

CLAYTON COUNTY VETERANS AFFAIRS MEETING

600 Gunder Road NE, Elkader, Iowa 52043

November 18, 2024, at 7:30 a.m.

The Veterans Commission Meeting was called to order at 7:35 a.m. on November 18, 2024, at the Clayton County Office Building Meeting Room.

**I.) Roll Call:** Commissioners Clark, Torkelson and Jordan, Director, present.

**II.) Approval of Minutes:** Motion was made by Clark to approve the minutes from the October 21, 2024, meeting, seconded by Torkelson. Motion carried unanimously.

**III.) Public Comments:** None.

**IV.) Budget Review:** Jordan distributed the current Fiscal Budget for Period Ending: October 31, 2024. The Veterans Affairs office spent \$9888.29 during the month of October 2024. Discussion and clarification of expenses concerning the current budget was further reviewed. Clark made the motion to approve the budget, Torkelson seconded the motion; the motion carried unanimously.

**V.) Old Business:**

Jordan stated that he was continuing outreach opportunities with Crawford County, Wisconsin.

**VI.) New Business:**

a). Discussion was held regarding the Veterans Commission Terms. GERALYN Torkelson's term expires on December 31, 2024. She agreed to another three-year term pending the Board of Supervisors' approval. Greg Clark's term expires on December 31, 2025, and Richard Eilers' term expires on December 31, 2026. The office terms for members of this Commission are three years.

b). The October Statistical Report was distributed. 38 total number of calls received this month re: Veteran related concerns. 17 total office visits from Veterans, 1 home visit, 0 outreach events, and 1 training event.

c). The VA has announced the nationwide availability of its virtual emergency care option for Veterans enrolled in VA healthcare. This option provides Veterans with access to emergency care services without having to leave their homes. Thus, eliminating the need for travel to urgent care or emergency departments. Veterans enrolled in VA Health can utilize this option by calling VA Health Connect at 1-800-877-6976. The Veterans will speak with a triage nurse who, if appropriate, will refer the Veteran to a tele-emergency care provider who can evaluate their situation over the phone or by video conference and recommend follow-up care. Veterans should continue to use 911 for life threatening emergencies and the triage nurse will call 911 and remain on the line with the Veteran until help arrives for situations that require this level of attention. This service is particularly advantageous for Veterans living in rural areas or individuals with limited mobility or transportation.

d). For the month of November, Iowa Works is offering several virtual workshops to assist Veterans, service members and their spouses with reemployment efforts. The session includes training that focuses on drafting resumes, conducting job searches and preparing for interviews. Individuals may register by calling Iowa Works American Job Centers by phone at 563-382-0457 or email at [Dubuquelowaworks@iwd.iowa.org](mailto:Dubuquelowaworks@iwd.iowa.org). Individuals are encouraged to register for training at least two weeks prior to the event date. A schedule of November Virtual Workshops can be obtained at [iowaworks.gov](http://iowaworks.gov)

**VII. Review and approval of Claims:**

**VIII. Confirmation of the Next Meeting:** Next meeting will be on December 9, 2024, at 7:30 a.m.

**IX. Adjournment:** Clark made the motion to adjourn, Torkelson seconded the motion; Motion unanimously carried. The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by Gerrie Torkelson

# November Report

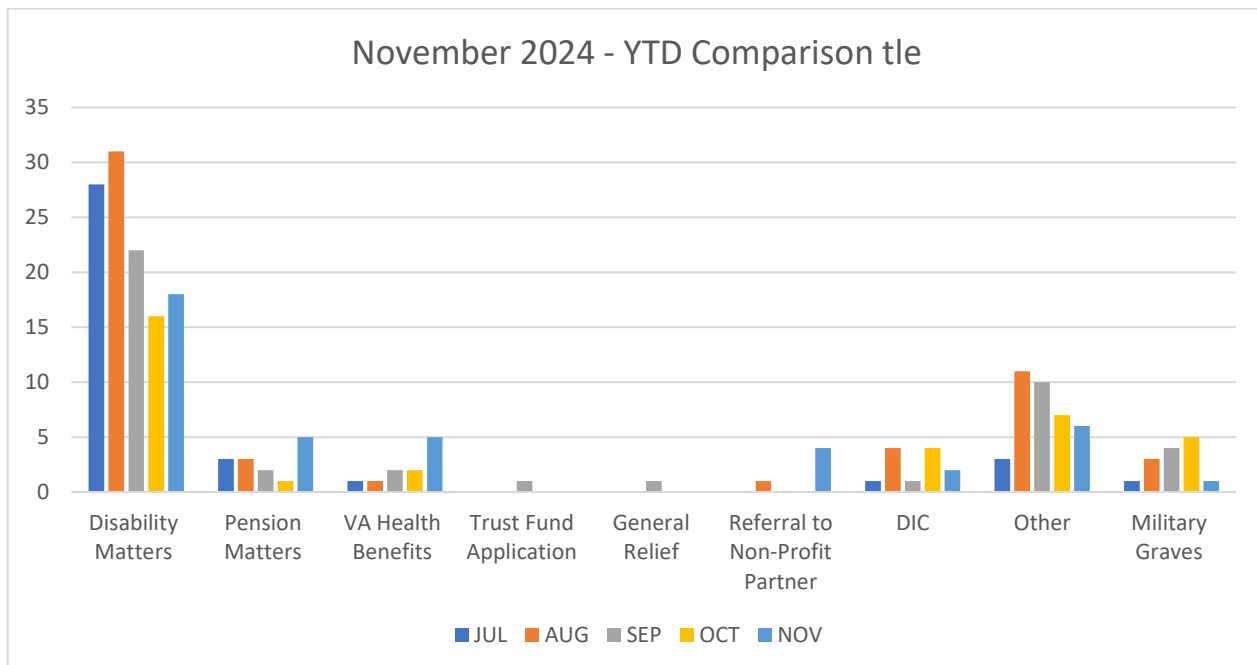
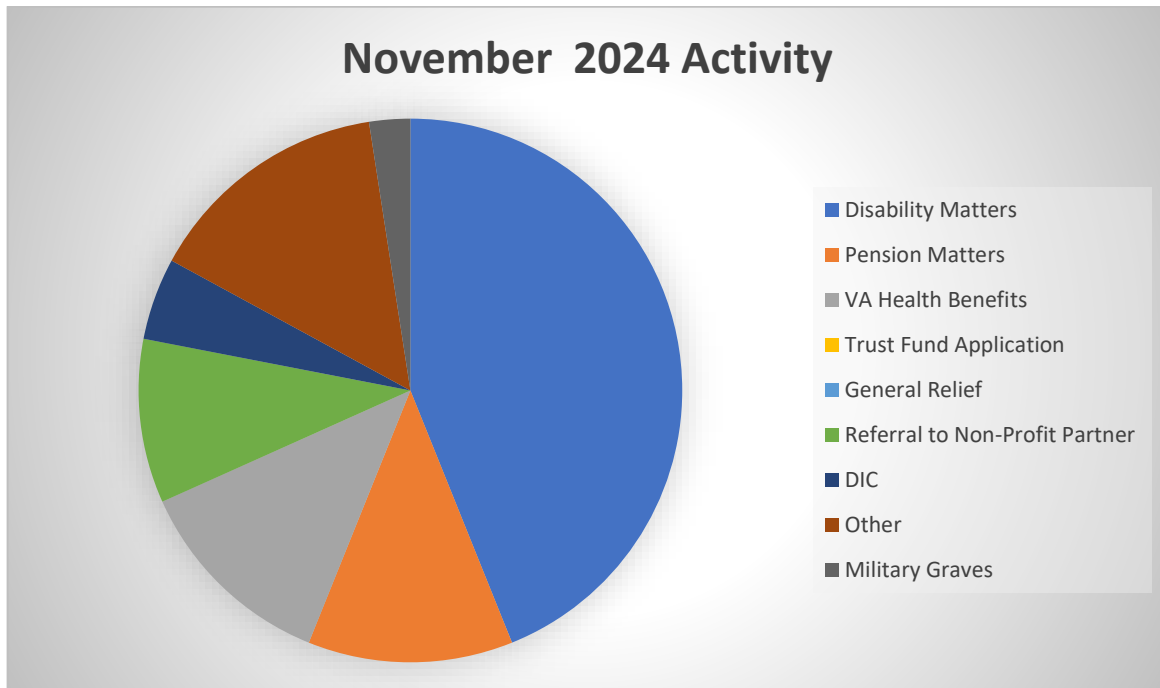
**31** total number of calls received this month re: Veteran related concerns.

**24** total office visits from Veterans.

**4** home visits

**0** outreach events

**1** training event



## **VA & State Updates:**

### **Prepare for Secure Sign-In Changes**

The VA is enhancing how Veterans access personal health information with a new sign-on process that will go live in **January 2025**. Username and Password used to access My HealtheVet will be replaced by a more secure multi-factor authentication system. To continue accessing health records, appointment details, medication refills and secure messaging with medical providers, Veterans should set new accounts with ID.me or Login.gov as soon as possible. This is a nationwide change to ensure protection of your data. Note that only Username and Passwords will not work after January 31, 2025.

**The following are hyperlinks to webpages with step-by-step instructions for creating an account:**

[How to create a Login.gov account for VA](#)

[How to create an ID.me account for VA](#)

For in-person support you may visit the Virtual Health Resource Center (“VHRC”) at the front entrance of the Iowa City VA Medical Center or contact the office at 319 339-0581 ext. 631909.

### **New Rule Makes Access to Military Base Easier for Eligible Veterans**

The Department of Defense and Veterans Affairs updated rules to streamline the process for individuals to access military bases. Effective November 1, the new access process will now be a single credential entry. Veterans may use their VA issued Veteran Health Identification Card (VHIC) or REAL ID compliant driver’s license or identification card to register at the military base visitor’s center. Once enrolled, the veteran or caregiver can use the same credentials for future visits without having to re-register. The initial registration process requires presenting necessary ID. Undergoing a criminal record and terrorism check, verifying eligibility for on-base benefits. Veterans seeking medical care at an installation without commissaries or exchanges must provide proof of healthcare appointment. Veterans should note that access for these reasons may require additional documentation. Veterans who do not have a VHIC card may present their VA service-connected disability letter and caregivers must bring that their VA issued caregiver patronage letter. Enrollment is valid for one to three year or one year after that last visit – this is governed by each installation’s policies.