



2025

ANNUAL REPORT

Dodge County
Veterans Services



Serving Those Who Served

Table of Contents

Department Overview – page 3

Staff & Accreditation – page 4

Dodge County Veterans Service Commission – page 5

Our Impact – page 6

Budget – page 8

State and Federal Benefits in Dodge County – page 11

2025 Highlights, Review and Feedback – page 12

Goals for 2026 – page 15

Geographic Distribution of VA Expenditures (GDX) Report – page 16

Department Overview

Dodge County Veterans Services is here to help veterans and their families navigate services, provide support and coordinate opportunities to connect with other veterans. We strive to keep veterans and their family informed on all relevant veteran information with legislation or benefit changes.

Dodge County Veterans Services has VA Accredited representatives to help from the start of the application process to the final decision. We are not Department of Veterans Affairs employees; we are county employees here to be the advocate for benefits earned. Our office serves as a liaison between the veteran and the VA. Veterans Services helps navigate through the barriers veterans face when using the benefits they have earned through their service to our country.

Our office can provide assistance with a variety of benefits and services at the federal, state, and local levels. Veterans and their families can get assistance with the following:

Service Connected Disability Compensation

VA Health Care

Long Term Care

Veteran Pension

Board of Veterans Appeals

Veteran Readiness and Employment

VA Home Loan Guaranty Program

Veterans Affairs Life Insurance

Home Improvement & Vehicle Adaption Grants

Dependency and Indemnity Compensation

VA Survivor Pension

CHAMPVA

VA Caregivers Programs

Dependents Education Assistance

Burial Allowances

Burial in a National or State Cemetery

Education Benefits

Correction of Military Records

WI GI Bill

Veteran Identifier on Driver's License

Property Tax Credit for Totally Disabled Veterans and Surviving Spouses

State Park and Trail Pass

Registration for WI Veterans Homes

Aid to Needy Veterans Grants

License and Permit Fee Waivers

Retraining Grants

Homeless Veteran Assistance

Veteran Relief Fund

Requesting Official Records

Reissuance of Medals

Dodge County Patriot Project

Referrals to CVI, VORP, Vet Center

Funeral Honors & Burial Flags

Flags and Flag Holders for Graves

Government Markers, Medallions, Urns & Plaques

& More

Staff & Accreditation

Katlynn Rhyner – Director, Veterans Services Officer

Accreditations: Veterans Administration, Wisconsin Department of Veterans affairs (WDVA) National Association of County Veterans Service Officers (NACVSO), Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), The American Legion (AL), and Disabled American Veterans (DAV)

Jessica Bull – Deputy Veterans Service Officer

Accreditations: Veterans Administration, Wisconsin Department of Veterans affairs (WDVA) National Association of County Veterans Service Officers (NACVSO), Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), and The American Legion (AL)

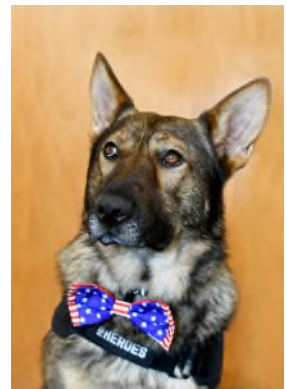
The Veteran Administration (VA) Accreditation by the VA Office of General Counsel is for the sole purpose of providing legal representation services to claimants. Accreditation requires yearly continuing education typically taught by attorneys or VA employees to maintain credentials. The accreditation also allows our staff full access to federal databases, benefit management systems, and files to further assist our veterans and their families. This allows the Dodge County Veterans Services to file claims and appeals and argue those claims in front of Law Judges up to the Board of Veterans Appeals in Washington D.C. at no cost to the claimants.



Katlynn Rhyner



Jessica Bull



Poe – Service Dog

Dodge County Veterans Service Commission

Chapter 45.81 of the Wis. Statutes provides for each county to have a County Veterans Service Commission consisting of three residents of the County who are veterans appointed for staggered three-year terms by the County Board Chairperson.

Veterans Service Commission Members

Harvey Lewis – Chairperson

Mike Weynand – Member

Robert Patrouille – Member

The Commission administers the Dodge County Veterans Relief Fund which provides short-term, temporary financial assistance to all resident veterans and their dependents. The Commission investigates claims for financial aid, determines eligibility, and authorizes financial assistance for applicant veterans and dependents. The Commission may delegate administrative duties to the County Veterans Service Officer, who serves as its Executive Secretary.

Financial Assistance Provided to Dodge County Veterans and their families:

- Gift Cards: \$2,500
 - o \$725 in gas cards
 - o \$1,505 in grocery cards
 - o \$270 for hot meals
- Emergency Relief Fund
 - o 31 Total Applications Received (Increase of 63% from prior year)
 - o 18 Approved, 11 Denied Applications & 2 Withdrew
 - o \$15,559.39 in assistance for rent/mortgages, utilities, funeral expenses, etc.

Donations to Dodge County Veterans Relief Fund:

- \$2,000 from Sons of the Legion Squadron 251
- \$364 from attendees at Dodge County Fair
- Gift Cards from VFW Post 1163
- Gift Cards from American Legion Post 210
- Gift Cards from Vietnam Veterans of America Blackhawk Chapter 409
- Gift Cards from Pizza Ranch in Beaver Dam

In 2025, Veterans Services added an electronic form for both the emergency fund request and a gift card request on the website. Before applicants would have to fill out a paper copy or a PDF and email it. Now everything can be submitted right on our website and can upload their documents which get sent directly to the CVSO. By adding this as an option, it has helped eliminate technology barriers for those without computers and printers. This application can be completed from any smart phone, computer or internet capable device. The paper application is still available. This electronic application has enabled more completed applications as fields must be filled out prior to submission, before we were receiving many applications that were missing key components that were needed for approval.

Our Impact

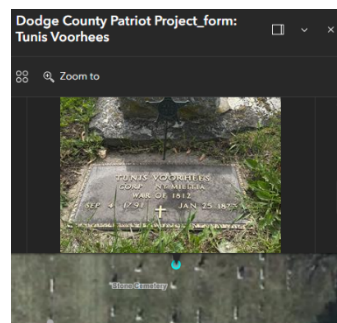
The impact of the benefits Veteran Services provides to our county goes beyond the initial claim or benefit granted. Majority of these benefits are paid monthly for the remainder of the Veteran or claimant's life.

Dodge County Veterans Services has an active case load varying from 250-300 claims. With each staff member having around 130 open claims at any given time. We received notification of 158 Veteran's deaths last year. In 2025, there were 447 new veteran profiles created in VetraSpec. These are individual veterans who have never worked with our office before.

The claim time from start to finish of a submitted claim can be an average of 2-3 months, but some take years to be finalized. In 2025, our office was directly responsible for \$1,534,300 in one-time payments and \$532,816 paid every month for the claims that were completed. These payments come from the 388 claims that were adjudicated in 2025.

Veterans Services completed an additional 298 federal, state and local benefits. With two full-time staff members, we were able to serve/contact 1,375 different veterans. This is not counting family members or assisting the same individual multiple times. Compared to 2023, this number increased by 216%.

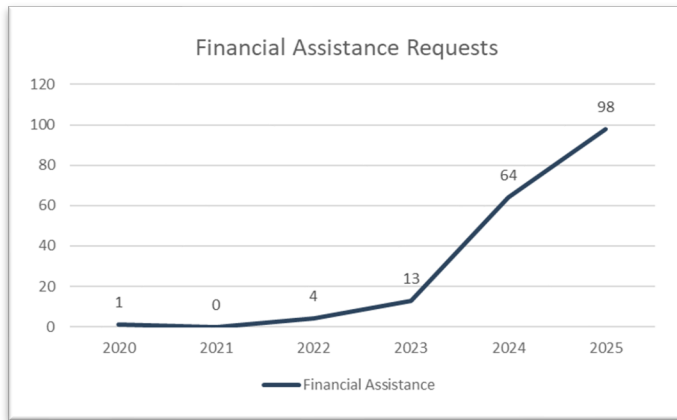
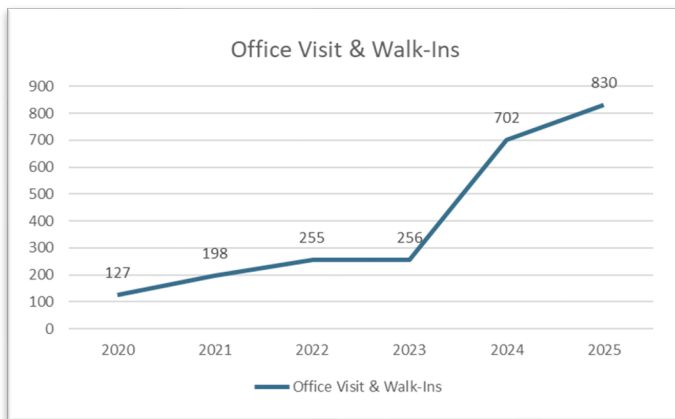
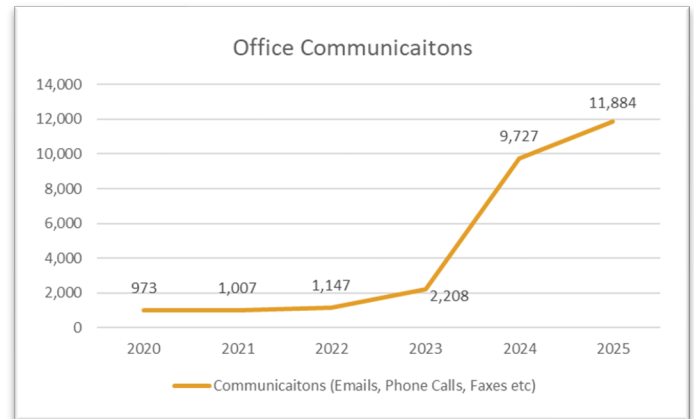
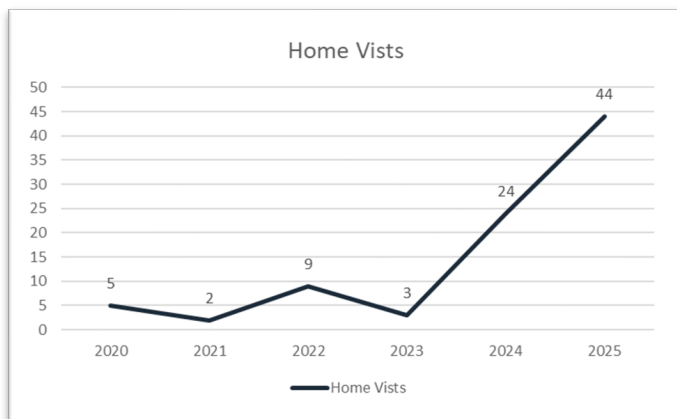
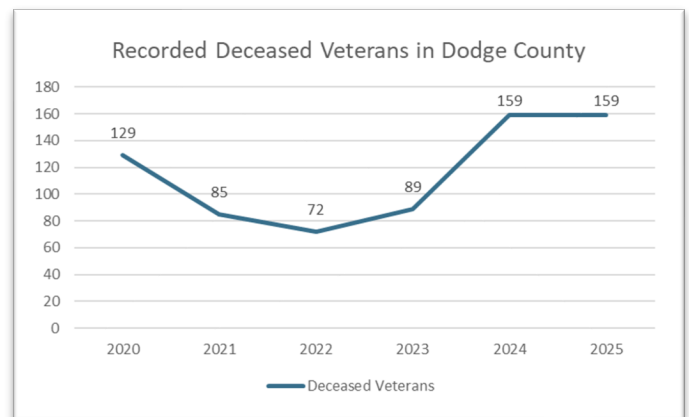
Dodge County Patriot Project was an active effort in 2025 and received 466 grave locations of veterans buried in Dodge County. These reports have to be reviewed and verified with other means if available.



Benefits and Services Provided by Year

Completed Benefit/Service Provided	2025
Compensation	336
NSC Pension	4
Dependency Indemnity Compensation	8
Death Pension	2
Burial Allowance	9
Waiver of Debt	1
VA Pay Corrections, Death Payments and Grants	4
Dependents	24
Property Tax Credit	27
Driver's License ID	40
WI GI Bill	8
Record Requests/Corrections	46
VA Health Care	44
Referrals to Elected Officials	7
Park Pass	35
Memorial Products	30
Assistance (Referrals to CVI, VORP, DFAS)	19
Federal Education	5
Burial Flag	1
Presidential Memorial Certificate	2
CHAMPVA	17
VA Life Insurance	0
Cemetery Pre-Registration	4
CareGiver Program	3
Correction to VA Pay	5
Cold War Recognition Cert	2
Adaptive Equipment Grant	0
WDVA Grants	3

DCVSO Trends (2020-2025)



Deceased veteran numbers can fluctuate based on updating past records

Budget

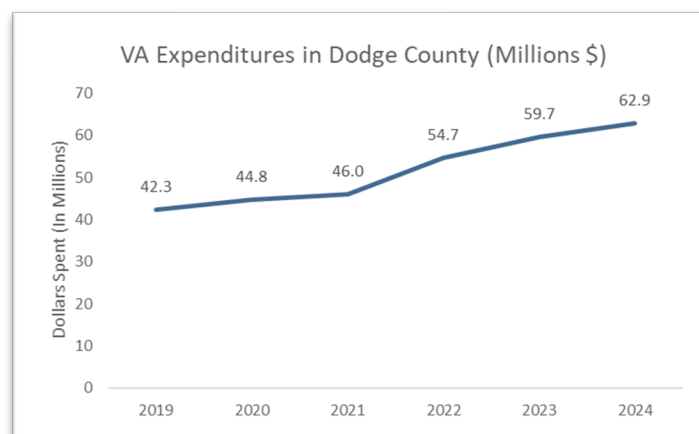
Dodge County Veterans Services operated with an amended budget of \$213,392 in 2025 but utilized \$187,350.12 (87% of the 2025 budget). Veterans Services is made up of two funds: department expenses (9410) and relief fund (9420). Funded through sales tax, DCVSO makes up less than 0.5% of the total Dodge County Budget.

Dodge County Total CVSO Expenditure	12 Month Projection of Monthly Payments for Benefits Completed by DCVSO	One Time Payments on Benefits Completed by DCVSO	Total Federal VA Expenditures in Dodge County for 2024
\$187,350.12	\$6,393,802.20	\$1,534,300.94	\$62,855,820
(\$213,392 Budgeted - Used 87%)	\$532,816.85 paid each month		
0.5% of the County Budget	ROI for CVSO Budget to Federal \$ directly to County Residents: 3,312.76%	ROI for CVSO Budget to Federal \$ directly to County Residents: 718.95%	

The Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs awarded two grants to DCVSO: CVSO Grant and DVA ARPA Funds. The CVSO Grant of \$17,875 is used to cover the salary of the Veterans Benefits Specialist position. The DVA ARPA grant was spent over 2023 into 2025 with a total of \$19,178 to be used to improve services and outreach to our Veterans and their families. These funds were used to improve our services for home visits and being able to provide the same services in the office as outside of the office along with outreach events like the Regional Veterans Benefits Expo and Dodge County Fair.

Important County Fiscal Impact Note:

Dollars received by veterans through the Federal or State DVA which are infused into a community by the veterans or family members may change hands three times; creating greater financial impact to the surrounding community and a subsequent increase in taxable revenue available to local government. Also, each dollar of VA medical care expenditure utilized by Dodge County veterans is a dollar potentially saved from their personal and/or insurance expense or, is a relief from the expense of utilizing Medicaid or Medical Assistance which can, as a result, provide additional financial savings benefits to local governments.



9410 - Veterans Services

	REVISED BUDGET	YTD ACTUAL	AVAILABLE BUDGET	USED
ST GRANTS HUMAN SERVICES	-\$17,875.00	-\$17,875.00	\$0.00	100.0%
INTRAFUND TRANSFER IN	-\$4,076.00	-\$4,075.75	-\$0.25	100.0%
INTRAFUND SALES TAX TRANS IN	-\$191,441.00	-\$165,399.37	-\$26,041.63	86.4%
Revenue Total	-\$213,392.00	-\$187,350.12	-\$26,041.88	

	REVISED BUDGET	YTD ACTUAL	AVAILABLE BUDGET	USED
SALARY EXP	\$166,569.00	\$141,966.00	\$24,603.00	85.2%
FICA TAXES	\$12,715.00	\$10,830.21	\$1,884.79	85.2%
WRS CHARGES	\$10,767.00	\$9,957.10	\$809.90	92.5%
HEALTH INSURANCE	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.0%
HSA CONTRIBUTION	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.0%
LIFE INSURANCE	\$17.00	\$16.62	\$0.38	97.8%
WORKERS COMPENSATION	\$1,294.00	\$1,118.57	\$175.43	86.4%
DENTAL INSURANCE	\$1,271.00	\$1,052.16	\$218.84	82.8%
DRUG ALCOHOL TEST FEE	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.0%
PHONE	\$1,000.00	\$958.44	\$41.56	95.8%
COMPUTER MAINT LICENSE REPAIR	\$3,000.00	\$2,256.34	\$743.66	75.2%
POSTAGE PARCEL DELIVERY	\$1,200.00	\$493.24	\$706.76	41.1%
PRINTING AND DUPLICATION	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.0%
PURCHASED SERVICES	\$601.00	\$6,870.48	-\$6,269.48	1143.2%
FUTURE YEAR EXPENDITURE	\$4,076.00	\$0.00	\$4,076.00	0.0%
OFFICE SUPPLIES AND SMLL EQMNT	\$1,400.00	\$1,466.02	-\$66.02	104.7%
COMPUTER EQUIPMENT	\$2,200.00	\$4,163.57	-\$1,963.57	189.3%
MEMBERSHIP DUES	\$200.00	\$310.00	-\$110.00	155.0%
CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FEES	\$400.00	\$800.00	-\$400.00	200.0%
NEWSPAPERS PERIODICALS BOOKS	\$200.00	\$0.00	\$200.00	0.0%
MILEAGE	\$1,000.00	\$770.17	\$229.83	77.0%
MEALS	\$200.00	\$0.00	\$200.00	0.0%
LODGING	\$800.00	\$0.00	\$800.00	0.0%
EMPLOYEE BOND PREMIUM	\$17.00	\$16.13	\$0.87	94.9%
GENERAL LIABILITY INSURANCE	\$465.00	\$343.22	\$121.78	73.8%
FLAGS	\$4,000.00	\$3,961.85	\$38.15	99.0%
Expense Total	\$213,392.00	\$187,350.12	\$26,041.88	

Important Note: ARPA Funds were used but not included in the original 2025. This is why categories such as purchased services are above the budgeted amount

9420 - Veterans Relief

	ORIGINAL APPROP	TRANFRS/ADJSMTS	REVISED BUDGET	YTD ACTUAL	AVAILABLE BUDGET	USED
DONATION REVENUE	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	-\$2,364.00	\$2,364.00	100%
REBATES	-\$300.00	\$0.00	-\$300.00	-\$401.12	\$101.12	133.7%
INTRAFUND TRANSFER IN	-\$12,347.00	\$2,962.00	-\$9,385.00	-\$9,384.61	-\$0.39	100%
INTRAFUND SALES TAX TRANS IN	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	-\$5,700.00	\$5,700.00	100%
Revenue Total	-\$12,647.00	\$2,962.00	-\$9,685.00	-\$17,849.73	\$8,164.73	

	ORIGINAL APPROP	TRANFRS/ADJSMTS	REVISED BUDGET	YTD ACTUAL	AVAILABLE BUDGET	USED
VETERANS RELIEF	\$12,647.00	-\$2,962.00	\$9,685.00	\$18,496.18	-\$8,811.18	191%
Expense Total	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$646.45	-\$646.45	

Important Note: This is a non-lapsing fund. This fund is mandated by Ch. 45 of the Wisconsin State Statute, and Dodge County Veterans Services will budget an annual amount of \$10,000 each year. Any previously unused funds will roll over into the next calendar year.

State & Federal Benefits in Dodge County

WI Department of Veterans Affairs Benefits

Veterans and Surviving Spouse's Property Tax Credit

- 229 individuals claimed this credit on their 2025 taxes
- Average of \$3,766 per credit back to the veteran or spouse
- 37 new property tax applications submitted in 2025

Professional/Occupational License Fee Waiver Applications: 9

Wisconsin GI Bill Applications: 36

WisDOT Veteran Identifier Applications: 83

Wisconsin Veterans Cemetery Pre-registration: 2

Wisconsin Veterans Home Pre-registration: 1

Veterans Assistance Grant - Subsistence Aid Applications: 2

Recently Separated Veterans: 34 (individuals released from Active Duty with a Dodge County Zip Code as home of record)

WDVA Veteran Grave Registrations for Dodge County: 65

Federal VA Expenditures in Dodge County FY2024

Total VA Expenditure: \$62,855,820 (Increase of \$3.1 million from the prior year)

Compensation and Pension Payments: \$25,431,178

Dependency & Indemnity Compensation & Survivor Pension: \$2,333,104

Memorial Benefits: \$131,673

Education and VR&E: \$1,577,278

Life Insurance and Indemnities: \$172,163.70

Medical Care: \$33,118,692

Specially Adapted Housing, Automobiles & Adaptive Equipment: \$84,813

See last page of this report for specific benefits included in each category. FY2025 Numbers will be released in June 2026.

2025 Year in Review

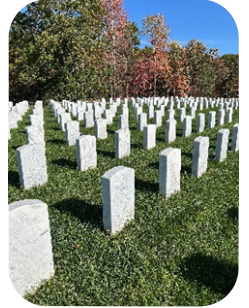
Dodge County Veterans Services remained active throughout the year in various community functions, outreach events, and continuing education in addition to the typical day-to-day operations of the office. One of the main goals for 2025 was to make our services more accessible for individuals. Without having easily accessible resources, we are not meeting the needs of those we serve.

Walk-In Wednesdays were implemented in January 2025 in an effort to combat our long wait times for appointments. By providing this service, veterans and their families were able to get same day assistance with benefits such as Intent to Files, emergency financial assistance, and the “easier” benefits meaning the ones that do not take more than a few minutes to apply for.

Our team was proud to continue to foster community relationships this year. DCVSO strives to keep our community informed of changes in the office; to better meet this goal, DCVSO held our first townhall. By holding this event, DCVSO was able to hold face to face conversations with those who had concerns or questions for the office. We were asked to present for five different schools and assisted livings for Veterans Day. Both Jessica and Katlynn shared their experiences while serving and the importance of saying thank you to those who served. We have maintained our partnership with Marshfield Medical Hospice to honor veterans for their service. Last year, the CVSO spoke at two of their ceremonies. DCVSO met with local elected officials Representative Mark Born and WI Senator John Jagler to discuss trends our office is seeing and how to best support our veterans.

After years of ideas, problem solving and proving the need of additional staff for our office, a Deputy Veterans Services Officer position was created. With the addition of this position, we increased our staff size to three. Putting the veteran to accredited representative ratio more in line with the rest of the County Veterans Service Offices. Jessica Bull was promoted from Veterans Benefits Specialist to the Deputy Position due to her hard work and dedication to our local community. Unfortunately, we were not able to have three staff employed by the end of 2025, but our goal is to find the right candidate for the Veterans Benefits Specialist position.

2025 was a busy, but productive year as always. Our office was able to achieve milestones that we thought might be a couple years down the road. We look forward to continuing to expand our reach and help those veterans and family members.



Veteran & Family Testimonials

Our “why” is our veterans and their families. We say “our veterans” as they are much more than just another number or client coming into the office. Our passion comes from them, their stories, and how we can serve them. Our “why” is driven by the feedback we receive from our veterans and their families. What we do not only impacts and can improve their life, but their families. The services we provide can have a lasting impact for years to come.

Some of the feedback we received this year:

I know I have told you this before but I am very very thankful for you and all that you do. I wouldn't be where I am at without your efforts. Thanks doesn't seem to be enough.

Dear Jessica,

On behalf of the family of [Veteran] we want to thank you for helping get [Veteran] an Honor Guard military part of his service. There were many compliments, teary eyes and heart felt expressions of gratitude for all... Thanks so much for all of your kind help.

Ms Katlynn...

IT'S REAL.... You got me 100% Disability. A sum of [dollars] will be deposited in my checking account on October 1st, 2025. Omg....Way beyond my expectations. You are incredibly Awesome. It's the Cinderella Story. Rags to Riches. Thank-you

Within 48 hours of when you handled my problem via calling and discussing it with the proper authorities, I received not one but four deposits to my account. Thanks again!

Thanks so much for all your help and patience in helping get [Veteran's] benefits set up. You are amazing and we are grateful.

Goals for 2026

Last year, DCVSO was able to make strides in improving our services and relationships with the community. The year prior was mainly getting the office functional and reestablished after CVSO turnovers, but in 2025 we were able to focus on issues that were in front of us and not the cleanup of years prior.

Dodge County Patriot Project became functional in 2025 and now with the growing data base, we can accurately remember and honor our local Dodge County Veterans. Anyone can volunteer or honor their loved one with this effort. This is an ongoing memorial project to remember and honor our local veterans buried in Dodge County. The next steps with this project are verifying the data entered with both the county and Wisconsin grave registrations. DCVSO would also like to create a virtual remembrance wall as a way to remember those without a final resting place.

With the addition of a third full time staff member, our goal for 2026 would be to decrease wait time from 6-7 weeks to no more than 2 weeks for an appointment. Having three full time accredited representatives will improve our responsiveness/case load and allow the ability to provide the best services for more in-depth claim reviews. By the end of 2026, we should have the Veterans Benefits Specialist accredited which can take up to a year from the training, the background checks, fingerprints etc. Having a fully functional office isn't always as easy as just filling a position. There are so many aspects that go into learning and being a successful veteran advocate.

I would love the ability to have a more proactive office instead of reactive. In the past years, the veteran to representative ratio was not allowing us to serve the veterans the way other counties were. There was not enough time in the day to spend hours reviewing one veteran's claim when we have so many others waiting for a reply.

The success of the Veterans Services Offices is based off of our ability to serve our veterans and their families. In 2026, the goal would be to not just get by anymore which is what the office had been doing. Not to say that we were not doing the work, but there was only so much we could do with the resources we had. The main objective for the office will always be the same – **Serve Those Who Have Served.**



Katlynn Rhyner

Dodge County Veterans Services Officer

About the Geographic Distribution of VA Expenditures (GDX) FY 2024 Report

Prepared by the National Center for Veterans Analysis and Statistics, September 2025

GDX Categories

Each Fiscal Year (FY), the Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA's) Office of Enterprise Integration (OEI) publishes the Geographic Distribution of VA Expenditures (GDX) report. This report provides the estimated amount of expenditures for major VA programs at the state, county, and Congressional District levels. Expenditure data are grouped by the following categories: Memorial Benefits, Compensation and Pension (C&P), Education and Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment (EVRE), Loan Guaranty (LGY), Insurance, Specially Adapted Housing (SAH) and Automobiles and Adaptive Equipment, Dependency & Indemnity Compensation (DIC) and Survivors Pension, Construction, and Medical Care. The following information provides a brief description of the data included in the report and the sources of the data.

Memorial Benefits: VA expenditures for urns & plaques, presidential memorial certificates (PMCs), interments, headstones and markers, medallions and administrative. Source: National Cemetery Administration (NCA) Office of Finance Service.

Compensation and Pension: VA expenditures for recipients of Disability Compensation payments for service-connected disabilities and Disability Pension payments. Source: VBA Office of Performance Analysis & Integrity (PA&I).

Education and Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment: Survivors' and Dependents' Educational Assistance (Chapter 35), Vocational Rehabilitation for Disabled Veterans (Chapter 31), Post-Vietnam Era Veterans' Educational Assistance (Chapter 32), Montgomery G.I. Bill for Selected Reserves (Chapter 1606), Reserve Educational Assistance Program (Chapter 1607), Montgomery G.I. Bill (Chapter 30), and Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance (Chapter 33). Source: VBA PA&I.

Insurance: VA expenditures for death claims, matured endowments, dividends, cash surrender payments, total disability income provision payments, and total and permanent disability benefits payments. It includes Veterans Affairs Life Insurance (VALife), Veterans' Mortgage Life Insurance (VMLI), National Service Life Insurance (NSLI), Service Disabled Veterans Life Insurance (SDVI), United States Government Life Insurance (USGLI), Veterans Reopened Insurance (VRI), and Veterans Special Life Insurance (VSLI). It does not include Traumatic Injury Protection Under Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance, Family Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance, or Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance. Source: Insurance Services Office of Budget and Oversight.

Specially Adapted Housing and Automobiles and Adaptive Equipment: VA expenditures for Specially Adapted Housing, Special Housing Adaptation, and Automobiles and Adaptive Equipment. Source: VBA PA&I

Dependency & Indemnity Compensation (DIC) and Survivors Pension: Expenditures for benefits to spouses and dependents of deceased Veterans who were service-connected disabled. Source: VBA PA&I.

"Medical Expenditures: VA expenditures related to clinical care and support. Source: VHA Allocation Resources Center (ARC). Expenditure data for medical research, canteen services, and prosthetics services. Source: Financial Management System (FMS)."

Caveat Emptor

GDX 2024 strives to produce summary data on VA program expenditures of VA benefits and services by State, County and Congressional District (CD). For programs or categories that are associated with individuals, expenditures are based on where they live. For programs or categories that are not associated with individuals, expenditures are reported based on their "places of performance." GDX expenditures data may not be comparable with other VA financial data or financial reports because they may be using different criteria for identifying expenditures directly related to providing healthcare, benefits, and services.

<https://www.va.gov/vetdata/expenditures.asp>