



COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF VETERANS SERVICES
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GOVERNOR

JON SANTIAGO, MD, MPH
SECRETARY

KIMBERLEY DRISCOLL
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

May 1, 2025

Rep. Aaron Michlewitz
Chair, House Committee on Ways and Means
State House, Room 243
Boston, MA 02133

Sen. Michael J. Rodrigues
Chair, Senate Committee on Ways and Means
State House, Room 212
Boston, MA 02133

Rep. Joseph McGonagle
Chair, Joint Committee on Veterans and Federal
Affairs
State House, Room 171
Boston, MA 02133

Sen. John Velis
Chair, Joint Committee on Veterans and Federal
Affairs
State House, Room 513
Boston, MA 02133

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

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

Dear Chairs Michlewitz, Rodrigues, McGonagle, Velis, and Clerks Carroll and Hurley,

[Section 4 of Chapter 15 of the Acts of 2021](#), An Act financing the reconstruction of the Massachusetts Veterans Home at Holyoke (formerly the Soldiers' Home at Holyoke), requires the Executive Office of Veterans Services to submit a report on the construction of the new long-term care facility at the Veterans Home in Holyoke.

Annually, not later than December 31, and until the completion of the new facility for the Veterans Home at Holyoke, the Executive Office of Veterans Services, in consultation with the division of capital asset management and maintenance, shall file a report on the construction of the new facility. The report shall include, but not be limited to: (i) a brief, current description of the project and any substantial changes in the description of

the project during the previous year; (ii) the state of progress of the project; (iii) a summary of the total and major costs of the project as originally estimated and as currently expended or currently estimated to be expended; (iv) the original project schedule and the current and estimated schedule and progress of the project; and (v) identification of the designers and contractors who have contracted to provide materials or services for the new facility, including how the designers and contractors meet any applicable participation goals for minority and women workers. The report shall be filed with the clerks of the senate and house of representatives, the joint committee on veterans and federal affairs and the house and senate committees on ways and means.

For calendar year 2024:

(I) A brief, current description of the project and any substantial changes in the description of the project during the previous year:

As reported:

- The new facility is designed utilizing the VA's small house model. Each resident floor of the proposed new building is designed with 2 to 3 "homes" per floor, typically with 12 beds per home, accommodating a maximum of 36 Veterans per floor.
- Most rooms have single occupancy with private baths, but two rooms on each floor are larger than a standard room so that they can function as a double, a couple's room, or a bariatric room.
 - The second floor of the facility is specifically designed for dementia (memory) care.
 - The first floor and basement will provide both resident services and support facilities, including community room, hobby room, chapel, café, store, dental clinic, hair salon, and PT/OT facilities. The design also includes several outdoor garden spaces and activities, such as a green space and an open-air pavilion.
- Overall project specifications
 - 348,000 square feet facility.
 - 8 stories tall.
 - 234 long term care beds, 30 of which are designed for memory care.
- There will be an Adult Day Health space that can serve 40 - 50 participants per day, with approximately 5,600 gross square feet will have its own drop off/pickup area.
- When completed, the project will reduce consumption of energy resources by 90%. Operating costs will be reduced, and carbon emissions will be reduced by 1,000 tons annually.

(ii) The state of progress of the project:

- Commodore|Walsh, a veteran-owned business, has managed the construction project since its initiation.
- A groundbreaking ceremony occurred in August 2023 with many State and Federal dignitaries including Governor Healey, Secretary Santiago and Congressman Neal in attendance.
- The general construction has been ongoing with the topping off ceremony of the last steel beam installed in November 2024.

- Substantial work has been accomplished to seal the exterior of the building and make it weatherproof to inclement weather conditions.
- Concrete has been poured for all floors and stairs. Interior framing—including HVAC ductwork and plumbing—has begun on several levels.
- DCAMM, Payette Architecture, Commodore|Walsh, and the Home representatives have been meeting regularly with EOTSS (Executive Office of Technical Support Services), to develop plans for IT infrastructure that will support the Commonwealth's IT Network but also integrate the new Electronic Medical Record (EMR) system of the Home.
- The construction is considered approximately 30% complete.

(iii) A summary of the total and major costs of the project as originally estimated and as currently expended or currently estimated to be expended:

- Project Cost: \$405,334,600
- The Commonwealth has been awarded the VA State Home Construction Grant Program totaling 65% federal reimbursement and continues to work with the VA to meet annual reporting deadlines. The grant program follows federal rules, including compliance with the Build America Buy America Act (BABAA).
- The Commonwealth has requested, on seven occasions, VA reimbursement totaling \$81M in reimbursement in support of this project.
- There is approximately \$184M available in VA reimbursement to meet the 65% criteria for total VA project reimbursement.

(iv) The original project schedule and the current and estimated schedule and progress of the project:

- The overall Project Schedule has remained on schedule as planned including:
 - Groundbreaking Ceremony held in August 2023 to kick off the start of construction.
 - Topping Off Ceremony held in November 2024 to commemorate the completion of the steel construction.
- On schedule:
 - New Building Completion/Occupancy: Q4 2026
 - Existing building demolished and site restoration complete: Summer 2028

(v) Identification of the designers and contractors who have contracted to provide materials or services for the new facility, including how the designers and contractors meet any applicable participation goals for minority and women workers:

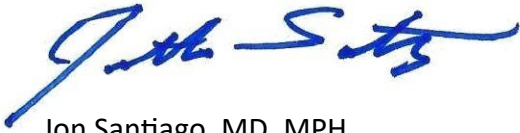
- Construction Manager Selection: Commodore|Walsh (a joint venture). Commodore is a veteran-owned business.
- The Access, Inclusion, and Diversity (AID) Committee continues to meet monthly and has initiated productive discussions. The construction project remains on track to meet all established goals and objectives. Approved meeting minutes, presentations, and video recordings are available on the Committee's website: <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/holyoke-soldiers-home-reconstruction-access-inclusion-diversity-committee>

- Workforce participation percentages as of December 29, 2024:

Group	Goal %	Reported Hours	Actual %
Minority	15.3%	52,457.28	22.9%
Women	6.9%	23,369.38	10.2%
Veterans	7%	20,570.00	9%
Apprentices	20%	43,228.00	19%
All Workers	-	229,382.09	-

Thank you for your continued support of the Veterans Home at Holyoke.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jon Santiago", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jon Santiago, MD, MPH
Secretary, Executive Office of Veteran Services