



**MILITARY AND VETERANS AFFAIRS  
COMMITTEE**

**5 JUNE 2019**

**JUDY M. GRIEGO - CABINET SECRETARY**

## **New Mexico Department of Veterans Services Overview:**

- **Mission, Vision, and Goals**
- **Organizational Structure / Budget FY20**
- **Milestones as of January 1, 2019**
- **Benefits, Memorial, and Cemetery Program**

## **Mission / Vision / Goals:**

### **“Serving Those Who Served”**

- ❑ **Mission:** To provide the highest quality care, service and advocacy for the men and women, and their families, who have served as members of the United States Armed Forces.
- ❑ **Vision:** To be the premier agency that anticipates and meets the changing needs of New Mexico’s veterans and their families.
- ❑ **Goals:**
  - Increase awareness of benefit opportunities available to veterans and their families (high density, rural, and tribal)
  - Strengthen relationships and collaboration with the veteran, VA Hospital, and VARO
  - Sustain a high performance customer service work force

## **Organizational Structure:**

- ❑ Full Time Employees – 63 Authorized / 54 Occupied
  - Loss Due to the Transfer of the Veterans Home
  - Growth Due to Cemetery Development
  
- ❑ Budget \$4.5M for FY20
  
- ❑ **Five Major Divisions**
  - Administrative Services  
Director - Vacant
  - State Veterans Benefits & Cemetery  
Director – Ed Mendez
  - Field Services  
Director – Larry Campos
  - Health Care  
Director – Mitchell Lawrence
  - Veterans Business Outreach Center (VBOC)  
Director – Richard Coffel

## **Organizational Structure Continued:**

- ❑ **Administrative Services Division** – Oversees agency budgetary, financial, and administrative operations and the state approving agency.
- ❑ **State Veterans Benefits & Cemetery Division** – Manages the state property tax exemption, education benefits, and recreational benefits, cemetery / funeral honors programs, and many more state veterans benefits.
- ❑ **Field Services Division (13 Statewide Offices)** – Assists veterans and their eligible dependents with filing for VA and state veterans benefits. Also oversees the women veterans program.
- ❑ **Health Care Division** – Educates veterans about available VA and non-VA health benefits. Works closely with federal, state, local, and tribal organizations to address healthcare for veterans.
- ❑ **Veterans Business Outreach Center (VBOC)** – Helps veterans with business planning, start-up and expansion funding, marketing, and all other assistance needed to start or grow a business.

## **Milestones:**

- HB643 - Transfer of the New Mexico Veterans Home
- HM32 – Transportation for Veterans Task Force
- HB2 General Appropriations – New FTE – VSO in Grants
- Gallup Cemetery Grand Opening

## **Benefits, Memorial and Cemetery Division:**

**Edward Mendez, Division Director**

**David Walker, Bureau Chief of Cemeteries / Memorial**

**Vacant, Bureau Chief of Benefits**

### **□ Benefits:**

- **Disabled Veteran Property Tax Exemption, Property Tax Waiver**
- **Veterans Educational Benefits Vietnam Veteran, Wartime Veteran Scholarship Fund**
- **In-State Tuition for Veterans and Military Children School Enrollment Priority**
- **Gold Star Family License Plate, Patriot License Plate, Special MacArthur Service Medal**
- **Free State Monuments and Museums Pass for Disabled Veterans**
- **Reduced-Fee Hunting and Fishing License for Disabled Veterans**

## □ **Memorial and Cemeteries:**

### ■ **Angel Fire Vietnam Veterans Memorial**

DVS is currently working with Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 996 and the Department of Economic Development to bring a 50% scale Memorial Wall to the Angel Fire Facility.

### ■ **Ft. Stanton State Veterans Cemetery**

- Ft. Stanton State Veteran Cemetery opened Veteran's Day 2017 currently 63 veterans and dependents are interred there.
- DVS currently operates and maintains the Historic Merchant Marine Cemetery which hold 2014 interments.

### ■ **Gallup**

- Gallup State Veterans Cemetery held a grand opened Memorial Day May 27, 2019 and is scheduled to perform it's first interment June 2019

### **Angel Fire**

- Angel Fire State Veterans Cemetery is currently under construction and is scheduled to be completed Spring 2020.



- **Carlsbad**

Carlsbad State Veterans Cemetery has been approved above the line for VA consideration for a construction grant project. DVS will continue to coordinate with VA to procure grant funding approval for this project during the upcoming Federal Fiscal Year 21 or 22 Budget.

- **Long Term State Cemetery Plans**

- Equip, fully staff and maintain all State Veterans Cemeteries to National Cemetery Administration standards.
- **Taos County Veterans Cemetery** – Local Government project, continue to assist the county with consulting and best practices for their construction project.



# Questions