

# 2024 Critical Needs Veterans Services

**Pete Carey**  
**Executive Director**  
**Justice Services**  
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# Department's Strategic Plan Goals

- The El Paso County Veterans Service Office is responsible for assisting residents of the State of Colorado who served honorably in the United States Armed Forces.
- The primary purpose of the office is to provide personalized local service to veterans, survivors and their dependents concerning Veterans Affairs benefits.



# Department's Operating Indicators

- El Paso County is home to over 100,000 Veterans and Family members.
- Veterans Services conducts 6,000 – 8,000 client contacts per month.
- Veterans who use El Paso County Veterans Services average over \$20,000 annually in Disability Compensation.
- Veterans who do not use our office average less than \$10,000 annually.
- Veterans in El Paso County have received over \$500,000 in retro-active payments so far in 2023.



# Department's Operating Indicators

Prompt and efficient service is defined by The Department of Military & Veterans Affairs (DMVA) and the Colorado Division of Veterans Affairs (CDVA) by the following:

- No more than a two-week wait time for a veteran to meet with a Veteran Service Officer.
- No more than a two-business days delay in responding to any inquiry.

The wait time for assistance from the El Paso County Veterans Services currently extends to over six weeks, due to high demand from veterans and their family members.



# Budgetary Highlights

## 2023 Process Improvements Leading to Office Efficiencies:

1. Veterans Services front desk staff are now trained to schedule Veteran Service Officer (VSO's) appointments accurately.
2. VSO's have increased their daily appointment capacity by one.  
(from 5 to 6 Appointments Daily, per VSO)
3. Benefits Delivered before Discharge (BDD) claims are now scheduled exclusively for El Paso County Colorado Veterans.
4. 18 claims clinics have been conducted specifically for the PACT Act.
5. 2 additional claims clinics were conducted for standard claims.
6. A 3-day PACT Act Clinic was held in August, serving nearly 1,200 Veterans.



# Critical Needs and Justification

- The PACT Act has substantially increased the Veterans Services workload, wait times increased from 3-4 weeks to over 6 weeks.
- El Paso County Strategic Goal #2.
- Adding three more Associate VSO's will reduce wait times closer to the two-week recommendation, thereby improving customer service and increasing positive outcomes for El Paso County veterans.
- Delays in VA claims can lead veterans to file on their own, risking incomplete claims and financial loss. Consulting a County VSO improves odds of success.
- An additional VSO will be assigned to Mt. Carmel, complementing the two existing VSOs at the Veterans Services Main office.



# Base Budget & Critical Needs

<u>Description</u>	<u>2024- Base Budget</u>	<u>2024- Critical Needs/Requests</u>	<u>2024- PBB</u>
Pretrial Services	\$ 820,165		\$ 820,165
Justice Services	\$ 333,563		\$ 333,563
Veteran Services	\$ 800,640	\$ 208,169	\$ 1,008,809
<b>Justice Services-GF</b>	<b>\$ 1,954,368</b>	<b>\$ 208,169</b>	<b>\$ 2,162,537</b>

## Funding Request 2024

### On Going:

- Associate VSO's 3 FTEs - \$193,883

### One time:

- Set up for employees-\$14,286





**Questions?**