

# The Communicator

November - December  
2022



## CACVSO President Message

Dear Membership!

Reflecting on my past year of being President (How does a year go by so fast??!!), I feel we have accomplished so much. Returning to in person conferences, updating our bylaws and voting schedule, addressing our increase in subvention funding, just to name a few, were some of my first matters to address. But I also feel like there is still a lot of work ahead. I look forward to supporting you in any way I can. We have had two terrific conferences since I have addressed you last. The conference in San Luis Obispo was a time when we could finally celebrate our 75<sup>th</sup> annual anniversary for the CACVSO, what a fun and exciting time. Thank you, Morgan Boyd for hosting us. In the fall we again got to be together in Grass Valley here we enjoyed reconnecting and each others company. I want to thank David West for a terrific conference. It does not matter how big or small your county is there are always beautiful and interesting places to see.

I am very excited to continue to bring us all back together as a cohesive group as we fall from under this COVID isolation that we have all suffered over the past 2 years. The passing of the PACT ACT will bring more veterans and their families to our offices. Please reach out if you need assistance, we are all here to support you. I would like to continue to work on strengthen our committees and develop processes to ensure that the passing of the information is being heard by the Association. It is important that if you are on a committee that you actively participate.

Marvin King our 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President has been tasked with developing a plan to show our mission, vision and core values of our Association, it is important that we help him in this process to achieve our goals.

I can not wait to see what the next year brings, and I look forward to seeing you all in Sacramento.



Rhonda Murphy  
President, CACVSO

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U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs

# News Release

Office of Public Affairs  
Media Relations

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[www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## VA announces funding opportunities to help Veterans experiencing homelessness

WASHINGTON — This week, as a part of ongoing efforts to end Veteran homelessness, the Department of Veterans Affairs published three grant opportunities for Fiscal Year 2024 that will help Veterans who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

The first grant opportunity is for VA's [Supportive Services for Veteran Families program](#), which provides supportive services to rapidly rehouse Veterans and their families, prevent the imminent loss of a Veteran's home, or identify new, more suitable housing situations for Veterans and their families. VA anticipates awarding funding to eligible organizations located in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam and Virgin Islands.

The two other grant opportunities are for VA's [Grant and Per Diem program](#), which provides Veterans-in-need with transitional housing beds and case management —connecting them to VA benefits, community-based services and permanent housing. VA anticipates awarding nearly 390 total grants through this program, which will provide beds for approximately 11,000 Veterans nationwide.

“These grants will provide critical resources to help Veterans and their families climb out of homelessness or prevent them from falling into homelessness in the first place,” said **VA Secretary Denis McDonough**. “Every Veteran deserves a good, stable, safe home in this country they fought to defend — and these grants are a key part of making that goal a reality.”

More information about each of these opportunities is below: Supportive Services for Veteran Families Grants: The first grant opportunity is through VA's [SSVF program](#) and will support both new and renewal grant awards to community-based nonprofit agencies and consumer collaboratives. The grant money will fund operations for fiscal year 2024, beginning Oct. 1, 2023. In addition to providing services to prevent Veterans from becoming homeless or to rapidly rehouse Veterans who are currently homeless, these funds also [provide additional authorities and flexibilities](#) to assist Veterans in remaining in and obtaining permanent housing.

SSVF grant applications must be received by the SSVF Program Office by 4 p.m. ET, Feb. 10, 2023. View the [SSVF Notice of Funding availability](#), [learn more about SSVF](#) or email [SSVF@va.gov](mailto:SSVF@va.gov).

**Grant and Per Diem Grants:** The second and third grant opportunities are available through [VA's Homeless Providers Grant and Per Diem](#) program and will support two kinds of grants for FY24: 1) Per Diem Only grants will fund transitional supportive housing beds or service centers, and 2) Transition in Place grants will provide Veterans with apartment-style housing that allows Veterans to remain in their homes when they complete the GPD program. VA anticipates awarding 350 Per Diem Only grants to support approximately 10,500 transitional housing beds and 15 service centers nationwide. The department also anticipates awarding approximately 40 Transition in Place grants to support 600 TIP beds nationwide.

PDO grant applications must be received by 4 p.m., ET, Feb. 6, 2023, and TIP grant applications must be received by the GPD program office by 4 p.m., ET, Jan. 30, 2023. View the GPD [PDO Notice of Funding Opportunity](#), the [GPD TIP Notice of Funding Opportunity](#), learn more about GPD or email [GPDGrants@va.gov](mailto:GPDGrants@va.gov).

In this calendar year, VA has already placed nearly 31,000 homeless Veterans into permanent housing — putting VA on track to meet and even exceed its goal of [38,000 permanent housing placements for homeless Veterans in 2022](#).

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## How to Avoid Social Media Burnout

In a lot of ways, social media is a great thing. It helps us stay connected with friends and family, get the latest headlines, watch funny videos, and connect with people around the world.

But it is possible to get too much of a good thing; research shows that excessive social media consumption can interfere with your daily life. If you find your nose in your device more often than you'd like, try shaking things up.

- **Digital Detox:** Choose a duration of time to completely disconnect from all digital devices and reconnect with the world around you.
- **Define the Relationship:** Take some time to determine how big a role social media plays in your life, and whether it works for you.
- **Set Boundaries:** Just because technology can keep us connected 24/7 doesn't mean it's healthy to be available 100% of the time.

**Remember:** Life's most exciting moments usually happen IRL — make sure your devices are helping improve your life, not distracting you from it!



## Secretary Corner

Contact your secretary when you have office and/or staff changes



# VA closes gap in benefits for LGBTQ+ Veterans and their survivors



Recently, the Department of Veterans Affairs announced that it is closing a gap in [survivor benefits](#) for certain survivors of LGBTQ+ Veterans — specifically, for those who were unable to wed until the [2015 Obergefell v. Hodges Supreme Court decision](#), and who, therefore, were not married to their now-deceased Veteran spouses for long enough to qualify for survivor benefits.

This extension of survivor benefits is effective immediately. Eligible survivors can apply for these benefits, and more information about this announcement is found by logging into <https://news.va.gov/109836/va-closes-gap-survivor-benefits-lgbtq-survivors/>

“VA is closing a gap in benefits for surviving spouses of LGBTQ+ Veterans, righting a wrong that is a legacy of the discriminatory federal ban on same-sex marriages,” said VA Secretary Denis McDonough. “It is VA’s mission to serve all Veterans – including LGBTQ+ Veterans – as well as they’ve served our country, and this decision is a key part of that effort.”

Due to bans on same-sex marriages, many LGBTQ+ Veterans were unable to get married until [Obergefell v. Hodges \(6/26/2015\)](#) despite being in “marriage-type” relationships long before that. This wrongly precluded many survivors of those LGBTQ+ Veterans from becoming eligible for [survivor benefits](#) because their Veteran spouse died before the marriage met VA’s length-of-marriage requirements (one-year for [survivor benefits](#), eight-years for a higher rate of benefits). This decision addresses that problem by counting the duration of marriage from when the surviving spouse can establish a “marriage-type” relationship — such as a commitment ceremony, joint banking account, or joint purchase of a house. Importantly, these benefits are not retroactive.

VA is committed to delivering world-class care and benefits to LGBTQ+ Veterans. As a part of this effort, last year, [VA began providing benefits](#) to Veterans who were given “Other Than Honorable” discharges due to their sexual orientation. LGBTQ+ Veterans can learn more about VA’s current health offerings on the [LGBTQ+ Health Program website](#).

# Training / Conferences

## Cal Vet CVS0 Training

**Phase 1**                      **TBD**  
Sacramento

**Phase 2**                      **TBD**  
Sacramento

Please feel free to reach out to  
[Jennifer.Hubbard-Beath@calvet.ca.gov](mailto:Jennifer.Hubbard-Beath@calvet.ca.gov)

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## CACVSO Conferences 2023



**Winter**                      **Feb 26<sup>th</sup> – Mar 4<sup>th</sup>, 2023**  
Sacramento

**Summer**                      **June 2023**  
Yuba City

*THE COMMUNICATOR is the official publication of the California Association of County Veterans Service Officers (CACVSO). Opinions expressed are those of contributing writers and do not necessarily reflect opinions or policies of CACVSO officers, members, or the editorial staff. The newsletter reserves the right to edit, amend, or reject any contribution submitted for publication.*

**UPCOMING**

*Mark Your Calendars*

**EVENTS**



## NOVEMBER

- 2 Dia de Muertos (Mexico)\*
- 5 Guy Fawkes Night (UK)
- 8 Yi Peng Lantern Festival (Thailand)\*
- 11 St Martin's Day (Europe)
- 11 Remembrance Day
- 11 World Origami Day
- 13 World Kindness Day
- 15 Shichi-Go-San (Japan)
- 17 Take a Hike Day (USA)
- 20 Universal Children's Day
- 24 Thanksgiving (USA)\*
- 30 St Andrew's Day (Scotland)

## DECEMBER

- 6 St Nicholas' Day (Europe)
- 7 Día de las Velitas (Colombia)
- 13 St Lucia Day (Europe)
- 16 Las Posadas (Mexico)
- 18 Hanukkah (Jewish)\*
- 24 Jolabokaflokkur (Iceland)
- 25 Christmas
- 26 Kwaanza (USA)
- 31 New Year's Eve
- 31 Hogmanay (Scotland)

***For article submissions, email:  
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