



OREGON DEPARTMENT
of **VETERANS' AFFAIRS**

AGENCY UPDATE: COUNTY VETERAN SERVICES FUNDING

Senate Interim Committee On Veterans, Emergency Management, Federal and World Affairs | May 29, 2024



PRESENTED BY
Dr. Nakeia Daniels, Director



STATEWIDE ACCESS TO VETERAN SERVICES OFFICES



Deschutes County Veteran Services Office

STATE INVESTMENTS IN VETERAN SERVICES

- Core Veteran Service provided by long standing state and county partnership in funding and delivering free and expert claims assistance to Oregon veterans
- Passage of Ballot Measure 96 (2016) allowed ODVA to double the amount of pass-through funding to counties – now totaling \$9.8 in combined GF and LF in the 2023-25 biennium
- State economic driver: \$158 million per month or \$1.9 billion per year (FY22) in monetary benefits delivered to veterans in all 36 counties
- For every \$1 of GF/LF investment in VSO services, approx. \$392 in federal funds is returned to the state in the form of monetary DC&P benefits to veterans and their families



ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES and AUTHORIZATION

AUTHORITY (ORS 406.450)

The Director of ODVA shall establish a program to enhance and expand the services provided by County Veteran Service Officers (CVSOs). The program shall:

- Conduct outreach and provide veterans (and family members) with information regarding benefits
- Assistance by trained reps certified by the state in applying for all federal and state veterans' benefits

ODVA

- Power of Attorney (POA)
- Training, certification and technical assistance
- Quality assurance and submits all claims for disability to federal VA
- Represents veterans at federal VA claims appeals hearings

COUNTY and CVSO

- County employs or contracts for Veteran Service Officers (VSO) and Admin Support
- CVSOs act in direct advocacy to veterans
- CVSOs conduct outreach
- File claims for benefits on behalf of veteran and their families
- CVSOs refer to other veteran federal, state and local benefits and resources



ODVA PASS-THROUGH FUNDS TO COUNTIES



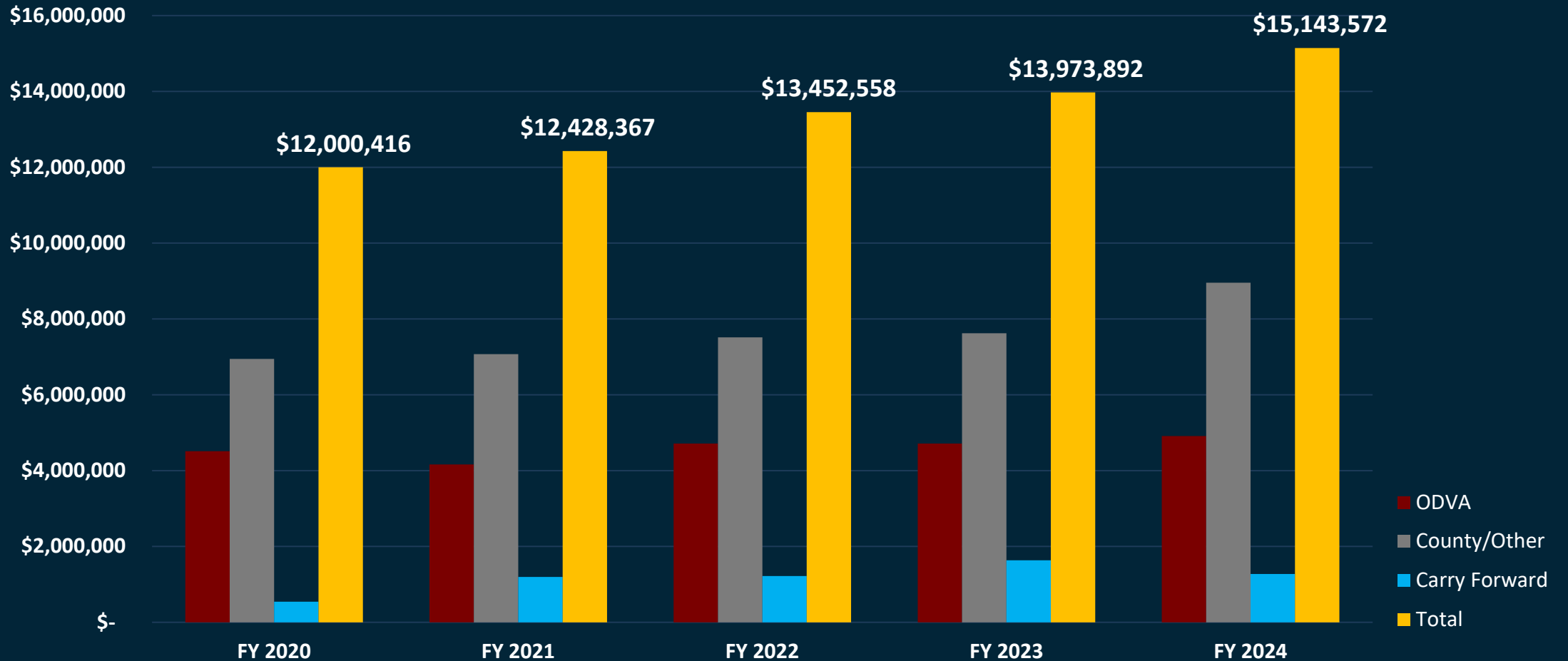
Yamhill County Veteran Services Office

DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS

- ODVA distributes funds with ORS 406.454 and defined in Oregon Administrative Rule.
- Counties submit annual application to receive ODVA pass-through funding
- 2023-25 ODVA Legislatively Adopted Budget allocated \$9.8 in combined GF and LF in the 2023-25 biennium
 - 55% is equally distributed among counties
 - 45% is distributed based on veteran population, as reported by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs



HISORICAL BUDGET FOR COUNTY VETERAN SERVICES





FY 24 SPENDING TO DATE

FY 2024 VETERAN SERVICES SPENDING TO DATE JULY 2023 – MARCH 2024

Total FY24 Budgets
\$15,143,572

Total FY 24 Budget Spent as of March 2024
\$9,515,745

EXAMPLES OF RECENT COUNTY VSO SPENDING CHALLENGES

- Staffing and retaining Veteran Service Officers and Administrative Support positions due to pandemic impacts and turnover due to nature of work.
- Impacts to outreach spending due to caseload increases introduced by the passage of the PACT Act (2022), Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act (2019), etc.







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Questions

