UTAH DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS & MILITARY AFFAIRS

APRIL 2026

Commissioner: Gary Harter
Deputy Director, Facilities: Jeff Hanson
Deputy Director, Military Affairs: Brian Garrett
Deputy Director, Veteran Services: Cory Pearson

MISSION

The Utah Department of Veterans & Military Affairs serves Veterans, current service members and their families by opening doors to benefits, education and jobs.

We advocate for Utah's military installations and defense sector.

ECONOMIC IMPACT

(Source: Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute, 2024)

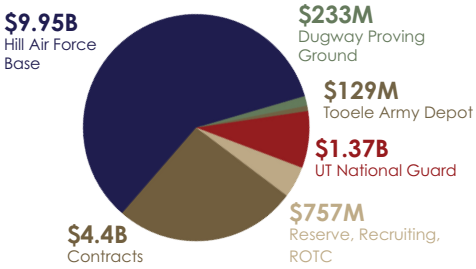
TOTAL ECONOMIC IMPACT

$22.2B Economic Activity
7.8% Share of State GDP
173,713 Supported Jobs

VETERANS ECONOMIC IMPACT

$4.5B Economic Activity
38,249 Supported Jobs

MILITARY ECONOMIC IMPACT



VETERANS

1,021 World War II

3,684 Korean War

38,430 Vietnam War

14,096 Cold War/Peacetime

70,932 Current Conflict

129,783 Total Veterans

91% **9%**

(Source: National Center for Veterans Analysis, 2023)

VETERAN UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

3.5% State of Utah **3.0%** Veterans

(Source: Utah DWS, Feb 2026)

CURRENT EFFORTS

SUPPORTING *GOVERNOR'S "BUILT HERE"* PRIORITIES

SALT LAKE VETERANS HOME REPLACEMENT

NORTHERN UTAH VETERANS CEMETERY

RURAL VETERANS OUTREACH

MILITARY & VETERAN FAMILY PROGRAMS

MILITARY INSTALLATION RESILIENCY
- **Encroachment, Energy, UAS**
- **Great Salt Lake Sentinel Landscape**

UTAH IS BEST PLACE TO PERFORM MILITARY MISSIONS

TRANSITION EXCELLENCE CENTER

SUICIDE PREVENTION EFFORTS

FOCUSED COMMUNICATIONS & LEVERAGING TECHNOLOGY
- **Veterans Business Registry**
- **E-Newsletter**
- **Veterans.utah.gov & Military.utah.gov**

MILITARY

ARMY		**8,564**
	Active Duty	164
	National Guard	6,128
	Reserves	2,393
AIR FORCE		**6,940**
	Active Duty	4,115
	National Guard	1,469
	Reserves	1,347
NAVY		**390**
	Active Duty	31
	Reserves	370
MARINES		**247**
	Active Duty	127
	Reserves	109
SPACE FORCE		**1**
	Active Duty	1
COAST GUARD		**5**
	Active Duty	5
Active Duty		4,443
National Guard		7,597
Reserves		4,219
Civilians		15,195
		31,454

VA BENEFITS & HEALTHCARE

HEALTHCARE

82,360 Unique Patients
VA Salt Lake City Health Care System

695,144 Outpatient visits (FY2025)

COMPENSATION & PENSION

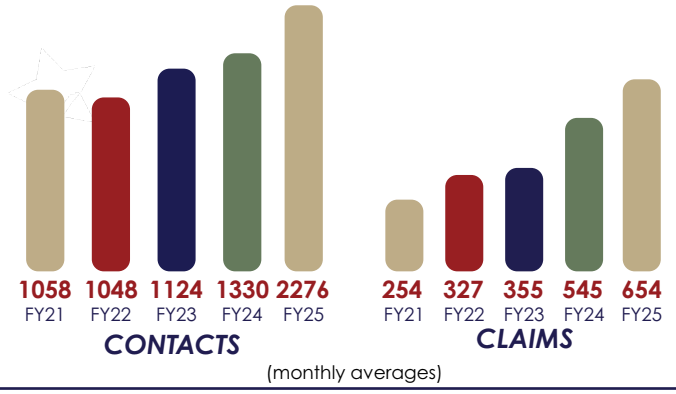
$959M Compensation & Benefits

41,874 (FY2024) UT Veterans w/ a Service Connected Disability

17% Increase in Veterans' compensation from 2023-2026

(Source: National Center for Veterans Analysis and Statistics, FY2025; VA Salt Lake City Health Care, FY2023))

VETERANS OUTREACH & SERVICES



NURSING HOMES & CEMETERY

VETERANS HOMES

95% Occupancy
381 Veterans
16 Family Member
397 Total Residents

800 Employees
$64M Expenditures

CEMETERY Interments

499 FY25
504 FY24
494 FY23

Casket to Cremains **50:50**
Veterans to Spouses **70:30**

PROGRAMS & PARTNERSHIPS

VETERAN BUSINESS RESOURCE CENTER

PARTNERSHIP WITH SLCC

2,397 Individuals supported
840 Jobs created

MILITARY FAMILY SUPPORT TEAM

PARTNERSHIP WITH DAVIS, WEBER, OGDEN, & TOOELE SCHOOL DISTRICTS

800+ Families and students supported
13,000 Participants in Mo. of MC events
2,500 Teachers trained in MC needs

GREAT SALT LAKE SENTINEL LANDSCAPE

FEDERAL, STATE, & LOCAL PARTNERSHIP TO PROTECT MILITARY MISSIONS & CONSERVATION

2.7M Total area in acres
1,700 Sq miles of protected environment

PURPLE STAR SCHOOLS

PARTNERSHIP WITH UTAH STATE OFFICE OF EDUCATION

180 Purple Star Schools in Utah
79 New schools added in 2026

FIRST-TIME HOMEBUYER GRANT

PARTNERSHIP WITH UTAH HOUSING AUTHORITY

52% to currently serving
48% to veterans
244 Grants awarded

GOVERNOR'S CHALLENGE TO PREVENT SUICIDE

PARTNERSHIP WITH SAMHSA, VA, & UTAH DHHS

1,526 Gun safes to SMVF
2200+ Mission Ready Resource Fair

HIGHER EDUCATION SUPPORT

STATE APPROVING AGENCY AND USHE

8,853 GI Bill® beneficiaries
302 Institutions & Apprenticeships
11 Veterans support centers

UTAH STATE PARKS VETERANS PASSES

PARTNERSHIP WITH UTAH STATE PARKS

8,500 Honor Passes distributed in 2025
1,600 Veterans Park Pass Pilot Program

ACCELERATED CREDENTIALING TO EMPLOYMENT (ACE)

PARTNERSHIP WITH UTAH DWS

220 Employment placements in '25
181 Obtained licenses in '25
251 Individuals in training

NATIONAL ABILITY CENTER MILITARY & VETERANS PROGRAMS

1,709 Veteran/Military participants (FY25)
12,660 Total experiences

GRIT

Partners
GOPB | LFA | VMA

- **Prepare Veterans Through Education of Benefits**
- **Match VSO Supply to Veteran Demand**
- **Promote and Invest in Success**

Oct 2025 - Jan 2026 GRIT Eval Process Started
Jan 2026 Report & Implementation Start

UTAH@EASE

PRO BONO LEGAL SUPPORT
PARTNERSHIP WITH AG'S OFFICE AND UTAH BAR

1,703 Veterans inquired
1,167 Veterans supported
76 Attoneys in program