

County of Riverside - Department of Veterans Services

Background

The Riverside County Board of Supervisors established the Department of Veterans Services in 1930. These services assist veterans, dependents and survivors with benefit counseling and claim preparation. The department also provides information and referral services for employment, medical services, public assistance and Social Security benefits.

Presently, there are 150,000 veterans residing in Riverside County. Approximately 10,000 people are assisted annually through appointments, walk-ins and telephone inquiries.

Transportation requirements within the county to and from the VA hospital have been secured with the Van-Express.

Findings

- 1.The Van-Express has limited occupancy due to its size.
- 2.Public transportation is one block from the Veterans Center on Spruce Street. Walking in the street or over a dirt path on this block is unsatisfactory for those with disabilities and in wheelchairs.
- 3.Veterans Services satellite facilities throughout the county operate with short hours and without telephones.
- 4.Parking at the Riverside Veterans Center has a limited number of spaces.
- 5.Veterans informational forums, while found quite beneficial, have not been held with any regularity.

Recommendations

Riverside County Board of Supervisors request the Director of Veterans Services submit a feasible plan to:

- 1.Obtain larger vans to accommodate more passengers.
- 2.Improve the accessibility and safety path to the Veterans Service Center.
- 3.Provide a telephone system linking satellite offices with the main office.

4. Increase the parking spaces at the Spruce Veterans Center.

5. Ensure that the veterans forums are held on a regular basis with adequate prior notification.