

# 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 not-for-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 and 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 our Veteran community of resources that exist, 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 realms. DVS recognizes and honors Veterans of all protected classes in the City of New York, as the diversity of our City informs and reflects the diversity of our 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.

---

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

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

# HOW WE PERFORMED IN FISCAL 2021

## SERVICE 1 Provide supportive services to Veterans and their families.

**Goal 1a** Mitigate and prevent homelessness for Veterans.

In Fiscal Year 2021, DVS secured placements for 117 housing-insecure Veterans through the Veteran Peer Coordinator (VPC) program; our peer-to-peer service model focused on Veterans helping Veterans experiencing homelessness navigate the challenging process of finding housing in New York City. Despite working remotely for most of Fiscal 2021, our VPCs continued to engage Veterans, community partners, and other agencies working to end Veteran homelessness. In the first quarter of Fiscal 2021, as mentioned in the PMMR, housing viewings and interviews were able to go back to a combination of in-person and virtual appointments for our Veterans to limit close, in-person interactions. There was a 36 percent decrease in the total number of placements compared to previous fiscal years due to the precautions surrounding the COVID-19 epidemic as offices and community partners adjusted to remote and limited in-person engagements. DVS believes that these factors played a significant role in the decrease of homeless Veterans processed and housed. Despite the decrease in placements, DVS remained committed to help Veterans obtain and stay in safe, affordable housing by providing appropriate connections to resources. Of the 117 placements, 22 percent (or 24 Veterans) were placed into a supportive setting with on-site services, and 63 Veterans who were not already connected to services were referred to community-based services for additional case management. These Veterans were not just housed but are provided additional supports to reduce homelessness recidivism.

In Fiscal Year 2021, DVS conducted 617 Critical Time Intervention calls, an approximate increase of 37 percent from Fiscal Year 2020. Former housing-insecure Veterans received needs assessments, mental health screenings, and subsequent referrals for any additional resources or supports during these intervention calls. Further, DVS ensured that our former housing-insecure Veterans receive the additional care necessary to continue their forward progress in housing and personal security through these actions.

Performance Indicators	Actual					Target		Trend	
	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY21	FY22	5-Year	Desired Direction
★ Homeless Veterans and their families who received housing through DVS Veteran Peer Coordinator program	NA	169	158	184	117	*	*	NA	*
★ Veterans and their families receiving homelessness prevention assistance from DVS	NA	466	438	455	617	*	*	NA	*
★ 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.

In Fiscal Year 2021, DVS had to effectively halt all in-person outreach, including the availability to meet in-person with Veterans at our Veteran Resource Centers and community-based outreach events. This decline in the volume of activities attributed to a decrease of 28 percent in our engagement metrics compared to the same period during Fiscal Year 2020, resulting in 5,066 Veterans and Veteran family members engaged. With the continuation of the Mission: VetCheck initiative, DVS continued calling Veterans and Veteran households that otherwise would not be aware of or able to access services or resources. Through this initiative, almost 18,000 phone calls were placed during Fiscal Year 2021, yielding a program total of nearly 31,000 calls. The team successfully engaged and interacted with over 2,300 Veterans and Veteran family members and processed 836 referrals for DVS assistance as a result of the Mission: VetCheck initiative.

In Fiscal Year 2021, DVS restructured its staff assignments to form a Care Coordination Unit that provides complete oversight of all Assistance Requests, Referrals and delivering case management as needed via the VetConnectNYC platform. This was the first year that all client-facing interactions were tracked and recorded on VetConnectNYC platform and the UniteNYC network. There were almost twice as many assistance requests processed in Fiscal 2021 vs. Fiscal 2020. This significant increase can be attributed to the Mission: VetCheck initiative and GetFoodNYC. The agency obtained about 75,000 Veteran household contacts through data-sharing agreements with other agencies, which definitively sustained the Mission VetCheck wellness calls throughout Fiscal 2021. DVS also established a Claims Unit that acts as a conduit to Veterans gaining access to their U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs benefits. During this fiscal year there were 96

completed claims submitted. Those benefits include, but are not limited to, service-connected compensation, non-service-connected pension, survivors' pension, and education benefits. Throughout the pandemic, there was a significant increase in food insecurity amongst the Veteran community. DVS responded by obtaining staff certification to enroll and set up meal deliveries to more than 576 Veterans and Veteran household members who could not leave their homes. DVS collaborated with NYC Department of Corrections to facilitate phone interviews with justice-involved Veterans at Rikers Island; those Veterans were allowed the same opportunity to submit assistance requests and seek help obtaining access to the benefits and resources to which they are entitled.

Performance Indicators	Actual					Target		Trend	
	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY21	FY22	5-Year	Desired Direction
Veterans and their families engaged by DVS	NA	12,099	12,896	7,084	5,066	*	*	NA	*
★ Veterans and their families given assistance to access resources	NA	3,230	3,087	2,715	8,572	*	*	NA	*
★ Critical Indicator	✳ Equity Indicator	“NA” Not Available	↕↔ Directional Target	* None					

## AGENCY RESOURCES

Resource Indicators	Actual <sup>1</sup>					Plan <sup>2</sup>		5yr Trend
	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY21	FY22	
Expenditures (\$000,000) <sup>3</sup>	\$2.5	\$3.6	\$4.1	\$5.9	\$6.3	\$6.5	\$6.2	Up
Personnel	32	35	38	41	39	44	44	Up
Overtime paid (\$000)	\$11	\$23	\$29	\$30	\$0	\$0	\$0	Down

<sup>1</sup>Actual financial amounts for the current fiscal year are not yet final. Final fiscal year actuals, from the Comptroller's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, will be reported in the next PMMR. Refer to the "Indicator Definitions" at [nyc.gov/mmr](http://nyc.gov/mmr) for details. <sup>2</sup>Authorized Budget Level <sup>3</sup>Expenditures include all funds "NA" - Not Available  
\* None

## 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 FY20 <sup>1</sup> (\$000,000)	Modified Budget FY21 <sup>2</sup> (\$000,000)	Applicable MMR Goals <sup>3</sup>
001 - Personal Services	\$3.9	\$3.9	All
002 - Other Than Personal Services	\$1.1	\$2.4	All
Agency Total	\$5.0	\$6.3	

<sup>1</sup>Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) for the Fiscal Year ended June 30, 2020. Includes all funds. <sup>2</sup> City of New York Adopted Budget for Fiscal 2021, as of Jun 2021. Includes all funds. <sup>3</sup> Refer to agency goals listed at front of chapter. "NA" Not Available \* None

## NOTEWORTHY CHANGES, ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS

- Equity NYC indicators are identified with a burst (✳). These indicators are also reported in the Social Indicators and Equity Report (SIER) and explore the economic, social, environmental, and physical health of New York City across race/ethnicity, gender, location, and income.

## 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](http://www.nyc.gov/veterans)