



AUGUST 2025

VETERANS ASSISTANCE COMMISSION
COOK COUNTY

MONTHLY MUSTER

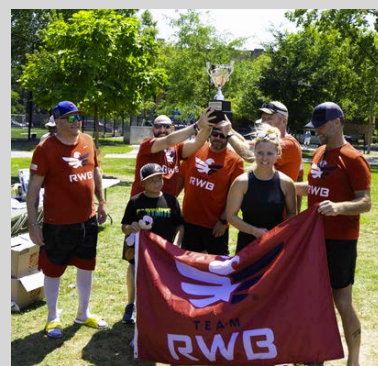


Chicago Veterans Family Fest & Softball Tournament

The VACCC was honored to be invited to table at the Chicago Veterans Family Fest & Softball Tournament, hosted by CEDA in partnership with several other Veteran-serving organizations from across Cook County. This exciting community event combined family fun with meaningful support, bringing Veterans and their loved ones together for a day of celebration, connection, and resources.

Alongside, Chicago Veterans Non-Profit, and the Chicago Mayor's Office of Veterans Affairs, the VACCC helped ensure that Veterans had direct access to valuable information on benefits, services, and programs designed to support their needs.

Representing the VACCC, Outreach Coordinator **Julian Calderon** spent the day engaging with attendees, answering questions, and connecting families with the resources they have earned. With a mix of friendly competition on the ballfield, community spirit, and a strong network of support, the event highlighted the power of partnership in uplifting and serving our Veteran community.





SUPERINTENDENT HIGHLIGHTS

As Superintendent of the Veterans Assistance Commission of Cook County (VACCC), my role is to ensure that our agency continues to deliver vital services, resources, and advocacy to Veterans and their families throughout Cook County. I am honored to oversee our VACCC programs alongside our Deputy Superintendent, supported by an exceptional team of Veteran Service Officers, Veteran Service Caseworkers, Administrative Assistants, and the Communications and Outreach team. I am deeply proud of their accomplishments this past month, which reflect not only their hard work but also their commitment to improving the lives of Veterans and their families across Cook County.

Over the past month, our VSO team has continued to exceed expectations by serving an exceptional number of Veterans, while our Outreach team has remained deeply engaged, extending their reach throughout Cook County by expanding community partnerships and increasing participation in local events. Just as importantly, our front office staff: Veteran Service Caseworkers and Administrative Assistants, handled the steady influx of Veterans visiting the VACCC office with professionalism and care, ensuring every qualified individual received their benefits.

August Agency Statistics – A Record-Breaking Month

We are also proud to share a historic milestone in VACCC history: in August 2025, **\$93,844.32** in direct financial assistance was provided to Veterans in Cook County. This is the highest amount ever recorded in our agency's history, a reflection of both the growing need in our county and the VACCC's commitment to answering that need.

- **Veterans In-Office Visits: 385**
- **Calls Handled: 416**
- **Outreach Events: 33**
- **New Veterans Engaged: 83**



Elizabeth D. Soto

Superintendent

Moving Forward

Our mission for September and the months ahead is clear: to continue to raise the bar for our Veteran community. Every benefit filed, every emergency need met, and every connection made within our network matters deeply. Our mission is to never rest on yesterday's accomplishments but to constantly strive for new ways to uplift and empower every Veteran who walks through our doors each day. Together, we will continue to make history by delivering essential services that empower Cook County Veterans, support families, and strengthen communities, one Veteran, one family, and one community at a time.





MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE BOARD



FRANK GUITIERREZ
PRESIDENT

The Board President of the Veterans Assistance Commission of Cook County (VACCC) serves as the lead officer of the Commission's governing board, providing oversight, guidance, and representation on behalf of the county's Veteran community. In this role, the President presides over board meetings, ensures compliance with the Military Veterans Assistance Act (MVAA), and helps set strategic priorities for how the Commission delivers emergency financial assistance, claims support, and outreach services to Veterans and their families across Cook County. The President also acts as a liaison between the Commission, County leadership, and member Veteran Service Organizations, advocating for resources, approving policies, and supporting initiatives that strengthen the VACCC's ability to fulfill its mission of honoring and assisting Veterans.



BILL BROWNE
VICE PRESIDENT

I serve as the First (1st) Vice President of the VACCC and assist the President, and if the president is absent shall stand in as Interim President.

I am proud to say that I have helped the executive board working with the VACCC to get additional funding for the VACCC and helping more Veterans in getting their benefits and service within Cook County.

I have been on the VACCC board for three years. My goal as an executive board member and delegate has been to get more Veteran service officers (VSO) in the southern suburbs identified to help the Veterans get information on their benefits and services for the southern area of Cook County.

Recently when VACCC came out with the increased services and financial amounts for services, it was a true example of what the purpose of the VACCC has accomplished to provide more services and increased financial amounts for the Veterans and their families. I have promoted these increased services and financial amounts to the Veteran organizations in my position as a VFW and American Legion member and to the other Veteran organizations as well.

The VACCC has provided more outreach services through the offices of the Cook County Commissioners and have started to house offices in more parts of Cook County. The existence of transportation to Hines Hospital to service Veterans has shown an increased outreach event to let more Veterans aware of the VACCC.

I am proud of the VACCC staff and all the outreach events and look forward to these events increasing and being an aid to the Veteran organizations in Cook County.

Bill Browne
VACCC delegate and 1st. Vice President to the VACCC Board



MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE BOARD



Dutch Degroot
2ND VICE PRESIDENT

One may wonder what the 2nd Vice President does. Per our by-laws, "The Second (2nd) Vice President of the VACCC shall be responsible for vetting organization applicants for membership. He/she shall also assist the President and First Vice President as needed".

Keeping track of membership and organizing the quarterly meetings is a large task. As you know per the Military Veterans Assistance Act, enrollment is from 1 January until the last day of February of each year. I also get the word out to every post in Cook County and the surrounding area (if a post has 25% Cook County resident members, they also qualify). With 51 current organizations and almost a hundred delegates/alternates, it is a large task. Also, any time of the year, the top official of the organization can change delegates.

The next goal, besides increasing membership this September, is to make sure we have the resources to continue the mission of the VACCC and to make sure we have the funds to continue hiring staff. The budget is being presented, and I would ask all of you to appear at our future October budget meeting

(TBD) in person or at least to contact your Cook County Commissioner. We are still far behind in getting the many Veterans and families the help they need.

Being a member organization of the VACCC has responsibilities, but the impact is massive. We cannot exist without you, our dedicated members. I thank you all for electing me to this position and consider it an honor to serve as your 2nd VP.

Dutch DeGroot
VACCC delegate and 2nd. Vice President to the VACCC Board



Robert Arciola
Treasurer

As Treasurer of the Veterans Assistance Commission of Cook County (VACCC), my role is to ensure that our membership finances and reports are secure, accurate, kept in order, properly submitted, and serve as a voting member on the VACCC Executive Board. As a Board Member, I am honored to help provide insight on matters, question, support, and advise our Supervisor and her exceptional team of staff members. I am deeply proud of our commitment, collaboration, and accomplishments reflecting the changes to improving the lives of Veterans and their families across Cook County.

Over the past month, our Attorney General provided a video presentation in which I was please to join. The presentation focused on funding Veterans Assistance Commissions in the Military Veterans Assistance Act (MVAA). The presentation was clear and very informative.

As an Executive Board member of our VAC, it's imperative we join in such presentations to keep ourselves well informed to help gain knowledge, provide insight when necessary, and make proper decisions. Another responsibility that I'm responsible for is to serve on VACCC committees where needed.

Annual Reporting/IRS Filing – A Recording Requirement

We are required to file an Annual Report to the Illinois Secretary of State office online. This reporting records our active board, officers, addresses, business address, and contact information. Our nonprofit membership is required to report by November 1st to keep in good standing with the SOS. If not, delinquency notices are sent.

Looking Ahead – A Continued Commitment

Over the next few months I plan on submitting the Annual Report to the SOS as mentioned above, and file taxes with the IRS in January. Our mission as a nonprofit 501 C 3 is to provide support to the eligible Veterans and families defined under MVAA where they have no authorized resources, and where we can to help Veterans living in Cook County. I will continue to serve in my capacity attending Executive Board and Membership Meetings, and on committees. One accomplishment that I look forward to is to volunteer on the bylaw committee of which I been on in recent years, and resolving the renaming, redefining the mission, and establishing goals for the nonprofit. These few tasks take time and sometimes assistance of others. I look forward to working with everyone involved and hope that together we can strive to serve more Veterans with more service.



FEATURE STORY

OAK LAWN VA CLINIC RESOURCE EVENT

The VACCC was excited to be invited to table a resource event hosted by the Oak Lawn VA Clinic to bring much-needed support and resources directly to local Veterans. The event created a welcoming space where Veterans could connect with organizations dedicated to their well-being, learn about available programs, and receive hands-on assistance tailored to their needs.

Representing the VACCC, Veteran Service Manager **Derek Giffin** spent the day meeting one-on-one with Veterans, answering questions, assisting with claims, and providing clear guidance on the wide range of benefits and services available to them. His presence ensured that Veterans walked away not only with valuable information but also with the confidence that they have advocates ready to help them navigate the process. Events like this highlight the importance of bringing resources directly into the community. The VACCC is proud to partner with the Oak Lawn VA Clinic in making sure that every Veteran knows where to turn for the support they have earned.



NATIONAL NIGHT OUT WITH HINES VA POLICE AND SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

The Veterans Assistance Commission of Cook County (VACCC) participated in the annual National Night Out Resource Fair, held on the Hines VA Hospital campus, and hosted by the Hines VA Police in partnership with the Cook County Sheriff's Department. The event served as a showcase of collaboration between the two law enforcement agencies, aimed at bringing community resources directly to Veterans and their families. The fair featured a wide range of service providers offering information on programs and support systems tailored to the Veteran community. Attendees had the opportunity to connect with organizations, learn about available benefits, and discover new ways to access healthcare, housing, and other critical resources.

Representing the VACCC, our Communications and Outreach Manager **Conner Intress** connected Veterans with resources and shared details about the VACCC's VSO and Emergency Financial Services. His participation ensured that Veterans were not only informed of the resources available to them but also had a direct connection to the VACCC itself. Events like National Night Out highlight the importance of community partnerships in strengthening support for Veterans and their families. For the VACCC, being included in this effort was both an honor and a reaffirmation of its ongoing mission: to serve those who have served.





UPCOMING EVENTS

OFFICE HOURS

VETERANS ASSISTANCE COMMISSION COOK COUNTY

SEP, 2

36TH WARD 12:00 PM - 4:00 PM
6560 W FULLERTON AVE UNIT #C118 - SUITE A, CHICAGO, IL 60707

SEP, 3

45TH WARD 10:00 AM - 2:00 AM
5460 N MILWAUKEE AVE, CHICAGO, IL 60630

SEP, 4

15TH DISTRICT 12:00 PM - 4:00 PM
5460 N MILWAUKEE AVE, CHICAGO, IL 60630

SEP, 8

WORTH TOWNSHIP PRESENTATION 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM
11601 S PULASKI RD, ALSIP, IL 60803

SEP, 9

15TH WARD 12:00 PM - 4:00 PM
2650 WEST 51ST STREET, CHICAGO, IL 60632

SEP, 10

6TH DISTRICT 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM
14037 LINCOLN AVE, DOLTON, IL 60419

1ST DISTRICT 12:00 PM - 4:00 PM
6614 W. NORTH AVE, CHICAGO, IL 60302

SEP, 12

14TH DISTRICT 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM
1812 WAUKEGAN ROAD, GLENVIEW IL 60025

47TH WARD 12:00 PM - 4:00PM
4243 N LINCOLN AVE, CHICAGO, IL 60618

SEP, 15

41ST WARD 12:00 PM - 4:00 PM
7231 W TOUHY AVE, CHICAGO, IL 60631

SEP, 16

8TH DISTRICT 12:00 PM-4:00 PM
2934 N. MILWAUKEE AVE. UNIT C CHICAGO ,IL 60618

SEP, 17

5TH DISTRICT 10:00 AM-2:00 AM
3039B WEST 159TH STREET MARKHAM, ILLINOIS 60428
HOUSE DISTRICT 51 ST 06:30 PM-7:30 PM
PALATINE PUBLIC LIBRARY, 700 N NORTH COURT

SEP, 18

30TH WARD 12:00 PM - 4:00 PM
5418 W BELMONT AVE, CHICAGO, IL 60641

SEP, 20

34TH WARD 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM
115 S SANGAMON ST, CHICAGO, IL 60607-2615

SEP, 23

16TH DISTRICT 12:00 PM- 4:00 AM
7833 OGDEN AVE. LYONS, IL 60534

SEP, 24

19TH WARD 12:00 PM- 4:00 AM
3207 W. 111TH ST. CHICAGO, IL, 60655
49TH WARD 12:00 PM- 4:00 AM
1447 W MORSE AVE, CHICAGO, IL 60626

SEP, 25

4TH WARD 12:00 PM- 4:00 AM
5050 S INDIANA AVE, CHICAGO, IL 60615

SEP, 26

11TH WARD 12:00 PM- 4:00 AM
3659 S. HALSTED ST. CHICAGO, IL 60609

SEP, 30

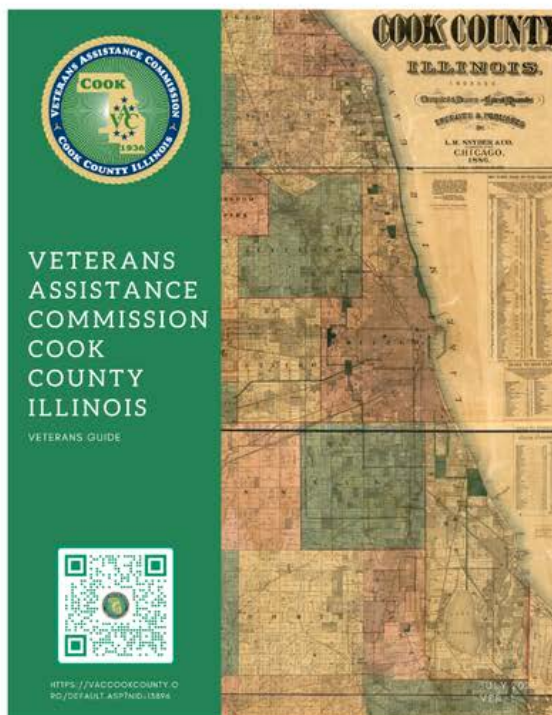
36TH WARD 12:00 PM - 4: 00 PM
6560 W FULLERTON AVE UNIT #C118 - SUITE A, CHICAGO, IL 60707





RESOURCES & ASSISTANCE

Please Scan for a Digital Copy
Veterans Assistance Commission Cook County
Veterans Guide





CONTACT US



COOK COUNTY JUVENILE TEMPORARY DETENTION CENTER



1100 S. HAMILTON AVE, C-011 (LL)
CHICAGO, IL 60612



(312) 433-6010



VACCC@COOKCOUNTYIL.GOV

HOURS OF OPERATION
MONDAY- FRIDAY 8:30 AM- 3:00 PM
CLOSED WEEKENDS

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with us



VACCC

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22](https://hovqr.to/85B40922)

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us on our social media



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To speak to a
representative and
learn more about our
services, please scan
QR code or visit

[https://hovqr.to/d
e421623](https://hovqr.to/d
e421623)