STATE OF ALASKA

OFFICE OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

2021-2025

STRATEGIC PLAN

OFFICE OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
4600 DEBARR RD., STE. 180
ANCHORAGE, AK 99508

MAIN: 907.334.0874
TOLL FREE: 888.248.3682
FAX: 907.334.0869

WEB: VETERANS.ALASKA.GOV
FACEBOOK: WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/AKOFFICEVETERANSAFFAIRS

Director:
Verdie Bowen

Alaska Office of Veterans Affairs Staff:
Forrest Powell III, Delma Chapa, Murriah Ebersole

OFFICE OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

- 4 STAFF MEMBERS
- 18+ VETERAN SERVICE OFFICERS
- 400+ TRAINED VOLUNTEER TRIBAL VETERANS REPRESENTATIVES

ESTIMATED VETERAN POPULATION OF ALASKA:

68,000

MISSION:

The mission of the Office of Veterans Affairs is to promote awareness while assisting eligible veterans, active duty, Guard/Reserve, their families, and survivors to receive from the U.S. federal and state governments any and all benefits to which they may be entitled under existing or future laws to be enacted.

VISION:

Our vision is to ensure that all veterans, active duty, Guard/Reserve, 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 those needs.

CORE VALUES:

We hold ourselves personally and professionally accountable to deliver on America's promise to all eligible members we serve through courage, conviction, and a belief in our core values of Integrity, Compassion, Commitment, Selflessness, and Teamwork.

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

OVERVIEW

The Alaska Office of Veterans Affairs organizes its efforts to serve veterans utilizing four core goals:

1. Provide the highest quality care and services for our veterans and their families.
2. Enhance operational effectiveness to maximize services to Alaska's veterans.
3. Invest in our workforce to enhance service to veterans in the long term.
4. Provide excellent customer service to our veterans, colleagues, and partners.

GOAL 1: PROVIDE THE HIGHEST QUALITY CARE AND SERVICES for our veterans and their families

- **Educate Alaska's veterans and their families about federal, state, and local benefits.** Continue to develop and implement Transitional Assistance programs to ensure that we interact with veterans in-person at pivotal moments throughout their post-military experience to educate them on their earned benefits.

- **Provide home loan products to a wide array of veterans.** Develop loan products and outreach statewide to assist veterans who may not be able to obtain financing to get a home loan while maintaining a sound financial position. Provide a Certificate of Eligibility so veterans know their eligibility.

- **Reduce the number of homeless veterans in the state by focusing on those who are at risk of becoming homeless.** This will be accomplished by assisting veterans with education, on-the-job training, employment, disability/compensation payments, and housing vouchers.

- **Help veterans with discharge upgrades so they become eligible to receive benefits.**

- **Improve the quality of veterans' benefits claims.** Increase the rate at which Office of Veterans Affairs staff review claims submitted by the Joint Venture Grantees. Ensure accuracy, update, and improve the accreditation program for veterans representatives, and initiate continuing education components on new U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs initiatives.

- **Ensure underserved veterans have access to benefits and services.** Identify the disparities in services delivered and benefits accessed for veterans who are traditionally underserved, such as those veterans who live off the road system, minority veterans, women veterans, disabled veterans, incarcerated veterans, and other underrepresented populations.

- **Provide dignified burials for veterans, their spouses, and dependent children.** We attend every unclaimed remains burial at the National Cemetery on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson and will continue to do so.

GOAL 2: **ENHANCE OPERATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS TO MAXIMIZE** services to Alaska's veterans

- **Implement modern information technology solutions throughout Alaska.** Seek and implement solutions that leverage modern methods and technology to enhance delivery of care to residents, streamline outreach efforts, and provide efficient service to all veterans and their families. Improve software programs to capture veterans' data. Continue variety of outreach methods to include emails, postcards, and public service announcements.

- **Educate the public and decision-makers to foster awareness and support.** Increase outreach and education efforts regarding the Office of Veterans Affairs activities and successes to the public, legislators, and other government agencies via traditional media coverage, social media, participation at events, and publications.

- **Enhance the Office of Veterans Affairs leadership function in collaboration with the veterans community in Alaska.** Continue to expand the Office of Veterans Affairs role as a state and national leader in veterans advocacy through state-wide conferences, meetings, and consultation with our partners at the federal, state, and local government levels, as well as with non-profit organizations and veterans service organizations throughout Alaska.

- **Advocate for increased federal investment in our operations.** Advocate, educate, and strategically engage federal decision-makers about the work of the Office of Veterans Affairs and the needs of Alaska's veterans to ensure that our veterans and families receive federal support.

- **Ensure state and federal legislation and regulations support the Office of Veterans Affairs mission.** Through collaboration across divisions, promulgate regulations that provide transparency, consistency, and accountability across veteran programs in Alaska.

GOAL 3: INVEST IN THE WORKFORCE TO ENHANCE SERVICES for our veterans into the future

- **Assess and plan for state-wide educational programs.** Continue to implement streamlined strategies that ensure veterans receive the best education in the community that they live by partnering with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to ensure that each school of higher education, vocational education, and on-the-job training program is accredited in one or all chapters covered under the GI Bill program.

- **Recruit, develop, and retain quality staff.** Establish cohesive, innovative ways to recruit new staff when required, create a learning environment for staff development, and assist staff to attain life goals at the same time as retaining the best personnel to serve our veterans and their families.

- **Publicize the Office of Veterans Affairs effectiveness, accomplishments, and professionalism.** Increase volume of articles distributed through office connections, social media, and traditional media about staff expertise and accomplishments. Nominate staff for public recognition when appropriate to ensure their efforts are appropriately rewarded.

GOAL 4: **PROVIDE EXCELLENT CUSTOMER SERVICE** to our veterans, colleagues and partners

- **Raise the level of cultural competency and our ability to effectively serve our diverse customer.** Focus staff training, development, and delivery of services to be culturally aware and customer oriented. Ensure that publications, posted information, and public remarks are sensitive to the interests of all segments of our diverse veterans population.

- **Maintain timely and effective communications with governmental entities and partners.** Conduct strategic engagement with key stakeholders to meet their particular informational needs. Maintain awareness of the political environment and shape communications and engagements with that in mind.

- **Ensure veterans and their families are satisfied with the services they receive.** Hold an open dialog with veterans, families, stakeholders, and the public through regular meetings, social media, and specific gatherings to ensure those we serve have their needs met and that the delivery of services are spot-on for their needs.

GOALS

BY THE NUMBERS

TRAVEL

VISIT 100 COMMUNITIES A YEAR TO ENSURE SERVICES AND ASSISTANCE ARE DELIVERED STATEWIDE.

REACH

INCREASE THE NUMBER OF VETERANS SERVED EACH YEAR. ON AVERAGE, THE OFFICE OF VETERANS AFFAIRS SERVES ABOUT 50,000 PEOPLE ANNUALLY.

SUPPORT

HELP VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES RECEIVE EARNED BENEFITS.

MAINTAIN

KEEP ALASKA AS #1 IN THE NATION FOR QUALITY AND SPEED FOR PROCESSING VA CLAIMS.

REPRESENT

ADD TO THE 400+ TRAINED TRIBAL VETERANS REPRESENTATIVES TO HAVE ONE IN EVERY COMMUNITY STATEWIDE.

OFFICE
OF
VETERANS AFFAIRS

ALASKA
REMEMBERS