



**COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF VETERANS SERVICES**

15 New Chardon Street  
One Bowdoin Square, Suite 400  
Boston, MA 02114  
TEL: (617) 210-5480 | FAX: (617) 210-5883 |  
TTY: (617) 210- 6883  
[www.mass.gov/vets](http://www.mass.gov/vets)



**MAURA T. HEALEY**  
GOVERNOR

**JON SANTIAGO, MD, MPH**  
SECRETARY

**KIMBERLEY DRISCOLL**  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

November 1, 2025

Timothy Carroll  
House Clerk  
State House, Room 145  
Boston, MA 02133

Michael D. Hurley  
Senate Clerk  
State House, Room 335  
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Clerk Carroll and Clerk Hurley,

Pursuant to Section 12 of Chapter 115A of the Massachusetts General Laws, please find enclosed the annual report from the Office of Veterans Homes and Housing within the Executive Office of Veterans Services (EOVS).

Sincerely,

Jon Santiago

CC:

Senator John Velis, Senate Chair, Joint Committee on Veterans and Federal Affairs  
Representative Joe McGonagle, House Chair, Joint Committee on Veterans and Federal Affairs

**Maura T. Healey**  
Governor  
**Kimberley Driscoll**  
Lieutenant Governor



**Jon Santiago, MD, MPH**  
Secretary

# **State of the Commonwealth's Veterans Homes**

## **November 2025**



**Executive Office of Veterans Services**  
**Office of Homes and Housing**

## **Table of Contents**

<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Overview and Current Initiatives.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Quality of Care .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Financial Status .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Uniformity of Programs .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Capital Needs .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Status of the United States Department of Veterans Affairs Accreditation .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Conclusion.....</b>	<b>12</b>

## **Introduction**

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts operates two Veterans Homes: the Massachusetts Veterans Home at Chelsea and the Massachusetts Veterans Home at Holyoke are collectively called the 'Homes' in this report.

The Homes provide long-term care and domiciliary residential services to Massachusetts veterans. Both Homes have a five-member Board of Trustees, each appointed to a seven-year term. The Homes' mission is to provide services and care to Massachusetts veterans with dignity, honor, and respect.

Pursuant to Section 12 of Chapter 115A of the Massachusetts General Laws, the Office of Veterans Homes and Housing within the Executive Office of Veterans Services (EOVS) must submit an annual report on the state of the Veterans Homes. In accordance, the report shall include the following: (i) the quality of care provided at the Homes; (ii) the financial status of the Homes; (iii) the uniformity of programs at the Homes; (iv) the capital needs of the Homes; and (v) the status of the United States Department of Veterans Affairs' accreditation.

## **Overview and Current Initiatives**

Since October 2023, the Homes have made major strides to professionalize operations, standardize practices, and improve the quality of life for residents.

The Executive Office of Veterans Services (EOVS) was established on March 1, 2023, following the implementation of Chapter 144 of the Acts of 2022. Under this Act, the two Massachusetts Veterans Homes (MVH) and their executive directors now report directly to the EOVS Secretary. The Act also redefined the responsibilities of local boards, created a statewide Veterans Council, established the Executive Office of Homes and Housing, and introduced an Ombudsperson role at each Home. Each Home must be licensed by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) and certified by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) as a long-term care facility. Both Homes have since been licensed by DPH and are managed by experienced, licensed nursing home administrators. In 2024, veterans and staff at the Chelsea Home moved into a new facility, and a new facility in Holyoke is scheduled to open in 2026.

The Homes have further professionalized operations by implementing an Electronic Medical Record (EMR) system, which enhances care coordination and reduces administrative burden. Beyond operational efficiency, the EMR strengthens care quality through improved documentation, communication, oversight, and metric-based data collection. The EMR was implemented at the Holyoke Home in September 2024 and at Chelsea in November 2024.

Another key initiative is a comprehensive review of all policies and procedures at both Homes, conducted in partnership with a professional consultant. This effort aims to establish a unified policy and procedure framework that supports operational and clinical standardization across both Homes. The new framework will align with the requirements of CMS, DPH, and the VA, as well as long-term care best practices. The initiative also includes staff training and a full inventory and analysis of existing policies.

The EOVS Ombudsperson program has been fully implemented. Ombudspeople at each Home receive, investigate, and resolve complaints from residents, their representatives, and staff. They operate within each Home but remain independent, reporting directly to EOVS. This program strengthens resident quality of life, assists staff, and identifies opportunities for ongoing improvement.

To invest in frontline staff, EOVS worked with SEIU Local 888 to implement a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) establishing a career ladder for Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs) at both Homes. The MOA defines position descriptions, staffing assessments, and promotion processes for eligible employees. It establishes four levels within the CNA job series, enabling advancement based on skills, experience, and responsibility.

The Homes continue to prioritize equity across regions, staff diversity, and veteran access. They are engaging veterans statewide to promote equitable access and exploring ways to expand staff diversity and career pathways.

## **Overview of the Massachusetts Veterans Home at Chelsea**

The Massachusetts Veterans Home (MVH) at Chelsea opened in 1882 as the first veterans' home in the Commonwealth. Chelsea offers veterans high-quality long-term and skilled nursing care, domiciliary housing, and support services. The Home includes 154 long-term care beds and 125 domiciliary beds. The new state-of-the-art facility creates a home-like environment that enhances resident comfort and privacy while offering more shared spaces for interaction and socialization. The facility's design follows the VA Small Homes model, improving quality of life for veterans and their families.

MVH at Chelsea achieved licensure from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) and certification from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) in September 2023, followed by recognition from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) in December 2023. The Executive Director and Deputy Executive Director are both licensed nursing home administrators, bringing nearly 40 years of combined experience to the Home.

The domiciliary campus at MVH Chelsea is undergoing major redevelopment through a public-private partnership with Pennrose LLC. The project will fully renovate the campus and create approximately 240 affordable housing units reserved entirely for veterans. It will accommodate all current domiciliary residents and offer independent living apartments for veterans.

## **Overview of the Massachusetts Veterans Home at Holyoke**

The MVH at Holyoke opened in 1952 to provide veterans with long-term and skilled nursing care. The current facility has 128 long-term care beds. The MVH at Holyoke is constructing a replacement facility with \$263.5 million in federal funding from the VA and \$141.9 million from the Commonwealth. Supported by the Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance (DCAMM), the project is now in an advanced phase of construction and is scheduled for occupancy in fall 2026. In addition to the replacement facility project, the Home has completed several capital repairs to the roof and façade of the existing building.

On July 8, 2025, the MVH at Holyoke was notified of its CMS certification, effective April 14, 2025. This milestone follows a detailed survey conducted by the DPH which evaluated the quality of care and overall condition of the facility. A similar survey was conducted in February 2025.

As part of the CMS certification process, the Home must submit documentation verifying staffing levels to support its Hours Per Patient Day (HPPD) data. This documentation plays a crucial role in the facility's quality rating.

MVH at Holyoke will now be evaluated under CMS's Five-Star Quality Rating System, which allows for comparison with other long-term care facilities regionally and nationally. The goal is to achieve a five-star rating, a gradual process that will require continuous improvement.

CMS certification also enables the facility to bill Medicare for eligible services, which is essential to sustaining operations and expanding access to care. This certification fulfills the requirements established in Chapter 144 of the Acts of 2022, which created the Executive Office of Veterans' Services and mandates that all veteran care facilities be both DPH licensed and CMS certified.

## Quality of Care

The Homes' Quality Assurance and Performance Improvement (QAPI) program is a data-driven, comprehensive system that integrates quality assurance (QA) and performance improvement (PI) to continuously monitor and enhance care and services. The primary goal of QAPI is to improve the quality of life for resident veterans. The program identifies areas for improvement, implements systematic changes, and tracks outcomes through ongoing monitoring and reporting. Input for the process includes resident feedback through the Resident Council, town halls, Family Council, resident satisfaction surveys, and the grievance process. The QAPI program also incorporates clinical quality measures based on care outcomes and insights gained from independent surveys conducted by DPH, CMS, and the VA.

Each Home has a multidisciplinary QAPI team that meets monthly and includes representatives from management and line staff. The team identifies targeted initiatives to address specific issues through data collection, analysis, intervention, and evaluation. Initiatives are developed, implemented, and monitored to assess effectiveness. This process ensures that veteran residents receive the highest quality of life and continuously improves their satisfaction.

The EOVS Quality Management team now includes a Deputy Assistant Secretary for Quality and a Quality Manager, who provide oversight and support to each Home's QAPI program. EOVS receives key metrics, initiatives, and accomplishments through the quality dashboard. Each Home develops annual program plans for its QAPI initiatives and presents quarterly progress reports to the EOVS Secretary. QAPI information is also shared with each Home's Board of Trustees and the Statewide Homes Council.

In September 2025, Homes reported year-to-date Key Performance Indicator (KPI) metrics. Holyoke performed better than other long-term care (LTC) facilities nationally in five of the seven metrics used by CMS to evaluate quality. Chelsea continues to show improvement on these metrics, with three of seven performing above national averages. Each Home has quality improvement initiatives targeting areas where outcomes are below national averages.

QAPI is an ongoing journey of improvement that is beginning to show results. Several of this past year's QAPI focus areas included reducing medication errors and falls. With new reporting from the medication dispensing cabinets, Holyoke has identified and addressed medication errors through staff re-education. Falls have shown steady year-over-year improvement, with a 17.3% decrease per 1,000 veteran days from 2021 through 2025.

Resident and family satisfaction is another important quality indicator. Confidential surveys are conducted monthly by Activated Insights, an independent, nationally recognized healthcare survey agency. Chelsea achieved a 94% favorability rating, while Holyoke reached 100% - a metric reflecting the percentage of respondents who would recommend care at the Home. The overall annual satisfaction rating was 4.5 for Chelsea and 4.9 for Holyoke on a 5.0 scale, both exceeding national averages. Much of this satisfaction is attributed to consistent staffing within care units. Holyoke has reduced the number of agency staff to 3%, with 97% of staff being permanent employees, providing veterans with consistent, familiar caregivers.

## Financial Status

The Massachusetts Veterans Homes are funded through the Commonwealth's annual General Appropriations Act ("GAA") on an annual basis. All reimbursements received from residents and/or the U.S. Veterans Administration (VA) (except for a small amount of retained revenues) revert to the Commonwealth's general fund to offset the operating costs. Daily care charges may be waived or reduced based on monthly income or certain qualifying disabilities.

### Financial Status of the Massachusetts Veterans Home at Chelsea

The MVH at Chelsea received an appropriation of \$53.1 million in FY2025 which includes staffing of 400 full-time employees and revenue of \$15.9 million.

Appropriation Number	Appropriation Name	FY 25 GAA
<b>4180-0100</b>	Administration and Operations	53,086,687
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$53,086,687</b>

Revenue Source	Revenue Source Description	FY 25 GAA
<b>3504</b>	Reimb - Blue Cross Blue Shield	1,500
<b>3505</b>	Reimb - Other Insurance	1,500
<b>3506</b>	Reimb - Direct Patient Payer	1,429,316
<b>3508</b>	Free Meals	33,000
<b>3545</b>	Reimb - Medicare Part D	130,000
<b>5203</b>	Medicare Reimbursement	13,000
<b>5204</b>	VA Per Diem Domiciliary Care	2,597,138
<b>5205</b>	VA Per Diem Long Term Care	11,714,732
<b>6900</b>	Miscellaneous	12,000
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$15,932,186</b>



## Financial Status of the Massachusetts Veterans Home at Holyoke

The MVH at Holyoke received an appropriation of \$34.3 million in FY2025 which includes staffing of 356 full-time employees and revenue of \$9.3 million.

Appropriation Number	Appropriation Name	FY 25 GAA
4190-0100	Administration and Operations	33,437,909
4190-0103	Canteen Retained Revenue	50,000
4190-0300	12 Bed Retained Revenue	824,198
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$34,312,106</b>

Revenue Source	Revenue Source Description	FY 25 GAA
3505	Reimb - Other Insurance	9,386
3506	Reimb - Direct Patient Payer	152,416
3508	Free Meals	30,000
3545	Reimb - Medicare Part D	54,000
4000	Occupancy/Rent Fees	1,209,000
4033	Agent Rental Service Fee	1,500
4500	Miscellaneous Sales	400
4556	Holyoke Canteen Revenue	50,000
5205	VA Per Diem Long Term Care	7,374,885
6900	Miscellaneous	12,000
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$8,893,587</b>

## **Uniformity of Programs**

The Homes are licensed by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) as long-term care facilities and recognized by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) State Veterans Home Program as nursing homes. Both Homes maintain standardized programs and services that deliver high-quality care to resident veterans. Each demonstrates ongoing compliance with the rigorous standards established by DPH, CMS, and the VA through annual unannounced surveys conducted by both the DPH and VA.

The Homes operate under a resident-centered model of care that aligns with the VA Small Homes design and best practices in long-term care. Each Home provides comprehensive, compassionate care tailored to the unique needs of every resident. This holistic model supports residents' physical, mental, and emotional well-being while promoting dignity and independence. The Homes also offer a range of social, recreational, and therapeutic activities tailored to each veteran's interests and abilities, including music therapy, arts and crafts, fitness programs, and opportunities for spiritual enrichment through religious services. Together, these services promote the highest possible quality of life for all residents.

As described earlier in this report, EOVS initiated a comprehensive review of all policies and procedures in partnership with an external consultant. Each Home had approximately 200 policies, which were reviewed through a structured process to merge and align policies from both Homes into a single comprehensive policy document. The new framework reflects industry best practices and ensures compliance with Veterans Affairs, CMS, and Department of Public Health regulations. This process has resulted in a unified policy framework and standardized care practices across both Homes.

The Electronic Medical Record (EMR) system has been fully implemented at both Homes. Implementation included a thorough and rigorous workflow analysis, fostering collaboration between the Homes and resulting in enhanced consistency, standardization, and improved quality.

The new MVH at Chelsea facility was constructed using the VA Small Homes model, an architectural approach that places residents at the center of care. This design moves away from traditional institutional layouts focused on operational efficiency, creating a more home-like and person-centered environment. The new facility at MVH Holyoke is being built to the same standards. Upon its completion, both Homes will fully embody the VA Small Homes model.

To further advance professionalism and standardization, the EOVS Office of Homes and Housing provides oversight, guidance, and support to both facilities. The office is led by a licensed nursing home administrator and staffed by professionals with extensive experience in management, organizational transformation, strategic planning, workforce development, quality improvement, and regulatory compliance.

## **Capital Needs**

### **Capital Needs at the Massachusetts Veterans Home at Chelsea**

Resident veterans at the MVH at Chelsea now reside in a new, state-of-the-art 154-bed long-term care facility. With major construction and move-in completed, the Home is working with the Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance (DCAMM) to address several minor outstanding items. The next phase of the project includes demolition of the old facility and site improvements that will add green space and provide access to Malone Park.

The MVH at Chelsea has partnered with Pennrose through a public–private redevelopment initiative to modernize its domiciliary campus. The redevelopment includes affordable housing units with 100% veterans’ preference and will transition all current domiciliary residents into the new housing units.

### **Capital Needs at the Massachusetts Veterans Home at Holyoke**

With the support of DCAMM, the MVH at Holyoke is constructing a replacement facility with \$263.5 million in federal funding from the VA and \$141.9 million from the Commonwealth. The new eight-story building will have the capacity to house 234 veterans. In addition, Holyoke will expand services for Commonwealth veterans through a new adult day health program designed to serve 40 to 50 participants. The new building is expected to be ready for occupancy in fall 2026, with full project completion, including demolition of the current facility, by 2028.

The MVH at Holyoke has also completed important improvements to the existing facility, including façade brickwork and roof repairs.

## **Status of the United States Department of Veterans Affairs Accreditation**

Both Homes hold full certification from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and participate in the VA State Veterans Home Program. As part of this certification, the VA surveys each Home annually to ensure continued compliance with rigorous VA regulations for long-term care, including domiciliary services. In 2025, both Homes were surveyed and maintained full VA certification as compliant facilities.

The new MVH at Chelsea received formal VA certification in March 2024, following a deficiency-free survey in December 2023. The survey evaluated all quality-of-care measures, life safety code standards, and VA long-term care regulations.

The VA conducted its annual survey of the Chelsea nursing home program in December 2024. Of the 190 standards, six deficient practices were noted in the nursing home and four in the domiciliary. The VA granted provisional certification following acceptance of the corrective action plan.

The VA also conducted its annual survey of the Holyoke nursing home program in January 2025. The survey found no deficiencies, and the VA granted full certification as a result of this exemplary review.

## **Conclusion**

The Massachusetts Veterans Homes at Chelsea and Holyoke have continued to make tremendous strides in the quality of resident care, professionalization, standardization, and operational improvements over the past year. The Homes' leadership and staff continue to enhance residents' quality of care and life through initiatives including expanded clinical services, enhanced programming, the construction of two new facilities, the implementation of the Ombudsperson program, a renewed focus on resident and staff equity, and the CNA career ladder.

Both Homes continue to advance toward greater uniformity through use of the new EMR system, the development and implementation of standardized policies, and the creation of highly effective QAPI teams. Each has also made progress in addressing capital needs—demonstrated through occupancy of the new facility in Chelsea and ongoing construction at Holyoke, which is nearing completion. In addition, planning is underway for the redevelopment of the Chelsea domiciliary campus into veterans' preference affordable housing. Lastly, both Homes have achieved and maintain full certification with the VA State Veterans Home Program, DPH, and CMS.

The Healey-Driscoll Administration looks forward to implementing further improvements and reaching even greater heights in providing services and care to Massachusetts veterans with dignity, honor, and respect.