



# Luzerne County Veteran Affairs

# Overview

- ▶ The Veteran Affairs Office provides vital assistance to Luzerne County's 22,000 Veterans and their dependents
- ▶ The office has a staff of four which includes three Veteran Service Officers accredited by the US Department of Veteran Affairs to assist claimants with all benefit applications administered by the VA

# Benefits

- ▶ Disability Compensation for veterans injured during active duty military service
- ▶ Wartime Pensions which provide financial assistance for veterans and their dependents to guarantee a minimum income.
  - ▶ Most commonly awarded to help pay for extraordinary medical expenses such as assisted living and in-home health care
- ▶ VA Home Loan Guarantee Program
- ▶ GI Bill Educational Benefits
- ▶ Life Insurance
- ▶ Benefits provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Military and Veteran Affairs such as Real Estate Property Tax Exemption and Emergency Assistance for Veterans who have experience an unexpected financial hardship

# Other Benefits

- ▶ Burial and Funeral Assistance
  - Federal Government Issued Headstones
  - Federal Burial Benefits (up to \$2,000)
- ▶ Cemetery Flags and Flag Holders
  - State Statute
- ▶ County Burial Benefits
  - \$100.00 for Wartime Veterans and their widows

# Performance Statistics

- ▶ In Fiscal Year 2020-2021, Luzerne County Veteran Affairs was successful in obtaining \$3,508,531.00 in new monetary benefits for Disability Compensation and Wartime Pensions
  - This yearly amount is both recurring and cumulative; and, it contributes to the total annual VA expenditure in Luzerne County
  - <https://www.dmva.pa.gov/veteransaffairs/Pages/Programs%20and%20Services/Monthly-Claims-Award-Reports.aspx>
- ▶ The total annual VA expenditure for these two programs in Luzerne County for the most recent fiscal year was
  - **\$108,299,000**
  - [https://www.va.gov/vetdata/docs/GDX/GDX\\_FY19.xlsx](https://www.va.gov/vetdata/docs/GDX/GDX_FY19.xlsx)

# 2022 Budget Request

- ▶ \$359,926.00
- ▶ < 1% increase over 2021 Budget Request