

Department of Veterans' Services

Fiscal Year 2021 Strategic Plan 2-pager

Agency Director:
Strategic Planner:
Last modified:

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07/15/2020

Summary of Multi-Year Strategic Priorities

Vision:

Arizona Veterans, Service Members and their families will have no barriers to benefits and services they have earned

Mission:

To be the catalyst in response to the evolving needs of Arizona Veterans, Service Members and their families

Agency Description:

The Arizona Department of Veterans' Services (ADVS) assists Veterans, Service Members and their dependents with obtaining Federal and State earned benefits. The Department operates State Homes for Veterans (ASVH) and Veterans' Memorial Cemeteries throughout Arizona. The homes are self-funded, skilled-nursing facilities that provide short and long term care services to Veterans and their spouses. The Department manages the State Approving Agency (SAA) that qualifies schools to offer curriculum to Veterans under the GI Bill. The Department also administers the Military Family Relief Fund (MFRF), the Veterans' Donation Fund (VDF), coordinates statewide services to eliminate homelessness among Veterans, decrease Veteran suicides and increase employment opportunities for Arizona Veterans.

Executive Summary:

Fiscal Year 2020 was a year of great success and great challenge. ADVS strengthened its commitment to AMS by implementing metrics to show improvement in 1:1 completions, standardized work creation and revisions, continuous improvement ideas implemented at the recommendation of our customers and Gemba walks. This emphasis allowed us to continue to excel as COVID-19 attacked our state. We were prepared and stood strong. Our Veteran suicide prevention efforts earned national praise, even being touted in the New York Times. Our State Veteran homes continue to excel. ASVH-Tucson has been a 5-Star facility for the third consecutive year and ASVH-Phoenix raised from 3-Stars to 4-Stars. Both homes were recognized by US News and World Report with their highest rating. Our two new ASVH's construction continues to progress on schedule. Two of our cemeteries completed National Cemetery Administration audits and one was rated 97%. The Veteran Benefits Counselors (VBC) assisted Arizona Veterans in receiving over 600 million dollars in federal Veterans Affairs (VA) entitlements and the Department provided over 19,000 monthly direct services to customers. Our IT Risk score remains one of the highest in the state. FY21 will be a year of change. We will analyze our successes during the COVID-19 crisis to improve our processes. We will complete construction and implement our detailed staffing plans for our two new ASVHs. We will complete more outreach and grow our partner base. The departments superior fiscal stewardship of the money entrusted to us ensures that we "Serve More Veterans Better".

#	Five Year Strategy	Start Year	Progress / Successes
1	Significantly reduce the Veteran suicide rate in Arizona	2018	Launched the Be Connected Roadshow across Arizona, adding 99 new partners. ADVS has become a national model (recognized by The New York Times) through their efforts participating in the Governor's Challenge to reduce Veteran suicide. Be Connected calls increased by 10% – Added 1.2 million dollars to the budget for service delivery, training and coordination – 85% of our VBCs and 50% of our Public and Intergovernmental Affairs staff attended suicide prevention training.
2	Operate four long term care facilities that all carry 5-Star ratings	2018	ASVH-Tucson has carried the 5-Star rating for three years while ASVH-Phoenix has risen from 3-Stars to 4-Stars in the past year. Both homes also achieved the US News and World Report's highest rating. A restorative care program was created in ASVH-Phoenix. Construction for ASVH-Flagstaff and ASVH-Yuma are on schedule.
3	Support significant increases in Veterans' Services through management of staff, funding and effective communication	2019	FY20 was a year of emphasis on honing our AMS skills. We saw a marked increase in 1:1 completions, standard work revisions, continuous improvement ideas implemented and process improvement projects completed. Through that emphasis we were able to adjust to meet the COVID-19 challenge without a degradation in services. We improved our relationship with ADOA and have shown progress in working with key suppliers like Knowledge Services. Our IT risk score remains one of the highest in the state.
4	To be Arizona's proven top choice for Veterans' services	2017	Arizona Veterans currently receive over \$54 million per month in VA monetary benefits, an increase of 11% over the last year. SAA was recognized by the VA as a model for best AMS practices. ADVS handled over 800 dignified burials during the fiscal year. ADVS has increased the speed of the MFRF processes and payments.

Strategy #	FY21 Annual Objectives	Objective Metrics	Annual Initiatives
#1	Increase the number of pre-crisis interventions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average time from voicemail to call back. • % of calls returned within established time frame 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the number of partner organizations and communities • Develop and deploy a plan to reach at risk Veterans • Continue the Be Connected Roadshow, a year long initiative to increase awareness amongst communities • Establish a plan to expand geographical outreach and hours
#2a	Increase combined rating to an average of 5-Stars.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly quality of care score • Monthly census • # of nursing hours per resident • # of RN hours per resident • Points received during health inspection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to increase advanced training opportunities for clinical staff • Develop a business plan that promotes efficiencies to better serve our residents and staff • Maintain US News and World Report rankings for nursing homes • Develop a plan to increase census at ASVH-Phoenix
#2b	Ready ASVH-Flagstaff and ASVH-Yuma for opening.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of home opening milestones met 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete 16 tiered A-3's for establishment of ASVHs
#3	Staffing to desired levels. Increase effective use of our budget.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funded vacancy rate • % of expenditures to budget • # of VBC positions filled 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and deploy a more practical business plan to manage our divisions • Continue training each Assistant Deputy Director to manage their own budget • Leverage the best practices learned from the COVID-19 crisis
#4	Eliminate barriers to quality service.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Federal dollars leveraged • Dollars in donations • Dollars in revenue • % of agency complaints resolved in established time frame • # of direct services provided 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to redesign the MFRF process for efficiencies • Continue headstone alignment projects in all three State Veterans' Memorial Cemeteries • Fully deploy the Department's complaint process • Develop and deploy a strategy to leverage the different types of Veteran community partners • Develop a strategy for deploying additional virtual services • Modernize and maximize our technology