



VETERANS CONNECTIONS

News from the Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs ★ Volume 5, Issue 11 ★ November 2025



★ Message from IDVA Director Terry Prince

The Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs team deployed across the state to participate in ceremonies, programs, and events to commemorate Veterans Day 2025. Every corner of the state was covered, including Decatur, Springfield, Woodstock, DuPage, Chicago, and everywhere in between. Speeches were delivered, interviews conducted, and ceremonies were held. IDVA ensured that veterans across the state felt respected, honored, and celebrated. We also seized the opportunity to share with

veterans the services IDVA provides while also listening to their concerns and helping them navigate the VA claims and benefits process.

December 1st, we are launching our fourth annual Operation Rising Spirit, a campaign to recruit volunteers to serve at IDVA's five Veterans' Homes in Anna, Chicago, LaSalle, Manteno, and Quincy. Volunteers make a profound impact on the veterans in our care. Their service allows us to enhance our already robust events and activities schedule. Crafts and woodwork are created with the guidance of volunteers, while other veterans and volunteers are catching fish. Volunteers also help provide religious services, transportation to appointments, and specialized gardening skills. The bonds built between volunteers and the veterans is remarkable and long-lasting. Please consider volunteering at one of IDVA's Veterans' Homes. It promises to be a rewarding experience. For more information, please view this [short video](#).

You can also complete an [online application here](#).

Wishing you and your family a very Happy Thanksgiving.

Sincerely,

Terry Prince, U.S. Navy Veteran and IDVA Director



Veterans Day



Director Prince was interviewed by ESPN1 at half-time of the UIC Veterans Salute game at the Credit Union 1 Arena, where he shared information about IDVA's services for veterans and their families. [View the interview here.](#)



Veteran Service Officer Brandon Jagers conducting Veteran outreach at the University of Illinois Chicago Flames Basketball game.

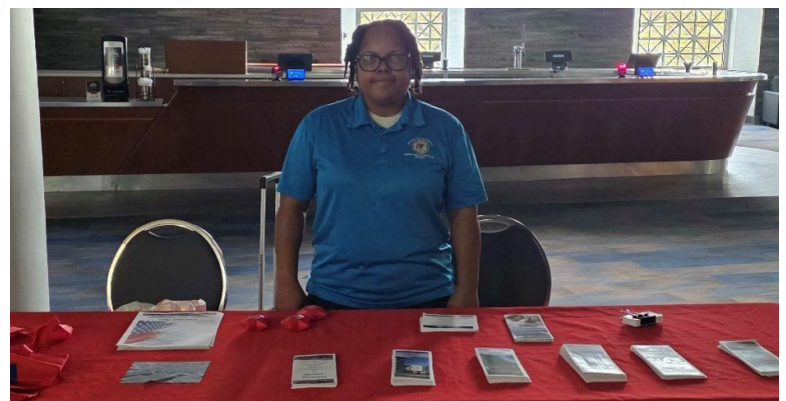


Legislative Liaison Dylan Hopp, Chief of Staff, Jassen Strokosch, and Assistant Director Anthony Vaughn.

The City of Chicago hosted its annual Veterans Day Commemoration Ceremony at Soldier Field. This year marked the 80th anniversary of World War II, when all Chicagoans honored and expressed gratitude for the outstanding service of the men and women of our armed forces. Additionally, the ceremony took place one day after the 250th Anniversary of the United States Marine Corps. IDVA Assistant Director and Marine Corps Veteran Anthony Vaughn was present on stage to represent those who have served in the United States Marine Corps.



Metro Region Supervisor Robert Iverson III was honored at the University of Chicago, Illinois Flames Salute to Veterans Basketball game, where he was presented with a signed basketball by UIC Athletic Director Andrea Williams. Robert is pictured here with his wife Frieda, and Flames mascot "Sparky".



Veteran Service Officer Michele Richards is conducting IDVA Veteran outreach at the City of Chicago's annual Veterans Day ceremony at Soldier Field.

Veterans Day



Veteran Service Officer Cynthia McKee (Chicago) delivers remarks to Operation PUSH. Saturday Morning Forum: Veterans Day: Service and Sacrifice: The Real Cost of Freedom. Cynthia is pictured here with Congressman Jonathan Jackson.



Jodi Weinberg of Rehab Maxx, IDVA Metro Region Supervisor Robert Iverson III, and Jynda Strelitz of CapTel Captioned Telephones attend the Blue Star Families event at the College of DuPage.



IDVA Veteran Service Officer Walter Wilson at the Rolling Thunder Chapter 2 veteran event hosted by Woodstock Harley Davidson, with Ted Makarewicz, Rolling Thunder Motorcycle Club Chapter Commander.



Veteran Service Officers Jordan Heap and Jeff Eagler (Macon County) hosted an event at the Decatur Public Library to provide veterans in the community with information about IDVA and federal and state benefits available to veterans.



IDVA Veteran Service Officer Gerald Enriquez with Jonathan Cooper, a student veteran leader at Governors State University, participate in the University's Resource Fair at the Governors State University. Gerald and Jonathan served together in the Army.



Director Prince attended the Livingston County VAC Luncheon, where he served as the keynote speaker and was presented with a shirt representing his service in the Navy. The event was also sponsored by the Livingston County Board and the Pontiac Elks Club.



Veterans' Homes Celebrate Veterans Day



Veterans' Home at LaSalle: Sons Dennis and Scott Hughes with Army veteran Ray Hughes and his wife, Carol.



Veterans' Home at LaSalle: Dietary Manager Marsha Meuser (center) with her parents, Michael and Marilee Meuser, and Guest Speaker Vernon Sondgeroth and his daughter Lori.



Veterans' Home at Anna Parade: Front: IDVA employee Bonnie Brimm and Air Force veteran Dale Yates. Back: Marine Corps veteran Mike Cleland and IDVA employee Mechelle Greer.



Veterans' Day at Quincy: Korean War Army veteran Paul Altgilbers performed the wreath-laying. Paul lives in the Fifer building and was accompanied by his daughters, Paulette and Holly.



Support Illinois Veterans



PLAY WITH PURPOSE®

A portion of every dollar you spend goes towards **Veterans support programs** in Illinois.

18+ Be Smart, Play Smart®
Game odds available at IllinoisLottery.com.

ILLINOIS LOTTERY

Support Illinois Veterans with the 7X Bingo Multiplier Instant Ticket!

The Illinois Lottery is proud to help support Veterans in Illinois through its 7X Bingo IDVA, which distributes the funds to vital organizations like ours that provide essential support programs for Veterans across Illinois.

These tickets are making a tangible difference in the lives of our veterans, whether through housing assistance, job training, mental health services, or other critical resources. By purchasing a 7X Bingo Multiplier Instant Ticket, you not only have a chance to win up to \$200,000, but you're also making a direct impact on the men and women who have served our country.

We invite you to join us in supporting our Veterans by purchasing a ticket and encouraging others to do the same.



ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF
VETERANS AFFAIRS

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ Marine Corps 250th Birthday

Marine Corps 250th Birthday Cake Cutting Ceremony

To commemorate the 250th birthday of the United States Marine Corps, IDVA hosted a traditional cake-cutting ceremony at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum, attended by Marines and their families. IDVA's Operations and Programs Division Manager Danielle Miller, a Marine Corps veteran, served as the Master of Ceremonies, including reading General John A. Lejeune's birthday message. The powerful Commandant's annual message was viewed, and the traditional cake-cutting ceremony was presented. The Sacred Heart Griffin Encore Choir performed the National Anthem and the Marines' Hymn.

The Marine Corps was additionally honored with flags flying over the State Capitol and Director Prince reading a Proclamation by Governor JB Pritzker declaring November 10th United States Marine Corps Day in Illinois.

Assistant Director Anthony Vaughn, a Marine Corps veteran and the Guest of Honor, delivered powerful remarks recounting the Marine Corps' strength and contribution to protecting the nation. His speech centered around **"The strength of the Marine Corps is the Marine. The strength of the Marine is the Marine Corps."**

The cake-cutting ceremony included Assistant Director Vaughn, Chief of Staff Jassen Strokosch, William Keener (resident of the Veterans' Home at Manteno and the oldest Marine present), and the youngest Marine present, Jacob Turner. The cake was provided by Turano Baking Company in Berwyn, IL.

To view the Commandant's Message, click here: [Commandant's message](#).



The Guest of Honor and Assistant Director of the IDVA delivers the keynote address.



Left to right: Youngest, Marine present Jacob Turner, oldest Marine present William Keener (resident of the Veterans' Home at Manteno), and Guest of Honor, Assistant Director Anthony Vaughn.



Sacred Heart Griffin Encore Choir performs the National Anthem.



Marine Corps 250th Birthday



Director Terry Prince, Chief of Staff Jassen Strokosch, Vice President/Legal Turano Bakery Lisa Turano, Operations and Programs Division Manager and Master of Ceremonies Danielle Miller, and Assistant Director and Guest of Honor Anthony Vaughn.



IDVA Chief of Staff and Marine Corps veteran Jassen Strokosch cuts the ceremonial cake with a sword provided by the Lincoln Marine Corps League Detachment #1336.



IDVA Director Terry Prince presents Guest of Honor and Assistant Director Anthony Vaughn the Governor's Proclamation designating November 10, 2025, as USMC Day in Illinois.

United States Marine Corps Veterans

Veterans' Home at Quincy



Delta & Echo: left to right: Steve Lindsey, Staff (standing), Vern Smith, John Briggs, David Goodwin, and Bobby Whitten.



Domiciliary Marines: left to right: Billie Browning, Jim Nauert (seated), Keith Neville, and Tom Spohr.



*Fifer Marines: left to right: Ron Wier, John Vernon, and Mike Dodge.
Hammond Hall Marines, left to right: Robert Sword, Terry Strong, and Donnie McQueen*

United States Marine Corps Veterans

Veterans' Home at Quincy



Markword 2 Marines: left to right: Grady Keigwin, Charlie Doan, Joe Follis, Bill Richards, Bob Gillet (front), Jim Carlock, and Chuck Vespa.



Schapers: Ronald Farmer

Veterans' Home at Manteno



Greg Garcia



Diane Richardson



Left to right: Anthony Sparenberg, Mark Barnes, Greg Garcia, William Keener (Bill participated in the cake-cutting ceremony as the oldest Marine present).

News from the VA

With the end of the federal government shutdown, the United States Department of Veterans Affairs provided the following updates.

ECC and SCO Hotlines Operations

The ECC and SCO Hotline have resumed operations and are available to assist with questions. Call us at 888-GIBILL-1 (888-442-4551), or 001-918-781-5678 if calling from overseas, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. EST.

If a student has a debt due to enrollment changes, they can submit a message through [Ask VA](#) or call the Debt Management Center at 1-800-827-0648.

Progress and Claim Support

VA Education Service continues to make steady progress in restoring timely service for students, especially for those using Survivors' and Dependents' Educational Assistance (Chapter 35) benefits.

We are working as quickly as possible to process all pending claims and remain on track for full recovery by mid-December.

Students can check the status of their payments and complete common self-service actions such as updating direct deposit information or changing contact details using their [My Education Benefits page](#).

We encourage you to submit enrollment certifications as soon as possible. Enrollment Manager allows certifications up to 180 days before the term begins for Post-9/11 GI Bill (Chapter 33) enrollment certifications and up to 120 days for non- 33 (Montgomery GI Bill Active Duty [Chapter 30], Montgomery GI Bill Selected Reserve [Chapter 1606], or Chapter 35).

Email and Text Notifications for Attendance Verification

VA now offers email and text messaging for students using Chapter 30,33, or 1606 benefits. These messages are used for the required monthly verification of attendance.

We encourage students to ensure their contact information is up to date in their VA.gov profile and to opt in to text or email notifications to ensure their payments are released without delay.

For Chapter 35 students only, enrollment verification is temporarily waived as explained below. Automatic Verification for Chapter 35 Students

Chapter 35 students whose fall 2025 terms have been processed will be automatically verified for November. They do not need to submit verification of attendance at this time.

We will share more information once Chapter 35 beneficiaries are required to resume verifying their enrollment.



Veterans Seeking Assistance

We've Moved

McDonough County/Macomb Veteran Service Office

Veterans Seeking Assistance with Claims and Benefits, visit

Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs

Veteran Service Officers Nathan Johnson and Kayla Bair

New Address

McDonough District Hospital
505 E. Grant St Suite 302 (HSB 1)
Macomb IL 61455

Kayla Bair

By appointment only:
Monday and Wednesday,
Thursday and Friday 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM
Kayla.Blair@illinois.gov
Office: 308-836-2243
Mobile: 217-725-9795

Nathan Johnson

By appointment only:
Monday, Tuesday and Thursday
8:00 AM – 4:00 PM
Nathan.Johnson@illinois.gov
Office: 309-837-5838
Mobile: 217-685-3531

IDVA's Mission:

Ensuring Veterans Thrive in Illinois



Veterans' Homes



Manteno Veterans' Home Administrator Tanya Smith Receives Illinois Pioneer Culture Champion of the Year

Tanya Smith, Administrator of the Veterans' Home at Manteno, was awarded the Illinois Culture Change Champion of the Year at the annual Illinois Pioneer Culture Summit: Mobilize the Movement: Changing the Culture of Long-Term Care in Illinois.

"Tanya's innovation at the Veterans' Home at Manteno has been transformative to the care veterans receive," said Angela Simmons, Senior Home Administrator. "She considers the entire well-being of the veterans by nurturing their mind and spirit while also providing exceptional care."

The Summit, attended by the administrators from Illinois' five veterans' homes, offers two days of presentations and brainstorming on enhancements in long-term care. The Illinois Pioneer Coalition advocates for changes in long-term care by creating opportunities for health care providers to share ideas and experiences and offering educational programs. Since 1999, thousands of consumers, advocates, nursing facility representatives, and licensing surveyors have been trained on culture change values and principles through the Illinois Pioneer Coalition.

Click here for more information on the [Illinois Pioneer Coalition](#).

Illinois' Five Veterans' Homes are Hiring Serve Those Who Served

Benefit from meaningful work in a supportive work environment. Receive excellent benefits, retirement plans, competitive salaries, and work-life balance. Deliver compassionate, person-centered care to Illinois' heroes.

Opportunities

- Registered Nurse
- Veteran Nurses Aid Certified
- Dietary
- Social Workers
- Activities Professionals

Excellent Benefits

- Top health insurance benefits
- Generous time off benefits
- Pension, Deferred Compensation
- Multiple, scheduled pay increases
- Paid Holidays annually
- Pay Differential
- Tuition Reimbursement
- Much more!



To learn more and apply:



★ ★ ★ ★ ★ Veterans' Homes



Veterans' Home at Manteno: Manteno Home Administrator Tanya Huston serves the first ice cream cone from the Home's new ice cream machine to Navy veteran Robert "Bob" Taylor. The ice cream machine is available to veterans at the Home's newly renovated Pentagon Café.



Veterans' Home at Quincy: A large crowd gathered in Smith Hall to celebrate the 100th birthday of Marine Corps veteran Charlie Doan, a resident of Markword 2. Charlie was born on October 24, 1925. Quincy Mayor Linda Moore proclaimed October 24, 2025, Charlie Doan Day in Quincy and presented a certificate of congratulations from Governor Pritzker. Local dignitaries and family members spoke of Charlie's community service and shared stories of his life.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ Women Veterans

Lori Wilcox Legacy Award

Margo Watson, Women Veterans Coordinator for the Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs, received the Lori Wilcox Legacy Award. This award honors individuals who devote themselves to improving the lives of others, whose compassion, leadership, and extraordinary contributions often go unnoticed, yet are essential to the fabric of our communities. This recognition reflects Margo's remarkable achievements, dedication, and leadership within the veteran and first responder communities.

Founded in October 2022 by Renee Dickerson, a licensed clinician, retired first responder, and military trauma survivor, the Victory Place organization is led by a board comprising trauma-informed nonprofit veterans, first responders, and family members. Victory Place's mission is to support veterans, first responders, and their families through a combination of peer and clinical support, education, and holistic wellness programs aimed at addressing the social, psychological, and emotional effects of service-related trauma.

Victory Place provides no-cost trauma recovery groups, VA benefits navigation, crisis counseling and services, holistic wellness programs, and trauma-informed trainings.

Left to right: Shamika White, Victory Place Board Member, Margo Watson, IDVA Women Veterans Coordinator, Dr. Renee Dickerson, Victory Place Founder and CEO.



Call for Nominations for the 25 Illinois Women Veterans Leaders of 2026

We are seeking women Veterans in Illinois who demonstrate leadership, mentoring, and advocacy in their Veteran communities. Nominate yourself or another women Veteran to be recognized.

Nominations are open from **December 1, 2025 at 8:00 AM** and will close on **February 1, 2026 at 12:00 PM**.

Nomination Criteria

- Must be an Illinois Resident
- Military Service and Accomplishments
- Leadership and Mentorship in the Veterans' Community
- For full details on the Nominee Criteria, please review the survey
- Individuals honored in 2025 will not be eligible for consideration in the 2026 selection cycle

Website Link for Submission or scan QR Code

- <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/J59SKP2>



For any further questions

- Email: Angela.stpaul@va.gov
- Womenveterans@illinois.gov



Women Veterans

25 Women Veteran Leaders in 2025

The Women Veterans Program continues to showcase the 25 Women Veteran Leaders of 2025. Women veterans were nominated and selected for their contributions to the women veteran community. They were honored at a lunch and ceremony held on March 31st at Malcolm X College.



Elizabeth D. Soto
Illinois National Guard (ILARNG) Veteran

Elizabeth D. Soto, Illinois National Guard veteran, is a dedicated and trailblazing professional with a distinguished career in service and advocacy for veterans. From 2004 to 2013, she proudly served in the Illinois Army National Guard (ILARNG), where she developed a strong commitment to duty and community.

Following her military service, Elizabeth transitioned to various government positions, bringing her expertise and dedication to public service. Her passion for supporting the veteran community led her to join the Veterans Assistance Commission of Cook County (VACCC). It was in this role that Elizabeth discovered her true calling to work with and serve her fellow veterans. Her work in the veteran community with the VACCC has made a significant impact, culminating in her historic election as the first Latina female Superintendent in the entire 80-plus history of the commission. Elizabeth's groundbreaking achievement as Superintendent reflects not only her professional excellence but also her commitment to breaking barriers and paving the way for future generations. She brings a unique perspective to her role, combining her military background, government experience, and personal dedication to Veterans' issues. Elizabeth's journey highlights her dedication, leadership, and pioneering spirit.

Elizabeth D. Soto, Illinois National Guard veteran, is a dedicated and trailblazing professional with a distinguished career in service and advocacy for veterans. From 2004 to 2013, she proudly served in the Illinois Army National Guard (ILARNG), where she developed a strong commitment to duty and community.



Kimberly Yantis
U.S. Navy Veteran

Kimberly Yantis, U.S. Navy veteran, is a passionate advocate for veterans, currently serving as the Central Region Supervisor at the Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs for the past five years. Before this role, she served for 13 years as the Superintendent at the Sangamon County Veterans Assistance Commission. With over 18 years of experience in supporting veterans in Illinois,

she has made a significant impact through her leadership and commitment to improving the lives of those who have served. Kimberly also proudly serves as the first female Commander of the Chatham-Auburn VFW, currently in her fifth year of leadership, where she continues to promote camaraderie and advocacy for fellow veterans.

Kimberly holds a Master's Degree in Human Services and is currently pursuing a Master's in Public Administration to enhance her ability to serve and lead in the public sector. Outside of her professional life, she enjoys spending time outdoors with her family, riding side-by-sides, and contributing to her community.



Milana Herman
U.S. Army Veteran

Milana Herman, a U.S. Army veteran, is a dedicated and impactful leader, deeply committed to serving veterans and fostering success within the community. A former U.S. Army Personnel Administrative Support Specialist, Milana served active duty from 1989 to 1994 and continued in the reserves until 1997. Today, she brings her leadership skills to Rock Valley College, where

she serves as the Program Manager for Student Employment/Veterans Affairs. In this role, Milana advises the RVC Veterans Club and ensures that veterans are supported in their academic journey. In addition to her work at Rock Valley College, Milana is a passionate advocate for women veterans, making substantial contributions to the visibility and support of their unique needs.

She actively participates in the National Women Veterans United Rockford Chapter, is a member of VFW Ross Pearson Post 5149, and serves on the Advisory Board for the Vet Center. One of her proudest accomplishments is her involvement in the short film Take Your Own Notes, where her story is shared, alongside those of other women veterans, highlighting their sacrifices and invaluable service to their country. Milana's resilience in overcoming the challenges she faced as a woman in the military has made her a trailblazer for others.

She earned a Bachelor's in Psychology from Northern Illinois University and a Master's in Organizational Leadership from Judson University, further underscoring her commitment to personal growth and empowering others. Milana's unwavering belief in every individual's potential continues to inspire and uplift those around her.



#StriveFor500



Register at The Military Women's Memorial to collect and preserve our history

The Military Women's Memorial is a one-of-a-kind tribute to America's Servicewomen, past and present, and a world-class collection of military women's stories. It is the leading memorial honoring the commitment, contributions and experiences of Servicewomen.

Three million women have served in or with the Armed Forces since the American Revolution. By contributing names and information to the Register, you can help record and preserve stories that will otherwise be lost to history and unknown to future generations. Register TODAY and MAKE HERstory!



The Military Women's Memorial's #StriveFor500 campaign is in full swing and the goal is clear: every state and territory is working to register at least 500 military women in 2025 to preserve their powerful stories in the National Digital Repository.

Women Service Members, Veterans, and Reserve/National Guard, we're calling on YOU to help Illinois make history! Illinois is one of the larger states so let's make our registration numbers reflect that! We have thousands of women veterans in our state but last year only registered 231. So far this year, we are at 136. Let's show that Illinois Women Veterans Lead the Way!!



It only takes a few minutes to register yourself at www.womensmemorial.org
Every zip code. Every rank.
Every era—from the Revolutionary War to present day.

Jeffrey Lewis

Transitions to VETS Coordinator

Jeffrey Lewis, IDVA's former Southern Region Supervisor, has assumed the role of the Administrator of the Veterans Education and Training Section, managing and administering state education programs for dependents of deceased, disabled, and POW/MIA veterans. The Administrator is also the Director of the State Approving Agency (SAA), which is responsible for developing rules, regulations, and guidelines to evaluate program submissions for education institutions and training facilities that require approval for veterans' benefits.

Jeff will soon celebrate his 20th anniversary at IDVA, where he was hired as a Veteran Service Officer on December 5, 2005. He was a floater for the Southern region and then permanently assigned to the Mt. Vernon Office in 2007. He became the Southern Region supervisor in 2022 until he transitioned to VETS Administrator.

Jeff is a Marine Corps veteran, where he served for four years on active duty. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree from Southern Illinois University Carbonale. He is married to his wife Jessica. They have two sons. His oldest son, Jeffrey, is also a Marine Corps veteran. Jeff is a JB basketball coach at Woodlawn Grade School, with his son Josh as his assistant.

John Cernich

Joins Labor Relations Team

John Cernich joined IDVA's Labor Relations team to provide training to supervisors and managers (BU and non-BU) on key labor relations and management topics. This includes affirmative attendance, managing tardiness, overtime, understanding union contracts, communication, basic management skills, performance evaluations, and discipline. His focus will be on helping supervisors lead effectively, apply policies and contract language consistently, and help our supervisors develop the skills to address workplace issues with clarity and confidence.

John brings over 30 years of experience in labor relations management, supervisory training, and public sector workforce development. He previously served as Bureau Chief of Training for the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services (HFS), leading statewide management and leadership initiatives that strengthened organizational performance and compliance across multiple Illinois agencies.

Throughout his career, John has held senior roles with the Departments of Public Health, Children and Family Services, Transportation, and Healthcare and Family Services, providing expert guidance on collective bargaining, contract interpretation, and employee relations. He has extensive experience working with AFSCME, INA, IFPE, and Teamsters unions, ensuring fair, consistent, and effective labor practices.

As a certified Master Trainer and Rapid Results facilitator, John has designed and delivered leadership, labor relations, and performance improvement training for hundreds of state employees. With us, he will focus on accountability, communication, and practical leadership skills to help supervisors/managers lead with clarity and confidence.

John will soon begin offering management training sessions on evaluations, grievances, discipline, PIPs, mentoring, navigating the contract, attendance and tardiness, and communication challenges.



Do you have a Compliment, Recommendation, Question, or Complaint?

Illinois Veterans Accountability Unit (VAU)

Let us Know!

If you are an Illinois veteran or other Illinois resident who seeks services from the Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs (IDVA); a resident of any Illinois Veterans' Home, a family member of a resident, a visitor of any Illinois Veterans' Home; a vendor and/or contractor of the IDVA; or staff of the IDVA, we want to hear from you.

This office welcomes feedback about the services being provided to the veterans of Illinois.
If you received exceptional service or have concerns involving any member of the Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs, please let us know.

Email us at

IDVA.accountability@illinois.gov

or Call our Toll-Free Helpline

1-855-660-7011

More information about the VAU can be found on the Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs website

<https://veterans.illinois.gov/>

The VAU maintains the confidentiality of investigations, complainants, and witnesses to the maximum extent allowable, but must disclose complaints to the Office of the Executive Inspector General (OEIG).

You can obtain more information about the OEIG or file a complaint with the OEIG directly through its website at **<https://oeig.illinois.gov/>**.

Our mission at the IDVA is very simple. To serve those who have served. In doing so, we serve not only the men and women who have worn the uniform, but also their families. It is our privilege to be able to help our veterans receive the benefits they have earned through service to our nation. Our goal is to empower our veterans and their families to thrive in all aspects of their lives.

We know there are many veterans within our great state who do not require any assistance – but we still want to encourage you to “Stand Up and Be Counted!” by registering with your local VSO. In doing so, you’re helping IDVA to do a better job of planning for services, seeking federal funding and understanding the needs of our veteran communities statewide. [Click here to register.](#)

We thank you for your service and for your sacrifice and we at the IDVA look forward to offering our services to you.



**ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF
VETERANS AFFAIRS**

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