

**ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS (ADVA) Commissioner's Goals
Quarterly Meeting of State Board of Veterans Affairs July 2024**

Goal #1: Begin full operations at Command Sgt. Maj. Bennie G. Adkins State Veterans Home

- Initiate "Path of Honor" project on old railroad line right-of-way on property
-

Goal #2: Step up personal advocacy role as Commissioner

- Alabama Code Section 31-5-7: "(b) It shall be the duty of the state commissioner to: ... (4) Cooperate and negotiate with the federal government, all national, state and local governmental, or private agencies for securing additional services or benefits for veterans, their families, and dependents who are residents of the State of Alabama."
 - Forcefully address sensitive issues such as veterans wellbeing programs (more on this later) and past toxic exposures (including Fort McClellan).
 - Effectively use Veterans Assistance Fund (including for new North Alabama state veterans cemetery and establishment of a permanent "Supporting Alabama's Veterans Grant Program")
-

Goal #3: Initiate second committal shelter at Spanish Fort and begin process of establishing a State Veterans Cemetery in north Alabama

Goal #4: Improve delivery of services via ADVA Veterans Service Offices

- Reclassify Veterans Service Officer (VSO)/Assistant VSO positions to provide better pay and upward mobility.
 - Seriously pursue cross accreditation with VFW (and others).
 - Expand work of new ADVA QA/Training office (including next annual training conference and resilience programs for all ADVA employees).
-

Goal #5: Continue progress on long-term veterans well-being program

- “Alabama’s Challenge”
 - Town halls and fairs
 - Vetsforhope.com
 - Operation Resilience
 - Operation We Remember

- Sample External Partnerships:
 - Operation Iron Ruck
 - Veteran Treatment Courts
 - SB135 Steering Committee