



Oklahoma  
Department of  
Mental Health  
Substance and  
Abuse Services

# Mutual Support

## Distinctions between the VA & VSO'S

### Special Point of Interest:

#### DD-214

- The Department of Defense issues each veteran a DD-214 upon separation.
- This report of separation contains information normally needed to verify for military service benefits, type of separation, retirement, employment, and membership in veterans' organizations.
- Participants can request a DD 214/ Military Service Records online, by mail, or by fax @ [www.archives.gov](http://www.archives.gov)



**Veteran Justice Outreach is a national initiative created by Secretary of Veteran Affairs, General Eric Shinseki (ret.), to assist veterans needs in the judicial system.**

The terms "VA & VSO" can cause plenty of conundrums understanding military acronyms and what service each term may or may not cover. We will begin by asking who and what services does the VA provide? The Department of Veteran Affairs

consists of three essential branches. The Veterans Health Administration (VHA) provides health care and clinics. The Veteran Benefit Administration (VBA) provides compensations, pensions & educational benefits and the National Cemetery Administration (NCA) provides national and state cemeteries, headstones and markers. Listed below are links to VA organizations in Oklahoma <http://www.va.gov/directory/guide/state.asp?dnum=ALL&STATE=OK>.

Veteran service organizations (VSO's) are private non-profit groups that advocate on the behalf of veterans. Some VSOs are "chartered", which means they are federally chartered and/or recognized or approved by the VA Secretary for purposes of preparation, presentation, and prosecution of claims under laws administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs. Chartered VSO's such as the American Legion have accredited service officers that can assist participants with filing claims through the VA and much more. Each VSO may have a particular area of expertise. Listed below are links to Veteran Service Organizations in Oklahoma [http://www.ok.gov/odva/Related\\_Links/Veterans\\_Service\\_Organizations/index.html](http://www.ok.gov/odva/Related_Links/Veterans_Service_Organizations/index.html).

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## VJO's & VSR's

The purpose of the Veterans Justice Outreach (VJO) Program is to avoid the unnecessary criminalization of mental illness and extended incarceration among Veterans by ensuring that eligible justice-involved Veterans have timely access to VHA services as clinically indicated. Veterans' Justice Outreach Specialists (VJO's) are responsible for direct outreach, assessment, and case management for justice-involved Veterans in local courts and jails, and liaison with local justice system partners. The VJO program targets Veterans with known or suspected service related mental health conditions that demonstrate some correlation to their legal issue. Oklahoma's VJO'S can be found at this site: <http://www.va.gov/homeless/vjo.asp#contacts>. The only correction to this list is OKC's VA center, who's acting VJO is

Amber Ward [amber.ward@va.gov](mailto:amber.ward@va.gov) in lieu of Joe Dudley.

Veterans Service Representatives (VSR's) or (Veteran Service Officers) are located by their respective state/city in Veteran Service Organizations. VSR's know their way around the VA system and can assist veterans and their families in a number of ways. VSR's may assist participants with compensation/pensions, medical care, military records, grave markers and veteran home loans. Some Veteran Service Organizations may also have dedicated funds to assist with temporary shelter/utilities, food/health supplies, medical/dental, job placement, counseling, and transportation. Veteran Service Organizations are listed in article 1, and linked for your county Veteran Service Representative in article 3.





## ODMHSAS

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We are on the web!

[http://www.ok.gov/odmhsas/  
Substance\\_Abuse/  
Oklahoma\\_Drug\\_and\\_Mental  
Health\\_Courts/index.html](http://www.ok.gov/odmhsas/Substance_Abuse/Oklahoma_Drug_and_Mental_Health_Courts/index.html)

Tel: 405 522 8020  
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## Orbit Point: Q & A

**Q:** Would I need to establish a separate docket to better support participants that are veterans in my drug court program?

**A:** There is no need to reinvent the wheel. Start small. Coordinating drug court programs concurrently to support your veterans can work great. Think of your veterans as participants with extra options. Separate dockets can seem isolating to participants without supporting participants. Consider a separate docket as an optional process, unless your program can benefit independently from a separate docket or court procedures.

## HUD: Heads-Up-Display

Do you know how to reach the veteran service representative of your county?

Click Here: Veteran Service Rep

<http://www.ok.gov/odva/>

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**Did you know:** Asking “ Have you ever served in the United States Armed forces?” can help identify veterans. Research has shown younger veterans are unaccustomed with the term. “veteran.



“I am proud to be on board with ODHMSAS, and to also have the opportunity to support veterans throughout the state of Oklahoma. I'm excited to work with you all to better serve your participants in the future. Please feel welcome to contact me with any inquires, questions, or your suggested topics for this quarterly newsletter.”

## My Bio

Kerry Mucker II is the Specialty Courts Veterans Liaison for the Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services. Prior to starting with ODMHSAS, Kerry served 4 years active duty in the United States Air Force, where he received Airman of the Year honors, traveled the world under Air Combat Command, and saw the world's best armed forces from 2003-2007. Returning to Oklahoma, Kerry received a Bachelor's of Science degree in Family Studies &

Gerontology from Southern Nazarene University, his graduate degree from the University of Oklahoma in Human Relations with a minor in Organizational Behavior, and a certification in Diversity & Development. Kerry is also certified by the attorney general as a Batterer's Intervention Facilitator, and is certified as a Recognizing Child Abuse Trainer as well. Kerry is married and has a daughter, who loves to watch her dad coach and play basketball.

