



COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE OFFICE

May 2024

BENEFITS AWARDED

\$508,628.47

SCHEDULED APPOINTMENTS

182

WALK-IN CLIENTS

412

CLAIMS FILED

179 Auditable
611 Total

MEDI-CAL VERIFICATIONS

26

ANNOUNCEMENTS

April 2024 was a slower month for walk-in clients with a noticeable decrease of 335 clients, or 37.81%, from March. However, appointments were nearly the same as in March, with only five fewer in April. It is not clear what drove this sharp decrease in walk-in clients, but one factor may have been an increased amount of leave used by team members during the month. Another consideration is that March was just a busier month for walk-in clients.

The decrease in walk-in clients was juxtaposed with a noticeable increase in auditable claims filed, which are claims the State includes in its calculation of funding to CVSOs. Auditable claims increased from 155 to 179, a 14.37% increase. The total number of claims processed decreased slightly from 628 to 611 total, a 2.71% decrease.

There was a decrease of 31.8% in benefits awarded, from \$745,782 in March to \$508,628 in April. This might also be due to the increased amount of leave taken by team members, which left less time to post awards, which is what we do when we identify a claim has been awarded. Alternatively, there may have simply been a lower dollar amount of benefits awarded in April, meaning that fewer large retroactive payments were granted.





Medi-Cal Cost Avoidance Workload units, which are the verifications we do for Veterans in receipt of or applying for MediCal/IHSS, CalFresh, and General Assistance, decreased by 16.13% from 31 to 26.

Notable in April was the outreach event that the CVSO attended along with our Dept. of Disability and Aging Services Benefit and Resources Hub counterpart programs: Eligibility, Coordinated Intake, and IPAC, at the Golden State Warriors Hoops for Troops Veterans Wellness Fair inside Chase Center. Although it was a rainy day, we were able to talk to about 15-20 participants and make three appointments for Veterans to discuss filing claims.

I also had the opportunity to speak to graduating and recently graduated SFUSD students about the CA College Fee Waiver as part of a presentation hosted by K2C, which helps kickstart college funding for all SFUSD and public SF charter school students.

SUCCESS STORIES

A Veteran working with this office since March 2023 was granted 100% permanent and total disability compensation in April after his claim for new conditions and supplemental claim for previously denied conditions related to multiple deployments to Iraq, Afghanistan, and Guantanamo Bay were granted. This led to retroactive payments totaling over \$40K as the Veteran previously had no disability rating after being denied for service-connected disability in 2009. This grant also resulted in ongoing monthly benefit payments of \$4,400 per month, which includes dependent benefits for his spouse and four minor children. Veterans Claims Representative Gerardo Carr worked with the Veteran, who was referred to this office from his CA National Guard unit, to identify his physical and mental health conditions related to his two decades of military service, and complete the appropriate forms, including a form to help the VA identify and request private treatment records. He assisted the Veteran in walking him through the claims process, including informing him about what to expect during the Compensation and Pension Examination.

Working with Veterans requires building trust, especially when the Veteran's mental health condition(s) make him or her distrustful. Sitting down with a SF CVSO Claims Representative can lead to a successful claim process because of the one-on-one attention, knowledge, and rapport our Representatives provide. This Mental Health Awareness Month, I would like to commend our Veterans Claims Representatives for the work they do to improve the outcomes for Veterans in their claims for disability benefits related to mental health and for their encouragement of Veterans to seek mental health treatment for improved quality of life.





UPCOMING EVENTS

May 18 the SF CVSO will be participating in the Homeownership SF San Francisco Housing Expo along with other Dept. of Disability and Aging Services programs to discuss Federal and State Veterans benefits with an emphasis on the VA home loan guarantee, the CalVet Home Loan program, and the CA property tax exemption for 100% permanent and total disabled Veterans or their surviving spouses. This is the 10th year that Homeownership SF has held this annual event, which “showcase(s) the City’s affordable housing programs and provide information and resources for San Francisco tenants, current homeowners, and first-time homebuyers.”

