



2025

ANNUAL **REPORT**

ILLINOIS ASSOCIATION OF COUNTY
VETERANS ASSISTANCE COMMISSIONS

Table of Contents

MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT	3
BOARD BREAKDOWN	4
MISSION	5
IMPACT REPORT	6
CLAIMS REPORTS	7
FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE/TRANSIT	8
EDUCATION	9
LEGISLATION	10
CURRENT VAC OFFICES	11
GLOSSARY	14
CONTACT/REFERENCES	15

Message from the President

Dear Stakeholders,

As we reflect on the past year, I am proud to share the progress and resilience demonstrated by our Commissions in an evolving and challenging legislative landscape. Despite global uncertainties and major fluctuations, we remained focused on our strategic goals, delivering solid financial performance and operational excellence.

Throughout the year, we prioritized continuing education, legislative advocacy, and veteran satisfaction. We launched new initiatives that have not only expanded our market reach but also strengthened our core business practices. Our Commissions worked tirelessly to adapt to shifting veteran demands and to ensure that our services remained relevant, responsive, and value-driven.

Financially, we have achieved steady growth in revenue, managed costs effectively, and maintained a strong balance sheet. These outcomes reflect our disciplined approach and our commitment to long-term sustainability and stakeholder value.

Looking ahead, we are optimistic and confident in our roadmap. Our focus for the coming year will be on digital transformation, sustainable practices, and creating greater value for our stakeholders. We will continue to invest in talent, technology, and partnerships that align with our vision for the future.

On behalf of the leadership team, I extend my sincere gratitude to our Commission members, partners, and sponsors for their unwavering support and trust. Together, we look forward to another year of progress and shared success.

Warm regards,
Andrew Tangen
President
IACVAC



Illinois Association of County Veterans Assistance Commissions

MEET OUR BOARD



Andrew Tangen
President



Jake Zimmerman
Vice-President



Ken Buck
Treasurer



William Sutton
Judge Advocate



Lissa Olson
Secretary



John Murray
1st Division VP



Luz Gilkey
2nd Division VP



Dan Benedict
3rd Division VP



Greg Collins
4th Division VP



John Lawson
5th Division VP



Jennifer Ingram
Womens Vet Rep



Natasha Furlano
Sgt -At -Arms



Erik Papineau
Chaplain

OUR MISSION



The Illinois Association of County Veterans Assistance Commissions is organized and operated for the educational purposes of the Association's Veteran membership, which, in part, consists of Veteran Service Officers throughout the State of Illinois. This mission conforms to the terms established in the 501 (c)(3) section of the Internal Revenue code.

- To serve as the central counseling and coordinating office for all County Veterans Assistance Commission offices included as members of the Illinois Association of County Veterans Service Officers to be referred to as Association.
- To foster and perpetuate VAC's in all counties where viable commissions do not exist and provide such information and training as deemed necessary.
- To have general oversight of the rules, laws, and regulations pertinent to governing and administering the County VAC's within the State of Illinois for the benefit of Military Veterans and their dependents.
- To establish communication and recognition with all local, state, and federal service officers for processing Veterans and their dependents' claims as may be referred to the Commission office.
- To promote the welfare of all Military Veterans and their dependents

IMPACT REPORT

Introduction

Of the 54 county Veterans Assistance Commissions operating under the Illinois Association, 38 submitted end-of-year data. The following metrics outline our key performance indicators for Fiscal Year 2025.



Key Impact Metrics

Total Veterans Assisted:	Total Funds Obtained FY 25:	Accredited County Service Officers:	Witness Slips Signed:
120,961+	\$178,297,558+	168+	369

Operational Impact by Goals

New Benefit Payouts Per FY

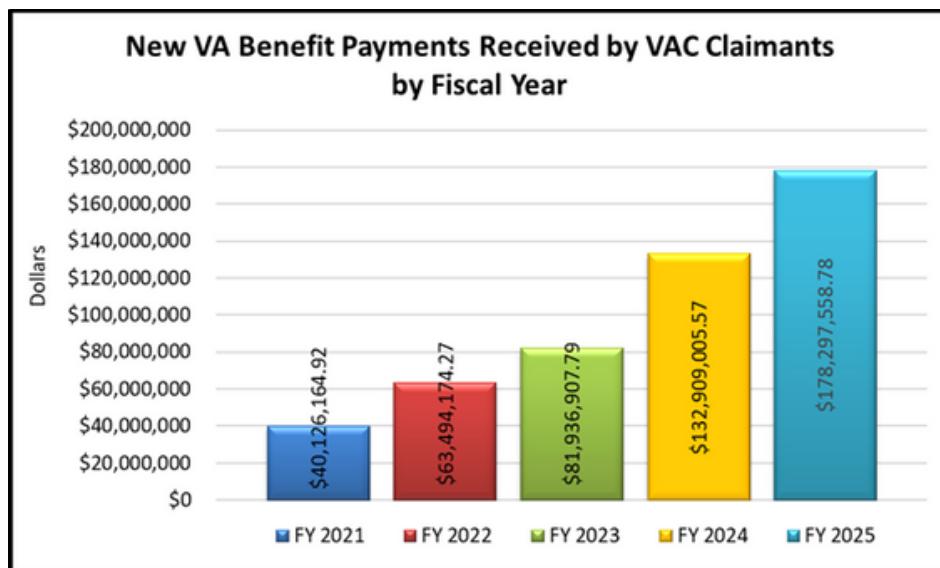
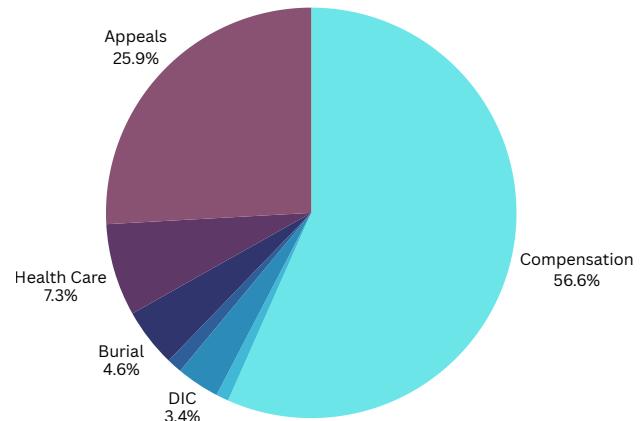


Figure 1. This chart shows the total amount of federal VA service-connected disability or non-service connected pension benefits received by VAC clients by fiscal year. The large jump this year can largely be attributed to increased benefits available from the PACT Act and the realization of the claims assistance mandate on VAC's from recent amendments to the Illinois Military Veterans Assistance Act (MVAA).

\$178,297,558 in NEW Benefits - FY 2025

Annual Claims Reports

Here you will find our Association's cumulative impact on veterans' benefits throughout the State of Illinois. As a disclaimer, these statistics are not a perfect year-over-year comparison. This report is compiled on a volunteer basis and not all VAC's contribute their data. This year, we had some new VAC's contribute their data and we had some VAC's that contributed their data last year, but not contribute it this year. This year, we had 38 VAC's contribute to this report, two more than last year. Therefore, these figures should be read as "at least" in their totality as obviously the non-contributing VAC's did provide assistance that is not reported here. We look forward to more complete data in future years. With that disclaimer, these statistics are impressive and show that VAC's have an incredible impact and remain an essential unit of local government.

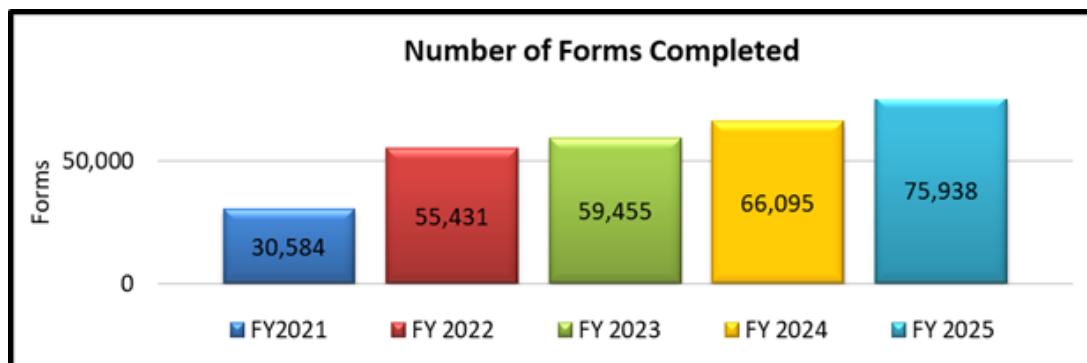


Fiscal Year 2025 Total Claims:

Compensation: 14,487
Pension: 253
DIC: 866
Survivors Pension: 307
Burial: 1,182
Health Care: 1,861
Appeals: 6,619

The VAC's statewide in FY 2025 were able to complete over 4,500 more compensation claims than in FY 2024. With that, both Veterans pension and survivors pension claims dropped- which is never a bad thing. The VAC's did see an increase in Appeals claims - up from 4,997 in FY24 to 6,619 in FY25.

The VAC offices assist Veterans and their families with filing all kinds of claims. In doing so, they have multiple forms to file- whether it be per claim type, in response to VA letters and adding additional information to claims or appealing unjust decisions. Below is a chart for the past 5 years on the amount of forms that VAC's completed per Fiscal Year. As you can see there is a increase per year - with the difference between FY24 and FY25 being over 9,800 forms.



Clients Assisted / Financial Assistance

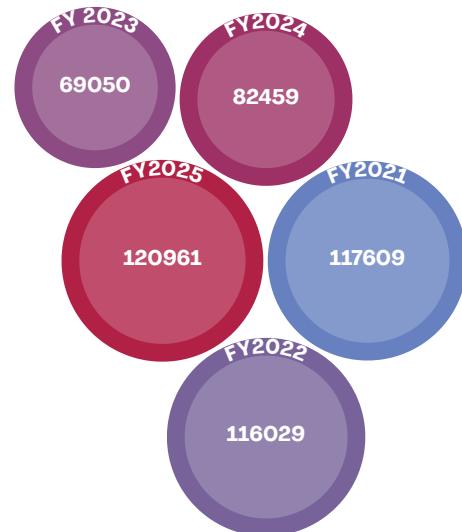
Figure Shown. (number in center of circle)

The number of clients assisted by VAC's across Illinois has increased since the previous year. This figure has fluctuated over the last five years which we attribute largely due to standardized data reporting and data integrity issues. The more recent the number, the more accurate the data as most VAC's are adopting a similar definition on "clients assisted." – Shown in white (center of circle)

Figure Shown. (size of circle-numbers below)

A critical service provided by VAC's is providing financial assistance to indigent veterans and their families. There is a marginal increase in financial assistance payments over the previous fiscal year.

There was a increase in assistance payouts from FY 24 – FY 25 of over \$580,000. Not every client that we assist is in need of financial assistance, but we are grateful that we can be somewhere for our Veterans and families to turn in their time of need.

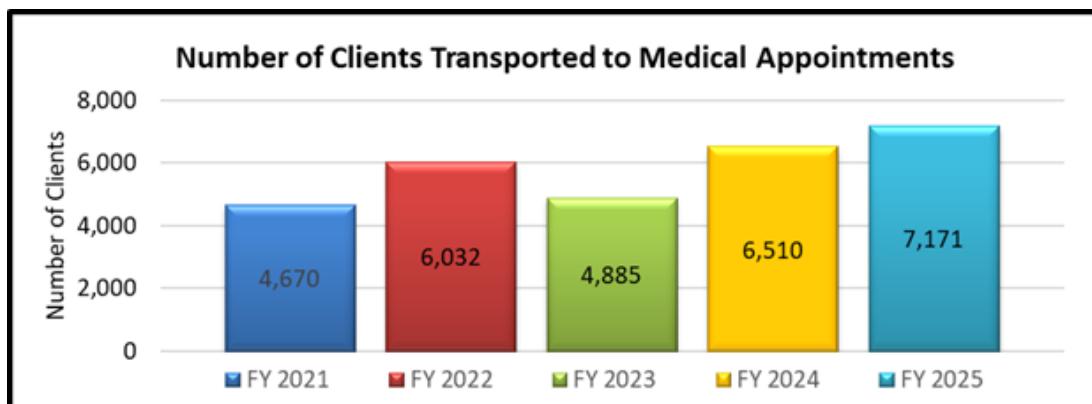


FY Financial Assistance Data:

FY 2021: \$927,936.24
 FY 2022: \$1,725,703.17
 FY 2023: \$1,828,049.13
 FY 2024: \$2,217,391.99
 FY 2025: \$2,798,495.56

Transportation

Another crucial service that some VAC's provide, is transportation to and from medical appointments – mostly at VA medical facilities. It is often utilized by Veterans who have medical conditions that prohibit their ability to drive or drive long distance. Not all VAC's offer their own transport services, some utilize pre-existing transit or other services in their area to assist Veterans. Below is a graph of how many Veterans used VAC transit to Medical appointments per Fiscal Year.



Educational Impact

FY	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
IL CVSO's trained	67	69	70	81	92
out of state	0	1	0	0	1

Figure shows Number of County Veteran Service Officers trained by the Association per fiscal year.

Winter Meeting

IACVAC began the year with a full-day Winter training session designed to strengthen the capabilities of Superintendents and Assistant Superintendents. The agenda focused on practical issues essential to operating and growing Veterans Assistance offices. Attendance and engagement were strong, reflecting the ongoing need for high-quality, accessible training for county leadership.

Annual Conference – September 2025

The 2025 Annual Conference was held in September and welcomed 92 Illinois CVSO's along with one CVSO from out of state, demonstrating the reach and reputation of IACVAC's educational programming. Participants benefited from presentations delivered by a diverse group of knowledgeable and experienced speakers. Across the conference, CVSO's earned more than 20 Continuing Education Units, supporting their ongoing accreditation and ensuring they remain current on best practices, policy updates, and veteran-focused service delivery.

During the fall board meeting, the Education Committee extended an open invitation to CVSO's interested in contributing to IACVAC's educational mission. The committee encouraged members to participate as trainers, presenters, and volunteers to help expand and enhance the training opportunities offered throughout the year. This outreach aims to build a stronger, more collaborative network of educators within the association and ensure that IACVAC's training programs continue to evolve with the needs of our counties and the veterans we serve. The Education Committee remains committed to delivering high-quality, relevant, and accessible training to all CVSO's and VAC leadership across Illinois. We appreciate the participation and support of our members throughout 2025 and look forward to expanding our educational offerings in the coming year.



Legislation



Advocacy: Throughout the year, members of IACVAC met with members of Congress and their staffs to discuss the implementation of the CVSO Act, crackdown on overdevelopment and unnecessary development of claims, improvement to implementation of toxic exposure risk activities, increasing and improving Dependency Indemnity Compensation for surviving spouses and dependents, restoration of criminal penalties to unaccredited claims consultants, reducing barriers to enrollment in health care, improvement of reproductive health care access for women veterans, expanding dental care, and modernizing the Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs, which provides health benefits to eligible family members and survivors of veterans.

Legislation: The Association continued its close working relationship with the Illinois Senators and Representatives from both parties. Having these relationships has benefited the Veterans of the State. This work included legislation being passed into law provide more accurate calculations under the Illinois Service Member Employment and Reemployment Rights Act, HB 1362, Public Act 104-0176. The Association further worked with the General Assembly on HB 1421 (Veterans Paid Leave Act), SB 0186 (Temporary Military Licensure Act), SB 1368/HB 1352 (Multi-County Veterans Assistance Commissions Act), and SB 1174/HB 1280 (Uniform Deployed Parents Custody and Visitation Act). The Association looks forward to the next legislative year to get these important pieces of legislation through the process and enacted into law.

Number of Witness Slips Signed Per FY:

FY 2021: 48
FY 2022: 217
FY 2023: 300
FY 2024: 1,446
FY 2025: 369



Illinois Veteran Statistics

<u>2025 Population Statistics</u>	<u>Illinois</u>	<u>United States</u>
Veteran Population Rate (2024) [2] [8]:	4.8%	5.3%
Veterans Over Age 65 [2]:	38.9%	45%
Female Veteran Rate [2]:	12.5%	12%
Veteran Median Income (2024) [8]:	\$54,621	\$52,122
Civilian Median Income (2024) [8]:	\$44,683	\$41,734

Figure 1. Income and population statistics for 2025 unless otherwise noted.

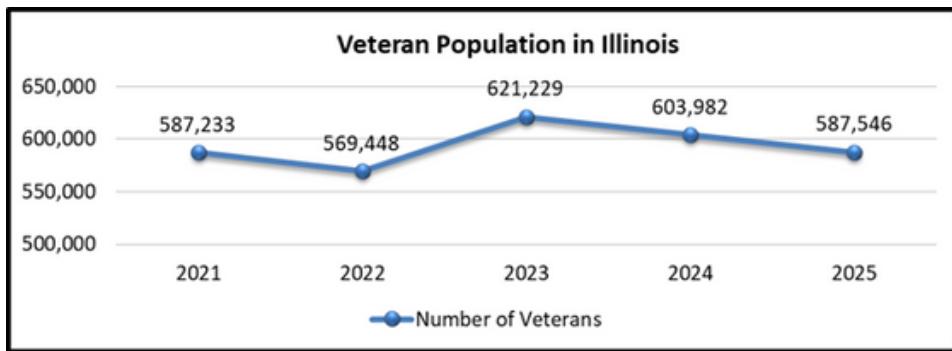


Figure 2. The veteran population in the U.S. is projected to decline 36% by 2053.

Figures such as VA total expenditures by category/fiscal year, homeless veteran population in Illinois, unemployment rates in Illinois vs Nationally, Number of Veterans receiving specific disability compensation ratings, gender distribution of VA Service-Connected compensation, gender distribution of VA non-service connected pension, Veterans population total receiving property tax exemptions (and a breakdown of each), percentage of eligible Veterans utilizing the homestead exemption, percentage of veterans utilizing VA healthcare and education benefits are all tracked by the Illinois Association of County Veterans Assistance Commissions. However, at the time of this report, no new data was available. In some instances, no new data has been available since 2023. We continue to monitor these numbers and will update when new data becomes available.

Current Counties

<p>Adams County 3701 East Lake Center, Suite 3 Quincy, IL 62305 Phone: (217) 515-2822 Fax: (217) 214-6336 phavermal@adamscountylil.gov</p>	<p>Bond County 1520 South 4th Street Greenville, IL 62246 Phone: (618) 690-2293 Fax: None vac@bondcountylil.gov</p>	<p>Kane County 719 South Batavia Avenue, Building A Geneva, IL 60134 Phone: (630) 232-3550 Fax: (630) 232-5403 zimmermanjacob@kanecountylil.gov</p>	<p>Kankakee County 581 William Latham Sr. Drive, Suite 302 Bourbonnais, IL 60914 Phone: (815) 937-8489 Fax: (815) 937-3655 ksmietanski@k3county.net</p>
<p>Boone County 130 South State Street, Suite 212 Belvidere, IL 61008 Phone: (815) 544-6464 Fax: (815) 544-6455 vacboone@vacbc.org</p>	<p>Carroll County 17612 East Benton Street Mount Carroll, IL 61053 Phone: (815) 906-0133 Fax: (815) 906-0135 superintendent@cc-vac.org</p>	<p>Kendall County 811 West John Street Yorkville, IL 60560 Phone: (630) 553-8355 Fax: (630) 553-0003 tstubinger@kendallcountylil.gov</p>	<p>Knox County 121 South Prairie Street, Suite 3 Galesburg, IL 61401 Phone: (309) 345-3877 Fax: (309) 342-7597 mekinzie.storm@knoxcountylil.gov</p>
<p>Champaign County 1776 East Washington Street Urbana, IL 61802 Phone: (217) 819-3556 Fax: (217) 384-3896 cheryl.walker@champaigncountylil.gov</p>	<p>Clinton County 850 Fairfax Street Carlyle, IL 66231-1840 Phone: (618) 594-0101 Fax: None vacc@clintonco.illinois.gov</p>	<p>Lake County 1790 Nations Drive, Suite 221 Gurnee, IL 60031 Phone: (847) 377-3344 Fax: (847) 984-5750 veterans@lakecountylil.gov</p>	<p>LaSalle County 4231 Progress Boulevard, Unit 4 Peru, IL 61354 Phone: (815) 433-1761 Fax: (815) 433-6209 chambers@lasallecountylil.gov</p>
<p>Cook County 1100 South Hamilton Avenue Suite C-011 Lower Level Chicago, IL 60612 Phone: (312) 433-6010 Fax: (312) 433-6015 vaccc@cookcountylil.gov</p>	<p>DeKalb County 2500 North Annie Glidden Road, Suite A DeKalb, IL 60115 Phone: (815) 756-8129 Fax: (815) 748-2142 tanderson@dekalbcounty.org</p>	<p>Lee County 309 South Galena Avenue, Suite 101 Dixon, IL 61021 Phone: (815) 288-5683 Fax: (815) 284-5240 jgorman@countyoflee.org</p>	<p>Livingston County 110 West Water Street Pontiac, IL 61764 Phone: (815) 844-7378 Fax: (815) 844-1178 1cvac@livingstoncountylil.gov</p>
<p>Douglas County <i>No Physical Office</i> Phone: Fax:</p>	<p>DuPage County 421 North County Farm Road, 2nd Floor Wheaton, IL 60187 Phone: (630) 407-5655 Fax: (630) 407-5656 steven.fixler@dupagecounty.gov</p>	<p>Logan County 122 North McLean Street Lincoln, IL 62656 Phone: (217) 732-8388 Fax: (217) 735-5345 vac@logancountyil.gov</p>	<p>Macon County 141 S. Main St., Room 210 Decatur, IL 62523 Phone: (217) 424-1376 Fax: (217) 718-4760 gcollins@maconveterans.us</p>
<p>Effingham County 1011 Ford Avenue Effingham, IL 62401 Phone: (217) 342-4979 Fax: (217) 342-4883 vac@effinghamcountylil.gov</p>	<p>Franklin County 901 Public Square Benton, IL 62812 Phone: (618) 435-9868 Fax: None liam.mungovan@franklincountylil.gov</p>	<p>Macoupin County 570 North Broad Street Carlinville, IL 62626 Phone: (217) 854-5249 Fax: (217) 716-2311 macvac@gomadison.com</p>	<p>Madison County 157 North Main Street, Suite 115 Edwardsville, IL 62025 Phone: (618) 296-4554 Fax: (618) 692-8958 mcvac@madisoncountylil.gov</p>
<p>Fulton County 260 West Lincoln Avenue Lewistown, IL 61542 Phone: (309) 547-7262 Fax: (309) 518-8116 fultcovac@yahoo.com</p>	<p>Greene County 519 North Main Street, Room 5 Carrollton, IL 62016 Phone: (217) 370-8779 Fax: (217) 942-5431</p>	<p>Marion County <i>No Physical Office</i> Phone: Fax:</p>	<p>Mason County 125 North Plum Street Havana, IL 62644 Phone: (309) 543-8907 x8 Fax: (309) 543-0032 masonvac@masoncountylil.gov</p>
<p>Grundy County 1320 Union Street Morris, IL 60450 Phone: (815) 941-3152 Fax: (815) 513-5018 vac@grundycountylil.gov</p>	<p>Hancock County 2005 East US Highway 136 Carthage, IL 62321 Phone: (217) 617-7635 Fax: None hancockcountylilvac@gmail.com</p>	<p>McDonough County 1 Courthouse Square, 3rd Floor Macomb, IL 61455 Phone: (309) 833-3275 Fax: (309) 837-9110 ricsmart01@gmail.com</p>	<p>McHenry County 667 Ware Road Woodstock, IL 60098 Phone: (815) 334-4229 Fax: (815) 334-4678 veterans@mchenrycountylil.gov</p>
<p>Henderson County 307 Warren Street Oquawka, IL 61469 Phone: (309) 221-0169 Fax: (309) 867-2033 vachc@yahoo.com</p>	<p>Henry County 307 West Center Street Cambridge, IL 61238 Phone: (309) 937-3534 Fax: None vet@henryctv.com</p>	<p>McLean County 200 West Front Street, Suite 400D Bloomington, IL 61701 Phone: (309) 888-5140 Fax: (309) 888-5570 jerry.vogler@mcleancountylil.gov</p>	<p>Mercer County 100 Southeast Third Street Aledo, IL 61231 Phone: (309) 582-2714 Fax: (309) 628-0132 MercoVAC@mercercountylil.org</p>
<p>Iroquois County 1001 East Grant Street Watseka, IL 60970 Phone: (815) 432-2721 Fax: (815) 432-0485 jingram@co.iroquois.il.us</p>	<p>Jersey County 201 West Pearl Street Jerseyville, IL 62052 Phone: (618) 498-1810 Fax: (618) 498-7404 vacgb1977@outlook.com</p>	<p>Montgomery County 201 South Main Street Hillsboro, IL 62049 Phone: (217) 532-9695 Fax: (217) 532-2534 cassandrah@montgomerycountylil.gov</p>	<p>Ogle County 1302 Pines Road, Suite 3 Oregon, IL 61061 Phone: (815) 255-9181 Fax: (815) 655-2684 luz.gilkey@ocvac.org</p>

Counties Continued

<p>Peoria County 4234 North Knoxville Avenue Peoria, IL 61614 Phone: (309) 681-2554 Fax: (309) 681-2558 veterans@peoriacounty.org</p>	<p>Piatt County 115 North State Street, Suite 116 Monticello, IL 61856 Phone: (217) 762-8387 Fax: (217) 762-3507 super@pcvac.us</p>
<p>Rock Island County 4000 46th Avenue Rock Island, IL 61201 Phone: (309) 558-3545 Fax: (309) 558-3548 vac@rockislandcountyl.gov</p>	<p>Sangamon County 300 South 9th Street Springfield, IL 62701 Phone: (217) 753-6680 Fax: (217) 920-0920 ashti.dawson@sangamonil.gov</p>
<p>Saint Clair County 19 Public Square, Suite 300 Belleville, IL 62220 Phone: (618) 277-0040 Fax: (618) 277-9626 veterans@co.st-clair.il.us</p>	<p>Stephenson County 10 North Galena Avenue, Suite 120 Freeport, IL 61032 Phone: (815) 233-7282 Fax: None vcsc@stephensoncountyil.gov</p>
<p>Tazewell County 335 Court Street Pekin, IL 61554 Phone: (309) 477-2271 Fax: (309) 478-5855 tazvet@tazwell.com</p>	<p>Vermilion County 123 North Hazel Street Danville, IL 61832 Phone: (217) 554-7950 Fax: None marti.carroll@vercounty.org</p>
<p>Warren County 100 West Broadway, 1st Floor Monmouth, IL 61462 Phone: (309) 734-6767 Fax: None wc.reynolds@outlook.com</p>	<p>Washington County 101 East Saint Louis Street, Suite 203 Nashville, IL 62263 Phone: (618) 327-4800 x178 Fax: None matthewk@washingtanco illinois.gov</p>
<p>Whiteside County 1300 West 2nd Street Rock Falls, IL 61071 Phone: (815) 626-8640 Fax: None stryderwood@yahoo.com</p>	<p>Will County 2400 Glenwood Avenue, Suite 110 Joliet, IL 60435 Phone: (815) 740-8389 Fax: (815) 740-4329 vacwc@willcounty.gov</p>
<p>Winnebago County 555 North Court Street, Suite 300 Rockford, IL 61103 Phone: (815) 516-2850 Fax: (815) 516-2851 thotchkiss@vac.wincoil.gov</p>	<p>Woodford County 115 North Main Street, Suite 106 Eureka, IL 61530 Phone: (309) 467-2716 Fax: (309) 467-7290 wcvac@woodfordcountyil.gov</p>



Glossary of Terms

Compensation: See “Disability Compensation”

Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC): A tax-free monetary benefit paid to eligible survivors of military service members who died in the line of duty or eligible survivors of veterans whose death resulted from a service-related injury or disease.

Disability Compensation: A tax-free monetary benefit paid to veterans with disabilities that are the result of a disease or injury incurred in or aggravated during active military service.

Functional Zero: A goal reached when the number of veterans experiencing homelessness within a community is less than the average number of veterans being connected with permanent housing each month.

Intent-to-File: An application for veterans and survivors who intend to file a claim for VA compensation, pension, or survivors’ benefits which preserves the effective date of future benefits while the claimant is gathering supporting documentation for their formal claim.

Non-Service Connected Pension: A tax-free needs-based monetary benefit paid to wartime veterans, who meet certain age or non-service connected disability requirements.

Pension: See “Non-Service Connected Pension”

Pension Management Center: A department at certain VA Regional Offices that is responsible for processing and adjudicating claims for pension, survivor’s pension, dependency and indemnity compensation, and burial benefits.

Regional Office: One of 56 VA offices located nationwide responsible for processing and adjudicating VA benefits which primarily includes disability compensation.

Superintendent: Supervisor who has the executive powers of the Veterans Assistance Commission.

Survivor’s Pension: A tax-free needs-based monetary benefit payable to a low-income, unremarried surviving spouse and/or unmarried child(ren) of a deceased wartime veteran.

VA Health Care: A comprehensive medical benefits package available to qualifying veterans which includes primary and specialty care at VA hospitals and clinics.

Veterans Service Officer: An individual accredited by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and trained to assist veterans and their dependents in filing claims for benefits with the VA.

Work/Study Student: A veteran student who is using VA education benefits and paid by the VA to do VA related work at no cost to the County.



Contact Us



www.veteransbenefitsillinois.org

References

[1] National Center for Veterans Analysis and Statistics, "Veterans Population Model," U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Washington D.C., 2023.

[2] U.S. Census Bureau, "American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates," U.S. Department of Commerce, Washington D.C., 2024.

