



# COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE OFFICE

August 2024

## BENEFITS AWARDED

\$733,259.60

## SCHEDULED APPOINTMENTS

137

## WALK-IN CLIENTS

442

## CLAIMS FILED

122 Auditable

484 Total

## MEDI-CAL VERIFICATIONS

5

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

July brought some challenges to The San Francisco CVSO as we had to manage our staffing due to two Claims Representatives being out on extended leave. However, this did not significantly affect our ability to serve our clients as our volume of scheduled appointments decreased by only 8.1%, from 149 in June to 137 in July. Our total claims filed also did not decrease significantly with a 9.7% decrease from June to July, from 536 to 484. While auditable claims filed decreased more significantly from June to July, from 178 to 122, or 31.5%, we don't have much control over this since we don't dictate what clients come in for. However, this figure seems to correlate with having fewer Claims Representatives available.

The greatest impact of our staffing challenges was having to temporarily put on hold our San Francisco VA Medical Center Outstation just weeks after the newly renovated Veterans Welcome Center, where our office is located, (re)opened. However, working with the SF VAMC Business Services team we mitigated the significant impact this closure could have had by providing messaging to Veterans in advance of the closure. Our new office in the Welcome Center is a welcome relief to the temporary conference room space we occupied during the renovation, and our ability to be in the same space as the SF VAMC business lines of service, including Member Services, Travel, and





the MyHealthVet program, among others, will allow Veterans to be served in a more holistic manner.

Separately, the sign-in process for our outstation at the SF VAMC continues to provide challenges due to the need to balance competing factors such as the ease of use for our clients, with capturing data needed for improving processes. We currently use a two-step sign-in process with a third, manual process, as a backup. The manual sign-in is used if we do not have support from our Work Study student, who assists clients with signing in via a QR code and via our internal program, VetPro, which allows us to capture wait times. We hope that Veterans understand our need to balance these two competing needs, and we will continue to work with the SF VAMC as well as San Francisco Human Services Agency IT and Planning to identify improved sign-in processes at the Welcome Center.

July was a slow month for outreach. Towards the end of June, we attended an orientation for the new Veterans Welcome Center at the SF VAMC, which included team members from a variety of the business service lines that will have office space in the Center. The goal of this orientation was to introduce the different services to each other so that we can be more knowledgeable about what each program does to improve the quality of service to our Veterans and ensure a better experience when directing a Veteran to another service. We also attended the Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony at the Welcome Center in July.

## SUCCESS STORIES

A Veteran this office has been assisting since 2015 was recently granted a retroactive payment of almost \$82,000 for a claim dating back to October 2017, and ongoing monthly payments of \$1,716 based on the 70% disability rate. The Veteran was previously denied for all conditions except for a single, non-compensable rating, in May 2017. With the expertise that Elvira Flaviano has with appeals to the Board of Veterans Appeals, she guided the Veteran through the process to respond to the Statement of the Case and submit necessary forms, along with guidance on the evidence needed to support the claim. The Veteran chose to have a virtual hearing, and the outcome was the Board remanded the claims back to the Regional Office that had jurisdiction for additional development for new Compensation and Pension examinations. As a result, the VA granted all the Veteran's previously denied conditions.





As long as a claim is continuously pursued, meaning that any appeal is filed in a timely manner, the Veteran can maintain the initial effective date of the claim.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

August 13 the CVSO will provide an in-service to a not-for-profit caregiver support organization serving six Bay Area counties on VA Pension benefits and Aid and Attendance.

Also on August 13, the CVSO will provide a presentation to the Vets In Tech Technology Training Program on CVSO services, VA benefits, and the claims process.

August 27 and 28 the CVSO will provide presentations to new and returning City College of San Francisco student Veterans on CVSO services, VA benefits and the claims process, in addition to providing a claims clinic each day. The claims clinic will be by sign-up each day on a first-come, first-served basis.

