

# ***DIVISION OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS***

## ***MISSION***

The Division of Veterans' Affairs assists veterans, members of the armed forces and their families and dependents in securing benefits earned through military service. The Division coordinates veterans' programs and services offered by other State agencies, works closely with the Federal Department of Veterans Affairs and advocates State and Federal actions to meet veterans' needs. The Division serves more than 1.4 million New Yorkers who are veterans, as well as their dependents and those on active duty.

## ***ORGANIZATION AND STAFFING***

The Division is headed by the Director who is appointed by the Governor. The Division's central office is in Albany, with regional offices in Albany, Hauppauge and Buffalo. The Division is also supported by a network of approximately 60 community field offices in nearly all of the State's counties and New York City.

The Division will have a workforce of 126 employees during 1999-2000. Approximately 86 percent of these positions are paid for by State tax dollars from the General Fund and 14 percent of the staff are supported by Federal Medicaid or Veterans' Education funds.

## ***FISCAL BACKGROUND AND BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS***

The 1999-2000 recommendation of \$9.0 million for the Division of Veterans' Affairs will fund veterans' counseling services at current levels and will fully fund the 1998 expansion of the Blind Veteran Annuity Assistance Program to include all unremarried spouses of deceased blind veterans. In addition, State aid to local county and city veterans service agencies, which defrays the operating costs of these organizations, is continued. The reduction in Federal funds will more accurately reflect actual Federal support for the Veterans' Education Program.

## ***PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS***

During 1999-2000, the Division of Veterans' Affairs will operate four principal programs. The largest provides veterans' counseling and claims services. A statewide network of approximately 60 State Veterans' Counselors — all veterans — and 35 support staff review eligibility and help veterans complete applications for benefits and services, obtain necessary documentation and file for Federal, State, local and private veterans' benefits. Counselors also serve constituents through outreach to Veterans Affairs Medical Centers, senior centers, State Veterans' Homes and local nursing homes, public assistance offices and correctional facilities.

Since 1995-96, the Division of Veterans' Affairs has expanded its community outreach activities through senior citizens seminars, an inaugural cable television program aired on three dozen local cable outlets, and collaboration with the Department of Health and US Department of Veterans Affairs in the development and opening of a 126-bed long-term health care facility for veterans in western New York.

The Division of Veterans' Affairs is responsible for securing a substantial portion of the nearly \$1 billion in recurring Federal VA payments made directly to New York State veterans and dependents. During 1997, State Veterans' Counselors made more than 155,000 contacts — an average of approximately 2,600 a year per counselor — and provided some 267,000 services, filing nearly 13,100 applications for benefits for New

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York's veterans and dependents. In doing so, State Veterans' Counselors obtained 7,200 VA benefits awards worth more than \$60 million in Federal payments, most of which are recurring.

Staff of the Veterans' Education Program investigate and certify post-secondary educational and vocational institutions for eligibility for student veterans' education benefits.

## ALL FUNDS APPROPRIATIONS

Category	Available 1998-99	Appropriations Recommended 1999-00	Change	Reappropriations Recommended 1999-00
State Operations . . . . .	\$6,894,400	\$6,561,000	-\$333,400	\$3,426,800
Aid To Localities . . . . .	3,027,697	2,425,000	-602,697	. . . .
Capital Projects . . . . .	. . . .	. . . .	. . . .	. . . .
<b>Total . . . . .</b>	<b>\$9,922,097</b>	<b>\$8,986,000</b>	<b>-\$936,097</b>	<b>\$3,426,800</b>

## ALL FUND TYPES LEVELS OF EMPLOYMENT BY PROGRAM ANNUAL SALARIED POSITIONS

Program	Available 1998-99	1999-00 Recommended Average Fill Level			Change
		Personal Service (Regular)	Maintenance Undistributed	Total Recommended 1999-00	
Administration					
General Fund . . . . .	7	7	. . . .	7	. . . .
Veteran Counseling Services Program					
General Fund . . . . .	108	108	. . . .	108	. . . .
HIGH ED SVC					
Special Revenue Funds — Federal . . . . .	11	11	. . . .	11	. . . .
<b>Total . . . . .</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>. . . .</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>. . . .</b>

## STATE OPERATIONS ALL FUNDS FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS BY FUND TYPE APPROPRIATIONS

Fund Type	Available 1998-99	Recommended 1999-00	Change
General Fund . . . . .	\$4,917,000	\$5,097,000	+ \$180,000
Special Revenue Funds — Federal . . . . .	1,977,400	1,464,000	-513,400
<b>Total . . . . .</b>	<b>\$6,894,400</b>	<b>\$6,561,000</b>	<b>-\$333,400</b>

## STATE OPERATIONS ALL FUNDS FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS BY PROGRAM APPROPRIATIONS

Program	Available 1998-99	Recommended 1999-00	Change
Administration			
General Fund . . . . .	\$468,000	\$444,000	-\$24,000
Veteran Counseling Services Program			
General Fund . . . . .	4,449,000	4,653,000	+ 204,000
Special Revenue Funds — Federal . . . . .	264,000	264,000	. . . .
HIGH ED SVC			
Special Revenue Funds — Federal . . . . .	1,713,400	1,200,000	-513,400
<b>Total . . . . .</b>	<b>\$6,894,400</b>	<b>\$6,561,000</b>	<b>-\$333,400</b>

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**STATE OPERATIONS — GENERAL AND OFFSET FUNDS  
SUMMARY OF PERSONAL SERVICE APPROPRIATIONS AND CHANGES  
1999-00 RECOMMENDED**

Program	Total Personal Service Amount	Change	Personal Service Regular (Annual Salaried) Amount	Change
Administration . . . . .	\$339,000	-\$24,000	\$339,000	-\$24,000
Veteran Counseling Services Program . . .	4,597,000	+ 204,000	4,597,000	+ 204,000
<b>Total . . . . .</b>	<b>\$4,936,000</b>	<b>+ \$180,000</b>	<b>\$4,936,000</b>	<b>+ \$180,000</b>

**STATE OPERATIONS — GENERAL AND OFFSET FUNDS  
SUMMARY OF NONPERSONAL SERVICE AND MAINTENANCE UNDISTRIBUTED  
APPROPRIATIONS AND CHANGES  
1999-00 RECOMMENDED**

Program	Amount	Total Change	Supplies and Materials Amount	Change
Administration . . . . .	\$105,000	. . . .	\$15,000	. . . .
Veteran Counseling Services Program . . . . .	320,000	. . . .	30,000	. . . .
<b>Total . . . . .</b>	<b>\$425,000</b>	<b>. . . .</b>	<b>\$45,000</b>	<b>. . . .</b>

Program	Amount	Travel Change	Contractual Services Amount	Change
Administration . . . . .	\$27,000	. . . .	\$52,000	. . . .
Veteran Counseling Services Program . . . . .	58,000	. . . .	152,000	. . . .
<b>Total . . . . .</b>	<b>\$85,000</b>	<b>. . . .</b>	<b>\$204,000</b>	<b>. . . .</b>

Program	Amount	Equipment Change	Maintenance Undistributed Amount	Change
Administration . . . . .	\$11,000	. . . .	. . . .	. . . .
Veteran Counseling Services Program . . . . .	15,000	. . . .	\$65,000	. . . .
<b>Total . . . . .</b>	<b>\$26,000</b>	<b>. . . .</b>	<b>\$65,000</b>	<b>. . . .</b>

**STATE OPERATIONS — OTHER THAN GENERAL FUND  
SUMMARY OF APPROPRIATIONS AND CHANGES  
1999-00 RECOMMENDED**

Program	Amount	Total Change	Personal Service Amount	Change
Veteran Counseling Services Program . . . . .	\$264,000	. . . .	. . . .	. . . .
HIGH ED SVC . . . . .	1,200,000	-\$513,400	\$700,000	-\$335,900
<b>Total . . . . .</b>	<b>\$1,464,000</b>	<b>-\$513,400</b>	<b>\$700,000</b>	<b>-\$335,900</b>

Program	Nonpersonal Service Amount	Change	Maintenance Undistributed Amount	Change
Veteran Counseling Services Program . . . . .	. . . .	. . . .	\$264,000	. . . .
HIGH ED SVC . . . . .	\$500,000	-\$177,500	. . . .	. . . .
<b>Total . . . . .</b>	<b>\$500,000</b>	<b>-\$177,500</b>	<b>\$264,000</b>	<b>. . . .</b>

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## AID TO LOCALITIES ALL FUNDS FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS BY FUND TYPE APPROPRIATIONS

<u>Fund Type</u>	<u>Available 1998-99</u>	<u>Recommended 1999-00</u>	<u>Change</u>
General Fund . . . . .	\$3,027,697	\$2,425,000	-\$602,697
Total . . . . .	<u>\$3,027,697</u>	<u>\$2,425,000</u>	<u>-\$602,697</u>

## AID TO LOCALITIES ALL FUNDS FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS BY PROGRAM APPROPRIATIONS

<u>Program</u>	<u>Available 1998-99</u>	<u>Recommended 1999-00</u>	<u>Change</u>
Veteran Counseling Services Program			
General Fund . . . . .	\$1,040,000	\$725,000	-\$315,000
Blind Veteran Annuity Assistance			
General Fund . . . . .	1,200,000	1,700,000	+ 500,000
Legislative Initiatives			
General Fund . . . . .	787,697	. . . .	-787,697
Total . . . . .	<u>\$3,027,697</u>	<u>\$2,425,000</u>	<u>-\$602,697</u>