MONTHLY MUSTER

NEWSLETTER

VACCC Assists at County Jail

Fallen Heroes Portrait of a Soldier

3rd Quarter, 2026 Meeting



https://vaccookcounty.org

VETERANS ASSISTANCE COMMISSION OF COOK COUNTY

SEPTEMEBER 2026 RECAP

VACCC Supports Veterans at County Jail

September 8, 2026 | Chicago, IL

On September 8, 2026, the VACCC Communications and Outreach Manager Conner Intress attended the Cook County Jail Resource Fair to provide assistance and guidance to incarcerated Veterans preparing for release or navigating the judicial process. The outreach effort focused on reaching an often-overlooked and underserved segment of the Veteran community, ensuring that individuals facing incarceration are not forgotten and remain connected to the benefits, services, and support they have earned through their military service. Through direct engagement, the office provided information about available VA benefits, the claims process, and local support services that can help Veterans prepare for a successful transition back into their communities. The event also provided an opportunity to address a significant challenge facing justice-involved Veterans: navigating the often-complicated process of accessing benefits and rebuilding stability following incarceration. By helping Veterans understand how to initiate disability compensation claims, reconnect with VA healthcare, and identify available housing, employment, and financial assistance resources, the VACCC sought to establish a pathway toward greater independence and long-term stability. This outreach reflects the VACCC's broader commitment to serving all Veterans throughout Cook County, regardless of their circumstances, and ensuring that those preparing to reenter civilian society have access to the tools, information, and assistance necessary to move forward successfully.



Conner Intress, Communications and Outreach Manager, speaking to incarcerated Veteran.



Deputy Superintendent Grant Jacobson speaking at the event.

VACCC Honors Fallen Heroes at Portrait of a Soldier

September 9, 2026 | Chicago, IL

On September 9, 2026, the VACCC proudly participated in the Portrait of a Soldier Memorial Exhibit Launch at the Richard J. Daley Center in downtown Chicago. VACCC Deputy Superintendent Grant Jacobson joined former Illinois Governor Pat Quinn, Cook County Commissioner Donna Miller, Commissioner John Daley, and Cook County Department of Veterans Affairs Director Calvin Young for this solemn occasion honoring Illinois service members who made the ultimate sacrifice. During the ceremony, Jacobson had the opportunity to address attendees, reflecting on the importance of remembering our fallen heroes, recognizing their service, and ensuring their sacrifices are never forgotten.

The Portrait of a Soldier Memorial features hand-drawn portraits of approximately 300 Illinois service members killed in action, offering a deeply personal tribute to the men and women who gave their lives in service to our nation. Originally launched in 2004, the traveling exhibit has served as a powerful reminder of the human cost of war and the families and communities forever changed by these losses. Held just ahead of the 25th anniversary of September 11, the ceremony carried particular significance, bringing together community leaders, Veterans, and residents in remembrance. The VACCC was honored to participate in this meaningful tribute, reaffirming its commitment to preserving the legacy of our fallen service members and supporting the Veteran community they leave behind.

VACCC Highlights Growth and Future Plans at 3rd Quarter Meeting

September 22, 2026 | Brookfield, IL



Superintendent Elizabeth Soto speaking to the Commission.

On September 22, 2026, the VACCC held its Third Quarter Commission and Budget Meeting at VFW Post 2868 in Brookfield. Led by Superintendent Elizabeth D. Soto, VACCC leadership presented a comprehensive overview of the organization's progress, operational improvements, and continued growth throughout 2026. The presentation highlighted advancements in Veteran benefits assistance, emergency financial services, community outreach, and organizational efficiency. Among the accomplishments discussed were improvements to internal intake systems, the development of the VACCC Volunteer Corps, and continued efforts to expand access to services for Veterans and their families throughout Cook County. Looking toward 2027, Superintendent Soto outlined an ambitious vision for the organization's future, emphasizing expanded staffing, regional office development, and greater accessibility to Veteran services. Key priorities included the planned opening of a Northwest Regional Office in Rolling Meadows, future expansion into Cook County's south suburban communities, and strengthening the Commission's capacity to assist Veterans with benefits claims and financial emergencies. The Commission voted and approved the FY27 budget recommendation for submission at the conclusion of the event. The meeting reflected the VACCC's commitment to transparency, responsible growth, and continuous improvement, ensuring that the organization remains prepared to meet the evolving needs of Cook County's Veteran community.

CONNECT WITH US!

Contact Us

(312) 433-6010

vaccc@cookcountyil.gov

https://vaccookcounty.org

Our Locations

Headquarters Office
1100 S. Hamilton Ave, C-O11 LL Chicago, IL. 60612

Chicago Regional Office
69 W. Washington St., Suite 1420, Chicago, IL 60602

Hours Of Operations

Monday - Friday
8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Benefits window closes by
3:00 p.m. (Headquarters Office)

Follow us on social media

Intake Form