

ACTUAL FY07	PROJECTED FY08		BUDGET FY09	VETERANS' SERVICES/BENEFITS
\$304,745 <u>\$303,055</u> \$607,800	\$307,330 <u>\$374,500</u> \$681,830	ADMINISTRATION BENEFITS	\$325,235 <u>\$415,200</u> \$740,435	<p>PURPOSE & OVERVIEW: Mandated by Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 115, the department's mission is to advocate on behalf of Cambridge veterans and their families, provide them with quality support services and direct a financial assistance program for those veterans and/or their dependents who are in need. The primary function of the department is to administer a benefits program which provides monetary aid to qualified veterans and/or their dependents for food, clothing, shelter, utilities, personal needs, insurance, fuel, telephone and transportation, as well as medical, dental, hospital and burial expenses. The Commonwealth reimburses the City 75% of the cost of this benefits program. The department assists Global War on Terrorism veterans in applying for a state cash bonus of \$1,000 for those who served in Iraq or Afghanistan and \$500 for all others. In addition, the department assists veterans who are 100% disabled, parents or wives of veterans killed-in-action, and surviving spouses of veterans who died as a result of a service-connected injury, in receiving an annual \$2,000 annuity at no cost to the City. The department also assists veterans and their dependents in applying for federal VA benefits such as service connected compensations, disability pensions, personal needs/aid and attendance pensions, medical, education, housing, employment, life insurance and death benefits as well as social security/disability benefits. In FY08, Cambridge veterans and/or their dependents received \$3.3 million in federal Veterans' Administration benefits. The department also provides assistance in filing for City tax exemptions and abatements earmarked for veterans or their surviving spouses. The department coordinates public events on Patriots', Veterans' and Memorial days, including the Memorial Day parade. On Memorial Day, in conjunction with the Cambridge Veterans' Organization (CVO), over 9,000 flags are placed on the graves of veterans interred in Cambridge cemeteries. In addition, the department participates in the dedication of streets, squares and parks for veterans killed-in-action. The department also serves as Burial/Graves Agent for indigent Cambridge residents (non-veterans) that are buried in the Cambridge cemetery.</p> <p>SIGNIFICANT BUDGET MODIFICATIONS: An increase of \$40,700 for veterans' benefits, based on the FY08 projected costs and estimated FY09 increases, is included in the FY09 Veteran's Budget. The veterans' benefits budget is \$415,200 with this increase. It is anticipated that the state will reimburse the City for a portion of these cost increases.</p> <p>FY08 MAJOR DEPARTMENTAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successfully managed a 20% increase in the number of clients served since July 2007. • Continued to enhance the department's Web site, ensuring that quality up-to-date information is available to veterans and their families. • Developed a new Cable TV informational public announcement that has significantly increased our

outreach capabilities.

- Implemented revised changes in policies, procedures and benefit levels, pursuant to CMR 108 (Massachusetts Veterans Benefits Laws and Regulations), effective July 2007. In January 2008, successfully managed a new \$250 per month fuel allowance benefit for clients who pay their own heat.
- Worked closely with the Assessing Department to reach veterans who may be eligible for FY 08 property tax exemptions/abatements.
- Continued outreach to returning veterans to apprise them of their entitlement to a Massachusetts cash bonus for their service since 9/11 and other entitlements.
- In conjunction with the Massachusetts National Guard, sponsored a send off ceremony for members of Company C, 1st Battalion, 181st Infantry, a Cambridge based National Guard Unit that received orders for a year-long deployment to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The deployment ceremony held on the Cambridge Common in July, brought together family, friends and elected officials for a rousing send off for our troops.
- Assisted veterans and surviving spouses in applying for the Economic Stimulus payment of \$300 for those who traditionally do not file taxes.
- Assisted 24 veterans/dependants in accessing federal VA benefits, exclusive of Ch. 115 clients. To date 13 cases have been awarded favorably, 8 cases are pending and 3 reported unfavorably.

Figure 1: FY07 Veterans, Spouses and Dependants Receiving City Subsidies

The Veteran’s Services Department has the primary responsibility to assist veterans, their spouses and dependants in applying for federal benefits and also provide them with a City/State subsidy when eligible.

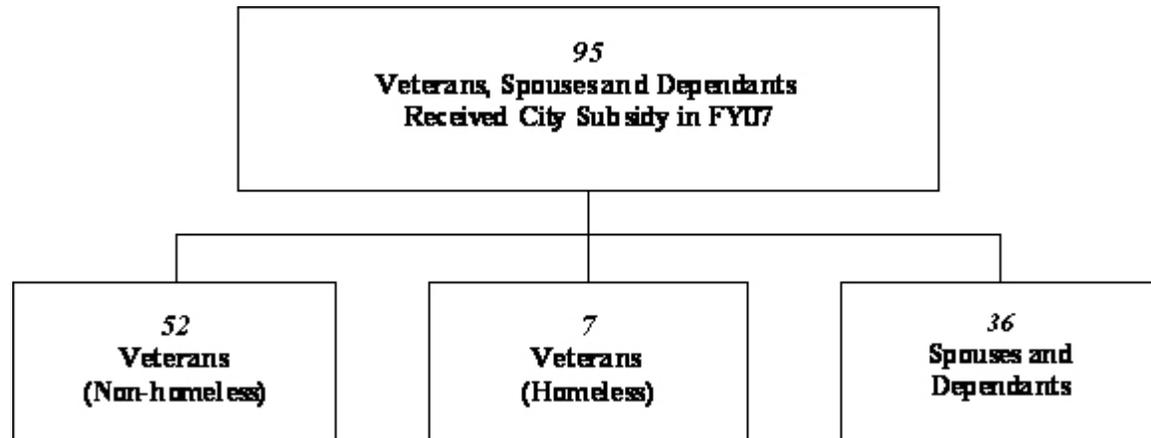
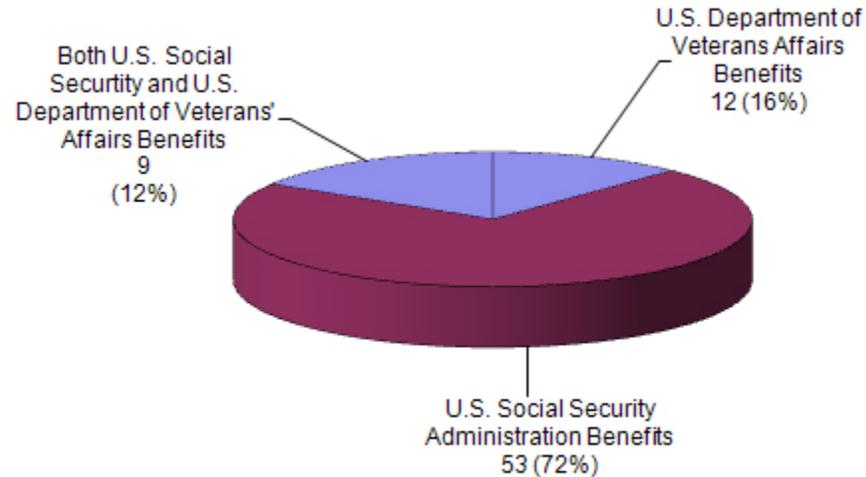


Figure 2: FY07 Clients Receiving a City Subsidy and Federal Assistance

Between July 1, 2006 and June 30, 2007 there were 74 clients, Veterans, Spouses and Dependents who received both a City Subsidy and Federal Assistance from either the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) or the U.S. Social Security Administration. In addition, the Veterans' office reviews all new federal benefits programs to ensure that all eligible clients apply for any benefits to which they are entitled.



FY09 GOALS

- *GOAL 1: Continue compliance with MGL Chapter 115 (Veterans' Benefits) regulations.*

PERFORMANCE MEASURES	FY07 ACTUAL	FY08 BUDGET	FY08 PROJECTED	FY09 PROPOSED
1. Ensure applications are forwarded for approval to the state within 10 days after intake	100%	100%	100%	100%
2. Develop a case management plan for each new client within 30 days of intake	100%	100%	100%	100%
3. Ensure state returns for reimbursement are forwarded to the state within 30 days following the payment month	100%	100%	100%	100%

- *GOAL 2: Increase public awareness of veterans' benefits, services and events by issuing informational announcements on City TV 8.*

PERFORMANCE MEASURES	FY07 ACTUAL	FY08 BUDGET	FY08 PROJECTED	FY09 PROPOSED
1. Number of informational announcements televised on municipal cable TV	n/a	6	6	6

- *GOAL 3: Increase community participation in veterans' ceremonial events by increasing public awareness through personal presentations, media utilization, linkages with schools, community organizations and other City departments. Continue the ceremonial and public events function of the Department by honoring both living and deceased veterans.*

- *GOAL 4: Produce timely updates to the Veterans' Department Web page.*

PERFORMANCE MEASURES	FY07 ACTUAL	FY08 BUDGET	FY08 PROJECTED	FY09 PROPOSED
1. Number of veterans benefits updates	13	12	12	12
2. Number of informational/current event updates	15	14	14	14

- *GOAL 5: Continue to upgrade staff skills with an emphasis on team building, skill sharing and accountability.*

PERFORMANCE MEASURES	FY07 ACTUAL	FY08 BUDGET	FY08 PROJECTED	FY09 PROPOSED
1. Number of internal staff trainings	4	4	4	4
2. Number of external trainings	12	12	12	12

- **GOAL 6:** *Aggressively identify and access federal and state resources for eligible clients.*

PERFORMANCE MEASURES	FY07 ACTUAL	FY08 BUDGET	FY08 PROJECTED	FY09 PROPOSED
1. Conduct assessments and evaluations of client eligibility for federal and state benefits; number of assessments	4	4	4	4

FINANCING PLAN	DETAIL	SUMMARY
TAXES		\$471,260
Real Estate Taxes	\$471,260	
INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVENUE		\$269,175
Veterans' Reimbursement	\$4,500	
Cherry Sheet-Veteran Benefits	\$264,675	
TOTAL FY09 BUDGETED REVENUE		\$740,435

STATUTORY ANALYSIS	SUMMARY
SALARIES & WAGES	\$265,685
OTHER ORDINARY MAINTENANCE	\$54,900
TRAVEL & TRAINING	\$419,850
EXTRAORDINARY EXPENDITURES	\$0
TOTAL FY09 BUDGETED EXPENDITURES	\$740,435

FULL TIME BUDGETED EMPLOYEES	FY07	FY08	FY09
	3	3	3