

# Agency 28 - Department Of Veterans' Affairs

## Statutory Authority:

The Department of Veterans' Affairs was created by LB 187 and LB 240 of the 1947 Session of the Legislature. Its' duties and organization are outlined in Article 3, Chapter 80, Section 314-322, Article 4, Chapter 80, Section 401-412 and Article 9, Chapter 80, Section 901-903, Article 13, Chapter 12, Section 1301. The agency also has a complete set of Rules and Regulations on file with the Secretary of State.

## Vision Statement:

It is the vision of the Department of Veterans' Affairs that all Nebraska veterans and their dependents will have a quality of life that is dignified and acceptable in our society, reflective of the appreciation Nebraskans have for the freedoms won and preserved by veterans.

## Mission Statement:

The mission of the Department of Veterans' Affairs is to provide assistance to Nebraska veterans and their dependents in acquiring county, state, and federal benefits to which they are entitled by virtue of their service to this country.

1. Administer state benefit programs for qualified Nebraska veterans and eligible dependents.
2. Prepare and present cases on state and federal benefits for qualified Nebraska veterans and their dependents before the United States Department of Veterans Affairs.
3. Serve as the state's chief advocate for the veteran's position on all issues, legislative or otherwise, that impact their benefits, their status or their social well-being.
4. Create and establish a State Veterans' Cemetery System that will provide an eternal resting place for veterans and eligible dependents that meet or surpass National Cemetery Administration standards.

## Goals:

Goals for the Department of Veterans' Affairs are as follows:

1. Construct, establish a State Veteran Cemetery in Box Butte County and establish operational systems and standards in the State Veteran Cemetery System that meet or surpass National Cemetery Administration standards while developing the plan that will lead to establishment of a State Veterans Cemetery in Hall County.
2. Improve the Department's commitment to a highly trained and fully staffed State Service Office that keeps pace with the increasing demands placed upon the staff as a result of increasing number of and complexity of cases as well the increasing expectations of Nebraska veterans.
3. Improve the quality of all services provided to veterans, their spouses or dependents.
4. Enhance relationships with other agencies, organizations, and individuals that impact the veteran community.
5. Increase the number of eligible Nebraska veterans and dependents who may receive state and federal benefits.
6. Increase the awareness and appreciation among Nebraskans for the sacrifices made by veterans.
7. Further utilize modern technology to enhance the capability and efficiency of the Department in the service to our veterans.

## Financial Data:

	Actual FY06	Approp FY07	Request FY08	Recom FY08	Request FY09	Recom FY09
General Fund	721,098	778,850	919,800	857,651	973,282	937,293
Cash Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Federal Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Revolving Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Agency	721,098	778,850	919,800	857,651	973,282	937,293

## Agency 28 - Department Of Veterans' Affairs Program 036 - Veterans' Affairs

### Program Objectives:

1. Provide complete administrative support to all Divisions of the Department, to include accounting, human resources/payroll, budget, procurement and fixed assets.
2. Administer statutory assigned state veterans benefits.
3. Maintain a Service Office that assists veterans and their dependents in applying for federal benefits.
4. Serve as the state's chief advocate for the veteran's position on all issues.

### Financial Data:

	Actual FY06	Approp FY07	Request FY08	Recom FY08	Request FY09	Recom FY09
General Fund	720,987	775,850	861,141	798,992	857,535	821,546
Cash Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Federal Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Revolving Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>720,987</b>	<b>775,850</b>	<b>861,141</b>	<b>798,992</b>	<b>857,535</b>	<b>821,546</b>

### Performance Measures:

The Nebraska Department of Veterans' Affairs is seeing major increases in the complexity of requests for all veteran benefits. Applicants for state benefits requests require more thorough review due to lack of information and the need to request additional facts and supporting documentation. Applicants for federal benefits no longer request claims for single disabilities but have multiple issues to bring before the US Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA). The Department Central office in the past has been managed by a very limited number of staff members that handled all operating functions. With the addition of the Cemetery System we are now involved in major contracts and procurement that were never envisioned as part of the Department. All of these changes require a redirection of the administrative structure of the Department.

Description	FY06 Actual	FY07	FY08 Request	FY09 Request
NVA Fund Applications Received	1,264	1,300	1,400	1,500
NVA Fund Payments	\$886,248	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000
Discharges Received & Filed	2,911	3,000	3,000	3,000
Discharge Requests	3,239	3,500	3,500	3,500
State Service Office, New POA's	4,588	5,000	5,500	6,000
State Service Office, Claims Filed	5,805	6,300	6,800	7,300
State Service Office, Ratings Review	6,360	6,800	7,300	7,800
State Service Office, Hearings	212	250	300	350
Veterans Home Applications	343	365	390	415
Waiver of Tuition Applications	286	290	295	300

## Agency 28 - Department Of Veterans' Affairs Program 037 - Veterans' Cemetery System

---

### Program Objectives:

Provide for the Nebraska Veteran Cemetery System as set forth in State Statute 12-1301. Construct a State Veteran Cemetery in Box Butte County and establish operational systems and standards in the State Veteran Cemetery System that meet or surpass National Cemetery Administration standards while developing the plan that will lead to establishment of a State Veterans Cemetery in Hall County.

### Financial Data:

	Actual FY06	Approp FY07	Request FY08	Recom FY08	Request FY09	Recom FY09
General Fund	111	3,000	58,659	58,659	115,747	115,747
Cash Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Federal Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Revolving Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>3,000</b>	<b>58,659</b>	<b>58,659</b>	<b>115,747</b>	<b>115,747</b>

### Performance Measures:

We propose the requested adjustment will provide staff to the State Veteran Cemetery System at the Alliance Cemetery to assist with the establishment of the system found in State Statute 12-1301. The Department of Veterans' Affairs currently has no veteran cemeteries and thus no prior performance to measure. The establishment of the Nebraska Veteran Cemetery System and construction of the cemetery in Box Butte County will require development, coordination and oversight by all staff involved in the system.