



# Marion County Veterans Services

Operational Plan  
Projected Fiscal Years 2020-2024

2730 E. Silver Springs Boulevard, Suite 100 352-671-8422  
Ocala, Florida 34470-7010

<http://www.marioncountyfl.org/VeteransServices>

## Executive Summary

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- Our five (5) year Operational Plan demonstrates our commitment to serving Marion County Veterans and their families. Since the 1940's, Marion County Veterans Services has served as a liaison to the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Benefits Division.
- This office is available to serve over 40,000 Marion County Veterans plus their families.
- Since 2002, this office has been instrumental with Veterans and their families receiving over 100 million dollars in revenue from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs.

We provide professional and courteous service to all Veterans and their families, consequently improving their quality of life.

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- **MARION COUNTY VETERANS SERVICES**

According to our archives, Marion County Veterans Services was established in the area of NE 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue Ocala, Florida in the mid-1940. The office was located on Osceola Avenue back in the early 1970's. It was relocated, in 1987, the McPherson Government Complex on the corner of SE 25<sup>th</sup> Avenue and SE Fort King Street (currently the Marion County Parks Department). In June 2005, the office was again relocated one block north to its present address at 2528 East Silver Springs Boulevard. This location placed the office conveniently closer to the Ocala-Marion County Veterans Memorial Park and made our office more accessible. We then made yet another move to the Marion County Resource Center in March of 2017; which is a one stop shop for all Veterans.

- **OCALA-MARION COUNTY VETERANS MEMORIAL PARK**

The Park is located at 2601 East Fort King Street, Ocala. Construction started in 1997 and the official ceremony was in 2002. It was rededicated in 2005, when the main pavilion was completed. Within the Park's walls are 6,332 etched bricks with the names of service members, 226 etched granite benches, and over 100 historical plaques paying tribute to various wars and conflicts throughout the history of the United States. Some items in the Park have been purchased as a direct result of donations made by area businesses, organizations, and patrons. Visitors can appreciate the history of our Veterans from the birth of our nation to the present. The Park offers an opportunity to commemorate and honor the men and women who has sacrificed so much for our great nation. The Park office is staffed by highly motivated volunteers.

- **MARION COUNTY VETERANS EXHIBIT AND EDUCATIONAL CENTER**

The Exhibit Center is located north of the Veterans Park at 2528 E. Silver Springs Blvd. It was dedicated on March 30, 2019. It contains uniform displays and memorabilia from each branch of the United States Armed Forces. The center is staffed by highly motivated volunteers.

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- **Funding Source**

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- Marion County Veterans Services is funded by Marion County General Funds. We also receive donations from private citizens as well as commercial business; for the Veterans Park and the Exhibit Center

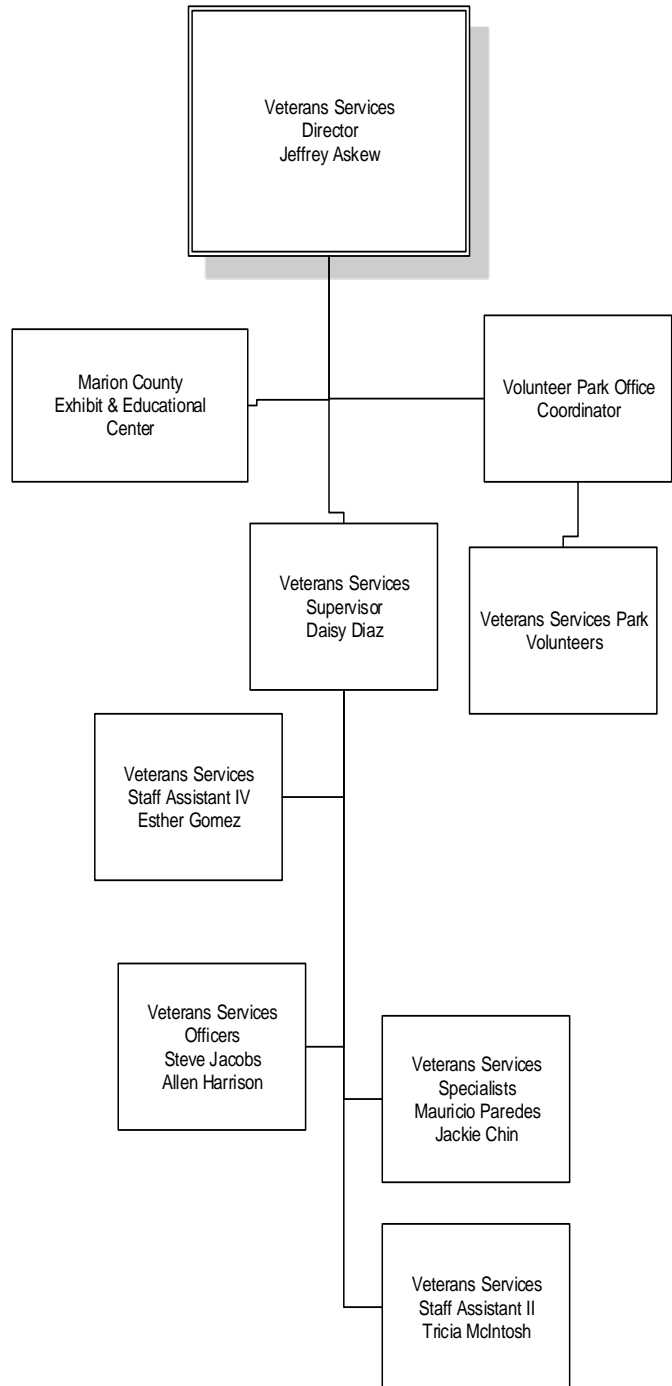
- **Primary Workload**

- Our office provides over 400 hours a week of services to Veterans and their families. These services consist of:
  - Filing Service Connected VA Claims
  - Non-Service Connected Pension Claims
  - Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) Claims
  - Burial Benefits
  - Education Benefits
  - Applying for ChampVA
  - Health Care Benefits
  - Certificate of Eligibility for VA Home Loan
  - DD214/Records/Medals
  - Executing House Calls (average 30 per year)
  - Speaking Engagements/Facilitating VA Eligible Benefits
  - Provide free Notary Public Services to Veterans and their families
  - Aid to Combat Duty Grant Program
- There are also volunteers hours which can average anywhere between 40 to 50 hours a week. They coordinate/display Special Events at Veterans Memorial Park such as:
  - Memorial Day, Veterans Day, 4 Quarterly Memorial Ceremonies, Flag Retirement as well as a host of other events.
  - Facilitating Brick/Plaque/Bench Placement
  - Tours of the Exhibit Center



Marion County Board of County Commissioners  
Fiscal Year 2020 Organizational Chart

**Veterans Services**



## **Future State**

- a. Workload Changes – add two part-time employees ; one for Park and one for Exhibit Center; working 20 hours each per week
  - b. Additional Assets – Sound system for Park –cost TBD
  - c. Additional Cost of Changes – Two part time employees at the pay rate of one Staff III; \$33,134.40, they will work 20 hours each per week.
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## Our Next Five Years:

- Time Lines



Implementation:

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## Goals and Timeline

### Goals

1. Acquire and install new sound system for Veterans Park.
2. Contact/ educate Veterans and their families in rural areas of Marion County; i.e. Ocala National Forest, McIntosh, Marion Oaks, Silver Springs Shores, and Dunnellon as well as other areas.
3. Hire two new part time employees.

### Timeline

2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Conduct outreach programs in the following areas: Marion Oaks and Dunnellon.</li><li>• Acquire new sound system plus installation and training of its operation.</li></ul>
2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Hire/train part time person for Veterans Exhibit Center.</li></ul>
2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Conduct outreach program in the following areas: “The Forest” and McIntosh.</li><li>• Hire part time person for the Veterans Park.</li></ul>
2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Conduct outreach programs in the following areas: Fort McCoy and Silver Springs Shores.</li></ul>
2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Conduct one outreach per quarter, revisiting areas previously touched: Marion Oaks, “The Forest”, Silver Springs Shores, Dunnellon, and Reddick.</li></ul>



# Veterans Memorial Park



