

I am really emotional right now just having read your letter. I don't know how you have the insight you do but it really hits home. It's like you were there. Thank you. No matter what the court decides your letter has a great impact on me understanding my experience. Having someone put my experience into words. I can't express in words the impact reading it is having on me right now. Thank you.

U.S. Navy Veteran Client

Overall, extremely helpful, particularly in understanding how the military culture affects the ways that clients may react to us and the legal system in general. Good practical information not lost in legal research.

*Brian Leeds, Esq.
Ontario County Public Defender's Office
10/13/23 CLE*

Thank you so much again—your mitigation packet was beautiful and impressed the judge very much!

*Bailey Waltman, Esq.
The Legal Aid Society of Nassau County*

The DA specifically noted the mitigation report you prepared in noting the offer to the court. I am quite sure that without your work, this would not have happened.... classes on weekends. If he concludes these successfully, we will get that DWAI violation. I have never had a .15% BAC reduced in Monroe County without a trial, so this is significant.

*Angelo A. Rose, Esq.
Finger Lakes Legal, Inc.*

CONTACT US

Time is of the essence when it comes to obtaining military records. Contact us today to discuss how we can assist you and your veteran or active military clients.

Please contact our main office to connect with the VDP attorney covering your jurisdiction.

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NEW YORK STATE DEFENDERS ASSOCIATION



VETERANS DEFENSE PROGRAM

The Veterans Defense Program provides training and legal assistance to attorneys defending veterans and service members in the family and criminal court systems.



MISSION

The Veterans Defense Program provides training, support, and legal assistance to promote trauma-informed, client-centered representation of veterans and service members involved in New York State's criminal and family court systems.



VISION

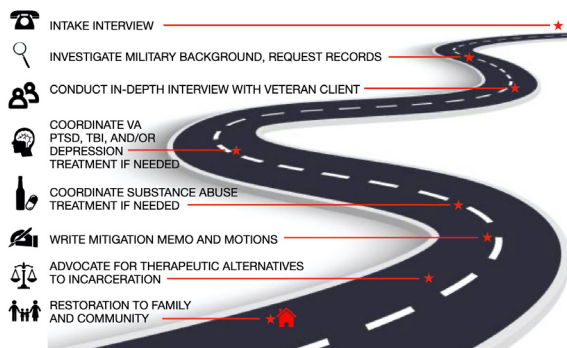
Every justice-involved veteran receives specialized legal representation from an attorney who understands their military experience and culture, the effects of those experiences, and who can present this information to the court in support of therapeutic outcomes.



VALUES

Our core values at the VDP include developing military cultural competence, advocating for therapeutic alternatives to incarceration, ensuring open access to services, and restoring healthy vets to their families and communities.

THE VDP PROCESS



LEGAL SERVICES

Help attorneys collect and interpret military and VA records, provide case consultations and specific military document summaries.



MITIGATION

Prepare mitigation reports based on the individual's military experience and its effects on the veteran's life, done through careful review of the veteran's military records and VA records and thorough interviews with the veteran and others.



PRISON ASSISTANCE

Assist veterans in prison with letters of commitment, VA disability forms, time credit issues, and 440 motions.



VA BENEFITS COORDINATION

Coordinate services & communication with the VA Veterans' Justice Outreach Specialists & county Veteran Service Officers on veterans' benefits.



TREATMENT

Connect veterans with PTSD, TBI, depression, and substance use disorder treatment.



Continuing Legal Education

CONTINUING LEGAL EDUCATION

Provide Continuing Legal Education presentations on topics including Military Cultural Competence and Trauma-Informed Representation by the defense bar.



MENTORING & REFERRALS

Provide veteran peer-to-peer mentoring, and referrals and guidance on family and civil issues.



ACTIVE DUTY AND RESERVES

Advocate with the soldier's command and JAG officers for retention, or favorable discharge in the event of a separation board.

TYPES OF CASES HANDLED BY VDP

- Criminal
- Info Request
- Family
- Civil
- VA Benefit Assistance
- Records Request
- Collateral
- Consequences SORA
- Federal
- CPL 440 Motions