Washington Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA)
Governor's FY2024 Supplemental Proposals, As of January 8, 2024

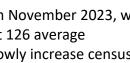### Staffing and Census in Homes

WDVA has been able to slowly recover staffing in its four State Veterans Homes. Through November 2023, we have averaged about 45 vacancies across our four homes in FY24 in comparison to about 126 average vacancies for the same period in FY23. By filling these positions, we have been able to slowly increase census, while also sharply reducing our need to use temporary agency staffing, reducing the usage by about $1.25 million when comparing the first five months of FY24 to FY23. We are near or over 90% in two homes. COVID, influenza, and norovirus outbreaks continue to make it challenging to build census during the fall and winter months as families are more reluctant to admit loved ones. In addition, our Orting and Port Orchard census has lagged due to capital projects, such as flooring and HVAC upgrades, that are requiring full wings to be vacant, as well as continued challenges in filling some direct care positions, particularly in weekend and night shifts. WDVA must fill direct care positions before admitting staff. Because of this our current census across all four homes is about 80%, while our staffing is averaging about 94% of FTE authorized (which includes on call, overtime and holiday pay).   WDVA has put in additional controls and support measures to help our Homes to increase their census, with a goal of getting all homes over 90% of their maximum allowable census by the end of the current fiscal year.   Increasing census will ensure we are meeting the critical need of our Veterans and family members for quality long-term care services, in addition to decreasing the amount of state general fund dollars to support operations.

OPERATING BUDGET   23-25 Biennium

Policy -Level

1. **One Washington (OneWA) Staffing Support (GF-State)** $ 1,135,000
   Provides WDVA four project staff critically needed to implement the OneWA Project, Phase 1A. WDVA does not have the internal capacity to support the significant testing, training, and process changes over the next two years.

2. **Nursing Assistant Training Academy (GF-State/GF-Federal/GF-Local)** $ 357,000
   Provides funding to expand the certified nursing assistant training program within our state veterans' homes to support recruitment and retention of these key direct care staff.

3. **LPN Apprenticeship Program (GF-State/GF-Federal/GF-PL)** $ 102,000
   Supports a new apprenticeship program for Homes certified nursing assistants to become licensed practical nurses (LPN's). This supports career development and retention efforts of another critical direct care component.

4. **Homes Budget Adjustment (GF-State/GF-Federal/GF-PL**) $ 5,931,000
   The policy level adjustment to WDVA budget reflects expenditures in our budget which weren't specifically funded, but necessary to continue operations. This includes temp agency staff to fill critical shift vacancies and call outs ($4.95M) and capital projects staff to ensure critical Homes projects that were funded by the Legislature are completed ($980K).

5. **Nursing Recruitment and Retention Incentive (GF-State/GF-Federal/GF-PL)** $ 55,000
   Primarily shifts funding to FY25 to ensure this funding can cover the end of the federal fiscal year of September 30. Provides some more funding due to increase in federal VA grant dollars provided.

Maintenance-Level

1. **Computer Equipment Leasing (GF-State)** $ 72,000
   Addresses a gap in funding to allow us to get all computers on a standard lease schedule.

2. **Homes Budget Adjustment (GF-State/GF-Federal/GF-PL)** $ 144,000
   Annual adjustment to WDVA budget due to changes in federal and private revenues collections, primarily impacted by census, in comparison to expenditures. (Maintenance and Policy Adjustments)

CAPITAL BUDGET

Burial and Columbarium Expansion Cost Increase (State and Federal) $ 2,109,000
Provides $241K in state and $1.9 million in federal funding to address increase in cost for this project from when the grant was originally submitted in 2019.