



Contra Costa County

Contra Costa County
invites your interest for the position of
**VETERANS SERVICE
OFFICER**

The County of Contra Costa

Located in northern California, Contra Costa County covers approximately 733 square miles extending from the northeastern shore of San Francisco Bay east to San Joaquin County. With a population of just over 1 million residents, the County is among the 10 most populous counties in California and home to one of the State's most ethnically, culturally, and socioeconomically diverse populations. It has one of the fastest growing work forces among Bay Area counties, with growth in its employment base being driven by the need to provide services to an increasing population and the presence of relatively high-wage skilled jobs.



The County contains 19 incorporated cities and includes a variety of urban, suburban, industrial, agricultural, and port areas. Substantial portions of the County are served by the San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART), which has contributed to significant residential and commercial development. Contra Costa is home to numerous attractions, including wildlife refuges, state parks, historic sites, and a variety of museums. Mount Diablo, a 3,849-foot peak at the north end of the Diablo Hills, is popular with outdoor enthusiasts, as are hiking, biking, horseback riding, boating, and other activities. The wine country of Napa and Sonoma Counties, picturesque seaside communities such as Carmel and Monterey, and the Sierra Lake Tahoe region are all within driving distance of Contra Costa.

Several prestigious public and private academic institutions are also located nearby, including Stanford University, University of California at Berkeley, University of San Francisco, University of the Pacific, San Jose State University, and California State University, East Bay. One of California's best community college systems is also located in Contra Costa County.

County Government and the Veterans Service Office

Contra Costa County was created in 1850 as one of the 27 counties formed at the time of California's statehood. The County Seat and County's Administrative Offices are located in the City of Martinez. Contra Costa County is governed by an elected five-member Board of Supervisors and includes a variety of citizen commissions, committees, and other entities that advise the Board and County staff on issues and policy. The County Administrator is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the County, including overseeing implementation of Board directives; planning, monitoring, and overseeing County operations; supervising appointed Department Heads; and preparing the annual budget, among other tasks.



The County provides a full range of services through 27 County departments divided into the service areas of Public Protection, General Government/Municipal Services, Health and Human Services, and Special Districts and Authorities. It has more than 10,000 employees and a total FY2022/23 budget of over \$4.4 billion with a General Fund of \$2.04 billion. Contra Costa County is committed to Racial Equity, Inclusion and Social Justice within all county operations and is dedicated to the advancement of key initiatives and efforts in support of this essential mission.

The Veterans Service Office was established in 1946 to help local veterans and their families obtain veterans' benefits from federal, state, and local agencies. Since the department's inception, the

Board of Supervisors has continued to recognize the need for professional veterans' advocates to provide claims assistance to the 72,000 veterans and their families who reside in the county. The Veterans Service Representatives (VSRs) are thoroughly trained and accredited by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs and are county employees who work closely with service officers from Veterans organization of your choice, including American Legion, California Department of Veterans Affairs, Disabled American Veterans, and many other organizations that maintain staff at federal Veterans Affairs Regional Offices.

The Position and Ideal Candidate

The Veterans Service Officer (VSO) is a department head position responsible for planning and administering a county-wide program of comprehensive service for veterans, their dependents, and survivors. The new hire will report directly to the Chief Assistant County Administrator and oversee a staff of 13.

Locally, the Veterans Service Office is held in high regard and has consistently been a statewide top performer in comparison to peer counties. The new VSO is expected to maintain the high service levels and visibility at the state level, in supporting the county veteran community. In doing so, the VSO as a county department head must maintain close communications, collaboration, and a cohesive work relationship with the Board of Supervisors (BOS), the CAO's office, and with peer county executives. This includes helping the county organization identify and implement strategies to reduce disparities that exist in justice, health, and social services. Positive connections and strong work relationships are an essential aspect of this assignment as the CAO and her entire leadership team place a major premium on teamwork and communication. A progressive leadership style is also a high priority as the VSO will need to be an engaged, participative, and transparent manager who establishes positive connections, provides mentorship, and keeps staff informed. The VSO will also have a chance to expand organizational capacity with the addition of an approved, yet to be hired Assistant VSO position.



Externally, the VSO will establish and maintain professional relationships with constituents including veteran service organizations, community organizations, as well as with elected and appointed officials at the local, state, and federal levels. Those connections will ensure constituents are kept informed of benefits, programs, and services available, and will assist in providing guidance towards navigating the complexities of securing those services.

The ideal candidate will have an excellent interpersonal style, a keen sense of diplomacy, and a high level of emotional intelligence. In dealing with the delicate balance of constituent needs, and with BOS, CAO, and county wide interests, the new VSO must be politically astute and truly relate to and understand the dynamics of the entire countywide organization. The VSO will reflect a demonstrated commitment to the values of equity, diversity, and inclusion, and will have an awareness of and respect for cultural diversity, be effective and responsive in

politically and ethnically diverse environments and accomplished at maintaining cooperative relations with diverse communities.

The required background for this role includes five years of experience in a local, state, or federal government veterans' program or a federally recognized veterans service organization counseling veterans on a variety of rights and benefits (or its equivalent experience within a not-for-profit or private enterprise) with at least one year of supervisory experience. A Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university with a major in Business or Public Administration, Counseling, Psychology, Sociology, or a closely related field. In addition, the incumbent must secure at least one active accreditation by the California Department of Veterans Affairs (CDVA) or by a congressionally recognized National Veterans Service Organization at the time of hire, or within one year of hire date. The accreditation must be obtained through an approved examination from the Veterans Administration and must also include a certification of competition certificate for the VA sponsored, "Training, Responsibility, Involvement, and Preparation of Claim (TRIP) Program." The new VSO must be a veteran as defined in the California Military and Veterans Code (MVC), section 980. The incumbent must possess appropriate military separation/discharge document, Department of Defense form, DD214 or equivalent.

Compensation and Benefits

The salary range for this position is \$132,485 - \$153,368 annually, DOQ. Additionally, this position will receive an annual 5% COLA adjustment in July for the next three (3) years. The County offers a competitive benefits program that includes the following:

- ◆ Retirement - The County pays the employer contribution to CCCERA, a 1937 Act defined benefit retirement plan, which has reciprocity with other 1937 Act county retirement systems, CalPERS, and systems with CalPERS reciprocity. Employee contributions are based on a percentage of pensionable compensation. The County also participates in Social Security and Medicare.
- ◆ Health Insurance - A variety of subsidized medical, dental, and vision plans are offered.
- ◆ Long Term Disability - County paid program.
- ◆ Vacation Leave - Initial monthly accrual rate is 10 hours, up to maximum accumulation of 240 hours.
- ◆ Sick Leave - Monthly accrual is 8 hours.
- ◆ Annual Management Administrative Leave - 94 non-accruable leave hours are credited each January 1st (prorated for those hired after January 1st).
- ◆ Personal Holiday Credit - Accrual of 2 hours each month, up to 40 hours.
- ◆ Holidays - 11 paid holidays per year.
- ◆ Executive Professional Development Reimbursement - Eligible for reimbursement of \$925 each 2-year period for qualifying expenses, including the purchase of job-related technology devices or software. An additional \$750 per fiscal year is available through Career Development Training, which requires some cost sharing.
- ◆ Deferred Compensation Plan - County contributes \$85, plus an additional \$150 per month upon qualifying employee contributions to a 457 plan.
- ◆ Executive Life Insurance Program.
- ◆ Management Longevity Pay.



The Process

If you are interested in pursuing this desirable career opportunity, please visit the Avery Associates Career Portal on our website at www.averyassoc.net/current-searches/ to upload your letter of interest, resume, and contact information, including email addresses for five work-related references (who will not be contacted until after an interview takes place).

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The final filing date for this position is March 24, 2023.



If you have any questions regarding this position, please feel free to contact Paul Kimura at 408.399.4424 or by email: paulk@averyassoc.net or Bill Lopez at 408.888.4099 or by email: williaml@averyassoc.net. For more information on the County of Contra Costa, visit its website at www.contracosta.ca.gov.