

# **TEXAS VETERANS NEEDS ASSESSMENT 2020: COMPREHENSIVE STUDY FINDINGS**



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March, 2021



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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Texas Veterans Commission (TVC) contracted with the Public Policy Research Institute at Texas A&M University to conduct the state mandated Needs Assessment (sec 434.017 of the Texas Government Code) to help set priorities for TVC's FVA (Funds for Veteran Assistance) grants.

In conducting the needs assessment study, PPRI deeply appreciates all the veterans who took the time to respond to online surveys and who graciously participated in the regional focus groups. We could not have conducted this study without their assistance. In addition, we want to acknowledge the numerous veteran serving organizations that responded to the online surveys and shared their experiences and opinions about veteran needs and TVC services and grants with PPRI. Our thanks also go to TexVet for their assistance with placing the veterans needs survey on their website.

We are particularly grateful for the gracious and thoughtful assistance from Jim Bracken and Elizabeth Webster from TVC. They helped with significant input, creative suggestions and helpful feedback to refine the various aspects of the project including instrument development, survey focus group recruitment, contract amendment and revision of timelines due to the COVID pandemic, as well as obtaining the sample for the summer 2020 veterans needs assessment survey from another agency. Our special thanks go to the other TVC staff members who attended the multiple focus groups and assisted PPRI research staff and Texas veterans during the focus group sessions to clarify TVC services in each FVA region and handle service related questions from the veterans.

At the Public Policy Research Institute, as always, special thanks go to all members of the research team who helped with various aspects of the study as well as the final report development. Our thanks also go to Qualtrics for aggregating the panel for the veterans panel survey.



## ABOUT THE PUBLIC POLICY RESEARCH INSTITUTE

The Public Policy Research Institute (PPRI) at Texas A&M University is an applied, policy-relevant research organization. PPRI was established by the Texas Legislature during fiscal year 1983 as a Special Item appropriation to provide relevant scientific research to the Texas legislature as well as various federal, regional, state, and community agencies actively engaged in determining public policy.

During the last 37 years, PPRI personnel have successfully designed and implemented scientifically sound research strategies that examined the effectiveness of existing governmental programs and policies, and provided scientific foundations to aid policy makers in the development of new policies.

Program evaluation and needs assessment studies constitute a significant component of PPRI work portfolio. Combined with a notable history of evaluating numerous consequential grant funded initiatives at the state and national level, PPRI's breadth and depth of knowledge and capabilities in statewide program evaluation and needs assessment work have established the agency as a leading interdisciplinary government and social policy research organization. PPRI has considerable expertise in integrating document reviews, surveys, focus groups, interviews, case studies and program specific accountability and program performance data tailored to the needs of each client. The institute is known for using cutting-edge quantitative and qualitative methodologies and software to reach impact related conclusions for decision making and policy reforms by government agencies.

### STUDY RESEARCH TEAM

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Texas Veterans Commission (TVC) contracted with the Public Policy Research Institute at Texas A&M in July 2019 to conduct a needs assessment study to identify the pressing needs of Texas veterans and their families. PPRI has addressed this goal using standard validated social science methods that included the following:

- A Texas Veterans Needs Assessment Survey conducted via two methodologies and samples in December 2019-January 2020 and June 2020 with a total dataset of 15,664 fully completed responses
- A Texas Veterans Organizational Needs Survey conducted in December 2019-January 2020
- An asset mapping of veteran resource inventories in Texas conducted in April-June 2020
- A series of 17 focus groups with Texas veterans and families during October-December 2020 with a total sample of 201 focus group participants

All protocols for the above components were developed in close coordination with TVC staff. For each of the above methodological components, PPRI submitted a detailed report to TVC at the completion of data collection and analysis. A list of these reports are included in the Appendices. This final comprehensive report triangulates data from all the above sources to present the key findings on Texas veterans needs for each FVA region. Based on the findings, a list of actionable suggestions and recommendations are included in the conclusion.



## KEY FINDINGS BY FVA REGION

The report organizes key findings from each FVA region based on the triangulation of data for cross-reference, reconfirmation, convergence and validation of thematic information that emerged from all collected data sources. All percentages referenced describe the proportion of veteran survey respondents from that particular FVA region, who selected a certain response as a high or important need/barrier.

Unlike the other need questions asked in the survey which listed set responses, an open ended response format was used to assess unmet regional needs. This format allowed each respondent to answer with any concern or problem, not just pre-determined items. Consequently, the response rate for this item was relatively low. Because participants were not required to select a rating for a subset of needs, many respondents either did not provide a response, or stated that they, “did not know” when asked to list two important unmet needs for their area. Percentages for the unmet needs reflect the proportion of total survey respondents for that region who indicated a given need as an important unmet need for their area.

PPRI did not have access to any database from which to sample actual number of veterans or sub populations of veterans in each FVA region. Therefore, there was no way to obtain and confirm a representative sample of veterans from each FVA region. The samples obtained varied in size depending on the population size of the region, resulting in relatively small samples for regions such as the Panhandle and West Texas. This is why it was not feasible to adequately test for some subgroup differences in top needs at the regional level.

### FVA REGION 1 - PANHANDLE

- Data Sources: Veterans Survey (N=577), Focus Groups (N=21), Organizational Survey (N=25) & Asset Mapping of Veteran Serving Organizations (N= 27).
- The convergence and comparison of data sources indicate that the top FVA grant needs belong to two categories: emotional/psychological and financial needs. Specifically, the top FVA grant needs include clinical counseling services (55%), veteran employment services (53%), and short-term financial assistance (34%).
- Responses to both the veterans and organizational surveys indicate that healthcare support (5%) and short-term financial assistance (2%) are important unmet needs for the Panhandle region. The focus group participants indicated that there is a lack of awareness about support services available, and it can be difficult to obtain specialty care.
- Veterans and organizational survey respondents agreed that the lack of services available (27%) in the Panhandle region presents a barrier to obtaining services. In alignment, focus group participants indicated that the lack of understanding of benefits coverage is an important barrier to obtaining services. Other important needs largely centered on a lack of information, resources, and awareness.
- Transportation services (2%) also arose as an important need for the Panhandle region. It was indicated as an important unmet need by veterans and an important barrier to accessing services by organizations.



- For Panhandle veterans, healthcare support refers primarily to overall access to health services and resources, knowledge of benefits, and help navigating hurdles to obtaining health services.

## FVA REGION 2 – WEST TEXAS

- Data Sources: Veterans Survey (N=524), Focus Groups (N=18), Organizational Survey (N=25), & Asset Mapping of Veteran Serving Organizations (N= 28).
- The analysis of data indicated that the top FVA grant needs include clinical counseling services (55%), veteran employment services (53%), integrative therapies (40%), short-term financial assistance (34%), and home modification assistance (30%). The focus group participants suggested that counseling services are important due to Fort Bliss and the large amount of recently deployed veterans.
- Veterans and organizational survey respondents agreed that healthcare support (3%) and short-term financial assistance (3%) are important unmet needs for the West Texas region as well as clinical counseling services (3%) and VA disability claims assistance (2%). In alignment with organizational survey results, focus group participants emphasized the importance of housing needs for homeless veterans.
- Focus group participants echoed the veterans finding that inadequate understanding of benefits (33%), difficulty getting appointments (31%), anxiety (31%), not knowing where to get help (31%), and few service providers in the area (28%) are barriers to obtaining services.
- For West Texas veterans, healthcare support primarily refers to overall access to health services and resources, knowledge of benefits, and help navigating hurdles to obtaining health services.

## FVA REGION 3 - ALAMO

- Data Sources: Veterans survey (N=2832), Focus Groups (N=31), Organizational Survey (N=39), & Asset Mapping of Veteran Serving Organizations (N=40).
- The convergence of veterans survey and focus group data indicate that clinical counseling services (57%) and integrative therapies (35%) are high priority FVA grant needs. Focus group participants also agreed that employment services (52%), short-term financial assistance (35%), and home modification assistance (30%) are important FVA grant needs.
- Unmet needs for the region include clinical counseling services (2%), healthcare support (2%), and VA disability claims assistance (2%), and integrative therapies (2%). Focus group participants also indicated that housing is an important unmet need due to the large population of homeless veterans residing in San Antonio, TX
- The lack of awareness of services (28%), the difficulty in getting appointments (27%), anxiety (21%), and the dearth of service providers in the area (17%) serve as barriers to obtaining services for Alamo veterans. Focus group participants mentioned that anxiety is common with veterans and can make other needs such as accessing services, understanding benefits, and making appointments more difficult



- Focus group participants in the Alamo explained that healthcare support primarily refers to assistance navigating the VA and finding services, transportation to appointments, and having a person to help with navigating services and understanding individual levels of support based on an individual's status.

## **FVA REGION 4 – SOUTH TEXAS**

- Veterans survey (N=751), Focus Groups (N=23), Organizational Survey (N=31), & Asset Mapping of Veteran Serving Organizations (N=34).
- A thorough examination of the data sources show clinical counseling services (55%), veteran employment services (47%), and short-term financial assistance (34%), integrative therapies (33%), and home modification assistance (31%) emerged as top FVA grant needs for South Texas veterans. However, focus group participants emphasized that the importance of needs did not matter without assistance in navigating the existing resources available to address those needs
- Data sources indicated that healthcare support (4%), VA disability claims assistance (2%), and housing assistance (mentioned by organizations and focus group participants) are important unmet needs for South Texas veterans. Focus group participants stipulated that most veterans do not understand the process for filing disability benefits claims.
- Knowing where to get help/awareness of services (34%) was expressed as an important barrier by veterans and organizational survey respondents. All other barriers centered on a need for information and resources.
- Focus group participants in this region explained that healthcare support primarily includes assisting with the difficulty of obtaining VA healthcare and educating veterans on how to navigate the VA health care system.

## **FVA REGION 5 – GULF COAST**

- Veterans survey (N=2798), Focus Groups (N=26), Organizational Survey (N=47), & Asset Mapping of Veteran Serving Organizations (N=54).
- The data overall suggest that the top FVA grant needs for Gulf Coast veterans are clinical counseling services (56%), employment services (54%), and short-term financial assistance (38%), integrative therapies (31%) and home modification assistance (27%). Focus group participants expressed that employment services are especially important due to the pandemic.
- Healthcare support (2%) arose as a top unmet regional need among all data sources. Veterans survey respondents and focus group participants also agreed that clinical counseling services (2%), veteran employment services (2%), and VA disability claims assistance (2%) were top unmet needs for the region.
- The top barriers obtained from all data sources related to a lack of information. Inadequate understanding of benefits (35%), not knowing where to get help (32%), difficulty getting appointments (27%), anxiety (23%), and potential costs (22%) were all indicated as important barriers to accessing services.



- For Gulf Coast veterans, healthcare support primarily refers to easy access to information including where and how to access services and assistance with navigating the health care system and having services localized and available in every community.
- Veterans survey (N=2798), Focus Groups (N=26), Organizational Survey (N=47), & Asset Mapping of Veteran Serving Organizations (N=54).
- The data analysis shows that the top FVA grant needs for Gulf Coast veterans are clinical counseling services (56%), employment services (54%), and short-term financial assistance (38%), integrative therapies (31%) and home modification assistance (27%). Focus group participants expressed that employment services are especially important due to the pandemic.
- Healthcare support (2%) arose as a top unmet regional need among all data sources. Veterans survey respondents and focus group participants also agreed that clinical counseling services (2%), veteran employment services (2%), and VA disability claims assistance (2%) were top unmet needs for the region.
- The top barriers obtained from all data sources related to a lack of information. Inadequate understanding of benefits (35%), not knowing where to get help (32%), difficulty getting appointments (27%), anxiety (23%), and potential costs (22%) were all mentioned as important barriers to accessing services.
- For Gulf Coast veterans, healthcare support primarily refers to easy access to information including where and how to access services and assistance with navigating the health care system and having services localized and available in every community.

## FVA REGION 6 – CENTRAL TEXAS

- Veterans survey (N=2686), Focus Groups (N=25), Organizational Survey (N=84), & Asset Mapping of Veteran Serving Organizations (N=86).
- The totality of data indicates that clinical counseling services (61%), veteran employment services (55%), and short-term financial assistance (35%) are important FVA grant needs for Central Texas veterans.
- The data examination shows that Healthcare support (3%), clinical counseling services (3%), VA disability claims assistance (3%), and short-term financial assistance (2%) were all designated as top unmet needs for the Central Texas region. Focus group participants emphasized that short-term financial assistance is an especially high priority need due to the financial stress caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Inadequate understanding of benefits (32%), not knowing where to get help (30%), anxiety (23%), and the number of service providers (22%) in the area were all identified as important barriers to obtaining services.
- For Central Texas veterans, healthcare support primarily refers to access timely care, patient advocacy, assistance making appointments, an understanding of the healthcare options available, holistic care, and transportation assistance.



## FVA REGION 7 – EAST TEXAS

- Veterans survey (N=963), Focus Groups (N=21), Organizational Survey (N=25), & Asset Mapping of Veteran Serving Organizations (N=35).
- Data analysis reveals clinical counseling services (53%), veteran employment assistance (49%), short-term financial assistance (31%), integrative therapies (30%) and home modification assistance (29%) as the top FVA grant supported needs for East Texas veterans.
- Healthcare support services (4%) immersed as an important unmet need across all data sources. Other agreed upon needs included clinical counseling services (3%), veteran employment services (2%), and short-term financial assistance (2%). Focus group participants noted that short-term financial assistance has become increasingly important due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Top service barriers obtained from each data source centered on the availability of information and resources. Specifically, top barriers included few providers of services (37%), lack of services (37%), inadequate understanding of benefits (32%), not knowing where to get help (30%), and difficulty getting appointments (27%).
- For East Texas veterans, healthcare support primarily refers to access to services, resources, knowledge about services and eligibility; there needs to be a better, more systematic way of communicating information about support resources to veterans.

## FVA REGION 8 – NORTH TEXAS

- Veterans survey (N=4328), Focus Groups (N=25), Organizational Survey (N=80), & Asset Mapping of Veteran Serving Organizations (N=85).
- The convergence of veterans survey and focus group data indicate that clinical counseling services (56%), veteran employment services (53%), short-term financial assistance (35%), integrative therapies (31%) and home modification assistance (27%) are high priority FVA grant needs. Focus group participants asserted that clinical counseling needs should be addressed in order to address other issues. They also advocated strongly for the needs of veterans experiencing homelessness.
- Healthcare support services (3%), clinical counseling services (2%), short-term financial assistance (2%), and employment services (2%) immersed as the top unmet needs for the North Texas region. In alignment with the results of the organizational survey, focus group participants considered the needs of homeless veterans to be an important unmet need as well as military sexual trauma services.
- The totality of data indicate that inadequate understanding of benefits (33%), not knowing where to get help (31%), difficulty getting appointments (27%), potential costs (22%), few service providers (22%), and transportation are important barriers to accessing services for North Texas veterans. Focus group participants expressed that transportation in urban areas was nonexistent or inadequate, and transportation in rural areas could often be located far away from service providers.
- For North Texas veterans, healthcare support primarily refers to the entire process of accessing health care resources, support should remove barriers to obtain care from specialists and decrease wait time for care.





## ADDITIONAL KEY FINDINGS

- The rank order of important personal needs differed as a function of veteran employment status and there were similarities across the 8 FVA grant regions.
- For **employed individuals** in each region, VA disability claims assistance (27%) was identified as the top personal need. Assistance receiving VA healthcare (21%), business startup assistance and training (19%), and integrative therapies (18%) were also named as important needs for employed veterans.
- Employment services (58%) was designated as the primary need for **unemployed veterans** followed by business startup assistance and training (38%) and VA disability claims assistance (35%) in no particular order.
- For **retired veterans**, VA disability claims assistance (11%) was specified as the most important personal need, followed by assistance with receiving VA healthcare (9%) and integrative therapies (6%). Although retired veterans accounted for a large portion of the sample of survey respondents, they were less likely to state a particular service as an important personal need than veterans in other stages of employment.
- Integrative therapy (34%) was indicated as the topmost need for **disabled veterans** followed by VA disability claims assistance (28%) and assistance with receiving VA healthcare (23%).



## RECOMMENDATIONS

To enhance the methodological approach for this study, the PPRI team carefully triangulated data collected through all methods (surveys, asset mapping, and focus groups) to develop and summarize the key findings by the eight FVA regions and develop the recommendations for this final report. The purpose of triangulation was not only cross-validating quantitative and qualitative data but also identifying the different dimensions of the veterans' needs through convergence, complementarity and divergence. In moving ahead, the state should carefully consider the following suggestions, which are based on careful triangulation of all data.

### **CONNECT TOP BARRIERS AND NEEDS TO LACK OF KNOWLEDGE**

Needs expressed by veterans in the veterans survey and focus group discussions were often needs for which resources are presently available. However, as was evident from the focus group discussions, Texas veterans lack information about the types of services and resources available and how to access those resources. A priority moving forward should be to inform veterans of the resources and services available to them.

### **RECOGNIZE HEALTHCARE SUPPORT AS A PRIORITY**

Services related to healthcare support were the top priority needs obtained from all data sources. In order to adequately address the needs of veterans, the TVC should recognize healthcare support as a top priority when considering the types of needs to address through services and funding.

### **STRATEGIZE MARKETING AND OUTREACH**

One of the most notable insights obtained from the veterans survey and focus groups was that many veterans are not aware of the TVC or the services it offers. To better serve veterans and increase the overall impact of the TVC on the Texas veteran population, the TVC will need to carefully consider its marketing strategy. To reach veterans, TVC will need to establish a known presence in the communities it serves through a myriad of ways as suggested by the veterans from the various FVA regions.

### **CONDUCT SYSTEMATIC EVALUATION OF FVA GRANTS**

After examining the needs that were of most importance to Texas veterans and veteran serving organizations, it seems that the FVA grants program could be better structured to provide assistance to veterans by connecting with the optimum allocation of priorities. The feedback of veterans and veteran serving organizations should be considered in the grant design process. Additionally, the FVA needs to conduct regular, systematic evaluations of the FVA grants program to determine the overall impact of each grant in meeting the veteran needs area it was allocated to address.





## STUDY CONTEXT AND METHODOLOGY

The mission of the Texas Veterans Commission (TVC) is to advocate for and provide superior service to veterans that will significantly improve the quality of life for all Texas veterans and their families. In accordance with Texas Government Code §434.017(c-1) and (c-2), the TVC is required every four years to conduct a needs assessment to identify the specific high-priority needs of veterans and the services available to address these needs. The TVC incorporates the results of the assessment and related determinations into the commission's process for awarding grants from the Fund for Veterans' Assistance (FVA). In April 2019, TVC issued a Statement of Work (SOW) to solicit responses from agencies as defined in Texas Government Code §771.002 (Interagency Cooperation Act) to select a provider to conduct this needs assessment study to determine the priority needs of Texas Veterans and their families.

The Public Policy Research Institute (PPRI) at Texas A&M University responded to TVC's solicitation and was awarded a 16-month contract to conduct the needs assessment study starting in July 2019. Because of the coronavirus pandemic, the initial scope of work changed somewhat, resulting in moving the end date to February 28, 2021 and transitioning the face-to-face focus groups in the 8 FVA regions to virtual implementation. While PPRI submitted detailed reports at each stage of needs assessment to TVC during the course of the study, this February 2021 final report triangulates all data collected for the needs assessment study through diverse methodologies, comprehensively highlights the key findings across the FVA regions and includes a set of actionable recommendations.

### STUDY CONTEXT

Approximately 22 million veterans currently live in the United States (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, 2016). Veterans are demographically diverse by age, family structure, education, and income, and they live in a wide range of geographic regions of the United States, including rural, suburban, and urban areas (RAND Corporation, 2015; United States Department of Veterans Affairs, 2016). Varying military service branches, diverse military experiences among the veteran population and distinct issues of the veteran sub-groups such as women veterans, unemployed veterans or veterans with different disability ratings, and individual health characteristics combine to create a vast and diverse array of needs which cannot be adequately met through one-size fits all approach. As a method of discovering the best approach to serve this population, multiple veteran needs assessments have been conducted in various states to identify these veteran challenges with the goal of informing policy and program development.

Texas has the second largest veteran population in the nation with more than 1.4 million veterans living in the state.<sup>1</sup> The legislature-directed needs assessment of Texas veterans aim to obtain and analyze relevant data to identify and prioritize the service needs of these veterans and their families to help TVC make data-driven decisions about how to use the FVA funds to support organizations that serve veterans for maximum effectiveness in improving their quality of life. Starting in 2012, every two years, the Texas Coordinating Council for Veterans Services (established as the result of legislation passed by the 82nd Texas Legislature)

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<sup>1</sup> Military veterans in Texas number 1,435,787, according to October 2020 Census Bureau numbers. Veterans currently account for 6.8 percent of the state's population.



develops a report that identifies a list of Texas veteran needs and provides a set of recommendations. In late 2016, the Harris County Veteran Service Office conducted a needs assessment of Veterans in the Houston metro area with the help of TexVet and the Military Affairs section of the 2-1-1 Texas/United Way Helpline.

In 2015, the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas reviewed the complex challenges faced by veterans and their families in seeking, navigating, and attaining adequate mental health care in Texas (Eaton 2015). The most recent statewide veterans needs assessment was conducted by Texas State University's Center for Sociological Inquiry (Texas State CSI) in 2016 under contract with TVC. As for regional needs assessment, Combined Arms produced a needs assessment survey report in May of 2020 from the El Paso area targeting veterans, service members, family members of veterans, community members, healthcare providers and others (Combined Arms 2020).

The current PPRI study not only takes into consideration the needs assessment methods and design parameters used by these other studies but also carefully integrates methodological suggestions from all previous Texas and national studies. Additionally, the comprehensive multi-stage and multi-method design crafted for the study builds on PPRI's long-term professional expertise and domain based knowledge in conducting needs assessments and program evaluations for numerous federal and state agencies.

## STUDY METHODOLOGY

Based on well-established social scientific approaches to understanding the needs of a specific population (Altschuld, 2014), needs assessment studies are systematic explorations of the way things are and the way they should be. Social science methodologies used for needs assessment have become increasingly objective and scientific over the last decade and currently, it is primarily an evidence-based approach to aid in commissioning and planning the necessary services for a targeted population. Adhering to these basic principles, PPRI crafted a multi-stage and multi-method design primarily aimed at engaging the Texas veterans and the organizations that serve Texas veterans in an inclusive and comprehensive manner to obtain their feedback regarding priority statewide needs, top personal needs, unmet needs, barriers to services and effective marketing strategies for Texas veterans and their families.

The overarching objective of the participatory and inclusive design has been integrally connected with effective outcome utilization and action planning goals: improving TVC's intent and ability to use the findings to allocate resources appropriately and improve the quality of life for the Texas veterans and their families. The key methodology components for the study are shown in the diagram that follows. Each component was based on a set of strategies, tools and activities. This section briefly explains each methodological component utilized in the study. Detailed reports were submitted to TVC at each stage of the project, bringing together findings from each component. All key protocols and a list of previous deliverables are included in the Appendices.



## LITERATURE REVIEWS AND INSTRUMENT DEVELOPMENT

To situate the needs assessment study in its appropriate context, the PPRI team systematically reviewed scholarly articles, survey instruments and published reports on veterans and veteran serving organizations across the nation. In addition, the literature review specifically explored formal and informal assessments done in various regions of Texas alongside the statewide assessments to identify reliable and valid questions from tested instruments. Then, in close consultation with the TVC FVA Director, PPRI team developed numerous draft versions for the veterans needs assessment survey and the organizational needs assessment survey. The goal was to gather the most pertinent information from targeted populations while keeping the survey as short as possible to encourage participation. Questions for veterans focused on the priority needs for them and their families, unmet needs, challenges and barriers, places to seek assistance, effective marketing and outreach strategies as well as basic demographics. To maintain comparability and consistency across instruments, the survey targeting veteran serving organizations included the same general topics and themes from the organization’s viewpoint. Additionally, in order to address Sunset Advisory Commission’s recommendations, TVC staff internally worked on adding a list of questions for the FVA grantees to the organizational survey instrument. These questions focused on the FVA grant application process, grant procedures, and assistance provided by TVC during pre and post award stages. The intent was to maximize the benefit of the organizational survey to TVC’s FVA unit to allow it to fulfill its mission to effectively address the needs of the Texas veterans and their families. Adding these questions decreased the survey burden for the veteran serving grantee and non-grantee organizations. PPRI’s survey lab tested both survey instruments and the resulting feedback helped finalize the instruments.

## TWO NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEYS OF TEXAS VETERANS

PPRI conducted the TVC needs assessment survey online twice, using Qualtrics, a state-of-the-art survey research platform. The initial Texas veterans needs assessment survey data was collected primarily via an online panel sample aggregated by Qualtrics from December 2 through December 25, 2019. The online panel sample methodology was used because there was no available comprehensive list of Texas veterans or family members to provide the basis for a random and representative sample. This panel-based online



survey research method has grown steadily over the last decade in many fields including market research (Comley, 2007; Göritz, 2010; Postoaca, 2006), social issues research (Tortora, 2008), psychological research (Göritz, 2007), election studies (Clarke, Sanders, Stewart, & Whiteley, 2008), and medical research (Couper, 2007). The validity of research using online panels is a function of the internet penetration of the population being studied (Callegaro et al. 2014). The higher the internet penetration of the target population, the greater the chance that a panel might reflect the sub-traits of the entire target population. Adhering to this principle, a group of pre-screened Texas veterans who expressed a willingness to participate in surveys and similar types of feedback sessions in lieu of monetary incentive were aggregated into a panel by Qualtrics.

As the panel aggregator, Qualtrics used approximately 30 different panel providers to assist in creating the Texas veterans panel sample. A total of 4,115 possible respondents were pre-screened and answered the demographic questions and of these, 2,427 respondents started the survey and 1,044 people completed the survey. In order to ensure the quality of the data, Qualtrics reviewed several indicators including: various methods to prevent duplicates; time taken to complete the survey; logical open-ended responses; indicators of bots; GeoIP location; and consistency logic checks of all responses. As a method of expanding this sample, the same survey link was placed on the TexVet website from December 5, 2019 to January 31, 2020 in order to reach the Texas veterans who accessed the website during this period. With the help of these combined methodologies, the initial survey yielded a total of 1,531 fully completed responses over a period from December 2 through January 31, 2020.

Later, in May 2020, TVC shared with PPRI a sample that included 308,530 Texas veterans with email addresses. TVC wanted to repeat the veterans needs assessment survey with the help of this larger sample to supplement the veterans needs assessment data obtained earlier. Accordingly, a second survey was conducted from June 16 through June 28, 2020. It yielded a total of 14,133 completed survey responses. While this effort was overwhelmingly successful, 51,522 emails bounced or failed to reach anyone; 7,984 went to individuals who opted to not participate; 7,347 individuals clicked on the survey but did not start; 753 were screened out due to self-reported previous participation, not ever residing in Texas, or not being a veteran; and 4,405 individuals started but did not finish the survey. This final needs assessment survey, conducted from June 16th through June 28th, yielded 14,133 completed survey responses. This final comprehensive report has triangulated findings from all 15,644 completed responses (1,531+14,133) collected for the Texas veterans needs assessment survey until June 28, 2020 with the other data sources utilized for the study. A separate detailed survey report was submitted to TVC in July 2020.

## **NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY OF VETERAN SERVING ORGANIZATIONS IN TEXAS**

The organizational survey was conducted on the Qualtrics web survey platform from December 11, 2019 to January 31, 2020. Organizations were identified through several approaches. First, TVC shared contact information for relevant organizations including previous TVC grantees, County Service Officers, and Combined Arms. Second, the PPRI research team obtained a list of veteran service organizations from TexVet. Additionally, PPRI searched various online resources to identify relevant organizations serving the Texas Veterans and collected contact information for key personnel from the organizations. When specific



contact information for an individual was not available online, the research team reached out using the general contact information provided on an organization's website to help identify the appropriate individual. All these sources helped create the sample for the organizational survey. Starting on December 11, 2019, a total of 3,286 invitational emails were sent, 13 of these emails failed and 813 bounced. The organizational survey yielded a total of 537 completed surveys of which 407 were acceptable quality responses. A detailed report on the survey was submitted to TVC in July 2020.

## ASSET MAPPING AND INVENTORY ANALYSIS

As an additional data collection method, PPRI team utilized asset-mapping techniques to investigate existing resources for Texas veterans. Asset mapping is a method of research originally developed as part of asset-based community development (ABCD) strategy for community capacity building (Kretzmann and McKnight, 1993). Although asset mapping is generally considered for smaller regional geographies at the community level (Amos, Lazarus, Seedat, 2014), the rationale behind combining asset mapping to other methods was to document the existing veteran resources and incorporating these as strengths into the overall needs assessment work to open up opportunities for later action. To review and map existing veteran resources in the various FVA regions of Texas, PPRI utilized the website [TexVet.org](http://TexVet.org). This website is a comprehensive database of veteran serving organizations. It enabled listing the existing Texas veteran services and veteran serving organizations into a spreadsheet. PPRI used the 'search by county' function of [TexVet.org](http://TexVet.org) to catalog services and organizations by counties served, and then by the FVA regions served. Services and organizations were systematically grouped by 'type of services' offered by them using their main service categories.

Additionally, PPRI referenced each organization's informational page on [TexVet.org](http://TexVet.org) and the organization's individual website to establish and validate whether their services are offered statewide or specific to a certain region. This resulted in an extensive inventory of veterans services offered in Texas. Through an additional step, PPRI compared the organizational and individual survey results with the inventory of services that emerged through asset mapping. PPRI was also able to obtain the list of past and current veteran serving organizations that received FVA grants from TVC (from 2016 to 2019 and second quarter of 2019-2020) and combined this list with the inventory created. This overall process provided a consolidated method for assessing the existing capacities and resources to address the needs of the veterans in different Texas FVA Region based communities. PPRI submitted a detailed list of organizations to TVC in July 2020.

## VIRTUAL FOCUS GROUPS

A series of 17 virtual focus groups with Texas veterans and families, two targeting each FVA region and an additional statewide make-up session were conducted by PPRI in November-December 2020 as a key methodological component for this study. The overarching goal was to reconfirm and validate the survey findings for each FVA region as well as to understand the larger regional context behind the numbers. As a standard qualitative methodology, focus group sessions help gather detailed information through a structured discussion about the reasons behind common responses. Above all, these carefully facilitated sessions allow for considering details that are too complex for simple surveys (Parker & Tritter, 2006) and





are therefore widely used as standard part of any systematic needs assessment study (Stewart & Shamdasani, 2014).

While these focus groups were originally envisioned as in-person events, the COVID-19 pandemic and related travel restrictions and safety protocols altered their implementation mechanism and transitioned the focus groups to the Zoom platform. Some potential participants saw technology as a barrier to participation due to the technical requirements but others (for whom traveling to a venue, finding child or elder care, time constraints, or certain physical limitations were significant challenges) welcomed the virtual administration. These sessions provided the rich qualitative data for the needs assessment study. A total of 201 veterans participated in 17 focus group sessions across eight FVA regions although 423 signed up and 2,727 expressed an initial interest to participate. All who participated received a \$25 gift card.

Recruitment primarily occurred through the veterans needs assessment survey administered in Summer 2020 and through TVC staff contact in targeted FVA regions. As part of the summer survey, respondents were asked if they would be interested in participating in a virtual focus group later in the year and receive a \$25 amazon gift card. Respondents who indicated interest were asked to provide their email and phone contact information. This initial interested group of 2,727 individuals received invitational emails to participate in focus group and were recruited via a targeted survey and enrolled via subsequent phone calls. Prior to session administration, all signed-up focus group participants were asked to participate in a Zoom test session to help them test their audio and video equipment, troubleshoot technical problems and make them feel comfortable with the diverse features of the virtual platform.

The focus group protocol (Appendix D) was developed in close consultation with TVC staff to ensure that the data collected from focus groups directly connect with TVC's needs assessment goals and allow for validation and reconfirmation of the findings from the prior surveys and asset mapping. In order to assist TVC with reaching additional veterans, PPRI also added marketing related questions to the end of the protocol regarding knowledge about TVC, familiarity about the TVC website, and suggestion for targeted outreach by TVC. Each session was facilitated by two PPRI staff trained in implementing focus group protocols for diverse populations. Facilitation ensured that discussions remained focused on the session goals and maximized participation by all the attendees. Participant input was captured with the help of Zoom recordings that guided later thematic analysis of the qualitative data following both facilitator notes and the recording. A detailed focus group report was submitted to TVC in December 2020.

## **DATA TRIANGULATION FOR KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Triangulation is a comparative strategy to reconfirm reliability and validity of data to strengthen multi-method research. Data triangulation is regularly used as a way of assuring the validity of any needs assessment research and convergence of information collected on the same themes from various data sources and diverse methods (Carvalho & White, 1997). It is a technique to analyze results of the same study using different methods of data collection: to enhance validity, to create a more in-depth picture of a research problem, and to explore different ways of understanding a research problem (Kennedy, 2009:



Nightingale, 2020). To strengthen the methodological approach for this study, the PPRI team carefully triangulated data collected through all methods (surveys, asset mapping, focus groups) to develop and summarize the key findings by the FVA regions and develop the recommendations for this final report. The purpose of triangulation was not only cross-validating quantitative and qualitative data but also to identify the different dimensions of the veterans' needs through examining convergence and divergence. The findings presented in the next chapter of this report are based on this triangulation exercise and hope to balance any measurement bias, sampling or inclusion bias and/or procedural bias in the methodology utilized.



## KEY STUDY FINDINGS BY FVA REGIONS

Across the 8 Texas TVC Funds for Veterans' Assistance (FVA) regions, there were many similarities in the most important needs expressed by the veterans. As noted in the July 2020 report, the results of the individual needs assessment survey (conducted December 2019 - January 2020 and June 2020) indicated that there were no differences among the eight FVA regions in the needs rated as the most important for the state of Texas. On average, veterans from each region indicated that healthcare support (65%), VA disability benefits claims assistance (61%), clinical counseling services (57%), veteran employment services (53%) and assistance for women veterans (41%) were the most important needs for the Texas veteran population. Similarly, there were very few differences in the top five sources from which veterans seek information about services in the eight FVA regions. Their primary sources of information on services include the Veteran Affairs (VA, 23%), friends or family members (17%), veteran service organizations (VSOs, 15%), the internet (12%), and the TVC (9%).

There was, however, some variation in the top five areas of need funded by FVA grants across the eight regions. Some needs such as clinical counseling services (57%)<sup>2</sup>, veterans' employment services (53%), short-term financial assistance (36%), and integrative therapies (33%) were common in all regions of the state. The same was true for the top personal or individual needs, which included VA disability claims assistance (22%) as the topmost need followed by assistance with receiving VA healthcare (17%), integrative therapies (16%), and business startup assistance and training (14%) in varying rank orders for each FVA region.

When veterans were asked to indicate the top unmet needs for veterans in their area of the state, healthcare support (3%) and clinical counseling services (3%) consistently arose as one of the top unmet needs for each region. However, the overall percentage of respondents who indicated any particular need as a high unmet need were relatively low due to the response format for this item in the veterans needs assessment survey. While other questions regarding areas of need listed specific needs and asked respondents to select only from a short list, this question was an open response format and asked participants to type their answer into a box. Open-ended responses allow for all types of responses, but if a person does not want to answer they are not forced to do so. Consequently, many veterans either did not respond to this item or indicated that they did not know.

To highlight the top areas of need funded by FVA grants, although healthcare support consistently emerged as a relatively high individual, statewide, and regional need for Texas veterans, it was omitted from consideration in the list of TVC grant supported needs because it does not directly relate to any of TVC's FVA grant funded areas. But because this need repeatedly emerged as a recurring theme, it was important for PPRI to fully explore the context of the phrase "healthcare support." The focus group discussions conducted in November 2020 indicated that two elements were crucial in understanding and defining healthcare support across all FVA regions: assistance in navigating the VA healthcare system as well as education on where and how to find and use health-related resources and services. These needs were also

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<sup>2</sup> Percentages are based on the full sample of veterans across the state (N = 15,664). The data are based on responses to a multi-response item, therefore percentages will not add up to 100%.





reflected in the topmost barriers to obtaining services in the veterans survey. Specifically, veterans in each region stated that an inadequate understanding of benefits (32%) and not knowing where to get help (30%) were amongst the top barriers to obtaining services. Additional important barriers included difficulty in getting appointments (28%) and existence of few service providers (23%) in the regions. Although retired veterans accounted for a large portion of the sample of survey respondents, they were less likely to indicate a particular service as an important personal need than veterans in other stages of employment.

For each FVA region, PPRI also looked at the top personal needs by employment and disability status. Top needs were different for employed, unemployed, disabled, and retired veterans. The survey asked veterans to identify as employed full time, employed part-time, self-employed, 50-90% disabled and not able to work, 100% disabled and not able to work, student, unemployed, or retired. There were very few students in each regional subsample of survey respondents and so, we do not report information on students specifically. Employed full time, part-time, and self-employed veterans were grouped together as employed, and the 50%-90% and 100% disabled veterans were grouped together as disabled due to the small numbers of respondents in each category for some regions.

For employed veterans, there were similarities across regions. For each FVA region, VA disability claims assistance was listed as their topmost need (27%). Other needs that were included amongst the top needs were assistance with receiving VA healthcare (21%), business startup assistance and training (19%), and integrative therapies (18%). For disabled veterans, integrative therapies were indicated as the topmost need (34%) in each region. Other top personal needs for disabled veterans across the eight regions included VA disability claims filing assistance (28%), and assistance with receiving VA healthcare (23%). Unsurprisingly, employment services (58%) was indicated as the topmost need for unemployed individuals in each region. Other top personal needs of unemployed veterans across the regions included business startup assistance and training (38%) and VA disability claims assistance (35%). Retired veterans across the regions indicated that VA disability claims assistance (11%) was their topmost personal need. Assistance with receiving VA healthcare (9%) and integrative therapies (6%) were also indicated as top personal needs for retired veterans in each region.

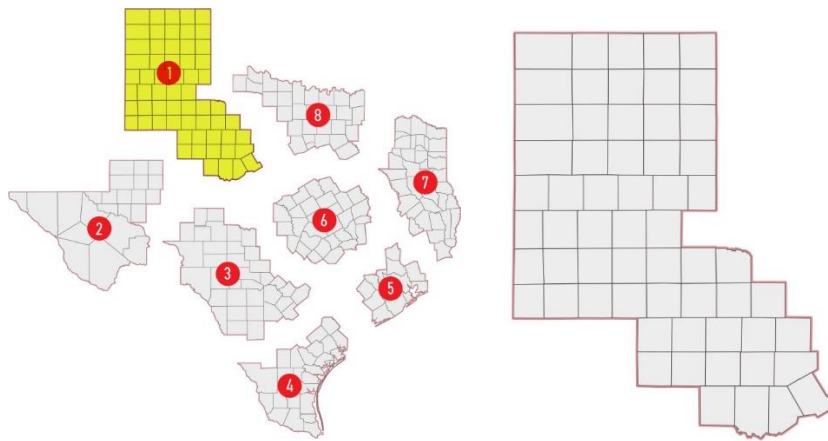
The Texas veterans organizational survey (conducted December 2019 - January 2020) highlighted similar needs of Texas veterans. Responding organizations indicated healthcare, disability, and mental health support – all categorized as healthcare support – as the most important unmet service need of Texas veterans (58%). This was followed by housing support (51%) and financial assistance (41%). When analyzed by FVA region, little variation occurred. All eight FVA regions indicated healthcare support as the number one unmet need. Housing assistance and financial assistance were the most common second and third unmet needs identified, with only one region indicating employment assistance as the third unmet need and one citing transportation. When asked to identify the two largest service barriers for Texas veterans, lack of awareness of services offered (46%) and transportation (39%) were the most frequent responses, which again did not significantly vary across FVA region. Organizations indicated that veterans use organizational websites (84%), friends and family members (82%), and internet searches (68%) as top resources for learning about services their organizations provide. There was little variation when analyzed by FVA region, which is detailed later in this report.



To provide a clear understanding of the unique needs of veterans in each FVA region, the following subsections highlight the top needs distinct to each area. For each region, the findings from the veterans survey are presented first followed by further insights obtained from the focus groups to validate/or provide further context for the survey data. Also presented are the results from the organizational needs assessment.



## TVC FVA REGION 1 – PANHANDLE



FVA GRANT NEEDS	STATEWIDE NEEDS	INDIVIDUAL NEEDS	UNMET REGIONAL NEEDS	SERVICE BARRIERS	INFORMATION SOURCES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clinical Counseling</li> <li>• Employment Support</li> <li>• Short - Term Financial Assistance</li> <li>• Home Modification Assistance</li> <li>• Integrative Therapies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthcare Support</li> <li>• VA Disability Claims Assistance</li> <li>• Employment Support</li> <li>• Clinical Counseling</li> <li>• Assistance for Women Veterans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VA Disability Claims Assistance</li> <li>• Assistance with VA Healthcare</li> <li>• Integrative Therapies</li> <li>• Business Startup Training</li> <li>• Employment Support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthcare Support</li> <li>• Clinical Counseling</li> <li>• Short-Term Financial Assistance</li> <li>• Transportation to VA Medical</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding Benefits</li> <li>• Lack of Services in Area</li> <li>• Getting Appointments</li> <li>• Knowing Where to Get Help</li> <li>• Few Service Providers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VA</li> <li>• Friends or Family</li> <li>• VSOs</li> <li>• Internet</li> <li>• TVC</li> </ul>

Survey Highlights (N = 577)

### FVA GRANT NEEDS

As is shown in the figure above, the majority of respondents in the Panhandle region, similar to veterans in the other FVA regions, indicated that clinical counseling services (55%), employment services (53%), short-term financial assistance (34%), home modification assistance (32%), and integrative therapies (30%) were the most important TVC grant funded needs for the Texas veteran population.



## INDIVIDUAL NEEDS

Similar to other FVA regions VA disability claims filing assistance (21%) was the most important need for the Panhandle veterans. Assistance with receiving VA healthcare (18%) was the next highest need, followed by integrative therapies (14%). Needs such as integrative therapies and business start-up assistance and training (12%) ranked higher as personal needs for veterans in this region compared to needs ranked in reference to the overall Texas veteran population. The observed differences in rankings may indicate that veterans perceive certain needs as applying only to themselves than to the Texas veteran population at large.

## REGIONAL UNMET NEEDS

Key unmet needs for veterans in the Panhandle region were comparable to the key unmet needs recorded for the other regions of the state. Healthcare support was the top need (5%) followed by clinical counseling services (3%) and short-term financial assistance (2%). Contrary to other regions, transportation (2%) also emerged as one of the most important unmet needs for the Panhandle region. This is understandable given the predominantly rural nature of the region.

## SERVICE BARRIERS

Panhandle veterans primarily listed barriers that largely related to the greater need for service-related information: inadequate understanding of benefits (30%), a lack of services in the area (27%), difficulty in getting appointments (26%), not knowing where to get appointments (26%), and few service providers available in their area (26%).

## PERSONAL NEEDS BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS

In addition to the needs that were similar across all regions for employed veterans, employed veterans in the Panhandle indicated VA disability claims assistance (27%) as their topmost personal need. Additionally, employment services (10%) was also indicated as one of their top personal needs. Disabled veterans in the region specified home modification assistance (32%) as their topmost need and included living expenses other than housing or food expenses (20%) among their top personal needs. Unemployed veterans in the region included assistance with receiving VA healthcare (37%) and living expenses other than food and housing expenses (37%) among their top needs, and retired veterans included clinical counseling (6%) and elder care (7%) among their top needs.



FVA GRANT NEEDS	STATEWIDE NEEDS	HEALTHCARE SUPPORT	UNMET REGIONAL NEEDS	SERVICE BARRIERS	TVC OUTREACH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two Categories, Emotional/ Psychological and Financial</li> <li>• Emotional Needs should be Prioritized</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Needs of Wounded Vets is a high priority within VA Disability Claims Filing Assistance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Case Management</li> <li>• Care Coordination</li> <li>• Access to Health Services</li> <li>• Education about Services</li> <li>• 24/7 Healthcare Support Hotline</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of Awareness about Healthcare Support Services</li> <li>• Difficulty in Obtaining Specialty Care</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comprehensive Understanding of Coverage</li> <li>• Awareness about Availability of Financial Assistance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emails, Targeted Town Halls, Faith-based Organizations, Social Service Organizations</li> <li>• Radio &amp; Print Media for Rural Area Veterans</li> </ul>

November 2, 2020 Focus Group Highlights (N = 21)

## FVA GRANT NEEDS

The focus group participants categorized the FVA grant needs into two key groups: emotional and psychological (e.g., integrative therapy and clinical counseling) and financial (e.g., employment, home modification and short-term financial assistance). The participants emphasized that in order to address needs in other areas, psychological needs must be addressed first.

## STATEWIDE VETERAN NEEDS

Needs ranked as important for the overall Texas veteran population were the same for each region of the state. However, in relation to VA disability claims assistance, some veterans in the Panhandle mentioned that the needs of wounded veterans should be a high priority.

## HEALTHCARE SUPPORT

For this group, healthcare support implies case management, care coordination, and access to services and resources in addition to appropriate education and information about available services.

## REGIONAL UNMET NEEDS

The discussion of unmet regional needs for Panhandle veterans centered on a lack of knowledge and awareness about service availability. Attendees also discussed their concerns with obtaining specialty care.

## SERVICE BARRIERS

In addition to survey findings, attendees discussed an additional hurdle: comprehensive understanding of coverage and availability of financial assistance to cover specific needs. To address barriers, attendees



suggested open communication among local, state, and federal veteran serving agencies. They also suggested increasing marketing to improve veterans’ awareness of services.

## TVC OUTREACH SUGGESTIONS

Panhandle veterans largely referred to the VA as their primary source of information. To improve service awareness, attendees suggested using emails, targeted town hall meetings, faith-based organizations, billboards, and other social service organizations to market TVC’s services to veterans in the area. They also suggested using local radio and print media to specifically advertise in rural areas. They explained that with rural veterans, local newsletters are very popular because they feature local stories and services.

UNMET NEEDS	BARRIERS	ASSETS NEEDED	INFORMATION SOURCES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthcare Support</li> <li>• Financial Assistance</li> <li>• Housing Assistance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transportation Assistance</li> <li>• Lack of Awareness</li> <li>• Availability of Resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding</li> <li>• Additional Support Options</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Friends and Family</li> <li>• Organizations Website</li> <li>• County Service Officers</li> </ul>

Organizational Survey Highlights (N = 25)

## REGIONAL UNMET NEEDS

Panhandle organizations identified healthcare support (23%), financial assistance (21%), and housing assistance<sup>3</sup> (16%) and financial assistance (16%) as the most important unmet needs of veterans in their region in rank order. These findings do not vary significantly from organizational perspectives in other FVA regions as healthcare support was ranked the number one unmet need by organizations in every FVA region (although there was some variation in the second and third rankings).

When comparing the organizational perspective to the veterans survey and focus group findings in this region, they largely coincide. Healthcare support was also identified as both the top regional unmet need and statewide need by the veterans survey results. The focus groups identified lack of awareness about healthcare support services as an unmet need, which also falls into the theme of healthcare support.

Financial assistance was identified by the veterans survey as the third most important unmet need and was also selected as the third FVA grant need, performing slightly lower than the second-place ranking in the organizational survey. Home modification was not identified as an *unmet* need by the veterans survey but was chosen as the fourth FVA grant need. The focus groups did not discuss financial assistance or home modification or other housing needs as *unmet* needs in the Panhandle but did agree that they are both important FVA grant funded needs that should be prioritized after emotional and psychological needs.

<sup>3</sup> Housing assistance refers to comments related to the need for affordable and disability accessible housing, emergency housing for those dealing with homelessness, and home repair and modifications.



## SERVICE BARRIERS

Barriers to services identified by organizations in this region include transportation (34%) followed by lack of awareness, availability of resources, and social stigma (tied 14% each). The top barriers in both the veterans survey and focus groups highlighted issues related to lack of awareness of services and availability of resources. Specifically, the veterans survey identified inadequate understanding of benefits as the first barrier and lack of services in area as the second. The focus groups referenced a comprehensive understanding of coverage as a top barrier in the region. Transportation was not identified as a top barrier by the veterans survey or focus groups, but was found a top unmet need by the veterans survey

## ASSETS NEEDED

Organizations in this region cited funding (37%) and additional support options<sup>4</sup> (21%) as the top two assets needed to better serve veterans. These findings do not vary greatly across FVA regions as seven of the eight regions indicated funding as their top asset needed. Many organizations indicated the need for larger facilities or new facilities in underserved communities. Others noted a desire to partner with other organizations to encourage veterans to attend for more than one reason (e.g., combining medical and mental health care with a hot meal).

## INFORMATION SOURCES

Organizations in this region identified friends and family members as the number one method that veterans learn about services provided by their organization. Their organizations website was the second, followed by county service officers. This is similar to organizations in other FVA regions, as most identified their organizations website and friends and family members as the top methods. It should be noted that military veteran peer networks, non-government organizations, and Texas 2-1-1 were not far behind the third information source.

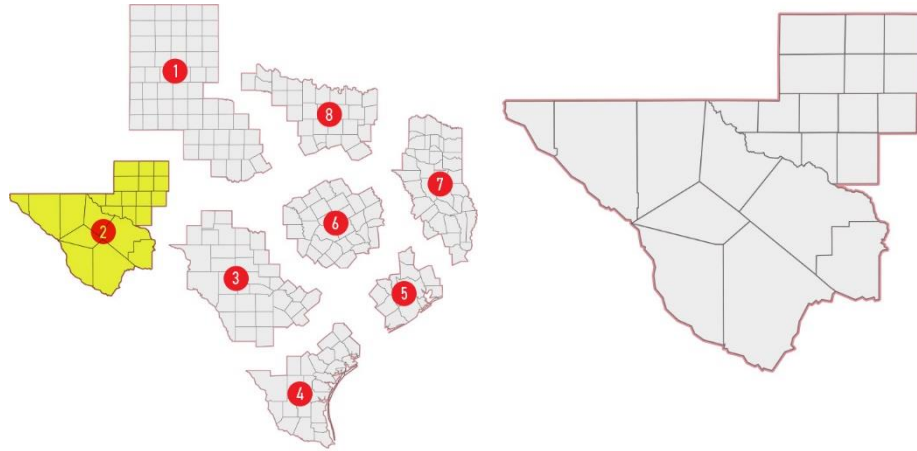
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<sup>4</sup> Additional support options cover a wide variety of needs, but refer to the need to both coordinate care with other community organizations (usually under one roof) and expand the location and presence of current services into areas of the community where the organization currently does not reach.





## TVC FVA REGION 2 - WEST TEXAS



FVA GRANT NEEDS	STATEWIDE NEEDS	INDIVIDUAL NEEDS	UNMET REGIONAL NEEDS	SERVICE BARRIERS	INFORMATION SOURCES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clinical Counseling</li> <li>• Employment Support</li> <li>• Integrative Therapies</li> <li>• Short – Term Financial</li> <li>• Home Modification Assistance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthcare Support</li> <li>• VA Disability Claims Assistance</li> <li>• Employment Support</li> <li>• Clinical Counseling</li> <li>• Assistance for Women Veterans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VA Disability Claims Assistance</li> <li>• Integrative Therapies</li> <li>• Assistance with VA Healthcare</li> <li>• Business Startup</li> <li>• Clinical Counseling</li> <li>• Employment Support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clinical Counseling</li> <li>• Healthcare Support</li> <li>• Short-Term Financial</li> <li>• VA Disability Claims Assistance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding Benefits</li> <li>• Getting Appointments</li> <li>• Anxiety</li> <li>• Knowing where to Get Help</li> <li>• Few Service Providers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VA</li> <li>• Friends or Family</li> <li>• VSOs</li> <li>• Internet</li> <li>• TVC</li> </ul>

Survey Highlights (N = 524)

### FVA GRANT NEEDS

The most important TVC grant funded need areas for the veterans in the West Texas region were similar to those indicated by veterans in other regions of the state with veteran clinical counseling services (55%) as the top need followed by employment services (53%). However, integrative therapy services (40%) ranked as a more important need for West Texas veterans in comparison to veterans in some other regions.





## INDIVIDUAL NEEDS

Integrative therapies (26%) and clinical counseling services (18%) ranked relatively high as personal needs for West Texas veterans, even though integrative therapy was not indicated as a relatively high need when survey respondents were asked to consider the needs of the overall Texas veteran population. Clinical counseling services and veteran employment services (18%) ranked equally high as important personal needs.

## REGIONAL UNMET NEEDS

Veterans residing in the West Texas region indicated that clinical counseling services (3%), healthcare support services (3%), and short-term financial assistance (3%) were the most important unmet needs in their region.

## SERVICE BARRIERS

Barriers to obtaining services for veterans residing in the West Texas region largely centered on a lack of knowledge and understanding relating to services offered within the state of Texas. Specifically, veterans residing in West Texas indicated that inadequate understanding of benefits (33%) was the greatest barrier to accessing services. However, contrary to veterans in some other FVA regions, anxiety (31%) was one of the topmost barriers for veterans residing in the West Texas region.

## PERSONAL NEEDS BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS

In addition to needs that were similar across all FVA regions for employed veterans, employed veterans in West Texas indicated that clinical counseling (18%) was one of their top personal needs. Disabled veterans in the region also indicated clinical counseling (22%) as well as home modification assistance for disability (28%) as top personal needs. Unemployed veterans in the region considered integrative therapies (49%) and short-term financial assistance (43%) as top personal needs, and retired veterans indicated clinical counseling services (7%) and home modification assistance for disability (6%) as some of their top personal needs.



FVA GRANT NEEDS	STATEWIDE NEEDS	HEALTHCARE SUPPORT	UNMET REGIONAL NEEDS	SERVICE BARRIERS	TVC OUTREACH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Psychological and Financial Needs</li> <li>• Clinical Counseling</li> <li>• Home Modification Assistance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical and Mental Health are Top Needs.</li> <li>• Alcohol/Drug Dependency Assistance and Job Assistance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to Health Services and Resources</li> <li>• Knowledge of Benefits</li> <li>• Help Navigating Healthcare Services</li> <li>• Little Knowledge of TVC's HCAD</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing, Education, Legal, and Clinical Counseling</li> <li>• Housing Support for Homeless Vets</li> <li>• Assistance with Education Benefits</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complex Process of Navigating VA Services</li> <li>• Attitudes towards Women Veterans</li> <li>• Personal Life Issues</li> <li>• Service Hours: Date and Times of Appointments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Combination of Strategies for Diverse Vet Population</li> <li>• Online Avenues for Younger Veterans</li> <li>• Print Media and Television for Older Veterans</li> <li>• Billboards in El Paso</li> </ul>

November 4, 2020 Focus Group Highlights (N = 18)

## FVA GRANT NEEDS

Focus group participants felt that the list of top needs obtained from the survey results were all interconnected and that no one need should be treated in isolation. The group mentioned that counseling is particularly important due to Fort Bliss and large numbers of recently deployed veterans.

## STATEWIDE VETERAN NEEDS

In response to the list of needs obtained from the survey, participants felt that physical and mental health are the top needs for veterans in the state. Consequently, participants suggested that clinical counseling services should be considered a higher priority need. Alcohol/drug dependency assistance and job assistance (assistance with referrals, resumes and interviewing techniques) were discussed as important need areas in addition to the list of needs obtained from the survey.

## HEALTHCARE SUPPORT

For this group, healthcare support encompassed overall access to health services and resources, knowledge of benefits, and help navigating hurdles to obtaining health services.

## REGIONAL UNMET NEEDS

In addition to the top needs obtained from the survey, the group specified that housing needs were important for homeless veterans. The group also discussed the need for educational benefits and additional legal services in the area. Focus group members mentioned that legal work is only handled by one overwhelmed agency in the region.



## SERVICE BARRIERS

The focus group participants suggested that some of the top barriers obtained from the survey should be linked together (e.g., *few providers* and *lack of services* as well as *inadequate understanding of benefits* and *not knowing where to get help*). The complexity of navigating the VA, attitudes towards women (for whom challenges are unique), the unavailability of services outside of business hours, and the placing of appointments close together were all mentioned as barriers. Focus group members suggested that increasing staffing, extending business hours, and making benefits information simpler and easier to understand could serve as solutions to some of the barriers.

## TVC OUTREACH SUGGESTIONS

In response to the list of top information sources obtained from the survey, the group mentioned that the VA is the most utilized resource because the VA is portrayed as a resource upon exiting the military. Group participants suggested that TVC use online services (e.g., email and social media) to target younger veterans and print media and television to target older veterans who may be less likely to use online services. Billboards were mentioned specifically as a resource for El Paso, and VSOs were mentioned as another general marketing strategy for the region.

UNMET NEEDS	BARRIERS	ASSETS NEEDED	INFORMATION SOURCES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthcare Support</li> <li>• Financial Assistance</li> <li>• Housing Assistance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of Awareness</li> <li>• Transportation Assistance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding</li> <li>• Additional Support Options</li> <li>• Transportation Assistance</li> <li>• Visibility/ Promotion/ Advertising</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organizations Website</li> <li>• Internet Searches</li> <li>• Friends and Family</li> </ul>

Organizational Survey Highlights (N = 25)

## REGIONAL UNMET NEEDS

West Texas organizations ranked healthcare support (28%), financial assistance (16%), and housing assistance (16%) as the most important unmet needs in their region. Again, these findings are similar to the organizational perspectives in other FVA regions.

Similarly, these findings largely concurred with the veterans survey and focus group findings. Healthcare support was selected as the second unmet need in this region as well as the top statewide need by the veterans survey. Needs related to healthcare support, such as needs for physical and mental health services, were discussed as top FVA grant needs, statewide needs, and unmet needs by the focus groups in this region. Financial assistance was identified by the veterans survey as the third most important unmet need in the region as well as the fourth FVA grant need. The focus groups also discussed financial assistance as a top FVA grant need.



Housing assistance was not identified by the veterans survey as an *unmet* need, but home modification was selected as the fifth FVA grant need. The focus groups, however, did indicate housing assistance for homeless veterans as a very important unmet need in the region, as well as an important FVA grant need.

## SERVICE BARRIERS

Lack of awareness (32%) and transportation (24%) were identified by West Texas organizations as top barriers in their area, which varied from the veterans survey and focus group findings as transportation was not discussed as a top barrier in either. Both the veterans survey and focus groups identified barriers related to lack of awareness of services in their region, with an emphasis on the difficulty of understanding benefits and the complex process of navigating the VA system.

## ASSETS NEEDED

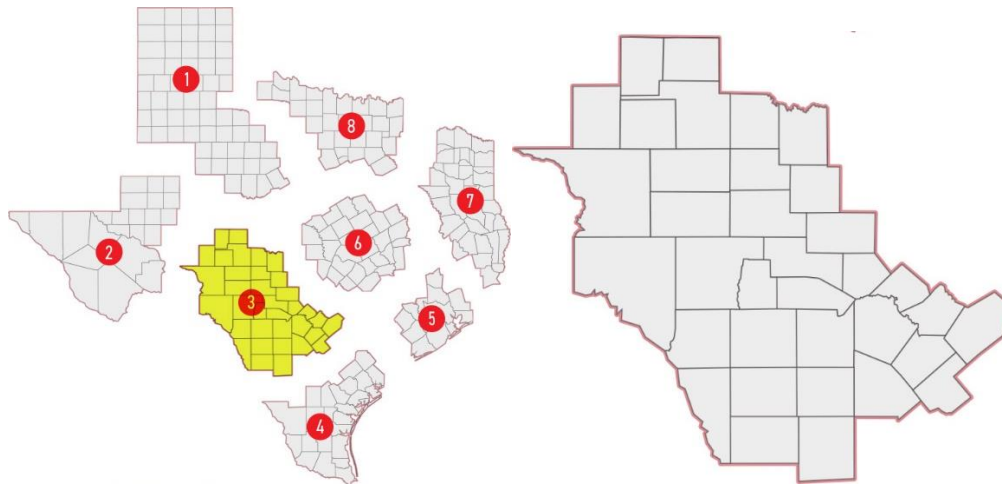
Organizations in this region named funding (32%) and additional support options (32%) as their top assets needed to better serve veterans, followed by transportation (13%) and visibility/promotion/advertising (13%). Again, funding was the most common top asset needed across FVA regions. West Texas was one of only two regions to cite visibility/promotion/advertising as a top two assets needed; organizations in the region indicated that a lack of awareness was a barrier to serving veterans and that increased awareness would help them meet their service goals. West Texas was also the only region where transportation emerged in the top two assets needed.

## INFORMATION SOURCES

Organizations in this region reported that their organization's website is the top resource veterans use to learn about services provided by their organization. Internet searches were identified as the second resourced, followed by friends or family members. Social workers were ranked very close behind the third resource.



## TVC FVA REGION 3 - ALAMO



FVA GRANT NEEDS	STATEWIDE NEEDS	INDIVIDUAL NEEDS	UNMET REGIONAL NEEDS	SERVICE BARRIERS	INFORMATION SOURCES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clinical Counseling</li> <li>• Employment Support</li> <li>• Integrative Therapies</li> <li>• Short - Term Financial Assistance</li> <li>• Home Modification Assistance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthcare Support</li> <li>• VA Disability Claims Assistance</li> <li>• Employment Support</li> <li>• Clinical Counseling</li> <li>• Assistance for Women Veterans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VA Disability Claims Assistance</li> <li>• Integrative Therapies</li> <li>• Assistance with VA Healthcare</li> <li>• Business Startup</li> <li>• Employment Support</li> <li>• Clinical Counseling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clinical Counseling</li> <li>• Healthcare Support</li> <li>• VA Disability Claims Assistance</li> <li>• Integrative Therapies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding Benefits</li> <li>• Knowing where to Get Help</li> <li>• Getting Appointments</li> <li>• Anxiety</li> <li>• Few Service Providers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VA</li> <li>• Friends or Family</li> <li>• VSOs</li> <li>• Internet</li> <li>• TVC</li> </ul>

Survey Highlights (N = 2,832)

### FVA GRANT NEEDS

Similar to veterans in other regions of the state, the top two FVA grant funded need areas for veterans in the Alamo region were clinical counseling services (57%) and employment services (52%). However, contrary to veterans in most other regions, veterans in the Alamo region attributed a slightly higher rating of importance to integrative therapy (35%) than short-term financial assistance (35%) and home modification assistance (30%).



## INDIVIDUAL NEEDS

The top individual need was VA disability claims filing assistance (23%). However, contrary to some regions, integrative therapies (18%) were slightly more of a concern than assistance with receiving VA health care (16%) for veterans in the Alamo region.

## REGIONAL UNMET NEEDS

The rank order of unmet needs for veterans residing in the Alamo region was similar to that of the other FVA regions, however veterans in the Alamo region indicated a greater need for integrative therapy services (2%) than short-term financial assistance services (1%).

## SERVICE BARRIERS

The top barriers to accessing services for veterans in the Alamo, although varying in rank order, were similar to the top barriers to accessing services for veterans in other regions of the state. Top barriers were: inadequate understanding of benefits (30%), not knowing where to get help (28%), difficulty getting appointments (27%), anxiety (21%), and having few services providers in the area (17%).

## PERSONAL NEEDS BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS

Employed (13%) and disabled veterans (23%) in the Alamo region indicated clinical counseling services as one of their topmost personal needs. Disabled veterans also indicated home modification assistance for disability (24%) as one of their top personal needs. Unemployed veterans in the region indicated that short-term financial assistance (33%) and integrative therapies (26%) were included among their top personal needs. Legal help (5%) and home modification assistance (5%) were indicated as top needs for retired veterans in the region.



FVA GRANT NEEDS	STATEWIDE NEEDS	HEALTHCARE SUPPORT	UNMET REGIONAL NEEDS	SERVICE BARRIERS	TVC OUTREACH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agreement with the Survey generated List of Needs</li> <li>• Mental Health and Integrative Therapies as a Top Priority</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greater Support needed for Women Veterans</li> <li>• Clinical Counseling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assistance with Navigating the VA and Other Available Service</li> <li>• Finding services in the Local Communities</li> <li>• Transportation to Appointments</li> <li>• Having a Real Person to assist with Service Needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agreement with the List of Unmet Needs Obtained from the Survey</li> <li>• VA Disability Claims Assistance</li> <li>• Housing Assistance</li> <li>• Education Support</li> <li>• Legal Services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Getting Timely Healthcare Appointments</li> <li>• Anxiety Ranks Higher as a Barrier</li> <li>• Pride, Frustration</li> <li>• Lack of Awareness and Providers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partner with Transition Assistance Program, Active Duty Units, and Local Colleges</li> <li>• Social Media</li> <li>• Direct Mailing</li> <li>• Podcasts, Billboards, TV, and Radio</li> </ul>

November 6, 2020 Focus Group Highlights (N = 31)

## FVA GRANT NEEDS

In response to the list of top FVA grant funded need areas obtained from the survey, group participants mentioned that mental health and integrative therapies were a top priority because unaddressed mental health issues can affect other aspects of life; many of the needs are codependent.

## STATEWIDE NEEDS

In response to the list of needs for veterans in the state of Texas obtained from the survey, some focus group members mentioned that greater support is needed for women veterans and clinical counseling services than the survey data suggests. The group also mentioned that clinical counseling services and employment services are important for transitioning to civilian life.

## HEALTHCARE SUPPORT

Focus group members asserted that health care support refers to assistance navigating the VA, finding services in the area, transportation to appointments, and having a person to help with navigating services and understanding individual levels of support based on an individual's status.

## REGIONAL UNMET NEEDS

Focus group members in the Alamo region felt that VA disability claims filing assistance was a higher priority need than the survey results suggested. The group also suggested that housing may be a top unmet need due to the large population of homeless veterans residing in San Antonio, TX.





## SERVICE BARRIERS

During the focus group discussion, the group discussed barriers related to difficulty getting timely appointments, anxiety, pride, frustration, lack of awareness, and lack of providers in the area. Several participants also felt that anxiety should rank higher as a barrier because anxiety is common with veterans and can make other needs such as accessing services, understanding benefits, and making appointments more difficult.

## TVC OUTREACH SUGGESTIONS

In response to the list of top sources veterans would use to seek information, group participants suggested that the VA may be highly ranked as a source of information because they reach out to veterans during out-processing. However, many focus group members expressed a distrust of the VA and mentioned that they would look somewhere else first for information. To increase awareness of the services provided by TVC, participants suggested that TVC partner with the Transition Assistance Program, active duty units, and colleges that provide assistance to veterans. Social media, direct mailing, podcasts, billboards, TV, and radio were also mentioned as ways to reach veterans. Additionally, focus group members suggested that TVC should attend conferences and social gatherings that veterans frequent.

UNMET NEEDS	BARRIERS	ASSETS NEEDED	INFORMATION SOURCES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthcare Support</li> <li>• Housing Assistance</li> <li>• Financial Assistance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Availability of Resources</li> <li>• Transportation Assistance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding</li> <li>• Additional Support Options</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organizations Website</li> <li>• Friends and Family Members</li> <li>• Internet Searches</li> </ul>

Organizational Survey Highlights (N = 39)

## REGIONAL UNMET NEEDS

Organizations in the Alamo region ranked healthcare support (23%), housing assistance (21%), and financial assistance (15%) as the top three unmet needs in the area. Again, these findings are similar to the veterans survey and focus group findings.

Healthcare support was identified by the veterans survey as the second rather than first unmet need in this region, but was identified as the top statewide need, similar to the other regions. The focus groups agreed with the veterans survey in regard to healthcare support as a top unmet need, but emphasized assistance with VA disability claims filing as the *most* important.

Housing assistance was not identified by the survey results as a top *unmet* need but was selected as the fifth most important FVA grant funded need. The focus groups did suggest that housing assistance for homeless veterans should be considered a top unmet need. Financial assistance was not identified as a top *unmet* need by the veterans survey, but was the fourth top FVA grant funded need, with the focus groups agreeing.





## **SERVICE BARRIERS**

Availability of resources (26%), transportation (19%), and lack of awareness (18%) were identified by organizations as the top barriers to service in the Alamo area. Although neither the survey nor the focus groups identified transportation as a barrier in the region, both listed availability of resources as a barrier. Specific barriers resulting from availability of resources included: knowing where to get help, few service providers, and getting timely appointments.

## **ASSETS NEEDED**

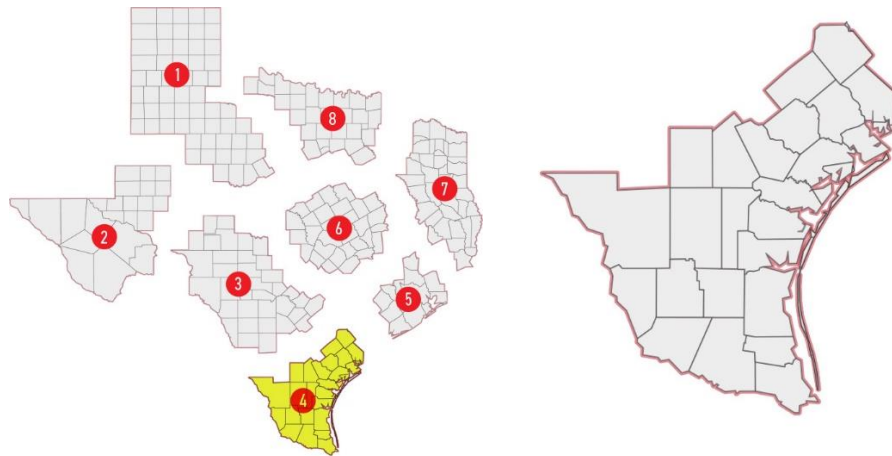
Organizations in this region highlighted funding (39%) and additional support options (25%) as the top two assets needed to better serve veterans. Again, these were common themes across all FVA regions

## **INFORMATION SOURCES**

Organizations in this region reported that their organization's website is the top resource veterans use to learn about services provided by their organization. Friends or family members was identified as the second resource, tied with internet searches. Military veteran peer networks ranked not far behind internet searches.



## TVC FVA REGION 4 – SOUTH TEXAS



FVA GRANT NEEDS	STATEWIDE NEEDS	INDIVIDUAL NEEDS	UNMET REGIONAL NEEDS	SERVICE BARRIERS	INFORMATION SOURCES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clinical Counseling</li> <li>• Employment Support</li> <li>• Short - Term Financial Assistance</li> <li>• Integrative Therapies</li> <li>• Home Modification Assistance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthcare Support</li> <li>• VA Disability Claims Assistance</li> <li>• Employment Support</li> <li>• Clinical Counseling</li> <li>• Assistance for Women Veterans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VA Disability Claims Help</li> <li>• Assistance with VA Healthcare</li> <li>• Integrative Therapies</li> <li>• Business Startup Assistance</li> <li>• Employment Support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthcare Support</li> <li>• Short-Term Financial Assistance</li> <li>• Clinical Counseling</li> <li>• VA Disability Claims Assistance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding Benefits</li> <li>• Knowing where to Get Help</li> <li>• Few Service Providers</li> <li>• Lack of Services in Area</li> <li>• Getting Appointments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VA</li> <li>• Friends or Family</li> <li>• VSOs</li> <li>• Internet</li> <li>• TVC</li> </ul>

Survey Highlights (N = 751)

### FVA GRANT NEEDS

Similar to all other FVA regions, clinical counseling services (55%) and veteran employment services (47%) emerged as the top FVA funded need areas for South Texas. However, contrary to some regions, short-term financial assistance (34%) emerged as a more important need than integrative therapies (33%) and home modification assistance (31%) for veterans residing in South Texas.



## INDIVIDUAL NEEDS

The top individual needs for veterans in South Texas were only slightly different from those of veterans in the other FVA regions. VA disability claims filing assistance (27%) was the top need like most of the other regions, however assistance with receiving VA healthcare (23%) ranked higher as an individual need than integrative therapies (19%) for veterans residing in South Texas.

## REGIONAL UNMET NEEDS

For South Texas veterans, short-term financial assistance (2%) emerged as a slightly more important unmet need than clinical counseling (2%) and VA disability benefit claims assistance (2%) in comparison to most other regions of the state.

## SERVICE BARRIERS

As with all other FVA regions across the state of Texas, the primary barriers to services for South Texas veterans centered on knowledge, understanding and access to services. However, contrary to some FVA regions, not knowing where to get help (34%) ranked higher as a barrier to services than the number of providers (33%) or services (31%) available in the area.

## PERSONAL NEEDS BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS

In addition to needs that were similar across all FVA regions for employed veterans, employed veterans in South Texas indicated that short-term financial assistance (17%) was one of their top personal needs. Disabled veterans in the region indicated home modification assistance for disability (22%) and legal help (21%) as top personal needs. Unemployed veterans considered assistance with receiving VA healthcare (45%) and integrative therapies (38%) as top personal needs, and retired veterans indicated clinical counseling services (8%) and home modification assistance for disability (7%) as some of their top personal needs.



FVA GRANT NEEDS	STATEWIDE NEEDS	HEALTHCARE SUPPORT	UNMET REGIONAL NEEDS	SERVICE BARRIERS	TVC OUTREACH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disagreement with Survey Rank Order of Needs</li> <li>• Employment Support and Short-Term Financial Assistance are Closely Connected</li> <li>• Help with Navigating Existing Services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasized Importance of Assisting Women Veterans</li> <li>• Disability Claims Filing Assistance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Help with Obtaining VA Healthcare</li> <li>• Educating Veterans on how to Navigate the VA Healthcare System</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthcare Support is Most Important</li> <li>• Awareness of Benefits and Assistance with Filing Claims</li> <li>• Affordable Housing</li> <li>• Education Support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Barriers are Interconnected</li> <li>• Advocacy and Marketing are Key and Interconnected</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social Media is Most Effective</li> <li>• Mail and Email</li> <li>• Advertisements on Streaming Services</li> <li>• Television and Radio</li> </ul>

November 10, 2020 Focus Group Highlights (N = 23)

## FVA GRANT NEEDS

There was some disagreement regarding the rank order of needs obtained from the survey. The group largely agreed that the importance of needs did not matter without assistance in navigating the existing resources available to address those needs.

## STATEWIDE VETERAN NEEDS

In response to the list of top needs obtained from the survey, focus group members discussed the importance of assisting women veterans and having women veterans within the veteran support system to provide peer to peer assistance. Participants also emphasized the importance of VA disability claims filing assistance.

## HEALTHCARE SUPPORT

To unpack the phrase “healthcare support,” the group asserted that support refers to assisting with the difficulty of obtaining VA healthcare and educating veterans on how to navigate the VA health care system.

## REGIONAL UNMET NEEDS

Healthcare support was considered the most important unmet need for the region, and state. Group participants felt that benefits awareness, and assistance with filing disability benefits claims were important unmet needs because most veterans do not understand the process for filing disability benefits claims.



## SERVICE BARRIERS

The group felt that the barriers obtained from the survey were largely interconnected and that careful advocacy and marketing were necessary to encourage veterans to take advantage of available services.

## TVA OUTREACH SUGGESTIONS

In responses to the survey findings, the focus group participants mentioned that the VA is the most well-known source of information for veterans in the South Texas region, however veterans also seek information from the internet and people that they trust. To increase awareness of services provided by TVC, the participants suggested that TVC use social media, especially for younger veterans. Mail and email were also thought to be effective. The participants suggested that TVC post advertisements on streaming platforms such as Hulu and Amazon Prime video. Additionally, it was also suggested that TVC should conduct outreach at social events and have a representative do Public Service Announcements on local TV and radio.

UNMET NEEDS	BARRIERS	ASSETS NEEDED	INFORMATION SOURCES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthcare Support</li> <li>• Housing Assistance</li> <li>• Employment Support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Availability of Resources</li> <li>• Lack of Awareness</li> <li>• Transportation Assistance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional Support Options</li> <li>• Funding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Friends and Family Members</li> <li>• County Service Officers</li> <li>• Organizations Website</li> <li>• Social Workers</li> <li>• VA Healthcare</li> <li>• Texas 211</li> <li>• Military Veteran Peer Networks</li> </ul>

Organizational Survey Highlights (N = 31)

## REGIONAL UNMET NEEDS

South Texas organizations ranked healthcare support (25%), housing assistance (24%), and employment assistance (17%) as the top three unmet needs in their region. South Texas was the only FVA region with employment assistance identified as a top unmet need by organizations.

The findings are similar to the findings of the veterans survey and focus groups. Healthcare support was ranked the top unmet need in the region by the veterans survey with the focus groups strongly in agreement. Housing assistance was not identified as an *unmet* need by the veterans survey, but was identified as a top FVA grant funded need (specifically home modification). The focus groups did identify affordable housing as an unmet need but largely felt that healthcare support was more important. Employment assistance was not ranked as a top *unmet* need by the veterans survey but was the number two FVA grant funded need and also listed as both a statewide need and individual need. Again, the focus groups agreed that employment services are important but not as important as healthcare support and assistance with navigating services.



## SERVICE BARRIERS

Organizations in this area identified availability of resources (21%) as the top service barrier in the region followed equally by lack of awareness (19%) and transportation (19%). The veterans survey identified top barriers similar to these findings: understanding of benefits, knowing where to get help, few service providers, and lack of services in area. The focus group findings largely agreed citing that these barriers were closely related. Transportation was not identified as a barrier by the veterans survey or focus groups.

## ASSETS NEEDED

Organizations in this region indicated that additional support options (32%) and funding (26%) were the top two assets needed to better serve veterans. South Texas was the only FVA region where funding was not the number one asset needed, although it did emerge as a close second.

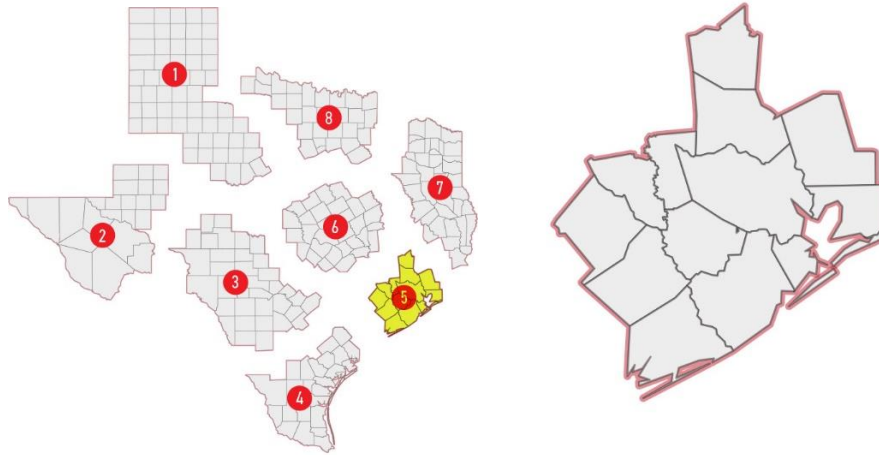
## INFORMATION SOURCES

Organizations in this region equally identified their organization's county service officers and friends or family members as the top resources veterans use to learn about services provided by their organization. The organizations website and social workers were tied as the second ranked resources, followed by three-way-tie between VA healthcare, Texas 2-1-1, and military veteran peer networks.





## TVC FVA REGION 5 – GULF COAST



FVA GRANT NEEDS	STATEWIDE NEEDS	INDIVIDUAL NEEDS	UNMET REGIONAL NEEDS	SERVICE BARRIERS	INFORMATION SOURCES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clinical Counseling</li> <li>• Employment Support</li> <li>• Short - Term Financial Assistance</li> <li>• Integrative Therapies</li> <li>• Home Modification Assistance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthcare Support</li> <li>• VA Disability Claims Assistance</li> <li>• Employment Support</li> <li>• Clinical Counseling</li> <li>• Assistance for Women Veterans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VA Disability Claims Assistance</li> <li>• Assistance with VA Healthcare</li> <li>• Business Startup Help</li> <li>• Integrative Therapies</li> <li>• Employment Support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clinical Counseling</li> <li>• Healthcare Support</li> <li>• Employment Support</li> <li>• VA Disability Claims Assistance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding Benefits</li> <li>• Knowing Where to Get Help</li> <li>• Getting Appointments</li> <li>• Anxiety</li> <li>• Few Providers in the Local Area</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VA</li> <li>• Friends or Family</li> <li>• VSOs</li> <li>• Internet</li> <li>• TVC</li> </ul>

Survey Highlights (N = 2,798)

### FVA GRANT NEEDS

The top grant supported needs for veterans residing in the Gulf Coast reflected those of the other FVA regions with little variation however, lower level needs were more variable. Thus, short-term financial assistance (38%) was indicated as a more important need than integrative therapies (31%) and home modification assistance (27%).



## INDIVIDUAL NEEDS

Similarly, there was no variation in the top needs indicated as high personal needs, however, integrative therapy (13%) was much lower in the ranking of top individual needs compared to some other FVA regions.

## REGIONAL UNMET NEEDS

The most important unmet needs for veterans in the Gulf Coast region were similar to those of the other FVA regions. However, continuing the trend for low ranked needs, employment services (2%) was indicated as a more important unmet need than integrative therapy services (1%).

## SERVICE BARRIERS

The top barriers to service for veterans in the Gulf Coast region were very similar to the top barriers reported for other regions. However, unlike most other regions, potential costs and finances (22%) were included amongst the top barriers to service for the Gulf Coast region.

## PERSONAL NEEDS BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS

Employed veterans in the Gulf Coast region indicated employment services (14%) as one of their topmost personal needs. Disabled veterans in the region considered clinical counseling services (29%) and short-term financial assistance (29%) as top personal needs. Unemployed veterans indicated that short-term financial assistance (40%) and living expenses other than house or food expenses (30%) were included among their top personal needs, and retired veterans indicated clinical counseling services (3%) and elder care (3%) as some of their top personal needs.

FVA GRANT NEEDS	STATEWIDE NEEDS	HEALTHCARE SUPPORT	UNMET REGIONAL NEEDS	SERVICE BARRIERS	TVC OUTREACH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employment Support during Pandemic</li> <li>• Clinical Counseling</li> <li>• Guidance when Transitioning from Military Service</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assistance for Women Veterans More Important than Survey Suggested</li> <li>• Addressing Certain Needs will Help with Others</li> <li>• Mentorship upon Leaving the Military</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Easy Access to Healthcare Information</li> <li>• Assistance with Navigating VA Health Care System</li> <li>• Localized Support Services in Every Community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge of Where to find Services and How to Access Services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to Information is the Key Barrier</li> <li>• Pride of Veterans is a Potential Barrier</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social Media Groups for Veterans and Paid Advertising on Social Media</li> <li>• Billboards</li> <li>• AARP, Mail-Outs</li> <li>• Television and Radio Advertisements</li> </ul>

November 12, 2020 Focus Group Highlights (N = 26)



## **FVA GRANT NEEDS**

Participants largely agreed with the list of top FVA grant supported need areas obtained from the survey and mentioned that employment related services are especially important during the COVID-19 pandemic. Services related to supportive counseling (e.g., drug and financial counseling) and transitioning to civilian life were also mentioned as important needs for the Gulf Coast region.

## **STATEWIDE VETERAN NEEDS**

Half of the group participants thought that assistance for women veterans should be moved higher on the list of needs. Outsourcing of certain services pertaining specifically to women was mentioned as a potential reason for this need. Participants also suggested that the needs are connected and that meeting certain needs like healthcare related services would assist with other needs like employment. The focus group participants suggested that veterans should be connected with a mentor upon leaving the military to inform them of the opportunities available to them and guide them through the processes.

## **HEALTHCARE SUPPORT**

To unpack the phrase “healthcare support,” participants expressed that healthcare support refers to easy access to information including where and how to access services. Health care support also includes assistance with navigating the health care system and having services localized and available in every community.

## **REGIONAL UNMET NEEDS**

Many participants agreed with the rank order of unmet needs obtained from the survey, and the group generally agreed that veterans need to know where to find information about available services and how to access them.

## **SERVICE BARRIERS**

Participants generally agreed with the list of barriers obtained from the survey and expressed that information was largely regarded as the primary barrier to obtaining services. Pride was also mentioned as an important barrier. Focus group members expressed that methods for removing barriers should include educating service providers.

## **TVC OUTREACH SUGGESTIONS**

The focus group participants suggested that other veterans should be included as a resource and that the internet should be moved higher up on the list. To the contrary, participants felt that TVC was low on the list due to a lack of awareness of the organization, and some participants suggested moving TVC from the list of top needs for this same reason. The group indicated support for billboard advertisements and advertisement via social media and streaming platforms to increase awareness of the TVC and the services it offers. Other options to reach older adults included using AARP, mail-outs, television ads, and radio ads. Tabling at events was also suggested as a method of marketing to younger veterans.



UNMET NEEDS	BARRIERS	ASSETS NEEDED	INFORMATION SOURCES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthcare Support</li> <li>• Housing Assistance</li> <li>• Financial Assistance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of Awareness</li> <li>• Transportation Assistance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More Funding</li> <li>• Personnel</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organizations Website</li> <li>• Friends and Family Members</li> <li>• Internet Searches</li> <li>• Social Workers</li> </ul>

Organizational Survey Highlights (N = 47)

## REGIONAL UNMET NEEDS

Gulf Coast organizations ranked healthcare support (30%), housing assistance (21%), and financial assistance (17%) as the top unmet needs in their area.

The veterans survey also identified healthcare support as a top unmet need, ranking it second. The focus groups agreed that healthcare support, specifically knowledge of where to find services and how to access them, is an important unmet need in the region, as well as a statewide need.

Both housing assistance and financial assistance were not identified by the veterans survey as a regional *unmet* need, but were selected as the fifth and third FVA grant needs respectively, with the focus groups falling in agreement with those rankings.

## SERVICE BARRIERS

Organizations in this region cited lack of awareness (29%) as the number one barrier to services in the area and transportation (25%) as the second. Transportation was not identified as a barrier by the veterans survey or focus groups. The veterans survey listed understanding of benefits and knowing where to get help as the top two barriers. The focus groups added that access to information is a predominant barrier, which is closely related to lack of awareness of services.

## ASSETS NEEDED

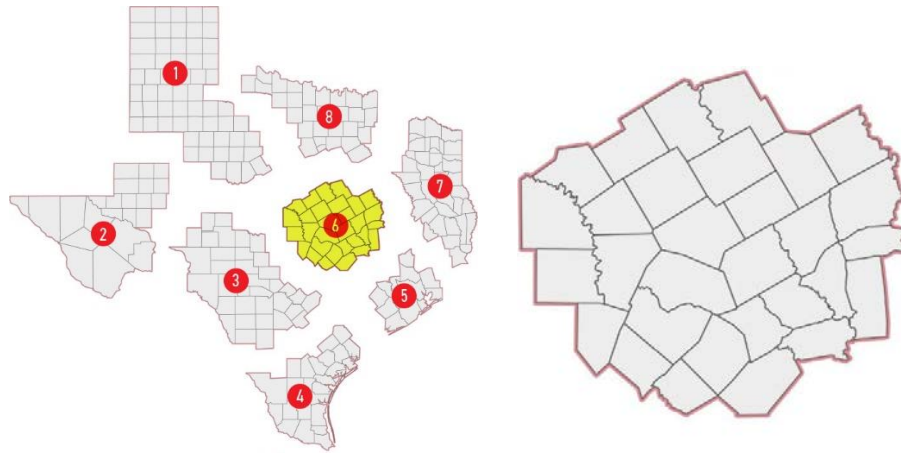
Organizations in this region highlighted funding (30%) and personnel (23%) as their top assets needed to better serve veterans. The Gulf Coast was the only region to rank personnel in the top two assets needed.

## INFORMATION SOURCES

Organizations in this region equally reported that their organization’s website and friends and family members were the top resources veterans used to learn about the services they provide. Internet searches were identified as the third resource, followed by social workers.



## TVC FVA REGION 6 – CENTRAL TEXAS



FVA GRANT NEEDS	STATEWIDE NEEDS	INDIVIDUAL NEEDS	UNMET REGIONAL NEEDS	SERVICE BARRIERS	INFORMATION SOURCES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employment Support</li> <li>• Clinical Counseling</li> <li>• Short - Term Financial Assistance</li> <li>• Integrative Therapies</li> <li>• Home Modification Assistance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthcare Support</li> <li>• VA Disability Claims Assistance</li> <li>• Employment Support</li> <li>• Clinical Counseling</li> <li>• Assistance for Women Veterans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VA Disability Claims Assistance</li> <li>• Integrative Therapies</li> <li>• Assistance with VA Healthcare</li> <li>• Business Startup</li> <li>• Clinical Counseling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthcare Support</li> <li>• Clinical Counseling</li> <li>• Short-Term Financial Assistance</li> <li>• VA Disability Claims Assistance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding Benefits</li> <li>• Knowing where to Get Help</li> <li>• Getting Appointments</li> <li>• Anxiety</li> <li>• Few Providers in Area</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VA</li> <li>• Friends or Family</li> <li>• VSOs</li> <li>• Internet</li> <li>• TVC</li> </ul>

Survey Highlights (N = 2,686)

### FVA GRANT NEEDS

The order of most important needs supported by TVC grants for veterans in the Central Texas FVA region was similar to those of all regions of the state. However, contrary all other regions, peer delivered services (27%) was considered a top need for the Central Texas region.

### INDIVIDUAL NEEDS

The ranking of individual needs for Central Texas was similar to the rankings for other regions, although contrary to some regions, integrative therapy services (18%) were considered more important than



assistance with receiving VA health care (16%). Likewise, contrary to most regions, Central Texas veterans considered clinical counseling (12%) to be a top need for the region.

## **REGIONAL UNMET NEEDS**

The list of top unmet needs for the Central Texas region was comparable to those of other regions, with healthcare support (3%) ranking as the most important unmet need followed by clinical counseling services (3%), VA disability claims assistance (3%), and short-term financial assistance (2%).

## **SERVICE BARRIERS**

The top barriers to obtaining services for veterans in the Central Texas region did not vary greatly from those of other regions. However, contrary to some and similar to other regions, anxiety (23%) was indicated as one of the top barriers to obtaining services.

## **PERSONAL NEEDS BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS**

Employed veterans in Central Texas considered clinical counseling services (11%) as one of their topmost personal needs. Disabled veterans indicated that clinical counseling services (33%) and short-term financial assistance (23%) were amongst their top personal needs. Unemployed veterans in the region indicated short-term financial assistance (40%) and integrative therapies as top needs (35%), and retired veterans included home modification assistance (6%) and legal help (5%) amongst their top personal needs.





FVA GRANT NEEDS	STATEWIDE NEEDS	HEALTHCARE SUPPORT	UNMET REGIONAL NEEDS	SERVICE BARRIERS	TVC OUTREACH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clinical Counseling, Employment Support and Short-Term Financial Assistance are Most Important</li> <li>• Resume Writing Assistance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vets go to the VA to Address Any Needs because it is Recommended when Transitioning to Civilian Life</li> <li>• Vets also turn to Friends, Family and Other Vets to Learn About Services</li> <li>• Inform Texas Veterans about TVC Services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Timely Care, Patient Advocacy, Help with Appointments and Understanding Healthcare Options</li> <li>• Holistic Care Support</li> <li>• Transportation Assistance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agreement with Needs List from Survey; Disagreement with Order</li> <li>• Short-term Financial Assistance during Pandemic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agreement with Top Barriers</li> <li>• Anxiety should be Ranked Higher</li> <li>• Not Knowing Where to get Help</li> <li>• Seeking Services Might Negatively Impact Job/Occupation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social Media for Younger Vets</li> <li>• Ads in Online Video Games</li> <li>• Workforce Commission, Businesses and Social Groups</li> <li>• TV, Radio, Satellite Radio,</li> <li>• Billboards</li> <li>• Direct Mail</li> </ul>

November 16, 2020 Focus Group Highlights (N = 25)

## FVA GRANT NEEDS

There was some disagreement with the veterans survey order of the top grant funded needs for focus group members residing in Central Texas. Most agreed that clinical counseling, employment services and short-term financial services were the most important needs. The group asserted that emotional stability is an important foundation for addressing other needs and that alleviating financial burdens would allow veterans to focus on other needs.

## STATEWIDE VETERAN NEEDS

In addition to the needs that can be addressed using TVC grants, participants felt that women’s health care assistance is also important because women are oftentimes overlooked.

## HEALTHCARE SUPPORT

Describing healthcare support, participants mentioned that health care support refers to access to timely care, patient advocacy, assistance making appointments, and understanding the healthcare options available. Some participants also mentioned that support refers to holistic care, and one participant mentioned transportation assistance as form of support.

## REGIONAL UNMET NEEDS

Veterans in the Central Texas region largely agreed with the list of most important unmet needs obtained from the survey, although they felt that the order of needs should be reversed. The group asserted that short-



term financial assistance should be primary due to the pandemic which has caused financial stress for many veterans.

## SERVICE BARRIERS

The group largely agreed with the list of top barriers to services obtained from the survey. However, many members felt that anxiety should be ranked higher as a barrier as it is a very common and powerful barrier. Not knowing where to get help was also mentioned as a major challenge, and focus group members mentioned that some veterans may avoid seeking help due to fear of how taking time off would impact their job.

## TVC OUTREACH SUGGESTIONS

Regarding the top resources veterans use to obtain information, Central Texas veterans suggested that the VA is listed as the top resource because it is recommended during the transitioning process from the military. However, many focus group members thought that the VA should not be listed as a source of information due to bureaucratic issues. Instead, friends, family, and other veterans were considered to be the most important sources of information. To increase awareness of TVC and the services it provides, the focus group participants suggested marketing through social media for younger veterans, online video games, the workforce commission, businesses, and social groups and activities frequented by veterans. TV advertisement, radio, billboards, and direct mail campaigns were also suggested for older veterans.

UNMET NEEDS	BARRIERS	ASSETS NEEDED	INFORMATION SOURCES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthcare Support</li> <li>• Financial Assistance</li> <li>• Housing Assistance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Availability of Resources</li> <li>• Transportation Assistance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding</li> <li>• Additional Support Options</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organizations Website</li> <li>• Friends and Family Members</li> <li>• Social Workers</li> <li>• Internet Searches</li> </ul>

Organizational Survey Highlights (N = 84)

## REGIONAL UNMET NEEDS

Central Texas organizations identified healthcare support (27%), financial assistance (20%), and housing assistance (18%) as the top three unmet needs in the area.

The veterans survey also identified healthcare support as the number one unmet need in the region, however the focus groups felt that healthcare support was a less important unmet need. Financial assistance was also identified as a regional unmet need by the veterans survey (ranked third) as well as the third FVA grant funded need. The focus groups felt that financial assistance should be ranked higher due to the current pandemic. Housing assistance was not selected as a top *unmet* need in the veterans survey but was the fifth FVA grant need, with the focus groups somewhat in agreeance.



## **SERVICE BARRIERS**

Organizations in this region ranked availability of resources (24%) as the top barrier to services in this area followed by transportation (22%). The veterans survey indicated few providers in the area as the fifth barrier to services in this region, which is closely related to the availability of resources. The focus groups largely agreed. Transportation was not indicated as a barrier by the veterans survey or focus groups, however the group did include transportation support in their definition of healthcare support.

## **ASSETS NEEDED**

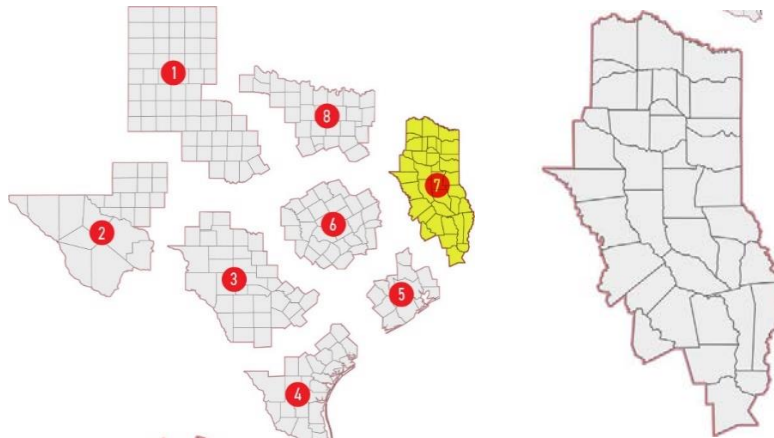
Central Texas organizations identified funding (32%) and additional support options (26%) as their top assets needed to better serve veterans. These were the most common assets needed across all FVA regions.

## **INFORMATION SOURCES**

Organizations in this region identified their organization's website and friends or family members as the top resources veterans use to learn about the services their organization provides. The third resource identified was social workers, followed by internet searches (tied).



## TVC FVA REGION 7 – EAST TEXAS



FVA GRANT NEEDS	STATEWIDE NEEDS	INDIVIDUAL NEEDS	UNMET REGIONAL NEEDS	SERVICE BARRIERS	INFORMATION SOURCES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clinical Counseling</li> <li>• Employment Support</li> <li>• Short -Term Financial Assistance</li> <li>• Integrative Therapies</li> <li>• Home Modification Assistance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthcare Support</li> <li>• VA Disability Claims Assistance</li> <li>• Employment Support</li> <li>• Clinical Counseling</li> <li>• Assistance for Women Veterans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VA Disability Claims Assistance</li> <li>• Integrative Therapies</li> <li>• Help Navigating VA Healthcare</li> <li>• Business Startup Help</li> <li>• Employment Support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthcare Support</li> <li>• Clinical Counseling</li> <li>• Employment Support</li> <li>• Short-Term Financial Assistance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Few Service Providers</li> <li>• Lack of Services in Area</li> <li>• Understanding Benefits</li> <li>• Knowing Where to Get Help</li> <li>• Getting Appointments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VA</li> <li>• Friends or Family</li> <li>• VSOs</li> <li>• Internet</li> <li>• TVC</li> </ul>

Survey Highlights (N = 963)

### FVA GRANT NEEDS

The ranking of grant funded needs for the East Texas region was similar to, if not the same as, those of other FVA regions, with short-term financial assistance (31%) ranking higher in importance than integrative therapies (30%) and home modification assistance (29%).



## INDIVIDUAL NEEDS

Similarly, the rank order of individual needs for veterans residing in the East Texas region closely resembled those of other regions. VA Disability claims assistance (17%) was the top need followed by assistance with receiving VA healthcare (16%) and integrative therapies (12%).

## REGIONAL UNMET NEEDS

Contrary to the top unmet needs for veterans in most other regions of the state, veteran employment services (2%) ranked among the top unmet needs for the East Texas region.

## SERVICE BARRIERS

The rank order of barriers to obtaining services for East Texas veterans differed from that of all the other FVA regions. Veterans in East Texas indicated that the greatest barriers to accessing services were few providers in the area (37%) and lack of services in the area (37%).

## INFORMATION SOURCES

The top resources that veterans would use for information across all eight FVA regions was relatively the same, however, veterans in the East Texas region indicated that they would be more likely to look for information and assistance from county service officers (16%) than from the TVC (7%).

## PERSONAL NEEDS BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS

In addition to needs that were similar across all FVA regions for employed veterans, employed veterans in East Texas indicated that employment services (10%) was one of their top personal needs. Disabled veterans in the region indicated clinical counseling services (27%) and home modification assistance (26%) as a top personal needs, and unemployed veterans considered assistance with receiving VA healthcare (37%) and short-term financial assistance (37%) to be top personal needs. Retired veterans in the region indicated that home modification assistance (4%) and clinical counseling services (3%) were amongst their top personal needs.



FVA GRANT NEEDS	STATEWIDE NEEDS	HEALTHCARE SUPPORT	UNMET REGIONAL NEEDS	SERVICE BARRIERS	TVC OUTREACH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Services for Self-Employed Veterans</li> <li>• Outreach for Homeless Veterans</li> <li>• Suicide Prevention Services</li> <li>• Internet Access</li> <li>• Transportation Assistance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education Support</li> <li>• Vocational Rehab Services</li> <li>• Reasonable Health Insurance for Self-Employed Veterans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to Services and Resources</li> <li>• Knowledge about Services and Eligibility</li> <li>• Communication and Knowledge of Resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge and Awareness of Support Services</li> <li>• Greater Need for Short-Term Financial Assistance</li> <li>• Education Benefits for Younger Vets</li> <li>• Mental Health and Substance Abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agreement with Survey List of Barriers</li> <li>• Lack of Information about Services and How to Access them</li> <li>• Inadequate Understanding of Benefits</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Billboard Advertisements, Social Media, and Streaming Services</li> <li>• TVC Sponsored Events and TVC Conducted Events</li> <li>• Churches</li> <li>• Clinics</li> <li>• Radio</li> <li>• College Sports</li> </ul>

November 18, 2020 Focus Group Highlights (N =21)

### FVA GRANT NEEDS

Services for self-employed veterans, outreach to assist often overlooked veteran populations (e.g., veterans experiencing homelessness or mental illness), suicide prevention education, transportation assistance, and internet access were all mentioned as needs that should be added to the list of top needs.

### STATEWIDE VETERAN NEEDS

Important needs mentioned in addition to the top needs obtained from the survey included education assistance and vocational rehab, and reasonable health insurance rates for the self-employed. Group participants mentioned that the underlying problem for the top needs is a lack of information or knowledge about what benefits exist for veterans.

### HEALTHCARE SUPPORT

To unpack the phrase “healthcare support,” focus group members asserted that healthcare support included access to services, resources, and knowledge about services and eligibility. Focus group members also asserted that there needs to be a better, more systematic way of communicating information about support resources to veterans.

### REGIONAL UNMET NEEDS

Knowledge and awareness of support services was considered the most important unmet need in the region, however the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has increased the need for short-term financial assistance.





Other unmet needs mentioned included education benefits for younger veterans and mental health and substance abuse services for veterans involved in the justice system.

## SERVICE BARRIERS

The group largely agreed with the list of top barriers obtained from the survey and asserted that the lack of information about services available and inadequate understanding of benefits were major barriers to accessing services.

## TVC OUTREACH SUGGESTIONS

To raise awareness about the TVC and the services it offers, the focus group participants suggested billboards, social media/streaming platforms, mail-outs, nursing facilities and clinics, churches, satellite radio, and college and professional sports as advertisement opportunities. Members also suggested that TVC sponsor events and send representatives to attend events that draw veterans. One group member also mentioned that TVC should keep in mind that primary sources of information may vary between cultural communities.

UNMET NEEDS	BARRIERS	ASSETS NEEDED	INFORMATION SOURCES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthcare Support</li> <li>• Housing Assistance</li> <li>• Transportation Assistance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of Awareness</li> <li>• Availability of Resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding</li> <li>• Additional Support Options</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organizations Website</li> <li>• Friends and Family Members</li> <li>• County Service Officers</li> <li>• Internet Searches</li> <li>• Texas 211</li> <li>• Military Veteran Peer Networks</li> </ul>

Organizational Survey Highlights (N = 25)

## REGIONAL UNMET NEEDS

Healthcare support (27%), housing assistance (17%), and transportation (15%) were ranked the top three regional unmet needs by organizations in East Texas. These findings are mostly similar to other FVA regions but differ in that transportation was not identified as a top unmet need by organizations in other regions.

However, although transportation was not identified as an unmet need by the veterans survey or focus groups in this region, the focus group attendees felt that transportation should be a top FVA grant need. Healthcare support was identified by the veterans survey as the number one regional unmet need, with the focus group participants emphasizing the unmet need of knowledge and awareness of support services. Housing assistance was not identified as an *unmet* need by the veterans survey but was marled as an unmet need in the focus groups for this region. The focus groups did not discuss housing support as a top unmet need, but did mention that outreach to homeless veterans should be prioritized by the FVA grants.



## **SERVICE BARRIERS**

Organizations identified lack of awareness (30%) as the number one barrier to service in the area followed by availability of resources (26%). The veterans survey and focus groups cited similar barriers in their region. Specifically, few service providers in area, lack of services in the area, understanding benefits, and knowing where to get help.

## **ASSETS NEEDED**

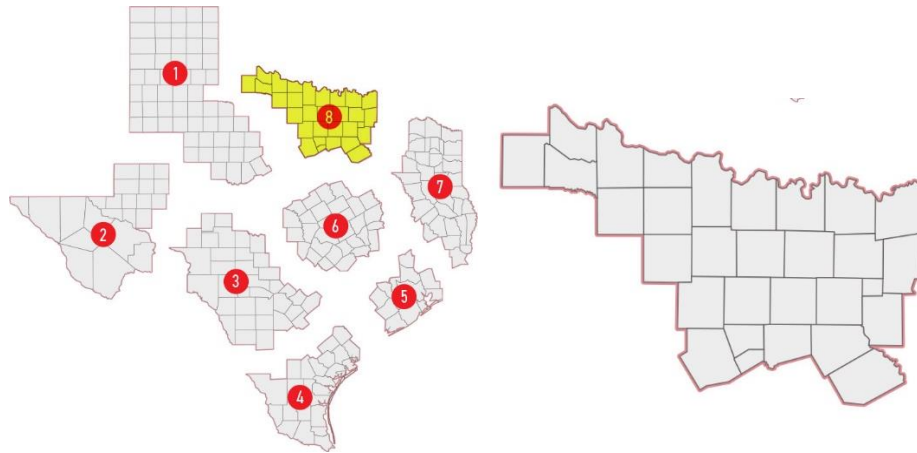
Organizations in this region indicated funding (34%) and additional support options (23%) as the top two assets needed to better serve veterans, which were common across all FVA regions.

## **INFORMATION SOURCES**

Organizations in this region equally reported that their organization's website and veterans' friends and family members were the top methods veterans used to learn about services their organization provides. County service officers and internet searches were tied for second, followed by Texas 2-1-1 and military veteran peer networks. Non-government organizations ranked closely behind, as well as VA healthcare.



## TVC FVA REGION 8 – NORTH TEXAS



FVA GRANT NEEDS	STATEWIDE NEEDS	INDIVIDUAL NEEDS	UNMET REGIONAL NEEDS	SERVICE BARRIERS	INFORMATION SOURCES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clinical Counseling</li> <li>• Employment Support</li> <li>• Short -Term Financial Assistance</li> <li>• Integrative Therapies</li> <li>• Home Modification Assistance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthcare Support</li> <li>• VA Disability Claims Assistance</li> <li>• Employment Support</li> <li>• Clinical Counseling</li> <li>• Assistance for Women Veterans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VA Disability Claims Assistance</li> <li>• Help with Navigating VA Healthcare</li> <li>• Integrative Therapies</li> <li>• Business Startup Help</li> <li>• Employment Support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthcare Support</li> <li>• Clinical Counseling</li> <li>• Short-Term Financial</li> <li>• Employment Support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding Benefits</li> <li>• Knowing Where to Get Help</li> <li>• Getting Appointments</li> <li>• Potential Costs and Finances</li> <li>• Few Service Providers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VA</li> <li>• Friends or Family</li> <li>• VSOs</li> <li>• Internet</li> <li>• TVC</li> </ul>

Survey Highlights (N = 4,328)

### FVA GRANT NEEDS

Similar to other Texas FVA regions, clinical counseling services (56%) and employment services (53%) were the top grant supported needs for North Texas. In agreement with veterans residing in the East Texas region, veterans in the North Texas region indicated that short-term financial assistance (35%) was a more important need than integrative therapies (31%) and home modification assistance (27%).



## INDIVIDUAL NEEDS

The top individual needs for veterans in North Texas largely resembled those of veterans in other regions with slight variations in the order of importance in comparison to some regions. VA disability claims assistance (20%) was the top personal need followed by assistance with receiving VA healthcare (16%).

## REGIONAL UNMET NEEDS

Although there were many similarities in the lists of top unmet needs for each FVA region, veterans in the North Texas region, contrary to veterans in most other regions, considered veteran employment services (2%) to be a more important unmet need than VA disability claims filing assistance (1%).

## SERVICE BARRIERS

The top barriers to obtaining services for veterans in the North Texas region did not differ greatly from those of other regions, however, similar to veterans in the Gulf Coast region and contrary to veterans in all other regions, the potential costs and finances associated with services (22%) was considered a top barrier among veterans residing in North Texas.

## PERSONAL NEEDS BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS

For employed veterans in North Texas, business startup assistance (19%) and employment services (13%) were considered important personal needs. Disabled veterans in the region included clinical counseling services (24%) and home modification assistance (19%) in addition to the needs that were similar for disabled veterans in each region. Unemployed veterans in the region indicated that short-term financial assistance (36%) and assistance with receiving VA healthcare (32%) were among their top five personal needs. For retired veterans in the region legal help (4%) and clinical counseling services (3%) were considered high personal needs.



FVA GRANT NEEDS	STATEWIDE NEEDS	HEALTHCARE SUPPORT	UNMET REGIONAL NEEDS	SERVICE BARRIERS	TVC OUTREACH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agreement with List of Needs</li> <li>• Home Modification Assistance</li> <li>• Clinical Counseling</li> <li>• Assistance for Homeless Veterans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthcare Support and Clinical Counseling Validated as Top Needs</li> <li>• Help for Homeless Veterans, Outreach to Mentally Ill, and Dental Care also Important</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Process of Accessing Healthcare Resources</li> <li>• Support should Remove Barriers to Care and Reduce Wait Times for Services</li> <li>• Pandemic Related Support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agreement with Survey List of Top Needs</li> <li>• Services for Military Sexual Trauma</li> <li>• Homeless Outreach and Counseling</li> <li>• Services for Women Veterans and Spouses of Veterans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agreement with Survey List of Barriers</li> <li>• Lack of Transportation</li> <li>• Limiting Cultural &amp; Religious Sensitivity of Providers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social Media, Radio, and TV to Reach Most</li> <li>• Billboards or Information Tables to serve Vets in Need including Homeless Vets</li> <li>• Podcasts for In-Depth Information</li> </ul>

November 20, 2020 Focus Group Highlights (N = 25)

## FVA GRANT NEEDS

Many group participants residing in the North Texas region agreed with the list of the most important needs supported by TVC grants and noted that more emphasis should be placed on housing and food assistance, clinical counseling, and assistance for veterans experiencing homelessness. Participants also mentioned that clinical counseling needs should be addressed in order to address other issues.

## STATEWIDE VETERAN NEEDS

In response to the list of top needs for the Texas veteran population obtained from the survey, participants agreed that healthcare support and clinical counseling should be the top needs because most veterans need them to varying degrees. Veterans also felt that help for homeless veterans, outreach to the mentally ill, and dental care were also important needs.

## HEALTHCARE SUPPORT

To unpack the phrase “healthcare support,” the group explained that support refers to the entire process of accessing health care resources. Support should remove barriers to obtain care from specialists and decrease wait time for care.

## REGIONAL UNMET NEEDS

The group generally agreed with the list of unmet needs obtained from the survey and mentioned that the need for healthcare support is due to difficulties in dealing with the VA. Other important unmet needs discussed included military sexual trauma services, homeless outreach, and counseling services.



## SERVICE BARRIERS

The group largely agreed with the top barriers to services obtained from the survey, and a few participants mentioned that lack of transportation was also a barrier for veterans in both the urban and rural areas. Transportation in urban areas was believed to be nonexistent or inadequate, and transportation in rural areas could often be located far away from service providers.

## TVC OUTREACH SUGGESTIONS

In response to the list of top sources veterans in the North Texas region look for information, the group mentioned that the VA is well known, however, it is not a good source of information. The group was largely in agreement with the other top resources listed, and several mentioned that the internet and VSO run social media groups were also good sources of information. Many focus group members felt that the top resources were family or friends with military experience.

To increase awareness of the TVC and its services, the focus group participants suggested using social media, radio, or TV to reach most people and using billboards or information tables at places that serve the homeless to reach veterans in great need. Podcasts were also mentioned as a method to share in depth information.

UNMET NEEDS	BARRIERS	ASSETS NEEDED	INFORMATION SOURCES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthcare Support</li> <li>• Housing Assistance</li> <li>• Financial Assistance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of Awareness</li> <li>• Transportation Assistance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding</li> <li>• Visibility/ Promotion/ Advertising</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Friends and Family Members</li> <li>• Organizations Website</li> <li>• Internet Searches</li> </ul>

Organizational Survey Highlights (N = 80)

## REGIONAL UNMET NEEDS

Organizations in North Texas ranked healthcare support (25%), housing assistance (22%), and financial assistance (15%) as the top three unmet needs in their area. Again, these findings do not vary greatly by FVA region and coincide with veterans survey and focus group findings.

Healthcare support was also identified as the number one unmet need in this region by the veterans survey, and again as the top statewide need. Housing assistance was not identified as an *unmet* need by the veterans survey but was listed as a top FVA grant funded need. Financial assistance was identified as the third unmet need, as well as the third FVA grant need. Focus groups largely agreed with the veterans survey findings but felt that housing assistance should potentially be a higher priority.



## **SERVICE BARRIERS**

Organizations ranked lack of awareness (31%) as the top barrier to services followed by transportation (19%). Availability of resources (18%) was also frequently reported as a barrier. The veterans survey highlighted similar barriers to lack of awareness, such as understanding benefits and knowing where to get help. Survey results did not indicate transportation as a barrier. The focus groups, however, agreed that lack of awareness is an issue and emphasized that lack of transportation is an issue in both urban and rural areas of their region.

## **ASSETS NEEDED**

North Texas organizations highlighted funding (40%) and visibility/promotion/ advertising (20%) as their top two assets needed to better serve veterans. North Texas was one of only two regions to cite visibility/promotion/advertising as one of their top two assets needed.

## **INFORMATION SOURCES**

Organizations in this region identified friends or family members as the top resource veterans use to learn about services provided by their organization. Their organization's website was identified as the second resource, followed by internet searches.





## CONCLUDING INSIGHTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Various stages of this needs assessment study integrated four major methodological components (surveys of veterans and veteran serving organizations; asset mapping of veteran serving organizations; focus groups of veterans and family members) as key data sources. Data triangulation attempted to decipher convergence, divergence, confirmation and validation of feedback on needs identified from these various sources. The final step of categorizing and triangulating data findings by each FVA region aim to help TVC identify the actionable priorities for each region. Nevertheless, without a firm understanding of the actual number of veterans residing in each FVA region, there is no way to accurately contextualize the proportionality of needs identified through the diverse data sources for each FVA region. Keeping this in mind, in moving forward, TVC needs to carefully consider the following thoughts and suggestions.

### HEALTHCARE SUPPORT IS A PRIORITY NEED

Although not directly linked with any of TVC's FVA grant areas, healthcare support emerged as the single most important need area for all FVA regions, as both a priority as well as an unmet need. It is a recurrent theme in all the surveys, mostly in open-ended responses. The leading personal or individual veteran needs included VA disability claims assistance (22%) as the topmost need followed by assistance with receiving VA healthcare (17%). Primary barriers included difficulty in getting medical appointments (28%) and existence of few service providers (23%) in the regions. Feedback on services available in each FVA region but currently unavailable were also related to healthcare, including VA hospitals and VA outpatient clinics as well as specialty care. Unpacking the meaning of healthcare support in the 17 focus groups helped define its parameters primarily in terms of: accessing health services; understanding healthcare eligibility; and navigating and assisting with obtaining the VA's medical services. Another key dimension of healthcare support connected it with the overarching theme that mental health needs supersede all other healthcare needs for Texas veterans. Both Panhandle and South Texas group participants discussed the importance of VA disability claims assistance emphasizing the needs of wounded veterans. West Texas veterans specified that counseling services were particularly important due to Fort Bliss. West Texas groups also discussed the need for alcohol/drug dependency assistance, and East Texas participants highlighted the need for vocational rehab and reasonable health insurance rates for self-employed veterans. All these data suggest that TVC might want to consider adding a new grant area that focuses on Healthcare Support for Texas veterans and carefully define the boundaries of this new grant area with systematic feedback, open communication and appropriate coordination with key stakeholders. Stakeholders should include veteran families, veteran advocacy groups, VA representatives, regional health service organizations, legislators, policy makers, veteran serving organizations and others.

### TOP NEEDS SLIGHTLY VARY BY FVA REGIONS

The top needs of Texas veterans only marginally vary across the FVA regions and the key barriers are very closely connected with the key needs in each region. Some needs such as clinical counseling services (53%)<sup>5</sup>,

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<sup>5</sup> Percentages are based on the full sample of veterans across the state (N = 15,664). The data are based on responses to a multi-response item, therefore percentages will not add up to 100%.



veterans' employment services (57%), short-term financial assistance (36%), and integrative therapies (33%) were common in all FVA regions. The primary personal or individual needs include VA disability claims assistance (22%) as the topmost category followed by assistance with receiving VA healthcare (17%), integrative therapies (16%), and business startup assistance and training (14%) in varying rank orders for each FVA region. More veterans in the Gulf Coast region indicate a higher need for assistance with starting a business and workforce training. For the West Texas, Alamo, Gulf Coast, and North Texas regions, employment service was one of the three services frequently indicated as most important. For the Panhandle, Central Texas, and East Texas regions, home modifications were commonly mentioned as most necessary. There was little variation in the perceptions of service importance based on gender, race, FVA region, or annual household income. However, veterans who were unemployed or students considered veteran unemployment services to be among their most important needs. However, the focus group participants were reluctant to differentiate among the top regional needs. Many participants said that the needs were interlinked and could not be easily unpacked or separated from each other and were concerned that trying to prioritize one of several interconnected needs was problematic.

## **TOP UNMET NEEDS DO NOT DIFFER FROM FEEDBACK ON OTHER NEEDS**

The services available in each FVA region but currently unavailable center primarily on healthcare: VA hospitals and VA outpatient clinics as well as specialty care. Veterans from five regions (Panhandle, South Texas, Central Texas, East Texas, and North Texas) listed healthcare support as the top need with the other three regions ranking healthcare support second. All eight FVA regions also referenced clinical counseling as a top need and four regions (Panhandle, West Texas, South Texas, and North Texas) referenced short-term financial assistance as a top unmet needs. Two regions (Alamo and Central Texas) cited VA disability claims benefits assistance as an unmet need. However, the overall percentage of veterans who indicated any particular need as a high unmet need were relatively low due to the response format for this question in the veterans needs assessment survey instrument. This item was an open-ended response which asked veterans to list key services that were unavailable yet needed in their area. Consequently, many veterans either did not respond to this item or indicated that they did not know about unmet needs. The organizational survey across the eight FVA regions also highlighted healthcare, disability, and mental health support – all categorized as healthcare support – as the most important unmet service needs of Texas veterans. This was followed by housing support and financial assistance. Organizations from five regions (Alamo, South Texas, Gulf Coast, East Texas, North Texas) cited housing assistance as the second-ranking unmet need (with their third being financial assistance) and 3 regions (Panhandle, West Texas, Central Texas) cited financial assistance as second (with housing assistance ranked their third unmet need). As mentioned earlier, participants from all focus groups stressed that unmet needs are very much interconnected with their personal needs and perceived barriers to services.



## TOP BARRIERS PRIMARILY RELATE TO LACK OF KNOWLEDGE

The veterans in each FVA region stated that an inadequate understanding of benefits (32%) and not knowing where to get help (30%) were amongst the top barriers to obtaining services. Primary barriers included difficulty in getting medical appointments (28%) and existence of few service providers (23%) in the regions. Across the FVA Regions, healthcare support consistently ranked as the top unmet need and a key challenge area according to Texas veterans organizations. Housing assistance and financial assistance were the second and third most important unmet needs in the regions, with 5 regions (Alamo, South Texas, Gulf Coast, East Texas, North Texas) citing housing assistance as the second-ranking unmet need (with the third being financial assistance) and 3 regions (Panhandle, West Texas, Central Texas) citing financial assistance as second (with housing assistance ranked third). Also noteworthy is that compared to employed or retired veterans, veterans who were unemployed, disabled and unable to work, or student veterans indicated that anxiety would be a serious or very serious overarching barrier when accessing veteran services. Many organizations noted that veterans either do not know they exist, or do not know about the full extent of their services. Transportation-related barrier from organizational viewpoint include access to resources including disability-friendly transportation services and public transportation availability. Another access issue stems from the distance between where veterans live and where the organization is located, especially in rural Texas. Many organizations also mentioned the need for increased and continued funding to sustain their goals to serve the veterans.

## MARKETING AND OUTREACH NEEDS ATTENTION

As their primary information sources, most Texas veterans turn to family and friends or other veterans they know. Besides, VA was often mentioned as a primary source of information because it is well known, but veterans across many FVA regions (Panhandle, West Texas, Alamo, South Texas, and Central Texas) felt that it was not the best source of information. TVC cannot assist veterans with their needs if Texas veterans do not know about TVC. The overarching theme from the results of this needs assessment is that Texas veterans need information about TVC's services as well as the services of TVC's grant funded organizations. While TVC has a very informative website, very few participants who had answered the TVC survey and attended the focus group had looked online to see what was available. This lack of knowledge is a very large barrier for Texas veterans to obtaining services. Suggestions from veterans overwhelmingly indicate that TVC needs targeted outreach strategies and needs to have a larger presence in the communities. Focus group attendees suggested TVC try marketing via myriad avenues: the internet, email, social media/streaming platforms, television, radio, and mail-outs. Billboard advertisements were often mentioned as a way to reach a lot of commuters (Panhandle, West Texas, Alamo, Gulf Coast, East Texas, and North Texas). Another key suggestion is that TVC attend conferences and social gatherings that veterans frequent and establish a presence in the communities through town hall meetings and table at local events and shows that reach local individuals (Alamo, South Texas, and Central Texas, East Texas, and North Texas). Other marketing opportunities mentioned included nursing facilities, medical clinics, churches, and college/professional sports (East Texas). Although print media does not work for urban and



tech-savvy veterans, focus group participants from rural Texas emphasized that local newsletters and newspapers still serve as a valuable source of information for veterans residing in rural Texas.

## **METHODS, LIMITATIONS, AND FUTURE SCOPE**

Without the accurate understanding of the actual number of veterans residing in each FVA region of Texas, it is not possible to appropriately contextualize the proportionality of needs identified for each region in this report. To meet the mission of serving Texas Veterans, PPRI suggests that TVC work to obtain a better understanding of the number of veterans in each FVA region and their demographic characteristics. Secondly, the first veterans' needs assessment panel survey and the organizational survey took place before the pandemic while the second larger sample based survey and the focus groups were conducted during the pandemic. The pandemic could have had an exogenous effect on the post-pandemic data collection components. Methodologically, the design was also limited in terms of its exploration of each FVA region through detailed asset mapping. Because asset mapping works better for smaller geographies, it would be more appropriate to focus on one specific region at a time, probably the ones that need most attention in TVC's consideration of the needs presented in this report and maximize the benefit of asset mapping approach with the help of interviews with key stakeholders/ informants connected to these regions. TVC's online regional directories are already a step in highlighting the assets for each FVA region but asset mapping could also be positioned to target the sub-groups within the Texas veterans, especially women veterans, veterans with higher disability ratings and veterans below poverty levels. For economically disadvantaged Texas veterans, it would be helpful to run a survey based on statewide sample of veterans that could be obtained from state Medicare or VA. Sample could be obtained by a state request from TVC to US Department of Veterans Affairs that provides names and address of individuals who had become eligible for VA services in any state during last five years. RAND<sup>6</sup> has used this approach in their 2011 needs assessment of the New York State Veterans<sup>7</sup>. Finally, for any future needs assessment methodology, target populations for focus groups should not only include the veterans and veteran families but also representatives from the veteran serving organizations in each FVA region, the direct beneficiaries or clients served by the grants as well as staff from each FVA grant unit at TVC.

## **SYSTEMATIC EVALUATION OF FVA GRANTS**

TVC's FVA grants are based on the premise that the regional organizations can provide better assistance because they are more knowledgeable about the regions and communities they serve. However, PPRI needs assessment data show that not all veterans found the organizations serving in their regions helpful with addressing their needs. To develop the evidence base for the FVA grant program and to engage in the state and national conversation on priority needs of veterans, there is a critical need to not only conduct periodic needs assessment studies but also track the process and outcomes of the awarded FVA grants via a focused third-party evaluation effort. There is also larger need for proper training and coordination of staff on the

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<sup>6</sup> The RAND Corporation is a nonprofit institution that helps improve policy and decision making through research and analysis. [https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/technical\\_reports/2011/RAND\\_TR920.pdf](https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/technical_reports/2011/RAND_TR920.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> Information to obtain this sample is available at the following address:  
[https://www.oprm.va.gov/ers/howto\\_rona\\_request.aspx](https://www.oprm.va.gov/ers/howto_rona_request.aspx)



front lines offering assistance both at TVC and at the veteran serving organizations to ensure that these staff can professionally provide the required coordinated services. Relatedly, a key suggestion is to develop the success indicators for the FVA grant program carefully, and assess user/recipient satisfaction for all the awarded grants. This is a strategic way to assess and track the dynamic needs scenario of the Texas veterans and how TVC is able to address the needs. In any evaluation design, special attention should be given to service realms that are covered by the FVA grants. Connecting with this needs assessment report, FVA should consider establishing evaluation objectives and timetables to plan and manage progress, and apply what is learned toward achieving desired outcomes. Before attempting any grant reforms, evaluation lessons need to be discussed with all stakeholders, including the veterans served as well as the veteran serving organizations serving the veterans in each FVA region through the grant awards. As a valuable component of any future needs assessments, another suggestion is to utilize telephone conferences with other states and jurisdictions that are simultaneously conducting similar needs assessments to exchange ideas and learn from their effectiveness and pitfalls in needs assessment process and outcomes.





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## APPENDIX A – KEY DEMOGRAPHICS

### Key Sample Demographics for the Full Sample of Texas Veterans Needs Survey

Selected Demographic Characteristic	Percentage of Sample
<b>Military Status</b>	
A veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces	95.7
Currently serving on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces	0.7
Formerly or currently serving with the Reserve Forces	1.9
Formerly or currently serving with the National Guard	1.7
<b>Ethnicity</b>	
Hispanic/Latino	14.1
Not Hispanic/Latino	77.9
No Response	8.0
<b>Race</b>	
White	77.0
Black	9.4
Asian	1.1
American/Indian or Alaska Native	1.2
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.3
Mixed Race	3.4
<b>Sex</b>	
Male	85.2
Female	14.6
No Response	0.2
<b>Age</b>	
Under 65	55.0
65+	44.2
<b>Median Household Income?</b>	
Below Texas Median	33.2
Above Texas Median	60.8
Does Not Know	6.0
<b>Employment Status</b>	
Employed full-time	31.9
Employed part-time	3.4
Self-employed	4.8
50% - 90% Disabled, not able to work	3.1
100% Disabled, not able to work	6.7



Student	2.3
Unemployed and looking for work	6.1
Retired	39.4

N = 15,664

### Key Sample Demographics for Panhandle Veterans

Selected Demographic Characteristic	Percentage of Sample
<b>Military Status</b>	
A veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces	97.7
Currently serving on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces	0.5
Formerly or currently serving with the Reserve Forces	0.9
Formerly or currently serving with the National Guard	0.9
<b>Ethnicity</b>	
Hispanic/Latino	8.5
Not Hispanic/Latino	86.5
No Response	5.0
<b>Race</b>	
White	84.1
Black	2.8
Asian	0.7
American/Indian or Alaska Native	1.4
Mixed Race	3.5
<b>Sex</b>	
Male	84.7
Female	15.1
No Response	0.2
<b>Age</b>	
Under 65	51.4
65+	47.7
<b>Median Household Income?</b>	
Below Texas Median	38.8
Above Texas Median	55.6
Does Not Know	5.5
<b>Employment Status</b>	
Employed full-time	34.5



Employed part-time	3.3
Self-employed	4.2
50% - 90% Disabled, not able to work	2.8
100% Disabled, not able to work	7.6
Student	2.1
Unemployed and looking for work	4.7
Retired	39.5

*N* = 577

### Key Sample Demographics for West Texas Veterans

Selected Demographic Characteristic	Percentage of Sample
<b>Military Status</b>	
A veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces	96.9
Currently serving on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces	1.1
Formerly or currently serving with the Reserve Forces	1.5
Formerly or currently serving with the National Guard	0.4
<b>Ethnicity</b>	
Hispanic/Latino	38.9
Not Hispanic/Latino	52.1
No Response	9.0
<b>Race</b>	
White	63.0
Black	11.3
Asian	2.3
American/Indian or Alaska Native	1.3
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.4
Mixed Race	6.5
<b>Sex</b>	
Male	84.9
Female	15.1
<b>Age</b>	
Under 65	67.1
65+	32.1
<b>Median Household Income?</b>	
Below Texas Median	42.2



Above Texas Median	52.9
Does Not Know	5.0
<b>Employment Status</b>	
Employed full-time	31.7
Employed part-time	3.6
Self-employed	4.6
50% - 90% Disabled, not able to work	4.6
100% Disabled, not able to work	10.5
Student	4.6
Unemployed and looking for work	9.0
Retired	28.6

N = 524



**Key Sample Demographics for Alamo Veterans**

<b>Selected Demographic Characteristic</b>	<b>Percentage of Sample</b>
<b>Military Status</b>	
A veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces	96.9
Currently serving on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces	0.2
Formerly or currently serving with the Reserve Forces	1.6
Formerly or currently serving with the National Guard	1.3
<b>Ethnicity</b>	
Hispanic/Latino	21.0
Not Hispanic/Latino	70.2
No Response	8.8
<b>Race</b>	
White	73.5
Black	9.1
Asian	0.8
American/Indian or Alaska Native	1.6
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.3
Mixed Race	4.5
<b>Sex</b>	
Male	84.5
Female	15.3
<b>Age</b>	
Under 65	57.4
65+	41.7
<b>Median Household Income?</b>	
Below Texas Median	30.0
Above Texas Median	64.5
Does Not Know	5.4
<b>Employment Status</b>	
Employed full-time	31.4
Employed part-time	3.6
Self-employed	4.5
50% - 90% Disabled, not able to work	3.3
100% Disabled, not able to work	7.3
Student	2.1



Unemployed and looking for work	5.4
Retired	39.9

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*N* = 2832





**Key Sample Demographics for South Texas Veterans**

<b>Selected Demographic Characteristic</b>	<b>Percentage of Sample</b>
<b>Military Status</b>	
A veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces	96.0
Currently serving on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces	0.3
Formerly or currently serving with the Reserve Forces	1.6
Formerly or currently serving with the National Guard	2.1
<b>Ethnicity</b>	
Hispanic/Latino	43.7
Not Hispanic/Latino	49.9
No Response	6.4
<b>Race</b>	
White	81.4
Black	2.0
Asian	0.7
American/Indian or Alaska Native	0.8
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.7
Mixed Race	3.6
<b>Sex</b>	
Male	85.8
Female	14.2
<b>Age</b>	
Under 65	59.4
65+	40.1
<b>Median Household Income?</b>	
Below Texas Median	39.3
Above Texas Median	53.9
Does Not Know	6.8
<b>Employment Status</b>	
Employed full-time	34.8
Employed part-time	2.8
Self-employed	4.4
50% - 90% Disabled, not able to work	3.5
100% Disabled, not able to work	8.1
Student	2.0



Unemployed and looking for work	6.3
Retired	35.7
<hr/>	
N = 751	

**Key Sample Demographics for Gulf Coast Veterans**

<b>Selected Demographic Characteristic</b>	<b>Percentage of Sample</b>
<b>Military Status</b>	
A veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces	95.5
Currently serving on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces	0.5
Formerly or currently serving with the Reserve Forces	2.4
Formerly or currently serving with the National Guard	1.6
<b>Ethnicity</b>	
Hispanic/Latino	12.0
Not Hispanic/Latino	80.0
No Response	8.0
<b>Race</b>	
White	75.1
Black	13.0
Asian	1.1
American/Indian or Alaska Native	0.9
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.4
Mixed Race	3.0
<b>Sex</b>	
Male	85.7
Female	14.3
<b>Age</b>	
Under 65	54.2
65+	45.2
<b>Median Household Income?</b>	
Below Texas Median	33.1
Above Texas Median	61.5
Does Not Know	5.4
<b>Employment Status</b>	



Employed full-time	33.5
Employed part-time	2.9
Self-employed	5.3
50% - 90% Disabled, not able to work	2.9
100% Disabled, not able to work	5.8
Student	1.9
Unemployed and looking for work	7.5
Retired	37.9

N = 2798

**Key Sample Demographics for Central Texas Veterans**

Selected Demographic Characteristic	Percentage of Sample
<b>Military Status</b>	
A veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces	95.9
Currently serving on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces	0.6
Formerly or currently serving with the Reserve Forces	1.6
Formerly or currently serving with the National Guard	1.9
<b>Ethnicity</b>	
Hispanic/Latino	10.9
Not Hispanic/Latino	80.5
No Response	8.6
<b>Race</b>	
White	75.4
Black	9.8
Asian	1.3
American/Indian or Alaska Native	1.3
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.4
Mixed Race	4.2
<b>Sex</b>	
Male	85.2
Female	14.6
<b>Age</b>	
Under 65	56.7
65+	42.2
<b>Median Household Income?</b>	



Below Texas Median	32.9
Above Texas Median	60.2
Does Not Know	6.9

**Employment Status**

Employed full-time	31.1
Employed part-time	3.4
Self-employed	4.2
50% - 90% Disabled, not able to work	2.8
100% Disabled, not able to work	7.2
Student	3.2
Unemployed and looking for work	5.7
Retired	39.6

N = 2686

**Key Sample Demographics for East Texas Veterans**

Selected Demographic Characteristic	Percentage of Sample
<b>Military Status</b>	
A veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces	95.3
Currently serving on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces	0.4
Formerly or currently serving with the Reserve Forces	2.0
Formerly or currently serving with the National Guard	2.3
<b>Ethnicity</b>	
Hispanic/Latino	3.6
Not Hispanic/Latino	89.9
No Response	6.4
<b>Race</b>	
White	87.1
Black	5.2
Asian	0.3
American/Indian or Alaska Native	1.2
Mixed Race	1.9
<b>Sex</b>	
Male	85.3
Female	14.7



<b>Age</b>	
Under 65	45.8
65+	53.6
<b>Median Household Income?</b>	
Below Texas Median	40.9
Above Texas Median	52.3
Does Not Know	6.7
<b>Employment Status</b>	
Employed full-time	19.6
Employed part-time	3.7
Self-employed	4.6
50% - 90% Disabled, not able to work	3.4
100% Disabled, not able to work	9.3
Student	1.7
Unemployed and looking for work	6.4
Retired	49.8

N = 963

**Key Sample Demographics for North Texas Veterans**

<b>Selected Demographic Characteristic</b>	<b>Percentage of Sample</b>
<b>Military Status</b>	
A veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces	95.8
Currently serving on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces	0.5
Formerly or currently serving with the Reserve Forces	2.0
Formerly or currently serving with the National Guard	1.7
<b>Ethnicity</b>	
Hispanic/Latino	7.8
Not Hispanic/Latino	84.0
No Response	8.2
<b>Race</b>	
White	79.1
Black	9.9
Asian	1.0
American/Indian or Alaska Native	1.1
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.3



Mixed Race	2.3
<b>Sex</b>	
Male	86.4
Female	13.4
<b>Age</b>	
Under 65	51.9
65+	47.2
<b>Median Household Income?</b>	
Below Texas Median	29.9
Above Texas Median	63.9
Does Not Know	6.2
<b>Employment Status</b>	
Employed full-time	32.9
Employed part-time	3.3
Self-employed	5.2
50% - 90% Disabled, not able to work	2.8
100% Disabled, not able to work	5.3
Student	2.0
Unemployed and looking for work	5.8
Retired	40.4

N = 4328



## APPENDIX B – TVC VETERANS SURVEY

# TVC Texas Veterans Survey



Thank you for participating in this *survey* conducted by Texas A&M University and contracted by the Texas Veterans Commission (TVC). The TVC wants to allocate resources according to the needs and priorities expressed by Texas veterans and their dependents and to remove barriers to getting those resources. If you have any questions or concerns about this survey, please feel free to contact Texas A&M's Public Policy Research Institute at 979-845-6759. Please click "next" to start the survey.

---

Did you previously complete an online survey for TVC regarding the needs of Texas Veterans and their dependents in December 2019 or January 2020?<sup>8</sup>

- Yes -> **SKIP TO END**
  - No
  - Don't Remember
- 

<sup>8</sup> This question was only asked to respondents recruited after January 2020.





Are you:

- A veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces
  - Currently serving on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces
  - Formerly or currently serving with the Reserve Forces
  - Formerly or currently serving with the National Guard
  - None of the above -> **SKIP TO END**
- 

Do you currently live in Texas or have you ever lived in Texas?

- Yes, currently live in Texas
  - Yes, formerly lived in Texas but now live elsewhere
  - No -> **SKIP TO END**
-



Please rate **your current need** for each of the following types of needs and services. Please think about assistance that you currently receive as well as any assistance you need but do not receive.

	No Need	Low Need	Moderate Need	High Need	Extremely High Need
	0	1	2	3	4
Addiction and substance abuse counseling					
Clinical counseling					
Peer to peer support					
Integrative therapies <i>(holistic, acupuncture, equine, recreation therapy, etc.)</i>					
Family counseling					
Childcare					
Youth programs					



Please rate your current need for each of the following types of needs and services. Please think about assistance that you currently receive as well as any assistance you need but do not receive.

	No Need	Low Need	Moderate Need	High Need	Extremely High Need
	0	1	2	3	4
Reintegration support					
Transition assistance					
Transportation					
Food					
Elder care					
Assistance with filing VA Disability Claims					
Assistance with receiving VA Healthcare					



Please rate your current need for each of the following types of needs and services. Please think about assistance that you currently receive as well as any assistance you need but do not receive.

	No Need	Low Need	Moderate Need	High Need	Extremely High Need
	0	1	2	3	4
Legal help  (legal aid, legal clinics, and legal services other than Veterans Courts)					
Employment services  (job skills and training programs, job search assistance)					
Business start-up & training programs, entrepreneurial support services					
Short-term financial assistance  (rent, mortgage, utilities, emergent needs, childcare, transportation, etc.)					
Living expenses other than housing or food-related					
Home modifications to improve accessibility or to accommodate disability					



Please specify 3 of **your most important needs** (type N/A or none if nothing comes to mind).

Need 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Need 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Need 3: \_\_\_\_\_

-----



Please rank the importance of the following service categories **for the Texas veteran population**, from the most important to the least important in your opinion.

	Least Important				Most Important
	1	2	3	4	5
Short-term Financial Assistance (rent/mortgage, utilities, transportation assistance, etc.)					
Home Modification Assistance Services					
Clinical Counseling Services (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, Depression, Anxiety, Psychosis etc.)					
Integrative Therapy Services (holistic, equine, acupuncture, recreation therapy, etc.)					
Peer Delivered Services (Peer-to-Peer Counseling)					
Assistance for Women Veterans					
VA Disability Benefits Claims Assistance					
Veteran Employment Services					
Veteran Entrepreneurial Support Services					
Healthcare Support					







Please specify 3 of the most important services for the **Texas veteran population** (type N/A or none if nothing comes to mind).

Service 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Service 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Service 3: \_\_\_\_\_

If you have received veteran services in the past, how did you learn about those services?

Please select all that may apply.

Texas 2-1-1

VA Healthcare

County Service Officer

Veteran Service Organizations (Disabled American Veterans, Veterans of Foreign Wars etc.)

Social Worker

Friend or Family member

Internet Search

Military Veteran Peer Network

Non-Government Organizations

TexVet Website

Texas Veterans Commission Website

I do not receive any veteran service

Other - please specify: \_\_\_\_\_



---

If you need veteran services in the future, where would you most likely look for this information?

Please select all that may apply.

Texas 2-1-1

VA Healthcare

County Service Officer

Veteran Service Organizations (Disabled American Veterans, Veterans of Foreign Wars etc.)

Social Worker

Friend or Family member

Internet Search

Military Veteran Peer Network

Non-Government Organizations

TexVet Website

Texas Veterans Commission Website

Other - please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

---



If you wanted help with any services in the future, which of the following might make it difficult to access those services? Tell us how big a problem the following are to you by using the scale from *Not a Problem* (1) to *Very Serious Problem* (5).

	<b>Not a Problem</b>				<b>Very Serious Problem</b>
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
Scheduling					
Difficulty getting time off work					
Transportation difficulty					
Not knowing where to get help					
Inadequate understanding of benefits					
Lack of services in the area					
Few providers of services in the area					
Hard to get appointments					
Confidentiality and privacy concerns					
Potential costs and finances					
Worry and concerns about what others will think					
Life getting in the way					
Legal issues					
Anxiety					
Other - please specify below					

Other (specified response): \_\_\_\_\_

-----



Please mention 2 key veterans' services available in the area you live. Please type "don't know" if you don't know any.

Service 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Service 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Please mention 2 key veterans' services **not** currently available but most highly needed in the area you live. Please type "don't know" if you don't know any.

Service 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Service 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Below is a list of grants provided by TVC. Please indicate how familiar you are with each of these grants based on the brief descriptions provided through the *hover over* feature (hover your mouse over the individual grant). If you are using a mobile device or tablet to take this survey and the hover over feature doesn't work for you, please scroll to the bottom of the page where the descriptions of each grant are provided for all respondents.

	Not at All Familiar	Moderately Familiar	Somewhat Familiar	Very Familiar	Extremely Familiar
General Assistance Grants					
Veterans Mental Health Grants					
Housing for Texas Heroes Grants					
Veterans Treatment Court Grants					
Veterans County Service Officer Grants					



---

## Grant Descriptions<sup>9</sup>

**General Assistance Grants:** These are the grants to organizations that address the needs of Texas veterans and their families. Funded services include, but are not limited to, the following: Limited emergency assistance; Family and child services; Transportation services; Legal services, excluding criminal defense; and Employment, training, education, and job placement assistance.

**Veterans Mental Health Grants:** These grants address the mental health needs of Veterans and their families. Projects should emphasize direct services to Veterans and their families and may include but are not limited to: Clinical counseling; Peer delivered services; and Integrative support services.

**Housing for Texas Heroes Grants:** These grants allow organizations to assist Texas Veterans and their families in obtaining, maintaining, or improving housing. Projects include homeless Veterans support, Veteran homelessness prevention, home modification assistance, and housing assistance for families of Veterans being treated at Texas medical facilities.

**Veterans Treatment Court Grants:** These grants assist Texas Veterans in obtaining services through Veterans Treatment Court programs established under Texas Government Code § 124.001-.006.

**Veterans County Service Officer Grants:** The Texas State Legislature created a 5% set-aside for VCSO applications for FVA grants. This funding is available for General Assistance, Housing for Texas Heroes, and Veterans Mental Health grant applications with the Veteran County Service Officer listed as the Project Coordinator.

---

<sup>9</sup> These prompts were displayed when a respondent hovered over one of the grant areas during the web survey. The prompts were also presented at the bottom of the page for the questions that referenced them.



Based on the brief descriptions through the *hover over* feature or via scrolling down on this page, indicate if you have ever served as a volunteer or resource for an organization that used one of these following grants provided by TVC.

	Yes	No	Don't Know
General Assistance Grants			
Veterans Mental Health Grants			
Housing for Texas Heroes Grants			
Veterans Treatment Court Grants			
Veterans County Service Officer Grants			

Tell us if you have ever been the beneficiary of an organization that used one of these grants provided by TVC.

	Yes	No	Don't Know
General Assistance Grants			
Veterans Mental Health Grants			
Housing for Texas Heroes Grants			
Veterans Treatment Court Grants			
Veterans County Service Officer Grants			



Based on the brief descriptions through the *hover over* feature or via scrolling down on this page, indicate how important you think each of these grants provided by TVC are for veterans like you.

	Least Important				Most Important
	1	2	3	4	5
General Assistance Grants					
Veterans Mental Health Grants					
Housing for Texas Heroes Grants					
Veterans Treatment Court Grants					
Veterans County Service Officer Grants					

What is the zip code of your primary residence?

\_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever served on active duty?

- Only on active duty for training in the Reserves or National Guard
- National Guard or Reserves member who served on active duty for a purpose other than training
- Now on active duty
- On active duty in the past, but not now
- Retired from active duty military after reaching retirement eligibility
- Medically retired from active duty



Has your spouse ever served on active duty?

- Yes
  - No
  - Not married
- 

If you served in the US military, please select each period in which you served. Please select all that may apply.

September 2001 or later

August 1990 to August 2001 (including Persian Gulf War)

May 1975 to July 1990

August 1964 to April 1975 (Vietnam era)

February 1955 to July 1964

June 1950 to January 1955 (Korean War)

January 1947 to June 1950

December 1941 to December 1946 (World War II)

November 1941 or earlier

---





Do you receive monthly compensation from the VA?

- Yes, for service-connected disability
  - Yes, for non-service-connected pension (NSCP)
  - No
- 

If you have a service-connected disability, what is your service-connected disability rating?

- 0 percent
- 10 percent
- 20 percent
- 30 percent
- 40 percent
- 50 percent
- 60 percent
- 70 percent
- 80 percent
- 90 percent
- 100 percent
- Claim submitted, but not yet determined by VA
- I do not have a service-connected disability



Do you use VA medical care as your primary medical care system?

- Yes, 100% of my medical care is supported by the VA
  - Yes, over 80% of my medical care is supported by the VA
  - No. Although I am eligible for VA medical care, I use other medical care systems about half of the time
  - No. I am not eligible to use VA medical care for medical issues outside of service-connected disabilities
  - No. I do not know if I am eligible.
- 

Choose the best option from choices below to describe your employment status:

- Employed full-time
  - Employed part-time
  - Self-employed
  - 50% - 90% Disabled, not able to work
  - 100% Disabled, not able to work
  - Student
  - Unemployed and looking for work
  - Retired
  - Prefer not to answer
-



To which gender identity do you identify?

- Male
  - Female
  - Transgender Male
  - Transgender Female
  - Gender Variant/Nonconforming
  - Prefer not to answer
- 

To which of the following age group do you belong?

- 18-24
  - 25-34
  - 35-44
  - 45-54
  - 55 to 64
  - 65+
  - Prefer not to answer
-



Which of the following best describes your race?

- White
  - Black or African American
  - Asian
  - American Indian or Alaska Native
  - Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - Mixed race
  - Prefer to not answer
  - Other (please describe): \_\_\_\_\_
- 

What is your ethnicity?

- Hispanic or Latino
  - Not Hispanic or Latino
  - Prefer to not answer
-



Median household income in Texas is \$59,000 for a family of 4. Is your total annual household income below this level?

- Yes
  - No
  - I don't know
- 

Do you have a spouse or partner eligible to receive veteran support services?

- Yes
  - No
  - I don't know
- 

How many dependents under the age of 23 live in your household?

- 1-2
  - 3-4
  - 5 or more
  - None
-



How many of your under 23 dependents also have special needs and would benefit from veteran support services?

- 1 only
  - 2 only
  - More than 2
  - None
-



TVC has contracted with the Public Policy Research Institute at Texas A&M University to conduct focus groups to gather details about the needs of Texas Veterans and their dependents.

These focus group discussions will include either:

**A.** Meeting in-person in groups no larger than 20 in different regions around the state later this year

OR

**B.** Meeting via your phone or computer in small groups.

Both types of focus group discussions (both A&B) will ask for individual opinions regarding the needs of the Texas veterans and their dependents.

All focus groups will last no more than 1.5 hours.

---

**Would you be interested in participating in a local in-person meeting?**

- Yes
- No
- Don't know - Need more information

---

**Would you be interested in a virtual meeting held by phone or computer?**

- Yes
  - No
  - Don't know - Need more information
-



Please provide the following information so we may be allowed to contact you regarding these focus group meetings. Due to size limitations we may not be able to include everyone who expresses interest.

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Best way to communicate (phone/email/etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

---

Thank you very much for completing this survey! If you have any questions or concerns, please call Texas A&M's principal contact for this survey at (979) 845-6759.

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## APPENDIX C – TVC ORGANIZATIONAL SURVEY

# TVC Organizational Survey



Thank you for participating in this *survey* conducted by Texas A&M University and contracted by the Texas Veterans Commission (TVC). The TVC wants to allocate resources according to the needs and priorities of the Texas veterans and their family members and to remove any barriers to getting those resources. Your input is valuable for the process of needs identification because the organization where you work serves Texas veterans. If you have any questions or concerns about this survey, please feel free to contact Texas A&M’s Public Policy Research Institute at 979-845-6759. Please click on the arrow below to start the survey.

-----  
What organization do you work for?

---

-----  
What is your current job title with the agency/organization?

---

-----



How long have you worked for this organization?

- Less than 3 months
  - Between 3 and 12 months
  - More than a year but less than 3 years
  - More than 3 years
- 

Which Fund for Veterans' Assistance (FVA) region does your organization cover?

- Region 1 - Panhandle
  - Region 2 - West Texas
  - Region 3 - Alamo
  - Region 4 - South Texas
  - Region 5 - Gulf Coast
  - Region 6 - Central Texas
  - Region 7 - East Texas
  - Region 8 - North Texas
  - Let me select counties
-



**Which counties are served by the organization where you work?**

To select more than one county please hold the “ctrl” key and click the selected counties if on a PC or if on a MAC please hold down the “cmd” key.

*If “Region 1 - Panhandle” is selected*

**Region 1 - Panhandle**

- |                                        |                                     |                                       |
|----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Armstrong     | <input type="checkbox"/> Garza      | <input type="checkbox"/> Motley       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bailey        | <input type="checkbox"/> Gray       | <input type="checkbox"/> Nolan        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Briscoe       | <input type="checkbox"/> Hale       | <input type="checkbox"/> Ochiltree    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brown         | <input type="checkbox"/> Hall       | <input type="checkbox"/> Oldham       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Callahan      | <input type="checkbox"/> Hansford   | <input type="checkbox"/> Parmer       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Carson        | <input type="checkbox"/> Hartley    | <input type="checkbox"/> Potter       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Castro        | <input type="checkbox"/> Haskell    | <input type="checkbox"/> Randall      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Childress     | <input type="checkbox"/> Hemphill   | <input type="checkbox"/> Roberts      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cochran       | <input type="checkbox"/> Hockley    | <input type="checkbox"/> Runnels      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Coleman       | <input type="checkbox"/> Hutchinson | <input type="checkbox"/> Scurry       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Collingsworth | <input type="checkbox"/> Jones      | <input type="checkbox"/> Shackelford  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Comanche      | <input type="checkbox"/> Kent       | <input type="checkbox"/> Sherman      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Crosby        | <input type="checkbox"/> King       | <input type="checkbox"/> Stephens     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dallam        | <input type="checkbox"/> Knox       | <input type="checkbox"/> Stonewall    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Deaf Smith    | <input type="checkbox"/> Lamb       | <input type="checkbox"/> Swisher      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dickens       | <input type="checkbox"/> Lipscomb   | <input type="checkbox"/> Taylor       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Donley        | <input type="checkbox"/> Lubbock    | <input type="checkbox"/> Terry        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Eastland      | <input type="checkbox"/> Lynn       | <input type="checkbox"/> Throckmorton |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fisher        | <input type="checkbox"/> Mitchell   | <input type="checkbox"/> Wheeler      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Floyd         | <input type="checkbox"/> Moore      | <input type="checkbox"/> Yoakum       |

*If “Region 2 - West Texas” is selected*

**Region 2 - West Texas**

- |                                    |                                     |                                   |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Andrews   | <input type="checkbox"/> Gaines     | <input type="checkbox"/> Pecos    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Borden    | <input type="checkbox"/> Glasscock  | <input type="checkbox"/> Presidio |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brewster  | <input type="checkbox"/> Howard     | <input type="checkbox"/> Reeves   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Crane     | <input type="checkbox"/> Hudspeth   | <input type="checkbox"/> Terrell  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Culberson | <input type="checkbox"/> Jeff Davis | <input type="checkbox"/> Upton    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dawson    | <input type="checkbox"/> Loving     | <input type="checkbox"/> Ward     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ector     | <input type="checkbox"/> Martin     | <input type="checkbox"/> Winkler  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> El Paso   | <input type="checkbox"/> Midland    |                                   |



*If "Region 3- Alamo" is selected*

Region 3 - Alamo

- |                                    |                                    |                                     |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Atascosa  | <input type="checkbox"/> Gonzales  | <input type="checkbox"/> Menard     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bandera   | <input type="checkbox"/> Irion     | <input type="checkbox"/> Reagan     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bexar     | <input type="checkbox"/> Karnes    | <input type="checkbox"/> Real       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Coke      | <input type="checkbox"/> Kendall   | <input type="checkbox"/> Schleicher |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Comal     | <input type="checkbox"/> Kerr      | <input type="checkbox"/> Sterling   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Concho    | <input type="checkbox"/> Kimble    | <input type="checkbox"/> Sutton     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Crockett  | <input type="checkbox"/> Kinney    | <input type="checkbox"/> Tom Green  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dimmit    | <input type="checkbox"/> La Salle  | <input type="checkbox"/> Uvalde     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Edwards   | <input type="checkbox"/> Mason     | <input type="checkbox"/> Val Verde  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Frio      | <input type="checkbox"/> Maverick  | <input type="checkbox"/> Wilson     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gillespie | <input type="checkbox"/> McCulloch | <input type="checkbox"/> Zaval      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Guadalupe | <input type="checkbox"/> Medina    |                                     |

*If "Region 4 - South Texas" is selected*

Region 4 - South Texas

- |                                  |                                    |                                       |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aransas | <input type="checkbox"/> Jackson   | <input type="checkbox"/> Refugio      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bee     | <input type="checkbox"/> Jim Hogg  | <input type="checkbox"/> San Patricio |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brooks  | <input type="checkbox"/> Jim Wells | <input type="checkbox"/> Starr        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Calhoun | <input type="checkbox"/> Kenedy    | <input type="checkbox"/> Victoria     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cameron | <input type="checkbox"/> Kleberg   | <input type="checkbox"/> Webb         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> DeWitt  | <input type="checkbox"/> Lavaca    | <input type="checkbox"/> Willacy      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Duval   | <input type="checkbox"/> Live Oak  | <input type="checkbox"/> Zapata       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Goliad  | <input type="checkbox"/> McMullen  |                                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hidalgo | <input type="checkbox"/> Nueces    |                                       |

*If "Region 5 - Gulf Coast" is selected*

Region 5 - Gulf Coast

- |                                    |                                     |                                  |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Austin    | <input type="checkbox"/> Galveston  | <input type="checkbox"/> Walker  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brazoria  | <input type="checkbox"/> Harris     | <input type="checkbox"/> Waller  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chambers  | <input type="checkbox"/> Liberty    | <input type="checkbox"/> Wharton |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Colorado  | <input type="checkbox"/> Matagorda  |                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fort Bend | <input type="checkbox"/> Montgomery |                                  |



*If "Region 6 – Central Texas" is selected*

Region 6 - Central Texas

- |                                   |                                    |                                     |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bastrop  | <input type="checkbox"/> Fayette   | <input type="checkbox"/> Llano      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bell     | <input type="checkbox"/> Freestone | <input type="checkbox"/> Madison    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Blanco   | <input type="checkbox"/> Grimes    | <input type="checkbox"/> McLennan   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bosque   | <input type="checkbox"/> Hamilton  | <input type="checkbox"/> Milam      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brazos   | <input type="checkbox"/> Hays      | <input type="checkbox"/> Mills      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Burleson | <input type="checkbox"/> Hill      | <input type="checkbox"/> Robertson  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Burnet   | <input type="checkbox"/> Lampasas  | <input type="checkbox"/> San Saba   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Caldwell | <input type="checkbox"/> Lee       | <input type="checkbox"/> Travis     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Coryell  | <input type="checkbox"/> Leon      | <input type="checkbox"/> Washington |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Falls    | <input type="checkbox"/> Limestone | <input type="checkbox"/> Williamson |

*If "Region 7 – East Texas" is selected*

Region 7 - East Texas

- |                                    |                                      |                                        |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Anderson  | <input type="checkbox"/> Houston     | <input type="checkbox"/> Rusk          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Angelina  | <input type="checkbox"/> Jasper      | <input type="checkbox"/> Sabine        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bowie     | <input type="checkbox"/> Jefferson   | <input type="checkbox"/> San Augustine |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Camp      | <input type="checkbox"/> Lamar       | <input type="checkbox"/> San Jacinto   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cass      | <input type="checkbox"/> Marion      | <input type="checkbox"/> Shelby        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cherokee  | <input type="checkbox"/> Morris      | <input type="checkbox"/> Smith         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Delta     | <input type="checkbox"/> Nacogdoches | <input type="checkbox"/> Titus         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Franklin  | <input type="checkbox"/> Newton      | <input type="checkbox"/> Trinity       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gregg     | <input type="checkbox"/> Orange      | <input type="checkbox"/> Tyler         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hardin    | <input type="checkbox"/> Panola      | <input type="checkbox"/> Upshur        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Harrison  | <input type="checkbox"/> Polk        | <input type="checkbox"/> Van Zandt     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Henderson | <input type="checkbox"/> Rains       | <input type="checkbox"/> Wood          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hopkins   | <input type="checkbox"/> Red River   |                                        |

*If "Region 8 – North Texas" is selected*

Region 8 - North Texas

- |                                 |                                 |                                 |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Archer | <input type="checkbox"/> Clay   | <input type="checkbox"/> Cooke  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Baylor | <input type="checkbox"/> Collin | <input type="checkbox"/> Cottle |



- |                                   |                                     |                                    |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dallas   | <input type="checkbox"/> Hood       | <input type="checkbox"/> Parker    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Denton   | <input type="checkbox"/> Hunt       | <input type="checkbox"/> Rockwall  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ellis    | <input type="checkbox"/> Jack       | <input type="checkbox"/> Somervell |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Erath    | <input type="checkbox"/> Johnson    | <input type="checkbox"/> Tarrant   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fannin   | <input type="checkbox"/> Kaufman    | <input type="checkbox"/> Wichita   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Foard    | <input type="checkbox"/> Montague   | <input type="checkbox"/> Wilbarger |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grayson  | <input type="checkbox"/> Navarro    | <input type="checkbox"/> Wise      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hardeman | <input type="checkbox"/> Palo Pinto | <input type="checkbox"/> Young     |

*If "Let me select counties" is selected*

- |                                    |                                        |                                    |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Anderson  | <input type="checkbox"/> Camp          | <input type="checkbox"/> Dickens   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Andrews   | <input type="checkbox"/> Carson        | <input type="checkbox"/> Dimmit    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Angelina  | <input type="checkbox"/> Cass          | <input type="checkbox"/> Donley    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aransas   | <input type="checkbox"/> Castro        | <input type="checkbox"/> Duval     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Archer    | <input type="checkbox"/> Chambers      | <input type="checkbox"/> Eastland  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Armstrong | <input type="checkbox"/> Cherokee      | <input type="checkbox"/> Ector     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Atascosa  | <input type="checkbox"/> Childress     | <input type="checkbox"/> Edwards   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Austin    | <input type="checkbox"/> Clay          | <input type="checkbox"/> Ellis     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bailey    | <input type="checkbox"/> Cochran       | <input type="checkbox"/> El Paso   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bandera   | <input type="checkbox"/> Coke          | <input type="checkbox"/> Erath     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bastrop   | <input type="checkbox"/> Coleman       | <input type="checkbox"/> Falls     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Baylor    | <input type="checkbox"/> Collin        | <input type="checkbox"/> Fannin    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bee       | <input type="checkbox"/> Collingsworth | <input type="checkbox"/> Fayette   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bell      | <input type="checkbox"/> Colorado      | <input type="checkbox"/> Fisher    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bexar     | <input type="checkbox"/> Comal         | <input type="checkbox"/> Floyd     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Blanco    | <input type="checkbox"/> Comanche      | <input type="checkbox"/> Foard     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Borden    | <input type="checkbox"/> Concho        | <input type="checkbox"/> Fort Bend |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bosque    | <input type="checkbox"/> Cooke         | <input type="checkbox"/> Franklin  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bowie     | <input type="checkbox"/> Coryell       | <input type="checkbox"/> Freestone |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brazoria  | <input type="checkbox"/> Cottle        | <input type="checkbox"/> Frio      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brazos    | <input type="checkbox"/> Crane         | <input type="checkbox"/> Gaines    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brewster  | <input type="checkbox"/> Crockett      | <input type="checkbox"/> Galveston |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Briscoe   | <input type="checkbox"/> Crosby        | <input type="checkbox"/> Garza     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brooks    | <input type="checkbox"/> Culberson     | <input type="checkbox"/> Gillespie |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brown     | <input type="checkbox"/> Dallam        | <input type="checkbox"/> Glasscock |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Burleson  | <input type="checkbox"/> Dallas        | <input type="checkbox"/> Goliad    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Burnet    | <input type="checkbox"/> Dawson        | <input type="checkbox"/> Gonzales  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Caldwell  | <input type="checkbox"/> Deaf Smith    | <input type="checkbox"/> Gray      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Calhoun   | <input type="checkbox"/> Delta         | <input type="checkbox"/> Grayson   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Callahan  | <input type="checkbox"/> Denton        | <input type="checkbox"/> Gregg     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cameron   | <input type="checkbox"/> DeWitt        | <input type="checkbox"/> Grimes    |



- |                                     |                                      |                                        |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Guadalupe  | <input type="checkbox"/> Kinney      | <input type="checkbox"/> Nueces        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hale       | <input type="checkbox"/> Kleberg     | <input type="checkbox"/> Ochiltree     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hall       | <input type="checkbox"/> Knox        | <input type="checkbox"/> Oldham        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hamilton   | <input type="checkbox"/> Lamar       | <input type="checkbox"/> Orange        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hansford   | <input type="checkbox"/> Lamb        | <input type="checkbox"/> Palo Pinto    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hardeman   | <input type="checkbox"/> Lampasas    | <input type="checkbox"/> Panola        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hardin     | <input type="checkbox"/> La Salle    | <input type="checkbox"/> Parker        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Harris     | <input type="checkbox"/> Lavaca      | <input type="checkbox"/> Parmer        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Harrison   | <input type="checkbox"/> Lee         | <input type="checkbox"/> Pecos         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hartley    | <input type="checkbox"/> Leon        | <input type="checkbox"/> Polk          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Haskell    | <input type="checkbox"/> Liberty     | <input type="checkbox"/> Potter        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hays       | <input type="checkbox"/> Limestone   | <input type="checkbox"/> Presidio      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hemphill   | <input type="checkbox"/> Lipscomb    | <input type="checkbox"/> Rains         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Henderson  | <input type="checkbox"/> Live Oak    | <input type="checkbox"/> Randall       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hidalgo    | <input type="checkbox"/> Llano       | <input type="checkbox"/> Reagan        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hill       | <input type="checkbox"/> Loving      | <input type="checkbox"/> Real          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hockley    | <input type="checkbox"/> Lubbock     | <input type="checkbox"/> Red River     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hood       | <input type="checkbox"/> Lynn        | <input type="checkbox"/> Reeves        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hopkins    | <input type="checkbox"/> McCulloch   | <input type="checkbox"/> Refugio       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Houston    | <input type="checkbox"/> McLennan    | <input type="checkbox"/> Roberts       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Howard     | <input type="checkbox"/> McMullen    | <input type="checkbox"/> Robertson     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hudspeth   | <input type="checkbox"/> Madison     | <input type="checkbox"/> Rockwall      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hunt       | <input type="checkbox"/> Marion      | <input type="checkbox"/> Runnels       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hutchinson | <input type="checkbox"/> Martin      | <input type="checkbox"/> Rusk          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Irion      | <input type="checkbox"/> Mason       | <input type="checkbox"/> Sabine        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jack       | <input type="checkbox"/> Matagorda   | <input type="checkbox"/> San Augustine |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jackson    | <input type="checkbox"/> Maverick    | <input type="checkbox"/> San Jacinto   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jasper     | <input type="checkbox"/> Medina      | <input type="checkbox"/> San Patricio  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jeff Davis | <input type="checkbox"/> Menard      | <input type="checkbox"/> San Saba      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jefferson  | <input type="checkbox"/> Midland     | <input type="checkbox"/> Schleicher    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jim Hogg   | <input type="checkbox"/> Milam       | <input type="checkbox"/> Scurry        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jim Wells  | <input type="checkbox"/> Mills       | <input type="checkbox"/> Shackelford   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Johnson    | <input type="checkbox"/> Mitchell    | <input type="checkbox"/> Shelby        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jones      | <input type="checkbox"/> Montague    | <input type="checkbox"/> Sherman       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Karnes     | <input type="checkbox"/> Montgomery  | <input type="checkbox"/> Smith         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kaufman    | <input type="checkbox"/> Moore       | <input type="checkbox"/> Somervell     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kendall    | <input type="checkbox"/> Morris      | <input type="checkbox"/> Starr         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kenedy     | <input type="checkbox"/> Motley      | <input type="checkbox"/> Stephens      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kent       | <input type="checkbox"/> Nacogdoches | <input type="checkbox"/> Sterling      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kerr       | <input type="checkbox"/> Navarro     | <input type="checkbox"/> Stonewall     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kimble     | <input type="checkbox"/> Newton      | <input type="checkbox"/> Sutton        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> King       | <input type="checkbox"/> Nolan       | <input type="checkbox"/> Swisher       |



- Tarrant
- Taylor
- Terrell
- Terry
- Throckmorton
- Titus
- Tom Green
- Travis
- Trinity
- Tyler
- Upshur
- Upton
- Uvalde
- Val Verde
- Van Zandt
- Victoria
- Walker
- Waller
- Ward
- Washington
- Webb
- Wharton
- Wheeler
- Wichita
- Wilbarger
- Willacy
- Williamson
- Wilson
- Winkler
- Wise
- Wood
- Yoakum
- Young
- Zapata
- Zavala





---

Which of the following services are provided by your organization for Texas veterans, their dependents, or surviving spouses? Please select all that apply.

- Short-term Financial Assistance (rent/mortgage, utilities, transportation assistance, etc.)
- Home Modification Assistance Services
- Clinical Counseling Services (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, Depression, Anxiety, Psychosis etc.)
- Integrative Therapy Services (holistic, equine, acupuncture, recreation therapy, etc.)
- Peer Delivered Services (Peer-to-Peer Counseling)
- Assistance for Women Veterans
- VA Disability Benefits Claims Assistance
- Veteran Employment Services
- Veteran Entrepreneurial Support Services
- Veteran Healthcare Support Services
- Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

---

On average, how many veterans, dependents, and surviving spouses have you provided services to each year, for the past 3 years?

- Less than 25
- Between 26 and 50
- Between 51 and 75
- Between 76 and 100
- More than 100
- More than 150
- More than 200

---

How many full-time staff and/or providers are employed by your organization? Please specify:

\_\_\_\_\_

---



Does your organization partner with another local community organization or veteran service organization to provide services to veterans?

- Yes
- No
- On occasion for special projects
- On occasion for holiday events such as Memorial Day, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas
- Don't know

In your community, what are the three most important veteran service needs that are currently not met?

- Unmet Need 1: \_\_\_\_\_
- Unmet Need 2: \_\_\_\_\_
- Unmet Need 3: \_\_\_\_\_

What are the two largest barriers that might prevent Texas veterans in your area from using your organization's services?

- Barrier 1: \_\_\_\_\_
- Barrier 2: \_\_\_\_\_

To better serve veterans, what are the two most important assets your organization needs?

- Need 1: \_\_\_\_\_
- Need 2: \_\_\_\_\_

How do veterans in your area learn about the services that your organization provides? Please select all that may apply.

- Your Organizational Website
- Your Organizational Newsletter
- Texas 2-1-1
- VA Healthcare
- County Service Officer



- Social Workers
  - Friend or Family members
  - Internet Searches
  - Military Veteran Peer Networks
  - Non-Government Organizations
  - TexVet
  - Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_
- 

Are you or members of your organization familiar with reimbursement grants available from the Texas Veterans Commission (TVC)? These are grants for nonprofit organizations and local government entities, and these grants specifically serve veterans, their dependents, and surviving spouses.

- Yes
  - No
- 

*(If "Yes" is selected)*

If members of your organization are familiar with reimbursement grants available from Texas Veterans Commission, where did you learn about the grant program?

- TVC Website
- TVC email
- County Service Officer
- Social Workers
- Internet Searches
- Military Veteran Peer Networks
- Veteran Service Organization (such as VFW, American Legion, MOPH, etc.)
- TexVet
- Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever applied for a reimbursement grant from the Texas Veterans Commission?

- Yes
  - No -> **SKIP TO END**
-



How well did your organization's staff understand the requirements of a TVC reimbursement grant, BEFORE you applied?

- Not very well
  - Somewhat well
  - Well
  - Extremely well
  - Doesn't apply to me
- 

How well did your organization's staff understand the expectations of a TVC grantee, AFTER you were awarded the grant?

- Not very well
- Somewhat well
- Well
- Extremely well
- Doesn't apply to me

TVC provides Newly Awarded Grantee training (for new grantees) and Awarded Grantee training (for returning grantees) each year during the month of June. How well does TVC's training explain expectations and requirements for grantees?

- Training was not effective
  - Training was effective, but needs improvement
  - Training was effective
  - Training was excellent, and provided the details necessary to use the grant
  - Doesn't apply to me because I have never attended any TVC training
- 

Should TVC's Fund for Veterans' Assistance (FVA) tailor the grant opportunities to be more specific for each service category, or remain the same?

- Grant opportunities should be more general for each service category to provide more flexibility
  - Grant opportunities are okay just the way they are defined
  - Grant opportunities should be more specific for each service category
  - No opinion, I am not that familiar with FVA parameters
-



If only one amendment is allowed per grant cycle, when is the best time to submit that amendment? An amendment is a change to the scope, time, grant goals, or budget structure of a grant.

- October – after the first grant quarter
  - January – after the second grant quarter
  - Anytime the grantee needs to submit the amendment between July 1st and April 15th
  - No opinion, I am not that familiar with FVA amendments
- 

If your application is submitted with unallowable items or services, would you rather negotiate to remove those unallowable items before the grant is scored and reviewed (Nov-Dec), or after the grant has been awarded (May)?

- Working with TVC early on (Nov-Dec) to correct our grant application before awarding recommendations and decisions would be very helpful
  - Working with TVC after the grants are awarded (May) is better for our organization
  - I have no opinion on this matter because I do not know much about the negotiation process
- 

How user-friendly is the online grant management system used by TVC (GovGrants)?

- Very user-friendly
  - Somewhat user-friendly
  - Not very user-friendly
  - Not at all user-friendly
  - I have no opinion on this matter because I have never used the online system
- 

How helpful are the GovGrants training guides provided by TVC?

- Very helpful
  - Somewhat helpful
  - Not very helpful
  - Not at all helpful
  - I have no opinion because I have never used the GovGrants training guides
-



How often do you review TVC's webinar recordings and other reference material?

- I only use these resources when I am preparing my grant application
  - I use these resources throughout the grant year, especially as my organization begins to submit requests for reimbursements, consider amendments, and prepare quarterly performance reports
  - I seldom use these resources
  - I never use these resources
- 

When do you request an in-person monitoring/compliance visit (grant performance review) by TVC staff?

- When we have a question about how to manage the grant
  - When we have discovered an issue with how the grant is performing
  - I did not know we could request an in-person visit
  - I have never requested an in-person monitoring/compliance visit
- 

When would compliance visits by TVC staff be most beneficial?

- During the beginning of the grant cycle (the first 3 months)
  - After the 1st quarter performance report (in Oct, Nov, and Dec)
  - During the 3rd quarter (Jan – Mar)
  - It depends – I only wish to have compliance visits if a problem arises
- 

What areas would your agency like to have addressed during a monitoring/compliance visit by TVC staff?

- Verification of Eligibility process & procedures
  - Reimbursement request process & procedures
  - None
  - Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_
- 

If you have experienced a grant compliance visit from TVC, were you provided with enough information about the visit to prepare ahead?

- Yes



- No
- Does not apply, we never had a grant compliance visit

TVC's Grantee Newsletter and TVCFVA website are helpful during the grant application period.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- No opinion
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

TVC's Grantee Newsletter and TVCFVA website are helpful during the grant performance period.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- No opinion
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

The Texas Veterans Commission website is easy to navigate, and information about various programs is clear and concise.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- No opinion
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

What are two key recommendations you would like to make about accessing TVC Grant information on the TVC website ([www.tvc.texas.gov](http://www.tvc.texas.gov))?

- Recommendation 1: \_\_\_\_\_
- Recommendation 2: \_\_\_\_\_



What are two most important recommendations you would like to make about improving the current online grant management system – GovGrants?

- Recommendation 1: \_\_\_\_\_
- Recommendation 2: \_\_\_\_\_





## APPENDIX D – TVC FOCUS GROUP GUIDE

### INTRODUCTIONS

SCRIPT: Good morning, my name is [FACILITATOR NAME] and I work at the Texas A&M University Public Policy Research Institute. We are here because the Texas Veterans Commission contracted with PPRI to conduct a Needs assessment per section 434.017 of the Texas Government Code. In simple terms a Needs Assessment is a process used to determine priorities, make organizational improvements, or allocate resources. Today’s focus groups are part of this Needs Assessment and will be used to help TVC with its mission of serving Texas Veterans and their families.

We could not do this focus group without your thoughtful assistance. Thank you all for taking the time from your busy lives to join us today. We deeply appreciate your input and we look forward to hearing your thoughts regarding the topics we will cover.

Also joining from PPRI are [FACILITATOR NAMES]

From TVC we have: [TVC REPRESENTATIVE NAMES]

In order to keep this introduction as short as possible we will quickly go over a few basic pieces of information.

You are taking part in one of 16 focus groups for Texas veterans. All participants will be asked the same set of questions – which have no right or wrong answers. PPRI will moderated the discussions so that all points of view can be collected. We want to respect everyone’s ability to reply confidentially. While the sessions will be taped we do this so that we can accurately report on the responses that are given to each question. The responses will be reported in an aggregate manner (that is they will be grouped together) and no response will be reported as coming from or tied to a particular person by name or by any identifying characteristic. We ask that everyone who joins today please respect the confidentiality or responses as well and be respectful of differences of opinions. This confidentiality is why PPRI is conducting the groups as an outside agency as separate from TVC.

Now I will hand off the process and ground rules to [FACILITATOR]



## PROCESS AND GROUND RULES

We want to use your time wisely and ensure an excellent virtual experience. To do this, we need your help in following some basic participation **guidelines and rules**.

- **Because we are using Zoom**, we want you to understand the limitations of this technology. As mentioned during the test session last week, we would like to repeat some housekeeping rules:
  - Please either use your computer or your cell phone to listen and speak with the focus group. Please do not use both to listen because it will create feedback.
  - Please use your computer or tablet device to see when people are about to talk and view any slides and keep your microphone muted when you are not talking.
  - Please turn off your phone if you are not using it to talk.
- **To guide the discussions, we have a set of specific questions** about services for Texas Veterans and their families. We will moderate the discussion so we can cover all the questions while also gathering input from everyone.
- **Please talk one at time and take turns speaking**. If you have a sudden thought while another person is talking, write it down and speak up after they are done talking OR you can put it in the chat box. We will try our best to add the chat box comments to the discussion. We will ask different people to go first and try to give everyone a chance to talk. We will repeat our questions as often as necessary.
- **All feedback will be recorded** so we do not have to take notes and can focus on your comments and concerns. All recording will be destroyed after we write our basic report. No data reporting will contain any names and no information will be tied to a particular person.

## FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

**PRIOR TO QUESTIONS:** As you may know, PPRI conducted a survey in May to find out about the service needs of Texas Veterans and their families and what barriers exist to getting services. Today, we are going to discuss some of the findings from that survey and ask you to help us understand the details or the “why” for the survey responses. To show the responses, we will show you some slides.

**TVC VERSUS VA CLARIFICATION** | Before we begin, however, we would like to give a short explanation about the difference between the VA and the Texas Veterans Commission. Before we start- **(Poll)** *how many of you knew about the TVC prior to participating in the online survey? Give us a nod...we will not poll but need to see your faces and nods at this time.*

Most of you are familiar with the U.S Department of Veterans Affairs, or the VA. This is a Federal Agency with programs for veterans in the areas of healthcare, education, disability compensation and pensions. The Texas Veterans Commission is a Texas state agency that is totally separate from the VA. The mission of the



TVC is to advocate for and provide superior service to veterans that will significantly improve the quality of life for all **Texas** veterans, their families, and survivors.

Please keep in mind today that these two agencies are separate and that we will only be discussing topics within the purview of TVC to ensure that TVC obtains information to help it allocate resources.

## TVC GRANTS

Before we can ask the first question we need to share some information. With the help of a slide, we are going to look at the types of grants that TVC gives to charitable organizations, local governments, and Veteran Service Organizations in Texas that provide direct services to Texas Veterans.

To help you with this discussion, we are going to show you a list of the types of grants. Because this has a great deal of information, for ease of reading, we have underlined the key words. We will also show you the TVC website information on grants. I will quickly read the bulleted list from TVC’s website

### GRANT AREAS FOR TVC SLIDE #1 -

#### Simple Version:

1. **Housing for Texas Heroes Grants:** These grants allow organizations to assist Texas Veterans and their families in obtaining, maintaining, or improving housing
2. **Veterans Mental Health Grants:** These grants address the mental health needs of Veterans and their families.
3. **General Assistance** – the assistance that doesn’t fit into the other areas: Limited emergency assistance; Family and child services; Transportation services; Legal services, excluding criminal defense; and Employment, training, education, and job placement assistance.
4. **Veteran County Service Officers** – set aside grants for types 1, 2, and 3 above - to be administered locally by the county officers.
5. **Veteran Treatment Court** - Access to needed mental health and addictions treatment for veterans in the criminal justice system.

Next, [NAME] will use this grant information to ask the first set of questions.

**Q1. As we just mentioned, TVC grants cover specific areas. From the survey we conducted during summer, of the areas that the grants cover, the most important grant funded service needs for Texas veterans and their families for your region of Texas are shown in this next slide.**

### MOST IMPORTANT TVC GRANT FUNDED NEED SLIDE #2

REGION	1st NEED	2nd NEED	3rd NEED	4th NEED	5th NEED
--------	----------	----------	----------	----------	----------



Panhandle	Veteran Employment Services	Clinical Counseling Services	Short-term Financial Assistance	Home Modification Assistance	Integrative Therapy Services
West Texas	Veteran Employment Services	Clinical Counseling Services	Integrative Therapy Services	Short-term Financial Assistance	Home Modification Assistance
Alamo	Veteran Employment Services	Clinical Counseling Services	Integrative Therapy Services	Short-term Financial Assistance	Home Modification Assistance
South Texas	Veteran Employment Services	Clinical Counseling Services	Short-term Financial Assistance	Integrative Therapy Services	Home Modification Assistance
Gulf Coast	Veteran Employment Services	Clinical Counseling Services	Short-term Financial Assistance	Integrative Therapy Services	Home Modification Assistance
Central Texas	Veteran Employment Services	Clinical Counseling Services	Short-term Financial Assistance	Integrative Therapy Services	Peer Delivered Services
East Texas	Veteran Employment Services	Clinical Counseling Services	Short-term Financial Assistance	Integrative Therapy Services	Home Modification Assistance
North Texas	Veteran Employment Services	Clinical Counseling Services	Short-term Financial Assistance	Integrative Therapy Services	Home Modification Assistance

**Q1A. Do you largely agree with this list? Why do you think these are the top grant funded needs?**

- i. Does anyone disagree with these priorities and think the priority should be different? If so, how should it be different and why? (IF NECESSARY REMIND PARTICIPANTS THAT ONLY SOME AREAS ARE FUNDED BY THE GRANTS)
- ii. Does everyone still think the top three grant funded needs for your area are what is on the slide?

**1B. People in the focus group today have mentioned STATEMENTS as reasons for these grant needs. What are the three most important reasons in your mind that explain the top grant funded needs for veterans and their families?**

DO NOT READ Note: Facilitators keep in mind that we need to ensure that we gain an understanding of the top 4-5 items by region that can be addressed by TVC grants. Non-profits, units of local government, and Veteran County Service Officers can apply for grants to will fill the service gap in the county/regions. There are NO TVC GRANTS that directly support entrepreneurship, healthcare support, women veterans, VA disability claims.



The next questions will be asked by [NAME].

## TOP NEEDS

Now, we are going to ask about the top needs of veterans, not just the ones funded by TVC grants – but all service areas that TVC can assist with. On the slide you see are the top needs of Texas Veterans which were the same for all areas of the state:



**TOP NEEDS SLIDE #3**

<b>Top 5 Needs for the Texas Veteran Population</b>	
	<b>Overall Needs</b>
<b>1<sup>st</sup> NEED</b>	Healthcare Support
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> NEED</b>	VA Disability Benefits Claims Assistance
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> NEED</b>	Veteran Employment Services
<b>4<sup>th</sup> NEED</b>	Clinical Counseling
<b>5<sup>th</sup> NEED</b>	Assistance for Women Veterans

**Q2. Healthcare support has come up as an important area in all regions. What do think *the word support* refers to? Can we come up with the top 5 words that describe health care support? (Use probe to mention eligibility or understanding benefits if nothing is mentioned).**

**Q2a What about the other top needs – do you agree with the rankings? WHY – Do you think something was left off – WHY?**

**Q2b. Does everyone agree with the top needs, how about the order – build consensus.**

**Q2c TVC has a Health Care Advocacy Department – did you know about this service? USE POLL to gather information on knowledge of service (POLL 1)**

**AFTER POLL: The TVC HCAD is a resource for Texas veterans to help them connect with the federally funded VA healthcare benefits for which they qualify.**

In the past year the top five areas that they helped Texas veterans with included:

1. Eligibility (What benefits from the Federal Veterans Administration is the veteran eligible for?)
2. Enrollment (How do veterans enroll for healthcare benefits, education benefits, or other benefits and/or compensation plans?)
3. Appointments (Help veterans get an appointment with a disability claims counselor, or a VA benefits counselor)



4. Non-VA Billing (Help veterans with medical or other healthcare costs that they paid for out of pocket)
5. CHOICE Program / MISSION Act / TriWest (How a veteran can see a current private doctor, or get medical support outside of the VA healthcare system?)

**Q2d. Removing healthcare related services, we have veteran employment services, and assistance to women veterans as the topmost needs. We would like to hear about some general reasons for these other needs. What do you think could be the reasons? What are your thoughts on these needs and are there other non-health care needs?**



[NAME] will ask the next question.

## UNMET NEEDS

Q3. The survey also asked about the **most important unmet needs** for Texas veterans and their families in your region of the state. The answers we obtained are what you see in this slide. We want to know **why** you think these might be **the top unmet needs** in your area of Texas. Why do you think these came up as unaddressed?

### TOP UNMET NEEDS SLIDE #4

Most Important Unmet Needs for Veterans in the Area					
REGION	1 <sup>st</sup> NEED	2 <sup>nd</sup> NEED	3 <sup>rd</sup> NEED	4 <sup>TH</sup> NEED	5 <sup>TH</sup> NEED
<b>Panhandle</b>	Healthcare Support	Housing/ Education/ Legal	Clinical Counseling Services	Short-term Financial Assistance	Transportation to VA medical
<b>West Texas</b>	Housing/ Education/ Legal	Clinical Counseling	Healthcare Support	Short Term Financial Assistance	VA Disability Benefits Claims Assistance
<b>Alamo</b>	Housing/ Education/ Legal	Clinical Counseling	Healthcare Support	VA Disability Benefits Claims Assistance	Integrative Therapy Services
<b>South Texas</b>	Healthcare Support	Housing/ Education/ Legal	Short-term Financial Assistance	Clinical Counseling Services	VA Disability Benefits Claims Assistance
<b>Gulf Coast</b>	Housing/ Education/ Legal	Clinical Counseling	Healthcare Support	Veteran Employment Services	VA Disability Benefits Claims Assistance
<b>Central Texas</b>	Housing/ Education/ Legal	Healthcare Support	Clinical Counseling	VA Disability Benefits Claims Assistance	Short-term Financial Assistance
<b>East Texas</b>	Healthcare Support	Clinical Counseling	Veteran Employment Services	Housing/ Education/ Legal	Short-term Financial Assistance
<b>North Texas</b>	Healthcare Support	Housing/ Education/ Legal	Clinical Counseling Services	Short-term Financial Assistance	Veteran Employment Services

\* Services related to housing, education, and legal needs were combined due to the low number of responses for each





**Q3A. Please tell us why these are the top unmet needs. After discussion, if you think of another need that should be on this list what is it and why should it be here.**

**Q3B. After more discussion... can we please select the ones that are most important needs in the opinion for this group?**

Next [NAME] will talk about Veteran Resources.

## VETERAN RESOURCES

**Q4. According to the survey, the top places veteran and their family members in your area would look to find assistance are listed in the slide.**

### PLACES TO LOOK FOR RESOURCES SLIDE #5

REGION	1 <sup>st</sup> RESOURCE	2 <sup>nd</sup> RESOURCE	3 <sup>rd</sup> RESOURCE	4 <sup>TH</sup> RESOURCE	5 <sup>TH</sup> RESOURCE
<b>Panhandle</b>	VA	Veteran Service Organizations	Friend or Family Member	Internet	TVC
<b>West Texas</b>	VA	Veteran Service Organizations	Friend or Family Member	Internet	TVC
<b>Alamo</b>	VA	Veteran Service Organizations	Friend or Family Member	Internet	TVC
<b>South Texas</b>	VA	Friend or Family Member	Veteran Service Organizations	Internet	TVC
<b>Gulf Coast</b>	VA	Friend or Family Member	Veteran Service Organizations	Internet	TVC
<b>Central Texas</b>	VA	Friend or Family Member	Veteran Service Organizations	Internet	TVC
<b>East Texas</b>	VA	Friend or Family Member	Veteran Service Organizations	Internet	County Service Officer



North Texas	VA	Friend or Family Member	Veteran Service Organizations	Internet	TVC
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**Q4. Please look at this next slide and can you help us understand why these are the top resources for veterans and their family members in your region of Texas?**

**4A. Do you disagree with the selection of these? If you disagree, please tell us why you disagree?**

Next [NAME] will ask about methods of marketing TVC.

## TVC Marketing

**Q5. If TVC wanted to reach more Texas veterans to inform them about TVC and its services which of the following methods would you suggest they focus on?**

### TVC MARKETING SLIDE #6

- a. Social Media
- b. TV Advertising
- c. Radio Spots
- d. Print media – newspapers and magazines
- e. Billboards
- f. OTHER - suggestions

**Q5a. Which do you think is the most important of these that you see in the slide? Are there others?**

**4B. Out of everything that has been mentioned what are the top 3 methods for TVC to share information about available services?**



Next [NAME] will discuss barriers.

## TOP BARRIERS

Q6. According to the survey the top barriers that keep veterans and their family members from accessing services in your region were [USE TABLE BELOW TO GET CORRECT INFORMATION]:

### BARRIERS TO OBTAIN SERVICES SLIDE # 7

REGION	1 <sup>st</sup> BARRIER	2 <sup>nd</sup> BARRIER	3 <sup>rd</sup> BARRIER	4 <sup>th</sup> BARRIER	5 <sup>th</sup> BARRIER
<b>Panhandle</b>	Inadequate understanding of benefits	Lack of services in the area	Hard to get appointments	Not knowing where to get help	Few providers of services in the area
<b>West Texas</b>	Inadequate understanding of benefits	Hard to get appointments	Anxiety	Not knowing where to get help	Few providers of services in the area
<b>Alamo</b>	Inadequate understanding of benefits	Not knowing where to get help	Hard to get appointments	Anxiety	Few providers of services in the area
<b>South Texas</b>	Inadequate understanding of benefits	Not knowing where to get help	Few providers of services in the area	Lack of services in the area	Hard to get appointments
<b>Gulf Coast</b>	Inadequate understanding of benefits	Not knowing where to get help	Hard to get appointments	Anxiety	Potential costs and finances
<b>Central Texas</b>	Inadequate understanding of benefits	Not knowing where to get help	Hard to get appointments	Anxiety	Few providers of services in the area
<b>East Texas</b>	Few providers of services in the area	Lack of services in the area	Inadequate understanding of benefits	Not knowing where to get help	Hard to get appointments
<b>North Texas</b>	Inadequate understanding of benefits	Not knowing where to get help	Hard to get appointments	Potential costs and finances	Few providers of services in the area





**Q6A. Why do you think these are the topmost barriers? Do you think there are more important barriers that are not on this list, and then WHY are they a barrier?**

**READ:** We would like to remind everyone that most of the information on “how to access services” is on the TVC website, along with contact numbers, emails, etc.

**Q6B. What changes might help remove barriers for veterans who need assistance locally?**

Next [NAME] will discuss information on the TVC website.

## **GRANTEE ASSISTANCE DIRECTORIES**

Previously we spoke about 5 types of grants made by the Texas Veterans Commission. On the TVC website there are directories of information for each region of the state for services provided by these grants.

**SHOW SLIDE AND GO OVER INFORMATION AND DISCUSS AS TIME ALLOWS.**

### **WRAP UP**

We have come to the end of our focus group questions this morning. If you felt that you could not share some of your thoughts due to time or did not want others to hear your thoughts, please feel free to send your comments to facilitator(s). The chat box will be kept open for some more time to capture additional comments.

Thank you very much for attending this focus group and for helping the Texas Veterans Commission. Your thoughts and comments are very important for ensuring that TVC understands the needs of Texas Veterans and their families. We hope you have an enjoyable day.

If you would like to share more information on the topics discussed, feel free to send an email to [ajackson@ppri.tamu.edu](mailto:ajackson@ppri.tamu.edu).

## **CLARIFY AMAZON GIFT CARD**

Finally, all participants will get an email within 72 working hours of the focus group with an Amazon gift card code to use and instructions for using the code. If after three days you DO NOT receive this code and need to contact us, please email: [ajackson@ppri.tamu.edu](mailto:ajackson@ppri.tamu.edu)



## LIST OF PREVIOUS DELIVERABLES

Previous deliverables submitted to TVC are listed below for reference:

- Stage 1 Progress Summary Report (July to September 2019)
- Two Survey Instruments (September 2019)
- Stage 2 Progress Summary Report (October to December 2019)
- Veterans Needs Assessment Survey Brief (March 2020)
- Veterans Organizational Survey Brief (March 2020)
- Surveys, Asset Mapping and Sampling Report (June 2020)
- All Surveys & Asset Mapping Interim Findings (July 2020)
- Excel Chart List of VSOs in Each FVA Region via Asset Mapping (July 2020)
- Focus Group Training Guide & Customized Guide for Each FVA Region (October 2020)
- Virtual Focus Groups Report (December 2020)