

CLAYTON COUNTY VETERANS AFFAIRS MEETING
CLAYTON COUNTY OFFICE BUILDING/CONFERENCE ROOM 1
600 Gunder Road NE, Elkader, Iowa 52043
October 6, 2025, at 7:30 a.m.

The Veterans Commission Meeting was called to order at 7:30 a.m. on October 6, 2025, at the Clayton County Office Building Meeting Conference Room #1.

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

II.) Approval of Minutes: Motion was made by Eilers to approve the minutes of the September 8, 2025 meeting, seconded by Clark. Motion carried unanimously.

III.) Public Comments: No comments were noted.

IV.) Budget Review: Jordan distributed the current Fiscal Budget for Period Ending: September 30, 2025. The Veterans Affairs Office began the current fiscal year on July 1, 2025. \$102,019.00 is the yearly budget for 2025-2026. \$3,522.08 was spent during the month of September with 85.30% remaining in the budget for the year. Clark made the motion to approve the budget, Eilers seconded the motion; the motion carried unanimously.

V.) Old Business:

Review of information pertaining to the Fall County Commissioner Training October 12-13, 2025. The Commissioner Networking event will begin on Sunday, October 12, from 5-7 at the Stoney Creek Hotel and Event Center, 5291 Stoney Creek Court, Johnston, IA. The Commissioner Training will be on Monday, October 13 from 8-4.

VI.) New Business:

a). The new shuttle vehicle has been acquired. New running boards are to be installed to aid in the loading and unloading of riders. Brown's Service Center will conduct maintenance on the vehicle, so that a record of maintenance remains with our VA office.

b). Review of Memo received from the Iowa Public Information Board dated September 18, 2025 RE: Individuals Subject to Section 21.12 Training Requirements. Governor Reynolds signed House File 706 into law. By its own terms, HF 706 is "an Act relating to open meetings and open records providing penalties and making penalties applicable." Amongst other things, the Act creates a new section, Iowa Code 21.12, which imposes a "member education course" requirement Iowa Code 21.12(1) provides effective **July 1, 2025** as follows: A newly elected or appointed public official who is a member of a governmental body shall complete a course of training of not less than one and not more than two hours regarding the responsibilities of the governmental body and the governmental body's members under this chapter and chapter 22 not later than the ninetieth day after the date the member does one of the following, as applicable: a. Takes the initial oath of office. b. Assumes responsibilities, if the member is not required to take an oath of office. c. Is elected to the office. The officers in Clayton County began their service prior to the **July 1, 2025** deadline.

c). Jordan shared the VA Contingency Planning used during a government shutdown. **Not impacted by the shutdown:** VA Medical Centers, Outpatient Clinics, and Vet Centers will be open as usual and providing all services. VA benefits will continue to be processed and delivered, including compensation, pension, education, and housing benefits. Burials will continue at VA national cemeteries. Applications for headstones, markers, and burial benefits processing will continue. The Board of Veterans' Appeals will continue decisions on Veterans' cases. Call Centers: VA's primary call center 1-800-MyVA411) and the Veterans Crisis Line (Dial 988, Press 1) will remain open 24/7. The VA Benefit Hotline (1-800-827-1000 will be available Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. ET. Suicide prevention programs, homelessness services, and caregiver support will continue. **Impacted during the shutdown:** VA will cease providing transition program assistance and career counseling. Call Centers: VA's GI Bill (1-888-GIBILL-1) and National Cemetery Applicant Assistance (1-800-697-6947) hotlines will be closed. VA benefits regional offices will be closed. Public Affairs and unfunded

outreach to Veterans will cease, including social media, Vet Resources emails, and responses to press inquiries. No ground maintenance or placement of permanent headstones allowed at VA cemeteries. Applications for pre-need burials at VA cemeteries will not be processed. No printing of new Presidential Memorial Certificates. No outreach to state, county, tribal, municipal, faith-based, and community-based partners by VA Central Office.

d). Information regarding HF 1000 was discussed. This bill seeks to establish a grant program to assist veteran service organizations with expansion of the number of the employees to assist with veteran claims. The bill is specific to Service Organizations (i.e., American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Disabled American Veteran) located in Des Moines who file the claims with our VA regional office. This bill has passed the State House and is pending with the State Senate Appropriations Committee.

e). Clayton County is planning to have County Website up and running during the month of December, 2025. This new website will also include information regarding the Clayton County Veterans Office.

f). The September Statistical Report was distributed. Twenty-five total number of calls were received this month re: Veteran related concerns. Twenty-one total office visits from Veterans. Two home visits for Veterans, and zero training events.

g). Coordinating VA Caregiver Benefits with State Programs – Families may qualify for support from multiple systems at once. The VA's care giver benefits include the Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family ordered clinical services (i.e. Homemaker/Home Health Aide, Respite Care, Adult Day Health Care) and Veteran-Directed care. These programs can be accessed along with state Medicaid home or community-based offerings last resort, in that Medicaid will not cover services already paid by another program. Stacking, which is leverage services from multiple programs, works best when the services being offered are for different purposes and/or not provided at overlapping times. VA and State Offered programs work to prevent double payment for the same hour or provided services/tasks. Therefore, it is pertinent to keep each program's service offerings, plans and hours distinct. The goal of leveraging any combination of services is to ensure that they complement provided services of the other, establish clear roles, and ensure that funding sources are specific to each respective program offering.

h). The VA will issue 12-month Community Care Authorizations for 30 Specialties: The VA has announced a policy change to extend the length of time (for a full 12 months) for new community care authorizations for a defined set of 30 specialties. The rationale for providing this extension is to cut down or reduce mid-year or mid-course renewals while a patient may be receiving treatment. Prior to this change, authorizations were reviewed every 90-180 days. The one year authorization will cover care for cardiology, dermatology, endocrinology, neurology, otolaryngology, gastroenterology, urogynecology, addiction psychiatry (outpatient), family and couples' psychotherapy (outpatient), mental health (outpatient), nephrology, nutrition intervention, oncology and hematology, neuro-ophthalmology, oculoplastic services, comprehensive eye exams, routine optometry, orthopedic hand, general orthopedics, orthopedic spine, pain management, podiatry, addition medicine (outpatient), pulmonary, physical medicine and rehab (physiatry), rheumatology, sleep medicine, and urology. Authorizations will require VA clinician referral. The change is simply that the authorization for these services has been extended from 90-180 days to 12 months.

VII. Review and approval of Claims

VIII. Confirmation of the Next Meeting: Next meeting will be on November 10, 2025, at 7:30 a.m.

IX. Adjournment: Clark made the motion to adjourn, Eilers seconded the motion; Motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by Gerrie Torkelson

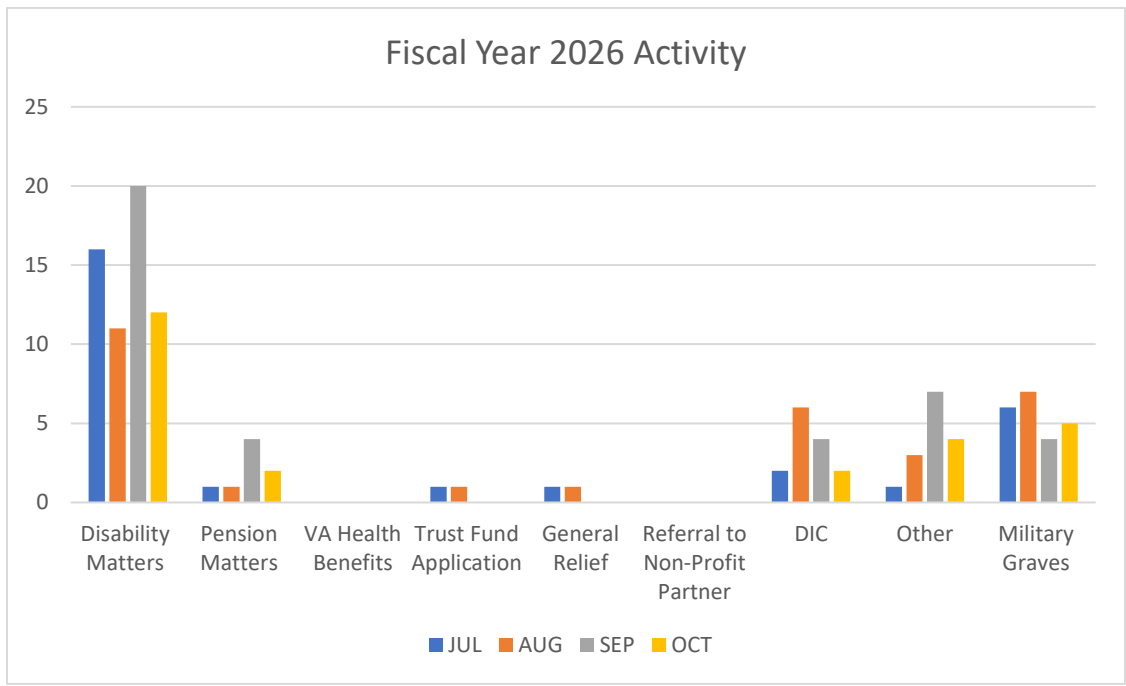
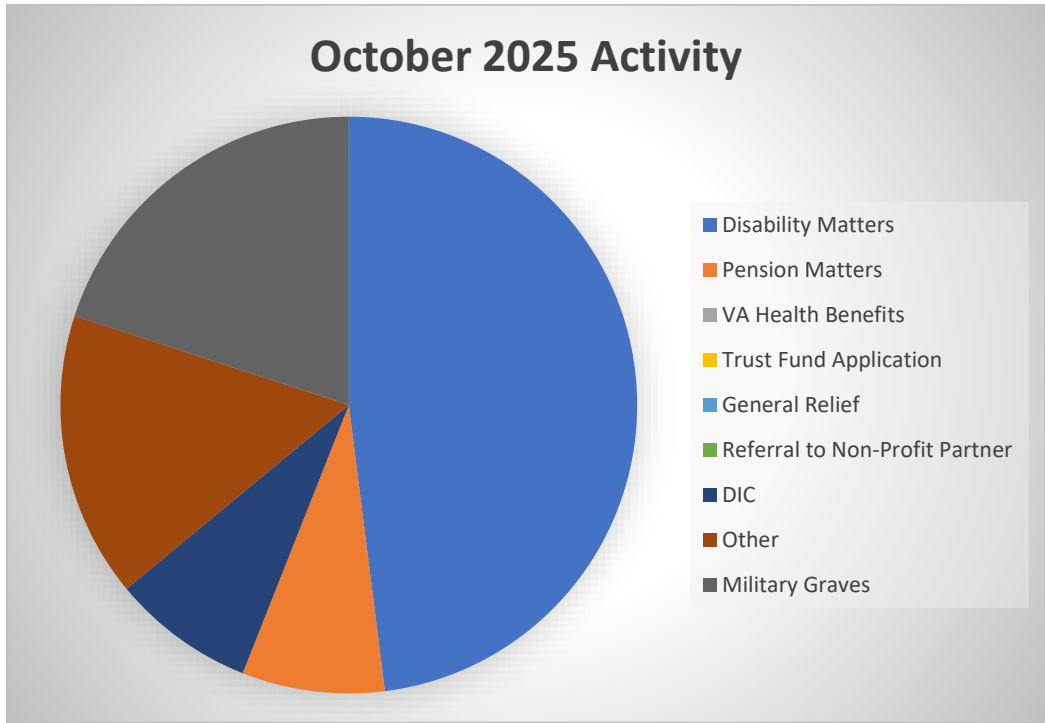
October Report

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

17 total office visits from Veterans.

4 home visits

2 training events



VA & State Updates:

VA Debt Management – During the winter, the Department of Veteran Affairs reconciles payments for the year. The process may result in Veterans receiving notices from the VA's Debt Management Center regarding adjustments to disability, education or pension benefits. Debt notices usually result from changes to disability rating or dependency status, updates to GI Bill enrollment, dual payments from another agency (like DFAS) and/or delay in reporting address or banking changes. The VA is required to notify a Veteran if an overpayment occurs, even if the overpayment is the result of administrative error. Do not ignore the notification. Review the notification carefully to verify the debt and payment history. You have an option to dispute the debt, request a waiver and/or enter into a repayment plan if repayment causes a hardship. Save copies of all letters, forms and call notes as good records are helpful should you find yourself disputing a debt. Receiving a notice doesn't always mean you owe money right away, but it does require attention. So, review this notice, verify information and contact the Debt Management Center.