



# KOOTENAI COUNTY

## VETERANS SERVICES



December 11, 2023

To: Kootenai County Board of County Commissioners

Subject: KOOTENAI COUNTY VETERANS SERVICES OFFICER (KCVSO) ANNUAL REPORT FY2023

The following report is produced annually (Oct-Sep) by the KCVSO to document Veterans Services activities and provides other statistical information concerning veterans and services in Kootenai County, Idaho.

An important note, the data in this report is not fully representative of the KCVSO activities and some of the services and activities that are performed by this office are not necessarily quantifiable. As an example, FY22 and prior years, some of the data included State VSO's who were collocated in this office up until Jan 2023. Furthermore, KCVSO and the assistant interact regularly with individuals, groups and agencies (private and public) during and after normal business hours, many of which are unscheduled and impromptu, and not formal in nature. Lastly, software and resources for data are constantly evolving.

Additionally, comparing data in this report with previous fiscal years may not be a direct comparison of activities, current or past. This is a fluid report and services provided are constantly developing with changes in the Department of Veterans Affairs and other State and local agencies that administer services and benefits to Veterans. This past year the software this office uses as a client data base and services preparation tool was significantly updated. As a result this update caused a shift in how some data is tabulated.

Some key points are follows:

- 1. Significant Shift in Veteran Population:** Kootenai County remained the second most Veteran populous county in Idaho, overtaking Canyon County in recent years. According to 2020 VA census data, the top three Veteran Counties in Idaho are as follows: Ada = 35,168, Kootenai = 16,211, and Canyon = 15,168. This data is always several years behind. However, based on recent growth percentages, the KCVSO estimates Kootenai County is well in excess of 16,211. These numbers do not take into account a larger community of family members and surviving spouses.
- 2. Office Communications:** Incoming phone calls are still higher than historical average and up 133 calls from FY22 to FY23. There was a significant uptick in scheduled appts and walk-ins dropped by an even proportion from FY22 to FY23.

(continued)

3. **Community Outreach:** This past year, outreach has remained steady comparatively to recent years. Community outreach is defined as Veteran home visits, attending veteran service organization meetings, providing training in the community, and face-to-face or electronic networking outside of the office.
4. **Services Demographic Shift:** During FY22, the Veterans Services Office continued to observe a significant number of new Veterans relocating to the area which is consistent with the region's exponential growth in recent years. Additionally, data is showing a shift in the bulk services towards post Vietnam War Era Veterans who served from 1975 to present. Due to age, our WWII, Korea and Vietnam Veteran population is rapidly shrinking.
5. **VA Total Expenditures:** Monies received by Veterans living in the county from the VA increased over \$26 million in FY22, up from \$168 million to \$194 million. Furthermore, Compensation and Pension expenditures made up \$17.5 million of the VA's increase in expenditures that equated to an overall 13% increase over FY22, compared to a 9% increase in 2021 . Compensation and Pension expenditures are monies that are given directly to the Veteran as nontaxable income as a result of the KCVSO claims process. Disclaimer -- Claims are produced by other VSO entities and the Veterans themselves.
6. **Expenditures Per Veteran:** Kootenai County receives roughly \$12,000 annually in VA expenditures per Vet, again per FY22 data.

Points of contact for this report are Thomas Freeman (KCVSO) and Jessica Christensen (Assistant KCVSO) at 208 446-1090.



Thomas Freeman  
Director, County Veterans Services  
120 East Railroad Avenue  
Post Falls, Idaho 83854



**Kootenai County Veteran Services Office  
120 E. Railroad Avenue, Post Falls, ID 83854  
Office: (208) 446-1090 FAX (208) 446-1093**

## **FISCAL YEAR 2023 REPORT**

### **OCT 2022 – SEP 2023**

Compiled By:

Kootenai County  
Veteran Services Office

**Thomas Freeman**  
**Veteran Services, Director**

*“Veterans’ Helping Veterans’*



## VA Dollars Brought Back to the County Through Claims

Number of Veterans geographically in KC = 16,212 <sup>(1)</sup>

Kootenai County Veterans Service Officer Office Staff = 2

### VA Expenditures By Type of Claim <sup>(2)</sup>

Compensation/Pension: \$110,195,000

Education/Voc Rehab: \$5,307,000

Insurance and Indemnity: \$298,000

Medical Care: \$78,543,000

**TOTAL \$194,343,000**

(1) Population from ID Dept. of Labor 2020 report. Population growth reporting usually lags behind actual - Est. 2020 County Vet Population 15 -16,000

(2) VA Expenditures (2022) derived online from the VA's National Center for Veterans Analysis and Statistics. <https://www.va.gov/vetdata/Expenditures.asp> (see expenditures table)



## **AVERAGE PERCENTAGE OF VETERANS SEEN AND MOST COMMON CLAIM FILED IN THOSE GROUPS <sup>(3)</sup>**

WWII 8% (Hearing Loss/Pension)

KOREAN 9% (Hearing Loss/Pension)

Vietnam 35% (Hearing Loss/Agent Orange Presumptives)

Gulf War/OEF/OIF 27% (PTSD/Pact Act)

Peace Time 15% (Hearing Loss/Sustained Injuries)

Other 6% ( Survivor DIC/Pension)

## **COMMUNITY OUTREACH <sup>(4)</sup>**

Shut-in Visits - Average (2) per month

VA briefings To Area Agencies - Average (2) per month

Attendance at Service Organizations - Average (5) per month



## Comparison from FY 2022 and FY 2023 <sup>(5,6)</sup>

<u>FISCAL YEAR</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>
Scheduled Appt.	552	719
Walk-in	1593	1323
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>2090</b>	<b>2042</b>
<u>AVERAGE PER MONTH</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>
Scheduled Appt.	46	65
Walk-in	133	109
Aver. Length Appt Initial claim		60-130 minutes
Aver. Length Walk-In Apt.		5-15 minutes
Aver. Request for records		5 minutes
Aver. Returned Call Time		10-45 minutes

(5) Data on this page was derived from internal Kootenai County Veterans Services Office records – daily sign-in sheets and calendar entries

(6) KCVSO Office consisted of (1) County VSO and (1) State VSO. In January, the state added an additional State VSO position to North Idaho, working out of the KCVSO Office, with a total of 2 State VSOs and (1) County VSO.



## Comparison from FY 2022 and FY 2023 (cont.)

<b>RECORDS</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b> <sup>(7)</sup>
New Clients Added	191	464
Records Edited	2147	2114
<b>Forms Prepared</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b> <sup>(7)</sup>
	2272	2173
<b>Phone Calls Returned</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b> <sup>(8)</sup>
	3363	3496

<sup>(7)</sup> VetraSpec Reports. VetraSpec is licensed secure online software solution management system used for Veteran claims built for Veteran service officers and state departments.

<sup>(8)</sup> Phone logs from Oct 01, 2021 to Sep 31, 2021.