

**Representative Jack McFarland**  
Chair



**Representative Jerome Zeringue**  
Vice-Chair

# **Fiscal Year 2027 Executive Budget Review**

# **DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS**

**House Committee on Appropriations**  
**House Fiscal Division**

March 4, 2026

**Budget Analyst: Paige Philyaw**

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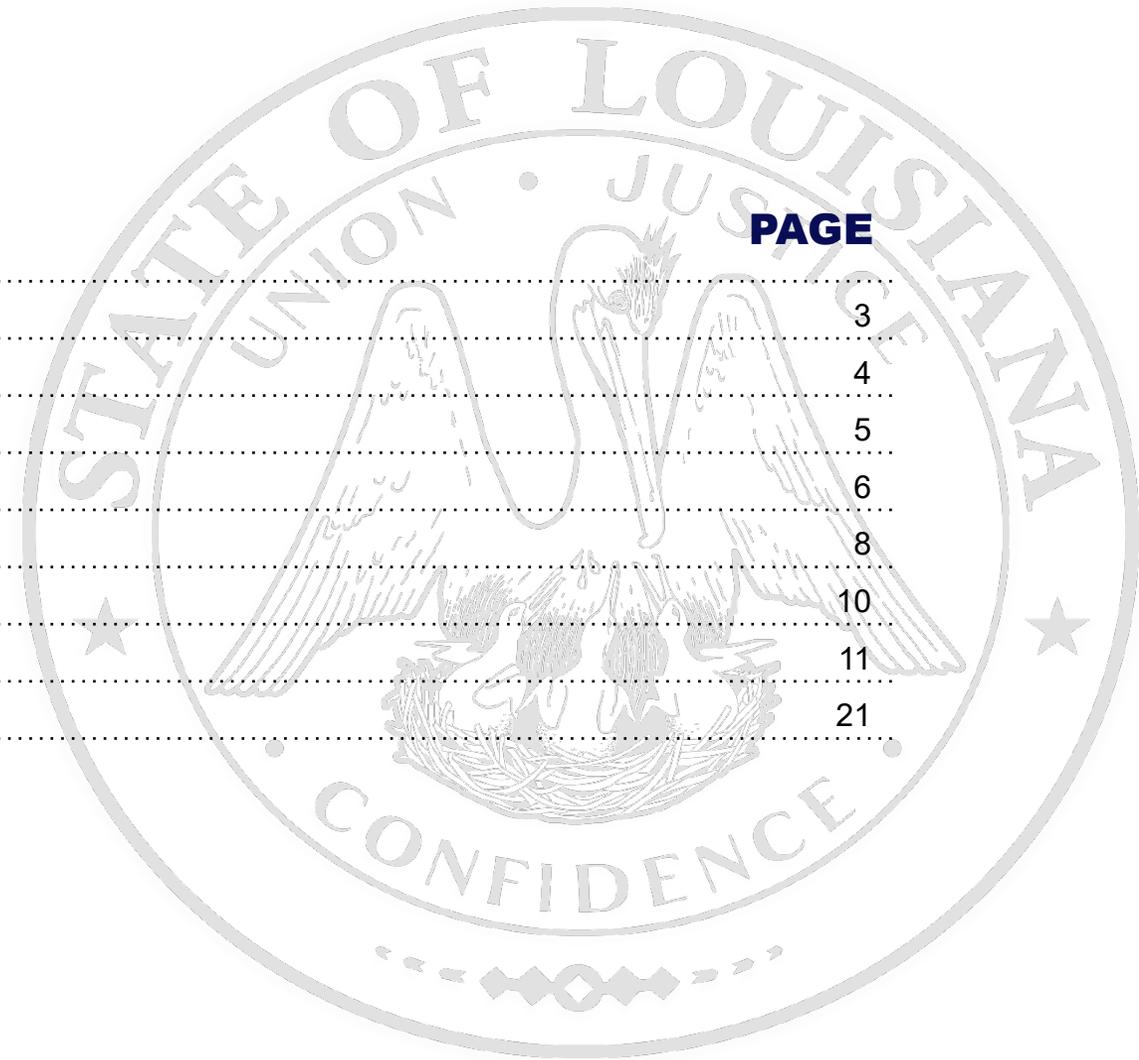
All data and figures were obtained from the governor's Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Executive Budget and Supporting Documents provided by the Office of Planning and Budget within the Division of Administration along with House Bill 1 of the 2026 Regular Session, unless otherwise noted.

<https://www.doa.la.gov/doa/opb/budget-documents/>

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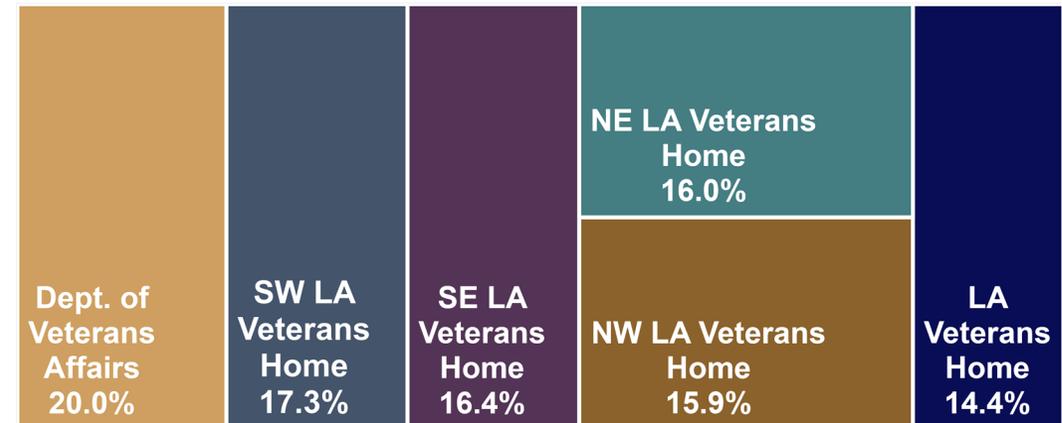
# FY 27 BUDGET RECOMMENDATION

## Total Funding = \$105,155,476

| Means of Finance      |           |                    |
|-----------------------|-----------|--------------------|
| State General Fund    | \$        | 18,091,600         |
| Interagency Transfers |           | 2,636,505          |
| Fees & Self-generated |           | 15,212,648         |
| Statutory Dedications |           | 215,528            |
| Federal Funds         |           | 68,999,195         |
| <b>Total</b>          | <b>\$</b> | <b>105,155,476</b> |



| Program Funding & Authorized Positions |           |                    |                  |
|--|-----------|--------------------|------------------|
|  |           | <i>Amount</i>      | <i>Positions</i> |
| Dept. of Veterans Affairs              | \$        | 21,021,006         | 127              |
| Louisiana Veterans Home                |           | 15,127,157         | 120              |
| Northeast La Veterans Home             |           | 16,814,184         | 148              |
| Southwest La Veterans Home             |           | 18,201,772         | 153              |
| Northwest La Veterans Home             |           | 16,728,121         | 148              |
| Southeast La Veterans Home             |           | 17,263,236         | 149              |
| <b>Total</b>                           | <b>\$</b> | <b>105,155,476</b> | <b>845</b>       |



# SOURCES OF FUNDING

| <b>State General Fund</b><br><b>\$18.1 M</b>   | <b>Interagency Transfers</b><br><b>\$2.6 M</b>  | <b>Self-generated Revenue</b><br><b>\$15.2 M</b>  | <b>Statutory Dedications</b><br><b>\$215,528</b>  | <b>Federal Funds</b><br><b>\$69 M</b>   |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| <p>The chief operating fund of the State recognized by the Revenue Estimating Conference from various taxes, licenses, fees, and other revenue sources except for those identified as other means of financing</p> | <p>Funding is derived from the following transfers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$1.8 M from the various Veterans Homes into the main agency for support services</li> <li>• \$718,574 from the various Veterans Home towards contribution for an internal auditor position that services all the homes</li> </ul> | <p>Revenues derived from the following sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$13.6 M from the Veterans Homes, funds are derived from the residents' ability to pay for part of their care and from employees and visitors purchasing meal tickets</li> <li>• \$1.5 M from the Contact Assistance Program, funds are derived from each parish's contribution towards providing a veterans service office</li> </ul> | <p>Funding is derived from the Louisiana Military Family Assistance Fund it collects donations from businesses and citizens throughout Louisiana, including via an individual or a corporate state income tax check-off</p> | <p>Federal funding derived from the following sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$64.5 M from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs for patient care and reimbursement of various services and expenses</li> <li>• \$2.8 M from the U.S. Department of Health &amp; Human Resources for Medicare and Medicaid Services</li> </ul> |

# FUNDING COMPARISON

| Means of Finance | FY 25 Actual Expenditures | FY 26 Existing Operating Budget 12/1/25 | FY 27 HB1 Budget      | Change Existing Operating Budget to HB1 |             | Change Actual Expenditures to HB1 |              |
|------------------|---------------------------|---|-----------------------|---|-------------|-----------------------------------|--------------|
| SGF              | \$ 16,678,010             | \$ 16,901,392                           | \$ 18,091,600         | \$ 1,190,208                            | 7.0%        | \$ 1,413,590                      | 8.5%         |
| IAT              | 2,409,308                 | 2,513,238                               | 2,636,505             | 123,267                                 | 4.9%        | 227,197                           | 9.4%         |
| FSGR             | 14,031,724                | 15,068,283                              | 15,212,648            | 144,365                                 | 1.0%        | 1,180,924                         | 8.4%         |
| Stat Ded         | 62,083                    | 215,528                                 | 215,528               | 0                                       | 0.0%        | 153,445                           | 247.2%       |
| Federal          | 60,873,758                | 67,387,546                              | 68,999,195            | 1,611,649                               | 2.4%        | 8,125,437                         | 13.3%        |
| <b>Total</b>     | <b>\$ 94,054,883</b>      | <b>\$ 102,085,987</b>                   | <b>\$ 105,155,476</b> | <b>\$ 3,069,489</b>                     | <b>3.0%</b> | <b>\$ 11,100,593</b>              | <b>11.8%</b> |

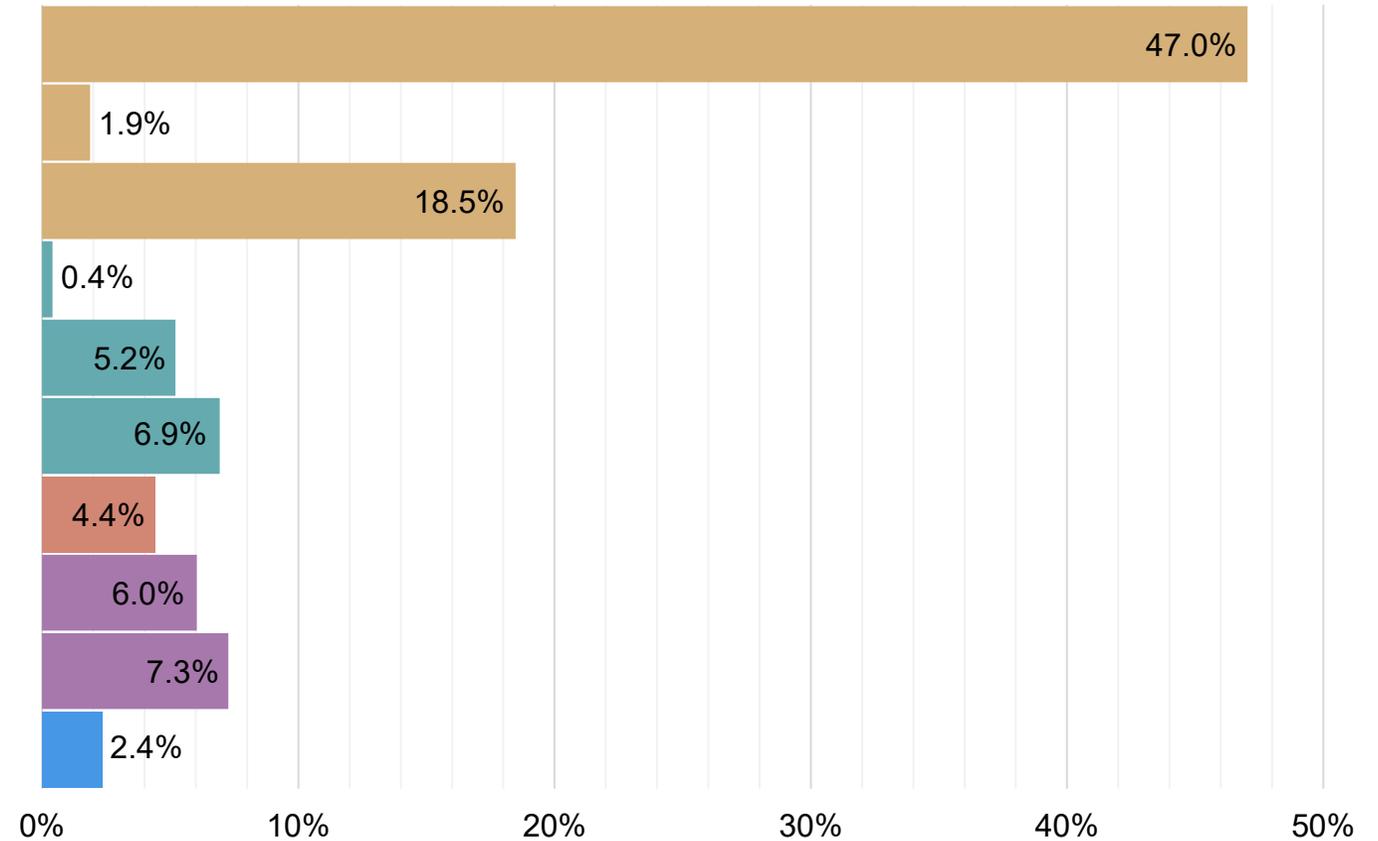
## Significant funding changes compared to the FY 26 Existing Operating Budget

| State General Fund   | Interagency Transfers  | Fees & Self-generated   | Federal Funds   |
|--|--|---|---|
| <p>\$1.2 M net increase due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$1 M increase in various standard statewide adjustments</li> <li>\$255,729 increase for a workload adjustment</li> <li>(\$66,483) decrease for means of finance swap with Interagency Transfers, Fees &amp; Self-generated, &amp; Federal funds</li> </ul> | <p>\$123,267 net increase due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$277,091 increase from the Lieutenant Governor's Office</li> <li>(\$153,824) decrease for a means of finance swap with State General Fund, Fees &amp; Self-generated, &amp; Federal funds</li> </ul> | <p>\$144,365 net increase due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$110,951 increase to align with historical collections</li> <li>\$69,717 increase for a means of finance swap with State General Fund, Interagency Transfers, &amp; Federal funds</li> <li>(\$36,303) decrease in various standard statewide adjustments</li> </ul> | <p>\$1.6 M increase due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$1.3 M increase in various standard statewide adjustments</li> <li>\$150,590 for a means of financing swap with State General Fund, Interagency Transfers, &amp; Fees &amp; Self-generated</li> <li>\$124,300 increase for a workload adjustment</li> </ul> |

# FY 27 EXPENDITURE RECOMMENDATION

## Total Budget = \$105,155,476

| Expenditure Category  |           |                    |
|-----------------------|-----------|--------------------|
| Salaries              | \$        | 49,468,775         |
| Other Compensation    |           | 1,969,765          |
| Related Benefits      |           | 19,433,480         |
| Travel                |           | 428,660            |
| Operating Services    |           | 5,473,564          |
| Supplies              |           | 7,292,241          |
| Professional Services |           | 4,618,555          |
| Other Charges         |           | 6,342,631          |
| Interagency Transfers |           | 7,644,503          |
| Acquisitions/Repairs  |           | 2,483,302          |
| <b>Total</b>          | <b>\$</b> | <b>105,155,476</b> |



# OTHER CHARGES / INTERAGENCY TRANSFERS

## Other Charges

| Amount              | Description   |
|---------------------|---|
| \$ 3,850,000        | Louisiana National Guard Disability Claims  |
| 1,499,600           | "The Boot" initiative to recruit and retain transitioning military and veterans from across the United States including Louisiana |
| 480,000             | LaVet Corps   |
| 244,900             | Indigent Burials and Burial Equity  |
| 215,528             | Louisiana Military Assistance Fund  |
| 52,603              | Military Honors Veterans Medals   |
| <b>\$ 6,342,631</b> | <b>Total Other Charges</b>  |

## Interagency Transfers

| Amount              | Description                                    |
|---------------------|--|
| \$ 2,558,190        | Transfers within the department for services   |
| 2,531,477           | Office of Technology Services (OTS)            |
| 1,698,690           | Office of Risk Management (ORM)                |
| 300,278             | Civil Service Fees                             |
| 145,553             | Transfers to other State Agencies for services |
| 135,401             | Rent in State-owned Buildings                  |
| 127,125             | Legislative Auditor Fees                       |
| 62,185              | Office of State Procurement (OSP)              |
| 46,608              | Uniform Payroll System (UPS)                   |
| 21,243              | Louisiana Property Assistance Agency           |
| 15,368              | Capitol Park Security Fees                     |
| 2,385               | State Treasury Fees                            |
| <b>\$ 7,644,503</b> | <b>Total Interagency Transfers</b>             |

# EXPENDITURE COMPARISON

| Expenditure Category  | FY 25 Actual Expenditures | FY 26 Existing Operating Budget 12/1/25 | FY 27 HB1 Budget      | Change Existing Operating Budget to HB1 |             | Change Actual Expenditures to HB1 |              |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|---|-----------------------|---|-------------|-----------------------------------|--------------|
| Salaries              | \$ 45,764,173             | \$ 47,837,616                           | \$ 49,468,775         | \$ 1,631,159                            | 3.4%        | \$ 3,704,602                      | 8.1%         |
| Other Compensation    | 2,006,532                 | 1,611,066                               | 1,969,765             | 358,699                                 | 22.3%       | (36,767)                          | (1.8%)       |
| Related Benefits      | 17,302,535                | 19,133,924                              | 19,433,480            | 299,556                                 | 1.6%        | 2,130,945                         | 12.3%        |
| Travel                | 321,418                   | 308,026                                 | 428,660               | 120,634                                 | 39.2%       | 107,242                           | 33.4%        |
| Operating Services    | 4,721,701                 | 6,095,913                               | 5,473,564             | (622,349)                               | (10.2%)     | 751,863                           | 15.9%        |
| Supplies              | 6,620,940                 | 6,930,731                               | 7,292,241             | 361,510                                 | 5.2%        | 671,301                           | 10.1%        |
| Professional Services | 3,458,887                 | 4,251,040                               | 4,618,555             | 367,515                                 | 8.6%        | 1,159,668                         | 33.5%        |
| Other Charges         | 5,282,571                 | 5,902,889                               | 6,342,631             | 439,742                                 | 7.4%        | 1,060,060                         | 20.1%        |
| Interagency Transfers | 7,252,742                 | 7,488,589                               | 7,644,503             | 155,914                                 | 2.1%        | 391,761                           | 5.4%         |
| Acquisitions/Repairs  | 1,323,384                 | 2,526,193                               | 2,483,302             | (42,891)                                | (1.7%)      | 1,159,918                         | 87.6%        |
| <b>Total</b>          | <b>\$ 94,054,883</b>      | <b>\$ 102,085,987</b>                   | <b>\$ 105,155,476</b> | <b>\$ 3,069,489</b>                     | <b>3.0%</b> | <b>\$ 11,100,593</b>              | <b>11.8%</b> |

# SIGNIFICANT EXPENDITURE CHANGES

*Compared to the FY 26 Existing Operating Budget*

| Personnel Services  | Professional Services  | IAT/Other Charges  |
|---|--|--|
| <p>\$2.3 M increase due to various standard statewide adjustments to salaries including attrition, benefits, and retirement changes</p> | <p>\$367,515 increase due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$326,718 increase due to realignment of expenditure categories from IAT for a contract with Office of Technology Services (OTS)</li> <li>• \$45,602 increase for realignment with anticipated expenditures</li> <li>• (\$4,805) decrease due to the removal of funding carried into FY 26 that is no longer needed in FY 27</li> </ul> | <p>\$595,656 net increase due to items such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$532,000 increase due to standard statewide adjustments to Office of Technology Services (OTS) fees, risk management, UPS fees, and capitol park security</li> <li>• \$255,729 increase in funding to support benefit claims for the Louisiana National Guard</li> <li>• \$184,013 increase for an AmeriCorps grant with the Lieutenant Governor's Office for navigator services</li> <li>• (\$326,718) decrease related to an alignment of expenditure categories to professional services for a contract with Office of Technology Services (OTS)</li> </ul> |

# DEPARTMENT CONTACTS



**Charlton Meginley**  
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**Dr. Jerome Buller**  
*Deputy Secretary*  
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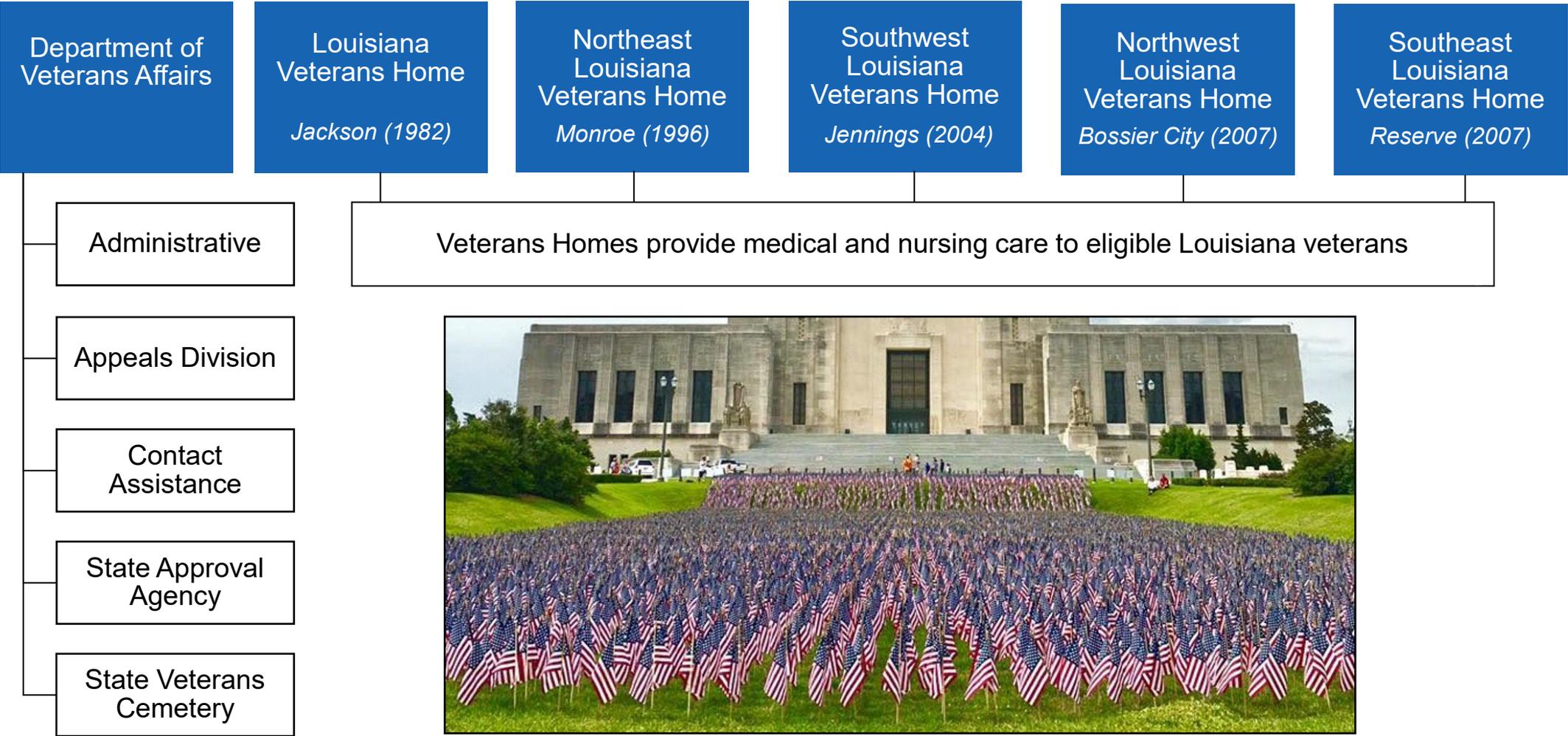
**Sonya LaCasse**  
*Chief Financial Officer*  
Sonya.LaCasse@vetaffairs.la.gov

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The seal of the State of Louisiana is a large, faint watermark in the background. It features a central figure of a pelican feeding its young in a nest, surrounded by the text "STATE OF LOUISIANA" at the top, "UNION • JUSTICE" on the sides, and "CONFIDENCE" at the bottom. A star is visible on the right side of the seal.

# General Department Information

# DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATION



# DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

## Administration Program

### Office of the Secretary

- Handles the management for the activities, performance, and overall operation for the Department of Veterans Affairs
- **Military Family Assistance Fund** - addresses financial hardships of qualified veterans, Louisiana National Guardsmen, and Reservists and their dependents by paying for a variety of items such as food, housing, medical expenses, auto repair, and more



***Mission:** To provide comprehensive care and quality service to Louisiana's Veterans, and their families, with regard to health care, education, disability benefits, long-term care, and burial honors*

### Human Resources

- Maintains all personnel records, regulates position classification, pay administration, hiring and firing, and employee relations for the department

### Accounting and Purchasing

- Plans, prepares, and executes annual department operating budgets, and is responsible for requesting funds. It also maintains and controls financial records of receipts and disbursements

### Training and Information

- Provides specialized classroom and field training to all newly appointed Veterans Assistance Counselors

# DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

## Appeals Division, Contact Assistance, and State Approval Agency Programs

### Appeals Division

- Represents veterans and/or their dependents on claims for benefits to which they are entitled before rating boards of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and its Board of Vet Appeals
- Represents and advocates for veterans before all agencies administering programs that affect veterans

### Contact Assistance

- Parish offices with veterans assistance counselors help process and develop claims to determine a veteran's eligibility for benefits
- Assists veterans and their families with various problems such as medical services, compensation, pension programs, education, home loans, employment, insurance, and additional benefits when a patient is in a nursing home

### State Approval Agency

- Approves, supervises, and provides technical assistance to the institutions and training establishments for veterans
- Makes supervisory visits to all active schools, institutions of higher learning, non-college degree programs, job training programs and flight schools to ensure that the approved institutions are maintaining the approval criteria as approved and as set out in the Operation Plan and the Veterans Administration contract
- Conducts inspection visits on new schools seeking approval, and additional visits at the request of Veterans Affairs



# DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

## Veterans Homes and Cemeteries

### Veterans Homes

- Provides nursing care to eligible veterans in five veteran nursing homes
- Provides a variety of services including long-and short-term care, rehabilitative therapies, Alzheimer's care, skilled nursing, and centralized pharmacy services

### Veterans Cemeteries

- The department constructs, operates, and maintains veterans cemeteries throughout Louisiana
- Available for eligible veterans, their spouses, and dependent children (at no charge for veteran burials)

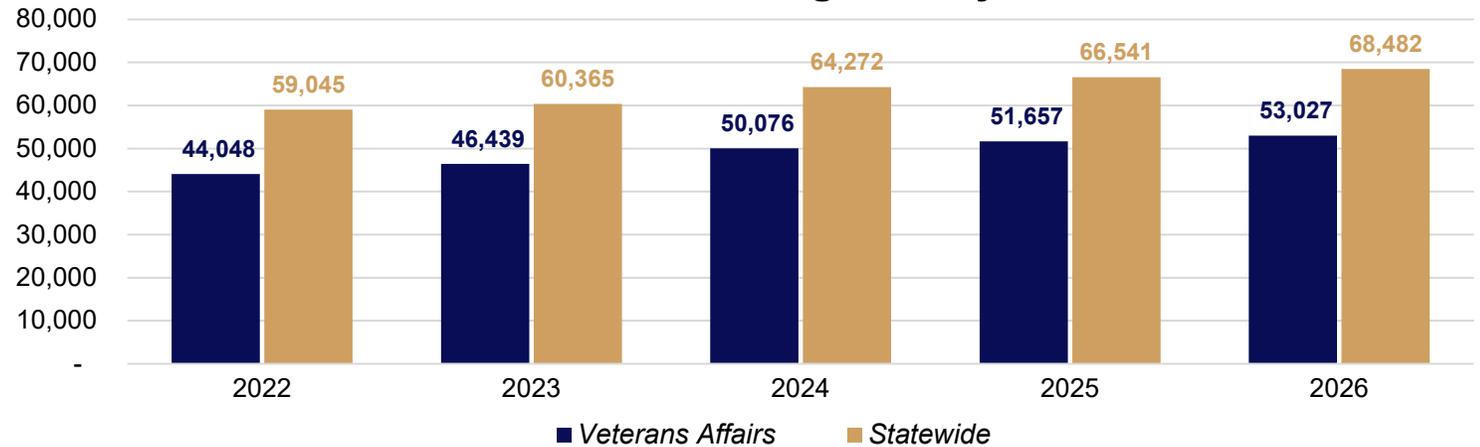


# PERSONNEL INFORMATION

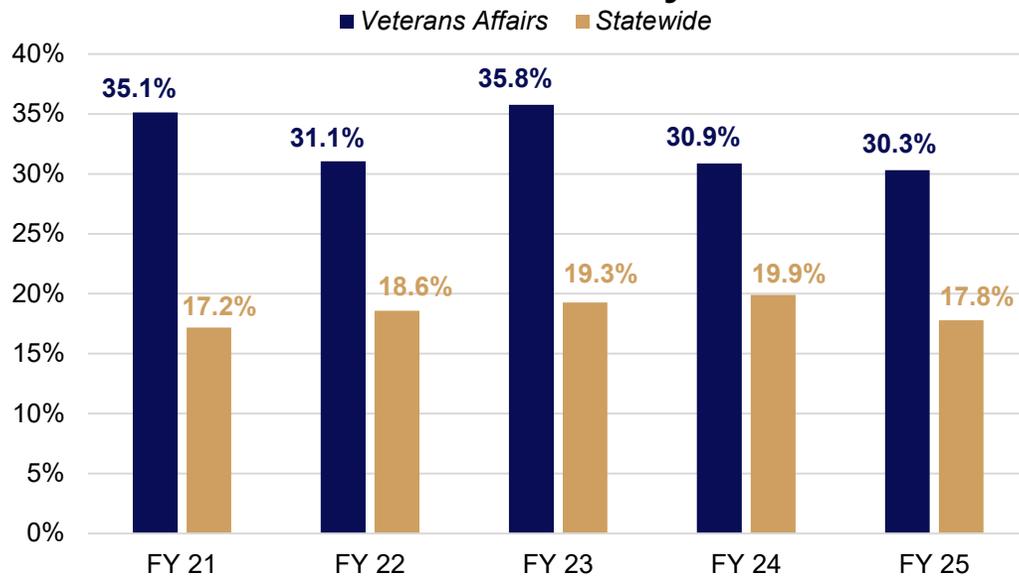
## FY 2027 Recommended Positions

|     |   |
|-----|---|
| 845 | Total Authorized T.O. Positions<br>(838 Classified, 7 Unclassified) |
| 0   | Authorized Other Charges Positions                                  |
| 4   | Non-T.O. FTE Positions  |
| 81  | Vacant Positions (December 3, 2025)                                 |

## Historical Average Salary



## Turnover History

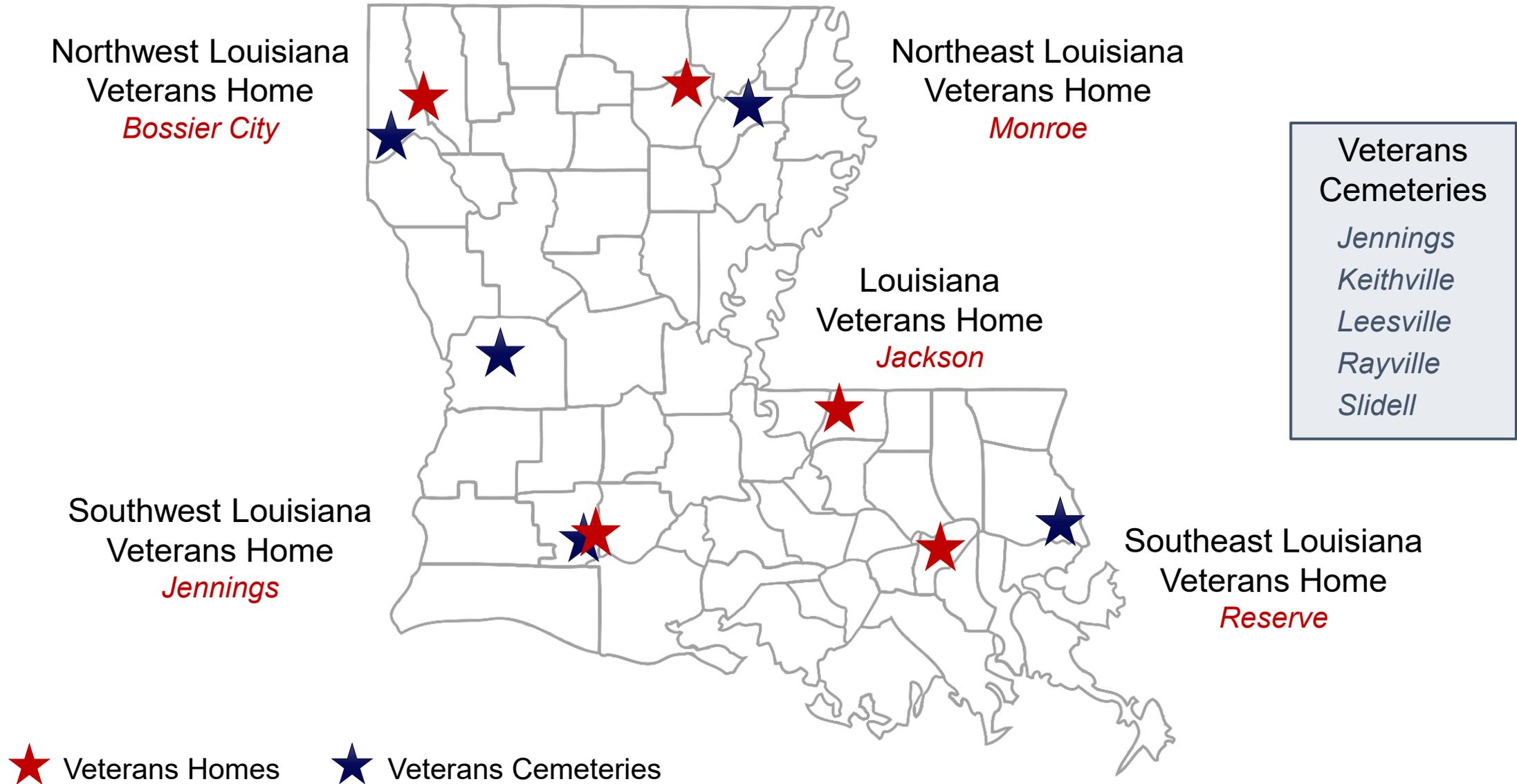


## Top Positions Vacated FY 2025

| Position                     | Number of Employees | Separations | Turnover Rate |
|------------------------------|---------------------|-------------|---------------|
| Nursing Assistant II         | 158                 | 82          | 51.9%         |
| Nursing Assistant I          | 19                  | 30          | 157.9%        |
| Licensed Practical Nurse III | 96                  | 20          | 20.8%         |
| Food Services Specialist III | 32                  | 11          | 34.4%         |
| Custodian II                 | 22                  | 10          | 45.5%         |

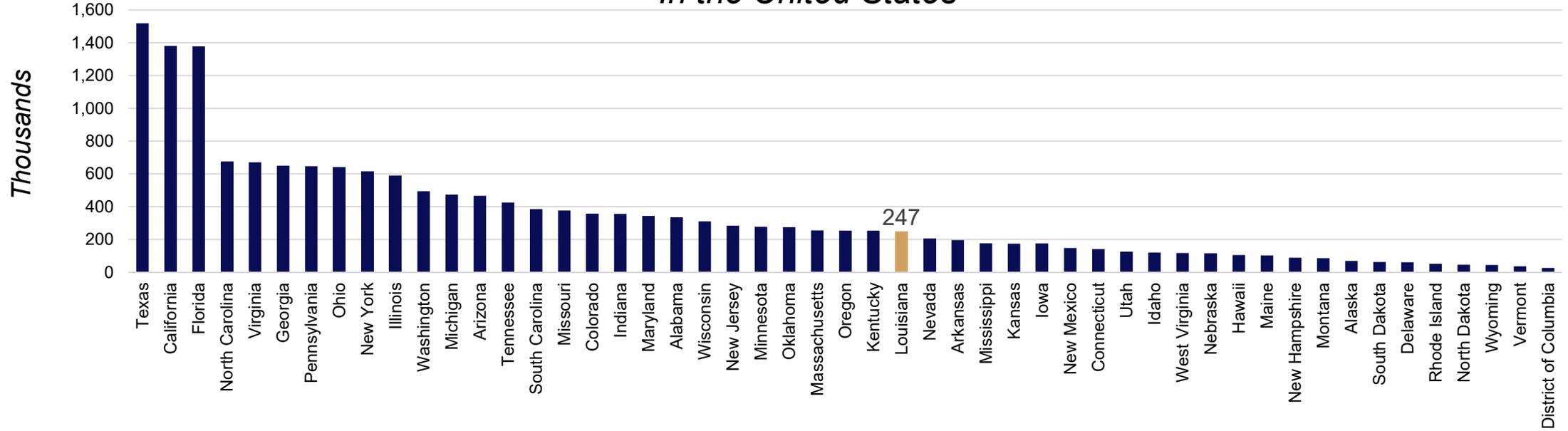
Source: Department of Civil Service

# VETERANS HOMES AND CEMETERY LOCATIONS

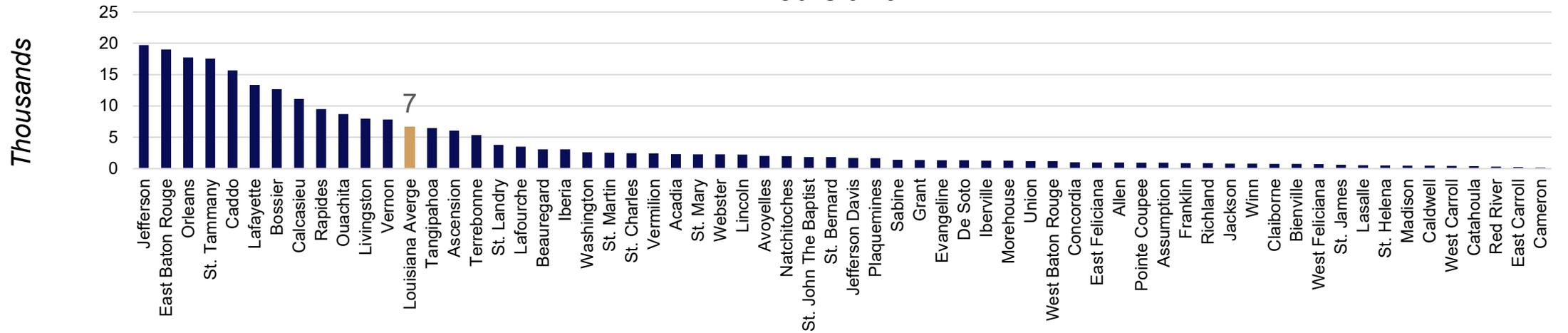


# ESTIMATED NUMBER OF VETERANS

## In the United States



## In Louisiana



Source: Data from the National Center for Veterans Analysis and Statistics (FY 25), Office of Enterprise Integration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and LA Department of Veterans Affairs

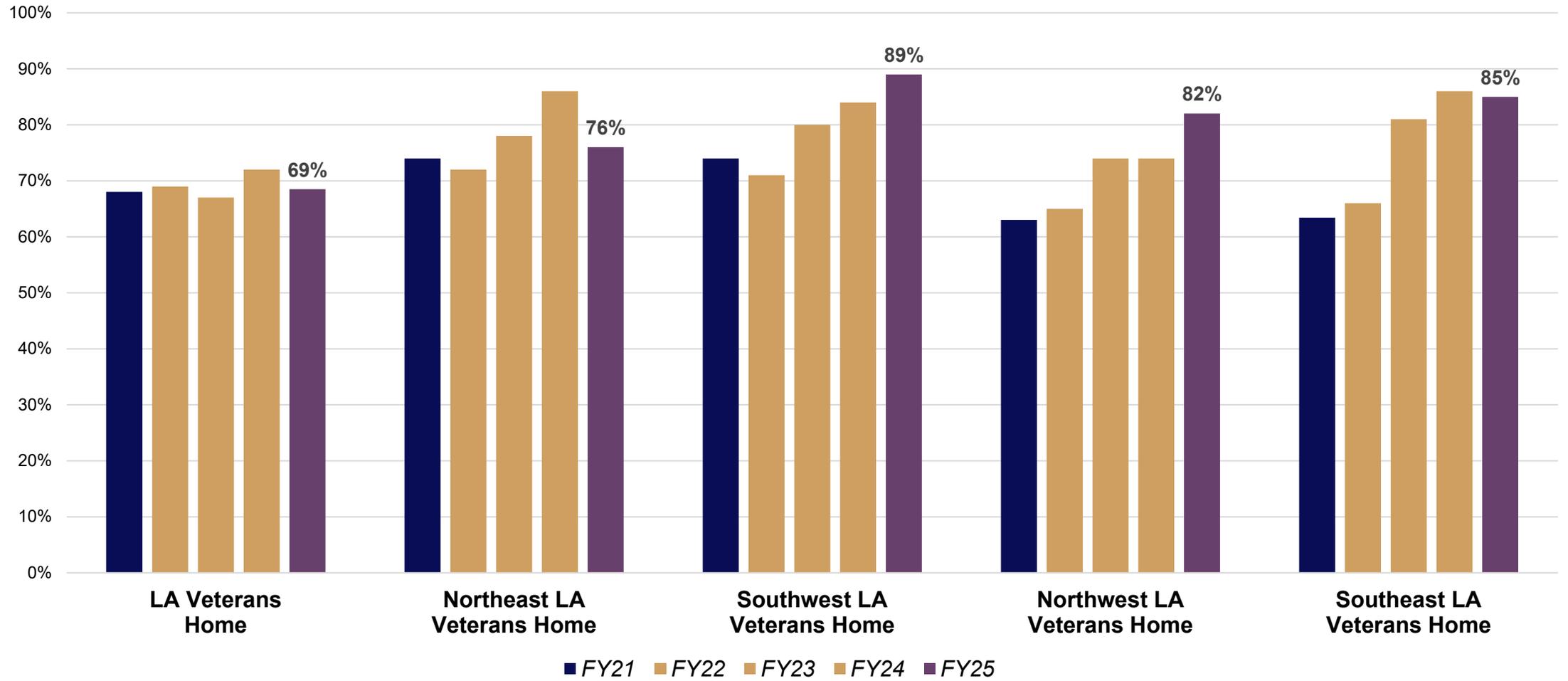
# VETERANS HOME AVERAGE COST

## Five-year historical averages of the five state run veterans homes

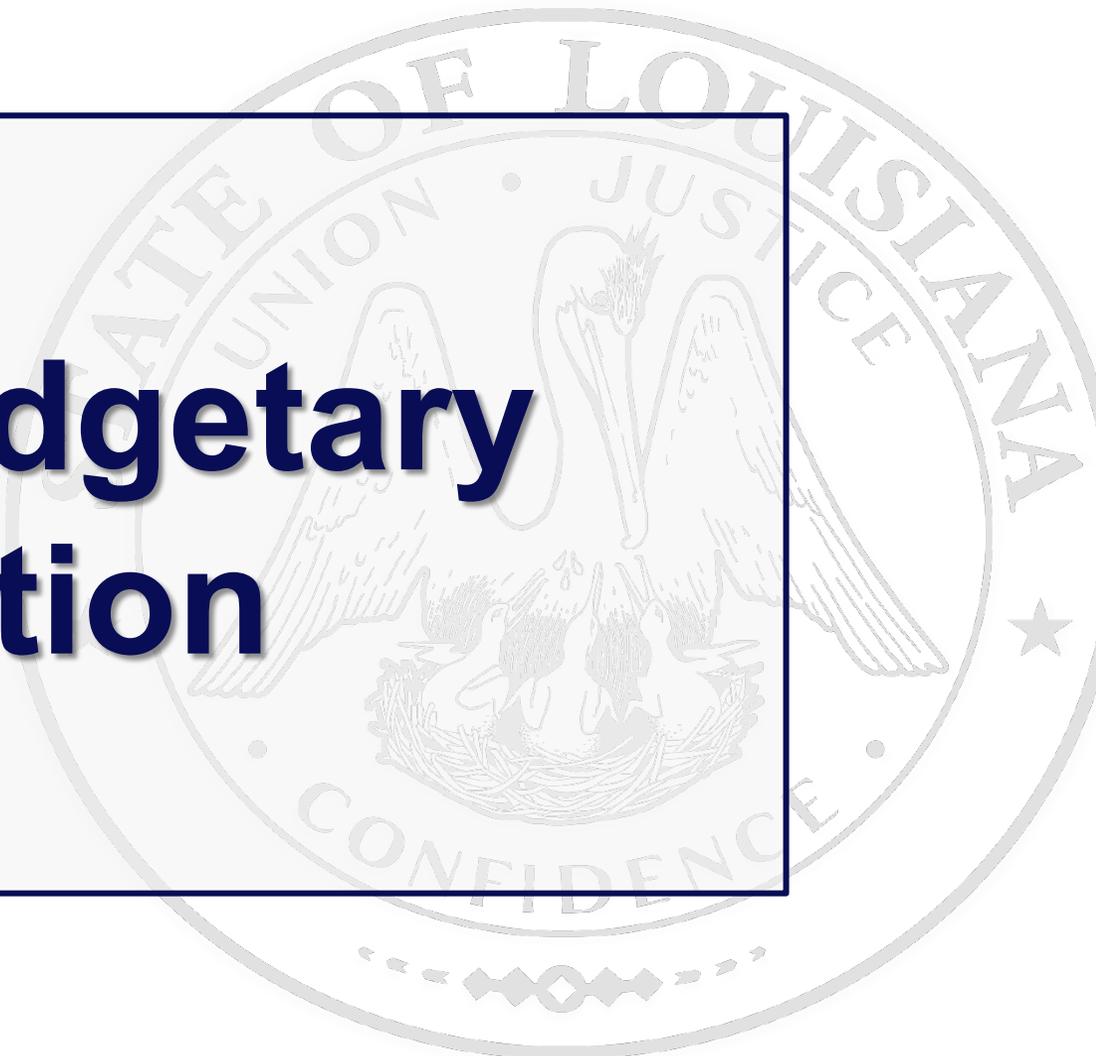
| Averages                  | FY 21     | FY 22     | FY 23     | FY 24     | FY 25     |
|---------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Daily Census              | 103       | 103       | 114       | 120       | 122       |
| Occupancy Rate            | 68%       | 69%       | 76%       | 80%       | 80%       |
| Cost per Patient per Day  | \$313     | \$312     | \$315     | \$339     | \$348     |
| Cost per Patient per Year | \$114,245 | \$113,880 | \$114,975 | \$123,826 | \$127,014 |

Source: Average calculations based on the Office of Planning and Budget – Budget Supporting Documents and Performance Indicators

# VETERANS HOMES OCCUPANCY RATES



Source: Office of Planning and Budget – Budget Supporting Documents and Louisiana Performance Accountability System (LaPAS)

The seal of the State of Louisiana is visible in the background, featuring a pelican feeding its young in a nest, surrounded by the text "STATE OF LOUISIANA", "UNION • JUSTICE", and "CONFIDENCE".

# General Budgetary Information

# FY 26 EXISTING OPERATING BUDGET

The FY 2025-26 Existing Operating Budget (EOB) was frozen on December 1, 2025. This point-in-time reference is used in both the Executive Budget and the General Appropriations Bill.

| Means of Finance              | Appropriation         | Mid-Year Adjustments | Existing Operating Budget |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>General Fund</b>           | \$ 16,868,424         | \$ 32,968            | \$ 16,901,392             |
| <b>Interagency Transfers</b>  | 2,513,238             | 0                    | 2,513,238                 |
| <b>Self-generated Revenue</b> | 15,026,428            | 41,855               | 15,068,283                |
| <b>Statutory Dedications</b>  | 215,528               | 0                    | 215,528                   |
| <b>Federal</b>                | 67,299,452            | 88,094               | 67,387,546                |
| <b>Total</b>                  | <b>\$ 101,923,070</b> | <b>\$ 162,917</b>    | <b>\$ 102,085,987</b>     |

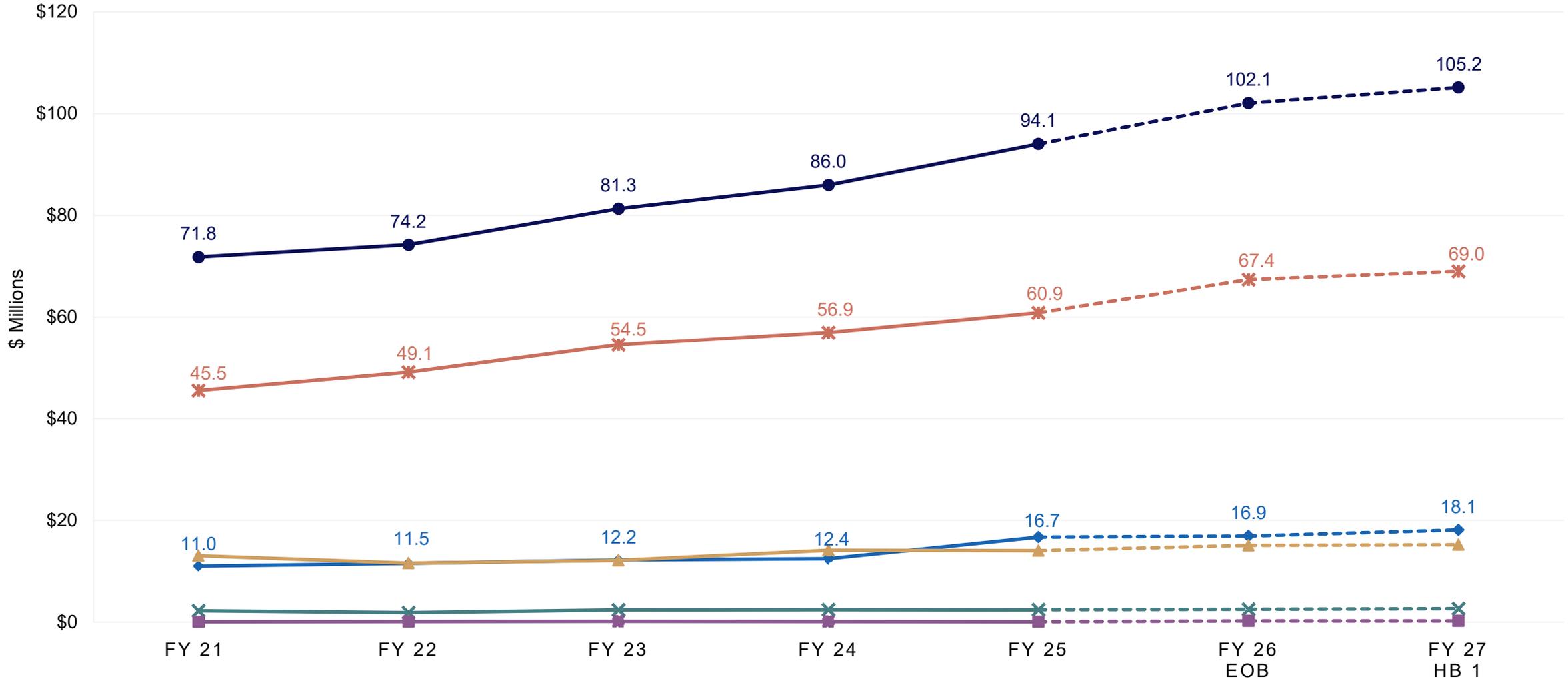
| <b>Mid-year Adjustments Summary</b> |  |   |                |                 |
|-------------------------------------|--|---|----------------|-----------------|
| <b>July</b>                         | <b>August</b>  | <b>September</b>  | <b>October</b> | <b>November</b> |
| No change                           | \$233,710<br><br>Various means of finance carried into FY 26 from the prior fiscal year for program expenses and contracts | (\$70,793)<br><br>Reversal of federal funding carried into FY 26 from prior fiscal year | No change      | No change       |

# HISTORICAL SPENDING

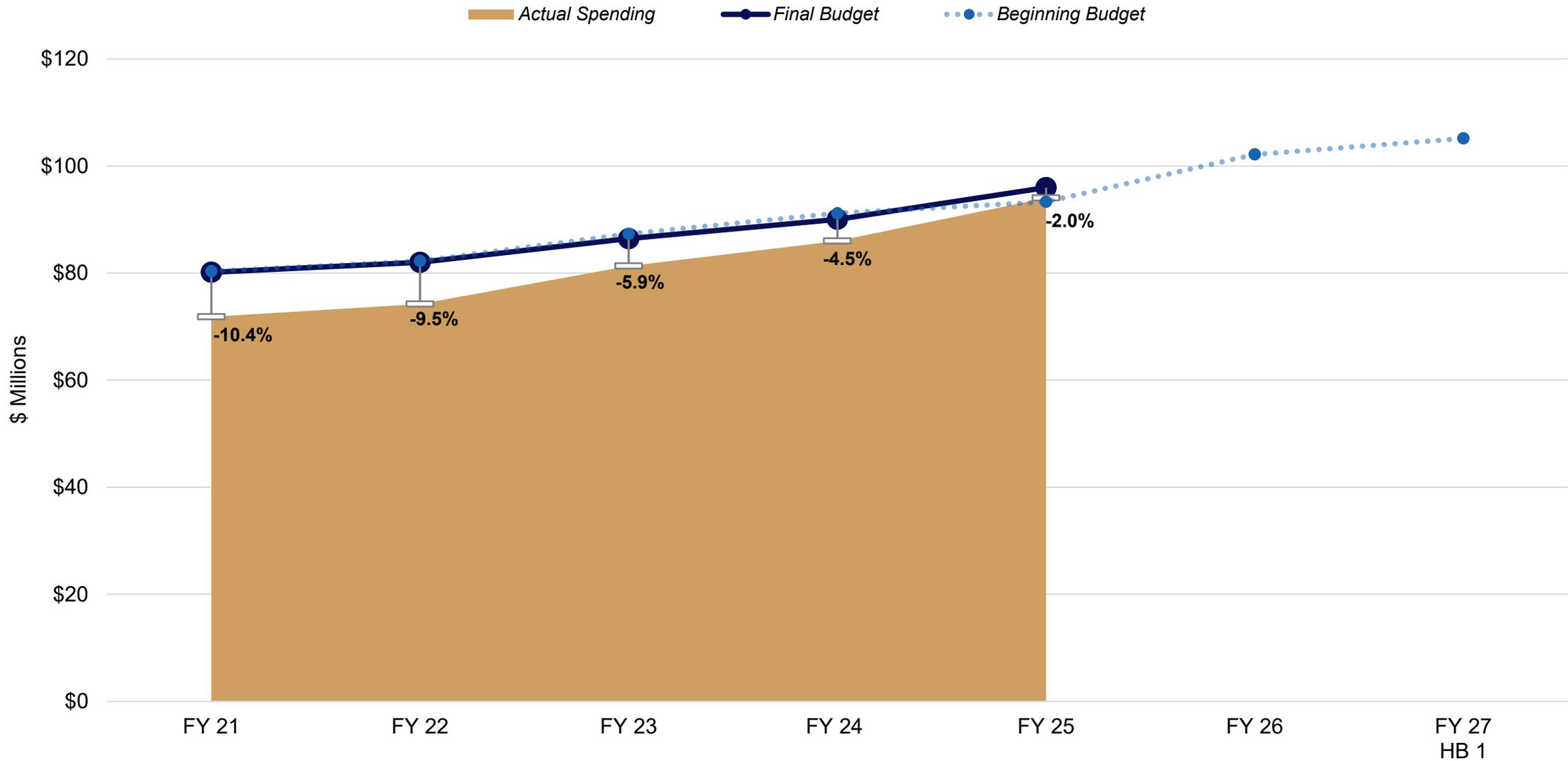
◆ State General Fund 
 ✕ Interagency Transfers 
 ▲ Fees & Self-generated 
 ■ Statutory Dedications 
 ✕ Federal Funds 
 ● Total Budget

Annual Average Spending Change from FY 21 to 25:

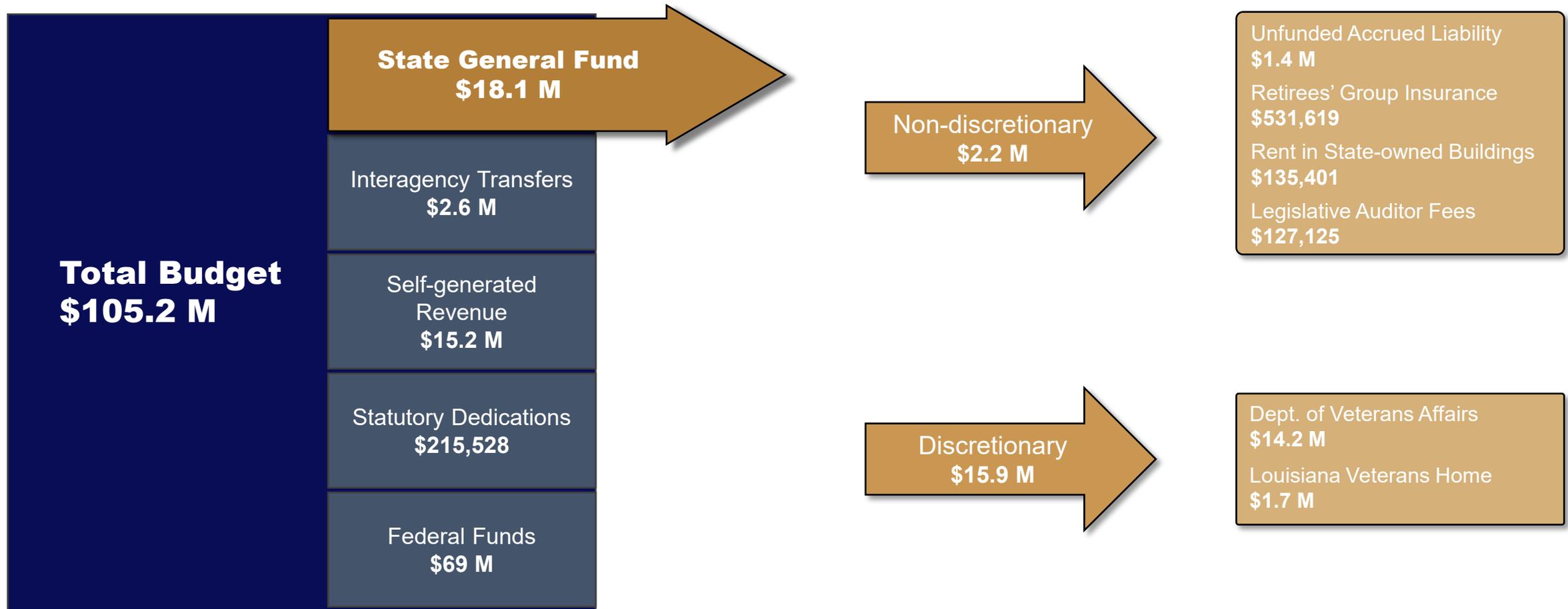
|     |         |      |      |     |    |
|-----|---------|------|------|-----|----|
| 19% | (21.5%) | 0.6% | 2.1% | 11% | 7% |
|-----|---------|------|------|-----|----|



# HISTORICAL BUDGET



# DISCRETIONARY EXPENSES



\* Figures may not add precisely due to rounding \*