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# Overview of Housing Programs Administered by the California Department of Veterans Affairs

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LEGISLATIVE ANALYST'S OFFICE

Presented to:

Assembly Veterans Affairs Committee

Hon. Mary Salas, Chair





## Department of Veterans Affairs Administers the Cal-Vet Program

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### ***The Veterans' Farm and Home Purchase (Cal-Vet) Program.***

Under the Cal-Vet program, money from bond sales is used by the state Department of Veterans Affairs to purchase farms, homes, and mobile homes which are then resold to veterans. Each participating veteran makes monthly payments to the department. These payments are in an amount sufficient to (1) reimburse the department for its costs in purchasing the farm, home, or mobile home; (2) cover all costs resulting from the sale of the bonds, including interest; and (3) cover the costs of operating the program.

- ***Most Cal-Vet Loans Are for Houses.*** About 85 percent of Cal-Vet loans are for the purchase of single-family homes. The remaining loans are for condominiums, mobile homes, farms, and construction and rehabilitation. As of December 31, 2003, there were slightly more than 20,000 Cal-Vet loans outstanding.
- ***Veterans' Bond Act of 2008 Provides Additional Funding.*** In November 2008, the voters approved the Veteran's Bond Act of 2008 which authorizes the state to sell \$900 million in general obligation bonds for the Cal-Vet program. These bonds provide sufficient funds for at least 3,600 veterans to receive loans.



## The Department of Veterans Affairs Administers the State Veterans Homes (VHs)

- VHs Provide Housing for Veterans.** The overall mission of California veterans homes is to “provide the state’s aged or disabled veterans with rehabilitative, residential, and medical care and services in a home-like environment.” Founded in 1884, VH Yountville in Napa Valley is the oldest and largest of the homes with 1,568 beds. The VH Barstow in San Bernardino County opened in 1996 with 400 beds and VH Chula Vista in San Diego County opened in 2000 with an additional 400 beds.
- VHs Offer Several Levels of Care.** As shown in Figure 1, the veterans homes currently offer five levels of care to the veterans residing in them.

**Figure 1**  
**Levels of Care at Veterans Homes**

Level of Care	Description
Domiciliary/Independent Living	Members are self-sufficient and able to perform all activities of daily living.
Residential Care for the Elderly (RCFE)	Members are self-sufficient and able to perform all activities of daily living with minimal assistance.
Intermediate	Members require intermittent licensed nursing assistance with medications/treatments.
Skilled Nursing	Members need substantial, continued skilled nursing assistance with life functions (includes treatment for Alzheimer’s and related dementias).
General Acute	Members are provided with 24-hour nursing and medical care.

- VHs Provide a Range of Services.** In addition to the different levels of care provided, the homes offer other services for their residents. For example, the existing homes have outpatient clinics for more ambulatory residents to see doctors and/or visiting specialists. The VH Yountville and Chula Vista have on-site pharmacies that provide medication to residents. All homes have a postal exchange for resident use and VH Yountville has a canteen where many of its residents can meet for meals.



## The Department of Veterans Affairs Administers the State VHs

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***VHs Slated for Expansion.*** Despite a capacity of nearly 2,000 beds, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs announced that California has a “great need” for additional homes to accommodate more veterans. In response, the DVA is constructing five new homes that will expand the total number of beds to about 3,300. The new homes will be located across the state in West Los Angeles (LA), Lancaster, Ventura, Redding, and Fresno. The new homes will add about 1,000 more beds to the existing 2,368. The VH West LA will have 396; VH Lancaster and Ventura, 60 each; VH Fresno, 300; and VH Redding, 150. See Figure 2 for detailed breakdowns.

**Figure 2**  
**Number of Beds Per Veterans Home**

Levels of Care	Yountville	Barstow	Chula Vista	West LA	Lancaster	Ventura	Fresno	Redding
Domiciliary/Independent Living	811	164	164	—	—	—	—	—
Residential Care for the Elderly (RCFE)	101	56	56	84	60	60	180	90
Intermediate	204	60	—	—	—	—	—	—
Skilled Nursing	416	120	180	312	—	—	120	60
General Acute	36	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
<b>Total Beds</b>	<b>1,568</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>396</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>150</b>

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***VHs Are Funded by State, Federal, and Other Funds.*** The 2009-10 Budget Act includes \$174 million General Fund for support of the VHs. Funding sources include General Fund and federal funds as well as private insurance and member fees.