



# EATON COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE OFFICE

## ANNUAL REPORT 2020

*The Eaton County Veterans Service Office is committed to providing services and assistance to those distinguished men and women who have honorably served and protected our country. It is our privilege to ensure veterans are informed of, and receive, all the benefits to which they and their dependents are entitled.*

## INTRODUCTION

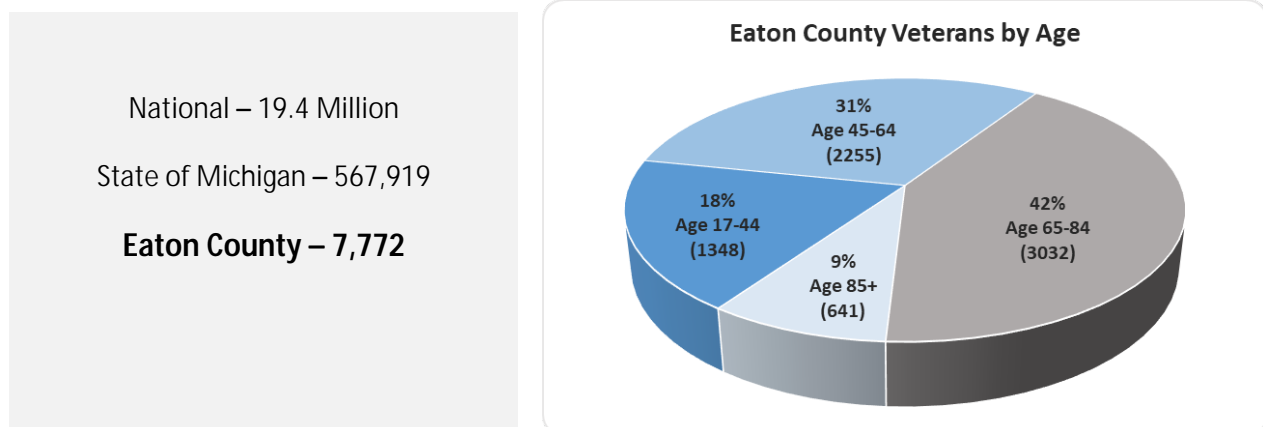
Veterans of the U.S. Armed forces are entitled to certain benefits that reflect the pride and gratitude our country has for its veterans. The Eaton County Veterans Service Officer is an advocate for the veterans and their dependents who reside in Eaton County. Staff provides assistance to veterans and their dependents regarding compensation, pension, medical, educational, insurance and death benefits. Veterans and their dependents are also assisted in obtaining important documentation they need to apply for benefits.

On October 1, 2008 Eaton County began employing a Veterans Service Officer to assist veterans in obtaining benefits they may be eligible for from the Veterans Administration. Prior to this time, Ingham County provided these services through a contract agreement. From October of 2008 through September 30, 2013 part-time staff fulfilled these duties. The position was made full time by the Board of Commissioners effective October 1, 2013.

Department Staff: Mr. Thomas Lewis has served as the County Veterans Service Officer since March of 2012. Ms. Claudine Williams is the Director of Community Development and Housing which oversees the Veterans Service Office.

## VETERAN POPULATION

Veteran population estimates are produced by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Predictive Analytics and Actuary Service.



## GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION OF VA EXPENDITURES (GDX)

Federal Benefits information is obtained from the GDX, which is provided annually by the VA. The GDX report provides the estimated dollar expenditure for major VA programs at the state, county and Congressional District Levels. Among the 83 counties in Michigan, Eaton County ranks 59<sup>th</sup> in per capita expenditures in the state for the calendar year 2020 at \$7,772 per veteran. The highest per capita average is Dickinson County at \$24,322 and the lowest is Leelanau County at \$5,697. Other counties with similar population sizes range from 39<sup>th</sup> to 69<sup>th</sup>.

	EATON COUNTY									
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Veteran Population	8,340	8,577	8,388	8,545	8,357	7,226	7,041	6,857	6,676	7,276
VA Expenditures	\$27,651,000	\$30,202,000	\$36,818,000	\$41,799,000	\$43,747,000	\$48,179,000	\$47,571,000	\$48,461,000	\$56,047,000	\$56,555,000
State Ranking Per Capita	66	62	61	63	62	43	51	48	43	59
Per Capita Expenditure	\$3,315.47	\$3,521.28	\$4,389.37	\$4,891.63	\$5,234.77	\$6,667.45	\$6,756.28	\$7,067.38	\$8,395.14	\$7,772.00

## EATON COUNTY DETAILED EXPENDITURES

The Eaton County Veterans Service Officer is responsible for assisting service members, dependents and survivors, in exploring and receiving VA benefits in which they are entitled. This includes, but is not limited to VA disability compensation, non-service connected/survivor's pension and burial assistance. The information below was obtained from the VA, National Center for Veterans Analysis and Statistics.

### 2020 VA Expenditures in Eaton County

The total amount of money the VA disbursed to or spent on Veterans and their dependents in Eaton County in 2020 was **\$56,555,000**.

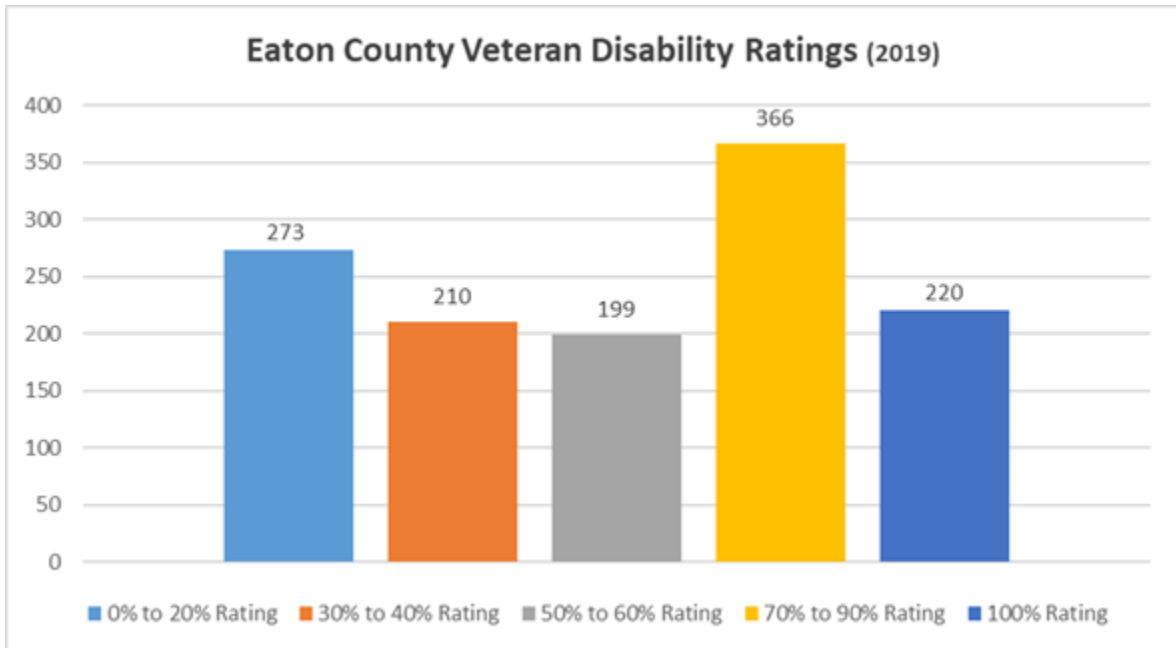
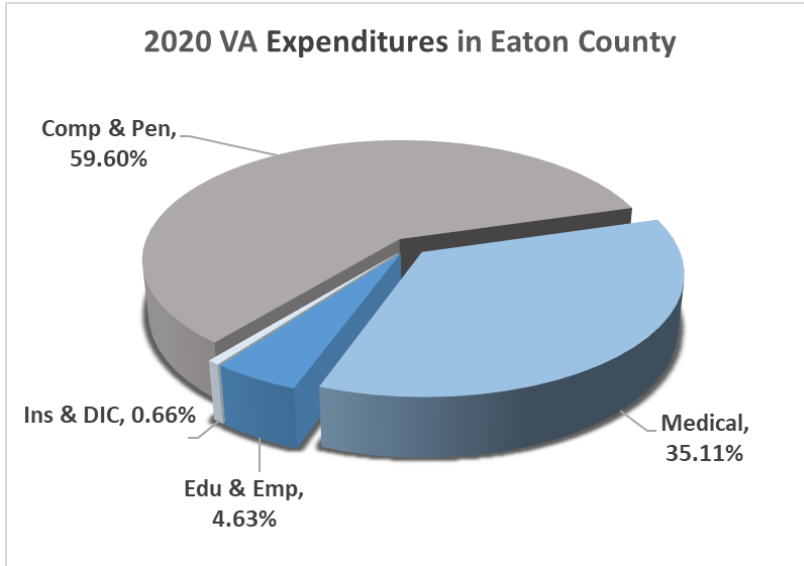
Compensation and pension \$33,706,000

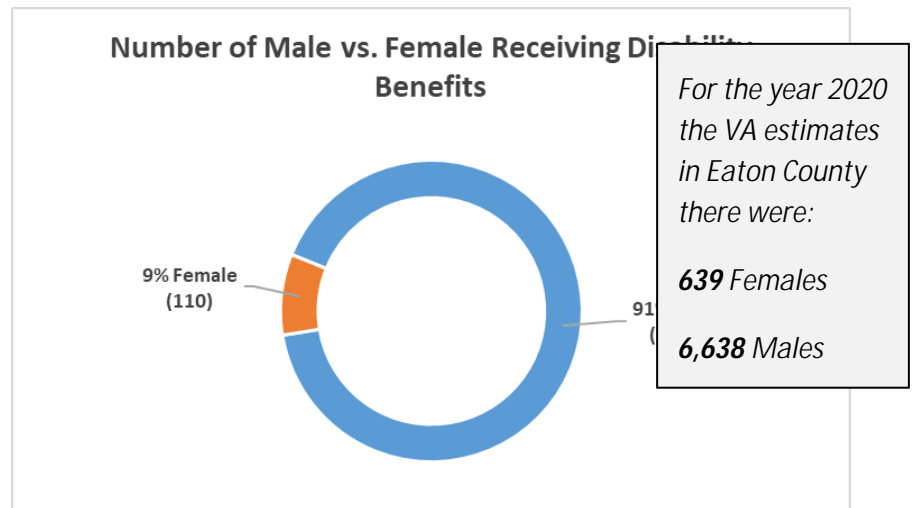
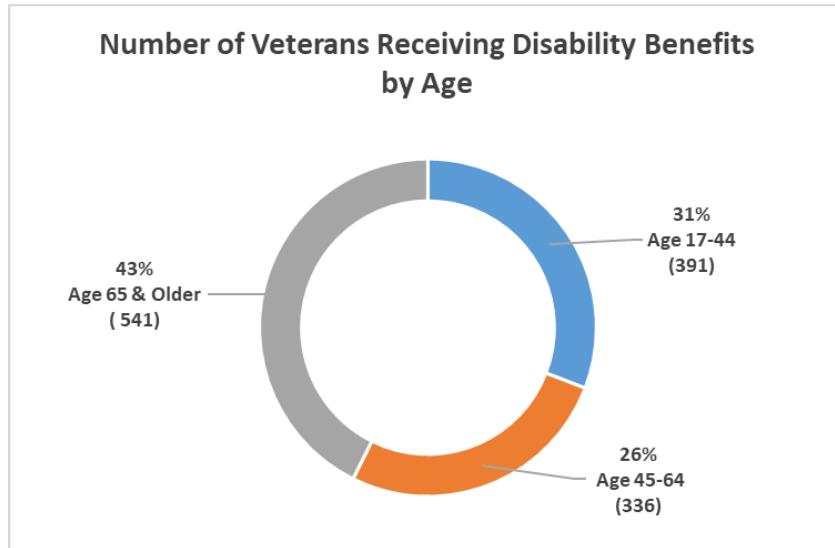
Medical \$19,859,000

Education, vocational rehab & employment  
\$2,617,000

Insurance & DIC \$373,000

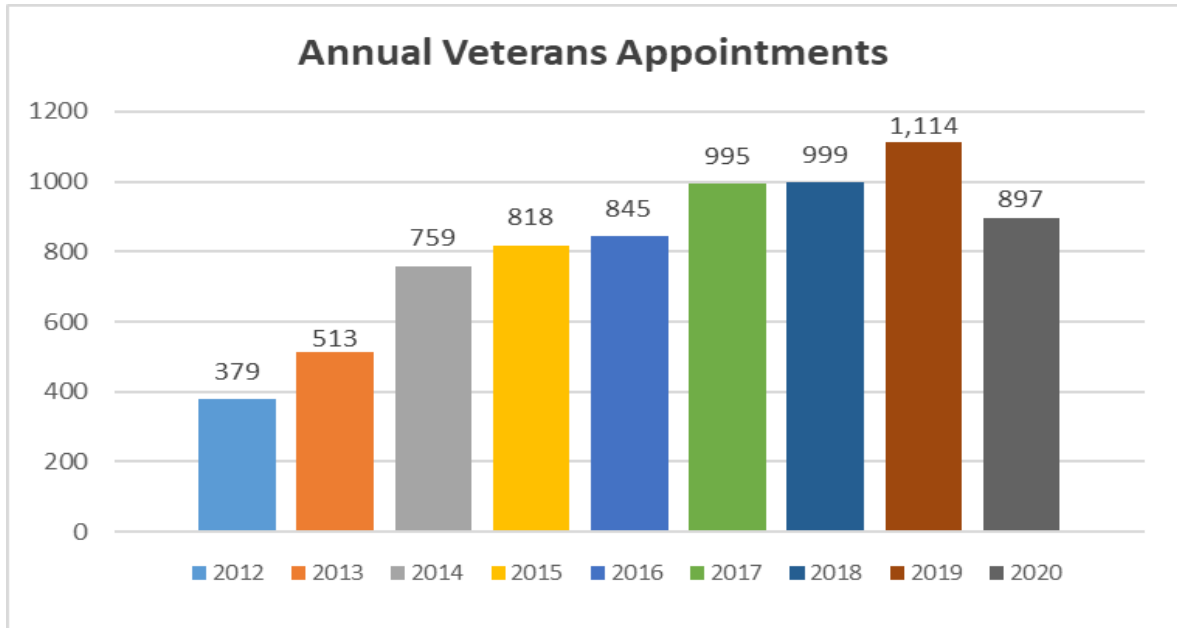
This creates an annual average of **\$7,772** per veteran.





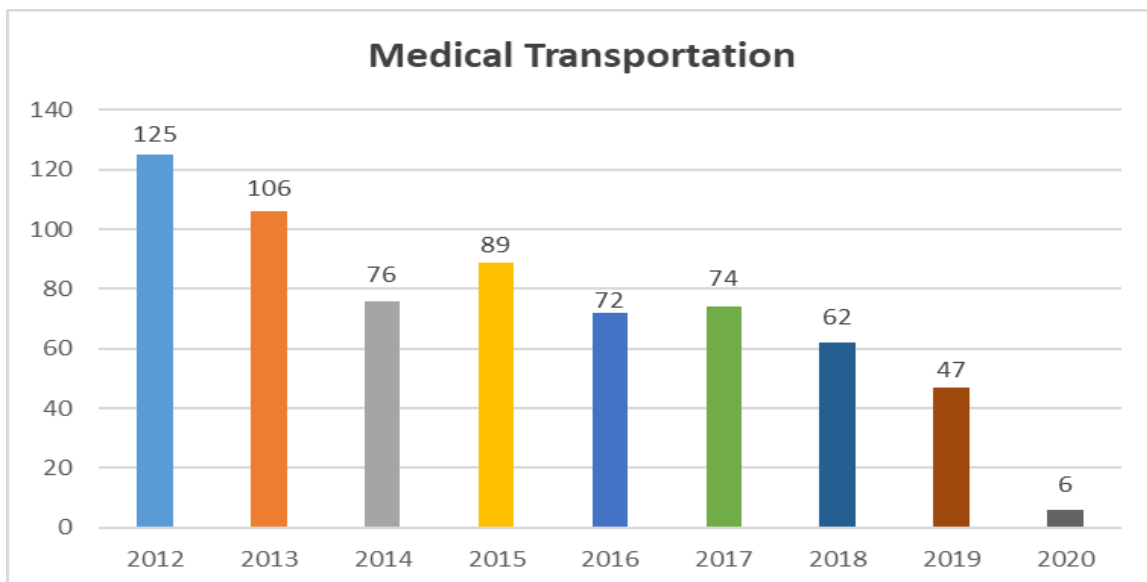
## VETERANS SERVICE OFFICER APPOINTMENTS

The Veterans Service Officer met with 897 veterans in the year 2020. On average, this is 75 persons per month that were either met with in person or electronically via the phone or computer. The Department did see a drop in the number of appointments in 2020, most likely due to the coronavirus pandemic.



### MEDICAL TRANSPORTATION

Transportation to and from the VA Hospital in Ann Arbor is provided to Eaton County Veterans. This is possible due to a very dedicated group of volunteers who transport the veterans in a county owned vehicle. Below are the last few year’s statistics on this provided service. Staff assumes the decline in ridership is most likely due to the coronavirus pandemic.



### COUNTY VETERAN SERVICE FUND (CVSF) GRANT

Eaton County received a CVFS grant from the Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency for up to \$75,465.91, which was awarded in March of 2020 with an end date of September 30, 2020. Due to delays at the State of Michigan, funding was not awarded in October 2019 as planned. This reduced the expenditure period of the grant from 12 months to 6 months. This combined with the

coronavirus pandemic reduced the expenditures the Department had planned for. The total amount spent was \$8,432.25. Office equipment was purchased for \$3,708.31, two veterans were assisted with eviction prevention for \$3,000 and eleven families received grocery store vouchers for a total amount of \$1,723.94.

The State of Michigan's fiscal year 2021 CVSF grant was awarded for up to \$59,634.90 and is effective from October 1, 2020 through September 30, 2021. The grant application was approved for the addition of a Veterans Service part-time administrative assistance, eviction and foreclosure prevention, and emergency grocery store vouchers. The hiring of new staff was delayed until 2021 due to the coronavirus pandemic and the work from home orders in place.

## MICHIGAN VETERANS DATA

### Michigan's Veteran Population (from GDX 2020) **567,919 veterans**

- Ranked **11** of 53 in veteran population among states and territories
- Ranked **49** of 53 in veteran expenditures per veteran among states and territories

### VA Average Federal Expenditure Per Veteran in Michigan

