

LFC Requester:

Emily Hilla

AGENCY BILL ANALYSIS - 2026 REGULAR SESSION**WITHIN 24 HOURS OF BILL POSTING, UPLOAD ANALYSIS TO****[AgencyAnalysis.nmlegis.gov](https://www.nmlegis.gov/AgencyAnalysis) and email to billanalysis@dfa.nm.gov****(Analysis must be uploaded as a PDF)****SECTION I: GENERAL INFORMATION***{Indicate if analysis is on an original bill, amendment, substitute or a correction of a previous bill}***Date Prepared:** 01/14/26*Check all that apply:***Bill Number:** HB 56Original ☒ Correction ☐Amendment ☐ Substitute ☐**Sponsor:** Alan Martinez**Short** Veteran Behavioral Health
Services Accessibility**Agency Name
and Code
Number:**Department of Veterans' Services /
67000**Person Writing**Danelle Lucero**Phone:** 505-372-9035**Email** Danelle.lucero@nm.dvs.org**SECTION II: FISCAL IMPACT****APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)**

| Appropriation | | Recurring or Nonrecurring | Fund Affected |
|---------------|------|------------------------------|------------------|
| FY26 | FY27 | | |
| | 1M | Non-Recurring | 06500 |
| | | | |

REVENUE (dollars in thousands)

| Estimated Revenue | | | Recurring or Nonrecurring | Fund Affected |
|-------------------|------|------|---------------------------------|------------------|
| FY26 | FY27 | FY28 | | |
| N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| | | | | |

(Parenthesis () indicate revenue decreases)

ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT (dollars in thousands)

| | FY26 | FY27 | FY28 | 3 Year Total Cost | Recurring or Nonrecurring | Fund Affected |
|--------------|------|------|------|----------------------|------------------------------|------------------|
| Total | | 200. | | | Non-recurring | 06500 |

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Duplicates/Conflicts with/Companion to/Relates to:
Duplicates/Relates to Appropriation in the General Appropriation Act

SECTION III: NARRATIVE

This bill provides funding to the Veterans' Services Department to help veterans and their families identify and access behavioral health care services.

BILL SUMMARY

Synopsis: Provides general fund dollars (\$1M) to the Veterans' Services Department for fiscal year 2027 to support programs that help veterans and their families locate and obtain behavioral health care services.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The fiscal impact reflects assumptions about program design, staffing, and outreach efforts.

Note: The appropriation of one million dollars (\$1,000,000) from the general fund to the Veterans' Services Department for fiscal year 2027 will increase the department's expenditures and operational responsibilities related to assisting veterans and their families in identifying and accessing behavioral health care services. The funding will support expanded outreach, coordination, referral, and navigation activities, as well as partnerships with behavioral health providers and community organizations.

Given the significantly expanded scope of work and the increased level of funding, the department will require one additional full-time equivalent (2.0 term employees) to implement the services envisioned in the bill and to manage the increased programmatic, fiscal, and reporting requirements. Personnel costs associated with this position, including salary, benefits, training, and administrative support, are expected to be absorbed within the appropriation.

Note: if additional operating budget impact is estimated, assumptions and calculations should be reported in this section.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATION

Given the significantly expanded scope of work and the increased level of funding, the department will require 2 term employees to implement the services envisioned and manage the heightened program demands.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

This broad scope allows the department not only to contract direct services for veterans and their families but also to invest in activities that strengthen the overall capacity of behavioral-health providers. Expanding eligible uses in this way would support system-wide improvements and could justify the use of a larger appropriation.

Public awareness efforts such as informational materials, public media, and digital outreach are assumed to be necessary to ensure veterans and families are aware of available services.

CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP

Relationship: House Bill 32, relating to professional licensure and enacting the Counseling Compact. Adoption of the compact would increase the number of available licensed counselors by allowing qualified practitioners from other member states to provide services in New Mexico and increase capacity of available behavioral health professionals to serve our Veterans.

The department will continue to leverage and coordinate with existing behavioral health resources, including the Department of Health, Health Care Authority, and federal Veterans Affairs programs.

TECHNICAL ISSUES N/A**OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES N/A****ALTERNATIVES N/A****WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL**

If the bill is not enacted, current conditions will remain unchanged, and veterans and their families will continue relying on existing resources to navigate behavioral health care services without additional state support.

AMENDMENTS