

ADVS begins web camera sessions to give veterans easier access to their benefits



Veterans benefits counselors (VBCs) from the Arizona Department of Veterans' Services (ADVS) are now using web cameras to complete appointments with veterans, their families and caretakers. VBCs can live chat with people to help them apply for their Veterans Administration compensation and pension claims.

“With these web camera sessions, we’re leading the nation in using technology to ensure Arizona’s veterans receive the benefits they’ve earned,” Gov. Doug Ducey says. “This program increases access and convenience, especially for Arizona veterans in rural areas.”

The Hopi Tribe was one of the first to test this technology with ADVS. Before this program, Hopi veterans had to travel two hours to one of the ADVS offices in Prescott or Flagstaff, or VBCs had to meet them at an itinerant office.

“Our VBCs in the Northern Region came up with the idea. We use web cameras for meetings internally, and in the spirit of continuous improvement, piloted the program to benefit our customers. Through a successful pilot from the Flagstaff ADVS office, we have conducted about 70 successful meetings throughout Northern Arizona,” Wanda Wright, ADVS Director, says.

Since the pilot, VBCs have helped veterans from Flagstaff, Winslow Indian Healthcare, Hopi Veterans Services and more. Now they’re ready to expand the web camera sessions to all areas of Northern Arizona.

In the future, ADVS hopes to expand this program across the state. Then every VBC office would be able to do web camera sessions. For example, a VBC in Yuma could file a claim for a veteran who lives in Sierra Vista. This will save time and eliminate travel costs for veterans and their families.

“This is definitely a process that’s prescribed under the Arizona Management System. As our employees think about how they can do their jobs bigger, better and faster, the web camera sessions definitely answer the call. Now we’ve increased our efficiency and the number of veterans we serve,” Wright adds.

VBCs are available in more than two dozen locations statewide. They help with processing compensation and pension applications, appealing VA decisions, filing for survivor’s death benefits and much more. To contact a VBC office for an appointment (in-person or online), [click here](#).

