

Arizona Department of Veterans' Services

For Arizona veterans and those who care for them.



ADVS Overview

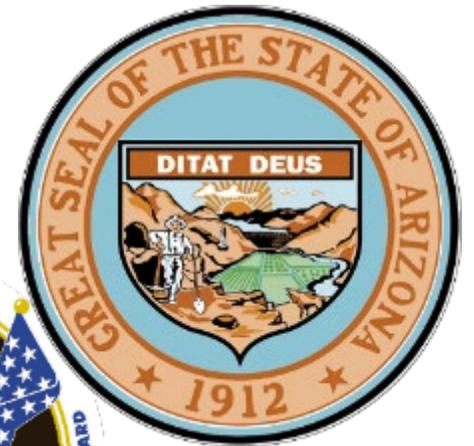
Presented by:
Col.(Ret) Wanda Wright, Director



About ADVS



- The Arizona Department of Veterans' Services is a state agency that serves and provides advocacy to service members, Veterans and their families.
- Our Mission: To be the catalyst in response to the evolving needs of Arizona's Veterans, service members and their families.



Veteran Demographics



Veterans make up 10.8% of our population, ranking Arizona among the top 15 states with the highest concentration of veterans.

- All Veterans – 522,100
 - Wartime Veterans – 397,000
- Military Retirees – 56,000
- Veterans receiving disability compensation - 100,000
- Veterans receiving pension - 5,800
- Age distribution
 - Less than 40 – 69,000
 - 40-64 – 187,000
 - 65+ - 266,000
- Male - 476,700
- Female - 45,400



Military Demographics



- Active Duty
 - 19,700 service members
 - 5 Military Installations
 - Davis-Monthan Air Force Base (Tucson)
 - Fort Huachuca (Sierra Vista)
 - Luke Air Force Base (Glendale)
 - Marine Corps Air Station (Yuma)
 - Army Proving Ground (Yuma)
- National Guard and Reserve
 - 15,400 service members



Veteran Benefits Counselors (VBCs)



- VBCs are accredited by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and advocate for Arizona's service members, Veterans and their families with receiving federal and state Veteran benefits. VBCs also advocate for American Legion clients.
- VBCs assist claimants by:
 - Educating them on eligibility requirements for benefits
 - Processing VA compensation and pension applications
 - Appealing VA decisions
 - Representing claimants at VA hearings
 - Filing for survivor's benefits
 - Referring claimants to other agencies for potential benefits
 - Requesting military service records and certifying DD-214s (discharge paperwork)
 - Discussing State Veteran Benefits
 - Assisting with upgrading discharge statuses
- VBCs are working remotely and continue to assist Veterans, service members and their families. **Call to make an appointment: [602-535-1215](tel:602-535-1215)**



Arizona State Veteran Homes



Arizona State Veteran Homes serve the long-term care and rehabilitative needs of Arizona's Veterans, with energetic and caring staff who provide:

- Nursing
- Therapeutic Recreation
- Social Services
- Rehabilitative, Physical, Occupational and Speech Therapy

Allowing residents to enjoy an independent lifestyle with services customized to fit their needs.

Locations:

- **Phoenix:** 200 bed facility
 - Address: 4141 North S. Herrera Way
 - Phone: 602-248-1550
- **Tucson:** 120 bed facility
 - Address: 520 E. Ajo Way
 - Phone: 520-638-2150
- **Flagstaff:** 80 bed facility
 - Address: 2100 N Gemini Dr.
- **Yuma:** 80 bed facility
 - Address: 6051 E. 34th St.

Phoenix



Tucson



Flagstaff



Yuma

For more on eligibility, visit www.azdvs.gov

Arizona Veterans' Memorial Cemeteries



- Arizona Veterans' Memorial Cemeteries offer burials to all eligible members of the Armed Forces. For a fee, the veteran's spouse and qualifying dependents are also eligible.

Camp Navajo (Bellemont)
(928) 214-3473



Marana
(520) 638-4869



Sierra Vista
(520) 458-7144



For more on eligibility, visit www.azdvs.gov

Arizona State Approving Agency



- The State Approving Agency (SAA) is responsible for reviewing, evaluating and approving quality programs of education and training under State and Federal criteria
 - The SAA works with educational partners to:
 - Promote and safeguard quality education and training programs for Veterans;
 - Ensure greater educational training opportunities to meet the changing need of Veterans; and
 - Assist the VA in preventing fraud, waste and abuse in the administration of the GI Bill
- Arizona has over 17,000 GI Bill users
- The SAA has approved over 400 state institutions to accept GI Bill benefits

For questions contact: saa-special@azdvs.gov



Arizona Military Family Relief Fund



- The Arizona Military Family Relief Fund (MFRF) provides financial assistance to the families of currently deployed service members, plus military and Veteran families for hardships caused by the service member's deployment
 - For separated service members, this includes, but is not limited to, hardships caused by service-connected disabilities
- The lifetime financial assistance limit for service members, Veterans and their families is \$20,000
 - Applicants can receive emergency assistance of up to \$3,000 once in a lifetime

For questions contact: mfrf@azdvs.gov



Arizona Military Family Relief Fund



- Service Members and Veterans discharged under ***honorable conditions*** who meet all of the following criteria may be eligible for financial assistance:

Deployment by the service member or Veteran	Arizona Residency (one of the following must apply to the service member or Veteran)	Financial Hardship (one of the following must apply)
<p>Deployment includes any movement from a military service member's home station to somewhere outside the continental U.S. and its territories.</p>	<p>1. Claimed Arizona as home of record while in service OR</p>	<p>For Veterans, service members and family members: must demonstrate that military service caused their current financial hardship</p> <p>For surviving families: service member or Veteran died or was wounded in the line of duty and family members need financial assistance with travel and living expenses</p>
	<p>2. Deployed with an Arizona National Guard or Reserve unit OR</p>	
	<p>3. Deployed from an Arizona military installation OR</p>	
	<p>4. Established residency in Arizona and is able to provide proof of continuous physical presence in Arizona for at least 12 months before submitting an application</p>	

Veteran Toolkit



- The Veteran Toolkit Program funds expenses associated with beginning employment for Veterans
 - For example, if a Veteran is getting a job in the medical field and needs scrubs before they start, the toolkit will buy the scrubs to make sure there are no barriers standing between the Veteran and their new job
- Qualifying Veterans must:
 - Live in Arizona
 - Have a job offer and are in need of tangible items to start employment
 - Visit any ARIZONA@WORK to apply



For questions contact: benefits@azdvs.gov



Arizona Veteran Supportive Campuses



- The Arizona Veteran Supportive Campus (AVSC) program is intended to address the unique needs of Veterans, service members and their families on campuses
- Certification ensures institutions understand the needs of their military and Veteran students and are continually responsive to those needs
 - In order to be eligible for certification as a AVSC, an institution must be certified as eligible to receive GI Bill educational benefits.



For questions contact: vetsupportivecampus@azdvs.gov



Tuition Waiver



- The tuition waiver program provides eligible veterans or surviving dependents with tuition-free education at any public state university or community college.
- **Eligibility**
 - As outlined in **A.R.S 15-1808** here are the types of eligibility criteria for the tuition waiver (applicants must meet one of the criteria and be accepted into the institution where they'd like to utilize the tuition waiver):
 1. Dependent spouse and/or children up to age 30 of an Arizona National Guard Member or member of the United States Armed Forces who was a resident of the state of Arizona or stationed in Arizona and who was killed in the line of duty or who died from injuries suffered in the line of duty while traveling to or from duty.
 2. A member of the Arizona National Guard who received a Purple Heart Citation on or after September 11, 2001.



Tuition Waiver



3. A former member of the Arizona National Guard who was medically discharged from the Arizona National Guard due to an injury or disability suffered:
 - a) During status under title 10, United States code;
 - b) In weekend training status;
 - c) In annual training status **OR**
 - d) In response to a state of emergency declared by the Governor
4. A person who is a former member of the United States Armed Forces
 - a) Who received a Purple Heart citation; AND
 - b) Who was a resident of the State of Arizona or was stationed in Arizona at the time of the injury that resulted in the Purple Heart citation; AND
 - c) Who's disability rating determined by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs is 50% or more.

For questions contact: benefits@azdvs.gov



Honorary Diploma



- Arizona's Honorary Diploma program recognizes the life experiences and contributions of honorably discharged Veterans who were unable to complete their high school education because of service in the armed forces during World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War, pursuant to [Chapter 56 \(HB2549\)\(link is external\)](#) and [Chapter 19 \(HB2450\)\(link is external\)](#). The Honorary Diploma program was originally introduced in 2001 and amended in 2009.
- To obtain an honorary diploma, a Veteran may submit a request to ADVS to receive a diploma from the Arizona high school of their choosing. Additionally, guidelines allow for a surviving spouse or other immediate family member of a deceased Veteran to request the diploma. In order to qualify for the program, **the Veteran submitting must meet the following criteria:**
 - Currently reside in the state
 - Provide documented evidence from ADVS that the person enlisted in the armed forces of the United States and served in World War II, the Korean War or the Vietnam War
 - At least 65 years of age
 - Honorably discharged



For questions contact: benefits@azdvs.gov



Minority Veterans Program



- According to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, just over 40% of minority Veterans are using their VA benefits. Minority Veterans are a widely underrepresented community comprised of numerous demographics. This program aims to ensure every Veteran in Arizona has the knowledge of and access to all benefits and resources available.
- **Program Goals:**
 - Promote the use of Federal and State Benefits
 - Support and initiate educational and sensitized activities for ADVS staff and the public
 - Perform minority-specific outreach
 - Advocate on behalf of minority Veterans

For questions contact: azminorityvets@azdvs.gov



Arizona Veterans' Donation Fund



- The Arizona Veterans' Donation Fund (VDF) assists programs and initiatives that benefit Veterans and their families. The VDF supports Arizona's Veteran community through small grants (\$4,999 or less) and large grants (\$5,000-\$75,000), each with their own application process.
 - More than \$1 million granted yearly to support the Veteran community
 - Organizations can find the application process on our website
- For questions regarding small and large grants contact: vdf@azdvs.gov**
- Funds come from tax-deductible charitable donations and the purchasing of Veteran, Women Veterans or Freedom Arizona license plates



Purchase at www.ServiceArizona.com



Arizona Gold Star Military Medal



- The Arizona State Legislature created the Arizona Gold Star Military Medal to honor Arizona members of the Armed Forces of the United States of America who have been killed in action since Arizona became a State on February 14, 1912.
 - The families of qualifying individuals must complete the application form on our website.
- ADVS performs ceremonies for each Gold Star Military Medal presented

More information can be found on our website: azdvs.gov



Arizona Action Plan to End Homelessness Among Veterans



- We take seriously the challenge of assisting homeless veterans to find safe shelter where possible
- The Arizona Action Plan to End Homelessness Among Veterans began in 2010 – we’ve seen success, but there’s still work to be done
- ADVS and the Arizona Housing Coalition are collaborating to institute three key goals and 26 regionalized objectives to sustain efforts to end homelessness among veterans in Arizona
- As of Feb. 2022, the “By Name List” showed 931 homeless veterans



Arizona Action Plan to End Homelessness Among Veterans



- Goals

- End street/shelter homelessness among veterans
- Transform the temporary help system
- Ensure ongoing system functionality for all veterans experiencing homelessness

- StandDown Events

- ADVS assists in funding StandDown events hosted by the Arizona Veterans StandDown Alliance.
- StandDowns provide benefits and services to thousands of veterans a year



Arizona Roadmap to Veteran Employment



- The Arizona Roadmap to Veteran Employment, developed by ADVS and the Arizona Coalition for Military Families, is a comprehensive statewide effort that focuses on connecting veterans, service members and family members to employment opportunities and resources.
 - Includes options for job seekers, employment service providers and employers
 - <http://arizonacoalition.org/employment/>



Be Connected



The Be Connected program is a statewide effort to strengthen access to support and resources for the service members, Veterans and their families who call Arizona home.



CALL

A veteran, family member, or someone in the community can call **1-866-4AZ-VETS** to obtain resources, seek advice, or reach a crisis specialist for immediate assistance



MATCH

Be Connected employs statewide resource navigators that offer personalized help connecting to resources. People can explore and be matched to resources online at www.BeConnectedAZ.org



LEARN

Be Connected also provides in-person and online training so everyone can gain the knowledge and skills to help at www.BeConnectedAZ.org

How Can You Support Arizona's Veterans?



- Contribute to the Arizona Veterans' Donation Fund
- Donate to the Arizona Military Family Relief Fund
- Volunteer at an Arizona State Veteran Home
- Become a Military/Veteran Resource Navigator
- Tell people about the services we offer!



Important Contacts



- **Arizona Department of Veterans' Services:**

www.azdvs.gov or 602-255-3373

- **Be Connected:**

www.BeConnectedAZ.org or
1-866-4AZ-VETS (429-8387)

- **Arizona State Veteran Home Admissions**

Hotline: 602-234-5678

- **U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs:**

www.va.gov

- **VA Call Center for Benefits: 1-800-827-1000**

- **VA Health Care: 1-877-222-VETS (8387)**

- **VA Inspector General: 1-800-488-8244**

- **Veterans Crisis Line: 1-800-273-8255, Opt. 1**

