

Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs

ANNUAL REPORT

Fiscal Year 2024



INFORMATION

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Montgomery, Alabama
(334) 242-5077**

ADVA Mission: To promote awareness, assist eligible Veterans, their families, and survivors to receive from the U. S. and State Governments any and all benefits to which they may be entitled under existing or future laws to be enacted.

Annual Report

Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs

2024

Table of Contents

02 ADVA Goals and Highlights

04 ADVA History

06 State Board of Veterans Affairs

08 Veterans Service Offices

16 Quality Assurance & Training

17 Appeals & Review Division

18 State Veterans Homes

20 State Veterans Cemetery

21 G.I. Dependent Scholarship

22 Outreach & Engagement

24 Accounting

ADVA FY2024 Overview

To the Governor of the State of Alabama, members of the State Board of Veterans Affairs, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives, it is my distinct honor to present herewith the Annual Report of the Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs (ADVA) for Fiscal Year 2024. This report gives an overview of Veterans services and programs ADVA provides and highlights the many accomplishments of our dedicated team of state and contract employees.



I want to express my gratitude to the exceptional men and women of ADVA who honorably serve the approximately 400,000 Veterans in Alabama with unwavering dedication and commitment to excellence in all they do for those Veterans, their family members, caregivers, and survivors. The partnerships we have forged with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Veteran service organizations, community partners, and state, county, and municipal governmental agencies have strengthened our ability to leverage resources and to foster seamless access to Veterans' services.

FY24 was filled with monumental milestones and significant strides in ADVA's mission and execution. This is validated through Alabama Veterans earning \$3.6 billion in compensation and pension claims during FY23, a major contributor to Alabama's economy.

In February 2024, ADVA dedicated the Phase II expansion of Alabama State Veterans Memorial Cemetery at Spanish Fort. This project, the first of nine planned expansions, added 2,762 pre-placed vault sites, 960 columbarium niches, and a memorial wall that includes 100 sites.

In September 2024, a seven-year project in Enterprise was completed with the dedication of the Command Sgt. Maj. Bennie G. Adkins State Veterans Home. The 182,000 sq. ft. facility will be home to 174 Veterans and offer more than 200 jobs. Along with providing excellent skilled-nursing care for our nation's heroes, it will also ease the overflow that our State Veterans Home Program has experienced for years. On September 13, ADVA was joined at the dedication ceremony by Enterprise and Coffee County leadership, state legislators, numerous Veterans service organizations, and nearly 1,000 members of the community.

There are numerous other accomplishments and successes during FY24, which can be found throughout this annual report. On behalf of our employees who proudly serve "America's Finest," I want to express our gratitude to the citizens of Alabama for their continued support to the ADVA, and especially to our Veterans and their families.

Jeffrey L. Newton

Jeffrey L. Newton

Brig General, USAF/ANG (Ret)

Commissioner, Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs

Department Goals

1

CSM Adkins Home

Begin full operations of CSM Bennie G. Adkins State Veterans Home. Initiate “Path of Honor” project on old railroad line right-of-way on property.

2

Advocacy Role

Secure additional services or benefits for Veterans and families. Address Veterans well-being and toxic exposures. Fund north AL cemetery and grant program.

3

Committal Shelter

Initiate second committal shelter at Spanish Fort. Begin process of establishing a second State Veterans Cemetery.

4

ADVA VSO Services

Reclassify VSO /AVSO positions to provide better pay and upward mobility. Pursue cross accreditation. Increase retention. Expand work of new ADVA QA/Training.

5

Veterans Well-eing

Continue Alabama’s Challenge and external partnerships (Operation Iron Ruck, Veteran Treatment Courts, Steering Committee, Town Halls, Vets for Hope).

Highlights

Oct. 2023

TBI Summit

First Statewide Collaboration

Feb. 2024

State Veterans Cemetery

Phase II Expansion Completed

Aug. 2024

Veterans Access to Care Bill

Established Steering Committee

Sept. 2024

Veterans Grant Program

\$7M issued to support Veterans

Sept. 2024

Operation We Remember

61 Participants Across Alabama

Sept. 2024

CSM Bennie G. Adkins SVH

Completed Construction



ADVA Training Conference

ABOUT US

We hold ourselves personally and professionally accountable to deliver on Alabama's promises to all Veterans through courage, conviction, and a belief in our core values:

- **Professionalism** – Provide accurate and timely assistance and information in a manner consistent with the core values of the ADVA.
- **Integrity** – Provide fair, honest and objective advocacy in an ethical manner while displaying the highest standard of conduct both on and off duty.
- **Compassion** – Consistently demonstrate care, concern and understanding in every encounter.
- **Commitment** – Fully dedicated to develop yourself to become the best you can be in carrying out the mission of the ADVA.
- **Teamwork** – Everyone working together in a positive and productive manner to accomplish the mission and goals of the ADVA.

MISSION

To promote awareness, assist eligible Veterans, their families, and survivors to receive from the U. S. and State Governments any and all benefits to which they may be entitled under existing or future laws to be enacted.

VISION

To ensure that all Veterans and their families understand and receive all the benefits, support, care, and recognition that they have earned and are entitled to, by expertly administering all current programs, anticipating future needs and taking appropriate action to meet these needs.

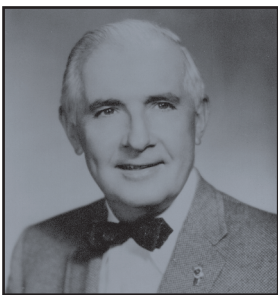
ADVA HISTORY

The first official agency charged with assisting Veterans was the State Service Commission, established in 1927 by the Alabama Legislature. This agency was created primarily to assist World War I Veterans in claiming federal benefits and other services for which their military service made them eligible. From the outset, however, all surviving Veterans from any war were eligible for assistance in gaining federal benefits. The Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs (ADVA) is an outgrowth of the Commission, created to meet the needs of an increasing number of military Veterans.

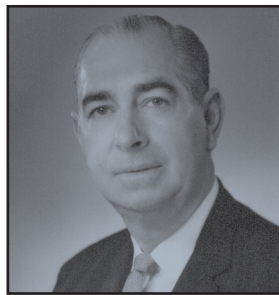
With the expansion of federal benefits and thousands of Veterans returning to Alabama from service during World War II, the American Legion, Department of Alabama began advocating for a state department dedicated to Veterans' affairs. Through the efforts of the American Legion and other Veterans organizations, the Alabama Legislature established the ADVA on June 23, 1945. It also created the State Board of Veterans Affairs at the same time to act as an oversight and administrative body for ADVA.

The department began operations on October 1, 1945, and the board appointed Clarence C. Horton, commander of the American Legion, Department of Alabama, as the first ADVA Commissioner, a post he held until 1962. In 1945, the state operated Veterans Affairs offices in all 67 counties in Alabama.

PAST COMMISSIONERS



C.C. Horton
1945-1962



Walter C. Head, Jr.
1962-1976



W.W. Wadsworth
1976-1979



Roy C. McGinnis
1979-1983



Frank D. Wilkes
1983-2005



W. Clyde Marsh
2005-2018



W. Kent Davis
2019-2024

State Board of Veterans Affairs

The State Board of Veterans Affairs consists of the Governor, as chair, and representatives who shall serve for a term of four years from the date of their respective appointments. These representatives shall be selected from the memberships of the American Legion, Department of Alabama, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the Disabled American Veterans, the Vietnam Veterans of America, AMVETS, the Military Order of the Purple Heart, American Ex-Prisoners of War, Inc., Marine Corps League and Military Officers Association of America as prescribed by Alabama Code §31-5-3.



Gov. Kay Ivey

Chairwoman



Scott Gedling

Vice Chairman,
Veterans of Foreign Wars



Chad Richmond

Deputy Vice Chairman,
Disabled American Veterans



Bryan Battaglia

Marine Corps League



Tony Berenotto

American Legion



Mike Davis

AMVETS



Earnestine Doubek

American Legion



Matt Gaff

American Legion



Janice Harris

Veterans of Foreign Wars



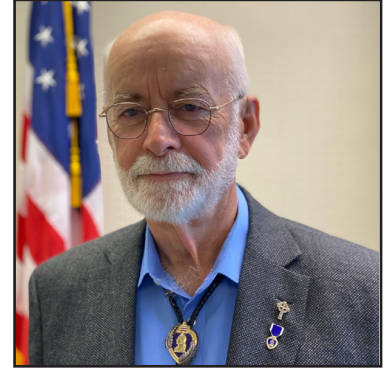
John Kilpatrick

Military Officers Association of America



Keith Lewis

American Ex-Prisoners of War Inc.



Samuel Rollason

Military Order of the Purple Heart



Ken Rollins

Vietnam Veterans of America



Charles Stephens

Veterans of Foreign Wars



Carol Anne Toms

Military Officers Association of America



Deborah Walker

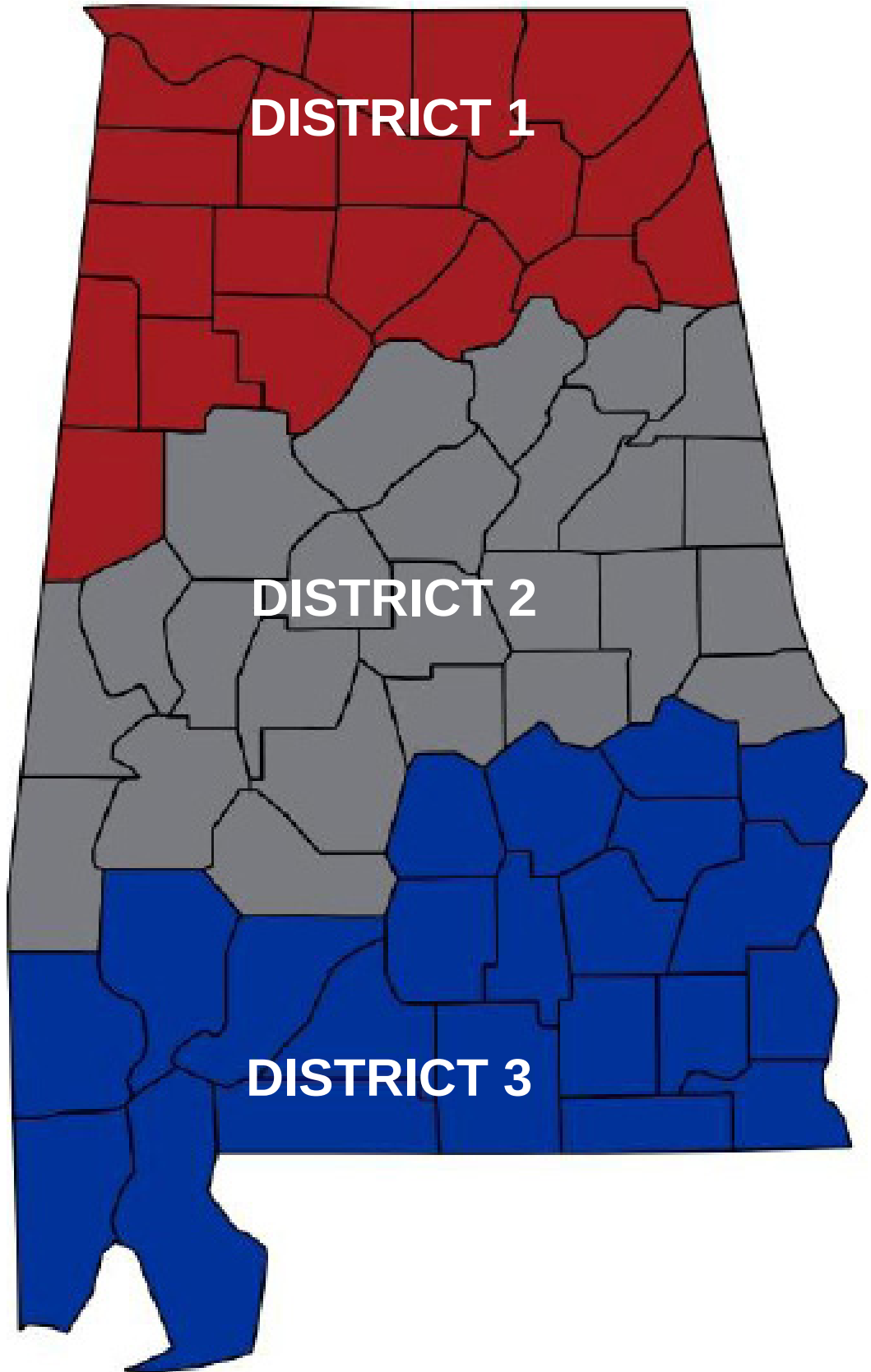
Disabled American Veterans



Charles Waugh

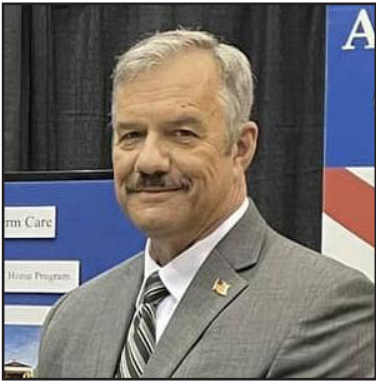
Disabled American Veterans

Veterans Service Offices District Map



About the Service

Veterans Service Offices are the foundation of the ADVA. Located in 61 counties across the state, ADVA Veterans Service Officers and Assistant Veterans Service Officers provide Veterans and their loved ones with free services, including hands-on assistance in submitting applications for VA compensation and pension claims and assistance with accessing all other state and federal Veterans benefits and services. Each must undergo rigorous training and testing to be certified as a Veterans Service Officer.



Timothy Edgil, District 1

Mr. Edgil has been with the Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs for the past 10 years after serving nearly 30 years in law enforcement for the Birmingham Police Department and Jefferson County Sheriff's Office. He joined ADVA as a Veterans Service Officer in Walker County in 2015 before being promoted to District 1 Manager the following year. Mr. Edgil retired as a Lieutenant Colonel in the Alabama Army National Guard after 30 years of service.



Eric Ervin, District 2

Mr. Ervin served with distinction in the U.S. Navy for more than 22 years while rising to the rank of Senior Chief Petty Officer. He joined the ADVA as an Assistant Veterans Service Officer in 2013 and was promoted to the Veterans Service Officer in Tuscaloosa County the following year. He was named District 2 Manager in 2023. In 2019, Mr. Ervin received an ADVA Veterans Advocate of the Year Award, which is presented to individuals whose service to the community and Veterans goes above the call of duty.



Rhonda Jackson, District 3

Ms. Jackson joined the ADVA as a Veterans Service Officer in 2013 after retiring with 22 years of service from the United States Marine Corps as an aviation operations specialist with the rank of Gunnery Sergeant. Most notably, Ms. Jackson received the Commissioner's Excellence Award for her service to veterans in Clarke, Monroe, and Washington counties in 2021. She was named District 3 Manager in 2023.

District One Highlights

1

Marion County VSO Marlon Holloway and Fayette County VSO Christopher Phillips participated in the USDVA West Alabama Town Hall in June 2024. Phillips conducted initial introductions and Holloway was a member of the benefits discussion board.

2

Madison County VSO Terrence Peoples conducted transition assistance briefings at Redstone Arsenal in Huntsville in September 2023 and March 2024.

3

Winston County VSO Nathan Tidwell conducted a public presentation during the Patriot Luncheon hosted at Fontaine Trailer in Haleyville in June 2024.



Madison County AVSO Heather Perry was awarded the Clarence Horton Service Officer of the Year Award from The American Legion in August 2024.

VETERAN POPULATION

COUNTY	
BLOUNT	3,110
CHEROKEE	1,696
CULLMAN	4,996
COLBERT	3,618
DE KALB	3,072
ETOWAH	6,585
FAYETTE	1,155
FRANKLIN	1,304
JACKSON	2,972
LAMAR	755
LAUDERDALE	5,489
LAWRENCE	1,478
LIMESTONE	7,313
MADISON	35,366
MARION	1,587
MARSHALL	5,943
MORGAN	7,115
PICKENS	1,167
WALKER	3,350
WINSTON	1,483

BENEFITS RECEIVED

COUNTY	
BLOUNT	\$41,557,000
CHEROKEE	\$20,753,000
COLBERT	\$53,620,000
CULLMAN	\$71,710,000
DE KALB	\$43,292,000
ETOWAH	\$110,096,000
FAYETTE	\$16,093,000
FRANKLIN	\$17,461,000
JACKSON	\$38,921,000
LAMAR	\$13,023,000
LAUDERDALE	\$79,294,000
LAWRENCE	\$16,226,000
LIMESTONE	\$150,888,000
MADISON	\$595,538,000
MARION	\$23,729,000
MARSHALL	\$83,578,000
MORGAN	\$93,735,000
PICKENS	\$24,642,000
WALKER	\$59,778,000
WINSTON	\$19,425,000

Veterans Service Offices

District One



District 1 staff at the ADVA annual training conference in June 2024 in Montgomery.

98,494

TOTAL PUBLIC
CONTACTS

1,287

TOTAL PENSION
CLAIMS SUBMITTED

8,785

TOTAL COMPENSATION
CLAIMS SUBMITTED

213

TOTAL EDUCATION
ASSISTANCE

District Two Highlights

1

District II assisted ADVA's efforts supporting Operation Iron Ruck, including hosting a news conference on the campuses of Auburn University and University of Alabama and receiving donated items to the Bill Nichols State Veterans Home in Alex City.

2

Veterans Service Officer Chris Orr regularly attended and supported the Calhoun County Veterans Treatment Court.

3

Jefferson County remains the county with the largest Veterans population (40,991) and total benefits received (\$699,684,000).



ADVA Commissioner Jeff Newton and Talladega County VSO Scott Williamson represented the department at the Dovetail Landing Rockin' for Recovery Fall Festival in Lincoln.

VETERAN POPULATION

COUNTY	VETERAN POPULATION
AUTAUGA	5,394
BIBB	1,250
CALHOUN	9,480
CHAMBERS	2,083
CHILTON	2,436
CHOCTAW	744
CLAY	816
CLEBURNE	736
COOSA	732
DALLAS	2,226
ELMORE	7,634
GREENE	448
HALE	821
JEFFERSON	40,991
LEE	11,155
MARENGO	1,195
PERRY	432
RANDOLPH	1,388
ST. CLAIR	5,754
SHELBY	12,356
SUMTER	577
TALLADEGA	5,491
TALLAPOOSA	3,145
TUSCALOOSA	12,314
WILCOX	511

BENEFITS RECEIVED

COUNTY	BENEFITS RECEIVED
AUTAUGA	\$103,345,000
BIBB	\$15,287,000
CALHOUN	\$158,113,000
CHAMBERS	\$34,911,000
CHILTON	\$39,310,000
CHOCTAW	\$12,196,000
CLAY	\$12,519,000
CLEBURNE	\$10,091,000
COOSA	\$15,795,000
DALLAS	\$41,200,000
ELMORE	\$152,256,000
GREENE	\$8,675,000
HALE	\$18,672,000
JEFFERSON	\$699,684,000
LEE	\$230,093,000
MARENGO	\$21,764,000
PERRY	\$9,251,000
RANDOLPH	\$19,245,000
ST. CLAIR	\$81,515,000
SHELBY	\$163,424,000
SUMTER	\$10,954,000
TALLADEGA	\$75,245,000
TALLAPOOSA	\$48,526,000
TUSCALOOSA	\$261,617,000
WILCOX	\$7,617,000

Veterans Service Offices

District Two



ADVA held an open house at its Jefferson County Veterans Service Office to highlight services and recent renovations that will elevate Veterans' experiences and amplify the efficiency and effectiveness of the office's talented staff. Through a grant from the Jefferson County Commission, renovations included a conference room table, two 65-inch televisions, videoconferencing technology, and additional office furniture.

101,076

TOTAL PUBLIC
CONTACTS

1,029

TOTAL PENSION
CLAIMS SUBMITTED

9,697

TOTAL COMPENSATION
CLAIMS SUBMITTED

125

TOTAL EDUCATION
ASSISTANCE

District Three Highlights

1

District Manager Rhonda Jackson instituted a mentorship program for all new hires.

2

District III participated in 137 outreach events during FY24.

3

District III had a 100% participation rate for the State Combined Campaign and Discrimination- and Harrassment-Free Workplace virtual training.



In June 2024, ADVA honored and recognized David Sharpe for his retirement after two decades of incredible work as the Veterans Service Officer in Russell and Macon counties.

VETERAN POPULATION

COUNTY	VETERAN POPULATION
BALDWIN	19,700
BARBOUR	1,530
BULLOCK	372
BUTLER	1,237
CLARKE	1,470
COFFEE	6,624
CONECUH	666
COVINGTON	2,992
CRENSHAW	905
DALE	6,282
ESCAMBIA	2,264
GENEVA	2,261
HENRY	1,178
HOUSTON	8,438
LOWNDES	542
MACON	1,362
MOBILE	30,030
MONROE	1,330
MONTGOMERY	18,526
PIKE	2,385
RUSSELL	6,462
WASHINGTON	748

BENEFITS RECEIVED

COUNTY	BENEFITS RECEIVED
BALDWIN	\$239,037,000
BARBOUR	\$25,092,000
BULLOCK	\$13,943,000
BUTLER	\$21,554,000
CLARKE	\$21,922,000
COFFEE	\$154,443,000
CONECUH	\$15,305,000
COVINGTON	\$41,434,000
CRENSHAW	\$15,510,000
DALE	\$102,097,000
ESCAMBIA	\$32,254,000
GENEVA	\$40,697,000
HENRY	\$21,369,000
HOUSTON	\$130,971,000
LOWNDES	\$15,703,000
MACON	\$47,436,000
MOBILE	\$380,118,000
MONROE	\$22,148,000
MONTGOMERY	\$450,272,000
PIKE	\$34,353,000
RUSSELL	\$191,267,000
WASHINGTON	\$12,536,000

Veterans Service Offices

District Three



Left: In March 2024, District III Manager Rhonda K. Jackson was recognized as the Woman of the Year by Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Incorporated, Xi Delta Zeta Chapter. Top Right: City of Andalusia's Veterans Day event. Bottom Right: Pike County VSO Randy Ross delivers a Quilt of Valor from the Cotton Rose Quilters Guild in Troy to World War II Veteran Fred Wilks Moore.

88,823

TOTAL PUBLIC
CONTACTS

1,525

TOTAL PENSION
CLAIMS SUBMITTED

4,392

TOTAL COMPENSATION
CLAIMS SUBMITTED

186

TOTAL EDUCATION
ASSISTANCE

ADVA Quality Assurance & Training

About the Office

The Quality Assurance and Training office consults with senior leadership regarding all training needs of the department, particularly Veterans Service Officers and Appeals & Review Officers. The director writes training plans and prepares briefings, presentations, and training packets for new employee orientation trainings.

ADVA held its annual training conference in Montgomery in June 2024. The conference focused on the importance of resiliency and featured a presentation on customer service from Elizabeth Dixon with Chick-fil-A. Dr. Jack Hawkins, Chancellor of Troy University and U.S. Marine Corps Veteran, served as the keynote speaker. Appeals & Review Claims Analyst Belinda Clay and Marion County Veterans Service Officer Marlon Holloway each received a Commissioner's Excellence Award -- an honor bestowed annually for employees providing exceptional service to Alabama Veterans.

04

Orientations - 4
(16 new hires in FY24)

20

Accreditations - 20
(ADVA and American Legion)

05

State Personnel Trainings - 5 Courses
(145 total attendees)

01

ADVA Training Conference - 1
(130 attendees)



Appeals & Review Division

About the Service

The Appeals & Review Division (A&R) works with Veterans and surviving family members to review compensation decisions from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. If a decision has inaccuracies or it is determined additional compensation is available, A&R continues working with the claimant in preparation for an appeal with the Board of Veterans' Appeals (BVA). (Note: Due to the complexity of VA's claim and appeals systems, the amounts of money that are recovered may be based on work that was done in years prior to FY24.)

**\$20.4
million**

Retroactive Benefits
Received

11,081

Audits & Reviews

5,705

Field Assistance
Requests

173

BVA Hearings Held

53

Local Hearings Held

A&R Administrative Support Assistant Paula Lawson was awarded the Irby Powers Support Person of the Year by the American Legion.

The A&R division, which is stationed within the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Regional Office Building in Montgomery, underwent a full renovation in FY24. Operations continued during the three-week renovation and A&R staff provided additional labor as needed to ensure the project was completed in a timely manner. Additionally, A&R was included in an agency-wide software transition from Vetraspec to Vetpro, the system that processes Veterans' claims.

Board of Veterans Appeals (BVA)

A Board of Veterans Appeals (BVA) hearing is with a Veterans Law Judge in Washington D.C. and is the highest level of appeal that A&R can represent a client. These hearings are held virtually, meaning the Veteran can log on and attend from home or another location or by video conference where the Veteran comes to the Regional Office to attend the hearing. There were 205 hearings assigned to A&R by BVA and 173 hearings held. Five hearing requests were withdrawn and case were forwarded to BVA, while 17 BVA appeals were withdrawn in full and three were no-shows.

Local Hearings

Local hearings are conducted with a Rating Specialist at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Regional Office. These are usually predetermination hearings, "proposal to reduce," or "overpayment" type issues. There were 53 local hearings assigned in FY24 held.



A&R Manager Mark Sullivan received a Distinguished Service Medal when he retired after 22 years of service.

Alabama State Veterans Homes

About the Program

The State of Alabama provides affordable assisted-living and skilled-nursing care to qualifying Veterans through a partnership with the federal government and private industry by proudly operating five state-of-the-art Veterans homes located within the state.

The Bill Nichols State Veterans Home in Alexander City has been home to thousands of Veterans since its opening in 1989. In 1995, Alabama opened two more homes to Veterans, the Floyd E. "Tut" Fann State Veterans Home in Huntsville and the William F. Green State Veterans Home in Bay Minette. In 2012, the Colonel Robert L. Howard State Veterans Home opened in Pell City. In October 2024, the Command Sgt. Maj. Bennie G. Adkins State Veterans Home in Enterprise welcomed its first Veterans.

Command Sgt. Maj. Bennie G. Adkins State Veterans Home

In September 2024, ADVA celebrated the dedication of the Command Sgt. Maj. Bennie G. Adkins State Veterans Home in Enterprise. The 174-bed facility was a seven-year project that began with a feasibility study in 2018. Enterprise was chosen as the new home's location largely because of the considerable Veteran population in Coffee County. Additionally, studies indicate the county, and Enterprise in particular, will see a significant growth in the Veteran population in coming years.

Williams Blackstock Architects in Birmingham was tasked with creating the facility's design. Rabren General Contractors was selected to build the facility. When in full operation, it will provide jobs for nearly 300 people.





Home	WWII	Korea	Vietnam	Gulf War	Peacetime
Bill Nichols	6	37	66	21	15
Tut Fann	4	31	80	13	32
William F. Green	4	28	93	13	15
Robert L. Howard - SNF*	6	45	108	12	11
Robert L. Howard - DOM**	3	32	31	2	11
Total	23	173	378	61	84

*SNF - Skilled-Nursing Facility
**DOM - Domiciliary

***Veterans may have served in multiple war periods
****All data as of September 30, 2024

Home	Total Residents
Bill Nichols	149
Tut Fann	147
William F. Green	150
Robert L. Howard - SNF	172
Robert L. Howard - DOM	78



Home	White	Black	Other
Bill Nichols	108	41	0
Tut Fann	121	25	1
William F. Green	122	28	0
Robert L. Howard - SNF	153	19	0
Robert L. Howard - DOM	77	1	0

Home	Male	Female
Bill Nichols	144	5
Tut Fann	138	9
William F. Green	144	6
Robert L. Howard - SNF	165	7
Robert L. Howard - DOM	76	2

Daily Rates

(As of July 1, 2024)

Veteran	Veteran	Veteran
\$11.64 4%	\$24.00 8%	\$24.00 12%
State \$144.03 49%	State \$149.23 48%	State \$113.05 58%
Federal \$138.29 47%	Federal \$138.29 44%	Federal \$59.69 30%
BN/TF/WFC \$293.96	RH SNF \$311.52	RH DOM \$196.74

Alabama State Veterans Memorial Cemetery

About the Cemetery

The Alabama State Veterans Memorial Cemetery at Spanish Fort serves as a reminder of the sacrifices made by Americans while defending the nation's freedom. The cemetery sits on over 120 acres of land and includes an administration building, maintenance facility, committal shelter, and a memorial walk. There are currently approximately 9,000 graves, including in-ground crypts, traditional graves, columbarium niches and a scatter garden. The cemetery will eventually be the final resting place for more than 190,000 Veterans, their spouses, and eligible dependents. The lifespan of the entire cemetery is 100 years.

Burials

Oct. 1 2023 - Sept. 30, 2024

Total Interments	483
Veterans Interred	347
Spouses Interred	114
Dependents Interred	1
Guard/Reserve Interred	21
Casket Interments	291
Cremains Interments	192



Phase II Expansion - Completed March 2024

The Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs (ADVA) dedicated the Phase II expansion of the Alabama State Veterans Memorial Cemetery at Spanish Fort on March 26, 2024.

The expansion added 2,762 pre-placed vault sites (casket sites), 960 columbarium niches (above-ground urn sites), and a memorial wall that includes 100 sites. It also provided an update to roadways, storm drainage, irrigation, and other expansion infrastructure.

The expansion was funded thanks to a \$5 million grant through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Veterans Cemetery Grants Program. This was the first of nine planned expansions for the facility, which will actively serve Alabama Veterans with interments for a total of 100 years.



Alabama G.I. Dependent Scholarship Program

About the Program

The Alabama G.I. Dependent Scholarship Program offers education benefits to dependents of eligible Alabama Veterans. The scholarship applies to tuition, textbooks, and instructional fees and can be used at all public universities, colleges, and technical schools in Alabama, along with 13 private institutions.



Activity Report	1st Quarter	2nd Quarter	3rd Quarter	4th Quarter	Total Type
Denied Applications	17	29	42	47	135
Original Applications	302	290	771	909	2,272
Supplemental Applications	148	163	323	394	1,028
Total by Date	467	482	1,136	1,350	3,435

Growth Index		
Original and Supplemental Applications		
Year	Supplemental	Original
FY21	939	1,858
FY22	883	1,972
FY23	870	2,162
FY24	1,028	2,272

Total Number of Students Attending

5,986

Four-Year Schools

4,722

Two-Year Schools

1,264

Total FY24 Expenditures

\$33,020,559.98

About the Office

The Office of Outreach and Engagement was created under the leadership of former Commissioner Kent Davis in 2019. A motion was put before the State Board of Veterans Affairs to establish the Office of Outreach and Engagement and create a new Assistant Commissioner position to lead the Office of Outreach and Engagement. The SBVA approved the creation of the office and new position effective FY20. Initially, the office consisted of one Public Affairs Manager, Director of Intergovernmental Relations, and the new Assistant Commissioner. Shortly after, the need for a Veterans Well-Being Program Manager was identified and was created in FY21.

Office of Outreach and Engagement



OPERATION WE REMEMBER: Operation We Remember features an American flag display to honor and remember the Veterans in Alabama who have lost their lives to suicide. The campaign takes place statewide during the month of September and in FY24 included 143 flags to recognize the 143 Alabama veterans who died by suicide in 2021. Along with flag displays set up on college campuses across the state, the ADVA held a news conference on the front steps of the Alabama Capitol to raise awareness for Veterans suicide prevention.



TBI SUMMIT: The ADVA, in partnership with the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services and Alabama Department of Mental Health, hosted “Forging Connections: Navigating Traumatic Brain Injury” in October 2023. The one-day event underscored the importance of collaboration and knowledge sharing in the field of Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) management and support. Serving as a pivotal moment for professionals and individuals, the summit was open to a diverse audience of medical professionals and dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for those affected by TBI.

Mission

ADVA's goal is to cultivate and develop relationships with other state and federal agencies, faith-based, nonprofit, and community/neighborhood organizations, working with them as partners to serve Veterans, their families, caregivers, survivors, and other beneficiaries.

ADVA will engage and inform those organizations about issues facing Veterans and the benefits, programs, and services USDVA provides.

Through ADVA outreach efforts, opportunities will be provided for external partners to expand their understanding of and participation in Veterans-focused programs.

PARTNERSHIPS: The ADVA partnered with the Alabama League of Municipalities in FY24 and attended its annual convention in Huntsville. With more than 145 incorporated cities and towns attending, the convention provided a convenient opportunity for the ADVA to have face-to-face conversations with municipal leadership across the state.

Separately, the ADVA also continued and strengthened one of its many established partnerships by continuing its support of Operation Iron Ruck.



This annual Veterans suicide prevention campaign between the Auburn Student Veterans Association and University of Alabama Campus Veterans Association is a three-day, 151-mile ruck march from one campus to the other the week of the Iron Bowl. ADVA held three news conferences in November 2023 to show support -- in Auburn, Tuscaloosa, and with Governor Kay Ivey at the Alabama Capitol. Assistant Commissioner of Outreach & Engagement Sandra Lucas also participated in the full ruck.



ALABAMA'S CHALLENGE: The Partners of Alabama's Challenge held its first in-person meeting in May 2024 to discuss strategies and best practices for forward mobility. During the meeting, members established four working groups through 2025 focuses: creating community engagement, identifying a lens of well-being, maturing a secure storage initiative, and developing a formal strategic communications plan.

**GENERAL FUND, EDUCATION TRUST FUND, AND AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT
FINANCIAL STATEMENT
FY 2024**

SOURCE OF FUNDS

Act No. 2023-382	State General Fund	\$ 3,249,737	
Act No. 2023-382	State General Fund (FY23 Reversion Reappropriated)	325,713	
Act No. 2023-382	State General Fund (Inflation)	149,357	
Act No. 2023-382	State General Fund (COLA)	7,745	
Act No. 2023-382	State General Fund (SEIB)	3,948	
Act No. 2024-412	State General Fund (Supplemental Appropriation)	<u>6,000,000</u>	
	Total State General Fund		\$ 9,736,500
Act No. 2023-379	Education Trust Fund (Administration)	2,730,364	
Act No. 2023-379	Education Trust Fund (AL G.I. Bill Education Benefits)	59,800,000	
Act No. 2023-379	ETF Administration (FY23 Reversion Reappropriated)	284,982	
Act No. 2023-379	ETF AL G.I. Bill Education Benefits (FY23 Reversion Reappropriated)	<u>500,000</u>	
	Total Education Trust Fund		\$ 63,315,346
Act No. 2023-1	ARPA (Healthcare Program Fund 1773)	5,000,000	
Act No. 2022-1	ARPA (Healthcare Program Fund 1779)	<u>5,000,000</u>	
	Total Healthcare Program		\$ 10,000,000
	TOTAL SOURCE OF FUNDS		\$ 83,051,846

EXPENDITURES

01	Personnel Costs	2,349,383	
02	Employee Benefits	1,034,989	
03	Travel (In-State)	179,893	
04	Travel (Out-of-State)	14,830	
05	Repairs and Maintenance	2,125	
06	Rentals and Leases	311,157	
07	Utilities and Communication	57,183	
08	Professional Services	904,646	
09	Supplies, Materials, and Operating Expenses	198,725	
10	Transportation Equipment Operations	28,966	
11	Grants and Benefits	16,066,525	
	(AL G.I. Bill Education Benefits)	33,020,560	
13	Transportation Equipment	55,760	
14	Other Equipment Purchases	<u>25,950</u>	
	TOTAL EXPENDITURES		\$ (54,250,692)
	Reverted to General Fund	\$ 797,381	
	Reverted to General Fund (Supplemental Appropriation)	\$ 413,958	
	Reverted to Education Trust Fund (Administration)	\$ 310,375	
	Reverted to Education Trust Fund (AL G.I. Bill Education Benefits)	\$ 27,279,440	

**VETERANS HOME TRUST FUND
FINANCIAL STATEMENT
FY 2024**

SOURCE OF FUNDS

Beginning Balance October 1, 2023	\$ 2,668,125
VA Per Diem	52,004,191
Bed Lease (HMR of Alabama, Inc.)	1,027,840
Income Tax Check-Off	24,052
Interest	19,909
Donations	762
Total Revenue	<u>\$ 53,076,754</u>
TOTAL SOURCE OF FUNDS	\$ 55,744,879

EXPENDITURES

	Nichols Home Alex City	Green Home Bay Minette	Fann Home Huntsville	Howard Home Pell City	Adkins Home Enterprise	
01 Personnel Costs	147,773	117,211	125,445	119,583	3,273	
02 Employee Benefits	51,394	50,775	52,185	50,648	743	
03 Travel (In-State)	2,034	4,645	3,708	2,971	220	
04 Travel (Out-of-State)	2,036	1,450	2,128			
06 Rentals and Leases	1,354	1,017	1,322	1,019		
07 Utilities and Communication	2,871	3,269	3,019	6,350	447	
08 Professional Services (HMR of Alabama, Inc.)	12,748,973	12,357,572	11,144,129	16,142,378		
09 Supplies, Materials, etc.	34,948	53,358	56,264	132,915	27,990	
11 Grants & Benefits						
14 Other Equipment	<u>6,672</u>	<u>736</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>941</u>	<u>4,805</u>	
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	12,998,055	12,590,033	11,388,240	16,456,805	37,478	<u>\$ (53,470,611)</u>
Ending Balance -Veterans Home Trust Fund as of September 30, 2024						<u><u>\$ 2,274,268</u></u>



Student Veterans from Auburn University donated items from Operation Iron Ruck to Veterans at the Bill Nichols State Veterans Home in December 2023.

**ALABAMA VETERANS ASSISTANCE FUND
FINANCIAL STATEMENT
FY 2024**

SOURCE OF FUNDS

Beginning Balance as of October 1, 2023	\$ 156,427,650
Transfer from Confederate Soldiers & Sailors Ad Valorem	69,318,174
Interfund Grant Programs	7,265,772
Local Capital Grants (CSM Bennie G. Adkins SVH)	7,304,578
Federal Reimbursement (Pharmacy)	716,341
Federal Burial Awards	292,147
Federal VA RN Grant (Nurse Retention)	224,911
Federal Reimbursement (Retroactive Awards)	57,550
Miscellaneous Tags	97,070
Dependent Burials	40,125
Local Government Grants (Jefferson County)	13,500
Surplus Property	523
Donations	400
Prior Year Refunds	217
Total Revenue	\$ 85,331,308
TOTAL SOURCE OF FUNDS	\$ 241,758,958

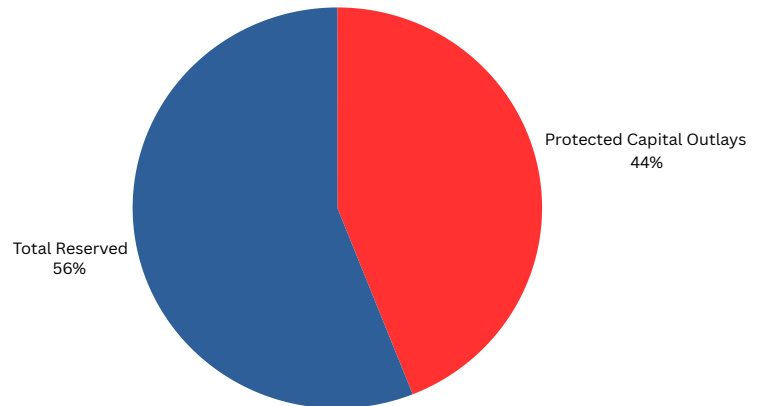
EXPENDITURES

	<u>Administration</u>	<u>Nichols Home Alexander City</u>	<u>Green Home Bay Minette</u>	<u>Fann Home Huntsville</u>	<u>Howard Home Pell City</u>	<u>Adkins Home Enterprise</u>	<u>Capital Outlay 5th SVH</u>	<u>Cemetery Spanish Fort</u>
01 Personnel Costs	3,687,391							248,405
02 Employee Benefits	1,698,979							122,790
03 Travel (In-State)								1,492
05 Repair and Maintenance		114,026	106,778	84,492	57,303			103,284
06 Rentals and Leases								956
07 Utilities and Communication								20,734
08 Professional Services (HMR of Alabama, Inc.)		853		107,003	853			6,447
09 Supplies, Materials, etc.	8,678	4,702,397	5,092,493	5,723,729	9,451,326	1,162,500		
10 Transportation Equipment Op			350	250	35,586			44,070
11 Grants and Benefits	7,300,000	256,813	209,657	175,554	457,023			7,548
12 Capital Outlay							11,800,000	
13 Transportation Equipment								56,572
14 Other Equipment	234,453	294,961	114,262	146,545	555,593		8,200,000	26,639
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	12,929,501	5,369,050	5,523,540	6,237,573	10,557,684	1,162,500	20,000,000	638,937
								\$ (62,418,785)

Ending Balance- Alabama Veterans Assistance Fund as of September 30, 2024



Brandon Miller and Wade Morrison represented ADVA at Operation Iron Ruck's Day Zero event at Wind Creek State Park.





"Proudly serving America's finest!"



ADVA Commissioner Jeff Newton and Assistant Commissioner Sandra Lucas awarded April Turner (center) the 2024 Lt. Col. Robert M. Horton Jr. Memorial Service Award during the Montgomery Chamber of Commerce's Veterans Day Ceremony.

Previously known as the ADVA Memorial Service Award, the Lt. Col. Robert M. Horton Jr. Memorial Service Award was renamed in 2024 after Bob Horton, who served as ADVA's first Assistant Commissioner of Outreach and Engagement from 2019 to 2022.

Previous winners include Martha Poole Simmons (2022) and Anna Doeren Taylor (2023).



Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs

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