



TO VIEW
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VETERANS JOURNAL

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SPRING 2026



*A message from the Governor
& First Gentleman*

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As fellow Navy veterans, we understand that service shapes more than careers; it shapes character. Every veteran in New Jersey carries a story of sacrifice, resilience, and love for this country. It's an honor to continue that service here at home.

Our state's veterans deserve not just gratitude but results. That's why the Sherrill-Caldwell Administration is committed to empowering veterans with access to affordable, safe housing, quality physical and mental health care, and workforce training and small business support that recognizes the unique skills veterans bring to the civilian economy. New Jersey's newly established Department of Veterans Affairs will ensure that these priorities move from promise to reality with accountability and focus.

We also know that veterans and their families are affected by broader challenges, from rising utility bills and housing costs to difficulty accessing quality education and health care. We are tackling these affordability issues head-on because when costs are lower and services are more dependable, all New Jerseyans, especially those who served, thrive.

To every service member, veteran, and military family: you have our vow that your government works for you. You have a seat at the table, and your voice will always be heard.

Sincerely,

*Governor Mikie Sherrill &
First Gentleman Jason Hedberg*

WELCOME TO THE NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS



Effective January 9, 2026, the New Jersey Department of Veterans Affairs (NJ DVA) is on the ground serving Veterans, families, caregivers, and survivors. We live in a country whose greatness has been earned and protected by Veterans who embraced service as well as sacrifice. I have seen this with my own eyes through my nearly two decades in the military. Please subscribe to the NJ DVA digital newsletter. Visit veterans.nj.gov to do so and stay in touch about important programs, services, and events.

Good leaders are measured by their actions. They foster common purpose, shared understanding, and cultures of respect, innovation, and helpfulness. That is the spirit that I hope will animate our new Department of Veterans Affairs. Here is how I believe that we get there:

- ✓ ***We will deliver efficient, timely, and responsive state benefits, programs, and services.***
- ✓ ***We will be accountable to ourselves and to the Veterans and families whom we serve.***
- ✓ ***We will ensure the safety and the highest possible standards of care for the Veterans, Veteran Spouses, and Gold Star Families who call our facilities home.***
- ✓ ***We will reach and maintain functional zero to ensure that veteran homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.***
- ✓ ***We will partner with anyone and everyone to enhance efforts to reduce suicide and foster mental health resilience.***
- ✓ ***We will demonstrate this commitment to mission and accountability through our everyday actions.***

Those that I serve beside on the NJ DVA team are called to not only meet standards but exceed them. To seek innovative solutions to current and unforeseen challenges. To sustain what we are doing well while seeking constant improvement. We need your help to get it right.

My door is always open and you can send feedback to connect@dva.nj.gov

*Vincent Solomemo III
New Jersey Commissioner of Veterans Affairs*

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• X - @NJ_Veterans
• LinkedIn - <https://www.linkedin.com/company/njdva>

SERVING THOSE WHO SERVED: THE NJDVA MISSION AND WORK

The New Jersey Department of Veterans Affairs (NJDVA) exists to serve a simple but critical mission: ensuring that veterans, their families, caregivers, and survivors receive the care, benefits, and recognition they have earned through their service. Across the state, NJDVA provides a wide range of programs and services designed to meet veterans where they are, whether they are transitioning to civilian life, seeking healthcare, navigating benefits, or looking for connection and community.

One of the Department's core functions is helping veterans access the benefits available to them. Through a statewide network of Veterans Service Officers in all 21 counties, NJDVA assists with claims for federal, state, and local benefits, including healthcare, disability compensation, pensions, and education programs. These trained professionals serve as trusted guides, helping veterans and their families navigate often complex systems. To connect with your VSO, turn to page 23.

NJDVA operates three Veterans Memorial Homes at Paramus, Menlo Park, and Vineland. These facilities provide high quality long-term care to eligible veterans, veteran spouses, and Gold Star family members. These award-winning homes are communities built on dignity, respect, and a shared understanding of service. To learn more about our homes, visit veterans.nj.gov

Together with the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (DCA), we support the State of New Jersey's Bringing Veterans Home initiative. We are effectively ending veteran homelessness by enhancing existing systems, creating rapid access to housing, and ensuring homelessness becomes rare, brief, and non-recurring. In addition, for veterans facing housing instability, the Department runs Veterans Haven North and South, transitional housing programs that offer not only shelter, but also access to counseling, job training, and support services aimed at long-term stability and independence. To learn more about Bringing Veterans Home, visit page 16.

NJDVA also proudly maintains the World War II Memorial in Trenton, the Korean War Memorial in Atlantic City, and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Holmdel. Our team operates the 24/7 Vet2Vet Helpline, provides no-cost PTSD counseling, and disburses grants-in-aid for county governments for transportation to and from VA appointments.

In addition, NJDVA is responsible for the care, maintenance, and daily operation of the Brigadier General William C. Doyle Veterans Memorial Cemetery, a place of honor where veterans and their families are laid to rest with the dignity they deserve. The Department also oversees the state's War Memorials, preserving spaces that recognize the service and sacrifice of generations of New Jersey veterans.

Beyond direct services, NJDVA works to strengthen the broader veteran community through outreach, partnerships, and initiatives focused on mental health, employment, and overall well-being. By listening to veterans and adapting to their evolving needs, the Department continues to expand and improve the support it provides.

At its core, NJDVA is committed to one guiding principle: those who served our country should always have access to the care, resources, and respect they have earned.



**FOR MORE BENEFITS
& SERVICES WE OFFER
SCAN THE QR CODE:**



Holiday Cheer



GOVERNOR SHERRILL CELEBRATES THE HOLIDAYS WITH PARAMUS VETERANS HOME RESIDENTS & STAFF

In the weeks leading up to her inauguration as the 57th Governor of New Jersey, Mikie Sherrill joined Commissioner of Veterans Affairs Vincent Solomeno and Brig. Gen. Yvonne L. Mays, The Adjutant General of New Jersey, for a visit to the Paramus Veterans Memorial Home. The three joined residents for a holiday celebration.



The holiday spirit was on full display across all three veterans homes. Below is a collage highlighting the incredible community volunteers who helped spread cheer at our Menlo Park and Vineland Memorial Veterans Homes. We extend our heartfelt thanks to the dedicated teams at each home, along with our community partners, for ensuring that the Veterans, Veteran Spouses, and Gold Star Families who call our facilities home felt celebrated and supported throughout the holiday season.

Our Menlo Park Memorial Veterans Home had holiday visits from multiple chapters of the Daughters of the American Revolution for caroling and distributing holiday bags to our residents. JROTC Students from Paterson Charter School Made their Annual Holiday visit to connect with residents, and Sacred Heart Church in South Atmboy graciously collected and delivered gifts for the residents - something they do each year.

In our Vineland Memorial Veterans Home, they hosted Boscov's Christmas Spectacular in partnership with the generous staff and shoppers at the Boscov's at Cumberland County Mall. Throughout the holiday season, the community purchased gifts for all of the residents.

The State of New Jersey VFW hosted a Holiday Party for the residents at Menlo Park Memorial Veterans Home.

Pictured is Santa with Menlo Park Resident, Army Veteran, Gary Bohl.



VETERANS HOME SPOTLIGHT



PARAMUS AND VINELAND VETERANS MEMORIAL HOMES EARN NATIONAL RECOGNITION FOR EXCELLENCE IN CARE

New Jersey's commitment to honoring and caring for its veterans has once again been recognized on the national stage. The Paramus Memorial Veterans Home and the Vineland Memorial Veterans Home have both earned places on Newsweek's 2026 list of America's Best Nursing Homes and U.S. News & World Report's 2026 Best Nursing Homes—two of the most respected and data-driven evaluations in the long-term care field. This dual recognition is a powerful testament to the exceptional quality of care provided at New Jersey's Veterans Memorial Homes. Both rankings assess facilities using rigorous criteria, including clinical outcomes, safety measures, staffing levels, resident satisfaction, and compliance with federal and state standards. Earning recognition from both organizations underscores the consistency, accountability, and excellence demonstrated every day by the Paramus and Vineland teams.

These honors reflect far more than metrics, they represent the dedication of the nurses, clinicians, caregivers, administrators, and support staff who serve our veteran residents with professionalism, compassion, and respect. Their commitment ensures that residents receive not only high-quality medical care, but also an environment that prioritizes dignity, safety, and quality of life.

For the veterans who call Paramus and Vineland home, this recognition affirms what they and their families already know: New Jersey's Veterans Memorial Homes are places where service is honored and care is delivered with purpose.

As a state, we are proud to serve those who have served our nation. These national distinctions reinforce our unwavering mission to continuously strengthen care standards, invest in our workforce, and ensure that New Jersey veterans receive the exceptional care they have earned—today and for generations to come.



NJ VETERANS HOMES ACHIEVE FIVE-STAR RATING

The New Jersey Department of Veterans Affairs announced in January that the Menlo Park, Paramus and Vineland Veterans Memorial Homes have earned an overall five out of five-star rating from the U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). This marks a significant milestone in the State of New Jersey's commitment to providing high-quality care to the Veterans, Veteran Spouses, and Gold Star Families who call these long-term care facilities home.

The five-star designation is based on positive findings from independent health inspections, staffing levels, and resident level quality measures of clinical care. The Paramus Veterans Memorial Home has received this distinction for three years running; the Vineland Veterans Memorial Home received this distinction in 2024 and again this January; and Menlo Park received their first five star report this year.

"I am incredibly proud to see continued improvement at New Jersey's veterans homes. Veterans put their lives on the line for us, so it is our responsibility to ensure they have top-tier facilities to receive the care they deserve. As the first elected female veteran Governor in the country, I made a promise to take care of our veterans, and I look forward to working with the New Jersey Department of Veterans Affairs to make good on this commitment,"
said Governor Mikie Sherrill.

Under CMS guidelines, only the top 10 percent of long-term care facilities in each state are eligible to receive an overall five-star rating at any given time. Achieving a five-star rating signifies excellence across all evaluated areas and reflects a sustained commitment to safety, accountability, and resident-centered care.



"Our goal is constant and never-ending improvement,"
said Commissioner of Veterans Affairs Vincent Solomeno.
"This five-star ratings is a testament to increased investment, higher wages, and the dedication, professionalism, and compassion of our team. Our work continues and we remain laser focused on providing the highest possible standards of care"

VETERANS DAY CEREMONY

NEW JERSEY VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL

The State of New Jersey's Veterans Day Observance was conducted at the New Jersey Vietnam Veterans Memorial and Museum, Holmdel, on November 11, 2025. Veterans Day is intended to honor the service of those Americans who served in the U.S. Armed Forces and celebrate their patriotism, love of country, and selfless service.



In the final Veterans Day ceremony of his tenure, former Governor Philip D. Murphy addressed a full house. Veterans Day celebrates and honors America's veterans for their patriotism, love of country, and willingness to serve and sacrifice for the common good.



The Brigadier General William C. Doyle Veterans Memorial Cemetery Honor Guard renders a salute during the State of New Jersey Veterans Day Observance at the New Jersey Vietnam Veterans Memorial and Museum at Holmdel, New Jersey, November 11, 2025.



Former Governor Murphy, left; Brig. Gen. Yvonne L. Mays, The Adjutant General of New Jersey, second from right, and Vincent Solomono III, Commissioner of Veterans Affairs, right, presented the New Jersey Governor's "We Value Our Veterans" Employer Award to Christopher Heacock, Atlantic Healthcare Systems, second from left, during the ceremony. The award recognizes communities, businesses, and academic institutions who honor the sacrifices, patriotism, and bravery of New Jersey's service members.

THE NEW JERSEY LEGISLATURE

MILITARY AND VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMITTEES

In January, the New Jersey Legislature began its 222nd session that will run from January 2026 to December 2028. The Legislature consists of two houses: a forty member Senate and an eighty member General Assembly. The Senate and Assembly chambers are located in the State House in Trenton. Their standing committees include the separate Senate and Assembly Military and Veterans Affairs Committees.

SENATE MILITARY AND VETERANS AFFAIRS



Senator
Raj Mukherji
Chair



Senator
Nilsa I. Cruz-Perez
Vice Chair



Senator
Parker Space



Senator
Latham Tiver



Senator
Benjie Wimberly

ASSEMBLY MILITARY AND VETERANS AFFAIRS



Assemblywoman
Cleopatra G. Tucker
Chair



Assemblywoman
Melinda Kane
Vice Chair



Assemblyman
Anthony Angelozzi



Assemblyman
Wayne P. DeAngelo



Assemblyman
Brian E. Rumpf



Assemblyman
Alex Sauickie

Together, these legislators help elevate veterans issues across New Jersey. They are indispensable partners in ensuring that those who served in the U.S. Armed Forces have access to exceptional benefits, programs, and services.

NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS LAUNCHES

OFFICE OF WOMEN VETERANS

The New Jersey Department of Veterans Affairs announced in March the launch of its new Office of Women Veterans, a dedicated initiative designed to ensure improved access to benefits, programs, services, and support for women who served in the U.S. Armed Forces. Lucy Del Gaudio, a U.S. Army Veteran and nationally recognized advocate for veterans' rights, will serve as the first Women Veterans Coordinator, helping to lead outreach, engagement, and policy efforts across the Garden State.

The Office of Women Veterans will focus on addressing the unique needs and experiences of women who have served, including access to health care, mental health support, benefits navigation, career opportunities, and community connection.



"Women veterans have played an essential role in defending our country and strengthening our communities, yet their service has too often gone unrecognized," said Governor Mikie Sherrill, the first woman veteran to serve as state governor in the history of the United States. "The creation of the Office of Women Veterans ensures that New Jersey is meeting the needs of this growing population with dedicated leadership and focused support."

Women veterans often face challenges that differ from those of their male counterparts, including navigating benefits systems historically designed without their experiences in mind, addressing gender-specific health concerns, and overcoming barriers to accessing veteran-focused services and networks. The new office will serve as a central point of coordination within the Department to ensure that policies, programs, and partnerships are responsive to those needs.

"New Jersey is home to roughly 26,000 women who have served in the United States Armed Forces. They are the fastest growing population within the veterans community," said Commissioner of Veterans Affairs Vincent Solomeno. "The Office of Women Veterans ensures that their service is not only recognized, but that our team ensures access to the veteran benefits and programs that they have earned during their time in uniform."

Del Gaudio brings extensive experience in advocacy, community engagement, and veteran policy to the role. She most recently served as Program Coordinator for Operation Sisterhood at YWCA Northern New Jersey, where she led initiatives that support women veterans through connection, transition resources, and empowerment.

"Lucy Del Gaudio brings both lived experience and extraordinary leadership to this role," said Solomeno. "Her dedication to ensuring women veterans are seen, heard, and supported makes her uniquely qualified to help guide this important work."

VISIT THE OFFICE OF WOMEN VETERANS
OR EMAIL: WomenVeterans@dva.nj.gov



COMMISSIONER'S 21 COUNTY TOUR NEW JERSEY



In November 2025, for the second year in a row, Commissioner of Veterans Affairs Vincent Solomeno traveled up, down, and across New Jersey on a twenty-one county tour meeting with veterans, family members, caregivers, and the service organizations that work each day to honor and support Garden State heroes.

1. MIDDLESEX COUNTY

Commissioner Solomeno kicked off the tour at the Veterans Memorial Home at Menlo Park. He joined residents to celebrate the 250th Birthday of the United States Marine Corps.

2. SOMERSET COUNTY

Joined U.S. Representative Tom Kean, Jr., Brig. Gen. Yvonne L. Mays, The Adjutant General of New Jersey, Commissioner of Transportation Fran O'Connor, Somerset County Commissioners, and other leaders to realize a long-held goal of veteran advocates: the launch of a free shuttle connecting the Lyons Train Station to the Lyons VA Medical Center. This new service was made possible through county, state, and federal partnership.

3. MERCER COUNTY

Stood alongside Governor Philip D. Murphy and First Lady Tammy Murphy to welcome veteran leaders and advocates to Drumthwacket, the official residence of the Governor of New Jersey, for a commemoration of November as the Month of the Veteran.

4. MONMOUTH COUNTY

Together with the Governor and The Adjutant General, participated in the State of New Jersey's Veterans Day Observance at the New Jersey Vietnam Veterans' Memorial and Museum in Holmdel.

5. SALEM COUNTY

For the second year in a row, visited with the inspiring leaders of Together with Veterans, an evidence-driven program that strengthens rural communities, fosters resilience, and reduces the risk of suicide.

6. ATLANTIC COUNTY

Stopped in Atlantic City to place a bet on the success of third annual Veteran Resource Fair and Mini-Stand Down at Atlantic Cape Community College. The volunteer organizers are servant leaders committed to supporting the most vulnerable among us.

7. HUNTERDON COUNTY

Stopped in Glen Gardner to visit with the residents and staff of Veterans Haven North, one of two New Jersey Department of Veterans Affairs transitional housing facilities. Together with its sister facility Veterans Haven South, the Veterans Havens provide housing, counseling, transportation, and a stable path to permanent housing for Garden State Veterans.

8. MORRIS COUNTY

One of the highlights of the entire tour: spending time with the students of Shongun Elementary School in Randolph. The students learned about the importance of Veterans Day and paid tribute to their own parents and grandparents who served in the U.S. Armed Forces.

9. PASSAIC COUNTY

Met with the leaders of YWCA Northern New Jersey's Operation Sisterhood. This program supports women veterans through robust case management, counseling, entrepreneurship and job support, and mentorship.

10. CAPE MAY

On the way to Cape May, Commissioner Solomeno fell in love with the fact that the State of New Jersey now has veterans service offices in all twenty-one counties. He visited with the team at our office in Cape May Courthouse.

11. CAMDEN

For the second year in a row, the Camden County visit included coffee with Veterans at American Legion Tatem-Shield Post 17 in Collingswood. This group meets regularly to provide peer support and share information about available benefits, programs, and services.

12. BURLINGTON COUNTY

Paid respects at the Brigadier General William C. Doyle Veterans Memorial Cemetery in Wrightstown. Under the auspices of the New Jersey Department of Veterans Affairs, Doyle Cemetery is the busiest state-run veterans cemetery in the United States.

13. SUSSEX COUNTY

Celebrated the importance of collaboration at the Catholic Charities Diocese of Patterson Partnership for Social Services Food Pantry and Thrift Shop in Franklin. This location also serves as the State of New Jersey's Sussex County Veterans Service Office, a physical point of entry for Veterans interested in accessing their earned benefits.



14. ESSEX COUNTY

Pitched in at the East Orange VA Medical Center Veterans Food Pantry and met with U.S. Army Veteran Bill Graves, President of the Blinded Veterans Association of New Jersey. Led by Mr. Graves and other volunteers, the work of the food pantry reminds us that, for many, service continues long after they have hung up their uniform.

15. UNION COUNTY

Met with Bridges Outreach, the on the ground team working in Union County to realize the State of New Jersey's goal of effectively ending veteran homelessness in 2026. Since the launch of Bringing Veterans Home, over 1,800 Veterans have been permanently housed statewide. The work continues.

16. WARREN COUNTY

The tour stopped at Warren County Community College, including a visit to the campus's 9/11 First Responder Memorial honoring New Jersey heroes lost in the line of duty. The visit also highlighted the State Approving Agency, which helps veterans and eligible spouses access GI Bill benefits through approved institutions.

17. GLOUCESTER COUNTY

Stopped in for a meeting with local veterans and also visited the Gloucester County Wall of Heroes at the Woodbury Justice Complex, a powerful tribute to the sacrifice of county residents missing or killed in action.



Today, New Jersey is investing more, doing more, and achieving more for Garden State heroes than at any time in our history. As anyone will tell you, there is more work ahead. The New Jersey Department of Veterans Affairs enables us to do more.

18. HUDSON COUNTY

Joined New Jersey Senator Raj Mukherji, Chair of the Senate Military and Veterans Affairs Committee, in Jersey City to present a ceremonial check to NJSOSVETS. The check reflects the State of New Jersey's Fiscal Year 2026 grant to the organization to continue to provide vital emergency housing assistance and other support services for homeless veterans.

19. CUMBERLAND COUNTY

Visited the Veterans Memorial Home at Vineland to celebrate the home being named among America's Best Nursing Homes for 2026 by Newsweek. This award reflects the hard work of our team of healthcare heroes and the broader investments in care, higher wages, and a daily commitment to ensuring the highest possible standards of care for the Veterans, Veteran Spouses, and Gold Star Families who live at all of our facilities.

20. BERGEN COUNTY

No tour would be complete if the Commissioner did not visit all the veterans home. At the Veterans Memorial Home at Paramus, he met with members of the Resident Council and celebrated the facility also receiving Newsweek's America's Best Nursing Home for 2026 recognition.

21. OCEAN COUNTY

Last call and final stop! Opened in 2024, the Toms River VA Clinic is one of the newest VA facilities in the United States and reflects the broad, bipartisan commitment to ensuring the best care for America's Veterans.

FEATURED MEDAL CEREMONIES

MEDAL CEREMONY AT COUNTY COLLEGE OF MORRIS



SEPTEMBER- John Mallon, right, accepts the posthumous award of the New Jersey Distinguished Service Medal and New Jersey Korean Service Medal for his father, World War II and Korean War Veteran Navy Lt. John J. Mallon, from Vincent Solomono III, Deputy Commissioner of Veterans Affairs, New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, during the New Jersey State Medals Ceremony at the County College of Morris in Randolph, New Jersey, Sept. 4, 2025.

UNION COUNTY MEDAL CEREMONY VFW POST 2230



OCTOBER- Retired U.S. Army Chief Warrant Officer 3 Luisa Sanchez, presents the New Jersey Distinguished Service Medal and New Jersey Desert Shield/Storm Medal to Operations Desert Shield/Desert Storm Veteran Army Spc. Larry Green, during the New Jersey State Medals Ceremony at VFW Kenilworth Post 2230 in Kenilworth, New Jersey, Oct. 9, 2025.



MEDAL CEREMONY AT COUNTY COLLEGE OF MORRIS



SEPTEMBER- New Jersey Meritorious Service Medal and New Jersey Vietnam Service Medal recipient Marine Corps Cpl. Neil J. Kenny, has his photo taken during the New Jersey State Medals Ceremony at the County College of Morris in Randolph, New Jersey, Sept. 4, 2025.

UNION COUNTY MEDAL CEREMONY VFW POST 2230



OCTOBER- Retired U.S. Army Chief Warrant Officer 3 Luisa Sanchez, right, presents the New Jersey Distinguished Service Medal and New Jersey Vietnam Service Medal to Vietnam War Veteran Army Specialist Four Stanley G. George, during the New Jersey State Medals Ceremony at VFW Kenilworth Post 2230 in Kenilworth, New Jersey, Oct. 9, 2025.

OCEAN COUNTY MEDAL CEREMONY AT THE ARBOR TERRACE



NOVEMBER- Retired U.S. Army Col. Mark A. Preston, Chief Fiscal Officer, New Jersey Department of Military Affairs, presents the New Jersey Distinguished Service Medal and the New Jersey Vietnam Service Medal to Vietnam War Veteran Army Specialist Four Robert Sudol during the New Jersey State Medals Ceremony at the Arbor Terrace Middletown in Middletown, New Jersey, Nov. 6, 2025.

OCEAN COUNTY MEDAL CEREMONY AT THE ARBOR TERRACE



NOVEMBER- Retired U.S. Army Col. Mark A. Preston, Chief Fiscal Officer, New Jersey Department of Military Affairs, presents the New Jersey Meritorious Service Medal to Army Pfc. Gilfredo Pacheco for honorable Service in the U.S. Army during the New Jersey State Medals Ceremony at the Arbor Terrace Middletown in Middletown, New Jersey, Nov. 6, 2025.

To learn more about eligibility criteria and application procedures or request a medal ceremony, visit:

Scan the QRcode



OCEAN COUNTY MEDAL CEREMONY AT THE ARBOR TERRACE



NOVEMBER- New Jersey state medal recipients have their photo taken after the New Jersey State Medals Ceremony at the Hainesport Volunteer Fire Company in Hainesport, New Jersey, Nov. 21, 2025.

MORRIS COUNTY MEDAL CEREMONY AT THE VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS POST 3401



DECEMBER- Retired Chief Warrant Officer Luisa Sanchez, Veterans Services, New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, presents the New Jersey Meritorious Service Medal and the New Jersey Global War on Terrorism Medal to Operation Enduring Freedom Veteran Army Capt. Christopher R. Gardner during the New Jersey State Medals Ceremony at the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 3401 in Morris Plains, New Jersey, Dec. 17, 2025.

MORRIS COUNTY MEDAL CEREMONY AT THE VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS POST 3401



DECEMBER- New Jersey state medal recipients have their photo taken after the New Jersey State Medals Ceremony at the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 3401 in Morris Plains, New Jersey, Dec. 17, 2025.

ENDING HOMELESSNESS



Bringing Veterans Home (BVH) is the State of New Jersey’s flagship program to effectively end veteran homelessness by enhancing existing systems, creating rapid access to housing, and ensuring homelessness becomes rare, brief, and non-recurring. Since January 1, 2025, with the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs in the lead, Bringing Veterans Home has permanently housed over 2,000 veterans and their families.

PROGRAM IMPACT

(SOURCE: NJ DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS – HERF MODEL)

2,535

of veterans housed since start of BVH

358

of veterans served through BVH in 2026

2,052

of veterans permanently housed since start of BVH

Permanent housing placements drive the majority of durable public cost avoidance.

\$42.5 Million

Conservative Annual Public Cost Avoidance

Savings compound annually as housing stability persists.

Estimated 2025 Investment:	Annual Cost Avoidance:	First-Year ROI:	Year 3 Return:
\$36.2M	\$42.5M	1.17:1	2.5-3.5x

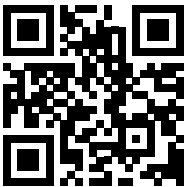


BRINGING VETERANS HOME SUCCESS STORY:

After experiencing long-term chronic homelessness and facing significant financial barriers, including debt, a low credit score, and a prior eviction; a Veteran applied for the BVH voucher determined to rebuild his life. He had previously been denied a HUD-VASH voucher, which made securing stable housing feel out of reach. Once he applied for the BVH voucher, he was quickly accepted, and his housing process moved forward without delay. Within a few months, he secured permanent housing and began reconnecting with family members he had lost touch with during his years of instability. With support from the program, he also began budgeting, addressing his debts, and working toward long-term financial goals. Today, he is stably housed, rebuilding his financial foundation, and moving forward with renewed confidence and purpose.

If a reader knows a veteran or encounters one who is at risk of homelessness or currently homeless, contact the NJ Vet2Vet Helpline any time at 1-866-838-7654 or by visiting www.njvet2vet.com.

TO VIEW ALL OF OUR COUNTY AND STATE PARTNERS VISIT:



DVA Wins Grant to Elevate Veterans Home Memory Care - Recognizing the increasing need for specialized dementia care, the New Jersey Department of Veterans Affairs is proud to announce the launch of its new Certified Dementia Practitioner (CDP) training program. This comprehensive initiative is designed to equip staff with advanced, practical skills to manage complex behaviors, reduce caregiver stress, and enhance the quality of life for residents living with Alzheimer’s and other forms of dementia.

The program curriculum aligns with national certification standards established by the National Council of Certified Dementia Practitioners and addresses critical gaps in dementia education. Key areas of focus include understanding dementia types, communication strategies, and person-centered care approaches.

“Our homes at Menlo Park, Paramus, and Vineland provide care each day for residents experiencing memory loss,” said Rochelle Guglielmo, DVA Director of Veterans Healthcare Services. “Through a train the trainer model over the next four years, our end goal is 252 of our clinical team members across the three homes becoming Certified Dementia Practitioners. This will be a set of critical tools to add to the toolboxes of our healthcare heroes.

Today, New Jersey’s three veterans homes are independently ranked among the best long-term care facilities in the state. The U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services awarded five out of five overall stars to each home as a result of positive findings from independent health inspections, staffing levels, and resident-level quality measures of clinical care. Funding to train Certified Dementia Practitioners is made possible by a \$45,000 grant from the New Jersey Department of Health.

VOLUNTEERING *FOR VETERANS*

LOCAL VETERANS LEAD 26 YEARS OF BLACKJACK AT PARAMUS VETERANS HOME



For more than twenty-six years, one special tradition has brought camaraderie, laughter, and a little friendly competition to the Paramus Veterans Home every single Thursday without fail. Joe Cecere, then Commander of Wood-Ridge Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 3616, joined together with Norwood American Legion Post 272 to host weekly blackjack games for residents. What began decades ago as a simple act of service has grown into a beloved weekly event that many residents look forward to as a highlight of their week.

In 2019, Cecere's post merged with Carlstadt Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 3149. The members of Post 3149 continued the partnership with American Legion Post 272. Each Thursday, two to three blackjack tables are set up, complete with volunteer dealers who generously give their time and energy to ensure everyone has a seat at the table. Thanks to a grant from the American Legion, residents receive a few dollars for their winnings, adding an extra layer of excitement and fun to the games.

The impact of this tradition goes far beyond cards and chips. Some residents have been attending blackjack every week for more than five years, forming friendships and routines that provide connection and continuity. At the same time, new residents regularly join the tables, quickly becoming part of the group and discovering a welcoming community.

The local VFW and American Legion's enduring commitment is a powerful example that service continues long after one hangs up a military uniform. Their presence each Thursday reflects gratitude in action; honoring service not just with words, but with time, consistency, and genuine care.

After more than two decades, the cards are still being dealt, the tables are still full, and the tradition continues one Thursday at a time.



WREATHS
across
AMERICA



In December, Wreaths Across America conducted its annual remembrance ceremony at the Brigadier General William C. Doyle Veterans Memorial Cemetery in Wrightstown.

Wreaths Across America is a non-profit organization that honors deceased Veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces by placing balsam wreaths on gravesites during the holiday season. Established in 1992, December's National Wreaths Across America Day at Doyle Cemetery was one of over 4,900 ceremonies intended to remember, honor, and teach about the service of our fellow Americans.

Doyle Cemetery is the busiest state-run veterans cemetery in the United States. Each day, members of the New Jersey Department of Veterans Affairs team to work to ensure the solemn, dignified interment of Veterans, Veteran Spouses, and eligible dependents. For more information on the cemetery, visit veterans.nj.gov.



Wreaths were placed at Brigadier General William C. Doyle Veterans Memorial Cemetery, Wrightstown, New Jersey, Dec. 13, 2025. The ceremony culminated with the presentation of memorial wreaths for each branch of the armed forces by Civil Air Patrol cadets.

HONORING OUR LEGACY, ADVANCING OUR MISSION

It is an honor to serve New Jersey's veterans, families, caregivers, and survivors at this important moment of transition and opportunity. For decades, the New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMAVA) carried out a broad and vital mission—supporting veterans services, operating our veterans homes, maintaining memorials, and ensuring military readiness for the State of New Jersey. The strength of that work, and the public servants who delivered it, built a foundation rooted in service, accountability, and respect.

As we move forward as the New Jersey Department of Veterans Affairs (NJDA), we do so with deep appreciation for that legacy and a clear focus on the future. In the months ahead, NJDA will advance new efforts centered on mental health and wellness, housing stability, benefits access, and community engagement.

While our structure may be new, our mission is not. The values that guided DMAVA: integrity, responsiveness, and a commitment to caring for the whole veteran and family; remain at the heart of everything we do. What this transition allows is sharper focus, stronger coordination, and the ability to introduce initiatives designed to better meet veterans where they are.

In the months ahead, NJDA will advance new efforts centered on mental health and wellness, housing stability, benefits access, and community engagement. We are strengthening outreach, listening more closely to the voices of veterans and caregivers, and investing in programs that reflect real needs and measurable outcomes. This work builds directly on the foundation laid by DMAVA and positions us to deliver services that are responsive, effective, and worthy of the trust placed in us.

This magazine reflects both who we have been and where we are going. We honor the legacy that brought us here, and we embrace the responsibility to carry it forward. Our commitment is simple and unwavering: to serve New Jersey's veterans and their families with dignity, excellence, and purpose, today and in the years ahead.

STAY CONNECTED



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UPCOMING EVENTS CALENDAR



STATE OF NEW JERSEY MEMORIAL DAY OBSERVANCE

11:00AM Sharp
Brigadier General William C. Doyle
Veterans Memorial Cemetery, Wrightstown



STATE OF NEW JERSEY VETERANS DAY CEREMONY

11:00AM Sharp
New Jersey Vietnam Veterans
Memorial and Museum, Holmdel



VETERANS SERVICE OFFICES

The New Jersey Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) operates Veterans Service Offices in each of the state's twenty-one counties. These offices are led by trained and accredited Veterans Service Officers (VSOs) and serve as points of entry for Veterans and their dependents to access local, state, and federal benefits, programs, and services. DVA also conducts outreach events in the community where VSOs are present to help and assist any Veteran.

State Supervisors Main Numbers
1-(844) 671-1019
or (609) 671-3500

Atlantic Veterans Service Office
Atlantic City National Guard Armory
1008 Absecon Boulevard
Atlantic City, NJ 08401
(609) 671-3505 / 3506

Bergen Veterans Service Office
Suite #109, 125 State Street
Hackensack, NJ 07601-5435
(609) 671-3510 / 3511

Bordentown Veterans Service Office
Joint Military & Family
Assistance Center
1048 US Highway 206 South
Bordentown, NJ 08505
(609) 671-2005

Burlington Veterans Service Office
Suite #6A, 555 High Street
Mt Holly, NJ 08060
(609) 671-3515 / 3516

Camden Veterans Service Office
Governor James J. Florio Center for
Public Service Building
Suite 146, 200 Federal Street
Camden, NJ 08103
(609) 671-3520 / 3521

Cape May Veterans Service Office
National Guard Armory
600 Garden State Parkway
Cape May Court House, NJ 08210
(609) 671-3525 / 3526

Cumberland Veterans Service Office
New Jersey Veterans Memorial
Home at Vineland
524 N. West Boulevard
Vineland NJ 08360
(609) 671-3530 / 3531

East Orange Veterans Service Office
East Orange VA Medical Center
Room 3-214, 385 Tremont Avenue
East Orange, NJ 07018
(973) 676-1000, Ext. 202377

Essex Veterans Service Office
Newark Liaison Office
Newark VA Regional Office
Room 439, 20 Washington Place
Newark, NJ 07102-3174
(609) 671-3535 / 3536

Essex Veterans Service Office
Newark City Hall
Room B-13, 920 Broad Street
Newark, NJ 07102
(973) 424-1968

Gloucester Veterans Service Office
Woodbury National Guard Armory
658 N Evergreen Avenue
Woodbury, NJ 08096
(609) 671-3540 / 3542

Hudson Veterans Service Office
Jersey City National Guard Armory
Room 6, 2nd Floor
678 Montgomery Street
Jersey City, NJ 07306
(609) 671-3545 / 3546

Hunterdon Veterans Service Office
Veterans Haven North
200 Sanatorium Road
Glen Gardner, NJ 08826
(609) 671-3550 / 3551

Mercer Veterans Service Office
National Guard Armory
Room #136, 151 Eggerts Crossing Road
Lawrenceville, NJ 08648
(609) 671-3555 / 3556

Middlesex Veterans Service Office
National Guard Armory
625 Main Street
Woodbridge, NJ 07095
(609) 671-3560 / 3561

Monmouth Veterans Service Office
Suite #320, 630 Bangs Avenue
Asbury Park, NJ 07712
(609) 671-3565 / 3566

Morris Veterans Service Office
National Guard Armory
479 W Clinton Street
Dover, NJ 07801
(609) 671-3570 / 3571

Ocean Veterans Service Office
Toms River VA Clinic
Room #1213, 1055 Hooper Avenue
Toms River, NJ 08754
(609) 671-3575 / 3576

Passaic Veterans Service Office
Passaic County Administration
Building
Room 113b, 401 Grand Street
Paterson, NJ 07505
(609) 671-3580 / 3581

Salem Veterans Service Office
90 Market Street
Salem NJ 08079
(609) 671-3586 / 3585

Somerset Veterans Service Office
National Guard Armory
1060 Hamilton Street
Somerset, NJ 08873
(609) 671-3590 / 3591

Sussex Veterans Service Office
Catholic Family &
Community Services
48 Wyker Road
Franklin, NJ 07416
(609) 671-3571

Union Veterans Service Office
652-654 Rahway Avenue
Union NJ 07083
(609) 671-3595 / 3596

Warren Veterans Service Office
Port Murray Armory
550 NJ-57 South
Port Murray, NJ 07865
(609) 671-3598 / 3599

For more information call
toll-free 1-888-865-8387
or online at:
<https://www.nj.gov/military/veterans/>

GET INVOLVED

To share your voice, engage in promotional efforts, or volunteer individually or as a group to support the Veterans in our Memorial Homes or Havens, please reach out to **connect@dva.nj.gov**.



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