



VETERANS
LEGAL INSTITUTE

2023 IMPACT ANNUAL REPORT

VetsLegal.org

TESTIMONIALS

"Your caring, patience with my brain injury, and kindness, will never be forgotten. Words alone will never be enough to express the positive, life changing impact you had on my life and my future."

- Ed, Air Force Veteran

"I cannot thank you enough for affording me this opportunity to finally see light at the end of the tunnel and the impact it will have on my family in such a positive way going forward. Again, I am so appreciative of all you have done and the fact you have achieved something in such a short time that others could not."

- Chris, USMC Veteran

"We can't tell you how much we appreciate your hard work, consideration, and perseverance."

- From the mother of Bobby, a permanently disabled USMC Operation Iraqi Freedom combat Veteran

"Thank you so much for what you have done for me and my wife. You have no idea how much your actions have impacted our lives for the better."

- Harry, a permanently disabled USMC Vietnam combat Veteran

"I don't know if you know, but the VA approved my PTSD claim at 70% and my sleep apnea claim at 50%! That brings my combined rating to 90%! They already deposited the back-pay to my account. Thank you so much for ALL your help with this. You were able to do what I and another law firm couldn't."

- Vincent, Army Veteran

"I just want to say again I really appreciate all that you have done. If it wasn't for you and the team at VA Long Beach, I would never have my VA benefits. A special thanks from my heart."

- Dennis, Air Force Veteran

"Thank you so much for all of your help. This has been incredibly helpful for me during this crazy stressful time in my life. I appreciate everything that you all do."

- Javier, Navy Veteran

"I'm glad we were able to come to an agreement with the other party versus having to appear in court and deal with it there. Thank you for your advice and work on all of this. Everything is clear, no questions."

- Jose, Army Veteran

WHO WE ARE

Veterans Legal Institute (VLI) provides pro bono assistance to homeless, at risk, disabled and low income veterans to eradicate barriers to housing, healthcare, education, employment and to foster self-sufficiency.

VLI Board of Directors:

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Jeff Roberts, Esq. **Military Family Member*

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Jack Williams, Esq. **USMC Veteran*

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Michelle Robinson, Esq. - Managing Attorney

Robin Williams - Director of Operations **Army Veteran*

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**Navy Veteran*

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Lea Petersen

Matt Rabin, Esq.

Sean S. Twomey, Esq.



VLI's Core Values

• Outreach • Compassion • Quality • Leadership • Empowerment



THOSE WE SERVE

2023 HIGHLIGHTS

86%

more than quadruple the national average, **86% of VLI clients in need of discharge upgrades** were successful in obtaining necessary documents and advice or acquiring discharge upgrades so that they could access their healthcare, benefits, compensation, and dignity.

10,000+

volunteer hours in 2023 and veterans served to date

40%

of VLI clients are seniors

34%

of VLI clients have dependent children

67%

of our clients live in poverty with a monthly income of less than **\$2500**

63%

of VLI clients self-identify as people of color

43%

of clients self-identified as disabled, with another 33%+ applying at VLI for their disability

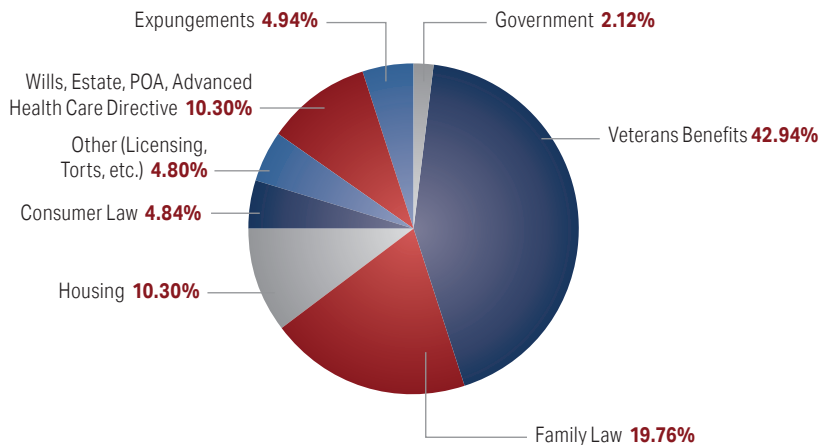
54%

attorney involvement has an impact. VLI attorneys prevented an eviction in 54% of unlawful detainer cases in 2023.

Since inception VLI has historically served Southern California Counties of Orange, Los Angeles, San Bernardino, and Riverside. In 2022 VLI expanded to service Central California, specifically in rural regions without legal services.

In 2023, VLI secured over **\$2.9 million** in benefit awards for disabled veterans, including over **\$165,000** in monthly compensation. VLI received between **200-400 applications per month** for legal services serving 150 on average each month. Most importantly, VLI is a pro bono law firm, which means that the veterans served never need to worry about receiving a bill for VLI's life-changing services.

Total Impact of Matters by Practice Area in 2023



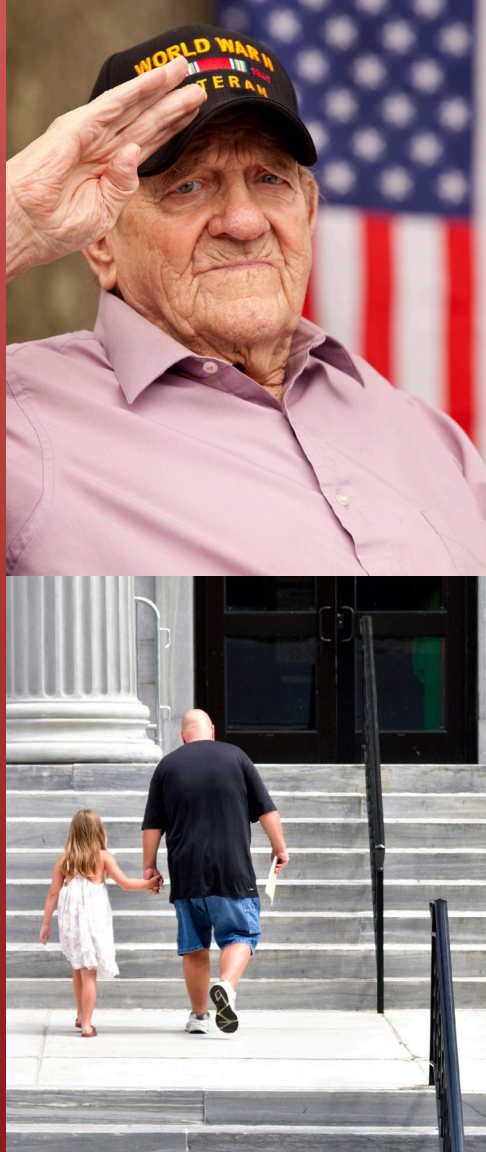
Total # of Matters by Practice Area in 2023

Veterans Benefits and Discharge Upgrades	913
Family Law	420
Housing	219
Consumer Law	103
Wills, Estate, POA, Advanced Health Care Directive	219
Expungements	105
Government Benefits, other than Veteran	45
Other (Licensing, Torts, etc.)	102



YEAR IN REVIEW





Access to Justice for Disabled Veterans Statewide

Veterans Legal Institute is committed not only to its clients, but to the overall California veteran community. VLI joined forces with policymakers in Sacramento to expand access to justice for disabled California veterans. Before SB 498 was passed, many veterans were disqualified from legal aid because their disability compensation made them “over-income.” Disabled veterans were in a Catch-22 situation, as some were too “rich” to qualify for legal aid, but too poor to afford a private attorney, due to their service-related disability. VLI partnered with Senator Tom Umberg to push for this critically needed legislation, which allowed disabled veterans to access justice while not being penalized for their disability. As a result, disabled veterans throughout California can now qualify for the legal services they desperately need – and deserve.

Holistic Support for Disabled Veterans in the Family Court System

Family court can be stressful and heartbreaking on anyone. A veteran living with PTSD, or a traumatic brain injury, might be exceptionally affected by the intense mental, emotional, and financial strain of a divorce, child custody dispute, or other family court proceeding. VLI joined Senator Susan Eggman in advocating for SB 1182 to connect veterans in family court with local resources including mental health, housing, legal services, and other resources. This legislation ensures all affected veterans are equipped to face these challenging times in a healthy and constructive manner. **In 2023, VLI was instrumental in implementing this legislation at the Orange County Lamoreaux Justice Center. On-site peer support services now directly connect veterans and their families with local life saving resources.**

SPONSOR A HERO

\$5,000

Supports onsite and online free legal clinics at a local VA Hospital. These clinics serve close to 60 low income and homeless veterans who have medical issues monthly.

\$2,500

Supports a Veterans Legal Institute advocate to give onsite legal services at the Vet Center and other veteran serving hot spots, where combat veterans can gather and receive free mental health services each month.

\$1,000

Supports sustaining the healthcare and standard of living of veterans through appeals led by an attorney. These appeals secure benefits claims for illnesses and injuries including, but not limited to, post-traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain injury, and other visible and invisible wounds of war.

\$500

Supports one Legal Hero to collaborate with other nonprofits to keep one veteran family safe and sound.



**ONGOING
SUPPORTERS**

Wright
Ford
Young & Co.



JUDICATE
WEST



REGAL
COURT REPORTING

CALOVET

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usbank

Orange County
Community
Foundation



Volunteers
of America

SoCalGas

PointClick.io



BOB WOODRUFF
FOUNDATION



Orange County Bar Association
Charitable Fund

JOIN OUR TRIBE

WAYS TO SERVE AT VETERANS LEGAL INSTITUTE

- Take a case pro bono
- Volunteer in-house
- Apply to join the VLI Board
- Join the VLI's Annual Fundraising Event Committee

*All donations are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law

WAYS TO CONTRIBUTE

- Become a monthly supporter and stand with our veterans of today and tomorrow by registering at VetsLegal.org or text VLI to 44-321
- Recommend VLI receive a donation through your Donor Advised Fund (DAF)
- Consider VLI in your estate legacy planning

Donate via Venmo

Donate via PayPal



venmo



**VETERANS
LEGAL INSTITUTE**

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Platinum
Transparency
2023

Candid.