

BILL SUMMARY
1st Session of the 53rd Legislature

Bill No.:	HB 1555
Version:	Introduced
Request Number:	5743
Author:	Rep. Jordan
Date:	2/17/2011
Impact:	ODVA Annual Cost: \$824,000

Research Analysis

HB 1555, as introduced, creates the Oklahoma Veterans' Treatment Court Act which establishes a Veterans' Treatment Court program, at the discretion of a judicial district body, which may be a separate court or a program of a drug court. The measure provides guidelines for admission to the program and excludes certain defendants from the program. The measure authorizes a court to order a defendant to complete treatment and counseling programs and provides guidelines for referring defendants to such programs. Other guidelines for administering and terminating the defendant from the program are provided. The measure authorizes a court to dismiss the original charges upon successful completion of the program.

Prepared By: Andrea Merten

Fiscal Analysis

HB 1555 as introduced, authorizes the creation of Veterans' Treatment Courts in all judicial districts of the state. Officials from the Oklahoma Department of Veterans Affairs (ODVA) identify the following responsibilities for ODVA under HB 1555.

Eligibility Screening – based on the experience of a comparable program in Tulsa, ODVA estimates participation in a Veterans' Treatment Court would be approximately 340 clients. ODVA believes they can conduct eligibility screening for the program with current resources and staff, at \$0 additional cost

Mental Health, Drug and Alcohol screening and assessment – ODVA does not currently provide such services and would have to contract for services at an estimated per assessment cost of \$1,100, approximately \$374,000 annually.

Veterans Service Representatives Court and Claims Services – ODVA estimates the need to hire 6 FTE to fill Veterans Service Representative positions needed to provide services for judicial districts. Such services include preliminary court preparation sessions, court hearings and claims filing and processing. The estimated annual cost to ODVA for the additional FTE is \$450,000.

ODVA estimates a total annual cost of \$824,000 to implement and administer the program created in HB 1555.

Prepared By: John McPhetridge

Other Considerations

Actual demand on the program is dependent upon the rate at which judicial districts choose to establish Veterans' Treatment Courts, as well as, other factors such as the population of qualifying veterans in the state.