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RICK LARSEN  
2ND DISTRICT, WASHINGTON

RANKING MEMBER  
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TRANSPORTATION  
AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515-4702

December 2, 2025

The Honorable Mike Bost  
Chair  
Committee on Veterans' Affairs  
364 Cannon HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mark Takano  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Veterans' Affairs  
556 Cannon HOB  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chair Bost and Ranking Member Takano:

I am writing to submit my report entitled “Listening to Veterans in Northwest Washington” as a statement for the record for the House Committee on Veterans’ Affairs’ Member Day.

Every two years, I host roundtables across Northwest Washington state to hear directly from veterans about what is working at the Department of Veterans Affairs, what is not and how Congress can do better. This fall, I met with veterans and service providers in Everett, Bellingham, Burlington, Oak Harbor and Lummi Nation.

Based on those conversations, I wrote a report that analyzes the challenges veterans in my district are facing, based on the four pillars that guide my work in veterans’ policy: health care, housing, education and employment.

I look forward to working with the Committee to ensure veterans in Washington’s Second District have access to timely health care, affordable housing, high-quality education and fulfilling employment opportunities.

Sincerely,

  
Rick Larsen  
U.S. Representative  
Washington State, Second District



# LISTENING TO VETERANS IN NORTHWEST WASHINGTON

A Report from  
Representative Rick  
Larsen on Veteran  
Roundtables across  
Washington's Second  
Congressional District

November 2025

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## A Note from Representative Rick Larsen

From my first days in Congress, I've made working with veterans in Northwest Washington state a top priority for my office. Through this partnership, we have made excellent progress in improving access to services for veterans. Together, we secured Community-Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOCs) in Everett and Mount Vernon. These clinics provide local veterans with access to high-quality, timely health care, but getting the clinics funded was not an easy task. The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) said there would not be enough demand for services, but local veterans made the case and refused to take no for an answer. Now, those clinics are open to patients, and the strong demand for care has proven VA wrong. These clinics are always busy, and just this year, VA opened an additional clinic in Oak Harbor.



These CBOCs are just one example of how we can work together to support and care for veterans in Northwest Washington state, and there is more work to be done. As I work on behalf of veterans in Congress, I am focused on four key pillars:



Health Care



Housing



Education



Employment

This past September, I traveled across the Second District to meet directly with veterans and service providers about what is working at VA, what is not and how Congress can better support the women and men who have served our country.

This report reflects those conversations. By sharing the voices of veterans in the Second District, I intend to outline a framework for addressing their most pressing challenges, built around the four pillars that guide my work in Congress.

I want to thank the veterans of the Second District who shared their insights and made this report possible. With their help, I look forward to continuing to break down barriers for veterans in Northwest Washington state with clear and measurable action.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rick Larsen".

Rick Larsen  
U.S. Representative  
Washington State, Second District

## Section 1. Introduction

For more than a century, the federal government has supported veterans and their families after their time in the armed forces. What began as a limited system of disability pensions and medical care has expanded over time. VA is now responsible for providing health care, housing, education and employment benefits to millions of veterans across the country.

In the last decade, landmark laws have reshaped VA's role and expanded benefits to millions more women and men who served their country and their families.

In 2018, Congress passed the VA MISSION Act (P.L. 115-182). For the first time, eligible veterans were allowed to seek care outside of the VA system under the community care program. This law also expanded access to telehealth and invested in supporting the family members who care for veterans.

Congress followed this expansion of benefits by passing the Honoring our PACT Act (PACT Act, P.L. 117-168) in 2022, which extended VA health care and disability benefits to veterans exposed to Agent Orange, burn pits and other hazardous substances.

The passage of the PACT Act marked the largest expansion of veterans' benefits in the nation's history. As of September 2025, VA has approved 1.9 million benefits claims and enrolled nearly 740,000 additional veterans in VA health care under this law.<sup>1</sup> Locally, more veterans eligible for care means more veterans in Northwest Washington seeking services from clinics and doctors that were already busy.

As VA's role continues to evolve and more veterans become eligible for benefits, the agency must have the staff necessary to meet growing demand. A strong VA workforce is essential to adjudicating claims fairly and efficiently, and providing timely, high-quality health care.

Since January 2025, VA has lost approximately 30,000 employees because of the Trump administration's workforce cuts, which have included mass firings, early retirement offers and limited recruitment. VA has lost 2,000 registered nurses, 800 physicians and 500 social workers.

<sup>2</sup> Instead of making the agency more efficient, these staff reductions worsen backlogs and lengthen wait times.

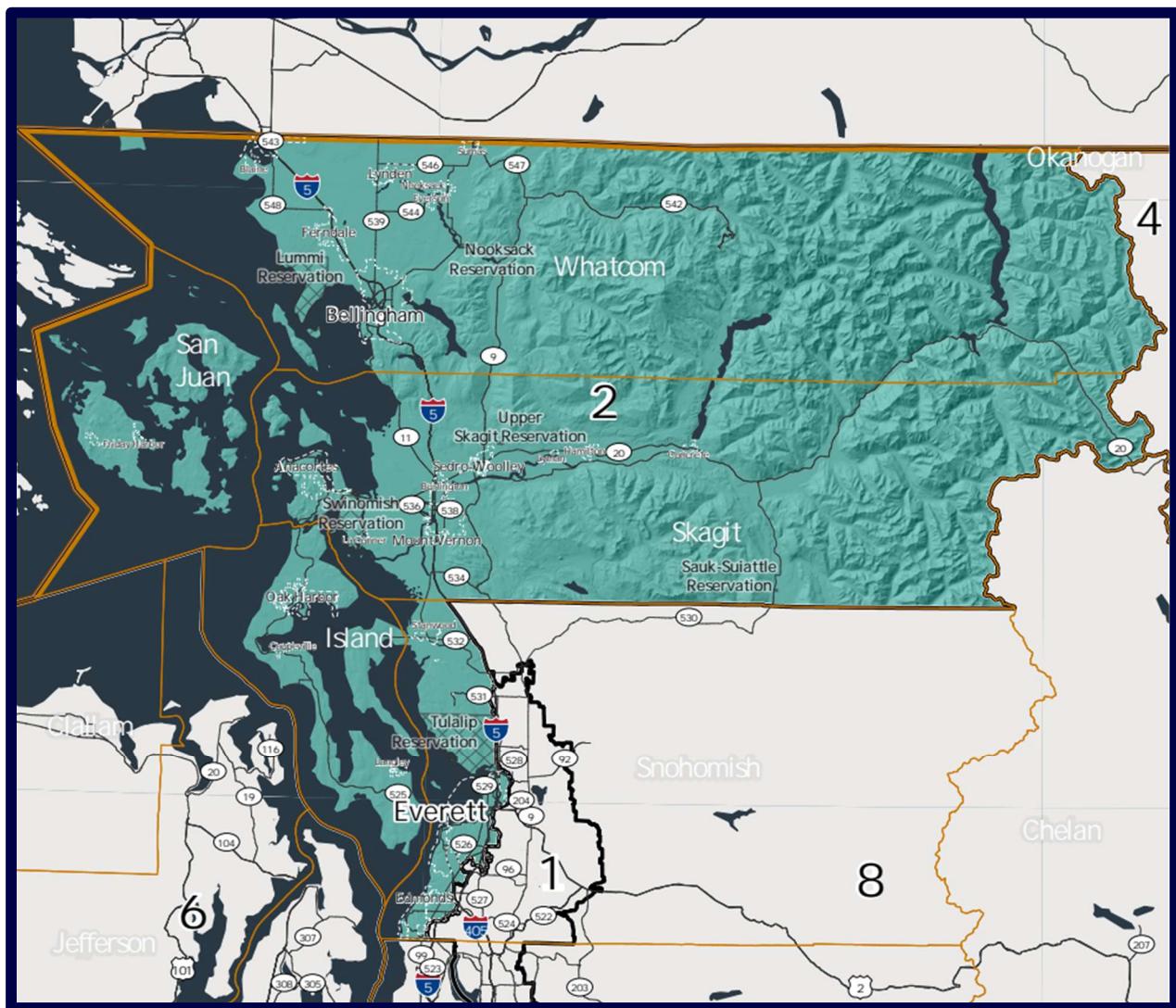
While access to high-quality health care remains a top priority for veterans in the Second District, many continue to face barriers accessing the full range of benefits they earned. By summarizing the experiences of veterans shared with Representative Rick Larsen in September 2025, this report aims to:

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, *PACT Data*, accessed October 31, 2025, <https://department.va.gov/pactdata/>.

<sup>2</sup> "US Veterans Affairs Agency Medical Staff Departures," *The Guardian*, August 11, 2025, <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2025/aug/11/us-veterans-affairs-agency-medical-staff-departures>.

- Provide an overview of the district's veteran population and outline Rep. Larsen's recent veteran-related engagement.
- Share the experiences of veterans accessing health care, housing, education and employment.
- Provide a framework to understand the challenges veterans are facing in the Second District through the pillars of health care, housing, education and employment.
- Propose solutions that Congress, VA and veterans can work on together.
- Provide a comprehensive list of services for veterans in Washington's Second District.



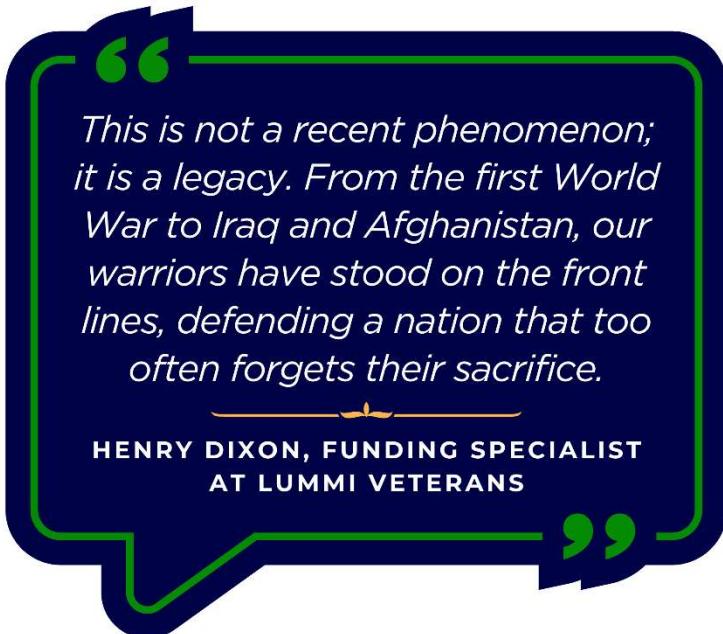
*Image 1, Map of Washington's Second Congressional District. Source: Washington State Redistricting Commission.*

## 1.1: WA-02 Veteran Snapshot

Washington state's Second District includes the west side of I-5 in Snohomish County and all of Whatcom, Skagit, Island and San Juan counties. The district hosts two U.S. Navy installations, Naval Station Everett and Naval Air Station Whidbey Island, and is also home to Coast Guard Station Bellingham.

The Second District has a strong tradition of military service. According to the 2023 Census American Community Survey (ACS), the Second District is home to 47,000 veterans, which is 7.6 percent of the district's population, and 25 percent higher than the average Congressional district. Nine percent of the veteran population in the Second District are women.

Native Americans serve in the armed forces at five times the national average, a higher rate than any other demographic in the United States.<sup>3</sup> The eight federally recognized Tribes in the Second District are home to Native veterans who have served the nation with distinction. Henry Dixon, Funding Specialist at Lummi Veterans, emphasized the continued impact of the service of Native Americans in the U.S. military, saying:



*This is not a recent phenomenon; it is a legacy. From the first World War to Iraq and Afghanistan, our warriors have stood on the front lines, defending a nation that too often forgets their sacrifice.*

**HENRY DIXON, FUNDING SPECIALIST  
AT LUMMI VETERANS**

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<sup>3</sup> USO, "A History of Military Service: Native Americans in the U.S. Military, Yesterday and Today," accessed October 31, 2025, <https://www.uso.org/stories/2914-a-history-of-military-service-native-americans-in-the-u-s-military-yesterday-and-today>.

# WA-02 VETERAN SNAPSHOT

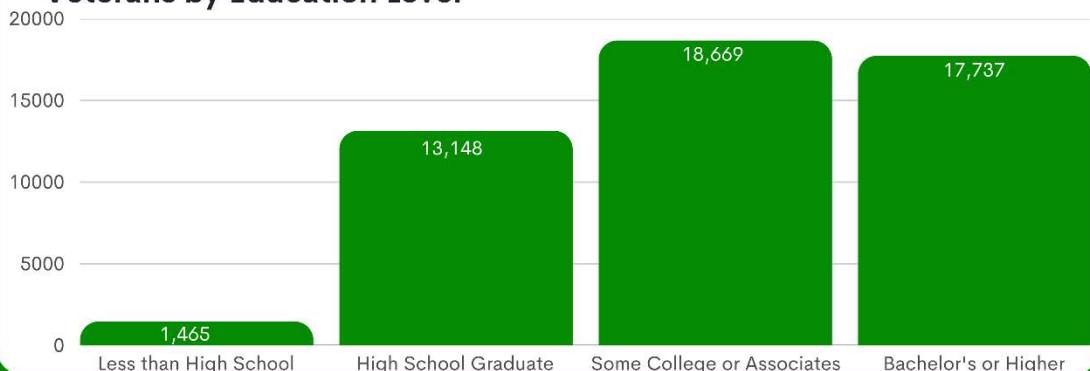
Total Veterans: 47,501

Percent of Total Population: 7.6%

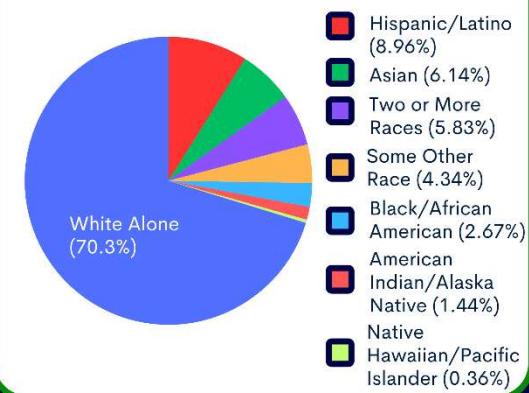
## Veteran Population by County



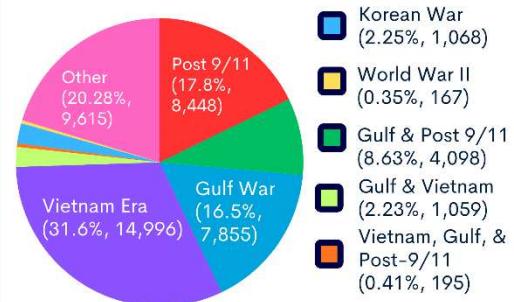
## Veterans by Education Level



## Veteran Population by Race



## Veterans by Period of Service



**Image 2**, Approximate population of veterans by county in WA-02. Source: Department of Veterans Affairs VetPop2023 study; Veterans in WA-02 by Education Level. Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 2024.; Veterans in WA-02 by Race. Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 2022; Veterans in WA-02 by service era. Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 2023.

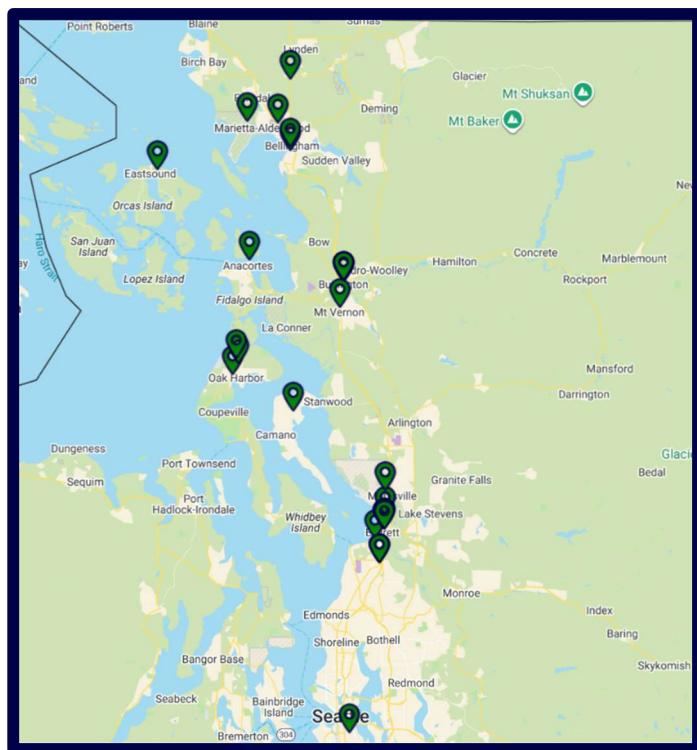
## 1.2 Rep. Larsen's Work with Veterans

Every two years, Rep. Larsen holds forums to hear directly from veterans across the Second District. Since 2001, he has hosted over 70 of these events, including five roundtables in September 2025.

This year, Rep. Larsen heard from veterans at roundtables in Everett, Bellingham, Burlington, Oak Harbor and Lummi Nation. In addition to local veterans, participants included county and tribal Veteran Service Officers (VSOs), campus veteran advisors and representatives from American Legion posts, the Fleet Reserve Associations and Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) chapters.

Rep. Larsen also invited representatives from Puget Sound VA to attend the 2025 roundtables. In past years, these forums provided valuable opportunities for VA staff to both hear directly from veterans in the Second District and to help connect veterans with VA benefits and services. Unfortunately, VA did not attend the 2025 roundtables. While the local Puget Sound VA representatives continue to be great partners in serving the veterans of Northwest Washington state, VA leadership must make a stronger commitment to engaging with veterans directly, including through forums like these roundtables.

In addition to public forums, Rep. Larsen regularly meets with local veterans. Since passage of the PACT Act in 2022, Rep. Larsen has held 26 meetings with veterans across Northwest Washington state.



*Image 3, Map showing the location of official meetings between Representative Rick Larsen and veterans since the passage of the PACT Act.*

## Section 2. A Comprehensive Framework to Support Veterans

Ensuring the federal government fulfills its responsibilities to veterans requires a comprehensive framework that focuses on four main pillars: (1) timely, quality **health care**, (2) stable and affordable **housing**, (3) access to **educational opportunities** and (4) **employment** that provides for a smooth transition to civilian life. At his roundtables across the Second District in September 2025, Rep. Larsen heard about the problems veterans face when accessing benefits under these four pillars.



*Image 4, Rep. Larsen hosting veteran forums in Bellingham, Everett, Oak Harbor, Anacortes and Burlington.*

## 2.1 Health Care

The Veterans Health Administration (VHA) is the country's largest integrated health care system. Every year, VHA cares for 9.1 million veterans at over 1,300 VA-run medical facilities.<sup>4</sup>

### Access in Northwest Washington State

The Second District is home to three outpatient VA medical facilities. In Snohomish County, the Everett Community-Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) provides primary care, women's health care, mental health services and nutrition counseling. In Skagit County, the Mount Vernon CBOC offers primary care, women's health care, audiology services, mental health care and a pathology department.

Opened just this year, Oak Harbor's VA clinic at Naval Air Station Whidbey Island (NASWI) is Washington state's first veterans' clinic created as a partnership between the Department of Defense (DoD) and VA. This clinic allows VA to serve veterans from existing space in the Naval Health Clinic Oak Harbor medical facility and is a critical step in providing health care to veterans in Island County. Over 20 percent of Oak Harbor's population are veterans, and the geography of Island County makes access to care off-island difficult.<sup>5</sup> The clinic at NASWI is expected to provide health care to at least 1,200 veterans.



*Image 5, Rep. Larsen cuts the ribbon on Oak Harbor's VA Clinic, August 20, 2025.*

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, "About VHA," accessed October 31, 2025, <https://www.va.gov/health/aboutvha.asp>.

<sup>5</sup> Census Reporter, "Oak Harbor, WA," accessed October 31, 2025, <https://censusreporter.org/profiles/16000US5350360-oak-harbor-wa/>.

The Second District also has two Vet Centers, located in Everett and Bellingham, which provide veterans with individual, couples and family mental health counseling. Vet Center providers are experienced in treating veterans and addressing common conditions within the veteran population, including post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and the psychological effects of military sexual trauma (MST).

While these clinics have made great progress in providing high-quality and accessible health care for veterans in the Second District, veterans still must travel to the VA Medical Center in Seattle for specialty care or surgical services.



*Image 6, Rep. Larsen visits Everett Vet Center, October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2022.*

## **Community Care**

As the veteran population grows and becomes more diverse, VA has expanded its reach through initiatives like community care. Beginning with the Veterans Choice Program in 2014, eligible veterans have been able to obtain VA approval to receive care from outside providers when VA cannot provide necessary services in a timely manner. The current community care program was established by the VA MISSION Act in 2018.

At the roundtables, veterans recognized that while community care is necessary in certain circumstances, it comes with long wait times, complicated enrollment processes and providers

who lack experience treating veterans. Several veterans attending the roundtables shared that the wait times just to obtain an initial community care referral have stopped some veterans from seeking care altogether.

Describing his frustration when trying to contact the community care referral phone line, one veteran service officer in Skagit County said:

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***"I can tell you right now, I tried to call for one veteran, and I waited an hour and fifteen minutes and there was no answer. I just had another vet today who called four times and waited an hour each time, no answer."***

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Community care providers also often lack extensive experience in treating veterans compared to providers in the VA system. Studies have also consistently shown that the quality of VA care is as good as, and often better than, care in the community.<sup>6</sup> Anecdotes from veterans at the roundtables support this finding.

One veteran in Everett mentioned:

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***"I just started to have the VA as my full medical care due to the fact that I have cancer. Very good, I love my doctors...my primary care, oncologist, urologist, greatest care I've ever had."***

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Another Snohomish County veteran followed up, saying:

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***"The Seattle VA...they got great doctors, great nurses, CNAs, you get great care."***

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The experience of these veterans underscores that Congress must work to improve the community care program, while continuing to expand VA's own capacity to meet veterans' health care needs.

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<sup>6</sup> Health Services Research & Development (VA), *Quality of Care Review*, <https://www.hsrd.research.va.gov/publications/esp/quality-of-care-review.pdf>.

## **Staff Reductions and Wait Times**

Since January 2025, VA has lost about 30,000 employees through a combination of mass firings, early retirements and limited recruitment.<sup>7</sup> Despite firing thousands of nurses and physicians, the Trump administration claims only “unnecessary administrative positions” are being eliminated. Regardless, administrative professionals are essential to VA’s mission. They are responsible for processing claims quickly and accurately, scheduling medical appointments and helping veterans navigate the benefits system.

Veterans at the roundtables shared concerns that already long wait times will only increase because of recent reductions in VA staff.

When describing the timeline for getting claims reviewed, one veteran in Whatcom County said:

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***“The responses veterans are getting from the VA have definitely slowed down and the number of denials has skyrocketed.”***

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Another veteran in Snohomish County emphasized the wait times for medical appointments:

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***“It’s the time that it takes to get appointments and get important appointments... appointments are taking a long time”***

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## **Transportation to Care**

Veterans cited getting to and from medical appointments as a frequent barrier to care. While VA provides travel reimbursement through the Beneficiary Travel Self-Service System (BTSSS), not all veterans are eligible. Additionally, those living in rural and island communities face more barriers to transportation.

One program highlighted as a success by the roundtable participants is VA’s Volunteer Transportation Network (VTN), which is operated by Disabled American Veterans (DAV). Under this program, VA-approved volunteers drive DAV-donated vehicles to provide cost-free rides for veterans. However, the availability of these services is subject to volunteer and vehicle availability.

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<sup>7</sup> Kathleen McGrory and Neil Bedi, “Veterans’ Care at Risk Under Trump as Hundreds of Doctors and Nurses Reject Working at VA Hospitals,” *ProPublica*, August 2025, <https://www.propublica.org/article/veterans-affairs-hospital-shortages-trump>.

Veterans can also get transportation from local non-profits, such as Helping Hands' Skagit Veteran Shuttle or Whidbey Veterans Resource Center's Ride-Link Van Program. Still, these transportation options are insufficient to meet the needs of all the veterans in the Second District.

Chris Diaz, Veteran Service Specialist Lead for Skagit County, said:

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*"Helping Hands, the van we got transferred there from Skagit Transit, is going to be transporting veterans from east county, west county and all that... but that's just not enough. Anything past Concrete or east? There's zero transportation unless you know somebody."*

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At the roundtables, participants shared that VA's telehealth options have proved invaluable for connecting veterans in rural areas with care. These veterans also support expanding the number and reach of VA mobile clinics to bring care closer to their homes.

### **Women's Health Care**

Women are the fastest-growing group in the veteran population and currently account for 11 percent of the U.S. veteran population. By 2040, VA projects that 18 percent of all veterans will be women.<sup>8</sup> As the number of women veterans rapidly increases, VA has struggled to quickly modernize its women's health services. Women veterans participating in the roundtables underscored the need for timely and comprehensive women's health care and more women providers.

While every VA Medical Center now has a Women Veterans Program Manager, women veterans from the Second District also shared that they have been misdiagnosed by VA physicians who lack sufficient experience in women's health. Additional research and education regarding the specific needs of women veterans is urgently needed.

In August 2025, the Trump administration enacted a near-total ban on abortion counseling and services at VA. Previously, veterans could access abortion care at VA in cases of rape, incest or health risk to the mother, regardless of state-level bans. Now, veterans can only access abortion care at VA if continuing a pregnancy would put their life in "immediate danger," as certified by a physician. Rather than making VA more responsive to women veterans and their needs, this decision pushes women out of the VA system by potentially discouraging pregnant veterans from seeking care at VA medical facilities.

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<sup>8</sup> U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, "Facts and Statistics (Women's Health)," <https://www.womenshealth.va.gov/materials-and-resources/facts-and-statistics.asp>.

## **Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Care**

Veteran suicide rates remain alarmingly high. According to VA's 2022 data, the suicide rate among male veterans was 44 percent higher than that of civilian males, while female veterans faced a staggering 92 percent higher suicide rate than their civilian counterparts.<sup>9</sup> In Washington state alone, 194 veterans died by suicide in 2022.<sup>10</sup>

Confronting the veteran suicide crisis requires a comprehensive approach that addresses all four pillars of the framework: health care, housing, education and employment. In 2024, Congress passed the Not Just a Number Act (P.L. 118-210), which requires VA to study the relationship between veteran suicide and VA benefit usage, including health care, housing, education and employment benefits. This research is a critical step in creating a comprehensive approach to reducing veteran suicide, including which interventions are most effective at preventing veteran suicide.

Veterans at the roundtables supported expanding access to VA's traditional mental health services, including psychotherapy and psychiatry. At the same time, they emphasized the need to create more alternative treatment options. Roundtable participants shared that VA's Staff Sergeant Parker Gordon Fox Suicide Prevention Grant program is tremendously successful as a community-based suicide prevention effort in the Second District.

While explaining the importance of community-based prevention efforts, one veteran from Skagit County said:

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***"When we are talking about PTSD and different mental health issues... going through the traditional therapy is great, but it doesn't make it go away... what it does is it gives you an understanding of why you are where you are at, now they need the tools to move forward."***

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Additionally, local programs like Growing Veterans, Guitars 4 Vets, Hooves & Heroes and Project Healing Waters provide critical peer mental health support to veterans. Veterans emphasized that Congress should expand access to community-based mental health programs designed by veterans, for veterans.

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<sup>9</sup> RAND Corporation, *Perspectives PEA1363-1-v2*, "The Risk of Suicide Is ...," <https://www.rand.org/pubs/perspectives/PEA1363-1-v2.html#:~:text=The%20risk%20of%20suicide%20is,of%20Suicide%20Prevention%2C%202024b>

<sup>10</sup> U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, *2022 State Data Sheets Washington (Mental Health)*, [https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/docs/datasheets/2022/2022\\_State\\_Data\\_Sheets\\_Washington\\_508.pdf](https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/docs/datasheets/2022/2022_State_Data_Sheets_Washington_508.pdf)



*Image 7, Rep. Larsen visits with Growing Veterans in Lynden, WA. August 18, 2023.*

### **Culturally Competent Care**

According to VA, Native veterans are more likely to have a service-connected disability and face higher rates of unemployment than their white counterparts.<sup>11</sup> Henry Dixon again said:

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***“These disparities are not just statistics: they are calls to action! We must do more than honor our veterans with words. We must continue to build systems that reflect their worth.”***

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At the roundtable at Lummi Nation, Native veterans emphasized the need for more culturally competent care options and traditional healing practices at VA. To make VA health care work better for Native veterans, roundtable participants support VA conducting robust tribal consultation, expanding the number of Tribal VSOs and authorizing additional partnerships between the Indian Health Service (IHS) and VA.

Since 2012, IHS and VA have had a reimbursement agreement that allows VA to pay for health care that Tribal veterans receive at participating IHS, Tribal Health Program and Urban Indian

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<sup>11</sup> U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, NVHER 2021 AIAN Veteran Chartbook and AIAN Report, [https://www.va.gov/HEALTHEQUITY/docs/NVHER\\_2021\\_AIAN\\_Veteran\\_Chartbook\\_11222022\\_Final.pdf](https://www.va.gov/HEALTHEQUITY/docs/NVHER_2021_AIAN_Veteran_Chartbook_11222022_Final.pdf); <https://www.va.gov/vetdata/docs/SpecialReports/AIANReport.pdf>

Organization health care facilities. Unlike community care, eligible veterans do not need a referral from VA to receive care at these clinics, and they do not pay a copay for services. This arrangement provides veterans in rural Native communities with health care closer to home and allows them to receive better, culturally informed care.

Not all eligible Tribal clinics participate in the reimbursement program. Veterans at the roundtable expressed support for additional reimbursement agreements under this program.

Henry Dixon shared the following policy priorities:

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***"Expand access to culturally competent health care, increase funding for tribal health clinics and IHS-VA partnerships, support integration of traditional healing practices."***

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*Image 8. Rep. Larsen speaking at the Lummi Nation Stommish Water Festival, June 24, 2023.*

## 2.2 Housing

As housing prices and the cost-of-living increase across the nation, veterans in the Second District are feeling the strain. In 2023, the median home value in the Second District was \$629,300<sup>12</sup>, almost double the national average<sup>13</sup>. Additionally, one-third of Washingtonians are cost-burdened, meaning they spend more than 30 percent of their monthly income on housing<sup>14</sup>. At the roundtables, participants made clear that the Second District lacks appropriate, available and affordable housing.

One factor contributing to these high prices is the state's lack of housing supply. Based on projected population growth over the next 20 years, the Washington State Department of Commerce projects that the state will need to add 1.1 million homes, and more than half of these new units will need to be affordable for residents of the lowest income levels.<sup>15</sup>

Even as more housing is built, VSOs at the roundtables emphasized that much of the Second District's housing stock is not the appropriate size for single veterans. These veterans are often left on waiting lists for one-bedroom units, not knowing whether they will ever obtain housing in their own communities.

One Skagit County Veteran Service Officer, describing a single veteran, illustrated this problem:

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*"I know for a fact that he's probably not going to find housing here in Skagit County because we're not going to have a single dwelling for him... It's just not available."*

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### HUD-VASH

Washington state continues to face high rates of veteran homelessness. In 2024, VA estimated that there were 1,780 homeless veterans in Washington state, the 4th most out of all states.<sup>16</sup> Of the homeless veterans in Washington state, 59 percent were unsheltered in 2024, meaning they reside outdoors or in places not meant for human habitation.

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<sup>12</sup>Census Reporter, Table B25077, Owner-Occupied Housing Units – Washington (State), accessed October 31, 2025, [https://censusreporter.org/data/table/?table=B25077&geo\\_ids=50000US5302&primary\\_geo\\_id=50000US5302](https://censusreporter.org/data/table/?table=B25077&geo_ids=50000US5302&primary_geo_id=50000US5302)

<sup>13</sup> Census Reporter, *Table B25077, Owner-Occupied Housing Units* (United States), accessed October 31, 2025, [https://censusreporter.org/data/table/?table=B25077&geo\\_ids=01000US&primary\\_geo\\_id=01000US](https://censusreporter.org/data/table/?table=B25077&geo_ids=01000US&primary_geo_id=01000US)

<sup>14</sup> WCRER, *State of Washington's Housing Report 2024*, <https://wcrer.be.uw.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/60/2024/10/State-of-Washingtons-Housing-Report-2024.pdf>.

<sup>15</sup> Washington State Department of Commerce, "Washington State Will Need More Than 1 Million Homes in Next 20 Years," March 2, 2023, <https://www.commerce.wa.gov/washington-state-will-need-more-than-1-million-homes-in-next-20-years/>.

<sup>16</sup> U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, *2023 Annual Homelessness Assessment Report, Part 1*, <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/sites/default/files/pdf/2023-AHAR-Part-1.pdf>.

The Housing and Urban Development – Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) program offers permanent housing vouchers and case management services to eligible homeless veterans. Roundtable participants shared how this program meets Second District veterans where they are while providing necessary services to keep veterans housed. Participants emphasized their support for increasing HUD-VASH vouchers so more homeless veterans can get housing and access to wraparound services.

A veteran service provider in Whatcom County shared:

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***"We have a really good relationship with HUD-VASH. We have utilized a lot of vouchers over the past couple of years. We could always use more."***

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A Snohomish County veteran noted:

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***"I know a few veterans using the vouchers for housing. That is a tremendous thing; one went from living in a halfway house to getting his own apartment. That will definitely help out."***

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While roundtable participants praised HUD-VASH as a success in the Second District, some shared stories of suspected discrimination from housing providers when veterans disclosed that they would pay their rent with HUD-VASH vouchers. While discriminating against a tenant's source of money is illegal, one service provider raised concerns that there are not appropriate enforcement mechanisms for these discrimination protections.

### **Supportive Services for Veteran Families**

At the roundtables, Second District veterans also emphasized support for the Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) program, which has been a lifeline for low-income veterans and their families in Northwest Washington state. SSVF provides case management and supportive services to prevent the imminent loss of a veteran's home or identify a new, more suitable housing situation for the individual and their family. The program allows for 7-9 months of housing subsidies, based on the veteran's income at the time of enrollment.

The veteran service provider in Whatcom County mentioned:

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***“SSVF is a great, very well-rounded program, and it is able to support people very extensively if needed... SSVF is a phenomenal program.”***

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### **VA Home Loan Benefits**

Preventing veteran homelessness starts with keeping veterans in their homes. Many veterans qualify for VA-backed home loans, which are financed by private lenders but guaranteed by VA. Lenders offer lower interest rates and often no down payment for veterans using their VA home loan benefits. In 2024, over 10,000 veterans in Washington state used these loans to buy homes.<sup>17</sup>

For veterans using VA-backed home loans and facing foreclosure, the Veterans Affairs Service Purchasing Program (VASP) was a lifeline. Enacted in 2024, VASP allowed VA to purchase a veteran's delinquent VA-backed loan and reissue it as a direct VA loan on more favorable terms. Unfortunately, the Trump administration ended VASP in May 2025 without establishing an alternative program, putting approximately 80,000 veterans at risk of foreclosure. Veterans and service providers at the roundtables shared that VASP was successful in the Second District, preventing many veterans from losing their homes.

One VFW benefits advisor in Whatcom County said:

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***“VASP is gone, and I have a relief fund of a decent amount of money to help vets in the county, but I don't have the money to help with a mortgage payment... I think VASP and programs like VASP are something that should be fought for.”***

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To partially address the gaps left by VASP's termination, Congress passed the VA Home Loan Program Reform Act (P.L. 119-31). This law allows VA to pay up to 30 percent of a delinquent VA-backed loan. Unlike VASP, the new program does not convert the loan to be directly administered by VA. Instead, the loan remains with the original servicer. While this program is still being implemented at VA, it will not provide the level of relief offered by VASP.

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<sup>17</sup> U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, “Loan Volume by State – VA Home Loans,” [https://www.benefits.va.gov/HOMELOANS/lender\\_state\\_volume.asp](https://www.benefits.va.gov/HOMELOANS/lender_state_volume.asp).

## **Tribal HUD-VASH**

Like veterans across Washington state, Native veterans are facing an increasing risk of homelessness as home prices skyrocket. The Tribal HUD-VASH program, established in 2015, provides tribes and Tribally Designated Housing Entities (TDHEs) with funding to provide housing vouchers and culturally competent case management to eligible Native veterans. Despite high demand, the program's growth is constrained by limited funding. Native veterans at the roundtables shared their support for funding the program at a higher level to allow more entities, including Coast Salish tribes, to participate.



**Image 9**, Rep. Larsen presents Tulalip Tribes Leadership with his Native American Heritage Month Congressional Resolution as well as a proclamation from President Biden that marks the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam War. November 8, 2023.

## 2.3 Education

Education and training opportunities are essential to ensuring veterans' smooth transition into civilian jobs after they leave the military. In fact, veterans who reported being underemployed after their service reported that the biggest barrier to finding meaningful employment was a mismatch between the training and skills they used in the military and the civilian job market.<sup>18</sup> Education and training opportunities that open doors to fulfilling jobs are essential for transitioning servicemembers and veterans.

Veterans using their G.I. Bill education benefits at postsecondary institutions have access to veteran resource centers, which have staff dedicated to helping veterans navigate VA's education benefits system. In the Second District, veteran resource centers are available on campus at Western Washington University, Whatcom Community College, Bellingham Technical College, Skagit Valley College, Everett Community College and Edmonds College. Washington State University Everett students also have access to the Veterans & Military Affiliated Student Services office at WSU's main campus in Pullman.

### VA Work Study

Student veterans using their VA education benefits who are enrolled at least three-quarters time in a college degree, vocational or professional training program may be eligible for the VA Work Study program.

When enrolled in this program, VA pays students who work up to 25 hours at VA facilities, campus veteran resource centers and qualified VSOs. Campus veteran resource officers in the Second District have shared how VA Work Study has been a great resource for student veterans, but there are simply not enough eligible work positions in communities to support the number of interested veterans.

One campus veteran program manager in Snohomish County said:

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***"There's a list of veteran students eager to join... but many institutions and VA-affiliated sites don't have the capacity or workload to support more students."***

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Campus veteran officers in the Second District have expressed support for expanding the number of eligible organizations, such as non-profits that support veterans, that may host VA Work Study participants.

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<sup>18</sup> "Policy Brief: Mitigating Veteran Underemployment Among Transitioning Post-9/11 Veterans," (Penn State Veteran Network, October 2023), [https://veterannetwork.psu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/PSU\\_Mitigating-Veteran-Underemployment\\_OCT-2023-FINAL.pdf](https://veterannetwork.psu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/PSU_Mitigating-Veteran-Underemployment_OCT-2023-FINAL.pdf).

## **G.I. Bill**

Since 1944, the G.I. Bill has helped eligible veterans and their families access education and training benefits after leaving military service. Since its enactment, the G.I. Bill has provided veterans and eligible family members with \$410 billion in educational assistance.<sup>19</sup> This program has been a vital pathway for generations of veterans who come home to transition into civilian life and find employment. VA staffing shortages also impact veterans using GI Bill benefits at campuses in the Second District.

A School Certifying Official (SCO) in Whatcom County mentioned:

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***"I am noticing it is taking about twice as long for dependent education assistance applications to be processed. It used to be pretty solid in the 30-day range, but now it is taking about twice as long."***

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Campuses across the Second District employ SCOs, who are responsible for ensuring that eligible Veterans, Reservists, servicemembers and dependents can promptly access their VA education benefits. One Veteran Program Manager for a local college in Snohomish County explained that additional training is needed for the VA staff who support these programs. When describing his experience calling the hotline designed to support SCOs, he said:

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***"You get one answer from one [employee], and then you get another from someone else. So, you tell the student that, and then when they contact the VA, they say "well they told me..." but then you get more mixed answers, there is no right or wrong answer given."***

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**Image 10.** Larsen meets with veteran students from Bellingham Technical College, Whatcom Community College and Western Washington University, November 2016

Students are also facing delays in tuition payment processing, long wait times on the GI Bill helpline and late monthly housing allowance (MHA) payments. Again, these students emphasized that VA needs to adequately staff the phone lines and benefit processing centers that student veterans rely on for timely payments and accurate answers.

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<sup>19</sup> "80 Years of the G.I. Bill: American Dream for Veterans," *VA News*, accessed October 31, 2025, <https://news.va.gov/132480/80-years-g-i-bill-american-dream-for-veterans/>.

## 2.4 Employment

Every year, 200,000 women and men transition from U.S. military service to civilian life. While still in the armed forces, some servicemembers participate in SkillBridge programs, which provide training and apprenticeship opportunities in various industries.<sup>20</sup> Many other veterans go on to work in the federal government, where they are eligible for a hiring preference. In fact, veterans make up almost a quarter of the federal workforce nationwide.<sup>21</sup>

Yet, challenges remain. A Penn State study found that 61 percent of veterans report being underemployed after their separation from the military.<sup>22</sup> Roundtable participants shared that recent federal workforce changes and the increasing cost of living have upended the job market for veterans.

### **Federal Workforce**

In January 2025, President Trump signed an executive order requiring all federal workers to return to the office full-time. Roundtable participants shared stories of veterans in the Second District who worked remotely for the federal government and had their telework agreements terminated. This forced veterans to choose between uprooting their lives or losing their jobs, and as a result, many left the federal workforce.

At the roundtables, veteran service providers shared that the recent spike in veteran unemployment has placed additional strain on local services. Veterans expressed support for more robust federal employment opportunities that do not require relocating their families.

While describing the local impact of President Trump's return-to-office mandate, one veteran service provider in Whatcom County said:

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***"The federal mandate to return to work and cut remote work has led veterans in this county that would never normally need financial assistance from Whatcom County to find themselves out of work, and now, their unemployment has ended... We can't support them, my fund is \$200,000 a year, we are going to run it dry."***

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<sup>20</sup> Military OneSource, "DoD SkillBridge," accessed October 31, 2025, <https://www.militaryonesource.mil/resources/gov/dod-skillbridge/>.

<sup>21</sup> Pew Research Center, "What We Know about Veterans Who Work for the Federal Government," April 10, 2025, accessed October 31, 2025, <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2025/04/10/what-we-know-about-veterans-who-work-for-the-federal-government/>.

<sup>22</sup> "Policy Brief: Mitigating Veteran Underemployment Among Transitioning Post-9/11 Veterans," (Penn State Veteran Network, October 2023), [https://veterannetwork.psu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/PSU\\_Mitigating-Veteran-Underemployment\\_OCT-2023-FINAL.pdf](https://veterannetwork.psu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/PSU_Mitigating-Veteran-Underemployment_OCT-2023-FINAL.pdf).

## **Senior Veterans**

As the cost of living continues to increase, elderly veterans are making the difficult decision to return to the workforce. These veterans are struggling to find meaningful employment, and some cited suspected age discrimination as the primary barrier to finding a job.

A service provider for disabled veterans illustrated this problem while describing their efforts to connect aging veterans with employment:

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***"Out of the approximately 30 veterans I'm working with, the majority of them are over 60 and having a tough time making ends meet. I just met with a 76-year-old veteran seeking employment yesterday."***

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## **Veterans Readiness & Employment Counseling Services**

Veterans with service-connected disabilities that limit their ability to work are eligible for Veterans Readiness and Employment (VR&E) counseling services, which provide these veterans with job training and employment opportunities. However, veterans have reported being unable to reach their VR&E counselors, whose caseloads have increased dramatically while their pay remains the same.

While speaking about his VR&E counselor, a student veteran in Whatcom County said:

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***"You can tell they are overworked and underpaid... and it's getting worse."***

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Veterans at the roundtables emphasized the need to hire additional VR&E counselors.

# RECOMMENDATIONS



## HEALTH CARE

- Keep VA at the center of veteran health care by opposing efforts to shift funding from direct VA care to community care, particularly in the annual Military Construction – Veterans Affairs appropriations bill.
- Enact the *Veteran Families Health Services Act* to permanently overturn VA's ban on fertility treatments and provide eligible veterans with IVF treatments and adoption assistance.
- Promote federal research into the specific needs of women veterans, including Rep. Brownley's *Menopause Care for Veterans Act*, which would study the menopause care currently available to veterans and make clinical improvements to that care.
- Expand culturally competent care for Native veterans by expanding IHS-VA partnerships.
- Ensure VA implements the *Not Just a Number Act* to get a comprehensive view of which VA benefits programs can be expanded for suicide prevention.
- Encourage VA to expand the Volunteer Transportation Network, which provides cost-free rides to medical appointments for veterans.
- Invest in veteran-led, community-based suicide prevention efforts by increasing funding for grants under the Staff Sergeant Parker Gordon Fox Suicide Prevention program.



## HOUSING

- Continue to increase the number of available HUD-VASH vouchers in annual appropriations.
- Support efforts to educate housing providers on anti-discrimination laws protecting renters who intend to pay with HUD-VASH vouchers.
- Pass Rep LaLota's *Supporting Veteran Families in Need Act* to permanently authorize VA's Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) program.
- To protect veterans at risk of foreclosure, encourage VA to quickly implement the *VA Home Loan Program Reform Act*. VA must create clear guidance for delinquent borrowers, streamline paperwork requirements and allow for robust Congressional oversight.
- Pass Rep. Pettersen's *VA Loan Informed Disclosure (VALID) Act* to ensure veterans are aware of their VA-backed home loan benefits.
- Expand the Tribal HUD-VASH program to provide housing and culturally competent case management to Coast Salish veterans.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

## EDUCATION

- Improve collaboration between GI Bill education and housing hotlines to provide student veterans with quick and accurate answers.
- Pass Rep. Levin's ***Guard and Reserve GI Bill Parity Act*** to ensure National Guard members and Reservists can count every day spent in uniform toward their education benefits.
- Increase the number of jobs available under the VA Work Study program to allow participating student veterans to work at non-profits and local agencies that benefit veterans.
- Allow student veterans enrolled in school half-time to participate in VA Work Study.

## EMPLOYMENT

- Expand federally supported training programs for transitioning servicemembers through legislation like the ***Federal Cybersecurity Workforce Enhancement Act***.
- Hire additional VR&E counselors to reduce wait times.
- Support efforts to educate employers on anti-age discrimination laws to ensure older veterans are given a fair shot at employment.

## BOTTOM LINE

Congress must oppose President Trump's efforts to slash the VA workforce. Instead, we need to invest in more health care workers, administrative professionals and employment counselors to ensure veterans can receive high-quality care and benefits support.

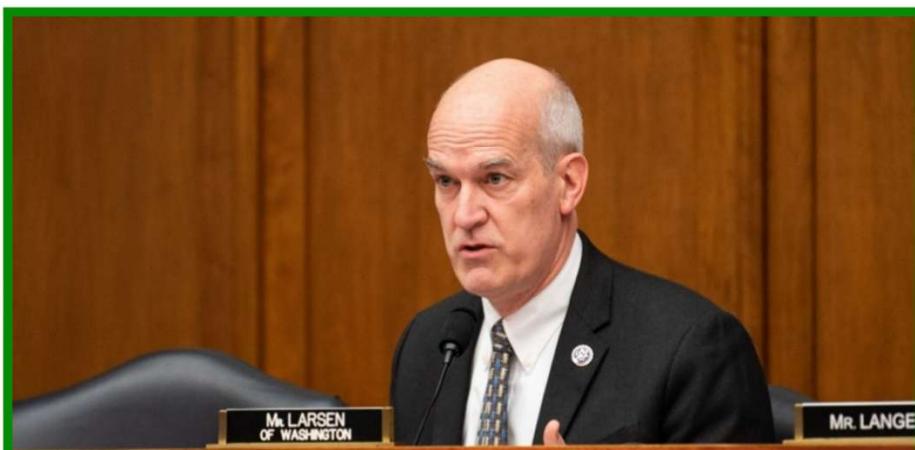


Image 11, Rep. Larsen at Armed Services Committee hearing, March 20, 2022

## Section 4. Conclusion

The stories and perspectives shared by veterans in Washington state's Second District underscore both the progress the federal government has made in serving veterans and the work that remains. The experience of veterans in Northwest Washington state makes clear that the nation's commitment to its veterans must go beyond words and ceremonies. Congress must continue to ensure access to comprehensive health care, affordable housing, quality education and meaningful employment opportunities for veterans.

If you or anyone you know is having issues with VA, their service branch or any other federal agency, my office may be able to help. Please reach out to the Everett office at (425) 252-3188 or fill out a privacy release form on the website at [larsen.house.gov](http://larsen.house.gov).

Finally, veterans in the Second District have shared that there is a lack of a centralized location for resources available to veterans in the area. The appendix of this document provides a breakdown of resources in the Second District for veterans who may be facing challenges in accessing health care, housing, education and employment.



*Image 12, Rep. Larsen speaks at Memorial Day event in Oak Harbor. May 31, 2021.*

## Appendix. Resources for Local Veterans

### Casework:

The office of Representative Larsen offers services to all constituents of the Second District who need assistance with federal agencies, including VA, the Social Security Administration (SSA), Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and more. Since January of 2025, Rep. Larsen's office has recovered \$13,762,204.56 for constituents.

To receive help with a federal agency, the Privacy Act of 1974 requires that Members of Congress and their staff receive written authorization before obtaining information about an individual case. All constituents must complete a [Privacy Release Form](#) prior to Rep. Larsen's staff initiating casework with a federal agency.

To request assistance from our office, please call (425) 252-3188 or you can access our Privacy Release Form at: <https://larsen.house.gov/helping-you/privacy-release-form.htm>.

### Success Stories:

- A veteran from Everett was unable to receive his disability back pay. Our office reached out to VA and resolved the issue. The veteran received over \$9,000 in missing disability benefits.
- Another veteran from Everett who was working with the Veterans Readiness and Success program was recently removed from his courses after his program was cut short. After working for months and completing over half of his courses, the veteran reached out to our office for assistance. Our office worked with VA to assist this constituent, who was assigned a new VSO officer and is now continuing his studies.
- A veteran from Bellingham was unable to reach VA after his disability determination was delayed. After months of waiting, he reached out to our office. We helped the constituent receive his determination promptly.
- A veteran from Edmonds who was unable to receive dental care reached out to our office to request help scheduling appointments. Our office contacted VA and helped facilitate the veteran's dental care in a timely manner.





# Resources for Local Veterans

## Statewide Resources

- **Suicide & Crisis Lifeline**
  - Dial 988 then press 1 for 24/7 confidential crisis support
  - Washington State Resource Hotline
  - Dial 211 to reach a highly trained information and referral specialist who will assess your needs and provide a list of referrals to available resources in your community
- **Washington Department of Veterans**
  - Services: Counseling and Wellness Programs, Veterans Transitional Housing Program, State Veteran Cemetery, Claim Assistance, Financial Assistance and more
  - Contact: Phone: 1 (800) 562-2308, Website: [dva.wa.gov](http://dva.wa.gov)
- **NineLine Veteran Services (Fife)**
  - Services: Business and Employment Program, Housing Program, Route Step Outdoors Program for eco-therapy and their Quick Response Force suicide prevention team
  - Contact: Phone: 253-922-7225, Email: [Help@nine9line.org](mailto:Help@nine9line.org), Website: [www.9linevets.org](http://www.9linevets.org)
- **Permission to Start Dreaming Foundation (Gig Harbor)**
  - Service: Warrior PATHH a peer-to-peer alternative therapy training program. This program includes a 7-day on-site initiation and is followed by 90 days of continued training.
  - Contact: Phone: (253) 432-6502, Website: [ptsdfoundation.org](http://ptsdfoundation.org)
- **Veteran Rites Inc (Tacoma)**
  - Services: Rite to Return Ceremony, this program includes a 7-day on-site initiation held in a wilderness setting in Eastern Washington with trained veteran and non-veteran guides and their Roots of Resilience Online Course.
  - Contact: Website: [www.veteranrites.org](http://www.veteranrites.org)
- **Wounded Warrior Project (Tacoma)**
  - Services: programs for peer support, mental health, physical wellness, financial wellness and lifelong care with their independence program and continuous care services.
  - Contact: Phone: (206) 441-7096, Website: [woundedwarriorproject.org](http://woundedwarriorproject.org)

Additional information for each program can be found on each organizations' website.

## VA Transportation Resources

- **Beneficiary Travel Self-Service System (BTSSS):**
  - Eligible Veterans and caregivers can submit claims to reimburse travel (mileage, tolls, ferries).
  - Information: [www.va.gov/health-care/file-travel-pay-reimbursement/](http://www.va.gov/health-care/file-travel-pay-reimbursement/)
  - File a claim: [eauth.va.gov/accessva/](http://eauth.va.gov/accessva/)
- **National Veterans Transportation Program (NVTP):**
  - Request a ride through your VA care provider or call the travel office call center.
  - (206) 764-2120 (option 4)
  - [PUGHASTRAVELSUPERVISORS@va.gov](mailto:PUGHASTRAVELSUPERVISORS@va.gov)
  - [www.vetride.va.gov](http://www.vetride.va.gov)
- **DAV Volunteer Transportation Network (VTN)**
  - For veterans not eligible Beneficiary Travel or NVTP. Trips must be scheduled at least two weeks in advance and is subject to volunteer availability.
  - Seattle: (206) 277-3884
  - American Lake: (253) 583-1343
- **Special Mode Transport**
  - Veterans needing special transport for appointments can call the Beneficiary Travel Dispatcher
  - (206) 764-2120 (option 2)

# Tribal Resources



## Lummi Nation Veterans Program

- Contact:
  - Phone: (360)758-9999,
  - Email: [DavidHJ@lummi-nsn.gov](mailto:DavidHJ@lummi-nsn.gov)

## Nooksack Indian Tribe Veterans Service Program

- Services: Benefits assistance, career services
- Contact:
  - Phone: (360) 592-5176
  - Website: [www.nooksacktribe.org/departments/veterans-program/](http://www.nooksacktribe.org/departments/veterans-program/)

## Tulalip Tribes Veteran Program

- Services: Assistance with VA benefits, Transportation to Healthcare and more.
- Contact:
  - Phone: (360) 716-4862,
  - Website: [www.tulaliptribes-nsn.gov/Dept/TulalipVeterans](http://www.tulaliptribes-nsn.gov/Dept/TulalipVeterans)

# Island County

## Veteran Service Providers

### 1. Island County Veterans Services (1791 1st Ave, Oak Harbor, WA 98277)

- Services: Emergency financial assistance, claims assistance
- Contact: Phone: (360) 246-4710; Email: [z.commit@islandcountywa.gov](mailto:z.commit@islandcountywa.gov), [t.howard@islandcountywa.gov](mailto:t.howard@islandcountywa.gov), or [d.mcinnis@islandcountywa.gov](mailto:d.mcinnis@islandcountywa.gov); Website: [islandcountywa.gov/200/Veterans-Assistance](http://islandcountywa.gov/200/Veterans-Assistance)

### 2. Opportunity Council Island County Services (231 SE Barrington Dr, Suite 100, Oak Harbor, WA)

- Services: Rental Assistance, Case Management, Employee Assistance, Financial Renter and Education Classes, Benefits Coordination, Homelessness Prevention, Housing Counseling
- Contact: Phone: (360) 679-6577, Website: [www.oppco.org/services-for-veterans/island-county/](http://www.oppco.org/services-for-veterans/island-county/)

### 3. Oak Harbor VA Clinic (3475 North Saratoga Street, Building 993, Oak Harbor, WA)

- Services: Primary care and specialty health services
- Contact: Phone: (800) 329-8387, Website: [va.gov/puget-sound-health-care/locations/oak-harbor-va-clinic/](http://va.gov/puget-sound-health-care/locations/oak-harbor-va-clinic/)

### 4. Whidbey Veterans Resource Center (723 Camano Ave, Langley, WA)

- Services: Job Assistance, Ride-Link Van Program, VA Benefit Assistance, Peer Support Groups
- Contact: Phone: (360) 331-8081, Email: [whidbeyvrc@gmail.com](mailto:whidbeyvrc@gmail.com) Website: [www.whidbeyvrc.org](http://www.whidbeyvrc.org)

## Educational Services

### 5. Skagit Valley College Veteran Resources (1900 SE Pioneer Way, Oak Harbor, WA)

- Contact: (360) 679-5392
- Website: <https://www.skagit.edu/student-resources/veterans-outreach/>

## Veteran Organizations

### 6. American Legion Post 207 (609 W Camano Dr, Camano Island, WA)

- Contact: Phone: (360) 387-5381, Email: [walegionpost207@gmail.com](mailto:walegionpost207@gmail.com)

### 7. American Legion Post 141 (14096 St Rt-525, Langley, WA)

- Contact: Phone: (360) 321-5696, Email: [post141@whidbey.com](mailto:post141@whidbey.com)

### 8. American Legion George Morris Post 129 (690 SE Barrington Dr, Oak Harbor, WA)

- Contact: Phone: (360) 675-2411, Email: [americanlegion29@comcast.net](mailto:americanlegion29@comcast.net)

### 9. Disabled American Veterans Chapter 47 (3037 N Goldie Rd, Oak Harbor, WA)

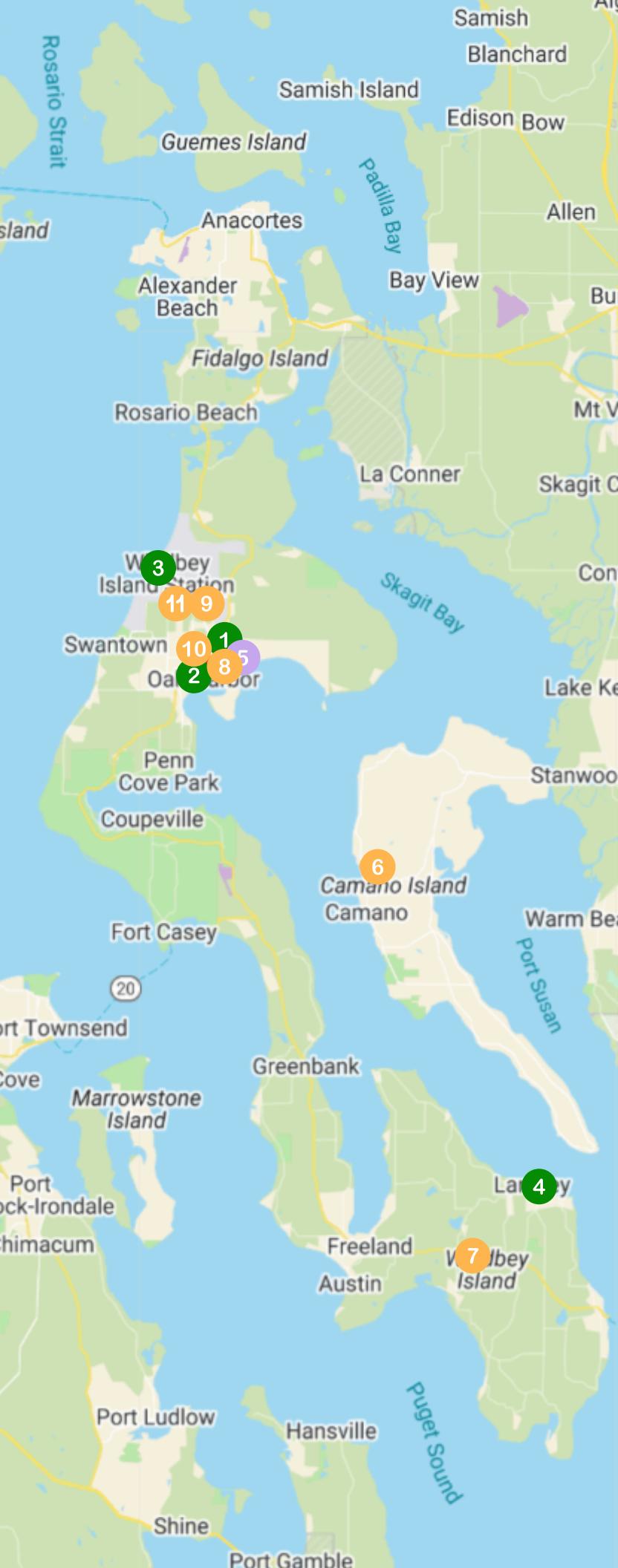
- Contact: Phone: (360) 682-2945 or (360) 682-2958, Website: [davchapter47.wixsite.com/dav47](http://davchapter47.wixsite.com/dav47)

### 10. Fleet Reserve Association Branch 97 (311 SE 8th Ave, Oak Harbor, WA)

- Contact: Phone: (360) 246-4710, Website: [franwregion.org](http://franwregion.org)

### 11. Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 7392 (3037 Goldie Road, Oak Harbor, WA)

- Contact: Phone: (360) 675-4048, Email: [vfwpost7392@gmail.com](mailto:vfwpost7392@gmail.com), Website: [vfw7392.org](http://vfw7392.org)





# Snohomish County

## Veteran Service Providers

- Snohomish County Veterans Assistance Program** (3000 Rockefeller Ave, Everett, WA 98201)
  - Services: Emergency Vouchers, Case Management, Alcohol and Drug Referrals, VA Medical Center Referrals, Claims Benefit Assistance, Employment Services
  - Contact: (425) 388-7255
- Everett Vet Center** (1010 SE Everett Mall Way #207, Everett, WA 98208)
  - Services: Counseling services
  - Contact: Phone: (425) 252-9701, Website: [www.va.gov/everett-vet-center/](http://www.va.gov/everett-vet-center/)
- Everett VA Clinic** (220 Olympic Blvd, Everett, WA 98023)
  - Services: Primary care and specialty health services
  - Contact: Phone: (800) 329-8387, Website: [www.va.gov/puget-sound-health-care/locations/everett-va-clinic/](http://www.va.gov/puget-sound-health-care/locations/everett-va-clinic/)
- Hooves and Heroes** (P.O. Box 251, Stanwood, WA 98292)
  - Services: Support services through equine-based experiences
  - Contact: Email: [info@hoovesandheroes.org](mailto:info@hoovesandheroes.org), Website: [www.hoovesandheroes.org](http://www.hoovesandheroes.org)

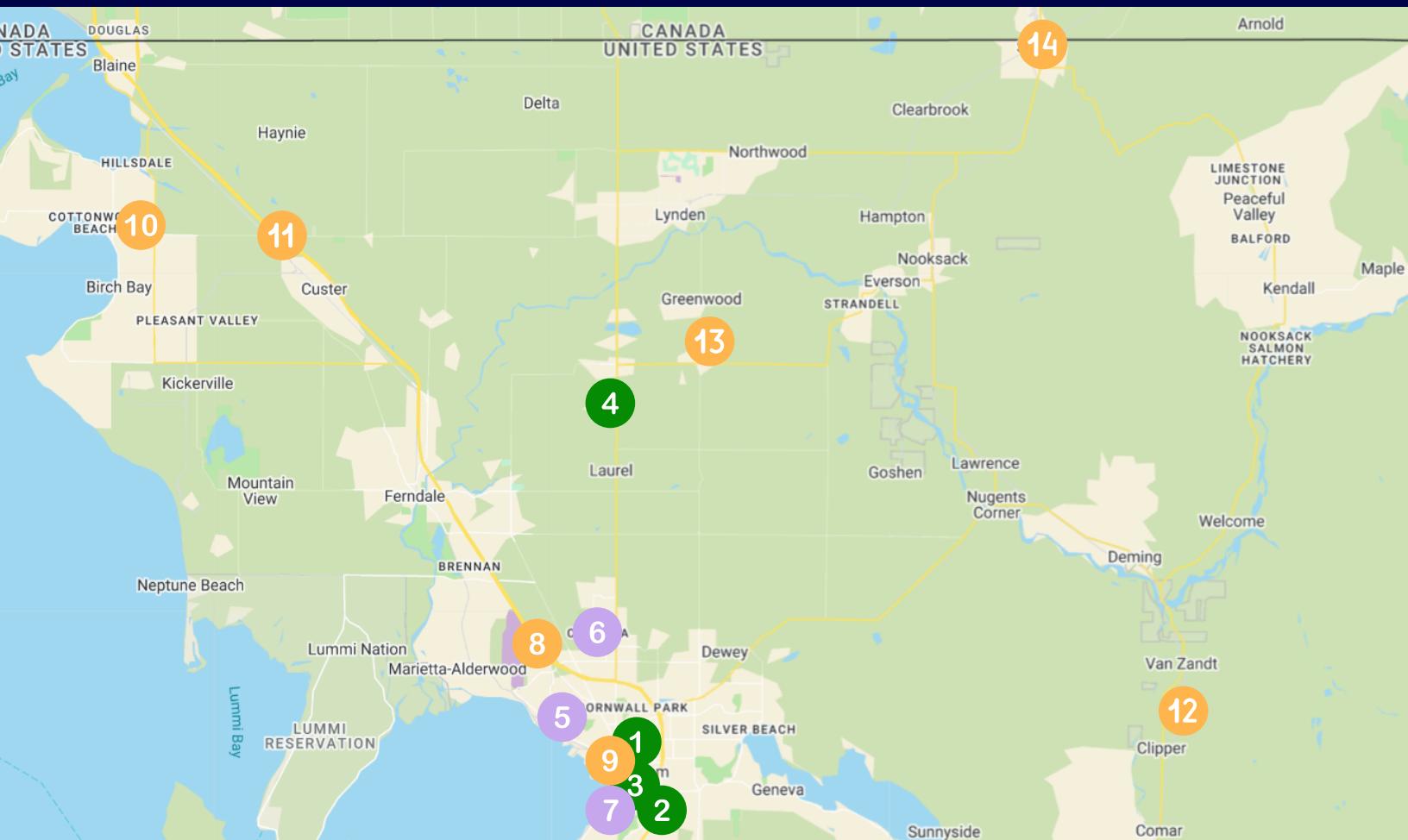
## Educational Services

- Everett Community College Veteran Resource Center** (2000 Tower Street, Everett, WA 98201)
  - Contact: Phone: (425) 388-9277 Email: [veterans@everettcc.edu](mailto:veterans@everettcc.edu) Website: [everettcc.edu/students/financial/veteran-center](http://everettcc.edu/students/financial/veteran-center)
- Washington State University Everett** (915 N Broadway, Everett, WA 98201)
  - Contact: Phone: (509) 335-1857 Email: [veterans@wsu.edu](mailto:veterans@wsu.edu) Website: <https://va.wsu.edu/pullman>
- Edmonds College Veteran Resource Center** (20000 68th Ave. W Lynnwood, WA 98036)
  - Contact: Phone: (425) 640-1502 or (425) 640-1775, Email: [angela.carranza@edmonds.edu](mailto:angela.carranza@edmonds.edu) or [matthew.durkee@edmonds.edu](mailto:matthew.durkee@edmonds.edu), Website: [edmonds.edu/student-services/veterans-resources/](http://edmonds.edu/student-services/veterans-resources/)

## Veteran Organizations

- American Legion Post 66** (117 6th Ave S, Edmonds, WA 98020)
  - Contact: Phone: (833) 924-4636, Email: [edmondsamlegionpost66@gmail.com](mailto:edmondsamlegionpost66@gmail.com)
- Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 2100** (2711 Oakes Ave Everett, WA 98201)
  - Contact: Phone: (425) 252-2100, Email: [vfwpost2100@yahoo.com](mailto:vfwpost2100@yahoo.com)
- Disabled Veterans of America Chapter 13** (19223 Hwy 99 Lynnwood WA 98036)
  - Contact: (425) 299-3373
- Heroes' Cafe** (6519 188<sup>th</sup> Street SW, Lynnwood WA)
  - Contact: Phone: (425) 770-6381, Email: [americanheroescafe@gmail.com](mailto:americanheroescafe@gmail.com)
- American Legion Frank H. Hancock Post 92** (26921 88th Ave NW, Stanwood, WA 98292)
  - Contact: (360) 629-2851, Email: [post92adjutant@gmail.com](mailto:post92adjutant@gmail.com)

# Whatcom County



## Veteran Service Providers

1. **Whatcom County Veterans Program** (509 Girard Street, Bellingham, WA 98225)

- Services: Help accessing mental healthcare, social services, employment services, financial assistance.
- Contact: Phone: 360-778-6050 or 360-410-5380, Email: [EWitowsk@whatcomcounty.us](mailto:EWitowsk@whatcomcounty.us) or [SDalgarn@co.whatcom.wa.us](mailto:SDalgarn@co.whatcom.wa.us)

2. **Bellingham Vet Center** (3800 Byron Ave, Unit 124, Bellingham, WA 98229)

- Services: Counseling services
- Contact: Phone: (360) 733-9226, Website: [www.va.gov/bellingham-vet-center/](http://www.va.gov/bellingham-vet-center/)

3. **Opportunity Council Whatcom County Services** (1111 Cornwall Ave, Bellingham, WA 98225)

- Services: Rental Assistance, Case Management, Employee Assistance, Financial Renter and Education Classes, Benefits Coordination, Homelessness Prevention, Housing Counseling, SSVF
- Contact: Phone: (360) 734-5121, Website: [www.oppco.org/services-for-veterans/whatcom-county/](http://www.oppco.org/services-for-veterans/whatcom-county/)

4. **Growing Veterans** (6458 Martin Pl, Lynden, WA 98264)

- Services: Agriculture-based veteran peer support and community engagement
- Contact: Phone: (360) 553-3577, Website: [www.growingveterans.org](http://www.growingveterans.org)

## Educational Services

5. **Bellingham Technical College Veterans Support** (3028 Lindbergh Ave, Bellingham, WA 98225)

- Contact: Phone: (360) 752-8387, Email: [veterans@btc.edu](mailto:veterans@btc.edu)

6. **Whatcom Community College Veteran Services Office** (237 W. Kellogg Road, Bellingham, WA 98226)

- Contact: Phone: (360) 383-3015, Email: [veterans@whatcom.edu](mailto:veterans@whatcom.edu)

7. **Western Washington University Veteran Services Office** (516 High St, Bellingham, WA 98225)

- Contact: Phone: (360) 650-3324, Website: <https://wp.wwu.edu/veteranservices/>

## Veteran Organizations

8. **American Legion Post 7** (1688 W Bakerview Rd, Bellingham, WA 98226)

- Contact: Phone: (360) 734-3110, Website: <https://bellinghamlegion.com/>

9. **William Matthews Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 1585** (625 N State St, Bellingham, WA 98225)

- Contact: Phone: (360) 734-5520, Website: <https://vfwpost1585.wordpress.com/>

10. **American Legion Post 86** (4580 Legion Dr, Blaine, WA 98230)

- Contact: Phone: (360) 371-7311, Website: [www.blainelegion.com](http://www.blainelegion.com)

11. **Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 9474** (8000 Portal Way Custer, WA 98240)

- Contact: (360) 393-3350

12. **American Legion Post 224** (3500 Nelson Rd Deming, WA 98244)

- Contact: (360) 595-2463

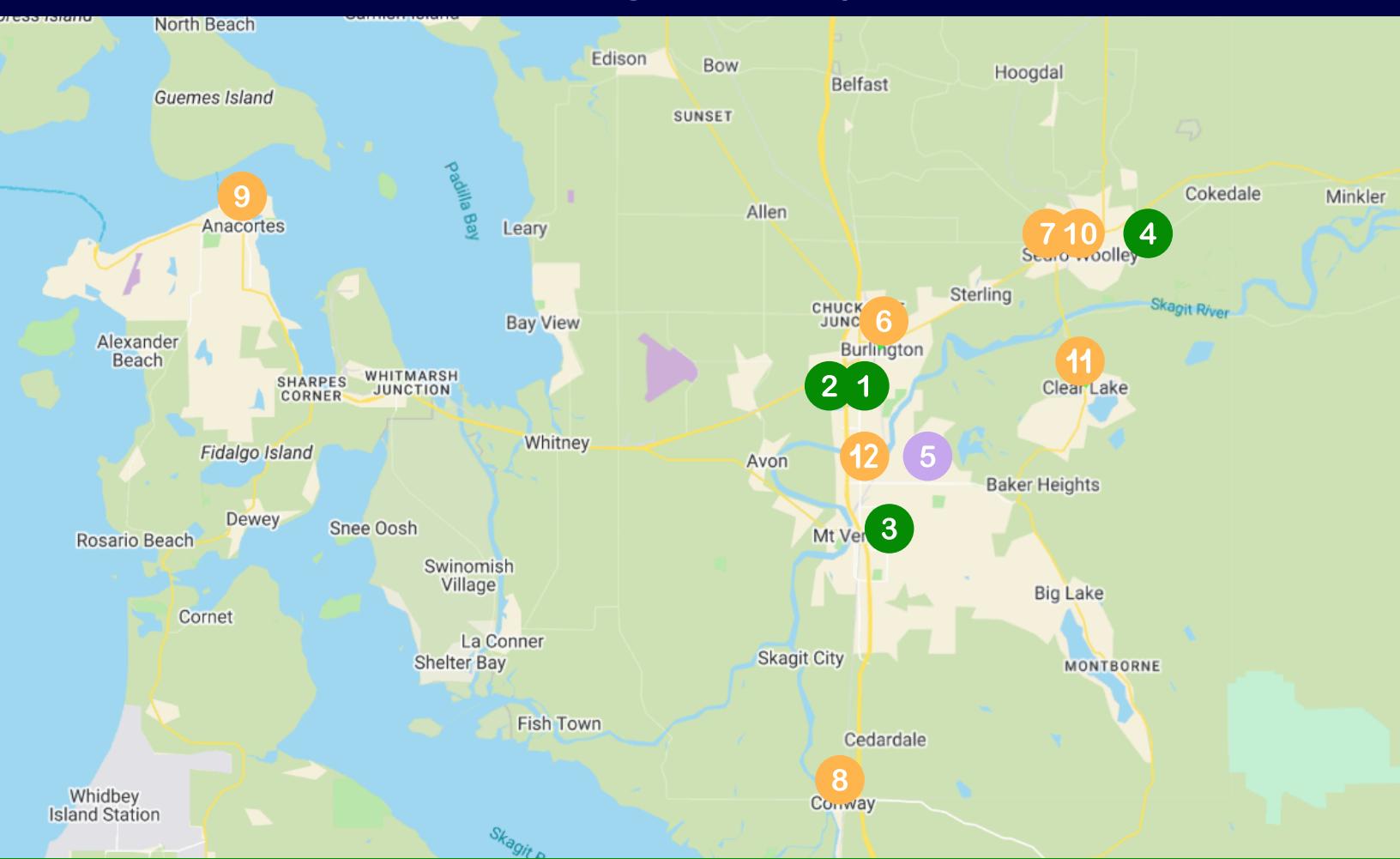
13. **Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 9301** (7011 Hannegan Road, Lynden, WA 98264)

- Contact: Post Commander (360) 220-2194, Auxiliary Services (360) 224-4123

14. **American Legion Post 212** (134 Harrison St, Sumas, WA 98295)

- Contact: Phone: (360) 988-2921, Email: [americanlegionsumas@gmail.com](mailto:americanlegionsumas@gmail.com)

# Skagit County



## Veteran Service Providers

### 1. Skagit County Veteran Services

- Services: Veteran Document support, Disability Compensation and Pension Claims, Elderly & Disabled Veteran & Widow Programs, Emergency Assistance and more.
- Contact: Phone: (360) 588-5156 or (360) 391-1512, Email: [cdiaz@co.Skagit.wa.us](mailto:cdiaz@co.Skagit.wa.us) or [michael.till@dva.wa.gov](mailto:michael.till@dva.wa.gov), Website: [skagitcounty.net/Departments/HumanServices/vets.htm](http://skagitcounty.net/Departments/HumanServices/vets.htm)

### 2. Skagit Vets Connect (160 Cascade Place Suite 104, Burlington, WA 98233)

- Services: Benefits assistance, emergency financial assistance, housing, SSVF, VASH
- Contact: Phone: (360) 588-5156, Website: [www.communityactionskagit.org/skagit-vets-connect/](http://www.communityactionskagit.org/skagit-vets-connect/)

### 3. Mount Vernon VA Clinic (307 S 13th St #300, Mount Vernon, WA 98274)

- Services: Primary care and specialty health services
- Contact: Phone: (360) 848-8500, Website [va.gov/puget-sound-health-care/locations/mount-vernon-va-clinic](http://va.gov/puget-sound-health-care/locations/mount-vernon-va-clinic)

### 4. Helping Hands (9386 Fruitdale Rd. Sedro-Woolley, WA 98284)

- Services: Food Bank, housing application assistance, resource navigation, Skagit Veterans Shuttle
- Contact: Phone: (360) 856-2211, Website: [helpinghandsskagit.org](http://helpinghandsskagit.org)

## Educational Services

### 5. Skagit Valley College Veteran Resources (2405 East College Way Mount Vernon, WA)

- Contact: (360) 416-7804
- Website: <https://www.skagit.edu/student-resources/veterans-outreach/>

## Veteran Organizations

### 6. American Legion Post 91 (721 E Fairhaven Ave #1914, Burlington, WA 98233)

- Contact: Phone: (360) 755-1202, Email: [burlingtonlegion91@gmail.com](mailto:burlingtonlegion91@gmail.com)

### 7. American Legion George Baldridge Post 43 (701 Murdock St Sedro Woolley, WA 98284)

- Contact: (360) 855-0520

### 8. American Legion Post Mason-McConkey 147 (18611 Main St Conway, WA 98238)

- Contact: [post147@mason-mcconkey.com](mailto:post147@mason-mcconkey.com)

### 9. Young-McCool VFW Post 12220 (1009 7th St Anacortes, WA 98221)

- Contact: (301) 906-1283

### 10. Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 5056 (702 Murdock St, Sedro-Woolley, WA 98284)

- Contact: (360) 840-5334

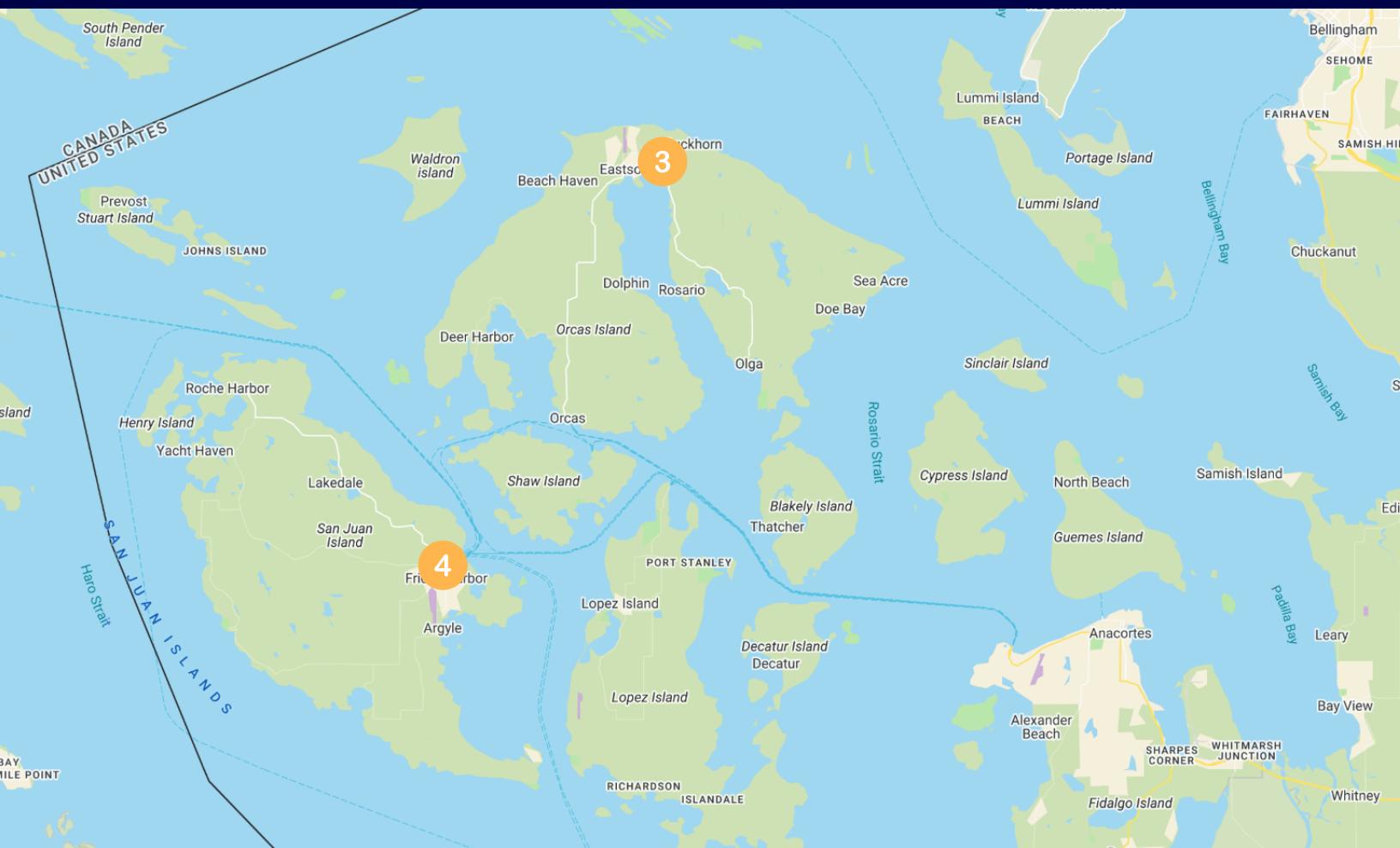
### 11. Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 1109 (Clear Lake)

- Contact: (360) 420-8513

### 12. Disabled Veterans of America Chapter 59 (2204 Riverside Dr, Mt. Vernon WA 98273)

- Contact: (360) 420-4046

# San Juan County



## Veteran Service Providers

### 1. San Juan County Veteran Advisory Board

- Services: Veterans Assistance Fund
- Contact:
  - Phone: (360) 298-6466
  - Email: [veterans@sanjuancountywa.gov](mailto:veterans@sanjuancountywa.gov)
  - Website: [sanjuancountywa.gov/575/Veterans-Advisory-Board](http://sanjuancountywa.gov/575/Veterans-Advisory-Board)

### 2. Opportunity Council

- Services: Rental Assistance, Case Management, Employee Assistance, Financial Renter and Education Classes, Benefits Coordination, Homelessness Prevention, Housing Counseling
- Contact:
  - Phone: (360) 679-6577
  - Website: [www.oppco.org/services-for-veterans/sanjuancounty/](http://www.oppco.org/services-for-veterans/sanjuancounty/)

## Veteran Organizations

### 3. American Legion Voyle B Martin Post 93 (793

Crescent Beach Dr, Eastsound, WA 98245)

- Contact:
  - Phone: (360) 376-4987
  - Website: <https://orciaslegion.org/>

### 4. American Legion Post 163 (110 First St N, Friday Harbor, WA 98250)

- Contact: Phone: (360) 378-5705