



The Guardian

The monthly newsletter of the New Mexico Dept. of Veterans' Services
March, 2024

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The New Mexico Department of Veterans' Services Receives Funding to Expand Services

The New Mexico Department of Veterans' Services (DVS) will be receiving funding to expand its services and programs, courtesy of the new \$10.21 billion fiscal year 2025 state budget passed in the recently concluded 2024 New Mexico Legislature and signed by Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham on March 6.

DVS will receive \$1.2 million for a feasibility study to develop a veterans' service center in Albuquerque, located not far from the Raymond G. Murphy VA Hospital. The idea is to provide veterans with a true "one-stop shop" facility that houses representatives from federal, state, and local agencies.

"We want to make it a lot easier for veterans and their families to get the help they need," said DVS Cabinet Secretary Jamison Herrera. "This veterans' service center would eliminate the need for them to have to drive all over town, or trying to communicate by mail, email, or phone."

In addition, the new state budget will also provide the following funds for the creation or expansion of the following DVS programs and services:

- \$175,000 to expand its state veterans' transportation program. This will allow DVS to expand the reach of its Highly Rural Veterans Transportation Program, which is a VA grant-funded program offering free round-trip rides to VA medical appointments for veterans in fifteen counties VA identifies as highly rural. The expanded program will begin offering this service to the remaining 18 counties in New Mexico.

- \$600,000 for the purchase of a four-wheel-drive mobile unit, and the hiring of two additional veterans' service officers. This mobile team will travel to areas not readily served by VSOs in DVS field offices to help veterans file VA claims or apply for state veterans' benefits.

- \$125,000 to develop a strategy and implement a program to help homeless veterans. DVS will work with other federal, state, and local/community agencies...and seek to improve services for veteran homelessness in rural and tribal areas.

- \$100,000 to fund the implementation of the Burial Equity Act here in New Mexico. This is a federal law that now allows members of the National Guard or Reserves, who were never federally activated for the minimum 90-days needed in order to receive a DD-214 upon completion of their service, to be buried with military honors and a headstone at state veterans' cemeteries.

- \$150,000 to bolster the state Honor Guard program, which is managed by DVS. This will allow for the adding and training of additional honor guards—teams of all-volunteers from service organizations that render military honors at many funerals of veterans around the state. Each honor guard team receives a bugle, and a team stipend for each funeral. DVS holds two annual training conferences to ensure that honor guards render honors in a professional manner.

(continued on next page)

- \$3 million in capital outlay funds to help with expansion and maintenance at the three state veterans' cemeteries in Angel Fire, Fort Stanton, and Gallup that are managed by DVS.

In addition to this funding through the state budget, legislators also passed House Bill 298, the Service Members Suicide Prevention Act sponsored by State Representatives Eliseo Alcon, Harry Garcia, Tara Jaramillo, and Alan Martinez. The new state law allocates an additional \$100,000 to DVS for raising statewide awareness of suicide in the veteran community, and increasing access to federal, state, and local suicide prevention resources.

"DVS would like to thank the legislators and Governor Lujan Grisham for their commitment to improving the lives of our veterans and their families," said DVS Secretary Herrera. "We will be developing solid plans to put this funding to work, and will be releasing more details once they're finalized."



DVS Launches Statewide TV/Radio Ad Campaign for 9-8-8 Suicide & Crisis Line

DVS, with cooperation from the New Mexico Department of Health, has contracted with the New Mexico Broadcaster's Association to launch a statewide military and veteran suicide awareness and prevention TV and radio advertising campaign.

This spring and summer, 30-second radio and TV commercials will feature actual military veterans urging service members, veterans, or their family members having suicidal thoughts to call the national 9-8-8 National Suicide & Crisis Lifeline--and then to press "1" for any service member or veteran having thoughts of suicide. This immediate and confidential service is available 24-hours a day/seven days a week.

"VA data indicates 17 veterans nationwide take their own life every day," said DVS Cabinet Secretary Jamison Herrera, who taped a segment in one of the TV commercials (*left photo; other veterans are shown below*). "Many don't know where to turn to for help. We want the military community to know about this 9-8-8 number that can save their life."

The TV and radio commercials are in English and Spanish. A 60-second radio commercial has also been produced in the Navajo language for airing on the state's two Navajo-language radio stations. The advertising campaign is part of DVS' participation in the nationwide *Governor's Challenge to Prevent Suicide Among Service Members, Veterans, and Their Families*. More commonly known as The Governor's Challenge, the campaign's mission was developed by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)—a division of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services—asking states to spread awareness about and develop strategies for stopping suicides among our nation's military members and veterans. DVS is leading the effort here in New Mexico. The state Dept. of Health is a participating agency and provided funding for the DVS-led advertising campaign.





DVS Outlines Plans at Three Public Presentations

DVS Cabinet Secretary Herrera (*left photo, top/center*) was busy presenting agency plans for the year, and talking about legislative funding matters, at three recent public briefings.

Two days before the 2024 Legislature adjourned, Secretary talked about many of the agency's pending legislative matters at the first DVS quarterly veterans' community meeting of the year on February 13 in Albuquerque at the New Mexico Veterans Memorial. In addition to also seeking community feedback, DVS also invited representatives from the following agencies were

also invited to present agency updates: The New Mexico VA Health Care System, VFW, the American Legion, Disabled American Veterans, U.S. Seagoing Marines Association, the Governor's Veterans Advisory Council, the New Mexico Veterans Integration Center, Honor Flight of Northern New Mexico, and Goodwill Industries of New Mexico. [DVS videotaped the meeting](#), which concluded with a 45-minute Q&A session.

Two days after the governor signed the state budget, Secretary Herrera talked about the funds that were now officially appropriated for DVS...on March 8 at the DVS spring Native American Veterans Collaboration Quarterly Briefing at Fire Rock Casino in Gallup. Representatives from pueblos and the Navajo Nation were assured by Secretary Herrera that all of the planned expanded services will definitely include serving tribal communities.



MIDDLE PHOTO: Joining DVS Cabinet Secretary Herrera at the Fire Rock Casino briefing were the following DVS staff (L to R): Tribal Liaison Beverly Charley, Gallup VSO John Livingston, SAA Director Kathy Snyder, Women Veterans Program Manager Theresa Figueroa, PIO Ray Seva, CFO Danelle Lucero, Social Worker Therese Castillo, and State Benefits Division Director Ed Mendez. At the far right is Navajo Nation Veterans Administration Director Bobbie Baldwin.



On March 13 (*left photo*), DVS Cabinet Secretary Herrera was the first speaker at a Governor's Veterans Advisory Council public meeting in Truth or Consequences at the state veterans' home. In addition to outlining for the committee the program expansions at DVS, he mentioned funding included for five additional veterans' service officers—which will bring the total number of DVS VSOs to 29.

The council then opened up the meeting for questions from the audience. Most of the concerns centered on the lack of medical staff at hospitals and clinics in rural parts of the state. Committee Chair Sam Lujan assured the audience that the board will take these concerns to legislators for possible



DVS Busy on the Outreach Trail

DVS veterans' services officers and program managers have been busy on the outreach trail this winter.

LEFT PHOTO: Silver City-based VSO Clarissa Sierra (*in black*) answered questions and helped veterans file benefits claims at a VA-hosted PACT Act outreach on February 24 at Elks Lodge 1813 in Lordsburg. Clarissa also makes monthly outreach stops in Deming.

MIDDLE PHOTO: DVS Women Veterans Program Manager Theresa Figueroa was on hand to assist attendees at the 39th annual *Tribute to Women in the Military* ceremony on March 1 at American Legion Post 13 in Albuquerque.

Like her fellow DVS VSOs, Theresa can help file VA claims, apply for state veterans' benefits, or help with anything else a veteran needs help with. But her primary focus is helping women veterans.



LEFT PHOTO: DVS Roswell-based VSO Danielle Thompson (*in light-blue shirt*) answered questions and helped file claims at a Veterans' Resource Fair on February 21 at the Roswell Public Library.

The event was presented through a collaborated effort by DVS, Goodwill Industries of New Mexico, VFW/Dept. of New Mexico, the American Legion/ Dept. of New Mexico, ESGR, the New Mexico Workforce Connection, and VA's HUD-VASH Supportive Housing Program.



Scheduled DVS March/April Outreach Visits

DVS is scheduled to make the following outreach visits later this month and in April at the locations listed below.

Veterans and/or their eligible dependents are encouraged to visit the locations listed below for information regarding the filing VA claims for VA medical care, mental health counseling, disability benefits and payments, retiree pensions, burials, and many other VA benefits.

DVS staff can also help with applying for state veterans' benefits such as the veterans' \$4,000 property tax exemption, waiving the property tax assessment for veterans rated 100% permanent and total disabled, disabled veteran fishing and hunting licenses, veterans' license plates, and many more state veterans' benefits.

Staff will also help with any other issues a veteran or eligible dependent may need help with. Please remember to bring a copy of your Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty (DD-214), as it is a necessary document for filing all veterans' benefits claims. DVS can help assist veterans file for lost or misplaced forms.

City/Town	Date	Venue/Address	Hours
Albuquerque	Mar. 26	CNM/900 University Blvd. SE	8am-2pm
Artesia	Mar. 21	United Veterans Center/W. Hermosa Dr.	9am-3:30pm
Bernalillo	Mar. 29	Bernalillo Senior Center/801 Rotary Park Rd.	1030am-230p
Cuba	Mar. 20	Cuba Senior Center/16 W. Cordova St.	9am-1pm
Deming	Mar. 13	Deming Food Bank/4045 Overhill Dr. NW	10am-2pm
Deming	Mar. 27	Deming Senior Center/800 South Granite	10am-12:30pm
Eagle Nest	Mar. 22	Eagle Nest Senior Ctr./151 Willow Creek Dr.	9am-2pm
Roswell	Mar. 28	Nat'l Guard Armory/1 W. Earl Cummings Loop	8am-5pm

Albuquerque	Apr. 7	KAFB Air Nat'l Guard	9am-1pm
Albuquerque	Apr. 29	North Valley Sr. Ctr/3825 4th St. NW	9am-1pm
Artesia	Apr. 18	United Veterans Center/W. Hermosa Dr.	9am-3:30pm
Capitan	Apr. 4	Capitan Public Library/101 East 2nd St.	10am-2pm
Cimarron	Apr. 12	Village Hall/356 9th. Street	9am-1pm
Deming	Apr. 10	Veterans' Food Bank/4045 Overhill Dr. NW	9am-1pm
Deming	Feb. 28	Deming Senior Center/800 S. Granite	10am-12:30pm
Santa Rosa	Apr. 17	David Flores Veterans Ctr/720 Lake Dr.	10am-2pm

The following are weekly outreach visits:

Albuquerque	M & W	VA Regional Office/500 Gold Ave SW	9am-4pm
Santa Fe	T & Th	Santa Fe Vet Center/2209 Brothers Rd.	8am-2pm
Truth or Consequences	Wed.	State Veterans Home/992 S. Broadway	9am-4pm

Throughout the year, veterans or their eligible dependents can always make an appointment with a veterans' service officer for assistance. Locations, contact information for DVS VSOs, the woman veterans program manager, and the DVS Native American liaison can be found on the last two pages of this newsletter.



DVS will host the following outreaches listed below...to help veterans and unmarried widows of veterans to file for the veterans property tax exemption or waiver:

Roswell	Mar. 28	New Mexico National Guard Armory 1 West Earl Cummings Rd.	9 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Aztec	Apr. 2	San Juan County Assessor's Office 100 South Oliver Drive/Suite 400	9 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Albuquerque	Apr. 6	New Mexico Veterans Memorial 1100 Louisiana Blvd. SE	9 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Las Cruces	Apr. 25	Doña Ana County Assessor's Office 845 North Motel Blvd.	9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

The veterans' property tax exemption is a \$4,000 reduction off the taxable value of a veteran's New Mexico property assessment.

Veterans rated at 100% permanent-and-total, service-connected disabled can file to waive their property tax payment. Unmarried widows of these service-connected disabled veterans can also apply for this waiver.

Applicants for the exemption or waiver must bring a copy of one of the following documents to show proof of veteran status: DD-214, NOAA form 56-16, or PHG form 1867.

You must also bring one of the following to show proof of residency: a valid NM driver's license, voter registration card, or your latest income tax return. You will not be able to file for the exemption or waiver without proof of veteran status or residency at your home.

Throughout the year, veterans and unmarried widows of veterans can also contact any DVS field office at any time of the year to apply for the exemption or waiver by mail. Please contact DVS at (505) 827-6300 or nmdvs.info@dvs.nm.gov to find the nearest DVS office.



DVS Roswell-based VSO Danielle Thompson will be at the Chaves County Veterans Symposium below... to help veterans and their eligible dependents file VA claims and apply for state veterans' benefits. DVS State Veterans Benefits Bureau Chief Jeff George will also be there to help eligible veterans file for the state veterans' property tax exemption....or the 100% service-connected-disabled property tax waiver.



CHAVES COUNTY VETERANS SYMPOSIUM

A Collaborative Veterans event of Local, State, and Federal Organizations

When: Thursday, March 28, 2024 **Time:** 9am to 3pm

Location: National Guard Armory (1 W Earl Cummings Loop/Roswell, NM)

Schedule of Events

- 9:00 am Presentation of Colors:
 - Youth Challenge Academy
 - National Anthem sang by Sean Lee
- Followed by Opening Remarks
- 10:30 am Together with Veterans Presentation
- 11:30 am NMMI Goss Rifle Team Presentation
- 1:00 pm to 2:30pm Informal Q & A
- 3:00 pm Conclusion of Event

Services Available All Day

- ◇ Veterans Property Tax Exemption/Waiver Clinic to include Assessors office
- ◇ Claims Clinic Hosted by DAV, VA Regional Office, and NMDVS
- ◇ Goodwill Industries & Local Funeral Homes
- ◇ Local Chaves County Veteran Organizations
- ◇ Veterans Health Care Services and Vet Center
- ◇ VA Home Loan
- ◇ New Mexico State organizations
- ◇ Senior Services and More





VBOC to Present “Boots to Business” Classes in Clovis & Albuquerque

The New Mexico Veterans Business Outreach Center (VBOC)—the veterans business development division of DVS—is presenting “Boots to Business” training class March 25-26 at Cannon Air Force Base in Clovis for transitioning active-duty service members who are interested in starting their own business or growing an existing operation.

On April 11-12, the VBOC will present a similar “Boots to Business: Reboot” class for current and former New Mexico National Guard members and their spouses at the Albuquerque VBOC/DVS office, at the Pinetree Corporate Center at 4801 Indian School Road NE.

These free two-day introduction to entrepreneurship courses are from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Attendees will learn key elements of small business ownership, techniques for evaluating the feasibility of business concepts, and the steps needed to develop an all-important business plan—a “must” for anyone looking to start or expand a business.

There will also be an introduction to a broad spectrum of entrepreneurial business concepts, how to access resources available for obtaining start-up or expansion capital, technical assistance, and how to pursue federal contracting opportunities. To register for this class, please go to the national Boots to Business calendar at <https://sba.my.site.com/s/reboot-course-information> . Click on the March 25-26 class in Clovis, or the April 11-12 class in Albuquerque to complete enrollment.

For more information, contact VBOC Business Advisor Austin Walker at a.walker@dvs.nm.gov or (505) 469-8501.



ABOVE PHOTO: VBOC Business Advisory Austin Walker (*center/top, standing*) taught a VBOC Boots to Business class at Kirtland AFB on Feb. 20-21 for transitioning active-duty service members and spouses.



New Mexico Department Of Veterans' Services

2024 Military Honors Spring Training Conference and Competition



Friday, April 26
8 a.m.—4 p.m.

Las Cruces/Sonoma Ranch Golf Course
1275 Golf Club Rd.

POC: diana.myklebust@dvs.nm.gov; (505) 231-8911



AARP[®]



**NEW MEXICO
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SAVE THE DATE

Department of Veterans' Services
SATURDAY, JUNE 8, 2024
Sheraton Albuquerque Uptown



2024



WOMEN VETERANS'

CONFERENCE

"YOUR VOICE MATTERS"

RSVP early and reserve your seat today!

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2024-department-of-veterans-services-women-veterans-conference-tickets-797077429047?aff=oddtcreator>

Email: theresa.figueroa@dvs.nm.gov



DVS Tours Construction Site of New Veterans Integration Centers

DVS Cabinet Secretary Jamison Herrera (*LEFT PHOTO, in camouflage uniform*), DVS Health Care Coordination Division Director Diane Mourning Brown (*black sweater/red shirt*) and DVS Women Veterans Program Manager Theresa Figueroa (*third from right*) were given a tour of the new Veterans Integration Center (VIC) facility under construction in SE Albuquerque. The tour was led by VIC CEO Brock Wolff (*third from left*) and COO Fermin Ortega (*in light-blue shirt*).

The VIC, which provides temporary shelter and transitional services for homeless veterans, is scheduled to open this new 42 residential unit facility in June. It is located on Gibson Blvd SE just off Interstate 25--less than four miles from the Raymond G. Murphy VA Medical Center. DVS plans on establishing a regular outreach schedule to help residents with their benefits needs.



(above is an artist's conception of the new Veterans Integration Center (VIC))



News from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)

VA Sets Record For Fastest to Process the One-Millionth Claim in a Year

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced that it has processed its one millionth veteran benefits claim in fiscal year 2024.

VA reached this milestone March 4 — the earliest in VA history and nearly six weeks faster than the previous all-time record (from fiscal year 2023). VA has completed almost 35% more claims than at this point last year.

Through February of this fiscal year, VA provided \$69 billion in earned compensation and pension benefits to 6.5 million veterans and survivors. This milestone builds on last year's historic pace, when VA delivered record amounts of earned benefits to veterans and survivors.

This increase in veteran benefits is largely due to the PACT Act, which has empowered VA to expand health care and benefits to millions of veterans who were exposed to toxins and other hazards while serving our country.

“We’re proud to be delivering more benefits, more quickly, to more veterans and survivors than ever before – but we’re not slowing down,” said VA Under Secretary for Benefits Josh Jacobs. “We won’t rest until every veteran and every survivor gets the VA benefits and care that they’ve earned. So, to any veteran or survivor out there: don’t wait, submit your claim today!”

VA has been able to grant benefits for 60.4% of claims filed in 2024 — including 75.1% of PACT Act claims — a sharp increase in the grant rate from pre-PACT Act levels.

Veterans also continue to apply for benefits at record rates, with VA receiving 4.5% more claims thus far in fiscal year 2024 than at this point in 2023. Since the PACT Act was signed into law by President Biden in August of 2022, veterans and their families have filed more than 3.5 million claims.

As a part of reaching one million claims, VA processed 221,592 disability compensation and pension claims during January 2024 alone – making it VA’s highest single month of claims production ever, surpassing the previous monthly record of 193,411 from May 2023. In fact, VA’s top 11 best claims production months in agency history all happened in the last 12 months.

Additionally, VA continues to achieve single day processing milestones – VA processed between 9,000 and 10,000 veteran claims 43 times in fiscal year 2024 and more than 10,000 veteran claims 35 times during the same time period. February 7, 2024, was the best single production day ever in VBA history with 10,997 claims completed. Before fiscal year 2024, VA had only had three 9,000 claim production days in history.

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As a result of this record pace, veteran claims pending over 125 days – known as the backlog – has decreased by more than 42,000 claims over the past three months.

Due to record numbers of claims applications, the backlog is still expected to grow in 2024 before decreasing at the end of this year – and VA will continue to hire new claims processors, invest in continuous learning for all claims processors, and make technology improvements to ensure that veterans, family members, caregivers and survivors receive the benefits they've earned and deserve as quickly and accurately as possible.

VA remains focused on hiring and training new claims processors and has grown the claims processing workforce by more than 50% since fiscal year 2021. This growth, along with new technology to assist those processors, has allowed VA to meet the historic demand for benefits precipitated by the passage of the PACT Act in 2022.

President Biden Unveils Proposed Federal FY25 Budget and VA Funding

President Joe Biden has released his proposed budget for fiscal year 2025. It proposes critical resources to help VA continue providing more care and more benefits to more veterans than ever before.



President Biden has made supporting veterans a key pillar of his [Unity Agenda](#). VA has implemented the historic [PACT Act](#), which expanded VA [health care](#) and [benefits](#) to millions of veterans exposed to toxins and other hazards while serving; permanently housed [more than 40,000](#) veterans two years in a row; [expanded life-saving support](#) for veterans at-risk of suicide; delivered an [all-time yearly record number](#) of health care appointments to veterans; and much more.

The total fiscal year 2025 request for VA is \$369.3 billion, a \$33 billion (+10%) increase above the fiscal year 2024 budget estimate level. This includes a discretionary request of \$134.0 billion. The fiscal year 2025 mandatory funding request is \$235.3 billion, which includes \$24.5 billion from the Cost of War Toxic Exposures Fund (TEF), for a total increase of \$41.8 billion (21.6%) above fiscal year 2024.

The budget also makes critical, targeted investments in supporting veterans, their families, caregivers, and survivors. At VA, the budget will:

- **Expand health care and benefits for Veterans who were exposed to toxins and other hazards while serving our country.**

The PACT Act, which President Biden signed into law in August of 2022, is the most significant expansion of VA healthcare and benefits for veterans in generations – helping millions of veterans.

As part of the PACT Act, Congress authorized the TEF to invest in the delivery of health care associated with exposure to environmental hazards and any expenses incident to the delivery of health care and benefits associated with exposure to environmental hazards in the military. The budget continues this commitment and includes \$24.5 billion for the TEF in fiscal year 2025.

- **Support the delivery of health care for veterans across America**

At a time when VA is expanding access to health care for millions of veterans and [delivering record numbers of appointments](#), we are making sure that veterans have access to world-class health care whenever and wherever they need it. This budget invests \$112.6 billion in discretionary medical care funding in fiscal year 2025.

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In addition to fully funding inpatient, outpatient, mental health, and long-term care services, the budget supports programs that enhance VA healthcare quality and delivery, including a \$2 billion investment for non-recurring maintenance to improve medical facility infrastructure, and continued efforts to address the opioid and drug overdose epidemic.

This funding is critical because veterans who are enrolled in VA health care are proven to have better health outcomes than non-enrolled Veterans, and VA hospitals have dramatically outperformed non-VA hospitals in [overall quality ratings](#) and [patient satisfaction ratings](#). Additionally, VA health care is often [more affordable](#) than non-VA health care for veterans.

- **Prioritize mental health care and suicide prevention for veterans.**

The Budget invests \$135 million in VA research programs – along with \$17 billion within the VA Medical Care program – to increase access to quality mental health care and lower the cost of mental health services for veterans, with the goal of helping veterans take charge of their treatment and live full, meaningful lives. In addition, the budget provides \$583 million to further advance the Administration’s Veteran suicide prevention initiatives, including continued support of the 988 Veterans Crisis Line (Dial 988, press 1) and additional support for VA’s National Suicide Prevention Strategy.

- **Support health care for women veterans.**

The budget invests \$13.7 billion for women veterans’ healthcare, including \$1.1 billion towards women’s gender-specific care. More women are choosing VA healthcare than ever before, with women accounting for over 30 percent of the increase in enrolled veterans over the past five years. Investments support comprehensive specialty medical and surgical services for women veterans, improving maternal health outcomes, and more.

- **Bolster efforts to end veteran homelessness.** VA has permanently housed more than 40,000 homeless veterans each of the past two years. The budget invests \$3.2 billion to help VA’s efforts to end veteran homelessness and prevent veterans from becoming homeless in the future. The budget also includes funding for the Department of Housing and Urban Development to expand housing vouchers to more veterans in need.

- **Invest in claims processing and benefits delivery for veterans.** The budget provides \$4 billion to the Veterans Benefits Administration to support the continued timely processing of claims and delivery of benefits to veterans. This is critical at a time when veterans are applying for benefits at record rates and VA is delivering benefits at record rates; in FY 2023 alone, VA completed more than 1.9 million disability compensation and pension claims – an all-time record that surpassed the previous record by 15.9% – and VA is continuing this record-breaking trend.

For more information on the President’s fiscal year 2025 Budget, please visit the White House’s budget [website](#). For more information on the VA budget, please visit the VA’s budget [website](#).

Veterans Community Bulletin Board

The following pages feature event and informational flyers provided to DVS by veterans and community service agencies. These flyers are published for the convenience of New Mexico's veteran community. Inclusion in *The Guardian* does not constitute an endorsement by DVS of the organization, content, products, or services contained therein.

DVS invites government agencies and non-profit service organizations to send flyers for publication in *The Guardian* announcing an upcoming or ongoing veteran-related event. DVS will run these flyers as a public service courtesy to the veteran community.

Please note:

- Flyers must have the name of a point-of-contact from the organization...along with the contact's phone number or email address. Flyers without this information will not be published.
- DVS is not responsible for the accuracy of the content, products, or services in these flyers.
- Views expressed in these flyers are the independent views of the authors/owners of the third-party entity that created the flyer—and does not necessarily reflect the views of DVS.
- To the maximum extent permitted by law, DVS expressly denies liability for any and all losses suffered by any persons or organizations who, in their independent discretion and reliance, either directly or indirectly rely on content, products, services or information offered by these independent third-party organizations.
- DVS reserves the right to edit or decline to publish any flyer.

7th Annual 2024 NATIONAL VIETNAM WAR VETERANS DAY

Visit Us At
<https://northernagencyvo.org>



Shiprock Agency March 29, 2024

PROPOSED EVENTS

Parade * General Session * Trail Ride * Veteran Claims Clinic
Motorcycle Honor Ride * Navajo Song & Dance

SPECIAL ENTERTAINMENT

D Johnson In Concert

With Full Backup Band

Nashville Recording Artist

www.djohnsonmusic.com

Scan QR Code
To Donate



CONTACT

Vern R. Lee (505) 635-3249

Email: vernlee@gmail.com

Visit Us At

<https://northernagencyvo.org>

New Mexico Veterans' Memorial Park
1100 Louisiana Blvd SE Albuquerque

U.S. Seagoing Marine Monument Dedication



Friday March 29, 2024 @ 10:30 am



For more information: Sardo Sanchez (505) 999-8129

2nd Annual Navajo Women Veterans Recognition Day



Saturday, March 30th 2024
8:00 am-4:00 pm



A Navajo Womens Veteran Recognition Day and Gala to be presented for the Navajo Women Veterans who've served their country and transitioned back to civilian life.

The conference will provide information, VA claims services assistance, employment opportunities and other VA benefits women veterans may qualify for.



**Wear your
Favorite Traditional outfit
or
Ribbon Skirt**

4601 College Blvd,
Farmington, NM 87401



Come to enjoy the camaraderie of sisterhood in Arms.

VETERAN OUTREACH

HOBBS, NM

APRIL 11-17TH

- 🔥 Free for veterans:
- ✓ 3 Meals/Day
- ✓ Room & Board
- ✓ Equine & Piscatorial
Recreational Therapy

Join us for support,
connection, and healing!

HealingAmericasHeroes.org

Native American Training Institute Veterans Symposium



Friday, April 19 and Saturday, April 20, 2024
Isleta Resort & Casino Conference Center • Albuquerque, NM

Honoring Our Veterans
To A Journey for a Healthy and Quality Life

Veterans, Service Members and Dependents are invited and encouraged to attend this two-day symposium to ensure veterans have access to the many benefits, entitlements and services provided by NM Department of Veterans Services, Veterans Administration and Indian Health Services. Veterans will have the opportunity to voice their issues, concerns and needs directly to government officials, agencies and service providers to make certain their questions are adequately addressed, including:

1. Medical and Healthcare Services: COMPACT ACT, PACT ACT, PTSD, Suicide, Opioid Overdose
2. On-site assistance in filing for VA and State benefits;
3. Entrepreneurship: Business start ups, government contracting, etc.;
4. Vocational training, on-the-job training and other higher education opportunities;
5. Employment services and initiative;
6. Training and certification information for Veteran Service Officers;
7. Program and service opportunities exclusive to Women Veterans;
8. Promote and provide adequate healthcare needs and transportation services in rural communities.

Registration

FREE registration for Veterans, their spouses, and service providers. Complimentary information tables are available for veteran related services.

Register or reserve your information table by scanning the QR code on the right with your smart phone's camera to open the registration site or visit our website at:



www.nati-nm.org/veterans-1

Lodging & Venue

Isleta Resort & Casino
11000 Broadway SE
Albuquerque, NM 87005

Rate: \$141 plus tax

Code: NAT0424

Phone: (877) 747-5382

Deadline: April 1, 2024

Symposium Information

Ramus Suina
(505) 920-5047

Larry Archuleta
(505) 907-8699

Native American Training Institute *invites all Gourd Dancers to the* **Veterans Symposium** *Gourd Dance*

Saturday, April 20, 2024 • 1:00 pm to 7:00 pm
Isleta Resort & Casino Conference Center
Albuquerque, New Mexico



- Head Singer **Paige Burgass** *Comanche*
Santa Fe, NM
- Head Gourd Dancer **Paul Bemore** *Osage*
Broken Arrow, OK
- Master of Ceremony **Mike Salabiye** *Dine*
Gallup, NM
- Arena Director **Thomas Goodluck** *Dine*
Phoenix, AZ

*NATI kindly request participants adhere to the dance origin protocols.
There will be no vending opportunities at this event.*



Gourd Dance Information:
Ramona Wanya
admin@nati-nm.org 505.313.6386

Are you a Veteran ready to begin living your best life?

Experience a complimentary week full of mindful education, body rejuvenation and uplifting comradery with fellow veterans and their partners in the mountains of New Mexico. Learn valuable therapeutic and holistic tools while leaning in to Post Traumatic Growth.

APPLY TODAY!
Download an application on our website.



Serving veterans and their families since 2009.
YOU ARE NOT ALONE!

2024 RETREAT SCHEDULE

April 28- May 5

June 2-9

August 18-25

October 20-27

Retreats include **FREE** lodging, meals, and activities like massage therapy, acupuncture, yoga, horseback riding and more!
*Travel is participants responsibility.

Eligibility for attendance:

- 1) Veterans diagnosed with Post Traumatic Stress
 - 2) Must bring a support partner
 - 3) Must be free from drug/alcohol abuse for at least 12 months
- *Note: New Mexico veterans have first priority. Veterans from other states will be accepted as funds allow.

OUR CONTACT



505-501-8337



retreats@vethealingcenter.org



www.veteranswellnessandhealing.org



P.O. Box 805, Angel Fire, NM 87710





NM Caregivers Coalition Creates Portal to Provide Respite Care Provider Training

Did you know that any New Mexican seeking to be a respite caregiver can now obtain the needed training on how to become one?

New Mexico Caregivers Coalition has created a [Respite Care Provider Training](#) portal.

The [Respite Care Provider Training](#) teaches basic skills needed to work with New Mexicans who are elderly and those with disabilities throughout the lifespan. Training content is applicable to any type of caregiver working in any type of care setting.

Best of all, there is no cost to the learner.

Complete this self-paced, online training that teaches the skills required for becoming a paid, or volunteer, respite care provider within the State of New Mexico. Completers receive a 7-hour Certificate of Completion.

Completers and certificate holders can also be listed within [the Respite Care Registry](#). The Registry lists only those caregivers who complete our training. In this way, New Mexico Caregivers Coalition can promote those caregivers who have mastered, at least, these foundational skills.

The first step is to complete the Respite Care Provider Training. So, get started today. Go to <https://newmexico-respitecarewi.talentlms.com/> and sign up.

We thank ARCH National Respite Care Network; Respite Care Association of Wisconsin; and National Academy for State Health Policy for helping to create these invaluable resources!

About the Coalition

The New Mexico Caregivers Coalition is a statewide 501(c)3 organization created to promote the voice of family and professional caregivers and those they serve. We advocate for direct care workers' education, training, benefits, wages, and professional development. Support our work by getting involved in this and other dialogues of NMCC.

HORSIN' AROUND THERAPEUTIC RIDING CENTER

ABOUT US

Horsin' Around Therapeutic Riding Center is a PATH certified, 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that provides therapeutic activities centered around horses. We provide equine assisted services to children and adults with physical, cognitive, and emotional challenges in Valencia, Bernalillo and Socorro Counties.



OUR MISSION

Our mission is to improve the wellbeing of individuals through equine-assisted Therapy. We believe that horses and the therapy they provide make a difference by creating strong and healthy individuals, families and communities.



WHAT WE DO

Therapeutic/adaptive horsemanship

A horsemanship program that focuses on teaching riding and horsemanship skills on and off the horse to those with physical, cognitive, social, and developmental disabilities.

CHANGING LIVES ONE RIDE AT A TIME!

GET INVOLVED

Volunteer

- | | |
|--------------|------------------------|
| Side Walker | Administration |
| Horse Leader | Public Relations |
| Barn help | Information Technology |

Monetary Donation

Your donation will contribute to the care of our horses, facility maintenance, and provide scholarships for our participants.

@R0bin-Thomas-304



venmo

Scan this code to pay



DVS Field Offices in New Mexico

DVS has field offices throughout the state that are staffed with nationally accredited veterans service officers. DVS VSOs are dedicated to helping veterans with filing VA claims, applying for state veterans benefits, or with helping with anything else a veteran or their family needs with.

Office hours are Monday-Friday from 8am-5pm, (excluding holidays). Though this service is free, appointments are required and can be made by contacting the VSOs below. **Please note: VSOs can also provide help by phone or email to any veteran or eligible dependent calling or emailing from anywhere in New Mexico.**

Alamogordo/Southeast NM

David Henley

411 10th Street #107
(575) 937-5620

david.henley@dvs.nm.gov

Albuquerque Metro Area

May Chavez (*ABQ metro supervisor*)

Pinetree Corporate Center/Bldg. 2
4801 Indian School Rd. NE/2nd floor
(505) 527-2302

helen.chavez@dvs.nm.gov

Albuquerque Metro Area

Ron Saavedra

Pinetree Corporate Center/Bldg. 2
4801 Indian School Rd. NE/2nd flr
(505) 525-3331

ronald.saavedra@dvs.nm.gov

Albuquerque Metro Area

Diana Powers

Pinetree Corporate Center/Bldg. 2
4801 Indian School Rd. NE/2nd flr
(505) 274-0393

diana.powers@dvs.nm.gov

Albuquerque Metro Area

Mathew Zamora

Pinetree Corporate Center/Bldg. 2
4801 Indian School Rd. NE/2nd flr
(505) 525-3331

mathew.zamora@dvs.nm.gov

Albuquerque (downtown)

DVS staff Mon. & Wed. (9am-4pm)

Dennis Chavez Federal Bldg.
500 Gold Ave. SW/3rd floor
(*No appointment needed*)
(505) 383-2400

Albuquerque (VA Hospital)

DVS staff Mon., Wed., Thu. (9am-3pm)

Raymond G. Murphy VA Medical Ctr.
1501 San Pedro Dr. SE
(*no appointments needed*)
(505) 383-2400

Belen/ABQ Metro & Central NM

Rob Miller

Belen Business Center
719 South Main St.
(505) 537-9339

rob.miller@dvs.nm.gov

Carlsbad/Southeast NM

Dagmar Youngberg

101 N. Halagueno
(505) 537-9339

dagmar.youngberg@dvs.nm.gov

Clovis/Southeast NM

Matt Barela (*SE region supervisor*)

904 W. Sixth St.
(575) 825-9602

matthew.barela@dvs.nm.gov

Clovis/Southeast NM

Ben Padilla

904 W. Sixth St.
(505) 537-1445

ben.padilla@dvs.nm.gov

Farmington/Northwest NM

Robert Guinn (*NW region supervisor*)

San Juan College Vet Center
4601 College Blvd./Room 1715-B
(505) 327-2861

robert.guinn@dvs.nm.gov

Farmington/Northwest NM

Leo Esquibel

San Juan College Vet Center 4601
College Blvd./Room 1715-B
(505) 916-4835

leo.esquibel@dvs.nm.gov

Gallup/Northwest NM

John Livingston

908 E. Buena Vista Ave/Room 1A
(505) 389-8731

john.livingston@dvs.nm.gov

Grants/Northwest NM

April Ball

551 Washington Ave.
(505) 521-8132

april.ball@dvs.nm.gov

Hobbs/Southeast NM**Fred Solis-Littlejohn**

2120 North Alto St.

(575) 241-0714

fred.solis-little@dvs.nm.gov**Las Cruces/Southwest NM****Clint Anderson**

2024 E. Griggs Ave.

(505) 216-8782

clint.anderson@dvs.nm.gov**Rio Rancho/Northeast NM****Dustin Newsom**

Sandoval County Admin. Bldg.

1500 Idalia Rd./Bldg. D/room 2041

(505) 221-7190

dustin.newsom@dvs.nm.gov**Silver City/Southwest NM****Clarissa Sierra**

Western New Mexico University

1000 West College Ave.

Juan Chacon Bldg./Rm. 138A

(575) 313-5627

clarissa.sierra@dvs.nm.gov**Las Cruces/Southwest NM****Miguel Martinez** (*supervisor*)

2024 E. Griggs Ave.

(575) 644-6869

miguel.martinez@dvs.nm.gov**Las Vegas, NM/Northeast NM****Arturo Marlow** (*supervisor*)

917 Douglas Ave.

(505) 331-8838

arturo.marlow@dvs.nm.gov**Roswell/Southeast NM****Danielle Thompson**

1600 SE Main Street /Suite A

(575) 416-2284

danielle.thompson@dvs.nm.gov**Taos/Northeast NM****Leticia "Lety" Cano**

Health & Human Service Bldg.

145 Roy Rd.

(505) 709-5263

leticia.cano@dvs.nm.gov**Las Cruces/Southwest NM****Vincent Tellez**

2024 E. Griggs Ave.

(505) 361-5298

vincent.tellez@dvs.nm.gov**Las Vegas/Northeast NM****Jimmy Saiz**

917 Douglas Ave.

(505) 520-5079

jimmy.saiz@dvs.nm.gov**Santa Fe/Northeast NM****Phillip Hernandez**

Bataan Memorial Bldg.

407 Galisteo St./1st Floor, Room 134

(505) 218-3125

phillip.hernandez@dvs.nm.gov**Women Veterans Program (ABQ)****Theresa Figueroa**

Pinetree Corporate Center/Bldg. 2

4801 Indian School Rd. NE/2nd floor

(505) 372-9106

theresa.figueroa@dvs.nm.gov**DVS Tribal Liaison (Farmington)****Beverly Charley**

San Juan College Veterans Center

4601 College Blvd./Room 1715-B

(575) 241-3322

beverly.charley@dvs.nm.gov