

April 4th, 2016 9:00am – 11:00amMultnomah Building, 1st Floor Room 126, 501 SE Hawthorne Blvd, Portland, Oregon 97214**Meeting Focus: Families**

Welcome and Introductions	
Task Force meeting attended by: Diane McKeel, Sean Files, Catherine Todd, Alex Glover, Stephen Canova, Hank Bauer, Don Weber, Pete Pringle, John Concepcion, Doug Kuhl, Evan Hessel, Andrea Jusino, Leneld Brown, Mike Elston, Eric Ensley, Emily Hutchison, Andy Smith	
TOPIC / PRESENTER	NOTES
Drill Pay Update for Guard and Reserve Soldiers	Evan presented on the issue of drill pay overpayment, in which veterans who receive VA disability payment and a Guard paycheck at the same time. These soldiers were identified at a later date, notified of the overpayment that they owe, and were being sent to the collections process and benefits cut off. A Wasco County CVSO contacted the Senator's office with a case he was working on and Sen. Wyden sent a letter to the VA in January requesting action to correct this. Last month they received response from the VA that this overpayment will be treated similar to other VA collections programs, where veterans have an option of a payment plan and won't have benefits cut off. The full press release dated March 18 th with additional details is available at the weblink here , or at the website https://www.wyden.senate.gov/news/press-releases
Evan Hessel <i>Sen. Wyden's Office</i>	<p>Group discussion about the Veterans Choice program. Evan noted five new provisions in the program that the Senator helped get passed, and Task Force members noted that urgent care is a "black hole" in areas of the state where those services aren't open evening or weekends (Wasco County was one area specifically referenced).</p> <p>Evan also presented an overview of the letter Senator Wyden sent with seventeen other Senators to extend presumption of exposure to Agent Orange. The March 18th press release with additional information is available here.</p>

<p>ORNG Child & Youth Program Update – Month of the Military Child, Military Student Identification, School Partnerships</p> <p>Hank Bauer <i>Oregon National Guard Child & Youth Program</i></p>	<p>April is the Month of the Military Child. Focus is on recognizing military children who have a parent who is actively serving or is a veteran. There are approximately 10,000 military dependents in Oregon. April 15th is “Purple Up Day” – wear purple to raise awareness of support for military families. Currently working to set up social media campaign and will send out press release soon. Hank distributed a flyer with additional events during the month. The events are focused on Oregon National Guard (as an ORNG program) but if a child has a parent in the Reserves or Active Duty contact Hank and he can help with registration.</p> <p>School update: Met with Gresham – Barlow School District last year through the Task Force. Have continued to develop partnership since then and worked primarily with the Deputy Superintendent. Using available data, they know which county and age range children are, but don’t know what schools they are attending. Working with the district on a military child identifier, which would include one or two questions for parents to self-identify as well as information about resources that might be available to make it beneficial to the family. Eric noted that one focus for the CVSO AmeriCorps VISTA project will be outreach to families in economic hardship, and this is good opportunity to partner.</p> <p>*Action step: The Task Force will work with Hank to develop a letter of support for the school identifier efforts.</p>
<p>Overview of County Veteran Service Office Data Collection – VTF Work Plan</p> <p>Eric Ensley <i>Multnomah County</i></p>	<p>Eric presented on data collection efforts through the CVSO, which tracks demographic information that veterans voluntarily provide when they call the office, come to appointments, and connect with representatives at local events or outreach activities in the community. This information is entered into a database that can help inform future outreach efforts. Sean worked with the CVSO office to create a report of demographic data from the first three months of this calendar year, which was distributed in a handout and is available on the Task Force website.</p> <p>Eric noted that the period of service is similar to national data and representative of the county’s veterans. When asked about the World War II veterans, he noted that, anecdotally, many were referrals to long-term care facilities or referred to the office through partnerships with the county’s guardianship program. The referral form will be embedded on the CVSO site and as new information is entered it gets added to the spreadsheet. Eric noted that the survey is still being developed, and will focus on ways to track racial demographics (since there is not very good data on it now) and recently pulled question about service connected rating since that information is more accurate after the claims process than at the time of referral. The Task Force will continue to review this data in future meetings.</p> <p>Group discussion about how this data collection can fit with veteran housing efforts through Home For Everyone. Would be helpful to track discharge status upgrades, income, and housing status if that is possible. That data about the primary needs of veterans seeking services would also help inform future legislation or funding decisions.</p>

Updates
All

- Andy, policy staff for the Assoc. of Oregon Counties Veterans Committee, presented a brief legislative overview from the 2016 session. SB 1524, which passed, enables veterans who qualify for medical marijuana card and meet 100% disability rating or employment status threshold would not need to renew their card annually. HJR 202 also passed this session, and sends a measure to the ballot that would add language in the constitution appropriating money from lottery revenues for veterans services. Would be about \$18m next biennium if it passes, which is over 50% more than the current \$11-12m that ODVA receives now. The enrolled version of JHR 202 that passed this session was distributed as a handout and is available on the Task Force meeting materials website with these minutes.
- Eric: Opened position for County Veteran Service Officer, which can be accessed on multco.us/jobs until it closes on Friday. All training is provided, and the position will be in the jail but not on the jail floor every day.
- Don: Concordia is having a groundbreaking ceremony Thursday for the new Faubian Elementary building.
- Honor Flight is hosting a presentation on May 2nd at the Hillsboro Elks Lodget at 6pm to award a WWII veteran POW.
- Doug: Building a program to develop skills in urban farming. Handout distributed that will be posted to the meeting materials website. Contact Doug for more information, and Sean will connect Doug with the manager of the County's CROPS program for assistance and partnership opportunities.
- Alex: Portland Stand Down is September 9th at the Memorial Coliseum. The warehouse with surplus gear in New Jersey burned so surplus is now a slow item-by-item request process. Pete is taking the lead on that. East County Veterans Stand Down is October 22nd from 10-3 at the Chapel in Troutdale.
- Free tax return preparation for veterans, military members and their families. For more information, visit the VA newsletter "Veteran Connection" at <http://www.portland.va.gov/news/documents/veteranconnectionmarch2016.pdf>
- Commissioner McKeel: The May 2nd Task Force meeting will be the Executive Committee, which was announced at last month's meeting and will alternate monthly meetings with the full Veterans Task Force networking group. The 8-member executive committee will provide direction for the Task Force workplan, oversight on Veterans and Military Families VISTA Project and other similar initiatives, and a formal voice on advocacy around county policy or service improvement. As Committee Chair, Commissioner McKeel selected eight members for appointment on the Executive Committee, representing the county's human services, public safety, the County Veterans Service Office, a local nonprofit partner, the VA, a community member, and an education/workforce representative.
Appointees include: Commissioner McKeel, Peggy Brey (Multnomah County Dept. of County Human Services), Stu Walker (Multnomah County Dept. of Community Justice), Eric Ensley (CVSO Supervisor), Carolyn Bateson (Portland VA Medical Center), Alex Glover (Transition Projects), Bobbi Robinson (veteran community representative), and Greg Flores (Portland State). All meetings are will continue to be public with materials posted to the Task Force website, and the Task Force Networking Committee will meet next on June 6.