

Self-Evaluation Report Instructions



***Sunset Advisory Commission
June 2017***

INSTRUCTIONS

Each agency under Sunset review is required by law to complete a Self-Evaluation Report (SER) on its operations. The SER is designed to provide the Sunset Commission members and staff with a general background description of each agency being reviewed. The SER also gives each agency an opportunity to provide the Commission with a preview of issues and suggested improvements regarding the agency and its functions.

The SER contains 12 sections. Agencies should record their responses to each question directly on this electronic form. Answers should be typed in the white space beneath each question. Use as little or as much room as needed to answer each question. Since the SER is intended to be a learning instrument, and you are the instructor, Sunset is quite flexible in how various charts and sections apply to your operations. If the information requested does not apply to your agency, either provide similar information to reflect agency practices or enter "N/A" in the space provided. In charts, add or delete rows, change column widths, and renumber exhibits as necessary, or rename chart headings to better reflect agency practices. If a chart is not applicable, indicate so and delete the blank chart. If information requested appears in documents already produced by your agency, it is acceptable to provide a summary of that information within the SER, note the precise document and location within the document of the information, and then attach the document for further details.

For questions where statistics, performance measures, or other data is provided, please also provide basic information regarding the methodology used to collect and report that data.

This document also contains examples for certain sections of the SER. Links are provided to jump directly from one part of the document to another, and can be accessed by clicking on the text indicating an exhibit example or exhibit.

Reviewing the background and issues sections of recent Sunset staff reports may also be helpful in preparing certain sections of the SER. Recent Sunset staff reports are available on the Sunset website at www.sunset.texas.gov.

Once the report is complete, update the appropriate page numbers on the table of contents. The text regarding Instructions, Attachments, and Examples can be deleted from the SER that the agency submits to the Sunset Commission.

By September 1, 2017, please submit an accessible pdf file of the Self-Evaluation Report and attachments to Janet Wood at janet.wood@sunset.texas.gov. Please redact any personally identifiable medical information from any documents you provide to Sunset. If available, please provide the Sunset Commission with one hard copy of the SER and attachments to verify the pdf.

As of 2013, it is the responsibility of the agency under Sunset review, not the Sunset Commission, to submit copies of the agency's self-evaluation report directly to the Texas State Library and Archives Commission. Sunset no longer maintains the self-evaluation report as part of its retention schedule and will not keep copies of these reports after the review is complete.

Agencies should submit copies of their self-evaluation reports to the Publications Depository Program to fulfill the archival requirement. If you have any questions, please contact your agency's assigned Government Information Analyst at the Texas State Library and Archives Commission.

We encourage you to contact Robert Romig at robert.romig@sunset.texas.gov of the Sunset staff at (512) 463-1300 with any questions, or email them to the Sunset Commission. Every effort will be made to minimize the additional workload this report places on your agency.

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Texas Veterans Commission Self-Evaluation Report

I. Agency Contact Information

A. Please fill in the following chart.

**Texas Veterans Commission
Exhibit 1: Agency Contacts**

	Name	Address	Telephone & Fax Numbers	Email Address
Agency Head	Thomas Palladino	1700 N. Congress Avenue Austin, TX 78701	512-463-6564	Thomas.palladino@tvc.texas.gov
Agency's Sunset Liaison	Cruz Montemayor Justin Coleman	1700 N. Congress Avenue Austin, TX 78701	512-463-6564 512-463-8914	Cruz.montemayor@tvc.texas.gov Justin.coleman@tvc.texas.gov

Table 1 Exhibit 1 Agency Contacts

II. Key Functions and Performance

Provide the following information about the overall operations of your agency. More detailed information about individual programs will be requested in a later section.

A. Provide an overview of your agency's mission, objectives, and key functions.

Agency Mission

Since 1927, the mission of the Texas Veterans Commission has been to advocate for and provide superior service to veterans that will significantly improve the quality of life for all Texas veterans, their families, and survivors.

Agency Objectives

- 1) The Texas Veterans Commission will assist Veterans with receiving benefits and services through effective advocacy and training within its nine program areas.
- 2) The Texas Veterans Commission will provide grant funding to community nonprofit organizations and units of local government to ensure veterans receive services in the areas of General Assistance, Mental Health, Housing, and Veteran Treatment Courts.
- 3) The Texas Veterans Commission will provide effective administration of the Hazlewood Exemption Program and ensure timely reimbursements to public institutions of higher education.

Key Functions

TVC provides assistance to veterans and their families within three distinct categories:

Provide Direct Services to Veterans

- Claims Representation & Counseling
- Veterans Employment Services
- Veterans Education Programs
- Health Care Advocacy Program

Award Grants to Organizations that Assist Veterans

- Fund for Veterans' Assistance

Connect Veterans to Services

- Communications and Veterans Outreach
- Women Veterans Program
- Veteran Entrepreneur Program
- Veterans Mental Health Program

- B. Do your key functions continue to serve a clear and ongoing objective? Explain why each of these functions is still needed. What harm would come from no longer performing these functions?**

Claims Representation & Counseling

Representation and Counseling

Do your key functions continue to serve a clear and ongoing objective?

Yes. See Strategic Plan page 4.

Explain why each of these functions is still needed. What harm would come from no longer performing these functions?

If TVC no longer provided representation and counseling services, veterans and their families would be forced to find other organizations to submit claims to the VA on their behalf. Most of these organizations' staff work on a volunteer basis and do not possess the same expertise in VA administrative law nor are they housed in VA facilities like TVC claims counselors. Due to representation by TVC, Texas Veterans and their families received \$3.46 billion in tax exempt compensation and pensions in 2016. The amount of compensation would likely be reduced in the absence of TVC representation and counseling staff.

State Strike Force Team (SSF)

Do your key functions continue to serve a clear and ongoing objective?

See Strategic Plan page 4.

Explain why each of these functions is still needed. What harm would come from no longer performing these functions?

An average claim can take up to 24 months for a final decision and the number of new claims filed each year continues to rise. While the VA has made progress in the reduction of backlogged initial claims, the amount of appeals has spiked in recent years. If SSF no longer performed these functions, veterans and their families may face further delays in the VA claims and appeals process.

Fully Developed Claims Team (FDC)

Do your key functions continue to serve a clear and ongoing objective?

See Strategic Plan page 4

Explain why each of these functions is still needed. What harm would come from no longer performing these functions?

The FDC team works with veterans and their families to increase the likelihood of a faster decisions from VA on compensation, pension, and survivor benefit claims. If FDC team no longer performed this function, veterans and their families may face further delays in the VA claims and appeals process.

Training

Do your key functions continue to serve a clear and ongoing objective?

See Strategic Plan page 4

Explain why each of these functions is still needed. What harm would come from no longer performing these functions?

To meet VA accreditation and TVC certification requirements, certain TVC staff and Veteran County Service Officers (VCSOs) must complete VA approved training which is administered and paid for by TVC. TVC ensures training modules are updated regularly to reflect changes in VA administrative law and provides valuable information on specific services offered by state agencies. If TVC did not provide certification and accreditation training to TVC staff and VCSOs, both groups would have to complete all training at a private entity with no state oversight at additional costs.

Veterans Employment Services

Family Employment Services (FES)

Do your key functions continue to serve a clear and ongoing objective?

See Strategic Plan page 5-6.

Explain why each of these functions is still needed. What harm would come from no longer performing these functions?

Spouses, family members, and caregivers of active duty service members often face unique barriers to employment that most job placement organizations and employers are not familiar with. If FES no longer performed its functions, these individuals would be forced to seek employment services from organizations that potentially lack military cultural competency.

Veterans Career Resource Services (VCRS)

Do your key functions continue to serve a clear and ongoing objective?

See Strategic Plan page 5-6.

Explain why each of these functions is still needed. What harm would come from no longer performing these functions?

VCRS are provided to veterans with significant barriers to employment to become job-ready and find long-term and meaningful employment. Individualized career services include job coaching, resume and application assistance, and job searching techniques. Without these services, many veterans would continue to struggle to find meaningful employment.

Veterans Recruitment Services (VRS)

Do your key functions continue to serve a clear and ongoing objective?

See Strategic Plan page 5-6.

Explain why each of these functions is still needed. What harm would come from no longer performing these functions?

The functions of VRS is needed to ensure employer awareness in hiring veterans while continuing to expand the amount of available jobs for veterans. If this function did not exist, veteran unemployment rates could rise and veteran employment among public and private employers could fall. Additionally, strides to increase veteran cultural competency at employers would be diminished.

Veterans Education

State Approving Agency

Do your key functions continue to serve a clear and ongoing objective?

Yes. See Strategic Plan page 7.

Explain why each of these functions is still needed. What harm would come from no longer performing these functions?

The function provides state oversight of education and training at colleges, universities, career schools, On the Job Training programs, apprenticeship programs, flight school and other training instructions in the state. If Veterans Education did not perform this function, veterans would lose subject matter experts that ensure quality service delivery.

Training

Do your key functions continue to serve a clear and ongoing objective?

Yes. See Strategic Plan page 7.

Explain why each of these functions is still needed. What harm would come from no longer performing these functions?

The program trains school officials on student veterans' needs and evaluates institution policies and procedures to ensure compliance with state and federal guidelines for administration of the GI Bill. If this program did not exist, student veterans and institutions would lose subject matter experts that assist them in cultural competency and GI Bill compliance.

Hazlewood Administration

Do your key functions continue to serve a clear and ongoing objective?

Yes. See Strategic Plan page 5-6.

Explain why each of these functions is still needed. What harm would come from no longer performing these functions?

If the TVC Veterans Education Program did not manage/oversee the Hazlewood Exemption Program, another state agency would need to be assigned this responsibility which could prove detrimental to the veterans, family members and schools. TVC now employs subject matter experts who serve as a resource to veterans and their families and place a high priority on customer service.

Education Coordinators Program

Do your key functions continue to serve a clear and ongoing objective?

Yes. See Strategic Plan page 8.

Explain why each of these functions is still needed. What harm would come from no longer performing these functions?

The TVC Veterans Education Program works with institutions of higher education and existing veteran programs to create a hospitable and supportive environment for veterans, enhances awareness of and encourages participation in educational programs, and develops ancillary programs.

This function significantly enhances the educational experience for our state's student veterans by assisting the colleges and universities to foster well-rounded and meaningful services to the student veterans.

If the TVC Veterans Education Coordinators did not exist, student veterans could suffer the consequences of not having advocates at the local level to oversee their experience and to work on their behalf with veteran service organizations and colleges/universities.

Health Care Advocacy Program

Do your key functions continue to serve a clear and ongoing objective?

Yes. See Strategic Plan page 12.

Explain why each of these functions is still needed. What harm would come from no longer performing these functions?

The Health Care Advocacy Program (HCAP) assists veterans and their families in gaining access to VA health care facilities and resolving patient concerns and issues. In cooperation with VA health care providers and support staff, TVC HCAP personnel identify existing and potential problems, and suggest solutions or alternatives. HCAP assists in increasing community and veteran awareness of Veterans Health Administration health care resources and services.

If TVC did not perform this function, veterans of the state of Texas would solely rely on the assistance of VA patient representatives to assist them in resolving their issues/concerns. The TVC health care advocate program while working alongside the VA, ensures that Texas veterans receive and have access to the health care services that they have earned through service. This programs functions to increase accountability within VA health care system.

Fund for Veterans' Assistance (FVA)

Do your key functions continue to serve a clear and ongoing objective?

Yes. See Strategic Plan page 16.

Explain why each of these functions is still needed. What harm would come from no longer performing these functions?

FVA provides grant funding to non-profits and local governments that provide direct services to veterans. FVA grants provide resources for organizations to specifically serve the veteran portion of their client populations. Without the FVA grant program, most organizations who receive grant funding would continue to operate but their services targeted for veterans may be reduced or eliminated altogether as explained in their individual grant applications.

Communications and Veterans Outreach

Do your key functions continue to serve a clear and ongoing objective?

Yes. See Strategic Plan pages 8-10

Explain why each of these functions is still needed. What harm would come from no longer performing these functions?

The Outreach Department drives engagement to TVC programs. In addition, the Outreach Department works with agency programs to gather, analyze, track, and monitor veteran awareness and engagement. This essential information assists in the planning, execution, and assessment of veteran outreach efforts to maximize the reach and return on investment of outreach activities. In addition, the Outreach Department utilize several media channels and platforms to accomplish its mission, including a call center, radio and television, print publications, social media platforms, outreach and engagement events, and other activities across the state.

If the Outreach department did not exist, the TVC would be limited in its ability to connect veterans to services. TVC offers valuable services and programs to the veteran community, and without the department awareness of TVC would also decline. Also, the department builds the agency brand and message recognition that enhances awareness of TVC services. Lastly, without the Communication Department, TVC programs would have to absorb the tasks of promoting their services without dedicated and knowledgeable communications and outreach staff.

Women Veterans Program

Do your key functions continue to serve a clear and ongoing objective?

Yes. See Strategic Plan pages 8-10

Explain why each of these functions is still needed. What harm would come from no longer performing these functions?

The Women Veterans Program (WVP) works to bridge the gap between Texas women veterans and the services and benefits they have earned. The functions of the WVP are needed to meet the needs of a growing female veteran population. Based on projections provided by the Veterans Administration, Texas has the highest number of women veterans in the country at 177,507 and a projected 19% growth by year 2027 bringing the population of women veterans in Texas to 210,775. Florida is projected to be the 2nd most populous state for women veterans at 148,166.

Second, studies show that women veterans have needs that are not being met. A statewide needs assessment executed by Texas State University on behalf of the Texas Veterans Commission indicate that women “tend to have the higher levels of need” and further suggest that “organizations and programs that focus on women” receive priority funding (Texas State University, The Center for Social Inquiry, April 2016).

Third, women veterans want organizations that advocate on their behalf. The results of a national survey executed by the Service Women’s Action Network, revealed that “97% of respondents said that there should be an organization dedicated to the issues facing service women and women veterans” and “agreed that the public needs to know more about their leadership and contributions, the challenges they face, and their stories and experiences.” (Service Women's Action Network, January 2017).

If the WVP program no longer existed, fewer women veterans would receive the information and education they need to make informed decisions about their benefits and services. The Women Veterans Program is the link between the veteran and the available local, state and federal resources ensuring the women veteran and her family become contributing members to the local, state and federal economy.

Veteran Entrepreneur Program

Do your key functions continue to serve a clear and ongoing objective?

Yes. See Strategic Plan page 10.

Explain why each of these functions is still needed. What harm would come from no longer performing these functions?

Veterans represent the largest segment of new business owners in Texas. While other organizations provide some level of business services to this population, VEP is considered a one-stop-shop where veteran entrepreneurs can engage VEP services to maintain a consistent, congruent relationship with a specialized consultant throughout all phases of business. Through this consultative process, VEP can track progress and activity of veteran business owners thus enabling VEP to measure economic impact to the state.

Without this type and level of service veteran business owners would not have consistent guidance and direction. Engagements with other business service providers would be disjointed and inconsistent thus placing an undue burden on veteran entrepreneurs left to fend for themselves. It is likely that this would have a detrimental impact on new veteran business start-ups and existing veteran business growth and prosperity which in turn has impacts on employment and tax revenues.

Furthermore, the annual tax certification process for existing business per the Comptroller, uncovered thousands of existing veteran-owned businesses prior to January 1st, 2016, which were not recorded or verified as veteran business up until this point. VEP is positioned as the central data hub to not only collect veteran information, track data, but to also connect veteran business owners to business resources efficiently.

The loss of performing the functions previously stated may impair a veteran entrepreneur's and business owner's opportunity of connecting to the correct business resources. VEP works closely with business partner resources to identify veteran-centric opportunities locally and nationwide, which is then channeled through various TVC networks. Providers would be disjointed and inconsistent thus placing an undue burden on veteran entrepreneurs left to fend for themselves. It is likely that this would have a detrimental impact on new veteran business start-ups and existing veteran business growth, which in turn has impacts on employment and tax revenues of the state.

Veterans Mental Health Program

Military Veteran Peer Network, Peer-to Peer Support

Do your key functions continue to serve a clear and ongoing objective?

See Strategic Plan pages 15

Explain why each of these functions is still needed. What harm would come from no longer performing these functions?

The technical assistance provided by TVC's Veterans Mental Health Program is needed to assist, advise, and guide state, county, and municipal efforts to identify and provide supportive services to Texas' military trauma-affected veterans and their families.

If the TVC's Veteran Mental Health Program no longer provided its trainings, it is likely a large gap in service in this area would develop and continuity of efforts to identify and engage with military trauma-affected veterans would be negatively impacted.

Clinical Mental Health Providers, Community and Faith-Based Organizations & Justice Involved Services

Do your key functions continue to serve a clear and ongoing objective?

Yes. See Strategic Plan pages 15

Explain why each of these functions is still needed. What harm would come from no longer performing these functions?

The military trauma-informed, behavioral-health related, suicide prevention-focused trainings provided by TVC's Veterans Mental Health Program are needed to ensure continued and expanding knowledge of: military-related traumas and their impacts on the veteran population of Texas; supportive services and treatment options available to military-trauma affected Service Members, Veterans, and their Families (SMVF); and, military cultural competency needed among service providers and within agencies/organizations to appropriately identify and address military-related traumas and the impacts they create in Texas veterans' lives.

No other statewide, veteran-focus agency program exists, nor is prepared to, to carry out the training functions of this program. While the Veterans Administration provides benefits and health care services to veterans, its focus is not on helping the citizenry of Texas understand and guide trauma-affected veterans to its services. The TVC's Veterans Mental Health Program's trainings are centered on building awareness of resources and services – national, state, and local - for military trauma-affected veterans and their families.

The Texas Veterans Commission provides technical assistance to veteran peers, peer service coordinators, licensed mental health providers, state agencies, community- and faith-based organizations and coalitions, and Texas justice system agencies/organizations.

No other statewide, veteran-focus agency program exists, nor is prepared to, to carry out the technical assistance functions of this program.

If the TVC's Veteran Mental Health Program no longer provided technical assistance, it is likely many of the state, county, and local programs would no longer understand how to tailor their programs for military trauma-affected veterans. Additionally, military trauma-affected veterans and their families would be negatively impacted from a stifling effect of programs tailored to serving them.

C. What evidence can your agency provide to show your overall effectiveness and efficiency in meeting your objectives?

Claims Representation & Counseling

See II. C. Attachments. Program Performance

Veterans Employment Services

See II. C. Attachments. Program Performance

Veterans Education Programs

See II. C. Attachments. Program Performance

Health Care Advocacy Program

See II. C. Attachments. Program Performance

Fund for Veterans' Assistance

See II. C. Attachments. Program Performance

Communications and Veterans Outreach

See II. C. Attachments. Program Performance

Women Veterans Program

See II. C. Attachments. Program Performance

Veteran Entrepreneur Program

See II. C. Attachments. Program Performance

Veterans Mental Health Program

See II. C. Attachments. Program Performance

D. Does your agency’s enabling law continue to correctly reflect your mission, objectives, and approach to performing your functions?

Sec. 434 of the Texas Government Code correctly reflects the mission, objectives and approach that continues to deliver efficient customer service to veterans and their families in the areas of direct services, connecting veterans to services, and providing grants to organizations that assist veterans. The enabling laws that govern the agency provide the flexibility needed to advocate for veterans and their families in all services areas that currently exist or may require advocacy in the future.

E. Have you recommended changes to the Legislature in the past to improve your agency’s operations? If so, explain. Were the changes adopted?

TVC requested changes to its budget structure for the 2018-2019 biennium. See attachment: II.E. TVC Budget Structure Change Requests. All requests were approved.

F. Do any of your agency’s functions overlap or duplicate those of another state or federal agency? Explain if, and why, each of your key functions is most appropriately placed within your agency. How do you ensure against duplication with other related agencies?

No other state agency is better positioned to advocate for and provide superior service to veterans. Over the last decade, the Texas legislature has centralized veterans’ services within TVC with great success. Many programs that were administered by other agencies (example: Veteran Employment Services – TWC & Hazlewood Administration – THECB) have been transferred to TVC. TVC’s veterans first approach ensures veterans and their families are put as a priority in the delivery of services.

Further, TVC chairs the Texas Coordinating Council for Veterans Services (TCCVS) which consists of 22 state agencies that provide services to veterans. The purpose of the council is to:

- (a) coordinate the activities of state agencies that assist veterans, service members, and their families;
- (b) coordinate outreach efforts that ensure that veterans, service members, and their families are made aware of services; and
- (c) facilitate collaborative relationships among state, federal, and local agencies and private organizations to identify and address issues affecting veterans, service members, and their families.

Through TCCVS, TVC works to ensure proper coordination and minimal duplication of services amongst local, state and federal agencies.

G. In general, how do other states carry out similar functions?

See attachment: II.G. Fifty state benefit analysis

H. What key obstacles impair your agency's ability to achieve its objectives?

See attachment: 2018-2019_LAR_FINAL (admin statement page 3 of 5)

I. Discuss any changes that could impact your agency's key functions in the near future (e.g., changes in federal law or outstanding court cases).

Any state or federal law that expands eligibility of benefits for veterans will inherently increase demand for TVC services. TVC expertise in VA administrative law and federal benefits for veterans is key in ensuring veterans and their families obtain benefits they have earned.

Substantial reductions in general revenue or federal funds that fund TVC programs would have an impact on the services TVC provides.

J. What are your agency's biggest opportunities for improvement in the future?

Demand for TVC claims representation and counseling services continues to rise and the number of counselors TVC employs has remained stagnate. Demand has also significantly increased in rural areas of the state where there are no TVC claims counseling offices. There are 59 VA Healthcare facilities and 21 Vet Centers across the State of Texas. However, 21 VA Healthcare facilities and 20 Vet centers do not have TVC personnel available to professionally advocate in support of veterans and their families.

TVC offices serve on average 141,000 veterans a year, a number that continues to rise. Additional staffing in these areas will enable the Claims program to meet the increasing demand for assistance by placing personnel at understaffed VA Healthcare facilities and Vet Centers as well as increasing capacity at high traffic VA facilities.

K. In the following chart, provide information regarding your agency's key performance measures included in your appropriations bill pattern, including outcome, input, efficiency, and explanatory measures. See Exhibit 2 Example. Please provide information regarding the methodology used to collect and report the data.

See Attachment: II.K. TVC 2016 Key Performance Measures Report

L. Please discuss any "high-value data" your agency possesses, as defined by Section 2054.1265 of the Government Code. In addition, please note whether your agency has posted those data sets on publically available websites as required by statute.

N/A

III. History and Major Events

The agency was established in 1927 as the State Service Office to assist veterans of the Indian Wars, Spanish-American War, and World War I. The State Service Office was established because of complaints by Texas veterans about the complexity of the veterans' claims process, insensitivity of the Veterans Bureau (predecessor of the Veterans Administration) and Federal bureaucratic red tape. After World War II (1947), the agency was renamed and restructured as the Veterans Affairs Commission. This legislation also established a system of Veterans County Service Officers, and mandated the Commission to train the Veterans County Service Officers and Assistants and coordinate a statewide Veterans Assistance Program. The Commission was renamed the Texas Veterans Commission in 1985. In 1989, the Commission was given greater responsibility for training and certification of training attendance of the Veterans County Service Officers, as mandated with the passage of Senate Bill 252 (71st Legislature).

Chronology

- 1927 - State Service Office founded as a branch of the Adjutant General's Department as a result of an act of the 40th Texas Legislature

- 1947 - 50th Texas Legislature creates The Texas Veterans Affairs Commission as an independent Commission to respond to the needs of the 800,000 plus Texas veterans returning from World War II. Creates two-tiered system.
 1. Texas Veterans Affairs Commission
 2. Veterans County Service Officers (VCSO).

- 1981 - Commission renewed by the 67th Texas Legislature as a result of Sunset Legislation.
 1. Expanded from five to six members
 2. Extended for 13 years. (Subsequently extended until August 31, 2007)

- 1985 - Renamed the Texas Veterans Commission (TVC) by act of the 69th Texas Legislature.

- 1989 - Senate Bill 252, 71st Texas Legislature gives the Texas Veterans Commission greater responsibility for training of Veterans County Service Officers (VCSO); mandates minimum training requirements for VCSO and requires the Commission to certify the attendance at required training for VCSO. Also, authorized the payment of travel expenses for VCSO to attend training.

- 1996 - Completed Needs Analysis/Feasibility Study - State Veterans Home(s).

- 1997 - Legislature authorizes the Veterans Land Board to build Veterans Homes based on the findings of the Study.

- 1998 - Completed Architecture/Financial Feasibility Study for State Veterans Cemetery(s) as mandated by Texas Legislature.
- 2001 - Texas Legislature authorizes the Texas Veterans Land Board to build State Veterans Cemeteries based on the findings of the Study
- 2003 - Composition of the Commission is reduced from six members to five members
- 2005 - Legislation is passed authorizing the Commission to establish a Veterans Trust Fund and to receive grants and gifts (SB 1480).
- 2005 SB 1714 went into effect in 2006. This bill transferred veterans employment programs from the Texas Workforce Commission to the Texas Veterans Commission.
- 2006 - The State approving agency (SAA) responsible for approving GI Bill Education programs in the state moved from TWC to TVC.
- 2007 – Renamed and Reestablished the Veterans Trust Fund to The Fund for Veterans Assistance established by House Bill 3107, 80th Texas Legislature.
- 2009 – HB 2199 was enacted, in coordination with the Texas Lottery a \$2 Texas Lottery Scratch-off game, originally called *Veterans Cash* was produced to generate revenue for the Fund for Veterans’ Assistance.
- 2013 - Senate Bill 1796 amends the Government Code to establish the Texas Coordinating Council for Veterans Services to coordinate the activities of state agencies that assist veterans, servicemembers, and their families; coordinate outreach efforts that ensure those people are made aware of services; and facilitate collaborative relationships among state, federal, and local agencies and private organizations to identify and address relevant issues. The bill sets out provisions relating to the operation of the council.
- 2013 - SB 1476 –Directs the Texas Veterans Commission to establish and administer the Veteran Entrepreneur Program.
- 2013 - SB 1158/1159 - The bills transfer additional administrative responsibilities of the Hazlewood exemption to the Texas Veterans Commission and established a regional coordinator program that assists institutions of higher education in creating a hospitable and supportive environment for veterans;
- 2015 – HB 867 establishes a women veterans program within TVC.
- 2015 HB 1762 establishes a health care advocacy program within TVC.
- 2015 - House Bill 19, authored by State Representative Susan King, strengthens the Military Veteran Peer Network (MVPN) of the Texas Veterans Commission and the Department of State Health Services by enhancing mental health intervention services for veterans.

IV. Policymaking Structure

- A. Complete the following chart providing information on your policymaking body members.

**Texas Veterans Commission
Exhibit 3: Policymaking Body**

Member Name	Term / Appointment Dates / Appointed by (e.g., Governor, Lt. Governor, Speaker)	Qualification (e.g., public member, industry representative)	City
Eliseo Cantu Jr., Chair	6 years / April 4, 2008- 2012 December 31, 2019 / Governor Perry	Disabled Veteran	Corpus Christi, TX
Richard A. McLeon IV, Vice Chair	6 year/ November 10, 2010 - December 31, 2017 / Governor Perry	Veteran	Henderson, TX
Daniel P. Moran, Member	6 years/ March 14, 2011 - December 31, 2019 / Governor Perry	Disabled Veteran	Cypress, TX
J.K. "Jake" Ellzey, Member	6 years/ May 25, 2012 - December 31, 2017 / Governor Perry	Veteran	Midlothian, TX
Kevin Barber, Member	6 years/ April 6, 2017 - December 31, 2022 / Governor Abbott	Veteran	Houston, TX

Table 2 Exhibit 3 Policymaking Body

- B. Describe the primary role and responsibilities of your policymaking body.

The Commissioners develop and evaluate policy that governs the Commission. Often the staff presents suggestions for potential policy changes which the Commission considers and takes final action. The Commission also approves agency administrative rules and grants recommended by the Fund for Veterans' Assistance.

- C. How is the chair selected?

The governor appoints the chair of the Commission.

- D. List any special circumstances or unique features about your policymaking body or its responsibilities.

Members of the Commission must be citizens and residents of the state. At least three members must have been honorably discharged or honorably released from active military service of the United States. At least one member must be a person classified as a disabled veteran by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs or the branch of the United

States armed forces in which the person served. This person's disability must be service-connected and compensable.

E. In general, how often does your policymaking body meet? How many times did it meet in FY 2016? In FY 2017?

The Commission by law must meet quarterly. At times, special circumstances may require additional meetings. The Commission met four times in FY 2016 and four times in FY 2017.

F. What type of training do members of your agency's policymaking body receive?

A person who is appointed to and qualifies for office as a member of the commission may not vote, deliberate, or be counted as a member in attendance at a meeting of the commission until the person completes a training program that complies with this section.

The training program must provide the person with information regarding:

- (1) the legislation that created the commission;
- (2) the programs, functions, rules, and budget of the commission;
- (3) the results of the most recent formal audit of the commission;
- (4) the requirements of laws relating to open meetings, public information, administrative procedure, and conflicts of interest; and
- (5) any applicable ethics policies adopted by the commission or the Texas Ethics Commission.

A person appointed to the commission is entitled to reimbursement, as provided by the General Appropriations Act, for the travel expenses incurred in attending the training program regardless of whether the attendance at the program occurs before or after the person qualifies for office.

G. Does your agency have policies that describe the respective roles of the policymaking body and agency staff in running the agency? If so, describe these policies.

The Commissioners and Executive Director have certain statutory duties as outlined in Chapter 434 of the Texas State Government Code. Through policy, the Commissioners ensure that the agency perform the following: Compile federal, state, and local laws enacted to benefit members of the armed forces, veterans, and their families and dependents; collect information relating to services and facilities available to veterans; cooperate with veterans service agencies in the state; inform members and veterans of the armed forces, their families and dependents, and military and civilian authorities about the existence or availability of:

- Educational training and retraining facilities;
- Health, medical, rehabilitation, and housing services and facilities;
- Employment and reemployment services;
- Provisions of federal, state, and local law affording rights, privileges, and benefits to members and veterans of the armed forces and their families and dependents; and other similar, related, or appropriate matters;

In addition, through policy, Commissioners also cooperate with all government and private agencies securing services or benefits to veterans and their families and dependents; investigate, and if possible correct, abuses or exploitation of veterans or their families or dependents, coordinate the services and activities of state departments and divisions having services and resources affecting veterans or their families or dependents.

Executive Director: TVC ensures separation of the policymaking responsibilities of the Commission and the management responsibilities of the Executive Director and the staff of the Commission. The Executive Director places into operation the policies and instructions of the Commission; serves as the executive officer of the Commission, without the power to vote; be in charge of Commission offices; directs paid personnel of the Commission; and is responsible to the Commission for all reports, data, and similar information required by the Commission. The Executive Director may:

(1) administer oaths;

(2) certify official acts under the Commission's seal;

(3) take depositions inside or outside the state, as provided by law; compel the production of pertinent books, accounts, records, and documents. The Executive Director shall devote the Executive Director's entire time to the duties of the office and may not actively engage or be employed in another business, vocation, or profession.

H. What information is regularly presented to your policymaking body to keep them informed of your agency's performance?

The Commissioners are updated at the Commission's quarterly meetings on budget and finance, information resources, human resources, and program areas by the employees in charge of those respective areas. The Commissioners are also briefed on all other business items by the Executive Director at each meeting as well as through regular communications between meetings.

I. How does your policymaking body obtain input from the public regarding issues under the jurisdiction of the agency? How is this input incorporated into the operations of your agency?

The Commissioners may be addressed by the public during quarterly Commission meetings. The public is allowed to attend the meetings and to request to speak on Commission meeting agenda items or Commission policy. Commissioners also receive direct communication by Texas veterans concerning issues. These communications can take a number of forms (e.g. letters, phone calls or direct verbal communication at venues such as town hall meetings). Input received by Commissioners is evaluated to determine if further action is required.

J. If your policymaking body uses subcommittees or advisory committees to carry out its duties, fill in the following chart. See Exhibit 4 Example. In addition, please attach a copy of any reports filed by your agency under Government Code Chapter 2110 regarding an assessment of your advisory committees.

See attachment: IV. J. TVC Assessment of Advisory Committees

V. Funding

A. Provide a brief description of your agency's funding.

For AY2016 GAA – TVC's funding is:

53.63% General Revenue

21.30% Federal Funds

21.58% Fund for Veterans Assistance, Fund 0368, Funds

.12% Appropriated Receipts

3.35% Interagency Contracts

.01% of License Plate Trust Accounts, Fund 0802, Funds

B. List all riders that significantly impact your agency's budget.

Rider 5 – Cash Flow Contingency

Rider 6 – Fund for Veterans' Assistance

Rider 9 – Veterans Housing Grant Program

Rider 11 – State Strike Force Team Initiative

Rider 12 – Fully Developed Claims Team Initiative

Rider 13 – Hazlewood Reimbursements

Rider 14 – Healthcare Advocacy Program for Veterans

Rider 15 – Interagency Contract with Supreme Court of Texas

Rider 16 – Contingency for Behavioral Health Funds

C. Show your agency's expenditures by strategy. See Exhibit 5 Example.

See Attachment: V.C. Agency Expenditures by Strategy

- D. Show your agency's sources of revenue. Include all local, state, and federal appropriations, all professional and operating fees, and all other sources of revenue collected by the agency, including taxes and fines. *See Exhibit 6 Example.*

See Attachment: V.D. Agency Source of Revenue

- E. If you receive funds from multiple federal programs, show the types of federal funding sources. *See Exhibit 7 Example.*

Texas Veterans Commission
Exhibit 7: Federal Funds — Fiscal Year 2016 (Actual)

Type of Fund	State / Federal Match Ratio	State Share	Federal Share	Total Funding
17.801 Disabled Vets Outreach/Prg US Department of Labor	100%	N/A	\$6,965,311.51	\$6,965,311.51
17.804 Local Vets Empl Rep Prg US Department of Labor	100%	N/A	\$3,395,573.57	\$3,395,573.57
64.035 Veterans Transportation Prg US Department of Veteran Affairs	100%	N/A	\$10,066.74	\$10,066.74
64.124 All Vol Force Educ Assit US Department of Veteran Affairs	100%	N/A	\$861,923.06	\$861,923.06
TOTAL		N/A	\$11232,874.88	\$11,232,874.88

- F. If applicable, provide detailed information on fees collected by your agency. *See Exhibit 8 Example.*

N/A

VI. Organization

- A. Provide an organizational chart that includes major programs and divisions, and shows the number of FTEs in each program or division. Detail should include, if possible, Department Heads with subordinates, and actual FTEs with budgeted FTEs in parenthesis.

See attachment: VI.A. Org Chart

- B. If applicable, fill in the chart below listing field or regional offices. *See Exhibit 9 Example.*

Headquarters, Region, or Field Office	Location	Co-Location? Yes / No	Number of Budgeted FTEs FY 2016	Number of Actual FTEs as of June 1, 2016
Claims Northwest Region	Waco, TX	No	45.6	37.2
Claims Northeast Region	Temple, TX	No	22	21
Claims Southwest Region	San Antonio, TX	No	26	23.8
Claims Southeast Region	Houston	No	42.4	41.4
VES Region 1	San Antonio, TX	No	35	31
VES Region 2	Killeen, TX	No	27	20
VES Region 3	Dallas, TX	No	43	36
VES Region 4	Houston, TX	No	40	27
VES Region 5	Abilene, TX	No	22	19
Vets Ed and Hazlewood Region 1	Rowlett, TX	No	3	3
Vets Ed and Hazlewood Region 2	Spring, TX	No	3	3
Vets Ed and Hazlewood Region 3	Cibolo, TX	No	2	2
Vets Ed and Hazlewood Region 4	Laredo, TX	No	0	0
Vets Ed and Hazlewood Region 5	Austin, TX	No	15	13
Vets Ed and Hazlewood Region 6	El Paso, TX	Yes	3	2
		TOTAL:	331	281.4

C. What are your agency's FTE caps for fiscal years 2016–2019?

FY2016 & 2017 – FTE Cap of 407.5

FY2018 & 2019 – FTE Cap of 410.5

D. How many temporary or contract employees did your agency have as of August 31, 2016,? Please provide a short summary of the purpose of each position, the amount of expenditures per contract employee, and the procurement method of each position.

TVC hired 4 different temporary employees throughout FY2016.

Fund for Veterans Assistant hired a temporary grant coordinator to assist with processing grants. Expenditures totaled \$5,851.20 and they were procured through the Purchase Request/PO process (TIBH Industries – Peak Performers).

Human Resources hired a temporary HR Specialist to assist with HR functions while in the processes to hire a permanent HR Specialist. Expenditures totaled \$2,103.20 and they were procured through the Purchase Request/PO process (TIBH Industries – Peak Performers).

Executive management hired a temporary Administrative Assistance to assist with front desk tasks until a permanent position was filled. Expenditures totaled \$1,302.00 and they were procured through the Purchase Request/PO process (TIBH Industries – Peak Performers).

Finance hired a temp employee to support the Accounts Payable section during the deployment of CAPPS Financials. Expenditures totaled \$47,018.69 and were procured through the Purchase Request/PO process (TIBH Industries – Peak Performers).

At the end of the fiscal year, TVC terminated the temp employee and hired a permanent temp employee to continue with support for CAPPS Financials deployment/implementation. The amount of expenditures for the short period were \$3,443.47 and were procured through the payroll process.

- E. List each of your agency's key programs or functions, along with expenditures and FTEs by program.

Texas Veterans Commission

Exhibit 10: List of Program FTEs and Expenditures — Fiscal Year 2016

Program	Number of Budgeted FTEs FY 2016	Actual FTEs as of August 31, 2016	Actual Expenditures
Claims (Incl. Visitation, PARIS & Lic. Plates)	107.5	93.5	\$5,579,445.22
Fully Developed Claims Teams	24.0	20.28	\$1,277,000.16
Strike Force Teams	26.0	23.67	\$1,344,695.40
Healthcare Advocacy Program (incl. WVP HCAP)	14.0	13.18	\$956,304.05
Veteran Employment Program	171.0	171.54	\$13,342,276.68
Veteran Education Program	21.0	20.55	\$1,851,409.55
Outreach Program	7.0	5.39	\$721,856.29
Veteran Mental Health Program (Incl. WVP VMHP)	IAC	8.31	\$1,355,886.92
Veteran Entrepreneur Program	3.0	1.68	\$232,463.87
General Assistance Grants	8.0	11.33	\$12,923,006.80
Housing for Texas Heroes (H4TXH)	n/a	1.0	\$1,970,400.80
Hazlewood Administration (no Reimbursements)	7.0	2.0	\$197,587.65
Central Administration	19.0	16.82	\$1,936,051.99
TOTAL	407.5	389.25	\$43,688,385.38

VII. Guide to Agency Programs

Complete this section for **each** agency program (or each agency function, activity, or service if more appropriate). Copy and paste the questions as many times as needed to discuss each program, activity, or function. Contact Sunset staff with any questions about applying this section to your agency.

- A. Provide the following information at the beginning of each program description.**

Name of Program or Function: Claims Representation and Counseling

Location/Division: Statewide

Contact Name: Victor Polanco IV

Actual Expenditures, FY 2016: See SER VI.E

Number of Actual FTEs as of June 1, 2017: 128.4

Statutory Citation for Program: Government Code, Title 4, Subtitle C, Ch 434, Subchapter A. Texas Veterans Commission, Sec. 434.0078 (Claims Assistance) & Subchapter B. Veteran County Service Officers (Training Requirements)

- B. What is the objective of this program or function? Describe the major activities performed under this program.**

Page 3 and 4 of the Strategic Plan.

- C. What evidence can you provide that shows the effectiveness and efficiency of this program or function? Provide a summary of key statistics and outcome performance measures that best convey the effectiveness and efficiency of this function or program. Also please provide a short description of the methodology behind each statistic or performance measure.**

See VII. C. Program Performance

- D. Describe any important history regarding this program not included in the general agency history section, including how the services or functions have changed from the original intent.**

On July 19, 2012, Lieutenant Governor David Dewhurst, working with Governor Perry and Speaker Straus, directed the Texas Veterans Commission to reinstitute the "State Strike Force Teams (SFT) " that were implemented in 2009 to help reduce the federal backlog of veterans' claims for disability benefits.

Texas Veteran Commission established the Strike Force Teams and Fully Developed Claims Team in August 2012. The priority for the team at that time was to assist with the VA backlog. This included, but was not limited to, reviewing claims prior to being reviewed for decision. This enabled the SFT to obtain any needed evidence, thus reducing the development time. With the initial requirement of 10 years or more experience in rating and/or appeals, this proved to be a substantial benefit to the VA Regional Offices (VARO) for reducing the time required to complete the claims process.

TVC coordinated several highly successful “Beat the Backlog” outreach events that were conducted by the SF Teams all over the State to address the backlog.

- E. Describe who or what this program or function affects. List any qualifications or eligibility requirements for persons or entities affected. Provide a statistical breakdown of persons or entities affected.**

See *Government Code, Title 4, Subtitle C, Ch 434, Subchapter A. Texas Veterans Commission, Sec. 434.007* for eligibility requirements.

See VA GDX and Compensation and Pension by County 2016 attachments for statistical breakdown.

- F. Describe how your program or function is administered, including a description of the processes involved in the program or function. Include flowcharts, timelines, or other illustrations as necessary to describe agency policies and procedures. Indicate how field/regional services are used, if applicable.**

See attachment: VII.F. Claims Manual

- G. Identify all funding sources and amounts for the program or function, including federal grants and pass-through monies. Describe any funding formulas or funding conventions. For state funding sources, please specify (e.g., general revenue, appropriations rider, budget strategy, fees/dues).**

See attachment: VII.G. Funding Sources

- H. Identify any programs, internal or external to your agency, that provide identical or similar services or functions to the target population. Describe the similarities and differences.**

There are VA, County, and National Veteran Service Organizations that provide benefit assistance to veterans and their families similar to the TVC Claims Program; however, none of them have State Strike Force and Fully Developed Claims teams, nor are they mandated to provide training on claims assistance and benefits. The TVC Claims Representation and Counseling Program is the only program that provides benefit assistance, houses the State Strike Force and Fully Developed Claims teams, and provides training to the Veteran County Service Officers.

- I. Discuss how the program or function is coordinating its activities to avoid duplication or conflict with the other programs listed in Question H and with the agency’s customers. If applicable, briefly discuss any memorandums of understanding (MOUs), interagency agreements, or interagency contracts.**

Veterans Service Organizations such as the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars and the Disabled American Veterans provide assistance and representation; however, they have limited resources. They also tend to prefer that a veteran be a member of their organization. The two largest organizations, the American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars depend on the TVC to provide them with administrative and clerical support. In the cases of other smaller organizations, the TVC presently or at times will be called on to handle their claims. The TVC is the only organization which offers a training program for Veterans County Service Officers. The TVC provides initial training and ongoing training for VCSO’s .

The current MOU between the TVC and the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) states that TVC counselors located in regional offices will provide claims counseling services to VFW members throughout the State of Texas, specifically, those veterans, dependents, and survivors located in the Houston and Waco regions. The designated VFW counselor is also mandated to attend all VFW trainings.

- J. If the program or function works with local, regional, or federal units of government, include a brief description of these entities and their relationship to the agency.**

See attachment: VII.F. Claims Manual

- K. If contracted expenditures are made through this program please provide:**

- a short summary of the general purpose of those contracts overall;
- the amount of those expenditures in fiscal year 2016;
- the number of contracts accounting for those expenditures;
- the method used to procure contracts
- top five contracts by dollar amount, including contractor and purpose;
- the methods used to ensure accountability for funding and performance; and
- a short description of any current contracting problems.

N/A

- L. Provide information on any grants awarded by the program.**

N/A

- M. Are there any barriers or challenges that impede the program’s performance, including any outdated or ineffective state laws? Explain.**

N/A

- N. Provide any additional information needed to gain a preliminary understanding of the program or function.**

N/A

- A. Provide the following information at the beginning of each program description.**

Name of Program or Function: Veterans Education Program

Location/Division: Texas Veterans Commission, Austin, Texas, Headquarters Office

Contact Name: Tammy Micallef, Director

Actual Expenditures, FY 2016: See SER VI.E

Number of Actual FTEs as of June 1, 2017: 21/28

Statutory Citation for Program: Texas Government Code 434.0079, 434.00791, 434.251, 434.301; US Code Title 38 Part III Chapter 36 Subchapter I - State Approving Agencies.

- B. What is the objective of this program or function? Describe the major activities performed under this program.**

See Strategic Plan page 7

- C. What evidence can you provide that shows the effectiveness and efficiency of this program or function? Provide a summary of key statistics and outcome performance measures that best convey the effectiveness and efficiency of this function or program. Also please provide a short description of the methodology behind each statistic or performance measure.**

See attachment: VII. C. Program Performance and Strategic Plan page 34

- D. Describe any important history regarding this program not included in the general agency history section, including how the services or functions have changed from the original intent.**

Veterans Education Program – In October 2006, the SAA function of the Veterans Education Program was moved from the Texas Workforce Commission to the Texas Veterans Commission. In 2014, the Hazlewood Management and Education Coordinators Programs were introduced to the Veterans Education Program by statute.

- E. Describe who or what this program or function affects. List any qualifications or eligibility requirements for persons or entities affected. Provide a statistical breakdown of persons or entities affected.**

The Veterans Education Program affects every student veteran and eligible family member in the State in some fashion. Students who wish to use VA Education benefits, schools and training institutions that wish to provide training to veterans and family members using VA education benefits, veterans and family members who wish to utilize the Hazlewood Tuition and Fee exemption program and all public institutions of higher education that are required by statute to provide the exemption.

Federal Statute pertaining to Veterans Readjustment and Related Benefits (includes veterans education benefits) may be located at the following link:

<https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/38/part-III>

Federal Statute pertaining to Administration of Educational Benefits (includes operation of the State Approving Agency) may be located at the following link:

<https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/38/part-III/chapter-36>

The VA GI Bill® website may be located at the following link:

<http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/>

- F. Describe how your program or function is administered, including a description of the processes involved in the program or function. Include flowcharts, timelines, or other illustrations as necessary to describe agency policies and procedures. Indicate how field/regional services are used, if applicable.**

See attachment: VII.G.VetsEd Program Manual

- G. Identify all funding sources and amounts for the program or function, including federal grants and pass-through monies. Describe any funding formulas or funding conventions. For state funding sources, please specify (e.g., general revenue, appropriations rider, budget strategy, fees/dues).**

See attachment: VII.G. Funding Sources

- H. Identify any programs, internal or external to your agency, that provide identical or similar services or functions to the target population. Describe the similarities and differences.**

N/A

- I. **Discuss how the program or function is coordinating its activities to avoid duplication or conflict with the other programs listed in Question H and with the agency's customers. If applicable, briefly discuss any memorandums of understanding (MOUs), interagency agreements, or interagency contracts.**

N/A

- J. **If the program or function works with local, regional, or federal units of government, include a brief description of these entities and their relationship to the agency.**

The Veterans Education Program SAA function is contracted with the VA to provide oversight and approval of all state schools and other training institutions that wish to train veterans using VA education benefits. The contract includes program approvals and compliance inspection.

- K. **If contracted expenditures are made through this program please provide:**

- a short summary of the general purpose of those contracts overall;
- the amount of those expenditures in fiscal year 2016;
- the number of contracts accounting for those expenditures;
- the method used to procure contracts
- top five contracts by dollar amount, including contractor and purpose;
- the methods used to ensure accountability for funding and performance; and
- a short description of any current contracting problems.

N/A

- L. **Provide information on any grants awarded by the program.**

N/A

- M. **Are there any barriers or challenges that impede the program's performance, including any outdated or ineffective state laws? Explain.**

N/A

- N. **Provide any additional information needed to gain a preliminary understanding of the program or function.**

N/A

- O. **Regulatory programs relate to the licensing, registration, certification, or permitting of a person, business, or other entity. For each regulatory program, if applicable, describe:**

- why the regulation is needed;
- the scope of, and procedures for, inspections or audits of regulated entities;

- follow-up activities conducted when non-compliance is identified;
- sanctions available to the agency to ensure compliance; and
- procedures for handling consumer/public complaints against regulated entities.

N/A

P. For each regulatory program, if applicable, provide the following complaint information. The chart headings may be changed if needed to better reflect your agency’s practices. Please include a brief description of the methodology supporting each measure. N/A

A. Provide the following information at the beginning of each program description.

Name of Program or Function: Veterans Employment Services

Location/Division: Texas Veterans Commission, Austin, Texas, Headquarters Office

Contact Name: Tim Shatto, Director

Actual Expenditures, FY 2016: See SER VI.E

Number of Actual FTEs as of June 1, 2017: 152

Statutory Citation for Program: Texas Government Code 434.0079, 434.00791, 434.251, 434.301; US Code Title 38 Part III Chapter 36 Subchapter I - State Approving Agencies

B. What is the objective of this program or function? Describe the major activities performed under this program.

See Strategic Plan pages 5-6

1. Veterans Career Resource Division (VCRD) – The VCRD consists of Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG)-funded Disabled Veteran Outreach Program positions. VCRD is tasked with providing individualized careers services to Veterans with significant barriers to employment (SBE), and ensuring those veterans are job-ready. The goal is to assist these veterans in finding long-term, meaningful employment.

2. Veterans Recruitment Division (VRD) – The VRD consists of JVSG-funded Local Veteran Employment Representative positions. VRD is tasked with facilitating employment, training, and placement services for veterans in the state of Texas. VRD staff promote the benefits of hiring veterans to employers, employer associations, and business groups.

3. Family Employment Division (FED) – The FED provides job coaching to spouses, family members, and caregivers of active duty service members and veterans who are not eligible for services from VCRD staff.

- C. What evidence can you provide that shows the effectiveness and efficiency of this program or function? Provide a summary of key statistics and outcome performance measures that best convey the effectiveness and efficiency of this function or program. Also please provide a short description of the methodology behind each statistic or performance measure.**

See attachment: VII. C. Program Performance and Strategic Plan Page 33

- D. Describe any important history regarding this program not included in the general agency history section, including how the services or functions have changed from the original intent.**

Veterans Employment Services – SB 1714 went into effect in 2005. This bill transferred veterans employment programs from the Texas Workforce Commission to the Texas Veterans Commission.

April 10, 2014, US Department of Labor, Veterans' Employment and Training, released Veterans' Program Letter 03-14. This program letter refocused roles and responsibilities expected of all JVSG-funded staff. The program letter conveyed the duties they are to perform and discussed the relationship of services provided by staff.

- E. Describe who or what this program or function affects. List any qualifications or eligibility requirements for persons or entities affected. Provide a statistical breakdown of persons or entities affected.**

A Veteran who:

- Served on active duty more than 180 days and received other than a dishonorable discharge;
- Was discharged/released from active duty because of a service-connected disability;
- Was a member of a Reserve/National Guard component called to active duty; served during a period of war, or in a campaign, or expedition for which a campaign medal is authorized, or was released from active duty by reason of sole survivorship discharge.

A Spouse/Family Caretaker of:

- A Veteran who died of a service connected disability;
- A Veteran who has a total disability rating resulting from a service-connected disability;
- A Veteran who died while a service-connected disability was in existence; or
- An active duty service member who for more than 90 days is/was listed as:
 - Missing in Action
 - Captured in the line of duty by hostile forces; or
 - Forcibly detained or interned in line of duty by a foreign government or power.

A Caretaker:

- Family caretaker of wounded, ill, or injured service members at Military Treatment Facilities (MTF) and Warrior Transition Units (WTU).

Qualified for Services

To be qualified for DVOP-funded services, Veterans and/or eligible spouses or family members must attest that they meet one of the six identified significant barriers to employment (SBEs) or be a member of one of the designated populations eligible for such services.

Significant Barriers to Employment:

A special disabled or disabled veteran, as those terms are defined in 38 US Code 4211(1) and (3);

- Who are entitled to compensation (or who but for the receipt of military retired pay would be entitled to compensation) under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans' Affairs; or,
- Were discharged or released from active duty because of a service-connected disability

A homeless person, as defined in Sections 103(a) and (b) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11302(a) and (b)) as amended:

The definition of homeless as a SBE is updated to include paragraph (b) of Section 103 of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, which considers homeless to be any individual or family who is fleeing, or is attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or other dangerous or life-threatening conditions in the individual's or family's current housing situation, including where the health and safety of children are jeopardized, and who have no other residence and lack of resources or support network to obtain other permanent housing.

1. A recently-separated service member, as defined in 38 U.S.C 4211 (6), who has been unemployed for 27 or more weeks in the previous 12 months.
2. An offender, as defined in WIOA Section 3 (38), who is currently incarcerated or who has been released from incarceration.
3. A veteran lacking a high school diploma or equivalent certificate.
4. A low-income individual (as defined by WIOA Section 3 (36)).

Additional Populations Eligible for Services:

1. The population to be served by DVOP specialists includes any veteran ages 18-24.
2. Transitioning Service Members in Need of Intensive Services

3. Wounded, ill, or injured service members receiving treatment at military treatment facilities or warrior transition units.
4. Spouses and Family Caregivers of such wounded, ill, or injured service members.

F. Describe how your program or function is administered, including a description of the processes involved in the program or function. Include flowcharts, timelines, or other illustrations as necessary to describe agency policies and procedures. Indicate how field/regional services are used, if applicable.

See attachment: VII.F.VES Program Guide

G. Identify all funding sources and amounts for the program or function, including federal grants and pass-through monies. Describe any funding formulas or funding conventions. For state funding sources, please specify (e.g., general revenue, appropriations rider, budget strategy, fees/dues).

See attachment: VII.G. Funding Sources

H. Identify any programs, internal or external to your agency, that provide identical or similar services or functions to the target population. Describe the similarities and differences.

N/A

I. Discuss how the program or function is coordinating its activities to avoid duplication or conflict with the other programs listed in Question H and with the agency's customers. If applicable, briefly discuss any memorandums of understanding (MOUs), interagency agreements, or interagency contracts.

N/A

J. If the program or function works with local, regional, or federal units of government, include a brief description of these entities and their relationship to the agency.

The JVSG-program is administered by US Department of Labor, Veterans Employment and Training Services (DOL-VETS). DOL-VETS establishes federally mandated performance measures, as well as administers the grant given for the JVSG program.

K. If contracted expenditures are made through this program please provide:

- a short summary of the general purpose of those contracts overall;
- the amount of those expenditures in fiscal year 2016;
- the number of contracts accounting for those expenditures;
- the method used to procure contracts
- top five contracts by dollar amount, including contractor and purpose;

- the methods used to ensure accountability for funding and performance; and
- a short description of any current contracting problems.

N/A

L. Provide information on any grants awarded by the program.

N/A

M. Are there any barriers or challenges that impede the program's performance, including any outdated or ineffective state laws? Explain.

N/A

N. Provide any additional information needed to gain a preliminary understanding of the program or function.

N/A

O. Regulatory programs relate to the licensing, registration, certification, or permitting of a person, business, or other entity. For each regulatory program, if applicable, describe:

- why the regulation is needed;
- the scope of, and procedures for, inspections or audits of regulated entities;
- follow-up activities conducted when non-compliance is identified;
- sanctions available to the agency to ensure compliance; and
- procedures for handling consumer/public complaints against regulated entities.

N/A

P. For each regulatory program, if applicable, provide the following complaint information. The chart headings may be changed if needed to better reflect your agency's practices. Please include a brief description of the methodology supporting each measure.

N/A

- A. Provide the following information at the beginning of each program description.**

Name of Program or Function: Health Care Advocacy Program

Location/Division: TVC HQ - Austin, Texas

Contact Name: Jose Silva, Program Manager

Actual Expenditures, FY 2017: See SER VI.E

Number of Actual FTEs as of June 1, 2017: 12/14

Statutory Citation for Program: Texas Government Code 434.023, HB 1762

- B. What is the objective of this program or function? Describe the major activities performed under this program.**

See Strategic Plan pages 12-13

- C. What evidence can you provide that shows the effectiveness and efficiency of this program or function? Provide a summary of key statistics and outcome performance measures that best convey the effectiveness and efficiency of this function or program. Also please provide a short description of the methodology behind each statistic or performance measure.**

See VII.C. Program Performance & Strategic Plan page 40

- D. Describe any important history regarding this program not included in the general agency history section, including how the services or functions have changed from the original intent.**

N/A

- E. Describe who or what this program or function affects. List any qualifications or eligibility requirements for persons or entities affected. Provide a statistical breakdown of persons or entities affected.**

The Health Care Advocacy Program affects every veteran and eligible family member in the State in who have earned health care benefits and services. The HCAP can advocate for any veteran seeking assistance or guidance on health care services within the local communities or through the Department of Veterans Affairs.

- F. Describe how your program or function is administered, including a description of the processes involved in the program or function. Include flowcharts, timelines, or other illustrations as necessary to describe agency policies and procedures. Indicate how field/regional services are used, if applicable.**

See attachment: VII.F. HCAP Program Guide

- G. Identify all funding sources and amounts for the program or function, including federal grants and pass-through monies. Describe any funding formulas or funding conventions. For state funding sources, please specify (e.g., general revenue, appropriations rider, budget strategy, fees/dues).**

See attachment: VII.G. Funding Sources

- H. Identify any programs, internal or external to your agency, that provide identical or similar services or functions to the target population. Describe the similarities and differences.**

The Veterans Health Administration (VHA) does have patient representatives assigned to assist veterans with issues/concerns. The VHA and the HCAP have similar occupations where advocates identify existing and potential problems, suggest solutions or alternatives, and assist with Congressional inquiries and public relations to increase community and Veteran awareness of Veterans Administration health care services.

The TVC Health Care Advocacy Program (HCAP) differs in service and exists to fill gaps where the VHA does not provide specific services related with patient health care. HCAP advocates are trained and sponsor a range of Veteran-centric programs such as providing transportation to and from medical center appointments, emergency financial assistance, home-modification grants/loans, and other veteran services. The HCAP assists the Texas VHA/VISN 17 form a productive partnership that can supplement VA services and help fill urgent or emerging gaps in services.

Many veterans seek out State Advocates to assist them with health care issues simply because they are not VA employees within the same chain of command. Our advocates are strategically located in some areas (rural/CBOC's) where the VHA does not provide a local patient representative.

- I. Discuss how the program or function is coordinating its activities to avoid duplication or conflict with the other programs listed in Question H and with the agency's customers. If applicable, briefly discuss any memorandums of understanding (MOUs), interagency agreements, or interagency contracts.**

The HCAP advocates operate and follow all the Veterans Health Administration medical center policies and procedures while presenting Veteran concerns to appropriate

personnel. The HCAP Standard Operating Procedure lists the memorandum of understanding between the VHA and TVC to assist veterans (page 5, attached).

J. If the program or function works with local, regional, or federal units of government, include a brief description of these entities and their relationship to the agency.

The Health Care Advocacy Program can seek solutions to problems, concerns, and unmet needs by working with VA health care providers and VA support staff to prevent and resolve patient complaints.

See attached: VII. Health care Advocacy Program. VISN 17- TVC SOP Final January 5, 2016

K. If contracted expenditures are made through this program please provide:

- a short summary of the general purpose of those contracts overall;
- the amount of those expenditures in fiscal year 2016;
- the number of contracts accounting for those expenditures;
- the method used to procure contracts
- top five contracts by dollar amount, including contractor and purpose;
- the methods used to ensure accountability for funding and performance; and
- a short description of any current contracting problems.

N/A

L. Provide information on any grants awarded by the program.

N/A

M. Are there any barriers or challenges that impede the program's performance, including any outdated or ineffective state laws? Explain.

The Health Care Advocacy Program was significantly impacted by the state hiring freeze during Fiscal year 2017. Due to manning shortfalls and increased workload due to effectiveness of the program the measurement data requirements will be difficult to obtain.

N. Provide any additional information needed to gain a preliminary understanding of the program or function.

N/A

- O. Regulatory programs relate to the licensing, registration, certification, or permitting of a person, business, or other entity. For each regulatory program, if applicable, describe:
- why the regulation is needed;
 - the scope of, and procedures for, inspections or audits of regulated entities;
 - follow-up activities conducted when non-compliance is identified;
 - sanctions available to the agency to ensure compliance; and
 - procedures for handling consumer/public complaints against regulated entities.

N/A

- P. For each regulatory program, if applicable, provide the following complaint information. The chart headings may be changed if needed to better reflect your agency's practices. Please include a brief description of the methodology supporting each measure.

N/A

- A. Provide the following information at the beginning of each program description.

Name of Program or Function: Women Veterans Program

Location/Division: TVC HQ - Austin, Texas

Contact Name: Anna Baker

Actual Expenditures, FY 2016: \$205,006.73

Number of Actual FTEs as of June 1, 2017: 4

Statutory Citation for Program: H.B. 867, SUBCHAPTER E. TEXAS WOMEN VETERANS PROGRAM

- B. What is the objective of this program or function? Describe the major activities performed under this program.

The Women Veterans Program (WVP) bridges the gap between Texas women veterans and the services and benefits they have earned. The program ensures that the women veterans of Texas have equitable access to federal and state veterans' benefits and services. WVP works to increase support for women veterans throughout Texas by collaborating with federal, state, county, municipal, and private agencies that provide services to women veterans to increase their awareness of the needs of women veterans, improve and create needed services, and identify existing resources for women veterans. WVP aims to empower women veterans to expect equitable treatment in the care and services to which they are entitled and elevate public awareness of the vital roles women veterans have played in our national defense.

WVP Outreach, in coordination on with the aforementioned agencies, implements conferences, seminars, training workshops, and statewide community events for the purpose of:

- Improving the awareness of women veterans of their eligibility for federal and state veterans' benefits and services
- Assessing the needs of women veterans with respect to benefits and services
- Connecting women veterans to those agencies that meet the needs of women veterans

WVP Outreach informs women veterans about the many services and benefits available to them through the Texas Veterans Commission and provides guidance and direction to women veterans applying for grants, benefits, or services including, but not limited to:

- Education, i.e. Hazlewood, Montgomery and Post 9/11 GI Bill
- Claims and claims counselors
- Mental Health Program and Military Veteran Peer Network
- Veteran Entrepreneur Program

The 3 primary competency areas of the Women Veterans Program are:

Employment

The program provides women veterans with employment assistance by conducting skills training geared specifically towards women veterans in the form of seminars, webinars, workshops, and the Women Veterans Professional Network. The WVP Employment Coordinator reaches out to employers to promote the hiring of women veterans throughout Texas. WVP refers women veterans who are not aware of the TVC Veterans Employment Services to a Veterans Career Advisor for one-on-one employment assistance.

Healthcare

WVP partners with TVC HCAP and the VA to ensure women veterans receive quality healthcare services from the VA. The TVC Women Veterans Healthcare Liaison is the lead advisor for Military Sexual Trauma and collaborates with agencies of the Texas Association on of Sexual Assault relating to domestic violence.

Homelessness

WVP helps to reduce homelessness among women veterans by collaborating with the VA as well as other federal, state, and local programs regarding veteran homelessness. In collaboration with the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs, WVP completed its statewide study on veteran homelessness in December 1, 2016.

Additionally, WVP reviews programs, research projects, and other initiatives designed to address the needs of the women veterans of Texas, and disseminates information regarding opportunities for women veterans throughout the network of entities with

which the program collaborates. All efforts, as well as recognizing and honoring Texas women veterans will increase the number of women veterans identifying as a veteran and improve their awareness of eligibility for benefits, services, and opportunities.

- C. What evidence can you provide that shows the effectiveness and efficiency of this program or function? Provide a summary of key statistics and outcome performance measures that best convey the effectiveness and efficiency of this function or program. Also please provide a short description of the methodology behind each statistic or performance measure.**

In 2016, the Women Veterans Program (WVP) consisting of 4 coordinators performed outreach, advocated for, and/or referred 1,038 veterans to the VA, other TVC services, or non-profit agencies. Reporting was broken down by respective competency areas: Outreach, Health Care, and Employment. Outreach represents 82% of service provided and is conducted in the form of TVC hosted training events, speaking engagements, as a panel member at conferences related to women veterans, and one-on-one table/booth outreach events often hosted by local, state, or federal partners, such as county service offices or the Veterans Land Board. In the competency areas of Health Care and Employment, the WVP provides education to women veterans and referral to other TVC programs, local non-profits, county services offices, or Federal agencies, such as the Veterans Administration, as may be needed by the woman veteran to ensure benefits are received.

In 2017, the WVP performed outreach, advocated for, and/or referred 1,798 veterans to the VA, other TVC services, or non-profit agencies, a 73% increase over 2016. Outreach increased to 89%.

Additional information on how information and data is collected for reporting purposes is located in the Women Veterans Program Manual, Chapter 3, Events and Services, Documenting Event and Service Activities.

- D. Describe any important history regarding this program not included in the general agency history section, including how the services or functions have changed from the original intent.**

Refer to the Women Veterans Program Manual, Chapter 2, Women Veterans Program.

- E. Describe who or what this program or function affects. List any qualifications or eligibility requirements for persons or entities affected. Provide a statistical breakdown of persons or entities affected.**

The Women Veterans Program affects all the women veterans of Texas. There is no qualification or eligibility requirement for women veterans to seek help from the Women Veterans Program. The state of Texas is home to 173,348 women veterans.

- F. Describe how your program or function is administered, including a description of the processes involved in the program or function. Include flowcharts, timelines, or other illustrations as necessary to describe agency policies and procedures. Indicate how field/regional services are used, if applicable.**

See attachment: VII.F. WVP Program Guide

- G. Identify all funding sources and amounts for the program or function, including federal grants and pass-through monies. Describe any funding formulas or funding conventions. For state funding sources, please specify (e.g., general revenue, appropriations rider, budget strategy, fees/dues).**

See attachment: VII.G. Funding Sources

- H. Identify any programs, internal or external to your agency, that provide identical or similar services or functions to the target population. Describe the similarities and differences.**

The Women Veterans Program goes further in advocating for all women veterans to ensure that the organizations and agencies providing direct services are taking into consideration the gender-specific needs of women. Additionally, the Women Veterans Program is the only program that educates the public, non-veterans, and male veterans about the gender-specific needs of women veterans for ensuring the women veterans in their community are recognized and receive equitable services.

- I. Discuss how the program or function is coordinating its activities to avoid duplication or conflict with the other programs listed in Question H and with the agency's customers. If applicable, briefly discuss any memorandums of understanding (MOUs), interagency agreements, or interagency contracts.**

To ensure that the Women Veterans Program does not overlap or duplicate functions of other state or federal agencies, the Woman Veteran Program Manager coordinates events with the partner agencies and utilizes the strengths of the partner agencies to ensure a continuum of care for women veterans. Other organizations and agencies focus on providing a very specific need of the veteran, such as employment or education, when the veteran approaches them to fulfill this need. The Women Veterans Program advocates to the public, non-veterans, and male veterans of the gender-specific needs of women veterans and refers women veterans to the agencies or organizations best qualified to provide the service.

- J. If the program or function works with local, regional, or federal units of government, include a brief description of these entities and their relationship to the agency.**

The Women Veterans Program educates and provides guidance to women veterans applying for healthcare services to ensure that women veterans receive quality healthcare services from the Veterans Administration.

The Women Veterans Program works closely with Health and Human Services to capture women veterans seeking services and ensuring they are receiving care from the Veterans Administration if they meet VA eligibility requirements.

The Women Veterans Program also works with Texas Association Against Sexual Assault to coordinate care for women veterans suffering from Military Sexual Trauma and Intimate Partner Violence.

The Women Veterans Program works closely County Veteran Service Officers to coordinate care for women veterans in the areas where they live.

The Women Veterans Program works closely with the Texas Workforce Commission to help women veterans find employment. The WVP also connects women to local organizations like Dress for Success and Boots to Heels, who offer professional interview attire, interview skills, resume writing, and networking opportunities for women seeing employment.

The Women Veterans Program partners with Veteran Land Board for outreach opportunities throughout the state.

For a list of other organizations and agencies the Women Veterans Program partners with, go to the Resources section located at the end of the Women Veterans Program Manual.

K. If contracted expenditures are made through this program please provide:

- a short summary of the general purpose of those contracts overall;
- the amount of those expenditures in fiscal year 2016;
- the number of contracts accounting for those expenditures;
- the method used to procure contracts
- top five contracts by dollar amount, including contractor and purpose;
- the methods used to ensure accountability for funding and performance; and
- a short description of any current contracting problems.

N/A

L. Provide information on any grants awarded by the program.

N/A

M. Are there any barriers or challenges that impede the program's performance, including any outdated or ineffective state laws? Explain.

Lack of funding and FTE's to perform the additional duties set forth in SB 805.

- N. Provide any additional information needed to gain a preliminary understanding of the program or function.**

None.

- O. Regulatory programs relate to the licensing, registration, certification, or permitting of a person, business, or other entity. For each regulatory program, if applicable, describe:**
- why the regulation is needed;
 - the scope of, and procedures for, inspections or audits of regulated entities;
 - follow-up activities conducted when non-compliance is identified;
 - sanctions available to the agency to ensure compliance; and
 - procedures for handling consumer/public complaints against regulated entities.

N/A

- P. For each regulatory program, if applicable, provide the following complaint information. The chart headings may be changed if needed to better reflect your agency's practices. Please include a brief description of the methodology supporting each measure.**

N/A

A. Provide the following information at the beginning of each program description.

Name of Program or Function: Fund for Veterans' Assistance

Location/Division: Moody Bank Building, Suite 711

Contact Name: Charles Catoe, Director

Actual Expenditures, FY 2016: See SER VI.E

Number of Actual FTEs as of June 1, 2017: 11

Statutory Citation for Program: Texas Government Code. 434.017

B. What is the objective of this program or function? Describe the major activities performed under this program.

The FVA program oversees five grant categories: General Assistance, Housing4TexasHeroes, Veterans Mental Health, Veterans Treatment Courts, and Highly Rural Transportation Grants. These grants offer funding to non-profit and local government organizations which, in turn, provide direct services to Texas Veterans and their families.

C. What evidence can you provide that shows the effectiveness and efficiency of this program or function? Provide a summary of key statistics and outcome performance measures that best convey the effectiveness and efficiency of this function or program. Also please provide a short description of the methodology behind each statistic or performance measure.

See Attachment: 2016 FVA Annual Report for descriptions of grant programs, revenue, and grants awarded.

D. Describe any important history regarding this program not included in the general agency history section, including how the services or functions have changed from the original intent.

The Fund for Veterans' Assistance was created in the 79th Legislature, and codified in the Texas Government Code § 434.017, Veterans' Assistance Agencies. The Fund, prior to the passage of Senate Bill 1655 in the 81st Legislature, was composed of money transferred to the Fund at the direction of the Legislature, gifts and grants contributed to the Fund, and the earnings of the Fund.

During the 81st Legislature, Senate Bill 1655 established the Veterans' Assistance Game. This allowed for money to be transferred to the Fund from proceeds of a game operated by the Texas Lottery Commission, operated under the Texas Government Code §§ 466.027 and 466.408. The Fund is also composed of money deposited to the Fund under the Texas Transportation Code § 502.1746. The Housing for Texas Heroes (H4TXH) grant program was

established in 2011 during the 82nd Legislative Session. The 83rd Legislature's House Bill 2392 appropriated funds and directed DSHS to create a Veterans Mental Health Grant program to further increase mental health service capacity with an emphasis on direct services to Veterans. DSHS and TVC established a partnership to create the Veterans Mental Health Grant program with the first grants in 2014. The 83rd Legislature established the Veterans Treatment Court (then called Veterans Court) as defined in Title 2, Subtitle K, Chapter 124 of the Texas Government Code. During the 84th Legislature, the General Appropriations Act appropriated funds to the Texas Veterans Commission for a Veterans Treatment Court Grant.

- E. Describe who or what this program or function affects. List any qualifications or eligibility requirements for persons or entities affected. Provide a statistical breakdown of persons or entities affected.**

FVA provides grants to non-profits and local governments that provide direct services to veterans, their families and their survivors. See attached 2016 FVA Annual Report for details on the grant programs, revenue, distribution and a list of granted organizations.

- F. Describe how your program or function is administered, including a description of the processes involved in the program or function. Include flowcharts, timelines, or other illustrations as necessary to describe agency policies and procedures. Indicate how field/regional services are used, if applicable.**

See attachment: VII.F. FVA Program Guide

- G. Identify all funding sources and amounts for the program or function, including federal grants and pass-through monies. Describe any funding formulas or funding conventions. For state funding sources, please specify (e.g., general revenue, appropriations rider, budget strategy, fees/dues).**

See attachment: VII.G. Funding Sources

- H. Identify any programs, internal or external to your agency, that provide identical or similar services or functions to the target population. Describe the similarities and differences.**

There are no other portions of TVC that administers grants to other entities to provide services to veterans. HHSC administers the Texas Veterans and Family Assistance grants which reach a similar population and attract many of the same applicants to FVA's Veterans Mental Health grants. Key differences include HHSC's grant is funded by the Legislature with GR while FVA's grant is funded predominately with revenue from lottery ticket sales and volunteer donations. HHSC's grants target community collaborative efforts and require a significant local investment in matching funds while FVA grants target individual organizations serving veterans whether local or all across the state.

- I. Discuss how the program or function is coordinating its activities to avoid duplication or conflict with the other programs listed in Question H and with the agency's customers. If applicable, briefly discuss any memorandums of understanding (MOUs), interagency agreements, or interagency contracts.**

FVA avoids duplication by requiring our applicants to disclose other grants they have received on our application. We have coordinated informally with HHSC but do not have an MOU in place.

- .J. If the program or function works with local, regional, or federal units of government, include a brief description of these entities and their relationship to the agency.**

VA provides grants to local governments (cities or counties) that provide services to veterans their families and survivors. FVA is the pass-through agent for a federal Highly Rural Transportation Grant serving nine counties across Texas. This federal grant is administered by the Department of Veteran Affairs.

- K. If contracted expenditures are made through this program please provide:**

- a short summary of the general purpose of those contracts overall;
- the amount of those expenditures in fiscal year 2016;
- the number of contracts accounting for those expenditures;
- the method used to procure contracts
- top five contracts by dollar amount, including contractor and purpose;
- the methods used to ensure accountability for funding and performance; and
- a short description of any current contracting problems.

N/A

- L. Provide information on any grants awarded by the program.**

See our list of current grants on our website.

<http://www.tvc.texas.gov/Grants-Awarded.aspx>

- M. Are there any barriers or challenges that impede the program's performance, including any outdated or ineffective state laws? Explain.**

N/A

- N. Provide any additional information needed to gain a preliminary understanding of the program or function.**

N/A

- O. Regulatory programs relate to the licensing, registration, certification, or permitting of a person, business, or other entity. For each regulatory program, if applicable, describe:**
- **why the regulation is needed;**
 - **the scope of, and procedures for, inspections or audits of regulated entities;**
 - **follow-up activities conducted when non-compliance is identified;**
 - **sanctions available to the agency to ensure compliance; and**
 - **procedures for handling consumer/public complaints against regulated entities.**

N/A

- P. For each regulatory program, if applicable, provide the following complaint information. The chart headings may be changed if needed to better reflect your agency's practices. Please include a brief description of the methodology supporting each measure.**

N/A

A. Name of Program or Function: *Communications & Veterans Outreach*

Location/Division: Texas Veterans Commission, Austin, Texas, Headquarters Office

Contact Name: Elaine Zavala, Manager

Actual Expenditures, FY 2016: See SER VI.E

Number of Actual FTEs as of June 1, 2017: 7

Statutory Citation for Program:

Sec. 434.0161. USE OF FUNDS TO SUPPORT OUTREACH AND TRAINING.

Sec. 434.024. VETERANS COMMUNITY OUTREACH CAMPAIGN.

B. What is the objective of this program or function? Describe the major activities performed under this program.

The Outreach department (Outreach Department) in alignment with the Texas Veterans Commission's overall mission provides advocacy, awareness, engagement, and resource information of services provided by the TVC and Veterans County Service Officers (VCSO). The Outreach Department aims to ensure Texas veterans, their family members, and survivors are aware of the benefits and services earned through military service.

The Outreach Department drives engagement to TVC programs. In addition, the Outreach Department work with agency programs to gather, analyze, track, and monitor veteran awareness and engagement. This essential information assists in the planning, execution, and assessment of veteran outreach efforts to maximize the reach and return on investment of outreach activities. In addition, the Outreach Department utilize several media channels and platforms to accomplish its mission, including a call center, radio and television, print publications, social media platforms, outreach and engagement events, and other activities across the state.

Media Relations

The Outreach Department's Public Affairs team communicates and coordinates TVC resource information to the veteran population and the public via national, state, and local media channels. The team serves as the liaison for all media inquiries and requests for information. In addition, the Outreach Department plans, coordinates, produces, and distributes public service announcements and press releases. These products are circulated to targeted media channels to amplify the awareness and reach of veteran resource information.

The Outreach Department plans, coordinates, and participates in media interviews to extend the awareness and reach of veteran resource information. These interviews ensure

effective and efficient results are produced with a minimum amount of taxpayer funds, while successfully fulfilling core functions and performance measures, and allowing for excellent customer service and transparency.

The Outreach Department plans, coordinates, implements, and executes training activities and events including media training, skill set cross-training, and software training. This allows for continuous improvement, excellent customer service, and transparency.

Publications

The Outreach Department delivers the E-Vets electronic newsletter monthly. E-Vets is distributed to subscribers across the state and beyond. The external/internal facing newsletter includes relevant veteran topics, veteran benefits and services, and upcoming veteran-centric events. The Outreach Department also delivers an annual report with emphasis on agency successes throughout the prior year. The annual report includes legislative and policy updates that affect federal, state, and local veteran benefits and services. All products are consistently evaluated for continuous improvement.

The Outreach Department produces and distributes printed and electronic guides of state veterans' benefits in even-numbered years. Booklets are updated and posted on the TVC website. Electronic and printed versions are provided to VCSO's and state and federal military installations in Texas. Outreach Department designs and distributes brochures and flyers that highlight TVC's programs providing consistent information and messaging that encourage the Texas veteran population to contact and engage with TVC through the "No Wrong Door" model.

The E-Vets electronic newsletter is produced and delivered monthly to subscribers and improve the distribution of relevant information to the veteran population.

Social Media

The Outreach Department manages TVC resource information and messaging utilizing social media platforms to include Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter, and YouTube. Social media platforms are an easily accessible and cost-effective method that allows for rapid communication and engagement, while providing excellent customer service and transparency. In addition, the Outreach Department and other key agency personnel participate in a co-branded podcast with the General Land Office and the Texas Veterans Land Board. The podcast stimulates interagency partnerships and collaboration.

The Outreach Department engage the veteran community through social media platforms. Performance metrics of these platforms will be analyzed to improve online efficiency and help eliminate redundant or superfluous efforts.

Events

The Outreach Department actively coordinate and facilitate TVC sponsored events as well as participate in non-TVC sponsored events with veteran-centric strategic partners. Such events include the Annual Veterans Summit, Veterans Benefit Fairs, state agency collaborative events, institutes of higher learning fairs, legislator-sponsored town hall meetings, veterans' service organization events and local community events across the State of Texas.

The Outreach Department document event participation including the number of attendees and cost per attendee. These valuations will ensure effective and efficient results are produced with a minimum amount of taxpayer funds. This documentation allows for continuous improvement, excellent customer service, and transparency. These events promote excellent customer service through the building of interagency relationships, and face-to-face veteran interaction.

Texas Veterans Commission's resource information is effectively and efficiently communicated to the Texas veteran population and the public via national, state, and local channels. Dedicated staff members serve as media and community liaisons to ensure all inquiries and requests for information are met with clear and responsible answers.

- C. What evidence can you provide that shows the effectiveness and efficiency of this program or function? Provide a summary of key statistics and outcome performance measures that best convey the effectiveness and efficiency of this function or program. Also please provide a short description of the methodology behind each statistic or performance measure.**

Attached Performance Metrics. By December 1, 2019, the outreach program will increase its number of veteran engagements and contacts by 20%.

- D. Describe any important history regarding this program not included in the general agency history section, including how the services or functions have changed from the original intent.**

N/A

- E. Describe who or what this program or function affects. List any qualifications or eligibility requirements for persons or entities affected. Provide a statistical breakdown of persons or entities affected.**

Texas veterans, their families, and surviving spouses.

- F. Describe how your program or function is administered, including a description of the processes involved in the program or function. Include flowcharts, timelines, or other illustrations as necessary to describe agency policies and procedures. Indicate how field/regional services are used, if applicable.**

See attachment VII.F. Outreach Program Guide

- G. Identify all funding sources and amounts for the program or function, including federal grants and pass-through monies. Describe any funding formulas or funding conventions. For state funding sources, please specify (e.g., general revenue, appropriations rider, budget strategy, fees/dues).**

See attachment: VII.G. Funding Sources

- H. Identify any programs, internal or external to your agency, that provide identical or similar services or functions to the target population. Describe the similarities and differences.**

The Outreach department manages the Communication section of the Texas Coordinating Council for Veterans Services (TCCVS). The TCCVS was created as a result of legislation authored by Senator Leticia Van de Putte and sponsored by Representative Sid Miller during the 82nd Legislature. Senate Bill 1796 established the Council to accomplish three tasks:

1. Coordinate the activities of state agencies that assist Veterans, service members, and their families;
2. Coordinate outreach efforts that ensure that Veterans, service members, and their families are made aware of services; and
3. Facilitate collaborative relationships among state, federal, and local agencies and private organizations to identify and address issues affecting Veterans, service members, and their families.

Therefore, the department recognizes the outreach efforts of agency partners across the state to ensure duplication of communications is minimal.

- I. Discuss how the program or function is coordinating its activities to avoid duplication or conflict with the other programs listed in Question H and with the agency's customers. If applicable, briefly discuss any memorandums of understanding (MOUs), interagency agreements, or interagency contracts.**

See attachment: Comms_VLB_MOU

J. If the program or function works with local, regional, or federal units of government, include a brief description of these entities and their relationship to the agency.

All participating state agencies involved in Texas Coordinating Council for Veterans Services (TCCVS) workgroups and council meetings are listed below:

- Veterans Land Board
- Office of Acquired Brain Injury of the Texas Health and Human Services Commission
- Texas Department of State Health Services
- State Bar of Texas
- Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services
- Texas Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services
- Texas Department of Family and Protective Services
- Texas Workforce Commission
- Texas Workforce Investment Council
- Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
- Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation
- Texas Department of Public Safety
- Texas Department of Criminal Justice
- Texas Commission on Jail Standards
- Texas Commission on Law Enforcement Officer Standards and Education
- Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs
- Texas Department of Transportation
- Texas Department of Motor Vehicles
- Office of Public Utility Counsel

These agencies met at least six times to identify strengths and weaknesses of Veterans services provided by the State of Texas. The recommendations identified in the report include extensive collaboration efforts between state, federal, local agencies and private organizations.

See attachment: 2016 TCCVS Report

- K. If contracted expenditures are made through this program please provide:**
- a short summary of the general purpose of those contracts overall;
 - the amount of those expenditures in fiscal year 2016;
 - the number of contracts accounting for those expenditures;
 - the method used to procure contracts
 - top five contracts by dollar amount, including contractor and purpose;
 - the methods used to ensure accountability for funding and performance; and
 - a short description of any current contracting problems.

N/A

- L. Provide information on any grants awarded by the program.**

N/A

- M. Are there any barriers or challenges that impede the program's performance, including any outdated or ineffective state laws? Explain.**

N/A

- N. Provide any additional information needed to gain a preliminary understanding of the program or function.**

N/A

- O. Regulatory programs relate to the licensing, registration, certification, or permitting of a person, business, or other entity. For each regulatory program, if applicable, describe:**
- why the regulation is needed;
 - the scope of, and procedures for, inspections or audits of regulated entities;
 - follow-up activities conducted when non-compliance is identified;
 - sanctions available to the agency to ensure compliance; and
 - procedures for handling consumer/public complaints against regulated entities.

N/A

- P. For each regulatory program, if applicable, provide the following complaint information. The chart headings may be changed if needed to better reflect your agency's practices. Please include a brief description of the methodology supporting each measure.**

N/A

A. Provide the following information at the beginning of each program description.

Name of Program or Function: Veteran Entrepreneur Program

Location/Division: Austin, TX (HQ)

Contact Name: Robyn Provost

Actual Expenditures, FY 2016: Est. See SER VI.E

Number of Actual FTEs as of June 1, 2017: 4.0

Statutory Citation for Program: Texas Government Code 434.023, SB 1476, SB 660, SB 1049

B. What is the objective of this program or function? Describe the major activities performed under this program.

The Veteran Entrepreneur Program (VEP) assists veterans with starting businesses and growing businesses through the development of their business plan, securing of capital and development of business fundamentals. VEP provides veterans with business tools, resources and direct support that can be leveraged towards business success. VEP continuously observes the Texas market landscape and create programs that enhance the scope of services it delivers to veterans. The VEP team of Veteran Business Consultants travels to targeted regions of the state to conduct and facilitate training sessions and informal oral seminars. VEP enlists regional program coordinators across the state to promote, support veteran entrepreneurs, and provide business education through training and counseling. (LAR, pg. 3)

C. What evidence can you provide that shows the effectiveness and efficiency of this program or function? Provide a summary of key statistics and outcome performance measures that best convey the effectiveness and efficiency of this function or program. Also please provide a short description of the methodology behind each statistic or performance measure.

During FY 2015 – 2016, VEP provided 1,258 unique business services to veteran entrepreneurs and business owners. (LAR, pg. 3). These unique services were provided through over 8000 individual interactions with veteran clients.

D. Describe any important history regarding this program not included in the general agency history section, including how the services or functions have changed from the original intent.

The Veteran Entrepreneur Program was created as a pilot program in April 2012 and was formally established in 2013 by Senate Bill 1476, passed during the 83rd Legislature. The purpose of the Veteran Entrepreneur Program is to foster and promote veteran entrepreneurship throughout the state of Texas. Senate Bill 660, passed by the 84th Legislature, allows for the establishment of regional program coordinators in major cities of economic growth across the state. While no funding was provided to support regional coordinators, all members of VEP's team of Veteran Business Consultants are assigned to a minimum of one major metropolitan city in Texas as the main point of contact for veteran clients and partner resources within assigned region.

Senate Bill 1049, passed during the 84th legislature (effective January 1, 2016) allows for exemptions from filing fees and franchise taxes for newly formed veteran owned businesses in Texas. The verification of eligibility process requires the veteran to request a letter of verification from TVC-VEP and submit their discharge paperwork to enable the VEP team to verify their character of service and produce and distribute the letter. The original intent was to help veterans starting new businesses however due to communications sent from the comptroller's office to all self-identified veteran owned businesses the volume of requests has increased from 2-3 per day to 20-30 per day.

This has created a growing backlog of requests processed by the consultants and has hampered their ability to provide services as originally intended.

E. Describe who or what this program or function affects. List any qualifications or eligibility requirements for persons or entities affected. Provide a statistical breakdown of persons or entities affected.

The Veteran Entrepreneur Program provides direct business assistance services to veterans and their families throughout the state of Texas and affects people within this population who have a vested interest in entrepreneurship. The Veteran Entrepreneur Program also connects veterans and their families to partner resources throughout the state, thus also impacts the quality of engagement levels between veteran entrepreneurs and business resources within their respective resources. In turn, VEP resource partners gain the opportunity to engage and work with veteran entrepreneurs and increase their network of veteran business owners. To date, VEP has served 3,153 clients.

- F. Describe how your program or function is administered, including a description of the processes involved in the program or function. Include flowcharts, timelines, or other illustrations as necessary to describe agency policies and procedures. Indicate how field/regional services are used, if applicable.**

See attachment VII.F. VEP Program Guide.

- G. Identify all funding sources and amounts for the program or function, including federal grants and pass-through monies. Describe any funding formulas or funding conventions. For state funding sources, please specify (e.g., general revenue, appropriations rider, budget strategy, fees/dues).**

Veteran Entrepreneur Program's source of funding is allocated by the state of Texas and issued to the Texas Veterans Commission's General Revenue Fund. VEP is a line item of TVC's General Fund.

- H. Identify any programs, internal or external to your agency, that provide identical or similar services or functions to the target population. Describe the similarities and differences.**

Currently, there are no internal TVC programs that provide identical or similar services or functions to veteran entrepreneurs and business owners.

There are several agencies externally on local city, statewide and federal levels that provide similar services or functions in support of veteran entrepreneurship. For example, federal agencies such as the Small Business Administration and the entities that fall under its umbrella i.e. Service Corps of Retired Executives, Small Business Development Centers, Veterans Business Outreach Centers to name a few, all provide business support and assistance to veteran entrepreneurs and business owners. Except for Veteran Business Outreach Centers, most of the agencies previously referenced, also provide business support and assistances to the public and the veteran population are a small percentage of the constituents they serve. The Veteran Business Outreach Centers' primary focus are transitioning service members via their "Boots to Business" Program. With slight modifications, VBOC's "Boots to Business" program transforms into "Boots to Business Re-Boot", targeting military veterans who have transitioned out of the military. In this instance, VBOC and VEP share the same target market and conduct similar operations with respect to working with veteran entrepreneurs and business owners.

The Veteran Entrepreneur Program seeks to enhance their services through strategic partnerships, collaborative efforts, educational programs and veteran community outreach activities designed to not duplicate services that other agencies provide. VEP provides a level and quality of service to veterans that other agencies are not structured to. Unlike other agencies that can provide business assistance, as a division within the Texas Veterans Commission, the Veteran Entrepreneur Program has a greater opportunity to serve veteran business owners and their families from its multi-faceted internal community and seek a 'holistic' approach to service. In addition to providing business assistance and support, the

Veteran Entrepreneur Program, has access to internal divisions such as claims, education, employment to name a few, who in turn have established relationships in their respective areas within the community. This enables the Veteran Entrepreneur Program to not only connect veterans and their families to agencies outside of business resources, but facilitates key engagements to the veteran entrepreneur's or business owner's 'life' events.

- I. Discuss how the program or function is coordinating its activities to avoid duplication or conflict with the other programs listed in Question H and with the agency's customers. If applicable, briefly discuss any memorandums of understanding (MOUs), interagency agreements, or interagency contracts.**

The functions of coordinating activities to avoid duplication or conflict with other programs has been through a mutual understanding that veteran entrepreneurs and business owners need a community of resources to be a successful and viable business in Texas. The support structure for veteran entrepreneurship is unlimited; however, VEP's relationship with resource partners is structured around the best interest of the veteran entrepreneur and business owner. On a case by case basis, the Veteran Entrepreneur Program have entered Memorandums of Understanding and offered letters of support with agencies who have a specific focus on business assistance to veteran entrepreneurs and business owners.

- J. If the program or function works with local, regional, or federal units of government, include a brief description of these entities and their relationship to the agency.**

The VEP program works with Texas Secretary of State office and TX Comptroller of Public Accounts, to initiate and complete the veteran business formation process. Senate Bill 1049 Process facilitates the onboarding of the veteran entrepreneur, in the VEP office. Once VEP office verifies the Veteran Honorable Service, via DD FORM 214, a Unique code is assigned to the veteran verification documentation, allowing both the SOS and Comptroller offices to complete business formation documentation for the State of Texas and the veteran. This process occurs daily.

In March 2017, VEP established partnerships with two Federal organizations: US Commercial Service and the US Department of Agriculture, (USDA). VEP works with both entities to provide a pipeline of veterans interested in stated areas of expertise. Specifically, the US Commercial Service VETS GO GLOBAL program works with veteran business owners who are eligible to take products and services globally, opening a new avenue in international commerce, while educating them on the process and regulations of exporting. This year, VEP also worked closely with USDA, and its affiliates, to provide veterans access to training and funding for Agri-Business, establishing farms across Texas. Working with USDA and state universities, VEP continues to help new farmers gain entry and access to these national programs.

K. If contracted expenditures are made through this program please provide:

N/A

L. Provide information on any grants awarded by the program.

Currently, grants are not awarded by the VEP program, however VEP would like the authority to establish a Veteran Small Business Grant program, and to award grants to qualified and deserving veteran businesses. Please see comments in 'M' below.

M. Are there any barriers or challenges that impede the program's performance, including any outdated or ineffective state laws? Explain.

See Section VII.D.

N. Provide any additional information needed to gain a preliminary understanding of the program or function.

As a department in TVC, the Veteran Entrepreneur Program provides direct counseling to veterans and families seeking economic independence through small business ownership. When our VEP consultants, meet with potential Entrepreneurs, we have confidential, realistic, thorough, sometimes difficult, conversations, on the realities of small business. VEP consultants want to help create successful business owners, but also conduct the due diligence required if a vet is not fit for the rigors of entrepreneurship. In the event entrepreneurship is not a fit, this awareness allows TVC to continue to aid the veteran by referring to our sister services of Education and Employment, to help vets gain the skills needed for fulfilling employment.

O. Regulatory programs relate to the licensing, registration, certification, or permitting of a person, business, or other entity. For each regulatory program, if applicable, describe:

- **why the regulation is needed;**
- **the scope of, and procedures for, inspections or audits of regulated entities;**
- **follow-up activities conducted when non-compliance is identified;**
- **sanctions available to the agency to ensure compliance; and**
- **procedures for handling consumer/public complaints against regulated entities.**

N/A

P. For each regulatory program, if applicable, provide the following complaint information. The chart headings may be changed if needed to better reflect your agency's practices. Please include a brief description of the methodology supporting each measure.

N/A

A. Provide the following information at the beginning of each program description.

Name of Program or Function: Veterans Mental Health Program

Location/Division: Texas Veterans Commission, Austin, Texas, Headquarters Office

Contact Name: Tim Keesling, Director

Actual Expenditures, FY 2016: See SER VI.E

Number of Actual FTEs as of June 1, 2017: 7 of 8

Statutory Citation for Program: Texas Government Code, Title 4, Subtitle C, Chapter 434, Subchapters H and I, Sec. 434.351. - Sec. 434.401.

B. What is the objective of this program or function? Describe the major activities performed under this program.

See VMHP Program Guide

C. What evidence can you provide that shows the effectiveness and efficiency of this program or function? Provide a summary of key statistics and outcome performance measures that best convey the effectiveness and efficiency of this function or program. Also please provide a short description of the methodology behind each statistic or performance measure.

See Attachment: II. Key Functions and Performance\Attachments\II. C. Program Performance

D. Describe any important history regarding this program not included in the general agency history section, including how the services or functions have changed from the original intent.

See VMHP Program Guide

E. Describe who or what this program or function affects. List any qualifications or eligibility requirements for persons or entities affected. Provide a statistical breakdown of persons or entities affected.

The Veterans Mental Health Program affects Texas Veterans and their Families who have been impacted by military-related traumas. It also affects those who serve trauma-affected veterans and their families.

- F. Describe how your program or function is administered, including a description of the processes involved in the program or function. Include flowcharts, timelines, or other illustrations as necessary to describe agency policies and procedures. Indicate how field/regional services are used, if applicable.**

See VMHP Program Guide

- G. Identify all funding sources and amounts for the program or function, including federal grants and pass-through monies. Describe any funding formulas or funding conventions. For state funding sources, please specify (e.g., general revenue, appropriations rider, budget strategy, fees/dues).**

See attachment: VII.G. Funding Sources

- H. Identify any programs, internal or external to your agency, that provide identical or similar services or functions to the target population. Describe the similarities and differences.**

The Veterans Administration has nationally focused trainings for Licensed Mental Health Providers regarding a wide array of topics. These trainings are principally designed for didactic purposes and information, not for practical application. The Veterans administration employs Peers who have been trained by state-approved organizations. The state-approved organization in Texas is ViaHope. ViaHope trains Peers in the Appalachian model of peer support, which is directly focused on the major mental health diagnoses of schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, and major depression.

The Veterans Mental Health Program training and technical assistance is specifically focused on the topic of military-related traumas: post-traumatic stress disorder, military sexual trauma, traumatic brain injury, and moral injury. These traumas are not biological in development; instead, these are injuries resulting from traumatic events during military service and, as such, must be addressed separately from the major, traditional mental health diagnoses.

- I. Discuss how the program or function is coordinating its activities to avoid duplication or conflict with the other programs listed in Question H and with the agency's customers. If applicable, briefly discuss any memorandums of understanding (MOUs), interagency agreements, or interagency contracts.**

The Veterans Mental Health Program collaborates closely and in concert with the Veterans Administration's Veteran (VA) Integrated Service Networks' (VISN) Chief Mental Health Officers for VISN 16 and 17, which cover the state. To nature of this informal collaboration is to provide training and technical assistance to VA employees, augment VA efforts – such as the Clay Hunt Act – and assist with navigating eligible veterans into VA mental health services.

VMHP, per HB 19 (84th Leg) coordinates to administer HHSC's Mental Health Program for Veterans and serves as the Office of Mental Health Coordination's and Department of Veterans Services' primary technical assistance advisor regarding implementation of HB19 and many other veteran mental health-related concerns and issues, including: information pertaining to legislative actions and initiatives, trainings related to mental health services for veterans, development of internal programs and procedures, and strategic planning efforts.

The VMHP leadership facilitates both the Metal Health work group and Justice Involved Veterans work groups of the Texas Coordinating Council for Veterans Services for the TVC. 22 state agencies are represented at these working groups, including HHSC: the VA is invited to attend. The VMHP leadership also represents and coordinates/deconflicts efforts for mental health services related to veterans at: HHSC's Statewide Behavioral Health Coordinating Council, Texas Suicide Prevention Council, and the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Agency's (SAMHSA) Veteran Suicide Prevention implementation efforts and Peer Workforce development efforts across the nation – with a specific emphasis on Texas.

Regarding direct efforts in Texas, the TVC and HHSC have an Inter-Agency Contract (IAC) regarding the coordination to administer the Mental Health Program for Veterans. (See IAC and both HB2393[83rd Leg] and HB19[84th Leg]).

J. If the program or function works with local, regional, or federal units of government, include a brief description of these entities and their relationship to the agency.

See VII.I.

K. If contracted expenditures are made through this program please provide:

- a short summary of the general purpose of those contracts overall;
- the amount of those expenditures in fiscal year 2016;
- the number of contracts accounting for those expenditures;
- the method used to procure contracts
- top five contracts by dollar amount, including contractor and purpose;
- the methods used to ensure accountability for funding and performance; and
- a short description of any current contracting problems.

See IAC with HHSC

L. Provide information on any grants awarded by the program.

N/A

M. Are there any barriers or challenges that impede the program's performance, including any outdated or ineffective state laws? Explain.

The Veterans Mental Health Program has found challenges in procuring the necessary IT framework needed to move training from solely in-person delivered training to virtual, on-line training. These challenges are found in DIR policy and procedures as well as procurement policy.

N. Provide any additional information needed to gain a preliminary understanding of the program or function.

N/A

O. Regulatory programs relate to the licensing, registration, certification, or permitting of a person, business, or other entity. For each regulatory program, if applicable, describe:

- why the regulation is needed;
- the scope of, and procedures for, inspections or audits of regulated entities;
- follow-up activities conducted when non-compliance is identified;
- sanctions available to the agency to ensure compliance; and
- procedures for handling consumer/public complaints against regulated entities.

N/A

P. For each regulatory program, if applicable, provide the following complaint information. The chart headings may be changed if needed to better reflect your agency's practices. Please include a brief description of the methodology supporting each measure.

N/A

A. Provide the following information at the beginning of each program description.

Name of Program or Function: Central Administration (Governmental Relations, HR, IT, Legal, Finance)

Location/Division: TVC HQ, Austin, Texas

Contact Name:

Governmental Relations – Justin Coleman

HR – Glenn Tramel

IT – Peter Donton

Legal – Madeleine Conner

Finance – Michelle Nall

Actual Expenditures: FY 2016: All rolled up under Central - \$1,936,051.99. Cost are not tracked by each section in Central.

Number of Actual FTEs as of June 1, 2017: 14.75 per PAF Ad Hoc Report for the Central program.

Statutory Citation for Program: Texas Government Code, Chapter 434, Sec. 434.011

B. What is the objective of this program or function? Describe the major activities performed under this program.

The objective of Central is to perform the following major activities:

- Executive support to all TVC programs
- Legislative support for all TVC programs
- Legal support to all TVC programs
- Employee hiring for all TVC programs
- Process agency monthly payroll for all TVC programs
- Process agency payments for all TVC programs
- Provide IT support for all TVC programs
- Seek reimbursement for Federal expenditures
- Prepare Legislative Appropriations Request/Biennial Operating Plan, Published Operating Budget, Strategic Plan, Annual Financial Report, Report Agency Performance Measures.

C. What evidence can you provide that shows the effectiveness and efficiency of this program or function? Provide a summary of key statistics and outcome performance measures that best convey the effectiveness and efficiency of this function or program. Also please provide a short description of the methodology behind each statistic or performance measure.

N/A

- D. Describe any important history regarding this program not included in the general agency history section, including how the services or functions have changed from the original intent.**

N/A

- E. Describe who or what this program or function affects. List any qualifications or eligibility requirements for persons or entities affected. Provide a statistical breakdown of persons or entities affected.**

N/A – no specific person or entity affected

- F. Describe how your program or function is administered, including a description of the processes involved in the program or function. Include flowcharts, timelines, or other illustrations as necessary to describe agency policies and procedures. Indicate how field/regional services are used, if applicable.**

N/A

- G. Identify all funding sources and amounts for the program or function, including federal grants and pass-through monies. Describe any funding formulas or funding conventions. For state funding sources, please specify (e.g., general revenue, appropriations rider, budget strategy, fees/dues).**

See attachment: VII.G. Funding Sources

- H. Identify any programs, internal or external to your agency, that provide identical or similar services or functions to the target population. Describe the similarities and differences.**

N/A – Central provides services only to the TVC programs.

- I. Discuss how the program or function is coordinating its activities to avoid duplication or conflict with the other programs listed in Question H and with the agency's customers. If applicable, briefly discuss any memorandums of understanding (MOUs), interagency agreements, or interagency contracts.**

N/A

- J. If the program or function works with local, regional, or federal units of government, include a brief description of these entities and their relationship to the agency.**

N/A

- K. If contracted expenditures are made through this program please provide a short summary of the general purpose of those contracts overall;**

- **the amount of those expenditures in fiscal year 2016;**
\$50,423.89 total for FY2016
- **the number of contracts accounting for those expenditures;**
3
- **the method used to procure contracts**
Purchase Request/Purchase Order (TIBH – Peak Performers)
- **top five contracts by dollar amount, including contractor and purpose;**
TIBH – Peak Performers \$47,018.69 Accountant to provide support through CAPPS Financial implementation.
TIBH – Peak Performers \$2,103.20 HR Specialist to support HR tasks
TIBH – Peak Performers \$1,302.00 Admin Assistant to provide HQ front desk assistance
- **the methods used to ensure accountability for funding and performance; and**
HR Specialist and Admin Assistant were contracted for very short period. Accountant’s funding was special Appropriation provided for the specific purpose of providing CAPPS Implementation support and funding was placed in a designated account assigned by the Comptroller’s Office and expenditures were paid from this specific account. Performance was basically only determined by the amount of support the Accountant provided to Finance Accounting staff.
- **a short description of any current contracting problems.**
N/A

L. Provide information on any grants awarded by the program.

N/A (all grants awarded by the FVA program)

M. Are there any barriers or challenges that impede the program’s performance, including any outdated or ineffective state laws? Explain.

N/A

N. Provide any additional information needed to gain a preliminary understanding of the program or function.

All state agencies have a Central Administration program that provide services to TVC’s direct program

O. Regulatory programs relate to the licensing, registration, certification, or permitting of a person, business, or other entity. For each regulatory program, if applicable, describe:

- **why the regulation is needed;**
- **the scope of, and procedures for, inspections or audits of regulated entities;**
- **follow-up activities conducted when non-compliance is identified;**
- **sanctions available to the agency to ensure compliance; and**
- **procedures for handling consumer/public complaints against regulated entities.**

N/A

- P. For each regulatory program, if applicable, provide the following complaint information. The chart headings may be changed if needed to better reflect your agency's practices. Please include a brief description of the methodology supporting each measure.**

N/A

VIII. Statutory Authority and Recent Legislation

- A. Fill in the following charts, listing citations for all state and federal statutes that grant authority to or otherwise significantly impact your agency. Do not include general state statutes that apply to all agencies, such as the Public Information Act, the Open Meetings Act, or the Administrative Procedure Act. Provide information on Attorney General opinions from FY 2011–2015, or earlier significant Attorney General opinions, that affect your agency’s operations.

**Texas Veterans Commission
Exhibit 12: Statutes / Attorney General Opinions**

Statutes

Citation / Title	Authority / Impact on Agency <i>(e.g., “provides authority to license and regulate nursing home administrators”)</i>
Chapter 434, Government Code, Veterans Assistance Agencies	Provides the structure of the Commission and outlines the duties and responsibilities of Commission members, Executive Director, paid employees and County Veterans Service Officers.
38 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) §14.629	Sets the criteria for Accreditation of TVC Employees and Veterans County Service Officers by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Table 3 Exhibit 12 Statutes

Attorney General Opinions

Attorney General Opinion No.	Impact on Agency
N/A	N/A

Table 4 Exhibit 12 Attorney General Opinions

- B. Provide a summary of recent legislation regarding your agency by filling in the charts below or attaching information already available in an agency-developed format. Briefly summarize the key provisions. For bills that did not pass, briefly explain the key provisions and issues that resulted in failure of the bill to pass (e.g., opposition to a new fee, or high cost of implementation). Place an asterisk next to bills that could have a major impact on the agency. *See Exhibit 13 Example.*

See attachment: VII.B. TVC Related Legislation

See attachment: VII.C. TVC Related Legislation - Not Passed

IX. Major Issues

The purpose of this section is to briefly describe any potential issues raised by your agency, the Legislature, or stakeholders that Sunset could help address through changes in statute to improve your agency's operations and service delivery. Inclusion of an issue does not indicate support, or opposition, for the issue by the agency's board or staff. Instead, this section is intended to give the Sunset Commission a basic understanding of the issues so staff can collect more information during our detailed research on your agency. Some questions to ask in preparing this section may include: (1) How can your agency do a better job in meeting the needs of customers or in achieving agency goals? (2) What barriers exist that limit your agency's ability to get the job done?

Emphasis should be given to issues appropriate for resolution through changes in state law. Issues related to funding or actions by other governmental entities (federal, local, quasi-governmental, etc.) may be included, but the Sunset Commission has no authority in the appropriations process or with other units of government. If these types of issues are included, the focus should be on solutions which can be enacted in state law. This section contains the following three components.

A. Brief Description of Issue

Funding for Veteran County Service Offices

B. Discussion

Background.

- The office of Veteran County Service Officer (VCSO) was established by Texas law (Texas Government Code Chapter 434, Subchapter B).
- Texas is currently home to 1.6 million veterans, second in population only to California.
- Current statute requires each county with a population of over 200,000 to employ a Veteran County Service Officer. State law is permissive for those counties with a population under 200,000, they may employ a Veterans County Service Officer, but are not required to do so.
- According to 2010 Census, 23 Texas counties have populations greater than 200,000
- These duties have not been examined or updated since actions taken by the 70th Texas Legislature in 1987.

C. Possible Solutions and Impact

- The end of combat operations in Iraq, a decreased military presence in Afghanistan, and force shaping measures announced by the Department of Defense are expected to increase the number of service members separating from Texas' 15 active military installations and swell the demand for veterans' services.

- The efficient and effective delivery of quality veterans' services is impeded by the challenges of a huge veteran population spread across a vast geographic area.
- The network of Veterans County Service Officers throughout the state is the potential answer to this Texas-sized challenge.
- In order to ensure the full-time staffing of a single Veteran County Service Officer in every county in Texas, the state should invest \$12.7 million to directly fund veteran county service offices, which could be administered by the Texas Veterans Commission. (That investment represents .0025% of the federal dollars entering Texas in the form of federal VA payments to veterans).
- The role of the Veteran County Service Officer within the county should be refined, with less emphasis on claims processing and a greater emphasis on resource referral and placement.

X. Other Contacts

- A. Fill in the following charts with updated information on people with an interest in your agency, and be sure to include the most recent email address.

Texas Veterans Commission Exhibit 14: Contacts

Interest Groups

(groups affected by agency actions or that represent others served by or affected by agency actions)

Group or Association Name/ Contact Person	Address	Telephone	Email Address
Texas Coalition of Veteran Service Organizations / Jim Brennan	N/A	512-627-7169	jbrennan@aasupply.com
Texas Association of Veteran County Service Officers / Zach Migura	N/A	972-881-3060	zmigura@collincountytx.gov

Table 5 Exhibit 14 Interest Groups

Interagency, State, or National Associations

(that serve as an information clearinghouse or regularly interact with your agency)

Group or Association Name/ Contact Person	Address	Telephone	Email Address
(Text) National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA)	444 N Capitol St. NW, Ste. 142, Washington, DC 20001	202-434- 8020	Staff directory available at www.naswa.org/?action=staff_directory
National Association of State Women Veteran Coordinators (NASWVC)	1102 Quince St SE, Olympia, WA 98504- 1150	512.420.6810	Carrie.sconza@tvc.texas.gov (president)
National Association of State Approving Agencies (NASAA)	1122 Lady St Ste 300 Columbia, SC 29201	803-737- 2282	fmyers@che.sc.gov
National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs' / Les Beavers	107 S. West Street, Suite 550 Alexandria, Virginia 22314	(502) 396- 5675	Lesbeaversusma60@gmail.com

Table 6 Exhibit 14 Interagency, State, and National Association

Liaisons at Other State Agencies

(with which your agency maintains an ongoing relationship, e.g., the agency's assigned analyst at the Legislative Budget Board, or attorney at the Attorney General's office)

Agency Name / Relationship / Contact Person	Address	Telephone	Email Address
Office of the Governor / Craig Bean	1100 San Jacinto Blvd, Austin, TX 78701	512.463.8737	craig.bean@gov.texas.gov
Office of the Lt. Governor / Advisor/ Suzanne T. Mackowiak	PO Box 12068, Austin, TX 78711	512-463-0001	Suzanne.Mackowiak@ltgov.texas.gov
Legislative Budget Board / Analyst / George Gogonas	1501 Congress Ave # 5, Austin, TX 78701	512-463-8928	George.gogonas@tvc.texas.gov
Speaker of the House / Advisor / Shelton Green	PO Box 2910, Austin, TX 78768	512-463-1000	Shelton.green@speaker.texas.gov
House Appropriations Committee / Analyst / Malika Te	PO Box 2910, Austin, TX 78768	512-463-1091	Malika.Te_HC@house.texas.gov
Senate Finance/ Analyst / Brady Vaughn	PO Box 12068, Austin, TX 78711	512-463-0370	Brady.vaughn@senate.texas.gov

XI. Additional Information

- A. Texas Government Code, Sec. 325.0075 requires agencies under review to submit a report about their reporting requirements to Sunset with the same due date as the SER. Include a list of each agency-specific report that the agency is required by statute to prepare and an evaluation of the need for each report based on whether factors or conditions have changed since the statutory requirement was put in place. Please do not include general reporting requirements applicable to all agencies, reports that have an expiration date, routine notifications or notices, posting requirements, federally mandated reports, or reports required by G.A.A. rider. If the list is longer than one page, please include it as an attachment. *See Exhibit 15 Example.*

Texas Veterans Commission
Exhibit 15: Evaluation of Agency Reporting Requirements

Report Title	Legal Authority	Due Date and Frequency	Recipient	Description	Is the Report Still Needed? Why?
Texas Coordinating Council for Veteran Services	GC Sec. 434.151	October 1 (Even numbered Years)	OOG, Lt. Gov. Speaker	Needs assessment of veteran services in Texas	Yes, stakeholder input provides the state a current snapshot of veteran needs in Texas.
Public Assistance Reporting Information System (PARIS) U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Match Report	H.B. 2562, 83rd Legislature, Regular Session, 2013, and the 2014-15 General Appropriations Act S.B. 1, 83rd Legislature, Regular Session, 2013 (Article IX, Miscellaneous Provisions, Section 17.04	December 1 (Annually)	OOG, Lt. Gov. Speaker	Cost Saving Benefit Analysis	Developing new strategies for using system data in ways that generate fiscal savings for the state, improve communication to veterans, and maximize the availability of and access to benefits for veterans.

Table 7 Exhibit 15 Agency Reporting Requirements

Note: If more than one page of space is needed, please provide this chart as an attachment, and feel free to convert it to landscape orientation or transfer it to an Excel file.

- B. Has the agency implemented statutory requirements to ensure the use of "first person respectful language"? Please explain and include any statutory provisions that prohibits these changes.**

Yes.

- C. Fill in the following chart detailing information on complaints regarding your agency. Do not include complaints received against people or entities you regulate. The chart headings may be changed if needed to better reflect your agency's practices.**

N/A

- D. Fill in the following charts detailing your agency's Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) purchases. See Exhibit 17 Example.**

**Texas Veterans Commission
Exhibit 17: Purchases from HUBs**

Fiscal Year 2015

Category	Total \$ Spent	Total HUB \$ Spent	Percent	Agency Specific Goal*	Statewide Goal
Heavy Construction	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	11.2%
Building Construction	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	21.1%
Special Trade	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	32.9%
Professional Services	\$39,622	\$0	0%	n/a	23.7%
Other Services	\$574,256	\$71,881	12.52%	n/a	26.0%
Commodities	\$499,713	\$176,047	35.23%	n/a	21.1%
TOTAL	\$1,113,892	\$247,028	22.26%		

Fiscal Year 2016

Category	Total \$ Spent	Total HUB \$ Spent	Percent	Agency Specific Goal	Statewide Goal
Heavy Construction	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	11.2%
Building Construction	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	21.1%
Special Trade	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	32.9%
Professional Services	\$32,507	\$0	\$0	n/a	23.7%
Other Services	\$702,186	\$28,321	4.03%	n/a	26.0%
Commodities	\$404,269	\$140,725	34.81%	n/a	21.1%
TOTAL	\$1,138,963	\$169,047	14.84%		

Fiscal Year 2017

Category	Total \$ Spent	Total HUB \$ Spent	Percent	Agency Specific Goal	Statewide Goal
Heavy Construction	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	11.2%
Building Construction	n/a	n/a)	n/a	n/a	21.1%
Special Trade	n/a	n/a	n/a)	n/a	32.9%
Professional Services	\$47,766	\$0	\$0	n/a	23.7%
Other Services	\$330,607	\$6,082	1.84%	n/a	26.0%
Commodities	\$151,917	\$78,572	51.72%	n/a	21.1%
TOTAL	\$530,290	\$84,655	15.96%		

- E. Does your agency have a HUB policy? How does your agency address performance shortfalls related to the policy? (Texas Government Code, Sec. 2161.003; TAC Title 34, Part 1, rule 20.286c)**

TVC's policy is to utilize a HUB each opportunity possible even if there is a small difference in cost between a HUB or non-HUB. TVC will seek best value if the cost difference is substantial. Currently TVC does not address performance shortfalls since the agency does it's best to utilize HUBs.

- F. For agencies with contracts valued at \$100,000 or more: Does your agency follow a HUB subcontracting plan to solicit bids, proposals, offers, or other applicable expressions of interest for subcontracting opportunities available for contracts of \$100,000 or more? (Texas Government Code, Sec. 2161.252; TAC Title 34, Part 1, rule 20.285)**

The only TVC contracts greater than \$100,000 are TVC's Fall Conference hotel contracts and a Field Clinician Services contract under our Veteran Mental Health Program. TVC does not follow a HUB subcontracting plan for either contracts.

- G. For agencies with biennial appropriations exceeding \$10 million, answer the following HUB questions.**

- 1. Do you have a HUB coordinator? If yes, provide name and contact information. (Texas Government Code, Sec. 2161.062; TAC Title 34, Part 1, rule 20.296)**

TVC does not have a HUB coordinator. The Lead Purchaser handles any HUB related reporting and procurements.

- 2. Has your agency designed a program of HUB forums in which businesses are invited to deliver presentations that demonstrate their capability to do business with your agency? (Texas Government Code, Sec. 2161.066; TAC Title 34, Part 1, rule 20.297)**

TVC has not designed a program of HUB forums.

3. Has your agency developed a mentor-protégé program to foster long-term relationships between prime contractors and HUBs and to increase the ability of HUBs to contract with the state or to receive subcontracts under a state contract? (Texas Government Code, Sec. 2161.065; TAC Title 34, Part 1, rule 20.298)

TVC has not developed a mentor-protégé program between contractors and HUBs.

- H. Fill in the charts below detailing your agency’s Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) statistics. See Exhibit 18 Example.

**Texas Veterans Commission
Exhibit 18: Equal Employment Opportunity Statistics**

1. Officials / Administration

Year	Total Number of Positions	Percent African-American	Statewide Civilian Workforce Percent	Percent Hispanic	Statewide Civilian Workforce Percent	Percent Female	Statewide Civilian Workforce Percent
2015	13	0%	7.4%	7.7%	22.1%	30.77%	37.4%
2016	11	0%	7.4%	9%	22.1%	18.2%	37.4%
2017	12	0%	7.4%	16.67%	22.1%	25%	37.4%

Table 8 Exhibit 18 EEO Statistics for Officials/Administration

2. Professional

Year	Total Number of Positions	Percent African-American	Statewide Civilian Workforce Percent	Percent Hispanic	Statewide Civilian Workforce Percent	Percent Female	Statewide Civilian Workforce Percent
2015	351	28%	10.4%	20.8%	19.3%	35.6%	55.3%
2016	325	26.1%	10.4%	21.53%	19.3%	38.46%	55.3%
2017	339	27.14%	10.4%	21.83%	19.3%	41.30%	55.3%

Table 9 Exhibit 18 EEO Statistics for Professionals

3. Technical

N/A

4. Administrative Support

Year	Total Number of Positions	Percent African-American	Statewide Civilian Workforce Percent	Percent Hispanic	Statewide Civilian Workforce Percent	Percent Female	Statewide Civilian Workforce Percent
2015	36	17%	14.8%	30.55%	34.8%	91.66%	72.1%
2016	32	18.75%	14.8%	25%	34.8%	90.63%	72.1%
2017	28	25%	14.8%	28.57%	34.8%	92.85%	72.1%

Table 10 Exhibit 18 EEO Statistics for Administrative Support

N/A

5. Service / Maintenance

N/A

6. Skilled Craft

N/A

I. Does your agency have an equal employment opportunity policy? How does your agency address performance shortfalls related to the policy?

The agency has an EEO policy which is part of the Agency's Procedure Guide. Training is conducted on EEO every two years at the agency's Fall Conference. EEO complaints and shortfalls are brought to the Executive Director's attention by the Director of Human Resources. The complaint is investigated and an attempt is made to correct the problem at the lowest level possible.

XII. Agency Comments

N/A

Attachments ---

Create a separate file and label each attachment (e.g., Attachment 1, Agency Statute) and include a list of items submitted. Attachments may be provided in electronic form or through links to agency webpages.

Attachments Relating to Key Functions, Powers, and Duties

*See Attachments Folder

1. Agency's enabling statute.
2. Annual reports published by the agency from FY 2015–2017.
3. Internal or external newsletters published by the agency from FY 2016–2017.
4. List of studies that the agency is required to do by legislation or riders.
5. List of legislative or interagency studies relating to the agency that are being performed during the current interim.
6. List of studies from other states, the federal government, or national groups/associations that relate to or affect the agency or agencies with similar duties or functions. Provide links if available.

Attachments Relating to Policymaking Structure

7. Biographical information (e.g., education, employment, affiliations, and honors) or resumes of all policymaking body members. ***See Attachment 8 Example.***

<http://tvc.texas.gov/Commissioners.aspx>

8. Agency's most recent rules. If lengthy, please provide electronically or just the citation to the Administrative Code.

[https://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac\\$ext.ViewTAC?tac_view=3&ti=40&pt=15](https://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac$ext.ViewTAC?tac_view=3&ti=40&pt=15)

Attachments Relating to Funding

9. Agency's Legislative Appropriations Request for FY 2018–2019.
10. Annual financial reports from FY 2015–2016.
11. Operating budgets from FY 2015–2017.

Attachments Relating to Organization

12. If applicable, a map to illustrate the regional boundaries, headquarters location, and field or regional office locations.

Attachments Relating to Agency Performance Evaluation

13. Quarterly performance reports completed by the agency in FY 2015–2017.
14. Any recent studies on the agency or any of its functions conducted by outside management consultants or academic institutions.
15. Agency’s current internal audit plan.
16. Agency’s current strategic plan.
17. List of internal audit reports from FY 2013–2017 completed by or in progress at the agency.
18. List of State Auditor reports from FY 2013–2017 that relate to the agency or any of its functions.
19. Any customer service surveys conducted by or for your agency in FY 2016–2017.

See Strategic Plan pages 51-54