

Sunset Public Hearing Questions for
Department of Veterans' Services
Created by Section 4-3-2201, *Tennessee Code Annotated*
(Sunset termination June 2018)

1. Provide a brief introduction to the Department of Veterans' Services, including information about its purpose, statutory duties and staff.

HISTORY:

The Tennessee Department of Veterans Services was established in 1921 with the purpose to provide statewide services to Veterans, survivors and family members.

MISSION:

The department's mission is to serve Tennessee Veterans and their family members with dignity and compassion as an entrusted advocate.

VISION:

To serve as an effective and efficient conduit for Veterans of all eras; to connect them with resources and services that improve their quality of life, access to education, business resources and high quality jobs.

DUTIES:

The Tennessee Department of Veterans Services (TDVS) manages and maintains four State Veterans Cemeteries to include two in Knoxville, one in Nashville and one in Memphis. The future Tennessee State Veterans Cemetery at Parkers Crossroads is scheduled to open in the spring of 2018. The department also operates nine field offices statewide and the Appeals Division to serve more than 500,000 Veterans and 1.5 million family members in 95 counties.

REORGANIZATION:

In 2015, the department changed its name from Tennessee Department of Veterans Affairs to Tennessee Department of Veterans Services to decrease confusion between the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and the state department. Additionally, the department reorganized to restructure the Appeals Division and created three Regional Director and three Veteran Education Coordinator positions.

The Appeals Division was restructured to offer more specialized appeals support for customers presenting to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Board of Veterans Appeals.

Regional Directors were established to offer more individualized daily training, mentoring and supervision for Veteran Resource Coordinators. These positions also offer daily support to the County Service Officer partners.

Veteran Education Coordinators work with 91 public and private higher education campuses to collaborate in regards to best practices to recruit, retain and support student Veterans through to graduation.

EMPLOYEES

The Tennessee Department of Veterans Services is currently authorized to have 105 positions. There are currently 93 TDVS employees and 12 vacancies.

EMPLOYEE BREAKDOWN

PERONNEL	TITLE OR CLASSIFICATION
1	Commissioner
1	Deputy Commissioner
1	Assistant Commissioner-Middle Tennessee - Appeals Division
1	Assistant Commissioner-East Tennessee
1	Assistant Commissioner-West Tennessee
1	Assistant Commissioner-Intergovernmental & External Relations
17	Veterans Resource Coordinators
1	Appeals Attorney
2	Veterans Assistance Paralegal Counselors
1	Appeals Specialist-2
2	Appeals Specialist-1
3	Regional Directors
3	Veteran Education Coordinators
1	Budget Analyst Coordinator
1	Procurement Officer 1
1	Constituent Services Representative
4	Cemetery Directors
29	Cemetery Caretakers
5	Cemetery Equipment Operators
4	Cemetery Foremen
1	Training Officer-2
1	Training Officer 1
1	Department Counsel/Legislative Liaison
1	Clerk 1
1	Clerk 3
2	Executive Assistants
1	Veteran Education and Employment Director
3	Secretary
1	Human Resources Analyst 2
13	Administrative Assistants

2. What were the department’s revenues and expenditures for fiscal years 2016 and 2017?

Fiscal Year 2016 Expenditures:	\$6,871,563	Total
	\$1,204,461	Administration
	\$2,767,982	Cemeteries
	\$2,899,120	Field Offices/Appeals Division
Fiscal Year 2016 Funding:	\$6,871,563	Total
	\$ 4,633	Interdepartmental
	\$ 398,150	Current Services (Dependent Burials)
	\$1,171,277	Federal Veteran Burial Reimbursements
	\$5,297,503	State Appropriations

Fiscal Year 2017 Expenditures:	\$6,706,644	Total
	\$ 981,223	Administration
	\$2,935,074	Cemeteries
	\$2,790,347	Field Offices/Appeals Division
Fiscal Year 2017 Funding:	\$6,706,644	Total
	\$ 2,400	Interdepartmental
	\$ 378,773	Current Services (Dependent Burials)
	\$1,163,216	Federal Veteran Burial Reimbursements
	\$5,162,255	State Appropriations

3. Has the department established branch offices in each congressional district in the state as required in Section 58-3-106(a), *Tennessee Code Annotated*? Does the assistant commissioner or service officer in charge of each office visit each county seat within the congressional district each month as required? Have additional offices been opened in some congressional districts as authorized in Section 58-3-106(f), *Tennessee Code Annotated*?

The department does have a field office in each congressional district. There are nine field offices and the Appeals Division to offer claims assistance and appeals representation for Veterans and dependents. Regional Directors offer monthly training for County Service Officer partners, conduct office visits based on need and are available for daily consultations. Additionally, the department established the Training Division in 2014 which offers accreditation training for new service officers, quarterly regional training sessions and annual certification training for employees and county partners.

4. How many county and municipal Service Officers have been opened by local legislative bodies pursuant to Section 58-3-109, *Tennessee Code Annotated*? How does the county interact with these offices?

Since 2011, the number of County Service Officers has grown from 81 to 94. The department meets with county leaders to explain the need for County Service Officers committed to offer high-quality customer service and claims assistance. In cases when a County Service Officer needs to be hired, the department assists with criteria and offers consultation to identify the highest qualified candidate.

5. What type of training and accreditation is provided to county and municipal service officers as required by Section 58-3-111(d), *Tennessee Code Annotated*? How does the department ensure that all county and municipal service officers are trained and accredited?

In 2013, the department created a TDVS accreditation policy that has been shared with county leaders and County Service Officers. The policy was also added to the TDVS training page offered on the department's website. The department recommends accreditation to the United States Department of Veterans Affairs. In accordance with Title 38 Code of Federal Regulations 14.629, no individual may assist claimants in preparation, presentation and prosecution of claims for VA benefits as an agent or attorney unless he or she has first been accredited by VA for such purposes.

According to TCA 58-3-111 (d), "all veterans' service officers shall successfully complete training and be issued accreditation by the Department of Veterans' Affairs within one (1) year from the date of appointment." The Tennessee Department of Veterans Services is closely monitoring training attendance, test scores and office hours to determine recommendations for

accreditation, continued accreditation or revocation of accreditation. Per Title 38 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) the County Service Officer (CSO) is required to be a paid employee of the county working as a CSO for not less than 1,000 hours annually. Each CSO must also successfully complete a course of training and examination. In order to ensure Veterans and their families are receiving high quality, knowledgeable, consistent claims assistance; the department enforces accreditation requirements.

In cases when accreditation standards are not being met, department executive leadership meets with county leaders to discuss the shortcomings and solutions.

Additionally, the department established the Training Division in 2014 which offers accreditation training for new service officers, quarterly regional training sessions and annual certification training for employees and county partners. The Training Division monitors test scores and comprehension. This data is used to determine remedial training needs which is offered to County Service Officers per their needs.

Regional Directors offer monthly training for County Service Officer partners, conduct office visits based on need and are available for daily consultations.

6. How does the department interact with the War Records Bureau within the Military Department? What records does the bureau furnish to the department and how are those records used?

The Tennessee Department of Veterans Services interacts with War Records to receive DD-214's or discharge papers to determine Veteran status and service dates which can determine eligibility for federal benefits.

Currently, the United States Department of Defense mails DD-214's for newly discharged Tennessee Veterans to the Tennessee Department of Veterans Services. TDVS then mails the DD-214 to War Records with the Tennessee Military Department. When TDVS needs discharge papers to assist Veterans, survivors or family members with claims for federal benefits or burial eligibility, the department requests the DD-214 from War Records. The Department of Defense is transitioning to digital discharge information which is currently accessed by TDVS. The number of paper documents sent to War Records is continuing to decrease.

TDVS employees contact War Records approximately 389 times per month. It takes between 2 to 48 hours to receive the requested DD-214 or discharge papers if Tennessee was the home of record for the Veteran. If the Veteran enlisted out of state, TDVS employees have access to the Defense Personnel Records Image Retrieval System (DPRIS), Department of Defense digital discharge data, or they can submit requests to the National Personnel Records Center (NPRC) in St. Louis, Missouri.

REGION	MONTHLY REQUESTS TO WAR RECORDS
East	244
West	85
Middle	60

7. How was the department involved in the establishment of the State Veterans' Homes? What continuing involvement has the department maintained with the home?

There are currently four State Veterans Homes to include one in Murfreesboro, Humboldt, Knoxville and Clarksville.

The Tennessee Department of Veterans Services serves as a liaison between the Tennessee State Veterans Homes Board and the state. The Tennessee State Veterans Homes Board (TSVHB) oversees the management of the four existing homes. The Governor appoints the board members. Commissioners from the Tennessee Department of Veterans Services and Finance and Administration are ex-officio voting members of the TSVHB.

To create a new State Veterans Home, the department works with local community members to increase local awareness, support and to recommend a proposed site. The community members also collect local funding. Federal funds provide 65 percent of the design and construction of the site, but state and local funding must provide for the full cost of land acquisition. State and local funding also pays for 35 percent of the design and construction of the proposed State Veterans Home.

During the conceptual, design and construction phase, the TDVS Commissioner presents the plans and developments to the State Building Commission (SBC).

All four of the current State Veterans Homes are self-sustaining and do not require state funding.

TDVS Commissioner continues to monitor operations, contract agreements, capital planning, accomplishments, violations and operating budget after admissions begin. TDVS Commissioner also provides recommendations for board member appointments to the Governor. Department executive leadership increase awareness of the award winning facilities by offering tours to legislators and partnering with the State Veterans Homes for community outreach events as well as free claims assistance for residents.

TDVS also offers communication support and marketing consultation for the State Veterans Homes.

8. How does the department interact with veterans' groups within the federal government and other states?

FEDERAL PARTNERSHIPS

The Tennessee Department of Veterans Services maintains a productive and constructive partnership with the United States Department of Veterans Affairs VA Regional Office in Nashville and leadership for VA Medical Centers in Mountain Home, Murfreesboro, Nashville and Memphis.

These partnerships have created positive change in state and federal processes.

STATE PARTNERSHIPS

TDVS Commissioner is a member of the National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs (NASDVA). NASDVA members maintain constructive working relationships with national

leadership for the United States Department of Veterans Affairs Benefits Administration and Health Care Administration which allows them to share information and feedback.

The department has also visited Veterans Cemeteries in other states to identify best practices and implement improvements in Tennessee. These visits have improved the department's grants submissions which have resulted in \$29,497,410 in federal grants to establish, expand and improve Tennessee State Veterans Cemeteries.

9. How many veterans' claims were processed during fiscal years 2016 and 2017? Of those claims, how many were approved by the federal government? Is the number of claims processed each year increasing, decreasing, or remaining level over the last five years?

CLAIMS FILED IN FISCAL YEAR 2016

ORIGINATING AGENCY	NUMBER OF CLAIMS FILED
TDVS	4,261
COUNTY SERVICE OFFICERS	5,381
TOTAL	9,642

CLAIMS FILED IN FISCAL YEAR 2017

ORIGINATING AGENCY	NUMBER OF CLAIMS FILED
TDVS	5,522
COUNTY SERVICE OFFICERS	7,551
TOTAL	13,073

FULLY DEVELOPED CLAIMS FILED IN FISCAL YEAR 2016

ORIGINATING AGENCY	NUMBER OF CLAIMS FILED
TDVS	3,891
COUNTY SERVICE OFFICERS	4,707
TOTAL	8,598

FULLY DEVELOPED CLAIMS FILED IN FISCAL YEAR 2017

ORIGINATING AGENCY	NUMBER OF CLAIMS FILED
TDVS	5,463
COUNTY SERVICE OFFICERS	7,361
TOTAL	12,824

Data from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs indicates Tennessee veterans and dependents received \$2.5 billion in pension, educational and disability benefits during Fiscal Year 2016. Since 2013, the department's efforts have led to Tennessee veterans receiving a combined total of \$9.1 billion in benefits.

The number of claims and federal monetary awards can fluctuate substantially every year. A change in federal law can cause an increase in service-connected disabilities during war-time and the federal government's efforts to focus on the back-log can also cause an influx in claim totals.

Since 2011, the number of claims filed has steadily increased every year except for FY 2016. The decrease was noted shortly after the federal VA changed the claims submissions process which led to confusion. However, the confusion regarding the federal process change has been remedied as indicated in the improved data tracking in fiscal year 2017.

10. What programs does the department participate in to assist veterans' with job placement or training?

In 2016, the department partnered with Dr. Fred Mael, the City of Clarksville, the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development and Workforce Essentials to survey 11 public sector and 10 private sector employers in regards to their experiences hiring veteran job-seekers. Veteran focus groups and dependents were also surveyed to discuss transitional challenges and strategies to overcome transitional challenges. The majority of veterans surveyed referred to mediocre transitional training offered by the military. Results from the survey were released in June, 2017. The department is working on using this information to create transitional support to enhance the transitional experience for Tennessee Veterans.

11. During the 1990's, the department opened three state-owned veterans' cemeteries, one in each grand division of the state. How many veterans' are buried in those cemeteries? How many were buried in fiscal years 2016 and 2017? How are the cemeteries funded? What were the annual costs for operating the cemeteries in fiscal years 2016 and 2017? What was the source of the funding to pay those operating costs?

BACKGROUND

The Tennessee Department of Veterans Services is committed to establish a State Veterans Cemetery within 75 mile radius of Tennessee's Veterans.

The East Tennessee State Veterans Cemetery at 5901 Lyons View Pike in Knoxville opened in August 1990. However, that cemetery is at capacity for new burials. TDVS opened the East Tennessee State Veterans Cemetery at 2200 E. Gov. John Sevier Highway 168 in Knoxville in August 2011.

The West Tennessee State Veterans Cemetery at 4000 Forest Hill in Memphis opened in January 1992.

The Middle Tennessee State Veterans Cemetery at 7931 McCrory Lane in Nashville opened in January 1993.

The future Tennessee State Veterans Cemetery at Parkers Crossroads located at 693 Wildersville Road in Parkers Crossroads is scheduled to open in spring 2018.

FUNDING

The United States Department of Veterans Affairs fully funds construction and design of State Veteran Cemeteries, as well as initial issue of equipment and furnishings. Funding for land acquisition for State Veterans Cemeteries is a combination of state and local money as well as donations.

The Tennessee Department of Veterans Services can also apply for federal grants from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs to maintain or improve State Veterans Cemeteries. Since 2010, the department has received more than \$29 million in federal grants to build, expand and improve the State Veterans Cemeteries.

Operational costs for the four State Veterans Cemeteries are funded by both state appropriations and federal reimbursements for burials. The United States Department of Veterans Affairs reimbursement rate for Veteran burials is \$747. The state is not reimbursed for dependent burials, therefore the state charges \$600 for dependent interments in the State Veterans Cemeteries.

In Fiscal Year 2016, TDVS received \$1,204,461 in federal reimbursements for Veteran burials and \$398,150.00 for dependent burials.

OPERATING COSTS FISCAL YEAR 2016

CEMETERY	OPERATING COSTS
Knoxville (Combined)	\$818,198.00
Nashville	\$801,778.00
Memphis	\$1,142,826.00
Total Statewide	\$2,762,802.00

In Fiscal Year 2017, TDVS received \$1,163,216.00 in federal reimbursements for Veteran burials and \$378,773.00 for dependent burials.

OPERATING COSTS FISCAL YEAR 2017

CEMETERY	OPERATING COSTS
Knoxville (Combined)	\$ 962,231.00
Nashville	\$ 976,717.00
Memphis	\$ 987,087.00
Parkers Crossroads	\$9,039.00
Total Statewide	\$2,935,074.00

TOTAL BURIALS SINCE CEMETERIES OPENED

CEMETERY	TYPE	INTERMENTS
Knoxville-Lyons View	Veteran	4,282
Knoxville-Lyons View	Dependent	1,359
Knoxville-John Sevier	Veteran	1,967
Knoxville-John Sevier	Dependent	478
Nashville	Veteran	9,850
Nashville	Dependent	2,779
Memphis	Veteran	16,575
Memphis	Dependent	5,371
Statewide	Total	42,661

BURIALS FISCAL YEAR 2017

CEMETERY	TYPE	INTERMENTS
Knoxville-Lyons View	Veteran	12
Knoxville-Lyons View	Dependent	63
Knoxville-John Sevier	Veteran	397
Knoxville-John Sevier	Dependent	122
Nashville	Veteran	440
Nashville	Dependent	181
Memphis	Veteran	762
Memphis	Dependent	285
Statewide	Total	2,262

12. What were the department's major accomplishments in fiscal years 2016 and 2017?

In 2013, Governor Bill Haslam established the Governor's Veteran Education Task Force and appointed Tennessee Department of Veterans Services Commissioner Many-Bears Grinder as chair. The Task Force met five times at campuses statewide to learn from student veterans, campus leaders, staff and faculty. The Task Force made three recommendations to the Governor in 2014 and all were approved. The first recommendation was to establish a web portal to walk veterans through the process to find a job, connect with educational benefits and business resources. NextChapterTN.gov was launched in 2015. Secondly, the Task Force recommended creating a competitive funding grant to motivate campuses to establish or expand programs and services for student veterans. The first Tennessee Veteran Reconnect Grants were awarded to 11 campuses in varying amounts for a grand total of \$1 million. The majority of these grants funded the creation of Veteran Resource Centers to give student veterans a place to connect with other veterans as well as other campus support. The Tennessee Higher Education Commission works with TDVS to create the Requests for Proposals and the department promotes the grant opportunity to campuses through the newly established Veteran Education Coordinators. TDVS also participates in reviewing grant applications. Nearly \$1 million was awarded to six campuses in larger amounts to further sustainable campus efforts in 2016. The Tennessee Veteran Reconnect Grant was awarded to 13 campuses in 2017 for a total of \$750,000.

The first Veteran Education Academy was hosted at Austin Peay State University in 2015. In 2016, TDVS hosted three regional Veteran Education Academies to teach higher education campuses about the needs of student veterans and potential areas of improvements. The department brings in speakers to address student veteran transitional challenges and best practices to overcome those challenges. Additionally, TDVS offers guidance on best practices for data collection, information sharing, recruiting student veterans and retention. These regional events were hosted at the University of Memphis, Lipscomb University and the University of Tennessee at Knoxville. The Tennessee Higher Education Commission, Tennessee Board of Regents and the Tennessee National Guard also participate in these events.

In 2017, the department hosted the Statewide Veteran Education Academy at Middle Tennessee State University where more than 100 attendees from 45 campuses attended the information session and break-out presentations. Governor Haslam participated in the fifth Academy.

In 2016, the department also hosted the Statewide Student Veteran Organization (SVO) Summit at Belmont University to teach student veterans ways to start a SVO or expand their organization through strategic student engagement. Student Veterans of America participates in the department's Academies and Summits. The department will host this statewide event at Lipscomb University in September, 2017.

In 2015, TDVS reorganized to restructure the Appeals Division and create three Regional Director and three Veteran Education Coordinator positions.

The Veteran Education Coordinators offer Veteran Empowerment Training at campuses that want more information on student veterans, transitional challenges, culture, language, needs and best practices to support student veterans. These department employees collaborate with campus partners to improve student veteran data tracking and address campus specific needs and interests to increase recruitment and retention. In 2017, the Coordinators worked with 91 campuses to collect data. An average of 69 percent of campuses submitted data that indicates 8,542 veterans enrolled in higher education and 1,552 are not receiving any educational benefits. Additionally, an average of 69.2 percent complete their education with either a degree, certification or transfer to a 4-year institution. The Tennessee College of Applied Technology (TCAT) campuses have an 87 percent job placement rate among student veterans. These roles also assist Student Veteran Organizations with engagement and campus influence.

In 2013, the department launched secure online pre-registrations for burial in the Tennessee State Veterans Cemeteries. Since 2013, the number of online pre-registrations has increased every year with a total of 9,868 veterans and dependents registered for burial. Since the process began, TDVS has reduced the response time from 4 to 6 weeks to less than 2 weeks. Additionally, in 2017, the National Cemetery Administration (NCA) has implemented online pre-registrations for National Veteran Cemeteries.

Pre-registrations by year:

FY 2014	1,100
FY 2015	2,371
FY 2016	2,829
FY 2017	3,568
Total	9,868

In 2016, the National Cemetery Administration (NCA) approved the department's design and site preparation for the future Tennessee State Veterans Cemetery at Parkers Crossroads. In October, 2016, the department was awarded \$5.7 million in federal funding for construction and broke ground on what will become a pristine final resting place for veterans and eligible dependents. The future cemetery is scheduled to open in spring 2018.

In March, 2016, through the department's efforts with State of Tennessee Real Estate Management (STREAM), the State of Tennessee accepted 28.29 acres located at 1960 Westland drive in Cleveland Tennessee for the future Bradley County Tennessee State Veterans Home. Federal funding is pending for construction of the future Home.

In June, 2016, the department purchased 28.65 acres at 11293 Memphis Arlington Road in Arlington, Tennessee through an interdepartmental payment of \$380,000 between TDVS and the Department of Intellectual Developmental Disabilities. The property is designated

as the site for the future West Tennessee State Veterans Home which is pending state, local and federal funding for construction.

Another large customer service accomplishment is the creation of a dedicated Constituent Services Representative. The department established this position in 2014 which has greatly improved consistency in customer service responses and tracking. In 2012, the department tracked 347 constituent inquiries. In fiscal year 2017, the department tracked 4,323 constituent inquiries.

In 2012, the department created the state's first formal standard operating procedure for casualty assistance and notifications to ensure surviving family members and federal casualty officers receive consistent support and assistance from the State of Tennessee. TDVS ensures surviving family members are aware of the services available at the Tennessee State Veterans Cemeteries as well as other federal and state survivor benefits. The department has presented 15 Tennessee Fallen Heroes Medals to surviving family members on behalf of Tennessee service members killed in action since July 2011. Since the implementation of the new protocol, the department has assisted 31 families of service members killed in action, killed in the line of duty or missing in action but recently identified and returned home.

Since 2013, combined efforts of TDVS field offices and County Service Offices has resulted in more than 54,000 claims filed and more than \$9.1 billion in tax-free federal benefits for Tennessee veterans and their families.

Additionally, Tennessee is one of only 15 states initially invited to participate in the Digits-to-Digits (D2D) initiative which is a collaborative effort between the department, the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), VetraSpec and the Veterans Benefits Management System (VBMS). In November, 2015, the department began participation in the pilot program with 32 submissions. In June 2016, the department attempted more than 1,000 submissions with nearly 80 percent of those resulting in a successful transmission. The D2D process can decrease the time it takes to get claims to the VA for review by 2 weeks.

In 2016, the department partnered with Dr. Fred Mael, the City of Clarksville, the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development and Workforce Essentials to survey 11 public sector and 10 private sector employers in regards to their experiences hiring veteran job-seekers. Veteran focus groups and dependents were also surveyed to discuss transitional challenges and strategies to overcome transitional challenges. The majority of veterans surveyed referred to mediocre transitional training offered by the military. Results from the survey were released in June, 2017. The department is working on using this information to create transitional support to enhance the transitional experience for Tennessee Veterans.

The department's intergovernmental relations have improved tracking, information sharing and efforts to raise awareness regarding the needs of veterans.

- Veteran unemployment has decreased from 7.3 percent in 2012 to 3.6 percent in 2017.
- Veteran suicides have decreased from 197 in 2012 to 179 in 2015.
- Veteran incarcerations have decreased from 2,483 in 2012 to 1,307 in 2015.

13. What reports does the department prepare on its operations, activities, and accomplishments and who receives those reports?

The department Annual Report highlights the operations, accomplishments and federal benefits received by Tennessee Veterans. The TDVS Annual Report is distributed in hard copy to legislative partners and customers through outreach events, field offices and County Service Officers. Annual Reports are also posted on the department website.

14. Are current national security concerns affecting how the department functions within the provisions of the Sunshine Law (Section 8-44-101 et seq)? If so, how?

No, there are no current national security concerns that have impacted the department's functions.

15. How does the department ensure that its staff is operating in an impartial manner and that there are no conflicts of interest? If the department operates under a formal conflict of interest policy, please attach a copy of that policy.

The department adheres to the conflict of interest guidelines set by the Tennessee Department of General Services.

16. Has the department promulgated rules? If yes, please cite the reference.

The department has not promulgated rules.

17. Please provide a current organization chart for the department.

Please see Appendix A

18. Should the department be continued? To what extent and in what ways would the absence of the department endanger the public health, safety or welfare?

The department has greatly evolved to better serve customers to include a reorganization, expanded focus on education, employment and business resources, continued progress in training, appeals support, claims assistance and cemetery operations as well as improved intergovernmental collaboration and relations.

The ramifications for discontinuing this department would include the termination of progress in veteran education initiatives. This would cause reversion to disconnected campuses, disconnected student veteran organizations and ignorance in regards to transitional challenges and best practices to overcome transitional challenges. Additionally, data collection would also revert back to solely information provided by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) which does not capture student veteran success rates, job placement rates and veterans not receiving educational benefits. Moreover, student veterans will experience an overwhelming amount of information instead of streamlined information needed to connect with the correct contacts, services and resources.

Additionally, discontinuing of the transforming department would include the loss of innovative business solutions which would once again greatly decrease customers and

employee engagement causing frustration, confusion and lack of connection. Innovative business solutions include the department's online pre-registrations which have now been adopted on a national level by the National Cemetery Administration (NCA). Upcoming innovative business solutions include the creation of a mobile application which allows customers to make appointments for field office visits, take surveys on service received and receive updates on weather related closures. These initiatives increase customer and employee engagement.

Furthermore, the department's transformational efforts have improved customer service through centralizing constituent inquiries which were not consistently tracked or resolved in a timely and efficient manner. Decentralizing this role through discontinuing the department would not only negatively impact the customers the department serves, but would also federal, state and local partners the department connects to the customer.

The department's effort through the TDVS Training Division has also improved and increased high-quality and consistent claims assistance for veterans statewide through department employees and County Service Officer partners. This training has led to more than \$9 billion in tax-free benefits federal benefits for Tennessee veterans and their families. Without the function of the department's Training Division, field offices, Appeals Division and County Service Officers customers would be forced to navigate the daunting, confusing and bureaucratic U. S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) process by themselves.

Moreover, the department serves as a credible subject matter expert on veteran focused legislation for legislative partners as well as other state departments to the benefit of all stakeholders. Discontinuing the department would remove that level of credible expertise and collaborative efforts to create or amend veteran focused legislation.

Additionally, prior to the department's casualty assistance protocol, Tennessee casualties were not consistently tracked, recognized or remembered. Additionally, surviving family members were unaware of benefits, services and supports available to them after suffering the tragic losses.

The department serves a pivotal role for federal, state and local partners. The department works with several partners to track student veteran success, veteran unemployment, veteran suicides, veteran incarcerations and veteran treatment court trends. Discontinuing of the department would disconnect all of these efforts and information which is used to improve efficiency and create pertinent legislation.

19. List all programs or activities that receive federal financial assistance. Please include the amount of federal funding received by program/activity.

Cemetery Federal Funding (Veteran Burial Reimbursements):

Fiscal Year 2016 Funding:	\$6,871,563	Total
	\$ 4,633	Interdepartmental
	\$ 398,150	Current Services (Dependent Burials)
	\$1,171,277	Federal Veteran Burial Reimbursements
	\$5,297,503	State Appropriations

Fiscal Year 2017 Funding:	\$6,706,644	Total
	\$ 2,400	Interdepartmental
	\$ 378,773	Current Services (Dependent Burials)
	\$1,163,216	Federal Veteran Burial Reimbursements
	\$5,162,255	State Appropriations

20. Please list all department contracts and include information about the services provided and the amount of the contract.

Name	Purpose	Total Dollars	Duration	Signed	Cancelled if Necessary	Outsourced to another country?	Single Source Contract/ ITB / RFP
VetraSpec - DataSpec #31117	Used to submit claims for Federal Benefits to the U.S. Dept of V.A.	\$121,109	5 yrs	4/15/2012	Yes	No	Single-Source
ADT Security	Alarm Monitoring at W.TN Cemetery	\$1,872	3 yrs.	6/21/2016	Yes	No	Single-Source
Vantage Products Corp #40306	To provide Burial Vault Liners (W.TN, Mid.TN, & E.TN)	\$1,867,000	5 yrs	12/10/2014	Yes	No	Single-Source
Scotts Lawn Service	Lawn, Tree & Shrub Application inc. Fertilization (W.TN)	\$7,113	1 yr	4/14/2016	Yes	No	Single-Source
Canon Solutions America, Inc. 001-3146103-340	Rental of Copier & Faxboard at ADMIN-HQ	\$7,159	5 yrs	11/16/2014	Yes	No	Single-Source
Canon Solutions America, Inc. 001-2146103-231	Rental of Copier & Faxboard at ADMIN-HQ	\$5,509	5 yrs	1/29/2015	Yes	No	Single-Source
Canon Solutions America, Inc. 001-146103-350	Rental of Copier & Faxboard at Knoxville	\$5,509	5 yrs	11/11/2014	Yes	No	Single-Source
Canon Solutions America, Inc. 001-4146103-749	Rental of Copier & Faxboard at Appeals	\$5,974	5 yrs	6/7/2015	Yes	No	Single-Source
Canon Solutions America, Inc. 001-0146103-619	Rental of Copier & Faxboard at Appeals	\$5,509	5 yrs	7/29/2014	Yes	No	Single-Source
Canon Solutions America, Inc. 001-3146103-371	Rental of Copier & Faxboard at Appeals	\$4,066	5 yrs	11/19/2014	Yes	No	Single-Source
Canon Solutions America, Inc. 001-2146103-542	Rental of Copier & Faxboard at Chattanooga FO	\$5,539	5 yrs	4/10/2015	Yes	No	Single-Source
Canon Solutions America, Inc. 001-2146103-452	Rental of Copier & Faxboard at Crossville FO	\$5,186	5 yrs	9/24/2014	Yes	No	Single-Source
Canon Solutions America, Inc. 001-4146103-103	Rental of Copier & Faxboard at Jackson FO	\$5,509	5 yrs	4/1/2014	Yes	No	Single-Source

Canon Solutions America, Inc. 001-2146103-444	Rental of Copier & Faxboard at Mt. Home FO	\$5,186	5 yrs	9/24/2014	Yes	No	Single-Source
Canon Solutions America, Inc. 001-2146103-437	Rental of Copier & Faxboard at Murfreesboro FO	\$5,509	5 yrs	9/9/2014	Yes	No	Single-Source
Canon Solutions America, Inc. 001-2146103-418	Rental of Copier & Faxboard at Nashville VAMC	\$5,186	5 yrs	9/10/2014	Yes	No	Single-Source
Canon Solutions America, Inc. 001-4146103-538	Rental of Copier & Faxboard at ESTVC-Lyon's View	\$7,586	5 yrs	4/2/2015	Yes	No	Single-Source
Canon Solutions America, Inc. 001-4146103-633	Rental of Copier & Faxboard at MTSVC	\$5,186	5 yrs	4/29/2015	Yes	No	Single-Source
Canon Solutions America, Inc. 001-2146103-301	Rental of Copier & Faxboard at WTSVC	\$5,509	5 yrs	9/9/2014	Yes	No	Single-Source
Canon Solutions America, Inc. 001-2146103-480	Rental of Copier & Faxboard at Memphis VAMC	\$5,509	5 yrs	10/1/2014	Yes	No	Single-Source
Canon Solutions America, Inc. 1673007	Rental of Copier & Faxboard at U of M	\$4,387	5 yrs	2/1/2016	Yes	No	Single-Source

21. Please provide a list of current staff members and employees by name and job title.

Employee Title	Name
Admin Assistant 1	Clark, Robert
Admin Assistant 1	Leigh, Devon G
Admin Assistant 1	Martin, Carol L
Admin Assistant 1	Patterson, Selena
Admin Assistant 1	Pichette, William
Admin Assistant 1	Sharp, Elizabeth
Admin Assistant 1	VACANT
Admin Assistant 1	Wade, Ida S
Admin Assistant 1	Walker, Crystal
Admin Assistant 2	Couk, Patricia J
Admin Assistant 2	Thigpen, Jasmine
Admin Services Assistant 2*	Bohorquez, Kritzie
Admin Services Assistant 2*	Richardson, Susan C
Appeals Specialist 1	Sanders, Jimmie L
Appeals Specialist 1	Tomlinson, William L
Appeals Specialist 2	Swindon, Carol
Assistant Commissioner 1	Murphy, Travis
Assistant Commissioner 1	Taylor, Yvette M
Assistant Commissioner 1	Van Epps, Matthew
Assistant Commissioner 1	Wills, Lorenza
Attorney 3	Rogers, Michael J
Budget Analyst Coordinator	Grill, Christina
Cemetery Caretaker 1*	Bass, Freeman
Cemetery Caretaker 1*	Bates, Rico

Cemetery Caretaker 1*	Cathey, John
Cemetery Caretaker 1*	Lowe, Jerry
Cemetery Caretaker 1*	Maples, Derrick
Cemetery Caretaker 1*	Pace, Josh
Cemetery Caretaker 1*	VACANT
Cemetery Caretaker 1*	Ward, Gary
Cemetery Caretaker 1*	Wilhite, Duran
Cemetery Caretaker 2*	Barry, Edward F
Cemetery Caretaker 2*	Brock, Michael P
Cemetery Caretaker 2*	Brown, William E
Cemetery Caretaker 2*	Carter, Demetrius
Cemetery Caretaker 2*	Elms, William L
Cemetery Caretaker 2*	Greer, Willie L
Cemetery Caretaker 2*	Harden, Joseph Michael
Cemetery Caretaker 2*	Hooper, Joseph D
Cemetery Caretaker 2*	Johnston, George
Cemetery Caretaker 2*	Rogan, Ladarrell E
Cemetery Caretaker 2*	Williams, Darius
Cemetery Caretaker 3	Davis, Regine
Cemetery Caretaker 3	Gossett, Ronald
Cemetery Caretaker 3	Johnson, Richard A
Cemetery Director 1	Weed, Marty
Cemetery Equipment Operator	Battle, Robert L
Cemetery Equipment Operator	Borum, Paul M
Cemetery Equipment Operator	Eggers, Patrick S
Cemetery Equipment Operator	VACANT
Cemetery Equipment Operator	Young, Charles
Clerk 1	VACANT
Clerk 3	Ziegler, Heather
Commissioner 1	Grinder, Many-Bears
Deputy Commissioner 1	Breece, Mark A
Director of Education & Empl	VACANT
Executive Admin Assistant 1	Day, Deanna Martin
Executive Admin Assistant 1	Holmbraker, Anna
Executive Admin Assistant 1	Mascolo, Marki
HR Analyst 2*	Keene, Dolores A
Legislative Liaison	Cosby, Tyler
Procurement Officer 1	Fuller, Tanzania
Secretary	Decant, Sharon
Secretary	Gray, Ketara
Secretary	Haraway, Sheila
Training Officer 1	Spears, Paul L
Training Officer 2	Rivera, Michael
VA Cemetery Director 2	Knowles, Kevin
VA Cemetery Director 2	Lindsey, James
VA Cemetery Director 2	Lindsey, Joseph W
Veteran Education Coordinator	Crawford, Gregg

Veteran Education Coordinator	Fears, Chris
Veteran Education Coordinator	VanCleave, Marcus
Veterans Cemetery Foreman 1	VACANT
Veterans Cemetery Foreman 2	Million, Robert S
Veterans Cemetery Foreman 2	Wiesner, Kevin W
Veterans Cemetery Foreman 2	Willis, Freddie J
Veterans Paraleg Assist Couns	Held, Kathryn
Veterans' Paraleg Assist Couns	Howard, Michael Wayne
Veterans Resource Coor 1*	McGhee, Charles
Veterans Resource Coor 2*	Arneson, Garth
Veterans Resource Coor 2*	Braden, Raymond C
Veterans Resource Coor 2*	Cox, Cynthia / DeMarcus, Kevin
Veterans Resource Coor 2*	Dempsey, Ginger
Veterans Resource Coor 2*	Elmore, Greg
Veterans Resource Coor 2*	Gerlach, Michael
Veterans Resource Coor 2*	Good, Roger
Veterans Resource Coor 2*	Heusterberg, Brian
Veterans Resource Coor 2*	Houser, William Paul
Veterans Resource Coor 2*	Hunter, Bruce
Veterans Resource Coor 2*	Kilgore, Kelly
Veterans Resource Coor 2*	Laberdeee, Charles
Veterans Resource Coor 2*	Lewis, Dave
Veterans Resource Coor 2*	Quinn, Liza
Veterans Resource Coor 2*	Selvage, Ulysses
Veterans Resource Coor 2*	Shields, Bobbie A
Veterans Services Reg Dir 1	Scott, George M
Veterans Services Reg Dir 2	Forte, Timothy P
Veterans Services Reg Dir 2	Ziegler, Scott R







