

**COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY
SAN DIEGO MILITARY AND VETERANS ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING**

**MEETING NOTICE: In Person
North Central Live Well Center
5055 Ruffin Road, 2nd Floor Conference Room, San Diego CA 92123
Phone (858) 694-3222**

Public Video Viewing/Comment Option:

<https://sdcounty-ca-gov.zoom.us/j/82446012368>

**October 16, 2025
1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.**

AGENDA

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| 1:00 - 1:01 | 1. Call to Order |
| 1:01 - 1:02 | 2. Pledge of Allegiance |
| 1:02 - 1:03 | 3. Roll Call |
| 1:03 - 1:05 | 4. Action Item: Approval of August 21, 2025, Meeting Minutes |

PUBLIC COMMENTS

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| 1:05 - 1:15 | 5. <u>Guidelines for Public Comment on Items not listed on the agenda:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Members of the public may request to speak about any issue within the purview of the Board.➤ Each speaker will be limited to three (3) minutes.➤ Board members may not discuss or take action on issues raised during public comment unless the issue is listed in this Agenda. |
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PRESENTATIONS/DISCUSSION ITEMS

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| 1:15 – 1:30 | 6. Discussion Item: New Community Connections: SDMVAC Council Members share community events they had recently attended. |
| 1:30 – 1:45 | 7. Action Item: SDMVAC Annual Report 2024–2025, All San Diego Military and Veterans Advisory Council Members |
| 1:45 – 2:00 | 8. Discussion Item: Veterans Day/ Week Events, Member Participation Representing SDMVAC: All San Diego Military and Veterans Advisory Council Members |
| 2:00 – 2:30 | 9. Presentation Item: San Diego Non-Profit Collaboration During Government Shutdown; Tracy A. Owens, LCDR, USN (Ret.) Senior Program Manager of Support the Enlisted Project (STEP) |
| 2:30 – 2:40 | 10. Discussion Item: Proposal to Create a San Diego County MILVET Community Calendar, Chair Jude Litzenberger |

- 2:40 – 2:50 11. **Action Item:** Motion to Adopt Proposed Ad Hoc Workgroup Guidelines: Chair Jude Litzenberger
- 2:50 - 3:00 12. **Discussion Item:** Suggested topic for future meetings: All San Diego Military and Veterans Advisory Council Members

ADJOURNMENT/ NEXT MEETING

The next regular meeting will be held on December 18, 2025, 1:00 – 3:00 pm, at 5055 Ruffin Road, 2nd Floor Conference Room, San Diego, CA 92123.

ASSISTANCE FOR THE DISABLED:

Agendas and records are available in alternative formats upon request. Contact the San Diego Military and Veterans Advisory Council Meeting staff contact at (858) 694-3222 with questions or to request a disability-related accommodation. To the extent reasonably possible, requests for accommodation or assistance should be submitted at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting so that arrangements may be made. Additional information can be found on the San Diego Military and Veterans Advisory Council (SDMVAC) website:

https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/hhsa/programs/ssp/veterans_advisory_council.html

**COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY
SAN DIEGO MILITARY AND VETERANS
ADVISORY COUNCIL (SDMVAC)**

**Held In Person
North Central Live Well Center
5055 Ruffin Road, 2nd Floor Conference Room, San Diego CA 92123
Phone (858) 694-3222**

Public Video Viewing/Comment Option:

<https://sdcounty-ca-gov.zoom.us/j/83797810267>

**SDMVAC Meeting Minutes
August 21, 2025**

Members Present

Danny Jackson
Paula Jansen
Jude Litzenberger
David McCulloh
John Paul Sullivan

Staff Present

Alberto Banuelos, Asst. Director, Self-Sufficiency Services
Amy Klock, OMVA
Ray Flores, OMVA

Guests

Bill Teter
Mark London
Vic Martin – San Diego Veterans Coalition
Matt Jackson

Members Absent

Mark Gracyk
Philip Kendro
Tony Teravainen

1. Meeting called to order at 1:02 pm by Jude Litzenberger, Chair
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Roll Call
 - SDMVAC present members noted above.
4. The June 17, 2025, meeting minutes were approved by the five Council members present and one abstained.
5. Public Comments:
 - No public comment

6. **Discussion Item:** New Community Connections: SDMVAC Council members share community events they have recently attended. Council member David McCulloh shared his attendance at the Veterans Advisory Committee in North County on August 4, 2025, and announced the upcoming Grape Day 5K Run on September 13, 2025, at Escondido. Paula Jansen reported on her visit to the VFW, where she participated in a tree seed-packing activity for veterans and their families, and attended the Purple Heart Ceremony at the Balboa Museum and the Military Stamp Unveiling at the San Diego Midway Post Office on July 10, 2025. Chair Jude Litzenberger shared her participation in the Cal TAP event held at the LGBT Center, focused on resources for LGBTQ+ Veterans. John Paul Sullivan attended the 126th VFW National Convention, which took place from August 9–13, 2025, in Columbus, Ohio.
7. **Action Item:** Nomination for the 2025 SDMVAC Chair and Vice Chair. Jude Litzenberger, the current Chair of SDMVAC, was nominated to continue serving as Chair for the next term. Danny Jackson, the current Vice Chair, was also nominated to continue serving as Vice Chair for the next term. All members were in favor; there were no abstentions. Both nominations were unanimously approved.
8. **Action Item:** Election for the 2025 SDMVAC Chair and Vice-Chair: All San Diego Military and Veterans Advisory Council Members. An election was held for the 2025 Chair and Vice Chair positions. All five San Diego Military and Veterans Advisory Council (SDMVAC) members participated in the vote. Jude Litzenberger was elected as Chair, and Danny Jackson was elected as Vice Chair for the 2025 term.
9. **Presentation Item:** Steven A. Cohen Military Family Clinic at VVSD: Ashley Tatum, Case Manager/Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Counselor at Steven A. Cohan Military Family Clinic at VVSD. Ashley Tatum, Case Manager and SUD Counselor, provided an overview of the clinic's services, including mental health counseling, substance use treatment, case management, and support for veterans and their families regardless of discharge status.
10. **Discussion Item:** Administrative Code Update: Ray Flores, Military and Veterans Affairs Officer, Office of Military and Veterans Affairs. Ray Flores, OMVA officer, discussed that all committees and councils with public members are governed by an administrative code that outlines their structure, operations, and framework. He noted that OMVA and Self-Sufficiency Services (SSS) periodically review this policy, and there are currently no updates or changes.
11. **Discussion Item:** Nonprofit Board Training – Strengthening San Diego nonprofits serving Military, Veterans and their families; Chair Jude Litzenberger announced that this year, the Good for Others Foundation will conduct a nonprofit board training program aimed at strengthening San Diego-based organizations that serve military members, veterans, and their families.
12. **Discussion Item:** Suggested topic for future meetings: All San Diego Military and Veterans Advisory Council. David McCulloh suggested inviting David Whitley Commanding Officer, Headquarters & Support Battalion at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton.

ADJOURNMENT/SET NEXT MEETING:

The meeting was adjourned at 1:53 p.m. The next regular meeting will be held on October 16, 2025.

DRAFT

ITEM #6 New Community Connections: SDMVAC Council members share community events they had recently attended

All San Diego Military and Veterans Advisory Council Members



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**LIVE WELL
SAN DIEGO**

ITEM #7 SDMVAC Annual Report 2024-2025

All San Diego Military and Veterans Advisory Council Members



LIVE WELL
SAN DIEGO

San Diego Military and Veterans Advisory Council (SDMVAC) 2024 Annual Report to the County Board of Supervisors

August 2025

In accordance with the County Administrative Code, Article XLVIII, Section 820 the San Diego Military and Veterans Advisory Council (SDMVAC) submits the following report of activities and accomplishments for Fiscal Year 2024-2025.

Background:

The Board of Supervisors of the County of San Diego sets the policy of the County to take a leadership role in identifying and addressing the needs of Military Veterans. In order to fulfill the tasks related to this, the Board established a San Diego County Military and Veterans Advisory Council. The Council shall function as an independent body in carrying out its duties and responsibilities, reporting directly to the Board of Supervisors, as well as the Chief Administrative Officer.

The plan for Fiscal Year 2024-2025 was to advise the Board of Supervisors on goals and objectives relevant to the County of San Diego Office of Military and Veterans Affairs (OMVA) Department.

Membership and Organization:

The SDMVAC consists of nine volunteer citizens who are appointed by the Board of Supervisors. Five members are appointed by the Board of Supervisors, with each Supervisor nominating one Council Member from their respective District. Four members are appointed by the Board of Supervisors, as Members-at-Large. A Chair and a Vice-Chair are elected on odd-numbered years and serve a two-year term.

Jude Litzenberger (Member-at-Large) was elected as the new Chair and Danny Jackson (D3) was elected as the new Vice-Chair, in August 2023.

The SDMVAC started the Fiscal Year with two membership vacancies: District 5, Seat 5 and Member at Large, Seat 6. In May 2025, Jaime Yslas, who held the position of District 1, Seat 1, resigned from the Council. Following his departure, two new members were appointed: David McCulloh filling Seat 5 for District 5 on April 22, 2025, and John Paul Sullivan filling Seat 6 for Member at Large on June 24, 2025.

SDMVAC meetings were regularly announced to the public via the Clerk of the Board and SDMVAC websites. Meetings were also broadcast via Zoom for virtual public and staff participation.

Focus and Oversight:

This year, budget constraints made clear the importance of healthy nonprofits in meeting more needs of the military/ Veteran community in the future. The Council continued to look at the health of the County's military veterans including the nonprofit organizations who play an important role in caring for them. The Council invited presentations from a number of key nonprofits asking questions that provided a good sense of what was working and what needed attention. The primary focus areas of the SDMVAC in Fiscal Year 2024-2025 were

- Service Delivery to Veterans
- Local Military and Veterans Events
- Community Outreach to Veterans and their Family Members

- Collaboration with different Veteran services organizations.

The Council identified the need to have workgroups/ad hoc committees to look deeper into activities that affect the health and full participation of the military/veteran population. The Council is establishing working groups that address Education, Employment, Food Security, Housing, Healthcare, and Legislation. Each working group will monitor progress and anticipate challenges in these areas to provide more accurate information regarding the health of San Diego County active-duty military, veterans and their families to support the Board of Supervisors.

Additionally, the issue of viable boards of directors to serve local nonprofit organizations revealed that many key organizations were having difficulty identifying, recruiting and retaining qualified board members. The Council identified a solution that would provide training for these important organizational leaders and help them create strong boards to serve in the future. The SDMVAC Chair invited Good for Others (a San Diego based impact focused nonprofit) and The Nonprofit Institute at University of San Diego to assist with expertise in identifying training options. Soon, Good for Others will fund the USD Nonprofit Institute in conducting training for the boards of nonprofits serving military/veterans. They also will build up a pool of military veterans to serve as qualified nonprofit board members in the future. The Council believes this training will strengthen both military/veteran-serving nonprofits and qualify a pool of military veterans willing to serve on other nonprofits where veterans voices will be helpful throughout the County.

During 2024-2025, the SDMVAC discussed numerous topics in the following categories:

- County Code of Conduct for Boards, Commissions, and Committees
- Establishing and Organizing Ad Hoc Subcommittees to Address Key Issues Facing Veterans: Food Security, Housing, Education, Employment, Healthcare, and Legislation
- Nominations for the 2025 SDMVAC Chair and Vice Chair
- SDMVAC Subcommittee Reviews
- Afghanistan Evacuee Update
- Community Assignments and Charters
- DOD/VA Policy Changes Regarding Gender-Affirming Care and fate of Trans Service Members
- All Chairs County Boards Meeting
- Veteran's Events
- 25/26 Proposed Operational Plan Budget

The San Diego Military and Veterans Advisory Council (SDMVAC) is committed to facilitating knowledge exchange and promoting collaboration effort amongst the organizations that are invited to present to the Council. The purpose is to raise visibility and awareness of their work in the community and help the SDMVAC plan for the next 20 years that best supports the Military and Veterans in San Diego. These organization includes:

- Current Initiatives and Interests in Veterans/Services in District 3
- Team Red, White and Blue (RWB)

- Triple B Adventures
- San Diego Military, Veterans and Families Advisory Council
- VA San Diego Healthcare System
- San Diego Pro Sports Military Alliance
- California Department of Veterans Affairs (CalVet)
- Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW)
- Zero8hundred
- Support The Enlisted Project (STEP)
- VA San Diego Healthcare System
- San Diego Pro Sports Military Alliance

2024-2025 Board of Supervisors Letters Discussed by SDMVAC:

Date

- No Board of Supervisor Letters were Discussed

Staff support was provided by the Health & Human Services Agency throughout the year.

ITEM #8 Veterans Day/ Week Events, Member Participation Representing SDMVAC

All San Diego Military and Veterans Advisory Council Members



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**LIVE WELL
SAN DIEGO**

ITEM #9 San Diego Non-Profit Collaboration During Government Shutdown

Tracy A. Owens, LCDR, USN (Ret.) Senior Program Manager of Support the Enlisted Project (STEP)



LIVE WELL
SAN DIEGO

Financial Wellness

Making This Crisis *Their Last*



Serving military and Veteran families for **12 years**



\$2.8M

Emergency funds distributed to stop the loss of critical basic needs

Supporting Military and Veteran Families Through Crisis and Toward A Brighter Future

As a non-profit founded by Veterans, we understand the lifestyle challenges that come with serving your country. Every member of our team has first-hand knowledge of the realities of military life:

- ✓ Frequent moves
- ✓ Deployments
- ✓ Unreimbursed expenses
- ✓ Low pay

We know the sacrifices and struggles, and we're here to help. Our expert Financial Social Workers provide one-on-one support to help families get from crisis to financial wellness, **breaking the cycle of financial stress.**

Mission

Improving Financial Wellness to Combat:

- Food insecurity
- Homelessness
- Mental health conditions
- Suicide and other crises

Through **counseling, education, and financial support** for enlisted service members, veterans, and their families.

90%

Effective in helping families achieve their financial goals, with financial wellness scores still improving a year after the program

100%

Successful at restoring or retaining critical basic needs through emergency funds



Emergency Financial Assistance (EFA) Program

Expert Financial Counseling

Our Financial Social Workers address the immediate crisis and work to uncover the root cause of your financial challenges. Financial habits are largely shaped by age 9, but many Americans lack the education needed for healthy spending habits. We pull the thread to reveal the underlying behaviors, guiding you with **personalized solutions and education** to ensure this crisis is the last. We know you are resilient, and our counseling focuses on **collaboration and guidance** to help you succeed.

Our Social Workers Have:

- ✓ Deep military backgrounds
- ✓ A degree in Social Work (MSW/BSW)
- ✓ A certification in Personal Financial Counseling (CPFC)
- ✓ A certification in Financial Social Work (FSW)

Personalized Financial Plan

Your Financial Social Worker will create a personalized financial plan that addresses your specific needs and goals. This isn't just another budget - it's a real plan, **with a tailored approach to create lasting change**.

Emergency Funds

Through emergency funds, we stop the loss of critical basic needs such as housing, transportation, and utility loss. These funds are paid to vendor directly, and **do not get paid back (they are not a loan)**.



Only 3%

of clients ever return for additional assistance



544

Utility Shutoffs Prevented



670

In-Process Evictions Halted



580

Cars Stopped From Repossession

**As of Fiscal Year 2024*

100%

of service members in pay grades E1-E4 earn a low income wage according to HUD guidelines

84%

of every dollar goes directly toward programs

8,492

Families served through our Emergency Financial Assistance (EFA) Program

**As of Fiscal Year 2024*



teamstepusa.org



STEP

WANTS TO HELP YOU

TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR FINANCES

“Apply for Assistance” at **teamstepusa.org**.

Let us help you navigate your financial crisis now and build your financial well-being for years to come.

Open to all active duty service members, Veterans, reservists, and their families.



Experian has partnered with STEP to help military and Veteran families achieve financial health

*Stressed out
about finances?*

*Tired of living
paycheck-to-
paycheck?*

*Concerned
about inflation?*

*Worried about
a past-due car
payment?*

*Threatened
with home
eviction?*

**Apply for
assistance today**

teamstepusa.org





FINANCIAL WELLNESS

Support The Enlisted Project (STEP)

Take control of your finances

As a non-profit founded by Veterans, we understand the lifestyle challenges that come with volunteering to serve your country. At STEP we are familiar with the challenges associated with the job, including frequent moves, deployments, unreimbursed expenses, and low pay.

Our Social Workers, certified in financial counseling, will work with you one-on-one to develop a Personal Finance Plan.

Your plan may include an emergency grant* to prevent the loss of critical basic needs.

**grant qualifications: imminent risk of loss of a critical basic need; E1-E6 Active Duty or Veteran service member up to 18 months post service, currently living in Southern California or Washington state.*



SUPPORT THE ENLISTED PROJECT

Find us at
@teamSTEPusa
(858)-695-6810
teamSTEPusa.org

A TAX EXEMPT 501(C)(3) NONPROFIT | FEDERAL TAX ID # 20-3051279

ITEM #10 Proposal to Create a San Diego County MILVET Community Calendar

Jude Litzenberger, Chair of San Diego Military and Veterans Advisory Council



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ITEM #11 Motion to Adopt Proposed Ad Hoc Workgroup Guidelines

Jude Litzenberger, Chair of San Diego Military and Veterans Advisory Council



LIVE WELL
SAN DIEGO

ITEM #12 Suggested topic for future meetings

All San Diego Military and Veterans Advisory Council Members

