

Arizona Veterans' Services Advisory Commission
 3839 N. 3rd Street, Phoenix, AZ 85012

March 28, 2024

MINUTES

<u>Advisory Commissioner Present</u>	<u>Arizona Department of Veterans' Services</u>
Philip Cushman, Chair (In person)	Dana C. Allmond, Cabinet Executive Officer (In person)
Gene Crego, Commissioner (In person)	Julia Gusse, Legislative Liaison (In person)
Chris Gibbs, Commissioner (In person)	Valen Harris, Administrative Assistant (In Person)
Kathy Gallowitz, Commissioner (In person)	Lupita Santellano, Executive Assistant (In person)
Charles Byers, Commissioner (In person)	
<u>Absent</u>	<u>Guests</u>
Andrew Meshel, Commissioner	Dr. Anthony Reed, Ed.D, Contractor Installation Manager, Transition Assistance Program (TAP)
	Judge Thaddeus Semon, RMVTC, Tucson
	Deborah Dominick, Chief LCSW, Social Work Services, Phoenix VA Health Care System
	Maxwell Hartgraves, Legislative Affairs & Communications Manager, Arizona Department of Gaming
	Douglas Jensen, Lieutenant - Intelligence Unit Manager, Arizona Department of Gaming

Call to Order – The Arizona Veterans' Services Advisory Commission (AVSAC) meeting, at Arizona State Veteran Home Tucson 555 East Ajo Way, Tucson, AZ 85713, and via Google Meets: <https://meet.google.com/jgq-vm-sc-uux>; Dial-in: (US) +1 475-222-5532 PIN: 275 244 224#.

Chairman Cushman called the meeting to order at 10:13 am.

Chairman Cushman led the Commission in the pledge of allegiance. He introduced himself and allowed each commission member and guest to introduce themselves.

Guest presentations

Dr. Anthony Reed Presentation:

Dr. Anthony Reed's presentation discussed the Army Transition Assistance Program (TAP), the Army Career Skills program & the Military Life cycle of service men and women. Dr. Reed's presentation can be found [here](#). The TAP mission is to assist Soldiers, their Families and DA Civilians with simple, timely, effective and positive transitioning, promoting long-term satisfaction and association with the Army through Public Law and DOD Career Readiness Standards (CRS) attainment and compliance. Dr. Reed broke down the timeline of a soldier transition out, to where TAP services are utilized towards a smoother transition from military to civilian life. He discussed the Career Skills program and how transitioning Service Members have the opportunity to participate in employment skills training (EST), on-the-job training (OJT), pre- apprenticeships and internships with a high probability of employment in high-demand and highly-skilled jobs. Dr. Reed's presentation highlighted the importance of the program and pointed out the success of the Army Career Skill program with a 93% success rate.

Judge Semon Veterans Treatment Court Presentation:

Judge Semon discussed Pima County Veteran treatment court, and how it has become an essential part of the justice system. Jude Semon presented a video that can be found [here](#). The goal of Veterans Court is to rehabilitate and restore veterans as active, contributing members of their community. Veterans Court programs typically focus on veterans who are currently in, or entering, the Criminal Justice System. The Court creates and supervises treatment plans to address the underlying causes of the veteran's behavior and/or substance abuse issues. Judge Semon further elaborated on the education aspects that come with Veterans Treatment court. He pointed out that many veterans that enter the program are skeptical of the justice system, after counseling sessions and mentoring many veterans come out better than when they initially started the program.

Deborah Dominick VA Health Care Presentation:

Deborah Dominick's presentation discusses the VA Health care system. She elaborated on the mental and social worker perspective. Her presentation can be found [here](#). Ms. Dominick further discusses the various benefits available for veterans, and explains the level of care that veterans receive. She discusses the various programs that the VA Healthcare system offers, as well as the successes that they have achieved through mental health care. Ms. Dominick also discusses the caregiver program, which allows support for those who are the primary caregiver of a veteran. Deborah Dominick concludes her presentation with the importance of feedback on the work that is being conducted within the veterans community through the Veterans Healthcare system.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Chairman Cushman called for a motion to approve the AVSAC meeting minutes from January 11, 2024. Commissioner Byers motioned to accept the meeting minutes with a correction. He attended the Commission meeting on January 11, 2024, in-person and the meeting minutes show he attended "virtually." Commissioner Crego second the motion. The commission moved to approve the minutes unanimously with the correction.

CEO Department Update

CEO Allmond provided her department updates:

Veteran Transportation Initiative

- FREE bus passes for Veterans in need of transportation
- Arizona Department of Veterans' Services (ADVS) received funding from the Governor's Office of Youth, Faith, and Family for this new program
- ADVS has partnered up with the Mountain Line in Flagstaff and Valley Metro in Phoenix for bus passes
 - Starting March 11th, Veterans in the valley can come to ADVS HQ in Phoenix or connect with our Outreach team for a FREE 30 day pass.
 - We have a limited supply and passes will be handed out on a first come, first serve basis.

Veteran Benefits Counselors

- Veterans and their families can now schedule an appointment online!
 - In Person and Virtual (phone or video)

§ Meet with specific counselor or the first available

§ Appointments available Monday-Friday from 7:00 AM-4:00 PM

§ Our website is available for more information
(<https://dvs.az.gov/services/benefits-page>)

- **VBCs are available for:**
 - **In-person** (<https://calendly.com/d/4yh-xhr-zd4>)
 - **Remote** (<https://calendly.com/d/4vv-4hn-z89>) appointments.
 - Call 602-535-1215 for further assistance. Use the following link:
bit.ly/advfeedback

Stories of Our Heroes

- New communications initiative aims to never forget the lives and legacies of our Veterans
- Once a month – ADVS will feature a Veteran laid to rest in our three Arizona Veterans' Memorial Cemeteries
- Our first feature – posted on our website on February 15, 2024, was about Lt. Col. Gene Kleese who served in the Army and was interred at Southern Arizona Veterans' Memorial Cemetery in Sierra Vista back in 2014. To read his whole story visit <https://dvs.az.gov/news/stories-our-heroes-sharing-lives-and-legacies-our-arizona-veterans>
- We need your help! We can't share these stories without the loved ones of our Veterans. If you know a Veteran laid to rest at Southern Arizona Veterans' Memorial Cemetery, Arizona Veterans' Memorial Cemetery at Marana or Arizona Veterans' Memorial Cemetery at Camp Navajo you can share their story by filling out our Google Form <https://forms.gle/5wAXQs9nbypnprpu6>

Veteran StandDowns in March

- **Tucson Veterans StandDown & Career Fair**
 - Wednesday, March 13, 2024, 9:00 AM-3:00 PM (StandDown)
 - Thursday, March 14, 2024, 10:00 AM-3:00 PM (Career Fair)
 - Ramada Inn – 777 W. Cushing Street in Tucson
 - ADVS VBCs were there
- **Parker StandDown**
 - Friday, March 15, 2024, 9:00 AM-3:00 PM
 - VFW Post 7061 in Parker
 - ADVS Central Outreach Coordinator was there
- **Maricopa County StandDown**

- Thursday, March 21, 2024, 6:30AM to 3:00 PM
 - Friday, March 22, 2024, 7:00 AM to 2:00 PM
 - At the Arizona State Fairgrounds in downtown Phoenix
 - ADVS PIA staff was there on both days, including MFRF and VBC support
- **Verde Valley StandDown**
 - Wednesday, March 27, 2024, 9:00 AM-2:00 PM
 - Sedona Elks Lodge 2291 – 110 Airport Road in Sedona
 - Our Northern Arizona Outreach Coordinator was there

Congratulations to 21 Arizona organizations awarded 2024 VDF large grants.

Total VDF large grants awarded: \$1,038,271

The Arizona Department of Veterans' Services would also like to thank the VDF large grant review team who evaluated grant applications from nearly 60 Arizona organizations. To learn more about the Arizona Veterans' Donation Fund visit <https://dvs.az.gov/services/financial-assistance/donation-fund>

Arizona Pet Project (awarded \$40,000): Keeps pets with the people who love and need them most by connecting vulnerable community members and families in crisis with services and resources to prevent the unnecessary surrender of their companions. For more information, visit their website at <https://azpetproject.org/>

Ayuda Smiles for Veterans (awarded \$75,000): Provides Veterans with dental care. Visit their website <https://smilesforveterans.org/>

Central Arizona Shelter Services, Inc. (awarded \$75,000): Works to prevent and end homelessness among individuals and families while advancing compassionate community solutions. For more information, visit their website at <https://www.cassaz.org/>

CGA, Inc. (awarded \$75,000): Helps address substance misuse with Veterans through education and awareness services, treatment resource information, coalition mentoring and administrative support. For more information, visit their website at <https://casagrandealliance.org/>

City of Tempe, Safe at Home (awarded \$25,000): Assists Veterans who are not eligible for VA services to participate in the Strength At Home program at no cost, which helps Veterans who struggle with conflicts in their relationships.

City of Tempe, Digital Equity (awarded \$75,000): Support honorably discharged veterans of Tempe and Guadalupe through the distribution of veteran technology kits, 1:1 in-person tech support, and hands-on digital literacy classes at no cost.

Coconino Community College's Veterans Center (awarded \$20,000): Provides guidance to further the educational goals for service members and Veterans. For more information, visit their website at <https://www.coconino.edu/veteran-services>

Duet: Partners in Health & Aging (awarded \$15,000): Partnering with the Arizona Caregiver Coalition, Unlimited Potential, and the So'Tsoh Foundation to help Arizona Veterans and their families regain hope and build resilience when confronting the complexities of caring for individuals with dementia, traumatic brain injuries, or other cognitive challenges. For more information, visit www.duetaz.org

Houck Veterans Organization (awarded \$46,200): Provides assistance and much-needed home repairs for Navajo Veterans living in substandard housing.

It's Bigger Than Me (awarded \$40,000): Helps restore hope to those who have fought for us by providing supportive services to them. For more information, visit <https://itsbiggertm.org/>

Jerry Ambrose Veterans Council of Mohave County, Inc (awarded \$50,778): Partners with organizations across Mohave County to provide a voice and resources for Mohave County Veterans. For more information, visit <https://javc.org/>

Law College Association of the University of Arizona (awarded \$55,000): The Veterans' Advocacy Law Clinic at Arizona Law provides pro bono legal services to Veterans. The only law school clinic in Arizona whose clientele are exclusively Veterans and service members. The only non-profit program in Arizona that focuses exclusively on the legal needs of Veterans. For more information <https://law.arizona.edu/clinics/veterans-advocacy-law-clinic>

Luke Chapter MOAA Community Fund, Inc. (awarded \$25,000): Helps provide funds for scholarships for high school seniors enrolled in JROTC and the children, grandchildren and siblings of active duty service members and Veterans. they also help provide funds to active duty military, Veterans and their families in financial distress. For more information, visit <https://www.luke-fund.org/>

Merging Vets and Players (awarded \$69,805) – Supporting the mental health of Veterans in the greater Phoenix area and Maricopa County through our unique peer-to-peer programming. Visit <https://vetsandplayers.org/locations/phoenix>

Motorcycle Relief Project (MRP) (awarded \$6,000): Provides relief to veterans and first responders with PTSD and other related issues by taking them on structured week-long adventure motorcycle relief rides. For more information, visit <https://www.motorelief.org/>

Quality Resilience Fitness (awarded \$39,988): Helps fund veteran gym memberships from various community based gyms to be able to get Veterans into a physical fitness environment, to re-instill the motivation, accountability, and team camaraderie that they once cherished while in the service.

Soldier's Best Friend (awarded \$17,000): Pairs Veterans living with combat-related PTSD or a Traumatic Brain Injury with service or companion dogs rescued from local animal shelters. For more information, visit <https://soldiersbestfriend.org/>

Valley Housing Partners (awarded \$66,500): Assists more than 50 homeless Veterans in the Tucson and Phoenix areas by addressing the pressing and urgent needs of the Veterans, including shelter and crucial mental health services.

Veterans 5-9 (awarded \$72,000): Helps connect Veterans with support and resources between 5-9 PM and on weekends, including emergency services assistance, for Veterans who are homeless, incarcerated, currently in the military or exiting the military. For more information, visit <https://veterans5-9.com/>

Veterans Furniture Center (awarded \$75,000): Fights Veteran homelessness by providing new furniture and household goods to help Veterans transitioning from homelessness to a furnished home. For more information, visit <https://veteransfurniturecenter.org/>

VMLC Charities (awarded \$75,000): Advocates initiatives that enhance the quality of Veteran's health care and services in Arizona, and to raise funds to primarily assist Arizona Veterans in crises at the Phoenix VA Health Care System and the Arizona State Veteran Home that fall outside federal and state funding guidelines. For more information, visit <https://arizonavmlc.org/>

Free Tuition for Spouses of Veterans in Arizona

This initiative is specially designed for the spouses of honorably discharged Veterans who reside in Arizona. The award covers up to the full cost of in-state tuition and mandatory fees, after accounting for any other financial aid. This means that the financial burden of pursuing higher education can be significantly reduced, allowing you to focus on your academic, career, and personal growth.

To be eligible for this remarkable opportunity, applicants must:

- Be an Arizona resident: You need to be, and continue to be, a resident of Arizona while receiving the scholarship

- Qualify for In-State Tuition: Please refer to the specific residency requirements at [Arizona State University](#) (ASU), [Northern Arizona University](#) (NAU), and the [University of Arizona](#) (UA)
- Be a spouse of an honorably discharged U.S. Armed Forces Veteran
- Be admitted and enrolled at ASU, NAU, the University of Arizona, or a participating community college
- Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)
- Allow the release of information necessary to determine continued eligibility for the scholarship

Please contact

<https://www.azregents.edu/programs/scholarships-assistance/veteran-spouses> for more information on how this program can support your educational goals.

Service members, Veterans, and their family members may also be eligible for other programs and services for employment, housing, legal support, transportation, funding for social activities, peer coaching, and much more. Call the Be Connected support line Monday–Friday at 866-4AZ-VETS (866-429-8387) from 8am–5pm M.S.T. to see what other support programs or resources are available.

ADVS Highlights

The Arizona Department of Veterans Services employs over 50 Veteran Benefits Counselors (VBCs) statewide to assist Veterans and their eligible dependents obtain state and federal benefits. Over 90% of claimants ADVS assist receive a favorable decision by Veterans Affairs, bringing more than 85 million dollars a month to the Veterans of Arizona. Appointments for VBC's can be made online, and our services are always free of charge.

The National Guard and Reservist Burial Equity Act now allows prior National Guard and Reservists to be interred at one of our three cemeteries located in: Sierra Vista, Marana and Bellemont. The Arizona State Veteran Cemeteries have all ranked above 92% by the National Cemetery Administration for over 90 national benchmark standards for all Veteran cemeteries nationwide.

The Military Family Relief Fund (MFRF) provides Veterans and their families up to \$20,000 of financial assistance for unforeseen financial hardships caused by the service member's military service. MFRF funding is available for all qualifying Veterans residing in Arizona. For FY24, the fund has disbursed over \$720,000 to Veterans and their families and is expected to disburse over a million dollars by the end of the fiscal year.

The State Approving Agency is responsible for the review, evaluation, approval and oversight of schools and training facilities to ensure that Veterans receive a high quality education.

The Veterans Donation Fund was established in 1999 to grant monies to community Veteran serving organizations that benefit Veterans and their families throughout Arizona. Some examples of services provided by previous awardees include: dental services, emergency housing, food instability, legal services and past due rent or mortgages to name a few. In FY 24, ADVS will grant over 1.1 million dollars to eligible service providers.

Veteran suicide is an important issue that ADVS believes can be reduced significantly. In FY 24 ADVS in coordination with the Arizona Coalition for Military Families will be providing suicide prevention training programs for community partners that work with the Veteran population to bring additional skills and awareness about Veteran suicide.

In FY 24 ADVS will invest nearly 1 million dollars in Starlink technology to be distributed to the 22 tribes in Arizona to ensure that no Veteran goes without our services because they do not have internet connectivity or the requisite technology necessary to apply for services.

In January of 2024, ADVS awarded over 1.6 million dollars from the Homeless Veteran Reintegration Program to Veteran Service Organizations to decrease Veteran homelessness, assist with the transition from military to civilian life and assist in securing gainful employment.

ADVS currently operates 3 skilled nursing facilities located in Tucson, Phoenix and Yuma, with an additional fourth Veteran Home in Flagstaff to begin accepting residents in October of 2024.

The Arizona State Veteran Homes have won awards from US News and World Report and the Arizona State Veteran Home in Tucson currently carries a 5 star rating with one of the highest quality rating scores of any skilled nursing facility in the State of Arizona.

VA Readjustment Counseling Services

Background

1. Vet Centers are community-based counseling centers that provide a wide range of social and psychological services, including professional counseling to eligible Veterans, service members, including National Guard and Reserve components, and their families.

2. Counseling is offered to make a successful transition from military to civilian life or after a traumatic event experienced in the military to include military sexual trauma (MST).

3. Individual, group, and marriage and family counseling is offered in addition to referral and connection to other VA or community benefits and services.

4. Vet Center counselors and outreach staff, many of whom are Veterans themselves, are experienced and prepared to discuss the tragedies of war, loss, grief, and transition after trauma.

Overall Organization of Access to VA Vet Center Services

Based on Need:

1. VA starts with identifying and providing Access Points in donated office spaces

2. Vet Center Outstation is next level

3. Full Vet Center is final level

Readjustment Services in Sierra Vista

1. Sierra Vista Veterans are concerned about access to the readjustment counseling services in Sierra Vista. They believed services had ended.

2. The ADVS Cabinet Executive Officer (CEO) and Congressman Juan Ciscomani are concerned as well.

3. Vet Center services never stopped. A mobile Vet Center unit would come out to Sierra Vista from the Tucson Vet Center.

4. The Tucson Vet Center mobile unit no longer comes out. They now have a permanent provider at an Access Point in Sierra Vista. They are recruiting for a second permanent provider.

5. The ADVS CEO connected with Mr. Michael Fisher who is the VA Chief of Readjustment Counseling Services.

6. This week, the ADVS CEO met with Mr. Fisher at the Tucson Vet Center and the location for the new Sierra Vista Vet Center Outstation.

7. Mr. Fisher brought Ms. Deb Moreno a Vet Center District Director with him. Ms. Moreno oversees all Vet Centers in the Western-most District that includes all of Arizona.
8. The Tucson Vet Center has authority over the new Sierra Vista Vet Center Outstation and current Sierra Vista Access Point.
9. Mr. Fisher indicated that the new outstation is projected to open next year. Renovation of existing office spaces is starting.
10. Congressman Ciscomani's staff attended these meetings in Tucson and Sierra Vista.
11. The ADVS CEO will provide updates on the progress in Sierra Vista.

Legislative Updates

ADVS Legislative Liaison, Julia Gusse, provided a link to her weekly legislative updates on the department website, <https://dvs.az.gov/about/legislative-updates>. Julia covers any bills that affect veterans, their families and/or caregivers.

Chairman Cushman requested Julia track a bill that affects open meeting law on behalf of the commission. He also requested the Commission fill out the request to speak form so the Commission can testify on behalf of veteran related bills.

New Business

Talking Point for AVSAC Meeting with the Governor Staff – Discussion, Approval, and Vote- Chairman Cushman, CEO Allmond, and Legislative Liaison Julia Gusse were unable to secure a meeting with the Governor due to her busy schedule. Instead, they will meet with the Governor's staff on April 4, 2024. The talking points can be found [here](#). There were no changes to the talking points; no vote required.

Commission Leadership Assignments 2024-2025 - Chairman Cushman stated the Commission leadership roles were coming to an end and nominations must be submitted for vote on May 9, 2024. This will allow for a Chair and Vice Chair to begin their role in July of 2024. Commissioner Byers re-nominated Chairman Cushman to keep his current position as Chairman. Commissioner Gallowitz second the nomination. Commissioners Gibbs and Crego agreed. Chairman Cushman accepted the nomination. Chairman Cushman nominated Commissioner Byers for the Vice Chair position. Commissioner Crego second the nomination. Commissioners Gibbs and Gallowitz agreed. Commissioner Byers accepted the nomination. Nominations will remain open until May 9, 2024.

Commissioner Vacancies and Commission - Chairman Cushman thanked Commissioner Michael Noble for his service to the commission. There are currently two

vacancies within the Commission, one vacancy in the Northern region and the second vacancy in the Southern region. Chairman Cushman encouraged the commissioners to recruit veterans that are active in the multiple Veteran service organizations. Commissioner Gallowitz and Commissioner Crego have submitted renewals to Boards and Commissions. He also suggested ADVS can ask Boards and Commissions to look at previous applicants.

AZDVS Budget Discussion - CEO Allmond was unable to discuss ADVS's budget with the commission. CEO Allmond will be able to discuss the budget once she receives more information from the Governor's office.

Chairman Cushman recommended the commissioner's have a budget set aside for travel expenses, business cards and name tags. He suggested that awards and fundraising be added to the next Commission meeting agenda.

Outreach Activities for Commission

Philip Cushman provided his outreach activity report, found [here](#).

Commissioner Gallowitz attended the Maricopa County StandDown. She also encouraged the commission to attend the Annual Arizona Coalition for Military Families Symposium on April 17 and 18, 2024. Coalition put out the 2023 survey, the previous survey results are online, please read it. She also had the opportunity to partner with Marquee the Chair of AG Mesa Advisory Council regarding veteran treatment court best practices.

Commissioner Gibbs had nothing to report.

Commissioner Byers attended and spoke at the Ira Hayes parade. He also attended the Veterans Heritage Project dinner.

Commissioner Crego stated the Patriotic Awards Luncheon is scheduled on April 19, 2024, the UAV and Arizona Veterans Hall of Fame Society (AVHOF) will be giving out awards and scholarships. UAV started an events calendar adminanduavnewsletter.net AVHOF packets must be turned in or postmarked by March 29, 2024.

For the Good of the Order

Commissioner Gallowitz suggested the Strategic Policy Objectives should be kept on the agenda regularly. The Strategic Policy Objectives must be rewritten, researched and updated. She also suggested the commission limit presenters to two per meeting in order to cover more information and not rush through the presentations.

Commissioner Byers would like an update regarding the Flagstaff home at the next meeting on May 9, 2024.

Commissioner Crego suggested the Commission meet in Prescott in September of 2024. ADVS staff will take a look at their schedules.

Open Floor for Comments

No comments.

Executive Session

The Commission broke for the Executive Session at 12:25 pm. The commission returned to the Commission meeting to adjourn.

Adjournment

Chairman Cushman called for a motion to adjourn the Arizona Veterans' Services Advisory Commission Meeting. Commissioner Byers motioned to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Gallowitz second the motion. The motion was carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 1:30 pm

DRAFT



U.S. ARMY



Army Transition Assistance Program

US Army Garrison
Fort Huachuca

As of May 2023

UNCLASSIFIED



- **TAP Overview**

- Mission

- Eligibility

- Command Team
Responsibilities & Procedures

- Reenlistments



- Voluntary / Involuntary
Separations

- Deploying Soldiers

- **Career Skills Program**

- **VA Benefits & Services**



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- **TAP is a set of programs, services and information directed by Public Law with policy oversight provided by the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Manpower & Reserve Affairs) and Deputy Chief of Staff, G-1. The TAP mission is to assist Soldiers, their Families and DA Civilians with simple, timely, effective and positive transitioning, promoting long-term satisfaction and association with the Army through Public Law and DOD Career Readiness Standards (CRS) attainment and compliance**
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Eligibility

- **Soldiers begin receiving transition services:**
 - NLT 18 – 12 months (366 days) prior to anticipated separation date
 - 24 months prior to retirement
 - As soon as possible when involuntary separation is anticipated
 - No formal separation/retirement orders needed to initiate services
- ***Spouses are eligible to use TAP services once SM is registered with program***
- **TAP Centers provide support to transitioned Soldiers and Civilians for up to six months after separation. Retirees receive lifetime services for Retirees**

Command Team Procedures

- **Commanders' procedures**
 - Once a Soldier completes all TAP requirements and a Transition Counselor has completed the mandatory Capstone Review, the Company Commander will receive an email token from the TAP counselor requesting digital signature on the DD Form 2648
 - Emailed token can only go to one person
 - TAP counselors will not provide commanders with incomplete DD Forms 2648
 - Soldiers cannot complete their final out and receive a DD Form 214 without the signed DD Form 2648

Reenlistments

- Retention NCO should review monthly loss roster sent from TAP and identify any Soldiers who have reenlisted
- Notify TAP (520-533-5764) of Soldiers who have reenlisted
- Retention NCO coordinates with S1s to update eMILPO
- TAP *supports* the unit retention program
 - Gap Analysis in MOS Crosswalk helps Soldier identify transferable skills
 - Influences future civilian and professional military education
 - Research on civilian equivalent careers often drives re-enlistment
 - Registering 12-18 months from separation influences earlier decision
 - Come early, Come often sets Soldiers up for Success

Involuntary Separations

- Involuntary separations (un-programmed losses) should start TAP as soon as the separation process begins
- No orders are required to begin TAP
- Un-programmed losses will be scheduled for the Army Consecutive Transition Timeline (AR 600-81, Chap 4, Table 4-2) for rapid transitions
- Contact the TAP Center (520-533-5764) to schedule an appointment, do not refer Soldiers to the TAP Virtual Center

Deploying Soldiers



Company Commander/1SG notifies the TAP Transition Services Manager (TSM) of a unit or individual deployment



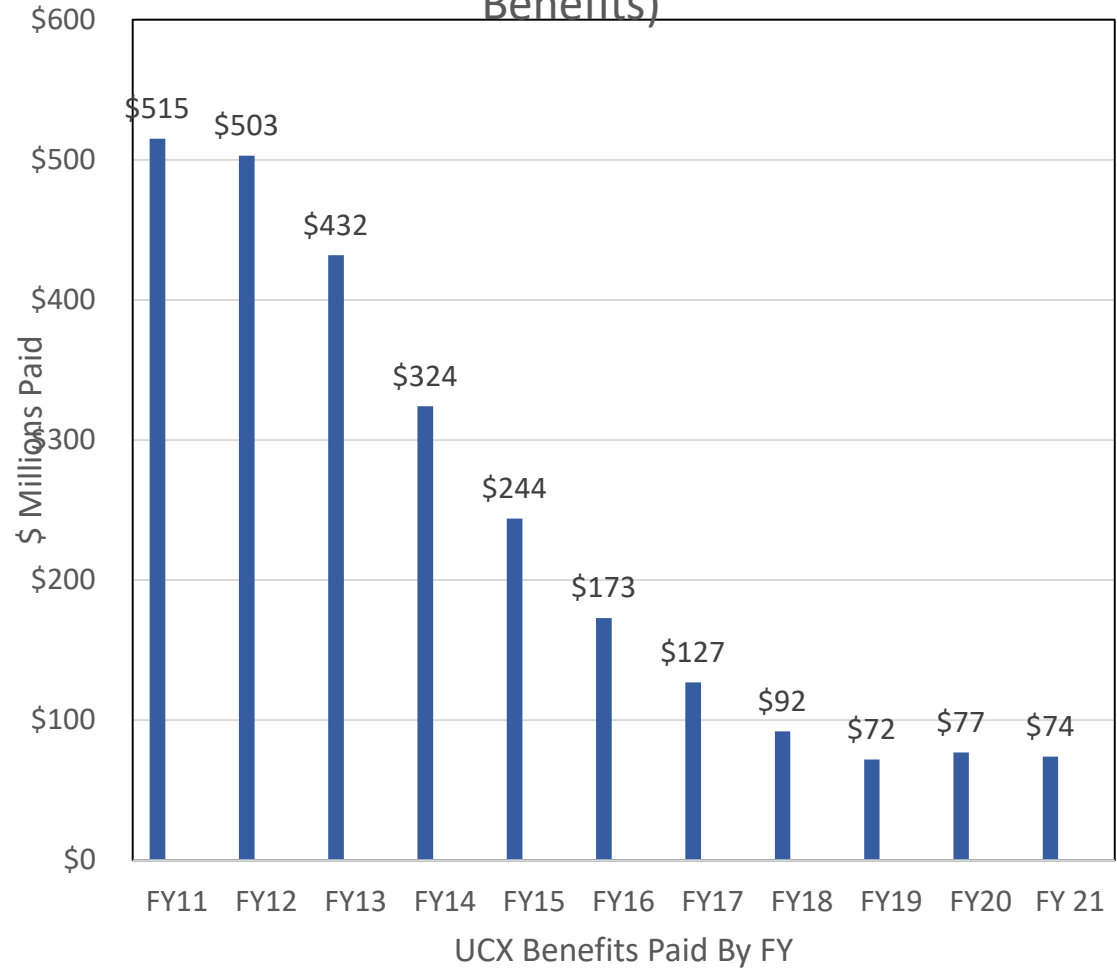
Soldiers who will be within 365 days from separation while deployed must initiate TAP prior to deployment



Command team coordinates with TSM on identifying deploying Soldiers for any TAP requirements prior to deployment

Program Impact

Army Unemployment Compensation (UCX Benefits)



Career Skills Program

- The Army Career Skills Program (CSP) affords transitioning Service Members the opportunity to participate in employment skills training (EST), on-the-job training (OJT), pre-apprenticeships and internships with a high probability of employment in high-demand and highly-skills jobs.
- Participation must occur within the last 180 days of military service, with an honorable discharge.
- **Program Has a 93% Success Rate**

Career Skills Program Eligibility & PTDY

- **Career Skills Program Overview**
 - Basic eligibility:
 - Must have served 180+ days of continuous active duty
 - Must have 180 days remaining prior to separation date
 - Must not be flagged*
 - Participating employers must provide a job interview at the end of the CSP










*Waiverable flags: Failure to meet body fat standards and COVID vaccine declination

- **VA Benefits Services Overview**
 - Two full-time benefits counselor on post
 - Benefits are based on multiple factors, including characterization of discharge
 - VA Benefits & Services Briefings
 - Twice monthly (Tuesdays) by appointment only – additional briefings as needed
 - All Soldiers, Veterans, and dependents may attend
 - Military Life Cycle Briefings
 - Individual or unit-based

Military Life Cycle Module Offerings



The VA offers nine Military Life Cycle (MLC) modules focused on the topics most important to service members and their loved ones. Please contact your local VA Benefits Advisor for more details and to schedule a session.

MODULE NAME	MODULE OVERVIEW	INSTRUCTOR LED TRAINING	JKO COURSE NUMBER
 VA EDUCATION BENEFITS	Provides information about DoD and VA education benefits to include Post-9/11 benefits that may help service members pay for or offset the cost of tuition, housing, books, and supplies.	✓	MLC US013
 VA BENEFITS 101	Highlights VA benefits and services to include education, home loan guaranty, health care, and insurance and memorial benefits.	✓	MLC US014
 SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL HEALTH RESOURCES	Describes services and provides information on resources for coping with life experiences and stressors that may impact social and emotional health.	✓	MLC US018
 COMMUNITY INTEGRATION RESOURCES	Explains how to identify local services and community organizations that can provide assistance and aid to service members and their loved ones.	✓	MLC US020
 VA HOME LOAN GUARANTY PROGRAM	Offers a general overview of the VA Home Loan Guaranty Program including eligibility, processes, costs, and other available resources.	✓	MLC US017
 VET CENTERS	Describes how to connect with local Vet Centers and how service members, veterans, and their loved ones can use Vet Centers as a free resource.	✓	MLC US015
 VA LIFE INSURANCE BENEFITS	Communicates the different types of VA life insurance benefits to help determine the best choice for service members and their loved ones based upon interests and needs.	✓	MLC US019
 RESERVE COMPONENT DUAL PAYMENTS	Provides an overview on drill pay, compensation eligibility, and dual payment.	✓	MLC US022
 SURVIVOR AND CASUALTY ASSISTANCE RESOURCES	Provides an overview on VA and DoD survivor benefits and eligibility, and what to do in the event of a loss.	✓	MLC US021



Choose **VA**

VA



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs



Operational Hours & Training

- **Open Monday thru Friday, 0730 to 1630**
- Open on **training holidays**
- **Call to schedule workshops or individual appointments**

- Executive TAP Workshops
 - Executive level facilitation
 - E-6 and above (spouses invited to attend space permitting)
 - Tailored to retiring and early separations
 - Scheduled monthly

- Standard TAP Workshops
 - All transitioning Soldiers (spouses invited to attend space permitting)
 - Scheduled monthly

Local Points of Contact

Building 22420, Butler Road
Fort Huachuca, AZ 85613
(520) 533-5764

Nick Gilmore: TSM (520) 533-7314
Robert.n.gilmore.civ@army.mil

Dr. Anthony Reed: CIM (520) 533-8414
anthony.l.reed.ctr@army.mil



QUESTIONS?

Phoenix VA Health Care System

Presented by Deborah Dominick, LCSW,
PVAHCS Social Work Service Chief

VA



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Health Administration
Post 9/11 Transition Case Management

PVAHCS Social Work Services

Patient Aligned Care Team (PACT)/Geriatric and Extended Care (GEC)

- PACT (including Geri-PACT, Oncology, Dialysis, Post-Stroke and SCI)
- Contracted Nursing Home Program
- Adult Day Health Care
- COACH
- HBPC
- CLC
- Community Care
- Hospice/Palliative

Patient Advocate Resource Center (PARC)

- Congressional Response Team
- Hotline Response Team
- VRC
- ERC
- MHV
- Patient Advocates

Women's Health

- Women Veterans Program
- ROSE (Reach Out Stay Strong Essentials)

Homeless Programs

- HUD/VASH
- Grant Per Diem
- Veteran Justice Program (VJP)
- Health Care for Homeless Veterans
- HPACT
- Compensated Work Therapy
- Community Resource and Referral Center (CRRC)

Education

- Social Work Internship Program
- Social Work Education

Coming Soon

Survivors Assistance & Memorial Support Program (SAMS)

Caregiver Support Program

- Program of General Caregivers Support Services
- Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers

Specialty

- Inpatient Medicine
- Inpatient Mental Health
- Emergency Department
- Military 2 VA
- Polytrauma

Mental Health Programs with Social Work Staff

- PCHMI
- DOM SUD
- PCT
- PRRC
- MHICM
- Suicide Prevention
- General Mental Health
- BHIP
- PCT
- SUDTP
- IPVAP

U.S. Department of
Veterans Affairs
(VA)



Veterans Health
Administration
(VHA)

Health care
Inpatient/outpatient
CBOC

Veterans Benefits
Administration
(VBA)

Service Connected
Disability
Education
Pension
Life Insurance
Home Loan
Career and
Employment

National Cemetery
Administration
(NCA)

Burial and
Memorial

Veterans Benefits Administration VA Regional Office

- 1-800-827-1000
- 3333 N. Central Ave. Phoenix, AZ 85012
- www.VA.gov - Access VA and DoD Benefits 24/7
(all access is transitioning to VA.gov)

VA Healthcare



- VA operates the largest health care system in the country, with over 1,400 medical centers and clinics across the nation
- VA health care is portable, so your coverage stays with you if you move or relocate
- Electronic records transfer with you
- Once you become enrolled, you remain enrolled, and you can receive VA's comprehensive medical benefit package

To schedule an appointment, please call
602-277-5551 options 2 then 4- primary care
602-222-2752- mental health

How to enroll for healthcare at VA

- www.va.gov
- By telephone: 855-488-8440
- In Person: Enrollment and Eligibility
 - Carl T. Hayden, Northwest VA Clinic, Southeast VA Clinic, 32nd St. Clinic
- By Mail: Complete 10-10EZ and mail to
 - Health Eligibility Center
2957 Clairmont Road, Suite 200
Atlanta, GA 30329-1647

Eligibility

- Active military service (minimum 24 consecutive months), separated under any condition other than dishonorable, may qualify for VA health care benefits.
- Current and former members of the Reserves or National Guard who were called to active duty by a federal order and completed the full period for which they were called or ordered to active duty may be eligible for VA health benefits
- OTH discharges may be eligible for **emergency** mental health services for 90 days if care is initial sought through ER
- Since there are a number of exceptions to the minimum duty requirements, VA encourages all Veterans to apply so that we may determine their enrollment eligibility.

Community Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOC)

- Southwest CBOC- 9250 W. Thomas Rd. Suite 400
- Midtown- 5040 N. 15th Ave
- Staff Sergeant Alexander W. Conrad VA Clinic- 3285 S. Val Vista Dr.
- Northeast CBOC- 11390 E. Via Linda Rd. Suite 105
- Northwest CBOC- 13985 W. Grand Ave. Suite 101
- Thunderbird CBOC- 9424 N. 25th Ave.
- Show Low- 5171 Cub Lake Rd. Suite C380
- Globe- 5860 S. Hospital Dr. Suite 111
- 32nd Street Clinic- 400 N. 32nd St.

Mental Health Services

- 602-222-2752
- All VA facilities offer mental health services (services below may not be available at every facility)
 - Medical evaluation and management
 - Therapy: individual, groups, couples
 - PTSD Clinical Team
- If in crisis:
 - 911
 - 988 +1
 - 602-222-9444

Community Resource and Referral Center (CRRC)

1500 E. Thomas Rd. Suite 106 Phoenix, AZ 85014

- Health Care for Homeless Veterans Program (HCHV)
- Homeless program eligibility (contract housing, sober housing, long-term housing)
- Clinical screenings
- Benefits eligibility
- Immediate shelter
- Access to medical, mental health, and substance abuse care, peer support services
- Collaboration with community partners (probation, financial coaching, AHCCCS/SNAP, employment, community bridges)

Other available specialty programs

- VA Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH)
- Compensated Work Therapy (CWT)/Supported Employment
- Women Veterans Health Care Program
- Military Sexual Trauma Services
- Post-9/11 Military2VA Case Management Program (M2VA)
- Psychosocial Rehabilitation & Recovery Center (PRRC)
- Veterans Justice Outreach (VJO)
- Mental Health Intensive Case Management (MHICM)
- Primary Care- Mental Health Integration (PCMHI)
- PTSD Clinical Team (PCT)
- Recreation Therapy (RT)
- Caregiver Support Program
- Geri PACT

Women Veteran Health Care

- Complete health care for women Veterans of all ages, including:
 - Comprehensive Primary Care from Women's Health PCPs
 - Reproductive Health Care, including: maternity & postpartum care, contraception, family planning, infertility services, pregnancy options counseling & abortion, menopause treatment, including hormonal therapy.
 - Routine & Specialty Gynecology
 - Breast Imaging, including: 3D mammography, breast MRI, breast ultrasound, stereotactic breast biopsy
 - Mental health care and counseling
 - Lifestyle wellness services
 - Specialty Care
 - Emergency Care
- Contact the Women Veteran's Program:
 - 602-277-5551 ext. 6764

Dental



- ***Cost free one time treatment*** of dental conditions for recently separated veterans who:
 - ✓ served for 90 days or more,
 - ✓ apply within 180 days of separation, and
 - ✓ DD214 does not indicate necessary dental care was provided within 90 days of release or discharge (box 17)

Dental Cont.

- Service-connected dental disability or condition
- Former POW
- Service- connected disabilities rated 100% or unemployable and paid at the 100%
- Actively engaged in a 38 USC Ch. 31 Vocational Rehab Prog

Post-9/11 Military2VA Case Management Program

- Transitional Case Management
- Mental Health services with a focus on post deployment and transition related concerns
- Deployment related TBI evaluation (concurrent physical assessment and Neuropsych)
- Care connection and coordination

MyHealthvet



 Download My Data

 Prescription Refill

 Emergency Contacts

 Message Providers
& Physicians

 Vitals & Readings

 Military Health History

 Medical Library

 VA Honors Veterans

Register in person to access all services in VRC

VA: Health and Benefits App



- Requires ID.me, DS Logon, or MyHealtheVet account credentials
- Access to:
 - Claims and appeals
 - Appointments
 - Secure Messaging
 - Letters
 - Profile (view and update contact information, direct deposit, etc.)
 - Facility locator
 - Veterans Crisis Line



Contact Information 1-800-905-4675 (Eastern)
1-866-496-8838 (Pacific) www.vetcenter.va.gov

Vet Center

The Vet Center offers...

Vet Center Services

- A safe and protected place to talk
- Confidentiality
- Flexible hours
- Easily accessible
- Network is knowledgeable about the resources available
- Staff are >65% Combat Veterans
- All family members are welcome
- No cost
- Individual/group counseling
- Military Sexual Trauma counseling
- Marital/family counseling
- Bereavement counseling
- Drug and alcohol referral
- Liaison with VA & Community resources
- Benefits Assistance Referral
- Community education and career referral

Veterans
Crisis Line



- **988 PRESS 1**
- Helps you identify warning signs
- Provides suicide and crisis resources
- Text to 838255
- Confidential Veteran's chat
www.veteranscrisisline.net

- **1-877-927-8387 (WAR-VETS)**
- Around the clock confidential call center
- Combat Veterans and their families can talk about military or readjustment issues
- Staff is comprised of combat Veterans and family members of combat Veterans



Thank You

From: Commissioner Cushman

To: Commissioners

Subject: TALKING POINTS FOR MEETING WITH THE GOVERNOR

Cabinet Executive Officer Allmond has received an invitation for the Commission Chair, the Cabinet Executive Officer, and the Legislative Liaison to meet with the Governor to discuss the Commission's priorities and issues involving the greater Veteran community throughout Arizona. The following are proposed talking points for the Commission's consideration.

1. Briefly discuss the mission of the Commission referencing A.R.S. §41-602, *"The Commission shall provide policy advice to the Governor and the Director of Veterans' Services regarding Veterans' issues."* Since 1951, her Commission has had a broad mission to promote public awareness and enhance the well-being of past and present Arizona service members, Veterans, and their families. The Commission consists of eight members who represent Congressionally Mandated Veteran Service Organizations and reside within one of the three Veterans Administration regions within Arizona.
2. Validate that the Commission's Strategic Objectives and Priorities align with the Governor's priorities:
 - a. We need to promote sustainable employment, talent development, and the economic security of Arizona's Veterans and their families. Express concern that our County and Municipal governments are not hiring enough Veterans, especially in appointed senior executive positions. It is not enough to send Veterans to the Police and Fire Services; we need their administrative, management, and leadership talents in all sectors of local government.
 - b. We need to improve Veterans' access to mental, physical, spiritual, and legal support; especially in the rural, and more remote regions of our State and in our Tribal areas. Our partnerships between Veteran Service Organizations, first responders, law enforcement, medical practitioners, mental health professionals, religious leaders, social workers, Veterans' Courts, and elected and appointed officials are maintained and strengthened. We need to create a state-wide culture that truly believes that a call from a Veteran is not a change in our routine.
 - c. We need to ensure that Veterans and their caregivers have access to affordable housing and services. The lack of affordable housing affects all aspects of care for Veterans. One way that we can help Veterans is by raising the income thresholds for property tax exemptions for Veterans and their survivors.

- d. We need to improve the educational outcomes for Veterans and their families. While using Veterans Benefits to enroll in an Arizona institution of higher learning or vocational training is commendable and helps our economy, it is the final result of a degree or certification that really matters and ensures that the Veteran is competitive. We need to identify and remove the barriers that Veterans have in completion of their educational goals.
 - e. Finally, we should monitor, evaluate, and influence how water shortages and immigration policies affect our Veterans. While these issues affect everyone in Arizona, we need to consider their effects on Veterans, especially the most vulnerable in our communities.
 3. Advocate for local salary and benefits parity for State Veteran Home Nursing Staff (RN, RA, CVN), medical staff, and support staff. This addresses the staffing shortfalls in our State Veterans' Homes due to high demand on these medical specialties and the increasing cost of living in certain Arizona communities.
 4. Consider Cabinet Executive Officer Allmond's input to the Governor's State-of-the-State speech for future speeches. "Our Veterans deserve the best and we cannot express enough gratitude for their long and faithful service to our Nation. Research shows that Veterans are civic assets who strengthen the workforce and community. With more than 500,000 military Veterans living in Arizona, it is estimated that nearly \$2.5 billion dollars comes to the State from federal Veteran benefits. Furthermore, the economic impact of Veterans spending their pensions, disability compensation, educational benefits, military retiree pay, and Veterans' Employment funding exceeds \$5 billion per year." With the Governor's help, we can keep Arizona a state that really appreciates their Veterans.
 5. Recommend that the Governor's administration place a high priority on Veteran's Issues because Veterans are powerful economic, financial and social influencers that positively shape Arizona's future workplace and communities. Thank the Governor very much for her advocacy on behalf of Arizona's Veterans.

In conclusion, thank you very much for your consideration of my proposed talking points.

Very Respectfully,

Philip D. Cushman
Commissioner

28 March 2024

To: Arizona Department of Veterans' Services Commission

From: Commissioner Cushman

Subject: Outreach to Veterans 12 January 2023 to 27 March 2024

The following is a summary of outreach to Veterans performed between Commission meetings. I chair several committees at my local VFW and American Legion Post to include Bylaws Committee, Naming Committee, Executive Committee, and the Quartzsite Masters Charity Desert Golf Tournament.

- Attended AZDVS Commission Meeting, Phoenix, Arizona (11 January 2024)
- Attended VFW Post 769, Quartzsite, Arizona monthly membership meeting (13 January 2024). Provided update on Commission activities.
- Attended American Legion Post 113, Quartzsite, Arizona monthly membership meeting (20 January 2024). Provided update on Commission activities.
- Substitute Teaching, Parker High School, Parker, Arizona (25 January 2024). Inspired the next generation to consider careers in the U.S. Military.
- Attended Meeting with Directors from AZ Departments of Gaming, Revenue, Attorney General, and Governor's Office regarding Bingo Machines in Veteran Service Organizations (30 January 2024)
- Substitute Teaching, Parker High School, Parker, Arizona (31 January 2024). Inspired the next generation to consider careers in the U.S. Military.
- Attended Memorial Service for Charles Wendt, U.S. Army (Retired). Charlie Wends was past commander of VFW Post 769 and encouraged me to join the Commission. (2 February 2024)
- Attended VFW Post 769, Quartzsite, Arizona monthly membership meeting (10 February 2024). Provided update on Commission activities.
- Substitute Teaching, Parker High School, Parker, Arizona (12 February 2024). Inspired the next generation to consider careers in the U.S. Military.
- Entered credentials at the State Legislature request to speak (13 February 2024)
- Attended American Legion Post 113, Quartzsite, Arizona monthly membership meeting (17 February 2024). Provided update on Commission activities.
- Attended Veterans' Advisory Council for the International City Manager's Association (20 February 2024)
- Substitute Teaching, Parker High School, Parker, Arizona (22 February 2024). Inspired the next generation to consider careers in the U.S. Military.
- Telephone Meeting with Cabinet Executive Officer, Dana Allmond. (26 February 2024)
- Attended VFW Post 769, Quartzsite, Arizona monthly membership meeting (9 March 2024). Provided update on Commission activities.
- Attended Veteran Stand Down in Parker, Arizona (15 March 2024)
- Meeting with Executive Assistant, Lupita Santellano to discuss agenda for next meeting. (21 March 2024)

- Chaired annual charity Desert Golf Tournament hosted by VFW Post 769 and Legion Post 113 (23 March 2024).

Respectfully Submitted,

Philip D. Cushman
Commissioner