duty to Reserve Component and to waive Tuition Exception fees for military families living in temporary housing outside the school district. (Rep. M. Koch)

12. Amend KRS 40.317 to remove requirement for KDVA to employ no fewer than five Veteran Benefits Regional Administrators. (No Sponsor Yet)
Recent Successes

- **Top Rated Veterans Centers** - In October 2019, for the first time ever – all of Kentucky’s state veterans long-term care centers earned the top rating (5-Stars) from the federal agency that oversees long-term care facilities.* The federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) created the Five-Star Quality Rating System to help consumers, their families, and caregivers compare nursing homes more easily.

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**National Cemetery Administration (1 August 2019). Veterans Cemetery Grants Compliance Review Program; Preliminary Findings Report for Kentucky Veterans Cemetery North
Recent Successes

- **Top Quality Awards** - In November 2019, two employees of the Paul E. Patton Eastern Kentucky Veterans Center in Hazard, KY received **Professional Achievement Awards** from the Kentucky Association of Health Care Facilities:
  - Charlotte Cornette, Caregiving Award
  - Greg Gilbert, Nursing Care Award

- **Citizen of the Year** - In November 2019, KDVA Field Representative Wendi Maxwell was named Independence, KY’s Citizen of the Year for her work helping veterans.
Major Events

Spring 2020
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

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