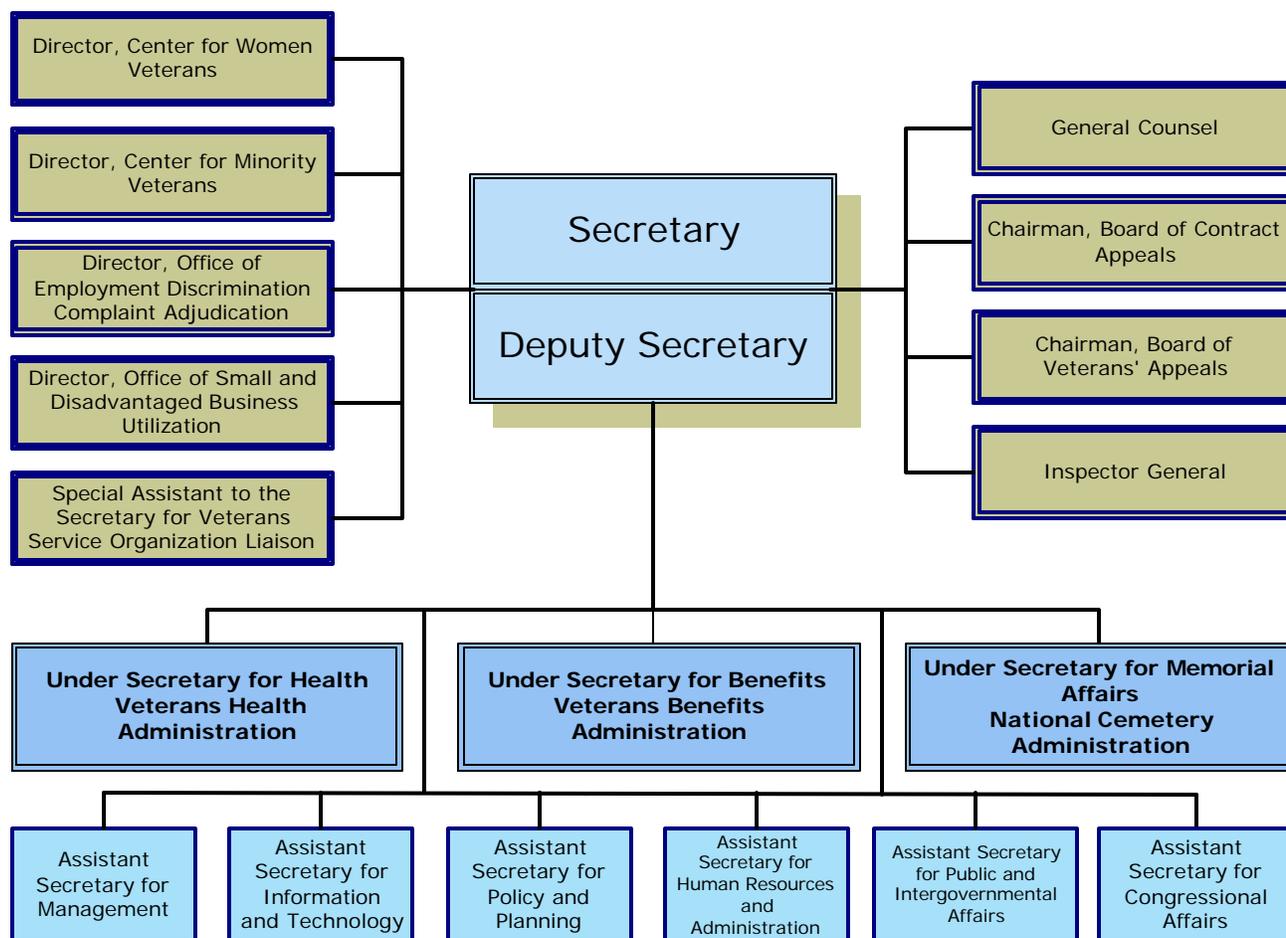


WHO WE ARE



The FY 2000 Performance Report documents VA's progress in providing high-quality, timely benefits and services to the men and women who have served our country in the armed forces. This report identifies the achievements VA recorded during FY 2000 that have contributed to attaining the goals and objectives in the VA Strategic Plan

and Annual Performance Plan. In so doing, we are providing detailed information—to Congress, OMB, veterans service organizations, and other stakeholders—to spell out not only what we do, but more importantly, *how well we are doing* in meeting our commitment to honor our veterans and to compensate them for their sacrifices.

Mission

“To care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and his orphan.”

These words, spoken by Abraham Lincoln during his Second Inaugural Address, reflect the philosophy and principles that guide VA in everything we do in our efforts to serve our Nation’s veterans and their families.

In today’s environment, President Lincoln’s statement reflects VA’s responsibility to treat America’s veterans and their families with profound respect and compassion; to be their principal advocate in promoting the health, welfare, and dignity of all veterans; and to ensure they receive the medical care, benefits, social support, and lasting memorials they deserve in recognition of their service to America.

The statutory mission authority for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) defines our organizational commitment to America’s veterans: “to administer the laws providing benefits and other services to veterans and the dependents and the beneficiaries of veterans.” (38 U.S.C. 301(b)) VA exists to give meaning, purpose, and reality to that commitment. The needs, preferences, and expectations of veterans directly shape the benefits and services we provide.

Vision

As the needs of veterans change, VA must change to address those needs by:

- ◆ Becoming an even more veteran-focused organization, functioning as a single, comprehensive provider of seamless service to the men and women who have served our Nation;

- ◆ Continuously benchmarking and improving the quality and delivery of our service with the best in business, and using innovative means and high technology to deliver world-class service;
- ◆ Fostering partnerships with veterans organizations and other stakeholders, making them part of the decision-making process;
- ◆ Cultivating a dedicated VA workforce of highly skilled employees who understand, believe in, and take pride in our vitally important mission.

Core Values

To implement our mission and achieve our strategic goals, we strive to uphold a set of core values representing the basic fabric of our organizational culture. These values transcend all organizational boundaries and apply to everything we do as *One VA*. Each member of the VA team endeavors to practice the following values when serving veterans and working with others:

Respect and Commitment

- ◆ Veterans have earned our respect and our commitment to meet their needs.
- ◆ We believe that integrity, fairness, and respect must be the hallmarks of our interactions.

Open Communication

- ◆ We are committed to open, accurate, and timely communication with veterans, employees, and external stakeholders.
- ◆ We listen to the concerns and views of veterans, employees, and external stakeholders to improve the programs and services we provide.

Excellence in Services, Programs, and People

- ◆ We continuously strive to meet or exceed the service delivery expectations of veterans and their families by delivering accurate, timely, and courteous service and benefits in an effective and efficient manner.
- ◆ We are committed to improved access for veterans and their families through facility location and design, and through innovative uses of information technology.
- ◆ We perform at the highest level of competence and take pride in our accomplishments.
- ◆ We are open to change and value a culture where everyone is involved, accountable, respected, and appreciated.
- ◆ We value teamwork and cooperation—operating as *One VA* to deliver world-class, seamless service to veterans and their families.

Background

VA directly touches the lives of millions of veterans every day through its health care, benefits, and burial programs. With facilities in all 50 states, the territories, and the District of Columbia, we provide benefits and services through our 172 hospitals, 135 nursing homes, 43 domiciliaries, 781 outpatient clinics (i.e., 601 community-based, 172 hospital-based, 4 independent, and 4 mobile), 206 Vietnam Veteran Outreach Centers (Vet Centers), 57 regional offices, and 119 national cemeteries.

The Department accomplishes its mission through partnerships among the Veterans Health Administration (VHA), the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA), the National Cemetery

Administration (NCA), the Board of Veterans' Appeals (BVA), and the Departmental staff organizations by integrating the related activities and functions of the following major programs:

Medical Care

VA meets the health care needs of America's veterans by providing primary care, specialized care, and related medical and social support services.

Medical Education

VA's health care education and training programs help to ensure an adequate supply of clinical care providers for veterans and the Nation.

Medical Research

The medical research program contributes to the Nation's knowledge about disease and disability.

Compensation

The compensation program provides monthly payments and ancillary benefits to veterans, in accordance with rates specified by law, in recognition of the average potential loss of earning capacity caused by a disability, disease, or death incurred in, or aggravated during, active military service. This program also provides monthly payments, as specified by law, to surviving spouses, dependent children, and dependent parents, in recognition of the economic loss caused by the veteran's death during active military service or, subsequent to discharge from military service, as a result of a service-connected disability.

Pension

The pension program provides monthly payments, as specified by law, to needy wartime veterans who are permanently and totally

disabled. This program also provides monthly payments, as specified by law, to needy surviving spouses and dependent children of deceased wartime veterans who die as a result of a disability not related to military service.

Education

The education program assists eligible veterans, service members, reservists, and survivors and dependents in achieving their educational or vocational goals.

Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment

The vocational rehabilitation and employment program assists veterans with service-connected disabilities to achieve functional independence in daily activities. It provides the support and assistance necessary to enable service-disabled veterans to become employable and to obtain and maintain suitable employment.

Housing

The housing program helps eligible veterans, active duty personnel, surviving spouses, and selected reservists to purchase and retain homes.

Insurance

The insurance program provides veterans and service members with life insurance benefits, some of which are not available from other providers like the commercial insurance industry, due to lost or impaired insurability resulting from military service. Insurance coverage will be available at competitive premium rates and with policy features comparable to those offered by commercial companies. A competitive, secure rate of return will be ensured on investments held on behalf of the insured.

Burial

Primarily through the National Cemetery Administration, VA honors veterans with a final resting place and lasting memorials to commemorate their service to the Nation.

Program Participants

VA serves a significant portion of the veteran population. In FY 2000, more than 3.8 million patients used VA health care, over 2.6 million veterans and family members received monthly VA disability compensation payments, and nearly 2.4 million graves were maintained at our national cemeteries. The following table summarizes the number of individual veterans or dependents who received benefits or services in our major program areas during FY 2000.

Program	Number of Participants
Medical Care	
Unique patients	3,817,000
Veterans	3,505,000
Non-veterans	312,000
Compensation	
Veterans	2,300,600
Survivors/children	306,200
Pension	
Veterans	370,400
Survivors	264,400
Education	
Veterans and service persons	283,000
Reservists	70,300
Survivors/dependents	44,800
Vocational Rehabilitation	
Veterans receiving services/subsistence	53,000
Veterans receiving services only	11,000
Housing	
Loans guaranteed	175,200
Insurance	
Administered policies (veterans)	2,206,800
Supervised policies (service members and veterans)	2,720,100
Burial	
Interments	82,700
Graves maintained	2,380,500
Headstones and markers	327,500

In FY 2000, VA resources totaled about \$50.9 billion in obligations and nearly 203,000 full-time equivalent (FTE) employees. Over 95 percent of total obligations went directly to veterans in the form of monthly payments of benefits, or for direct services such as medical care. The following charts show (1) how VA spent the taxpayer funds with which we were entrusted, and (2) the distribution of FTE.

