

# **BUTLER COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE COMMISSION**



## **ANNUAL REPORT 2022**

*Approved May 17, 2023*

**FROM THE BUTLER COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE COMMISSION BOARD OF  
COMMISSIONERS**

The Butler County Veterans Service Commission is an agency that provides veterans and their dependents reliable and professional service by providing advocacy and assistance in obtaining veterans benefits, temporary financial assistance, and transportation to VA medical appointments. The Butler County Veterans Service Commission works closely with our community partners to best meet the needs of the veteran families that we service, thus helping to improve the lives of veterans and their families residing within Butler County.

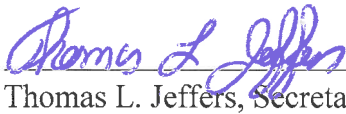
This 2022 Annual Report is being disseminated in PDF format. Written copies of the report are available upon request.



H. Bruce Jones, President



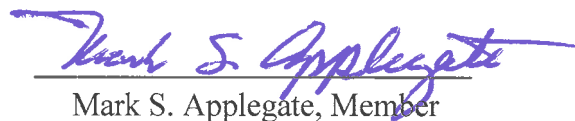
David L. Reed II, Vice-President



Thomas L. Jeffers, Secretary



Charles Weber, Member



Mark S. Applegate, Member

# BUTLER COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE COMMISSION

Location: 315 High Street, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor  
Hamilton, Ohio 45011

Phone: (513) 887- 3600  
(513) 425- 8600

Website: [www.bcvets.org](http://www.bcvets.org)

Like us on Facebook: @bcvets

Follow us on Twitter: @bcVsc

Find us on Instagram: @butlercountyveterans

Follow us on LinkedIn: [www.linkedin.com/company/bcvets](http://www.linkedin.com/company/bcvets)

Follow us on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCM-mt0lzClosgFvmmv1teiw/videos>

Follow us on TikTok: @bcvets

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## COMMISSIONERS

H. Bruce Jones, President (US Army 1971 - 1991)	Representing American Veterans
David L. Reed II, Vice President (US Army 1989 - 1993)	Representing Disabled American Veterans
Thomas L. Jeffers, Secretary (US Air Force 1969 – 1972)	Representing American Legion
Charles Weber, Member (US Army 1970 – 1972)	Member at Large
Mark S. Applegate, Member (US Army 1967 - 1969)	Representing Veterans of Foreign Wars

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## STAFF

Mike Farmer (USMC 2001 - 2005) Joined Commission in 2015	Executive Director/CVSO
Matt Jones (USA 2000 – 2004 / 2006 – 2008) Joined Commission in 2009	Assistant Executive Director/CVSO
Lisa Meece (USA Child 1968 - 1970) Joined Commission in 2021	Administrative Assistant
Tian Myers (USAF 1999 – 2009) Joined Commission 2019	County Veterans Service Officer II
Apt Boykin (USA 1996-2016) Joined Commission in 2020	County Veterans Service Officer II
Steve Harbin (USN 2003 – 2006) Joined Commission in 2021	County Veterans Service Officer I
Daniel Anderson (USMC 1993 - 1998) Joined Commission in 2022	County Veterans Service Officer I
Pam Klink (USA Parent 2007 - 2013) Joined Commission in 2021	Veteran Benefit Coordinator
Daniel Schofield (USMC 1988 - 1992) Joined Commission in 2022	Veteran Benefit Coordinator
Anita Lewis (USAF Spouse 1967 - 1971) Joined Commission in 2020	Receptionist
Nika Cooper (USMC Spouse 2003 - 2005) Joined Commission in 2022	Receptionist

## 2022 Board of Commissioners

(Seated left to right: Chuck Weber (MAL), Tom Jeffers (AmLeg) Standing left to right: Dave Reed (DAV), Bruce Jones (AmVets), Mark Applegate, (VFW))



## 2022 Butler County Veteran of the Year



Photo Credit: Nick Graham, Journal News

**Fred Bailey** was born in Zanesville, Ohio on 02/25/1948 who has two daughters, Beth and Diedra along with five grandchildren.

Mr. Bailey comes from a family who served including six uncles who served in World War II and a nephew who served during Global War on Terror.

He was drafted to the United States Army as a college student, who went from being in a classroom to

learning how to shoot a gun in basic training. Soon after his basic training Mr. Bailey was sent to Vietnam, where he served for two and half years with a top secret security clearance. He was assigned to the 132nd Assault Support Helicopter Company outside of Vietnam and he also served in Cambodia and Laos.

Fred's military accomplishments include expert marksmanship, Bronze Star, Air Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, Vietnam Campaign Medal and an Army Commendation with Oak cluster with over 25 mission flown in combat zones as a helicopter door gunner. He received an honorable discharge in April 1971.

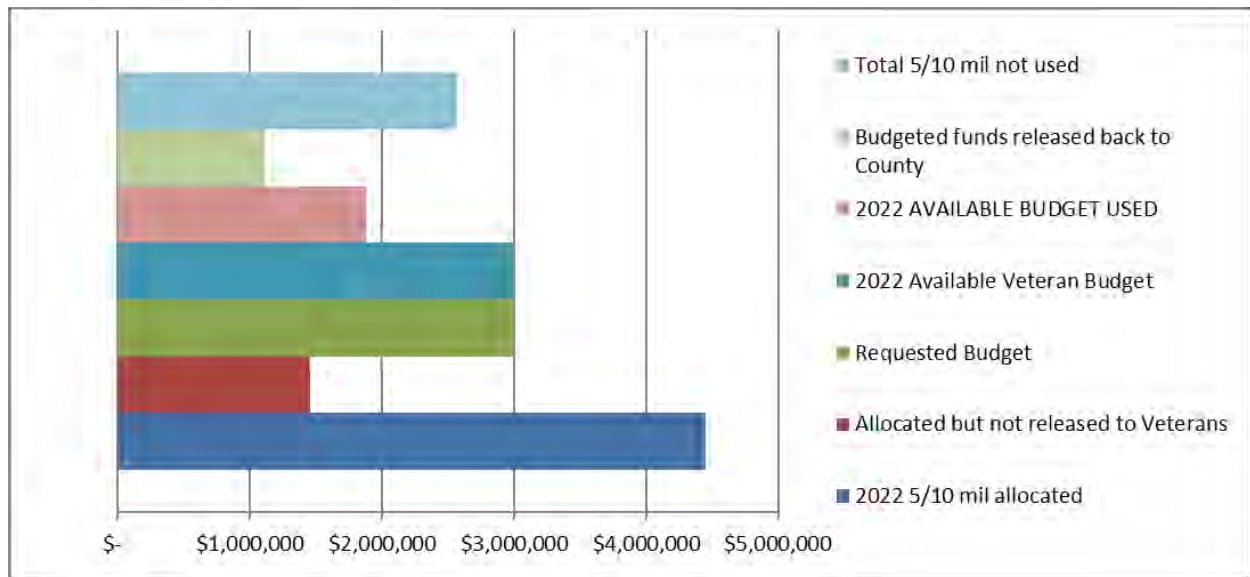
In 1972 Mr. Bailey moved to Hamilton, Ohio and began working as a manager at American Finance Company. Advancing himself he moved on to work for BP Oil where he retired after 37 dedicated years of dedicated service and a reputation of being very well respected for getting the job done. He currently resides in Fairfield, Ohio.

Although retired from work Fred stays very active and dedicated to service. He is an active member and Trustee with American Legion Post 138, member of American Veterans Post 1983, has served as the Co-Chair of the Butler County Memorial Day event for seven years and spearheads the effort to place flags on all Veterans graves in Hamilton, Ohio for Memorial Day. For 30 years Fred has ensured flags are placed and removed. This effort is often in inclement weather and walking the hollowed grounds alone. Placing flags one by one.

The Board of Commissioners, Butler County Veterans Service Commission is pleased to announce Mr. Fred Baily as the 2022 Butler County Veteran of the Year, on November 11, 2022.

## 5-10 Mil Comparison

Description	\$	%age
<b>2022 5/10 mil allocated</b>	<b>\$ 4,448,461</b>	
<b>Allocated but not released to Veterans</b>	<b>\$ 1,453,976</b>	33%
Requested Budget	\$ 2,994,485	67%
2022 Available Veteran Budget	\$ 2,994,485	
<b>2022 AVAILABLE BUDGET USED</b>	<b>\$ 1,880,182</b>	63%
Budgeted funds released back to County	\$ 1,114,303	37%
<b>Total 5/10 mil not used</b>	<b>\$ 2,568,279</b>	58%



## 2022 Budget and Expense Summary

EXPENSE DESCRIPTION BY SECTION	BUDGETED		ACTUAL EXPENSES			RETURNED TO COUNTY	
	Dollars Requested	%age of Total Budget	Dollars Spent	% of Total Budget	% of Total Expenses	Dollars Returned	%age of Requested Budget Returned
<b>PERSONNEL</b>	\$ 970,283	32%	\$ 886,968	30%	47%	\$ 83,315	9%
Commissioner Salaries	\$ 49,037		\$ 44,763				
Staff Salaries	\$ 595,798		\$ 590,727				
Employer Share Taxes/Insurances	\$ 274,448		\$ 220,146				
Training and Membership Expenses, Local Mileage	\$ 51,000		\$ 31,332				
<b>OFFICE OPERATIONS</b>	\$ 82,202	3%	\$ 68,073	2%	4%	\$ 14,129	17%
Agency Vehicle Fuel and Maintenance	\$ 1,500		\$ 241				
Rent/Utilities/Security for Middletown office	\$ -		\$ -				
General office supplies, other materials, food	\$ 37,500		\$ 35,859				
Subscriptions and other contracts, notary	\$ 16,325		\$ 16,133				
Software, hardware, IT support**	\$ 26,877		\$ 15,840				
<b>ADVERTISING AND OUTREACH</b>	\$ 275,000	9%	\$ 292,785	10%	16%	\$ (17,785)	-6%
Advertising	\$ 275,000		\$ 292,785				
<b>VETERAN DIRECT EXPENDITURES</b>	\$ 1,667,000	56%	\$ 632,356	21%	34%	\$ 1,034,644	62%
Food Assistance	\$ 215,000		\$ 94,443				
All Other Veteran Expense Assistance	\$ 750,000		\$ 294,052				
Transportation for VA Medical Appointments	\$ 660,000		\$ 226,080				
Indigent Burials and Survivor Condolences	\$ 42,000		\$ 17,781				
<b>AGENCY TOTALS</b>	\$ 2,994,485	100%	\$ 1,880,182	81%	100%	\$ 1,114,303	37%

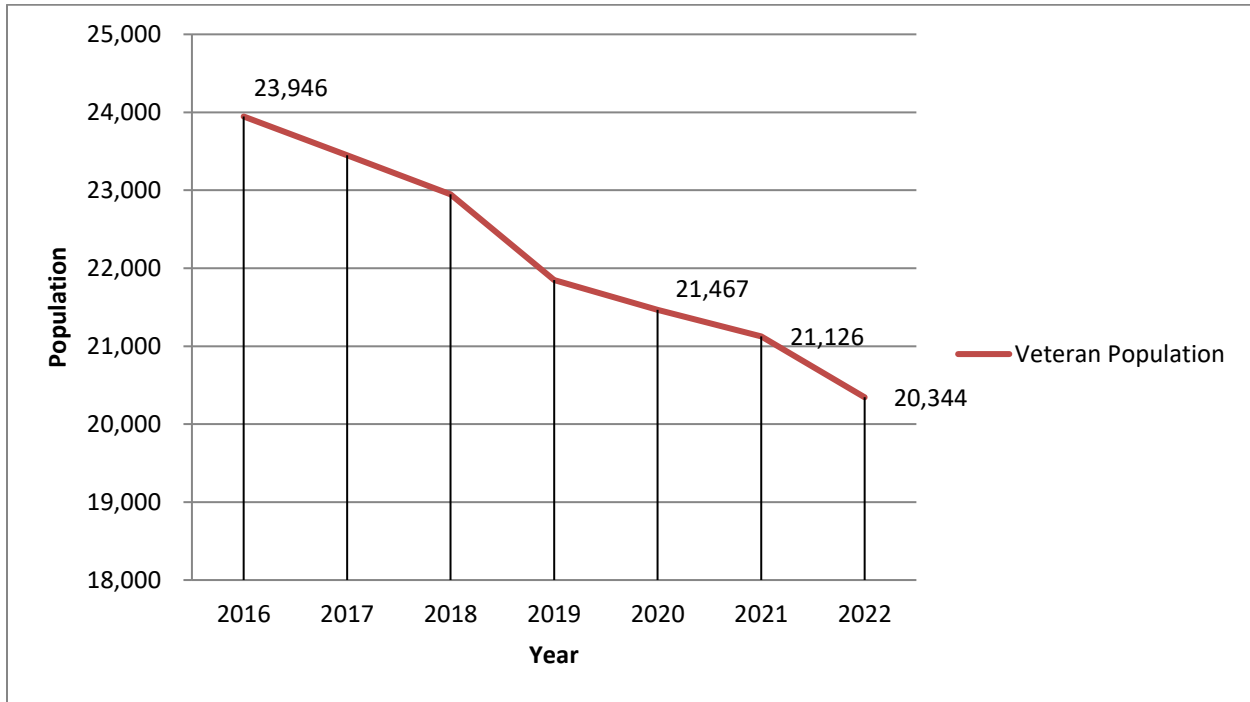
\*Percentages and totals are rounded to nearest whole number

## 2022 VA Expenditures in Butler County

FY22 Summary of Expenditures by State										
Expenditures in \$000s										
County/ Congressional District	Veteran Population*	Total Expenditure	Compensation & Pension	Construction	Education & Vocational Rehabilitation/ Employment	Loan Guaranty#	General Operating Expenses	Insurance & Indemnities	Medical Care	Unique Patients**
BUTLER	20,344	\$ 210,059	\$ 107,393	\$ -	\$ 7,685	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 715	\$ 94,266	6,359

Each fiscal year the Department of Veterans Affairs' Office of Policy and Planning publishes the annual Geographic Distribution of VA Expenditures (GDX) Report for the public and all stakeholders. The GDX report provides the estimated dollar expenditures for major VA programs at the state, county, and Congressional District levels. Expenditure data are grouped by the following categories: Compensation and Pension; Education and Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment; Insurance and Indemnities; Construction and Related Costs; General Operating Expenses and Related Costs; Loan Guaranty; and Medical Expenditures. The GDX Report also includes Veteran population estimates at the state, county and Congressional District level and the number of unique patients who used VA health care services.

## 6 Year Comparison of Butler County Veteran Population



The data from above is an estimate of the veteran population as of September 30, 2022 as produced by the VA Predictive Analytics and Actuary Service. By this model, our veteran population within Butler County continues to decrease as the number of service members from WWII, Korea and Vietnam eras are passing and fewer enlistments have occurred.



# 6 Year Comparison of Federal Expenditure within Butler County

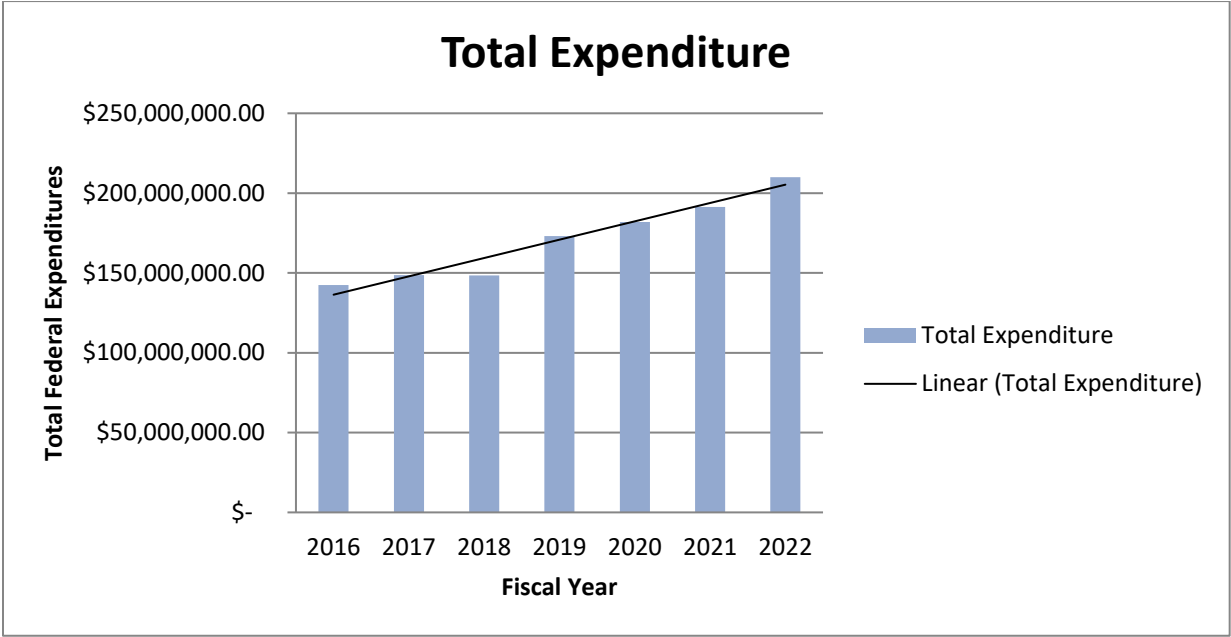
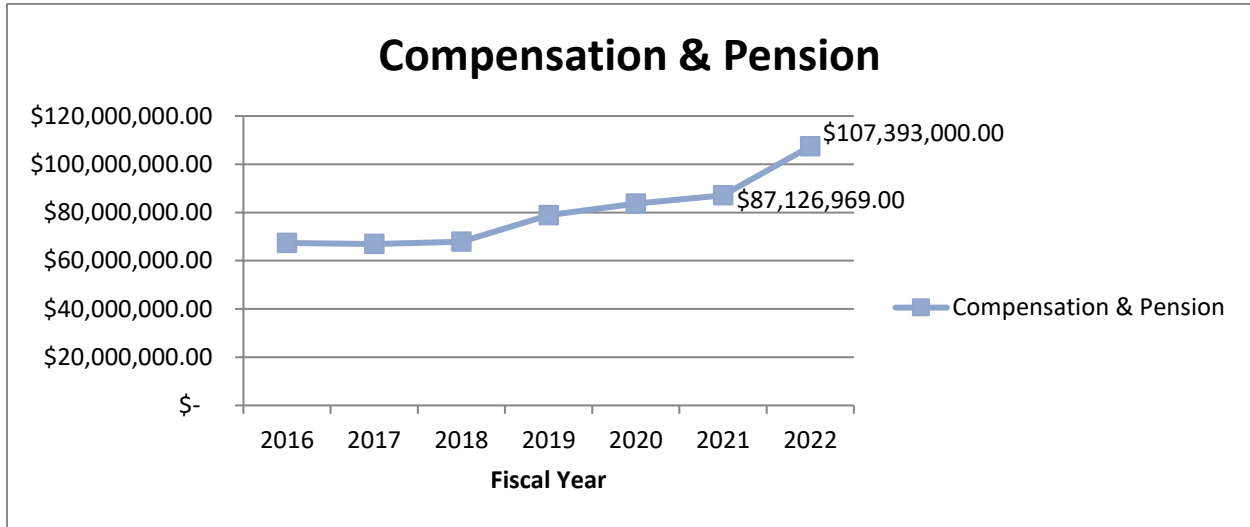


Chart above shows the total Federal Expenditure in Butler County over a six year period. The total amount encompasses Compensation & Pension, Educational and Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment Benefits, Insurance Costs, Construction, Medical Research and Medical costs. 2022 showed an increase of over \$18.6 million when compared to the previous year.

## Compensation & Pension Comparison for Butler County Residents

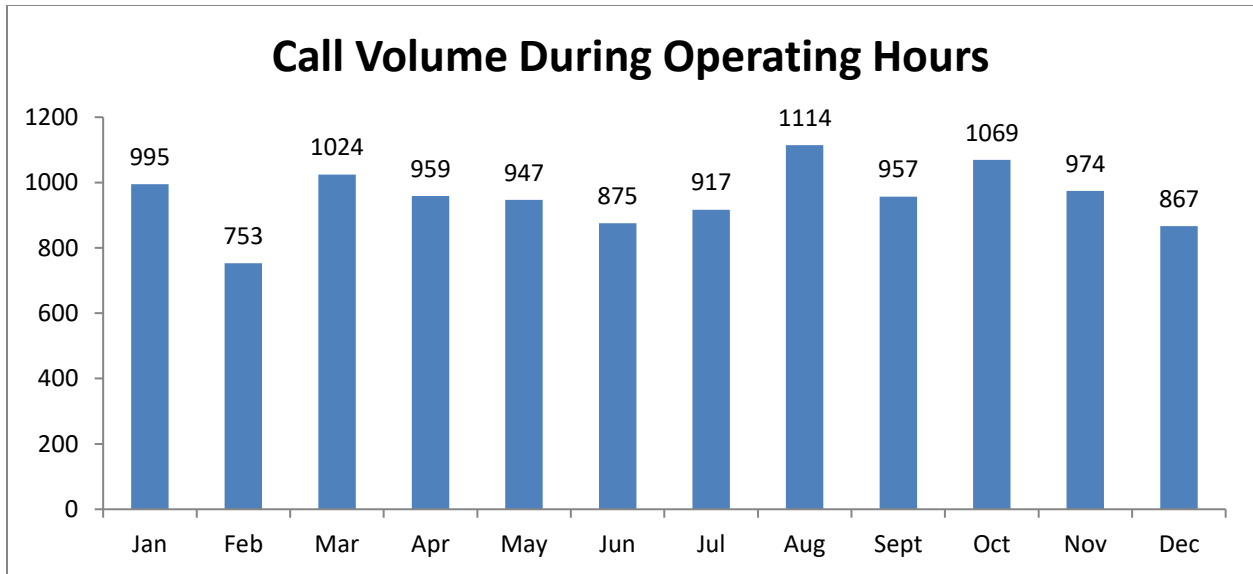


The Compensation & Pension expenditures include dollars for the following programs: veterans' compensation for service-connected disabilities; dependency and indemnity compensation for service-connected deaths; veterans' pension for non-service connected disabilities; and burial and other benefits to veterans and their survivors. Over \$107.3M was awarded to Butler County Veterans and their Survivors in FY2022. This is more than a 23% increase when comparing to the immediate preceding year (FY2021).

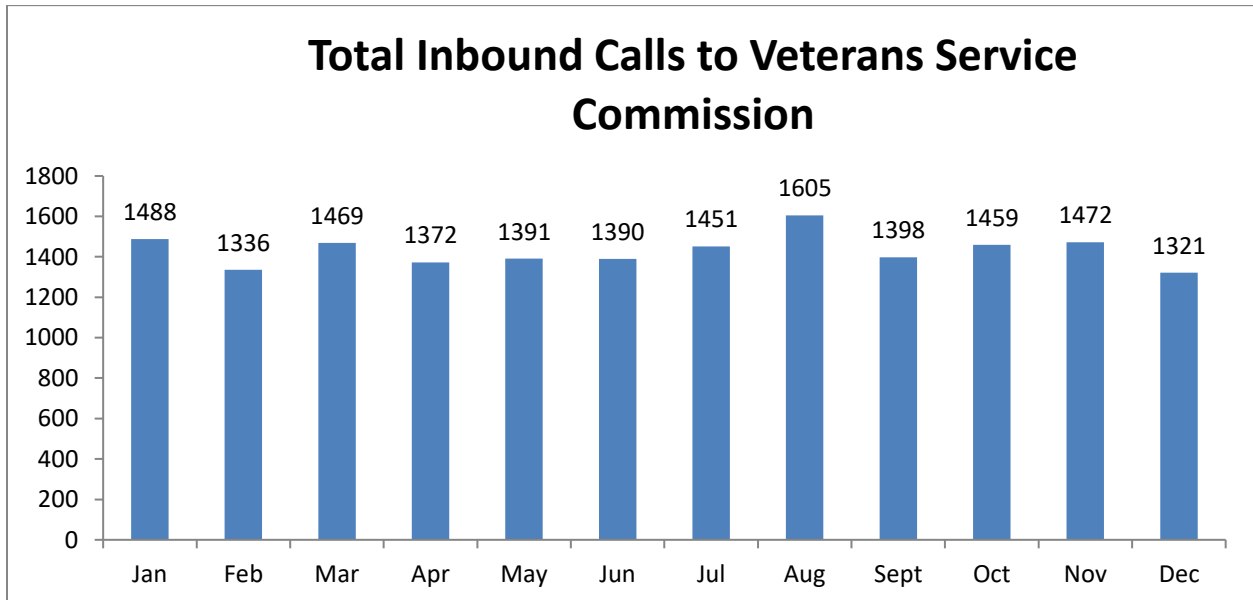
## Service Officers Work 2022

ITEMS	Month Totals												YTD TOTALS			
	Jan-22	Feb-22	Mar-22	Apr-22	May-22	Jun-22	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	ITEM TOTAL	LOW	AVE	HIGH
<b>New Claims Filed</b>	75	80	99	59	55	60	52	83	79	98	106	76	<b>922</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>106</b>
<b>Forms Completed</b>	525	525	699	572	450	418	492	596	576	650	623	564	<b>6690</b>	<b>418</b>	<b>608</b>	<b>699</b>
<b>Office Visits</b>	169	149	224	167	121	101	118	171	145	158	150	153	<b>1826</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>224</b>
<b>Documents Uploaded</b>	424	444	575	499	411	335	411	464	474	474	450	410	<b>5371</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>488</b>	<b>575</b>
<b>E-mails</b>	999	846	1164	999	735	761	789	726	824	877	899	851	<b>10470</b>	<b>726</b>	<b>952</b>	<b>1164</b>
<b>Faxes</b>	202	214	276	232	185	166	184	233	228	239	230	219	<b>2608</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>237</b>	<b>276</b>
<b>Filled out Forms</b>	525	525	699	572	450	418	492	596	576	650	623	564	<b>6690</b>	<b>418</b>	<b>608</b>	<b>699</b>
<b>Home Visits</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Incoming Mail</b>	33	28	35	33	36	30	20	30	23	22	28	20	<b>338</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>Other Items</b>	24	12	27	22	20	12	11	20	23	28	32	33	<b>264</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Outgoing Mail</b>	34	27	33	27	36	26	23	26	25	29	29	32	<b>347</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>Outreach</b>	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Phone Calls</b>	322	224	235	229	162	120	138	174	190	177	209	166	<b>2346</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>322</b>

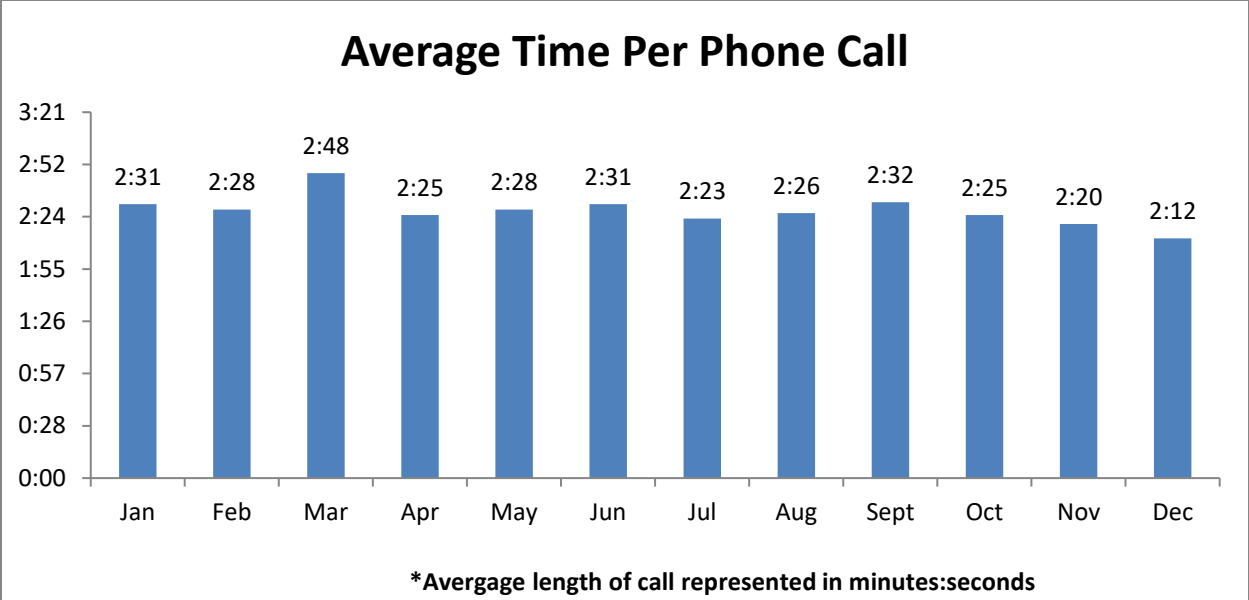
The numbers shown above are a general snapshot of the work performed by our County Veterans Service Officers. It is worth noting that not all forms or processes are captured within these numbers (e.g. Appeals, Discharge Upgrades, etc).



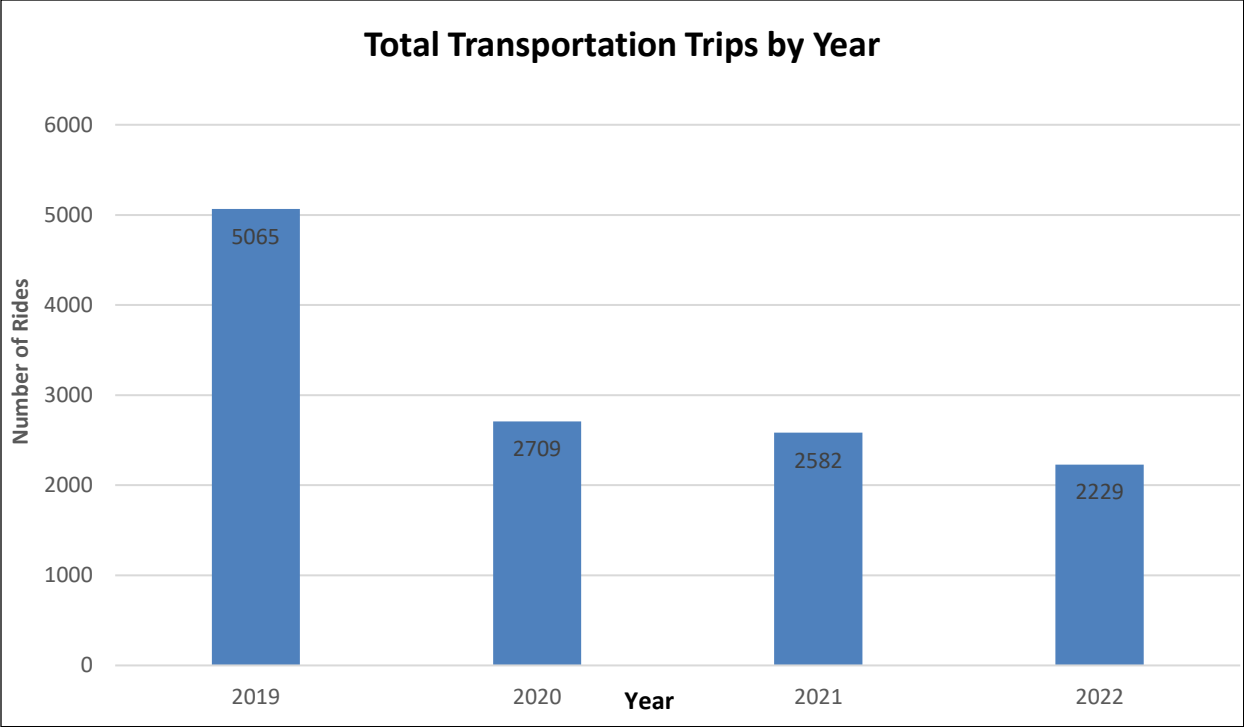
The above chart represents the number of phone calls answered during our normal operating hours. While the number of calls month to month appear to decrease occasionally, the reasoning is the improvement of our phone recording to explain large benefits which were currently/recently being advertised.



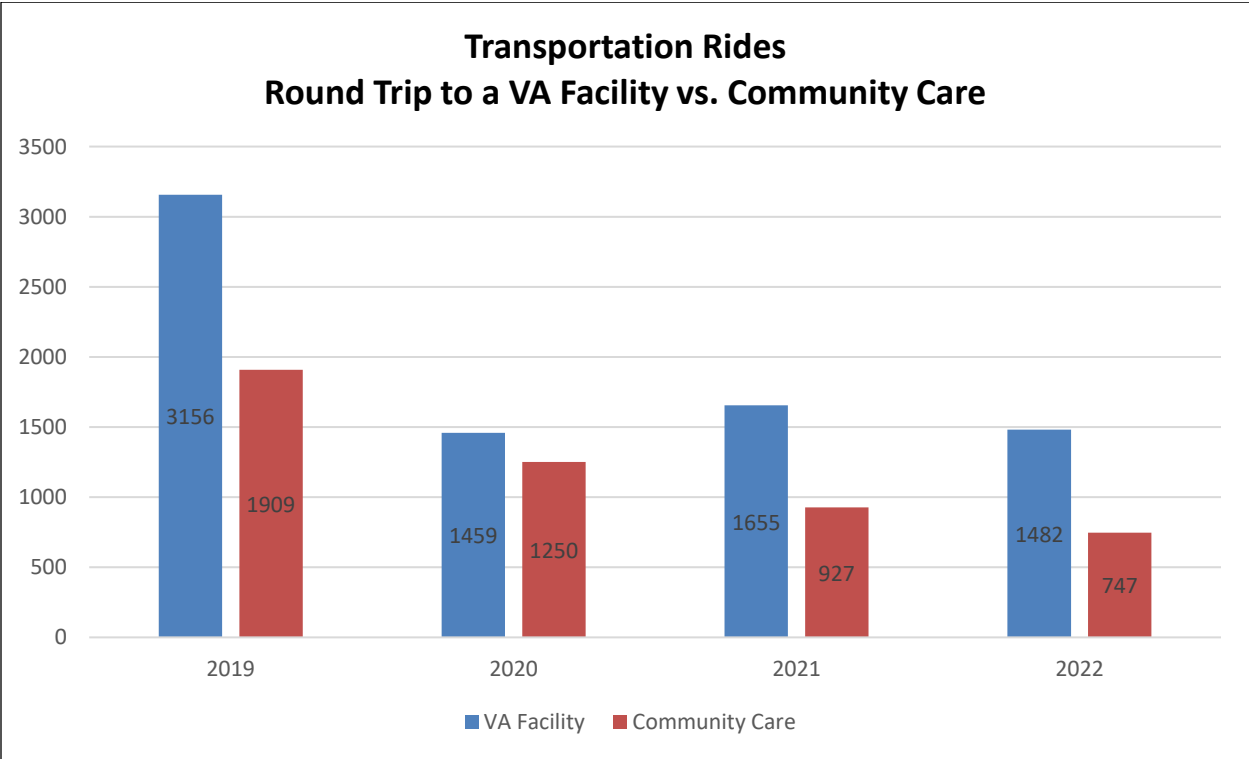
The chart above depicts the total call volume, including those calls which received information before being connected to a staff member through an automated recording.

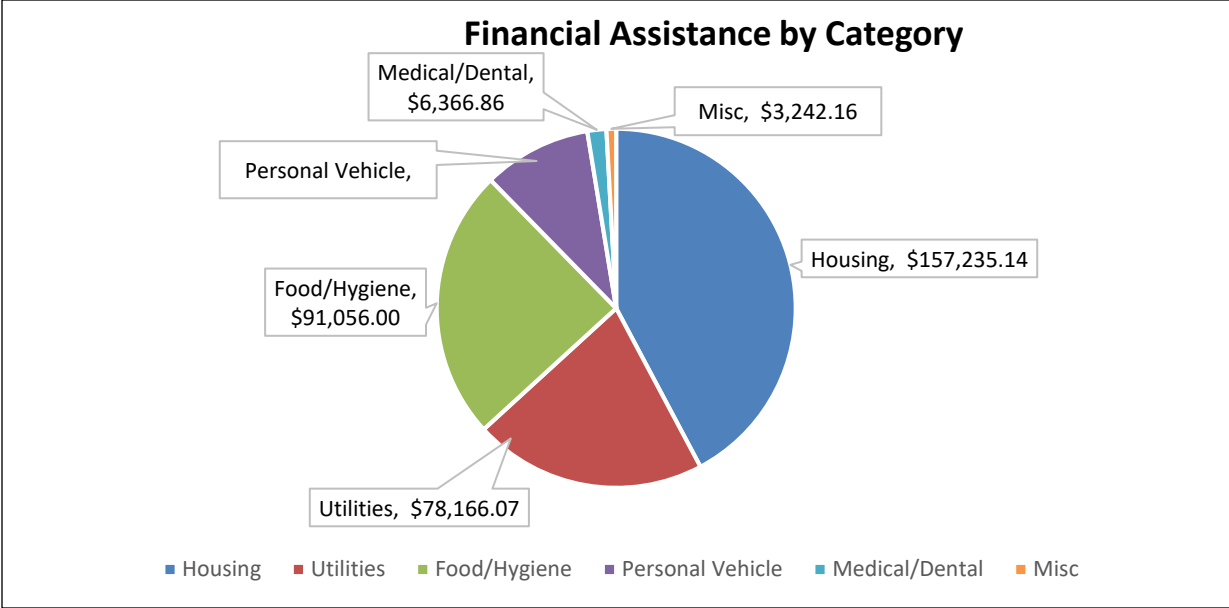


The chart above depicts the average time per phone call each month. Despite the increases in call volume or the complexity of the call, the staff is well composed to deliver consistent and accurate information and scheduling.

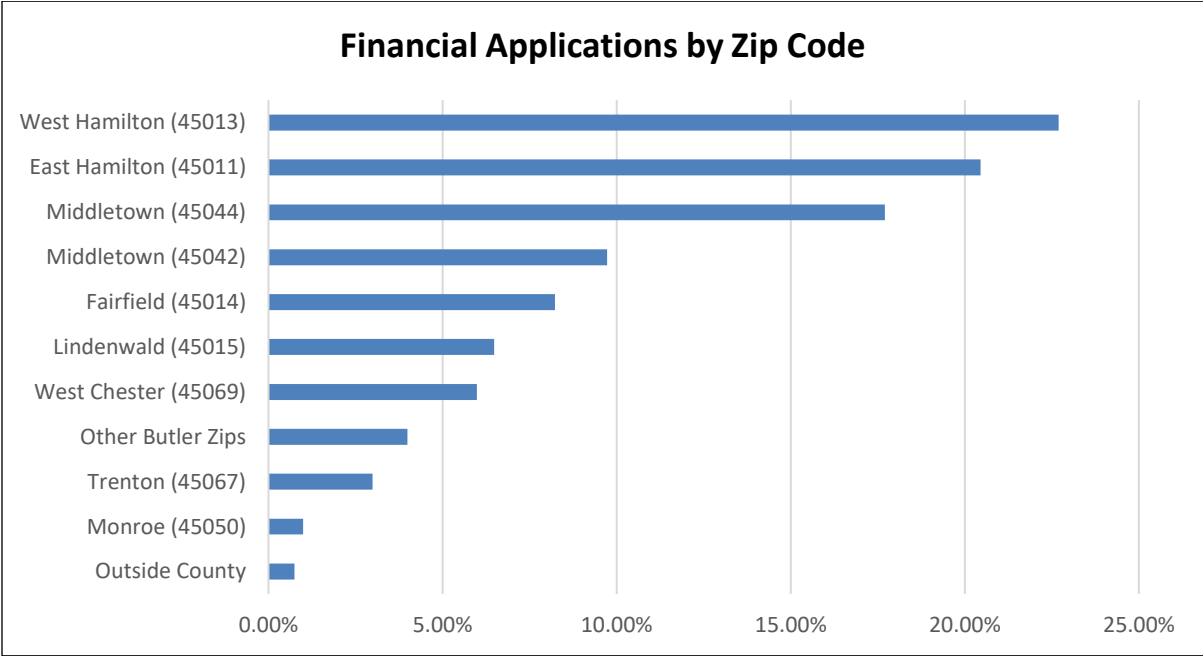


Our transportation services are depicted above and below, represented as the total number of roundtrips annually (top) and then comparing rides going to a VA facility versus a Community Care Doctor (below). You can also see the drastic shift to telehealth appointments and technology starting in 2020.

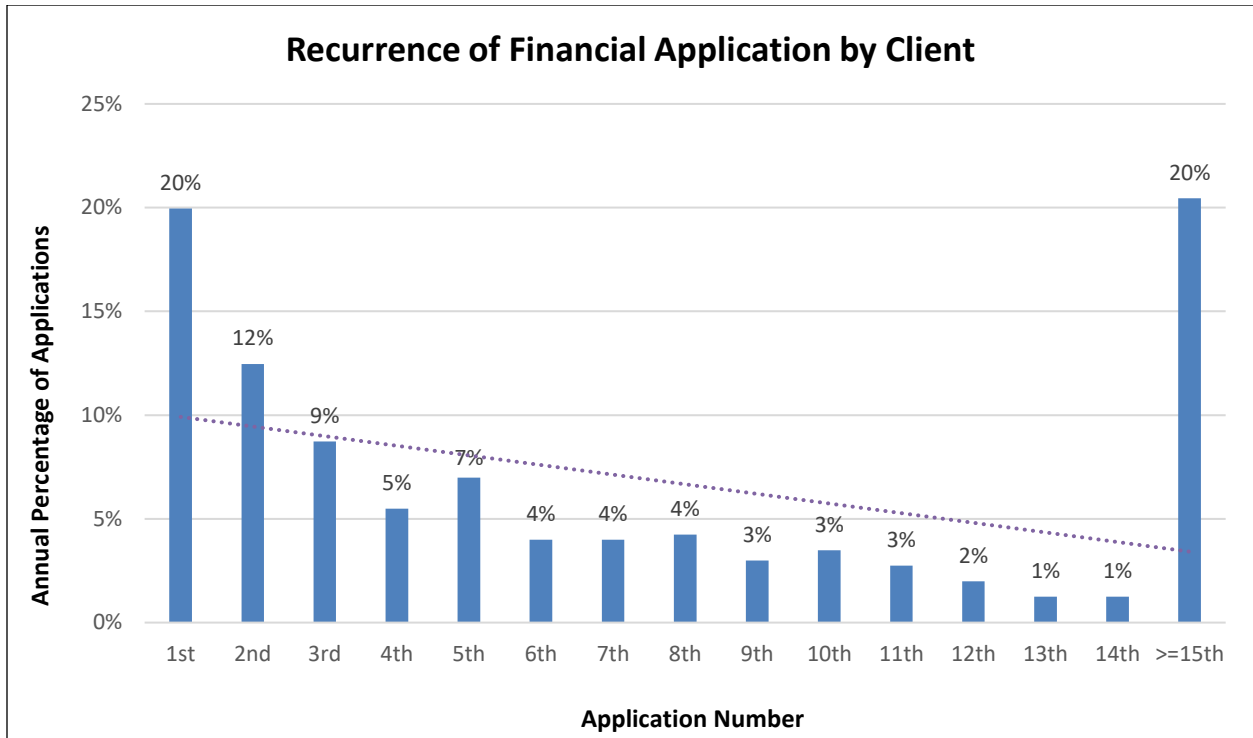




During FY2022 we assisted 401 Veterans and eligible family members financially. Above you can see the assistance amount of each overall category. As a whole, the total value equals \$372,384.39 with an average of \$928.63 per application. The miscellaneous category represents assistance with basic clothing items.

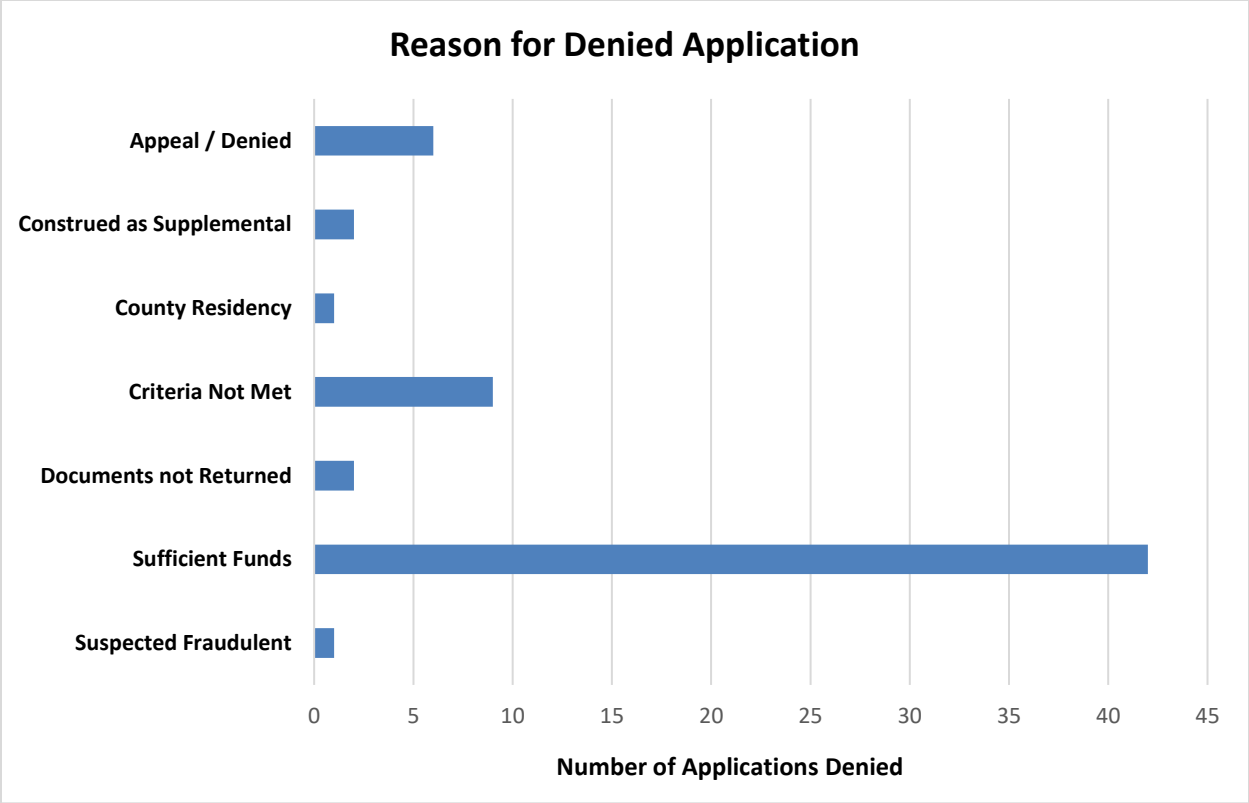


The chart above shows the financial applications taken based on Zip Code of the applicant. The data supports applications are more common when the veteran and dependent populations are the highest. Outside of Butler County represents areas where zip codes crossover such as Sharonville and Forest Park or those who recently moved outside Butler County within 90 days as supported by the Ohio Revised Code.



The chart above depicts the number of applications an applicant (associated by the veterans' social security number) has opened with our office. Most applicants are in a very temporary financial hardship situation. With our financial assistance program, applicants generally recover their ability to maintain financial independence for basic living expenses in less than 3 applications. Applications in the “>=15<sup>th</sup>” level are generally applicants with continued need of assistance due to being unable to work as well as living below the poverty line (e.g. disabled at a young age).





The chart above shows the reason a financial application was denied. It should be noted that with the exception of “Appeal Denied”, the reason may not be final. For example, an application that was adjudicated as denied due to “Sufficient Funds” may have been appealed to the Board of Commissioners and granted. A determination is made at the time of adjudication based on the evidence presented by the applicant and after investigation and recommendation of a Veterans Benefit Coordinator.

# **2022 AGENCY REPORT**

## **AGENCY OVERVIEW**

Re-Appointment of Commissioner to Board representing the Disabled American Veterans, Mr. David L. Reed II.

Appointment of Commissioner to Board representing the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Mr. Mark Applegate.

Implementation of a county veterans Dental Program.

Change in delivery of veteran transportation services by moving to a sole provider.

Continued mass media advertising campaign on Cumulus Radio (96 Rock, Fox, and WARM 98) and iHeart Radio (WEBN, 55KRC and 700WLW).

Implemented one new social media platform: TikTok.

Shifted our Veterans Day ceremony to the Butler County Fair Grounds to accommodate more attendees.

## **TRAINING**

Commissioners and Service Officers are required to complete annual training in order to maintain their Board appointment and for the Service Officers, to maintain their certifications and accreditations.

During 2022, the Commissioners had three scheduled training sessions: Spring Conference, Summer Convention, and Fall Conference; all of which were held in Columbus, Ohio. They were required to complete online training which consisted of the following topics: ethics, discussion of best practices within the Commissions, updates from the Ohio Department of Veterans Services, and other service organizations.

The Service Officer training included: updates from Veterans Benefit Administration (VBA), Veterans Healthcare Administration (VHA), Department of Veterans Affairs, National Cemetery Administration, veteran education updates, discussion on legislation affecting veterans, and updates from national service organizations. In 2022, the service officers returned to in person training in Columbus, Ohio as well as the National Association of County Veterans Service Officers Annual Conference held in San Antonio, TX. They also completed the online training through the Ohio Department of Veteran Services. Additionally, the service officers completed three webinars sponsored by the National Veterans Legal Services Program (NVLSP) that included information on Compensation for Disabilities Caused by Burn Pits and Fine Particulate Matter, "The Battle of the Medical Experts" and "The Pact Act: A primer for Veterans Advocates." Assistant Director attended Advanced Appeals and one Service Officer attended the Ohio Veterans Women Conference.

The training programs offered by the agency continue to make a valuable difference in the level of work output delivered by the Service Officers. In 2022 Service Officers very candidly faced questions about the Camp Lejeune Justice Act and had answers thanks to the assistance of Butler County Prosecutor, Michael Gmoser.

## **EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION**

The Veterans Service Commission has an active Employee Recognition program. During 2022, we individually recognized three employees for their exemplary service and job performance. The 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2022 Employee of the Quarter was Veterans Benefit Coordinator Pam Klink and 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter 2022 Employee of the Quarter was Receptionist Anita Lewis. During the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter 2022, Executive Administrative Assistant Lisa Meece was recognized and the 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter 2022 Employee of the Quarter was Veterans Benefit Coordinator Pam Klink.

Each of these employees were recognized for selfless acts and answering calls to service well beyond what is expected on a daily basis. These employees continually raise the bar for what the public can expect of our office and we are truly fortunate to have members like this on our team.

## **AGENCY OPERATIONS**

Our agency continues to grow in each facet of operation. Our three main areas continued to be Financial Assistance, Transportation, and Service Work. In 2022 our biggest growth was in appellant work for claimants at the Board of Veterans Appeals. It concluded with a Christmas Eve hearing that was granted with less than 48 hours' notice that the hearing would happen due to the veteran being terminally ill. We were able to talk with the Veterans Law Judge and were successful in winning the claim.

The Butler County Veterans Service Commission has adapted with the times and continues to be a nationwide leader in the delivery of benefits to Veterans, their survivors and family members who are eligible for services.

**OUTREACH EVENTS**

<p>A Walk to Remember          American Heroes Breakfast          American Legion Post 218 Veterans Day          Butler County Fair          Butler County Jail- Inmate Outreach          Butler County Memorial Day Ceremony          Butler County Veterans Day Ceremony          C3 Veterans Day Ceremony          Common Pleas Court          Community Alliance Opening          Dayton Veterans Day Parade          DAV Commissioner Swearing-in          Flag Setting in Butler County Cemeteries          Governors Holocaust Commemoration          Governors Wreath Laying Ceremony          Hamilton Memorial Day Committee          Hamilton JROTC Area Inspection          Hamilton Memorial Parade          Hamilton Veterans Court          Hamilton Veterans Hall of Fame Ceremony          Hillandale Communities- Doverwood Caroling</p>	<p>Hospice of Middletown Veterans Luncheon          Liberty Center Holiday Parade          Liberty Township 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade          Lindenwald Kiwanis Club Presentation          Middletown Legion Outreach Table          Middletown Veterans Court          Middletown Veterans Day Ceremony          Middletown Wellness Fair          Monroe 4th of July Parade          NACVSO Legislative Summit          New Miami Field Day          Princeton City School District Veterans Day          Silent Watch- Suicide Awareness          Trenton Fall Fest 2022          Vet. Memorial Fundraiser at Municipal Brew          Veterans Presentation @ River Church          Veterans Suicide Prevention Conference          Veterans Town Hall Meeting          Westover Retirement Community Caroling          WGRR DAV Breakfast</p>
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**COLLABORATED WITH COMMUNITY PARTNERS**

<p>Butler County Housing &amp; Homeless Coalition          Butler County Suicide Prevention Coalition          Butler County Veterans Memorial          Cincinnati VA Medical Center, Veterans              Justice Outreach Specialists          Cincinnati Vet Center / Dayton Vet Center          Council on Aging Panel          Dayton VA Medical Center, Veterans Justice              Outreach Specialists</p>	<p>Disabled Veteran Outreach Program Specialist          (DVOP), Ohio Means Jobs Butler County          Homeless Veterans Reintegration Project          (HVRP), Goodwill          Miami University, Oxford          Military Veteran Resource Center (MVRC)          Supports to Encourage Low-Income Families          (SELF) / Partners in Prime</p>
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