



## PRESS RELEASE

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### Office of Veterans Affairs announces completion of the Alaska Veterans Needs Assessment

**ANCHORAGE, Alaska** – The Department of Military & Veterans Affairs is proud to announce the completion of the Alaska Veterans Needs Assessment, which details what issues are most important to our state’s veterans.

This assessment was accomplished by the University of Alaska Anchorage - Institute of Social and Economic Research and released this month. ISER conducted this needs assessment of Alaska veterans starting in the spring of 2014. Its goal was to identify and measure areas for improvement in providing services and determining the methods to achieve improvement. Their approach consisted of three methods:

- Survey of 2,950 Alaska veterans using a list of veterans who have requested veteran designation on their driver’s license.
- Focus groups: one consisting of women and one of disable veterans.
- Key information interviews with individuals responsible for helping veterans navigate the benefits available to them.

The findings were far ranging. One of the most important lessons was the difference in needs across the age groups. Younger veterans were concerned about education and employment while the older counterparts valued health care and navigating the application process as most important to them. The four most claimed benefits by veterans were health care, disability compensation, home loans and education/training.

“This survey is a true reflection of Alaska veterans’ needs, and with the completion of the assessment, we have a better picture of the services we need to concentrate on for those members who are in our state,” said Verdie Bowen, director of the State of Alaska Office of Veterans Affairs.

“The good news is we are going in the right direction with the services and assistance we are already providing to our veterans,” Bowen added. “This assessment provides us a road map to the future so we know how to continue serving our veterans in the most helpful and beneficial way. I want to thank each veteran who took the time to answer the questions and participate in the groups because this has addressed their needs and will lay the foundation for benefits into the future.”

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The Alaska Veterans Needs Assessment can be found at:

[http://www.iser.uaa.alaska.edu/Publications/2015\\_10-VeteransNeedsAssessment.pdf](http://www.iser.uaa.alaska.edu/Publications/2015_10-VeteransNeedsAssessment.pdf)

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