

**Department of Veterans' Affairs**  
**Budget No. 321**  
**Senate Bill Nos. 2007 and 2344, House Bill Nos. 1405 and 1439**

	<b>FTE Positions</b>	<b>General Fund</b>	<b>Other Funds</b>	<b>Total</b>
2013-15 executive budget (bills as introduced)	8.00	\$1,343,167	\$0	\$1,343,167
<b>2013-15 legislative appropriations</b>	<b>8.00</b>	<b>1,715,703</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,715,703</b>
Legislative increase (decrease) to executive budget	0.00	\$372,536	\$0	\$372,536
Legislative increase (decrease) to 2011-13 appropriations	1.00	\$298,484	\$0	\$298,484

**ONGOING AND ONE-TIME GENERAL FUND APPROPRIATIONS**

	<b>Ongoing General Fund Appropriation</b>	<b>One-Time General Fund Appropriation</b>	<b>Total General Fund Appropriation</b>
2011-13 legislative appropriations	\$1,099,626	\$317,593	\$1,417,219
<b>2013-15 legislative appropriations</b>	<b>1,420,703</b>	<b>295,000</b>	<b>1,715,703</b>
2013-15 legislative increase (decrease) to 2011-13 appropriations	\$321,077	(\$22,593)	\$298,484
Percentage increase (decrease) to 2011-13 appropriations	29.2%	(7.1%)	21.1%
2013-15 legislative increase (decrease) to executive budget	\$92,536	\$280,000	\$372,536
Percentage increase (decrease) to executive budget	7.0%	1,866.7%	27.7%

**SUMMARY OF LEGISLATIVE CHANGES TO THE EXECUTIVE BUDGET AND MAJOR FUNDING ITEMS**

**Salaries and Wages**

The legislative action affecting the recommended appropriation for the Department of Veterans' Affairs is in accordance with legislative salary and fringe benefits guidelines as contained in House Bill No. 1015. Consistent with the guidelines, a portion of salaries and wages funding from the general fund (\$10,123) for permanent employees' compensation and benefits is reallocated to an accrued leave payments line item for paying accrued annual leave and sick leave for eligible employees.

	<b>Major Items FTE Positions</b>	<b>General Fund</b>	<b>Other Funds</b>	<b>Total</b>
The legislative action:				
Adjusted funding for state employee salaries and benefits consistent with the legislative compensation package guidelines included in House Bill No. 1015.		(\$17,464)		(\$17,464)
Added funding for two "stand down" events to coordinate benefits and provide services to needy veterans in this state.		10,000		10,000

Added <b>one-time funding</b> to purchase two vans to transport veterans.	30,000	30,000
Added funding for grants to assist in the identification of and the provision of services to North Dakota veterans who had been exposed to Agent Orange during the Vietnam Conflict (House Bill No. 1405).	50,000	50,000
Added funding for a transfer of \$250,000 from the general fund to the veterans' postwar trust fund to increase the principal balance of the fund (House Bill No. 1439).	250,000	250,000
Added funding to train service dogs to assist North Dakota veterans with posttraumatic stress disorder (Senate Bill No. 2344).	50,000	50,000
Total	<u>0.00</u>	<u>\$372,536</u>
		<u>\$0</u>
		<u>\$372,536</u>

#### FTE Changes

The Legislative Assembly did not change the executive recommendation to add 1 FTE national service officer position to provide a total of 8 FTE positions during the 2013-15 biennium, 1 FTE position more than the 2011-13 biennium.

#### One-Time Funding

In Section 2 of Senate Bill No. 2007, the Legislative Assembly identified a total of \$45,000 from the general fund, of which \$15,000 is for website upgrades and \$30,000 is for two vans to transport veterans. The Legislative Assembly also provided in House Bill No. 1439 a one-time \$250,000 transfer from the general fund to the veterans' postwar trust fund to increase the principal balance of the fund. This funding is not to be considered part of the department's 2015-17 biennium base budget, and the Department of Veterans' Affairs is to report to the Appropriations Committees during the 2015 legislative session on the use of this funding.

#### Other Sections in Bill

**2015-17 appropriation bill** - Section 7 provides legislative intent that the Office of Management and Budget present separate budget bills for the Department of Veterans' Affairs and the Veterans' Home for the 2015 legislative session rather than a combined funding bill.

**Transport van replacement plan** - Section 8 provides legislative intent that the Department of Veterans' Affairs prepare and provide a transport van replacement plan to the 64<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly and introduce legislation seeking state funding for the replacement of transport vans based on the plan.

#### Related Legislation

**Disabled veterans homestead property tax credit** - House Bill No. 1306 expands the disabled veterans homestead property tax credit.

**Services to North Dakota veterans who were exposed to Agent Orange** - House Bill No. 1405 provides a general fund appropriation of \$50,000 to the Department of Veterans' Affairs for grants to identify and provide services to North Dakota veterans who were exposed to Agent Orange. The department must provide a report to the Budget Section during the 2013-14 interim regarding any funds received; the status of the grant program, including information on the use of the grants awarded; and outcomes of the services provided.

**Veterans' postwar trust fund transfer** - House Bill No. 1439 provides for a transfer of \$250,000 from the general fund to the veterans' postwar trust fund to increase the principal balance of the fund to generate additional income for programs authorized by law to benefit and serve veterans.

**Veterans' service dog training** - Senate Bill No. 2344 provides a general fund appropriation of \$50,000 to the Department of Veterans' Affairs to train service dogs to assist North Dakota veterans with posttraumatic stress disorder. Payments may only be made upon the completion of a service dog's training and may not exceed \$12,500 per service dog. The department must provide a report to the Legislative Management during the 2013-14 interim regarding the status of the service dog training program, including benefits to veterans, number of applicants, and number of service dogs provided.