

Department Name	Veteran Services Bureau
Account(s)	6510

Department Function
The Veterans Service Bureau (The Bureau) connects veterans and their families to county, state, or federal benefits that they are entitled to as a result of their service in the military, and with navigating resources available to veterans locally. The Bureau provides many services and resources to the veterans of Albany County, including: • Guiding veterans as they enroll in the VA Health Care System. • Assistance with burial expenses and securing death benefits for veterans' survivors. • Referring veterans and their families to other appropriate programs for assistance, and coordinating emergency assistance with appropriate agencies or County Departments, including obtaining temporary housing and other necessities for homeless veterans. • Obtaining Military records. • Providing employment referrals. • Coordination and maintenance of the "Return the FAVOR" Discount Program. • Honoring deceased and living veterans by providing gravesite maintenance and annual flag placement. • Honoring all veterans by organizing and participating in memorial parades and events. • Outreach to organizations frequently used by veterans, advocating for the unique needs of our veterans' community.

Current Year Highlights
• Conducted monthly "Honor a Veteran" ceremonies. • Assisted the County Executive in recognizing distinguished veterans for their service in the military and the community. • Worked with veterans and spouses in submitting claims for compensation, pensions, aid and attendance, and burials. • Published a bi-monthly newsletter and a calendar of veteran events to keep the community informed. • Awarded Dwyer grant funding from New York State to expand our "Veteran Peer Support Program." Conducted local outreach at veteran focused events regarding suicide prevention and gambling addiction – two prominent issues affecting the veteran community. • Hosted a Veterans' Town Hall meeting with the Deputy Commander from the Army Training & Doctrine Command. • Assisted in the Albany County Joint Veterans Committee in the planning for Memorial Day & Veteran Day events. • Acquired & placed veteran markers at the Eagle Hill cemetery for Memorial Day.

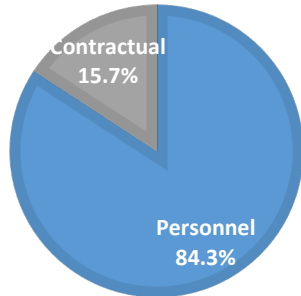
Next Year Projects
• Continue to support events and organizations that bring awareness to the high veteran suicide rate. • Continue aggressive outreach efforts in order to reach more organizations to ensure more veterans are aware of available benefits and the Bureau's ability to assist with filing for those benefits. • Open more remote sites within the County to provide services. • Work with the Joint Veterans Committee to improve communication, events, and efforts of the veteran organizations in the county and the Veterans Service Bureau.

Link to Website	www.albanycounty.com/Veterans
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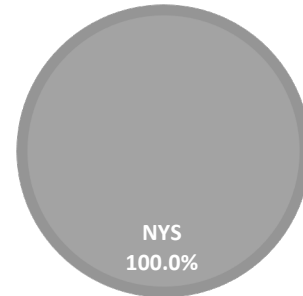
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Financial Charts

FORECASTED COSTS, BY TYPE



FORECASTED REVENUES, BY TYPE



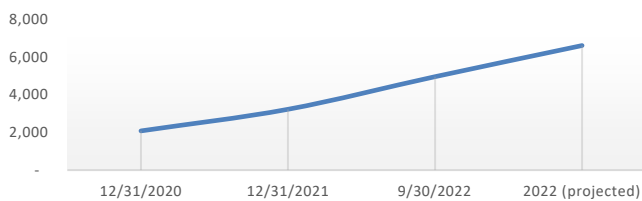
Personnel costs directly related to the delivery of services by the Veterans Bureau make up the bulk of the Department's annual expenses. Contractual items such as materials for special programs and the purchase of Flags every year round out the anticipated costs for 2023.

The Bureau receives annual funding from NYS to help lessen the operational costs of running the Department.

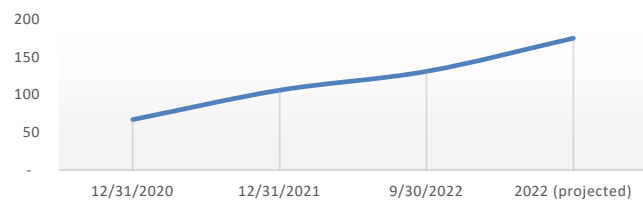
The 2023 Budget has a forecasted County Share of \$0.3 million for the Veteran Services Bureau.

Programmatic Highlights

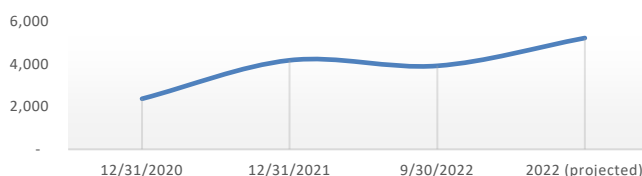
Info Requests



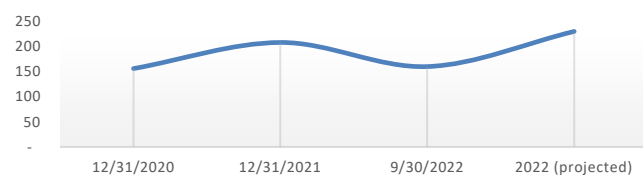
Outreach Events



Referrals



New Claims Processed



As the County came out of the worst of COVID, the Veterans Bureau saw a steady uptick in interactions with local veterans. As the charts show, there has been year-over-year increases in information requests coming into the Bureau and outreach events held by the Bureau. Additionally, the debate over (and eventual passage of) the PACT Act this summer has pushed engagement even higher.

As a result, referrals for services and new claims for compensation or pension payments have also continued to rise.