

2024



ANNUAL REPORT

FISCAL YEAR 2024



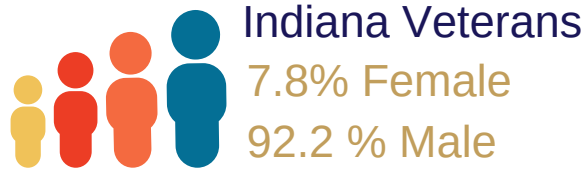
Mission

The mission of the Indiana Department of Veterans Affairs is to Support, Serve and Advocate for the Indiana Veteran Community.

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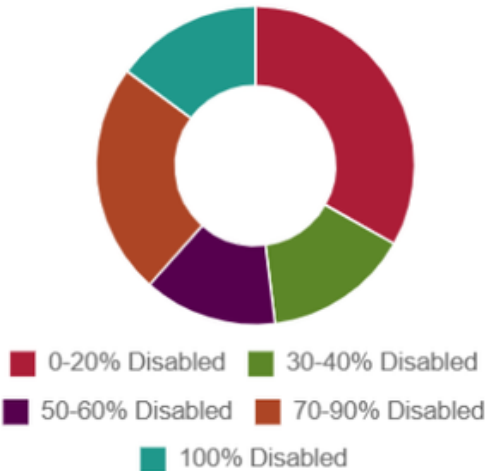
Vision

Indiana is the choice for Veterans to Live, Work and Thrive.

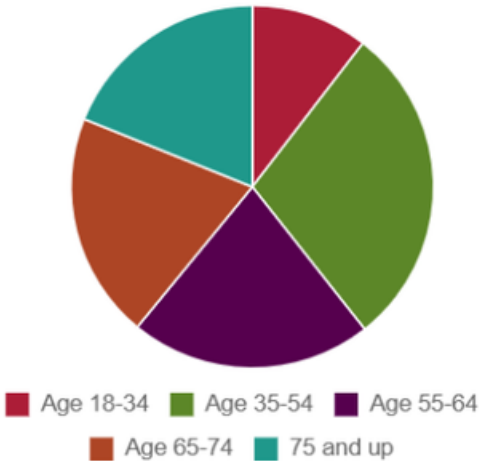


Suicide Rates
(per 100,000 Population)
34.8% Total Veteran Suicide Rate
20.7% Total Suicide Rate

Veteran Disability Ratings

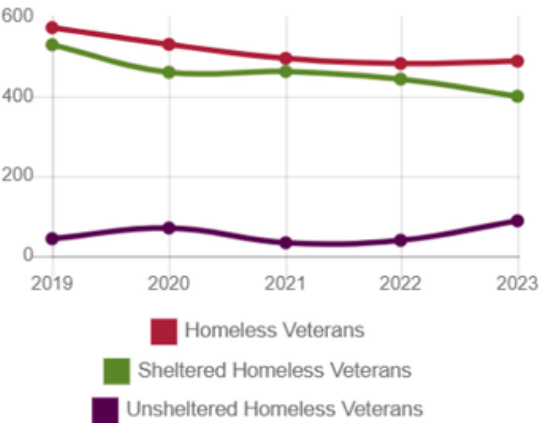


Veterans by Age Group

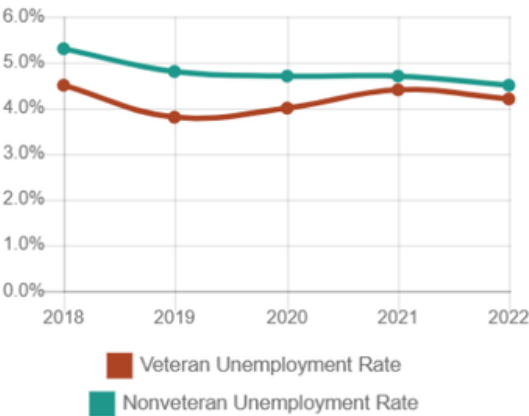


Indiana Veteran
Treatment Courts
Currently:
30

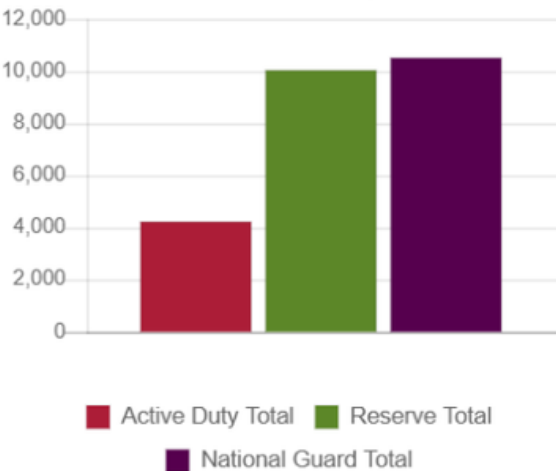
Homeless Veterans



Unemployment Rate



Service Member Population





Dennis A. Wimer, Director

Dennis is a well-rounded leader who has put his years of experience in business, non-profit, and education to work for the agency. His passion for helping people and serving the veteran community is what drives his commitment to supporting Indiana's veterans and their families.

Tim Winslow, Operations Director

Tim is the Assistant Adjutant General in the Indiana National Guard and oversees four divisions within IDVA. In his role, he collaborates with various organizations and State agencies to help veterans access their earned benefits.



Gabrielle Owens, General Counsel

As the General Counsel, Gabrielle brings over 25 years of legal experience to the team. She also provides leadership in policy, audit and legislative functions. Gabrielle's father is a retired Air Force colonel.

Amy Gibson, IVH Superintendent

Amy brings a wealth of experience and knowledge to our community of veterans at the Home. With over 10 years of experience as a Nursing Home Administrator in various communities, she provides oversight and ensures quality care. Amy is a proud graduate of IUPUI and Indiana Wesleyan.



Joseph DeVito, Outreach Director

Joe, a Coast Guard veteran, Indiana University Southeast graduate, former County Veteran Service Officer and District Service Officer, brings experience in business, outreach, and volunteer work. He is passionate about reaching veterans and increasing the number of veterans served and benefits awarded across the state.



TRAINING & SERVICES



Timothy E. Dyke
Director



Mark Gourley
Service Officer



Phil A. Krumm
Training Manager



Ronald Higgins
Service Officer



Gary Bengé
Service Officer



Cameron Lochner
Service Officer



Josh Tolen
Service Officer



Cambria Sparks
Service Officer



Kevin Hinton
Service Officer

CUSTOMER SERVICE



Kelly Cherry
Office Manager



Shannon Nicoloff
Customer Service



INDIANA VETERANS MEMORIAL CEMETERY



Alan J. Burnham
Superintendent



Charlie J. Burton
Asst. Superintendent



Albert S. Bennett
Foreman

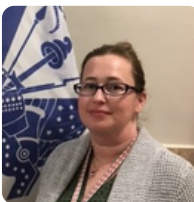


David McKay
Foreman

MILITARY FAMILY RELIEF FUND



Lynn Dickey
Director



Janie Gregory
Assistant Director



Kathryn Conyers
Program Coordinator

LEGAL & LEGISLATIVE



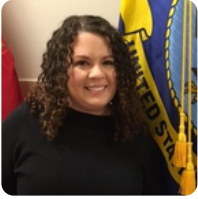
Kyle Gross
Deputy Director



Brookelynn Deaton
Grant & Compliance Administrator



STATE APPROVING AGENCY



Amber R. Mertens
Director



Tim Wilson
Assistant Director



Gary Rainey
Program Director



Sean Litchford
Program Director



Kimberly Bloodgood
Program Director

OUTREACH & COMMUNICATIONS



Laura McKee
Women Veterans
Coordinator



Bryan Schmidt
Health & Wellness
Director



Salon N. Osborne
Digital Marketing
Manager



Lesley Evans
IGC Program
Administrator



Brad Harper
IGC Suicide Prevention Manager

TECHNOLOGY



Devon Sprong
IT Director



Support, Serve, and Advocate for the Indiana Veteran Community

The Indiana Veteran Community consists of veterans, family members, caregivers, friends, organizations, and providers who touch veteran lives in some way. Indiana owes a great debt to its veterans, past and present, for their personal sacrifices and dedicated service. IDVA is committed to providing quality services, benefits, and programming. We are devoted to enhancing and expanding Indiana's resources, and continuing our vision:

Indiana is the choice for veterans to Live, Work, and Thrive.

Improving the Lives of Indiana Veterans: The Indiana Department of Veterans Affairs (IDVA)

Since its establishment in 1945, the Indiana Department of Veterans Affairs (IDVA) has been committed to enhancing the welfare of Indiana veterans. As benefits and veteran communities have evolved, IDVA has customized its communication to accommodate all veteran groups. Its staff members organize and participate in various events and activities across the state to reach out to veterans and their families throughout the year.

IDVA's partnerships with other state agencies and public and private organizations continue to expand. The Indiana Veterans Center houses numerous veteran agencies, including federal, state, city, and nonprofit organizations. This combination is unparalleled to any other facility in the country.



The organization is growing rapidly, and IDVA has been expanding its operations and staff to meet its goal of Supporting, Serving, and Advocating for Indiana's entire veteran community. Under the guidance of Director Wimer, the executive team focuses on transparency, implementing effective policies, empowering staff, and striving for positive change.

The entire IDVA, including the Indiana Veterans Memorial Cemetery and the Indiana Veterans Home, is dedicated to achieving its vision that Indiana is the ideal place for veterans to live, work, and thrive.



The IDVA Training and Services Division comprises several key members, including the Director of Veterans Services, the Training Manager, and the State Veteran Service Officer. In addition, the mobile team consists of six District Service Officers (DSOs).

The Director of Veterans Services and the Training Manager manage daily state benefits applications and online Tuition and Fee Exemption applications. The State Service Officers specifically focus on assisting veterans applying for federal benefits, VA pension benefits, and VA health care enrollment.

IDVA maintains a quality partnership with Indiana's County Veteran Service Officers (CVSO). The CVSOs provide front-line state and federal benefit services for Indiana's Veteran Community. While the CVSOs are county staff, and IDVA assists them with attaining and maintaining state-mandated VA accreditation. IDVA provides full access to VetraSpec, a standardized veteran claims management system which include one account per CVSO office at no charge.

IDVA's six District Service Officers each cover 13-15 CVSO offices. They provide on-site accreditation training and special projects assistance to the CVSO and office staff. The DSOs provide full training and support for the claims management system, federal benefits application, and VA healthcare eligibility.



162 Total Active VetraSpec Accounts

89 IDVA Sponsored Accounts

Tuition & Fee Exemption Applications
2023-2024 Academic Year **1,890**

- 1,764 Awarded
- 54 Denied
- 67 On Hold

Indiana Veteran Benefits

Applications Processed

Veteran License Plates **853**

- Disabled Veteran
- Purple Heart
- POW/MIA

Property Tax Deductions **688**

- Disabled Veteran
- Peacetime & Wartime
- Surviving Spouse

Hunting & Fishing License **601**

- Disabled Veteran
- Reduced Fee
- One Year & Ten Year

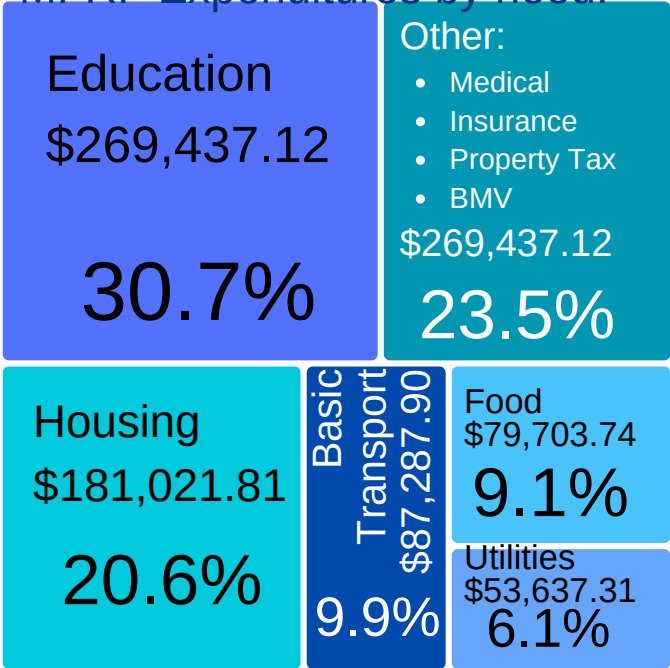


The Military Family Relief Fund (MFRF) is dedicated to supporting veterans and their dependents who are faced with financial hardships. The fund assists with essential household expenses that have become difficult to afford. In fiscal year 2024, the MFRF continued to offer its regular program and two specialty programs: Operation Holiday Program and Operation Back to School.

To streamline the application process, the MFRF has created an online portal for submitting applications on its website. Additionally, a new digital case management system is in place to ensure more efficient and accurate processing of applications.

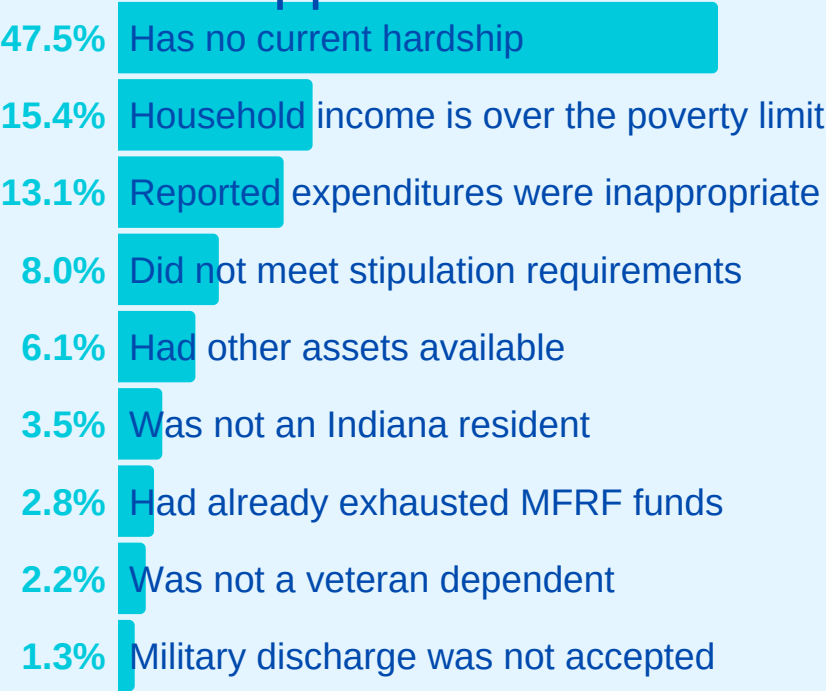
The MFRF has established a robust network of partners to support veterans in various areas of need, including job searches, financial counseling, federal and health benefits, and legal counsel.

MFRF Expenditures by need:

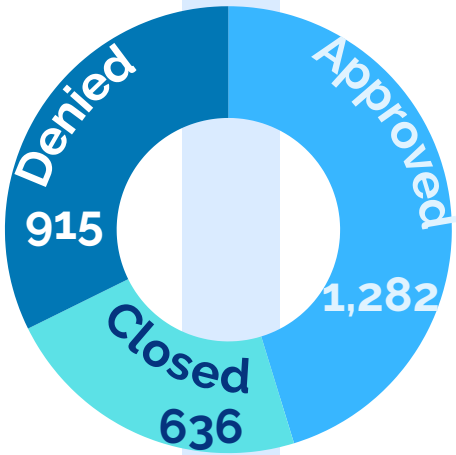


Total MFRF Expenditures
\$877,514.12

MFRF Denial Reasons
The Applicant:



2,833 MFRF
Applications Processed



We make every effort to contact applicants and obtain any necessary information when an incomplete application is received. If we're unable to reach them after 30 days, the application is **closed without any impact on the applicant's ability to reapply.*



The State Approving Agency (SAA) is responsible for approving a variety of educational programs, including college and non-college degree programs, vocational flight training, high schools, apprenticeships, and other on-the-job training programs. These approvals enable veterans and other eligible individuals to receive federal educational assistance benefits through programs managed by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

Working in conjunction with the VA, the SAA is responsible for approving and maintaining the approval of educational and training facilities. The agency successfully fulfilled all requirements of the federal fiscal year 2024 cooperative agreement.

The SAA received a Satisfactory rating, the highest rating score from U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, in FY 2024.

Apprenticeship Program (APP)

APP attracts veterans and their families from across the nation to live, work & thrive in Indiana



Without these APP programs, many federal GIBILL® benefits would remain unused!

332 Indiana Active Facilities



9

The purpose of Risk-Based Surveys is to review and mitigate potential fraud, waste, and abuse by utilizing data and risk factors that are outside of the normal approval, compliance, and liaison processes.

Assigned by the VA

Supervisory Visits are on-site reviews of an institution's records and practices to ensure compliance with VA requirements regarding veteran benefits and training quality.

18





Grants For Veterans Services

GRANTEE	AWARD	SPENT
Indiana Legal Services	\$45,000	100%
Veterans Life Changing Services	\$45,000	100%
Operation Combat Bikesaver	\$40,000	100%
Lafayette Transitional Housing	\$20,000	100%
Hope Southern Indiana	\$16,500	100%
Turnstone Center	\$20,000	100%
Family Services Howard Co.	\$30,000	100%
InteCare	\$20,000	100%
Pets Healing Vets	\$10,000	100%
YMCA Greater Indianapolis	\$27,000	100%
Indy Warrior Partnership	\$26,000	100%
Liberty Place	\$36,000	100%
Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans	\$20,000	100%
Reach Services	\$25,000	70%
Muncie-Delaware	\$10,000	10%

The IDVA Legal & Legislative Division (ILL) serves as a trusted advisor to the IDVA Executive Team and all other divisions of IDVA. ILL is responsible for representing IDVA in appeals, coordinating all IDVA legislative functions, administering grants to nonprofit organizations that assist veterans and nationally chartered veteran service organizations, conducting compliance monitoring of state grant funds, executing contracts and other legal memoranda, and overseeing administrative activities for the Indiana Veterans Affairs Commission.

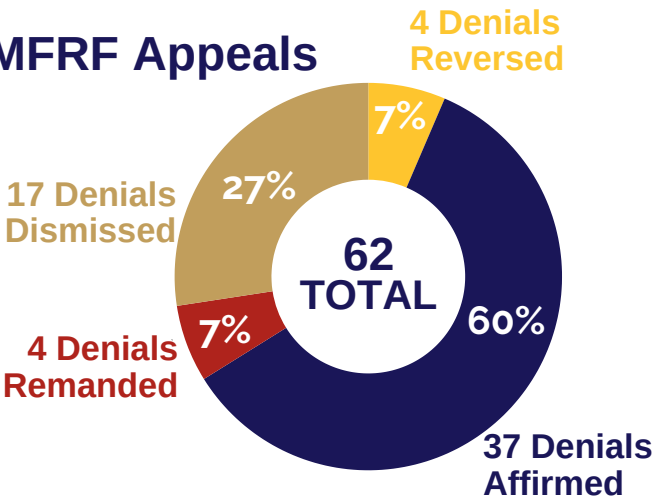


Tuition & Fee Exemption Appeals

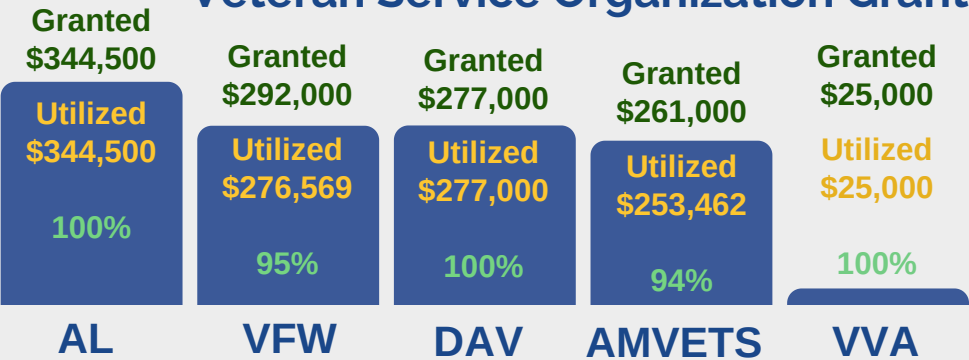


MFRF OVER \$2,500 REQUESTS
37 Applications - 37 Approved
Total Awarded \$86,159.79

MFRF Appeals



Veteran Service Organization Grants



- AL - American Legion
- VFW - Veterans of Foreign Wars
- DAV - Disabled American Veterans
- AMVETS - American Veterans
- VVA - Vietnam Veterans of America



IDVA's Outreach Division has been diligently delivering information about benefits, services, and programming statewide. The agency's reach has expanded further than ever combining curated partnerships and the use of innovative technology with an entrepreneurial grassroots community action plan. Four main areas of focus and growth have been essential for the agency to deliver on our mission and achieve our vision. (1) The expansion of the Indiana Governor's Challenge (IGC) team. IDVA welcomed our Upstream Suicide Prevention Manager and the IGC Program Administrator and furthered expanded the team with cross-agency IGC staff at FSSA and IDOH. (2) Expand utilization of IDVAs Short Messaging System (SMS) to identify and connect with the Indiana Veteran Community. (3) Continue the growth of the Woman Veterans programming. (4) Develop in-house talent for a direct focus on IDVAs website and social media creation and modification.



The WINVet program is dedicated to empowering women veterans to attain the utmost quality of life by providing reliable resources, delivering quality community outreach, and cultivating vast networking opportunities.

WINVet provides education and enrichment to women veterans through coordination and collaboration with service organizations, community partners, and the VA.

Women Veteran Registry Enrollment  **24% in FY 2024**

IDVA Women Veteran Wellness Retreats

Retreats offer Indiana's women veterans camaraderie, wellness activities and provide one-on-one sessions with women service officers.

The retreats are held at Indiana state parks in partnership with the Indiana Department of Natural Resources.

Participants help IDVA gather key data about the women veteran community and boast a

98% "Excellent" Rating
by retreat participants!



As of January 2024, the Indiana Governor's Challenge to Prevent Suicide Among Service Members, Veterans, and their Families was fully operational, marking a major milestone in the state's commitment to addressing suicide prevention for the Indiana Veteran Community (IVC).

The IGC team empowers local community coalitions across the state with data, proven concepts, and resources to plan and implement suicide prevention strategies tailored to the needs of their local Veteran community.

This initiative is a testament to the real-life impact that federal and state partnerships, intrastate agency collaboration, and community empowerment can fuel. This unique partnership has produced suicide prevention programs grounded in evidence and derived from collaboration offering a chance of saving lives. Under the dedicated leadership of the IDVA and its mission to Support, Serve, and Advocate for the Indiana Veteran Community, Indiana is dedicated to the fight against veteran suicide.



Creating healthy opportunities for the Indiana Veteran Community to Live, Work & Thrive.



Subscriber Activity

45 Email Bulletins & 12 Newsletters Sent



1,061,495 Total Recipients



1,011,446 Total Delivered

95%



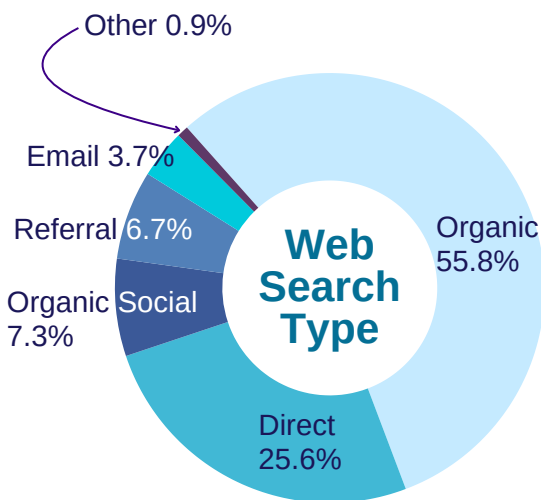
913,526 Total Received



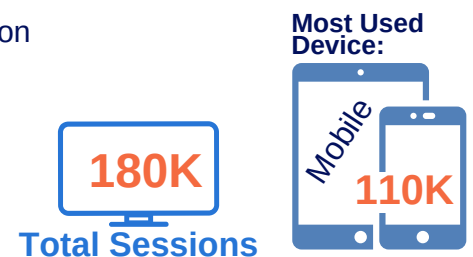
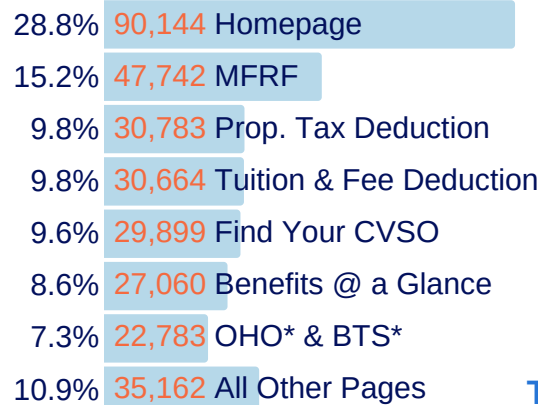
264,865 Total Opened

29%

Website Activity



IDVA Webpage Visits



*MFRF Specialty Programs: Operation Holiday Program and Back to School

Social Media

Facebook	Total Followers	Added in FY24	Page Reach
	9,246	611	2.708M
	Total Posts	Total Impressions	Engagement Rate
	464	159,724	3.17%

Instagram	Total Followers	Added in FY24	Page Reach
	753	682	13,863
	Total Posts	Total Impressions	Engagement Rate
	214	13,491	3.55%

LinkedIn	Total Followers	Added in FY24	Page Reach
	1,071	337	31,098
	Total Posts	Total Impressions	Engagement Rate
	208	52,525	7.16%

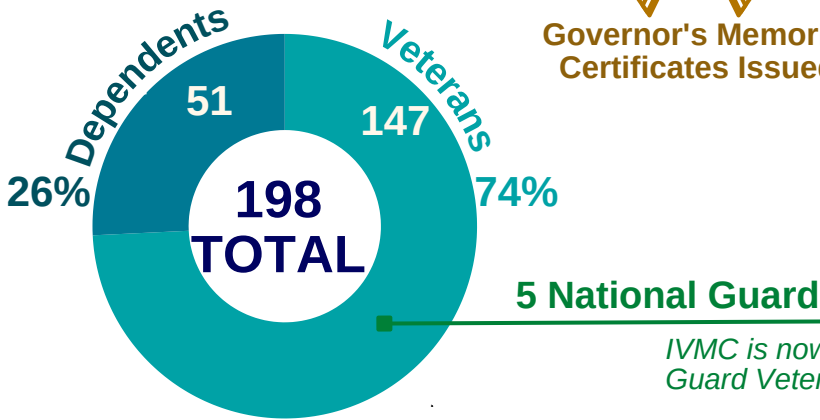


Honoring Veterans and Their Families at the Indiana Veterans Memorial Cemetery

The Indiana Veterans Memorial Cemetery serves as both a final resting place and a lasting tribute to veterans and their families. It stands as a symbol of appreciation and gratitude for the sacrifices made in service to our country.



On May 27, 2024, IVMC hosted a Memorial Day service that garnered a large turnout. The event was hosted by IVMC Superintendent Alan Burnham and featured a poignant speech Madison Mayor Bob Courtney.



IVMC is now open to honoring Indiana's National Guard Veterans with full interment accesses.

IVMC INTERMENTS



Honoring Our Fallen Heroes: Wreaths Across America at IVMC

On December 16, 2023, IVMC hosted Wreaths Across America, an event that saw a remarkable turnout from the community with around 350 attendees. Together, we laid wreaths on every gravesite to honor those who sacrificed everything for our country. A total of 1,650 wreaths were placed, each one a symbol of gratitude for our fallen heroes.





Our Mission

To meet the unique needs of Indiana's veterans, spouses and families. Deliver high level care in a therapeutic home-like environment with compassion and comprehensive skilled care while integrating arts and cultural programming.

Our Vision

Honor Indiana's veteran community through high level care, enhancing health and yielding optimal quality of life while preserving the rich history of the home.

New Recreation Bus Ribbon Cutting January 2024



Great Thanks to:

DAV, Elks, VFW, VFW Auxiliary,
American Legion Post 502, and the
American Legion Post 502 Riders

Residents: 117



as of 06/30/2024

52
New Residents



VA Nursing Hiring and Retention Grant

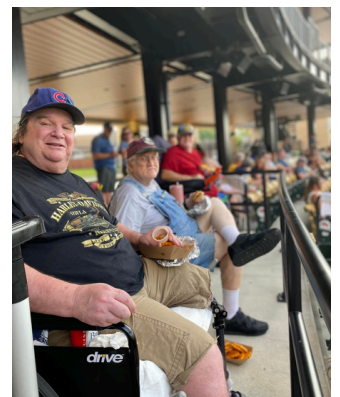
This grant, part of the VA Nursing Hiring and Retention Program, specifically focuses on increasing the hiring and retention of direct-care nursing staff at IVH, helping achieve the goal of employing more state nursing staff rather than relying on agency staff.



Purdue football players visit the residents

IVH Recreation Activities

IVH hosts a wide range of activities throughout the year. Residents enjoy attending Lafayette Aviators games and fishing in the Legion Pond located on-site. They also have visits from various organizations. On Christmas Day and during the Christmas parties, every resident receives gifts, and last year, they were delighted by a visit from Santa and Mrs. Claus!



IVH residents enjoy a day at the ballpark



FIRST FLOOR Veterans Administration

Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) (800) 827-1000
Veterans Readiness & Employment (VBA) (800) 827-1000
VA HUD-VASH Vocational Rehabilitation (317) 464-1400

Indiana Veteran Service Organizations

Volunteers of America (463) 202-5864
Disabled American Veterans (317) 319-3844
INVETS (317) 353-3674
American Legion (317) 916-3605

SECOND FLOOR VA HUD-VASH Veteran Health Initiative Clinic (317) 778-0217

THIRD FLOOR Indiana Department of Veterans Affairs (317) 232-3910

FOURTH FLOOR Indiana Department of Workforce Development (317) 234-8661

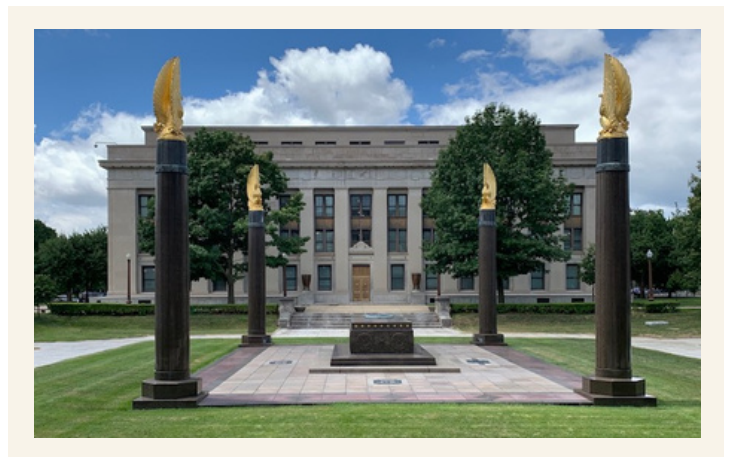
Local Veterans Employment Specialist (LVER)
Disabled Veteran Outreach Program Specialist (DVOP)
Operation Job Ready Vets

Historic Auditorium - Conference/Meeting Space (317) 921-5563



On March 15, 1919, members of the American Expeditionary Force convened in Paris to form the first American Legion caucus. This historic event marked the start of an organization dedicated to veteran benefits, resources and, programs, marking the start of a legacy of caring for veterans in the state of Indiana. In 1925, the American Legion took up residence in the four-story, 40,000 square foot iconic structure at 777 N. Meridian Street in downtown Indianapolis, IN.

“The Indiana Veterans Center is a veteran’s first and last stop,” IDVA Director Dennis A. Wimer said. “If you are a veteran or veteran family member looking for assistance, you can come here and we will do our best to meet your needs. Our goal is to support, serve and advocate for Indiana’s veteran community, we can achieve these goals at the Indiana Veterans Center.”





INDIANA DEPARTMENT of VETERANS AFFAIRS

Mission

The mission of the Indiana Department of Veterans Affairs is to Support, Serve, and Advocate for the Indiana Veteran Community.

Indiana Veterans Center

777 North Meridian Street, Suite 300
Indianapolis, IN 46204

