

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' SERVICES

James Hendon (Lt. Col.), Commissioner



WHAT WE DO

The Department of Veterans' Services (DVS) connects, mobilizes, and empowers New York City's Veteran community in order to foster purpose-driven lives for U.S. Military Service Members—past and present—in addition to their caregivers, survivors, and families. DVS works with city, state, and federal agencies, as well as regional private and non-profit partners, to improve the lives of all New York City Veterans and those close to them. The Department ensures that homeless Veterans have permanent housing and access to the support services needed to find and maintain their homes; expands education and career opportunities for Veterans; and provides the human and technological infrastructure for Veterans and their families to gain citywide access to benefits, resources, and care through the nation's leading coordinated service network.

FOCUS ON EQUITY

DVS strives to connect with New York City Veterans regardless of discharge status or branch of service in the U.S. Armed Forces, including the Reserves and/or National Guard. DVS serves as a critical hub for Veterans' advancement by informing the Veteran community of existing resources, serving as a bridge to those resources when needed, and occupying roles that the local government can uniquely fill when gaps in Veterans' services appear in the private, not-for-profit, federal, and state sectors. DVS recognizes and honors Veterans of all protected classes in the City of New York, as the diversity of the City informs and reflects the diversity of the Veteran community. Further, the Department serves family members, caregivers, and survivors, recognizing their essential role in Veteran health and well-being.

OUR SERVICES AND GOALS

SERVICE 1 Provide supportive services to Veterans and their families.

- Goal 1a Mitigate and prevent homelessness for Veterans.
 - Goal 1b Ensure veterans are screened for mental health conditions and referred to appropriate mental health service providers.
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SERVICE 2 Assist Veterans and their families with accessing eligible resources.

- Goal 2a Inform Veterans and their families about services, benefits, and resources available to them.
- Goal 2b Connect veterans to eligible resources and services.

HOW WE PERFORMED

- In the first four months of Fiscal 2024, DVS secured housing for 31 homeless Veterans through the Veteran Peer Coordinator (VPC) program, a decrease of 49 percent compared to the first four months of Fiscal 2023. This decrease is attributed to changes in DVS and NYC Housing Authority (NYCHA) operations following the COVID-19 pandemic as well as unforeseen delays in processing Collaborative Case Management (CCM) housing subsidy applications. CCM is a program that combines federal housing vouchers with supportive services including case management to help Veterans find stable housing. CCM vouchers available increased from 14 in Fiscal 2022 to 49 in Fiscal 2023, with all 14 vouchers utilized in Fiscal 2022 but only 4 utilized in Fiscal 2023 due to processing delays. The remaining 45 CCM vouchers rolled over into Fiscal 2024 and Veteran Peer Coordinators continue to work with the Veteran community to find appropriate recipients for these vouchers.
- DVS Veteran Peer Coordinators continue to engage Veterans, community partners, and other City agencies to work towards ending Veteran homelessness via a combination of in-person and remote engagements. In the first four months of Fiscal 2024, the number of veterans receiving homelessness and aftercare assistance declined by 78 percent compared to the same period in Fiscal 2023 due to a pause in the Mission: VetCheck program as well as staffing constraints due to extended leave circumstances and reassignments. Mission: VetCheck was an outreach program developed in April 2020 specifically in response to COVID-19. Through the program, DVS leveraged a team of trained volunteers to proactively place wellness check telephone calls to Veterans on a weekly basis. That outreach identified lists of Veterans who, through a weekly cadence, would receive follow up referrals and information to address their needs. DVS paused Mission: VetCheck because of changing circumstances surrounding COVID-19 and a return to pre-pandemic programming. DVS restarted Mission: VetCheck in November 2023 with funding from the New York State Health Foundation to continue wellness check telephone calls to Veterans once a week throughout Fiscal 2024. Other causes also contributed to this drop, namely that homelessness prevention and aftercare is an unfunded component of the Veteran Administration Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) Program. This funding stream ended in Fiscal 2021. As a result, in Fiscal 2024, DVS still does not have a funded community-based organization (CBO) partner to enable the agency to continue to provide a more robust number of Veterans with aftercare support,. Accordingly, the preliminary Fiscal 2024 numbers for this indicator return to the pre-pandemic averages.
- Some of the mental health services that DVS offers clients include administering two voluntary mental health assessments and facilitating referrals to mental health care providers. From the first four months of Fiscal 2023 to the same period in Fiscal 2024, mental health screenings completed dropped 73 percent from 514 to 137 and mental health referral requests decreased 66 percent from 221 to 75. However, Fiscal 2023 data for mental health services is artificially elevated due to the inclusion of previous backlog data as a result of the Department's data collection platform's technical issues being resolved. In addition, DVS anticipates that screening responses may also increase in the future due to the strategic re-phrasing of the question that invites Veterans to complete the assessments.
- In the first four months of Fiscal 2024, DVS participated in 68 public engagement events to promote Veterans resources which were attended by 7,179 members of the public, a 17 percent increase from the same period in Fiscal 2023. The increase from the previous year is attributed to the success of a dedicated DVS unit for outreach and public engagement.
- In the first four months of Fiscal 2024, the DVS Website received 56,665 site visits and 366,213 social media impressions which include a combination of Facebook Reach, Instagram Reach, LinkedIn Impressions and X Impressions, an increase from the same period of Fiscal 2023 of 75 percent for site visits and 315 percent for social media impressions. This is the result of a Fiscal 2023 priority to increase marketing to inform and educate Veterans about the resources available to them. DVS expanded its marketing efforts to include direct mail outreach, informational text messaging, paid social media, and printed newspaper ads. Advertisements were strategically targeted to engage special Veteran populations, including students, entrepreneurs, older adults, and those who recently separated from active-duty service. In addition, DVS formed a public-private partnership with the Bob Woodruff Foundation and OurVeterans.nyc to support the management of a community event calendar and informational newsletter.
- DVS continued offering services for Veterans and their families through the VetConnectNYC program. In the first four months of Fiscal 2024, DVS successfully engaged and interacted with 2,631 Veterans, a 171 percent increase from the same period in Fiscal 2023. DVS also connected 1,543 Veterans and their families to resources and services from public, private, and nonprofit organizations, a 50 percent increase from the first four months of Fiscal 2023. Both increases are a result of an additional staff member performing intakes and referrals.

SERVICE 1 Provide supportive services to Veterans and their families.

Goal 1a Mitigate and prevent homelessness for Veterans.

Performance Indicators	Actual			Target		4-Month Actual	
	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY23	FY24
★ Homeless Veterans and their families who received housing through DVS Veteran Peer Coordinator program	117	52	123	87	92	61	31
Veterans and their families who received homelessness prevention and aftercare assistance from DVS	617	517	217	190	200	74	16
★ Collaborative Case Management housing vouchers available	NA	14	49	45	50	49	45
★ Collaborative Case Management housing vouchers utilized	NA	14	4	45	50	0	2
★ Collaborative Case Management housing vouchers utilization rate (%)	NA	100%	8%	25%	35%	0%	4%
★ Critical Indicator ● Equity Indicator "NA" Not Available ⇅ Directional Target * None							

Goal 1b Ensure Veterans are screened for mental health conditions and referred to appropriate mental health service providers

Performance Indicators	Actual			Target		4-Month Actual	
	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY23	FY24
Mental health screenings completed	NA	845	626	730	750	514	137
Mental health referral requests	NA	202	312	350	350	221	75
★ Critical Indicator ● Equity Indicator "NA" Not Available ⇅ Directional Target * None							

SERVICE 2 Assist Veterans and their families with accessing eligible resources.

Goal 2a Ensure Veterans have information about and are connected with appropriate resources.

Performance Indicators	Actual			Target		4-Month Actual	
	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY23	FY24
Veterans and their families served by DVS	NA	1,068	3,338	2,100	3,500	970	2,631
Public engagement events attended by DVS to promote Veteran resources	NA	149	243	365	365	58	68
★ Online site visits	NA	28,592	125,457	150,000	160,000	32,428	56,665
★ Social media impressions	NA	245,539	362,469	572,015	575,000	88,290	366,213
Average newsletter subscribers	NA	11,062	10,616	10,500	10,600	10,842	10,135
★ Critical Indicator ● Equity Indicator "NA" Not Available ⇅ Directional Target * None							

Goal 2b Connect veterans to eligible resources

Performance Indicators	Actual			Target		4-Month Actual	
	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY23	FY24
Veterans and their families referred to resources and services	8,572	7,198	2,918	5,000	5,000	1,032	1,543
Veterans and their families who successfully accessed resources and services (%)	NA	96.3%	83.9%	90.0%	90.0%	57.0%	63.0%
★ Critical Indicator ● Equity Indicator "NA" Not Available ⇅ Directional Target * None							

AGENCY RESOURCES

Resource Indicators	Actual			Sept. 2023 MMR Plan	Updated Plan	Plan	4-Month Actual	
	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY24 ¹	FY25 ¹	FY23	FY24
Expenditures (\$000,000) ²	\$5.4	\$5.7	\$5.5	\$5.1	\$5.7	\$5.2	\$1.4	\$1.9
Personnel	39	34	34	37	37	37	29	33
Overtime paid (\$000)	\$5	\$24	\$24	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$7	\$3
¹ January 2024 Financial Plan. ² Expenditures include all funds "NA" - Not Available								

SPENDING AND BUDGET INFORMATION

Where possible, the relationship between an agency's goals and its expenditures and planned resources, by budgetary unit of appropriation (UA), is shown in the 'Applicable MMR Goals' column. Each relationship is not necessarily exhaustive or exclusive. Any one goal may be connected to multiple UAs, and any UA may be connected to multiple goals.

Unit of Appropriation	Expenditures FY23 ¹ (\$000,000)	January 2024 Financial Plan FY24 ² (\$000,000)	Applicable MMR Goals ³
001 - Personal Services	\$3.5	\$3.5	All
002 - Other Than Personal Services	\$2.0	\$2.2	All
Agency Total	\$5.5	\$5.7	
¹ Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) for the Fiscal Year ended June 30, 2023. Includes all funds. ² Includes all funds. ³ Refer to agency goals listed at front of chapter. "NA" Not Available * None			

NOTEWORTHY CHANGES, ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS

- Goal 1a:
 - 'Veterans and their families receiving homelessness prevention and aftercare assistance from DVS' was renamed 'Veterans and their families who received homelessness prevention and aftercare assistance from DVS' to maintain continuity in indicator language.
 - 'Collaborative Case Management housing vouchers available,' 'Collaborative Case Management housing vouchers utilized, and 'Collaborative Case Management housing vouchers utilization rate (%)' are new indicators.
- Goal 1b:
 - Goal 1b 'Ensure Veterans are screened for mental health conditions and referred to appropriate mental health service providers' was created.
 - Mental health screenings completed' and 'Mental health referral requests' are new indicators.
- Goal 2a:
 - Goal 2a 'Ensure Veterans have information about and are connected with appropriate resources' was renamed to 'Inform Veterans and their families about services, benefits, and resources available to them.'
 - 'Online site visits,' 'Social media impressions,' and 'Average newsletter subscribers' are new indicators.

- Goal 2b:
 - Goal 2b ‘Connect veterans to eligible resources and services’ was created.
 - ‘Veterans and their families referred to resources and services,’ ‘Veterans and their families who successfully accessed resources and services (%)’ and ‘Veterans and their families served by DVS’ were moved from Goal 2a to Goal 2b.
 - ‘Veterans and their families supported by DVS’ was renamed to ‘Veterans and their families served by DVS.’
 - ‘Veterans and their families referred to resources and services’ and ‘Veterans and their families who successfully accessed resources and services (%)’ were switched to correct for a previous error. ‘Veterans and their families referred to resources and services’ refers to the number of unique assistance requests and ‘Veterans and their families who successfully accessed resources and services (%)’ refers to the percentage of unique resolved assistance requests that resulted in a successful connection to care.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

For additional information go to:

- The Social Indicators and Equity Report, EquityNYC:
<http://equity.nyc.gov/>

For more information on the agency, please visit: www.nyc.gov/veterans.