

Special Surveillance Report Veterans Health Survey

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Introduction

Pursuant to Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) 417.126, the Director of the Department of Veterans Services must develop a questionnaire for veterans concerning their experience in the military and any service-connected disabilities and diseases. The Director must then submit information obtained through the questionnaire to the Division of Public and Behavioral Health of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) on or before January 31 of each year.¹ Nevada DHHS uses the information provided in the questionnaire to complete the report required through NRS 439.249. NRS 417.126 states that the questionnaire must include questions to obtain the following data:

- a. The veteran's experience in the military, including, without limitation, the branch of the military in which the veteran served, the veteran's job while in the military, any battle, conflict, or war in which the veteran served and the locations where the veteran was stationed.
- b. Any service-connected disabilities and diseases, including, without limitation, diseases presumed to be service-connected, from which the veteran may suffer.
- c. Whether the veteran is enrolled with and receiving benefits from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs.

The questionnaire was made available on the Nevada Department of Veterans Services website, <https://veterans.nv.gov/>. A direct link to the survey is located here: [Veterans Health Survey](#).

Pursuant to NRS 439.249, the Division of Public and Behavioral Health shall compile a report concerning the health of veterans in Nevada. The report must include information concerning trends in cancers, other illnesses, and deaths related to service-connect disabilities and diseases.

Methods

The questionnaire was designed and administered using the Qualtrics online survey platform. The raw data was outputted from Qualtrics into an Excel file on February 14, 2025. The Excel file was then uploaded into SAS 9.4 for data analysis.

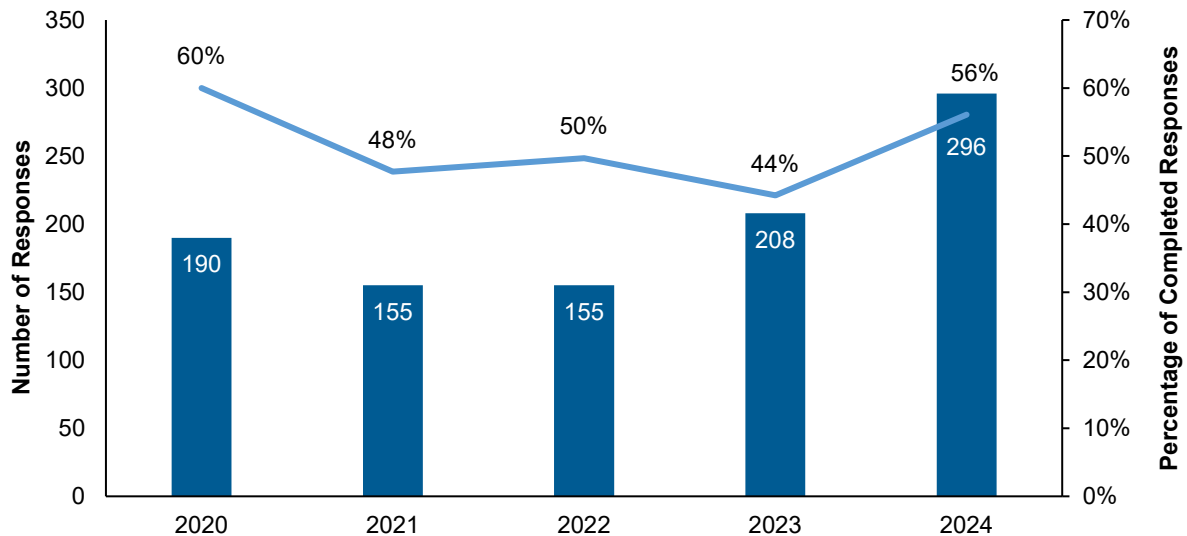
There were 296 responses to the questionnaire between January 1, 2024, and December 31, 2024. An individual may have started the survey, stopped, and restarted later. Qualtrics logged all responses, regardless of whether an individual completed the survey or not and regardless of how many times an individual took the survey before completing it. There is no way to eliminate an individual's partial survey and only keep their completed survey, so all responses were included in the analyses. Therefore, the 296 responses may consist of multiple responses from the same individual.

In previous versions of this report, the analysis was based on the data pull date. For example, if the data was pulled on January 31, the analysis covered the period from February 1 of the previous year to January 31 of the current year. In contrast, the current report will follow the calendar year to present the survey findings.

Findings

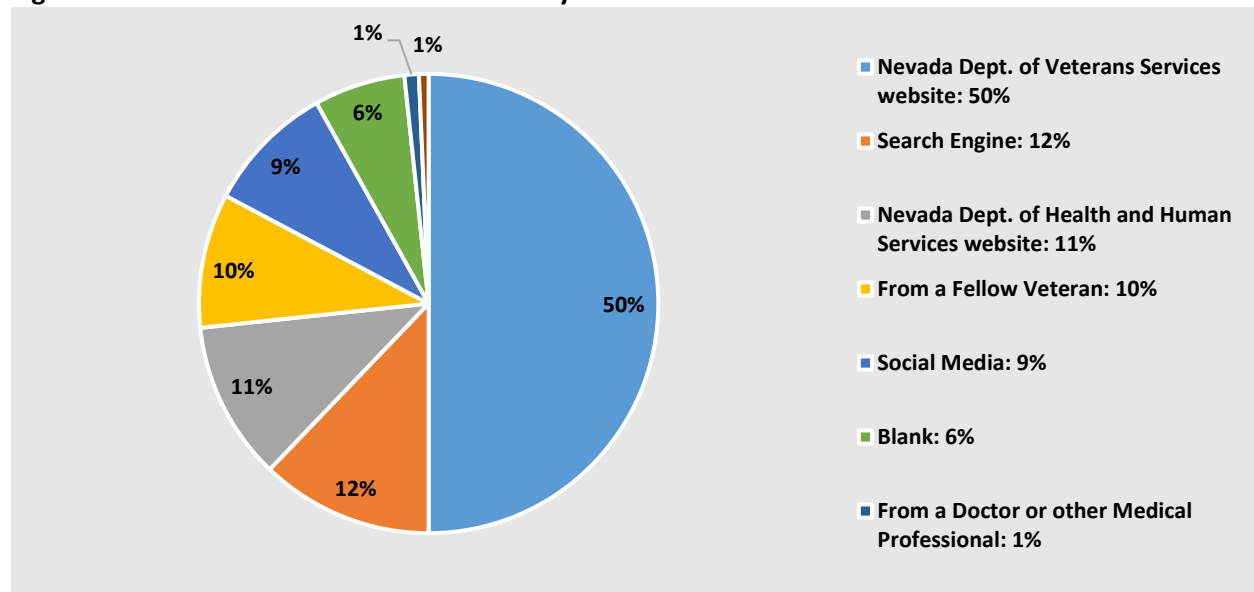
Of the 296 responses to the Nevada Veterans Health Survey in 2024, 166 were complete (56%) and 130 were incomplete (44%) [Figure 1]. The first year the survey was available was 2020. The 2020 survey yielded 190 responses; of those responses, 114 were complete (60%) and 76 were incomplete (40%). In 2021, the survey had 155 responses, and 74 were complete (48%). In 2022, the survey had 155 responses; 77 were complete (50%). The number of responses increased in the 2024 survey and had higher rate of completed responses compared to the previous year.

Figure 1. Number of responses and percentages of completed responses.



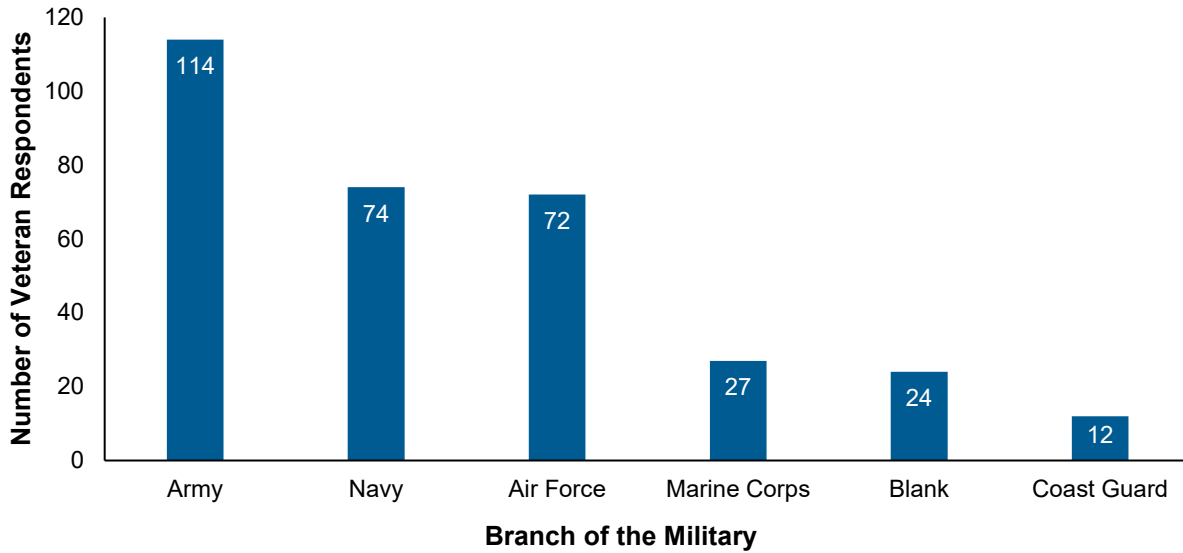
In 2024, most respondents heard about the survey directly from the Nevada Department of Veterans Services website (50%), followed by “Found on a Search Engine” (12%) [Figure 2].

Figure 2. How Did You Hear About This Survey?



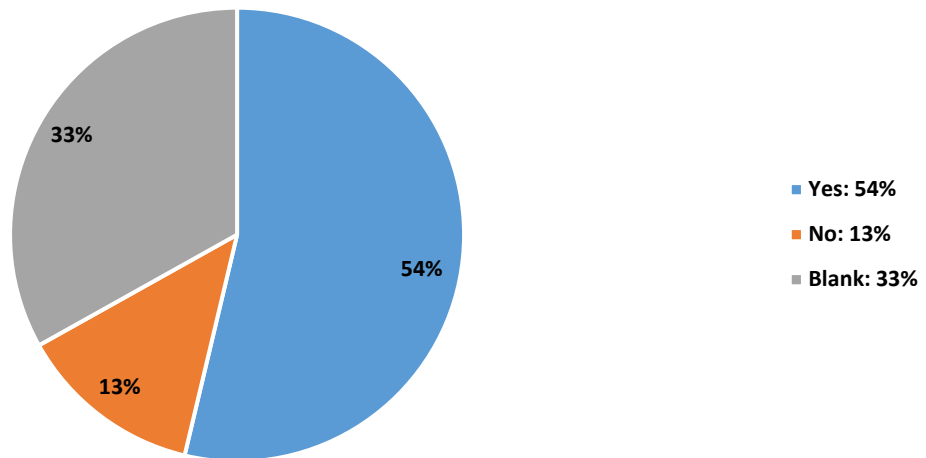
An individual may have served in more than one branch of the military, therefore, the counts represented in Figure 3 below are not mutually exclusive. About 93% of respondents served in one branch of the military, and 7% served in more than one branch [Figure 3].

Figure 3. In Which Branch of the Military Did You Serve?



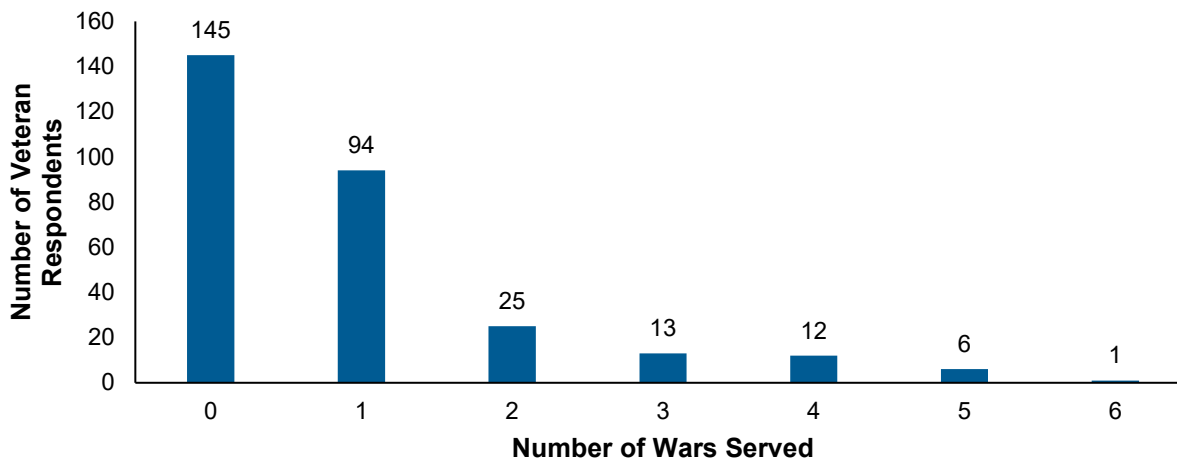
Most respondents served during a wartime era (54%) [Figure 4].

Figure 4. Did You Serve During a Wartime Era?



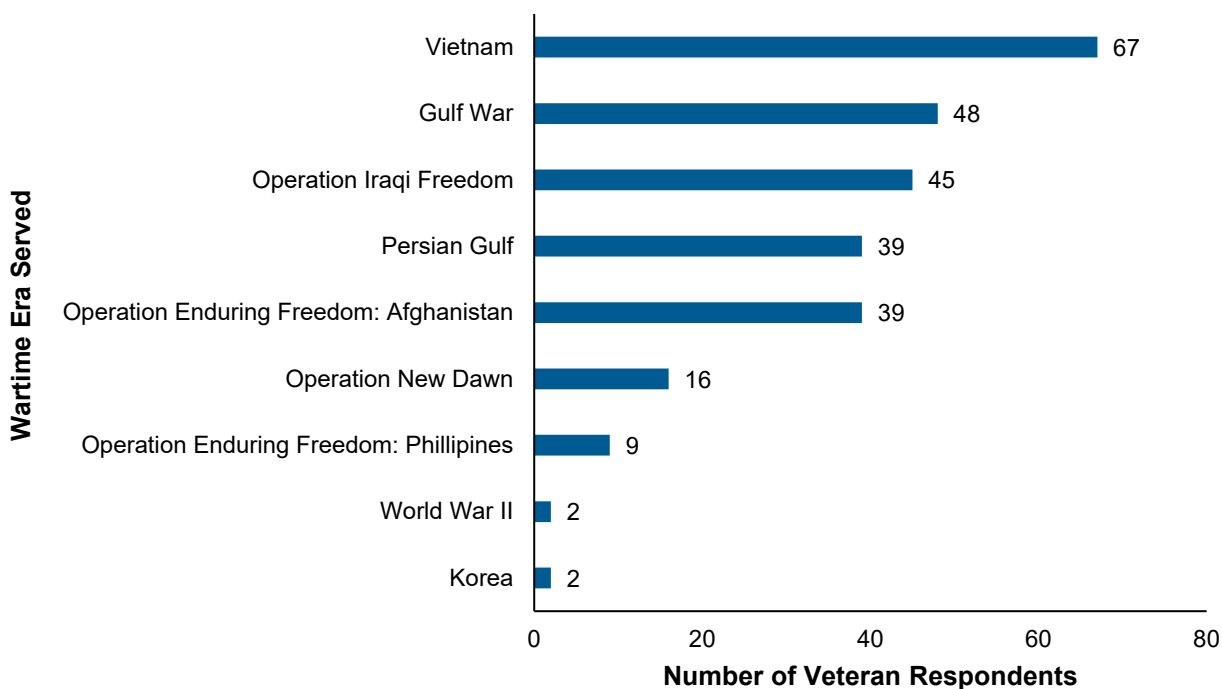
The respondents were asked to list the wartime eras served, and most had either served during zero (145) or one wartime era (94) [Figure 5]. While a majority of respondents served during a wartime era, relatively few served in multiple eras.

Figure 5. Number of Wartime Eras Served.



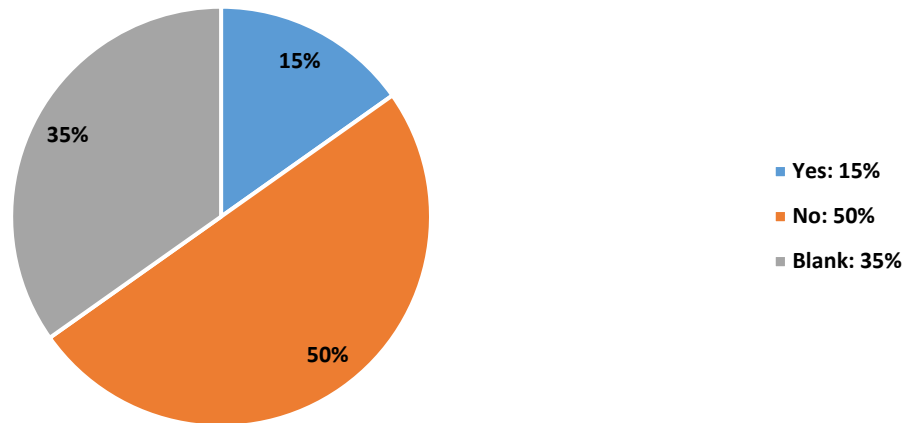
As illustrated in Figure 6, an individual may have served in more than one wartime era, therefore, the numbers reflected in Figure 5 above are not mutually exclusive. Of the wartime eras listed, most had served during the Vietnam era (67), followed by the Gulf War (48), and Operation Iraqi Freedom (45) [Figure 6].

Figure 6. Wartime Era Served.



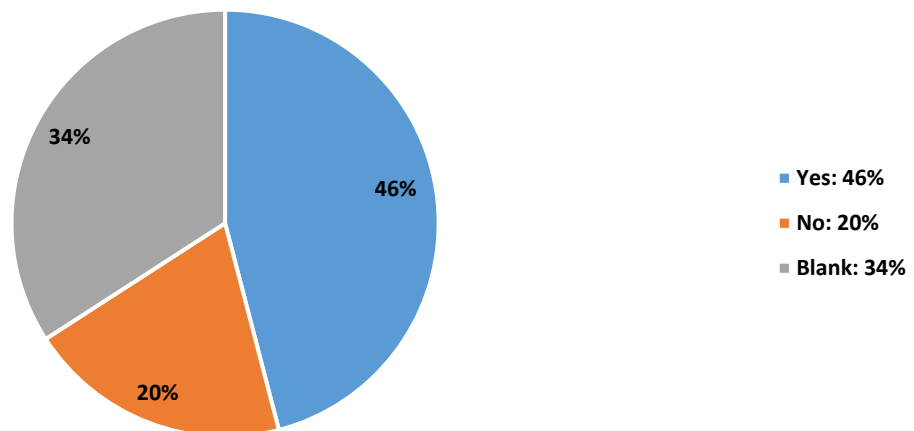
Of the veteran respondents, 15% were awarded a combat badge, ribbon, or medal, depending on the military branch in which they served [Figure 7].

Figure 7. Were you Awarded a Combat Action Badge/Combat Infantryman Badge (Army), Combat Action Ribbon (Navy, Marines, & Coast Guard), or Combat Action Medal (Air Force)?



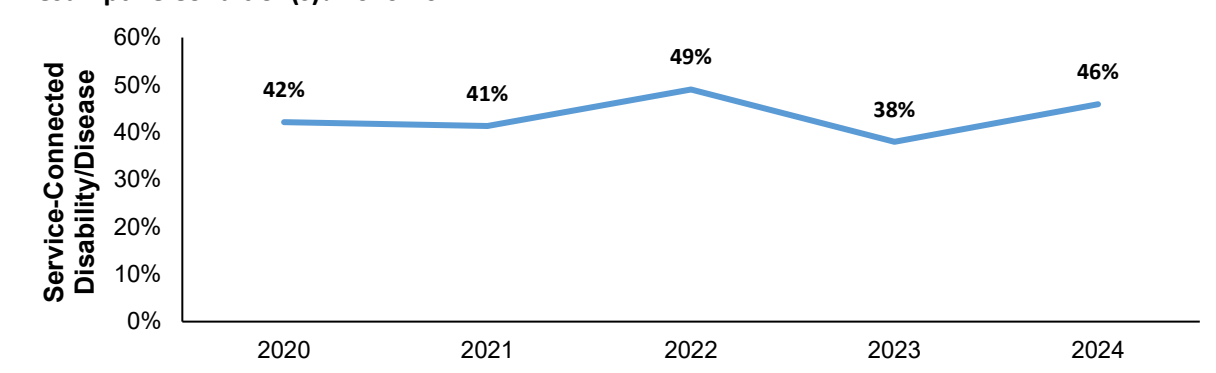
Approximately 46% of respondents answered that they had been diagnosed with a service-connected disability or disease, including presumptive conditions. According to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), presumptive service connections are disabilities and conditions that the VA presumes were caused by military service, due to the “unique circumstances of a specific veteran’s military service”² [Figure 8].

Figure 8. Have You Been Diagnosed with a Service-Connected Disability or Disease, Including Presumptive Condition(s)?



From 2020 to 2024, the rate of respondents answering “Yes” to having been diagnosed with a service-connected disability or disease including presumptive condition(s) has remained stable [Figure 9].

Figure 9. Have You Been Diagnosed with a Service-Connected Disability or Disease, Including Presumptive Condition(s)? 2020-2024



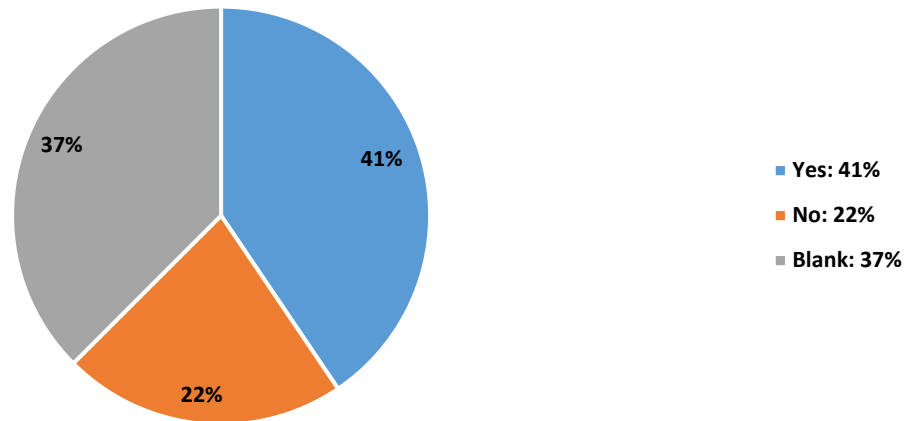
Respondents were asked to list their most recurring service-connected disability or disease from a dropdown list. Although 63% of responses were blank, the reported responses ranged from diabetes mellitus to different types of cancers [Table 1].

Table 1. List of Service-Connected Disabilities or Diseases.

Service-Connected Disability or Disease	Count
Diabetes mellitus (Type 2)	14
Anxiety states	11
Sleep disturbances	9
Joint pain	7
Post-traumatic osteoarthritis	6
Fatigue	5
Peripheral Neuropathy (Early-Onset)	5
Signs or symptoms involving the skin	4
Atherosclerotic heart disease or hypertensive vascular disease and their complications	3
Cardiovascular signs or symptoms	3
Functional gastrointestinal disorders	3
Headache	3
Muscle pain	3
Neurological signs or respiratory system (upper or lower)	3
Gastrointestinal signs or symptoms	2
Gulf War Syndrome	2
Osteoporosis	2
Parkinson's Disease	2
Peripheral neuropathy except where related to infectious causes	2
Prostate cancer	2
Soft-tissue sarcoma (other than osteosarcoma, chondrosarcoma, Kaposi's sarcoma, or mesothelioma)	2
Thyroid cancer	2
All Other Disabilities or Diseases	13

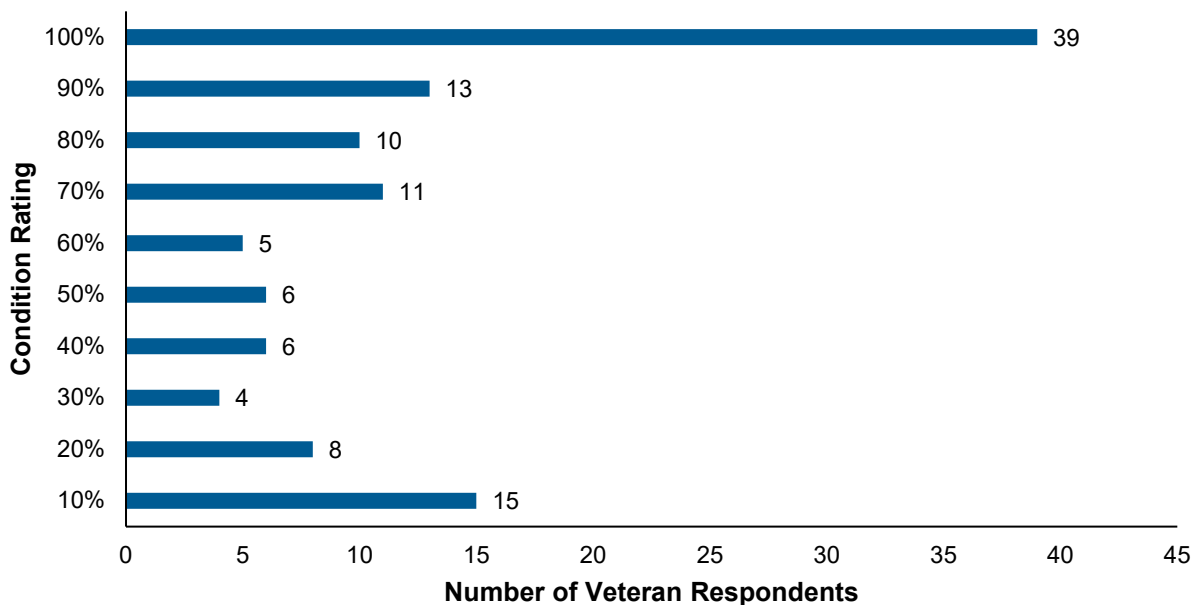
Forty-one percent of respondents, responded “Yes” to having been rated by the VA for a service-connected disability or disease, including any presumptive condition(s) [Figure 10].

Figure 10. Have You Been Rated by the VA For a Service-Connected Disability or Disease, Including Any Presumptive Condition(s)?



According to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, the VA assigns a veteran a disability rating “based on the severity of your service-connected condition.”² The assigned rating is then used to determine disability compensation and other VA benefit eligibility. The rating is expressed as a percent. Of the 117 responses to this specific survey question, 33% of respondents (39) were rated at 100% [Figure 11].

Figure 11. What Is the Rating of the Service-Connected Disability or Disease, Including Any Presumptive Condition(s)?



Of the respondents, 40% reported receiving monthly monetary benefits from the VA, 41% receive health care from the VA, and 22% have a disability claim in process [Table 2].

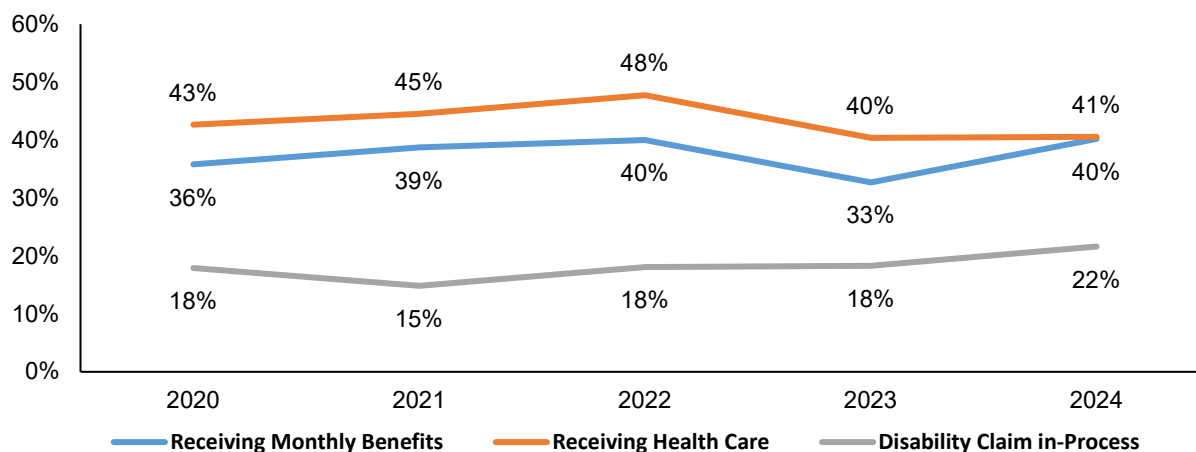
Table 2. VA Benefits Received.

Survey Question	Yes	No	Blank
Are you receiving any monthly monetary benefits from the VA?	40%	22%	38%
Do you receive health care from the VA?	41%	22%	38%
Do you have a disability claim in process?	22%	40%	38%

The sum of the counts will not be equal to the total due to rounding.

From 2020 to 2024 the percentages of veterans receiving benefits from the VA have remained stable [Figure 12].

Figure 12. VA benefits Received 2020-2024.



Conclusion

This report is based on responses from the annual Veterans Health Survey. As noted, this survey had 296 respondents in 2024, which is about 0.1% of the veteran population. Furthermore, only 166 survey responses (56%) were completed. According to the United States Census Bureau, there were 201,790 veterans living in Nevada in 2023.³ With a Nevada veteran population of 201,790, a confidence level of 95%, and a margin of error of 5%, the survey sample size should be at least 384 respondents to draw meaningful conclusions.

However, this report does highlight the diverse service-connected diseases and disabilities with which veterans have been diagnosed, including three forms of cancer, sleep disturbances, and anxiety. The responses were from veterans who served in six different wartime eras and across four branches of the military and coast guard.

References

¹Nevada Legislature website <https://www.leg.state.nv.us/>

²U.S Department of Veterans Affairs website <https://www.va.gov/>

³United States Census Bureau website <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/NV>