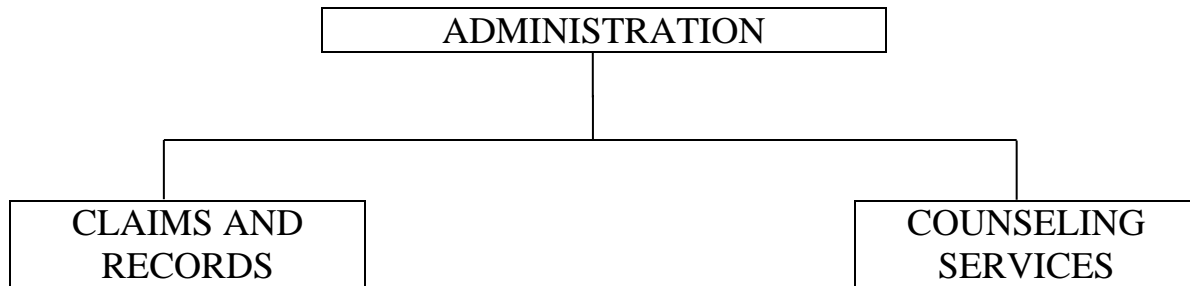


# VETERANS SERVICE AGENCY – 2023 PROGRAM BUDGET

## ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



### DEPARTMENT DESCRIPTION

Genesee County Veterans Service Agency was established on July 1, 1945. The Agency has been a part of County Government for approximately 75 years. New York State Executive Law Article 17, Section 357 requires the establishment and maintenance of a County Veterans Service Agency and the appointment of a Director. Since its beginning, the Agency has provided numerous and varied services to many thousands of veterans, their dependents and survivors, and continues to do so, as required by law.

Through the claims and application program, assistance is provided to veterans and their dependents. Development and submission of various claims, applications and forms to the proper Federal and State Agencies secure direct benefits to Genesee County residents.

The staff provides counseling to clients explaining various Federal, State and local benefits to which they may be entitled. In addition, claims are developed and submitted on behalf of the client. Veterans Services offers a variety of counseling and informational programs to Genesee County residents. These services include but are not limited to, benefit entitlements, compensation, education, insurance and disability pensions. The Director is an accredited representative and, as such, is recognized by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to legally represent veterans and their survivors in the pursuit of claims and benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs.

The veterans and their families are the primary recipients of the services provided. In a boarder sense, all of Genesee County profits because of all the millions of Federal and State monies that flow into the County as a direct result of the Agency's programs. The monetary benefit realized annually from these programs is in excess of \$13.5 million which in turn is put into the economy of our County.

## STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

### MISSION STATEMENT:

The Genesee County Veterans Service Agency will actively promote the rights of veterans and their dependents/survivors of Genesee County through counseling and filing claims. We will work as a team with the Department of Veterans Affairs and other Genesee County and State offices and other veterans' organizations to ensure that all veterans and their dependents/survivors receive the entitlements they richly deserve for the sacrifices they endured.

## **Key 2022 Accomplishments**

1. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic no report of the number of claim, appeals and pensions can be provided
2. This office has numerous claims in the appeals process and we are still waiting for their results. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has begun a new process for the appeals. Rapid Appeals Modernization Program (RAMP) into effect 14 FEB 19. This new process also opened up a new way of submitting a supplemental claim or what is called in the past a reconsideration claim by utilizing two new forms. Even though the process is somewhat new, the “RAPID” is non-existent. Also due to the Pandemic, Appeals were removed from the Regional office responsibility to the County VSO’s.
3. The office has an established and continues to have a contractual relationship with DSS. This is assisting more and more veterans and their families. The veteran is applying to DSS for benefits and DSS is referring them to our agency to establish eligibility for federal benefits first. This is a substantial cost savings to the county. We have had 72 referrals and 29 veterans and/or widows who have qualified for federal benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs. This results in a greater reduction in the cost of local Medicare benefits.
4. Over the past year, this office had 4740 contacts and has provided 6340 client services. We have completed 132 Veterans’ property tax exemptions. This number will increase due to the returning Active Duty Reservist/Guardsman.

## **Key 2023 Goals**

1. Continue supporting the National Cemetery known as the “Western New York National Cemetery” located at NY Route 77 and the Indian Falls Road, Town of Pembroke, Genesee County by keeping in contact with our Federal, State Representatives and Local Legislature and providing assistance in preparation of the VA Form 40-10007(Pre-Need Application).
2. Continue and improve the Veterans Mentorship Program by increasing the number of Mentors. This has been in existence since 2009. We have graduated 49 veterans to date with no repeat offenders.
3. This agency is highly involved with the NYS Department of Labor. The NYS Department of labor has recently assigned an employee to the Veterans Mentorship program this past year to assist veterans going through the court process to find employment.
4. Continue to gain knowledge of what is available to veterans and their families by attending Service Officer training offered by the National Association of Veterans Service Officers and the New York State Veteran Service Officer Association.

**Jan-July 2022**

<b><u>INDICATORS</u></b> <b><u>CLIENTS</u></b>	<i>Actual</i> <b><u>2021</u></b>	<i>Estimated</i> <b><u>2022</u></b>	<i>Estimated</i> <b><u>2023</u></b>
WW II	440	435	430
Korea	410	405	400
Vietnam	1265	1270	1265
Persian Gulf	1005	1020	1025
Other	450	458	461
Veterans	2515	2520	2525
Dependents/Others	1077	1080	1083

**Jan-July 2022**

<b><u>INDICATORS</u></b> <b><u>CLIENT REQUESTS</u></b>	<i>Actual</i> <b><u>2021</u></b>	<i>Estimated</i> <b><u>2022</u></b>	<i>Estimated</i> <b><u>2023</u></b>
Disability Compensation	UKN	1860	1870
Pension	UKN	575	580
Health Care	30	45	47
Education	UKN	55	60
Insurance	18	20	22
Home Loan	5	7	9
Burial	UKN	560	555
Medals	8	6	8
Military Records	10	12	15
Other	255	257	260

**Jan-July 2022**

<b><u>INDICATORS</u></b> <b><u>CLIENT REQUESTS</u></b>	<i>Actual</i> <b><u>2021</u></b>	<i>Estimated</i> <b><u>2022</u></b>	<i>Estimated</i> <b><u>2023</u></b>
Blind Annuity	0	1	1
Park Passes	10	18	23
State Vets Home	6	8	10
Other	9	8	10

**Local Benefits**

Property Tax	106	111	115
Other	9	12	15

**New Benefit Applications**

	199	205	210
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**DSS Referrals**

Applicants	63	70	90
Approved	48	21	38

## **Performance Indicators**

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, no report have been provided from the Buffalo Regional office for claims that were submitted from this office.

Our office never closed since the beginning of the restrictions and numbers of out-of county veterans increased due to other count VSO's closing their offices.

Due to the non-closure of this office, numbers of veterans from out of county, state, country have increased, in order to serve the veteran and/or their families.