

# HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

## Health and Human Services

The Arlington Department of Health and Human Services is the agency that oversees the Health Department, Council on Aging, Arlington Youth Consultation Center, and the Veterans' Services Office. The agency also coordinates the activities of the following boards: Board of Health, Board of Youth Services, Council on Aging, Disability Commission, and the Human Rights Commission. Additionally, the agency works with the Food Pantry, Fair Housing, Widows Trust Fund Commission, Youth Health and Safety Coalition, and the Health and Human Services Charitable Corporation.

The mission of the Department of Health and Human Services is to provide a safety net for Arlington residents experiencing difficulties in their lives and also to promote a healthy environment for all residents.

During 2009 the Department of Health and Human Services continued to collect donations from generous residents, businesses, and agencies to provide support for needy residents in the form of assistance funds. These include the fuel assistance fund, food pantry, and general assistance funds.



## Health Department Board of Health

The three-member Board of Health meets on a regular basis and addresses environmental health concerns, reviews policy, and conducts public hearings. In 2009 the Board of Health met six times and conducted: four housing code hearings, three tobacco sales violation hearings, and six food code hearings, which resulted in closure of one food establishment for fourteen days. The Board granted one variance. Dr. Marie Walsh Condon joined the Board of Health and serves as the Medical Doctor on the Board.

The Board of Health is required by state statutes and regulations to perform many important and crucial duties relative to the protection of public health and safety, the control of disease, the promotion of safe and sanitary living conditions, and the protection of the environment from damage and pollution. These mandated requirements are conducted by staff in the Health Department Office which is at 27 Maple Street in the Arlington Multipurpose Senior Center, located behind Town Hall.

## Environmental Health Permitting and Inspections

Staff annually permit, and regularly inspect restaurants, tobacco retailers, tanning establishments, body art establishments, pools, the ice-skating rink, and the bathing beach. Inspectors from the Department also follow up on numerous resident complaints related to any health issue within the community, ranging from trash and dumpster complaints to housing code violations. The Environmental Health Division is comprised of a full-time lead inspector and two part-time inspectors. The Department also contracts with two food safety consultants to conduct a portion of mandated food establishment inspections.

Permits Issued	2009	2008	2007
Food	250	230	220
Tobacco	26	31	30
Massage Therapist	0*	70*	95
Massage Establishment	0*	40*	47
Waste Hauler	13	13	13
Funeral Director	5	6	6
Tanning Establishment	2	2	2
Public Pool	8	8	8
Public Beach	1	1	1
Ice Rink	1	1	1
Body Art Establishment	1	1	1
<b>Total Permits Issued</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>403</b>	<b>424</b>

Inspection Type	2009	2008	2007
Food Establishment	426	449	359
Tobacco Compliance Check	0	62	60
Housing	43	48	52
Massage Establishment	0*	0*	80
Demolition Inspection	23	16	24
Nuisance Inspection	291	250	300
<b>Total Inspections</b>	<b>783</b>	<b>825</b>	<b>875</b>

\*The Massachusetts Division of Professional Licensure assumed responsibility of licensing and inspecting massage therapy establishments in 2008.

## Food Protection

The Department conducted 426 food inspections ranging from risk-based categories one through four. The Department assigns each establishment that serves food to a risk-based category. A food establishment that sells packaged food, such as a convenience store, is considered low risk, is assigned to a category one, and is inspected one time per year. A food establishment that serves food to a fragile population, such as a nursing home, is considered a high risk and would be placed in a category four, which is inspected four times per year. The Department investigated ten food complaints, held four administrative hearings to discuss food safety, and had ten establishment closures. In addition, seven new food establishments were opened in 2009.

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Type of Food Permit Issued	2009	2008
Food Establishment Permits	180	180
Mobile Food Permits	7	8
Residential Kitchen Permits	6	6
Farmers Market Permits	16	12
Temporary Event Food Permit	54	24

## Housing

The Department conducted forty three inspections of rental housing units in 2009 in accordance with 105 Code of Massachusetts Regulations 410.000, Massachusetts Housing Code. When a housing inspection is requested by a resident, an inspector conducts an inspection and may cite a landlord for violations of the housing code. The landlord is then ordered to repair violations. Violations documented in 2009 included: improper heating, cross metering of electricity, chronic dampness, leaking plumbing fixtures, lead paint determinations, unsanitary living conditions, structural integrity, insect and rodent infestations, and many more.

The Department condemned four properties for uninhabitable conditions due to a lack of running water, electricity, excessive debris, and hoarding. The Department worked closely with the Council on Aging and Minuteman Senior Services to assist residents of these properties with alternate housing and services.

The condition of collecting excessive debris and belongings is called hoarding. Department inspectors attended training in 2008 on how to address residents with hoarding tendencies. Many hoarding units that are inspected are unsafe due to the amount of debris and the danger to first responders, occupants, and the general public. Additionally, materials that are close to heating units or stoves could catch fire. Studies show that 1-2% of the general population has hoarding tendencies. The Department conducted training for police and fire officials to coordinate responses to cases of hoarding. Although only one home was condemned, the Department was involved in four cases in which the properties were observed in "hoarding" type conditions.

## Emergency Preparedness

The Department continued to work with the public health emergency preparedness region 4b, which includes all of the health departments in the communities surrounding the City of Boston. In December, Arlington, Belmont, Brookline, Watertown, and Newton came together to offer a public seasonal and H1N1 flu clinic in the Town of Brookline, to test a multi-community response to a large-scale public clinic while offering vaccine to the public. This is the group's seventh regional clinic. The results from the emergency clinics have become a model for other groups of communities as they plan for vaccinating residents.

## Arlington Medical Reserve Corps



The Department conducted a massive recruitment effort in September to bring in hundreds of new volunteers into the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC). Arlington residents, both medical and non-medical professionals enlisted to assist the Town in the event of an emergency event. The recruitment event occurred just as the federal push to vaccinate the entire public against the novel H1N1 2009 influenza virus became a public health priority. Throughout the fall, the Department ran over nineteen clinics, administering 7,193 H1N1 flu, seasonal flu, and pneumonia vaccinations to residents. Over 277 Medical Reserve Corps volunteers assisted and gave over 26,000 hours of service to the Town to vaccinate residents.

Additionally, Region 4b provided free emergency preparedness training to all MRC volunteers, including Incident Command classes as well as CPR and home preparedness classes.

## Public Health Nursing

### *Communicable Disease Surveillance*

To protect the community against the spread of contagious illnesses, a rigorous communicable disease tracking system is in place. Arlington continued to work with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) in 2009 in conducting online disease reporting through the Massachusetts Virtual Epidemiology Network (MAVEN). State law requires that doctors, hospitals, and laboratories report contagious diseases including diseases such as tuberculosis, whooping cough, and salmonella. When a doctor diagnoses a resident with a contagious disease the public health nurse is mandated to conduct an investigation to determine if further control measures are needed. The illness is then recorded and reviewed to identify and respond to any possible outbreaks. The new online reporting system has streamlined disease investigation and has assisted the MDPH with early detection of contagious disease trends beyond community boundaries.

During the year, 104 communicable diseases were monitored. The Health Department vaccinated all Town employees, while school nurses vaccinated all school staff against both seasonal and H1N1 flu. Throughout the fall, the Department ran over nineteen clinics and administering 7,193 H1N1 flu, seasonal flu, and pneumonia vaccinations to residents. Over 277 Medical Reserve Corps volunteers assisted and gave over 26,000 hours of service to the town to vaccinate residents. The Department ran vaccination clinics in each

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Communicable Diseases Monitored	2009	2008	2007
Amebiasis	2	0	0
Babesiosis	0	0	1
Campylobacter Enteritis	10	6	11
Chicken pox	0	5	0
Cryptosporidiosis	0	1	0
Enterovirus	2	0	0
Giardia	1	5	11
Haemophilis Influenzae	0	0	1
Hepatitis A	1	0	1
Hepatitis B	3 chronic	2 chronic	12
Hepatitis C	15 chronic	6 chronic	11
Influenza	33	-	-
Legionellosis	0	0	1
Lyme Disease	8	11	19
Meningitis	0	0	2 viral
Norovirus	0	4	1
Pertussis	5	3	15
Salmonella	13	12	6
Shigatoxin	0	0	0
Shigellosis	3	3	1
Strep pneumonia invasive	6	4	6
Group A strep	0	1	1
Group B strep	1	2	1
Tuberculosis		4	3
Tuberculosis contacts		25	4
Vibrio sp.	1	0	0
West Nile Virus	0	0	1
Yersiniosis	0	2	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>123</b>

of the 9 public schools in partnership with the school nurses to vaccinate school aged children against the H1N1 flu. Over 2,100 public school children were vaccinated at the school based clinics. The Department used the school based clinics as an opportunity to prepare for future clinics. At each school-based clinic, a floor plan, organizational chart, and press release was developed. The Emergency Management Director also participated in the effort by providing support.

Over 200 school children were vaccinated against H1N1 flu at the Bishop School Clinic in under one hour. Nine nurse stations were open to vaccinate children using both injections and mist formulations of the vaccine.

A large H1N1 and seasonal flu public clinic was held on December 30 at the high school. Over 2,300 residents were vaccinated in three hours. There were fifty-nine Medical Reserve Corps volunteers running the clinic along with Armstrong Ambulance paramedics, Arlington Public School Nurses, physicians from two pediatric offices in Town, two Arlington Fire Department EMTs, ten Police department detail officers, and the Arlington Emergency Management Agency. This clinic was among the top public clinics in the state for distribution of the vaccine.

Flu Prevention Initiatives	2009	2008
Number of vaccination clinics held	19 clinics	15 clinics
Number of Residents vaccinated at clinics	7193 persons	1600 persons
Number of administrative volunteers that assisted	166	49 volunteers
Number of Nurse volunteers that assisted	111 nurses	27 nurses



## Weights and Measures

To ensure compliance with the Consumer and Merchant Protection Act, the Sealer of Weights and Measures conducts inspections of all scales, scanners, and dispensing equipment in Town. This includes retail stores, gas stations, oil trucks, and food establishments. The Sealer responds to all consumer complaints to ensure fairness and accuracy.

As merchants are inspected annually, compliance with standards and accuracy of merchant measuring devices has increased steadily. The Sealer of Weights and Measures determines the amount of savings by computing the amount of fuel pumped each year from a particular measuring device such as a gas pump.

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## Arlington Youth Health and Safety Coalition

The Arlington Youth Health and Safety Coalition (AYHSC) is a group of concerned community members, organizations and public agencies, and representatives from local and state government united in their goal of preventing and reducing underage drinking and substance abuse in Arlington. To this end, AYHSC employs multiple strategies to influence positive, community-wide change.



AYHSC operates within the Department of Health and Human Services out of the Office of the Board of Health. AYHSC employs one full-time staff person, the Coalition Director, and two part-time staff, the Coalition Coordinator and the Diversion Program Coordinator. In addition, the Coalition receives in-kind personnel support from other Town employees including the School Resource Officer and the Director of Health and Human Services.

As a grant recipient of the Drug Free Communities Program (DFC), AYHSC received \$125,000 in federal funding in 2009, the first in a five-year grant cycle. During its first year as a DFC grantee, AYHSC generated more than the required 100% in matching funds for the federal award, largely through in-kind support. In addition, AYHSC was allocated \$100,000 in state funding through a one-time MA Bureau of Substance Abuse Services (BSAS) earmark. With the financial backing of the DFC program and BSAS, and the in-kind support of Town agencies, AYHSC activated a comprehensive strategic plan to restrict youth access to alcohol and other drugs, and to change permissive community attitudes towards underage drinking and substance abuse.

### 2009 Highlights

- Hosted its 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Community Forum featuring co-authors of *From Binge to Blackout*, including a panel of local specialists and law enforcement officials.

- Created the Arlington Youth Council to facilitate young people's involvement in preventing youth substance abuse in Town. The Council implemented:
  - "Friday Night Lights," a large-scale, substance-free event for teens.
  - "Sticker Shock" a campaign to raise awareness about the minimum drinking age law.
- Coordinated Alcohol Awareness and Responsible Sales Seminars for the Arlington Liquor Licensing Board, Law Enforcement, and alcohol retailers.
- Collaborated with the Police Department to conduct alcohol sales compliance checks and a reverse sting operation called "Cops in Shops."
- Organized two unwanted medication collection events to help community members rid their homes of commonly abused medications.
- Partnered with the Police, Recreation, and Health and Human Services departments to offer a free, four-day summer program to 100 Arlington youth.
- Trained 11 community members to facilitate Guiding Good Choices a parenting program to improve family management and communication and to reduce risk factors for youth substance abuse.
- Partnered with Calvary Church to pilot Guiding Good Choices in Arlington.
- Wrote a monthly column in the Arlington Advocate.
- Funded Coalition volunteers to attend trainings about youth risk behaviors, mental health and substance abuse, and community-based prevention strategies.

Members and community affiliates of AYHSC include: individual community members, the Departments of Health and Human Services, Police, Recreation and Public Works, Arlington Public Schools, Board of Selectmen, Board of Youth Services, MA Department of Children and Families, Arlington Boys and Girls Club, Arlington Advocate, Arlington Community Media Inc, Calvary and Highrock Churches, Law Enforcement Dimensions, Arlington Youth Council, Arlington SADD club, and State Representatives William N. Brownberger and Sean Garballey.

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## **Council on Aging**

The Council on Aging (COA), a division of the Department of Health and Human Services, provides advocacy and support services to help Arlington seniors live dignified and independent lives. The Council's primary responsibilities include: identify the needs of the community's elder population, design, promote, or implement services to address such needs, and to coordinate existing services in the community. The COA carries out locally the programs of the Massachusetts Executive Office of Elder Affairs and coordinates with public and private agencies and providers in the area.

## *Services and Programs*

The Council on Aging has a wide range of services and programs for Arlington elders and their families. These include support and advocacy, social services, wellness services, and various modes of transportation. The agency gets frequent calls for transportation to the Senior Center and also to medical appointments. There are also many seasonal requests for service through the LINKS Program (Linking Neighborhood Kids with Seniors), SHINE Program (Serving Health Information Needs of Elders), Tax Assistance Program, and for property tax exemption assistance. The COA Social Worker receives many calls that inquire about transportation for cancer-related medical appointments and housing option questions.

## *Information and Referral*

As private-sector options become more costly or less available, seniors are turning more and more to the public sector for necessary support. The Council on Aging Information & Referral service is seeing an increasing number of requests from callers who are looking for ways we can help ease their financial burdens. Referrals to fuel assistance, SHINE counseling, tax abatement, LINKS program, and request for home helpers have steadily increased. The SHINE Program saw almost three hundred seniors served this year alone. Families are reaching out to seek ways their parents can remain safely in their own homes, with some needed support services, in order to prevent relocation.

The COA manages a medical equipment loan program. People donate used equipment such as walkers, wheelchairs, and bath seats. The equipment is then loaned out, free of charge, to Arlington residents. About 120 people received equipment from the program in 2009.

Access to services and transportation is the most frequently addressed concern. With the growing number of seniors in Town it is expected that requests for Senior services will continue to increase.

## *Social Services*

The Social Services program at the Council on Aging (COA) consists of a full-time Social Worker, a part-time Intake and Referral worker, and a part-time Social Work student intern. The program offers help around many issues including home services, mental health, dementia, housing, health care, benefit programs, and elder abuse and neglect. Over the last year there has been an increase in the number of seniors feeling financial strain as evidenced, in part, by a significant increase of requests for information about the food stamp program.

COA staff also helps many seniors maneuver through the complexity that increasingly affects so many aspects of living, such as government programs, health insurance, and interactions with large companies. In the last year over 500 individuals received assistance with in-depth case-management issues and an additional 1000 persons were assisted with information and referral resources.

The Social Worker conducts a Caregiver Support Group and co-leads a Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Support Group. In 2009 an Immigrant Support Group was initiated, comprised of older women from many different countries. This year the Council on Aging established a partnership with VNA Hospice Inc. to provide bereavement groups at the senior center.

## *Health and Wellness Services*

Under the direction of the COA Geriatric Nurse Specialist, 2009 was a busy year for the Council on Aging Health & Wellness services. Blood pressure clinics continued twice weekly, averaging twelve people per session. As the COA is an assigned field training site, student nurses continued coming from University of Massachusetts Boston (UMB) for two semesters this year, doing many visits each week to our frail and homebound clients. There has been positive feedback from UMB that this program is quite successful and will continue in the future with eight students each semester. The popular Muscle-strengthening Program was discontinued in the fall because of the lack of an instructor.

Over the summer months, with no student nurses available, the COA Geriatric Nurse Specialist visited clients at their homes an average of eight to ten times each week. This dictates a very full schedule as this is a part-time position.

The latter months of 2009 were spent working in conjunction with the Board of Health's flu clinics. Flu clinics were held at all Arlington schools for the H1N1 flu. A record number of seasonal flu shots were provided this year to the homebound aging population in Arlington, including service at the Arlington Rest Home twice for all the staff and patients.

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The COA held four dental screening clinics this year, screening forty-seven clients. Affordable podiatry clinics have been held on a monthly basis for those who need regular foot care, but whose insurance does not cover this service.

Looking ahead, health & wellness services and clinics (blood pressure clinics, dental screenings, podiatry clinics) should remain productively consistent. The beginning of the year should see multiple H1N1 flu clinics that will be open to the public. The student nurse program will continue and at the end of January we will welcome our next group of student nurses. The COA Geriatric Nurse Specialist's goal for 2010 is to resume writing a health update for the monthly newsletter, *Senior Notes*, and in setting up health discussion groups or arranging lecturers to bring some new and interesting information to the Senior Center presentations.

## *Transportation Services*

The agency's lift-equipped vans and the subsidized taxi program provide about 750 one-way trips each month for Arlington seniors. Two transportation outreach workshops were developed and implemented in 2009. A third is planned for the Town leadership in 2010.

To replace the oldest unit in our aging van fleet the Massachusetts Department of Transportation and Construction has approved a Mobility Assistance Program grant for eighty percent of the cost of a new lift-equipped van. The remaining twenty percent must be borne by the Council's Transportation Program. The Program, which receives no municipal funding, continues to show annual revenues less than its annual expenses.

## *Volunteer Services*

After some decreases due to sickness and retirement there was a modest increase of seven volunteers, bringing the volunteer force to a total of ninety-five people. Due partly to the baby-boomers coming of age and partly to the poor economy, there seems to be more people with higher skill levels interested in volunteering. Time flexibility is an issue with these groups, as well as having programs for volunteering which use their skills, that is to say artistic or computer or organizing abilities. There is more of a need to connect personal interests and programmatic needs.

People are regularly contacting the COA to offer themselves as volunteer workers. This is due in large part to the success of the Friends of the Council on Aging and their public relations and outreach campaigns.

Monthly gatherings for volunteers, known as Coffee & Conversation meetings, offer participants opportunities for team building and information. Attendance remains high at these successful meetings, discussing topics such as education and community components, the census, and the Town budget.

## *Arlington's Senior Population Growth*

The nation's elder population will continue to grow significantly in the future. In 2008 the U.S. Census Bureau projected there would be 40.2 million persons 65 years and older. In 2030, 72.1 million elders are predicted as baby-boomers age.

## *Funding*

Federal, state, Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), and subsidy funding account for more than half of the agency's annual budget.

2009 saw the creation of The Friends of the Arlington Council on Aging, a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization, the purpose of which is to raise funds for the Council on Aging's needs. This is a significant achievement, both from the point of creating another source of revenue, and also from an informational outreach and public relations point of view. Although state funding was reduced early in the year, municipal funding held steady, allowing the COA to preserve staff hours and continuation of services at the current level.

Donations were offered from a number of sources. Lahey Clinic provided a very generous grant to introduce Arlington seniors to regular exercise. The Executive Office of Elder Affairs provided funding that supports the COA Social Worker and Geriatric Nurse Specialist positions. The Friends of the Arlington Council on Aging made a sizeable donation to the agency's transportation program. The Elizabeth and George L. Sanborn Foundation Fund For The Treatment And Cure Of Cancer Inc. subsidizes multiple-trip transportation costs for cancer treatments. A grant was received from The Massachusetts Rural Transit Assistance Program for new tires for the Council's lift-equipped van. Yet, corporate and private donations to the COA have decreased over the past few years necessitating more rigorous management of resources and program offerings.

## *2009 Highlights*

Completed a detailed needs assessment of Arlington seniors to help determine the future of our services and programs.

Continued assessment of the effectiveness of our existing programs and services and the our ability to meet the needs of Arlington's elderly.

## *2010 Goals*

Increase Council involvement in financial advocacy and resource development.

Application of needs-assessment survey results to Council programs and services.

Develop more community involvement with police and fire services and local/regional service providers.

Continue to develop outreach efforts for COA programs and services and maximize the agency's ability to meet the widely-varied needs of Arlington's elderly.

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## Arlington Youth Consultation Center

In 2009 The Arlington Youth Consultation Center (AYCC) continued to provide therapy services, referral services, and psychopharmacological services to Arlington children, adolescents and their families in 2009. Approximately 705 people were helped. These numbers reflect our mental health services both at the AYCC clinic setting and in the Arlington Public Schools.

Beginning in 2005 AYCC was asked to increase its school counseling to Special Education students. Much of this service was provided by graduate interns placed for training at AYCC. In the first part of 2006, a pilot project, using one graduate intern, was started at Brackett School. Based on the success of these efforts AYCC was asked to recruit, train and supervise additional graduate interns to be placed in all the elementary schools for the start of school in September. A great deal of time and effort was put into interviewing interns, finding additional supervisors, and developing a training model. AYCC began the 2006-2007 school year with sixteen graduate interns supervised by existing staff and four consulting supervisors who worked just with school based interns. This continued through 2007-2008. A cut in funding in 2008-2009 reduced the number of school based interns to twelve. Graduate Interns represent seven different masters and doctoral graduate programs. A total of twenty-four graduate students received training at AYCC during 2009. They provided a total of 12,000 hours of in kind service.

School year 2009-2010 saw further reduction of the school based program as the Arlington Public Schools brought their own counseling staff on board. AYCC continues to provide in school counseling to alternative programs and a small number of Special Education students.

As of July 1, 2009 AYCC had to reduce its counseling capacity by twenty percent due to one staff retirement and additional budget cuts. As a result only five interns were brought on board in September, 2009. From Spring, 2009, through the rest of the year, a significant waiting list has been in place. The agency is now closed on Fridays. In spite of these limitations the full range of services offered remained available to the community.

In the spring the AYCC sponsored its tenth annual Sand Tray Therapy Conference. More than forty clinicians from around New England attended this two-day event. The event featured Dr. Gisela Schubach de Domenico, PhD, developer of Sandtray-Worldplay techniques. Participants had the opportunity to practice and learn techniques of sand tray therapy.

### Acknowledgments

This was a year of significant retirements. During the summer Barbara Tosti, LMHC, retired after more than three decades at AYCC. In the fall Dr. Irwin Av-

ery, M.D., our Medical Director retired, having been with AYCC since its doors opened in 1970. Their longevity at AYCC and dedication to the people of Arlington were models of public service. Both were important components in making AYCC an effective and people friendly agency.

## Veterans' Services

The Department of Veterans' Services for The Town of Arlington is designed to aid and assist veterans and their families as provided by The Department of Veterans' Affairs (VA) and The Massachusetts Department of Veterans' Services (DVS). All eligible veterans and their eligible dependents can seek counseling and assistance with applications for federal and state benefits, financial aid, medical care, educational/vocational benefits, and burial benefits.

As a result of interviewing over forty veterans and/or their dependents, nine new client receiver benefits under Chapter 115 were added in 2009. Six died, 2 moved, and 1 went over income maintaining a total of sixty-one clients receiving benefits over the course of the year. Fifteen veterans were awarded the "Welcome Home" bonus for service in the military since 9/11. Two Vietnam veterans and one Korea veteran were advised of their entitlement to a bonus for their service and were given the appropriate form to redeem it. Five widows of veterans were assisted in receiving their benefits as the surviving spouse of a veteran either "Killed in Action," receiving 100% service-connected disabilities from the VA, or veterans who died from Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS), and also an annuity from DVS.

Veterans' Benefits, Claims, and Referrals				
	2009	2008	2007	2006
Receiver of Benefits (Chapter 115)	61	61	55	56
Disability/Pension Claims Submitted	14	16	21	27
Inpatient/Outpatient Care Requests/ Referrals	56	51	47	45
Veteran Burial Benefits	25	18	24	28

After consulting with over a hundred veterans and/or veteran dependents, 14 claims were submitted to the VA for service-connected compensation and/or pension and 9 have been awarded. Requests for treatment at the VA medical centers by over 50 veterans have been referred and 25 burial benefits have been awarded to eligible veterans. Markers for all veterans buried in Mt. Pleasant Cemetery were ordered and to date 14 unmarked graves of veterans have been identified and authenticated, and markers have been ordered.

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On Veterans' Day, McGurl Square was dedicated on the island at Brattle Street and Summer Street. The stone honoring Lt. Eugene McGurl has been moved to the site to accompany a sign acknowledging the square. The square honors the ten McGurls who served during war from World War Two through Vietnam. Lt. Eugene F. McGurl was "Killed in Action" and Cpl. Daniel P. McGurl died in service during World War Two.

Veterans' Services is responsible for organizing, coordinating, and participating in the Memorial Day Parade and the Veterans' Day Parade. For Memorial Day, the office is responsible for decorating over 5,500 veterans' graves at Mt. Pleasant Cemetery and St. Paul's Cemetery with flags and assuring the maintenance of the veterans' lots. The Disabled American Veterans Chapter 49 assists by decorating the graves at St. Paul's. The file for the Veterans' Honor Roll located at Monument Park in Arlington Center, which will be refurbished at the conclusion of The War on Terrorism, is continuously being updated with veterans from all wars. This Office also serves as Secretary/Treasurer of the Patriots' Day Parade Committee and President of the Combined Veterans' Council of Arlington.

The Office of the Veterans' Services, located in Town Hall Annex, is continuing to purge old files and improve computerization, while reaching out to advertise veterans' benefits and advocate for volunteer opportunities at The Bedford VA Medical Center.

## Commission on Disability

In its sixteenth year of service the Commission on Disability continues to provide information, referral, guidance, and technical assistance to Arlington officials, residents, public and private agencies, and others to ensure that people with physical, sensory, cognitive, and other disabilities have equal access to Town facilities, services, and programs. The Commission currently has eight volunteer Commissioners with one vacancy. As mandated by State law the majority of Commissioners have a physical, cognitive, or sensory disability. This mandate brings an intimate and informed understanding of disabilities to the Commission's agenda and ultimate decisions. The Commission continues to bring awareness to Arlington policy makers and residents as to the legal rights of people with disabilities, enforcing those rights, and working towards community inclusion to make Arlington a stronger Town and capitalizing on the strengths each person living here has to offer.

Coordination and implementation of the Commission's agenda and goals continues to be handled by the, ADA Coordinator, which continues to be effective and efficient.

### 2009 Activities

For the 4th consecutive year, the Commission reported to Town Meeting on its history and future goals.

With Vision the 2020 Standing Committee, the Diversity task Force, and the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission, co-sponsored a highly successful job fair for people with disabilities. Hundred of prospective job seekers met with over twenty interested employers representing a variety of business in Town and beyond.

A Commission representative sits on the Massachusetts Avenue Corridor Project Review Committee, keeping the needs of people with disabilities in the forefront during this planning process of this project.

Hosted Interim Superintendent of Schools Kathleen Bodie at one of its monthly meetings, discussing the needs of Arlington children with disabilities and their families.

Welcomed Carol Kowalski, Arlington's newly appointed Director of Planning & Community Development to a Commission meeting.

Worked with Acting Captain Robert Bongiorno and Officer James Smith of the Community Services Unit to discuss safety issues pertinent to all residents.

Manned an information booth at Town Day to answer questions and provide resources to community members.

### 2010 Goals

The following are Commission on Disability goals that will continue to revolve around the very clear parameters of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Continue to represent the rights of Arlington residents living with disabilities.

Continue to monitor accessible pedestrian safety, installation of curb ramp cuts, and the enforcement of snow removal from curb ramp cuts and sidewalks.

Continue to meet with Town officials to discuss the rights of people with disabilities in order to work towards full community inclusion within the Town of Arlington.

Meet with the Director of Special Education to discuss special education services as well as brainstorm ways to support inclusion, respect, and the rights of children and their families with disabilities.

Co-sponsor another job fair for people with disabilities with Vision 20/20 Standing Committee, the Diversity Task Force, and the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission.

Continue to reach out to other Commissions, groups, and agencies to strengthen connections, referrals, information, and resources.

Work towards reaching full membership.

The Commission continues to occupy office and meeting space in the Senior Center building at 20 Academy Street. The Commission meets on the third Wednesday of each month at 4:00 p.m. in the conference room of the Housing and Disability Program Office # 203. Meetings are open to the public and citizens are invited to attend to observe or voice their concerns.