

# 2024 Current Fiscal Year Report: Advisory Committee on the Readjustment of Veterans

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## 1. Department or Agency

Department of Veterans Affairs

## 2. Fiscal Year

2024

## 3. Committee or Subcommittee

Advisory Committee on the Readjustment of Veterans

## 3b. GSA

## Committee No.

1331

## 4. Is this New Fiscal Year?

No

## 5. Current Charter

04/16/2016

## 6. Expected Renewal Date

## 7. Expected Term Date

## 8a. Was Terminated During Fiscal Year?

No

## 8b. Specific Termination Authority

## 8c. Actual Term Date

## 9. Agency Recommendation for Next Fiscal Year

Continue

## 10a. Legislation Req to Terminate?

Not Applicable

## 10b. Legislation Pending?

Not Applicable

## 11. Establishment Authority Statutory (Congress Created)

## 12. Specific Establishment Authority

38 U.S.C. 545

## 13. Effective Date

10/09/1996

## 14. Committee Type

Continuing

## 14c. Presidential?

No

## 15. Description of Committee Non Scientific Program Advisory Board

## 16a. Total Number of Reports

No Reports for this Fiscal Year

## 17a. Open

0

## 17b. Closed

0

## 17c. Partially Closed

0

## Other Activities

0

## Meetings and Dates

No Meetings

Current Next  
FY FY

<b>18a(1). Personnel Pmts to Non-Federal Members</b>	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>18a(2). Personnel Pmts to Federal Members</b>	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>18a(3). Personnel Pmts to Federal Staff</b>	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>18a(4). Personnel Pmts to Non-Member Consultants</b>	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>18b(1). Travel and Per Diem to Non-Federal Members</b>	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>18b(2). Travel and Per Diem to Federal Members</b>	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>18b(3). Travel and Per Diem to Federal Staff</b>	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>18b(4). Travel and Per Diem to Non-member Consultants</b>	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>18c. Other(rents,user charges, graphics, printing, mail, etc.)</b>	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>18d. Total</b>	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>19. Federal Staff Support Years (FTE)</b>	0.00	0.00

**20a. How does the Committee accomplish its purpose?**

To fully map the readjustment service needs of Veterans returning from military service in a combat theater, the Committee strives to understand the psychological, social, familial, economic and educational needs critical for a successful post-war readjustment to civilian life, as well as the psychosocial readjustment needs that accompany the physical wounds of war such as TBI, and family supportive counseling. In conjunction with its needs assessments, the Committee reviews VHA's services available to meet these war-related readjustment needs. The Committee has identified several VA programs that are of value to Veterans' post-military readjustment to include: Readjustment Counseling

Service Vet Centers; Mental Health with particular attention to VHA's Office of Mental Health and Suicide Prevention, Care Management and Social Work Services, PTSD and substance use treatment programs; Primary Care; polytrauma systems of care; homeless programs; and VBA's employment, education and service connection programs. Based on the unique needs of combat theater Veterans, Service members and their families, the Committee will focus on critical readjustment service functions that not only match VA's priorities of: Goal 1: Veterans choose VA for easy access, greater choices, and clear information to make informed decisions, Goal 2: Veterans receive timely and integrated care and support that emphasizes their well-being and independence throughout their life journey, Goal 3: Veterans trust VA to be consistently accountable and transparent, Goal 4: VA will modernize systems and focus resources more efficiently to be competitive and to provide World Class capabilities to Veterans and its employees; but also those that correspond with VHA's priorities and RCS's strategic goals of 1) building the trust of Veterans and the American people; 2) fostering our organizational learning; and 3) modernizing our systems. The Committee's reports will be widely distributed within VA, to Congressional leaders, and to the major Veterans service organizations.

**20b. How does the Committee balance its membership?**

The Committee is composed of war-zone Veterans, all of whom have shown some type of significant post-military career accomplishment in their respective communities. Among the membership are attorneys, health care and mental health providers, state directors of Veterans'

services, and other various professionals, all of whom collectively represent the various branches of the U.S. Military. The Committee membership also maintains diversity of gender, ethnicity and geographical representation. The Committee provides a diversity of perspective and expertise indispensable to its function as a Veteran consumer representative body that reinforces VA's efforts to Improve the Veteran Experience and build their trust.

### **20c. How frequent and relevant are the Committee Meetings?**

The Committee conducts at least two meetings each year. The input of this Committee continues to be positive, constructive, and helpful in informing VA's understanding of post-war readjustment problems and in advising the management of service delivery systems to meet the needs of returning war Veterans. The Committee contributes to quality improvements in VA programs in readjustment counseling, medical facility PTSD services, Veterans employment and family issues pertaining to readjustment, and resolving difficulties regarding compensation and disability for PTSD. The Committee's input also provides substantive contributions to improving Veterans' trust in and access to VA services. The significant level of utilization of VA programs in readjustment counseling, mental health and health care among the new Veteran populations who served in Afghanistan and Iraq suggests that this Committee's activities will be tremendously valuable to VA for the foreseeable future. In FY 2023, the Committee was able to meet three times, twice in person: November 2022 (Washington D.C.); February 2023 (San Diego CA); and virtually in March 2023.

**20d. Why can't the advice or information this committee provides be obtained elsewhere?**

The Committee provides an organized forum of motivated Veterans of various backgrounds, demographics and areas of expertise who review VA services and benefits, and provide recommendations to the Secretary. The Committee's input represents that of well-informed and thoughtful consumer representatives who focus their attention on the effectiveness and coordination of VA and other agency services, with particular attention to the readjustment needs of Veterans returning from combat. The Committee's conclusions and recommendations are generated from testimonies of Veteran consumers, VA, other agency service providers, and various other program officials. The Committee also conducts thoughtful reviews of relevant research findings and program policy positions significant to Veteran services. VA service providers and management officials are sufficiently involved with ongoing issues of direct service delivery and program management to preclude this type of careful attention and review provided by the Committee regarding the interface between VA service providers and Veteran consumers. The Committee is the only organized external body that provides systematic review of Veterans' readjustment problems to include war-related PTSD. The Committee's input is directly relevant to building trust and positive experiences, and is of significant value for Suicide Prevention.

**20e. Why is it necessary to close and/or partially closed committee meetings?**

The Committee's meetings are open to the public, unless the Committee meets directly with Veteran consumers which would be closed in order to

protect the patient privacy and in accordance with the Government in the Sunshine Act (5 U.S.C. section 552b).

## 21. Remarks

The Committee's twenty third Annual Report contained seven recommendations, however, Recommendation 1 contained 3 parts, Recommendation 2 contained five parts, Recommendation 3 contained 4 parts, Recommendation 4 contained five parts, Recommendation 5 contained four parts, Recommendation 6 contained 3 parts and Recommendation 7 contained three parts. Primarily focused on the post war readjustment of Veterans, and the further organizational development of the Readjustment Counseling Service (RCS) and the areas of needed collaborative alignment with VHA to ensure the continued success of the RCS Vet Center program mission for providing outreach and readjustment counseling to combat Veterans, Service members and their families. The response to report recommendations has been published and the committee will begin work toward composing the 24th report when they meet in November of 2023. The Committee recently completed a membership package and appointed six new members. Jessica Dunn was erroneously omitted from the FY20 ACR and her appointment term dates were reported incorrectly in the FY21 and FY22 ACRs, but her appointment term dates are now reported accurately.

## Designated Federal Officer

Richard Barbato Designated Federal Officer

Committee Members	Start	End	Occupation	Member Designation
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Anderson, Joseph	01/19/2021	06/30/2024	Consultant	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
Castles, John	06/27/2023	05/31/2026	Consultant	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
Chitaphong, Khamkay	06/27/2023	05/31/2026	Clinical Social worker	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
DeLuca, Abigail	06/27/2023	05/31/2026	Nurse	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
Herke, Larry	08/15/2022	05/31/2025	State Director of Veteran Services	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
Jacobs, Cheryl	06/27/2023	05/31/2026	Retired	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
Marcotte, Viviana	08/15/2022	05/31/2025	Education	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
Nystrom, Heather	08/15/2022	05/31/2025	Social Worker	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
Pike, Isaac	08/15/2022	05/31/2025	Social Worker	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
Thomas, Danica	06/27/2023	05/31/2026	Non-Profit Member	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
Tyler, Nate	06/27/2023	05/31/2026	Tribal Leder	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member

**Number of Committee Members Listed: 11**

### **Narrative Description**

The Congressional mandate of this Committee to assist VA to improve the post-war readjustment of Veterans who served in combat is central to VA. The Committee's recommendations contribute to facilitating Veterans' post-war transition to civilian life

and to the successful recovery of war-wounded Veterans.

**What are the most significant program outcomes associated with this committee?**

	Checked if Applies
Improvements to health or safety	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Trust in government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Major policy changes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Advance in scientific research	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Effective grant making	<input type="checkbox"/>
Improved service delivery	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Increased customer satisfaction	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Implementation of laws or regulatory requirements	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Outcome Comments**

Based on the Committee membership being composed of Veteran leaders in their home communities, a positive outcome is enhancement of public relations for VA.

**What are the cost savings associated with this committee?**

	Checked if Applies
None	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Unable to Determine	<input type="checkbox"/>
Under \$100,000	<input type="checkbox"/>
\$100,000 - \$500,000	<input type="checkbox"/>
\$500,001 - \$1,000,000	<input type="checkbox"/>
\$1,000,001 - \$5,000,000	<input type="checkbox"/>
\$5,000,001 - \$10,000,000	<input type="checkbox"/>
Over \$10,000,000	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cost Savings Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Cost Savings Comments**

NA

**What is the approximate Number of recommendations produced by this committee for the life of the committee?**



**Number of Recommendations Comments**

This is a total of recommendations that VA concurred with or concurred-in-principle with on reports submitted from FY 2003 through FY 2023.

**What is the approximate Percentage of these recommendations that have been or will be Fully implemented by the agency?**

95%

**% of Recommendations Fully Implemented Comments**

Partial implementation of some recommendations is considered a positive outcome by the Committee.

**What is the approximate Percentage of these recommendations that have been or will be Partially implemented by the agency?**

5%

**% of Recommendations Partially Implemented Comments**

All of the Committee's recommendations are given serious consideration by the agency and implemented to the extent feasible.

**Does the agency provide the committee with feedback regarding actions taken to implement recommendations or advice offered?**

Yes ☒ No ☐ Not Applicable ☐

**Agency Feedback Comments**

Agency feedback is provided in writing in response to the Committee's reports. Feedback is also provided verbally from participating VA officials during the course of the Committee's meetings each year.

**What other actions has the agency taken as a result of the committee's advice or recommendation?**

Checked if Applies

Reorganized Priorities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Reallocated resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Issued new regulation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Proposed legislation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Approved grants or other payments	<input type="checkbox"/>

Other



### **Action Comments**

The Committee's conclusions and recommendations have been referenced by the agency in Congressional reports and hearing statements.

### **Is the Committee engaged in the review of applications for grants?**

No

### **Grant Review Comments**

NA

### **How is access provided to the information for the Committee's documentation?**

Checked if Applies

Contact DFO



Online Agency Web Site



Online Committee Web Site



Online GSA FACA Web Site



Publications



Other



### **Access Comments**

Committee members networking within their respective communities with other local community leaders provides additional informal access to the Committee's work.