VETERANS' ASSISTANCE COMMISSION
OF
LIVINGSTON COUNTY
"VETERANS HELPING VETERANS"

110 W. Water St.
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County Board Chair James Carley
Commission President Chris Studebaker

Rules, Leg, VA.C. & CS Chairman Jack Vietti
Commission Vice President Paul Augsburger

Board Rep. Jim Blackard
V.A.C. Superintendent Michael Haerr

December 31st, 2025

2025 Annual Governors Report

The Livingston County Veterans Assistance Commission is composed by 11 veterans service organization located throughout Livingston County, Illinois. The commission is organized and funded to support three essential functions. The first is to provide rides to veteran's incapable of driving to Bureau of Veteran Affairs (BVA) Healthcare facilities in North-Central Illinois. Those are Hines VAH, Danville VAH, and Veteran Affairs Community Based Outpatient Clinics in LaSalle, Joliet, Bourbonnais, Bloomington and Peoria Illinois. BVA authorizations for community care referrals are also supported. The second function is to assist veterans and families apply for earned benefits from both the BVA and Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs (IDVA). The county is served regionally by IDVA by the Livingston County IDVA Veteran Service Officer who was hired in September 2025. The IDVA VSO is responsible for supporting Pontiac, Ford and Iroquois County Veterans applying for state specific benefits and grants as well submission of VA claims. The third function is to administer emergency financial assistance to veterans in need for rent, utilities, groceries, and medical supplies not covered by the BVA or IDVA.

The commission is supported by the county through an annual property tax levy that provides approximately $175,000 to support the salaries of the part time Superintendent/Veteran Service Officer, and a full time Veteran Service Officer. The County provides the Commission an office to transact the business of the commission, as well as all communication/maintenance support of the office. The County also provides administrative/financial-book keeping/legal support through an Memorandum of Agreement updated in September 2024. The Superintendent administers the Veterans emergency financial assistance program on behalf of the commission and county. This year the County VAC disbursed $26,000 dollars to in support of 88 requests for emergency rent, grocery, and utility expenses to 26 veterans and eligible widows. To support the healthcare transportation mission, the Commission employs seven-part drivers and owns-operates four vehicles (one SUV, one sedan, two min-vans). The Veteran Service Officer is the primary provider of claims support, and works with the Illinois Department of Veteran Affairs VSO to assist veterans and dependents apply for access to VA Healthcare, Injury – Illness compensation, National Cemetery Administration memorials-military honors at National Cemeteries, and dependent indemnity compensation, applications for admission to IDVA nursing homes and IDVA administered grants.

The BVA's 2023 Annual Data Reports that there are approximately 2,106 veterans that reside in the county. The BVA reports that there are 567 veterans using BVA healthcare facilities at an estimated expense of $9.3 million dollars. The County VAC utilized $44,350 to support salary and vehicle expenses moving 65 unique veterans to 442 appointments in 323 trips VBA Healthcare providers. The BVA also reports supporting $10.9 million dollars in compensation and pension payments to county residents.

The Superintendent and Veteran Service Officer are members of the Illinois Association of County Veterans Assistance Commissions and accredited by the National Association of County Veteran Service Officers (NACVSO). To maintain Veteran Administration VSO accreditation, the Veteran Service Officer attended the Illinois Association of County Veterans Assistance Commissions (IACVAC) Annual CEU training in September 2025 and attended training provided by IDVA in April 2025 (2 days). The Superintendent attended IACVAC Training in conjunction with the Winter (JAN 25), IACO Meeting (May 25), and IACVAC Quarterly Meeting in September 25. The Superintendent also attended the NACVSO Annual Training in July 25 for five days and three days of training in October 25 at the Illinois Association of Problem-Solving Courts. The continuing education allows access to the VA Veteran Benefit Management System to track claims submitted by the Commission in support of the MVAA requirement to provide VA POA services to local veterans. The Commission represents 368 county veterans and dependents as POA for VA communication, an increase of 150 over CY24. The Commission transmitted over 600 requests on behalf of veterans for VA and IDVA benefits for veterans/dependents in the calendar year. The VAC leases space to IDVA to provide County veterans with a single point of service for Veteran Service Officer services in the County.

The VAC is also closely following the amendment to allow multi-county VAC's in regards to providing outreach and services to Ford County veterans within the 11th Judicial Court Circuit. In conjunction with the Peoria Vet Center, the Vet Center hosts monthly Peer Support Group meetings and conducts weekly one on one reintegration counseling out of the VAC office. The Superintendent also provides VSO support to the 11th Judicial Circuit Court Veterans Treatment Court and mentors county veterans participating in the program. He also serves as an adjunct faculty for Justice 4 Vets through All Rise for VTC mentor boot camps.

The Commission and Elks Lodge Post 1019 hosted a Veterans Lunch and Benefits orientation on November 9th, 2025. County Veteran Service Organizations, Regional mental health providers and organizations, IDVA and BVA representatives were able to support attendees as needed. Over 130 veterans and 78 family members took advantage of this opportunity. The purpose of the lunch was to provide information about the PACT Health Screenings and efforts by the BVA to enroll eligible combat deployed veterans from the Viet Nam Conflict forward information on how to enroll for the various registries. Next years event is scheduled for Sunday November 8th at the Elks Lodge. The VAC in support of the Pontiac War Museum hosted the Gary Senise Foundation "Brothers at War" Movie and Seminar on December 14th 2025 at the Eagle Theater with over 150 veterans and family members registered

Respectfully Submitted

Michael Haerr
Superintendent, USA Retired

Christopher Studebaker
President, USN Veteran

Illinois Association of County Veterans Assistance Commissions

SURVEY FOR IACVAC ANNUAL REPORT

1.) County of Livingston

2.) Total Dollar Amount of New Compensation and Pension Received: $829, 697

3.) Total Number of Claims Filed by Category:

a.) VA Service-Connected Disability Compensation: 61

b.) VA Non Service-Connected Pension: 0

c.) VA Dependency Indemnity Compensation: 10

d.) VA Survivor's Pension: 1

e.) VA Burial Benefit: 37

f.) VA Health Care: 48

g.) VA Appeals (Supplemental Claim, Higher Level Review, and Board of Veterans Appeals): 34

4.) Total Dollar Amount of New Financial Assistance Paid Out: $28065/25 Unique Vets

5.) Total Number of New Forms Completed: 544 (Federal/State)

6.) Total Number of Clients Transported to Medical Appointments: 442

7.) Total Number of Clients Assisted: 739

I report that the above numbers are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and are within the parameters defined on the reverse.

Superintendent's Name: Michael Haerr

Superintendent's Signature: Michael Haerr Date: 12/18/25

Please return survey by December 31, 2025 to zimmermanjacob@KaneCountyIL.gov or by fax to 630-232-5403.