

VETERANS ASSISTANCE COMMISSION
OF
LAKE COUNTY, ILLINOIS

Andrew C. Tangen, Superintendent



Annual Report

Fiscal Year 2021

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December 30, 2021

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 2021, the Commission was instrumental in securing an estimated \$8,916,551.94 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 more than twelve times its budget in new monies to Lake County.

These new benefits represent an economic impact to the County of Lake of approximately \$44,582,759.70. 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

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 2020

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 – U.S. Army Reserve Ambassador - Illinois
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 George Swenson – 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
Delegate William Frangquist – Gurnee American Legion Post 771
Alternate Peter Mockapetris – Gurnee American Legion Post 771
Delegate Sheldon Konowitz – Highland Park American Legion Post 145
Alternate Larry Sassorossi – Highland Park American Legion Post 145
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 Thomas Marciciak – Lake Zurich American Legion Post 964
Delegate Robert Gabriel – Lakes Region American Legion Post 703
Alternate Lizbeth Risely – Lakes Region American Legion Post 703
Delegate Ernest Chan – Libertyville American Legion Post 329
Alternate Harry Swanson – Libertyville American Legion Post 329
Delegate Larry Crone – McKinlock American Legion Post 264
Delegate James A. Nelson – Mundelein American Legion Post 867
Alternate Larry Klauser – 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 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 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 Thomas Skau – 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 Thomas Hilliard – 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
Delegate David Christensen – Team Red, White, and Blue
Delegate Paul Hettich – United States Army Reserve
Delegate Stan Villarreal – Vietnam Veterans of America

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:

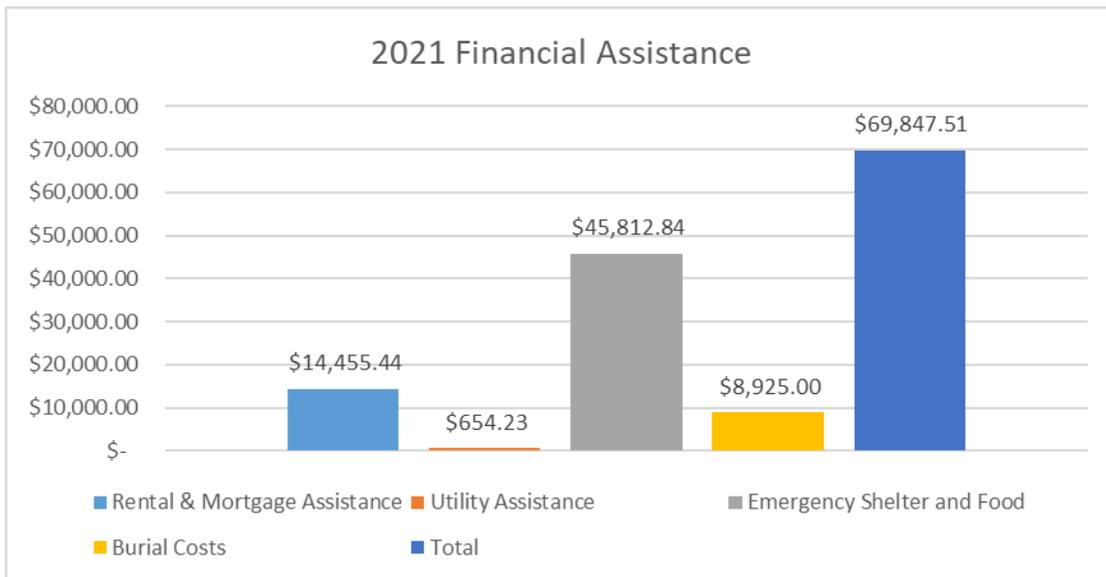
- 1) Financial Assistance
- 2) Advocacy
- 3) Partnerships

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/Senior Veteran Service Officer John L. Murray; Veteran Service Officers Shane McNerney, and Jilian “Summer” Padoan; and Administrative Assistant Suzette Pawluk.

This year was an exceptionally difficult year in the veterans’ community. The end of America’s longest war, coupled with the increased stresses of the pandemic, and a myriad of other issues including health issues, income, and other disparities, have increased stresses upon the Commission staff, as well as on the wider veteran community. The fall of Afghanistan to the hands of the Taliban sent shockwaves through the veteran community. The staff of the Commission was itself negatively affected by these events, as many of us served in Afghanistan over the preceding twenty years. Vietnam Veterans also had increased stress and other issues due to the similarities between May 1975 and August 2021. In Lake County, during a three-week period between August 22nd and September 15th there were four (4) veteran suicides. The Commission also heard reports and rendered assistance to several families of veterans who died by suicide in Northern Cook County and other neighboring counties. These developments are extremely troubling and point to additional services and support needed to combat this epidemic. The Commission is currently working on plans to be able to have additional programs available to ensure the recent tide of suicides is not a permanent trend.

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.



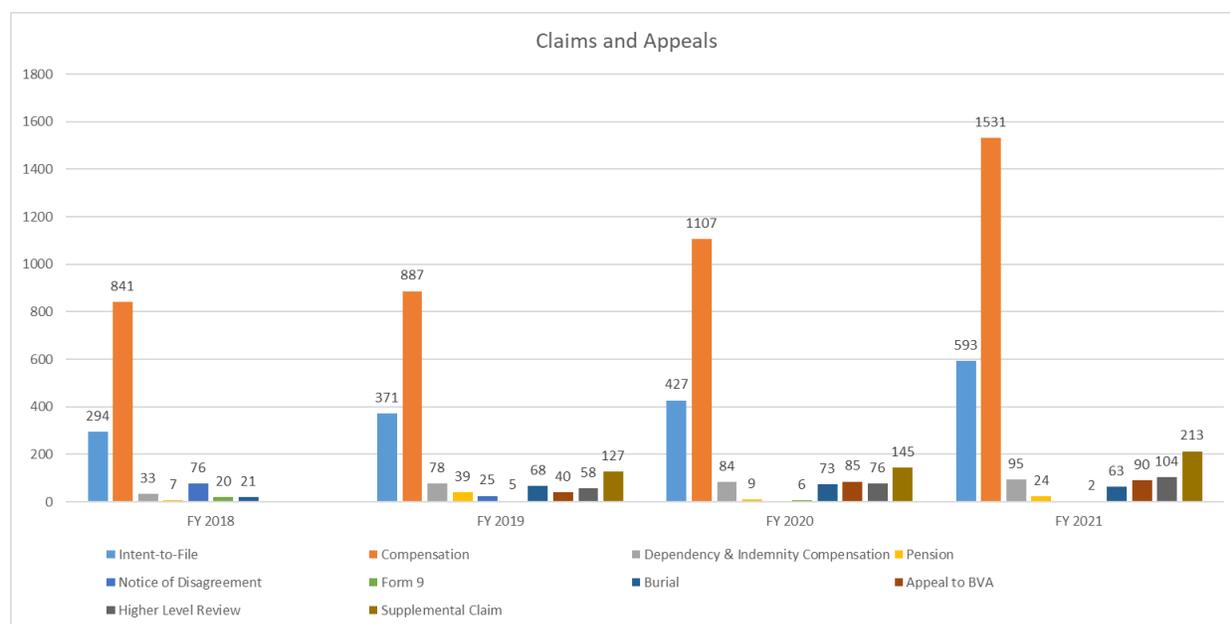
This year, the Commission provided \$69,847.51 in financial assistance, representing: \$14,455.44 in rental and mortgage assistance; \$654.23 in utility assistance; \$45,812.84 in emergency shelter and meals to indigent Veterans and their families, representing just under seven-hundred (700) cumulative nights of hotel stays; and \$8,925 in burial costs for indigent Veterans. Though this number is not as high as reported in fiscal year 2020, the Commission acknowledges this still potentially dwarfs the amount in financial assistance we are expecting for fiscal year 2022, with the repeal of the eviction moratorium.

Advocacy

1. Advocating at the Federal Agency Level

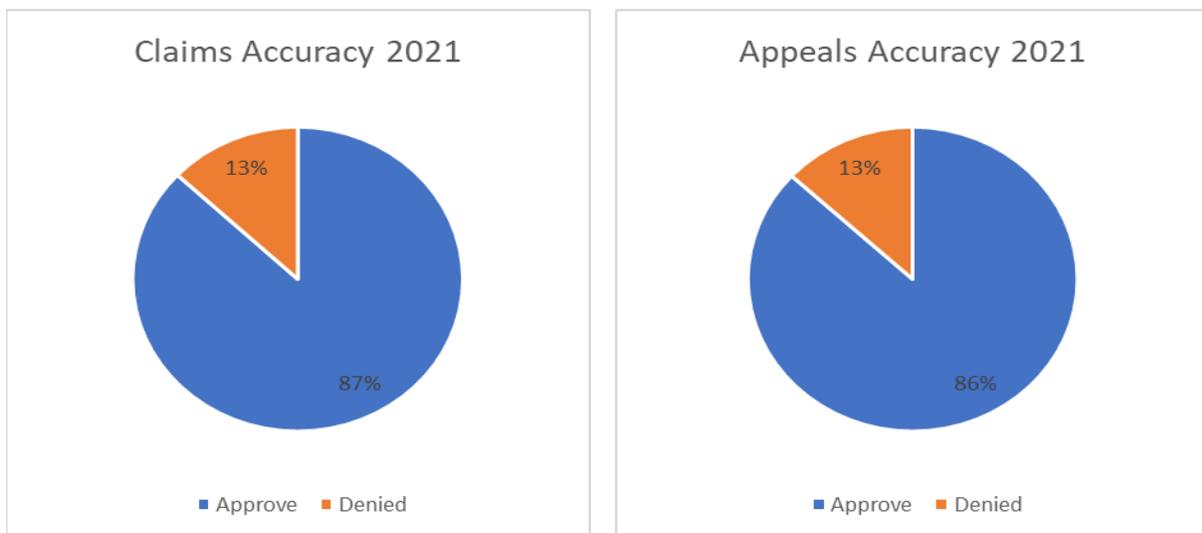
Advocating on behalf of Veterans involves assisting in the filing of claims for compensation, pension, school, and insurance, to local, state, and federal agencies that includes the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and Social Security Administration, adjudicating appeals for Veterans denied by representing 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 2021 continued the trend seen in fiscal year 2020 in drastic increases in request for advocacy assistance over previous fiscal years. This is not only due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic in which veterans and their families are in dire need of a myriad of assistance programs offered by the Commission, but also due to the staff's incredible work throughout the last twenty-two months. Veterans from throughout the County of Lake have seen positive life changes through the assistance provided to them by the staff of the Commission.



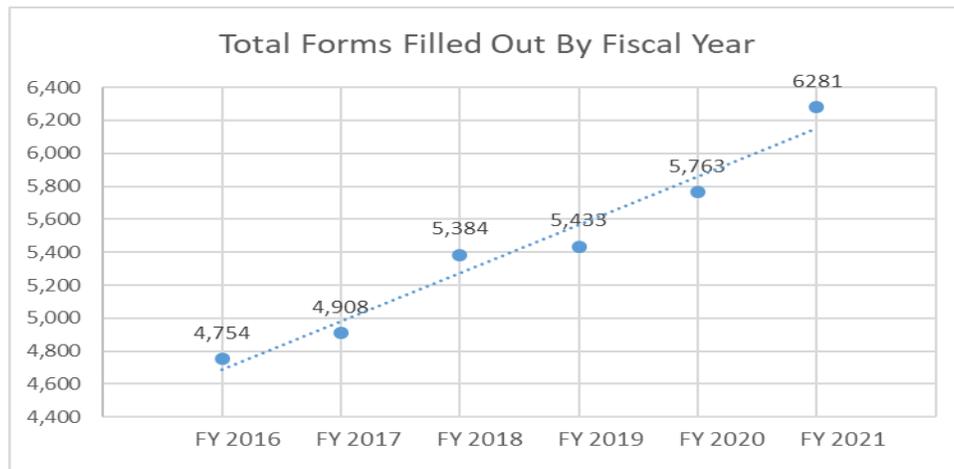
The advocacy work in front of the US Department of Veterans Affairs continued to show increases with the Commission increasing claim submissions nearly double what was filed in fiscal year 2019. This drastic increase showed how dire the need for assistance was in the Lake County Veterans Community and was most likely mirrored in every county in the State. Even with the drastic increase in claims, appeals, and other benefit applications filed, the Commission still saw an effective rate 87 percent of claims filed and an 86 percent effective rate of appeals.

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 extenuate the fact that veterans' advocacy requires high levels of knowledge, education, and research acumen.



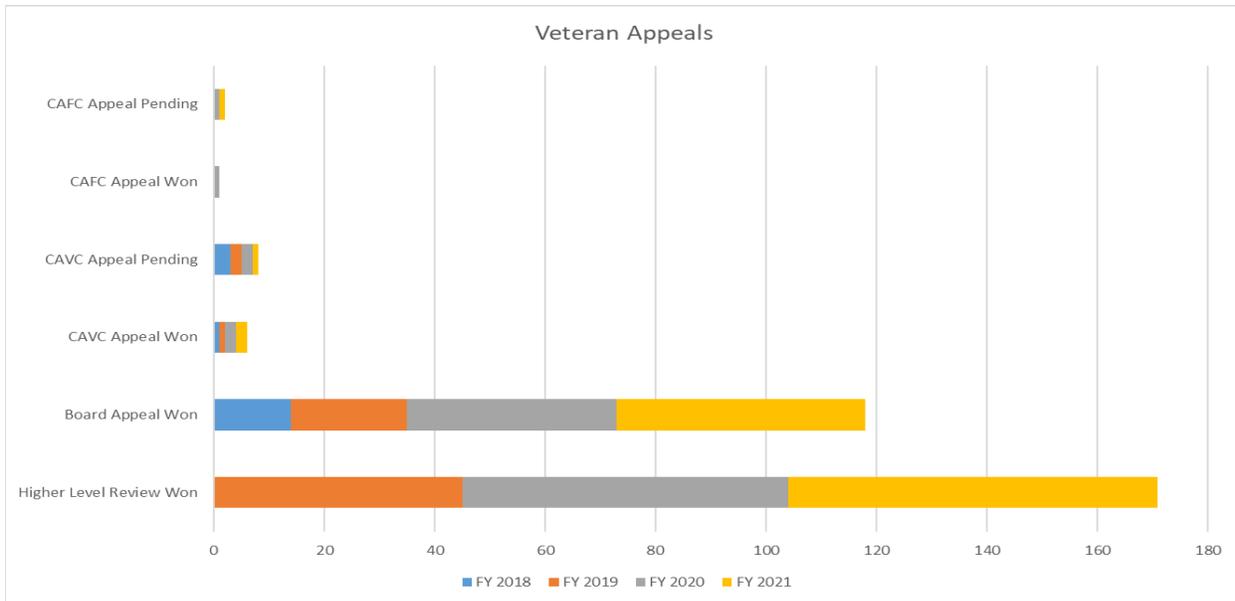
Total forms completed continues to exponentially increase year over year. This is due to the Commission filing more complete claims and appeal documentation with Regional Offices and the Board of Veterans Appeals in order to provide adjudicators with the data required to adjudicate claims effectively 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.

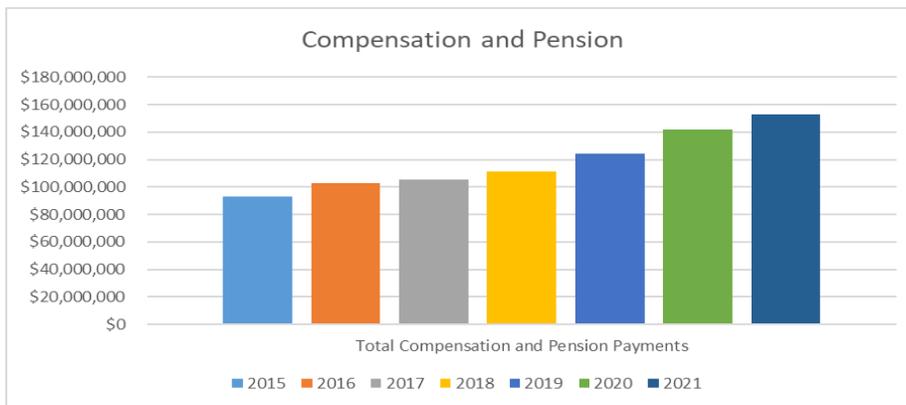


Further, the Commission staff continue to represent Veterans during all stages of appeals with numerous cases still pending before both the Board of Veterans Appeals and the Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims. Further, the Commission remained a party alongside the National Organization of Veterans Advocates in *National Organization of Veterans' Advocates, Inc., et al. v. Secretary of Veterans Affairs*, No. 20-1321 at the Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit, which will be covered more in depth below.

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 \$8,916,551.94 in new benefits paid by the Federal Government to Lake County Veterans, their dependents, and their survivors. Total VA Compensation and Pensions Payments for fiscal year



2021 for Lake County is expected to be approximately \$152,985,597.90.¹ This represents a return to the community of \$218.67 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.



¹ 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 \$764,927,987.90. 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.

However, this continues to barely scratch the surface as to what could potentially be available to the Veterans of Lake County. The Veterans of Lake County currently receive compensation or pension at a percentage rate 6.3 percent below the National average, which is approximately 1 percent better than Fiscal Year 2020. Illinois continues to rank 52nd in per capita compensation and pension, behind every State, Guam, and Puerto Rico. As these statistics demonstrate, Lake County has been grossly underservicing its Veterans for years. What results is a lack of available services to our Veterans. This causes many Veterans to give up on filing for services that they very well may be eligible.

2. Advocating For Veterans at Federal Appellate Courts, State Courts, and Media

A. Federal Appellate Court Cases

The Commission continued working 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 (2020 WL 7218734) at the Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit. This case was discussed in Fiscal Year 2020’s report in relation to the En Banc Panel at the Federal Circuit. The Commission is happy to report that oral arguments were heard on December 9, 2021 relating to the remaining issues set forth in the En Banc decision. Hopefully next year will see a resolution to this case and the potential reopening and re-adjudication of veterans who were either properly denied or were improperly rated for knee injuries and knee replacements will commence.

B. State Court Cases

The Commission continues the original Writ of Mandamus action against the Lake County Government, with the case pending before the Second District Appellate Court and awaiting decision.

Unfortunately, the Commission was required to file a second Writ of Mandamus action against the Lake County Board because the County Board determined it would cease releasing funds from the Commission's account for attorney's fees until the Commission produced unredacted invoices for the entirety of time the original Writ of Mandamus was being undertaken, both at the Trial Court and work done for the appeal to the Second District Appellate Court. The Commission argued that under *Lavite v. Dunstan*, 2019 IL App (5th) 170114, the County Board could not arbitrarily impose requirements on the Commission, including for the payment of attorney's fees. Luckily, after negotiations, the County Board settled the case and resumed releasing funds as dictated by the Commission when a proper warrant for funds was provided.

C. Media Engagement

The Commission continued the partnerships it had developed with local media over the course of Fiscal Year 2020 and expanded to different areas to ensure the Commission could reach veterans in need.

This proved especially significant during the month of August and the events leading up to the fall of Afghanistan. The Commission utilized its vast media contacts in television, print, digital, and new media to inform about not just the Commission, but other assets available to families and citizens desiring to work with and aid our veteran community during this time. This produced strong engagement from the veteran community with many individuals who had never sought out services began contacting the Commission for assistance.

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 July to inform on important legislative changes on the Federal level. These meetings in turn opened up 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 two most important pieces of Federal Legislation the Commission and others are currently working with Congress are Burn Pit and Other Toxic Exposure legislation and County Veteran Service Officer Funding Bills. The Burn Pit and Other Toxic Exposure legislation is extremely important for our veterans of the Post 9/11 generation, especially those who served in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Africa. These Burn Pits and Other Toxic Exposures our military was exposed to in these arduous locations is already causing debilitating and, in some cases, deathly diseases within these young veterans. Currently, the US Department of Veterans Affairs denies approximately eighty percent (80%) of claims filed for exposures, leaving it to veterans and their advocates to prove the diseases they are fighting is from this exposure. This legislation will make several serious conditions presumptive, meaning if a veteran served in one of the many areas known to have exposure, it is presumed the exposure caused these diseases.

Regarding Federal Funding for County Veteran Service Officers, this legislation will open the door for Commissions throughout the State to apply for Federal funds to supplement local funds for a myriad of programs Commissions are directed to provide, both under State and Federal laws and regulations. There is still much to be done on this legislative initiative, but the Commission is hopeful that within the next several years this legislation will go into effect and provide further aid and assistance to our veteran community.

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. Specifically, the Commission was asked to provide subject matter expert testimony to several Illinois House Committees including the House Veterans Affairs Committee and the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee on legislation.

Further, the Commission joined and assisted Representative Joyce Mason in House Bill 1290, legislation that provided for veterans who were given less than honorable discharges due to their sexual orientation or gender identity would be considered to have honorable service. This allows for veterans who fall into this category to utilize most of the Commission's services while the Commission advocated for discharge upgrades at the Federal level, which in turn allows for Federal benefits to be restored. The Superintendent and the Chief of Staff were grateful to be in attendance when House Bill 1290 was signed into law during Veterans Day at the State Fair, and look forward to continuing the work ahead on assisting these veterans.

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 Illinois Association of County Veterans Assistance Commissions (hereinafter "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 partnered with the Lake County Health Department in training for individuals desiring certification as Mental Health First Aid Instructors. Two of the Commission employees, Chief of Staff John Murray and VSO Summer Padaoan, received full certification as instructors in Mental Health First Aid. Both have already begun training individuals in certification in Mental Health First Aid, to include conducting training at the Illinois Association of County Veteran Assistance Commission's annual training in September. This paved the way for many of our fellow Commissions to be certified in Mental Health First Aid, allowing greater care and assistance to our Veteran Community.

Further, as the Commission works on developing programs and initiatives to hold back the tide of mental health crisis currently facing the veteran community, these two are playing an integral part in building programs and training sessions. The Commission hopes more individuals will become certified in Mental Health First Aid through these efforts and the Lake County community, as a whole, continues to partner with us.

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. The Commission is very grateful for the friendship and partnership with Acting Director Terry Prince and look forward to continuing to develop this relationship in many years to come.

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.

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 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 maintain 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 increased to not only provide constant assistance to Lake County Veterans with employment referrals.

Outlook For 2022

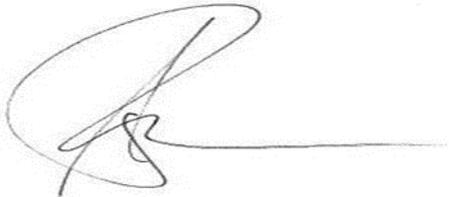
Fiscal Year 2021 saw massive increases in assistance needed from the veteran community. This was expected and discussed last year in the Commission's Annual Report. Even with these increases, the Commission staff was able to exceed in growth. For 95 years, the Commission has led the way in Lake County in assisting our Veterans and their family members.

The Commission's Writ of Mandamus is still awaiting decision at the Second Appellate District. Unfortunately, the Commission's desire of turning this Fiscal Year to increasing services remains on hold. The Commission, as covered above, is continuing to notice very troubling and very dangerous trendlines going into next year. To combat this, the Commission has partnered with many organizations in order to provide part of the services the Commission is statutorily mandated to provide, but as of yet lacks the funding.

As stated in each of the preceding Fiscal Year Reports, increasing the staffing of the Commission, by adding additional employees in order to 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, is still needed. Without these important advocates, Veterans will continue to be underserved and underrepresented. Further, the statutorily mandated functions required of the Commission are needed now more than ever.

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. Anything else would be to disregard the sentiment of President Lincoln and show disdain towards 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', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Andrew C. Tangen, JD, MBA, MS
Superintendent

VAC Lake County
State Legislators
Federal Legislators
Veteran Service Organizations of Lake County

References

- [1] Veterans Benefits Administration, "Monday Morning Workload Reports," U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Washington D.C., 2020-2021.
- [2] Veterans Benefits Administration, "Annual Benefits Reports," U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Washington D.C., 2020-2021.
- [3] National Center for Veterans Analysis and Statistics, "Veterans Population Model," U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Washington D.C., 2018.
- [4] U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, "Continuum of Care Homeless Assistance Programs Homeless Populations and Subpopulations," U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Washington D.C., 2011-2021.
- [5] National Center for Veterans Analysis and Statistics, "Geographical Expenditure Reports," U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Washington D.C., 2010-2020.
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- [7] U.S. Census Bureau, "American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates," U.S. Department of Commerce, Washington D.C., 2019.
- [8] Board of Veterans Appeals "The Board of Veterans Appeals Annual Report to Congress 2020," U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Washington D.C., 2020.