

November 10, 2021

Board of County Commissioners
Clackamas County

Members of the Board:

Recognition of Veterans Day

Purpose/Outcomes	Acknowledge the service, commitment and sacrifices of those who have served our great nation. Appreciation and support for those who have served and those who are currently serving, and for the family and friends who are also impacted by military service.
Dollar Amount and Fiscal Impact	N/A
Funding Source	N/A
Safety Impact	N/A
Duration	N/A
Previous Board Action	N/A
Contact Person	Erika Silver, Manager, Social Services Division 503-650-5725
Contract No.	N/A

BACKGROUND:

The Social Services Division of the Health, Housing & Human Services Department present the recognition of Veteran’s Day. Since 1938, the United States has commemorated the sacrifices of its armed forces by designating November 11th as a national holiday. Today, the Program Managers of the Clackamas County Veterans Service Office and Children, Family and Community Connections come before the Board of County Commissioners to acknowledge the service, commitment and sacrifices of those who have served our great nation. While Veterans Day is an annual commemoration, appreciation and support for those who have served and are currently serving, and for families also impacted by military service, is needed every day.

Consistent with **Performance Clackamas** goals to build public trust through good government and ensure safe, healthy and secure communities - Clackamas County is engaged in a broad range of efforts to support our veterans including:

The County maintains an active **Veterans Advisory Council** that ensures that the perspective of a broad diversity of Clackamas County veterans have the opportunity to impact County plans and services. Current initiatives include veteran suicide prevention and outreach.

Children, Family and Community Connections Veterans Workforce Program assists veterans in need of training and employment with intensive case management and customized career plans. Veterans engaging in services overcome multiple complex barriers such as living with disabilities including PTSD (50%), substance use disorder (13%), justice system involvement (38%), and housing instability/homelessness (63%). Last year 32 veterans were served, 68% gained employment and the remaining veterans continue to engage in case management and employment training. Average wage for hired veterans was \$20.03 an hour.

Healthy Families. Strong Communities.

In support of the Performance Clackamas **Ending Veteran Homelessness** goal, Social Services housed 65 homeless veteran households (76 adults and 13 children). Ten veterans were prevented from homelessness. 146 Veterans Administration Supportive Housing (VASH) are administered by the Housing Authority. 92 veterans are housed, 19 are house searching, and 35 vouchers are available.

The County Veterans Service Office (CVSO) assists veterans with Veteran's Administration (VA) financial and medical benefits. Last year, CVSO staff members Gina Thomas, Heather Miewald, Felicia Ridings and Jackie Bauer worked intensively with 1,930 veterans and family members. Current data indicates that the VSO helped secure more than \$10.7 million in new federal benefits for County veterans, and this will increase as more claims are processed.

In October, Gus Bedwell (Army Veteran) joined the CVSO as the new Supervisor. Most recently, Gus was the Veteran Housing Integrator for Oregon Housing and Community Services. He also worked for Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs as a Veteran Advocate (Lead) and Training and Development Specialist, OSU and the Employment Department.

The **Homeless Veteran Coordination Team** is convened monthly and includes the Social Services Division, Veterans Workforce Program, VA and numerous community partners serving homeless veterans. This team is committed to collaboration and the efficient and effective use of resources. At the end of October, there were 45 known homeless veterans, 23% fewer than this time 2020.

Recommendation

Staff respectfully requests that the Board recognize and honor the service, commitment and sacrifices of all Veterans, military personnel, reservists and their families by reading the proclamation below:

Clackamas County families have contributed to the United States military who is known as the strongest, most capable fighting force the world has ever known. Our Fathers, Mothers, Sisters and Brothers have served in the Armed Forces with resolve and unmatched selflessness, and their service stands as a model that there are few things nobler than giving of ourselves to make a difference in the lives of others. On Veterans Day, we reflect on the sacrifices experienced by so few in the name of so many, and we rededicate ourselves to supporting those who have worn America's uniform and the families who stand alongside them.

NOW, THEREFORE, We, Clackamas County Board of County Commissioners, do hereby proclaim November 11, 2021, as Veterans Day. We encourage all Americans to recognize the fortitude and sacrifice of our veterans through public ceremonies and private thoughts and prayers. We call upon Clackamas Residents to display the flag of the United States and to participate in patriotic activities in their communities. We call on all Americans, including civic and fraternal organizations, places of worship, schools, and communities to support this day with commemorative expressions and programs.

Respectfully submitted,

Rodney Cook

Rodney Cook, Director
Health, Housing & Human Services

Veteran's Day 2021



PRESENTATION TO THE
CLACKAMAS COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

NOVEMBER 10, 2021

Veterans in the State and County

Oregon	283,045
Clackamas County	26,384
Known veterans experiencing houselessness	45

Veterans in our County workforce are making meaningful impacts in every department.

Veterans Advisory Council

Membership

- Currently includes people who served in Army, Air Force and National Guard
- Service dates span from Korean War to Operation Iraqi Freedom/Enduring Freedom
- Affiliations include Veterans of Foreign Wars, American Legion, Clackamas Community College, Milwaukie Planning Commission, Kiwanis, Chambers of Commerce among others
- [Recruiting new members](#)

21-22 Work plan goals

- Active role in veterans suicide prevention efforts
- Increase veteran employment
- Support outreach efforts, connect county veterans to CVSO.

Projects

- Veterans Behavioral Health Summit
- Veterans Job Fair
- [Clackamas County Veterans Survey](#)

Children, Families and Community Connections Veterans' Employment Program

Served 32 Veterans

- 22 (68%) became employed
- 91% retention at 90 days
(goal = 55%)
- Average wage \$20.03/hour



Jobs included: manufacturing, construction, transportation, retail, social assistance, education and wholesale trade

Veterans Employment Story

Helped a veteran obtain Class A
CDL Truck Driving License during
the pandemic shutdowns

Pandemic related impacts almost
every step of way

Was paid on the job training to
gain experience

Hired, \$21.64 + full benefits



County Veterans Service Office



OR Dept of Veterans Affairs Accredited
Veteran Service Officers: Heather
Miewald, Gina Thomas, Felicia Ridings

Office Specialist: Jackie Bauer

Supervisor: Gus Bedwell

During 2020-21, VSO staff

- Met with 1,930 veterans and family members (an increase from 19-20)
- Filed 799 compensation claims (including appeals) with 643* claims granted
- Generated \$10.7M in new federal monetary benefits

* *Claims for 19-20 are now 953. VA continues to process claims submitted.*

VSO Claim Example

- 2014

- **May:** Army Veteran (65) who struggled with PTSD completed suicide. Veteran had tried accessing VA mental health services but in widow's words "never got anywhere" so they accessed mental health services in community.
- **July:** Widow visited VSO. After an assessment of facts and medical records, VSO filed claim for service connected Dependency Indemnity & Compensation (DIC) for widow.
- **September:** VA denied claim due to PTSD not being service-connected.
- **October:** VSO filed an appeal.

- 2016 – 2020

- Appeals processed back and forth between the local VA and the Board of Veteran Appeals.

- 2021

- **June:** VA acknowledged Veteran did have service-connected PTSD while alive, death was caused by his PTSD, and awarded widow DIC benefits.
- VA awarded retroactive benefits of \$99,000 to widow plus \$1,350/month for life, plus healthcare and education benefits.

Ending Veteran Homelessness

Social Services programs housed 65 homeless veteran households, (76 adults and 13 children).

Veterans Administration Supportive Housing (VASH) vouchers administered by Housing Authority (146)

- 92 currently housed
- 19 more vouchers issued, in housing search
- 35 still available

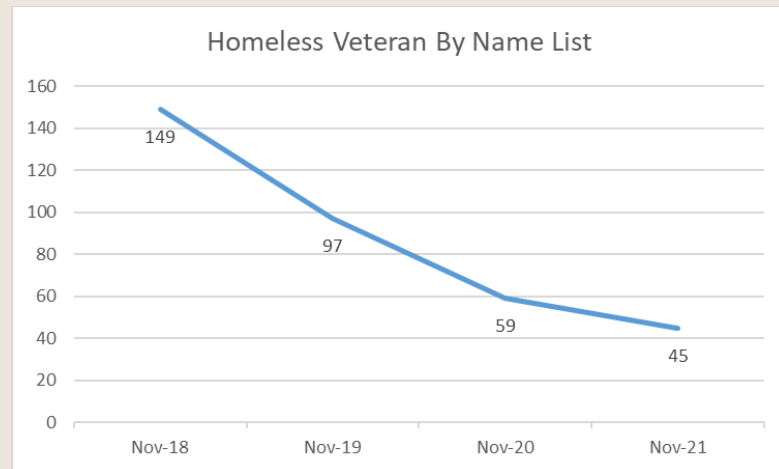
Known homeless veterans reduced 23% from a year ago

10 veteran households prevented from homelessness

Known Veterans Experiencing Houselessness Trend Line



Performance Clackamas Goal:
Zero Unsheltered Homeless Veterans



Clackamas County Veterans Services Office

Monday-Thursday
7 a.m. to noon
1 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Call 503-650-5631

Email

veterans@clackamas.us

Website

<http://www.clackamas.us/socialservices/veterans.html>



Housing and Employment

HOUSING ASSISTANCE

Phone: 503-655-8575

Email: cha@clackamas.us

Online application

<https://www.clackamas.us/communitydevelopment/cha>

EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE

Phone: 503-655-8840

Email: Workforce@clackamas.us

Website:

<https://www.clackamas.us/cfcc/employment.html>

Monday-Thursday 8:00 a.m. to 5 p.m. by appointment. Services available in person and virtually

VETERANS DAY

November 11, 2021



HERE REPOSES IN
HONOURED GUARD
AN AMERICAN
SOLDIER
UNKNOWN BUT TO GOD

HONORING ALL WHO SERVED



www.va.gov

