

2016 ANNUAL REPORT AND DIRECTORY



California Association of County Veterans Service Officers, Inc.
Professional Veterans Advocates Serving California's Veterans and Their Families

Veteran Driver License and ID Available

HAVE YOU EVER SERVED IN THE U.S. MILITARY? YOU MAY QUALIFY TO PROUDLY DISPLAY **VETERAN** ON YOUR CALIFORNIA DRIVER LICENSE OR IDENTIFICATION CARD.

IT'S AS EASY AS 1, 2, 3!

- Find your military discharge certificate (DD214). If you need assistance obtaining your military records, then contact your County Veteran Service Officer (CVSO).
- Take your DD214 and
 government identification to
 your CVSO to obtain your
 Veteran Status Verification Form.

For faster CVSO service, schedule an appointment by finding your local CVSO at www.calvet.ca.gov or calling 1-844-737-8838.

To schedule an appointment at a DMV, visit www.dmv.ca.gov or call 1-800-777-0133.

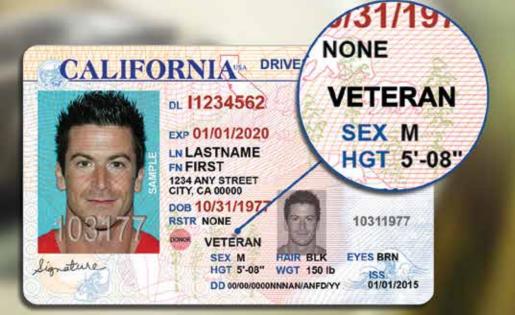
Go online or call DMV for an appointment. Then bring your Veteran Status Verification Form to DMV. Complete your application, pay any fees including the \$5 fee to add the Veteran Designation.

Note: tests may be required.









OUTGOING PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

2015 was a great year for CACVSO and the veterans of California! Among our many accomplishments, CACVSO was successful in obtaining permanent increased state funding for veteran services and establishing a "veteran" designation on the state driver license. Many thanks to Governor Jerry Brown for approving the increased funding! This funding will help us meet the ever increasing demand for services that our member counties are experiencing — including the many new veterans seeking the "veteran" designation on their driver license. We would be remiss in not saying 'thank you' to the state legislators whose unwavering support of California's veterans was paramount in our legislative successes. CACVSO looks forward to a successful 2016 serving our state's veterans and their families, in partnership with CalVet and the US Department of Veteran Affairs.

Chris Bingham, President (February 2014 – February 2016) California Association of County Veterans Service Officers

INCOMING PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It's an honor to be taking over as President of the CACVSO in February 2016. These are exciting times, as many of our offices are experiencing a 50% increase in foot traffic, and this will likely rise as more veterans request the new Veteran Driver License. But this increased workload can be a challenge, so I want to concentrate on helping offices that are struggling with new staff and new leadership. Part of this initiative will be establishing best operational practices in all of our offices and exchanging ideas and information to make us all better at what we do. For example, having VA personnel phone numbers, names and contact information in all locations can help us be more effective. CalVet training will also improve this year, and with our help become more relevant to what we do on a daily basis. Working together, we'll become the best organization in the country providing claims and other services to our veterans. I want to thank Chris Bingham and Charles Hunnicutt for going the extra mile for us, and working with Pete Conaty and Jack Kirwan to secure the funding we've been pursuing for 20 years. Wishing a Happy, Healthy New Year to all.

Theodore "Ted" Puntillo, President (February 2016 – February 2017) California Association of County Veterans Service Officers

WHAT IS THE CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE OFFICERS?

The CACVSO is the California Association of County Veterans Service Officers. These officers oversee and direct the activities of their individual county veterans service offices (CVSO) — in 57 of California's 58 counties — where veterans and their families receive free United States Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) claims assistance for federal benefits and information and referral to local, state and federal programs.

The CACVSO:

- ★ provides members of the Association and their staff with a collaborative network of resources, information and ideas, especially in the sharing of information on the many difficult federal claims issues,
- ★ provides training and education to CVSOs and their employees,
- ★ promotes the mission of CVSOs throughout the state, and
- ★ promotes the welfare and rights of veterans statewide through legislative advocacy.

THE HISTORY OF COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE OFFICES

Shortly after the Civil War, veterans began to organize by forming the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR), which advocated for government benefits for their comrades who were physically or mentally injured as a result of their wartime service. What we now call Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) was called "Soldiers Heart" during the Civil War. Since then, other veterans service organizations were formed after each of America's wars:

- ★ The American Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars after World War I.
- ★ AMVETS after World War II.
- ★ The Vietnam Veterans of America after the Vietnam War.

Currently Iraq and Afghanistan veterans are joining the Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, as well as joining the previously mentioned veterans service organizations.

All of these groups have lobbied to ensure that our military and veterans are taken care of during and after their wartime service. There are over 100 veterans service organizations registered with the USDVA.

These veterans service organizations also advocated at the state and county level for help for veterans. In the beginning, the states and counties responded by establishing commissions, boards and committees to assist their veterans.

This led to the establishment of a system known as County Veterans Service Offices (CVSO). The CVSO system is the most widely used model that states use to deliver services to and assist veterans in obtaining federal and state benefits.

The creation of the CVSO system had its beginnings prior to World War I, but became more prevalent after that war as counties in different states established CVSOs.

The first CVSO in California was established in Stanislaus County in 1924 followed by San Bernardino County (1926), Riverside (1930), Ventura (1931) and San Diego (1933) to serve California's World War I veterans.

With the end of World War II, practically every county in California established a county veterans service office.

These counties realized that helping veterans and their families navigate the federal veterans benefit system would provide financial support for their veteran citizens and help alleviate costs that counties had to bear. This trend would accelerate after World War II.

With the end of World War II, practically every county in California established a county veterans service office. This led to the formation of the CACVSO in 1945. The CACVSO celebrated its 70th anniversary in 2015.

State law does not mandate that counties establish county veterans service offices. Counties have done so to help their veterans and they fund 72% of the cost, even with the increased funding.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE OFFICERS

In September 1989, the CACVSO became a founding member of the National Association of County Veterans Service Officers (NACVSO), along with CVSOs from seven other states. NACVSO meets annually to advocate at the national level in Congress, the USDVA, and other federal agencies on behalf of all veterans and their families

Studies have shown that veterans who file their claims through a CVSO receive a higher claim amount than veterans who do not use a CVSO.

The NACVSO is a 2,400-member association, which includes 28 states and one Tribal Nation. The mission of the NACVSO is to actively promote the rights of veterans and dependents of the United States through a progressive legislative platform and to work collaboratively with the USDVA and other nationally chartered veterans service organizations.

According to the NACVSO, about 80% of the claims presented to the USDVA each year originate in the office of a CVSO. Studies have shown that veterans who file their claims through a CVSO receive a higher claim amount than veterans who do not use a CVSO.



CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE OFFICERS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE DECEMBER 8, 2015

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COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE OFFICERS BRING IN OVER \$ 380 MILLION IN <u>NEW</u> FEDERAL VETERANS BENEFITS TO CALIFORNIA!

The California Association of County Veterans Service Officers (CACVSO) announced today that during fiscal year 2014-15, they assisted California's veterans in filing claims with the federal government, which resulted in payments of at least \$380,544,494 according to recently released figures from the California Department of Veterans Affairs.

Many of California's 1.84 million veterans are eligible for benefits from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). However, determining which benefits and programs they may be eligible for, as well as applying and qualifying for these benefits can be very complicated. County Veterans Service Officers (CVSO's) are county employees whose job is to assist the veterans in their county in obtaining their earned federal benefits. The services CVSO's provide are 100% free to veterans and their families. The majority of CVSO funding is provided by the counties, while about 28% comes from the state.

Local governments and the State of California have long realized that assisting veterans in obtaining the federal benefits they earned as a result of their military service reduces the pressures on already impacted local and state social service programs. Also, since these federal veterans benefits go directly from the VA to the veteran, these new federal monies are also a boon to the local economies, as well as helping veterans.

In FY 14-15, the CVSO's were able to obtain over \$380 MILLION in federal benefits for California's veterans! This cost of operating the CVSO's is about \$19 million by the counties (all counties combined) and \$5.6 million by the state, for a total California expenditure of \$24.6 million. Therefore, CVSO's are guiding the state's veterans to the appropriate benefits, saving the state money by lessening cost pressures on state and local programs, AND getting a 15 fold return on investment! This does not take into account the economic multiplier effect of an added \$380 million in federal dollars going into the county economies.

According to CACVSO President Chris Bingham, "The CACVSO would like to thank the Legislature and Governor Brown for making the state's contribution level permanent at the \$5.6 million level for the 2015-16 budget". Prior to 2015, state CVSO funding had languished at \$2.6 million. In 2013 and 2014, it was at a one year only \$5.6 million level. The non-permanent funding level made it difficult for counties to hire and train qualified CVSO's.

"While we only track these benefits for a one year period, it is important to note that these monthly federal compensation payments continue each year until the veteran passes away" noted Joe Wright, CACVSO Legislative Chair.

ABOUT THE CACVSO

The California Association of County Veterans Service Officers (CACVSO) is a professional training and legislative organization comprising the 56 counties, which have established 54 County Veterans Service Officers throughout the state dedicated to serving California's 1.84 million veterans as well as their dependents and survivors.

WHY WE DO WHAT WE DO

Pure numbers cannot quantify the value of what California's County Veterans Service Officers (CVSOs) do, although we do bring a great deal of additional federal funding to the state every year. There is a real, human value to the services we provide, which is seen and felt by the California veterans and families we help. Following are some of their stories.

Veterans Designation on Driver License and Reaching New Veterans

A Vietnam veteran went to his local CVSO to obtain the form for his driver license. While there, he learned that he was eligible for VA medical care and service connected disability compensation, because he had medical conditions such as Diabetes, Mellitus Type 2, and Diabetic Neuropathy, as well as other medical illnesses the VA has determined to be caused by exposure to Agent Orange (a chemical defoliant used in Vietnam). (Sonoma County)

Helping Veteran's Widow

In 2013, as a result of outreach making the public aware of Kern County's CVSO services, the widow of a Vietnam veteran came into our office. After the loss of her husband in 2003, she had filed a claim with the federal USDVA and it was declined. When the Veterans Service Representative (VSR) in our office noticed the death certificate listed cause of death as presumptive conditions of Agent Orange exposure in Vietnam, they reopened the widow's claim. She was retroactively awarded \$150,000 and now receives about \$2,000 monthly. (Kern County)

Helping Homeless Veterans

Facing homelessness, a female veteran with a spouse and two children came to the CVSO office. Based upon her military medical records, within 60 days of her claim she received a USDVA compensation award for a brain cyst, back problems and migraine headaches. She received a disability rating of 80% and is receiving \$1,700 per month. (L.A. County)

Cutting Through the Redtape

A veteran (age 93) and his spouse (age 77) came into the Placer County Veterans Service Office with an award letter from 2010 that they felt was incorrect. A new staff person — hired with new funding and who was formerly a rating specialist from the USDVA — noticed a mistake on the rating. They assisted the claimants with submitting the required forms to the USDVA. The veteran was awarded a 100% Service Connected Disability. The award was retroactive from 2010 for \$112,826 with a \$4,000 monthly benefit.

Unfortunately, the veteran passed away before the money could be released — causing the claim to be terminated. Another VSR was able to assist the distraught widow in completing more forms for the burial, accrued pay and widow's benefits. The widow was awarded \$112,826 retroactively with a monthly benefit of \$1,215.

Because of the increased local assistance funding from the state, the Placer county office had the staffing and resources available to assist this veteran, his widow and many other veterans in the county. As of May 16, 2014, the Placer County Veterans Service Office has been able to submit 185 new claims — resulting in \$116,822 in one-time payments and \$10,422 in new monthly benefits to county veterans. (Placer County)

Helping Veterans Near and Far

The additional state funding received by the Trinity County CVSO has allowed the office to add an additional 10 hours per month to the position, which is currently one person, part-time. This extra time has allowed the CVSO to provide bi-monthly outreach services to the town of Hayfork, which is over a mountain pass, 36 miles from Weaverville. On one of these visits to Hayfork, a Vietnam veteran came to see the CVSO. As a result of their discussion, the CVSO referred him to the federal USDVA Outpatient Clinic in Redding for an Agent Orange physical and the Agent Orange Registry. The veteran also has diabetes, so a claim for this is also being pursued for related illnesses.

The CVSO is also assisting the widow of a World War II veteran who lives in Hyampom (30 miles from Hayfork) for a Widow's Pension with Aid and Attendance. This requires that the CVSO coordinate the application and reports with her son, who lives in Twain Harte, $CA - a \mod 350$ miles away from the office. (Trinity County)



"At the time, we didn't know about Agent Orange."

Carl "Butch" Frederickson, U.S. Navy Vietnam Veteran

OBTAINING VETERANS BENEFITS IS NOT LIKE FILING FOR SOCIAL SECURITY!

Every veteran's claim is unique. There are over 30,000 pages of federal law and regulations dealing with veterans benefits. Without someone to assist them in filing their claim, many veterans simply give up. This is why it is important to have a qualified County Veterans Service Officer or Representative help veterans file claims.



CACVSO Training Consultant Norm Gillett advises CVSOs on specific items involved in filing and pursuing claims with US Department of Veterans Affairs. Below is a sample of the complex issues Norm assists CVSOs with. This advice is also published in the column "Out of the Norm" in the CACVSO monthly newsletter, *The Communicator*.

Question from CVSO: I have a veteran who is Service Connected for multiple injuries of one leg from a fragment wound in combat. All of the disabilities are at or below the knee; they are: ankylosis (fixation)

of the knee in 15° of flexion (40%); severe muscle injury of the calf, with extensive loss of muscle substance (30%); and severe incomplete paralysis of the common peroneal nerve, with sensory loss (30%). These all combine to 70%, but the veteran is only being paid at the rate for 60%. VA cites "the amputation rule" as the reason, but if they consider this injury to be equivalent to an amputation, shouldn't they also be paying Special Monthly Compensation (SMC) for loss of use of the extremity?

Norm's answer: Sorry, but no. The "amputation rule" (38 CFR 4.68) says: "The combined rating for disabilities of an extremity shall not exceed the rating for the amputation at the elective level, were amputation to be performed." (my emphasis) Your veteran's rating is not considered to be "equivalent to" an amputation; rather, the amputation rule simply limits the combined rating for multiple disabilities of one extremity to the percentage that would be assigned IF that extremity was amputated at the level covering all of the listed disabilities. In this case, the percentage rating for amputation of one leg above the knee is 60%, so that is the limit in your veteran's situation.

Application of the amputation rule is not synonymous with, nor does it imply, loss of use of the involved extremity. Entitlement to SMC for loss of use of an extremity is a separate issue apart from the proper percentage evaluation(s) assignable for the extremity. To qualify for SMC for loss of use of the extremity, evidence would have to show that your veteran's lower extremity meets one or another of the descriptions set out in 38 CFR 3.350(a)(2) and 38 CFR 4.63 for a finding of "loss of use of a... foot" (note that the two references are essentially identical).

Norm Gillett served in the USAF from 1961-65. He joined the USDVA Regional Office in San Francisco in 1970, and worked there until 1996. In 1975 he became a Rating Specialist. He served as an instructor on rating issues at the USDVA's Adjudication Academy. After retiring from USD VA, Norm was invited to be CACVSO Training Consultant on claims issues, which includes advising CVSOs on specific items involved in filing and pursuing claims with the VA.

Executive Department State of California

PROCLAMATION

Veterans Day began as Armistice Day, a holiday commemorating the end of World War I on November 11, 1918. All too soon, it became clear that this had not been the "War to End All Wars" some optimists claimed. After a second global conflict that dwarfed the first in its magnitude of destruction, countries around the world began changing their observance to encompass all conflicts and honor those who served. Our own Veterans Day was established as a national holiday by congressional resolution and presidential proclamation in 1954.

Today, nearly 2 million veterans live in California. Among them are men and women who served in World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, the Gulf War and our current wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as various smaller engagements and peacetime deployments. As we remember our brave Americans today, we should consider their valor and suffering in the service of our country and the challenges they face upon returning home. Some of our veterans suffer from high rates of disability, poverty, unemployment and homelessness. We cannot glibly claim to honor our heroes while leaving them to suffer from social and economic ills.

This Veterans Day, let us welcome all our returning veterans with open arms and, as President Eisenhower wrote in his 1954 proclamation, "Let us reconsecrate ourselves to the task of promoting an enduring peace so that their efforts will not have been in vain."

NOW THEREFORE I, EDMUND G. BROWN JR., Governor of the State of California, do hereby proclaim November 11, 2015, as "Veterans Day."

IN WITNESS WHEREOF I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of California to be affixed this 30th day of October 2015.

EDMUND G. BROWN JR. Governor of California

ATTEST:

diam'r.

Secretary of State

THE CALIFORNIA MODEL FOR VETERANS SERVICES

The California model for providing veteran services (i.e., the processes that connect veterans to benefits and services they have earned) is similar to many other states with a close partnership between state and county governments through the auspices of CalVet and the many California County Veterans Service Offices (CVSOs) statewide.

Collectively, the CVSO, through claims initiation and development, and CalVet, through claims development and representation, provide assistance to veterans and their dependents in preparing and submitting claims and in representing claimants before the federal, state and local agencies providing veterans benefits.

The California CVSO model epitomizes Governor Brown's oft espoused belief in the principle of subsidiarity — the principle that government should do only what individuals and private organizations

This critical relationship with CVSOs ensures that veterans have the best opportunity to receive all earned benefits and facilitates access to services.

cannot do, and that governmental activities should be as local as possible.

This critical relationship with CVSOs ensures that veterans have the best opportunity to receive all earned benefits and facilitates access to services. While the state directly supports services in United States Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) regional offices, the CVSOs provide the underlying network that facilitates the direct support of the individual veteran or family member. CVSOs provide the local expertise for initiating claims, connecting veterans to services and generally assisting veterans, their dependents and survivors. They do this across the entire spectrum of federal, state and local benefits including compensation and pension, vocational rehabilitation, medical services, legal services, education, training, mental health services, and public assistance. CVSOs originate claims for all USDVA recognized organizations, as well as for CalVet. CVSOs are the key component in any state or federal effort to interface with the individual veteran and their family.



Chris Bingham, Sonoma County CVSO and President of the CACVSO for 2014 and 2015. Chris is a retired military aviator who has served in both the US Air Force and the U.S. Navy and is rated as a Command Pilot.

This model has widespread success nationwide with 28 of the 50 states using the

CVSOs are the key component in any state or federal effort to interface with the individual veteran and their family

CVSO model to assist veterans and their families in obtaining USDVA benefits (as well as state benefits). The other states either use state employees, a combination of state employees and CVSOs (Texas) or contract with veterans service organizations to deliver services to their veterans.

Why Use Public Funds to Support CVSO Operations?

- ★ Formal studies prove veterans receive more benefits and larger awards by using professional veterans service representatives (i.e., CVSOs) than if they file individually or with a non-professional.
- ★ Unlike other federal benefits, veterans benefits are extremely individualized entirely dependent on that individual's service experience CVSOs have the experience to draw out the nuances in that individual's experience to validate the claim.
- ★ CVSO's know local services and how to access those services they can get a homeless vet a bed tonight in a shelter just down the street, or a stressed out vet into mental health services, locally, right now, not in a couple of weeks.
- ★ The CVSO model epitomizes Governor Brown's belief that governmental activities should be as local as possible.
- ★ For every dollar of state general fund support provided in fiscal year 2014-15, the CVSO community brought in \$70 in new federal benefits.
- ★ The CVSO sits across the table from the veteran eyeball to eyeball so the veteran recognizes the simpatico relationship and is able to openly discuss their case, allowing the CVSO to present a fully developed claim.
- ★ The veteran has a real person to hold responsible for the claims process not an anonymous voice at the other end of a toll-free call.



Mike McCoy's service allowed him to access benefits that could pay for the college education of his three children, Mike, Nick, and Kaitlyn.

TRUE SERVICE TO VETS MEANS MORE THAN LIP SERVICE

When it comes to U.S. veterans, we need to put our money where our mouths are



By Jeff vonKaenel, Sacramento News and Review August 20, 2015

"Thank you for your service." It's five words. But not all sentences are created equal.

Many sentences are pleasant, perhaps even informative, but do not have to convey any weighty ideas. "Thank you for your service," the sentence that Americans say to other Americans who have served in the armed services, is a sentence with a big job. Its job is communicate the deep gratitude that the people of our country have for those who have put themselves in harm's way.

Politicians roll these words out repeatedly in speeches. We say them at the airport and many other places. It is sometimes an awkward interaction. There are two people involved, two Americans, who have enjoyed the same benefits and freedoms. One of us has risked life for our country—seen buddies die, been stuck in a Godforsaken desert, and perhaps even returned with horrible injuries. And the other has not. The words seem so inadequate and awkward. As someone who has not been called to serve my country in this way, even as I say the words, I feel the unfairness of our divergent life experiences.

Over the last year, I have had numerous opportunities to think about how we treat our veterans. Our company has a separate division, N&R Publications, that has been producing mini-newspapers that veterans services organizations have been using for outreach. In the process of putting together these publications, I spend several hours talking with a group of veterans service officers, hearing about their jobs, the difficulties of navigating the system, and many stories, so many stories, about veterans.

They tell stories of veterans who were and are homeless. Veterans whose bodies are home but their minds are still in combat. Veterans who cannot figure out the system. These stories break your heart.



Hannah Williamson, Butte County CVSO

The veterans service officers so clearly love their fellow soldiers. I'd like to thank all of them for their service. Three who recently shared their stories with me are Hannah Williamson of Butte County, Suzi Vinci of Sacramento and David Perez of Reno. Their faces lit up like kids at Christmas when they told me about a vet who they were able to help.

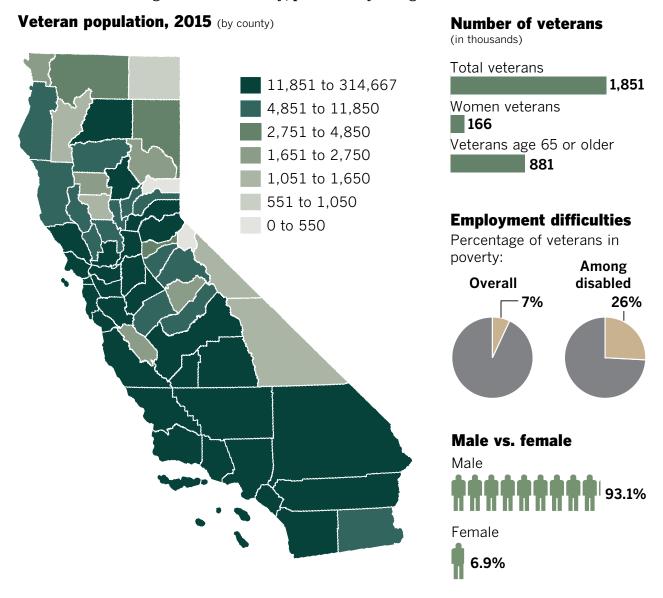
After our meetings, I am inspired by the dedication and the work of the service officers. But I am disheartened when I think about how we, as Americans, are treating our veterans. So many are homeless. So many are not receiving the medical treatment that they so desperately need. I am left with another five-word sentence. "What is wrong with us?"

What is wrong with us? We know that many of our veterans are suffering. And we do not provide adequate resources to meet their needs.

When we say, "Thank you for your service," we should put our money where our mouths are. We should make our own small sacrifice of paying higher taxes so we can properly take care of our vets. Then, rather than asking, "What is wrong with us?" we can show our gratitude with a four-word sentence, "We have your back."

California veterans, by the numbers

Veterans Day commemorates the day the WWI armistice went into effect on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month. It's a celebration of the heroism and sacrifice of those who have fought for our country, particularly living veterans.



Race/ethnicity among veterans (In percent)

Facilities to treat veterans (as of 9/30/14)



Sources: U.S. Census Bureau's 2013 5-year American Community Survey. U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

VETERAN STATISTICS BY COUNTY

The County Veteran statistics on the following pages provide a comparison between counties using two common metrics, Compensation and Pension Utilization and New Awards Obtained. To provide a more equitable comparison the counties are grouped by size (large, medium, small or very small) based upon veteran population. County size is an arbitrary designation based upon veteran population with "Very Small" being less than 7,500 veterans, "Small" being more than 7,500 and less than 20,000 veterans, "Medium" being more than 20,000 and less than 75,000 veterans and "Large" as more than 75,000 veterans.

The left section of the table, "Total Compensation & Pension Utilization by County," shows the same metric, compensation and pension utilization rate, as used when comparing California to other states. Utilization rate is the percentage of veterans receiving compensation or pension benefits within the county for federal fiscal year 2014 as reported by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA). This part of the table also shows the total compensation and pension paid, and the average amount each beneficiary receives for those benefits within the county. These metrics reflect the efforts of all organizations that assist veterans with receiving those benefits, not just the County Veterans Service Offices (CVSOs). As such, this section represents the overall health of veterans service programs within that county, both public and private.

The right section of the table, "New Awards Attributable to CVSOs," provides the monetary value of new or increased monetary benefits paid to eligible veterans and their dependents by the USDVA during fiscal year 2014-15 that are directly attributable to the activities and efforts of the CVSOs. In total, the CVSOs accounted for approximately \$380 million in new or increased federal veteran benefits being brought into California's economy. It should be noted that this table reports only the new or increased benefits obtained in the fiscal year, not the cumulative benefits and, as such, is a reflection of the ongoing effort of CVSOs to assist veterans in attaining the benefits they have earned — the "what have you done for me lately" metric.

VETERAN STATISTICS BY COUNTY

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o CVSOs	County	LOS ANGELES	\$15,202 SAN DIEGO	RIVERSIDE	ORANGE	SAN BERNARDINO	SACRAMENTO	SANTA CLARA	ALAMEDA	CONTRA COSTA	KERN	FRESNO	VENTURA	SAN JOAQUIN	SOLANO	PLACER	SONOMA	SAN MATEO	STANISLAUS	SAN FRANCISCO	SANTA BARBARA	SAN LUIS OBISPO	MONTEREY		BUTTE	SHASTA	EL DORADO	MARIN	KINGS	SANTA CRUZ	MERCED	HUMBOLDT	NAPA	YOLO	NEVADA	MADERA	\$15.492 IMPERIAL
New Awards Attributable to CVSOs FY 2014-15	Average New Award FY 2014-15	\$13,619	\$15,202	\$12,327	\$13,921	\$13,688	\$19,163	\$20,972	\$34,219	\$12,565	\$15,928	\$21,079	\$13,612	\$20,043	\$16,323	\$20,664	\$17,099	\$29,387	\$16,474	\$12,889	\$14,860	\$20,884	\$26,639	\$12,420	\$25,926	\$8,623	\$24,125	\$21,243	\$16,387	\$20,605	\$7,814			\$13,082		\$17,672	\$15,492
New Awa	Total New Awards FY 2014-15 (Note 7)	\$9,417,723	\$40,362,208	\$25,961,555	\$5,136,711	\$51,126,409	\$1,705,510	\$2,894,145	\$6,255,993	\$14,624,282	\$15,625,263	\$10,349,812	\$5,771,611	\$13,167,977	\$21,546,478	\$7,790,261	\$16,553,701	\$6,582,686	\$7,610,872	\$6,327,744	\$4,576,742	\$7,179,379	\$7,592,083	\$5,961,501	\$8,944,493	\$7,935,114	\$4,776,711	\$3,207,685	\$4,539,179	\$4,265,165	\$2,461,299	\$6,199,125	\$1,950,415	\$1,988,534	\$2,671,033	\$1,095,694	\$2,029,487
	Average C&P Award per Claimant (Note 6)	\$18,366	\$14,763	\$17,328	\$17,690	\$17,668	\$18,343	\$18,771	\$18,076	\$16,701	\$17,087	\$17,476	\$18,048	\$20,001	\$17,611	\$19,519	\$19,942	\$18,524	\$21,189	\$18,272	\$17,508	\$17,229	\$21,487	\$14,859	\$19,586	\$23,819	\$18,644	\$17,788	\$11,453	\$22,196	\$17,354	\$19,865	\$19,141	\$17,389	\$19,792	\$16,901	\$15,076
ounty	C&P Dollars (Note 5)	\$945,440,822	\$1,032,449,271	\$551,488,042	\$348,070,256	\$398,123,958	\$322,384,968	\$158,466,768	\$169,062,584	\$150,541,752	\$157,682,080	\$155,607,554	\$139,421,136	\$122,368,346	\$191,921,531	\$89,906,196	\$90,535,273	\$67,687,822	\$97,342,645	\$70,840,903	\$77,961,669	\$58,267,532	\$99,248,159	\$70,760,817	\$61,675,600	\$89,677,292	\$46,851,156	\$27,606,344	\$36,306,604	\$43,370,780	\$41,198,355	\$43,047,221	\$29,227,883	\$32,761,331	\$34,240,865	\$29,306,903	\$25 916 491
Utilization by County	Utilization Rate (Note 4)	16.4%	30.4%	23.3%	15.5%	19.8%	19.6%	13.8%	15.8%	16.3%	19.2%	19.8%	17.6%	16.8%	32.0%	15.1%	15.3%	12.5%	17.4%	14.9%	18.6%	15.7%	23.5%	25.6%	17.4%	22.6%	15.9%	11.9%	25.1%	16.3%	21.0%	20.7%	15.3%	19.5%	18.4%	20.3%	22 4%
Pension (C&P)	C&P Cases (Note 3)	51,478	69,935	31,827	19,676	22,534	17,575	8,442	9,353	9,014	9,228	8,904	7,725	6,118	10,898	4,606	4,540	3,654	4,594	3,877	4,453	3,382	4,619	4,762	3,149	3,765	2,513	1,552	3,170	1,954	2,374	2,167	1,527	1,884	1,730	1,734	1719
Total Compensation & Pension (C&P)	County Size (Note 2)	Large	Large	Large	Large	Large	Large	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Small																					
Total Co	Veteran Population (Note 1)	314,667	229,931	136,466	126,806	113,725	89,733	61,106	59,133	55,196	47,962	45,032	43,841	36,480	34,022	30,501	29,686	29,300	26,456	26,089	23,980	21,527	19,642	18,611	18,055	16,670	15,822	12,996	12,613	11,986	11,322	10,461	896'6	9,685	9,395	8,558	7 670
	County	LOS ANGELES	SAN DIEGO	RIVERSIDE	ORANGE	SAN BERNARDINO	SACRAMENTO	SANTA CLARA	ALAMEDA	CONTRA COSTA	KERN	FRESNO	VENTURA	SAN JOAQUIN	SOLANO	PLACER	SONOMA	SAN MATEO	STANISLAUS	SAN FRANCISCO	SANTA BARBARA	SAN LUIS OBISPO	MONTEREY	TULARE	BUTTE	SHASTA	EL DORADO	MARIN	KINGS	SANTA CRUZ	MERCED	HUMBOLDT	NAPA	AOLO	NEVADA	MADERA	IMPERIAI

FY 2014-1	Total New Awards Average Ne FY 2014-15 Award (Note 7) FY 2014-19	N/A N/A	\$3,346,020 \$8,5	\$1,381,397 \$11,4;	\$5,095,309 \$14,6	\$7,230,676 \$14,9	\$3,184,285 \$17,9	\$927,215 \$14,2	\$2,395,763 \$13,3	\$1,648,858 \$6,9	\$1,173,829 \$16,0	\$1,609,887 \$18,9	\$1,343,002 \$15,6	\$111,059 \$10,0	\$941,485 \$25,4	\$1,293,576 \$41,7;	\$1,710,423 \$20,3	\$367,036 \$22,9	\$197,861 \$14,1:	\$248,725 \$19,1;	\$121,567 \$20,2	\$31,938 \$10,6	\$380,544,494 \$15,3
	<u>'</u>																						<u>Ц</u>
	Average C&P Award per Claimant (Note 6)	\$17,154	\$20,378	\$15,218	\$22,458	\$16,536	\$22,689	\$20,398	\$18,223	\$19,120	\$18,442	\$20,628	\$20,059	\$16,725	\$17,716	\$18,152	\$19,299	\$20,148	\$11,731	\$25,585	\$20,690	\$21,946	\$17,488
ounty	C&P Dollars (Note 5)	\$29,178,462	\$27,693,591	\$16,055,490	\$29,240,552	\$29,863,626	\$23,165,416	\$16,175,437	\$10,259,663	\$16,653,867	\$9,184,050	\$11,056,640	\$12,496,574	\$6,372,392	\$6,572,752	\$5,282,252	\$4,689,624	\$5,460,208	\$1,325,599	\$3,914,546	\$3,517,287	\$899,793	\$6,376,052,133
Compensation & Pension (C&P) Utilization by County	Utilization Rate (Note 4)	24.7%	20.1%	15.7%	19.8%	28.1%	16.0%	13.8%	12.8%	19.9%	13.7%	19.8%	24.0%	%5'.21	18.0%	16.3%	15.5%	17.3%	%6'8	12.5%	47.4%	10.7%	19.7%
Pension (C&P)	C&P Cases (Note 3)	1,701	1,359	1,055	1,302	1,806	1,021	262	263	871	498	536	623	381	371	291	243	271	113	153	170	41	364,594
mpensation &	County Size (Note 2)	Very Small	Very Small	Very Small	Very Small	Very Small	Very Small	Very Small	Very Small	Very Small	Very Small	Very Small	Very Small	Very Small	Very Small	Very Small	Very Small	Very Small	Very Small	Very Small	Very Small	Very Small	
Total Co	Veteran Population (Note 1)	6,882	6,752	6,713	6,583	6,429	6,387	5,730	4,413	4,385	3,647	2,713	2,597	2,179	2,061	1,787	1,572	1,570	1,265	1,226	226	384	1,851,470
	County	SUTTER	LAKE	TEHAMA	MENDOCINO	YUBA	TUOLUMNE	CALAVERAS	AMADOR	SISKIYOU	LASSEN	SAN BENITO	DEL NORTE	MARIPOSA	PLUMAS	GLENN	INYO	TRINITY	MONO	COLUSA	MODOC	SIERRA	STATEWIDE

County

15 e €

2

ble to CVSOs

MENDOCINO

439 600

TEHAMA

Z

558

SUTTER

CALAVERAS

AMADOR SISKIYOU

310 957

TUOLUMNE

066

YUBA

SAN BENITO

LASSEN

080

DEL NORTE

616

396 MARIPOSA

PLUMAS

146 728 362

GLENN

NY0

COLUSA

MODOC SIERRA

TRINITY

940

MONO

STATEWIDE	
\$15,351	
\$380,544,494	
\$17,488	
,052,133	

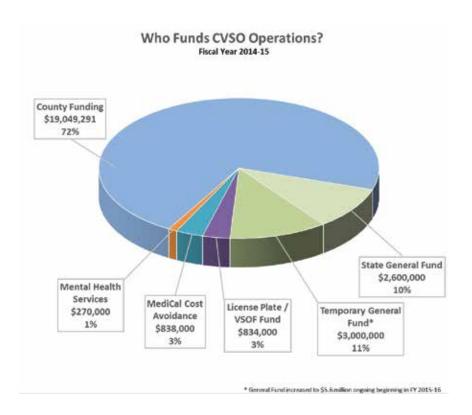
Compensation and Pension by County." These cases are the result of all veteran service organizations or individual veterans who filed claims (they are not CVSO unique). The number of compensation and pension beneficiaries in the county as reported by the USDVA National Center for Veterans Analysis and Statistics as "FY 2014 က

1. Veteran population estimates, as of September 30, 2014, published by the USDVA National Center for Veterans Analysis and Statistics as "VetPop 2014."

County size is an arbitrary designation for comparison purposes based upon veteran population with "Very Small" <= 7,500; 7,500<"Small" <= 20,000;

20,000<"Medium"<=75,000; and "Large" >= 75,000.

- Utilization rate is the percent of veterans in the county receiving either compensation or pension benefits from the USDVA. 4.
- The total amount of compensation and pension benefits paid to beneficiaries in the county as reported by the USDVA National Center for Veterans Analysis and Statistics as "FY 2014 Geographic Distribution of Expenditures." These amounts are the total amount paid by USDVA for C&P benefits to claimants with addresses in the respective county. They are the cumulative result of all veterans service organizations or individual veterans who filed claims (they are not CVSO unique). 5.
 - The average compensation and pension award received by beneficiaries in the county.
 These amounts are the new or increased benefits obtained by the CVSO as reported in (
- These amounts are the new or increased benefits obtained by the CVSO as reported in CalVet's revised Annual Report to the Legislature" Monetary Benefits Attributable to the Assistance Of County Veterans Service Offices" for Fiscal Year 2014-15. They do not include any awards attributable to other veterans service organizations or individual filers.



CVSO FUNDING

The cost of maintaining a County Veterans Service Office (CVSO) is primarily a county general fund expense; however, counties with an established CVSO receive some state funds to supplement county funding. It is important to emphasize that while state general funds and federal pass-through funds distributed by CalVet assist counties in maintaining their CVSOs, the primary cost of the CVSO program statewide is a county expense, as opposed to a state expense, as is illustrated in the chart above. Funds received by CVSOs are subject to both internal county audits and regular audits by the CalVet in accordance with the California Code of Regulations.

Thankfully, the funding situation has recently changed; an additional \$3 million in temporary funding was provided by the state in fiscal years 2013-14 and 2014-15. This funding was made permanent in fiscal year 2015-16.

"Some of our veterans suffer from high rates of disability, poverty, unemployment and homelessness. We cannot glibly claim to honor our heroes while leaving them to suffer from social and economic ills."

— Governor Brown, Veterans Day Proclamation, 2015

While every funding dollar is gratefully accepted and well spent by CVSOs, increased state funding could afford CVSOs the ability to accomplish so much more. Even with the recent funding increases, the state is still not meeting its own goal to provide for 50% of CVSO operations, as specified in Military and Veterans Code. As a result, CVSOs are unable to meet the demand for providing assistance to veterans and their families.

CALIFORNIA'S 1.9 MILLION VETERANS

Are Eligible Veterans Receiving Their Benefits?

There are about 21 million veterans in the United States. California has almost 1.9 million veterans, more than any other state, but has a low percentage of veterans compared to other states.

California has the nation's third lowest proportion of veterans among the states, at six percent, Alaska is the highest at 14 percent, Texas is eighth lowest and Florida is 22nd highest.

Florida and Texas, each with 1.6 million veterans, trail California in numbers, but both have higher proportions of veterans in their populations. They also receive more dollars in veteran claims.

It is estimated that up to 800,000 California veterans may not be aware that they are eligible for their federal veterans benefits, which they earned by virtue of their military service.

A detailed report on California reveals that the largest single group of its veterans (34%) served during the Vietnam War — although not necessarily in Vietnam — and just under 50 percent are over 65 years of age.

CALIFORNIA VETERAN DEMOGRAPHICS BY WARS:

Total veterans: 1,899,632

Wartime veterans: 1,420,262 Peacetime veterans: 479,369

Pre World War II: 1,809 World War II: 116,785 Korean War: 190,240 Vietnam Era*: 643,939 Gulf War Era**: 534,404

Veterans who served in 3 wars (WWII, Korea, & Vietnam): 4,288

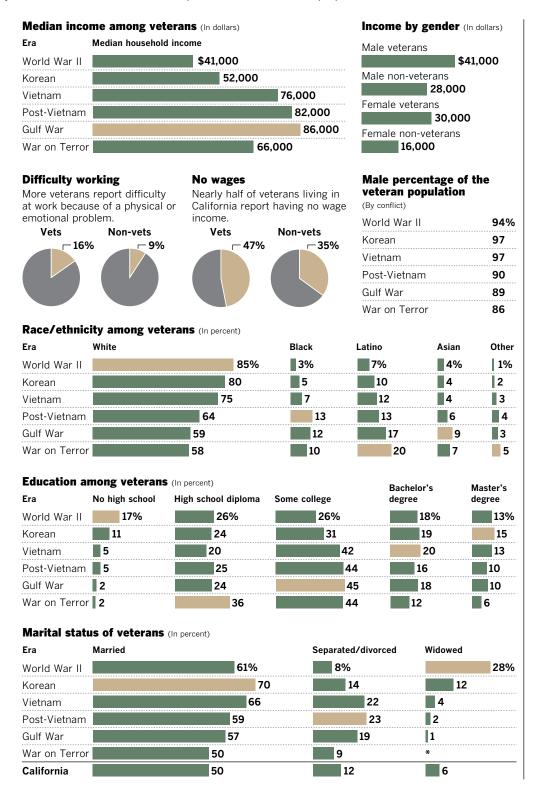
Post 9-11 veterans: 208,070

^{*} Anyone who served during the Vietnam War anywhere in the world.

^{**} Anyone who has served since the 1991 Gulf War to the present

CALIFORNIA VETERANS, BY THE NUMBERS

Veterans Day traces its roots to World War I, commemorating the day the armistice went into effect on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month. It celebrates the heroism and sacrifice of those who have fought for our country, particularly the living veterans. There are roughly 23 million veterans living in the U.S., with some 2 million in California. Here's a statistical profile of some of the key characteristics that make up the state's veteran population.





Percentage of veterans from past

U.S. conflicts (Southern California counties)

County

Orange
Riverside
San Bernardino

Ventura California

Los Angeles

wwii

Korean

22

Notes: All numbers rounded to the nearest 1,000. Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding. *Less than 0.5%

Eras: Through 1946 (WWII); 1947-Feb. 1961 (Korean); Mar. 1961-Apr. 1975 (Vietnam); May 1975-Jul. 1990 (Post-Vietnam); Aug. 1990-Aug. 2001 (Gulf War), Sep. 2001-present (War on Terror). Recent regional explainer graphics are available at latimes.com/localgraphics.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau's 2007 American Community Survey public use microdata sample. Graphics reporting by Jia-Rui Chong.

Data analysis by Sandra Poindexter and Doug Smith.

Post-

Vietnam

Vietnam

War

Terror

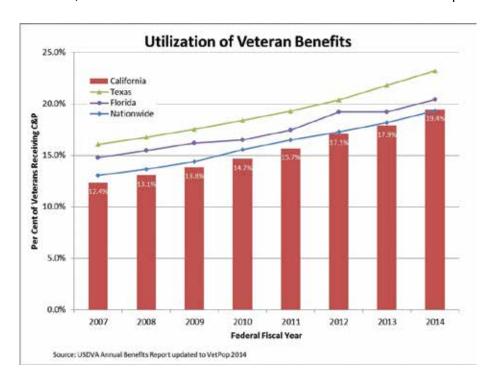
Gulf on

War

CALIFORNIA'S UTILIZATION OF VETERAN BENEFITS

California's utilization of the primary monetary veteran benefits, compensation and pension (C&P), has historically lagged behind the nation as a whole and more dramatically behind similar sized states. The end result is that some of California's veterans are not receiving benefits they earned through their service. Additionally, there is a significant loss of economic impact to the state by failing to bring these federal dollars into the economy.

Recently, California has caught up to, and now slightly exceeds utilization rates nationwide. However, like-sized states such as Texas and Florida continue to outperform California.



Finding solutions to this underutilization issue has been the subject of extensive study by CalVet¹, the Bureau of State Audits² and others³. The solution condenses down to whether there are enough professional veterans service representatives available to assist veterans in filing benefit claims. In California, there are simply not enough California Veterans Service

But even with these new hires, California still does not field enough professional veterans service representatives to meet the demand. Offices (CVSOs) and their representatives available to serve the needs of California's veterans.

In 2007, CalVet recommended several strategies to correct the underutilization including "... providing resources in support of additional full time professional service representative staff with a focus on areas with large veteran population and lower than average benefit participation rates."

Recently subvention funding in support of CVSO operations was increased from \$2.6 million to \$5.6

million. Many counties used this increase to add additional staff; now that the funding has been made permanent, these counties can make temporary hires permanent as well. Performance metrics gathered when this funding was still temporary showed a direct

correlation between these new hires and increased monetary benefits. But even with these new hires, California still does not field enough professional veterans service representatives to meet the demand.

The Legislature has previously set a target of \$11 million dollars for subvention funding (Military and Veterans Code §972.1), which was approximately 50% of total county level budget authority in fiscal year 2011-12. **Despite recent increases, the reality is that state funding has never approached that legislative goal, and currently the state would need to provide over \$13 million in funding to become an equitable partner in serving California's veterans.**

What is the end result of this underfunding? A comparison of California benefit utilization rates to Florida's and Texas' rates shows that they significantly outperform California. As discussed earlier, this is because they field more veterans service representatives, as a ratio of veterans served, than does California.

C&P Utilization Comparisons

	Veteran Population	C&P Beneficiaries	C&P Utilization Rate	C&P Dollars
California	1,851,470	359,977	19.40%	\$4,450,896,040
Texas	1,680,418	389,900	23.20%	\$5,650,016,345
Florida	1,583,697	323,172	20.40%	\$4,237,160,564
Nationwide	21,999,108	4,253,622	19.30%	\$57,786,399,177

The end result is that up to \$945 million in federal funding is lost annually, impacting approximately 74,000 veterans and their families.

If California were to undertake additional funding increases to specifically put more professional veterans service representatives in the field, it too could realize the same utilization rates as Texas and Florida. While connecting veterans to the benefits they have earned should be the primary motivator, adding approximately \$945 million dollars annually to the economy further justifies the expenditure. Those increased benefits would occur year after year and circulate through the local economy multiple times — bringing payback through state and local taxes. It would be money well spent.

¹ "Strategies to Improve California's Utilization of Veteran Benefits", report to the California State Legislature, March 15, 2007.

² "California Department of Veterans Affairs: Although It Has Begun to Increase Its Outreach Efforts and to Coordinate With Other Entities, It Needs to Improve Its Strategic Planning Process, and Its CalVet Home Loan Program Is Not Designed to Address the Housing Needs of Some Veterans", October 2009, Bureau of State Audits Report 2009-108, pp. 36-38.

³ Clark, Clayton A. "State Demographic and Veteran Disability." Harvard University, June 2004, p. 50.

CVSO SERVICES — AT NO CHARGE TO THE VETERAN!

The California Veterans Service Offices (CVSOs) can provide a wide range of assistance to veterans and their families. CVSOs are trained and accredited by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) and other veterans service organizations. CVSOs are personnel who can help with USDVA claims, and answer questions about both state and federal benefits.

It is important to seek out a trained Veteran Service Representative (VSR) at the CVSO office to assist with any claim for benefits. Should an appeal become necessary, the CVSO can assist there too.

Here are a few of the benefits available to veterans and their familes.

Disability Compensation Benefits

This is a tax-free monetary benefit paid to veterans with disabilities that are the result of a disease or injury incurred or aggravated during active military service. Compensation may also be paid for post-service disabilities that are considered related or secondary to disabilities occurring in service and for disabilities presumed to be related to circumstances of military service, even though they may arise after service. The CVSO can assist the veteran in applying for USDVA Healthcare to care for both service-connected and non service-connected issues.

USDVA Pension Benefits

This benefit helps Veterans and their families cope with financial challenges by providing supplemental income through the Veterans Pension and Survivors Pension benefit programs. This benefit is available to both the veteran and dependents and is based on income.

Education Benefits for Veterans

Post-9/11 GI Bill

The Post-9/11 GI Bill provides up to 36 months of education benefits, generally payable for 15 years following release from active duty. A monthly housing allowance, annual books and supplies stipend are available.

Vocational Rehabilitation

Veterans may receive vocational rehabilitation and employment services to help with job training, employment accommodations, resume development, and job seeking skills coaching. USDVA's Education and Career Counseling program is a great opportunity for servicemembers and veterans to get personalized counseling and support to help guide their career paths, ensure the most effective use of their USDVA benefits, and achieve their goals.

California State Benefits

College Fee Waiver

CalVet administers the College Fee Waiver Program for dependents of veterans. The basic benefit is the waiver of mandatory systemwide fees at any campus of the University of California (UC), California State University (CSU) or a California Community College. This benefit is available to the children of service-connected disabled veterans. Students must meet residency requirements and income requirements. The CVSO is the approval authority for this benefit.

CalVet has many additional benefits available for veterans, including the CalVet Home Loan, business license tax and fee waivers, fishing and hunting licenses, license plates, motor vehicle registration fee waivers, property tax exemptions, and state park and recreation passes. The CVSO can assist in applying for any of these benefits.

WHAT CVSOS DO

California Veterans Service Offices (CVSOs) are committed to providing the highest quality service to California veterans, their families, and our in-state active duty military and reserve forces, as well as our California National Guard.

In a recent survey, CVSOs were asked how much time they spend delivering the services and benefits identified in their annual report. While the list of services and benefits is long, most of the CVSO staff's time is spent in providing direct claims and case management services to veterans and their families.

Activity	Percent of Average Day
Claims (including filing claims on behalf of beneficiaries for direct payments	52%
to veterans and their families such as Compensation, pension, disability indemnification, etc.)	
Case management (including providing direct services to veterans and their families to access benefits that may not result in monetary benefits such as burial, educational, health, correction of military records, transportation, and homeless services)	27%
Information & Referrals (including educating veterans and their families on the myriad of services and benefits provided by other agencies, and then connecting them to those agencies, such as employment services, home loans, veterans homes, driver and business licenses, tax exemptions, veteran preferences, etc.)	23%
Outreach and Advocacy (including providing outreach and education to places where veterans and their families may congregate to ensure that veterans and their families are aware of the benefits they have earned and how to access them including campuses, USDVA clinics and hospitals, jails & prisons, etc.)	9%

CALIFORNIA VETERANS TREATMENT COURTS AND VETERANS DIVERSION PROGRAM

Prior to the Iraq and Afghanistan Wars, returning combat veterans who became entangled with the law were not treated any differently than anyone else in similar circumstances, even though it is a well established fact that their wartime service had caused mental problems, which generally manifests as alcohol and/or drug abuse and domestic violence incidents.

This most common wartime problem is now called Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), although it has existed since wars began. PTSD was not recognized as a disorder until 1984, 10 years after the Vietnam War. Since then, we have learned much about it, its causes and how to treat it.

PTSD was not recognized as a disorder until 1984, 10 years after the Vietnam War.

California is leading the nation in assuring that its veterans get treatment instead of incarceration for their wartime combat issues.

In 2006, California became the first state to establish a prison diversion program

for veterans and military members when Governor Schwarzenegger signed AB 2586 (Parra) creating Penal Code 1170.9. Since then, PC 1170.9 has been expanded and refined by the Legislature.

The initial passage of AB 2586 in 2006 also led to the establishment of veteran's treatment courts (VTCs) in California.

While the first VTC was established in Buffalo, New York in January 2008, it was quickly followed shortly thereafter by several VTCs in California. Santa Clara and Orange counties established VTCs in November 2008.

There are now 25 counties that have established VTCs, and several counties have informal VTCs for their veterans and more are expected soon.

Four new veterans treatment courts were created in 2015 — in Butte, Lake, Santa Cruz and Sonoma Counties

Four new veterans treatment courts were created in 2015 — in Butte, Lake, Santa Cruz and Sonoma Counties.

It should be noted that the VTCs are not a state mandated program, nor do they receive any state funding. Budget funding constraints are holding back at least 12 counties from establishing these cost-savings courts.

Additionally, it should be noted that any veteran or military member does not have to be accepted into a VTC to use PC 1170.9 as a defense in a criminal proceeding.

For more information, visit www.cvltf.org.

FOUR NEW VETERAN TREATMENT COURTS STARTED IN 2015

11/23/2015

COUNTY	COURT?	VETERANS ^a	OEF/OIF ^b	POPULATION°
Orange	Yes (11/08)	137,011	6,227	3,081,804
Santa Clara	Yes (11/08)	67,790	2,726	1,842,254
San Bernardino	Yes (1/10)	115,646	7,280	2,076,274
Tulare	Yes (2/10)	19,793	1,097	455,599
Los Angeles Downtown	Yes (9/10)	345,886	17,470	9,958,091
Ventura	Yes (11/10)	46,442	2,884	835,436
San Diego	Yes (2/11)	229,524	28,666	3,150,178
San Joaquin	Yes (4/11)	37,498	1,640	698,414
Sta Barbara-Santa Maria	Yes (11/11)	25,172	1,167	429,200
Sta Barbara-Sta Barb	Yes (11/11)			
Riverside	Yes (1/12)	136,635	8,235	2,255,059
El Dorado	Yes (2/12)	15,942	407	182,286
San Mateo	Yes (5/12)	31,505	1,084	735,678
Placer	Yes (9/12)	30,582	1,219	357,463
Los Angeles Lancaster	Yes (3/13)			
San Francisco	Yes (4/13)	28,444	1,076	825,111
Kings	Yes (4/13)	11,139	1,555	152,007
San Luis Obispo	Yes (6/13)	21,966	753	272,177
Alameda	Yes (11/13)	65,831	2,278	1,548,681
Sacramento	Yes (7/14)	98,204	4,614	1,445,806
Solano	Yes (9/14)	34,524	3,099	418,387
Lake	Yes (9/15)	6,958	132	64,531
Butte	Yes (9/15)	18,787	701	221,485
Santa Cruz	Yes (10/15)	13,189	306	266,662
Sonoma	Yes (11/15)	31,955	834	490,423
Kern	Alternative2	48,052	2,815	857,882
Nevada	Alternative3	9,489	232	97,019
Amador	Alternative4	4,627	84	36,741
Trinity	Alternative 1	1,567	33	13,443

Footnotes

- a. Source: VA as of 2013
- b. Source: DoD as of 2010 (based on last known home address at discharge)
- c. Source: California Department of Finance, 2013
- * County with 10 or fewer OEF/OIF veterans

Notes: Alternative Structures

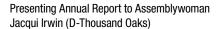
- 1. (Trinity) Informal team led by CVSO selects veterans for alternative sentencing or other help; any courtroom. VA or nonprofit designs treatment plan.
- 2. (Kern) VA assesses veterans and creates treatment plans for those qualified; any courtroom. No other entities involved. Judges might apply alternative sentencing.
- 3. (Nevada) PD identifies veterans needing assistance; various organizations respond. Judges (any courtroom) might apply alternative sentencing.
- 4. (Amador) Drug court judge invokes alternative sentencing; veterans is accompanied by veterans' service nonprofit.

2015 CAPITOL CORNER



CACVSO presents 2014 Legislator of the Year Award to Senator Ben Hueso (D-San Diego)

(L to R: Grant Gautsche, Riverside County; Hannah Williamson, Butte County; Roberto Avila, Imperial County; Senator Hueso; Chris Bingham, Sonoma County; Michael Piepenburg, San Diego County; Pete Conaty, Legislative Advocate)



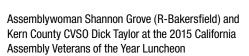
(L to R: Pete Conaty, Legislative Advocate; Mike McManus, Ventura County; Assemblywoman Irwin; Chris Bingham, Sonoma County; Roberto Avila, Imperial County; Michael Piepenburg, San Diego County)





CVSOs and Assemblyman Devon Mathis (R-Visalia) at Annual Day at the Capitol

(L to R: Chris Bingham, Sonoma County; Ken Cruickshank, Tulare County; Assemblyman Mathis; Yvette Mason, Inyo County; Pete Conaty, Legislative Advocate)





ABOUT THE AWARDS

The CACVSO Lifetime Achievement Award is presented to a California legislator who has demonstrated during their tenure a significant, ongoing commitment and contribution to California's veterans through leadership, support, and legislation, which reflects and enhances the California Association of County Veterans Service Officers' mission of "serving those veterans who have served us."

The Motomu Nakasako Award is named after "Mote" Nakasako, a Los Angeles County Veterans Service Officer who was constantly involved in legislation to improve the lives of veterans at the local, state and federal levels. He was a decorated member of the Army's 442nd Regimental Combat Team, one of World War II's most decorated units. Mr. Nakasako joined the Army and volunteered for combat duty from the Heart Mountain Internment Camp in Wyoming.

Lifetime Achievement Award Recipient

The CACVSO has selected Speaker of the Assembly Toni Atkins (D-San Diego) to receive the Association's Lifetime Achievement Award.



Assembly Speaker Toni Atkins (D-San Diego)

Speaker Atkins campaigned for the passage of Proposition 41, the Veterans Housing Bond, which was passed in 2014, and she has made affordable housing for veterans and veterans homelessness two of her legislative priorities. She has authored bills regarding Veterans Home admissions, waiver of renewal fees for professional licenses for deployed service members, extension of sales and use tax exemption for veterans thrift stores, a resolution encouraging California's courts to establish veterans treatment courts, and resolutions to proclaim Women Veterans Day for 2014 and 2015.

Kings County CVSO and CACVSO Legislative Committee Chair Joe Wright noted, "County Veterans Service Officers were fortunate to have a such a staunch supporter of veterans, especially during the time of our crucial efforts to secure the additional state funding needed to serve our state's veterans. We could not have done it without her leadership."

2015 Motomu Nakasako Legislator of the Year Award Recipients

The CACVSO has chosen California State Senator Richard Roth (D-Riverside) and Assemblyman Jim Frazier (D-Oakley) each to receive the Motomu Nakasako Legislator of the Year Award for 2015.



Senator Richard Roth (D-Riverside)

Senator Roth is retired from the Air Force Judge Advocate General's Corps, is chair of the Senate Budget Subcommittee on State Administration and General Government, and also serves on the Senate Veteran's Affairs Committee.

Senator Roth has introduced legislation to improve the Disabled Veterans Business Enterprise system, require the Employment Development Department to monitor outcomes for veterans, and create a California Veterans Leadership Program to connect returning veterans of military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan with employment, housing, and mental health resources. He

was also instrumental in helping to increase funding for the County Veterans Service Offices over the past three years through the budget process.

On March 28, 2013, Governor Jerry Brown appointed Senator Roth to the newly created Governor's Council on California Military Future.



Assemblyman Jim Frazier (D-Oakley)

Assemblyman Frazier was the major sponsor and participant of the 25th Anniversary of the California Vietnam Veterans Memorial at the State Capitol. He used his own funds to bring the "Wall That Heals" Vietnam Memorial Traveling Wall to the State Capitol in 2014. In November of that year, he participated in the ceremony for the Wall of Remembrance for the Global War on Terror at the Capitol on Veterans Day.

He also pushed through the VETERAN designation on the California driver's license bill, a longtime goal of the veterans community. AB 935, which took effect on November 11, 2015,

requires the DMV to print the word "VETERAN" on the face of a driver license or identification card issued to a person who makes that request.

According to Pete Conaty, Governmental Advocate for the CACVSO, "California's veterans and the professionals who assist them are indeed fortunate to have such staunch champions in the Legislature as Speaker Atkins, Senator Roth, and Assemblyman Frazier."

Past Recipients of the CACVSO Motomu Nakasako Award for Legislator of the Year

2014-Senator Ben Hueso and Assemblywoman Sharon Quirk-Silva

2013-Senator Ellen Corbett and Assembly Speaker John A. Pérez

2012-Senator Ted Lieu and Assemblywoman Susan Bonilla

2011-Assemblyman Jim Nielsen and Congressman Jerry McNerney

2010-Senator Lou Correa

2009-Assemblyman Paul Cook and Congressman Mike Thompson

2008-Assemblywoman Mary Salas

2007-Assemblywoman Lori Saldaña

Recipient of CACVSO Lifetime Achievement Award

2011-Assemblyman Paul Cook

CACVSO LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITY

Since the 1980s, the CACVSO has been active at the State Capitol advocating on behalf of California veterans, military members, and their families. Over the years, they have worked with the Legislature and the Administration on improving the lives of their clients.

Since 2001, Pete Conaty and Associates has represented the CACVSO and California's veterans at the State Capitol.



About Pete Conaty

In 1986, after a 21-year career including two tours in Vietnam where he was awarded the Combat Infantry Badge and the Purple Heart, Pete retired from the US Army, having risen from the rank of Private to Lieutenant Colonel.

After his military career, Pete became involved in veterans and military issues at the State Capitol and Washington DC. During this time he worked at the California State Assembly for ten years in a variety of positions such as Chief Committee Consultant and Chief of Staff before

establishing his governmental advocacy firm, Pete Conaty and Associates in 1996.

Since 2001, he has provided veterans service organizations with expert, knowledgeable and effective guidance in Washington DC and the California State Legislature. He has taken a hands-on approach to developing relationships with new members of the State Legislature and their staffs, while still maintaining the personal

contacts he has cultivated over the years in the Executive and Legislative branches of California government.

In the last 14 years, Pete has worked on over 1,100 veterans and military legislative bills at both the state and national capitols. He is known as "Mr. Veteran" at the State Capitol. In 2010 and 2015, he was awarded the CalVet Secretary's Award for his



"invaluable contributions to California veterans." He has received numerous awards for his advocacy on behalf of California's military and veteran population.

About Dana Nichol

After serving successful internships in the Assembly and for Pete Conaty & Associates, Dana Nichol joined Pete Conaty & Associates in 2004 as an Associate Lobbyist. During his legislative internship, Dana worked for Assemblyman Cogdill on Rural Caucus issues. Dana received his Bachelor of Arts degree in Government at California State University, Sacramento.

Pete Conaty and Associates is a state-certified Disabled Veterans Business Enterprise.



Ted Puntillo, Solano County CVSO



Joe Wright, Kings County CVSO and servicemember at the Kings County Veterans Memorial Wall

CACVSO STATE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES 2015/2016

1. Support efforts to educate the Governor's Office, the Legislature, and the public on the importance and value of the County Veterans Service Offices (CVSOs). The eventual goal is to fully fund CVSOs by permanently appropriating the full \$11 million in local assistance funding as reflected in Military and Veterans Code Section 972.1(d).

California is home to approximately 1.9 million veterans. Currently, the state budget allocates \$5.6 million in one-time funding to the CVSOs in 58 California counties. CVSOs are the first contact for most veterans and are historically able to bring in \$100 of federal veterans benefits for every \$1 spent by the state. Without full funding, California's veterans will not get the government benefits they earned though their service in the military.

2. Support legislation that would require state agencies to coordinate with California Department of Veterans Affairs (CalVet) to improve state services provided to veterans.

There are many services that are offered to veterans. Many state agencies are involved in administering these services. Improved coordination between agencies would allow veterans to more easily access these services, and would also allow the CVSOs to better assist the veteran. An example would be for the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) to collect data on incarcerated veterans and provide that data to CalVet. CalVet could then provide that data to the CVSOs who could then provide assistance to those incarcerated veterans.

CACVSO STATE LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM 2015/2016

California Veterans Homes

- 1. Support legislation to update the Military and Veterans Code concerning all aspects related to California Veterans Homes to insure that all veterans in all homes are treated equally. California has gone from one veterans home (Yountville, est. 1884) to the eight current veterans homes. The Military and Veterans Code has not been updated to establish uniform procedures.
- 2. Support legislation to provide educational assistance to nursing students who commit to serve a specified number of years in California Veterans Homes.

Other State Veterans Issues

- 1. Support legislation that would create a Governor's Memorial Certificate similar to the Presidential Memorial Certification. Include information directing survivors to the CVSOs.
- 2. Support legislation that would provide state income tax relief to retirement pay of military retirees.
- Support legislation that would make it a criminal offense to intentionally misdirect

or mislead a veteran, or anyone acting on the veterans behalf, concerning benefits or entitlements.

- 4. Support legislation that would expand current law to allow local jurisdictions the option of waiving building and inspection permit fees for veterans with service-connected disabilities, in order to assist them in making ADA-type modifications to their homes.
- 5. Support the legislative priorities of the state's veterans service organizations that are in-line with our own legislative priorities.
- 6. Support legislation that would require an individual, who is assisting a veteran with filing a claim for benefits, to notify that veteran if they are not a US Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) accredited representative.
- 7. Support legislation that would help educate doctors, coroners, etc., of the importance of including other significant conditions contributing to the death of a veteran on the death certificate.

CACVSO FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES 2015/2016

1. Support legislation that would provide increased access for CVSO to USDVA information systems (i.e., VBMS, VACOLS, SHARE, MAPD, etc.) for use in developing and monitoring claims submitted on behalf of veterans.

CVSOs are local <u>government</u> agencies responsible for assisting veterans and their dependents and survivors in obtaining benefits to which they may be entitled. As such, CVSOs need maximum possible access, <u>regardless of USDVA Power-of-Attorney (POA)</u>, to USDVA client and claims databases. Enhancing this access will result in better, timelier services to claimants and reduce the workload in USDVA call centers.

2. Support legislative, regulatory or policy changes that would create a federal/state/local government partnership to reduce the USDVA veterans claims backlog and expand outreach services to veterans.

USDVA has expressed the belief that one important way to reduce the unacceptable claims backlog is the initial submission of complete-as-possible claims packages. Individual claimants are unfamiliar with the requirements of the USDVA claims system. It is therefore necessary to have competent, trained intermediaries, such as CVSOs, participate in the preparation and submission of claims. Many CVSOs do not have the resources to do the community outreach that would enable them to reach the maximum possible number of benefit claimants. Federal/state/local partnerships will enable state and county veterans service programs to reach and assist more claimants, thus helping to reduce the chronic USDVA claims backlog.

3. Support legislation that would authorize USDVA pharmacies to honor prescriptions written by non-USDVA physicians.

Currently, the USDVA medical system will only provide prescription medication to eligible veterans if the prescription is written by a USDVA physician. This requires that veterans make medical appointments with USDVA physicians for the sole purpose of

getting authorization for a medication already prescribed by the veteran's non-USDVA provider. This process places an unnecessary burden on the USDVA medical system by requiring its providers to duplicate work that has already been done in the private sector. Waiting times for appointments for this purpose can also result in adverse consequences when the medication is prescribed for an urgent or emergency medical need. This would especially help our more rural veterans.

4. Support legislation that would eliminate the Means Test (income limits) for veterans to qualify for USDVA medical care.

The USDVA currently uses the Means Test as one of the factors in determining a veteran's eligibility for USDVA medical care. These income limitations have excluded some veterans, who would otherwise qualify for enrollment, from obtaining their primary healthcare through the USDVA. In light of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010, we believe all veterans have earned the right and should be able to enroll and obtain their healthcare through the USDVA if they so choose.

CACVSO FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM 2015/2016

- 1. Support legislation that would include "Blue Water Navy" veterans into the set of veterans with presumed exposure to Agent Orange.
- 2. Support legislation that would provide for payment of Concurrent Retirement and Disability Pay (CRDP) for all military retirees regardless of the percentage of their service connected disabilities.
- 3. Support legislation that would eliminate Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) offset.
- 4. Support legislation that would reinstate the Burial/Plot allowance for all honorably discharged veterans.
- 5. Support legislation, regulatory or policy changes which expand/increase USDVA responsibility to educate veterans on their entitlements.
- 6. Support legislation that would provide for a pro-rata additional allowance for dependents for all levels of compensation.
- 7. Support legislation that would authorize states with Departments of Veterans Affairs that are accredited with the USDVA to cross-accredit CVSOs with another state's accreditation.
- 8. Support legislation that would eliminate the requirement for war-time service as an eligibility requirement for non-service connected and death pension.
- 9. Support legislation that would reduce the eligibility criteria for veterans to meet Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) program requirements.
- 10. Support legislation that would expand the eligibility criteria for USDVA Dental Services for veterans eligible for USDVA Healthcare.

ASSEMBLY CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 36

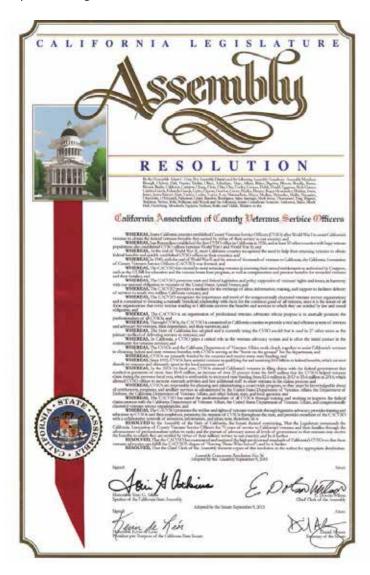
Assemblyman Adam Gray and others

California Association of County Veterans Service Officers

This measure would recognize the California Association of County Veterans Service Officers for helping veterans secure their federal and state benefits over the past 70 years.

Resolved, by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate thereof concurring, that the Legislature commends the California Association of County Veterans Service Officers for 70 years of service to California's veterans and their families through the advancement of professionalism within its ranks and the pursuit of advocacy across all levels of government so that veterans may receive the benefits to which they are entitled by virtue of their military service to our country; and be it further

Resolved, that the CACVSO has maintained and nurtured the high professional standards of California's CVSOs so that these veterans advocates can fulfill the CACVSO's slogan of "Serving Those Who Served."



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The California Association of County Veterans Service Officers is proud to partner with the California branches of these veterans service organizations in the furtherance of our mission:

"SERVING THOSE WHO SERVED"











