

# DISABLED VETERANS' SERVICE OFFICE

## Enabling Laws

Act 55 of 2010

## History and Organization

This Agency is dedicated to a single purpose: building better lives for disabled veterans, their families and survivors. The Disabled Veterans' Service Office is located within the Disabled American Veterans (DAV), VA Regional Office, Building 65, Room 121, 2200 Fort Roots Drive, North Little Rock, Arkansas.

Act 376 of 1951 provided appropriation to be expended by the Disabled Veterans' Service Office to assist such claimants in preparation of their claims for benefits from federal, state and local agencies. We have a long history of advocacy and successful representation of veterans and their dependents seeking benefits and services from the Department of Veterans' Affairs (VA) and other governmental agencies. In keeping with the purpose of our creation, we are required to develop and prosecute claims in writing, in person, and by video/teleconferencing with the agencies, which serve our clients.

Our effort to realize our purpose expands well beyond the office and extends deep within the veterans community through our Mobile Service Office Program. This outreach program was designed so that many disabled veterans, who are unable to physically travel to our office, can still obtain claim assistance when our Mobile Service Office (MSO) is in their area.

The Disabled Veterans Service Office assists claimants in filing for the following benefits:

- |                               |                             |   |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| 1. VA Compensation            | 11. Hospitalization         | 21. Pre-COVA preparation                |
| 2. VA Pension                 | 12. Discharge Upgrade       | 22. Reimbursed Medical Expenses         |
| 3. Education & Training       | 13. TAP/DTAP                | 23. EEOC recoveries                     |
| 4. Vocational Rehabilitation  | 14. Injuries from treatment | 24. REPS benefits                       |
| 5. Aid & Attendance Allowance | 15. Injuries from training  | 25. Soldiers & Sailors Civil Relief Act |
| 6. VA Clothing Allowance      | 16. Military Retirement     | 26. Arkansas State benefits             |
| 7. Automobile Grants          | 17. CRSC/CRDP               | 27. U.S. Insurance Programs             |
| 8. Housing Grants             | 18. Dependency Benefits     | 28. Widow's Benefits                    |

9. Waivers for VA Overpayments 19. Domiciliary Entrance 29. Burial Assistance  
 10. ChampVA Benefits 20. Relief from VA co-pays 30. Unemployment Compensation

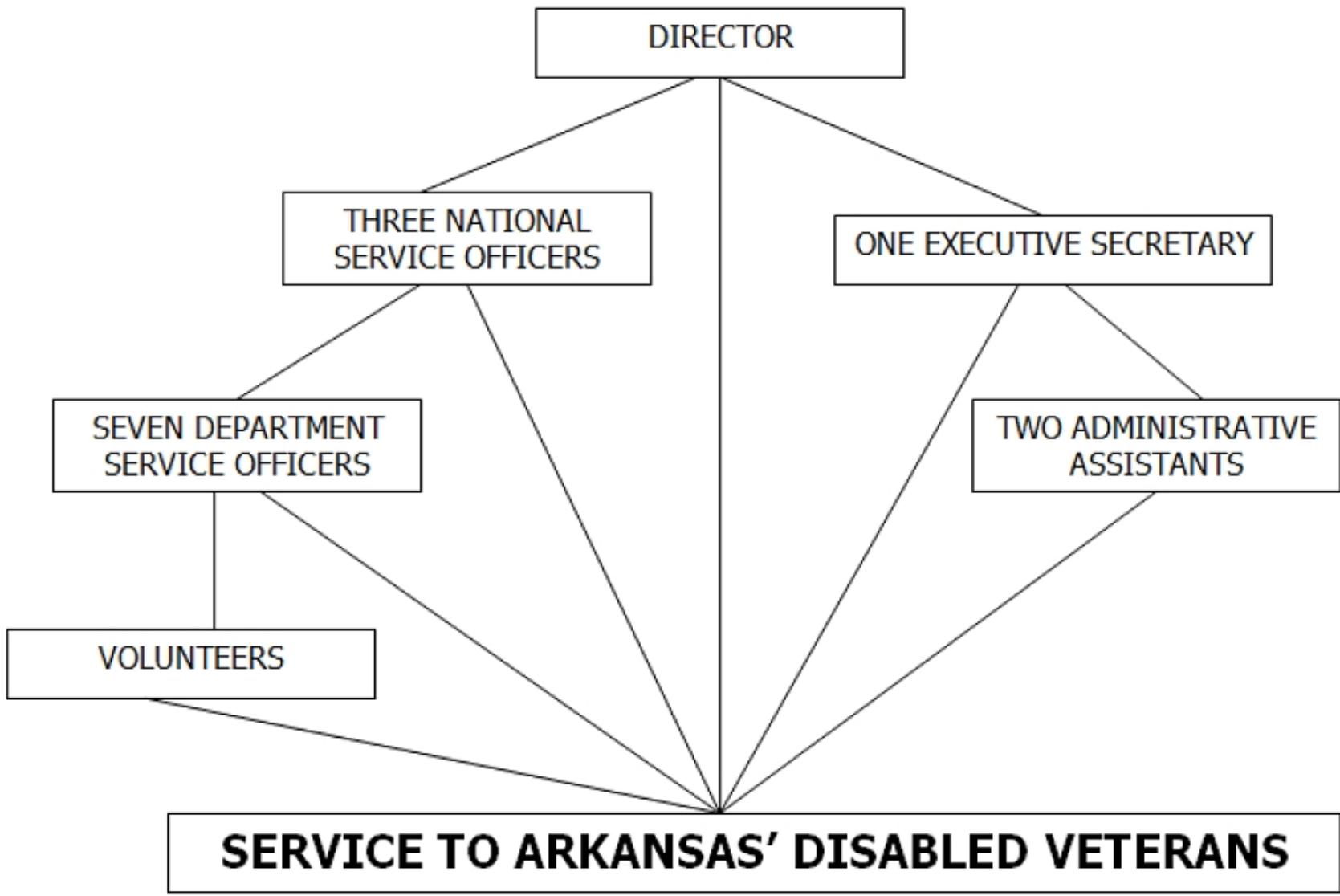
The hard work and diligent effort of this Agency has resulted in over \$10 million in monthly benefits as well as over \$148 million in retroactive and annual benefits. The table below reflects the Statistical Report for this Agency's activities, to include all Mobile service Office and transition services, from July 1, 2008 to May 30, 2010.

<u>Office Statistics</u>	<u>FY08-09</u>	<u>FY09-10</u>
Award Totals	5,609	5,931
Total Monthly Entitlements	4,722,566	5,446,815
Total Annual Entitlements	71,454,188	76,642,345
Number of Files Reviewed	9,382	9,102
Powers of Attorney Received	865	678
Interviews Conducted	6,443	5,778
Board of Veterans Appeals Hearings	225	245
Appellate Briefs Prepared	275	291
New Claims Filed	3,115	2,863

This Agency is also responsible for conducting the Service Officer Training Conference, an annual event that enables all Department Service Officers (DSOs) and Chapter Service Officers (CSOs) the opportunity to become certified, or recertified, for coverage under the National Organization's Indemnification of the Department and Chapter Service Programs. Once certified, these service officers may assist this Agency in providing benefit information to claimants and helping claimants to prepare claims for submission to the Department of Veterans' Affairs (VA). The training is designed to enhance the knowledge and professionalism of the DSOs and CSOs and will help the Agency offer the best service possible to our claimants. Over 100 service officers receive certification on a biennial basis.

Many of Arkansas' disabled veterans take advantage of our Transportation Network that is administered by our Department Office. Many volunteers work under our Transportation Network to transport sick and disabled veterans to and from VA medical facilities for treatment. The majority of the veterans who use this program are seeking care for their service-connected disabilities. Others have limited resources, are too ill to drive, or may have no access to public transportation. The following, reports the totals from this program for the Little Rock and Fayetteville VA Medical Centers.

<u>Transportation Network</u>	<u>FY08-09</u>	<u>FY09-10</u>
Veterans Transported	15,558	12,415
Volunteer Hours	33,570	30,670
Miles Driven	659,907	624,612



## **Agency Commentary**

The Disabled Veterans' Service Office is responsible for ascertaining benefits for Arkansas' veterans, their families and survivors. This service is accomplished by carrying out the following tasks: assisting claimants in completing any necessary paperwork; submitting applications, evidence, and other documents to the appropriate agency; explaining laws; advising and providing benefit information; assisting in procuring and presenting evidence to support claims; conducting in-depth reviews of medical histories, explaining decisions rendered; preparing appellate briefs; and personally representing claimants in formal hearings before the Board of Veterans Appeal.

FY2011 Base level appropriation and general revenue funding consists of \$32,939 in Regular Salaries with related Personal Services Matching for one (1) Administrative Specialist I position, Operating Expenses and Conference & Travel Expenses.

The Disabled Veterans' Service Office will maintain all past services rendered as referenced in the History and Organization Section of this presentation and continue to seek new and innovative methods to provide extended service to our clientele. Maintaining the current level of activity, the Agency brings over \$148 million into the state on a biennial basis. Additionally, volunteer hours provide service work of over \$464,000 to the state's citizens, and the twenty nine (29) vans donated for use to the Department of Veterans' Affairs saves Arkansas' veterans over \$533,075 in transportation costs on a biennial basis.

## **Audit Findings**

DIVISION OF LEGISLATIVE AUDIT  
AUDIT OF :  
DISABLED VETERANS' SERVICE OFFICE  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2009

Findings

None

Recommendations

None

## Employment Summary

	Male	Female	Total	%
White Employees	0	1	1	100 %
Black Employees	0	0	0	0 %
Other Racial Minorities	0	0	0	0 %
Total Minorities			0	0 %
Total Employees			1	100 %

## Publications

### A.C.A. 25-1-204

Name	Statutory Authorization	Required for		# of Copies	Reason(s) for Continued Publication and Distribution
		Governor	General Assembly		
None	N/A	N	N	0	N/A

## Agency Position Usage Report

FY2008 - 2009						FY2009 - 2010						FY2010 - 2011					
Authorized in Act	Budgeted			Unbudgeted Total	% of Authorized Unused	Authorized in Act	Budgeted			Unbudgeted Total	% of Authorized Unused	Authorized in Act	Budgeted			Unbudgeted Total	% of Authorized Unused
	Filled	Unfilled	Total				Filled	Unfilled	Total				Filled	Unfilled	Total		
1	0	1	1	0	100.00 %	1	1	0	1	0	0.00 %	1	1	0	1	0	0.00 %

## **Analysis of Budget Request**

**Appropriation:** 052 - Disabled Veterans - State Operations

**Funding Sources:** HUA - Miscellaneous Agencies Fund

The Disabled Veterans' Service Office offers assistance to veterans in the preparation of their claims to the U.S. Government for compensation and other benefits, and is primarily supported by the Disabled American Veterans Service Office. The Office also provides transportation services to veterans for outpatient appointments when no other options are available. The state provides appropriation and general revenue funding for one clerical position, as well as for Operating Expenses and Conference & Travel Expenses.

Base Level salaries and matching do not include appropriation for a Cost of Living Adjustment or Career Service Payments.

The Agency Request provides for Base Level for the 2011-2013 biennium.

The Executive Recommendation provides for the Agency Request.

## Appropriation Summary

**Appropriation:** 052 - Disabled Veterans - State Operations

**Funding Sources:** HUA - Miscellaneous Agencies Fund

### Historical Data

### Agency Request and Executive Recommendation

Commitment Item	2009-2010 Actual	2010-2011 Budget	2010-2011 Authorized	2011-2012			2012-2013		
				Base Level	Agency	Executive	Base Level	Agency	Executive
Regular Salaries 5010000	16,317	18,855	23,703	21,827	21,827	21,827	21,827	21,827	21,827
<b>#Positions</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
Personal Services Matching 5010003	7,852	8,471	10,111	9,084	9,084	9,084	9,084	9,084	9,084
Operating Expenses 5020002	1,988	1,304	1,004	1,304	1,304	1,304	1,304	1,304	1,304
Conference & Travel Expenses 5050009	0	724	1,024	724	724	724	724	724	724
Professional Fees 5060010	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Data Processing 5090012	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Capital Outlay 5120011	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>26,157</b>	<b>29,354</b>	<b>35,842</b>	<b>32,939</b>	<b>32,939</b>	<b>32,939</b>	<b>32,939</b>	<b>32,939</b>	<b>32,939</b>
<b>Funding Sources</b>									
General Revenue 4000010	26,157	29,354		32,939	32,939	32,939	32,939	32,939	32,939
Total Funding	26,157	29,354		32,939	32,939	32,939	32,939	32,939	32,939
Excess Appropriation/(Funding)	0	0		0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>26,157</b>	<b>29,354</b>		<b>32,939</b>	<b>32,939</b>	<b>32,939</b>	<b>32,939</b>	<b>32,939</b>	<b>32,939</b>

Budget exceeds Authorized Appropriation in Operating Expenses by authority of Budget Classification Transfer.