

IDAHO



Idaho Division of
**VETERANS
SERVICES**

*Caring for
America's
Heroes*

Strategic Plan

For the Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 2022 – June 30, 2026

Vision

Caring for America's Heroes

Mission

We are dedicated to serving Idaho's Veterans and their families by providing superior advocacy, excellent assistance with benefits and education, high quality long-term care, and respectful interment services in a dignified final resting place.

Values

- **Compassion for All**
- **Unending Accountability**
- **Absolute Integrity**
- **Outstanding Communication**
- **Dignity for Everyone**
- **Unconditional Honesty**

Dear Citizens,

The Strategic Plan for the Idaho Division of Veterans Services is our compass. This plan helps our staff make decisions that are consistent with our vision, mission, values, and goals. It provides a way for us to measure our performance in clear ways, hold ourselves accountable and help make needed changes to better serve Idaho Veterans and their families.

As a self-governing agency, the Idaho Division of Veterans Services is composed of a Central Support Office and six Bureaus: the Office of Veterans Advocacy (Service Officers); Veterans Education (GI Bill/Workforce focused); State Veterans Cemeteries in Boise and Blackfoot; and the three Idaho State Veterans Homes in Boise, Lewiston, and Pocatello with construction of a fourth in Post Falls slated to be complete in Fall 2022.

We expect to continue to see dramatic changes in Veteran demographics in the years ahead. Many of these changes relate to care needs, such as those associated with behavioral health including Alzheimer's disease, Traumatic Brain Injury, Post Traumatic Stress Injury; and those associated with the Baby Boomer aging population. Due to these changing conditions, in fiscal year 2015, we conducted a statewide needs assessment to determine what services we should provide in our Veterans Homes, and if we need to expand their capacity and geographical reach. As a result of the capacity study findings, a fourth State Veterans Home in Post Falls has been approved by the VA and is in the construction phase with planned completion in 2022. Legislative endorsement for the construction of a second State Veterans Cemetery in Eastern Idaho was also sought in 2016 and in 2018 Idaho was awarded a VA Construction Grant. Construction for the first phase of the site was completed in December 2020 and the Blackfoot Veterans Cemetery began conducting services that same month. The Blackfoot Veterans cemetery serves approximately 23,000 eastern Idaho Veterans and their families.

Additionally, changing demographics are necessitating an expansion of our advocacy and benefit assistance programs to include a new Community Resource Coordinator to better focus on a new generation of Veterans from the conflicts in Afghanistan, Iraq, and other locations around the globe and to continue to reach as many veterans in Idaho as possible. Also, an increasing number of Vietnam Veterans now seek their earned federal and state Veterans' benefits, which has increased our outreach focus. IDVS highly prioritizes our involvement with state, federal, and community partners to help Veterans with employment, transportation, higher education, and a variety of additional opportunities. This allows us to have a broader spectrum of reaching Veterans who might not know that we are here as their liaison in bringing them to the VA services they have earned for their service.

The Idaho Division of Veterans Services will continue to focus on providing the utmost quality of services and care. Input from our Veterans, their families, employees, volunteers, and our stakeholders is essential and will be carefully considered in determining what direction we should be moving in the years ahead. We encourage you to visit our website (www.veterans.idaho.gov) and contact us with any questions or concerns you may have. You may call us at 208-780-1300; write us at 351 Collins Road, Boise, ID 83702; or e-mail us at info@veterans.idaho.gov. Our team will continue to build partnerships with fellow state and federal agencies that excel in **Caring for America's Heroes**.

Sincerely,

Mark Tschampl, Chief Administrator
Idaho Division of Veterans Services

Goals

1. Provide high quality advocacy and benefit assistance for all Idaho Veterans and their families.
2. Provide superior long-term care and enhanced quality of life for all Idaho State Veterans Home residents.
3. Honor Idaho Veterans and their families with respectful interment services in a dignified final resting place.
4. Ensure high quality, well-managed education and training programs for Idaho Veterans.
5. Attract and retain excellent, compassionate staff and volunteers.

Key External Factors

- Legislation can alter or significantly impact the functions of the Idaho Division of Veterans Services.
- The nursing home industry is considered one of the most heavily regulated industries in the nation and these regulations are consistently becoming more cumbersome and comprehensive with increased civil monetary penalties. The comprehensive nature of regulatory revisions and increased civil monetary penalties could significantly impact our personnel needs and operating costs.
- Unforeseen threats and challenges, particularly infectious disease outbreaks, such as SARS-CoV-2 and the corresponding COVID-19. These outbreaks increase operational costs via increased personnel costs, new regulatory burdens, and new equipment and technology requirements. Additionally, these outbreaks can have long lasting consequences through negative health impacts exacerbating existing health conditions or creating new ones increasing the long-term costs of care for Veterans.
- State and federal economic conditions may create fluctuations in budget projections.
- Additions or reductions in federal appropriations or program mandates are unpredictable yet dramatically impact our activities, budget planning, and actual revenue.
- It might be difficult to meet service demands in the context of our inability to hire and retain qualified staffing with the declining healthcare workforce in rural and urban areas, along with the inability to provide competitive salaries across the State, particularly in Idaho's panhandle.
- Idaho's changing Veteran population demographics, national healthcare reform initiatives, and changing healthcare needs may result in necessary shifts in direction, as well as necessitate an expansion of our advocacy and benefit assistance programs.

Objectives and Performance Measures

GOAL #1:

Provide high quality advocacy and benefit assistance for all Idaho Veterans and their families.

OBJECTIVES

- a. Expand outreach activities.
- b. Improve capability of County Service Officers
- c. Adapt to the needs of the increasing number of Veterans from the Afghanistan and Iraq conflicts, and of Vietnam Veterans now reaching out for assistance.
- d. Expand partnerships with other entities serving Veterans, including those providing employment assistance, transportation, and higher education.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

We will determine our success by measuring the:

- ⇒ Number of Veterans' benefit claims filed with the Department of Veterans Affairs and other agencies.

Benchmark: 7,989¹

¹ Based on internal review of past 3 fiscal years' comparison of claims filed with the Department of Veterans Affairs

Objectives and Performance Measures

GOAL #2:

Provide superior long-term care and enhanced quality of life for all Idaho State Veterans Home residents.

OBJECTIVES

- a. Use best practices in all the Homes' departments.
- b. Continue to enhance communication with residents and families.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

We will determine our success by measuring the:

⇒ Percent of returned customer service questionnaires from residents and families indicating satisfaction with the services provided at the Veterans Homes.

Benchmark: 90%

⇒ Number of satisfactory surveys from state and federal survey agencies with no more citations issued than the federal or state average. Complaint surveys will be considered satisfactory if the complaint is not validated.

Benchmark: 100%

⇒ Percent of occupied beds in the Veterans Homes.

Benchmark: 88%

Objectives and Performance Measures

GOAL #3:

Honor Idaho Veterans and their families with respectful interment services in a dignified final resting place.

OBJECTIVES

- a. Operate the Idaho State Veterans' Cemetery in compliance with the national cemetery program.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

We will determine our success by measuring the:

- ⇒ Percent of returned questionnaires from families indicating satisfaction with interment services at the Cemetery.

Benchmark: 90%

Objectives and Performance Measures

GOAL #4:

Ensure high quality, well-managed education and training programs for Idaho Veterans.

OBJECTIVES

- a. Provide oversight for Veterans' education and training programs for all Idaho Veterans.
- b. Coordinate educational efforts with division, state, federal, and local stakeholders.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

We will determine our success by measuring the:

⇒ Percent of compliance with VA national standards.

Benchmark: 90%²

⇒ Percent to process completed approval packets for training facilities within 30 calendar days, the VA national standard.

Benchmark: 90%³

² Based on performance measures established per contract with VA

³ Based on performance measures established per contract with VA

Objectives and Performance Measures

GOAL #5:

Attract and retain excellent, compassionate staff and volunteers.

OBJECTIVES

- a. Ensure staff and volunteers understand the requirements and expectations of their positions and are motivated to provide excellent customer service.
- b. Recognize our superior staff and volunteers.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

We will determine our success by measuring the:

⇒ Percent reduction in agency turn-over rate.⁴

Benchmark: 1% per year; 5% total over the next 5 years.

⁴ Agency Turnover was 29% in FY2021.

NIST Cybersecurity Framework and CIS Controls

Adoption of the NIST Cybersecurity Framework and Implementation of CIS Critical Security Controls 1 – 5

As a technology customer of the Office of Information Technology Services (ITS) in the Governor's Office, we are using the cybersecurity systems and technical expertise in ITS to fulfill requirements related to Executive Order 2017-02. Staff from ITS were briefed on the NIST Core Framework, CIS Controls 1-5, and their plan for adoption of the NIST Cybersecurity Framework. We participate in DHR and ITS administered cybersecurity training, as awareness is a critical component of an effective cybersecurity program. As briefed by ITS staff, implementation of the CIS Controls 1-5 will be their responsibility for the systems they operate and, as technological tools applied to the computer systems, largely invisible to us as a customer. ITS, working through the multi-agency Incident Response Task Force, has developed an Incident Response Program in support of our agency.

Executive Order No. 2019-02 Red Tape Reduction Act Measures

The Idaho Division of Veterans Services is motivated to reduce state regulatory burdens on Idaho citizens and businesses.

Pursuant to the *Red Tape Reduction Act (Executive Order 2019-02)*, each state agency is required to designate a Rules Review Officer (RRO) “to undertake a critical and comprehensive review of the agency’s administrative rules to identify costly, ineffective, or outdated regulations.” The Idaho Division of Veterans Services identified a management assistant in its Central Support Office as its RRO. IDVS completed a thorough review of its Administrative Rules as of May 9, 2019.

Red Tape Reduction Metrics

In 2019, IDVS allowed five of eight Administrative Rules to Expire – the Rules allowed to expire, account for a **reduction of 62.5%** of Idaho Division of Veterans Services Administrative Rules.

- **[IDAPA 21.01.02, Rules Governing Emergency Relief for Veterans](#)**: according to our understanding of the relevant Statutes, Idaho Code 65-201, 65-202, 65-203, 65-204 and 65-207, Rules are not required for the Emergency Relief Grant. Rather, this program will be managed via policy.
- **[IDAPA 21.01.03, Rules Governing Veterans Support Fund Grant Program](#)**: according to our understanding of the relevant Statutes, Idaho Code 65-204 and 65-209, Rules are not required for the Veteran Support Fund Grant Program. Rather, this program will be managed via policy.
- **[IDAPA 21.01.05, Rules Governing Medical Transportation Payment for Wheelchair Confined Veterans](#)**: the relevant Statute for this program, Idaho Code 65-208, was repealed with Senate Bill 2081 and signed by Governor Little on 3/21/2019, effective 7/1/2019.
- **[IDAPA 21.01.07, Rules for Education and Training Programs for Veterans](#)**: according to our understanding of the relevant Statute, Idaho Code 65-202 and 65-204, Rules are not required. This program follows policy and regulations as set by the VA.
- **[IDAPA 21.01.08, Rules Governing Veterans Recognition Fund Grant Program](#)**: according to our understanding of the relevant Statutes, Idaho Code 65-204, 65-704, and 65-705, Rules are not required for the Veteran Support Fund Grant Program. Rather, this program will be managed via policy.

Reduction of Pages – The expired rules account for 26 pages out of a total of 70 pages of Idaho Division of Veterans Services Administrative Rules, a **reduction of 37.1%**.

Reduction of Words – The expired rules account for 6,872 words out of a total of 23,470 words, a **reduction of 29.3%**.

In 2020, IDVS reviewed Idaho Code pertaining to the Idaho Division of Veterans Services and identified four sections of obsolete code. In the 2021 legislative session, IDVS submitted via the EALS process legislation to repeal Sections 65-102, 65-105, 65-106 and 65-509, Idaho Code. All four sections of code were successfully repealed by the Idaho Legislature. This was a reduction of 9.76%.