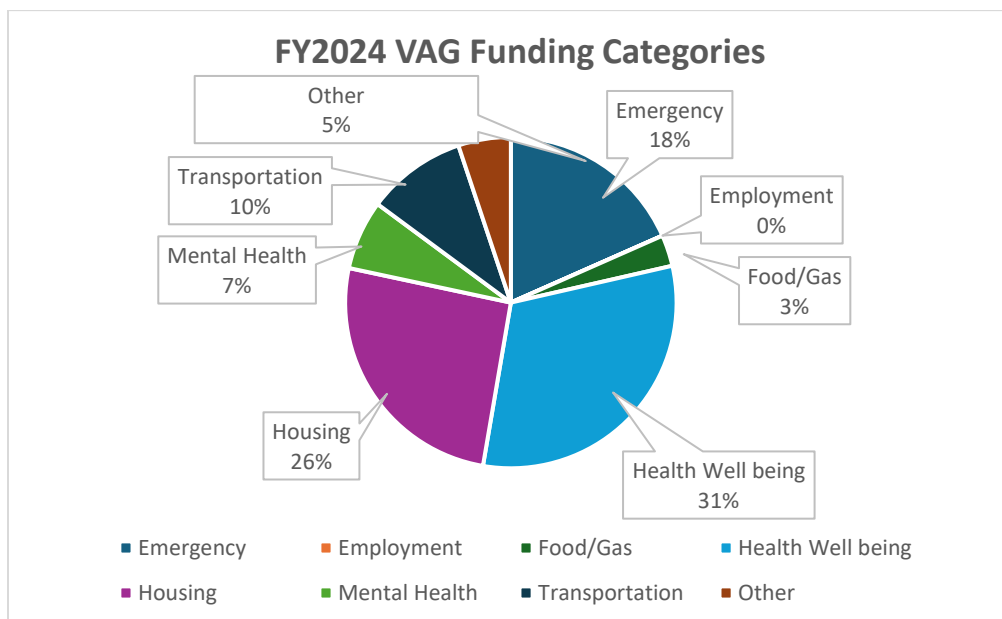


Veterans Assistance Grant

FY 2024

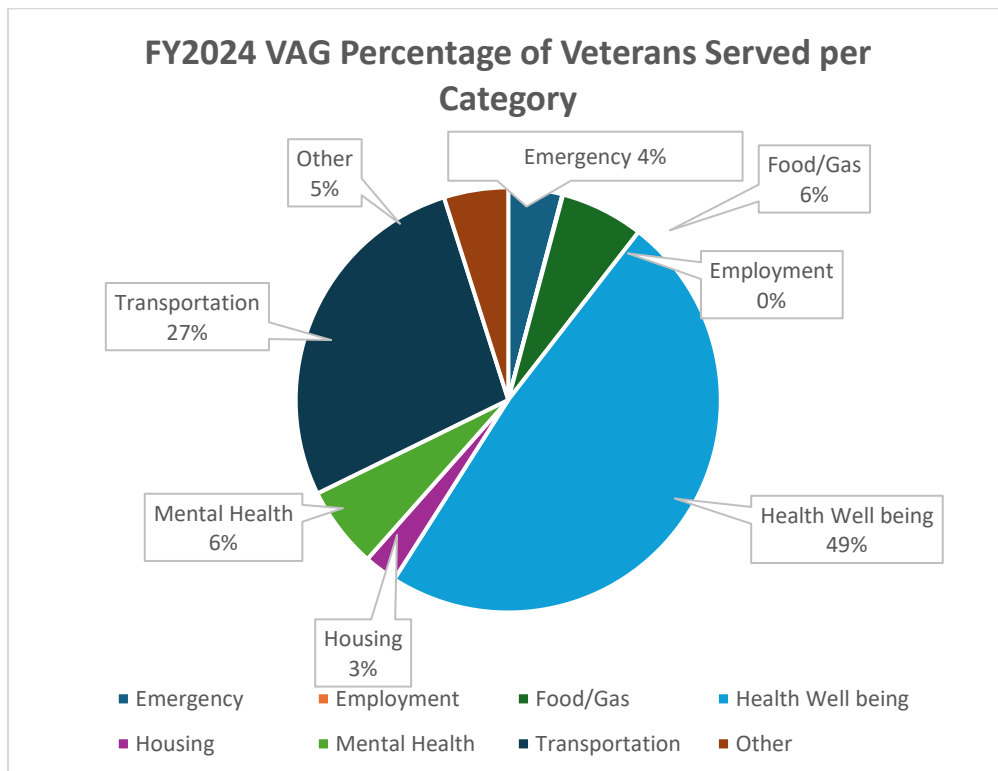
Pursuant to C.R.S. 28-5-712, legislative appropriations authorized the Colorado Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMVA) Veterans Assistance Grant (VAG) to receive \$850,000 from the general fund for FY 2024, with \$50,000 going to administrative functions. Of these funds, a total of \$800,000 was designated to be granted to non-profit or governmental agencies to provide assistance to veterans in the state. Additionally, a total of \$157,886 from the VAG Cash Fund was allocated, all of which was designated for grant funding. This resulted in a total of \$957,886 of funds available to be awarded to organizations throughout the state serving veterans. \$957,000 was awarded to grantees for FY2024. The following is a final report of the administration of those monies.

A total of 28 non-profit organizations and governmental entities throughout the state were awarded grants totaling \$957,000. The direct services provided through the grants include the provision of health and well-being (31%), housing (25%), 502 emergency financial services (18%), transportation (10%), mental health (7%), food/gas cards (3%), and other services (5%).



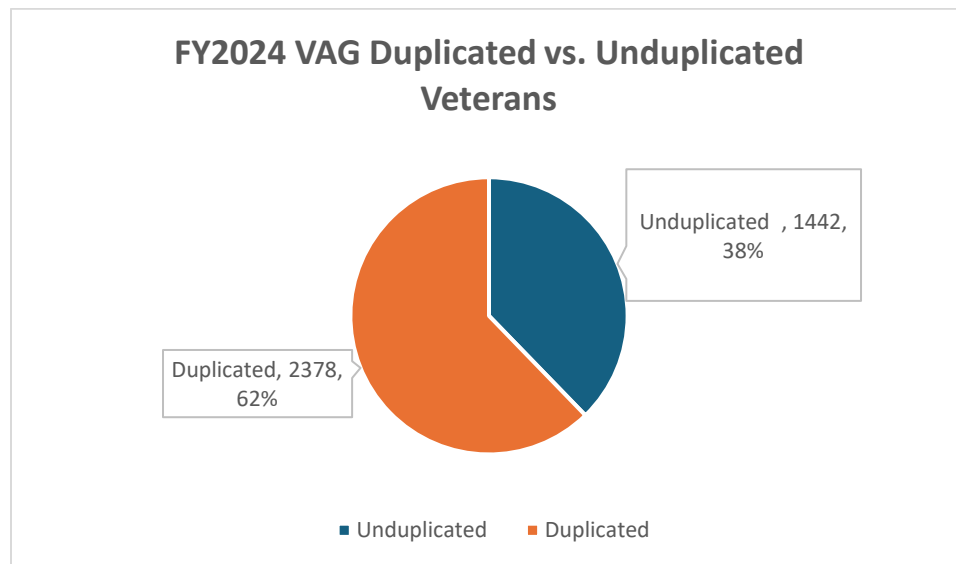
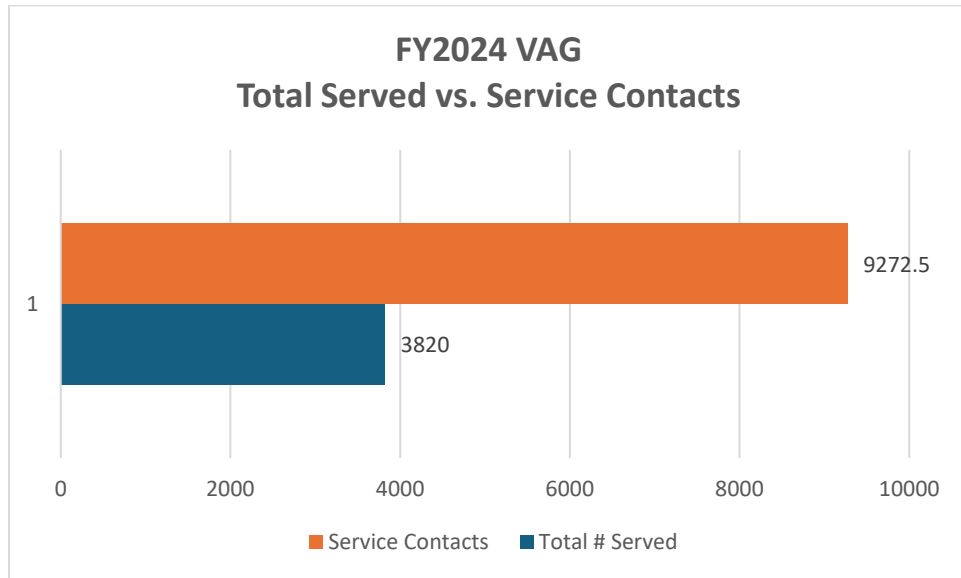
Categories Served

A total of \$906,332.21 was expended by the grantees, resulting in an 95% execution rate, which is 6% higher than the prior fiscal year. The grant programs continued to address health and well-being for veterans, spending 48% of the funds in this category. Programs addressed health and well-being by providing Veterans with emotional support animals, therapeutic recreational activities, and equine therapy. With the rising cost of living, VAG funds were instrumental in providing emergency financial assistance to veterans in need. Funds were used to assist veterans with high utility costs, home repairs, home necessities, childcare, and other emergency needs.



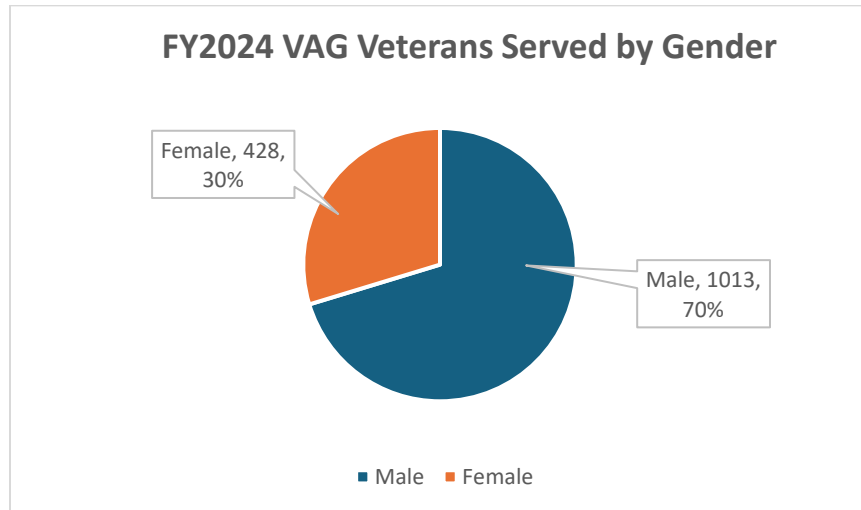
Number of Veterans Served

During FY 2024, 3,820 veterans were served through the Veterans Assistance Grant. Of those, 2,378 were duplicated service contacts and 1,442 were unduplicated. A total of 9,272 service contacts were made.



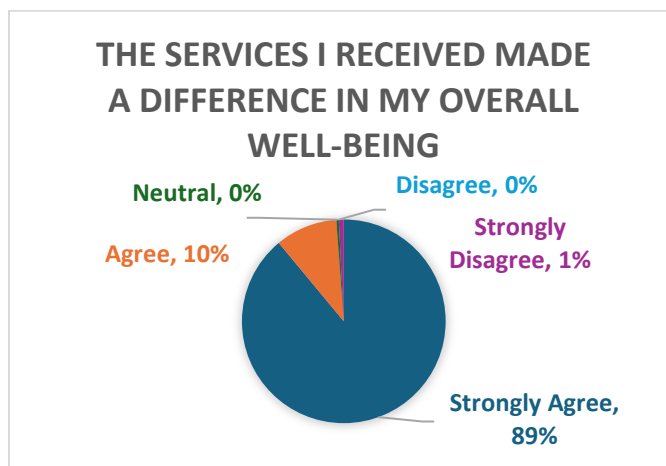
Veterans Served by Gender

70% of the veterans assisted were men and 30% were women. The number of women veterans served has significantly increased. Training and outreach to women veterans helped raise the total amount of women served.

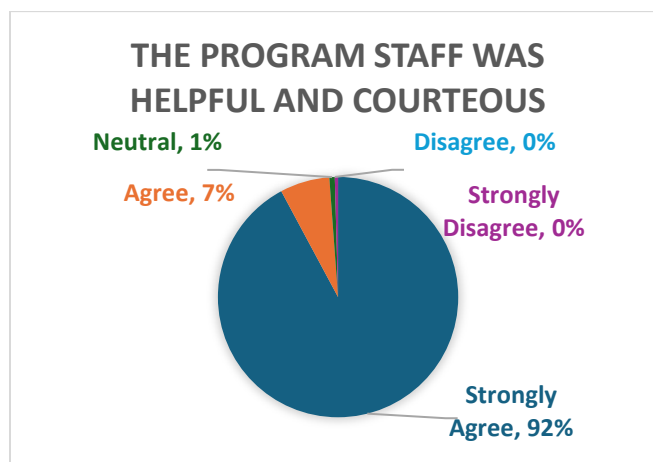


Program Effectiveness

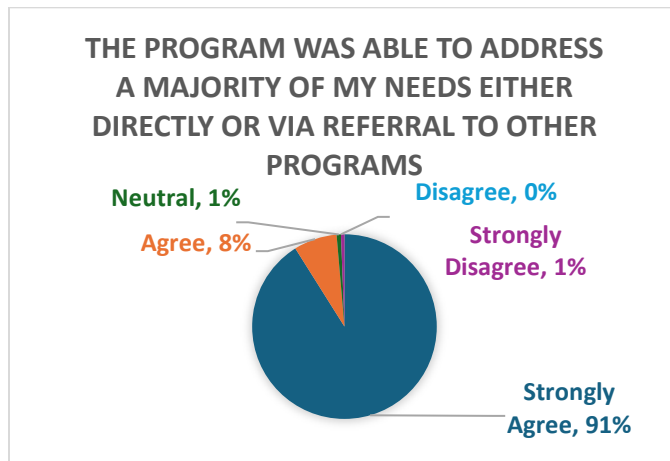
Program evaluation measures include a service recipient survey to measure the effectiveness of the services provided by the grantees; and to measure the outcomes or impact of those services. The survey uses a standard Likert scale to assess both the grantee program and changes in the overall health and well-being of veterans served. Overall, most veterans rated the services positively, with the majority reporting an improvement in their own well-being, as well as an increase in the well-being of their families.



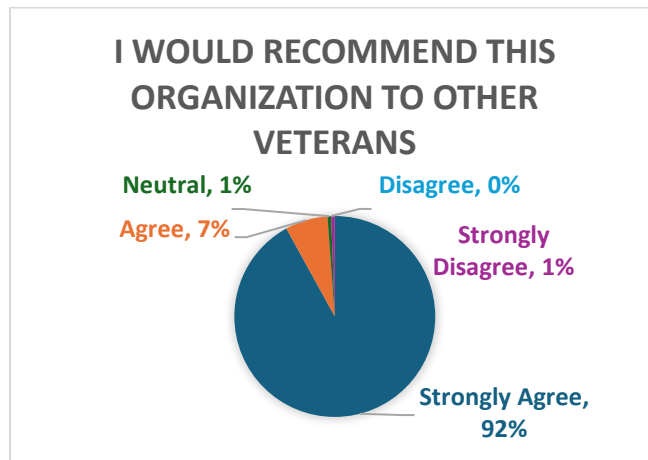
These indicators demonstrate that the services provided align with the statutory intent of improving veterans' overall health and well-being, as well as increasing mental health support.



The majority of respondents indicated that program staff were helpful and courteous.



The majority of respondents indicated that the program met most of their needs, either directly or through referral to another program.



The majority of respondents indicated that they would recommend this organization to other veterans.

Evaluation of the Operation of the Program

The grant programs continued to address health and well-being, emergency financial assistance, family counseling, holistic activities, recreational and therapeutic activities, transportation, and mental health needs.

Process improvement is a primary focus in terms of the grant program operations. Minor changes in processes led to more efficiency and effectiveness in programming. The increase in the number of grantee trainings via webinars and one-on-one sessions continued throughout the year. The Grant Manager conducted 11 application trainings. Grantee input was sought several times throughout the reporting period. Office hours were held on a weekly to bi-weekly basis to cover unmet training needs, provide technical assistance, and outreach to underserved veterans, while allowing grantees to learn about one another and their programming.

Office hours have increased communication among grantees and have improved grant management, along with execution rates. Specific training topics were included during each office hour session. Topics consisted of reimbursement documentation, reporting requirements, referrals, underserved veterans, application training, and overall grant management. The Grant Manager provided 1:1 technical assistance to numerous grantees over the fiscal year. An updated and improved Grantee Handbook was provided to all grantees with specific details on VAG policies, procedures, and processes. We continue to seek input from grantees to further program enhancements.

In April of 2024, a Grant Specialist was hired to focus on the grantee reimbursements. Due to the additional staff person, grantees received reimbursements within a 10-business day turnaround.

The training of the Colorado Board of Veterans Affairs to determine an organization's capacity and to make funding decisions accordingly is ongoing. The Board received application and ongoing grant training.

We continued to expand outreach to eligible entities to increase the saturation throughout the state. Outreach was focused on the eastern part of the state and underserved veteran populations, specifically women veterans. Because of the outreach efforts, 13 new programs applied for FY2024 grant funding.

Success Stories

Black Ops Rescue

Black Ops Rescue is dedicated to pairing homeless pets with veterans in need for the good of both the veteran and the pet. Black Ops Rescue builds relationships with the veterans they serve and documents outcomes with performance surveys throughout the companion animal's lifetime. Funding through the Veteran's Assistance Grant assisted veterans with new pet adoptions.

An Air Force and Army veteran and Purple Heart recipient, reached out to Black Ops rescue shortly after his beloved small dog passed away. He and his wife were heartbroken. Despite the currently high population at shelters and rescues, small dogs are often hard to find. Black Ops Rescue reached out to their partner rescues and were able to make a match for the veteran and his wife. VAG funds were used to pay his adoption fee, provided all supplies, and provided medical care.

Women Marines Association Colorado Columbines

The Women Marines Association provides financial assistance to veterans in need who have tried other resources and have been unable to get the assistance needed. This agency serves the entire population of Colorado, as they do not limit themselves to the Denver area.

One veteran that they assisted had been to the Rocky Mountain Hyperbaric Oxygen Treatment Center three times and was recommended to do an alternative treatment. He needed to stay in a Residence Inn during the treatment in Denver, as he lived in Colorado Springs. The housing was going to cost the veteran approximately \$6,000. VAG funds were used to pay for some of his stay to complete the treatment

successfully. This veteran would not have been able to receive treatment without the assistance of the VAG program.

Veterans Community Project

The Veterans Community Project (VCP) believes that true solutions to homelessness look at the whole problem and the unique needs of the individual veteran. For this reason, Veterans Community Project focuses on transitional housing, supportive programming, and everything in between. The VCP understands that rapid rehousing and prevention matter in the total equation to obtaining and maintaining permanent housing solutions. The VCP provides veterans and their families with support to cover rent and other household expenses, such as utilities and other costs that contribute to housing stability during a financial crisis.

A Marine Corps veteran came to the VCP for help after being laid off from his job. With the support from the Veterans Assistance Grant program, this veteran was connected with the local county workforce office and VCP continued to provide ongoing case management support and navigation throughout the process. With emergency assistance, he was able to focus on searching for a new job to support himself, and his 14-year-old son, without the worry that he would lose his housing options. After receiving rental assistance, through the Veterans Assistance Grant, he was able to find a job and is now self-sufficient once again.

FY2024 Veterans Assistance Grantees

Agency	Geographic Area(s) Served	Services to be Provided	Amount Awarded	Amount Expended
Alamosa County	Alamosa County, Rio Grande, Mineral, Saguache, Costilla, Conejos	Financial Assistance	\$60,000.00	\$60,000.00
Arapahoe County	Arapahoe, Aurora, Adams Counties	Financial assistance, program costs, physical and mental well being	\$50,000.00	\$50,000.00
Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks Lodge #1319	Prowers, Kiowa, Bent, Baca, Otero Counties	Financial assistance	\$17,690.00	\$17,651.00
Black Ops Rescue	Adams, Arapahoe, Boulder, Douglas, El Paso, Jefferson Counties	Pet Therapy	\$15,000.00	\$14,949.23
Boulder County	Boulder, Firestone, Frederick, Dacono, Mead, Berthoud, Allenspark, Nederland	Financial Assistance	\$15,000.00	\$11,999.94
City and County of Broomfield	Broomfield County	Financial Assistance	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00

Colorado Coalition for the Homeless	Denver Metro Area	Employment related services	\$5,000.00	\$4,661.30
Costilla County	Costilla County	Financial assistance, suicide prevention, counseling, vehicle repair and other emergency services	\$21,000.00	\$21,000.00
Douglas County	Douglas County	Financial Assistance	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00
Grand County	Grand, Lake, Routt, Eagle, Chaffee, South Park, Park counties	Transportation, financial assistance	\$26,600.00	\$26,595.45
Gunnison County	Gunnison, Hindsdale Counties	Mental well being, physical well being, emergency financial assistance	\$21,000.00	\$20,985.19
Healing Warriors	Larmer, Pueblo, Fort Collins, Denver, Longmont, Colorado Springs	Integrative Healing Therapies Non-narcotic treatment	\$53,000.00	\$53,000.00

Home Front Military Network	Statewide	Financial Assistance	\$65,000.00	\$65,000.00
La Puente Home	La Puente	Transportation, tuition, rent	\$40,000.00	\$40,000.00
Las Animas County Veterans Council	Trinidad and Las Animas County	Financial services, behavioral health	\$20,000.00	\$19,115.91
Mount Carmel Veterans Service Center	El Paso, Teller, Pueblo, Las Animas, Custer, Rio Grande	Financial Assistance, case management, Stand Down, Transitional Housing Initiative	\$65,000.00	\$65,000.00
Operation Revamp	Mesa, Grand Junction, Palisade, Fruita, Clifton, Delta, Loma, Parachute, Montrose	Healing Arts, Art Therapy, Financial Assistance	\$50,000.00	\$23,624.56
Park County	Park County	Emergency financial assistance, mental health, transportation	\$30,000.00	\$24,153.83

Pikes Peak Workforce Center	El Paso, Teller, Pueblo	Work force assistance, emergency financial assistance	\$10,000.00	\$9,994.50
Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing	Denver	Fishing equipment for outdoor recreation	\$3,825.00	\$3,825.00
Pueblo County	City and County Pueblo	Stand Down event	\$7,000.00	\$6,997.10
Regents of the University of Colorado	Denver, Front Range	Dental Services	\$50,000.00	\$50,000.00
Remount Foundation	Front Range, El Paso County	Equine-assisted Therapy	\$66,885.00	\$62,750.66
Sobriety House	Denver, Statewide	Residential substance abuse treatment	\$65,000.00	\$64,628.00
Telluride Adaptive Sports	Statewide	Outdoor recreation	\$50,000.00	\$42,674.64
Veterans Community Project	Northern Colorado, Metro Denver	Emergency assistance, project costs, transitional housing support	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00

Vets 4 Vets Archuleta County	Southwest Colorado	Emergency assistance, mental health transportation	\$90,000.00	\$87,725.90
Women Marines Association	Statewide	Financial Assistance	\$35,000.00	\$35,000.00
			\$957,000.00	\$906,332.21