

THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Hon. Corey Johnson
Speaker of the Council

Hon. Chaim M. Deutsch
Chair, Committee on Veterans



Report of the Finance Division on the
Fiscal 2021 Preliminary Plan and the
Fiscal 2020 Preliminary Mayor's Management Report for the
Department of Veterans' Services

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Department of Veterans' Services Overview

Established by Local Law 113 of 2015, the Department of Veterans Services (DVS) is dedicated to improving the lives of New York City veterans and their families. DVS is currently in its fourth fiscal year of operations.

Program Areas



DVS' activities include:

- Expanding education and career opportunities for veterans through a network of public, private, and non-profit partners;
- Ensuring that veterans have access to the benefits, resources and services they need throughout the City;
- Cultivating an integrative health model to ensure the physical, mental and spiritual wellbeing of veterans and their families; and
- Connecting homeless veterans with permanent housing and support services.

DVS History

DVS was formed in Fiscal 2017, subsuming and replacing the smaller Mayor’s Office of Veteran’s Affairs (MOVA). To create DVS, existing resources for veterans’ services from various agencies along with new resources were combined to create the new agency. The first adopted budget for DVS arrived in Fiscal 2017, with a budget of approximately \$3.8 million and a total headcount of 33. Over the years, the Department continued to grow to a budget of \$6.8 million in Fiscal 2021. As of December 2019, the New York State Division of Veterans’ Affairs estimates there are 163,645 veterans living in New York City. By borough, the breakdown is 27.9 percent in Queens, 25 percent in Brooklyn, 19.7 percent in Manhattan, 16.9 percent in the Bronx, and 10.4 percent on Staten Island.

Fiscal 2021 Preliminary Budget Highlights

The Department of Veterans’ Services’ Fiscal 2021 Preliminary Budget totals \$6.7 million, including \$4.4 million in Personal Services (PS) funding to support 49 full-time positions. Approximately \$6.3 million or 95 percent of DVS’ Fiscal 2021 Budget is City tax-levy funding. State funding for DVS totals \$327,000 and represents the remaining five percent of the agency’s Fiscal 2021 Budget.

Figure 1

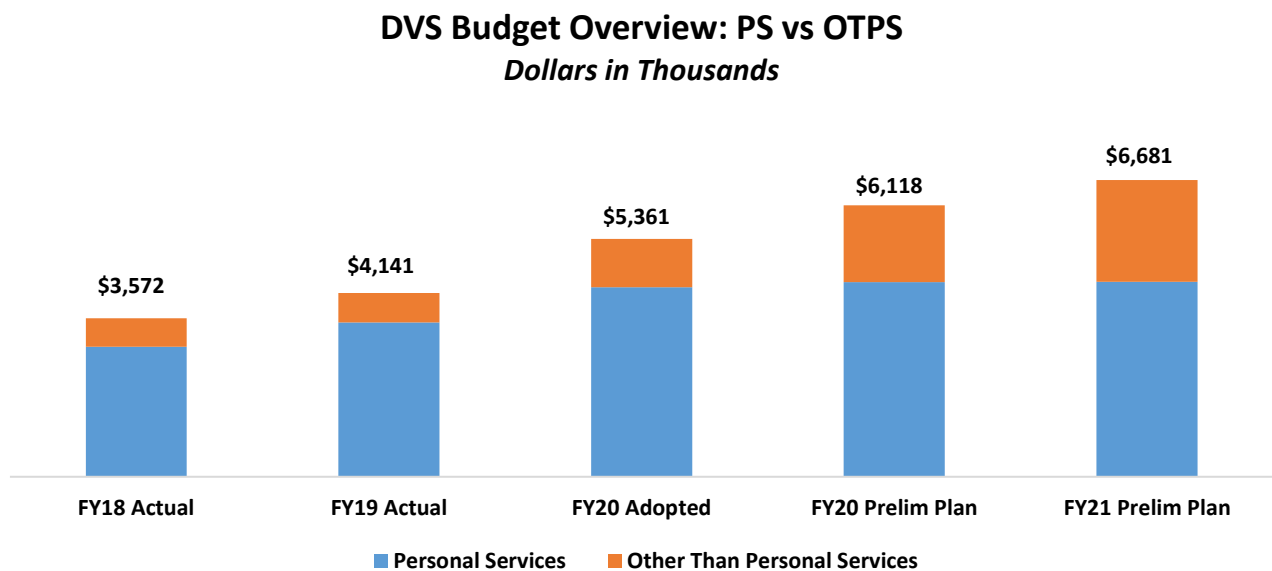


Figure 1 above highlights DVS’ budget since Fiscal 2018. DVS’ Fiscal 2021 Preliminary Budget is \$1.3 million greater than its Fiscal 2020 Budget at Adoption, mostly from a \$1.2 million increase in the Other Than Personal Services (OTPS) Budget. DVS’ PS Budget only grew by approximately \$129,000 to accommodate a cost of living increase and collective bargaining agreements.

Financial Plan Summary

Table 1

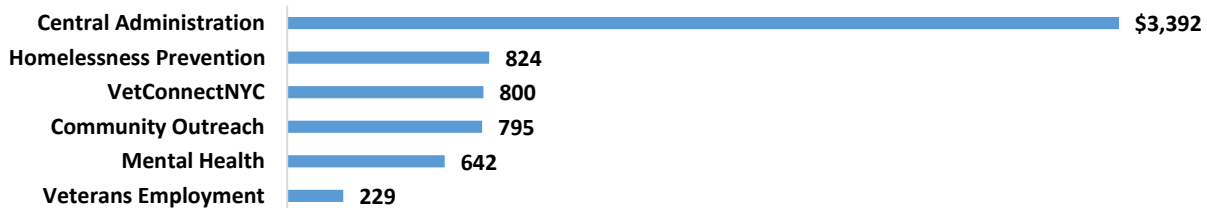
DVS Financial Summary <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>						
	FY18	FY19	FY20	Preliminary Plan		*Difference
	Actual	Actual	Adopted	FY20	FY21	FY20-FY21
Personal Services	\$2,932	\$3,476	\$4,266	\$4,388	\$4,395	\$128
Other Than Personal Services	640	665	1,095	1,730	2,288	1,192
TOTAL	\$3,572	\$4,141	\$5,361	\$6,119	\$6,682	\$1,321
Budget by Program Area						
Central Administration	\$1,790	\$2,080	\$2,200	\$2,896	\$3,392	\$1,192
Homelessness Prevention	589	722	817	819	824	\$6
Community Outreach	539	483	792	782	795	\$4
VetConnectNYC	22	229	710	771	800	\$90
Mental Health	631	615	637	643	642	\$6
Veterans Employment	1	12	206	206	229	\$23
TOTAL	\$3,572	\$4,141	\$5,361	\$6,119	\$6,682	\$1,321
Funding						
City Funds			\$5,034	\$5,704	\$6,355	\$1,321
State			327	415	327	0
TOTAL	\$3,572	\$4,141	\$5,361	\$6,119	\$6,682	\$1,321
Budgeted Headcount						
Full-Time Positions - Civilian	34	38	48	49	49	1
TOTAL	34	38	48	49	49	1

**The difference of Fiscal 2020 Adopted Budget compared to Fiscal 2021 Preliminary Budget.*

Table 1 above highlights the Department of Veterans’ Services budget and historical expenditures in greater detail. As noted above, DVS’ Fiscal 2021 Preliminary Budget is \$1.2 million larger than its Fiscal 2020 Adopted Budget due to growth in the Agency’s OTPS Budget. This growth is primarily due to adjustments in the OTPS budget as the agency develops and manages growth. Almost all of the OTPS increase comes from general supplies and materials. As DVS’ OTPS Budget has grown, its PS Budget has remained steady. The PS Budget change comes entirely from cost of living adjustments, along with the hiring of one additional position to help manage the VetConnectNYC contract and other related programming.

DVS FY21 Budget by Program Area

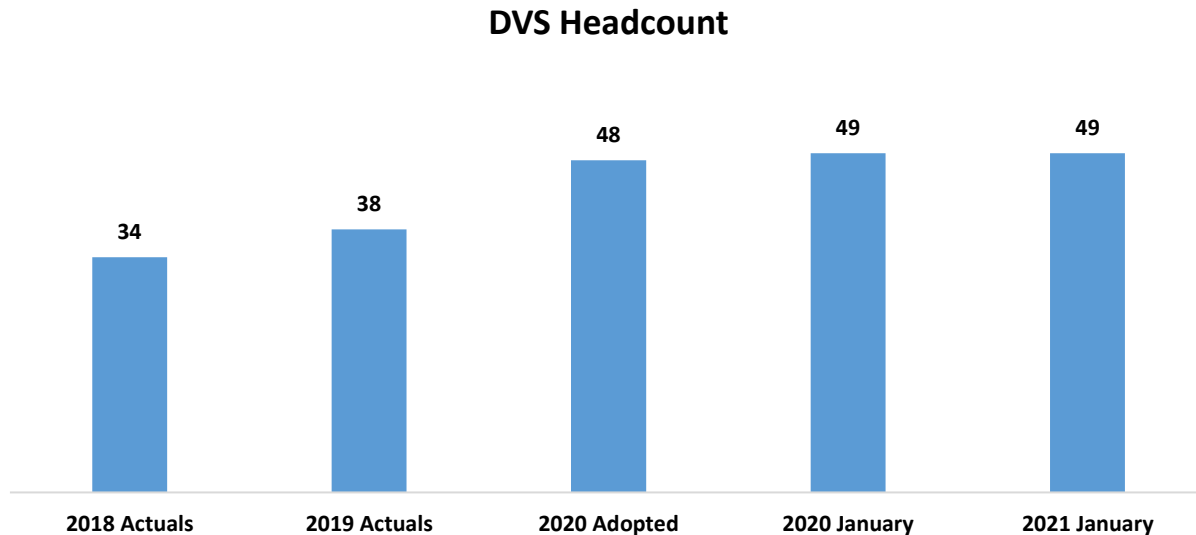
Dollars in Thousands



As shown in the Expense Budget table, DVS’ budget includes two units of appropriation, one for PS and one for OTPS. The Chart above presents a programmatic view of the agency’s budget. Categorizing resources by the functions they are used for creates a budget divided into Program Areas. The greatest share of the Agency’s resources is devoted to its Central Administration, which operates along with the Mental Health and Homeless Prevention divisions primarily from DVS’ main

office on 1 Centre Street. The Community Outreach division is focused on serving veterans from DVS' satellite offices, of which there is at least one in each borough. The majority of the DVS' OTPS Budget is allocated for the development and operation of VetConnectNYC, a City-owned digital portal that connects approximately 225,000 veterans and their families with a full range of care, services, and resources from a network of public, private, and non-profit partners, including the Federal Department of Veterans Affairs.

Headcount



The Department's Fiscal 2021 Preliminary Budget provides for \$4.4 million in Personal Services funding to support 49 full-time positions across four divisions (neither VetConnectNYC nor Veterans Employment are staffed). As of January 2020, the Department was operating with 38 active headcount and ten vacancies, translating to a 22 percent staff vacancy rate, as the agency continues to grow. Central Administration has 20 positions, followed by Community Outreach with 11 positions, Homelessness Prevention with ten positions, and Mental Health with eight positions.

Contract Budget

The Department of Veterans' Services has only two contracts with a value of \$764,000 in Fiscal 2021. The first is a \$514,000 professional computer services contract with Northwell Health designated for the development of the VetConnectNYC website. The website serves to ensure that all of a veteran's needs are properly defined prior to connecting with the most suitable service provider. VetConnectNYC was launched on Veterans Day in November 2018 and is managed by DVS, in partnership with Syracuse University's Institute for Veterans and Military Families, AmericaServes, Unite US, and Northwell Health. The contract for VetConnect with Northwell Health has been managed by the Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS), but it is transitioning to DVS. The other contract is with Payor Alliance for Veterans Employment LLC, a program aimed to increase veteran employment. This contract began on December 20, 2018 and ends on October 29, 2021. The contract was originally valued at \$675,000 over the three years, but the Fiscal 2021 Preliminary Plan increases the amount to approximately \$775,000. In Fiscal 2021 specifically, DVS is budgeted \$250,000, with another \$272,000 budgeted for Fiscal 2022 for Veterans Employment. As of February 2020, approximately \$200,000 has been spent on this contract.

Council Initiatives

The Council's Fiscal 2020 Veteran Services Initiatives total \$2.87 million to provide employment, housing, legal, and mental health services to veterans across the five boroughs. Created in Fiscal 2015, funding for the Council's Veterans Services Initiative has increased from \$400,000 in its first year to its current allocation. Services under the initiative are currently administered by several agencies.

Table 2

Managing Agency	Veteran Services Initiative	Fiscal 2015 Amount	Fiscal 2016 Amount	Fiscal 2017 Amount	Fiscal 2018 Amount	Fiscal 2019 Amount	Fiscal 2020 Amount
SBS	Job Placement for Veterans	\$100,000	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$200,000	\$200,000
HRA	Legal Services for Veterans	100,000	350,000	350,000	300,000	450,000	600,000
DOHMH	Mental Health Services for Veterans	100,000	190,000	150,000	225,000	420,000	500,000
DYCD/ DCLA/ CUNY	Veterans Community Development	100,000	100,000	390,000	515,000	970,000	1,270,000
HRA	Homeless Prevention Services for Veterans	0	150,000	300,000	150,000	300,000	300,000
TOTALS		\$400,000	\$940,000	\$1,340,000	\$1,340,000	\$2,340,000	\$2,870,000

Fiscal 2020 Designated Community-Based Organizations

For Fiscal 2020, 24 community-based organizations were designated by the Council to provide services to the City's veterans. Those organizations are listed below.

Table 3

Initiative	Agency	Organization	Fiscal 2020 Amount
Job Placement for Veterans	SBS	Helmets to Hardhats, NYC	\$200,000
Legal Services for Veterans	HRA	Association of the Bar of the City of New York Fund, Inc. d/b/a City Bar Justice Center	30,000
Legal Services for Veterans	HRA	Legal Information for Families Today (LIFT)	55,000
Legal Services for Veterans	HRA	Legal Services NYC	150,000
Legal Services for Veterans	HRA	New York Legal Assistance Group, Inc.	175,000
Legal Services for Veterans	HRA	Services And Advocacy For Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual And Transgender Elders, Inc.	100,000
Legal Services for Veterans	HRA	Urban Justice Center	90,000
Mental Health Services for Veterans	DOHMH	Community Healthcare Network	110,000
Mental Health Services for Veterans	DOHMH	Samaritan Daytop Village	130,000
Mental Health Services for Veterans	DOHMH	New York University – Military Family Clinic	175,000
Mental Health Services for Veterans	DOHMH	Yeshiva University – Care Café	85,000
Veterans Community Development	DYCD	Bailey House, Inc.	40,000
Veterans Community Development	DYCD	Bicentennial Veterans Memorial Park, Inc.	100,000
Veterans Community Development	DYCD	Black Veterans for Social Justice, Inc.	70,000
Veterans Community Development	CUNY	City University of New York	250,000

Initiative	Agency	Organization	Fiscal 2020 Amount
Veterans Community Development	DYCD	Giving Alternative Learners Uplifting Opportunities, Inc.	85,000
Veterans Community Development	DCLA	Intrepid Museum Foundation	90,000
Veterans Community Development	DYCD	Jericho Project	315,000
Veterans Community Development	DYCD	Josephine Herrick Project, Inc.	20,000
Veterans Community Development	DYCD	Row New York	80,000
Veterans Community Development	DYCD	Soldiers', Sailors', Marines', and Airmen's Club	25,000
Veterans Community Development	DCLA	Theatre Development Fund, Inc.	135,000
Veterans Community Development	DYCD	United Military Veterans of Kings County, Inc.	60,000
Homeless Prevention Services for Veterans	HRA	Project Renewal, Inc.	300,000
TOTAL			\$2,870,000

Preliminary Mayor's Management Report

The Department of Veterans' Services was included for the second time in the Preliminary Mayor's Management Report (PMMR). The 2020 PMMR was released in February 2020. Given that DVS is only in its fourth year of operation, the PMMR does not include significant historical metrics. In addition, there are no targets for upcoming fiscal years. It is the aim of the Council for DVS to include targets in the MMR once sufficient data has been accumulated.

DVS PMMR Indicators

Table 4

DVS Performance Indicators	Actual			Target		4-Month Actual	
	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY19	FY20
Homeless veterans who received housing through DVS Vet Peer Coordinator program	NA	169	158	*	*	59	91
Veterans receiving homelessness prevention assistance from DVS	NA	466	438	*	*	152	176
Veterans and their families engaged by DVS	NA	12,099	12,896	*	*	1,977	2,593
Veterans and their families given assistance to access resources	NA	3,230	3,087	*	*	1,013	1,446

Veterans Advisory Board

The New York City Veterans Advisory Board (VAB) advises the Administration on all matters concerning veterans. The VAB meets quarterly, comprised of 11 volunteer veterans from the five boroughs, and submits annual reports to the Mayor and the Speaker. Its primary task is to advise the Commissioner of Veterans Services on all matters concerning Veterans. There is no dedicated funding allocated to the VAB in the Department's budget.

Appendix

A: Budget Actions in the November and the Preliminary Plans

<i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	FY20			FY21		
	City	Non-City	Total	City	Non-City	Total
DVS Budget as of the Adopted 2020 Budget	\$5,034	\$327	\$5,361	\$5,086	\$327	\$5,413
New Needs						
Holistic Services	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$150	\$0	\$150
Job Path	250	0	250	250	0	250
Legal Services Contract Funding	200	0	200	500	0	500
OTPS Funding	103	0	103	270	0	270
Survey Assessment	64	0	64	0	0	0
VetConnectNYC Program Manager	45	0	45	90	0	90
Subtotal, New Needs	\$662	\$0	\$662	\$1,260	\$0	\$1,260
Other Adjustments						
Collective Bargaining	\$8	\$0	\$8	\$9	\$0	\$9
DVS State Grant	0	88	88	0	0	0
Subtotal, Other Adjustments	\$9	\$88	\$96	\$9	\$0	\$9
Citywide Savings						
Subtotal, Citywide Savings	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
TOTAL, All Changes	\$671	\$88	\$759	\$1,269	\$0	\$1,269
DVS Budget as of the Preliminary 2021 Budget	\$5,704	\$415	\$6,119	\$6,355	\$327	\$6,682