

ONONDAGA COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE AGENCY

2027 EXECUTIVE BUDGET WRITTEN STATEMENT

SECTION 1:

2026 INITIATIVES & ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The department's new VSO is dually accredited with NYS DVS and American Legion. The VSA now has a Senior VSO to lead the claims team. In addition to the increasing VA Compensation workload, the VSO's attend meetings for ESGR (Employers Support Guard Reserve), The Veteran Expo and Parade Committee, Clear Path Summit, Onondaga County Veterans Council. The VSO's are active in their respective American Legions. The Veteran Service Aide position is a support position that is responsible for in-take, reviewing Power of Attorney, and providing applications and advocacy within supervised parameters.

The VSA continues Outreach efforts, especially regarding the PACT Act, which directly impacts VA Benefit Eligibility. The VSA attends outreach events partnering with Syracuse University, The VA Medical Center and local American Legions, VFW's and DAV's among other community partners. We also provide education on VA Benefits to recently separated servicemembers and attend resource fairs. We schedule office hours at The Vet Center to provide ease of access for our clients. We remain actively involved with the OCE-VSAB (CE-Veterans Advisory Board), OCVC (Onondaga County Veterans Council), ESGR (Employers Support Guard Reserve), the CNY Parade and Expo Committee. The VSA planned and executed The Memorial Day Ceremony in May 2026 at OC-Veterans Memorial Cemetery. We are also actively involved in preparing for The Veteran Expo and Parade 11/8 at the Fairgrounds, and the Veterans Day Ceremony on 11/11 at The War Memorial. The VSA provides informational presentations as needed and requested. The presentations help our community partners to identify claimants who may be eligible for VA Benefits, and they refer to the VSA.

2026 BUDGET REVIEW

VSA is forecasted to finish 2026 within budget.

SECTION 2:

2027 BUDGET OVERVIEW

The 2027 budget includes standard salary and wage increases consistent with the baseline budgeting approach.

The 2027 Contractual Services appropriation remains flat from 2026 and supports contracts that provide services and assistance to local veterans.

The 2027 Travel and Training appropriation remains flat from 2026 and supports accreditation and professional development through the National Association of County Veterans Service Officers. This training ensures the County's Veterans Service Officers remain current on advanced veterans' benefits and advocacy matters, including the VA Board of Veterans' Appeals process.

The 2027 Maintenance, Utilities and Rents appropriation increases primarily to address the growing maintenance and upkeep needs of the Onondaga County Veterans Memorial Cemetery.

The 2027 revenue appropriation remains flat from 2026 and represents State Aid received as reimbursement for eligible salary costs.

SECTION 3:

2027 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The VSA will continue to meet with and encourage local municipalities to hire Veteran Outreach Coordinators at the town level. Veteran Outreach Coordinators are essential in bridging the gap between military connected constituents and the needed or desired resources.