

**Department of Veterans' Affairs
Budget No. 321
House Bill Nos. 1025, 1021, and 1372**

	FTE Positions	General Fund	Other Funds	Total
2015-17 legislative appropriations	9.00	\$1,612,495	\$288,018	\$1,900,513
2015-17 base budget	8.00	1,420,703	0	1,420,703
Legislative increase (decrease) to base budget	1.00	\$191,792	\$288,018	\$479,810

ONGOING AND ONE-TIME GENERAL FUND APPROPRIATIONS

	Ongoing General Fund Appropriation	One-Time General Fund Appropriation	Total General Fund Appropriation
2015-17 legislative appropriations	\$1,535,600	\$76,895	\$1,612,495
2013-15 legislative appropriations	1,420,703	295,000	1,715,703
2015-17 legislative increase (decrease) to 2013-15 appropriations	\$114,897	(\$218,105)	(\$103,208)
Percentage increase (decrease) to 2013-15 appropriations	8.1%	(73.9%)	(6.0%)

SUMMARY OF LEGISLATIVE CHANGES TO THE BASE 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 Senate Bill No. 2015.

	Changes to Base Budget			Total
	FTE Positions	General Fund	Other Funds	
The legislative action:				
Added funding for base payroll changes for cost-to-continue 2013-15 biennium salaries and benefit increases and for other base payroll changes.		\$70,244		\$70,244
Added funding for 2015-17 biennium performance salary adjustments of 2 to 4 percent per year.		38,613	8,757	47,370
Added funding for employee health insurance premiums to reflect a premium estimate of \$1,130.22 per month.		28,520	3,565	32,085
Transferred federal funding and 1 FTE position for the State Approving Agency from the North Dakota University System to the Department of Veterans' Affairs.	1.00		275,696	275,696

Added funding to purchase vans to transport veterans to medical appointments.	15,000	15,000		
Added funding for stand down events to provide total funding of \$20,000 from the general fund.	10,000	10,000		
Adjusted funding for operating expenses.	(5,220)	(5,220)		
Removed grants authorized during the 2013-15 biennium including \$50,000 for services related to Agent Orange, and \$50,000 for service dog training.	(100,000)	(100,000)		
Added one-time funding for service dog training to provide dogs to veterans with posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD).	25,000	25,000		
Added contingent one-time funding for service dog training.	25,000	25,000		
Added funding for grants to assist in the identification and the provision of services to North Dakota veterans who had been exposed to Agent Orange (House Bill No. 1372).	50,000	50,000		
Added funding for desktop support services, including \$26,895 of one-time funding from the general fund (House Bill No. 1021).	34,635	34,635		
Total	<u>1.00</u>	<u>\$191,792</u>	<u>\$288,018</u>	<u>\$479,810</u>

FTE Changes

The 2015-17 biennium appropriations for the Department of Veterans' Affairs include funding for 9 FTE positions, 1 FTE position more than the 2013-15 biennium. The Legislative Assembly transferred 1 FTE position for the State Approving Agency from the University System to the Department of Veterans' Affairs.

One-Time Funding

In Section 2 of House Bill No. 1025, the Legislative Assembly identified \$25,000 from the general fund as one-time funding for service dog training for veterans with PTSD and another \$25,000 from the general fund as one-time funding for service dogs contingent on the dogs having completed training, eligible and approved veterans being available to receive the dogs, and the department receiving Budget Section approval. Section 9 of House Bill No. 1021 identifies \$26,895 of funding from the general fund for desktop support services as one-time funding.

Deficiency Appropriations

In Section 1 of House Bill No. 1364, the Legislative Assembly provided \$380,000 of federal funds for the 2013-15 biennium to provide transportation services to veterans or for purchasing vehicles for transportation-related services to veterans.

Other Sections in Bill

Exemption - Section 3 provides the amounts appropriated to the Department of Veterans' Affairs for service dog training in Section 1 of Chapter 60 of the 2013 Session Laws are not subject to Section 54-44.1-11 and any unexpended funds from this line item for grants are available for grants during the 2015-17 biennium.

Contingent funding - Service dogs - Section 4 provides the funding made available in the contingent service dogs line item in Section 1 of the bill, includes \$25,000 from the general fund for service dogs to assist veterans with PTSD. The funding is contingent on service dogs that have completed training, eligible and approved veterans being available to receive the dogs, and the department receiving Budget Section approval.

Related Legislation

Desktop support services - In Sections 7, 8, and 9 of House Bill No. 1021, the Legislative Assembly required certain agencies use Information Technology Department centralized desktop support services and provided \$34,635 from the general fund, of which \$26,895 is one-time funding, to the Department of Veterans' Affairs for desktop support services.

Transportation-related services - House Bill No. 1364 provides an appropriation of \$380,000 of federal funds for the 2013-15 biennium to provide transportation services to veterans or for purchasing vehicles for transportation-related services to veterans.

Services to North Dakota Veterans exposed to Agent Orange - House Bill No. 1372 provides an appropriation of \$50,000 from the general fund for grants to assist in the identification of and the provision of services to North Dakota veterans exposed to Agent Orange during the Vietnam conflict.