



ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
PROUDLY SERVING AMERICA'S FINEST

RSA UNION BUILDING
100 N UNION ST, SUITE 826
MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA
(334) 242-5077

ANNUAL REPORT | FY 2025





Dear Governor Kay Ivey:

It is my distinct honor to present herewith the Annual Report of the Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs (ADVA) for Fiscal Year 2025. 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 you and 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 access to Veterans' services.

FY25 was a historic year for the ADVA, primarily highlighted through Senate Bill 67 and Senate Bill 70, which marked significant milestones for ADVA and the state's broader approach to serving veterans. Together, these measures strengthened leadership, accountability, and service coordination across Alabama's veterans network.

Senate Bill 67 elevated ADVA to a Cabinet-level agency by placing the Commissioner under direct appointment by the Governor and integrating the Department into the executive branch. This change streamlined governance, clarified accountability, and ensured veterans' issues have a direct voice in statewide policy discussions. Changes to the State Board of Veterans Affairs created a working partnership, while allowing the Veteran Service Organizations the freedom to represent all 400,000 Alabama veterans at the state and national level.

Senate Bill 70 established the Alabama Veterans Resource Center to serve as a centralized hub for veteran support services. While operating separately from ADVA, the resource center complements the Department's mission by expanding access to benefits, employment assistance, mental health resources, and transition support. Together, these bills modernize Alabama's veterans services framework and reinforce the state's commitment to meeting the needs of those who served.

As ADVA continues to operate its primary services and programs, FY25 confirmed the traditional successes of ADVA's efforts, identifying \$3.8 billion in compensation and pension claims for Alabama's veterans — a major contributor to Alabama's economy.

There are numerous other accomplishments and successes during FY25, 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

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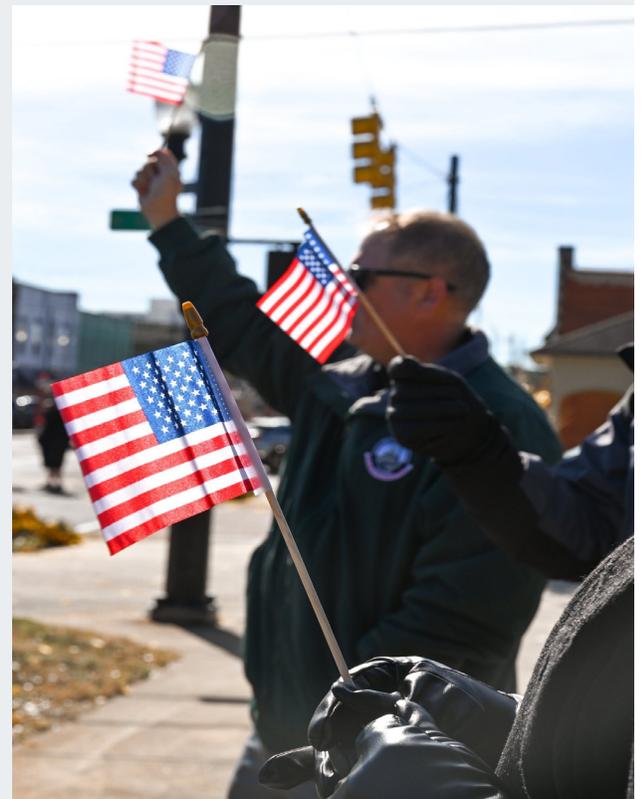
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Our Mission

To promote awareness and assist eligible veterans, their families, and survivors in obtaining any and all benefits to which they may be entitled from the Federal and State government under existing or future laws to be enacted.

Our 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.

Our Core Values

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.

About Us

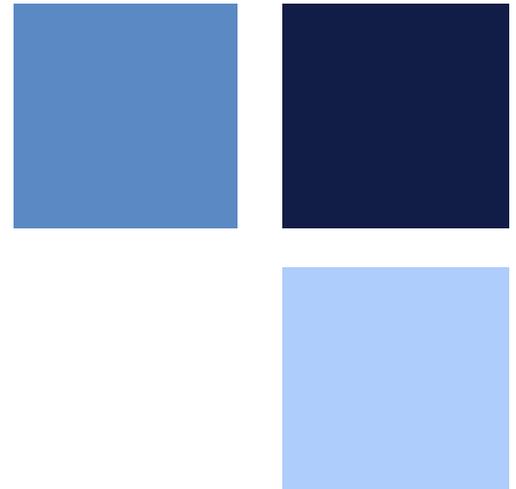


ADVA History

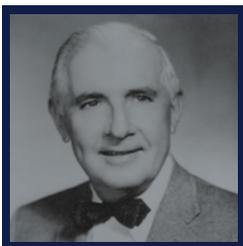
The first official agency charged with assisting veterans was the State Service Commission, established in 1927 by the Alabama Legislature. This agency was created primarily to assist World War I veterans in claiming federal benefits and other services for which their military service made them eligible. 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.



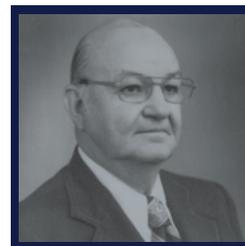
Past Commissioners



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

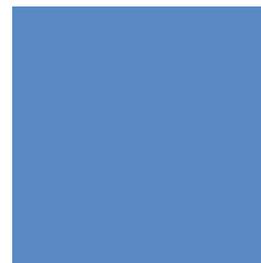
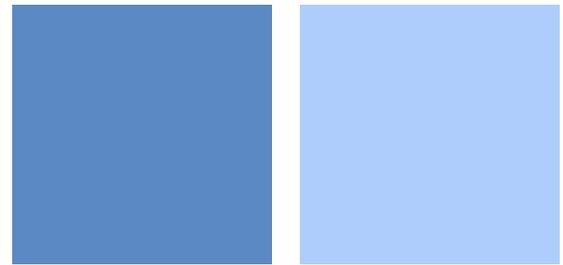
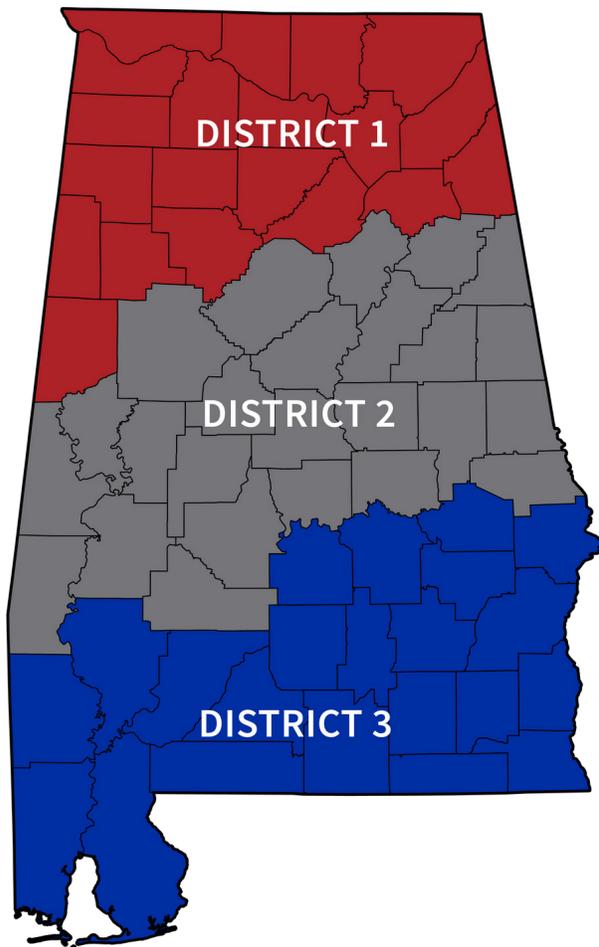


W. Kent Davis
2019-2024

Veterans Service Offices

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 all at no cost. Each must undergo rigorous training and testing to be certified as a Veterans Service Officer.

ALABAMA



Timothy Edgil, District 1 Manager

Mr. Edgil has been with the ADVA 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.

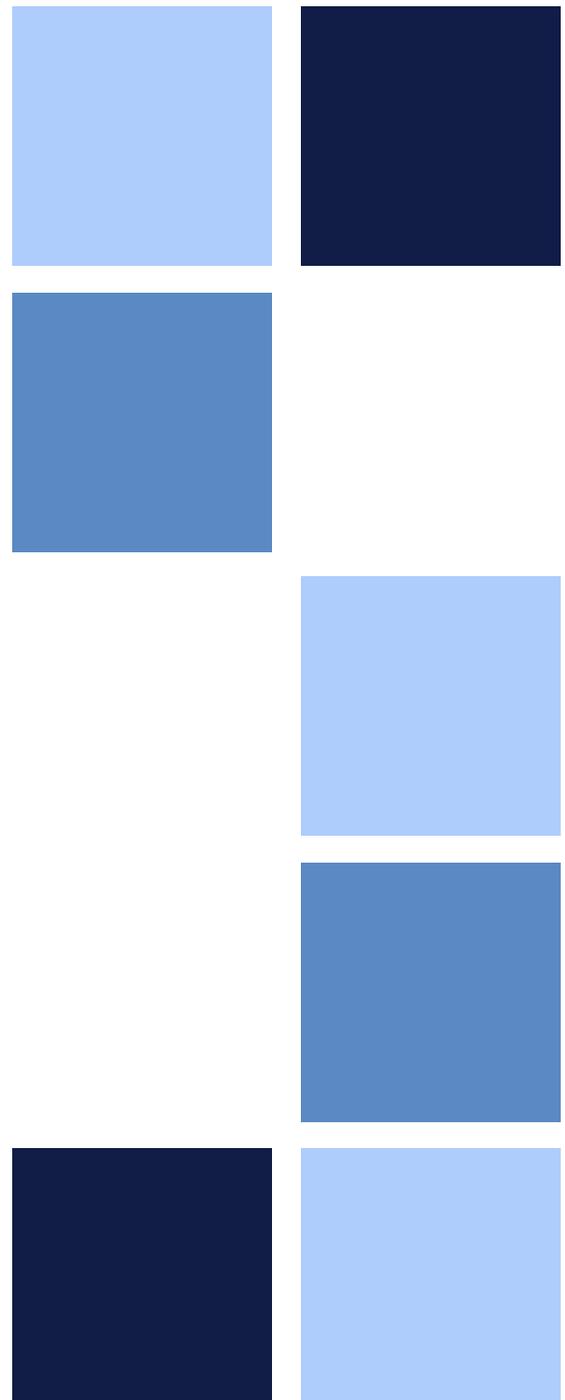


It is my pleasure to serve with the dedicated ADVA employees of District 1. These individuals are committed to the Department mission, and they demonstrate excellence in service to the veterans and their family members. District 1 team members provide the same measure of courtesy, compassion, commitment, and professional service to our clients regardless of which office they may visit.

I try to foster a culture of team spirit for these employees - evoking trust, a focus on doing the right thing, selfless service, and creating an environment that enables them to succeed. To accomplish this, I am determined to provide resources, relevant training, and offer support and guidance for their wellbeing.

Timothy Edgil

*Timothy Edgil
District 1 Manager
Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs*



District 1 Highlights

1 District 1 conducted training at Bevill State Community College, in Jasper on December 20. Guest speakers included a counselor from the Behavior Health Systems, Inc.



District 1 staff at the 2025 ADVA Annual Training Conference.

2 Madison County VSO Heather Perry and Etowah County VSO Leah Harden attended the Women Veteran Recognition Day observances in Huntsville and Jacksonville State University on June 12.



Etowah County VSO Leah Harden (2nd from left) with fellow female veterans at the Women Veteran Recognition Day held at Jacksonville State.

3 Jackson County VSO Kevin Holcomb and Cullman County VSO Daniel Marty attended the Vietnam Veterans Lapel Pinning Ceremonies in Huntsville on August 15 and in Cleveland on August 29.

**ADVA
DISTRICT 1
BY THE NUMBERS**

96
TOTAL
EDUCATION
ASSISTANCE

1,180
TOTAL PENSION
CLAIMS SUBMITTED

7,765
TOTAL
COMPENSATION
CLAIMS SUBMITTED

92,068
TOTAL PUBLIC
CONTACTS

Eric Ervin, District 2 Manager

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.

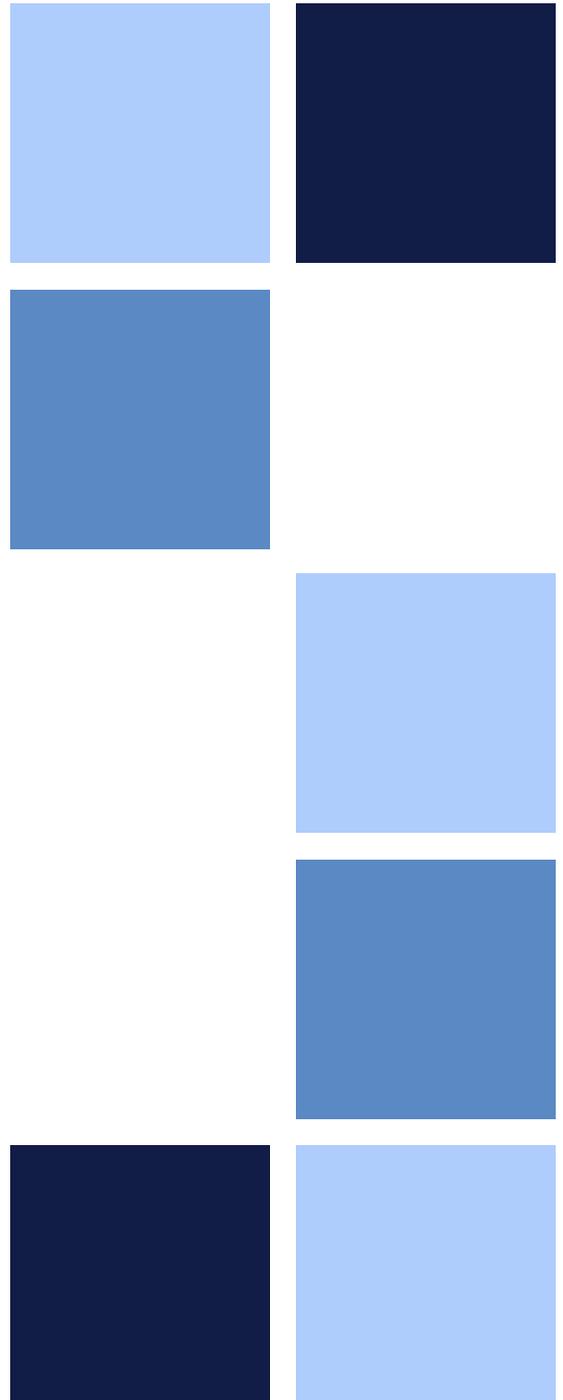


I am most proud of District 2 for continuing to show up consistently and treating every veteran with the respect and dignity that they deserve. I have witnessed firsthand how our work translated into real stability, opportunity and hope for our veterans and their families. That is something I carry with deep pride. My leadership throughout the year was most informed by my belief in empathy, accountability and clear communication.

I lead by listening first, setting high standards, and making sure that the District understood the “why” behind our work. It’s a challenge to balance compassion with performance but doing so helps to keep focus on meaningful outcomes. Guiding the district in FY25 was about staying steady, adaptable and mission-focused, especially when challenges arose, so we could continue delivering for those who served.

Eric Ervin

*Eric Ervin
District 2 Manager
Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs*



District 2 Highlights

- 1 VSO Peter Anaya assisted in the Clay County Wellness fair in Ashland.
- 2 VSO Angela Hunter and the Jefferson County office participated in the Marine Corps League Annual Conference in Birmingham and the American Legion Indy Grand Prix at Barber Motor Sports in Leeds.
- 3 Elmore County VSO Jessica Senteno supported Suicide Awareness Month by bringing awareness to veterans suicide and provided resources to the Elmore and Autauga County Commissions.



District 2 staff at the 2025 ADVA Annual Training Conference.



On August 8, Jefferson County VSO Sam Yount received a certificate of appreciation by the 87th Training Division Command Team for participating in its resource fair.

ADVA DISTRICT 2 BY THE NUMBERS

82
TOTAL EDUCATION ASSISTANCE

506
TOTAL PENSION CLAIMS SUBMITTED

4,859
TOTAL COMPENSATION CLAIMS SUBMITTED

17,527
TOTAL PUBLIC CONTACTS

Rhonda Jackson, District 3 Manager

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.

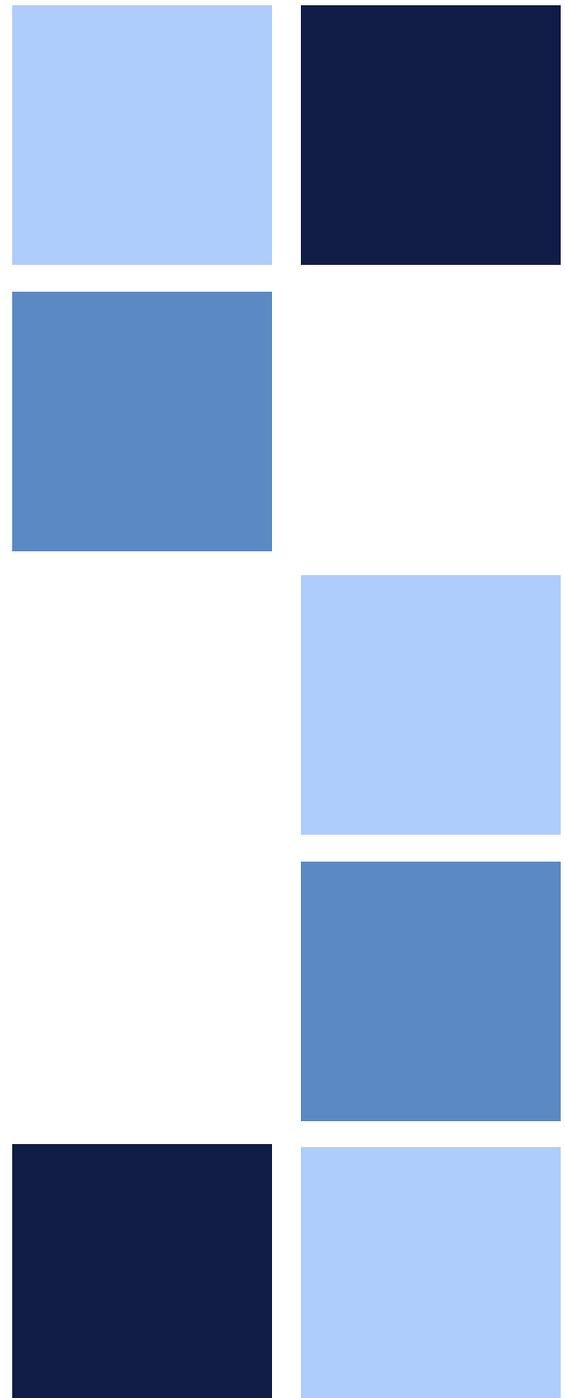


I am most proud of the tangible difference our district makes in veterans’ lives by responding to real needs. Whether it is improving access to benefits, strengthening support for struggling veterans and their families, or creating spaces where veterans feel valued, service is always our focus. I’m especially proud of how we foster collaboration among community stakeholders to extend our reach. The result is renewed trust, engagement, and a stronger sense of belonging among the veterans we serve.

My leadership style is most informed by my sense of accountability, empathy, and consistency. I believe in leading by example and empowering others to step into their strengths. I value fairness, which helps to build trust across the District. Rather than directing from the top down, I focus on guidance, mentorship, and shared ownership of goals. That approach allows us to navigate challenges effectively while keeping the mission – and the veterans – at the center of every decision.

Rhonda Jackson

*Rhonda Jackson
District 3 Manager
Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs*



District 3 Highlights

- 1 VSO Brian Foshee was honored and recognized with the Commissioner's Excellence Award for outstanding service to the veterans of Covington and Conecuh counties. Houston County VSO Davy Daughtry as honored and recognized with the Department's inaugural GOAT award for service beyond his regular duties.
- 2 District 3 had 100% participation in the State Combined Campaign and 100% county office participation in Operation We Remember.
- 3 District Manager instituted and executed district-wide Wellness Day to focus on employee whole health and team building.



District 1 staff at the 2025 ADVA Annual Training Conference.



Macon County Administrative Support Assistant Betty Dubose (on the left) was recognized and honored for 44 years of service with the Alabama Department of Veteran Affairs.

ADVA DISTRICT 3 BY THE NUMBERS

103

TOTAL
EDUCATION
ASSISTANCE

1,695

TOTAL PENSION
CLAIMS SUBMITTED

5,134

TOTAL
COMPENSATION
CLAIMS SUBMITTED

97,118

TOTAL PUBLIC
CONTACTS

2025 Annual Training Conference

The Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs 2025 Annual Training Conference was held on May 21-23 at the Enterprise Civic Center in Enterprise. The conference brought all ADVA staff from across the state for focused training and collaboration aimed at improving services for Alabama's veterans and their families. The annual conference serves as a cornerstone professional development event, ensuring consistent, high-quality service delivery across the state.

The 2025 Annual Training Conference provided timely updates and information on policies, programs, and best practices impacting veterans, while strengthening coordination among service providers and partners. The conference also served as a forum to share updates on ADVA initiatives, strategic priorities, and performance outcomes, and to highlight innovative approaches to addressing the evolving needs of Alabama's veteran population.

Conference sessions focused on several key priority areas aligned with ADVA's mission and strategic goals, including well-being and updates on veteran benefits and claims assistance. The conference featured welcoming remarks from Enterprise Mayor William E. Cooper and served as a shining example of ADVA's strong partnership with the community. U.S. Army veteran Mike Durant delivered the keynote address, focusing on the Battle of Mogadishu and the importance of a successful transition out of the military.



2025 BY THE NUMBERS

2

ORIENTATIONS HELD

4

NATIONAL VETERANS LEGAL SERVICES PROGRAM (NVLSP) COURSES ATTENDED

102

TOTAL ACCREDITATIONS

6

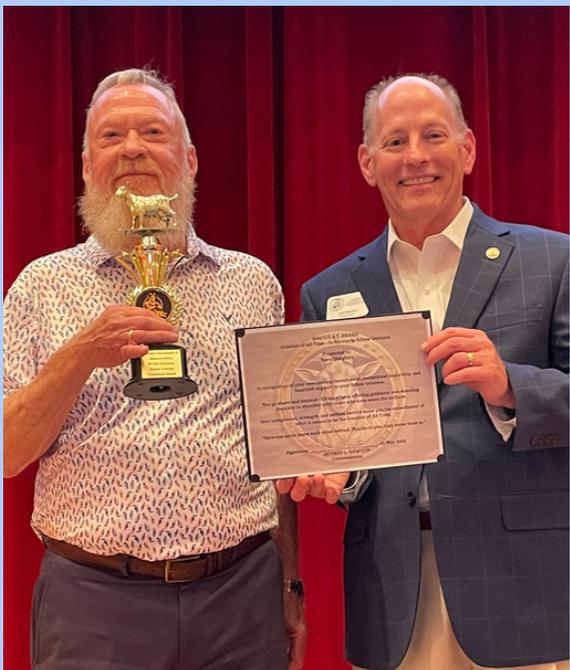
STATE PERSONNEL TRAINING COURSES ATTENDED

There were numerous trainings and briefings on a range of information including the Employee Assistance Program, caregiver support through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, TBI training, and briefings from the VA Regional Benefits Office.





Commissioner's Excellence Award
Covington County Veterans
Service Officer Brian Foshee



**Greatest Of All-Time in Service
to Fellow Veterans Award**
Houston County Veterans
Service Officer Davy Daughtry

2025 Annual Training Conference Awards

The conference concluded with Commissioner Jeff Newton presenting the Commissioner's Excellence Award to Covington County Veterans Service Officer Brian Foshee and Greatest of All-Time (GOAT) in Service to Fellow Veterans Award to Houston County Veterans Service Officer Davy Daughtry.

The Commissioner's Excellence Award honors individuals demonstrating exceptional dedication and service to Alabama's veterans. Foshee served 30 distinguished years in the United States Marine Corps. Since 2015, Foshee has continued his commitment to service as the Covington County Veterans Service Officer, assisting veterans and their families in accessing the benefits they've earned.

The Greatest of All-Time in Service to Fellow Veterans Award is presented to individuals who demonstrate unwavering commitment, exceptional leadership and heartfelt support for fellow veterans. Daughtry retired from the U.S. Navy with 30 years of service, and has continued his commitment to service as the Houston County Veterans Service Officer for the past 19 years. Daughtry views his role and the way he helps other veterans simply saying, "We just try our best to help veterans and their families. It's as simple as that."

Geographic Distribution of VA Expenditures (GDX) FY2024 Report by County

County	Total Direct Expenditure	County	Total Direct Expenditure
Autauga	\$ 74,565,185	Henry	\$ 16,343,413
Baldwin	\$ 182,598,837	Houston	\$ 97,492,740
Barbour	\$ 17,665,055	Jackson	\$ 30,310,164
Bibb	\$ 9,263,462	Jefferson	\$ 341,621,859
Blount	\$ 21,741,594	Lamar	\$ 8,556,895
Bullock	\$ 6,851,887	Lauderdale	\$ 57,867,306
Butler	\$ 13,890,191	Lawrence	\$ 10,842,584
Calhoun	\$ 111,745,653	Lee	\$ 170,490,851
Chambers	\$ 24,659,347	Limestone	\$ 127,718,640
Cherokee	\$ 13,832,264	Lowndes	\$ 8,199,713
Chilton	\$ 25,597,830	Macon	\$ 19,132,031
Choctaw	\$ 7,841,185	Madison	\$ 474,647,369
Clarke	\$ 15,385,928	Marengo	\$ 12,564,823
Clay	\$ 8,797,316	Marion	\$ 14,352,145
Cleburne	\$ 6,109,316	Marshall	\$ 58,297,280
Coffee	\$ 125,713,188	Mobile	\$ 242,944,807
Colbert	\$ 37,564,891	Monroe	\$ 12,849,091
Conecuh	\$ 11,190,644	Montgomery	\$ 247,217,262
Coosa	\$ 9,047,621	Morgan	\$ 67,095,469
Covington	\$ 28,550,312	Perry	\$ 5,164,928
Crenshaw	\$ 11,126,867	Pickens	\$ 12,854,406
Cullman	\$ 49,148,934	Pike	\$ 23,555,409
Dale	\$ 79,865,634	Randolph	\$ 12,693,722
Dallas	\$ 25,633,283	Russell	\$ 141,578,392
De Kalb	\$ 28,588,272	Saint Clair	\$ 49,597,248
Elmore	\$ 112,923,242	Shelby	\$ 109,422,529
Escambia	\$ 22,803,243	Sumter	\$ 5,996,479
Etowah	\$ 70,867,166	Talladega	\$ 49,149,070
Fayette	\$ 9,742,362	Tallapoosa	\$ 31,128,903
Franklin	\$ 12,217,696	Tuscaloosa	\$ 108,244,631
Geneva	\$ 31,928,721	Walker	\$ 36,831,633
Greene	\$ 5,283,459	Washington	\$ 8,851,563
Hale	\$ 12,322,653	Wilcox	\$ 5,289,782
Henry	\$ 16,343,413	Winston	\$ 13,085,914
		ALABAMA TOTAL	\$ 3,857,052,293

Note: The FY25 GDX Report will be released in Summer 2026.

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 FY25.

Board of Veterans Appeals

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 164 BVA hearings held.

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 129 local hearings assigned in Fiscal Year 2025 that were held.

\$14.6 Million

RETROACTIVE BENEFITS RECEIVED

APPEALS & REVIEW DIVISION
BY THE NUMBERS

164

BVA HEARINGS HELD

6,571

AUDITS & REVIEWS

3,447

FIELD ASSISTANCE REQUESTS

129

LOCAL HEARINGS HELD

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.



Floyd E. “Tut” Fann State Veterans Home
 Huntsville
 150 Skilled Care Units
 Opened in 1995. Major renovation in 2020.

Col. Robert L. Howard State Veterans Home
 Pell City
 80 Assisted Living Units / 174 Skilled Care Units
 Opened in 2012.

Bill Nichols State Veterans Home
 Alexander City
 150 Skilled Care Units
 Opened in 1989. Major renovations in 2015.

Command Sgt. Maj. Bennie G. Adkins State Veterans Home
 Enterprise
 174 Skilled Care Units
 Opened in 2024.

William F. Green State Veterans Home
 Bay Minette
 150 Skilled Care Units
 Opened in 1995. Major Renovation in 2020.

STATE VETERANS HOMES (SVH) BY THE NUMBERS

Wartime Era Service

Home	WWII	Korea	Vietnam	Gulf War	Peacetime	OEF/OIF***
Bill Nichols SVH	8	24	77	18	23	0
Tut Fann SVH	3	22	85	12	37	0
William F. Green SVH	4	26	91	14	21	0
Col. Robert L. Howard SVH SNF*	4	36	112	15	16	0
Col. Robert L. Howard SVH DOM**	3	28	31	3	13	0
CSM Bennie G. Adkins SVH	2	13	39	8	8	1

*SNF: Skilled-Nursing Facility

**DOM: Domiciliary

***Operation Enduring Freedom / Operation Iraqi Freedom

****Veterans may have served in multiple war periods

*****All data as of September 30, 2025

Demographics

Home	Race - White	Race - Black	Race - Other	Sex - Male	Sex - Female
Bill Nichols SVH	112	38	0	143	7
Tut Fann SVH	117	33	0	141	9
William F. Green SVH	125	24	0	142	7
Col. Robert L. Howard SVH SNF*	148	24	1	165	8
Col. Robert L. Howard SVH DOM**	78	1	0	77	2
CSM Bennie G. Adkins SVH	54	10	0	61	3

Annual Average Census & Occupancy Percentage

(Data from October 1, 2024 to September 30, 2025)

*Admissions were paused for CSM Bennie G. Adkins SVH in April 2025.



147 Residents
Bill Nichols SVH



148 Residents
Floyd E. "Tut" Fann SVH



148 Residents
William F. Green SVH



173 Residents
Col. R.L. Howard SVH
Skilled Nursing Facility



79 Residents
Col. R.L. Howard SVH
Domiciliary

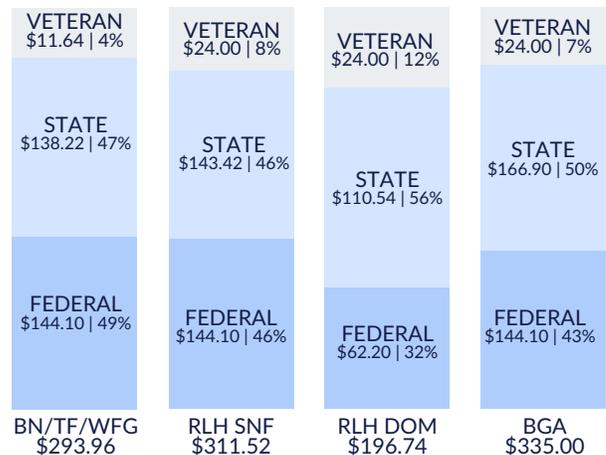


60 Residents
Bennie G. Adkins SVH

Daily Rates at Capacity

COST PER VETERAN/STATE/FEDERAL PER DAY & THE PERCENT PAID BY THE VETERAN/STATE/FEDERAL PER DAY

(Effective as of October 1, 2024)



Alabama State Veterans Homes Year in Review

The year began with the much anticipated opening of the CSM Bennie G. Adkins State Veterans Home. The first two veterans arrived on October 3, 2024 after licensure was granted by the Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH). The Federal VA conducted a Recognition Survey in November in which the facility received 100% compliance. This allowed the veterans home to be officially recognized and start receiving federal per diem.

All of the veterans homes provide a vital activity program with many creative in-house activities that serve a variety of interests ensuring the veteran residents had an active, meaningful year. They also participate in many outings to restaurants, shopping, parks, sporting events and more. Special emphasis is given to veteran focused holidays. Each home conducted well-attended Veterans Day programs and Memorial Day programs. This year, we also held the first Women's Veterans Day programs recognizing women veteran residents through an official proclamation by Governor Kay Ivey and presenting quilts through the Quilts of Valor program.

Several major construction projects and facility improvement initiatives were completed throughout the year. This included the roof replacement project at the Tut Fann SVH as well as replacement of the nurse call system at Col. Robert L. Howard SVH and Bill Nichols SVH. Additionally, there was an upgrade to the wander management system at Bill Nichols SVH. We continue to assess the veterans homes' equipment, building systems and finishes to continually have fully functioning buildings that provide for a safe and homelike living environment for our veterans that reside with us.

A federal single audit was conducted that reviewed all programs receiving federal funding for compliance. The State Veterans Home Construction Grant Program and the Federal VA Per Diem Program were both audited extensively with no findings.

In addition to the Recognition Survey by the Federal VA of the CSM Bennie G. Adkins SVH, they also conducted Annual Surveys of the Bill Nichols SVH, Tut Fann SVH, William F. Green SVH and Col. Robert L. Howard SVH. All had very successful results and are in full compliance with all healthcare standards. Strong quality assurance practices and interdisciplinary collaboration contributed to continued regulatory compliance and high standards of care.

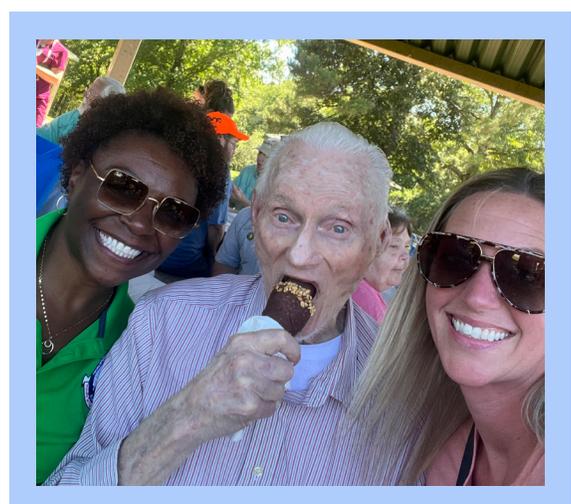




Staffing efforts focused on targeted recruitment in several areas with a focus on nursing. Since COVID, staffing had continued to be a challenge. A huge milestone was reached this year when we achieved full staffing levels without relying on agency staffing in any of the veterans homes. This achievement was in part attributed to the VA's Nurse Recruitment and Retention Grant. We received \$144,985.30 for programs that provided scholarships for CNAs to become nurses as well as sign on bonuses and retention bonuses.

State Veterans Homes Directors participated in the National Association of State Veterans Homes Annual Summer Conference in Louisville, Kentucky, where they collaborated with peers nationwide and explored innovative practices in veteran care. During the conference, Executive Director Kim Justice and HMR's Dalton Freeman presented on "The Importance of Relationships in Times of Crisis," sharing lessons learned from the catastrophic fire at the Command Sgt. Maj. Bennie G. Adkins State Veterans Home and highlighting how strong partnerships with local, state, and federal leaders supported evacuation efforts and recovery.

Overall, FY25 reflected a year of resilience and growth across Alabama's State Veterans Homes. Through strong leadership, targeted hiring, meaningful facility investments, and continued community partnerships, each home remained well-positioned to meet the increasing demand for veteran long-term care services in their areas. The collective efforts of staff, volunteers, partners, and supporters ensured that Alabama's veterans were honored, cared for, and supported in safe, dignified, and enriching environments throughout the year.



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

The Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs marked a significant milestone in early October 2024 with the opening of the Command Sgt. Maj. Bennie G. Adkins State Veterans Home in Enterprise. The new facility not only strengthened ADVA's commitment to ensuring disabled veterans receive high-quality, skilled-care nursing in the Wiregrass but it also alleviated stress to a long waiting list for the state veterans home program.

Named in honor of Command Sgt. Maj. Bennie G. Adkins, one of Alabama's most decorated veterans and a Medal of Honor recipient, the Enterprise veterans home provides skilled nursing care and specialized services designed to meet the unique needs of Alabama's veteran population. With modern accommodations, professional medical staff, and a focus on quality of life, the Enterprise home offers residents a supportive environment that promotes both physical well-being and personal connection.

On April 16, 2025, a fire at the Command Sgt. Maj. Bennie G. Adkins State Veterans Home led to the long-term displacement of 90 veterans. The safety of residents and staff was the immediate priority, and no injuries were reported as all veterans were quickly evacuated. On the ground, ADVA worked closely with first responders, City of Enterprise leadership, Medical Center Enterprise, and the Enterprise Health & Rehabilitation Center to ensure veterans were quickly relocated to safe care settings.

Following the incident, a lease agreement was entered with the Enterprise Health & Rehabilitation Center for long-term housing as the restoration process began. ADVA maintained ongoing communication with veterans and their families throughout the relocation process, providing updates and ensuring each veteran's individual needs were met during the transition. After the transition, continuity of care was preserved for our veterans, as all staff moved with the residents to ensure consistent treatment.

Damage assessments and recovery planning began immediately after the fire, with a focus on restoring the facility while maintaining the highest standards of safety and care. ADVA coordinated with contractors, Risk Management, and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to guide repairs and ensure compliance with all applicable requirements.

Veterans will return to the Command Sgt. Maj. Bennie G. Adkins State Veterans Home once repairs and safety enhancements are completed, which ADVA leadership expects to be in Fall 2026.





Alabama State Veterans Memorial Cemetery

The Alabama State Veterans Memorial Cemetery at Spanish Fort serves as the final resting place, a peaceful shrine, and lasting tribute to the service and sacrifice of our nation's veterans. The cemetery is constantly upholding a model of excellence and commitment to serving our veterans and their families.

ADVA welcomed the community to celebrate and commemorate our veterans' service and sacrifice on Memorial Day, Veterans Day, and Family Wreath Day. Each year American flags are placed on each burial sites by local Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts and the families of our veterans interred here. The Patriot Guard Riders and the Baldwin County Armed Forces Honor Guard participate in the annual ceremony. This special recognition honors our veterans who paid the ultimate sacrifice in service of our country and those who served honorably.

The cemetery provides a committal service, gravesite, opening and closing services, headstone, and perpetual care. It is expected to carry out those services for over 110 years and will be the final resting place for more than 190,000 veterans, their spouses, and their eligible dependents.

Multiple capital improvement projects and programs were worked during FY25, including a second committal shelter, which will be completed in 2026. This project will expand committal service logistics, add redundancy for regular shelter maintenance, and offer sanctuary from future expansion project activities.

ADVA is also planning second Alabama State Veterans Memorial Cemetery for North Alabama. This project will expand services to an area of unserved veterans in Alabama. Leadership plans to break ground in FY26.

October 1, 2024 - September 30, 2025	
Total Interments	484
Total Veterans Interred	344
Total Spouses Interred	128
Total Dependents Interred	1
Total Guard and Reserve Act Interred	11
Total Casket Interments	305
Total Cremains Interments	179



Alabama State Veterans Memorial Cemetery
at Spanish Fort

Alabama G.I. Dependent Scholarship Program

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



\$43,523,933.20

TOTAL FY25 EXPENDITURES

GROWTH INDEX

ORIGINAL & SUPPLEMENTAL APPLICATIONS

YEAR	SUPPLEMENTAL	ORIGINAL
FY22	883	1,972
FY23	870	2,162
FY24	1,028	2,272
FY25	1,085	2,608

6,213

TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS ATTENDING

5,093

FOUR-YEAR SCHOOLS

1,120

TWO-YEAR SCHOOLS

Activity Report	1st Quarter	2nd Quarter	3rd Quarter	4th Quarter	Total Type
Denied Applications	21	28	33	46	128
Original Applications	278	323	1,126	881	2,608
Supplemental Applications	153	168	329	435	1,085
Total by Date	452	519	1,488	1,362	3,821

The Office of Outreach and Engagement

The Office of Outreach and Engagement was created after 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. Today, the office is comprised of a Director of Outreach, a Veterans Well-Being Manager, and a Digital Manager, all of whom work collaboratively to strengthen community partnerships, expand awareness of programs and services, enhance strategic communication efforts, support veteran-centered initiatives across the state, and ensure that veterans and their families remain informed, connected, and fully supported.



OPERATION WE REMEMBER: This initiative 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 FY25 included 139 flags to recognize the 139 Alabama veterans who died by suicide in 2023. Along with flag displays set up in cities and towns across the state, the ADVA held a press event in Montgomery alongside the Montgomery Military and Veterans Commission to formally announce the 2025 campaign. The department also had yard signs at each of its 62 veterans service offices and partnered with the Alabama League of Municipalities to spread the veterans suicide prevention message across the state.



S.A.F.E.R. TOGETHER: The Houston Hunter Act was signed into law in April 2025 and represents the state's most direct, hands-on safe storage program for safe storage related to veterans suicide prevention. The program – commonly called S.A.F.E.R. (Storing Ammunition and Firearms to Enhance Resilience) Together – offers voluntary and temporary firearm storage during mental health crises. It is named in honor of Army veteran Houston Tumlin and Marine veteran Hunter Whitley, who both lost their lives to suicide. The law creates firearm hold agreements between participating Federal Firearm Licensees and veterans to provide veterans and others a safe option to set aside firearms temporarily. ADVA has been a strong advocate for the program since its inception and continues to support S.A.F.E.R. Together as the third pillar requirement of Alabama's Challenge.

Partnerships

ADVA's footprint across the state saw growth in FY25 with several initiatives continuing and others being established. ADVA remains committed to establishing and growing strong partnerships within the veterans community, which is essential to the ADVA's mission to effectively serve those who have served.

In FY25, the Office of Outreach continued working with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, participating in multiple resource fairs organized by the VA, including the annual Homeless Veterans Stand Down in Montgomery. Across the state, Commissioner Newton and Veterans Service Officers remained present at Veterans Treatment Courts, which were developed to allow qualifying veterans with mental health or substance use issues to avoid unnecessary incarceration. In the program, veterans may receive medical and mental health treatment, training and help with finding a job, as well as housing and transportation assistance. Veterans who successfully complete the program will have the charges against them dismissed and may be eligible to have their records expunged.

Two significant partnerships in FY25 remained with the Alabama League of Municipalities (ALM) and Operation Iron Ruck. The Department attended the ALM annual convention in Huntsville, which was highlighted by Commissioner Newton providing city and county leaderships with a briefing on ADVA's services and programs. 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.



OPERATION IRON RUCK: 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 Student Veterans Association is a three-day, 151-mile ruck march from one campus to the other the week of the Iron Bowl. ADVA coordinated a student meeting with Governor Ivey, which included the Governor proclaiming the first day of the ruck as Operation Iron Ruck Day in Alabama.

By working closely with veteran service organizations, community leaders, healthcare providers, and local governments, ADVA is better positioned to connect veterans and their families with critical resources, benefits, and support. These partnerships strengthen trust, expand outreach, and ensure that veterans across Alabama receive timely, coordinated, and meaningful assistance where they live.

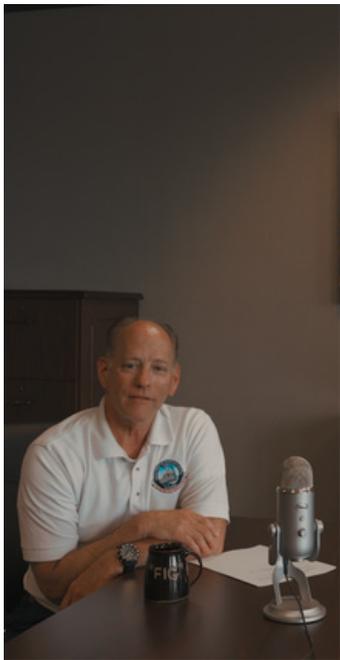
ALABAMA'S CHALLENGE: Alabama's Challenge for Preventing Suicide Among Service Members, Veterans, and their Families (SMVF) is an initiative aimed to create an impactful, long-term outcome across the state as we continue fighting a stigma with mental illness. ADVA serves as the lead agency within Alabama's Challenge and assists with connecting with SMVF to provide information and knowledge about suicide, provide support, and provide resources and options to deal with PTSD and crisis situations.

In FY25, ADVA and the partners of Alabama's Challenge hosted a veterans well-being town hall in Prattville. Mayor Bill Gillespie and Prattville Chamber President Patty Vander Wal joined Commissioner Newton in presenting local resources available for veterans who are in need of well-being assistance.



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



GENERAL FUND, EDUCATION TRUST FUND, AND OPIOID TREATMENT AND ABATEMENT FUND
FINANCIAL STATEMENT
FY 2025

SOURCE OF FUNDS

Act No. 2024-355	State General Fund	\$ 3,743,500	
Act No. 2024-355	State General Fund (FY24 Reversion Reappropriated)	1,191,739	
Act No. 2024-355	State General Fund (Inflation)	128,363	
Act No. 2024-355	State General Fund (COLA)	12,926	
Act No. 2024-355	State General Fund (SEIB)	2,688	
	Total State General Fund	\$ 5,079,216	
Act No. 2024-351	Education Trust Fund (AL G.I. Bill Education Benefits)	45,000,000	
Act No. 2024-351	Education Trust Fund (Administration)	2,815,227	
Act No. 2024-351	ETF Administration (FY24 Reversion Reappropriated)	310,375	
	Total Education Trust Fund	\$ 48,125,602	
Act 2025-255	Opioid Treatment and Abatement Fund 1822	1,500,000	
	Total Opioid Treatment and Abatement Fund 1822	\$ 1,500,000	
	TOTAL SOURCE OF FUNDS	\$ 54,704,818	

EXPENDITURES

01	Personnel Costs	2,309,749	
02	Employee Benefits	1,020,393	
03	Travel (In-State)	163,614	
04	Travel (Out-of-State)	23,562	
05	Repairs and Maintenance	1,620	
06	Rentals and Leases	324,844	
07	Utilities and Communication	52,864	
08	Professional Services	1,097,648	
09	Supplies, Materials, and Operating Expenses	165,723	
10	Transportation Equipment Operations	36,763	
11	Grants and Benefits	783,460	
	(AL G.I. Bill Education Benefits)	43,520,417	
13	Transportation Equipment	48,306	
14	Other Equipment Purchases	50,072	
	TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$ (49,599,035)	
	Reverted to General Fund	\$ 1,783,047	
	Reverted to Education Trust Fund (Administration)	\$ 343,153	
	Reverted to Education Trust Fund (AL G.I. Bill Education Benefits)	\$ 1,479,583	
	Reverted to Opioid Treatment and Abatement Fund 1822	\$ 1,500,000	

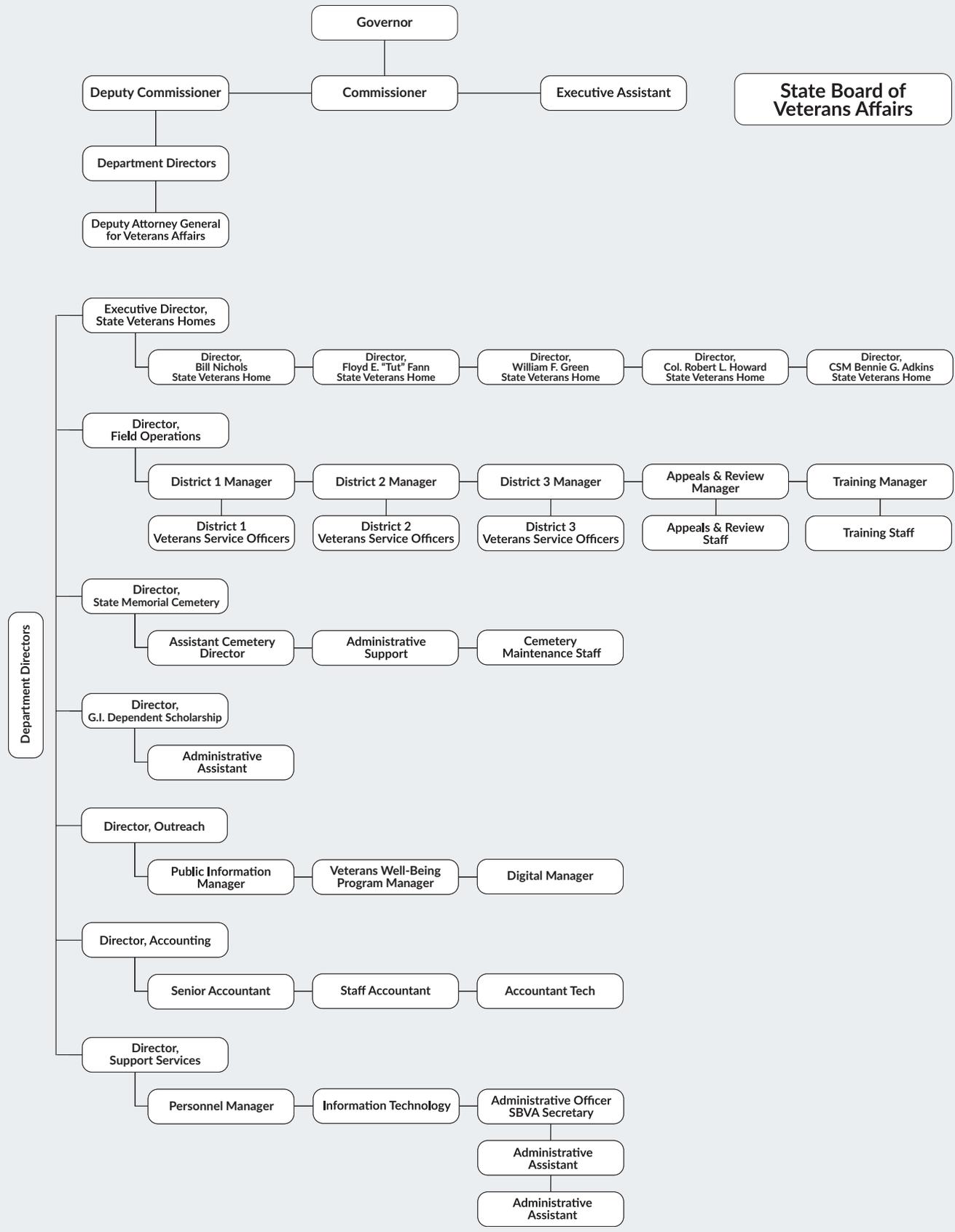


VETERANS HOME TRUST FUND FINANCIAL STATEMENT FY 2025					
SOURCE OF FUNDS					
Beginning Balance October 1, 2024					\$ 2,274,268
VA Per Diem				59,080,396	
Bed Lease (HMR of Alabama, Inc.)				1,280,475	
Income Tax Check-Off				26,479	
Interest				100,911	
Surplus Property				5	
Total Revenue					\$ 60,488,266
TOTAL SOURCE OF FUNDS					\$ 62,762,534
EXPENDITURES					
	Nichols Home Alex City	Green Home Bay Minette	Fann Home Huntsville	Howard Home Pell City	Adkins Home Enterprise
01 Personnel Costs	119,278	128,571	134,348	128,235	93,817
02 Employee Benefits	51,908	54,531	55,308	53,751	41,904
03 Travel (In-State)	1,382	1,264	1,879	1,628	1,279
04 Travel (Out-of-State)	2,263	1,942	1,517	1,902	1,449
06 Rentals and Leases	1,337	1,058	1,357	1,028	1,156
07 Utilities and Communication	511	4,011	3,555	7,156	
08 Professional Services (HMR of Alabama, Inc.)	13,334,401	12,233,871	11,589,959	16,641,607	5,757,406
09 Supplies, Materials, etc.	36,129	57,025	58,355	131,499	89,629
11 Grants & Benefits	21,247		30,982		
14 Other Equipment	37		1,112	44	236
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	13,568,493	12,482,273	11,878,372	16,966,850	5,986,876
					\$ (60,882,864)
Ending Balance -Veterans Home Trust Fund as of September 30, 2025					\$ 1,879,670

ALABAMA VETERANS ASSISTANCE FUND FINANCIAL STATEMENT FY 2025									
SOURCE OF FUNDS									
Beginning Balance as of October 1, 2024								\$ 179,340,173	
Transfer from Confederate Soldiers & Sailors Ad Valorem								74,330,108	
Local Capital Grants (CSM Bennie G. Adkins SVH)								42,900,000	
Insurance Recoveries								10,000,000	
Local Capital Grants (Cemetery)								4,977,042	
Federal Reimbursement (Pharmacy)								1,006,622	
Federal Burial Awards								299,796	
Federal VA RN Grant (Nurse Retention)								252,582	
Miscellaneous Tags								105,175	
Federal Reimbursement (Retroactive Awards)								99,464	
Dependent Burials								15,750	
Surplus Property								1,944	
Donations								1,425	
Prior Year Refunds									
Total Revenue								\$ 133,989,908	
TOTAL SOURCE OF FUNDS								\$ 313,330,081	
EXPENDITURES									
	Administration	Nichols Home Alexander City	Green Home Bay Minette	Fann Home Huntsville	Howard Home Pell City	Adkins Home Enterprise	Capital Outlay Homes	Capital Outlay Cemetery	Cemetery Spanish Fort
01 Personnel Costs	3,969,947								283,558
02 Employee Benefits	1,884,453								140,433
03 Travel (In-State)									2,069
04 Travel (Out-of-State)									1,756
05 Repair and Maintenance		93,667	31,147	2,274,137	78,515		1,000,000		106,802
06 Rentals and Leases									1,351
07 Utilities and Communication									20,571
08 Professional Services (HMR of Alabama, Inc.)	90,000	39,797	15,808	67,851	1,655	12,420	4,268,975	(59,964)	22,345
09 Supplies, Materials, etc.	71,479	4,827,195	5,632,403	5,987,690	9,879,917	8,679,063			46,226
10 Transportation Equipment Op									7,384
11 Grants and Benefits		250,420	214,470	258,177	532,985	14,057			
12 Capital Outlay							30,534,717	2,699,803	
13 Transportation Equipment									89
14 Other Equipment	37,612	270,700	160,110	101,309	339,916	312			69,052
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	6,053,491	5,481,779	6,053,938	8,689,164	10,832,988	8,705,852	36,803,692	2,639,839	701,636
									\$ (85,962,379)
Ending Balance- Alabama Veterans Assistance Fund as of September 30, 2025									\$ 227,367,702

Total Reserved \$ 201,596,144.00
 89% of FY25 Ending Balance Reserved
 Capacity Protected \$ 25,771,558.00
 11% of FY25 Ending Balance Protected

ADVA Organizational Chart



State Board of Veterans Affairs

The State Board of Veterans Affairs is composed of 16 members, comprised of the Governor and selected members of the American Legion, Disabled American Veterans, Marine Corps League, Military Officers Association of America, Military Order of the Purple Heart, The Veterans of Foreign Wars, and Vietnam Veterans of America. The Governor, who serves the Board's chair, appoints members from a nominated list provided by each Veteran Service Organization. Board members' terms are four years, with the option of one renewal. From its membership, the Board elects a vice chairman.



Chairwoman, Kay Ivey
Governor



Vice Chair, Scott Gedling
Veterans of Foreign Wars



John Burks
Marine Corps League



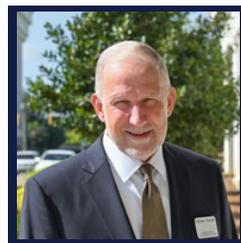
Michael Davis
Vietnam Veterans of America



Jeffrey Fisher
American Veterans



Buddy Keen
American Legion



Walter Kozak
American Legion



Lorenzo Nathan
Military Order of the Purple Heart



Lori Rasmussen
U.S. Air Force



Robert Schmidbauer
Veterans of Foreign Wars



Anne Toms
MOAA



Michael Urquhart
MOAA



Deborah Walker
Disabled American Veterans



Charles Waugh
Disabled American Veterans



Brandi Whitman
Disabled American Veterans



Larry Vannoy
American Legion

FY26 GOALS

Goal #1 Enhance Partnerships

Strengthen collaboration with local, state, and federal legislators, community leaders, Governor's cabinet members, and the Alabama Military Stability Commission to ensure continuity of strong legislative support for veterans' benefits and well-being services.

Goal #2 State Veterans Homes

Complete construction repair of CSM Bennie G. Adkins State Veterans Home. Evaluate renovation and expansion possibilities for Bill Nichols SVH, Floyd E. 'Tut' Fann SVH, and William F. Green SVH. Initiate feasibility study for sixth veterans home, located in west-central Alabama.

Goal #3 State Veterans Cemetery Initiatives

Complete construction of second committal shelter at facility in Spanish Fort. Secure property and complete architect and engineer design for a second state veterans cemetery, located in north Alabama.

Goal #4 Veterans Benefits and Services

Expand county Veterans Service Offices in Colbert and Shelby counties. Establish an ADVA District 4 region in east-central Alabama to effectively distribute District Manager workload responsibilities.

Goal #5 Veterans Well-Being Initiatives

Contribute to the successful implementation of the Alabama Veterans Resource Center. Strengthen liaison with VA and ADMH to ensure veterans have responsive access to mental health & substance use care. Employ an in-house ADVA grant administrator. Continue to increase support and visibility at veterans outreach activities. Launch women veterans coordinator position.

Alabama Veteran Benefits Summary

Veterans Service Officers & Claims Assistance

The ADVA assists eligible veterans and eligible family members in filing for and obtaining DoD, Federal, and State VA benefits and services through our Veterans Service Offices, located in nearly every county of Alabama.

Our free and accredited Veterans Service Officers are authorized to counsel and represent veterans and their dependents before the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs in filing for benefits and services in the following major categories:

- Compensation
- Pension
- Health Care
- Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment
- Appeals Assistance
- Home Loans
- Life Insurance
- Education & Training
- Burial Benefits
- Dependents & Survivors Benefits

Alabama GI Dependent Scholarship Program

After all other scholarships and grants have been applied to required education expenses first (unless otherwise stated by state or federal law), this program pays for textbooks and applicable fees up to a combined maximum total of \$1,000 per student, & for tuition up to \$400 per credit hour.

A student may be eligible if they meet the veteran state residency requirements, veteran military service requirements, dependent student requirements, and one of the following veteran disability requirements:

- Former POW/Declared MIA
- Service-connected death or died in the line of duty
- Rated 40% or greater VA disability

Alabama State Veterans Homes

Alabama veterans are eligible for affordable long-term care at the state's five veterans homes in Alexander City, Bay Minette, Huntsville, Pell City, and Enterprise.

A State Veterans Home provides:

- 24-hour skilled nursing care
- Activity Programs
- Pharmacy Services
- Extensive physician and physician extender coverage
- Around the-clock security staff

An application can be obtained at any Veterans Service Office or on our website at va.alabama.gov

Free Burial Benefits | Pre-register today

Eligibility for interment in the Alabama State Veterans Memorial Cemetery at Spanish Fort follows National Cemetery Administration eligibility requirements. National Guard and Reserve service members, as well as veteran spouses and dependent children who meet certain criteria, may be eligible.

Eligibility requirements and applications are on our website at va.alabama.gov



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VETERAN
SERVICE OFFICERS



DEPENDENT
SCHOLARSHIP
PROGRAM



VETERANS
HOMES



VETERANS
CEMETARY

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ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
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