

VETERANS ASSISTANCE COMMISSION  
OF  
LAKE COUNTY, ILLINOIS

*Andrew C. Tangen, Superintendent*



# Annual Report

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Fiscal Year 2022

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December 30, 2022

The Honorable J.B. Pritzker  
Governor of Illinois  
State Capital Room 207  
Springfield, IL 62706-0001

Dear Governor Pritzker,

It is with great pleasure that I present you with the annual report of the Veterans Assistance Commission of Lake County, Illinois, pursuant to Chapter 330, Part 45, Section 8 of the Illinois Compiled Statutes.

As the foremost Veteran advocacy agency in Illinois' 2nd most Veteran populous county, we provide services in the following categories:

- 1) Financial Assistance
- 2) Veterans Advocacy
- 3) Partnerships

In Fiscal Year 2022, the Commission was instrumental in securing an estimated \$12,539,931.75 in new benefits for Lake County Veterans, their dependents, and their survivors from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). This means the Commission has, in effect, brought in nearly fourteen times its budget in new monies to Lake County during the fiscal year.

These new benefits represent an economic impact to the County of Lake of approximately \$62,699,658.75. That amount does not consider money that we helped our Veterans save by assisting them in accessing VA health care, home loan, or education benefits. Consequently, the Commission continues to be a significant and judicious governmental entity at the county level and continues to have an extremely positive impact on the economy of Lake County.

Thank you for your support of our county's Veterans. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions, comments, or concerns.

Very truly yours,

Andrew C. Tangen, JD, MBA, MS  
Superintendent

## Glossary of Terms

**Compensation:** See “Disability Compensation”

**Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC):** A tax-free monetary benefit paid to eligible survivors of military service members who died in the line of duty or eligible survivors of Veterans whose death resulted from a service-related injury or disease.

**Disability Compensation:** A tax-free monetary benefit paid to Veterans with disabilities that are the result of a disease or injury incurred in or aggravated during active military service.

**Functional Zero:** A goal that is reached when the number of Veterans experiencing homelessness within a community is less than the average number of Veterans being connected with permanent housing each month.

**Intent-to-File:** An application for Veterans and survivors who intend to file a claim for VA compensation, pension, or survivors’ benefits which preserves the effective date of future benefits while the claimant is gathering supporting documentation for their formal claim.

**Non-Service-Connected Pension:** See “Pension”

**Pension:** A tax-free needs-based monetary benefit paid to wartime Veterans, who meet certain age or non-service-connected disability requirements.

**Pension Management Center:** A department at certain VA Regional Offices that is responsible for processing and adjudicating claims for pension, survivor’s pension, dependency and indemnity compensation, and burial benefits.

**Regional Office:** One of 56 VA offices located nationwide responsible for processing and adjudicating VA benefits which primarily includes disability compensation.

**Superintendent:** The executive powers of the Veterans Assistance Commission vest within this individual and that individual acts as the Chief Veterans Advocate for the Veterans of the County.

**Survivor’s Pension:** A tax-free needs-based monetary benefit payable to a low-income, un-remarried surviving spouse and/or unmarried child(ren) of a deceased wartime Veteran.

**VA Health Care:** A comprehensive medical benefits package available to qualifying Veterans which includes primary and specialty care at VA hospitals and clinics.

**Veterans Service Officer:** An individual who is accredited by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs who assists Veterans and their dependents in the filing of claims, and advocacy for, benefits with the VA.

**Work/Study Student:** A Veteran student who is using VA education benefits and is paid by the VA to do VA related work at no cost to the County.

## **Veterans Assistance Commission Delegates and Alternates 2022**

**President Nicholas G. Konz** – Mundelein American Legion Post 867  
**Vice-President Thomas Marciciak** – Lake Zurich American Legion Post 964  
**Chaplain Marie Honeywell** – Lake Zurich Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 110  
**Sergeant at Arms Donald Nickerson** – Samuel Schiera American Legion Post 1943  
**Executive Committee John Patterson** – Polish League of American Veterans Post 25  
**Executive Committee John DeReu** – Military Officers Association of America  
**Executive Committee Paul Hettich** – Antioch American Legion Post 748  
**Executive Committee Paul Baumunk** – Lake Villa Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 4308  
**Executive Committee Allan Ayers** – Marine Corps League 1395  
**Delegate Paul Hettich** – Antioch American Legion Post 748  
**Alternate Jay Jozwiah** – Antioch American Legion Post 748  
**Delegate Andrew Schaffer** – Barrington American Legion Post 158  
**Alternate Fred Schaffer** – Barrington American Legion Post 158  
**Delegate John Reid** – Deerfield American Legion Post 738  
**Delegate Fergal Gallagher** – Grayslake American Legion Post 659  
**Alternate Ted Rock** – Grayslake American Legion Post 659  
**Delegate William Frangquist** – Gurnee American Legion Post 771  
**Alternate Peter Mockapetris** – Gurnee American Legion Post 771  
**Delegate Larry Sassorossi** – Highland Park American Legion Post 145  
**Alternate Michael Zimmerman** – Highland Park American Legion Post 145  
**Delegate Richard Gordon** – Highwood American Legion Post 501  
**Delegate Duane Percy** – Homer Dahringer American Legion Post 281  
**Delegate David Bentley** – Lake Bluff American Legion Post 510  
**Alternate David Cimarrusti** – Lake Bluff American Legion Post 510  
**Delegate Robert Gabriel** – Lakes Region American Legion Post 703  
**Alternate Lizbeth Risely** – Lakes Region American Legion Post 703  
**Delegate Richard Johnson** – Lake Zurich American Legion Post 964  
**Alternate John Garris** – Lake Zurich American Legion Post 964  
**Delegate Ernest Chan** – Libertyville American Legion Post 329  
**Alternate David Sears** – Libertyville American Legion Post 329  
**Delegate Larry Crone** – McKinlock American Legion Post 264  
**Delegate Larry Klauser** – Mundelein American Legion Post 867  
**Alternate Ed Hackett** – Mundelein American Legion Post 867  
**Delegate Donald Nickerson** – Samuel Schiera American Legion Post 1943  
**Alternate John Patterson** – Samuel Schiera American Legion Post 1943  
**Delegate Lester Deanes** – Sharvin American Legion Post 1943  
**Delegate James Schultz** – Vernon Hills American Legion Post 1247  
**Alternate William Wagner** – Vernon Hills American Legion Post 1247  
**Delegate Donald Castella** – Wauconda American Legion Post 911  
**Alternate William Geary** – Wauconda American Legion Post 911  
**Delegate James Duncan** – Zion Benton American Legion Post 865  
**Delegate Paul Hettich** – Antioch Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 4551  
**Alternate Paul Swanson** – Antioch Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 4551  
**Delegate Lalena Magnetta** – Grayslake Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 2245

**Alternate Warren Sundberg** – Grayslake Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 2245  
**Delegate David Kunz** – Highland Park Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 4737  
**Alternate Chris Thomas** – Highland Park Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 4737  
**Delegate Tom Schmit** – Highwood Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 4741  
**Delegate Barry Desfor** – Island Lake Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 2486  
**Alternate Michael Peck** – Island Lake Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 2486  
**Delegate Paul Baumunk** – Lake Villa Veterans of Foreign War Post 4308  
**Alternate Patrick Dunham** – Lake Villa Veterans of Foreign War Post 4308  
**Delegate Marie Honeywell** – Lake Zurich Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 11020  
**Alternate Darrell Pebbles** – Lake Zurich Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 11020  
**Delegate George Gandara** – Libertyville Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 8741  
**Alternate Bernard J Voit** – Libertyville Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 8741  
**Delegate Randy Schenck** – Mundelein Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 7191  
**Delegate Cheryl Reed** – Ron Hill Memorial Veterans of Foreign War Post 2245  
**Delegate John Patterson** – Winthrop Harbor Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 7448  
**Delegate John Shebenik** – American Veterans Post 35  
**Delegate Oliver Davidson** – Marine Corps League 801  
**Delegate Allan Ayers** – Marine Corps League 1395  
**Alternate Stan Villarreal** – Marine Corps League 1395  
**Delegate John DeReu** – Military Officers Association of America  
**Alternate Eliseo Lee Lopez** – Military Officers Association of America  
**Delegate Frank Relmer** – Military Order of the Purple Heart Post 323  
**Delegate Christine Pawley** – Polish League of American Veterans Post 25  
**Delegate Art Dutkovic** – Reserve Officers Association of America Chapter 48  
**Alternate Paul Hettich** – Reserve Officers Association of America Chapter 48  
**Delegate Michael Zimmerman** – Jewish War Veterans North Shore Post 29  
**Alternate Martin Rockwell** - Jewish War Veterans North Shore Post 29  
**Delegate John Patterson** – Disabled American Veterans Chapter 16  
**Delegate Lonnie Hodge** – Operation Fetch<sup>1</sup>  
**Delegate David Christensen** – Team Red, White, and Blue<sup>1</sup>  
**Alternate Mark Helm** – Team Red, White, and Blue<sup>1</sup>  
**Delegate Paul Hettich** – United States Army Reserve<sup>1</sup>  
**Delegate Stan Villareal** – Vietnam Veterans of America

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<sup>1</sup> Not Congressionally Chartered Veteran Service Organizations. These represent community partners who are members for information purposes only. Members of these entities do not vote in Commission matters

## **The Mission of the Veterans Assistance Commission of Lake County**

*To promote the welfare of honorably discharged Veterans of military service and their families through maximizing all possible benefits through effective and dynamic advocacy and by serving as a central service office for all Veterans residing in the County of Lake.*

This mission is accomplished through three key areas:

- 1) Financial Assistance
- 2) Advocacy
- 3) Partnerships

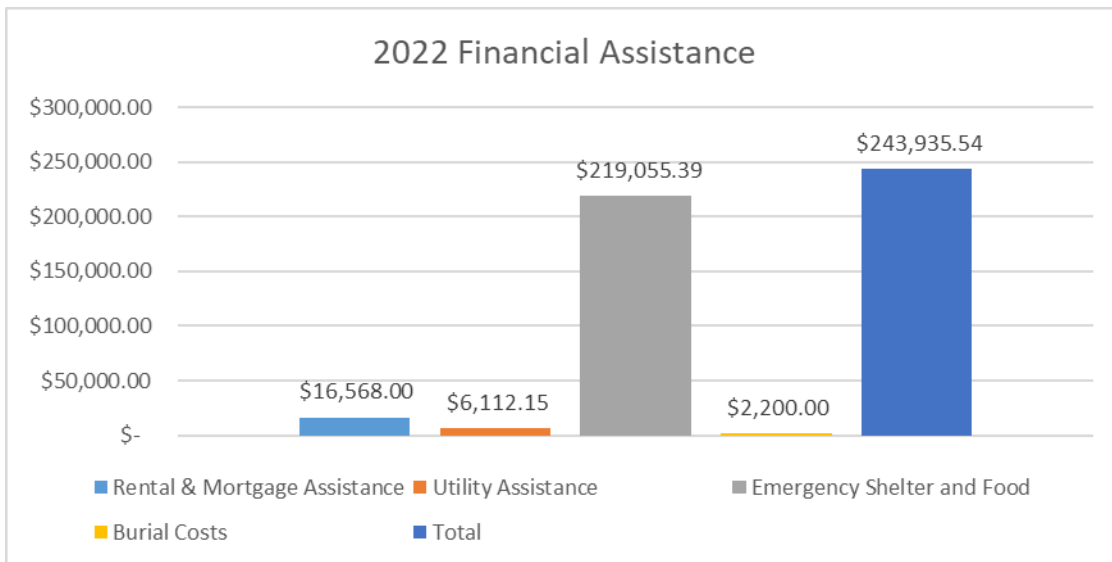
The Staff of the Veterans Assistance Commission of Lake County (hereinafter “the Commission”) is currently comprised of Superintendent Andrew C. Tangen; Assistant Superintendent Sherry J. Kruse; Chief of Staff (CoS) John L. Murray; Senior Veteran Service Officers (SVSO) Shane McNerney and Jilian “Summer” Padoan; Veteran Service Officer (VSO) Allan Lacson and Administrative Assistant Suzette Pawluk.

Next fiscal year, the Commission will add one (1) additional Veteran Service Officer and two (2) administrative assistants. This will further allow for more coverage of services, as well as expand services, to include reopening an office space at the James A. Lovell Federal Health Care Center (FHCC) and increasing services for pre-separation discharge assistance at the Great Lakes Naval Station.

Two Commission employees were elected to position of leadership, both on a State and National level. The Commission Superintendent was elected as the President of the Illinois Association of County Veteran’s Assistance Commissions (IACVAC) and as Judge Advocate for the National Association of County Veteran Service Officers. The Commission Chief of Staff was elected to the IACVAC as First Division Vice President. In addition, SVSO’s Summer Padoan and Shane McNerney were appointed to the IACVAC Education Committee.

## Financial Assistance

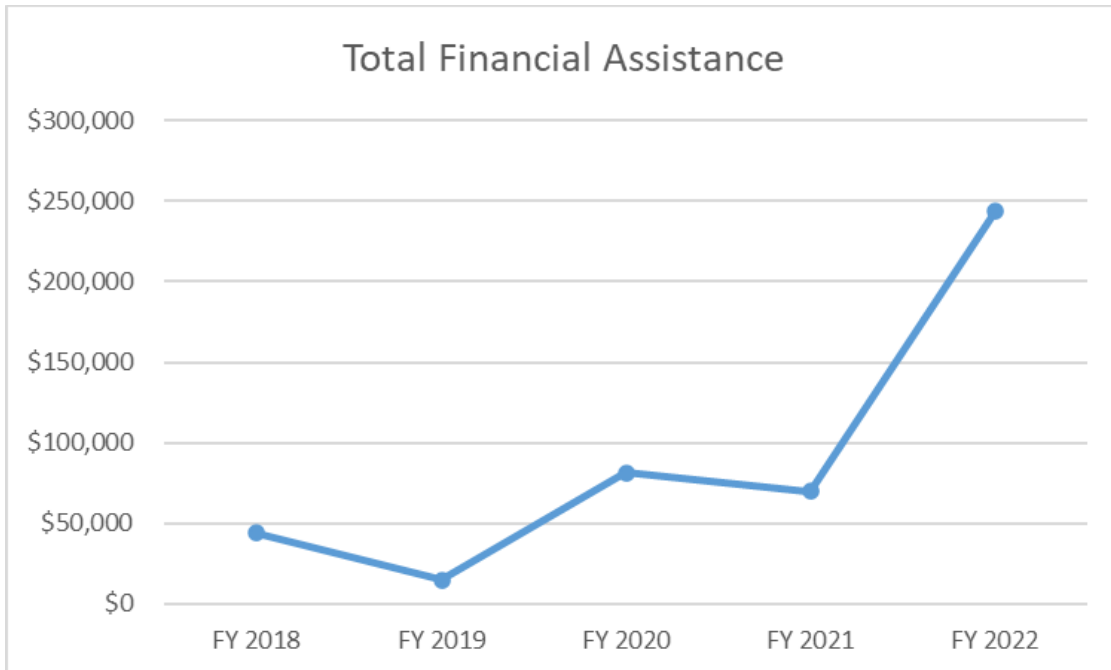
The Commission provides financial assistance, available to all honorably discharged Veterans of the County, including, but not limited to: rental and mortgage assistance; utility payments; aid to the medically indigent; assistance and emergency shelter to homeless Veterans, those Veterans in danger of becoming homeless, and those Veterans displaced by natural disasters; and, burial assistance of indigent Veterans.



This year, the Commission provided \$243,935.54 in financial assistance, representing: \$16,568 in rental and mortgage assistance; \$6,112.15 in utility assistance; \$219,055.39 in emergency shelter and meals to indigent Veterans and their families, representing just over 2,300 cumulative nights of hotel stays; and \$2,200 in burial costs for indigent Veterans.

As estimated last year, this number dwarfs the previous 4 fiscal years. The main component to this increase was due to increased need in the veteran community in terms of emergency shelter. There are several factors that have played into this in Lake County, including: the pandemic; lack of affordable housing in Lake County; job loss due to the pandemic and other business closures; and, the end of the eviction moratorium. The Commission currently working





with the Captain James A. Lovell FHCC Homeless Program and other community partners to address many of these issues and look forward to these numbers decreasing in next fiscal year.

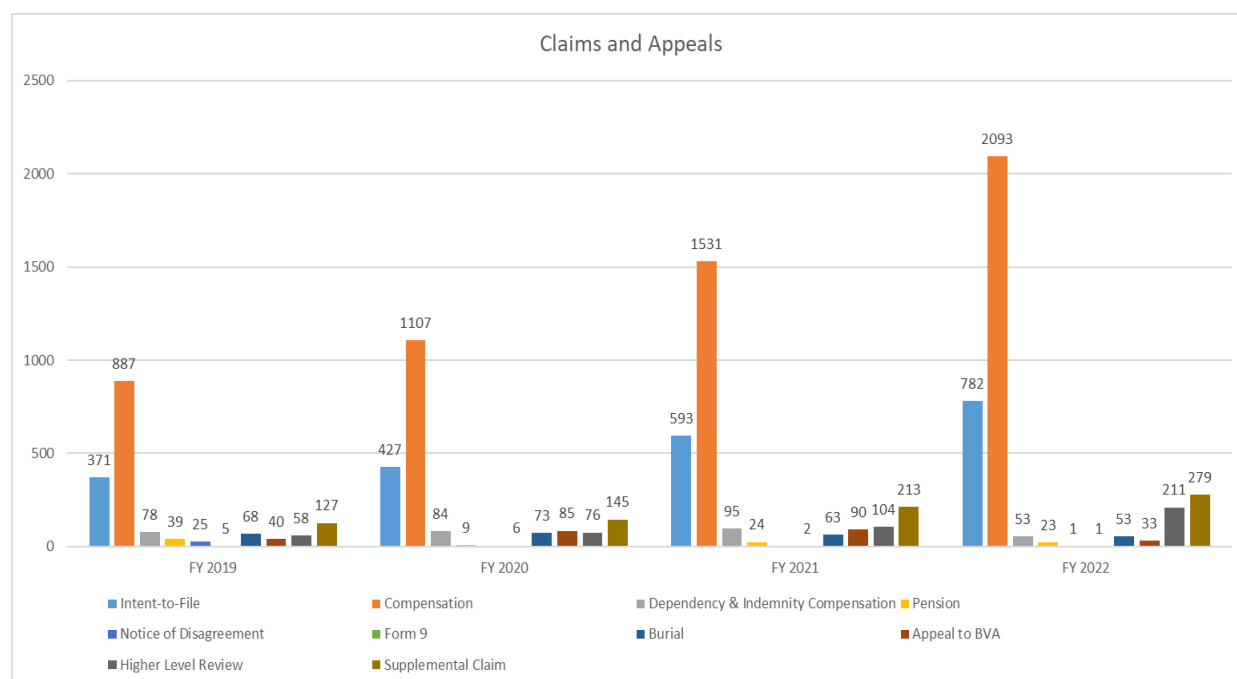
The Commission also applied for American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds for next year to supplement funds utilized for emergency shelter. If granted, these monies would additionally help offset costs and leave available additional dollars to be utilized in assisting veterans in need of other financial support in the County, to include the other assistance authorized under Article VI of the Illinois Public Aid Code.

# Advocacy

## 1. Advocating at the Federal Agency Level

Advocating on behalf of Veterans involves assisting in the filing of claims for compensation, pension, school, and insurance, to local, state, and federal agencies that includes the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and Social Security Administration, adjudicating appeals for Veterans denied by representing those Veterans at the Board of Veterans Appeals, the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims, and the United States Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit.

Fiscal year 2022 continued the trend seen over the preceding two fiscal years in drastic increases in request for advocacy assistance over previous fiscal years. Due to the staff’s incredible work throughout the previous four years, veterans from throughout the County of Lake have seen positive life changes through the assistance and needed services provided to them by the staff of the Commission. Further, with the lingering effects of the pandemic still very present, whilst coupled with the pain many are feeling with uncertain economic outlooks, it is the Commission’s

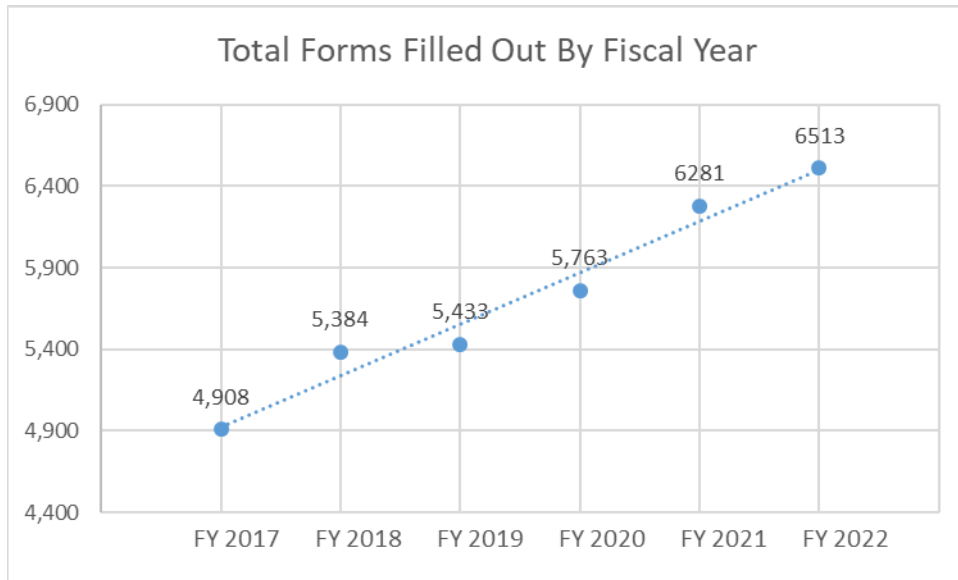


belief that these numbers will only continue to rise over the next several fiscal years.

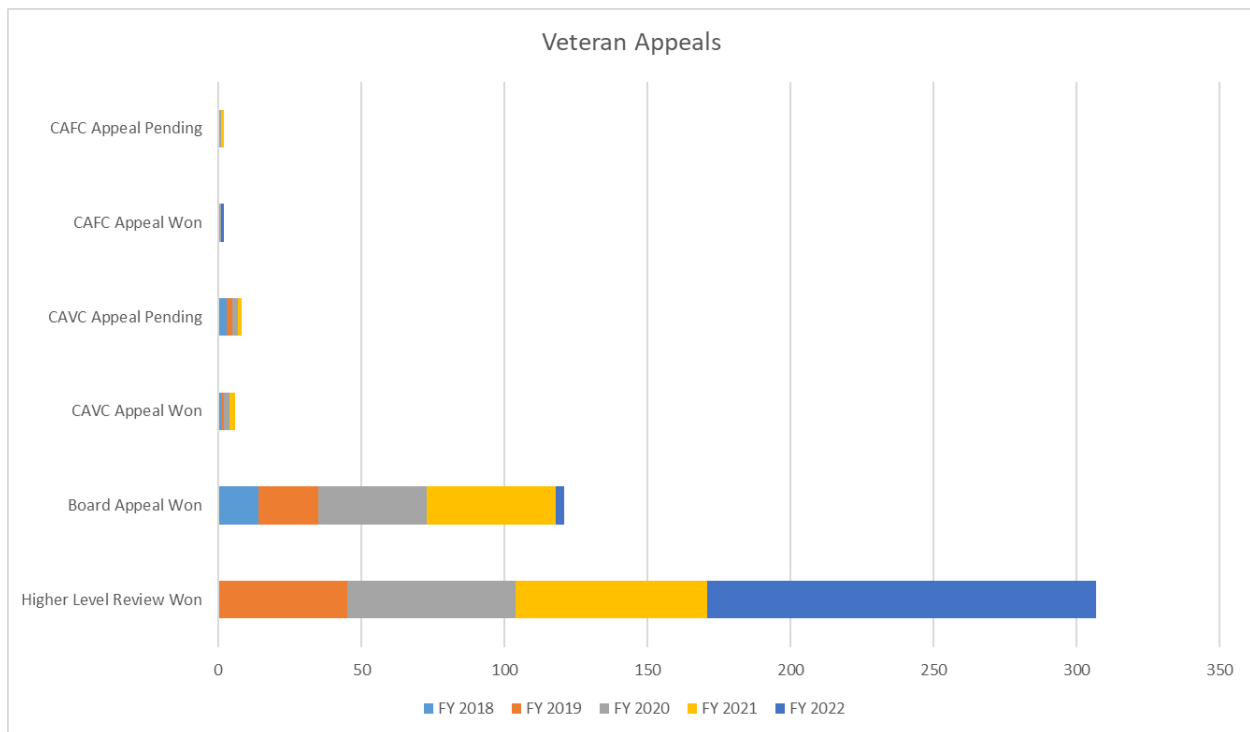
The advocacy work in front of the US Department of Veterans Affairs continued to show increases with the Commission increasing claim submissions nearly double what was filed in fiscal year 2020. This represents the second fiscal year in a row to nearly double advocacy work done over previous years. Even with the drastic increase in claims, appeals, and other benefit applications filed, the Commission still saw an effective rate of 80 percent.

Year over year, the Commission continues to perform at an extremely high level of accuracy on every claim filed for the veterans of Lake County. Further, the continued exceptionally high level of accuracy on appeals filed for claims show the diligence, care, and commitment the staff of the Commission puts into each veteran and spouse. These positive trends further exemplify the fact that veterans' advocacy requires high levels of knowledge, education, and research acumen.

Total forms completed continues to exponentially increase year over year. This is due to the Commission filing more complete claims and appeal documentation with Regional Offices and the Board of Veterans Appeals in order to provide adjudicators with the data required to adjudicate claims effectively and correctly the first iteration, as well as briefs and supplemental filings to the Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims and the Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit. Further, as a byproduct of the increased number of claims, appeals forms, and briefs in support of appeals filed, additional forms to support the claims and appeals increased. The number of forms completed is a solid production measure as claims or appeals filed may only be represented by one form, whereas evidence, supporting documentation, and additional forms (such as forms for dependency or release of information authorization) show a fuller picture of workload.



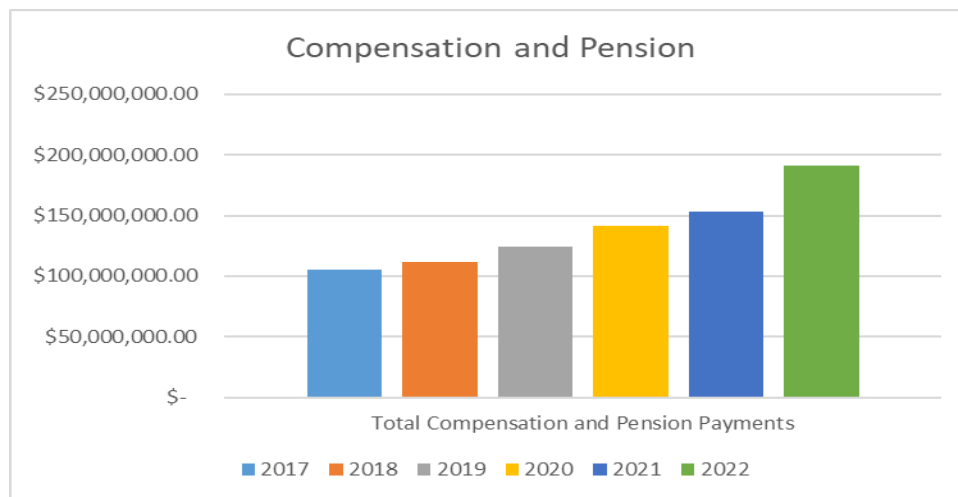
Further, the Commission staff continue to represent Veterans during all stages of appeals with numerous cases still pending before both the Board of Veterans Appeals and the Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims. As the US Department of Veterans Affairs continue to work through



legacy appeals, these cases have taken priority over appeals falling under the Appeals Improvement and Modernization Act (Pub L. 115-55) (AMA). The Commission currently has an

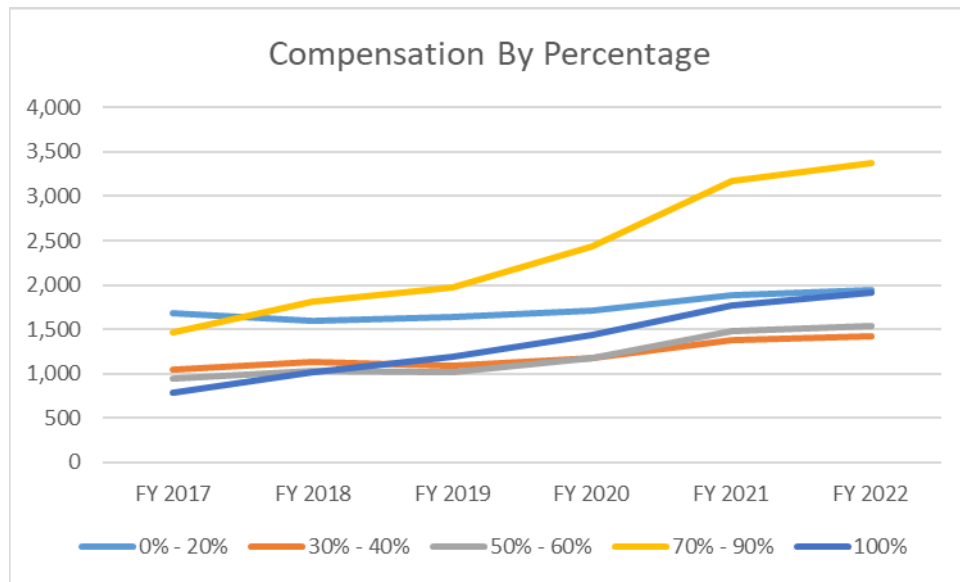
inventory of 243 pending AMA appeals at the Board of Veterans Appeals awaiting adjudication, while only having less than 20 legacy appeals still awaiting final adjudication.

Advocacy for VA benefits continues to be the primary focus of Commission staff. As indicated in the Introductory Letter, the Commission was instrumental in securing an estimated \$12,539,931.75 in new benefits paid by the Federal Government to Lake County Veterans, their dependents, and their survivors. Total VA Compensation and Pensions Payments, based on newly released data from the US Department of Veterans Affairs, for fiscal year 2022 for Lake County is expected to be approximately \$191,375,379.<sup>2</sup> This represents a return to the community of \$211.30 for every dollar of Property Tax Revenue received by the Commission. That amount does not consider money that we helped our Veterans save by assisting them in accessing VA health care, home loan, or education benefits. Consequently, the Commission continues to be a significant and judicious governmental entity at the county level.



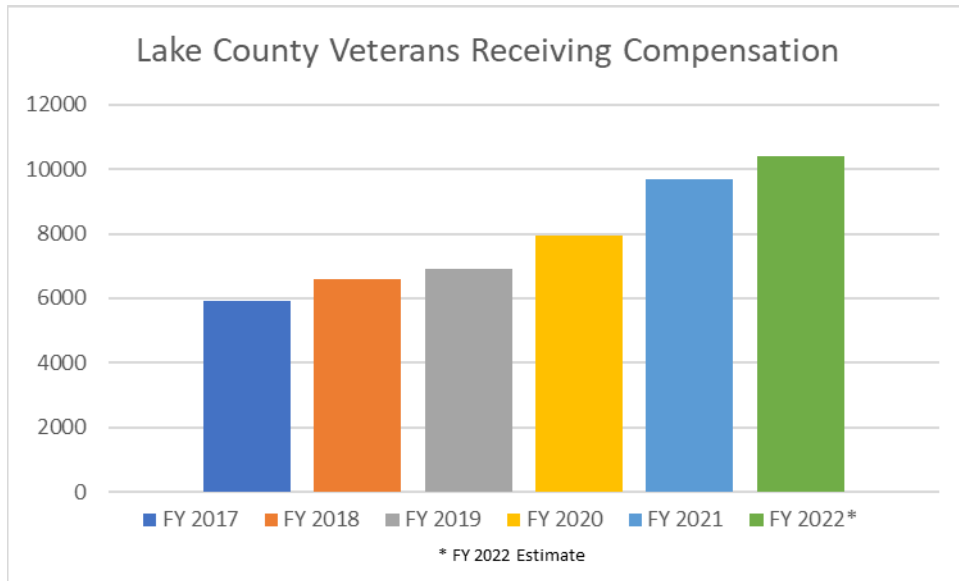
<sup>2</sup> Further, when the economic theory of the Multiplier Effect is applied to this sum, with a conservative estimate of the Marginal Propensity to Consume of 80% and the Marginal Propensity to Save of 20%, these compensation and pension payments have a cumulative effect on the economy of Lake County of \$956,876,895. Veterans of Lake County are continuing to have an extremely positive impact on the economy of Lake County. In addition, these monies represent a positive funding source for the Lake County Government, which is different than the funding stream of Property Taxes, as this money is spent on gasoline, entertainment, and other taxable sources within Lake County that can be applied to other Lake County Government Services and needed projects, such as Road Improvement.

This is a remarkable increase in benefits paid to veterans in Lake County from fiscal year 2017, when benefits were approximately \$105,624,000. Across the compensation percentages, the Commission has worked tirelessly to maximize the benefits veterans should be receiving, whether through initial claims or through increases due to new conditions, appeals of wrongfully calculated benefits, and additional evidence discovered that was not available or reviewed at the time of the initial decision.

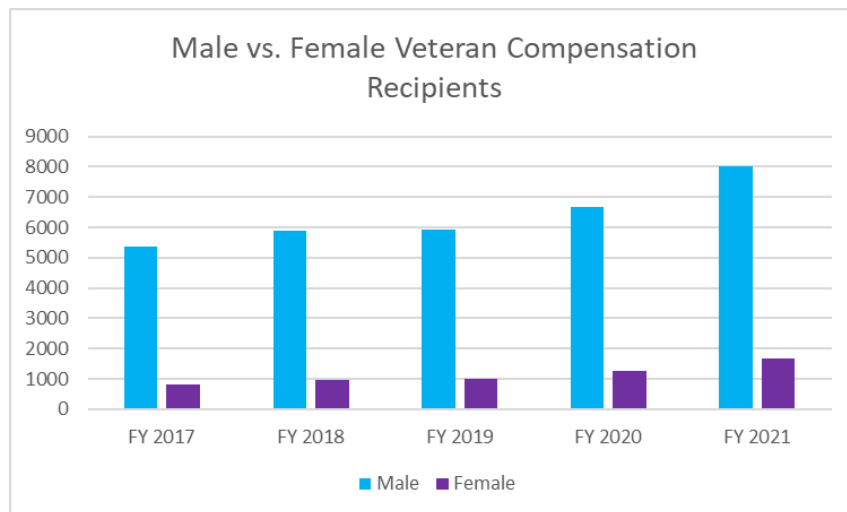


The Commission’s work over the last five (5) fiscal years has produced incredible results in benefits provided to Lake County Veterans. Specifically, the Commission has been instrumental in increasing the number of veterans receiving compensation. Notably, Lake County now ranks 101 in the Nation (top 3 per cent) of all Counties, Tribes, and Territories in total veterans receiving compensation. This is a marked increase over where the veteran population stood in Lake County prior to 2017, wherein only approximately 13 per cent of veterans were receiving compensation due to injuries or illnesses related to service. Since important changes were implemented at the Commission over the previous five (5) years, 30 per cent of Lake County veterans are now

compensated. This is ahead of the National Average of veterans receiving compensation, which is 26 per cent of veterans nationally.



Further, due to outreach efforts of Commission staff, the number of Women Veterans receiving compensation in Lake County has doubled over the last five years. Though Women Veterans continue to be the most underserved veteran demographic nationally, with Women Veterans only comprising thirteen (13) per cent of veterans receiving compensation, Lake County Women Veterans comprise twenty-one (21) per cent of service-connected veterans in Lake County.



## **2. Advocating for Veterans at Federal Appellate Courts**

As discussed previously in the Commission's Annual Reports, work continued with the National Organization of Veterans Advocates (hereinafter "NOVA") in *National Organization of Veterans' Advocates, Inc., et al. v. Secretary of Veterans Affairs*, No. 20-1321 (2022 WL 4350443) at the Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit. This case was discussed in fiscal year 2020 and fiscal year 2021's reports. The Commission is happy to report that the Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit rendered its decision on September 20, 2022, holding that the US Department of Veterans Affairs Knee Replacement Guidance was arbitrary and capricious.

This represents a total victory in the case the Commission partnered with NOVA nearly three years ago. The Commission is still awaiting how the US Department of Veterans Affairs will implement this case that saw both the Knee Joint Stability and Knee Replacement Rules being found invalid. The Commission has continued to monitor veterans' cases that would be affected by this decision and will assist our veteran clients in reopening and re-adjudication improperly denied or improperly rated knee injuries and knee replacement decisions.

## **3. Advocating for Veterans With Federal Congressional Representatives and Staffers**

The Commission continued its work with the three Congressional District Representatives and their staffers. With the lifting of many restrictions, the Commission was able to plan and attend events hosted by and with Congressman Schneider and Congresswoman Underwood, as well as meet with our Congressional delegation in Washington, D.C. in February to advocate for the *Sergeant First Class (SFC) Heath Robinson Honoring Our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics (PACT) Act of 2022* (Pub. L. 117-168). These meetings in turn opened lines of communication with other Congressional Representatives and staffers from throughout the State of Illinois and Nationally in order to bring concerns and issues facing the veteran community.



The Commission has further continued to advocate with the Illinois Congressional Delegation regarding federal funding for County Veteran Service Officers, in the Commitment to Veteran Support and Outreach (CVSO) Act (H.R. 4601). The CVSO Act will provide critical federal resources to help counties meet our growing caseloads by awarding competitive grants worth \$250 million over five years for states to create, expand or support CVSOs or similar government entities, such as state, municipal and tribal VSOs. Currently, the CVSO Act is pending a vote in the US Senate and the Commission will continue to advocate for its passage.

#### **4. Advocating for State Legislation with Illinois Senators and Representatives**

The Commission continued its close working relationship with the Illinois Senators and Representatives from both parties whose districts encompass Lake County. Having these relationships has benefited not only the Veterans of Lake County and their families, but also the Veterans of the State.

The Commission was honored to partner with the legislature on H.B. 5184 (P.A. 102-0732) in crafting legislation that clarified the law of the State of Illinois regarding Veterans Assistance Commissions. This law is already having a positive impact on veteran services throughout the State and will directly aid the Commission and other VACs in providing needed services to our veterans. In addition, the Commission worked with H.B. 5184's Chief House Sponsor, Representative Stephanie Kifowit, Chief Senate Sponsor, Senator Craig Wilcox, and the Illinois Attorney General's Office on a trailer bill to add additional oversight and direction for both Commissions and County Governments throughout the Summer and Fall of 2022. The Commission is hopeful for the Legislature to continue to work on and pass this critical legislation during the Lame Duck Session in January of 2023.

## **5. Advocating for Partnerships and Support for Veterans Issues with Illinois Association of County Officials.**

The Commission continued to work closely with Illinois Association of County Officials (hereinafter “IACO”). Specifically, the Commission holds a key role as one of the many delegates from County Organizations on the IACO Legislative Committee. As the IACVAC delegate, the Commission is able to advocate in front of the various County Organizations that make up IACO, to explain the necessity for certain legislation that has been filed in either Illinois Chamber. Having the ability to explain to these partner organizations the reasoning behind the need for changes, as well as have these partners join with IACVAC in our support or opposition to specific legislative items continues to be a positive impact on the Veterans Community in the State of Illinois.

## **6. Partnership with the Lake County Health Department**

The Commission continued its partnership with the Lake County Health Department in conducting training for citizens in Mental Health First Aid. CoS John Murray and SVSO Summer Padoan conducted several training symposiums with Veteran Service Organizations and other entities within the County, allowing greater care and assistance to our Veteran Community.

Further, the Commission continues to develop programs and initiatives to hold back the tide of mental health crisis currently facing the veteran community. Next year, the Commission will continue to work on implementing its “Whole Veteran” initiative, which seeks to provide a holistic approach to serving the veteran community and providing veterans and their families with tools to not only function, but thrive in society upon separation from service.

The Commission looks forward to follow-on reports in identifying key components to the program that can be shared and reproduced throughout the State to ensure veterans and their families are properly serviced within the intent of the Military Veterans Assistance Act.

## **Partnerships**

As covered above, the Commission has continued its partnerships with both US Senate and Congressional offices and State Legislators in Lake County to ensure the best possible legislation is moved forward for Illinois Veterans. The Commission looks forward to continuing this tradition of partnerships with those newly elected.

The Commission has partnered on several different initiatives and opportunities with the Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs and looks forward to the great relationship with the staff and leadership of IDVA.

The Commission continued its partnership with the Allen J. Lynch Medal of Honor Veteran's Assistance Foundation in order to further provide assistance to those Veterans in critical need.

Lake County Recorder of Deeds continued to be an active and integral partner of the Commission through offering assistance with record retention and updating and assisting the Commission with advertisement and mailers to Veterans of Lake County. With the reorganization of the Recorder of Deeds office being dissolved and brought under the purview of the Lake County Clerk, the Commission looks forward to working with the County Clerk on similar programs and initiatives.

The Commission continued its partnership with Veterans Path to Hope who provide needed transitional living, peer support, housing support, and employment assistance to Veterans throughout the Lake and McHenry County region.

The Commission continued its partnership with the Midwest Veterans Closet, continuing the much-needed service of providing clothing and food to Veterans and their families.

The Commission has continued a strong partnership with Prairie State Legal Services.

The Commission continued to partner with the Lake County Sheriff's Office, PADS Lake County, The Captain James A. Lovell Federal Health Care Center (FHCC), the Midwest Veterans Closet, Medal of Honor Recipient Allen J. Lynch, the Lake County States Attorney's Office, and Lake County Veterans and Family Services through the "Veteran Ambassador Program" and will continue to work with these organizations to return to Functional Zero and ensure no Veteran is left behind.

As a member of the Illinois Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (Department of Defense sponsored organization) the Commission assists Lake County Reservists and Guardsmen with re-employment problems and recognition of private companies and employers who go above and beyond in supporting Lake County Reservists and Guardsmen who have been activated.

Partnership with the Illinois Department of Employment Security has been essential over the past year and the Commission looks forward to the continued and important work of assisting veterans finding gainful employment.

## Outlook For 2023

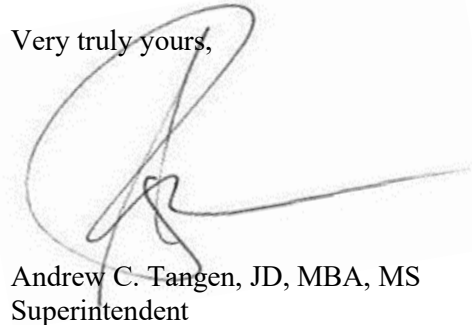
Fiscal Year 2022 continued the trends that began during the Pandemic on increased need for services within the veteran community. These trendlines show there is much work to still be accomplished for our veterans.

With the signing of P.A. 102-0732 and the pending trailer bill to that important piece of legislation, the Commission looks forward to being able to implement holistic resources and programs for our veteran community, beginning with next fiscal year. The Commission looks forward with excitement to the increased services and the high potential for strengthening of the veterans' community.

The Commission has created several initiatives that will not only continue to provide prompt, effective, and accurate advocacy for the Veterans of Lake County who gave their all to protect and defend the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of Illinois, but also provide a path forward for a veteran community that can be an example to the citizens of this great State.

The Commission further looks forward to continuing the growing relationship with the Lake County Government and County Board to find the best possible solution for the Veterans and the taxpayers of Lake County, to provide the maximum services to those men and women who have given their youth, their health, their bodies, and their minds for the citizens of this great State.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andrew C. Tangen', is written over a light gray circular stamp. The signature is fluid and extends to the right.

Andrew C. Tangen, JD, MBA, MS  
Superintendent

CC: Veteran Service Organizations of Lake County  
VAC Lake County  
Federal Legislators  
State Legislators  
Illinois Department of Veteran Affairs  
Lake County Board

## References

- [1] Veterans Benefits Administration, "Monday Morning Workload Reports," U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Washington D.C., 2021-2022.
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- [8] U.S. Census Bureau, "American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates," U.S. Department of Commerce, Washington D.C., 2019.
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