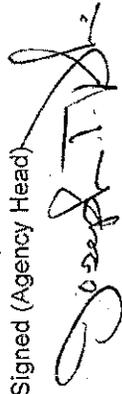


Agency Option Submission
 Department of Veterans' Affairs

Signed (Agency Head)



Title

Commissioner

Date

10/24/2014

Fund	Agency Priority	Adjustment Title	FY 2016 Amount	FY 2017 Amount
11000 - General Fund				
	1	Re-define of Patient Worker Program	(500,000)	(500,000)
		Reduction of the nursing overtime	(95,000)	(100,700)
		Savings from Electronic Health Records (EHR) system	(350,000)	(350,000)
		Total	(945,000)	(950,700)
Total			(945,000)	(950,700)

Department of Veterans' Affairs
 11000 - General Fund

Adjustment Type: Reduction

Agency Title: Re-define of Patient Worker Program

Agency Description: The Physical Plant, Building Services, and Food Services Departments use many veteran workers within the "Veterans Worker Program" to supplement resource staffing gaps - not having a full complement of classified state workers. In the proposed expansion option, DVA has identified the need to reduce/eliminate this practice and moving towards replacing veteran workers with classified employees. If the expansion option is approved, the Agency anticipates that the following cost savings/reduction can be achieved - going forward, the "Patient Worker Program" will be modified to focus primarily on a vocational rehabilitation model - acquiring transferrable employment skill that can be applied to a trade and long term employment - with reintegration back to the community. Anticipated savings from the reorganization is estimated at \$600,000.

Agency Priority: 1 System ID: 3530

SID	Account	Program	Agency 2016	Agency 2017
Financials				
10010 - Personal Services	00700 - Other Personal Services	14000 - Office of the Commissioner	(500,000)	(500,000)
Total Financials	Total-10010 - Personal Services		(500,000)	(500,000)
			(500,000)	(500,000)

Department of Veterans' Affairs
 11000 - General Fund

Adjustment Type: Reduction

Agency Title: Savings from Electronic Health Records (EHR) system

Agency Description: Utilizing technology to replace the current antiquated and redundant patient care system - in a paper driven environment, will reduce the duplication of manual labor/data entry, loss of records, and the lack of ability to generate meaningful reports - an enterprise wide streamlined integrated process will create accountability with transparency. The Agency estimates there will be \$350,000 potential cost savings/reductions that can be achieved from the implementation of a new Electronic Health Record System.

Agency Priority: 1 System ID: 3531

SID	Account	Program	Agency 2016	Agency 2017
Financials				
10020 - Other Expenses	51970 - Temporary Services	41006 - Veterans' Health Care Services	(100,000)	(100,000)
	54040 - Drugs & Pharmaceuticals	41006 - Veterans' Health Care Services	(250,000)	(250,000)
	Total-10020 - Other Expenses		(350,000)	(350,000)
Total Financials			(350,000)	(350,000)

Department of Veterans Affairs

11000 - General Fund

Adjustment Type:

Agency Title:

Agency Description:

Agency Priority: System ID:

SID	Account	Program	Agency 2016	Agency 2017
Financials				
10010 - Personal Services	00110 - Salary & Wages - Permanent Full Time	41006 - Veterans' Health Care Services	(95,000)	(100,700)
Total Financials	Total-10010 - Personal Services		(95,000)	(100,700)
			(95,000)	(100,700)



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS

287 West Street

Rocky Hill, Connecticut 06067

Date: October 21, 2014

Paul Potamianos, Executive Budget Officer
Office of Policy and Management
450 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Paul,

As you know, the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) has maintained a fiscally responsible business model over the past ten years, while continuing to meet the challenges of serving not only our veteran population at the Rocky Hill facility but approximately 250,000 veterans in Connecticut. Today, those challenges and the need to change our service model far exceeds our current resource base – while we continue to deliver services utilizing the most cost effective and efficient means from FY08 to FY14 - the DVA has lost 56 full time employees and 10 part time employees. The Department went through the FY10 Early Retirement Incentive Program (ERIP) with 24 employees retiring and the FY12 retirement, losing another 14 positions. Subsequently, 18 funded vacant positions were eliminated from the DVA head count in FY10 & FY11 and 26 positions were cut in FY13. The result of the staffing reductions/ loss of resources have impacted the Agency's operations and the lingering effects are now showing up in the replacement cost of overtime, the long-term medical leave cases, and the need for relying on more temporary staffing resources.

Therefore, in order to maintain a fiscal responsible course and carry out our core mission of "serving those who served" - the DVA submits the following expansion option for your consideration and approval.

1. **To address the staffing shortage and the agency's operational needs for the Office of Advocacy and Assistance**

The DVA Office of Advocacy and Assistance (OA&A) has lost two (2) Veterans Service Officers, one (1) Veterans Service Supervisor, and one (1) Office Assistant through the two waves of retirements and budget cuts. The OA&A covers five satellite offices in five congressional districts plus the central office in the Rocky Hill Campus. The OA&A also has an office of Memorial/Cemetery Services for burial in the Middletown Bow Lane Cemetery and the Rocky Hill Colonel Gate Cemetery and to assist with the funeral/burial arrangement and other military honor services.

In order to properly deliver the outreach services/VA benefits to the 250,000 veterans in Connecticut, the Agency is requesting to increase the staffing level – two Veterans Service Officers (VSO) and one Office Assistant for the Memorial Cemetery Services under the direct supervision of a Veteran Service Supervisor.



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS

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Therefore, the Office of Advocacy and Assistance is requesting the positions of one (1) Veterans Services Supervisor (SH25), one (1) Veterans Services Officer (SH22), and one (1) Office Assistant (CL13) for the OA&A to service the veteran population in Connecticut.

2. To address the operational needs in the Office of the Commissioner

In order to provide the legal assistance, review of the statutes and regulations proposed and to assist in the mission of the Commissioner's Office, these positions are needed.

Manager of Community Advocacy (MP63), is of crucial necessity to achieve the continuum of care by facilitating the core mission of CT Dept. of Veterans' Affairs and will formulate a program that foster outreach partnerships with corporations, veterans' communities, municipalities, state and federal agencies, etc. through events, workshops, and community initiatives to identify and resolve issues that impact the wellbeing of veterans across Connecticut. The Manager of Community Advocacy position will also manage the volunteer and charitable donation programs and serve as the Agency's media relation and communications liaison.

Staff Attorney 2 (AR28) -- The Staff Attorney will provide the much needed in-house legal counsel for the operation.

Legislative and Administrative Advisor 1 (MP59) -- With the constant changing of laws and rules that affects the affairs of veterans, the Agency is in need of staff to review the legislative proposed bills, to stay current with legislative changes, and to work with the Commissioner's Office and other agencies to implement the bills passed both at the State and the federal levels.

3. To implement the Strategic Planning Model

The Director of Planning prepares and submits grant applications for the Agency. Since 2005, the Agency completed the new healthcare facility, water main, and the domicile safety upgrades projects with \$33M of federal grant funding. Additionally, there are boiler replacement, fire alarm and sprinklers, and the Middletown Cemetery upgrade projects that are pending federal grants with total amount to approximately \$8 million dollars.

Majority of DVA Rocky Hill campus buildings and infrastructure are over 75 years old. It requires strategic planning to renovate, upgrade, and to utilize these buildings to be consistent with the Agency's mission and the veterans' needs. With the expansion of Planning Office, the strategic planning model can be implemented and grant opportunities (that will increase federal revenues to CT) can be further pursued.

One (1) Planning Analyst (AR22), one (1) CCT target Planning Analyst (AR15), and one Office Assistant (CL13) is needed to be consistent with the resources service levels that are required.



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS

287 West Street

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4. To address the staffing shortfalls in the Facility Plant

The Agency's Facility Plant is staffed with trade workers in electrical, masonry, carpentry, and HVAC to maintain the 92 acres campus with building square footage totaling 623,510sq ft. However, the current staffing levels do not meet the demand for resources required for maintenance and upkeep of the facility. Therefore, the Agency has been heavily relying on the "Veteran Worker" program to supplement the resource gaps. However, utilizing veteran workers to supplement the classified employees' workforce has created problems and is not the best model to continue moving forward. The main program goal for the veterans in the Residential Program is for rehabilitation and return to the community. They are not here to supplement staffing gaps or to perform jobs as classified employees. In reviewing the current staffing mix, the Agency has gaps in the following areas – painter, carpenter, and mason.

One (1) QCW Painter (TC17), one (1) Skilled Maintainer Painter (TC14), one (1) Skilled Maintainer carpenter (TC14), and one (1) Skilled Maintainer Mason (TC14) are needed to afford the Agency's Facility Team with addressing infrastructure maintenance, repairs, and responding to upkeep calls timely and efficiently.

5. To address the staffing shortfalls of the Building/ Custodian Services

The Building service staff cleans and maintains the health and cleanliness standards of the entire DVA Rocky Hill campus. However, the current staffing level can only maintain/clean the healthcare facility for 2 shifts to be in compliance with the health codes. The Building Services department has lost five (5) custodians and one (1) trade worker since 2008. Both the healthcare facility and the domiciliary facility are 24/7/365 operation. The Agency has to utilize veterans from the "Veteran Worker" program to assist in the cleaning of the facility. However, to reiterate, utilizing veteran workers to supplement the classified employees' workforce has created problems and is not the best model to continue moving forward. The main goal for the veterans here is for rehabilitation and return to the community. They are not here to supplement staffing gaps or to perform jobs as classified employees.

Four (4) Custodians and one (1) skilled maintainer for 2nd shift are needed to be consistent with the service levels needed.

6. To address the Food Services Department's staffing shortfall –

Food Service Department is another department that heavily relies on the workforce of the "veteran worker program" to assist in preparation, cooking, and cleaning. Throughout the two rounds of early retirements and staffing cuts, the Food Services Department has lost five staff. The Food Services Department provides over 410,450 meals a year for both healthcare and domicile veterans. The increased staffing level is consistent with the service levels needed.



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS

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One (1) Cook (TC13), and one (1) Assistant Cook (TC09) are needed for the preparation of meals to serve the veterans on campus.

7. Residential Services –

The Residential & Rehab Services serve approximately 240 veterans on Rocky Hill campus. Currently, there are three (3) Social Workers, six (6) Veterans Residential Facility Workers, and one (1) Vocational Rehabilitation Coordinator on staff to serve the 240 domicile veterans' social, vocational and rehabilitative needs. The department has done the best it can with minimal staffing levels for a 24/7/365 operation. However, with the aging veteran populations and the complexity of veterans' issues, there is a need to increase the staffing resource levels to accommodate the additional demands in the Residential Program.

The Residential Facility also operates the veterans' recovery center (VRC) which is currently staffed with 5 employees -- One (1) Clinical Psychologist, three (3) Addiction Counselors, and one (1) Secretary. The VRC has been a vital component in assisting veterans with substance addiction issues. Due to the current staffing, the VRC is not certified/ accredited and has limited funding for the number of veterans we can assist.

With the hiring of a Psychiatrist (RZ13), the Agency can appropriately credential the VRC to be certified/ accredited as an approved substance abuse program.

One (1) Social Worker (HC24), one (1) Supervising Medical Social Work Consultant (HC26), two (2) Veterans Residential Facility Worker (HN16), and one (1) Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (SH23) are needed to meet with the current demands of service levels.

8. Healthcare Services Needs –

DVA healthcare facility has dual licenses – as a chronic disease hospital by the CT DPH and a skilled nursing home by federal VA. Besides providing 24/7/365 direct nursing care, the healthcare facility also provides other necessary ancillary services, i.e. cardiopulmonary, physical therapy, occupational therapy, recreational therapy, etc. The patients are transported to outside specialty doctors or hospitals for appointments and treatments. Based upon the review of our medical transportation utilization, the Agency finds resource gaps in the areas of cardiopulmonary, transportation, and transportation escorts, and clerical support. Because of the shortage in cardiopulmonary coverage, the Nursing Dept. has to use overtime to have another nurse to cover the oxygen treatments needed by our veterans. The nursing department also needs to use Nurse's Aide as transportation aide - resulted in additional overtime/replacement costs. There are not enough drivers available to transport patients and residents to their appointments so the Agency has to use the "Patient Worker Driver" to fill in the resource gaps which creates an unnecessary liability exposure for the State.

One (1) Maintainer Driver (TC09) and two (2) part-time Maintainer Driver (TC09) are needed to replace the current use of veteran worker drivers to transport patients/residents to medical appointments.



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS

287 West Street

Rocky Hill, Connecticut 06067

One (1) Office Assistant (CL13), two (2) part time Respiratory Therapists (HN18), three (3) part time Transport Aides (FK09) are needed to be consistent with the service levels needed.

9. Safety and Security –

Over the last two years, the Agency has implemented enhanced security system which includes the entry and exit access control, vehicle inspection, close circuit monitoring, and increased patrol. With the enhanced security, it comes with additional requirement for staffing. Based on the staffing pattern and the staffing needs, two (2) Part time Building & Ground Patrol Officers are needed to prevent the need to use overtime for coverage.

In summary, there is a detailed spreadsheet attached with our request delineating by positions the cost and the benefits gained over the next biennium. Needless to say, the Department of Veterans' Affairs will continue to be fiscally conservative and look for innovative ways to stay on a course of fiscal responsibility while carrying out our mission of "serving those who served". Thanks again for your consideration and approval of our expansion option/plan.

Sincerely yours,



Joseph T. Perkins

cc. Magdalena Lekarczyk, OPM Budget Analyst
Michael Clark, DVA Fiscal Administrative Manger
File



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS
 287 West Street
 Rocky Hill, Connecticut 06067

Department/ position request	Pay Plan	Full Time	Part Time	FY16 salary	FY17 salary
Commissioner's Office					
Manager of Community Advocacy	MP63	1		\$85,077	\$90,181
Legislative and Administrative Advisor 1	MP59	1		\$71,338	\$75,618
Staff Attorney 2	AR28	1		\$86,656	\$91,855
Total for Commissioner's Office		3		\$243,071	\$257,655
Office of Planning					
Planning Analyst	AR22	1		\$65,055	\$68,959
CCT target Planning Analyst	AR15	1		\$47,333	\$50,173
Office Assistant	CL13	1		\$42,092	\$44,617
Total for Office of Planning		3		\$154,480	\$163,749
Healthcare					
Respiratory Therapist (32 hours/wk part time)	HN18		2	\$77,014	\$81,634
Transport Aide (part time)	FK09		3	\$67,427	\$71,473
Office Assistants	CL13	1		\$42,092	\$44,617
Maintainer (Driver)	TC09	1		\$35,866	\$38,018
Maintainer (Part Time Driver)	TC09		2	\$57,386	\$60,829
Total for Healthcare		2	7	\$279,784	\$296,571
Physical Plant					
Quality Craft Worker (Painter)	TC17	1		\$49,363	\$52,325
Skilled Maintainer (Painter)	TC14	1		\$42,971	\$45,550
Skilled Maintainer (Carpentry)	TC14	1		\$42,971	\$45,550
Skilled Maintainer (Mason).	TC14	1		\$42,971	\$45,550
Total for Physical Plant		4		\$178,277	\$188,974
Building Services					
Custodians	TC09	4		\$143,465	\$152,073
Skilled Maintainer (for HCF)	TC14	1		\$42,971	\$45,550
Total for Building Services		5		\$186,436	\$197,623
Food Services Department					
Cook	TC13	1		\$41,095	\$43,561
Asst Cook	TC09	1		\$35,866	\$38,018
Total for Food Services		2		\$76,961	\$81,579
Residential Services					
Psychiatrist	RZ13	1		\$163,028	\$172,810
Social Worker - Healthcare Professional	HC24	1		\$60,809	\$64,458
Supervising Medical Social Work Consultant	HC26	1		\$68,929	\$73,064
Veterans Residential Facility Workers	HN16	2		\$85,139	\$90,248
Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor	SH23	1		\$65,583	\$69,518
Total for Residential Services		6		\$443,488	\$470,097
Security Department					
Building & Ground Patrol Officer (Part Time)	PS05		2	\$66,236	\$70,210
Total for Security Dept			2	\$66,236	\$70,210
Office of Advocacy & Assistance					
Veterans Services Supervisor	SH25	1		\$72,100	\$76,426
One Veterans Services Officer	SH22	1		\$62,621	\$66,378
One Office Assistant	CL13	1		\$40,865	\$43,317
Total for OAA		3		\$175,586	\$186,121
Total Positions Requested		28	9	\$1,804,319	\$1,912,578

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER
287 West Street
Rocky Hill, Connecticut 06067

October 23, 2014

Mr. Paul Potamianos
Executive Budget Officer
Office of Policy and Management
450 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

Subject: DVA Reduction Options FY16&FY17

Through the implementation of a new Electronic Health Record System (EHR), the Agency is anticipating the need to re-organize and re-align the way we deliver patient care and ancillary medical support services to veterans at the Rocky Hill facility and potentially 250,000 veterans in the State of Connecticut. The EHR will be a business change that when implemented will integrate all aspects of our current services - allowing for a more efficient, streamlined, delineated, and coordinated resource tool -with veterans data/information entered at a point in time with built in validation to ensure compliance on all state and federal regulation. The Agency also has reviewed each department's staffing levels to identify staffing deficiency/shortfall and current business processes that can and should be updated/improved. The current staffing deficiencies were addressed with our recent expansion options submitted to OPM for consideration on October 23, 2014. Therefore, the anticipated and estimated cost savings/reductions that the Agency is working to achieve are contingent upon the re-organization and in conjunction with the expansion options that was submitted for approval.

- (1) The Physical Plant, Building Services, and Food Services Departments use many veteran workers within the "Veterans Worker Program" to supplement resource staffing gaps - not having a full complement of classified state workers. In the proposed expansion option, DVA has identified the need to reduce/eliminate this practice and moving towards replacing veteran workers with classified employees. If the expansion option is approved, the Agency anticipates that the following cost savings/reduction can be achieved - going forward, the "Patient Worker Program" will be modified to focus primarily on a vocational rehabilitation model - acquiring transferrable employment skill that can be applied to a trade and long term employment - with reintegration back to the community. Anticipated savings from the reorganization is estimated below.

Fund/Sid	Description	Account	Estimated Savings FY16	Estimated Savings FY17
11000/10010	Patient Worker Savings	54750	\$500,000	\$500,000

- (2) Utilizing technology to replace the current antiquated and redundant patient care system - in a paper driven environment, will reduce the duplication of manual labor/data entry,

loss of records, and the lack of ability to generate meaningful reports - an enterprise wide streamlined integrated process will create accountability with transparency. The Agency estimates that the following are the potential cost savings/reductions that can be achieved from the implementation of a new Electronic Health Record System.

Fund/Sid	Description	Account	Estimated Savings FY16	Estimated Savings FY17
11000/10020	VA Drug reimbursement	54040	\$250,000	\$250,000
11000/10020	Temporary Service	51970	\$100,000	\$100,000

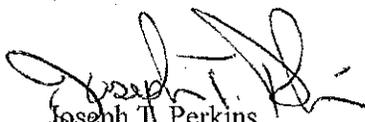
(3) Reduction of the nursing overtime cost –

With the proposed re-organization/re-alignment of all medical support services -with proper staffing levels and the additional ancillary service resources that were requested in the expansion options - the Nursing department will not have to assign Nurses' Aides to escort patients to their medical appointments – allowing the nursing staff to devote more time to direct patient care utilizing a more efficient service model provided by the new HER and the elimination of paper charting. See anticipated and estimated savings on the overtime below.

Fund/Sid	Description	Account	Estimated Savings FY16	Estimated Savings FY17
11000/10010	Overtime	50170	\$95,000	\$100,700

For the past ten (10) years, DVA has demonstrated its fiscal due diligence and has met all of the reduction challenges within a balance agency budget. The above are anticipated and estimated cost savings/reductions that the Agency believes can be delivered with the appropriate resources properly aligned within an organizational structure that has its full complement of staffing resources. With the anticipated successful implementation of the Electronic Health Record System, the medical and ancillary support services reorganization, and the pending approval of the expansion options, the Agency believes there are more efficiencies and additional cost savings that can be achieved in future years.

Sincerely,


Joseph T. Perkins
Commissioner

cc: Magdalena Lekarczyk, OPM Budget Analysis
Michael Clark, DVA Fiscal Administrative Manager