

ACTUAL FY08	PROJECTED FY09		BUDGET FY10	VETERANS' SERVICES/BENEFITS
\$303,845 <u>\$365,840</u> \$669,685	\$333,460 <u>\$515,200</u> \$848,660	ADMINISTRATION BENEFITS	\$338,335 \$545,070 \$883,405	<p>PURPOSE & OVERVIEW: Mandated by Massachusetts General Law, 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 FY09, Cambridge veterans and/or their dependents received \$3.8 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 collaboration 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) who are buried in the Cambridge cemetery.</p> <p>SIGNIFICANT BUDGET MODIFICATIONS: An increase of \$29,870 for veterans' benefits based on the FY09 projected costs and estimated FY10 increases, is included in the FY10 Veterans' Budget. The veterans' benefits budget is \$545,070 with this increase, a \$129,870 increase from the original FY09 Budget. It is anticipated that the state will reimburse the City for a portion of these cost increases.</p> <p>FY09 MAJOR DEPARTMENTAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successfully managed a 21% increase in the number of active clients served since July 2008. • Continued to enhance the Department's Website, ensuring that quality up-to-date information is available to veterans and their families. • Continued to air Cable TV informational public announcements that have significantly increased our

outreach capabilities. In addition, developed a City brochure regarding Veterans' Benefits and Services.

- In collaboration with the Cambridge Health Alliance, successfully established a process that identifies veterans who are receiving their services and provides them with an informational brochure regarding veterans' benefits and services.
- Implemented revised changes in policies, procedures and benefit levels, pursuant to 108 CMR (Massachusetts Veterans Benefits Laws and Regulations), effective July 2008.
- Worked closely with the Assessing Department to reach veterans who may be eligible for FY 09 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.
- Co-sponsored with the United States Postal Service an event honoring former Cambridge resident Sgt. Clifton Merriman, a highly decorated African American serviceman from WWI, who was the first African American in New England to have a federal building named in his honor.
- In collaboration with City staff, participated in the re-opening of the Cambridge War Memorial Recreation Center. The facility was originally built to honor the Cambridge men and women, who for our freedom gave their lives in service to our country.
- Assisted 16 veterans/dependants in accessing federal VA benefits, exclusive of M.G.L. Ch. 115 clients. To date 3 cases have been awarded favorably, 11 cases are pending and 2 reported unfavorably/withdrawn.

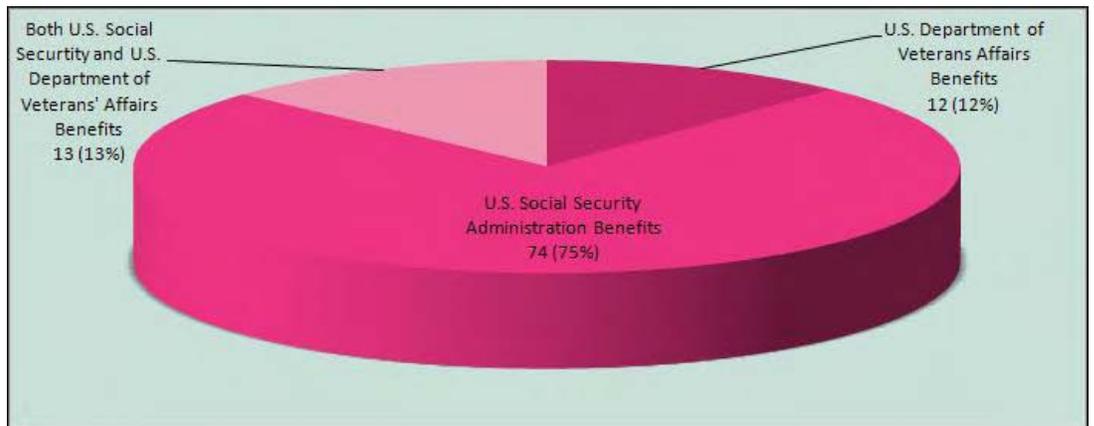
Figure 1: FY08 Veterans, Spouses and Dependants Receiving City Subsidies

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.

Veterans, Spouses and Dependants Received City Subsidy	FY06	FY07	FY08
Veteran (non homeless)	45	52	77
Veteran (homeless)	6	7	4
Spouses and dependants	34	36	38
Total served	85	95	119
Total active cases of total served (as of 6/30)	71	71	97

Figure 2: FY08 Clients Receiving a City Subsidy and Federal Assistance

Between July 1, 2007 and June 30, 2008 there were 99 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.



FY10 GOALS:

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

PERFORMANCE MEASURES	FY08 ACTUAL	FY09 BUDGET	FY09 PROJECTED	FY10 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	FY08 ACTUAL	FY09 BUDGET	FY09 PROJECTED	FY10 PROPOSED
1. Number of informational announcements televised on municipal cable TV	6	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	FY08 ACTUAL	FY09 BUDGET	FY09 PROJECTED	FY10 PROPOSED
1. Number of veterans benefits updates	11	12	12	12
2. Number of informational/current event updates	13	14	14	14

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

PERFORMANCE MEASURES	FY08 ACTUAL	FY09 BUDGET	FY09 PROJECTED	FY10 PROPOSED
1. Number of internal staff trainings	4	4	4	4
2. Number of external trainings	12	12	12	10

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

PERFORMANCE MEASURES	FY08 ACTUAL	FY09 BUDGET	FY09 PROJECTED	FY10 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		\$520,800
Real Estate Taxes	\$520,800	
INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVENUE		\$362,605
Veterans' Reimbursement	\$4,500	
Cherry Sheet-Veteran Benefits	\$358,105	
TOTAL FY10 BUDGETED REVENUE		\$883,405

STATUTORY ANALYSIS	SUMMARY
SALARIES & WAGES	\$278,785
OTHER ORDINARY MAINTENANCE	\$54,900
TRAVEL & TRAINING	\$549,720
EXTRAORDINARY EXPENDITURES	\$0
TOTAL FY10 BUDGETED EXPENDITURES	\$883,405

FULL TIME BUDGETED EMPLOYEES	FY08	FY09	FY10
	3	3	3