

WASHINGTON STATE  
DEPARTMENT OF  
**VETERANS  
AFFAIRS**



*"Serving Those Who Served"*

**July 2025**



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## **Greetings from your WDVA Director: David Puente**

Washington's commitment to serving Veterans runs deep - so deep that Soldiers and Veterans Homes were written into our State Constitution (Article X, Section 3) from the very beginning.

Since then, we've expanded from one original home to four across the state, replacing buildings and modernizing facilities to meet the evolving

needs of Veterans and their families. Our Capital Projects team is constantly planning, ensuring we continue to provide safe, dignified care for generations to come.

Keeping elected officials informed is essential. When they visit our Homes, they witness firsthand the results of public investment, like newly installed flooring, upgraded HVAC systems, and redesigned bathing suites and hear directly from residents and staff about what more is needed.

Over the past few weeks, we've had the honor of welcoming several leaders:

- **Spokane Veterans Home** Residents shared stories with Governor Ferguson.
- **Walla Walla Veterans Home** Residents connected with Governor Ferguson during his tour.
- **Washington Soldiers Home (Orting)** Attendees included Representative Josh Penner and Legislative Assistant Sara Wendell.
- **Washington Veterans Home (Port Orchard)** – Attendees included Sen. Deborah Krishnadasan, Rep. Tarra Simmons and staff from the office of Rep. Emily Randall

These visits help us advocate for future funding, including land to replace the Spokane Veterans Home and approval to rebuild the Washington Soldiers Home in Orting. Our thanks also go to Senators Marcus Riccelli and Leonard Christian for their support in securing funding in Spokane for the replacement facility.

Every step forward reflects our promise to Serve Those Who Served.

Stay tuned! More updates are coming as we move ahead with new projects and improvements across all our Homes.

To learn more about our Veterans Homes visit, [Veterans Homes | WDVA](#)

Interested in working at one of our Homes? Take a look at our [available opportunities](#) with WDVA!



## WDVA News and Current Events

### 8th Annual Serving Those Who Served Conference

#### Are you registered?

This year's Serving Those Who Served Conference will take place in Yakima on August 20 and 21. Registration is free, and we are once again partnering with Washington Employment Security Department and Washington State Arts Commission to bring you a fantastic variety of breakout sessions!

This two-day conference will enhance collaboration among professionals who support Veterans and their families. It is a hub for sharing knowledge and resources, with a focus on practical solutions and impactful discussions.

**August 20th & 21st**  
**Yakima Convention Center**



8:00 am – 5:00 pm  
[REGISTER HERE](#)

What you can expect:

- **Statewide Networking:** Connect with peers and experts in veteran services.
- **Expert Insights:** Gain valuable knowledge on a variety of veteran-related issues.
- **Interactive Sessions:** Participate in discussions on topics that are focused on veteran benefits, employment best practices, behavioral health, and veterans engaging with art.

[Reserve your spot today!](#)

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## VAAC Town Hall and Women Veterans Forum - Okanogan County, Omak Elks Lodge

### 8:30 a.m. - 9:30 a.m. - Women Veterans Forum

The Washington Women Veterans Advisory Committee (WVAC) is calling all women Veterans for a “She Served” forum. They want to listen and discuss the needs of Women Veterans in the region and how we can improve access to the benefits they have earned.

Forum will be held on the Elks outdoor patio area. All are also invited to attend the VAAC Town Hall afterwards, please share any questions at [womenveterans@dva.wa.gov](mailto:womenveterans@dva.wa.gov)

### 10:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. - VAAC Town Hall

Okanogan County Veterans, your Governor’s Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee wants to hear from you! Join us, along with community partners as we hear updates on:

- WDVA Services,
- PACT Act,
- County Veterans Program
- Suicide Prevention Program & more

Share your questions with us at [communications@dva.wa.gov](mailto:communications@dva.wa.gov)



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## Outstanding Service to Veterans Awards - Nominations Now Open

## Know someone who goes above and beyond for Veterans?

Whether they're volunteers, advocates, National Guard members, or part of Tribal Veteran programs, now's the time to honor their impact.



The Governor's Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee is accepting nominations for the **Outstanding Service to Veterans Awards**, recognizing individuals and teams across seven categories. Honorees will be celebrated at the Auburn Veteran's Day Parade and a special luncheon.

### Top Categories Include:

- **Superior Award:** Highest honor for outstanding accomplishments
- **Distinguished Service Award:** Recognizing special contributions
- **Team Award:** Celebrating collaborative excellence

Nominate your heroes today! let their service shine.

To submit a nomination, please fill out the Nomination Form available at: <https://forms.office.com/g/nxiwqJkrgP>

To learn more visit, [Outstanding Service To Veterans Hall of Fame | WDVA](#)

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## Honoring Purple Heart Heroes: VFW Auxiliary's Support Recognized

WDVA and WSDOT were honored to visit the Toutle Valley Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 10882 to formally present a certificate of appreciation to the Auxiliary, acknowledging their support for the Purple Heart State sign initiative. The Auxiliary's generous donation allows for the placement of two highway signs.



On July 25, 2021, the Washington State Legislature passed HB 1250, officially designating the state a Purple Heart State; this further acknowledges Washington States' gratitude to the men and women of the military who were killed or wounded as a result of an act of an enemy of the United States or in military combat.

All Individuals and Organizations are invited to donate to thank and honor Veterans who were killed or wounded and received a Purple Heart in service to their country.

Donations in any amount are welcome and every donation counts!

Visit <https://www.dva.wa.gov/purpleheartstate> to learn more and download an application!

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## Celebrating the Legacy of the Orting Veterans Farm



As we bid farewell to the Orting Veterans Farm, which will cease operations on July 1 due to completion of funding from a VA Rural Farms Grant, we reflect on the immense impact it has had on the community, the land, and the many Veterans who found purpose and healing through its soil.

This farm was more than just acres of land, it was a space for growth, resilience, and connection.

Over the years, the Orting Veterans Farm accomplished incredible milestones, becoming a model of sustainability, education, and service.

To learn about the Farm's long-term impact and to read the full article visit, [Orting Veterans Farm | WDVA](#)

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## Check out what's happening at our Veterans Homes

### Washington Veterans Home



Our 2nd annual Fun Fest lit up with free family fun for all! From face painting and games to visits from the Kitsap County Sheriff's Office, SWAT team, South Kitsap Fire and Rescue, and branches of the military, there was something for everyone. Residents especially enjoyed connecting with active-duty service members.

Thanks to Veterans Allegiance VMC and [VFW Auxiliary 2669](#), we offered free hot dogs, popcorn, and live music by *Ten Strings and a Box*. With hundreds in attendance, the day was a huge success. We're already looking forward to next year!

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## Washington Soldiers Home in Orting

Sunshine, serenity, and a tug on the line... On a gorgeous morning. Residents and volunteers came together for some well-earned outdoor joy: fishing at the campus pond!

The air was fresh, the company warm, and the fish biting.

Moments like these remind us how meaningful simple pleasures can be.



## Walla Walla Veterans Home

Summer's off to a joyful and vibrant start at the Walla Walla Veterans Home!

From Wii bowling and raised-bed gardening to baseball games, fishing, and scenic drives, our veterans, spouses, widows, and beloved Gold Star Mother have embraced a season full of adventure. They've flown drones, enjoyed concerts, practiced seated yoga, and found healing through music therapy with June McKenzie and a visit to Teresa Larson's enchanting hummingbird sanctuary. Add in tea parties, patio BBQs, and creative arts and crafts - there's truly something for everyone.

Huge thanks to the [Washington State Arts Commission](#) for the generous grant that makes these experiences possible, and an extra special shoutout to [Volunteers Love Serving Veterans](#) for their incredible Fourth of July celebration and year-round dedication.



## Events & Observances Calendar

[Click Here to View Upcoming Events](#)



S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17						

[Submit an Event](#)

## Program Spotlight

### Veteran Owned Businesses

Washington State offers a [free certification for Veterans and Servicemembers](#) requiring only basic discharge status and business details to apply.

Thanks to a partnership between WDVA and WEBS (Washington's Electronic Business Solution), the registration and certification process is now easier than ever. Once certified, your business will be listed in a statewide directory that's accessible to:



State agencies, who are encouraged by the Governor's Office to allocate 5% of purchases to Veteran/Servicemember Owned Businesses.

Municipalities, private companies, and citizens, looking to support veteran-owned enterprises in their communities.

Certification not only increases your visibility - but it also helps Washington track progress toward meaningful procurement goals and connect communities with your services.

To learn more visit: [Veteran Owned Businesses | WDVA](#)

## More Information

### Are you a Veteran or know a Veteran struggling to find shelter?

The VA and Pierce County are hosting an Outreach Surge for Veterans experiencing homelessness.

#### **Where:**

Pierce County Human Services Soundview Building

3602 Pacific Ave

Tacoma, WA, 98418

**When:** July 30 and 31st, 2025; 9am – 3pm

#### **Onsite resources:**

Community Housing

- Outreach Services
- Primary Care
- Transitional Housing
- Permanent Supportive Housing
- Suicide Prevention
- Claims & Benefits
- Health Care Enrollment & Eligibility
- Supportive Services for Veteran Families
- Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs
- Veterans Benefits Administration
- Pierce and Tacoma Housing Authorities
- Tacoma Vet Center Pierce County Veterans Program
- ...and more



For more information: VA Puget Sound Community Housing and Outreach Services 206-764-5149, press 2 or e-mail to: [PUGHCHVSouthSound@va.gov](mailto:PUGHCHVSouthSound@va.gov)

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