

Memo

To: Director – Onondaga County Veterans Service Office (OC-VSO)

From: Olivia Curreri

Re: Veterans Disability Benefits Compensation – Policy Field Map

Summary

- Too many of Onondaga County’s veterans experience difficulties transitioning from the military and adjusting to civilian life
- Onondaga County’s veterans can experience challenges transitioning from the military and adjusting to civilian life like the loss of camaraderie, and a lost sense of purpose and belonging which can have significant negative impacts on health, well-being, and economic security.
- The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to aid veterans’ transition to civilian life with policy solutions.
- Current solutions are Veterans Disability Benefits Compensation which provides monthly payments intended to offset costs of living that an individual could otherwise pay provided they weren’t hurt and could earn a wage or salary income to veterans.
- Alternative strategies include OC-VSO taking the additional funding boost from NYS-DVS to fund Legion-OC so both organizations can deliver services to veterans more efficiently and the OC-VSO establishing a formal relationship with VABuffalo to make the approval of disability benefits applications timelier.

Goal

Reduce the problem via utilization – reduce Onondaga County’s veterans’ difficulties transitioning from the military and adjusting to civilian life by using appropriate services.

Tool

Capacity building – provide veterans with disability compensation to offset costs of living that an individual could otherwise pay provided they weren’t hurt and could earn wage or salary income.

Target

Onondaga County's veterans

Theory of Change

If the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs offers Veterans' Disability Benefits Compensation then Onondaga County's veterans will utilize the disability compensation to offset costs of living that an individual could otherwise pay provided they weren't hurt and could earn a wage or salary income, and the problem of veterans who experience difficulties transitioning from the military and adjusting to civilian life will reduce.

Policy Field Analysis

The policy field map is attached to this memo with an analysis of key players and their ties.

Oversight Ties

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA-DC) has direct legal authority over the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Regional Office in Buffalo, NY (VA-Buffalo) and the New York Division of Veterans' Services (NYS-DVS). The VA-DC has indirect legal authority over the Onondaga County Veterans Service Office (OC-VSO) because it is directly overseen by NYS-DVS.

Financing Ties

VA-DC directly funds VA-Buffalo and NYS-DVS. The NYS-DVS directly funds OC-VSO by passing the funds from VA-DC. Biz-4-Vets provides funds to Legion-OC.

Oversight-Financing Matches

There is a strong oversight-financing match between VA-DC and VA-Buffalo. There is a weak oversight-financing match between VA-DC and OC-VSO as funding and oversight is passed through NYS-DVS. There is a mismatch of indirect oversight and direct financing between Biz-4-Vets and Legion-OC.

SWOT Analysis

Based on the SWOT analysis, there are two alternative strategies that OC-VSO could adopt to improve its performance and the performance of the overall implementation system.

Opportunity-Strength Strategy

OC-VSO should take the additional funding boost from NYS-DVS to fund Legion-OC so both organizations can deliver services to veterans more efficiently.

Opportunity-Weakness Strategy

The OC-VSO should establish a formal relationship with VABuffalo to make the approval of disability benefits applications timelier.